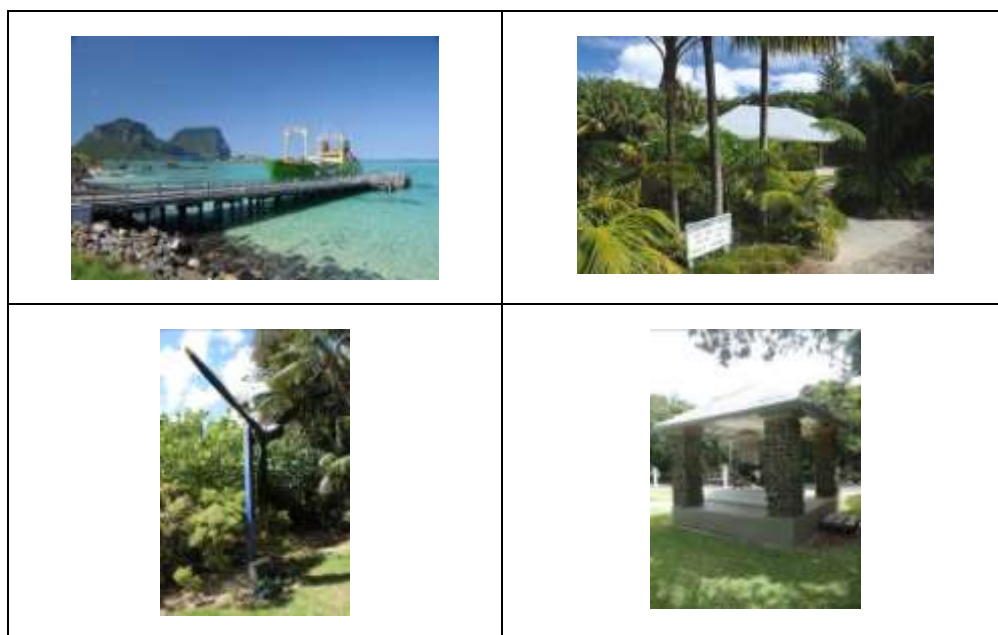


## The Last Paradise: A Community-Based Heritage Study of Lord Howe Island



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for Lord Howe Island Board

**Final, April 2012**

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SPECIALISTS IN THE IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, MANAGEMENT & INTERPRETATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

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**Front cover images:**

**Top row: Left:** View from the north end of the island over the lagoon to Mount Lidgbird and Mount Gower; **Right:** Graves at ‘Pinetrees’ Cemetery.

**Second row: Left:** Lighter barge, Government Reserve, near Lagoon; **Right:** Hikers on the Mount Gower track.

**Third row: Left:** *MV Island Trader* at the cargo jetty, with lagoon and Mount Lidgbird and Mt Gower in background; **Right:** ‘Government House’.

**Bottom row: Left:** Catalina crash 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary memorial, Old Settlement; **Right:** War Memorial, Lagoon Road. (All front cover images by Chris Betteridge)

## Executive Summary

### *The Study*

This Community-based Heritage Study has been prepared for the Lord Howe Island Board with financial assistance from the NSW Government to provide the Board and the people of Lord Howe Island with the following:

1. a thematic history of the island that is consistent with those prepared for other local government areas in the State;
2. a list of heritage items that have been identified and assessed through a consultative process with the island community, for possible inclusion on the heritage schedule to Lord Howe Island Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2010;
3. conservation strategies for the Board to employ in managing the environmental heritage of Lord Howe Island;
4. an annotated bibliography of references to the cultural heritage of Lord Howe Island.

### *Some Conservation Principles*

1. The Lord Howe Island Board, as the local government authority for Lord Howe Island, has an obligation under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, as amended, to take appropriate action to manage heritage items in its area.
2. Listing of heritage items in the LEP for Lord Howe Island should be based solely on significance, assessed according to the criteria established by the Heritage Council of NSW. If the significance of an item is not clear, the item should be recorded as a potential item for further investigation. However, items should only be listed if that is the most practical way of achieving their conservation. There are many items and processes that demonstrate historical themes that can be conserved and interpreted by means other than listing on a heritage schedule.
3. Management for the conservation of heritage items should be based on the retention of significance in accordance with the guidelines of the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS, taking into account the practical realities of the island environment and the statutory framework applying. Conservation does not preclude sympathetic adaptive reuse of items for new purposes or the sympathetic inclusion of modern facilities in historic buildings. Conservation does not preclude demolition of an item as a last resort in cases where there is no prudent or feasible alternative. Conservation should include communication of significance to the community through culturally appropriate interpretive measures.

## **General Recommendations**

The Lord Howe Island Board should:

1. commence implementation of the recommendations of this study and work towards an amended LEP heritage schedule of the items with their associated management recommendations.
2. adopt policies for promoting heritage conservation in partnership with the island community, including implementation of heritage incentives.
3. adopt the recommendations for State Heritage Register listing of any items identified as having State significance.
4. approach owners of listed heritage items with the intent of receiving their cooperation and an agreement in principle for the conservation management of those items. Where an appropriate conservation management report such as a Conservation Management Plan, Conservation Management Strategy or Statement of Significance is not available for a listed item, the Board should assist an owner to prepare an interim report appropriate to the level of significance.
5. in collaboration with the island community, continue the input of data into the State Heritage Inventory (SHI) for all the culturally interesting places in the SHI listings for the island, regardless of their level of significance.
6. advertise the findings of this study in the *Lord Howe Island Board Community Information Bulletin* and in *The Lord Howe Island Signal*, inviting community feedback on the study's findings and recommendations.
7. make the entire study including the thematic history available to the public through the Board's offices, the library of the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of the Premier & Cabinet, the State Library of NSW and on the web.

## **Recommendations for Lord Howe Island LEP 2010**

The Board should:

1. develop a final agreed list of heritage items to be included in the Heritage Schedule of Lord Howe Island Local Environmental Plan 2010.
2. nominate to the Heritage Council of New South Wales any items assessed as being of State significance for their possible inclusion on the State Heritage Register.
3. in future, map all SHI items electronically and show their location accurately on the LEP map. These locations should be interconnected with GPS mapping of all other Board records for the island.

4. ensure that LEP 2010, when amended, includes special clauses that favour the retention and appropriate management of heritage items.

### ***Specific Recommendations for Heritage Management***

The Board should:

1. Update the Schedule of Heritage Items in *Lord Howe Island LEP 2010*, with full descriptions, statements of significance and management recommendations to be included on State Heritage Inventory (SHI) database forms;
2. Develop a new Development Control Plan (DCP) to replace *Lord Howe Island Development Control Plan 2005* that guides new work on or in the vicinity of heritage items with a view to retaining significance, including setting, and minimising adverse impact on items;
3. Develop a “sympathetic infill” policy for new development in the vicinity of listed items or groups of items to be included in a revised DCP for Lord Howe Island;
4. Keep owners of heritage items informed of heritage incentives such as financial assistance, sources of management advice and statutory measures through the Board’s *Community Information Bulletin* and other media available to the island community;
5. Consider establishment of a heritage advisory panel for Lord Howe Island in collaboration with the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet;
6. Participate with owners of items that are formally listed as State significant in preparing interim Heritage Management Agreements for those items;
7. Carefully consider access to heritage items, taking into account their significance, their ownership, condition and any sensitivities that may attach to particular places. Access should not be taken for granted and should be approached with reference to an owner’s or leaseholder’s consent and opinions;
8. If demolition of a place suspected of being culturally significant is proposed, its significance should be investigated and assessed and the impact of its demolition assessed in accordance with the appropriate guidelines published by the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet;
9. Exercise its Interim Heritage Order powers, if available, where significance is strongly suspected and demolition is a real threat to a heritage asset;
10. Allow the State Heritage Inventory (SHI) data records to remain publically accessible;

11. Take steps, with the owner's or leaseholder's permission and / or cooperation to encourage conservation of significant grave sites on leasehold land;
12. Make the island community aware of their responsibilities in regard to terrestrial and maritime archaeological sites, including compliance with the 'relics' provisions of the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*, as amended;
13. Set a good example to the island community by employing best practice conservation management of the Board's heritage assets.
14. Ensure that cultural heritage significance is incorporated in any interpretive programs for the island, including face-to-face interpretation, signs and other media such as printed and web-based publications.

### ***Recommendations for Heritage Incentives***

The Board should:

1. Establish a Local Heritage Fund for Lord Howe Island in collaboration with the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, to provide the community with a major incentive for the conservation of heritage items;
2. Encourage funding for heritage projects through a range of other sources as they become available;
3. Ensure that there are adequate heritage incentive clauses in Lord Howe Island LEP 2010, when amended;
4. Support the managers of heritage items with a Heritage Advisory Service;
5. Support the owners / leaseholders of heritage items through incentives such as internet coverage, heritage awards or plaques, cultural tourism publications, tax and rate reductions based on lower heritage valuations.



## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 The Brief

In December 2008 the Lord Howe Island Board engaged **MUSEcape** Pty Ltd, Sydney-based heritage consultants to work with the Board and the people of Lord Howe Island to produce a community-based heritage study of the island. The NSW Government has been providing the State's local government authorities (LGAs) with financial assistance to prepare such studies as a means of achieving the following objectives:

- a consistent approach to thematic histories for all local government areas in NSW;
- schedules of heritage items in planning instruments that have been identified and assessed through a consultative process using the assessment methodology developed by the Heritage Council of NSW over the past thirty years;
- strategies for local government authorities to employ in conserving the heritage of their areas.

### 1.2 The Study Area

Lord Howe Island (LHI), with an area of 1,455 hectares, is the predominant landform of the Lord Howe Island Group (LHIG) which also comprises 28 smaller islets and reefs and associated marine environments, with the main island located 760 kilometres north-east of Sydney. The most significant of the outer islets are the Admiralty Islands (1 kilometre to the north of Lord Howe Island) and Ball's Pyramid, the world's tallest rock stack (23 km to the south-east of LHI). The group as a whole covers an area of 146,300 hectares. Lord Howe Island itself is a spectacular landform dominated by two mountains at its southern end, Mount Gower and Mount Lidgbird, the remnants of a shield volcano, a low-lying central area with coral lagoon and reef on the western side, and lower peaks at the northern end.

The Lord Howe Island Group has been identified as being of world heritage significance and was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982 as an example of superlative natural phenomena and containing important and significant habitats for *in situ* conservation.

The Study Area for this report comprises the entire Lord Howe Island Group and associated shipwrecks, although field investigations were limited to Lord Howe Island and Blackburn (also known as Rabbit, Goat, Shark) Island, an island within the lagoon.

### 1.3 Methodology

#### **Stage 1 – Establishment of Working Group**

The authors consulted with the Lord Howe Island Board to set up a Heritage Working Group that includes broad representation of community groups and individuals who can make a positive contribution to the Heritage Study. The consultants then worked in conjunction with the Working Group, Board staff and the broader island community to prepare a list of known and potential historical sources, both local and outside the

island. The Regional Environmental Study (RES) 1985 reports and other previous historical and environmental studies were used as a starting point. The authors gave Powerpoint® presentations to the island community and the Board in February 2009 and made questionnaires available for islanders to provide feedback on the things that they consider significant on Lord Howe Island. In November 2009 the consultants gave a Powerpoint® presentation to the Working Group of historical themes and potential items and sought feedback on the draft items and comment on any potential items that had been missed.

### ***Stage 2 – Historical Research***

The history of European exploration and settlement was researched, including the archives and publications of relevant government departments and agencies (e.g. Lord Howe Island Board, National Parks and Wildlife Service, The Australian Museum, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, CSIRO Division of Wildlife Research, Australia Post, Maritime NSW, Tourism NSW, Industry and Investment NSW (formerly NSW Department of Primary Industries) and relevant corporations (e.g. banks (Westpac and Commonwealth), shipping companies (e.g. Burns Philp), airlines (e.g. Historic Houses Trust exhibition on “Flying Boats” held at the Museum of Sydney 2008-09), Anglican Church Sydney Diocese Archives, Yates Seeds, family-based tourism ventures, as well as community groups such as the Lord Howe Island Historical Society and Museum, Society of Australian Genealogists, sporting clubs, dive operators.

### ***Stage 3 – Community Consultation***

Once themes and gaps in information were identified, the authors interviewed islanders and encouraged them to participate in the identification of potential items. This process included input from local organisations, the staff and former students of the Lord Howe Island Central School and sessions at local guest houses and other venues to get locals, particularly older residents, to provide their recollections of buildings, land uses, previous owners, events, etc.

### ***Stage 4 – The Heritage Study***

The Board advertised the Study and invited the community to nominate items and to provide further information relevant to identified and potential heritage items. Once the list of potential items had been drawn up, the Board, Heritage Working Group and **MUSEcape** approached owners and set up site visits to collect information. Owners / leaseholders were encouraged to regard the heritage listing as a positive process that may well have long term benefits in terms of potential funding and / or tourism opportunities, as well as continuing the long tradition on the island of proud custodianship of heritage assets.

With considerably increased knowledge of the range and condition of items and potential items across the island, the authors were then in a position to revise the draft thematic local history and provide enhanced historical input to the data sheets for individual heritage items prepared by the authors and the Heritage Working Group.

The authors then worked with the Heritage Working Group to complete statements of significance in accordance with the criteria established by the former NSW Heritage Office (Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of

Premier & Cabinet) and complete draft heritage data sheets for individual heritage items.

Once the community, Board and Heritage Working Group had provided comment on the preliminary draft, a final draft thematic history was produced. When the authors and the Heritage Working Group had finalised the draft heritage study, the Board forwarded it to the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet for endorsement and payment.

**MUSEcape** Pty Ltd then worked with the Board and its planning consultants All About Planning to consult any individual owners / leaseholders about the draft heritage study reports and the implications of management recommendations on their items. The draft heritage study report with a covering report was presented to the Board. Following Board approval of the draft study, the Board notified heritage item owners / leaseholders and the wider community about the heritage study and undertook a public exhibition and consultation process.

The final heritage study, including the final thematic history report and heritage database (SHI) forms were then sent to the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of The Premier & Cabinet with a claim for any remaining project funding.

The Board then formally adopted the findings of the study and set about implementing its recommendations, including incorporation of the list of heritage items and heritage conservation areas as a draft amended Schedule to the Local Environmental Plan 2010, with unambiguous curtilages clearly shown on plans.

**MUSEcape** Pty Ltd has also worked with the Board to ensure that appropriate conservation management policies for its own heritage assets are in place, in accordance with the guidelines of the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Burra Charter and current best practice generally. The Board should ideally also embark on a prioritised program to set up a local heritage fund, offering incentives to owners of listed items, as well as promoting heritage conservation through a variety of means.

### ***Stage 5 – Identification of Shortcomings and Recommendations for Further Work***

Once the Heritage Study including the thematic history and the schedule of heritage items had been prepared, the authors worked with the Board and the Heritage Working Group to identify any perceived shortcomings in the heritage management regime for Lord Howe Island and to make recommendations for further work.

#### ***1.4 Definition of Terms***

The following terms from the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS have been used in this report.

*Place* means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views.

*Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the *place* itself, its *fabric*, *setting*, *use*, *associations*, *meanings*, records, *related places* and *related objects*. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.

*Fabric* means all the physical material of the *place* including components, fixtures, contents, and objects.

*Conservation* means all the processes of looking after a *place* so as to retain its *cultural significance*.

*Maintenance* means the continuous protective care of the *fabric* and *setting* of a *place*, and is to be distinguished from repair. Repair involves restoration or reconstruction.

*Preservation* means maintaining the *fabric* of a *place* in its existing state and retarding deterioration.

*Restoration* means returning the existing *fabric* of a *place* to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

*Reconstruction* means returning a *place* to a known earlier state and is distinguished from *restoration* by the introduction of new material into the *fabric*.

*Adaptation* means modifying a *place* to suit the existing use or a proposed use.

*Use* means the functions of a *place*, as well as the activities and practices that may occur at the *place*.

*Compatible* use means a use which respects the cultural significance of a *place*. Such a use involves no, or minimal, impact on cultural significance.

*Setting* means the area around a *place*, which may include the visual catchment.

*Related place* means a place that contributes to the *cultural significance* of another place.

## **1.5 Abbreviations**

The following abbreviations may be found in this report.

AFMA – Australian Fisheries Management Authority;

AHC - Australian Heritage Council;

AM – Australian Museum;

AQIS – Australian Quarantine Inspection Service;

BCA – Building Code of Australia

CMP - Conservation Management Plan;

CMS - Conservation Management Strategy;

CP – Conservation Plan;

DA – Development Application;

DCP – Development Control Plan;

DDA - Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992;

DECCW – former NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water;

DEWHA – former Commonwealth Department of Water, Heritage and Environment;

DII – former NSW Department of Industry and Investment;

DPI - NSW Department of Primary Industries;

DPI – NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure;

DOP – former NSW Department of Planning;

DSEWP & C – Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities;  
 EP & A Act – *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*  
 EP & A Regulation - *Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000*  
 HIS – Heritage Impact Statement  
 ICAC – Independent Commission Against Corruption;  
 ICOMOS - International Council of Monuments and Sites;  
 IHO – Interim Heritage Order;  
 LEP - Local Environmental Plan;  
 LHI – Lord Howe Island;  
 LHIA – *Lord Howe Island Act 1953*;  
 LHIB - Lord Howe Island Board;  
 LHIG – Lord Howe Island Group;  
 LHIGWHA – Lord Howe Island Group World Heritage Area;  
 MPA – NSW Marine Parks Authority;  
 NPWS – NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service;  
 NRCMA – Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority;  
 NT - National Trust of Australia (New South Wales);  
 OEH – Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet;  
 OH & S Act - NSW *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*;  
 PCO – Permanent Conservation Order;  
 PPP – Permanent Park Preserve;  
 REP – Regional Environmental Plan;  
 RES – Regional Environmental Study;  
 RNE – Register of the National Estate;  
 SEPP – State Environmental Planning Policy;  
 SHI – State Heritage Inventory;  
 SHR - State Heritage Register;  
 SOHI - Statement of Heritage Impact;  
 TCA – *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*.

## **1.6 Limitations & Disclaimer**

No physical intervention in the place was carried out apart from some minor examination of building materials and collection of some herbarium specimens for plant identification. Internal access was not gained to all structures. No archaeological assessment of the place was made although the results of previous archaeological studies were reviewed. Comparative analysis was limited to properties of similar age and significance currently listed on the State Heritage Register or known to the consultants. Initial lack of remote access to the Lord Howe Island Museum archival photographic database caused considerable delays in completion of the thematic history because images could only be accessed during visits to the island, which were limited by budgetary constraints and the consultants' other contractual obligations.

This document may only be used for the purpose for which it was commissioned and in accordance with the contract between **MUSEcape** Pty Ltd (the consultants) and the Lord Howe Island Board (the client). The scope of services was defined in consultation with the client, by time and budgetary constraints agreed between the

consultants and client, and the availability of reports and other data. Changes to available information, legislation and schedules are made on an ongoing basis and readers should always try to obtain the most up-to-date information. The consultants accept no liability or responsibility whatsoever for or in respect of any use of or reliance upon this report and its supporting material by any third party. Information provided is not intended to be a substitute for site specific assessment or legal advice in relation to any matter. Unauthorised use of this report in any form is prohibited.

### **1.7 Authorship**

This Study report has been prepared for the Lord Howe Island Board by Chris Betteridge, BSc (Sydney), MSc (Leicester), AMA (London), M. ICOMOS and Margaret Betteridge, BA (NSW), Grad. Cert. Museum Studies (Leicester), AMA (London), Directors of **MUSEcape** Pty Ltd, heritage consultants specialising in the identification, assessment, management and interpretation of environmental heritage. Chris originally trained as a botanist and has specialised in the conservation of cultural landscapes, including the settings of historic buildings as well as parks, gardens and cemeteries. After more than 20 years in a variety of technical and management roles in the NSW Public Service, Chris has been in private practice as a heritage consultant for the past 20 years. He has lectured and published widely on cultural landscapes and often acts as an expert witness on landscape matters in the NSW Land and Environment Court. Margaret is an arts graduate with post-graduate qualifications in museum studies and training in the decorative arts and has over 30 years' experience in the conservation, management and interpretation of cultural resources, particularly historic buildings, their interiors and collections of movable heritage including furniture, furnishings and decorative arts. She has a particular interest in the conservation and interpretation of heritage places, including important collections kept *in situ* as part of 'living, working museums'.

### **1.8 Protection of Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights**

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### **1.9 Acknowledgments**

The authors would particularly like to thank all the many individuals who contributed so much to this study. We hope the end result will have lasting benefit for the island community as a documentary record of the cultural heritage and traditions of the place and also for the many tourists and others who visit Lord Howe Island regularly or only occasionally. We are especially indebted to Daphne Nichols, whose publication *Lord Howe Rising* was inspirational in its very personal approach to the history of the island; also to other Working Group members Chris Murray and Karen Giles. Robyn Warner, Chairman, Lord Howe Island Historical Society and Ian Hutton, Curator, Lord Howe Island Museum were particularly helpful in providing workspace at the Museum and access to the Museum's wonderful collection of

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 Geoff & Judy Mauldon, Hong Kong  
 Bob & Jerry Rogers and their daughter, Brett Rogers, regular visitors in the 1960s  
 Simon & Jan Sheller, Lord Howe Island honeymooners

### **Lord Howe Island Board members and staff**

Jeff Angel, LHIB member  
 Hank Bower, Manager, Environment / World Heritage Unit  
 Christo Haselden, Ranger, Environment / World Heritage Unit  
 Alistair Henschman, Chairperson, LHIB  
 David Kelly, Manager Environment & Community Development  
 Robert Pallin, LHIB member  
 Belinda Panckhurst, Administration Officer  
 Marilyn Piatti, former staff member  
 Greg Pierce, Manager Operations (up to 15 March 2010)



Barrie Rogers, Technical Services Manager  
 Lynda Shick, Administration Officer  
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 Judy Horton, Yates Seeds  
 Glenn Howroyd, Information & Archives Officer, Commonwealth Bank;  
 Sue Jackson-Stepowski, Jackson-Stepowski Planning;  
 Desmond Kennard;  
 Martin Lau, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet;  
 Sophie-Marie Lawson, TelstraClear;  
 Fabian Lo Schiavo;  
 James McBean  
 Ross & Pam McBean  
 Dr Kimberley Ann Owens  
 Rob Parkinson, NSW Land and Property Management Authority;  
 Stuart Read, Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet;  
 Catherine Seccombe, National Film and Sound Archive;  
 Dick Smith;  
 Tim Smith, Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet;  
 Miriam Stacy, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet;  
 Matthew Stephens, Caroline Simpson Research Centre, Historic Houses Trust, NSW;  
 Alan Taylor, Alan Taylor & Associates;  
 Victoria Throp, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet;  
 Vivienne Tibbs, All About Planning;  
 Dr Louise Trott, Sydney Diocesan Archivist, Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney  
 Rebecca Ward, National Trust of Australia (NSW)

Stewart Watters, Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW  
Department of Premier & Cabinet  
Susannah Webb, Manta Consulting;  
Haimeng Zhao, X-Squared Design.

## 2.0 Thematic History

This section contains a history of Lord Howe Island based on the National Historic Themes developed by the Australian Heritage Council and the NSW State Historic Themes developed by the Heritage Council of New South Wales. A table listing all the national and state themes is included as an Appendix to this report.

Some historians dislike the thematic approach to history, preferring a traditional chronological treatment with identification of influences and analysis of causes and effects. However, a thematic history does provide a useful mechanism by which heritage items that demonstrate particular themes can be identified, and enabling the compilation of a representative schedule of items that are significant for a particular local government area. A disadvantage is that some processes and items may demonstrate a number of themes and some duplication and overlap may result.



**Figure 1** Map of Lord Howe Island and nearby islets, showing the natural areas of the Permanent Park Preserve at the northern and southern ends of the main island and the leases and reserves of the settled areas outlined in white. The lagoon and fringing reef are clearly visible on the western side of the island, with Blackburn Island edged white. (Source: LHI Board).

## 2.1 Tracing the natural evolution of Australia

### 2.1.1 Environment – naturally evolved

There are two aspects to this theme:

- (1) Features occurring naturally in the physical environment which have significance independent of human intervention;
- (2) Features occurring naturally in the physical environment which have shaped or influenced human life and cultures.

#### Introduction

The physical environment of the Lord Howe Island Group of islands would be significant independent of human intervention, although it can be argued that the notion of significance is in itself a human construct – a judgement on the values of a place to contemporary society. ‘Unique’ is a term that is applied much too commonly these days, without adequate thought to its actual meaning, namely ‘of which there is only one.’<sup>1</sup> However, while there may be other islands of volcanic origin and high levels of endemism in their flora and fauna, the Lord Howe Island Group is unique in its combination of geographic location, volcanic and depositional episodes, assemblages of plants and animals, and human history.

The Lord Howe Island Group has been listed since 1982 on the World Heritage List (WHL), primarily for its outstanding natural values, based on the following WHL criteria:

#### *Criterion (vii)*

*Natural criterion (iii) contain superlative natural phenomena, formations or features, for instance, outstanding examples of the most important ecosystems, areas of exceptional natural beauty or exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements.*

#### *Criterion (x)*

*Natural criterion (iv) contain the most important and significant natural habitats where threatened species of animals or plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation still survive.*

The natural environment of Lord Howe Island has provided the support for human visitation to and occupation of the island since 1788 in terms of food, shelter and inspiration, providing the basis for development of the cultural landscape of the island and the community’s interactions with it.

#### Geography and Topography

The following description of the island is adapted from a Lord Howe Island Board tender document.<sup>2</sup>

Lord Howe Island is located 760 kilometres north-east of Sydney, in the northern Tasman Sea at a latitude of 31°31’S and longitude 159°04’E. The island lies about a

<sup>1</sup> *Macquarie Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1991

<sup>2</sup> Lord Howe Island Board Contract No. 2009/08, June 2009

third of the way between Australia and the North Island of New Zealand. After Norfolk Island, which is about 900 kilometres to its north-east, Lord Howe Island is the next easternmost land under Australian sovereignty. Unlike Norfolk, which is a Commonwealth territory, Lord Howe Island is part of the State of New South Wales.

The main island of the Lord Howe Island Group is 11 kilometres long from end to end, and little more than 2 kilometres wide at its widest point. It is roughly crescent-shaped, enclosing a coral reef lagoon on its south-western side. The small extent of the island belies its impressive scale – two bulky mountains make up the southern half of the main island and reach approximately 875 metres (Mt Gower) and 775 metres (Mt Lidgbird) in elevation respectively. Only a narrow isthmus of lowland country in the north-central part of the island crescent is habitable terrain. The northern tip consists of steep hill slopes culminating in extensive sea cliffs against the northern coastline.

Scattered around the main island are several groups of smaller islands and rocks. The most distant of these is a group of small islets and rock stacks around the spectacular 550 metres pinnacle of Balls Pyramid, 25 kilometres to the south-east of Lord Howe Island.

The spectacular mountain scenery, the coral reef and the lagoon, together with the flora and fauna, are the natural features for which Lord Howe Island was granted World Heritage status and which are attracting increasing numbers of tourists from Australia and overseas to this “last paradise” in the Tasman Sea, this jewel of a dot in the ocean.

## Geology

The following description of the geology of the Lord Howe Island Group is based largely on that in the publication *Australia's Volcanoes*<sup>3</sup>:

The Lord Howe Island Group is an outstanding example of an island system developed from submarine volcanic activity and demonstrates the nearly complete stage in the destruction of a large volcanic island. The islands are the only known occurrence of a remarkable volcanic exposure, there being some 1,000 metres of unweathered volcanics with a great variety of upper mantle and oceanic type basalts.

The geology of the southern end of the main island is predominantly Mount Lidgbird basalt<sup>4</sup> (including Mount Lidgbird and Mount Gower) with talus slopes known as The Big Slope (near the southeast end of island) and The Little Slope (near southwest end of island). The hilly central part of the island, including North Hummock and Intermediate Hill is composed of Boat Harbour breccia with areas of undifferentiated alluvium, Neds Beach calcarenite and alluvial and marine calcareous sands on the western side of the island, on and behind Salmon Beach, Kings Beach, Johnsons Beach and the area immediately south of the airstrip. Evidence in the Boat Harbour breccia suggests that the volcano which formed Lord Howe Island may have erupted explosively at times. Angular blocks of material torn from the sides of the volcanic

<sup>3</sup> Ferrett, 2005, pp.109-11

<sup>4</sup> Basalt is a dark-coloured, fine-grained, usually extrusive, igneous rock.

conduit and rounded 'bombs' of partly congealed lava can be seen between Rock Point and Boat Harbour Point. Along the east coast many basaltic dykes can be seen in the Boat Harbour breccia<sup>5</sup> and the beaches are of basalt boulders.

The area between Blinky Beach on the east and the western end of the airport runway is a mix of alluvial clay, undifferentiated alluvium, Aeolian (i.e. wind-blown) calcareous sands and Neds Beach calcarenite<sup>6</sup>. Transit Hill and The Clear Place are composed of North Ridge Basalt. The majority of the main settled area of the island is Neds Beach calcarenite on the eastern side, with large areas of clay and sands towards the west. The higher parts of the northern end of the island including Malabar Hill and Mount Eliza are North Ridge Basalt, with numerous dykes around the coastline. The first settled area, behind Old Settlement Beach, is Aeolian calcareous sand with areas of undifferentiated alluvium and alluvial clay upslope. The lower areas at North Bay are alluvial clay and Neds Beach calcarenite. The north-eastern end of Malabar Hill has exposures of Roach Island tuff<sup>7</sup>, named for the largest islet in the Admiralty Islands, and believed to be the oldest rocks on the island.

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<sup>5</sup> Breccia is a coarse-grained clastic rock, composed of angular broken rock fragments held together by a mineral cement or a fine-grained matrix.

<sup>6</sup> Calcarenite is a limestone, more than half of which consists of cemented sand-size grains of calcium carbonate.

<sup>7</sup> Tuff is a general term for all consolidated pyroclastic rocks i.e. those formed by volcanic explosion or aerial expulsion from a volcanic vent.



**Figure 2** Geology map of Lord Howe Island from Thompson, D., Bliss, P., and Priest, J. 1987. Lord Howe Island Geology, Geological Survey of New South Wales, Sydney.

### Hydrology and Climate

Due to its isolated, subtropical situation Lord Howe Island has its own microclimate, brought about by a confluence of factors: the first being the high mountains at the southern end, often shrouded in mist, and the second, more substantial influence being the East Australian Current. Unlike the cooler Tasman Sea, the waters around Lord Howe Island are warmed year round to a fairly stable temperature above 17°C by this current, which runs south from near Vanuatu parallel to the Queensland and northern NSW coasts before swinging eastwards towards Lord Howe Island, enabling the growth of one of the world's most southerly coral reefs. The corals around Lord Howe Island provide shelter and food for other organisms, helping complex marine communities to develop. The maritime setting ensures very little variation in temperatures on Lord Howe, both on a daily basis and throughout the year.

The Lord Howe Island Group has a climate that is moderated by oceanic air currents and mild sea temperatures. Winters are wet and cool, with an average daily maximum of 18°C and average daily minimum of 13°C. The lowest temperature recorded from the settlement area of the island is 6°C, and no frost had been recorded up to 2002.<sup>8</sup> Summers have less rainfall, and are mild or warm, averaging a daily maximum of 25°C and an average daily minimum of 20°C. Temperatures on the high plateau of Mount Gower are 6–8°C cooler than at sea level<sup>9</sup>. The mean annual rainfall of the lowlands is 1650 mm, with a pronounced maximum in midwinter. The rainfall in the mountainous southern half of the island is considerably higher due to orographic cloud and rainfall influences<sup>10</sup>. Humidity on Lord Howe Island is high throughout the year. The island is generally windy, more so in the afternoons. The salt-laden wind comes predominantly from the south-east and north-east and the mean wind speed is highest in late winter and spring<sup>11</sup>.

During the warmer months high-pressure cells are well to the south of Lord Howe Island and fresh easterly winds predominate. At the same time a periodic influx of moist humid air occurs creating still, tropical conditions. Tropical cyclones, however, do not occur, although severe storm events occur periodically. In the winter months the high-pressure cells progress from west to east. The result of these cold fronts are heavy rains, yet on occasion a large, slow moving high-pressure cell remains over the area for several days producing the phenomenon of 'June still' - calm, dry, clear conditions.

As for many islands in the world, climate change, whether a part of natural cycles or exacerbated by human activity, is a cause for concern. Rising average temperatures and sea levels can have a profound effect on the distribution of plant and animal species, particularly those with such specific ecological niches as some plants on the higher elevations of Lord Howe's two main peaks and animal species in the intertidal zone. Climate change and sea level rise have the potential to have a negative impact on the island's heritage values.

## Flora

The following description of the island's natural vegetation is largely based on 1980s research by John Pickard, descriptions in *Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes: The Native Vegetation of New South Wales and the ACT*<sup>12</sup> and the Lord Howe Island Biodiversity Management Plan 2007.

There are 239 species of indigenous vascular plant recorded from the LHIG, of which 113 (47%) are endemic. The high degree of endemism is illustrated not only at the species level, but also at the generic level, where there are five endemic vascular plant genera (*Negria*, *Lordhowea*, *Howea*, *Lepidorrhachis* and *Hedyscepe*)<sup>13</sup>. The non-vascular flora of terrestrial and freshwater habitats (bryophytes, lichens and freshwater algae) is less well known, but is also considered to be diverse with many endemic species. For example, 105 species of mosses are known, 21 (20%) of

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<sup>8</sup> LHIB 2002

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Keith, DA, 2004

<sup>13</sup> Hunter 2002



which are endemic<sup>14</sup>. New species of endemic vascular and non-vascular plants from the LHIG continue to be described.

### **Vegetation Communities**

Pickard (1983) identified seven structural formations and 25 vegetation associations, with a number of subformations and alliances, and another four physiographic units to identify cliffs and shorelines. Pickard's vegetation communities were refined by Hunter (2002) and Hutton (pers. comm.) for the LHI BMP 2007, which listed 34 vegetation communities, of which 18 are considered of particular conservation concern due to threatening process that are causing, or likely to cause their decline.

### **Closed Forest Communities**

Lord Howe Island has a unique array of lowland and sub-montane closed forest communities<sup>15</sup>. These resemble Subtropical Rainforests in structure, but share relatively few species with their mainland counterparts, because of their long isolation. The closed forests attain their greatest structural complexity on the calcareous lowland flats and low basalt hills in the centre of the island. Here the complex and multi-layered tree canopy may exceed 25 metres, and includes banyans, palms and trees with buttress roots. Lianas and epiphytes are common, although there are relatively few species<sup>16</sup>. The understorey comprises a modest variety of shrubs, herbs and ferns.

These luxuriant communities contrast with the wind-sheared littoral forms growing as thickets only 2-4 metres high on the island's steep exposed slopes<sup>17</sup>. In this latter form, some of the hallmarks of subtropical rainforests such as buttress roots and epiphytes are missing, but the dense, even canopy is still composed of a variety of trees. Sheltered hill slopes and mountain valleys support forests of intermediate stature and complexity, while some scree slopes support closed sclerophyll forests with pure groves of palms, which may grow so densely that their heavy leaf litter excludes virtually all other plants.

Periodic landslides triggered by deluges occur on the steepest slopes of Lord Howe Island, laying them bare of vegetation and topsoil. This sets in motion a succession of plant forms, commencing with opportunistic 'pioneer' species, followed by slower-growing, woody forms that regain dominance after years as soil begins to develop, and eventually fully-formed rainforest.

Nearly half of the 240 plant species native to Lord Howe Island are found nowhere else in the world<sup>18</sup>. Most of these 'endemic' species are found in the closed forests on volcanic substrates but none occurs exclusively on the younger calcarenite<sup>19</sup> or alluvial substrates, which share more species with littoral rainforests of mainland

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<sup>14</sup> Ramsay 1984

<sup>15</sup> Pickard, J, 1983, *Cunninghamia* 1, 133-265

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Green, PS, 1994, 'Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island' in *Flora of Australia, Vol.49, Oceanic islands*. (ed AE Orchard) pp.1-26, AGPS, Canberra.

<sup>19</sup> *Dictionary of Geological Terms*, p.67. A name suggested by A W Grabau for a 'limestone or dolomite composed of coral or shell sand or of sand derived from the erosion of older limestones'. The word is derived from the Latin for lime and sand.

New South Wales<sup>20</sup>. Notable among the endemic species on basalt is the genus of palms, *Howea*, widely known as kentia palms, from the earlier name *Kentia*. An international trade in these palms began in the 1870s and flourished as they became fashionable ornamental plants in homes and offices throughout Europe and America, including royal palaces. In 1901 Queen Victoria lay in state at Osborne on the Isle of Wight with pots of kentia palms at the four corners of her coffin, giving rise to one of the common names for *Howea forsteriana* of Sentry Palm.<sup>21</sup> More information on the kentia palm industry can be found in the section on Industry.

The unique biota of Lord Howe reflects its long history of evolution in isolation. Other remote volcanic oceanic islands, such as Hawaii, show similar or even higher levels of endemism. Lord Howe Island originated from a deep sea volcano fewer than seven million years ago, and has never been connected to mainland Australia<sup>22</sup>. As a result the biota has developed from colonising species that have dispersed to the island from various sources and at various times in the past. The flora of the closed forests on LHI therefore reflects multiple origins from rainforests on the Australian mainland, New Zealand, New Caledonia and other Pacific islands. The island as a whole shares 129 plant genera with eastern Australia, 102 with New Caledonia, 75 with New Zealand and 66 with Norfolk Island<sup>23</sup>. When these figures are considered as proportional overlaps between floras, they indicate that the flora of Lord Howe Island is most similar to that of Norfolk Island and least similar to that of eastern Australia. As well, many of the endemic plants on Lord Howe Island have closer evolutionary links with species in New Caledonia and New Zealand than they do with those on mainland Australia<sup>24</sup>. These relationships cannot simply be explained in terms of distances between the land masses, because Lord Howe is closer to mainland Australia (600 km) than to Norfolk Island (900 km); New Caledonia and New Zealand are even more remote. Instead, the floristic relationships may reflect ancient dispersal routes for birds (and the seeds they accidentally carry) along the Lord Howe Rise, a submarine ridge extending from New Zealand through the Lord Howe Island Group to the west of New Caledonia<sup>25</sup>. Parts of this rise may have been emergent above sea level at various times since formation of the island.

The biogeographic connections between the closed forests of Lord Howe and those of other south-west Pacific islands are indicated by the genera they have in common, such as *Atractocarpus*, *Celtis*, *Coprosma*, *Macropiper*, *Metrosideros*, *Peperomia*, *Pimelea*, *Polyscias* and *Zanthoxylum*<sup>26</sup>. Species of *Solanum* and *Calystegia* are shared only with Norfolk Island, while species of *Cryptocarya*, *Ficus*, *Passiflora*, *Sarcomelicope*, *Smilax* and the genus *Plectorrhiza* (tangle orchid) are shared exclusively with the Australian mainland.

About one-third of the closed forests on Lord Howe were cleared for the island's settlement and associated pasture in the 19th century, while the remainder is now protected within the Lord Howe Island World Heritage Area. Aside from the direct

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<sup>20</sup> Pickard 1983

<sup>21</sup> Image at Lord Howe Island Board Kentia Palm Nursery

<sup>22</sup> Hutton, Ian, 1986

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Green, 1994

<sup>25</sup> Hutton, Ian, 1986

<sup>26</sup> Green, 1994

effects of clearing, canopy dieback resulting from increased exposure to salt-laden maritime winds in disturbed areas has led to historical declines in the number, extent and health of banyan trees, *Ficus macrophylla* subsp. *columnaris*<sup>27</sup>. Today, canopy dieback in *Syzygium* and *Drypetes* is also evident at some locations in the fragmented forest<sup>28</sup>.

The half-day trek to the summit of Mount Gower through the closed forests on Lord Howe Island is one of the world's great bushwalks. Emerging onto the summit, walkers are treated to spectacular mountain scenery framed by the rare and unique plants of the Gnarled Mossy Closed Forest (Cloud Forest), set against a vast blue ocean and the turquoise waters of the world's most southerly coral reef. Contorted trees, their branches draped in mosses, lichens and filmy ferns, dominate the primeval forests on the summits of Mount Gower and Mount Lidgbird. Beneath this dense tree canopy - just 5 metres tall - is a small but distinctive suite of tree ferns (which sometimes reach the canopy), ground ferns and herbs. These basalt mountains are regularly enveloped in cloud, creating cool moist conditions akin to those experienced by some Cool Temperate Rainforests on the Australian mainland. The summit forests spill over onto sheer cliffs. In these areas, the vegetation takes on a scrubby appearance with small-leaved shrubs among the rainforest trees, punctuated by rocky outcrops and open patches of grasses and sedges, dropping almost vertically to the sea in places.

A high proportion of the plants in Lord Howe's cloud forests are found nowhere else in the world<sup>29</sup>. The endemic species include most of the ferns and tree ferns on and around the mountain summits, as well as most of the woody species. Four of the island's six endemic vascular plant genera are found almost exclusively in the cloud forests (*Negria*, *Lepidorrhachis*, *Lordhowea* and *Hedyscepe*). The close evolutionary links with rainforests on New Caledonia and New Zealand are even more strongly evident in the Cloud Forest than in the other closed forests on the island. This is well illustrated by *Negria rhabdothamnoides* (Pumpkin Tree), the only tree in a family of 2,500 tropical and subtropical species of herbs, climbers and shrubs - the Gesneriaceae, which includes plants such as the African Violet. Its closest relatives are genera in New Caledonia (*Coronanthera* and *Depanthus*) and New Zealand (*Rhodothamnus*). The only other closely related genus in the region is *Fieldia*, a vine found in the Cool Temperate Rainforests of mainland Australia<sup>30</sup>.

Of the species and genera with broader distributions, some have northern affinities while others have closer connections to the south. For example *Zygogynum howeanum* (Hotbark), a 'primitive' flowering plant, has relatives in the same genus in New Caledonia, north-east Queensland, and from New Guinea west to the Moluccan Islands. *Dracophyllum fitzgeraldii* has its closest relatives in New Caledonia and north-east Queensland, although other species in the genus are found in south-eastern Australia and New Zealand. On the other hand, *Carmichaelia exsul*, a very rare shrub found on the rocky upper slopes of mountains on Lord Howe Island, is the only member of its genus that occurs outside New Zealand. Similarly, the sword sedge,

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Pickard, J, 1983

<sup>29</sup> Hutton, Ian, 1986

<sup>30</sup> Green, 1994

*Gahnia xanthocarpa*, is also found on the north island of New Zealand. Connections with the Australian mainland are shown by species such as *Blechnum patersonii* which occurs in both the cloud forests and a variety of mainland Australian rainforest communities.

The varied botanical relationships between land masses in the region suggest a complex dispersal history from multiple sources at multiple times. This is probably a legacy of past dispersal routes by birds along islands on the Lord Howe rise, as well as infrequent chance dispersal events over long distances on wind or ocean currents. The most bizarre and complex dispersal story belongs to *Dietes robinsoniana* (Wedding Lily). All the other species in this genus are native to southern Africa<sup>31</sup>, which last had a land connection to the Lord Howe Island rise (an underwater mountain range) through Australia and Antarctica more than 80 million years ago<sup>32</sup>. As the island itself only emerged above water some seven million years ago, *D. robinsoniana* must have dispersed there since that time.



**Figure 3** Wedding Lily (*Dietes robinsoniana*), a species endemic to Lord Howe Island and starting to find favour as an ornamental on the mainland. (Photo: Copyright Black Diamond Images)

The cloud forests and associated rocky scrubs cover no more than 300 hectares, making them the most restricted of all the classes of vegetation described for New South Wales. Even in the relatively inaccessible area of the mountain summits and the steep upper slopes seed predation by rats has had an impact on the regeneration capacity of Little Mountain Palm, a species which only regenerates readily where regular rat baiting occurs. Rats are the primary reason why the Little Mountain Palm and the gnarled mossy cloud forest have been listed as an endangered species and preliminarily listed as an Endangered Ecological Community respectively. Neither goats nor pigs managed to get above the 'Get Up Place' on Mount Gower but Cherry Guava has invaded as high as near the base of the Oceanic Cloud The cloud forests seem to have been affected much less than the rainforests at lower elevations by introduced weeds, goats and rats. The protection

<sup>31</sup> Hutton, Ian, 1986

<sup>32</sup> White 1986

of Oceanic Cloud Forest and Tobacco Bush is already well entrenched in the Big Pocket. These and other threats are highlighted in the LHI Biodiversity Management Plan 2007.

Global climate change may pose the greatest threat to these unique forests if cloud formation becomes less frequent, or if the height at which clouds usually form shifts above the mountain summits. Evidence of such worrying trends has emerged from research on oceanic mountains in Costa Rica<sup>33</sup>.

A *Poa* grassland community occurs on coral sand at a number of places around Lord Howe Island and is identified in the *LHI Biodiversity Management Plan 2007* as a landform community of conservation concern. The offshore islands of the LHIG are mainly grasslands. Blackburn Island in the lagoon used to be treed but was cleared and planted with the introduced Rhodes Grass, a species which has become a weed. Another important site is Muttonbird Point which has been invaded by Kikuyu, a stoloniferous grass species planted for fodder and its soil stabilisation properties but which now restricts access for nesting wedge-tailed shearwaters. While weeds rarely seem to displace native species on beach strands, a number of introduced plants on LHI have become problem weeds, including Buffalo Grass, *Senecio* and two species of *Euphorbia*.

Kikuyu can also be found on the track up Mount Gower on Lord Howe Island where the so-called “Low Road”, a narrow section of the track traversing the cliff face on the western side of Mount Lidgbird, south of Little Island, is a dense mat of this introduced grass. However, in this location it was planted with a purpose. Legendary mountain guide Ray Shick felt that action had to be taken to control erosion on this dangerous part of the track, where there is a sheer drop of 150 metres to the sea below. Consequently, he planted kikuyu on the section<sup>34</sup>. In November 2009, during the worst dry spell the island had recorded since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this belt of kikuyu appeared very distinctly as a yellow-brown band on the side of the mountain.

When Ray Shick planted Kikuyu on the Lower Road, there were still feral goats grazing on the island, their preferential browsing and camps being a major contributor to erosion. Kikuyu may have been a suitable pasture plant to withstand grazing but it restricts the regeneration of native grasses, shrubs and climbers. The Lord Howe Island Board sprays the Lower Road to reduce the trip hazard for walkers and has used hand weeding at the ‘Get Up Place’ and above, mainly to control the spread of *Erhata* grass. The Board has not yet had the resources to target Kikuyu in this area.

As on many islands, propagules of plant species can be found washed up on the beaches of Lord Howe Island, carried south by the Eastern Australian Current. In March 2010 the authors noted five coconuts in the strand line at Neds Beach. While the fruit of this species is known to be able to survive long periods in salt water and to germinate in new locations where it is washed up,

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<sup>33</sup> Pounds *et al.* 1999

<sup>34</sup> Ray Shick, pers. comm. 4 December 2009

Lord Howe Island is well south of the species' southern limit of natural distribution.

Exposed headlands and areas of coastal plateaux within the sea spray zone carry a structurally varied, although floristically simple, group of plant communities - the Coastal Headland Heaths. These include dense scrubs, open sedge-heaths, and grasslands with scattered shrubs, all of which occupy locally restricted patches but are scattered over a wide geographic range. Collectively, they occur on headlands along the entire NSW coast, extending into Victoria and Queensland and to many offshore islands, including LHI.

The scrubs are the simplest communities in this class, with canopies up to 5 metres tall and so dense that they exclude everything but a sprinkling of the most shade-tolerant grasses and sedges from beneath them. Floristically unique scrub communities in this class occur on the Lord Howe Island Group<sup>35</sup>.

The soils that develop on rocky headland substrates are loams and clays, but may in some cases also have significant amounts of sand, blown up from adjacent beach dunes. The soils are usually stained black with organic matter, because the high salt content slows decomposition, especially closest to the sea where the salt levels are highest<sup>36</sup>.

In contrast to the nutrients brought in as sea salt, soil phosphorus is strongly related to the parent material, the rocks from which the soils are derived. The droppings of nesting seabirds can add significantly to the nutrient levels on these headlands.

The species composition of Coastal Headland Heaths over time is dynamic, and this was well illustrated by the expansion of *Leptospermum laevigatum* (Coast Teatree) on LHI. Historically found no further north than Nambucca on the coast of NSW, it was planted further north to rehabilitate areas after sand mining and has since become naturalised. Colonising LHI, it became invasive in response to disturbance and has now almost been eradicated. LHI coastal scrubs dominated by the endemic species, *Leptospermum howeanum* provide important habitat for nesting seabirds. Table 1, below, lists those vegetation communities of the Lord Howe Island Group considered to be of particular conservation concern, as identified in the LHI Biodiversity Management Plan 2007.

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<sup>35</sup> Pickard 1983

<sup>36</sup> Adam *et al.* 1989

<b>Community</b>	<b>Status / threat</b>
<b>Closed forest communities</b>	
Blackbutt ( <i>Cryptocarya gregsonii</i> ) Closed Forest	Restricted distribution; threatened by Crofton Weed
Greybark-Blackbutt ( <i>Drypetes deplanchei</i> - <i>Cryptocarya triplinervis</i> ) Closed Forest on calcarenite / coral sand	Extent of clearing/fragmentation; weed invasion
Big Mountain Palm ( <i>Hedyscepe canterburyana</i> ) Closed Sclerophyll Forest	Climate change
Kentia Palm ( <i>Howea forsteriana</i> ) Closed Sclerophyll Forest on calcarenite/coral sand	Extent of clearing ; fragmentation
Sallywood ( <i>Lagunaria patersonia</i> ) Closed Swamp Forest*	Restricted distribution; extent of clearing
Lowland Mixed Closed Forest	Threatened by weed invasion
Hotbark-Fitzgeraldii ( <i>Zygogynum howeanum</i> - <i>Dracophyllum fitzgeraldii</i> ) Gnarled Mossy Closed Forest (Cloud Forest)	Restricted distribution; climate change
<b>Scrub communities</b>	
Mangrove ( <i>Aegiceras corniculatum</i> ) Closed Scrub	Restricted distribution; grazing and trampling; weed invasion; climate change
Alyxia squamulosa – <i>Coprosma inopinata</i> Dwarf Scrub	Very restricted distribution, weed invasion
Saltbush ( <i>Atriplex cinerea</i> ) Dwarf Scrub	Very restricted distribution
Mangrove ( <i>Avicennia marina</i> v. <i>australasica</i> ) Open Scrub	Very restricted distribution
Mixed Fern and Herb	Restricted distribution; weed invasion, particularly by Crofton Weed & Tiger Lily; climate change
Fitzgeraldii-Mountain Rose ( <i>Dracophyllum fitzgeraldii</i> - <i>Metrosideros nervulosa</i> ) Closed Scrub	Climate change
<b>Grass communities</b>	
Poa poiformis Grassland	Restricted distribution on main island; invasion by Kikuyu; risk of Kikuyu reaching offshore islands
<b>Specialised landform communities</b>	
Coral Sand Beach and Dune Community	Moderately restricted distribution; clearing ; disturbance
Waterfall Cliff Community	Threatened by weed invasion, particularly Crofton Weed
<b>Aquatic communities</b>	
Upland Freshwater Instream Community	Restricted distribution; climate change
Lowland Freshwater Instream Community	Restricted distribution; clearing, grazing and trampling; climate change

\* Listed as an Endangered Ecological Community on the TSC Act.

**Table 1.** Vegetation communities of particular conservation concern of the Lord Howe Island Group

### Vertebrate Fauna

The following information has been extracted from the *LHI Biodiversity Management Plan* (2007). The terrestrial vertebrate fauna of the island is dominated by birds, as is typical of remote oceanic islands. One hundred and eighty-two species of birds are recorded from the LHIG, of which 20 are resident landbirds, 14 are breeding seabirds, 17 are regular visitors and 120 are vagrants. Lord Howe Island is reputed to have more sea birds breeding in higher numbers than anywhere else in Australia. In addition to the species recorded at the time of European settlement, 18 land bird species and 5 sea bird species have since established populations on the LHIG, either through intentional human introduction or unassisted colonisation.

Two species of reptile (the Lord Howe Island Gecko *Christinus guerntheri* and the Lord Howe Island Skink *Cyclodina lichenigera*) and two species of microchiropteran bat complete the indigenous terrestrial fauna of the LHIG at the time of European settlement. One of the bats, the Lord Howe Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus howensis*) was endemic but is thought to be extinct, while the surviving bat species, the Large Forest Bat (*Vespodelus darlingtoni*) is also found widely in south-eastern Australia.

### Invertebrate Fauna

The following information has been extracted from the *LHI Biodiversity Management Plan* (2007). The terrestrial invertebrate fauna of the LHIG is characterised by relatively high species richness and high endemism with up to 60% of some groups comprising endemic species. More than 1600 terrestrial invertebrate species have been recorded, including 157 land and freshwater snails, 464 beetles, 27 ants, 183 spiders, 21 earthworms, 137 butterflies and moths and 71 springtails. The rate of discovery of new species remains high, indicating that numerous endemic species are yet to be discovered.

Information concerning declines and extinctions amongst the indigenous invertebrate fauna since European settlement is incomplete. Cassis et al. (2003) provides a preliminary assessment of the conservation status of the Formicidae (ants), Coleoptera (beetles) and Araneae (spiders), identifying one endemic ant and ten endemic beetles which may be extinct and six endemic ants, 38 endemic beetles and nine endemic spiders at risk of extinction. The majority of beetles classified as presumed extinct were large, often flightless species. Other invertebrates thought to be extinct or 'at risk' include a number of land snails and freshwater snails, as well as an earthworm, a phasmid and a cockroach.

Introduced invertebrate species currently comprise about 5% of the recorded invertebrate fauna, including ten land snails and slugs, at least 19 beetles, at least four ants, four spiders, five earthworms and six butterflies and moths. Some introduced invertebrate species are restricted to the settlement area, as they are dependent on human habitation, exotic garden plants or exotic pasture, while others are now widely distributed in natural habitats across the main island and at least some of the offshore islands.



### Marine and Intertidal Fauna

The warm waters around Lord Howe Island enable the growth of corals, invertebrates such as urchins, sea stars, crabs, snails, clams, slugs and worms and an enormous diversity of fish (around 500 species although many of these are present in very small numbers as few actually reproduce in the area).



**Figure 4** Elongated Giant Clam (*Tridacna maxima*), exposed at low tide on the reef near North Bay. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 28 November 2009)

### Extinct Species

Birds were the first indication of the fauna of Lord Howe Island, which had apparently escaped detection by both non-European (e.g. Polynesian, Micronesian, Chinese) and European explorers until 1788. The first documented intimation of the island's possible existence was a vast cloud of seabirds observed in the general area by the French explorer La Perouse<sup>37</sup> who visited Botany Bay only two days after the arrival there by the First Fleet in January 1788. He reported what he had seen to the British colonists and the First Fleet ship *Supply* subsequently found Lord Howe Island in February 1788 while en route to Norfolk Island. The *Supply* landed the first known human visitors on the island about a month later, on 12 March 1788, initiating human-induced changes that were to have a dramatic impact on both the natural vegetation and the animals it supported.

The natural features of Lord Howe Island have certainly shaped or influenced human life. Its very isolation in the Tasman Sea, at a considerable distance from both the east coast of Australia and from New Zealand, made it a welcome re-victualling stop for early colonial ships and whalers. Its rich terrestrial and marine wildlife sustained early human settlers and visiting sailors alike, unfortunately leading to the extinction of several endemic land birds. The ground-dwelling species had no natural predators on the island and they and the turtles were easy game for the early visitors and settlers. The island was described as 'a convenient larder for the starving convict colony [of New South Wales], and in the following years [after 1788] it was systematically plundered'<sup>38</sup>. Flannery and Schouten discuss the fate of one of the now-extinct birds, *Porphyrio albus* (the White Gallinule) as follows<sup>39</sup>:

*'Among the birds found on the island, all of which were remarkably tame, the stately white gallinule was chicken-sized with a solid red beak and yellowish-red legs. It was clearly a relative of the cosmopolitan purple swamphen, but was flightless, white, and possessed of a more robust bill. Nothing is known of its habits, but given the purple swamphen's propensity to carnivory, it may have been a predator on the chicks of the other bird species that swarmed the island.'*

<sup>37</sup> Flannery & Schouten 2001, p.12

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

*Today the white gallinule is sunk in mystery. Just two skins survive, one in Liverpool [England] and one in Vienna, both of which date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and are of somewhat uncertain provenance. Some ornithologists dispute that the skins are from Lord Howe Island at all, but historical records confirm that such a bird once existed on the island. One of Lord Howe Island's earliest visitors was Arthur Bowes Smythe of the Lady Penrhyn, who landed in May 1788. So taken was he with the idyllic, palm-clad island and its utterly tame birds that he wrote 'when I was in the woods amongst the birds I cd. not help picturing to myself the Golden Age as described by Ovid'. Bowes Smythe also wrote of encountering 'fowls or coots some white, some blue and white, others all blue wt. Large red bills'. Some researchers have speculated that the blue birds were purple gallinules (which exist on the island today), and that the blue-and-white birds were hybrids with the white gallinule. Others, however, consider that all belonged to one variable species.*

*So little is known of the white gallinule that it is impossible to determine whether it became extinct as early as 1788, or whether it survived until 1834 when the island was first settled. Whatever the case it was clearly gone by 1844. The cause of its demise was almost certainly outright slaughter, for it was not timid and could easily be killed with sticks. It is possible that hybridisation with the purple swampphen may also have played a role. Rats and cats cannot be blamed, for they arrived much later."*

Another bird endemic to Lord Howe Island that has become extinct is *Zosterops strenuus* (the Robust White-eye), a sparrow-sized bird known to the islanders as 'big grinnels'. They were apparently disliked by the locals because they raided crops and sucked the eggs of other birds.<sup>40</sup> Before the arrival of rats on Lord Howe in 1918 there were thousands of the white-eyes. Flannery and Schouten write:

*"The alarmed islanders introduced owls (which had not existed there before) to control the rats, but that only made matters worse as the owls preyed on the native island life as well. The rats, and to a lesser extent the owls, soon wrought a wave of destruction that was to carry away a whole suite of species – lizards, insects, land snails and of course birds, of which the robust white-eye was one."<sup>41</sup>*

*Gerygone insularis* (the Lord Howe Island Gerygone) is extinct, a victim of predation by rats. Nine of the 26 land bird species on LHI at the time of European settlement (all endemic species or subspecies) have become extinct<sup>42</sup>.

## **Key Threats - Unwanted Immigrants**

### **Goats and Pigs**

Goats and pigs were introduced to Lord Howe Island very early by whalers seeking to ensure a ready supply of food for their subsequent visits. Pig and goat hunts later became popular pastimes for island residents, providing them with recreational

<sup>40</sup> Flannery & Schouten, p.128

<sup>41</sup> The LHI Boobook Owl, endemic to the island, is presumed to have become extinct due to competition with the introduced Masked Owl.

<sup>42</sup> *LHI Biodiversity Management Plan 2007*, p.10

outlets and a supplement to their food supply. While these animals played some part in the cultural history of the island, together with other introduced species such as rats, mice and Big-Headed Ants, they have proved devastating to its natural environment.

Feral goats, pigs and rodents preferentially target palatable species and alter succession through grazing, seed predation, erosion and trampling. This makes disturbed areas more prone to weed invasion following eradication (unless weeding operations are conducted prior to or soon after feral pest eradication). Some plant species such as *Marattia howeana* (King Fern) were heavily impacted by pigs.

### Rodents

There have been other immigrants to Lord Howe Island of a non-human and very much unwanted variety. It is thought that mice (specimens of *Mus musculus*, the house mouse) were inadvertently introduced to the island in 1860<sup>43</sup>. Then, in 1918, disaster really struck. The Burns Philp trading vessel *Makambo* became stranded on the reef off Ned's Beach and cargo jettisoned from the ship in an effort to refloat it contained rats (*Rattus rattus*, the ship rat) which came ashore. 'Ship rats were widespread on the island by 1920, when the Island Board of Control (a forerunner of the current LHI Board) encouraged rat control. Despite various efforts to reduce their numbers, rats remained widespread and abundant across the island; with densities of up to 94 per hectare being reported in the mid-1980s<sup>44</sup>. Trapping by researchers at Transit Hill / Clear Place have found population densities of 31-64 rats per hectare and 67-81 mice per hectare<sup>45</sup>. Today, rodents are only known on the main island but rats are competent swimmers and so could potentially occur on other islands within the LHI Group'.<sup>46</sup> Fortunately, surveys of these islands in 2009 and 2010 found no evidence of exotic species including rats, mice, garden skinks or bleating tree frogs on these islands.

Rodents are almost certainly responsible for the demise of the Lord Howe Island Phasmid on the main island although it was discovered to have survived on the isolated Ball's Pyramid. A recent captive breeding program has rescued the phasmid from the brink of extinction and hopefully its future will be secure if rodents are finally eradicated from Lord Howe Island.

A lengthy and well-managed program of baiting covers only 10% of the island and only manages rat numbers in those areas. Rodents continue to pose a threat to the palm seed industry by eating the seeds and are also implicated in a relatively recent outbreak of Pink Rot, a local pathogen that is affecting the palms on the southern slope of Transit Hill. Dr Edward Liew, a plant pathologist from the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, recently inspected a patch of dead and dying palms which are suffering from lesions which appear to be originating from rodents chewing the stems to obtain water<sup>47</sup>. Hopefully, this problem will be reduced now that good rainfall has

<sup>43</sup> Woodford, James, *SMH* 31 October – 1 November 2009

<sup>44</sup> Miller & Mulette, 1985

<sup>45</sup> H. Bower, pers.comm.

<sup>46</sup> Draft LHI Rodent Eradication Plan October 2009, p.3

<sup>47</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal*, vol.6, no.101, 5 March 2010, p.1

terminated one of the island's worst droughts on record. As on the mainland, other plant pathogens such as *Phytophthora* and Myrtle Rust also pose major threats to the island's plant communities, requiring ongoing research and carefully planned management regimes.

Planned for 2014 is a comprehensive aerial baiting program with cereal laced with the rodenticide Bromifacoum. Pre-eradication planning and trials commenced in 2011-12. This program will require safeguards including capture and protective custody of many of the island's rare birds, particularly the woodhen and currawongs, slaughter or relocation to the mainland of cattle and poultry and other protective measures to minimise adverse environmental impacts. While such programs have proved successful in eradicating rodents from a number of other islands off the coast of New Zealand and in the Pacific, these have mostly been uninhabited or with very small human populations. There are concerns in the Lord Howe Island community about impacts on humans, including possible contamination of groundwater. At the time of writing of this report, the Board had completed a major public consultation exercise on the proposal and was awaiting research findings from CSIRO and others.

### **Invasive Plants**

Weeds present one of the greatest threats to the island's biodiversity. The LHI Weed Management Strategy identified 670 introduced plants, of which 271 were considered to have invasive characteristics, with 40 'iseries' weeds identified as invading the Permanent Park Preserve. Many weed species thrive on the rich soils in sites previously disturbed by clearing. Feral pigs and goats (now eradicated from the island) increased weed incursion into more remote areas by dispersing their seeds and disturbing the soil. Aggressive species such as *Ageratina adenophora* (Crofton Weed) have apparently further expanded their populations since pigs and goats were eliminated from the island, leaving them free to rapidly exploit the open spaces<sup>48</sup>. Some plant species that have become major weeds had considerable cultural heritage values. The Cherry Guava, for instance, was introduced to the island by whalers as a source of Vitamin C, helping to reduce the risk of scurvy on long sea voyages. Subsequent settlers prized the guava for jam and dessert making but its highly invasive properties posed a major threat to the World Heritage values of the island. Excellent progress on weed control is being made by teams of "weeders", some employed by the Lord Howe Island Board; others volunteer members of The Friends of Lord Howe Island.

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<sup>48</sup> Hutton, Ian, pers. comm., 2002

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

A geological formation, fossil site, ecological community, island, soil site, river flats, estuary, mountain range, reef, lake, woodland, seagrass bed, wetland, desert, alps, plain, valley, headland, evidence of flooding, earthquake, bushfire and other natural occurrences.

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Lord Howe Island Group and Maritime Environs Landscape Conservation Area, comprising the Admiralty Group, Mutton Bird Island, Gower Island, Lord Howe Island and Balls Pyramid; Mount Lidgbird; Mount Gower; Mount Eliza; the lagoon<sup>49</sup>. The Lord Howe Island Group already has World Heritage status<sup>50</sup> and is listed on the State Heritage Register.

There are 168 species of birds including the Lord Howe Island Woodhen and extensive colonies of seabirds that live on or visit the island group.

Endemic plant species including four endemic species of palm.

Natural landscape with re-forestation, Lagoon Road, in vicinity of Dignam House, Government Road,<sup>51</sup>

Fossil site of extinct horned turtle.

### **Items already protected**

The Lord Howe Island Group already has World Heritage status<sup>52</sup> and is listed on the State Heritage Register.

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

The Lord Howe Island Group should be listed on the LEP Schedule with an indication that it is on the State Heritage Register. It is considered that the World Heritage listing, SHR listing and current management by the NSW Marine Parks Authority and the Lord Howe Island Board provide sufficient recognition and adequate management of the natural and scientific values of the Lord Howe Island Group.

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<sup>49</sup> Classified listing on the Register of the National Trust of Australia (New South Wales), 23 September 1974

<sup>50</sup> World Heritage List, 1982

<sup>51</sup> RES LH 22

<sup>52</sup> World Heritage List, 1982

## 2.2 Peopling Australia

### 2.2.1 Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures

*Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures.*

*Activities associated with maintaining, developing, experiencing and remembering Aboriginal cultural identities and practices, past and present; with demonstrating distinctive ways of life; and with interactions demonstrating race relations.*

Lord Howe Island's origin from volcanic activity 7-8 million years ago means that it had no geological relationship to the continental land mass which became Australia (following the breakup of the supercontinent Gondwana). Consequently there was no association with the original inhabitants of the landmass from which the Australian mainland was derived. There is no evidence either, that eastern coastal tribes tackled the sea journey across the unpredictable waters of the Tasman Sea to the island, or in fact, could have succeeded, given their limited outer ocean-seafaring skills had they attempted it.

There has been no evidence to date either of discovery or settlement by any other peoples of the Pacific region, including Polynesians, Melanesians or Micronesians. It would not be improbable to imagine that the warm current extending southwards from Vanuatu along the eastern coast of Australia and sweeping west towards Lord Howe Island (bringing with it the warm waters that support the coral growth) could have brought Melanesians (including those from the Torres Strait and New Guinea); or that the adventurous seafaring Polynesians (including the Maori) with their well-developed navigational skills might have found and colonised it. There is archaeological evidence of Polynesian settlement on Norfolk Island circa 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries AD<sup>53</sup>, to the north of Lord Howe Island, as well as later Polynesian influences attributed to the Tahitian wives of the Pitcairn mutineers who settled there in the 1850s.

Another possibility might have been that Lord Howe Island, although uninhabited by humans at the time of European discovery in 1788, might have archaeological evidence confirming that it had been previously occupied. This theory prompted archaeologists from the University of Wollongong in 1996 to undertake surveys and radiocarbon dating of unconsolidated sediments overlying the geological strata on the island. They found no evidence in analysis of pollens or charcoal deposits, which might have indicated human colonisation earlier than the first documented account of Europeans landing on Lord Howe Island.<sup>54</sup>

When the first European visitors stepped ashore in 1788, they noted an island rich in abundant wildlife, densely clothed in thick undergrowth but uninhabited by humans.

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<sup>53</sup> Anderson, Atholl & White, Peter 2001, 'Prehistoric settlement on Norfolk Island and its Oceanic context', in *The Prehistoric Archaeology of Norfolk Island, Southwest Pacific*, ed. Atholl Anderson and Peter White, pp.135–141. *Records of the Australian Museum, Supplement 27*. Sydney: Australian Museum.

<sup>54</sup> Anderson, Atholl, 'Investigating early settlement on Lord Howe Island', *Australian Archaeology*, Vol. 57, pp. 98-102.

Lieutenant Watts, travelling on the *Lady Penryhn*, in May that year recorded that ‘the inhabitants of this island were all of the feathered tribe...’. Fellow mariner, Surgeon Arthur Bowes Smyth, also on board the same ship, described the fearlessness of the birds which were so tame they could be picked off the branches of trees. Until the arrival of these Europeans, the birds had had nothing to fear.

Lieutenant Ball and subsequent early diarists made no mention of any indigenous occupation of the island and no evidence has come to light that would suggest they had missed any encounter with humans. There are however accounts of subsequent visits to the island by indigenous people from the mainland of Australia.

Island folklore recalls an Aboriginal man named ‘Black Billy’, of Tasmanian aboriginal extraction who came to Lord Howe Island as one of two deserters from the ship ‘*Aladdin*’. He was employed by the Andrews family in the mid-1850s but failed to return from a day’s hunting trip with his fellow deserter and was never seen again<sup>55</sup>. His unexplained disappearance has given rise to a legend that his ghostly form appears on Smoking Tree Ridge.

In 1869 Water Police Magistrate, P.L. Cloete and his party were dispatched by the NSW Government to investigate a criminal matter on the island. Cloete’s party included Edward S Hill, who authored a comprehensive account of the visit. Hill records that Cloete brought with him ‘Tombone’, an aboriginal of New South Wales. According to surveyor, R D Fitzgerald, also a member of Cloete’s group, ‘Tombone’ was a tracker from the Shoalhaven district. He recounts an attempted ascent of Mount Gower by a party of ‘five travellers, one Australian black and two guides’.<sup>56</sup> Tombone or ‘Shoalhaven Billy’, as he was also known, assisted the botanists collecting specimens by scaling trees to collect flowers and astounded everyone with his many remarkable talents in a totally unfamiliar environment. Fitzgerald observed that ‘the darkie breaks a twig as he goes, no doubt thinking of the return track’<sup>57</sup> and that Shoalhaven Billy was in charge of the returning party, bringing them out at nightfall at the settlement and distributing them ‘at the other end of the island whether homestead or tent, sometime during the night’<sup>58</sup>. His bush skills earned high commendation from Fitzgerald who wrote “If honour is due to the native guide in Australia, ‘tis doubly due to Billy from Shoalhaven, in a strange land’.<sup>59</sup>

Like most of their contemporaries, these Europeans used what are now regarded as highly pejorative terms such as ‘darkie’ and ‘black boy’ to describe Aborigines but these early government visitors to Lord Howe Island undoubtedly respected the Aborigines’ knowledge of the Australian bush which was so alien to men from Britain.

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<sup>55</sup> Nichols, D p.66

<sup>56</sup> Fitzgerald p.41

<sup>57</sup> *ibid*

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*

<sup>59</sup> *ibid*

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Place name, camp site, midden, fish trap, trade route, massacre site, shipwreck contact site, missions and institutions, whaling station, pastoral workers camp, timber mill settlement, removed children's home, town reserve, protest site, places relating to self-determination, keeping place, resistance & protest sites, places of segregation, places of indentured labour, places of reconciliation

**Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme.**

No definitive places but accounts by Hill and Fitzgerald are relevant archival documents.

**Items already protected**

The Lord Howe Island Group is already listed on the State Heritage Register.

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

None.

**Further recommendations**

The early visits by Aborigines should be noted in the history section of the SHR data sheet.



## 2.2.2 Convict

*Activities relating to incarceration, transport, reform, accommodation and working during the convict period in NSW (1788-1850) – does not include activities associated with the conviction of persons in NSW that are unrelated to the imperial ‘convict system’: use the theme of Law & Order for such activities*

On 14 February, 1788, nineteen days after Governor Arthur Phillip disembarked in Port Jackson to proclaim the first British colony in Australia, *HMS Supply*, one of the two naval escort ships which accompanied the First Fleet of settlers to Australia, set sail for Norfolk Island. The intention was to establish a further colony there ‘with the idea of cultivating and improving the Flax plant and Cutting down Fir Trees’ to provide materials to repair masts and sails on ships of the British fleet<sup>60</sup>. On board, under the command of Lieutenant Henry Lidgbird Ball and Master, David Blackburn, was a detachment led by Lieutenant Phillip Gidley King who was to act as Norfolk Island’s first Superintendent. Accompanying them were a surgeon, a midshipman, a master weaver, 9 male convicts and 6 female convicts. En route, almost mid-point between Sydney and Norfolk Island, Lt Ball discovered and named Lord Howe Island on 17 February,<sup>61</sup> returning on 13 March 1788 to claim possession to prevent French occupation. The two ships of the La Perouse expedition had landed at Botany Bay only two days after the First Fleet and the British officers would have been worried that after leaving the NSW mainland, La Perouse might happen upon Lord Howe Island and claim it for France. The *Seven Years War* between Britain and France had ended with the *Peace of Paris* in 1763, resulting in France ceding Canada, Mississippi and the control of India to Britain. However, in 1778 France had joined the American colonies in the War of Independence against Britain. Under the Treaty of Versailles in 1783 Britain had accepted the independence of the 13 American colonies but had retained New Brunswick and the West Indies. By 1788 France was bankrupt and the following year would be plunged into revolution.

Lt Ball considered the island to be a “*Valuable Acquisition for the Colony*” but could find “*no Running stream of fresh water*”<sup>62</sup>. Lord Howe Island was, however, of no interest as a site for penal incarceration, as Governor Arthur Phillip pointed out, writing to British Home Secretary Lord Sydney on 15 May 1788:

*“Lieutenant Ball examined it on his return and says it abounds in turtle but unfortunately has no good anchoring ground”*<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Letter from David Blackburn to his sister Margaret, 12 July 1788, MLMSS 6937/1/1. It was assumed that the tall thin trunks of the Norfolk Island Pines would make good spars for sailing ship, but the wood was too soft to withstand the enormous tension placed on them under full sail.

<sup>61</sup> Lord Howe Island was named in honour of Admiral of the British Fleet Richard Howe, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Howe KG, a distinguished naval officer who served in the American War of Independence and the French Revolutionary Wars.

<sup>62</sup> Governor Arthur Phillip to Lord Sydney, 15 May 1788 MLMSS

<sup>63</sup> Letter from David Blackburn to his sister Margaret, July 12 1788 MLMSS 6937/1/1. It was assumed that the tall thin trunks of the Norfolk Island Pines would make good spars for sailing ship, but the wood was too soft to withstand the enormous tension placed on them under full sail.

The significance of Ball's discovery of Lord Howe Island, for a colony starved of fresh food and facing dire food shortages, was the abundance of wildlife, both on the island and in the waters surrounding it. To prove his point, he captured a quantity of turtles, which he carried back to Sydney as gifts for the Governor and the colony. Turtle meat, although prized as a delicacy, was also a combatant against scurvy and the prospect of a plentiful supply close by for a community in crisis would have raised the hopes of officials anxious to combat this serious illness.

The *HMS Supply* subsequently made four return trips, the last in January 1790, when a small party stayed on the island for fifteen days (the longest time ashore of the four voyages) hunting for turtles. It is inferred from the accounts in contemporary journals that the ship's company on these expeditions were naval officers, midshipmen and sailors as there is no mention of convict labour being assigned to assist in this work. Had the supply of turtles been more prolific and less dependent on seasonal variations, the future of the island may have taken a different course.<sup>64</sup>

Despite Governor Phillip's attempts to discourage visiting ships from using the wildlife on Lord Howe Island for provisions when his colony had greater demands, three of the convict transport ships of the First Fleet returning under charter to England via China to take on cargo of tea, the *Lady Penrhyn*,<sup>65</sup> the *Charlotte*<sup>66</sup> and the *Scarborough*, called in at Lord Howe Island while *Supply* was there in May 1788. Thomas Gilbert, the Commander of the *Charlotte* wrote in his diary for 7 May 1788 that before he left England he 'had entered into the usual obligations, not to allow any convicts under my charge to escape, not to bring any away with me'.<sup>67</sup>

Some of the ships of the Second and Third Fleets, their convict cargo duly off-loaded in Sydney, headed east towards the whaling grounds off South America, may possibly have called at Lord Howe Island to replenish their food supplies. The *Queen* (Third Fleet) was despatched to Norfolk Island to recover the large contingent of naval personnel and evacuees stranded on Norfolk Island following the sinking of *Sirius* on its approach through dangerous surf. It is likely that they may have called in at Lord Howe Island to procure fresh birds and fish for the contingent who had been facing serious starvation during their lengthy wait for rescue. The final visitor from the convict fleet was the *Gorgon* (a storeship accompanying the Third Fleet), which left Sydney in December 1791 to return to England. James Scott, the Sergeant of Marines, recorded his fruitless attempt to capture live birds, before heading off back to England via the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>68</sup>

Any association Lord Howe Island may have had with convict transport ships sailing between Sydney and Norfolk Island would have ceased in 1814 with the closure that year of the penal colony on Norfolk Island, but may have re-commenced in 1824, when Norfolk Island was re-established as a place of incarceration, this time for the very worst felons.

<sup>64</sup> MLMSS 6320 Hunter's journal [C 689](#)

<sup>65</sup> *Journal of the Voyage from Portsmouth to NSW and China in the Lady Penrhyn* by Arthur Bowes Smyth, Surgeon, 1788-1789, MSS

<sup>66</sup> *Voyage from New South Wales to Canton, 1788* by Thomas Gilbert, published London 1789

<sup>67</sup> *ibid*

<sup>68</sup> James Scott

## A Potential Penal Colony

The serious overcrowding of convict gaols in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land was the instigation for another consideration, in 1834, of Lord Howe Island as a penal settlement. *The Sydney Gazette* reported on 18 December 1834 that:

*'The expedition to Howe's Island<sup>69</sup>, for the purpose of reporting on the practicability of devoting it to the purposes of an enlarged prison, upon the principle of Norfolk Island, is the first indication of the abandonment of Moreton Bay, a place where facilities to escape are numerous and where the ague and other afflictions and diseases prevail to a fearful extent. To be perfect a penal settlement for the reception of double convicted, and desperate offenders must be wholly destitute of every possible incentive for the convict to put restraint and discipline at such defiance, and to encounter the hazard of the wild bush and savages, in the desperate hope of avoiding the affliction of one evil for others of less possible occurrence. In this respect Howe's Island will be preferable to Moreton Bay – and we believe the rigorous enforcement of the code of penal regulations adopted to punish second offenders, and yet preserve the dictates of humanity from unnecessary violation, will operate as the instrument of reforming the objects of immediate correction; and present a terror to those who by pursuing a career of violence and depravity, have before them the certain prospect of detection and disgraceful punishment.'*

H J White, Assistant Surveyor to Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell, was sent to Lord Howe Island aboard the revenue cutter, *Prince George* under the command of Captain Roach. He had been directed by the Government to collect an escaped convict from Van Diemen's Land and some members of the crew of the *Adelaide* who had disembarked on the Island in October 1834. While on Lord Howe, White conducted a preliminary survey of the island to investigate its potential as a suitable site for a penal settlement.<sup>70</sup>

White offered a physical description of the island noting that 'from the shallowness of the water on the Bar and in the Harbour it will not afford anchorage to vessels of more than 30 or 40 tons' (i.e. not suitable for the type of vessels that would be needed for the transport of felons) and that 'fresh water is scarce, there being but one stream of any size at the foot of the most northern mountain, and a small lagoon in the centre of the island, both liable to be exhausted'. More importantly, he was of the opinion that 'the soil does not seem fit for the growth of wheat'<sup>71</sup>.

*The Sydney Morning Herald* of 8 January 1835 took issue with White's observation about the availability of water, reporting the following:

*'HOWE'S ISLAND – Complaints have been made of the want of water at this settlement, which is well founded, would of course have the effect of rendering impracticable any intention of settling on these shores. We are, however, of opinion that such complaint cannot be well founded, as the high ridge of*

<sup>69</sup> *The Sydney Gazette*, 18 December 1834

<sup>70</sup> Rabone pp.23-24

<sup>71</sup> H J White in NSW Parliamentary Papers etc., p. 3

*mountains on its surface and other appearances, renders it certain that water, if sought for, cannot but be obtained’.*

All things considered, the Government formed the view that a penal settlement on Lord Howe Island would have little chance of success and the island escaped any further such attention before the transportation of convicts to New South Wales from England was officially abolished on 1 October 1850.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme.**

Prison, convict shipwreck, convict system document, ticket-of-leave and probationary living quarters, guards uniform, landscapes-of-control, lumber yard, quarry, gallows site, convict-built structure, convict ship arrival site, convict barracks, convict hospital, estate based on convict labour, place of secondary punishment.

**Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme.**

No structures or archaeological remains associated with convicts are known although the island was at one time proposed as a penal settlement and reports into the feasibility of such settlement are relevant documentary evidence.

Government reports and archival records, most of which are in Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW or in State Records.

**Items already protected**

None

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

None

**Further recommendations**

The proposals to establish a penal colony on Lord Howe Island in the 19<sup>th</sup> century should be added to the history section in the SHR data sheet.

### 2.2.3 Ethnic Influences

*Activities associated with common cultural traditions and peoples of shared descent, and with exchanges between such traditions and peoples.*

The discovery of Lord Howe Island was made by British sailors en route from Sydney to Norfolk Island but at the time, the island held little interest for British or colonial authorities who were struggling to make a go of settlement on Norfolk Island. The names of many of the island's natural features as discovered in 1788 owe their origin to identities significant to the British government and the Admiralty at that time. Itinerant whalers stopping at Lord Howe Island from the 1830s onwards came from many different backgrounds, but they rarely stayed for long and appear to have left little or no evidence.

The earliest settlers hailed from faraway places - England, Portugal, America, South Africa, Micronesia, New Zealand and of course, Australia. In their new home they were forced to turn an ingenious hand to whatever bounty they could exact from providence; they became farmers, fishermen, hunters, barterers and traders<sup>72</sup>. Lord Howe Island's cultural heritage has been shaped by their ethnic influences which have blended English, European, American and Pacific Island traditions over 170 years of settlement.

The first record of human settlement on Lord Howe Island dates from June 1834 when a party of British whalers landed, with the intention of establishing a shore-based whaling supply station. Whaling had become a profitable industry in the south-western waters of the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea, known as the Middle Whaling Ground, which were fertile hunting grounds for several species of whales, seals and large fish. There was a ready market for seal fur and skin, but it was whalebone (for corsetry) and meat, along with the oil (for lighting) and blubber that were in high demand.

With whale stocks depleted in the North Atlantic, American and British whalers had ventured further afield to the Indian and Pacific Oceans to hunt their quarry. Sydney and Hobart had become significant ports for home-based and international whalers, as had settlements along the coast of the South Island of New Zealand. However, increasing inter-tribal tension among the Maori which led to attacks on whaling stations, saw operators quit for safer locations.

Sydney merchant, Robert Campbell whose mercantile interests extended to several whaling stations in New Zealand did just that. His business associate, a Captain Blenkinsoppe,<sup>73</sup> set sail for calmer waters, travelling to Lord Howe Island aboard the whaling ship *Caroline* with the intention of establishing there a whaling station to provision the passing trade. On board were three British whalers, George Ashdown, James Bishop and a Mister Chapman, each accompanied by a Maori wife, and one child and possibly an adolescent Maori boy. This group of European and Maori settlers were the first known inhabitants of the island. They established their settlement at the northern end of Hunter Bay, on the north-west side of the island

<sup>72</sup> *Lord Howe Island 1788-1888*

<sup>73</sup> Captain Blenkinsopp is spelt variously as Blinkensorp, Blinkinhorpe, Blenkinhorpe

where they built five huts, on either side of a fresh water creek. They also established at least one garden behind the Blinkenthorpe (now Blinky) Beach dune within six months of their arrival<sup>74</sup>.

Although these first settlers were never long term residents, archaeological evidence recovered in 2004 by Kimberley Owens, a researcher from the Australian National University, from excavations of the sites of first settlement is confirmation that the earliest structures and lifestyle were influenced by traditional Polynesian culture. Owens' findings from a series of digs and the use of ground-penetrating radar suggest their dwellings, diet and methods of food preparation were influenced by Maori customs. Huts were made from palm logs and clad with thatch of overlapping and interwoven palm fronds held down by split palm battens. The diet of these early settlers included shellfish prepared in accordance with Polynesian tradition.



**Figure 5** Kim Owens (right) and volunteer assistant Hugh on site at the Old Nichols Garden, North Bay. (Photo: S Thompson)

Of particular significance is the style of thatched structures, which continued to be constructed on the island, long after the first settlers left, and the agricultural practice of farming in small cleared areas or 'gardens', similar to the subsistence farming of the Maori. However, Owens notes that the cultural and professional background of the first settlers, rather than simply their ethnicity, profoundly influenced the pattern of settlement on the island and the social interaction between them.<sup>75</sup> Theirs was a story more of adaptation of traditional ways of life and work, born of necessity due to the isolated nature of the island, rather than the application of distinct ethno-cultural customs with significant enduring impact.

The arrival of more settlers on Lord Howe Island during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century brought the ethnic diversification which has underpinned the cultural diversity of the island to this day. Edward S Hill's summary of the origins of the families inhabiting the island in 1869 provides an interesting overview of their origins and includes those who came to stay permanently.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> White 1835

<sup>75</sup> Kimberley Owens

<sup>76</sup> Hill

<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Origin(s)</b>
David Whybrow, (master mariner); wife and daughter	Sydney
Edward King (mariner)	England
Perry Johnson (mariner); wife, Sarah Johnson	America Cape of Good Hope
Campbell Stevens, (postmaster)	NSW
Thomas Mooney (farmer); wife Mary Mooney	Hobart, Tasmania Ireland
William Nichols (farmer)	Hobart, Tasmania
John Lewis (farmer); wife, Ellen Lewis	England England
W O Spurling (master mariner)	England
Henry Wainwright (carpenter); wife JE	England Hunter River, NSW
A I Mosely (mariner); wife, Johanna Britton	England Arrived from Sydney
W Field (master mariner); wife, Mary Field	America Ireland
Nathan (identified as Matthew) C Thompson (master mariner) and Bogoroo and Boque	America South Sea Islands
David Lloyd (mariner); wife Mary and daughter Alice, married to John Leonard (sailor)	Wales America
Margaret Andrews, widow and daughter, Mary	Ireland
Captain T C Nichols, wife, Mary Nichols	Hobart, Tasmania Born on Lord Howe Island

The early community on Lord Howe Island, through its isolation, had of necessity to adopt a 'can and make-do' attitude and many cultural traditions have evolved in juxtaposition with each other. The cultural heritage of British and American seafarers and whalers who settled on the island from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century is represented in shared traditions of patterns of settlement, architecture and construction, agriculture, work practices, domestic endeavour, social interaction and religion. The domestic lifestyle, farming traditions and maritime interests of the Andrews, King and Nichols families reflected their English / Irish heritage. Nathan Thompson's American heritage was expressed in the architecture of his house and extended to include traditional American food, also adopted by other islanders – such as corn mush<sup>77</sup> breakfasts, johnnycakes<sup>78</sup>, soda biscuits<sup>79</sup> and chicken rolled in flour and slowly fried. The celebration of American Independence Day and Thanksgiving were other traditions brought to the island by Nathan Thompson.<sup>80</sup> While some of these traditions may have been adopted by some other islanders, they are not followed today.<sup>81</sup> Importantly, the Pacific island cultural traditions of the women whom Thompson's party brought from Abemama in the Gilbert Islands (now part of Kiribati – pronounced "Kiribas") in Micronesia, including architecture, music and crafts, have had a lasting impact on the cultural diversity of Lord Howe Island.

Perry Johnson, an African American who escaped a life of slavery by running away

<sup>77</sup> Corn meal, boiled in water or milk until it forms a thick, soft mass.

<sup>78</sup> A small flat damper of corn meal, water and milk about the size of the palm of the hand, cooked on both sides, often on top of the embers of a camp fire or in a camp oven.

<sup>79</sup> A biscuit using soda and sour milk or buttermilk as a leavening agent.

<sup>80</sup> Nichols, D 2006, p.29

<sup>81</sup> Robyn Warner, pers.comm.

to sea, arrived on Lord Howe in 1855 as mate on the schooner *Will O' the Wisp*, which called at the island for provisions while returning to New Zealand after a fishing expedition at Elizabeth Reef. Sometime after settling on the island with the ship's skipper, Captain Stevens, Johnson visited Sydney and brought back with him a well-educated Khoikhoi<sup>82</sup> woman from the Cape Colony named Sarah. First married (illegally as it turned out) in 1860 by Captain Field, a ship's master, Perry and Sarah were remarried legally by Seventh Day Adventist Pastor Edwin Butz in 1913, not long before their deaths.

After initially working for the Thompson family, Perry and Sarah established their own farm at the foot of Mt Lidgbird, where their enterprise included a large peach orchard. The ridge extending from Big Creek to the summit of Intermediate Hill was known for many years as Peach Tree Ridge. Although Sarah Johnson's hospitality was legendary, and Perry lived a long life on the island, just how the extent of their influence on the cultural traditions of the island can be measured is a subject for further research.



**Figure 6** Photograph of Perry Johnson. 'An Old Identity, Ld Howe Isl'd' (Source: Seldon Collection, S4, LHI Museum)

The gradual increase in population on Lord Howe Island during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century has brought further ethnic diversity to the island, continuing subtle influences on the island's lifestyle. The 2006 census records that 80.4% of persons usually resident on Lord Howe Island were born in Australia, the remainder originating from New Zealand (5.2%), England (2.6%), Fiji (1.4%) South Africa (1.4%) and Solomon Islands (0.9%). The only other languages spoken at home were Italian and Solomon Islands Pijin.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> This people and their language were formerly known as Hottentot, a term now regarded as offensive.

<sup>83</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 Census, released 25 October 2007



### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme.**

Blessing-of-the-fleet site, ethnic community hall, Chinese store, place or object that exhibits an identifiable ethnic background, marriage register, coats of arms, olive grove, date palm plantation, citizenship ceremony site, POW camp, register of ship crews, folk festival site, ethnic quarter in a town.

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Archaeological evidence from Kimberley Owens' 2004 dig<sup>84</sup> at Old Settlement indicates probable Polynesian influences in house construction, food selection and preparation.

'Bokue's Restaurant', formerly at Lorhiti, was named after Bokue, the princess from the Gilbert Islands who was part of the group led by Nathan Thompson who settled on the island in 1853. Nathan and Bokue eventually married and had six children, five of whom survived to adulthood. The restaurant now has a different name.

### **Items already protected**

Significant material evidence of non-indigenous settlement of NSW is protected under the 'relics' provisions of the NSW Heritage Act.

The site of Kimberley Owens' 2004 archaeological excavations<sup>85</sup> at Old Settlement, is listed in the LEP as 'Old Settlement Beach area, beyond northern end of Lagoon Road, including Portions 74, 75, 275 and 276'.

Soldier Creek area, being the site of Johnson's farm and 1882 Commissioner's Camp, Lagoon Road, Portions 126 and 123 is listed on the LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule.

### **Additional items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

The LHI Museum collection, which includes finds from the Kimberley Owens' 2004 dig which indicate Polynesian influences in house construction, food selection and preparation.

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<sup>84</sup> Owens 2008

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

## 2.2.4 Migration

*Activities and processes associated with the resettling of people from one place to another (international, interstate, intrastate) and the impacts of such movements*

For a tiny speck in the Pacific Ocean, Lord Howe Island has attracted people from many distant parts, but, unlike mainland Australia, there have been no major phases of organised colonisation of, or human migration to the island. However, the small size of the place, its isolation and the uncertainties of supply of basic necessities have meant that there have been constant movements to and from the island since first European settlement.<sup>86</sup>

### The First European Settlers

The impetus for settlement on the island came 54 years after its discovery in 1788, with the business opportunity which Sydney merchant, Robert Campbell saw for provisioning whaling ships in the southern waters of the western Pacific Ocean. The first arrivals, George Ashdown, Thomas Bishop, and a man named Chapman, lately of a whaling station in New Zealand, were of British stock. They brought with them a Maori wife each, a Maori youth and one child, but their period of residence lasted only 7 years.

The economic depression which gripped the NSW colony in the 1840s marked the next phase of migration to the island. Business entrepreneurs, Captain Owen Poole, lately retired from military service with the British Army in Bombay, India and iron founder Richard Dawson, acquired the trading business on Lord Howe Island from Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman in 1841. With mainland work opportunities limited, Poole had no trouble attracting employees to the island, first taking Messrs Wright, Hescott & McAuliffe and their wives, followed by Thomas and Margaret Andrews, who travelled on the barque, *Rover's Bride* in July 1842.

### The First Permanent Settlers

Margaret Curry had emigrated to Sydney from Ireland in 1832, sailing on board the *James Paterson*, where she met seaman, Thomas Andrews, whom she married soon after her arrival in Sydney. Faced with poor work prospects in the docking and warehousing business in which Thomas was employed, the Andrews were offered twelve months work as general servants for Captain Poole on Lord Howe Island through an intermediary in charge of the *Rover's Bride*.<sup>87</sup> Eighteen forty-three was a year of turmoil for Poole who, along with Dawson, was a defendant in a case in the Supreme Court of New South Wales brought by William Hescott.<sup>88</sup> Sometime soon thereafter, Dawson died insolvent<sup>89</sup>. Poole's new business partner, a Dr John Foulis, re-engaged the Andrews, and together they travelled to the island in August 1844, along with Foulis' wife and daughter. The return of the Andrews is significant in the story of migration to Lord Howe Island, for they would become its first permanent residents and the creators of the island's first dynastic lineage. Foulis also brought Englishmen Messrs Platter, Slade, Thom and Varney to work for him,

<sup>86</sup> Information for this section has been drawn from Nichols, LHI 1788-1988 and D Owens and Heck,

<sup>87</sup> Max Kelly p.14

<sup>88</sup> *NSW Govt Gazette*, 4 March 1844, *SMH* 4 March 1844, p.1

<sup>89</sup> *NSW Govt Gazette*, 7 June 1844

but after they failed to obtain leasehold of the island from the NSW Government in 1847 neither Foulis nor the four men elected to remain and settle on the island and plans for settlement on the island were abandoned by Poole.<sup>90</sup>

Thomas and Margaret Andrews eventually took over the Foulis home to the north of Windy Point (now Pinetrees Lodge). Their daughter, Mary, born in 1846, later married Captain Thomas Gore Charles Nichols, master of a Tasmanian sailing vessel and they had ten children, four boys and six girls. The Nichols family was further extended when Thomas' half brother, William Nichols, arrived from Tasmania on the *Aladdin* in 1862 and settled to the east of Old Settlement.



**Figure 7 (Left)** A family group including Hannah, Mary, William and Tom Nichols. (Source: Paul Maidemont Prints PM90, LHI Museum); **(Right)**: Nathan Chase Thompson and his wife Bokue. (Source: Dick Morris Prints 2, Print DM929, LHI Museum)

The Wrights remained where they were at the foot of Mount Lidgbird until the early 1860s when Charles Thorngrave and Edward (Ned) King, from London, arrived in the vessel *Gleaner* to take over their residence. Thorngrave later left, but Ned King stayed on, later married, and had six children, four girls and two boys, including two sets of twins. Some of Ned King's descendants remain on the island today.

### **An American Whaler and Micronesian Women**

The arrival of American whaler, Nathan Chase Thompson, from Somerset, Massachusetts on board the *Belle*, in the mid-1850s was to influence significantly the island's gene pool, for he brought with him two women, Boranga and Bogaroo, and a young girl, Bokue or Bogue, from the Gilbert Islands (now Kirabati). Thompson first married Boranga, and after her death c1865, he married Bokue (Bogue), with whom he had six children (five of whom survived to adulthood), thereby establishing the second significant island dynasty. See Fig.4 (right) above.

<sup>90</sup> Rabone p.28

### Other 19<sup>th</sup> Century Settlers

Several immigrants who arrived during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century left no descendants. One was Allan Moseley (also spelt Mosely), an English navigator on the ship *Jane* and his wife Johanna, whom he had smuggled aboard rather than leave her in Sydney. On discovering the stowaway, the captain of the *Jane* put her ashore at the first opportunity, being Lord Howe Island, where she waited for Mosely to return in 1843. The Moseleys, who had no children, settled on land to the south of Transit Hill (now the site of the aerodrome) where they remained until their deaths.

During the 1850s, a Captain Field settled with his wife, Mary, near Signal Point. Captain Field became a part owner of the trading vessel *Sylph* and tragically lost his life when the vessel foundered during a voyage to Sydney in 1873. One of Field's partners, Henry Wainwright and his wife and two children, settled at the south end of the island, near Johnson's Point in 1868, but his wife and children were also lost with the *Sylph* and Wainwright died not long after. The *Sylph* also claimed the life of Thomas Mooney who had arrived with his wife, Mary, in 1867 on the *Blue Belle*. Mary subsequently married John Robbins who arrived on the *Ephemey* in 1880. There were two children from the Mooney marriage, Patrick and Ellen, the latter becoming the second wife of Alec Fenton, whose descendants still reside on the island today.

American Perry Johnson and his African wife, Sarah also arrived during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. So too did Captain Stevens with his son Campbell, who subsequently married Alice, daughter of David and Mary Lloyd. Neither the Johnsons nor the Stevens produced children.

### Thomas Bryant Wilson

With the arrival of Thomas Bryant Wilson ten years later, the foundation for the island's DNA can be said to have been established. Most island residents today can claim direct lineage to one of these founding families and many have acquired further pedigrees through marriage. Descendants of the original families are scattered across the globe and the gene pool continues to be enhanced through the union of islanders with non-islanders. As some Lord Howe Island families celebrate descendancies of eight generations, Mick Nichols' oft-quoted comment that 'the island is full of families – and not many of them...' remains true.<sup>91</sup>



**Figure 8 (Left to Right);** Gower Wilson (son of TB Wilson), TB Wilson and Jack Wilson. (Source: Joe Lyons collection JL19 LHI Museum)

<sup>91</sup> Nichols, p. 90

### **To-ing and Fro-ing**

Many islanders are forced to move to the mainland of Australia for education, employment or aged care and many do not return due to lack of suitable employment and housing. The absence of a high school on the island means that once children have completed their primary education, they have to attend boarding schools on the mainland or move there with their parents for lengthy periods while they attend secondary school. The provision of distance education facilities at the Lord Howe Island School means that some students can continue their secondary education on the island. The LHI Board offers scholarship opportunities for young islanders to obtain tertiary qualifications and to return to the island and contribute to its social, environmental and economic life. Some islanders who have lived on the mainland or in other countries, sometimes for decades, are eventually drawn back to Lord Howe to spend their retirement in the place where they were born or grew up although the same constraints on housing limit such opportunities.

Short term relocation to Lord Howe Island is also compromised by the shortage of accommodation and permanent work opportunities. Some people spend time on Lord Howe Island as housekeeping, kitchen and waiter staff in the island's accommodation houses and restaurants. Long-term migration and population growth are controlled by the limited land availability, the controls in the LEP 2010 and the Dwelling Allocation and Entitlement Policy. Without these controls, Lord Howe Island would face serious threats to its natural habitats, its fragile relationship with the natural ecosystem and its sustainability. What is sometimes perceived as a frustration of bureaucratic proportions is precisely the control which has preserved this unique environment and its residents from over-development and the loss of cultural identity and tradition.

### **The 'Waiting' Rock**

A large block of basalt moved in 1974 from near Little Island to a site outside the airport terminal bears a plaque commemorating the listing of Lord Howe Island on the World Heritage List. This rock has become important to island residents<sup>92</sup> as a place where their children sit to be photographed while waiting for the plane to take them away to boarding school on the mainland. Young children cannot wait to grow tall enough to climb up on the rock for a photo. Many island families have happy snaps of their children sitting on the rock waiting for their siblings to depart or arrive home for the holidays. Despite its relatively recent installation, this item has been identified by many community members as having great social significance.

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<sup>92</sup> Personal comments from many island families.



**Figure 9** Children crowding onto the 'Waiting Rock' at Lord Howe island airport. (Source: Private collection)

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Migrant hostel, customs hall, border crossing, immigration papers, bus depot, emigrant shipwreck, Aboriginal mission, quarantine station, works based on migrant labour, detention centre.

**Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Old Settlement area, already listed on LEP Schedule.

“Waiting / Leaving / Arriving Rock”

**Items already protected**

Old Settlement area, already listed on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule.

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

“Waiting / Leaving / Arriving Rock” at LHI airport

## 2.3 Developing local, regional and national economies

### 2.3.1 Agriculture

*These are activities relating to the cultivation and rearing of plant and animal species, usually for commercial purposes and can include aquaculture.*

#### Cultivation in Isolation

The first European visitors to Lord Howe Island availed themselves of the island's native wildlife, catching fish, turtles and birds during their transitory visits. It was not until the arrival in 1841 of Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman as residents intent upon providing provisions for passing sailors to supplement their restricted shipboard diet that agriculture, the cultivation of land, can be said to have begun on the island.

Lord Howe Island's 'gardens', as the cultivated land was referred to, were an important food bowl in the Tasman Sea until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, but with the demise of whaling, and often many long months with no communication, supplies or trade from passing ships, the survival of the early settlers depended on their own resources.<sup>93</sup> Luckily, a number of natural attributes and a degree of ingenuity greatly assisted them in their agricultural endeavours.

The fertile basalt-derived soils on Lord Howe Island, the availability of fresh water and the warm semi-tropical climate provided the essential ingredients for successful agriculture. The manner in which the land was farmed involved the adoption of techniques derived from the shared heritage of community gardening on the Pacific Islands, and the feudal traditions and small enclosed allotments of British-European farming.

The only official agricultural assessments of the island during the 19<sup>th</sup> century were made in connection with investigations of Lord Howe's potential as a penal settlement, where some degree of self-sufficiency to support a prison population would presumably be required.

Captain H M Denham, in his *Remarks upon Lord Howe Island* estimated "2,500 acres of land capable of culture, of which the occupants (three families of the names Andrews, Mosley and Wright) cultivate some 44 acres, producing a succession of crops as demonstrates the richness of the soil".<sup>94</sup>

John Denis Macdonald observed that:

*'It would be impossible to determine the actual number of persons who might be supported on the present resources of the island, but there can be no doubt that its capabilities would be greatly extended were an effort once made with sufficient capital, a stock of axes, saws, picks, farming implements &c.'*<sup>95</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Thomas Icely, Parkes correspondence 1891

<sup>94</sup> Denham 1853

<sup>95</sup> Macdonald, J D 'Remarks on the Natural History and Capabilities of Lord Howe Island'. Correspondence 12, enclosure 2 in NSW Government (ed) 1853 *Correspondence relative to*

The Last Paradise: A Community-based Heritage Study of Lord Howe Island

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Charles Moore, Director of Sydney's Botanic Gardens estimated that of the island's available area of 3,200 acres, only 2,000 acres were capable of cultivation<sup>96</sup>, while Visiting Magistrate, Thomas Icely, writing in 1891, was more conservative, suggesting that only 300-400 acres of a total 3,800 were available for agriculture. In reality, the area under cultivation was considerably less than that if Edward Hill's estimate of 33 acres under cultivation in 1869<sup>97</sup> and Surgeon aboard *HMS Pearl*, Alfred T Corrie's estimate of 40-50 acres in 1878 are any guides.<sup>98</sup>

The land appropriated for the first gardens on Lord Howe Island took advantage of sheltered sites away from the ravages of the strong south-easterly winds and in proximity to creeks and low swampy areas. White's 1835 survey identified the area west of the sand-dunes behind Blenkinthorpe (Blinky) Beach, which had been established the year before by Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman. Farming at North Bay began in the 1840s with the arrival of Captain Middleton (land later taken up by Captain Stevens and worked by Perry Johnson). By 1844, land was under cultivation by the Wrights, Andrews and Moseleys in the Soldier's Creek basin near the foot of Mt Lidgbird at the southern end of the island (later taken over by the King family). Not long after, Dr Foulis and the Andrews (who moved from Soldier's Creek) had established gardens near Windy Point, Perry Johnson was farming a parcel of land adjacent to Soldier's Creek around 1855 and the Moseleys had established new gardens close to the site first cultivated by Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman.

William Nichols, who had farmed onions and other vegetables beside the creek west of Mt Eliza, moved to Old Settlement by 1871. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, agricultural activity was also underway in the Big Creek area, inland from the southern foreshore of the lagoon and on the site of the present airstrip; on Whybrow Ridge (farmed by the Whybrows, and the Lord's of Lord's Garden); on the site of the present golf course (farmed by Frank 'Cobby' Robbins); on land above Anderson Road (Wilsons) and towards the Clear Place (Nichols); and in the vicinity of Ned's Beach. Today there is still some evidence of one of the original 'gardens' on Thompson land on Neds Beach Road.

A map of 'Lord Howe Island showing Holdings and Portions measured for Occupation' and signed by hand with the date July 1909, identifies the locations of gardens extending west of Intermediate Hill from the lagoon to Soldier's Creek and the central south coast; a cluster behind Blinkenthorpe Beach and south-west of Transit Hill; a scatter extending from Middle Beach to the southern slope and flats of Hunter Bay (old Settlement Beach); and two on the western side of North Bay.<sup>99</sup>

Agricultural development on the island took advantage of the availability of water from creeks and in poorly drained, low-lying areas which supplemented the rainfall throughout the year and the frequent storm activity which developed over Mt Gower and often drenched the island. In some areas, drainage ditches were dug to channel

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*proposed new penal settlement at Lord Howe Island.* NSW Parliamentary Accounts and Papers pp13-17

<sup>96</sup> Moore??

<sup>97</sup> Hill

<sup>98</sup> Cloete.....Corrie.....

<sup>99</sup> Map reference nla



water, or to drain boggy land and excess water. The Soldier's Creek area retains important archaeological evidence of hand-cut drainage ditches and a basalt cobble slope, on land which was once farmed by Ned King and Perry Johnson. These features, along with the sections of exposed drains on Frank Robbins' land near Cobby's Corner (now the golf course), demonstrate the mitigation required to divert water from ground which to this day can become saturated and remain waterlogged after heavy rain.

As population increased and more households established and maintained their own gardens to produce their daily needs, they dug their own wells on their land to save them the effort of carting water. The existence of at least three wells is confirmed in the 1909 survey map.

The soil on Lord Howe Island was described historically as generally “of a rich character, that in the lower or flatter parts extremely so, being of dark unctuous loamy nature, largely impregnated with humus, overlying a deep bed of yellow clay. The fallen banyan branches and roots were used by the residents as manure in their cultivation patches which greatly benefited the cultivation of crops”.<sup>100</sup>



**Figure 10** Part of an undated (c1909) map of Lord Howe Island, showing the portions between Blinky Beach (right) and the lagoon (left) with numerous ‘gardens’ (areas devoted to agriculture) shown. (Source: LHI Museum collection).

## Crops

Thomas Iceley observed that: “The ‘gardens’ as the cultivated plots on the island are called – and which are cut out of the thickets of Palms and Banyans are necessarily irregular in shape”.<sup>101</sup> This delineation required “that the cultivation grounds, which must not be approached nearer to each other than what will allow a sufficient brake of palms to protect them against the wind”<sup>102</sup> was for a very sound reason. The prevailing winds were “destructive to vegetation blowing the finely divided spray from

<sup>100</sup> (Duff p.33 in Armstrong)

<sup>101</sup> T Iceley, 13 February, 1891, Parkes Correspondence, 1909, Vol. 19, pp 368-370

<sup>102</sup> Fitzgerald Hill p.49

the reef over the unprotected parts. From May to September it is most severe and its blighting influence is frequently observed within a few hours, bananas, potatoes and many other plants becoming quite black and shrivelled up. These effects are guarded against by clearing the land in small patches, preserving a rampart of tall trees around each, as a protection to its own area. It would be imprudent therefore to clear large tracts of land neglecting this precaution".<sup>103</sup> J H Maiden expressed concern that creating ramparts of tall trees caused neighbouring trees to fall in strong winds, making inroads into natural forest and thereby enlarging the cleared areas. So a number of species were trialled as windbreaks, the most successful and resilient being *Nerium oleander* (Oleander). *Hibiscus tiliaceus* (Cottonwood), popular throughout the Pacific Islands for fencing and windbreaks, was also used.

The first account of an agricultural 'garden' on the island was a description by H J White of the land cultivated by Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman behind the dunes at Blinkenthorpe Beach. Their produce was intended for their own consumption and for exchange with passing whalers. White visited the island in January 1835 but his report was not published until 18 years later.<sup>104</sup>

*"There is a small patch of ground on the east side of the island which has been cultivated as a garden containing potatoes, carrots, maize, pumpkins and tarra [taro], all of which seem to thrive well. Another piece of ground more to the north was also tried as a garden but found to be too stony. The soil does not seem fit for the growth of wheat."*

Assistant Surgeon and Botanist, John Denis Macdonald, who accompanied White, noted the richness of the soil and the varieties of exotic plants which had already made their way to the island, presumably from passing ships – bananas and vines from Port Stephens, potatoes from Hobart and melons, cape gooseberries and mint from Sydney - and he commented that "with due attention to the seasons, and the selection of suitable crops throughout the year, agriculture would prosper".<sup>105</sup> Prosper it did, and by 1841, Captain Poole was advertising the commercial availability of livestock, fish, potatoes and other vegetables to the shipping trade in the *Sydney Herald*.<sup>106</sup>

Dr John Foulis was obviously impressed that:

*"All kinds of vegetables can be produced in abundance, potatoes, pumpkins and other garden provisions are reared twice a year and sometimes oftener in the same ground. Maize and wheat grow well and have yielded large crops as also the sweet potatoe [sic], which seems very well adopted for the more sandy parts. The banana grows luxuriantly and ripens very well; and some vines which I planted on my arrival on the island flourished exceedingly well and were*

<sup>103</sup> (Macdonald, 1854 p.14)

<sup>104</sup> H J White in "Proposed new penal settlement" *Votes and Proceedings, Legislative Council, New South Wales*, 1853

<sup>105</sup> Surgeon J D Macdonald "Remarks on the natural history and capabilities of Lord Howe Island in "Proposed new penal settlement" *Votes and Proceedings, Legislative Council, New South Wales*, 1853, II p.730

<sup>106</sup> *Sydney Herald*, Monday 13 September 1841

*producing fruit before I left [in 1847]”<sup>107</sup>*

In 1851, Dr Foulis made a memory map of the island which noted major topographic features, a watercourse at Big Creek, cleared land in the northern, central and southern parts of the island and their relationship to ‘settlements’.

In 1854, Captain Denham observed that pigs, poultry, potatoes and “every variety of fruit and vegetables” were being grown to supply the whalers or passenger vessels passing by chance.

*“All the fruit trees and culinary vegetables at present growing on the island, have been introduced, - the bananas and vines from Port Stephens, melons, Cape gooseberries and mint from Sydney. The potatoes have been chiefly grown from Derwent seed. Some time ago, egg plants and marsh melons<sup>108</sup> were plentiful, but they have been neglected lately.”<sup>109</sup>*

In 1862 William Nicholls was farming at North Bay and built a house thatched with palm fronds<sup>110</sup>. He grew vegetables and exported seeds and also beche-de-mer. He had a well and archaeological evidence of his activities at North Bay may survive.

In 1869, Edward recorded<sup>111</sup> that “good crops of potatoes, maize, onions, cabbages, oranges, lemons, peaches, grapes, arrowroot and coffee - all thrive exceedingly well”

Water Police Magistrate Cloete in 1869 noted that<sup>112</sup>:

*‘about 33 acres of land under cultivation and producing good crops of potatoes, maize, onions, cabbages, oranges, lemons, bananas, peaches, grapes, arrowroot and coffee – all thrive exceedingly well, but the inhabitants care little to cultivate more than just sufficient for their wants. The only product they export is onions, which are brought to Sydney in a small ketch of about 14 tons named ‘Sylph’, the joint property of Thompson, Wainwright and Field. There is excellent fishing and turkeys, ducks and fowls are reared in great numbers’.*

The Andrews are credited with the establishment of the successful onion industry on Lord Howe Island, assumed to have begun with the planting of an onion washed ashore, presumably from a passing ship in the 1850s.<sup>113</sup> Onions were produced in sufficient quantity to be traded: in one instance a ton of onions was swapped for a whaleboat.<sup>114</sup> Onions were regularly exported and sold direct to the Sydney market up to 4 times a year, transported first on Captain Field’s small ketch, the *Sylph*, (sometimes also taking other produce) until its loss at sea in 1873, and subsequently on the *Comet*.

<sup>107</sup> J Foulis ‘Statement of circumstances in reference to Lord Howe’s Island in “proposed

<sup>108</sup> WikiAnswers suggests a marsh melon is similar to a canteloupe in flavor, but grows in clusters, each melon being about the size of a cow's eyeball.

<sup>109</sup> Denham, V+P p.16

<sup>110</sup> Edgecombe, J, p.26

<sup>111</sup> Hill

<sup>112</sup> Water Police Magistrate 1 November 1869

<sup>113</sup> Rabone, Nichols

<sup>114</sup> R Park *Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island*, Serendip, Dover Heights, 1982

According to J H Maiden, Government Botanist, in 1898, the Lord Howe Island ‘reds’ were celebrated in the Southern Hemisphere – “they grow a small pickling onion, and a larger sort, these onions having excellent keeping qualities”<sup>115</sup> William Clarson, who visited the island in 1882 to work for Captain Armstrong gave this account of their cultivation:

*“One of the chief products of the soil to which the attention of the islanders is devoted is that of growing the onions which have so good a name on the Australian markets. Fully nine-tenths of the land under cultivation is occupied with this crop, which at all times the highest price owing to the excellent keeping qualities of the esculent. The seed is sown thickly in beds about the month of May, and the young plants, when sufficiently large to handle are transplanted from three to four inches apart in long strips or beds. Some idea may be formed of the labour attending this process, when it is mentioned that no fewer than 144 plants are made to occupy every square yard. A single plantation of less than two-thirds of an acre was estimated to contain 286,000 plants. The beds are reduced to a fine surface, and the operator holding a bunch of young plants in one hand, with the other presses the bulb firmly in the ground to the depth of about an inch”.*<sup>116</sup>



**Figure 11** A healthy crop of onions. (Source: Miscellaneous prints 4-112 LHI Museum)

At one time onions formed the staple of the island’s agriculture, but the increasing prevalence of the fungus disease, smut<sup>117</sup>, severely damaged the industry – it eventually folded by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Andrews were also responsible for the introduction of citrus, which J H Maiden recounts as having come originally from Tahiti around 1860 as pips (seeds) which were planted and raised on board an American whaler. Citrus, including Seville

<sup>115</sup> J H Maiden *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales*, Nos 23 and 24, 1898-9

<sup>116</sup> Clarson.....(*Island of Lord Howe, Madeira of the Pacific*, also Rabone p.45)

<sup>117</sup> The plant disease smut is caused by fungi of the order Ustilaginales. The affected parts are converted to a black powdery mass of fungal spores.

orange, mandarin, lemon, lime and citron thrived, with lemons especially fruiting abundantly and an old orange tree producing 90-100 dozen oranges a year. Alfred Corrie's 1876 report to the NSW Government, which expressed concerns about the impact of the diminishing sea trade and consequent lack of staple foods on the health of the islanders, prompted a further visit to the island by surveyor and botanist, R D Fitzgerald that same year. At Fitzgerald's urging, the Botanic Gardens dispatched a shipment of plants including Kei Apple (*Doryalis caffra*), Fig (*Ficus carica*), Yellow Guava (*Psidium guajava*), Passionfruit (*Passiflora edulis*), Jack Fruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*), Wine Palm (*Butia capitata*), Thyme (*Thymus* spp.), Lavender (*Lavandula* spp.), Marjoram (*Origanum* spp.), Sage (*Salvia* spp.), Mint (*Mentha* spp.), Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*), Sarsaparilla (*Smilax* spp.), Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*), Liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), Tea (*Camellia sinensis*), Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*), Loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*), Brazillian Cherry (*Eugenia uniflora*, *E. michelii*), Black Guava (possibly *Psidium littorale* var. *longipes*), Hops (*Humulus lupulus*, *H. japonicus*), Arrowroot (possibly *Canna edulis* or *Maranta arundinacea*), Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), Winter Savory (*Satureja montana*), Seakale (*Crambe maritima*) and Coffee (*Coffea arabica*).

Conditions for growing coffee were obviously excellent, for samples which were exhibited at the Sydney International Exhibition 1879 were considered equal to the very best samples from Ceylon and other coffee growing countries.<sup>118</sup> Despite Fitzgerald's hopes that this might become a cash crop for the Island, coffee was never grown commercially.

Captain Armstrong, appointed the island's first administrator the following year, shared the same concerns, and to encourage a higher degree of self-sufficiency among the locals and explore export opportunities, he imported many seeds and plant varieties which contributed significantly to the diversification of what was (and could be) grown on the island. Armstrong's list is shown below:

*"List of Seeds and Plants imported by Captain Armstrong  
Ivory nut tree, candle nut tree, tapioca, arrowroot, Fiji; three different types of coffee, pea nuts and calavancies, tea, sorghum, pine apples, vanilla, taro, hops, different kinds of maize, date tree, sugar cane, wheat, oats, wine palm, and plants for making beer bitter, four different kinds of bananas, prairie grass, two different kinds of plaintains, Peruvian and Turkey maize, different kinds of pigeons, key apple, Punjaub and silkworm mulberry, indigo, Eve trees, herbs of all kinds, tomatoes, bread fruit, W.I. arrowroot, sweet maize, different kinds sweet potatoes, white and black pepper, willows, bamboos, ten different kinds of other plants, blue, red, peppermint and other gums; navel and bitter orange; peas, beans &c; limes, granadilla, strawberry, melons, cherimoyer; Norfolk Island pine, mango, ginger, Chinese cucumbers, numerous flower seeds; apples, pears currants, plums, and peaches, apricot, nectarine, prune, vines; different kinds of onions, four different pumpkins, and vegetables of all kinds; tobacco three kinds, red and white cedar, rami, eight different kinds of potatoes, yams, beet, castor oil; angora goat, sheep, well-bred cow; land rail; oysters two kinds, grasses and clover, vegetables of all kinds; different kinds of plants from India, China, Brisbane and*

<sup>118</sup> Linnaeus, *Illustrated Sydney News*

*New Hebrides. Sent fish, seeds, shells, birds, &c., to Museum; plants, palms, shells, fish, &c., &c., to Colonial Secretary, Treasurer, Under-Secretary, Governor, and other high officials.*

*Secured islanders boats and moorings, surveyed harbor, inside and outside reefs, cleared away hundred tons of rocks in passage, &c., at my own expense. No credit or allowance was made by Government for my outlay &c. Cleared a road from north to south.*<sup>119</sup>

Armstrong was clearly trying to curry favour with as broad a cross-section as possible in the NSW Government and Public Service.

The following table provides a comparison of the common and scientific names of the species imported by Armstrong, with comments on their uses<sup>120</sup>.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments
Ivory Nut Tree	<i>Phytelephas macrocarpa</i>	Known as 'tagua' in Colombia, this palm species produces 'vegetable ivory' - very hard, ivory-like nuts which are used for making buttons, carved objects and jewellery.
Candle Nut Tree	<i>Aleurites moluccana</i>	Useful tree from SE Asia and the Pacific. National tree of Hawaii, where it is known as Kukui. Oily seeds (candlenuts) used as candles. Oil with medicinal uses, also used in tanning and as a drying oil for varnishes and artists' paints. Soot from burnt oil or nuts used as kohl and for tattooing. Walnut-like nuts used in cooking. Candlenut also provides an important copper-red dye used for tapa cloth.
Tapioca	<i>Manihot esculenta</i>	Also known as manioc and cassava. An important source of starch from the shrub's tubers. Can be used in puddings, biscuits and confectionery.
Arrowroot	<i>Maranta arundinacea</i> or <i>Canna edulis</i>	The rhizomes are a source of very fine starch granules which are easily digestible and thus suitable for invalid and infant diets. A gruel of arrowroot can be used to treat diarrhoea.
Fiji Arrowroot	<i>Tacca leontopetaloides</i>	Also known as East Indian arrowroot. Similar use to the above.
Coffea	<i>Coffea arabica</i>	The beans can be processed to produce brewed coffee which is drunk for its sensory pleasure and stimulatory effects, due to its caffeine content.
Pea nuts	<i>Arachis hypogaea</i>	Also known as groundnuts or monkey nuts. The 'nuts' or seeds are a rich source of oil (50-55%) and protein (30%). The husks can be used as fuel and the foliage as fodder.
Calavancies [sic]	Possibly <i>Dolichos barbadensis</i> or <i>Lablab niger</i>	'Calavance' is an old name for certain types of pulses <sup>121</sup> . Legumes used for food, with about 25% protein and 60% carbohydrate.

<sup>119</sup> Armstrong

<sup>120</sup> From Vaughan, JG & Geissler, CA 1997, *The New Oxford Book of Food Plants*, OUP, Oxford et al. Todd, RG (ed.), *Extra Pharmacopoeia Martindale 25<sup>th</sup> edn*, The Pharmaceutical Press, London, and Usher, G 1974, *A Dictionary of Plants Used by Man*, Constable, London.

<sup>121</sup> *Oxford Shorter Dictionary*

Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments
Tea	<i>Camellia sinensis</i>	Terminal buds and tip leaves from this shrub are harvested and processed, with or without fermentation, to produce tea, which is consumed as a pleasant and mildly stimulating beverage, with 3-4% caffeine in the fresh leaf although this is reduced with brewing.
Sorghum	<i>Sorghum bicolor</i> (syn. <i>S. vulgare</i> )	A grain that is an important human food source in many countries and used as animal feed in USA and Australia. Human food products include porridges, flat breads and beer. Other minor uses are starch and alcohol from grain; syrup from sweet-stemmed cultivars; brooms from broomcorn cultivars; plant bases and stems as fuel and thatching.
Pine apples	<i>Ananas comosus</i>	A compound fruit produced by a bromeliad. Can be eaten fresh, canned or processed to give juice.
Vanilla	<i>Vanilla</i> spp.	Extracts of the pods ('beans') of this climbing orchid are an important flavouring used in ice creams and other confectionery.
Taro	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i> syn. <i>C. antiquorum</i>	The corm is a staple food in many Pacific islands. Can be roasted, baked or boiled. The subsidiary corms, leaf stalks and blades can also be eaten.
Hops	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>	The female 'cones' or bracts, bracteoles and female flowers of this perennial vine contain essential oils and soft resins that are used to give the aroma and bitter taste to beer and also have antiseptic properties that give beer a shelf-life.
Different kinds of maize	<i>Zea mays</i> cultivars	The 'corn cob' of this crop contains grains that can be eaten fresh or dehydrated. Can be milled in the dry or wet condition to produce grits, cornmeal and cornflour, used in cereals, pancakes, biscuits.
Date tree	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	Essentially a plant of hot, dry areas. The fruit can be eaten fresh or used in cakes, biscuits, etc. Date juice can be used as a sugar substitute and the trees can be tapped for their sap which can be fermented to give 'toddy' or palm wine.
Sugar cane	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i>	A perennial grass, the canes of which can be heated over an open fire and evaporating the juice squeezed from the stems to give a dark product containing varying amounts of sucrose, which deteriorates rapidly. More sophisticated processing involves crushing the canes and extracting the sugar with water to give an impure solution which is purified, concentrated by evaporation, and the sugar crystallised.
Wheat	<i>Triticum aestivum</i> (Bread Wheat); <i>T. durum</i> (Durum Wheat)	A major cereal crop and probably the world's most important food plant. Milling can produce bran, germ, semolina and flour. Used in the making of breads, cakes, pastries, biscuits, pasta, noodles.
Oats	<i>Avena</i> spp.	A grain crop used for livestock feed in the form of grain, pasture, forage, hay and silage. The grain is also used for human food in the form of porridge, grits, oatmeal, biscuits.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments
Wine palm	<i>Butia capitata</i>	A native of Brazil and Uruguay. The edible pulp of the ripe fruit is used to make an alcoholic drink.
Plants for making beer bitter	Probably includes <i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	The dried leaves and flowering tops of <i>Marrubium vulgare</i> produce Horehound which is used in the making of a beer substitute. Used medicinally as an expectorant and, in large doses, as a laxative.
Four different kinds of bananas	<i>Musa</i> spp.	
Prairie Grass	<i>Bromus cartharticus</i>	Densely tufted grass – widespread weed on disturbed ground but also cultivated as a pasture species. Recorded for LHI in <i>Flora of NSW</i> , Vol.4, p.630
Two different kinds of plantains	Probably <i>Musa acuminata</i> and <i>M.xparadisiaca</i>	A tree-like herb producing fruit that can be eaten fresh or cooked (fried, boiled, roasted, or baked). Important source of sugars, starch, vitamin C and potassium.
Peruvian and Turkey maize	<i>Zea mays</i> cultivars	The 'corn cob' of this crop contains grains that can be eaten fresh or dehydrated. Can be milled in the dry or wet condition to produce grits, cornmeal and cornflour, used in cereals, pancakes, biscuits.
Different kinds of pigeons		Species and varieties not listed but presumably for food.
Key [sic] apple	<i>Doryalis caffra</i>	Kei Apple (also Kau Apple, Kai Apple) a bushy shrub from Africa and Sri Lanka with fruits that are pleasantly flavoured, tart or subacid. Eaten either raw or in various preserves.
Punjaub and silkworm mulberry	Probably <i>Morus nigra</i> (Black Mulberry) and <i>Morus alba</i> (White Mulberry)	The fruit of Black Mulberry are rich in vitamin C and potassium and can be eaten as a dessert or used for tarts, pies and jams. The leaves of White Mulberry are used as food for silkworms and the fruit can also be eaten by humans.
Indigo	<i>Indigofera</i> spp.	The genus <i>Indigofera</i> is the principal source of the blue dye indigo. The plants are cut just before flowering and cut into small pieces, which are soaked in water to produce a yellow solution. This oxidises in air to a blue precipitate, which is dried and pressed into blocks for storage or export.
Eve trees		Unidentified at this stage.
Herbs of all kinds		Unidentified at this stage.
Tomatoes	<i>Lycopersicum</i> spp.	An important fruit used in salads, sauces and chutneys.
Bread fruit	<i>Artocarpus altilis</i> syn. <i>A. communis</i>	Tree to 20 metres in height which bears multiple fruits arranged in groups of two or three. The fruit are unusual in that they contain about 20% starch and may be roasted, boiled, or fried before consumption. A staple or subsistence crop in the Pacific Islands.
W[est] I[ndies] arrowroot	Probably <i>Maranta arundinacea</i>	The rhizomes are a source of very fine starch granules which are easily digestible and thus suitable for invalid and infant diets. A gruel of arrowroot can be used to treat diarrhea.



Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments
Sweet maize	Probably <i>Zea mays</i> cultivar	The 'corn cob' of this crop contains grains that can be eaten fresh or dehydrated. Can be milled in the dry or wet condition to produce grits, cornmeal and cornflour, used in cereals, pancakes, biscuits.
Different kinds of sweet potatoes	<i>Ipomoea batatas</i> , <i>I. pandurata</i>	Tuberous roots of a member of the morning glory family (Convolvulaceae), can be eaten boiled, baked or candied. They contain about 16% starch and 6% sugars.
White and black pepper	<i>Piper nigrum</i>	The fruits of this climbing vine turn red when ripe. To make black pepper, unripe peppercorns are sun-dried leading to black and wrinkled structures; to make white pepper, the outer coverings are removed from the ripe fruit. Traditionally ground to a fine powder. An important spice used as a condiment and with many culinary uses such as seasoning dishes.
Willows	<i>Salix</i> spp.	Exact species unknown but possibly included <i>Salix babylonica</i> (Weeping Willow) and <i>Salix viminalis</i> (Basket Willow, Osier Willow), the young branches of the latter used for basket making.
Bamboos	<i>Arundinaria</i> spp., <i>Bambusa</i> spp., <i>Phyllostachys</i> spp.	<i>Phyllostachys bambusoides</i> (Giant Bamboo) can be used for timber, scaffolding, guttering, pipes. The shoots of many bamboo species can be eaten, often requiring cooking to remove bitterness.
Ten different other kinds of other plants		Unidentified at this stage.
Blue, red, peppermint and other gums	Probably <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> , <i>E. calophylla</i> and other gums.	Presumably imported for their timber potential.
Navel and butter [sic] orange	Probably <i>Citrus sinensis</i> and <i>Citrus aurantium</i>	Fruits can be eaten fresh, juiced or used for making preserves such as marmalade. Important source of vitamin C.
Peas and beans etc.	Probably <i>Pisum sativum</i> cultivars and <i>Phaseolus</i> spp. and cultivars	The peas can be eaten fresh, cooked or dried and used as split peas as a vegetable, often in soups.
Granadilla	Probably <i>Passiflora quadrangularis</i> (Giant Granadilla) or <i>P. ligularis</i> (Sweet Granadilla)	Closely related to the passionfruit. The elongated yellow fruit of this tropical climber contains many seeds surrounded by yellowish juicy 'arils'. The flesh can be eaten raw or used to flavour icing, cakes, biscuits. Quite high in vitamin C.
Strawberry	<i>Fragaria x Ananassa</i> cultivars	The fruit are rich in vitamin C and can be eaten as a dessert.
Melons	<i>Cucumis melo</i> and cultivars (e.g. rockmelon, cantaloupe); <i>Citrullus lanatus</i> (Watermelon)	Fruits are juicy and sweet-tasting, used as desserts. Flesh is mostly water but includes sugars and some vitamin C.
Cherimoyer [sic]	<i>Annona cherimola</i>	Cherimoya or Custard Apple is a small tree producing fruit with custard-like, whitish, edible flesh with seeds. Contains 15% total sugars and quite high vitamin C.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments
Norfolk Island pine	<i>Araucaria heteropylla</i>	Native to Norfolk Island and a useful ornamental tree for coastal areas, providing good shade and shelter. Timber is relatively soft but can be used for construction and joinery.
Mango	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	A tropical tree producing fruit rich in sugars, vitamin C and carotenes. Can be eaten fresh or used in jams, jellies and preserves. Immature fruits can be used to make pickles and chutneys.
Ginger	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Underground rhizomes or tuberous stems can be harvested when young and preserved in sugar syrup or used for crystallised ginger. Older rhizomes become dried ginger, used in biscuits, puddings, cakes, gingerbread, soups, pickles, chutneys, curry powder, ginger beer, ginger ale and ginger wine.
Chinese cucumbers	<i>Cucumis sativus</i> or possibly <i>Momordica charantia</i> (Bitter Cucumber)	The fruit of hairy, trailing or climbing plants can be eaten raw in salads or pickled.
Numerous flower seeds		Unidentified at this stage.
Apples	<i>Malus</i> spp. & cultivars	
Pears	<i>Pyrus</i> spp. & cultivars	
Currants	<i>Ribes</i> spp. & cultivars	
Plums and peaches	<i>Prunus</i> spp. (plums) and <i>P. persica</i> (Peach)	
Apricot	Probably <i>Prunus armeniaca</i> cultivars	
Nectarine	<i>Prunus persica</i> cultivars	
Prune	Probably <i>Prunus domestica</i> cultivar(s)	
Vines	Probably <i>Vitis</i> spp. (grapes)	
Different kinds of onions	<i>Allium cepa</i> cultivars	
Four different pumpkins	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i> , other <i>Cucurbita</i> spp. & cultivars	
Vegetables of all kinds		Unidentified at this stage.
Tobacco, three kinds	<i>Nicotiana tabacum</i> , other <i>Nicotiana</i> spp. & cultivars	
Red and white cedar	<i>Toona ciliata</i> (Red Cedar) and <i>Melia azederach</i> (White Cedar)	
Rami	Probably <i>Boehmeria nivea</i> (Ramie, China Grass) or possibly <i>B. nivea</i> var. <i>tenacissima</i> (Green Ramie)	Ramie (pronounced 'ray-me') is one of the oldest vegetable fibres and has been used for thousands of years. It was used in Egypt for mummy cloths during the period 5000 - 3000 BC, and has been grown in China for many centuries.
Eight different kinds of potatoes	<i>Solanum tuberosum</i> varieties and cultivars	
Yams	Probably <i>Dioscorea</i> spp.	
Beet	Probably <i>Beta vulgaris</i>	

Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments
Castor oil	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	The fixed oil expressed from the seeds of this plant is a mild purgative, especially valuable in treating acute diarrhea, particularly due to food poisoning. In the days before antibiotics and more sophisticated drugs, castor oil was a popular remedy given to children for intestinal colic. <sup>122</sup>
Angora goat		
Sheep		
Well-bred cow		
Land-rail	Possibly <i>Gallirallus philippensis</i> (Buff-banded (Land) Rail)	
Oysters, two kinds	Probably Sydney Rock Oyster and Pacific Oyster.	
Grasses and clover		
Vegetables of all kinds		Unidentified at this stage.
Different kinds of plants from India, China, Brisbane and New Hebrides		Unidentified at this stage.

Not all species with agricultural potential introduced to Lord Howe Island flourished; some, like grapes, Cape gooseberry, and strawberry fell victim to the birds and some simply became unfashionable and disappeared altogether. Many exotic species competed with native species and were eventually designated as invasive pests and have been identified for eradication through the island's current weed removal program. Examples of these include the castor oil plant (*Ricinus communis*) which Macdonald had lauded in 1853. "Judging from the healthiness of the castor oil plant in the garden of Mr Andrews, they might be grown extensively for the oil"<sup>123</sup> but Hill cautioned in 1869 thus: "The castor oil plant (*Ricinus communis*) threatens to become a nuisance"<sup>124</sup>. Hill also forecast that the cherry guava (*Psidium cattleianum*), so beloved by islanders for preserves, "may, as in Tahiti, become a nuisance". This proved to be prescient, and cherry guavas have now become a major environmental weed on many oceanic islands and can no longer be grown on Lord Howe Island. The yellow guava (*Psidium guajava*) can still be grown.

Perhaps because the farming was principally subsistence, there are few documentary records which identify what grew where, or who grew what but the 1879 map does identify areas as an 'orange garden and an orangery', a 'banana garden' and a 'guava garden'. By far the largest single consolidated garden was Thompson's, on Ned's Beach Road, evidence of which still survives today.

<sup>122</sup> *Extra Pharmacopoeia Martindale*, 25<sup>th</sup> ed., 1967, p.867

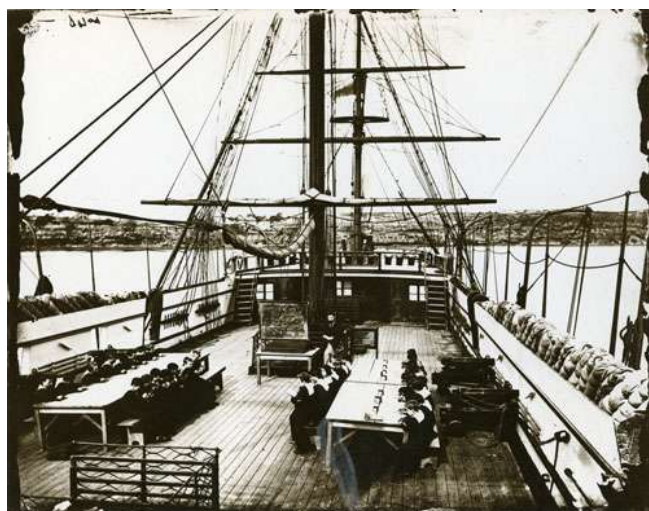
<sup>123</sup> Macdonald p16

<sup>124</sup> Hill/Fitzgerald



**Figure 12** Excerpt from c1909 map of Lord Howe Island, showing Portion 32 extending from the Government Flagstaff (Signal Point) in the west to just west of Ned's Beach. This was the Thompson's farm and included a group of houses and extensive gardens. (Source: LHI Museum)

Agricultural practices on Lord Howe Island were rudimentary, with almost all farm work undertaken by manual labour. As the farming land had generally been appropriated by each family for its own subsistence, much of the work was done by them for themselves and people directly in their employ. Some settlers, including Captain Poole and Dr Foulis, are known to have employed labourers, while others, such as Perry Johnson, who had worked for the Thompsons, eventually established their own farms. In 1881, when five young boys from the *Vernon*, a training ship for disadvantaged youth, arrived as apprentices to Captain Armstrong, their tasks included weeding, hoeing, general farm and garden work.



**Figure 13** Boys at school lessons (c1869) aboard the training ship 'Vernon'. One of a series of photographs by John Sharkey, the first Official Government Photographer, NSW Government Printing Office 1869 – 1896. (Source: photo-web.com.au)

Captain Denham noted that the settlers practiced crop rotation but surmised that they did not understand the necessity for it, alternating potatoes or turnips with crops of grain and allowing for the soil to remain fallow for a while; nor did they appreciate the value of ploughing, instead of adding manure, which would be more effective.<sup>125</sup> R D Fitzgerald observed that tillage was performed principally by hand as there were only 2 horses on the island,<sup>126</sup> although bullocks were introduced subsequently for draught work.<sup>127</sup> An inventory of Lloyd's dwelling in 1874 includes a large quantity of farming implements including rakes, barrow, grindstones, hoes, garden line shovels, and trowels.<sup>128</sup> Mechanised farming equipment did not reach the island until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Thomas Bryant Wilson's diary for the period 1878 to 1896 provides a fascinating account of the daily tasks and seasonal variations associated with farming and life generally on Lord Howe Island at that time. Wilson identifies gardens by name - 'Sugar Cane garden', 'well garden', 'Morepork garden', 'Banyan garden' and the crops grown therein. Some idea of the scale of agricultural operations can be appreciated from some of the diary entries over a single month in 1878.

*"Nov 25<sup>th</sup> Monday - transplanted 1100 onions, went on board "Eva" dirty weather – P M all hands getting coal from reef, wind SE, raining very heavy – Captain Townes, Officers, & [indecipherable] aimed at Captain Nicholls, blowing hard all night, am doing a great deal of good to crops<sup>129</sup>.*

*Nov 30<sup>th</sup> Raining all night and day - Transplanted 600 onions - which will be the last for the season, crops looking very well – wind working round to the SW. Blowing a gale of wind all night. N Thompson acting as field [indecipherable] away persuades Captain Townes to remain at north anchorage but Captain Nicholls and self considered southern passage safe [indecipherable] and advised Captain Townes accordingly<sup>130</sup>.*

*Dec 15<sup>th</sup> Wind SE gloomy. Made about 80 lbs Peach jam from about 600 peaches. Part of wreck drifted to Dawsons point, Thompson secured it just in time, hope to have stores finished next week. Weather threatening, very high tide today which is rather curious being 4 days over full moon. Wind, ESE<sup>131</sup>.*

*Dec 16<sup>th</sup> Wind SE up at 3.30 am planting sweet potatoes. 8 am, wind North, showery, no work at Storehouse today, expect to finish it by Saturday. PM sketching, heavy blow and rain from Northward during the night, took medicine. Emma came<sup>132</sup>.*

*Dec 17<sup>th</sup> Harrys cow trespassing in garden for 3<sup>rd</sup> time. Made about 60 lbs Peach jam from about 500 peaches. PM Brought in part of the wreck of "Stetson" and*

<sup>125</sup> Denham p 16

<sup>126</sup> Fitzgerald 1869

<sup>127</sup> Kimberley Owens p 263

<sup>128</sup> (Keely 1984)

<sup>129</sup> Transcript of TB Wilson diary A1158046, SLNSW

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., A1158047, SLNSW

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., A1158049, SLNSW

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

beached it. W Nichol and Mosely getting battens and thatch. Wilson working in garden. Wind N fine<sup>133</sup>.

Dec 19<sup>th</sup> Not well during the night. Blowing fresh all night. Hands at work at store. Emma and self went to pick onions at Captain Spurlings assisted by Berty and black boy – pickled half viz 10 sack's I think the lot will be about 2 sack's one ton – store ready for thatching. I very seedy – Blowing hard from SE<sup>134</sup>.

Dec 20<sup>th</sup> All hands at work at store, fine strong SE breeze all day. Finished thatching gathered 200 lemons (no good)<sup>135</sup>.

Dec 27<sup>th</sup> Light breeze from East, heavy sea, result of yesterday's blow, westerly. Evening Berty, Culli Cullie & self picking Onions. I calculate about a ton from Captain Spurling's ground, very fine, Westerly wind<sup>136</sup>.

Dec 28<sup>th</sup> Thompson found my felt hat yesterday, wash up on the beach, lost on Decr 1<sup>st</sup> while swimming off to "Eva" steamer. 26-day in the water but not suffered. Wilson must with Harry & Mosely pig hunting, self gathering peaches for distilling, 600 to date - grinding arrowroot from Thompson's garden 50 lbs giving about 5 lbs clean arrowroot. Hunting party got one pig and returned at PM. Wind shifting<sup>137</sup>.

Dec 30 Blowing heavy from SW. Employed in garden. PM wind moderated, gathered 52 lbs Arrowroot & ground returned 7 lbs clean at the rate of 14% Peach fermenting well – intend to make spirits<sup>138</sup>

His entries also offer a wider commentary on life on the island, his interaction with other residents and a continuing account of weather observations.

One of the greatest threats to agricultural viability came with strong winter winds blowing from the south-west; these blew finely-divided spray from the reef over unprotected land.

*"From May to September it is most severe, and its blighting influence is frequently observed within a few hours, bananas, potatoes and many other plants becoming black and shriveled up. These effects are guarded against by clearing the land in small patches, preserving a rampart of tall trees around each, as a protection to its own area. It would be imprudent, therefore, to clear large tracts of land neglecting this precaution, but the space must be economized, and turned to the best account by proper management"*<sup>139</sup>

Native birds attacked the crops, necessitating netting, and mice were an early threat, as Fitzgerald noted:

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., A1158050, SLNSW

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., A1158051, SLNSW

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> John Denis Macdonald p. 14 in Denham

*“The little granaries for maize are elevated on posts four or five feet from the ground, the roof well thatched, ingress at the end of the building by aid of a shifting ladder. Since the introduction of mice... it has been necessary to protect the grain from their depredations by placing horizontal discs of tin or iron round each post, each some distance from the ground”<sup>140</sup>.*

Elevated granaries, sometimes called ‘corn straddles’ were a commonly-used mechanism for protecting harvested crops from moisture and the predations of rats and mice.

Joseph Henry Maiden, Fellow of the Linnaean Society and Director of the Botanic Gardens, Sydney visited Lord Howe Island in 1898 on the *Thetis* in company with Frank Farnell MP, messrs Robert Etheridge Jun., and Edgar Waite, Curator and Zoologist respectively of the Australian Museum, and Mr JA Brodie, Visiting Magistrate. As well as documenting the indigenous flora of the island, Maiden commented on introduced weeds, edible introduced fruits, vegetables and miscellaneous food crops, some miscellaneous introduced plants (chiefly economic) and some Lord Howe Island dishes<sup>141</sup>.

As a plant scientist with a strong interest in economic botany, Maiden was well attuned to the agricultural and forestry potential of indigenous and introduced plants on the island but also alert to the risks posed by invasive exotics. This latter risk had not gone unnoticed by the islanders either and Maiden reports:

*“The islanders now seem alive to the danger of allowing noxious weeds to obtain a footing. For example, the Bathurst Burr (*Xanthium spinosum*) and the Black Thistle (*Carduus lanceolatus*) were got rid of by concerted action.*

*There were also a few patches of the dangerous weed, Nut Grass (*Cyperus rotundus*), but this has been exterminated. There were also a few patches of Wild Onion (*Allium frgrans*, Vent.) which were nursed by one of the settlers as a pretty plant. When its nature was discovered it took four years to exterminate it.*

*I think the following plants in Hemsley’s list were probably introduced by the hand of man during the present century [i.e. 19<sup>th</sup> century]: - *Oxalis corniculata*, Linn., *Bidens pilosa*, Linn., *Panicum sanguinale*, Linn. To these I might perhaps add *Solanum nigrum*”.*

Bathurst Burr was introduced to Australia allegedly tangled in the tails of horses imported from Chile (its natural habitat) early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it may also have entered as an impurity in grain. It was observed by John Macarthur on the Nepean River as early as the 1830s. By 1862 it had been proclaimed a noxious weed in both Victoria and South Australia and a NSW conference in 1895 agreed that Bathurst Burr was the State’s worst weed. It is a serious competitor with such crops as cotton, maize, peas, potatoes, sorghum, sugarcane and grapes i.e. many of the

<sup>140</sup> Fitzgerald

<sup>141</sup> JH Maiden, ‘Observations on the Vegetation of Lord Howe Island’, *Proc. Linn. Soc. NSW*, 1898, pp. 112-152

species being grown on Lord Howe Island at the time<sup>142</sup>.

Black Thistle, now named *Cirsium vulgare*, and also variously known as Spear Thistle, Bull Thistle and Swamp Thistle, has its origins in Europe, western Asia and North Africa. This spiny weed has spread to most temperate regions of the world, including all Australian states except the Northern Territory. It invades disturbed areas and because it is not readily grazed by stock, it spreads quickly, its dense patches considerably reducing the carrying capacity of paddocks<sup>143</sup>.

Mainland NSW gardeners know how difficult it is to eradicate Nut Grass and Onion Weed from their gardens.

Maiden provides a list of weed species he collected, noting whether they had been recorded previously by Hemsley, and providing comments on their abundance and, in some cases, their likely source. Maiden's list is shown in table form below, with his comments in Italics.

<b>Scientific Name</b> Genus and species shown in italics, with abbreviated name of author following.	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Senebiera didyma</i> , Pers.		<i>"Abundant; recorded originally by Moore".</i> <sup>144</sup>
<i>Cerastium vulgatum</i> , Linn.	A Chickweed (Mouse-ear)	<i>"Not recorded"</i> by Hemsley.
<i>Polycarpon tetraphyllum</i> , Loefl.		
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> , Linn.	Pig-weed or Purslane	<i>"Not recorded"</i> by Hemsley. <i>"So abundant in some places as to be used with sweet potato vines for pig-feed"</i> .
<i>Medicago denticulata</i> , Willd.		<i>"Not recorded"</i> by Hemsley. <i>"Plentiful. Not a noxious weed, as there are no sheep on the island; at certain seasons it is a useful fodder plant. At the same time it is often a nuisance in gardens and other cultivation patches"</i> .
<i>Vicia sativa</i> , Linn.	Vetch	<i>"Not recorded"</i> by Hemsley. <i>"Several patches in the long grass close to the beach near Thompson's landing place"</i> .
<i>Cassia laevigata</i> , Willd.		<i>"Not recorded"</i> by Hemsley. <i>"I observed a thicket of this at the back of Mrs T Nicholls' ground. It goes by the ridiculous name of "Myrtle" on Norfolk Island, where it became such a pest that a regulation was adopted under which it was exterminated. I strongly urged its eradication in Lord Howe Island."</i>
<i>Erigeron linifolius</i> , DC	"Cobbler's Pegs"	<i>"Not recorded"</i> by Hemsley.

<sup>142</sup> WT Parsons & EG Cuthbertson, 1992, *Noxious Weeds of Australia*, Inkata Press, Melbourne, pp.318-19.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.209-12

<sup>144</sup> Charles Moore was Maiden's predecessor at the Botanic Gardens, Sydney.



<b>Scientific Name</b> Genus and species shown in italics, with abbreviated name of author following.	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Bidens pilosa</i> , Linn.		"No.59 in Hemsley's list. Very abundant, and locally known as "Teaser" for obvious reasons. It was brought with potatoes by whalers from Sunday Island, Macaulay Group, near New Zealand."
<i>Taraxacum dens-leonis</i> , Desf.	"Dandelion"	"Not recorded" by Hemsley. "A note in regard to this plant has been given at p.154".
<i>Solanum nigrum</i> , Linn.		"Not recorded" by Hemsley. "Springs up wherever land is cleared. It is known as "Black Currant", the fruits being occasionally used for jam, as on the mainland."
<i>Solanum aviculare</i> , Forst. <sup>145</sup>		"No.86 in Hemsley's list. "Known as "Bully-bully" (said to be the Maori name). "Kangaroo Apple". Mrs T Nicholls says she has seen the Maoris eat the fruits, but Europeans could not." This species is native to Lord Howe Island.
<i>Physalis peruviana</i> , Linn.	"Cape Gooseberry"	"Springs up in many places where land is cleared. Not in Hemsley's list."
<i>Verbena bonariensis</i> , Linn.		"Recorded by Moore. Known all over the island as "Gin-case." It first sprang up where the packing of a gin-case was emptied out, about 40 years ago. At first it was encouraged, as a pretty plant, but now it is a serious pest, although lightly spoken of by some, as the cattle nip it."
<i>Chenopodium murale</i> , Linn.		"Not hitherto recorded."
<i>Mirabilis jalapa</i>	"Marvel of Peru".	"A large patch on Mrs T Nicholls' ground. An escape from cultivation."
<i>Ricinus communis</i> , Willd.	"Castor Oil Plant"	"Introduced to the island by Dr Foulis, who employed it for medicinal purposes. It is now a great nuisance, as it is spreading in the brushes and injuring the native vegetation. Cattle keep it down in most places where they can get at it. Already noted by Moore."
<i>Ceratochloa uniloides</i> , DC.	"Prairie Grass"	"Not recorded" by Hemsley. "This useful grass was originally introduced (by seed) several years ago; it is now well established in many parts of the island".
<i>Stenotaphrum americanum</i> , Schrank.	"Buffalo Grass"	"Introduced by Mrs Cavaye about five years ago, and spreading."
<i>Avena</i> sp.	"A bearded Wild Oat"	"Said to be plentiful, and described to me clearly by two witnesses. I did not see it, at all events in flower or grain."

<sup>145</sup> This species is native to LHI.

Maiden goes on to list those “edible introduced fruits” on the island up to the time of his visit in 1898.

<b>Fruit</b>	<b>Comments (Maiden’s in italics)</b>
Apples	<i>“an eating and a cooking”</i>
Pear, cooking	
Quince	
Peaches	
Plum	<i>“(Black Diamond)”</i>
Apricots	
Loquats	<i>“(these and many other fruit trees were received via Norfolk Island)”</i>
Orange	<i>“of which there are some magnificent trees on Mrs T Nicholls’ land of great size, in full bearing, and without a trace of disease, as far as I could see. They were introduced by Mr Andrews (Mrs Nicholls’ father) about 1860 from Tahiti, pips having been planted on board the American whaler “Napoleon”. This was the beginning of citrus cultivation on Lord Howe Island. In addition there are other Orange trees, also Seville Oranges, Mandarin Oranges and lemons: also one Lime and one Citron.”</i>
Strawberries	<i>“have been tried and have been exterminated by birds”.</i>
Mulberry	<i>“the edible one; also the White Mulberry for silkworms.”</i>
<b>Fruit</b>	<b>Comments (Maiden’s in italics)</b>
Turkey Fig	
Cape Gooseberry	
Pomegranate	
Pea-nut ( <i>Arachis</i> )	
Passion-fruit	
Cherimoyer	<i>“apparently flourishes, but is a shy fruiter”.</i>
Grape vine	<i>“(Black Hamburg and Muscatel), does not flourish here; the climate is too wet. The islanders allow them to grow prostrate”.</i>
Yellow Guava	<i>“from Tahiti, via Norfolk Island”.</i>
Black or Purple Guava	
Bananas	<i>“were originally introduced by Dr Foulis, and are one of the staples of the island. They grow the Cavendish, Plantain and Sugar Banana”.</i>
Pine-apple	<i>“exists, but does not flourish”.</i>
Papaw ( <i>Carica papaya</i> )	<i>“There are several plants on the island, and they are universally known as Mammee Apple, usually pronounced “Mummy”. Wyatt Gill, “Jottings from the Pacific”, p.183, has the following note on the subject: “It is amusing in printed and written lists of prices of produce at different islands to read Mammy Apple; never Papaw Apple. This originated in the ignorance of the early whaling captains who took papaw for papa, and then by way pf joke converted it into Mammy”. It is to be regretted if the proper name, Papaw, cannot be reintroduced, as it is probable that inconvenience may be caused by confusion with the true Mammee Apple (Mammea Americana) or South American Apricot, an esteemed fruit of South America.”</i>
Bread fruit	<i>“I was informed that there was a Bread-fruit tree on the island and the islanders, many of whom have spent much time in the tropics, ought to know it, but a handsome young tree in front of Mrs T Nicholls’ house which goes under this name is Candle nut tree (<i>Aleurites triloba</i>)”.</i>

As far as specific farm structures associated with crops are concerned, documentary references are few, but R D Fitzgerald noted the presence of drying floors for onions

in his description of the outhouses of buildings in 1869 <sup>146</sup>.

Thomas Iceley, reporting to Sir Henry Parkes, estimated there to be three to four hundred acres of a total land area of 3,800 acres available for agriculture and noted that:

*'the gardens (as the cultivated plots on the island are called – and which are cut out of the thickets of Palms and Banyans) are necessarily irregular in shape....For some years Bananas, Oranges, Onions and Corn, have been grown and exported in small quantities.'*

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the island was famous for its onion crop until disease wiped it out. Market gardening has been an important part of island life since first European settlement when islanders began trading with whalers and others on passing vessels. Early accounts of the settlers' gardens indicate that they had considerable success with fruit and vegetables in the rich basalt-derived soils on parts of the island. However, with the arrival of rats, following the grounding of the *Makambo* in 1918, islanders found it necessary to use poison baits to protect their produce. Mould and black spot and the introduction of fruit fly to the island have meant that it has been much more difficult to grow fruits such as peaches and apples disease-free without some use of insecticides.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Frank 'Cobby' Robbins managed one of the largest cultivated gardens on the island, growing fruit and vegetables on land now occupied by the golf course. The land was drained by a series of rock-lined drains, using rocks from the seashore. Physical evidence of these drains survives near Moron's Gully, between holes 7 and 8 of the course. <sup>147</sup>



**Figure 14 (left)** Frank 'Cobby' Robbins harvesting beans from his 'garden'. (Source: Dick Morris prints 3: DM007, LHI Museum); **(right)** one of the stone-lined drains surviving from Cobby's Garden on the site of the present Golf Course. (Photo Chris Betteridge, 18 March 2010)

Cobby, like other islanders, [earned a livelihood during difficult times](#), growing vegetables, including tomatoes, cucumber and rockmelon and flowers for seeds for

<sup>146</sup> E G Fitzgerald

<sup>147</sup> *Signal* vol. 4, no. 7, 22 September 1994

mainland seed companies like Searle's, Yates<sup>148</sup> and Rumseys<sup>149</sup>. During World War II, with many of the island men away and a decline in palm seed collection activity, the islanders grew vegetables and flowers to supply seeds. The land now occupied by the island's sports oval was commandeered for seed production at this time<sup>150</sup>. In 1942 it was reported that three quarters of Australia's supply of seed of tomatoes, cucumber and squash marrow was being produced on Lord Howe Island.<sup>151</sup> Islander Des Thompson recalls that as children they could eat some of the rockmelons produced in the family's garden as long as they kept the seeds in a container for later use. Des also remembers locals growing zinnias and phlox to supply seed to Yates and Andersons.<sup>152</sup> A branch of Junior Farmers was established at the Lord Howe Island School and students learned how to graft trees and tend the large garden which was located where the 'new' classroom block now stands.



**Figure 15 (Left):** Undated photograph of Dick Fred Davies and John Thompson Jr picking cucumbers. (Source: Dick Morris prints 3: DM208, LHI Museum); **(Right):** From left to right: Beth Kirby, Edith Kirby, Pixie and Kerry Kirby (seated on seed bag) and Gerald Kirby with bags of seed for Yates Seeds. (Source: Ian Esler: Eril Esler-Davies prints, EED10, LHI Museum Collection)

Today, many islanders maintain the tradition of kitchen 'gardens' to supplement the produce imported via regular shipping, and some air freight. As on the mainland, islanders can now enjoy fresh produce all year round, irrespective of the seasonality of various fruits and vegetables. Today, several larger gardens, one in Stevens Reserve and another tucked in behind the Seventh Day Adventist Church, some equipped with hydroponic equipment, produce a diverse and healthy range of fruit, vegetables and herbs for local consumption. Records show many 'gardens' and fruit tree orchards existed until recent times. A row of banana 'trees' is evidence of one of the Thompson family gardens on Neds Beach Road, just east of the tennis court.

While many current islanders still grow herbs and vegetables for their own consumption, the size and probably also the heightened expectations of the tourist

<sup>148</sup> Yates have been unable to confirm this from their archives. Correspondence, Judy Horton to Margaret Betteridge .....22 June 2010

<sup>149</sup> LHI Bicentennial book

<sup>150</sup> *Signal* Vol. 4, no. 7, 22 September 1994

<sup>151</sup> *Canberra Times* 17 October 1942, p.2

<sup>152</sup> Des Thompson, pers.comm., 3 March 2009

market require that fresh food for the guesthouses comes by air or on the twice monthly ship service from Port Macquarie on the *MV Island Trader*. The introduction of fruit fly to the island has meant that it is now much more difficult to grow disease-free fruits such as peaches and apples. A few islanders run cattle on lush pasture, mainly east and south of the airfield and the grazing cows add a bucolic touch to the landscape in stark contrast to the palm-fringed roads and coral lagoon. Islander Gary Payten had a licence to run chickens on his lease<sup>153</sup> but has given up egg production<sup>154</sup>.

Many islanders, particularly the older generation, were very fond of cherry guavas which they grew in their gardens for the fruit which were used to make guava jelly and juice and to flavour icecream. The increasing problem of cherry guavas invading natural areas created a major conflict with the protection of the island's World Heritage values. Some of those islanders wishing to continue growing cherry guavas suggested keeping the trees in netted enclosures to prevent birds spreading the seeds. However, the Lord Howe Island Board considered this approach would not provide sufficient safeguards against the spread of this very invasive species. A single community garden in which cherry guavas could be grown was considered but at the LHI Board's September 2008 meeting it was decided to abandon the idea owing to a lack of support from residents and the fact that under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* cherry guava must be fully and continuously destroyed.

Today, the major plant crop of the island is that of palms. There are four species of palm endemic to Lord Howe Island but it is the Kentia or Thatch palm (*Howea forsteriana*) that is most important. This slow-growing temperate palm proved ideal as an indoor plant in the conservatories of Europe, unlike the faster-growing tropical species that soon outgrew their containers. The export of palm seed was for many years the major source of income for the islanders. Palms are now exported as nursery-grown seedlings produced to International Standards. Although Lord Howe's share of the kentia market has shrunk, with competition from plantations on Norfolk Island, Hawaii and elsewhere, Lord Howe Island kentias are still regarded as the best. In 2009/10 the nursery operations of the palm industry, run by the Lord Howe Island Board, produced gross revenue (adjusted for AASB 141 Agriculture) of \$564,907, equivalent to approximately 27% of the total gross revenue from the Board's trading operations, the remainder coming from liquor store operations.

Plantations now account for more than 80% of palm seed collected whereas previously the Permanent Park Preserve was the main source of seed. Traditional tree-climbing and seed collection techniques are part of the island's cultural heritage, celebrated in events on Discovery Day. Further investigation is needed regarding occupational health and safety and insurance issues to allow these skills to be passed on to younger generations.

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<sup>153</sup> Gary Crombie, pers. comm. in interview with Margaret Betteridge

<sup>154</sup> Hank Bower, pers. comm.

### Typical examples that demonstrate this theme

Hay barn, wheat harvester, silo, dairy, rural landscape, plantation, vineyard, farmstead, shelterbelt, silage pit, fencing, plough markings, shed, fish farm, orchard, market garden, piggery, common, irrigation ditch, Aboriginal seasonal picking camp.

### Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme

Soldier Creek Area / Site of Johnson's Farm and 1882 Commissioner's Camp, Portion 126 (R Shick) & Portion 123 (N Fenton), Lagoon Road;<sup>155</sup>  
 Green House and Agricultural Building, Earl's Anchorage? Portion 91, Anderson Road;<sup>156</sup>  
 Site of early land use related to W R ("Billy") Nicholls, Permanent Park Preserve, North Bay;<sup>157</sup>  
 Garden Areas, Portions 47, 50 & 52, off Anderson Road;<sup>158</sup>  
 Garden areas Portion 55, Neds Beach Road;  
 Palm seed collection areas e.g at base of Mt Gower;  
 Stone-lined drains on golf course;  
 Lord's Garden;  
 Oleander wind breaks;  
 Potential archaeological sites of wells and gardens;  
 Weir at Transit Hill;  
 Cool room and associated equipment, Dignam residence, Lagoon Road.

### Items recommended for listing on LEP Heritage Schedule

Soldier Creek Area / Site of Johnson's Farm and 1882 Commissioner's Camp, Portion 126 (R Shick) & Portion 123 (N Fenton), Lagoon Road;<sup>159</sup>  
 Site of early land use related to W R ("Billy") Nicholls, Permanent Park Preserve, North Bay;<sup>160</sup>  
 Stone-lined drains on golf course;  
 Cool room and associated equipment, Dignam residence, Lagoon Road.

### Further Recommendations

In the interests of food security, high-value agricultural land should be identified in the LEP and zoned appropriately for agricultural protection.

Further research is required into the significance of the weir at Transit Hill and other sites relevant to the theme of Agriculture. The LHI Golf Course has recently written to the Board suggesting that the stone-lined drains on the golf course are experiencing substantial gully erosion. It has been recommended that an erosion and sediment control plan be prepared in accordance with best practice guidelines (vegetated swales and buffer strips). Such management measures should include mechanisms to retain and protect as much as possible of the historic drain features.

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<sup>155</sup> RES LH 03

<sup>156</sup> RES LH 49

<sup>157</sup> RES LH 34

<sup>158</sup> RES LH 38

<sup>159</sup> RES LH 03

<sup>160</sup> RES LH 34

### 2.3.2 Commerce

*These are activities relating to the buying, selling and exchanging of goods and services*

With no human population resident on Lord Howe Island, the very first visitors were free to take whatever native wildlife they could capture from land and sea and it was not until the arrival of the first settlers that there is any indication of commercial activity on the island.

The first residents came to Lord Howe Island from the north-eastern region of the South Island, New Zealand where Sydney merchant, Robert Campbell, in business with Captain Blenkinthorpe (various spellings including Blenkinsopp), operated whaling stations for provisioning ships. With increasing inter-tribal friction among the Maori and the destruction of their station at Cloudy Bay, Blenkinsopp and a party of British whalers and their Maori wives set out for Sydney, calling in on June 1834 at Lord Howe Island where the whaling party set up a small settlement.<sup>161</sup> For the next seven years they are believed to have traded with passing ships, offering fresh produce in return for staple items. The scale of this operation, presumably based on barter and exchange, was probably very small.

The very first mention of a financial transaction on Lord Howe Island comes from 1841 when Captain Owen Poole and his partner, Australian iron-founder Richard Dawson, purchased the business established by Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman for the sum of £350 (£150 for each family and £50 for additional improvements made by the Ashdowns).<sup>162</sup> On 13 September 1841, Poole and Dawson placed the following advertisement in the *Sydney Herald*:

*“Notice is hereby given that a station and store is formed at Lord Howe’s Island in Latitude 31° 30’ South and Longitude 158° East, where whaling and other vessels can be provided with live stock, Fish, Potatoes and other Vegetable, Slops<sup>163</sup>, etc on moderated terms”<sup>164</sup>.*

To save vessels from having to navigate the unfamiliar waters around the island or to send men ashore, Poole would organise for the goods to be taken out to the ships. When Poole’s partnership with Dawson was dissolved, Poole entered into a relationship with Dr John Foulis, who brought, in addition to two servants, four Englishmen - Platter, Slade, Varney and Thorne, to work for him, on an annual wage of £10 and a single ration. During Foulis’ time on the island, he observed that in the space of a year, between 60 and 80 ships would call in for provisions but no details of these transactions have been located.

<sup>161</sup> William Lines, *Taming the Great South Land: A history of the conquest of nature in Australia*, p.37

<sup>162</sup> This business was originally established by Robert Campbell and Co. but there is no known record of the terms under which it operated. The sale in 1841 has been recorded in Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman. (Nicholls 1952; Rabone, 1940; Finch and Finch, 1967; Nichols, 2006;) KO p.70

<sup>163</sup> The word "slop" was slang for ready-made clothing, wearing apparel and bedding of seamen.

<sup>163</sup> *Sydney Herald* 13 Sept 1841

<sup>164</sup> *Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser* 4 June 1842 p.3

The dissolution of the Poole-Foulis partnership in 1847 saw Poole transferring his improvements at Hunter Bay to the Andrews<sup>165</sup> and Foulis accepting a passage for his family back to Sydney from Captain Pierce on the *General Pike* in return for his house.<sup>166</sup> Pierce in turn 'traded' the 'homestead' for two tons of potatoes from the Andrews' farm at Big Creek. There is no mention in the records of a monetary exchange for these arrangements.

It would seem that subsequent to Poole's business, the provisioning trade was conducted by the settlers, who, although independent of each other, acted as a co-operative and shared the trade among themselves. Findlay's Directory of 1851 mentions a "small settlement at the northern end of the main island where pigs and potatoes could be obtained in small quantities – 16 people engaged in farming, selling surplus produce to whalers and passing ships".<sup>167</sup> Another wrote "...the unmistakable signs of trading appeared on the lagoon, a rickety jetty, a slipway, a smokehouse, a store shanty or two"...

In 1856, the barque *Louisiana* from New Brunswick (USA) took on a surprisingly varied list of stores – "arrowroot, two casks of smoked mutton birds, coffee, sugar, syrup, grapes, papaya, six walking sticks, one bale mutton bird feathers. The captain also notes that they traded a four year old whaleboat for a ton of onions".<sup>168</sup>

With no regular shipping service between Sydney and Lord Howe Island and visits by whalers of varying nationalities thousands of miles from home ports, opportunities to acquire currency, other than goods in kind, would have been very limited. Trading and bartering therefore were the only mechanisms for acquiring or disposing of items, so it comes as no surprise that early land transactions on the island were also conducted this way. In 1869, Surveyor R D Fitzgerald notes<sup>169</sup> that the inhabitants:

*"have for the most part, been connected with the whaling trade (and are) of a class quite equal, in my opinion, to the settlers on land in Australia, and are thirty-five in number. They seem to be fairly provided with the necessities of life, but lack money, as their trade with the whalers is, in great part, carried on by barter. They exchange pork, potatoes, maize, fowls and onions for tea, sugar, clothes."*

As the whaling trade declined with the discovery of alternate energy sources, fewer boats had reason to call in at Lord Howe Island. In 1867, a group of enterprising island residents, Captain William Field, Nathan Thompson, and William Wainwright formed a partnership with equal shares in an 18-ton trading vessel, the *Sylph* and made the first attempt to export locally-grown 'red' onions (for which they received £2 per ton) and occasional seasonal produce to the markets in Sydney twice a year. This venture helped to offset the shortfall in income, but Edward Hill, visiting the island with Inspector P J Cloete in 1869, expressed concern<sup>170</sup> that the residents:

*"seem to be fairly provided with the necessities of life, but lack money, as their*

<sup>165</sup> McFadyen, 1992 p.

<sup>166</sup> Kelly, M. 1984; Nichols 2006

<sup>167</sup> Findlay's Directory

<sup>168</sup> Ruth Park, 1982, p.53

<sup>169</sup> NSW Parliament, *Votes and Proceedings*, 1870

<sup>170</sup> Hill, 1869, p.37)



*trade with the whalers is in great part, carried on by barter. They exchange pork, potatoes, maize, fowls and onions for tea, sugar and clothes &c which must be taken at the whaler's valuation"*

According to Hill:<sup>171</sup>

*"turkeys could be obtained by barter or cash at 10 shillings a pair; fowls 3 shillings; ducks 3 shillings; geese 12 shillings, pigs and goats at 3 pence per pound alive, or weighed as they stand; fuel may be had at 5 pounds or 1 pound a cord, cut or stacked on the beach".*

Alfred T Corrie, surgeon aboard *HMS Pearl* visited the island in 1877, observing<sup>172</sup> that:

*"sometimes six or twelve months pass without a vessel calling at the island....now this once much frequented and favoured little spot is apparently quite deserted; the old families have lost all zeal for cultivation, having to live as it were, from hand to mouth, seeing the fruits of their labour decaying and rotting in the storehouses"*

The arrival of Captain Armstrong, appointed in 1878 as Forest Ranger and Resident Magistrate, brought renewed interest in the island's capabilities for commercial production. Armstrong devised a number of projects with an economic agenda, for the mutual benefit of the islanders and himself. He financed the importation of a wide variety of plants and seeds which he trialed, with varying success. Coffee, in particular, thrived in the island's climate and 100 plants were duly sent from the Botanic Gardens and a plantation of about 3 acres established. The venture however failed to become an economic success and the only coffee produced was that grown for domestic consumption.<sup>173</sup>

Armstrong encouraged a number of other ventures with potential for economic success, including the export of *Kentia* palm fibre, which could be used for furniture and mattress stuffing, toilet paper and fruit packing and storage; phosphatic guano collecting, and most importantly, *Howea foresteriana* palm seed industry. Islanders such as Ned King and TB Wilson, had already recognized the economic potential of *Kentia* seed, which could satisfy the growing demand for indoor palms. Some islanders, however, saw Armstrong as a threat to the independence of their operations. Following Armstrong's dismissal in the wake of his efforts to close a 'sly grog' operation (in which locals distilled liquor from bananas and dried figs) and control the sale of spirits and liquor, intense rivalry developed among those islanders engaged in the palm seed trade.

Two authors have suggested that in 1880 islanders traded vegetables for a cannon. This item, mounted on a gun carriage made by a former island policeman is now located outside the Lord Howe Island Museum but was previously at Signal Point

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., p.48

<sup>172</sup> *Royal Geographical Society, Proceedings*, Vol XXII, pp.136-143

<sup>173</sup> Fitzgerald, Clarson 1882, TDE 1893a

and in the grounds of the Government House<sup>174</sup>. Jean Edgecombe suggests the cannon was given to islanders by the crew of a passing ship and Max Nichols records that a Captain O'Brien, the skipper of the topsail schooner *Colleen Dhas*, traded it for produce on 29 October 1880. The interpretive sign at the LHI Museum suggests a date of 21 December 1880.

Arriving in 1900, Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell found the islanders "poverty stricken" and being taken advantage of by unscrupulous seed merchants, including the English seed company, Sander and Coy, which in 1905 tried to secure a monopoly by offering a high price [£2 to £2.10 per bushel] in return for a seven year contract under which they would obtain the rights to all seed produced on the island. This invoked the ire of Australian nurserymen who protested to the Chief Secretary, and the agreement was blocked by the State Government.

In 1906, the *Kentia Palm Seed and Plant Co-op Company* was established, with 22 islanders and 3 Sydney-based individuals, but it left many non-shareholding islanders aggrieved and prompted a Royal Commission investigation into island activities and the welfare of residents. Eventually the Lord Howe Island Board of Control (established 1913 to "take charge of the affairs of the island and the trade thereof") was placed in control of trade. The Board established a limited liability, co-operative company, to administer the profits of the palm seed trade evenly amongst the islanders, with dividends paid to shareholders at the end of every month, with wages also paid to those who assisted with the collection, packing and dispatch of seed.

Under the new arrangement, a three-man local committee appointed by the Board oversaw the operations and men over 21 years of age were entitled to 25 shares, increasing to 50 shares after a further ten years. Women were treated equally and held exactly the same number of shares, and a family supporting children received an extra ten shares for each child, with a maximum number of shares being set at 135.<sup>175</sup>

With tensions abated, it was the palm seed industry which was to establish economic viability for the island in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>176</sup> G P Darnell-Smith, Director of the Botanic Gardens Sydney commented in 1929 of "a remarkable romance in the realm of economic botany", noting that the islanders were wholly dependent on the returns of seeds from palms. Certainly, it was the only profitable trade and was the economic mainstay until World War I.<sup>177</sup> For the year ending 1919, proceeds from the sale of four different palm seeds yielded an income of over £8,108 – by 1954, it had dropped to £1,883.

The major threat to the industry came in June 1918 with the arrival of rats following the grounding of the Burns Philp steamship, *Makambo* on Ned's Beach after hitting rocks in the Admiralty Group. The rats on board the ship quickly discovered a

<sup>174</sup> Early photograph of Government House grounds

<sup>175</sup> Men over 21, 25 shares; women over 21, 10 shares rising to 25 and each child 10 with up to 35 shares per family; and men over 35 an additional 25 shares each. LHI Board Annual Report....

<sup>176</sup> The *Kentia Palm Seed* industry is included in Section.....

<sup>177</sup> 'The *Kentia Palm Seed Industry*' LHI Misc Info Bulletin RBS Kew No 1 1929

gourmet paradise on Lord Howe Island and decimated native bird populations, invertebrates and palm seeds. In a desperate measure to control the destruction of the island's only viable industry, each shareholder was required to devote one day a fortnight to hunting and eliminating the predatory rats. The Board of Control provided islanders with traps, guns and ammunition with which to exterminate the rodents, and provided a bounty for each rat's tail surrendered as evidence of their destruction. This scheme, which endured into the 1950s, provided islanders with a small local income, 1 penny per tail in 1920, rising to sixpence in 1928 when 21,214 tails were surrendered for payment. By the 1950s, alternative eradication measures were in place and the bounty declined to threepence.

With ships commandeered to the war effort and widespread disruption to markets in Europe during World War II, export opportunities for the palm seed industry declined rapidly. Islanders were reduced to earning a meagre livelihood from growing vegetables and flower seeds under contract to mainland seed companies such as Yates and Rumseys and by exporting small quantities of fresh fish. It may have seemed inconsequential, but it was enough to keep the islanders solvent. The lean years continued until after World War II and the long-established share system lapsed. By the time the war ended, the market for seed had shrunk, so the share system was discontinued. Instead, palm seed collection was arranged directly between collectors and the new management authority, the Lord Howe Island Board, established 1953. Islanders were paid a fixed sum per bushel to collect the seed, and any profit derived from seed sales went into the Board's consolidated fund for island administration. This arrangement continues today. In 2008-09 net revenue to the Board from palm nursery operations was \$585,871 (down from \$749,962 in 2007-08).<sup>178</sup> However, this figure needs to be placed in context. Revenue from Liquor Store Operations for 2008-09 was \$1,515,988, nearly three times that for palm sales<sup>179</sup>.

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<sup>178</sup> *Lord Howe Island Board Annual Report 2008-09*, p.51

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*



**Figure 16 (Left):** A seed collector climbing a kentia palm. Collectors today must operate in pairs and use safety harnesses in the interests of Occupational Health and Safety. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 2, DM200, LHI Museum Collection); **(Centre):** Collectors carrying sacks of seed from the harvest area. (Photo: Mabel Payten Collection, MB44, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Goats were sometimes used to carry the heavy loads of seed. (Photo: Robyn Warner prints, RW2, LHI Museum Collection).



**Figure 17** Islander Larry Wilson explains the operation of the Board's kentia palm nursery during one of the regular public guided tours of the facility. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 27 February 2009)

### Tourism

The island's other major commercial activity is based on tourism. In 1893, Burns Philp, which had begun a steamer service between Sydney and Lord Howe Island, delivered goods for islanders and brought visitors over from the mainland. Initially, holiday-makers paid Burns Philp for an all-inclusive package - a two-three week round trip including passage on the boat, and board and lodging on the island. Islanders were paid an allowance to accommodate visitors in their homes.



**Figure 18** Passengers in tender *Venture* at jetty with Cargo Shed and other boatsheds visible in background. The Cargo Shed survives but has been converted to provide facilities for visiting sailors. Clothes suggest circa 1930s (LHI Museum Photographic Collection, Dick Morris prints 3: DM260).

The rise of tourism throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century created an industry which is now the backbone of the island's economy and has spawned a diverse range of commercial activities, including accommodation, restaurants, retail stores and land and marine-based tourist activities, many of which promote environmental awareness of the World Heritage values of the island. Tourism is capped, with a strict control on the number of beds which can be offered for tourist accommodation and is further restricted by the availability of transport to and from the island.

### Trading

The rise of commerce on the island was slow, reflecting the unique nature of the economic opportunities and the reliance on maritime transport. T B Wilson's diary provides a fascinating account of financial transactions which he carried out. He acted on behalf of many islanders in their transactions with each other and with external businesses, as far afield as London, where seed was exported. Under the terms associated with the regulation of the palm seed industry, residents didn't have full control of their incomes and were required to submit requests to the Government's Board of Control before an individual could incur any expenditure outside ordinary living expenses.<sup>180</sup>

A correspondent, writing in *The Lone Hand* in November 1913, observed that money for a trip to Lord Howe was hardly required because "there were no shops on the island - the only item which could be purchased was a postage stamp".<sup>181</sup> The same author highlighted one of the difficulties facing the island's export economy, noting that on one occasion, 800 dozen oranges, all packed ready for transit, were left on the beach because that month the ship had too much cargo and could not take them to Sydney. There must have been many commercial losses experienced in this way.

<sup>180</sup> *Australian Banker* 1935 p5-8

<sup>181</sup> Lord Howe Island by L.E.A., *Lone Hand*, November 1913

Even though sea and air transport is now more reliable, the fortnightly visits by the *MV Island Trader* can still be delayed by unscheduled service requirements or the ship might have to wait outside the lagoon for a day or two because weather or tidal conditions are unfavourable. Similarly, aircraft operations can be affected by windy conditions or storm damage to the runway. While the authors were staying on the island in March 2009, they met a group of visitors who had arranged for cases of their favourite wines to be sent over by ship in time for their holiday. They were dismayed to discover that the *Island Trader* had been delayed for repairs and their precious cargo didn't arrive on the island until the day after they'd returned to the mainland.

### **Banking**

According to bank records, a private agency of the Commonwealth Savings Bank operated for a short time on the island in 1925 but it was not until 1935, that the Lord Howe Island Board of Control announced the opening of an agency of that same bank under the control of Cecil Whiting, making ready cash available to islanders. In March 1965, in response to the growing tourism industry, the agency was authorised to cash travellers cheques in \$US, \$NZ and £UK to a limit of \$A200 for any one person. For islanders, facilities improved in 1980 with special concessions granted by the bank, allowing the agent to issue bank cheques in exchange for large amounts of cash, issue new or continuation savings bank passbooks, and have a cash holding of \$3000 and a withdrawal limit ceiling (without authority) of \$500.

In October 1980, Thompson's Store (which had operated a private agency for the Bank of New South Wales Savings Bank since 1965), was also appointed as an agent of the Bank of New South Wales Trading Bank. In 1985, black light facilities were introduced. The Commonwealth Bank and Westpac (formerly Bank of New South Wales) continue to operate agencies and most island businesses now have electronic funds transfer (EFTPOS) facilities. For a long time the ATM (automated teller machine) failed to find its way to Lord Howe Island but one has recently been installed at the Bowling Club!

### **Retail Outlets**

The first retail outlet on Lord Howe Island was a small shop opened by Kath Hines in about 1923 at her family's property 'Palmgrove', at the northern end of Lagoon Road near Old Settlement. The Hines family regularly took visitors from the Burns Philp ships into their own home<sup>182</sup>. The site is now occupied by Arajilla resort. The first general store, Thompson's Store, operated by Cam(pbell) Thompson, opened in 1925, followed by Cecil Whiting's store, which operated from 1931-35. Transaction records of sales / stock and purchases maintained by the Dignam family between 1870-1942 and 1928-58 and the credit register for Thompson's Store for the years 1928-58 provide a fascinating account of the island's commerce.

With increasing tourism, opportunities arose for islanders to sell island arts and handcrafts, including woven pandanus and kentia leaf baskets, shells and locally made jewellery. 'Babe' Payten's Gift Store (on Lagoon Road, previously Blue Peter's) and the Curio Store in Kath Hine's former dress shop were among the first,

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<sup>182</sup> Chris Murray, pers.comm.



and were re-invented by successive owners, with new stock lines during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Trade has also been conducted from private homes, lodges and art studios, with islanders selling locally made items.



**Figure 19 (Left)** Undated photograph of Thompson's Store. The Norfolk Island Pine trees have gone. The store survives in a much altered state, and with major issues arising from the deteriorating asbestos cement cladding. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints Mis4-148, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Undated photo of Babe Green (née Payten) serving a customer in The Gift Store (Photo: Babe Payten Prints 1927-60, BP50, LHI Museum Collection).

Cam Thompson for a time ran a sweet stall from a suitcase at the movies in the Public Hall and later John and Betty Thompson sold refreshments from a kiosk on the site now occupied by Humpty Mick's.<sup>183</sup>

PW Dignam and family operated an ice and meat business on Lagoon Road and prior to World War II they supplied ice to island homes by horse-drawn dray. During the 1940s, '50s and early '60s the Dignam's butchery kept the island supplied with fresh meat<sup>184</sup>. The cool room and some of its refrigeration equipment survive today.



**Figure 20** The cool room in a building at the rear of 'Thornleigh', the Dignam residence in Lagoon Road retains relatively intact evidence of past refrigeration technology. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 21 March 2010)

<sup>183</sup> Robyn Warner, pers. comm.

<sup>184</sup> Chris Murray, pers. comm.

Another butchery was operated from behind the Curio Shop by Horace Green between 1957 and 1962.<sup>185</sup>

The concentration of a large number of businesses around the intersection of Lagoon Road and Ned's Beach Road has created what the locals refer to as the 'CBD' - a focal point for both islanders and tourists. A community market, held once a month in the grounds of Lord Howe Island Central School, also provides an important opportunity for locals to socialise, recycle household goods and sell local produce and handicrafts to other islanders and to visitors. The market also provides the school with a showcase for the students' work as well as generating some additional income for school activities.

In recent times, with delivery of goods more certain as a result of a regular shipping service, several shops have prospered. In addition to local demand and lifestyle aspirations, along with the needs of tourists in self-catering lodges, the range of food, domestic and household items and souvenirs has increased.

Joy's Shop on Middle Beach Road, established in 1955 near the church precinct, became so successful that additions had to be built in 1995. Joy's is a veritable cornucopia, selling supermarket items, newspapers, household goods, drinks and icecreams, holiday clothing and souvenirs. In 1955, Thompson's Store, near the Post Office, advertised a lending library service, they sold film, took reservations for cinema screenings, sold fruit, biscuits, aerated drinks, tackle and cosmetics. Today Thompson's has an outdoor eating area, serves take-away food and has a range of other foods, (including fresh bread baked daily by "The Butcher, The Baker"), as well as clothing, fishing tackle and souvenir items.

Joy's and Thompson's largely fulfill the role once played by general stores in mainland towns, selling everything from spare light globes to sunscreen lotions, fishing and snorkeling gear and reef shoes. Fish 'n Fillet, on Anderson Road, sells local fish to islanders and tourists but you need to be quick because the day's catch is often sold to the Bowling Club.

Top Shop, up high on the eastern side of the island, as the name implies, has fresh meat and milk. Larrup's Boutique, next to Humpty Mick's Café, specialises in holiday clothing and surfing equipment. A beauty salon, appropriately named 'Not Just a Salon', next to the Post Office, also sells home wares, craft and clothing.

A significant recent initiative has been the Co-Op, established as part of the Lord Howe Island Board's waste management strategy to minimise packaging and reduce waste. The Co-Op stocks bulk and organic foods, including a wide range of dry goods and locally made cakes and biscuits. Members can take advantage of reasonable prices for items such as cooking oil, flour, nuts, rice, cheese and cold meats. Visitors staying in self-catering accommodation can also save money by buying supplies at the Co-Op.

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<sup>185</sup> Recalled by Horace's son, John Green.



### The Board and Commerce

The Lord Howe Island Board is engaged in commercial activities based on the sale of liquor and kentia palm seedlings. In June 1955 *The Signal* forecast<sup>186</sup> the establishment of a Board-controlled liquor store and on 9 October 1955 operations commenced from a store room at the end of the Public Hall. At the start, sales were limited to six bottles per customer per week and, after an initial rush, sales tapered off. The Board currently operates a retail Liquor Store next to its administrative offices and also supplies the island's restaurants and accommodation houses with alcohol. In 2009-10 the Board's gross revenue from liquor store operations was \$1,523,978, representing approximately 73% of the Board's total revenue from trading operations<sup>187</sup>.

Palm nursery operations now account for only 27% of the Board's total revenue from trading operations. Palm seedlings produced in the Board's nursery are transported, mostly by air, to high-tech glasshouses in The Netherlands, where they are 'grown on' and eventually dispatched as indoor plants for offices and homes throughout Europe. Henk van Staalduinen of Maasdijk, has for over 30 years been the largest buyer of seedlings and regularly visits the island to renew trading contracts. Small quantities of seedlings are purchased by tourists, who are allowed to take them home with them when they fly out.

Patterns of trade and commerce on the island have also been shaped by commercial relationships with businesses on the mainland. Strong links have developed with those companies which can supply items as cargo for delivery by ship. The recent move from Yamba to Port Macquarie as the mainland port for the *Island Trader* has meant that supplies can be sourced from a larger population centre. The high cost of air freight, the limited carrying capacity and the unreliability of services due to weather has made this a less attractive commercial option.

Accessibility to the internet and automated banking probably represents the biggest single change to the method of trade and commerce in the island's history.

The island's economy is also supported by the guest lodges and other tourist accommodation, cafes and restaurants, and the tourism businesses based on guided tours, bush-walking, coral-viewing, snorkeling, diving and recreational fishing.

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<sup>186</sup> *The Signal* No.2, 22 June 1955

<sup>187</sup> *Lord Howe Island Board Annual Report 2009-10*, p.56

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Bank, shop, inn, stock exchange, market place, mall, coin collection, consumer wares, bond store, customs house, trade routes, mint, Aboriginal trading places, Aboriginal ration/blanket distribution points, Aboriginal tourism ventures

**Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Thompson's Store;

Joy's Store;

Larrup's Boutique;

Top Shop;

LHI Board Liquor Store;

Co-op;

Site of former Curio Shop, now 'Arajilla';

Commonwealth Bank agency;

Records and ledgers pertaining to sales, purchases and stock compiled by J Dignam 1870-1942 and P. Dignam 1928-1958;

Credit register for Thompson's Store compiled by the Thompson family 1928-1958 (LHI Museum);

Diary of palmseed work W S Thompson 1897-1927;

Cool room and associated equipment, 'Thornleigh', Lagoon Road.

Items in Museum Collection related to Commerce.

**Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule**

Cool room and associated equipment, 'Thornleigh', Lagoon Road.

Items in Museum Collection related to Commerce.

### 2.3.3 Communication

*These are activities relating to the creation and conveyance of information.*

As an isolated community Lord Howe Island is very dependent on communication with the outside world. In the days before radio communication, islanders would have to wait, sometimes months, for news brought by ship from the Australian mainland or elsewhere in the world. The introduction of flying boat services between Sydney and Lord Howe Island greatly improved communication between the mainland and the island, with several flights a week enabling prompt delivery of mail and newspapers and greater opportunities for travel between the two places.

Despite the introduction of satellite television and phones, Lord Howe Island remains relatively isolated. There is no mobile phone coverage and land-line phones were previously subject to relatively frequent problems. Flights between the mainland and the island are very weather dependent. There have been recent instances when damage to the airport runway or violent storms have prevented planes landing or taking off for periods of several days.

Like many other isolated communities, that on Lord Howe Island has traditionally been close-knit, with a strong community spirit exemplified by the building of a public hall, support for group sporting activities, the local school and community events.

#### Flags

The very first communication recorded on Lord Howe Island was the raising of the 'English colours' by Lt Ball and his party at 4 pm on 13 March 1788, signifying the British occupation of the island. This symbolic act of using a flag for proclamation was the traditional method by which explorers established and communicated the territorial nature of acquisition(s). Flags have been important as a communication tool on Lord Howe Island as the maritime language between the sea and land. Interestingly, the credit for today's international code of maritime signal flags (including the Blue Peter) is in fact due to Admiral Lord Richard Howe, after whom Lord Howe Island is named and who played a major role in the development of the sophisticated communication system for the Royal Navy, based on a system of codes and coloured flags.

Because of the prevailing strong winds, treacherous reef and shallow lagoon, a system of communication between islanders and sailors was critical. The government steamer, *Thetis*, for instance, ran alongside the reef and dipped her ensign several times as a signal to the islanders who would send a boat out to guide the vessel through the lagoon by hoisting a flag to indicate a safe passage. The *Thetis* would then slowly creep in, off-load passengers on exposed coral and then move to the other side of the island for safe shelter in the lee of the land.

Flags were hoisted on flagstaffs along the foreshore to signal passing ships or captains intending to land. The 1898 survey map identifies three flagstaff locations along the western shore of the island: a Government flagstaff at Signal Point (current site of a flagstaff); a flagstaff (shown on Admiralty map) on the lagoon foreshore opposite the Andrews' farm (now 'Pinetrees'); and a third, further south, also shown

on the Admiralty map, on the lagoon foreshore at the mouth of Soldier's Creek.

Finch & Finch observed the local protocol thus<sup>188</sup>:

*“A flagstaff situated on the southern side of Hunter Bay, about 1 ½ miles east-south-eastward of Phillip Point, is used to display signals for the guidance of vessels. A white flag means the western or town side anchorage. A red flag means the Ned's Beach anchorage and both flags together mean ‘go away’ - landing is not possible anywhere”.*

The absence of a lighthouse on the island is testament to the many topographical and maritime dangers which no single facility could ever hope to overcome.

Dr John Foulis recounts in 1851 that a high vantage point was important for scouring the seas for signs of shipping<sup>189</sup>:

*“There is a conical hill near the southern extremity of the island, which was used by the settlers as a look-out station, as from its commanding position all vessels may be seen approaching when at a considerable distance”.*

On the island itself, information about approaching ships was transmitted verbally to residents with the simple call of ‘Sail- Ho’ along the length of the settlement. Not all ships sent crews ashore, and islanders were often dispatched to row out to ships at anchor, taking with them provisions<sup>190</sup>. A correspondent writing in 1913 recounts that on arrival of their ship to the island, the Captain fired detonators and sounded a siren, and prepared for disembarkation at daylight when a rowboat would be dispatched with a red ‘welcome’ flag to collect the travelers and bring them ashore.<sup>191</sup>



**Figure 21** Flagstaff on lagoon foreshore c1925. (Photo: Joyce Petherick prints, img922, LHI Museum Collection).

Today, the *MV Island Trader* and other maritime vessels visiting Lord Howe Island are encouraged to advise the coastguard station, Lord Howe Maritime, prior to their departure for the island and on approach, to contact Lord Howe Island Maritime Radio (VHF Channel 12, 16) for guidance into the lagoon, for access to the jetty and a mooring.

<sup>188</sup> Finch & Finch, p.131

<sup>189</sup> Foulis, p. 7

<sup>190</sup> Nichols, p.

<sup>191</sup> LH Nov 1 1913

## Mail

Before regular shipping links, air services and electronic communications, islanders were dependent on passing ships for news of the outside world. Dr John Foulis notes in 1851 that “it was not infrequent for the island to get English news from an American vessel some weeks before the same was known in the Colony”.

The first written communications to and from the Island were dependent on sea traffic and were sporadic at best. In March 1852, a mailbag washed ashore, presumably from the wreck of the *Jenny Lind* (a vessel bound for London from Melbourne via Singapore) which had hit Kenn’s Reef north-east of Gladstone, Queensland in September 1850.<sup>192</sup> At the time of the ship’s loss, “a search was made for the mail, but it could not be found, as the vessel was completely bilged, and fast breaking up”<sup>193</sup>. A further report<sup>194</sup> stated that:

*“A mail bag sent from Melbourne for London by the Jenny Lind, which was wrecked at the entrance to Torres Straits, was received at the Sydney Post Office by the whaler Jane, Captain Fowler having received it from a resident on Lord Howe’s Island, who picked it up on the beach. The addresses of many of the letters were completely obliterated. The letters of which the addresses were legible were sent to England by the Blackwall, the remainder were returned to Port Phillip, in order that they may be returned to the writers if they can be ascertained.”*

Captain William Spurling, who settled on Lord Howe Island in 1861, undertook the unofficial duties of postmaster, delivering mail which was off-loaded from passing ships to residents. It could not have been a regular occurrence, for Alfred Corrie noted in 1876 that “sometimes six or twelve months pass without a vessel calling at the island”.<sup>195</sup> It is likely that Captain Field’s ship, the *Sylph* and the vessel, *Comet*, carried mail to and from Sydney on their trading runs. Postal records show that Thomas Mooney (who was drowned when the *Sylph* was lost at sea in 1875) had requested that letters be re-directed to him on Lord Howe Island in February 1871.

In 1878 Captain Richard Armstrong was appointed to manage the affairs of Lord Howe Island and among his portfolio of duties was the postal service. This still depended on the vagaries of passing ships, so deliveries continued to be infrequent and when letters did arrive, residents had to collect their mail from Captain Armstrong as there was no door-to-door delivery. Following Armstrong’s departure, Campbell Stevens was appointed postmaster in 1882, a position he held until his retirement in 1924. The first post office was a weatherboard building with a thatched roof, located on a site in what is now Steven’s Reserve. From there, Stevens resumed the mail delivery service to residents. In 1924, the post office was transferred to the home of Harry and Elsie Smythe (where the property now known as ‘Pandanus’ is located) and it operated there until 1929. Smythe remained as postmaster until 1948, when the service was transferred to the home of Charlie Retmock, now the site of Mary Challis Apartments, but continued with his wireless

<sup>192</sup> *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*, Wednesday 27 November 1850, p.1

<sup>193</sup> *Moreton Bay Courier* of November 9

<sup>194</sup> *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 13 March 1852, p.2

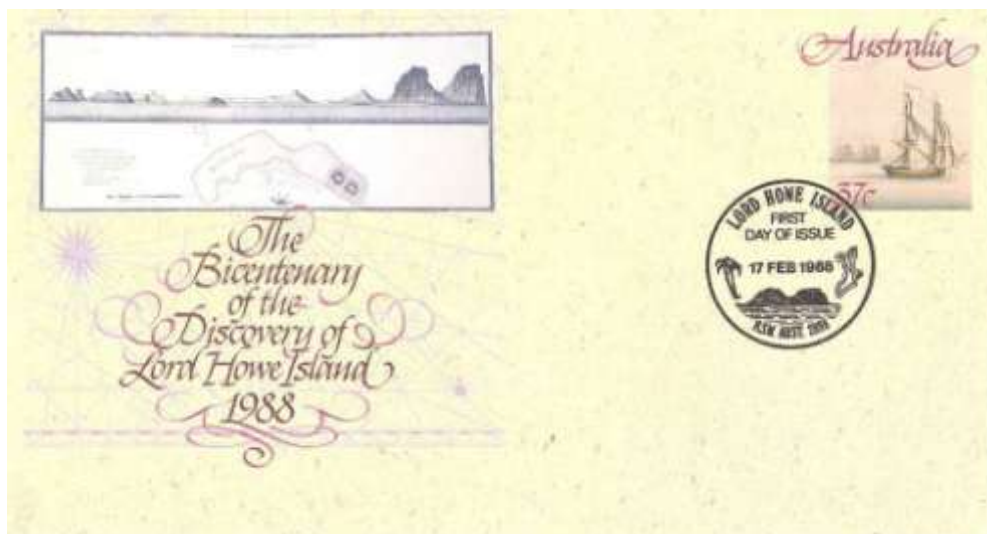
<sup>195</sup> *Proceedings, Royal Geographical Society*, London Vol. XXII, pp.136-143 in Rabone, p 49

duties until 1968. Following Charlie's death in 1959, a post office was constructed on a portion of land leased to John Thompson and the service was operated by his son, John Thompson Jnr.

Between 1939 and 1975 telegrams and letters (carried at normal postal rates, free of air mail charge) were the main avenue of communication for islanders, but postal services have always been subject to delays when the weather for sea or air transport is poor.

Lord Howe Island's postal history is significant for a number of brushes with the mainland authority. The first stamps used on the island were of NSW issue, until 1913 when Australian stamps became a national issue. In 1930, with the island facing a shortage of stamps following an increase in postage rates and with a monthly steamer due to depart, postmaster Stan Fenton radioed through to the General Post Office in Sydney for instructions. The reply came back that Fenton was to endorse one and a halfpenny stamps at the new two penny rate. What they actually meant to say was that Fenton was to endorse the additional payment on the envelope rather than defacing the stamp, but he had written across each stamp. Although postal officials tried to discredit the stamps as unlawful, Fenton had followed their instructions, albeit ambiguous and no action was taken against him. The result was that 260 1 ½ d Charles Sturt and King George V stamps with the Lord Howe Island endorsement are now very rare provisional stamps and have become highly sought after by collectors.

In 1988, with a seemingly simple initiative, the islanders raised the ire of the national postal authority once more. With no local mail delivery service, all residents and businesses were required to collect mail from the post office. During inclement weather, or for reasons of ill health or old age, this was not always possible or convenient, so a group of locals decided to establish a business, the Lord Howe Island Courier Post, and introduce a courier delivery service for mail and parcels for which a stamp would be required. The *Australian Postal Corporation Act* requires that no general courier can compete with Australia Post by charging less than four times the value of the basic Australia Post letter delivery rate. At the time, the basic Australian postage stamp cost \$0.45. Following consultation with Australia Post, who saw no difficulty, provided the words 'Australia', 'Australia Post' or the Australia Post logo were not used and the fee was \$1.80 (i.e. 4 times the standard rate) or more, an adaptation of the £1 stamp which had been used in conjunction with fund-raising for the Gower Wilson Hospital in 1936 was created. However, the popularity of the stamp issue and demand for reprints led Australia Post to threaten legal action over what it considered to be unlawful use of an Australian postage stamp. In a counter claim, the Courier Post enlisted the support of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) in its case against Australia Post. In the meantime, the Courier Post issued its own independent philatelic material using local artist Margaret Murray's artwork of Lord Howe Island wildlife and continued its delivery service. Local interest in philately has always been high on the island and has been seen as a means for celebrating and commemorating significant events. Lord Howe Island Post Office issued a commemorative cover for the last flying boat service in 1974 and again, in January 2000, to mark the millennium. The Lord Howe Island Museum has acquired a very significant philatelic collection of items of specific interest to Lord Howe Island.



**Figure 22** First Day Cover of special postal stationery issued in 1988 to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Discovery of Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge).

### Windsocks

The introduction of flying boat services between Sydney and Lord Howe Island greatly improved communication between the mainland and the island, with several flights a week enabling prompt delivery of mail and newspapers and greater opportunities for travel between the two places. The importance of windsocks, particularly during the operation of flying boats for take-off and landing on the lagoon, is noted and windsocks continue to play an important role for aircraft attempting to land on the island's airstrip. Evidence survived of the structural support for a large windsock which flew on Blackburn Island during the flying boat days and a windsock has been recently reinstated on the island as a reminder of earlier times and as a valuable guide for sailors and others who need to check wind direction and intensity.



**Figure 23** Ansett flying boat on the lagoon, with the windsock on top of Blackburn Island. (Scan of colour slide taken by Warwick Betteridge, October 1958).

## Wireless / Radio

On 19 August 1929, a 'wireless [radio telegraph] station' was established on Lord Howe Island 'in a neat little bungalow, with a picturesque setting facing the lagoon'<sup>196</sup>. Stan Fenton, who had worked as a radio operator for Amalgamated Wireless of Australia (AWA) and was familiar with the equipment and skilled in Morse code was appointed as the officer in charge of wireless communication, in addition to his role as postmaster. Stan sent the first Morse code telegram from the island to NSW Governor, Sir Dudley de Chair on 19 August 1929 and during World War II, he played an important role in island and strategic communications. Equipped with a 500 watt short and long wave LCW transmitter with engine, alternator, and exciter, islanders kept in touch with mainland Australia at a cost little more than ordinary land-line telegraph rates. Three times a. day, messages of commerce and greeting were exchanged with the AWA station at Pennant Hills.

Lord Howe Island's isolated location in the Pacific Ocean made it important as a point of reference for the collection and transmission of weather information and the movement of aircraft across the Tasman Sea. During World War II, the Department assumed control of the wireless station, which it shared with the Meteorological Bureau, and installed a radio-telephone to communicate with aircraft flying within a limited range of the island and added a direction-finding station at Old Settlement. In 1946, two large high directional navigational towers were installed by the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA), near the junction of Neds Beach Road and Anderson Road. Islander Robyn Warner remembers her father working on the towers when he returned from the war.<sup>197</sup> After the War, the DCA continued to serve the island, operating the communications for the flying boat service which commenced in 1947 and the telegraph office which was located in the building that is now the island's Post Office. During the flying boat days, a blackboard on the exterior wall of the building displayed the estimated times of arrival of aircraft.<sup>198</sup>

Two new communication towers were installed on Portion 230 in 2008 and the old towers were removed in 2011.

Thousands of telegrams were sent from the wireless office until 11 August 1975 when then officer-in-charge, Rupert Giles sent the last telegram from the island, and made the last Morse code transmission in Australia<sup>199</sup>. The following day, a joint radio-telephone link for the Postmaster General's Department and the Department of Civil Aviation was introduced, with the addition of a periodic loop antenna added to improve reception in 1975. That same year, the DCA was replaced by the Department of Transport which ran the Flight Service Office on the island, located in a shed adjacent to the jetty.

## Telephone

Plans for the installation of a telephone service to Lord Howe Island were forecast in June 1955.<sup>200</sup> Given that the first telephone service in Australia had commenced

<sup>196</sup> *Advertiser*, 1 February 1930, p 10

<sup>197</sup> Robyn Warner, Pers.comm.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Edgecombe, Jean, p.38

<sup>200</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal*, Vol 2, 22 June 1955



between Melbourne and Sydney in 1879, islanders had had to wait a very long time for the same service. Finally, a radio-telephone service, jointly managed by the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) and the Postmaster General's Department (PMG) was introduced in 1975. Located at the post office, the service was only available during weekdays for a few hours a day, depending on the volume of departmental and air traffic, and the postmaster was required to alert residents of an incoming call, which meant he had to cycle to their homes in advance of the call and be back in plenty of time to accept it.

The installation in 1982 of 2 4-metre diameter satellite earth stations, with housing for electronic equipment and aerials for re-transmission of satellite signals, significantly improved island communications and access to the outside world. In the same year a telephone service for islanders became operational through a manual exchange (4 lines) operated by Neil and Carole Woolnough from their home, 'Waveney' and islanders could now enjoy telephone conversations in the privacy of their own homes. This exchange was subsequently moved to the Meteorological Bureau's residential site.

In 1987, following the installation of the AUSSAT satellite, an automatic analogue exchange with 13 lines was installed in the public hall, providing a direct dialing telephone service. The large dishes, one adjacent to the existing telecommunications earth station in the northern part of the settlement and one in a disused quarry in the south, made telephone communication for the island a reality, but also brought access to television channels and FM radio stations.

Despite the failure of a proposal to establish community television, the islanders were happy at last to be able to receive mainland programs. In 1997, Telstra installed digital automatic telephone exchanges next to the large satellite dishes in the paddock adjacent to Beachcomber Lodge. This new service offered islanders itemised accounts, EasyCall facilities and call waiting – but weather still affected reception.

Now most guest lodges provide a communal call phone for guests and there are public telephones located at Joy's Shop on Middle Beach Road, opposite the Post Office next to Humpty Mick's and in Anderson Road. However, these are frequently susceptible to technical problems. A free local telephone is provided for tourists in the shelter next to the Post Office. Lord Howe Island has actively resisted pressure to install mobile telephone coverage on the island: although this initially comes as a shock to mainlanders arriving for their first time visit, they soon learn to enjoy the freedom from incessant calls – the absence of mobile phones is, for many people, one of Lord Howe's greatest assets!

### **Radar**

The first direction-finding tower and station was erected at Old Settlement in 1939 and could track aircraft in transit within range of the island. Huge non-directional towers and transmitters emitted the Lord Howe Island signal as a homing beacon for aircraft and ships in the area and flying boats arriving from 1947.

In 1955, the Meteorological Bureau moved out of the wireless station which it shared with the DCA and relocated to a new site above Middle Beach on the eastern side of

the island (now demolished, only footings remain). This new station, which was serviced by a network of overhead cables to feed reticulated power to the tower and transmitters, was equipped with the latest in meteorological communication technology, including a Plessey 277 S-band radar surface warning aerial which also doubled as a height finder, an AWA 72 MHz radiosone ground station, which acted as a receiver for atmospheric data measured by a weather balloon, and a voice radio-link between Lord Howe Island and Sydney airport. This facility provided radar weather surveillance across a range of 445 kilometres and became the southernmost point for tracking the movement of cyclones in the Pacific Ocean.

The Plessey WF277 aerial was one of the earliest radars developed, built in 1942 and employed on a Royal Navy ship during World War II. After the war the Australian Bureau of Meteorology purchased twelve of these radar units to track weather balloons to 20,000 feet altitude. This enabled measurement of upper atmosphere winds, essential for aviation safety. This aerial was used at the Jim's Point weather station between 1954 and 1982<sup>201</sup>.

The last use of the WF 277 radar was on 13 May 1985, after 30 years in operation. It was replaced by WF 100 radar, and in 1988, the Meteorological Station was relocated to its present site, near the airport, where it could participate more effectively in the management of accurate weather data specifically for aircraft movements with new satellite equipment.<sup>202</sup> The old radar was donated to the Lord Howe Island Museum and is currently displayed outdoors on the Lagoon Road boundary. Among the many movements to be tracked in the region was the progress of the adventurer, the late Steve Fosset in his balloon 'Solo Spirit' in 2001. This was tracked 80 kilometres north of Lord Howe Island by the island's equipment.



**Figure 24** Old radar unit on display outside Lord Howe Island Museum. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 5 March 2009).

<sup>201</sup> Interpretive label at Lord Howe Island Museum.

<sup>202</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal* Vol. 3, No. 5, 22 May 1985

In 2010, Airservices Australia commissioned a new VHF radio and ADS-B system on Lord Howe Island to replace the high frequency radio link which was often prone to atmospheric interference. The new service will improve safety for air traffic serving the island and also high capacity jet airliner traffic over-flying en route to and from east coast airports. The significance of this is the fact that for the first time, air traffic controllers will be able to positively identify, track and directly manage aircraft within a 250 nautical mile radius (around 460km) of Lord Howe and will mean that flights between Sydney, Brisbane and Lord Howe can now be under constant surveillance by air traffic controllers.

### **Local and Community Radio**

The first local radio station on Lord Howe Island, which broadcast from the foyer of the Public Hall, is recorded as having operated in the early 1980s at 1490 KHz between 7 and 11 am and between 4 and 6pm Monday to Friday, 7 to 11 am on Saturdays and 4 to 7 on Sundays. For over 20 years Gary 'Blaz' Millman has been the voice of Lord Howe Island's community radio and provided an important network for islanders while *The Signal* was out of print during the mid 1990s. The station broadcast for an hour at a time, providing news, weather, tides, bulletin items from the Lord Howe Island Board, local community news, activities at the clubs, hospital information and notice of visiting specialists and encouraged a 'kids' radio club, operating on Wednesday afternoons.

FM Radio 100.1 currently broadcasts from a console in the Cargo Shed and has been supported by the Lord Howe Island Board in the acquisition of equipment including a transmitter and mixer. Many younger islanders enjoy the Thursday night sessions which broadcast popular CDs and jam sessions, with accompaniment by Gary and others on percussion and mouth organ.

### **Internet**

Internet access was first available in Australia to universities via AARNet in 1989 and the first commercial dial-up ISPs (Internet Service Providers) appeared in capital cities soon afterwards. By the mid-1990s almost the entire country had a wide choice of dial-up Internet access providers. However, it was not until 2001 that Internet access was introduced to Lord Howe Island, through Telstra's mainland dial-up service, initially Big Pond, and in 2006 the Clearmail network began. To avoid the unsightly proliferation of mini satellite receivers across the island, the Lord Howe Island Board determined that residents would not be permitted to install them on an individual basis.

Internet communication, although still weather dependent, has had a high take-up rate on the island and provides a key tool for business communication. Public access to the internet is provided at the Lord Howe Island Museum. In June 2007, a community website, [www.lordhoweisland.nsw.au](http://www.lordhoweisland.nsw.au), was established and has proved to be a very successful communication portal for local residents, the local tourism providers and visitors requiring tourist information.

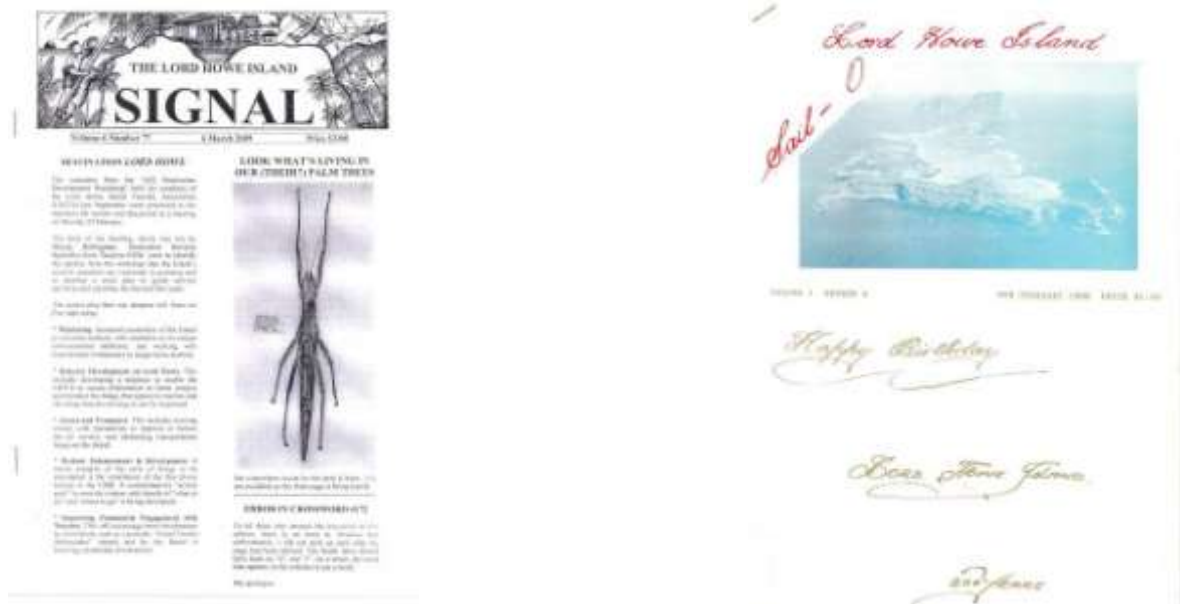
### **Newspapers**

Lord Howe Island's first attempt to circulate current news in a printed form was a two-page bulletin, typed by hand three times a week by postmaster Stan Fenton in the 1930s. Entitled *News of the World*, it presented local and international news and

events and was posted on notice-boards at the wireless station, and two guest lodges, 'Pinetrees' and 'Ocean View'. In 1932, Cecil Whiting established a general goods store and Bank of New South Wales agency from where he produced the island's first 'newspaper', the *Lord Howe Island News* in competition with Fenton's publication. What began as a monthly issue, freely distributed to residents, became a hit with tourists. To keep up with demand, Cecil introduced a nominal fee of 3d per issue to cover costs but eventually the venture proved uneconomic and was abandoned in 1935, when Cecil went to the mainland to work for Warner Brothers.

Jim Whistler (along with Trevor Nixon) was responsible for establishing the island's most successful printed media communication, *The Signal*, in 1953 and it has been in almost continual production for over 50 years, with only a couple of temporary production breaks between 1980 and 1985, during which time Daphne Nichols published the occasional *Sail-O*. Until the introduction of photocopiers, *The Signal* was produced on a spirit duplicator at the public school. Whistler promoted *The Signal* as providing "news and advertisements of interest to readers and constructive criticism relating to local affairs". It proved to be an important community forum for information, debate and social contact. The lead article in the first issue began with a complaint about the practice of off-loading of mail in preference to passengers and perishable food. For almost 30 years, the major topics of discussion aired were the frustrations of islanders with the reliability of transport of goods by sea, disruptions to air services and the difficulties with regular mail services.

Publication of *The Signal* ceased in 1987 but after public agitation it was revived and recommenced as a weekly newsheet on 11 August 1994. It is now produced fortnightly by Barney Nichols. Current copies can be purchased at Thompson's Store, Joy's Shop and Humpty Mick's and the cost of \$3 per issue helps defray expenses and distribution to subscribers, many of whom are resident on the mainland.



**Figure 25** Covers of *The Lord Howe Island Signal* (left) and *Sail-O* (right). (Scans by Chris Betteridge)

### **Community meetings and forums**

The Lord Howe Island community may be small but it is passionate about its island and its heritage, both natural and cultural. Opportunities to meet and discuss issues which impact on their way of life are provided through public meetings, consultations, open sessions with the Lord Howe Island Board and presentations by visiting specialists. This face-to-face communication, particularly in an ever-increasing electronic media environment, plays a very important role in island relations. The public hall is generally the venue for such events, which are advertised on community noticeboards, located along Lagoon Road and opposite the Post Office, or on chalkboards in front of the hall (a practice that has been in operation since the 1950s).

### **Emergency communication**

By necessity, Lord Howe Island has an SES radio outstation and emergency warning system to alert residents and tourists to impending danger and evacuation, if required. This service has been implemented on a number of occasions, most recently for a tsunami warning on 27 February 2010 (following the Chile earthquake), on 15 July 2009 (following an earthquake in New Zealand) and again on 13 November 2009 after the outbreak of a fire in the island's power house.

Despite the introduction of satellite television and phones, Lord Howe Island remains relatively isolated. There is no mobile phone coverage, land-line phones are subject to frequent problems, and flights between the mainland and the island are very weather dependent. There have been recent instances when violent storms or the damage they have caused to the airport runway have prevented planes landing or taking off for periods of several days. Like many other isolated communities, that on Lord Howe Island has traditionally been close-knit, with a strong community spirit exemplified by the building of a public hall, support for group sporting activities, the local school and community events.

### **The Lord Howe Island Museum**

The first museum on Lord Howe Island opened in 1978 on the corner of Lagoon Road and Middle Beach Road in a hall previously owned by the Lord Howe Island Sub-Branch of the Returned Services League, with Jim Dorman as its founding curator and President of the Lord Howe Island Historical Society. A new architect-designed, purpose-built museum opened on the same site on Discovery Day, 17 February 2001.

Today, the Lord Howe Island Museum is a central part of the island community. The Museum's roles include the care and archiving of valuable artefact and photographic collections for the community. The museum has history and environmental displays to showcase the island to visitors, a café, an audiovisual room with seven presentations weekly, a library, a tourist information desk and a shop.

The LHI Museum committee aims to involve as many people in the community and have the museum as a place that all residents feel they own.

The Museum is set up with a café, rotating temporary displays and shop so that it is a nice atmosphere to want to visit and spend some time. By having no entry fee

residents and visitors can visit as many times as they like and enjoy the atmosphere. The Museum is the only generally available indoor facility on the island, for use by residents and tourists. When the weather is inclement it is a very popular place for people to visit. The museum shop, wherever possible, sells art, craft and photographs of residents, to encourage locals to be creative and display their works.

### **The care of the collections at the Lord Howe Island Museum**

The Lord Howe Island Museum has four collections:

**Historic artefacts** relating to the island's history include personal belongings of early families; domestic items of a bygone era; technical items from communications; whaling implements relating to early visiting whaling ships, pieces of shipwrecks; original artworks such as two paintings by renowned Australian maritime artist Jack Earl; original maps depicting Lord Howe Island. The historic artefact collection is databased on software developed by the Queensland Museum.

**Photographic collection:** The LHI Museum has around 4,000 images dating from 1882 in its photographic collection, the majority taken by island resident Dick Morris from 1931 to 1970. This collection includes all facets of island life- transport, community, tourism, shipping, school, weddings, sport aviation etc. A large part of this photographic collection has been scanned and digitised, plus the majority are now databased on a catalogue system; a copy of which is available to the public in the History gallery

**Herbarium collection** – pressed, dried and mounted specimens of Lord Howe Island plants; available by arrangement for researchers.

**Philatelic Collection** : The Museum recently purchased one of the most complete philatelic collections relating to Lord Howe Island.

Reference library of books and scientific papers relating to Lord Howe Island, its history, geology, oceanic island flora and fauna and marine life. At present this reference collection is not accessible by the public, but plans are to open the library for researchers and public under supervision, and to have it available on a public access computer.

### **Displays at the Lord Howe Island Museum**

The Lord Howe Island Museum has two display galleries:

1) **The James Dorman Historical Gallery** which displays the cultural history of the island. Themes within this gallery are Discovery, Whaling crews; Early Settlement, Shipping, Aviation, the palm seed industry. The gallery houses many original items, photographs, artworks, maps, detailed models of sailing and steam ships plus aircraft; and visitor operated sound systems telling stories of the Island.

2) **The Ian Kiernan Environmental Gallery** tells the natural history story of Lord Howe Island, from its volcanic origins, fossils, colonisation by plants and animals, its biodiversity From Coral reef to Cloud Forest ; impact of humans on the

ecosystems (concentrating on the many very successful conservation projects completed to date).

The Museum has received grants for the Curator and designer to travel to Hawaii, New York and Nantucket to study display techniques; and Commonwealth funding in 2007 allowed half of the displays to be completed professionally.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Post office, telephone exchange, printery, radio studio, newspaper office, telegraph equipment, network of telegraph poles, mail boat shipwreck, track, airstrip, lighthouse, stamp collection.

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Public Hall,<sup>203</sup>

Aircraft Radio Beacons, Portion 51, Intersection of Neds Beach Road and Anderson Road<sup>204</sup>. These towers are scheduled for demolition, replaced by newer technology;

LHI Museum Collection, including Stamp Collection<sup>205</sup>, old radar unit on display outside museum and numerous items demonstrating the theme of communication;

Former Telegraph Office (current Post Office);

Site of former "Post Offices", Stevens Reserve;<sup>206</sup>

Site of former Meteorological Station, off Skyline Drive, near Top Shop;

### **Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule**

Public Hall;

Former Telegraph Office (current Post Office);

Stevens Reserve, including site of former "Post Offices";

LHI Museum collection including stamp collection and old radar unit;

### **Further Recommendations**

Stevens Reserve was planted for forestry i.e. for the potential supply of timber.

Some of the species planted have invasive characteristics and should be removed.

Others should be managed for their timber resources. The area should be subject to a plan of management.

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<sup>203</sup> RES LH 24

<sup>204</sup> RES LH 37

<sup>205</sup> LHI Museum

<sup>206</sup> O'Connor, C (2005), p.11

### 2.3.4 Environment – Cultural Landscape

*These are activities associated with the interactions between humans, human societies and the shaping of their physical surroundings.*

#### Some Definitions

It is important first to define what we mean by a cultural landscape. The following quotes should assist in this regard.

*“A cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium. The cultural landscape the result.”*

Carl Sauer<sup>207</sup>

*“Landscape is never simply a natural space, a feature of the natural environment. Every landscape is the place where we establish our own human organization of space and time”.*

John B. Jackson<sup>208</sup>

Cultural landscapes by their name imply human intervention but they may also include substantial natural elements. “They can present a cumulative record of human activity and land use in the landscape, and as such can offer insights into the values, ideals and philosophies of the communities forming them, and of their relationship to the place. Cultural landscapes have a strong role in providing the distinguishing character of a locale, a character that might have varying degrees of aesthetic quality, but, regardless, is considered important in establishing the communities’ sense of place.”<sup>209</sup>

A 2010 publication by the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) provides guidelines for managing cultural landscapes. It defines the cultural landscape concept as emphasising “the landscape-scale of history and the connectivity between people, places and heritage items. It recognises the present landscape is the product of long-term and complex relationships between people and the environment.<sup>7</sup> On any given area of land, it is likely that some historical activity will have taken place. Evidence of that activity may be detectable in the vegetation or in landscape modifications as well as in archaeological evidence, historical documents or people’s stories.<sup>8</sup> Some places have ‘touched the landscape only lightly’,<sup>9</sup> while some places of historical activity are marked by imposing built structures or are commemorated for their association with important events or people.

<sup>207</sup> Carl O. Sauer, 'The Morphology of Landscape', in *Land and Life: A Selection from the writings of Carl Ortwin Sauer*, ed. by J. Leighly (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), pp. 315-350 (p. 343).

<sup>208</sup> John B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 156.

<sup>209</sup> Pearson, Michael and Sullivan, Sharon (1995), *Looking After Heritage Places*, Melbourne University Press.



For the purposes of the DECCW guide, cultural landscapes are defined as: ‘... those areas which clearly represent or reflect the patterns of settlement or use of the landscape over a long time, as well as the evolution of cultural values, norms and attitudes toward the land.’<sup>10</sup>

The elements of a cultural landscape are illustrated below;

Landscape = Nature + People
Landscape = The Past + The Present
Landscape = Places + Values

**Figure 26** The Elements of a Cultural Landscape. (Source: Diagram after Guilfoyle 2006:2, based on Phillips 2002:5)

### **The Cultural Landscape Management Approach**

The DECCW Guidelines emphasise that cultural heritage management has, until recently, conceptualised heritage mainly as isolated sites or objects. For example, a hut, woolshed, fence, ground tank, bridge, scarred tree, grave, orchard or piece of machinery. A site-based approach is thus an ‘easy’ concept for land managers and heritage practitioners as it supports separating the natural and cultural for management purposes. However, this site-based approach has the unfortunate effect of reinforcing the notion of culture and nature as spatially separate and thus able to be managed independently. In a park context, cultural heritage sites are seen as isolated points or pathways that are set in a natural landscape. The work of nature conservation can go on around these sites. The authors of the guidelines argue that the natural environment is part of these sites. A cultural landscape approach offers an opportunity to integrate natural and cultural heritage conservation by seeing culture and nature as interconnected dimensions of the same space.

### **Application of a Cultural Landscape Approach to Lord Howe Island**

Some landscapes such as declared wilderness areas, perhaps the bulk of Antarctica, etc. remain ostensibly natural, although all landscapes on earth are now affected by human intervention to some degree, even if only through limited exploration, and atmospheric and marine pollution. While the Permanent Park Preserve on Lord Howe Island remains largely natural in landscape character and appearance, apart from the effects of seed collecting, invasion by feral animals (rats and mice and previously, goats and pigs) and introduced plants, the central, settled part of the island shows the effects of more than 150 years of land clearing, grazing, agriculture and horticulture, infrastructure development and residential and commercial land use.

Unlike an area which is entirely managed as a national park, Lord Howe Island includes a living community, many members of which have family histories of settlement on the island going back to the 1850s. Applying a cultural landscape approach to managing the island must proceed on the basis of a number of general principles:

1. Landscape is a living entity, and is the product of change, dynamic patterns and evolving interrelationships between past ecosystems, history and cultures.
2. The interactions between people and landscape are complex, multi-layered and are distinctive to each different space and time.
3. Community engagement and dialogue, where all people's values are noted and respected, are characteristic of a cultural landscape mentality.
4. All parts of the Lord Howe Island landscape have community connection and associated values and meanings.
5. A key element of cultural landscapes is the continuity of past and present.

The general acceptance of the above principles is central to, and will underpin, a practical approach to the management of the cultural landscape of Lord Howe Island.

In an operational sense, a cultural landscape approach involves asking three basic questions:

1. what is the history of the place?
2. who has social attachment and historical connection to the landscape?
3. what impacts will a management action have on the place and its cultural values?

If these questions cannot be answered, further investigation is required. When the relevant information is available, management can be planned in such a way that it promotes the goal of integrated landscape management as well as meeting the management objectives established to conserve the World Heritage values of the Lord Howe Island Group. One of the desired outcomes of this Community-based Heritage Study is the identification and assessment of cultural heritage values in collaboration with the local community, so that an appropriate balance can be achieved between conservation of natural and cultural values in a way that recognises and respects both.

### **Early Human Intervention in the Landscape**

The first waves of Europeans to visit Lord Howe Island, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century certainly plundered its wealth of birds and marine life for food but there is little evidence that they effected any great change on the landscape as a whole. While there is no substantial evidence of the level of impact they caused, any foreign animals such as goats and pigs left by visiting sailors or whalers prior to the first settlement would have had considerable impact through their foraging for feed and disturbance of the sensitive environment.

Once the small party of settlers engaged by successful Sydney merchant, Robert Campbell arrived on Lord Howe Island in 1834, however, the human impacts would have become more obvious – clearing of sites for agriculture and grazing animals, cutting down of timber for housing and fuel and exploration of the island on foot.

The settlement established by Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman at the western end of Hunter Bay, in the area known now as Old Settlement Beach, on the north-west side of the island comprised five huts on either side of a fresh water creek. They also established at least one 'garden' for their own subsistence and trade with passing ships behind the Blinkenthorpe (Blinky) Beach dune within six months of their arrival.<sup>210</sup>

The permanent settlers who followed expanded the areas subject to land clearing and subsistence farming. Centres of influence developed around their chosen sites and the character of the landscape evolved to include utilitarian 'gardens' where introduced plants were grown. Trees, shrubs and crop plants from many parts of the world were introduced to see how well they would perform in this island environment, hopefully thriving for the benefit of the settlers. Houses and garden plots were often protected from the strong winds by hedges of plants such as oleander, which performed well in the island's climate. As the settlers became more established, they were able to enhance their modest homes and farms with ornamental plantings including the Norfolk Island Pine which appears to have been introduced in the late 1870s and is now a prominent element in parts of the settled area.

### **Bushfires on Lord Howe Island**

The island has a usually reliable rainfall but the combination of dry periods and the extensive fuel load that can be produced by built-up leaf litter means that bushfires are not unknown, although, as on the mainland, they were often deliberately lit. In his diary for 24, 25 and 27 February 1882, TB Wilson recorded<sup>211</sup>:

*"24th Fine day wind S.S.E. Work pit sawing. At about 3 P.M. on the children returning from School they reported that a very large fire was raging between Moselys & Spurlings. Thompson & myself at once went to the scene of the fire & found it rapidly approaching northwards - not only burning the grass & rushes above the high watermark but destroying the bush a long distance inland. Thompson, Stevens & myself tried to intercept its progress by firing the rushes &c further north than where the fire was there but without success as the wind was very strong - we then cut trenches across the probable track that the fire would take - in several places & at the point it had nearly spent itself - this fire must have destroyed hundreds of trees - it appears that about noon Mosely had lighted a fire in one of his gardens & left it to get his dinner & on going back to his garden he found that had got into the bush & was beyond his power to stop it.*

*25th Fine day wind S.E. The first still burning in several places, especially near Mosley's Pit sawing.*

*27th During the past night several heavy showers of rain, which were much wanted. Cloudy Nly morning with light showers wind changable. An enquiry was held at Capt Armstrong's house to-day relative to the origin of the late bush fire, present Messrs Johnson, Thompson, H Wilson, Mr & Mrs Mosley, Stevens, W Nichols, T B. Wilson, Robbins. Morning pit sawing."*

<sup>210</sup> White 1835

<sup>211</sup> TB Wilson Diary transcripts A1158170, A1158171

### **Delight in the Island Landscape**

An indication of the delight that visitors took in the landscape of Lord Howe Island may be had from an entry in the diary kept by Mrs Hedley, the wife of naturalist Charles Hedley (1862-1926) during her stay on the island during September 1908. This delight was not only in the natural values but also in the cultural landscape that had been developed by the settlers for food production, amenity and the comfort that no doubt came from having familiar plants around them in what must have seemed, at least at first, an alien natural environment.

*“Friday Sept 4<sup>th</sup>*

*The distance to the Pines [now Pinetrees] from the landing-place was about a mile and Captain W. [Captain Weatherill] and all members [of the party], with two exceptions, were very glad of the walk [after a rough trip from Sydney on HMS Tambo]. The duet, Ruth [Miss Cowper] and Herself [Mrs Hedley], who were provided with a seat on a sleigh had a delightful ride. Mr King [Edward King of “Janetville”] was their driver and walked alongside the horse whilst he pulled his human freight through the most lovely palm glades the sight of which must make all beauty lovers’ mouths water.”*

and

*“Thursday Sept 10<sup>th</sup>*

*Then restlessness fell upon the party and when the men returned from their walk Mil [Miss Creed] and Herself [Mrs Hedley] joined Nud [Mr Dun], Mac [the naturalist Allan McCulloch], and Himself [Mr Hedley] in an expedition to the orangery through the most beautiful scenery; A very glorious palm grove having to be passed. At last, the orchard was reached and the quintette enjoyed themselves thoroughly. The trees were gigantic and the ground was strewn with bird-pecked oranges. Such sweet ones. Birds always seem to know the sweetest fruit, and the silvereyes of Lord Howe are no exception to the general rule. Mac and Herself ate neither wisely or too well, at least so Mil thought but nevertheless they both were quite ready for lunch at 1 o’clock. After which a C.O.W. [Council of War] was held and a walk to the Valley of the Shadow [sic] was decided upon. Eventually at 3 o’clock everyone with the exception of Ad set off. Mac was guide but he seemed to have difficulty picking up the trail, however, after planting the party in one corner of a palm grove and then making a little detour, he returned and with no hesitation led them into the most beautiful valley. A rockery which was passed must have been quite 70 feet [approximately 21 metres] high with the most beautiful ferns covering it. Palms of quite 90 feet [approx. 27 metres] were there in abundance and Mac told a story of how when he was on Lord Howe six years before, one palm was cut down which was 150 years old. (The rings on the stem note the age.) The view from the outlook beyond the valley was*

*splendiferous, Mts Gower and Lidgbird, Ball's Pyramid and Mutton Bird Island making everyone declare that they'd never weary of the views round Lord Howe."*

*"Wednesday Sept: 16<sup>th</sup>*

*"The purpose of the visit [to Goat Island] was Mac's desire to get photographs of the nests of Mutton birds. These are most interesting; the birds come ashore during September and scratch holes."*

Mrs Hedley's enthusiasm for the landscape is obviously derived from the excitement at seeing the strange and beautiful natural wonders the island had to offer, mixed with the familiar sights, smells and tastes of a citrus orchard protected by lofty Norfolk Island Pines.

The expansion of tourist accommodation, particularly after World War II, saw increasing development of purpose-built guesthouses and, more recently, several more luxurious but small resorts, set in landscaped grounds planted with a mix of native trees and shrubs and exotic ornamentals, particularly frangipani, hibiscus, acalypha, crotons. Together with the kentia palms, these species imparted a character redolent of the South Pacific and a number of guesthouses promoted this atmosphere with Hawaiian style activities and the presentation of leis to visitors.

Until quite recently, the major change in the island landscape has been caused by clearing for grazing and agriculture, although the latter has declined and is now concentrated in several relatively secluded areas where protection from prevailing winds is easier to achieve. Some areas, particularly south of Transit Hill and north of Mounts Lidgbird and Gower are still used for cattle grazing.

### **The impact of infrastructure developments**

The relative inaccessibility of Lord Howe Island to shipping afforded by coral reefs, rocks and a shallow lagoon has meant that the infrastructure associated with maritime transport has always been pretty limited – jetties and a few boat sheds on the lagoon foreshore and to a lesser extent at Ned's Beach. Until the construction of the airstrip in 1974, infrastructure for air transport was also very limited.

Communication and meteorological facilities have had some visual impact on the landscape but generally restricted to specific locations. Until quite recently, roads, too, had a limited visual impact – they were mostly narrow, unsealed and lined with palms and other native trees. The proliferation of motor vehicles, particularly since the 1990s, has seen the upgrading of the major roads – Lagoon Road, Ned's Beach Road, Anderson Road, Skyline Drive, Middle Beach Road – all now bitumen-sealed and wider than they once were.

The greatest single impact on the landscape of the island has been the construction of the airstrip. Although short by modern aviation standards (a fact that limits the size of aircraft that can visit the island) the airstrip cuts a swathe across the island, from Blinky Beach on the eastern side to the lagoon on the west. The strip itself and associated clearing and infrastructure, including terminal buildings, navigation equipment and retaining walls at the lagoon end, has posed a major visual impact on the island that is unlikely to soften over time.

### Typical examples that demonstrate this theme

A landscape type, bushfire fighting equipment, soil conservation structures, national park, nature reserve, market garden, land clearing tools, evidence of Aboriginal land management, avenue of trees, surf beach, fishing spot, plantation, place important in arguments for nature or cultural heritage conservation..

### Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme

Site of first garden, west of Blinky Beach<sup>212</sup>;

Site of farm established by Nathan Thompson, Jack Brian and George Campbell circa 1853, at Signal Point or Flagstaff, between Neds Beach and Thompsons Point<sup>213</sup>;

Nichols Clear Place (so-named because it was cleared by Tom Nichols), near Middle Beach<sup>214</sup>;

Site of Nichols garden and pine grove at Old Settlement Creek<sup>215</sup>;

Wilson Garden, Portion 129, off Lagoon Road<sup>216</sup>;

Pair of mature Norfolk Island Pine trees, Government Reserve, Quarry Road<sup>217</sup>;

Landscape adjoining 'Kentia', Gazetted Road, Lagoon Road<sup>218</sup>;

Garden Areas, Portions 47, 50 and 52, off Anderson Road<sup>219</sup>;

Signal Point landscape with WOS Thompson and McCulloch memorials;

Gardens associated with guesthouses.

Blackburn (Goat, Rabbit) Island

Smoking Tree Ridge – resting place for hunters and seed collectors JE P25

Modifications to landscape by construction of airport - sea wall, changes to Lagoon Road, top of dunes at Blinky Beach cut off for airport for take-off and landing

Lagoon foreshore track.

### Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule

Thompson Memorial Park at Signal Point, including part of former Thompson Farm (part former Portion 32), WOS Thompson Memorial and Alan McCulloch Obelisk;

Pair of mature Norfolk Island Pine trees, Government Reserve, Quarry Road<sup>220</sup>;

Unsealed section of road adjoining 'Kentia', Gazetted Road, Lagoon Road<sup>221</sup>;

Landscape setting 'Pinetrees' including entrance path and garden from Lagoon Road to guesthouse, specimen of Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*), 'Pinetrees';

Other historic plantings of Norfolk Island Pine are currently being assessed for their significance;

### Further recommendations

Further research into the significance and management of Norfolk Island Pine plantings, including succession planting of the two trees at Lovers Bay, Lagoon

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<sup>212</sup> Nichols, D (2006), p.32

<sup>213</sup> Ibid, p.44

<sup>214</sup> Ibid, p.46

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> RES LH 02

<sup>217</sup> RES LH 05

<sup>218</sup> RES LH 08

<sup>219</sup> RES LH 38

<sup>220</sup> RES LH 05

<sup>221</sup> RES LH 08

foreshore plantings and plantings at 'Pinetrees';

Further research and management of *Ulmus parvifolia* (Chinese Elm) to control spread of species into areas of environmental significance. A fruiting specimen (wilding) of this species was found in bushland of the northern hills (Malabar), suggesting it has weed potential.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Hank Bower, pers. comm.

### 2.3.5 Events

*These are activities and processes that mark the consequences of natural and cultural occurrences.*

Anniversaries, events and celebrations are important to the people of Lord Howe Island as a focus for community engagement.

#### Discovery

The first 'event' conducted on the island was its possession in the name of the British Crown by the crew of *HMS Supply* during which the 'English colours' were raised. No location for this event is recorded. Arrivals of ships during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century were probably classified as significant 'events' to the fledgling community, given their frequency and unpredictability. Influx of new residents would have given cause for celebration and the small community would undoubtedly have gathered to acknowledge the significance of births and deaths on the island.

#### Tragedies

Shipwrecks on the reefs and rocks around the island and the loss of islanders at sea could perhaps be regarded as significant events in the lives of the islanders, albeit salutary reminders of their isolation and the treachery of the sea, but important as occasions which often brought the community closer together. The steamer *Ovalau* caught fire (and subsequently exploded) off Lord Howe Island on its return voyage from Norfolk Island to Sydney in October 1903. So grateful were the 33 passengers and the crew for their rescue that a thanksgiving service was held and the Lord Howe Island community was presented with an illuminated address acknowledging their hospitality and kindness to the survivors. The testimonial is now in the Lord Howe Island Museum.



**Figure 27** Framed testimonial to the people of Lord Howe Island from the appreciative passengers and officers of the steamer *Ovalau* which caught fire off Lord Howe Island in 1903. (Photo: Chris Betteridge September 2010).



Many islanders still recall events such as the tragic crash of the RAAF Catalina on Malabar Hill on 28 September 1948, the beaching of another Catalina on rocks near the jetty in bad weather in June 1949; the sinking of the *Jacques del Mar* inside North Passage in 1954 and the washing ashore of the *Islander* in May 1965. More recently, on 7 July 2002, the Royal Navy warship *HMS Nottingham* ran aground on Wolf Rock and Lord Howe Island became the centre of world media attention for some time. In crises such as these, islanders always rally to provide every possible assistance and these events remain alive in their memories and discussions for years.



**Figure 28 (Left)** The site on Malabar Hill where Catalina flying boat A24-381 crashed on 28 September 1948, scattering wreckage downhill on the slope to the west of the ridge; **(Right)** The memorial plaque to those who perished and the two survivors who were dragged from the burning plane by islanders. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 11 September 2010)

Nichols records that among the major social events on the island's annual calendar were those initiated by Nathan Chase Thompson, who organised celebrations of his national heritage on America's Independence Day each 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Thanksgiving Day in November and what became legendary family Christmas gatherings.<sup>223</sup> For many decades islanders celebrated New Year's Eve at North Bay, where they often camped for their summer holidays. However, the increase in tourism in recent years has brought with it regular daily invasions of the area by snorkelers and picnickers to such an extent that the islanders feel they have lost the privacy they once enjoyed and they no longer continue the tradition.



**Figure 29 (Left)** Islanders camping at North Bay (Babe Payten 1927-60 prints: BP13); **(Right)** Tug-o-War on the beach during a picnic at North Bay (Dick Morris prints 3: DM201)

<sup>223</sup> Nichols 2006, p.172

## Annual Celebrations

### Arbor Day

Older island residents recall the celebrations on Arbor Day in June each year. In 1934, school children planted trees including Norfolk Island Pine seedlings, labelled with plaques carrying the names of the children who planted them. They spent half a day a month looking after the trees and planted more trees the following year in the school grounds, along the lagoon foreshore and at North Bay. This event is now celebrated in October and school children continue the tradition, now planting *Kentia* palms and other native species to help the island's reforestation program.



**Figure 30** Norfolk Island Pine trees planted by school students as part of Arbor Day celebrations in the mid-1930s. At the time this photo was taken some of the trees were fenced off because they had been undercut by erosion, causing a potential public safety hazard. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge, 28 November 2009)

### Egg Day

Another unofficial but much anticipated annual event was Egg Day (28 November). Locals gathered eggs of wideawakes and possibly also muttonbirds. Islanders collected eggs for a week and many of the eggs would be salted and stored in brine for later use. This activity began as a necessary source of food and some locals continued to collect eggs, usually for older residents, for some time after the practice had largely stopped. Although several islanders are still thought to collect the eggs of the sooty tern, this is a threatened species and the activity is not permitted.

### Australia Day

The annual celebration of Australia Day on 26 January was for many years organized by the island's RSL Auxiliary which organised a picnic (later a swimming carnival) and events included 'catch the greasy pig', cross-cut sawing and throwing the broom. Commemoration of Australia Day has been largely replaced by Discovery Day.

### Discovery Day

The premier annual event for the Lord Howe Island community is Discovery Day, 17 February, which commemorates the discovery and naming of Lord Howe Island by Lt Ball on that date in 1788. The day is celebrated at the sportsground, between the Bowling Club and Pinetrees, with a program of sporting events, which have included the traditional favourites of 3-legged races, tunnel ball, sprints, relays and tug o' war, together with island activities adapted for sporting fun, including palm tree climbing, drum rolling, slow bicycle riding, honeymooner's race and pillow fights, a 'Mr Lord Howe' Competition, – and events for the over-50s including 'Old Buffers' and 'Old

Beauties' races. The day culminates with a 'fish fry', the traditional cook-up of locally caught seafood, as a fund-raiser for the public school.



**Figure 31 (Left):** Discovery Day celebrations when many islanders dress in period costumes. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, Mis4-116, LHI Museum); **(Right)** One of the events for a Discovery Day celebration – a pillow fight on a slippery palm trunk. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, Mis5-39, LHI Museum)

### Sporting Events

Like most Australians, Lord Howe islanders are keen on their sport. Sporting events are high profile fixtures on the island's annual calendar, often attracting participation from mainland clubs, organisations and teams, and occasionally from overseas. The annual Lord Howe Island calendar includes two bowls tournaments, in February and November; and a golf tournament in November. 'Yachties' eagerly await the annual Gosford to Lord Howe Island Yacht Race which is recognized as a classic blue water event. Sailed across 416 nautical miles from the central coast of NSW the race is regarded as important preparation for the annual Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race which commences on Boxing Day each year. Organised by the Gosford Sailing Club, the race began in October 1973 to promote tourism, with a trophy [formerly the Perpetual Trophy for the Singapore Turf Club] donated by the Late Beth Kirby. It is described as 'the most exclusive ocean race in Australia', with entries limited to the number of moorings that can be made available in the lagoon, as determined by the Lord Howe Island Board.

### War Memorial Commemorations

Lord Howe Island's commemoration of wartime conflicts and the contributions of islanders has always been a significant item on the annual calendar.

### Anzac Day

Anzac Day was first commemorated on the island in 1946 when a march was introduced from the former RSL Hall to the War Memorial. This tradition continues to this day and participants now assemble outside the Museum (built on the site of the former RSL Hall) where the RSL memorials are now displayed. The dedication for this ceremony is conducted by the Anglican and Seventh Day Adventist ministries and often attended by mainland representatives of the Australian armed forces. Federal MP Tanya Plibersek attended the island's Anzac Day commemoration in 2011.



**Figure 32** Undated photograph circa 1920s-'30s of a service at the War Memorial. (Photo: Special Prints 134, LHI Museum Collection)

### Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day, 11 November, is also commemorated on the island, although usually when a dignitary is visiting. In 2004, Navy, Army and Air Force personnel attending the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the island's airstrip made Remembrance Day that year a memorable historic event. A combined RAAF Air Command / Royal Australian Navy band led the ceremonial march and catafalque party to the War Memorial, along with a group of Australian Army pilots from 173 Surveillance Squadron, 1st Aviation Regiment and the ship's company of *HMAS Tobruk*. Their presence at the wreath-laying ceremony gave the commemoration a distinctly tri-service flavour. For event organizer, Clive Wilson MBE, the moment was one of the proudest days of his life. "To see you and the Australian Defence Force contingents here with us this morning is a great thrill indeed," Mr Wilson told the big crowd that turned out for the service.<sup>224</sup>

The significance of these events is important to islanders, some of whom saw active service - and to young islanders who are able to share the heritage and legacy of their forebears' contributions by participating in these ceremonies and keeping alive a long and respectful tradition on the island.

### Vice-regal Visits

Vice-regal visits, often held in conjunction with 'tours of duty' by governors to Norfolk Island increasingly became occasions for celebrations on Lord Howe Island. The first vice-regal visitor to pass Lord Howe Island was Governor-in-Chief of NSW, Sir Charles FitzRoy, travelling on the *Calliope* in May 1854, but he did not disembark due to bad weather. The ship's chaplain, Reverend Carwithen did however go ashore, braving high seas to show the flag and perform the first Christian baptism on the island.

<sup>224</sup> <http://www.defence.gov.au/news/navynews/editions/4722/topstories/story24.htm>

The Rt. Hon. Charles Robert, Baron Carrington [Lord Carrington], travelling with a vice-regal party and Admiral Fairfax on *The Nelson*, in April 1888 disembarked for a day, ostensibly to observe the small community but spent most of their time exploring and botanising.

The next vice-regal visit was that in 1927 by Admiral Sir Dudley Rawson Stratford de Chair, who made the journey on *HMAS Melbourne* and was accommodated for two days on the island, staying at Government House. Among his personal collection presented to the Mitchell Library at the State Library of NSW is an album of photographs commemorating the historic visit.



**Figure 33 (Left)** Image from an album of photographs presented to Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair, 1924 to 1927 / Sir Dudley Rawson Stratford de Chair; Lord Howe Island (Album of photographs 1927 PXB 1556); (Right) The old seed packing shed decorated for the visit by Sir Dudley de Chair (Lord Howe Island Museum Photographic Collection Mis3-20)

Auckland's *Evening Post*, commented on the growing trend for vice-regal representatives to travel on tours of duty and recounted details of de Chair's visit.

Another Vice-Regal representative fond of travel in the Governor of New South Wales (Sir Dudley de Chair). He has visited practically every district in the State, and has been even to the far north-western corner—the "Back o' Beyond" we Sydney folks call it—where no other Governor has been. His latest exploit, a visit to lonely Lord Howe Island, has only once been done previously, and that more than 40 years ago. On this trip, from which he returned last weekend, Sir Dudley de Chair travelled by H.M.A.S. *Melbourne*. An admiral of the British Navy, it was no new experience for Sir Dudley to use this means of transport, and he seems to have thoroughly enjoyed his trip. Lord Howe Island lies but a few hundred miles from Sydney, but without cable or radio communication, and visited but once a month by steamers, it is a lonely little speck. Consequently Sir Dudley de Chair's visit was a red-letter event in its annals. In his account to the newspapers of his visit, Sir Dudley waxed poetical concerning the splendour and romance of the island, and the hospitality of the islanders. He recounted with delight how a party of sailors taken ashore to entertain the island people found that their latest dances were the quadrilles and lancers, but soon the islanders, especially the girls, were being introduced to the mysteries of jazz. He exploited the islanders' only means of travel, horse-drawn sledges, and gloried in the beauty of the island's lagoon. Doubtless of all Sir Dudley's impressions of New South Wales none will remain more vividly in his mind than his voyage to this sea dependency of the State.

**Figure 34** Article from Auckland *Evening Post*, Volume CIV, Issue 85, 7 October 1927, p.7



De Chair's visit was followed in August 1933 by that of NSW Governor, Air Vice-Marshall Sir Phillip Game and Lady Game, who arrived on *HMAS Canberra* and after staying on the island for a few days, departed on the Burns Philp vessel, *Morinda*. On his return to Sydney the Governor said that he and his wife had been overwhelmed by the hospitality shown them by the islanders. He said that it was just as well that left when they did, otherwise everything on the island would have been showered on them as gifts.<sup>225</sup>

NSW Governor, Sir John Northcott visited the island in May 1951, travelling on the second *HMAS Australia*, to attend the island's Empire Day celebrations and to perform the opening ceremonies at the RSL Club House and a new schoolroom. His two-day visit was a huge success with islanders who warmed to Northcott's family. Islanders recall that during his visit, Sir John planted a Norfolk Island Pine tree near the Cargo Shed.



**Figure 35** NSW Governor Sir John Northcott with Frank Payten, Ray Wilson and others, 14 May 1951. (Lord Howe Island Photograph Collection Babe Payten prints 1927-60, BP52).

Viscount de l'Isle, Governor-General of Australia, visited Lord Howe Island as a passenger on *HMAS Tobruk* in October 1963, being the first in his position to do so. He was transported from ship to shore on a Bristol Sycamore helicopter, the downdraft from the chopper's rotors almost blowing the official welcome party away! To mark the occasion of his visit, Viscount de l'Isle planted a Sallywood tree just east of the Cargo Shed (now obscured within a kentia palm plantation). At the base of the tree is a bronze plaque, organised by island Superintendent, Horton Ward through the Chief Secretary's Department and inscribed:

*"His Excellency the Right Honourable Viscount de L'Isle, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia planted this tree on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1963"*

The design was based on a plaque in Macquarie Place, Sydney relating to a plane tree planted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1954 as the start of the

<sup>225</sup> *The Canberra Times*, Tuesday 22 August 1933, p.1

Remembrance Driveway between Sydney and Canberra. Subsequent to his visit, Viscount de L'Isle sent a letter to the Queen on behalf of the Lord Howe Island community conveying their good wishes.



**Figure 36 (Left):** Jim Whistler with Viscount de l'Isle inspecting the cannon that is now on display outside the Museum. (Lord Howe Island Photographic Collection Jim Whistler prints JW3); **(Right):** The plaque at the base of the tree planted by Viscount de l'Isle on 2 October 1963. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 September 2009)

Since then, the community has been visited regularly by incumbent governors-general and NSW governors, their visits usually associated with Discovery Day celebrations or the opening of an island facility.

In 1968 NSW Governor Sir Arthur Roden Cutler and Lady Cutler visited the island to open a third new school building for science and domestic arts and were duly entertained by the local children. Sir Roden would come again in 1970 and again in 1979 for the school's centenary celebrations and the opening of the Lord Howe Island Historical Society's Museum.



**Figure 37** Sir Roden and Lady Cutler with their retinue and islanders. (Lord Howe Island Museum Photograph Collection Jim Whistler prints JW6)

Sometimes, official visitors had time out to sample some of the island's scenic highlights, game fishing and local hospitality. In February 1982, Governor-General Sir Zelman Cowan and Lady Cowan came for Discovery Day, and residents celebrated the centenary of the first major expedition to Lord Howe Island in 1882. A

highlight of Governor-General Bill Hayden's visit in 1991 for Discovery Day was a (goat) hunting expedition with locals.



**Figure 38** His Excellency Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair addressing islanders during his 1993 visit. (Lord Howe Island Photographic Collection Daphne prints DH58)

Details of vice-regal visits are recorded in the mainland press, as this item from the *Sydney Morning Herald* explains:

*“Yesterday morning, Her Excellency the Governor [Dr Marie Bashir] and Sir Nicholas Shehadie visited Lord Howe Island Central School, where they met with staff and students.*

*Later, Her Excellency and Sir Nicholas toured Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital before visiting the Lord Howe Island Museum, where the Governor delivered an address to members of the Historical Society following tours of the History Gallery to view the Official Visits Display, and the Nature Gallery.*

*In the evening, Her Excellency and Sir Nicholas, accompanied by The Honourable Bob Debus MP, Attorney General, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for the Arts and Ms Leela Smith; were Guests of Honour at a Dinner at ‘Pandanus’, hosted by the Members of the Lord Howe Island Board.”<sup>226</sup>*

For the 1988 bicentenary of the discovery of Lord Howe Island, the Board invited a special guest, Frederick Richard Penn Curzon, the 7th Earl Howe, great-great-grandson of Richard Howe, the 1st Earl Howe to attend the celebrations including Discovery Day. Earl Howe was accompanied by his wife, Countess Howe and NSW

<sup>226</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* Vice-Regal notices, Saturday 17 February, 2007



Governor, Air Marshall Sir James Rowland and Lady Rowland who all stayed on the island for two days.

In 2008, it was the Australian Navy who provided the dignitaries for Discovery Day. *HMAS Armidale* visited Lord Howe Island from 14 to 18 February 2008 and participated in the celebrations for the 220<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the island's discovery. The crew of 21 joined residents in the celebrations and participated not only in Discovery Day, but a 20/20 cricket match, golf and bowling tournaments.

### Openings

The history of Lord Howe Island has been marked by events with important social associations, such as the opening of the Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital in 1940. The dedication of the Anglican Church in 1959 was celebrated with a visit by NSW Governor Sir Eric Woodward and Lady Woodward and the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney. This was followed in 1960 by the dedication of the Seventh Day Adventist Church and in 1994 of the Catholic Church - all significant occasions for celebration by the community.



**Figure 39** Sir Eric and Lady Woodward and their Aide-de-Camp farewelling islanders Jim Whistler, Roy Wilson and John Thompson Jnr on the jetty which was festooned with bunting for the governor's visit. (Lord Howe Island Museum Photograph Collection, Dick Morris prints 4-383)

The opening of the Lord Howe Island airport in 1974 was a major event and the culmination of decades of agitation for improved communication and transport connections between the island and the mainland.

The island is regularly visited by politicians on official business (environment, health, transport, communications, etc.) and the completion of a number of the island's facilities have been celebrated with an opening event, including the opening of the golf club, the biowaste facility and the police station. Many NSW State politicians have visited at other times on matters of business and the local State and Federal members make regular appearances. Politicians also regularly visit Lord Howe Island for recreation and for family holidays. The former NSW Premier, Neville Wran and his family are among those who appreciate the island's natural environment and seclusion, returning year after year for annual holidays.

On Discovery Day 1988, State Minister for the Environment, The Hon Pam Allen MP officiated at the commencement of the new Lord Howe Island Museum by unveiling plaques erected on a stone cairn constructed by the children of the Lord Howe Island

Central School. The Museum was completed in 2001 and opened to the public on Discovery Day the following year.

### Local significance

Events including dedications of public facilities and opening events at local restaurants and guest lodges are also celebrated.



**Figure 40** Visit by Seventh Day Adventist Pastor A H Ferris on 4 June 1934. (Photo: Special prints 59, LHI Museum Collection)

The dedication of the W.O.S. Thompson Park at Signal Point in 1954 commemorated the life of William Spurling Thompson ('Uncle Willie'). Kim's Lookout is named after Kim Morris, tragically killed in a fall on the island in 1967. Despite ferocious weather on the night in July 1994, the opening of Auntie Sue's Restaurant at Palmhaven (on the site of the former Polynesian Lodge) celebrated the legacy of noted islander, the late Sue Whiting. On 18 December, 2004 Earl's Anchorage was officially opened by Mick Morris, the only surviving crew member of the history-making circumnavigation of the globe in 1947-1948 on the *Kathleen Gillett*.

### Anniversaries

Islanders recall significant events in their history, sometimes associated with tragedies which affect the small community and remind them of their isolation and the fact that are still at the mercy of the elements. Observation of these anniversaries is important for the healing and sense of belonging they bring to the community. The twenty-eighth of September 2008 was a solemn anniversary, commemorating the loss of seven of the nine crew of the RAAF Catalina which crashed on Malabar Hill 60 years earlier. Each year, the day is commemorated by the lowering of the island's flag to half-mast.

Other significant anniversaries commemorated on Lord Howe Island remind us of the importance of air links with the rest of the world. The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the solo round the world flight by Francis Chichester (later Sir Francis) and his time on Lord Howe Island in 1931 was celebrated between 3 and 4 April 2006.

The loss of passengers and crew in the Seaview Air Aero-Commander tragedy was marked with a plaque at the airport and the commemoration of the tragic death in a motor bike accident of David ('Harry') Rourke, son of Ed Rourke and the late Pixie Rourke of 'Pinetrees' was marked by his friends with a surfing tribute near the reef break subsequently named after him.

On 14 October 1983 the NSW Premier unveiled a plaque at the airport commemorating the tenth anniversary of the dedication of Lord Howe Island as an area of World Heritage under the UNESCO Convention on 14 December 1982. In November 2007, this anniversary was further commemorated with a twilight concert by *Sirocco* at Ned's Beach. Lord Howe Island continues to mark the significance of its environmental heritage status by staging events which focus on the island's unique flora and fauna, linked to Sea Week (February / March), Bird Week (March and November), Photo Week (April), and Rainforest Week (December).

### **Time capsules**

Burial of time capsules in two locations on Lord Howe Island are documentation of two significant events to be celebrated for their historical importance in the future. The centenary of the visit to the island in 1882 by The Hon J H Bowie and the reconnaissance party who investigated the suitability of the island for observing the Transit of Venus later that year was marked with the sealing of a time capsule. Organised by the Lord Howe Island Historical Society, the capsule, which was buried at the observation site on the summit of Transit Hill, contains records of contemporary island life and a 'present day history' and is due to be opened in 2082. There was some disappointment for islanders when a concrete block at the Transit site was excavated, it was found to have nothing underneath it - residents had long believed records of the Transit party had been buried there. Research for this study has identified that the block was one of the footings for the scientific instruments used for the viewing and no documentary evidence has come to light suggesting that it covered a cache of records or artefacts from 1882.

At sunset on New Year's Eve, 31 December 1999, the end of the millennium was celebrated with the burial of a time capsule at W O S Thompson Park under a stone cairn with a plaque inscribed:

*"This plaque commemorates the placing of a time capsule hereunder by the residents of LHI on the last day of December 1999. This capsule contains a record of the life and events on the island during 1999. It is to remain sealed until 2099".*

Islanders were asked to nominate items for the capsule which symbolised contemporary life on the island, donating a list of names of all islanders current at that time, a visitor's guide, a copy of the palm tree nursery brochure (*The Kentia Palm of Lord Howe Island*), a current edition of *The Signal*, a palm tree climbing strap, a mouse trap and a copy of the Lord Howe Island Family Tree compiled by Daphne Nichols and Diane Owens. Following accidental damage to the cairn, the time capsule was subsequently moved to the site of the Museum and re-buried adjacent to Lagoon Road

## Gifts

Presentations which have been made to the Lord Howe Island include a Wedgwood clock presented by the British High Commissioner during a visit in March 1985 and the Blackburn Memorial Seat at the airport. Made of English oak, the seat was presented by the people of Norfolk, England and initially displayed on the verandah of Government House. It had been intended to place the seat at Flagstaff Hill overlooking the lagoon and Blackburn Island, but following advice that the timber would not withstand exposure to wind, rain, sun and salt, it was decided to place it, along with a photograph of Blackburn Island and a leather volume inscribed with the names of contributors inside the air terminal. Lord Howe Island Museum holds a number of other items presented to the island and islanders from time to time.

If you ask the many tourists who visit the Island, the highlight event for many of them would undoubtedly be the daily hand fish-feeding of kingfish at Ned's Beach which commenced in 1950s by Eddie Rhoades then passed to Brian Simpson. Since the shark attack on Ross Ellery, a young boy in February 1996, more informed conservation debate has taken place about the appropriateness of this activity but many visitors continue to feed fish with bread and squeal with delight and/or trepidation as they are surrounded by 'greenback' kingfish and other fish in the shallows.

### Typical examples that demonstrate this theme

Monuments, photographs, flood marks, memorials, ceremonial costume, honour boards, blazed trees, obelisks, camp sites, boundaries, legislation, places of pilgrimage, places of protest, demonstrations, congregations, celebrations.

### Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme

Transit of Venus observatory site, Crown Land, Transit Hill<sup>227</sup>;  
RSL Charter and Honour Board to those who served in World Wars I & II, Malaya and Vietnam; on display at LHI Museum  
Catalina Aeroplane Disaster site, Malabar Hill, Permanent Park Reserve<sup>228</sup>  
Catalina Disaster 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary memorial, Old Settlement;

### Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule

Transit of Venus observatory site, Crown Land, Transit Hill<sup>229</sup>;  
RSL Charter and Honour Board to those who served in World Wars I & II, Malaya and Vietnam; on display at LHI Museum  
Catalina Aeroplane Disaster site and memorial plaque, Malabar Hill, Permanent Park Reserve<sup>230</sup>  
Catalina Disaster 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary memorial, Old Settlement;

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<sup>227</sup> RES LH 12

<sup>228</sup> RES LH.56

<sup>229</sup> RES LH 12

<sup>230</sup> RES LH.56

### 2.3.6 Exploration

*Activities associated with making places previously unknown to a cultural group known to them.*

#### **It could have been French!**

French navigator Jean Francois de Galaup, Comte de La Pérouse, was quite possibly the first European to suspect the existence of a landmass in the Pacific Ocean at 31° 28'S latitude and 159° 15'E longitude when he observed a large quantity of seagulls on 17 January 1788 on his journey from Tonga to the east coast of Australia.<sup>231</sup> Had he investigated further, Lord Howe Island's name and cultural heritage may have been quite different. Lord Howe Island may have been Ile des Palmes or even Ile de La Pérouse!

#### **One island or two?**

Within 22 days of the founding of the colony at Sydney Cove, Lord Howe Island was discovered by Lieutenant Ball, commander of *HMS Supply* which left Sydney on 14 February 1788, to investigate the availability of pine trees (for spars) and flax plants (for fibre) on Norfolk Island. Lord Howe Island happened to be in a direct line between Ball's point of departure and his destination. On first sighting, Lt Ball and his party thought they had seen two islands, naming the larger one Lord Howe's Island and the smaller one Lidgbird Island. On the following day, they corrected their initial error, Ball writing that they had "Found the land seen on the 17<sup>th</sup> to be only one island"<sup>232</sup> and Lt Phillip King noting that they had "Found the two islands or hills that we had seen the day before, were two immense high rocky mountains on ye South point of an Island" and that:

*"Lieutenant Ball, soon after he left this harbour [Port Jackson], fell in with an uninhabited island in lat. 31° 56' S and in long. 159° 4' East, which he named Lord Howe Island."*<sup>233</sup>

On Ball's return from Norfolk Island, the party stopped to investigate further.

*"We made Lord Howe's Island on the 9<sup>th</sup> [March], at four in the afternoon, bearing east-north-east, distant about 16 or 18 leagues. The south end of this island is two very high mountains, nearly perpendicular to the sea; those hills are the only land you see until you come within six or seven leagues, when the lower land begins to appear, extending from the foot of the mountains, northward:.....Latitude at the southernmost hill [Mount Gower] 31 degree, 35' S, Longitude by time keeper 159 degree 10' 30" E of Greenwich; Longitude, by distance of the (sun) and (moon), taken at 10AM 159 degrees 08' 00"E."*<sup>234</sup>

*"This island I judge to be about three miles and a half long, north-north-west and south-south-east; it is very narrow across. There is anchorage on both sides of it,*

<sup>231</sup> Voyage de la Perouse Vol 3, 1797: Le voyage de La Perouse 1785-1788, recits et documents originaux presentes par John Dunmore, Maurice de Brossard, Paris 1985; Nichols, D. pp.3-4

<sup>232</sup> Lt Ball 17/18 February 1788

<sup>233</sup> After Richard, fourth Viscount Howe (1726-99) who was first Lord of the Admiralty in 1787.

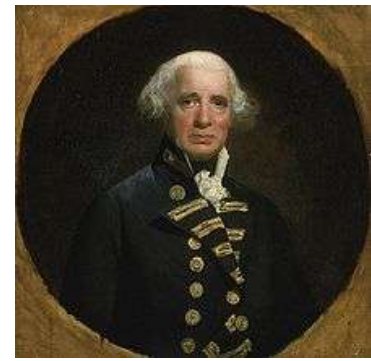
<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p.172

*but the bottom is foul. On the west side there is a bay, off which lies a reef parallel to the shore, with good swatches, or passages through for boats; this reef breaks off from the sea from the shore, which is a fine sandy beach, so that there is no difficulty in landing.*<sup>235</sup>

### Howe the Island was named and claimed

David Blackburn, the master of the *Supply*, travelling with Lt Ball subsequently described the discovery in a letter to a friend: "As we were undoubtedly the first who had Ever seen it Lieutenant Ball Namd it Lord Howe Island"<sup>236</sup>. He also recorded that at 4 o'clock 9 March 1788<sup>237</sup>, Ball's party:

*"took possession of this Island in the Name of His Britannic Majesty and Displayd the English Colours – and Mr Ball Namd the Different Parts of the Island. The two Mountains, Mount Gower & Mount Lidgbird, the Valley between them Erskine Valley. A Large Bay Near the Middle of the Island Prince William Henry Bay – two other Bays to the Left of it Hunter Bay and Callam Bay & an Island in the Middle of Prince William Bay, Blackburn Isle. Had I been present at this ceremony it should have been Named Knight Island".*<sup>238</sup>



**Figure 41 (Left)** Miniature portrait of Henry Lidgbird Ball, Commander of *HMS Supply*, c 1792, National Library of Australia; **(Right)** Portrait of Richard Howe, First Earl Howe KG (1726-1799) from a mezzotint engraving by R. Dunkarton, after the painting by John Singleton Copley

### Mount Lidgbird, Ball's Pyramid

Henry Lidgbird Ball, (1756-1818), naval officer, commanded *HMS Supply* in the First Fleet. Captain Arthur Phillip thought highly of his navigational skills and sent him to assist La Perouse on his entry to Botany Bay in January 1788. In February, Phillip entrusted Ball with conveying the first settlers to Norfolk Island. On the way, his party, including Lt-Gov Phillip Gidley King, saw and named Lord Howe Island, returning on their voyage back to Sydney to explore it more fully and record it.

<sup>235</sup> Watts in Voyage to New South Wales

<sup>236</sup> Blackburn D. David Blackburn - letters received by Richard Knight, 12 July 1788, 19 March 1791, Microfilm - CY 1301, frames 1 - 26

<sup>237</sup> Nichols 2006, p.5 gives 13 March 1788

<sup>238</sup> The subject of his correspondence Richard Knight



**Figure 42** Lieut. Ball is commemorated in Sydney by Balls Head, an area of remnant bushland on the North Shore of Sydney Harbour, between Berrys Bay and Balls Head Bay. (Photograph: Chris Betteridge, 28 October 2010)

### Lord Howe Island

Richard Howe, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Howe KG (1726-1799) was a distinguished British naval officer whose service during the Seven Years War, the American War of Independence and the French Revolutionary Wars led to his promotion to the rank of First Lord of the Admiralty (1783-1788), a position which he held at the time of discovery and naming of Lord Howe Island.



**Figure 43 (Left)** Silhouette of Lieutenant David Blackburn, by unknown artist, c.1779-1796, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW; **(Right)** The Duke of Gloucester painted c1780 by Johann Zoffany.

### Blackburn Island

David Blackburn, (1753–1795) was appointed Master of the First Fleet ship *Supply* in April 1787. Blackburn was in the advance party, with Governor Phillip, searching for a better location for the colony, choosing Port Jackson over Botany Bay for first settlement. He accompanied Lt Ball to Norfolk Island and was among the first to sight Lord Howe Island.

### Prince William Henry Bay

Prince William Henry, Duke of Gloucester and Edinburgh, (1743-1805) was the son of Prince Frederick, eldest son of King George II and Queen Caroline and fourth in line of succession at birth.





**Figure 44 (Left)** John Leveson-Gower, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Gower; **(Right)** Granville Leveson-Gower, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl Gower, by George Romney c1790s.

### Mount Gower

John Leveson-Gower, 1st Earl Gower (1694 – 1754), The Baron Gower from 1709 to 1754, was a British Tory, politician, one of the first Tories to enter government in the 18th century. He married three times and one of his 14 children, **Granville Leveson-Gower**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl Gower, later 1st Marquess of Stafford (1721 –1803) was also a British politician, serving high office, including Lord of the Admiralty (1783-1789) in William Pitt the Younger's government.



**Figure 45 (Left)** Portrait of Thomas Erskine, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Erskine by Sir William Charles Ross, 1823 National Portrait Gallery, London; **(Right)** John Hunter (1737 - 1821), by William Mineard Bennett, c1812, courtesy of National Library of Australia

### Erskine Valley

Thomas Erskine, 1st Baron Erskine (1750 –1823) was a British lawyer and politician. He served as Attorney-General to the Prince of Wales, member for Portsmouth and subsequently Lord Chancellor.



### Hunter Bay

John Hunter (1737-1821), admiral and governor, was appointed commander of the *Sirius* in command of the main convoy of the First Fleet and accompanied Governor Phillip to locate the site for the settlement in Port Jackson. As well as his maritime and survey roles, he sat on the Court of Criminal Judicature. He was in command of the *Sirius* off Norfolk Island on 19 February 1790. He subsequently returned to New South Wales as governor of the colony



**Figure 46 (Left)** Philip Gidley King (1758 - 1808), by unknown artist, courtesy of National Library of Australia; **(Right)** David Collins (1756 - 1810), by unknown artist, courtesy of National Archives of Australia.

### Point King

Philip Gidley King, (1758-1808), was appointed second lieutenant in the *Sirius* and sailed with Arthur Phillip, both transferring to the *Supply* in the hope of reaching their destination at Botany Bay ahead of the main fleet. A fortnight after arriving, Phillip selected him 'as a officer of merit ... whose perseverance may be depended upon' to establish a subordinate settlement on Norfolk Island'. He was with Lt Ball on the *Supply* on the first sighting of Lord Howe Island.

### Collins Cove

David Collins (1756-1810), deputy judge advocate and lieutenant-governor, secretary to Governor Phillip

### Callam's Bay

No illustration available

James Callam, Surgeon on HMS Supply

### Ross Bay

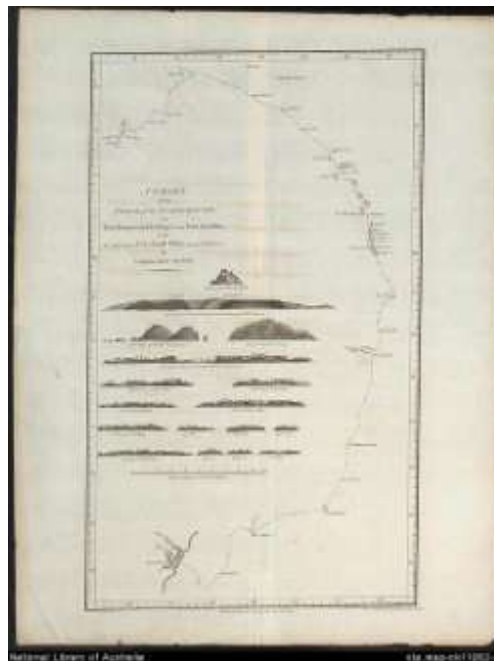
No illustration available

Robert Ross (c.1740–1794) was the officer in charge of the First Fleet garrison of marines, and Lieutenant-Governor of the convict settlement of Norfolk Island. He was a most unpopular man, particularly after proclaiming martial law on Norfolk Island following the wreck of the *Sirius*.

Newton Fowell, a midshipman on the *Sirius* recorded the news of Ball's discovery when it reached Sydney in March 1788 in notes he kept:

*"We learn from Lt Ball of the Supply Arm'd Tender just arrived from Norfolk that on his passage from thence he Discover'd an Island in Lat 31.32wch he Cal'd Lord Howe Island it Abounds in Turtle Many of wch he has Brought here wild pigeons Abound there also (if the Expression may be Allow'd) and a Fowl very much resembling a Guinea Hen. As they suffer themselves to be taken from the trees wth.out Attempting to Fly away & the former the men Run Down without any Difficulty".*<sup>239</sup>

The first detailed account of the discovery of Lord Howe Island was published in August 1789 by John Stockdale in London, in *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay, with an Account of the Establishment of the Colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island in 1789*. It was compiled from accounts and papers from Lieutenants Watts (*HMS Lady Penryhn*), Ball, (*HMS Supply*) Shortland (*HMS Sirius*) and Captain Marshall (*HMS Scarborough*) sent back to England. The book was published by subscription and brought Lord Howe Island to the attention of the world.

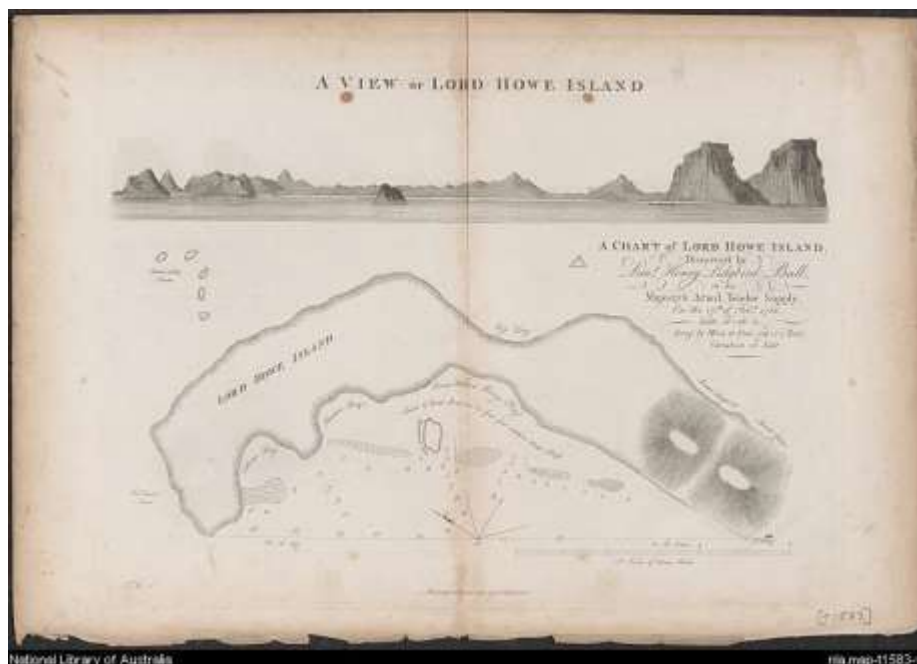


**Figure 47** A chart of the track of the Scarborough on her homeward passage from Port Jackson on the Et. (i.e. East) coast of New South Wales towards China, 1789 published in *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay, with an Account of the Establishment of the Colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island* in 1789. NLA map-nk1 1052-v

The Account also included the first views and maps of Lord Howe Island to be seen in England and included a map of the route taken by *HMS Scarborough* to England

<sup>239</sup> Irvine, Nancy (ed.) 1988, *Complete Letters of Newton Fowell, Midshipman Aboard the Sirius*, Fairfax Press, Sydney. Able Seaman Newton Fowell joined the *Sirius*, aged eighteen, he was gregarious, optimistic and well-connected, destined for early promotion and, alas, a fatal encounter with the Batavia fever.

via China, showing the island's location in the Eastern Pacific and its relationship to the east coast of Australia and Norfolk Island.



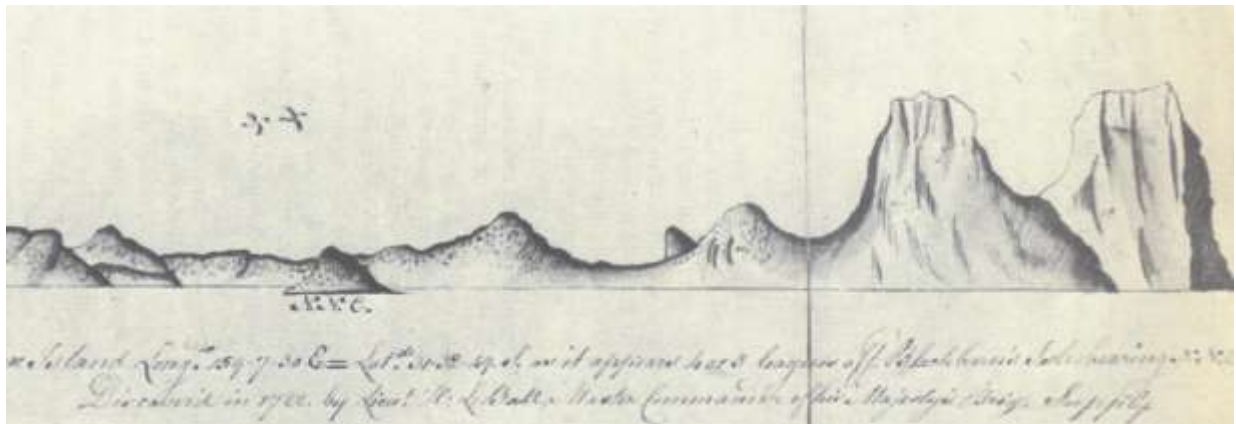
**Figure 48** View of Lord Howe Island and A Chart of Lord Howe Island published in (see below) *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay, with an Account of the Establishment of the Colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island in 1789*. NLA map t1 583-v

Lieutenant Watts's narrative of the return voyage of the *Lady Penrhyn*, published in the book, records his diary entry for Saturday 17 May 1788 with the following description:

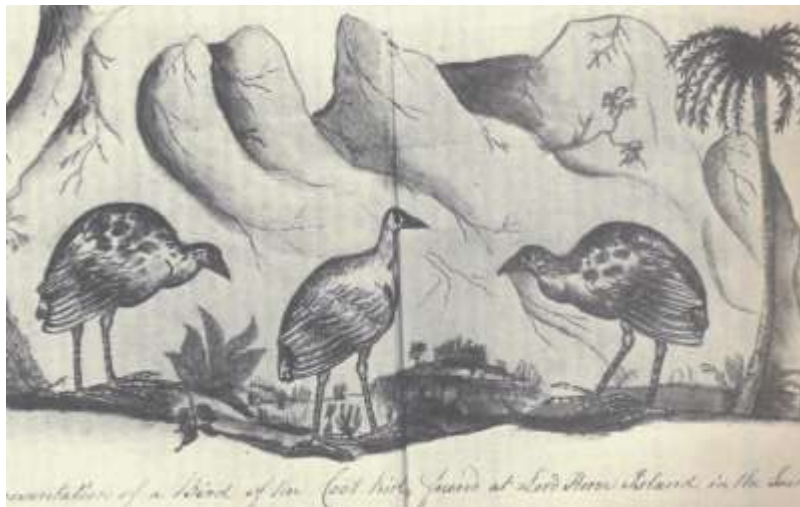
*"The island is about two leagues in extent, and lies in the direction of North 30 west and south 30 east; the south-east end making in two very high mounts which may be seen at a distance of more than twenty leagues and at first appear as two detached isles. About three leagues from these, and nearly in a south-east direction, is a remarkably high and pointed rock, which may be seen at least twelve leagues off; and from this there are dangerous rocks extending three or four miles, both in a south-east and south-west line; those to the south-west not showing themselves above water: there are also rocks extending four or five miles off the north-west and north-east ends of the island, which is of moderate height. Both extremes are bluff, and there appears to be much foul ground about them: within the north-west point lies a rock with eleven fathoms water close to it, and there is a passage between it and the island. The reef on the west side extends nearly to both extremes with breaks in it, through which boats may pass with safety, but within the reef it is in general very shaly. The island is tolerably broad at each end, and very narrow, with low land in the centre, forming two bays, that should the wind be from the south-east to north-east, or south-west to north-west, a ship may always be secure by running to the leeward of the island. There are regular soundings on the west side, but the ground is too hard for holding well, being coral rocks. The east side they did not examine. The low narrow part has evidently been overflowed and the island disjointed, for in the very centre, as they*

walked across, they saw large beds of coral rocks and shells in great abundance; and on the east side, which seems in general to be the weather side, the sea has thrown up a bank of sand from twenty five to thirty feet in height, which serves as a barrier against future inundations. The island has likewise every appearance of having undergone a volcanic revolution as they have found great quantities of burnt stone and pumice stone; and Mr Anstis, who landed on the reef which shelters the west bay, at dead low water, found the whole a burnt up mass".<sup>240</sup>

Accompanying Watts was Arthur Bowes Smyth, Surgeon on *Lady Penryhn*, who made notes about the rich avifauna and marine life of Lord Howe Island, sketching the island's topography and birdlife. Bowes Smyth was among the earliest to record these aspects of the island.



**Figure 49** One of the drawings of Lord Howe Island from Arthur Bowes Smyth's *A Journal of a Voyage from Portsmouth to New South Wales and China in the Lady Penrhyn 1787-1789*.



**Figure 50** 'Representation of a Bird of the Coot Kind found at Lord Howe Island in the South Pacific' from Arthur Bowes Smyth's *A Journal of a Voyage from Portsmouth to New South Wales and China in the Lady Penrhyn 1787-1789*.

<sup>240</sup> Surgeon Nicholas Anstis was the chief mate on the *Lady Penrhyn* for the voyage of the First Fleet to Australia.

In March 1790, while attempting to land supplies on Norfolk Island for the contingent of convicts, the *Sirius* was wrecked on offshore rocks. The ship's crew was forced to wait for months before a hired vessel, the Dutch transport, *Waaksamhey'd* arrived to pick them up for a passage back to England. Among the crew was a midshipman, George Raper, whose natural history illustrations represent some of the only known images of species he observed on his travels. Although there is no evidence that Raper went ashore on Lord Howe Island, he may have had access to wildlife caught by others, or sufficient information for him to sketch them. Among his drawings was a drawing of the island which may have been made as the *Sirius* sailed past on its ill-fated voyage to Norfolk Island, or subsequently from memory.



**Figure 51** HMS *Supply*, painting by George Raper entitled: "His Majesty's Brig Supply 1790 off Lord Howe Island. Disc. Feb. 1788". Ink and water colour, after, Smith, Bernard & Wheeler, Alwyne (ed) 1988, *The Art of the First Fleet and other early Australian drawings*, Yale University Press, London, Plate 92, p.92.

Following the return of the crew of the *Sirius*, Stockdale subsequently published further observations on Lord Howe Island in *An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island, including the journals of Governors Phillip and King, and Lieut. Ball, and the voyages from the first sailing of the Sirius in 1787 to the return of that Ship's company to England in 1792*. In this volume was a map of the route taken by the *Waaksamhey'd*, with Captain Hunter's additions to previous maps of largely uncharted waters in the Eastern Pacific which would be significant for subsequent exploration and navigation in the area. The location of Lord Howe Island, with its geographical co-ordinates, was included.





**Figure 52** 'Chart shewing the track of the Waaksamhey'd Transport from Port Jackson in New South Wales to Batavia in 1792', George Allen sculptor, published by John Stockdale, Sadlers Wells Row, 1793.

The next significant exploration of Lord Howe Island was made in 1834 by Assistant Surveyor H J White, who had been asked by colonial authorities to survey the island and comment on its suitability as a possible penal settlement. Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell reported White's findings to the Colonial Secretary:

*"Lord Howe's Island, situated in lat. 31 degrees 30 seconds, longitude 159 degrees east, is sixteen miles in circumference, six and a half miles in length, and averages half a mile in width. It contains 3,230 acres, of which only 1,000 are sufficiently level, although too sandy for cultivation, there being little but whinstone soil, which is very stony, on the sides of the hills. About one-third of the Island is taken up by two mountains at the southern end, which descend in some places perpendicularly to the water. The shore around these mountains is not accessible except from the water. The highest mountain is 2,450 feet above the level of the sea. There is a harbour at the south-west of the Island protected from the swell by a bar about three-quarters of a mile from the shore, lying between the north and south points. There are several small openings in the Bar, but in which there is only five and six feet of water at low tide. The depth of the water inside the Bar is from a half to three fathoms, but may be taken generally at one fathom, three fathoms being found only in two places, to arrive at which one fathom must be*

passed over. From the shallowness of the water on the Bar and in the Harbour it will not afford anchorage to vessels of more than 30 or 40 tons. There is no harbour or anchorage on the east side of the Island, but boats may land on some of the beaches. Any part of the shore on the south-west side, inside the Bar, affords good landing in any weather. The only grass to be found is a narrow belt close to the beaches, which is of a very coarse description. There are seven kinds of timber, principally of the hard, knotty description, and very small. The wild fig and cabbage trees are the most abundant. Fresh water is scarce there being but one stream of any size at the foot of the most northern mountain, and a small lagoon in the centre of the Island, both liable to be exhausted....."<sup>241</sup>



**Figure 53** Reduction from H F [sic] White's Survey of Lord Howe Island 1835.



**Figure 54** Plan of Lord Howe Island, reproduced from H J White's Survey, 1835 by J A Murray for NSW Surveyor General's Office, 1889.

<sup>241</sup> H J White (Assistant Surveyor) Sydney 7 January 1835 in NSW Parliamentary Papers, etc.

The Roach Islands, off the northeast corner of Lord Howe Island, were named after the captain of the cutter *Prince George*, which was sent to Lord Howe Island to collect an escaped convict and two crew from the schooner *Adelaide*. The date of naming remains unconfirmed.



**Figure 55** Map of New South Wales and Van Dieman's [sic] Land, published by Alan Bell, London, 1837. An inset of Lt Ball's sketch map of Lord Howe Island was included.

It was the potential of Lord Howe Island as a penal settlement which interested the authorities in the middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century sufficiently to call on former resident, Dr John Foulis for a first-hand account from someone whose knowledge had come from his time as a resident. Foulis provided the following account to the Executive Council of the NSW Parliament in 1851 and a hand-drawn sketch of the island as he recalled it.



**Figure 56** Sketch of Lord Howe Island by Dr Foulis, showing his recollections of the disposition of geographical features, settlements and cleared land.



*“I believe the Island is about 450 miles from Sydney, and with a fair wind can be reached in three or four days, although sailing vessels with contrary winds are often fourteen days making the trip.*

*It is about thirty five miles in circumference, and only about two and a half miles across in the widest part. ...on one side of the Island there is a coral reef extending nearly two miles from the shore, and stretching from the northern to the southern extremity, and being about ten miles in length.....The entrance through the reef marked No 1, is the best for vessels to go in at as the water seems scarcely to be disturbed here when it is blowing hard outside, nor is there any ground swell observable, although frequently a heavy swell and surf is breaking on the reef.*

*The water inside the reef is in most places about five feet deep at half tide, and in some parts, from ten to twelve, with a fine sandy bottom.....*

*With reference to the Island itself, I would first remark that some of the hills are considered to be upwards of 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, and are visible on a clear day at eighty or ninety miles distance, and are usually sighted by vessels passing between Sydney and Norfolk Island.....*

*There is a conical hill near the southern extremity of the Island, which was used by the settlers as a look-out station, as from its commanding position it overlooks all other height, except the Big Hills, which are inaccessible perpendicular cliffs, and above 4,000 feet high.*

*There are several small islands of three or four acres in extent, within a mile and a half of the northern extremity of the mainland called the Admiralty Rocks”.<sup>242</sup>*

In 1852, Captain Henry Mangles Denham was appointed Commander of *HMS Herald* and commissioned by the Royal Navy to undertake a major hydrographic survey expedition of the waters around Australia and the islands of the western Pacific. He arrived at Lord Howe Island on 12 May 1853. In his account of Denham’s expedition, Andrew David explains the survey process:

*“An observation spot was established behind Middle Beach, whose geographical position was fixed by astronomical observations in 31°31’38” S 05’58”E. Next a base of 2630 feet long was measured along the high- water line at Blinkenthorpe Bay, about halfway along the eastern side of the Island. From this base a triangulation scheme was extended to cover the whole island and the offshore isles of Mutton-bird Island, Rabbit Island and Admiralty Islets. It is probable too that a bearing was taken of Ball’s Pyramid from the 2834-foot summit of Mount Gower at the southern end of the island. During these operations, the *Herald* fired her guns on several occasions to enable her boats to check their relative positions by timing the interval of the flash and hearing the report. By this method the distance between the ship and the boats could be calculated. Having established a triangulation scheme and erected suitable marks or flags as sounding marks, the detailed survey work began. While the two ships (the *Herald* and the *Torch*)*

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<sup>242</sup> Foulis

were engaged in taking soundings offshore, the boats worked closer inshore taking soundings and 'shooting up' the coastline and the topography, which was fixed in great detail. In accessible parts of the island it is likely that surveying parties walked along the coastline, fixing its position as they went. While working off the western side of the island a good anchorage was found in the South-West Roads, opposite Wright's Farm....An emergency anchorage south of Phillip Point, the north-western tip of the island, provided shelter from north-easterly gales. Denham used four landing places on the island – at Ned's Beach, Middle Beach, Blinkenthorpe Beach and at Boat Haven. Dangerous winds were encountered off the south-western side of the island, which prompted Denham to insert on his survey: 'Ships approaching the south-eastern side of the island nearer than 1 ½ miles risk being dismasted by gusts alternate with dead calms' ".<sup>243</sup>

This note, with small modifications, is still shown on the modern chart of the island. Denham also set up a tide-pole during the survey, observing the tidal range to be 6 feet and the tidal hour at high water full, changing at 8 hours 30 minutes.



**Figure 57** 'Herald firing her guns off Lord Howe Island to enable her boats to obtain their distance from the ship by timing the interval between flash and report, May 1853'. Watercolour by James Glen Wilson. Capt Denham hydrographic surveyor, James Glen Wilson artist, voyage 21 Feb 1852 to 18 Feb 1853.

At the request of Lord Palmerston, the Admiralty sent *HMS Herald*, a 28 gun frigate reworked at Chatham Dockyard fully provisioned and refitted as a 10 gun sloop for surveying with bottom copper sheath to prevent toredo worm, Denham in command.

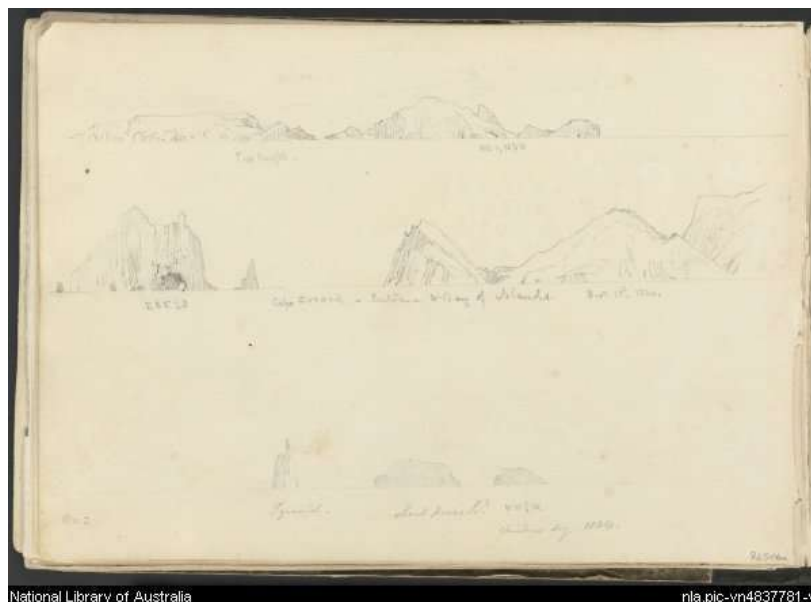


**Figure 58** Denham's 1853 survey chart of Lord Howe Island and adjacent islets and reefs.

<sup>243</sup> David, Andrew 1995, *The voyage of HMS Herald to Australia : and the South-West Pacific 1852-1861 under the command of Captain Henry Mangles Denham*, Melbourne University Press at the Miegunyah Press, Carlton South, Vic.

Denham's Admiralty chart of 1853 (Figure 54) is interesting for it is evidence that many more features had been named since Ball's initial description of the island. Few of Ball's locations are identified on the chart and were possibly not known to the few island residents at the time. Presumably, the names Denham ascribed to topographical features were the names then in use by the islanders, although it is likely that Denham would have had access to Ball's chart through the British Admiralty.

Offshore, to the north-east, Sugarloaf Passage marked the water between rocks named Sugarloaf, and the Admiralty Islets with North Island further to the north-east, and south-east from there to the North-east Roadstead and Mutton Bird Island. Two rocks had been named to commemorate shipping incidents – George Rock (1831) and Wolf[e] Rock (1837); while Gower Island to the south of King Point is associated with Mount Gower and Goat Island (previously Blackburn Island) had been colonised by goats for the whaling trade.<sup>244</sup> Denham's map also shows Ned's Beach, (named for one of the crew of the *Wave* who drowned, with two others, during a landing attempt on the beach in 1844), Middle Beach, Blinkenthorpe Bay (formerly Ross Bay) to East Point, and thence to Gower Island and King Point. To the north, Callam's Bay is now North Bay and Governor Phillip is commemorated at Phillip Point, Phillip Rock and Phillip Bluff. In addition to the two southern mountains, North Peak, Look-out Mound, Intermediate Hill (and North Hummock adjacent) are recognised. Denham's map also shows Soldier's Creek, and the sites of the farms settled by the Andrews, Moseley and Wright (Wainwright). Safe boat anchorages are identified at Boat Harbour (Middle Beach), Boat Haven, and Boat Pool in Hunter Bay.



**Figure 59** Sketch of Lord Howe's Island by Charles La Trobe 13 May 1854. (Source: National Library of Australia, nla.pic-vn4837781-v)

<sup>244</sup> Blackburn Island was known as Goat Island and subsequently Rabbit Island. In 1973, at the request of Mr D Neville of Norfolk UK, the original name, Blackburn Island, was reinstated. At the same time, Blackburn Passage (previously) Rabbit Island Passage was also officially reinstated.

Charles La Trobe (1801-1875) was lieutenant-governor of Victoria from 1851 to 1854 and, after nearly 15 years as Queen Victoria's representative, he left the colony on the *Golden Age* via Sydney bound for Panama. The *Golden Age* was a new wooden ship of 2864 tons, built in New York for the New York and Australian Steam Navigation Company. She carried 1200 passengers and 500 tons of cargo. With vertical engines and 8 paddle wheels, she was intended for the trans-Pacific mail run and Sydney-Panama route but the high cost of fuel in New Zealand and Papeete (Tahiti) meant the ship was not profitable. La Trobe charted the route in sixty one pencil sketches and pen and ink drawings including Lord Howe Island which they passed en route from Sydney to Tahiti arriving at the latter port on 24 May 1854.

Captain Denham was accompanied on his voyage by two naturalists, John MacGillivray and John McDonald whose records and observations on the natural history of the island were among the earliest scientific observations, rather than those by sailors, to be published and distributed.

Two accounts of Lord Howe Island, published between 1869 and 1882 are significant as primary sources of information and provide eye-witness records of the island's natural attributes. While not strictly the accounts of 'explorers', they are detailed and were compiled by observers, each with a particular interest in documentation of observations for the public and scientific domain.

Inspector Cloete's official visit as Water Police Magistrate in 1869 to investigate a police matter was an opportunity for the first NSW government appointed team to investigate, record and publish detailed observations of Lord Howe Island. Cloete's party included Charles Moore, Director of Sydney's Botanic Gardens, Edward Smith Hill, a retired businessman and naturalist, Robert Fitzgerald, Deputy Surveyor, a number of collectors and an Aboriginal tracker. While their expeditions over the island were motivated by the desire to collect flora and fauna specimens, Fitzgerald documented the ascent of the island's higher ground for the first time. Accompanied by two young local men, one of whom was Ned King, two hunting dogs and a holding dog led by a cord, (and with the exception of Inspector Cloete), the party including the Aboriginal tracker, traversed a ridge (Smoking Tree Ridge) through land already colonised by pigs and goats to Red-clay Saddle. Here, at about 990 feet, all but Fitzgerald and the two guides turned back, citing the slipperiness of the rocks as a danger and their underestimation of the time the expedition would take. According to Hill, the track they followed was identified by marked trees<sup>245</sup> and not more than two feet wide.<sup>246</sup> Elsewhere in their report the track was referred to as a path, implying that some form of access had already been created and was used by residents.

Fitzgerald returned to base the following day, having survived a thunderous night in the open at an elevation of some 2,000 feet crouching on the boulders, but having failed for the same reason (the slipperiness of the rocks and track and thick fog) to make the summit of the 'Big Hill' (Mount Gower). They did however make the summit of one of the precipices of Mount Lidgbird, where the sight of the sheer,

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<sup>245</sup> Hill, Edward S 1869 *Lord Howe Island : official visit by the Water Police Magistrate and the Director of the Botanical Gardens, Sydney together with a description of the island*, p.39

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, p.43

naked wall above them was “grand – oh wonderfully grand ... 1,000 feet of grey perpendicular basalt, the very highest mass of which overhangs the base.... a sight of awe and fascination”.<sup>247</sup>

Hill’s detailed account includes mention of localities which by now had been explored and named by island residents. Although the summit of Mount Gower had eluded the expedition party, Captain Field was able to describe the summit as “an area of half a square mile, well clothed with vegetation, watered by small streams, and abounding with wood-hens and wild pigs”.<sup>248</sup> but not of Mount Lidgbird whose summit had not yet been reached.

According to Hill’s account, the following localities (in addition to those identified by Lt Ball and H J White) had been named by 1869:

*Big Hill* – Mount Gower;<sup>249</sup>

*Smoking-tree Ridge* – described as being at the top of the ‘camel’s shoulder’ in Fitzgerald’s amusing comparison of the island’s topography to a camel, the two mountains (Mount Gower and Mount Lidgbird) being its humps. Smoking Tree Ridge was a place for a rest “in honour of the name, and as an excuse for a rest, those who could smoked, and those who couldn’t smoke plucked the long grass and chewed the ends”.<sup>250</sup>

*Red-clay Saddle* - a spur from the mountain (Mount Lidgbird)<sup>251</sup>

*Big Creek* – opposite the southern opening of the southern passage from the coral reef

*Between Hills* – a hollow incline in Erskine Valley, between Mount Lidgbird and Mount Gower, running down to a never-failing creek covered everywhere with boulders<sup>252</sup>

Inspector Cloete’s account of his observations included the most comprehensive description of the landing sites then explored:

*“On the SW side and about three-quarters of a mile from the shore, a reef extends NW and Se; about three miles over this, in westerly winds, there is a very heavy break. There are three entrances – the one at the northernmost end leading to the small harbour, available for vessels drawing no more than 6 feet. On the outside of this reef there is an anchorage and shelter from the NE winds, the best holding ground being in nine fathoms, near to a small island just outside, and near the centre of the reef; and here there is also an opening through which to land. From the SW there is anchorage and shelter on the NE side... Two or three small bays with sandy beaches afford very easy landing.”<sup>253</sup>*

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Hill, p.32

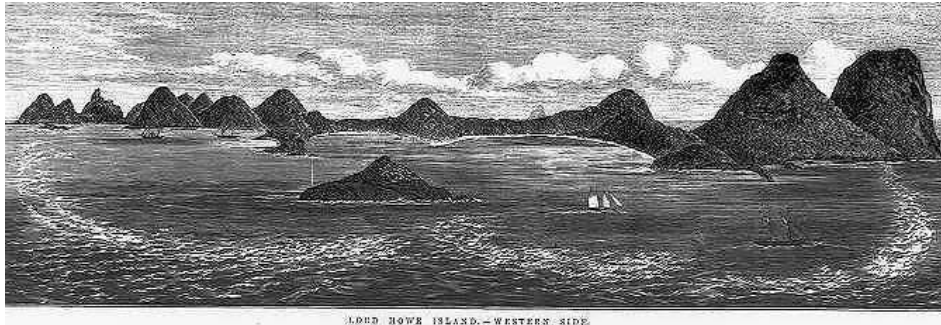
<sup>249</sup> Ibid., p.37

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., p.39

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., p.39

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., p.40

<sup>253</sup> Cloete, p.14



**Figure 60** A sketch of Lord Howe Island's western side published in the *Illustrated Sydney News*, 15 May 1880.

Until 1882, hand drawn sketches of Lord Howe Island had been the only visual record. Some of these, presumably done from descriptions rather than from actual observations, show considerable artistic licence.

Although some members of Cloete's party returned on collecting expeditions in 1871 and 1876, their focus was principally scientific. It was not until 1882 and the visit of The Hon John Bowie that further exploration of the island's topographical features was conducted and documented. John Duff's botanical report confirmed his ascent of Mount Gower where he observed "the top is probably 150 to 200 acres in extent, chiefly flat, with numerous creeks and ravines across its centre.....here rain is frequent, the air is cold and heavy clouds cap the summit of it and Mount Lidgbird, almost daily obscuring their tops from view".<sup>254</sup>

Access to Mount Lidgbird however remained elusive, Duff reporting that "Edward King informed me that he would undertake, for a sum not exceeding ten pounds (£10), to fix a chain or handrail, and cut steps in the perpendicular rock, so as to make the ascent to the top of Mount Lidgbird (which I understand has never been made, except by King himself)"<sup>255</sup> for the purpose of future plant specimen collecting. An attempt on Mount Lidgbird in January 1955 was to claim the life of Norman Ziska.

Perhaps the most significant outcome of Wilson's visit in the exploratory sense was the photography undertaken by John Sharkey of the Government Printing Office. Sharkey's images represent the first known photographs of Lord Howe Island and were integrated into Wilson's report to the Colonial Secretary published in Sydney in 1882.<sup>256</sup> For the first time, photographic images of the island were available in the public domain.

Detailed surveys of the island subsequent to Wilson's visit addressed land tenure issues, rather than natural features and contemporary cartography reveals that over this period of time, features of Lord Howe Island have been named for their associations with people and human activity in particular locations, natural topography and flora and fauna. While many more visits to the island at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century were of an investigatory nature, their findings and achievements were principally scientific.

<sup>254</sup> Duff in Wilson, p.31

<sup>255</sup> Ibid p.36

<sup>256</sup> Wilson 1882, p.

The record for the ascent of Mount Gower is held by Dr Phillip Whistler who covered the track in 1 hour 41 mins 10 sec on 6 May 1995. The usual time for a guided tour to the summit is about 8 hours. On 28 December 2005, mountain guide Jack Shick, the son of guide Ray Shick, made his 1000<sup>th</sup> climb of Mount Gower.

### Balls Pyramid

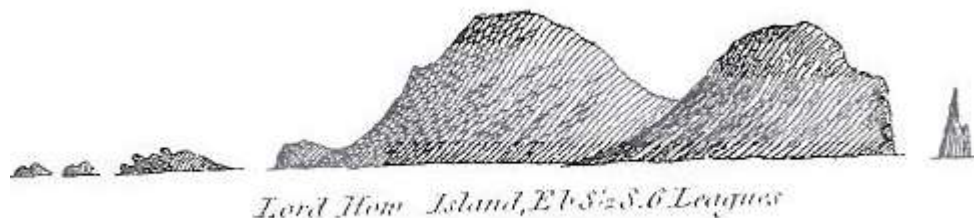
Twenty kilometres to the south-east of Lord Howe Island is the tallest (eroded) volcanic rockstack in the world. Once thought to have been an island, it is now recognised as an erosional remnant of a shield volcano and caldera in the Lord Howe Island seamount chain. The Pyramid is approximately 10 kilometres in circumference, 562 metres (1844 ft) high, 1100 m (3600 ft) long and 300m (1000 ft) wide.



**Figure 61** Islanders on a boat trip to Balls Pyramid c1940s. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM222, LHI Museum Collection).

Geologists believe that although the volcano responsible for the formation of Ball's Pyramid was active at the same time as the Lord Howe Island volcano, the two islands were never physically linked. Over 100 separate lava flows have been identified in the towering spire of the Pyramid.

Named in 1788 by its discoverer, Lieutenant Henry Lidgbird Ball, Balls Pyramid has a few satellite islets, including Observatory Rock (800m WNW) and Wheatsheaf Islet (800m WSW) and South East Rock, a pinnacle located about 3.5km to the southeast.



**Figure 62** Detail from a sketch of Ball's Pyramid from the Chart of the Route taken by the Scarborough.....



The first recorded observation of Ball's Pyramid was made in 1788. On 9 March Lieutenant King noted that:

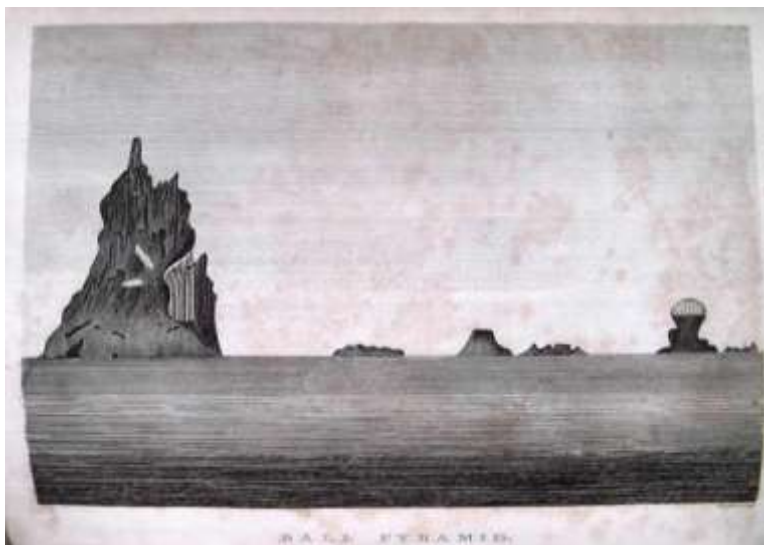
*"There is a very remarkable rock, which lies about 12 or 14 miles to the southward of the island, and which is named Ball's-pyramid, and has much the appearance of a church steeple at a distance; but as you come near, it is exceedingly high and perpendicular: we passed in the evening between the island and the pyramid; and had 26 fathoms within two miles of Mount Gower, over a rocky bottom."*<sup>257</sup>

It must have been an awe-inspiring site, but some caution was sounded:

*"There is no danger in approaching Lord Howe Island – the 'Supply' anchored there in 13 fathoms, sand and coral; but there lies from the south-west part of the pyramid a dangerous rock which shows itself a little above the surface of the water, and appears to be no bigger than a boat."*<sup>258</sup>

Two months later, Lt Watts was able to add a further warning for seamen:

*"About three leagues from there [Mt Gower], and nearly in a south-east direction, is a remarkably high and pointed rock, which may be seen at least twelve leagues off; from this there are dangerous rocks extending three or four miles, both in a south-east and south-west line; those to the south-west not shewing themselves above the water..."*<sup>259</sup>



**Figure 63** Engraving of Ball's Pyramid by T Prattent, engraver published in Stockdale, J 1789, *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay, with an Account of the Establishment of the Colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island in 1789.*

<sup>257</sup> King in Voyage to ....Transactions at Norfolk Island Hunter p.172

<sup>258</sup> check

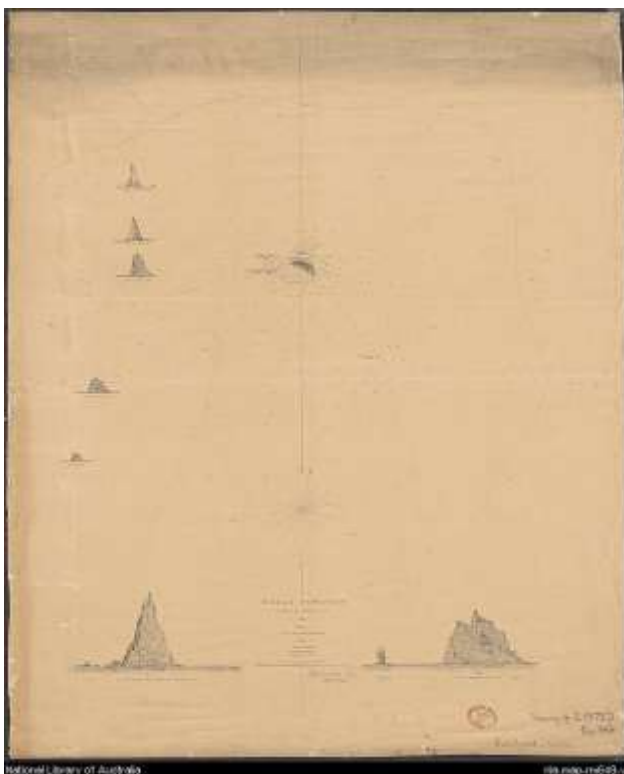
<sup>259</sup> Watts in A Voyage to New South Wales p.224





**Figure 64** Watercolour by Augustus Earle (1793-1838), Ballo [i.e. Balls] Pyramid, Hows Island [i.e. Lord Howe Island] being W by S distance 30 [300?] miles from New Zealand, towards Port Jackson [picture] [1828?] 1 watercolour; 14.1 x 36.7 cm.

On 25 May 1853 during his hydrographic survey of Lord Howe Island, Captain Denham left the *Herald* in the lee of the island where some of the party continued their survey work, and travelled on the support vessel, *Torch*, which steamed about 10 miles south-south-east to survey the waters around Ball's Pyramid. Neither Ball's Pyramid, rising spectacularly to 1810 feet, nor the nearby Wheatsheaf were ideal spots to establish an observation point but measurements were taken from a another exposed rock, 64-feet high, which was named Observatory Rock at  $31^{\circ}45'10''S$ ,  $159^{\circ}16'10''$ .



**Figure 65** Denham, Henry Mangles, Sir, 1800-1887, Balls Pyramid, South Pacific [cartographic material] : from H.M.S. s. Herald & Torch 1853, 1853. (Source: National Library of Australia map-rm649-v)

In 1881, the *Illustrated Sydney News* published William Clarson's description of Ball's Pyramid as:

*"...a pyramidal rock, with a dome-like top, towering to a height of nearly 2,000 feet and varying greatly in aspect as it is approached from different points. Viewed from the west in sunshine, it presents the appearance of a massive golden spire; while seen from the north-east, it resembles the dome of the Pantheon in Paris."*<sup>260</sup>

The first recorded landing on Ball's Pyramid was made in 1882. Henry Wilkinson, a geologist with the NSW Department of Mines, travelled to Lord Howe Island as a member of The Hon John Bowie Wilson's party in April of that year. In Wilson's report to the Colonial Secretary, Wilkinson recorded that:

*"Only on a point at the north-east side [of Ball's Pyramid] can a landing be effected. At the time of our visit the sea was unusually calm, and three of our party succeeded in getting ashore, which, I believe, is the only instance known of any person landing on this remarkable rock."*<sup>261</sup>

Accompanying Wilkinson were two others, one of whom, C W Darley (of the Harbours and Rivers Department,) collected plant specimens for John Duff, the botanist.

The first attempt to climb the rock is attributed to Logan Morrisby, Phil Dignam and others in 1922. Logan Morrisby (and his brother Rokeby) are identified in Harry Pidgeon's book, *Around the World Single Handedly: The Cruise of the Islander*, published in 1945. The two brothers, who lived on the Navua River, Fiji had built a boat, the *Tasman*, in which they had many adventurous sailing expeditions in the Pacific Ocean, including several trips to Sydney.<sup>262</sup> An unconfirmed report which is attributed to the *Evening News*, 1 January 1923, suggested that Logan Morrisby and Phil Dignam made an attempt in 1922, reaching 700 feet, and requires further investigation. Islander Clive Wilson recollects an expedition party on the *Aerial* were going to use the yacht as a base but then did it from the *Venture*, attempting the ascent from the east side but abandoning their attempt at 400 feet when rock gave way.<sup>263</sup>

In 1931, aviator Francis Chichester flew over Ball's Pyramid "In several places about 200 feet below the summit, I could see clean through – it was cracked right off!"<sup>264</sup> Subsequent climbers have noted that the Pyramid does indeed have an open hole inside which extends to sea level.<sup>265</sup>

<sup>260</sup> Clarson, *Illustrated Sydney News* 1881

<sup>261</sup> Lord Howe Island 1882, Reprint of Report on the Present State and Future Prospects of Lord Howe Island by the Honourable J Bowie Wilson, Government Printer 1882, reprinted by the Lord Howe Island Historical Society 1981, p. 21

<sup>262</sup> Dover, Harry Pidgeon 1931, *Around the world single-handed: the cruise of the "Islander"*

<sup>263</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal* vol.22, 9 May 1956

<sup>264</sup> Chichester, Francis 1945, *Alone across the Tasman*, George Allen & Unwin, London.

<sup>265</sup> Dick Smith, pers. comm., February 2012, advises that he has never heard this claim.

A party from the Melbourne Climbing Club in the late 1950s or early 1960s, transported by Clive Wilson are also thought to have attempted an expedition but the weather was too bad to even get close to Balls' Pyramid<sup>266</sup>. A group from the Australian Pacific Climbing Expedition failed in their attempt in 1961-62 due to bad weather. Early in 1964 Rick Higgins and Dave Roots attempted an ascent of Balls Pyramid, reaching a height of about 600 feet.<sup>267</sup>

In November 1964, a party of seven members of the Scouting movement set sail from Sydney on board the *Tai Hoa* and travelled to Lord Howe Island with the intention of climbing Ball's Pyramid.

Rick Higgins, Dave Roots and Ian Gasking successfully reached Winklestein Steeple, 1,200 feet. They named this feature after the song "Balls to Mr. Winklestein", that was sung repeatedly in bravado by one of the unsuccessful teams as it endured sea urchin spines and barnacle scratches from the landing, falling rocks, and waves of centipedes at the bivouac. The party, which also included Dick Smith (now a successful entrepreneur and adventurer) then aged 20, was forced to turn back on their fifth day due to exhaustion and shortage of food and water. However, they brought back with them a phasmid (commonly known on Lord Howe Island as a 'land lobster') which the Australian Museum then believed to be extinct.

Ian Gasking recalled the trip:

*"It was one incredible place where we spent a night. We were 1,200 feet above sea level and there were five of us on a ledge, and the ledge was about 200mm wide, and the cliff was vertical below and vertical above, so we drilled holes and we put in our security bolts, and each person was tied into a bolt, and then we had a bolt for each pack. Then we tied everything together, so it was a spiderweb of ropes. And to stay on a ledge all night with a freezing wind is a real feat of endurance."*

Rick Higgins remembered it thus:

*"When you're climbing the face of it, you're going up with birds all around you and the birds around your head and then you look down and you look straight below your feet and you're looking straight down into the ocean, at 300 feet down, then 600 feet, then 1,000 feet then 1,200 feet. That's a real rush."*<sup>268</sup>

On 14 February the following year, some members of a team of climbers from the Sydney Rock Climbing Club, comprising Bryden Allen, John Davis, Jack Pettigrew, Ben Sandilands and David Witham successfully climbed to the summit. Sponsored by the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Ansett Flying Boat Services and Ocean View

<sup>266</sup> *The Signal* vol.4, no.239.

<sup>267</sup> Dick Smith, pers. comm., February 2012.

<sup>268</sup> Transcript of Australian Story 'Rock of Ages' Monday 11 April 2005, Australian Broadcasting Commission

guesthouse, they took enough food to survive for 3 weeks and equipment to swim off if necessary but their radio contact with Lord Howe Island failed to operate. Photographs of the successful ascent appeared in the *Herald* two days later, courtesy of Ben Sandilands (correspondent for the *Sydney Morning Herald*) whose long distance swim from the Pyramid to the boat enabled photos of the climb to be sent to Sydney via flying boat.



**Figure 66** The first successful attempt to reach the summit of Ball's Pyramid mad front page news in the *Sydney Morning Herald* 17 February 1965.

Bryden Allen recalled:

*"There had been numerous previous unsuccessful attempts, because of a wide range of problems peculiar to that climb. These included the reluctance of the local Lord Howe Islanders to allow climbers to overnight on the rock, the difficulties of the landing, and the local fauna (which ranged from the more benign wedge-tailed shearwaters that disturbed sleeping climbers at their bivouacs when the birds returned at night to find their roosts occupied.....to centipedes whose venom turned the arms and heads of some bivouacing climbers into touchy, watermelon-sized swellings after torches had dimmed and they could no longer defend themselves with piton hammers."*<sup>269</sup>

In 1969, filmmakers Gary Steer and John Davis and a party of seven, some of them returning climbers from the first ascent, climbed to the summit, filming a documentary for the ABC.<sup>270</sup>

<sup>269</sup> <http://www.uq.edu.au/nuq/jack/climbing/bp.html>

<sup>270</sup> Nancy Maiden woman in team????

Several more climbs were made during the early 1970s and attempts made on the more dangerous north and east faces and a successful alpine ascent and skyline ridge traverse in 1973 by Greg Mortimer and Keith Bell but more often than not, climbers were thwarted by heavy rain and winds, rockfalls and loss of gear.

In 1979, members of the Australian Climbers' Union attempted to claim the Pyramid for 'Climbers International and World Ecology' but failed due to bad weather. However, in January 1980, Dick Smith returned to the Pyramid along with climbers John Worrall and Hugh Ward. Entomologist Tim Kingston and ornithologist Ben Miller accompanied them along with an ABC *A Big Country* documentary crew to record their findings.

Smith, Worrall and Ward successfully reached the summit where they unfurled a NSW State flag which had been given to them by then Premier Neville Wran, and declared the island Australian territory. The flag and some water had been dropped on the summit by the film crew's helicopter, the movements of which had been curtailed due to an acute fuel shortage on Lord Howe Island at the time.

At the time, *The Signal* recounted that after the group had been dropped into the sea from a helicopter and had swum ashore, they established a base camp at 'Gannet Green, a flat area 300ft up on the south-eastern corner of the pyramid. Dick, John and Hugh then commenced the climb to the top. The climbers tackled 'Winkelstein Steeple' and, while John and Hugh bypassed the needlelike 'steeple' itself, Dick climbed to the top and located an empty green champagne bottle that had been placed there by the party he was with in 1964. The climbers noted that there was virtually no other evidence of previous climbs. Throughout the day the helicopter hovered above and beside the climbers, enabling the photographers to take what they believed would prove to be spectacular film. Monday night was spent at 'Drop Camp' – the climbers slept on an 18 inch wide ledge 1300 ft above the ocean below! On Tuesday morning the climbers attacked the 'Crux Arete', a very thin ridge where climbers had to have one leg on the western side and the other leg on the eastern side while they negotiated the 250ft rock face."<sup>271</sup>

Although climbing was restricted from 1965, approximately eight groups including Japanese and French teams, landed on the Pyramid, two traversing it in four directions, and all making successful climbs. Islander Clive Wilson ferried many of these parties to and from the Pyramid, using the 'Venture' and 'Lulawai', as did Jim Whistler on 'Santara' and 'Beaumont'.

Until the 1970s, climbers had scaled the SE ridge - the North Ridge was not successfully climbed until the 80s. In 1982, climbing Balls Pyramid was officially banned under amendments to the *Lord Howe Island Act*, and in 1986, all access to the island was banned by the Lord Howe Island Board because of possible disturbance to bird colonies. However, the policy was later relaxed to allow some climbing under strict conditions and for scientific purposes, and only subject to approval from the relevant NSW Minister.

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<sup>271</sup> *The Signal*, July 1979

In February 2001, a team of entomologists and conservationists from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, led by Dr Dave Priddell and including the island's ranger Dean Hiscox, landed on Balls Pyramid to survey its flora and fauna. To their surprise they rediscovered evidence of the Lord Howe Island phasmids (thought to be extinct), living in the shelter of a single shrub of *Melaleuca howeana*.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Explorers routes, marked trees, camp sites explorer journals, artefacts collected on an expedition, captains' logs, surveyors' notebooks, mountain passes, water sources, Aboriginal trade routes, landing sites, maps.

### **Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Place names given by early explorers and / or named after significant figures. The following were all named by Lieutenant Ball on 13 March 1788<sup>272</sup>:

Prince William Henry Bay; Blackburn Island; Phillip Point; Phillip Bluff; Phillip Rock; Hunter Bay; Callam Bay; Collins Cove; Admiralty Islands; Ross Bay; Erskines Valley; King Point; Mount Lidgbird; Balls Pyramid; Mount Gower; LHIG.

### **Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schdeule**

LHIG is already listed on the SHR.

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<sup>272</sup> Nicholls, D (2006), p.5

### 2.3.7 Fishing

*These are activities associated with gathering, producing, distributing, and consuming resources from aquatic environments useful to humans.*

The bounty of the seas around Lord Howe Island has been exploited since the sailors from ships of the First Fleet visited the island in 1788 and 1789 and caught fish and turtles. Much of the early development of the island centred around the provisioning of visiting whalers and although there was never a whaling station on Lord Howe Island, fresh fish was certainly available to their crews. The Lord Howe Island Museum collection includes many items associated with whaling and has established important relationships with American east coast historical societies for comparative research.

The collection of the Whaling Museum in Nantucket, Massachusetts includes a piece of scrimshaw relating to Lord Howe Island and Thompson's Store on the island even has modern imitations of scrimshaw on environmentally-friendly resin rather than the traditional whale ivory].

Early commercial operations were restricted to the collection of bêche-de-mer by Captain Nicho, some limited export of fresh fish to Sydney markets and a shark processing venture based on Blackburn Island, which operated for a short spell during the 1930s. In 1929 Colonel Spain and the trustees of Taronga Zoological Park arranged for some of the zoo keepers to visit the island to collect species of tropical fish for the aquarium collection and the Australian Museum has also conducted scientific research in respect of fish species and habitat for over a century.<sup>273</sup> During World War II, a significant commercial fishing venture developed to supply frozen fish to American and allied service bases in the Pacific. Islander Eric Hines was involved in this operation.<sup>274</sup> In 1973-74 some commercial fishing was undertaken in the locally-owned vessel *Island Trader*, which also back-loaded frozen fish to Sydney when it brought supplies to the island. At that time, there was often a gap of 6 to 8 weeks between supply ships and the island often ran short of supplies. The *Island Trader* filled the gap by bringing much-needed supplies from Sydney between ships<sup>275</sup>. Otherwise, fishing has generally been for recreational purposes or to supply food for local consumption.

Although Salmon Beach, Old Gulch, North Bay, Neds Beach, Middle Beach and Boat Harbour were popular fishing waters adjacent to the island, islanders had favourite offshore fishing spots including Pyramid, Wolf Shoal, South East Rock, South East Bank and Sunken Rock.

The waters around Lord Howe Island and Balls Pyramid have been protected by exclusion zones since 1993 to protect local fish stock from the potential impacts of large-scale commercial fishing - this has restricted fishing activity for islanders.<sup>276</sup>

<sup>273</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1929, p.13

<sup>274</sup> Chris Murray, pers.comm.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> *Lord Howe Island Common Waters Management Plan*, Natural Heritage Trust, Environment Australia, Department of Environment and Heritage, 2002



Access to waters between 3–12 nautical miles around the island for commercial fishing is currently limited to one mainland operator licensed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) and informal agreements have been established to ensure any fish caught are not exported from the island. While none of the island residents fishes ‘commercially’ on a full-time basis, some fish, especially the excess catch from charter operations, are sold to the island restaurant trade.

A highlight for many visitors to Lord Howe has long been the opportunity for recreational fishing in the waters around the island. Mainland papers occasionally displayed the trophy fish caught during expeditions. Many holiday snaps taken by tourists show them proudly displaying the big catches made in waters around island. An article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* was typical of the press this sport attracted. It explained the success a group of anglers had with mackerel, kingfish, swordfish, mako shark and cod, the largest specimen caught by the particular party weighing in at 107 lbs.<sup>277</sup>

Today, most marine activities are undertaken by island residents and visitors in waters close to shore using hand-lines and are generally limited by distance from the island and the frequent rough weather. Recreational fishing is popular as a leisure activity, targeting mostly the larger kingfish (greenbacks), with some big game billfish fishing and hand-lining (with a salt water recreational fishing licence under the NSW *Fisheries Management Act 1994*) for more prolific species including yellow fin tuna, wahoo, dolphin fish, yellowtail kingfish, marlin, sailfish, salmon, sharks, rainbow runners and mackerel tuna.

Fish and fresh seafood has always been a staple item in the diet of Lord Howe Islanders but is weather dependent throughout the year. Nichols recounts that the waters were never over-fished and locals happily shared their catches. In the early days, locals preferred to use gaffs, fashioned by hand from whatever metal was around, in preference to a rod and line. Fishing line and nets were made from *Hibiscus tiliaceus* (Cottonwood) fibre.<sup>278</sup> J H Maiden described how fishing line was made by soaking the bark of this plant species in sea water for 24 hours, ‘making better fishing lines that we can buy in Sydney’.<sup>279</sup>

Many islanders lament the loss of their traditional North Bay holidays, during which fish were hand-caught in the shallow waters and fried in pans over open fires (hence the term ‘pannies’). Community fishing provides an important source of protein for island residents and some income. While this fishing activity is currently unlicensed, the island community have informally regulated their fishing effort, with agreements not to export catch and to supply fish only to a small and limited island tourist and resident population (estimated at 400 and 320 people respectively); and they estimate that less than 20 tonnes of fish are caught in the vicinity of the island by islanders each year.

The lack of any commercial fishing industry at Lord Howe Island has meant that boat numbers have largely been restricted to recreational craft and the small and close-

<sup>277</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 April 1932, p.8, ‘Anglers’

<sup>278</sup> Wilson p.32

<sup>279</sup> Maiden JH, ‘Vegetation of Lord Howe Island’, p.123



knit community pool their resources. This tradition even extended to government owned resources, with both T B Wilson's diary and Campbell Steven's diary recording the use of the 'government boat' for fishing expeditions, particularly to the Admiralties.

There are currently seven charter fishing boats operating in waters around Lord Howe Island, five of which are licensed for fishing beyond 3 nautical miles and sightseeing tours around the island. Their activities are constrained by weather and seasonal tourism demand and their method of fishing is trolling for game fish (billfish, tuna, marlin) and set drop-lines for rosy jobfish.

The boatsheds along the lagoon foreshore were used for storage of boats and associated material but most have either been converted for marine tourism uses or are little used. Most of the charter and recreational boats tie up to moorings in the lagoon.

Despite global pressure on marine ecosystems through the depletion of populations of large predatory fish, there is continuing support on Lord Howe for an annual fishing competition which rewards anglers for the greatest diversity of catch and the greatest size of any one species. Islanders consider continuation of this tradition is justified because of the relatively small numbers of fish caught during the competition.

The availability of Lord Howe Island's fresh fish is also a highlight for visitors. Fish features strongly on the menus of island eating establishments – kingfish steaks are a diet staple. Friday night "fish fries" were *de rigueur* until recently at some of the guesthouses such as Milky Way and such meals are now served even more regularly at the island's Bowling Club. Island chefs have become very inventive and kingfish is now served in many different ways, with macadamia crusts and on beds of celeriac mash or wilted greens. A simple barbecue by the lagoon, at Neds Beach or Cobbys Corner is still preferred by many visitors – kingfish fillets supplied in a hamper by Pinetrees or bought at 'Fish'n'Fillet' on Anderson Road and cooked in foil with lemon and butter.

If you ask the many tourists who visit the island, the highlight event for many of them would undoubtedly be the daily hand fish-feeding of kingfish with restaurant 'left-overs' at Neds Beach. This practice was commenced in the 1950s by Eddie Rhoades and then passed to Brian Simpson. Since the shark attack on a young boy, Ross Ellery in February 1996, more informed conservation debate has waged about the appropriateness of this activity. In December 2004, Neds Beach was proclaimed a Sanctuary Zone in the Lord Howe Island Marine Park and this activity was discontinued, although some tourists continue to hand-feed fish with bread.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Fishing boat, whaling station, marine reserve, fisher camp, seafood factory, fish shop, oyster lease, artificial reef, fishing boat wreck, mooring, dock, marina, wharf, fish farm, fish trap.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Lord Howe Island Museum collection of specimens and artefacts relating to whaling<sup>280</sup>;  
 Archaeological site of former shark processing factory, Blackburn Island<sup>281</sup>;  
 Exhibits in Pinetrees boatshed

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Lord Howe Island Museum collection of specimens and artefacts relating to whaling<sup>282</sup>;  
 Archaeological site of former shark processing factory, Blackburn Island<sup>283</sup>;

**Further recommendations**

Attempts should be made to secure other significant material relating to the theme of Fishing e.g. archival photographs for the LHI Museum collection.

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<sup>280</sup> LHI Museum exhibit

<sup>281</sup> Edgecombe, J

<sup>282</sup> LHI Museum exhibit

<sup>283</sup> Edgecombe, J

### 2.3.8 Forestry

*These are activities associated with identifying and managing land covered in trees for commercial timber purposes.*

The first visitors to Lord Howe Island were on their way to Norfolk Island to investigate the natural supplies of straight tall timber for spars and masts for sailing ships and flax for fibre production. They found nothing of interest in the timber on Lord Howe Island, David Blackburn dismissing the vegetation simply as ‘cabbage tree, shrubs and mangrove’<sup>284</sup>, and Thomas Gilbert complaining about a thick undergrowth of vine he described as ‘ratten’ which impeded their hunt for birds and erroneously observing the island’s kentia palms as ‘cocoanut’ trees.

The first residents made do with local materials, particularly kentia palms – the trunks for constructing the frames of their shelters and outhouses and the leaves for thatching for walls and the roof. Captain Henry Denham who surveyed the island in 1853 considered that the island’s timber had economic potential:

*“for a long time, the profitable export of that close-grained timber to be found on the slopes, ...while fuel timber would be afforded for many years from the glade clearing, after taking care to leave to each glade a zone of the forest trees to form a rampart for the protecting of the crops from the spray drift...”*

and presented the NSW government with section specimens of timber.

A further selection of 28 specimens of species indigenous to Lord Howe Island were collected by John Duff, who accompanied The Hon J B Wilson on his trip to the island in 1882 and represented the Botanic Gardens. He noted that the leaves of the thatch palm were used for thatching houses and the stems for posts, rafters and split into battens. Wilson considered that none of the timber on the island had any industrial, economic or commercial use and thought that some of the forest species of New South Wales should be planted without delay including Blue Gum, Cedar, Box, Ironbark, Jarrah, Cork Oak, Kauri Pine, Moreton Bay Pine, She-oak, camphor trees, and NSW ash. Duff agreed with Charles Moore’s idea that the island should be planted with useful timber as a means of providing residents with more suitable building timbers to prevent the destruction of indigenous species which he noted were limited. He even suggested growing Red Cedar and exporting the surplus to the mainland.

Some of the more substantial homes on the island were constructed of local timbers such as Scalybark (*Syzygium fullagarii*), Blackbutt (*Cryptocarya triplinervis*) and Maulwood (*Olea paniculata*), which were sawn into planks and used<sup>285</sup>.

On 14 October 1878 Lord Howe Island was proclaimed a Forest Reserve, and Captain Richard Armstrong was appointed the island’s first Forest Ranger. Although the island’s lush vegetation provided the community with wood for building and fuel, Armstrong had a view to the island’s future too, requesting from Charles Moore a

<sup>284</sup> Blackburn, RAHS Journal XX pp.326-8

<sup>285</sup> Interpretive sign, Stevens Reserve

quantity of seedlings of timber which could be used for commercial purposes. The selection he received included mainland species including blue gum.

From T B Wilson's diary it is clear that native timber was felled and cut to provide wood for steamships, for limited building construction and for fencing on the island. Although locals scavenged flotsam timber which washed ashore<sup>286</sup> or raided the wrecks of ships which foundered on the reefs<sup>287</sup>, the supply of hardwood timber was scarce. Stevens, who succeeded Armstrong as Forest Ranger, had his duties extended to 'Forester' with an increased salary as a counter measure against the locals clearing timber on an ad hoc basis. With an eye on the protection of the island's *Kentia* palm seed resource and islanders engaged in fierce competition over the collection and sale of seed, Frank Farnell sought clarification from the Chief Secretary's Department in 1900 about the status of the island's reserves. Until then, it had been assumed that the island was exempted from the operation of timber licences issued under the *Crown Lands Regulations* under Section 31 of the *Forestry Act*. This in effect prevented 'the removal of palm seed and prohibited any person without a right or licence or permit from collecting palm seeds. "So far as the Department is aware there are no Forestry Regulations for Lord Howe Island. The island is constitutionally attached to New South Wales but it is not subject to its Land and Forestry Laws".<sup>288</sup> It seems that without specific legislation under the *Crown Lands Act* and without a proclamation by the Forestry Department, no action could be easily taken to rectify this anomaly.

In December 1903, Visiting Magistrate, Frank Farnell signed a lease with the Lands Department which gave him permissive occupancy of 3,500 acres of un-allotted Crown Land on Lord Howe Island for a peppercorn rent of one shilling per annum. Within two years, with access to increased collecting areas and Farnell's services (gratis) as a broker to eight islander exporters, the industry was in better shape.

In the 1930s the Lord Howe Island Board decided to plant tree species from the mainland to provide building material for future home construction. In the area now known as Stevens Reserve, which had already been cleared by Campbell Stevens as a farm, the following trees were planted: Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*), Hoop Pine (*Araucaria cunninghamii*), Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*), Tallowood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*), Grey Ironbark (*E. siderophloia*), Silky Oak (*Grevillea robusta*), Camphor Laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*) and probably Flooded Gum (*E. grandis*). These trees can still be seen in Stevens Reserve<sup>289</sup>.

With the passing of the *Lord Howe Island Act* in 1953, land on Lord Howe Island was allocated for leasehold for domestic and farming purposes and large areas were identified as a Permanent Park Preserve. The *Lord Howe Island Act 1953* declared that "All timber on the island shall remain the property of the Crown notwithstanding that the land on which the timber is growing becomes the subject of a lease or

<sup>286</sup> Campbell Stevens' diary mentions Kauri and Oregon logs washing ashore in July 1899.

<sup>287</sup> T B Wilson's diary mentions the removal of timber from the wrecks of the *Eva* and the *Stetson*.

"Dec 6 1878 Collected timber from wreck of 'Stetson' – building and firewood

Nov 27/28 splitting wood from 'Eva'"

<sup>288</sup> Correspondence 17 October 1900 Chief Secretary's Department to Department of Lands,

<sup>289</sup> Interpretive sign, Stevens Reserve

reservation or dedication under this Act". Although this originally was a mechanism to protect the palm seed industry, the Government's protection of natural vegetation on the island since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century has significantly contributed to the high preservation of natural species and habitats.

The Permanent Park Preserve (PPP) is now dedicated to protecting the unique natural values of Lord Howe Island and neighbouring islands and cover 75% of the island, including the southern mountains and northern hills, Balls Pyramid and neighbouring islands. The PPP is similar to a National Park in terms of the primary management emphasis which is directed at conservation of natural values, the main difference being that those on Lord Howe Island are managed by the Lord Howe Island Board in consultation with a local committee, rather than by a New South Wales government department.

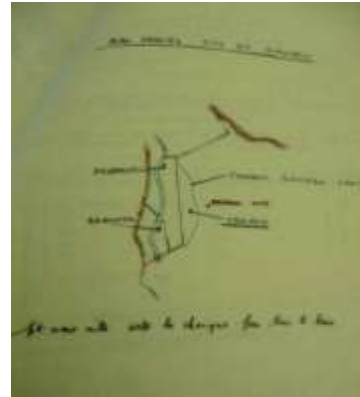
The Lord Howe Island Board of Control established a sawmill on the island to assist with the milling of timber to satisfy local demands, primarily for building and case timbers. In 1946, it was moved to a new site near Government House which provided easy access in all weather. In 1953, the NSW Legislative Assembly defended the decision to place a tourist levy of 2 shillings a day by explaining that "If we are going to provide tractors, sawmills and amenities for the island, .... there must be some way to finance these."<sup>290</sup>



**Figure 67** The old sawmill, on a site behind the present golf course. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, Mis4-130, LHI Museum Collection).

Although the Board was faced with demands which exceeded supply, there was a shortage of accessible timber which took time to locate and identify and a lack of staff to cope with private supply of logs. The equipment was showing signs of fatigue and its last significant work was milling imported timber for staff quarters at 'Pinetrees' and framing for 'Capella' apartments. Despite suggestions that the machinery be converted into a glass crusher, the sawmill closed and timber is now imported, in milled and cut form, from the mainland.

<sup>290</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 November 1953, p.6



**Figure 68 (Left)** Lord Howe Island Sawmill; **(Right)** Map showing location of sawmill; (Source: LHI Museum Collection)

### Typical examples that demonstrate this theme

Forested area, forest reserve, timber plantation, forestry equipment, saw mill, mill settlement, arboretum, charcoal kiln, coppiced trees, forest regrowth, timber tracks, whim.

### Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme

Forestry Reserve over whole island proclaimed in 1878<sup>291</sup>;  
Trial plantation of araucarias and eucalypts in Stevens Reserve

### Items recommended for listing on new LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule

Stevens Reserve, including trial plantation of araucarias and eucalypts.

### Further recommendations

These were planted for forestry purposes and should be managed under a management plan. All of the species are exotic to the island with some exhibiting weedy characteristics

<sup>291</sup> O'Connor 2005, p.11

### 2.3.9 Health

*These are activities associated with preparing and providing medical assistance and/or promoting or maintaining the well being of humans*

The discovery of Lord Howe Island and its abundant wildlife offered early hope to the ailing colony of New South Wales, its people diminished by the long months spent at sea and the lack of readily available fresh food in their newly established settlement. Lt Ball's cargo of fresh turtles and his description of their abundance in the waters around the Island prompted Governor Phillip to send him straight back for another load in a desperate measure to acquire an antidote for the scurvy which was seriously menacing the community. Unfortunately, by the time Ball returned, the turtles had sought warmer waters further north. David Collins records in his journal "The Supply also sailed on the 6<sup>th</sup> for Lord Howe Island, to procure birds and turtle for the settlement, the scurvy continuing to resist every effort that could be made to check its progress by medicine; from the lateness of the season, however, little hope was entertained of her success."<sup>292</sup> Scurvy, a disease caused by a deficiency of Vitamin C in the diet, was a common affliction of sailors whose diet during long months at sea had little in the way of fresh fruit or meat.

With settlement on the Island came passing ships and a vehicle for the transportation of disease. The first recorded affliction of islanders was an outbreak of measles which was spread by a party of Pitcairn Islanders and their friends returning to Norfolk Island and who stopped on Lord Howe to recuperate after the disease broke out on board their ship, the *Pacific* in 1868.<sup>293</sup>

On his visit to the Island in 1876, Surgeon T Corrie found the population to be in good health, despite the lack of a doctor or any hospital facilities. Plants with medicinal properties, including the succulent aloe, an antidote for skin wounds and burns, and castor oil had been introduced by Dr Foulis in 1843 and some thought had been given to the possibility of the economic cultivation of the latter. John Denis Macdonald wrote: (<sup>294</sup>)

*"Judging from the healthiness of some castor oil plants in the garden of Mr Andrews, they might be grown extensively for the oil."*

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<sup>292</sup> An Account Of The English Colony In New South Wales, Volume 1

by David Collins p.75

<sup>293</sup> J B Wilson p.7

<sup>294</sup> Denham p.16



**Figure 69** Large aloe plant growing at the south part of the island, 1880

E S Hill's 1870 statistical register of inhabitants on Lord Howe Island, shows a population which included 29 adults and 10 children under 18.<sup>295</sup> The increase in the number of new settlers on the island saw a rise in the numbers of children born and a corresponding increase in illness and morbidity. Some of the infections would have been brought to the island by passengers on ships and spread rapidly through the island population. While adults succumbed to consumption (tuberculosis) – the first officially recorded death from this cause was that of Bogoroo, a native of Kingsmill Island (now part of Kiribati) in the care of Nathan Thompson. She died in 1880, aged 37, after a lingering illness. Others died of inflammation of the lungs and dropsy. Infants and children fell victim to convulsions, bronchitis, whooping cough, pneumonia, measles, inflammation of the bowel and thrush. Despite the general well-being and good health of islanders and their midwifery skills<sup>296</sup> there were deaths associated with childbirth and accidental deaths. Islanders sometimes had to provide medical assistance to others. This was the case in March 1879 when a seaman from the whaler *Derwent Hunter* suffered a broken arm and possible fractures to his hip and foot in a fall from the topsail. He was brought ashore because the captain of the ship had not offered him respite. Sometimes, not even passing medical help could help prevent emergencies. In 1894, a doctor travelling to Norfolk Island on board SS *Birksgate* was summonsed too see Mrs Garth who suffered not only the stress of a neighbourhood dispute which no doubt induced her labour, but the death of her infant five days later; and Mr Langley whose serious illness lingered until his death six weeks later.<sup>297</sup>

During the inquiry into Captain Armstrong's conduct on the island during his administrative term, charges were laid against him for selling intoxicating liquor to islanders. In his defence, Armstrong pointed out that the shortage of alcohol had led the locals to brew their own concoction from bananas and wild figs although the islanders were keen to point out that their home brew had great medicinal value. In an effort to curb their dependence on the home brew and imported spirits, and to woo their friendship, Armstrong offered to provide them with a small allowance "of colonial wine on their calling at my house, or a bottle of wine in case of reported necessity in their families". The plight of three families was cited during the Inquiry:

<sup>295</sup> Report of the Official visit by the Water Police Magistrate and Director to the Botanic Gardens, Sydney 1870

<sup>296</sup> Kelly, M.

<sup>297</sup> T B Wilson June 20 1894 Transcript A1158387 and March 24 1879 Transcript A1158065



*“H Wilson, as a treatment for “poorness of blood; Robbins for restorative measure, his wife having suffered from rheumatic fever and a difficult confinement; and T Nichols, a slight stimulant, necessary for his children who were weak and ill, was beneficial to them when added to their porridge.”*<sup>298</sup>

Armstrong clearly felt justified in helping them out on remedial grounds, but he may have been too liberal in supplying the locals with alcoholic tonics, as Albert Nichols’ testimonial might suggest:

*“..on every occasion I have been sent to you by my parents for wine or spirits that they have told me to ask for it medicinally, on account of illness in the family – more especially by my father”.*<sup>299</sup>

John Bell was convinced that Nichols’ intemperance was the cause for his negligence which resulted in the loss of the barque, *Australian Packet*,<sup>300</sup> which could suggest that the alcohol was not used purely for its medicinal properties.

While there can be no doubt that the fresh clean air, a diet rich in fresh fish and island-grown produce<sup>301</sup> was their best weapon against illness and disease, colic frequently troubled the islanders. This could be attributed either to eating too many onions or more likely, the consumption of underground water drawn from wells on the island which would have had a high alkaline salt content. TB Wilson’s diary mentions his dyspepsia, recording that between February 6 and 8, 1879, he suffered severe gripping pain in his stomach all night, for which he took salts; the following day he was better but still with pain in the stomach which continued, “suffering very much from colic....pain in stomach very bad.”<sup>302</sup> Epsom salts appear to have been the generally accepted cure, and at least one islander, Ernest Nichols, attributed his good health to taking ‘just enough Epsom salts each day to cover a sixpence’ as his cure-all.<sup>303</sup> Epsom Salts (Magnesium sulphate) is a saline purgative, not readily absorbed from the intestine. When taken by mouth in dilute solution it reduces the normal absorption of water from the intestine with the result that the bulky fluid contents distend the bowel, active peristalsis is excited, and evacuation of the contents of the intestine follows in 1 to 2 hours<sup>304</sup>.

With little medicine to treat ailments and no medical knowledge, it was left to islanders to help each other out as best they could. According to T B Wilson’s account of Captain Nichols’ afflictions in February 1880, when the pain became so bad, Nathan Thompson consulted his medical book and consulted Wilson who had recently experienced similar symptoms before “making up a mixture from the medicine chest’ for Nichols. Relief was temporary: Nichols was given ammonia the following night and several days later, laudanum.<sup>305</sup> Laudanum is tincture of opium which has an analgesic (pain-relieving) and narcotic action due mainly to its

<sup>298</sup> Armstrong Inquiry

<sup>299</sup> Albert Nichols letter supporting Armstrong

<sup>300</sup> Bell, J. to Captain Armstrong, 14 January 1880

<sup>301</sup> The diet of fresh produce is still promoted within the island’s Seventh Day Adventist community.

<sup>302</sup> TB Wilson diary

<sup>303</sup> Nichols, D p.149

<sup>304</sup> *Martindale Extra Pharmacopoeia*, p.754

<sup>305</sup> T B Wilson diary Feb 1-5 1880 Transcript A1158103 and A1158104

morphine content. Its slow absorption rate and relaxing action on intestinal muscle makes laudanum of value in the treatment of diarrhoea and in the relief of intestinal, biliary and renal colic<sup>306</sup>. Prolonged use of laudanum can lead to addiction.

Subsequent to the Armstrong Inquiry and several unsuccessful overtures to the Government to supply essential medicines, a quantity of medicinal items was eventually despatched to the island for its community medicine chest, including:

“2 bottles carbonate ammonia; 1 bottle ether sulphur; one do. castor oil; 1 ullage bottle chlorodyne, one roll lint; 1 roll plaster; one pair tweezers; 2 lancets; 1 package needles; two pair forceps; 1 skein silk; one box camel-hair brush; 1 bottle seal volatile, one do. Epec. wine; 1 package rhubarb pills; one parcel borax; 1 bottle soap liniment; 1 bottle pul. Epacac; 1 bottle Dover, one pot cerat. Flav Resin; 1 bottle liquid epispasticas, one do. paregoric; 1 bottle Goulard’s extract; 2 packages Steedman’s soothing powders; 1 small piece oil-silk; 1 bottle extract ergot, one pair scissors, 1 part bottle myrrh aloes.”<sup>307</sup>

The medicinal uses of the preparations in the community medicine chest have been interpreted and are shown in the table below<sup>308</sup>.

Preparation	Interpretation	Uses
Carbonate ammonia	Either Ammonium carbonate or Ammonium bicarbonate	An irritant to mucous membranes and used in small doses as a reflex expectorant. Also has a carminative action and has been used in the treatment of flatulent dyspepsia. Large doses cause nausea and vomiting.
Ether sulphur	Solvent ether; Aether sulphuricus	Used for cleaning the skin before surgical operations and for removing adhesive plaster from the skin.
Castor oil	Castor oil	A mild purgative, especially valuable in acute diarrhoea, particularly when due to food poisoning. Also used as a soothing application to allay irritation due to foreign bodies in the eye.
chlorodyne	Tincture of Chloroform and Morphine	Carminative, analgesic and narcotic effects
Seal volatile	Sal Volatile; Aromatic Solution of Ammonia; ‘Smelling Salts’	Ammonium bicarbonate, strong ammonia solution and oils of lemon and nutmeg. Inhalation of ammonia vapour, by reflex action on the brain stimulates respiration, accelerates the heart and causes some vasoconstriction. Used as a restorative in fainting and collapse.
Epec wine	Ipecacuanha Wine	5% Ipecacuanha Liquid Extract in sherry. Used in small doses as an expectorant; in larger doses as an emetic.
Rhubarb pills	Compound Rhubarb Pills	Rhubarb is a mild anthraquinone purgative, with mild astringent properties due to the presence of tannins. With small doses the astringent action predominates and it is therefore used as an astringent bitter and occasionally in the treatment of diarrhoea.

<sup>306</sup> *Martindale Extra Pharmacopoeia*, pp.801-2

<sup>307</sup> Nichols p

<sup>308</sup> *Martindale Extra Pharmacopoeia*

Preparation	Interpretation	Uses
Borax	Borax; Sodium Borate	Borax has feeble bacteriostatic action. Applied externally it is mildly astringent and is used as a gargle or mouthwash in the treatment of mouth ulcers. Can be used as a lotion in pruritis and for inflammatory eye conditions.
Soap liniment	Camphor and Soap Liniment	Applied externally, the camphor in the liniment acts as a rubefacient and mild analgesic, with counter-irritant properties in the treatment of fibrositis, neuralgia and similar conditions.
Pul. Epacac	Probably powdered Ipecacuanha	Used to induce vomiting in cases of suspected poisoning.
Dover	Dover's Powder; Ipecacuanha and Opium Powder	Used as a diaphoretic in the early stages of febrile affections and especially for aborting incipient colds.
Pot cerat Flav Resin	Possibly Ceratonia or Carob Gum, which produces a thickening agent more effective than starch or tragacanth.	Ceratonia mucilage is used for the dietetic treatment and prevention of diarrhoea in infants, children and adults.
Liquid episasticas	?	
paregoric	Camphorated Opium Tincture	Given in combination with expectorants for coughs.
Goulard's extract	Strong Lead Subacetate Solution	Probably used externally as a soothing astringent application to bruises and sprains.
Steedman's soothing powders	Steedman's soothing powders	A proprietary preparation of phenolphthalein, starch and sugar. Phenolphthalein is an irritant purgative, also used in teething powders.
Extract Ergot	Probably Ergot Liquid Extract	Ergot stimulates the smooth muscle of the body, especially of the blood vessels and uterus, and its use is almost entirely confined to obstetrics, including checking of post-partum haemorrhage.
Myrrh aloes	Probably Aloes and Myrrh Pills	Aloes is a purgative, producing a bowel movement in 6 to 12 hours after administration. Intensely bitter so usually given in pills. Moderate doses are laxative but owing to their tendency to cause griping, they are commonly combined with a carminative such as myrrh.

Interpretation of the contents of the community medicine chest suggests that, as was common medical practice at the time, many of the remedies were chosen to eliminate harmful toxins from one end of the body or the other as quickly as possible. The causes of many infections were unknown and emetics and purgatives were the preparations of choice.

J B Wilson's 1882 report<sup>309</sup> concluded with his request that the Government withhold any further expansion of occupation and that the island - 'this gem of the sea' be reserved for an Australian Sanatorium where the favourable climate and isolation

<sup>309</sup> Wilson, The Hon. J B 1882, *Report on the present state and future prospects of Lord Howe Island*, Government Printer, Sydney.

would be advantageous to recuperation, especially from infectious diseases. With the outbreak of a smallpox epidemic in Sydney the preceding year and the urgent need for effective quarantine facilities, the island's isolation and natural attributes would have seemed perfect. In 1913, with the risk of the smallpox epidemic being spread to the island by passengers on ships, islanders were vaccinated by a visiting minister Rev Holiday, "in the absence of a medico-man"<sup>310</sup>. By 1956, when all island children were vaccinated against polio, Lord Howe Island had significantly improved medical resources.

Until the establishment of the Board of Control, there had been little supervision of public health or medical facilities on the island. Kitchen tables had to suffice as operating tables in cases of emergencies. Local women, with their own personal experiences of childbirth, acted as midwives. From 1926, the Board of Control required that wives of seconded school teachers be qualified in nursing so that, in the absence of doctors, they could manage the dispensary, administer anaesthetics and attend to house calls.

Without a doctor's surgery or hospital and trained medical staff on the island, procedures were carried out in private homes, Nichols recounting that at least one operation was carried out on Phil Dignam's kitchen table with a sterilised penknife in lieu of a scalpel. It would seem that the island put visiting doctors to good use. In July 1932, while holidaying on the island, Dr C Gearin attended to a number of children, removing their tonsils and adenoids, using Government House as a makeshift medical centre. Visiting dentists made use of a small shed for their consultations. Known affectionately as the 'torture chamber' the structure was relocated in 1947 to the Davies' property on Middle Beach Road to house their generator.<sup>311</sup>

Following the loss at sea of Gower Wilson, his son Jack, William Hammill and the members of his crew in 1936, the islanders honoured their memory with the construction of a small hospital and doctor's residence. A number of Australian yachtsmen who had enjoyed hospitality at Oceanview, along with a local committee set about raising funds for construction. They produced a hospital stamp as a novelty receipt (probably printed by John Sands Pty Ltd in Sydney) as a way of acknowledging each £1 sterling donation.

The hospital, named Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital, was opened on Anzac Day, 25 April 1941 on land on Lagoon Road donated by William and Mary Retmook. Much of the medical equipment was provided by the Hospital Women's Auxiliary through their fund-raising efforts. A dental clinic at the hospital is dedicated to the memory of two popular islanders, Tom Payten and Bryant Smythe who lost their lives at sea on a fishing expedition, a further stark reminder of the potential treachery of the ocean around Lord Howe Island.

One of the first tasks the newly-appointed Lord Howe Island Board addressed in 1954 was a major refurbishment of the hospital, modernising its interiors with funding from the Hospitals Commission. Again, the voluntary Hospital Auxiliary assisted in

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<sup>310</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 September 1913, p.10

<sup>311</sup> Nichols 2006, pp.148-50

this work. Further extensions were added in May 1960, with a major overhaul carried out on the building in 1994 and a new verandah added in 1997. A subsequent upgrade of nurses' quarters has provided for live-in respite care facilities. The doctor's residence was demolished and a new one built.



**Figure 70** Lord Howe Island Courier Post \$1.80 stamp issued in 1988, with a design adapted from the receipt for donations to establish the hospital in the 1930s.

The front grounds of the hospital, adjoining Lagoon Road, have been landscaped as a botanic garden, with native Lord Howe Island plant species identified on labels.



**Figure 71 (Left)** Sign at entrance to Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital; **(Right)** Sign in Lord Howe Island Botanic Garden.

Today, the hospital, which incorporates a dispensary, is administered by the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service (SESAHS) and maintains a staff of three – a fully qualified medical doctor resident on the island and two registered nurses. It provides four inpatient beds (1 high care, 3 acute) which are currently used for acute medical / surgical admissions. Serious cases are evacuated to the mainland by the NSW Air Ambulance Service during daylight hours, while medical emergencies are evacuated from the island by RAAF Hercules transport. The island is also serviced by visiting specialists who conduct clinics and consultations. Although elderly residents are supported by Home Care services, there are currently no aged care facilities on the island which means that some islanders are forced to relocate to the mainland for their final years.

The present doctor, Dr Frank Reed, much loved by the island community, commenced work in 1996, and is accommodated in the doctor's residence on Lagoon Road.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Hospital, sanatorium, asylum, surgical equipment, ambulance, nurses quarters, medical school, baby clinic, hospital therapy garden, landscaped grounds, herbalist shop, pharmacy, medical consulting rooms.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital and its garden setting;  
Memorial plaque to Gower Wilson;  
Historic surgical equipment?  
Historic medical records?  
Baby books;

**Items recommended for listing on new LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Memorial plaques at Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;

### 2.3.10 Industry

*These are activities associated with the manufacture, production and distribution of goods.*

As with any small and isolated community, opportunities for the establishment of local industries which require the manufacture and distribution of goods have been limited on Lord Howe Island by the availability of natural and human resources, technology and markets and have been subject to the vagaries of weather and transport to get the produce to market. With the decline of whaling in the 1860s, Lord Howe Island had to look for another market for its agricultural produce. To counter Alfred Corrie's dire assessment in 1876 of a population in "a near state of starvation", surveyor and botanist R D Fitzgerald was despatched with Captain Amora on the schooner *Esperanza* to determine whether the islanders should be removed. Fitzgerald saw opportunities for islanders to remain, citing the re-establishment of a local whaling and fishing industry and the cultivation of a wider variety of produce, including "fungus for the Celestials" (Chinese)<sup>312</sup> as offering potential salvation.

Lord Howe Island 'reds', as the local onions were popularly known, were grown successfully during the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century in sufficient quantities for export to the mainland but the industry could not be sustained. The fertile soils had potential for other crops and in April 1877, R D Fitzgerald organised a shipment of coffee plants, along with a selection of fruits and herbs which he considered would not only thrive, but yield well.<sup>313</sup> The following year, Captain Armstrong organised more shipments of plants which he thought might be successful for commercial production.<sup>314</sup> However, these, along with local attempts to assemble and export viable quantities of bêche-de-mer, cured (salted) fish, red-tailed tropic bird feathers, mutton-bird feathers (for mattress stuffing) and kentia palm fibre (for upholstery) were never profitable. Neither was the venture by Henderson and Macfarland to collect guano from the Admiralty Islands and ship it to New Zealand, nor an idea for exporting albuminous protein from birds' eggs for the photographic paper trade – that was never pursued.

In June 1909, the *Sydney Morning Herald* announced that:

*"a small company is to be formed for the purpose of catching sharks and marketing the fins, oil &c. A plant for turning the carcasses into fertilizer is also planned."*<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> *SMH*, 12 Jan 1877

<sup>313</sup> Kei apple, fig, yellow guava, passionfruit, jackfruit, wine palm, thyme, lavender, marjoram, sage, mint, tumeric, cinnamon, sarsaparilla, chickory, liquorice, tea, black walnut, loquat, Brazillian cherry, black guava, hops, arrowroot, horehound, winter savoury and sea kale.

<sup>314</sup> Oak tree, blue gum, camphor laurel, oleander, agave, smilax, tea, coffee, Indian tea, sarsaparilla, Brazillian cherry, fig, lemon balm, mint, thyme, oregano, salvie, lavender, cardamom and cinnamon

<sup>315</sup> *SMH*, 30 June 1909, p.10

In April 1930, the same newspaper subsequently reported that the Pacific Fishing Industry had been established with managing director Mr E G Cole in charge. Cole confidently claimed that:

*“sharks were extremely plentiful in Lord Howe Island waters and often four men in a small boat would catch 120 or 130 sharks in a day. The sharks would yield many products, including skins, oils, fins, dehydrated flesh, and fish meal. For all these there was a market in Sydney.”<sup>316</sup>*

After securing funding from island investors, Cole went to Sydney and acquired equipment, returning to supervise the erection of a factory to deal with commercial products obtained from sharks (including oil, leather, bone, fins and skins for gloves and handbags). His optimism continued, with Cole reiterating that:

*“the island was an ideal place for the industry. The seas swarmed with sharks and there was no fear of the supply giving out, even after years of fishing. He said that in two hours five men caught more than 40 sharks, of an average length of six feet. Sharks 14 feet in length, or even longer, lived further out from the island.”<sup>317</sup>*



**Figure 72** A young Norm Simpson astride a large tiger shark. (Photo: Special prints 125, LHI Museum Collection)

Islander Harry Woolnough recalled that shark fishing operations, which commenced in the late 1920s, were conducted from the boat ‘Venture’ and that every part of the shark was used. Skins were scoured and salted down and sent to a tanner in Sydney to make shoes and handbags; the flesh was dried in the sun, salted and shipped to islands as a source of food ‘for natives’; the fins were sun-dried and sold to Chinese merchants for soup; livers were boiled down and oil used for lamps or sold to chemists as an ingredient for medicines, and the bones were cleaned, boiled and dyed and used for card counters. By 1932, however, the industry was no more.<sup>318</sup>

Despite initially gaining the confidence of islanders who invested in the venture, Cole failed to establish a viable industry and all that remained were the broken dreams of

<sup>316</sup> SMH 30 April 1930, p.14

<sup>317</sup> SMH 11 July 1930, p.15

<sup>318</sup> SailO Vol 1, No.7, 25 February 1988



the investors. Today only some remnants of brine tanks survive on the eastern side of Blackburn Island.



**Figure 73** The remains of two brine tanks from the former shark processing works on the north-eastern shore of Blackburn Island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, March 2010)



**Figure 74** The interior of the more intact of the two brine tanks from the former shark processing works on the north-eastern shore of Blackburn Island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, March 2010)

### The Kentia Palm Industry

The industry based on Lord Howe Island's endemic Kentia palm (*Howea forsteriana*) has been the backbone of the island's economy and has successfully supported the island's residents for over a century, with the palm exported throughout the world. The first economic use of the plant was not its seeds, but the protective fibrous sheathing around the palm hearts which had a market on the mainland for mattress and pillow stuffing. It also made good packing around onions and other produce sent to Sydney by sea.

In 1869 Charles Moore, the Director of the Botanic Gardens in Sydney, surveyed the island's vegetation, including the palms that formed dense forests covering the lowland areas.<sup>319</sup> Moore described two palms that were growing in abundance and gave them botanical names *Kentia forsteriana* (after William Forster, a prominent politician in New South Wales) and *K. belmoreana* (after the Earl of Belmore).<sup>320</sup> Upon his return to Sydney, Moore sent a small quantity of seeds from these palms to Sir Joseph Hooker, curator of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew.<sup>321</sup> Hooker, a

<sup>319</sup> Williams, K 2007, p.15

<sup>320</sup> These two species have since been renamed *Howea forsteriana* and *H. belmoreana* to comply with the rules of botanical nomenclature but are still known popularly as Kentia palms. The first is also known as the Sentry Palm, allegedly because it was placed at the four corners of Queen Victoria's coffin while she lay in state. The common name for *H. belmoreana* is Curly Palm because the fronds curl downwards markedly, distinguishing it from the other species.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid. p.16

distinguished plant collector, was well aware of the commercial potential of such plants at a time when the fashionable well-to-do had an absolute passion for new, exotic plants, particularly palms and ferns. Unlike some of the faster-growing tropical palm species, *Kentia*, a slow-growing, shade tolerant species could be grown in the same container for many years without becoming too tall for the room in which it was kept. Consequently, kentia palms became highly desirable and for more than a century they have graced the parlours and conservatories of palaces and houses in Europe and across the world.

The first exporter of palm seeds from Lord Howe Island was Edward 'Ned' King<sup>322</sup>, who acted as a mountain guide for surveyor and botanist, Robert D Fitzgerald's scientific collecting visits in 1869 and 1876. By 1880, T B Wilson had secured the first commercial sales overseas, followed by Mary Nichols and William Nichols who had secured markets in Belgium, England, America and India by 1884. Their popularity as indoor plants and the lengthy process of getting them to overseas markets meant supply was slow and unreliable and islanders soon found themselves in fierce competition with each other, and at the mercy of opportunistic seed merchants, some of whom paid islanders a fifth of the price that palm seed brought on the mainland and infinitely less than the seed was being sold for overseas. Searle's, the Sydney horticultural company, saw the potential for a healthy profit on sales and sent a landscape specialist, Alexander Fenton, to Lord Howe Island to collect and ship seeds specifically for sale to the Australian market.

Aware of the unjust business practices to which islanders were being subjected, Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell attempted to win a better deal for them in 1904. First, he increased the area available for seed collection by securing Permissive Occupancy over the island's unoccupied Crown Lands which had previously been sterilised as forestry reserves. Then, he offered to act as a *pro bono* broker to ensure that payments to the eight island seed merchants / exporters were fair and just. Two years later, Farnell formed the Kentia Palm Seed and Plant Co-operative Ltd with 21 island shareholders in partnership with a Sydney seed company, Horton & Company. Farnell acted as the mainland chairman of the company, with George Nichols as its island director. One thousand six hundred and ninety (1690) shares were allocated among the island shareholders, with the remainder distributed between Horton & Company, Farnell and the company solicitor. In the year 1910, Lord Howe Island produced 2,302 bushels (62,154 kilograms) of seed.<sup>323</sup>

Following dissatisfaction with the way the profits were distributed and the lack of entitlements for non-shareholders, who were aggrieved because the seed was collected from Crown Land, a commission of enquiry into the control of the palm seed trade was established in 1911. It found irregularities and conflicts of interest in the activities of Horton & Co, leading to a further inquiry the following year which looked more widely into the affairs of Lord Howe Island. As a result of the findings of the 1912 inquiry, the Lord Howe Island Board of Control was established to manage the island and a company acting as a limited liability co-operative was established to handle the palm seed trade. Under the new arrangement, a three-man island committee was appointed to administer and supervise the business. Existing

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<sup>322</sup> Nichols, D 2006, p.99

<sup>323</sup> 1 bushel equals 27 kilograms

shareholders retained their shares, and all islanders were given a stake in the business. Men over 21 years of age received 25 shares which increased to 50 after 10 years. Women were entitled to 10 shares on turning 21 and an additional 25 on marriage to another shareholder. A married couple of shareholders were entitled to a further 10 shares on the birth of each child up and until they turned 21, when they received their own entitlement. Additional duties secured an increase in dividends, which were paid on a regular monthly basis. Shares were forfeited if income from other sources exceeded 24 and all islanders were expected to assist with the harvesting, carting, packing and shipping of Income earned from other sources.

An important outcome of the seed industry for the island was the construction of a shed in which seed was packed for export. Not only did this shed become the place for preparing the seeds for their journey to market, but the building became the focus for community events and social activities until it was demolished to make way for the current Public Hall in 1934.

By the time World War II broke out, the palm seed industry on Lord Howe Island had all but collapsed, with declining custom and the destruction of seed thanks to the invasion of the island by rats following the grounding of the *SS Makambo* in 1918. The reduced demand (for about 300 bushels) generated only a small income and the meagre profits went into the Board's funds.

The decline in the *Kentia* palm industry during World War II was offset by the interest shown by Sydney seed companies including Yates and Rumseys in growing various vegetable crops for seed. With increasing food shortages and the loss of many mainland farmers to the war effort, Lord Howe Island played an important role in propagating seed for vegetables. Existing agricultural land was planted out and the sports ground was even given over to cultivation. Among the seeds raised in the spirit of the 'Dig for Victory' program were rockmelons, cucumbers, and tomatoes. It was during this period that the first truck, a Thornycroft, was brought to the island to assist in the collection and transport of seed crates to the wharf.

During the 1960s, demand for palms began to increase again, but Lord Howe Island faced competition for its market share of seeds. However, the renewed international interest was sufficient for the Board to invest in a propagation trial for palm seedlings. The economics of exporting seedlings rather than seed offered the potential of a higher return for the island. With the appointment of an agent acting for the Board, Alan Williams, and assistance from the NSW Department of Agriculture under the guidance of Chris Weale, a staff member on secondment, a palm nursery was established in 1978 and islanders were trained in horticultural management.

Not everyone was happy with the Board's monopoly and in the 1980s, a number of island families established a co-operative with Sydney nurseryman Gary Andreasen. Island growers paid a premium for palm seed when the Board increased its sale price to them from \$430 per bushel to \$780 per bushel in 1987.<sup>324</sup> This venture survived less than ten years but islanders won back some involvement in the commercial cultivation of palms in 2004 when an amendment to the *Lord Howe*

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<sup>324</sup> *The Signal*, Vol.4, No.24, 23 February 1995

*Island Act* allowed perpetual leaseholders ownership of palms on their land, and a return on the sale of seeds from those palms.

In 1995 the Board's nursery was proud to be awarded quality assurance accreditation (ISO 9001:2000) as a licensed exporter of *Kentia* palm seedlings, Curly palm seedlings and seeds and seedlings of Big and Little Mountain palms. The nursery currently exports approximately 2 million seedlings a year, most of which are sold to Hank van Staaldinien's nursery in Holland which has bought palm seed and stock for over thirty years and established close ties to the island and the community. In 2008/9, the income generated from sales of palm seedlings from the nursery was \$1.23 million.

Today, seed collecting is regulated by the Lord Howe Island Board, which employs accredited collectors to undertake the often dangerous work associated with harvesting the seed. The season extends from February through to June and rates for collecting depend on the degree of difficulty in obtaining the seed. In 1988, the areas open for collecting were North Bay, Clear Place, Lowlands (including Salmon Beach), Waterfall, Far Flats, Between the Hills, Little Slope (and other out of the way areas), Big Slope, Goat House and Grey Face. Depending on the species, rates for seed are set by the Board. In 1988, they were:

*Howea belmoreana* (Lowlands) \$75 per bushel; other areas \$85 per bushel;  
*Hedyscepe canterburyana* \$84 per bushel;  
*Lepidorrhachis mooreana* \$32 per 1,000 seeds;  
*Howea forsteriana* (Lowlands) \$106 per bushel; (Waterfall, etc) \$128 per bushel, (Little Slope, Red Point, Rocky Run, Big Slope, Goat House, Between the Hills) \$160 per bushel<sup>325</sup>. A decade later, collectors were earning between \$154.50 and \$195.00 per bushel depending on accessibility.

Like any agricultural venture, yields are subject to the vagaries of the season and other environmental factors. In 1995, after a particularly bad year of weather due to gale force winds in February, moth damage to palm flowers before the seeds formed and the predations of rats., the annual palm seed crop was well below average and the forecast yield of 800 bushels ended up being closer to 600.

The isolation of Lord Howe Island and its reliance on maritime transport has meant that stevedoring, boat building and maintenance are important activities central to island survival. As with many other aspects of island life, the relatively low permanent population and limited market demands are insufficient to create full time industries around these activities, but infrastructure, including jetties, slipways, operation of cranes and working vessels are still required to support new island construction projects, maintain existing structures and facilities and provide emergency assistance when necessary. With increasing safety requirements and improved technology, industrial practices associated with these activities have been significantly improved from the 'all hands on deck' principle of years gone by. Early photographs of unloading cargo over the reef or manually hauling it up the Ned's Beach jetty offer an important insight into the changing work practices.

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<sup>325</sup> *SailO* vol.1, no.6, 9 February 1988

### War effort

In order to overcome the serious setback during World War II and provide an industry on the Island which would sustain residents, the Lord Howe Island Board and the NSW Department of Agriculture organised relief industries, in addition to the contracted work from commercial nurseries. The local advisory committee supervised the work. Thirty-five thousand tomato plants of over 30 different varieties were planted and several colonies of bees introduced to assist with pollination. Birds (species not specified) were introduced to combat insects. Over £1,000 income was generated from the sale of seeds in the first year of operation. In addition, over 1,000 lbs of shark meat per week was exported to the Sydney fish markets from the island. The Board purchased the Thornycroft truck to assist in this work, and the operation was conducted as a business, with the cost of plants and fertiliser being deducted from the proceeds.

### Sawmill

One of the initiatives of the Board of Control was the establishment of a sawmill in October 1940 to process fallen timber for fence posts, pig sties, fish casks and packing crates for exporting seeds. It was also used to mill Norfolk Island Pine timber for house framing. In 1946, the Island Superintendant reported that the sawmill had been moved to a new site near Government House (from its previous site near Lord's Garden) which would greatly improve access to it during all weather. He noted that the plant was functioning well, but that the engine was due for an overhaul; and that demand exceeded supply. The greatest drawback to its operation was the lack of staff to cope with the private supply of logs and the time it took to search for suitable timber suitable for building and case wood.<sup>326</sup> By November 1957, the sawmill was hardly in use, with most milled timber brought in by ship and thought was given to using the engine for crushing coral for road base. Among the last of its uses was the milling of timber for staff quarters at Pinetrees in 1997 and framing for Capella apartments.

It is considered unlikely that any local timber was milled for building after about 1957-58 owing to a growing controversy over felling native trees for timber. Certainly Pinetrees staff quarters and the Capella apartments were not constructed from locally milled timber. However, during the construction of the airstrip in 1974, the Army engineers set up a portable mill and cut up the logs from the Norfolk Island Pine trees that were felled adjacent to Mosely Park to make way for the airstrip. Norfolk Island Pine timber contains numerous knots and the cut timber deteriorates rapidly when exposed to weather unless it is chemically treated. Consequently, no major use was found for the timber stock-pile although some of it was used as flooring in the cargo tenders used to transport cargo ship-to-shore prior to commencement of the shipping service by the *Sitka* which effectively made the cargo boats redundant. In 1991 Michael Nobbs imported a chainsaw jig and was able to cut large slabs from felled Norfolk Island Pines – many of these slabs were incorporated in bench and table tops in island homes. In 1997 Michael upgraded to a Lucas spot mill mostly to cut timber for furniture he makes by hand from local species such as blackbutt, maulwood and scalybark, although he has also used camphor laurel<sup>327</sup>.

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<sup>326</sup> State Records 40/9

<sup>327</sup> Chris Murray, pers.comm.

## The Kentia Palm Industry

In the early years after first permanent human settlement on Lord Howe Island, the main industry was the supply of fresh produce for visiting whaling ships and other vessels that called to the island. However, from the 1880s onwards a new industry emerged which, until relatively recently, was to be the islanders' main source of income – the Kentia Palm Industry.

One of the island's many endemic plant species, the Kentia Palm, proved to be an excellent indoor ornamental plant and for more than a century has graced the parlours and conservatories of palaces and houses in Europe and elsewhere around the world. Unlike some of the faster-growing tropical palm species, Kentia, a slow-growing, shade tolerant species could be grown in the same container for many years without becoming too tall for the room in which it was kept.

The first recorded exporter of palm seeds from Lord Howe Island was E 'Ned' King<sup>328</sup>, who was a mountain guide for Surveyor General's scientific visits in 1869 and 1876. In 1869 Charles Moore, the Director of the Botanic Gardens Sydney surveyed the island's vegetation, including the palms that formed dense forests covering the island's lowland areas.<sup>329</sup> Moore chose two palms that were growing in abundance and they were given the botanical names *Kentia forsteriana* (after William Forster, a prominent politician in New South Wales) and *K. belmoreana* (after the Earl of Belmore). These two species have since been renamed *Howea forsteriana* and *H. belmoreana* to comply with the rules of botanical nomenclature but are still known popularly as kentia palms. The first is also known as the Sentry Palm, allegedly because it was placed at the four corners of Queen Victoria's coffin while she lay in state. The common name for *H. belmoreana* is Curly Palm because the fronds curl downwards markedly, distinguishing it from the other species.

At the request of the Botanic Gardens, King supplied them with palm seeds, seedlings and other native plants. The inscription on the stencil plate for his seed bag read:

"E King, the oldest established seed and plant merchant in Lord Howe Island".

Upon his return to Sydney, Moore sent a small quantity of seeds from these palms to Sir Joseph Hooker, curator of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew.<sup>330</sup> Hooker, a distinguished plant collector, was well aware of the commercial potential of such plants at a time when the well-to-do had an absolute passion for new, exotic plants, particularly palms and ferns. Charles Moore also was aware of the kentia's potential. As an enthusiastic member of the international botanical community, Moore would have been informed of changing horticultural fashions in England. At times the palm seed industry was the island's main source of income and even today the palm nursery operated by the Lord Howe Island Board contributes \$749,962 or 33.6 % of the Board's revenue from trading operations<sup>331</sup>. It is interesting to note that the

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<sup>328</sup> Nichols, D 2006, p.99

<sup>329</sup> Williams, K 2007, p.15

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., p.16

<sup>331</sup> Lord Howe Island Board Annual Report for 2007-08

remainder of this revenue (\$1,480,027) comes from the Board's liquor store operations.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Factory, workshop, depot, industrial machinery, timber mill, quarry, private railway or wharf, shipbuilding yard, slipway, blacksmithy, cannery, foundry, kiln, smelter, tannery, brewery, factory office, company records.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Site of Lord Howe Island Board's original palm nursery, Portion 28, off Middle Beach Road<sup>332</sup>;

Archaeological site of former shark processing factory, Blackburn Island<sup>333</sup>;

Lord Howe Island Board depot and workshop?

Shipping company records (see also Transport);

Ledger transactions for goods and palmseeds 1901-1915 Phil Dignam;

Slipway on lagoon foreshore;

LHI Waste Management facility recycling and conversion of materials for mulch, compost etc.

Crushed glass for road base....;

Kentia palm seeds and nursery;

**Items recommended for listing on new LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Archaeological site of of former shark processing factory, Blackburn Island

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<sup>332</sup> RES: LH.54

<sup>333</sup> Edgecombe, J

### 2.3.11 Mining

*These are activities associated with the identification, extraction, processing and distribution of mineral ores, precious stones and other such inorganic substances.*

In his “Statement of Circumstances made in respect of the proposed penal settlement for Lord Howe Island” in 1851, Dr John Foulis touched briefly on the geology of the Island, He notes the higher hills to be volcanic:

*“in some parts form perpendicular basaltic cliffs, many hundred feet above the level of the sea. The middle and lower parts consist of soft sandstone hills and cliffs composed of granulated coral, which seems to have been stratified under water, as the bones of turtle and sea shells are found embedded in them”.*<sup>334</sup>

Surveyor R D Fitzgerald, in 1869 made the first detailed assessment of the geology of the Island and observed that;

*“There was nothing remarkable in the geological features of this island. At one time it appears to have been a chain of atolls, linked together by coral insects, having a vegetation and land shells. The igneous action has upheaved the whole line of atolls and madreporic rock to a considerable elevation to the south and a moderate one to the north end of the island. The basaltic debris having floated over parts of the centre has made patches of exceedingly rich soil; whilst in some instances the calcareous rock outcrops, and which, by exposure has disintegrated, forming apparently a sandy soil. Organic remains exist in the upheaved coral debris of the east side of the island and the north-east headland shows in the escarpment a partly decomposed bed of porphyry underlying the coral. The large mountains of the south consist chiefly of basalt, either vesicular or compact. I saw but the fragments of what appeared to be columnar and which had toppled down from the heights”.*<sup>335</sup>

Edward Hill, a member of the same party, however made a slightly different observation, noting that the island consisted of coral and trap. The term ‘trap’, which he used for the fine grained igneous rock (basalt) he saw, is one used more commonly to describe rock suitable for quarrying and crushing.<sup>336</sup>

Captain Armstrong, keen to establish viable and self-supporting industries on the island had recognized potential in the guano deposits on the island’s rocks. This mineral has economic value in the production of fertilizers for the agricultural sector, fungicides, ceramics and metallurgy and its commercial potential was not lost on Armstrong. In March 1881, a New Zealand firm, Henderson and Macfarlane Ltd, which owned extensive plantations, trading stores and ships in the mid-Pacific, was granted a license to extract guano from the island.<sup>337</sup> They sent a representative, Charles Ponder, to collect it and ship it out. He was joined by four labourers from the

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<sup>334</sup> Foulis, p.6 in ....

<sup>335</sup> Fitzgerald, p.15

<sup>336</sup> Hill, p.44

<sup>337</sup> *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Auckland Provincial]*, The Cyclopaedia Company Ltd, Christchurch, 1902



Malabar region of southern India (now Kerala), but the venture proved unsuccessful. Ponder remained on the island where he made himself most unpopular with Armstrong and the residents by clearing land and destroying vegetation to such an extent that Armstrong was forced to report him to the Government, upon which it was revealed that Ponder was a debtor and absconder who had fled New Caledonia. Ponder was removed from the island and although a replacement was sent, the guano industry was not sustainable.

Geologist Henry Wilkinson, representing the NSW Department of Mines was a member of J B Wilson's party in 1882. During his stay on the island, he mapped geological features, using Denham's 1853 survey as a base map and colouring his observations of major deposits as he found them – blown sand, basalt and coral reef. He also tested samples of rock and soil in several locations, including the Admiralty Islands and found them to have a very high content of carbonate of lime and low traces of phosphoric acid. Wilson speculated that the phosphate of lime might occur in payable quantities, and recommended that the Government "retain the working of it in their own hands, and allow the leaseholders on the island to work it on tribute, as an influx of miners would soon destroy the characteristic features of the island, and in this manner the island would become self supporting."<sup>338</sup> Wilson's comments suggest that he was aware of the potential damage that commercial mining might do to the island's natural beauty.

However, after having the samples tested further by the Government Analyst Mr C Watt and passed to the former Geological and Mining Museum back in Sydney, he concluded that "These samples of earth are not sufficiently rich in phosphates to export; they would be useful to enrich poor lands in the locality where they are obtainable, if such could be done at a moderate rate (say 10s [shillings]) per ton, including all expenses."<sup>339</sup>

Wilkinson also found iron pyrites in the basalt at Boat Harbour and Robbins Point which he assayed and found "gold at the rate of dwts 14grs per ton, silver 3 dwts per ton"<sup>340</sup>. He also tested the drift in watercourses draining from the mountains but found no trace of gold or metallic ore, concluding that he thought it improbable that any metalliferous deposits of value occur on the island.<sup>341</sup> This led Wilson to finally conclude in his report that "There does not appear to be any minerals on the island, and applications for mineral leases should not be entertained."<sup>342</sup> Lucky too that Thomas Icely's suggestion for the removal of stone from the southern end of the island for the construction of a groin across the lagoon failed to proceed for the impact of such quarrying on the natural attributes of the island would have been irreparable.

Lord Howe Island's location proved useful to ships as a refuelling stop as they plied their trade in the mid Pacific. T B Wilson's diary makes mention of ships calling in to collect firewood and, later, steamers calling to replenish their stocks with supplies of

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<sup>338</sup> Wilson, p.16

<sup>339</sup> Wilkinson in Wilson, p.21

<sup>340</sup> dwt = pennyweight: 1 dwt = 1/20 of a troy ounce = 1.55517384 x 10<sup>-3</sup>

<sup>341</sup> Wilkinson in Wilson, p.21

<sup>342</sup> Wilson, p.15

coal. Coal supplies for ships returning from Lord Howe Island would also have been required and with no coal seams on the island, it is most likely that it was brought across from Newcastle. According to Wilson, ships lay at anchor off the reef and a whaleboat was sent out via Rabbit Island where coal was stored.<sup>343</sup>

The extraction of rock from the island has only ever been conducted to satisfy local demand for building and construction purposes and was never developed into an industry. Outcrops of suitable material were excavated on an 'as needed' basis from readily accessible sites, and when one source was extinguished, another was used.

Calcarene rock was used for the footings of buildings from the earliest days of settlement. Because it was soft, it could be cut easily by hand and sawn into blocks to support timber joists. Later, this same feature enabled the rock to be cut with the aid of the sawmill's diesel-powered equipment. Calcarene was also used extensively for concreting and provided a ready supply of crushed gravel for surfacing the tracks and early roads. Much of the supply was taken from King's Beach and Salmon Beach towards the southern end of the island.

Mining probably did not really make a mark on the island landscape until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century when civic improvements became a priority for the newly constituted Board. Until then, apart from some Department of Civil Aviation activities and road making, construction requirements were slight. Most island homes and buildings were simple in construction, often in prefabricated form, made from timber, fibro or ripple iron, and requiring rock only for a firm foundation. Until relatively recently, structures built of masonry simply did not exist on the island, mainly due to the high cost of transport of materials. The Seventh Day Adventist Church (1960) is noted as one of the few structures where masonry is a major element of its building fabric.

The construction of the Public Hall in 1934 required quantities of rock and gravel and the Public Works Department engaged islanders to extract material from Far Flats, Dawson's Point, Blackburn Island and North Bay, paying them 1 shilling 6 pence per bag.

A number of former quarries across the island are still visible and are presumed to date from circa 1950s onwards. These include sites at Ned's Beach, along Anderson Road, on Middle Beach Road above Joy's Shop, and on Lagoon Road near Windy Point. One major quarrying activity recalled by many older residents was the construction in the 1950s of the foundations for the original 'Met' station (where the Riddle house is now located)<sup>344</sup>. With dwindling supplies of calcarene in readily accessible areas, locals first towed the lighter barge to Rabbit Island for supplies. When that supply was exhausted, they erected a flying fox to raise hundreds of bags of calcarene up the sheer cliff face at Hell's Gate. Horses, including Wally Wilson's horse 'Girlie', were waiting at the top to carry the loads to the building site<sup>345</sup>.

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<sup>343</sup> T B Wilson's Diary, 24 November and 29 November, 1878

<sup>344</sup> *The Signal* vol.4, no.198, 12 November 1999

<sup>345</sup> *The Signal*, vol.5, no.7, 30 April 2004

In 1964, 1800 tons of earth and rock were quarried from this last site to construct the retaining walls around the jetty area.<sup>346</sup> By 1974, when large quantities of material were required for the construction of the airstrip, supplies of crushed coral at the southern beaches, including Little Island, were all but exhausted. The road to Little Island was created with army labour at this time.



**Figure 75** Quarry beside Lagoon Road at Windy Point. While such quarries demonstrate the theme of Mining, they are often a major visual impact on the landscape. Unless they have scientific significance for the geological formations or palaeontological evidence they expose, they are best remediated by screen planting or, in some cases, perhaps adaptively reused to site buildings. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 4 December 2009).

Some basalt ballast for resurfacing Lagoon Road was extracted from the southern end of the island but this site but not considered a viable source in the long term. Small quantities of gravel were imported, first from Norfolk Island, and subsequently from the mainland. The first major importation of gravel was made in 1985 for maintenance on the airstrip, replacing the crushed coral base. Prefabricated retaining wall units were imported in 1999 for the construction of the seawall to combat erosion at Windy Point.

At Lover's Bay, the remains of a quarry face has been incorporated into the landscaping of the golf course. Calcarenite was extracted from this locality for airport works in 1974; and for road base at other times. Evidence of other sites where slate and loam have been extracted are also visible in this area beside the road to the south.



**Figure 76** This former quarry near Lovers Bay has been incorporated as a feature in the island's very picturesque Golf Course. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 9 September 2010).

<sup>346</sup> Ray Shick, pers. comm.

The use of basalt for construction on the island is less common, due in no small part to the difficulty in collecting and processing it. At one stage, it was thought the diesel engine from the sawmill might have been converted to a crushing machine, but basalt was beyond its capabilities. It is however a decorative feature, used as rounded pebbles set in concrete in a number of memorials, including the cairn outside the museum, the cairn marking the Max Nicholls Track and the supporting columns for the Cenotaph which were brought from Rabbit Island. Most of the stone for other memorials and headstones appears to have been prepared by masons on the mainland and imported.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Mine, quarry, race, mining field or landscape, processing plant, manager's office, mineral specimen, mining equipment, mining license, ore laden shipwreck, collier, mine shaft, sluice gate, mineral deposit, slag heap, assay office, water race.

### **Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Quarry, Portion 176, Lagoon Road<sup>347</sup>;  
 Ned's Beach Quarry, Government Reserve, Ned's Beach Road<sup>348</sup>.  
 Quarry near Aunty Dick's House, on Portion 87, Anderson Road<sup>349</sup>;  
 Quarry beside Middle Beach Road, above Joy's Shop;  
 Check quarry site near Capella South.

### **Items recommended for listing on new LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

None at this stage.

### **Further recommendations**

Former quarries can pose both visual impacts and safety hazards. A decision on retention and conservation of any of the above potential sites should be subject to further investigation of their scientific significance and potential for other uses such as location of infrastructure, housing.

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<sup>347</sup> RES LH.04

<sup>348</sup> RES LH 40

<sup>349</sup> RES LH 51

### 2.3.12 Pastoralism

*These are activities associated with the breeding, raising, processing and distribution of livestock for human use.*

#### Livestock

The first visitors to Lord Howe Island found no land-based mammals but plenty of native birds to supplement their diet of fresh fish and shellfish. With the arrival of the early settlers, the hunting of native birds increased to such an extent and so successfully that it eventually contributed to the extinction of several species.

Documentary sources have speculated that goats and pigs were released by visiting seamen to provide a food source for passing ships or shipwrecked survivors, shortly before the arrival of Ashdown's party, who are thought to have introduced chickens in 1834 and perhaps ducks, geese and probably turkeys.<sup>350</sup> The provision of fresh and salted meat for the whaling trade was the impetus for Poole and Dawson's business which advertised livestock in 1841. Captain Middleton and his wife Eliza farmed and raised pigs in the vicinity of North Bay, and by 1849, there were "plenty of pigs, goats, poultry and dogs for hunting".<sup>351</sup> Goats were the island's only source of milk at this time.

Commenting on the island's pastoral viability, Dr John Foulis wrote in 1851:

*"I have no doubt plenty of land could be found to support a small flock of sheep (say 500) at a time, and also a few head of cattle, and I think they would thrive well, and find an abundance of food from the natural grasses which spring up wherever the land is cleared, and it is so thickly timbered that there could be no want of wood for building, as well as domestic purposes.....The settlers all have gardens and huts which they have built of the cabbage-tree."*<sup>352</sup>

The first horse is thought to have come with Nathan Chase Thompson, following his arrival in the mid 1850s.<sup>353</sup> Horned cattle are mentioned by 1853, and by 1870, Fitzgerald reported that:

*"The piggeries about each establishment are comfortable for the animals and are used chiefly for those intended to be killed in the water for salting and curing. The livestock which has recently been introduced consists of a gelding and mare, the property of Captain Field and Mrs Thompson; one bull, two steers and four heifers, none over eighteen months old, the property of Mr Wainwright. The horses were put overboard from ships and swam ashore; the horned cattle as calves, taken down in the ketch."*<sup>354</sup>

Fitzgerald also notes that tillage is performed principally by hand labour as there are only two horses on the island.

On his subsequent visit in 1877, Fitzgerald reported that:

<sup>350</sup> H J White, 1835; Anon, 1849)

<sup>351</sup> Anon, 1849

<sup>352</sup> Proposed Penal Settlement, p.6

<sup>353</sup> Rabone

<sup>354</sup> Fitzgerald, Hill 1870

*"It is really wonderful to see the milch [sic] cows giving two buckets of milk a day, tethered to a stake and as fat as prize oxen."*<sup>355</sup>

He also approved of the regulation which required tame goats or pigs to be kept in a sty, having noted the presence of large numbers of pigs and goats that ran wild. With little in the way of fencing, many pigs and goats escaped to the north and south of the island where they went feral. Fitzgerald's account of his visit in 1869 include a detailed description of pig hunting in Erskine Valley and goat hunting on his descent from Mount Gower, using dogs to act as 'finders' and 'holders'. Maiden saw no wild pigs or goats – by that time they had taken shelter in the valleys or migrated to the caves and ledges on Mt Gower and Mt Lidgbird. The Goat House, a rock overhang on the northeast slope of Mount Lidgbird, is so-named because feral goats used to shelter there. Although Blackburn Island was variously renamed Rabbit Island and Goat Island, there is no documentary evidence to confirm that rabbits or goats colonised it. The demise of feral animals came in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century as part of the strategy to honour the World Heritage objectives for the island, with pigs and goats finally eradicated.

In his report in 1882, John Bowie Wilson noted that the stock on the island consisted of about 40 head of cattle which were nearly all kept on the chain, five sheep, one horse, pigs and poultry – and he urged that common for dry cattle be fenced and that the inhabitants were willing to provide labour to erect it.<sup>356</sup> The lack of fences often created simmering tensions between islanders when cattle trampled neighbours' vegetable gardens. It also meant that straying cattle damaged natural vegetation. Photographs of Thompson's farm in 1882 show post and rail fencing.

The only other livestock recorded was a flock of approximately 40 sheep, assumed to have been grown for meat, but their fleeces may have provided fibre for clothing<sup>357</sup>

Captain Armstrong introduced bees, presumably in the hope of establishing some local honey production.

The island's first livestock had to contend with native grasses, until pasture species including clover, were imported as feed for grazing animals.<sup>358</sup> Some of the native vegetation was fed to cattle, including the leaves of the sallywood, stinkwood, boarwood and banyan (which was said to improve the cream from dairy cows). The Kentia palm had its uses too, particularly the thatch palm leaf ends, while local pig fodder included the Kentia seeds. According to T B Wilson's diary, pigs were also fed maize and other agricultural produce grown on the Island.

Balancing agriculture and the natural environment has long been a challenge for the island and subsequent to the passing of the *Lord Howe Island Act* in 1953, the Lord Howe Island Board introduced tighter controls on the management of livestock in respect of fencing, stocking ratios, and safer food handling, particularly in respect of

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<sup>355</sup> Fitzgerald 1877

<sup>356</sup> Wilson, p.15

<sup>357</sup> TDE 1893b A New South Wales Dependency

<sup>358</sup> Maiden, p.

local milk production and the introduction of stud stock. Although Beachcomber Lodge previously enticed tourists with the promise of home-style cooking, including freshly caught fish, seasonal garden-grown fruit and vegetables and milk from their own cows, locals lament the passing of the daily walk to Retmock's farm for buckets of fresh milk and the substitution of imported frozen, Pasteurised, long-life or dried milk. There are currently no primary production businesses licensed to sell milk or meat on Lord Howe Island. One islander is currently applying to the NSW Food Authority to enable sale of local milk and another is considering the construction of a small meat processing facility.



**Figure 77** Islander Les King delivering pails of milk on his motor scooter circa late 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Photo: Karen Giles prints 4, LHI Museum Collection)

Cattle add to the bucolic character of the landscape of the island, peacefully grazing at Old Settlement Beach, in paddocks off Anderson Road; down towards the Clear Place; behind Pinetrees and adjacent to the airstrip, and on the lagoon side of the island towards the mountains at its southern end.

Salting and curing of meat were common practice on the island and old photographs and archaeological evidence of a large hearth associated with Perry Johnson's property, attest to the existence of at least one smokehouse on the island in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The existence of offal pits, uncovered in Kimberley Owen's archaeological excavation in 2004, is also important evidence of former meat handling practices. According to locals, there was no slaughterhouse on the island: when fresh meat was required, beasts were simply slaughtered, by hanging from a tree. In line with current safe handling practices, meat for domestic consumption is brought to the island in regular shipments by sea and air and stored by freezing.

The Lord Howe Island Board has assisted pastoralism by maintaining good blood lines among the island livestock through the importation of stud and pedigree stock and through artificial insemination. Numbers of livestock on the island fluctuate, however, in 2009 there were about 100 beef cattle and a small dairy herd of 14 cows to provide milk for local consumption. The LHI Board is working closely with the NSW Food Authority to ensure that meat and dairy products sold on the island are produced within the requirements of food legislation in NSW. Due to strict quarantine policies, there is no need to drench cattle and thus all meat is considered to be biodynamic / organic meat and has potential to be of export quality

In 2009 there were also 3 horses, 12 goats and 300 domesticated chickens kept by island residents. Pigs are now prohibited and as of February 2011 the number of domestic goats was restricted to seven animals (one desexed male and six females). Three female feral goats remained within the PPP.





**Figure 78** Slaughtering a pig among the kentia palms. (Photo: Miscellaneous 4 prints: Mis4-111, LHI Museum Collection).



**Figure 79** Cattle grazing on the slope east of Old Settlement Beach. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 11 September 2010).

However, the future of livestock and poultry on Lord Howe Island is currently under debate in connection with the proposed aerial baiting for the rodent eradication program. An article in the *Sydney Morning Herald*<sup>359</sup> raised some of the difficulties about the way forward envisaged by at least one third generation Lord Howe Islander and cattle farmer, who expressed concern that before the baiting could begin, his herd of twenty cattle would need to be slaughtered locally and destroyed or exported because of the risk that they may be affected by aerial baiting. The Rodent Eradication Program provides for a new herd to be introduced to the island, re-invigorating existing bloodlines. The local dairy herd of 14 cows will not be slaughtered but isolated in a contained area for the duration of the poisoning.

<sup>359</sup> SMH, 31 October 2009



**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Pastoral station, shearing shed, slaughter yard, stud book, photos of prizewinning stock, homestead, pastoral landscape, common, fencing, grassland, well, water trough, freezer boat shipwreck, wool store.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Slaughter yard?

Pastoral landscapes with dairy cattle near airport and further south.

Well sites?

Shipwrecks?

Sallywood trees in Esven Fenton's special lease.

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

None at this stage.

**Further recommendations**

The potential examples listed above require further investigation.

### 2.3.13 Science

*These are activities associated with systematic observations, experiments and processes for the explanation of observable phenomena.*

Lord Howe Island's unique environment and ecological habitat is significant in the context of the island's cultural history for the impact that human habitation has had on the destruction of some species, and on the introduction of others. For this reason, the island has long been important to specialists in the pursuit of scientific knowledge across many disciplines. Early scientific observations and accounts of the island are invaluable to scientists as records against which changes can be measured. Some of their records provide the only descriptions of species which are now extinct.

The first journey to Lord Howe Island specifically motivated by scientific interest was made in 1853 when Captain Henry Mangles Denham was sent by the NSW colonial government to survey the island. On board were three naturalists, William Grant Milne, a gardener at Edinburgh Botanic Gardens, who collected the very first plant specimens from the island and sent them to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in England; Scottish naturalist John MacGillivray, who made collections of fishes and the first scientific collection of Lord Howe Island birds, and J D Macdonald, whose report, *Remarks on the natural history and capabilities of Lord Howe Island* (1853) formed part of the assessment of the island's capabilities as a penal settlement. In 1869, Robert Denis FitzGerald, naturalist and surveyor, accompanied Charles Moore, Director of Sydney's Botanic Gardens, his assistant William Carron, Gerard Krefft Masters, assistant curator and collector at the Australian Museum and Edward Hill on a visit to Lord Howe Island with Inspector P J Cloete. In 1882, the Hon J B Wilson travelled to the island in the company of Henry Wilkinson, Department of Mines, William J Conder, Superintendent of Trigonometrical Survey; J Duff, Botanic Gardens and Alexander Morton, assistant taxidermist, Australian Museum. The latter visit was documented by John Sharkey of the Government Printing Office and his views of the island were published in the first illustrated report on the state and future prospects of Lord Howe, in which Wilson wrote:

*"I would strongly urge upon the Government the propriety of preserving this beautiful island."*



**Figure 80** The Hon J H Wilson and his party, including colonial scientists who travelled on board SS Thetis to undertake studies of the Island's attributes, set up temporary camp at the southern end of the Island in 1882. Report on the Present State and Future Prospects of Lord Howe Island, J B Wilson, 1882

In August and September, 1887, the Australian Museum sent its own expedition to the island on the SS *Thetis* 'for the purpose of extending our knowledge of its geology and zoology'. The findings of the expedition members were published in *Memoirs No 2* which is still considered to be a seminal work in the annals of natural history. Since then, scientists from the museum, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney and Kew Gardens in England have developed significant and distinguished scientific associations with the island which continue to the present day. Each of these scientific institutions holds important reference material of Lord Howe Island flora and fauna in their collections and the specimens have been, and continue to be, the subject of important research.

The impetus for formal recognition of Lord Howe Island's natural values arose from the dilemma facing those responsible for the future management of the Island. On the one hand, the island represented an environment of world importance for its natural features including its topography, spectacular scenery and its endemic flora and fauna; on the other hand, there was concern that these resources could be diminished through exploitation.

In 1970, at the urging of Kew Gardens botanist P S Green, who had concerns over the impact of feral goat browsing on the endemic flora and consequent destruction of habitat on the southern mountains, the Australian Museum's staff under the leadership of environmental scientist, Dr Harry Recher, commenced a coordinated and comprehensive biological survey of the entire island, in association with the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and the CSIRO Department of Wildlife Research. The aim was to understand the current status of the island's wildlife and to recommend ways which would ensure its survival. The final report, *The Environmental Survey of Lord Howe Island*, defined the status of plants and certain groups of animals on the island so that changes in the environment, and their effect on wildlife, could be monitored. It made far-reaching recommendations on the preservation of the island's environment and wildlife, including the creation of a reserve for the protection of the flora and fauna, and strategies for monitoring, managing and controlling this unique natural asset.

The impetus that was given to the conservation of the island by the Environmental Survey was reinforced by the lobbying of leading conservationists Jim Brown, Vincent Serventy and Milo Dunphy. After many years of debate the *Lord Howe Island Amendment Act* of 1981 established a Permanent Park Preserve over nearly 70 per cent of the Island and provided for a Plan of Management for the protection of important natural habitats and ecosystems with controls on the orderly development of future settlement and subject to the jurisdiction of the NSW Planning and Environment Act.

As a consequence of this work, Lord Howe Island and adjacent islets were placed on the Register of the National Estate<sup>360</sup> in 1978 in recognition of the area's many outstanding natural features. In December 1982, following nomination by the Federal and NSW Governments, the Lord Howe Island Group was placed on the World Heritage List as a place of outstanding universal value 'because of its

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<sup>360</sup> The Register of the National Estate (RNE) was established by the Whitlam Government in 1975 in response to the recommendations of a report prepared in 1974. It is no longer being maintained.

remarkable volcanic geology, its exceptional range of ecosystems, its rare collection of plants, birds and marine life that demonstrate independent evolution at work, and last, though by no means least, its exceptional natural beauty.'

For scientists, the current scientific challenge is to use the taxonomic research and the historical collections of specimens from Lord Howe Island to understand the relationships of different species within their communities and how best to conserve the island's biodiversity, particularly in respect of threatened species and climate change.

Many Lord Howe Island residents have assisted scientists with their research for over 150 years, acting as collectors and observers in this work. William Nichols supplied The Australian Museum with specimens and sold fossil specimens to other institutions. He also collected botanical specimens which he gave to (Edward) Ned King, who had been engaged as a collector by Charles Moore at the Botanic Gardens in Sydney. T B Wilson's diary records expeditions to blast for strange fish for the museum in Sydney and many scientific staff from the Royal Botanic Gardens and The Australian Museum sent their research staff on collecting and monitoring expeditions. Resident Lord Howe Island naturalist and museum curator, Ian Hutton works closely with Australian and international scientists and institutions to further current research work, particularly in the areas of zoology, botany and geology. For many years, the Lord Howe Island Board supported a scientific research facility with accommodation for researchers on the Island Marine Park.

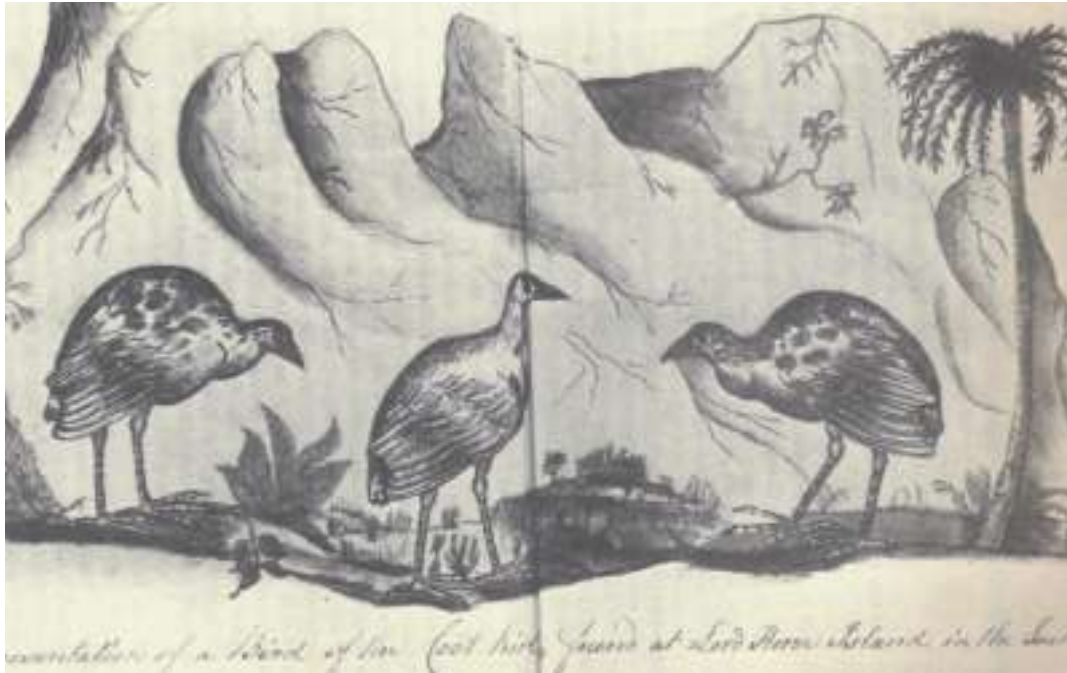
The Lord Howe Island Museum, through its present curator, Ian Hutton, who continues the work of the late Jim Dorman, and a group of dedicated volunteers, plays an important role in the promotion of the scientific values of Lord Howe Island, with a program of lectures, displays, publications and research. The museum disseminates information to visitors and to the local community and supports the island's tourism strategies for the benefit of the natural environment.

Perhaps most significant to the island's survival, the controls arising from the scientific values of the place, which have imposed some restrictions on the cultural traditions and historic heritage of the island, have also given the islanders a role in the collaborative and sensitive management of a tourist industry which is largely based on the understanding, enhancement and promotion of the island's natural values.

### **Ornithology**

In May 1788, Lord Howe Island was visited by a number of homeward-bound ships from the First Fleet and by the *Supply* en route to Norfolk Island. The accounts of crew members on these vessels provide the earliest descriptions of wildlife and in some cases, the only documentation of certain species prior to their extinction. All were struck in particular by the abundance of avian species and they made comparisons with the birds of their English homeland, using familiar common names to describe them – fowl, pigeon, guinea hen, chicken, rail, coote, parrot, gannet, partridge. David Blackburn, master of the *Supply*, writing in July 1788, made this very early observation of Island wildlife in such terms:

*“..on the Shore we caught several sorts of Birds, particularly a Land fowl of a Dusty Brown About the size of a small pullet, a bill 4 inches long and feet like a chicken. Remarkably fat & good, Plenty of Pidgeons, a white fowl – Something like a Guinea hen, with a very strong thick and sharp pointed bill of a Red Colour – stout legs & claws – I believe they are Carniverous...”*<sup>361</sup>



**Figure 81** Representation of a Bird of the Coot Kind found at Lord Howe Island in the South Pacific' from Arthur Bowes Smyth's *A Journal of a Voyage from Portsmouth to New South Wales and China in the Lady Penrhyn 1787-1789*.

What struck these early visitors to the island most, however, was the birds' lack of fear, a consequence of the absence of any previous human intervention or predators. Surgeon Arthur Bowes Smyth observed that:

*“when I was in the woods amongst the birds I cd. not help picturing to myself the Golden Age as described by Ovid”.*

He went on to recount how they were:

*“walking totally fearless & unconcern'd in all aprt around us, so that we had nothing more to do than to stand still a minute or two & knock down as many as we pleas'd wt. a short stick – if you throw'd at them and miss'd them, or even hit them without killing them, they never made the least attempt to fly away”.*

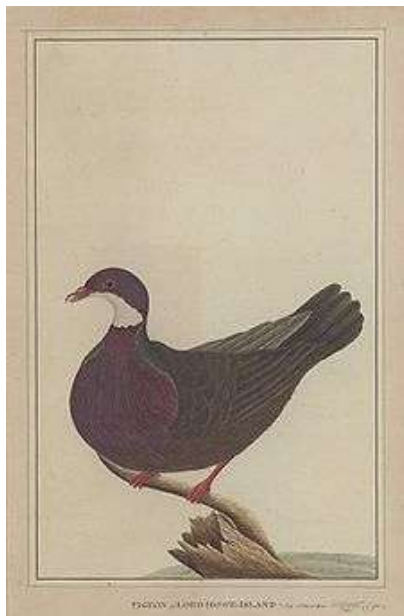
Bowes Smyth seemed surprised that even with such harassment the birds would run a short distance but seem unconcerned, while the 'pidgeons' would sit on the branches and allow the men to carry them away.<sup>362</sup>

<sup>361</sup> Blackburn, D. to Richard Knight, 12 July 1788

<sup>362</sup> Bowes Smyth

By 1853, the White Throated Pigeon, originally named *Raperia godmanae*, now *Columba vitiensis godmanae* was extinct, its numbers decimated by passing sailors and the early settlers. R D Fitzgerald noted in 1869 that “a large pigeon is remembered, but has become extinct.”<sup>363</sup> All that is recorded of this bird are drawings in Captain John Hunter’s compilation of the voyages to Norfolk Island of HMS *Sirius* which called at Lord Howe Island between 1788 and 1790; and illustrations by George Raper (1768?-1797), midshipman on *Sirius*, and now in The British Museum of Natural History, London, who did not visit Lord Howe Island, but may have drawn it either from a description or from a live bird taken back to Sydney.

Although not a professional artist, Raper had the ability to make “a graphic record vivid in its simplicity”<sup>364</sup>. The British Museum (Natural History) holds a volume of 73 drawings signed by Raper of scenes, native implements, birds, flowers, fishes and other subjects. Among these and still valuable to ornithologists is the only known illustration of the now-extinct Lord Howe Island Pigeon,. Many of Raper’s watercolours were painted while he was marooned on Norfolk Island after the *Sirius* was wrecked there on its way to the Cape of Good Hope to secure supplies for the infant colony in New South Wales. It was Raper’s drawing which was used in 1915 by Gregory M. Mathews, to describe the White Throated Pigeon scientifically, and it is the same drawing to which scientists continue to refer today.



**Figure 82 (Left):** White-throated Pigeon (*Columba vitiensis godmanae* George Raper, 1790; **(Right):** Lord Howe Swamphen or White Gallinule (*Porphyrio albus*), Engraving 1789, White Gallinule Opp. p. 273 of: *The voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay* / Arthur Phillip eng Peter Mazell for J Stockdale

<sup>363</sup> Fitzgerald, p.38

<sup>364</sup> Steven 1988, p.48





**Figure 83** (Left): Ground bird, Lord Howe Island [picture] / [John Hunter Hunter, John, 1737-1821 Birds & flowers of New South Wales drawn on the spot in 1788, '89 & '90, nla; (Right): Pigeon, Lord Howe Island [picture] / [John Hunter. Hunter, John, 1737-1821 Birds & flowers of New South Wales drawn on the spot in 1788, '89 & '90, nla

The White Gallinule was another bird to meet extinction at the hands of sailors, whalers and settlers. First described by John White in his *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales* (published 1790), it is thought to have disappeared from Lord Howe Island by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Fortunately, it had been illustrated in White's publication and there are known to be two skins of the bird in existence, in the natural history museums in Liverpool (UK) and Vienna, as well as some sub-fossil bones. Parrots and 'parroquets', which had been recorded on the island in 1788, were considered a pest to agriculture and were exterminated, with little left in the way of documentary evidence.

The journals of early visitors to Lord Howe Island made particular mention of its bird species. Like other remote oceanic islands, the terrestrial vertebrate fauna of the Lord Howe Island group continues to be dominated by birds, - 182 species, of which 20 are resident land birds, 14 are breeding seabirds, 17 are regular visitors and 120 are vagrants. While a number of additional species have colonised the island since human settlement, nine land bird species have become extinct in that time, the most recent being the Lord Howe subspecies of Southern Boobook (*Ninox vaeseelandiae albaria*), the last recorded sighting of which was in the 1950s.

Much of the demise of bird species and other terrestrial fauna on Lord Howe Island in the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be attributed to the predations of the rat (*Rattus rattus*), which invaded the island from the ship *Mokambo* which ran aground in 1918. Rats fed on eggs and young birds, as well as the seeds of many island plants including kentia palms. It did not take long for their considerable impact to be clearly evident. In 1921 the naturalist Alan McCulloch wrote of the speed of species annihilation:

*"Two short years ago the forests of Lord Howe were joyous with the notes of myriads of birds, large and small and of many kinds ... Within two years this*

*paradise of birds has become a wilderness, and the quietness of death reigns where all was melody."*

The bird which has received the most attention in recent years has been the Lord Howe Island Woodhen, *Gallirallus sylvestris*, a small flightless bird endemic to the island. By the late 1970s, their numbers had diminished significantly as a result of loss of habitat and hunting, but also attacks by feral pigs, goats, cats and dogs, all of which had been introduced to the island and had invaded their habitats, and the owls which were introduced to try and eradicate the island's rats. Fewer than thirty woodhens, classified by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as endangered, had survived, confined to the summits of Mount Gower and Mount Lidgbird where they had taken refuge.

The Australian Museum and CSIRO had a significant role to play in determining the ecology of these birds, research carried out under the difficult conditions of living with them on Mt Gower (112 nights in total according to Peter Fullagar ex-CSIRO). Ian Hutton has documented this research in an anniversary book on the subject.

In 1978 ornithologist Dr Ben Miller of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, assisted by the Lord Howe Island Board and the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife, began a detailed study of the Lord Howe Island Woodhen. After two years of research, a captive breeding facility was built in Stevens Reserve at the centre of the island, in a forested area with a plentiful supply of natural foraging food. In 1980, three healthy pairs of woodhen were brought down from Mount Gower by helicopter and settled into the facility, where they began laying eggs within a few weeks of their arrival. The eggs were cared for by both parents, then incubated for the last week before hatching. By the end of the year, fifteen healthy chicks had been hatched in this way.

The second stage of the project began in 1981, when two pairs of the captive-bred birds were released back into the wild in an area under the cliffs of Mount Gower, where surveys had shown this to be the best site for the new woodhen colony. By 1984, with feral pigs and cats removed from the island, a total of 82 birds had successfully been released and had taken up residence across the island.

Since then, the NPWS and the Lord Howe Island Board monitored the numbers of woodhen once or twice a year. They were breeding well, and by 1997, the population had reached over 200, with the birds living in many parts of the island, including residents' back yards. However, the numbers declined in April 2001 to 117 individuals. Further monitoring is being carried out to see if numbers have stabilised. Today there are about 250 birds on the island, which is believed to be the optimum population size<sup>365</sup>.

A Lord Howe Island threatened species recovery team has been set up to help manage threatened species on the island, including the Lord Howe Island woodhen. With the support of the people of Lord Howe Island, the woodhen's future is hopefully secure. The birds show little fear of humans and have been observed by

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<sup>365</sup> NSW National Parks and Wildlife Foundation website, accessed 18 September 2010.



these authors foraging on the summit of Mt Gower, on the beach at Cobbys Corner and amongst the machinery at the island's Waste Recycling Centre.

Lord Howe Island's bird populations are of significant scientific interest to researchers. Eighteen land bird species are known to breed on the island and at least 14 species of seabirds nest on the main island or on the neighbouring offshore islets. The 2009-10 survey of bird populations, recorded colonies of Fleshfooted Shearwater (17,500 pairs), Sooty Tern (21,000 pairs), Providence Petrel (32,000 pairs), Masked Booby (2,670, island-wide, including Balls Pyramid), Red-tailed Tropic Bird, Grey Ternlet, White Tern (500 pairs), Wedge-tailed Shearwater (27,000 pairs), Little Shearwater (1,250 pairs on off-shore islands), Kermadec Petrel, Black-winged Petrel, White-bellied Storm Petrel (110 pairs on Admiralty Islands), Common Noddy and Black Noddy.<sup>366</sup>

Of these, the Providence Petrel, which only occurs on Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island, is listed as Vulnerable under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. This species breeds on the southern mountains of Lord Howe in winter. Sooty terns, also listed as vulnerable under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* occur in large colonies on offshore islets, but substantial numbers breed on the northern hills (including Mt Eliza). A small number breed at Muttonbird Point and at Neds Beach. At these sites in September, the female bird lays one speckled egg on the ground. The sooty tern is the only surface-nesting seabird visitors get to interact with and they are encouraged to avoid nesting sites e.g. on the Mt Eliza track at times when the birds are nesting. Despite the vulnerability of this species, a three-year PhD study by Lisa O'Neill (Charles Sturt University) turned up no evidence of predation by rats on the eggs of sooty terns.

Conservation measures introduced under World Heritage listing and Commonwealth and NSW statutory controls have resulted in increases in bird populations but have had an impact on some of Lord Howe's traditional food gathering customs. For years, the eggs of mutton birds, wide-awakes and other species were collected by islanders for food. Today, this activity carries the risk of prosecution and substantial fines. Birds also interfere with aircraft operations at the island's airport. Colonies of nesting birds on the dunes at Blinky Beach pose a threat of bird strike to aircraft taking off or landing and authorities have recently been forced to install large areas of flag bunting on the dunes in an effort to discourage the birds.

Many visitors to Lord Howe Island who have made the strenuous climb up Mt Gower in the right season for the Providence Petrel will have been amazed by the way these majestic birds will almost drop at their feet when the guide claps his hands. Insights into the breeding biology and ecology were gained through research completed in 2004 by Dr Adam Bester.<sup>367</sup> The Providence Petrel (*Pterodroma solandri*) is listed as Vulnerable under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. It is estimated that the island supports 32,000 breeding pairs<sup>368</sup>. Whilst this may initially appear a huge number, Lord Howe Island and a small island off Norfolk Island support the only known breeding populations in the world. Although they mostly nest atop Mt Gower and Mt Lidgbird, Bester's research suggested that the

<sup>366</sup> Nicholas Carlile, OEH, pers. comm.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

<sup>368</sup> Bird survey 2009-10

increase in lowland breeding sites is linked to the eradication of feral pigs. The Providence Petrel is long lived, probably with a lifespan of about 50 years. Its diet consists largely of squid and fish, and that nocturnal foraging is important component of its feeding strategy. Smaller petrel species, similar to the Black-winged Petrel currently under study, are currently up to 42 years old.



**Figure 84** A providence petrel at the lookout, Mt Gower. (Photo: S. Thompson)

Australian Museum ornithologist, John Disney and Ian Hutton, Curator, Lord Howe Island Museum, are among a number of noted ornithologists who have published scientific papers and books on the birds of the island group.

### **Scientific Study of the Lord Howe Island Flora**

The flora of the Lord Howe Island Group includes 239 native species of vascular plants, of which 113 plants species and 5 plant genera are considered to be endemic to the island. The Lord Howe Island Group has 129 plant genera in common with Australia, 102 with New Caledonia and only 75 in common with New Zealand. This makes the place a very significant botanical resource for scientific research and requires strategies for careful management against threats. While a high proportion of the significant vegetation communities are located in the southern mountains and northern hills, the settled area in the central lowlands is particularly significant for the Sallywood Swamp Forest Endangered Ecological Community.

Much of the information about the native flora and its habitat has been collected scientifically since the 1850s and important herbarium collections and botanical records are preserved in the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, London. The first visitors to undertake botanical investigations travelled to Lord Howe Island on board HMS *Herald* with Captain Henry Mangles Denham who surveyed the island. Assistant Surgeon, J. D. Macdonald's *Remarks on the Natural History and Capabilities of Lord Howe Island* which contained a short general account of the vegetation, were tabled as part of the discussions about the suitability of the island as a penal settlement and J. Macgillivray's *Letters from a Naturalist* on HMS *Herald* were published in *Kew Journal of Botany* in 1854. The vascular plants collected on that voyage were included in *Flora Australiensis: a description of the plants of the Australian Territory*, the seven-volume flora of Australia published between 1863 and 1878 by George Bentham, with the assistance of Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, the eminent 19<sup>th</sup> century taxonomic botanist. This work was one of the famous Kew series of colonial floras, and the first flora of any large continental area that had ever been finished and was a standard reference work on the Australian flora for more than a century.

Charles Moore, Director of the Botanic Gardens, Sydney travelled to Lord Howe Island on board the Government steamer, *Thetis* in 1869 with his assistant, W Carron and surveyor botanist R D Fitzgerald. In his report Moore noted that:

*“taken as a whole the plants are perhaps more nearly allied to those of Norfolk Island than of any other country”.*

In 1871 Moore published *Remarks on the Botany of Lord Howe Island* and a table of the genera of plants he found, with remarks on their geographical relationships. Together with observations by his successor, J H Maiden, particularly in the documentation of introduced species and their origins, these works provide a significant scientific resource. Moore subsequently engaged islander Edward ‘Ned’ King as a collector of specimens for the Gardens and many of the plants sent by King remain in the Royal Botanic Gardens’ herbarium collection today. In 1882, Moore did express concern however, that the tree-ferns formerly found along the creeks on the lowland and at the foot of the mountains were “nearly extinct, their disappearance being doubtless caused by plant collectors procuring the plants most accessible”; and that the tree ferns endemic to Mount Gower “would probably share the same fate as those on the low land if their removal is not absolutely prohibited”.<sup>369</sup>

Another significant collection of specimens, this time of ferns, was made by Fullager and Lind, collectors in the pay of Baron von Mueller, who visited Lord Howe during the Eclipse Expedition to the Claremont Islands in the Great Barrier Reef to view an eclipse of the sun on 12 December 1871.

In August 1887, a scientific expedition party including Thomas Whitelegge and Robert Etheridge was dispatched from the Australian Museum, producing further accounts of the vegetation with specific observations about *Ficus* and the four species of palms found on the island. The most complete 19<sup>th</sup> century account of the plants of Lord Howe Island is considered to be the work of W B Hemsley, an assistant at the Herbarium at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. His work includes a comprehensive list of the species, giving references and distribution, and a discussion on the origin of the flora.

During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Dr John Pickard from Sydney’s Royal Botanic Gardens made regular visits to the island and published numerous articles on his taxonomic research of island plant species. In 1999 a prefabricated fibreglass dome called an Igloo Satellite Cabin was placed on Mt Gower and was colloquially known as the “Mt Gower Hilton”. It was installed to provide a dry environment for sensitive electronic tracking and recording equipment.

In 2005, a team of international scientists working with Drs Bill Baker and Vincent Savolainen at Kew Gardens and local authority, Ian Hutton, published significant research on the sympatric speciation (divergence without geographical isolation) apparent in Kentia Palm (*Howea forsteriana*) and Curly Palm (*Howea belmoreana*) on Lord Howe Island. On the island they carefully monitored the flowering seasons of the palm species, while in the laboratories at Kew they produced one of the most

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<sup>369</sup> Wilson 1882 p.28

comprehensive DNA-based genetic models of the family trees of palms. The origin of species diversity has challenged biologists for over two centuries and while speciation, species divergence resulting from geographical isolation, is well documented, divergence without geographical isolation, is highly controversial. Their study shows that the two species of palm diverged from one another well after the island was formed. This finding is significant in the continuing study of the origin of species and as a new marker for exploring plant and animal evolution on oceanic islands.

In 2009-10, the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney collected 47 specimens of endemic flora to add to the NSW Seedbank and the UK Millennium Seedbank and seeds of 15 species of rainforest flora were collected for assessment of their desiccation tolerance in the Rainforest Seed Project. Concurrent with this work is continuing botanical research in respect of threatened species.

### **Weed Control**

An important recommendation arising from the environmental studies of the 1970s was the need to control the invasion of weed species across the island. Many plants were introduced to the island during the 19<sup>th</sup> century to test their suitability for food production, fodder, timber, etc. As in many other parts of Australia, these plants were introduced with the best of intentions by people who probably could not at the time foresee the damage they might eventually cause to the island's fragile natural environment. Other species have most likely been introduced accidentally in cargo, on imported animals or by unsuspecting visitors.

In 2002 a weed density mapping study<sup>370</sup> of Lord Howe Island found that weeds had penetrated into the southern mountains, an area recognised as one of the island's significant biodiversity 'hot spots'. The study found that introduced plants outnumbered natives, with over 271 exotic species defined as weeds and a further 400 species found in cultivation. At least 18 exotic species were listed as noxious or environmental weeds, many of which had escaped into natural areas of the island, largely through bird and wind dispersal.

Weeds pose a major threat to the environmental values of the Lord Howe Island Group because they can threaten all native vegetation communities across the group and some species, particularly those with a high environmental tolerance, can invade intact communities and inhibit native recruitment, thereby changing the characteristics of ecosystems.

An important community response to the weed problem was the formation in 1994 of 'The Friends of Lord Howe Island', to assist the Lord Howe Island Board in its weed control program at key target sites. The Friends include island and mainland volunteers who provide support and manpower by organising five annual visits in which people pay to come for a holiday, and contribute 3 hours of their time each morning to assist with weed control. Each group is offered a program of specialist eco-tours tour each day to enhance their understanding of the island's unique biodiversity. The Board commenced a statistical count in November 2004 and by December 2006 the tally of removed weeds stood at 1,006,596 comprising Cherry

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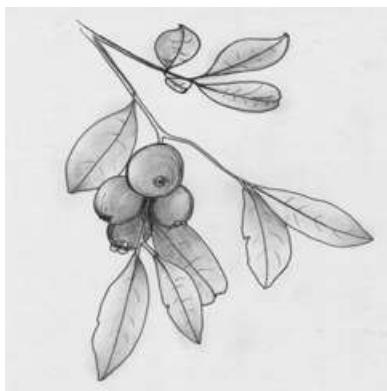
<sup>370</sup> Weed study reference and author

Guava (442,733), Ochna (304,235), Ground Asparagus (163,127), Pittosporum (33,023), Cotoneaster (18,916), Bitou bush (1,530).



**Figure 85** Friends of Lord Howe Island controlling Climbing Asparagus (*Asparagus plumosus*) infestation at Transit Hill. (Photo: Ian Hutton in *Restoring Lord Howe Island's Ecosystem*, accessed at <http://www.lordhoweisland.info/library>)

Another major weed control project has been the ongoing removal of *Psidium cattleianum* (Cherry Guava) within the Permanent Park Preserve and from surrounding lands<sup>371</sup>. Cherry guava trees were popular as these provided a good source of fruit for jams etc. This species however aggressively invaded parts of the island well beyond residents' gardens. For example, in 2003, 25 Cherry Guava plants were removed from below Eddies Cave on the slopes of Mt Gower and since 2004 over 600,000 plants of this species have been removed from the island. Cherry guava is recognised as a major environmental weed in other oceanic islands, such as Hawaii where a range of control methods have been employed. To assist rehabilitating weed infested sites, the Lord Howe Island Board adopted a vegetation and rehabilitation plan. This plan gave a focussed direction by identifying priority areas and allocating resources as required. An example of this was the 2003 plantings undertaken around the creek lines near the Old Settlement area, and at Cobby's Creek. Species planted included *Lagunaria patersonia* (Sallywood), *Pandanus forsteri* (Forked Tree), and *Hibiscus tilaceus* (Cottonwood). These species represented the Sallywood Swamp Forest community, recognised as a rare plant community on the island.



**Figure 86** *Psidium cattleianum* (Cherry Guava) escaped from islander gardens and at first invaded disturbed areas but then began to invade healthy bushland aggressively around the island and had to be controlled. Its cultivation on the island is now banned. (Illustration: LHIB)

In 2004 Lord Howe Island Board officer, Jenny Le Cussan travelled to Raoul Island in the south west Pacific Ocean to assess how cherry guava was managed on that

<sup>371</sup> *EnviroNews* Vol.1, Issue 1, Summer 2003, p.1

island<sup>372</sup>. As with a large number of other Pacific islands cherry guava had become a serious environmental weed on Raoul. As part of her study Jenny also travelled to the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean and to Hawaii. Cherry guava is rated as one of the worst environmental and agricultural weeds on Pacific and Indian Ocean islands. Jenny's study was supported through funding from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia.

### Terrestrial Zoology

The early observations of the zoology of Lord Howe Island by sailors and naturalists form the basis of important scientific documentation of the land and marine life, with comprehensive accounts made by some of the scientists travelling with the scientific expeditions already mentioned. Scientific research has long been a significant activity on the island, with the first known collection of Lord Howe zoological specimens made by the naturalists aboard HMS *Herald* in 1853. The ship's surgeon, John Denis Macdonald, wrote papers on zoology for the Australian Museum, and curator Robert Etheridge, a member of the Museum's 1887 expedition compiled an important report on "The General Zoology of Lord Howe Island," based on his findings.<sup>373</sup>

Of the indigenous terrestrial vertebrate fauna of the Lord Howe Island Group, there are known to be two species of reptile and two species of bats, and there are more than 1,600 terrestrial invertebrate species, including 157 land and freshwater molluscs (including six species of land snail common throughout the settlement and adjacent forested areas); 464 beetles; 27 ants; 183 spiders; 21 earthworms; 137 butterflies and moths; and 71 springtails. *Parorchestia gowerensis* (Amphipoda: Talitridae), a new species of terrestrial amphipod, was described in 1976 from the summit of Mt. Gower<sup>374</sup>.

### The Lord Howe Island Phasmid

Although once abundant on the main island, the Lord Howe Island Phasmid now only survives in the wild on the isolated rock stack Balls Pyramid. Arthur Mills Lea, an entomologist with the South Australian Museum, who visited Lord Howe Island between 1915-1916, recorded his observations of what is today considered to be among the rarest insects and possibly also the rarest invertebrate in the world.

*"One of the most remarkable species of insects that I obtained during a recent (December, 1915, and January, 1916) visit to Lord Howe Island is a large wingless phasma, Karabidion (formerly Eurycantha) australe, Montr. It appears to have been taken by almost every natural history visitor to the island, and, in fact, once their hiding-places are known, specimens may be taken in practically unlimited numbers. During the day they remain concealed in hollows in upright or slightly sloping stems of living trees, but their presence may be detected by examining the ground at the foot of the trees, where heaps of their excrement,*

<sup>372</sup> *EnviroNews* Vol.2, Issue 1, p.1

<sup>373</sup> Etheridge, R. The general zoology of Lord Howe Island; containing also an account of the collections made by the Australian Museum Collecting Party, Aug.–Sept., 1887 *Australian Museum Memoir*, 1889, Vol 2, No 1: 1-42

<sup>374</sup> Bousfield, E L 1976. A new terrestrial amphipod from Lord Howe Island. *Records of the Australian Museum* 30(6): 118–122.



*sometimes amounting to bushels, may be found. The hollows are seldom less than eighteen inches in length, and are sometimes much longer; suitable ones are probably used for years. On examining the heaps of droppings, frequently both fresh and newly-hatched eggs may be found, the females apparently simply extruding their eggs as soon as these are ready*".<sup>375</sup>

This flightless stick insect or 'land lobster' as many islanders call it, now known by the scientific name *Dryococelus australis*, is believed to have been exterminated on the main island by rats in the 1920s, after the accidental introduction of the rodents in 1918. In 1964 adventurers, including Dick Smith, climbing Balls Pyramid captured photographs of newly dead specimens of the Lord Howe Island Phasmid, causing a buzz of excitement that perhaps the species was not extinct. In February 2001, a team of researchers, coordinated by Dr David Priddel, Senior Research Scientist, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service discovered a small population (two adults and one nymph (all females) feeding on an endemic tea-tree (*Melaleuca howeana*) on a precipitous rock ledge 65 metres above sea level on Balls Pyramid. A subsequent survey, in 2002, located a total of 24 specimens and a captive-breeding program for this species was established by the Lord Howe Island Board in collaboration with Melbourne Zoo and Insektus. Stick insects have generally adopted a particular survival strategy whereby eggs may lay dormant for months before hatching.

The Lord Howe Island Phasmid is currently listed as Critically Endangered on the ICUN Red List. The captive breeding program is continuing and release of the phasmids back into the wild on the main island will depend on the success of the rodent eradication campaign. Ongoing research on the species includes molecular studies into the genetic variations between the populations on Balls Pyramid and Lord Howe Island and development of theories on how the insects reached Balls Pyramid.



**Figure 87** Male Lord Howe Island Phasmid. (Illustration: © CSIRO)

<sup>375</sup> A M Lea 1916, "Notes on the Lord Howe Island Phasma, and on an associated Longicorn Beetle", *Trans. Roy. Soc. South Aust.* 40: 145-147

### Lord Howe Island *Placostylus* captive breeding project

In 2004 the Lord Howe Island Board and the Lord Howe Island School established a captive breeding enclosure for the Lord Howe *Placostylus* (*Placostylus bivaricosus*).<sup>376</sup> The enclosure was located at the school and the students were involved in a captive breeding program through which they were able to learn more about *Placostylus* ecology, and how they could assist the survival of this endangered species. This project was funded with assistance from the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife.



**Figure 88** Students at Lord Howe Island Central School put their hands up to help save the *Placostylus*. (Photo: LHI Board)

### Stag beetle seizure!

In December 2002, about 1,000 specimens of the Lord Howe Island stag beetle *Lamprima insularis* were seized by Australian Customs at Sydney Airport. This species of beetle is only found on Lord Howe Island, and is noted for its iridescent green colour. The beetles were destined for the live pet trade in Japan. This incident highlighted the need to make visitors aware that taking plant and animal species off the island without appropriate authorisation is not only illegal, but, more importantly can threaten the long term survival of the island's unique flora and fauna.



**Figure 89** The Lord Howe Island stag beetle (*Lamprima insularis*) is highly sought by collectors of weird pets in Japan. (Photo: LHIB)

### Not all cockroaches are undesirable

In 2002 the NSW Scientific Committee, established under the Threatened Species Conservation Act (TSC) made a preliminary proposal to list the endemic Lord Howe Island wood-feeding cockroach (*Panesthia lata*) as an endangered species<sup>377</sup>. This species is now extinct on Lord Howe Island, but can still be found on Roach Island. It is thought that rats probably caused the extinction of this species on Lord Howe Island. Losing another species (even if it's a cockroach!) from the islands would

<sup>376</sup> *EnviroNews* Vol.2, Issue 1, P.2

<sup>377</sup> *EnviroNews* Vol.1, Issue 1, Summer 2003, p.2



represent a further loss in biodiversity which could not be accepted. Listing under the TSC Act triggers recovery measures such as a threat abatement plan.

### **The Lord Howe Island Skink**

Another species subject to current scientific research is the Lord Howe Island Skink *Cyclodina lichenigera* (formerly *Pseudemoia lichenigera*), only found on Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island. On the Lord Howe Island Group, it is found on offshore islands including Blackburn Island, Balls Pyramid and Roach Island and less commonly on the main island. This medium sized lizard is listed as vulnerable under Commonwealth and NSW legislation, subject to a variety of threats including current and potential predation by introduced rodents, the potential introduction of non-native invertebrates (e.g. Fire Ant / Crazy Ant), possible competition for food resources with the introduced Grass Skink and habitat disturbance through weed invasion, trampling and clearing. The current program includes population studies involving the laying of free-fall trap lines in areas of likely habitat

### **Pest Eradication Programs**

The largest impact on the unique biodiversity of the island has come with human settlement, which has been responsible for the extinction of species through hunting; the destruction of native habitats through clearing and grazing; the introduction of invasive plant species and livestock; the spread of feral populations of pigs, goats, dogs and cats (now eliminated); and the continuing predations of the introduced House Mouse (*Mus musculus*) and Ship Rat (*Rattus rattus*).

### **Feral Goat Control**

Goats were introduced to Lord Howe Island early as a source of meat and milk. At times these sure-footed beasts were even used to carry loads of kentia palm seeds down from difficult parts of the island. However, goats escaped from captivity into the bush and their ability to cope with the island's steep topography made them difficult to locate and control.

Feral goats not only graze on a wide variety of plants but they disturb natural areas and can carry weed seeds and potential plant pathogens into those areas. They were controlled by shooting on an opportunistic basis until 1999 when a feral goat eradication program was initiated. This produced good results – in less than two months over 300 goats were shot from a helicopter platform or tracked down using species detector dogs and ground shooters. Several goats were known to survive and a specific locating program was initiated. By the summer of 2003 there had been no recent sightings other than of two 'Judas' goats that were released with radio tracking collars. The aim of releasing Judas goats was that these animals would link up with other goats (if any) and combined with the tracking collar, would enable Lord Howe Island Board staff to locate any additional animals. It is estimated that three female feral goats survived the eradication program, as evidenced by fresh droppings still regularly found in the Goathouse cave. However, as these females have no capacity to breed, and their foraging ground comprises the dangerously steep and inaccessible cliffs around the summit of Mt Lidgbird, they have been left to die out from natural causes<sup>378</sup>.

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<sup>378</sup> Chris Murray, pers.comm.

## Rodent Control and Eradication

Control of feral species is reduction of numbers to 'acceptable levels' whereas eradication is the complete removal of a species.

In 2002 the Australian Museum commenced a project monitoring the impact of rodents on invertebrates such as insects, plant material and seed<sup>379</sup>. This project used a combination of rodent-excluding fenced areas and non-fenced areas. Understanding rodent impact on plant matter, and particularly seed material has obvious implications for managing the kentia palm industry. The fenced enclosures were near the golf course and in the vicinity of Soldiers Creek.

Rat control has been a major activity for the Board, with significant effort going into baiting four times a year. Baiting aims to protect known threatened species habitat and palm seed areas from rat damage. Recent research proposals have investigated the feasibility and cost/benefit and risk associated with implementing an intensive island wide evaluation program. The proposed method of control would be to use a combination of ground based bait stations, and aerial dropped baits throughout the more inaccessible areas. Similar eradication programs have been carried out successfully on 300 other islands, including all other off-shore islands In NSW<sup>380</sup> and many around New Zealand. New technologies such as genetically modified rat and mice specific baits are also being investigated.

In addition to threatened species research, including that on the Lord Howe Island Currawong commissioned by the LHIB, the scientific evaluation of the proposed Rodent Eradication Program has included trial baitings and rodent density studies. The unique ecosystem on the island is also an important reference for scientific research into the possible re-introduction of some species now extinct on the main island and into the proposed eradication of invasive species. These topics remain the subject of vigorous debate between island residents and scientists.<sup>381</sup>

## Marine Zoology

The waters around Lord Howe Island contain tropical, subtropical and temperate marine fauna and flora, many of which are endemic to the Lord Howe Island area. The island's coral reefs are the most southerly in the world, their establishment at Lord Howe's latitude enabled by the warm waters of the East Australian Current.

The first fish specimens to be collected for scientific study were taken on board HMS *Herald* in 1853 and deposited with the Australian Museum. Since the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, valuable research on Lord Howe Island fish species has been undertaken by noted Australian ichthyologists, including Alan Riverstone McCulloch (1885-1925)<sup>382</sup> and Gerald Percy Whitley (1903-1975)<sup>383</sup> and. The former, a self-taught naturalist, made numerous collecting trips to the island and is commemorated in the

<sup>379</sup> *EnviroNews* Vol.1, Issue 1, p.3

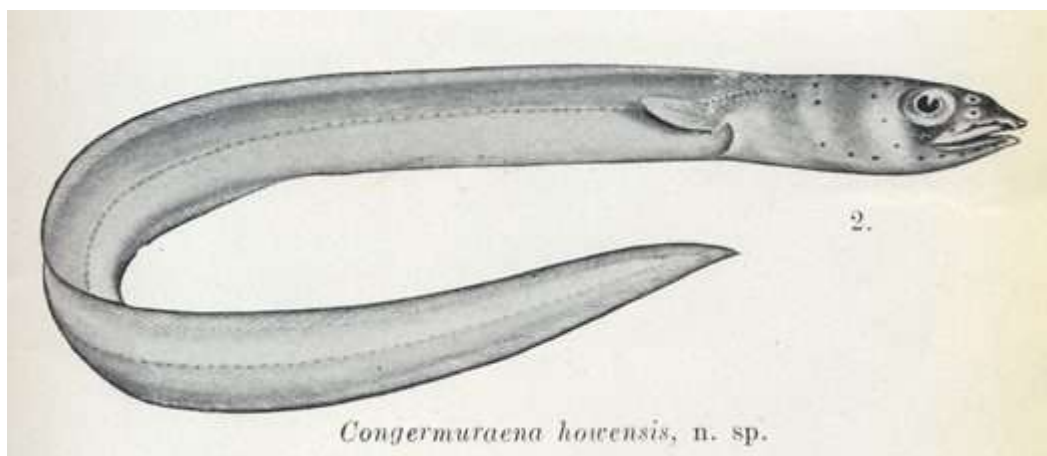
<sup>380</sup> Priddel et al., 2010

<sup>381</sup> LHI DECC Biodiversity Management Plan Sydney October 2007

<sup>382</sup> G. P. Walsh, 'McCulloch, Allan Riverstone (1885 - 1925)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 10, Melbourne University Press, 1986, pp 244-245.

<sup>383</sup> Maree Murray, John Roach, 'Whitley, Gilbert Percy (1903 - 1975)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 16, Melbourne University Press, 2002, pp 542-543.

naming of several species after him and by a memorial obelisk at Signal Point. Whitley succeeded McCulloch as ichthyologist and later as Curator of Fishes at the Australian museum. Other scientists who have made major contributions to the study of the island's fish include T Iredale, J. Paxton, J. Veron, T. Done and N. Coleman. Neville Coleman's colour photographic guide to the marine life of Lord Howe provides divers, snorkelers and those exploring the reef and intertidal areas with a valuable reference.



**Figure 90** Lord Howe Conger (*Ariosoma howensis*), illustrated by Alan McCulloch © Australian Museum.

Many of the marine species endemic to Lord Howe Island have been identified and named by prominent scientists and many type collections and scientific illustrations are preserved in the Australian Museum in Sydney, including McCulloch's illustration of *Congermuraena howensis* from the original description<sup>384</sup> (see Figure 9 above).

Scientists currently estimate that more than 1,500 species of snails and shellfish are likely to occur in the Lord Howe Island Marine Park, with at least 70 species of crustaceans and 110 species of marine invertebrates. They have identified 86 species of hard corals, 318 species of marine algae and more than 500 species of fish, including 16 endemic reef fish. The most commonly seen of these are McCulloch's anemone fish, three-striped butterfly fish, double-header wrasse and the Lord Howe butterfly fish. Other species include 4 species of turtle, 12 species of sharks (the most common being the Galapagos whaler shark) and rays, bottlenose dolphins, with seasonal visits by humpback whales and occasional visits by seals and sea lions. To protect this rich marine habitat, a State Marine Park was declared in 1998 and a Commonwealth Marine Park in 1999. The area remains of significant importance to scientists for taxonomic, ecological, biodiversity and threatened species research. A major monitoring project currently underway is a study by scientists from Charles Sturt University and the National Marine Science Centre into coral bleaching.

<sup>384</sup> McCulloch, A.R. & Waite, E.R. 1916, "Additions to the fish-fauna of Lord Howe Island No. 5", *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia*. 40: 437-451.

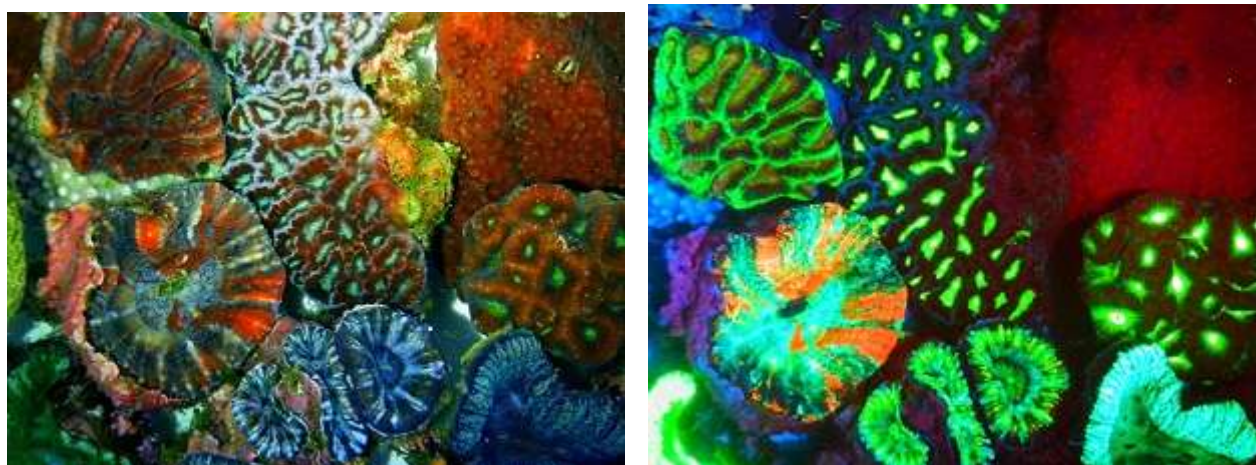
### Fluorescent Coral with potential for cancer research

Researchers monitoring the recovery of bleached coral at Lord Howe Island Marine Park have discovered a highly fluorescent coral community that will now be used in cancer research. Park manager Ian Kerr said<sup>385</sup> it was an example of why biodiversity should be protected not only on land but also in the ocean.

“Often cures are found in nature – this coral community will now be used by researchers from the University of Western Sydney who are collaborating with cancer research specialists overseas. This rare fluorescent community could also be in the Solitary Islands Marine Park and Cape Byron Marine Park as both parks have coral reefs similar to those in the marine park at Lord Howe Island. It’s a strong illustration of why we have marine protected areas”, he said.

University of Western Sydney scientist, Dr Anya Salih said the corals had been found in underwater reefs at the base of the sheer cliffs that rise up at the northern end of the World Heritage island. “It’s an incredible find, at a relatively shallow depth of about 15 metres - an amazing community of highly fluorescent corals.” “The site is extraordinary. Most commonly the highly red fluorescent corals are found deeper or inside reef overhangs and even then are never so abundant. The underwater buttresses and caverns are densely inhabited by hundreds of corals, all deeply pigmented by the most intense green, blue and many with red fluorescence,” she said.

*“In some corals these pigments are vibrantly strong and form beautiful patterns that can be visible in daylight and are also spectacularly revealed when illuminated by blue-light torches at night-time.”*



**Figure 91** Fluorescent corals photographed in the waters of Lord Howe Island Marine Park, showing appearance in daylight (left) and at night when illuminated by blue-light (right). (Photos: Lord Howe Island Marine Park Authority)

*“The shimmering red, green, yellow and blue corals we found occur at a higher density and at a shallower depth, than other similar coral communities we’ve discovered elsewhere. This type of coral has only been documented on deeper reefs in other parts of the world.”*

<sup>385</sup> Lord Howe Island Marine Park Authority news release 11 August 2010

Dr Salih said coral specimens from the marine park would now be tested in her lab for new types of fluorescent labels that under special laser microscopes would be used to follow individual molecules to decipher what happens inside living healthy or cancerous cells.

“We are using these pigments to light up the workings of living cells and to study what goes wrong in cancer cells.” Dr Salih is collaborating with Professor Robert Hoffman of the University of California and CEO of AntiCancer Inc. in San Diego to develop new fluorescent labels from corals. She said the aim is to show how cancer cells differ from normal cells and the effectiveness of anti cancer drugs. “Coral fluorescence is not only proving to be incredibly important in the biology of coral reefs and their ability to survive stressful conditions but these fluorescent molecules are transforming cell science and biomedical research,” she said. “We need to protect marine ecosystems for environmental and social reasons, but also importantly for science,” she said.

Other significant research currently underway include studies relating to longhorn turtles, coral bleaching, life history and ecological studies of the Bluefish and East Australian Garfish.

### **Geology and Palaeontology**

The voyage of HMS *Herald* in 1853 was also the opportunity for the first survey of the geological attributes of the Lord Howe Island, although its topographical features had previously been documented by earlier visitors to the island. John Denis Macdonald (1853) found the island to be ‘full on (geological) interest, though involved in much difficulty’<sup>386</sup>, but he described the general distribution of key features including the volcanic projections, stratification, dykes, coarse and coralline sands. A geological account with map was prepared in 1882 by Henry Wilkinson.

Foulis (1851) and Macdonald (1853) had mentioned the existence of fossils, the latter also noting madrepores<sup>387</sup>. E P Ramsay, a curator at the Australian Museum determined the fossils ‘to be remains of turtles’. It was the identification of these fossils which would put Lord Howe Island on the international paleontological map and provide material for continuing and extensive research.

The fossils were evidence of *Meiolaniid*, or horned turtles, an extinct family of Pleistocene megafauna - land-dwelling animals that evolved during the time of the dinosaurs in Gondwana. They have been discovered in Australia, the Pacific region and Argentina and are distinguished by massive armoured shells and heads that feature multiple horns, thus preventing cranial retraction. William Nichols, who settled in the Old Settlement area of the Island where there was one of the largest deposits of fossil evidence, acted as a collector for the Australian Museum and sold a large quantity of material to them for scientific research. Further specimens were collected from calcarenite beach deposits behind Neds Beach (type locality, believed to have been formed during the last interglacial period, around 130,000 years BP, when sea levels were roughly the same as they are today) and in the vicinity of the

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<sup>386</sup> McDonald, J. p. 13-14

<sup>387</sup> The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* defines madrepora as “formerly any perforate coral, now usually, a polypidom of the genus *Madrepora* or family *Madreporidae*, also the animal producing this.”

former Trader Nick's guest lodge. Excavations for the swimming pool at Ocean View revealed the most comprehensive skeleton found to date and this was subsequently used in a display reconstruction at the American Museum of Natural History in New York in 1980. Some specimens are also on public display at the Lord Howe Island Historical Museum.



**Figure 92** Skull of the Horned Tortoise, *Meiolania platyceps*, from Lord Howe Island - the 'hole in the head skull'. S Humphreys Rights: © Australian Museum

Due to its unique seamount characteristics, geographic location, distance from the mainland and relatively limited impacts from fishing, the species and habitats of the marine environs of Lord Howe Island provide an exceptional opportunity for oceanographic and marine scientific research. A research voyage on RV *Franklin* in 1998 indicated that there is a Pleistocene fossil reef on the mid-shelf around most of Lord Howe Island which is the subject of continuing research by Geoscience Australia into the geological origins of Lord Howe Island and Balls Pyramid. Stratigraphical and sedimentological research and seismic surveying for geoscientific purposes to better understand the linkage between near geologic structure and benthic processes is also an important area of research in this region.<sup>388</sup>

Prior to the devastating earthquake off the west coast of Sumatra in Indonesia in 2004, Australia's tsunami monitoring had been conducted on an informal basis by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, Geoscience Australia and Emergency Management Australia. In order to be better prepared, the Australian Government upgraded its earthquake monitoring systems, including the establishment of stations around the Indian and Pacific Ocean coastlines linked to mainland computer modelling technology and a sea-floor monitoring network. As part of this preparedness plan, a tsunami monitoring station was established on Lord Howe Island in 2007. Located on Malabar, the equipment which feeds information direct to Canberra consists of sensors located below ground on basalt bedrock which are calibrated to detect sensitive wave vibrations which might indicate seismic activity and send information direct to Canberra 24 hours a day. Since then, Lord Howe Island has been on tsunami alert on two occasions, in July 2009 and February 2010, requiring evacuation of the human population to higher ground, but thankfully

<sup>388</sup> Lord Howe Island Marine Park Plan accessed at <http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mpa/publications/pubs/lordhowe-plan.pdf>



passing without incident. However, the value of the information for monitoring purposes and scientific research is significant.

### **Meteorology**

Dr Foulis (1851) made some of the earliest climatic observations about Lord Howe Island. Having resided there for a period of time, he was witness to the seasonal variations. He recalled that it was rare for the Island to be without rain for more than a month, and that the rainy season coincided with mainland winter months. Because the variation in wind speed and direction affected access to the Island for ships, Foulis thought it useful to note that northerly and north-easterly gales prevailed during winter while between September and February the southerly and south-easterly winds are almost constant, offering the best access 'into the harbour' for vessels. According to Foulis, summer temperatures rarely exceeded 80F. Concluding, he claimed that "I am of the opinion that owing to this great equality of temperature it would be difficult to find a more healthy spot for European constitutions".<sup>389</sup> Lord Howe Island's climate is influenced by the warm maritime currents flowing south from .....waters, and popular published literature suggests that there are two seasons 'warm summer two seasons – one, a warm summer (Nov - Apr) with daytime temperatures around 25-28°C, the other, a cool season (May - Sept) with daytime temperatures of between 18 and 22 degrees. TB Wilson's diary includes a daily record of weather conditions on the Island between 1878 to 1896, which, when assessed with his agricultural notations, offers a fascinating account of the annual seasonal growing patterns. The collection of rainfall data which has been measured on the Island since a resident Mr Langley began recordings in 1886 and climatological observations since 1887. Island residents continued Stevens' work T B Wilson 1894-1908; Edith Kirby 1908-1923; Charles Retmock 1923-1939; J Mason 1931-1935 until 1936, when the Bureau of Meteorology took on the responsibility and established an office on the Island to work collaboratively with the Department of Civil Aviation and sharing facilities.

The systematic observation of weather movements and the collection of meteorological data would become critical to air and sea traffic. Being able to transmit information about weather conditions meant that the Island could assist shipping and aircraft movements in the area, which was particularly useful in World War II. Following the introduction of the flying boat service in 1947, the role of weather forecasters and record keepers had increased sufficiently for the NSW government to erect a dedicated meteorological station on the Island. The original site was in a building near the Flying Boat Base, now the Information Office, with a balloon enclosure near the jetty. In 1955, a new station was built on the ridge above Middle Beach on the eastern side of the island with radar facilities and three residences built off Anderson Road for staff. In 1987, a decision was made to demolish that station and relocate to a new site adjacent to the airport. This move acknowledged the important role that Lord Howe Island's weather observations now had for aircraft movements across the Pacific Ocean. The station, which opened on 18 November 1988 and is identified as Lord Howe Island Aero Station 200839, is manned between 21-24 hours a day by a resident meteorologist employed by the Bureau of Meteorology. Four times daily, a hydrogen-filled weather balloon is released and its distance and bearing tracked by satellite to calculate upper air wind-

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<sup>389</sup> Foulis, J. p.6

speed and direction, while upper air temperature, pressure and humidity is checked 2-3 times daily. Lord Howe Island's weather is published daily on the internet by the Bureau of Meteorology and in 2010, the evening weather report on ABC TV added Lord Howe Island to its daily report and forecast of temperature and rainfall.



**Figure 93** Meteorological station on Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Bureau of Meteorology)

### **Astronomy**

In 1882, William Jacomb Conder, the Superintendent of Trigonometrical Survey was sent to Lord Howe Island with The Hon J B Wilson to investigate the suitability of sites on the Island for the observation of the transit of Venus later that year and the advisability of sending an observing party to the Island to watch and record the event. The transit of Venus in 1769 had been observed in Tahiti by the scientists on James Cook's First Voyage to the Pacific and in 1874, the NSW Government Astronomer, Henry Chamberlain Russell made a scientific observation of the transit of Venus in various locations around New South Wales. The next one was due to occur in early December 1882. Russell was interested in sending an observation party to Lord Howe Island not simply to view the event, but to increase the possibilities of recording it should the views at other stations be obscured by cloud. As part of his research, Conder's task was to investigate possible sites for viewing the event, assess the practical aspects of conveying the astronomical equipment to a suitable location and to consult the residents about climate and other attributes which might affect the viewing opportunities.

During his visit, Conder also made a series of astronomical observations for latitude and longitude with "an eight-inch theodolite and two chronometers belonging to and rated at the Sydney Observatory" and was pleased that the results matched the Admiralty chart which Captain Henry Denham had prepared in 1835. Conder mentions that he marked the point of his observations with an iron spike 12 in by  $\frac{3}{4}$  in, driven in an inch below the surface of the ground with such references that it will be easily found in any future time and I have connected it by traverse to a surveyed portion".<sup>390</sup>

<sup>390</sup> Conder, W in Wilson, J. p 24



Conder identified a hill in the centre of the Island, known as Mount Look-out as being suitable place at which to observe the transit. Its height at 400 feet afforded an uninterrupted view to the north and south and it was the view of older residents that they could expect clear viewing weather during summer months. Access was easy and the instruments could be set up quite close to the summit.<sup>391</sup>

Accordingly, Henry Russell, Director of the Sydney Observatory, sent a party of observers to the Island, from the New South Wales Department of Lands including Conder, Superintendent of trigonometrical surveys, Philip Francis Adams, surveyor-general and keen amateur astronomer, Thomas Frederick Furber, draftsman-in-charge, and David Miller, clerk to the Surveyor General, along with Timothy Coghlan, draftsman of the Department of Public Works. They arrived on November 24 on the SS *Thetis* in plenty of time to set up their instruments. T B Wilson records in his diary that the party pitched their camp at the back of Tom Nichol's property and Nathan Thompson, Wilson and bullocks dragged two loads of equipment to the top of Mount Look-out. The following day (November 25) a second bullock and 3 additional men spent all day getting the Transit party's instruments to the summit and residents assisted the party during their stay, supplying them with water. On December 8 Wilson records that the Transit party 'was only successful in getting 2 observations – too cloudy'. However, despite the disappointment, Lord Howe Island fared better than other Australian stations where poor weather and cloud obscured the skies and no observations could be recorded. The Transit party and their equipment returned to Sydney on board the government steamer *Ajax*, leaving Lord Howe Island on December 20. All that they left behind were the concrete plinths on which they had steadied their delicate scientific instruments including their Grubb and a Schroeder telescopes. Locals mistakenly thought the scientists had buried a time capsule and were disappointed in digging them up in 1992 to find there was nothing below!

Mount Look-out was later renamed Transit Hill and is marked today by a large viewing tower, 126 metres above sea level and two bronze plaques, one commemorating the exact location (with latitude and longitude co-ordinates) from which the observation party viewed the Transit of Venus in 1882, the other marking the burial of a time capsule containing items contributed by the community on the centenary of that occasion in 1992. The next Transit of Venus will occur on June 5-6, 2012 and will be visible across the Pacific Ocean. No doubt, astronomers will converge on Lord Howe Island for the purpose of observing its progress.



**Figure 94** Concrete plinth with plaques to mark the site on Transit Hill where scientists viewed the transit of Venus in 1882. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge, 2 December 2009).

<sup>391</sup> Ibid p.23

## Archaeology

Historical archaeological investigations of Lord Howe Island have previously been limited to anthropological assessments in the context of south-western Pacific Ocean settlement with reference to colonisation of New Zealand and Norfolk Island. In 2004, Kimberley Owens commenced one of the very few studies of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century cultural history of Lord Howe Island. Her investigations included historical research and detailed archaeological investigations and surveys which explored the basic processes of environmental change and settlement development following the Island's discovery and occupation by Europeans. She also explored how this may or may not have been significant in the context of similar island occupations in both historic and prehistoric contexts. Her findings have been significant to the understanding of Lord Howe Island's early settlement and important in the teaching of early cultural heritage to students at the Lord Howe Island Central School. The Lord Howe Island Museum devotes display space to her important discoveries and the artefacts recovered during her excavations at six sites – Old Settlement Beach (hillside and foreshore), North Bay Swamp, North Bay Garden, Wright/King land and Perry Johnston's land. .

### Typical examples that demonstrate this theme

Laboratory, experimental equipment, text book, observatory, botanical garden, arboretum, research station, university research reserve, weather station, soil conservation area, fossil site, archaeological research site.

### Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme

Meteorological Station on land leased to Commonwealth of Australia, south end of Skyline drive<sup>392</sup>;

Archaeological research sites, Old Settlement Beach (hillside and foreshore), North Bay Swamp, North Bay Garden, Wright/King land and Perry Johnston's land.

Palaeontological research sites, near Neds Beach; 'Ocean View', near Arajilla Transit of Venus observation site<sup>393</sup>

Woodhen research facilities – anything left? Structures have been removed from Stevens Reserve after damage following the 1996 floods. Possibly useful to install an interpretive sign at this site?

Records of Ball's Pyramid scientific expeditions;

Phasmid research facilities and records at Kentia Palm Nursery;

Kentia Palm Nursery propagation records

### Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule

Archaeological research sites, Old Settlement Beach (hillside and foreshore), North Bay Swamp, North Bay Garden, Wright / King land and Perry Johnston's land.

Palaeontological research sites, near Neds Beach; 'Ocean View', near Arajilla Transit of Venus observation site<sup>394</sup>

Items in LHI Museum Collection that demonstrate this theme

Plaque at the book tree on the summit of Mt Gower, commemorating the final trip of the Australian Museum Woodhen research team.

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<sup>392</sup> RES LH 47

<sup>393</sup> RES

<sup>394</sup> RES

### 2.3.14 Technology

*These are activities and processes associated with the knowledge or use of mechanical arts and applied sciences.*

The very first application of technology on Lord Howe Island was probably associated with the erection of dwellings by the first settlers, and relied more on hand tools associated with traditional skills and handcrafted items. Early machinery would probably have been associated with marine technology derived from the boilers and engines used in the early steam ships which visited the Island. Given that anything else (including fuel and raw materials) had to be imported from the mainland thereby incurring high cost, as well as the practical difficulty of unloading heavy equipment and servicing and maintaining items, early technological devices were necessarily simple.

TB Wilson's diary mentions using a machine for thatching and fibre for house construction, although no further details are provided; and further entries record him making 'flanges', a grindstone for Captain Armstrong and the existence of a forge at Thompson's house.

Maintaining access into the lagoon for ships was a necessity and the growth of coral in North Passage was kept in check by regular explosions of dynamite to keep it clear. Various early accounts also mention Islanders using charges to explode dynamite to catch fish for scientific purposes.<sup>395</sup>

Domestic technology relied first on wood fire for power, and Islanders recall wood stoves and donkey engines on the Island which provided heated water to homes and guesthouses. The sole surviving example donkey engine, still operational, is owned by Bill Retmock. In the absence of refrigeration, drip safes were initially used for cooling food. They were constructed using walls of wood and wire netting, filled with charcoal. Ice making for ice chests was introduced by Phil Dignam in 1936 using brine tanks. He would fill moulds with water, immerse them in brine overnight to freeze and deliver them to households by horse and cart early the next morning. Dignam, who was the Island's representative for Vacuum Oil, also supplied islanders with oil and kerosene fuel for refrigerators and heaters. During the 1940s, he acquired an American-made Delco generator, now preserved in the Lord Howe Island, to meet his home and business demands. The Museum also displays a number of interesting items of technology, including a machine for making carbonated water for soft drinks which was acquired by Alan Williams for Somerset Lodge.

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<sup>395</sup> Wilson, T B. Diary, 9 April 1881; 25,26 March 1881; 5 6 8 January 1881



**Figure 95 (Left):** Delco Generator used by the Dignam Family for their ice-making and refrigeration business from the 1940s. (Photos by Margaret Betteridge of displays in the LHI Museum).



**Figure 96 (Left):** Carbonated water equipment in Lord Howe Island Museum; **(Right):** Donkey engine, owned and operated by islander, Bill Retmock and still working in September 2010. (Photos: Chris Betteridge)

It would not be until the arrival of the Island's first diesel power generation unit and communications equipment in 1929 that land-based radio-transmission and electric power were introduced. Although limited power supply was available, it was not until 1954 that the entire Island was connected to a grid and power was available to every home. The technology which supports this utility still requires regular fuel delivery from the mainland to power the generator in the Island's powerhouse. The digital age has revolutionised technology on the Island and the Island has access to advanced communications and satellite equipment which have made a number of the Island's visual landmarks redundant.

## Equipment

Manual labour and horsepower were the early mainstays of operations on the Island and photographs document the longevity of these practices on the Island. It was not until the Lord Howe Island Board of Control acquired equipment which they used in their operations during the 1940s that Islanders were able to access the benefits of new and improved machinery and technology. The Board initiated a scheme whereby their equipment could be hired by Islanders to assist them. The Board also made significant improvements to machinery associated with sawmilling and freight handling, including the acquisition of a crane and winch for the jetty in 1962. The Board's depot has expanded over the years, reflecting advances in machinery with practical applications for the improvement and maintenance of Island facilities. With the high cost of imported services and the inconvenience of delays, there is heavy reliance on local contractors on the Island to keep on top of service. However, as technology becomes increasingly sophisticated, there is a constant need for updating the skills required to operate it, not always readily available.



**Figure 97** Islanders used horse-drawn sleds to transport goods to and from the beach for loading onto ships moored offshore. (Photo; LHI Museum Collection).

## Recycling

Lord Howe Island's commitment to environmental sustainability and management of its waste has introduced cutting edge technology associated with the minimization of biowaste and has provided the Island with various methods for creating industrial products for re-use on the Island. With the recent purchase of glass crushing equipment, waste glass from bottles and containers which previously had to be shipped off the Island can now be crushed locally. It is currently being mixed with gravel and used as road surface and sealing. It is estimated that each tonne of glass used to replace imported gravel saves the Board about \$300. The recycling plant also generates material which is used for mulch on the Island. In 2009, a trial of crushed glass as a substitute for road base was laid under the asphalt along Smoking Tree Ridge Road and subsequently used elsewhere on the Island.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Computer, telegraph equipment, electric domestic appliances, underwater concrete footings, museum collection, office equipment, Aboriginal places evidencing changes in tool types.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Cool Room and associated equipment, 'Thornleigh' (Dignam residence), Lagoon Road;

Museum Photographic Collection<sup>396</sup>;

Historic domestic appliances.

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Cool Room and associated equipment, 'Thornleigh' (Dignam residence), Lagoon Road;

LHI Museum Collection including Museum Photographic Collection; and Historic domestic appliances<sup>397</sup>.

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<sup>396</sup> LHI Museum

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

### 2.3.15 Transport

*These are activities associated with the moving of people and goods from one place to another, and systems for the provision of such movements.*

#### Only accessible by Ship

As for most islands, Lord Howe Island has been heavily dependent on sea transport. The first human visitors arrived by ship in 1788 on vessels of the First Fleet. From the time the first settlers arrived in 1834 until the advent of regular air services after World War II, new settlers or visitors had no option other than embarking on a sea journey to reach Lord Howe Island.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century various ships of the early fleets from England to the new colony at Port Jackson called at Lord Howe Island to collect fish, birds and turtles, the last-mentioned helping to control the epidemic of scurvy that was rife in the early days of the colony. Before the first permanent settlement on Lord Howe, whalers had been visiting the island to stock up on provisions and had left behind pigs and goats to ensure a supply of meat on their later visits. The first settlers Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman and their party arrived in June 1834 on the barque *Caroline* under the command of Captain John Blinkenthorpe. While those first, temporary settlers were on the island, William Powis, an escaped convict from Hobart, and two crew members from the schooner *Adelaide* who had assisted his escape from custody, were put ashore on Lord Howe. On learning of this incident the authorities in Sydney despatched the cutter *Prince George*, under the command of Captain Roach to bring the offenders back. On this trip was Assistant Surveyor HJ White, who conducted a survey of the island as a potential penal settlement.

The next group of settlers, eventually replacing the first, arrived on the barque *Jane Elizabeth* in 1841. The whalers continued to call after the island was settled and traded goods with the islanders in return for fresh produce, as well as gaining welcome respite after long and arduous voyages in search of whales.

The small cutter *Rover's Bride* had visited Lord Howe Island in 1839 with a group that included a Mr Hescott, whose name was corrupted to Erscott in the naming of Erscott's Hole and Erscott's Passage, the latter being one of the three passages through the reef into the lagoon.<sup>398</sup> Between 1842 and 1852 the *Rover's Bride* became the first vessel to engage in regular trade between Sydney and the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) via Lord Howe Island. She provided a reliable link between the island and these other destinations, including the export of onions from Lord Howe. Unfortunately, while trading in sandalwood in the New Hebrides in December 1852, she was lost off the coast of Erromanga.<sup>399</sup>

In 1847, after failing to secure a lease on their holdings from the New South Wales Government, the entrepreneurs Captain Poole and Dr Foulis abandoned the settlement. Hescott, who had settled on the island in December 1841 and his fellow settlers McAuliffe and four Englishmen, all decided to leave in 1847 but Poole's employees, the Andrews, decided to stay on, accepting Poole's holding at Old

<sup>398</sup> Nichols 2006, p.34

<sup>399</sup> Ibid.

Settlement. Foulis and his family left on 9 August 1847 on the American whaler *General Pike* after transferring his holdings to Captain Pierce the master of that ship, in return for passage.

Following an exaggerated report on Lord Howe Island's potential, prepared for the colonial authorities by Dr Foulis from memory in 1851, Governor-General of the Australian Colonies, Sir Charles A Fitzroy sent Captain Henry Denham of HMS *Herald* to carry out the first hydrographic survey of the island in July 1853. Fortunately, Denham's endorsement of the island as a prospective prison settlement was not proceeded with. That same year American whaler Nathan Chase Thompson and his party arrived on Lord Howe Island on the barque *Belle*, staying on to commence one of the island's enduring dynasties. The next year 1854, Governor Fitzroy attempted to carry out the first vice-regal visit of the island on HMS *Calliope* but was thwarted by bad weather and unable to land.

William Field, American captain of the barque *Woodlark* and a former acquaintance of Nathan Thompson arrived on Lord Howe Island in January 1855. His wife Mary joined him two years later and they built a house on Thompson's property near Signal Point. In September 1855 the schooner *Will O' the Wisp*, returning to New Zealand from a fishing expedition, called at Lord Howe Island for provisions. The skipper Captain Stevens returned to the island with his 10-year old son, Campbell, a Maori servant, Jacky Wahoo and an African American former slave, Perry Johnson. After schooling in New Zealand, Campbell Stevens eventually settled in the area now known as Stevens Reserve and where the island's first post office was established. Perry Johnson later married a South African woman and established a farm at the foot of Mt Lidgbird<sup>400</sup>.

In 1856 whalers on board the American ship *Louisiana* traded farming implements and a whaleboat with the settlers in return for a ton of onions and a supply of arrowroot, coffee, sugar syrup, grapes, papaya, two casks of smoked muttonbirds, a bale of muttonbird feathers and six walking sticks. The following year, on 26 February 1857 sailors from the American barques *Belle*, *Rose* and *Mary Lake* carved their names and those of their vessels in a tree near Big Creek<sup>401</sup>.

In 1858 David Whybrow, Captain of the brig *Curllew*, arrived with his family and established a farm on a ridge that extends from the northern slope of Intermediate Hill and became known as Whybrow Ridge<sup>402</sup>.

In July 1862 Captain Tom Nichols arrived on Lord Howe Island from Hobart on the barque *Aladdin*. He fell in love with Mary Andrews, one of the earlier settlers, married her on Norfolk Island and returned with her to Lord Howe where their union produced eleven children and the start of another island dynasty, members of which still run 'Pinetrees', the island's longest established guesthouse. Another island family of long standing arrived in 1864. Charles Thorngrave and 18-year old Edward 'Ned' King, both from England, arrived on the schooner *Gleaner*, skippered by Captain Starich, and settled firstly near Middle Beach and later, near Soldier's Creek.

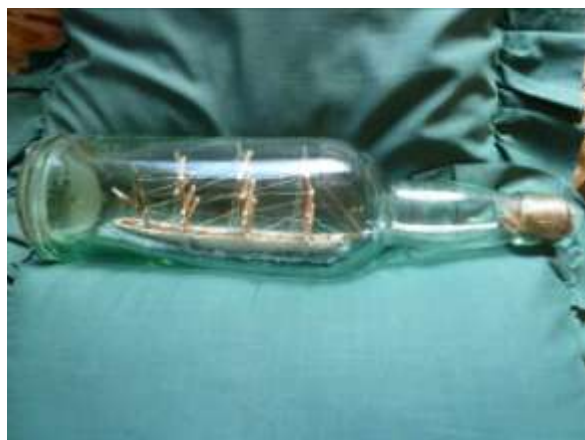
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<sup>400</sup> Ibid., p.61

<sup>401</sup> Ibid., p.26

<sup>402</sup> Ibid., p.62





**Figure 98** ‘Ship-in-a-bottle’ model of the schooner *Gleaner*, private collection, Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 September 2010)

With the rapid decline in whaling from the 1860s due to the increasing availability of petroleum products and the impact of the American Civil War, fewer and fewer whaling vessels called at Lord Howe Island. From 1860 to 1872 only 43 whalers provisioned on the island and in the following period to 1873, less than a dozen called. The *Minnesota*, under the command of Captain H Poole of Dartmouth, USA, recalled that on his first visit to Lord Howe Island, in 1869, the islanders exchanged fruit, vegetables and fowls for calico, flour, sugar, tea, tobacco, soap and shoes<sup>403</sup>.

In May 1869 the steamer *Thetis* visited Lord Howe Island under the command of Captain Hutton, carrying surveyor RD Fitzgerald, who was also a collector for The Australian Museum, three representatives from the Botanic Gardens, and Tombone, an Aboriginal tracker. They conducted a scientific survey of the island, befriending the 35 islanders in the process and reporting on their way of life as well as their agricultural successes.

HMS *Rosario* anchored off Lord Howe Island on 11 September 1871 on its return from official duties at Elizabeth Reef. The ship’s commander Henry G Challis went ashore to conduct the baptism of eight children from the Nichols and Thompson families. Two years later the small ketch *Comet* began trading between Lord Howe Island and the mainland, replacing the *Sylph*, which had been lost earlier that year<sup>404</sup>. The *Sylph* had been the first trader owned by the islanders and had successfully transported produce, mainly onions and pigs, between the island and Sydney from 1867 until its tragic demise on 20 April 1873. In the shipwreck, the *Sylph*’s owner Nathan Thompson lost his partner Captain Field, the wife and children of another partner Thomas Wainwright, and settler Thomas Mooney, who had arrived with his wife Mary on the schooner *Bluebell* in 1867<sup>405</sup> and had established a farm near Nichols Clear Place. Island historian Daphne Nichols sums up the impact the loss of the *Sylph* had on the infant settlement<sup>406</sup>:

*“The hopes and dreams of a better life on Lord Howe Island were shattered forever for three families with the tragic loss of the Sylph.”*

<sup>403</sup> Ibid., p.30

<sup>404</sup> Ibid., p.58

<sup>405</sup> Ibid., p.57

<sup>406</sup> Ibid.



**Figure 99 (Left):** View from the south end of the island circa 1960s looking across the lagoon towards Mt Eliza, with the two Norfolk Island Pine trees at Lovers Bay, thought to have been planted in memory of Thomas Wainwright, and his wife who was lost in the sinking of the *Sylph*. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints Mis47, LHI Museum Collection; **(Right)** The same view in February 2009. The trees not only have aesthetic significance but when lined up they mark the safe passage through Erscott's Passage into the lagoon. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 24 February 2009).

In March 1876 HMS *Pearl* delighted the islanders with an official visit and Tom and Mary Nichols took advantage of the chance to have their second daughter christened by the ship's chaplain, naming her Grace Marguerite Pearl Nichols in honour of the visit. By this time the whaling trade had declined and the onion industry was all but finished by disease. The ship's surgeon Alfred T Corrie noted that some of the islanders were almost starving<sup>407</sup>. In response to Corrie's report on island conditions, the NSW Government considered removing the inhabitants to the mainland. The schooner *Esperanza*, under the command of Captain Amora arrived at Lord Howe on 26 November 1876, carrying Surveyor Fitzgerald for his second visit. More baptisms took place in late 1879, when the mission steamer *Dayspring* visited the island. The christening service was also attended by visitors Mr and Mrs McKee, who visited the island several times on the ketch *Collingwood* and befriended the locals.

In response to Fitzgerald's report, the Botanic Gardens in Sydney despatched a variety of economic plants for trial on the island and islander Ned King reciprocated by sending many native island plants back to the Gardens between 1880 and 1898, including palm plants and seeds.

John Robbins arrived on the schooner *Ephemey* in February 1880 and soon married the widow Mary Mooney, eventually settling at the south end of the island. Robbins' farm became one of the island's most productive and remains of their drainage scheme are still visible on the site now occupied by the island's golf course.

In 1878 retired Royal Navy officer, Captain Richard Armstrong had arrived on Lord Howe Island to become Forest Ranger, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages and, the following year, Postmaster, Resident Magistrate, Coroner and Clerk of Petty sessions.<sup>408</sup> After initially impressing the islanders with his bravery in helping to save the crew of the stricken steamer *Eva*, Armstrong gradually incurred the islanders'

<sup>407</sup> Ibid. p.70

<sup>408</sup> Ibid., p.76

resentment and suspicion when he had so many privileges and was granted 100 acres when they had no security of tenure. The islanders also perceived that Armstrong was being favoured in the sale of a large quantity of kentia palm seed in 1881 and they petitioned the NSW Government to remove him.

The authorities appointed former politician and senior public servant, the Hon. John Bowie Wilson as Commissioner of the Inquiry into Armstrong. Wilson arrived on the *Thetis* on 4 April 1882 and, having suspended Armstrong from his duties and seized all Government property held by him, Wilson heard evidence and completed his Inquiry on 17 April. Armstrong was subsequently removed from the Public Service and his appointments terminated. Also on the *Thetis* was a survey team which prepared a site for the Transit of Venus and came back in December 1882 to observe the astronomical phenomenon.

The last recorded visits by American whalers were *Palmetto* in 1881, *Robert Morrison* in 1882 and Poole's second visit to the island, in 1887, this time on the barque *John and Winthrop*, when his party purchased Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, bananas, fowls and beef. He recalled that Tahiti oranges were not ripe but there were plenty of lemons, passionfruit and ripe corn.<sup>409</sup> The last Australian whaler to provision at Lord Howe was the barque *Especulador* on 11 October 1881.<sup>410</sup>

This decrease in ships calling at the island not only reduced the islanders' opportunities to trade goods but also deprived them of much-needed contact with the outside world. New settlers were arriving only sporadically and other vessels had little reason to visit this dot in the ocean once the mainland colonies were well established. With decreasing trade with whalers, the islanders were having to rely more heavily on their own exports, particularly onions, but by the early 1870s the crops were severely damaged by fungal disease and the onion industry failed.<sup>411</sup>

Ship's cook Henry West snr had survived the sinking of the barque *Aurifera* en route from Newcastle and New Caledonia in July 1870 and along with the other crew members, they made the 480km trip to Lord Howe Island in a lifeboat. The island must have made a favourable impression on him because he signed on as cook on the *Mary Ogilvie*, made several more trips to the island, before settling there with his family in 1894. That same year George Garth, who had captained the schooners *Mary Ogilvie*, *Onward* and *Oscar Robinson*, also settled on Lord Howe Island.

A sinking off Lord Howe Island had a positive outcome for another sailor. Wandering Hector Innes, a 25 year old Scot, was a member of the crew of the brigantine *Zeno* which was carrying a cargo of coal from Newcastle to New Zealand on 18 September 1895 when it sprang a leak and started to sink several miles off Lord Howe. The captain and crew made it safely to shore at Ned's Beach in the ship's lifeboat and all except Innes returned to the mainland. He met and fell in love with Grace Nichols and stayed – their eldest child was one of two islanders to be killed in action in World War I.<sup>412</sup>

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<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Nichols 2006, p.30

<sup>412</sup> Ibid., p.52

The small vessel *Dewdrop*, owned by George Waterhouse, was chartered in 1896 to carry cargoes of palm seed, onions, sweet potatoes, bananas and oranges from Lord Howe Island to the markets in Sydney, under the command first of islander Tom Nichols and later the American Captain Potts. The *Dewdrop* operated successfully for twelve years until she was no longer viable and was purchased by Burns Philp & Co. as a coastal trader. She was eventually wrecked on a reef off the Queensland coast.<sup>413</sup>

At the time the *Dewdrop* charter ceased in 1908, steamship trade had been established between Sydney, Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island. It would be more than fifty years before the islanders would again rely on small commercial vessels for trade with the mainland.<sup>414</sup> In 1893 Burns Philp & Co had commenced a passenger service to Norfolk Island to supplement its cargo trade. Their vessels were occasionally offered a 24-hour respite on Lord Howe Island when adverse weather conditions delayed the unloading of cargo. In her book *Lord Howe Rising*, historian Daphne Nichols writes<sup>415</sup>:

*“The Islanders enjoyed the social contact with the passers-by who, in turn, were captivated by the Island’s natural charm and the hospitality of its residents. These short sojourns prompted Burns Philp to quietly promote Lord Howe as a holiday destination.”*



**Figure 100 (Left):** The Burns Philp & Co flag. **(Right):** Entrance to Burns Philp’s agency on Lord Howe Island, which was also an office for Queensland Insurance Co. (Photo: Ilma Sainsbury prints, IS16, LHI Museum Collection).

These first ‘modern’ tourists to Lord Howe Island had a two day voyage from Sydney, at the end of which they were slung over the side into open boats and rowed ashore, either through the reef if weather favoured a lagoon landing, or at Ned’s Beach if the eastern side of the island was calmer. Once close to the beach, the oarsmen would jump overboard and carry the passengers ashore, first the men on their backs and then the women in their arms. Once on dry land the tourists were

<sup>413</sup> Ibid., p.53

<sup>414</sup> Ibid., p.64

<sup>415</sup> Nichols 2006, p.124

treated to nine days of genuine family hospitality in one of the number of guest houses that were established from 1900 onwards.

In 1914 the start of the Great War disrupted the fledgling tourism industry and it took some time to re-establish after the conflict. Mary Nichols, who had expended the family home 'The Pines' in 1900 to accommodate tourists, died in 1923 and was succeeded by her daughter Edith Kirby until 1930 when the running of the property was handed to Edith's eldest son Gerald. He had postponed a commercial career in Sydney to help his mother through the Depression but stayed on for the rest of his life, running the renamed 'Pinetrees'.

In 1932 the *Morinda*, equipped to carry forty passengers, replaced the *Makambo* as the island's main service provider.<sup>416</sup> The *Makambo* had been repaired and put back into service after its grounding in 1918. Daphne Nichols recounts an amusing story about the shipping line fitting extra tourists on the *Morinda*<sup>417</sup>.

*"Once clear of Sydney, and against maritime regulations, tents were erected on the after-hatch of the Morinda to accommodate extra passengers. On the return voyage, they were disassembled before reaching port. Additional provisions were not included in these clandestine operations, so in smooth sailing there was always a shortage of food. However, on a rough trip there was often an over-supply! Two seasoned voyagers, Marj Scott and Bill Shipway (grandson of a founding member of the Kentia Palm Cooperative) recalled that on these journeys it was recommended that passengers stick to toast and strawberry jam because 'it tasted just as good coming up as it did going down!'"*

The tourism industry ceased again during World War II, with most of Burns Philps' fleet commandeered for war service in the wake of Japan's entry into the conflict in 1941. The passenger service was confined to islanders travelling to Sydney for business or medical treatment. However, they could be stuck there for considerable periods while they waited for a boat home.

During the Second World War, RAAF Catalina flying boats from the base at Rathmines on Lake Macquarie made occasional flights to Lord Howe island for medical evacuations or to deliver urgently needed supplies. These flights raised the possibility of a commercial air service to the island. In a remarkably prescient 1940 memorandum to the islanders, the Board of Control stated<sup>418</sup>:

*"It is felt that the establishment of a flying boat service between Sydney and Lord Howe island would provide a facility that would contribute immeasurably to make Lord Howe Island one of the leading, if not the premier tourist resort of Australia."*

The end of World War II really marked the end of steamship passenger travel to Lord Howe Island. The *Morinda* continued service as a cargo carrier until 1952<sup>419</sup> and was sold for scrapping in Japan the following year.

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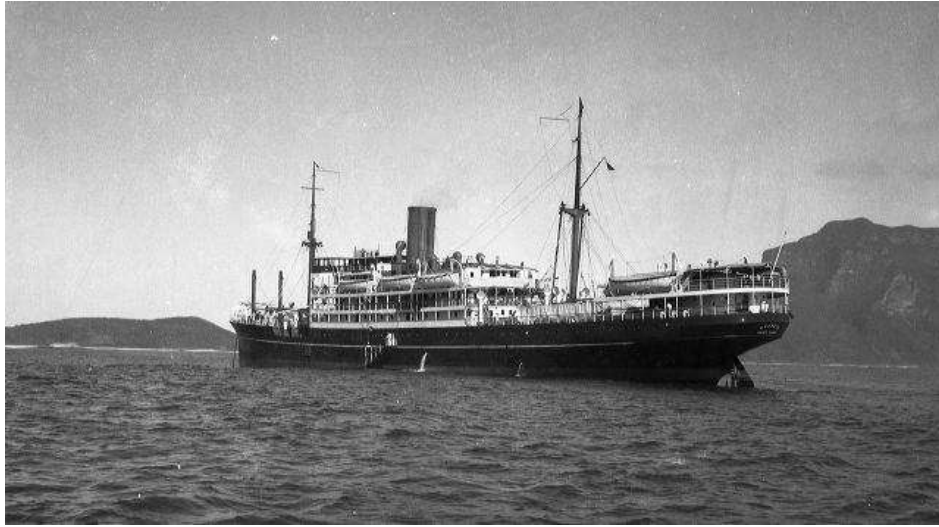
<sup>416</sup> Ibid., p.127

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.

<sup>418</sup> Nichols 2006, p.129

<sup>419</sup> LHI Museum website





**Figure 101** After World War I and before the days of the flying boats visitors to Lord Howe Island made the trip from the mainland on vessels like this. (Photo: Dick Morris prints DM1033)



**Figure 102 (Left):** Passengers including islander Phil Dignam jnr well-clothed for the trip to or from Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Dick Morris prints, DM659, LHI Museum Collection): **(Right):** Much less formal attire for passengers taking the sun on board the ship en route to Lord Howe Island in 1937. (Photo: Special Prints 94, LHI Museum Collection)



**Figure 103** Motor launch *Venture* at the jetty with the cargo shed and other boatsheds in the background. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM260, Lord Howe Island Museum Collection).

### Still the Island's Major Means of Supply

The ships' cargo leaving Lord Howe Island for the mainland these days is no longer onions, cucumbers and other agricultural produce, but more likely scrap metal and other material that can't be handled by the island's Waste Management Facility. While most tourists (apart from visiting 'yachties') and some fresh produce, mail and other light goods arrive by air, since the commencement of commercial air services the majority of bulk and heavy goods have still come by ship.

In the early 1950s, Gerald Kirby of 'Pinetrees' purchased *Flying Cloud*, a 72-foot Fairmile<sup>420</sup>, primarily for tourist trips around the island and to Balls Pyramid. Kirby hoped that his vessel would also be able to supplement the cargo carrying trade, but the cost of complying with Maritime Services and Union regulations plus the fact that *Flying Cloud* drew too much water to carry heavy loads into the jetty in the lagoon combined to make the venture uneconomic. The boat was beached during a storm in May 1955 and although re-floated after six months, *Flying Cloud* was sold to mainland interests after Gerald's death in 1960.



**Figure 104** *Flying Cloud* on the beach 1955. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM030, LHI Museum Collection).

Bulk goods continued to be transported to Lord Howe Island by ships which moored outside the reef or off Ned's Beach and then transferred their cargoes to shore in lighters or other small craft – an often long and arduous process, not without its dangers. In fact, the first supplies of alcoholic liquor to be sold by the newly established Lord Howe Island Board arrived on the *Sonoma del Mar* on 12 October 1955 and trading commenced the following week in the Public Hall. However, the search was on for smaller vessels capable of entering the lagoon.

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<sup>420</sup> The Fairmile B was a type of motor launch built by Fairmile Marine during the Second World War for the Royal Navy for coastal operations including submarine chasing. After the war many were converted for other naval or tourist uses.

Daphne Nichols writes<sup>421</sup>:

*“Between 1970 and 1985, a number of small vessels traded for brief period between Sydney or the North Coast and Lord Howe island. After about ten trips Gower Wilson’s Trader was wrecked at Elizabeth Reef while on a fishing expedition. Other boats included Sol, Barrenjoey, Derwent Hunter and Norfolk Island’s Norfolk Trader. The latter two made only two or three trips. The operation of another two trawlers was cut short when they courted disaster in the lagoon on their first voyage.”*

For nine months in 1985 the *Kuri Pearl*, operated by the mainland-owned Lord Howe Island Shipping Company serviced the island, with Jim Fitzgerald as the appointed agent. The company sent islander Carl Dignam to Europe in search of a more suitable vessel to service Lord Howe Island. In September 1986 the Danish coastal trader MV *Sitka*, of 400 tonnes displacement, replaced *Kuri Pearl* as the sole operator. However, island residents felt that the island should have its own ship, owned by them. They established Lord Howe Island Sea Freight and purchased in Cairns the 487 tonne MV *Island Trader*, one of four sister ships built in Singapore in the early 1980s for the coastal trade in New Guinea. The *Island Trader* commenced voyages to Lord Howe in 1991 and became the first carrier of bulk oil supplies to the island.

Oil had previously been delivered in drums, the stockpile of which had posed a visual impact on the island, as well as being less economical than bulk shipments. Seven thousand five hundred unsightly oil and petrol drums were subsequently removed from the island on the *Laurana*, which made to trips to the Solomon Islands where the drums were to be used in the copra industry.

The *Sitka* and the *Island Trader* operated out of Yamba on the North Coast of NSW on a fortnightly basis. Until they operated on alternate weeks, the competition between the two vessels to get to the jetty first was intense. While some islanders welcomed a weekly service, the competition became labelled by the media as a shipping war. Two inquiries were held into the shipping service amid allegations of corruption, illegal transport of bulk oil, oil spills and other environmental damage to the lagoon. Since 40% of the usual cargo is made up of goods and oil for the Lord Howe Island Board, the carriage of that cargo has to be put out to tender. Today the *Island Trader* has the contract and services the Island once a fortnight. Its home port has recently changed from Iluka to Port Macquarie.

The advent of shallow-drafted supply vessels like the MV *Sitka* and the MV *Island Trader*, operating out of ports on the north coast of NSW has made a huge difference to the supply of goods to Lord Howe Island. Everything from heavy equipment, motor vehicles, fuel, livestock, white goods, bulk mail and perishables are now transported in this way. The design of these vessels means they can come into the lagoon at high tide and unload their cargo at the jetty, with the hull resting on the bottom when the tide goes out. The flat-hull design apparently has its drawbacks

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<sup>421</sup> Nichols 2006, p.138



though, and several islanders who've travelled on the *Island Trader* from the mainland have said that it's not very comfortable in heavy weather<sup>422</sup>



**Figure 105 (Left):** MV *Sitka* at the jetty c1996. (Photo: Warwick Betteridge); **(Right):** MV *Island Trader* at the jetty. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 1 March 2009).

Although no longer essential for unloading cargo, a steel lighter barge survives and should be retained, treated to arrest corrosion and stored under a covered structure with appropriate interpretation panels, not only as evidence of past transport practices, but also in case of emergencies.



**Figure 106 (Left):** What looks like a risky undertaking! Unloading a utility from a lighter barge at low tide in the lagoon Dick Morris prints 4, DM523, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The last remaining lighter barge. (Photo: Chris Betteridge 9 September 2010)

### Boating for Work and Pleasure

From the time of first settlement Lord Howe Islanders have relied on small boats to take them around the island for exploration and to gather palm seeds, to visit fishing grounds, conduct tours and for purely recreational use. This reliance on small craft has meant that many of these boats have made a significant impact on the working and social lives of the community and some are held in high regard. Even today, the environmental tour and fishing charter operators all have named boats and those names feature heavily in the titles of the businesses.

<sup>422</sup> Pers.comm.



**Figure 107 (Left):** Islanders in a traditional clinker-built craft on a trip to the Admiralties in 1927. (Photo: Joe Lyons Collection, JL12, LHI Museum); **(Right):** Islanders including Ilma Sainsbury (née Hines) and Eileen Douglass (née Wilson) in a rowing boat near Old Settlement Beach. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, LHI Museum Collection).



**Figure 108 (Left):** Passengers waiting to disembark from the motor launch *Albatross* on a picnic trip in 1965. (Photo: John Cook prints, JC49, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The *Albatross* moored in the lagoon in 2010. (Photo: Chris Betteridge 9 September 2010).

## Boatsheds

Boatsheds and slipways are an integral part of small boat use, providing accommodation for vessels, storage for items associated with maritime activities and places for repair and maintenance. Boatsheds were constructed at a number of points along the lagoon foreshore, from King's Beach to Old Settlement Beach. There was also a community boatshed, a shed for surfboats and a slipway at Ned's Beach associated with cargo loading and unloading operations at that site. Bill Whiting had a shed at Middle Beach. The earliest structures were timber-framed with thatch cladding. Later examples were timber-framed and clad with weatherboard, fibro or corrugated iron. - Many of the boatsheds have gone – damaged by storms, replaced by newer structures or removed in conformity with updated planning controls. Those which survive comprise two main groups.

## The Lagoon Beach Boatsheds

A small group of boatsheds fronting Lagoon Beach on Lord Howe Island have strong connections with water-based tourism, transport and fishing operations as well as associations with many individuals and families on the island. A conservation

management plan<sup>423</sup> prepared for these boatsheds in 2006 assessed them to have high local significance for their historical associations and social values and moderate significance at a State level for other assessment criteria. As a group they are already listed on the heritage schedule of LEP 2010.

The Lagoon Beach group of boatsheds comprises the following items:

Alan Williams boatshed;

John Green (former Francis Payten) boatshed;

Lord Howe Island Board boatshed;

'Beachcomber' (Payten family) boatshed;

Wilson boatshed and slipway;

Hiscox (former Whitfield) boatshed;

De Russet boatshed;

Dignam boatshed and slipway;

'Pinetrees' boatshed and archaeological remains of 1930s boatshed and slipway.

Archaeological remains of former Department of Civil Aviation boatshed and slipway;



**Figure 109** Panorama of the main group of boatsheds fronting Lagoon Beach. There is some distortion in the foreground due to boat movement but the row of sheds is accurately depicted. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 1 March 2009).



**Figure 110 (Left):** Boatsheds south of the main group shown in Fig.108. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 22 February 2009); **(Right):** The new 'Pinetrees' boatshed built in 1995 to replace the old shed which was destroyed by fire. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 March 2009).

<sup>423</sup> High Ground Consulting 2006, p.3



### The Aquatic Club

Built in 1973 and located on the Government Reserve, west of the intersection of Lagoon Road and Middle Beach Road, the Aquatic Club differs from other boatsheds on the island in having its long side facing the beach. Heavily altered over the years and reclad in Hardiplank, this building has negative visual impact on the foreshore. Apart from its social significance as the base for dinghy sailing activities for nearly 40 years, it has no architectural merit and would benefit from some judicious screen planting.



**Figure 111** While it may serve a functional purpose as a base for sailing activities on the lagoon, the Aquatic Club building does not enhance the foreshore or views of the lagoon and mountains. Some sympathetic landscaping around the building would help to reduce its visual impact. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 5 December 2009).

### The Boatsheds near the Jetty

Another major group of boatsheds were clustered around the site of the former jetty, between Signal Point and Wilson's Landing. Of these, only the former Cargo Shed and the former 'Ocean View' boatshed remain. The Cargo Shed has been adapted to provide facilities for visiting sailors and also has a studio for the local radio community radio station. The old 'Ocean View' boatshed has been adapted for storage of Board items. The Cargo Shed group comprises the following:  
Former Cargo Shed including archaeological remains of former jetty;  
Norfolk Island Pine trees;  
Former 'Ocean View' boatshed.



**Figure 112 (Left):** Looking south towards Signal Point circa 1930s, showing group of boatsheds near site of current jetty, with Cargo Shed at far left. The Cargo Shed survives but the other sheds have gone. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, Mis4-134, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Hauling a boat up to the 'Ocean View' boatshed circa 1930s. The building survives, although its roof form has been altered and its landward elevation is now open for storage. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 4, DM540, LHI Museum Collection).

### The Ned's Beach Shed

The current shed at Ned's Beach is a recreation of the shed formerly on the site and serves as a shelter for tourists and storage and hire of surfing and snorkelling equipment.



**Figure 113 (Left):** An undated early image of a thatched shed at Ned's Beach. (Photo: Rabone prints HR28, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Presumably the same shed circa 1912. (Photo: Oldfield family prints c1912, 7, LHI Museum Collection).



**Figure 114 (Left):** The two later sheds at Ned's Beach – a shed for storage of boats and a community shed for shelter and cargo storage; **(Right):** The current shelter and equipment hire shed at Ned's Beach, a recreation of the right hand shed in the adjoining image. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 23 February 2009).

### Tragedies and Shipwrecks

The Tasman Sea between the mainland and Lord Howe Island can be unforgiving and the waters around the island are fraught with hazards to shipping. Numerous vessels have come to grief on the reef or on the many rocks in the area, from the early days of exploration and settlement to very recent times. During the landing of Dr Foulis' party from the schooner *Wave* in 1844, one of the boats belonging to the settlement was dashed to pieces against rocks and three crewmen from the *Wave* – John Duncan, James Sanson and a man named Ned were killed. The three were buried in the sands of the bay where the accident occurred.<sup>424</sup>

<sup>424</sup> Nichols 2006, p.35

The loss of the *Sylph* in 1873 has already been discussed and had an enormous impact on the hopes and aspirations of at least three island families. Apart from the human tragedies arising from loss of life and livelihood in shipwrecks, probably the greatest single environmental impact on Lord Howe Island was the result of a shipping accident. In June 1918 the Burns Philp steamer *Makambo* struck an unmarked rock in the Admiralty Group and ran aground on Ned's Beach. While repairs to the vessel were being effected it is believed that rats from the ship's cargo escaped onto the island, to commence a reign of predation that continues to the present day. Within a short time the rats had decimated the populations of at least five endemic bird species, the land snail and the giant phasmid. Before long they also had a disastrous impact on the kentia palm industry as the rats ate the seeds.

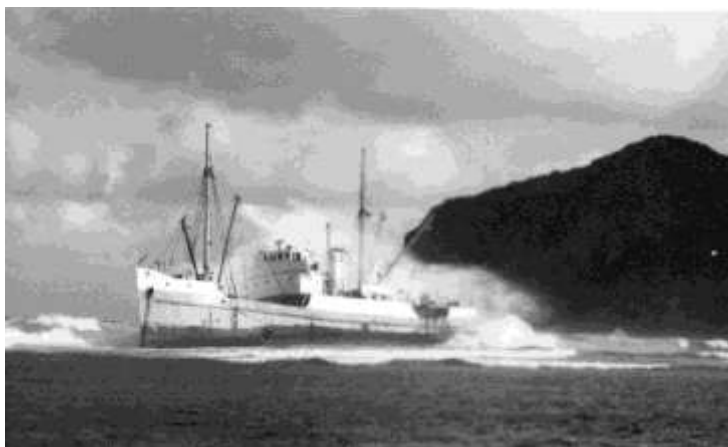
In 1936 the loss of the wooden, double-ended island boat *Viking* on its maiden voyage from Sydney to Lord Howe Island had a profound effect on many island families. The Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital was established in memory of the boat's owner who perished along with his crew on that fateful trip.



**Figure 115** The ill-fated *Viking* which disappeared on its maiden voyage from Sydney to Lord Howe with the loss of all on board. Photographed at Circular Quay 1936. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, LHI Museum)

It is understood that several boats the same as or similar to *Viking* were built at Palm Beach in the 1940s or '50s. Of these, one known as *Viking 2* survives on Lord Howe Island, albeit in dilapidated condition. Of 29 feet overall length, with a straight stem and canoe stern, *Viking 2* had Oregon planks, later with ¼ inch fibreglass sheeting over. Along with *Albatross* they were the island's main tour boats and towing vessels. After the flying boat service ceased in 1974, *Viking 2* languished on the lagoon shore for ten years before being moved and stored at a site on Anderson Road. Originally powered by a Chapman 'Pup' engine, it has been largely dismantled and requires a new engine and a total restoration<sup>425</sup>.

<sup>425</sup> Gary Payten, pers.comm. 3 March 2009



**Figure 116** The *Jaques Del Mar*, a French-registered 506 ton steel screw steamer being battered by big seas near North Passage on the reef in 1954. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, LHI Museum Collection)



**Figure 117 (Left):** The last resting place of the *Jaques del Mar*. Only fragmentary remains are left on the reef, with more wreckage in deeper water outside the reef. A spar is displayed in the grounds of the museum. (Photo: Dick Morris prints DM892, LHI Museum Collection; **(Right):** Protruding out of the water is the main engine mass of the wreck of the *Favorite*, which ran aground at the North Passage in 1965. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 28 November 2009)

### The Pacific Chieftain

In July 1963 the Ansett Short Sandringham flying boat *Pacific Chieftain* was driven ashore from its mooring in the lagoon and so badly damaged that it had to be scuttled. After usable parts were salvaged, the aircraft was towed out to sea, holed with hand axes and sunk off the North Passage. The significant wreckage of this aircraft is protected under the 'relics' provisions of the NSW Heritage Act.



**Figure 118** The Sandringham flying boat *Pacific Chieftain* on Lagoon Beach in July 1963, before she was towed out to sea and sunk. (Photo: Daphne prints DH95, Lord Howe island Museum Collection).

Shipwrecks and underwater aircraft remains are an important part of the cultural heritage of Lord Howe Island that deserve further research, recognition and interpretation. A major Maritime Archaeological Survey<sup>426</sup> carried out by marine archaeologists from the NSW Heritage Office identified all the recorded shipwrecks in the area and the known wreck sites. The study report includes recommendations for conservation, promotion, public access and interpretation.

### Shipwrecks of Lord Howe Island

***Favorite*** - One of the Island's more recent shipwrecks, the *Favorite* ran aground at the North Passage in 1965. Few details have been located for the vessel, its origin, or ownership.

***George*** - the earliest shipwreck at Lord Howe Island, the 186 ton whaler *George* either ran aground or sank off the southern end in December 1830. A 23.77 metre, two-masted whaler operating out of Tasmania. Built at Plymouth, UK, in 1810, registered Hobart as 6 of 1830.

***Jacques del Mar*** - French-registered 506 ton, 44.28 metre, steel screw steamer wrecked at the Island's North Passage in 1954. Built as the *Marion Sleigh* at Bremerhaven, Germany in 1906 and one time registered to Sydney as 6 of 1930 with Official Number 139627.

***La Meurthe*** - abandoned at sea in gale whilst under the tow of *St. Louis*. The unmanned "ghost ship" drove ashore near the lagoon at Lord Howe Island in 1907 much to the amazement of local residents. A timber sailing ship of 1597 tons gross built at France in 1882.

***Laura*** – lost at sea after departing the Peruvian port of Callao on 18 April, for Newcastle to load coal. One of *Laura*'s lifeboats eventually washed up north of Cronulla Beach, Sydney and the wheel box at Lord Howe Island. A barque formerly known as *Claudova*.

***Maelgwyn*** – abandoned approximately twenty miles northwest Lord Howe Island in 1907. Departing Pisco, Peru on 17 November 1906, the 1276 ton vessel became disabled in a gale after ballast shifted. All 20 crew reached Lord Howe Island in the

<sup>426</sup> Nutley and Smith 2002



boats. A 67.06 metre, iron barque built at, Sunderland, Scotland in 1884 and registered at London. Official Number 89625.

**Mystery Star** – intended as part of a film on Lord Howe Island the 4.88 metre timber motor skiff was lost after departing the island for New South Wales in October 1936. Crewed by actors Brian Abbot and Leslie Simpson, the vessel was never found despite searches by RAN destroyer *Waterhen* and RAAF aircraft including Seagull amphibians and a Gannet monoplane.

**Ovalau** – cargo of copra caught fire about 100 miles from Lord Howe Island in October 1903 but contained until reaching that place. Passengers and crew disembarked before the ship exploded, burnt and finally sank off North Passage. A 1229 ton, 70-metre steamer, built in Scotland in 1891, registered at Sydney as 33/1903, Official Number 141471. Cargo of Cockatoos and parrots let loose on the island. Wreckage lies in 19-30m of water - located.

**Pacific Chieftain** – a 10 metre, wooden fishing vessel, wrecked in November 1968 at Flat Rock near North Rock, Admiralty Islands. All 11 passengers and crew escaped on a lifeboat.

**S.M. Stetson** – the 707 ton collier barque *SM Stetson* left Newcastle with 1150 tons of coal on 10 March 1877 bound for San Francisco. Sprang a leak and beached at entrance to North Passage on 25 March. Three crew manned a small boat and after a gruelling 7 day voyage made Sydney. Built in the USA, in 1874. Registered San Francisco. Official Number 115351.

**Sylph** -The 13 metre, 17 ton ketch *Sylph* foundered at sea after departing Lord Howe Island for Sydney on 20 April 1873. All 8 crew and passengers drowned. Built at Brisbane Water in 1849, NSW. Owned by Lord Howe Island residents Field, Thompson and Wainright, some of whom were lost with the vessel. Registered in Sydney at 1 of 1850 with Official Number 32395.

**Viking** – A wooden, double-ender, island boat lost between Sydney and Lord Howe Island in November 1936 with the loss of 6 lives.

**Whangaroa** - Became unseaworthy and abandoned about 20 June 1911 after departing New Zealand for Sydney with cargo of hardwood. Crew arrived at Lord Howe Island after four days clinging to vessel. Wreckage later sighted ashore. A 36.48 metre topsail schooner of 143 tons, built at Whangaroa in 1893. Registered Sydney as 46 of 1899 with Official Number 94270.

**Wolf** - the 265 ton whaling barque *Wolf* wrecked near Lord Howe Island in 1837. At sea for 18 months with 1700 barrels of sperm whale oil aboard. Exhausted crew went ashore for water and food. *Wolf* blew against near-shore reefs and holed, later sinking within ten miles of shore. Originally built as a gun-brig at the Royal Navy Woolwich Dockyard in 1814.

**Zeno** - abandoned off Lord Howe Island on a voyage from Newcastle to Wellington, New Zealand with coal. Foundered on 6 September 1895 with 10 crew making the safety of the island. A 407 ton, 38.92 metre brigantine, built at John's River, Nova Scotia, Canada in 1876. Registered Auckland at folio 26 of 1891, Official Number 74343.

## Land Transport

The first visitors to the island explored and botanised on foot. Early settlers introduced horses and oxen to pull timber sleds or simple, home-made, iron wheeled timber carts. Wooden crates were nailed to the platforms to serve as seats. Sleds were a simple means of transporting people and goods over sandy or boggy ground and have also been used on the mainland at places such as Belgenny Farm, the original home farm of the Macarthurs' Camden Park Estate, southwest of Sydney. A small example of a sled survives in the Lord Howe Island Museum.



**Figure 119** An early image of a bullock-drawn sled, with thatched buildings in the background. (Photo: Paul Maidemont prints PM92, LHI Museum Collection).

**Figure 120** Undated image of loading or unloading goods from a ship with the aid of horse-drawn sleds. (Photo: Special prints 17, LHI Museum Collection)



**Figure 121** A timber sled with seed bags in the Lord Howe Island Museum. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 4 March 2009)

Many islanders relied on horse-drawn sleds and carts until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a c1920s Thornycroft truck, a charabanc maintained by the Board as a community vehicle and perhaps a tractor as the only mechanised vehicles prior to World War II. Few of the early images in the Lord Howe Island Museum photographic collection are dated but the following four images show a sequence of horse-drawn conveyances on the island in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



**Figure 122** A horse-drawn sled well-loaded with passengers while others look on c1912. (Photo: Oldfield family prints 1912, LHI Museum Collection)

**Figure 123** Three passengers on a simple wooden sled with a crate for a seat in 1932. (Photo: Stuart Fry 1932 prints, img719, LHI Museum Collection).



For a special occasion such as a wedding, much more luxurious transport was called for. The hay cart had to be dressed up with garlands of foliage to disguise its rural origins.

**Figure 124** To the church in style in a horse-drawn wagon in 1934. The party includes Gower Wilson, Eileen Douglass (née Wilson), Monnie Morris (née Austic) and Veronica Thornton (née Wilson). (Photo: Special prints 74, LHI Museum Collection).





**Figure 125** Horse and sled on the track from Ned's Beach in August 1937. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints August 1937 Mis193712, LHI Museum Collection)



**Figure 126** Early flat-bed truck with a load of seed at Ned's Beach. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints 3, LHI Museum Collection)

Lord Howe Islanders have always been known for their ingenuity and inventiveness. Having to make do with what was available was a characteristic of island life in the early days that has been continued to the present day through waste management and recycling programs.



**Figure 127** The 'can do' philosophy at work – a motor driven cultivator converted for family transport c1950s. (Photo: Special prints 118, LHI Museum Collection)

### **An island made for Bicycles (except on the hills)**

The mostly flat, smooth, Lagoon Road along the western side of the island was and still is ideal for bicycles but the steep hills up to the eastern side and near the golf course can be a challenge, especially on windy days. The hill from Joy's Shop up to Anderson Road is called 'Heart Attack Hill' for nothing! Island historian Daphne Nichols believes bicycles were introduced to the island shortly after World War I.<sup>427</sup>

*“For the young men of the day, they were something of a status symbol. While the best automobile attracted the ladies in the city, it was the best bike on Lord Howe! The competition was fierce, and their prized vehicles were identified by such names as Mountin’ Rider, Pedal Prowler, Spoken For, Double Up and Nightie (easy to lift!)”.*

It seems boys will be boys, wherever they are! The first bike may have been imported by Campbell Stevens.<sup>428</sup> Islander Les King remembers paying 400 rats tails for his bike. The Department of Civil Aviation may also have brought bikes to the island so that their employees could get around. Today bikes are the standard form of transport for most visitors, with a busy cycle hire business and many lodges also offering bikes for daily or weekly rental. The standard of bikes available has improved dramatically in recent years. When the authors first visited Lord Howe in 1995 most of the bikes were basic types with no gears and back-pedal brakes. Today they are sophisticated mountain bikes with suspension forks, good brakes and chain gears. They don't have lights, though, and on the authors' most recent visit, in September 2010, the word had got out that the island's Police officer was issuing warnings and fines for those riding at night without lights. There is little street lighting on Lord Howe and moonless nights can be very dark! Some visitors to the island obviously haven't ridden a bike for a while because there are many instances where riders can be seen wobbling along the road and crashes are not unknown!



**Figure 128** Girls riding bikes c1954. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints 4-Mis4-166, LHI Museum Collection)

<sup>427</sup> Nichols 2006, p.146

<sup>428</sup> Gower Wilson, pers.comm.

### Too Many Motor Vehicles?

A number of islanders ride motor bikes and scooters but accidents have claimed one life. Alec Innes gained an edge over his pushbike-riding rivals when he imported the first motorbike in the 1920s but when he sustained injuries in an accident the bike was removed. David 'Harry' Rourke, the son of Ed and the late Pixie Rourke of 'Pinetrees' was tragically killed when his motorbike ran out of control and hit a tree on 30 May 2002.

By 1954 there were only five motor vehicles on the island, three of them owned by the Lord Howe Island Board<sup>429</sup>:

- A small Ford Prefect sedan, owned by the doctor, who possibly imported the first private motor vehicle;
- An ex-Army 4-wheel drive 'Blitz Wagon' to service the Department of Civil Aviation's installations;
- A 1920s Thornycroft truck, with pneumatic tyres replacing its original rubber on steel wheels;
- A post-World War II Bedford truck, also used as a community vehicle and tourist 'bus';
- A Fordson tractor.

At first the Board discouraged private ownership of motor vehicles in spite of protestations by tourism operators, particularly after flying boat services began. Just getting a vehicle to Lord Howe island was a challenge and even after a hoist and winch were installed on the jetty there were some hazardous attempts at landing vehicles on the island.



**Figure 129** Undated photo c1950s of unloading a small van from a wooden lighter at the old jetty with the aid of the hoist and winch. (Photo: Special prints 2, LHI Museum Collection).

<sup>429</sup> Nichols 2006, p.146

**Figure 130** A truck doubles as a tourist 'bus' circa 1950s. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints 4, Mis4-168, LHI Museum Collection).



**Figure 131** A trusty Fergie. (Photo: Norm Simpson prints NM25, LHI Museum Collection)

In his 1968 *Guide to Australia*, Osmar White stated<sup>430</sup> that there was a local bus service, that bicycles could be hired and that the Lord Howe Island Board and the Department of Civil Aviation, which maintained a meteorological station on the island, used motor vehicles. Board records show that in 1968 there were still very few vehicles registered on the island, for a permanent population of 250.



**Figure 132** Even a VW Kombi, favoured by surfers and hippies, found its way to Lord Howe Island –for the Curio Shop. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 4 DM469, LHI Museum Collection).

A bus service was trialed in the mid-1990s but proved unprofitable and was abandoned. By 2006 the number of motor vehicles on the island had grown to more

<sup>430</sup> White 1968, p.106

than 200, comprising lodge-operated buses, tour buses, rental cars, Board vehicles, boat and box trailers, motorbikes and privately owned cars. By contrast, in 2011 there are some 400 registered motor vehicles on the island, to serve a permanent population of 350, with a maximum of 400 tourists at any one time<sup>431</sup>. While admittedly some of these vehicles are motorbikes, scooters and electric golf buggies, there are now many cars, four wheel drive vehicles, trucks and courtesy buses, with each guest house and accommodation venue having at least one bus to take visitors to and from the airport or to restaurants in the evenings.

Many tourists and some islanders lament this increase in vehicle numbers and the impact they have had on the island in terms of traffic, noise, road safety risks and pollution. The authors have seen locals use a vehicle to drive only a couple of hundred metres from their house to the beach and some locals claim that they should have the same rights to vehicles as their mainland counterparts. Residents argue that they have no garbage collection, no mail delivery and no shuttle bus service to the airport. A survey conducted in 2006 to garner public opinion on the vehicle question found that 90% of respondents believed there were too many motor vehicles but 93% claimed they would still need their own car if public transport became available. Given the World Heritage significance of Lord Howe Island and the relatively short distances to be travelled, it would seem that the island could survive with fewer motor vehicles than at present. Preference should be given to 'green' vehicles and accommodation venues might well consider vehicle pooling.

### **Air Transport**

Our feathered friends have been using Lord Howe Island as a landing strip for millennia but it was not until 1931 that a human first flew to the island. Francis Chichester (later Sir Francis), on his epic around-the-world solo flight in a De Havilland DH60 Gipsy Moth floatplane ZK-AKK named *Madame Elijah* had already covered 14,000 miles when he landed at Cascade Bay on Norfolk Island after leaving Parengarenga in New Zealand on 28 March 1931. Using his own system of navigation by sun-sighting, Chichester was the first person to fly into Norfolk Island<sup>432</sup>. He spent the night at the island's Government House and prepared to take off at sunrise the following morning for the flight of 561 miles (approximately 898 kilometres) south-west to Lord Howe Island.

*"After many futile runs, he discovered that one of his [seaplane] floats had sprung a leak and was thoroughly waterlogged. Following four days of frantic repairs, and the towing overland of the Gipsy Moth from Cascade to Emily Bay, he finally took off, to the anxious cheers of the islanders."*<sup>433</sup>

Chichester then undertook the perilous flight to Lord Howe:

*"virtually without instruments, his compass, altimeter, air speed indicator and radio transmitter all being disabled. After seven and a half hours of flying, and almost out of fuel, something suddenly 'stabbed the air like a broad primeval dagger of grey stone'. It was Ball's Pyramid, a 552 feet rock pinnacle a few kilometres off*

<sup>431</sup> Strategic Plan for the LHIGWHP Draft, May 2010, p.32

<sup>432</sup> Clarke, Peter, p.162

<sup>433</sup> Ibid.



*Lord Howe. He landed safely on the island's lagoon where the islanders stared 'as if the dodo had been found'. Next morning, he found that a hurricane had turned his Gipsy Moth upside-down in a deep water-filled depression known as Sylph's Hole. The islanders, very few of who [sic] had set eyes on a grounded plane, set to, ordered parts to be sent by steamer from Sydney and, within nine weeks, had repaired her. Chichester took the time to treat dozens of helpers to joy-rides, broke a bottle of brandy over the plane and endeavoured to take off, to discover that, just as in Cascade Bay, his floats were waterlogged and his radio inoperative. Taking two carrier pigeons on board, jettisoning food, spare parts and all but eight hours of fuel, he made it to Australia in just over six.*"<sup>434</sup>

Chichester finally landed in Jervis Bay on the South Coast of NSW on 6 June 1931, completing the first east-west solo crossing of the Tasman Sea by aircraft.<sup>435</sup> He left Sydney on 3 July 1931 bound for England via Japan but on 15 August he crashed at Katsuura and the flight was abandoned.<sup>436</sup>



**Figure 133 (Left):** The upturned *Madame Elijah* in the lagoon. **(Right):** Francis Chichester repairing one of the plane's wings in the old Cargo Shed. (Photos: LHI Museum website).

In their Bicentennial publication *Flypast*, Parnell and Boughton<sup>437</sup> discuss early proposals for a trans-Tasman air service:

*"[On] 3 May 1936 Capt [PG] Taylor stated his visit to Melbourne 'had resulted in final arrangements concerning organistaion and personnel for the inauguration of a regular Tasman air service' which would commence as soon as plans submitted by the Trans-Tasman air Service development were approved; this was seen as 'the first section of a British air service across the Pacific Ocean, linking Australia and New Zealand with suva, Honolulu and Vancouver. This would complete the plans of the late Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and Mr CTP Ulm'; [on] 12 May 1936 news [was] released that Capt Taylor, as requested, had provided 'an exhaustive report on weather conditions likely to be encountered by aircraft engaged...on the Tasman service'; he favoured the direct route, Sydney-Auckland, with Lord Howe*

<sup>434</sup> Ibid, pp.162-3

<sup>435</sup> Parnell & Boughton 1988, p.467

<sup>436</sup> Ibid.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid. p.121

*Island available for emergency use; a route from Brisbane could not make emergency use of Norfolk Island”.*

In an article titled ‘Fifty Years of Commercial Aviation at Lord Howe Island’, islander Chris Murray<sup>438</sup> writes:

*“In December 1937, New Zealander, [Captain] John Burgess [of Imperial Airways], flew a Shorts [S.23] Empire Class flying boat, “Centaurus”, on a marathon flight from England to New Zealand. It was not long before commercial flying boat operations between Australia and New Zealand were established by Tasman Empire Airways Ltd (TEAL), a service that became vital in World War II, owing to the danger to shipping from Japanese submarines. The lagoon at Lord Howe Island was surveyed as an emergency landing strip, and two huge communication towers were built near the Anderson [Road] / Neds Beach [Road] intersection to facilitate navigation on the trans-Tasman route.”*

Burgess’ proving flight was carried out in four legs – Southampton to Darwin, Sydney to Auckland, Auckland to Sydney and Darwin to Southampton, a round trip totalling 82 days.<sup>439</sup> The weather station on Lord Howe Island was supplemented by one on Norfolk Island and two observers stationed permanently on trans-Tasman ships<sup>440</sup>. TEAL was operating the trans-Tasman route by April 1940 with a fare of £30 between Sydney and Auckland. After only two months operations, the flying time between the two cities in a Cabot class flying boat had been reduced from 8 hours 45 minutes to 7 hours 32 minutes, at an average speed of 176 miles per hour.<sup>441</sup>

However, it was to be thirteen years after Chichester’s epic flight before the next flight to Lord Howe Island. Chris Murray continues:<sup>442</sup>

*“During World War II the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) commenced training and transport flights in Catalinas, flying from Rathmines base [on Lake Macquarie] near Newcastle to Lord Howe Island. These flights operated throughout the war about once a month, and often flew via the Rose Bay flying boat base in order to transport island residents to and from the mainland. They provided a vital supply line for supplies, medical evacuations and passenger transport at a time when the shipping service had become unreliable”.*

*“The experience gathered during the war years opened the opportunity for post-war commercial aviation. Trans Oceanic Airways [TOA], a company formed by ex-RAAF pilots like Brian Monkton and P G Taylor, flew the first commercial survey flight in May 1947, when one of their converted Sunderland aircraft was diverted from Noumea [New Caledonia] to Lord Howe Island for a medical evacuation. A regular commercial service commenced in August 1947 and continued until 1953. First Phil Dignam Jnr, then Ron and Hazel Payten were the airline agents.*

<sup>438</sup> *The Signal*, Vol.4, No. 137, 10 July 1997, p.3

<sup>439</sup> Parnell & Boughton 1988, p.467

<sup>440</sup> *Ibid.* p.121

<sup>441</sup> Parnell & Boughton 1988, p.123

<sup>442</sup> *The Signal*, Vol.4, No. 137, 10 July 1997, p.3

The first air service to Lord Howe Island commenced on 1 August 1947, departing Rose Bay with 22 passengers on a flight arranged by David Jones Travel Service.<sup>443</sup> By December that year, QANTAS had commenced competition with TOA, using Catalina flying boats (Class PB2B-2).<sup>444</sup>

*“The Catalinas carried up to 14 passengers, but QANTAS upgraded to larger Sandringham flying boats in 1950. Tom and Babe Payten were the airline agents. However, a small route like Lord Howe could not support two operators, so rationalisation took place in 1951, when QANTAS withdrew from Lord Howe Island and TOA from Noumea”.*

Trans Oceanic Airways Pty Ltd, registered in NSW, operated flying boat services from Sydney to Lord Howe Island, Grafton, Port Macquarie and Hobart, scheduled services commencing on 2 October 1948. TOA was sold to Ansett Flying Boat Services Pty Ltd in May 1953<sup>445</sup>.



**Figure 134** Qantas Empire Airways Catalina flying boat VH-EAW disembarking passengers on the lagoon at Lord Howe Island. This particular plane was blown up at her mooring at Rose Bay in Sydney Harbour in 1949. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints 4 Mis4-21, LHI Museum Collection).

**Figure 135** Harry Woolnough and Jim Cunningham in the Civil Aviation service launch with flying boat *Australis*. (Photo: Ian Esler / Eiril Esler-Davies prints, EED11, LHI Museum Collection).



<sup>443</sup> Parnell & Boughton 1988, p.212

<sup>444</sup> *The Signal*, Vol.4, No. 137, 10 July 1997, p.3

<sup>445</sup> Parnell & Boughton 1988, p.431

Ansett Flying Boat Services Pty Ltd, registered in NSW, operated the routes of Barrier Reef Airways Pty Ltd from May 1952 and then Trans Oceanic Airways in May 1953, the latter purchase enabling all operations to be based at Rose Bay. <sup>446</sup>



**Figure 136** This is a composite photograph of an Ansett Sandringham flying boat superimposed on a photo of the Shaw Savill refrigerated freighter 'Runic' wrecked on Middleton Reef. Ansett organised two charter flights circa 1960 over the wreck site. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, Mis4-18, LHI Museum Collection).

**Figure 137** Ansett's flying boat passenger terminal near the jetty. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM266, LHI Museum Collection).



In the mid-1950s islanders voted unanimously to have an airstrip<sup>447</sup>. On 9 May 1960 a committee was formed to investigate the building of an airstrip on Lord Howe Island which would enable the withdrawal of Ansett's Short S.25 Sandringhams.<sup>448</sup> In May 1968, as a result of meetings between the Commonwealth Department of Civil Aviation, NSW State Transport and Airlines of NSW, a decision was made to construct an airstrip 4,200 feet long suitable for Fokker F-27 Friendship services. The high-winged twin turbo-prop Friendship was at the time the mainstay of Australia's regional network. Agreement was reached on 2 October 1970 for construction of a runway 4,000 feet long, to be completed in 1970. The Commonwealth Government was to pay up to \$750,000, with the NSW Government paying the balance as well as half the maintenance costs. The project did not proceed at this time since the projected cost had blown out to \$2.5 million, with the Commonwealth's share being \$1 million.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid., p.422

<sup>447</sup> *The Signal*, no.13, 23 November 1955

<sup>448</sup> Parnell & Boughton, 1988, p.294

In August 1973 the NSW Government agreed to a much shorter, 3,000 feet runway and in March 1974 Australian Army engineers commenced construction of the runway as a training exercise. 31 May 1974 was the date originally nominated as the last scheduled service to be flown by Sandringham *Beachcomber*, however the service would continue until the runway was completed.<sup>449</sup>



**Figure 138** Ansett Sandringham flying boat *Beachcomber* in the lagoon. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 4, DM580, LHI Museum Collection).

On 9 June 1974 *Beachcomber* was blown ashore and the decision was made to salvage the aircraft. Seventy-five stranded passengers were flown out on 13-14 June 1974 by VH-BRF, which was being prepared for its overseas delivery flight.<sup>450</sup>



**Figure 139** The construction of the airstrip was an Army engineering exercise code-named “Kentia Palm”, with design by the NSW Public Works department. (Photos: **(Left)**: Miscellaneous prints 2, Mis32, **(Right)**: Miscellaneous prints 2, Mis75, LHI Museum Collection)

On 4 August 1974 the military transport Caribou A4-140 landed on the unfinished runway for a medical evacuation flight<sup>451</sup>. This was the first land-based aircraft to land on the island. On 15 August VH-BRF made its last flight to Lord Howe Island and, after repairs, *Beachcomber* was test-flown from the island on 20 August. The last flying boat flight to Lord Howe Island was made by *Beachcomber* on 10 September 1974.<sup>452</sup>

<sup>449</sup> Ibid.

<sup>450</sup> Ibid.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

The long and colourful period of flying boats operating out of Rose Bay in Sydney came to an end when, on 25 September 1974, VH-BRF, now re-registered as N158J *Excalibur VIII* departed Rose Bay for America, followed by VH-BRC, re-registered as N158C *Southern Cross* left for delivery to Antilles Air Boats in the Caribbean, the last flying boat to leave Rose Bay.<sup>453</sup> Unfortunately, there is little, if any, physical evidence remaining at the Rose Bay Flying Boat Base. Even the sign to the base on the kerb of the street leading to Rose Bay Sailing Club has been removed in the last two years<sup>454</sup>.

The first civil aircraft to land on the new runway, on 11 September 1974, was Aero Commander 690A VH-ATF. On 18 September De Havilland Heron VH-CLV was chartered, with crew, from Connair for a proving flight to the island and the next day it commenced a service of four return flights per week.<sup>455</sup>

On 28 February 1975 the major carrier, Airlines of NSW (formerly Butler Air Transport Ltd, a division of Ansett Transport Industries (Operations) Pty Ltd) discontinued its Heron service to Lord Howe Island and the era of commuter services to the island began<sup>456</sup>.

Norfolk Island Airlines Ltd, registered in Norfolk Island and Queensland, commenced Brisbane-Norfolk Island and Brisbane-Lord Howe Island-Norfolk Island services on 2 October 1975<sup>457</sup>. North Coast Airlines, registered in NSW, had begun Brisbane-Lismore-Grafton-Coffs Harbour services on 30 January 1973, extending to Newcastle (Aeropelican) on 20 August 1973.<sup>458</sup>

In 1975 Oxley Airlines Pty Ltd, registered in NSW, commenced charters from Port Macquarie to Lord Howe Island, with scheduled services from 13 June 1975 and from Newcastle to Lord Howe Island from 1977. A service from Port Macquarie to Armidale, Inverell, Moree, Narrabri, Gunnedah and Tamworth connected with the Lord Howe Island service. Oxley also operated daily services from Taree to Brisbane.<sup>459</sup>

After extending their services on the North Coast and into New England, from 1 August 1976 North Coast Airlines operated the Coffs Harbour-Lord Howe Island route as a commuter service. The airline's name was subsequently changed to Air Eastland and, with others, on 1 August 1978 former East Coast Airlines.<sup>460</sup>

In 1978, at the age of 38, entrepreneur and publisher Dick Smith, piloting a single-engine Bell Jet Ranger, made the first helicopter flight to the island, setting a world record for a return flight from Sydney to Lord Howe Island, a distance of 1185 km.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> Parnell & Boughton 1988, p.294

<sup>454</sup> The authors, personal observation.

<sup>455</sup> Ibid.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid., p.428

<sup>458</sup> Ibid.

<sup>459</sup> Ibid.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid.

<sup>461</sup> Wikipedia

Avdev Airlines, registered in NSW, was the operating name for Aviation Developments Operations Pty Ltd. On 25 November 1980 Avdev purchased the assets of Advanced Airlines of Australia. During 1981 Avdev purchased Thorpes Transport Commuter Air Services and Davey Air Services Pty Ltd. Avdev's services from Sydney operated with aircraft initially marked Avdev Airlines Davey, later Avdev Airlines. After a partial merger with East Coast, Avdev commenced operations on the Avdev NSW country routes from 27 April 1984. From 15 March 1984 Norfolk Island Airlines Ltd purchased the Sydney- Lord Howe Island route licence and one aircraft from Avdev Airlines and operated that service with aircraft initially marked Norfolk Island Airlines-Lord Howe Island Airlines and later Lord Howe Island Airlines. The purchase of Connair Airlines routes and equipment was announced on 13 June 1985, the charter operations were then sold and the company name was changed in May 1986 to Norfolk Airlines.<sup>462</sup>



**Figure 140** Passengers disembarking from Advance Airlines Rockwell 690-A Turbo Commander aircraft VH-ATF at Lord Howe Island Airport terminal. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints 4, Mis4-34, LHI Museum Collection).

**Figure 141** Connair (formerly Connellan Airways Ltd) de Havilland DH-114 Heron aircraft VH-CLV at the airport with long wheelbase Land Rovers to take visitors to their lodges. Most lodges now have more comfortable minibuses. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints Mis4-57, LHI Museum Collection).



The Heron aircraft in the figure above was originally delivered to the German Luftwaffe in 1958 to test communications equipment and was purchased by Connellan Airways Ltd in 1970.<sup>463</sup>

<sup>462</sup> Parnell & Boughton, pp.423, 429

<sup>463</sup> De Havilland Aircraft Register.



## Air Safety

The often extreme weather conditions, the mountainous terrain and the dangers of landing either on a shallow lagoon or a short airstrip have posed hazards to aviation on Lord Howe Island since Francis Chichester's historic flight there in 1931. The fatal RAAF Catalina crash in 1948 has been dealt with under the theme of Defence. There were several incidents involving the beaching of flying boats during the days of their operation to the island. Several aircraft have been involved in incidents in recent years and there has been a fatal crash.

Air safety and the quality of airline operations and maintenance standards was to come under government and public scrutiny as a result of an air disaster and subsequent inquiries.

On 2 October 1994 a Rockwell Aero Commander operated by Seaview Air crashed into the sea en route to Lord Howe Island, killing all nine on board. On 17 October, the relevant Commonwealth Government Minister announced a judicial inquiry was to be conducted by Sir Lawrence Street into the operations of Seaview Air and its relations with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). On 23 December, the Minister announced the appointment of a second commissioner, Mr James Staunton, who later replaced Sir Lawrence Street. The Commission of Inquiry into the relations between the CAA and Seaview Air commenced on 16 January 1995. The intended reporting date to the then Minister of Transport, Mr Laurie Brereton was to be 31 May 1995, but the report did not appear until 8 October 1996, two years after the accident, by which time there was a new Coalition Government in power in Canberra and a new Minister, John Sharp. Three other inquiries were conducted by the Parliamentary (Morris) Committee, the Federal Police inquiry into dealings between some CAA officers and Seaview, and by the BASI investigation. Some CAA staff were dismissed.

On 16 November 1994, after an intense period of surveillance, the CAA grounded four airlines - Seaview Air, Yanda Airlines, Newcastle Aviation and Uzu Air-. They were able to resume flights once deficiencies in their operations had been rectified. Meanwhile, Qantas AirlinK was also the subject of media attention over safety concerns. The Parliamentary inquiry into air safety received a submission from a CAA officer claiming that 200 Australian aircraft including commuter planes could lose wings due to structural fatigue.

On 8 October 1996 The [Staunton] *Report of the Commissioner of the Commission of Inquiry into the Relations Between the CAA and Seaview Air* was particularly scathing of CAA operations and identified a number of systemic problems. Recommendations included action against two CAA officers, and suggested mechanisms for responsibility, accountability and documentation. There seems to be no official Government response to the Inquiry aside from comments reported in Hansard and a Ministerial Statement in Parliament. The Minister urged changes to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and its management board positions. BASI undertook a separate investigation of the incident.

Safety on flights to and from Lord Howe Island is now a very high priority, with strict limits on checked-in and carry-on luggage. Any luggage over the weight limits may have to wait for a later flight, not necessarily on the same day. Passengers leaving



the island are weighed with their hand luggage to ensure that planes are not overloaded and to allow for optimum weight distribution on the departing aircraft.

### The Weather Holds Sway

Air transport to Lord Howe Island has always been susceptible to disruption by inclement weather. Flying boats often had to delay their flights from Rose Bay to the island if the weather conditions at Lord Howe were not conducive to landing on the lagoon. The author's cousin had a delayed start to her honeymoon in 1973 when her aircraft was held in Sydney.<sup>464</sup> On the other hand, some lucky honeymooners had a better experience, when their aircraft could not take off from Lord Howe and they scored another day or two in paradise. Strong winds can also interfere with flights to and from Lord Howe Island. In September 2010 the authors had an extra two days on the island because aircraft could neither take off nor land in the severe cross winds buffeting the airstrip at that time.

On 19 June 1996 a severe storm with heavy rain (approximately 250mm in one night) caused low level flooding on Lord Howe Island and damage to the tarmac on the airstrip, with large potholes in the middle of the runway. The State Member of Parliament for Port Macquarie, Ms Wendy Machin reported to Parliament that Pinetrees guest house, the island's administration office and the sports field had been flooded and that only 400 metres of the airstrip could be used, insufficient for the regular Dash 8 aircraft then being operated by Eastern Airlines. Phone and fax lines were down and holiday makers were in for an enforced bonus holiday.<sup>465</sup>



**Figure 142** Severe storm damage to the airstrip in 1996 caused the cessation of regular flights and necessitated emergency flights by RAAF helicopters and Caribou aircraft. (Photo: Norm Simpson prints, img727, LHI Museum Collection).

Bob Debus, then Minister for Corrective Services, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister Assisting the Minister for the Arts, reported that seven houses had been flooded and the occupants evacuated. Sixty people at Pinetrees Lodge were

<sup>464</sup> Dorothea Mascord, pers.comm.

<sup>465</sup> <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/PARLMENT/hansArt.nsf/V3Key/LA19960619035>

relocated to other lodges. In accordance with emergency management arrangements, known as Displan, the State Emergency Service unit of 16 people on the island responded to this emergency under their local controller, Pauline Skeggs.

It was established that the assessment of the airstrip and the supply of oxygen for the Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital were the most immediate priorities. This resulted in a request to Emergency Management Australia for helicopter transport and two Navy Sea Hawk helicopters were dispatched to the island. One of those aircraft carried a RAAF engineer whose job was to assess the airstrip for the landing of RAAF aircraft. Six medical oxygen cylinders required by the hospital were delivered on the same aircraft.

The airstrip was assessed as being suitable for use by RAAF Caribou aircraft which are able to land in very short spaces, and a request was made to Emergency Management Australia for two Caribou to fly to the island. The request was subsequently approved and they were soon on their way to Taree. The first of the Caribou was to fly to the island the following morning, if weather conditions permitted, with a Federal Airports Corporation engineer qualified to assess the runway for use by commercial airlines.

The Caribou also carried two Department of Community Services representatives who provided financial and welfare assistance to those in need; nine State Emergency Service volunteers to assist with the clean-up operations; and approximately 600 kilograms of stores, such as batteries, generators, cleaning equipment, disinfectant and other material necessary in the clean-up after the storm. Minister Debus reported that there were 400 tourists on the island and approximately 80 of them were due to leave but, not surprisingly, were prepared to stay on the island for a little longer - they had to in any event. Access to the island by anything other than the RAAF Caribou was to be determined by the engineer from the Federal Airports Corporation, who would assess the airfield and help to decide on appropriate response actions to be put into place.

Wendy Machin reported to Parliament that the island had just received its routine resupply by ship on the previous Sunday so there was no immediate concern about food shortages on the island. She extolled the natural values and tourism potential of the island and expressed the view that NSW parliamentarians could justifiably expect that Lord Howe Island might have received a little more financial assistance from Canberra - she knew that this was a sore point with the then State administration as well.

Ms Machin reminded members that another major blow to the island's tourist industry in the previous couple of years was the tragic Seaview airline crash which occurred when an aircraft operated by that airline was on its way to Lord Howe Island. Locals as well as tourists were involved in the crash and the operator of the airline was well known. Seaview operated out of Lord Howe Island and, after the accident, revised its management, changed its operations and changed its name to Kentia Link. It ran services up and down the coast as well as some freight services to Lord Howe Island. Ms Machin advised that she had learned that a licence had just been issued to a second airline, known as Air Pacific, to operate services to Lord Howe Island. Ms Machin expressed the opinion that this decision not to give this

licence to Kentia Link or the former Seaview was likely to be a disappointment and was a tough decision to make. She hoped that air services would soon be able to resume using the air strip.

### **Recent Air Services to the Island**

By the end of 1992 Eastern Australian Airlines had consolidated their position as the leading regional airline in Australia. From the end of October 1993, all Eastern's flights adopted the QF designator as part of the Qantas Regional Airline Group. By this time the fleet comprised seven de Havilland DHC-8 Dash 8s and four British Aerospace BAe Jetstream 31s. Eastern connected the ports of Armidale, Brisbane, Canberra, Coolangatta, Cooma, Dubbo, Grafton, Lord Howe Island, Moree, Narrabri, Newcastle / Williamtown, Port Macquarie, Sydney, Tamworth and Taree. They added additional services to Lord Howe Island in 1997 with the Jetstream 31 aircraft, giving the island an extra 576 seats over the August – September period, an increase of 15% over the same period the previous year.

In 2001 tourists to Lord Howe Island could travel from Sydney or Brisbane domestic air terminals with Qantas' wholly-owned subsidiary airlines - Eastern Australia Airlines and Sunstate Airlines; which were then both flying under the QantasLink banner. Qantaslink is currently the exclusive scheduled airline carrier to Lord Howe Island (LDH), flying 32-seat Bombardier Dash 8 – 100/200 aircraft most days from Sydney (SYD). Weekend flights depart from Brisbane (BNE), and a seasonal service has operated from Port Macquarie (PQQ) since 2006. Some visitors also arrive on Lord Howe by charter or private aircraft<sup>466</sup>. Flying time today in the Dash 8 is under two hours direct from Sydney and Brisbane<sup>467</sup>.

At the time of writing this report an impending problem which had not been resolved was the possibility that Qantaslink would phase out in about five years the Dash 8 100/200 aircraft which carry up to 36 economy passengers. Their replacement in the Qantaslink fleet, the bigger Bombardier Q400 aircraft (74 economy passengers) are too large to use the short runway at Lord Howe Island with a full load of passengers. If its load were reduced to say 50 passengers, the bigger aircraft would be able to land on the existing runway.<sup>468</sup> Further extension of the runway would have major environmental impacts on Blinky's Beach (at the eastern end) or the lagoon (at the western end). The Lord Howe Island Board has recommended liaison with the current airline operator to investigate future proposals and runway requirements for aircraft on the LHI route.<sup>469</sup>

The airstrip on Lord Howe Island is not only a vital part of the tourism infrastructure of the island but is important for military training exercises, medical evacuations and visits by the Royal flying Doctor Service.

<sup>466</sup> <http://www.lordhowe.com/gettingthere.asp>

<sup>467</sup> <http://www.talpacific.com/main.asp?Destination=LH&Info=Getting%20There>

<sup>468</sup> Stan Fenton, pers. comm..

<sup>469</sup> Strategic Plan for the LHIGWHA Draft, May 2010, p.36

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Railway station, highway, lane, train, ferry, wharf, tickets, carriage, dray, stock route, canal, bridge, footpath, aerodrome, barge, harbour, lighthouse, shipwreck, canal, radar station, toll gate, horse yard, coach stop.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Boatsheds, Government Reserve, Lagoon Road<sup>470</sup>;  
 Cargo Shed related to wharf, Government Reserve, Lagoon Road<sup>471</sup>, including the space in which Chichester and locals repaired his plane in 1930;  
 Ned's Beach and Ramp, Government Reserve, west end, Ned's Beach Road<sup>472</sup>;  
 Lord Howe Island Airport (the largest human-made feature on the island)<sup>473</sup>;  
 Links to remains of flying boat base at Rose Bay?  
 Radar unit outside LHI Museum;  
 Shipwrecks on Middleton Reef - over 90 possible, 38 known, 26 identified, including the *Runic*;  
 Sled, flying boat float and other transport items in LHI Museum;  
 Lighter barge;  
 Motor launch 'Albatross', former flying boat tender  
 Viking 2  
 Comet's Hole, Sylph's Hole  
 All Shipwreck sites

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Boatsheds, Government Reserve, Lagoon Road<sup>474</sup>;  
 Cargo Shed related to wharf, Government Reserve, Lagoon Road<sup>475</sup>, including the space in which Chichester and locals repaired his plane in 1930, Former Ocean View boatshed and Norfolk Island Pines;  
 LHI Museum Collection, including sled, float from flying boat, radar unit outside;  
 Motor launch 'Albatross' (former flying boat tender);  
 All shipwrecks

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<sup>470</sup> RES LH.23

<sup>471</sup> RES LH.26

<sup>472</sup> RES LH.41

<sup>473</sup> RES potential future item

<sup>474</sup> RES LH.23

<sup>475</sup> RES LH.26

## 2.4 Building settlements, towns and cities

### 2.4.1 Towns, suburbs and villages

*These are activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages*

#### North and South

The first settlement on Lord Howe Island was made in Hunter Bay, in the area now known as Old Settlement. With no maps to guide their passage to the island, and a combination of high mountains to the south, big swells and a rocky coastline to the west and a shallow reef to the east, it is likely the newcomers found Hunter Bay a safe sheltering spot, with fresh water in a nearby creek. Certainly, they would have been protected from the strong northerly winds and found an easy landing place along the shallow sandy beach – to be later recorded by Captain Denham (1853) as a ‘boat pool’ on his hydrographic survey.

H J White’s earlier survey of 1835 shows the settlement of Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman as five structures at the western end of Hunter Bay, on either side of the creek, known today as Old Settlement. Archaeological investigation of this area in 2004 identified the sites of structures associated with first settlement but the wider area was not fully investigated due to the difficulty in determining the exact location from White’s map. It is assumed that the disturbance of this area during the 1920s-30s when residents used the hillside as a rifle range, along with land slippage may have obliterated some evidence.

Just why the first settlers chose to locate their garden some distance away, behind the dunes of Blenkinthorpe Beach, is not recorded, but perhaps the sandy soil and fresh water swamp may have been conducive to their early attempts at agriculture and the vegetation on the sandy shore easier to clear.

Ashdown et al were bought out by Richard Dawson and Captain Poole and in their advertisement for ‘a store and station’ on the island for whaling and other vessels in 1841, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that ‘The Settlement is on the West side of the Island’ suggesting that they continued the occupation at Old Settlement.<sup>476</sup> In 1841, Captain Middleton and his wife Eliza were also farming in the vicinity of neighbouring North Bay.

Foulis’ memory map of the island, drawn in 1851 shows a cluster of buildings at Old Settlement and another on the site near Windy Point presumed to be the property he established following his arrival on the island in 1844. Foulis’ property was subsequently transferred to Thomas and Margaret Andrews (now the site of ‘Pinetrees’). The Andrews, who had arrived in 1842 as part of the Poole-Dawson partnership, farmed first at Hunter Bay, then worked for Dr John Foulis, before moving to join the Wrights and Moseleys in a farming partnership at the southern end of the island at Big Creek.

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<sup>476</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 13 September 1841

The next significant settlement was made by Nathan Thompson and his party of 6 on land between Ned's Beach and Signal Point (which became known as Thompson's Farm). His farm and gardens would in time become the largest on the island.

In Denham's survey of the island (1853), the limits of settlement as they existed then extended from Hunter Bay (north) to Wright's farm (south). In between Denham delineated the plots of cleared land and marked buildings in the vicinity of Nathan Thompson's house, and settlements at Andrew's Farm; Moseley's Farm slightly SW of Look-out Mound (now Transit Hill) opposite the South Entrance through the reef, and Wright's Farm at Soldier's Creek.

Denham identifies temporary anchorage outside the reef at Hunter Bay, a Boat Haven on the western side of the island and a 'best landing' at the southern end of Middle Beach, with an observation spot above the beach. He shows a single track extending west from there to the flagstaff near Andrew's Farm. Proximity to landing sites does not appear to have necessarily dictated settlement patterns and it is likely that the choice of where to settle was a more pragmatic decision. Denham's survey was subsequently used as the base map that geologist Henry Wilkinson used in 1882 to sketch the geology of the island. Wilkinson's map shows that all the settlements had been established on areas of 'blown sand' where land would have been easier to farm.

With the first residents needing to feed not only themselves but make their living from fresh produce sold to passing ships, settlers took advantage of natural resources including good soil, fresh water, and shelter from prevailing winds to select the sites on which to settle. With no system of formal land acquisition, they exercised their own freedom to choose where they erected dwellings and cultivated land. Interestingly, they settled as rural farmers, not together in a village cluster, but spread out along the island, with curtilage around their dwellings and sufficient land to support their needs. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these early arrivals to Lord Howe Island had effectively forecast the limits of arable land, which in turn would influence future settlement patterns.

During the 1860s, new arrival Captain William Nichols took up land at North Bay but his wife found it too remote from the 'social scene' and they moved to Old Settlement. Ned King settled above Middle Beach while T B Wilson, who arrived in 1878, built his house between Signal Point and Old Settlement. Not everyone who came to Lord Howe Island decided to stay, but their legacy remains in names which are associated with their settlements. These include Whybrow Ridge, Lord's Garden, Jim's Point and the site of Wainwright's farm at Lover's Bay.

Captain Armstrong's arrival in 1878 marked the start of the unification of disparate settlements across the island with the installation of a track along the eastern lagoon foreshore which he noted among his achievements, 'cleared a road from north to south'.<sup>477</sup> This presumably provided the start of a continuous link between north and south. The terms 'north' and 'south' continue to be used by residents, who describe anything south of the airport as 'down south' and a visit to collect the mail from the post office as a trip 'up north'. Many subsequent civic improvements in the time

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<sup>477</sup> Armstrong

before the establishment of the Board of Control in 1913 can be credited to Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell. His commitment to the island and to the welfare of its residents was significant and the construction of a number of roads, improved jetty facilities, cart tracks and the clearing of land for a sportsground were among his initiatives.

Over time, some properties were consolidated through marriage, while others were subdivided for children or offered as partnerships where owners had no issue. By the turn of the century, the families Dignam, Payten, Retmock, Fenton, Innes, Kirby, Austic and Baxter took up land which in-filled areas between original settlements and by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the island's DNA and the framework for settlement had been secured.

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century surveys were conducted for the purpose of securing land title for residents rather than for any formal town planning. They show the principal pattern of settlement extending along the western side of the island. A map of 1898 shows, apart from the cleared areas for gardens, the markings for dwellings, a road reserve and numerous tracks, a Government reserve with the location of Government House, the school and the lockup. The post office on Campbell Stevens property is identified, as is the site of the general cemetery at Ned's Beach.



**Figure 143** 'Map of Lord Howe Island showing Permissive Occupancies'. The map has no printed date but is post-1882 and signed by Murphy Govt Surveyor July 1909. (Source: LHIB)

Surveyor Ferrier's survey (1923) identifies portions of land along the foreshore for the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Church of England, and Recreation Ground Church adjacent to the school (see Land Tenure). The relocation of the churches to



a new 'church paddock' in the 1960s subsequently created a religious precinct on Middle Beach Road.

### The island's 'CBD'

The erection of the palm seed shed in 1921 (now the site of the Public Hall), the opening of William [Campbell] Thompson's store in 1927 and the establishment of a wireless station, from which postal services were dispensed from 1929, led to the creation of the equivalent of Lord Howe Island's 'town centre'. Here, residents would call to collect their mail, do their shopping and banking. As a community, they gathered at the seed shed to strip seeds and pack them for export. In the evenings, the seed shed would be cleared and set up for dances and after-hours entertainment. Today, the Public Hall (1934) is the centrepiece of the island's commercial hub, often referred to as the 'cbd'. This precinct currently comprises the following commercial operations – the Lord Howe Island Post Office (postcode 2898), the 'Co-op', Thompson's General Store (with Commonwealth Bank agency), a clothing store (Harrup's Boutique) a homewares and hairdressing shop (Not Just A Salon) and a café / restaurant (Humpty Mick's). The 'CBD' also has public facilities including the Community Hall, the Powerhouse, a shelter with tourist information and free local phone, a public telephone booth and LHI Board notice boards.

In 2006, a precinct plan for future options for the 'cbd' was prepared to address a number of matters including the visual amenity of the Powerhouse, traffic management and parking in the vicinity of the businesses in Ned's Beach Road.



**Figure 144 (Left):** View looking southwest from public phone site outside Humpty Mick's café towards the lagoon, with the Public Hall on right and the Powerhouse on left, with a row of Norfolk Island Pine trees beyond. The Powerhouse restricts views from the 'CBD' to the lagoon and mountains as well as producing an audible hum from its generators; **(Right):** The view southeast from the same point across Ned's Beach Road to the Post Office, with the tourist information shelter obscured by recently installed planter boxes made from Norfolk Island Pine timber. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 5 September 2010).

### The Backblocks

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the foreshore land had been taken up, prompting the next wave of settlement to accept smaller portions of land on the western side of the island. Known locally as the 'back blocks' (more recently, with tongue-in-cheek, as the 'eastern suburbs') this elevated area could accommodate dwellings and gardens, but was inadequate for grazing, prompting the use of common areas for shared pastoralism.



As island families expanded, some land holdings were subdivided to accommodate younger generations, most notably, areas occupied by the extended families of the Nichols, Thompsons, Paytens and Wilsons. As a result, some areas of the island are dominated by family groups, and have been designated by association as 'Nathan's Valley', 'Payten's Selection' and 'Wilsonville'.

### Community 'Hubs'

Another feature of settlement has been the concentration of clusters of official housing for the island's communications, meteorological and medical / school staff. A government precinct developed around the site of Government House from the 1890s and has become the headquarters for the Lord Howe Island Board's operations.



**Figure 145 (Left):** View east along Bowker Avenue to the Board's compound; **(Right):** The Liquor Store, next to the Board's office's. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 7 September 2010)

### Other Community Facilities

The first sporting facilities developed on the island (bowls and cricket) share adjoining land and proximity to the island's school. The hospital and the doctor's residence are located within close proximity of each other on Lagoon Road. The new building for the Lord Howe Island Historical Society's Museum, at the corner of Lagoon Road and Middle Beach Road, has become a major focal point for both locals and tourists. Further east up Middle Beach Road, Joy's Shop is an old-style general store, selling a wide range of foods, household items, clothing and souvenirs, is another hub, with a public phone outside. 'Church Paddock', nearby is another focal point for those islanders and visitors who are church goers. Top Shop, and the adjacent garage with fuel pump, on Anderson Road, are another hub for locals.



**Figure 146 (Left):** Farnell Park, the island's Sportsground, between the Central School and 'Pinetrees', within the Bowling Club in the background. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 7 September 2010); **(Right):** Many islanders are Seventh Day Adventists and religiously observe the Sabbath on Saturdays. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 27 February 2009).



**Figure 147 (Left):** Looking east up Middle Beach Road to Joy's Shop. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 27 February 2009); **(Right):** Top Shop in Anderson Road. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 September, 2010).

## Tourism

Unlike the mainland, where tourism often creates a specific precinct with visitor facilities including accommodation, restaurants, shops and related businesses, Lord Howe Island's tourist accommodation has evolved according to the location of original guest houses and lodges. Because most were originally residences and run by island families who were proud to offer personal service, their scale and character is generally sympathetic and consistent with planning controls. The benefit of their individuality is that each venue can offer a unique experience arising from its siting, aspect and facilities, without competition being a driving factor.

While some tourist activities are conducted from lodges or private homes, the headquarters for marine and land-based eco-tourism are located in a cluster of boatsheds on the western side of the island along the lagoon foreshore. Many lodges have their own bikes for guests to ride but a long-running bike-hire business is near the boat sheds on Lagoon Road.



**Figure 148 (Left):** One of the boatsheds on the lagoon foreshore now used by water-based tourism operators. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 23 February 2009; **(Right):**

### Roads

Access along and across the island began as simple foot tracks and remained so for many years. Campbell Steven's diary records numerous complaints about people assuming the right to thoroughfares on other people's land so presumably, there were rights of way and boundary paths which were generally accessible. The use of horses and bullocks to pull loads on wooden sleds with metal runners necessitated widening the tracks and sand and crushed coral were found to be an excellent track base, particularly during wet weather when water could drain away quickly.

Denham's map (1853) shows a path between the observation spot above Middle Beach and the lagoon flagstaff opposite Andrews' farm. Because landing on the island was weather, wave and tide dependent, the early system of flags signalling which side to call for stores or disembark, early residents had need to access both sides of the island. Captain Armstrong mentions among his achievements, the clearing of a road from north to south, which skirted the lagoon foreshore and would eventually link the northern and southern settlements.



**Figure 149** Track along foreshore at Windy Point. (Photo: Special prints 14, LHI Museum Collection)

Stevens' diary for 1899 records that a "cart road [had been] cut from near Middle Beach Road through the back blocks to the old cart road", the completion of the

'point road' <sup>478</sup> on 19 July 1899, and the following day, the commencement of the road from the top of the cliffs at the northern end of Middle Beach, down to the Beach, completed on August 10 that same year. In September, work commenced on clearing a road from the western side to Middle Beach. <sup>479</sup>

Surveyor Ferrier's map of 1923 shows the location of a cleared track, which would become Ned's Beach Road and access through the 'backblocks', later to become Anderson Road.

With increased use of Ned's Beach for landing, particularly after the introduction of regular steamer traffic to the island and the establishment of the Department of Civil Aviation's base on the western side of the island, a more substantial route from east to west linking the two became desirable. Paths and tracks to residential dwellings became the foundation for roads as settlement increased. Photographs show these sandy tracks lined with vegetation, in many places the branches and fronds of trees arching over to form a canopy. They were used not just by pedestrian traffic, but by horses, pulling carts and sleds, so the surface was required to be soft and friable. Crushed coral and sand made a perfect base, although, as Hazel Payten recalls, the tracks became deeply rutted and the ruts filled with water after heavy rain.

Gradually the tracks were sealed with road base and their width increased sufficiently for two horses and sleighs to pass (although it was a tight squeeze). <sup>480</sup> With the advent of motor cars, the roads became wider, requiring many trees to be cut down. Because many of the paths and tracks traversed agricultural and pastoral land, measures were implemented for pedestrian safety. Wooden stiles over fences, turnstiles and gates were installed, many of which survive today on secondary tracks. By 1955, cattle grids had been installed to replace gates and proved successful and convenient. Roads were sealed subsequent to 1975 following representations by then Minister for Lands, the Hon Tom Lewis, who addressed the shortcomings of a number of the island's major utilities.



**Figure 150 (Left):** A turnstile of the type traditionally used on the island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 March 2009); **(Right):** Crushed glass used to resurface a residential driveway off Middle Beach Road. (Photo: 30 November 2009).

<sup>478</sup> Entry for July 18 1899 'working at road at Mrs Nichol's point

<sup>479</sup> Campbell Stevens diary

<sup>480</sup> Personal communication



In 2009, the first trial of the use of crushed glass (produced on the island at the Waste Management Facility) was initiated along the Smoking Tree Ridge Road. This road was originally created as a rough bush track to Boat Harbour by Gower Wilson, Ray Schick and Bob Whitfield in 1965 using a tractor to clear the undergrowth.



**Figure 151 (Left):** Looking east along Ned's Beach Road towards Anderson Road junction circa 1950s. (Photo: LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Section of old Lagoon Road near 'Kentia' cut off by construction of the airstrip in 1974. This is one of the few sections of road on the island that retains its character – unsealed and fringed with palms and over-arching trees. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 December 2009).

### Major Infrastructure

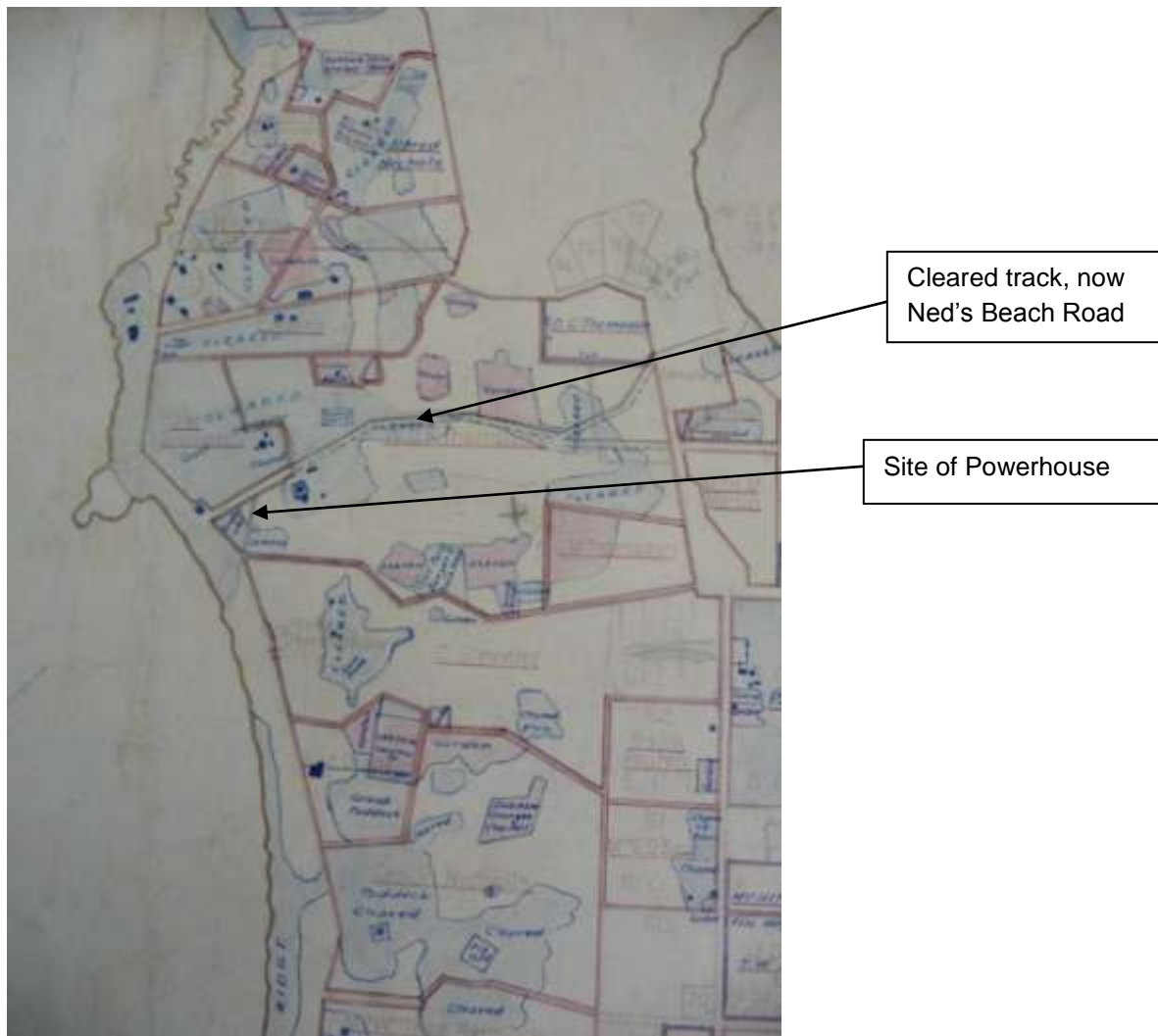
The two major items of the island's infrastructure, the airstrip and the Powerhouse, occasioned alterations to existing road alignments. After 1954, following the installation of generators to operate the island's electricity supply, a change was made to the junction of Lagoon Road and Ned's Beach Road. At the south-western extremity of WOS Thompson's land is a small triangular grassy area, on which the island's first power house shed would be constructed in 1954.

The visual bulk of the Department of Civil Aviation's power house created a traffic blind spot at the intersection of Ned's Beach Road and Lagoon Road, and with increasing traffic and a number of near-misses at this location, including a near fatality involving a truck turning right from Lagoon Road and a motorcycle turning left from Ned's Beach Road, a cement 'Silent Cop' was installed in September 1961 to indicate that it was a two-way traffic thoroughfare.<sup>481</sup> Silent cops have all but disappeared on the mainland, replaced after the introduction of diamond turns and by roundabouts. The example on Lord Howe Island is a rare survivor.



**Figure 152** 'Silent cop' at intersection of Ned's Beach Road and Lagoon Road, outside the Powerhouse. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 21 March 2010).

<sup>481</sup> *The Signal*, 20 September 1961, Vol.2, No.58



**Figure 153** Detail from amended survey plan, originally drawn by Surveyor Ferrier, 1923.  
(Source: State Records NSW)

The construction of the airstrip in 1974 created a major deviation, particularly for islanders accessing the 'south' of the island or for those living south of the airport getting to the northern parts of the island. They now had to skirt around the airstrip. A section of the old road, from the airport terminal turnoff, past the entrance to 'Kentia' and the Waste Management Facility, remains unsealed and retains the character that most of the island's roads once had.

A new concrete and timber jetty was opened on 25 February 1983 by then Deputy Premier and Minister for Public Works, The Hon. Jack Ferguson MP, replacing the old timber jetty, which had been built in 1956, with a crane and winch added in 1962..



**Figure 154 (Left):** The new jetty under construction, with the old jetty with hoist beside it. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints 4, Mis4-153, LHI Museum Collection); **(right):** The new jetty with *MV Island Trader* docked. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 1 March 2009).

### Controls

The controls on land tenure and, in turn, population growth, and more recently, the promotion of World Heritage values, have spared Lord Howe Island from an excess of commercial tourist development, and in particular the ugliness of mainland tourism strip development and competition for views along the foreshore of the lagoon. Early action restricting advertising signage has also contributed to the lack of visual clutter. The agent for Vacuum Oil, on erecting a large sign, was instructed to remove it on the grounds that it was 'too large for the island' and 'everyone knew where he was and what he supplied'.

There is a finite amount of land on Lord Howe Island which can be made available for future residential and other development without compromising the World Heritage values of the place. While restrictions on the number of new lots that can be created in future are a cause of considerable resentment among many of the descendants of the original permanent settlers, such controls are necessary to protect those values. Documents such as the Lord Howe Island Group World Heritage Property Strategic Plan for Management 2000-2005, The Draft Plan of Management for the Permanent Park Preserve (October 2008) and the draft Lord Howe Island Group World Heritage Property Strategic Plan 2007-2010 have had opportunities for community input and provide the management policies, strategies and actions necessary for conservation of the island's unique environmental qualities.

The Lord Howe Island Board, as the local government authority for the island, is subject to the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EPA) Act 1979* and the *Heritage Act 1977*. A Local Environmental Plan (LEP), Lord Howe Island LEP 2010, prepared to meet new model provisions for standard planning instruments was gazetted in 2010, replacing the old Regional Environmental Plan for the island. The LEP, complemented by a Development Control Plan (DCP) which is undergoing review, provides the planning controls for new development on the island. Heritage matters are dealt with under the provisions of the Heritage Act, with the island group recognised by its listing on the State Heritage Register. The schedule of items of the environmental heritage in the LEP is carried over from the REP but will be amended as a result of the findings of this Community-based Heritage Study. Archaeological items are protected under the provisions of the

*Commonwealth Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976 and the relics provisions of the NSW Heritage Act 1977.*

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Town plan, streetscape, village reserve, concentrations of urban functions, civic centre, subdivision pattern, abandoned town site, urban square, fire hydrant, market place, abandoned wharf, relocated civic centre, boundary feature, municipal Coat of Arms.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Layout of CBD;  
Streetscape of Lagoon Road;

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Potential conservation area encompassing Public Hall, Powerhouse, Post Office, Thompson's Store, Humpty Mick's, Larrup's Boutique;  
Unsealed section of old Lagoon Road, south of the airstrip



## 2.4.2 Land Tenure

*These are activities and processes for identifying forms of ownership and occupancy of land and water, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal*

The first residents of Lord Howe Island were effectively squatters, selecting land for settlement which could be safely accessed from the water, sheltered from the elements and in close proximity to potable water. The huge basalt peaks at the southern end of the island and steep cliffs and treacherous rocks on the eastern side necessarily dictated that preferred land for settlement hugged the western shoreline; while the thick vegetation on the island prevented penetration far inland.

In 1847, Captain Poole and his business partner Dr Foulis, anxious about the insecurity of their position in respect of land tenure, unsuccessfully petitioned the Colonial Government of New South Wales for freehold title to the land they occupied. There was no response, so they cut their losses and left the island, Foulis 'trading' his house and land to an American whaling captain, Captain Pierce, master of the whaler, *General Pike*, for a family passage back to Sydney. Pierce, in turn, transferred his holdings to Thomas Andrews, it is said, for 'the payment of two tons of potatoes.'<sup>482</sup>

In 1853, Captain Denham noted that "Andrews, Mosely [sic] and Wright have, by tacit permission, without rent or acknowledgement, cultivated with most commendable industry, the several plots of cleared land which are delineated in outline of the Chart of the Island."<sup>483</sup>

With their growing investment in agriculture and no security of tenure on their land, residents raised their concerns about the lack of title to land with Commander Henry Challis, during his visit to the Pacific aboard *HMS Rosario* in 1869<sup>484</sup> and requested "that he petition the State governor on their behalf their desire to have a long lease or absolute gift of the land they are cultivating".<sup>485</sup> Commander Challis had been appointed by the British Government to investigate claims of 'blackbirding' and the slavery trade of Pacific Islanders and the islanders hoped his connections with the colonial authorities through the naval authorities would help their case. However, there was no response.

Apart from a brief mention in the *NSW Constitution Act 1865* which transferred parliamentary legislative authority from Britain and granted New South Wales responsible government, Lord Howe Island was in a curious position in respect of land ownership. Despite *The Robertson Act 1861 (NSW)* which made free selection of Crown land possible for anyone, neither the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1861 (NSW)* which dealt with the sale of land nor the provisions for leaseholds in the *Crown Lands Occupation Act 1861 (NSW)* made any mention of or brought any

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<sup>482</sup> McFadyen, K. Pinetrees.....

<sup>483</sup> Denham in Enclosure 1 in No 12 PP papers on proposed New Penal Settlement, p.12

<sup>484</sup> Information on land tenure sourced from 1988 booklet.

J Cater Eyes to the Future Sketches of Australia and her Neighbours, NLA, 2000

<sup>485</sup> 1988 booklet p.

resolution to land tenure on Lord Howe Island. The acts basically quarantined Lord Howe Island by failing to mention its existence.<sup>486</sup>

In October 1878 Lord Howe Island was declared a forest reserve which effectively prohibited the removal of timber and the NSW Government appointed Captain Richard Armstrong, a former naval officer, as Forest Ranger, with a leasehold of 100 acres at an annual rental of 5 shillings. Frustrated that an outsider now had rights to land that islanders didn't, the islanders again agitated for security of tenure. Surveyor John Berry was dispatched to the island sometime thereafter to undertake a survey. On the basis of this, permissive (short-term) leases were granted, but they carried little weight because Lord Howe Island was still not recognized in any legislation.

In 1882, The Hon John Bowie Wilson was appointed to head an inquiry into the current state and affairs of the island. In his report to the NSW Government, Wilson urged the Government to protect the beauty of the island from any further intrusion from agricultural or extractive or speculative activity and suggested that "all applications for further special leases be peremptorily refused as all these applications, ...are only excuses for getting a foothold on the island" and that the holders of these leases be informed that unless they evacuate the island, their leases should be cancelled.<sup>487</sup> In respect of existing residents, Wilson recommended that:

*"no persons will in future be allowed to make a permanent settlement on the island, other than the present leaseholders and their families, who have certainly an equitable claim to consideration by being protected in their homes; and that, instead of the annual leases or promise of lease by which they now hold their homesteads, a lease for ten years, with the right of renewal, be granted to them at a nominal rent."<sup>488</sup>*

William J Conder, Superintendent of Trigonometrical Survey noted in his report to the Commission of Inquiry in 1882 that:

*"leases of small areas ranging from 1 to 11 acres had been granted under the 38<sup>th</sup> section of the Crown Lands Occupation Act 1875,<sup>489</sup> in many cases the homestead only is included in this area. Other small patches in the vicinity have been cleared and brought under cultivation, the occupants having no legal claim whatever to the land; and the consequences are, that disputes occur as to the limits of the assumed individual rights, only acquired by acts of occupation."*

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<sup>486</sup> The *Robertson Act 1861* made free selection of Crown land possible for anyone. The *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1861* dealt with the sale of land and the *Crown Lands Occupation Act 1861* dealt with leasing. The Occupation Act permitted any person to select up to 320 acres of land and purchase the freehold (with the exception of urban land). Prior to this, powerful squatters had managed to acquire vast amounts of the colony's prime land through initially illicit occupation. The Occupation Act opened up these squatter-held lands for selection by anyone in the colony. The Alienation Act allowed the sale of town and suburban land by public auction. (Sourced from Land and Property Information [http://www.lpma.nsw.gov.au/land\\_titles/land\\_ownership/crown\\_land](http://www.lpma.nsw.gov.au/land_titles/land_ownership/crown_land)

<sup>487</sup> J B Wilson, p 24

<sup>488</sup> JB Wilson p16

<sup>489</sup> Neither details of the *Crown Lands Occupation Act 1875* nor the survey by John Berry referred to by W J Conder could be located for this study.

He went on to suggest that it would be a simple matter to resolve this by measuring and including the cultivated land with the leaseholds, thereby offering an incentive to occupiers to develop the island's resources, improve their own personal situations and increase the comforts for their families. As it then stood, Conder viewed the existing situation as 'objectionable'.<sup>490</sup> He also pointed out that it would be desirable for a more permanent method of marking the boundaries of portions on the ground to be adopted than the corner pegs only, without reference trees, as the existing survey had. Surveyor James Murphy heeded Conder's advice, identifying each portion more accurately. Subsequent surveys certainly adopted this method and in some cases, the trunks of trees were inscribed with survey markings. Some of the more recent ones on *Kentia* palms are still visible today.

Nothing came of either Conder's or Bowie's recommendations, or of an application the following year by Visiting Magistrate Henry Wilkinson for the government's consideration of security of tenure and the sustainable allocation of land, or of a Code of Regulations drafted by Wilkinson the same year, reflecting the islanders' concerns. To make matters worse, the *Crown Lands Consolidation Act 1884* also ignored Lord Howe Island, loosely defining the boundary of the eastern division of NSW as "the waters of the Pacific Ocean".

The lack of definition brought residents into unnecessary dispute with each other and was certainly the cause of some tension between T B Wilson and Thomas Nichols, his wife Mary and their son Charles. On commencing to erect a house on land described as 'Jenkin's place', the Nichols questioned his authority to build on that site claiming that "he had no right to any ground and that [he] should not have any on the Island," and threatening to demolish anything he erected. They subsequently tethered their cattle in the very spot he wanted to build on, causing Wilson to quietly withdraw and hand the matter over to the Visiting Magistrate on his visit.<sup>491</sup>

Another survey of the island commissioned in July 1898 recommended that Lord Howe Island be included within the land district of New South Wales, but that too failed due to the inertia of government to amend the existing *Crown Lands Act*.<sup>492</sup> Consequently, Visiting Magistrate J Brodie's representations on behalf of islanders to include the island as part of a Land District in New South Wales were stone-walled, as were the attempts by Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell in 1905. Farnell, who had himself been granted a permissive occupancy, sought to have the permissive occupancies of 13 residents converted to freehold title. Once again, the legislative undertaking to amend the *Crown Lands Act* appears to have proven too onerous for government to consider.

In 1911, the NSW government was forced to turn its attention to the welfare of islanders as part of its inquiries into the *Kentia* Palm seed industry. It instigated two Commissions of Inquiry, the first headed by Mr Langwell, who recommended that holders of Permissive Occupancies be granted leases subject to some strict conditions. Commissioner Walter Bevan, who led the second Commission the following year, was set the task of developing an equitable system which would

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<sup>490</sup> Conder in Wilson, p.25

<sup>491</sup> T B Wilson, 27 April 1883

<sup>492</sup> Portion survey of Lord Howe Island by Surveyor James Murphy, July 1898

resolve land tenure on the island and provide security of settlement for island residents and their descendants. His report recommended the establishment of a Board of Control, acting on behalf of the NSW Government, with responsibilities for the management of the island's affairs and the authority to grant special homestead leases of about 5 acres for a period of up to 21 years; and short-term grazing leases over the balance of land held by respective occupants. With the appointment of the Lord Howe Island Board of Control in 1913, all individual permissive occupancies were revoked and the Board granted one permissive occupancy over the whole island. The losers were the islanders (referred to in some documents as 'selectors') who now became tenants of the government.

Between 1913 and 1953, a long period including two world wars and the Great Depression, the matter of land tenure would not go away. It was an issue which seriously and understandably troubled the islanders, but one which never seemed to gain enough traction for reform, possibly due to the isolated nature of the settlement. Efforts to address the land tenure issue and provide a degree of security to residents who had constructed homes and other buildings on land they did not own, were raised by surveyor Captain L S Ferrier (1923), Board member R. Hicks (1940), The Hon D Clyne, MLA for King and local parliamentary member (1946), and Board Chairman W F Sheahan (1948), without success. During this time, the Board of Control maintained a Land Register of portion lots and granted local approvals and managed the transfer of lands, the sale of improvements, and occupancies.



Sites for Adventists Church, Church of England, Public School and Recreation Ground.

**Figure 155** Section of Captain LS Ferrier's 1923 survey map of Lord Howe Island, showing 'the boundaries of the existing occupations' at that time. (Source: LHI Board).



**Figure 156** Section of Department of Civil Aviation map 'Lord Howe Island General Layout' dated 1949, showing leases with holders' names and potential 'runways' for flying boats at high tide on the lagoon. (Source: LHI Board)

In 1951, then Chief Secretary of NSW, The Hon Clive Evatt QC, took matters into his own hands, recommending the granting of 99-year leases to islanders. His proposal failed to appease all the islanders, some of whom felt their interests could all too easily be sold off and sought legal advice on their land rights. Their counsel, Garfield Barwick QC, an authority on constitutional law, was of the opinion that right and power of the Crown (NSW Government) to deal with land issues was still subject to the higher authority (in this case, English Common Law). He maintained that the disposal of Crown land was governed by the Statutes of England and that any person who resided on a piece of land for 60 years or longer automatically becomes its owner, entitled to Freehold title or its equivalent – and he questioned the authority of the Executive Council to create the Board of Control or to sanction its powers. Sensing trouble (possibly in the form of a High Court challenge by islanders), the NSW Government moved quickly to introduce in 1953 the *Lord Howe Island Act*, which finally offered Islanders something - leasehold land tenure, constrained by the minutiae of detail.

*The Lord Howard Island Act 1953* established the Lord Howe Island Board (replacing the Board of Control) and reserved all land on the island as the property of the Crown. On the recommendation of the Board, the Secretary of Lands provided direct descendants of those who had held permissive occupants since 1913 with perpetual leases on blocks up to 5 acres, and short-term special leases were granted for pastoral and agricultural use. These could be fixed for a period not exceeding ten years, but could be extended on the recommendation of the Board.



**Figure 157** Section of July 1954 survey map of Lord Howe Island, showing lease and reserve boundaries, areas, types of leases, lease-holders, buildings, tracks, fence lines. (Source: LHI Board).

Perpetual leases came with conditions which prevented one person holding more than one lease and requiring the leaseholder to be a permanent resident of the Island. A leaseholder could only transfer his lease to a direct descendant on his death through the provision of a will or he could transfer it to outside interests through sale, but only if no islander expressed interest in it. This second clause was the cause of some friction in the community when properties were sold to mainlanders and created division between islanders and non-islanders. Eventually, legislation was enacted in an attempt to maintain the fragile balance between land tenure, the natural environment and the bureaucracy with the passing of the *Lord*

*Howe Island Amendment Act 1981*. The Act now recognised all settlers who had resided on the island for a period of ten years, which failed to please the descendants of first settlers or those whose career and family situations required extended absences away from the island.



**Figure 158** Sections of Department of Lands Map of Lord Howe Island dated 12 October 1960, showing subdivisions along Lagoon Road north of Middle Beach Road to provide additional residential lots

There would be no future allocations of large leaseholds and the acquisition of land was now subject to a financial valuation. Lease rentals were fixed at \$200 per hectare, subject to a ten year review, and increases not exceeding \$100 per hectare. A further amendment to the Act in 2004 authorised the Board to regulate annual rental of perpetual and special leases every three years, subject to advice from the Valuer-General's Office and according to its financial position. Currently, the maximum rent payable is \$150 per perpetual lease, plus \$0.215 for every square metre (\$2,150 per hectare) and \$50 per special lease, plus \$0.017 for every square metre (\$170 per hectare). The rent is currently set at less than half the maximum allowable, at \$150 per perpetual lease, plus \$0.0103 for every square metre (\$103 per hectare) and \$50 per special lease, plus \$0.008 per square metre (\$80 per hectare). Rent payments for leases make up about 1.4% of the Board's revenue.

Land tenure remains a sensitive issue for islanders, despite the aforementioned amendments to the original Act<sup>493</sup> and the 2005 amendments to the Regional Environmental Plan (REP) 1986 which until recently was the planning instrument (required by the *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*) controlling the development of settled areas, particularly in the central area of the island. The REP was replaced by the Lord Howe Island Local Environmental Plan 2010.

World Heritage listing of Lord Howe Island in 1982 was for its wide range of natural values, not for its cultural heritage values. The latter are highly regarded and fiercely protected by many islanders and environmental management controls imposed to protect the island's natural values have led to further tensions over land tenure. There is continuing disquiet about the discrepancies associated with islander status in regard to non-islander property purchases and islander status and residency in respect of the transfer of leaseholds through lineal descent.

<sup>493</sup> The current statutory provisions for land tenure on Lord Howe Island are contained in the *Lord Howe Island Act 1953 No.39* which was accessed at <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au>

In an effort to overcome the problem of insufficient land for the numbers of eligible residents, the Board has struggled for a compromise despite the constraints imposed by planning instruments, the environmental protection of the island and the sustainability of the fragile ecosystem in response to increased pressure on resources. There are currently around 122 leases on Lord Howe Island, of which 83 are occupied by those with lineal descent, 25 by other islanders and non-islanders resident less than 10 years and 14 homes occupied by Government employees. By sub-dividing some perpetual leaseholds and revoking a number of special leaseholds, the Board created sufficient land to create 25 new leases. These are to be offered through a ballot process up to the year 2025 but there is no guarantee of a successful outcome for the children of leaseholders. To this day, the machinations of land tenure on Lord Howe Island continue to divide the community.

In 2009, the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) prepared a draft review of the *Lord Howe Island Act 1953*, and addressed in particular the current position in respect of land tenure. At the time of writing, this report has not yet been finalised.

### **Perpetual leases**

Perpetual leases for up to two hectares of land can be granted for residential purposes. Such leases can also be used for tourism accommodation, as licensed under the Act and Regulation. The leaseholder or sub-leaseholder must reside on the land. However, the Minister, on the recommendation of the Board, may suspend the condition of residency, for example, if someone is sick and cannot reasonably reside on the land, or if the leaseholder holds a second perpetual lease on the Island. The Act also allows for subleasing and joint tenancy.

### **Special leases**

The Minister may grant special leases for agriculture or other uses to perpetual leaseholders for up to 10 years on the recommendation of the Board. The Board must report any objections to the granting of a special lease to the Minister. Land subject to a special lease tends to be the most suitable land for future development because it is cleared and modified. Compensation is payable to special leaseholders if the lease is required for residential housing or public purposes.

Provisions that give Islanders property rights privileges over non-Islanders are:

- Islanders, as defined by section 3(1) of the Act, have first call on perpetual lease transfers and opportunities to sublease (non-Islanders can only take up leases if no Islander is willing and able to) (section 23(4)).
- The price for perpetual lease transfers is determined by the Valuer-General. The fair market value takes account of the values of the unimproved land, the improvements on the land and, if used for commercial purposes, the value of the business (section 23(1)).
- There is a condition of residency on perpetual leases (a home 'without any other habitual residence' (section 21(7))).
- Perpetual leases can only be bequeathed, with any certainty, to any Islander, or the leaseholder's direct lineal descendants (for example, son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter) (section 23(11)).



These provisions work together to achieve the Act's objective to support a permanent residential community on the Island, by giving Islanders first choice on the limited supply of residential accommodation, capping the price of a lease to increase affordability, and requiring that leaseholders reside permanently on the land subject to the lease, except under special circumstances. This discourages speculative investment because future sales prices may be limited, and the residency requirement would require an investor to permanently reside on the property.

By protecting the island's unique environment and the interests of island residents, these provisions may have significant economic implications with regards to property. The review found that the benefits of these provisions outweigh any adverse economic effects that may occur, and the objectives of the Act can only be achieved by these provisions. This issue is discussed further below.

#### **a. The definition of Islander**

The Act defines an Islander as a person who has resided on the Island continuously for 10 years, or who was an Islander before the 1981 amendments commenced. In special circumstances the Minister, on the recommendation of the Board, may declare someone to have retained or acquired the status of an Islander (section 3(1)).

Islanders have privileges with regard to perpetual leases. Non-Islanders can only take up leases if no Islander is willing and able to. While there are different ways of becoming an Islander, the Act does not distinguish between different types of Islanders.

#### **Issues raised in public submissions**

- Islanders who can trace their ancestry back to the original settlers of Lord Howe Island should be recognised under the World Heritage Convention, should have their specific local identity recognised and preserved, and should have first call for perpetual leases over other Islanders and non-Islanders.
- All Islanders should be treated equally.

#### **Review findings**

- The definition of an Islander is appropriate for securing the objectives of the Act. It is a critical component of the provisions that work together to secure a permanent residential Island community.
- It is not appropriate for the Act to define different types of Islanders because it would not be appropriate to discriminate between long-term permanent Island residents based on their ancestry, and it would not further the objectives of the Act. Lord Howe Island was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982 for its natural scientific values, including its exceptional natural beauty and biodiversity values, but not for its cultural heritage values.
- The ability for the Minister to declare a person to be an Islander in special circumstances allows any unreasonable or anomalous situations that may arise to be addressed in a transparent manner.
- It is proposed that section 3(1)(b), which defines an Islander as someone who resided on the Island and was an Islander before the 1981 amendments to

the Act, be removed because it is captured by section 3(1)(c), which defines an Islander as someone who has resided on the Island continuously for the immediately preceding 10 years.

### **b. Condition of residency**

Perpetual leases carry a requirement of residency (section 21(7)), which is defined as ‘residing by the person referred to in the context continuously and in good faith ... as his or her usual home, without any other habitual residence’ (section 3(1)).

### **Issues raised in public submissions**

- The residency requirement for perpetual leases is too restrictive and may not be appropriate for modern trends in work, investment and travel.
- The condition of residency is not complied with or enforced.

### **Review findings**

- The requirement of residency for perpetual leaseholders is appropriate for securing the objectives of the Act. While it is appreciated that modern trends in work, investment and travel make it more likely for individuals to have more than one home, requiring perpetual leaseholders to live on the land subject to the lease is an effective way of maintaining a permanent resident Island community.

The Board (section 21(7)), or the Minister (section 21(7A)) can suspend the condition of residency or attach conditions, reservations and provisions to the lease (section 21(8)) to deal with any special circumstances (sections 21(7)–21(8)).

- The current definitions of ‘reside and residence’ are appropriate for securing the land tenure and community objectives of the Act (section 3(1)). To clarify the definitions further and address current compliance issues, the Board could develop policy, guided by its charter, to define what is deemed to be ‘with no other habitual residence’.
- Enforcement and compliance issues are outside the scope of the review.

### **c. Transfer of leases at fair market price as determined by the Valuer-General**

The sale price of a lease must not exceed its fair market value, as determined by the Valuer-General. The fair market value is to take account of the value of the unimproved land, the improvements on the land and, if used for commercial purposes, the value of the business (section 23(1)).

In determining fair market values, the Valuer-General’s methodology takes into account the unique Lord Howe Island market, trends in market appreciation in comparable areas, and the value of the home or business on the lease.

### **Issues raised in public submissions**

- The Valuer-General’s determination of the transfer price may be anti-competitive and discourage certain land uses because the value of the land has been lowered.

## Review findings

- The requirement that the Valuer-General determine the price of lease transfers is appropriate for securing the objectives of the Act. By keeping the price to a fair market value, and preventing speculative investment, Islanders are less likely to be priced out of the market. While these provisions might work to restrict competition, the review found that the benefits of the Islander privilege provisions, in securing the Act's objective of supporting a permanent residential community, outweigh any costs that might result from restrictions in competition.

### d. Bequeathing of property in a will

The Minister, on recommendation of the Board, has ultimate discretion in approving the transfer of leases in all circumstances, including the bequeathing of perpetual leases in a will.

A perpetual leaseholder can leave their property to anyone they choose. However, the Islander privilege provisions in the Act limit the ability to transfer bequeathed leases to non-Islanders, unless:

- the beneficiary is a direct lineal descendent of the person bequeathing the property in a will (section 23 (11));
- the Board is satisfied that no Islander is willing and able to buy the lease (section 23(4));
- the Minister declares the beneficiary to be an Islander because of special circumstances (section 3(1)(d)); or
- the Minister allows the executor or administrator of the lease to hold it until such time as the beneficiary becomes an Islander. This might suit Island residents who have resided on the Island for almost 10 years and will soon meet the definition of 'Islander'.

If the beneficiary of a will is restricted from taking up ownership of, and residence on, the perpetual lease, they will instead secure the financial benefit of the bequest. If the beneficiary is not restricted from taking up ownership and residence, they have two years to make necessary arrangements before the residency condition applies.

### Issues raised in public submissions

- The limitations on the bequeathing of perpetual leases deny Islanders a basic human right and are discriminatory against Islanders without children.
- The current two-year limit for beneficiaries to take up residency (section 23(11)) should be extended to 10 years.

## Review findings

- There is no legal basis for the claims that limitations on the bequeathing of perpetual leases are denying Islanders basic human rights or are discriminatory against Islanders without children.
- A perpetual leaseholder can bequeath their property to anyone they choose. The restrictions on the ability for beneficiaries of bequeathed leases to take up residence are appropriate for securing the objectives of the Act. These

provisions are a key component in directing limited residential accommodation to Islanders who are committed to living permanently on the Island.

- The provisions that allow the Minister to declare someone to be an Islander (section 3(1)(d)) provide appropriate opportunities to consider special circumstances, such as widows of Islanders who do not yet meet the definition of 'Islander', but intend to continue living permanently on the Island.
- The current two-year limit for beneficiaries of bequests to take up residency is reasonable and appropriate for securing the objectives of the Act. The Act provides that the Minister may approve a longer period (section 23(11)), which provides flexibility in dealing with special circumstances that may arise, such as those where two years may not be enough to support a beneficiary moving to take up permanent residence on the Island.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Fence, survey mark, subdivision pattern, land title document, boundary hedge, , stone wall, shelterbelt, cliff, river, seawall, rock engravings, shelters & habitation sites, cairn, survey mark, trig station, colonial/state border markers.

### **Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Subdivision patterns of perpetual and special leases;

Trees or pegs marked by Surveyor Berry at three points along Lagoon Road north and south of Windy Point<sup>494</sup>;

Original copies of lease documents and subdivision plans held by LHI Board or NSW Dept of Lands;

Trig stations;

Old fencelines;

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

None at this stage but locations of historic survey marks need further investigation.

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<sup>494</sup> Rabone, H R (1940), p.43 and O'Connor, C (2005), p.11

### 2.4.3 Utilities

*These are activities associated with the provision of services, especially on a communal basis*

#### **Power**

Life on Lord Howe Island for the early settlers during the 19<sup>th</sup> century would have been an austere, ‘every man for himself’ existence, given the isolation of the island and the meagre opportunities for trade. Early settlers would have sourced their fuel for cooking on wood-burning fires and hobs from the local timber. At the height of whaling in the Pacific Ocean, islanders certainly traded their fresh produce and wood for tallow and whale oil for use as candle wax and in lamps. In his diary, T B Wilson mentions trying whale oil which he found to burn very well<sup>495</sup>. The local alternative was mutton bird oil which the islanders, including Nathan Thompson (who supplied it to T B Wilson) made themselves.

The discovery of crude oil (petroleum) and the associated technology to extract it from the ground in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was the major contributor to the demise of the whaling industry. Kerosene, a by-product distilled from petroleum, offered a cheaper alternative to whale oil and before long, a range of machinery and domestic products for lighting, cooking and refrigeration powered by kerosene (and in some cases, petrol) were developed. With fewer whaling ships visiting Lord Howe Island, opportunities for trade declined, and so too did access to supplies of whale oil. Cargo ships coming to the island brought the new substitute, kerosene, and with the introduction of more regular shipping services from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, islanders were able to enjoy some modern home comforts, just like their mainland counterparts. Still, Mrs Nichol’s discovery of an electric light globe inscribed, *Edison Swan*, which washed ashore at Old Settlement Beach on 5 May 1895 must have caused much interest.<sup>496</sup>

The first electric power on the island was generated by a diesel engine used in combination with an alternator, similar to that used on ships. It was installed in 1929 following the establishment of the wireless station which required power to run its short and long wave transmitters. ‘Ocean View’ is recorded as having the first domestic generator, supplying other residents with any surplus, until additional power from the Department of Civil Aviation’s units became available to the Lord Howe Island Board of Control.

Many island residents purchased their own generators and became self-sufficient, creating enough power for their own domestic lighting needs and, if they were lucky, enough to run appliances from power points.

In 1955, the Lord Howe Island Board forecast the imminent installation of a grid to supply electricity to island homes and during that year, a team moved along the length of the island, installing power lines. A network of overhead power cables already reticulated power to towers and transmitters but not to residences. By September, power had been connected to ‘Pinetrees’; lines were up to Windy Point

<sup>495</sup> T B Wilson’s Diary, 28 February 1879

<sup>496</sup> Campbell Stevens’ Diary, 5 May 1895

and houses at the southern end of the island, including Moseley Park and the Baxter residence, were due to be connected by Christmas that year.<sup>497</sup> While the Board received a subsidy from the Electricity Authority over a 10 year period to meet a portion of the capital outlay, islanders were required to meet the installation and connection costs themselves.



**Figure 159** Doing things the hard way – islanders erecting power poles with timber poles and lots of manpower. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM35, LHI Museum Collection).

In 1975, the then NSW Minister for Lands prepared a report on the current state of facilities on the island, noting an urgent need to upgrade the generating capacity of the plant which had no reserve for backup supply in the event of plant failure. He recognised the inconvenience of this to residents, particularly in regard to the storage of food. Perhaps more significantly, though, was his observation that the overhead power reticulation was unsightly in an area of such natural beauty and the cost of line maintenance was high on account of the overhanging vegetation and strong winds. The Minister was keen to correct this and made a recommendation for undergrounding the power supply. Lagoon Road was the first to have underground power to roadside lights in 1972 and by 1976, most of the overhead power lines had been removed. The last to go was the unsightly power line across the golf course in 1977 following the installation of a substation on Mulley Drive.

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, energy services on the island had progressed from being able to support basic power demands for cooking, water heating and lighting solely derived from fossil fuels to a fully reticulated electricity supply increasingly supplemented by solar power. Many properties have bottled gas and some residents are keen to explore the potential of wind power. Improvements to the power supply however have never completely eliminated temporary power failures and major storm events continue to this day to cripple the island. The most serious recent failure due to storms occurred in July 1996 when torrential rain flooded the island which was also battered by strong winds and rough seas. Power was seriously disrupted, and with the airstrip damaged and out of action, emergency measures were enforced until power could be restored.

<sup>497</sup> *The Signal*, vol.2, 22 June 1955

Until 1985, the island's electricity supply was managed by the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA). The supply was then shared by the Lord Howe Island Board which handled reticulation in partnership with the Electricity Commission of NSW, which was responsible for electricity generation. In July 1992, the Board (different from the situation on the mainland where energy is supplied through the private sector) accepted overall management and financial responsibility for the supply and distribution of the island's electricity. In 2010, the main source of electricity remains a diesel generator, powered by four 300kW Series 60 engines in a structure known as the Powerhouse, at the intersection of Ned's Beach Road and Lagoon Road, with a back-up generator, located in an adjacent shed. To run it, bulk diesel fuel (along with containerised petrol for vehicles and jet aviation fuel) is brought to the island fortnightly in steel containers (to reduce the risk of a spill affecting the coral) in the *MV Island Trader* and unloaded in containers for transport to the Powerhouse where it is decanted by gravity into underground storage tanks.

The outbreak of a fire in the Powerhouse is the single biggest threat to the electricity supply on the island. The most recent event occurred on 14 November 2009, when fire broke out in the roof space of the building due to an electrical short, destroying most of the roof. Quick action by residents and the local Rural Fire Services volunteers prevented a major disaster which could have left the island without mains power. Temporary generators were brought in by ship so that interim repairs could be made while a team of electricians and engineers could assess the longer term impacts. In July 2010, upgrades to the Powerhouse and current electrical services were put out to commercial tender.



**Figure 160** Three portable generators installed on a site at rear of Powerhouse following the fire in that building in November 2009. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 2 December 2009)

During public consultations for this Community-based Heritage Study, many residents raised their views about the future of the Powerhouse, so it is important to include the Powerhouse in this discussion of the island's cultural heritage. When the Powerhouse was constructed, the heart of the island's service functions (post office, shop, public hall) were located on the eastern side of the island, clustered around the intersection of Ned's Beach Road and Lagoon Road in what is referred to now as the island's 'cbd'.

The Powerhouse building was originally designed and erected by the NSW Government's public works office as a utilitarian enclosure using materials which could be easily transported to the island. It has been substantially modified and enlarged over time to accommodate equipment upgrades and meet safety



regulations. The structure is timber-clad with a corrugated iron roof and stands on a concrete foundation pad. The pale blue and cream exterior colour scheme is consistent with that applied to the post office and cargo shed. Like many utilities of its kind, the building contains asbestos which poses management issues, not just in operational terms, but in its removal and disposal.

In his 1975 report which recommended the replacement of the powerhouse and generating facility (at a cost conservatively estimated at \$400,000), Lands Minister Tom Lewis noted that the Hon. Neville Wran QC (later Premier) had expressed a view that the whole power generating facility should be transferred to a more suitable location and the present site converted to parkland.

In the 1980s, Elcom investigated fully-funded options for relocating the plant to Ned's Beach Common or a site near the airport. In 2007, an estimate of \$1.1million was quoted for its possible relocation adjacent to the Meteorological Station near the Waste Management Facility but the choice of that site was not supported by the community and, in the end, considered to be too low-lying. Because of the potential for tsunami activity in the region, any new site would need to be 20 metres above sea level. That left few options in the settled area, an obvious one being the former meteorological site next to Beachcomber Lodge on Anderson Road which would meet the elevation requirement but construction on this site is considered to be too costly to be a viable alternative.

It could be argued that the site on which the Powerhouse now stands may have some social significance to the community as part of the 'cbd' precinct, but many would argue that the siting of the structure at a key location is visually intrusive and a poor example of urban design. Indeed, the building is located at one of the best vantage points on the island for views across the lagoon towards Mt Gower and in very close proximity to Stevens Reserve. The smoke-stack emissions and the constant hum of the generators, while intrusive, are in effect the island's heartbeat. Without them, the island cannot currently operate and they are a symbolic reminder of the current dependence on resources imported from the mainland.

The bulk of the Powerhouse building creates a major blind spot for pedestrian and vehicle traffic and has been cited on more than one occasion as the cause of accidents, and major 'near-misses'. The Powerhouse is a symbolic reminder of the importance of this utility to the operation of the island.

At the May 2011 LHI Board meeting, following a site feasibility study, the Board approved the relocation of the Powerhouse to the proposed site on Portion 230. This decision to relocate the function elsewhere on the island is a generationally important one and will prompt vigorous debate not only about the conflict between World Heritage values of the island and the cultural significance of the Powerhouse building and its function on its present site, but also about the island's longer term attitudes to the practicality of alternative power sources and renewable energy.



**Figure 161 (Left)** The Powerhouse on 23 February 2009; **(Right)** After the fire, 24 November 2009. (Photos: Chris Betteridge)

### Alternative Energy Sources

The rising cost of fuel, the long term viability of maintaining the current diesel operating system and the practical difficulties associated with the importation of fuel have prompted discussion about the sustainability and the use of alternative energy sources on Lord Howe Island. As far back as 1983, the Energy Authority undertook a wind energy feasibility study for Lord Howe Island, but by then, the conflict between the visual impact and danger to birds relative to the island's world heritage values meant that any large scale wind farm operation was unlikely to be approved. Further studies in 1997/98 were unable to resolve the dilemma. Lord Howe Island may have future potential for the installation of electricity-generating systems based on wind, solar energy or tidal power. However, the present state of those technologies, the potential impacts on the natural environment and the high cost of implementation do not offer viable alternatives for renewable energy at this point in time.

In the early 2000s, the Sustainable Energy Development Authority NSW (SEDA) oversaw the installation of an 8 kW solar power system mounted on the roof of the Lord Howe Island airport terminal building.<sup>498</sup> This, along with the installation of a 200-300 kW tower and turbine near the airstrip for wind generation, have been trialled as potential sources of clean electricity to combat the high cost and air/noise pollution from the diesel generator. All new residences and tourist accommodation are required to meet strict environmental conditions, and Lord Howe Island has established an important benchmark in the field of eco-management and sustainability, encouraging the use of 'green' technology and sensitive architectural design. Among the design measures currently being adopted across the island are the use of cross-flow ventilation to take advantage of the island's natural weather patterns and the use of glazing to capture sunlight and store natural heat, the selection of building materials, and the installation of solar panels. These features will ultimately alter the character of the island's traditional building design. More importantly, these initiatives have established benchmarks for small island communities.

One of the newest lodges on the island demonstrates how this can be successfully achieved. 'Capella Lodge', which promotes a sustainable management policy

<sup>498</sup> SEDA Australian Bureau of Statistics Yearbook, 2003 accessed at [www.abs.com.au](http://www.abs.com.au)

through its website, has introduced ethanol-fuelled winter heating and low wattage lighting. 'Earl's Anchorage' has based its sustainable design on lightweight construction and energy efficiency, although its back-up batteries are charged by a diesel generator<sup>499</sup>.

### **Water Supply and Sewerage**

The supply of fresh water, although not considered enough to support a large settlement, provided sufficient for the needs of the small population. Lack of abundant natural water was in fact the one resource which saved the island from becoming a penal settlement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and probably from over-development at other times.

Water for domestic use was originally taken from the creeks, and timber casks were used to catch and store rainwater. There is plenty of evidence that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, wells were sunk on the island to access underground water. Many of the wells were located in the 'gardens' where the water was used to supplement the natural supply, particularly during frequent dry spells.

In his 1851 report, Dr Foulis noted:

*"With respect to water, I am of the opinion that any quantity could be obtained by sinking wells or forming dams. There are many good springs on the hills, and I caused one or two wells to be sunk at very moderate expense. They were about 15 feet deep, and contained about 10 feet of water and never failed in the driest weather in supplying the settlement with abundance of pure and wholesome water."*<sup>500</sup>

John Denis Macdonald, travelling with Captain Denham's survey party in 1853 observed:

*"Fresh water is most plentiful at the south end of the Island, and may be obtained all through the year in the glen near Wright's ground. After heavy rain, it flows down from the mountains in torrents into the sea. In the winter good water is also found in the small creek near the burial ground, but this is liable to dry up in the summer season. On the eastern side of the Island, in Boat Harbour, excellent water bubbles through the shingle, being thus filtered from the impurities taken up in its course. There is a small natural well in Andrews' ground, but it often runs dry, not being of sufficient depth; but good water may be at any time procured by digging to a depth of 14 feet in the low country. The inland 'lagoon' and the 'swampy' districts observed in 1833 do not exist at present, the whole face of the country, with trifling exceptions, being clothed with trees and arborescent shrubs."*<sup>501</sup>

Fitzgerald/Hill described the process of excavating a site for a well<sup>502</sup>:

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<sup>499</sup> Chris Murray, pers.comm.

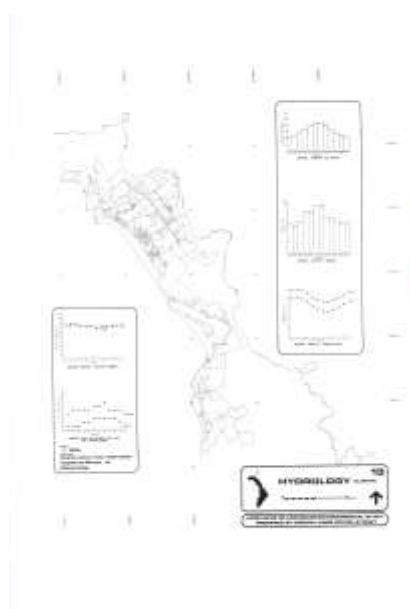
<sup>500</sup> Proposed new Penal Settlement, p.5

<sup>501</sup> Denham, p.14

<sup>502</sup> Fitzgerald/Hill, p.55

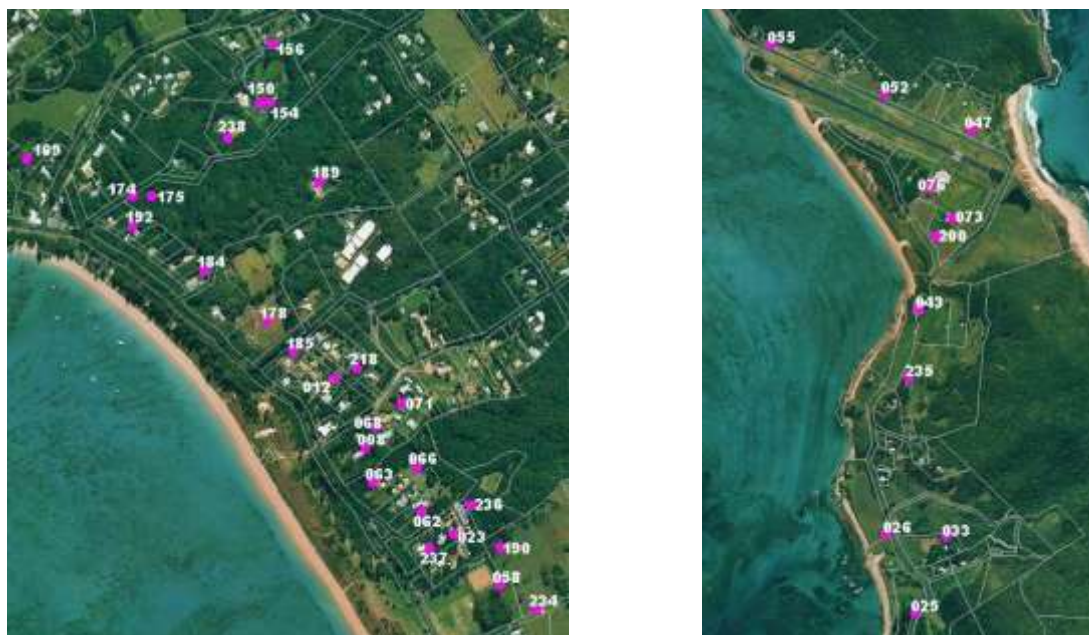
*“Wells for water supply have been dug to some depth on the island. In sinking, occasionally argillaceous beds of 14 feet in thickness have been cut through; these have been resting on a coral debris, and will retain no water; others which have been cut through the clay retain the water but it is of considerable hardness on account of the lime. A well near the settlement at the north end was dug nearly through the clay. At 30 feet it came to what was thought to be solid rock and held water; subsequently it was determined to sink deeper, when it was discovered that the rock was detached; a sheers was rigged and the stone raised. I found it to be a piece of basalt, in the crevice of which was carbonate of lime in crystals. This well, though it held water no more, was of considerable advantage afterwards. The situation chosen happened to be a kind of basin in which heavy rains collected and there remained till evaporation or percolation relieved the surface. This well now acts as a duct, and draws off at once the super-abundant water. Another well was dug at no great distance from the same quarter, which is said to be under tidal influence, rising and falling perceptibly, and the water unfit for domestic purposes; indeed most of the wells produce water with varied hardness and peculiar taste, the constant use of which may have something to do with the prevailing dyspepsia. Rain-water is collected, and which of course forms the best drink the island affords, although the stream forming Big Creek is unobjectionable.”<sup>503</sup>*

Archaeological surveys in 2003 located a small circular water-filled feature in a low-lying area which was thought to be the old well in swampy land at the eastern end of Old Settlement. The well at the rear of Nathan Thompson’s house still exists as do large ones at ‘Janetville’, ‘Thornleigh’ and at many other properties across the island.



**Figure 162** Hydrology and Climate map of Lord Howe Island, showing location of wells. (Source: Regional Environmental Study, 1985)

<sup>503</sup> Fitzgerald/Hill p.55



**Figure 163** Recent map of settled areas of Lord Howe Island, showing location of wells and the relevant portion numbers. The historical significance of some of these wells needs further investigation. (Source: LHI Board).

A common complaint of dyspepsia among islanders was suspected to be a result of the poor quality of the underground water. Following concerns about the contamination of sub-surface water and investigations by the Board of Health, Lord Howe Island banned use of underground water for domestic use from 30 September 1955. It could however continue to be used for stock and watering gardens. In 1975, NSW Lands Minister Tom Lewis suggested that a water purification plant be installed to treat underground water which would then be reticulated to all residents, but the scheme did not proceed. A clause in the 1994 amendment to the *Lord Howe Island Act 1953* specifically addressed the non-potable quality of the drinking water, stating that “a person must not take or use, or supply for the use of another person, any water from underground sources unless it has been treated in a manner approved by the New South Wales Department of Health so as to render it fit for human consumption.”<sup>504</sup>

As the population increased, the limited natural water supply was off-set with the capture of rainwater in tanks which could be pumped and piped locally for use.<sup>505</sup> Lord Howe Island has no reticulated water supply network. In 1973, the Department of Health recommended further investigation into the provision of such a supply. A number of dam sites were considered, the preferred site being Soldier’s (Big) Creek, ahead of sites at the base of Transit Hill and Intermediate Hill, with a storage reservoir located at the top of either hill to supply reticulation by gravity. The reticulation of water at Soldier’s Creek and at relevant creeks at the northern end of the island was also proposed. Neither recommendation proceeded. The Department of Public Works subsequently investigated the cost of both schemes to be around \$700,000 with a further \$300,000 for filtration. Needless to say, neither scheme proceeded.

<sup>504</sup> *Lord Howe Island (General) Regulation 1994* Clause 57 (repealed)

<sup>505</sup> Map from nla



Currently, all residents are required to use tanks to harvest rain water from roof surfaces. Corrugated iron water tanks on wooden stands have all but disappeared on the island, replaced by polycarbonate water tanks. Where possible, tanks are located to maximise gravity flow but in many areas, above-ground tanks require water pumps to distribute supply through local piping.



**Figure 164 (Left):** Surviving timber water tank stand, Stan Fenton's property, north of airstrip. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 7 March 2009); **(Right):** Tank stand with tank near 'Ocean View'. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 December 2009).

The mean annual rainfall of 1477mm on Lord Howe Island is spread throughout the year with higher rainfall during winter months<sup>506</sup>. Lack of rain during summer months has often caused shortages, sometimes requiring the importation of water from the mainland. Non-potable groundwater is used for other purposes, including agriculture. Interestingly though, water supply and demand has never been such that islanders have had to rely on the installation of windmills (such as the Southern Cross or Comet brands so common on the mainland) to pump underground water for lengthy periods, so their impact on the landscape is not of any consequence.

Maintaining the quality of water on Lord Howe Island to prevent outbreaks of illness related to the consumption of contaminated water and contamination of the lagoon from polluted ground water runoff are obviously matters of high priority. In 1995, GM Laboratories were commissioned by the Lord Howe Island Board to assess the quality of groundwater and to conduct a census of bores, wells and other natural water sources. They investigated the feasibility of construction of a water supply to include dams, weirs, reservoirs and treatment facilities as well as piping; and for a sewerage system with a central treatment plant, piping and a disposal point. The resulting visual and environmental impacts, along with the costs to the Board associated with engineering and construction, put paid to the idea. The World Heritage listing of the island means that proposals of this nature, should they arise again, will be put through rigorous community consultation and environmental assessment – and their chances of success would almost certainly be negative.

<sup>506</sup> Bureau of Meteorology dataset

The natural topography of the island for the most part aided run-off, but in some areas, flooding from heavy rainfall prompted the construction of drainage diversions. Some of these, like the drains (from Frank 'Cobby' Robbins farm) which survive on the golf course were constructed for agricultural drainage, but hand-dug trenches thought to have been associated with Edward (Ned) King's property survive at 'Janetville' as evidence of early flood mitigation measures.

Septic tanks were introduced to the island in 1955, replacing primitive latrines and pit toilets, thereby greatly improving public health standards and the risk of contamination in the soil and run-off. However, because most of the settled area is situated on sandy soils, there is a very poor base for septic tank effluent disposal. The continuing use of pit toilets was discouraged on the grounds of public health. In 1975, Lands Minister Tom Lewis proposed the installation of a conventional sewerage system (i.e. non septic) estimated then to cost \$740,000, but this scheme was another that did not proceed.

Many of the island's concrete septic tanks are ageing and will require replacement. The Board has recommended that all new domestic on-site sewage system proposals include a minimum level of secondary treatment (using aerobic biological processing and settling of effluent received from a primary treatment unit). More environmentally friendly methods of managing the disposal of household waste water and sewage are being implemented across Lord Howe Island. Larger premises, including the Lord Howe Island Museum and guest lodges are leading the way with enviro-cycle secondary sewerage treatment systems, rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling for irrigation. Greywater produced by filtration through reedbeds has been trialled by the Board; while decomposition by worms and other organisms is producing water which can be used safely for irrigation.

Composting public toilets are provided at Ned's Beach and at North Bay and the Board monitors the impact of human waste disposal in areas accessed by bushwalkers and weeders and potential threats to water quality in areas of permanent and semi-permanent water supply.

### **Waste management and recycling**

Lord Howe Island takes the management of its natural environment very seriously and actively promotes its conservation strategies. From a heritage point of view, the evolution of the island's utilities to meet the challenges imposed by the World Heritage recognition of the island's natural values has required some adjustment. The success of these initiatives serves as a model for other isolated communities across Australia, including Fraser Island and Kangaroo Island

Sensitive environmental management is something that islanders have done almost as a matter of course for over 150 years and can be appreciated by their relatively small footprint on the island's eco-system. Originally, the small, self-sufficient community on Lord Howe Island had little rubbish to dispose of. Their organic waste was composted for agricultural use, water was carefully conserved and frugally used, items were recycled in any number of inventive ways and rubbish that could not be burnt was buried at the rubbish tip near Cobby's Corner (now the site of the 8<sup>th</sup> green on the island's golf course), used as landfill or for foreshore dune stabilisation. Evidence of this appears in the frequent outwashing of glass and garbage from the



foreshores into the lagoon after storm events and very high tides, despite a major clean-up effort by the local Landcare group which organised community working bees in 1996.



**Figure 165 (Left):** Bottle dump in old corrugated iron water tank on lagoon foreshore. Dune erosion caused glass to be exposed on beach and in lagoon, posing public safety hazard; **(Right):** Bottles extracted from dump were common beer, whisky, gin and cordial types from late 1940s, early 1950s. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 9 September 2010)

As the shipping service became more frequent, plastics and other non-recyclables were compacted and shipped to a rubbish tip on the mainland, for a time at no cost. A user-pays system was introduced to discourage the dumping of discarded household items such as TV sets, furniture and old bicycles. Recyclable plastics, aluminium and glass, once taken off the island and sold to recoup the freight costs, are now recycled on the island.

In the late 1990s, Lord Howe Island Board made a serious attempt to reduce the environmental problems associated with waste going to island landfill. With the help of regular visitor, Ian Kiernan AO, Chairman and Founder of Clean-Up Australia and others, both Federal and State governments were lobbied for funding assistance towards finding a solution. A cost-efficient Waste Minimisation Strategy for the island was commissioned and its recommendations duly implemented to the highest world-standards. The Bio-waste treatment facility which provides more environmentally sound solid waste management and the Vertical Composting Unit (VCU) (constructed by Willson Brown, tested at Long Bay Gaol and UNSW) was commissioned by Senator Alan Eggleston in June 2000. Organic waste was buried in trenches near the existing waste management facility prior to the activation of the VCU. Homes and resorts use a three-bin sorting system for recyclables, compostables and garbage items. The VCU goes beyond other composting options because it is able to process the island's entire organic waste and has successfully been extended to glass and scrap metal. Since its installation the VCU is processing between 0.8 to 1.2 tonnes per day. This produces between 0.5 - 0.75 tonnes of high

quality compost, which local residents were initially able to use on their gardens, however this no longer allowed for public health reasons<sup>507</sup>.

Residents are required to deposit their garbage at the centre as there is no garbage pick-up service and fees to use the facility are charged. Recycling is now a highly organised activity on the island for residents, and every public garbage bin on the island includes a bin for compostable food scraps as well as for recyclables and other rubbish. The Co-op encourages the use of recycled containers and calico bags are sold in lieu of plastic shopping bags.

All the island's organic waste - from homes, restaurants and public bins - plus sewage sludge and paper and cardboard that has been shredded, go into a Vertical Composting Unit which creates compost that residents use on their gardens. It is the first time such a system has been used in an isolated community with World Heritage status and is evidence of the use of the world's best environmental practice in sustainable tourism on the island. There are few places in the world where a visit to the Waste Management Facility and Recycling Centre would feature as a major stop on a visitor's itinerary but on Lord Howe Island green living is something the community strongly support and are proud to share.



**Figure 166 (Left):** A reed bed at the island's Waste Management Facility assists in providing an improved level of wastewater treatment and on-site reuse of effluent; **(Right):** Even the endangered woodhens visit the facility! (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 28 February 2009).

<sup>507</sup> Chris Murray, pers.comm.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Water pipeline, sewage tunnel, gas retort, powerhouse, County Council office, garbage dump, windmill, radio tower, bridge, culvert, weir, well, cess pit, reservoir, dam, places demonstrating absence of utilities at Aboriginal fringe camps.

### **Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Powerhouse;<sup>508</sup>

Aircraft Navigation radio beacons, Portion 51, Intersection of Ned's Beach Road and Anderson Road;<sup>509</sup>

Stone-lined drains on golf course, portions 118, 120 & 299, Lagoon Road;<sup>510</sup>

Historic wells – require further investigation e.g possible example near western end of Ned's Beach Road<sup>511</sup>; possible well site at Pinetrees<sup>512</sup>; possible well site north of the present runway, about half way across the island<sup>513</sup>; possible well site near Cobby's Creek<sup>514</sup>; possible well site just south of Soldier Creek<sup>515</sup>;

Waste Management Facility;

Historic water tank stands.

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Stone-lined drains on golf course, portions 118, 120 & 299, Lagoon Road;<sup>516</sup>

### **Further recommendations**

Historic well sites require further examination as potential archaeological sites.;

Gully erosion on the Golf Course requires remediation works which will need to take retention and protection of the historic stone-lined drains into account.

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<sup>508</sup> RES potential item

<sup>509</sup> RES LH.37

<sup>510</sup> REP Schedule 3

<sup>511</sup> O'Connor, (2005), p.11

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> O'Connor, (2005), p.11

<sup>514</sup> Ibid.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid.

<sup>516</sup> REP Schedule 3

#### 2.4.4 Accommodation

*These are activities associated with the provision of accommodation, and particular types of accommodation – does not include architectural styles – use the theme of Creative Endeavour for such activities.*

##### The first visitors

The first account of an overnight stay on Lord Howe Island was that of Surgeon Arthur Bowes-Smyth on May 16, 1788:

*“ Mr Anstis & the Stewards, wt, several of the Ship’s Company came in the afternoon and stay’d on shore all night.....We made a fire under the trees.....we afterwards slept in thick great coats carried on shore for that purpose, covered over wt the leaves of the Cabbage Tree”.*

For the next 36 years, visitors calling in to the island to hunt for birds it was either sleeping rough on shore, or returning to their ships for the night to sleep on board.

##### Early shelter

The name of Old Settlement Beach, in Hunter Bay, at the northern end of the island commemorates the first settlement, established by Ashdown, Bishop and Chapman in 1834. Surveyor White’s record made in 1835 shows a cluster of five structures at the base of the hill on the western end of the Bay, where “the island-triumviri had built their houses, which were rude and simple in structure”<sup>517</sup>. They made their settlement in Hunter Bay, on the foreshore of what is now called Old Settlement Beach. While some archaeological evidence of this site has been uncovered, it has been suggested that the full extent of the settlement may never be revealed as land slippage, grazing and dense undergrowth probably conceals physical evidence, if any remains.<sup>518</sup>

Accompanying the Ashdown party, who travelled to the island from New Zealand, were three Maori women and a Maori youth. With only the island’s natural resources available to them, the structures they would have erected would have been primitive and consistent with Polynesian tradition. This is borne out by recent archaeological research in the Old Settlement foreshore area. Excavation of the settlement site in Hunter Bay which correlated with Captain Denham’s map (1853) and based on results of ground penetrating radar surveying, revealed a rectangular foundation measuring approximately 4 by 6 metres with an outer course of stone, interspersed with post holes which would have supported palm thatch wall panels; and a depression between two centralised post holes suggesting an upright beam for the pitched roof over a single room. Evidence of other features, likely to be a cobbled stone entry to the hut and a stone hearth and base to a chimney, were also

<sup>517</sup> Anon 1849, np

<sup>518</sup> Owens, K. p.108

recovered.<sup>519</sup> It is likely that their success with this construction owed something to the traditional Maori thatched shelters in design.



**Figure 167** Two early structures at the southern end of the island, including a thatched shelter. (Photo: Paul Maidemont prints, PM106, LHI Museum Collection).

The most northerly settlement of the island was made at North Bay in the early 1840s with three families thought to have variously resided there until the 1880s - 1890s. According to Edgecombe, William Nichols, who arrived in 1862, and settled in the vicinity, built a palm-framed and thatched house with calico lining and split palm floor, before relocating to Old Settlement Beach where he built a new house which incorporated a 'shop' (most likely a store where goods were traded rather than a retail outlet).

At the southern end of the island, three families farmed the land and settled in the Soldier's Creek area close to the base of Mt Lidgbird. Shortly after 1848 and the dissolution of the Wright-Moseley-Andrews partnership, the Moseley's moved further north (to Moseley Park near the gardens that Ashdown's party had established behind Blinkenthorpe Beach. and the Andrews moved to Windy Point, occupying the house Dr Foulis built for his family). Ned King, who took over Wright's farm, appears to have left the residence vacant as R G Fitzgerald (1876) mentions occupying King's unoccupied house. Perhaps its location was too far removed from settlement. Evidence of these early structures, thought to have been simple thatched huts, appears to have gone, perhaps left to a natural process of decay – or dismantled and used elsewhere.

The population of Lord Howe Island grew slowly from 9 in 1833 to 16 in 1853 to 40 in 1869. R D Fitzgerald recorded that "There are altogether 35 souls on Lord Howe Island occupying thirteen homesteads and having under cultivation about 33 acres of

<sup>519</sup> Owens, K. pp.110-111

land. The houses are built of the cabbage-palm, and covered with the frond; they are clean and comfortable; two or three of the better buildings are of sawn timber procured from Sydney, the wood on the island not being adapted for building purposes".<sup>520</sup>

The earliest domestic structure continuously occupied since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is Nathan Thompson's house, thought to be the oldest extant residential structure on the island. It was constructed from cedar logs washed ashore, with design features adapted from sailing ship design and whaling cottages from his native homeland in north-eastern United States of America.



**Figure 168** Nathan Chase Thompson's house showing 'board and batten' construction. Built prior to 1882 and may date from the 1850s. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints, Mis5, LHI Museum Collection).

## Campsites

Inspector Cloete, despatched to the island in 1869 to investigate a police matter, does not record where his party stayed but it could be assumed that island accommodation was sufficient only for the residents and the only alternatives for visitors were remaining on board ship, or making camp. Certainly, the latter was the accommodation for John Bowie Wilson's group in 1882. They set up their Commissioner's camp at the southern end of the island on flat land below Mt Lidgbird, where access through the South Passage straight onto the dune foreshore probably made landing their gear an easier exercise than hauling it up the steep cliffs at Middle Beach.

John Sharkey's photographs suggest that the Commissioner's camp was located around a cluster of thatched cottages of an existing farm (presumed to be Ned King's, formerly Wright's farm) and show it to be a very orderly arrangement of two rows of canvas bell tents with a marquee in the centre at the eastern end and an L-shaped drying line.

<sup>520</sup> Fitzgerald, R. p.15





**Figure 169** Commissioner's camp, 1882 John Sharkey, Government Printing Office, 1882 State Library of NSW

### Domestic dwellings

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the population of the island was expanding and the demand for housing was increasing. TB Wilson's diary includes numerous references to the construction of houses, which appears to have been a communal effort, each settler helping another out. Among the residences he helped with were Captain Armstrong's timber framed and battened roof house (down south) in 1880, a house for Mr Ponder in 1881 for which Wilson offered some of his own building materials, a house for Williams in 1883, a new house for Thompson in 1884 and a residence for Stevens that same year for which they collected stones for the chimney and a house for George Garth. Work involved pit-sawing timber, splitting battens and thatching, erecting kitchens, storerooms and outbuildings, burning lime, carpentering and planing timber, fixing iron and painting. T B Wilson's own house, erected in 1895, used imported Baltic boards, iron and guttering, and featured a verandah and a water closet.



**Figure 170** The archaeological remains of TB Wilson's house, in the front garden of the later house 'Larhonette'. The house was demolished because it was in a dilapidated condition. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 4 December 2009)

Prefabricated housing offered quick and easy assembly from the late 19th century, with mainland firms like George Hudson & Company supplying ready to assemble



framing, roofing and joinery in an easily transportable form. 'Kentia' remains the most significant of this form of housing on the Island.



**Figure 171 (Left):** Unidentified house, probably a Hudson prefabricated home. (Photo: Oldfield family prints c1912); **(Right):** 'Kentia' (former Christian house) very similar to the house at left. It is known that the roof of 'Kentia', a Hudson prefabricated house built 1906, was altered and the verandah widened. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 18 March 2010).

With the spotlight on land tenure and greater regulation, the erection of accommodation during the 20<sup>th</sup> century increasingly adopted mainland processes to ensure compliance. In the 2006 Census there were a total of 191 private dwellings of which 147 were listed as occupied, and 39 flats or unit accommodation, but no detached dwellings.

### Government accommodation

In 1878, the NSW government made its first appointment of an official, Captain Armstrong. As part of his terms, he was granted a leasehold of 100 acres, on which he presumably constructed a dwelling. Records locating the site of his residence are yet to be located, but T B Wilson's diary makes numerous mentions of Captain Armstrong's house and one could speculate that the original lease may have been somewhere in the vicinity of the present Government House.

Following the dismissal of Armstrong, the government appointed a visiting magistrate to oversee the Island's affairs. Around 1890, an official residence was constructed for his use, combining both accommodation and office space. As this was not a full-time residential position, the visiting magistrate did not reside in it on a permanent basis. During his absence, a caretaker was installed in a small cottage nearby. Government House was used to accommodate visiting dignitaries and official visitors and urgent renovations were sometimes required to bring it up to scratch. In 1959, for the visit of Sir John Northcott, a septic tank was hastily installed and a low-down suite borrowed from Gerald Kirby for the comfort of the visitors.



**Figure 172 (Left):** Undated photo of Government House, showing timber picket fence along western boundary. Later photos show arris rail fences. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints 3, Mis3-19, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Pedestrian access is now off Bowker Avenue, on the northern side of the house. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 March 2009).

As Lord Howe Island's population increased with the arrival of new settlers, so too did the demand for accommodation. From 13 houses by 1869 the number of dwellings increased to a total of 32 in 1914 – comprising 28 residences, a rectory, Government House and caretaker's residence.

By 1954, that figure had increased to around 50 and by the early 1990s, the figure had exceeded 115.

The shortage of accommodation prompted the Department of Civil Aviation to erect cottages for its staff on Anderson Road, and subsequently, for the Bureau of Meteorology to locate 4 houses for its staff in the 1950s. More recently, portable housing, like that sent for the island's policeman has become a convenient alternative to kit housing.



**Figure 173** One of a row of Riley-Newsum prefabricated houses erected for Bureau of Meteorology employees in the 1950s. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 December 2009)

### Accommodation for the Clergy

Both the island's ministers of religion had accommodation detached from the churches – the Seventh Day Adventist pastor accommodated in a house provided by Ellen Fenton on a site, later to become 'Seabreeze' (now 'Capella'). Colonial Under Secretary and Lord Howe Island Board member, Arthur Kingsmill deplored the standard of accommodation occupied by the Church of England minister in 1953, noting that it was well below standard and too far from the Church. In the 1960s, with

the relocation of the Church to its present site, a site for a residence was provided by a member of the Thompson family. The island's doctor, who lived on Lagoon Road, was also accommodated in a residence but by the 1990s, it needed a facelift and was rebuilt. The original school principal's residence is now occupied by a Board staff member and alternate accommodation provided for the current incumbent. Personnel, including the island's policeman, nurses, teachers and rangers on secondment from the mainland are provided with residences and flats, and in recent years, the Lord Howe Island Board has acquired additional properties to accommodate its staff.

### **Making do**

With a shortage of building materials on the Island, everything had to come by ship, making it costly. A few houses boast the spoils of flotsam washed ashore or salvaged from shipwrecks. *La Meurthe*, subsequently demolished to make way for the airstrip, was built from materials scavenged from the wreck of the French naval ship which broke loose under tow and was driven ashore near the lagoon in 1907. Few residents could afford the luxury or practical difficulties associated with an architect-designed home, so many houses were purchased in kit form and erected on site using available labour. Wainwright's house was demolished by Frank Robbins in 1899 whose own house was eventually removed and a new golf clubhouse built on the site.

Because many houses were lightweight and timber in construction, or made in kit form, they could be easily dismantled and reassembled. A number of residences have been moved to different locations on the Island. The Brearley's house, which was slated for demolition for the construction of the airstrip, was moved to become the Lonergan's house and Max Nicholl's house was relocated as 'Jed's Shed' to Barney Nichol's land. Even the old dentist's structure, known locally as the 'torture chamber' became the enclosure for the Davies' donkey engine, behind the present site of Joy's Shop. Building materials are recycled, or like H T Wilson's packing crates, reused as floorboards.

### **Tourist accommodation**

The introduction of the Burns Philp shipping service in 1893 placed pressure on the island's limited accommodation resources for visitors. At first, the only accommodation for visitors was at 'The Pines' where Mary Nichols had had the foresight to extend her family home to accommodate 10 guests, and later build small cottages and annexes, to cater for the increasing demand. And as Walter Bevan predicted in the Royal Commission in 1912, "the climate of the island is equitable and the scenery beautiful. An increasing number of visitors can be expected".<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> Bevan, W. Royal Commission Report. of the Royal Commission into the condition and welfare of the inhabitants of Lord Howe Island, and the control of the Kentia Palm Seed Trade, 1912

As the popularity of Lord Howe Island as a holiday destination became more widely known, the numbers of visitors soon increased, placing pressure on the limited availability of accommodation. In 1909, Gower and Ada Wilson took guests into their home 'Ocean View', which became the island's second guest house, offering accommodation for 7 guests by 1913. 'Palmhaven', the house constructed by William and Susan Whiting circa 1916, incorporated a guest annexe where many visiting government officials stayed and it was not uncommon for other residents to take in paying guests.



**Figure 174 (Left):** Undated image of 'Ocean View' and its tennis court. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 4, DM567, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** While the roof form remains, 'Ocean View' is much altered, with little original fabric retained. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 December 2009)

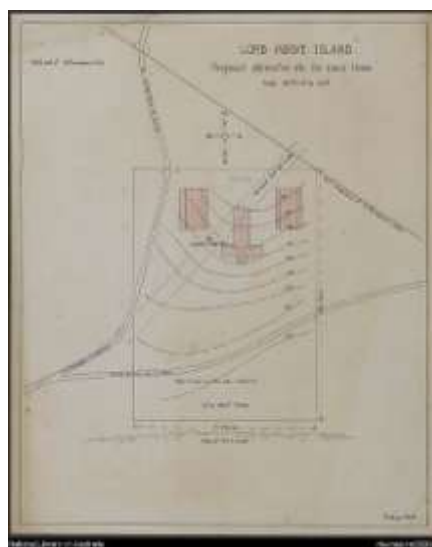
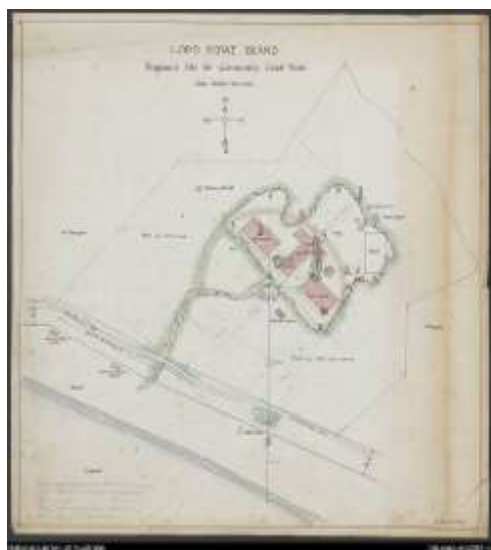
The numbers of visitors coming to the island continued to increase, stretching the Island's accommodation reserves and numbers arriving at any one time were dictated by the number of passengers carried by the steamers. By the 1930s, Mary Nichol's grandson, Gerald Kirby and wife, Beth, had become the managers of 'Pinetrees' which by then had 7 double rooms and 2 single rooms, plus a block of 10 rooms, five along one side known as Virgin's Alley, five along the other known as Bachelor (or Rum) Row. At peak times in summer, beds would be added to verandahs and tents erected on the lawn adjacent to the sports ground. Even the boatshed would be converted for overflow, particularly to those with a more robust constitution. 'Ocean View', which acquired a generator in 1933, offered a degree of luxury for guests, accommodating them in additional bungalows named 'Do Drop in', 'Venture In' and 'Astor Flats'.



**Figure 175** Guests on the tennis court at 'Pinetrees'. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 4, DM559, LHI Museum Collection).

In November 1933, the Board of Control, responding to a complaint, took a dim view of operators exceeding their approved allocation, noting that Gower Wilson (at Ocean View) and Gerald Kirby (at Pinetrees) had 8 and 10 additional single rooms respectively 'without permission'.<sup>522</sup>

As a response to this, the idea of a guest house to be run by the Lord Howe Island Board was mooted in 1934 and plans drawn up for two alternatives, one on the site where the Powerhouse now stands, the other off Lagoon Road.



**Figure 176** Plans for proposed locations of a community guest house, June 1934. National Library of Australia

The potential of Lord Howe Island as a tourist destination has long been coveted by potential investors and developers and while the island's long and tense struggle on the matter of land tenure has caused considerable heartache to residents, it is probably the very thing that has saved the island from the carve-up of land and the often ugly development which is associated with many scenic coastal areas on the Australian mainland.

In June 1950, Ronald McCredie chronicled his attempt to construct a luxury hotel on the island in a letter to the editor of the Sydney Morning Herald:

*"Sir, -Your recent article by a special correspondent deploring the absence of first-class tourist hotels at our local show places and particularly Lord Howe Island might suggest that private interests and local government bodies are as apathetic as the N.S.W. Government to our tourist needs.*

*Such is not the case. Regarding Lord Howe, last November a syndicate of which I am a member asked the State Government to approve a proposal to form a*

<sup>522</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal*, Vol.4, No.126, 17 April 1997



*public company with £250,000 capital to finance the construction of a luxury hotel at Lord Howe Island.*

*We sought tenure of about 10 acres of Crown land, permission to obtain limited material, and a liquor licence.*

*Mr. Matthews, the Chief Secretary, refused to sanction the project. He stated that Lord Howe was specifically excluded from the provisions of the Crown Lands Act, and no form of tenure could be given without amending legislation. He added, however, that the Government had already approved proposals by the Lord Howe Island Board of Control to erect a modern accommodation house”.*

Ronald McCredie. Sydney.<sup>523</sup>

Needless to say neither McCredie’s proposal nor the ‘modern accommodation house’ did proceed, but the shortage of tourist accommodation would continue. In 1953, Arthur Kingsmill, an official from the Chief Secretary’s Department whose association with the administrative affairs of Lord Howe Island was a long and productive one, visited the island. He furnished a report on the current state of affairs, reporting his findings in respect of the visitor accommodation. At ‘Pinetrees’, Gerald Kirby and his family were living in a small fibro structure with a galvanised iron roof and using their residence for guests, accommodating the overflow (including staff) in busy times in tents and on verandahs. Kingsmill was of the opinion that this measure, which exceeded the approved bed allocation of 32 adults and 8 children, was unpopular with residents who worried that numbers might increase if allowed to go unchecked. Additional accommodation was also provided at this time by ‘Ocean View’ which had approval for 42 adults and 8 children (but also accommodated additional guests on verandahs in busy times); and ‘Somerset House’, for 10 adults and 2 children.

The first Annual Report published by the Lord Howe Island Board following the passing of the *Lord Howe Island Act 1953*, reported on guest accommodation on the island, operated under license for a total of 161 beds.

<b>Name of Guest House</b>	<b>Proprietor</b>	<b>Maximum Accommodation</b>
Ocean View	Mr A Wilson	55
Pinetrees	Mr Gerald M Kirby	54
Somerset House	Mr R A Williams	24
Banyan	Mr/Mrs W G Thornton	15 Adults; 3 Children
Avalon	Mrs Henry and Hilda West	6
Valdon	Mr Harry O Payten	4

<sup>523</sup> Sydney Morning Herald, 24 June 1950, p.4

In 1955, the Lord Howe Island Board rejected a request from the proprietors of Valdon who wanted to erect four separate self-contained units to accommodate visitors on his land. The Board considered this move not to be in the best interests of the Island, suggesting that tourists liked the ‘no work’ feature of staying in a guest house and that it could become the start of a proliferation of ‘flats’ for non-tourists.<sup>524</sup>

525

With the introduction of the flying boat service following the end of World War II, Lord Howe Island’s tourist industry took off. Brochures published during the early 1950s provide an insight into the choices offered to tourists. ‘Somerset House’, which opened on 21 June 1951, advertised its weekly tariff at £8/8 shillings per week, consistent with the other establishments.<sup>526</sup>



**Figure 177** ‘Somerset House’ (now ‘Somerset’) circa 1950s, showing oleander hedges, a traditional form of windbreak used on the island. These particular hedges have gone, replaced by landscaped gardens of frangipani, hibiscus and cannas. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 2, DM763, LHI Museum Collection).

The tariffs at ‘Pinetrees’ and ‘Ocean View’ were for full board and included all meals and entertainment (fishing trips, launch cruises around the island, coral viewing in glass bottom boats, picnic trips to North Bay and Salmon Beach and weekly dances at guest houses).

According to the promotional material in the 1950s, the Wilson family at ‘Ocean View’ provided “for the holiday you will always remember”. ‘Ocean View’ was set delightfully amidst a grove of stately palms and surrounded by a profusion of tropical foliage. It boasted a comfortable lounge, large and cool verandahs, music, radio, splendid dance floor, tennis court, excellent cuisine, refrigeration, electric light and good water supply. Delicious tropical fruits, green vegetables, abundance of fresh milk, cream, eggs, fish, poultry and good home cooking were served to guests. ‘Ocean View’ was renowned for its enjoyable dances and the services of an entertainer were retained for the social requirements of guests.

At ‘Pinetrees’, with their long tradition of hospitality on the island, the Kirby family promoted:

<sup>524</sup> *The Signal*, 7 December 1955, No.14

<sup>525</sup> *The Signal*, 8 February 1956, No.16

<sup>526</sup> Tourism brochures, LHI Museum Collection



*“an excellent electric light plant and permanent supply of fresh water and bathrooms and shower and chip and kerosene heaters. A three-quarter size billiard table, a radio gramophone and a Ronisch piano in first class condition and a fifty-six foot dance floor contribute materially to entertainment. The old-fashioned early morning cup of tea brought around about 7.15am has survived, morning and afternoon tea is served regularly and often supper in the evening is provided. Beer and spirits are not available on the island and visitors should arrange for their own supplies. Talking motion pictures are screened in the local hall on Saturday nights”.*



**Figure 178** Piano playing and ‘sing songs’ were popular at ‘Pinetrees’. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 2, DM704, LHI Museum Collection).

‘Somerset House’ provided for 10 guests and had its own launch for fishing trips and excursions. It offered a glassed-in verandah with polished floors, and although it did not arrange dancing on the premises, it had a gramophone which guests could use for dancing if they wished.

‘Valdon’ could accommodate 8 guests, and host ‘Togie’ Payten, who was a keen fisherman, had his own boat and took guests fishing. ‘Valdon’ charged a weekly tariff £8/8¼s weekly for adults and children under 12 £5/5s shillings. Boat trips were additional, charged at a daily rate of £1/4s.

At ‘Avalon’, the Wests accommodated 6 guests at any one time between November to March and offered to guests fishing and arrange 2 picnics each week, one by truck and one by boat. Their tariff was the same as Valdon’s but they would not accept children over 18 months old.

‘Leanda Lei’, the first purpose-built motel style accommodation on the island, was constructed in 1955, its name a combination of oleander and lei, referring to the profusion of the flowers on the island and the traditional Pacific Island ornament presented to welcome visitors. In his 1968 *Guide to Australia*, Osmar White advised readers<sup>527</sup> that there were then six guest houses “of moderately good standard on the island” but that “none could be ranked in the luxury class”. His preferred accommodation was ‘Leanda Lei’, at that time only recently constructed - a long low

<sup>527</sup> White, O. *Guide to Australia*. p.106

motel-style building with central amenities facility, set in lawns with ornamental shrubs and a dense backdrop of kentia palms.



**Figure 179** Undated photograph of ‘Leanda Lei’ circa late 1950s-1960s, in keeping with Osmar White’s description. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM573, LHI Museum Collection).

‘Leanda Lei’, built by Roy Wilson, was the first purpose-built accommodation (as distinct from a home converted to guest accommodation) a departure from the guest house tradition and inspired others to modernize. ‘Somerset House’, which catered for 24 guests with its own vegetable and fruit garden, was described in 1960 as having polished floors and rooms painted in modern restful colours; a lounge with upholstery tapestry covered chairs, good lighting, radio from Sydney and lots of louvre windows; a verandah sun lounge with tables, cane chairs, ping-pong table and card tables. A new block of single rooms had been added in 1959 with 2 combined shower and toilet blocks, one each for male and female guests. The guest rooms were painted soft blue and white with a feature wall, coloured hibiscus framing, louvred windows, washbasins, towel rails, single beds with Dunlopillo® mattress and pillows, gay curtains and deep rose-coloured bedspreads. The rooms had modern lighting including a reading lamp on the bed, polished natural wood floor, nice scatter rug, built-in robes and a chest of 4 drawers.

The Lord Howe Island Board 1978 Annual Report records a total of 287 tourist beds on the island and an historic development in accommodation services. For the first time, a full report of ‘flats’ is provided, describing them as self-catering “for those not desiring full board and lodging”. This style of accommodation proved popular with some guests because it increased their freedom - and was cost-effective with operators because it reduced the labour required to service full-time guests and required fewer staff facilities. However, it required that visitors had ready access to regular deliveries of fresh food from the mainland. It was a portent of things to come.

Name of Guest House	Proprietor	Maximum Accommodation
Pinetrees	Mrs E M Kirby	75
Leanda Lei	R Wilson	40
Blue Lagoon	BM DK & RL Thompson	32
Lorhiti	Mrs A Rayward	12
Sea Breeze	M J Shick	20
Coral Court	J A M Whistler	8
Beachcomber	G Hawken	15

Name of Guest Units	Proprietor	Maximum Accommodation
Pacific Palms	R A Williams	28
Broken Banyan	WK & B Ardill	12
Polynesian	R F Giles	8
Aggie's Flats	Mrs A Christian	2
Ebbtide Flats	H Ackers	7
Trader Nick's	Mr & Mrs Rueckert	18
Bali Hai Cottage	G Hawken	5
Pinetrees Cottage	Mrs E M Kirby	5



**Figure 180 (Left):** Guests in the garden at 'Polynesian' lodge. (Photo: Karen Giles prints, KG5, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** 'Lorhiti', which has been substantially altered since this undated image was taken, although it retains a projecting balcony to the attic level. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM63, LHI Museum Collection).

By 1985, the number of beds had increased to 387, and by then, all but 'Pinetrees' offered self-catering accommodation.<sup>528</sup> 'Blue Lagoon' was built by the Thompsons on the site of Norm Simpson's home, 'Melrose'. 'Banyan' had become 'Lorhiti' (its name a combination of Lord Howe and Tahiti) and a two-storey guest facility built on the site.

<sup>528</sup> Lord Howe Island Board Annual Report 1985

<b>Name of Guest House</b>	<b>Proprietor</b>	<b>Maximum Accommodation</b>
Beachcomber	G Hawken	15
Blue Lagoon	Union Fidelity Trustee Co	32
Broken Banyan	WK & B Ardill	12
Coral Court	J A M Whistler	6
Ebbtide Flats	H T Ackers	9
Hideaway	E A Whitfield	18
Leanda Lei	R Wilson	40
Lorhiti	D Owens	12
Mary Challis Cottages	W P Retmock	4
Milky Way	B Young	12
Ocean View	A Wilson	37
Pinetrees Lodge	Estate of Mrs E M Kirby	80
Pinetrees Cottages		5
Polynesian	R F Giles	12
Seabreeze	M Schick	18
Somerset	R A Williams	49
Trader Nicks	H Reukert	22
Waimarie	M Fitzgerald	4

In the intervening years, ‘Polynesian Lodge’, the former home of postmistress Elsie Smythe (née Wilson) would be redeveloped to become first, ‘Palm Haven’ (1996), and then ‘Pandanus’ (2001). ‘Seabreeze’, once the site of a Fenton residence and then the rectory for the Seventh Day Adventist pastor, became ‘Capella South’ (now ‘Capella’). ‘Trader Nick’s’ (formerly Kath Hines’ dress shop, then The Curio Shop’) became ‘Capella North’ and is now run by Bill and Jann Shead as the redeveloped ‘Arajilla’, a spa resort. The Paytens, who operated ‘Valdon’ (now ‘Beachcomber’), also operated ‘Tradewinds’. Next door on Anderson Road was (and remains) ‘Ebbtide’. ‘Earls Anchorage’, named after famed yachtsman Jack Earl, opened in 2004 and, in 2010, the island’s newest accommodation opened as ‘Howeana’, transferring operations from a former site at ‘Coral Court’ on Lagoon Road to a new location on Ned’s Beach Road.

In 2011, the cap on tourist accommodation stands at 400 beds, offered by 18 licensed establishments. ‘Pinetrees’, run by descendants of its original owners, the Nichols, has been operating for over 100 years and is now the only traditional all-inclusive accommodation remaining on Lord Howe Island. ‘Somerset’ has expanded to offer 25 self-contained units and ‘Ocean View Apartments’ are still managed by descendants of its founders, the Wilson family.

Currently, the 18 establishments include, in addition to the above-mentioned, ‘Arajilla; ‘Beachcomber’; ‘Broken Banyan’; ‘Blue Lagoon’; ‘Capella’ (operated by

Baillie Lodges); 'Ebbtide'; 'Earl's Anchorage'; 'Hideaway'; 'Howeana'; 'Leanda Lei'; 'Lorhiti'; 'Mary Challis Cottages'; 'Milky Way'; 'Pandanus'; and 'Waimarie'.

### **House and lodge names**

Many of the houses and lodges on Lord Howe Island have names inspired by island features. 'Coral Court', 'Seabreeze', 'Sea Spray', 'Blue Lagoon', 'Ebbtide', 'Tradewinds', 'Waveney', 'Laguna / Lagoon', 'Beachcomber', all evoke images of the sea. The names 'Pinetrees', 'Banyan', 'Broken Banyan', 'Howeana', 'Pandanus', 'Palmhaven' and 'Kentia' recall the island's vegetation, and the spectacular scenery has inspired the names 'Whispering Hills', 'Gower View', 'Twin Views' and 'Mountain Inn'. 'Lorhiti', 'Leanda Lei' and 'Polynesian' conjure up thoughts of exotic Pacific destinations and 'Waimerie' is Maori for peaceful waters. The name for the Payten's guest house 'Valdon' was an amalgam of the names of their two children, Val and Don – it was later renamed 'Tradewinds'. Similarly, the Wilson property 'Lahronette' was named for the three siblings Larry, Rhonda and Annette.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Terrace, apartment, semi-detached house, holiday house, hostel, bungalow, mansion, shack, house boat, caravan, cave, humpy, migrant hostel, homestead, cottage, house site (archaeological).

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Archaeological remains of house of George Ashdown at Old Settlement;  
 "Janetville" (original home of Ned King, now owned by Gower Wilson and members of his family), Portion 127, Lagoon Road;  
 Baxter House (opposite rubbish tip), Portion 158, Lagoon Road.  
 W Wilson House, Portion 191, Lagoon Road;  
 "Kentia", (formerly house of A Christian), portion 111, Lagoon Road;  
 S Fenton House, Lagoon Road, (opposite airport);  
 M Nichols House, Portion 181, Lagoon Road opposite airport;  
 'Pinetrees; formerly 'The Pines', (Andrews / Nichols House (now 'Pinetrees Lodge'), Portion 102, Lagoon Road;  
 Early motel style units at Pinetrees designed by Stephenson and Turner.  
 House (Former teacher's residence and formerly G Nichols house), Portion 12, Lagoon Road;  
 Dignam House & Garden, Portions 31 and 32, Lagoon Road;  
 'Laguna', (Austic / Campbell, (Skeggs) / Morris and Murray house, divided into 2 units), Portion 56 and 151, Ocean View Drive;  
 'Ocean View Lodge', / A Wilson, Portion 204, Ocean View Drive;  
 'Larhonette' / L W Wilson house outbuildings, Portion 62, Lagoon Road;  
 Traces of T B Wilson's house, Portion 62, Lagoon Road;  
 I Sainsbury house, Portion 69, Lagoon Road;  
 Old Settlement, Portions 73, 74 and 75, beyond northern end of Lagoon Road;  
 Site of early land use, Permanent Park Preserve, North Bay;  
 Possible site of Captain Middleton's thatched hut and well, at foot of Mt Eliza, North Bay;  
 N C Thompson / M Thompson house, Portions 199, 209, Neds Beach Road;  
 'Blue Lagoon', (formerly 'Melrose' / Cunningham House), Portions 45, 46. 138, Ned;s Beach Road;

'Lorhiti', Portion 78, Anderson Road;  
 'Waveney', fence and carport, Portion 80, Muttonbird Drive;  
 'Tradewinds', (adjoins Ébb Tide'), Portion 81, Muttonbird Drive;  
 H T Wilson house, Portion 85, Skyline Drive;  
 'Beachcomber Lodge', Portion 171, Anderson Road;  
 'Polynesian Lodge', Portion 92, Anderson Road,  
 Nathan Thompson's House, including grave, Portions 199, 209, Ned's Beach Road,  
 N King House, Portion 94, Anderson Road;  
 'Palmhaven', (Garton House, formerly Whiting house), Portion 161, south end of  
 Anderson Road;  
 Department of Civil Aviation houses;  
 Bureau of Meteorology houses.

**Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule**

Archaeological remains of house of George Ashdown at Old Settlement;  
 "Kentia", (formerly house of A Christian), portion 111, Lagoon Road;  
 Historic core of 'Pinetrees; formerly 'The Pines', (Andrews / Nichols House (now  
 'Pinetrees Lodge'), including current lounge and small office, also landscaped  
 garden and path from Lagoon Road to 'Pinetrees', Portion 102, Lagoon Road;  
 House (Former teacher's residence and formerly G Nichols house), Portion 12,  
 Lagoon Road;  
 Dignam House & Garden, Portions 31 and 32, Lagoon Road, including former Cool  
 Room;  
 Traces of T B Wilson's house, Portion 62, Lagoon Road;  
 Site of early land use, Permanent Park Reserve, North Bay;  
 N C Thompson / M Thompson house, including Thompson family cemetery, Portions  
 55, 199, 209, Ned's Beach Road;  
 'Palmhaven', (Garton House, formerly Whiting house), Portion 161, south end of  
 Anderson Road;  
 Government House, Bowker Avenue.

## 2.5 Working

### 2.5.1 Labour

*These are activities associated with work practices and organised and unorganised labour*

The history of working on Lord Howe Island demonstrates three significant features: self-sufficiency; multi-skilling; and hard work.

The first people to settle on Lord Howe Island are understood to have been in the employ of Robert Campbell and came to establish a small station to supply the whaling trade. Accounts of their operations and working arrangements are inconclusive but their successors, Captain Poole and Richard Dawson are known to have hired staff for their station and store. Three men, Hescott, McAuliffe and Wright came to the island, with their wives, in 1841, presumably to work the land productively and to convey supplies out to passing ships. The following year, a married couple, Thomas and Margaret Andrews, came initially for a year as 'servants', returning to settle permanently in 1844. That same year, Dr John Foulis and his family arrived, bringing four Englishmen, Platter, Slade, Thorne and Varney to work for him on a wage of £10 per annum plus a ration.

In 1869, the statistical register of island residents noted their occupations as master mariners (5); mariners (4), farmers (3) and carpenter (1), along with land under their cultivation. The community was largely self-sufficient, surviving on what they could harvest from land and sea, extracting a small but unreliable income from the onions they grew and exported.

Working as a formal occupation was not a concept which would have been familiar to residents at this time. Whatever livelihood they could extract from the island's natural resources was their only certain means for survival. T B Wilson's diary demonstrates that this was very much a collective effort, with everyone lending a hand when it was needed. Work regimes were dictated by seasons, the daylight hours and weather conditions, or the arrival of a ship - but when there was work to be done, everyone pitched in. So, when onions were ready for transplanting, a new house needed building, cargo needed unloading, or a supply of coal was required to be taken from the store on Rabbit (Blackburn) Island to a waiting ship, it was 'all hands on deck'. Consequently, residents were extremely versatile and multi-skilled. They were also hard-working and took little leisure time as T B Wilson's diary repeatedly confirms.

Captain Armstrong was the first government employee to be appointed to the island. He arrived in 1878, following the proclamation of Lord Howe as a Forest Reserve, with a portfolio of responsibilities including forest ranger, registrar of births, deaths



and marriages and subsequently, postmaster, resident magistrate, coroner and clerk of petty sessions, for which he received an annual income of £300. Armstrong attempted to establish a number of enterprises on the island to create employment for islanders, including an expanded agricultural industry with crops including coffee; the collection and export of guano for fertiliser and the collection of palm seed and fibre. Finding spare labour to get these projects underway was hard when everyone was busy fending for themselves, so Armstrong supplemented the labour force by recruiting several Kanakas from New Caledonia and accepting five destitute boys from the nautical school established by Sir Henry Parkes on the training ship, *Vernon*. Armstrong's willingness to hire them met with considerable resistance on the island.<sup>529</sup>

This labour caused no end of trouble on the island. Throughout March 1879, T B Wilson expressed exasperation with a 'wild human [a young girl under his supervision], and the 'boys' would frequently wander off from their work in the gardens and disappear for a few days, causing a great inconvenience.

Following Armstrong's dismissal, resident Campbell Stevens (who had been made a special constable along with another resident in the wake of the Wilson Inquiry) was appointed forest ranger (a necessary position to prevent residents clearing trees) and postmaster (holding the latter position for 33 years). The administrative and legal duties were transferred to a visiting magistrate until the creation of the Lord Howe Island Board of Control in 1913. After that, the position of Island Superintendent was created and apart from islander, Norm Fenton, a mainland public servant was appointed by the Chief Secretary's Department and sent to the island to manage its affairs.

In 1914, the Chief Secretary's Office had four other people on their books who were employed on the island – school master, Gerald Kirby (annual salary £140/0/-); Edith Kirby as sewing mistress (£25/0/-) and caretaker of the government residence and offices (£25/0/-); and Campbell Stevens who received the following annual salary for the various positions he held – special constable (£30/0/-) , forest ranger (£10/0/-), signal man (£4/0/-) and care of the government skiff (£2/12/-).

The Annual Return for 1920 shows that the Board of Control, whose members were paid a sitting fee (collectively) of £128 per annum to attend four meetings a year, also managed the salaries of a schoolmaster (who was paid a salary of £195, a sewing mistress £58.6s.8d, a special constable £46 12s, a secretary to the Board £87.10s and payments to J L Boorman, a botanical collector for the National Herbarium of NSW at the Botanic Gardens, Sydney. He received paid fees for advice and work on palm clearing 35.17.1; gratuities for the same £15s.15s, his steamer passage of £5.12s and travelling expenses of £10.14s. That same year, the

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<sup>529</sup> Nichols, D. p.69

obstetric nurse who visited the island received a steamer passage of £4 17s and travelling expenses of £1.10s but no salary or wage was recorded.<sup>530</sup>

The island's administrator was a government appointee, who resided on the island for an appointed term. For many decades, that position was supported by one, later two, clerical employees (both islanders) and casual labour as required.<sup>531</sup>

Lord Howe Island's strategic position in the Pacific Ocean was recognised in 1929 with the appointment of Stan Fenton to operate the Department of Aviation's wireless station. With the island's location providing an important strategic link in the Pacific during and subsequent to World War II, additional staff were seconded to the island to man the station 24 hours a day. To complement this service and provide a 24 hour weather watch for the flying boat service, three meteorological observers and a senior radio technician were also transferred to the island from the mainland.

The first people to work in the *Kentia* palm seed industry were those engaged by the original exporters - Mary Nichols, George Nichols, T B Wilson, William Thompson, Phillip Dignam, John Robbins and George Waterhouse. At least one Sydney nursery firm felt their interests would be better served on the island, and despatched an employee, Alexander Fenton, to act on their behalf. The collection and packing of *Kentia* palm seeds provided intensive seasonal work between March and September and involved most of the able-bodied men on the island. Collecting seed was not for the faint-hearted and required considerable strength and agility. Collecting methods are much the same today as they were in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, although women have now joined the ranks of registered collectors.

To harvest palm seed, collectors ascended the thin trunk of the palm tree using a circular 'strap', often made from layers of hessian, which they placed around their feet. By keeping his feet together and using a jumping motion, a collector could scale the trunk and reach the pendulous seed spikes at the base of the fronds. The spikes would be pulled off and left to fall to the ground, or slung over the collectors' arms on his descent. Once down, the seeds would be stripped from the spikes and packed into hessian or jute bags and carried in a 'cubby' (a harness for carrying loaded bags). These would then have to be taken to the seed shed on foot or horse-drawn sled – or collected by boat from more inaccessible locations. The seed shed was the focus for intense activity for the whole community which re-packed the seeds, this time in wooden crates filled with soil, ready for export. When the industry was restructured as a co-operative and islanders given shareholdings, this activity was more inclusive and encouraged greater community participation.

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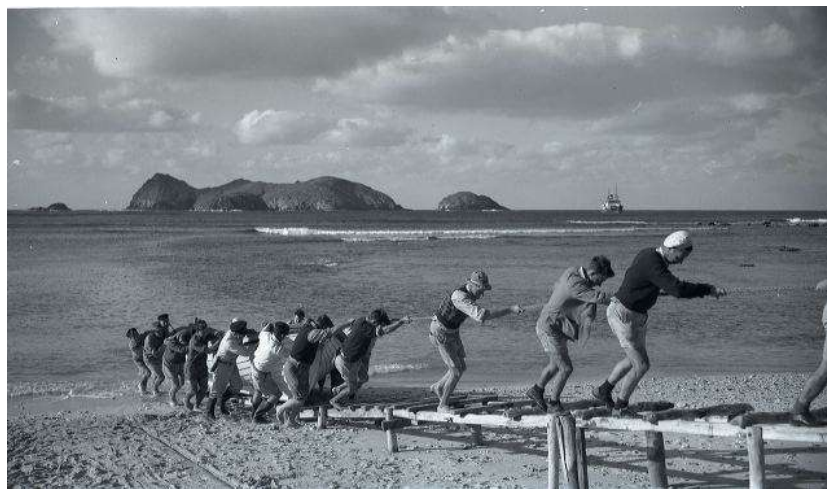
<sup>530</sup> Annual Return, Lord Howe Island Board of Control, 1920

<sup>531</sup> Lord Howe Island Board Annual Report 1954 p.7



**Figure 181** Collectors Ray Shick, Paul Thompson and Bruce 'Gilbert' Thompson carry back heavy loads of seeds from the harvesting area, assisted by goats. (Photo: Daphne prints, DH38, LHI Museum Collection).

Although collecting was notoriously arduous and dangerous the methods have remained pretty much the same for over a century. In 1996, the Lord Howe Island Board introduced working conditions to regulate the collection of seed, requiring that collectors must be 15 years of age and older to be paid, that only registered collectors could collect seed, and that seed was to be collected on vacant Crown Land Reserves or Permanent Park Reserves – and only from perpetual and special leaseholds or permissive occupancy, provided it was with the authority of the owner. In 1996, there were 45 registered seed collectors. Those who undertook the work were paid a collection rate per bushel, the rate variable according to where the collection was made. Seed from the 'Lowlands', North Bay, Clear Place and Salmon Beach received \$129 per bushel; increasing to \$195 per bushel for 'out of the way' places with a higher degree of difficulty including The Little Slope, Red Point, Rocky Run, Big Slope, Goat House and Between the Hills. Assistants could also be employed to assist, by 'shelling' the seed and cleaning up the areas after seeding.



**Figure 182** Loading and unloading ships in the old days required considerable labour. In this image, islanders haul a boat onto the slip rail at Ned's Beach, with the supply vessel at anchor offshore. (Photo: Dick Morris prints 3, DM122, Lord Howe Island Museum Collection).

The bounty on rats also provided residents with a small addition to their income. Frank Hurley's film, *Jewel of the Pacific* (1932) captures two of the island's keenest bounty hunters, 'Lil' Wilson and Ivy Cunningham, who with their 'ratters' (dogs) scoured fallen logs to smoke out rats and collect their tails. In one quarter in 1937 over 1,000 tails were sent in by one woman and in another quarter, a total of 4,370 rats were killed.<sup>532</sup> Most islanders participated in this activity until the mid-1950s when the practice was discontinued, joining a labour force which not only caught rats, but counted the tails for payment and then incinerated the bounty.

Subsistence agriculture remained for most islanders a necessary way of life. Whatever food produce was raised on the island was locally consumed. *Wise's Post Office Directory* for 1950 reflects this, listing the following individuals and their occupations<sup>533</sup>: Not all residents appear on this list and many undertook other secondary duties not recorded in this list.

Names	Occupation
Austic Edwd, Baxter Robt Dignam Jas, Fenton Norm, Innes H, Innes Mrs G, King Edwd, Kirby Mrs E, Nichols Alfrd, Nichols Ern, Nichols F, Hines R, Nichols, Geo, Payten F, Payten HO, Payten Mrs M, Payten T W, Robbins F, Shick Mrs G, Smyth Hy, Thompson Geo, Thompson Jno, Thompson Wm, West H, Whiting W, Williams A, Wilson Herbt, Wilson Roland, Wilson Warwick, Woolnough, H.	Farmer
Brearley Herbt	Boat builder
Dignam P W	Agent and ice manufacturer
Hines Eric	Cold storage
Morris Richard	Photographer
Payten T W	Cold storage
Retmock C R	Agent and postmaster
Rogers Wm	Medical practitioner
Thompson O C	Storekeeper
Williams R A	Guest house
Withers Mrs V	Refreshment rooms

Note: 'Pinetrees' and 'Ocean View' were listed separately as guest houses.

<sup>532</sup> *Lord Howe Island Signal* 2010 JD condolence)

<sup>533</sup> *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1950, p.598

In 1954, the first Annual Report for the new Lord Howe Island Board published annexures following the introduction of the new Act. Fifty-one islanders were awarded leases in perpetuity for residential use, with a further 43 special leases awarded for agricultural use, for grazing and agricultural use - almost everyone on the island at that time, whether they had some other employment, tended a grazing herd, and / or grew produce of some kind.

While agricultural activities originally predominated the economy and workforce of Lord Howe Island, the introduction of a regular shipping service to the island opened up a whole new future for employment. With the arrival of regular tourists from 1893, a service industry providing for their accommodation, nourishment, entertainment and leisure evolved. Local residents supplied the labour for domestic services, first assisting in private homes and later in guest houses. As this industry expanded, seasonal workers from the mainland were recruited, their terms of employment and residency dictated by the strict regulations over land tenure. For this reason, staff quarters were added to some of the larger establishments.

Providing activities for tourists evolved to become an industry during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many visitors were (and still are) content with the simple pleasures associated with the island's natural beauty and accounts of their holidays recalled the hospitality of islanders who accepted visitors into their homes, welcomed them to social events and accompanied them on walking and fishing expeditions. With the introduction of the flying boat service and greater numbers of visitors, more organised activities associated with tourism (including charter boating for fishing, island tours, restaurants) were required, providing further employment opportunities. David Murray who managed the flying boat arrangements on behalf of Ansett on the island, not only monitored weather and navigational information for flights and radio communications with pilots, but also checked out and supervised the 42 outgoing passengers as they waited around the jetty and welcomed the 42 incoming visitors, organised the transport of luggage and passengers between the island and the seaplane, (in summer sometimes 5 or more flights per week). When a new public address system was installed, he also had to remember to turn on the South Seas Island music to add to the atmosphere. As often happened, bad weather would delay departures from Sydney and without a telephone, it was David's job to visit each guest house (by bicycle, later on a motor scooter) and not only advise guests of delays and changes in arrangements, but find beds for the marooned passengers and crew.

Life was busy too for the domestic staff working in the guesthouses. Agnes Christian ('Ocean View') spoke for others like Norah Nichols ('Pinetrees') when she described her working regime to the *Woman* magazine in 1951. On Monday, she was at work by 4.30am to clean the rooms of departing guests in preparation for the arrival of another group from Sydney. Depending on the tide, the flying boat could land

anytime between 6am and 4pm and she would be down at the jetty to welcome them and install them in their rooms. That done, she might rest for a couple of hours, garden, collect flowers and participate in evening entertainment with new guests to make them feel at home. Tuesday was laundry day and began at 5am after the men had lit the coppers. An average load for 3-4 women included 60 sheets, 20 tablecloths, 50 table napkins, 50 towels and 50 pillowslips, all done by hand. When it was dry, it all needed to be folded, ironed and put away. If fine, Wednesday was a picnic day or fishing expedition for guests and once the sandwiches were made, Agnes might have had time for a swim or some gardening before helping out with a dance in the hall in the evening. Thursday was a cleaning day, with more housework on Friday while guests were out. Saturday was another washing day before a new load of guests arrived on Sunday and the week started all over again.<sup>534</sup> Although the days don't start as early now that flights are not dependant on the tides, the domestic routine has changed little. However, the vagaries of the weather can sometimes still play havoc with departing schedules and cause the inconvenience of having more guests than beds or reduce the time between the arrival and departure of guests.



**Figure 183** Flying boat *Australis* unloads passengers in the lagoon. (Photo: Dick Morris prints, DM608, LHI Museum Collection). The Trans Oceanic flyingboats were wartime Sunderlands converted after the war to civilian configuration – they were called ‘Hythes’. The Sandringham was purpose-built by Short Brothers of Belfast as a passenger flying boat, and was not used at Lord Howe Island until about 1951, when Qantas introduced them.

<sup>534</sup> *Woman*, 16 April, 1951



**Figure 184** The arrival of the Qantaslink Dash 8 at the airport requires considerable labour as passengers disembark and are transferred to their accommodation. The aircraft have to be unloaded, checked and refuelled. In peak tourist season, up to five flights a day serve the island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 12 September 2010).

The demand for this work can be appreciated when visitor numbers are considered. In 1956, 2,550 tourists visited the island, staying an average of 14 days. In 1970, 4,023 tourists visited the island. A cap on the number of visitors who can be accommodated on the island at any one time remains at 400.

In 1982, following the designation of Lord Howe Island as a world heritage site, eco-tourism has flourished. Islanders now operate businesses which cater specifically for this market, some using professional expertise or training to deliver high quality experiences associated with the unique environmental attributes of the island, including land-based and marine tour operators, walking track guides and naturalists and diving instructors. Regulation of businesses and accreditation of employees ensures that the high standards and survival of these operations are maintained for the benefit of visitors and Islanders.

The evolution of this local industry and a set of unique factors, including the island's isolation, the cap on tourist numbers, regulations associated with becoming a resident and owning land and seasonal spikes in visitation have all combined to create an unusual labour market on Lord Howe. Many Islanders multi-task and are employed in several part time positions. According to the 2006 census, Lord Howe Island recorded a workforce of 219 people (of a population of 347) with 116 employed full-time and 69 in a part-time capacity. Of those, 14.8% held professional positions, 26.2% had management roles, 35.2% were labourers or in technical trades and 12.9% worked in community or personal services.



The Lord Howe Island Board is now the largest employer on the island, with a permanent staff establishment of 28 working as 42.4 fulltime equivalent staff, engaged in general civic administration and management (7) , operations (14), environmental (14.1) and trading (7.3).<sup>535</sup> Many islanders are engaged indirectly or indirectly in the tourism industry and the Lord Howe Island Tourism Association is the peak organisation which promotes and monitors the tourism industry for the island.

The Lord Howe Island Board owned and managed the nursery for the commercial Kentia palm seedling industry from its inception in 1978. In 1981, following a succession of seed germination failures, Alan Williams, an islander, was replaced as manager by Chris Weale, from the NSW Department of Agriculture. The Board also manages the importation of liquor to the island and its sale.

The Board's offices and workshops are located in a 'government' precinct adjacent to the Government residence which was built in 1890 for the use of the resident administrator. That position is now classified as a chief executive officer and is filled by a senior member of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, seconded from the mainland, and supported by an administrative, technical and manual team working in both full-time and part-time capacity. Expert assistance is provided on a project-by-project basis and mainland consultants are engaged through the Board's tendering process to undertake specific investigations where there is insufficient local expertise. Government employees also include rangers attached to the Marine Parks Authority; the Department of Education's teaching staff, who are seconded to work on the island; nursing and medical staff appointed by NSW Health; staff from the Bureau of Meteorology seconded to manage the weather station and the island's police officer, who is also the island's customs and quarantine officer, and member of the NSW Police Force from Port Macquarie. These positions are filled mostly by mainlanders, who transfer on short term arrangements to work on the island.

The island has a local workforce of trades associated with the infrastructure and building trades, electrical, plumbing, waste management, marine and vehicle maintenance and for specialist work, temporary labour is often brought to the island. The fortnightly service by the MV *Island Trader* brings large quantities of cargo to the island which requires intensive activity for a couple of days to unload and distribute goods. Life is busy during these periods for the staff in the two general stores. Local staff engaged by Qantaslink provide on-ground flight services at the airport. The Port Operations Manager and Assistant Port Operations Manager undertake marine operations duties on behalf of the NSW Department of Transport and the NSW Waterways Authority, working in a voluntary capacity with a small annual stipend and the equipment for these duties.

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<sup>535</sup> Lord Howe Island Board Annual Report 2008-9 p27



**Figure 185** The fortnightly arrival of the island's supply vessel, the MV *Island Trader*, is eagerly awaited and results in bouts of frenetic activity as everything from motor vehicles to livestock are unloaded and distributed around the island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 1 March 2009).

In Campbell Steven's diary of the 1890s, mention is made of items in Government ownership which were made available to the islanders to assist in their work, including a whale-boat, grindstone, sledge, anchor, sacks and a rifle. Stevens duly kept records of the income from this practice which he was required to submit to the authorities. In 1957, islanders could make use of the Board's equipment and vehicles – they could hire the Bedford truck for 2 shillings (minimum hire 10s); utility 1s6d (min 6s); sawmill 25 shilling per hour; the Ferguson tractor 25s per hour with the cultivator 2s per hour (10s minimum) and the bulldozer for haulage at 30s per hour. Later, to help with pig and goat eradication, islanders could use .303 rifles lent by the Police Department. Sensibly, this practice of sustainable use of equipment continues and shows a commitment by the Board to minimising unnecessary repetition of resources. It seems a sensible practice for a small community and one which the Lord Howe Island Board continues to uphold. Items of Board equipment and vehicles are available for hire by residents, saving unnecessary duplication of specialised equipment. ,

The island's largest operation was the construction of the airstrip, completed in 1974 and the culmination of years of lobbying by the Island Committee and the Airstrip Committee during the 1950s and 60s. So desperate were they to get this vital piece of infrastructure that in 1957, they offered "That every able-bodied man [would] provide a minimum of I (one) day's labour per week towards the building of an airstrip, and that the Board, as its contribution, would devote the whole of the Tourist Tax for the next five years to the project".<sup>536</sup>

<sup>536</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal* No.40, 13 February 1957



**Figure 186** Army engineers moved a lot of earth and rock during the construction of the island's airstrip in 1974. (Photo: Robyn Warner prints, img973, LHI Museum Collection).

Finally, with the imminent cessation of the flying boat service, the Australian Army was appointed as the construction agency for the New South Wales Government and the Department of Transport to construct an emergency airstrip (which was originally to be a grass airstrip for light aircraft and emergency flight by RAAF Caribou). Captain Tony Coyle, the Officer Commanding sixty engineers from the First Field Engineers Regiment, based at Holsworthy, NSW, worked in consultation with the island's Assistant Superintendent, Mr Les King. Heavy equipment for the job was transported to the island and brought ashore on landing craft and the team worked 'round the clock to have the project completed before seasonal wet weather set in.



**Figure 187** When the *MV Island Trader* arrives with bulk mail, it's a case of 'all hands on deck' to unload the vessel and deliver the items to the Post Office. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 1 March 2009).

With a heavy reliance on a postal service as the principal communication with the rest of the world throughout the island's history, (particularly before telephones and internet) the postmaster has held an important role in the community. What began as a voluntary service collecting and distributing mail in Captain William Spurling Thompson's time and had become an official position in 1878, was incorporated into the telecommunications duties of the wireless operator in the 1920s. For a time the postal service was run by islanders from their homes, before a post office was constructed in 1959, later transferring across the road back into the former wireless

station. However there is no home delivery service. Islanders are required to collect their mail from the post office.

The small population on the island cannot support full-time work in many of its operations due to the seasonal nature of the tourism industry and the size of the community. If there is one labour feature unique to this small community in New South Wales, it is their multi-tasking ability. Many islanders work part-time in a number of casual jobs for which there is no justification for a full-time position. It is possible to be a cleaner, tour guide and bar tender all in one day.

Many services are now acquired through tendering and under contract and specialists are brought from the mainland to assist in construction projects, maintenance of the power supply, installation and maintenance of telecommunication services. This can create long delays and is frustrating for residents when there is a need for urgent response.

Countless hours on Lord Howe Island have been spent in voluntary work, through church and youth organisations, producing the island's newspaper, maintaining the radio station, staffing the museum, providing emergency services and port facilities and the myriad of committees catering to the social and welfare interests of residents. The Herculean task of ridding the island of noxious and invasive weed species to help return the vegetation to its natural state has been underway since 1995 and since then tens of thousands of person hours of assistance from mainland and local volunteers have been spent on this important task.



**Figure 188** The island's community radio station, run by volunteers from a room in the former Cargo Shed, provides a valuable service, particularly for the island's teenagers. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 7 September 2010)

### **Safe Working Practices**

On 13 March 2000 Chad Wilson was injured collecting palm seeds and fell 10 metres, suffering spinal injuries. The LHI Board resolution of 3 April 2000 requires that all registered palm seed collectors and leaseholders must now follow safety procedures. All seeds must now be collected by way of the newly adopted method of wearing safety equipment made available by the Board, or by use of ladders. Helmets are compulsory, seeders must use a sliding 'choke' connected to a harness, they cannot work alone and trees must be a certain measurable diameter. Straps can be used in conjunction with safety harnesses. Locals are frustrated by these

new regulations as few accidents have occurred in 100 years and these regulations will change traditional methods of collecting<sup>537</sup>.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Trade union office, bundy clock, time-and motion study (document), union banner, union membership card, strike site, staff change rooms, servants quarters, shearing shed, green ban site, brothel, kitchen, nurses station, hotel with an occupational patronage.

**Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

LHI Board employment records;  
Artefacts and records relating to the Kentia palm industry

**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Museum collection including artefacts and records relating to labour in the Kentia palm industry

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<sup>537</sup> *Signal* Vol.4, No.208, 7 April 2000

## 2.6 Educating

### 2.6.1 Education

*These are activities associated with teaching and learning by children and adults, formally and informally.*

The following account of the history of education on the island is largely taken from the 1979 Lord Howe Island School Centenary booklet.

There were children living on Lord Howe Island as early as 1842 but no positive action to establish a school on the island appears to have been taken until 1878, when there were fifteen school age children and another five or six older persons who also expressed an interest in schooling. However, the educational needs of the island had not been entirely neglected in the early days. Alan Isaac Mosely, who had arrived on Lord Howe in 1842 apparently attempted to provide more formal education for the young people on the island. Captain Spurling, who was appointed Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in 1869, took an active part in teaching young residents and a Captain Field took night classes during his life on the island.

Captain Richard Armstrong, who arrived as Resident Magistrate in 1878 initiated moves to secure government approval and assistance for the opening of a school and it opened in July 1879 with Thomas Bryant Wilson as the first official School Master. Wilson was a visitor to the island who had undertaken without pay to give some of the island children a few hours education daily and Armstrong believed he had the right credentials to become the island's teacher. Captain Armstrong also ensured the school came under the jurisdiction of the Council of Education and he was a member of the local board which was expected to "regularly visit, inspect and report upon the school placed under its supervision."

At first T B Wilson held classes in his own home until Captain Armstrong's Kanaka servants cleared a site for a small temporary school building on the one acre site granted by the Government on 27 June 1879. It soon became clear that this building was too small and Armstrong lobbied the Government for a new school house which the islanders agreed to construct and which could also serve as a general reading room and as a place for religious observances on Sundays. Before the new school was erected, T B Wilson married his oldest pupil, Mary Thompson, resigned his post, and returned temporarily to his native New Zealand.

With Wilson gone, Armstrong recommended Robert Cooper Rose as his replacement but Rose declined the appointment as he did not believe he would receive sufficient support from the islanders owing to the fact that he had previously had control of five "Vernon"<sup>538</sup> boys who had been apprenticed to Armstrong. Consequently, Armstrong nominated William Clarson as the next teacher. With Clarson installed, the school re-opened on 19 February 1882, with 15 day students and 12 pupils who were engaged in farm work during the day and attended evening classes. In spite of Armstrong's recommendations of Clarson, the latter soon proved unsuitable for the job – he was committed for trial on a charge of bigamy, having

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<sup>538</sup> The islanders opposed the presence of these boys.

remarried only eight days after he had wed another. Ironically, the event was reported in the *Evening News*, the paper on which Clarson had been employed as an artist prior to his appointment to Lord Howe Island.

The Chief Inspector communicated with Doctor J Bowie Wilson about the educational needs of the island and Wilson, who had previously lobbied the Colonial Secretary for better educational facilities, “strongly urged that a married man [presumably to only one woman], of high moral character and good common sense should be appointed as teacher. Extensive attainments are of less consequence, trust-worthiness being the main qualification necessary”. William George Stevens apparently filled these requirements and, after a period of teacher training at Orange Public School, he opened the Lord Howe school on 21 September 1882. He found that the number of children of school age was only eight and parents of some of these indicated they could not be spared on afternoons. Although the Government kept the school open on a trial basis, by July 1883 the Principal Under-Secretary reported to the Colonial Secretary that pupil numbers and average attendances were too low to justify the cost of keeping the school open and paying the teachers salary and house allowance. Stevens was removed to Barrenjoey and the school was closed.

Only one year later, in July 1884, the visiting Magistrate, Henry Wilkinson, reported to the Colonial Secretary that there were 20 children on Lord Howe Island and that “the absence of a schoolmaster is much felt”. Although it was shown that only six of these children fell within the age group for compulsory education, W G Stevens was re-appointed and took up residence in the house built by the Government for Captain Armstrong when he was Resident Magistrate on the island. Things had not improved and Stevens soon found attendances were poor, parents were apathetic about their children’s education and he reported that “it seems a waste of money to continue the school”. The school was formally closed in May 1887. Sporadic but unsuccessful attempts were made to reopen the school between 1887 and 1890.

In 1890 Celine Jeune, a woman who had apparently taught in English schools and whose new husband was a farmer on Lord Howe Island, expressed an interest in becoming the teacher. She was paid an advance in salary and had embarked from Sydney to Lord Howe when the Department of Public Instruction rescinded her appointment. Instead, Mrs Cavage, wife of the Forest Ranger on the island, was granted the position on 26 February 1891. With a background only in private schools, she needed a short period of training, at Petersham Public School, before taking up her post. Although local residents, including T B Wilson were pleased with her performance, attendances were so low for want of children on the island that the school again closed in January 1895. For the period 1879 to 1901 records relating to education on Lord Howe Island are almost entirely correspondence between the teachers on the island and the education administration in Sydney.

By 1901 there were 16 children on the island and the islanders made attempts to have the school re-opened but a history of erratic attendances, often the result of quarrels among various families or a dispute with the teacher, influenced the then Chief Inspector of Education to decide that it would be impractical to re-open the school. An approach by the islanders to the authorities led the appointment of a teacher, George Massy Kirby, in 1902. Kirby, forty years old when he took up the



post, had arrived on the island in 1900 on a ship that called in for water. Remembered by former pupils as very formal and proper, he apparently spoke excellent English, played the piano well, dressed usually in a white suit and straw hat and smoked a pipe. Lessons included rote learning of the counties of England, Scotland and Wales, the States of America and the names of British monarchs and the years in which they reigned.



**Figure 189** Teacher George Massy Kirby with Lord Howe Island School pupils, circa 1922. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 4, Mis4-15, LHI Museum Collection).

The school building, which had been built in 1880, was a barn-like structure, with gabled roof, weatherboard cladding, a door at each end and three multi-paned double-hung sash windows on each long elevation. It was furnished with a long desk and benches that had no backs. When this building was replaced in 1927, it was moved to the site of the present Public Hall and was used for a time as a store room for palm seeds. It was later put up for tender, bought by the H Brearleys, dismantled and moved by horse and sled to *Waimere*, where it was used as an engine and lumber room.

Writing was done on slates, with slate pencils sharpened by the students on stones under the trees near the school. Skipping ropes and swings were improvised from vines gathered in the bush, rounders, cricket and hopscotch were played. Mr Kirby started the school week with a Bible reading on Monday mornings, the roll was called and punctuality was strictly enforced. Kirby apparently had a disconcerting habit of pretending to go outside and then returning quickly to catch any pupils not working. It must have proved effective, as the Inspector commented favourably on the skilful teaching at the school. This author [Chris Betteridge] remembers school being pretty similar when he attended Parramatta Central School in the early 1950s!

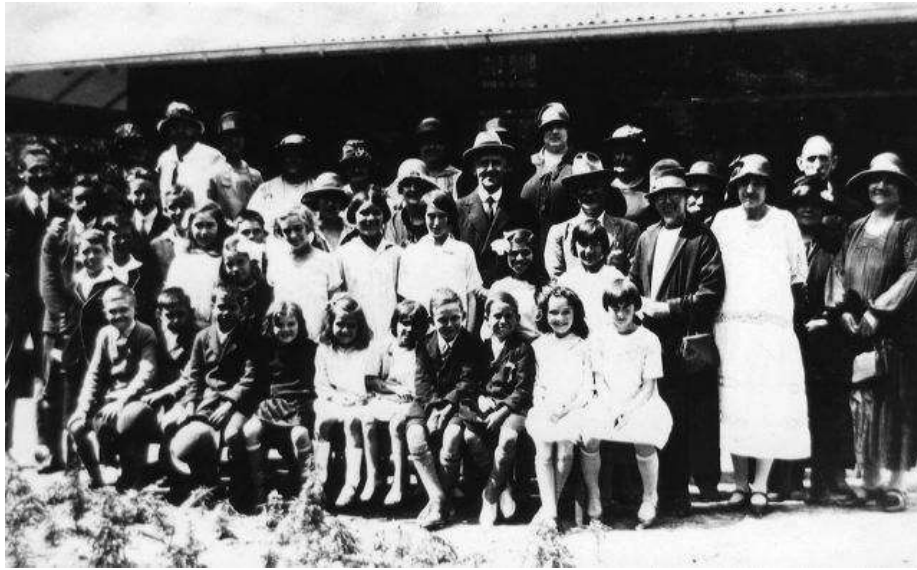
A school photo dated 1922 shows Kirby in his typical attire, the girls dressed in white dresses and most of the boys wearing shirts and ties, with jackets over breeches or

shorts. Most of the children are barefooted, a tradition that continues to the present day. After so many stops and starts for the school, G M Kirby's tenure as School Master was long and stable and must have had an enormous influence on the children who attended school on the island during the twenty years he was the teacher. However, in about 1921 Kirby decided to take a trip back to England to see his family and the Board of Control had to find a replacement teacher. However, the Board was suffering financial hardship in the aftermath of World War I and with the failure of the palm seed crop, due in part to the predations of rats which had invaded the island in 1918 from the stranded trader *Makambo*. In these circumstances, the Department of Education was approached to take over the running of the school again. This was agreed and Mr Clem Smith arrived to take up the post of Teacher in Charge in July 1922 but he only remained until December 1923, 18 months during which the island suffered further financial setbacks caused by drought and the predations of rats on the kentia palm seeds. The school photo for 1923 shows Mr Smith with 24 students, 12 boys and 12 girls.

Max Nicholls arrived in January 1924 to replace Clem Smith. Nicholls was a Tasmanian who had served in World War I and had been teaching in Newcastle prior to his posting to the island. While his period as teacher was relatively short, until December 1926, Nicholls' association with the island was longer, and very significant. He was a keen student of both natural and cultural history, pioneering many of the walking tracks on the island – the beautiful track from Old Settlement to North Bay is known today as the Max Nicholls' Memorial Trail. In 1938, Nicholls' book *A History of Lord Howe Island* was published, providing both locals and visitors with a comprehensive summary of the island's early development.

Max Nicholls had a great enthusiasm for music and was undeterred by the lack of instruments on the island. He formed a School Band in which the students played flutes, tin whistles, fiddles, banjos and drums, either bought or hand-made.

In September 1926 the Governor of NSW, Sir Dudley de Chair, visited the school. By this time the original school building was beginning to show its age and Mr Nicholls and the residents petitioned the Department for a new building which was completed in April 1927 and is still used today, although modified internally as school offices.



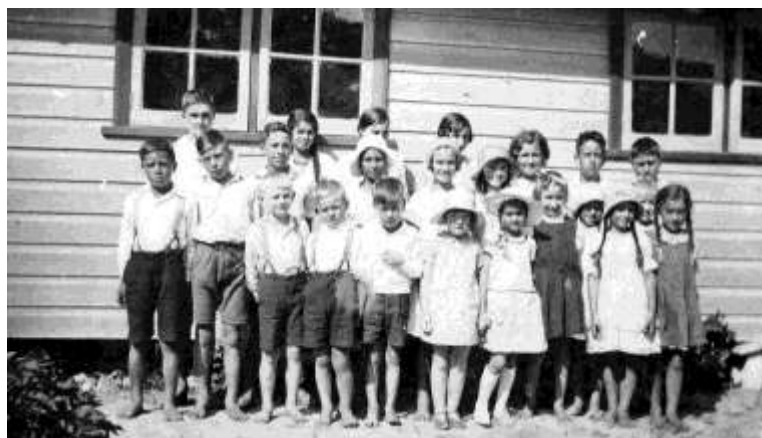
**Figure 190** The Governor of NSW, Sir Dudley de Chair and islanders during his visit to the school in 1926. (Photo: Muriel Ferris Prints, MF14, LHI Museum Collection).

Ilma Sainsbury (née Hines), a student at that time, recalled the craft lessons in which local materials were used to make cane laundry baskets, and mats and hats were plaited from cut grass that had been boiled and dyed. There was very little playground equipment and children's games of cricket and hockey were often played with bats and sticks which the students had made themselves.



**Figure 191 (Left):** Max Nicholls and a young assistant making baskets, circa early 1930s. (Photo: Special Prints 33, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Joseph Lyons with the school students circa 1927. (Photo: Joseph Lyons Collection, JL4, LHI Museum Collection).

In 1927 Joseph Lyons succeeded Max Nicholls, but his stay was quite a short one as he left after only two terms. He was followed in August of that year by Mr Austin Lee, another teacher who was to spend many years at the school. His first stay was for more than six years, until November 1933.



**Figure 192** The students of Lord Howe Island School circa 1931. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints, Mis13, LHI Museum Collection).

In 1932 the Inspector commented that some of the children appeared “listless and lethargic” and he advised “greater stimulation” to secure higher standards. Some of the girls at school at that time remember Friday afternoons as the time for cleaning duties. Hazel Payten (née Retmock) and Joyce Petherick (née Wilson), both still living on the island in 2010, recall sweeping verandahs and cleaning the windows as a weekly chore back in the early 1930s.

Mr Eric Folks took over until June 1936, then Mr Lee returned for another considerable period, until September 1942. In 1933 the Lord Howe Island Board of Control had specified that the teacher’s wife should be a double-certificated nursing sister. So, as in addition to her duties as needlework teacher at the school, Folks’ wife, Evaline was also responsible for maintaining the island’s dispensary, making professional visits and administering anaesthetic as required. That same year another NSW Governor visited the island – Sir Phillip Game, perhaps best remembered for his sacking of State Premier Jack Lang over the issue of the repudiation of State debts to overseas lenders during the Depression years. Towards the end of 1933 Mr J Walsh served briefly as relieving teacher at the school.

Attendance at the school during the 1930s was fairly stable, averaging about 20 children. The school building was renovated in 1935 and was declared to be in excellent condition when Mr B C Harkness, the Chief Inspector of Schools, visited Lord Howe Island that year. A photo taken during the visit shows Mr Harkness with the Chairman and members of the School Board at the school with Mr Folks and the children. On the occasion of this visit the school was presented with a painting by celebrated marine artist John Alcott, depicting the discovery of Lord Howe Island by Lieut. Ball on the Supply in 1788.

Mr Folks had a policy of inviting interesting and prominent people to come to the school to “widen the children’s experiences as much as possible”. It was much harder in those days to secure such visitors because fewer tourists and officials visited and transport was only by boat. The policy continues to the present day – in February 2010 Chris Hingley, principal of the Petra school in Zimbabwe visited the Lord Howe Island Central School and captivated the students with his tale of life in his country. As a result, the students decided to raise funds to help a school student

in Zimbabwe to have a better life.<sup>539</sup>

When Eric Folks left the island on 18 June 1936 he and his wife signed the Visitors Book and he wrote “Termination of two and a half happy years as Teacher in Charge”.

Austin Lee returned for his second term on the island and in 1937 a major tree-planting program was carried out. Forty Berry Wood trees, thirty Juniper trees and twelve Cypress Pines were planted in the school grounds, while Norfolk Island Pine trees were planted at the Signal Station, at North Bay and along the foreshores of the island. Bill Retmock, a student at that time, remembers that each tree planted at North Bay bore a plaque with the name of the child who planted it and he can still point proudly to ‘his tree’ (although the plaques have long since disappeared)<sup>540</sup>

Also in 1937 the Lord Howe Island Parents’ and Citizens’ Association was initiated. The “listless and lethargic” students of 1932 appeared to have gone and instead the children were “happy and contented”. The Inspector’s wife noted in the Visitors’ Book: “Charmed with the children and their keen interest in music. Will cherish happy recollections”.

By 1939, student numbers had dwindled to twelve, but the projected enrolments for 1940 promised another seven starters. During the years of World War II students had to dig air raid trenches and practice getting from desk to trench in a speedy but orderly fashion. A garden was planted at the school, with the proceeds from the sale of the crop going to the Australian Comforts Fund, established to provide support services for personnel in the armed services.

On Austin Lee’s departure in September 1942, Max Nicholls, who was living on the island at the time, was called upon to teach at the school once again, presumably until a new permanent teacher arrived. Nicholls again showed his interest in music and the School Band flourished anew.

Miss Valerie Payne-Scott, the new teacher, arrived in 1943. Bill Retmock remembers a question in an arithmetic lesson that asked the pupil to count the number of trees in the school playground and Miss Payne-Scott allowed the class to do this exercise. Bill does not state how long the count took, but with all the tree planting that had taken place in the preceding decade, it must have been a rather long job and was probably a welcome relief from the classroom.

After a stay of two years miss Payne-Scott left and was replaced in January 1945 by Miss Lillian Bingley. Miss Bingley’s first visit by an inspector was on a Saturday, presumably because the steamer was at the island during a weekend. Of the 28 children enrolled, therefore, only 12 attended. However, Mr Hayes, the inspector, was favourably impressed with the work being done and the thorough and systematic instruction being given. Many of the former students alive in 1979 recalled Miss Bingley’s prowess with the cane, which she kept behind the blackboard. Annette Young (née Wilson) remembered that a request from Miss

<sup>539</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal* vol.6, no.101, 5 March 2010, p.11

<sup>540</sup> Bill Retmock, pers.comm. Feb. 2009

Bingley to one of the children to bring her the cane was a sure indication to that child that he or she was about to be on the receiving end.



**Figure 193** Photo of Miss Bingley, signed “With love from Bing ‘48”. (Photo: Special Prints 53, LHI Museum Collection).

In 1948 a start was made to construct a tennis court at the school but apparently the wrong type of sand was used. The following year, under Max Nicholls’ supervision, another, more successful attempt was made, with the senior boys providing much of the labour. The court was in use at the school until 1967 when the new Science Block was built on the site.

By 1948 the number of secondary school age children had risen to seven , with the expectation of eleven being in attendance the following year. In September that year Mr L G Kendall, an Inspector of Schools, visited the island and commented on the activities of the P & C Association which had resulted in the provision of a wireless set and new pictures for the school. His report further comments:

*“The question of an additional teacher was discussed. The attendance at the school for several years at least should be about forty. This is a difficult school as the teacher had to teach all classes from first to ninth. Next year there will be eleven pupils in the Super-Primary classes. These pupils will need more attention than it is possible to give under present conditions. The parents were informed that an additional teacher would be appointed provided a suitable room could be made available for use as a classroom. This matter will be taken up immediately with the Board of Control.....*

*If a second teacher is appointed it will be possible to give these (Secondary) pupils the direct attention that is essential”.*

Mr Kendall’s recommendations obviously found support. In 1949 Lord Howe Island became a two-teacher school, the Board offered the small room at the Public Hall (which had been built in 1934) for use as a second classroom and this was accepted. Just three months after this report was issued, Lord Howe Island had its first Principal, Stephen Frew, and a new assistant teacher, Miss Jean Johnson. Many schools these days would consider themselves very fortunate to get such a

rapid and positive response from government.

Miss Johnson's Infants Class moved into the hall while awaiting the erection of the new classroom, but their stay proved longer than anticipated as the building was not completed until 1951. This is perhaps not surprising given the general shortages of building materials in the austere years post World War II. The Secondary boys at school at that time remembered the building of the new classroom – Gower Wilson, Des Thompson and Brian Young all spent time as “builders labourers” on that job. The official opening of the new building was performed by the Governor of NSW, Sir John Northcott, on 15 May 1951. This building contained a classroom and what later became the library, the Principal's office and the Duplicating Room. In Stephen Frew's time a Junior Farmers Club was actively encouraged and supported, as the occupation of most parents on the island at that time was noted as “Farmer”. After a tenure of about five years Mr Frew left the island at the end of 1953 and was posted to Kiama, where he stayed until his retirement.

He was followed by Harold Cairns who spent four years at the island school. Mr Cairns had had previous experience on the mainland in School Counselling. It was during this time, in 1954-55, that Lord Howe Island had the distinction of winning the Bowen Cup for Lifesaving. This involved many hours of swimming and lifesaving practice at the Far Rocks (in the lagoon just south of Signal Point) after school. In this contest the Island School of forty or so pupils was competing against mainland schools of up to three hundred pupils, and by winning the trophy it became the smallest school ever to do so. The tradition of swimming remains an important part of the school's activities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with weekly swim training in the lagoon during the summer months. The authors were amused at the sight of dozens of beach towels spread out to dry in the sun in the school playground when they visited the school in December 2009.

Principal followed Principal in steady succession as the Island School continued to serve its community efficiently and effectively. Maurice Reeve came from Normanhurst Public School to become Principal in 1958, with Janet Kearsley as his assistant and an enrolment of 38 pupils. During this period, the Inspector commented on the school uniform and the badge, and after listening to the children singing the Island Song and the School Song, he wrote that there was a “stimulating and wholesome atmosphere in the School”. Maurice Reeve was appointed to Urbanville Public school on his return to the mainland in December 1959.

Allan C Cook took up the post of Principal at the beginning of the 1960 school year and it was during his time that a septic toilet was finally installed at the school, to replace the previous pit-type toilets. Negotiations for a septic tank toilet system had begun at least as early as 1955 when the comment had been made that such a system was urgently required. In the intervening years there were frequent references to hold-ups and the problems connected with having the septic tank system installed. In 1958 the Chief Secretary's Department (which then had administrative responsibility for Lord Howe Island) was investigating the use of underground water to supplement the water supply and the comment was made that, unless a decision was made quickly, new closets and pits would have to be provided. Meanwhile, contemporary students enjoyed a game called “Forts”, in which the object was for the girls to defend the girls' toilet from an attack by the boys,



and vice versa. The toilets were also the target for other attacks. Homemade bombs appear to have been the aim of all those students of scientific leaning, and Bruce Thompson recalled his efforts with John Morgan to blow up the boys' toilets with one of their homemade bombs. However, by 1962, all that was finished. The new septic toilets were completed and in use. The Departmental officer who inspected the Island School that year left this rather puzzling comment in his official report:

*“The new septic toilet and ablution block has been used to good educational advantage”.*

He does not elaborate on just how this was done!

Allan Cook left in December 1963 after a four year stay and was replaced at the beginning of the following year by Ian Hore. Community involvement that is so much a part of public school life today was being practised on Lord Howe years before it came into vogue on the mainland. In 1965, during Ian Hore's time as Principal, the Inspector commented on the Physical Education Group that had been started at the school. He commended the voluntary teachers who gave willingly of their time. Under the leadership of Jim Dorman, this group continued to function for ten years and contributed greatly to the development of the co-ordination and physical prowess of the island children.

The rest of the School report was glowing: “in appearance and behaviour.....these pupils measure up to the highest standards set by the best schools in NSW”. High praise indeed - Lord Howe Island School had come a long way since the dark days of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when attendances were unreliable and the school's very future uncertain.

Ian Hore returned to Sydney at the end of 1966 and Ray Weekes arrived to start the 1967 school year. That year the Governor of NSW, Sir Roden Cutler VC made his first official visit to the island. In 1966 the Public School on Lord Howe Island had been re-classified as a Central School, thereby identifying the importance of the large number of Secondary pupils enrolled at the school. This necessitated a separate building with facilities at the Secondary level for Science, Woodwork, Home Science and Craft and the Department of Education funded a new building which was officially opened by Sir Roden Cutler on 16 February 1968. That year, the Principal, Ray Weekes, published a Lord Howe Island School Magazine which outlined the history of the school to that time. At the end of 1968 Ray Weekes moved to Cobar and David Moxon became the new Principal.

During David Moxon's three years, Sir Roden and Lady Cutler again visited the School. They watched the children at work and were entertained to afternoon tea. A major undertaking during David Moxon's time was the building of a new residence for the principal. Complaints by former principals about the previous house, which belonged to the Lord Howe Island Board, had been frequent, and the Department of education had been asked to provide its own residence for the principal. However, despite all the efforts he put into having the house built, it was completed only a few months before David's term as principal ended and he and his family occupied the new house for only a short time. David returned to the mainland as Principal of

Darlinghurst public School and, later, of Camperdown Demonstration School.

John Shipton commenced his five year stay on the island in 1972, and with an enrolment of nearly seventy, a third teacher was at last appointed in 1973. This allowed the school organization to be geared to the three School areas of infants, Primary and Secondary, with a separate teacher for each level.

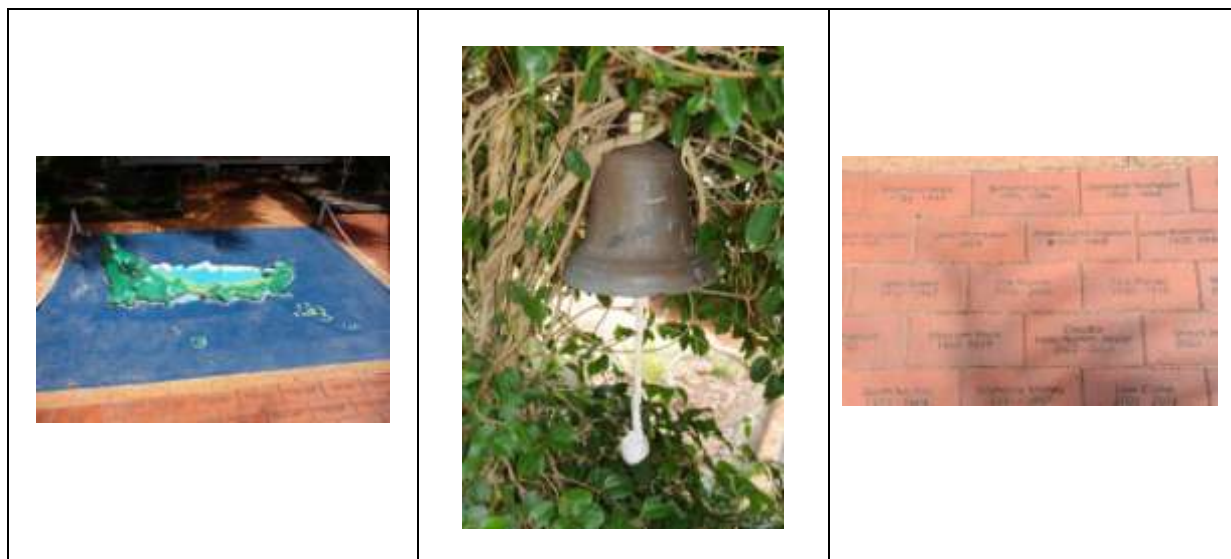
The opening of the airstrip during this period brought Port Macquarie into close contact with the island, and with the cooperation of Brian Peel of Oxley Airlines, free transport was offered to all island children who wanted to attend high school in 'the Port'. A number of students availed themselves of this generous offer and a strong link was forged between the island and Port Macquarie High School. Boat building became part of the boys' woodwork program during John's time, and as a result of this, the school acquired its own small sailing boats.

Like David Moxom before him, John Shipton returned to an inner city school, taking with him a kentia palm for his office to remind him of his days on Lord Howe. Bob Spencer's appointment as Principal in 1977 continued a sequence of principals who did their original teacher training at Wagga Wagga Teachers College in the early 1950s.

The history of the school from 1979 to the present was unavailable at the time of preparation of this report. However, recent years have seen a greater use of excursions as an adjunct to classroom activities. The opportunity to attend Vocational Guidance and Correspondence School camps in Sydney has broadened the social and cultural outlook of the island children by allowing them to meet and live with other similarly isolated students. The annual Correspondence School camps enabled secondary children to meet their Correspondence School teachers and this face to face contact has linked isolated pupils and distant teachers much more closely.



**Figure 194 (Left):** The c1926-7 school building that was originally a standard one-teacher school design, now converted to offices but retaining original external form and much original fabric. **(Right):** Recent classroom block and covered walkway and play area. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 28 February 2009).



**Figure 195 (Left):** Painted concrete relief map of Lord Howe island in the school playground; **(Centre):** Brass former ship's bell serves as the school bell; **(Right):** The names and years of attendance of former pupils and staff are marked in brick pavers in the school playground. (Photos: Chris and Margaret Betteridge, 28 February 2009).

The Secondary children have not been the only ones to leave the island. In 1978 the Primary Class raised funds to visit Wauchope for an excursion. Since that time fund-raising activities have allowed students to travel further afield, to the NSW snowfields for an experience they're never likely to have on Lord Howe. Under the current Principal Julian Mostert and his staff, the Lord Howe Island central School is well integrated into the island community and has greatly improved access to a wide range of education opportunities through internet access and the modern teaching tools. A Science block has been built, unfortunately at the expense of the school's tennis court and some older students can take advantage of supervised distance education, enabling them to stay on the island. Many secondary students, however, leave the island for the duration of their high school years, a number boarding at Sydney private schools.

Former students of Lord Howe Island Central School have gone on to successful careers in areas as diverse as teaching, nursing, acting, modeling, tourism, boat building, the merchant marine, the armed services, the law, banking and island administration

### **Parents and Citizens Association**

Formed in 1937 during Austin Lee's second term as teacher, the P & C has been particularly active in helping the school meet its needs. The association has always enjoyed the support of the community, enabling it to contribute to the construction of the school's tennis court, the purchase of projection equipment and other facilities. A monthly Sunday market at the school affords locals and tourists an opportunity to get together, with the proceeds from the sale of local produce, crafts and second-hand goods going towards school improvements. Students regularly introduce the Wednesday night screenings of historic films about Lord Howe Island at the Public Hall, gaining valuable experience in public speaking in the process. The small

admission charge to tourists also helps fund school projects.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

School, kindergarten, university campus, mechanics institute, playground, hall of residence, text book, teachers college, sail training boat wreck, sportsfield, seminary, field studies centre, library, physical evidence of academic achievement (e.g. a medal or certificate).

**Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Early building (1927) of Public School, Portion 38, off Lagoon Road;  
 Former schoolmaster's house, Lagoon Road (also for Accommodation);  
 Cement relief map of Lord Howe Island at Public School;  
 Brass ship's bell in school playground;  
 Brick pavers with names and years of attendance of pupils and staff;  
 Painting by John Alcott depicting the discovery of LHI in 1788;  
 Historic school photos and reports;  
 Islanders' school exercise and project books;  
 Items in LHI Museum Collection that represent this theme.

**Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule**

Early building (1927) of Public School, Portion 38, off Lagoon Road;  
 Former schoolmaster's house, Lagoon Road (also for Accommodation)  
 Cement relief map of Lord Howe Island at Public School;  
 Brass bell;  
 Brick pavers with names and years of attendance of pupils and staff;  
 Painting by John Alcott depicting the discovery of LHI in 1788;  
 Items in LHI Museum Collection that represent this theme.

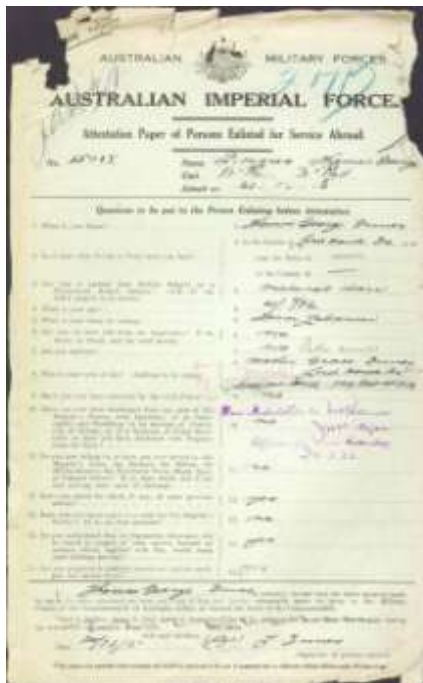
## 2.7 Governing

### 2.7.1 Defence

*These are activities associated with defending places from hostile takeover and occupation.*

#### So Many Served

For a tiny population, the men of Lord Howe Island have made an important contribution to the defence of Australia through their enlistment in the Armed Forces and serving in major campaigns, conflicts and during peace time since World War I. The first to enlist signed up to the Australian Army Infantry Forces. Of the nine who left for overseas engagement, two men, Thomas George Innes and Arthur Leslie Dignam made the ultimate sacrifice during campaigns in France. Private Arthur Leslie Dignam, who served with the 19th Battalion (Infantry), died of wounds sustained in conflict on 19 November 1916 and is buried in the St Sever Cemetery Extension Rouen, France. Private Thomas George Innes, son of Hector and Grace Marguerite Pearl Innes, of Lord Howe Island of the 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Infantry) died aged 23 on 7 April 1918 and is commemorated at the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, France. Privates Innes and Dignam are both commemorated on the Australian War Memorial's Roll of Honour in Canberra and on a memorial on the island which was constructed in the grounds of the former Church of England church on Lagoon Road.



**Figure 196 (Left):** Enlistment paper for Thomas George Innes, dated 14 December 1915. (Source: Australian War Memorial); **(Right):** Photographic portrait of Arthur Leslie Dignam date 2 February 1915. (Photo: Daphne prints, DH11, LHI Museum Collection).





**Figure 197** The War Memorial erected beside Lagoon Road adjacent to the site of the original Anglican Church. Unveiled on 26 January 1925, the memorial honours the two Lord Howe Islanders who gave their lives in the Great War 1914-18. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 7 March 2009).



**Figure 198 (Left):** Undated photograph of the main Lord Howe Island War Memorial. The dress of those attending, the condition of the building and the newness of the concrete suggest a date in the 1930s. (Photo: Special Prints 134, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The flagpole has been moved from the building to the centre of the entrance path. The posts and chain were originally intended to keep wandering cattle out. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 7 September 2010)

In 1928, a larger war memorial was erected by islanders. On a site bisected by Lagoon Road and Bowker Avenue, the structure has roof support columns of stone brought across from Blackburn Island. The memorial features a World War I German MG08 machine gun captured at Villers Bretonneux on 9 July 1918 (where Thomas Innes had been wounded and died four months earlier) and a plaque honouring the service of the 24 island men who enlisted for World War II and two islanders, Stan Fenton and Garth Nichols, who served during the Vietnam War.

### Fearful Isolation

Lord Howe Island's isolated location far from areas of conflict and its lack of a deep harbour or large airstrip has meant that its role in Australian defence capability has been limited. During the Second World War the island's main supply ship *Morinda* was commandeered for war service and the regular shipping run cancelled, leaving the islanders very isolated. Then, when Premier of NSW, William McKell issued an order under the *National Security General Regulations* authorizing the superintendent of Lord Howe Island, or his deputy, "to do whatever is necessary to meet any emergency arising on that island out of a warlike attack, or the fear or expectation of"<sup>541</sup>, the islanders knew that the rest was up to them.



**Figure 199** The island's Post Office sand-bagged and barricaded during World War II. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 3, Mis3-93, LHI Museum Collection).

### An Important Communications Role

The island did however play an important role in maintaining communications in the Pacific region and two members of the Royal Australian Air Force were stationed on the island to assist Stan Fenton, the Radio Communications Officer to provide a 24 hour watch. The Department of Civil Aviation's wireless station was upgraded, sandbagged and equipped with a radio-telephone so that voice contact, albeit for a very short range, could be made with passing aircraft. Residents helped to man a small transmitting station on Transit Hill atop the large Norfolk Island Pine tree there, and kept watch from Malabar Hill, for alien vessels.<sup>542</sup> In addition to blackouts, they also had an emergency rescue plan in place for older residents. Large pits were dug

<sup>541</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 20 February 1942, p.4

<sup>542</sup> Oral history Rosie Sinclair Tape LHI:FH2, CD Track 2



by hand along the beach so that residents could hide under leafy camouflage in preparedness for enemy invasion. The only physical evidence of armaments that came their way were two unexploded mines, washed up on shore, one on Middle Beach, in 1946; another almost sixty years after the event.



**Figure 200** Mine washed ashore on Middle Beach 1946. (Photo: Norm Simpson prints, NS19, LHI Museum Collection)

### **A Peacetime Tragedy**

On 28 September 1948 around 7.30pm, RAAF Catalina flying boat A24-381 was on a navigation exercise from its base at Rathmines on Lake Macquarie to Lord Howe Island. The plane had completed the outward leg and altered course for home when twenty minutes into that leg, a serious fuel leak began, filling the compartment with petrol vapour. The captain, Flight Lieutenant Malcolm Donald Smith, did not use the aircraft's radio because it was feared a spark from the set might cause an explosion, and decided to turn back to attempt an emergency landing on the lagoon. After crossing the island, west to east, the aircraft turned, the bottom of the Catalina's hull clipping the ridgeline just below Malabar Hill. A portion of the hull was ripped off before the plane careered down the slope through dense timber before exploding in flames. Two local residents, Roy Lance Wilson and William Ernest Davis, who rushed to the scene, managed to drag from the wreckage two seriously injured crew members, both wireless operators, Flight-Lieut Bert Raymond Bradley and Warrant-Officer John Dean Lea, before the petrol tank exploded. They had been thrown out of the plane on impact, but a third victim who crawled out from the wreckage was incinerated as the flames took hold. In all seven crewmembers perished<sup>543</sup>. At the time, the death toll was the highest suffered by the RAAF in a peacetime accident. The heroism of Roy Wilson, then co-proprietor of the Ocean View Guest House was recognised with the award of the George Medal. The Medal was presented to him by the Governor of NSW Lieutenant General Northcott at a ceremony at Government House, Sydney in December 1949 along with a citation which said he showed great

<sup>543</sup> *The Signal* Vol.4, No.168, 11 September 1998

coolness and exceptional courage in rescuing the two survivors of the crash). Bill Davis, also from Ocean View, received the British Empire Medal.<sup>544</sup>

Evidence of the wreckage still lies on the slope, although over time, many pieces have been removed by souvenir hunters. The wreckage remains the property of the RAAF who retrieved some items to assist in the restoration of a Catalina on display at the RAAF Museum at Point Cook. The site of the accident on Malabar is marked with a plaque, and a commemorative memorial, comprising a salvaged propeller and propeller boss, was placed at the northern end of Lagoon Road, near 'Milky Way' on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the accident.



**Figure 201** Photograph by Ernie Crome 1948 of the Catalina crash site, showing just how close the plane came to clearing the ridge on Malabar Hill. (Source: National Library of Australia. Nla pic-vn3722856)



**Figure 202 (Left):** The Catalina crash site on Malabar Hill looking west over Old Settlement and the lagoon; **(right):** The memorial plaque to the seven crew killed in the crash and the two survivors. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 11 September 2010)

<sup>544</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December 1949, p.12



**Figure 203 (Left):** Wreckage of the Catalina flying boat strewn over the slope on the western side of Malabar Hill. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 December 2009); **(Right):** The memorial erected near Old Settlement Beach to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the crash. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 25 February 2009).

### Building the Airstrip

After years of lobbying and desperate offers by islanders to build an airstrip themselves, the defence forces finally came to the party. The Australian Army provided the technical expertise and the manpower of sixty Army engineers to construct the island's airstrip which was completed in 1974. The work was done in association with the Lord Howe Island Board and heralded the demise of the flying boat service and the introduction of passenger services by land-based fixed wing aircraft to Lord Howe the Island.



**Figure 204 (Left):** The airstrip under construction, showing the runway extending westwards into the lagoon, with Army construction vehicles that were landed from the landing barges pulled up at the beach. (Photo: Robyn Warner Prints img974, LHI Museum collection); **(Right):** Plaques at the airport terminal honouring the contribution of the Army Engineers in the construction of the airstrip. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 March 2009).





**Figure 205 (Left):** An RAAF Caribou on the newly completed runway c1974. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 4, Mis4-58, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Islanders scramble to pick up papers as a P2V Neptune maritime reconnaissance aircraft flies close. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 2, Mis2-58)



**Figure 206** An RAAF F111 from Amberley base fires its afterburner over the island. This aircraft was flown by local resident Stanley Fenton (then Flight Lieutenant Fenton). (Photo: Daphne Prints, DH82, LHI Museum Collection).

### RAAF to the Rescue

Very important for the islanders has been the long and continuing relationship with the Royal Australian Air Force and the RAAF's assistance with emergency evacuations from the island. Medical evacuations in RAAF Catalina flying boats commenced during World War II. Maude Payten was the first person to be medically evacuated by RAAF Catalina, in May 1942. In 1945 Hilda West was also 'medi-vacced' to Sydney by Catalina. Islanders Monnie Morris and Hazel Payten were both medi-vacced off the island in 1947. Monnie had experienced complications after giving birth to twins, but despite medical assistance received in Sydney, only one of the twins, Kim, survived.

Even before the airstrip had been fully sealed (in August 1974), Warwick Wilson was the first person to be evacuated by a land-based aircraft – an RAAF Caribou – after his leg was crushed in a tree falling accident. Through brilliant piloting, the aircraft landed in appalling weather, with cross-winds gusting to 50 knots. The late Mick Nichols was the first person to be evacuated from the island after the airstrip was officially opened in September 1974, in a RAAF Caribou. Many island residents and visitors owe their lives to this continuing service.

In 1996, following a major storm event which knocked out essential services and caused damage to the airstrip, two Navy Sea Hawk helicopters landed on the island, bringing an RAAF engineer to assess the landing capabilities for an RAAF Caribou and an urgent cargo of oxygen cylinders required by the hospital. The RAAF continues to provide a vital service to the island assisting with the evacuation of seriously ill people to the mainland for hospital treatment.

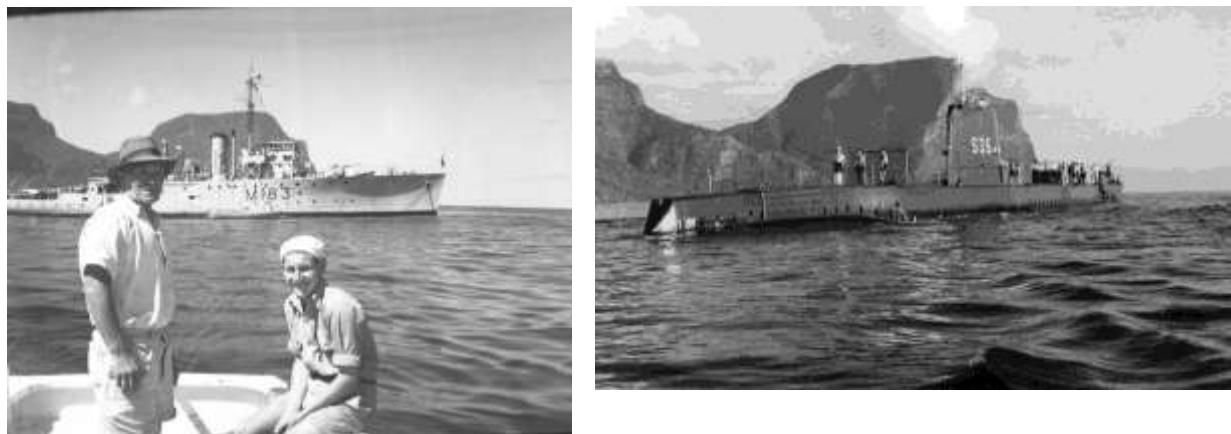
### **Military Exercises and Surveys**

In September 1998, 80 members of the 41<sup>st</sup> Battalion, The Royal NSW Regiment carried out a 3-day exercise on Lord Howe Island, the culmination of two years training on the North Coast of NSW, designed to practice for the defence of Australia in a low level conflict. While this was the first exercise of such a scale to be undertaken, Australian Defence Force units regularly undertake training and provide assistance at Lord Howe Island. The island's airstrip is considered a challenging place to fly into because of the short length of the landing strip and the prevailing weather conditions, which often include strong cross-winds and driving rain. For many years, the RAAF has used the island's airstrip for C-130 (Hercules) training flights, including circuit work, all-weather operations and nighttime training 'touch and go' landings and take-offs. When the authors visited the island in late 1995 they were amused by the sound of young locals squealing with delight in the dark as they lay at the western end of the island's airstrip runway while the RAAF practised nighttime "touch-and-go" landings and take-offs.

The Royal Australian Navy has long been a frequent visitor, on many occasions, conveying vice-regal guests on official visits. During the 1960s and 70s, the HMAS *Barcoo* and HMAS *Kanimbla* undertook oceanographic and hydrographic research in waters off the Island and today, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is involved in marine activities that occur from time to time within the Lord Howe Island region, including maritime surveillance and response; fisheries law enforcement; search and rescue; and hydrographic services.<sup>545</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> *LHI Common Waters Management Plan*, Natural Heritage Trust, Australian Department of Environment and Heritage 2002, p.30



**Figure 207 (Left):** Friendly ‘gunboat diplomacy’ as Royal Australian Navy Bathurst Class minesweeper M183 HMAS *Wagga* visits Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 2, DM95, Lord Howe Island Museum Collection); **(Right):** Royal Australian Navy Oberon Class submarine S35 outside the lagoon. (Photo: Norm Simpson Prints, NS18, LHI Museum Collection).

### Embarrassment for the Royal Navy

The headline in the British press read: “Whoops! One of our warships has hit a rock!”<sup>546</sup> On 7 July 2002, the Royal Navy destroyer HMS *Nottingham*, with a ship’s complement of 253 persons on board, struck Wolf Rock off Lord Howe Island, while manoeuvring to allow a helicopter to land on deck. At the time, the ship’s master, Commander Farrington was on-shore and junior officers were in charge of the vessel. Five of the *Nottingham*’s watertight compartments were breached and a major disaster was only narrowly averted. The incident was front-page news across Australia and in Britain and an extreme embarrassment for the Royal Navy. The public were amazed that such a thing could happen in this day and age when so much sophisticated technology is available on board such a warship. The 3,500 tonne ship lay at anchor off Lord Howe for several weeks while pumps worked overtime to dispel the water and temporary repairs were effected. Most of the ship’s crew were airlifted by RAAF Hercules aircraft to Richmond airbase but those who stayed behind were treated to the island’s famous hospitality. Eventually the *Nottingham* was towed backwards to Newcastle for further repairs and then transported back to England on the Dutch heavy-lifting ship *Swan*. She returned to sea after extensive repairs to her hull and electrics had been carried out at a cost of Aus\$102 million (UK£39 million)<sup>547</sup>.

After the naval inquiry into the incident at which Commander Farrington was court-martialled, he stated:

*‘This incident reminds us all that the sea is an unforgiving master and all those who follow this rewarding profession must treat it with respect, regardless of the technology that might be available’.*

<sup>546</sup> *The Guardian*, 9 July 2002

<sup>547</sup> *The Independent on Sunday*, 12 September 2003

### The Ongoing Role of the Australian Defence Forces

The Australian Defence Forces have had a close association with Lord Howe Island through peacetime activities and in times of emergencies and it is hard to imagine the consequences for residents without their assistance. Representatives from the Forces regularly attend major events, including Discovery Day and Anzac Day and Remembrance Day commemorations.



**Figure 208** An official visit by Australian Defence Force personnel on 18 February 1993 included His Excellency Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair and Air Commodore Stan Clark. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 4, Mis4-72, LHI Museum Collection).

#### Typical examples that demonstrate this theme

Battle ground, fortification, RAAF base, barracks, uniforms, military maps and documents, war memorials, shipwreck lost to mines, scuttled naval vessel, POW camp, bomb practice ground, parade ground, massacre site, air raid shelter, drill hall,

#### Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme

World War I Memorial, Portion 36, Lagoon Road,  
 War Memorial, Portion 35, Lagoon Road, including structure, World War I German machine gun captured at Villers Bretonneux, memorial plaques;  
 Catalina crash site and plaque, Malabar Hill;  
 Catalina wreckage, western slope of Malabar Hill;  
 Catalina crash 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary memorial, near Old Settlement Beach;  
 Wolf Rock, struck by HMS *Nottingham* on 7 July 2002  
 Piece of ship's hull from *Nottingham* and piece of Wolf Rock donated to LHI Museum;  
 Honour Boards from former RSL Hall in Museum.



**Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

World War I Memorial, Portion 36, Lagoon Road;

War Memorial, Portion 35, Lagoon Road, including structure, World War I German machine gun captured at Villers Bretonneux, memorial plaques;

LHI Museum Collection, including Radar unit outside museum, Honour Boards from former RSL Hall and piece of ship's hull from Nottingham and piece of Wolf Rock;

Catalina crash site and plaque, Malabar Hill;

Catalina wreckage, western slope of Malabar Hill;

Catalina crash 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary memorial, near Old Settlement Beach;

## 2.7.2 Government and Administration

*These are activities associated with the governance of local areas, regions, the State and the nation, and the administration of public programs – includes both principled and corrupt activities.*

### Self-Government for NSW

In 1856, the State of New South Wales achieved responsible government and the people of NSW elected their first Parliament. Although Lord Howe Island was identified as a territory of New South Wales under the *Constitution Act* that year, its isolation and the small number of inhabitants meant that it was largely left to its own devices. With a number of inhabitants in partnership with each other, or operating independently, and the emphasis largely on subsistence farming and trading with passing ships, there appears to have been little need for governance. R D Fitzgerald, who found the islanders to be a harmonious, self-regulating community, summed it up nicely in 1876 in a letter to the Colonial Secretary<sup>548</sup>:

*'Politics are simple and satisfactory. Anyone may call a meeting and minorities give way to majorities'.*

It might have remained that way for many more years, had the island not come to the attention of the authorities in matters of a criminal nature.

### A Murder Leads to Investigation of Lord Howe Island

In 1869 Water Police Magistrate, Inspector Peter Lawrence Cloete, was despatched from Sydney to investigate the murder of inhabitant John Leonard, and having decided there was no foundation for an arrest, Cloete returned to Sydney and submitted his report, along with the observations of members of his party which included botanists Robert D Fitzgerald, Charles Moore and William Carron, Australian Museum collector, George Masters, and geologist Edward S Hill. This was the first party of NSW government officials to visit the island and they travelled on the Government steamer, with a police crew to man a whaleboat once they arrived.

### Captain Richard Armstrong

On the strength of their observations of the rich diversity of flora and assessment of the island's future potential, Lord Howe Island was proclaimed a Forest Reserve in 1878. That same year, retired naval officer, Captain Richard Armstrong, was despatched to investigate a dispute between islanders and the captain and mutinous crew of a visiting ship, *Mary Peverley* which had gone to Lord Howe on a salvage operation following the wreck of the SM *Stetson*. Armstrong decided to stay on the island and in late 1878, the Government appointed him the island's first administrator, with responsibilities as Forest Ranger, Registrar of Births, Deaths and

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<sup>548</sup> *Lord Howe Island 1788-1988*

Marriages, and Postmaster. The duties of Resident Magistrate and Clerk of Petty Sessions were subsequently added to his portfolio.

Armstrong implemented a broad program of initiatives designed to improve the sustainability of the island for its inhabitants, who until then had relied largely on subsistence farming, the export of onion crops and the dwindling whaling trade for a livelihood. He encouraged improvements in agricultural practices and diversification of crops, the establishment of a school, and the export of palm seeds and fibre and pandanus seeds. He embarked on a program of improvements including the construction of a roadway along the settled part of the island, and facilitated better shipping access by enlarging an opening in the reef and creating the North Passage, providing government boats and moorings inside the lagoon for use by the islanders and proposed the construction of a jetty. But while he made some very progressive contributions, some islanders resented his privilege and mistrusted his motives, which eventually created division within the small community. Of particular concern was the Government's allocation of land to Armstrong at a time when the inhabitants had no tenure, security or title to land they had settled on and were cultivating. They had previously made two unsuccessful bids to Government to secure some tenure over the land they occupied and despite the commissioning of a survey in 1880 and the provisional allocation of leaseholds to islanders, the process failed to produce any outcome. As before, the island failed to be recognised under the *Crown Lands Act, 1884*.

### **The Bowie Inquiry**

When Armstrong's integrity was called into question over the matter of payment for palm seeds and a number of other issues and grievances, the NSW Government responded by appointing The Hon John Bowie Wilson in 1882 to conduct a commission of enquiry into the island's affairs. Armstrong, who was removed from his position, returned to Sydney later that year and vigorously fought the charges laid against him, finally accepting a compensation payment in 1887.

### **Visiting Magistrates**

Between 1882 and 1913, the administrative management of the island was conducted by a succession of four non-resident Visiting Magistrates, Messrs Henry Wilkinson, Thomas Icely, J Brodie and Frank Farnell. In 1890, a working government residence with rooms for offices or court use was constructed for the magistrates during their annual visits to the island. A small caretaker's house was built adjacent to the residence.

With booming economic opportunities in the palm seed collection and export trade, tensions on the island over land rights and competition for palm seed markets began to rise and despite considerable efforts by Farnell to negotiate better co-operative outcomes, the NSW Government stepped in to mediate.



**Figure 209** Government House, Lord Howe Island, currently the residence of the Chief Executive Officer, Lord Howe Island Board, and his family. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 25 February 2009).

### Two Royal Commissions

Two Royal Commissions investigated the management of the island, the welfare of its residents and its commercial ventures in the years immediately before World War I. The first, in 1911, was conducted by Hugh Langwell and the second, in 1912 was under the supervision of Walter Bevan QC. Bevan's recommendations, published in the *NSW Government Gazette No 82*, 28 May, 1913 were to change forever the nature of how the island was administered. Importantly, Bevan's findings accepted that the island would remain as Crown Land, reserved from sale to private ownership; and he recommended that a Board of Control be appointed to take charge of the affairs of the island; with the board, comprising three persons appointed by the Government and a number of islanders acting as a local committee.<sup>549</sup>

### The Board of Control

The Lord Howe Island Board of Control was vested with the permissive occupancy of the island, with the power to issue smaller permissive occupancies to islanders. The Board operated under the jurisdiction of the Chief Secretary's Department in Sydney and the Department's Under-Secretary acted as the Board's chairman. The other two positions were filled from the Department of Agriculture. These Board members managed Lord Howe Island from Sydney, issuing administrative orders in quarterly circulars and visiting the island once a year to hear representations from the community. On the island, the Board's directives were implemented by a three-member Island Committee, each member acting in an honorary capacity. William Osborne Spurling Thompson ('Uncle Willie') acted as chairman of this committee

<sup>549</sup> Bevan, W, Royal Commission 1912, Recommendations 3.4 and 6

from 1913 until his death in 1953 – a total of 40 years of service – supported by two committee members, elected biennially by residents.

### **A Taxing Problem!**

Mainland administration did not always sit well with the islanders. In October 1935, residents were shocked to discover during a visit from the Taxation Commissioner of New South Wales that his office had overlooked Lord Howe Island as a source of employment tax and the unexpected arrival of the assessment notices created great dismay. The taxation authorities, in reply to protests, pointed out that there was no reason why the voters of Lord Howe Island should enjoy exemption, as they 'have the benefit of the laws and administration of New South Wales'.<sup>550</sup>

### **A New Administrative Regime**

During the lean years of World War II, when palm seed trade and tourism declined, resident superintendents with agricultural experience were assigned to the island to manage the commercial seed trade which had been established as a war effort. This proved unpopular with residents who resented mainland interference, but it heralded the start of a new administrative regime. From then on, superintendents resided on the island during their term of office and assumed greater responsibility for day-to-day management of the island's affairs, for a time reducing the local committee's involvement to an advisory one.

The vexed issue of land tenure continued to distress residents and finally, in 1953, an Act of Parliament which specifically addressed the administration of Lord Howe Island was passed by the NSW Parliament. The *Lord Howe Island Act 1953* made provision for the care, control and management of Lord Howe Island by a Lord Howe Island Board which would include an elected representative from the island; and having respective powers, authorities, duties and functions which could make provision relating to the tenure of land and other matters. Under the terms of the Act, the new Board had five members, one of whom was an elected member representing islanders. The other members included the Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Department, the local State Member of Parliament and two members appointed by the Minister of Lands. The Island Committee, comprising four elected islanders, continued to have an important role in an advisory capacity. The first sitting of the Board was at the Chief Secretary's Department in Sydney on 4 March 1954.

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<sup>550</sup> *The Argus* 24 October 1935, p.10



**Figure 210** First sitting of the Lord Howe Island Board on the island, 25 October to 6 November 1954. (Photo: Miscellaneous prints Mis108, LHI Museum Collection).

As Lord Howe Island developed over the next two decades, the Act was amended in 1968 to clarify powers for the Minister to grant permissive occupancies and provide for partial lease transfers and surrender of leases.

The *Lord Howe Island Amendment Act 1981*, which went a step further and provided for partial lease transfers and surrender of leases, also addressed the need to ensure that future administrative decisions would be compatible with environmental values by proclaiming a Permanent Park Preserve over the largely untouched nature reserves at the north and south ends of the island. These areas were now to be managed in accordance with an adopted Plan of Management which would in future respect the World Heritage values. To control development in the settled, central area of the island, the Amendment Act brought the Board within the provisions of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, which at the time required that a Regional Environmental Plan be prepared to guide and control all future development in the settlement area.

The Act also abolished the Island Committee and added three elected islanders (one of whom was to hold the position of Vice-Chairman) to a new five-man Board. This gave islanders a majority on the Board for the first time. One of the NSW Government representatives was now to be appointed from the National Parks and Wildlife Service in recognition of the growing awareness of the importance of the island's natural values. Quarterly public meetings of the Board held on the island offered more opportunities for the wider inclusion of islanders in discussions, with sensitive matters held behind closed doors. Island Superintendents have, with one exception (Norm Fenton in 1957) been recruited from the mainland and reside on the island for the duration of their appointment.

### **Ministerial Responsibility**

Balancing development and conservation remains a controversial matter and an on-going challenge for the Board's administration of the island and the framing of new legislation. In 1983, the administration of Lord Howe Island was transferred from the Department of Lands to the Premier's Department, then to the Department of Local Government in 1986 and from 1988, to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, within the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water. Following the change of government in March 2011, the administration of the island falls within the Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

### **The Need for Better Governance & Greater Transparency**

Like many other small communities around the world, Lord Howe Island has sometimes suffered from the sense of insularity and insecurity that isolation can bring. *Preserving Paradise* – a discussion paper about good governance for small communities alluded to the mistrust that a lack of transparency of various activities on the island can bring, noting that the average incidence (on a per capita basis) of complaints from the island was 300 times the national average.<sup>551</sup> In 1990, in response to concerns about the financial management and internal controls on the island, the NSW Public Accounts Committee undertook an inquiry into the governance of the island and issued 39 recommendations for improvements to its management. This was followed in 2001 by an investigation by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) which addressed a number of matters of concern which had been raised through the complaints process, including:

- conflicts of interest leading to abuse of a situation and/or victimisation;
- the role of the Lord Howe Island Board in the governance of the island including tendering and probity and development control;
- shipping services;
- fishing, in particular as employment and
- contracts in respect of air transport.

While the findings did not uncover corrupt conduct, the ICAC inquiry addressed the problem by recommending the implementation of more transparent practices and codes of conduct, not simply for the benefit of Lord Howe Island, but as a template which could be adopted by other small communities.

Another amendment of the Lord Howe Island Act in 2004 further improved governance arrangements, provided more equitable rental determinations and compensation on surrender of leaseholds.

Currently, the Lord Howe Island Board comprises seven members. Three (including the Chairman) are appointed by the responsible minister (one is from the relevant

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<sup>551</sup> ICAC *Trouble in Paradise – governance issues in small communities – Lord Howe Island* Independent Commission Against Corruption, June 2001 and *Preserving Paradise: good governance guidance for small communities – Lord Howe Island*, 2001, p.4



administrative agency, one represents the interests of business and tourism and one represents conservation) and four islander members (including the Vice Chairman) who are elected by the Lord Howe Island community. Day-to-day management continues to be conducted from the Board's offices on the island, by the Chief Executive Officer (reporting to the Board), supported by and staff (both permanent and casual). The Board's management authority today extends to the area designated as World Heritage including Lord Howe Island and all adjacent islands and coral reefs within one marine league<sup>552</sup> of the island.

The major areas of the Board's responsibility are:

*Administration* - including general administration of the Board, trading operations and services, all local government functions, including processing building and development applications, management of land tenure including perpetual and special leases to islanders, management of the Permanent Park Preserve, management of the Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital, maintenance of other government department responsibilities including the registration of births, deaths and marriages, the management and reticulation of power on behalf of the mainland supplier and the regulation of tourist businesses;

*Operations* - including the maintenance of local government functions including infrastructure, roads, tourist and recreation facilities, management and operation of the airport, maintenance of moorings and safety of vessels in the lagoon, operation of the power station and reticulation of electricity;

*Environment* - including the protection of the environment and conservation of flora and fauna. The Board is also responsible for the day to day management and protection of the World Heritage values of the Lord Howe Island Group. The Environmental group within the Board, which in 2009/10 had 12 full-time equivalent employees, manages the PPP and has a range of other duties including environmental works, interpretation and education, monitoring of flora and fauna populations, research programs and monitoring and control of feral animal species.<sup>553</sup>

### **Federal Electoral history**

Lord Howe Island has been represented in the Federal Parliament by a Sydney metropolitan electorate since Federation in 1901. Under the terms of the Australian Constitution, the State of New South Wales determined the electoral divisions for the House of Representatives in the first federal election in 1901. At the time, according to the NSW *Federal Elections Act 1900*, Lord Howe Island was included as part of the electorate of East Sydney and remained thus in subsequent redistributions in 1906, 1913, 1922 and 1934. In 1949 and 1954, redistribution placed Lord Howe Island in West Sydney (i.e. the western side of the Sydney CBD) but in 1968, redistribution placed Lord Howe Island in the new Federal Division of Sydney.

<sup>552</sup> 1 marine or sea league equals 3 nautical miles or 5.556 kilometres

<sup>553</sup> Lord Howe Island Board Annual Report, 2009/10

In 1996, Douglas Darby, MLA, sought unsuccessfully to include Lord Howe Island in his seat of Manly. In 2006, there was a challenge to the existing arrangement from the National Party of Australia (NSW) which approached the Australian Electoral Commission's redistribution committee to include the island, due to its proximity to Port Macquarie, in the seat of Lyne.<sup>554</sup> This objection was not upheld by the AEC in the absence of any direct representation from the residents of the island.

Lord Howe Island remained within the Federal Electoral Division of Sydney following the most recent electoral boundary adjustment (gazetted 22 December 2009) and the seat has been held by Tanya Plibersek MP since 1998. Voting for the State and Federal elections is conducted in the Public School. Results for the most recent federal election held in August 2010, for which 179 votes were recorded, gave Labor candidate Ms Plibersek, a total of 98 votes with Liberal candidate Gordon Weiss registering 73 votes.

### State Electoral History

In NSW State politics, Lord Howe Island was originally represented within the electorate of King, although according to a newspaper article in 1894<sup>555</sup>, the island was overlooked at election time.

*'As a matter of fact, no electoral rights have been demanded by the inhabitants, and although they were served notice to send in their claims, no polling booth was provided – had residents been in Sydney they could have voted if they had been eligible'.*

Worse, in 1932, the voting rights of islanders were all but dismissed<sup>556</sup>:

*'Residents of Lord Howe Island, in the King electorate, will not be able to exercise the franchise at the coming election. In the case of the forthcoming election, it will be impossible to get the necessary electoral documents there in time for the poll to be held at the prescribed hour. The same position occurred at the latest Federal election. In all, 69 electors were enrolled at the previous State election. The Lord Howe Island vote has never materially affected an election'.*

Lord Howe Island was notionally included in the electoral district of Sydney for the Legislative Assembly in New South Wales. This district was created in 1859 and represented by four members. However, it seems Lord Howe was an all too forgotten outpost when it came to political representation until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1894, the election created the single-member electorate of Sydney-King. In 1904, the electorate became King, and in 1920, with the introduction of proportional representation, it was absorbed into the multi-member electorate of Sydney. King

<sup>554</sup> National Party of Australia (NSW) Submission pp.7-8

<sup>555</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 July 1894, p.10

<sup>556</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 May 1932, p.12

was recreated in 1927 and abolished in 1973. Between 1927 and 1956, the local member was Labour MLA, Daniel Clyne (succeeded by Albert Sloss 1956-73). Somewhere around this time, Mr Evelyn Douglas Darby MLA, who represented Manly continuously from 1945 to 1978, attempted to add Lord Howe Island (which was for a short time part of the new electorate of Phillip) to his electorate, without success.

Between 1981 and 1988, Lord Howe Island was included in the NSW electoral district of Elizabeth, and represented by Patrick Darcy Hills MLA. Lord Howe Island is currently in the NSW State seat of Port Macquarie and was represented by independent member, Rob Oakeshott MP between 1996 and 2008 when he successfully stood for the Federal seat of Lyne. Lord Howe Island was represented in the State Parliament by Peter Besseling MP until March 2011, when Mrs Leslie Williams (representing the National Party) was elected. .

### A Flag for Lord Howe Island

In 1958, designs for an island badge were first canvassed. According to Mr Ralph Bartlett, secretary of the Flag Society of Australia, the idea of a flag for the island was first raised with the Lord Howe Island Board in 1993. The design which was proposed by Sydney vexillologist, John Vaughan, was based on the royal blue and white "British Union" style flag of 1801 with offset diagonals and without the red cross of St George or the (saltire) red diagonal cross of St Patrick. His design was inspired by the command flag of Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Richard Howe (1726–99), which was flown on his flagship '*Queen Charlotte*' at the Battle of the Glorious First of June, 1794, the first fleet action of the French Revolutionary Wars. The modern description suggests a golden sun alluding to the warmth and friendliness of the islanders, with features of the island silhouetted against the sky, and silver rays shimmering on the crystal blue waters of the surrounding Pacific Ocean. The flag, which was produced in 1988 as part of a tourism strategy for the island, has no official status but is flown at the Bowling Club on the island and used for ceremonial events.



**Figure 211 (Left):** The 'unofficial' Lord Howe Island flag; **(Right)** The logo of the Lord Howe Island Board also features the island's major topographical features and the Kentia Palm Tree.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Municipal chamber, County Council offices, departmental office, legislative document, symbols of the Crown, State and municipal flags, official heraldry, ballot box, mayoral regalia, places acquired/disposed of by the state, customs boat, pilot boat, site of key event (eg federation, royal visit), protest site, physical evidence of corrupt practices

**Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Government House (c1890) and garden setting, Portion 37, Bowker Avenue;  
Administration Workshop and Vehicle Store, Portion 37, Bowker Avenue to the east of Government House;

Plaque commemorating tree planted by Governor-General Lord De Lisle, palm plantation, near Cargo Shed;

Lord Howe Island Board official records e.g. annual reports;

Material relating to LHI Board elections e.g. ballot box

**Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule**

Government House (c1890) and garden setting, Portion 37, Bowker Avenue;

Plaque commemorating tree planted by Governor-General Lord De Lisle, palm plantation, near Cargo Shed;

**Further recommendations**

It is recommended that all original Lord Howe Island Board official records and archives e.g. annual reports, survey plans, historic maps be catalogued and stored in secure, environmentally controlled conditions. NSW State Records should be consulted regarding the long-term archiving of all original Board records.

### 2.7.3 Law and Order

*These are activities associated with maintaining, promoting and implementing criminal and civil law and legal processes.*

#### **A Potential Penal Settlement?**

Lord Howe Island's history might possibly have taken a different turn had the early investigations into its suitability as a penal settlement taken hold. Although Lieutenant Ball considered the island to be a "Valuable Acquisition for the Colony" despite having "no Running stream of fresh water",<sup>557</sup> Governor Arthur Phillip pointed out, writing to British Home Secretary Lord Sydney on 15 May 1788, that it was of no interest as a site for penal incarceration, as:

*"Lieutenant Ball examined it on his return and says it abounds in turtle but unfortunately has no good anchoring ground"<sup>558</sup>*

The serious overcrowding of convict gaols in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land was the instigation for the first serious consideration of Lord Howe Island as a penal settlement in 1834. During his visit that year to Lord Howe Island, H J White, the Assistant Surveyor to Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell, conducted a preliminary survey of the island and investigated its potential as a suitable site for a penal settlement.<sup>559</sup>

White offered a physical description of the island noting, as had Lieutenant Ball before him, that:

*"From the shallowness of the water on the Bar and in the Harbour it will not afford anchorage to vessels of more than 30 or 40 tons".*

He was also concerned that:

*"Fresh water is scarce, there being but one stream of any size at the foot of the most northern mountain, and a small lagoon in the centre of the Island, both liable to be exhausted".*

But more importantly, White was of the opinion that:

*"The soil does not seem fit for the growth of wheat".<sup>560</sup>*

The Sydney Gazette reported on 18 December 1834 that:

*"The expedition to Howe's Island, for the purpose of reporting on the practicability of devoting it to the purposes of an enlarged prison, upon the principle of Norfolk Island, is the first indication of the abandonment of Moreton Bay, a place where facilities to escape are numerous and where the ague and other afflictions and*

<sup>557</sup> Governor Arthur Phillip to Lord Sydney, 15 May 1788, MLMSS

<sup>558</sup> Letter from David Blackburn to his sister Margaret, 12 July 1788, MLMSS 6937/1/1.

<sup>559</sup> Rabone, pp.23-24

<sup>560</sup> HJ White in NSW Parliamentary Papers, etc., p.3

*diseases prevail to a fearful extent. To be perfect a penal settlement for the reception of double convicted, and desperate offenders must be wholly destitute of every possible incentive for the convict to put restraint and discipline at such defiance, and to encounter the hazard of the wild bush and savages, in the desperate hope of avoiding the affliction of one evil for others of less possible occurrence. In this respect Howe's Island will be preferable to Moreton Bay – and we believe the rigorous enforcement of the code of penal regulations adopted to punish second offenders, and yet preserve the dictates of humanity from unnecessary violation, will operate as the instrument of reforming the objects of immediate correction; and present a terror to those who by pursuing a career of violence and depravity, have before them the certain prospect of detection and disgraceful punishment.”<sup>561</sup>*

The *Sydney Morning Herald* of January 8 1835 took issue with White's observation about the availability of water, reporting the following:

*“HOWE'S ISLAND – Complaints have been made of the want of water at this settlement, which is well founded, would of course have the effect of rendering impracticable any intention of settling on these shores. We are, however, of opinion that such complaint cannot be well founded, as the high ridge of mountains on its surface and other appearances, renders it certain that water, if sought for, cannot but be obtained”.*

All things considered, the Government formed the view that a penal settlement on Lord Howe Island would have little chance of success and the island escaped any further such attention before the transportation of convicts to New South Wales from England was officially abolished on 1 October 1850. The following year, the NSW Government requested that former resident, Dr John Foulis, provide a report on the suitability of the island as a penal settlement. Their interest was to identify an isolated location which could safely harbour the very worst class of criminal. Foulis suggested that the island could support a population of 5,000, but the Government, after some deliberation, rejected the idea on the grounds that the contingent of 526 prisoners was insufficient to warrant the expense associated with relocating and maintaining them.<sup>562</sup>

With the closure of Norfolk Island as a penal colony in 1853, attention again turned to Lord Howe Island. Victoria's then Governor, Charles la Trobe was keen to find 'A place to which Victoria and New South Wales might send their worst class of criminals (short of those whom it be necessary to hang'.<sup>563</sup> On instruction from then NSW Governor, Sir Charles Fitzroy, Captain Henry Denham of HMS *Herald* travelled to Lord Howe, where he made the first hydrographic survey of the island and made favourable recommendations about its suitability as a penal settlement.

*“The very absence of any security for a ship at Lord Howe Island on the one hand, and its vast command of horizon from out-posts of 400-2,800 feet elevation on the other, and supposing its internal resources to be admitted are, a combination of*

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<sup>561</sup> Howe's Island/LH's I

<sup>562</sup> Votes and Proceedings....

<sup>563</sup> Ibid

*inducements for adopting an Island of such apropos dimensions too, as a Penal Settlement”.*

*“Although access to this Island generally depends on off-shore winds,....in order to guard against escape of Prisoners as well as arresting any attempts to throw in mischievous supplies &c, it would be necessary to have an armed eight-oared galley stationed within the reef upon the south-west side of the Island to pursue in the direction indicated by the three telegraphs, which could flank the whole accessible coastline if planted upon East Point, Intermediate Hill and Goat Island. The sole object of the boats of the Establishment would be to arrest clandestine transactions, to catch fish, to exchange official despatches and to assist the Colonial Schooner tender on her visits with necessities.”<sup>564</sup>*

Despite the endorsement of the Executive Council, his recommendations failed to be tabled in the NSW Parliament.

In 1869 visiting Water Police Magistrate, P J Cloete took the opportunity to raise the matter again with authorities, endorsing the ability of the island to support the incarceration of a class of felons for whom “the alienation from their homes, and isolation from their friends, would be a far greater punishment than other degradations...” but which he considered not particularly well-suited “for the management of desperate criminals, who might find means, however dangerous, to escape occasionally”.<sup>565</sup>

One final assessment of the island’s potential as a penal colony was made by Visiting Magistrate Thomas Icely (1797-1874), who wrote to Sir Henry Parkes with concerns about the difficulty of landing on the island and likening it to the ‘quarries of Mokaltan [sic] to the Pyramids’:

*“Its shape is that of a Boomerang the slopes of its mountains being covered in moveable Basaltic boulders of all sizes in numerous quantities.”*

*“My dotted line represents a coral Reef enclosing a shallow sandy bottomed lagoon of from 1,000 – 2,000 acres – and I have thought that by prison labours working with Trolleys and Barges the Boulders in question might be transferred and tumbled onto the Coral Reef in quantities sufficient to make a Breakwater resembling the Port-Said. The Lagoon then to be dredged to a suitable depth. This done – any ship could go to Lord Howe Island and in any weather lie there in perfect safety. Prisoners could be kept at one end of the Island where the Barracks could be built of the aforesaid boulders – and the other more beautiful parts of the Island turned into any purpose that the Government might see fit.”<sup>566</sup>*

Fortunately, the Government did not see fit, and thoughts of using the island for penal detention were abandoned before any lasting damage was created to the reef and lagoon.

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<sup>564</sup> Denham, p.13

<sup>565</sup> Cloete, PJ .....

<sup>566</sup> Thomas Icely to Colonial Secretary, Sir Henry Parkes Correspondence, A833 Vol.18, pp.163-8d

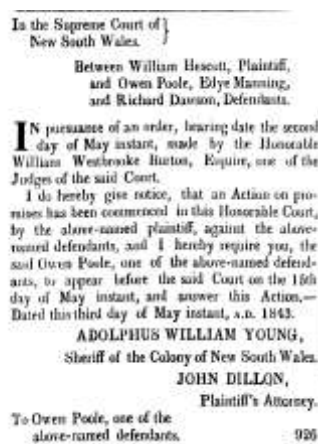


## Island law and order

With the absence of formal law enforcement on Lord Howe Island in the early days of settlement, locals took their own action against infringements to their reputation or property. Surgeon Corrie noted in 1876 that “Bickerings and open quarrels are unusual and distasteful. Disputed questions are generally referred to a retired American whaling captain (Nathan Thompson) and thus settled amongst themselves.”<sup>567</sup> In 1893, *The Brisbane Courier* noted that by then:

*“a commissioner from Sydney, armed with discretionary powers, visits the island periodically..... and that the inhabitants were in their normal state of chronic mistrust of each other”.*<sup>568</sup>

The first evidence of legal action involving an inhabitant with a connection to Lord Howe Island appears to be an ‘Action on promises’ case brought before the Supreme Court of New South Wales in May 1843 by William Hescott against Captain Owen Poole and Richard Dawson. Hescott was one of the men who travelled to the island with Captain Poole in 1841.<sup>569</sup> Poole was also involved in action involving a deserter named Moss who was unprepared to work for his keep.<sup>570</sup> Poole threatened Moss with deportation, to which Moss responded with threats to destroy property. Until such time as a ship arrived to take him off the island, Moss was first chained to a tree from which he escaped, then captured and placed in crudely built stocks before being imprisoned in a large barrel and shipped to Sydney. It was Poole, not Moss, who was charged with an offence, but this charge was eventually dropped.



**Figure 212** Court notice in *NSW Government Gazette* Friday 5 May and Friday 12 May, 1843

## Murder or Self-Defence

The first serious crime on Lord Howe Island occurred in 1869 and involved a deserter from the whaler, *Gayhead*. John Leonard, an American from Massachusetts who had married and settled on the island, was killed during a violent quarrel with his father-in-law, David Lloyd. Water Police Magistrate, P J Cloete, was sent to the island on the steamer, *Thetis* to investigate the matter. Cloete arrested Lloyd and took him on board ship, fearing that he could abscond to any number of

<sup>567</sup> Surgeon Corrie, 1876

<sup>568</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, Thursday 28 March 1893, p.4e

<sup>569</sup> *NSW Government Gazette*, 5 May and 12 May, 1843

<sup>570</sup> Nichols, D. pp.65-66

hiding places on the island. Cloete conducted the investigation over three days, ruling on the basis of the evidence that Lloyd had acted in self-defence and the matter was a case of justifiable homicide.<sup>571</sup>

### **The Armstrong Case**

In 1878, Captain Richard Armstrong was sent to the island by the NSW Government to investigate a dispute which had arisen between islanders and the captain and crew of the schooner, *Mary Peeverly*. Later that year, Armstrong was appointed to administer island affairs, with wide-ranging responsibilities as the island's forest ranger, registrar, postmaster, resident magistrate, coroner and clerk of petty sessions. During his tenure, Armstrong managed the legal affairs of the island and arbitrated on minor local disputes between islanders.

Armstrong's own downfall was precipitated by action he took to remove a business speculator, Charles Ponder, from the island for non-performance, followed by complaints against Armstrong's perceived honesty in his dealings over palm seed trading. Armstrong was subjected to an inquiry led by the Hon. John Bowie Wilson JP, a former member of the NSW Legislative Assembly. Armstrong was suspended from his position and Government property allocated to him was seized by two islanders who had been appointed special constables.

Of seven charges brought against Armstrong, four were immediately dismissed due to lack of evidence; the other three charges related to Armstrong's failure to prosecute a Kanaka workman over criminal assault of a juvenile girl; attempts to monopolise island trade and his involvement in the sale of 'sly grog' to islanders. Wilson's findings were reported to the Colonial Secretary and Armstrong was duly dismissed, but the matter was kept alive for many months afterwards, with claims and counter-claims from islanders about the injustice of Armstrong's treatment.

In 1887, five years after the Inquiry, Captain Armstrong's claim for compensation was upheld and his honour and reputation were restored. Despite this, Wilson claimed that:

*"After careful consideration of the whole case, I am decidedly of the opinion that a Resident Magistrate is not required at Lord Howe Island, and that the inhabitants generally do not require one"*<sup>572</sup>.

### **Neighbour Disputes**

Daily authority for law and order was assigned to the forest ranger, the positions of special constables were retained and the Government took advantage of a subsidised shipping service to the island to send a Visiting Magistrate when the occasion demanded it. Campbell Stevens' diary for this period provides an insight into the minor disputes affecting daily life, including neighbours bickering over cattle tramping down fences and vegetables, fowls escaping, islanders cutting down fruit

<sup>571</sup> Water Police Magistrate PJ Cloete to Colonial Secretary, 9 June 1869, reported in *Sydney Morning Herald* 11 June 1869, p.5

<sup>572</sup> J B Wilson to Colonial Secretary, Commission of Enquiry, 19 May 1882

that was not theirs, and cutting and removing thatch, and indolent youth who absented themselves from work.<sup>573</sup>

### **Whose Bananas?**

One Visiting Magistrate, Thomas Icely, was called upon to intervene in a matter on the island, which eventually brought his own reputation into dispute. The case originated over a dispute about remuneration for a shipment of bananas to which Edmund Jeune claimed he was owed a share as a 'partner' in the venture with farmer, Perry Johnson. The matter quickly escalated, with Johnson attacking Jeune's character and his bigamous relationship with Celine Moore. The resident Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, William Langley, was brought into the dispute, threatening to call for a commission of inquiry into the conduct of islanders, some of whom he considered had colluded with the authorities in the Jeune matter.

Icely reported to the Principal Under-Secretary to the Colonial Secretary's Department:

*"People upon the island, proverbially for the most part of sober habits, do not fight, nor do they often meet and squabble, nor do they rob each other, but they are forever repeating conversations and saying behind each other's backs things which, when retold, create the bitterest of feeling, followed by vicious complaints, revealing little other than crimination or recrimination, and rendering it frequently most difficult to decide which of the litigating parties is least in the wrong.....at Lord Howe Island, a vast number of cases that come before me have a character peculiarly of their own. In the cases of crime of serious nature, being furnished with both handcuffs and leg-irons my course is clearer. I write this after an experience of eighteen months, during which time I have made a special study of the interests and the best mode of managing the people of Lord Howe Island, who, having from the first, for a civilized community, been peculiarly situated, have engendered peculiarities which require peculiar management. No ownership of land, no rent, no tax, no church, no lock up, whilst outside 'talky-talky' scandal, there is but little vice."*<sup>574</sup>

Complaints against Langley were dismissed, but those against Icely became the catalyst for his removal as Visiting Magistrate and subsequent replacement by Mr Brodie. The position of Visiting Magistrate was upheld until 1913 when the Lord Howe Island Board of Control was appointed.

Before his term expired, Icely obtained a 'lock-up' for the island and he travelled on the Government steamer, *Ajax*, with workmen and the materials, to supervise its erection. The islanders would have nothing to do with it and demanded that the cargo be sent back. The Government insisted that a lock-up was needed and that the forest ranger might have cause to use it, so Mr Icely and the *Ajax* were despatched once again, with instructions to disallow the islanders from aborting the mission again. The lock-up was duly erected on land which later became Farnell

<sup>573</sup> Diary kept by Campbell Stevens 27 September 1892 – 19 December 1900, NSW State Records, ...City ..209

<sup>574</sup> Correspondence, Thomas Icely, Visiting Magistrate, Lord Howe Island to The Principal Under Secretary, 12 September 1890

Park and the island's cricket and sports ground. According to Campbell Stevens' diary, the key to the lock-up was issued to locals for the dry storage of onions during the 1890s.<sup>575</sup> Later, it was put to use for the storage of sports equipment.<sup>576</sup> A similar act of rebellion occurred in 1985, the year a mainland police officer was appointed to the island. Building materials were sent over for the erection of a residence for the officer and family and a holding cell. Islanders again chose to show their disapproval by selling off 'surplus' materials and although a cell was eventually built, Nichols recounts that it was put to use for poker evenings.<sup>577</sup>

William Whiting was the first islander to be summoned to appear before the Central Police Court, appearing on a charge of assault against Hugh Langwell in August 1916. Langwell was a former commissioner on the inquiry which investigated the control of the Kentia palm seed industry on Lord Howe Island in 1911 and was later a member of the Lord Howe Island Board of Control. Whiting claimed the attack was an act of honour, provoked by Langwell's repeated amorous advances to his wife, Susan Whiting. Whiting was found guilty and fined for damages to Langwell.

The need for a courthouse on the island has never been considered, given the lack of serious crime. Cloete's investigations of the Leonard murder were conducted on board ship, which was not an unusual occurrence, but one which probably secured the accused from easy escape. It is likely that the first schoolhouse, being the only island building not associated with a residence, may have been used for hearings. In 1890, a government residence was constructed for use by Visiting Magistrates. Like other similar official residences (e.g. Port Macquarie Government House), it was designed to provide facilities for hearings should they be required.

The conversion of the former seed shed to a public hall in the 1930s also provided a community place for judicial use. It was here, in 1984, that a colourful case before Magistrate C R Briese in the NSW Court of Petty Sessions created much interest and some mirth for islanders. At issue was a 'noise pollution' dispute between locals involving a crowing rooster, in which the rooster was found to be innocent on all charges, at a cost of \$25,000 to the Australian taxpayers. The informality of court cases has sometimes attracted comments from visiting mainland press, amused by the lack of dress code and the preference by some islanders to attend in bare feet.

### **The Bigamist Teacher**

Bigamy was the cause of the demise of William Clarson who arrived on the island to take up the position of school teacher, returning to the mainland five months after his appointment to answer charges of marrying one bride within eight days of marrying another. Not even the isolation of Lord Howe Island could protect his secret.

### **Desertion, Mutiny and Piracy**

Lord Howe Island was a temporary home in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to a number of deserters from whaling ships including the legendary 'Black Billy', a deserter from the *Aladdin*, whose ghost, it was said, would sometimes appear on the ridge between Mount Lidgbird and Intermediate Hill; and Alec Frazer and William

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<sup>575</sup> Campbell Stevens' diary

<sup>576</sup> Nicholls, M.

<sup>577</sup> Hill/.....Nichols, D. pp.173-4

Chapman from the *Especulador*, who were deported in 1881 after an attempt to claim land belonging to John and Mary Robbins.

There are two recorded instances of mutinous visiting crew sailing off with vessels, leaving owners stranded on the Island (*Water Witch* under the command of master William Christie, 1842 and the yacht, *Cythera*, under the command of Peter Fenton, 1963 which became the first subject of modern day piracy in Australian history, setting legal precedent to laws in effect from 1858).

### **An Envable Reputation**

Lord Howe Island has always had an enviable reputation as a community largely free of crime. Breaches have been isolated and are usually of a minor nature, involving drunkenness, assault, drugs, domestic disputes, neighbour relations or traffic offences. On 22 August 1987, the Hon George Paciullo, MP, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, officially opened the newly constructed Lord Howe Island Police Station and residence. Two years later, Lord Howe Island was exempted from a directive that NSW police stations manned by only one officer should be closed.

Law enforcement on Lord Howe Island is currently managed by the island's police officer, a serving member of the NSW Police Force attached to Mid North Coast Local Area Command and stationed on T.C. Douglas Drive, Lord Howe Island. Minor offences are administered under the jurisdiction of the NSW Court of Petty Sessions, with the island having access to a Magistrate. On occasion, court sittings have been held in the Public Hall. In some remote areas of NSW, police officers may also serve as acting court officials but breaches of the law on Lord Howe Island requiring legal action brought before the court are now referred to the mainland, with civil and criminal matters heard in Port Macquarie to ensure that the fair and transparent.

### **No Jury Duty**

Lord Howe Island is classified as one of the five subdivisions in New South Wales where residents are considered to be domiciled further than 56 kilometres from their nearest courthouses, and therefore too far to travel for jury duty<sup>578</sup>. process of justice is upheld..

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Courthouse, police station, lock-up, protest site, law chambers, handcuffs, legal document, gaol complex, water police boat, police vehicle, jail, prison complex (archaeological), detention centre, judicial symbols

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Government House (also for Government Administration and Accommodation); Police Station; Court records.

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Government House (also for Government Administration and Accommodation)

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<sup>578</sup> Law Reform Commission Criminal Proceedings: Ensuring Representative Jury Report 48, 1986

## 2.7.4 Welfare

*These are activities and process associated with the provision of social services by the state or philanthropic organisations.*

### **Islanders always ready to lend a helping hand**

Organised welfare came late to Lord Howe Island, but the act of providing comfort and assistance to people in need was offered in many distressing situations from the time when people first settled on the island. The first recorded instances of assistance during the 19<sup>th</sup> century are related to shipping disasters, when sick and injured crewmen required rescue, treatment or nourishment; or the burial of drowned crew members.

In 1837, the barque *Wolf* called at Lord Howe Island to stock up on fresh water and food for its scurvy-affected crew but ran aground on a submerged rock (subsequently named Wolf Rock). The crew made it safely ashore where they remained for five weeks before they were rescued by the *Pysche*. Captain Norris of the *Pysche* reported of their time<sup>579</sup>:

*“We were all treated with the greatest kindness by the few individuals on the island, sharing their last pound of flour with the shipwrecked men; after which, they were necessitated to subsist entirely upon the produce of the island.”*

Denham’s expedition in 1853 found:<sup>580</sup>

*“the settlers extended their hospitality to the camp party during their short stay, supplying them each morning with milk, dried fish, fresh pork, potatoes and other vegetables as gifts, in marked contrast to the inhabitants of Tristan de Cuhna, who had demanded payment for everything in spite of the fact that the Herald had supplied them with so many necessities. MacGillivray recorded his deep sense of gratitude for the generous hospitality all the settlers had shown their visitors.”*

### **Islanders in Need**

At times the islanders themselves were grateful for help as ship’s surgeon Alfred Corrie wrote in 1878 when, arriving at the island, he found the inhabitants to be almost starving<sup>581</sup>.

*“I am glad to state that we were able to assist them a little by sending on shore tea, sugar, biscuit, soap &c subscribed for of the ship I was on board. My old friend Mrs Andrews told me, with a very sorrowful countenance, that she had not tasted a cup of her favourite beverage, tea, for many weeks.”*

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<sup>579</sup> Anon in Rabone p.25

<sup>580</sup> David 1995 p.35

<sup>581</sup> Corrie

### **The *Ovalau* and its Grateful Survivors**

On 16 October 1903, two days after leaving Norfolk Island carrying passengers and a cargo of copra, ivory nuts, and pearl shells, a fire broke out on the Burns Philp & Co's steamer *Ovalau*. The ship made all speed to Lord Howe Island where the women were off-loaded into the ship's smaller boats and taken ashore. Although attempts were made by the crew to extinguish the fire, it proved insurmountable. All passengers and crew made it to shore before a final explosion destroyed the vessel.

Responding to calls that the *Ovalau* was overdue on her return to Sydney, a number of ships were despatched from Sydney, (steamers *Captain Cook*, *Titus* and the *Pacifique*), Brisbane (naval vessels HMS *Mildura* and HMS *Pylades*) and Newcastle (steamer *Ysabel*) to search for her. On 2 November news reached Sydney from Noumea that the Messageries Maritime Company's vessel, *Pacifique* had steered a zig-zag course from Sydney to Lord Howe Island where the shipwrecked passengers and crew were located safe and well. The following day, the first passengers arrived back in Sydney aboard the *Captain Cook*, the remainder returning on the *Ysabel*.<sup>582</sup>

During their enforced stay on Lord Howe Island, the passengers (including Viscount Boringdon who had been visiting the British Commissioner resident in the Solomon Islands, and Mr Justice Alexander Oliver, President of the Land Appeal Court (who had been visiting Norfolk Island to adjudicate on some land tenure matters there), Reverend Aldous, the chaplain on Norfolk Island, a number of 'excursionists' (tourists) and two islanders, Misses Dignam and Thompson were rendered assistance in every possible way by the residents of Lord Howe Island.

Captain Todd's heroism was acknowledged with the presentation of a purse of sovereigns by the grateful passengers and The Premier of NSW weighed in with a practical expression of gratitude in the form of a gift of flour, tea, sugar and other commodities to the value of £150 to acknowledge the hospitality shown by the island residents. In addition, an offer to provide some enhancements, including improved signalling apparatus and a new landing jetty was made. Following the NSW Government's lead, Burns Philp offered reimbursement to islanders for 'keep of the officers, crew and passengers'.<sup>583</sup>

In December 1903, Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell arrived on the island with the gifts to recompense the residents and presented them with an address 'artistically illuminated by Mr John Sands' from the *Ovalau*'s survivors. The address, which is preserved in the Lord Howe Island Museum was inscribed:

*To the Inhabitants of Lord Howe Island – We the passengers and officers of the steamer Ovalau which burnt and foundered off your island on October 19<sup>th</sup> 1903 ask*

<sup>582</sup> *Colonist*, Vol. XLVI, Issue 10865, 4 November 1903, p.3 and *The Argus*, 9 November 1903, p.6

<sup>583</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 November 1903 p.6



*you to accept this memento of sincere appreciation of the part you took in our rescue from the burning ship, and all you did for us during our stay on your island. Your ready welcome, your generous hospitality and the many efforts for our comfort and will not soon be forgotten by any of us.”*<sup>584</sup>



**Figure 213** Framed testimonial in the Lord Howe Island Museum to ‘The Inhabitants of Lord Howe Island’ from the passengers and officers of the steamer *Ovalau* expressing gratitude for the kindness bestowed on the survivors by the islanders. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 September 2009)

### **Islander Magnanimity**

In 1914, before any of the island’s men had enlisted to serve in World War I, the small community of Lord Howe Island was helping the war effort by making regular donations to the Lord Mayor’s Patriotic Fund in Sydney. Within three months of its establishment, the Fund, which provided relief to wives, widows and other dependants of soldiers and sailors fighting in World War I from the date of their departure to the date of their return to NSW, received £43 from the residents, the first two of a number of donations they made to the Fund. Alderman Richards was struck by their generosity, noting that:<sup>585</sup> “having regard to the limited number of the community on the island, the amount subscribed is regarded as most satisfactory.”

The islanders’ support continued after the war ended, with members of the Bowling Club raising funds for the *T B Sailors and Soldiers Association*. In 1930, the Secretary of the NSW Bowling Association noted that “This patriotic contribution is all the more deserving of credit when it is remembered that the total population of the island is approximately 100 souls, and that the Lord Howe Island Bowling Club is the smallest in the Commonwealth”.<sup>586</sup>

<sup>584</sup> Ibid.

<sup>585</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 September 1914, p.12

<sup>586</sup> Ibid., 27 August 1930, p.18

During World War II, a local Comforts Fund was established on the island to contribute to the NSW Division of the Australian Comforts Fund. The objective was to provide comforts, equipment and entertainment for sailors, soldiers, airmen, nurses, medical and ambulance services engaged on behalf of the British Commonwealth of Nations and / or her Allies in activities necessitated by the state of war; monetary and other assistance to dependants and memorials to commemorate the memory of casualties of war. During the war the Lord Howe Island Comforts Fund raised £1,346 from the population of 150 people on the island and supported a number of other appeals including the Food for Britain Fund.

Perhaps the single greatest achievement in the field of welfare on the island was the response to the loss of Gower Wislon and the crew of the *Viking* in 1936. Islanders contributed generously and a number of Australian yachtsmen who had enjoyed hospitality at Ocean View opened a fund to raise money to build a hospital on the island, later named the Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital. The hospital also relied on the generosity of the Hospital Auxilliary to fund equipment, repairs, and additions – everything from a mobile X-ray unit for hospital, to furnishings, a clothes hoist and infra red equipment (acquired in 1955). Funds were also raised from the sale of a special stamp printed by John Sands Pty Ltd which sold for 1 pound sterling.

An important initiative of the Auxilliary in 1957 was to establish an emergency sickness fund to assist residents with the cost of evacuating islanders for urgent medical treatment. Their vulnerability in emergency situations was obvious – in November 1935, Addie Stewart was struck by a fish hook while fishing at Muttonbird Point. It remained embedded in her cheek during what must have been an agonizing wait for a steamer, and then the long journey home. In 1936 the liner *Monowai* had made an emergency dash 300 miles off its course to the island to pick up Mrs W Nichols, who was suffering from acute appendicitis. She was taken to Auckland for urgent medical treatment.<sup>587</sup> Subsequently the Union Steamship Company estimated it had cost them £500, and sought recompense. After paying for the operation (£200) Nichols had monthly instalments deducted by the Board of Control from his palm seed bonus payments.<sup>588</sup> These experiences were important in determining an equitable solution for future emergency situations.

The Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital is supported by other welfare and charitable organisations on the island. In 1994, major renovations were carried out with considerable contributions from private donations and the Hospital Auxiliary's building fund, which raised \$12,000 towards the cost. Furniture for the waiting room was donated by the Lord Howe Island RSL Sub-Branch, the RSL Women's Auxilliary and the Senior Citizens group. The Hospital Auxilliary remains active today and continues to fund many essential acquisitions and services for the Hospital.

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<sup>587</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 May 1936, p.15

<sup>588</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 November 1936, p.8

### **Church Fund-raising Groups**

On 22 June 1957, the Lord Howe Island Church of England Women's Guild celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This group had been particularly active during the 1930s and World War II when William Whiting provided them with the use of his shop building as a venue where the island's women would meet to sew and repair clothing which they sent to the mainland for the poor and underprivileged. The Seventh Day Adventists' Welfare Society was similarly active in charitable works. Both organisations also raised funds through 'bring and buy' stalls, roadside stalls under the pine trees opposite the Public Hall and events in the hall and in private homes for church mission projects and to assist with repairs and furnishings required in the church residences.

### **The Coronation Gift Fund Appeal**

In 1954, the year of the coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II, the 119 permanent residents of the island sent a donation of £62/7/- to the Coronation Gift Fund Appeal which collected money from nearly every town and municipality in NSW. Unlike some of the larger centres which were miffed that the Royal itinerary did not include them, the islanders made a very generous contribution towards the Fund for the establishment of baby health clinics in Sydney and Newcastle.<sup>589</sup>

### **The Lions of Lord Howe**

In November 1980, twenty men attended a meeting at the Bowling Club to discuss the formation of a Lions Club on Lord Howe Island. They were addressed by Norfolk Island members and a steering committee was elected. One of the significant projects undertaken by this group was the establishment of a columbarium at the cemetery for the placement of ashes, enabling many islanders not resident on the island, to have their remains interred there. In 1993, the Lions Club generously supported the Hospital's fund-raising for major renovations and along with the Senior Citizens, actively support the idea of creating a cottage house for elderly residents as there is currently no aged care facility available on the island. This means that older residents are forced to leave the island if they require such care.

### **A Generous School Community**

Lord Howe Island Central School is an active supporter of worthy causes and contributes regularly to mainland charities for national and international relief programs. This tradition began in the mid 1950s with the school raising funds for the Department of Education's support of Stewart House Preventorium at Curl Curl, which was then the only charity endorsed for support by the Department. Popular fund-raising events included variety shows and talent quests.

The community, through organised charitable groups, sporting clubs and personal commitment are generous donors to charities. Events which touch them personally,

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<sup>589</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 January 1954, p.11

like the Samoan earthquake in 2009, demonstrate their ready willingness to offer donations of money, items and in-kind support.

**Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Orphanage, retirement home, public housing, special school, trades training institution, employment agency.

**Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
Memorial plaques at Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
Items in Lord Howe Island Museum demonstrating welfare.

**Items recommended for listing on new 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Memorial plaques at Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
Lord Howe Island Museum collection.

## **2.8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life**

Lord Howe Islanders have of necessity been resourceful. In the early days, the often long periods between visits by ships meant that the islanders had to be self-sufficient, making do with whatever materials were available to them. Even today, the burden imposed on imported goods by transport costs means that islanders have to economise on building materials, with the result that most houses are relatively basic. More reliable and more frequent sea and air transport is leading to improved supplies but creative recycling of goods and materials is still a feature of island life.

### **2.8.1 Domestic Life**

*These are activities associated with creating, maintaining, living in and working around houses and institutions.*

#### **Isolation demanded Resourcefulness**

Lord Howe Islanders have of necessity been resourceful, maximising the island's natural attributes and adjusting their demands to seasonal variations and the rise and fall of supply and demand. Their domestic endeavours have evolved as the island itself has adjusted to changing livelihoods and the introduction of new technology.

#### **A Simple Life**

Evidence associated with the start of domestic life on the island was investigated during an archaeological survey in 2004 of the sites associated with first settlement. From structures and artefacts examined at Old Settlement Beach, Dr Kimberly Owens has suggested that the early settlers maintained a simple life style and diet. Their huts were likely to have been sparsely furnished and the surviving fragments of household items associated with eating and drinking indicate that the hand-blown bottles and stoppers, Davenport china and highly fired earthenware were of good quality and likely to have been used and re-used many times. These items may have been associated with the first settlers or subsequent occupants for the date that these structures were vacated has not been recorded.

By contrast, on Perry Johnson's land, fragments of Scottish-made hollow-stemmed clay pipes, transfer-printed ceramics, bird shot (ammunition) and percussion caps (from a muzzle loading gun), fishhooks, a file, wire, nails and clothing items including a button hook, bone and shell buttons, eyelets and a shoe heel warrant further research and comparative analysis for the information they might reveal about lifestyle. Dr Owens suggests that these are items consistent with those expected from a 19<sup>th</sup> century Australian-British household.

#### **Feeding the Whalers**

As has been discussed elsewhere in this document, whalers called at Lord Howe Island to replenish their supplies after long sea voyages. On 26 February 1857 whalers carved the names of the American barques *Belle*, *Rose* and *Mary Lake* and

some of their crews into a tree near Big Creek. Daphne Nichols reports<sup>590</sup> that the tree had succumbed to the ravages of weather and time by the 1970s but that part of the engraved bark from the ‘ship tree’ is now displayed in the LHI Museum.

We know from early records that the residents could provide whalers with a variety of fresh produce, which in turn provides us with a good indication of their own diet, which of course was supplemented with fresh fish and local native birds and eggs.

*“Turkeys may be obtained in barter or cash at 10s a pair; fowls 3s; ducks 3s; geese 12s; pigs and goats at 3d per lb alive, or weighed as they stand. Fuel may be had at \$5 or £1 a cord, cut and stacked on the beach; and water...can only be rafted out by boats. There are a few rabbits, which fortunately are confined to a small island on the west side....”*<sup>591</sup>

Pigs and goats were also available by then. Maize grew well, as did potatoes, onions, pumpkins, melons, plantains and bananas, cabbage, lemons, peaches, grapes arrowroot and coffee. It is likely that these foods would have been staple fare for islanders as well. Most of the work to produce it was done on their own, for few settlers had the resources to engage domestic help or import staff from the mainland, for household service and farm labour.

### **Surfeit and Starvation**

Inspector P L Cloete explained the way the domestic economy worked in 1869. Produce was grown for home consumption, onions exported and sold on the Sydney market twice a year (freight charges at £2 per ton) when the ketch ‘*Sylph*’ would “return with tea, sugar and luxuries which they are often for a very long time without”. At the end of the whaling season, whalers would call in to take water and provisions in exchange for some of life’s necessities including soap, salt, slop-made clothing and other articles.<sup>592</sup>

Islanders knew the hardship that lean times brought, as Alfred Corrie’s observation in 1876 recorded<sup>593</sup>:

*“Sometimes six or twelve months pass without a vessel calling at the Island....but now this once frequented and favoured little spot is apparently, quite deserted; the old families have lost all zeal for cultivation, having to live as it were from hand to mouth, seeing the fruits of their labour decaying and rotting in storehouses”.*

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<sup>590</sup> Nichols 2006, p.26

<sup>591</sup> Fitzgerald, quoted in Hill, p.48

<sup>592</sup> Cloete p.15

<sup>593</sup> Alfred Corrie 1876

Captain Armstrong's efforts to increase the diversity of produce grown on the island was a positive initiative and perhaps contributed to this observation in 1880<sup>594</sup>:

*"The islanders lived in comfort and without deprivation, their surplus stock being bartered for articles of clothing, stores and agricultural implements".*

By contrast, in 1900, Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell found the residents poverty stricken and quite neglected by the Government, although it would seem that their determination to survive overcame the hardest of times.

### **T B Wilson's Diary**

Early accounts of life on Lord Howe are few, with T B Wilson's diary offering the most comprehensive account of the day-to-day existence on the island in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. His entries record the simplicity of living on the island, the isolation and infrequent contact with the outside world, and minor territorial and personality disputes. Newcomers who encroached on land that locals believed was theirs were not particularly well regarded, nor was the destruction of crops and gardens by stray livestock. Overall though, it seems to have been a harmonious settlement with a strong degree of mutual co-operation within the small community, reflected in Wilson's numerous accounts of the residents helping each other with their building, thatching, sowing or harvesting. As mainland bureaucratic supervision and regulation of island affairs increased, the role of a local Island Committee and island elders to settle the smaller daily domestic concerns became increasingly important.

### **A Perfect Eden!**

The 20<sup>th</sup> century brought tourists to the island and the islanders welcomed them into their lives and homes. Their personal accounts, sometimes printed in the mainland press, offered rare insights into life on the island, and are significant because they reflect the domestic pattern of life there. Occasionally, the prose romanticised the reality of island life, which was frequently described as the 'perfect Eden', 'Arcadia' or 'Utopia'. The *Sunday Sun and Guardian* in 1932 extolled the island's virtues headlining its article "A South Sea Eden".<sup>595</sup> It must have seemed that way to outsiders!

The *National Geographic Magazine* promoted the virtues of the island in a feature article on Lord Howe Island in 1934:

*"There are no movies and no film stars; no automobiles and no 'traffic cops'; no liquor problem and no bootleggers; no smoke or soot to befoul the air; no sounds of motors or machinery to offend the ear. Life moves evenly and serenely without*

<sup>594</sup> Anon, Lord Howe Island, *The Illustrated Sydney News and New South Wales Agriculturalist and Gazette* 15 May 1880, Vol.17, No.5

<sup>595</sup> 'A South Sea Eden – Lord Howe Island', in *The Sunday Sun and Guardian*, 18 December 1932



*noise or haste. The outside world intrudes only by wireless and radio. Several times a week the postmaster, who is also the wireless operator, types out a few sheets of paper containing the news of the world as he has heard it, and these are posted at the two boarding houses, 'Ocean View' and 'Pine Trees'. Once in five weeks, the Morinda arrives from Sydney with freight, mail and passengers. The freight includes flour and sugar, dry goods and shoes, stationery and various odds and ends for the two stores, the only places on the island where one can 'spend money' and gasoline for the few motor boats and motor engine the island boasts. The mail includes many magazines and weekly papers".<sup>596</sup>*

The article adds that the *National Geographic Magazine* is a regular arrival and that there are two members of The National Geographic Society on the island.

The Woman's Supplement to the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1934 offered this picture of domestic tranquillity:

*"But let us take you to the island for a day. We will enter a typical home, which depends for its upkeep on the Kentia palm industry, the seeds from these palms being collected and shipped to all parts of the world. Although there is no office to attend at 9 o'clock, the family is astir early because on Lord Howe it is a case of "early to bed and early to rise." The two daughters - we will call them Mary and Jane - prepare the breakfast, and they are splendid cooks. All the young women of Lord Howe are splendid cooks. Breakfast over, they will, with their mother, tidy the house and prepare the midday meal. The afternoon can be spent in many ways. If there happens to be a mail from Sydney containing illustrated magazines, newspapers, and patterns, together with some material for frocks, the young women will study the patterns, choose a style, and set to work to make dresses for themselves...."*<sup>597</sup>

Least the reader thought the women led an indolent existence, the author was at pains to point out that:

*"The women of Lord Howe, perhaps because of their isolation take a keen interest in the world and its affairs and so far as clothes are concerned, are not many days behind their sisters in Sydney...."*

and that with the forthcoming election, they were tuning in to Sydney broadcast stations to listen to election speeches and following the political campaigns by reading newspapers.<sup>598</sup>

In 2001, the *Lord Howe Island Signal* published an account of a day in the busy domestic life of Maude and Toge Payten, the proprietors of 'Valdon' which was perhaps closer to the truth. During the 1940s, they added additional rooms to their

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<sup>596</sup> 'The Paradise of the Tasman', *National Geographic* .....p

<sup>597</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July 1934, p.22

<sup>598</sup> Ibid

home to create some guest accommodation. According to the article, Toge would rise daily at daylight and after lighting the kitchen fuel stove, milked several cows and separated the milk. He then tended to his vegetable garden for half an hour while Maude was busy in the kitchen, kneading the dough which she had set the night before, ready to bake bread. She would do a load of washing, by hand, in the copper before making breakfast for the guests. If there was time, they would eat breakfast after the guests had finished. Then there was morning tea to make and serve – sponge cake or fresh scones with guava jelly and cream and a light lunch to prepare and serve. In between this, Maude would attend to the guests' bedrooms, and do the ironing, sometimes assisted by her niece. Toge might catch and prepare some poultry for Maude to cook. With lunch over and washed up by 2.00 pm, Maude would busy herself with sewing and gardening while Toge split and cut the wood for the fuel stove and donkey hot water service. During the seed season, Toge would join the men collecting seed while Maude toiled at home. Afternoon tea of savouries, biscuits and cake was offered to guests, followed soon after by dinner – often fresh fish followed by strawberries and cream. The Paytens worked hard to ensure their guests enjoyed their visits, taking them on picnics, out fishing or walking, and would often spend evenings providing home entertainment around a piano or a card table.

### **Grow Your Own**

Because of their isolation, islanders could not depend on supplies which came by ship (later air) because of the infrequency of services. With the uncertainty of supply, they placed considerable reliance on the crops they could grow or the livestock they could raise. R D Fitzgerald and Captain Armstrong are credited with the introduction and trial of many species of plants chosen to give the islanders some degree of self-sufficiency, introducing a wide range of fruit, herbs and vegetables, greatly extending the variety of what was grown for consumption.

Domestic endeavours reflected their rural existence, which was determined by daily and seasonal rituals associated with raising livestock and growing crops and harvesting what the island could provide. The community became good at exchanging and sharing this produce with each other, and with those who called in, and made use of the island's natural pantry. They could be inventive when it came to it. One Christmas, in 1937, a shipping strike prevented the importation of dried goods, flour, sugar and tea – and the dried fruits necessary for cakes and puddings. Some residents even had to resort to making thin cigarettes from the 'makings'.

Dr Foulis, who recounted his success with vegetables (potatoes, pumpkins, maize, wheat, sweet potatoes) also reported that bananas grew luxuriantly and ripened well and the vines he planted on his arrival on the island were producing fruit.

### Mutton Birds and Wideawakes

Dr Foulis also explained that the mutton bird was popular as “an article of food and was caught in great numbers for feathers (used as stuffing for upholstery) but that it was the young unfledged birds that are eaten, as they are free from any fishy rankness.”<sup>599</sup>

The decimation of native species at the hands of opportunistic visitors within the first thirty years of settlement has been well documented. Fitzgerald, camping out on his expedition in 1869 told of hunting woodhen and catching magpie. Visiting Government officials, such as those on Commissioner Wilson’s party, survived on a daily catch of birds and fish. In season, mutton birds were an easy catch, prized for food and the oil they secreted which substituted for oil and their fat and eggs for cooking. The government boat was commandeered for fishing and made many trips to the Admiralties to collect the eggs of sea birds, or to collect *bêche de mer* (eaten raw or boiled) and sea lettuce.

Naturalist and Museum Curator, Ian Hutton recounts an island tradition:

*“It was a regular activity early in September to visit the [Sooty] Tern colonies on Roach Island to collect buckets of eggs. Even the school children took part and it was considered a regular holiday outing for them. Older islanders can still recall visiting the Admiralty Islets with empty four gallon (20 litre) kerosene tins, and neatly stacking the tern eggs in the tins between layers of grass. Each tin held eight to 10 dozen eggs and a day’s collecting could yield up to 20 tins”.*

They were preserved between layers of salt which prolonged their freshness.

*“These eggs form an agreeable addition to the food supply and are cooked in various ways, the principal being plain hard-boiled, eaten cold, or made into large omelettes. They have practically no fishy flavour, and are not so rich as the domestic hen’s eggs...The industry of collecting these eggs for food has resulted in the evolution of a local term ‘wideawakeneggin’”.*<sup>600</sup>

The 28<sup>th</sup> of November was traditionally the start of the muttonbird egg collecting season. Every second day, nests around Ned’s Beach and Malabar, were cleared, thus ensuring that the eggs were fresh. The collection would be divided up among the residents. By placing them between layers of coarse (evaporated) sea salt, scraped from the rocks, eggs could be stored for up to 6 weeks.<sup>601</sup> Eggs of gannets, sooty terns and wide awakes were collected and used in cooking and baking (although some claimed they tasted slightly fishy: others considered them to be

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<sup>599</sup> Foulis

<sup>600</sup> Hutton 1990, pp. 56-7

<sup>601</sup> Daphne Nichols, p.72

“perfectly sweet and not the slightest unpleasant flavour or odour”).<sup>602</sup> They could also be preserved in brine or ‘waterglass’<sup>603</sup> (before the arrival of refrigerators).

### **A local ‘Cuppa’**

In 1869, botanist Charles Moore observed a shrubby *Melaleuca* growing on the southwest side of the island which the locals called ‘Kilmogue’ and drank as a pleasant and exhilarating beverage which substituted for tea and which they claimed had medicinal properties.<sup>604</sup> J H Maiden identified it as *Melaleuca ericifolia* (subsequently renamed *Melaleuca howeana*) and noted later that the settlers had an idea that it is identical to a New Zealand shrub (a claim which Maiden discounted as he argued that the species did not occur in that colony).<sup>605</sup>

### **Fiery Spirits and ‘Pill-eye’**

Captain Armstrong, arriving in 1882, found the residents distilling fiery spirits from bananas and the wild figs from banyan trees. In 1898, Maiden published his botanical observations on Lord Howe Island, including the uses to which some of the plants were put. Coffee leaves were used as a substitute for tea, sorghum for sugar and geranium leaves as an alternative for tobacco. Sweet potato leaves were a substitute for cabbage and the flesh was used for a dish called ‘pill-eye’, made with a bucketful of grated sweet potato and a saucer of flour mixed with a little fat and baked in the oven like a loaf of bread. Green bananas boiled in their skins substituted for potatoes and constituted a dish which apparently originated on Norfolk Island.

Ripe bananas mixed with ground corn (maize) and baked were eaten as a pudding. The ripe fruit of pandanus was popular eaten raw. The heart of the *Kentia* palm, boiled as a vegetable, tasted like a cabbage stump, and purslane (or portulaca, sometimes called pigweed) was not only boiled as a vegetable, but had extensive medicinal properties. The leaves of young sow thistles were eaten raw as a salad vegetable and taro leaves, boiled to remove toxins, were slimy, but edible. Sugar cane, grown for pig fodder, was eaten by youngsters. The choco or choko (*Sechium edule*) was ‘not esteemed’ (its reputation doesn’t seem to have improved!).

Jams made from black nightshade and yellow and cherry guava were popular<sup>606</sup>. Cherry guava is now listed as a noxious weed because of its invasiveness and since 2004 over 600,000 plants of the species have been removed from the island. Some residents, particularly the older generation, lamented the loss of this traditional island delicacy. Jam-making is still practised by several islanders and it is important that these skills be passed on to younger generations, though with less invasive fruits.

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<sup>602</sup> Anon 1880

<sup>603</sup> Sodium silicate, a white, water soluble compound used as a preservative.

<sup>604</sup> Moore 1869, p.27

<sup>605</sup> Notes on *Melaleuca* with descriptions of two new species and a new variety by Edwin Cheel, *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria*, Vol. LVIII, November 1924, p.192

<sup>606</sup> Maiden 1898, p.155

Mrs Hedley, writing her account of a trip to the island in 1908, mentions tasting 'hot bark' from the Dryma tree which she found to have a hot aromatic taste. She also tried the kernels of the pandanus fruit and found them to taste very like coconut.<sup>607</sup>

Hazel Payten and Thelma Wilson are long time residents whose memories of domestic life stretch back many decades. They recall catching mutton birds during the breeding season - some were eaten fresh; others smoked and preserved. Their oil, although it had a fishy taste, made good cooking fat, and used as lamp oil, it burnt well but created a fishy smoky haze. There was a ready supply of fresh milk from the island's cows and beef from cattle raised and slaughtered on the island. The waters around Lord Howe provided them throughout the year with enough fish and shell-fish for hunger to be unknown.<sup>608</sup>

### **Game Galore**

Pig and goat hunting, popular as a sport, also provided families with fresh meat, some of which would be smoked or salted in brine and stored in large timber casks. Young mutton birds could also be preserved by soaking in brine or hung to dry and cure in smokehouses or chimneys. One visitor had previously suggested that they were a rare delicacy which "when properly preserved may become a favourite with colonial club epicures."<sup>609</sup> Another mentioned that "the only birds of value for the table being the beautiful green and gold dove, the wood-hen, the small curlew, called the snipe by the islanders, and a few waders or stilts resembling the sandpiper".<sup>610</sup>

### **Preserving and Recycling**

Fruit and vegetables have thrived in the island's rich basaltic soil and what was harvested and not eaten could be stored, traded, preserved, stewed, or made into any variety of pickle or jam. Islanders knew all about recycling early on, re-using ceramic, glass and wooden containers over and over again. Preserving food was a necessity, not only to maximize seasonal availability but also to ensure against a poor season in the future. T B Wilson describes his harvest of peaches in 1878 - he gathered 600 in one day to make about 80 lbs of jam, and another 500 two days later to make 60 lbs of jam, with some reserved for making spirits.<sup>611</sup>

### **Recipe for Guava Jelly**

#### **Ingredients**

Guavas

Water

Sugar (one cup to one cup of liquid)

Lemons (juice of half a lemon to each 2 cups of liquid)

<sup>607</sup> Mrs Georgina Hedley, *The Lord Howe Expedition*, September 1, 1908

<sup>608</sup> Personal communication with Hazel Payten and Thelma Wilson, 2009-2010

<sup>609</sup> Anon, 1880

<sup>610</sup> Clarson 1882, .p.13

<sup>611</sup> T B Wilson diary December 1878 Transcripts A1158049 and A1158051

## Method

Wash guavas, remove tops, cover with water and bring to the boil, simmer 2 hours. Strain through colander, then through jelly bag. Allow one cup of sugar to one cup of liquid to the guava mixture, add lemon juice, boil quickly till it jells. Bottle and seal.

## New Influences and Increased Expectations

With increasing tourism and global travel, the food horizons of the island expanded. In January 1961, islander Rosemary Fenton shared the excitement of an overseas trip associated with her duties as the recently crowned Miss Australia, writing an account in the *Signal*. There she introduced a recipe for a dish she had tasted in Malaysia for sweet and sour fish, no doubt thinking of the plentiful supply of kingfish back home.

Today, islanders are exposed to a wide variety of cuisines through books and magazines, the internet and access to cooking shows on satellite television. Locals and visitors alike have for the last 20 years or more been able to experience a much broader range of menus at the island's cafés and restaurants. While kingfish remains a diet staple and the Friday night 'fish fry' survives, visitors are just as likely now to be able to enjoy their fish with a Cajun or macadamia crust and a side of tomato salsa.

## The Co-op

A co-operative store was first suggested in 1955, but was not popular. The idea was recently revived by the Lord Howe Island Board and a group of residents, resulting in the establishment of a co-operative store operated by the community on a site next to the Post Office on Ned's Beach Road,. Here, locals and visitors can buy bulk items such as flour, cooking oil and dried fruits in recycled containers, as well as delicatessen items such as olives, cold meats and cheese.

## Domestic Inventories

In the early days on Lord Howe Island, home comforts were few. The earliest documentation of the contents of a dwelling is an inventory of items which were transferred between islanders in 1874 when one family left the island.<sup>612</sup> TB Wilson mentions auctions of Cavage's and Langley's goods (including furniture) on their departure from the island.

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<sup>612</sup> Kelly 1984

Tools, equipment (outside)			Domestic items (inside)	
Corn bin	3 rakes	2 spare doors	2 boilers	1 looking glass
2 ladders	2 tubs	4 gimlets	1 large dish	1 gun
2 mills, small and large	4 axes	3 ovens	1 tea kettle	1 pair scissors
1 wheelbarrow	2 barrels	1 gouge	1 chopper	3 chairs
Seed potatoes	1 adze	2 trowels	1 rolling pin	2 sofas
1 pair stilliards <sup>613</sup>	1 hatchet	1 screwdriver	Knives, forks, spoons	3 tumblers
Tools, equipment (outside)			Domestic items (inside)	
2 blocks	1 maul	1 rasp	2 kitchen tables	½ doz dinner plates
1 piece timber	1 keg	1 plane	1 wash board	5 soup plates
1 grindstone	3 wedges	2 hammers	2 pepper boxes	11 cups
1 bellows	1 saw	1 driver	1 lamp	8 saucers
1 water cask	1 brace and bit		1 oil feeder	1 table
5 breaking up hoes	2 shovels		1 saucepan	1 safe
5 chipping hoes	1 boat spade		1 knife box	1 chiffoniere
1 garden line	2 reap hooks		1 washing stand	1 wooden bowl

<sup>613</sup> A balance for weighing that consists of a beam, a weight sliding on a graduated scale, and hooks to hold the thing being weighed. [www.chaddsfordhistory.org/history/glossary.htm](http://www.chaddsfordhistory.org/history/glossary.htm)



The Government residence was not overly equipped and during one official visit, Gerald Kirby was forced to lend his own furniture to supplement what was available in the house. In 1934, a quantity of surplus furniture from Government House was offered for sale to islanders, including an old stretcher, an old bedstead, pieces of old linoleum, an Austrian chair, door mats, miscellaneous collection of old ironmongery. Recycling has long been upheld on the island, and many items of furniture, clothing, furnishings, toys and household goods continue to be recycled through the island's waste facility.

Because of the cost and difficulty associated with importing supplies, island homes were simply constructed from available materials and furnished with items which could be ordered and sent from the mainland, or furniture made from local timber like banyan, or sometimes, the spoils of a shipwreck. Undoubtedly, the most exotic exception to this was 'Palmhaven', the home of William and Sue Whiting. Designed by an architect, a first for the island, their home was filled with treasures from China, where they had married. Kerry McFadyen recalls<sup>614</sup> the house as 'fairylane', with two huge carved ebony chairs inlaid with mother-of-pearl in the hall; ...walls hung with paintings of elderly mandarins and decorated with scimitars...cloisonné bowls and enormous blue and white Chinese vases, all reputed to have been acquired during the Boxer Rebellion."

### **Clothing**

Most cloth was imported, although hides and animal skins (particularly goat) made warm and protective clothing and long-wearing moccasins while the fleece of sheep could be spun and woven. Flour bags were particularly versatile as clothing and made hard-wearing shirts, trousers, smocks and caps. Many items of clothing (particularly for babies and children) were made by hand, and later, using treadle sewing machines. TB Wilson records clothing purchases which give some idea of what was worn on the island in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*"Willie – 1 blue serge suit 1/10/-, 1 felt hat 7/6, 2 silk h'chiefs 6/0, 1 blk straw hat trimmings 10/6; Charlie – 1 rug 12/6, blankets 13/-, bedstead 15/-, 2 twill shirts 8/-, 1 trimmed hat 10/6, 1 pair womans boots 8/6, 2 neckties 3/6, 3 oxford shirts 13/6, ½ doz hose 5/-, ½ doz hdkfs 5/-, 2 towels 3/6, 5 yd dungaree 5/0, 1 pr e/s boots 12/-, 1 pr bluchers 7/3, 1 suit 1/10; Tommy - hdkfs 3/-, Scent 1/6, H oils 2/0, cap 5/-, tweed suit 1/10/6, ½ doz hose 5/-; Ned – Caroline 3/15/-, cartridges 18/-, 2 pr pants 1/10/-, 1 e/s boots 12/6, ½ hose 5/-, 2 shirts 4/6; Thompson – tablecloth 6/-, shawl 10/6, 2 shawls 10/-, 1 pr boots 6/3".*

<sup>614</sup> Kerry McFadyen, *Pinetrees Lord Howe Island 1842-1992*, p.40

In 1930, a correspondent noted that<sup>615</sup>:

*“The women dress very much the same as those on the mainland: in summer, in voiles or fuji silks; men, in khaki shorts and shirts, numbers of them hatless and bare-footed, around their waists a leather belt with scabbard holding a short knife, for cutting down palm seeds or for other gardening purposes. They have the simple dignity characterising those whose life is lived near to nature, are of fine physique and comely.”*

The knife was not just a useful tool – it was a right of passage for young island men as Gary Crombie recalls<sup>616</sup>:

*“We wore twelve-inch long sheath knives on a belt – as a kid, your first sheath knife was almost a coming-of-age thing...everyone on the island wore a sheath knife – you cleaned fish with it, you undid screws with it – it was just like carrying an all-purpose tool.”*

Eventually, this practice was outlawed as inappropriate.



**Figure 214** Palm seeder’s ‘uniform’. (Photos: **(Left)**: National Library of Australia, nla pic-an23694759-v); **(Right)**: Chris Betteridge, 4 December 2009)

### Domestic technology

Bread was baked and meat roasted, at first in camp ovens or over hot coals, until fuel stoves arrived, then replaced with kerosene stoves until bottled gas became available. Food safes were used to keep fresh milk and meat cool until a local ice-

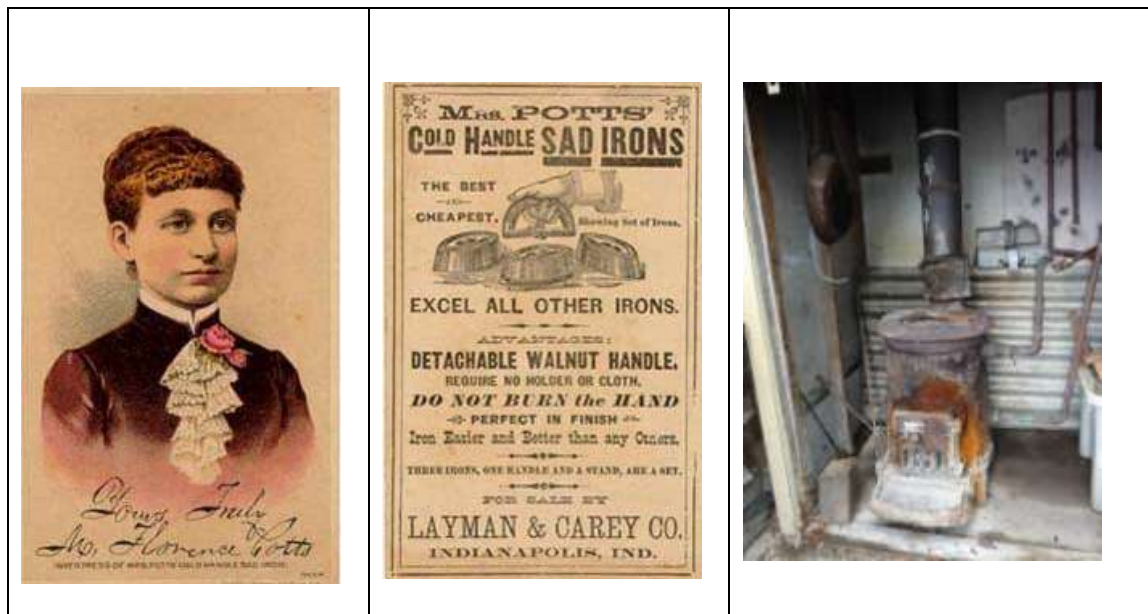
<sup>615</sup> *Bank Notes* April 1930 p.14

<sup>616</sup> Oral history Gary Crombie LHI: FH17 CD Track 12

making plant was established in the 1920s. Kerosene, gas and electric refrigerators and freezers subsequently improved the longevity of food. Lighting was provided in the early days by candle power and lamps were lit with whale oil or mutton bird oil (which was unpleasant because it smoked badly, emanating a strong fishy smell) and later, kerosene.

Washing was done by hand using a wood-fired copper and water heated for domestic use, including showers, by donkey engines<sup>617</sup> and chip heaters. Mrs Potts' irons<sup>618</sup> were popular before the advent of petrol irons and eventually, electric irons. Slowly, islanders acquired their own electricity generators and by 1955, every house on the island had been connected to electricity, changing the traditional domestic chores forever and achieving some parity with homes on the mainland. The introduction of septic systems around this time significantly improved sanitation and meant that 'long drop dunnies' (pit toilets) could become a thing of the past.

Many of Lord Howe Island's residents have preserved their memories of aspects of domestic life and the way it has changed on Lord Howe Island in a series of oral history recordings made in 2005 and deposited in the Museum. Their comments are interesting as counterpoints between the perceptions of the tranquility and simplicity of island life and the realities of living in the global spotlight.<sup>619</sup>



**Figure 215 (Left & Centre):** Sales literature for Mrs Dorothy Potts and her iron; **(Right):** Bill Retmock's 'donkey engine', thought to be the last one on the island in working order (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 10 September 2010)

<sup>617</sup> A donkey engine is a small, usually subsidiary, steam engine.

<sup>618</sup> A Mrs Potts' iron was one with a detachable wooden handle, that could be heated on a stove, then picked up with the handle for ironing.

<sup>619</sup> Oral history reference

### Domestic animals

Some domestic animals, through their predatory behaviour, became responsible for the loss of some of the island's significant bird and insect populations and damage to their habitats. Goats and pigs appear to have been left on the island in the early days as a food source for passing whalers. Dogs probably arrived with the first or second group of settlers in the 1830s and were later bred as hunting dogs and, after 1918, as ratters (particularly fox terriers). Cats are thought to have been introduced around 1846-7 from a passing whaler. Edward Hill noted in 1869 that the cats were all black and had become feral – and were destroyed whenever possible. Mice were accidentally set ashore in the mid 1860s from a ship from Norfolk Island, again a whaler. Rabbits are thought to have been kept on Blackburn Island (later called Rabbit Island), perhaps for food, but sensibly separated from the main island.

The greatest impact however has been the decimation of the island's avifauna and the Lord Howe Island phasmid by black rats which came ashore from the Burns Philp steamer *Makambo* which struck rocks in the Admiralty Group in June 1918. Both mice and rats have also impacted on the domestic crops of residents and despite a range of eradication programs, they continue to thrive. Dogs and cats were banned as household pets during the 1980s, but the ban on dogs relaxed in 1996, subject to a number of conditions and restrictions on breeds. Control programs successfully eradicated pigs by the 1970s and goats in the 1990s.

### Liquor

In 1916 the NSW Government held a liquor referendum on early closing for hotels. The results were delayed for almost a month because the steamer *Makambo* which was bringing the referendum voting papers back to the mainland had been delayed and the island's votes could not be counted until they arrived in Sydney. The island, with a strong Seventh Day Adventist population, at that time was 'dry', with no hotel to supply wine, beer or spirits and in 1928, islanders had voted in a liquor poll 38 votes to 24 to keep it that way. Liquor had certainly been available, be it an island brew distilled from wild figs, alcohol for medicinal use or imported in small quantities by some individuals. By 1937 however, things were changing, largely as a result of the impact of tourism, with many tourists bringing their own supplies of liquor with them. The then Chairman of the Board of Control of Lord Howe Island, Mr. E. B. Harkness cut the islanders' Christmas liquor order in half, arguing that "150 persons on the island shared 100 dozen bottles of whisky, gin, and beer, half the amount ordered. This worked out at eight bottles per person for three weeks, until the next ship arrived. Harkness maintained that "as there is no policeman on the island, we have got to be careful in these matters"....."I do not think there are many who will deny that we took the right course."<sup>620</sup>

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<sup>620</sup> *Courier Mail*, 4 January 1937, .p3

Islanders have recalled that in the years of austerity immediately after World War II, when wealthy tourists from Sydney could again visit Lord Howe Island, their luggage would often be heavily biased towards alcohol for their stay on the island<sup>621</sup>. Some male visitors would bring a set of clothes to 'dress for dinner', some light casual wear for their holiday and the rest of their bags filled with bottles of whisky and gin. The recent discovery of a bottle dump dating from the late 1940s and early 1950s tends to support this claim, with the bulk of bottles being beer, whisky and gin types<sup>622</sup>.

In 1955 the Lord Howe Island Board established a liquor store which operated from the Public Hall. Residents could purchase six bottles of beer and unrestricted spirits and while the initial response was favourable, sales tapered off. Eventually, the Board's initiative would become its largest commercial activity, with alcohol now sold through a store adjacent to the Board's offices.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Domestic artefact scatter, kitchen furnishings, bed, clothing, garden tools, shed, arrangement of interior rooms, kitchen garden, pet grave, chicken coop, home office, road camp, barrack, asylum

### **Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Domestic artefacts from archaeological excavation site, Old Settlement;  
Items demonstrating Domestic Life in Lord Howe Island Museum collection;  
Original interiors and movable heritage of some historic residences;  
Furniture from shipwrecks.

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Domestic artefacts from archaeological excavation site, Old Settlement;  
Items demonstrating Domestic Life in Lord Howe Island Museum collection;

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<sup>621</sup> Bruce McFadyen, pers. comm., September 2010

<sup>622</sup> Report by Chris and Margaret Betteridge to Lord Howe Island Board on bottle dump near 'Pinetrees' boatshed, September 2010

## 2.8.2 Creative Endeavour

*These are activities associated with the production and performance of literary, artistic, architectural and other imaginative, interpretive or inventive works; and/or associated with the production and expression of cultural phenomena; and/or environments that have inspired such creative activities.*

### Architecture

The first creative endeavour on Lord Howe Island was born of necessity, and the practicality associated with making shelter. The island's first settlers (including Maori women) came from New Zealand so it is not surprising to find that the domestic structures they erected on the island took their form from traditional Polynesian architecture, and particularly appropriate given that the island had a plentiful supply of suitable materials such as palm trees for posts and thatching.

Archaeological evidence from digs at Old Settlement and Hunter Bay have revealed that the first dwellings were large rectangular single-roomed huts, erected on a foundation base of water-worn basalt cobblestones collected around the bay, with a stone-flagged hearth. There is evidence of several pieces of Sydney sandstone (which does not occur on the island and therefore was possibly brought over as ship ballast) and hand-cut calcarenite blocks (possibly from a chimney). The timber frame appears to have been Thatch or Curly Palm and the post holes suggest a central support for the pyramidal roof and side supports which anchored the thatch panels flush with the edge of the foundations to ensure that rainwater drained directly into the sand and did not enter the hut.

Captain Henry Denham's 1853 report mentions that:

*'cabbage palms [sic] had already proved valuable for building and many other useful purposes, while porphyry rock, corallines, madrepores and sand would furnish excellent stone and mortar for the erection of commodious and handsome dwelling-houses'.<sup>623</sup>*

Hill described the houses as:

*'built of palms, with two or three exceptions, and thatched with the same material. The thatching looks particularly neat. The frond of what is called the thatch-palm is doubled and looped over a batten, secured on the roof for that purpose. The feathery spray on the outside and the stalk on the inside close together, forming a close row of ribs – the outer covering forming by this means a thickness of 7 or 8 inches, cool, comfortable and impervious to wet, and which lasts about seven years. In the two or three exceptions above alluded to, the houses are raised on calcareous blocks, procured close at hand, a couple of feet of base course, then boarded up with Australian pine and roofed with galvanized iron. The designs are*

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<sup>623</sup> McDonald, J. p.17

*nearly all alike – one entrance door in the centre, which forms a room of the better description; at either end are one, two or more small bed-rooms, as occasions arise, and forms one compartment, with a fire-place at one end and larder at the other; the centre side occupied by a large table for meals, with a long stool at either side.”*<sup>624</sup>

At North Bay, William Nichols built his palm-framed and thatched house with calico lining and split palm floor.

Fitzgerald also provided important observations about the island’s prevailing architecture.

*“The houses are well built of split palm battens, thatched on roof and sides with palm leaves. The leaf hangs down and the stem is bent over one horizontal batten and outside the lower, an arrangement which gives a very white, clean, appearance to the inside, somewhat resembling basket work, and very distinctive from any other style of building. Each house is surrounded by out-houses, the sides of which are sometimes not thatched, and have a very light tropical appearance. They consist of barns, fowl-houses, houses for goats, pigs and dogs and drying floors for onions. Each house with its surrounding buildings, encircled by a fence of split palms and backed by lemon trees, arching banyans and clustering palm trees, is a picture of tropical comfort and beauty – not often to be seen or easily forgotten.”*<sup>625</sup>

Photographs confirm that thatching continued to be used into the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, among the last survivors being the Board’s machinery shed, sawmill and a shelter on Lagoon Road (sadly no longer thatched).



**Figure 216 (Left):** Early structures, including a thatched hut and a weatherboard-clad building, at the southern end of the island. (Source: Paul Maidemont prints PM106, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The Board’s garage and workshop with thatched roof and sides. The front elevation of the present garage has some palm stems as supporting posts as a reference to the old building. (Source: Miscellaneous prints 3, LHI Museum Collection).

<sup>624</sup> Hill, E, p.49

<sup>625</sup> Fitzgerald, R., pp.37-8



Hill also noted that:

*“In...two or three exceptions...the houses are raised on calcareous blocks, procured close at hand, a couple of feet of base course, then boarded up with Australian pine, and painted, and roofed with galvanized iron. ..The designs are nearly all alike – one entrance door in the centre, which forms a room of the better description; at either end are one, two or more small bedrooms, as occasions may require, but no fireplace.... The kitchen, or general room, is detached and forms one compartment, with a fireplace in one end and larder at the other, the centre side occupied by a large table for meals, with a long stool at either side.”<sup>626</sup>*



**Figure 217** Three views of the [Nathan Chase] Thompson House. **(Left):** The house sits on footings of calcarenite blocks, with palm logs as floor bearers; **(Centre & Right):** The interior reflects architectural influences from Thompson’s Massachusetts origins and nautical heritage. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 4 December 2009).

Fitzgerald noted that:

*“Each house is surrounded by out-houses, the sides of which are sometimes not thatched, and have a very light tropical appearance. They consist of barns, fowl-houses, houses for goats, pigs and dogs, and drying floors for onions. Each house, with its surrounding building, encircled by a fence of split palms and backed by lemon trees, arching banyans and clustering palm trees, is a picture of tropical comfort and beauty – not often seen or easily forgotten.”<sup>627</sup>*

Nathan Thompson used the architectural language of whaling to build his house, styling it on the small whaler’s cottages of his north-east American heritage, using cedar logs reputedly washed ashore from the northern coast of New South Wales. The discovery of flotsam along the shores of the island and timbers washed ashore from shipwrecks was not an uncommon occurrence and houses and their interiors often profited from them. The creation of the island as a forestry reserve in 1878 meant that the natural resources could no longer be plundered in sufficient quantity to house residents, so materials for new dwellings had to be imported or recycled. Many structures on the island have components crafted from packing crates, used

<sup>626</sup> Hill, E. p.49

<sup>627</sup> Fitzgerald, R. pp.37-8

for lining and flooring; and from other recycled materials. Outbuildings associated with food storage, smokehouses, pigstyes, refuse and offal pits, wells and long-drop latrines were also part of the structures associated with dwellings, while produce and domestic kitchen and flower gardens defined by windbreaks, often planted as oleander hedges, created landscape elements.

With increased and more reliable shipping services, building materials could be ordered and sent from the mainland, but the cost of cartage was a significant extra. Strong, lightweight and weatherproof materials including weatherboards (Government House, 'Kentia'), ripple iron ('Janetville') and later, fibro sheeting were best suited for housing and could be assembled easily. Slowly, the island's architectural style began to change.

*"Lord Howe Island houses are substantially built of wood, serviceably if not sumptuously furnished. One or two cottages of the bungalow order present a distinctly tropical appearance. With walls of weatherboard and thick roofs of palm thatch they stand in clearings of the bush surrounded by well-kept gardens, brilliant in colour from tropical flowers and foliage."*<sup>628</sup>

One important exception was the Whiting's house, 'Palmhaven', at the eastern end of Anderson Road. Architect designed, it featured a tiled roof, rough cast cement walls with contrasting stained timber and was the very height of fashion - and it included a guest annexe.

Kit built structures proved a popular alternative – even the prison lock-up had arrived in a kit form ready to assemble. 'Kentia' and 'Janetville' are both thought to have been constructed from kits supplied by the Sydney firm, George Hudson and Son Ltd, makers of 'Hudson Ready Cut Homes'<sup>629</sup>.



**Figure 218 (Left):** An example of a Hudson Readycut Home form the company's 1915 catalogue. (Source: Caroline Simpson Research Centre, Historic Houses Trust of NSW); **(Right):** 'Kentia', Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 18 March 2010).

The houses constructed for technical staff of the Department of Civil Aviation are also thought to be prefabricated houses. The houses constructed for the staff attached to the Meterological Bureau, were also constructed using pre-fabricated

<sup>628</sup> TDE 1893, np

<sup>629</sup> Hudson 1846-1996 Sesquicentenary History.

kits. Facing a shortage of bricks, the Commonwealth Government, undertook a major post-war building program in Canberra using pre-fabricated homes for expediency. The houses were ordered from Riley Newsum, England's oldest joinery company, headquartered at Lincoln. Riley Newsum supplied the materials and A V Jennings were appointed as the local contractors to erect them, first as defence housing at Duntroon and Fairburn and later on other Commonwealth sites, including Lord Howe Island where brick houses were almost unheard of. These homes boasted internal laundries and built-in cupboards and with electricity recently connected to the island, they would have been considered the height of modernity, with power points and electric hot water services for water supply to both kitchen and bathroom and modern water taps.



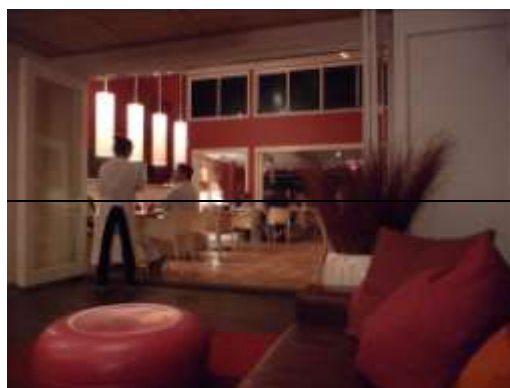
**Figure 219** One of the prefabricated houses erected on Lord Howe Island for the Department of Civil Aviation. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 December 2009)

The expense of materials and construction has generally precluded many residents from engaging architects for domestic architecture. Houses continue to be built of lightweight and weatherproof materials and their designs are simple. It is the newer lodges and the Lord Howe Island Museum, which provide contemporary evidence of creative design and construction. Each has responded to Lord Howe Island's unique climate, topography, flora and fauna for inspiration and the mood of the South Pacific is captured in their interiors and decoration.



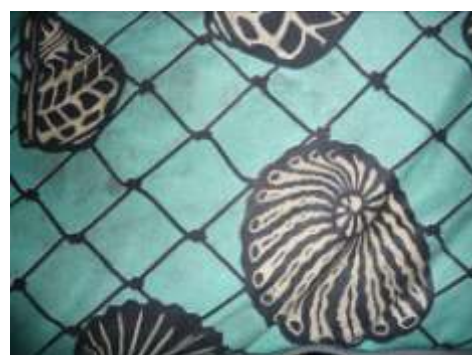
**Figure 220** Motel style units by architects Stevenson Turner at 'Pinetrees'. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 December 2009)





**Figure 221 (Left):** 'Capella', located towards the southern end of the island, with spectacular views of the mountains. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 9 September 2010); **(Right):** 'Arajilla' is in a more secluded setting of lush vegetation near Old Settlement. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 1 March 2009).

In the 1970s, 'Pinetrees' engaged Sydney architects, Stevenson Turner to design their new 'Tahitian' units, later adding cottages designed by architect and joint proprietor of 'Pinetrees', Bruce McFadyen. 'Capella' (formerly Capella South, now one of the Baillie Lodges) claims to be 'the first luxury lodge in the last paradise'. A feature of its interiors, with their sweeping views south towards Mt Gower, are interior soft furnishings by Sydney artist Bruce Goold, inspired by Lord Howe Island's wildlife and maritime history. Similarly, the Shead family's 'Arajilla' resort among the huge banyans on the site of the former Trader Nick's, channels their creative endeavour into their artists' retreat programs which feature Australian artists, including (in 2010) Garry Shead, Adam Rish, Robert Malherbe and Guy Maestri. Earl's Anchorage, completed in 2004 designed by Arcoessence Architects adapted a nautical theme to its presentation, inspired by yachtsman and marine artist, Jack Earl. The most recent addition to visitor accommodation is the 'Howeana Apartments', designed by Sydney architect Col Griffiths, and also furnished with Bruce Goold's interpretations of the island's tropical style.



**Figure 222** Two of artist Bruce Goold's fabric designs inspired by the flora and marine fauna of Lord Howe Island. (Photos: Chris Betteridge)

## Gardens

The creation and maintenance of gardens occupied many hours of endeavour as soil was ploughed and hoed, seed hills formed and seedlings planted, perimeters fenced, and produce harvested. T B Wilson's diary records the names ascribed to gardens, including

Banyan Garden, Mabel's Garden, Sugar cane Garden, Morepork Garden, Well Garden, Gully Garden, Wilson's Garden and one at Ned's Beach. Although the locations of gardens are clearly marked on early maps, it has not been possible to match all their names. The Banyan Garden is known to have been located at the bottom of the hill off Anderson Road, and was constructed among the root spaces where natural moist mulch ensured the growth of healthy produce.

Lord Howe Island's 'gardens' were originally utilitarian agricultural plots established for the production of staple foods, but with a mild maritime climate, fertile soil and a generally reliable water supply, domestic ornamental gardens also flourished. Lodges in particular took advantage of the climatic conditions to plant gardens which enhanced the tropical settings of their buildings. Gardens abounded in the flowers and foliage of hibiscus, acalypha, oleander, poinsettias and frangipani which provided the lodge owners with a ready supply of colourful blooms for leis which were once presented to arriving and departing guests, and for decorating guests' rooms. The delightful tradition of leaving arrangements of tropical flowers on tables and beds to welcome guests to the island continues today.



**Figure 223** Colourful hibiscus and frangipani flowers in traditional Lord Howe Island ornamental gardens. (Photos: Chris Betteridge)

During the flying boat era, guests often helped prepare the leis which departing passengers would throw in the lagoon as they left, secure in the belief that if their lei washed ashore, their return to Lord Howe was assured. An incoming tide usually helped to keep this charming superstition alive. Today, some older residents lament what they perceive as a loss of colour on the island, following the recognition of its World Heritage natural values and a policy that encourages the planting of endemic plants. However, islanders are still able to grow traditional exotics such as hibiscus, frangipani and other non-weedy species.

### **Furnishings**

Many island homes feature intriguing assemblages of items with fascinating stories and personal connections to episodes significant in the history of Lord Howe Island. Among some of the most interesting are the salvaged items from ships which foundered on coral reefs, some enthusiastic salvage hunters travelling as far as

Middleton Reef in the hope of a find. While the men sought technical equipment, instruments, wood and structural materials, many of their wives were disappointed when the trove did not include crockery, furniture or other domestic items.

The wood from the Banyan (*Ficus macrophylla* subsp. *columnaris*) was relatively soft, easy to shape and carve and was fashioned into furniture including chairs, tables and sideboards. John Denis Macdonald noted in 1853 that:

*“Exogenous timber is plentiful, of any required size; the leaves of tables, 4 feet by 5 and upwards, have been cut in single pieces from banyan roots, as well as from another species of hardwood which is very common.”*<sup>630</sup>



**Figure 224 (Left)** Chair made of Banyan wood in the Lord Howe Island Museum. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge); **(Right)**: Oak bench in the terminal building at Lord Howe Island Airport. This seat was a gift to the people of Lord Howe Island as a memorial to David Blackburn. Commissioned by Blackburn descendant Mr D Neville it sat on the verandah at Government House for a time. It was originally proposed for a site on Flagstaff Point but it was considered that it would deteriorate if left in the open. In June 1975 the Board determined that it should be placed in the air terminal to commemorate the links between Norfolk in England and Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 22 March 2010).

Islander Kerry McFadyen described the exotic interior of ‘Palmhaven’ which was influenced by time spent in China where owners, Susan and William Whiting had lived in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

“There were two huge carved ebony chairs with mother-of-pearl in the hall. The walls were hung with paintings of elderly mandarins and decorated with scimitars. She [Susan] had cloisonné bowls and enormous blue-and-white Chinese vases, all

<sup>630</sup> Denham, H. p.14

reputed to have been acquired during the Boxer Rebellion.”<sup>631</sup> Harry Smythe (former postmaster), “besides building his home (like everyone else) [he] has made most of his furniture, being one of the two to utilise banyan timber from which he fashioned a magnificent sideboard.”<sup>632</sup>

## Crafts

The most significant local craft, basket weaving, derives its influence from the traditions of Micronesian and Polynesian settlers. The style and technique are unlike those originating in England, America or Europe, and use endemic *Kentia* palm fronds, pandanus leaves and cut grass for weaving and plaiting.

The earliest mention of woven baskets appears in the minutes of the Lord Howe Island Board of Control in April 1930 when concerns were raised following the activities of a visitor who went out and cut a bundle of palm leaves for the purpose of trying to learn how to make baskets. With their investment in the *Kentia* palm seed business, shareholders were keen to protect the trees against any threat to their cash crop of seed. The matter was referred to the Island Committee which took the step of prohibiting the sale of baskets, but allowed them to be made as gifts. This did not deter a number of Islanders who persisted in making and selling them to tourists, 16 being taken away by one group alone.

In 1933, the Island Committee even suggested that the tradition of cutting of live palm fronds for picnics and decorative purposes should be prohibited.<sup>633</sup> Enforcing it however became a problem, with William Whiting reporting groups of picnic parties at North Bay cutting fronds for table use at North Bay and requesting that a warning notice be erected to stop people from continuing to do it.

The matter of palm baskets was not altogether resolved and in 1935, a member of the Board reported that on a recent visit, he consulted a number of islanders on the matter. William Nichols told him that he never made more than ten at any one time for a steamer visit and that he always sought permission beforehand. He explained that he took the second leaf from the bottom or outside on a palm that is within reach, about 5 or 6 years old – the trunk is about 5 feet high and the leaf he cuts just within reach. He never cut leaves from palms in seed, only from younger plants prior to their seed bearing age, and observed the ‘one leaf from one palm rule’.

The Committee however reported that as many as twenty baskets had gone out with the *Morinda*, supplied by Kath Hines, William Nichols, Edgar Nichols, with others wanting to make and sell them. Cam Thompson estimated that he could sell as many as a 100 on a steamer day. The Committee, which had explored options of restricting numbers, supervising leaf collection, and registering basket makers, eventually accepted the Board’s advice that the practice would thenceforth be prohibited.

To redress the loss of a market, the Committee, which supported the idea of

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<sup>631</sup> McFadyen, K. p.40

<sup>632</sup> *Bank Notes* April 1930 p.14

<sup>633</sup> Lord Howe Island Board of Control Minutes 18 August 1933



islanders profiting from the tourist trade, suggested that they could secure some additional income by providing lunches in their own homes for passengers on visiting ships, and offered them an opportunity to sell curios including shell and shark tooth jewellery (requiring them to apply for approval to erect stalls), but reminding them that the sale or disposal of palm baskets and coral had been prohibited by the Board. The Board was emphatic in its decision, writing to Mrs Payten in August 1937 stating that it could not depart from its decision prohibiting the making of palm baskets and the sale of coral and sea eggs. There was however, an alternative.

On her visit to the island in 1936-37, Ida McComish introduced islanders to the craft of pandanus weaving which she had learnt from the native women of some of the South Sea islands she had visited with her husband. She noted in her journal that “Thousands of pandanus trees grow wild on Lord Howe, none of the islanders had any idea of their usefulness until I showed them”.<sup>634</sup> She organized to demonstrate the craft to school children where many of the older residents recall having learnt the craft. As she explained:

*“I started a small industry among the children at Lord Howe. I was very interested in the number of things which can be made from pandanus leaves and I offered to teach the children weaving as I had learned it from the natives. They were very enthusiastic about it and soon started selling things to the tourists, who are very eager for souvenirs. When I called in on my way back [to Tahiti], the children were being kept very busy in the schoolhouse making purses and souvenirs.”*

Examples of her miniature work are preserved in the Lord Howe Island Museum.

Pandanus baskets had the benefit of being light and lasting indefinitely and the leaves could be used green or dyed to introduce colour. Before long, pandanus baskets became the must-have, take-home souvenir of the island and a number of enterprising islanders advertised baskets made to order for tourists. In the 1950s the largest supplier was Frank ‘Cobby’ Robbins, who even registered his design with the trademark name of ‘PAM’. At first, Robbins collected pandanus leaves from a number of sites including North Bay where he was eventually prohibited from cutting them down. He then sought permission to collect leaves from the south of the island which prompted the Board to seek the advice of Robert Anderson, Chief Botanist and Curator of the Botanic Gardens. He cautioned against cutting green leaves and heavy pruning of the trees, suggesting that little harm would occur if the leaves which had passed maturity and had commenced to turn brown were removed. Robbins’ baskets were legendary and his obituary in 1976 noted him as a pioneer of the basket making – and that the sight of him riding along Lagoon Road on his bicycle covered with baskets used to amaze visitors.

A number of islanders set up establishments and sold baskets. In the 1950s they could be purchased from The Basket House or made to order by the Nobbs family. Today, Norma Whitfield and some of Ida McComish’s original pupils have become the custodians of the craft of basket-weaving and teachers of the skill. It is important that this unique tradition be recorded on film for perpetuity and passed on to younger

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<sup>634</sup> Ida McComish *Gleanings from an Island Paradise*, 1937, facsimile published by the Lord Howe Island Museum, 2010

generations. Limited use of plaited *Kentia* fronds for celebratory events including weddings occurs and posts at the Ned's Beach shed and the Anglican Church are sometimes decorated in this way.

Local arts and crafts, including jewellery made from shells and coral were sold to tourists at the Curio Store and Babe Payten's Gift Store. During the 1960s, the Le Toa art studio operated from the Bowling Club. The longest running commercial art studio on the Island is Sea Spray Art and Craft Studio on Anderson Road where Noelle Hoffman's island scenes and still life paintings and local and imported arts and crafts are sold. The Howeana Gallery, which closed in 2005, sold souvenirs from local wood and shells made by Tim Kennedy. The island's Museum currently has a large range of items unique to Lord Howe, including fabric printed by Ginny Retmock and inspired by Lord Howe Island flora and fauna and story and cooking books by island authors, including Rosemary Sinclair (nee Fenton).



**Figure 225 (Left):** Pandanus baskets – a traditional Lord Howe Island craft. (Photo: Dick Morris prints DM949, Lord Howe Island Museum Collection); **(Right):** A young islander learns the craft of basket making under the expert tutelage of Norma Whitfield. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 18 March 2010)

In 1956, the Gower Wilson Hospital Auxilliary organized an exhibition in the Public Hall of popular domestic arts and crafts. The categories provide an insight into popular creative pursuits. As well as demonstrations of wood-chopping and cross-cut sawing, there were impressive displays of home-grown fruit and vegetables. Men were invited to submit utility or kitchen articles as a kitchen stool, dustpan tray set, wooden spoons, step ladder, bucket or watering – off of which could be made from any material. Women exhibitors could enter embroidered linens - from a small handkerchief to a large bedspread, shell jewellery, floral decorations or handmade

flowers; while the children's category included book binding, basketry. There was a special section for gift articles - cigarette box, trinket tray, ash tray or any kind of basketware; and entrants in the cooking section could submit buns, scones, fruit cake, sponge sandwich, lamingtons madiera cake, coconut cake, tarts, meringues, swiss or coffee roll, jams, pickles, preserves jellies. Interestingly, sewing was a skill which was taught during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a sewing mistress among the Board of Control's paid employees on the island in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. More often than not, she doubled as a nurse when the occasion demanded. The current monthly markets provide an outlet for contemporary creative endeavour and locally made items.

### Art

Island life has been satirized in cartoon form, the first appearing in Jim Whistler's early editions of *The Signal*, drawn by Sydney artist Trevor Nixon who resided on the island for a time during the 1950s. The Signal's current cartoonist is Craig Thompson, who interprets island issues with wry humour.

The earliest known painting of Lord Howe Island is a work by English-born travel artist, Augustus Earle in the National Library of Australia. In 1828, Earle left Sydney on his return voyage back to England, and headed north for India via the Caroline Islands, passing Lord Howe Island. His work is significant in that he was the first independent, professionally trained artist to visit each of the five continents and record his experiences, including Lord Howe Island. However, his painting shows that he perhaps did not land for his image, assumes the two prominent mountain peaks to be two separate islands, as indeed they appear from a distance.



**Figure 226** View of Lord Howe Island and Ball's Pyramid by Augustus Earle, 1828. (Source: National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an2820768-v)

Wives of visiting scientists made significant contributions to the knowledge and public appreciation of Lord Howe Island. Conchologist Charles Hedley, accompanied by his wife, Harriott Georgina Hedley, Alan McCulloch and several others, visited in 1908. Mrs Hedley's informative account of her stay, which she circulated to the members of her party following their return to Sydney, is a rich historical resource. Similarly, the illustrated account by Ida McComish of her visit to the island with her husband in 1937, documents her activities with personal

impressions, photographs and botanical illustrations. Ida McComish, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, was a competent watercolourist and travelled extensively with her husband, botanist (Captain) James Doran McComish, collecting and recording rare endemic botanical species. Her watercolours recorded not only flower and leaf specimens, but, fungi, lichen, seeds and bark, annotated with observations of their uses. She described her visit to the island in 1937 when they gathered 170 specimens:

*“During our trip I made 65 watercolours of flowers and 48 paintings of fungi. We usually allot about three days a week for ‘field’ or collection days and collect specimens until dusk. Then I start painting immediately as it is important that I catch the correct colours before they fade. Some of the wildflowers only last a few hours, and I have to go on painting all night.”<sup>635</sup>*

While she was on Lord Howe she and James spent three nights camping at 2000ft on Mt Gower to collect specimens. Subsequently, her life-sized watercolours of specimens collected there went to the British Museum and Harvard University.



**Figure 227** Lord Howe Island Wedding Lily, *Diets robinsoniana*, painted by Ida McComish. (Source: National Library of Australia nla.pic-vn3703817)

The beauty of Lord Howe Island’s landscape has been interpreted by many mainland artists. During the 1940s, Henry Dangar and John Moore held exhibitions of their work at leading commercial galleries including the Macquarie and Grosvenor Galleries. Of Harry Dangar’s work, an art reviewer wrote:

*“Most people who have been to Lord Howe Island return enchanted with the scenery there, and, above all, with the exquisite colouring which the landscape has to offer. In black and white reproduction, the twin peaks, Mount Lidgbird and Mount Gower, and the cliffs which rise sheer for hundreds of feet from the sea, sometimes look heavy and forbidding. The watercolour pictures of them which Mr. Harry Dangar has placed on view at the Grosvenor Gallery give a different aspect. The vistas of beach and mountain, adorned with luxuriant palms, shine forth with remarkable delicacy of tone. The green is lively, but never harsh. The*

<sup>635</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 1 December 1937, p.8

*jaggedness of the coast is mitigated by the changing tones of amethyst which wrap it round”.*<sup>636</sup>

In 1943, the Contemporary Art Group announced the purchase by the National Art Gallery (Art Gallery of NSW) of a painting entitled ‘The Admiralties’ by John D Moore from its exhibition at Farmer’s Blaxland Galleries.<sup>637</sup> Many contemporary artists have been enchanted by the colours and textures of Lord Howe’s natural environment and the island’s ever changing moods. In 1985 Stadia Graphics Gallery in Sydney staged an exhibition of impressions of Lord Howe Island (the Lord Howe Island Suite) by printmakers including David Voigt, Pamela Griffiths, Michelle Hingerty, Chris Gentle Jorg Schmeisser, and Terence O’Donnell, Trevor Weekes and John Winch.



**Figure 228 (Left):** Marine Rocks by Jorg Schmeisser colour etching and aquatint, 1984; **(Right):** Lagoon, Lord Howe Island by David Rose, screenprint, 1979



**Figure 229** Mutton birds return to the roost by Pamela Griffiths, etching and aquatint, 1984.

<sup>636</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 17 April 1940 p6

<sup>637</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 June 1943, p.7





**Figure 230** Impressions of 'Earl's Anchorage' by island artist Margaret Murray. (Source: Earl's Anchorage website).

### Lord Howe Island Historical Society

In addition to extensive and informative displays about Lord Howe Island's natural values, the Lord Howe Island Museum celebrated the opening of its new building on 17 February 2002 with a gallery devoted to the island's cultural history. Lord Howe Island's historical traditions have always been important to residents and have been documented in island histories written by Harold Rabone (1940), Max Nicholls (c1949), Alan and Valerie Finch (1967), Jean Edgecombe (1987) and Daphne Nichols (2006).

In November 1960, Jim Whistler, then editor of *The Lord Howe Island Signal*, canvassed islanders through the newsletter for their ideas on establishing a museum. Whistler maintained that there was much evidence of former lifestyles among people's homes, citing mutton bird oil lamps as one example that was historically interesting and worth preserving. In the mid 1970s, a group of island residents formed the Lord Howe Island Historical Society which set out to encourage the preservation of artefacts, photographs, documents and collections relating to Lord Howe's cultural and natural history. In 1978, the local sub-branch of the R.S.L. generously donated its former hall as a venue for the Society's museum. Under the direction and dedication of curator, Jim Dorman and a team of volunteers, the

museum opened with displays about the island's natural and cultural history, and was open to the public each afternoon, seven days a week. By the 1990s, the museum had outgrown the hall and plans were developed for a replacement building which would accommodate the island's visitor information centre, which was then inadequately housed in a kiosk on Ned's Beach Road. The Lord Howe Island Board assisted by establishing a reserve on the former RSL Hall site, specifically dedicated to museum use.

In 1997, plans for a new museum, combining a visitor information centre, café, exhibition space and work areas, drawn up by Mike Tomaszeski, were approved by the Board. Long time island supporters, Ian Kiernan and Dick Smith took on the role of fund-raising co-ordinators, helping to establish a trust to procure government and private funding, sponsorship and grants which eventually realised in excess of \$1m. The project was equally well supported by islanders who contributed over \$25,000 towards the initial costs and their on-going support through donations and volunteer assistance provides both the Historical Society and the Tourism Association with access to high quality facilities and funding for special projects, exhibitions and services. Open seven days a week, the Museum, its display galleries, café, and audio visual projection room provide a vibrant multi-purpose centre which is popular with both visitors and residents. None of it would have been possible without the tireless efforts of founding curator, the late Jim Dorman OAM who died in 2003 having realised his long-held dream.

The design and fit-out of the building demonstrates plenty of creative inspiration, from carved design motifs in Huon Pine timber doors to the long reception desk, designed and built by George Warner from Norfolk Island Pine timber cut down outside Thompson's Store and milled on the island. Some of the wooden display cabinets (and their contents) were acquired from the Thornton's House of 1,000 Shells and they, along with several Huon Pine and cedar display cabinets from the foyer of 'Capella' were donated by Philip and Michelle Whistler. Striking artwork by island artist, Margaret Murray, is featured in the natural history gallery of the Lord Howe Island Museum. Margaret's artwork was also featured on all Lord Howe Island Courier Post stamps and first day covers.



**Figure 231** Lord Howe Island Museum Reception Desk, designed by George Warner and made from Norfolk Island Pine timber. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge, 4 December 2009)



The Lord Howe Island Museum holds the most important photographic archive of the island's cultural (and natural) heritage. Many of the images of island life were captured by the late Richard Morris who began his photographic career as an assistant to islander Mr Giles, working also to assist building the Public Hall in 1934 and erecting the radio towers on Anderson Road. Before long, Morris established his own business and operated from a room in Thompson's General Store. There, he processed the photographs of tourists he had taken that day, washing the prints in salt water from the lagoon, and developing them within 24 hours. During World War II he served as an RAAF photographer, returning to the island in 1945, to resume his business which not only recorded tourists, but events (including weddings and other important happenings) and leading photographic tours. His images were used in many tourist publications, to illustrate Harold Rabone's book, *Lord Howe Island* (first published in 1940) and travel and fashion magazines.



**Figure 232 (Left):** Display of Dick Morris' photographic equipment in the Lord Howe Island Museum. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 24 February 2009); **(Right):** Photograph by Dick Morris taken during the visit to Lord Howe Island of NSW Governor Sir Eric Woodward and Lady Woodward, shown here with Jim Whistler, Roy Wilson and John Thompson Jr. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 4-383, LHI Museum Collection).

## Film

Lord Howe Island is a popular destination for local and international documentary film-makers and scores of moving images of the island's natural landscape have been screened globally. One of the most revealing is a short travelogue made by famed Australian photographer and cinematographer Frank Hurley. 'Jewel of the Pacific' was one of Hurley's *Pacific Graphilogue* series of travelogues made throughout the region and shows the island's geographical features, its local population, a group of men gathering kentia palm seeds for export, women hunting rats and the rock pools and coral reef which ring the island. The tranquility of island life, along with the native wildlife and tropical terrain, are presented as the unique characteristics that make the island such an alluring place. Hurley, best known for his ability to capture awe-inspiring footage in extreme conditions filmed a group walking along the slim mountain ledge where a member of the party almost disappears over the edge. Hurley's lively and informal voice-over narration adds significantly to the enjoyment of the film.



**Figure 233** Frank Hurley's party on the climb up Mt Gower, with the camera perched precariously on the edge. (Source: National Library of Australia, nla pic-an23566850-v)

'Mystery Island' was an adventure feature film made by George Malcolm and directed by Jonas Lipman for Paramount and released in 1937. The plot develops around two women and eight men who are shipwrecked on a South Pacific island. Among the survivors is a murderer, but his identity is known only to the ship's captain, who has lost his memory. The film was almost entirely shot on location on Lord Howe Island.

Film-maker Alasdair Loch made a varied and interesting documentary titled 'A Weekend in the South Seas' about the holiday experience in the early 1950s. In 1964, Loch made 'Fisherman's Castle' for Supreme Films, a film about a fishing trip in a small motor launch from Lord Howe Island to Fisherman's Castle (aka Ball's Pyramid). It featured a musical number, an adaptation of 'Call of the Island', popularly adopted as an island song.

During the Easter of 1966, Alan Bresnahan directed a short movie entitled 'The Know Alls of Know How Island' in which two gentlemen find a series of notes promising treasure on Lord Howe Island if they follow the instructions. A tongue-in-cheek story made to present home movie footage of a holiday to the island. The idea for this movie was probably the story of the wreck in 1831 of the whaler, *George*, which struck a rock (subsequently named George Rock). The crew was thought to have sheltered in an inlet nearby before being rescued, but no mention was ever made of a quantity of gold or coins which the whaler was alleged to have been carrying.

Islander Chris Murray has provided the following account of a feature film made on Lord Howe Island in the 1980s.

*'In 1984 actor /director Lex Marinos directed 'An Indecent Obsession', based on Colleen McCulloch's novel of the same name. Shot entirely on Lord Howe Island, the film employed a set constructed on the flats below Capella Lodge. The set was meant to represent a World War II military hospital in New Guinea. A*

*substantial proportion of the funding for the film came from Australian Government sources on the proviso that the funds be spent in Australia – so Lord Howe Island temporarily became a tropical look-alike for New Guinea. Actors included stalwarts of the Australian movie industry - Wendy Hughes, Bill Hunter, Gary Sweet, Jonathon Hyde and Julia Blake. All the extras and a few bit parts were filled by island residents. Various pieces of memorabilia belong to locals were used to lend an air of authenticity to the interior scenes and a World War II truck (a ‘Blitz Buggy’) owned by island resident Michael Bloomfield, was one of two vehicles used in the film.*

*The plot unfolds after a seemingly normal infantryman (Gary Sweet) is committed - for mysterious reasons - to the mental ward of the New Guinea hospital near the end of World War II. There he manages to completely disrupt the daily routine of Sister Langtree (Wendy Hughes) who is responsible for managing the ward, and ultimately one of the psychiatric patients in the ward is murdered. However, the whole incident is covered up by covert conspiracy between the hospital administrator (Bill Hunter) psychiatric ward nurse and supervisor (Wendy Hughes) and the other psychiatric patients, all of whom hold grudges against the victim – who just happened to be an extremely irritating paranoid schizophrenic.*

*After the film was completed, in typical ‘can-do’ island fashion, the set was dismantled and rebuilt at other locations around Lord Howe Island, forming the greater part of Museum Curator, Jim Dorman’s, new house, and part of Les King’s cow-bale near Middle Beach Common where a faintly painted cross can still be seen on the side of the cow bail - the same cross painted on the roof of the “hospital” in the film set.’*

Chris Murray adds that ‘the film was well made and acted, but the whole plot was rather depressing and, one suspects, not a crowd puller. Yours truly had a starring role as a corpse carried past the camera in the opening scene, but is still awaiting his next big role in the Australian film industry!’

## **Literature Novels**

A number of literary works are set on Lord Howe Island. Australian author, journalist and actress, Margaret Mary Marlowe, who was well known through her regular radio broadcasts which were largely aimed at a female audience, published a novel called *Psalmist of the Dawn*, (Endeavour Press) in 1934. Lord Howe Island is immediately recognizable throughout the book as the setting for this romantic tale woven around the lives of Roger Anderson, a Sydney medical specialist whose eyesight is failing him, and Bryony Browne, a light-opera singer whose voice is not equal to the strain. Here she recounts an evening dance night in the Seed Shed:

*“The Seed Shed stood at the cross-roads inside the gate – [it] bore the same relation to the Island as a town hall does to a city. Inside ....someone was playing a croupy old piano with enthusiasm. The Seed Shed was a galvanised iron structure. The rafters were made from old packing cases, the names and trade numbers of the former owners still showing on the wood. They gave a semi-Gothic effect to the low gabled roof, and the irregular splashes of black and red*

*paint a feeling of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Tonight the walls were lined with large Kentia palm-leaves stuck through the struts of the framework. The Shed was a rectangular-shaped room inside. Three sets of double doors opened outwards. At the end of the dancing-floor a carpet was spread...*<sup>638</sup>

In 1950, English author, Evelyn Cheeseman, published *Landfall of the Unknown – Lord Howe Island 1788*, (Penguin) a children’s story about a man and three children marooned on an uninhabited island in the Pacific, based on records relating to a botanist, John Price who was accidentally left behind on the island.

Ball’s Pyramid, the rock outcrop rising from the Pacific near Lord Howe Island, is the setting for the climax of Richard Hall’s thriller *Noumea* (1990), which concerns French Caledonian gun-runners confronted by Patrick Costello of the Australian Security Service.

Barry Maitland’s *Bright Air* (Allen and Unwin, 2008), a novel based around a climbing accident which befell a female scientist, is set partly on location on Lord Howe Island. Attempts to solve the mystery surrounding her death are thwarted by a local conspiracy which was thought to have hidden important information about the tragedy.

The Australian playwright Louis Nowra took some of the island’s tall stories and legends as the inspiration for his ‘Ten Anecdotes about Lord Howe Island’ in Sayer, Mandy (ed.) 2009, *The Australian Long Story* (Hamish Hamilton, Melbourne).

Local authors, such as Rosemary Sinclair, whose books about woodhens and lonely periwinkles delight children, and ‘The Story of Widdy Woodhen’ by Joyce Petherick, broadcast on island radio in 1980, capture unique and personal insights into the interesting wildlife of Lord Howe Island.



**Figure 234** The cover of Barry Maitland’s novel *Bright Air*.

<sup>638</sup> Marlowe, M. *Psalmist of the Dawn*. Endeavour Press, Chapter 2, p.93

## Poetry

The Oxford Literary Guide to Australia<sup>639</sup> cites two examples of works related to Lord Howe Island. “A climb of Mt Gower”, the more southerly of the two high mountains on the island, is described in R D FitzGerald’s poem ‘Ascent’, in which the poet retraces the path of his grandfather, a colonial botanist of the same name:

*Brink maybe, but depths of air  
are other than vacant there  
of the world’s end and the world’s despair.  
Here, to me climbing, seabirds’ calls  
float past frontiers of coastline walls*

About ten percent of the island’s population volunteered to serve in the armed forces in World War I. One of those, Private A L Dignam, like many of his young fellow soldiers, had thoughts of home and loved ones, dreams of a future, strong religious faith and a fervent patriotism tinged with fears of what lay ahead of them. Before he died of wounds in France in 1916, he penned the following poem, which was read by his great-great-niece Kate Dignam at the Lord Howe Island Bowling Club on National Poet’s Day, 1 September 1998.<sup>640</sup>

### ***Was it a Dream?***

*With my web gear for my pillow,  
And my rifle by my bed,  
Not a roof to form a shelter  
But the smoky sky o’erhead.  
As I lay in restless slumber,  
‘Neath the shell-lit smoky gleam  
Something seemed to waken me,  
Was it real – or but a dream?*

*In my vision there before me  
Stretched Australia’s widening lains,  
The young mare standing by me  
Is eager for the game.  
I could hear the stockwhips ringing:  
The boys were coming in  
With a mob of Queensland cattle,  
And the fun would soon begin.*

*One look before I started  
At a girl with flaxen curls.*

<sup>639</sup> Pierce, Peter (ed.) 1983, p.71

<sup>640</sup> Reproduced in *Lord Howe Island Signal* Vol.4, No.168, 11 September 1998

*Her shapely lips were ruby red,  
Her teeth are set like pearls.  
Her eyes are dew-wet violets,  
She's as pretty as can be.  
One look, and then I mounted –  
There were plenty envied me.*

*Lads, think of loving mothers,  
Your loving sisters, too;  
And those who have a sweetheart,  
Come, do your duty true.  
It plainly stands before you,  
Don't shirk, but act like men.  
Australia's future's pending,  
If we fail, what of you then?*

*Won't you come? But we must have you,  
And get back to the battle front  
To fight for our fair Australian girls,  
And hold their honour up.  
Bill and I have not a sweetheart,  
But we know just one or two;  
So we'll fight ahead, and trust to God,  
That the dream may yet come true.*

Perhaps not in the same class as the work of Rupert Brooke or Robert Graves but nonetheless heartfelt and indicative of the attitudes of many of the very young Australians who volunteered to fight for King and Country on foreign shores. It is in quite a different category from the following piece of Lord Howe Island 'poetic' work.

Ornithologist Dr Ben Miller, who conducted the Lord Howe Island Woodhen Survey in the late 1970s, created quite a stir in the island community and some were moved to put pen to paper about the unconventional "fowl lover" whose language was 'fruity' to say the least. The "Ode to Ben Miller" attributed to "Ex Woodhenner" was published in a pirate edition of *The Signal* in April 1980, accompanied by a not-very-flattering cartoon of the doctor roasting a bird on a spit!<sup>641</sup>

*The Lord Howe Island rumour line hammered,  
Ben Miller the bird man was here,  
His exotic Czech wife yet to follow  
With the child of their happier years.*

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<sup>641</sup> Ibid.

*Dr Miller, it seemed, had a problem,  
An assistant the man had to find,  
But on such a small place it wasn't easy  
For he had to have birds on his mind.*

*On the recommendation of Norm King  
He hired young Poops from Sea-Breeze,  
A good working lad, but a problem he had  
With a bottle of vodka, you see.*

*Their first meeting was nought to remember,  
What followed he'd never forget,  
Just three months of Ben's wit and good humour  
And he shot through to Port on a Jet.*

*Now on Lord Howe Ben's name is a scandal,  
He's tagged and he's shot Squire's ducks,  
Captain Wilson he's hired to wipe out the pigs,  
And Paul Beaumont's got rid of the goats.*

*But it's all for the good of the Island,  
The tourists arrive by the score,  
Go down to the reserve, with their own eyes observe,  
The mess that he's made of it all.*

For decades, Bill Retmock penned prose for *The Signal*, inspired by island events and life and collectively, his wry observations are a significant interpretation of life on the island.

Islander Chris Murray, who very kindly edited parts of the draft of this report, feels that no summary of the poetry relating to Lord Howe Island is complete without mention of a self-published trilogy of poems by Peter Bladen, who lived with the Gladys Shick family below Mt Lidgbird for some two years about 1946-48, when many islanders were still growing flower and vegetable seed for export to Australia. The poems (limited edition copy held in the Lord Howe Island Museum Collection) were titled "To the Mountain", "Midway Park" and "Looking Beyond", but were published together as "Island Trilogy". They extend to some 84 pages of printed text, and, in Chris Murray's opinion, 'undoubtedly comprise the best poetry ever written about Lord Howe Island'. Chris provides the following appraisal of the work:

*'Written in a rhyming but extremely irregular verse, Island Trilogy represents a deeply moving spiritual encounter between the poet and the island, the impact of which carried forward throughout the poet's entire life, despite his stay on the Island lasting only two years. All the usual poetic clichés are set aside as the poems grapple with the universal problems of human existence using the Island - and some of its contemporary and historic characters - as poignantly real*

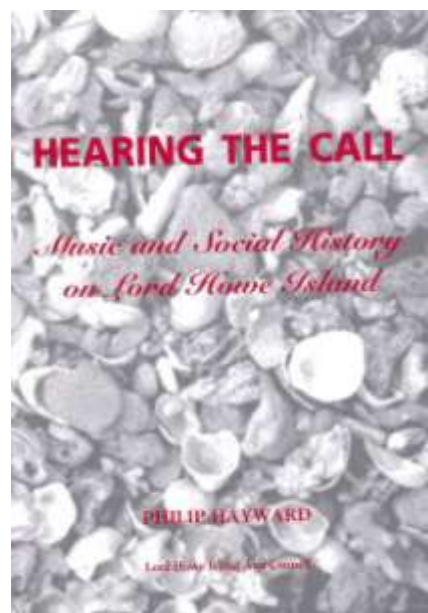
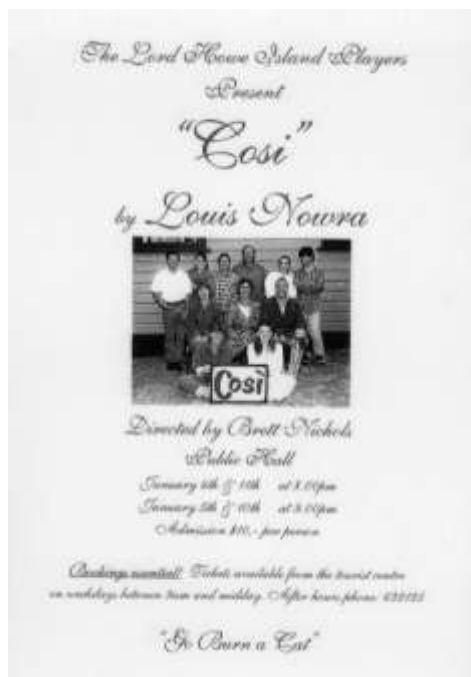


*elements embedded in a deeply metaphorical landscape. If every place has its bard, Peter Bladen stands alone poetic as Lord Howe's poetic muse'.*

### Lord Howe Island Arts Council

While home entertainment – charades, sing songs and card nights provided regular social engagement for islanders, opportunities for islanders to showcase their talents more widely were limited. In the 1950s the Lord Howe Island Players entertained local audiences with theatrical plays and musicals and groups organized variety events to showcase the musical and performing talents of islanders. At the instigation of Ginny Retmock, the Lord Howe Island Arts Council was formed at an inaugural meeting at Mary Challis Cottages on 13 January 1995 and has been the driving force for a number of successful activities on the island. One of the highlights was the outdoor production of *A Midsummer Nights' Dream* at Cobby's Corner in January 1996, directed by Brett Nichols and starring the cream of the island's acting talent. Sometime later, junior players performed *Someone Said Murder* and *Tree*. In January 1998 Brett Nichols directed the Lord Howe Island Players in *Cosi* by Australian playwright Louis Nowra.

In 2002, the LHI Arts Council supported the production of a CD recording of 'Songs of Lord Howe Island' and supported the publication of Dr Phil Hayward's research on the musical traditions of the island. This comprehensive work, based on extensive interviews with residents, is an important record of the development of the island's musical history which has been a defining feature of the island's social life.



**Figure 235 (Left):** Playbill for *Cosi* by Louis Nowra, staged in the Public Hall, January 1998. (Photo: Daphne prints DH110, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Cover of *Hearing the Call: Music and Social History of Lord Howe Island*. (Photo: Chris Betteridge).

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Opera house, theatre costume, film studio, writer's studio, parade tableau, manuscripts, sound recording, cinema, exemplar of an architectural style, work of art, craftwork, and/or public garden, bandstand, concert hall, rock art site, rotunda, library, public hall; and/or a, particular place to which there has been a particular creative, stylistic or design response

### **Potential LHI examples that demonstrate this theme**

Lord Howe Island Public Hall;

Creative items in Lord Howe Island Museum collection;

Thatching (e.g. shelter shed, Lagoon Road);

Work of local artists and crafts persons, (e.g. Pandanus baskets, Bruce Goold poster of rats and shipwreck of 'Makambo')

Literature relating to Lord Howe Island;

Photographic images of Lord Howe Island;

Examples of architectural expression (e.g. 'Capella')

Examples of interior design (e.g. Bruce Goold fabrics at 'Capella');

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Lord Howe Island Public Hall;

Lord Howe Island Museum Collection;

Blackburn Memorial Seat at Lord Howe Island Airport;

Shelter shed, Lagoon Road (formerly had a thatched roof).

### **Further recommendations**

It is recommended that the shelter shed on Lagoon Road be provided with a new thatched roof (possibly over the current solid roof) to interpret the practice of thatching to visitors. The shelter could also feature an interpretive display showing historic photos of thatched buildings on the island.

### 2.8.3 Leisure

*These are activities associated with recreation and relaxation.*

#### **Leisure Activities in the Early Days**

For the early hardworking community on Lord Howe Island, recreation and relaxation seem to have been a hard-earned privilege. As more families settled on the island and staff were engaged to assist with domestic, farming and labouring work, opportunities for leisure evolved as family-oriented and shared activities. In 1878, Alfred Corrie records the island's leisure pursuits as pig hunting, occasional games of 'rough cricket' and evening card nights when the American game of euchre was popular.<sup>642</sup> T B Wilson makes mention of all night parties and entertainment at the school.

Tourism brought the concept of full-time leisure to the island. Mainlanders came for rest and relaxation and islanders offered their time and hospitality to provide leisure activities for them. Many accounts of visits to, and sojourns on, the island are unanimous in their praise for island hospitality and the kindness of islanders in organising activities for their guests. A consistent theme through all their writings was the personal way in which the islanders welcomed visitors into their homes and shared their own leisure time with guests. Over time, activities associated with leisure became the island's principal service industry and the mainstay of tourism.

In 1927, a *Sydney Morning Herald* correspondent wrote that:

*"The Islanders are a happy, hospitable, intelligent and sport loving crowd. Considering their isolated position, they work hard for the privileges which come with living in 'paradise'— but they enjoy the leisure time and the few inducements they have to work hard they are more than ordinarily industrious as some of the extensive and heavily bearing gardens testify. Their favourite sports are bowls, tennis, cricket and fishing. Music, dancing and cards form the principal evening amusements. To these must be added the joys of wireless enabling the residents to learn what is constantly going on, and terminating to a great extent their former isolation. In the evening after their day's work is done, the Islanders are very fond of a dance. At least once a week generally on a Saturday night, to which there is no charge for admission, a dance is held in the seed shed, at which many of the old time dances are enjoyed to the fullest extent by the young and the old. Happily the latest crazes are not in vogue on the Island."*<sup>643</sup>

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<sup>642</sup> Corrie, A. 1878

<sup>643</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 12 Feb 1927 p.11

A correspondent writing for the *Sunday Sun and Guardian* in December 1932 told of:

*“Happy weeks spent on the Island. Happy weeks of pleasure and gaiety; mountaineering, surfing on ocean beaches, swimming in the lagoon, aquaplaning, fishing, dancing and picnicking in the moonlight, rambling through forests of palms....visiting the picturesque homes of the hospitable island folk....wandering on coral reefs....scrambling around the rocky foreshores..... or up the face of rugged cliffs...”*<sup>644</sup>

These were the same leisure pursuits enjoyed by islanders



**Figure 236** Islanders enjoying a picnic in the palms c1930s. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 2, Mis14, LHI Museum Collection).

For islander Hazel Payten, the biggest change in leisure has occurred during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but particularly after World War II. The island men used not to work on Fridays, devoting their time to a weekly cricket match. Gatherings at home for a sing-song around the piano, card games, musical evenings, billiards, concerts, tennis matches and afternoon teas have all but disappeared. The simple pleasures of swimming, walking, camping and picnicking have been replaced by organised ‘club’ activities and time spent socialising in their venues. When she was young – and if she was lucky, her contact with the outside world was via wireless, best in the evenings when reception was clear - but for the next generation of young islanders, it will probably equate with television and the world-wide web.

<sup>644</sup> *The Sunday Sun and Guardian*, 18 December 1932

## Tourism

As early as the 1880s, the natural beauty of Lord Howe Island prompted a number of writers to highlight the potential for leisure tourism.

*“The usual trammels and conventionalities of fashionable sea-side resorts would be here escaped, and visitors could roam its palm groves, climb its mountains, explore its botanical treasures, bathe in its waters, without a thought or care of the world they have torn themselves from. With a few roomy and cosy cottages erected on the island of the palm stems and thatched with their fronds, as is the custom, families might take the occasional migrations from the colonies for a few months, arranging with a schooner or for a passing vessel to call at the island.”*<sup>645</sup>

Less than a decade later, the Burns Philp Company introduced a mail steamer service to Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island, a round trip which took about a month (weather permitting). It left Sydney on the first day of each month, travelling first to Lord Howe Island and then on to Norfolk Island, returning to Sydney with another stop at Lord Howe. The round trip took 23 days and the cost of the passage was £10.

A company representative noted in 1903 that:

*‘but for want of a sheltered harbour, available in all weathers, Lord Howe Island would undoubtedly become a great tourist resort; however there is always the risk of bad weather preventing communication with the steamer thereby enforcing an additional month’s stay on the island’.*<sup>646</sup>

Even with more sophisticated transport, the vagaries of the weather continue to impact on holiday schedules over a century later!

Lord Howe Island has been successfully marketed as a holiday leisure destination, first through transport companies including Burns Philp, and later by the airlines, tourist offices, holiday booking services and the lodges themselves. Visitors arriving by steamer would land, depending on the direction of the wind, on the eastern or western side of the island. The steamer would anchor outside the reef and islanders would row out in small boats to bring the visitors and their luggage ashore, carrying the women piggy-back style through the shallow water to the beach. A similar practice operated for the passengers arriving by seaplane, although by then landings were only attempted in the lagoon and visitors disembarked via a jetty near the flying boat base just north of Signal Point.

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<sup>645</sup> Clarson, W. 1882 p.14

<sup>646</sup> Andrew, J. *All About Burns Philp and Company Ltd.* 1903

In 1909, a visitor returning from a holiday on the island, reported that “In those seventeen days we lived in the open air, we bathed, fished, camped, climbed a mountain, picnicked, went out sailing and pulling on the Lagoon.”<sup>647</sup> Others came as couples or in groups, combining scientific pursuits, like the tidal zone “conchologising” of Mrs Hedley’s party in 1908 or the ‘botanising’ of James and Ida McComish in 1937. While such activities are no longer acceptable in the spirit of the island’s environmental values, most tourists participate in activities associated with the island’s natural diversity and its promotion.



**Figure 237 (Left to right):** The cover of The National Geographic Magazine for July 1935 with a feature article on Lord Howe Island: ‘The Paradise of the Tasman’; three tourism brochures. (Photos: Margaret Betteridge)

### Camping and picnics

There was a long tradition of bush camping by the residents of Lord Howe Island, not just associated with palm seed collecting, but as a leisure activity for the island community. In holiday seasons, particularly between Christmas and New Year, local families decamped to North Bay where they took time to socialise, swim, fish, and cook the ever popular ‘pannies (fish) together. From the 1970s, restrictions on locations for bush camping (Erskine Valley, Boat Harbour, Rocky Run and North Bay) and fishing spots (now restricted by Marine Park exclusion zones) the size of camping groups (max 6 persons), the requirements for permits and approvals from the Island Committee – and the increasing loss of privacy, began to diminish the islanders’ enjoyment of this activity. Today, residents are still permitted to camp at North Bay, where there are composting toilets and tanked water, but they must obtain the prior approval of the Lord Howe Island Board.

Honeymooning island couples also once enjoyed camping trips, preferring the seclusion of Boat Harbour.<sup>648</sup> Many islanders interviewed for this study lamented the

<sup>647</sup> L E A in *Australian Nurses’ Journal* May 15 1909, p.169

<sup>648</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal* 3 August 1978 Vol.4, No.138

changing nature of life on the island and particularly, the demise of opportunities that activities such as camping provided for community engagement.



**Figure 238** Camping at North Bay. (Source: Babe Payten 1927-60 prints: BP13, LHI Museum)

In the old days, tourists could also enjoy the camping experience as part of their stay on the island. One tourist recalled that her party “camped on the ‘far flats’, as a distant forest of palms on the side of Mount Gower is called, and that the experience was one long to be remembered.

*“We built a camp fire in a small clearing and in the weird light told stories and one of our party who had a fine tenor voice sang songs. We were provided with a banjo too, and its sweet tones added to the harmony of the surroundings. The palms in this place were so thick that the sky was quite invisible in daylight, and after dark the deep silence of that dense forest was impressive beyond words. We slept that night on beds made of palm leaves, and they were extremely comfortable, the only objection we found to them was that when anyone moved the crackle of the leaves disturbed us all. In the morning we broke camp and the party divided, some going in the sailing boat with the tents and most of the luggage, while others chose to go home on a sleigh.”*<sup>649</sup>

Picnics remain a popular pastime and nothing has dulled this description of one in the 1930s at North Bay.

*“A short walk brought us to a veritable bower. Over-arching palms formed a green roof, stems, undergrowth and protecting walls..... Later, a walk through an adorable thicket of ‘curly palms’ brought us to an inlet, where on a long ledge of rock...we clambered along the difficult path to Old Gulch to see the crater...a prolonged dip in the warm ocean, whose waters, transparent as a vast bubble, showed the white sand beneath, completed the idyllic day”*<sup>650</sup>

<sup>649</sup> Ibid

<sup>650</sup> Bank Notes April 1930 p 15



From the 1950s, with the determination of Permanent Park Preserves and a new philosophy for civic improvement, the Lord Howe Island Board provided facilities, including barbecues, picnic tables and seats at a number of lagoon foreshore locations, Ned's Beach, and Old Settlement Beach. These facilities are associated with many island celebrations and get togethers and are popularly enjoyed by visitors. The daily delivery of hampers from Pinetrees to these sites for their guests is a long held tradition. At Ned's Beach, the shelter shed has been popularly used for weddings and houses the swimming and snorkelling equipment which can be hired on an honesty system, but for many locals, the loss of the shelter shed at Blinky Beach has been keenly felt. North Bay remains popular for day outings and with shelter, fresh water and bbq caters for large groups.



**Figure 239 (Left):** One of the shelter sheds at North Bay. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge, 1 March 2009); **(Right):** The shelter shed at Ned's Beach is a recreation of the shed previously associated with boat landings at this site. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 23 February 2009)



**Figure 240** Equipment for hire on an honour system in the shed at Ned's Beach. Visitors are well catered for with a range of wetsuits, snorkelling gear, surfboards, paddle boards with observation windows, etc. It's just as well this gear is available on the island because the luggage limits on the Dash 8 aircraft mean that visitors must travel 'light'. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 23 February 2009).

## Land and sea

Lord Howe Island is so well-endowed with areas of natural beauty offering spectacular scenery, rugged coastline, tranquil lagoon views and popular beaches and, with no commercial development to spoil them, the simple pleasures of outdoor picnics and fish fries have long been popular on the island with residents and visitors. Islanders adopted areas along the lagoon foreshore, Old Settlement Beach, Signal Point and at North Bay, or favourite fishing spots at Muttonbird Point, Salmon Beach, or Jim's Point, often combining a day's outing with fishing, swimming or a scenic walk. Sometimes, not even the weather could dampen enthusiasm in such a beautiful place. Mrs Hedley's party in 1908 endured a rough crossing in a leaking dinghy to North Bay where they sheltered from torrential rain under the palms. With some difficulty they attempted to butter bread but so heavy was the rain that before half a sandwich could be eaten, the remaining portion had been "washed out of their hands in the form of pulp."<sup>651</sup>

Most islanders had access to a boat, stored in boatsheds along the lagoon foreshore or if not under cover, moored in the lagoon or pulled up onto the dunes, enabling them to combine boating, fishing and picnicking. *Albatross*, *Venture* and *Viking 2* were among the earliest vessels to take tourists on board. As the tourist trade expanded, their hosts would organise day trips and share their favourite places with their guests and new boats were acquired circa 1980s, specifically for glass bottom coral viewing (*Sea Urchin*) and snorkelling and sightseeing trips (*Kingfisher*).



**Figure 241 (Left):** Visitors enjoy the natural wonders of the lagoon in a glass bottom boat. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 28 November 2009); **(Right):** A tour guide gives visitors an insight into the natural history of Lord Howe Island on the beach at North Bay. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge, 1 March 2009)

<sup>651</sup> Hedley, GA 'Trip to Lord Howe', 1908, personal journal account, unpublished.



**Figure 242 (Left):** Undated photo of the historic motor launch *Albatross* with passengers in the lagoon. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3, DM165, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** *Albatross* moored off 'Pinetrees' in the lagoon. The cabin has been extended and modern safety equipment has been added but the vessel retains much of its original fabric and is well maintained by its owners. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 26 February 2009).

Not much has changed, except that tourism has created an industry for these activities. While most visitors were content with a catch of kingfish or trevally, some more adventurous tourists created a demand for larger game fishing (yellowfin tuna, Spanish mackerel or marlin) in deeper waters, requiring more sophisticated vessels and equipment. Today, local operators can organise scenic fishing expeditions and trips around the main island or to Ball's Pyramid on large, specially equipped family operated charter cruisers. Among the charter vessels which have been, or continue to be used for fishing expeditions and around the island tours are the *Albatross*, *Noctiluca*, *Carina*, *Greenback*, *Lulawai*, *Belle Chase*, *Blue Billie* and *Oblivienne*.



**Figure 243** Lord Howe Island is a fisher's paradise. **(Left):** (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3:DM282, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** (Dick Morris DM755)



Because of Lord Howe island's exposure to strong winds, high seas and storm events, these activities, and the use of smaller craft such as kayaks, windsurfers and sailboats on the lagoon, are always weather dependent.



**Figure 244** Mr Philip Game, son of NSW Governor Sir Phillip Game and Lady Game aquaplaning on the lagoon at Lord Howe Island, August 1933. (Source: Sydney Morning Herald 23 August 1933, p.16 from <http://nla.gov.au.news-article-17000517>)

The demand for environmental tourism exploded following the 1982 World Heritage designation and is met by a number of operators with business names that reflect the island's natural wonders - Islander Cruises, Howea Divers, Marine Adventures, Lord Howe Island Environmental Tours, Lord Howe Island Nature Tours, Pro Dive, Sea to Summit Expeditions. Some ferry visitors across the lagoon to North Bay on snorkelling and underwater viewing expeditions or to North Bay for nature walks. Others take those visitors game and fit enough on guided walks up Mt Gower. Others conduct diving expeditions to the Admiralty Isles and Balls Pyramid. Dive and snorkelling sites closer to shore in the lagoon are popular and some shipwreck sites further afield can be explored by experienced divers. The island's cultural heritage is featured in Ron's Rambles; and bus tours around the island organised by the Whitfields and the Phillips' (Chase 'n' Thyme) which conclude with some island hospitality in their homes.



**Figure 245** Flying boat history buff, Peter Phillipps (right of centre) and his wife Janine run Chase 'n' Thyme tours and take visitors on bus tours of the island, followed by coffee and cake at their home near Ned's Beach. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 28 February 2009)

Swimming remains one of the most popular past times on the island and can be enjoyed year round due to the warm sea temperatures (17 degrees winter to 25 degrees in summer) associated with the world's most southern coral reef. Favourite swimming and snorkelling locations have always been the calm waters of the lagoon, Old Settlement Beach and North Bay – the surf at Blinky Beach; and Middle Beach

and Ned's Beach where the water teems with fish and snorkelling among the coral 'bommies' never fails to impress.

Lord Howe Island has one swimming pool, located at 'Ocean View' guest house and a plunge pool at 'Capella Lodge'. The former, built in 1971 and measuring 40 x 20 feet, was constructed because at the time "local authorities decided that island beaches were not sufficient to cope with the increasing tourist trade".<sup>652</sup>

In 1954, the Lord Howe Island Board introduced a tourist levy, collected by the lodges, specifically to cover the cost of maintaining the picnic areas, beauty spots and tourist amenities of the island, arguing that while their functions were akin to a local Council on the mainland, they received no revenue from rates. The Board explained it this way:

*"the reasonableness of tourists making some contribution to the upkeep and improvement of an island so regularly patronised and widely enjoyed needs little justification. The revenue so obtained will enable the Board to plan a scheme of improvements which should be to the ultimate benefit of Island resident and tourist alike".*<sup>653</sup>

The charge on tourists was levied at 1 shilling for each day of their stay on the island. In the 1980s, it stood at 20c per day. Currently, the levy is incorporated into the cost of a visitor's airline ticket to the island and continues to help the Board maintain the environment and visitor facilities such as walking tracks, picnic areas, BBQs, shelter sheds and toilets.<sup>654</sup>

In 1971 Barry Smith opened the Lord Howe Island Tourist centre in George Street, Sydney. A Visitor Information Centre operated on the island on a site in the 'CBD' in the 1990s, prior to relocation of those facilities to the new Museum. Basic tourist information is available in a shelter next to the Post Office, including a free phone for local calls. The Lord Howe Island Tourism Association, comprising representatives from accommodation houses, the marine recreation industry, Qantaslink and the Lord Howe Island Board encourages tourism operators to join and help promote the island's tourism potential.

### **Games and sport**

Sport has always been a serious leisure pursuit for islanders and Friday cricket matches on the pitch which Frank Farnell helped to establish and where the men stopped work for the day, were legendary. Tennis was a popular social game, played at courts at 'Pinetrees', the School, 'Ocean View' and on Thompson's lease

<sup>652</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal* Vol.4, No.203, 1971

<sup>653</sup> Lord Howe Island Board, Annual Report, 1956

<sup>654</sup> Information accessed at <http://www.lordhoweisland.info/flights.htm>

and a small, dedicated group continue to play each week on the court owned by the Thompson brothers – Barry, Des and Rodney – proprietors of ‘Blue Lagoon Lodge’.



**Figure 246** Anyone for tennis? (Photo: Babe Payten prints 1927-60, BP25, LHI Museum Collection) Mrs Hedley’s diary makes several mentions of target practice on the banyans behind the Pines where there was also room for games of rounders and cricket.

### Walking

Lord Howe Island is traversed by a number of scenic walking tracks, many of which developed from foot pads used by early residents. Some carried the heavier horse and sled traffic and eventually became sealed roads. Tracks were created to access higher points on the island so that residents could maintain watch on the horizon for passing ships, or to collect the eggs of birds which made their nests on peaks. Others were made through scientific curiosity, to gain access for plant specimen collecting and later, palm seed harvesting.

The first path identified on a map was a track from east to west across the island, from a lookout point above Middle Beach to the Andrew’s Farm in 1853 and a foreshore walk along the lagoon behind the dunes, parts of which corresponds to the original track linking the north and south which is attributed to Captain Armstrong. A track to the top of Mount Look-out (later renamed Transit Hill) had also been made and was an important high point with views east and west, perfect for watching out for passing ships; and there is evidence that a track to Mt Gower was in use by 1869.

Today 15 walks are promoted for their tourism value, graded for their degree of difficulty. Few visitors leave the island without attempting at least one.

**The Max Nicholls Memorial Track** to North Bay (1.5km) commences at Old Settlement Beach and provides land access to North Bay. It was created in 1955 following a recommendation from the Island Committee to the Lord Howe Island Board to cut and mark a track to commemorate Max Nicholls, a former island school teacher and local historian. The track, which ascends Dawson's Point Ridge, branches to the east to Kim's Lookout and Malabar, and west to **Mount Eliza** (formerly named Finger Peak) (0.6km), a popular nesting spot for terns with a side track to **Old Gulch** (0.2km), a deep slice into the cliffs where water rushes in over large boulders and pebbles, making a distinctive rattling sound. Around the base of the cliffs are the Herring Pools where herrings are sometimes trapped in depressions filled with miniature sea gardenscapes.



**Figure 247 (Left):** Old Gulch. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 28 November 2009); **(Right):** Malabar Hill from the Malabar Track, looking south over the island to Mount Lidgbird and Mt Gower. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 11 September 2010).

**The Malabar track** (1km) begins west of Ned's Beach Road and passes the site where the RAAF Catalina clipped the ridge in September 1948 and crashed with the loss of 7 lives, now marked with a memorial plaque. At the summit, past the Peg and Poole's Lookout, the track affords panoramic views across the island and to the Admiralty Islands and the blowhole on Roach Island. The track then proceeds to Kim's Lookout and descends to join the Max Nicholls Memorial Track, returning to Old Settlement Beach.

**The track to the Clear Place** (0.45km) begins at the southern end of Anderson Road, past grazing land through a major Thatch Palm grove and over multitudes of mutton bird burrows to a grassy clearing above the cliffs with spectacular views of the eastern coastline and the faces of Mt Lidgbird and to Mutton Bird Island and Ball's Pyramid way out to sea. A side track above Middle Beach proceeds to the Valley of the Shadows (now abridged from its original name, 'Valley of the Shadow



of Death’) where the tall palms cast strange shadows among the twisted trunks of old Banyan trees.



**Figure 248** Chris Betteridge at the Clear Place in a T-shirt designed by islander Craig Thompson, featuring a ‘Yin and Yang’ design inspired by the white terns that live on the island. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge, 20 March 2010)



**Figure 249 (Left):** The track down to Middle Beach; **(Right):** A Banyan (*Ficus macropylla* subsp. *columnaris*) on the Clear Place track. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 20 March 2010)

**Steven’s Reserve Trail** (1.2 km) is an easy level loop track from Lagoon Road, on the site of Campbell Steven’s leasehold from where he operated the island’s first post office. Many of the trees were planted to assess their potential as a timber resource for the island and are identified with descriptive signs.



**Figure 250 (Left):** Tall specimens of *Araucaria cunninghamii* (Hoop Pine) in Stevens Reserve; **(Right):** Interpretive sign explaining the experimental plantations of Hoop Pine, Bunya Pine, Norfolk Island Pine, Tallowwood and Southern Bluegum planted in the 1930s on land previously cleared by Campbell Stevens as a farm. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 8 March 2009)

**The track to Transit Hill (1km)** can be accessed from behind 'Pinetrees', passing Edie's Glen and ascending to the summit of Transit Hill, formerly known as Mount Lookout because of its views across the island and out to sea. It was here that a party of scientists attempted to observe the Transit of Venus in 1882, and the name of the hill was subsequently changed to commemorate that event. The track descends to Blinky Beach through pandanus trees and stands of Curly Palm and Thatch Palm.



**Figure 251 (Left):** Typical routed timber way-finding signs, on the Transit Hill track. **(Right):** The view south from the observation platform on the summit of Transit Hill. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 21 February 2009).

**Intermediate Hill track (1km)** can be reached from a track south of the air terminal on the Airstrip Road, through a closed forest of Blackbutt, Greybark and Sallywood trees, but views from the summit are obscured by dense bush. This track divides

near the start and becomes the **Coastal Trail** (2.3km) and is a rugged route which passes the narrow isthmus to Mutton Bird Point, an inaccessible but popular fishing spot for locals, and on to **Rocky Run** (1.5km). Some of the larger sea birds claim this area during their breeding season.

**The Goat House** track (2.1km) leads to a large cave 457 metres above sea level just below one of the sheer cliff faces of Mt Lidgbird, and from here there are spectacular views across the centre and to the north of the main island, the Admiralty Islands, and south to Ball's Pyramid. The track can be commenced from Lagoon Road near Big Creek or south of the air terminal and follows Smoking Tree Ridge dominated by Big Mountain Palm trees and the giant heath *Dracophyllum fitzgeraldii*, named after botanist and surveyor, Robert D Fitzgerald who first explored this area on a collecting trip in 1869. Until the eradication of goats in the late 1990s, goats were a common sight on this track and often found sheltering in the cave.



**Figure 252** Chris Betteridge at The Goathouse, with the view north over the island. (Photo kindly taken by a fellow tourist, scanned from colour slide taken December 1995)

**Boat Harbour** (2.4km from Lagoon Road) can be accessed from this track where it divides at Smoking Tree Ridge. Protected from the strong southerly swells, it has a small creek where fresh water could be obtained but sailors found the approaches treacherous. Nearby Wolf Rock has claimed at least 2 ships, the *Wolf* and, more recently, HMS *Nottingham*.

**Mount Lidgbird** is very rarely climbed by islanders because of its inaccessibility, sheer rock faces and knife-edge ridges. Although a route up the mountain was found by Ray Shick, Max Shick and Jim Whistler in the 1950s, visitors are discouraged from attempting the climb, which claimed the life of a visiting yachtsman in 1955, because of the lack of rescue equipment and the hazards associated with trying to even attempt a rescue.

Lord Howe Island is instantly recognisable in promotional photographs which almost always feature Mt Lidgbird and its companion, Mt Gower. The most significant

walking track on Lord Howe Island is the track to the summit of **Mt Gower**, which can only be attempted in the company of, and under the supervision of licensed guides. Identified as having a degree of difficulty of 10 on a scale of 1 to 10, the walk is not for the unfit, nor for the faint-hearted. From Little Island, where the walk starts, the track climbs the steep foothills of Mt Lidgbird and swings out along the 'Lower Road', a narrow ledge on a western buttress of the mountain with steep cliffs above and a drop of over 150 metres into the sea. Turning inland, following a boulder-strewn creek bed in Erskine Valley where tiny freshwater shrimps, eels and land crabs live in rock pools and further upstream, depending on the conditions, Erskine Creek trickles along underground channels or roars down the Valley in torrents falling over 305 metres in 0.8 kilometre to cascade into a little bay between the hills, (a palm seed collecting locality). Past the saddle between Mt Lidgbird and Mt Gower is the 'Get Up Place', the final and steepest challenge of the climb which requires the assistance of ropes to attain the summit. Some say the original route up Mt Gower was via the Goat House, then across the saddle.<sup>655</sup>

Once on the summit, visitors are treated to a magic, often misty, landscape of stunted trees and verdant growth. When they rest for lunch before attempting the descent, they can enjoy spectacular views over the island (weather permitting) while woodhens come close and even climb over their boots. Lucky visitors at the right time of year can experience the landing of stormy petrels at their feet.

The earliest description of this track was written by botanist / surveyor R D Fitzgerald who provided a first hand account of his attempt to ascend Mt Gower in 1869. He describes the challenge of the 'bad bit' where the track was no more than two feet wide, with a 500 foot drop down to palms, the shortage of footholds and the feeling of rounding angles with no ability to see where the track leads next – but at the talus of the precipice, "a sight of awe and fascination".<sup>656</sup> The first film of this track, taken by Frank Hurley in 1934 captures the fear that Fitzgerald surely felt, and shows a party of Islanders laden with palm seed, one of whom almost lost their footing and narrowly avoided a fall down the steep precipice to the sea<sup>657</sup>.

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<sup>655</sup> LHI Board staff, pers. comm.

<sup>656</sup> Fitzgerald, R. p.43

<sup>657</sup> Rabone, p.19





**Figure 253 (Left):** Jeff Betteridge, former NPWS Ranger on Lord Howe Island, on the Mt Gower track, c1996. (Photo: the late Warwick Betteridge); **(Right):** A rope-assisted section of the climb up Mt Gower. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 4 March 2009)



**Figure 254** A group attempts the ascent up Mt Gower, showing the steep initial climb up from Little Island, the rocky outcrop visible on the shore at far left. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3, DM196, LHI Museum Collection).



**Figure 255 (Left):** Climbers sign the visitor log on the summit of Mt Gower; **(Right):** Negotiating the narrow ledge of the 'Lower Road' with the welcome security of a rope and 'hard hats' in case there are falling rocks. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 4 March 2009)

A correspondent writing in the *Lone Hand* in 1913 noted that:

*"climbing is so severe that it is advisable to spend two nights camping out, and thus economise strength. Otherwise the toil of ascending Mt Gower is too arduous and quite unnecessary for a visitor who has at least 17 days at his disposal".*<sup>658</sup>

Botanist J H Maiden, writing for the Linnean Society in 1914, explained the difficulties of accessing the 'Get Up Place':

*"Mt Gower forms a massive block, the flat summit of which, according to the guides, is only accessible by a spur running from the head of Erskine Valley, and as far as we could see, except that at this point, the mountain is surrounded by tiers of huge wall-like precipices. It will illustrate the steepness of the track to say that the wild pigs have never been able to reach the summit, and that a dog, which accompanied us, had to be handed from ledge to ledge over what the islanders call the 'getting-up places'".*<sup>659</sup>

Ray Shick has lived his entire life in the shadow of Mounts Lidgbird and Gower. He first climbed to the summit of Gower when he was 12 years old, with the late Norman Fenton as his guide. The following account was published in *The Signal* in 1997<sup>660</sup>.

*"Ray first started guiding tourists to the top of Mount Gower in 1958 and continued for two years at which time he joined the staff of the Lord Howe Island Board. He retired from working for the Board in 1982 and became more or less a full time Mount Gower guide. One of the first things Ray did was to enlist the help of his brother-in-law Gower Wilson to blaze a track from the south end of The Lower*

<sup>658</sup> *The Lone Hand*, 1 November 1913

<sup>659</sup> J H Maiden, 'Vegetation of Lord Howe Island', *Proceedings of the Linnean Society* 1914 Vol.9 – or 14??) p 377.

<sup>660</sup> The Back Pages With the Editor, *The Lord Howe Island Signal*, Vol.4, no.137, 10 July 1997

*Road to the summit. This was necessary because at that time guides were not licensed and tracks had been blazed everywhere by “guides” who had obviously been lost. Ray and Gower stuck to the original track used by the late Jim King, Mick Nichols and others. Ray is very methodical and keeps a diary which shows that he guided more than 350 groups to Gower’s summit between 1984 and his retirement in 1992”.*

Ray’s son Jack continues the family tradition as a guide and is now one of three licensed guides, the others being Dean Hiscox, former Lord Howe Island Board Ranger and naturalist Ian Hutton.

Ascending Mt Gower has become became something of a feat of endurance for islanders. Jack Shick had recorded his 1,000th climb on 28 December 2005 and on 6 May 1995, Dr Phillip Whistler made the ascent and descent in a record time of 1 hour 41 mins 10 seconds, eclipsing his earlier record.

### **Indoor activities**

Mrs (Harriott) Georgina Hedley, visiting in 1908 stayed with a party of guests at ‘The Pines’. Each evening they dressed for dinner and after the meal, enjoyed a variety of evening entertainments. When they weren’t reading, writing, sewing or yarning in the Maroon Club, they might play some rounds of bridge, euchre, patience or dominoes. Another evening the hosts and guests played a game of ‘Up Jenkins’(sic)<sup>661</sup> around the dining table concluding, as with most evenings, with warm sugared coca and cake. Some evenings, their host, Mrs Nichols, took her guests to visit her daughters – one evening to Grace Innes’ house where they played instruments, another to Mary Challis’s home, another to Edith and her husband George Kirby, caretakers at the Government residence, where they all participated in vocal and musical selections (and hymns on Sundays), and several times to George Nichols where music was played on a ‘splendid piano’.

### **Film screenings**

In 1948, Mr R Mitchell from East Malvern in Victoria who was a regular visitor to the island was so impressed with the enthusiasm and resourcefulness of the island community to provide entertainment to which guests were always included, saw an opportunity to express his gratitude and admiration by making his own contribution with the gift of a 16mm cinebox movie projector for screening movies and documentaries. On 14 September 1949, the Mitchell Community Film Committee was established, chaired by Arthur Le Nevez (officer in charge of the DCA at the time). Alec Innes drove the old Thornycroft truck which had been retired from the

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<sup>661</sup> ‘Up Jenkins’ is a party game in which players conceal a small coin (or, in some variations, a ring) in their palm as they slap it on a table with their bare hands. The goal of the game is for the players on the team without the coin to correctly identify which hand the coin is under. The game typically consists of two two-to-four-player teams, one on each side of a table.



NSW Water Board and was the second vehicle to come to the island. It was fitted with a row of back-to-back seats bolted to the floor at the back and he would collect patrons from 'Pinetrees' and deliver them to the Public Hall. Admission was 2 shillings and the evening began with a short newsreel followed by an interval to change the reels for cartoons and full length movies. At one stage, the admission charge rose to 4 shillings and patrons enjoyed one or two documentaries, one or two cartoons and two full-length feature movies. It was often a long night, but patrons were kept awake by the unyieldingly hard seats! Proceeds offset the film rental costs and contributed to the Public Hall Committee's maintenance of that facility.

Interval was at 9.30pm when ladies would serve tea and coffee, biscuits, soft drinks and sweets. Until the advent of a second projector, re-winding the spools of film was done after the movies had finished to save lengthy interruptions. In a generous gesture, for over 30 years, the airlines carried the film canisters free of charge. DCA technicians were always on hand to cope with any glitches and 'Cam' Thompson organised the administrative side of the operation. To be sure of a seat, advance bookings could be made at Thompson's store.

On 28 October 1980, residents celebrated the 32<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the commencement of weekly movie screenings in the Public Hall but with the introduction of television to the Island, patronage declined. The Mitchell Film Committee was eventually disbanded and the film screening responsibility passed on to the Seventh Day Adventist Pathfinders as a fund-raising activity, using reel projection equipment well into the 1990s. Sea View Cinema screened recent releases, a cartoon and historic footage of the island. . Today, the remnant of this popular social activity survives as a weekly screening of historical documentaries about the island as a fund-raising activity for the Lord Howe Island Central School. The old 16mm cinebox has long gone, now replaced with digital technology.



**Figure 256 (Left)** Notices at the Public Hall advertise film screenings, market day, senior citizens' activities and church services. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 8 March 2009); **(Right)**: Students from the Lord Howe Island Central School get experience at public speaking by introducing the historical movies shown to visitors at the Public Hall. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 25 February, 2009).

### **Lectures and slide nights**

Visitors to the island, particularly ones on a scientific mission, were often a source of interest and curiosity to islanders. On occasions, they shared their work and knowledge with residents. The party visiting the island in 1882 to observe the Transit of Venus told of being under the threat of 'attack', necessitating them making a treaty with the islanders to show them the beauty of the heavens through their telescopes.

In September 1908, during an island visit, Charles Hedley and Alan McCulloch entertained residents with a lecture in the School Hall where they showed their glass slides. The arrival of meteorological staff in the 1950s seems to have provided islanders with another popular evening activity – slide nights in the Public Hall. Staff delivered fascinating talks on everything from astronomy to zoology and visiting officers regaled residents with illustrated talks, travel subjects being one of the most popular. A small admission charge covered supper costs and donations to island causes. Informative lectures on Lord Howe Island's natural features by curator Ian Hutton are held weekly at the Lord Howe Island Museum, although the audience today is largely made up of visitors.

### **Dining**

T B Wilson's diary makes few references to activities other than those associated with his livelihood or the weather, but every so often, he records an evening dining with residents at their place or his, or stopping at Mrs Johnson's near Smoking Tree Ridge for a welcome cup of tea. One Christmas (1895) he spent the day with the Thompsons where no doubt, with the latter's American origins, celebrations probably spanned the traditions of two hemispheres. This must have become a fixture because the following year, the whole community (with the exception of the W Nichols family) attended the day-long festivity on 26 December. With the arrival of tourists, meals were prepared and served at guesthouses before the evening's entertainment began. Ruby Thompson's 'Mountain Inn' catered for walkers and hikers, became a popular place to stop for morning and afternoon tea, offering fruit salad or strawberries and fresh cream, ice cream and cold drinks and breathtaking views from Ruby's verandah. Enterprising island ladies opened their homes and put their culinary skills to great use, their restaurants named in their honour – Ollie's (in Olive Wilson's home), Aggie's Steak House (Agnes Christian in her home 'Kentia'), Elsie's (Elsie Smythe on Middle Brach Road) and the Whitfield's "Redlands". It was in this same tradition that the Rourkes and McFadyens opened Auntie Sue's in 1996, a restaurant in their 'Palm Haven' apartments, named in honour of their aunt, Sue Whiting, whose hospitality was legendary.

While home dining remains a popular family and social activity on the island, the change from fully-catered accommodation to self-catering lodges introduced the opportunity for the lodges to operate restaurants open to the wider public, using their

original dining rooms. In the interests of fair competition and sensible management of resources, guest lodges operated a range of dining experiences and shared the business by opening on selected nights.

During the 1990s, diners had the choice of Boques (later Poppies and Seclusions by the Sea) at 'Lorhiti', the White Gallinule at 'Capella South', Shores at 'Blue Lagoon', Trader Nick's, a traditional fish fry at 'Milky Way' or more casual food including hamburgers at 'Beachcomber'. Less formal daytime dining was also available at Lagoon Café (Trader Nick's Cafe) and later, at Plane Crazy (in the post office). For a time in the 1990s, there was even a 'convention centre' in 'Admiralty House' (formerly 'Customs House') on Ned's Beach Road, which ran the Admiralty Bar.

The island continues to provide a wide range of dining experiences for locals and visitors with local specialities, Asian food and Italian pizza. Restaurants are open on selected nights offering imaginative cuisine, some featuring local beef, and most offering freshly caught kingfish. The Bowling Club and Golf Club provide evening meals on advertised nights as they have done for over two decades. Visitors can enjoy lunch or dinner with resident guests at 'Pinetrees', the last of the fully all-inclusive resorts on the island. Lodges transport guests to the restaurants which then provide return transport home. Dining is not just an experience for tourists - on any given night, patrons in the island's restaurants will also include residents.

## Dancing

Dancing was by far the most popular evening leisure activity in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Writing in the *Australasian Nurses' Journal* in May 1909, correspondent I.E.A. wrote that her party visited every home 'north' and 'south' of the one in which they were staying to invite everyone to a dance the following evening.

*"We danced quadrilles, schottisches, (a slow polka of European origin), waltzes, lancers and other dances we had only heard of. Our ballroom was a seed-shed, but with a fine floor."*<sup>662</sup> ..

Nearly all the inhabitants (including 35 children) attended and when the children became tired they were put to sleep on seats around the room or in baskets and containers pushed under the chairs. Even the large crate that the piano had come in doubled as a bed!

A correspondent writing in 1922 noted that for entertainment:

*"there will surely be a tennis party, or, if it is wet, bridge and music. Dinner over, in the evening, the family settles down to read, play cards, or hear news broadcast across the ocean by wireless. Or there maybe a dance, and here again the individuality of the residents expresses itself. There is a good dance orchestra*

<sup>662</sup> *Australian Nurses' Journal* May 15 1909 p.169

*on Lord Howe Island and there is nothing the young men and women do not know about the rhumba!”*<sup>663</sup>

An account of Sir Dudley de Chair’s visit in 1927 noted that:

*“the bluecoats from the cruiser Melbourne which brought the Governor rowed a jazz band ashore to initiate the inhabitants to the fox-trot and Charleston, it having been found to the amazement of the visitors that they still danced waltzes and quadrilles.”*<sup>664</sup>

Evenings were obviously lively as this account of a farewell dance for visiting guests suggests:

*“This was the farewell dance and the Seed Shed, the local hall, was a blaze of colour with lanterns, flags and palms....The music of the island orchestra joyful and rhythmic, set the Seed Shed rocking to the stamp of happy feet, while laughter, free and rippling, echoed through the night air as young and old swung to the figures of the merry dance”.*<sup>665</sup>



**Figure 257** A fancy dress party in the 1920s. (Photo: Ilma Sainsbury prints, IS32, LHI Museum Collection).

In 1955, a typical weekly program of activities published in *The Signal* in June included dances at the Bowling Club followed by dances organised by the Parents and Citizens one night; the Church of England another. The island’s social life was never dull. A typical fortnightly program in the mid 1950s went like this

<sup>663</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July 1934, p.22

<sup>664</sup> *The Argus* Melbourne 27.9.1927 p.14

<sup>665</sup> *The Sunday Sun* (reference to be located)

June 10	Bowling Club Dance
June 15	Parents and Citizen's Association Dance
June 16	Pictures. Plane arrives 1.45pm
June 17	Bowling Club Dance
June 18	Pictures. Plane arrives 3pm
June 20	Hospital Auxilliary Meeting
June 22	Church of England Dance.

### **Club entertainment**

The Public Hall and sporting club premises have traditionally been the venues for much of the island's organised social leisure, including performances by visiting performing artists and musicians. Billiard tournaments are recalled as popular events, and games of 'Housie' providing a great evening's entertainment. Originally played in the Public Hall (now at the Bowling Club), Sid Morgan was the island's star caller (with Norm Fenton, Charlie Collins and Tasman Douglass equally up to the task) and supper provided by Agnes Christian, Lola Morgan, Hazel Payten, Eileen Douglass, Babe Green and others.

### **Music**

The first musical traditions on Lord Howe appear to have been associated with some of the mariners who settled on the island. Allen Isaac Moseley is thought to have been the first resident musician and his repertoire included jigs and shanty tunes. Housewarmings, birthdays, anniversaries and other events were marked with a party at which music, dancing and singing made the entertainment. As for instruments, Moseley played a flute, T B Wilson's diary mentions the purchase of a concertina, while the first piano is thought to have been brought over by Captain Armstrong in 1880. Popular tunes sung on the island around this time, according to Max Nicholls's book, had their roots in American spirituals and British patriotism.

Music was the central focus for evening entertainment in private homes, with 'sing-songs' around the piano, accompanied by violin, concertina or banjo. Sometimes, visitors even played for their hosts. Not surprisingly, in a community where religion was the core of their values and beliefs, hymn singing and church choirs were also popular. The tradition continues, evidenced by the enthusiasm for community choir signing which was revived in 2010. The choir was dubbed the 'Lord Howelers', and was led by singer and musician Nicole Ford, the wife of island nurse Stuart Ford, who had been seconded from the South East Area Sydney Health Service to work on Lord Howe Island for 12 months.<sup>666</sup>

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<sup>666</sup> Chris Murray, pers.comm.

At first, musical accompaniment for dances in the seed shed and subsequent venues was provided on a piano, with a repertoire extending from classical waltz music to ragtime. Visitors enjoyed the music and were very appreciative.

*“For music we had a violin, piano and concertina, and the kind musicians who played for us kept perfect time and were ever agreeable to play more and more and more.”<sup>667</sup>*

Enthusiastic islanders acted as MCs for the evening and popular pianists included Monnie Morris, Evie Wilson and Jean Green, who played their hearts out. By the 1950s, their talents had been replaced by a 78rpm gramophone.

Tourism was the catalyst for the introduction of cabaret and nightclub style entertainment in the 1950s, offered at ‘Tradewinds’, ‘Somerset’ and ‘Ollies Cabaret’ where islanders performed Polynesian-inspired musical numbers. ‘Ocean View’, which opened the Driftwood Bar and offered themed Hawaiian evenings set a trend for bar-style entertainment which was soon taken up by ‘Pinetrees’, ‘Lorhiti’ and ‘Blue Lagoon’ in the 1960s. In the 1970s, ‘Milky Way’ offered its guests slide screenings to the accompaniment of a local quartet which sang and played suitably themed ‘Island’ songs, following the traditions of earlier local bands including the Redheads, the Driftwoods and the Kool Kats.



**Figure 258 (Left):** Hawaiian buffet at ‘Ocean View’. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3, DM161, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The ‘Kool Kats’ – Evie Wilson (née Smythe), Jim Redhead, Ruby Gwalter, Jim Dorman and Jean Green (née Payten). (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3, DM174, LHI Museum Collection)

More recently, live musical entertainment featuring performers from the mainland has become a drawcard with Pinetrees offering a successful winter jazz program for over a decade and country music.

<sup>667</sup> Ibid.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Resort, ski lodge, chalet, cruise ship, passenger rail carriage, swimming pool, dance hall, hotel, caravan park, tourist brochures, park, beach, clubhouse, lookout, common, bush walking track, Aboriginal Christmas camp site, fishing spot, picnic place, swimming hole.

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Walking tracks to Mount Gower, the Goathouse, Kim's Lookout, Mount Eliza, Malabar Hill;  
Tennis courts;  
Collections of posters and brochures at 'Pinetrees' and other resorts;  
'Recreation Ground', Portion 39, Lagoon Road;  
Photos of dinners held in the LHI Museum;  
Camping and fishing sites at North Bay, etc.;  
Honeymoon site for islanders at Boat Harbour;  
Material from 'Flying Boats' exhibition held at Museum of Sydney  
Items in LHI Museum Collection relating to Leisure;

### **Item recommended for listing on State Heritage Register**

Mount Gower walking track, from Little Island to summit;

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Other walking tracks;  
'Recreation Ground', Portion 39, Lagoon Road;  
Lord Howe Island Museum Collection

### **Note**

LHI staff have asked for comment on the implications of SHR or LEP listing on track maintenance and whether re-routing of a track would be permissible. Author Chris Betteridge was co-author of *Tracks into History, Conservation Management Plan for Walking Tracks of State Heritage Significance in the Blue Mountains*, commissioned and published by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. This study led to listing of 37 State significant tracks and track complexes on the State Heritage Register. Routine track maintenance and repair is subject to the Standard Exemptions under the Heritage Act. Minor re-routing for nature conservation or public safety reasons would need to be assessed in terms of its impact on the heritage values of the particular track but is not envisaged to be a major problem, given that the significance of most tracks on Lord Howe Island is embodied in their locations, associations, social values and the access they provide to places of natural and aesthetic significance, rather than in their fabric or exact alignment. The Mt Gower track, for instance, is essentially a foot-pad with little introduced fabric. By contrast, many of the listed tracks on the Blue Mountains derive at least part of their significance from their historic fabric and track construction solutions to difficult topography. Major re-routing or closure of a significant track should be subject to formal heritage impact assessment.



## 2.8.4 Religion

*These are activities associated with particular systems of faith and worship.*

According to accounts of early settlement on Lord Howe Island, organised religion took some time to arrive. Before it did, ship's captains or sometimes the chaplains travelling with them, are thought to have been the first to assume responsibility for services associated with religion, namely christenings, marriages and burials. Although it is unclear what form the ceremony took, the first recorded marriage on the island was performed by Captain Poole, uniting Alan Moseley with his stow-away bride, Johanna Britton circa 1843-44. In the 1860s, Captain Field married Perry and Sarah Johnson 'having read the marriage ceremony to them'.<sup>668</sup> Bureaucracy caught up with the Johnsons in the end and while their union might possibly have had the overtones of a religious ceremony, it was not recognised as a legal union and the couple was subsequently remarried by an island registrar. Captain Tom Nichols and Captain Spurling were other master mariners who undertook lay duties for the island.

One of the earliest recorded religious ceremonies performed by an ordained minister occurred during a visit to the island by HMS *Calliope*, which was taking NSW Governor Sir Charles Fitzroy northwards along the Australian coast in 1854. Although he did not disembark, his chaplain, the Reverend Carwithen, who was travelling with him, did, and on landing on the island, planted a Union Jack and baptised children.<sup>669</sup>

In 1871, the HMS *Rosario* anchored offshore and at the request of the islanders, Commander Henry Challis came ashore and baptised eight children – three belonging to Thomas and Mary Nichols - including Mary Challis Nichols and four children of Nathan and Bokue Thompson, one of whom was named Rosario after the ship.

Surgeon Alfred Corrie, arriving on HMS *Pearl* in 1876, noted of the islanders that "their observance of the Sabbath consists in suspension of all games and labour, but there are no religious services".<sup>670</sup> An unidentified author, writing for the *Maitland Mercury* in 1877 recounts:

*"For the past three or four years there has been a Government teacher stationed on the island, but I am sorry to say that he is now leaving for good. He has conducted Scriptural meetings on Sundays during his stay, and he will be much missed. I hold a meeting on Saturday evening at the close of the week's work, but I am really sometimes so tired and weary that I am hardly able to read the lessons*

<sup>668</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 11 June 1869 p5

<sup>669</sup> Cumming, G. *Freemasonry on Lord Howe Island* ML 366.1099481/1Masonic

<sup>670</sup> Corrie, A. *A Visit to Lord Howe Island*, Proceedings, Royal Geographical Society Vol XXII, 1878/88 p136-143

*or sermon. Speaking for myself, my greatest want is books; I mean books of solid and deep mind thought”.*<sup>671</sup>

Perhaps the arrival of a case of books in 1880 from the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge may have helped.<sup>672</sup>

The appointment of Captain Armstrong in 1879 as the island’s first Registrar brought with it the responsibility for legalising the births, deaths and marriages of the inhabitants. A selection of entries from T B Wilson’s diary records births, deaths and marriages as events in island life around this time.

*“Jan 31 1879 Married Thompson and Bogue*

*April 4 1879 Revds Mr Copeland and Mr Laurie.....afterwards held a Service and christened Mr Thompson’s son John Maxwell and W Nichols son, Edward These gentlemen left here some religious books and tracts for distribution.*

*Dec 2 1879 T B Wilson and Mary Thompson married this morning at Mr Thompson’s house by Capt Armstrong Registrar*

*5 April 1880 Capt A & self went to Mrs Mooney’s Capt A married Mrs M to Mr Robbins*

*Jan 1 1881 preparing for funeral of Bogaroo 1881*

*11 Dec 1881 accidental death of employee of Capt Armstrong – buried in government cemetery. Service read by Magistrate and Govt coroner Cap Armstrong*

*16 Aug 1885 Funeral of infant son of Mr Robbins*

*29 July 1894 Married this day Emmeline Thompson (divorced) to I Dignam by Registrar”*<sup>673</sup>

The Registrar’s duties were subsequently handled by Campbell Stevens and Visiting Magistrates. Today, the Lord Howe Island Board is responsible for maintaining the records of births, death and marriages and the Board’s Chief Executive Officer can act in a civil capacity. Marriage ceremonies may be conducted on Lord Howe Island by a Civil Marriage Celebrant, Ministers of Religion or the Local Registrar. The Manager, Lord Howe Island Board may solemnize marriages in accordance with the Local Registrar authority. Ceremonies can be conducted at the Board’s Administration Office or at another place on the island during the normal daily

<sup>671</sup> *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* 30 July 1887 p14

<sup>672</sup> Wilson, T B Diary December 9 1880 Transcript A1158133

<sup>673</sup> Ibid

business hours of the Board (i.e. 8.30am to 4.30pm) excluding weekends and public holidays, subject to other commitments.

Lord Howe Island is underpinned by the deep Christian spirituality of many of its people. The 2006 Census records that 30.3% of the island population nominated Anglican as their religious affiliation, followed by 17.6% Catholic and 11.5% Seventh Day Adventist. These three religions are represented by denominational churches on the island, located together in a precinct known as 'Church Paddock' on Middle Beach Road.

Nichols records that the first Church Paddock was an area south of Windy Point where the first church on the island was built. It was a yellow wood and palm thatch building, with a timber barrel adapted for a pulpit from which Captain Spurling conducted services. The building was destroyed by fire on 27 February 1881 and not rebuilt. For a time, services were held in Captain Nichols house, "The Pines" and occasionally in Government House. In June 1902, Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell arranged for the religious services to be held in the school house; under the tutelage of schoolmaster George Kirby, appointed that same year. Children attending the island school started each week with scripture, reading a bible passage. On 25 October 1903, at the request of Alexander Oliver, then Royal Commissioner for Norfolk Island, a service of thanksgiving was held for the 33 survivors of the *Ovalau*, which foundered on the reef off Lord Howe Island on its return journey to Sydney. The Reverend Aldous, the Anglican chaplain from Norfolk Island who had been a passenger on the doomed ship, conducted the service and songs were sung from Sankey's Collection, a popular evangelist book of gospel hymns and sacred songs published by American Ira David Sankey in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1909, a visitor to the island observed that:

*"On Sunday at Lord Howe Island, as a rule, church service is held: not that there is a clergyman there, or even a place of worship, but one of the residents has been appointed a lay reader and he kindly holds service at 3pm in the schoolroom. But if either of the great events of the month, that is the arrival or departure of the steamer, happens on a Sunday, then no service is held..."*<sup>674</sup>

Early religion on the island appears to have followed the teachings of the Church of England with the occasional visit of missionaries travelling in the South Pacific. T B Wilson's diary mentions the visit of the schooner, *Dayspring*.<sup>675</sup> This vessel was launched in 1862 from the shipyards of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia as a Presbyterian missionary ship and was sent to the South Pacific to continue the missionary work for the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland following the death of two of its missionaries on the South Pacific Island of Erromanga in the New

<sup>674</sup> L.E.A., *A Holiday trip to Lord Howe Island*. Australian Nurses' Journal, May 15, 1909 p168

<sup>675</sup> T B Wilson. Diary April 4 1879

Hebrides (now Vanuatu). The *Dayspring* called in to Lord Howe Island in April 1879, and missionaries, Rev. J. H. Lawrie, working on Aneityum (Vanuatu) and the Reverend Copeland, performed the christening of two island children and left some religious books and tracts for distribution.<sup>676</sup> The first record of a confirmation on the island was performed by Bishop Kirkby who visited in October 1933.<sup>677</sup>

Seventh Day Adventist missionary, Pastor John Cole, who was involved in establishing the Adventist movement (which had its origins on the west coast of America) on Norfolk Island, stopped at Lord Howe Island in September 1894, sheltering from rough weather. During his enforced stay he introduced islanders to Adventism and considered their interest sufficient enough to have missionaries Charles and Beatrice Baron allocated to the Island. They arrived in 1894 and the following year, Campbell Stevens' diary entry for February 24, 1895 records that Mr Baron, held his first Sabbath School in the re-erected school room. With the assistance of Nathan Thompson, who provided them with some land on which they erected a combined house and church quarters, they dispensed scriptures and tuition for children and held baptisms in the lagoon until 1897 when they left the island. In 1911, interest in Adventism was revived following a visit by Mary Nichols to Norfolk Island where she met the energetic and popular Pastor Arthur Ferris. Ferris was given leave from his post on Norfolk Island to develop the mission on Lord Howe Island in 1911 / 12 but he was recalled back to help rebuild the old chapel in the former convict goal on Norfolk. He was replaced by Pastor Meyers whose unpopularity saw his followers dwindle, only to surge again when Meyer's replacement, Pastor Edwin Butz, arrived. By the time Ferris returned in 1920, a third of the island population had embraced Adventism.<sup>678</sup>

The rising popularity of Adventism prompted the Church of England, in 1914, to send an ordained minister from the mainland to live and practice on the island. Poor health forced the return of the first two appointees and T B Wilson assumed pastoral responsibility as a lay preacher until 1920.

The Lord Howe Island Board of Control allocated land for church purposes on Lagoon Road - Portions 70 (Adventists Church) and 71 (Church of England) - where the Church of England constructed a church in 1916, and a rectory at the corner of Middle Beach Road and Anderson Road for the new Minister, Reverend Clark Kennedy, who replaced T B Wilson. Pastor Sidney Nobbs, who had settled from Norfolk Island, oversaw the establishment of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, which was dedicated in 1922 on the other half of the site and Ellen Fenton, one of the Church's original 13 members, donated land at the south end of the island (now the site of 'Capella Lodge', formerly 'Sea Breeze Lodge'), for a mission home and pastor's residence.

<sup>676</sup> Gunn, W. *The Gospel in Futuna*. Hodder and Stoughton, 1914 p.30

<sup>677</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 9 September 1933 p 7

<sup>678</sup> Hook, M. *Church in a Convict Gaol: Early Adventism on Norfolk Island*. Seventh Day Adventist Heritage Series Vol 9, n.d.



**Figure 259 (Left):** The former Anglican Church (built 1916, now demolished) on Lagoon Road, with the World War I War Memorial visible inside the fence at far right. The memorial survives on the site. (Photo: Babe Payten Prints 1927-60, BP21, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The current Anglican Church on 'Church Paddock', Middle Beach Road, constructed 1960, with the bell tower (demolished 2009) at left. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 4, Mis 4-149, LHI Museum Collection).

Following the passing of the *Lord Howe Island Act* in 1953, a new Church Paddock was created on land designated for church use on Middle Beach Road. The Greater Sydney Conference of the Seventh Day Adventists erected a new church and adjacent residence which was dedicated on 25 February 1960. The Anglican Church, which is part of the Diocese of Sydney, also erected a new church and rectory which was officially dedicated as the Christ Church of England by the Most Reverend H G Gough, Archbishop of Sydney during a vice-regal visit on 10 November 1959. In 1960, a lectern Bible was donated in memory of Beth Kirby and the Retmock family installed the bell tower (which stood adjacent to the Church until it was demolished in March 2009) in memory of Charles Retmock. On 19 December 1976, Canon Gilbert Hook dedicated a Lavabo bowl in a memorial service of dedication to the late Elizabeth Kirby.



**Figure 260 (Left):** The interior of the original Anglican Church. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 4, DM381, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Islanders at the original Anglican Church c1933 for confirmation. (Photo: Joyce Petherick Collection, img931, LHI Museum Collection).

During this time, members of Lord Howe Island's Catholic faith were reliant on infrequent visits by priests from Sydney, but with the increase in tourism following regular air services, the Church took steps to provide a more regular service to

islanders and visitors to the Island. In the 1990s, responsibility for the ministry on Lord Howe Island was transferred to St Agnes Parish, Port Macquarie, whose priests travel to the island to provide regular masses. The parish also took responsibility for the erection of a church, which was designed and pre-constructed in Port Macquarie and then shipped to the island in sections. St Agnes' Church, dedicated on 10 December 1994, was named after its Mother church.<sup>679</sup>

Religion plays an important part in the spiritual and social life of Lord Howe Island and island life and values are underpinned by the strong Christian values held by many islanders. The observance of the Sabbath by the Adventists is upheld on Saturday, despite the pressures associated with tourism; while their attitudes to temperance, clean living and good diet, along with their dedication to the spiritual and social nurturing of family life have a strong imprint on the island. The traditions associated with the interdenominational teachings of Christian faith and the observance of Christmas and Easter, add significantly to the rituals on Lord Howe Island, while church-based activities for younger members of the community provide important social interaction.

#### **Typical items that demonstrate this theme**

Church, monastery, convent, rectory, presbytery, manse, parsonage, hall, chapter house, graveyard, monument, church organ, synagogue, temple, mosque, madrasa, carved tree, burial ground

#### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Seventh Day Adventist Church; Anglican Church; Catholic Church;  
Main Cemetery; Thompson Family Cemetery; Pinetrees Cemetery;  
Records of past ministers, pastors and priests;  
Family Bibles held by various island families;  
Items in LHI Museum Collection that demonstrate Religion.

#### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Main Cemetery;  
Thompson Family Cemetery;  
Pinetrees Cemetery  
Items in LHI Museum Collection that demonstrate Religion.

#### **Further recommendations**

It is recommended that efforts be made to have items such as family bibles made available to the LHI Museum for the collection or for scanning.

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<sup>679</sup> *Catholic Life*, 2009

## 2.8.5 Social Institutions

*These are activities and organisational arrangements for the provision of social activities.*

The first real insight into the minutiae of life on Lord Howe Island is the diary of T B Wilson, which spans the period between 1878 and 1896. His days, like those of his fellow residents, were measured by the hours of sunlight, by the seasons, by the changing wind and storm patterns and the cycles of planting and harvesting. His life, like theirs, was devoted to maximising opportunities to provide a comfortable existence. Animal husbandry, crop management, supervision of labour, settling neighbourhood disputes and assisting with the arrivals and departures of ships were all in a day's work. When that work was done, Wilson might dine with the Mooneys, Johnsons, Thompsons or William Nichols. On one occasion he mentions Captain Armstrong as having organised entertainment (unspecified) at the school house.

Social activities on the island probably began as joint excursions to hunt pigs or collect eggs and concluded with some form of shared occasion; while religious festivals, family events and celebrations marked times of communal activity. The harvesting and packing of palm seed was a shared activity and community engagement probably followed the successful completion of harvest and sale. This may explain why and how the seed shed became the focus for the island's favourite social activity, dancing. Its replacement by the Public Hall in 1934 provided the community with a superior facility which was managed by a Hall Committee that oversaw its use and maintenance.



**Figure 261 (Left):** The Seed Shed decorated for the visit of Sir Dudley de Chair in 1926. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints Mis 3-20, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The present Public Hall. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 22 February 2009).

## Community Organisations

From the 1950s, the *Lord Howe Island Signal* is an important record of the activities of the island's social calendar. In March 1957, the Country Women's Association (CWA) celebrated their 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary and among the many good works they toiled



hard to achieve were the purchase and placement of outdoor seats around the island. The following year, the Seventh Day Adventists held a fundraising event for island improvements in a roadside stall under the Norfolk Island Pine trees; the Parents and Citizens (P & C) organisation from the school organised a variety show in 1960; the Young Wives Group met regularly, and Playgroup is a more recent regular social activity for mothers and pre-schoolers. A successful Youth Club ran activities in the 1950s, including physical education and gymnastics. The Pathfinders, run by the Seventh Day Adventist Church, has been a long-running organisation which has provided activity for children on the island,

### **Freemasonry**

Lord Howe Island's first Freemason was Brother Thomas George Charles Nichols, Master of Aladdin House, whose grave depicts the traditional Masonic symbols. In 1965, the island had seven Freemasons who belonged to mainland Lodges. Some thought was given to obtaining a warrant from the Grand Lodge of NSW and all residents known to be Freemasons were invited to attend a meeting to consider the possibility of establishing a Lord Howe Island chapter. Although it was estimated it might attract around 70 members and they might use the Anglican Church for ceremonies and meetings, with the view to eventually constructing a Masonic Lodge building, the proposal did not proceed. However, in 1992, islanders enthusiastically agreed to establish a Lion's Club and this organisation works hard to support and fund many island projects. (See chapter on Welfare).

### **The RSL**

The Lord Howe Island Sub-branch of the Returned and Services League was formed in 1947, followed by the RSL Womens Auxilliary in 1948. Their first task was raising funds to construct a clubhouse which was officially opened by NSW Governor Sir John Northcott on 14 May 1951. The RSL soon became the social hub of the island, with regular bingo and housie, and organised entertainment. It hosted many visiting personnel from the armed forces, social functions and athletics carnivals – and was the place to start Christmas morning festivities. By 1979, membership had declined significantly and the clubhouse was transferred to the island's historical society for use as a museum.



**Figure 262 (Left):** A ceremony at the RSL Memorial Hall during an official visit to the island on 17 February 1993. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints 4, MS4-69, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The sign outside the current Lord Howe Island Museum commemorating the site of the former RSL Hall. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 March 2009)

### Lord Howe Island Historical Society

The Lord Howe Island Historical Society has grown to be an active organisation dedicated to the preservation of the island's history with a strong focus on providing visitor information through exhibitions, lectures and resources. Formed by Jim Whistler over three decades ago, it has amassed an impressive collection of items and archival material – and with considerable fund-raising efforts, built a purpose-built museum and visitor information centre with café. This facility has become an important venue for social activity and a popular meeting place for visitors.



**Figure 263** The Lord Howe Island Museum, in an architect-designed, purpose-built building, contains a highly significant collection of artefacts and objects relating to the cultural and natural history of the island. The permanent exhibits and temporary exhibitions are well researched and displayed. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 4 March 2009)

Islanders enthusiastically welcome new arrivals who often bring skills and talents which create new social opportunities across many disciplines. There has been a long tradition of this. By way of example, in 2010, a community choir met and performed under the tutelage of a temporary resident. This opportunity to blend and embrace traditional island culture and mainland traditions through social interaction is an important part of island life.

### **Typical items that demonstrate this theme**

CWA Room, Masonic hall, School of Arts, Mechanic's Institute, museum, art gallery, RSL Club, public hall, historical society collection, public library, community centre, Aboriginal mission hall or school room.

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Public Hall, Portion 61, corner Lagoon Road and Ned's Beach Road<sup>680</sup>,  
 Records of dances, first held in the old schoolhouse, and more recently in the Public Hall;  
 Records of weddings, concerts;  
 Records of bowls and golf tournaments;  
 Lord Howe Island Museum and its collection;  
 Records of Discovery Day celebrations

### **Items recommended for listing on new LEP Heritage Schedule**

Public Hall, Portion 61, corner Lagoon Road and Ned's Beach Road;  
 Lord Howe Island Museum and its collection.

### **Further recommendations**

Every effort should be made to secure records of social activities for the LHI Museum collection.

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<sup>680</sup> RES LH 24

## 2.8.6 Sport

*These are activities associated with organised recreational and health promotional activities.*

### Sporting events

Organised sport has played a significant role in community development on Lord Howe Island and, as the community enlarged, sporting activities became important occasions for social interaction. T B Wilson's diary for December 1880 records that "Captain Armstrong organised sports for the inhabitants, those who accepted the invitation – assembled at Capt Nichols & a very pleasant day was passed."<sup>681</sup> Residents happily embraced tourists and visitors to the island, sharing their love of tennis, water sports, cricket, bush-walking and bowls. Sport also provided important opportunities for engagement with other island communities (Fiji, Norfolk Island) and mainland teams for both home and away matches and tournaments. No island holiday, be it informal time spent camping at North Bay or the more formal Empire Day, or Australia Day or Discovery Day, was complete without some form of organised sport, a tradition maintained for over thirty years in the celebration of Discovery Day on 17 February each year. In 1927, an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* noted that:

*"The Islanders are a happy, hospitable, intelligent and sport-loving crowd. Considering their isolated position, and the few inducements they have to work hard they are more than ordinarily industrious as some of the extensive and heavily bearing gardens testify. Their favourite sports are bowls, tennis, cricket and fishing."*<sup>682</sup>

Not much has changed!

### Cricket

The first team sport played on the island is likely to have been an informal mariner's version of a bat and ball game akin to rounders, with cricket introduced by Henry Wilson during the 1870s. Daphne Nichols records that bats and stumps were made from island timber, and interestingly, that balls were made from sennit<sup>683</sup>. This technique of plaiting the strands of dried fibre or grass, which has its origins in Oceania where it is used in architecture, fishing, boat building and as ornament, may have been adapted to the leaves of the local *Kentia* and *Pandanus* on the island.

The game of cricket received the enthusiastic support of Visiting Magistrate Frank Farnell who, as Patron, along with William Dignam, the first elected President,

<sup>681</sup> Wilson T B. Diary 27 December 1880, Transcript A1158135

<sup>682</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 12 February 1927, p.11

<sup>683</sup> A kind of flat braided cordage used on shipboard, formed by plaiting strands of rope yarn or other fibre.

oversaw the formation of a Cricket Club in 1900. An area of land adjacent to the school was cleared and levelled for the establishment of a cricket ground, and was subsequently named Farnell Park in the Magistrate's honour. Perhaps in one of the most attractive settings imaginable for a cricket ground, the *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin* described it as:

*"picturesquely set in the semi-circle of the hills, and bounded on the southern outfield by the lagoon and the beach, is a single end wicket, and coconut matting is stretched over the pitch itself. The "grand stand" is the rising ground encircling the pitch."*<sup>684</sup>

To offer some protection from prevailing winds, a row of Norfolk Island Pines was planted around its boundaries.

The old lock-up served as a shed for storing equipment, with a clubhouse erected sometime later. Friday was devoted to cricket and work stopped for the day, spectators bringing sumptuous picnics which they shared with visitors. A visitor reported that:

*"Even with all their keenness, there are not enough grown-up cricketers "to go round." So they co-opt the children. Friday is always set apart for cricket, and two elevens are always available. A judicious mixing of children and adults makes for even games. The teams having been chosen, a rubber of three matches is played. Then there is a re-shuffle, fresh teams are chosen, and a new rubber commenced."*

Friendly test matches were initially played against Norfolk Island, but interest in the game reached its zenith during the 1930s following a visit by the Lord Howe Island cricket team to Sydney in 1931. It soon became an important event on the sporting calendar and the island team were afforded every privilege.

*"One expects to find cricket played in any large British community. It is part of the scheme of things. One looks for it in outback towns. Even on ocean liners they play it. But who would expect a tiny Pacific Island, seven miles long by about one mile wide, to produce a full-sized cricket team (with reserves) and send it on a tour? That is what Lord Howe Island has done. A team from the island played against internationals at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday. What would any young cricketer in the suburbs of Sydney have given to play on the Cricket Ground, to face the bowling of Tommy Andrews, or to have bowled against Fingleton? To do these things one must be something of a champion. Or live on Lord Howe Island."*<sup>685</sup>

<sup>684</sup> *Morning Bulletin Rockhampton*, 25 February 1933, p.14

<sup>685</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 February 1933, p.12

On a return trip to the mainland in 1933, the Lord Howe Island Cricket Team played against a number of teams including the NSW Police, NSW Fire Brigade, staff of Gladesville Hospital, Members of NSW Parliament and Hawkesbury Agricultural College and were treated to seats to watch the England versus Australia Test. However, despite some successful wins, the visiting team was observed to continue to smoke on-field until batting began and then field poorly with many catches being declined; with a weakness against slow leg break bowling and very little knowledge of the on side strokes. Harsh criticism for a team with little access to professional coaching!<sup>686</sup>

To redress the imbalance, the Lord Howe Island Board of Control helped organise a mainland team of 'young colts' to visit the island in 1934, during which time the visitors were promised a week of cricket, tennis, trips to parts of the island and four dances.<sup>687</sup> Two years later, the critics were pleased to note considerable improvement in the island team. Sadly, this promising sporting event declined following the outbreak of World War II and although popularly played by locals with friendly games between Norfolk Island, visiting armed forces, yachtsmen and tourists, competitive cricket was never resumed to the same level.

Interest in the cricket traditions on the island were sparked in 2009 - the old cricket pitch was broken up when the sports oval was levelled and top dressed.

*'When cricket is played on the Australian-ruled Lord Howe Island in the Pacific.....the ground is so small that only one end of the cricket pitch is covered with matting. At the end of each over, the fieldsmen stay put and the batsmen change over.'*<sup>688</sup>

The use of canvas or fibre matting for the wicket had been endorsed by the NSW Cricket Association, which sent the appropriate material across to the island with visiting teams in the 1930s. Subsequently, a concrete pitch was laid, although not quite in the usual north-south position. Island elders recalled that the one which was taken up in 2009 replaced an earlier one which had been concreted over several times.<sup>689</sup> The reason for the undulating surface of the oval was attributed to the annexure of the land during World War II for commercial seed-raising activities. In order to preserve the unique history of Lord Howe Island's cricket ground, a small piece of the original concrete pitch was retained by the Lord Howe Island Board for interpretation.

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<sup>686</sup> Ibid

<sup>687</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 August 1934, p.20 and *SMH*, 16 February 1933, p.14

<sup>688</sup> Tibballs, G. *No Balls and Googlies*. Michael O'Mara Books Ltd, UK 2006

<sup>689</sup> *The Lord Howe Island Signal*, 2 Oct 2009, p.6



**Figure 264 (Left):** A cricket match in August 1937, with Norfolk Island Pines and Mounts Lidgbird and Gower in the background. (Photo: Miscellaneous Prints August 1937, Mis 193715, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Undated photograph of drinks break during a match c1930s. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3, DM242, LHI Museum Collection).



**Figure 265** Laying a new cricket pitch for the 2010-11 season. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 9 September 2010)

## Tennis

Tennis has long been a popular social game, not just with islanders, but with the many holidaying visitors. The first tennis court on the island was built for George Nichols in the early 1900s followed by courts adjacent to the school where the doctor's residence now stands; another in Thompson's paddock on Ned's Beach Road; and two associated with guest lodges – one at 'Ocean View'; the other at 'Pinetrees', considered at one time to be the centre of social sporting tennis for both guests and residents. The hard surface of the courts was made from finely crushed local calcarenite. Although no formal club was ever established, players enjoyed tournaments and tennis is still enjoyed by visitors at 'Pinetrees' and 'Ocean View' and as a weekly social game between residents on the court in Thompson's paddock. Tennis is no longer a school sport and the school's court was replaced by



a new science block. The preservation of the remaining public tennis court is important to the islanders and the regular matches held there, a social institution.



**Figure 266 (Left):** Tennis at 'Ocean View'. (Photo: Special Prints 63, LHI Museum Collection); **(Centre):** Tennis at 'Pinetrees'. (Photo: Dick Morris Print 3, DM239, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** The 'Blue Lagoon' court which survives on Portion 55 and can be hired for public use. (Photo: Joe Lyons Collection, JL7, LHI Museum Collection).

### Bowls

In 1922, at the urging of islanders, brothers Harry and Phil Payten, (Phil having previously been keenly involved in the Ashfield Bowling Club in Sydney prior to moving to Lord Howe Island) the Lord Howe Island Board of Control granted a portion of land adjacent to the cricket ground for use as a lawn bowling green. With a donated garden shed for a clubhouse, equipment to maintain the green and cash donations from visitors, a 4-rink green opened in 1923. By 1930, its twenty members were not only playing bowls, but contributing funds to worthwhile social causes, causing the *Sydney Morning Herald* to observe that "their patriotic donation to the T B Soldiers and Sailors Fund was "all the more deserving when it is remembered that the total population of Lord Howe Island is approximately 100 souls and the Bowling Club is the smallest in the Commonwealth."<sup>690</sup>



**Figure 267** Beryl Etheridge on the bowling green c1930s, with the old club house visible in the background. (Photo: Rabone prints HRMP6, LHI Museum Collection).

Maintaining the quality of the green to a standard suitable for lawn bowls was not without problems. In 1934, two Brisbane players, Mrs. Frank Graham and Mrs. R.

<sup>690</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, Wednesday 27 August 1930, p.18

Kennedy returned from a visit to the island. They reported that “the bowling green of five rinks was covered with sedge grass, and its surface ...is incomparably superior to any green previously played on by them. Various couch and other grasses had been tried out on the green, but all in turn were eaten up by insects. The sedge grass kept coming up, and finally it was decided to leave it remain, with most satisfactory results.”<sup>691</sup>

Like cricket, the popularity of bowls declined during the war years and land previously cleared for sporting use was appropriated for seed-raising. By the early 1950s, the bowling green had become overgrown and the clubhouse derelict until a group of islanders revived interest in the sport and rebuilt the facilities, which were officially opened by NSW Governor, Sir Eric Woodward in 1962. These were significantly upgraded in 1992.

While social bowls are enjoyed weekly on Thursday afternoons, Lord Howe Island remains a serious competitor in tournaments (including the Quadrangular Fours and the Tasman Triples) played against Norfolk Island and the mainland, and there is spirited competition for the Mick Nicholls Perpetual trophy.



**Figure 268 (Left):** The Bowling Club restaurant is a popular venue for ‘fish fries’. **(Centre):** The current Bowling Club building; **(Right):** In 2009, Friday night was ‘Dance Night’, the sounds of contemporary music carrying across the Sports Ground to ‘Pinetrees’. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 24 February 2009).

## Golf

Interest in establishing a golf course on Lord Howe Island provoked hot debate among the residents when a number of sites were canvassed, including Old Settlement, ‘Pinetrees’ paddock (including ‘Slippery Alley’), Moseley Park (now the site of the Air Terminal) and leasehold land owned by the late Norm Fenton below ‘Capella Lodge’. It was resolved in the late 1950s when Frank ‘Cobby’ Robbins donated his late father’s land, which had previously been one of the most successful and intensively cultivated gardens on the island. Evidence of local drainage works associated with the agricultural use of the site survives between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> holes

<sup>691</sup> *Queensland Courier Mail* 13 11 34 p 9

(Moron's Gully) where local rocks were arranged to create 'brick' drains to carry water away.

Frank Robbins's house at Cobby's Corner became the clubhouse of the Le-Toa Golf Club and the nine-hole course developed as one of the most picturesque and challenging in Australia. In 1969, the Lord Howe Island Board took control of the course and the Lord Howe Island Golf Club was established. A new clubhouse was acquired, formerly the home of Cobby's daughter, Celia, and son-in-law and accommodation was created for the Club's greenkeeper. It was officially opened in 1984 by then Minister for Sport, The Hon Michael Cleary.

Golf is enjoyed throughout the year by residents and visitors in local and social competitions. The highlight of the island's golf calendar is the annual Open Tournament in November which always attracts enthusiastic and friendly competition between islanders and mainlanders.



**Figure 269 (Left):** A spectacular setting for a golf course. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3, DM227, LHI Museum Collection); **(Centre):** Golf course fashions c1970s. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 3, DM232, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** View over the Golf Course towards the lagoon. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 28 February 2009).

### Football

Football (soccer) is played on the sports ground during the winter and there is a 'touch footy' competition.

### Aquatic sports

Encircled by water, Lord Howe Island provides opportunities for a wide variety of water sports. Sailing, once the only transport to the island, became a popular recreational activity. A sailing club, founded by Bill Payten in 1937, held races for two classes of boats - A class, over 12 feet and B class, 12 ft and under. Many of the craft were stored in boatsheds along the lagoon foreshore. In 1938, the Minute Book for the Lord Howe Island Sailing Club registered 14 boats, their owners and

crew, many of whom were women, vying with each other on regular Sunday race days and the annual New Year's Day Regatta. Sailing lost its momentum during the war years but it saw a revival during the 1970-80s with the formation of an Aquatic Club and the construction of a shed on the foreshore. Recreational weekend sailing is still enjoyed by its members.



**Figure 270 (Left):** Dinghy sailing on the lagoon c1920s. (Photo: Paul Maidemont Prints PM56, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** Aquaplaning behind a motor launch c1930s. (Photo: Ilma Sainsbury Prints, IS7, LHI Museum Collection)

While local interest in sailing may have declined since then, the island plays host to the prestigious annual sailing event, the Gosford to Lord Howe Island Yacht Race. Organised by the Gosford Sailing Club and recognized as a classic blue water event, this race across 416 nautical miles from the east coast of NSW is regarded as important preparation for the Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race. It attracts some of Australia's finest sailors and prominent yachts to Lord Howe Island waters. The race, described as 'the most exclusive ocean race in Australia', was inaugurated in October 1973 to promote tourism, with a silver trophy [formerly the Perpetual Trophy for the Singapore Turf Club] donated by the late Beth Kirby. Entries are limited to the number of moorings that can be made available in the lagoon as determined by the Lord Howe Island Board.

The lagoon has been enjoyed by visitors for aquaplaning, water skiing and kayaking and the keen winds which often blow across the lagoon have also encouraged windsurfers to hold an annual challenge for the National Windsurfing Slalom Title during the winter months on Lord Howe Island.



**Figure 271 (Left):** Lord Howe Island Sailing Club boats lined up on the lagoon beach with Blackburn Island and Mounts Lidgbird and Gower in the background. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints DM631, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** A yacht tied up at the jetty with an Ansett flying boat on the lagoon in the background c1960s. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints DM615, LHI Museum Collection)

Lord Howe Island's marine environment, with its abundance of fish and coral, and wreck sites, attracts many recreational divers and a number of local businesses support this activity for locals and visitors. The Undersea Explorers Club of Lord Howe Island was established at a public meeting held in the Community Hall in October 1956. Fishing, once a necessity for survival, was a popular sport for visitors to the island and many tourist holiday snaps from earlier times feature proud displays of the day's catches. There was also an annual fishing competition organized by the Game Fishing Club established in 1975, rewarding the greatest diversity of catch and the greatest size of any one species.

Recreational sport fishing is now significantly restricted by regulations associated with conservation of the natural heritage values of the marine park around Lord Howe Island, and hampered by a short fishing season and often, adverse weather conditions, with major catches now made in open waters outside exclusion zones.



**Figure 272 (Left):** Group on the old timber jetty with a sunfish caught off Lord Howe Island. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints 4, DM445, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** A group including Gower Wilson (son of T B Wilson) and Joseph Lyons with a day's catch circa early 1930s, with the cargo shed and old boatsheds in the background. (Photo: Joe Lyons Collection JL3, LHI Museum Collection).

### Swimming, Lifesaving & Surfing

Swimming, once thought by locals to scare away the fish,<sup>692</sup> was encouraged as a school sport from the 1950s. So good was the ability of the students that in 1955, they won the Bowen Cup for Lifesaving, a prestigious national award. For local students, the sport has particular importance as a life skill on the island, and they attend regular lessons in the lagoon and compete in an annual swimming carnival. A pontoon for swimmers financed by the P & C Association and the LHI Board was installed in 1986.



**Figure 273** Children from Lord Howe Island Central School enjoying water sports in the lagoon. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 3 March 2009)



**Figure 274 (Left):** Life reel training in the lagoon. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints, DM827, LHI Museum Collection); **(Right):** A surf carnival at Blinky Beach. (Photo: Dick Morris Prints, DM830, LHI Museum Collection)

The sport of surfing was introduced to the island in 1957 when the Nichols family acquired their first foam Malibu board. Since then, the sport has flourished at Blinky's Beach and on the island's great reef breaks and locals enjoy an annual competition.

### Discovery Day 'Sports'

Discovery Day has preserved a number of popular early sporting traditions on the island. Some of these had become competitive events on an annual sporting calendar, such as Palm Tree Climbing, for which Maybel Payten had donated a shield in 1937. This sport was hotly contested and won that year by Gower Wilson.

<sup>692</sup> Nichols, D. p.170



**Figure 275** Discovery Day night-time sporting events. **(Left):** Three-legged race; **(Right):** Running. (Photos; Dick Morris Prints 5, DM 40 and 41, LHI Museum Collection)

### **Typical items that demonstrate this theme**

Oval, race course, swimming pool, bowling club, bowling green, trophies, calendar of fixtures, cricket set, yacht pens, tennis court, rugby field, speedway, sporting equipment, bocce court.

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Bowling Club records and Honour Board;  
 Golf Club records and Honour Board;  
 Historic photos of people playing tennis at Ocean View, Thompson's, Pinetrees;  
 Discovery Day unique sports e.g. palm seed gathering, barrel rolling, etc.  
 Farnell Park (Jim Whistler Memorial) Sports Ground;  
 Items in Lord Howe Island Museum collection that demonstrate this theme;  
 Tennis Court, Portion 55.

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

LHI Museum Collection;  
 Tennis Court, Portion 55.  
 Farnell Park (Jim Whistler Memorial) Sports Ground;



## 2.9 Marking the Phases of Life

In a small island community such as Lord Howe Island, the lives and deeds of individuals may assume a greater importance than in a more heavily populated area. Given that there have never been more than a few hundred people permanently resident on the island, the lives of individuals are probably better known and documented than in many other places. Many of the long-term residents have spent most of their lives on the island, with occasional spells on the mainland for education and employment. These days most births occur on the mainland, where there is access to emergency medical care if needed. However, members of families with long links to Lord Howe Island prefer to be buried on the island and the cemeteries are well-maintained and respected, representing a microcosm of the island community since the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 2.9.1 Birth and Death

*These are activities associated with the initial stages of human life and the bearing of children, and with the final stages of human life and disposal of the dead.*

In small, isolated, close-knit communities such as Lord Howe Island, the lives of residents are, by necessity, intricately connected with each other and the bonds they share are strengthened by circumstances, in good times and bad. Marking the phases of life are important occasions for celebration and fellowship.

#### First Births

Until the arrival in 1879 of Captain Armstrong as the island's Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, there was no official process for recording these events. The first births on Lord Howe Island are believed to have occurred between 1836 and 1840, to George Ashdown and his partner, Emma during the period of first settlement<sup>693</sup>. The Andrews, after leaving Captain Poole's employ to farm independently, produced a daughter, Mary in 1846. Their farming partners, the Wrights, had produced two daughters, born between 1842 and 1844.

Nathan Thompson was the first permanent resident to have children whose dynastic lineage can still be traced to current island residents. Although his first partner, Boranga, and his first-born son, Hugh, died, he subsequently fathered six children with his second wife, Bokue. These, and the children born to other early residents, were christened by the commanders or chaplains on passing ships. On occasions, the names of these children commemorated those ships - Rosario Thompson, named after HMS *Rosario* (1871); Grace Marguerite Pearl Nichols, named after HMS *Pearl* (1876).

The first officially recorded birth on the island was that of Edith Nichols, born in November 1879. With no opportunities for medical intervention, basic midwifery knowledge and skill and a shortage of medicine, it is not surprising that infant

<sup>693</sup> Owen, K. *Farmers, Fishers and Whalemen*, p67

mortality during the 19<sup>th</sup> century on Lord Howe Island was high. It would fall significantly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with improved diagnostics and medical support including midwifery training (introduced by T B Wilson), the appointment of a nurse, and eventually, the construction of a hospital and appointment of a resident doctor. Today, even with a resident doctor on the island, pregnant women are encouraged to have their babies on the mainland where medical support can be guaranteed. Announcement of successful confinement is broadcast to islanders with the flying of a blue or pink nappy from the flagpole at Signal Point.

### Unofficial Unions

The marital status of early residents included some couples who had married prior to their arrival on Lord Howe Island. Some simply enjoyed partnership. Others, like the Moseleys, who were the first to wed on the island, with Captain Poole conducting the ceremony, discovered some fifty years later, that their union had been unofficial. The appointment of an Island Registrar in 1879 and the subsequent development of formalised religion ensured that this oversight could not occur again – enabling the Moseley’s matter to be rectified in 1892, when then Island Registrar W Langley, finally made their marriage official. Today, with three consecrated churches on the island and civil authority devolved to the island’s chief administrator, such oversights could no longer occur. It is not surprising that Lord Howe has become a popular wedding destination for visitors, nor that some of the island’s most scenic locations, including Ned’s Beach, Cobby’s Corner and Lover’s Bay, are chosen by residents and visitors for their ceremonies.

### The First Recorded Burial

The first recorded burial on Lord Howe Island was that of Charles Brochar, a cooper on the whaling ship *William Hamilton* out of New Bedford (USA), who died aboard his ship on 2 November 1840. His body was brought ashore and buried at Old Settlement, his grave marked with a piece of slate nailed to a wooden support and inscribed:



*“The die is cast his days are run  
And this world’s troubles are o’er  
And in Heaven we trust his spirit rests  
With his God who called him home.”*

**Figure 276.** This grave marker of timber and slate, which marked the grave of Charles Brochar, is now preserved in the Lord Howe Island Museum. (Photo: Margaret Betteridge)

A maritime tragedy claimed the lives of three men attempting to land in rough seas at the southern end of Ned's Beach. They were travelling on the passenger schooner, *Wave*, which brought Dr Foulis and his family to the Island in 1844. The first body recovered was believed to be that of a man named Ned, who was buried in the sand near the site of the accident, along with two fellow crew members, John Duncan and James Samson, whose bodies were recovered two days later. Another burial in the sand was recorded by Harold Rabone, that of a tall skeleton estimated to measure almost seven feet, washed out near Soldier's Creek, it having taken its name from military buttons found nearby.<sup>694</sup> It is thought that this burial was near the place referred to by McDonald in 1869 "In winter good water is also found in the small creek near the burial ground".<sup>695</sup>

While burials of non-residents may have occurred close to the place of their demise, R D Fitzgerald's account of the island in 1869 records that "There is no general cemetery on the island; each party, when requisite, has his own little plot to deposit the remains of a friend or relative as its last resting-place." Examples of this practice survive today, at the Thompson family cemetery and at the 'Pinetrees' cemetery, while Mrs Field, who lived near Nathan Thompson is recorded as having been buried nearby, and Henry Wainwright was buried on his property, on land near the current 8<sup>th</sup> hole on the golf course. Sarah West's grave is on the hillside east of the airport.



**Figure 277** Undated photograph of Nathan Thompson's Grave looking west towards the lagoon. This photograph was taken before the memorial to Bokue (Mrs N Thompson, died 22 April 1897) was added to the marble stele (upright slab headstone). Flowers in foreground are arum lilies, a traditional planting symbolising purity and often associated with death and grieving. The cemetery is now much more enclosed, with a woven timber perimeter fence and oleander hedging on two sides. (Source: Lord Howe Island Museum archival photograph collection Dick Morris prints, DM.427)

<sup>694</sup> Rabone, H. p.26

<sup>695</sup> McDonald, p.14



**Figure 278 (left):** Grave of Sarah West (1849-98) on the slope above the Air Services Australia shed east of the airport; **(right):** Memorial plaque on the grave marker. (Photos: Chris Betteridge, 7 March 2009)



**Figure 279** General view of the 'Pinetrees' cemetery, which contains the graves of those associated with 'Pinetrees', the island's oldest operating guesthouse, developed from the farms established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Andrews, Kirby and Innes families. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 9 September 2010).

T B Wilson, in recording the death of Nathan Thompson's wife Bogaroo [sic], who died from consumption on 31 December 1880, mentioned that family and neighbours were preparing for her funeral the following day. It fell to them to lay out the body, construct a coffin, make a grave marker and act as undertaker. His next diary entry noted that she was buried at 11 am on 1 January 1881, with "almost all neighbours attending."

Fitzgerald had noted that "It is to be regretted that some of Her Majesty's ships, which have a clergyman on board, have not called before now and consecrated a spot for this purpose. The people are very desirous that this should be

done....deaths are rare.”<sup>696</sup> Alfred Corrie noted that the island residents “are naturally now so attached to one another, being in reality but one large family, and having lived such a quiet and peacable lives so long together, that I suppose many of them would rather die of inanition [starvation] than leave the spot.”<sup>697</sup>

### The Public Cemetery

Eventually, a site for Lord Howe Island’s public cemetery was selected, above Ned’s Beach, and the first burial there was that of Ned Ambrim, who died on 6 June 1902. By 1948, the number of graves had increased to 41, and in the absence of any formal appointment of trustees to manage the cemetery, the care of graves fell to residents. Concerned with its deteriorating condition, the Board of Control asked the Island Committee to assume the responsibility. They began with a working bee during which thirty residents volunteered their time to tidy the site, and the appointment of a roster of volunteer grave diggers.



**Figure 280** Plan (LHI 89) of Lord Howe Island Cemetery, dedicated 11 March 1955. (Source: LHI Board)

In 1956, the Board Island Committee and Superintendent clarified some necessary particulars relating to burial and funerary practices on the Island. They determined that a charge of £20 was to be levied to cover the cost of the casket, transport and necessary arrangements. Pall bearers would be organised by the church and the friends of the family, with the assistance of island committee members, Roy Wilson,

<sup>696</sup> Hill, E. p.50

<sup>697</sup> Corrie, A. p.142



Phil Dignam and Jim Whistler offered to assist. The digging of graves had always been done by islanders who expressed the wish that this remain so, and that employees of the Lord Howe Island Board wishing to participate would have to take time off as unpaid leave. In the 1980s, the cemetery was extended with a longer term objective to create a lawn cemetery. In 1992, the local Lion's Club was given approval by the LHI Board to establish a columbarium for the placement of ashes. In May 2002 the Board commenced a program of cemetery restoration works to repair graves affected by subsidence and mutton bird burrows.<sup>698</sup> This work included the consolidation of grave-earth fill and the re-levelling of headstones and concrete grave surrounds. Bird burrows in or around graves were filled in and wire mesh was placed just below the ground surface to prevent future burrowing; and turf was replaced in disturbed grass areas.



**Figure 281** Lord Howe Island Cemetery, with ordered rows of mostly simple concrete 'desk and slab' type memorials in a tranquil setting surrounded by palms and banyans. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 11 September 2010)

In 1957, the Inspector of War Graves visited the island and on seeing the grave of Larry Thompson, pledged to send a quantity of granite chips to place around the grave as is customary practice for war graves.

The evolution of funeral practices on Lord Howe Island has reflected the isolated location and the practical necessities associated with burials. Traditional practice has been to bury the dead on the island within 24 hours of death, although with no autopsy or storage facilities on the island, there are occasions when this practice has been overridden by authorities, sometimes to the great distress of islanders. The

<sup>698</sup> *Lord Howe Island Signal* 4 (278), 24 May 2002, p.2

cremation of bodies, either from the island, or of residents who wish to have their cremated remains returned to the island, must be done on the mainland. The general cemetery is not always the final resting place for those who wish to remain on the island. Roland (Pope) Payten chose to have his ashes scattered beneath a Norfolk Island Pine tree he had planted as a boy at North Bay. Roylance Wilson was the first islander to be buried at sea and more recently, David (Harry) Rourke and his mother, Pixie, were laid to rest with their forebears in the small 'Pinetrees' cemetery.

In such a small community, death and grief are shared and unifying events. It is not unusual for the whole community to be part of the funerary procession or at least acknowledge its passing. Local musical expressions, including the haunting lyrics of the song attributed to Monnie Morris and popularly sung at funerals, 'A Call to the Island', underline other aspects of the unique traditions on the island.

*"Hear the call of Lord Howe Island  
Calling you sweet and plaintive it seems  
Where clear blue waters glisten  
Lies our beautiful island of dreams*

*Mystic fragrance fills the mountains  
O'er the lagoon, heavenly sunsets gleam  
By the sands I hear palms calling  
Calling you to this island of dreams*

*God took a bright star from the heavens  
And so gently placed it in the sea  
Fondly he called it Lord Howe Island  
Now for you his gift will worthy be."*



**Figure 282** A funeral procession makes its way along Ned's Beach Road towards the cemetery. (Photo: Special Prints 35, LHI Museum Collection)



Lord Howe Island has never been immune to tragedy and one of the perils of its isolated location has meant that lives have been lost in tragic circumstances, particularly at sea. A number of sailors drowned offshore during rough weather, and in 1918, a passenger on the *Makambo* lost her life attempting to board a lifeboat after that ship ran aground. Perhaps the event which had the most profound effect on residents was the loss of Gower Wilson, his son, Jack and crewmembers, L. Hart, S. Murray, W. Hamill, and H. Higgs. The party had left Sydney for Lord Howe Island in Wilson's newly constructed 32 foot motor launch, *Viking* on 1 November 1936. After failing to arrive ten days later, beacons were lit on high points on the island in the hope of guiding the seamen home and an extensive search was instigated from Sydney over several weeks, but no trace of the men or the vessel was found. A year later, a memorial service was held on board the SS *Morinda*, conducted by the Administrator of Norfolk Island, Sir Charles Rosenthal, honouring Gower Wilson's war service with the Third Field Company, Engineers, A.I.F and his irreplaceable loss to the community. During the service a wreath was dropped into the sea. In 1951, Gower's son Roy retraced his father's voyage in *Viking II*, thankfully arriving safely at Lord Howe Island. In a fitting tribute to his father and brother, when the time came for Roy's own burial, he chose to be buried at sea, offshore from the island. The death of popular islanders Tom Payten and Bryant Smythe at sea on a fishing expedition was a further stark reminder of the treachery of the ocean. Onshore, life could be equally hazardous. Cycling claimed the life of a young resident in an accident in the 1930s. Following the drowning death on 27 August 1955 at The Clear Place of Mrs Ervin, a guest of then school teacher Mr Cairns, life buoys were installed at popular fishing sites

### A Dangerous Environment

The rugged landscape of the island has also claimed lives. One of the Indian labourers employed in the guano business in the 1880s slipped on North Peak attempting to collect bird feathers; resident Kim Morris fell to his death from Malabar; and visiting yachtsman Norman Ziska lost his life in January 1955 attempting to climb Mt Lidgbird.



**Figure 283** The grave in the Lord Howe Island Cemetery of Norman Ziska, a tourist who fell to his death on Mount Lidgbird. His headstone is fittingly a piece of island basalt. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 11 September 2010)

## Simply Vanished

Then there have been others who have just simply vanished. The mystery of ‘Black Billy’ whose ghost long haunted locals at the sallywood tree on Smoking Tree Ridge remains unsolved 160 years later. In June 1953, Kathleen Kimber, an employee of ‘Pinetrees’ failed to return from a walk to Rocky Point on an expedition to collect leaves for basket-making. The disappearance of holidaymaker, Arthur Apelt, was determined to be death by misadventure following a coronial enquiry in 2001, the most probable explanation being that he had gone for a swim and been taken by a shark.



**Figure 284** Memorial plaque to Arthur John Apelt on a bench above Middle Beach. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 20 March 2010)

## A Community United in Grief

Islanders were united in their grief in May 2002 when popular young David (‘Harry’) Rourke was tragically killed riding his motorbike along Lagoon Road. His death was marked with a traditional Hawaiian farewell at South Reef by a flotilla of the island’s surfing community who rode a final wave in tribute. Harry’s Reef surfing break has now been named in his honour.



**Figure 285** The roadside memorial to young David ‘Harry’ Rourke at the edge of Lagoon Road is a constant reminder of the tragic loss of a promising young islander. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 7 March 2009)

## Air Disasters

Accidents in the air have also brought tragedy to the island, and for a community which has increasingly relied on air transport for its connections to the mainland, such events are keenly felt. In 1948 seven crewmen perished when an RAAF Catalina from Rathmines-based No 11 Squadron crashed on Malabar while

attempting an emergency landing in the lagoon. The plane, which had suffered a major fuel leak during a night-time navigational exercise, clipped the ridge of the hill before exploding in flames. Locals who rushed to the scene were able to rescue two seriously injured crewmen in a brave act of heroism. For the RAAF at the time, the accident represented the highest peacetime loss of life. The site of the accident and the memorials subsequently erected to commemorate the event hold special significance to islanders and to the RAAF.

In October 1994, 8 passengers and the pilot of an Aero-Commander 690 operated by Seaview Air disappeared en route from Sydney to Lord Howe Island after taking off from a scheduled stop in Williamstown. Despite an extensive air and sea search, no survivors were recovered. A memorial to this aviation accident tragedy is located at the island's airport.

### **The Heritage Value of Cemeteries**

Cemeteries are microcosms of the communities that developed them. They not only contain the human remains of the past members of those communities, but they reflect the religious beliefs, genealogical backgrounds, levels of affluence, artistic tastes and creative accomplishments of the people who made up those communities.

In their layout, monuments and plantings many cemeteries exhibit symbolisms relating to death, mourning, grief and beliefs in everlasting life. Funerary monuments demonstrate the skills of the artisans who produced them, the social standing and beliefs of the departed and the tastes of the period. Inscriptions on headstones sometimes provide considerable biographical information about people, their occupations, their ethnicity and, in some cases, the manner of their deaths.

**Historical significance** of a cemetery may relate to the human settlement of an area, patterns of immigration, maritime history, overseas military actions, epidemics and other health matters, important events and individuals, natural disasters and tragedies such as mining accidents. **Social significance** of a cemetery may be derived from the esteem in which the place or certain parts of it are held by the local community, or by recognisable groups within the community. Examples include the graves of early pioneers or those killed in wars, or whole cemeteries which have been conserved by community action. **Aesthetic significance** of a cemetery may result from the symbolism, quality of workmanship and artistic merit of the funerary monuments and structures within the place and from the siting, landscape design and plantings. **Educational and Research significance** of a cemetery may result from the opportunities the place provides for interpretation and further study for present and future generations of family and local history. **Technological significance** may be derived from the information a cemetery may provide about construction techniques, unusual craft skills and types of expertise which are being lost as a result of social changes or technological advances. Cemeteries may also have specific **religious significance** or **scientific value**. Some contain burial plots devoted to the deceased members of particular religious orders such as the Jesuits or the Carmelite nuns. Some cemeteries support remnants of indigenous plant

communities which have disappeared from surrounding areas as a result of clearing for agriculture or grazing or because of application of different management regimes. Other important measures of the significance of cemeteries are their **representativeness** and **rarity** as examples of particular types. While each cemetery is unique, many will share common characteristics and will exhibit similar types of significance. This is particularly the case within a region where there may be a certain type of stone used for monuments or where several cemeteries may feature the work of one or a few local monumental masons.

### **Typical examples that demonstrate this theme**

Birth control clinic, maternity hospital, nursery, baby clinic, baptism register, circumcision equipment, and Hospice, nursing home, funeral parlour, grave furnishings, cremation site, cemetery, burial register, disaster site, memorial plantings, shipwreck with loss of life,

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
 Burial site of Charles Brochar, cooper on the American barque *William Hamilton* – grave at Old Settlement marked by a piece of slate nailed to timber on 3 November 1840 and now displayed in the LHI Museum;  
 Grave of Ned Ambrim, died 6 June 1902, in LHI public cemetery;  
 Cemetery, Lagoon Road, adjoining 'Pinetrees', Portion 102;  
 Thompson Cemetery, off Ocean View Drive, Portion 55;  
 LHI General Cemetery, Cemetery Road, Portion 76;  
 Catalina Aeroplane Disaster site, Malabar Hill, Permanent Park Preserve;  
 Memorial at Old Settlement to mark 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Catalina disaster;  
 Memorial to Allan Riverstone McCulloch, Signal Point, Government Reserve  
 Memorial seat and plaque to Arthur John Apelt (10.2.1929 to 6.5.2001) above Middle Beach;  
 Memorial seat to James Brown at Lord Howe Island Airport;  
 Roadside memorial to 'Harry' Rourke;  
 Family Bibles;  
 'Baby books' held at the Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
 Birth, death and Marriage Records at Lord Howe Island Board;  
 Burial Register at Lord Howe Island Board;  
 Sarah West grave and marker above AirServices Australia shed near airport

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Cemetery, Lagoon Road, adjoining 'Pinetrees', Portion 102;  
 Thompson Cemetery, off Ocean View Drive, Portion 55;  
 LHI General Cemetery, Cemetery Road, Portion 76;  
 Catalina Aeroplane Disaster site, Malabar Hill, Permanent Park Preserve;  
 Memorial at Old Settlement to mark 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Catalina disaster;  
 Memorial to Allan Riverstone McCulloch, Signal Point, Government Reserve  
 Memorial seat and plaque to Arthur John Apelt (10.2.1929 to 6.5.2001) above Middle Beach;  
 Roadside memorial to 'Harry' Rourke, Lagoon Road;

Memorial plaque at airport to those who died in the Seaview Air disaster;  
Lord Howe Island Museum Collection items relating to this theme including historic  
grave marker;  
'Baby books' held at the Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
Birth, Death and Marriage Records at Lord Howe Island Board;  
Burial Register at Lord Howe Island Board  
Sarah West grave and marker above AirServices shed near airport

## 2.9.2 Persons

*These are activities of, and associations with, identifiable individuals, families and communal groups, a monument to an individual, a family home, a dynastic estate, private chapel, a birthplace, a place of residence, a gendered site, statue, Coat of Arms, commemorative place name, place dedicated to memory of a person (e.g. hospital wing).*

The recognition of persons significant to a community is sometimes expressed in formal ways through monuments and naming, but often the legacy of people who comprise the community itself is remembered in other ways. This study has identified many islanders whose lives have intersected with each other and who have profoundly influenced the development of the island. Records preserved in the Lord Howe Island Museum provide an important documentary, oral and photographic record of the island community. Listing on a heritage schedule is not usually applied to persons although there have been lists published of ‘living treasures’ both nationally and in particular communities. Recognition of significant contributions by individuals is accorded in annual ceremonies such as ‘Australian of the Year’, “Young Australian of the Year” and awards for volunteers in various fields. If any significant individuals and families have not been mentioned in one or more of the themes in this report, they are probably dealt with in other publications and oral histories.

### Place Naming

The naming of places on Lord Howe Island is an indicator of the importance of persons associated with the island and the esteem with which they are held by the community. It reflects a significant trend away from the formality of associating topographical features with personalities of political or naval importance, as was customary in the colonial history of Australia, to the evolution of place names associated with naturalistic features and personalities relevant to the local population. The combination of these provides Lord Howe Island with a unique nomenclature which is recognised by The Geographical Names Board of NSW.

### It wouldn't be Lord Howe Island without Lord Howe

The first people to be commemorated on Lord Howe Island were figures associated with colonial authority and English rule. Lieutenant Henry Lidgbird Ball, the first to sight Lord Howe Island in 1788 as Commanding Officer of the First Fleet vessel *Supply*, produced the earliest known hand-drawn map of the island. Ball named the island in honour of British naval officer and First Lord of the Admiralty at that time, Richard, the first Earl Howe. In a mark of respect for the British Admiralty, a small group of islands to the north were named Admiralty Isles. Ball himself is associated with the tall rock stack, Ball's Pyramid, and the towering peak on Lord Howe Island of Mt Lidgbird. The other significant peak on Lord Howe Island was named Mt Gower, commemorating John Levenson Gower, an admiral who had served in the British Navy under Earl Howe. Points at the northern and southern end of the island







the seaman who drowned trying to land from the vessel *Wave*, or for American, Ned Ambrin who lived and gardened above the beach.

### **Residents Honoured**

Many place names on Lord Howe Island recall former residents who lived at or were associated with particular localities. Mt Eliza (Eliza Middleton), Thompson's Valley (Nathan Thompson), Wilson's Landing (Thomas Bryant Wilson), and similarly Whybrow Ridge, Lord's Garden, Poole's Lookout, Dawson's Point, Searles Point, Stevens Point, Jim's Point, Cobby's Corner, King's Beach, Edie's Glen. Previous chairmen of the Island Committee, William Osborne Spurling Thompson (who held the position from 1913 to 1953) and his successor, Tasman Douglass are commemorated for their contributions – in the naming of W O S Thompson Park at Signal Point (where Thompson could often be found, scanning the sea) (dedicated in 1954) and T C Douglass Drive in 1978. Following his death in 1968, Kim's Hill and Lookout recalled the untimely loss of Kim Morris but although the Geographical Names Board had approved its naming, final approval was not forthcoming until 1973.

### **Non-Residents Honoured**

Contributions by non-residents were also marked by naming island features. Farnell Park, the sportsground, recalls the contribution of former visiting magistrate Frank Farnell, whose contribution to the palm seed industry and sporting opportunities was fondly remembered by islanders. Daniel Stern Mulley after whom Mulley Drive is named, is remembered for his patient work and significant contribution to surveying the island (three times) following the enactment of the *Lord Howe Island Act* in 1953; and Bowker Avenue, after former government medical officer, Dr Richard Bowker. Anderson Road is named in recognition of former Lord Howe Island Board of Control member, Mr. S. L. Anderson.

The island has a small number of commemorative tributes to non-resident individuals with associations to Lord Howe Island. The most significant is one honouring scientist and naturalist Allan McCulloch, a frequent visitor to the island and author of numerous scientific papers relating to endemic species on the island. He is commemorated by a large granite obelisk at Signal Point.



**Figure 287** Memorials to Alan McCulloch (**Left**) and WOS Thompson (**Right**) at Signal Point. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 25 February 2009 & 8 September 2010)



**Figure 288** Plaque on memorial seat at Lord Howe Island Airport to James Brown, a Vice-President of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia. (Photo: Chris Betteridge)

**Figure 289** Seat with memorial plaque to Frank Pemberton Chartres (1915-2000) in a clearing near Little Island at the start of the Mt Gower track. (Photo: Chris Betteridge, 24 February 2009)



## Tracks and Parks

The association of buildings and parks with individuals is uncommon on Lord Howe Island, but there are exceptions. Stevens Reserve is named after Campbell Stevens, a former island postmaster; Wilson's Landing, between the Cargo Shed and Old Settlement, after T B Wilson, whose property was nearby; and Thompson Memorial Park at Signal Point, after W O S Thompson. The Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital was established with funds raised by a local committee following the loss at sea in 1936 of Gower Wilson and his crew. The Max Nicholls walking track, marked with a stone cairn, was named in honour of Max Nicholls, a former island schoolteacher, who undertook considerable research into island history and whose book *A History of Lord Howe Island* remains an important reference work today.

In 1974, shortly before the completion of the airstrip, The Lord Howe Island Committee and Lieutenant Colonel A V Giles, then president of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division Engineers' Association and the Engineers Sub-Branch of the RSL suggested the strip be named 'Thompson Field' to commemorate early settler, Nathan Thompson. The LHI Board announced that it would simply be known as the Lord Howe Island Aerodrome. More recently, following a request to rename the sports ground after popular local identity Jim Whistler, the Lord Howe Island Board pointed out its 1993 ruling that naming of geographical features had to meet the conditions established by the Geographical Names Board of NSW and that "as it was not general practice on the island for public buildings and other structures to be officially named after public figures or local identities this request could not be granted."<sup>699</sup>

In August 2002 however, following representation from the LHI Board, the Geographical Names Board of NSW endorsed the naming of Harry's Reef, a surf break located between Erscott's Passage and Man of War Passage on the western side of the island, in memory of islander David ('Harry') Rourke. QantasLink recently recognised the major contribution of the late Pixie Rourke of 'Pinetrees' to the island's tourism industry by naming one of their Dash 8 aircraft in her honour.

## Media Recognition

Lord Howe Islander Rosemary Fenton (now Rosemary Sinclair) achieved Australia-wide fame in 1960 when she was crowned Miss Australia. Island photographer Dick Morris photographed her for the cover of *Woman's Day*.

## Future Naming Opportunities

It is not uncommon for place and street names to be changed over time to make them more relevant to contemporary communities. For example, streets once named after famous battles have been renamed to commemorate more recent

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<sup>699</sup> Reproduced in *The Lord Howe Island Signal* vol 6 no 110 July 9 2010

persons or events. However, this means that the contribution of historical figures and events to the development of a place may be forgotten. With a limited number of places and roads on the island and strict rules for naming laid down by the Geographical Names Board, opportunities for commemorating present and future members of the community could include memorial seats, statues, public art installations, interpretive signs or publications, scholarships and museum exhibitions.

### **Typical items that demonstrate this theme**

A monument to an individual, a family home, a dynastic estate, private chapel, a birthplace, a place of residence, a gendered site, statue, commemorative place name, place dedicated to memory of a person (e.g. hospital wing).

### **Potential LHI items that demonstrate this theme**

Names of American barques *Belle*, *Rose* & *Mary Lake* and names of some of crew engraved in bark – specimen in LHI Museum;  
 Blinky Beach named after Captain John Blinkenthorpe, master of the barque *Caroline*;  
 Finger Peak renamed Mount Eliza by Captain Middleton after his wife, circa 1841;  
 Neds Beach, named after a man called Ned whose body was the first recovered after the drowning of three seamen in the wreck of the 65 ton schooner *Wave* in July 1844 or after Ned Ambrin, an American who had a garden in the area;  
 Dawsons Peak, Dawsons Ridge and Dawsons Point all named after Richard Dawson from the firm Richard Dawson and Henry Augustus Castle, the first ironmongers in Sydney;  
 Pooles Lookout, north of and over-looking Old Settlement, named after Captain Poole, partner of Richard Dawson;  
 Kings Beach (near Salmon Beach) and Old Kings Cave (or Neds cave) – a series of caves or overhangs at the foot of the cliffs on the northern ridge of Mount Gower, named after Ned King;  
 Balls Pyramid – named after Captain Lidgbird Ball;  
 Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
 Harry's Reef;  
 Max Nicholls Track;  
 Kim's Lookout;  
 Blackburn Island;  
 Memorial plaques at Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
 Blackburn Memorial seat and book at Airport terminal;  
 Kim's Lookout;  
 Roadside memorial to 'Harry' Rourke, Lagoon Road;  
 McCulloch Memorial obelisk, Signal Point;  
 W O S Thompson Memorial cairn, Signal Point;  
 Stevens Reserve, including site of original Post Office and plantations;  
 Mick Nicholls plaque on summit of Mt Gower;  
 Catalina Crash memorial plaque, Malabar Hill;  
 Catalina Crash 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial, Old Settlement;  
 World War I War Memorial, Lagoon Road;  
 War Memorial, corner Bowker Avenue and Lagoon Road.

### **Items recommended for listing on LEP 2010 Heritage Schedule**

Memorial plaques at Gower Wilson Memorial Hospital;  
 Blackburn Memorial seat and book at Airport terminal;  
 Kim's Lookout (as part of track listing);  
 Roadside memorial to 'Harry' Rourke, Lagoon Road;  
 McCulloch Memorial obelisk, Signal Point;  
 W O S Thompson Memorial cairn, Signal Point;  
 Stevens Reserve, including site of original Post Office and plantations;  
 Nicholls Track and plaque;  
 Mick Nicholls plaque on summit of Mt Gower (as part of track listing);  
 Catalina Crash memorial plaque, Malabar Hill;  
 Catalina Crash 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial, Old Settlement;  
 World War I War Memorial, Lagoon Road;  
 War Memorial, corner Bowker Avenue and Lagoon Road.

### **Further recommendations**

Given the potentially invasive properties of some of the plantation species in Stevens Reserve e.g. Silky Oak, Camphor Laurel, it is recommended that this area be managed for forestry purposes under a plan of management, with its historical associations and cultural landscape values interpreted by appropriate means.

## 3.0 Bibliography

### 3.1 Introduction

This bibliography includes the sources consulted by the authors in the preparation of the report for the Community-based Heritage Study of Lord Howe Island, together with various other references and useful guides for the identification, assessment, conservation and interpretation of environmental heritage. Many of the listed titles also contain extensive bibliographies of further sources about the natural and cultural history of Lord Howe Island.

Many of the publications are held by the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW. Others are held by the Lord Howe Island Historical Society and Museum and / or **MUSEcape** Pty Ltd. Copies of the occasional newsletters *Lord Howe Island Sail-O* and *S(on) O(f) S(ignal)* were kindly provided by Daphne Nichols.

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### **3.3 Periodicals, Newspapers & Regular Newsletters**

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## 4.0 Useful Contacts

The organisations listed below can provide useful information on the identification, assessment, management and interpretation of Cultural heritage.

### Interpretation Australia **Association Inc.**

ABN: 94 546 981 448

Email: [iaa\\_info@interpretationaustralia.asn.au](mailto:iaa_info@interpretationaustralia.asn.au)

Website: <http://www.interpretationaustralia.asn.au>

### **National Trust of Australia (New South Wales)**

Observatory Hill

SYDNEY NSW 2000

Tel: (02) 9258 0123

Fax: (02) 9251 1110

Internet: [www.nswnationaltrust.nsw.org.au](http://www.nswnationaltrust.nsw.org.au)

The National Trust has a consultant Cemeteries Advisor available to give advice on the conservation of historic cemeteries.

### **NSW Board of Studies**

GPO Box 5300

SYDNEY NSW 2001

Tel: (02) 9367 8111

Fax: (02) 9367 8484

Internet: [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au)

### **Heritage Branch, Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet**

3 Marist Place

PARRAMATTA NSW

Locked Bag 5020

PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Tel: (02) 9873 8500

Fax: (02) 9873 8599

Internet: [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au)

### **Port Macquarie - Hastings Council**

The General Manager

Port Macquarie - Hastings Council

PO Box 84

PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444

Tel: (02) 6581 8111

Fax: (02) 6581 8123

Internet: [www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au)

**Armsign (designers and suppliers of a wide range of interpretive signs)**

Contact: Geoff Smith  
6 Holland Street  
GOONELLABAH NSW 2480  
PO Box 7003  
LISMORE HEIGHTS NSW 2480  
Tel: (02) 6625 1122  
Fax: (02) 6625 1270  
Email: sales@armsign.co.au  
Internet: www.armsign.com.au

**Cunneen Signs (designers and fabricators of wayfinding and interpretive signs)**

Contact: Mark Clover  
9 Peel Street  
HOLROYD NSW 2142  
Tel: (02) 9637 9400  
Fax: (02) 9897 3414  
Internet: www.cunneensigns.com.au

**GLD Enterprises (suppliers of baked enamel interpretive signs)**

Contact: Greg Drew  
25 Rokewood Avenue  
BEL AIR South Australia 5052  
Email: gldrew@senet.com.au

**Screenmakers Pty Ltd (suppliers of weather and vandal-resistant signs)**

1 Bedford St (PO Box 428)  
QUEANBEYAN NSW 2620  
Tel: (02) 6297 8474  
Fax: (02) 6299 3122  
Email: images@screenmakers.com.au  
Contact Officer: Tony Mostert (Director)  
Email: tony@screenmakers.com.au