Bullock Team Between Spotted Gums. c.1935.
Photograph: Harold Cazneaux Collection,
National Library of Australia Ref 6808635

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Bullocks on the NSW South Coast
by Peter McCarthy

Teams of bullocks on the South Coast were mostly used to cart timber and other forest products such as wattle bark, and for delivery of cream, butter and cheese to waiting vessels for transport to Sydney.

Until the advent of tractors, most farms had a small team of bullocks that were used for work such as the clearing of bush and for carting slides of anything that was too heavy for human haulage.

When Benjamin Boyd moved to Twofold Bay in the 1840s he (among other enterprises) bred cattle and had a large boiling-down works to make tallow, which was then fetching fair money (about £25 a ton). Boyd also put the first road through the mountains to the Monaro to accommodate vehicles such as drays and wagons. The main route at that time was via Cow Bail Creek which bullock teams travelled up to fetch granite for Boyd's boiling-down chimneys.

Ray Sirl drives his bullock team over the old Tarraganda bridge on the last day it was open. Photograph: Bega Valley Library.

The discovery of gold in the mid-1800s led to a population explosion and bullock teams weren't far behind the miners, providing them with supplies that ranged from food to blasting powder and, of course, alcohol.

In our region gold was discovered at Araluen, Mogo, Yowaka River and Montreal near Bermagui in the 1880s, and they all were serviced by bullock teams which mainly towed drays.

When gold was found at Kiandra, the coastal route from Eden crossing the Towamba River involved negotiating a very steep ascent up a pinch known as Big Jack Mountain. This was named after a big brassy bullocky, Jack Hayden, who supplied goods to the miners. He even moved a house from Eden to the top of the hill to be used as an inn. It became known as The Dragon Inn!

Apparently sheds and huts were also towed by bullock teams to the Nethercote area during the gold rush days.

The prevalence of bushrangers, such as the notorious Clarke gang who terrorised southern NSW goldfields, made travel hazardous for the bullockies, and their slow-moving bullock teams made them an easy target when they had any valuables.

A constant need for timber (especially railway sleepers) from the South Coast necessitated the use of bullock and horse teams. Huge logs were pulled from the South Coast forests by the likes of the Sirls, Morgan Spindler (Bega Valley) and Jim Lynch of Narooma. In 1929 Jim snigged and carted an exceptionally big log to Mitchell's Sawmill near the current Narooma Bridge. It was over 7 metres long and had a girth of over 4 metres. He used 2 large timber jinkers and 16 bullocks to pull it. Apparently, Jim worked his teams without an off-sider – so he was an unusually self-reliant man!

Wattle bark was another major branch of the timber industry. Black wattle has a particularly high tannin and, from as early as the 1820s and 30s, it was used to tan leather, which the colony needed because it was dependent on a supply of local leather harnesses for horses. As roads improved, horses gradually became the main mode of transport because they could tow carriages and the like at a quicker pace – so demand for leather, and therefore wattle bark, increased.

There was good money to be made from wattle bark harvesting. On the South Coast it was sent on steamers to Sydney, mainly to Burns Bay near Willoughby, and to Marshall (prev. Marshalltown) and Breakwater, Melbourne until tanneries (such as the Spenco tannery off Bega St, which was built in 1870 and operated until 1960) were opened locally.

Hollowed-out logs were used to chop wattle bark until chaff cutters were used. The bark was stripped with tomahawks in spring and summer when the sap was running freely, allowing the bark to be removed more easily.

Richard Otton provided these details of the technique used for stripping wattle bark: the bark would be stripped from about 3 feet above ground level to 10 or 12 feet up and be packed into bundles which then had a 12-foot strip of bark wrapped around it three times before being tied off. These dimensions allowed the use of pack horses to cart the bark, so in later years this wasn't exclusively a job for the bullocks.

No account of bullock history on the South Coast would be complete without mentioning the Sirl family, who first settled in the Bega Valley in the 1860s. The Sirls and descendants trained and used bullocks in the Bega Valley up until the 1960s, when they traded their bullocks for bulldozers. The Sirl brothers worked the forests around

Mumbulla Mountain and Dr George Mountain for many years, snigging timber railway sleepers and also snigging logs that became telephone poles. The rugged terrain often required block and tackle to be used.

The Sirls mostly worked in the Bega Valley but also worked up Dorrigo way, in northern NSW. Ray Sirl, now deceased, worked in the forests as a child with his father, Jim, and his Uncles Tom, George and Wally, all of whom were accomplished bullock drivers. They would yoke up their team of 12 in the early morning, collecting them from where they had been grazing in the open overnight at the base of Dr George Mountain. If the bullocks were not at first visible they would be located from the sound of the bells which were worn around their necks. They would hook a tucker bag containing their lunch over one of the metal bows in the yokes. Sometimes Jim would take the truck up the mountain while Ray would drive the team and "surf" along on the snigging chains – something that was a real balancing act! Ten sleepers were dragged at a time and the Sirls would cart up to 400 on a good day.

While still a lad in 1959, Ray and his Uncle Wal trekked from Dr George Mountain to Nimmitabel for the filming of *The Sundowners* which starred an international cast, including Deborah Kerr and Robert Mitchum. Wal, Ray, and their team stopped at Brown Mountain reserve for the first night and at Nimmitabel on the second day. This journey was no mean feat!

Other public demonstrations undertaken by the Sirl family were for Wool Week for David Jones in 1960, where Jim, Wal and Ray took a team along Elizabeth St, Sydney and past St. James Station. This was a huge spectacle! Wal Sirl also took a team to the Bermagui Tuna Festival in the late 1950s.

Ray Sirl kept the bullock tradition alive by training teams for public demonstrations. As an adult he was given a team by Richard "Paddy" Otton, who had purchased and started teams in the 1960s and the '70s. Paddy had secured a team of eight 10-month-old steers for free, apart from the cost of the cartage by Jimmy Rixon. He called the leaders Dollar and Cent! In 1978, Paddy and Ray took a team of Paddys to Ryrie's property, *Two Bob Downs* at Michelago, for the filming of *My Brilliant Career*, which was based on the Miles Franklin novel. The cattle used in this film were painted with red clay and water to simulate the red bull dust of the Outback!!

Over the years Ray would give great demonstrations with his teams of bullocks at various parades and shows, such as the Canberra Show in 1977 and 1978, the Oyster Week Festival, and the Merimbula Jazz Festival. Ray also took a

team of bullocks over the old Tarraganda Bridge on the last official day it was used on Nov 29, 1986.

Mrs Joy Sirl reported that she, Ray and their young children (along with Ray's brother, Brian, as his off-sider) would travel all over the state on some of these trips.

Mr Walker and Bullocks.

The Otton family of *Numeralla*, Stony Creek, have been in this area since John Otton settled here in 1849. Bullocks were used in the early days to bring corn from Pumpkin Flat, Brogo, to the dairy at *Numeralla*. Two teams were used, one pulling a dray and the other pulling a wagon. There were two steep climbs on this trip, one at Warrigal and the other at Station Creek which was nearly on the existing highway, near Hawks Head Road. In the 1860s, John Otton

Snr drove a team of 20 bullocks and three spare bullocks from Boydtown to Goulburn.

Paddy Otton, when just 13 or 14 years old, drove a small team to Bega towing a dray to move furniture. He has also used them on his farm for jobs such as harrowing.

The Ottons bought a wagon off the Farrells in the early 1960s. This had been used as a timber jinker during the '40s and '50s supplying timber for telegraph poles to the Monaro. It was originally owned by William Rixon and has 1870 stamped on it.

At the first big show at Bega Showgrounds in 1875, there was a ploughing competition which was won by a bullocky named Charles McGregor. In later years a plough (not McGregor's original plough, but one donated by Murray Otton) was placed in the showground as a commemorative monument.

Morgan Spindler was another accomplished bullocky and timber getter who worked the hills and forests around Dr George Mountain and Bega Valley during the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1885 Bega became the first municipality to produce and supply coal gas and Morgan and Arthur Sirl ran two bullock teams transporting the coal in drays as part of a regular run from Tathra Wharf to Bega. The ships also brought building supplies, such as cedar timber, which were transported from the wharf to local communities. In later years, Morgan Spindler who was residing in the Brogo area, supplied timber to a sawmill at Brogo which was owned by Ivan Howard. It sometimes took him two days to cart a huge log from near Cobargo to the mill.

The road down to Tathra wharf was quite steep and teams sometimes had to be double-banked (i.e. two teams of bullocks were used) to pull the loads up. And two teams usually travelled together, especially across Jellat flats where floods could be a problem, the track there near Gowing's Bridge having been corduroyed with logs to aid traction. If the bullockies had to camp due to a delay, they would simply roll their swags out on a platform under the wagon where they normally carried their tucker bags.

In the late 1880s to early 1900s, a Yuin man named Mr Walker did contract work (this entailed scrub clearing, carting of stores and even funeral work) with his bullocks between the Wallaga Lake/Tilba area and Batemans Bay. He was renowned for his pair of large white leader bullocks and photos from the time show his team to be in prime condition.

Harry Grant was another experienced bullocky from the area and a familiar sight between Wyndham and Eden. He often carted wattle bark down to the steam ships. Harry was still working bullocks as late as 1964.

The Farrells of Towamba were yet another renowned local bullocking family. Harold Farrell worked teams of 14 down Towamba way. Kate Clery gives a good account of their bullock team use around the Towamba area in her book, *The Forgotten Corner*, which contains an interview with Harold, Mrs Farrell and their son Pat, about their lives in this region.

Finally, between 1900 and 1960, five horse teams and 22 bullock teams worked in the Tanja State Forest, mainly employed in logging for railway sleeper use.

There are few people of today who can claim to work as hard as these people and the cattle truly were stoic beasts of burden. ℝ

Sources: *Bullock Teams: the building of a nation* by Olaf Ruhen, 1980; *When the Chips Are Down* by Robert B Whiter, 2017; *The Forgotten Corner Interviews* by Kate Clery, 2000; *Bullockies* by Len Braden, 1968; *The Bullock Driver's Handbook* by Arthur Cannon, 1985; and (with many thanks) oral histories from Mr Richard ('Paddy') Otton, Mrs Joy Sirl and Mr Edward Spindler.

Teams and Teamsters on Tathra Road
by Kate O'Connor (Bega District News, 4.9.1924)

When you're voting for Progression and the Labour Party's cause,
When you're keen on Legislature and the Parliamentary laws,
When you're spending all your energy in 'blooming up' the land,
Just give a thought in season to the blessing near at hand,
In the 'rush and bustle' hurry that we live in, so it seems,
We forget how we're indebted to the teamsters and the teams.

How they trudge along the highway, sweating teams and swinging load,
Some honest faithful workers are the teamsters on our road.
The waggon may be ancient, and the paint is not too grand,
But we hear their praises quoted and sung on every hand.
In the daylight and the darkness, through the wind and sleet and rain,
The patient team plod to and fro, again and yet again.

When the waters spread on Jellat, and the flood was at its height,
Cov'ring acre upon acre, 'twas an awe-inspiring sight.
It's dinkum what I'm telling you, you recollect the flood,
That left the road on Jellat just a stretch of bog and mud.
No traffic for the lorries then, with all their swank and power,
But the persevering teamsters were the heroes of the hour.

No traffic for the hupmobile or lordly limousine,
On that road that seemed more suitable to a boat or submarine.
But the jingling, creaking waggons kept on going all the time,
Through the mud that stuck like treacle, and through pools of slush and slime.
No sugar in the cannister, no flour in the bin,
All business stopped in Bega till the teams came plodding in.

When our Member makes a formal call at Bega on his round,
And is entertained at luncheon in the recreation ground,
When the good things have been eaten and the speeches all put through,
And petitions have been presented from the Shire and Council too,
'Twould be the time to ask him (or so it seems to me),
For a grant upon the road that lies 'tween Bega and the sea.

Typed requests and applications have been made in days of yore,
But we seem no further forward than we ever were before,
And then at some swell banquet, where the big guns of the trade,
Puff out their chests and speechify about the progress made,
Our petitions are forgotten, requisitions end as dreams,
And we still go on depending on the teamsters and their teams.

Bullocks in Australia

Seven live cattle were landed in 1788 from the First Fleet. Shortly thereafter one died and the remainder disappeared – thought to have been slain by local Aboriginals. But in 1795 a mob of 60 cattle in good condition – the descendants of the earlier escapees – was discovered in the Nepean district, 80kms west of Sydney, in an area that was, appropriately, then named Cowpastures.

Bullock Dray on the South Coast. One of many photographic prints displayed in NSW Country Trains between 1935 and 1969. NSW State Archives Collection.

Improved animal husbandry practices by 1795 resulted in 131 of 132 cattle surviving a voyage from Bombay to Sydney. Forty of these were Bengal oxen (buffalo types). These attracted criticism from the Home Office in England because they were not breeding stock and therefore were not considered 'useful'.

But, as Governor Hunter soon reported, they became productive beasts of burden, helping to complete much-needed public works that frail, undernourished convicts were struggling to build.

By the early 1800s, there were enough cattle in the colony to provide leather for harnesses for horses and cattle (most working cattle at that time were harnessed, not yoked) and bullocks became the main beast of burden for the colony's road builders.

When Governor Lachlan Macquarie arrived in Sydney, he introduced tolls for cattle and carts on the roads between Parramatta and Sydney, and instructed bullock drivers to walk at the head of their teams for safety when in built-up areas.

William Cox, who was tasked with building a road across the Blue Mountains, employed two bullockies (Myers and Walters), a team of bullocks and some horses. He also built a type of caravan on a dray for accommodation and stores.

Various explorers took bullocks and carts on their expeditions. In 1824 Hume and Hovell took six men, three horses, five bullocks and a cart on their journey from Lake George near Canberra to Westernport in Victoria. While descending the Tumbarumba range (near Tumut) one bullock slipped and took a man with it over a cliff … but their fall was broken when they hit a tree, and their

lives were saved, although the man was badly injured. On reaching the Victorian coast, the party encountered aggressive Aboriginals – but the sight of the strange, horned bullocks alarmed them, possibly saving the lives of Hume, Hovell and co.

On the return journey, the bullocks became lame and the explorers actually made booties or moccasins for them from kangaroo hide ... but a few days later Hume and Hovell were forced to leave the cattle and some remaining provisions before proceeding back to Lake George. Twelve months later Hume returned and found the remains of three of the four bullocks. A sad end to faithful servants!

Shoeing Bullocks at Eden.

In 1828–29 Charles Sturt used draught and pack bullocks on his journey of exploration, writing that he wished he had equal numbers of cattle to horses. Sir Thomas Mitchell also used bullocks in his searches for the inland river that supposedly flowed to the Western Australian coast.

Bullock and horse teams were then used on the NSW Western Plains to haul loads of wool and timber on wagons or jinkers to river ports such as Hay and Echuca that were serviced by paddle steamers. Record hauls of the time included 146 bales of wool (each weighing between 110 and 204kg), carted by Mick Allen of Findley, and a red gum log that was pulled from Gulpa Forest, near Deniliquin, that was 38-feet long and had a 16-foot girth.

Other teams pulled houses and sheds, and one team in northern NSW even pulled a wrecked ship to shore for repairs – a slow and painstaking feat!

Although bullocks were slower than horses, they were sturdier and steadier in rough country, such as along forest trails. And their tougher hides meant less chance of injury in the bush from sharp limbs and thorns.

But horses such as Clydesdales could generally pull heavier loads. In the early 20th century a 20-head bullock team pulled 330 bags of wheat weighing over 25 tons, compared with a 15-horse team that pulled 357 bags of wheat weighing over 28 tons! ... but, on the other hand, horses required to be fed expensive grain such as oats or corn or chaff, but bullocks did not require supplementary feeding where adequate rough forage was available.

The Australian bullock driving equipment and hardware was quite advanced and well-engineered. Yokes that sit on the bullock's muscular neck muscles were made of timber, and bows, which sit on the underside of the neck to hold the yoke in place, were made of blacksmith-forged steel.

And, finally, what of the bullockies?

The expression 'swear like a bullocky' is, today, an embedded part of Australian culture – and bullockies were renowned for their 'colourful' language, especially when things were not going right! And many bullockies had their own unique words and phrases that they would shout as commands to their charges.

But not all bullockies were loud and vulgar. 'Quiet' Tom Butts hardly uttered a word to his team, relying on body language and his whip to get good results.

Most teamsters left school early and started working teams from around 14 years of age. Their (and their bullocks') lives were a hard slog, often working together from dawn to sunset.

And teamsters often suffered terrible fates – some drowned and others had limbs broken or torn off when they became tangled in chains. Others were killed when being run over by bullock wagons. The bullocks, similarly, suffered tragic fates: many years ago, four bullocks were killed on Dr George Mountain (north-east of Bega) by an out of control wagon, and polers (bullocks at the rear of the team) occasionally choked or had their necks broken from the downward pressure on their yokes as they descended unusually steep slopes.

E Hazelgrove driving a bullock and cart, 1900.
Photograph: National Library of Australia, File FL42124169

And, yes, there were women bullockies! One was Margaret McTavish of Duntroon, in what today is Canberra, who worked as a bullock and horse trainer. In 1857 she was flogged by her father for 'riding like a man' before running away and living with local Aboriginals. Her father chased her, brought her home and burnt the soles of her feet! Once she had recovered, she left home again and worked as an off-sider with bullock teams and as a driver of bullocks and horses. After a bad fall, whilst breaking in a bronco, she was treated by a doctor who discovered she was a woman! She later married a wealthy Monaro famer and raised seven children. ℝ

Extracted from a longer, more detailed contribution by Peter McCarthy which is available on request from southcoasthistory@yahoo.com

Bega: A Town Steeped in Horseracing Tradition
by Erin Moon

So who am I to be writing an historical piece on the Old Bega Racecourse? I'm certainly no expert nor a horseracing enthusiast. However, through a work project, I found myself engrossed in the enchanting world that saw the rise of horseracing in Bega and the hardships faced by those who tried to keep this magnetic sport alive in the face of repetitive flood damage, drought, war and depression. This is not a complete account of the history of the old Bega Racecourse, but is instead a "taster" of the fascinating stories that pricked my interest. Much credit must be given to Ray James and Jim Gordon, authors of *River Oaks, Green Willows and Young Corn* (1997) and from which much of the information for this article has come.

So let's start here, with floods. Floods in the Bega River are mighty. They ravage and consume vast areas of adjacent land and have inextricably shaped human habitation. Floods, it could be said, began and ended horseracing in Bega.

The devastating flood of 1851 destroyed the new settlement of Yarranung, erected on the floodplain north-east of the Brogo/Bega River Junction. Tragically there were 12 deaths (both new settlers and Djiringanj workers), and the Yarranung settlement and many farm buildings up and down the river were destroyed. It was terrible and a massive blow to the morale of this emerging community.

This event, however, resulted in a few things that saw the beginning of horseracing.

The township of Bega moved south, across the river, where higher and drier ground was available, and one of the first buildings that was constructed was the all-important Victoria Inn on Auckland Street. A meeting was held there, and another at Mr Mead's Travellers Rest hotel, where small groups of men decided to organise Bega's first-ever horse races.

In a borrowed paddock on McNamara's Flat (at the northern end of today's East Street), on a bend in the river, the Bega Racecourse was established, and Bega's first annual races were held on the 15th & 16th of December 1857, four years before the first Melbourne Cup in 1861. It was a humble affair, with a ploughed furrow to mark the course and spectators watching from sulkies, horse-back, wagons or the ground. But boy, did it make an impact on Bega's cultural fabric!

Horseracing was the perfect sport for the time. Remember, it was born from a time where horsemanship skills were essential for the growth of this emerging farming community and were respected by all. Everyone had or knew something about horses, and therefore had something to share.

In those early days, it was an inclusive sport. There were no thoroughbreds and it cut across cultural boundaries, and included women, new-comers, and people of low-status and different races. It is even possible that Djiringanj people were jockeys in the early days, with a report of the first race meeting referring to one horse "*Traveller, ridden by a Darkie.*" (Incidentally, 'Traveller' won the race and a prize

of £5. It was immediately 'sold' to its owner, Mr Tarleton, for £10. Had it been sold for more that £10, the excess would have benefitted 'the race fund'.) Passing travellers would stop by and enter their horses for a chance at a quick quid.

This charismatic sport became the lifeblood of the young community of Bega, by gathering people and bonding them.

Soon, horseracing popularity exploded throughout the far-south coast, with race events taking place in almost every township. It wasn't long before the sport became more serious and exclusive, as breeds and training improved and there was money to be made. The first stopwatch was used in Bega in 1909, and can still be seen today in the Bega Pioneers' Museum.

Horseracing soon became a big industry, and Bega Valley locals were at the heart of it. They became renowned throughout the State for their racehorse breeding, training and riding skills.

Race meets had become large affairs, they were exciting and glamorous. It was said in the Bega Gazette that the two-day annual race meeting in 1868, "brought together a larger concourse of people and greater and finer herd of horses than was ever seen at Bega races. In fact, we very much question if any provincial town of the same standing has ever come out so powerful". At that time, the races were not for sprinters: there was not one race less than one mile and two were of three miles.

The Bega District Jockey Club formed in 1864, and instituted the race called The Bega Cup in 1874, which still runs today. Severe drought and tough times in 1943 saw the only year in which The Bega Cup did not run in an otherwise greater than 160 consecutive-year legacy.

The Club was run by committed members who shaped the sports evolution in Bega. Huge community support helped the Club to build important infrastructure for growing the sport and race meetings, including building a large wooden grandstand in 1896.
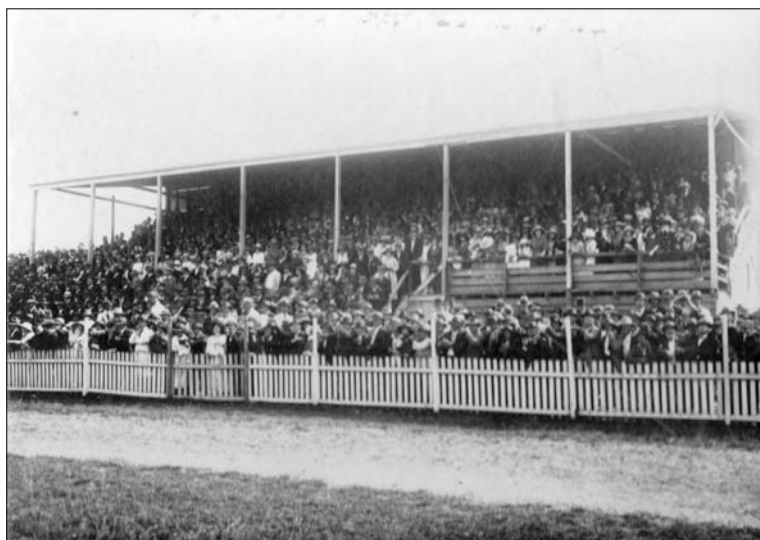
A packed grandstand at the old Bega Racecourse in 1923. This grandstand was lost in the 1934 floods and replaced with the current brick grandstand. Photograph: Courtesy Bega Pioneers' Museum.

Sadly, the fortunes of the Club were in constant flux and flow. The 1930s and '40s were the toughest times for the Club with devastating floods destroying racing infrastructure, and the Great Depression, the outbreak of WWII, major droughts and then the deaths of significant committee members all impacting on the Club. Constant replacement of infrastructure, in particular, kept placing the Club back into debt.

The Club hit its lowest in 1934 when floods destroyed the wooden grandstand. It was replaced with a brick grandstand with steel stanchions, placing the Club in extreme debt. However, it should be noted that this grandstand still stands today; it was built on the highest point on the site and has withstood many floods during its time.

But there were boom times from the late 1940s to the early '70s and the Club grew again to be a significant force in country racing, able to offer prize money greater than that offered by metropolitan clubs. The Club was in good financial stead, all infrastructure had been paid for in full (including new steel starting stalls), and for the first time in a very long time, it had no debt.

Then the 1971 floods hit, the greatest flood on record, and once again significantly destroyed racing infrastructure. The brand new starting stalls were found wrapped around the Tarraganda Bridge in a tangled wreckage. Apart from the grandstand, all other buildings and all fencing were gone, and a huge hole had been scoured out of the track near the 1400m starting position. It was a massive setback and many thought the Bega Racecourse days were over.

This is when talk of finding a flood-free site began in earnest. But the community wasn't ready and rallied together to repair the flood damage. Despite the loan of machinery, community donations and government assistance, the Club went deeply into debt.

There were still some good times for the Bega Racecourse after this, with a resurgence of young ownership of racehorses and a new generation interested in the sport in the 1970s. Breeding was back in fashion, with the Green family of Bemboka producing a racehorse, "Katoon" that won two Canberra races, two Bega Cups and several metropolitan races. It was around this time that the Club installed photo finish equipment. Ray James said that this produced some of the best racing ever seen in Bega.

However, the floods didn't stop and racing in Bega could not continue, even though horseracing had survived for 142 years in Bega. It had withstood the ravages of flood and drought, religious and racial intolerance, boom & depression and war. But, in the end, it was the sheer cost of repairing repetitive flood-damage that put an end to the viability of the Bega Racecourse.

A flood-free site was sought, and in 28th February 1999, the Sapphire Coast Turf Club was opened in Kalaru where the Bega Cup race continues to this day.

The land had been bought by the Bega Valley Shire Council with a view of retaining it for community use. It has since been handed to the control and care a volunteer committee, On-Track, which is a Committee of Council. It still manages the site today. Ⓡ

The Bega River and Wetlands Landcare group (BRAWL) are installing interpretive signs along the pathway at the Bega River which include a brief history of the old Bega Racecourse. If you have historical photos that you would like to share with the project, please contact them at begariverandwetlandslandcare@gmail.com. If you would like information on how to be involved with On-Track, please contact Tim Whittaker on 0429 779 359 or tim@ecoeel.com.au.

The Green Cape Lighthouse – Its History

The first Macquarie Lighthouse was built near Sydney in 1818. It was to be another 40 years before a second lighthouse was built on the NSW coast.

In 1863, a Select Committee of the NSW Legislative Council received evidence from several experienced master mariners, including a Captain Francis Hixson, about light stations that might be required on the NSW coast. The Committee decided no new lights were needed south of Sydney.

However, in 1872 Hixson was appointed President of the Marine Board of New South Wales and announced he would '*light the coast like a street with lamps*'. This would involve installing lights at 25 nautical mile intervals along the entire NSW coastline.

The following year it was resolved '*that having in view the extent of the traffic on this coast, and that Green Cape forms a considerable projection on the line of coast after rounding Cape Howe, a first-order revolving light should be erected on Green Cape*'. Vessels travelling north towards Sydney often sailed very close to the coast at this point, to avoid the strong south-moving East Australian Current, so the need for a light was clear.

Nothing tangible then happened until 1879 when a decision was made to build a light at Green Cape and £17,000 was included in that year's (Consolidation Fund) Appropriation Bill.

Plans were then prepared for a stone lighthouse and for houses for lightkeepers and their families by the NSW Colonial Architect James Barnet.

Tenders were sought in May 1880. Not a single tender was received, possibly because it was apparent that the local sedimentary stone was too soft to support the proposed tower.
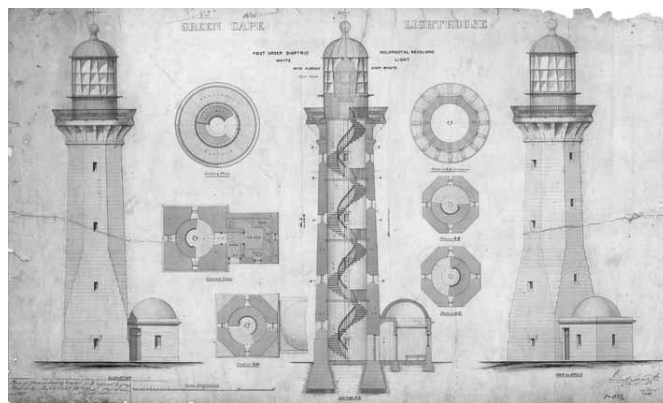
Original plans of the lighthouse.

Fresh tenders were sought in July to build a tower using concrete.

There remained, however, the major challenge of transporting the necessary materials and equipment to the Green Cape site. There was no easy access by sea and the nearest safe anchorage was almost seven kilometres to the

Bega Bridges, old and new, 1974. Photo: Bega Valley Library

Petersen & Gjerstrup's Bega Motor Garage, 1910.
Photograph: State Library of NSW, File FL1707294

Continuing our **Focus on BEGA**

Haymaking, Yarranung. Photograph: State Library of NSW, file FL1717303

Bega Women Cricketers at Bega Showground.
Photograph: State Library of NSW, File FL1688441

Star Newspaper Office, c.1920. The Editor, W A Smith, is second from left.

Mrs Fensom. The Fensom Family were early Bega bakers, who sold bread at tuppence ha'penny, including delivery. Photograph: State Library of NSW, file FL1692386

Right: Snowdon's Milk Vendor, 1936. Sid Snowdon and Arthur Peck. Photograph: State Library of NSW file FL1712635.

Procession in Carp Street, Bega. Photo: State Library of NSW, File FL166319.

Below: Phillips Temperance Hotel, c 1910. Photograph: State Library of NSW, File FL1682583

Right: Bega Dairy Factory, c. 1910. Photograph: State Library of NSW, File FL1716631

north, at Bittangabee Bay, which itself was only navigable by shallow draught craft. So a contract was eventually let in December 1880 to Albert Wood Aspinall, an experienced stone mason and builder, for the construction of a 'substantial' wooden jetty and store house on the southern shore of Bittangabee Bay and for the building of a 4 mile (6.4km) long hardwood rail tramline on which horse drawn wooden trolleys would be jinked to the Green Cape worksite.

Aspinall also received the contract to build the lighthouse and the lightkeepers' cottages.

All supplies, building materials (other than those found locally), construction equipment and men, were brought from Sydney by steamer to the port of Eden and were transhipped on a small ketch owned by the contractor on an almost daily basis to the newly built jetty. Considerable delays to deliveries occurred as a result of low tides and adverse weather conditions.

And the site at Green Cape was bleak, windswept, and life for the workforce would have been arduous – long hours, supplies delayed by rough seas, gales, inclement weather and a constant shortage of labour.

Green Cape Lighthouse.

But there was another, more major, problem. It had been thought that bedrock, suitable for foundations, would be encountered no more than 9 feet down. But this was not the case, and Aspinall's men had to dig some 20 feet through a bed of 'pure white clay' to reach bedrock – that then necessitated Barnet's office having to redesign the tower's foundations.

Aspinall proved to be an innovative builder, for example designing a special iron bucket that allowed the lifting and pouring of one cubic yard of concrete in just five minutes.

Meanwhile, work commenced on the lighthouse keepers' residences and other associated buildings. These were to be constructed of brick, as well as rubble and concrete. So aggregate was blasted and quarried from the rock platform at the bottom of the steep cliff below the site and then hauled up a tramway, which had a 40 degree incline, using a 1 ton capacity bucket and three horses. It was then mixed with Portland cement shipped out from England in barrels,

lime, and local sand to make the concrete mix. The lime was sourced by burning middens on the banks of the Pambula River or at Bittangabee Bay, which had previously been an important Aboriginal camping site and teaching ground.

180,000 sandstock bricks that were used to build the houses, stables, telegraph station, flag locker and other outbuildings and underground rain-water tanks were made at Boydtown on Twofold Bay, and then shipped to Bittangabee Bay.

Drifting sand repeatedly caused problems by covering the tramlines and building foundations with layers of sand several feet deep.

As the work was nearing completion, Aspinall ran out of money (the final cost of the project was £19,338.8.9 compared to the original budget of £17,000). So his creditors took over the contract, retaining Aspinall as the project supervisor. It is believed that, tragically, Albert Aspinall later put some dynamite in his mouth and lit the fuse.

The lantern house, light source and working mechanisms were purchased from Chance Bros and Co. Limited, Lighthouse Engineers and Constructors of Birmingham in England.

The Green Cape lightstation was handed over to the government on 29 October 1883 and its light was first displayed on 1 November 1883. At the time it was the largest mass concrete structure in New South Wales.

Three lighthouse keepers were employed and supplied with 'commodious and comfortable' quarters to ensure that the light never failed. Overnight they worked 5 hour shifts to achieve this and to wind the mechanism that rotated the prisms that transmitted the warning light seawards from the light tower.

Communication with the site was initially established through the daily trips (weather permitting) of the contractor's ketch from Eden to Bittangabee Bay. However, in May 1882, a telegraph relay station was opened at Green Cape that provided the first direct telegraphic communication between Green Cape and Sydney. This was established so that Sydney could be informed of the arrival of vessels in Australian waters, and it provided a vital communication link between Gabo Island and Eden.

Passing vessels would also come inshore and signal with maritime flags whenever they wished to send a message.

Subsequently, changes were made on several occasions to the frequency of the revolution of the light from the Green Cape Lighthouse, the intensity of the light was increased, and the various steps were taken to make light more reliable. In 1962 the old manually-lit lights were replaced by electric lights that were powered by on-site diesel generators. From about 1975 the lighthouse was automated and the lighthouse keepers were made redundant.

The introduction of satellite navigation since has effectively made it unnecessary for the lighthouse to be retained.

In 1997 the ownership of lighthouse and adjacent buildings was transferred from the Commonwealth to the State Government and the site was incorporated into the Ben Boyd National Park.

Today the historic lighthouse and surrounding buildings can be easily accessed from the Princes Highway via Edrom Road and Green Cape Lighthouse Road, and the lighthouse keepers' cottages are available for holiday rental from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. A 30 km 'Light to Light' Walking Track follows the coast from Green Cape Lighthouse to historic Ben Boyd's Tower on the southern shore of Twofold Bay. Ⓡ

Sources: '*Nomination of Green Cape Lightstation for Recognition as a National Engineering Heritage Landmark*' by Doug Boleyn, Engineering Heritage Committee, Sydney Division Engineers Australia, 2009; *Green Cape Lighthouse 54* by Eden Access Centre (both available on-line); '*Beacons in the Dark*' by Trevor King.

BEACONS IN THE DARK
by Trevor King, Bega Valley Shire Council's Heritage Advisor

One of the most intriguing aspects of historic places is their capacity to transport our imagination – even if momentarily – beyond the present, as we become captivated through a visceral evocation of bygone times. Few Australian places exhibit this power with the degree of intensity that 19th century lightstations bring.

Usually situated in wild and remote locations, the encounter of extended journey and eventual arrival serves to dislocate the traveller away from everyday comforts and the trappings of contemporary life. While the inherent uniqueness of their environmental setting and the specialised form and function of the light-tower can be experienced as singular, even isolating features, the more customary senses of romantic isolation, exposure to the elements and shelter afforded by wind-protecting compounds, thick walled structures and robust hipped roofs can serve to connect individuals to a more communal sensibility. This complex interplay feeds back upon itself. The wildness of the setting generates compelling, oftentimes heroic stories, and the stories then become part of a distinctive ambience. Layers of meaning consolidate to form a complex identity that continues to develop through time.

The cultural significance of places is understood to incorporate a range of attributes aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. This significance is embodied in the place itself, its physical fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.[1]

The relationship that humans have with places has both tangible and intangible dimensions. The tangible aspects are associated with Spirit of Place (traditionally called 'genius loci'), referring to the unique or physically distinctive

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qualities of a place that make it special and cherished by people, while the intangible factors are described as Sense of Place (our internalised, individual sensing of places).[2]

Living on the Far South Coast, we are fortunate to have access to two especially unique places, Montague Island and Green Cape Lightstations, that combine these perceptual modalities in multi-faceted ways by simultaneously representing each of the forms of cultural significance described above.

The lightstation complexes were designed by James Barnet (1827–1904) the NSW Colonial Architect from 1862 to 1890. Stylistically influenced by the Italian Renaissance, he was responsible for 169 post and telegraph offices, 130 courthouses, 155 police stations, 110 lock-ups and 20 lighthouses. By 1881 he had overseen 1490 public works.

Lighthouse on Montague Island 9 km offshore from Narooma.

In Australia the design of lightstations did not follow the British model, where keepers were separated from their families for extended periods. Here, the vital support provided by small, stable communities counteracted the vast, isolating distances. The unifying social connection that people still experience at lightstations is beyond doubt. These are places that are held in lifelong affection by former lighthouse keepers and their families, and it is a social attachment that can easily extend to receptive visitors.

MONTAGUE ISLAND

Scientifically, Montague Island is an off-shore extension of the now-exposed batholith of Gulaga/Mount Dromedary, an extinct volcano that erupted during the Cretaceous Era when Australia was joined to Antarctica in the ancient super continent of Gondwana. Today, the natural heritage of the island presents as an extrusion of exceptionally large, rounded, buff-grey granite tors that are typified by streaks of feldspar and patches of brilliant orange lichen. Its abundant wildlife includes fairy penguins, a colony of bachelor seals, migrating whales and a profusion of seabird species.

Fringed by *Lomandra longifolia* grassland, the island's central tier supports the lightstation precinct (constructed in 1881) comprising two tightly clustered lightkeeper's residences, service sheds, communications infrastructure and a magnificent granite light-tower.

Describing the island's aesthetic significance, distinguished landscape assessor Juliet Ramsay noted—

> Montague Island is aesthetically unique, there is no other place like it on the NSW coast and possibly its combination of tor landscape, wildlife, and nineteenth century architecture make this island aesthetically exceptional in Australia.

Its aesthetic qualities include—

the form, size and colour of the tors, the bountiful presence of seabirds, the ephemeral effects of wind, the sea and the bird calls, the sense of time depth and remote ambience, the form and clustering of the nineteenth century structures, and the dominance of the elegant and well-crafted light-tower. In addition, the light-tower is valued by the Narooma community as a landmark feature, being visible from the mainland as a flashing light at night.[3]

Montague Island's unique spirit of place is powerfully reinforced by the intimate relationship of its built forms to dominant shapes that are present within the landform and that reoccur at differing levels of scale. The distinctive verticality of the light-tower echoes the island's two prominently upstanding rocks, the iconic 'Two Sisters', while the streamlined profile of the residences, with their hipped roofs and ground-hugging form, beautifully reflects the rounded, horizontally spreading rock upon which they rest. Here, the straight, clean lines and acute angles of conventional Euclidean geometry were intuitively married with Benoit Mandelbrot's complex, curvilinear, fractal geometry of nature. This level of sympathy is seldom matched today. What is clear is that lightstations are exemplars of 19th century values. Unlike so much modern infrastructure, they were definitely built to last.

GREEN CAPE

Completed in 1883, the Green Cape Lightstation precinct includes the lighthouse, light keeper's residences, stables, a telegraph station, ancillary buildings, a cemetery and remnant gardens. Beyond the precinct, the concrete store at Bittangabee Bay and the remnants of the former tramline to Green Cape are significant structures associated with its construction.

The NSW State Heritage Register describes its aesthetic significance as:

At the southern-most point in NSW, Green Cape Lightstation is a dominant

feature in an isolated but picturesque landscape – bounded by both state forest and the Tasman Sea. One of NSW's 'highway of lights', the Green Cape Lightstation is a compact group of simple nineteenth century buildings that are visually unified by alignment, scale and the use of common materials. [4]

Its remarkable poured concrete light-tower is a recognized Engineering Heritage Landmark. Set on a deep square base and rising to an impressive 29 metres, the corners undergo a series of steps that transform its shape into a tapered octagon that then progresses to a sixteen-sided bluestone corbel before finally resolving into a circular bluestone gallery. Burnet's manipulation of its geometric form is masterful, with the steps assuming the appearance of a wave that seamlessly metamorphoses a square into a circle. The Oil Store at the tower's base takes a more direct route, its square base immediately resolving into a domed hemispheric roof.

Such unity in classical form takes on timeless, but surprisingly abstract, qualities that are manifestly present in the optic panels – glass refracting and reflecting prisms, mounted on a gun-metal framework whose function is to send the light rays from the burner in the required direction.

Montague Island's granite had allowed stonemasons to quarry, shape and lay its walls in the traditional circular shape, while Green Cape's soft Devonian sandstones were used as aggregate in an innovative poured concrete structure. The adaptability and capacity for endurance shown by the 19th century designers and builders, along with the devotion of the light keepers and their wives to keeping the lights burning over a period of 150 years, are qualities that we can only marvel at today.

Although this era has passed into history, the folklore and memories associated with Australia's lightstations and their keepers will continue to endure. The interweaving of spirit of place and sense of place finds no greater representation than this. For designers of built structures in contemporary times and for all those who are inspired by the resilience of our forebears and their capacity for sustained effort under the most difficult of circumstances, they are truly beacons in the dark. Ⓡ
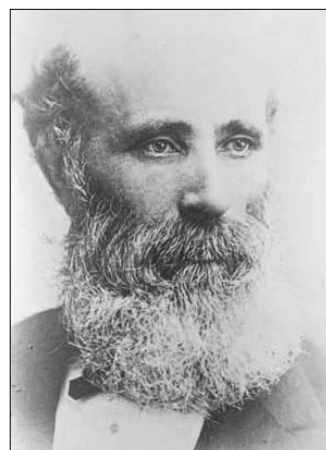
James Barnett. Photo: National Archives of Australia.

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ON THE BOOKSHELF

'*Immigrants and Spies. My father, my memories*'
by Barbara Mackay-Cruise

There are some books that you know you are going to thoroughly enjoy, after having just read the first page or two.

'*Immigrants and Spies. My father, my memories*' was, to me, one such book.

It is promoted as '*the riveting true story of Noel W. Lamidey, an English immigrant who arrived in Australia in the 1920s and went on to establish one of the most extraordinary migration schemes the world had ever seen.*'

But it's not. It's the autobiography of his daughter Barbara, or Boo as she was generally known, that includes information about her father.

Not that that made the book any less enjoyable – but, in the end, I was left wanting to know more about Noel Lamidey and more about that '*most extraordinary migration scheme the world had ever seen.*'

Basically, Lamidey was a British migrant who came to Australia in 1919 and later became a Commonwealth public servant who started his career in Canberra in 1929, serving as Ministerial Secretary to a number of departmental heads – so he was to meet and work with many of the most senior politicians and bureaucrats of the time. And when Arthur Calwell, as Minister for Immigration, championed the idea of attracting millions of immigrants from Britain and Europe to Australia in the post-World War II era, Lamidey was transferred to London to work as Australia's Chief Migration Officer. In that role he ultimately became responsible for selecting and transporting about two million migrants to Australia.

Lamidey moved his wife and two daughters from a comfortable house and comfortable lifestyle in Canberra (then '*the smallest capital city in the world*' where '*you saw paddocks parched bare by the hot Canberra summer, and they were not much better in the cold winter*') to London in 1946. His appointment was vehemently opposed by the-then Australian High Commissioner, J.A. Beasley (because, seemingly, Beasley and Calwell did not see eye-to-eye on anything), and England was then only starting to recover from the devastation
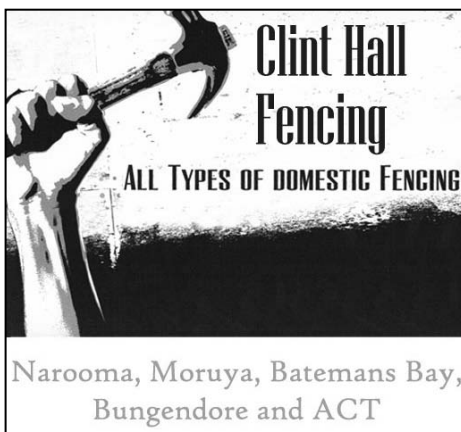
of World War II – so to the family it was major shock: '*the scenery* [on the way into London] *was one of utter desolation – miles and miles of bombsites broken by an occasional building standing stark and blackened amidst the ruins … Londoners no longer smiled, hundreds were homeless, food rationing was harsh and there was no fun or joy to lighten their lives…the transposition from the warmth and shelter in Australia where food was plentiful and sustaining, to conditions where food was heavily rationed and where the weather was bitter and bleak was indeed disconcerting, almost frightening.*'

Noel Lamidey had to organise everything from scratch – from finding accommodation for his family ('*accommodation was scarce, almost impossible to procure … Pop trudged the streets of Hampstead and found two men moving furniture … one of them had a brother who owned some apartments that he was modernising … Pop had the helpful chap in a taxi so fast he wondered what had hit him. They called at the brother's house and with two brothers in tow, Pop made his way to Belsize Park where he paid for the first six months rent*'), organising food coupons for them ('*we stood in the cold in a very long queue with other women whose husbands had just returned from overseas … Mother told me quietly not to comment on the ration books when we received them, and that we would go and have a cup of tea and talk about them then*'), finding an office (after overcoming considerable resistance from J. A. Beasley, the Tasmanian Agent-General was moved out of Australia House and the Migration Office was moved in), hiring staff, organising a processes to interview and assess potential migrants (almost 1,000 people per week would arrive at Australia House in London [the only logical place for the office to be situated], all desperate for a job, desperate for a house and hoping to become '£10 Poms' destined for a better lifestyle in Australia … and 3,000 letters also arrived each week) and then organise shipping for them to Australia (adequate shipping at this time was simply unavailable. His solution was to convince the Australian government to purchase several troopships and convert them to reasonably comfortable migrant carriers that would be '*something to remember with pleasure*' and not '*four weeks of misery* [that] *would mean nothing but recrimination all around*'). The stories of how he dealt with these challenges – and ultimately succeeded – is revealing.

As an example, Mackay-Cruise includes a chapter on "Migrant Children from British Orphanages": '*With this in mind* [*he wanted to make 'darned sure' that leaving the homes they had grown up in would not necessarily be depressing but more of a great adventure, a new chance of life to look forward to*], *my father considered the request he had received from the minister to bring out British children who, through no fault of their own , were living in cold and miserable orphanages. On Arthur Calwell's recommendation, children were brought out by the Big Brother Movement, the Fairbridge Society, Christian Brothers and Barnardo's.*
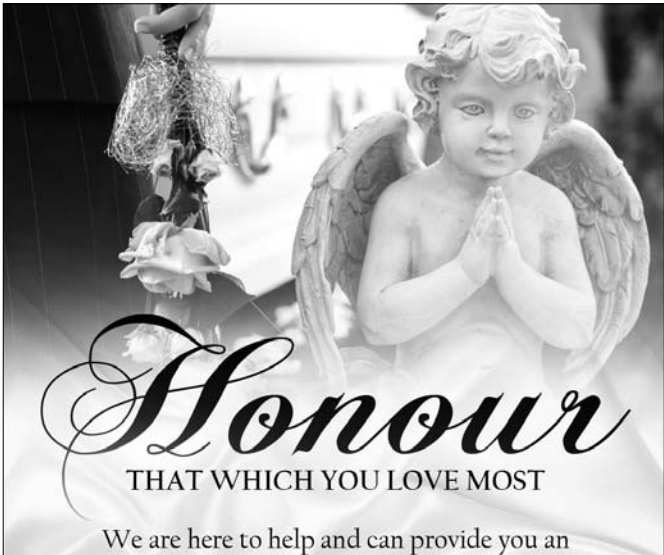
My father did not realise that little ones as young as four would be travelling. He went down to the first sailing and saw these small children being marched on-board two by two. His heart went out to them and he came home looking distressed, with his first words being, 'Lillian, I hope to God we know what we are doing'…

He derived some comfort from Canberra and the Australian press, on how well the children were doing, even to the point where he believed this what was what Australia needed: young children to grow up as Australians.

But he was not quite as happy about this child migration as everyone else seemed to be. He often spoke of his dislike of the laymen, the priests and 'pushy women' who arrived in London with letters from Australian Government ministers stating they wanted assistance with helping to have children placed in their orphanages. These Australian ministers had no conceivable idea about how involved it was to get children out of British orphanages. The orphaned children had to be approved through the Secretary for Dominion Affairs, the orphanages themselves were against it, and on top of this there was the 1948 Children Act. This Act gave responsibility for child welfare into the hands of local government …

Then there were the young mothers whose husbands or lovers never returned, Whatever the reason, these children were not all from the slums of Britain as many papers reported … children of one-parent families were luckier than those of their fellow orphans, for their mother or father was allowed to travel as a single parent and follow their children out to Australia. Children who did come to Australia featured large in our newspapers and glowing reports were forwarded to London with instructions from Arthur Calwell that this is what Australia needed – young children to grow up as Australians in a country of sunshine.
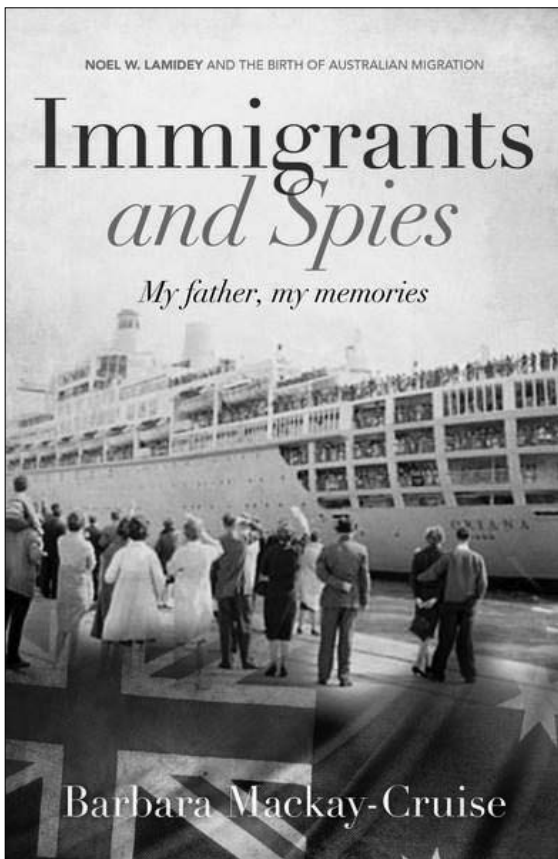
NOEL W. LAMIDEY AND THE BIRTH OF AUSTRALIAN MIGRATION

Immigrants
and Spies
My father, my memories

Barbara Mackay-Cruise

'Immigrants and Spies. My father, my memoirs' **is available in paperback, is issued by Xoum Publishing, and is priced from around $25.**

Pop told the story one night of two small children arriving at Australia House that day with a note from their father saying that he couldn't get a job and was unable to keep them … and enclosed in the envelope were two £10 notes. The police were called and the children taken away to be fed and looked after. But the matter didn't end there, for the father had misgivings and had gone to his local police station to report what he had done. My father asked one of his senior staff to look into the matter and see if they could help the father and children to get to Australia.'

This extract, however, also highlights one of the major weaknesses of this book as a history – it was written by Lamidey's daughter who, perhaps quite naturally, views her father and his undoubted achievements through slightly rose-tinted glasses. A cursory Google search of 'Lamidey' (to determine what else had been written about him) led me to an interesting detailed Submission made to a Parliamentary Senate Enquiry into Child Migration in 1999 in which it is suggested that quite unsuitable (in the instances cited) British Catholic children were accepted for migration to Australia simply because Noel Lamidey had become more focussed on the number of migrants being processed than the suitability of individuals to be accepted.

So the opportunity still remains for a more balanced and more detailed biography of N.W. Lamidey and a more comprehensive history of the Australian post-World War II migrant scheme to be researched and written.

Even with this shortcoming, this book is interesting in other ways and is a thoroughly 'good read'. For example,

it provides a wonderful insight into life in Canberra in the 1930s and 1940s (*'the year was 1934 and my father had just alighted from a train at Canberra railway station to find himself sharing a Commonwealth car with former Prime Minister* ['Billy'] *Hughes: "Do you live in this godforsaken hole?" the Minister asked. "Yes, I do." "Ha! Another bloody fool who likes to live amongst the gum trees".'* … 'Gough [Whitlam] *used to fly down the hill past our house on his bicycle when he was on school holidays and my mother worried that he would have an accident with a car. Mind you, there were not many cars in Canberra in the mid-'30s…'*) and it outlines a way of life in (a challenging) London that Boo and her sister seem to have enjoyed but would be unheard-of today (*'Mrs Beasley, our High Commissioner's wife, had suggested that she take us [Boo and her sister] to the first official garden party to be given by His Majesty King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, since before the war … however, Mrs Beasley became agitated and taking her husband's arm said 'Jack, Jack, go and get the King. I want the girls to meet him'. 'I can't go and get the King,' he replied in astonishment. Mrs Beasley took no notice of this, grabbed each of us by the arm and rushed towards where the King was standing. The equerry was quick to notice, smiled at Mrs Beasley and brought the High Commissioner over, followed by Mrs Beasley with us. We curtseyed and Mr Beasley explained to the King that our father was the Australian Government representative here in London to establish the Migration Scheme. The King appeared to know all about this because he spoke to Mr Beasley at some length before he turned to us asking what we were doing in London. It was an exciting few moments to be able to speak to this wonderful man so loved by the English.'* Soon afterwards Buckingham Palace summoned Beasley and Noel Lamidey to attend a further meeting with the King at which the Australian migration scheme was discussed in detail).

And finally, why is that reference to spies in the title of the book? Well, therein lies another story.

It seems that Noel Lamidey was also one of Australia's earliest spies. He was provided with a house in Canberra just down the road from the Russian and Japanese Embassies and the Chinese Legation and was often observed *'having what he called a 'chinwag' with them, which invariably led to them being invited to our place'.* And, when Prime Ministers and other senior government officials visited his home, *'of great amusement within our family was my father's practice of taking* (them) *into our back garden to show them his pride and joy – his large vegetable patch … but now I realise that he was a senior member of the Australian Security Service formed in March 1941 and later known as ASIO'.* And, in London, it seems he also covertly worked very closely with MI5 and MI6.

Peter Lacey

FEEDBACK

Noel Turnbull of Milton wrote indicating his Great-Grandfather was Albert Veitch who was mauled by one of the lions that escaped from Eroni's Circus in Batemans Bay (Recollections, Issue 6). The incident was of such significance in his life that it was even mentioned in his obituary in the Milton Times in 1948. ®

The Black-Allan Line

The Black-Allan Line is perhaps the South East's best-known landmark – but you can't see it, and most people have never heard of it!

I certainly hadn't until one of our members, Gary Thompson, asked me a question about it prompting me to do a little research. What I discovered was a fascinating history.

The Black-Allan Line is that straight line on the map, running from the Snowy Mountains to the coast that marks the border between New South Wales and Victoria. It is named after two surveyors, Alexander Black and Alexander Allan, who, between April 1870 and March 1872, surveyed the line that delineated the then two colonies and which today is our state boundary. (Actually, the survey was undertaken by three men. The third, William Turton, was regrettably not acknowledged when this landmark was named.)

It runs from Indi Springs near Forest Hill in the Snowy Mountains, which had been declared the most-easterly source of the Murray River, to Cape Howe on the coast. Why this particular line was chosen remains something of a historical mystery.

By the late 1860s the colony of New South Wales had expanded southwards and the colony of Victoria had expanded northwards, and much of Victoria had, by then, been surveyed. So it became necessary to accurately define the border between the two colonies.

The British *New South Wales Constitution Act* of 1842 and the *Australian Constitutions Act* of 1850 had previously declared the boundaries of Victoria to be "*… the boundary of the district of Port Phillip on the north and north east shall be a straight line drawn from Cape How* (sic) *to the nearest source of the river Murray and thence the course of that river to the eastern boundary of the province of South Australia.*" Why Cape Howe was specifically chosen to be the easterly end of the boundary is not known, but it

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HISTORY TRIVIA
Australian Bushrangers

Bushrangers were 'the first distinctively Australian characters to gain widespread recognition'. But how much do you know about them? Test your knowledge about Australian bushrangers with this quick quiz.

1. The word 'bushranger' was first used in 1805. Before that, what were 'bushrangers' called?

2. Who is generally accepted to be Australia's first bushranger?

3. Who was Australia's youngest bushranger?

4. Who was Australia's shortest-surviving bushranger?

5. How many bushrangers were there in Australia?

6. Who were Australia's best-known female bushrangers?

7. What was the largest gang of Australian bushrangers?

8. Which well-known Australian bushranger was an Anglican lay minister?

9. What action was taken by Australian state governments in 1911 and 1912 in an attempt to remove 'the entire folklore relating to bushranging from the most popular form of Australian cultural expression'?

10. Who was 'the wild colonial boy' immortalised in one of Australia's best-known ballads?

Answers on the next page.

has been suggested it was simply because Cape Howe had appeared on maps of the New South Wales coast ever since it had been sighted and named by James Cook on 20th April 1770, and was therefore a place that British legislators could immediately identify.

It was then left to the New South Wales and Victorian governments to accurately determine the actual boundary.

Sometime prior to 1869, the Victorian Government Astronomer Robert L.J. Ellery (assisted by surveyor Turton) and the New South Wales Surveyor-General P. F. Adams (assisted by Surveyor Allen) met on the coast at Cape Howe and after some discussion marked a spot they named 'Conference Point', agreeing that if the boundary line to run from the source of the Murray struck the coast within 5 chains (approximately 100 metres) of 'Conference Point' it would be acceptable to both Victoria and New South Wales.

The story goes that on the morning of their meeting the two men were faced with a 'strenuous walk' to decide on the actual easterly point for the boundary. They, of course, had differences of opinion about where the boundary should be sited, but these were gradually narrowed down from a three-kilometre difference, to a one-kilometre difference, and then after lunch to a distance of ten chains (two-hundred metres). Finally, a point of rocks was selected that they called 'Conference Point', and they agreed any termination of the boundary line within five chains (one-hundred metres) of that point would be acceptable to all.

The task undertaken by Black and Allan in laying the actual boundary on the land has been described as being one of the most 'difficult and arduous undertakings of colonial surveyors,' not least because the terrain they were traversing was so rugged. The men returned home once every six months and with 'no fixed hours for work … if it were necessary the work would be carried on from daylight to dark.' They even worked on Christmas Day.

Supplying their own needs including clothing, footwear and bedding, vessels from Melbourne bought foodstuffs, 'meat was often supplemented by shooting native animals or wild cattle.' The entire expenditure of the survey was £4,822. 7.11. The original survey marks include pegs, blazed trees, mounds and stone cairns. The three surveyors dug trenches and cleared the line of vegetation to indicate the line of the border.

Allan's field notes indicate little or no marking of the last 10 kilometres of the line to the coast. An 1891 publication, describing the boundary survey, notes "... and in April, 1870, Messrs. Black and Allan commenced running, clearing, and marking the boundary line and finished in March 1872, Mr. Allan taking the line from Mr. Black at Bendoc and producing it to Cape Howe, where it struck the coast within 16.8 inches of the marked terminal, completing a piece of survey work which for difficulties and for the requirement of skill, energy, and endurance, as well as for the accuracy attained I believe has never been surpassed." (It seems this was unfortunately

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Answers to our Bushrangers' Trivia Quiz

Here are the answers to the Quiz on page 17.

1. The earliest Australian 'bushrangers' were escaped convicts and were known as 'bolters'.

2. John Caesar, who was nicknamed 'Black Caesar.' He is believed to have been a Madagascan-born convict who arrived on the First Fleet and escaped on several occasions before becoming the leader of a band of bolters in December 1795. Governor Hunter offered a reward of five gallons of spirits for his capture. He was shot and died near Strathfield in February 1796.

3. Augustus Wernicke, who was 15 years old when he joined Captain Moonlite's gang of bushrangers. In 1879 he was killed in a violent gun battle at Wantabadgery Station (near Gundagai) when Moonlite and three surviving gang members surrendered – to later be convicted of murder and sentenced to death by hanging.

4. This may have been William Fletcher who joined the notorious Clarke Gang in Bega on 8th April 1866 and survived barely one day before being shot dead in Nerringundah (see Issue 1 of Recollections).

5. About 2,000.

6. Mary Ann Bugg (who joined Captain Thunderbolt's gang and who gave birth to two or possibly three children fathered by Captain Thunderbolt), Lizzie Hickman (who may not have been a conventional bushranger [she didn't stage any hold-ups] but did have five aliases, had a gang, stole and roamed the bush around Rylestone and Kandos while being pursued by police) and Mary Cockerill (an Aboriginal, also known as Black Mary, who was the partner of the notorious bushranger Michael Howe who operated in the Midlands of Tasmania before being killed in 1818).

7. The Ribbon Gang, a group of up to 130 escaped convicts, who ransacked villages and engaged in shootouts in the Bathurst area in 1829 and 1830. The Gang was led by Ralph Entwhistle who became embittered because he was given a public flogging of 50 lashes when he was caught skinny-dipping in the Macquarie River.

8. Andrew George Scott, aka Captain Moonlite, was the son of a clergyman and magistrate. He became a lay preacher in the Bacchus Marsh area before turning to a life of crime. It seems this began when a masked man (Scott) allegedly 'forced' a 17-year-old banker, Ludwig Bruun (who happened to be one of Scott's friends), to open the bank's safe and hand over its gold. The intruder left a note: "I hereby certify that LW Bruun has done everything within his power to withstand this intrusion and the taking of money which was done with firearms." This note was signed "Captain Moonlite".

9. The first Australian feature-length film was 'The Story of the Kelly Gang' (1906). Bushrangers then became such a popular subject in Australian films that the South Australian, NSW and Victorian governments imposed bans on bushranger films in 1911 and 1912, having become alarmed by what they saw as the glorification of outlaws. These bans contributed to the collapse of a booming Australian film industry ... with the resulting unfilled demand for films about Australian bushrangers immediately being met by the American film industry!!

10. It is said that 'The Wild Colonial Boy' was sung to the Kelly Gang at Glenrowan in 1880. There is an Irish version of the song in which 'Jack Duggin was his name' and an Australian version in which 'Jack Dolan (or Doolan) was his name.' A number of incidents in the ballad can be indirectly related to the story of Victorian bushranger John Doolan, but others appear to have been drawn from the careers of Victorian bushranger Harry Power and 'Bold' John (Jack) Donohoe who operated throughout a wide area from Bathurst to the Hunter Valley to the Illawarra.

Many more fascinating details of these (and other) Australian bushrangers are readily accessible via the internet.

And whoever said that Australian history was dull?? ℞

wrong and the offset was actually 16.8 feet – but, nonetheless, still a remarkable achievement considering the terrain traversed, the survey equipment that was available at
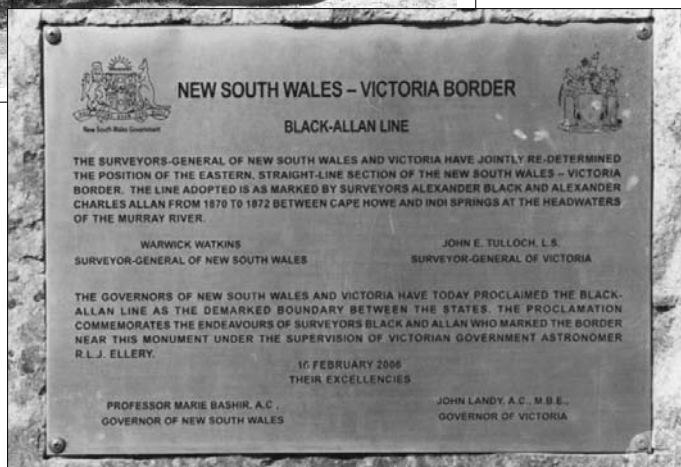

that time, and that this was the end point of an effort to trace a dead-straight line over an [aerial] distance of 110 miles [177 kilometres].)

Either due to an oversight or a disagreement between New South Wales and Victoria over an 1874 draft proclamation of the Black-Allan Line, the line was never officially proclaimed. This

was only remedied in February 2006 when, after official publication in government gazettes, the Governors of Victoria and New South Wales (the Hon. John Landy AC MBE and Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO) met at Delegate River on the Victorian/New South Wales border and proclaimed the Black–Allan Line to be part of the border between the two states.

Allan had marked the terminal point of his line at the coast with a rock cairn now known as Wauka. This was rebuilt in 1919 with a centre pipe placed over a glass bottle that had been allegedly placed in the original cairn. This was rediscovered in 1967 but by 1978 shifting sands on the coast had covered the rock cairn and a concrete pillar was erected over the old centre pipe. This concrete pillar is known as Wauka 1978.

A monument recognising the achievements of Black and Allan alongside a wayside stop were constructed at the border crossing on the Princes Highway in 1985.

Many of Black's original border cairns remain and some have been rebuilt over original marks using newly cut timber and original stone material; and several of Allan's marks have been replaced by concrete pillars. ***Peter Lacey***

Sources: *The Black-Allan Line Revisited* by R.E. Deakin, S.W. Sheppard and R. Ross, 2011; *The Story behind the Land Borders of the Australian States - A Legal and Historical Overview* – a paper delivered by Dr Gerard Carney at a Public Lecture Series at the High Court of Australia, 2013; *Surveying the Black-Allan Line* by Nadia Albert on behalf of the Office of the Surveyor General Victoria – all available online.

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