THE NAMING OF SYDNEY

For thousands of years the Aborigines had called it Werrong: a deep-water cove bounded to the east and west by steep, heavily wooded slopes, and to the south by tidal flats across which flowed a stream of fresh water. Protected from the worst of the westerly and southerly winds that could make the larger harbour a rough and dangerous place, the cove provided the Cadigal band of the Eora people with shelter, good fishing and reliable drinking water.[1]

On 22 January 1788, the Cadigals' ancient rhythm of life was shattered by the arrival of Governor Arthur Phillip and a small exploration party. The previous day, they had sailed up from Botany Bay in three small boats, searching for fresh water and a safe anchorage for the 1000 men and women and the First Fleet of eleven ships under Phillip's command. What made Werrong attractive to the Eora people also made it attractive to Phillip, who had been personally selected by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Lord Sydney, to establish a British penal colony on the east coast of Australia at a place of his choosing. After the disappoint-ment of Botany Bay, which had been strongly recommended to Lord Sydney by the influential Sir Joseph Banks who had gone ashore there with James Cook in 1770, a no doubt anxious Phillip wrote diplomatically to the Secretary of State, 'I fixed on a cove that had the best spring of water and in which the ships can anchor… close to the shore… This cove I honoured with the name of Sydney.' The larger

harbour however retained the name of Port Jackson, which Cook had given it when he had earlier sailed by its heads.[2]

On 26 January, Phillip's fleet entered Port Jackson and proceeded to Werrong where the masters of ships including the *Alexander* and the *Golden Grove* ruled off their logs with the words 'moored in Sydney Cove', signifying that Phillip's choice of name had taken hold immediately. Although some said Phillip had plans to call the town that soon sprang up around Sydney Cove, 'Albion', others such as Daniel Southwell, the master's mate on Phillip's flagship *Sirius*, were emphatic that 'Sydney was the name decided on'. Indeed this name was soon entrenched by Phillip himself who invariably addressed his official despatches to London from 'Sydney Cove' or 'Sydney'. In an age when political patronage was central to career advancement, some said that it suited

A view of Sydney Cove, New South Wales, 1804. Reproduced by permission, Beat Knoblauch Collection *

Phillip to flatter his political master in this way. However there was more to it than that. Phillip, a naval captain, had been Sydney's choice for Governor, a decision that surprised many, including Phillip's naval chief, the First Lord of the Admiralty. But Phillip had long since impressed Sydney as an extremely effective part-time spy in the Secret Service that came within Sydney's portfolio. And Sydney strongly backed his

From the editor...

We've had enquiries about the origin of several placenames since our previous issue…

Carinya is one of the most popular placenames in Australia, especially for property names and street names. *Dane,* from Blacktown NSW*,* asks whether we know anything about its origin. Apart from the fact that, not counting street names, there are about a hundred examples nationally (including every State), we know nothing!

Daruka is the name of a locality near Tamworth NSW. We suspect it's named after the nearby Mount Daruka; but *Margot*, who lives there, would like to know more.

Brewongle will be well known to NSW readers as the name of a stand at the Sydney Cricket Ground. It's also the name of a village near Bathurst, and of a property near Quirindi. *Phil*, from Oberon, would like to know what, if any, is the connection between the three.

Drop the Editor a line, at the address below, if you can help—or email <editor@anps.org.au>

In the meantime, our thanks to all those readers who have now subscribed as Members of Placenames Australia (see the back page if you're still thinking about it!)—and especially to the New Zealand Geographic Board and the Geographical Names Board of NSW, who have joined as Corporate Members.

We trust you'll enjoy reading Andrew Tink's paper on the naming of Sydney in this issue. It's a longer article than we usually include, but take it as our Christmas gift to you this year!

Season's greetings

In this issue

Where's Santa?

The North Pole rediscovered

Our intrepid ANPS researcher, Dale Lehner, did a pre-Christmas search for Santa's hideaway—and discovered that, contrary to widespread belief, the North Pole is actually in the US. The rather chilly town of North Pole, Alaska, boasts Santa's workshop. Anticipating our scepticism in this matter, since the town is situated at latitude 64 45 00 N and longitude 147 20 00 W, Dale has kindly provided photographic evidence of Santa and of the street where he lives.
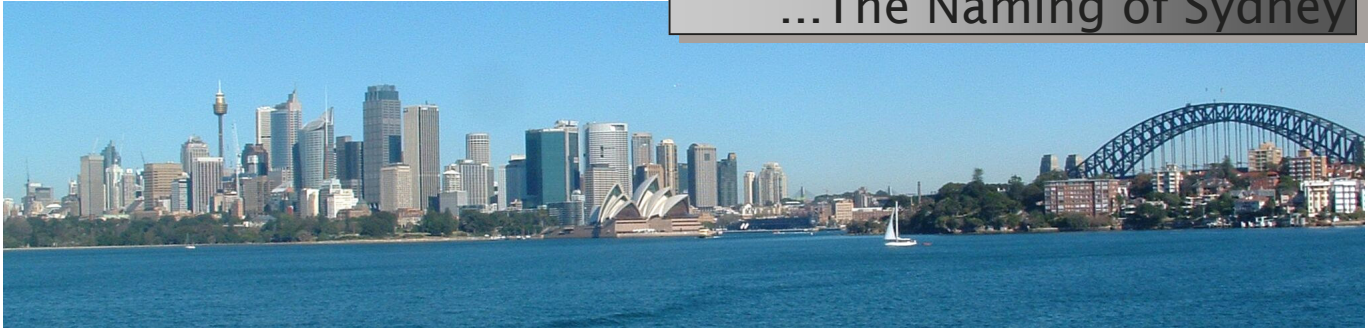
man. So when Phillip complained that the First Fleet's tonnage was insufficient to carry 1000 people, Sydney promptly arranged for the *Prince of Wales* to be added to the fleet. Apart from their mutual professional respect, there was also evidence of a personal friendship in the Governor's letters, which in a familiar tone, asked Sydney to pass on Phillip's best wished to Lady Sydney and their children.[3]

In 1789, John Stockdale published a book based on Phillip's early despatches to Sydney. Although Phillip himself never made a mistake spelling the Secretary of State's name, one of the book's maps prepared by others referred to Sidney Cove, a common misspelling at the time. Ironically 'Lord Sidney' had been the Secretary of State's first choice for a title when King George III offered him a peerage in 1783 for his role in negotiating the peace with America following the Revolutionary War. Baptised Thomas Townshend soon after his birth in 1733, the Secretary of State had spent most of his working life as a member of the House of Commons where he had been known to all as 'Tommy' to differentiate him from his father who was also a member and also named Thomas. Tommy's grandfather Charles Townshend had played a key role in securing the Protestant Elector of Hanover on the British throne as King George I ahead of the Catholic Stuarts after Queen Anne's death in 1714. From then on, the Townshends and their wider family including the Walpoles and the Pelhams who collectively became known as 'Whigs', wielded enormous influence in Parliament, checking the power of George I and George II during the formative years of what would become the modern constitutional monarchy.[4]

Tommy Townshend had been elected to the House of Commons in 1754 at the age of 21 and until 1760, he had slowly climbed the traditional Whig career ladder while his great-uncle Thomas Pelham-Holles and William Pitt the Elder orchestrated a war, which eventually evicted France from Canada. But in 1760, George III ascended the throne and as the first British born King in almost half a century, he was determined to rein in the Whigs' power. Tommy's great-uncle and

Pitt were soon out of office as parliamentary government descended into chaos, while the American colonists, freed from the threat of France and determined to oppose British attempts to tax them to pay for the war, became increasingly difficult to govern. During the 1760s, Tommy was in and out of office as governments came and went until in 1768 he resigned as Paymaster-General following a factional dispute. Tommy's ministerial eclipse, which kept him out of executive office from 1768 to 1782, coincided with the rise of Lord North. After becoming Prime Minister in 1770, North, a gifted parliamentarian, helped George III to better control the Commons as relations with the Americans spiralled out of control towards outright war.[5]

A bitter opponent of Britain's war against the Americans that began in 1775, Tommy spent many lonely years in opposition. Out of a Commons of well over 500 members, only about 50 consistently opposed Lord North's war. And of those 50, only a handful including Charles Fox, Edmund Burke and Tommy himself were prepared to play a leading role in criticising a war that at least initially, was popular with the British public. During the 1770s, Tommy turned for inspiration to his maternal great-great-great-great uncle Algernon Sidney, a republican who had fought on the side of Parliament against Charles I in the English Civil War. In 1683, Charles II had Sidney beheaded for writing *Discourses on Government*; a book published posthumously, which opposed the divine right of Kings and asserted that 'all just magisterial power is from the people'. Algernon Sidney was thus a hero to Tommy in his fight against North, who he thought was corrupting the Parliament, and a hero also to America's founding fathers including Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Benjamin Franklin.[6]

Following the British surrender at Yorktown in 1781, Tommy played a key role in a series of parliamentary motions that ultimately prevented George III and North continuing the American war from the remaining British base in New York. Soon after the

(Continued from page 3)

fall of the North Government in 1782, Tommy entered Cabinet for the first time as the Secretary of State responsible for concluding a peace treaty with the Americans; a task that comprised tough negotiations over those Americans who had remained loyal to the King and over Canada's boundaries. It was for his role in carrying out these negotiations that Tommy was offered a peerage by the King, who had by now grudgingly accepted the loss of his American colonies and appreciated Tommy's efforts.[7]

The correspondence between George III and Tommy over the name of his title infers that his first choice was Baron Sidney in honour of his hero Algernon. However objections by members of his wider family who claimed a prior right to the name Sidney, next had Tommy proposing the title Baron Sydenham. A compromise with the family was reached when Tommy agreed to take the title Baron Sydney of Chislehurst. In 1689, one of Algernon Sidney's brothers Henry had also agreed to the title Lord Sydney to avoid a dispute over the Sidney name. And as Henry's title, which he had earned by helping William of Orange overthrow James II in 1688, had since become extinct, it enabled Tommy Townshend almost a century later to reach a similar family compromise. Some say that during the Middle Ages, migrants to England from St Denis in Normandy anglicised their name to Sidney/Sydney. This connection to Algernon Sidney, though, is disputed by those who say it was simply an attempt by his ancestors to claim a Norman connection when it was fashionable to do so. Still others say that Algernon's family name is derived from a place his ancestors owned in Surrey, recorded in 1280 as La Sydenye, which in Old English meant 'wide well-watered land'.[8]

The massive political fallout in Britain from the American war soon split those who had opposed it, and before long, Lord Sydney (as Tommy was now known) was in opposition again—this time against Prime Minister Charles Fox. However, within a year Fox's government was sacked over its India policy and Sydney returned to Cabinet as Secretary of State for the Home Department with William Pitt the Younger as Prime Minister. Sydney's most pressing concerns from the American war were what to do with the loyalist refugees who were no longer welcome in the newly created United States and what to do with British convicts who could no longer be sent to work on plantations in Maryland and Virginia.[9]

Out of lands that Sydney had managed to retain in British North America following the peace negotiations with the Americans, he created the province of New Brunswick and turned Cape Breton Island into a sub-colony of the existing province of Nova Scotia to house the flood of refugees. And in the largely French-speaking province of Canada whose inhabitants felt threatened by this flood, Sydney appointed Lord Dorchester as governor with a mandate to recommend constitutional reform. Although ructions continue to the present day, especially in Quebec, Sydney had begun the constitutional formation of modern Canada; a contribution recognised during his lifetime when Sydney, Nova Scotia was named after him.[10]

Meanwhile Sydney and Pitt were under assault in Parliament over what to do about convict overcrowding on prison hulks moored in the Thames River. As a Whig, Sydney saw convicts as British subjects temporarily deprived of their full rights, to whom he owed a duty of care. Accordingly any place of transportation had to be fit for purpose and so he sent surveyors to various parts of Africa to find such a place. When they returned empty handed, Sydney turned to Botany Bay, which based on Banks's glowing accounts that only one year's rations would be necessary for a new settlement, needed no further survey. But after the decision to settle Botany Bay was taken in August 1786, Sydney made a number of crucial decisions which later made the difference between success and failure. First, he ordered that two years' rations be supplied. Second, he appointed Arthur Phillip, one of the most talented and until then, under-rated officers ever to wear a Royal Navy uniform, as Governor. And third, he backed Phillip to the hilt with the powers and resources necessary for him to do his job. Indeed, Sydney's generosity soon became a cause of concern in Cabinet; and following his retirement in June 1789 when he was advanced in the peerage to Viscount, his successor as Secretary of State, the young political up and comer William Grenville, replaced Sydney's successful but expensive First Fleet contractor William Richards with a cheaper alternative—the slavery firm of Camden, Calvert and King. So whereas the First Fleet's fatalities were kept to a minimum, the Second fleet's fatalities were the worst in the history of transportation—the survivors causing Phillip so much difficulty that the very future of Sydney town was in the balance for many months after their arrival in June 1790.[11]

But survive, the town did. And by the time Phillip departed for England in December 1792, it was even beginning to prosper. Accompanying Phillip on his voyage home was Bennelong, a prominent aborigine from the Wangal band of the Eora people who lived in a hut on Sydney Cove's eastern point known to the aborigines as Jubgalee, which Phillip had already renamed 'Bennelong's Point'. During almost two years in England, Bennelong was a guest of Lord Sydney and his family and was especially fond of Sydney's daughter Lady Harriet Townshend and Sydney's steward Mr Phillips.[12]

Although today Sydney is recognised around the world as the name of a city stretching for hundreds of square miles across the Cumberland plain from the Hawkesbury River in the north to the Blue Mountains in the west and Mount Annan in the south, the City of Sydney, first incorporated in 1842, has never extended more than a few miles south, east and west of Werrong Cove. The geographic environment within the City's modern boundaries would therefore be recognisable to Bennelong and Phillip alike. But the City now built upon that environment would astound both.

❑ **Andrew Tink**
16 August 2007

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* Illustration: *A view of Sydney Cove, New South Wales, 1804.* Edward Dayes after Thomas Watling, artists; Francis Jukes, engraver. Beat Knoblauch Collection. Photograph Jenni Carter, courtesy Historic Houses Trust

The Author

Andrew Tink is a Visiting Fellow at Macquarie University's Division of Law. After being a member of the NSW Parliament for nineteen years and a front bencher for eleven, Andrew stepped down at the 2007 election. He is currently working on a biography of William Charles Wentworth (1790-1872) for Allen and Unwin.

Placenames in the news...

Oops! They've done it again… Signwriters seem determined to alter the spelling of Australia's place-names. **Hookhams Corner** is a historically important junction near Hornsby, one of Sydney's northern suburbs. Roads & Traffic Authority workers installed the sign in October, and local newspaper the Hornsby Advocate reported the reaction:
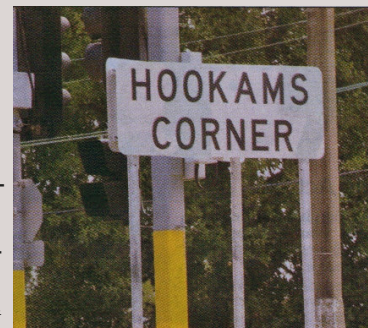
> *Mt Colah resident Arthur Bayley couldn't believe his eyes when he noticed the sign was spelt 'Hookams'… 'I just felt affronted,' he said.*

The junction was named after builder Alfred Hookham who built a number of homes in the area in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Only two generations ago... Eric Mosman celebrated his 100th birthday recently—and toponymists took some note. For Mr Mosman's grandfather was George Mosman, who with his twin brother Archibald, established a whaling station in Port Jackson in 1831; the location became known as Mosman Bay and gave its name to the Sydney suburb of Mosman. Western Australia followed suit in 1907 when Perth's Mosman Bay was so named after the Sydney birthplace of a Roads Board member. This in turn led to the naming of the nearby suburb of Mosman Park in 1937.

Additions to the team

Welcome to two of our readers who have volunteered to help Placenames Australia and the Survey since our last issue.

Michele Lang of Rockhampton (QLD) is a long-term Research Friend of ANPS. Michele will be coordinating the efforts of our Queensland informants. Queenslanders, expect a missive from Michele in the New Year!

Tricia Mack has been a subscriber to the newsletter for ages—and now she's going to help edit future issues. Watch out for her by-line in 2008!

Placenames puzzle no. 24

The Festive Season

The clues reveal placenames connected with Yuletide (disregard spelling)

e.g. (VIC) Santa has a long white one; a greater quantity ……..Beardmore

1. (WA) Evergreen used for Christmas decorations
2. (VIC) Roman god of wine; tract of low wet land
3. (VIC) In the manger there was not one for a bed; a sharp end
4. (VIC) Santa Claus wears a long-sleeved one
5. (VIC) This will have to be large in which to make a big plum pudding
6. (QLD) King Wenceslas looked out on this saint's snowy night
7. (QLD) Main course of a traditional Christmas dinner; usually of sand or pebbles
8. (QLD) Star sign of those born at this time of year; a large administrative area of a country
9. (QLD) Popular Christmas communication, in good health
10. (QLD) Father Christmas; Miss Streisand
11. (NSW) The action of "The Red, Red Robin…"
12. (NSW) Often found on top of the Christmas tree; piece of grassland
13. (NSW) The "First Noel" is one example
14. (NSW) The transport across a river of one of the Orient sages
15. (NSW) Used in lieu of mountain/hill in proper names; he had a city with a humble cattle shed
16. (NSW) Large utensil with ladle used for serving a combination drink at a party
17. (ACT) He had to tread carefully using the imprint of his master's footprints
18. (ACT/SA) Usually spends several days in the kitchen prior to festivities
19. (SA) Colour needed to fulfil Bing's dream; a unit is this in the UK
20. (TAS/VIC) Greeting wishing one to be merry; alleged to be black in Dakota

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Those awkward double letters again

Mosman or Mossman? Both Mosman (NSW) and Mossman (Qld) were named after the Mosman family. The Queensland town was named after Hugh Mosman, son of Archibald (the whaler responsible for the Sydney placename—see our story on page 6). Hugh was a mine owner who discovered gold at Charters Towers. The *–ss–* spelling is often charitably attributed to an occasional variation in the family name; more likely is that it's a spelling mistake arising from the pronunciation of the name, which sounds like "MOSS-man" rather than the expected "MOZ-man".

Barossa or Barrossa? Ingrid Eidam of the South Australian State Library has drawn our attention to an 1841 record of the spelling *Barrossa* for the well-known SA region. This wasn't a mistake, in fact—Colonel William Light had named the Range after Barrossa in Spain, the site of a battle in the Peninsula War. The current spelling is a later error, probably by a draftsman while working on a map, which has now become the established version.

More details on both of these toponyms can be found in Brian Kennedy's excellent book, *Australian Place Names*, published by ABC Books in 2006.

Other news…

Flavia Hodges has recently written an article on placenames of Indigenous origin in Australia, noting especially initiatives in dual naming and the replacing of Introduced names. "Language planning and place-naming in Australia" is to appear in the journal *Current Issues in Language Planning*, but our readers can view or download it from our website now: go to
http://www.anps.org.au/publications2.html

ANPS Database continues to develop. Our register (the module that contains the base data on toponyms, such as feature type and coordinates) now includes the entries from every State except WA. The heart of the Database, the documentation module, proceeds much more slowly. However, we're grateful to our Queensland researcher Ron Potter who has made available to ANPS his material on South East Qld, and Dale Lehner is currently transferring Ron's citations. Ron was profiled in our March 2002 issue. That issue, as well as a link to Ron's placenames webpage, can be found on our ANPS website.

Answers: 1. Holly 2. Bacchus Marsh 3. Crib Point 4. Red Jacket 5. The Basin 6. Stephens 7. Turkey Beach 8. Capricorn Region 9. Cardwell 10. Santa Barbara 11. Bobin 12. Fairy Meadow 13. Carroll 14. Wisemans Ferry 15. Mount David 16. Punchbowl 17. Page 18. Cook 19. White Flat 20. Christmas Hills

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The Survey has no funding of its own—it relies on the generosity of its supporters, both corporate and individual. We will try to maintain our current mailing list, as long as we can; in the long term, priority will be given to Supporting Members of the association, to our volunteer Research Friends, to public libraries and history societies, and to media organizations.

Please consider carefully this invitation. If you wish to become a Member, write a cheque to *Placenames Australia Inc,* or arrange a bank transfer, and post this page to the Secretary at the address below.

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We say thankyou to...

our corporate sponsor, the Geographical Names Board of NSW—and to the Secretary of the Board, Greg Windsor. This year's newsletters could not have been published without the support of the GNB.

Contributions

Contributions for *Placenames Australia* are welcome.
Please send all contributions to the Editor, David Blair, by fax to (+612) 9403 0944 or by email: <editor@anps.org.au>
Electronic submissions are preferred, and photographic or other illustrations are greatly appreciated.
Closing dates for submission are:

31 January for the March issue	31 July for the September issue
30 April for the June issue	31 October for the December issue