Mutating placenames

There is nothing exempt from the peril of mutation the earth, heavens, and whole world is thereunto subject. (Sir Walter Raleigh)

One of the most vital characteristics of a living language is that it is in a constant state of mutation. The only languages that don't mutate are dead languages (e.g. Latin, Sanskrit). The process is natural, a necessary phenomenon, and encompasses, among other things:

• words undergoing semantic change (i.e. obtaining additional meanings, changing their meanings either slightly or entirely, or by a narrowing of meaning);

• new words entering the language while others become archaic and are ultimately lost;

• words changing in their pronunciation; and

• changes in grammar.

Although placenames are an integral part of any language, we tend to view them as stable, unchanging elements, but they too are predisposed to mutate, like any other part of vocabulary. Evidence of placename mutation (in spelling and pronunciation) abounds in the Old World because of the recorded histories over many centuries for so many towns, cities and geographic features.[1] In this piece I shall just concentrate on a number of Australian toponyms given this is our primary interest. Naturally, in the very short history of recorded toponyms in Australia, mutations are rather scarce.

Toponyms can mutate in various ways:

1. Through calquing (i.e. literal translation), e.g. *Stijle Houck* (Dutch) > *Steep Point* (WA); *Baie de Rencontre* (French) > *Encounter Bay* (SA).

2. Through legislated changes in spelling, e.g. *(Mount) Kosciusko* (NSW) > *Kosciuszko*; *Paddy's River* (NSW) > *Paddys River.*

3. Through nativising the spelling and/or pronunciation, as in the following examples:

• English: *London > Lodoni* [lonˈdoːni] (Fiji) and *Ranana* [ˈraːnana] (Māori, NZ);

• Fijian: *Lakeba* [laˈkembа] > *Lakemba* (Sydney suburb);[2]

• Dutch: *Coen* (Qld.) /koon/ [kʊn] anglicised > /ˈkoh-uhn/ [ˈkoʊʷən]; *Nuyts* (Archipelago) (SA) [nœyts] anglicised > /nuyts/ [naɪts]; *Kaap Leeuwin* (WA) [kaːp leːuˈwɪn] anglicised > /kayp ˈlooh-uhn/ [keɪp ˈluwən]; *Maria Island* (Tas.) [maˈriə] (as in the *West Side Story* song 'I've just met a girl named Maria') anglicised > /muh-ˈruy-uh/ [maˈraɪə] (as in the *Paint Your Wagon* song 'They call the wind Maria');[3]

• Aboriginal: *Colegdar/Caligda > Collector* (NSW); *Darramurragal > Turramurra* (NSW).

From the Editor

I've recently returned from an excursion to Victoria's high country—a wonderful week spent with good friends, admiring the beautiful countryside and visiting such famous and historic towns as *Beechworth, Bright, Myrtleford* and (one of my all-time favourite toponyms) *Yackandandah*. We also discovered the not-so-well known *Edi, Moyhu, Molyullah*—and, yes, *Porepunkah*. By coincidence, Carol Sonogan's update on the name of this locality appears in this issue, opposite.

These last five names are from Aboriginal languages. We are often asked for information on such toponyms, and we always recommend as an indispensable reference the *Dictionary of Aboriginal Placenames of Victoria*, by Ian Clark and Toby Heydon (Melbourne, 2002).

On the subject of the use (and misuse) of Aboriginal words and placenames, Jim Smith returns to a subject he first raised in our March issue, 2006. On page 4, you'll find his article on how Kamilaroi words were transferred to become toponyms in Dharawal country.

We're also pleased to publish another article by one of Dr Jan Tent's toponymy students at Macquarie University. Cameron Dark's analysis of 'vanity toponyms' in Sydney suburbs appears on pages 8-10 in this issue.

David Blair
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We recommend...

Two of our toponymists have recently had articles published in scholarly journals, and readers may be interested to follow them up.

- Jan Tent, 'Approaches to research in toponymy' in *Names,* 63 (2) June 2015, 65-74
- Joshua Nash, 'On the possibility of Pidgin English toponyms in Pacific Missions' in *Historiographia Linguistica,* 42 (1) 2015, 139-151

We also recommend a recent book by Alastair Bonnett, Professor of Social Geography at England's Newcastle University. *Off the Map*, has the very long but explanatory subtitle 'Lost Spaces, Invisible Cities, Forgotten Island, and What they Tell Us About the World'. The book was published by Aurum Press (London) in 2014. We have an enticing extract for you to read on page 5.

For readers who are researching family history and genealogy, we have a special recommendation. Carol Baxter's new book on tracking down surnames reveals the secrets of how English names have changed over time, and provides guidelines for finding those elusive names in online indexes.

For copies, go to

www.carolbaxter.com
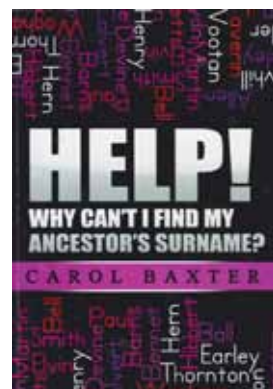
Placenames in the media

Microtoponyms have been a hot topic lately. Following Jan Tent's articles in our previous three issues, well-known cruciverbalist and language maven David Astle took up the challenge in his 'Wordplay' column for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. On 13th June David reported Jan's examples and invited readers to respond with more—which they did with some enthusiasm. Many fascinating contributions were sent to the *Herald* or to us at *Placenames Australia*, and on 1st August his column presented many of those microtoponyms. We recommend 'Wordplay' to those of our readers who have access to Saturday copies of the *Herald*.

Postscript on *Porepunkah*

Further information has come to the author's notice since the earlier publication of an article about the meaning of *Porepunkah* (*Placenames Australia*, March 2011). At that time, the meaning was attributed as *puwa* (head) + *pungga* (stone), or 'stone head'. The first element of this attribution now appears to warrant further scrutiny. While much of the context remains the same (namely, that the place is associated with men's business), this additional information means that either the placename has an alternative meaning, or that it may have had a dual meaning reflecting both topographic and cultural views—essentially a 'play on words' or cross-language homophone with an alternative meaning understood by the more initiated.

If we do not restrict ourselves to the recorded language data of the recognised local tribal group (which is limited at best), but additionally consider neighbouring language/s, further light is reflected on a possible meaning for the placename.

The earlier analysis considered only the Pallanganmiddang (or WayWurru) language. However, consideration of other languages recorded in the broader locality, namely Taungurung and Wiradjuri, presents strong alternative interpretations.

The realisation came about like this. With the help of a small group of Taungurung custodians, we were researching the meaning of the placename *Booerrgoen*. This locality lies some 100 km to the southwest of Porepunkah on the Goulburn River near Yea.

A search of known Taungurung wordlists provided no definitive answers, although *buur-an*[1] and *boorran*[4] are recorded as 'scar'.

Consulting the Wiradjuri wordlists, we find *gó-añ*[3] and *guuwayn*[2] = blood/(woman), leading to a proposed derivation:

   buur(-an) = scar + *guuwayn* = blood/(woman) → woman's scar.

At this point it is worth quoting from McNicol and Hosking:

> Whenever groups who speak different languages have prolonged contact, words are often borrowed into one or both languages... They are not incorrect because they did not originate in a particular language, and a language should not be judged to be impure or corrupted simply because it contains words from other languages.[2]

Although there was no hard evidence that such borrowing had occurred, it remained reasonable, as this attribution aligned well with the custodians' understanding that Booerrgoen was indeed a place of women's business, most probably a women's initiation site.

In Wiradjuri, we also find *buurrbang*[2] = ground and ceremony for making boys into men (literally, 'scar ground/place'?).

These discoveries led to a comparison with the case of *Porepunkah*, and the proposal of alternative parallel derivations for the placename (noting that *p/b* distinction is not significant):

   1. *buur(-an)* = scar + *pungga* = stone (man) → man's scar, or a place of male initiation; or
   2. *buurrbang* = scar ground/place(?) + *-ga* (Pallanganmiddang particle;[5] [possibly honorific?])

As well as providing layers of meaning to the more initiated, having attributions in more than one language may support the idea that the place was used by a wide-ranging multi-language/multi-lingual group of people for male initiation purposes. It may also indicate that cross-language borrowings created a kind of *lingua franca* across a wider area for trade or cultural purposes, and that it may be necessary to look further afield for meaning than initially thought. This strongly reinforces the importance of Walsh's criteria[6] of 'ownership' of a locality as guiding indigenous placenames research. Shared ownership makes it even more complex.

Carol Sonogan

Endnotes

[1] Healy, L. (for Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation), *Taungurung*, p. 91. Fitzroy, Vic.: Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, 2011.

[2] McNicol, S. and D. Hosking, 'Wiradjuri'. In Thieberger, N. and McGregor, W. *Macquarie Aboriginal Words*, pp. 79-99. Sydney: Macquarie Library, 1994.

[3] Mathews, R.H., *The Wiradyuri and other Languages of New South Wales*. pp. 284-305. London: Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, [1904?].

[4] Blake, B.J., 'Woiwurrung, the Melbourne language'. In Dixon, R.M.W. and B.J. Blake, *Handbook of Australian Languages*, vol. 4, p.107. Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia, 1991.

[5] Blake, Barry J and Julie Reid, 'Pallanganmiddang: a language of the Upper Murray'. *Aboriginal History*, vol. 23, 1999. Canberra: Aboriginal History Inc.

[6] Walsh, Michael, 'Transparency versus opacity in Aboriginal placenames'. In L. Hercus, F. Hodges and J. Simpson, eds, *The Land is a Map: Placenames of Indigenous Origin in Australia*, pp. 43-49. Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2002.

How Kamilaroi words became placenames...

Fifteen creeks, tributaries of Port Hacking Creek in The National Park (later Royal National Park) south of Sydney, in the country of Dharawal-speaking people, were given Aboriginal names in the 1880s by the trustees. They were first published in the Annual Report of the Park for 1885-1886 in a table headed: 'Name of Brook in the language of the Aborigines of Australia adopted'.[1] Fourteen of the names are of birds and one is of a bee. These words did not come from the local Dharawal language, even though there were many speakers alive at the time who could have provided local bird names or even the original names of the creeks. The name of *Bola Creek*, near the fifteen newly named creeks, appears to predate 1885 and may be a genuine Dharawal placename.

Palona Cave, Royal National Park--named after the Kamilaroi word for 'hawk'. Photo: Ross Ellis (Sydney Speleological Society)

Thirteen of the fifteen words chosen for the 'brooks' are from the Kamilaroi language and were taken from the book *Kamilaroi and other Australian Languages* by the Rev William Ridley. The second edition of this book was published in 1875. Thirteen of the creek names, with their meanings, appear on pages 20-22. Ridley defined the area where the Kamilaroi language was spoken as: 'the Namoi, Barwan, Bundarra, and Balonne Rivers, and of the Liverpool Plains and the Upper Hunter.' The two names that were not from Ridley's Kamilaroi vocabulary are found elsewhere in his book. *Dirijiri* for 'wagtail' is from the Wailwun language, which Ridley defined as 'spoken on the Barwan, below the junction of the Namoi.'[2] *Murrindum* for 'quail' is from the

Dippil language. Ridley wrote: 'The Aborigines about Durundurun, on the north side of Moreton Bay, and those toward Wide Bay and the Burnett District speak Dippel.'[3]

As these regions are many hundreds of kilometres from The National Park, why were words from such distant languages used instead of the Dharawal language, a word list for which is also in Ridley's book? It would appear that the trustee who was given the task of coming up with the Aboriginal words wanted to use mainly names for birds, and Ridley's 'Turuwul' vocabulary includes names for only three bird species.

It is of interest that the Kamilaroi word for 'bee' was included in a list where all the other words were for birds, especially as there are many bird species names from the Kamilaroi vocabulary that were not used. The choice of this word, and the two non-Kamilaroi words, may have been on the basis that other alternatives were not as 'euphonious' in the opinion of the compiler of the list. Another anomaly is that two of the bird species listed, *Burowa* ('Bustard') and *Buralga* ('native companion' or 'brolga') do not occur in the National Park.

The first published guidebook to The National Park, in 1893, listed the new creek names with their meanings, but the small map included in the book did not show their locations.[4] Only two of the named creeks (Palona and Karani) were shown on the maps included with the subsequent editions of the guidebook, between 1902 and 1918. All fifteen creeks could only be shown on a large-scale map such as one published in 1928.[5]

The process of moving Aboriginal words from the areas where they were originally spoken to serve as placenames in other areas is regrettable. The most prolific practitioner of this translocation of names in New South Wales was conservationist and cartographer Myles Dunphy (1891-1985), who used many hundreds of Aboriginal words, from all over Australia, as place names on his sketch maps.[6] These words were mainly sourced from issues of the popular anthropological journal *Science of Man*.

...in Dharawal country

Due to his influential position as a member of the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales, he was able to have a majority of these gazetted as official place names. Some of Dunphy's Aboriginal placenames came to be used within The National Park. In the 1930s, Dunphy's bushwalking group, the Mountain Trails Club, in association with the Sydney Bushwalkers Club, obtained a lease over 75 ha of land at Heathcote, to the east of, and adjacent to, The National Park. This became the core of the Heathcote Primitive Area gazetted in 1943. Prior to this, Dunphy had published *A Sketch Map of Heathcote Creek and Yarrawarra Heights Etc.* in 1940.[7] This map showed scores of translocated Aboriginal words as placenames surrounding Heathcote Creek. He also felt that the western side of The National Park had too many unnamed places and so he provided a suite of names for features in what he called the Yarrawarra Heights area of the Park. Linguists today could take particular exception to his hyphenated placenames, where two words from different languages are combined, such as in *Melinga-molong Creek*.

As there are now much more detailed Dharawal vocabularies available, perhaps the Advisory Committee for Royal National Park and Heathcote National Park could recommend to the National Parks and Wildlife Service that present-day descendants of the Dharawal speaking people be asked if they would prefer to have these translocated placenames replaced with others in the local language.

Jim Smith

Endnotes

[1] Anonymous. 1886. National Park (Money Voted for and Spent Upon), *New South Wales Legislative Assembly, Votes and Proceedings*, 1885-6, Volume A6:145-148. This report also includes an announcement of the adoption of five non-Aboriginal placenames in the park.

[2] Ridley: 49.

[3] Ridley: 65.

[4] Anonymous. 1893. *An Official Guide to The National Park of New South Wales.* Published by Authority of the Trustees, Sydney: New South Wales Government Printer: 33.

[5] Anonymous. 1928. *Map of The National Park, County of Cumberland New South Wales.* Sydney: Department of Lands, 2nd edition.

[6] Smith, Jim. 2006. 'William Cuneo and Myles Dunphy, two misguided nomenclaturists of the Blue Mountains'. *Placenames Australia*, March issue: 1, 4-5.

[7] Ten subsequent editions were published up to 1967. Dunphy added even more translocated Aboriginal words as placenames in his 1967 *Map of Heathcote Primitive Area.* Compiled and Published by Heathcote Primitive Area Trust. Dunphy was a member of this Trust.

The elusive Sandy Island

SANDY ISLAND
19 12′ 44″ S; 159 56′ 21″ E

The discovery of the non-existence of places is an intriguing byway in the history of exploration. The most recent example came in 2012 when an Australian survey vessel visited Sandy Island, 700 miles east of Queensland, and found that it was not there. This despite the fact that a stretched-out oval fifteen miles long and about three miles wide had been on the map for almost as long as people had been charting these seas.

Breakers and sandy islets were first sighted here by a whaling ship called the *Velocity* in 1876. A few years later Sandy Island got a mention in an Australian naval directory. In 1908 its inclusion on a British Admiralty map of the area lent it even more legitimacy. But its dotted outline on this chart shows that it was being identified as a potential hazard and hinted that it needed further exploration. [But] far from being doubted, Sandy Island's credentials became ever more watertight. Having been inked in on an authoritative chart, it acquired the

status of a known fact and its myth was transmitted deep into the twentieth century and beyond. It was included in maps produced by the National Geographic Society and *The Times* and no one complained, or even noticed. It was also apparently captured by the satellites that many imagine are the sole feeders for Google Earth. Dr Maria Seton, who led the Australian survey team, explained to journalists that although the island is on Google Earth as well as other maps, navigation charts show the water to be 1,400 metres deep in the same spot: 'so we went to check and there was no island. We're really puzzled. It's quite bizarre.'

On 26 November 2012, Google Earth blacked out Sandy Island and later stitched over the spot with generic sea…

From:

Alastair Bonnett, *Off the Map* (London: Aurum Press, 2014), pp. 11-12

Other than the examples above illustrating nativisation of placenames through pronunciation, introduced English placenames in Australia largely have not changed in pronunciation since their introduction. Our history has not been long enough to allow for such changes to occur, and besides, our spelling system is very accommodating of movement to most pronunciation mutations.

Error is very often the engine of language mutation—today's 'mistake' may be tomorrow's vigorously defended norm. There are many examples of alternative pronunciations or missteps of words that have become standard usage. For instance: *an asp < a nasp*; *wasp < waps*; *bird < brid*.

An apposite example of a mutation brought about by mistake is *Ulimaroa*.[4] This name was applied to the Australian continent by various northern European late eighteenth to early nineteenth century cartographers (e.g. Djurberg, Sotzmann, Streit, Canzler, Von Reilly, Schneider, Plant, Reinecke, Ackerland and Mollo). *Ulimaroa* is also the name of a nineteenth century mansion on St Kilda Road, Melbourne, and in the early twentieth century, it was used for a railway siding in the Darling Downs (about 320 km west-north-west of Brisbane), as well as a Huddart Parker shipping company steamer. The name originates from the Māori *Ko Rimaroa*, their name for *Grand Terre*, the main island of New Caledonia. This was interpreted by the Tahitian chief, Tupai'a, on board James Cook's *Endeavour* and acting as an interpreter and pilot, as '*O Rimaroa* (the Tahitian way of saying it). Given the difficulty Europeans have in distinguishing between Polynesian *l* and *r* sounds, Cook and Joseph Banks then transcribed the name as *Olhemaroa* and *Olimaroa* respectively. Subsequently, John Hawkesworth, who was commissioned by the Admiralty to edit the journals of Cook and Banks from the 1769-1770 voyage, transcribed the name as *Ulimaroa*. This rendition was then used by Daniel Djurberg to mistakenly label the Australian continent on his 1776 map. Ultimately, Hawkesworth's incorrect spelling was applied to the railway siding, the Melbourne mansion and the Huddart Parker steamer. The current spelling of *Moreton Bay* is yet another example of Hawkesworth's errors. James Cook named the bay *Morton's Bay*, after Lord Morton, president of the Royal Society.

An example of a relatively recent pronunciation mutation of a toponym, though not of an introduced placename, is that of *Bonegilla*. I cite this example because its pronunciation mutation follows a natural process—much like the one that placenames in the Old World have undergone.

Bonegilla is a small location a few kilometres from Wodonga in Victoria, and was the site of the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre from 1947 to 1971. It is an indigenous name from the local Waywurru language, most likely meaning 'small island' (Clark & Heydon: 37). Sluga (1987) notes the name had always been pronounced /bohn-ˈgil-uh/ [boʊnˈgɪlə]. However, the European migrants who went through the centre gave the name a European spelling-pronunciation viz. /bon-uh-ˈgil-uh/ [bɒnəˈgɪlə] (See also: Larkin, 2009; Pennay 2008, 2010). Persian (2012: 37) declares that Sluga's observation influenced the ABC's Standing Committee on Spoken English (SCOSE), which advises:

> '/bohn-ˈgil-uh/ is the pronunciation for Bonegilla, the town and Army base, but when referring to the migrant hostel, the name should be pronounced /bon-uh-ˈgil-uh/ because that's how the migrants pronounced the name' (Sluga, 1987: 42 cited by Persian, 2012: 37).

Modern sculpture at Bonegilla Migrant Camp (photo: Wikimedia Common - Mattinbgn)

My own observations tend to confirm this. Locals of the district still pronounce the name /bohn-ˈgil-uh/ [boʊnˈgɪlə] and a few /bohn-uh-ˈgil-uh/ [boʊnəˈgɪlə], whilst ex-Migrant Centre residents say /bon-uh-ˈgil-uh/ [bɒnəˈgɪlə]. This was also confirmed by the local residents I questioned. They also declared that 'outsiders' tend to pronounce it as the ex-Migrant Centre residents do. One can only speculate as to the reason for this, but perhaps the migrants who went through the centre then spread far and wide throughout Australia and thus promulgated their pronunciation of this not widely-known placename.

...placenames

The topic of 'outsider' pronunciations reminds me of the *Jervis Bay* case. Indeed, Alan Clark wrote a piece in *Placenames Australia* in 2006 on this very topic. In it he outlined the various opinions and theories as to the pronunciation of the name *Jervis*; is it /ˈjah-vuhs/ or /ˈjer-vuhs/? I add the following to Alan's notes: the ABC (ABC, 1957: 61), declares /ˈjah-vuhs/ [ˈdʒɑvəs] is the pronunciation of non-residents of the township, whilst locals pronounce the name 'correctly' as /ˈjer-vuhs/ [ˈdʒɜvəs]. 'Correctly' is the adverb used because the Bay was named after Admiral John Jervis (1735–1823) whose name was supposedly pronounced /ˈjer-vuhs/ [ˈdʒɜvəs] (Miller, 1971). A possible reason why 'outsiders' pronounce the name as /ˈjah-vuhs/ may be that placenames in Britain like *Berkeley* and *Berkshire* are pronounced as /ˈbahk-li/ and /ˈbahk-shuh/ (except in North America where more phonetic pronunciations were adopted, i.e. /ˈberk-li/ and /ˈberk-shuyr/).[5]

Our eagle-eyed Editor, David, concludes the *Jervis* debate with the words: 'I suspect the truth about it nowadays is that the Navy still calls it /ˈjah-vuhs/ while everyone else (locals plus outsiders) call it /ˈjer-vuhs/.'

Only time will tell which pronunciations will prevail.

Jan Tent

Endnotes

[1] For example: *Londinium, Lundinium* > *London*; *Aemstelredamme* > *Amsterdam*; *Køpmannæhafn* > *København* (Copenhagen); *ʾΑθῆναι* > *ʾΑθήνα* (Athens); *(Rušalim ?)* > *Urušalim* > *Yerushalem/Yerushalayim* (Jerusalem) etc.

[2] The Fijian language does not permit consonant clusters, and like many African languages, its voiced plosives /b/, /d/ and /g/ are all prenasalised (i.e. they are preceded by a homorganic nasal consonant) and are considered to be single sounds, thus the letters *b*, *d*, and *g* are pronounced as [ᵐb], [ⁿd] (that's why *Nadi* is spelled without an *n*), and [ᵑg] (the latter as in *finger*]. Since English doesn't have prenasalised plosive sounds, we spell out the nasal, thus we native *Lakeba* as *Lakemba*. And that's why *London* is spelled *Lodoni* in Fijian.

[3] Up until the twentieth century the name *Maria* was usually pronounced /muh-ˈruy-uh/ in Britain; however, during the twentieth century the popularity of this pronunciation was eclipsed by the Italian, Spanish and Portuguese pronunciation /muh-ˈri-uh/.

[4] For a full account of the origin of this toponym see: Tent, Jan & Paul Geraghty (2012). 'Where in the world is *Ulimaroa*? Or how a Pacific island became the Australian continent'. *Journal of Pacific History*, 47 (1): 1-20. For an abridged version see: Geraghty, Paul & Jan Tent (2010). 'Two unusual names for the Australian continent. Part II'. *Placenames Australia*, June: 4-7. <http://anps.org.au/documents/June_2010.pdf>

[5] An analogous case is the British and General American pronunciation of clerk, /klahk/ [klɑk] vs /klerk/ [klɜk] respectively.

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News from the GNB...

Barangaroo is an inner-city suburb of Sydney, now being redeveloped from shipping and stevedoring facilities to a commercial and recreational area. The NSW Geographical Names Board has recently announced five new names for features within the precinct.

Nawi Cove: *nawi* is an Aboriginal word of the Sydney language, for the bark canoe used on the harbour.

Watermans Cove: honouring the boatmen who were integral to early transport on the harbour.

Marrinawi Cove: *marrinawi* ('big canoe, big ship') is a word created by the Aboriginal people of Sydney to describe the First Fleet ship *Sirius* and other sailing ships.

Dukes Pier: a pier located within Nawi Cove, recalling the old Duke's Wharf on the original headland.

Rowntrees Dock: a dock within Nawi Cove, with the name recalling the old Rowntrees Floating Dock, a major 19th Century wharf that was located nearby.

The first four names were chosen from a shortlist created in consultation with key stakeholders of the precinct. The fifth was selected after a public vote for a series of other Barangaroo locations to be named.

Vanity toponyms and property prices...

Does your house attract a higher resale value if your suburb has an attractive name? This question has some relevance in cities like Sydney or Melbourne where rapidly rising real estate values provide a lively topic for dinner-party discussion. There are several studies which indicate that the suggestion might have some reality.

Eddy (2010) presents evidence for vanity placenames influencing sale prices in Sydney's suburban residential market. The research showed a large differential in median sale price between Sylvania and Sylvania Waters in favour of the latter, and significant year-on-year growth in prices following the renaming of Harbord to *Freshwater*. Another study (Extension Co., 2012) focused on new estates in the Greater Melbourne area: the consultancy surveyed recent purchasers, and found that the estate name was an influential factor for 64% of respondents. The respondents had a higher preference for sophisticated or higher order emotive descriptions for the estate name over commonly used emotive descriptions, and if the name reflected features not present within the estate, the emotive response and subsequent attraction to the estate was reduced.

Why would such an effect be present? Kostanski (2009) discusses the theory of toponymic attachment, the process whereby a person forms an emotional bond with a toponym, separate from that formed with the place. This attachment is thought to extend beyond those places a person has known physically, and this emotive response to the toponyms of personally unknown places forms the basis of further inquiry. This belief in a place's attractiveness, applied through the toponym, is what makes a vanity place name.

In order to find some quantitative data which might support those previous results, I investigated sale prices of residential properties in the Sydney Greater Capital City Statistical Area. Observations were taken of property sales for 70 suburbs across a period of 18 months. The study was limited to government-recorded sales of detached houses.

1   The study

Land and Property Information is the state government division responsible for collecting, collating and integrating property information in NSW. Property sale information is made available through authorised property sales information resellers. Three thousand and thirty observations on property sales from July 2012 through December 2013 were taken from authorised value-added reseller <onthehouse.com.au>. Three categories of vanity suburb within the Sydney Greater Capital City Statistical Area were sampled: those containing 'Heights' as part of a compound suburb name (Table 1); those containing 'Gardens' as part of the name (Table 2); and those considered to have an attractive name within the set of nearby suburbs (Table 3). Two issues are inherent in this type of study: spatial dependency, where the variation in prices is a function of distance; and spatial heterogeneity, where model functional forms and parameters vary with location.

Category	Suburb Name (Vanity Name)
Heights	Balgowlah (Heights)
	Berowra (Heights)
	Bonnyrigg (Heights)
	Burwood (Heights)
	Erina (Heights)
	Fairfield (Heights)
	Hornsby (Heights)
	Killcare (Heights)
	Kurrajong (Heights)
	Padstow (Heights)
	Peakhurst (Heights)
	Revesby (Heights)
	Woronora (Heights)

Table 1: Sydney suburb names with 'Heights'

Hannonen (2008) outlines methods to address these issues: the inclusion of explanatory variables that are a function of distance; and the division of the dataset into sensible sub-markets. Given the tendency for labour markets within Australian capital cities to be concentrated around a central business district, the inclusion of explanatory variables that are a function of distance is a sensible approach and often used (Abelson et al., 2013; Hansen, 2006). However the procedure of identifying sub-markets is one that is rarely seen. Many analyses of the kind we are discussing here—that is, those which examine 'the pleasantness effect in values'—are performed across a large sample of suburbs, using median values for price, bedrooms, bathrooms, etc. This results in a scarcity of observations for each sub-market, rendering the procedure inappropriate. As the analysis contained in this study is at a unit level, it is less prone to

...in Sydney suburbs

Category	Vanity Toponym	Adjacent Suburbs
Gardens	Acacia Gardens	Glenwood, Kings Langley, Kings Park, Parklea, Quakers Hill
	Cambridge Gardens	Cambridge Park, Cranebrook, Penrith, Werrington Downs
	Stanhope Gardens	Glenwood, Kellyville, Kellyville Ridge, Parklea

Table 2: Sydney suburb names with 'Gardens'

the scarcity issue. Nine sub-markets are identified based on the sample suburbs proximity to each other.

Figure 1 (below) provides a visual representation of each sampled suburb by vanity suburb category, and the identified sub-markets.

2   The results

A linear regression model was used to test the data, with various levels of testing. All explanatory variables were significant at a 1% significance level.

The estimated vanity toponym parameters revealed that the inclusion of 'Heights' or 'Gardens' as an element

	Vanity Toponym	Adjacent Suburbs
Other	Breakfast Point	Cabarita, Concord, Concord West, Mortlake
	Claremont Meadows	Kingswood, Orchard Hills, St Marys, Werrington
	Picnic Point	Panania, Revesby, Revesby Heights
	Pleasure Point	East Hills, Panania, Sandy Point, Voyager Point
	Summer Hill	Ashbury, Croydon, Dulwich Hill, Haberfield, Hurlstone Park, Leichhardt, Lewisham, Petersham
	Wattle Grove	Hammondville, Holsworthy, Moorebank

Table 3: Other Sydney vanity toponyms

of the placename had no effect on the sale price of residential properties. However, the model does predict that if a toponym is considered attractive within the set of nearby suburbs, this will result in an increase in sale price of 7.8% on average, with a 99% confidence interval of 2.53%-13.34%.
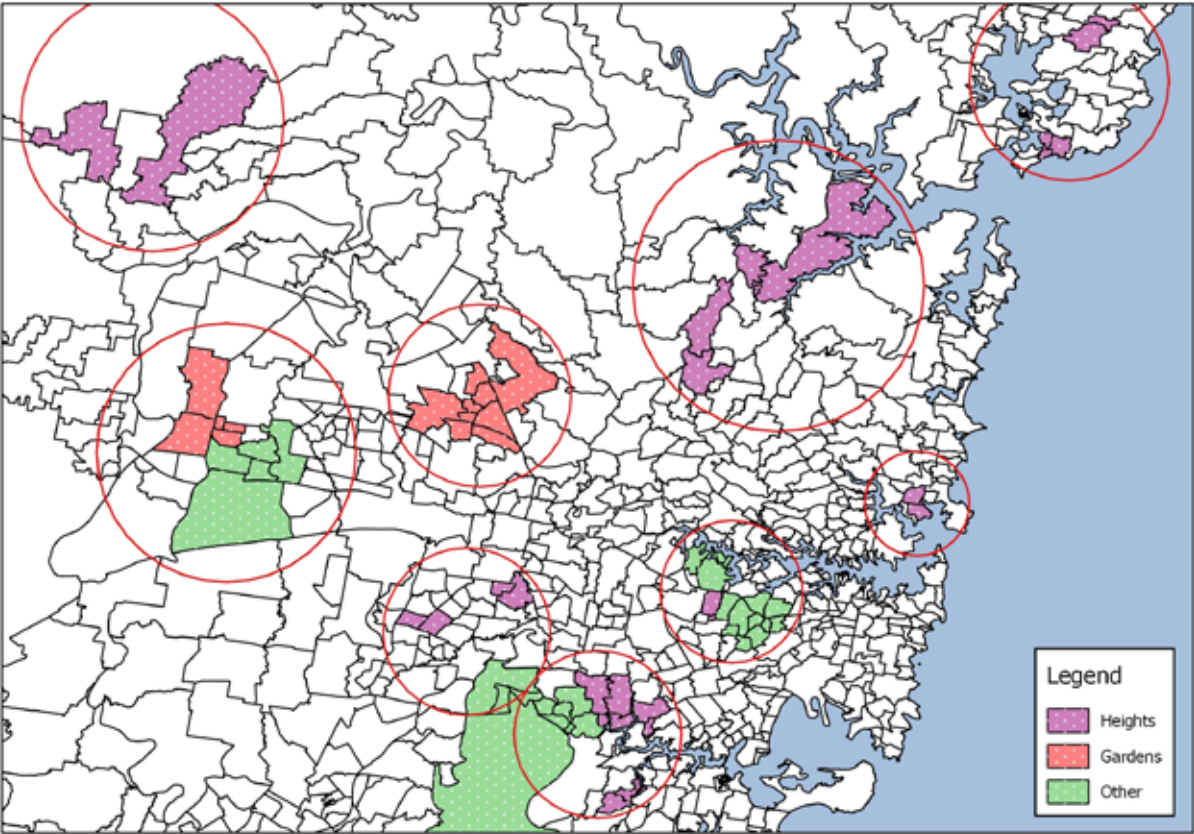

Figure 1. Sydney region (state suburbs): Localities by vanity suburb category with sub-markets.

Lord Howe Island: a placenames dictionary

Placenames Report No. 3

The third e-publication in our series *ANPS Placenames Reports* is now available. This Report deals with the toponyms of Lord Howe Island, an island in the Pacific Ocean about 700 kilometres north-east of Sydney. The first recorded sighting of the island was on 17 February 1788, and the process of naming began on that date.
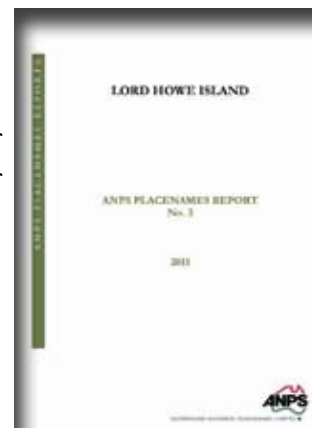
Each listed toponym is documented, usually by printed sources, and where possible a summary of its naming process is given. A brief extract from the Report, left, shows entries for names including earlier forms of the toponym, **Howe Island** and **Howe's Island**.

Copies of this Report and the two preceding publications in the series can be freely downloaded from our website at:

www.anps.org.au/publications4.html

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3   Conclusion

As Kostanski (2009) reports, people do form emotional bonds with toponyms, even with those which they have not physically experienced. And this study found empirical evidence to support Kostanski's theory. However, the effect of vanity toponyms was limited to those which are attractive as a whole; it did not apply to those which contain only an attractive word in the compound suburb name.

Linear regression was unable to address both the spatial dependency and spatial heterogeneity problems when applied to this dataset. Spatial heterogeneity was addressed through sub-market specific intercepts; however, more sophisticated techniques including the use of a spatial lag or spatial error model may be capable of addressing both. It is also possible that using median level data as in Abelson et al. (2013) could refine the findings of this analysis.

There is always room for further research in matters such as these. In particular, the interaction between toponyms that have a high 'pleasantness' rating and toponyms for suburbs with high prestige value is worthy of investigation.

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SYMPOSIUM:
PLACES AND PLACE NAMES

FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2015

10am to 4pm

Humanities Room 121

Flinders University, Adelaide

Guest Speaker:
Dr Alice Gorman
'Placenames in Outer Space'

Further enquiries:

Dr Dymphna Lonergan, Director ANPS
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<dymphna.lonergan@flinders.edu.au>

The Symposium will be followed by:

the Annual General Meeting of
Placenames Australia (Inc)

Placenames Puzzle Number 55

A Veritable Pantheon of Toponyms

It is common to name celestial bodies after Greek or Roman gods - not so common for terrestial locations in Australia. The following clues reveal places named after Roman (Rom.) or Greek (Gr.) gods.

e.g. (TAS) A creek after Rom. god of strength... Hercules Creek [Compiled by: Jan Tent]

1. (VIC) Bay, after Rom. god of poetry, music and oracles
2. (NSW) A Sydney parish, after Rom. god of war
3. (WA) River, after Rom. goddess of the river where the gods swear oaths
4. (Aust. Antarctic Territory) Glacier, after Gr. goddess of revenge
5. (NSW) Location of the outlet of the Murrumbidgee-Eucumbene tunnel in the Snowy Mountains; after the Rom. goddess of forethought
6. (SA) Island, after Rom. goddess of wisdom, war and the arts
7. (NSW) Creek, after Gr. god of the underworld
8. (TAS) Creek, after the Rom. goddess of the hearth
9. (QLD) A parish, after Gr. goddess of women and marriage
10. (WA) Island, after Rom. god of the forge, fire and blacksmiths
11. (VIC) Melbourne suburb, after Rom. god of wine, sensual pleasures and truth
12. (SA, VIC) Bay, after Rom. goddess of love
13. (QLD) Town, after Rom. Queen of the Dead and grain-goddess
14. (TAS) Lake, after Rom. god of the sea
15. (NSW) Headland, after Rom. Queen of the Gods and goddess of matrimony
16. (SA) Township, after Rom. goddess of agreement, understanding and marital harmony
17. (VIC) Creek, after Rom. ruler of the dead
18. (QLD) Reef, after Rom. King of the Gods
19. (AAT) Island, after Rom. god of agriculture and plenty
20. (SA) Lake, after Rom. goddess of the moon

1. Apollo Bay
2. Field of Mars
3. Styx River
4. Nemesis Glacier
5. Providence Portal
6. Minerva Island
7. Hades Creek
8. Lake Vesta
9. (Parish of) Hera
10. Vulcan Island
11. Bacchus Marsh
12. Venus Bay
13. Proserpine
14. Lake Neptune
15. Juno Point
16. Concordia
17. Pluto Creek
18. Jupiter Reef
19. Saturn Island
20. Loch Luna

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