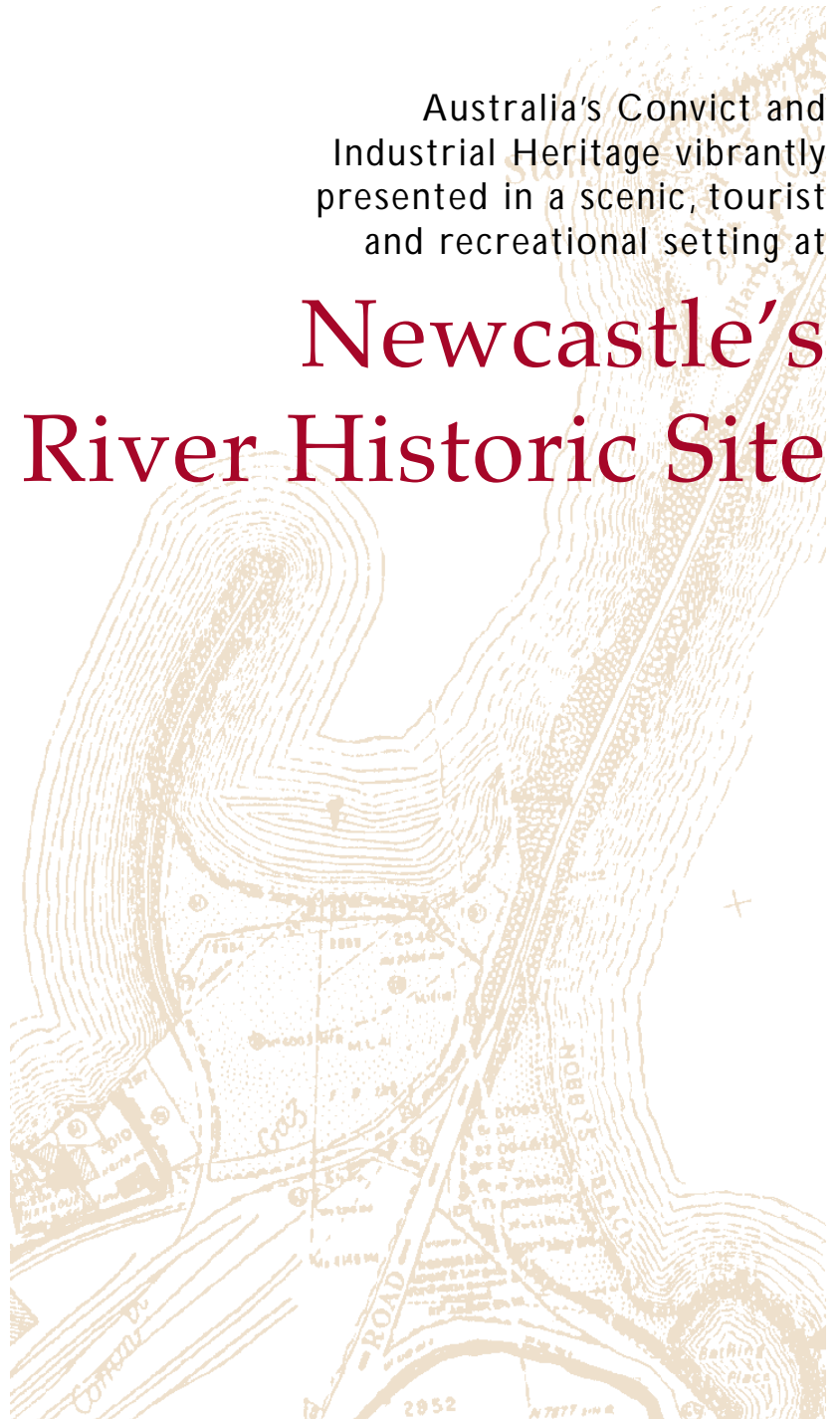


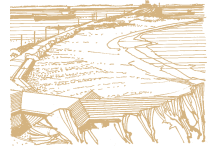
# *Prospectus*

Australia's Convict and  
Industrial Heritage vibrantly  
presented in a scenic, tourist  
and recreational setting at

## Newcastle's Coal River Historic Site



Prepared by the Parks and Playgrounds Movement Inc.  
for the Rt Worshipful Councillor John Tate Lord Mayor of the City of Newcastle NSW.  
20 October, 1999



## *Prospectus*

Prepared by the Parks and Playgrounds Movement Inc.  
for the Rt Worshipful Councillor John Tate Lord Mayor of the City of Newcastle NSW.  
13 October, 1999



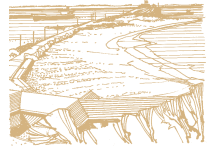
Photo: Nobbys Newcastle's unique Icon  
Macquarie Pier Newcastle's popular promenade

Australia's Convict and Industrial Heritage vibrantly presented in a scenic,  
tourist and recreational setting at

# Newcastle's Coal River Historic Site.

Shortland's account of his discovery of the Hunter River in a letter to his father..

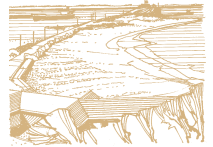
*"About twelvemonth since I went on an expedition in the Governor's whaleboat as far as Port Stephens, which lies 100 miles from this place. In my passage down I discovered a very fine coal river which I named after Governor Hunter."*



Watercolour: "Nobbys Island and Pier", Newcastle 23 January 1820  
artist unknown, Dixon Galleries, State Library of New South Wales

- ▮ Convicts are shown working on Macquarie Pier.
- ▮ The coal seams discovered by Shortland in 1797 are clearly visible at Nobbys and in the headland, (Signal Hill) now named Flagstaff Hill.
- ▮ Convicts carrying baskets of coal up the pathway to the beacon on the hill can be seen in the original painting.
- ▮ All coal mining was carried out by convict labour in the mines under the present Fort Scratchley up until 1814.

The Convict Lumber Yard Stockade is outside the painting just to the right.



# A Nationally Significant Site

The Coal River Historic Site is situated at the mouth of the Hunter River and includes Nobbys Headland, Macquarie Pier (Nobbys Breakwater), the Convict Coal Workings beneath the Fort Scratchley, the Military Fortifications and the Stockade Lumber Yard.

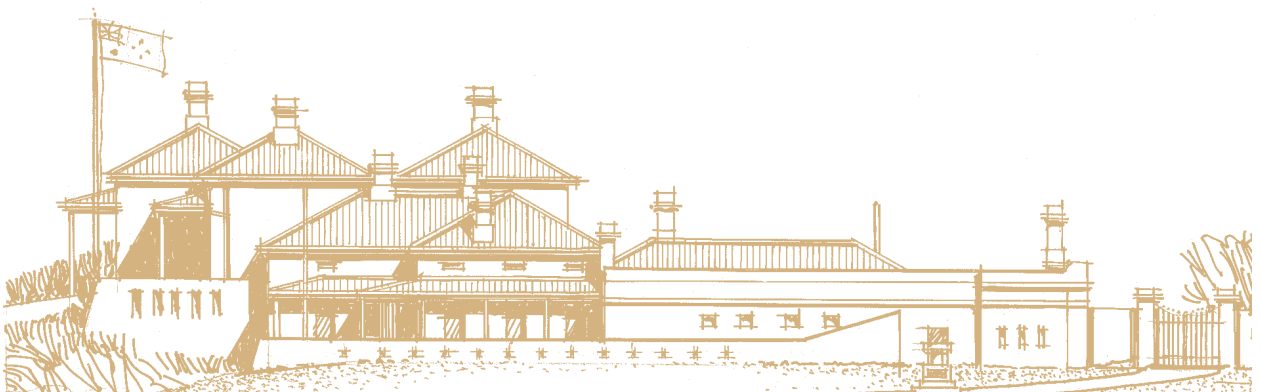
These lands are all in public ownership and all intimately connected with the discovery of the Hunter River and of coal and the original convict settlement at Newcastle.

The Coal River Historic Site is located entirely within the Newcastle Conservation Area listed in the Register of the National Estate. Individual items are also listed on the Register of the National Estate.

However the whole is more significant than any one of its parts and the whole Coal River Site when fully documented will be nominated as a World Heritage Site.

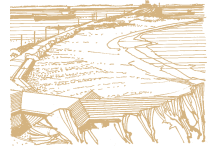
Important historical milestones include:

- ▶ Shortland's 1797 discovery of 'a very fine Coal River' and of winnable coal
- ▶ establishment of the first penal out-station on the mainland 1801
- ▶ founding of the permanent settlement at Newcastle 1804
- ▶ first coal mining in Australia
- ▶ cutting down of Nobbys Island
- ▶ erection of a coal fired beacon, on Signal Hill
- ▶ establishment of the Stockade lumber yard to service the convict coal mines and Hunter's cedar cutting gangs
- ▶ building of the Macquarie Pier
- ▶ fortifications at Fort Scratchley 1882 to defend Britain's chief coaling station in the southern hemisphere
- ▶ development of the port of Newcastle









# The Proposal

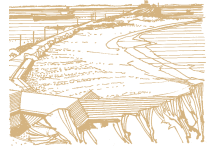
To give a tangible expression to Newcastle's unique convict and industrial heritage by the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the permanent settlement at 'Coal River' 2004.

That the Commonwealth Government of Australia and the New South Wales Government in partnership with the Newcastle City Council :

1. Acknowledge the significance of the Newcastle's Coal River Historic Site
2. Support the declaration of the Coal River Historic Site.
3. Commit funds for the vibrant presentation of the site and for professional archaeological investigation of the convict works within the site and the convict coal mines beneath Fort Scratchley.
4. Provide funds for the erection of a world class Coal River Interpretative Centre with access to convict mine workings and an innovative presentation of Newcastle's unique convict and industrial heritage associated with the Site
5. Allocate recurrent funding for professional management of the Coal River Site for a period of ten years.



Photo: View from Fort Scratchley looking south to the city



# Requirements

- ▶ All lands in the site should be held by the NSW Government under the NSW Historic Sites Legislation or by special act of parliament.
- ▶ Care control and management of the site will be the responsibility of appropriate groups or authorities for the day to day operation of the site in accordance with a Heritage Masterplan.
- ▶ The Heritage Masterplan for the Coal River Historic Site be created to establish a framework in which all activities within the site are co-ordinated and the physical fabric of the site protected in accordance with the Burra Charter.

Coal River Historic Site consists of six discrete parcels of land at Newcastle East: Nobbys Head, Nobbys Breakwater, Fort Scratchley with convict coal mines underneath, the Convict Lumber Yard Stockade and the Cornish Dock area.

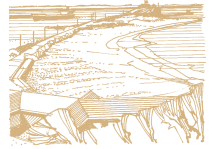
The title to Fort Scratchley and Nobbys lighthouse is held by the Commonwealth of Australia; the Convict Lumber Yard land is held by the Newcastle City Council and the remaining parcels of land are held by the NSW State Government (Newcastle Port Corporation).



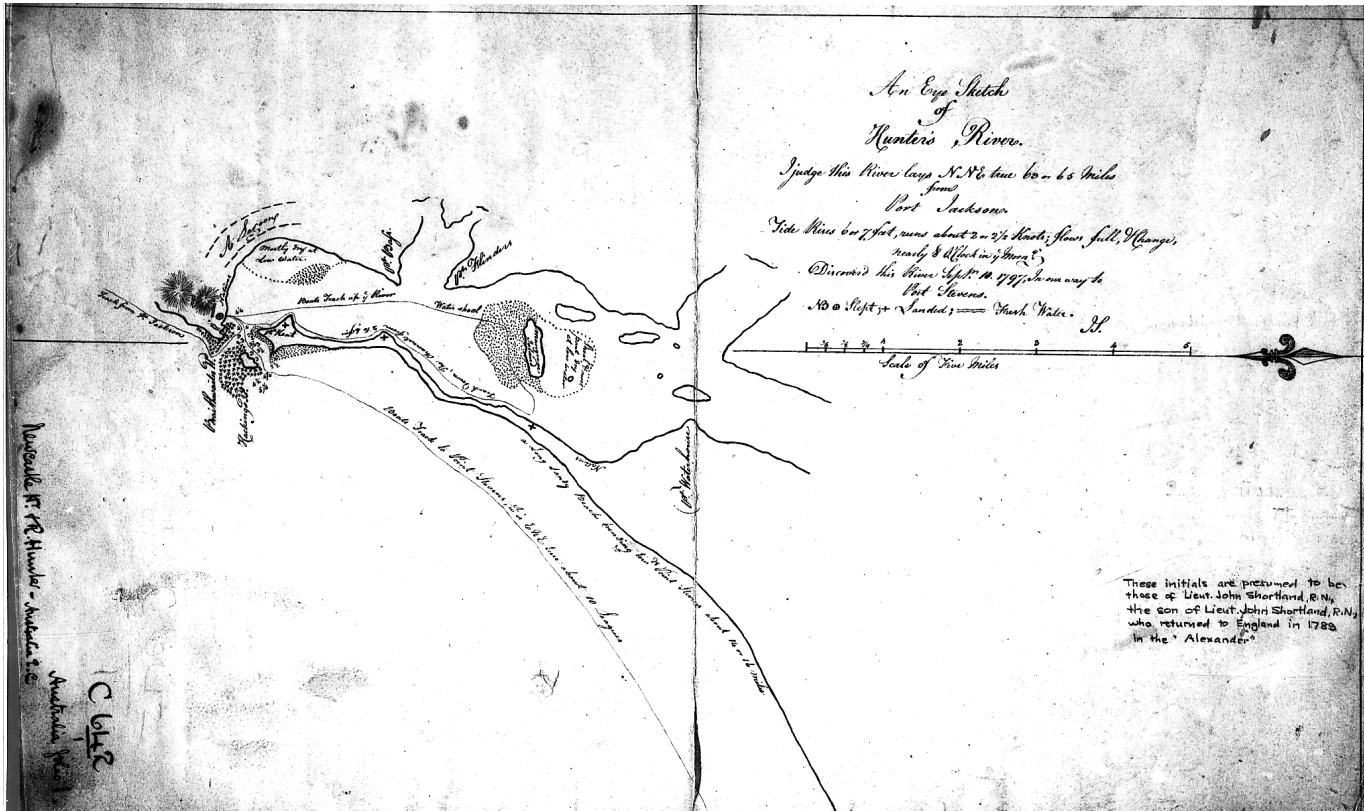
Nobbys & Breakwater 1900 Barbara Moore Collection, Newcastle Regional Library



# John Shortland's Eye Sketch of Hunter's River



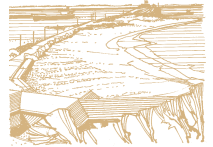
September 1797



PHOTOGRAPH OF SHORTLAND'S HAND DRAWN SKETCH 444 x 265mm  
held by D. Lithgow

Original  
Hydrographic Dept. Ministry of Defence  
Taunton Somerset TA1 2DN UK.





# The Benefits

**T**he Coal River Historic Site will create an ongoing and all year round tourist destination and add to the vitality and sense of place of the older part of the city.

It will make a significant contribution to the heritage focus of the old town area of Newcastle, provide Australia-wide recognition and be a draw card for the tourist industry.

The significance of Newcastle's unique convict, military, maritime and industrial heritage will be made accessible to a larger number of people.

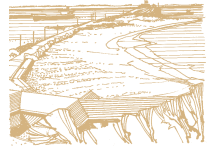
The Coal River Historic Site will provide opportunities for an innovative presentation of Newcastle's past and a mature understanding of the settlement of the region.



View from Fort Scratchley looking north to Nobbys Beach, Nobbys and Stockton Bight.

The Historic Site will complement the improvements to the foreshore that have been made in the past decade, create immediate employment in the tourist industry and flow on in hospitality and retail employment.

It will lead to the improvement of the image of Newcastle and a recognition of its importance as the second city of NSW.



# Action Plan

Following the acceptance of the Coal River Historic Site proposal by the Australian and New South Wales Governments a Masterplan for the Site will be prepared.

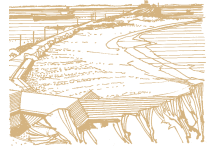
This will require the following action:

1. Review all historical material pertaining to the area.
2. Identify all existing authorities or groups operating in the Coal River Historic Site lands and their official policies or activities.
3. Assemble and summarise all existing studies and other relevant materials.
4. Describe the current controls and policies with regard to the Site.
5. Integrate the policies of those authorities with current responsibilities for the area.
6. Investigate the management of other Historic sites in NSW and other states of the Commonwealth.
7. Identify the principal historic features, issues and problems relating to the conservation, interpretation and effective presentation of the site.
8. Indicate the gaps in current historic and heritage knowledge and identify where further investigation should be undertaken.
9. Carry out the necessary archaeological investigations of the convict coal workings beneath Flagstaff Hill and prepare a plan for the establishment of a world class Coal River Interpretation Centre.
10. Make the Masterplan for the Coal River Historic Site.

Doug Lithgow

President

Parks & Playgrounds MOVEMENT Inc.



# Context



Photo: Panoramic view looking east to Fort Scratchley from Newcastle Harbour Foreshore Park



Photo: Suggested site for Coal River Interpretation Centre with access to 1804 convict coal workings



## Context

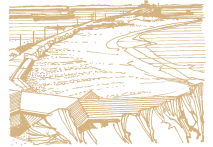


Photo: Fort Scratchley, moat with barracks in the background



Photo: Looking north, six-inch breach loading Mk VII gun, Nobbys and Stockton Bight in the distance

