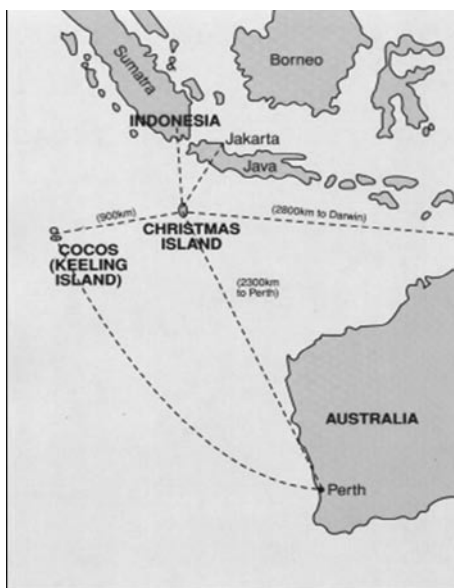




A survey of 'Christmas' names in WA

There are places named **Christmas** all over Western Australia, but the most frequent use of the name is for wells on pastoral stations – there are 26 of these, as well as 19 Christmas bores and 4 Christmas dams. These names were probably chosen because the water sources were worked on, or completed, at Christmas.

Christmas Island is probably the most well known



Christmas Island. Map courtesy of Christmas Island Tourism Association

Christmas name in Australia. Situated 360km from Java, below the southern entrance to Sunda Strait, it was named by Captain William Mynors of the British East Indies Company on Christmas Day 1643. The first recorded sighting was by a merchant, John Milward, aboard his vessel, *Thomas*, in 1615. The first recorded landing on the island by

a European (believed to be in the vicinity of The Dales) is said to have been by William Dampier in 1688. The island was annexed by the British on 6 June 1888.

Christmas Creek in the Kimberley is well known as both a creek and a pastoral homestead. The creek after which the homestead was named was added to maps between 1894 and 1896, but it is not known who named it, nor why. There are 4 other Christmas Creeks around the state, but no known origins are recorded, only dates.

10 roads throughout the state have Christmas as part of their name, and 5 names make use of **Christmas Tree** as part of the name. There are also 12 **Xmas** names in the state, mostly bores and wells.

Wiseman Street in Esperance and Manjimup honour persons with the surname Wiseman.

Jingle Creek and **Jingle Well** are located in the Upper Gascoyne area.

Bell or **Bells** – WA has 35 roads, 2 brooks, 2 creeks, a park, a point and a gorge all named Bell; plus Bells Rapids, Bells Hill and Bells Point Community.

Noel – WA has 4 Noel roads.

Yule – 8 roads, a river, a bridge and a brook named after Thomas Newte Yule, an early settler.

Santa Way in Wanneroo was named in 1971 but the reason for the name is unclear. Other Santa names for roads include 9 different varieties, from Santa Ana to Santa Paula, with most of them being located in the coastal suburbs of Rockingham and Wanneroo. There is a Santa Gertrudis Drive in Chittering.

Holly Hill and **Holly Railway Station** near Broomehill are named after the Holly family, early settlers. There are also about 6 Holly Roads.

□ CONTINUED PAGE 2

In this issue

A survey of 'Christmas' names in WA.....	1
Up-coming conferences.....	2
On the web.....	3
ICOS 2005.....	3
ANPS day conference.....	4
Some comments on placenames and my work on Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u.....	6
The dangers of taking placenames at face value: some examples of Dutch and Dutch-linked placenames.....	8
Placenames of Fiji 3.....	10
ANPS Research Friend: Patricia Evans.....	11
New publication.....	11
Placenames puzzle no. 16 – the festive season.....	12
Contributions.....	12
Mailing list and volunteer research.....	12

Up-coming conferences

The Place Research Network (PRN) brings together some of the diverse range of researchers, both within Australia and overseas, for whom place is a primary theoretical and organising concept. Central to the network's aims is the importance of providing a forum for critical analytic reflection on the concept of place itself, and on associated concepts including those of home, location, identity, belonging, orientation, borders, virtuality, indigeneity. The PRN aims to bring together researchers from a wide range of disciplines and practices. The *Senses of Place* conference will be held 6-8 April 2006 at the University of Tasmania's School of Art in Hobart. For details, follow the conference link at <http://www.utas.edu.au/placenet>

Strangers on the Shore: A Conference on Early Coastal Contacts with Australia will be held at the National Museum of Australia 30-31 March 2006. It will bring together leading Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers who have focused on this crucial area of Australia's heritage. The Conference is being hosted by the National Museum of Australia, with support from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the Centre for Cross-Cultural Studies of the Australian National University. It is linked to the *Australia on the Map: 1606-2006* initiative. Four Themes will be represented: Indigenous Maps of Landscape, Indigenous Narratives of Contact, Contact as a Two-Way Process and Maritime Societies in Transition. For more details see <http://www.strangersontheshore.com.au/index.html>

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

St Nicholas Way is the name of a road in Australind.

Vixen Street in Withers is named after a boat.

Jolly Peaks in Little Sandy Desert (named in 1957 after a 1925 explorer).

Merry – WA has a Merry Dance (which is a mine) and a Merry Bore.

There are numerous **Star** wells and some Star Streets and there is a **Snowball** Road in Kalamunda.

And who could forget food at Christmas time? WA has many places named **Turkey** – roads, hills, creeks, points and an island – as well as 2 **Ham** Roads, and 3 **Cranberry** Roads.

□ Brian Goodchild

Secretary, Geographic Names Committee
Department of Land Information WA

[originally prepared for a regular radio program in 2004]



Season's greetings and happy holidays to all *Placenames Australia* readers and contributors, and a special thank you, as always, to the ANPS Research Friends who have continued to volunteer their time and expertise to The Survey during the past year.

Apology

Sincere apologies to Albert Burgman and to the Wangka Maya Pilbara Aboriginal Languages Centre. The article which appeared in the September 2005 issue of *Placenames Australia* was the draft rather than final copy. Anyone who would like a copy of the final version please contact me and I'll send it to you. Susan Poetsch <susan.poetsch@humn.mq.edu.au> 02 9850 7937 (ph) • 02 9850 8240 (fax).

On the web

- The **Kōrero Māori** ('Speak Māori') website has been developed by Te Taura Whiri i te reo Māori – the Māori Language Commission – in order to raise awareness about the Māori language. It's a fun, interactive, bilingual website and contains information about Māori for learners, speakers and businesses. There is also a map with Māori placenames and compass points and the longest placename, each with an audio file pronunciation guide.
<http://www.korero.maori.nz/resources/map.html>
- The **NT Place Names Register** is now available on-line, at the website of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. Users can search the register and print out the results. Each entry includes the name, type designation, place ID number, feature type, status of the name, date registered, latitude and longitude, Local Government Area, alternate names and information about history and origin of the name where available.
<http://www.ipe.nt.gov.au/whatwedo/landinformation/place/register/home.jsp>
- Each suburb in Canberra has a theme by which its streets are named. Themes include people, places, flora, fauna and things relevant to the history of Australia. Origins and meanings of **street names in Canberra** are now available online via the website of the ACT Planning and Land Authority. Users can search by suburb name, theme or by entering a particular street name.
<http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/actlic/places>
- The Australian Antarctic Division (of the Department of the Environment and Heritage) **Antarctic Names and Gazetteer** contains approximately 3500 names. It includes information on their origin and meaning, together with links to nearby placenames (both those named by Australia and those named by other countries). There are images and maps, together with information about, and beautiful photos of, flora and fauna. Have a look at the Emperor Penguins, the Snow Petrels and the Ceratodon purpureus on the Windmill Islands!
http://aadc-maps.aad.gov.au/aadc/gaz/search_names.cfm

ICOS 2005



Australia had three representatives at the recent 22nd International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, held in Pisa in September. The participation of David Blair, ANPS National Director, with Ian Clark and Laura Kostanski from the ANPS Victorian State Committee, meant that Australia was better represented than any other country in the southern hemisphere.

The nearly 500 participants were interested in all types of names, of course, not just placenames; but the three papers our delegates presented on Australian toponymy were all well received. David gave a description and demonstration of the ANPS database; and both Ian and Laura gave papers on the Victorian experience of involving local communities in the process of re-introducing Indigenous names for geographical features:

Reintroducing Indigenous Placenames – Lessons from Gariwerd, Victoria, Australia, or, How to address toponymic dispossession in ways that celebrate cultural diversity and inclusiveness.

Place Attachment and Toponymic Attachment: are they the same? Reflections on an Australian case study conducted in 2004.

For more details see the website of the International Council of the Onomastic Sciences
<http://www.icosweb.net/>



ANPS day conference

On Saturday 1 October the Australian National Placenames Survey hosted a day conference on the theme of 'Aboriginal Placenames Old and New'.

It followed the same pattern as similar day conferences held in Canberra in 1999, Adelaide 2000 and Darwin 2001, bringing together researchers with interests in Australian languages and cultures with members of the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia, the peak body for state and territory nomenclature authorities.

The event was timed to follow on from the annual two-day meeting of the CGNA, and thanks to the assistance of Susie Salisbury, Executive Officer for the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping, we were able to meet on the premises of Geoscience Australia, Symonston, Canberra, and had the opportunity of touring the architecturally impressive, geothermally heated building – complete with indoor rainforest (see www.ga.gov.au/images/building/GA1795.jpg)

The day was divided into four sessions, devoted to placenames in traditional Aboriginal society (chaired by Jane Simpson of the University of Sydney); investigating Aboriginal placenames through archival materials (chaired by Harold Koch of the Australian National University); analysing placenames of Aboriginal origin in the Introduced system (chaired by David Blair of the ANPS); and reinstating Aboriginal placenames in the Introduced system (chaired by Brian Goodchild of the CGNA). Papers were presented by Luise Hercus, Harold Koch and David Nash of the Australian National University; Patrick McConvell of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; Ian Clark of the University of Ballarat, Chair of the ANPS Victorian Committee; Laura Kostanski of the University of Ballarat, Secretary of the ANPS Victorian Committee – who presented two separate papers in different sections; Jim Smith of

Macquarie University; Paul Monaghan of the South Australian Museum; and Greg Windsor of the NSW Geographical Names Board. Abstracts of their presentations may be seen online at the ANPS website, www.anps.mq.edu.au/documents/conf timetable.doc

Over 40 people attended, and there was lively discussion at the end of each paper and in the breaks between sessions, fuelled by the delicious and ample refreshments supplied by Connoisseur Catering. Many new contacts were made and participants have since been able to keep in contact via email. In addition, Bill Watt of the South Australian Geographical Names Advisory Committee and Co-Convenor (with CGNA Chair Brian Goodchild) of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names working group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names invited participants to contribute information on their projects to the report being prepared for the next UNGEGN meeting to be held in Vienna in March 2006. For further details, please contact watt.william@saugov.sa.gov.au

Just as the earlier 1999/2000 conferences resulted in the publication of *The Land is a Map* (ed. Luise Hercus, Flavia Hodges & Jane Simpson, 2002), it is intended that versions of most of the papers presented at this conference will be published, along with others contributed by linguists and anthropologists working all over Australia, in a volume *Aboriginal Placenames Old and New* to be edited by Luise Hercus, Harold Koch and Patrick McConvell for publication in 2006. With work already going forward on this second volume of collected papers, it may be said that toponymy has truly come of age as a discipline within the study of Australian languages and cultures.

□ Flavia Hodges



*Michael Walsh, Rod Stroud,
Judith Cannon*



*Bill Watt, Flavia Hodges,
Luise Hercus*



Susie Salsibury, Greg Windsor



Patrick McConvell, Kazuko Obata



Brian Goodchild, Anita Davids



*Lorraine Bayliss,
Maria Vassallo*



*Laura Kostanski, Melissa Byass,
Clair Hill*



Paul Monaghan, Tamsin Donaldson



*Tamsin Donaldson,
Philippa Scarlett*



Stuart Duncan, Ian Clark



Greg Windsor, Leon Jackson, Tony Naughton

Some comments on placenames and my work on Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u

Hi 'Placenames Australia' Readers! The ANPS team asked me to put together some words on my interest in Aboriginal placenames and the role they have in my language documentation work on Cape York Peninsula languages. This piece also serves as a bit of an update on some of my activities since leaving the employ of ANPS.

As is frequently cited in ANPS literature, the study of Aboriginal placenames includes an important distinction between toponyms that are part of the Indigenous naming system proper and placenames of Aboriginal origin in the introduced system of names. My particular interest in toponymy is specifically with those placenames within the Indigenous system. The principles of the Indigenous naming system differ greatly from the toponymic practices in the introduced system, and each of the naming networks associated with different Indigenous language and social groups has its own rich diversity of features and naming practices. I find this makes the study of Aboriginal placenames a complex and fascinating undertaking.

Like many linguists who work on Australian languages, my interest and research on placenames is part and parcel of more extensive language documentation and linguistic analysis work. This short commentary outlines the general language research I have been undertaking in recent years, as opposed to more focused toponymic projects or studies. I will not include any discussion of data or specific placename examples, due in part to the shortness of this piece and in part to confidentiality and consent issues surrounding some of the cultural and language knowledge obtained through my research.

Over the last couple of years I have been undertaking language documentation work on two closely related dialects, Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u, which along with Kaanju form a language group classified by O'Grady, Voegelin and Voegelin (1966) as the Middle Paman Subgroup. These language varieties belong to a region on the north-east coast of Cape York Peninsula – from the Olive River in the north to Massey Creek in the south and west over the Great Dividing Range to Coen.



Looking over maps with Umpila ku'unchi Elizabeth Giblet and Dorothy Short. In this session we were recording the Umpila placenames which run northwards along the coastline from the Old Mission site (Puchiwuchi) to the current location of the Lockhart community (Paytham), and then southwards from Old Site to the Nesbit River (Palingchi).

There are unfortunately very few people who still speak Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u, and those that do are quite elderly. Most of the remaining speakers reside in Lockhart River Aboriginal Community, which is located at Lloyd Bay, just north of the Lockhart River mouth. There were at least six related dialects or languages in the Lockhart River area before the intrusion of Europeans into this region. These days the predominant peoples

and language varieties are Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u, indeed, these days the smaller dialects, such as Kuuku Iyu, Kuuku Yani have been absorbed by Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u in the joint life in the community, and some of the differences between Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u have also been lost.

Sadly, this sort of language loss is widespread amongst in traditional Australian languages. These languages have been badly affected by the sudden changes colonisation brought to Australia, and only around a third of the languages that were spoken pre-contact still have fluent speakers. The vast majority of Aboriginal languages with living speakers are considered critically endangered; many only have a handful of elderly speakers.

I started work in Lockhart River in 2002 as part of my honours year research. This research resulted in a descriptive account of the linguistic coding of space in the Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u nominal system, particularly focusing on an inherently locative subclass of nominals and the local case system. During this research, I came across quite a bit of Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u placename data in archival manuscripts and field notes, and it was these discoveries that sparked my interest in placenames. These records allowed me to begin to explore the formation and treatment of toponyms in these dialects. In my thesis, I discussed the range of construction types that are typical in placenames in this language, e.g. comitative marked nouns, nouns marked by special placename suffixes, compounds. I also considered the inflectional markers that placenames can bear along with the degree of transparency and analysability of these names.

My work on Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u continued in 2004, after I held an AIATSIS research grant to undertake the 'Oral Histories and Stories of the Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u people of Lockhart River' project. This work focused on creating a corpus of current textual language recordings in Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u for use in producing language maintenance materials as well as the further investigation of the grammar of this language. While placenames weren't specifically a focus of this project's recording work, information relating to places and their names frequently emerged as part of the story telling – the stories and histories often focused on reminiscences set in important camping spots and places of significance, and discussions of placenames naturally ensued.

I spent almost three months in Lockhart River working on this project. This longer stint in the field gave me the opportunity to go camping at favourite local spots and visit the language speakers' country on 'bush trips' to collect bush food or medicines or grasses needed

for weaving. It's on these types of excursions that I have learnt the most about Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u placenames and their relationship with the land and associated stories – as you can imagine there are all sorts of difficulties in doing good placename work while being in the community with only maps as aides. However, because I wasn't undertaking a project focused on toponymic research (and so wasn't set up with a vehicle, GPS etc.) these sporadic trips only afford me further glimpses into the intricate system that these sites, stories and placenames form. So I look forward to many more outings to tracts of country and sites so that I can piece together more of this region's placename inventory.

My current work on Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u, and more recently Kaanju, is part of a larger CYP (Cape York Peninsula) language documentation project that I am coordinating (project website: <http://www.ling.arts.kuleuven.ac.be/fll/CYPLD/>). This project has brought together a team of researchers to work on the emergency language documentation of a selection of highly endangered CYP languages, e.g. Kuku Thaypan/ Awu Alaya, Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u, Kaanju, Kugu Muminh, Kugu Mu'inh, Wik Iyenh, Pakanh, Umpithamu, Umbuygamu. Whilst undertaking this language recording work the project is also seeking to involve interested community members in recording sessions and training, providing them with some of the skills they will need to undertake community based language work. This type of training responds directly to the desire/request of many CYP Indigenous communities to see the younger generations actively involved in language projects – undertaking language research and learning their traditional language.

One of the language worker trainees I worked with closely throughout this project had a particular interest in placenames, and this project gave him the opportunity to formally work with language speakers and elders documenting names. This resulted in some lovely recording sessions, particularly those discussions relating to names in his country. I hope projects such as this will help not only with the urgent need for documentation and maintenance of these languages but also stimulate more community managed language work in the region, including the further investigation of Indigenous placenaming systems by community members.

□ Clair Hill

Reference: O'Grady, G., Voegelin, C. and Voegelin, F. 1966. Languages of the World: Indo-Pacific Fascicle Six. *Anthropological Linguistics* 8, 2: 1-197.

The dangers of taking placenames at face value: some examples of Dutch and Dutch-linked placenames

Wayne Smith's interesting article on the dangers of taking placenames at face value in the December 2004 issue of *Placenames Australia* highlighted an important issue in the study and analysis of placenames; that there are many, what we might call, *faux amis* among them. For instance, some appear to be Indigenous when they are not (e.g. the name of northern Sydney suburb of Waitara is actually a Māori name meaning 'pure water'), whilst others give the impression of being English when they are not.

Continuing with my theme of Dutch and Dutch-linked placenames in Australia, we may identify a good number that are not transparently Dutch. These include: Crocodile Islands (NT) from the Dutch *Crocodils Eylanden*, Red Bluff (WA) from *Roode Houck*, Steep Corner (WA) from *Steijle Houck*, Turtle Dove Shoal (WA) from *Tortelduijff*, Swan River (WA) from *Swarte* [Black] *Swaane Rivier*, and Storm Bay (Tas.) from *Stoorm Baij*. These names are simply calqued (i.e. literally translated) from the original Dutch names bestowed by the seventeenth century Dutch explorers.

There are also two not immediately transparent eponymic Dutch placenames (i.e. placenames after people's names). The first is the small coastal fishing town of Leeman (formerly 'Snag Island'), 256 kms north of Perth. It owes its current name to Abraham Leeman, the under steersman of the *Waeckende Boeij* (Watchful Buoy), which was sent out in 1658 to search for the wreckage and possible survivors of the *Vergulde Draeck* (Gilt Dragon) which sank along the West Australian coast two years earlier. Leeman was put in charge of a small landing party to conduct a search ashore, but was unexpectedly abandoned by the *Waeckende Boeij* when she had to set sail when a storm

came upon them. Left to their own devices, Leeman and his companions sailed their small open boat in an epic voyage all the way back to Batavia.

The second is the city of Orange (NSW), named by the surveyor and explorer Major Thomas L. Mitchell in 1833 in honour of Prince Willem II van Oranje (1792-1849) with whom Mitchell served in the Peninsular War against Napoleon's forces in Spain. Willem was educated in Berlin and Oxford, was an Anglophone, became King of the Netherlands in 1840, and a British Field Marshal in 1845.



Prince Willem van Oranje (1792-1849)

Source: www.vanassenbergh.nl/willem_ii.htm

Another *faux ami* is Camperdown, the name of an inner-Sydney suburb as well as a Victorian town. The suburb (some 4 kms south-west of the Sydney CBD) is the home of the University of Sydney, the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and the former Children's Hospital. The Victorian town is in the state's western district at the foot of Mt Leura, some 45 kms west of Colac. The name 'Camperdown' is a calque of the Dutch coastal dune Camperduin, situated some 40 kms north-north-west of Amsterdam. The coastal waters off Camperduin was the location of a naval battle between British and Dutch forces on October 11, 1797. The British fleet, under the command of Admiral Duncan (later Earl of Camperdown) won a decisive victory, sinking nine Dutch ships of the line and one frigate, as well as killing 521 and wounding 852 Dutchmen and taking another 2872 prisoner.

In command of one of the 24 British ships, the sixty-four gun *Director*, was Captain William Bligh. In 1806, as Governor of NSW, he was granted a 240 acre estate, which he duly named 'Camperdown' to commemorate the naval battle. Victoria's Camperdown also owes its name to this battle, however, its connection is not as



The Battle of Camperdown, 1797, by Philip Jakob II de Loutherbourg

source: www.artnet.de/artwork/423816959/_Philip_Jakob_II_de_Loutherbourg_TheBattle_of_Camberdown.html

immediate. The township was so named in 1845 on La Trobe's suggestion, after Admiral Duncan, Earl of Camperdown. Another source suggests La Trobe proposed the name because the oldest settler of the township was called Duncan, which was also the name of the Earl of Camperdown.

The *camperduin* refers to the *duin* (i.e. dune or down) beyond (or belonging to) the village of Camp. On maps dating back to the 1850s the village is identified as Camp, however, in the 1920s it was renamed Camperduin, most likely to capitalise on its historic connotation as well as to attract seaside visitors. The village is now a popular sea-side resort. The origin of the village name Camp is not known. However, Middle Dutch *camp* (or *kamp* in Modern Dutch) was a term used, especially in North Holland, to refer to a piece of land in general, or a field. *Camp* derives from the Latin *campus* 'level field, especially the *Campus Martius* at Rome, the place for games, athletic practice, military drills, etc.', whence 'field of contest, combat, or battle'. Another possible etymology for the village name is West Germanic or Old Teutonic **kampoz* (Middle High German *Kampf*) 'martial contest, combat, fight, battle, war', which is reckoned to be an early Germanic adoption of Latin *campus* in its transferred sense 'field of contest or combat', also 'duel, fight, battle, war'.

Camp-kamp forms the generic element of a number of Dutch compound placenames, e.g. *de Buitenkamp*, *Denekamp*, *de Har(t)skamp*, *Heetkamp*, *Huiskamp*,

Huurkamp, *Kraaienkamp*, *de Loostercampen*, *Mariënkampen*, *Vlierkamp*, and *Zoutkamp*. It is also a common element in many toponymic family names, e.g. *Beerecamp*, *Boomkamp*, *Cromcamp*, *Hoenkamp*, *Hulstkamp*, *Kleikamp*, *Langkamp*, *Leeuwenkamp*, *Meerkamp*, *Metelercamp*, *Struikenkamp*, *Veldkamp*, and *Walencamp*.

The morpheme {-er} in *Camperduin* is a productive dative/genitive adjective forming suffix used to form the unique element of some placenames, e.g. *Hulshorster Zand*, *de Mookerhei*, and *Tielerwaard*.

One final example of a non-transparent Dutch-linked placename is that of Guilderton, which up until the 1940s was known as 'Moore River' and had been used as a camping site since the early 1900s. The government gazetted it as a townsite in 1951 and sought an appropriate name. Henrietta Drake-Brockman suggested the name 'Guilderton', to commemorate the sinking of the *Vergulde Draeck*, and the loss of its valuable cargo, chests of silver coin. Many coins and relics of the wreck have been found over the years near the mouth of the Moore River, which runs into the sea here.

□ Jan Tent

Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University

(I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Ferjan Ormeling of the Cartography section, Faculty of Geographical Sciences, Utrecht University for some of the historical information on the village *Camperduin*.)

Placenames of Fiji 3

Placenames in Fiji are not usually historical, as personal names are, but geographical. Personal names in Fiji often mark an event of note, so a relatively common name is *cagilaba* ‘hurricane’, to commemorate a hurricane that blew when the bearer of the name was born, or more frequently nowadays when the bearer’s namesake was born. Even non-Fijians living here have been known to follow this custom, as with the late weight-lifter Quake Raddock, who was born in 1953 around the time of the great Suva earthquake.

The vast majority of places, on the other hand, seem to have been named after more or less permanent features of the landscape or settlement, such as *Korolevu* ‘large village’ or ‘large hill’, *Navesi* ‘the *vesi* tree’ (*Intsia bijuga*, a very hard and valuable timber), *Dreketi* ‘river’, *Naqara* ‘the cave’, *Moturiki* ‘small island’ and so on. This makes sense, since places are a lot more permanent than people are. It’s true that there are a lot of stories heard around the kava bowl about how places were given names to commemorate events or things said by ancestor gods, but it’s fair to say that most of these don’t work linguistically, and are probably the product of fairly recent creative thinking, so perhaps best considered an art form rather than a historical account of the origin of a name. Given that most places – or at least most of the larger places – were probably first named some three thousand years ago, it’s hardly surprising that details of the circumstances of the naming are lost in the mists of time.

One of the reasons people can get away with these highly inventive etymological stories – apart from the fact that they’re good yarns – is simply because many placenames are so old that their meaning is no longer recognisable to most people. Languages change constantly, and words become obsolete or change their meanings. Placenames, on the other hand, are relatively permanent. They often live on when their meaning is long forgotten. A case in the point is the one just mentioned, *Moturiki*, the name of a smallish island to the south of Ovalau, east of Vitilevu, Fiji’s largest island. *Moturiki* has no meaning in today’s Fijian language. But by looking at other languages which are related to Fijian, we can infer that the language spoken by the first settlers of Fiji (which is called by linguists Proto Central Pacific) included the words *motu* meaning ‘island’, and *riki* meaning ‘small’. For a small island next to Ovalau, *Moturiki* is therefore an eminently sensible name.

Both of these words – *motu* ‘island’ and *riki* ‘small’ – are common throughout much of the Pacific, and reoccur in placenames with almost annoying frequency. For example, in New Zealand we find *Motutapu* ‘sacred island’ and *Motunui* ‘big island’, while in Vanuatu there is a suburb of Port Vila called *Tasiriki* ‘small sea-shore’ and a village on Ambae by the

name of *Navuturiki* ‘the small *vutu* tree’ (fish poison tree, *Barringtonia asiatica*).

The old word for ‘island’ – *motu* – is not completely lost in Fiji. It is the root of the word *yāmotu*, which means an isolated patch of coral reef, which could be viewed as a small island of submerged coral. Similarly, the old word for ‘small’ – *riki* – has at least two living descendants in Fiji. In some parts of south-eastern Vitilevu, it is used as a kind of adverb after the word for ‘small’, in the expressions *lailai riki* and *lada riki*, which mean ‘very small’. The other descendant is simply the suffix *riki* (or *driki*) in many placenames, where it retains the meaning ‘small’. Examples are *Wairiki* ‘small stream’ in Vanualevu and Taveuni, *Monuriki* ‘small Monu’ in the Mamanuca group (which locals usually pronounce *Mōdriki*), and the small uninhabited islands adjacent to Komo, Namuka, and Ogea in Lau, which are named *Komodriki*, *Namukadriki*, and *Ogeadriki*, respectively.

On my own island of adoption in Fiji, Moce in southern Lau, a great deal of the masi (bark-cloth made from the paper mulberry tree – *Broussonetia papyrifera*) for which it is famous is grown on land near a small bay called *Vagariki*. This last sentence is in fact tautological, because *Vagariki* means exactly that – ‘small bay’. The meaning of *riki* we have just been discussing, and *vaga* is an old Fijian word for ‘bay’ or

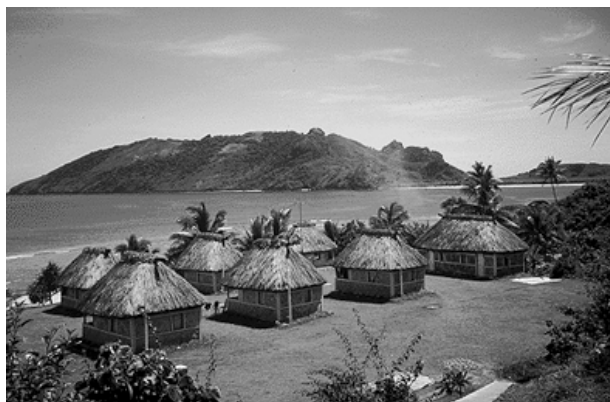
‘cove’. (Note that in Fijian ‘g’ is pronounced like English ‘ng’, as in ‘singer’). Although it no longer has this meaning in modern Fijian, it is used still to denote the upper free edge of the sail of a traditional sailing canoe, between the ends of the *karikari* (yardarms), which is shaped like a bay when the wind fills the sail.

There are many bays and coves in Fiji whose names reflect this old word. Some are simply called *Vaga*, as on the western coast of Naviti

in the Yasawa group, on the western coast of Beqa near the small village of Naiseuseu, and near Sogobiau in northeastern Macuata. Other names are compounds, such as *Vagadaci*, a village and small indentation on the coast just north of Levuka on Ovalau; *Vagaloa* (‘black bay’ or ‘long bay’), a substantial inlet near Nukuvou, towards the eastern end of Babaceva, the southern coast of Kadavu; and *Vaganai*, which is situated in north-west Bua, between Koroinasolo and Naicobocobo, the jumping-off place of the souls of the dead after they have followed the *salaniyalo* – the central ridge of Vanualevu.

There seems little doubt that *vaga* was the usual word for bay or harbour in the language of the earliest colonisers of Fiji – the ‘Lapita people’, who went on to colonise all the islands of Polynesia, since the word is reflected in many placenames not only in Fiji, but also throughout Polynesia. There are many examples in New Zealand, for example *Whanganui* ‘big bay’ and *Whangaroa* ‘long bay’ (the same name as *Vagaloa* in Fiji). In Hawaii, the capital city derives its name from the nearby harbour of Honolulu, earlier pronounced *Hanalulu*, and even earlier still *Fangaruru*, which means simply ‘sheltered bay’.

□ Paul Geraghty, University of the South Pacific



ANPS Research Friend: Patricia Evans



I started to research my family history in 1987, thinking it would be a quick and easy task. I soon learned that there is a close relationship between family, local and national history, and placenames in Australia.

Throughout the last two hundred and seventeen years people have had to supply a placename as the 'place of event' for a baptism, birth, death, burial, marriage and

census. This 'place of event' has not always referred to officially gazetted placenames. Gazetted placenames are easy to find, but many placenames which have appeared on certificates, in diaries and in other records from many years ago, were not officially gazetted.

My first experience of researching a name of a 'place of event' which was difficult to track down, was when I received my great-great grandfather's death certificate. His place of death was listed as Gegendzerrick NSW. I couldn't even pronounce it, let alone find it. This experience led me into collecting, compiling and releasing a CD-ROM called *Australian Place Name Guide, OLD to NEW*.

Over the years placenames have been changed by people and events, such as WWI and WWII, with others abandoned for many reasons. Old Mother Nature plays a big part in many places being abandoned through drought and flood, and mining areas ceasing to have payable loads. Villages, small towns etc have been absorbed into larger towns. Also, over time, many old towns have been put under dams or just bulldozed into the mysterious world of the past. In the early days of

colonisation events took place and were therefore named as the 'place of event', at far away properties, or areas 'known as' by the local population.

Many placenames were repeated many times over, in the same state/territory or county. This creates a big problem, but one that can be confirmed relatively easily, by purchasing a relevant certificate, which will give the 'place of registration'. This will indicate clearly, the particular area which the placename is in.

Sometimes you will never find the placename you are looking for! As an example, another family historian wrote to me and asked for help to find a place called 'The Bullock Wagon'. After many months of searching, we accepted the fact that there probably was no place of that name. We knew that the ancestors she was researching were not literate and that they were travelling from Victoria to Queensland by wagon with their first four children. We presumed the baby was born in the bullock wagon, during that journey. And this seems to be how they registered the place of birth, with the clerk at the courthouse in the next major town on their journey.

Because of the many tongues and ears that spoke and listened in a new land, spelling errors occurred which in turn created a placename that, in later years, became difficult for family historians to find. An example from my own research relates to my maternal great grandfather who was Swedish. When he married in 1870, he gave the name Sodava as his usual place of residence. After much consideration, I have decided that I think he meant Sofala NSW.

By the way, I did eventually find Gegendzerrick. It is one mile outside Berridale NSW and only consists of a church and cemetery.

[Anyone interested in the *Australian Place Name Guide, OLD to NEW* (2001), please write to Patricia Evans, 30 McGregor Cl, Toormina NSW 2452. The CD contains a large MSExcel file and costs \$20 including postage].

New publication

Macquarie Atlas of Indigenous Australia

Bill Arthur and Frances Morphy (ed.s)

ISBN: 1876429356, RRP: \$80.00, Macmillan Publishers, 2005



Both authoritative and accessible, the Macquarie Atlas of Indigenous Australia is the first of its kind. The atlas opens up a window onto the landscape on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lives, from 60,000 years ago to today. Packed with black-and-white and full colour photographs it contains maps, charts, illustrations and artwork. Each chapter has been compiled by one or more experts in their field, under the general editorship of Bill Arthur and Frances Morphy. An electronic version of a selection of the maps, allowing interactive use, will be available on MacquarieNet – <http://www.macquarienet.com.au>

The festive season

All the clues reveal placenames connected with Christmas (disregard spelling) e.g. (NSW) three irate royal travellers... Kings Cross.

- (Qld) Main course of Christmas dinner served on the sands
- (Qld) Zodiac sign for Christmas birthdays; large tract of country
- (Qld) One of the three valuable gifts on their way from the East; seashore
- (WA) Often combined with ivy as a Christmas decoration
- (WA) Confection served with the coffee after a festive dinner; group of trees
- (NSW) Was the good monarch drinking wine from Oporto when he looked out on this saint's feast?
- (NSW) Part of the title of Dickens' tale of miserly metamorphosis
- (NSW) Can be cooked round the turkey; sharp end
- (NSW) Go up; often found on top of the Christmas tree
- (NSW) Needed to boil the pudding; an aspect of something
- (NSW) A seasonal evergreen bears one "as red as any blood"
- (NSW) One of the three Eastern sage's water transporter
- (NSW/ACT) Australian poet who wrote "Along by merry Christmas time they buy the aged goose, And boil the dread plum pudding, because of ancient use."
- (Vic) Part of where Mr Pickwick and friends enjoyed Christmas
- (Vic) One of Father Christmas's garments
- (Vic/Tas) This season; elevations smaller than mountains
- (Tas) Needed for serving the red or the white; noise made by hounds
- (SA) Often depicted in a wintry European scene on a card; sizable settlement
- (SA/ACT) Spends hours in the kitchen on Christmas Eve
- (NSW/Vic/Qld) (Beach, Creek, Valley) A solitaire for Christmas, perhaps?

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Contributions

Contributions for *Placenames Australia* are welcome. Closing dates for submissions are:

31 January for the March issue

30 April for the June issue

31 July for the September issue

31 October for the December issue.

Please send all contributions to the Editor, Susan Poetsch, at the address below. Electronic submissions are preferred, and photographic or other illustrations are greatly appreciated.

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Answers: 1. Turkey Beach 2. Capricorn region 3. Gold Coast 4. Holly 5. Peppermint Grove 6. Port Stephens 7. Carroll 8. Potato Point 9. Mount Fairy 10. Basin View 11. Berry 12. Wisemans Ferry 13. Lawson 14. Dingley 15. Red Jacket 16. Christmas Hills 17. Wineglass Bay 18. Snowtown 19. Cook 20. Diamond