**". . . here is an Asylum open . . ."**


**Constructing a Culture of Government Care in Australia 1801 – 2014**


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(Signed):……………………………………….

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## Editorial Notes

This thesis has been written and formatted to meet the requirements of the History Discipline in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Newcastle. The Discipline requires candidates to use the 'Chicago' bibliographic conventions as outlined by Kate L Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 6th edition, 1996). The 'Chicago' style does not use *ibid.*, *op.cit.* and similar notations.

For non-bibliographical conventions such as capitalisation and hyphenation, the thesis has been guided by the Commonwealth of Australia's *Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers* (Canberra: John Wiley & Sons, 6th edition, 2002).

Name of Professional Editor
Michael Darley

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**Synopsis**

This thesis explores the history and heritage of the Newcastle Government Domain from its origins in the first European settlement at Newcastle in 1801 to its uncertain present as a largely vacated site of mental health care. The Domain is a significant holding of land at the centre of a growing urban area which has remained unalienated from the imperial, colonial and now state government because it has been seen as an asset to be applied to solving a series of contemporary challenges. Drawing upon public records, works of art and newspaper reports, the shifting uses of the Domain from centre of local administration, to military base, girls' reformatory and asylum are traced demonstrating how the site contributed to meeting the responsibility for caring for the residents of New South Wales which fell to its governments. It is argued that rather than careful planning, decisions about the use of the Domain were largely the result of outside pressures. This is followed through in detail with regard to the establishment on the site in 1871 of an Asylum for Idiots and Imbeciles. A close reading of the extant records of this institution reveal that for several years, it served mainly as a repository for long term residents of older asylums. Only in the 1890s did it become populated by the intellectually disabled. Although it was an "accidental asylum", the site was well suited to its purpose and has successfully hosted mental health services through to the present day. Its fraught transition from active health care campus to heritage site is traced to explore contemporary issues in heritage, in particular the rising interest in cultural landscapes, the role of interdisciplinary non-governmental organisations in heritage advocacy and the possibility of overtly recognising the positive benefits of heritage conservation for mental wellbeing at this and other sites. The Newcastle Asylum represented a new form of care in the colony of NSW and as such needs to form part of the cultural heritage of Newcastle because it contributed significantly to the social welfare of people in New South Wales.

**Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| AA Company | Australian Agricultural Company |
| HRNSW | Historical Records of New South Wales |
| NGD | Newcastle Government Domain |
| NSW | New South Wales |
| SHR | State Heritage Register |
| RNE | Register of the National Estate |
| NHL | National Heritage List |
| CRWP | Coal River Working Party |

# Chapter 1 : Introduction

An essential role of the imperial government in New South Wales (NSW) and of the colonial government in NSW as it developed was to care for the people of the colony.  Because of the dependent status of the majority of the first settlers, as well as the social structures of extended family and organised philanthropy, this public caring role was developed earlier and more extensively in NSW Australia than in the United Kingdom.  The significant needs of people of NSW in the first decades of colonisation, required urgent interventions by colonial and imperial governments. Thus a culture of Government responsibility and intervention developed and was strengthened by opening institutions for them.

The theme constructing a culture of government care in Australia explores how the land reserved for government use in central Newcastle, known as the Newcastle Government Domain (NGD) was a space that authorities would lay the groundwork setting up a place where care would develop and contribute to welfare history from 1801 to 2014. This research is a case study that demonstrates how this space was applied to a series of uses in the colonial period, all of which were components of this caring role. Although the form varied widely, care and caring have been constants in the European use of the NGD to the current day. Care can be interpreted several ways. In this thesis 'care' is not limited to a contemporary usage related to the general meaning of care but used in a more limited sense.  Specifically, it relates to the responsibility of government authorities to provide genuine consideration and provision for the needs of the people of NSW.  This extends to the intentions of the governments to provide care and implement interventions that were thought to have social benefits. This broad interpretation of care is applied to the three main phases of use at the Newcastle Domain.

The first phase is the early colonial period 1801 to the 1860s when the Domain was a place of administration of the penal settlement and then an Imperial military site. During this time it was used for public administration and defence.  These public functions and the physical structures built to facilitate them helped to set up the Domain as a space where care would be later directly implemented. This was the second phase whereby in 1867 the Reformatory for Girls and the Girls' Industrial School were established followed in 1871 by the establishment of a mental asylum.  The asylum offered a new form of care in the colony, one which opened up the site to the wider community, allowing inmates to become socialised with the wider world. This function of psychiatric care continues up until 2014.  The third phase of caring at the Domain focuses on the site as part of Newcastle's cultural heritage landscape. The significance of the site lies in its long history of providing care; the site itself now requires care to conserve its significance; and the Domain can offer the social benefits associated with heritage.   Embedded at the Domain is a culture of care.

Caring was grounded in place at the NGD, creating a multi-layered heritage site of national significance in the heart of Australia's seventh largest city. Once dedicated to public purposes it was the answer to many of the colony's problems. The various uses that played out at the Domain is evident of the caring culture that developed in NSW. Although State intervention could be seen as authorities exercising social control over deviant members

of colonial society, this thesis argues that the institutions at the NGD were genuinely about care rather than solely for the purpose of social control. Governmental action was necessary because there were minimal supports in place, such as charitable organisations or social networks. Authorities in NSW acknowledged the desperate needs of people and initiated programs to improve their well-being. What developed was a strong culture of government intervention and provision of care, a culture that continues today and is particularly evident in the area of health care.

The three phases of caring at the Domain are best understood when placed in their wider context of coal mining, convictism and asylums. The general historiography of these topics in Australia is well developed but few studies have focused on their local manifestations in Newcastle.[1] By offering a contextualised case study of the NGD, this thesis strengthens support for the conservation of this and other Australian government heritage places where caring was a core function. The following timeline shows the many uses at the NGD from 1801 to 2014.

Timeline
Uses of the NGD from 1801 to 2014:

| Year | Use |
| --- | --- |
| 1801 | Domain site possibly used by first Europeans to attempt settlement at Coal River when coal was found in the area. |
| 1804 – 1823 | Centre of local administration for Newcastle secondary penal settlement; site of coal mining |
| 1823-1830s | Site of civil administration for free town of Newcastle after withdrawal of convict establishment |
| 1841 - 1851 | Military barracks |
| 1851 - 1867 | Government department offices and depots; offices of A.A. Company |
| 1860 | Newcastle Volunteer Rifles |
| 1867 – 1871 | Girls' Industrial School |
| 1869 - 1871 | Reformatory for Girls |
| 1871 – 2014 | Psychiatric Hospital |

The mental health institution at Newcastle has had numerous name changes since 1871 and today continues to function for the purpose of mental health care. The following shows the numerous names changes to the institution located at the NGD:

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[1] Michael Pearson and Duncan Marshall, "Study of World Heritage Values Convict Places" (Canberra: Department of Environment, Sport and Territories, 1995).

**Names of the Mental Health Institution at the Newcastle Domain1871- 2014**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1871 - 1878 | Lunatic Asylum for Imbeciles and Institution for Idiots. |
| 1879 - 1915 | Newcastle Hospital for the Insane |
| 1916 - 1945 | Mental Hospital, Newcastle |
| 1946 - 1962 | Newcastle Mental Hospital |
| 1962 - 1983 | Newcastle Psychiatric Centre (also known as Watt Street Mental Hospital) |
| 1983 - 1989 | Hunter Hospital |
| 1989 | James Fletcher Hospital |

This thesis aims to contribute to knowledge about government care in Australia. Firstly, the thesis aims to enhance understanding of smaller regional asylums in Australia that have not been extensively researched. The NGD offers evidence of the development of mental health care and reflects the changes to it: from moral care to medical care; and from residential to outpatient care. Because of restrictions on access to sources related to mental health records this study does not look closely at the twentieth century.

The thesis also aims to raise awareness and understanding of how government heritage sites have contributed to care in Australia. Many government heritage places like the NGD have contributed to the Australian landscape and community psyche and only a dwindling number of these places continue to survive in public ownership in Australia.  This stigma continues today whereby members of the community perceive the NGD to be 'out of bounds' and a cause of unease because of its long association with mental illness. The NGD has only recently been officially recognised by listing on the State Heritage Register of NSW (2011) [2], it remains unrecognised at a federal level despite being included in a national nomination in 2013.   The NGD is one of the few government heritage places in Australia which provides a physical record of experimentation in the development of a strong culture of government care.

The site is well suited to such an investigation because of its continuous use for mental health care through almost a century and a half of changing approaches, priorities and understandings.   While the sites of other colonial asylums have been deemed no longer suitable for psychiatric care, the NGD has survived as a symbol of hope for current government 'care' institutions and services in Australia. The end of one function did not mean the sell-off or demolition of the site but rather a transition to a new use. Although they may not have been a success straight away, over time they did provide the building blocks for a better health care system.   Through an examination of the longer European history of the NGD, this thesis aims to separate it from its identification with mental health care, placing it in a context of other caring functions. This will also open up new conversations about how government heritage places can be used in the future; suggesting ongoing adaptive reuse for public purposes with recognition of the history of the site rather than the current model of leases for private development.

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[2] Office of Environment and Heritage, "Newcastle Government House & Domain"Accessed November 2013.http://www.Heritage.nsw.Gov.Au/07_Subnav_04_2.Cfm?Itemid=5060998," NSW Government.

Asylums were traditionally in out of the way places in NSW. The first insane asylum in NSW was at Castle Hill in 1811 where the town gaol was used to care for the insane. Following this the Liverpool Court House was used as a new government asylum in 1825.[3] A purpose built insane asylum was not completed in NSW until the Tarban Creek Lunatic Asylum opened in 1844.  Tarban Creek (Gladesville) was quite some distance from the main town centres of Sydney and Parramatta.  Asylums were sited in out of the way places in NSW.  The Newcastle Asylum was an exception to this rule.  When it was established in 1871, it was not an institution dislocated from its local community but rather as an integral part of it.  Similarly, this study will not examine the asylum as a separate space but as one occupant of a key parcel of public land located at the physical and symbolic centre of inner Newcastle.  Opening a city located asylum is an innovative approach because over time, the asylum was increasingly isolated. It was literally hidden behind high brick walls and for well over a century has been considered as a separate and private place.  The stigma of mental illness during the twentieth century impacted on perceptions of colonial asylums as people assumed that contemporary practices must have assumed even more sinister form in earlier times.   Public unease with the association of the site with mental health care has become a great obstacle to public recognition of the historical significance.  While the gates stand open and anyone is free to visit the site, concern not to intrude or anxiety about what might be seen or heard mean that the Domain is still regarded as a place which is out of bounds. By drawing attention to how relations between residents of the site and the surrounding city were conducted, insights can be gained which may be useful in thinking about a new, more open mental health care paradigm in Australia.

The rise in the incidence of mental illness and a new emphasis on preventative and monitoring signs and symptoms to prevent acute episodes, as well as care in the community, the emergence of new knowledge about former institutions and how care was implemented for those suffering mental illness in the nineteenth century is timely. The Newcastle Asylum was an open and active home for many chronic and incurable cases and authorities established structures both tangible and intangible to assist people living with mental challenges. This history of government 'care', particularly at the Newcastle Asylum, points to more effective ways to address the current crisis in Australia's mental health system. The James Fletcher Hospital at the Government Domain is a symbol of the growing call for a change in the way that mental health services are implemented in Australia.

The aims of this thesis can only be achieved by undertaking a comprehensive investigation of the NGD that looks at all of the histories associated with the place.   A brief introduction to the establishment of Newcastle provides necessary background to the history of the site.

**Establishing the Newcastle Settlement**

After having established the principal settlement at Sydney in 1788, exploration proceeded in all directions to locate fertile soil, navigable rivers and other resources which would be useful to the colony.  The mouth of the Hunter River was noted in 1797 as Lieutenant John Shortland sought escaped convicts. The first attempt to settle this port in 1801 was short lived due to poor management. The area was resettled in 1804 as a place for reoffending convicts after the Castle

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[3] Stephen Garton, *Medicine and Madness: A Social History of Insanity in New South Wales 1880 - 1940*. (Australia: NSW University Press, 1988), 18. Cyril Joseph Cummins, *A History of Medical Administration in NSW 1788 – 1973*, 2nd ed. (Sydney: New South Wales Department of Health, 2003), 35.

Hill uprising and it remained the centre of secondary punishment in the colony until 1823 with coal as well as timber and lime being produced in the settlement. Newcastle was settled because of the resources of the area such as cedar and coal. Newcastle is the site of Australia's first discovery of coal in 1791, the first export of coal in 1799, and the first 'return' or profit in 1801.[4]  Coal was scarce in the colony so when it was found at Newcatle it was settled almost immediately, it is the birthplace of the colony's export economy.  The port and its facilities become important infractructure. During this time, the NGD was the site of authority in the settlement, occupying high ground at the top of the principal thoroughfare and serving as the home of the Newcastle commandant.  The NGD became the site of a military barracks in the early 1840s and after the departure of the Imperial forces, the buildings were occupied by a range of government offices. The existing infrastructure allowed for the implementation of new policies and initiatives relating first to the conduct of the penal settlement and later to the security of the coal port and then shifted more overtly to the care of vulnerable groups in the late 1860s when an Girls Industrial School and the Reformatory for Girls used the site.[5]  They were succeeded by the Newcastle Asylum for Imbeciles and Idiots in 1871.  Many of the military buildings continue to be used for the purpose of mental health care to the present time. Other buildings are empty.

## Location of the Newcastle Government Domain

Newcastle is approximately one hundred and seventy kilometres north of Sydney, Australia.
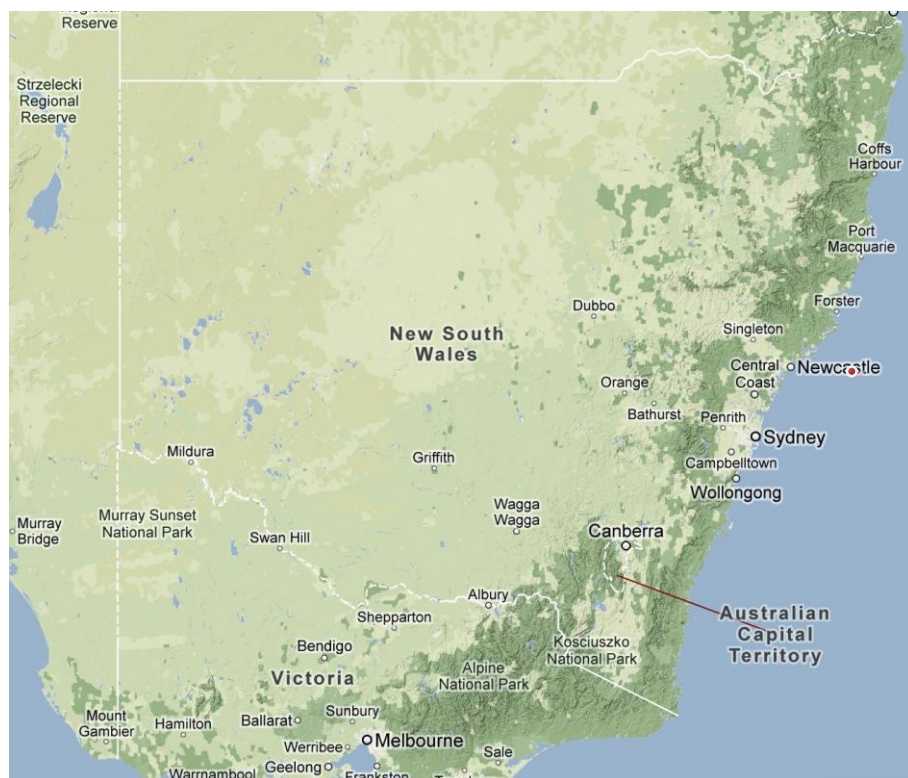


**Figure 1.1.** Map showing State of New South Wales and location of Newcastle
Source: Map data 2013 Google, *Whereis* (R), Sensis Pty Ltd.

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4 Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Coal Industry (New South Wales), p 50. Accessed January http://search.records.nsw.gov.au/agencies/4978. Letter from Mr John Thomson to Captain Schanck, H.R.N.S.W., Vol. III (September 8 , 1799): pp. 716 – 718.
5 John Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes: Destitute and Neglected Children in Colonial New South Wales* (Sydney:New South Wales University Press,1986), 112.

The Government Domain is located on a gentle slope overlooking the entrance to the Hunter River and Nobbys Island to the north. To the east is the Pacific Ocean where there are tall cliffs that run alongside the Domain and south to Shepherd's Hill. These cliffs were once part of the Nobbys Tuff, cream and grey layered consolidated volcanic ash that had formed above the coal seam. Although much of this has eroded over millions of years, it is still evident in the cliffs east of the Domain, and Shepherds Hill a few hundred metres away to the south west.[6] The Domain is part of the north eastern side of Shepherd's Hill. The Domain, although near Shepherds Hill it was not considered part of 'The Hill'. However Sheperds Hill and the Domain shared a commonality in that both precincts are government owned and managed. The area was used by local Indigenous people, known as the 'Newcastle tribe', today they are referred to as Awabakal people. Indigenous people used the Upper Domain and *Khanterin* or South Shepherds Hill for ceremonial purposes.[7] This area was first used by Europeans for grazing sheep and is shown in artworks to have short native grasses, looking (as suggested by Bill Gammage) like many early Australian landscapes that were not unlike the pastures and parks of England.[8] This similarity meant that coastal environments such as the one at Newcastle that were not heavily wooded were able to immediately be used for agriculture.[9] The vegetation was sparse due to the sandy nature of the soil which best supported native honeysuckle and white gum trees.[10] A small valley behind the Domain to the south led down to an ocean rock platform that was later carved out to create a bathing hole for use by the Commandant of the settlement which became known as the Bogey Hole.[11] The view to the north and east from the Domain was ideal for observing vessels approaching the harbour at the entrance to the Hunter River.



**Figure 1.2** View of Newcastle Government Domain in 1820s. By Charles Martin 2013.

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[6] Roslyn Kerr, "In Search of Nobbys Tunnels: Report to Coal River Working Party, University of Newcastle, NSW"(Newcastle: University of Newcastle, October 2011).

[7] Henry Taylor Plews, *'on the Coalfields of New South Wales' North of England Institute of Mining Engineers*,
 ed., Vol Vil Vide Plan 2 , Section No 3, (London: North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, 1858).

[8] Bill Gammage, *The Biggest Estate on Earth:How Aborigines Made Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2011).

[9] M H  Ellis, *A Saga of Coal* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson 1969 ),17.

[10] John Marquet Blaxland, "Journal Commencing July 14th 1821 on Which Day We First Crossed Hunter's River and the Second of the Our Arrival at Wallis Plains.Ending August 1821", in *ML C128 CY reel 1480* (Sydney: State Library of New South Wales, 1821).

[11] Department of Planning Office of Environment & Heritage, "King Edward Park Group (Bogey Hole) Public Baths," Accessed November 2013*http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_2.cfm?itemid=2170303* (New South Wales Government).

The Domain is located at the top of the main commercial street of Newcastle, Watt Street and was encroached upon by church, justice and police buildings. In 2014 the Central Business District is to the north, there is prestige housing to the south-west and parkland to the south and east.  Today the Domain is relatively undeveloped compared to the rest of the city and has all of the main former military buildings, as well as the open parade ground. The Domain occupies the equivalent of four city blocks.[12]
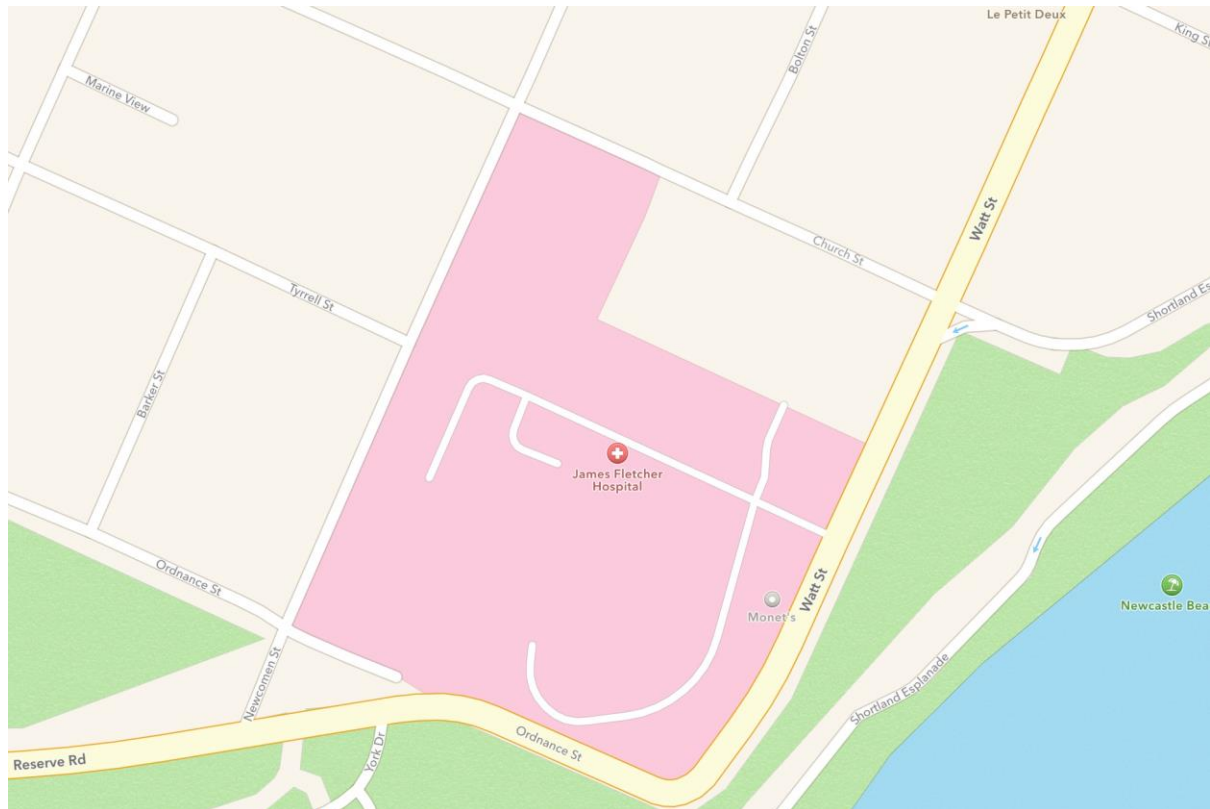


**Figure 1.3.** Map showing location of Newcastle Government Domain in the Newcastle City Map, NSW
Source: Maps Data, Apple Inc. 2012.   The site is bounded by Ordnance, Watt, Church and Newcomen Streets and the 'James Fletcher Hospital' is shown in pink.

The NGD is evidence of the haphazard planning for care in the colony. The planting of an outpost at Newcastle was motivated by coal, not care.   Coal mining promised to produce a commodity that could be exported throughout Asia and later to the Americas, offering some return on British investment in its convict colony**.**[13]  Newcastle coal provided energy for local manufacturing and steelmaking in the twentieth century, for transport, industry and electricity generation in other Australian cities and now the city exports more coal than any other port in the world.  Coal mining has significantly contributed to the cultural and social fabric of Australian society.  Remnants of its formation, although hidden, are to be

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[12] Except for Newcastle Court House and Police Station on north east boundary of the Domain. These sites are really still part of the Domain, they were just carved off for purposes other than mental health care.  You probably should have a note about this indicating that they will not be considered in your study, although they also fit your broad definition of care.

[13] The first profit ever made in the fledgling colony of NSW was 2 pounds, 5 shillings made at Coal River in 1801. Newcastle and the Hunter Region have bankrolled the Australian economy from its inception to nationhood, and continue to underpin Australia's prosperity. http://coalriver.wordpress.com/about/

found in the cultural landscape of contemporary Newcastle including at the NGD.[14]  The location of the Domain was mostly strategic, however it was also the site on the nation's first working coal shaft (Wallis shaft). Coal mining was Newcastle's economic raison d'etre and it brought with it the need for government supervision and interventions, many of which occurred on the Domain site.

## Methodology

The approach of this thesis is to consider positive government interventions into colonial society with the intention of extending the literature away from secondary use of sources to examine primary sources associated with the NGD. Without denying the existence of negative outcomes for many, it seeks the public benefits from the past use of the Government Domain and how these continue in the present. This approach considers strengths of the colony and is in contrast with other historians who have generally taken a less positive view of the treatment of the colony's inhabitants, particularly convicts and inmates of institutions and asylums.  This revisionist approach necessitates an innovative methodology.

The methodological approach used in this study is multi-disciplinary reflecting the eclectic nature of the Government Domain and its mixed use. Stepping aside from the historians' favoured foci of issues, individuals or events, this thesis treats a site, the Newcastle Domain. Like other central parcels of public land in Australia's cities, it has been used for many purposes since it was set aside by the governor in the early 1800s.  These include the administrative headquarters for the Newcastle secondary penal settlement, coal mining, horticulture, a military base, public recreation, a reformatory for girls and a mental health institution which has evolved from an asylum to a psychiatric hospital to an outpatient facility. The diversity of these uses necessitates an approach informed by a range of literatures.   Coleborne suggests in her study of asylums in Australia that trans-colonial studies can provide new interpretations of the "entanglement of imperial and colonial experiences and identities".[15] A similar approach is taken in this case study of the NGD, a site shaped by many imperial and colonial interactions and exchanges.

The site based approach has led to a large heritage conservation component that is informed by the rich historical material associated with the Newcastle Domain. Historic material ranges from colonial and imperial records, to specific records associated with various institutions at the NGD such as industrial girls' school and reformatory records, and the asylum.  The asylum records are extensive and include the Visitor's Book, Medical Case Books, Medcal Journal, Register of Discharges, Removal and Deaths and the Records of Inspection all held at the State Archives of NSW.  Susan Piddock who has also written on asylum sites, labels her approach as historical archaeology.  This approach of Piddock has similarities with work like Grace Karskens' which involves archaeological investigations interpreted in combination with other primary and secondary sources.  In this study a wide range of sources are used, including evidence from on site archaeology, visual sources, official sources and newspaper articles.  This approach moves away from the welfare historians' critiques of such institutions to a more rounded understanding of their functioning for residents, staff and community, not just relying upon the

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[14] Such as port related infrastructure at Macquarie Pier and Nobbys Lighthouse, the Convict Lumber Yard and colonial coal mines, tunnels and adits.
[15] Catharine Coleborne, *Madness in the Family* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 9.

inquiries, complaints and suspicious deaths which end up in official reports and capital city newspaper stories. For Piddock, historical archaeology "...draws on a wide range of techniques, theories, and sources of information to answer questions that are founded ultimately in questions about material culture and the ideas, beliefs and practices associated with it." but it does not necessarily require excavation.[16] Historical archaeology approaches have influenced the research for this thesis.

Rather than one core collection of primary sources, this thesis draws upon a wide range related to the various periods of use of the Domain. The lack of historical studies of the NGD placed a particular emphasis on primary material including documentary and visual sources as well as architectural reports and plans. Work conducted in other disciplines including architecture and and surveying have also been drawn upon to gain a better understanding. On a smaller scale this approach is being applied elsewhere in Newcastle by the University of Newcastle's Coal River Working Party (CRWP), and is described in more detail in Chapter Nine.

The combination of approaches and forms of evidence throws up new questions leading to deeper understandings about the NGD. This methodology suits both the historical approach of Parts One and Two and the heritage analysis in Part Three of this thesis.

## Asylum Historiography

As health institutions, asylums have not commemorated their histories and achievements with the same level of enthusiasm as general hospitals. General hospital histories usually take a chronological approach, are celebratory and are often commissioned on an institution's closure or special anniversary. For example *A Coast Chronicle: The History of the Prince Henry Hospital 1881 -1981* and *A Tradition of Care: A history of nursing at the Royal Brisbane Hospital* mark centenaries. They follow chronologically the many conditions treated and medical and nursing input over the decades.[17] Similarly, *The Hospital South of the Yarra* about the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne is a celebratory work marking one hundred years of the hospital.[18] Often these histories are written by former medical staff about the institution's staff. Typical amongst them is the *Fremantle Hospital: A Social History* which focuses tightly on the hospital and its staff with little attention given to patients, the built environment or how the wider community viewed the institution.[19] However, as Godden points out there are new forms of hospital histories being written by professional and academic historians.[20] A good example is *A Profession's Pathway: Nursing at St Vincent's since 1893* by Mary Sheehan who, Godden explains, provides an outsider's perspective, incorporating medical history that appeals to a wider readership.[21] Asylum histories are

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[16] Susan Piddock, *A Space of Their Own: The Architecture of Nineteenth Century Lunatic Asylums in Britain, South Australia and Tasmania* (New York: Springer, 2007), 28.

[17] Clement R Boughton, *The Coast Hospital: The History of the Prince Henry Hospital 1881-1981* (Sydney: Knudsen Printing, 1981), Helen Gregory, *A Tradition of Care: A History of Nursing at the Royal Brisbane Hospital* (Brisbane: Boolarong, 1988).

[18] Ann M Mitchell, *The Hospital South of the Yarra: A History of Alfred Hospital Melbourne from Foundation to the Nineteen-Forties* (Melbourne: Alfred Hospital 1977).

[19] P Garrick and G Jeffery, *Fremantle Hospital: A Social History* (Western Australia: Published by Fremantle Hospital, 1987).

[20] Judith Godden, "Review Works: Expressions of Mercy: Brisbane's Marter Hospital 1906-2006 by Helen Gregory; the Royal:. A History of the Royal Newcastle Hospital 1817-2005 by Susan Marsden with Cynthia Hunter; a "Profession's Pathway" by Mary Sheehan with Sonia Jennings, *Public History Review* vol.14 (2007):pp 158-160.

[21] Mary Sheehan, *A Profession's Pathway: Nursing at St Vincent's since 1893* (Kew: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2005).

less common and are rarely written by doctors or in a celebratory vein. The stigma associated with mental health may have had a chilling effect.

Historians have taken up the topic of insanity in Australia, but few have studied asylums. A few histories of mental health care were conducted in the first half of the nineteenth century such as *The Dawn of Australian Psychiatry*,[22] however most studies are about the growth of psychiatry in the twentieth century including *Asylum to Community: The Development of the Mental Hygiene Service in Victoria*.[23] Much work remains to be done, in particular on the social effects of insanity in Australia but since Garton's influential work *Medicine and Madness: A Social History of Insanity in New South Wales 1880 - 1940* in 1988 there has been minimal research in this area.[24] The asylum has become of greater interest since Garton in "Asylum Histories: Reconsidering Australia's Lunatic Past" challenged historians of mental illness in Australia to make the asylum an object of investigation.[25] This thesis contributes to this literature by addressing the gap in studies of smaller asylums to explore their development and the people who were admitted there.

During the first decade of this century, numerous books were written about Australian lunatic asylums and human stories relating to them. These include the collection *Madness in Australia* which offers well-informed studies of asylum culture, using themes of soundscape, gender and space.[26] Dolly MacKinnon's work "Hearing Madness"[27] and Catherine Coleborne's "Space, Power and Gender"[28] each contribute to exploring asylum spaces and the changing asylum landscapes. Lee-Anne Monk's *Attending Madness- At Work in the Australian Colonial Asylum* looks at asylums as workplaces by analysing the occupation of asylum attendant in Victoria between 1848 and 1886. She points out that a major paradigm shift during the 1870s towards inmate-focused care meant that there was a revision of the asylum space, the dynamic between medical and non-medical personnel and power and status at the asylum. Those in positions of management often fuelled the tension between medical officers and asylum attendants. In turn this sometimes changes the regime of mental health care, thus also effecting how spaces were used at the asylum. Asylums as a workplace changed significantly with the introduction of moral therapy and as a consequence the work of attendants become primarily a caring rather than a custodial role.[29] Susan Piddock's *A Space of Their Own* develops the concept of the ideal asylum using historical and institutional archaeology to compare the New Norfolk asylum in convict-settled Tasmania and the Parkside asylum in free-settled South Australia.[30] She explores regimes of treatment to find out what life may have been like at these asylums. The ideal asylum features that Piddock sets out in *A Space of Their Own*

[22] J. Bostock, "The Dawn of Australian Psychiatry", in *Mervyn Archdall Medical Monograph No.4* (Sydney: Australiasian Medical Publishing Company, 1968). Cummins, *A History of Medical*.

[23] Cunningham Dax, *Asylum to Community:The Development of the Mental Hygiene Service in Victoria* (Melbourne: FW Cheshire, 1961).

[24] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*.

[25] Stephen Garton, "Asylum Histories:Reconsidering Australia's Lunatic Past", in '*Madness' in Australia : Histories, Heritage and the Asylum*, ed. Colborne Catharine and MacKinnon Dolly (Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2003), pp11-23. Dolly MacKinnon, "Hearing Madness': the soundscape of the asylum", in *'Madness' in Australia,* pp.73-85.

[26] Catharine Colborne and Dolly MacKinnon, eds, *Madness' in Australia : Histories, Heritage and the Asylum* (Perth: Univerity of Queensland Press, 2003)

[27] Dolly MacKinnon, "'Hearing Madness' : The Soundscape of The Asylum." In *'Madness' in Australia : Histories, Heritage and the Asylum*, edited by MacKinnon, Dolly and Colborne, Catharine (Australia: University of Queensland Press in association with the API Network & Curtin University of Technology, 2003). 71 – 77.

[28] Catharine Colborne, "Space, Power & Gender in the Asylum in Victoria, 1850s - 1870s." In *Madness in Australia:Histories and the Asylum*, edited by MacKinnon Dolly and Coleborne Catharine. (Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2003), 49 -59.

[29] Lee-Ann Monk, *Attending Madness- at Work in the Australian Colonial Asylum* (New York: Rodopi, 2008).

[30] Piddock. *Space of their Own*, 21.

are used in this thesis to explore how the accidental asylum at Newcastle compares with the mainly purpose-built ideal asylums identified by Piddock.[31] The Newcastle asylum was accidental in the sense that it was never intended that the buildings, or the site, would provide mental health care over an lengthy period extending from 1871 to 2014. Facilities developed for civil administration and the accommodation of the military was pressed into service as an asylum. Those conducting the asylum had to work with what they had to make it an effective site of mental health care. By critiquing the buildings using Piddock's ideal asylum criteria, this study adds to the limited literature on the built environment of asylums in Australia challenging the frequent assumption that mental health care occurs in a neutral space.

Many of these contemporary histories of lunatic asylums are thematic rather than chronological, and tell previously unheard stories from people with mental illness and intellectual disability. MacKinnon's work "Music, Madness and the Body: Symptom and Cure" on lunatic asylums looks at the historiography of music as medicinal and the soundscape of the asylum; areas she believes have been overlooked in the history of psychiatry.[32] She argues that individual asylum inmates did benefit from music which had healing qualities, music was medicine and essential to asylum practice. MacKinnon concludes that the link between music and individuals is complex and has strong origins to classical times. However is a good start in documenting the what was happening in Australian asylums in regard to music and analysing this in terms of how music has been used over the centuries in asylums. This research contributes in some ways to MacKinnon's work in that it documents some of the musical performances that took place at the Newcastle Asylum. Such reconsiderations are occuring in media other than text. In 2007 there was an exhibition *Remembering Goodna* held in Brisbane, Queensland that celebrated the recently closed Goodna mental institution.[33] The exhibition featured artefacts relating to the Goodna asylum, including objects rarely seen in public, which generated new stories related to the people of the asylum. They served to relocate mental health history by incorporating not only the medical field but also the asylum as a place.

Gender issues relating to asylums in the colonial Australian context are also gaining a place in the literature.These include works by Coleborne about spaces and gender of asylums in Victoria,[34] and Garton who has written extensively on men, women and madness.[35] These creative and inspiring works are opening up new discussions about Australia's lunatic asylums which had been neglected as bad places best left in the past, an endeavour to which this study of the Newcastle Government Domain also contributes.

Of particular interest for this thesis is Garton's suggestion that colonial asylums were not primarily places of neglect and abuse but locations of treatment regimes that were comparatively humane and effective. In "Seeking Refuge: Why Asylum Facilities Might Still Be Relevant for Mental Health Care Services Today" he urges historians to recover this therapeutic efficacy as part of a broader understanding of the social history of insanity

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[31] Piddock. *Space of their Own*, 25.
[32] Dolly Mackinnon, "Music, Madness and the Body: Symptom and Cure", *History of Psychiatry* Vol. 17,no.1 (2006): pp 9-21. MacKinnon, "Hearing Madness".
[33] Remembering Goodna: Stories from a Queensland mental hospital. Museum of Brisbane. Exhibition 23 March 2008. Sponsored by Griffith University, Brisbane City and Queensland Government. Members of the public were invited to visit the exhibition and record their stories about the institution resulting in further fascinating and personal insights about the mental hospital.
[34] Coleborne, "Space, Power & Gender."
[35] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*.

and calls for a comprehensive analysis of individual asylums to explore this proposition.[36] This current study adds weight to the view that asylums could be places of genuine refuge for people who had nowhere else to go and no one to care for them.   As the Newcastle Asylum was established well before it became a 'hospital' that was managed by medical personnel, it demonstrates the impact of medical practice and cyclic changes of government policy on the experience of inmates. This study of the Newcastle Asylum supports Garton's view that the experience of those in asylums began to decline not in the nineteenth but in the twentieth century. It addresses the under studied years of transition from custodial to psychiatric care in the 1870s and 1880s.

A concrete factor in the neglect of the 1870s and 1880s is a lack of sources.  Many pre 1920 records relating to the major mental health care facilities of Callan Park, Gladesville and Parramatta hospitals have been destroyed.[37] The Newcastle Asylum records were thought also not to have survived.  However the records from 1871 were located at the James Fletcher Hospital in the late 1990s and are now held at the State Archives of NSW.[38] The survival of local records means that this study of the Newcastle Asylum is uniquely placed to examine this crucial period.  Transfers from other asylums were clearly recorded and ongoing medical case records created on site. Because both insane and imbecile/idiot cases are associated with the Newcastle Asylum, the historiography tracing the evolution and development of intellectual disability in Australia is also relevant.  The care of intellectually disabled people was much different to the management and care of the insane in colonial Australia.

The changes in the connotations and denotations of terms surrounding mental illness and intellectual disability demand some discussion.  Closely related and often intertwined with terms for mental disability is the language of madness.  David Wright's work on mental disability in Victorian Britain describes 'lunacy' as encompassing 'idiocy',' imbecility' and 'insanity'.[39]  The term lunacy referred to any individual considered *non compas mentis* and included imbecility, idiocy and insane as classes within it.  Idiocy in the 1800s defined a person with an intellectual disability from birth or early age. Although imbecility is similar to idiocy, it was a less severe condition.  Idiocy was less well defined in the early 1800s, however in the 1860s was more clearly articulated by Duncan and his colleagues who defined 'six distinct forms' ranging from imbeciles to backward children.[40]  There have been all sorts of meanings for the 'idiot' over the centuries but what has often been forgotten the term relates to intellect, and assessing intellectual functioning was something that came about quite late in the twentieth century with the Intelligence Quotient or IQ test to measure intelligence.[41]  Whether or not a person was considered an imbecile or an idiot depended on "...the life expectancy at the time for those born with severe mental disabilities."[42] Insanity referred to a person who had been of sound mind but had succumbed to a

[36] Stephen Garton, "Seeking Refuge:Why Asylum Facilities Might Still Be Relevent for Mental Health Care Services Today,"*Health and History* Vol. 11no. 1 (2009): 25.

[37] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 6.

[38] Other primary sources include the *Record of inspections, Registers of admissions, discharges, removals and deaths,* "Newcastle Institution," *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miner's Advocate* (Sydney),   September 9, 1914.

[39] David Wright, *Mental Disablity in Victorian England: The Earlswood Asylum, 1847-1901* (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 2001), 10.

[40] Patrick McDonagh*, Idiocacy: A Cultural History* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 2008)

[41] Anne Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded': Eugenics and the Institutionalisation of People withIntellectual Disability in New South Wales, 1900–30" (Ph.D. diss., University of Newcastle, NSW, 1998),105.

[42] Wright, *Mental Disablity,* 10.

permanent or temporary mental illness. Insanity was not considered a congenital disease. The following diagram shows these terms, with 'lunacy' encompassing imbecility, idiocy and insanity.

LUNACY

IMBECILITY    IDIOCY    INSANITY
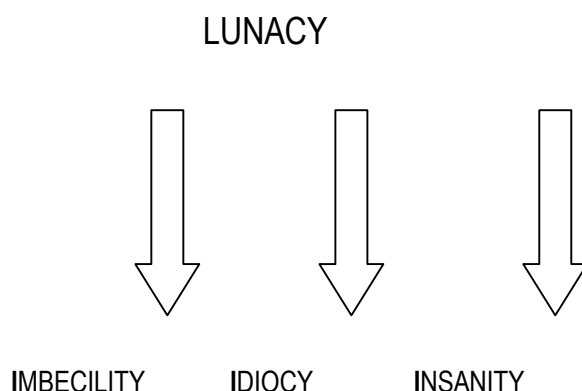
When the language of madness became medicalised in the second part of the nineteenth century, terms that had been related to behaviours were adopted.  Terms such as 'idiocy' and 'imbecility' as 'feebleminded' and gained much attention by the medical profession. Mahendra points out in *Subnormality Revisited in Early Nineteenth Century France* that definitions changed towards the end of the nineteenth century with the emergence of new terms such as defectives, epileptics and feeblemindedness which replaced idiocy and imbecility.[43]  The term used today in Australia for this group is intellectual disability, whereas in Britain they are referred to as having a mental disability or learning disability.[44]

The terms 'idiot' and' imbecile' are common in the case records of the Newcastle Asylum. These terms are ambiguous and today their use is derogatory. Fox states that amentia or severe mental deficiency was the defining feature of the conditions 'idiocy' and 'imbecility.'[45]  He notes the absence of references to these conditions amongst convicts, although 'feebleminded' was noted in post convict Tasmania and 'imbecile', whereas the terms 'idiot' and 'imbecile' were used interchangeably in NSW during the second half of the nineteenth century.   In fact the terms (idiot and imbecile) were used all through the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Australia, one of the ships of the Second Fleet there were two convicts aboard described as "perfect idiots". [46]  A term that had the same meaning in Britain, referring to a person with an intellectual disability. The terms "incurable" and "curable" were also used in the late nineteenth century to suggest the length of admission[47], with incurable often associated with imbecility and idiocy because of the permanency of the condition. The term "dementia" was used to denote a loss in mental function, rather than the current use for the onset of mental deterioration characterised by loss of memory.[48] Throughout this thesis, historical terms such as 'madness', 'lunacy,' 'insanity,' 'idiocy,' 'imbecility,' 'feebleminded'  and 'incurables' will be employed  as a means

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[43] B Mahendra, "Subnormality Revisited in Early Nineteenth Century France," *Journal of Mental Deficiency* 89 no. 3 (1985). (A person with dementia is deprived of the possessions that he has once enjoyed...the idiot has always been in misfortune and misery.  The state of the demented person may vary; that of the idiot is always the same)

[44] Wright, *Mental Disablity,* 3. Wright also refers to 'learning disability' in his writings about mental disability and different to mental/psychiatric illness.

[45] Charles Fox, "Exploring 'Amentia' in the Tasmanian Convict System, 1824-1890," *Tasmanian Historical Studies* vol.13 (2008):130.

[46] Governor Arthur Phillip, "Letter to Lord William Grenville," in *CO 201/1* (Kew, United Kingdom: UK Archives, 1790 July).

[47] Andrew Scull, *Madness: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55.

[48] Simon Thompson, *Dementia and Memory: A Handbook for Students and Professionals* (London: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 19.

of clarifying their contemporary usage. Historical terms are more fitting when used in the context they were common because it reflects their usage and how these terms differ to today. The use of these terms in the records and case notes were official terms taken very seriously to describe and catagorise an inmate's condition. Later terms such as 'mental illness' and 'intellectual disability' are used in this thesis to reflect the twentieth century terms in use in mental health care.

In *Mental Disability in Victorian England: The Earlswood Asylum, 1847-1901* David Wright acknowledges that in contrast with Great Britain, little has been written about the history of intellectual disability in Australia, with Western Australia the exception.[49] Charlie Fox and Errol Cocks' 1996 book *Under Blue Skies: The Social Construction of Intellectual Disability in Western Australia* was the first substantial work about intellectual disability in Australia.[50] In *Bye Bye Charlie: Stories from the Vanishing World of Kew Cottages*, Corrinne Manning provides a study of an institution for the intellectually disabled in Victoria.[51] The book reveals the previously hidden world at Kew by recording interviews with residents, staff and families and volunteers. Charles Fox's study "Exploring 'Amentia' in the Tasmanian Convict System, 1824-1890" situated imbecile and idiot care in that colony in a context of contemporary care in France, England and Western Australia.[52] The intellectually disabled were a major component of the population of the Newcastle asylum but little work has been done on them. Goodey argues that madness has been more attractive as a topic because a person with intellectual disability will not engage in research of the condition the same way that a person with mental illness would.[53] This thesis contributes new knowledge through a close study of the establishment and conduct of the first specialist asylum for this group in Australia. At the end of the nineteenth century, specific medical terms began to be used allowing mental conditions to be more easily classified. Terminology was no longer about an individual or their behaviour, but rather about mental conditions and the aetiologies of mental illness. Care and treatment of mental conditions merged with the medical model to become dominant in the twentieth century. This categorisation coincided with the rapid development of the psychiatric profession, the renaming of lunatic asylums as hospitals and the shift to referring to patients instead of inmates.[54] For the purpose of this thesis, individuals in mental health institutions will be consistently referred to as inmates and not patients because most of the discussion is about the era during which 'inmate' was in use. Terms that were common during this period such as being 'twisted' will be used in this thesis, with the recognition that their meaning is very different today.

## Interpreting Visual Sources

This thesis takes an innovative approach in terms of analysing and interpreting visual sources and looks at artworks in a slightly different way. Because minimal research has been conducted on the NGD during the early period, artworks are reinterpreted to find new knowledge. The visual sources included in this thesis are more than mere illustrations. In keeping with the historical archaeological approach, photographs, drawings and

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[49] Wright, *Mental Disablity*, 6.
[50] Errol Cocks et al., ed. *Under Blue Skies: The Social Construction of Intellectual Disability in Western Australia* (Western Australia: Optima Press,1996).
[51] Corinne Manning. *Bye-Bye Charlie: Stories from the Vanishing World of Kew Cottages*. (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd., 2008).
[52] Fox, "Exploring 'Amentia' .
[53] C F Goodey, "The Psychopolitics of Learning Disability in Seventeenth-Century Thought", in *From Idiocy to Mental Deficiency*, ed. David Wright & Anne Digby (London: Routledge, 1996), 95.
[54] William Charles Ellis. *A Treatise on the Nature, Symptoms, Causes and Treatment of Insanity.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1838), 264.

paintings are regarded as primary sources and are analysed to further understand how the open space and buildings of the NGD were used to implement care. This revision of visual sources not only looks at the artists, but uses information and detail of works to re-examine the NGD. Artworks are analysed to further understand how the NGD was set up to provide the space and buildings to implement care, including how authorities supported and provided new opportunities to the convict artists. Visual sources are an artefact of the NGD because they document how the Domain would develop. While some could be analysed as works of fine art, instead they are viewed as products of government workers who as a consequence of their professions had been taught to record scenes according to the conventions of their time and are described by the term occupational artists.

The Government Domain was central to Newcastle's visual arts culture during the 1810s.  Most of the artists in Newcastle during the first few decades were in the service of the government: primarily engineers, surveyors, botanists and engravers. They were carrying out landscape research and mapping projects that used a systematic process to document the landscape.[55]  Several of the Newcastle Commandants supported the production of artwork, in particular Commandants Skottowe (1811 to 1814) and Wallis (1816 to 1818).  These men applied multiple ways of seeing and understanding landscapes.[56]  The botanists and botanical illustrators showed the fine detail of plants and, as in Bauer's Newcastle sketch, showed detail of the landscape. Others employed in seeing the landscape were professional artist John Lewin who depicted the township and river showing the harbour depths and artist engineer Edward Close who painted the town's building and government infrastructure.  Engineers were taught drawing as part of their training.[57]  Many of the colonial artists were associated with the military professions.  What they produced as working documents have come to be viewed as fine art.

Until recently, the rich array of visual sources relating to early colonial Newcastle has been overlooked. Much of the academic literature relating to colonial art in Australia focuses on works produced in and of each colony's capital city. This is gradually changing with works associated with Newcastle being recognised in national exhibitions.[58] John McPhee's excellent work *Joseph Lycett: Convict Artist* [59] drew attention to works created during Lycett's time in Newcastle (1814 - 18). The Newcastle artworks by Lycett are the first series of Australian landscape oil paintings created in situ and a response to the surrounding environment.[60] Elizabeth Ellis' book *Rare and Curious: the Secret History of Governor Macquarie's Collector's Chest* showcased the exquisite wooden chest with panels painted by Lycett and preserved natural history specimen made in Newcastle in 1818 as shown in Image 2.11.[61]  The penal settlement at Newcastle developed a distinct artistic

55 Angele Smith, "Landscape Representation:Place and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Ordnance Survey Maps of Ireland" in Landscape, Memory and History, ed. Pamela Stewart and Andrew Strathern (London: Pluto Press, 2003) 71.
56  A Baker, "Introduction:On Ideology and Landscape" in Ideology and Landscape in Historical Perspective:Essays on the Meanings of Some Places in the Past, ed. A Baker and G Biger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 71.
57 Elizabeth Ellis "Treasures of Newcastle from the Macquarie Era." edited by State Library of New South Wales & Newcastle Art Gallery. Sydney: State Library of New South Wales 2013, 13.
58 Alisa Bunbury,ed. "This Wondrous Land: Colonial Art on Paper", (National Gallery of Victoria. Melbourne: The Council of Trustees of National Gallery of Victoria, 2011).
59 John McPhee, ed. *Joseph Lycett: Convict Artist* (Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2006).
60 Elizabeth Ellis, "The 'Newcastle Academy': Art in a Colonial Outpost" In *Treasures of Newcastle from the Macquarie Era*. Catalogue, A State Library of NSW & Newcastle Art Gallery partnership exhibition.2 March – 5 May 2013.
61 Elizabeth Ellis, *Rare and Curious:The Secret History of Governor Macquarie's Collector's Chest* (Sydney: The Miegunyah Press, 2010).

culture based around the occupations related to an industrial penal settlement, rather than Sydney's mixed artistic culture of public servants and professional artists.

Tim Bonyhady suggests that it was often difficult for professional artists to get work in the colony because of the small market.[62] However, there was plenty of work for government commissioned topographical illustrators and artists at Newcastle and these works have been preserved as government documents or in private hands. The production of these artworks as part of the official documentation of the colony in no sense suggests that they provide a photographic-style recording of their subjects although there is good reason to assume that they are largely accurate. Some of the artists who visited Newcastle may have been seeking to please their superiors by exaggerating order or development there. Occupational practices may have distorted the appearance of the place if they had vested interested in the place flourishing and becoming a centre of industrial trade. For example with plans to establish the Australian Agricultural Company it was favourable to depict Newcastle as orderly and prosperous to entice shareholders to invest. The paintings that come to mind are those by Close and completed around time J.T. Bigge was in Newcastle gathering evidence for the Bigge Inquiry.[63]

Although many of these colonial artworks show what may have actually existed, they cannot be taken accurate because artistic license may have been taken by the artist. Heathcote suggests that visual interpretation is one thing, but it is impossible to really know what the subject actually looked like.[64] However, the work of occupational artists may be more reliable than that of others because of the forensic approach developed during training as surveyors, botanists or engineers and their responsibility to record the progress of the colony as part of the official record. Their works carefully record building projects and the topography, with an eye for important details, such as the size, scale and fabric use of the built environment. In contrast, the picturesque or professional artists, as Auberbach suggests, were more concerned with balance and harmony. They did not transcribe nature but composed it in a way which fit European expectations.[65] Paintings and drawings by occupational artists have a high level of reliability as a foundation for historical interpretation and make an important contribution to an analysis of the Domain through its phases as mine site, military base, girls' home and asylum.


**Structure**

This thesis has three parts. Chapter One has introduced the thesis and methodologies used, asylum historiography and visual sources related to the Domain site. Part One *Government 'Works' at the Newcastle Government Domain 1801-1871* provides an historical account of the NGD and specifically looks at how the site was formed, including how the authorities interacted with the place before the establishment of the asylum. The rich visual art culture of the Macquarie period is discussed [66] for the evidence it provides of the changes to the Government Domain. Many Government officials stationed in Newcastle nurtured the colony's finest convict artists; often producing art in collaboration with them.

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[62] Tim Bonyhady, *The Colonial Image:Australian Painting,1800-1880* (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1987).
[63] Edward Close, "Barracks with Christ Church in the Distance, Newcastle, New South Wales", (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1820).
[64] R L Heathcote, "Visions of Australia'' in Australia as a Human Setting: Approaches to the Designed Environment, ed. A Rapoport (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1972), 77.
[65] Jeffrey Auerbach, "The Impossiblilty of Artistic Escape: Essays on Convict Australia", Journal of Australian Colonial History vol 7. (2005): 165-66.
[66] Lisa Slade, "Curious Colony: A Twenty First Century Wunderkammer", ed. Newcastle Region Art Gallery (Newcastle: Newcastle Region Art Gallery, 2010).

Chapter Two *Government Care and Convict Culture 1801 - 1841* gives an historical background of the Newcastle Domain and discusses the Government Domain as the headquarters of the penal settlement when it contained Newcastle's Government House and gardens.  It was the seat of authority, the dwelling place of Commandants and destination of visiting officials. Governor Lachlan Macquarie and Captain James Wallis supported the building program in Newcastle and had documented through art the topography and government infrastructure.  Artworks of early engineers and surveyors documented and recorded progress. Chapter Three *Military Barracks and Public Service 1843-1851* looks at the Government Domain when the military barracks was built at the site in 1841 for use by the imperial forces.  When the forces were withdrawn in 1851, the military buildings were occupied by various colonial government organisations. This chapter covers the period during which volunteer militia and the community began to be a greater presence at the NGD. Chapter Four *Care of Girls "...the little volcano slumbered" 1867 – 1871* discusses how the first Industrial Girl's School and Reformatory for Girls in the colony were established there. Although these institutions were unsuccessful, with the children being transferred to Sydney in 1871, the institutions were  genuine attempts by the colonial government to ease the growing problem of neglected and delinquent children in NSW.  This chapter also explores the dynamic between the authorities and the local community in accepting these new 'caring' institutions.

The departure of the girls from the Government Domain enabled its use for a new purpose, as an 'accidental' asylum. Part Two of this thesis *Australian Government Asylum Culture 1871 to 1900* specifically looks at the period from 1871 when the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots opened.  It traces the development of intellectual disability and mental health care on the site up to the early 1900s. Chapter Five *A 'Moral' Culture of Asylum Care at the Newcastle Government Domain* discusses the evolution of mental health care and the development of asylums in NSW. It also looks at the origins of care for intellectually disabled groups in Britain and compares these charitable schemes with state care intervention in Australia. The chapter explores how the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots became the first specialist mental health institution in Australia.  This chapter also explores moral therapy implemented at Newcastle by the non-medical personnel which included inmates using outdoor areas.  The Newcastle Asylum used moral therapy at a time when it was not widely used elsewhere in the colony.  Towards the end of the nineteenth century the medical professional and the medical model of care become dominant, with moral therapy less popular.  Chapter Six *Picturing' the asylum* investigates the use of space at the asylum drawing upon written and visual sources. The chapter discusses the functioning of the asylum in terms of the opportunities and constraints offered by buildings and open spaces drawing upon Piddock's model of the ideal asylum and comparing the Newcastle Asylum with the Parkside Asylum in South Australia and New Norfolk Asylum in Tasmania.

Chapter Seven *Visitors to the asylum*  discusses the various categories of visitors to the Domain when it hosted the asylum.  Visiting was believed to contribute to inmate care and there was a strong culture of visiting from many parts of the community.  The chapter demonstrates that there were may visitors to the Newcastle asylum.  These were not typically family or friends but people unrelated to the inmate such as entertainers and official visitors. Chapter Eight *Frontier Reality: A Government Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots* looks specifically at the Newcastle Asylum as an institution for the intellectually disabled and surveys the official case records to investigate the inmates admitted from 1871 to 1900. It looks at patterns of admission and the dislocation of many inmates from society.  The chapter also

discusses the first group of inmates at the Newcastle Asylum in 1871 and the ad hoc way in which they were transferred and admitted from various parts of the Colony.  The chapter argues that many of the inmates were not really 'imbecile' or 'idiot' at all, but people with mental illness, amongst whom immigrants without family support were a priority. The development of care of feebleminded children in the first two decades of the twentieth century is discussed, although the changes later in the century when the asylum became  a more general mental hospital with a heavy reliance on drug treatmentsis not dealt with extensively in this thesis because there are significant restrictions in accessing medical records that are less than 100 years old.

Part Three *Cultural Heritage and Australian Government Historic Places* examines the question of cultural heritage in the twenty first century and reviews changes to heritage and planning legislation that have allowed places like the NGD to 'fall through the cracks' in terms of adequate heritage listing. Chapter Nine *Newcastle Government Domain a 'Government Heritage Place'* discusses how individuals and groups who are not essentially heritage 'experts' are becoming heritage advocates and aligning themselves with other disciplines to research particular heritage places.  The multi-disciplinary approach to contemporary heritage investigation is explored in this chapter, as one way to raise interest in public heritage.  Heritage conservation issues specific to the NGD are discussed in order to examine the vulnerability of the site related to its changing city environment. This final chapter also explores a new area of research in Australia relating to heritage and well-being.  Today the NGD is at a crossroads, both in terms of mental health care and heritage conservation.  Chapter Ten *Conclusion* brings together the arguments related to care at the NGD, cultural heritage and care generally in Australian society to argue that government care has always been part of Australian culture and will continue to do so in the area of cultural heritage and well-being.

## PART ONE- Government Works at the Newcastle Government Domain 1801 to 1871

## Chapter 2:  Government Care and Convict Culture 1801 to 1841

Care in this chapter relates to the responsibility of government authorities to improve conditions and opportunities for those living in and around the Newcastle Domain to ensure the place thrived.  The Domain was a place from which labour was administered  and where officials were involved in artistic pursuits alongside convicts. Convicts were Australia's first working class; they were the colony's future.[1] Generally they were not grossly mistreated or denied health and medical care as many would have us believe.[2]  Nicholas argued that nutrition and the health of convicts, as well as their work, food, clothing and medical conditions, what is referred to generally in this thesis as their care, were basically satisfactory in NSW, indeed better than in countries from which Australian convicts originated. Medical care was free to all inhabitants in NSW until 1831.[3] It was in the best interest of the colony to have all inhabitants supported. While accepting that there were many gross failings in the Newcastle settlement, this chapter explores events and interactions in and around the Government Domain which demonstrate the benefits which flowed back to the government from their investment in the care of the convicts. This included establishing the coal industry and later supporting the transition of the government mines to the management of a private company called the Australian Agricultural Company (AA Company). Visual sources are interpreted throughout as evidence of the strong culture of government care at Newcastle. However before discussing care in this context at Newcastle, the following provides a background history of the early uses of the Domain and site development, and its changing landscape.



**Figure 2.1** View of Newcastle in 1820. Government Domain (NGD) in foreground & Government House coloured pink. By Charles Martin 2013.

The recorded history of the Government Domain began in 1797 when Lieutenant John Shortland made a preliminary survey of the Hunter River in a small whale boat named the *Reliance.*  He came across this 'very fine river' whilst looking

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[1] Stephen Nicholas, "Care and the Feeding of Convicts", in *Convict Workers: Reinterpreting Australia's Past*, ed. Stephen Nicholas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 199.  Stephen Nicholas, "A New Past", in *Convict Workers.*
[2] Nicholas, "Care and the Feeding of Convicts", 192.
[3] Nicholas, "Care and the Feeding of Convicts", 184-92.

for escaped convicts and it was on this visit that coal was located and reported to the authorities in Sydney.[4]  Shortland found a beautiful stream of clear water flowing from the hillside on the south shore of the harbour.  The 'little white sandy bay on the inland side of the main port' where the stream entered the harbour was named Fresh Water Bay.[5]  Natural springs edging the bay later became wells providing water for the settlement.[6] The rise of land from which the stream originated became the Government Domain.  Shortland reported his discoveries at Sydney and private traders began to come to the Coal River for coal and cedar.  Emancipist entrepreneurs Simeon Lord, James Underwood and Hugh Meehan were granted rights in 1799 to procure coals from Fresh Water Bay at Newcastle and to export them to Sydney.[7]

Once the Sydney settlement and its agricultural outlier at Parramatta had been securely established, the attention of the imperial government turned to consolidating a wider claim of the Australian territory.  Parties were sent to the Hunter River in 1801, the Derwent (later Hobart) and Port Philip Bay in 1803 and Port Dalrymple (later Launceston) in 1804.  Problems with the chosen sites, difficulties of supply and inadequate leadership meant that none of the first attempts at establishing new settlements were successful. It became increasingly clear that decades of ongoing commitment by the imperial government and its local representatives to providing care for colonists would be required to transform NSW into a civil and autonomous society.  The authorities had to adapt to a multitude of new situations.  The efforts of administrators in supporting the colony's inhabitants in the first few decades were therefore haphazard and fraught with much anxiety.  A close examination of the colony's second settlement at the mouth of the Hunter River demonstrates the extent of government involvement in the life in the penal station.

The establishment of a settlement at what became Newcastle was first attempted in 1801.[8] Governor King ordered a survey party led by Lieutenant-Colonel William Paterson to go to Coal River to explore the feasibility of setting up a penal settlement there. On arrival, Paterson anchored the *Lady Nelson* on the north side of the river, a location that provided more shelter than the south side.  The party spent six weeks surveying the region while they camped at the base of Tahlbihn Point.[9] Accompanying him were Lieutenant Grant, Ensign Francis Louis Barrallier, Dr John Harris and artist John W Frewin, as well as Bungaree the "Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe" and later elder and leader of the Sydney Aboriginal peoples.[10]  Perhaps it was thought that Bungaree would be able to speak the language of the local people of Coal River and Port Stephens.   Paterson's survey party recommended to Governor King that a settlement be established there to exploit the coal and cedar resources.  However this first settlement of just sixteen convicts was short lived with ongoing threats of mutiny against Corporal Wixstead.[11] Wixstead was not able to properly manage the settlement and in 1802 Governor King ordered the settlement be abandoned.[12]

[4] W.J Goold, "The Birth of Newcastle " *Newcastle & Hunter District Historical Society.*  (1949): 6. Although there had been Europeans in the area prior to Lieutenant Shortland in 1797, it is Shortland who is remembered and celebrated for being the 'discoverer' of Newcastle. Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle* ,8.
[5] Henry W H Huntington, ed. *History of Newcastle and the Northern Districts 1897-98* (Newcastle, NSW: Newcastle Family History Society,2009), 27.
[6] Unknown, "[Map of] City of Newcastle", in *333.3/16* (Newcastle: Local Studies Library, City of Newcastle, 1840?).
[7] Huntington, *History of Newcastle,* 46.
[8] Ellis, *A Saga of Coal*, 12.
[9] John Fryer, "Where Did Ensign Barrallier Camp in 1801? A Report for the University of Newcastles Coal River Working Party", (Newcastle: University of Newcastle, 2008), 28.
[10] Grace Karskens, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2009), 162.
[11] Susan Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle* (Wagga Wagga: Bobby Graham Publisher, 2002), 9.
[12] Goold, "The Birth of Newcastle", 8.

An attempted rebellion on 4 March 1804 by Irish convicts at Castle Hill was suppressed and before the end of that month, thirty-four of the rebels had been hastily transferred out of Sydney to Coal River.[13]  Some of the Irish convicts believed they could overthrow the colonial administration and gain independence from English rule but they were met with the full force of the British military. The fear of ongoing unrest in the colony was the reason for re-opening the settlement at Newcastle as the authorities were keen to remove agitators from the Sydney and set them to hard physical labour to redeem and reform their unruly behaviours.[14] The rebels sailed into Hunters River on the *Lady Jane* in 1804 with Lieutenant Charles Menzies as Commandant.[15]  This time, the idea was to form a penal settlement to which convicts could sentenced for crimes committed in the colony, what was called secondary punishment. This new purpose gave the Government Domain an expanded role, as it was the seat of central authority which was important in any new settlement but crucial to the success of a secondary penal settlement. Following  the closure of the first settlement the coal mines had continued to be worked, so when the second settlement opened there was already the intention that the 'refractory characters' could be kept at the coal works.[16]  Surgeon Dr James Mileham and eleven military guards were also detached, as well as a storekeeper who accompanied the party and provided officials with "...a line and fishing gear..." to provide fish for the convicts, in lieu of meat.[17]  Casks of salt were also sent for salting the fish. Convicts of this second settlement were encouraged to cultivate gardens and seed was provided for growing vegetables.

An adaptability and resilience developed in the settlement at Newcastle which worked in concert with the determination to care for inhabitants in the colony.  What was to play out at the Newcastle Government Domain (NGD) during the nineteenth century was not planned but a reaction to the events that unfolded in the colony. The European settling of Newcastle was accidental from the beginning; its planning and development was haphazard.  Its 'discovery' came about not by an exploring party but by one searching for runaway Irish convicts. The 1801 settlement was poorly set up and staffed with limited support from authorities.  Its location on an extremity of a peninsula.However it was not autonomous, but only existed on the whim of Sydney and London authorities.  Newcastle was 'out of sight, out of mind' and the re-offenders sent there may have been looked upon by authorities as less deserving than other convicts in the colony. However, these disadvantages did not necessarily mean that those in charge at Newcastle were not caring. The authorities in Sydney left it up to officials in Newcastle to organise and manage the settlement. At the heart of this was the Government Domain.

An order early in May 1804 stated coal mining by individuals had to stop and that coal mining needed to be supervised by professional miners.[18] Governor King's decision to procure coals using convict labour also brought about new regulations in 1804.  He gave strict instructions to Menzies restricting private traders seeking coal at the settlement and also gave permission to scuttle any vessel that did not comply with his orders.[19]   The demonstration of authority

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[13] Jack Delaney, *Vinegar Hill to Coal River: The Irish Rebellion and the Settlement of Newcastle,Nsw 1804* (Stockton, NSW: (the author), 2004), 55.

[14] Carol Baxter, *Breaking the Bank* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2008), 29.

[15] *The Sydney Gazette*, May 8, 1803.

[16] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle*, 9.

[17] King, Governor. "Instructions for Lieutenant Menzies of the Royal Marines Commandant and Superintendant of the Settlements to Be Formed in the Coal Harbour and Hunters River." In *Colonial Office Records*. London: Kew Archive, UK, 1804 March 18.

[18] "General Orders", *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (Sydney),May 6, 1804.

[19] *Colonial Office Records*, "Instructions for Lieutenant Menzies of the Royal Marines Commandant and Superintendant of the Settlements to Be Formed in the Coal Harbour and Hunters River", in *Colonial Office Records* (London: Kew Archive, UK, 1804 March 18). The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, "General Orders," *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 25 March 1804.

was essential for the new settlement, the first to be established with the aim of punishing convicts who reoffended in the colonies. This function brought new roles and an enhanced significance to the Government Domain. It was necessary to regulate coal mining so authorities could gain a monopoly and in 1804 private signals were shown from the flagstaff at the Government Domain to help control and monitor port trade.[20] Private vessels were not permitted to anchor in the harbour until they produced a certificate they had received a fortnight earlier. The sealed envelope containing a certificate revealed the correct signal pattern that would allow them to anchor.[21] It was a system that the Colonial Government introduced in an attempt to regulate trade, and it allowed private traders to operate simultaneously with the Government in the business of coal loading.[22] Also in July 1804 a General Order declared that Hunter River coal and timber would be the exclusive property of the Crown.

It was from the Government House at the Government Domain that orders for the settlement were issued. It is not known when the first Government House was erected, but is likely to have been erected about 1804 when permanent settlement was established. The first house was probably a very simple design made from local resources of cedar and lime because of their abundance in the area. Figure 2.3 shows a small house in the vicinity of the NDG. Newcastle's Government House would become much larger from 1807, probably to accommodate the families of Commandants. This larger house was made of sandstone and had later weatherboard additions built on the back as shown in several colonial artworks. There are no available sources found that explain how the site was chosen for Government House. However it was likely chosen because surveillance from this area was ideal, particularly towards the north where much of the convict work was being carried out at the coal mines. Not long after the Irish were sent to Newcastle, they were joined by twenty newly arrived English convicts whom Governor King stated would "mix with those at the Coal Harbour"; possibly to dilute the significant number of political prisoners who might have been plotting further rebellions.[23] The settlement was primitive with provisions inadequate and by necessity there was a great deal of adaptability and resourcefulness shown by all who lived there.

A number of names were used to refer to this place. The river had been given the official name "Hunter River" in 1797 but use of the more descriptive name Coal River persisted both for the waterway and the 1801 settlement. The name King's Town (after Governor King) was also used although "Newcastle" was selected as the official name in 1804. During his term, Governor Macquarie (1764-1824) preferred the name Newcastle to be used, instead of King's Town after one of his predecessors. The name King's Town was resurrected in 1823 by Governor Brisbane after Macquarie left the colony, perhaps a sign of the animosity directed towards Macquarie as a result of his ideas on how the colony should be governed. The official name change (King's Town) reflected a fresh start at the end of secondary punishment and also the establishment of a free settlement. However, it could not be displaced by the old name Newcastle. The frequent name changes reflect the instability of government in the early decades of the penal settlement, with each new

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[20] Governors in Chief of the territory of New South Wales, "New South Wales Proclamations and Regulations. Volume 1, 1786-1821," ed. Imperial Government (London: Imperial Government, 1821),27.
[21] "General Orders",*The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (Sydney), May 27, 1804.
[22] Goold, "The Birth of Newcastle", 6.
[23] Governor King, "Letter from Governor King Referring to Newcastle" in *Colonial Office Records* (London: Kew Arvices UK, 1804 May 15).

Governor applying his own political and professional agenda. Some Aboriginal names are also used on early maps of Newcastle, including Tahlbikn Point (later Colliers Point) as shown on Henry Dangar's map in 1828.[24]

The Domain and its surrounds hold great meaning and significance to the people of the lower Hunter River. According to the Rev. Lancelot Threlkeld (1788-1858), the Indigenous name for Newcastle was *Mulubinba* meaning the place of a certain flower (sometimes said to be a fern).[25] The earliest documentation of Indigenous occupation is the battle that took place on Prospect Hill overlooking the Domain in November 1801, the same year the Coal River was first settled.[26]

> The challenge is accepted, and the weapons named – the cudgel, shield, or spear. . . Messengers with the sacred message sticks were dispatched to gather in the distant tribes, and for a night or two the various hill tops would display signal fired, announcing the approach of the tribes to witness the affair of honour. On the occasion of the duel witnessed by the early Novocastrians the affair was one of a hostile character. The offending native, a stalwart man, first stooped and offered his head for his antagonist to strike with his nullah nulla or cudgel. As he was not killed by the first blow he rose from his bending posture, shook the streaming blood from his bushy hair, and then his opponent fairly and honourably bent forward his head, presenting it in return to receive his adversary's blow. Thus the duel was reciprocally continued, until the assembled tribes and the combatants themselves shouted out some native words, signifying that everyone was satisfied.[27]

Edward Charles Close portrayed a corroboree in the same location on Prospect Hill in an 1821 artwork.[28] Another high point that may have been used by Aboriginal people for ceremonial purposes is *Khanterin* or South Shepherds Hill a few hundred metres south of Prospect Hill.[29] The origin of the name 'Khanterin' is unknown and further research is required to explore if it is an Aboriginal term.

The Government Domain was a place of contact between Aboriginal and migrant people. Bungaree, Governor Macquarie and local government officials interacted at Newcastle's Government House and gardens located at the Domain. It was a place where corroborees took place. On Governor Macquarie's visit to Newcastle in1818 he was entertained with a 'Carauberie' (Corroboree) by "King" Jack Burigon, and the 'Newcastle Tribe'. The group consisted of about forty men, women and children who performed in the grounds at the rear of Government House.[30] Corroborees were also commonplace at the Domain during the 1820s.

Collaborations between Biraban and Threlkeld were also played out near the NGD. Threlkeld was a missionary appointed by the London Missionary Society who lived and worked with the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie Aborigines between 1824 and 1841. His principal cultural informant was the Awabakal leader John McGill or Biraban (1819-1842), whose traditional names means 'eaglehawk'.[31] *Yi-ran-na-li*, a cliff face adjacent to the Domain, was a significant site for

24 Henry Dangar, "Hunter River, New South Wales", ed. CO700/NSW 30 (London: The National Archives, United Kingdom).
25 Lancelot Threlkeld, *A Key to the Structure of the Aboriginal Language* (Sydney: Kemp & Fairfax, 1850), 47: "Mulubin is the name of a flower that abounds at the place called Newcastle, hence its name, Mulumbin-ba."
26 Huntington, *History of Newcastle.*'A Native Duel in 1801 in Newcastle' *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate*. 14th December 1897.
27 John Windross and John Paul Ralston, *Historical Records of Newcastle 1897-1997* (Newcastle: Federal Printing, 1897).
28 Edward Close, "Panorama of Newcastle : Watercolour Drawings Attributed to Edward Close" (Sydney: State Library of New South Wales, 1820).
29 Henry Taylor Plews, *'on the Coalfields of New South Wales' North of England Institute of Mining Engineers*,
 ed., Plan 2 , Section No 3 (London: North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, 1858).
30 Governor Lachlan Macquarie, "Macquarie's *Journal to and from Newcastle 27 July 1818 - 9 August 1818* Laying Foundation and First Stone of the Causway or Pier Known as Macquarie Pier. [Transcription <Http://www.Lib.Mq.Edu.Au/All/Journeys/1818/1818.html>] " in *From Macquarie University's Journals of Elizabeth and Lachlan Macquarie entitled Journeys in Time 1809 - 1822* (Sydney: Macquarie University, 1818, August 5th).
31 Niel Gunson, "Biraban," Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB), vol. 1 (Melbourne, MUP, 1966) (Accessed online 10 Jan. 2013); John Turner and Greg Blyton, *The Aboriginals of Lake Macquarie* (Australia: Lake Macquarie City Council, 1995).

local Indigenous people.  This was a 'fearful' place where it was Aboriginal custom to be silent when passing due to the occurrences of rock falls.  It was believed that speaking would invariably make overhanging rock and stone fall to the ground.[32]  The Domain and its surrounds was a place where two cultures came together.

## Coal Mining within the Government Domain

Newcastle became important because of the resources there. Authorities were particularly mindful of the coal in the area, and the special care needed to procure it including support to convict labourers. As already mentioned the definition of care extends the meaning to include responsible governance. The first use to which the land that became the Government Domain was put by Europeans was coal mining.  It became a central place, frequented by convicts and their keepers and recorded by visiting artists and topographical draughtsmen. There had been no intention to establish a coalmining industry in the colony.  No skilled miners or mining equipment had been sent from Britain.   When coal was found, the unanticipated opportunity to use convict labour to make a profit was embraced.  Coal helped to sustain the colony and enhance the lives of the inhabitants.

The Newcastle coal mines were the earliest in Australia, after the first discovery of coal being recorded at Port Stephens in 1796.[33]  Coal would also be one of the longest lasting and most significant economic activities in the colony.[34] Coal had been found in the Illawarra district south of Sydney in 1797 but accessibility was a problem and therefore the area was not systematically mined for several decades. Coal mines at the Illawarra were not operational until 1848 when a mine was opened at Mt Keira.[35]   The Coal Mines Historic Site at Little Norfolk Bay in Tasmania began to be worked in 1833.[36] The coal seams at the entrance of the Hunter River appealed to Lieutenant Shortland back in 1797 because of the relative accessibility of the coal as "Vessels from 60 to 250 tons may load there with great ease."[37] However, prior to Shortland's visit, David Collins who was Judge Advocate of the colony in 1796 documented that a party had brought back to Sydney a sample of coal 'from a bay near Port Stephens'.[38]  Private traders procured coal between 1799 and 1801.  Thereafter Governor King declared coal to be the property of the crown.[39] Convict workers and expert miners were dispatched in 1801 to take over what had been an informal, private trade since the discovery of coal in 1797. The first settlement in 1801 was established as a place of hard labour for sixteen reoffending convicts and to control the unchecked exploitation of the coal by private traders. After this first settlement failed, a second permanent settlement was launched in 1804.

The settlement of Coal River that would later become known as Newcastle was of particular importance to the imperial government because of the two key roles it was designed to fulfill.  The site was selected because of its coal resources which were expected to become a lucrative export for the colony.  The Government Domain established in the

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[32] Glenn Albrecht, "*Yi-Ran-Na-Li:* A Cliff Face at Newcastle South Beach," <http://healthearth.blogspot.com.au/search/label/Yi-ran-na-li>.
[33] J H Heaton, "Australian Dictionary of Dates and Men of the Time : Containing the History of Australia from 1542 to Dat,", ed. Heaton J H (London: Silver & Co., Sun Court, 1879), 62.
[34] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle*, vii.
[35] R Spires, "History of Kemira Colliery 1857-1984" in *sourced from Illawarra Coal: An unofficial history of coal mining in the Illawarra,* (1984).
[36] Department of Sustainability Environment Water Population and Communities, "Coal Mines Historic Site Tasmania," Australian Government. http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/coal-mines/index.html
[37] Lieutenant John Shortland, "Historical Records New South Wales," (Sydney: Colonial Government, 1798).
[38] David  Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales : With Remarks on the Dispositions, Customs, Manners &Of the Native Inhabitants of That Country* (London: Printed for Cadell and Davies, 1798).
[39] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle*, 8.

settlement was the site of some of the first Government coal mines in NSW. Procuring the coal and regulating of the coal industry were key governmental roles in this settlement for over twenty years. Even when the industry was privatised in the 1830s, the Government Domain remained an important place where convict and free miners worked side by side.

Complementing the coal mining function was Newcastle's role as a place of secondary punishment. Convicts who reoffended in the colony received sentences to serve their time in Newcastle. As such, Newcastle was conducted more strictly than other settlements, with a higher level of government scrutiny and control of residents, their movements, their working lives and their homes. Some of the most notorious criminals in the colony were managed at Newcastle with relative ease because the peninsula location was ideal for containing convicts and optimum for observing escape. When Commissioner J.T. Bigge made his enquiries in 1819, he was highly pleased with Newcastle seeing it as a model for the harsher system of managing convicts that he recommended should be implemented throughout NSW and Van Diemen's Land.[40] Newcastle remained a working gaol and was exclusively a penal settlement until 1823. Even after this time 250 convicts continued to work there in 1823 to build the southern breakwater, Macquarie Pier.[41] The combination of coal and reconvicted convicts made Newcastle a place of consequence for both the imperial and colonial government and one in which they attempted to balance care and economy.

The establishment of the coal mines at the Government Domain, their conduct and the workers associated with them are not well documented and there are very few plans showing the area prior to the 1820s. There has been recent interest and research on a second group of Government coal mines located in what has been named the Coal River Precinct along the Newcastle waterfront.[42] Figure 2.2 shows the location of the two government mine precincts, one at the Government Domain and the other beneath Fort Scratchley headland at the Coal River Precinct (formerly named Colliers Point). The coal mines at the Government Domain have been hidden, in a literal sense, as well as in the history books. They have been forgotten, nestled on the hillside away from the more visible water's edge of the Coal River Precinct.[43]

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[40] John Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement: The Evidence before J.T. Bigge in 1819 – 1821*, Newcastle Historical Monographs No: 7 (Newcastle: Newcastle Public Library, 1973), 293.
[41] Susan Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle*,16.
[42] Coffey Geosciences Pty Ltd, "Investigation of Convict Coal Mine Workings beneath Colliers' Point, Newcastle East. Results of Drilling Investigation", (Newcastle 2005 November ). State Heritage Listing NSW http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_2.cfm?itemid=5060998
[43] Suters Architects and Planners on behalf of Newcastle City Council, "Newcastle C.B.D Archaeological Management Plan", ed. Newcastle City Council (Newcastle1997).

**Figure 2.2** Map showing the Government Domain (NGD) and the Coal River Precinct.

There is a difference between the convict coal mines of these two precincts in Newcastle. The mines at the Coal River Precinct are drifts or horizontal passageways into the bed of coal, whereas the mines at the Government Domain are vertical shafts. This distinction is important because vertical shafts were not used elsewhere in the settlement, making the Domain mines the earliest working shafts in Australia.[44] The Government coal mines at the Coal River Precinct are still intact[45] and although further research is needed to understand the technologies used at these drifts, they are well documented. *A Plan of His Majesty's Coal Mine at King's Town* in July 1804 showing these Government mines (at the Coal River Precinct) is held in Britain's Public Records Office.[46] There are no early plans showing the shafts at the Government Domain. Written and visual evidence confirms that there were coal mines 'on the hill', but many historians do not acknowledge the existence of these mines prior to 1814.[47]

There may be several reasons for the lack of extensive investigation by historians of the early Newcastle coal mines. Firstly, the long use of the Government Domain as a mental hospital has limited awareness of the site and discouraged investigation into its earlier European use. Secondly, the many resources related to the mines of the Coal River Precinct have made it a focus, limiting examination of mines the Government Domain. Despite the early mine

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[44] Cynthia Hunter, "Coal River Tourism Project:Coal River Historic Site", (Newcastle: University of Newcastle, 2001).
[45] Coffey Geosciences Pty Ltd, "Investigation of Convict Coal Mine Workings beneath Colliers' Point, Newcastle East. Results of Drilling Investigation."
[46] Unknown, "*A Plan of His Majesty's Coal Mine at King's Town New Castle District County of Northumberland New South Wales in Its Present Situation of Working, July 1804*.," ed. Public Records Office London. CO 201/32 (London: UK Archives, 1804).
[47] Jim Comerford, *Coal and Colonials* (Sydney: Newcastle & Sydney United Mine Workers Federation of Australia, 1997), 104.

shafts at the Domain being identified in later reports showing their locations, there are no original plans found that confirm the location or age of these shafts.[48] The shaft mines were more sophisticated that the drift mines and demonstrate that a level of skill was employed in coal mining from the early years of the nineteenth century. This skill combined with significant expenditure on public works in Newcastle allowed the coal trade to steadily increase to become, with wool, one of the most important staple export industries of the colony during later decades of the nineteenth century.[49]

Drift mining at the Coal River Precinct was a less technical undertaking than vertical shaft mining. It used the bord and pillar method that involved sections or rooms dug out of the coal strata whereby pillars of coal were left intact to hold up the ceiling. However, different methods were required in shaft mining at the Government Domain. The shafts required more technical skill and expertise to excavate and one of the difficulties at the Domain was the lack of mining equipment to sink the shafts.

Work practices relating to coal mining during these years were extremely unsafe and resulted in many injuries.[50] Although drift mining was hazardous with risk of collapses, this method was probably less dangerous than mining by shafts that potentially contained poisonous gases. Convicts were inexperienced and may not have used the proper bord and pillar technique to prevent drifts from collapsing. This continued to be a problem for several decades. However, the authorities managed to keep these government mines operating from 1801 until 1831 and the government used convict labour to mine and load coal to 1829.[51] There was more care given to mining the drifts at Colliers Point than the shafts at the Government Domain that required specialist knowledge of ventilation and drainage.


## Coal providing 'Care' for the Inhabitants of the Colony

Newcastle coal was expected to provide the colony with a valuable export product.[52] This in fact had been the view for several years. Governor King wrote to the Duke of Portland in 1801 saying that coal was the "first natural produce of the colony that has tended to any advantage".[53] The notion of coal providing a staple export was also suggested by colonist George Caley to Sir Joseph Banks when he stated he was "...inclined to think that coals give the best prospect" (for trade).[54] Captain Hunter a year later also referred to coal and timber as the only resources that could relieve the financial problems in the colony. An early experiment was the exchange of coal for fresh meat from the Cape of Good Hope. The procurement and trade in coal was one way of contributing to the staple diet and well-being of the inhabitants. It was well known that there was an excellent export market to be had at the Cape of Good Hope where the Dutch would buy coal because it was very expensive there. A letter to Governor King from Captain Hunter in 1802 suggested "...the government here [NSW] might consent to have the colony supplied [with fresh meat], this would no doubt relieve the experiences of the settlement, and very much add to the comfort of its labouring inhabitants."[55] Coals were therefore

[48] Suters Architects on behalf of Newcastle City Council, "Newcastle CBD Archaeological Management Plan", edited by Newcastle City Council, 1997.
[49] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle,* 37.
[50] *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (Sydney) 1 December 1, 1805.
[51] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle* ,6.
[52] Captain Waterhouse, "Report Captain Waterhouse", in *Colonial Office Papers* (London: UK Archives, Kew, 1804).
[53] HRNSW, "Governor King to the Duke of Portland. Iv,," (21 August 1801).
[54] George Caley to Sir Joseph Banks, "A Short Account Relative to the proceedings in NSW 1800 - 1803 ...", (Banks Papers) ibid., V, 298.
[55] Captain Hunter, "Letter to Governor King from Captain Hunter", in *CO 201/1* (London: UK Arcives, 22 March 1802).

sent to the Cape in exchange for live cattle. In 1802, there was a surplus of coal from Coal River at Port Jackson that had been taken there for trade with India. Captain Waterhouse in a letter in 1804 described the rich quality and quantity of coals to be exported.

> The coast on each side of Port Jackson is almost a mass of coal. In Hunter's River to the north of Port Jackson the boats frequently went to load with coal for the purpose of supplying the ships in Port Jackson going to India, as an article for sale. They usually broke it from the cliffs with a pick axe into the boat, or got it from an island mostly composed of coal, lying at the mouth of the river, there aren't so many of these specimens of this coal in England, not its qualities are known and I believe are very fine.... the country [NSW] abounding with so much of that ore.

It was challenging times for the imperial and colonial authorities in terms of establishing the colony because of the vast distance between Great Britain and NSW, which strained the communications and the transport of supplies. There was also a demand for coal in NSW with Governor King suggesting coal was necessary for the work carried out by blacksmiths and carpenters of the colony. He believed coal was a benefit to the livelihood of individual inhabitants so that they could prosper and further support the colony.[56] Therefore the settlement at Newcastle was influenced by the incentive of coal and profit for the colony. The imperial government set the priorities and the locals did what they could to achieve them. The relationship between Sydney and Newcastle (like other outlying settlements) echoed this imperial relationship with priorities being set by the governor according to his own views and British policy. It was up to the local commandant to try to achieve those aims as best he could with limited resources. The Government Domain being the site of a coal mine as well as having a Government House reflected the mixed use of the site, between authority and labour that was essential to support the colony. It would be played out at the Government Domain where authority and convicts worked side by side.

There were many challenges for the commandants at Newcastle during the first decade. Firstly, as mentioned, it was a place to separate Irish convicts, these convicts were hard to control and it was a test to see if they were more manageable at Newcastle, and secondly to procure coal and other resources to finance the colony.[57] Authorities were involved in establishing new mine sites, while controlling private trade in the area and contending with numerous escapes from the settlement. As the settlement was specifically for reoffending convicts, Newcastle's inhabitants were considered less deserving and were issued with short rations. Drawing upon the Sydney experience, it was assumed they would be able to supplement government rations from other sources but this was not possible in Newcastle leading to serious effects on their health.[58] Commandants at Newcastle tried to secure adequate provisions but often failed to influence headquarters to send more supplies. They were responsible for ensuring that convicts would repay their debt to society through labour on infrastructure such as the Macquarie Pier that would eventually enable a more efficient coal industry to develop. To maintain tight discipline, convicts were mustered several times a day. Commandants and officers needed to be on guard because assistance was some distance away in Sydney. Despite the many difficulties at Newcastle, administration from the Domain scrupulously applied the orders emanating from Sydney.

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[56] Governor Phillip Gidley King, "Letter" in *CO 201/32* (London: UK Archives, 14 August 1804).

[57] John Turner, *Manufacturing in Newcastle 1801-1900*, Newcastle History Monographs No.8 (Newcastle: The Council of the City of Newcastle, 1980): 13.

[58] Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement,* 14-16.

**'Coal-mines on the seaside of Government House'**

John Platt, one of the very few experienced miners in the colony, had been sent with Paterson in 1801 to investigate the possibilities for mining Hunter River coal. When the settlement was established he returned and led a mining party to sink coal shafts on top of the hill at Newcastle. Platt was a Lancashire convict, a man "very clever…very intelligent, and a master of his business."[59] Despite the official closure of the settlement, he continued coal mining and was instrumental in establishing many new mines in 1802 and 1803.[60] He worked in Newcastle up until at least 1805, but after this no more is heard of him. It is believed that he developed poor eyesight whilst at Newcastle which may explain his departure.[61] He was given a pardon in 1809[62] and died in Sydney in 1811.[63] Platt opened the New Discovery mine next to the salt-pan on the south-east side of Colliers Point in 1803 and this was said to have much better quality coal than at previous mines in the area. One of the first written references to the Government Domain coal mines originated with Platt describing the mine which he said was located "on the seaside of Government House". These shafts were active at the Government Domain in 1805 and Platt ranked the coal raised there being cleaner than the coal found near the harbour (at Coal River Precinct). The vertical shafts gave access to "...3 ½ feet thick, solid coal..." which was suitable for use in furnaces and malt-houses.[64] Ferdinand Bauer's sketch of Coal River in 1804 (Figure 2.3) may provide some clues of the mining operations at the NGD. It is the earliest visual source that helps identify what structures existed at the Newcastle Domain in 1804. The original sketch is lost and what survives is a reproduction dating from the 1890s. Although it may deviate from the original, it has an authority because it is believed to be a copy.[65] Austrian born Bauer was a natural history painter who with his colleague and botanist Dr Robert Brown also accompanied Mathew Flinders on board the *Investigator* that circumnavigated Australia during 1801 to 1803.[66] Bauer and Brown gained permission to remain in the colony to continue their work after Flinders left for England.[67] Both men worked closely documenting the colony's rare and curious environment, as part of a 'discovery' culture of collecting and documenting. Bauer is renowned for his splendid botanical works and although there were plenty of opportunities for him to sketch the landscape of NSW, it was rare for him to do so. His Coal River sketch of 1804 is the only landscape work that he produced whilst in the colony and it is a wonderful record of the young township. This Newcastle artwork has hidden detail that may show evidence of the first settlement and shafts at the Government Domain.

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[59] King to Portland. 28 September 1800; I,3, 116: 8th July 1801. New South Wales Government, "Historical Records of Australia 1797-1897," (Sydney: Federal Printing & Bookbinding Works, 1897), 609.

[60] "Coals shipped from Newcastle by Mr Thomas Raby on the 'James' and the 'Raven' ",
*The Sydney Gazette* (Sydney)June 12, 1803. "Coals shipped from Newcastle by Mr Thomas Raby on the 'James' and the 'Raven'.

[61] Comerford, *Coal and Colonials*,103.

[62] Ellis, *A Saga of Coal*, 16.

[63] State of New South Wales in the Commonwealth of Australia, "Burials," ed. Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages (Sydney: Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, 1811, 10 June). John Platt Number 2710 Vol 2 A Ellis, *A Saga of Coal*, 16.

[64] John Platt, "Accounts Given by John Platt, a Coal Miner of the Coal Mines of Newcastle", *Sydney Gazette,* Sunday 5 May 1805.

[65] Marlene Norst, *Ferdinand Bauer the Australian Natural History Drawings* (Port Melbourne: Lothian Publishing Company, 1989), 56.

[66] Australian Dictionary of Biography, "Brown, Robert (1773 - 1858)" in *Australian Dictionary of Biography (On-line edtion)http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010149b.htm* (Canberra: Australian National University, 2006). Brown was a 'naturalist'; he was also a Ramsay Scholar having studied medicine in Scotland. He chose a career as a botanist because of his interest in natural history. It was a field that he is well known for particularly in Britain where he returned in 1805.

[67] Norst, *Ferdinand Bauer,* 52. Flinders was taken prisoner by the French and detained at Mauritius for six years and did not return to England until 1810.

**Figure 2.3** Tracing of Ferdinand Bauer's 'Settlement of Newcastle 1804'. Coloured lithograph of Newcastle, probably traced from an original sketch in England as the time the Bonwick transcripts were available. The house nearest the flagstaff is Newcastle's first Government House.
Source: State Library of New South Wales.

Bauer together with George Cayley was part of Menzies' survey party to Newcastle in 1804.[68] Cayley came to NSW in 1810 and was also a keen botanical collector sending specimens to Banks in England.[69] He had worked at Kew Gardens and his visit to Newcastle would have complemented Bauer's interest in recording the botanical specimens. Menzies must have been impressed with Bauer's sketch because he specifically wrote to Governor King informing him of "… this delightful spot" at Newcastle and arranged for the sketch to be presented to the Governor.[70] Bauer's sketch of Newcastle is useful to the historian, particularly given the lack of official plans of the mines, because it shows the European occupation of the Government Domain site in 1804 and possible earth disturbance.

Bauer's training as a botanical illustrator gave him the skill to observe a subject and produce an accurate and finely detailed record. His style is more similar to that used by surveyors and engineers of the era than that of professional artists and he was a keen observer of human features in the natural landscape, showing the subtleties of human occupation. The single house shown is almost certainly Newcastle's first Government House because it is near the flagstaff that was customarily associated with Government authority. There is also an arrangement of small tents most

[68] *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (Sydney)April 1, 1804.
[69] Percival Serle, "George Cayley", in *Dictionary of Australian Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 1949).
[70] Norst, *Ferdinand Bauer,* 56.

likely to house convicts. His sketch shows how the exposed and isolated location of the Government Domain was ideal for signaling vessels as they sailed north from Sydney before they entered the harbour, as well as being a good vantage point for observing the settlement and the landing place on the southern shore of the harbour.[71]

A forensic approach to Bauer's sketch provides possible evidence of early coal mine workings. On close examination of an enlargement of the image there is a small fenced enclosure on the left side of the house which may be evidence of mining activity. Its location fits with that of the mine shaft mentioned in a *Sydney Gazette* article in1805 describing Newcastle's Government House as on the hillside, near the coal mines.[72] There is also a feature on the left of the image that suggest some disturbance to the earth, possibly a test trench for coal mining. The subtle human features at the Domain, relating to industry were associated with the beginnings of what would one day become a significant place of industry. The sketch shows that from the first months of permanent settlement there was European occupation at the Government Domain, including a Government House and that it had become a place of authority as well as a mining site.

Throughout the penal period at Newcastle, coal mining remained small scale and primitive. Few experienced miners came to the colony and it was rare for skilled workers to be transported.[73] This had an impact on establishing the coal industry and this scarcity of labour continued for many decades. As mentioned, the coal drifts at Colliers Point were more accessible and coal could be extracted with relative ease, whereas the shafts at the Government Domain would require a windlass to take men into the pit. The transport of coal was by barrow.[74] Loading by basket and barrow was the norm during the convict era and was later superseded by wagons, tramways and cranes operated by labourers paid by the hour (after 1829).[75] By 1817 convict miners had stopped loading coal and this was done by the town gang that used the government oxen to haul loads that had been stored at the convict stockade to the wharf.[76] Unfortunately, oxen were in short supply and this was just another useful resource that would have made processing and export more efficient.

It was not until the *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the state of the Colony of NSW*, also known as the Bigge Report that the Government's coal shafts entered into the official record.[77] This is problematic because the inquiry took its evidence from those who were at the settlement in 1820. These individuals were unlikely to have known what happened at the Government Domain from 1804 to 1810. Grainger was the Inspector of Mines at Newcastle (1814 - 1822) and gave evidence to the Inquiry on the 23 January 1820. He described a shaft at the Government Domain sunk prior to 1814 but does not disclose its exact origins or any other information about it.[78] Platt had also made the distinction between the horizontal coal drifts 'at the sea side'[79] and at the bottom of the cliff level with the shore, and the mines 'at

[71] John Armstrong, "The Town of Newcastle, New South Wales", (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library,The National Library of New Zealand, 1830.
[72] *Sydney Gazette* (Sydney) May 5, 1805.
[73] Stephen Nicholas and Peter R Shergold, "Convicts as Migrants", in *Convict Workers: Reinterpreting Australia's Past*, ed. Stephen Nicholas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 54-55.
[74] John Turner, *Coal Mining in Newcastle 1801-1900*, Newcastle History Monographs No.9 (Newcastle: Newcastle Region Public Library, 1982), 16.
[75] Marsden,*Coals to Newcastle*, 6.
[76] Marsden,*Coals to Newcastle*,12.
[77] John Thomas Bigge, "Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the State of the Colony of New South Wales" (London: House of Commons, Great Britain, 1822).
[78] Colonial Government of NSW, "Colonial Secretary Papers (Reel 6003; 4/3492 P.188)," (Sydney: State Records NSW, 1811).
[79] *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (Sydney)November 12, 1814. Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement,* 144.

the shaft'.[80] In the Bigge Report, the vertical shaft at the Government Domain is sunk reportedly by Grainger in 1814[81] and is described as 'thirty seven yards' in depth. It was located about five chains (100 metres) from the northern boundary of the Domain in line with Patrick Street.[82] Water entered the working seam so miners used buckets to scoop water into a drift or sloping tunnel built out from the shaft whence it drained out to the sea.[83] Eight miners would descend by windlass or ladder and crawl one hundred yards to the coal face. Nineteen other men wheeled the coal to the shaft in barrows. Together, they produced as much as twenty tons per day.[84] Once they had reached the amount with which they were tasked each day, miners were detained at the mouth of the pit under a shed to prevent them from plundering houses of convicts who were still at work.[85] Another shaft at the Government Domain is thought to be behind the Military Hospital built in the 1840s, however no primary sources have been found verifying that this is the case. It is likely to have been mistakenly identified as a shaft because it is the location of well. It is also in an area of intense excavation during the 1830s and if a shaft did exist then is likely to have been filled. There are several other maps and plans showing the Government's 'old coal pits' on the hill south of the Government Domain, including White's *Plan of Newcastle* completed by the British Ordnance Office in 1833.[86] Russell Rigby has produced a comprehensive survey of Newcastle's maps and plans during the first half of the nineteenth century to show the location of these Government coal mines at the Government Domain (see 2.18).

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[80] Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement*, 138.
[81] Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement*.
[82] Meehan, James. "Adapted from 'Plan of Newcastle' August 7 1818", NLD B11 253/1818/1: State Archives Office of NSW, 1818
[83] Bigge, "Report of the Commissioner",138.
[84] Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement*, 19-20.
[85] O'Donnell, ed. *The History of Early Newcastle 1800-1870* (Newcastle: Newcastle Teachers College,1969), 21.
[86] Boyle White, "New South Wales (to Accompany Comm. Royal Engin. Letter Dated 8 June 1848)" in *MPHH1-681 (67) NSW, Newcastle* (Newcastle: Archives of the United Kingdom, 1848). Overlay produced by Russell Rigby, for the University of Newcastle's CRWP (August 2010) Showing the 'Coal Pits at lower Watt Street and King Edward Park'.

**Figure 2.4** Source: "Plan of the Town of Newcastle." The Domain is the land to the south of the grid of streets, including the Commandant's House, garden, parsonage and coal pit. Included in despatch from Governor Darling to Sir George Murray. In *MPG1-978 (2)*. Kew: The National Archives, United Kingdom, Overlay of Newcastle (1828?) cropped from MPG-978 (2) NSW Newcastle.

The location of a 'water pit' and 'old coal pit' are shown, as well as 'coal pits' near the original shoreline and wharf at the end of the main street.[87] It remains uncertain whether the shaft described in the evidence to Bigge was new in 1814 but the 1805 reference and Bauer's sketch both suggest that vertical shaft mining may have commenced in Australia much earlier than had been thought.



**Figure 2.5** Walter Preston 'Newcastle Hunter's River, NSW 1820. The shaft is shown at right of image.
Source: Newcastle Art Gallery.

Walter Preston's *Newcastle Hunter's River* 1820 engraving (Figure 2.5) portrays the settlement from the same perspective as Bauer's work but shows the space transformed by 16 years of European occupation.[88] Preston's work shows the layout of this all convict town.[89] The government gardens are neatly set out at the Government Domain and on the right of the image near the flagstaff is Government House. On the western perimeter of the Domain are a number of long sheds which held feed for sheep or cattle. Most of the private and government houses are located lower down along the roadways that lead to the river. An enlargement of the image shows a coal shaft positioned behind Government House where

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[87] "Plan of the Town of Newcastle" in *MPG1-978 (2)* (Kew: The National Archives, United Kingdom, 1820?).
[88] Walter Preston, "Newcastle Hunter's River, New South Wales" (Pic-an8603871, 1820).
[89] Grace Karskens, "The Rocks," *Sydney Journal* 2 (1) (June 2009).

Bigge recorded: "Twenty seven men are employed in the working of the mine, and the mouth of the shaft immediately adjoins offices of the Commandant's House".[90]

This arrangement does not seem that it would be altogether agreeable to the occupants of the Government House raising the question of which came first, the house or the shaft. As already discussed there may have been a small house as well as a coal mine somewhere in the location of Government House as early as 1805. It was probably quite accidental that coal was to be found nearby. As mentioned, the location of Government House was ideal for surveillance of the work carried out by convicts. However, it was not ideal for convict miners to be in the Commandant's backyard and so close to his private residence. It is evidence that the Domain was not the exclusive space of the Commandant and his officers but was a shared public space. There was a close physicality between officials and convicts and the mixed use of this space was carefully managed with the mine remaining active until 1827.

The Government Domain as the site of administration in Newcastle assisted in the strengthening of Government and private enterprise, particularly related to coal. Senior staff based there helped regulate the work gangs and labour that was vital to the increasing industry in the colony. The gang system of work which was employed in Newcastle has been viewed by many historians as an instrument of punishment rather than an efficient means of organising work. However as Robbins has highlighted convict work gangs were a scarce resource prior to 1822 and management of labour quite complex and sophisticated rather than brutish.[91] Much attention has been paid to the iron gangs where convicts were punished for hard labour.[92] They built roads, bridges and many public buildings in the colony. There were many public work gangs where work was undertaken by both men and women and tasks varied from ploughing fields to making clothing and shoes.[93] Some who worked in gangs were able to do so unsupervised. However other gangs working on important public infrastructure such as Macquarie Pier in Newcastle required a greater level of supervision. These larger gangs were guarded by soldiers who kept them at work, however they did not supervise their labour. Instead this was up to the convict overseer. In Newcastle several convict work gangs were established, including those at the coal mines, lumber yard and lime works. The size of these gangs was determined by the level of supervision needed. The Government Domain was the hub of administration and management of the convict gangs. A distinctive group of working convicts in Newcastle were the artists who also received their orders from the Domain.

Visual sources were the 'tools of trade' of many professionals who recorded the progress of the settlement. They used a mimesis technique, a technique that was thought to be left to amateur artists who portrayed the colony in a certain way usually through omissions and substitution of particular subjects in the works.[94] The topographical illustrators were interested in the physicality of the place, the engineering works and public projects. They rarely showed people in their artworks because the built environment was their primary focus. One outcome is a lack of a visual record of convicts. This may not have stemmed from a hidden agenda to conceal convicts as suggested by Kerr,[95] but be the

[90] Bigge, "Report of the Commissioner", 79-100.
[91] W M. Robbins, "The Supervision of Convict Gangs in New South Wales 1788 – 1830," *Australian Economic History Review* 44, no. 1 (2004): 80.
[92] Stephen Nicholas, "The Organisation of Public Work," in *Convict Workers: Reinterpreting Australia's Past*, ed. Stephen Nicholas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 152.
[93] Nicholas, "The Organisation of Public Work", 152.
[94] Joan Kerr, "Views,Visages, Invisibility:Themes in the Art of Colonial New South Wales" in *The Artists and the Patron: Aspects of Colonial Art in New South Wales*, ed. Art Gallery of New South Wales (Sydney: Beagle Press, 1988), 15-16.
[95] Kerr, "Views,Visages", 15-16.

result of the brief to document landscape and the built environment in images as a parallel to its documentation in maps and plans.

The association between the production of art and the Government Domain was strong because the artists were supported by Government officials at Government House. While there is ample correspondence between Sydney and Newcastle on matters associated with industrial and engineering matters and convict labour, very little written communication related to the artistic endeavours exists. Therefore artistic endeavours were not officially instructed by the Commandants, the artworks were clearly supported by authorities who often undertook the activity as well.

For the Commandants, as well as being a diversion from the tedium of life in a remote penal settlement, art played a useful role in recording the progress and order in their settlement while building relationships with other power people in the colony and in Britain. Captain Wallis and Governor Macquarie shared a common interest in art and both supported convict artists. For these reasons, they supported resident artists, ordering materials such as copper for engraving plates.[96]

After its haphazard beginnings, the early European inhabitants inscribed their pattern of life in the Newcastle landscape. There are several artworks that displayed the emerging township and streetscape showing the relationship with the land and in particular, the coal it contained. Although only a few hundred metres in length, the roadway to the wharf from the Government Domain became the anchor for the layout of the town. Coal was carried from the pit top in the Domain to the stockade near the foot of the road where it was stored.[97] At the foot was King's Wharf the site of arrival for people and goods and the point of departure for the coal, lime and timber produced in Newcastle.[98]



**Figure 2.6**. Lewin's 1808 painting demonstrates the informational role of what is now viewed as art. It documents features of the new settlement of Newcastle, including the wharf and Signal Hill. The numbers indicate the depth of the water at various points in the harbour.
Source: 'The Coal River or Port of Newcastle'. John Lewin, 1808, State Library of NSW, (SAFE / PXD 942 / 2)

Lewin's work (Figure 2.6) is one of the earliest artworks showing the main thoroughfare of the settlement, later named George Street and in the 1820s, rechristened Watt Street. He was a professional artist and was financially supported by

[96] Beatrice Spence, "The 'Official' Image", *National Library of Australia News,* (May 2000): 4.
[97] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle*, 10.
[98] Possibly John William Lewin, "The Coal River or Port of Newcastle", (Newcastle: State Library of New South Wales 1808).

private individuals to come out to NSW. However, when he arrived in the colony he found it difficult to gain employment as a picturesque artist and was commissioned to undertake artworks for government authorities.[99] In keeping with their interests, his 1808 painting has an emphasis on public works, including King's Wharf and Government House. The close proximity of the wharf and ease of passage from the coal mines on the hill at the Government Domain meant that the township built up around this north and south alignment. The slope from the Government Domain to the wharf, made it relatively easy for bullocks to haul the coals.[100] Convicts built their houses at irregular distance from each other, but they were in alignment and facing the early coal road.[101] They were encouraged to have gardens and keep pigs and poultry.[102] Other infrastructure such as the convict lumberyard and sawpits were also in close proximity to the wharf.[103] Lewin's painting conveys the reliance of this outpost on water transport and for links with the outside world. 'Signal Hill' where a fire was kept burning as a beacon for sea going vessels is clearly labelled and there are finely drawn numbers indicating the harbour depths. Safe entry to the harbour was paramount for coal export efficiency, and Lewin's work clearly documents the best route for vessels to take to get to the wharf. Government House at the centre right of the image is shown to command views both to the sea lane to Sydney to the east and the settlement to the north. 'The Camp' is also referred to by Dangar in 1822 suggesting the semi-settled status of the township and its remoteness from the centre of the colony at Sydney.[104]

The Government House and gardens at the Government Domain set the outer southern limits of the Newcastle settlement. They were officially defined by colonial surveyor James Meehan who first came to Newcastle in 1812,[105] and surveyed the township in 1818 as shown in Figure 2.7.[106] Meehan's plan shows the Government Domain situated on the southern boundary of Church Street (formerly known as Elizabeth Street), quite separate from the main township. Also shown is a concentration of streets around the main thoroughfare. The layout of the town was influenced by Governor Macquarie whose urban designs in other parts of NSW represented his power in the colony. Whilst Newcastle is not a 'Macquarie town', he certainly had an impact on the growth of public works there, including the 1818 survey itself.[107] Later in the 1820s the town developed west of George Street to the area known as the 'Market Place' as shown in Henry Dangar's plan of 1828.[108] Dangar was also a Government surveyor and created space for the town to grow by shifting from the short north-south axis which was constrained by the dimensions of the peninsula to one which ran at right angles to it and could extend indefinitely to the west. The newly defined symmetrical grid with the old George Street as its eastern most street accommodated the Domain and the existing Christ Church to its west on the hillside. Referred to as the Dangar axis, this street pattern continues to define (and constrain) the central area of the modern city of

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[99] Phyllis Mander-Jones, "Lewin, John William (1770 - 1819) " in *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 2* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967).

[100] Comerford, *Coal and Colonials*, 113.

[101] Lewin, "The Coal River or Port of Newcastle".

[102] Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement, 15* . O' Donnell, History of Early Newcastle, 20.

[103] Meehan, "Adapted from 'Plan of Newcastle' August 7, 1818", (State Archives Office of NSW, 1818 ).

[104] Henry Dangar, "Index and Map of the Country of Bordering Upon the Hunter River..." in *Joseph Cross* (London: University of Newcastle, 1828), 47.

[105] Tony Dawson, *James Meehan: A Most Excellent Surveyor.* (Sydney: Crossing Press, 2004), 63.

[106] Meehan, "Adapted from 'Plan of Newcastle' August 7, 1818".

[107] Diane Bland, "Contesting Colonial Terrains: Macquarie's Sydney" in *Contested Terrains XXIII Annual Conference of the Society of Architectual Historians. Australia and New Zealand.*, ed. Terrance McMinn, Dr John Stephes, and Dr Steve Basson (Fremantle, Western Australia.29th Sept-2nd Oct, 2006), 39.

[108] Henry Dangar. "Hunter River, New South Wales", CO700/NSW 30, London: The National Archives, United Kingdom, 1828.

Newcastle.  In the 1840s, the new Ordnance and Newcomen Streets became the southern and western geographical boundaries of the Government Domain.[109]
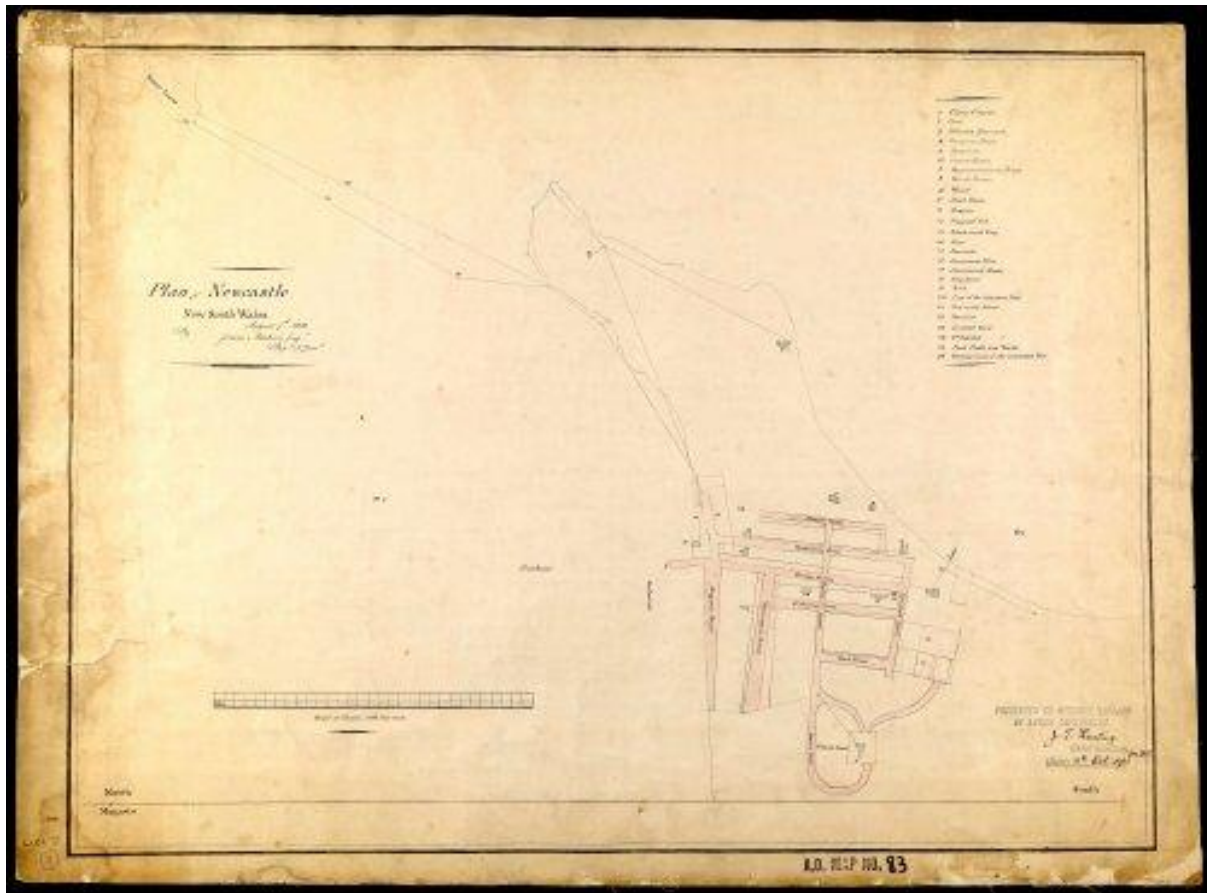


**Figure 2.7** "Adapted from 'Plan of Newcastle' NSW, August 7th 1818 By James Meehan Esq. Dep. S.
Source: State Archives Office of NSW (NLD B11 253/ /1818/1)

Lewin, Meehan and Dangar are just a few of the Government officials whose visual sources recorded the establishment and growth of the Newcastle settlement. These are official planning documents produced by professional personnel, for professional men.  These sketches, paintings and plans supplement written sources to show the attractiveness of the site of the Government Domain to those conducting the Newcastle secondary penal settlement.  Its elevated position allowed for surveillance of the waters outside of the harbour, the wharf and the convict town.  With the establishment of Government House and the coal shaft on the Domain site, a steady traffic of people, stock animals and goods transformed the path from the wharf to the Domain into Newcastle's first main road.  The central point of authority over the settlement also became the central place shaping its physical development.

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[109] Unknown. "[Map of] City of Newcastle", In *333.3/16* cartographic material. Newcastle: Local Studies Library, City of Newcastle, 1840s.

## Art is the Signature of 'Man'

Not only did the occupational artists have an official purpose in the settlement of Newcastle, but so did the convict artists who also documented the place. Many convict artists had competencies in drawing prior to being transported to the colony. They had something in common with the occupational artists in that many of the convict artists also produced art as part of their professions as forgers. Although taking orders from the authorities, many convict artists had the freedom to show the settlement as it was. Convict artists had no high expectations or serious notions about producing 'high art'. They did, of course, also bear in mind potential markets for their art in the colony and in Britain, and therefore tended to focus on positives such as the rapid growth of the settlement. Spence identified another function, describing such works as a form of propaganda designed to entice prospective immigrants.[110] Artworks of Sydney at this time did not show convicts working alongside settlers, but portrayed convicts as being kept to the periphery. Newcastle works rarely show any people at all. However Newcastle was an all convict town and to show people at work would have reminded outsiders that it was a penal settlement. This would have sent the wrong message to prospective immigrants. The only people shown in convict artist Joseph Lycett's works are local Aboriginal people with up to three individuals in any picture. In non-convict Edward Close's works, if any people were depicted they were usually hard at work building.

As well as working on their own, artists collaborated with the Newcastle commandants. Engravings were produced for *An Historical Account of the Colony of NSW* by Commandant Wallis and convict artist Walter Preston.[111] These exceptional illustrations showed off the flora and fauna of NSW to inform those in other parts of the world of the progress being made in places like Newcastle. Another collaborative partnership was Lieutenant Thomas Skottowe[112] with Richard Browne, a skilled convict artist who was transported from Dublin to NSW in 1810. Browne came to Newcastle in 1811 and served most of his sentence before leaving in 1817.[113] He completed many illustrations and produced a manuscript of drawings of Newcastle for Lieutenant Skottowe. Browne also collaborated with fellow convict artist Preston to produce the engraving *Newcastle, in NSW, with a distant view of Port Stephens* in 1812 (Figure 2.8). This work showed two ships precariously rounding Nobbys Island. The emerging 'footprint' of the town is evident with Government House at the top of the main thoroughfare and wharf at the other. These features represent the progress that had been made at the settlement in one decade and in comparison to the settlement in Lewin's painting in 1808.[114]

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[110] Spence, "The 'Official' Image", 6.

[111] James Wallis, *An Historical Account of the Colony of New South Wales,* (Rudolph Ackermann, 1821).

[112] Macquarie, "Macquarie's *Journal to and from Newcastle 27 July 1818 - 9 August 1818* Laying Foundation and First Stone of the Causeway or Pier Known as Macquarie Pier. [Transcription <Http://Www.Lib.Mq.Edu.Au/All/Journeys/1818/1818.Html>] ", Skottowe, "Select Specimens from Nature ".

[113] Joan Kerr, *The Dictionary of Australian Artists, Painters, Sketches, Photographers and Engravers to 1870* (Australia: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p 102. Richard Browne also known as T.R., I.R & J.R Browne.

[114] Richard Browne, "Newcastle in New South Wales with a Distant View of Point Stephens, Taken from Prospect Hill (Picture)" (Newcastle: Newcastle Region Gallery, 1812). Drawn by Browne and engraved by Walter Preston.

**Figure 2.8** Browne, T.R. (1776 - 1824). Newcastle, in NSW, with a distant view of Point Stephen, 1812 and View of Hunters River, near Newcastle. Copper Engraving by Walter Preston. Government House is circled.
Source: National Library of Australia.

Another engraving, this time drawn by Captain Wallis and engraved by Preston as shown in Figure 2.9 is also a good representation of the Government Domain. The engravings were part of a series of works that were widely published and advertised for sale in *The Sydney Gazette*.[115] "View of Hunter's River," shows the paddocks holding cattle and sheep as well as the government gardens at the Government Domain. There is a small group of Aboriginals in the foreground which was the location where Corroborees took place when Governor Macquarie stayed at Newcastle's Government House.

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[115] "Publication: Dedicated to His Excellancy Lachlan Macquarie , Esquire,Governor of New South Wales", *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 1812. James Wallis, "An Historical Account of the Colony of New South Wales and Its Dependent Settlements : In Illustration of Twelve Views.Engraved by W. Preston from Drawings Taken on the Spot by Captain Wallis", (London: Printed for R. Ackermann by J. Moyes, 1821, 1821), Wallis, *An Historical Account of the Colony of New South Wales*.

**Figure 2.9** Engraving (hand coloured) by Walter Preston and drawn by Captain Wallis of 46th Regiment. View of Hunters River, Newcastle, NSW, 1820.
Source: Private Collection.

Convict artist Joseph Lycett was the master painter of the Macquarie era in Newcastle. It has only recently been acknowledged that several works attributed to Captain Wallis were really the hand of Lycett, having been commissioned by Wallis. Lycett has contributed immensely to the strong artistic culture in the penal settlement of Newcastle. He is the most well-known of the convict artists and produced many works of Newcastle, including scenes of night time corroborees, campfires and a moonlit Nobbys Island. Lycett was transported to NSW in 1813 and arrived in Sydney in 1814.[116] He was a convicted forger and possibly an experienced engraver and miniature portrait painter in England prior to coming to the colony.[117] Having travelled on the General Hewitt, coincidentally the same ship on which Major Wallis arrived, he was issued a ticket-of-leave almost as soon as he arrived by Governor Macquarie because of his background as an engraver. Macquarie looked favourably on skilled men and helped them to find employment when they arrived.[118] Lycett had a nine year old daughter named Mary who came to the colony and also may have been a reason why he was given a ticket-of-leave almost immediately on his arrival. Lycett went to work for Absalom West who had a publishing company in Sydney and in need of an engraver after one of his engravers Walter Preston was sentenced to Newcastle in 1814. However, Lycett was caught for forging documents in 1815 and was sentenced to three years at Newcastle.[119] Whilst Lycett was in Newcastle Commandant Wallis supported him. *Settlement of Newcastle* produced in 1818 shows the Government Domain with Government House facing downhill. The curtilage of the Government Domain is quite prominent in this image which shows the extensive Government gardens and fenced areas of the site. Although the

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[116] Kerr, *The Dictionary of Australian Artists, Painters, Sketches, Photographers and Engravers to 1870*.
[117] Jocelyn Hackforth-Jones, *The Convict Artists* (South Melbourne: The MacMillan Company of Australia Pty Ltd, 1977), 70.
[118] McPhee, *Joseph Lycett*, 16-19.
[119] McPhee, *Joseph Lycett*, 19.

Government Domain abuts the main settlement, it was also quite separate to the township and not part of the officially surveyed streetscape. It was a place apart from the township.[120]



**Figure 2.10** Joseph Lycett 'Settlement of Newcastle 1818'.
Source: Newcastle Region Gallery.

Wallis supported the production of the most impressive work of art to be produced in Newcastle during the penal period. This was the collector's chest (also known as the Macquarie Chest) for which Lycett painted scenes as shown in Image 2.11. It was a gift to Governor Macquarie when he returned to England in 1822 and may have even been presented to him in 1818 whilst visiting Newcastle.[121] The Macquarie Chest is a significant cultural item that not only has scenes of Newcastle on it, but also contains local objects of flora and fauna. The timber used to make the chest is native to Newcastle and the chest was built by convict cabinet maker Mr William Temple.[122] Painted panels showed an ordered and controlled settlement.[123] McPhee describes the chest as a lovely display of artistry, carpentry and taxidermy.[124] However more than this it is about a place: the Government Domain where it was likely made. The chest's components were painstakingly put together at the Government Domain. It was from there the manufacturing, the stuffing of birds and collecting of artefacts was co-ordinated and took place. The final construction of the chest and meticulous arranging of butterflies, insects and shells would have required careful oversight. This was likely done by Wallis. The chest attests to

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[120] Joseph Lycett, "Newcastle, N.S.W with Distant View of Port Stephen, Taken from Prospect Hill.", (Newcastle: Newcastle Region Art Gallery., 1818).
[121] McPhee, *Joseph Lycett* , 73.
[122] S Meacham, "Treasure in the Chest, Mystery in the Mists," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) Feburary 11, 2006, 34.
[123] Similar views of Newcastle by Lycett, Wallis and Browne.

the presence of an art collective at the settlement at Newcastle, made up of convicts and officials who shared one another's interests in visual expression. Ellis refers to this collective as 'The Newcastle Academy', whereby Wallis set up a small informal art academy of convicts.[125]  It would seem an unusual environment for such a collective, however the production of art as survey records justified Wallis' pursuit of art because it was also a personal interest.   Although there was much replication of scenes among artists, the final product is testament to how seriously authorities took their art making.  Art was a shared culture and it was from Government House where materials were ordered.  Government House was a place from where art was a form of exploitation, evidenced in the attribution to Lycett of several works claimed to have been done by Wallis.[126]  Art enhanced relationships between convicts and officials and the Government Domain was neutral ground because of the provisions that came from there; perhaps even having its own art studio.



**Figure 2.11** Macquarie Collector's Chest circa 1818. Creators Joseph Lycett, James Wallis and William Westall. Source: State Library of New South Wales.

While the convict artists are now receiving due recognition from historians and art historians, the occupational artists continue to be underestimated.  A good example is Close who has already been mentioned, an engineer and a topographical artist who produced a series of artworks of Sydney and Newcastle in the 1810s and 20s.  Perhaps best known for his sketch "The Costume of the Australasians", Close was acting engineer at Newcastle from 1820 to 1822 and likely visited Newcastle regularly from 1819.  Close remained in Newcastle until he took up a position as magistrate at Maitland in 1825.[127]  The most significant of his Newcastle works is the watercolour panorama (Figure 2.12) which filled six pages of Close's sketchbook now held by the State Library of New South Wales. The work is beautifully

[125] Ellis, Elizabeth. *Rare and Curious:The Secret History of Governor Macquarie's Collector's Chest*. Sydney: The Miegunyah Press, 2010.
[126] Liz Williams. "Australian Colonial Art Uncovered in Canada", *Australian Geographic* http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/rare-australian-colonial-drawings-uncovered-in-canada-.htm, (18 October 2011).
[127] Nancy Gray, "Edward Charles Close (1790-1866) " in *Australian Dictionary of Biography (on-line edition)*, ed. Australian Dictionary of Biography (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2010).

coloured and reflects the amateur tradition coupled with the draughtsmanship of a trained engineer. It contains details observation of design of buildings. This panorama is from George Street (later Watt Street) looking west including Government House and captures details not recorded elsewhere. His method was intelligence gathering and he gleaned as much information as possible from the environment to inform his work.[128]



**Figure 2.12** Edward Close, Barracks with Christ Church in the distance, Newcastle, New South Wales 1820.
Source: National Library of Australia. Catalogue number 4564445.

The last section in the panorama shows the parsonage (later known as the Deanery) at the north-western corner of the Domain. It sat on approximately six acres of land used for gardens and grazing.[129] It was home of the Reverend George Augustus Middleton, the first chaplain of Newcastle in 1821, and was described by Governor Macquarie as a 'neat brick-built stuccoed, one-storied parsonage house with a veranda and all necessary out-offices...'.[130] It also contained a school where thirty-three students attended in 1820; twenty six of them were girls.[131] It took a while for a chaplain to be appointed at Newcastle because of the shortage of clergy. Few would come to NSW because until 1819 clergy had to hold a degree from Oxford or Cambridge Universities and such men often had patrons in England who gave them a parish. After 1819 the *Colonial Clergy Act* allowed those without a degree to go the colonies.[132] The parsonage was not officially part of the Government Domain during this time, but was owned by the Church of England. However part of the land was later resumed by Government for use as a military barracks and later again in 1903 was used for the purpose of mental health care. This is discussed further in later chapters.

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[128] Anne-Marie Willis, *Illusions of Identity-the Art of Nation*, Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1993, 52.

[129] Joan Murray, *The Vision Splendid, Christ Church Cathedral a Parish History,* (Hamilton, NSW: Magazine Associates, 1991).

[130] Adolphus Peter Elkin, *The Diocese of Newcastle : A History of the Diocese of Newcastle* (Glebe, NSW.: Australian Medical Pub. Co., 1955).

[131] Dean Selwyn, *Letters of the the Late Dean Selwyn (of Newcastle)* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1902).

[132] Brian Roach. "George Augustus Middleton - a Prodigal Priest?" (Thesis) (University of Newcastle, 2003).
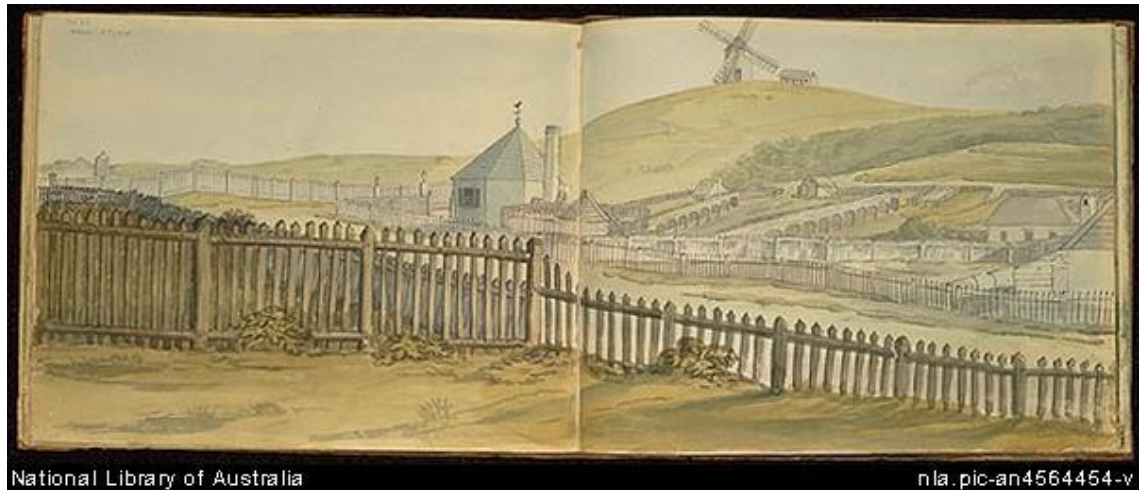
**Figure 2.13** Edward Close Barracks with Christ Church in the distance, Newcastle, New South Wales. Multi-sided building with side chimney at centre of image and two rows of arches shown at the Government Domain.
Source: National Library of Australia.[133]

This two dimensional work by Close would be of considerable interest to architectural historians because of the scale of the built environment and the streetscape shown. Close's works show the building program initiated by Wallis[134] and many of the public works listed in the Meehan plan of 1818[135] recording the Government works. Although the panorama does not qualify as an architectural sketch, it does have a high degree of accuracy. It was as if Close was looking through a camera lens, perhaps even using the *camera lucida* technique.[136] It would have been important to the Imperial government to record the extensive building projects being undertaken in the colony with artworks conveying to authorities in England just how far the colony had progressed. It was a particularly useful tool in response to critics of Macquarie who believed his spending was an unnecessary expense.[137] This panorama provides the perfect visual evidence of a progressive settlement at Newcastle during the final years of the Macquarie building era and while it was being investigated by Bigge. Close used his talents as an engineer to document the public works that were likely completed for official reasons and his drawings may have accompanied official reports to the Imperial authorities in Britain. Was it the proof needed to verify Governor Macquarie's overspending in the Colony? Probably not, as Bigge liked Newcastle. Here he saw punishment and practical approaches, not the "decadence" that was in evidence in Sydney. The Newcastle art works document the different attitudes applied to Newcastle that was a place of unadorned labour and resource exploitation.

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[133] Edward Close, "Panorama of Newcastle", (Dixson Library, State Library of New South Wales, (date unknown)).

[134] Wallis' building program included Church Christ, stone convict hospital, a two-storey brick and stone gaol, a brick subalterns' barracks, a brick barracks for the assistant surgeon, a barracks for convicts, a guard house, a watch house, a boat house, a lumber yard and workshop.

[135] Meehan, "Adapted from 'Plan of Newcastle' August 7 1818".

[136] Con Tanre, *The Mechanical Eye : A History of Australian Photography*, ed. with assistance from Alan Davies & Peter Stanbury (Sydney Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, 1977), 11. Ian Jack, "James Wallis, the Hawksbury and the Camera Lucida...", *History Magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, June 2005. Wallis used a camera lucida device in NSW.

[137] Turner, *Newcastle as a Convict Settlement*.

## Newcastle Government House

Close's work was the last to show the Government House and this has contributed to the popular belief that it ceased to exist after Newcastle became a free settlement. However it is likely that there were at least two government houses, with a larger one built a few years after settlement. As mentioned the first Government House at the Newcastle Domain appears in Bauer's 1804 sketch (Figure 2.3) as a very small cottage next to the flagstaff.[138] It would have been built for the settlement's first Commandant, Lieutenant Charles Menzies (1783-1866), or possibly during the 1801 venture for Wixstead.[139] There are no other structures shown in Bauer's work except for tents nor is there evidence of a camp or occupation at Colliers Point. This suggests that the Government Domain was the location of Newcastle's first permanent settlement. Certainly, it was the first seat of Government in Newcastle and remained in its prominent position until the mid-1830s.[140]  The house was extended several times to accommodate the families of the Commandants.[141] Ultimately, it had five bedrooms and was both the home and office to the Commandants of Newcastle.[142] As discussed there are several artworks that show Government House during the penal settlement years and including that by Lewin (Figure 2.6.)  A Close painting of 1820 shows the greatest detail of Government House (Figure 2.13) and includes the east side and front of the whitewashed sandstone house as well as the numerous wooden additions and large outbuildings.  This artwork had previously not been attributed, but matches Close's other work in style and detail.

The painting by Close of Government House is dated '31st January 1820' a week after Grainger gave evidence to the Bigge inquiry on 23 January 1820 in Newcastle.  The timing may not have been a co-incidence.  This painting might have been intended to document the public works initiated at Newcastle. It is worth exploring further the timing of these events and what else was proposed in the Colony at the time. Commissioner Bigge who was carrying out the inquiry also had knowledge of plans to establish the AA Company in which Close and Bigge would become shareholders.[143] Another motive could have been to provide evidence of the infrastructure which already existed at Newcastle to raise interest in the potential of the coal mines amongst investors.  For either or both purposes, a carefully delineated picture of the current state of Newcastle was an asset. Not all of Close's sketches of Newcastle were worked up into finished artworks.

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[138] Nancy Cushing, "Creating the Coalopolis : Perceptions of Newcastle, 1770-1935" (University of Newcastle, 1995). The flagstaff was later relocated to Signal Hill in 1818.

[139] NSW Department of Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan for the James Fletcher Hospital Site (Final Report) Report Vol. 1", Newcastle: NSW Dept of Commerce for Hunter Health, 2005.

[140] "General Orders", *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* 1804 Sunday 9 September 1.

[141] Jonathon Dixon, "Early Coal Mining in Australia", *Newcastle and Hunter District Monthly Journal* vol IV part III (1949) : 39.

[142] Government, "Historical Records of Australia 1797-1897" 8. The Government House and the settlement are shown in Lewin's work (1808).

[143] NSW, "Colonial Secretary Papers (Reel 6003; 4/3492 p.188)".

**Figure 2.14** Government House 1820. Edward Close.
Source: Dixson Library, State Library of NSW. Catalogue number DG SV1B/9.

His sketchbook includes alternative views of Government House and the Government Domain as shown in Figure 2.15.[144]  They show the significant detail and design of Government House, as well as the extensive 'kitchen garden' and grazing paddock.  There are also a few small houses, with the one that is to the left of Government House possibly being the original Government House because of its proximity to the flagstaff and a similar position to that shown in Bauer's sketch.

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[144] Edward Close, "Signal Mast and Buildings in Newcastle, New South Wales", (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1820 ).
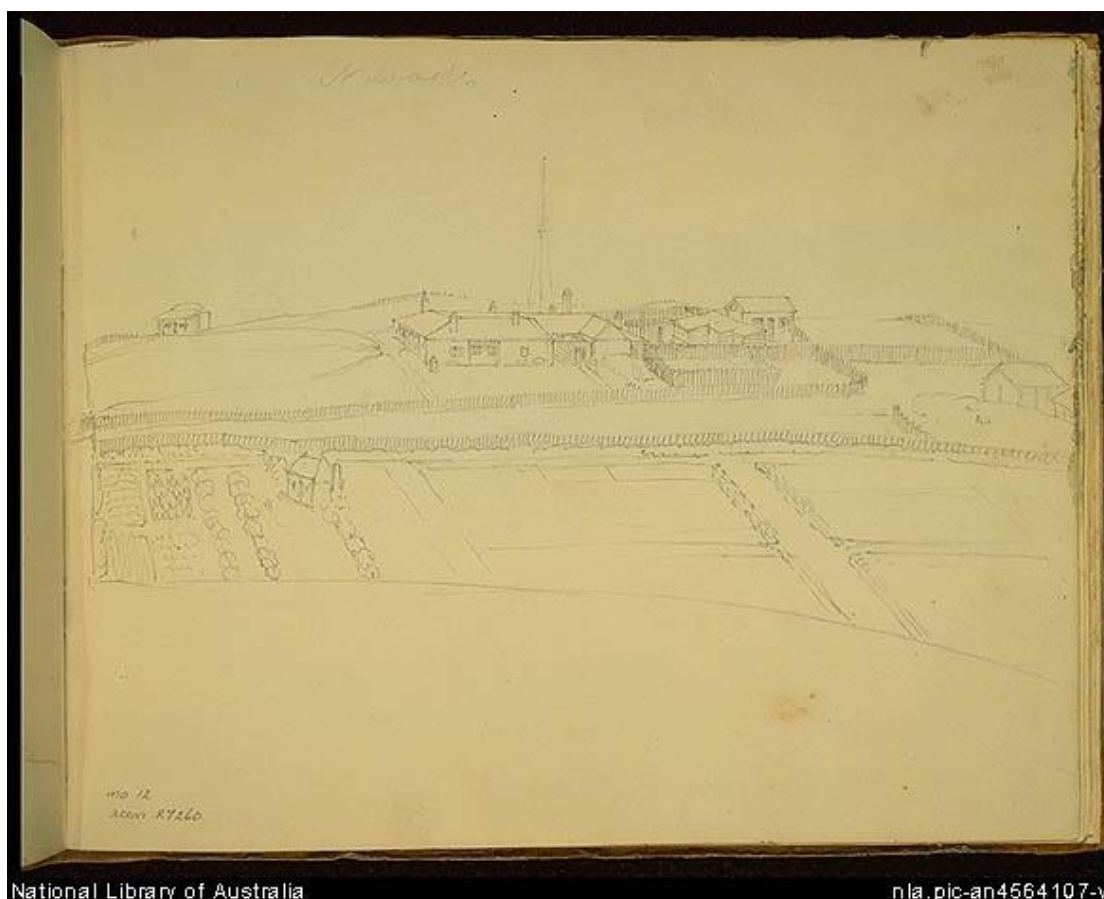
**Figure 2.15** Edward Close '"Signal Mast and Buildings in Newcastle, NSW"
Source: National Library of Australia. Catalogue number 4564107-v

After 1823 the Government Domain no longer was the exclusive government space it had in former years. It was at this time that Newcastle became a free settlement, no longer used as a place of secondary punishment and liberated of the restrictions on the coming and going of people and goods necessary in a penal settlement. About 250 convicts continued to live at Newcastle continuing their public labour.[145]

There is evidence that Government House continued in an official capacity during the first half of the 1820s. It was used by visiting government officials who were entertained there. The first Commandant of the free township was Captain Francis Allman (1780-1860) who lived in the Government House with his wife from 1824 to 1826. Free people resented the continuation of a military commandant at the settlement. Allman was from the 48th Regiment replacing Captain Gillman of the 3rd Foot also referred to as the 'Buffs'[146] who went on to Port Macquarie and became Commandant there.[147] In November 1824 Governor Thomas Brisbane aboard the *Amity* sailed to Newcastle with the Surveyor General Mr Oxley and they were met by Captain Allman who took them to Government House.[148] When the

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[145] Ellis,*Coals to Newcastle*.
[146] Peter Stanley, *The Remote Garrison : The British Army in Australia 1788-1870* (Kenthurst: Kangaroo Press, 1986), 32.
[147] "Shipping Intelligence," *The Sydney Gazette & New South Wales Advertiser* (Sydney) December 16,1824.
[148] *Hobart Town Gazette & Van Dieman's Land Advertiser* (Sydney)December 24, 1824.

Governor departed he received a seventeen gun salute from the 48th Regiment stationed at the Battery at Colliers Point, as had Governor Macquarie during his visits to Newcastle in the 1810s.



**Figure 2.16** View of back section of Government House, Newcastle in the 1820s. Government House coloured pink. By Charles Martin 2014Source: Coal River Working Party, University of Newcastle



**Figure 2.17 Figure** View of front of Government House, Newcastle in the 1820s. Windmill on Prospect Hill in background. By Charles Martin 2014Source: Coal River Working Party, University of Newcastle

Ongoing management from the former Government House continued although in a limited capacity during the second half of the 1820s. There was a general 'Muster of the Colony' in 1825 and the muster point at Newcastle was Government House.[149]  Newcastle's Government House is also mentioned in Lieutenant Coke's notebook in 1827.  Coke was the second in charge of the garrison at Newcastle and worked closely with Captain Allan the Harbour Master, and later Captain Wright.  Coke was in command of fifty-two men at Newcastle as well as the detachment of six hundred convicts at work for the AA Company at Port Stephens.[150]  The AA Company was formed in 1824 after it become official government policy that a large number of convicts be employed to build a pastoralist and industrial economy for the colony.[151]  The intention was that the convicts would supply the needed labour for the AA Company, lessening the

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[149] "Government & General Orders" *The Sydney Gazette & New South Wales Advertiser*, (Sydney) September 22, 1825.

[150] Cynthia Hunter, *The 1827 Newcastle Notebook and Letters of Lieutenant William S Coke Hm 39th Regiment* (Raymond Terrace NSW: Hunter House Publications, 1997), 96.

[151] Damaris Bairstow, *A Million Pounds, a Million Acres:The Pioneer Settlement of the Australian Agricultural Company.* (Cremorne,NSW: D Bairstow, 2003), 4, Jesse Gregson, *The Australian Agricultural Company 1825-75* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1907), 24.

burden and responsibility of government to house, feed and clothe them. Coke's appointment coincided with the abolition of the role of Military Commandant of the settlement. A Police Magistrate was instead appointed to maintain order.[152] The Commandant's residence (former Government House) became known as the Police Magistrates Residence.[153] The change of name from Government House or Commandant's residence to Police Magistrate's Residence seems to have led historians to believe that the original house was lost, in some accounts burned in a fire.[154] However, there is no primary evidence to support this and there is ample documentation of the continued use of a building on the site as a residence and administration headquarters. The following account in 1829 describes the house in need of repair :-

> This Building composed partly of Brick Rough Cast and partly of Weather Boards lined with Brick Nogging together with its out offices covers a span of Ground 86x43 feet and is in a general state of extreme dilapidation so much so, that I cannot recommend it as worth of a thorough repair. [155]

Annotation to this recommendation in the same year noted "Not to be repaired The House to be taken down when vacated and not required for any public purpose."[156] Other evidence to show that the house continued is the entry in *The NSW Calendar and General Post Office Directory* in the 1830s. The house was also used to accommodate the families of the Royal Veterans after Newcastle ceased to be a penal settlement.[157]

Coke documented his experiences at Newcastle and the interactions he had with local Aboriginals, particularly his servant Desmond.[158] He describes the 'numerous grand corroborees' performed at the Government Domain, an activity that had been common during the Macquarie years. It was the continuation of a cultural practice that is associated with both Aboriginal and European relations, and a symbol that Government House was actively used in the 1820s. Whilst at Newcastle Coke learnt to stuff birds and draw them, thus continuing the cultural tradition of collecting and drawing. Despite the many difficulties in sustaining the coal mines at Newcastle, the Government Domain played a role in continuing to support convict labour as the location from which government officials undertook their tasks.

## The Government Domain and the Australian Agricultural Company

The Government Domain did not have the same standing as a place of administration and authority after Newcastle ceased to be a penal settlement in 1823.[159] It also signalled the beginning of the establishment of private enterprise in Newcastle as the newly formed AA Company took over coal mining operations. Although, as the name suggests, the Company was envisioned as an agricultural enterprise and was granted one million acres of land at Newcastle and Port

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[152] Hunter, *The 1827 Newcastle Notebook*, 57.
[153] Joseph Cross, "A View of King's Town", in *http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/archives/coalriver/kingstown3.html* (London: Published in Dangar, H. (Henry), 1796-1861, 1828).
[154] Dangar, "Index and Map of the Country of Bordering Upon the Hunter River...". (Police Magistrate residence described in the list of Government and public buildings).
[155] Correspondence Colonial Secretary, "State Records New South Wales Colonial Secretary, Correspondence, 4/2146, Newcastle Reported by Mr Rodd the Superintendent of Public Works, 27 August 1829.," ed. State Records New South Wales (Sydney: New South Wales Government, June 1831).
[156] Correspondence Colonial Secretary, "State Records New South Wales Colonial Secretary, Correspondence, 4/2146, Newcastle Reported by Mr Rodd the Superintendent of Public Works, 27 August 1829.," ed. State Records New South Wales (Sydney: New South Wales Government, June 1831). NRS 905, Letter No 30/7483 [4/2083]
[157] Correspondence Colonial Secretary, "State Records New South Wales Colonial Secretary, Correspondence, 4/2146, Newcastle Reported by Mr Rodd the Superintendent of Public Works, 27 August 1829.," ed. State Records New South Wales (Sydney: New South Wales Government, June 1831).
[158] Hunter, *The 1827 Newcastle Notebook*, 30.
[159] Government, "Historical Records of Australia 1797-1897", 9.

Stephens for this purpose, it may have been through the influence of shareholders who knew Newcastle, such as Close, Philip Parker King (son of Phillip Gidley King), Robert Campbell, Charles Throsby and J.T. Bigge himself that some of the Company's interests were redirected into coal mining.[160]

The company employed John Henderson as mine manager in 1827 to help improve the output of coal at the mines in the Government Domain. However he found that these Government coal mines were not producing adequate quantities.[161] The idea of a partnership between the government and the AA Company was set aside and the company refused to take over the mines, withdrawing from operations in 1828. During this decade of uncertainty, mines at the Government Domain were maintained and worked, however not at any great capacity. One new coal 'pit' was opened in the vicinity of the current King Edward Park reserve to the south of the Government Domain (Refer to Figure 2.18 'Government Pit 'Bowling Green').[162] The AA Company agreed to take on full charge of the mines in 1828 to be worked by convicts, many of the convicts were then working on assignment for private employers in the pastoral industry and in trades and services.[163] Colonial and imperial authorities supported this quasi-public/private arrangement as a means of productively employing convicts at no cost to the public and private employers, many approved of it because of the scarcity of free labour in the settlement.

After several years of planning and negotiation, in 1831 the Company officially leased all of the government coal mines in the colony and was granted a monopoly on the establishment of new ones. There were many people who disagreed with this decision, preferring that the growth of industry be left to Government authorities. However there were some like Gregson who took the view that industry should be "...in the hands of responsible people who could be depended upon to make such proper use of their opportunities as would rebound to the wellbeing of the colony".[164] He was advocating that the private sector would be more successful in sourcing the right people for the job. The Government mines were not the financial success that authorities had hoped they would be, mostly because of the lack of experienced miners. Many of the convicts available for public works were those who had returned by settlers as unsatisfactory workers. [165] The NGD represents a significant heritage of government ownership of mines which laid the foundations for the private enterprise which followed.

The AA Company was the only large scale enterprise to attempt the systematic exploitation of convict labour as a source of profit, however there was an inadequate supply of convicts during the 1830s.[166] In 1831 the company's number of assigned convicts was 402 by 1835 this had reduced to 335. Of the 5 020 assigned convicts in NSW issued in fifteen months ending 1833, the company only received thirty, in this same period they lost seventy-seven due to obtained tickets of leave or the convicts finished their sentence.[167] By the 1840s

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[160] Bairstow, *A Million Pounds*, 9.

[161] Gregson, *The Australian Agricultural Company* 26 August 1826, 59.

[162] There are limited sources found in the AA Company records showing the location of the Government mines pre 1820.

[163] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle*, 14.

[164] Gregson, *The Australian Agricultural Company,* 12.

[165] Gregson, *The Australian Agricultural Company,* 59-60.

[166] John Perkins. "Convict Labour and the Australian Agricultural Company". In *Convict Workers: Reinterpreting Australia's Past*, edited by Stephen Nicholas. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988,168.

[167] Gregson, *The Australian Agricultural Company,* 84.

the AA Company established further new pits around the district, from the Hill adjacent to the Domain to Cooks Hill and Hamilton.[168]  Figure 2.18 shows the Government and AA Company mines that were established in the 1830s.



**Figure 2.18** Plan produced by Russell Rigby 2011 showing the location of Government mines and later Australian Agricultural Company owned coal mines.

[168] Docherty, *Newcastle the Making of an Australian City* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1983).

Early investigations by the AA Company had shown the coal shafts at the Domain to be unviable so they remained unaffected by this new activity. This may have contributed to the Domain remaining in public 'hands' because it was not seen as a viable mine site by the AA Company. The headquarters of the Company was in London and its local administrators lived at 'Carrington', Port Stephens or Newcastle, with a local office being opened on the waterfront west of the central business district of Newcastle in the 1840s. The Government Domain therefore has not had the interference of private use as has areas surrounding it. It was not made part of the AA Company land grant but remained in Government ownership. The grant of one million acres of land was taken up in 1824 and another 2000 acres west of the Newcastle Domain granted as coal mining commenced.[169] Early coal mining at the Domain meant much of the coal was depleted and the area remained in government ownership, preserved for future use.

## Conclusion

The concept 'care' has been used quite broadly in this chapter to show that although care was not always outwardly evident, government officials based at the NGD were attempting to improve conditions and provide benefits to the inhabitants of the colony. This also extends to the implementation of interventions that created positive social benefits. Although government intervention was harsh, authorities were exercising genuine care to ensure the settlement and colony of NSW advanced.

Part of this advancement involved authorities overseeing how the Newcastle settlement would evolve. Coal at Newcastle provided a pattern of occupation of the city and the specific geology determined the location of the Government Domain. It was human activity related to coal that gave the town its 'blueprint'. The urban spatial culture of the Government Domain helped determine the layout of the town and where infrastructure would be constructed. To some extent, Newcastle fits the ideal imagined by Strauss:

> A human settlement which did not completely destroy, but rather gave pattern to, the natural relationships between geology, geography and vegetation, and thus offered an exceptional kind of reality, a dream – world's in which we can find refuge.[170]

The layout of the village was distinctive with its main street which ran up the hill to the Domain but no further, unlike the common pattern of principal roads which become routes to other places.[171] Although there were initially high expectations for the coal output of the settlement, this was not achieved because there was limited investment in skills and capital in developing the coal industry. Even so, Newcastle was a refuge, a place that helped support the rest of the colony and benefit its inhabitants. The Domain was a pivotal location whereby orders were served from that would determine future plans for the town.

This small penal outpost helped provide for the greater good of the colony through the establishment of what became a significant industry for home consumption and export. Considering the haphazard way the penal settlement

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[169] Ian Parsonson, *The Australian Ark: The History of Domesticated Animals in Australia (1788-1998)*. Collingwood: CSIRO Publishing, 2000, 56.
[170] Charbonnier, "Conversations with Claude Levi Strauss. Trans by John & Maureen Weightman " in *Nature and the Idea of a Man-Made World*, ed. Crowe and Norman (Cambridge: MIT, 1995).
[171] As later happened with the reorientation to Hunter Street that becomes Maitland Road.

and the coal industry came about, it is extroadinary that the settlement survived to become one of the worlds biggest coal 'emporiums'. The nature of the penal settlement and its distance from the centre at Sydney contributed to the trying conditions. Government intervention was needed to support the settlement. Inhabitants at Newcastle were perceived as less deserving and the authorities at the Government Domain administered 'care' to convicts as best they could under the difficult circumstances. Convicts performed remarkably well under the constraints and lack of provisions. They sustained the coal mines long enough for them to be transferred to a private authority, the AA Company. This persistence by authorities to maintain the settlement is symbolised in the visual works of Newcastle that have been discussed. These artworks are products of colonisation. This broad interpretation of care applied to this early phase of use at the Domain saw authorities providing new opportunities to the convict artists. Care can also be redefined in terms of authorities support for 'art making' with evidence of collaborations between convicts and government officials unifying their talents to document and celebrate their achievements at Newcastle. This cataloguing of the early penal settlement provided a pastime for officers, an opportunity for convicts and drew attention to Newcastle as a place worthy of ongoing government support.

The Newcastle Domain was an essential node in the system of authority which directed the development of the Colony of NSW.[172] In contrast with the Sydney Domain which was used for a variety of public purposes and is now a highly valued urban open space, it disappeared from view in the 1870s and has not been fully acknowledged or celebrated. One means of recapturing the significance of the Domain is through foucsing on its role as a site of caring. This care emanated from the Domain in a way that was affected by the haphazardness of the settlement. As has been shown in this chapter, during the early years of the establishment of the coal industry in Australia, the Government Domain played a significant role. It helped improve the greater good of the inhabitants of NSW by supporting the growth of the coal industry and of the convicts sentenced to Newcastle by providing strict oversight and opportunities for artistic expression for the few. The following chapter discusses the next official use of the Domain as a military complex.

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[172] Bigge, "Report of the Commissioner"

# Chapter 3: Military Barracks and Public Service 1841-1867

This chapter traces the use of the Government Domain from 1841 to 1867. The Domain was established as a centre for caring, broadly defined, during the first decades of the Newcastle settlement. The establishment of the military barracks on the site broadened this role by offering security for local industry and economic development. The military buildings also created new government infrastructure. The chapter explores the physical changes at the site from the time when the military buildings were constructed there in the 1840s. There were two main uses during this time, firstly a military headquarters and secondly, for offices of public servants. As well as this, the community began to use the Domain in the 1850s when the volunteer forces trained there. This chapter discusses how these new occupants came to be established at the Newcastle Domain.

By the 1840s the colonial authorities in NSW had achieved greater responsibility and autonomy from the Imperial Government in London. One of their main tasks was to improve conditions for the inhabitants of NSW.[1]  As there was a continuing need for skilled labourers in the colony, free settlers were encouraged to migrate to the NSW.  In 1830 British and Irish convicts and ex-convicts made up 71 per cent of the colony's total workforce; with only 24 per cent having been free immigrants and the remaining 5 per cent colonial born.[2]  The trial and error of the early colonial period persisted, with haphazard planning where the authorities made genuine attempts to establish the order and care that would one day sustain a self-governing colony.

Timeline
Events related to the Newcastle Government Domain from 1841 to 1871

| Year | Event |
|------|-------|
| 1841 | Construction of military buildings commenced |
| 1843 | Military buildings ready for troop occupation |
| 1851 | Departure of troops from the Newcastle military buildings. Buildings rented by AA Company for accommodation purposes |
| 1853 | AA Company moved out. Occupied by police constables & Gov. Clerk of Works |
| 1860 | Newcastle Volunteer Rifles formed |
| 1867 | Industrial School for Girls established |
| 1869 | Reformatory for Girls established |
| 1871 | Newcastle Industrial School for Girls' and Reformatory closes after riot |

**Timeline 3.1** - Events related to the Newcastle Government Domain from 1841 to 1871

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[1] Gordon Greenwood, ed. *Australia: A Social & Political History* (Angus and Robertson,1974),70. *Constitution Act 1850* passed for the eastern Australian colonies to establish a common form of government.
[2] Noel Butlin. "White Human Capital in Australia 1788-1850," *Australian National University Papers in Economic History* 32 (1985).

As discussed in the previous chapter the official use of the Government Domain in the 1810s and 20s was fairly well documented in visual sources.  In the 1830s the Domain does not appear to have been recorded to same extent in written or visual sources. This was characteristic of a general period of decline in central Newcastle as most of the convicts departed, the activity of the AA Company's interests moved to the outer areas of Newcastle; and much of the water borne trade moved upriver to Morpeth and Maitland.  What reactivated the Domain was the significant building programme that saw a military barracks constructed. These buildings were designed, constructed and maintained by the Imperial authorities for the use of troops stationed in Newcastle to protect coal mining and coal ready for shipment. As such, the troops' presence supported the growth of infrastructure and commerce in Newcastle, ensuring that the Macquarie Pier would be completed to provide a safe harbour for the export of coal. Running between the southern mainland at the foot of Signal Hill and Nobbys Island, the pier (now known as Nobbys Breakwater) was designed to improve access to the harbour by directing all of the water flow through the main channel to the north of Nobbys.  Although the military withdrew in 1851, the buildings constructed for them provided the infrastructure that would secure government occupation of the site to 2014.

A renewed interest in the Domain by artists supported by government authorities took place when the military barracks were built and was associated with a sense of confidence and pride inspired by these public works. Art works during this time included ones that illustrated the cutting down of Nobbys Island to erect a lighthouse, as well as the construction of Macquarie Pier.[3]  These public works are also associated with a reorganisation of the environment to improve the settlement. It was an ambitious period supported by the Imperial Government, whose projects were the catalyst for a second wave of artists in Newcastle.


## Social and economic impacts 1840s - 1870s

The colony was always in transition however the period 1840 to1870s was a time when there was pressure on the colonial government to manage increasing migration and population growth. Assisted migration to NSW had begun in 1831 creating a growing cohort of free settlers with an expectation of participating in their own governance.   By the 1830s colonists were demanding a government with elected representatives.  The *NSW Constitution Act 1842* (UK) laid the groundwork for the parliamentary system and although this was not full responsible government it allowed for the election of a NSW Legislative Council.  Structures of the colonial government had to change to incrementally bring about self-government, a goal also sought by successive British administrations and given increased urgency with the change in financial fortunes and demographics brought about by the gold rushes.

Many civil service roles were taken on in an ad hoc way prior to self-government in 1856 and officials often fulfilled a variety of roles. This served to broaden their skills and enabled them to adapt to the new roles that developed in later decades.[4]

The needs of current and former convicts were met by the British Treasury. As the number of convicts declined in the Colony so did the British authorities' responsibility and their injection of finance.[5]   The colony had to find ways to begin

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[3] Conrad Martens, "Colonial Sketches:An Album of Views of Sydney and New South Wales.Ref DI Pxx 30" (Sydney: State Library of New South Wales, 1822-1859). Conrad Martens depicted the precision cutting and sculpting of the headland in an album of colonial sketches.
[4] Hilary Golder, *Politics, Patronage and Public Works* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2005), 62.

to provide establish its own infrastructure, services and institutions to fill the gap.  Hilary Golder calls these years prior to 1856 the 'groundwork years' because of the partnership formed between the imperial and colonial governments who shared the responsibility of sustaining the colony.[6]  In 1856, NSW become self-governing and the colony had to 'stand on its own two feet'.  It took several decades for the colony to become more self-regulating and responsible.  The rapid change that had occurred during the 1840s and 1850s created significant numbers of vulnerable and needy people and the colonial government was the authority charged with caring for them.  Acomprehensive welfare system was not started until the 1860s when the newly self-governing colony increased its capacity to deal with complex and long term needs.  The issue was pressing because of the aging population and the lack of family support for those in need in NSW.[7]  Rising unemployment placed further demands on institutions such as lunatic asylums during the 1850s and 1860s and the gold rush contributed to social disruption in NSW.  Between 1851 and 1860 almost 500 000 emigrants came to the Australian colonies from the United Kingdom, as well as 60 000 gold seekers from Europe and 42 000 from China.[8]  The overwhelming increase of permanent settlers had profound consequences for the development and growth of Australia.[9]

Although some charities had been established from the early years of the 1800s, they were far from enough to serve as a welfare system as in the United Kingdom where the majority of welfare institutions were funded through non-government agencies, charities and philanthropic means.[10]  Murphy's extensive research into charitable organisations in Australia from 1870 to 1949 shows there was significant growth; but its focus does not allow for an accounting of the immense contribution made by government authorities during the early years.[11]  He refers to the 'moving frontier' and the jostling between voluntary agencies and the state with its long established institutions including orphans' schools, asylums and gaols.  By this he meant the mixed economy of colonial welfare that was trying to keep pace with changing needs of inhabitants.

The growth in immigration as well as mixed fortunes for the economy resulted in some of the inhabitants of the colony being in need of institutional care. However, during the 1850s and 1860s many institutional structures were not in place and this meant the circumstances of those requiring care was not improved. In the absence of charitable organisations to assist in providing care, this role fell to the colonial government. Although the military buildings at the Domain would be handed over to the colonial government, they were originally built for imperial troups, by the Imperial government  At the Newcastle Domain, one institution of this period was longstanding in Newcastle, the military; the other was entirely new, a custodial facility for girls at risk which is discussed further in the next chapter.

## The Military at the Government Domain

The decade leading up to the construction of the military buildings was fraught with uncertainly in Newcastle.  There was much disorder and hostility in the town between free settlers and convicts. The make-up of the town was far removed

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[5] Golder, *Politics, Patronage*, 14.

[6] Golder, *Politics, Patronage*, ix.

[7] Golder, *Politics, Patronage*, 45.

[8] Debra Oxley and Eric Richards, " in *The Australian People:An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*, ed. James Jupp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 35.

[9] Oxley, *The Australian People*, 35.

[10] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*.

[11] John Murphy, *A Decent Provision:Australian Welfare Policy, 1870 to 1949* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 29.

from what had once been. The Domain was no longer a place of the control and management of convict labour. Until the 1850s most of the workers at Newcastle were former convicts, free miners, Aboriginal people and sailors.[12] The settlement's focus had moved away from the Domain during the 1830s to the main corridor of George Street (later Watt Street) where mercantile and shipping agents were established.[13] The Domain remained underdeveloped during this time with residential growth taking place at the 'sandhills' at Newcastle East.

The decision to use the Domain as the site for building military buildings was made in the mid-1830s. The Domain came to the attention of the Imperial Government during the 1830s when it was considered for the site of new military barracks to replace the one in use further down George Street. Plans were drawn up in 1835.[14] Governor Burke officially formalised the use of the site for this new purpose in October 1837.[15] Although the number of convicts in the town had been reduced, port safety and the efficient transport of coal from the port of Newcastle were deemed to warrant a military detachment in the town.[16] According to Maurice O'Connell, the Lieutenant Governor and Commander of the Forces in NSW:

> The Barracks at Newcastle so lately completed at an expense of 20,000 Pounds…is situated at the mouth of the River Hunter, which runs thro' the richest part of the Colony…besides Newcastle is the richest emporium of coal in this Colony, and a Military force will be always be required there.[17]

From the Domain the colony's wealth and the 'richest emporium' of coal were to be protected. Convict labour was used to prepare the Domain for the building works. A chain gang quarried the site to level the ground to allow for the erection of rectangular military barracks and a parade ground.[18] The following image shows the sandstone wall in the south boundary of the Domain. This section of wall was built using convict labour and is an extention of the excavated quarried rock forming the rest of the southern curtilage. .

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[12] Marsden, *Coals to Newcastle*, 38.
[13] Bingle, *Past and Present Records of Newcastle* (Newcastle: Bayley & Son & Harwood, Pilot Office, 1873), 14.
[14] Ann Hardy, "Government House: Newcastle, N.S.W", (Thesis,Curtin University of Technology, 2005), 39.
[15] Correspondence Colonial Secretary, "Surveyor General, Cgs 13754, Registers of Letters Received from the Colonial Secretary, 1826-1855, [Reel 2803], ed. Colonial Secretary Office (Sydney: Colonial Secretary Office, 4 April, 1836).
[16] Dolan, "Newcastle, Early Military History," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Newcastle)  Dec 1, 1934.
[17] Great Britain War Office, AJCP, Correspondence In-Letters, WO 1, 1841-1855, Mitchell Library, Maurice O'Connell to Lord Stanley, 12 June, 1844.
[18] Great Britain War Office, AJCP "Correspondence in-Letters, WO 1. 1843, 27 September, Memoranda from Inspector General of Fortification.

**Figure 3.2** Photograph of convict built wall at southern boundary.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.



**Figure 3.3** Photograph showing the quarried wall.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.

Convict workers also prepared the foundations of the Soldier's Barracks and Officer's Quarters. The design of the military buildings was a standard plan that could be applied anywhere in the empire it was required.  It was not specifically drawn up for the Newcastle Domain.  The plans were prepared in England and their implementation overseen in NSW by the Royal Engineer Henry William Lugard.  Some of the site plans for the barracks are held in the United Kingdom Archives, Kew and show the layout of the buildings but none of the original architectural plans survive. The construction of buildings was untaken by contractors Hudson and Richardson from Sydney. Some adaptations were made to suit the location.  For example, windows were placed opposite one another in the Soldier's Barracks to take advantage of the free air flow from the Pacific Ocean.[19] Other environmental factors were also taken into account such as the construction of a long veranda on the eastern side to shelter the adjoining rooms from the sun.

It took until 1841 for the military complex at the Domain to become fully operational.[20] At the new barracks in 1844 were two field officers, ten officers, two hundred non-commissioned officers and privates and sixteen horses.  As well as providing general security, their expertise in engineering was crucial in building essential infrastructure as well as overseeing the structural work at the Macquarie pier.[21] Just as the Government House site had been chosen for its position overlooking the settlement, the military were able to keep watch over the port and local works from the Domain.

Figure 3.5 shows a plan developed by the British Ordnance Office for the Military Hospital at the Government Domain which was built in 1841 and held twelve patients.[22]  It represents the domesticated element of this hard masculine place and was the last of the military buildings to be built at the Government Domain, having a shared use as a house and a hospital. This enabled a medical person to always be at hand. The hospital contained three wards, a surgery, store room and the small room at the front of building that was the Surgeon's Quarters. The smaller building behind the main house was the kitchen containing two small rooms for the larder and a 'Surgeon's Closet'. On close examination of the plan the 'Surgeon's Closet' is crossed out and labelled 'Dead House', or mortuary.  Kitchens were commonly built separately from the main house because if fire broke out, it was more likely to be contained. Other architectural plans relating to the NGD show the design, as well as the layout of the spacious offices and rooms of the large rectangular barracks buildings.  These plans are held at the Kew archives in the United Kingdom and are shown in Figures 3.4 to 3.5 and 3.7 to 3.8.

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[19] *Hunter River Gazette* (Sydney) December 11, 1841.
[20] "New South Wales Government Gazette", ed. New South Wales Government (Sydney1836 May).
[21] Noel Davies, *Convict Nobbys* (Belmont: Newey & Beath Pty. Limited, 1996), 41.
[22] Office of Ordnance, "Return of Barrack Accommodation at This Date in the Colony of New South Wales. Australian Joint Copying Project Wo1", ed. (Sydney,10 June 1844).

**Figure 3.4**. Source: "Plan of the Town of Newcastle." Included in despatch from Governor Darling to Sir George Murray. Kew: The National Archives, United Kingdom, Overlay of Newcastle (1828?) cropped from MPG-978 (2) NSW Newcastle. Produced by Russell Rigby 2010

**Figure 3.5** Former Military Hospital was also used as a residence.[23]
Source: The National Archives,United Kingdom, 1844. Gordon "Newcastle Barracks, NSW," MFQ1-963 (6)

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[23] Gordon, "Newcastle Barracks, NSW," ed. MFQ1-963 (6) (Newcastle: The National Archives,United Kingdom, 1844).

**Figure 3.6** Former Military Hospital Source: Ann Hardy, 2013. This contemporary photograph of the Former Military Hospital shows that little has changed of the building.
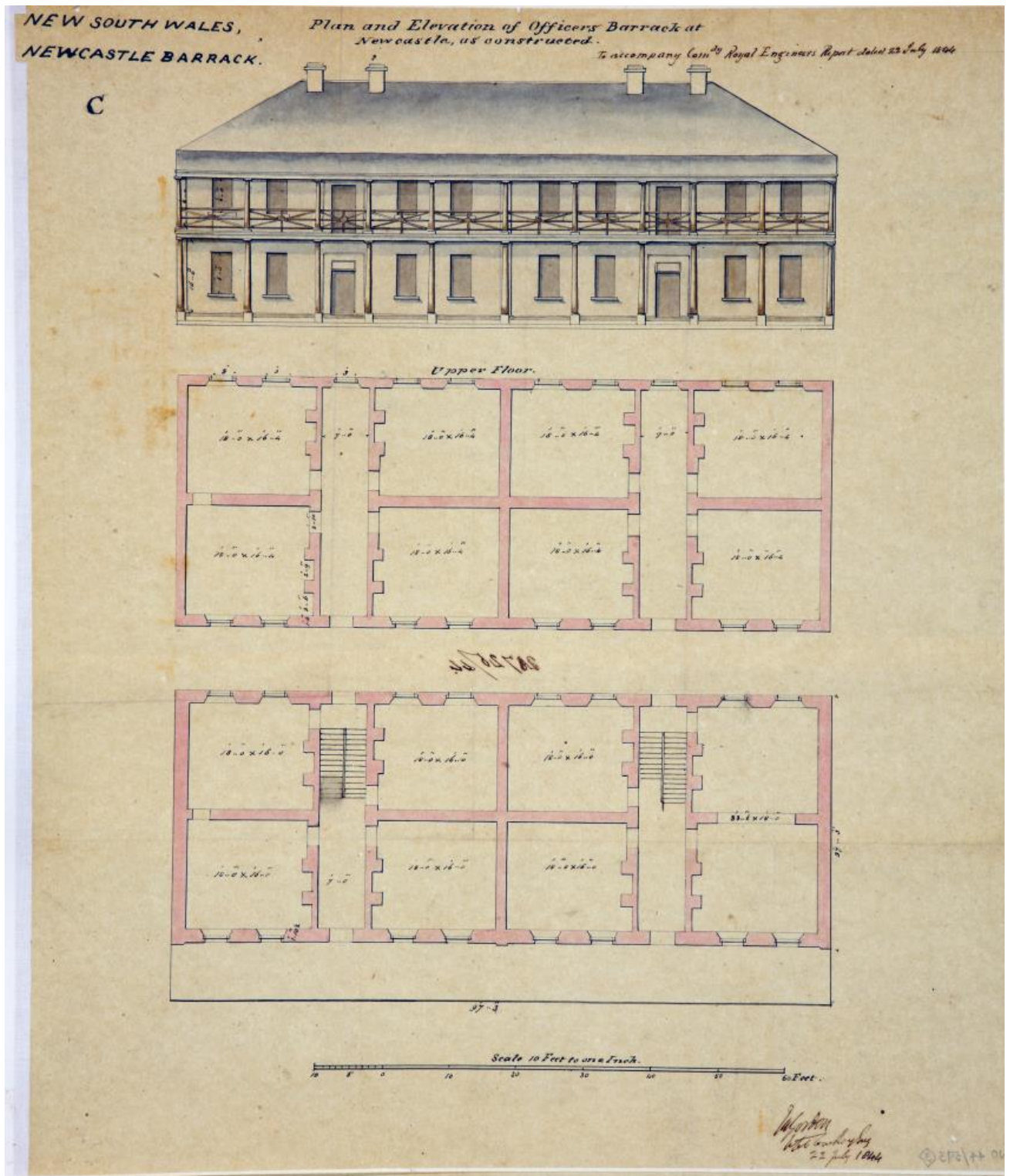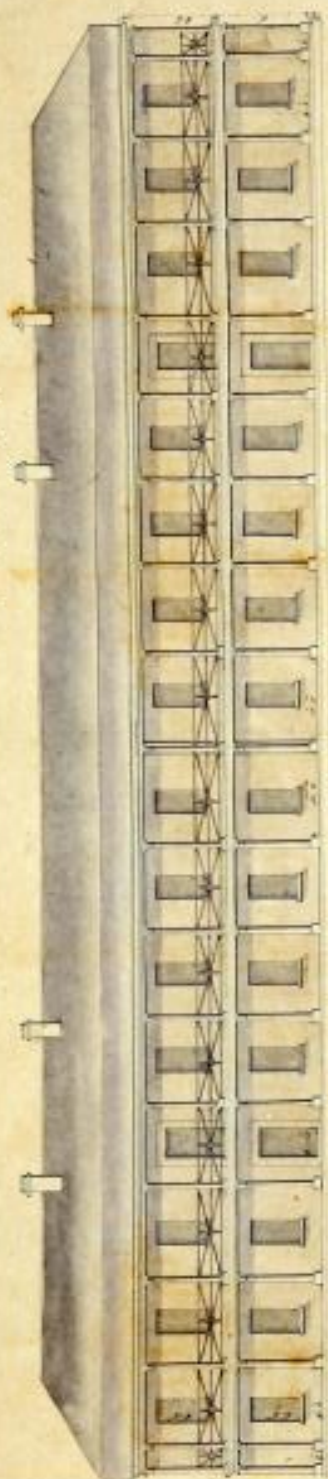
**Figure 3.7.** Source: "Newcastle Barracks, NSW." In MFQ1/963 (4). The National Archives, United Kingdom, 1844
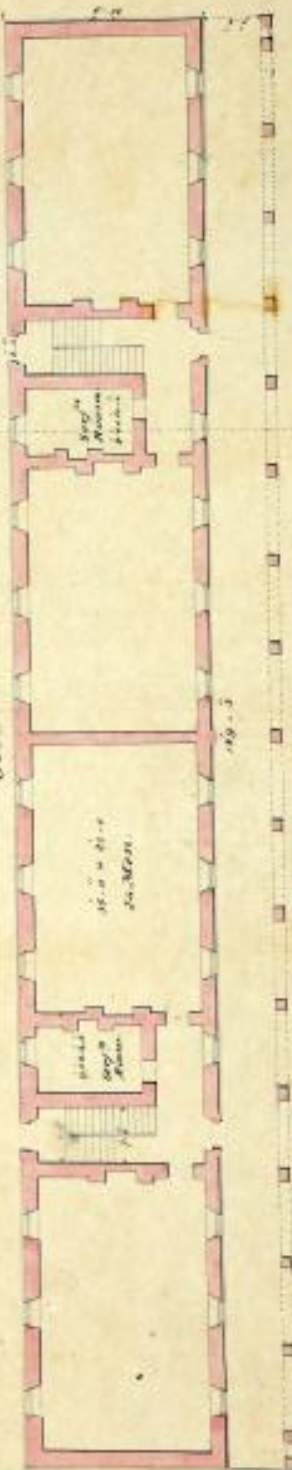
**Figure 3.8.** Source: "Newcastle Barracks, N.S.W."  In MFQ1-963 (2), The National Archives, United Kingdom,1844.

**Figure 3.9** Military Barracks Source: Charles Hardy, 2013.



**Figure 3.10** Military Barracks Source: Charles Hardy, 2013.

The construction of the military barracks by the Imperial authorities brought the Domain back into prominence as a government place; it began to be recorded once again in Government correspondence and shown in artworks. A panoramic painting by John Rae (Figure 3.11) shows the military buildings and the township from Newcomen Street in 1849.[24]  Rae came to Australia from Scotland in 1839 and in 1843 and was appointed Sydney's first town Clerk, later working in various government positions including accountant for the Sydney Railway Company. He was not an engineer or surveyor like many of the earlier occupational artists, but had a keen interest in public works.  He was a great promoter of the arts and cultural activities and in 1847 organised the first exhibition of fine arts in NSW.[25]  As a public servant and Railway Commissioner he pursued his interest in the arts by photographing and drawing the rapid expansion of townships and was particularly interested in the growing railway system.

There had not been a comprehensive artwork of the Domain since Close's 1820s panorama.  The work by Rae is a full panoramic 'snapshot' of the town and like some of the earlier works probably achieved using the *camera lucida* technique. The built features have an accuracy and scale that gives the work correctness to it.  This is similar to Close's panorama that also has the effect of looking through a wide lens camera to see the entire landscape. Rae's work shows the Gate House (also known as the Guard House) on the far right of the panorama. This building has had many uses and continues to exist in 2014.



**Figure 3.11** John Rae (watercolour painting 1849)
Source: Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW. Catalogue number DGA 10.

In the 1860s Rae became a prolific photographer. He exhibited these illustrations alongside his earlier paintings completed twenty years prior.[26]  His photographic panorama of the NGD shows the asylum and is discussed further in Chapter Six.  Figure 3.11 accompanied Rae's panoramic photograph that was exhibited at the Calcutta International Exhibition of 1883.  It shows the infrastructure and public works that had been added to Newcastle since his 1849 painting was completed.[27]

The Imperial authorities announced in 1849 that the self-governing colonies would need to provide their own defence forces and that British forces would be reallocated. The colony was left with possessions that had strategic value, however they were unable to defend them themselves.  Already well along the way to being granted responsible government in1855, NSW was one of the colonies from which imperial troops were gradually withdrawn. Each Australian

24 John Rae, "Newcastle Panorama" (Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales,1849).
25 Kerr, *The Dictionary of Australian Artists, Painters, Sketches, Photographers and Engravers to 1870*, 652-54.
26 Charles Potter, "Mr Rae's Sketches of Colonial Scenes in the Olden Times", ed. NSW Commission for the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition (Government Printer : Sydney, 1888).
27 Potter, "Mr Rae's Sketches", 3.

colony was directed to establish or expand its volunteer forces.[28]  The rationale for a gradual withdrawal by British forces over a 15 year period was so that the colonial forces had time to build up and became a large enough volunteer defence force to be effective if they were needed to protect the colony.  In 1862 the Mills Committee presented its findings to the British Parliament, recommending that the responsibility and cost of defence should rest solely with the colonial authorities.[29]  After another five years, all Imperial troops in Australia (except one regiment) would return to Britain, with all regiments having departed by 1870.[30] The Imperial forces at Newcastle were withdrawn relatively quickly, in 1851, coinciding with the completion of Macquarie Pier.  The 1860s were a decade of preparation in forming colonial volunteer regiments. To support the development of colonial defences, existing military barracks and the parade ground were handed over for the use of the colonial authorities.[31]  The vacated military barracks at the Domain were practically new when taken over by the colonial Government.

## Volunteer Forces and Civil Servants

The cost to the Imperial Government in constructing the military buildings at Newcastle was considerable. The responsibility was that of the Board of Ordnance which had initiated and overseen its construction.[32]  The British Ordnance Office ceased to have a presence at the site after 1851 when responsibility was handed over to the colonial government to provide its own defence forces.  The Imperial government transferred to the Colony of NSW military barracks and buildings, and associated lands. Military infrastructure was handed over on the terms that responsibility for any future expense for upkeep and maintenance was with the colonial government.[33]  Although ownership arrangements changed in 1851 the Imperial government reserved the right to resume military land and buildings and called on the colonial government to preserve the buildings. They wanted the colonial government to be mindful to whom the buildings would be leased, because they were concerned that inappropriate tenants could occupy the 'fine buildings', possibly neglecting and damaging them.[34] The Imperial government did not support the idea of putting the buildings out to public competition or tender. Instead it wanted the buildings properly cared for and maintained.[35]   Proposals for the buildings included their use as a candle factory, school, a fever hospital and a slaughter house.  None of these were acceptable to the British Ordnance Office which preferred the buildings to be partially tenanted rather than fully occupied by an undesirable enterprise.  They believed that an "empty house was better than a bad tenant".  Therefore the existing tenants were maintained rather than introducing new ones. This ensured a sympathetic use of the buildings and grounds.  Although the British authorities had no physical presence at the Domain, it was heartening that they continued an involvement and responsibility in protecting these fine buildings by making genuine attempts to care for them during the 1850s.

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[28] Helen Irving,ed.*The Centenary Companion to Federation* (Cambridge: Cambrigde University Press, 1999) 354.

[29] Jeffrey Grey, *A Military History of Australia* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 22.

[30] Bob Nicholls, *The Colonial Volunteer* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 55.

[31] Jeffrey Grey, *A Military History of Australia* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[32] Grey, *A Military History of Australia*, 16.

[33] AJCP WO 6: Lord Grey to Duke of Wellington, 11 July 1849, Lord Grey to Governor Fitzroy, 21 November, 1849.

[34] "Newcastle Military Barracks",*Sydney Morning Herald,*  4 July 1855.

[35] "Ordnance Land & Building", *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser,* 30 June 1838. The land in Newcastle was transferred to the Board of Ordnance by the Board of Works in 1836.

When the Imperial Forces left Newcastle in 1851, the colonial government had yet to establish its own regiment that could take over the military barracks at Newcastle. Therefore a community-based volunteer regiment was formed. A nominal rent of one shilling per annum was paid by the colonial authorities to use the Government Domain and in return they had to maintain the site.[36] Volunteers used the site and some buildings, but other buildings were leased to tenants. Although there was initial enthusiasm for a volunteer regiment in NSW, this waned after the Crimean War (1853-56) as the sense of urgency to establish a colonial corps faded.[37] Attempts to organise a force for the protection of the colony stalled and volunteers could not be recruited. During the later years of the 1850s the defence of the colony was again considered because of the Franco-Austrian War of 1859 had brought attention to the close location of New Caledonia that was occupied by the French. Although Britain eventually remained neutral in this war, it had brought about a renewed interest in the need for an effective defence force in the colony with popular demand for a voluntary force. By 1861 a permanent voluntary corps was formed consisting of three artillery batteries, a Rifle Regiment of two thousand men, named the 1st Regiment of NSW Rifle Volunteers and a NSW Naval Brigade with detachments in Sydney and then later in Newcastle.[38] The public rallied to support the newly established volunteer forces with many suburbs, towns and cities establishing their own infantry. Local volunteer forces were formed at Newcastle and the purpose built barracks and parade ground were perfect as a place to meet and train. The Northern Battalion Volunteer Newcastle Rifles was established in Newcastle in 1855 under the command of Captain Baker.[39] The type of person that became involved in the volunteer forces was varied, ranging from a leading physician, an industrialist and member of the colonial parliament, and several men involved in local government. A committee was established that included Dr Brooks, Captain Weatherill, Thomas Adam, AW Scott, C Bolton, GD Simpson, W Charlton and HT Plews.[40] The same year a Volunteer Artillery Corps was also formed. It was instructed by Captain Macpherson Samuel Holt, who had been Chief Constable for Police in the Newcastle district since 1844. In February 1861 he became the First Lieutenant of the Battery. Retiring from the police force in 1862, he was promoted to Captain and Commanding Officer of the Battery in 1868.[41] By January 1861 there were twenty-seven men in the Newcastle Unit many of whom had joined after a public parade of volunteers in Sydney that month.[42]

[36] *Maitland Mercury* (Maitland) April 16, 1851.
[37] Ronald McNicoll, *The Royal Australian Engineers 1835 to 1902* (Canberra: Published by the Corps Committee of the Royal Australian Engineers, 1977), 15,21.
[38] Nicholls, *The Colonial Volunteer*, 21, 33. "Grand Review of the Volunteer Forces," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) January 21, 1861.
[39] "Newcastle, Early Military History," *The Sydney Morning Herald*(Newcastle) December 1, 1934.
[40] "Hunter River District- a Newcastle Artillery and Rifle Corps," *Empire* (Sydney)December 13, 1855.
[41] City of Newcastle, "'Portrait of Captain Samual Lea Holt'" in *Hunter Photobank* (Newcastle: City of Newcastle, 2012).
[42] "Volunteer Movement," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) January 29,1861.

**Figure 3.12** "Naval Brigade of Parade in Grounds at Watt Street Hospital, Newcastle,"
Source: Newcastle: Hunter Photobank.  Date unknown.

Figure 3.12  shows the men of the Naval Brigade facing east with the Church Street terrace houses visible in the background behind the pine trees. Figure 3.13 captures the visual drama of firing the field guns. These photographs were likely taken in the 1880s after the Newcastle Asylum had been established on the site as they contained buildings constructed in that decade.  The volunteer infantry would meet there at six o'clock on a Thursday evening for drill followed by a recreational game of cricket.[43] Cricket was thought to be a "desirable recreative employment for the mental and bodily energies of Young Australia" and very much part of their training.[44]  The Domain was perfect for cricket because of the expansive level field provided by the parade ground. The pitch is shown at the bottom of the image.  The wicket was in a peculiar position next to the main entrance of the site where it was restricted by gardens on one side and the Guard House on the other. The end of the wicket was close to Watt Street, right next to the 'pits' that were annotated on the James Barnett's 1880 "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane"[45] (See Figure 6.3).   This was probably referring to the Wallis Shaft (also known as Asylum Shaft). This was not an ideal place for a game of cricket, and the wicket was later moved to the centre of the Recreation Ground.

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[43] "Volunteer Movement", 1861.
[44] "Grand Review of the Volunteer Forces", *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney)January 21, 1861.
[45] James Barnett, "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane" Sydney: Government Architects Office, 1880.

**Figure 3.13** "Naval Brigade of Parade in Grounds at Watt Street Hospital, Newcastle,"
Source: Newcastle: Hunter Photo Bank, date unknown. (Catalogue number 026 000193)

The community also used the parade ground for purposes other than c0ricket during the 1850 and 60s. A visitor to Newcastle in the 1850s noted that pitmen, Aboriginal people and sailors congregated in the evenings on the public green west of Watt Street. This is likely to have been the former parade ground at the Government Domain.[46]  In the 1860s, this space was referred to as the Recreation Ground. There was no other large civic park or public area where events could take place during this time.[47] From this decade,  the local community displayed an increased confidence in advocating for public spaces and an interest developed to use the parade ground at the Government Domain for sporting, social and other community events.

The Newcastle Artillery and Rifle Corps had a presence at local community events, such as the annual Anniversary Day regatta held on Newcastle Harbour on 29 January 1861, for which they assembled on the parade ground at the Government Domain. On this occasion they fired a salute from one of the guns that had recently arrived from Sydney and then the Naval Corps marched down the hill to watch the regatta. This public presence was designed to encourage recruits to the voluntary Corps. On other occasions there were grand displays held on the parade ground

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[46] John Askew, "A Voyage to Australia and New Zealand", including a visit to Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Hunter's River, Newcastle, Maitland and Auckland: with a summary of the progress and discoveries made in each colony from its founding to the present time / by a steerage passenger, (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co, 1857), 261.
[47] Unknown, "[Map of] City of Newcastle".

at the Domain where the community were welcome to come and watch.[48] The Artillery and Naval Corps at this time were in the process of forming bands that later became a regular feature at the Government Domain which drew people to the place.

The Newcastle Naval Brigade that also trained at the Government Domain was established in 1865 under the command of Captain Allan, the local Harbour Master, and was later led by Mr Herbert Cross. The volunteer units relocated to Fort Scratchley after it was constructed in 1882. This was considered a more suitable location as it overlooked the approaches to Newcastle Harbour, the pier and harbour.[49] However the volunteer units took advantage of the open space at the Domain throughout the 1870s and 1880s for training and drill.
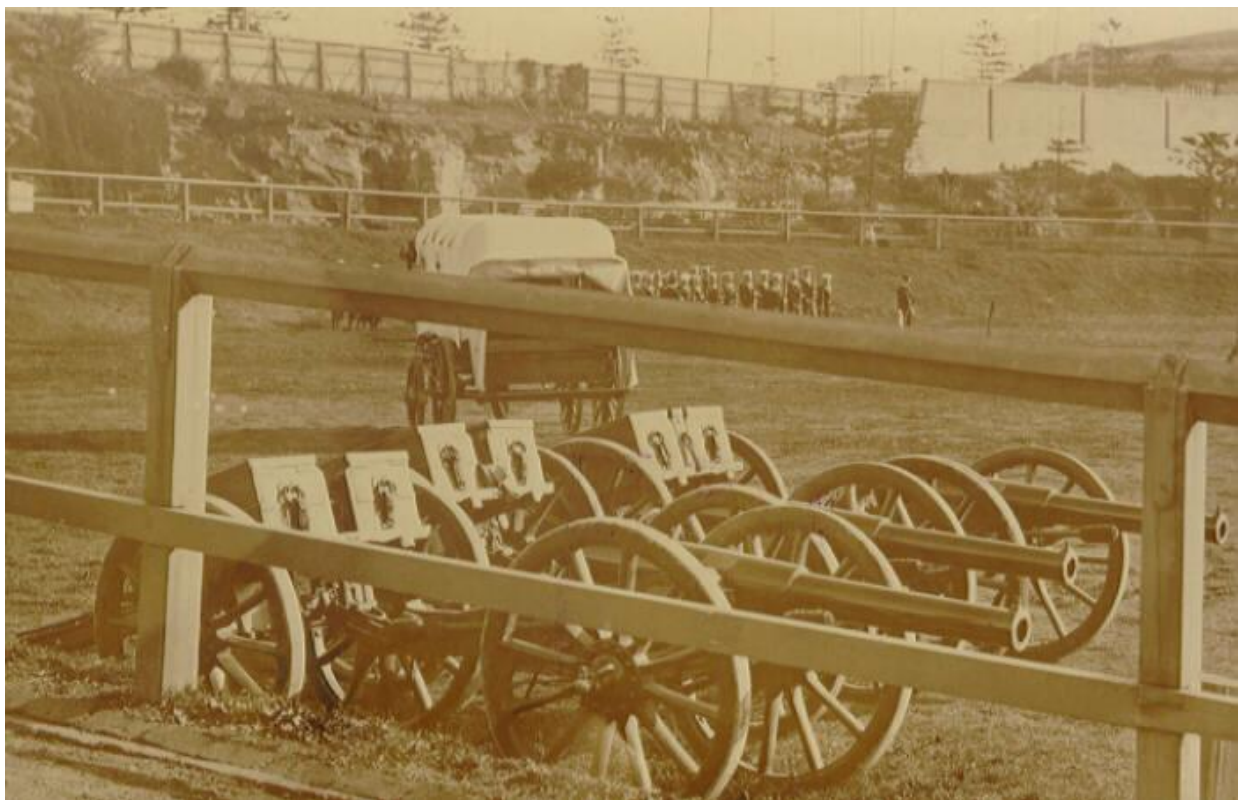


**Figure 3.14** "Naval Guns and Ambulance Parked at Watt Street (James Fletcher) Hospital Grounds "
Source: Hunter Photobank. Date unknown Newcastle: Hunter Photo Bank- 026 000187, 1860s).

Figure 3.14 shows the Government Domain with naval guns, a volunteer ambulance and a volunteer unit lined up beneath Ordnance Street on the southern boundary of the site. The rough cut wall shows the amount of excavation which was necessary to make the area level for the construction of military buildings and parade ground. This high wall, topped with a solid fence, hid the site from the adjoining houses and streets beginning the social isolation of the site which was almost total by the twentieth century. Figure 3.15 is a photograph of the Volunteer field ambulance that was formed around the same time as the other volunteer forces in the early 1860s.

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[48] "Volunteer Movement", 1861.
[49] Nicholls, *The Colonial Volunteer*, 81.

**Figure 3.15** "Naval Guns and Ambulance Parked at Watt Street (James Fletcher) Hospital Grounds "
Source: Hunter Photobank. Date unknown.

The voluntary regiments and brigades not only used the outdoor spaces at the Domain but rented offices in the former military buildings during their time there. The buildings were also leased to various Government departments and organisations between 1851 and 1867 as the complex was large enough to accommodate numerous groups.[50] Most of these offices were associated with government agencies, with the exception of the AA Company. The Domain was thus shared and continued at this time as a place of authority. In 1851 the Officer's Quarters were occupied by Captain Bull and Dr J.E. Stacey the Colonial Surgeon, as well as Mortimer Lewis (Jnr), the Clerk of Works.[51] Dr Stacey had a long association with mining and medicine practices and had worked in the 1830s dispensing medicine for the AA Company; later working as Colonial Surgeon in the 1850s and 1860s.[52] The role of Colonial Surgeon included the duties of a Government Medical Officer who cared for troops, police and the general sanitation of the town.[53] He lived at the Domain, a location central to government employees and their families at Newcastle. In 1853 the Guard House was used as the Chief Constable's residence and the Police Barracks were transferred to the former military hospital, also the base for the local Police Magistrate.[54] The AA Company rented rooms in 1855 and the Inspector General of Police used the Guard House situated at the entrance of the site. The Engine House next to the Guard House was used as a

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[50] John Turner, "History of the James Fletcher Hospital", ed. NSW Department of Public Works (Prepared for the NSW Department of Public Works, 19?).
[51] "Marriages", *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser*, Tuesday 19 February1867.
[52] Gregson, *The Australian Agricultural Company* , 65.
[53] Walter Brownhill and Ian Wynd, *The History of Geelong and Corio Bay*  (Geelong: Geelong Advertiser, 1990), 616.
[54] By 1853 the AA Company and the police constables had moved out of the military buildings.

police station. Mr William Keene the Examiner of the Coalfields and Mr J Dagwell the drill instructor of the Naval Brigade had offices in the military buildings in the 1850s. The Immigration Office had a 'depot' there, as did the Volunteer Rifles.[55] The buildings at the Domain were well used and occupied by mainly government agencies.

During the 1850s and 1860s the Government Domain became a buffer zone between the residents on The Hill and the growing commercial area of Watt Street. There were no real threats to the place in terms of inappropriate development or transfer of ownership because of the demand for government space. The site provided much of the building stock and open spaces needed by the authorities. The Domain was a significant asset that could be adapted for a variety of purpose other than its original military use, especially during the 1860s when the Colonial authorities halted the construction of many new government buildings in the Colony due to the slowing economy.[56] There was pressure on existing government building stock and it was at this time that rumours began to circulate about possible new uses for the Government Domain.

The people of Newcastle valued this central open space and assumed that it would continue in that role, becoming a botanic garden or other public facility. However the colonial government floated the idea in 1866 that a lunatic asylum be situated at the site. There was much opposition to this, even from religious and medical men who might have been expected to understand the need for such a facility. Reverend Canon George Charles Bode was concerned that the "unceasing sound of the waves beating upon the beach" would be enough to unsettle the lunatics.[57] He and Dr Bowker were concerned that the presence of an asylum might be off putting for those with physical maladies who regularly came to Newcastle to experience the sea air and sea bathing. They thought the sight of lunatics would make those in a sick and nervous state worse, and that the busy-ness of the site "could not be shut out of the gaze of the lunatics, and this was likely to arouse a longing for liberty".[58] Reverend Canon Selwyn also objected suggesting that the lunatics be sent to Port Macquarie (as the reoffending convicts have been) and recommending that the barracks become a museum or police quarters and for the grounds to become a public park.[59] A public meeting of inhabitants objected to incurable lunatics coming to the Domain. The existing tenants had not posed a threat to the local community; on the contrary they stood for order, protection and the rule of law. Novocastrians expected no less from any future uses. This united opposition redirected the government to find another use for the buildings at the Domain, at least in the short term.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that the NGD between the years 1841 and 1867 continued in its role as a centre of caring for the community. It remained exclusively in government use and as a place in defense of the community. And in that guise, signficant investment was made which left the colonial govenrment with a signficant assest in terms of the buildngs which could be redeployed in other official roles in the future.

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[55] New South Wales Government, "Military Barracks Newcastle, Showing How and by Whom They Are Occupied " in *Serial number 5298*, ed. State Archives NSW (Sydney: State Archives NSW, 1866).

[56] Noel Butlin, *Investment in Australian Economic Development 1861-1900* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1964),10-11.

[57] "The Proposed Conversion of the Barracks into a Lunatic Asylum", *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) November 26, 1866.

[58] "The Proposed Conversion of the Barracks into a Lunatic Asylum", *Newcastle Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) November 22, 1866.

[59] "The Proposed Lunatic Asylum at Newcastle", The *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)September 18, 1871.

There was much care in making sure that infrastructure remained properly looked after for future use by government authorities.  Firstly, in terms of the site, it was always a space of authority despite its continuously changing uses. Secondly, it was always specific and literally fenced off in later years. It had been the official space of the penal settlement and later the military barracks used exclusively by the Imperial authorities in setting up the military complex. The construction of the barracks at Newcastle was well planned and strategically placed there with the use of the Domain by British troops as the only well planned use of the site; all of the other uses were more haphazard.  The Domain's use as a military site ensured a military presence at the 'coal emporium' of the colony. There was never any real idea as to how long the colony would require the support of British forces. However the colonial Government would take over the Domain when there was no longer a need for Imperial forces in the colony.  The military barracks had not been deliberately built to be handed over to the colonial government for its new defence role; particularly so soon after they had been erected.  The Victoria Barracks in Sydney which were established in 1848 and erected under similar circumstances to the Newcastle barracks (under the supervision of Colonel Barney)  is still home to the Australian Army and has remained in continuous military use to 2014.[60]  They are relics of the British Army's presence in Australia, although importance of the military has declined.[61]  Although the British forces were only there for a short time, the military infrastructure set up the site to be used exclusively by the Government into the future.  It created a resource which could be applied to new uses by the Government, similar to Hyde Park Barracks and the Female Factory site at Parramatta.

The significant assett of the military buildings that had been left to the colonial government were next put to use in a more caring capacity, supporting new children's institutions whereby government authorities put into practice new child saving legislation.

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[60] Major R Vardanega, *Victoria Barracks Paddington Sydney, Proudly Serving since 1848*. (Paddington (NSW): Victoria Barracks, 1999).
[61] Bill MacMahon, *The Architecture of East Australia* (London: Axel Menges, 2001), 36.

## Chapter 4: The Girls, '...the little volcano slumbered' (1867 -1871)

The four years between 1867 and 1871 were perhaps the most controversial in the history of the Domain. Caring at this time was directed at girls identified as being at risk or who had committed offences. Responding to a perceived crisis of uncontrolled children in Sydney, two new institutions were hastily set up in the vacated military buildings on the site, a girls' industrial school and a reformatory, under Acts passed in 1866. State care or interventions in nineteenth century Australia have been well covered by historians such as Brian Dickey and Stephen Garton, however the role the Newcastle girls' institutions played in the welfare system in NSW has been overlooked. The girls who came to Newcastle were caught up in cycles of poverty and neglect and although the institutions themselves became sites of disorder, they were intended to alleviate social distress. The girls displayed resilience and vigour that tested the management skills of authorities in charge of them. Lessons learned about the use of the site for the care and education of dependent populations and managing community responses during these four year shaped the next use of the Domain, as an asylum.

The rationale behind developing institutions for girls in Newcastle was to address the long standing problem of child neglect and poverty in Sydney and other regional areas. The problem of caring for children in need was first addressed in NSW by the establishment of orphanages. The first female school of industry was the Female Orphan School established by Governor King in Sydney in 1801[1] and later moved to Parramatta in 1818 and transferred from direct government administration to the care of the Anglican Church. Here girls received a basic education and training as domestic servants. [2] This schoolwas privately run and relied on donations from subscribers and fund-raising for financial support.[3] A male orphan school opened on the Sydney site in 1819, shifting to Cabramatta four years later. A separate institution was the Female School of Industry started by Eliza Darling, wife of Governor Ralph Darling, in 1826.[4] This school was funded by subscribers and managed by a committee of women. These girls in these early institutions were disadvantaged just as the latter group was in the 1860s.

Charitable and philanthropic organisations offered the majority of the support required to assist neglected and impoverished children in NSW. The three main charitable organisations for children were the Benevolent Asylum, Roman Catholic Orphanage and the Protestant Orphan School. Some along with their families were assisted by the Benevolent Society established in 1818 and reliant on private donations and public moneys.[5] The Society conducted a Benevolent Asylum in the former convict barracks located at Liverpool.[6] Government authorities initially had very little to do with this industrial school which was directed at producing better servants for its sponsors, although by the 1840s, responsibility for the school was with the Colonial Secretary. During the first half of the 1800s the Benevolent Society helped whole families, they didn't only take in lone children. In

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[1] Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes*, 3.
[2] Brian H Fletcher, *Ralph Darling a Governor Maligned* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1984), 203.
[3] Anita Selzer, *Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2002), 89.
[4] Brian Dickey, *No Charity There: A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia*. Melbourne: Allen & Unwin, 1987, 10.
[5] Dickey, *No Charity There*, 20-26.
[6] Dickey, *No Charity There, 99 and 119.*

Sydney, the Roman Catholic Orphan School (1836) and the Protestant Orphan School (an amalgamation of the Male and Female Orphans' Schools in 1850) cared for children up to the age of nine years.

The definition of orphan was a child who had lost their father (death or whereabouts unknown), was illegitimate, or both of whose parents had died.[7] If a father existed then a child could not be sent to an orphanage, nor could they be admitted if they had an association with crime. Under the Act for the Relief of Destitute Children and for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (1852) a child could not be admitted to an orphanage after the age of nine, and at age twelve were apprenticed out.[8] The criteria for admission to the Protestant Orphan School was determined by the Colonial Secretary often also a recommendation coming from the Protestant clergy.[9] A burst of migration to the eastern colonies during the 1840s intensified problems associated with destitute children.[10] There was a depression in the 1840s and assisted immigration was stopped; many people left. Gold restarted the economy and immigration post 1851, however many fathers also deserted their families during the gold rush. There was increasing concern over the number of neglected children living on the streets of Sydney in the 1850s.[11] New South Wales became a self-governing colony in the 1850s and with the rise of liberal ideas in politics, there was new emphasis on developing an educated and responsible citizenry. The situation of homeless and destitute children was worsening in the 1850s. The Society for the Relief of Destitute Children influenced by Dr Henry Grattan Douglass called for subscribers and life members to assist in the care of children.[12] This was a private arrangement. At the same time an Inquiry was held in 1852 exploring child destitution and Police Superintendent McLerie provided evidence stating he was aware of hundreds of destitute and neglected children.[13] It was estimated during the inquiry into destitute children in Sydney that there were 300 destitute children under the age of twelve in this situation, and 100 girls between the ages of fourteen and sixteen who were associated with criminals and prostitutes.[14] McLerie also highlighted how Magistrates often dismissed charges because of age of a child and were reluctant to send children to gaols. He suggested that girls be sent to the Sydney Female Refuge, or Home of the Good Shepherd, and reformatories for girls to be established not too far from Sydney. He recommended that boys be placed on a ship in the harbour or sent to Berrima gaol. This was in the early 1850s and it would take over a decade to 1867 for these institutions to come to fruition.

As a consequence of the growing problem associated with the need for child welfare the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children opened in 1852 an orphanage at Juniper Hall in Paddington. The orphanage was named the Asylum for Destitute Children and the building was later known as Ormond House.[15] The orphanage at Juniper Hall become overcrowded within a few years and was not meeting the needs of the children. Regulations for the establishment of Industrial schools in NSW came about in 1852 when James Martin, a

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[7] Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes,* 24-58.
[8] Gladys Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations" :industrial schools in New South Wales, 1850-1910"University of New South Wales, NSW,1996, 32.
[9] Scrivener,. "Rescuing the Rising Generations" . 31.
[10] Dickey, *No Charity There,* 42.
[11] Report of the Select Inquiry into the Conditions of the working classes of the Metropolis. In VPLA 1859-60, vol 4. pp 180-195.
[12] Benelovent Society, Annual Reports, 1853 and 1854.
[13] Evidence McLewrie, Questions 4,10,13,15 Select Inquiry into the Destitute Children's Act in JLC 1854 vol.2. 175.
[14] *Select Inquiry into the Destitute Children's Act* in JLC 1854 Vol.2. 175.
[15] *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) June 30, 1852.

politician in the New South Wales Legislative Council put forward proposals for an Act for the Relief of Destitute Children.[16] The general idea behind proposed regulations was to rescue vulnerable children from thieves and prostitutes, and prevent youngsters becoming vagrants and living on the streets.[17] There were several attempts to pass this new legislation and Martin was instrumental in finally getting new legislation through. A few months after the orphanage opened at Juniper Hall the Act for the Relief of Destitute Children and for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (1852) was eventually passed.   In essence it meant that orphanages were privately managed, but regulated by government legislation. By 1857 Juniper Hall had become too small and children were transferred to the Orphan Asylum for Destitute Children at Randwick in 1858.[18] The colonial government took financial responsibility for this institution. This asylum admitted children who had been abandoned, committed by the courts or were destitute because their mothers required institutional care.[19] There was a perceived concern that institutions for children at this time were not adequately addressing the needs of vulnerable children, in the way that it was thought industrial schools could.[20] One issue was the restrictions on the age of children in asylums.  Only when the Industrial Schools Act and Reformatory Act came into force could children over the age of ten be legally admitted to government institutions for care and protection.

New South Wales differed from the other Australian colonies in that government took a primary role from the origins of industrial and reformatory schools in the 1860s.[21]  In other colonies, the charitable sector dominated the establishment of these institutions. Martin pointed out that legislation in NSW relating to destitute children differed significantly from regulations in Britain (and in the other colonies) as the board overseeing child welfare was appointed by the government and not subscribers.[22] The approach of the government was that if an institution was important enough to demand large assistance from public funds it ought to be subjected to the control of a Board appointed by the government. The committee of such an institution should not be self-elected but the government should have power to appoint and remove. Juniper Hall was technically a 'private' institution and like other similar institutions such as the Benevolent Society complied with government regulations. Government in NSW took a leading role in the implementation of child care after the "Relief of Destitute Children" legislation was passed in 1852.  In 1859 a committee of inquiry into the state of orphan asylums recommended that industrial schools and reformatories be established by boys and girls.[23]  It followed that these industrial schools would be run exclusively by the government.  Industrial schools were established in response to gaps in the system of caring for children in trouble and in need.  Up to this time, young boys and girls were admitted to gaols when convicted of petty criminal offences.  There was also a problem that there were no adequate institutions to house older children in need, nor was there legislation to keep them there. Advocates sought to 'save' vulnerable children who were associating with criminals, or had no means of support, were begging or

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[16] *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) June 30, 1852.
[17] Society for the Relief of Destitute Children, *First Annual Report*, June 1853.
[18] J Coulter, Randwick Asylum: An Historical Review of the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children (Sydney: NSW Government Printer, 1916) 9.
[19] Scrivener,,"Rescuing the Rising Generations", 31.
[20] Scrivener,"Rescuing the Rising Generations", 27
[21] RJW Selleck, "The Origins of Industrial Schooling in Melbourne 1864-1866" *Education, Research and Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (June 1988), 20.
CM Davey, *Children and Their Law Makers* (Adelaide: Griffin Press, 1956), 23-24.
[22] *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) June 30, 1852. Scrivener, "Children in Care", 34.
[23] Report from the Select Committee on the condition of the Working Classes of the Metropolis, in VPLA 1859-60. Vol 4. 1263.

wandering the streets.[24] The Industrial Schools and Reformatories legislation created powers for the permanent care of children.

The first bill for this purpose, was presented to parliament in March 1865, proposed that institutions be privately run, however there was little support for this.[25]   The bill was altered in early 1866 and passed in September that same year with the support of Premier James Martin and his coalition partner and free education proponent, Henry Parkes.  Martin made it very clear that the leading principle of the Bill was state responsibility:

> ". . . it was the duty of the State to take possession of children within certain ages who were living under certain conditions which, in all probability, would make criminals of them, it they were not looked after. . . A child even when criminal, should be treated as a child, and sent to a Reformatory School and not to prison." [26]

The establishment of reformatory and industrial schools in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century was a response to the perceived increase of juvenile crime at the time which was thought to be a threat to public safety.[27] Ritter states that the construct 'juvenile delinquency' comes from a long tradition of seeing children as dangerous.  These ideas also applied in the Australian colonies.[28]

The pioneer of reform schools in Britain was educator Mary Carpenter.  She wrote and lobbied extensively, setting up her own reformatory in Kingwood in Surrey in 1852 and influencing the passage of a series of industrial schools acts in the 1850s and 60s.  Carpenter argued that there were four distinct classes amongst the urban poor in mid-Victorian England: the working class, the ragged class, a perishing class and a criminal class. This excluded those in higher society.  She thought the intermixing of respectable and criminal classes was detrimental to a vulnerable child.[29] Having developed her ideas based on her own work with disadvantaged children and the introduction of reformatories for delinquent children in Europe,[30] Carpenter advocated reformatories and industrial schools. Interventions she believed should encourage reform be morally based, and not punitive.[31]

Carpenter developed a series of principles guiding practice in her own reformatories.   Firstly, a child should not be forced to work, but engage in activity of interest; secondly, recreation was just as important as work because it can expose other talents; and thirdly, Christianity and moral teachings were an important part of education.[32]  Her ideas were taken up in NSW where Premier Martin expressed similar concerns that there would be contamination between the better class and street children if mixed groups

[24] *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) June 30, 1852.
[25] *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) March 24, 1865.
[26] *The Empire* (Sydney) August 9,1866.
[27] Peter Quinn, "'Unenlightened Efficiency':The Administration of Juvenile Correction System in New South Wales 1905-1988" (University of Sydney, 2004).
[28] Leonora Ritter, "Inventing Juvenile Delinquency and Determining Its Cure" in *Policing the Lucky Country*, ed. Mike Enders and Benoit Du Pont (Annandale: Hawkins Press, 2001),109.
[29] Judith Rowbotham & Kim Stevenson (eds) *Criminal Conversations: Victorian crimes, social panic & moral outrage* (Ohio State University 2005),10.
[30] John Ramsland, "Mary Carpenter and the Child-Saving Movement," *Australian Journal of Social Work* vol. 33, no. issue 2 (1980). Quinn, "'Unenlightened Efficiency':The Adinistration of Juvenile Correction System in New South Wales 1905-1988".
[31] Barry Goldson, Michael Lavelette & Jim McKechnie  (eds)  *Children, Welfare and the State* (SAGE Publication, London 2004), 122.
[32] M. Smith. 'Mary Carpenter, reformatory schools and education', the encyclopedia of informal education, Last update: December 06, 2012. [http://infed.org/mobi/mary-carpenter-reformatory-schools-and-education/.

were placed together in a single institution.[33]  One difference was that although Carpenter strongly believe
that reformatories should be privately run, in NSW they were managed exclusively by government
authorities.[34]

   The reformatories act was one element of Henry Parkes' long campaign for a comprehensive education
system which would be free, compulsory and secular.[35] The Acts creating the three tiers of schools were all
passed in 1866:  the Public Schools Act, the Industrial Schools Act and the Reformatory Act.  The Public Schools
were for all children in the colony, the Industrial Schools for those at risk and the Reformatories for children who
had committed crimes.  These bills were the first welfare and educational statutes in the era of responsible
government in Australia.[36] Although there had been previous legislation relating to children, the NSW 1866 acts
provided care to children up to eighteen years, a significant increase to the previous age of ten years under the
Destitute Children's Society Act. While not initiated by public education reformers, industrial schools and
reformatories did provide training and employment for children who were socially and economically
disadvantaged.  This was seen to be beneficial to the youngsters and, more importantly, for the good order of
society by breaking the cycle of poverty. By pairing this training with what was effectively incarceration at the
schools, vulnerable children were kept off the streets.

         Historians assessing the reformatory acts in Britain have argued that the dominant motive in passing
them was social control.[37]  Evidence from NSW suggests that the welfare of the child was of at least equal
concern. However authorities in NSW did not directly link the problem with crime, but saw that there was a
genuine need to provide a 'home' for many children and young adults. Children were vulnerable, many living in
unsafe households and had no extended family to turn to for support.    The Industrial Schools legislation
enabled authorities to accommodate, detain and provide training for children under the age of 16 years who were
deemed not to be in the control of their parents, in particular those associated with prostitution. They were often
identified by members of the local police force as vagrants or destitute.  Once admitted by court order, children
were subject to control of the Superintendent of Industrial Schools as their guardian until eighteen years of age.[38]
Some were released at younger ages, either returned to their families or guardians or, after twelve months,
apprenticed out.   In cases of return to families, police checks were conducted in advance to ensure that the child
was being sent into a suitable situation.  The Reformatory Act allowed some industrial schools to also serve as
reformatories to which children convicted of criminal offences could be sentenced for up to five years.  The
reformatory at Newcastle opened in 1869 two years after the industrial school and was separated from it by a
high wall with a locked door so as to prevent any communication.[39] This system in Australia came about because
of the need to get vulnerable children off the street, whereas in United Kingdom industrial schools had been

[33] *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) August 9,1866.
[34] John Ramsland, "Mary Carpenter and the Child-Saving Movement," *Australian Journal of Social Work* vol. 33, no. issue 2 (1980). Quinn, "'Unenlightened Efficiency':The Adininistration of Juvenile Correction System in New South Wales 1905-1988".
[35] Scrivener,"Rescuing the Rising Generations", 51.
[36] Gregory Woods, *A History of Criminal Law in New South Wales : The Colonial Period 1788-1900* (Sydney : The Federation Press, 2008) 208.
[37] R Harris and D Webb, *Welfare, Power and Juvenile Justice: The Social Control of Delinquent Youth* (London: Tavistock, 1987), 7 and 11.
[38] Industrial Schools Act, NSW. Clause 7.
[39] "Local News-the Industrial School,Newcastle," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)  September 4, 1869. Reformatory Schools Act, NSW. Clause

around since the early 1700s and had a focus on industry work, for girls this was mostly knitting and sewing.[40]
These institutions in Britain had been around prior to industrialisation and provided certain labour, this was
before industrialisation. However when the New Poor Laws were introduced in 1834 and industrialisation
progressed the type of work that industrial schools could provide diminished. The 'reformatory' replaced many of
the industrial schools in Britain and instead there was a focus of reforming delinquent children. This focus was
not as strong in Australia where there were no Poor Laws, instead the care of destitute and neglected children
was identified.   However what remained in NSW was a dominant culture associated with colonisation and
convict management.

There has been very little written about the Newcastle Industrial School and reformatory. Historians such as
Ramsland and Dickey have mostly focused on the industrial school for the boys. Working from public documents
rather than the sources associated with the institution, Dickey and van Krieken mention the girls' industrial  school at
Newcastle in terms of the harshness and ill treatment of inmates.[41]   Scrivener's 1996 thesis "Rescuing the Rising
Generations:" Industrial schools in New South Wales, 1850-1910" provides an excellent chapter on the Newcastle
Industrial School for girls.[42] Although she admits there were many negative aspects of care delivered at Newcastle,
she says that there had not been a comprehensive analysis of what went on there to allow a proper interpretation.
Scrivener has undertaken a comprehensive study of the role and function of the Newcastle school, examining the
site, its staff and analysing the charges made against the girls.  She investigates the dynamic between the girls,
community, family and friends and the government officials and staff administering care of the girls but her treatment
did not extend to the individual stories of the girls. This has been rectified by local historian Jane Ison who in 2009
began research on the girls at the Newcastle industrial school and reformatory. Ison draws extensively on records
located at State Archives of NSW in 2011 including the Colonial Secretary's In Letters and the Entrance Books for
the Newcastle Industrial School from its opening until October 1869 and for the first time gives a glimpse into the
world of the girls, their families and the many issues facing them.[43]   Her work generally is a tremendous contribution
and resource for further historical research into child welfare in Australia.

Within the industrial schools, the focus on the welfare of the child was impeded by the continuation of a
culture of management and discipline from the old penal system, rather than adopting newer educational models.
Drafted by former naval personnel, the Industrial Schools legislation was originally targeted towards the control
and management of boys through a nautical program that involved marching, physical drill and naval style
uniforms. The *Vernon,* a nautical training ship, was the location of the school and home for the boys.  There were
no boys admitted at Newcastle.[44] Girls ended up at Newcastle because Industrial Schools Act and the
Reformatory Act (1866) gave magistrates specific powers to enforce girls into care, and by this time there was a
specific institution to send them to at Newcastle.  Girls who were destitute or associated with crime could be sent
under order to the Newcastle Industrial Girls School, arriving usually by government vessels. A reformatory for

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[40] Thomas Markus, *Buildings and Power : Freedom & Control in the Origin of Modern Building Types* (London: Routledge 1993) 44.
[41] Robert van Krieken, *Children and the State: Social Control and the Formation of Australian Child Welfare* (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991)
[42] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations".
[43] Ison,  http://nis.wikidot.com/
[44] No boys are listed on the full list of Newcastle admissions from the CSIL

boys was not established until the 1890s. Boys under the age of sixteen continued to be sent to Industrial School aboard the Vernon or adult gaols until 1895 when the Carpentarian or "Shore" Reformatory opened at Eastwood in Sydney.[45] The greater desire to control girls led to an imbalance in the system in regard to government institutions for children, however this also meant that many boys were still being sent to prison.

Newcastle Industrial Girls' School was established when government authorities identified the NGD as a possible location for a new institution. The buildings at the Domain were readied for the girls in hast, with minimal finances spent on maintenance and getting the buildings up to standard. The NDG was identified by government authorities because it was only being partly used and occupied. Authorities did not seriously consider the actual location and how a central city location may impact on the implementation of care of girls. As discussed in the previous chapter the Domain was mostly used by volunteer groups, its use had been piecemeal and diverse. For the first time, the Domain was exclusively used by females. The majority of the girls come from the Sydney region and began to arrive in August 1867.

Numbers built up quickly at Newcastle with seventy-seven girls in residence in February 1868 when an inspection was carried out by the Colonial Secretary Henry Parkes and the Secretary for Lands of NSW John Bowie Wilson.[46] It must have been pleasing for Henry Parkes to see this aspect of his education plan going ahead as he found the institution to be in a satisfactory condition. On the day of the inspection the behavior of the girls was not problematic.

In his speech to the girls, Parkes encouraged them to make the most of their circumstances, urging them to look for opportunities that would advance their situation:-

> I want you to look upon life hopefully and at the same time try to understand your duty...It should not be forgotten that you are supported here at great cost to the country. I hope your obedience to those placed over you, and your general good conduct, will prove that you appreciate the benevolent intention of the Legislature in making this provision for your permanent welfare.[47]

Although Parkes let the girls know that their care was a significant cost to government which created a duty to reform, he also tried to empower them, by saying that one day they would make "heads of families, possessing property and influence and enjoying the respect of good men and women".[48]

Although the reformatory legislation had been passed at the same time as that for industrial schools, no reformatories were opened in NSW until 1869. Both delinquent and the deprived girls were placed in the Newcastle Industrial School for its first two years of existence. Even when the reformatory opened, there was confusion amongst magistrates about the two acts as shown in the cases of Ellen Youngman and Louisa Winter.[49] Youngman was initially admitted to the Industrial School, however she really should have been admitted to the reformatory, a change to the warrant rectified this and she was eventually sent to the reformatory.

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[45] Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes*, 116.
[46] "The Industrial School at Newcastle", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 Feb 1868.
[47] "The Industrial School at Newcastle", 14 Feb 1868.
[48] "The Industrial School at Newcastle", 14 Feb 1868.
[49] Ison (Ellen Youngman) http://nis.wikidot.com/youngman. (Lousia Winter) http://nis.wikidot.com/winter

Whereas Winter was recorded on the reformatory list for what would be considered an arrest under the terms of the Industrial Schools Act.[50]  Once admitted to the school at Newcastle, the girls could potentially remain there until they were 18 years of age, receiving a basic education, training and moral guidance.

Children came to Newcastle after authorities in NSW intervened to get them out of unsafe environments. The rapid population of the institution was facilitated by work done prior to the passage of the Industrial School and Reformatory Acts. Local authorities in Sydney were aware of the dire situation of a number of girls, however were powerless to intervene until legislation was passed in 1866.  On 31 July 1867 a month prior to the Newcastle Industrial schools opening constables in Sydney compiled an 'at risk' list of vulnerable children.[51]  On this list were sisters Eliza Hanmore, aged fifteen, and her sister Theresa Hanmore, aged seven.[52] These were two of twelve girls first admitted to the Newcastle Industrial Girls' School as shown in the Entrance Book on 31 August 1867.[53]

The girls were housed in the unaltered military buildings. The former military barracks was used to accommodate the girls with schooling taking place on the ground floor beside the dining room. There was also a room for religious instruction on the ground floor.  The hospital ward was at the northern end of the upper floor where the dormitories were situated. At the rear of the barracks were the lavatories, kitchen and storerooms. The open space at the former parade ground was used by local residents to graze cows and there were vegetable gardens on site.[54]

The Daily life was pretty routine, waking during the week at 5.30 am the girls washed and dressed ready for breakfast at 7.00 am. At 8.00 am an 'inspection' took place, presumably of the dormitories and girl's attire, there was a quarter hour of prayer before educational classes started at 9.00 am. Therer was further religious instruction at midday. Lunch as at 12.30 pm and anotherinspection before doing sewing from mid afternoon until dinner at 5.00 pm. After dinner at 6.30 pm there were more prayers then girls were confined to their rooms.[55] Scrivener notes that it was not uncommon for girls to be excused from classes to work in the laundry, kitchen and dining room, as well as assist the teacher and storekeeper.[56] This was the summer routine and in winter the schedule altered half hour later. On Saturdays the girls did general cleaning and bathed in the afternoon. On Sunday mornings the girls went to church and in the afternoon there was further religious instruction at Sunday school. As numbers gradually increased at the Industrial school more staff were recruited.

[50] Ison. (Lousia Winter)  http://nis.wikidot.com/winter
[51] Jane Ison (Hanmore sisters) http://nis.wikidot.com/hanmore
[52] Ison, (Hanmore Sisters) http://nis.wikidot.com/hanmore,
[53] SRNSW: NRS: 14722; 5/3428 p.1 Entries 2 & 6
[54] Joseph Hines Clarke, "Letters Date from the 20 December 1868 to 1871. Partial Transcripts of Correspondence of Joseph Hines Clarke Superintendent of the Newcastle Industrial School for Girls, Newcastle N.S.W," ed. Ref. SRNSW: 14717 5/3429 PX (Sydney: State Archives of New South Wales, 20th December, 1868 to 1871). pp. 87 and 88 on 30 Mar 1869.
[55] CSIL 67/5980.
[56] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations"  220.

**Staffing**

With up to two hundred girls who would be accommodated at the Domain, a significant staff was required. At the end of the first year there were seven employees.[57] Superintendents played the main role. Matron Agnes King Superintendent of the Newcastle Industrial School served from August 1867 until November 1968. Matron Agnes King was the first superintendent at the Industrial school in 1867. The position was to have been held by naval Captain GW Jackson but he resigned suddenly after one week at the school. King was instead placed in this position.[58] King was a nurse who trained in the United Kingdom prior to coming to NSW where she worked at the Asylum for Destitute Children at Randwick.[59] She was stood down from her superintendents role at Newcastle in November 1868 because officials did not think she had the skills to manage the girls after a series of episodes of disorder had occurred. King had a second chance when she was put in charge of the Newcastle reformatory in 1869; however she was replaced there as well, by a male superintendent, George Lucas. King was dismissed after she sacked Richard and Bridget Sadleir from their positions as Warder and House Matron at Newcastle.[60] Officials must have thought King lacked the skills to be Superintendent at the Industrial School, however her reemploy at the site as Superintendent of the Reformatory almost exactly two months later signify that authorities must have had some faith in her abilities. Perhaps because this was smaller institution and thought to be more manageable. She held this position through to and after the transfer of the reformatory to Shaftesbury in 1880. When King was dismissed from the industrial school she was replaced by Captain Joseph Hines Clark on 26 November 1868. Clarke would resign on 18 March 1871 and the exact reasons for this are still unclear. George Lucas took over almost immediately. Key staff would live on-site at the Domain.

Superintendents of industrial schools had significant powers. They were vested with the child's custody and control and could set the terms of a child's apprenticeship. Powers also included punishment of a child for up to fourteen days in close confinement for leaving the institution.[61]

The second Superintendent was Captain Joseph Hines Clarke. Clarke had been a military settler at Taranaki in New Zealand in 1864.[62] Officially he became superintendent in January 1869 but he actually arrived and took up the position on 26 November 1868. [63] The wife of Superintendent typically was the Matron of the institution and in this case Clarke's wife Marion become Matron. Clarke corresponded regularly with the Colonial Secretary and other officials in Sydney about matters to do with the girls' care. He also negotiated suitable apprenticeships for the girls and managed transfers out of the institution to the community. However in March 1870 whilst Clarke was in Sydney having meeting with the Colonial Secretary another riot occurrred and a large contigent of police and local volunteers had to intervene to restore calm at the school.[64] After this espisode that Clarke was asked to hand in his resignition, he was stood down

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[57] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations" 206.
[58] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations" 205.
[59] CSIL. 66/4144 with 66/4174.
[60] http://nis.wikidot.com/sadleir,
[61] John Crawford, "Children of the Perishing Class" Essay. February 2009.
http://www.childrenscourt.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/agdbasev7wr/_assets/childrenscourt/m410051l1/aaa%20children%20of%20the%20perishing%20class.pdf
[62] Southern Provinces Almanac, Christchurch City Library, 1866 Accessed 20 June 2012.
http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/DigitalCollection/Publications/Directories/SouthernProvincesAlmanac/1866//PDF/SPA-1866-0025.pdf
[63] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations" 228.
[64] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 241.

immediately and replaced by George Lucas in March 1871.[65] Lucas was the final Superintendent of the girls' institutions at Newcastle. However it would seem that like his former counterparts, he too had no experience in mangement of a girls' institution. He had previously been a tripe manufacturer and manager of the night waste refuge.[66]

The government visiting medical officer at the girl's school was Dr Richard Harris. He undertook a medical assessment of the girls on their admission. Harris was formerly an Inspector of coal mines before taking up medicine in Newcastle becoming the visiting medical officer[67] to the Permanent Artillery Forces who were previously at the Domain. A role he continued at the Domain for the girls and later the asylum inmates in 1871 when the asylum opened. Harris' medical assessment recorded a girl's virginity and presence of venereal disease. Obvious medical conditions were also noted, however a survey of Ison's work has found that general medical conditions were not extensively recorded. A 'school hospital' existed at the Domain as mentioned this was on the upper floor of the barracks. There was tension between Dr Harris and the second superintendent of the Industrial School, Clarke. On one occasion Clarke refused to sign off on medicines requested by Harris because he believed he was overcharging. Another complaint was that Harris was not keeping up to date medical records for the girls and that his medical methods were inept. This become apparent after a ring worm outbreak and two hospital rooms were set up to isolate effected patients. Whilst Harris was on leave another doctor was called in and the cases seemed to clear up. The final episode of displeasure involved Harris' refusal to see Margaret Ellis who was reportedly very unwell. Eventually Margaret died and due to Harris' lack of action Clarke felt compelled to request a formal Inquiry be carried out.[68] Harris worked at the Domain over several decades until his death in 1887.

Other staff who worked exclusively for the Industrial School and reformatory was teacher Margaret Kelly. She conducted education assessments of the girls on admission, documenting a child's grade and level of education, this was recorded in the Entrance Books. Comments describing educational levels were noted and some examples of the documentation are "alphabet on slate"[69], "sequel number 2 and writing small hand." and "could read the third book and write in copy book". The Ability to read the third book and writing in copy book meant the highest educational levels were achieved. The highest educational levels recorded at the Newcastle Industrial School, these were Bridget Bourke, Mary Ann Cregan, Mary Ann Dennet, Martha Everley, Eve Russart and Sarah Ann Parsons.[70] The girls were taught reading, writing, arithmetic and geography and made their own school uniforms.

Other staff were sub-matron Mrs Rice, Thomas McCormack the clerk and storekeeper, both inexperienced in their roles at the school.[71] In 1868 Frederick Cane took over from McCormack as clerk and storekeeper.[72] Cane's presence at

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[65] Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes*, 142-144.
[66] CSIL 73/9513 special bundle 4/798.3
[67] *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) November 4, 1887, 8.
[68] Ison, (Margaret Ellis) http://nis.wikidot.com/ellis
[69] SRNSW: NRS: 14722; 5/3428; 3 Number 26
[70] SRNSW: NRS: 14722; 5/3428; p.6 Warrant 64 (No. 62)
[71] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 206.
[72] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 223.

the Domain is interesting because by 1871 he had gained sufficient status to be appointed Superintendent at the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots.  Other roles were gatekeeper, [73] cook, laundress and storekeeper.

Another group of visiting professionals to the girls' institutions were the clergy.  All the girls went to their respective religious instruction on a Sunday and officials were quite precise about getting each girls the religion correct.[74] Some of the girls attended religious service at St John's Church of England at Cook Hill and on 2 March 1869, twelve of the Protestant girls from the industrial school were confirmed there by Reverend Mr Bode.[75]  The church was not as close to the school as Newcastle's Christ Church and would have taken about thirty minutes for the girls to walk over the hill to St Johns. Daily prayers were offered at the school in the morning and evening led by Reverend Bode.[76] A list of Protestant students was kept for Reverend Mr Selwyn, priest in charge at Christ Church, Newcastle.  He and his wife Rose Selwyn lived on site at the Parsonage located on the northwest corner of the Newcastle Domain and were both advocates for Protestant girls, assisting with their lessons and supporting them in finding successful employment.  In 1870, Rose Selwyn wrote a letter, presumably to Superintendent Clarke:

> I am obliged to you for letting me know that Sarah McDuff is now eligible for service … Mrs Child
> is not I think prepared to pay more than 5/ a week at first … I hope that the wages being a trifle
> lower than what you propose will not be a hindrance to her having a place where every
> surrounding influence would be good and kind.[77]

It would seem that Rose Selwyn played a negotiating role in finding suitable employment for the girls. Some of the girls who came to Newcastle have already been mentioned, however all of the names of girls admitted to the Newcastle Industrial School were entered in Entrance Books. Also included was their age and religion. This information has been collated and available on The Newcastle Industrial Girls School website.[78]  Most of the girls were from the Sydney area, and a large group came from the Goulburn and Bathurst districts.

For the girls who were admitted to Newcastle the immediate future envisioned for them was domestic service.  Apprenticing often occurred after twelve months in the school. Scrivener mentions that some of the local employers who took apprentices were public servants, doctors and religious ministers, also suggesting that there may have difficulties getting the general public to accept female apprentices.[79]  Certainly some of those who took on girls as apprentices already had an association with the Industrial School through proximity, including police magistrate of Newcastle Helenus Scott whose office at the Newcastle Police Barracks was situated at the north east corner of Domain, or employment, specifically school clerk Frederick Cane.[80] Training at the school was directed towards the provision of disciplined and skilled servants for private households just as it had been when

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[73] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 206.
[74] Ison, (Rudd sisters) http://nis.wikidot.com/rudd Ison described how the Colonial Secretary went to great lengths to confirm girl's religion.
[75] *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney)March 2, 1869.
[76] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 220.
[77] SRNSW: CSIL: 72/4799 1/2176
[78] Ison http://nis.wikidot.com
[79] Scrivener"Rescuing the Rising Generations" ' 234-235.
[80] http://nis.wikidot.com/ (see Reddan, Manton an Everley)

the first such schools were set up for female orphans in the early nineteenth century and when Aboriginal girls were trained at residential schools in the early twentieth century.

Despite such interventions by professional staff, only thirty of 186 (16 percent) girls who went through the Newcastle institutions were sent as servants to households.[81] Of these, just two 'misconducted themselves' with the others being very industrious.[82] Sixteen year old Eliza McDonald[83] was one girl who was successful in gaining an apprenticeship as a domestic servant after spending fifteen months at the school.[84] Servants from the industrial schools were not always welcomed into most households because of the reputation of the girls as being associated with prostitution.

### The Girls

Related records show that while 186 girls passed through the Industrial School, just six were admitted to the Newcastle Reformatory before its removal in 1871.[85] These girls admitted to the reformatory were Jane Lord, sent there for two years for stealing, Mary Ann Meehan, Ellen Youngman, Jane Taylor, Louise Winter and Elizabeth Randall.[86] The girls admitted to the Industrial School ranged in age as shown in Table 4.1. The average age of the girls admitted to the Industrial Girls School and reformatory between 1867 and 1871 was twelve years. The youngest was two year old Hannah Solomon who was admitted with her four siblings in 1868.[87] After six weeks, Hannah was transferred to the Benevolent Society in Sydney. This was most likely a more suitable institution because many younger children were cared for there.[88] There was one other very young child admitted to the Newcastle industrial school, three year old Susannah Stanton.[89] Similarly, Susannah was admitted with four of her siblings and she remained there until the institutions closure and then went to Biloela. As shown there were many young adult women who remained in the system until aged eighteen. The majority of the girls were fourteen and fifteen years of age, as shown in Table 4.1 this group was by far the largest. Second to this were girls aged thirteen and fourteen years, each of these age groups were half that of the fifteen year age group. Numbers decreased, halving again for the girls aged between seven and twelve years. The group who were sixteen years were half that of the fifteen year group and there were very few girls aged seventeen years admitted over the four year period. This was also similar for the very young girls, with only six inmates under the age of five admitted.

[81]Jane Ison. "The Newcastle Industrial School for Girls 1867-1871", In *http://nis.wikidot.com/*, 2012.

[82]D.L. "Original Correspondence :Industrial Schools and Reformatories," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) April 18, 1871. 4.

[83]Ison (Eliza McDonald & Ann McDonald) http://nis.wikidot.com/Mcdonald

[84]SRNSW: NRS: 14717; 5/3429; pp.1 & 2

[85]SRNSW: CSIL: 72/4799 1/2176 (Newcastle Industrial School list of names) SRNSW: CSIL: 74/5050 1/2279 (Newcastle Reformatory list of names)

[86]SRNSW: CSIL: 74/5050 1/2279 (Newcastle Reformatory list of names)

[87]Ison (Hannah Solomon) http://nis.wikidot.com/solomon

[88]Ison (Hannah Solomon) http://nis.wikidot.com/solomon, (Mary Ann Meehan) http://nis.wikidot.com/meehan, (Ellen Youngman) http://nis.wikidot.com/youngman, (Jane Taylor)http://nis.wikidot.com/taylor,(Louise Winter) http://nis.wikidot.com/winter, (Elizabeth Randall) http://nis.wikidot.com/randall, SRNSW: CSIL: 68/5960 4/637

[89]Ison, (Susannah Stanton) http://nis.wikidot.com/

**Age Percentage on Admission**
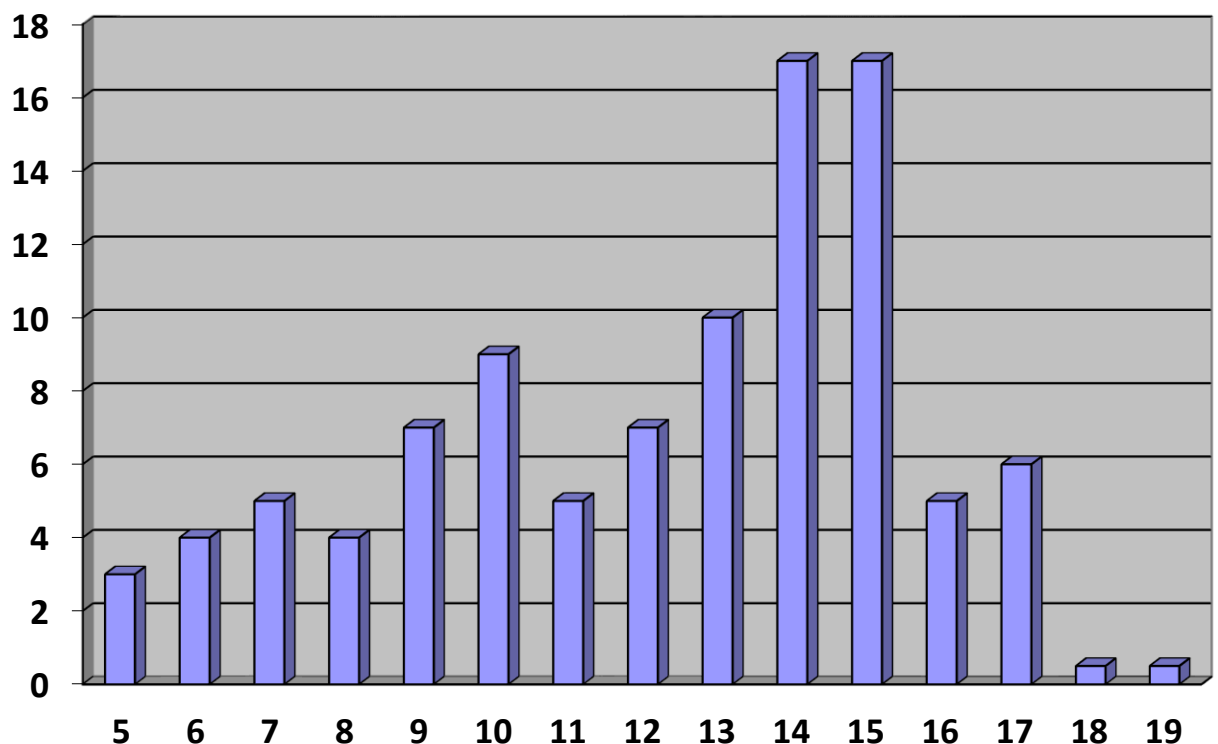


**Age on Admission 1867 - 1871**

**Table 4.1 -** Shows the age percentage of girls on admission to the Newcastle Industrial Girls School from 1867 to 1871.

Although referred to as 'girls', the population groups as previously discussed were mostly young women. Sixteen years was considered in Britain and NSW to be the point of transition between juvenile and adult in terms of the legal system.[90]  However, in NSW Industrial Schools Act and Reformatory Act (1866) enabled individuals who were under sixteen to be sentenced and detained in an industrial school or a reformatory and remain there for several years.[91]  This accounts for the large number of fourteen and fifteen year olds admitted. Age fifteen was the last year in which they could legally be taken into permanent care under the child welfare system.  Any child who was sixteen or older at the time of their admission were illegally admitted. This is likely to have been the case for seventeen year old Catherine Somerfield who in 1869 was charged under the Industrial Schools Act for stealing and sent to Newcastle. There is no explanation as to why she was sentenced under this act and not the Reformatory Act.[92] As Ison suggests "It is unknown whether her stated age of fourteen was a deliberate or accidental error but it seems likely that her admission was a deliberate act by the magistrates to

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[90] M May, "Innocence and Experience: The Evolution of the Concept of Juvenile Delinquency in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *Victorian Studies* XVII (September 1973): 26.
[91] Quinn, "'Unenlightened Efficiency", 18.
[92] Ison, (Cahterine Somerville) http://nis.wikidot.com/somerfield

avoid a gaol sentence or an admission to the Reformatory." [93]  To avoid this type of subterfuge, vulnerable fifteen year old girls may have been targeted by authorities to be placed in care.

Some of the girls who came to Newcastle had already been in some form of permanent care, such as Protestant Orphanage at Parramatta and Benevolent society Asylum. One such girl was Margaret Camden admitted to the Benevolent Asylum at aged nine, she was there for three days presumably after her mother had passed away.[94] Another girl Mary Ann Cregan spent time at the Benevolent Asylum with her mother in 1852 when she was aged one year.[95] A decade later in 1863 Mary Ann was again at the Benevolent Asylum with her mother, this time for one week, however later that year at age twelve she requested admission to the Randwick Asylum, she was on her own.[96] Mary Ann's final admission before coming to Newcastle was at the Benevolent Asylum in May 1865.   Another girl Hannah Burt aged fifteen came to Newcastle from the Randwick Asylum where she had been apprenticed since age twelve.[97] Prior to this she had been admitted to the Benevolent Asylum in 1864. The circumstance as to why she came to Newcastle is not revealed.[98] Catherine Condon entered the Newcastle Industrial School in 1870, however prior to this had been apprenticed at the Roman Catholic orphanage in 1866 at aged twelve and was later transferred to Cockatoo Island in 1871.[99]  Catherine was only on the island for a few months before gaining another apprenticeship.[100]  Mary Ann Hopkins, Emma Fern, Anna Greenfield, Eliza O'Brien and Esther Hall all spent time at the Catholic House of the Good Shepherd on the site of what is now Central Railway station in Sydney.[101] It was not uncommon for girls to have multiple admissions to other institutions before coming to Newcastle.

Many girls who came to the Newcastle industrial school and reformatory in this period were either associating with prostitutes or were young prostitutes.  Prostitution was considered such trouble in NSW that the girls were to be strictly separated from the boys and at Newcastle there were bans on all male visitors at the institution except for brothers and fathers.[102] Even though there was no specific legislation aimed at prostitution in the 1860s, there was widespread concern about sexually transmitted diseases. Not only were girls considered at greater risk than the boys, but they posed a risk to the rest of society as they could fall pregnant and perpetuate the problem of child poverty and neglect in the already struggling colony.[103]  The majority of the girls who came to Newcastle were arrested under provision of the Industrial Schools Act for their safety, for 'associating with prostitutes' or 'wandering with prostitutes' or 'living with common prostitutes'. This was the case for fifteen year old Jane Davis who had been apprehended on a warrant under provisions of the Industrial Schools Act for living with

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[93] Ison, (Cahterine Somerville)  http://nis.wikidot.com/somerfield
[94] Ison, (Margaret Camden) http://nis.wikidot.com/
[95] ancestry.com – Randwick Asylum records – see Thomas CRAIGEN
[96] ancestry.com – Randwick Asylum records
[97] Ison, (Hannah Burt) http://nis.wikidot.com/
[98] ancestry.com – Randwick Asylum records.
[99] Ison, (Catherine Condon) http://nis.wikidot.com/condon
[100] SRNSW: CSIL: 71/8794 1/2154 & SRNSW: CSIL: 71/2920 1/2142
[101] Ison (Mary Ann Hopkins) http://nis.wikidot.com/hopkins, (Emma Fern) http://nis.wikidot.com/fern, (Emma Greenfield) http://nis.wikidot.com/greenfield, ( (Eliza O'Brien) http://nis.wikidot.com/o-brien, (Esther Hall) http://nis.wikidot.com/hall.
[102] Ritter, "Inventing Juvenile",115.
[103] Rosamond Davenport Hill and Florence Davenport Hill, *What We Saw in Australia* (New York: MacMillan & Company, 1875); New South Wales Government, "Report of the Select Committee on the Condition of the Working Classes in the Metropolis" in *V&PLANSW 1859-1860 vol. 4, 1267* (Sydney, 1859-1860) pp.  6, 10 and 12.

prostitutes.[104]   Jane was also one of the children mentioned on the list drawn up by the Sydney constables, she was apprehended on 3 September 1867 from a house of an Asian man and sent to Newcastle where she stayed for two months.[105] Her parents successfully petitioned to have their daughter return to them in Sydney.[106] Although the required minimal term spent at the industrial school was two years, this could be reduced if petitions were made to the Colonial Secretary.  Jane went on to marry and have two sons, however her husband is thought to have abandoned the family and to survive she resorted to prostitution.[107] Her sons were admitted to the Industrial School for boys in 1881 aboard the *Vernon*, presumably due to their mother's association with prostitution.[108] It was a cycle of institutional care that for some families was beneficial, particularly those who were without social and financial support.



**Figure 4.2** Photograph of a much older Jane Davis in 1905. State Records NSW. No. 9775 (3/6070 p. 235 reel 5111). Image located by Ison during her research of the 'Newcastle girls'.

Another girl was fifteen year old Sarah Ann Parsons.[109]  She had been associating with prostitutes and was brought before the Central Police Court in June 1868 where her parents stated that for a full week they had not seen their daughter, her behavior was unsettled and she was unable to be supervised in work. Sarah at age fifteen had been charged with 'wandering with common prostitutes' and was sent to Newcastle.[110]  She was managed in the industrial school setting because at this time the reformatory had not opened.  After Sarah's twelve months at Newcastle she was discharged to her parent's home in Sydney.[111]

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[104] *Empire* (Sydney) September 4,1867. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60844414
[105] *Empire* (Sydney)September 4,1867. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60844414
[106] SRNSW: CSIL: papers with 67/6819 4/608
[107] Ison , http://nis.wikidot.com/.
[108] *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney)June 6, 1881. p6. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13482179
[109] Ison, (Sarah Parsons) http://nis.wikidot.com/parsons
[110] "Central Police Court", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 June 1868, 2.
[111] SRNSW: CSIL: 72/4799 1/2176

**Figure 4.3**. Photograph of Sarah Ann Parsons (1878). Source: State Records NSW. Image located by Ison during her research of the 'Newcastle girls'.

Girls were also admitted if their reality was that mothers were involved in prostitution.[112] Children who were illegitimate and the whereabouts of their father was unknown also could result in eligibility to the industrial school. Girls often came to the attention of authorities when their mothers were admitted to gaols for prostitution, this was the case for Pasculine Demartinene and her sister Sarah Maria whose mother went to Maitland Gaol for three months.[113] As result of these children not having their mother to help care for them was enough to warrant admission to the industrial school. More serious situations requiring urgent admission was the disturbing account of seven year old Esther Hobbs who was subjected to ongoing sexual abuse and exploitation prior to authorities intervening.[114] This child was subject to child prostitution organised by her parents for financial gain. Authorities made sure this child was taken far away from the bad influences of her 'drunkard' parents.

The other group of children at the Girls Industrial School was those who had been abused and neglected. They were less worldly children. Nine year old Elizabeth Gribbon had lived with her parents in Sydney and was the victim of her father's violent drunken attacks.[115] When her younger brother was left unsupervised and badly burnt, Elizabeth's father blamed her for being away from home. As punishment, he beat and kicked her. The magistrate on reviewing the case did not think that she should return to live with her parents and instead she was ordered to go to the industrial school. Elizabeth's case highlights the significant social problems affecting

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[112] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 214.
[113] (Pasculine Demartinene) http://nis.wikidot.com/demartiene, (Sarah Maria Demartinene) http://nis.wikidot.com/demartiene "Local News," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) August 3, 1869. NSW PG1869: 257
[114] Jane Ison (Esther Hobbs) http://nis.wikidot.com/
[115] "Central Police Court," The *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) June 16, 1868.

families during this time including alcohol abuse and domestic violence, however surprisingly she was not admitted to the school as her name does not appear on the entrance lists.

Other children were admitted under less dangerous circumstances, such as homelessness, vagrancy or no fixed address. One such girl was Jane Robertson described as "an intelligent looking little girl"[116] and charged on 26 July 1870 under the Industrial Schools Act on the evidence that her mother was deceased and father had deserted her. There was a warrant for her father's arrest. Jane was admitted to the Industrial Girls School, however after a few months her father successfully petitioned to have his daughter released to his care. As Ison has found Jane's father had acted in desperation and had needed to go to Sydney to find work to be able to afford to buy new tools. He had lost his tools during a flood in Maitland in the early 1870s. He advised he had left his daughter with her aunt as there were no other family members for support him while he found employment.[117] The arresting constable defended Jane's father stating that "He has resided in Maitland for twelve or twelve years. He is an excellent tradesman and the child is the only family he has got."[118] It would seem that Jane's father was a good man and intended to support his daughter. Sadly Jane's father was found drowned in the Hunter River not long after she had been returned home to him.[119]

As mentioned there was quite a structured routine at the school. This included an authoritarian management style to help enforce good behaviour. Legislation was quite harsh and punitive. If a child misbehaved at the institution, the Industrial Schools Act authorized placing a child in 'complete custody' and close confinement for up to fourteen days.[120] This was done at the Newcastle institution on many occasions. The place of confinement was the Gate House located at the entrance to the Government Domain. Reformatory legislation allowed authorities to place girls (already at a reformatory) under the age of 18 years who were suspected of prostitution in 'strict incarceration' at the local gaol for up to three months. Furthermore, if children absconded from a reformatory they could be sent to gaol, whereas absconders from industrial schools were returned to the institution. Rather than educational and caring reform, many civil liberties and freedoms were taken from the children, who instead were treated as criminals. Their reactions to the place suggest that for them, it left much to be desired.The masculine culture of management did not sit well with the girls sent to Newcastle.

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[116] Industrial Schools Act.The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser (Sydney) July 28, 1870.

[117] Ison. (Jane Robertson) http://nis.wikidot.com/robertson.

[118] SRNSW: CSIL: 70/8268 4/706

[119] "Hunter River Agricultural and Horticultural Association'"*The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) August 3, 1869.

[120] The Public General Statutes of NSW 1862-1874, "Industrial Schools Act 1866", in *pp 3737-39*., ed. The Public General Statutes of NSW 1862-1874. (1866, Sept 12).

**Figure 4.4** Reflection from Military Barrack window of parade ground and Gate House where some of girls were incarcerated. Photograph: Charles Hardy 2013.

## The Riots and Escapes

Disturbances and riots began soon after the Girls' Industrial Girls School opened in 1867. Although admitting children to government care provided for their basic needs for shelter and food, the institutional setting created new problems. The distance from Sydney meant that those who did have relatives and friends would rarely be visited. The site was starkly utilitarian.

Neglected and delinquent girls mixed together created divergent demands and the Domain was not ideal for meeting their needs. Paired with a punitive approach, ineffective supervisory staff and limited funding, the result was a dysfunctional institution. The girls' behavior became notorious and was reported in newspapers both locally and in Sydney.[121] It was reported that theyoung prostitutes seemed to have been particularly problematic and the authorities believed they were harder to reform than delinquent boys.[122]

In contrast with earlier uses of the Domain, the Industrial School was a closed institution which girls could only leave on sanctioned outings. Those not associated with the institution had limited access to the site, beginning more than a century of separation between the Domain and the city in which it was located. In this early phase, despite the physical barriers erected to demarcate the space dedicated to the school and reformatory, girls and members of the public were able to overcome this separation.

Several disturbances took place during Matron King's time as superintendent. An incident involving the girls breaking out in loud screams. On one occasion, the girls told Matron King that they saw a man or a ghost under a bed, and they shrieked loudly to get the attention of the locals which they certainly achieved.[123] The community

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[121] Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes*, 111.
[122] Ritter, "Inventing Juvenile", 115.
[123] "District News Newcastle-Noise at the Industrial School," The *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advocate* (Maitland) October 24, 1867.

disliked the presence of the girls but did have sympathy for Matron King who they believed was doing her best to deal with particular 'class of character' there.  Riots started at the industrial school early 1868 and continued in May with the girls breaking up furnishings and throwing pieces out of windows.  With Lucas as superintendent, a riot on the evening of 8 July 1868 was one of the worst and was triggered after ten girls broke out of the military cells in which they had been locked up. The girls were armed with weapons 'in the shape of brick bats' and stones as well as 'billets of wood'.[124]

Lucas called on authorities to consider dismissing the institution's officers and appointing new ones who would be more encouraging and positive towards the girls. It was clear that neither the staff nor the police at Newcastle were able to effectively manage the girls' behavior so reinforcements were sent in from Sydney for a three month period. Their commander, Senior Sergeant Lane, later stated that he had "...never witnessed [such behavior] before, or during my ten years on Cockatoo Island with the worst of criminals".[125]  The language used in reports conjures up ideas of complete anarchy and uncontrolled behavior.  Due to the distance from Sydney, the authorities were not able to deal with the series of incidents as they happened and this further contributed to the ongoing problems.

The girls maintained a steady series of disturbances. Four girls were admitted to solitary confinement at the school for forty-eight hours on bread and water on 6 January 1871 following a riot.[126] The circumstances of this event started when the Artillery Band, accompanied by a considerable local people, marched up Newcomen Street playing as they went.  The girls waved their hands in appreciation of the music.   After the procession had passed some of the girls began to act violently and threatened to destroy the institution. Many windows were broken and a detachment of police was needed to place the eleven 'ringleaders' in confinement.[127]  Things did not improve under Captain Clarke with his wife acting as Matron.[128] Another of these incidents occurred on 3 March 1871 when it was reported that a 'little volcano slumbered' and outbursts of rioting would take place and then settle. The girls waited until Clarke was absent in Sydney to mount their protest, perhaps having heard about the impending closure of the school and that they were leaving Newcastle.  Armed with iron bedsteads, girls broke through dormitory doors and got away over the fences into the local neighborhood. Police and members of the public helped re-capture thirteen of them who were sent to the nearby police lockup and held there over night until authorities could determine what to do with them.  The girls were not deterred by this harsh treatment and continued to act defiantly. The community waited anxiously for the next outburst:-

> In the Industrial School all is quiet. What are the inmates of the lockup doing? Sleeping? Not so, but boasting all night long of what they have done, how they have defied every one, knowing that their janitor's hands were completely tied, and so the night passes. Before six on the following (yesterday) morning, little bits of things are at their windows, half-clad only, cursing and swearing volubly at a

[124] Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes*, 140.
[125] New South Wales Government, "N.S.W V & Pla Session 1873-74, Second Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquiry into & Report Upon the Working & Management of Public Charities of the Colony," ed. New South Wales Government (Sydney: New South Wales Government, 1874, May 26).
[126] SRNSW: CSIL: 70/3766 4/695
[127] DL, "Original Correspondence-Industrial Schools and Reformatories," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)April 6, 1871.
[128] Ramsland, *Children of the Back Lanes*, 142.

policeman going down Tyrrell street. The authorities, paralysed, consult together, and telegraph to Sydney for instructions. Shall the culprits be brought before the bench and sent to Maitland gaol? Shall they be sent back to the school? Shall they be sent on to Sydney? What is to be done? They are powerless. Meantime the riot continues...[129]

Eventually the girls held in the Newcastle lockup were marched in groups of four back up the hill to the reformatory and although reports state that police remained 'in charge', the girls seemed to have the upper hand as the riots continued to escalate. The girls even made banners out of bed sheets and blankets and waved them out of windows whilst singing their 'ribald' songs.[130]

As a result of this riot eleven girls were confined, this time at the school and were only allowed bread and water. Clarke did not think this was adequate punishment, particular for the ringleaders as the following letter suggests:

> … Under these circumstances I would most respectfully suggest that the four ringleaders …
> should be handed over to the Police Magistrate and dealt with according to law for using
> obscene language, for mutinous conduct, and for wilfully destroying Government property. On
> speaking to Mr Scott on the subject I regret to find that the punishment is not near so great for
> such conduct as I think they deserve.[131]

The four ringleaders of the riot in early March were charged with wilfully destroying government property and were transferred to Maitland Gaol where they stayed for one month.[132] The ringleaders of such riots were relentless in their attempts to escape from the Domain, acting on their opinion that their apparent incarceration at the Newcastle institutions was unjust. Attempts to abscond were also frequent, as well as episodes of difficult and abusive behaviour towards staff. The following report by Matron King refers to the attempted escape of Eliza O Brien and Sarah Ann Parsons on 13 October 1868. The report also describes the difficult behaviour of Eliza O Brien which had, by then, apparently defeated King.

> They were safe in their dormitories at 11 o'clock p.m. They made their escape by thrusting out the
> fastening of a window facing the verandah and broke open the Clothes Store Room by pushing a pole
> through one of the windows, from which they extracted some of the clothing they escaped in. They
> piled up some stones on a Bucket and climbed over the Fence next (to) the residence of the Police
> Magistrate. They were brought back by the Police at 3 o'clock a.m. and placed in the Cells at the
> Guard House where they will remain until the decision of the Honble. Colonial Secretary. [Eliza
> O'Brien] has absconded from the Institution on three several occasions, she had frequently thrown
> stones with violence at the new bell, injuring the paint work, and rang it contrary to all discipline. She
> has gone into the pond against the most positive rules, was one of the most violent in the disturbance
> of the 9th of July and most active in breaking windows and otherwise injuring the property of the
> institution. Her language is usually of the most revolting and disgusting description, sometimes very
> blasphemous. She has taken my keys and robbed my private apartments. On one occasion, in the

[129] "Further Rioting-Induction of the New Superintendent", 4.
[130] From Nctle Chronicle, "The Industrial Girls School and Reformatory," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) March 23, 1871.
[131] SRNSW: CSIL: 71/239 4/782.1
[132] SRNSW: Series 2329, 5/789, No. 71/162

Muster Room, when correcting other girls for being in the pond and destroying their clothing, she rushed at and struck me before the rest. In the dining room throwing pannikins to destroy them and has several times threatened to take my life. She is constantly instigating other girls to acts of mischief and inciting them to insubordination. Her whole conduct has been such, and her violence of temper so ungovernable, I have no hope of any reformation on her whatever. I would earnestly recommend her removal to another Institution where the means of separation from others is complete and where there are no younger children to be vitiated by her pernicious example.[133]

The girls were very determined to get free and went to great lengths to find a way out of the institution. King's concerns that O Brien was encouraging other girls to abscond may have been genuine because over the following months and years more attempts were made.  On 20 November 1868 six girls managed to escape, shortly after this another two girls got away but were eventually returned to the school. It was not uncommon for girls involved in escapes to be placed in cells at the school as punishment.[134] The most brazen of the attempts to abscond were the three girls who successfully made their way to Sydney, via the Hawkesbury region assisted by others who transported them by boat. They were eventually captured in Sydney and returned to Newcastle. Some of the more daring older girls tried to get away in the late afternoons and evenings. There were at least three local men who assisted some of the girls to escape. These were local bus driver George Allshorn who assisted Meehan, Thomas Hafey was a young man from a local family who assisted Mary Ann Meehan, Ann Howard and Lucy Ah Kin to abscond.  The third man was Moses Masters who assisted Mary Cregan to escape. Master's place of employment was at the Domain where he was in the employ of Helenus Scott, perhaps he had got to know some of the girls whilst at the Domain. IOne girl walked straight out of the grounds arm in arm with 'a man in plain clothes'.  Another girl, Mary Ann Meehan, went out for a walk despite Superintendent Lucas's objections and she was punished with a 'change of air' in Maitland Gaol for three months.[135]  Julia Cunningham and Eliza Hanmore are two girls who successfully escaped by climbing out of the windows at the barracks and down the drainpipe.[136]

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[133] SRNSW: CSIL: 68/5714 4/637
[134] http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13169187
[135] "Disturbance at the Industrial Girls School", *Newcastle Pilot* (Newcastle)  July 10, 1868.
[136] Jane Ison (Hanmore sisters) http://nis.wikidot.com/hanmore, (Juiie Cunningham) http://nis.wikidot.com/cunningham

**Figure 4.5**.  Drainpipe at the former Barracks. Photograph: Charles Hardy 2014.

On 4 August 1870 another episode took place, involving Mary Ann Meehan, and fellow inmates Ellen Youngman and Jane Taylor who successfully escaped.  They tricked Mrs King into believing they were all locked in their dormitory.  Here is an account from Captain Clarke about the incident:-

> Mrs King stated that she locked up the girls in the dormitory about six o'clock but that she did not see Jane Taylor in the room, that the other two girls told Mrs King, Jane was under the bed, that it was only her fun, she would be out presently, then Mrs King states that she locked the door and left the key in the lock - that she suspects that Jane Taylor was in another room and that she unlocked the door and let the other two out.[137]

When it was realised that the girls were not in their room a search took place. Finally the girls were located not far from town by two policeman and they were returned around midnight. One of the girls who escaped this night was Mary Ann Meehan and it had not been the first time. A few months earlier she had escaped from the school disguised in Mrs King's clothing, however was recaptured and sent to Maitland Gaol. Meehan had also shown poor conduct towards Mrs King, resulting in her throwing a cup of water and pound of bread at her as she was leaving the girls room.[138] For this, Meehan was placed in solitary confinement at the school for two days. Meehan was no doubt the most notorious of the Newcastle girls, regularly getting a mention in newspapers across the country. Ellen Lewis, a newcomer to the school was also confined for misconduct. She had been caught

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[137] Ison, http://nis.wikidot.com/ '(ane Taylor) http://nis.wikidot.com/taylor
[138] SRNSW: CSIL: 69/6600 4/667

breaking and escaping through a fence at the school and made her way to the port. Lewis' punishment was to be "confined in No. 3 dormitory on Bread and Water for three days . . ."[139]

Meehan's poor behaviour continued when she was transferred to Cockatoo Island. There she attempted to burn down the dormitory door to get out.[140]  This was a serious charge and she represented herself at the trial. Although Meehan's behaviour was often at odds with authorities, it is likely that she was an intelligent and articulate girl and it was said that she "cross-examined the witnesses with an astonishing display of forensic ability".[141] One of the main arguments was that the others should share in the penalty as she was not acting alone.  According to the court summary Meehan provided ". . .a very lengthened and plausible address to the Court, and which was artfully intermingled with a harrowing description of the treatment she had undergone at the old Reformatory at Newcastle."[142] Meehan alleged that she had been falsely detained because she was over age of eighteen years. She also complained that her hair had 'violently' cut by Captain Clarke and Mrs Barton.  It was not uncommon for girls at the Newcastle institutions to have their heads shaved.[143] The following statement is a summary of Meehan's grievances that was presented in court. Her concerns speak volumes about reasons she misbehaved.

> She [Meehan] had had often been led to believe that if she conducted herself well for certain periods, she should have her liberty ; but these hopes had not been fulfilled, and hence she made up her mind to escape; for if she failed in the attempt, even the gaol was preferable to the reformatory . . . She was willing and able to get her own living – as Mrs King well knew, for she had done Mrs King's washing and ironing for two years. She had been sent to gaol for six months by Judge Dowling, and she was willing to serve the remainder of her time in gaol. . .[144]

Meehan experienced time in both the gaol and the reformatory, and according to her statement she much preferred her time in gaol rather than the later. This highlights that there was a much harsher punitive regime at the reformatory than at the gaol, and although the industrial school is not mentioned it is likely that management there was not as strict as the reformatory.  Considering that there were only six girls at the reformatory at Newcastle, perhaps the inmates there felt more isolated than when they were at the government gaol at Maitland. The following indicates that Meehan believed that she was treated more fairly at the gaol than at the reformatory. There was justice in the gaols, but none in the schools. She had been driven to do what was not good by being kept in the reformatory as the confinement there was more than she could bear.[145]

The boundary was deliberately transgressed by those on the inside and those outside. Men tore down palings from the fence on the high ground of Newcomen Street to obtain a better view  "...of the filthily indecent exposure

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139 13 October 1873,SRNSW: CSIL: 73/8432 1/2233
140 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60876290  what are these references?
141 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60877865
142 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60877865
143 Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations",  218.
144 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60877865
145 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60877865

of their persons the girls are making at the windows, and are encouraging the offenders by their plaudits."[146] According to the *Newcastle Chronicle,* the men were not locals but sailors taking advantage of the location of the Domain within a 'stone's cast of the wharves'.[147] Reports of constant whistling from sailors this caused further public disturbance and objections to having the girls in the centre of the city.[148]

As result of the ongoing attempts to escape by the girls and their unruly behaviour, authorities made physical changes to the Newcastle Domain which were made were motivated more by security than comfort. The grounds were enclosed on each side with a high palisade of 'sawn planks' which Captain Clarke, the Superintendent of the school, hoped would deter the girls from communicating with those on the outside. The front fence Clarke believed should be set back forty feet from the public road; however the Colonial Secretary's office decided that it only needed to be set back ten feet.[149] Clarke believed this would be too near the roadway making it impossible to stop the girls from communicating with the general public.  Because of the hillside location, those on the outside were easily able to look into the grounds, especially from the high eastern side.[150] On the western boundary, girls on the second level of the military buildings were able to signal and communicate with those on Newcomen Street. Clarke also erected fences within the grounds to separate classes of girls. However this was not successful because even with areas fenced off, the site was very open and the locked gates on the fences could, according to Clarke, be opened with a "crooked nail".[151]

Ideas about how to better manage the girls varied.  Police Sergeant Lane who had been sent from Sydney to restore order was an advocate for harsher forms of management.  He criticised the approach of Superintendent Clarke as too tolerant and 'indulgent' of the girls. Lane had eleven young women placed in the eight cells of the Guard House for six nights, sleeping on hard stone floors without mattresses and visited only twice in each twenty-four hours.[152] The Guard House was designed for the punishment of refractory soldiers, not for the management of girls. Some members of the community complained to authorities about the inappropriate confinement of the girls in the Guard House; however their complaints fell on deaf ears.  These punishments were no more effective than the compassionate approach had been and indeed seemed to foster even stronger reactions.

As increasing pressure on government authorities mounted it would only be a matter of time before the girls would leave Newcastle. The riots had caused significant problems for authorities, and the general bad behaviour exhibited by the girls meant many in the community wanted them out of Newcastle. However the logistics of setting up a new institution to relocate the girls would take some time. With so much attention paid to maintaining order, the intention of training for employment was largely abandoned, and with it, the initial purpose of institutionalisation.  Sixty-nine of the girls remaining in the industrial school and reformatory left the NGD.

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[146] "Further Rioting-Induction of the New Superintendent,"*The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)  March 23,1871.

[147] DL, "Original Correspondence-the Training Ship Vernon,"*The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)  June 17, 1869.

[148] "The Industrial School at Newcastle," *Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) February 14, 1868.

[149] Clarke, pp. 16 and 17 on 29 December 1868.

150  "The Newcastle Industrial School," The Sydney Morning Herald (Sydney) November 14, 1868.

[151] Clarke, Weekly Report to Colonial Secretary (Sydney), May 4, 1869. SRNSW NRS 14717 5/3429 pp 104, 105 & 106.

152  Ramsland, Children of the Back Lanes, 146.

Finally on 26 May 1871, 37 girls aged ten or under were transferred to Sydney aboard the *Morpeth* and on 27 May, 67 girls aged eleven of older were transferred to Sydney aboard the *SS Thetis*.[153]  This was a total of 104 girls. They were sent to Cockatoo Island (*Biloela)* in Sydney. Many of the girls who had been admitted to the institution since 1867 had already been transferred of discharged back to their families of the community prior the institution closing in 1871. Waiting at the wharf to see them off on the day of their departure was a large concourse of people.  This seemed to excite the girls once again and encouraged them to scream loudly their favourite songs as they "bid a most lively adieu to their admirers".[154] Even as they departed, some of the girls managed to find their way on deck to take a last look at what they were leaving behind.[155] The majority of the community were in favour of the girls leaving, including the Mayor of Newcastle James Hannell who believed the Domain had not been 'ideal' for the industrial school mainly because of the ongoing problem of noise that was projected into the streets disturbing the neighborhood. Many of the 'friends' or admirers of the girls took a different view.  They had organised a petition for the girls to remain at Newcastle which was, unsurprisingly, not successful.[156]

Only a few of the girls made a successful transition out of the Industrial School.  A few were apprenticed out or returned to their family. Authorities often paid travel expenses when a child was transferred out of the school, usually to Sydney. [157]  Sometimes these were long distances, as far as Queensland. Before girls were returned, family members were investigated andother witnesses were often interviewed by local police to gain insight about the appropriateness of a child being discharged from the care of the school. One girl, Sarah Dickson, had previously been in the care of a guardian before entering the school.  The guardian appealed successfully to have the girl returned to her in order to begin an apprenticeship in dressmaking.[158] If the arrangements made for them failed, the girls ended up at the new Industrial Girls School.

Some of the girls came into contact with asylums when they returned to Sydney, mostly due to support during pregnancies and to deliver their babies. Elizabeth Teasdale was one such former industrial school inmate that was admitted to the Benevolent Asylum for three month to give birth to her daughter in 1873.[159] Another former Newcastle inmate Catherine Condon who also required support at the Benevolent Society when she gave birth to twin boys in 1884, she was aged twenty five.[160] It is thought that one of the twins may have died. She was readmitted in 1891 to give birth to another son, who unfortunately he died. Another former child at Newcastle was Martha Everley who also had a child at Benevolent Society in 1888.  Ellen Lewis is another who may have been at the Benevolent Asylum in 1881, with her two month old daughter. The circumstances of this admission are sketchy, however highlights that some of these young woman continued to need support. Another girl was

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153 "The Last of the Industrial Girls," *The Newcastle Chronicles* (Newcastle) May 30,1871. SRNSW: CSIL: 71/3610 1/2144.
154 "The Last of the Industrial Girls," May 30, 1871.
155 "Deputation for Removal of Girls," *The Newcastle Chronicles* (Newcastle) March 30, 1871.
156 "Further Rioting -Induction of the New Superintendent," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) March 23, 1871.
157 From Ison, "CLARKE paid her [Eliza O Brien] fare and that of Mary Ann HOPKINS on the steamer to Sydney, an act which the government requested that he explain. CLARKE's explanation outlined that he already had, with either government permission or at their request, paid for fares to Sydney for Bridget DOWNS and the sisters, Ann and Marian SMITH, so rather than keep Eliza and Mary illegally after their discharge, he provided their fare. The government approved his act."  SRNSW: CSIL: 69/6559 4/667
158 http://nis.wikidot.com/dickson SRNSW: CSIL: 72/2841 1/2169
159 http://www.sydneybenevolentasylum.com/
160 Ison Catherine Condon

Mary Ann Dennet who married but died aged thirty years in 1883, triggering the admission of three of her children who went to the Randwick Asylum.[161]

There was a cycle of poverty that perpetuated from the 1860s to later decades of the nineteenth century, mostly due to the lack of informal support and charitable organisations, as prevalent in Britain. Despite this, government authorities strove to do the right thing by the children in NSW.

**'Care' of the Girls had failed**

Whether authorities were really trying to help the girls or protect society from them is debatable. The Parkes Government was fervently committed to making real changes for the vulnerable children of NSW.  Looking at the experience of the Newcastle Industrial School for Girls and Reformatory, it is clear that these institutions were not successful in helping to achieve this goal. The more formalised structure of care and related legislation in the 1860s appeared suddenly on the colonial landscape as a response to the perceived danger of the uncontrolled children of the poor.  As a result, the colonial government took stringent and forceful action to provide institutional care that was unsuccessful at the Domain; a place that unfortunately suited punishment and control more than it did practical and moral education. The guiding regulations had not been effective and the intervention did not work at the Newcastle site. As Scrivener points out there were inadequacies from the very beginning, including buildings ill prepared and maintenance work not carried out.[162]  Basic supplies were also lacking such as clothing, bedding and tools for cleaning. Furthermore, inadequate number of staff was also an issue, nor were they all experienced in their areas of employment.[163] Although the intentions of the colonial authorities were well meaning, the austere form of care used for the girls reflected past practices and forms of management which were inappropriate and doomed to fail.

Other reasons for the institutions failure were blamed on classification and the admission of two distinct groups.[164] The first group were those children for whom the government was acting in *loci parentis*, and the second group were those who had drawn negative attention through their behaviour.  Disparaged as 'notorious irreclaimable prostitutes,' their presence and their disruptive activity undermined the respectability of all of the schools' students.[165] The poor behaviour exhibited by the girls was no longer going to be tolerated by locals and there were many complaints from locals about groups in the community that would congregate at the Newcomen Street side of Domain to converse with the girls.[166] There was also the concern from those living at 'The Hill' that property values were being affected because of the impact of poor management and girls' behaviour was having. There was often noise coming from the school and disruption when the girls absconded.

The community saw the NDG as the heart of the city and did not want the stigma of caring institutions in their neighbourhood. The former military buildings were a feature which had been an asset for the Domain as the seat

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[161] (Mary Ann Dennett) http://nis.wikidot.com/dennett
[162] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 204.
[163] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations", 205.
[164] "Disturbance at the Industrial Girls School," *Newcastle Pilot* (Newcastle) July 10, 1868.
[165] "The Industrial School and Reformatory," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) April 4, 1871.
[166] Ramsland, *Children of the Back,* 140.

of local administration, its prominent and central location.  Reverend Canon Bode from St John's church at Cooks Hill alluded to this in 1868, suggesting that a purpose-built institution for children should be constructed 'in the country.' [167]  Bode was a well known local figure and regular contributor to public meetings, especially regarding new institutions proposed for the city. He had been fiercely opposed to the idea of an asylum at the Newcastle Domain two years earlier. Bode wrote a letter to the Editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald* outlining the many 'defects' at the Newcastle Industrial Girls School. [168]  Firstly, he believed buildings were inadequate because they had been adapted to a new use, and therefore defective, secondly, classification of the girls was impossible because of the close proximity of the buildings, thirdly, he spoke of seclusion as necessary to reform the girls, something he did not think possible at the sea port town of Newcastle. When Bode wrote this letter there had already been riots and disruptions at the school and the author is clearly opposed to the institution. Although the author does not directly say he wanted the institution removed, he does advocate for a secluded country location. As mentioned it is likely that many others in the community who lived near the Domain had similar views because the following year many locals were advocating for the school's removal.

On the other hand, another  author of the following letter to the editor was more sympathetic arguing that children at the institution had been let down by their parents, cared for by no one and now 'society waged war' on them.  Although not satisfied that the Newcastle Barracks was a suitable location for an industrial school, was more caring in understanding that they were innocent vulnerable children.

> The destitute and neglected children are not the offending parties, they may have been a pest to their neighbours, but it was because they were abandoned by their parents and cared for by no person. Society waged war with them and they were at variance with society. They had no other resource than to live by their wits, and society would not grant them this indulgence. Society would at last provide for them, and sent them either on board the Vernon or to the barracks at Newcastle, which cannot by any means be made into industrial schools. An industrial school ought to be in an elevated and a healthy situation, not in a town, but in a place of easy access to populous places, in a situation where the pupils could not annoy neighbours or be annoyed by neighbours, and the buildings should be commodious and comfortable, but not palatial and costly. [169]

Surprisingly there are only four riots identified at the Domain and possibly some minor unreported events. This does not seem significant but was still enough to cause community opposition. Escapes were a completely different issue. The girls were dreadful and persistent in their attempts to escape. Security was an issue and apart from them making their way down drainpipes, the closeness to the road, the fence that had a faulty lock, as well as the fence between the industrial school and Police Magistrates residence must have been pathetic as the girls were often going over or under it. The seclusion many deemed to be necessary to care for these children was something that was not possible at the NGD situated as it was in the centre of the city and overlooked on

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[167] G.C. Bode, "The Industrial School at Newcastle," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)  December 5,1868.
[168] G.C. Bode, "The Industrial. . .", December 5,1868.
[169] D.L., "The Training Ship Vernon," *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)  September 2, 1869. 4.

almost every side. The barracks were not in an isolated location and there was plenty of temptations to join others on the 'outside'. The girls could visibly see life in the city from their residence and desperately wanted to be part of the wider community.  The opportunity created when other government tenants had moved off the site rather than its suitability for the purpose had been the main reason the Domain had become the site of the industrial school.  The central location forced authorities to erect defences to keep the girls in and those not associated with the site out creating an 'island' effect of imperfect isolation.

The distance from Sydney contributed to decision makers allowed the problems at the industrial school to grow to a point where closure seemed the only viable alternative.  When children were sent to Newcastle they were out of sight of the authorities in Sydney and the severity of the issues was not fully understood. To some extent, this was intentional.  Newcastle was far enough from Sydney to serve as a means of defusing controversial issues in the capital by sending unwanted groups north.  It served as a dumping ground for unwanted reoffending convicts, wayward girls and later mental cases.

The lessons learned in Newcastle placed an emphasis on sites for industrial schools which were better able to be controlled.  Boys stayed on the ship *Vernon* and a new school for girls was established on Island in Sydney Harbour Cockatoo Island and was another ex-convict site with its own architectural deficiencies and riots continued there.[170]  Punishment and isolation were clearly not the answer to reform and 'care' for these girls.  For their part, the people of Newcastle had learned to be cautious about the colonial government institutions which might be foisted on their community.  They saw the Domain as a part of their city which should be accessible. During the period of the industrial school, local people were actively discouraged from having anything to do with the site and its inhabitants, both by official policies and the behaviour of the recalcitrant minority of girls.  The community resented 'others' being imposed on them.  The authorities suggested a succession of uses for the site; however the community were steadfast in their views and did not want any institution at the site, whilst at the same time they did not want the buildings to remain 'constantly empty'.

As mentioned noise from the girls' institution had also been a factor in the community not wanting further institutions in their neighborhood, believing that it devalued property.[171]  When rumours did begin to circulate that a lunatic asylum would be established, the community complained vigorously because they had seen firsthand the trouble that the girls had caused and they opposed the placement of another potentially disruptive group in their neighbourhood.[172]     The girl's institutions failed at Newcastle because of the rapid pace at which the institution came about, having not followed the same evolution as the private charitable institutions in Britain. Instead, in NSW most caring institutions were exclusively government institutions and although they did have some features of the models of care in Britain, the institutions in NSW had a structure of management formulated and implemented by the state government.


**Conclusion**

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[170] James Semple Kerr, *Out of Sight, out of Mind. Australia's Places of Confinement, 1788 - 1988* (Sydney: Bloxham & Chambers Pty Ltd, 1988), 6.
[171] DL. "Original Correspondence-the Training Ship Vernon," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)  June 17, 1869.
[172] "*To Be or Not to Be,*" *The Newcastle Chronicle* (Newcastle) Sept 5, 1871.

The establishment of the Newcastle institutions were careless and hurried. Authorities were simply trying to do the right thing by these children and improve conditions for them. Although the best plans were intended to care for children, there was little forethought or real planning in establishing these government child welfare institutions.

Ideas to establish industrial schools and reformatories for girls were discussed as far back as 1852 when an Inquiry was held exploring child destitution. These discussions were at a time when national responsibility and the formation of colonial defence were also on the government's agenda and how to better provide of care for people of NSW. The decision to use the NGD was flagged at the Inquiry and therefore the decision to use this site at Newcastle was not all that sudden because the former military barracks had been specifically recommended as the preferred location at the *Select Committee on the Destitute Children's Bill, 1852-54*.[173] The intention to provide adequate care to girls was there, what was lacking were all the elements to make the institutions a success. The intention had been there to open these new institutions, however the timing may not have been right because many of the staff were inexperienced, the institutions were understaffed and resources scarce.

The role of constables in the protection of children is evidence that there was concern for the welfare and safety of many girls particularly in Sydney, but also some regional areas. Lines are blurred in terms of genuine welfare needs of a child and incarceration of delinquent and criminal children. It is interesting to consider that police have a similar function today, they continue to take an active role in the welfare of children. In NSW the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 gives specific powers to police and community service case workers to remove a child they believe is at risk of harm.[174] It is a form of care that has been entrenched in government services beyond the typical health care sector. If some form of intervention hadn't been attempted by authorities to care for the girls many of them would have remained in destitute and unsafe households. Many believed that austere measures were taken, however it is likely that many girls benefited from coming to Newcastle. Despite the failure of the girls' institutions, this episode symbolises some attempts made by government to provide for the basic needs of disadvantaged children.In retrospect, the use of the Domain as an Industrial School for Girls and reformatory in the late 1860s can be read as an experiment to explore what would work there and what would not. The relatively new and spacious buildings in a central location were a public asset which could not be left idle when there were populations needing shelter, education and care. The behaviour of the girls while at the Domain demonstrated that the layout of the site and the nature of its buildings were not suitable for a reforming educational institution, especially when it was conducted in a semi penal manner. The architecture of these buildings was neither gentle nor homely and it was far from an ideal environment for the care of children.

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[173] Scrivener, "Rescuing the Rising Generations" , 203.
[174]Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 No 157 New South Wales, section 43. Accessed January 2014.
http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/fullhtml/inforce/act+157+1998+FIRST+0+N?#ch.5-pt.1-div.1-sec.43

Focus of legislation was on separation of children from parents. Separation meant isolation, whether this meant at a site in Newcastle stigmatised by the community, on a boat (where boys were placed) or at Cockatoo Island (*Biloela.*)   All of these places fit this bill.

After the girls' institutions were moved away from the Domain, the opportunity arose for the government to trial another type of use. The buildings were only empty for a few months before the Colonial Government launched yet another new venture, an Asylum for Idiots and Imbeciles.  Mental health care provision at the Newcastle Asylum would be more successful than the girls' institutions although it, too, was accidental in the sense that it was never intended that the Domain would provide mental health care for such a long period, in fact it was to be a temporary measure only.  Part 2 of this thesis *Australian Government Asylum Culture - 1871 to 1900*  discusses the haphazard beginnings of the Newcastle Asylum and how its managers worked with the site to create a strong culture of government care that has continued up to the present.

# PART 2   Australian Government Asylum Culture - 1871 to 1900

## Chapter 5:   A 'Moral' Culture of Asylum Care at the Newcastle Government Domain

The NSW government in the second half of the nineteenth century had significant problems providing adequate care for both children and adults in need,[1] and as discussed in the case of the girls' institutions, new regulations did not always translate into effective action. This would also be the case with the colony's asylums for those deemed to be psychiatrically ill or intellectually disabled. Part Two of this thesis focuses on the first three decades of the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots at the Newcastle Domain. This asylum differed from other colonial asylums because of the implementation of moral therapy as the guiding mode of caring for its inmates, and from British institutions as a public service administered by the colonial government rather than a charitable trust or private business.  Although public policy related to lunacy had been adopted in NSW in the 1860s, planning for the asylum at Newcastle was minimal.  It was an accidental asylum in that there had not been any grand plan for the site to become an asylum as its layout was determined and buildings were added to the site.  It opened hastily as an asylum with minimal preparatory work on the site as a political response to public concerns over the overcrowding in asylums in Sydney. Despite these origins, the institution emerged as the leading regional asylum in the colony and outlived all of its contemporaries.Part 2 of this thesis explores the circumstances that led to the establishment of the Newcastle Asylum and its capacity to implement moral therapy. The site is measured against ideas that Piddock puts forward as the 'ideal' for an asylum.[2]  In her work, Piddock has explored how well purpose-built asylums based around a model developed by psychiatrist and co-founder of the British Medical Association John Conolly in Great Britain functioned in Australian conditions as a means of testing how far the ideal model spread.[3]   He wrote extensively on the construction of asylums and treatment and care of the insane in Britain in the 1840s and 1850s.[4]  Piddock's model catalogues features including the layout of buildings (determining light and ventilation), the ability to house patients of different types separately, and the presence of school rooms, workshops and chapels.[5] Piddock establishes that many of the purpose-built asylums in Australia were unsuited to local conditions, and diverged significantly from what was then seen as the ideal for caring for the insane in Britain.  The Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots was not including her study but it had a very good fit with the ideal characteristics she identified. This speaks to both differences between mental health care in NSW and in other Australian colonies and the relative success of the Newcastle institution.

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[1] Noel Butlin, *Forming a Colonial Economy* (Australia: Press Syndicate University of Cambridge 1994), 57.

[2] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own,* 126-133.

[3] Andrew Scull, *Social Order/Mental Disorder: Anglo-American Psychiatry in Historical Perspective* (London: Routledge), Chap 17.

[4] John Conolly, *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane* (London: John Churchill, 1847).

[5] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own,* 63- 64.

Garton defines three crucial issues relating to the lunacy system in the formative years of the nineteenth century in NSW, the form this system took and how it evolved.[6]  Firstly, an influential approach was moral reform which was a distinct system of mental health care that differed from the medical approach to treating insanity. Secondly, Garton states that the *1868 Lunacy Amendment Act* was a turning point enabling non-gaol like institutions to be established, such as Reception Houses. Thirdly, it was not until numerous inquiries and reports were undertaken that political leaders began to argue for reform and for a more formal approach to the proper management of lunatic asylums, especially after Frederic Norton Manning (1839-1903) became Inspector General for the Insane in 1876. Imperative in this process of improving mental health services was the capable leadership of Manning who had experience and knowledge about insane care from his extensive research carried out worldwide.   Thus Garton demonstrates that it was during the 1860s that authorities were committed to a more sophisticated mental health system of which the Newcastle Asylum was a significant part. It was the first asylum in NSW under the modern mental health regulations and therefore represented a break away from the colonial asylums that had origins with convict care.

Part 2 of this thesis explores the circumstances that led to the establishment of the Newcastle Asylum and its capacity to implement moral therapy. It is tested against ideas that Piddock puts forward as the 'ideal' for an asylum.[7]  In her work, Piddock has explored how well purpose-built asylums based around a model developed in Great Britain functioned in Australian conditions as a means of testing how far the ideal model spread from Britain. The model Piddock has devised considers the asylum model developed by psychiatrist and co-founder of the British Medical Association John Conolly.[8]   He wrote extensively on the construction of asylums and treatment and care of the insane in Britain in the 1840s and 1850s.[9]  Piddock's model catalogues features including the layout of buildings (determining light and ventilation), the ability to house patients of different types separately, and the presence of school rooms, workshops and chapels.[10] Piddock establishes that many of the purpose-built asylums in Australia were unsuited to local conditions, and diverged significantly from what was then seen as the ideal for caring for the insane in Britain.  The Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots was not included her study but it had a very good fit with the ideal characteristics she identified. This speaks to both differences between mental health care in NSW and in other Australian colonies and the relative success of the Newcastle institution.

Garton defines three crucial issues relating to the lunacy system in the formative years of the nineteenth century in NSW, the form this system took and how it evolved.[11]  Firstly, an influential approach was moral reform which was a distinct system of mental health care that differed from the medical approach to treating insanity. Secondly, Garton states that the *1868 Lunacy Amendment Act* was a turning point enabling non-gaol like institutions to be established, such as Reception Houses. Thirdly, it was not until numerous inquiries and reports

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[6] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 20-21.

[7] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own,* 126-133.

[8] Andrew Scull, *Social Order/Mental Disorder: Anglo-American Psychiatry in Historical Perspective* (London: Routledge), Chap 17.

[9] John Conolly, *The Construction and Government of Lunatic Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane* (London: John Churchill, 1847).

[10] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own,* 63- 64.

[11] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 20-21.

were undertaken that political leaders began to argue for reform and for a more formal approach to the proper management of lunatic asylums, especially after Frederic Norton Manning (1839-1903) became Inspector General for the Insane in 1876. It took several years for mental health care to be acknowledged in a broad community sense, as well as investigations and regulations made that mental health care began to be properly addressed.  Imperative in this process of improving mental health services was the capable leadership of Manning who had experience and knowledge about insane care from his extensive research carried out worldwide.  Thus Garton demonstrates that it was during the 1860s that authorities were committed to a more sophisticated mental health system of which the Newcastle Asylum was a significant part. It was the first asylum in NSW under the modern mental health regulations and therefore represented a break away from the colonial asylums that had origins with convict care.

Garton's recent reassessment of the history of mental health asylums in NSW suggests that these institutions gained an undeservedly negative reputation during the twentieth century.  He argues that some asylums did provide genuinely therapeutic conditions for inmates in the nineteenth century and even that they could provide a model for future mental health care.[12] This chapter goes some way to answering Garton's call for further studies of particular asylums to develop an understanding of their contributions and find positive stories about them. The Newcastle Asylum was very much a product of the trends he identified and this close study looks at its first three decades of early mental health system.

For the present study, a key aspect of the 1868 act was its granting to the colonial government the ability to establish institutions for those with intellectual disabilities, then labelled 'imbecile and idiots', as well as the mentally ill.  By 1871, the political and social environment in NSW was such that a regional asylum where moral therapy could be implemented under the guidance of non-medical personnel was possible. Reforms relating to moral therapy were implemented in many of the newer Sydney asylums in the 1880s; however few studies have been undertaken to explore how effective this therapy was at these major government institutions.[13]  The Newcastle Domain was the first site chosen for this distinctive new system of asylum care, nominally designed for idiots and imbeciles.

Moral therapy was first made popular in England in the late eighteenth century by William Battie (1703-1776) who believed in humane forms of treatment that used airy open spaces[14] and encouraged opportunities for exercise and recreation.[15] Moral therapy was described by Philippe Pinel (1745-1826) in *Treatise on Insanity* in 1806[16] and William Tuke (1732-1822) in *Description of the Retreat* in 1813.[17]  It was a method for treating the insane commonly used in the first few decades of the nineteenth century in America, Europe and England.[18]  The concept of the retreat originated with the Quakers using a curative environment to treat the whole individual; both

[12] Garton, *Seeking Refuge*.
[13] Garton, *Seeking Refuge*, 33.
[14] K Doerner, *Madmen and the Bourgeoisie: A Social History of Insanity and Psychiatry* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), 43.
[15] Edward Wardley, "Some Phases of the Insanity and Its Treatment." In *Read at a meeting of the Philosophical and Literary Society of Parramatta, together with A Brief notice of some of the most eminent statesmen of the present century* (edited by Cumberland Times John Ferguson, Sydney, 1871).
[16] Phillippe Pine, *Treatise on Insanity* (London: W Todd for Cadell and Davies, 1806).
[17] Samuel Tuke, *Description of the Retreat* (London: Process Press, 1813).
[18] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own,* 38.

their physical and mental health.[19]  Within moral therapy the focus of care was on managing behaviours associated with insanity rather than seeking a cure. Recovery was seen as taking some time and thus needed long term interventions. Piddock defines moral therapy as having four components: supervision, classification, activity and employment, and exercise.[20]  This philosophy differed significantly from the medical model of care that supported short term and quick fix treatments. Moral therapy also differed from the isolative models of care that often led to inhumane and cruel treatments being used.[21] These inhumane methods were implemented indoors and out of view of the public, hidden behind ornate asylum walls which projected an air of civility and care.  In contrast, moral therapy offered a transparency where inmates could be seen working in the gardens and involved in activities that included general maintenance and farming. It was a model of care that was open for the community to see.

### An Overview of Asylum Government Care in NSW

Mental health care was needed when the colony was first settled. Arthur Phillip (1738-1814), governor of NSW from 1788-1792, identified the burden which would fall to the government because of transportation policies.  Reviewing arrivals of the Second Fleet, he raised concerns about the long term impact on the colony's ability to become self-sufficient because of the selection process.

> After a careful examination of the convicts , I find upwards of one hundred who must ever be a burden to the settlement, not being able to do any kind of labour from old age and chronical diseases of long standing...amongst the males, two are perfect idiots ...The sending out of the disordered and helpless, clears the gaols and may ease the parishes from which they are sent, but, sir, it is obvious that this settlement, instead of being a Colony which is to support itself, will, if the practice is continued, remain for years a burden to the Mother Country...Of the 930 males that were sent out by the last ships, 261 died on board, and 50 have died since landing..., the number of sick this day in 450 and many who are not reckoned as sick, have barely the strength to attend to themselves.[22]

It was clear that some of the convicts who were transported were disabled and this would result in the need for a high level of care for them once they reached NSW. The culture of government care which developed in NSW from the eighteenth century was based on the need for the state to take responsibility for these individuals.  What was lacking was a grand plan for how this would proceed in a remote, newly established colony in the absence of private sources of charitable and philanthropic support.

The NSW mental health system during the first half of the nineteenth century was chaotic with no specialist group taking responsibility for it or working within it. Mental health care was not part of the administration of the Colonial Medical Service provided by the British government for seventy years after colonisation.[23]  Instead, the care of the insane fell outside of this medical model and was absorbed into the punitive system of convict

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[19] Andrew Scull, "The Insanity of Place," *History of Psychiatry* Vol. 15, no. no.4 (2004): 9.
[20] Susan Piddock, "Convicts and the Free: Nineteenth Century Lunatic Asylums in South Australia and Tasmania (1830-1883)," *Australasian Historical Archaeology,* 19 (2001).
[21] Lord Chancellor, "Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor", in *Of the Treatment of Mania*, ed. Shaw & Sons (London: Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1847), 182.
[22] Governor Arthur Phillip, "Letter to Lord William Grenville," in *CO 201/1* (Kew, United Kingdom: UK Archives, 1790 July).
[23] Cummins, *A History of Medical*, 33.

management and the benevolent societies.  It was not until the 1850s that the medical significance of treating the insane was fully realised.[24] In the case of Tasmania, and likely also in the other former penal colonies, it was not until the decline in the convict population well after transportation had ceased and convicts began to age that the system of care for the insane was reviewed.[25]  The penal system shaped the culture of care for the insane in Australia and this precluded the use of moral care. Legislation institutionalised the link between the justice system and mental health care.  From 1828, the Australian Courts Act ensured that English statutory law with regard to lunacy would be applied in NSW.[26]  Specific colonial legislation was passed in the form of the *Dangerous Lunatics Act* in 1843, five years after similar legislation had been adopted in Britain.[27] This act applied to persons with a 'derangement of mind' who were considered dangerous and had the potential of causing harm to others.[28]  It also applied to those who were suicidal.  The clear intent of the act was to preserve law and order rather than to assist the mentally ill.  Garton points out that colonial legislation was primarily concerned with dangerousness and not mental illness; however it did specify that a medical certificate was necessary in gaining a lunacy order.[29] Authorities in NSW also used British legislation adopted in 1845 relating to 'lunaticks' and 'ideots' (the mentally ill and intellectually disabled)[30] to admit people to colonial asylums through the justice system or by the Governor's authority.

Circumstances in the colony were more complicated than in Britain.  While the social isolation of the largely convict population was likely to have exacerbated mental illnesses,  the lack of friends or family who were able to act as reliable historians in providing information on a person's mental condition also made assessment and diagnosis more difficult. Although authorities in NSW, as in Britain, could make an official declaration that someone was insane,[31] there was often no accountability in NSW because of the lack of trained personnel in the area of mental health care.  Magistrates could admit an individual to an asylum relatively unchecked.[32] In contrast with Britain where a culture of care had produced informal specialists in mental illness, no one in NSW had any expertise in the diagnosis of mental illness.  The ad hoc basis for admissions meant that people could be admitted inappropriately.[33] The lack of familial support in NSW also meant that inmates were not easily discharged to relieve crowding in the asylum system.[34] There was simply no family or home to go to. This lack of familial support and guidance from those with expertise greatly affected the experience of people entering asylums as will be shown in the case of the Newcastle Asylum.

The first institution for the insane in the colony was at Castle Hill.  It opened in 1811, and public buildings and the town gaol were allotted to care for the insane, however was a small institution that soon outgrow its purpose.

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[24] Cummins, *A History of Medical,* 33.

[25] Charles Fox, "Exploring 'Amentia' in the Tasmanian Convict System, 1824-1890," *Tasmanian Historical Studies* vol.13, (2008): 127-52.

[26] Phillip Powell, *The Origins and Development of the Protective Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of New South Wales* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 2004), 12.

[27] Mark Finnane, "Dangerous Lunatic to Human Rights", in *'Madness' in Australia: Histories, Heritage and the Asylum*, ed. MacKinnon Dolly and Colborne Catharine (Australia: Queensland Press in association with the API Network & Curtin University of Technology, 2003), 26.

[28] Peter Shea *Defining Madness (*Sydney: Hawkins Press, 1999), 27.

[29] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 19.

[30] Shea, *Defining Madness*, 22.

[31] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 17.

[32] New South Wales Government, "Mental Health Act 2007", in *No.8*, ed. (www.legislation.nsw.gov: New South Wales Legislation, 2007).

[33]  Wardley, "Some Phases", 19.

[34]  Wardley, "Some Phases", 19.

Colonial authorities decided on the former Liverpool Court House as the new government asylum and the one at Castle Hill was closed and the Liverpool asylum followed in 1825.[35] Like some later asylums, the Castle Hill asylum was not modelled on humane care or moral therapy, but on a penal culture of disciplinary care.[36] It was opened to relieve the colony's gaols of the insane.[37] The term 'dangerous lunatic' as it developed in Britain was associated with the incarceration of a person because of the need to protect the community. However in NSW the opposite was the case. In a penal colony, the insane convict needed protecting from the general convict population who might ridicule or physically harm the mentally ill leading them to act dangerously and worsening their condition. Constructing asylums to house the colony's insane was an unexpected cost to authorities which was kept to the minimum. Early lunatic asylums were disorganised and poorly managed under the Department of Lunacy.[38] The colonial framework of care of the insane is based on incarceration was not conducive to proper therapy and the needs of the insane were mostly unmet during the 1830s and 1840s, even as large scale free immigration to the colony began to change its demographics. There was an increase in assisted migrants and convicts arriving in the colony during the 1830s and generally was a time of growing poverty.[39] The increase in the insane population during the 1830s prompted the Lunacy Department to open the Tarban Creek Lunatic Asylum in 1838. Male inmates were transferred from the Liverpool and female inmates from the female factory at Parramatta were the first of the insane inmates transferred to Tarban Creek asylum.[40] Designed by the colonial architect Mortimer Lewis (1796-1879), this was the first purpose built asylum in NSW and by 1844 was accommodating 148 inmates.[41] The Tarban Creek asylum contained four rectangular buildings with small cells and rooms for staff, the main buildings were separated by square shaped airing grounds and gardens. Governor Burke had been contacted by James Backhouse a Quaker who was advocating for the proper construction of an asylum based on Samuel Tukes' ideas in Britain.[42] The design of the Tarban Creek asylum brought to the institution an orderly and regimental form of care where male and female patients were kept in separate parts of the asylum. It allowed for the closure of the earlier institution at Liverpool. With other public assets, it passed from the Imperial to the colonial government ownership under the Constitution Act of 1842. The Tarban Creek Asylum received both non-convict and convict inmates[43] and despite good intent and planning to have an adequate lunatic asylum it developed a poor reputation for care of its inmates. The following describes an inquiry that took place in the 1830s that saw the medical profession given considerable control in managing the inane in NSW. The outcome did not support moral therapy, a therapy later supported at the Newcastle asylum in the 1870s.

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[35] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 18. Cummins, *A History of Medical*, 35.
[36] G A Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", ed. visited in 1882-85 by G.A Tucker Introduction to the Reports on the Lunatic Asylums of various countries (Sydney: The Government of New South Wales, 1887), 637." ...originally constructed as prisons or other non-lunacy purposes."
[37] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 25.
[38] Cummins, *A History of Medical*.
[39] Dickey, *No Charity There*, 14.
[40] Bostock, "The Dawn of Australian", 44-45.
[41] Evander Luther, ed. *Gladesville Mental Hospital* (Beau Bassin: ACU Publishing, 2013).
[42] James Kerr. *Out of Sight, Out of Mind* (S.H Ervin Gallery, National Trust of Australia (NSW),1988): 35.
[43] Dickey, *No Charity There*, 5.

**Moral Therapy or Medical treatment - Inquiry into the Lunatic Asylum Tarban Creek**

Although moral therapy had been common in England and Europe in the early nineteenth century it fell out of favour by mid-century.[44] The concepts of the retreat and moral therapy were in circulation when asylums were being established in NSW, but they were not implemented in the first half of the nineteenth century.

From the first establishment of such institutions in NSW, they had been run by people without medical training. Physicians visited to deal with injuries and illness, but day to day care for the overall well-being of inmates, including their social and recreational needs, was conducted by non-medical staff. Moral therapy was not implemented at this time, instead culture of incarceration continued. They institutions met the basic physical needs of the inmates and kept them largely isolated and inactive. However in the 1840s the medical profession was beginning to understand the association between physical illness and the mind. From then on doctors started specialising in diseases of the brain and to assert their right to intervene in the asylum care with medical treatments in place of the minimal physical maintenance of the past.

The *Inquiry into the Lunatic Asylum* [at] *Tarban Creek* in 1846 took evidence about models of care for the insane which included local discussions about how moral therapy could be implemented in the asylums of NSW and the respective contributions to be made by medical and non-medical personnel. At the centre of the inquiry was Joseph Digby who was the Lunacy Administrator in NSW as well as manager at Tarban Creek asylum. He came to Australia in 1837 and began employment at Tarban Creek Asylum in 1839. Digby was an advocate of both medicine and moral therapy. He believed a medical person should have responsibility for "...the proper discharge of his medical duties"[45] but did not think that members of the medical profession should be in charge of treatment and care of the insane unless they had had experience and expertise in insane care . He preferred non-medical personnel as asylum managers.

Current research suggests that Digby's emphasis on the role of non-medical personnel was reflected in the conduct of Australia's lunatic asylums. Lee-Ann Monk has written extensively about expert knowledge, training and experience of asylum workers in Australia between the years 1848 and 1886.[46] Much of her work concentrates on the Colony of Victoria where she found that there was quite a variety of roles which differed greatly from one another of those working in asylums. She examines specifically how the role of the attendant in asylums and the often arduous relationship between attendants, inmates and those in authority and the impacted on the way that the institutions functioned. Monk concludes that attendant work (although perceived as low status) was fundamentally the 'backbone' of the asylum workplace. Attendants were essential and provided the rationale for moral therapy because they implemented treatments and therapies that were aligned with moral therapy rather than medical regimes[47] Asylum managers who were non-medical managers were better able to

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[44] David Barlow and Vincent Durand, *Abnormal Psychology: An Integrative Approach* (Belmont, CA.: Wadsworth Cenage Learning, 2009), 15.

[45] Graeme Curry, "The Select Committee of the Lunatic Asylum Tarban Creek 1846" (University of Sydney, 1989), 29.

[46] Monk, *Attending Madness.*

[47] Monk, *Attending Madness*, 12.

direct the attendants giving them greater responsibility. Asylum managers from the medical profession were less inclined to encourage the use of moral therapy.

Non-medical approaches sought to organise the asylum in a way that classified inmates. What contributed to the difficulties in defining the proper role of asylum manager was that the insane class was also difficult to properly define in the first half of the nineteenth century in NSW.[48] Classification had begun in England as an outcome of the Poor Laws which had identified the unemployable insane as a distinctive group.[49] In NSW, asylum inmates were assumed to be criminally insane and in need of incarceration for the good of society. The "harmless" insane were not of great concern to the authorities, because they didn't pose a threat to law and order.

Based on his English experience, Digby recommended to the enquiry a segregation policy including the classification of inmates into distinct behavioural groups. These were the quiet, convalescent, idiotic and refractors.[50] While the separation of these groups was considered favourably, the scale and overcrowding of the Tarban Creek asylum prevented its implementation.[51] A related issue was a debate over asylum space and the restrictions it placed on the forms of therapy which could be implemented. A chronic lack of space was argued by the medical profession to render asylums hospital-like justifying the need for the medical profession's management of them, as well as the use of medical treatments. The lack of open space in asylums would need to be addressed before moral therapy could be implemented.[52] With governments unwilling to fund asylums to a level which would allow for this and a system struggling to cope with rising admissions, the medical profession's methods of care were favoured. If implemented, Digby's ideas about moral therapy would have constituted a significant move away from the culture of incarcerated care that was common in the colony. Instead, admissions to asylums offering the same forms of sub-standard care continued to increase.

Digby was eventually dismissed as manager of the Tarban Creek Asylum because his methods were in conflict with the medical paradigm of the 1840s and his way things were done at that time. He was replaced by Dr Francis Campbell who was appointed the first Medical Superintendent at the Tarban Creek Asylum in 1847 after the Inquiry. He was in fierce opposition to Digby's moral therapy at the inquiry so perhaps the appointment was his reward.[53] Campbell became very influential in lunacy care and it was his idea to use the former military barracks site at Newcastle as an asylum in 1871.

By concluding that a medically trained person was best suited to manage lunatic asylums, the Tarban Creek inquiry gave support to an increasing role for the medical profession in lunacy care. However there were recommendations from the inquiry that referred to moral therapy and an ongoing role for non-medical personnel. For example, it was recommended that an asylum manager have "tact"and the ability to "... lead the minds of the

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[48] Monk, *Attending Madness*, 12.
[49] Lynne Hollen Lees, *The Solidarities of Strangers: the English Poor Laws and the People 1700- 1948* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1998), 191.
[50] Curry, "The Select Committee", 66.
[51] Curry, "The Select Committee", 71.
[52] Scull, "The Insanity of Place", 9.
[53] Curry, "The Select Committee", 18 & 32. New South Wales Government, "New South Wales Government Gazette" (1847, November 23).

inmate from their diseased trains of thought to more healthy ones."[54] There was a particular emphasis on behavioural therapy in treating the insane and need for asylum manager to show warmth and compassion. Ideally, the asylum Superintendent was to be a 'special type' of medical man who not only carried out medical duties, but communicated effectively with inmates (as non-medical personnel had done). These special qualities would later become part of psychiatry. The inquiry took various components of moral therapy and applied these to medical practice, so as to develop a standard of care to treat the insane in NSW. Although this position was articulated, it was not implemented and the standard of lunacy care and asylums remained very poor in the 1840s and 1850s. Some of the standard mental health treatments used in asylums in NSW during the mid-1800s included blistering, purging and leeching.[55] Insane inmates were confined in crowded gaol like conditions in Sydney[56] and management systems were basically very poor. It is unlikely that there was space for inmates to carry out exercise and activity, and most likely remained idle. The second half of the nineteenth century saw new drugs such as potassium bromide and chloral hydrate used. Overall the *Inquiry into the Lunatic Asylum Tarban Creek* in 1846 represents the tensions that existed at that time in NSW between the roles of medical and non-medical personnel, and the contest between moral and medical therapies. The poor state of the asylums and the way that the mental health system had evolved from institutions designed to deal with convicts did not make conditions conducive to using moral therapy. Ideas began to change about care in the second half of the nineteenth century when the inhabitants of the colony were looked upon perhaps as more deserving. Although the medical profession was primarily interested in the physiology of insanity and use of medical intervention, moral therapy was not dismissed altogether.

In Australia during the 1850s and 1860s it was accepted among 'alienists' that insanity was a disease of the brain requiring drug treatment. This changed when ideas about idiot and imbecile care began to be discussed and reviewed in the1860s and 1870s leading to support amongst the medical profession for moral therapy. As Coleborne points out moral therapy began creeping into asylum practices, impacting on social and cultural life and discourses of treatment that included work therapy and religious services.[57] By the 1860s some in the medical profession had reflected on past colonial asylum practice and become advocates of moral therapy. Wardley was a strong advocate for moral therapy in the 1860s being aware of the poor treatment inmates had received in NSW during the early nineteenth century. He believed that "restraint was a disgrace of our forefathers" and free air treatment a more appropriate method of treating inmates.[58] The medical profession was beginning to advocate for moral treatment at this time. Wardley made the same type of arguments and was very reminiscent of Digby's argument supporting moral therapy and non-medical personnel.

An important element in driving this shift in attitudes was new ideas about the care of the intellectually disabled. In *Lunacy in Many Lands* Tucker had argued that moral therapy was more important than medical treatment in asylums for

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[54] Curry, "The Select Committee", 36.
[55] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 39.
[56] Catharine Coleborne, "Passage to the Asylum : the role of police in committals of the insane in Victoria, Australia 1848-1900". In *The confinement of the insane: International Perspectives 1800-1965*. Editors Roy Porter and David Wright.
[57] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 22.
[58] Wardley, "Some Phases".

the imbecile and idiots.[59] Dr Cleland, a Resident Medical Officer at the Parkside Lunatic Asylum in South Australia, published a paper in the *Medical Journal of Australia* on the subject. [60] He argued at the Intercolonial Australian Medical Congress in 1881 that doctors treating the insane should have particular qualities: "benevolence, great patience, self-command, and freedom from prejudice." Cleland directed his colleagues away from the safety of only using medical treatments and encouraged them to use their experience and conversational skills to manage the insane. He advocated outdoor physical exercise for patients in "culture maraichere" or market gardening.  Not only would this provide therapy and fresh fruit and vegetables for those being treated, but it could also help to make asylums economically viable.  He tried to professionalise medical practice in the area of mental health care by highlighting the mental health problems brought on by Australia's "...climatic influences and continuous out-of-door life...".[61] Unfortunately for Cleland, his colleagues thought his ideas were neither practical nor realistic and they did not support his views.

The application of these ideas about moral therapy in NSW was not just theoretical.  This type of care had been implemented in the Newcastle Asylum since its founding in 1871 and been shown to be both practical and realistic.  The application of moral therapy at the Newcastle Asylum grew out of an ongoing tension between medical and non-medical personnel attending to the needs of inmates in colonial asylums.

Moral therapy would be extensively used at Newcastle in the 1870s and also at the New Norfolk asylum in Tasmania in 1883 where it was incorporated into work, recreation, restraint and discipline.[62]  Its use at the New Norfolk asylum presented inmates with things to do, such as entertainment, dances, picnics, walks, music, visiting performers, church services, and so on.[63]  Moral therapy was unlikely to have been extended to inmates with 'amentia' at New Norfolk asylum in the same way that it would be provided to similar inmates at Newcastle because a culture of incarceration remained there.  At the Newcastle Asylum this more deserving or caring model was reflected in a population not directly associated with the convict class.  Unflattering comparisons with the more modern asylums in the Colony of Victoria prompted the opening of yet again a new asylum in NSW. This was at the Parramatta asylum in the buildings that had been the former Female Factory in 1848.  This institution was renamed Gladesville Hospital, continuing to function under that name until the 1990s. The Newcastle Asylum was the next addition to the stock of mental health care institutions in NSW in 1871, followed by the Callan Park Hospital for the Insane in 1878, which ibecame the Rozelle Hospital in 1994.

The gold rushes in the 1850s had a significant impact on the social lives of individuals and families, as well as on the already struggling mental health system as colonial populations greatly increased.  By the 1860s the condition of asylums was very poor and overcrowding unmanageable. There was a demand for admission and it was feared that financial resources would be exhausted.[64] This was a real problem and people spoke or wrote at length and in detail about mental health issues, expediting mental health reform and policy making and prompting more asylums to be built. It took until the 1870s for real change to take place that saw care much more effectively implemented. Attitudes and ideas about managing the insane and models of care were debated

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[59] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 13.
[60] Cleland, "Australian Lunatic Asylums- Remarks on Their Economic Management in the Future," *Medical Journal of Australasia,* (1881)
[61] Wardley, "Some Phases", 47.
[62] Fox, "Exploring 'Amentia".
[63] Fox, "Exploring 'Amentia".
[64] Wardley, "Some Phases", 36.

in many parts of the world during the mid-nineteenth century, however in Australia these discussions were deferred because of the preoccupation with convicts. [65] Although there was no transportation to NSW after the 1840s, effects of transportation lasted for decades.  However the impact of immigration caused asylum admissions to continue to increase and this triggered inquiries and a series of reports.[66] The *Report into Lunacy* by Frederic Norton Manning in 1868 was instrumental in finally bringing about improvements and change in asylum care.[67] Manning was born in England and educated at St George's Hospital, London and St Andrew's University in Scotland. Two years after he arrived in NSW and had taken up a post as surgeon in the Royal Navy, his abilities came to the attention of Premier Sir Henry Parkes who offered him the position of Medical Superintendent of Tarban Creek Lunatic Asylum in 1867.  He was immediately commissioned by the colonial government to undertake a comparative study of asylums in New Zealand, Britain, Europe and the United States. After more than a year overseas, Manning produced a *Report into Lunacy*, described in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* as "undoubtedly one of the most comprehensive, complete and authoritative public documents that has appeared on the subject of Insanity and Hospitals for the Insane."[68]  This report offered a direction for lunacy management, administration and implementation along with recommendations that were presented to the Colonial Secretary in 1868. The *Lunacy Act 1878* incorporated many of Manning's recommendations including segregation, classification and separate institutions, or separated sections within institutions, for acute and chronic inmates, idiots and the criminally insane. He also supported decentralising the asylum system to outer suburban areas but emphasised in his report the importance of access for friends and family to visit their loved one.[69]  He argued for the importance of asylums being exposed to a southerly breeze, and as central as possible to townships for easy access by railway, with opportunities for recreation, amusement, exhibitions and concerts.

Several of Manning's recommendations can be seen to have directly influenced the form of the Newcastle asylum.  These included both segregation and separation of classes of the insane and their placement in regional locations. Chronic and incurable inmates and many needing long term care were admitted to Newcastle in 1871 when it opened.  In terms of the specific location in Newcastle, there is no known connection between Manning and the Hunter, but Dr Francis Campbell, from 1848 the first Medical Superintendent at Tarban Creek Asylum, and an advocate of up country asylums, had lived at Gresford and East Maitland in the Hunter Valley from 1840 to 1845.[70] There had been some deliberation and a rationale behind siting an asylum in the Hunter region, however the decision to use the NDG came about principally because of its availability. Another report on lunacy commissioned by the NSW authorities was *Lunacy in Many Lands* by Dr G.A.Tucker, which was published ten years after Manning's report in 1887. Tucker took leave as proprietor of the Bay View Lunatic Asylum situated near the Cook's River, Tempe in 1878 to undertake this study at the request of the

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[65] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands". Frederic Norton Manning, "Report into Lunacy" (Sydney: Mitchell Library, 1868).

[66] Butlin, *Forming a Colonial Economy*, 106.

[67] Manning, "Report into Lunacy".

[68] MD Review-Report on Asylums by Frederic Norton Manning, "New South Wales," *American Journal of Insanity* 26, no. 2 (1869): 229.

[69] Powell, *The Origins and Development*, 16.

[70] Australian Medical Pioneers. A Barwon Health Project Initiated by the Geelong Hospital Library. Accessed 8 March 2013.http://www.medicalpioneers.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi?detail=1&id=2118

government.[71] He visited over four hundred public and private asylums throughout the world between the years 1882 and 1885. Based on his observations, Tucker called for recreation, occupation, amusement and general good care of the inmates, emphasising the importance of the physical environment including yards and airing courts.[72] He specifically noted the older asylums overseas were far too large and ornate, saying that asylums "ought not to be enormously expensive... [with] needless display of architecture".[73] Tucker was impressed by his visit to the Richmond Asylum in Dublin where inmates were taught a variety of vocations and general literacy.[74] By the time Tucker undertook his review the Newcastle Asylum was well established, his recommendations to incorporate rehabilitative care was easily applicable. His was a rehabilitative model of care which was then unknown in NSW; except for the work of Frederick Cane the Superintendent at Newcastle between 1871 and 1889, which is described further in this chapter. There was a wider acceptance of alternate treatments for lunacy in England and the philanthropic culture that existed there supported asylum care. These occupational and recreational features were seen as important and incorporated into both Manning and Tucker's reviews of lunatic asylums.

These commissioned reports were comprehensive and important attempts to improve asylums in NSW. The physicians commissioned to write these reports took their responsibilities seriously and selected elements of the practices they observed which they believed should be adopted in the colony.[75] As Coleborne suggests these ideas were welcomed by British-trained colonial physicians.[76] Sharing of knowledge between superintendents and communication with colleagues overseas about new methods was common.[77]

This period was also marked by the production of local studies of insanity. Dr Edward Wardley's paper *Some Phases of the Insanity and its Treatment* (1871) outlined the causes of insanity in NSW, including environmental effects. Wardley was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London and began as an assistant medical officer at Tarban Creek Asylum in 1861,[78] becoming its Medical Superintendent in 1867.[79] He identified the crisis in mental health care in the colony and was scathing about past practices while advocating for non-restraint and moral therapy.[80] Wardley supported the idea of asylums being established near Sydney. However he acknowledged that funding costly 'palaces' for the insane was unlikely.[81] Instead he suggested postponing the building of a new asylum in Sydney and the establishment of an 'upcountry' asylum at Maitland, Bathurst or Goulburn as a cheaper option. In the end, the government endorsed a cheaper option still, the reuse of the recently vacated girls' institution at Newcastle

This decision was made very quickly, but it was in keeping with expert advice. The Newcastle site conformed to Campbell and Wardley's ideas of up-country asylums. Manning did not mention Newcastle as a

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[71] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 1.
[72] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 7 & 26.
[73] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 4.
[74] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 14.
[75] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 32.
[76] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 27.
[77] Janet Miron, *Prisons, Asylums and the Public: Institutional Visiting in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: Angus & Robertson, 2011), 27.
[78] Edward Wardley, "Letter to the Editor", *Empire*, 2 May 1861.
[79] "Local News," *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)June 4,, 1867.
[80] Wardley, "Some Phases".
[81] Wardley, "Some Phases", 36.

potential site in his paper published in the same year as the asylum opened.[82]  There was not the sense that an asylum outside Sydney might serve the regional population because as Manning described almost twenty years after it first opened that it was established only as a temporary expedient.[83] The pressure to relieve overcrowding in Sydney's asylums was intense and opening a new institution in Newcastle was the 'first step' in achieving this outcome.[84] Existing buildings were made to serve new inmates rather than build expensive new asylums. The Newcastle Asylum was a response to social problems in the colony which were an unwelcome legacy of convictism, but it deployed the infrastructure that was built up during this same period.   In 1878, only the second purpose-built asylum in the colony opened at Callan Park. Cost in this case was the primary consideration. As the Newcastle Asylum became more established it became part of a network of government asylums. Its role was as a specialist institution serving the needs of imbecile and idiot inmates within the mental health care system in NSW.  Despite the initial expectation that the Newcastle asylum would be a short term expedient, this accidental asylum became a permanent fixture in the city.

As a specialist institution, Newcastle Asylum is representative of the break away from the old system of lunacy care which gradually began to change for the better in the colony during the 1880s and 1890s.  One aspect of this was that there was an improvement in mental health training.  Manning was instrumental in advocating for education in psychological medicine and gave the first lecture in this field at Sydney University in 1886[85] He urged colleagues in the medical profession to do what was 'expedient or possible' in terms of improving mental health care, rather than what was 'right or best' and to be content  with the attainable good rather than with the unattainable better.[86] Psychological medicine was made a compulsory component of general medicine at universities in Sydney and Adelaide.  The specific training in this area contributed to a professionalising of the mental health system and the field of psychiatry.

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[82] Manning, "Report into Lunacy", 164.
[83] J. M. M., "New South Wales: Report for 1889 of the Inspector-General of the Insane. F. Norton Manning, M. D., Inspector-General," *American Journal of Insanity* 47, no. 2 (1890), 271.
[84] Wardley, "Some Phases" 36-38. "...upwards of twelve hundred lunatics in the two Government institutions...".
[85] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 40.
[86] Frederic Manning, "On Lunacy in the Australian Colonies", *Australasian Medical Gazette* 8, no. 73 (1888-1889).

## Moral Therapy and Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots

The *Inquiry into the Lunatic Asylum Tarban Creek* in 1846 had aired a debate about two fundamental philosophies of care that were at odds with one another. This had caused tension between the medical and non-medical personnel working in the field of lunacy.[87] The issues relating to asylum management and the use of moral therapy addressed at the inquiry were taken up many years later at the Newcastle Asylum.[88] It is important to point out here that the institution at the NGD was named Lunatic Asylum for Imbeciles and Institution for Idiots from 1871 to 1878, and Newcastle Hospital for the Insane from 1879 until 1915.

There are several possible motives for the adoption of moral therapy as the predominant mode of care at the Newcastle Asylum. Firstly, as suggested, the Newcastle asylum inmates were a specific group who were seen as incurable and in need of long term care. They were considered deserving of compassionate care as they were a quieter class than the general insane classes. Secondly, this class was being managed by non-medical personnel in other parts of the world and there was a genuine belief in the effectiveness of early education and training for imbecile and idiots. This philosophy merged nicely with moral therapy and was also a favourable fit with the authorities' desire to open rural asylums to alleviate overcrowding in the general asylums. The use of moral therapy at the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots stood in contrast to the medical therapies being used in asylums elsewhere in the colony at this time.

Idiocy and imbecility began to be differentiated from insanity by the medical profession in the early nineteenth century. By the 1870s, classification of mental patients demarcated those considered 'curable' from the 'incurable,' with the insane usually seen as curable, whereas imbeciles and idiots were incurable. Most of the institutions for idiots and imbeciles in the first half of the nineteenth century had a focus on education.[89] Institutional care for idiots and imbeciles in England and Europe was usually referred to as school, training school, home, institute or institution. The treatment of these 'incurables' was seen as well suited to moral therapy because of the training and education focus.

Kanner describes how the stimulus of imbecile and idiot institutions in America came from medical personnel, whereas in England and European countries it came more frequently from non-medical personnel.[90] This latter position would also be the case in Australia, where there was little interest from the medical profession to become managers of asylums associated with imbecile and idiots. This was the case at Newcastle whereby a non-medical person was appointed manager because the medical profession in the 1870s was more involved in the care of the insane. The incurables sent from asylums in Sydney were thought to have minimal prospects of recovery. This specialist institution for imbecile and idiots was the first of its type in Australia and provided the opportunity for non-medical personnel to use moral care; something Digby tried hard to bring to fruition in the earlier years of the colony. Table 5.1 illustrates the various management positions and status of managers at the institution at Newcastle.

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[87] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 11.
[88] Cummins C, *A History of Medical Administration*, 35.
[89] Leo Kanner, *A History of the Care and Study of the Mentally Retarded* (United States of America: Charles C Thomas, 1964), 45-67.
[90] Leo Kanner, *A History of the Care*, 62.

**Table 5.1** Managers at the Newcastle Asylum and successor institutions (1871- 2014)

| Year | Name | Role | Medical | Non-Medical |
|------|------|------|---------|-------------|
| 1871-72 | Mr Michael Prior | Superintendent | | Yes |
| 1872-89 | Mr Frederick Cane | Superintendent | | Yes |
| 1889-98 | Dr Williamson | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 1871-87 | Dr Harris | Visiting Medical Officer | Yes | |
| 1887 | Dr Mills | Visiting Medical Officer | Yes | |
| 1898-1923 | Dr RU Russell[91] | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 1923-27 | Dr J Bo stock[92] | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 1931-36 | Dr Grey Ewan[93] | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 1936-37 | Dr SJ Minogue | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 1937-40? | Dr D Frazer | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| | Dr Ross | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| | Dr Maurice | Medical Director | Yes | |
| 1954 | Dr Mary Kirkton | Superintendent | Yes | |
| | Dr Jim Wilson | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 1975-85 | Dr Brian Thwarts | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 1997-2005 | Prof Vaughan Carr | Director Hunter Mental Health | Yes | |
| 2012 | Prof.Sadanand Rajkumar | Medical Superintendent | Yes | |
| 2013 | Dr Martin Cohen | Area Director Mental Health | Yes | |

The first Superintendent of the asylum at Newcastle was Michael Prior in 1871. However his position was short lived because he left within a year to go to the Biloela Industrial Girls School to be a clerk and storekeeper.[94]  Prior reportedly had "...a thorough practical knowledge of his duties" and had experience working in asylums before coming to Newcastle, having spent fifteen years at the Gladesville Asylum.[95]  Prior's replacement, Frederick Cane, also had associations with the Biloela Industrial Girls School, where he too was a clerk before coming to Newcastle and as mentioned in the previous chapter had worked at the industrial girls' school at Newcastle, so likely to have known the site well.  The transfer of roles between Cane and Prior is interesting suggesting that a clerk at Biloela was the equivalent of the superintendent of the Newcastle Asylum. [96]  Cane was the Superintendent from 1872 to 1889 and was the main contributor to implementing moral therapy.

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[91] "Dr R U Russell Dead," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney) August 18,1942.
[92] "To-Day's News in Brief," *The Brisbane Courier* (Brisbane) December 23, 1927.
[93] "Funerals," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney)  June 10, 1922.
[94] "From our telegraphic correspondent," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)   April 30, 1872 & September 16,1871.
[95] "Newcastle," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) October 12,1871.
[96] "Local News," *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) June 4, 1867, 3.

Like Digby, Cane was a great proponent of non-medical personnel acting as managers of asylums and he dismissed ideas of a 'surgeon' or permanent medical officer being in charge of the Newcastle Asylum.[97]  During the period when non-medical personnel managed the Newcastle Asylum, Dr Harris, who had also attended to the health care needs of the Permanent Artillery Forces based at the Domain, and later the girlswas the visiting doctor attending to the physical ailments of the inmates.   He was the medical officer at the asylum, but not it's Superintendent, as this role was left to Cane.

Without the assumptions and approaches inculcated during medical training, Cane had to rely upon alternative forms of treatment.  He strove to establish a reciprocal relationship with the wider public and nurture a positive perception of government asylums. He was instrumental in the implementation of out-of-doors activities and events. This was something quite different for imbeciles and idiots.  As Fox points out, similar inmates at New Norfolk asylum in Tasmania were guarded and placed behind high walls and a locked gate.[98]  At Newcastle the inmates and the wider community gained positive experiences from moral therapy.[99]  At the heart of all this activity was Cane, who believed that work was conducive to health, happiness and mental restoration and that it was important to make every effort to increase the number of young inmates able to be employed.

Cane's innovative approach at Newcastle captured the public's attention, adding weight to the argument that medical training was not the only means to having a well-run asylum. Whilst Cane was Superintendent at Newcastle he provided residents with other opportunities to engage usefully and creatively in the company of others. He encouraged inmates to be involved with the planting and maintenance of the gardens.[100]

*The Brisbane Courier* published a letter describing the environment and culture of 'care' and 'attention' of the Newcastle Asylum in the 1870s.  The author described the landscaped gardens, sports and recreation, as well as social events there and the 'curative agents' including occupation, amusement and as much freedom for the inmates as required.  Credit is given to Cane as a non-medical superintendent who, like an ideal manager of a lunatic asylum was "...good and even tempered, full of kindness and forbearance...".[101]

The author also praised Cane for his good work and practices, suggesting that the older institutions in the colonies could borrow features from his efficient system and excellent management, thereby avoiding wasted expenditure on new asylums like that recently built at Kew in Victoria.  He recommended that authorities interview Cane personally to obtain information about how his asylum management practices could be implemented at other asylums.[102]

Another supporter of Cane's work was the Vagabond or John Stanley James (1843-1896) who regularly wrote for the *Argus* newspaper about lunatic asylums of the colonies.   He wrote that Australian asylums were 'closed' systems of care, believing that the asylum at Kew was a great mistake because it had been modelled on institutions from the old country instead of considering the Australian conditions. The Vagabond's observations of the Newcastle Asylum were favourable compared to his comments about other asylums in the colonies of NSW and Victoria. Cane was 'not a

[97] "The Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum," *The Brisbane Courier* (Brisbane) March 17,1877, 6.
[98] Fox, "Exploring 'Amentia".
[99] "Imbecile Hospital," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) January 22, 1890.
[100] "Hospital for the Insane," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) April 3,1886.
[101] "The Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum,"  *The Brisbane Courier (*Brisbane) March 17, 1877, 6.
[102] "The Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum," *The Brisbane Courier* (Brisbane) March 20,1877.

professional man' but his successes at the Newcastle Asylum were praised by the Vagabond.  He suggested that the Newcastle institution be held up as a model institution in the debate of the future of the Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum in Queensland.  New Australian asylums he suggested, should not be modelled on designs of the old English styled asylum, but be designed to suit the special Australian conditions and more humane and effective models of care.

Cane's successor, Dr Williamson also saw the special qualities of moral therapy and the benefits to the wider community of employing it in Newcastle.[103] He was appointed in 1889 and as the institution's first Medical Superintendent continued the tradition of moral therapy that had been used during the 1870s and 1880s.  Williamson was a compassionate man with an interest in the care of imbecile and idiot inmates and he strongly supported the government's commitment to care for this group with special needs.  He had previously worked at Parramatta asylum since 1884 and had helped to develop a comprehensive system of training for nurses and attendants by preparing lectures and examining trainee mental health nurses at Gladesville Hospital from 1889.[104]  This course in mental health nursing and elementary physiology of the brain was the first mental health nursing course in NSW.[105] Williamson was part of a new culture of medical and nursing training and this was reflected at Newcastle.

Williamson had firsthand knowledge of institutions for imbecile and idiots in Britain and was assistant medical officer at Parramatta asylum before coming to Newcastle.  Cane retired after 17 years in service and his successor was likely appointed because of pressure from authorities to have a medically trained superintendent.  It is unlikely that this appointment was associated with dissatisfaction with Cane's practice.   It is thought that Cane stayed on staff as a clerk, and used moral therapy in the 1890s including occupational and vocational strategies.  For visitors, the Newcastle Asylum was a stark contrast to "institutions of by-gone days, and promoted as a sight well worth seeing."[106]  They observed that the younger inmates would "...trot after him [Williamson] shaking his hand and showing unmistakable affection".  Dr Williamson did everything possible to relieve them of the feeling that they were prisoners and ensured his staff knew they were there to care for the inmates not just to guard them.  He credited the liberality of the government and the wise forethought and able administration of Dr Manning, Inspector-General of the Insane with ensuring that "the paths of these stricken people [were] to be in the most pleasant place possible."

Many of Williamson's medical colleagues who were working in the area of mental health used drug therapies at this time.  It was accepted that the imbecile and idiots classes required a special type of care. The special type of care encouraged outdoor activities and this was a significant shift from how care for the insane had been, and to some extent still existed at government asylums in Sydney. These outdoor activities took many forms, some of which extended beyond the walls of the Domain.  Drives in the asylum's 'spring cart' especially for those with mobility impairments went outside the asylum grounds to neighbouring reserves, and provided a sense of liveliness.  On Sundays, staff walked with inmates to the Lower Reserve adjacent to the asylum's main entrance whereby a fence had been erected to make it

[103] "Imbecile Hospital," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)January 22,1890.
[104] Donald, McDonald,. *Hospital for the Insane* Edited by John Pearn & Catherine O'Carrigan, Australia's Quest for Colonial Health : Some Influences on Early Health and Medicine in Australia. National Symposium on the History of Medicine and Health in Australia. (Brisbane: Department of Child Health, Royal Children's Hospital, 1983) 184. Medical courses saw fifth year students attend a minimum of twelve lectures in psychological medicine plus three weeks experience working in wards of a hospital for the insane.
[105] William Armstrong, "Lunacy Legislation in the Australian Colonies", *Intercolonial Medical Congress of Australasia*  (1881),894.
[106] "Imbecile Hospital," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate*  (Newcastle) January 22,1890.

safe.[107] Cane was responsible for the plantings of ornamental shrubs there and seats for the comfort of the public.[108]  The close proximity of this reserve made community outings possible and were a great social benefit for the inmates as they were able to mix with the wider community.  It was this normalisation of the inmate's lifestyle that helped the asylum progress to become increasingly accepted as a public place where visitors could go.

The asylum was a healing space that had well-tended gardens within and views outside over the Pacific Ocean. Esther Sternberg has written about therapeutic places in *Healing Spaces* and describes the physiological connection between the aesthetics of the natural world and a person's ability to heal and get better.[109] Manning had recommended that asylums be located close to other public amenities, ideally in a "...neighbourhood rich in natural beauties" where walks in gardens and public promenades could take place and this was achieved in Newcastle.[110] This was a common aspect of nineteenth century asylums, however not many asylums were built in cities in NSW. They were usually on the outskirts of main centres.  In contrast with other asylums, the Newcastle Asylum had had little planning and its location was another 'accidental' feature that contributed to the asylum and benefiting the inmates.[111]

## Conclusion

Moral therapy did not provide the cures expected as of the asylums in England. Instead moral therapy in Australia as shown at the Newcastle Asylum was about implementation of government care at smaller institutions. Whereas English institutions were repositories for the aged and intellectually disabled, this similar group were cared for in separate institution that would gradually become a specialist asylum.   The Newcastle Asylum has outlived many purpose-built asylums in Australia, perhaps due to its distance from Sydney by having an 'island' effect that was unlike the older asylums. This 'new' asylum culture had autonomy and was a distinctly different institution for a particular class of inmate that differed to the existing general asylums at the time. The Parramatta Asylum remained a general lunatic asylum because of the demands of a metropolitan area; however the Newcastle Asylum represented a more civil approach to treating the insane.  This was not only a geographical shift out of the metropolitan area, but a shift in perceptions away from the previous colonial lunacy regime that was shaped by penal approaches.

The re-introduction of a non-medical person (Cane) in 1870s as asylum manager was a similar model that had been used in the first half of the nineteenth century. This was a shift away from the medical profession that had dominated colonial asylums since the establishment of the Tarban Creek Asylum.  Anne Digby has described asylum attending as the 'hidden dimension' of asylum history, however the non-medical role of Superintendent Cane, as described in this chapter, has also been obscured but deserves to be acknowledged for the well-functioning of the asylum at Newcastle. It was from this non-medical perspective that educational approaches and training methods also developed and were able to be implemented at Newcastle, with the 'hospital' school being established there in the 1890s and located in the large Amusement Hall.  An initiative of the medical and nursing staff who encouraged a training component to care.

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[107] "Imbecile Hospital,"  January 22, 1890.

[108] "Recreation Reserve at top of Watt street,"*Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)  January15, 1878.

[109] Esther Sternberg, *Healing Spaces :The Science of Place and Well-Being* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 5*.*

[110] Manning, "Report into Lunacy", 168.

[111] George Dowdall, *The Eclipse of the State Mental Hospital: Policy,Stigma and Organisation* (Albany: State of University of New York Press, 1996), 51.

This chapter has highlighted some of the successes of the Newcastle Asylum and has not focused on the flaws and failures that are all too common in much of the histories written about asylums and mental health care. The Newcastle Asylum represents an innovative implementation of care. Government authorities repelled the objection by locals and remained determined in establishing a specialist institution. Although Newcastle was not considered by many to be the ideal location, however the space and built environment provided effective care. Garton suggests that the use of moral therapy in colonial asylums was subject to harsh criticism because of overcrowding and the accumulation of chronic incurables. However, as discussed in this chapter, this may not have been the case at Newcastle. The asylum at the NGD manifested civil thinking and a more caring model of care for the insane, in full view of the community. A small window of opportunity in the 1870s saw moral therapy being used 'hand in hand' with medicine at Newcastle, just as Digby believed it should be. Although three decades had passed between the Select Committee's recommendations regarding segregation and the implementation of moral therapy, at Newcastle this was able to succeed. Despite it being an 'accidental' asylum moral therapy was a greater success than in Sydney. Overcrowding in Sydney's asylums meant that classification could not be properly implemented due to lack of space and the organisation of buildings. Garton also argues that although many asylums were in decline in the twentieth century, some colonial asylums did provide good care. The Newcastle Asylum is an exemplar of this, whereby it differed to the older asylums having many positive features as also discussed in the analysis using Piddock's ideal asylum model in the following chapter. This chapter has explored how moral therapy had helped to move the care of idiot and imbeciles into a new cultural space in the 1880s, somewhere between mental health and educational practices. However by the 1890s care had shifted towards education also becoming part of government medical care. This early culture of incorporating education into care was an advantage in later decades when it would become official hospital policy to educate this group now referred to as feebleminded. Plans for industrial workshops and a special school at the Newcastle Asylum were devised.[112] The institution was transitioning towards becoming a 'hospital' specifically for 'feebleminded' children with a focus on education and training.

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[112] "Imbecile Hospital," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)January 22,1890.

# Chapter 6:   'Picturing' the Asylum

This chapter explores the community reaction to an asylum being proposed and established at Newcastle. Visual sources are used to explore how successful the asylum was.  Government authorities were determined to use the domain as a mental health site and even though they received a lot of opposition from local residence this did not stop them from pressing ahead.   Care can be defined through the actions and initiative that NSW government authorities took to make sure a new specialist mental health institution came about.  The Newcastle asylum represented a new form of care in the colony of NSW and is important to explore further.

Just as they were when an asylum was first proposed for the Newcastle Domain, local people remained unconvinced that an asylum should be established there.  As well as concern over the potential disorder which might be caused by lunatics, Novocastrians were troubled by the loss of public recreational space.  As one of the local residents remarked, since the military had left "the barrack square, in fact, was the only recreation ground the city contained", a view echoed by Rev. Canon Bode.[113]  Another resident asked where "were our children to go - where would our Bands of Hope go to - where would our volunteers and our cricketers go to if this proposal of the government were carried into effect!". The close proximity of the proposed asylum to the Church of England's parsonage at the north-west corner of the Domain may have also been a determining factor in Reverend Canon Selwyn's staunch opposition to the asylum and preference for it to become a public park.  He supported a resolution put forward by Dr Bowker opposing the asylum and stated "If these lunatics were admitted now, they would be there for years to come".  How true this was.

Others proposed that the Domain be used as a museum or botanical garden.  Government authorities were mindful of minimising resistance to the new asylum especially after the strong local opposition to the girls' institutions. This, rather than a real commitment to separating classes of lunatics, might have been behind the decision to have a specific institution for imbecile and idiots in Newcastle.  Being classed as passive inmates, they were expected to be more quiet and self-contained than the wayward girls.[114]

It was made clear that the public were not to be excluded from the site.  Opportunities for social and recreational activities there continued.  The existence of the military barracks on the site was one of its key assets. The use of the existing government building stock saved both money and time, thus enabling the asylum to open just four months after the girls had departed from the Domain.[115]  There was not much that could be achieved to change the built environment of the military buildings and so the emphasis was on beautifying the grounds. These elements included the establishment of formal gardens and the construction of features such as fountains and grottoes.  The gardens offered a soft aesthetic to counter the hard features of the military buildings as shown in Figure 6.6 The transformation of the asylum grounds, through gardens and landscaping was as much for the community as it was for the inmates.

These measures to placate local residents were necessary because the new asylum would be in the middle of the second city of the colony.  Two of the streets bordering the Newcastle Asylum were lined with houses.  Mooney

[113] "Barrack Square," *Newcastle Chronicle* (Newcastle)  November 21, 1866.
[114] "Conversion of Barrack Buildings at Newcastle into a Lunatic Asylum,"  *Newcastle Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)  September 23, 1871.
[115] Noeline Williamson, "Reform or Repression ? Industrial and Reformatory Schools for Girls in New South Wales, 1866 to 1910" (University of Newcastle, 1979), 29.

suggests that the idea that asylums should be isolated and segregated from the local community was gradually being dismantled in the late nineteenth century.[116] However this was not exactly true of asylums in NSW, it was not until early twentieth century that asylums were purposefully built away from population centres. Newcastle's location is in contradiction to best practice at the time and this is more evidence of its accidental and opportunistic origins. This study of the Newcastle asylum shows that it functioned in an urban environment when other government asylums at the time remained in rural settings or as at Rozelle, set apart from surrounding communities by extensive grounds and waterways.

Fortuitously, what was thought to suit the neighbours was also beneficial for the inmates of this, the first institution in the colony intended for the intellectually disabled rather than the psychologically ill. Landscape was an important part of therapy. Observing and interacting with inmates while strolling in the gardens or attending a concert changed community perceptions about the disabled and defused the intense community opposition to the Government Domain being used as an asylum. Improvements to the outdoors became central to care as it brought inmates, attendants and the wider community together. This also improved conversational aspects of care, which were part of the moral therapy that was adopted. Moral therapy and outdoor care were timely departures from previous practice.

## Interpretation of Asylum using Visual Sources

Let us explore the Domain through visual sources, we can 'picture' the asylum to further understand how moral therapy was used in Newcastle in the nineteenth century. Photographs and newspaper articles of the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s provide information about the ornamental vegetable gardens that were originally established by Cane during the 1870s. The neatly designed gardens were a special feature and had a significant association with moral therapy, reflecting the philosophy of care of the non-medical personnel. The following photographic, artistic and word pictures of the Domain allow us to use our mind's eye to imagine what the place was like.

John Rae's photographic panorama of the site (Figure 6.1) taken on a visit to Newcastle in the 1870s, shows how the former military barracks was transformed into an asylum.[117] Two works of Newcastle were shown, the photographic panorama and the watercolour painting completed in 1849 which was discussed in the previous chapter (Figure 3.11). The previously unidentified photograph (Figure 6.1) was found by the author in an album at the State Library of NSW in 2005 and is unlikely to have been publicly exhibited since the Calcutta Exhibition.



**Figure 6.1** John Rae 'Panorama of Newcastle 1875-1880'
Source: Dixson Library, State Library of NSW (Catalogue number PXX74 no.15 a-d).

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116 Graham Mooney, Bill Luckin, and Andrea Tanner, "Patient Pathways: Solving the Problem of Institutional Mortality in London During the Later Nineteenth Century," *The Society for the Social History of Medicine* (1999): 13.
117 Kerr, *The Dictionary of Australian Artists, Painters, Sketches, Photographers and Engravers to 1870*, 652-54.

The photographic panorama overlooking the Newcastle Asylum was likely to have been taken from Obelisk Hill because Rae was known to take images from the highest possible vantage points. Although it was not his primary aim to document the use of the site, the photograph has exceptional detail of the asylum grounds.



**Figure 6.2** John Rae, section of 'Panorama of Newcastle'1875-1880'
Source: State Library of New South Wales (Catalogue number PXX74 no.15 a-d).

The photograph provides a view across the Domain looking towards the ocean. Open areas are divided into neat rectangular garden plots, including vegetable gardens. These gardens at the Domain were further enhanced by the alignment of paths laid out by Colonial Architect James Barnett and shown in his *Plan for the Hospital for the Insane,* 1880 (Figure 6.3).[118] With the buildings already in place, Barnett's plan emphasised the landscape.[119] Together the photograph and the plan provide a detailed account of the asylum a decade into its existence.  Most of the built environment and spaces are relatively unchanged in 2014.

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[118] James Barnett, "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane", (Sydney: Government Architects Office, 1880 ).
[119] Like the photograph, the significance of the plan was not recognised until it was seen by the author during a visit to the site prior to the relocation of mental health services to Waratah in 2009.
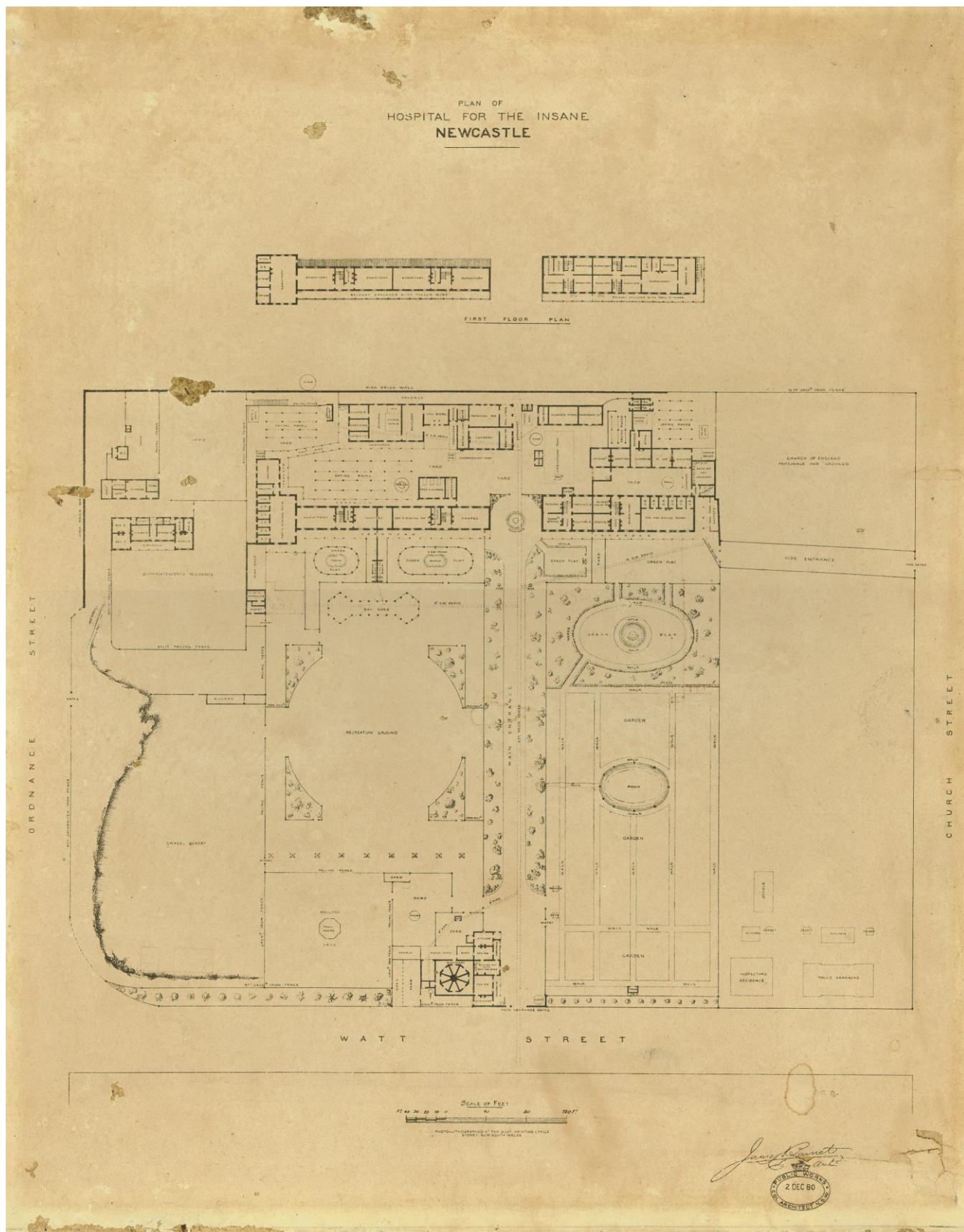
**Figure 6.3** :  James Barnett. "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane." 1880.
Collection of Hunter New England Health, Waratah Campus library. (Uncatalogued)

The Domain was bounded by four of Newcastle's principal streets, Church Street to the north, Watt Street to the east, Ordnance Street to the south and Newcomen Street to the west. The main entrance was from Watt Street. This was an un-gated entrance that had a wide drive where large carts, drays and horses could enter.  This entrance is shown in Figure 6.4. It was formally styled with plantings and Roman style vases on plinths along the drive.  Small shrubs lined the roadway.[120]  There are also several Norfolk Island Pine trees. Another entrance with a wide driveway and large iron gates in 1880s was located off Church Street on north side of the Domain. [121]  This is labelled as 'side entrance' on the *Plan of the Newcastle Asylum for the Insane*.  It is less likely that heavy vehicles would have used this entrance because of the steep gradient.  The gates at the Church Street entrance may have even been closed most of the time and used only by the Church of England which still had a presence at the Domain, owning the parsonage and grounds in the North West corner of the site.

Unsurprisingly, gates, fences and walls were dominant features of this institution.  The Government Domain was entirely fenced off except for the entrances described and the main entrance from Watt Street was watched by a gate keeper. Along the western boundary of the Domain near the parsonage was a twelve foot galvanised iron fence which tapered off on the corner of Church Street.  This iron fencing merged with the high brick wall at the other end of Newcomen Street that also extended around the corner and composed about a third of the Ordnance Street boundary. Within the site there were a number of fences segregating the private from the public areas, as well as private inmate space from community space. The fenced and walled site at the Domain was a distinct precinct and quite separate from the surrounding city. This is in contrast with the adjoining Upper and Lower Reserve that were accessible and frequently used by the community for active and passive recreation.  Despite its separateness, the people of Newcastle did enter the Domain.

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[120] John  Rae, "Newcastle Panorama: Photograph Taken near Newcomen Street", (State Library of New South Wales, 1884).
[121] Barnett, "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane".

**Figure 6.4** The cricket pitch was at the right of the entrance behind the row of trees and beyond the wall.
Source: Ralph Snowball Collection Courtesy held at Cultural Collections, University of Newcastle.
''Carriage Drive at Insane Asylum - Newcastle' 1888.

The original c1842 Guard House at the entrance of the site is shown in Rae's 1849 painting (Figure 3.11) had been added to many times by 1880. This was the building in which the girls had been locked away after they had misbehaved. In the 1880s, it had become the asylum's mortuary.[122]  If you were to  walk around to the side of this building we can see the 'buggy shed' where the deceased person is taken inside the mortuary.  The mortuary contained eight compartments in a circular design at the rear of Guard House.  Inmates who died at the asylum were buried at Christ Church cemetery until 1881 when that cemetery was closed to further burials.  This coincided with the establishment of the Sandgate Cemetery on the train line to the west of the city.[123]  Although Newcastle's Christ Church was close to the asylum, a buggy would have been needed to transport the deceased to it.  At the rear of the Guard House, facing west, numerous sheds and yards were constructed for poultry and other birds. In the centre an aviary full of pigeons for the amusement of the inmates was established.[124] Sections of the yards near the Guard House were fenced off on the southern side below Ordnance Street where the quarried rock wall was located. The exposed wall was a strong feature that showed the site preparation work carried out by convicts in the 1830s.[125] The smaller residence at the lower right

[122] From our own Correspondent, "Country News",  *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 December 1885.
[123] Brian Engel and Margaret Roulston, "Christ Church, Newcastle, NSW 1804-1900", in *Transcriptions and Indexes of Baptism, Marriage and Burial Registers* (Newcastle: Newcastle Family History Society, 2010), 8.
[124] Barnett, "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane".
[125] NSW Department of. Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan for the James Fletcher Hospital Site (Final Report) Report Vol. 1.

hand corner of Rae's photograph is the former military hospital, fenced off with a small garden and path linking the residence to the former barracks (Figure 6.2). This building was the residence of Mr Cane in 1880 and later of the other superintendents of the asylum. Prior to 1880, Cane lived in part of the former Soldiers' Barracks. A well at the rear of the house was fitted with a windmill and pump in 1882.[126] As mentioned in the second chapter this is the approximate location of the convict coal shaft believed to have been sunk there in the 1810s.[127] However no primary sources have been found confirming this. There is no evidence of a well today; however a contemporary report mentioned a coal shaft that has been secured and capped, however again no primary source is referenced.[128] The stairway and 'gate'[129] from Ordnance Street as shown in Figure 6.5 which continue in use today are also shown in the photograph. Open spaces were used for grazing cattle,[130] with the asylum having its own cows for milking, while pigs were used for food and garbage disposal. Tucked out of sight from the community were the newly introduced features including the 'Drying Racks' in the courtyard behind the barracks. A separate kitchen and laundry were also built behind the barracks near the west boundary of the Domain in the late 1870s.



**Figure 6.5** Quarried rock wall on southern side & stairway below Ordnance Street.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2009.

Since the time when the Domain was used to care for the girls, the gardens and landscaping had been much improved. The photograph *Women's Asylum, Watt Street Newcastle (*Figure 6.6) by prolific local commercial photographer Ralph Snowball demonstrates that asylums were entered and openly photographed and seen as being of interest to a viewing audience. The title refers to the building at the centre right of the photograph which accommodated the female inmates

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[126] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 467.
[127] "Report of the Royal Commission on Earth Subsidence at Newcastle. Depicts Asylum Shafts, Market Place Shaft and Bowling Green Shaft. 1822 (Drawing 1935 Shows Shaft near Commandants House)", (1908).
[128] Council, "Newcastle C.B.D Archaeological Management Plan".
[129] Barnett, "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane".
[130] "Imbecile Hospital," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) January 22, 1890.

of the asylum.  This photograph shows the results of the thought and care which went into the design of the Asylum grounds.



**Figure 6.6** Women's Asylum, Watt Street Newcastle.
Source: Ralph Snowball Collection, Cultural Collections University of Newcastle. 22 November 1888.

Figure 6.6 reverses the perspective of Rae's earlier photograph and therefore shows the northern section of the Domain[131] and the close proximity to the prestigious residential area known as 'the Hill,' including Jesmond House with its distinctive tower, the home of prominent brewer John Wood and his wife, the actress Essie Jenyns, whom he had married that year.[132]  The prominent barrack style building on the right of the photograph is the former Officer's Quarters. This was used to accommodate women and children, whilst the former military barracks to the left of the image was for men. In the foreground is a formal garden that echoes the openness of the military parade ground, but is also very reminiscent of the government gardens located there during the penal settlement and shown in Figure 2.9On the perimeter of the grounds at the north east was the largest of the asylum gardens.  It was rectangular with numerous

[131] Unknown, "Overlooking Asylum Gardens from Church Steet", (Newcastle: Cultural Collections, University of Newcastle, 1890 ?).
[132] Helen M. Van Der Poorten, 'Jennings, Elizabeth Esther Helen (1864–1920)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/jennings-elizabeth-esther-helen-3855/text6129, accessed 5 March 2013.

paths and 'walks' containing a manicured garden with 'green plat' and a "...handsome fountain" that the inmates enjoyed.[133]

> There are numerous ornamental walks, and the ground is covered with a rich velvet of buffalo and other choice grasses. This portion is given over exclusively to the female patients, who take great delight in promenading through it, admiring the flowers, and in other ways relieving the monotony and tedium of their lives. In this and all other portions of the ground everything is being done to make the surroundings attractive to the eye, with the object, not only to beautify the place, but of remaining as far as possible the barrier which were formally so prominent a feature of asylum life and habitation.[134]

Near the fountain was the asylums vegetable garden with several narrow paths. As already described and shown in Figure 6.6 the women had their own garden located in front of the female section of the asylum (former Officer's Quarters) which was exclusively theirs to cultivate and grow vegetables of every description, including parsnips, cabbages, onions, cucumbers, potato, pumpkin and peas. This was an all-weather garden that had asphalt on the paths so that inmates could use the space all year around. Geraniums, pansies and other flowers were grown there. In this part of the garden there were grottoes and rockeries that displayed a variety of ferns. The women enjoyed coming into the open spaces because it relieved "...the monotony and tedium of their lives."[135] There was a male and a female side to the Newcastle Asylum, one side reflecting a hard landscape and the military use with the parade ground and the other side much softer use of gardens and ornamental features. The stark male side of the asylum was used by the volunteer forces and is shown in Figures 3.12 to 3.15. This side also provided for active recreation in the form of a cricket pitch in contrast with the more passive recreational opportunities designed for females.

Coleborne found that the use of gender as a spatial organising principle was common in asylums in the Colony of Victoria.[136] At Newcastle gendered spaces were prominent in the outdoor areas rather than within the buildings. Many activities carried on indoors did not have the gender division seen at places like Kew Asylum in Victoria, where there were distinct separate enclosures for men and women, or at Yarra Bend Asylum where women were rarely seen doing outside work.[137] The gardens at the Newcastle Asylum were beautiful and offered a curative environment that was based around ideas of moral therapy but does appear to have been directed more at female than male inmates, perhaps because they were seen as more susceptible to the influence of beauty and order.

To accommodate the growing numbers and the change towards the training and education of inmates in the late 1870s, some improvements to the site were needed including additions to the southern end of the former Men's Barracks, as well as the northern end of Officer's Quarters. These allowed indoor training and education to take place. The following photograph (Figure 6.7) was taken some time after 1892 from the northwest corner of the Domain, at Church and Newcomen Streets and is looking east towards the gardens. New buildings had been established at this time, including the female and male wards, the amusement hall, day room and dormitory. The amusement hall was

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[133] "Newcastle Imbecile Hospital," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) January 22,1890, 8.
[134] "Imbecile Hospital," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) January 22,1890.
[135] "Imbecile Hospital," January 22, 1890.
[136] Coleborne, *Space, Power & Gender*, 49.
[137] Coleborne, *Space, Power & Gender*, 51-52.

used for the special training of imbecile and idiot inmates.[138]  These were significant in size, imposing on what was previously open space. Gardens were also encroached upon by more structured recreational spaces, in particular a tennis court in the late 1890s.

This photograph shows that the Asylum shared the Domain with other public uses.  In the foreground, the low house with the thatched roof is the Anglican parsonage or deanery on the corner of Church and Newcomen Streets. Having been started in the convict period when Anglican clergy were appointed to minister to the convicts, it continued in use as a deanery until 1902.[139]  To the east, on the left of the photograph, was the new Court House erected in 1892 and at the north east corner was a Police Barracks and Inspector's residence, although these are not visible in the photograph.  The Domain was never exclusively used for a single purpose by any one group; it has had multiple occupancies, all reflecting government use.



**Figure 6.7** View across Newcastle Government Domain from corner of Newcomen and Church Streets.
Source: Cultural Collections,University of Newcaslte, 1890s.

[138] Ralph Snowball, "Mental Hospital Grounds", (Newcastle Cultural Collections University of Newcastle, The Ralph Snowball Collection on Newcastle, 1885).
[139] Turner, "History of the James Fletcher Hospital", 26.

## How 'ideal' was the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots?

So far this chapter has discussed the features at this barrack asylum at Newcastle as well as moral therapy and the opening of the site the wider community. The asylum was meant to be temporary and was not purpose-built. Yet it seemed to provide a high standard of care. The following is an analysis using Piddock's ideal asylum model to examine to what extent the Newcastle asylum met her criteria. Although Piddock's ideal asylum model is based on a British construction of asylum care, she used this model to study the Parkside Asylum in South Australia and the New Norfolk Asylum in Tasmania.[140] She concluded that these purpose-built asylums showed few characteristics of a curative environment.[141]

**Table 6.8** The Newcastle Asylum mapped to Piddock's criteria for an ideal asylum.

| A | An appropriate site with some form of scenery | x |
|---|---|---|
| B | An arrangement of the buildings that allowed light in and cross ventilation, with no building overshadowing another or the airing courts | x |
| C | A linear form of the layout | x |
| D | It should accommodate no more than 360-400 inmates | x |
| Ea | A building that offers a range of wards for classification | x |
| Eb | Each ward should have its own attendant's rooms | x |
| Ec | There should be open areas as opposed to day rooms | x |
| F | Each ward should have access to a bathroom, lavatory and water closets | x |
| G | Each ward should have a wide gallery furnished as a day room with windows low enough to allow a view outside | |
| Ha | There should be a large recreation room | x |
| Hb | School rooms | x |
| Hc | Work rooms and workshops | x |
| Hd | A chapel for the use of inmates | x |
| Ia | The offices should be centrally located | x |
| Ib | There should be a means of accessing the various wards without passing through each | x |
| J | Attendant's should have their own dining hall | |
| K | Accommodation should be in the form of single rooms with a few dormitories | x |
| L | Above all the asylum should be light, cheerful and liberal in the space it offered | x |

Note: Information adapted from Table in Susan Piddock's study *A Space of their Own*.

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[140] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own.*
[141] Piddock, "Convicts and the Free", 94.

Clearly, although it was an accidental institution, the Newcastle asylum had features which suited its purpose. Firstly, scenery was thought to be essential to inmate care and although the landscape at the Government Domain was altered during the 1840s, views from the former parade ground towards Nobbys Head would have been possible due to the relative low height of city buildings in the 1870s and 1880s. For the inmates who ventured on outings to the Lower Reserve the scenery was magnificent with sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean and to Port Stephens.  According to Piddock's model the arrangement of buildings was important for light and cross ventilation and this was evident at the Domain as the buildings were not built close to one another. Good light and ventilation was also the result of the asylum's coastal location which brought direct sea breezes. The open verandas and large high windows on either side of the former military buildings also allowed air to circulate.  Overshadowing of buildings was not a problem at the Domain because the main buildings there were in a linear north-south axis and exposed to sunlight from the east to west.

Also essential in Piddock's model was the number of inmates that could be admitted to an asylum; she suggests no more than 400 inmates.  The Newcastle Asylum was small compared to the asylums in Sydney where large numbers of inmates were accommodated and at most there were about 300 inmates admitted during the mid-1890s.  A range of wards for classification at Newcastle were also present with men accommodated at the former barracks and women and children in the former Officer's Quarters.  Attendants' rooms were available near each of the wards which enabled easy access to inmates needing support, particularly the children. This was something Piddock suggests as very important. There were lavatories and amenities close at hand for the inmates; as well there was a recreation room, amusement hall, with a workshop and school room nearby. Piddock suggests 'open spaces as opposed to day rooms' and at Newcastle there were both day rooms and large verandas downstairs that opened on to large grassed areas. There was plenty of access to the gardens and open spaces for inmates to enjoy and use. The 'church room' was at the north end of the former Military Barracks, while the staff offices were at the south end of the Officer's Quarters; both quite centrally located.  The wards were able to be accessed via the verandas that acted as corridors and stair wells. These were separate from the dayrooms and dormitories and their use did not interrupt the inmates.  The Newcastle Asylum contained a mix of single rooms with a few dormitories. The last criteria of Piddock's ideal model suggest the institution should be 'light, cheerful and liberal in the space offered'. At Newcastle and as described in the numerous sources about the place this seems to be the case.  From the nineteen criteria that Piddock has developed there are only two that the Newcastle Asylum did not conform to. The only criteria that the Newcastle Asylum is unable to meet were those related to G and J; the day room did not have windows low enough to allow a view outside, and lastly it is unknown whether Attendant's had their own dining hall or separate room.  The asylum at Newcastle did not conform to the belief that the mode of care could only be achieved by new buildings designed for the care of the insane.[142]  Nor did it appear to share architectural and landscape traits with other colonial institutions as Coleborne suggests that were similar in design.[143] Instead the asylum at Newcastle had had a multiplicity of uses.   In contrast, the accidental asylum at Newcastle did suit conditions. The barracks' high windows and verandas allowed good ventilation of the long rectangular rooms used as dormitories. Figure 6.9 shows the veranda coupled as an access corridor stretching the entire length of the military

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[142] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own,* 2.
[143] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 28.

barracks and the Officer's Quarters. The veranda was useful for getting from one end of the building to the other. The veranda had doors that entered the dormitories and a separate passage that avoided disturbing the inmates, particularly at night when they were sleeping.



**Figure 6.9** The Veranda of the interior wards which was open in the 1870s and 1880s and the patio of Military Barracks. Source: Ann Hardy, 2009.

Generally the military architecture of the asylum at Newcastle was well suited as an asylum because, as discussed, many of the features were consistent with the criteria set out in Piddock's ideal model. The Government Domain was conducive to insane care in the later nineteenth century because it was complimented by the use of moral therapy. Piddock says there was limited recreational space at the Parkside Asylum and this may have contributed to moral therapy not being successful there.[144]  However at Newcastle this did not appear to be the case as there were separate Amusement Halls built and smaller buildings used as workshops behind the military buildings.  Furthermore, the rectangular and elongated buildings had plenty of windows that were well suited to the coastal environment. This style of architecture differed significantly to the purpose-built asylums found in both in the Australian colonies and in other countries that were mostly ornate and decorative. Although the Newcastle Asylum did not resemble either the asylums of England or Australia, it did however share many of their features and this may explain why it was able to function quite well.[145] Although it emerged from compromise, economy and pragmatism the Newcastle Asylum fitted well with the ideal

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[144] Piddock, "Convicts and the Free", 90.
[145] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own,*  57.

asylum model developed by Piddock.  What has been found is that many features of the Newcastle Asylum when applied to Piddock's ideal asylum model were in fact ideal. The Newcastle Asylum measured up quite well in terms of ideal asylum features.

**Conclusion**

As discussed in this chapter institutions set up at the NGD were haphazard and came about without a lot of planning.   Circumstances were much different in long established societies that had greater familial support and caring institutions. The need for state intervention was not as essential as it was in NSW where authorities acknowledged the desperate needs of inhabitants and initiated programs to improve the well-being of the colony. Authorities could not keep pace with the needs of the community in NSW, but nevertheless strove to make improvements.

The Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots at the Government Domain was special; as a separate institution for one class of the 'insane'.  Not only was it the first of its type in Australia, it used moral therapy in an atypical environment. This was very different from the general lunatic asylums of Sydney, dominated as they were by medical approaches. The NGD was ideal for vocational, recreation and social activities because it was a small institution located in the heart of a city with an attractive natural setting.  This was unlike many other asylums, such as Yarra Bend and Kew asylums in the Colony of Victoria that were purpose-built and removed from the community and where Coleborne describes this separation (of asylum and community) was part of the cure.[146]

Although this chapter has described and interpreted from various sources the manner in which the Domain was used, it highlights what was happening at the Newcastle Asylum in terms of use of moral therapy and site as a genuine therapeutic place.  This also supports the idea that there were genuine attempts by NSW government authorities to implement appropriate and effective care. This was further extended when community members and other visitors were encouraged to come to the asylum. This opening up of the asylum grounds to the community was a form of care, it socialised inmates with the wider world.  The following chapter discusses the patterns of visitation at Newcastle. The isolation of inmates at the Newcastle Asylum was a distinctive feature, this also determined how they would be cared for and who would visit there.

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[146] Coleborne, *Space, Power & Gender*, 51-2.

# Chapter 7:   Visitors to the Asylum

Although the various uses of the Domain described in the previous chapters were fixed and short term, after the volunteer forces and the girls left, a period began when the community used the Domain, or as it became known, the Recreation Ground.  In contrast with some contemporary asylums and most later psychiatric hospitals, visitors were encouraged onto the site and interaction with them was regarded as therapeutic for the residents.As well as casual visitors entering the site for band concerts or sporting matches, the *Visitors Book* records the number and types of official visitors who played a more formal role in the life of the asylum. It suggests the modest level of social support available to the intellectually disabled in the last decades of the nineteenth century.[147]

   After the struggles to maintain strict boundaries during the years of the Industrial School and Reformatory, the conduct of the Asylum  was not premised on it being a closed community. Central to care at the Newcastle Asylum were the visitors who helped shape the asylum environment and the use of the space at the Newcastle Asylum.The Visitors' Book of the Newcastle Asylumhad been held on site at the James Fletcher Hospital until its transfer to this government depository in the late 1990s. The book covers the period from 1881 to mid-1936 and contains important information about the type of visitor that came to the asylum, the purposes for which they came, and the origin of visitors.  Under NSW Health regulations, health records less than 110 years of age which identify patients are not available for public access. All of the records relating to the Newcastle asylum in the nineteenth century, a period that was of most interest because it was prior to mental health care becoming primarily medical, are open.   However, the two decades to 1891 are the focus herebecause they shows the richest diversity of visitors to the asylum. After this time, visitation from the community sharply dropped off and most of the visitors were from the religious and medical professions.

   The role of visitors in asylum care was well established and recognised in institutions outside of Australia prior to the establishment of the Newcastle Asylum.  In England, visiting asylums had a long tradition. It was first associated with the public viewing of artworks at foundling hospitals in the 1750s.[148]  Later purpose-built institutions were promoted to visitors and as Mooney and Reinarz suggests, the architecture and the grandeur of buildings were seen as a sign of success.[149]  Siena points out that in other parts of the world private institutions depended on subscribers and donations and asylum managers needed to elicit donations to survive.[150]  This outward display of accomplishment and benefit was thought to attract donations and subscribers. In NSW, where most asylums were fully, if not generously, funded by the colonial government there was no reliance on subscribers and donations for the institutions to carry on.  There was little effort to impress visitors with ornate architecture but they still did come to inspect the more sober and utilitarian asylums of the colony.

   The second half of the nineteenth century saw an increase of visitors to asylums worldwide, a phenomenon Janet Miron has written about in *Prisons, Asylums and the Public.* She argues that in North America, this can even be

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[147] Colonial Government of New South Wales. "Visitors' Book [Newcastle Psychiatric Centre] ", Reference  CGS 5064. Sydney: NSW State archives, 23 March 1881 - 10 May 1936.

[148] W M Jacob, *Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 182.

[149] Graham Mooney and Jonathon Reinarz, "Historical Perspectives on Hospital and Asylum Visiting: Themes and Issues" in *Permeable Walls:Historical Perspectives on Hospital and Asylum Visiting*, ed. Graham Mooney and Jonathon Reinarz (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), 14.

[150] Mooney and Reinarz, "Historical Perspectives on Hospital",17.

described as institutional tourism.  Some asylum managers strictly excluded visitors because they did not feel it was conducive to moral treatment or they were reluctant to expose their inmates to the gaze of spectators.[151]  The majority believed that there was merit in visitation, beyond potential monetary contributions.  Colborne's work shows that visitors were seen as an important part of psychological care but also of community education about mental illness.[152] This was the case in London, Ontario, where Dr Maurice Bucke was superintendent of an asylum from 1877 to 1902. He believed that institutional tourism had positive therapeutic implications for the inmates and that it helped to rectify some of the social misconceptions associated with mental illness.[153] Visiting he believed "...was about the only way that unfortunate prejudice can be removed."[154]  On the other hand, Reiss is less optimistic about the motives for asylum visits suggesting that some were there to satisfy their curiosity in much the same way as people flocked to the popular freak shows of the day.[155] Although controversial, visiting was an important part of the care and treatment of the insane during the late nineteenth century.[156]

There were various categories of visitors: the clergy and official visitors, entertainers and the general community.  Each had different roles to perform, but all engaged with the inmates and the asylum.  Clergy and entertainers played a therapeutic role for the inmates; in the first case, pastoral care and in the other, enjoyment and social well-being. Official visitors assessed conditions and management to ensure that it was in keeping with established practices in  other government asylums and report to a centralised authority..[157] The international visitors might occupy any of these positions and they helped to disseminate information to and from other jurisdictions.[158] Mooney and Reinarz point out that studies of visitors and visiting can tell us about the changing relationship between institutions and communities.[159] In the case of Newcastle, visits by officials, clergy and entertainers were particularly important as very few inmates had family and friends to visit them.  Miron points out that this was not necessarily a negative.Visits from family and friends often had a detrimental effect and interfered with the progress of treatment.[160] Both early superintendents, Cane and Williamson, were instrumental in promoting visitors to the Newcastle Asylum for the purpose of improving relations between the asylum community and the wider public.  The promotion of asylum visitors helped to strengthen relationships with the wider community, particularly those living in close proximity to the institution who had such a fraught relationship with the previous occupants. For their part, many in the community wanted to understand mental illness and asylums. The desire to attract visitors shaped the asylum space.  The most obvious effect was the transformation of open space into ornate gardens which were attractive leisure spaces for both inmates and visitors.

Between the years 1881 and 1891 there was a total 2693 visitors recorded as attending the Newcastle Asylum. Of these, 21 per cent of visitor's signatures were illegible and comments about where they were from or purpose of their

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[151] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums*, 135.
[152] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 13.
[153] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums*, 51.
[154] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums*, 51.
[155] Benjamin Reiss, *Theaters of Madness: Insane Asylums and Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2008),13.
[156] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums*, 6.
[157] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 23.
[158] Mooney, "Historical Perspectives", 14.
[159] Mooney, "Historical Perspectives", 8.
[160] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums* ,136.

visit was not noted.  There was a visitors' room located on the ground floor of the former Officers' Quarters where family and friends could spend time with their loved ones. It was a small intimate room next to the Matron's Office and opposite the Superintendent's Office.[161] Many of the inmates were transferred from Sydney and were unlikely to have had social supports in Newcastle. Although ships and, from 1889, trains ran between Sydney and Newcastle, time and financial constraints are likely to have prevented visits in contrast with other colonial asylums where personal visits were more frequent.  Others were estranged from their families because of emigration, the nature of their work or for personal reasons.  The majority of inmates were not from the region, however despite this 22 per cent of visitors came from Newcastle and the Hunter Region.

Another type of visitor were institutional tourists. It is noted in the Visitors' Book that a party of five visiting tourists, all from Sydney, came to the Newcastle Asylum on 18 January 1885. It is interesting that they are referred to as tourists as this suggests that this market was present in Australia, just as it was in North America, England and Europe.[162] Superintendents at Newcastle were open to foreign visitors coming to the asylum as a way of promoting the asylum.. There are minimal comments written about the foreign visitors to the Newcastle Asylum. Only their names and the date of their visit is recorded. For example, 'J. Simms MD' and his daughter 'Miss J. Simms' (6 November 1881) visited from New York. Simms was on a lecture tour, speaking on physiognomy to appreciative audiences.[163]  He most likely used the opportunity whilst in the area to visit the asylum, perhaps to gather more material for his talks.   On 24 June 1884 Mr Brownlee and Mr McCrudden visited from Canada, along with Mr Lewis from South Africa.

Another type of international visitor were those who visited in a professional capacity, and were not directly associated with asylum management and care. For example a proponent of the Newcastle Asylum was the Honourable Thomas Adamson Consul-General for the United-States in Australia who paid a visit and reported on the 'Imbecile Asylum (at Newcastle)' in 1878, stating that it was the best conceived and managed of any in the world and praising the work of Mr and Mrs Cane.[164]  This also reflected well on Manning whose vision it had been to separate the different classes of lunatic, the 'madly demented from the harmless epileptic'.[165]  This high profile official visit was part of a network that helped to relay knowledge about asylum performance worldwide. Other international visitors were personnel from ships docked at Newcastle who visited the asylum.  For example on Sunday 16 December 1883, J H Sykes and J M Vaughan from the ship HMS 'Cutty Sark' signed the Visitor's Book at the asylum.[166] The exact purpose of this visit is unknown, however because it was a Sunday and other signatures on that day were from clergy they may have participated in religious service.

In 1889 Japanese surgeons Dr Kimura and Dr Janare visited the asylum and they were joined by a Petty Officer from the Japanese man-o-war, the *Taukuba*.[167]  The *Taukuba* in 1883 had been one of two ships sailing the southern ocean with a crew of Japanese medical officers researching the causes of *beriberi*, a disease quite common at that time among

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[161] The Government Printing Office of New South Wales, "Plan of the Hospital for the Insane" (The Government Printing Office of New South Wales, 1875).
[162] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums*.
[163] "Dr Simms' Lectures," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland)  November 15,1881.
[164] "The Asylum for Imbeciles," *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners' Advocate*(Newcastle)  December 7, 1878.
[165] Frederic Norton Manning, "Address in Psychological Medicine, Delivered at the Intercolonial Medical Congress in Melbourne on January 11,1888," *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 35 (1889).
[166] Colonial Government of New South Wales. "Visitors' Book'". Basil Lubbock, *The Log of The "Cutty Sark"* (London: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1987).
[167] "The Asylum Grounds,"  *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)  July 26, 1889.

Japanese sailors.[168]  The disease had been eradicated in Japan and those on the *Taukuba* were given a special diet to prove Dr Takaki's theory that associated with diet..  The purpose of the ship's visit a few years later is unknown.  As the following newspaper article describes, the officers took part in a diversity of events whilst at the asylum enjoying:

> …sweet singing by about 20 of the inmates in the beautiful little church room, and the afternoon amusements was heightened by a game of skittles in the excellent alley (70 feet in length) in the recreation ground, and in which game the Japanese visitors performed very well. [169]

The asylum grounds were used for the game skittles which served as a distraction from the research that was undertaken by these visitors from Japan. Sharing a leisure activity was a uniting experience between inmates and members of the public.  This outdoor game had a long tradition in England.[170] The long alley version as played in Newcastle was common in the East Midlands.[171] The game facilitated social interaction and engagement between the Japanese visitors and the inmates as it is likely to have done with other visitors.

On more serious business were the official visitors who inspected the management practices of asylums and how they functioned. The role of official visitors is significant because they concentrated on management issues as part of their responsibility to report to a centralised authority any concerns relating to care and asylum management.[172] This role was a departure from British practice where there was no equivalent 'official' role until 1948 when institutions become public.[173] In Britain it was often subscribers and benefactors of institutions who carried out inspections. This was paralleled in the United States  by 'professional' visitors including well know reformers such as Dorothea L Dix.  Charles Dickens was an unofficial visitor who was critical of the ignorance in regard to the plight of vulnerable people in institutions in England.[174]   In Australia, this role was not well developed, but the journalist the Vagabond visited and often stayed at asylums for days at a time, to undertake his own reporting about the state of asylums. He visited the Newcastle Asylum and wrote about its condition and management, publishing his very positive accounts in newspapers that were widely read.[175] As Mooney points out, this informal visiting by social commentators was crucial at this time to acquire knowledge about new or alternative treatments as well as the organisation of institutions.[176]

The role of official visitors who were appointed to report to authorities on the condition of asylums in NSW, as in other Australian colonies, was to maintain and improve proper standards of care. The *Lunacy Act* 1843 provided for five Official Visitors to each asylum. Three were appointed by the Governor and two by the Legislative Council.[177] Some of the colonial official visitors who inspected the Newcastle Asylum were local clergy and staff from the Gladesville Mental Hospital and other institutions.  Official visitors made up 2 per cent of visitors at the Newcastle Asylum.  An inspection on the 22 October 1888 found "the place very clean and healthy, which I believe is due to the endeavours there by Mr Cane

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[168] Louis Livingston Seaman, *The Real Triumph of Japan: The Conquest of the Silent Foe* (London: Sidney Appleton, 1906). 237-240. beriberi is a deficiency of Vit B1 (thiamine).
[169] "The Asylum for Imbeciles," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate*(Newcastle)  December 7,1878.
[170] Tony Collins, John Martin and Wray Vamplew eds."Skittles", In *Encyclopaedia of Traditional British Sports*, New York: Routledge, 2005.
[171] "The Asylum Grounds," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) July 26, 1889.
[172] Mooney and Reinarz, "Historical Perspectives", 295.
[173] Mooney and Reinarz, "Historical Perspectives", 18.
[174] Miron, Janet. *Prisons, Asylums",* 75.
[175] Mooney, "Historical Perspectives", 294.
[176] Mooney, "Historical Perspectives", 18.
[177] Shea, *Defining Madness*, 33.

who has developed the right plan in the right place".[178] Mental health staff from other institutions which were managed quite differently had the opportunity to gain first hand practical knowledge about this distinctive approach to asylum care and management. Regular inspections were carried out by the Inspector of the Insane of Asylums Frederick Norton Manning and this record of inspections mirrored the policy of the Lunacy Commission in the 1840s in England.[179] Documentation was necessary to safeguard against irregular practices; however this was quite separate from the official visitors. The Official Visitors Program as it is known today continues in the mental health service [180] and although technology, resources and standards of care have changed dramatically, contemporary official visitors carry out inspections with similar concerns about inmate care just as they did in the 1880s.

Other professionals wanting to observe how the Newcastle Asylum was conducted also visited. Just as Manning and Tucker had toured asylums worldwide, the same occurred in NSW with people interested in how asylums functioned, often working in institutions themselves, visited Newcastle. Many staff from a variety of institutions throughout NSW visited the Newcastle Asylum, including Eliza Johnson from Parramatta Hospital (2 January 1882), Mona Ker from the Sydney Children's Hospital (8 March 1882), Thomas Warren and W.Dowse from Gladesville Hospital on 15 July 1883, and a party of twelve from the 'Convent Deaf and Dumb School' on 23 April of the same year. These visitors may have been drawn to inspect the Newcastle Asylum because of the praise it had gained in the media.

Groups of entertainers from New Zealand, North America and India all visited the Asylum to entertain inmates and staff.[181] The use of music in the care of the mentally ill was well documented in the nineteenth century. For instance, as described in the *Lincoln Gazette* (England) a 'Festival at a Lunatic Asylum' took place in 1841, at which the power of music uplifted the spirits of the inmates.[182] The author was both astonished that an asylum space could be transformed into a decorative place, and surprised that such a good time could be had 'among lunatics'. As Raffaele Baldassarro says in *The Power of Music Therapy*, music can refresh, relax and pacify the uncertainties of the world.[183] Listening to music can release tension and stress. Amusements and entertainments were seen as an integral part of moral therapy and as Moran states were prevalent in asylums in North America, as they were at Newcastle.[184] Furthermore, Reiss points out that entertainment and social activity often encouraged the raising of funds, helped sustain approval from legislative authorities and to allay suspicion by the community about management practices at institutions.[185] There has been very little written about asylum amusement in Australia, except for Dolly Mackinnon's work *'Hearing madness': the soundscape of the asylum*, which focuses on other acoustics related to asylum care.[186] In *Jolly and fond of singing': the*

[178] Colonial Government of New South Wales. "Visitors' Book [Newcastle Psychiatric Centre] ". Reference  CGS 5064. Sydney: NSW State archives, 23 March 1881 - 10 May 1936.
[179] Mooney, "Historical Perspectives", 294.
[180] http://www.ovmh.nsw.gov.au/ Accessed  5.5.11. Official Visitors Program aims to safeguard standards of treatment and care, and advocate for the rights and dignity of people being treated under the NSW Mental Health Act 2007. This scheme continues in 2013 as part of the mental health sector in NSW named the 'Official Visitors Program'.
[181] Colonial Government of New South Wales. "Visitors' Book [Newcastle Psychiatric Centre] " Reference  CGS 5064. Sydney: NSW State archives, 23 March 1881 - 10 May 1936.
[182] Mackinnon, "Music, Madness", 5-7.
[183] Raffaele Baldassarro, *The Power of Music Therapy : A New Group Therapy Tool Using the Universal Language of Music to Open Lines of Communication and Healing* (USA: Deep Forest Productions  2008). 9.
[184] James Moran, *Committed to the State Asylum:Insanity and Asylum in Nineteenth-Century Quebec and Ontario* (Canada: McGill-Queens University Press, 2000).95.
[185] Reiss, *Theaters of Madness,* 13.
[186] MacKinnon. "'Hearing Madness'

*gendered nature of musical entertainment in Queensland mental institutions c1870-c1937* Mackinnon associates music more directly with asylum recreation and care.[187]  Coleborne also touches on leisure and amusement in her study.[188]

The Newcastle Visitors' Books shows that entertainers included 'minstrels' who came from many parts of the world to perform in Newcastle theatres and came to the asylum in their free time. During the 1880s and 1890s, entertainers performed for the inmates to provide a social experience, as this was something that was fashionable in other parts of the world and part of the 'institutional tourism' phenomena. Piddock describes the 'Christy Minstrels' who visited the Adelaide Asylum in South Australia in 1869.[189] Similar entertainment took place at Newcastle on 2 June 1881 when the 'Mastodon Minstrels' visited the Newcastle Asylum. Another group named 'Happy Hours' visited there on 28 July 1882, as well as a fourteen member 'Opera Company' who came to the asylum on 7 June 1883.  On the 14 April 1885 the 'Hussy Minstrels' visited the Newcastle Asylum. International artists also included the 'Fish Jubilee Singers,' a troupe of five from the American state of Virginia, who visited on 16 April 1887. Another was an American 'Opera Company' who paid a visit on 13 May 1889.  The 'Soundfield's and South's Comedy Company' visited on 12 April 1889. It is unknown whether these performers were paid or whether they volunteered their services as a humanitarian gesture or a means of advertising their commercial performances.  Whatever the motive, social events at the Newcastle Domain helped to normalise the life of the asylum, often drawing in the wider community.  This sense of social inclusion helped to break down the barriers that existed in the 1870s between those at the asylum and their neighbours.  The Domain in the 1880s became quite an attraction. Its location in the centre of the town made it ideal for events.

Clergy also attended the asylum on a regular basis in the 1880s as recorded in the *Visitors' Book*. Repeated visits to conduct religious services and visit the sick made member of the clergy the most common visitors (some 25% of visits were made by them) and also inflate the number of visits from people resident in  Newcastle or the Hunter region. On thirty-eight occasions, a 'sick visit' was noted over a ten year period. Although this study is of the Newcastle Asylum from 1871, the Visitor's Book did not begin until 1882.  A sick visit was with a particularly unwell inmate and the majority of these visits were undertaken by Roman Catholic Chaplains for the Hospital for the Insane. These included Reverend J. Clancy and Reverend P. Meagher.  These visits took place on the same day as religious service.  The names of the inmates they visited were not recorded. The term 'sick visit' was a term commonly used by the clergy, more so than by visiting family and friends who tended to record the purpose of their visit.and only recording the surname of who it was they were visiting.

Canon Selwyn from the Church of England was involved in burials of 'mental inmates' at Newcastle's Christ Church during the 1870s; however, he did not conduct religious services there until 1882, ceasing in 1883. Prior to Canon Selwyn's services at the asylum in 1882, A D Mitchell is recorded as performing 'Devine Service for Canon Selwyn'. Mitchell was not an ordained minister and his role is unclear, however he had conducted the majority of the religious services from the 1870s up until 1888.[190] After 1883, weekly religious services were conducted by other religious instructors. In 1899, Reverend Downey conducted weekly Presbyterian services and other clergy later conducted

[187] Mackinnon, "Music, Madness".
[188] Coleborne, *Space, Power & Gender*.
[189] Piddock, *A Space of Their Own*, 141.
[190] Colonial Government of New South Wales. "Visitors' Book [Newcastle Psychiatric Centre] ". Reference  CGS 5064. Sydney: NSW State archives, 23 March 1881 - 10 May 1936.

services at the Newcastle institution during the twentieth century.  Downey was also associated with the Newcastle Synod and was minister at the nearby St Phillip's Presbyterian Church in Watt Street in 1895. Religious services were held in the "...beautiful little church room..." at the lower ground on the north end of the military barracks as shown in Barnett's 1880s *Plan of the Hospital for the Insane.*  A church room was in this same location when inmate services closed at the site in 2009.[191] Attending church was common in the nineteenth century; a cultural practice that many would engage in from an early age.  Church was a setting and ritual that become engrained in the practices of the asylum and remain an important aspect of mental health care in the 1900s. The singing and bringing people together from all walks of life, cut through class distinctions and the stigma of mental illness.  Attending church allowed inmates and staff to come together in what was part of a leisure and recreation practice.[192] Another small group appears in the records of visitors who did not fall into any of the categories above.  It is not known whether they were family members and friends of the Newcastle inmates, or merely there to experience the local asylum, and if the latter, what motivated their visit.

Visits by entertainers, 'tourists' and official visitors decreased quite suddenly at the beginning of the 1890s, with visitors associated with the performing of religious services making up a larger proportion of the visitation. Visits for the purpose of public relations diminished in Britain and it was a similar case in Australia.[193] However, a new type of visit began to increase, that of the member of the local community drawn by the gardens or by special events being held at the asylum.


## Opening the site to the Community

The 1870s was a decade of innovative and creative ideas in mental health care which were supported by the authorities. The conversion of this very ordinary site at Newcastle into a therapeutic and functional asylum was a sign that government mental health care intervention was changing to support ideas about imbecile and idiot care in keeping with those in Britain. In NSW most mental institutions up to this point were converted from other uses and the government had never really invested in the grand asylums of the United Kingdom.  Plans to build new purpose-built asylums were put on hold, instead what was not such an unusual idea put forward, was to reuse existing buildings, such as revising the barrack asylum at Newcastle.  However it would not be invisible like other asylums in the colony;[194] instead it was centrally located in the second city of the colony, open and accessible for all to see. Although it had been government policy since the 1850s to appoint a medical practitioner to manage asylums, this did not apply at Newcastle because of the specific group that was chosen to go there.   As an aid to their treatment, the Newcastle Asylum was enhanced by developing gardens, grottoes and a recreation ground.

There was a shift in the way that asylums were perceived during the 1870s and 1880s, from places properly located on the town limits and rural locations, to being close to town centres where they would benefit from interactions with the public. Coleborne talks about this 'bringing together' of the asylum and the outside world, with attempts at the

[191] Barnett, "Plan of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane".
[192] "The Asylum Grounds," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)  July 26, 1889.
[193] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums and and the Public*, 18.
[194] Coleborne, *Space, Power & Gender*, 50.

Yarra Bend asylum to have inmates exposed to out-door social and community life.[195] A similar philosophy underpinned the Newcastle Asylum and because it was in the heart of the city, it had the potential to be a gathering place around its large flat recreation ground.  In the absence of family visitors, community visitors were even more important. Visitors were part of the caring regime.

As well as those who visited specifically to observe or interact with the inmates and staff, the recreation ground which had long been used by the military and citizens drew the general community to the Domain . Recreation and the outdoors had always been part of moral therapy.  At Newcastle visitors were welcomed because of the benefits to the inmates and the wider community. Visitors there for recreation were no exception.   For many, the Newcastle Asylum was a sporting venue rather than a place of specific interest to the inmates. Cricket was one game that was common at asylums throughout the world during the late nineteenth century.[196]   As Cherry states, cricket provided a social space and was promoted as a healthy orderly game.[197]  At Newcastle the game was mostly played by inmates but the cricket pitch was also a community facility.



**Figure 7.1** Asylum Inmates dressed for cricket.
Source: Hunter Photobank, Snowball Collection, Newcastle City Library. 1896.

As mentioned in the Chapter Three, cricket had been played at the Domain by the volunteer military forces in the 1860s. In the 1880s Dr Williamson improved the facilities by establishing an 'excellent wicket' at the asylum, at quite

[195] Coleborne, *Space, Power & Gender*, 57.
[196] Steven Cherry, *Mental Health Care,*135.
[197] Steven Cherry, *Mental Health Care in Modern England: The Norfolk Lunatic Asylum, St Andrews Hospital* (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2003), 106.

considerable expense.  It was reported in the local newspaper that younger people from the community were encouraged to come the asylum to play cricket.[198]  In doing so local children become friends with some of the younger inmates. The improved wickets drew sides from the surrounding districts.  Players and spectators coming and going from the site created liveliness and amusement for the inmates. This was not unique to Newcastle.  Cricket matches were also played Callan Park Asylum in 1887and this sporting culture at the asylum was something maintained into the 1900s when teams from other mental institutions played at the Newcastle Domain.[199]  Cricket was part of a culture of care at the asylum, maintaining the health not only of the inmates but also of those who worked and visited there. This sport was the catalyst in normalising the space by allowing inmates to be spectators alongside the general community. Furthermore, the game of cricket was also one way of achieving the outcome of needing to appease the community into accepting an asylum in their neighbourhood.

The Domain was also a place of musical performance. It was an ideal venue for performance and activity because of its central location in the town. The Domain had been used by the community in the 1860s, and it became popular once more when the asylum opened. Concerts at the asylum included travelling companies as well as local bands and these were inaugurated by Superintendent Cane for the amusement of the inmates. The Cane family provided some of the entertainment with Miss Cane and Master Cane performing various duets.[200] The Burwood Band with Mr George Hardy as band leader played regularly at the Domain, and at one event in 1876 drew a crowd of two hundred people.  Although the military had officially left the site, volunteer infantry bands such as the 'Band of the NSW 4th Infantry Regiment' continued to use the Domain in front of the former military hospital during the 1880s (as seen in Figure 7.2). The asylum became a 'fashionable place of resort'.[201] The philosophy of opening the asylum is similar to Miron's idea of asylums as tourist places and was an important element of the strategy of the colonial authorities to win over the local community by making the asylum a pleasant and open place. Local bands were instrumental in facilitating the interchanges between community groups and the mental health residents, bringing the two together.

[198] "The Asylum Grounds," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)  July 26, 1889.
[199] McDonald, ed. *Hospital for the Insane,* 189.
[200] "Concert at the Asylum," *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)June 19, 1877.
[201] "Burwood Band," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)June 5,1876.

**Figure 7.2** Source: Hunter Photobank 'Band of the NSW 4th Infantry Regiment (1884?)

The opening up of asylums was seen in the increasing numbers of visitors to asylums during this period.  Community engagement was encouraged and many asylums were marketed as tourist attractions, which helped change perceptions. Amusements were shared by the inmates. For example, in 1878 the dispatching of a large balloon made by Mr Higginbottom, city engineer. was attended by inmates and a large number of the general community in the vicinity of the Domain.  It was also observed by many townspeople who were able to catch a glimpse from outside the asylum in other areas of the city. Unfortunately the wind was too strong on the day of the launch, so the balloon was put aside and a smaller one used which sailed away and after travelling some distance caught fire.  Another attempt to launch the large balloon was more successful and was watched by some observers through telescopes.[202]

Other outdoor activities included the New Year's Day amusement of 'sports at the Asylum grounds', whereby the Domain was open for all to enter and enjoy.[203] Community engagement was increased through sport and other displays which permeated the psychological barriers between the Domain and the community. As mentioned sports including cricket were a regular activity at the Domain, with games played between inmates and attendants, as well as particular professions invited to the site to play against each other.[204]  As well as active recreation the beautiful grounds offered opportunities for promenades amongst the plantings. These improvements coincided with the growing interest in the creation of parks, public recreational areas and visits to regional locations in NSW.   It supported the authority's

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[202] "Asylum Grounds," *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners' Advocate*(Newcastle)  October 2, 1878.
[203] "New Year's Day Amusements," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) January 4, 1876.
[204] "District News-Newcastle," *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* (Maitland) June 9, 1885. Fancy dress game and cricket attracting 1000 spectators.

objective of "not only beautifying the place, but removing as far as possible the barriers which were formerly so prominent".[205]  The Domain was a community friendly space which actively drew people to the site, providing interest for the inmates and increasing the understanding of the asylum as an institution.

Engaging inmates and the community at the asylum created shared social spaces where inmates were no longer hidden away, but visible.  The Newcastle Asylum became a transparent curative environment during the 1880s; known and accepted by the community, which served to reduce the stigma associated with lunacy.  As Miron advises, this was also common in North America where the community took pride in their asylums, promoting them as tourist places to visit and important sites of civic activity, public participation, and enlightenment.[206] Julia Horne's book *The Pursuit of Wonder* describes the awareness of the benefits of visiting new places in the 1890s, particularly trips to experience the natural environment.[207] Institutional tourism also contributed to the general boom in tourism to Newcastle and this was further supported by the expanding railway network in NSW which offered special excursion fares to the town's parks.[208] The 1880s and 1890s saw the beginning of growth in the colonial tourism market[209] with the Depression of the early 1890s helping to promote and develop local tourism as people were less inclined to undertake expensive overseas travel. A stay 'at home' approach was more affordable and this stimulated local economies.[210]  Many colonial asylum sites during this time emphasised the beauty of their surroundings,[211] particularly to visitors.   Newcastle's asylum grounds were promoted in the local press as:

> ...not to be missed...No visitor doing the sights of Newcastle ought to miss the excellent institution....the picturesque and interesting surrounds, it would well repay a visit.[212]

A postcard of 'The Fountain, Hospital for Insane, Newcastle' (Figure 7.3) confirms the Domain as a tourist destination and represents the community's acceptance of the place, to the extent that some would purchase an image of it to share with family or friends.   The scene includes the angel on a high plinth at the end of the main avenue in the Domain, a decorative fountain and a field gun reflecting the earlier military use at the Domain.

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[205] "Hospital for the Insane," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle)  January 22, 1890.

[206] Miron, *Prisons, Asylums*, 8-9.

[207] Julia Horne, *The Pursuit of Wonder: How Australia's Landscape Was Explored, Nature Discovered and Tourism Unleashed* (Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press, 2005).

[208] Horne, *The Pursuit of Wonder*, 56.

[209] Horne, *The Pursuit of Wonder,* 155.

[210] Horne, *The Pursuit of Wonder,* 56.

[211] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 27.

[212] "Hospital for the Insane," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) April 3, 1886.

**Figure 7.3**.Postcard 'The Fountain Hospital for the Insane, Newcastle'. Private collection. Date unknown.

The asylum at the Newcastle Domain was ideal for inmate care and community engagement because of its beautiful coastal location and social connectivity with other parts of the city. The Domain remained discrete because it was slightly less elevated on the landscape; however access to it was relatively easy due to its location in the city. The features and natural surrounds of the Government Domain could easily host a new and more open form of asylum care and enable people to engage with one another on site. Complementing this, inmates were encouraged to use the public amenities in the town just as much as the public were encouraged to come to the asylum.

Cane was able to make a long lasting contribution to the city's amenities when he extended his efforts at beautification beyond the formal boundaries of the Asylum.   The Lower Reserve with its dramatic coastal seascape setting of high coal cliffs and magnificent views was treated as part of the asylum grounds, despite it being outside the asylum wall and separated from it by Watt Street. The Lower Reserve had been part of the grounds of Government House.  Until the mid1870s, it was fenced off and out of bounds, especially when the girls were present at the Domain.  It was dedicated as a public park in 1878 and a drinking fountain constructed (Figure 7.4). The Lower Reserve was landscaped by Cane who made it attractive by planting ornamental shrubs and trees and constructing a neat hardwood fence and seats for the pleasure seekers.[213]

Its popularity as a park was shown when it was chosen in 1897 as the site for the only statue of a Newcastle citizen in the city, that of James Fletcher who was a prominent Newcastle identity, local coal miner and owner of mines, who

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[213] "Recreation Reserve at Top of Watt Street," *Newcastle & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) Jan 15,1878.

became a MLA and assisted the miners of the AA Company to establish a 'sick and accident fund'.[214] He was also proprietor of the *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners' Advocate.*



**Figure 7.4**. Lower Reserve, later Fletcher Park, Newcastle 1905.
Source: Ralph Snowball Collection, Cultural Collections, University of Newcastle 'Fletcher Park, Newcastle, NSW, 2 November 1905'

A Reserve for Public Recreation was also set aside to the south of the Domain and used for formal civic and public events. Referred to as the Upper Reserve, this was officially opened to the public in 1863 and the name changed to King Edward Park in 1910.  The park also contains the convict built swimming baths, also known as the 'Bogey Hole' which was cut out of rock under the direction of Major Morisset in 1819.[215] The Government Domain, King Edward Park and Lower Reserve were all promoted and opened up to the public during the 1870s. The close proximity of the asylum to the new parklands was beneficial as it provided easy access for inmates to recreation spaces outside the asylum walls. This was ideal and in keeping with the philosophy of the time that supported increased amusement and recreation for inmates. As Holmes, Martin and Mirmohamadi describe in *Reading the Garden: The settlement of Australia* public parks were established to improve the health and wellbeing of the general population.  The benefits of parks for the wider community in the nineteenth century were realised, often recreating familiar gardens that were similar to those in

[214] Dulcie Hartley, "James Fletcher: Behind the Legend", in *Cultural Collections* (Newcastle: University of Newcastle, 1992).
[215] Katie Holmes, Susan Martin, and Kylie Mirmohamadi, *Reading the Garden: The Settlement of Australia* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2008).

Britain.[216] These ideas also transformed colonial asylum gardens in many ways that were similar to practices worldwide. Katherine Ziff's work *Asylum on the Hill: History of a Healing Landscape* is a study of a single institution which looks at the significance of asylum landscapes for inmate care and managing behaviours.[217]  Similar ideas informed practice at the Newcastle Asylum.

However the openness and outdoor culture of the Newcastle Asylum in the late nineteenth century would not last. Instead what developed in the early twentieth century was a strong focus on education and training and this new culture of care took inmates increasingly indoors, although some activities such as gardening and sport continued outdoors.  The transition from asylum with its connotations of a place which provided an escape into a less stressful environment to a hospital in which people would be subject to medical treatments to try to cure their mental illness seemed eventually to create a culture of inactivity. There was a shift from inmates as 'workers', to the passive patients of the 1950s onwards. This shift in the culture of care in the twentieth century is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the variety of visitor to Newcastle Asylum during the late decades of the 1800s. These visitors made a positive contribution to care of the insane and were instrumental in opening up the asylum.  There was not the stigma of visiting an asylum as would be the case in the twentieth century when care became medicalised. This later period also saw fewer visitors to institutions as numbers dropped off leaving the clergy to do their work unaided. Visitors were part of care of inmates at Newcastle and as the following chapter explores inmates there were a very isolated population, a group who were very much in need of visitors.  This following chapter also examines how care of imbecile and idiot classes differed to the general insane population in NSW and the origins of care for this group in England. An historical background is needed to understand the Australian context within which the asylum at Newcastle operated.   Patterns of admission at the Newcastle Asylum are investigated to find out whether inmates really were imbecile or idiot or whether there were other factors contributing to them coming to Newcastle.

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[216] Holmes, *Reading the Garden, 15.*
[217] Katherine Ziff, *Asylum on the Hill: History of a Healing Landscape* (Ohio University Press: Athens, Ohio, 2013).

# Chapter 8: Frontier Reality: A Government Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots

The asylum at the Government Domain represents the early development of imbecile and idiot institutions in Australia. This is an area that has not been extensively written about, and this chapter attempts to put into context this special purpose government asylum. The chapter argues that state intervention and institutions on the site were genuinely about care rather than solely for the purpose of social control. It was unlikely the case that authorities were simply exercising social control over deviant members of colonial society. Also explored is whether social problems were a motive for admission, rather than their status as idiots or imbeciles. There was a mixed group of mostly aging men at Newcastle in the first few years and although it took some time to become a true 'feebleminded' institution, it was the first asylum for those with congenital mental deficiency in Australia. The social and cultural dimensions of the changing colony and increasing population in NSW had an incredible impact on the colonial government that carried this burden to care for this dislocated group.

This chapter explores the medical case records of the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots between the years 1871 and 1900. Other archival records include the asylum's *Record of inspections, Registers of discharges, removals and deaths* and *Registers of admission and discharge* held at the State Archives of NSW. The analysis is based on 824 inmates and their case notes to examine how they differed from the inmates of the general lunatic asylums in NSW. Although the Newcastle Asylum records show that some inmates had spent many years in asylums in Sydney, their background and the circumstances surrounding their need for institutional care were quite different. This is discussed further in this chapter. These records show that in Newcastle, inmates were a diverse group both socially and culturally. Initially most inmates were likely not to be imbecile and idiot, however over the following decades this specific class developed. The number of inmates discharged from Newcastle was minimal and recovery rates were low. Most needed long term care.[1] Many there were thought of as chronic incurables.

Documentary primary sources associated with the Newcastle Asylum inmates are also examined to explore the transition from the general asylum population in Sydney to a specific asylum for imbecile and idiots at Newcastle. It took many decades for this class of inmate to occupy the asylum, and the institution's name changed from the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots to become the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane in 1879[2] and as discussed the group of early inmates did not always fit this category (imbecile and idiots). There was a disposal of aging men and children in asylums in NSW during the 1860s and 1870s and the needs of these groups worsened in the 1870s and 1880s. Government authorities increased care because of the lack of other institutional agencies and it was the opposite scenario in Britain, where there was a disposal of women and children into asylums.[3]

These two groups (young people and ageing men) are a prominent feature in the early records of the Newcastle Asylum for Imbeciles and Idiots, they were vulnerable groups because of their incapacity to work or be financially independent. McDonald in his study of the Newcastle Asylum also backs up that older man and younger

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[1] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 639. There were no recoveries from Newcastle in 1883-4.
[2] Colonial Government of New South Wales, Newcastle "Medical Case Books", Reference CGS 5066. Sydney: NSW State Archives, 6 October 1871 - 28 Feb 1973.
[3] Joseph Melling and Bill Forsythe (eds), *Insanity, Institutions and Society, 1800-1914: A Social History of Madness in Comparative Perspective* (London Routledge,1999), 94.

children were prominent in the Newcastle records.[4]  Instead government authorities were forced to act as carer of such individuals.  The first group of inmates in 1871 was mostly older and foreign men, they were not idiot or imbecile at all, but rather many had functioned well having professional careers. Although inmates were more acute at the Newcastle Asylum, in reality the medical records do not reflect that these conditions were life-long.  Most of the older men needed long term care and recovery rates at the Newcastle Asylum were low because of their age and susceptibility to other illnesses.  Older foreign men were particularly vulnerable because often language complicated assessment.   Both of these issues are explored further in this chapter.

The colony was in crisis in terms of providing for the mentally ill during the 1870s and 1880s and the NGD was again used haphazardly to implement much needed care in the colony.  The opening of the Newcastle Asylum was about dispersal of inmates in government care to free up space in institutions in Sydney.  Before discussing inmates at Newcastle it is important to put into context how care for this group came about, therefore the following examines how care of imbecile and idiots in NSW came about.

## Development of Care of Imbecile and Idiots in NSW

British lunatic asylum regulations were the forerunner of contemporary practice of mental health care in NSW and influenced mental health practice in all of the Australian colonies. Despite this entanglement there were clear differences in the way that idiots and imbeciles were cared for as distinct from the insane population.  Although some intellectually disabled individuals were admitted to lunatic asylums in England they were mostly the responsibility of family or friends.[5] In NSW this permanent care of this group was cared for exclusively by government authorities.

During the second half of the 1800s in Britain the non-government sector cared for imbecile and idiots. David Wright in *Mental Disability in Victorian England: the Earlswood Asylum, 1847-1901* and David Gladstone book chapter *The changing dynamic of institutional care: the Western Counties Idiot Asylum 1864-1914* are comprehensive accounts of intellectual disability in Britain.[6]  Wright's work traces the history of what he believes is the first institution for 'idiots' in the English-speaking world, the Earlswood Asylum which opened in 1853.[7]  The medical profession did not get heavily involved in the field of intellectual disability until the late 1800s in Britain, instead focusing on the care of the insane. This would also be the case in Australia.  Australia did not have the charitable organisations and private institutions to the same extent as Britain, however had the support of government authorities to open institutions for the intellectually disabled.

A specific culture of care for imbeciles and idiots in England had its origins with the workhouses and Poor Laws. The New Poor Laws Act was established in 1834.[8]  Whereas in NSW institutional care for this group arose quite suddenly and haphazardly, instead of implementing Poor Laws government authorities gave financial assistance to charitable

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[4] Donald, McDonald. "The Newcastle Lunatic Asylum: 'So human a purpose." *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society,* June 1980.
[5] Wright, *Mental Disablity*, 21. Peter Rushton, "Idiocy, the Family and the Community in Early Modern North-East England", in *From Idiocy to Mental Deficiency*, ed. David Wright & Anne Digby (Great Britain: Routledge, 1996).
[6] David Gladstone, "The Changing Dynamic of Institutional Care: The Western Counties Idiot Asylum 1864-1914", in *From Idiocy to Mental Deficiency* ed. David Wright & Anne Digby (Great Britain: Routledge, 1996).
[7]  Wright, *Mental Disablity,* 9.
[8] Wright, *Mental Disablity,* 16.

societies such as the Benevolent Society to provide welfare services.[9] The New Poor Laws and workhouses attempted to curb funding of poor relief and discourage the provision of relief. Workhouses were intended to be punitive; they isolated the inmate from the outside world and provided harsh labour.[10] However, imbecile and idiot classes were vulnerable because of their inability to work.  Crowther's extensive work *The Workhouse System* described how workhouses were for the able-bodied, however soon become filled with the elderly and insane prompting the establishment of the conversion of existing buildings to care for these groups.[11]  They (idiot and imbecile classes) did not fit the national work house model due to their condition and special needs that were not provided for at the workhouses. This eventually led to a change in the legal framework acknowledging the distinct differences between insanity, idiocy and imbecility and to the establishment of private specialist institutions.  It was from the 1830s that many of these specialist institutions developed in the northern hemisphere.

Kanner provides a comprehensive analysis of the first institutional training for idiot children in Europe and northern America in *A History of the Care and Study of the Mentally Retarded*.[12]  He records the spread of these special institutions from around the mid-1850s. The first was a private school in France in 1834 and in 1847, Germany opened the first government sponsored institution. Table 8.1 is an overview of the specialist institutions for imbecile and idiots throughout England, Europe and North America. The majority of these were private institutions. Although the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots is not in Kanner's study, it has been included here to compare with similar institutions.

**Table 8.1**- Establishment of Imbecile and Idiot Institutions in Europe and Northern America

| 1834 | France- | Private |
|------|---------|---------|
| 1845 | Germany | **Public** (1847) |
| 1838 | England (Bath) | Private |
| 1853 | England (Earlswood) | Private |
| 1855 | USA | **Public** |
| 1857 | Netherlands | Private |
| 1863 | Sweden | Private |
| 1867 | Switzerland | Private |
| 1869 | Ireland | Private |
| 1871 | Australia | **Public** |
| 1883 | Austria | Private |
| 1883 | Finland | **Public** |
| 1889 | Italy | Private |
| 1900 | Japan | Private |

Note: Information from Leo Kanner study *A History of the Care and Study of the Mentally Retarded* (1964)- Australia included for this study for purpose of this thesis.

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[9] Dickey,  *No Charity There*, 16.
[10] Knott,"Popular Opposition to the 1834 Poor Laws" (Oroom Helm: London), 41-2.
[11] M Crowther, *The Workhouse System 1834-1929: The History of an English Social Institution* (Cambridge: University Press, 1981), Ch.7.
[12] Kanner, *A History of the Care and Study of the Mentally Retarded*.

The Newcastle Asylum was established relatively early when considered in the wider context of similar institutions worldwide; it was the third public institution of its type. This is significant considering NSW had yet to reach the centenary of white colonisation. As mentioned in Chapter Six the idea for specialist institutions was in circulation in NSW even before the opening of Britain's Earlswood Asylum in 1853. The *Report of the Select Committee on the Lunatic Asylum, Tarban Creek* (1846)[13] had advocated classification and this was implemented on the advice of Manning when he became the Inspector General of the Insane in NSW in 1876.[14] His intention that imbecile and idiots should be kept entirely separate from the general insane population in a special institution[15] was a radical shift from the way lunacy care had been carried out in NSW. It reflected the changing implementation of care that saw more recreation and training of imbeciles and idiots. The Australian asylum culture had up to this point been heavily influenced by medical doctors,[16] but the asylum at the Domain was a temporary experiment in non-medical care. After only a quarter of a century the institutional care of this group was handed to the medical profession.

Idiots and imbeciles came under the general lunacy provisions in Australia. The first special provision for this class in NSW was in the Lunacy Act 1878 passed after the establishment of the Newcastle Asylum. As for the general insane, the social realities of transportation and ongoing free immigration meant that extended families were not always present and care became the responsibility of government. Prior to a specialist asylum opening at the NGD there was no adequate care for imbecile and idiots in NSW who were admitted to large asylums and cared for alongside the general insane population.

Although lunacy regulations in NSW reflected practices in England, there were vast differences in the way this care was carried out. Care for imbecile and idiots followed a state driven model rather than the British tradition of charitable and private care.[17] Institutions in England did not have a medical focus and were not referred to as 'hospitals', except for Reed's first English institution. In Britain a medical officer was not appointed to managing equivalent institutions until 1937, this occurred at the Earlswood institution. They became known as 'training facilities'. It was not until 1948 that institutions in Britain for the intellectually disabled were taken over by the National Welfare Board.[18] The Newcastle Hospital for the Insane reflected this British philosophy of care but it was an isolated case.[19] Australian asylums including imbecile and idiot institutions were progressively renamed 'hospitals' recognising the primacy of medical care in them. One was Stockton Hospital for the Insane situated across the Hunter River from the NGD and for much of the twentieth century cared for the intellectually disabled. The 'Hospitals for the Insane' were later renamed 'mental' and 'psychiatric' hospitals continuing their association with medicine. From then on in NSW, the medical model of care became increasingly prominent in the management of institutions for the intellectually disabled. In 1887 the Kew Asylum was the first institution for imbecile and idiots established in the Colony of Victoria, later becoming known as the Kew Psychiatric Hospital. Although the name (hospital) applied to these early Australian institutions for imbecile and

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13 Curry, "The Select Committee".
14 Cummins, *A History of Medical*, 37.
15 Heaton, "Australian Dictionary of Dates and Men of the Time : Containing the History of Australia from 1542 to Date", 437.
16 Curry, "The Select Committee", 8.
17 Wright, *Mental Disablity,* 46.
18 Wright*, Mental Disablity,* 23. Gladstone, "The Changing Dynamic of Institutional Care: The Western Counties Idiot Asylum 1864-1914", 143.
19 Garton, Seeking Refuge.

idiots, the name did not really make any difference because a similar philosophy of care was also common in Britain. As mentioned the term 'hospital' still applied to these incurable institutions, there remained a marked difference between mental health care and the care of the intellectually disabled.

As a specialist, non-medical institution in a generalist medical system, the Newcastle Asylum has a certain level of autonomy that was not seen elsewhere. It adopted a model of care for imbecile and idiots similar to that in Britain. Considering the inexperience of non-medical personnel put in charge there, it was quite successful.

The situation was far different in Western Australia where as Megahey points out the need for separate institutions for the 'weak-minded' was not supported.[20] Instead it was suggested in 1898 by Dr Hope that this group be managed by charitable institutions as opposed to the state having primary care as in NSW.  A particular culture of care was able to develop in Western Australia because Sydney was in a separate colony and government had no authority there. A new system developed in Western Australia whereby care for intellectually disabled was managed by private and charitable sector (as in Britain). Institutions in Western Australia did not carry the baggage of the older asylums in NSW that had been primarily the responsibility of government authorities. Instead care there was organised and managed by non-government organisations.  At Newcastle, moral therapy had been given a chance to thrive and inmates were cared for in an environment more conducive to mental health care than the 'old' asylums in the colony.

Table 8.2 shows the general insane population in NSW and the insane population there during the 1860s and 1880s.  In Britain the situation was not significantly different with only a slightly lower proportion of asylum inmates there. This can be partially accounted for because the imbeciles and idiots who were part of the NSW asylum population were not counted in Britain because many were training institutions.  Although there was a significant increase in population in NSW, particularly between 1881 and 1885 the increase in the asylum population was more gradual.

**Table 8.2** Population of NSW and insane population 1864-1885.[21]

| Year | Population of NSW | Total Number of Insane in NSW | Proportion of Insane to Population NSW | Proportion of Insane to Population England |
|------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1864 | 392,589 | 894 | 1 in 399 | 1 in 465 |
| 1871 | 519,182 | 1,387 | 1 in 374 | 1 in 394 |
| 1876 | 629,776 | 1,740 | 1 in 361 | 1 in 368 |
| 1881 | 781,265 | 2,218 | 1 in 352 | 1 in 352 |
| 1885 | 980,573 | 2,643 | 1 in 374 | 1 in 345 |

The principle moral cause of admissions related to insanity in NSW in 1883-4 was reported as 'mental anxiety and worry, with overwork', the leading physical cause was intemperance.[22] In 1885 the Newcastle Asylum was the only government

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[20] Megahey, "Living in Fremantle Asylum: The Colonial Experience of Intellectual Disability 1829-1900", 47.
[21] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 640.

asylum outside Sydney. Table 8.3 shows the asylum population at the government asylums in NSW, including those at Gladesville and Parramatta which had large populations compared with institutions at Callan Park and Newcastle. The Newcastle Asylum was the colony's fourth government asylum and was the least populated. By 1885 the Newcastle Asylum had transitioned to become a specialist institution with the majority of inmates having an intellectual disability.

**Table 8.3**  Number of people in NSW asylums in 1885[23]

| Asylum | Female | Male | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gladesville | 299 | 478 | 777 |
| Parramatta | 363 | 654 | 1017 |
| Callan Park | 128 | 330 | 458 |
| Newcastle | 127 | 113 | 240 |
| TOTAL in NSW | 903 | 1,589 | 2,492 |

It had taken well over a decade for the Newcastle Asylum to gain true status as a specialist institution because of other needy mental health cases that also required institutional and permanent care. The objective of authorities in NSW was not so much in supporting families of the mentally ill or disabled, but the direct care of these groups, providing food and shelter.  This care was delivered by public servants including doctors, attendants, matrons, nurses, clerks and later teachers.  Some came from areas of public service unrelated to care. The lack of familial support in NSW meant that many inmates were not easily discharged to relieve the asylum system. The problem of discharging inmates from asylums, Manning described as more urgent in NSW than in any other colony because they had no one to go to.[24]  It was reported in 1871 that not one chronic incurable was able to be discharged from the Parramatta asylum.[25] This was due to the lack of family support and dischargeable cases having nowhere to return to in the community, these 'incurables' were a long term burden on government authorities. The lack of family was significant.

The absence of familial support for many of the inmates in NSW contributed to the need for admission and permanent care.  In *Madness in the Family,* Coleborne examines how families appear inside official asylum writing and also in correspondence to the institution. She draws out new stories about families in the colonial period through use of asylum records, suggesting three main reasons why people needed admission to an asylum. The first was to keep them safe, the second, to cure them, and the third to relieve family of difficult situations.[26] In the case at Newcastle, most were admitted to keep them safe because they did not have family or friends. Many of these admissions were for social reasons as much as for mental health care. Unfortunately there was not the 'voice' of families in the institutions records

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[22] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 640.
[23] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 640.
[24] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 47. Wardley, "Some Phases", 24.
[25] Wardley, "Some Phases".
[26] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 3.

as there was for some of the asylums that Coleborne looked at.  Those at Newcastle were predominantly a family-less group.

Lack of family support was characteristic of NSW as an immigrant society. Porter states in *Mind-Forged Manacles* that families in other parts of the world began to pay experts to care for a loved one who was insane as early as the 1720s.[27]  Australia lacked the experts to carry out such services, or as mentioned in many cases families to assist with care. This contributed to the high need for asylum care. Scull suggests that the early asylum system "created the demand for its own services."[28] It was not until asylums begun to be constructed that the potential for demand was estimated, and although numbers were relatively low, many were alarmed at the need for care, thus driving further institutions to be established. However, he was talking about asylums elsewhere in the world and a much earlier period. Australian asylums differed significantly from these other asylums worldwide due to no familial supports being available. The economic and social circumstances of NSW meant that some people who were family-less and suffered mental illness desperately needed permanent care.   As Grob points out asylums irrespective of their origins were primarily institutions designed to assume functions that had previously been the responsibility of family."[29]  As this chapter explores further, the Newcastle Asylum was a prime example of this response to social isolation where individuals already in the mental health care system may have been selected for transfer to Newcastle deliberately on their family-less status.

The lack of family and friends available for support also meant there was not always someone able to provide important information about a person's behaviour and level of functioning prior to them becoming unwell.  As Roy Porter points out insane treatments were often more effective if families and friends were present.[30]  The isolation of inmates in NSW had a profound impact on their care and the lack of familial knowledge had a significant psycho-social impact on society in nineteenth century Australia. The lack of family also impacted on the admission process during the 1870s when inmates were admitted to the Newcastle Asylum from the community.  Often proper assessments were not undertaken because there were no mental health doctors or reception houses in country areas.  Furthermore there was no standardised testing for mental or cognitive conditions, and often no one to provide an account of how the person's condition had changed over time.  Assessments for initial admission in the rural asylum system were likely to have been brief and substandard as in many cases there was no means of accurately assessing inmates before their arrival at the Newcastle Asylum.[31]  It was therefore difficult to draw conclusions about diagnosis and causes of the mental illness. Furthermore, information was not always effectively communicated across institutions or from one region to another.

With the implementation of more formal inspection processes, asylums throughout the colony became a network of institutions answerable to colonial asylum inspectors and authorities.[32]  Manning paid visits to each colonial asylum every two months to track the asylum population.[33]  He duly reported on inmates at the Newcastle Asylum where

[27] Roy Porter, *Mind-Forg'd Manacles:A History of Madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency* (London: The Athlone Press, 1987), 120.

[28] Andrew Scull, *The Most Solitary of Afflications :Madness and Society in Britain 1700-1900* (London: Yale University Press, 1993), 363-65.

[29] Gerald Grob, *The Mad among Us: A History of the Care of America's Mentally Ill* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 24.

[30] Roy Porter, "Madness and Family before Freud: The View of the Mad Doctors", *Journal of Family History* 23, no. 2 (1998): 169.

[31] Wardley, "Some Phases", 27.

[32] Wardley, "Some Phases", 27.

[33] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 63.

he monitored transfers and discharges between public institutions. Many of the transfers were for departmental reasons.[34] The following looks at the Newcastle Asylum records in more detail.


**The Newcastle Asylum Records**

Policy put into practice in NSW during the 1870s brought about the improvement of official reporting and documenting of procedures associated with the insane.  The English Lunacy Act of 1845 required mental health institutions to keep certain documents.  These included Medical Case Books, Visitation Books and Records of Inspection.[35]   The act also described the role of the Commissioner of Inspection and their requirement to visit institutions, and document any irregularities associated with care and general condition of asylums. These English practices were the basis of the policy of mandatory reporting of inmates in asylums in NSW.

Fortunately, the Newcastle Asylum was part of the new era of record keeping and these records have survived providing valuable information. The mandatory records available to be explored in this thesis show the population at the institution from October 1871 to 1900 and the general state of health of inmates, as well as information about gender and age. The  Admission Book has a column for 'Form of mental disorder' and another for 'Suppose Causes of Insanity' often with very brief notations such as 'imbecility' for the former and 'epilepsy' the later. The fields in the Newcastle Asylum Medical Case Book are Name, Age, Marital status, Number of Children, Occupation, Nativity, Residence, Religion, Form of Mental Disorder, Supposed Cause, Duration of Attack, Date of Known Admission, Insane Relations and Date of Discharge.[36]  Once admitted to the asylum the Record of Inspection kept information about restraint and seclusion showing the 'cause of death' of inmates, medical treatments and acts of violence.[37]

The following table shows the increasing population at the Newcastle Asylum and gives some perspective to the further discussion later in this chapter of other groups. The table show the population of male and females at the Newcastle Asylum from 1871 to 1899. Male admissions far outweighed female admissions during the 1870s, however a more equal distribution began to occur during the1880s and 1890s.

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[34] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 641.

[35] Clive Unsworth, "Law and Lunacy in Psychiatry's 'Golden Age'," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 13, No.4 (1993).

[36] Colonial Government of New South Wales, Newcastle "Medical Case Books", Reference CGS 5066. Sydney: NSW State Archives, 1871. 6 October 1871-28 Feb 1973.

[37] Health Department NSW, "Medical Journals" (Kingswood:State Archives NSW, 10 Mar 1879- 11 Jul 1965).

**Figure 8.4** Population at the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots 1871-1900

| Year | Male | Female | Total |
|------|------|--------|-------|
| 1871 | 88 | 20 | 108 |
| 1875 | 121 | 53 | 174 |
| 1880 | 124 | 104 | 228 |
| 1885 | 127 | 113 | 263 |
| 1890 | 138 | 112 | 319 |
| 1895 | 156 | 151 | 307 |
| 1899 | 176 | 143 | 319 |

Source: "Medical Case Book" NSW State Archives, Kingswood Office, 1871-1900.

As already mentioned the Newcastle Asylum did not start out with primarily imbecile and idiot classes being admitted. Instead it absorbed other cases that were chronic and incurable. The Newcastle records show that the first inmates transferred to the Newcastle Asylum may not have been imbecile or idiot at all, but a diverse group socially, culturally and mentally. The dynamic nature of the colonial mental health system meant that inmates were often transferred from asylum to asylum. The first person admitted to Newcastle was Mr William B on 6 October 1871. The records show that William B was transferred from Bathurst where he had been since August 1858.[38]  He arrived with fifty other inmates on the same day and is likely to have come via Sydney. On the following day another fifty inmates were admitted.   It was common for large groups to arrive at the same time during the first few months of the Newcastle Asylum opening.  There were some individual admissions from the community, however it is difficult to gain accurate numbers because this detail is not always present in the records.   Such admissions from the community would have been difficult to arrange because the priority was to move inmates from asylums in Sydney to create places for new inmates there.

Table 8.5 shows that in 1871, more than half of the first one hundred inmates admitted to Newcastle came directly from other government institutions. Others came from metropolitan and regional areas and it is unknown whether these inmates resided privately or with others in the community. In total 40 per cent are unknown as to their residential address prior to admission.

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[38] Colonial Government of New South Wales, Newcastle "Medical Case Books", Reference CGS 5066. Sydney: NSW State Archives, 1871. 6 October 1871 - 28 Feb 1973.

**Table 8.5** Admissions/transfers in 1871 to Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots.

| Year | Tarban Creek Asylum | Liverpool (Institutions) | Parramatta (Institutions) | Other Institutions | Sydney unnamed | Regional Unnamed | Not stated |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1871 | 37% | 10% | 5% | 8% | 11% | 18% | 11% |

The largest proportion of admissions was from Tarban Creek Lunatic Asylum. Smaller numbers of inmates came from the Parramatta and Gladesville lunatic asylums. The second largest group admitted to Newcastle during 1871 were those from regional areas, unfortunately the name of the town they were transferred from is not always noted. Although a small number of these inmates may have come from regional institutions, it is likely they and were being admitted from the community most were not already in care and. The other significant group came from 'Liverpool' suggesting the general hospital. Thomas M was one of the former Liverpool inmates who had been there since 1848, when aged 39 years. The Tarban Creek Lunatic Asylum was established to take care of non-convicts in the 1840s and 1850s, however many ailing former convicts were also admitted there because there simply was nowhere else for them to go. It is possible that Thomas M had been a convict, many men from the Invalid Establishment at Port Macquarie[39] were moved to Liverpool Hospital who when they became too sick or old to work. Thomas M spent 23 years in the Liverpool hospital before his transfer to Newcastle. One of the legacies of convictism was these damaged men whose sentences had long expired but still remained in the custody of the state. Dickey explains that this was particularly the case in colonies like NSW where there had been a large importation of convicts, these early arrivals ageing in the later decades of the 1870s and 1880s.[40] It was also a big problem in Tasmania where many ageing former convicts required institutionalisation. Many resided at Port Arthur until 1877 when they were transferred to Hobart.[41]

The first group admitted in 1870s was an older group. Just over half of them were over 40 years, and were mostly male. The average age of the inmates in 1871 was 47 years of age, coincidentally also the average life expectancy for men in 1871. The population at the asylum remained a predominantly older group throughout the first half of the 1870s, however admissions of inmates under the age of 21 years increased. The average age of those admitted to the asylum population decreased dramatically over the decades to 11 years in 1891 as shown in Table 8.6, reflecting the fact that many more children were being admitted. This mix of old and young in the first decade after the asylum opened gradually began to change over the following decades to mostly children and young adults. Table 8.7 shows the proportion of admissions in each age range in 1871. It is not known whether some of these inmates were former convicts, however as mentioned some of them may have been ageing convict men.

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[39] Golder, *Politics, Patronage and Public*, 45.

[40] Dickey, *No Charity There,* 48.

[41] Edwin Barnard, *Exiled, the Port Arthur Convict Photographs* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2010), 11.

**Table 8.6** Average Age of new inmates at Newcastle in 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1896

| 1871 | 1881 | 1891 | 1896 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 47 yrs | 25 yrs | 11yrs | 13yrs |

**Table 8.7** Admissions by Age at the Newcastle Asylum, 1871

| Age | Under 21 yrs | 21-30yrs | 30-40yrs | 40- 50yrs | 50-60yrs | Over 60yrs | Total |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1871 | 25 | 10 | 13 | 17 | 19 | 16 | 108 |

Table 8.7 shows that 25 per cent of those admitted to the Newcastle Asylum in its first year were under the age of 21 years.  However admissions of young people steadily grew over the following decades and many came from other institutions.  The admission to Newcastle may have been to clear out other institutions of children.

The figures shown in Table 8.8 indicate that younger people become increasingly prominent over the decades. However regardless of age and mix of inmates they had something in common, they were mostly 'incurable' cases with chronic mental health problems, firstly the ageing men and later children with intellectual disability.  These groups required permanent care. The first decade shows increasing numbers of admissions. This was because the length of stay for the ageing population was not as long as for the children admitted in later decades.  Deaths relating to the ageing population during the 1870s and early 1880s assisted to free up 'beds' for a younger population where length of stay was more extensive, thus slowing the rate of admissions.

**Table 8.8** Admissions relating to age of new inmates at the Newcastle Asylum, 1871- 1900

| Age | Under 21yrs | 21-30yrs | 30-40yrs | 40- 50yrs | 50-60yrs | Over 60yrs | Total Number Admitted |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1871-80 | 102 | 55 | 24 | 22 | 24 | 26 | 379 |
| 1881-90 | 75 | 16 | 15 | 1 | | 4 | 225 |
| 1891-00 | 155 | 23 | 18 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 236 |

Many of the inmates admitted in the first few years were previously employed and relatively high functioning individuals, suggesting that not all of them were imbecile or idiot, but rather needed care because of other reasons.  What the Newcastle records show is that many inmates had lived relatively 'normal' lives at some point prior to being institutionalised. Many had participated in some form of social life, and had been husbands and fathers prior to their admission.  However the majority were single as shown in Table 8.9 that shows the marital status of the Newcastle

inmates in 1871. Table 8.10 shows whether they were born in Australia.  Most of the first inmates were single men not born in Australia.

**Table 8.9** Marital status of inmate admitted to the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots in 1871.

| Year | Married | Single | Unknown |
|------|---------|--------|---------|
| 1871 | 20% | 50% | 30% |

**Table 8.10** Place of Origin of those admitted to the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots in 1871.

| Year | Native Born | Immigrant | Unknown |
|------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| 1871 | 20% | 53% | 27% |

These results (single men) also support the earlier discussion about the lack of a stable family life. The consequence of their status was that they needed full institutional care when they became unwell. Admissions at the Newcastle Asylum of those born in Australia remained relatively low in the first three years, but steadily increased over the next decade reaching 96 per cent by 1878 as shown in Appendix 1.  This increase also coincided with a decrease in the average age of inmates and the admission of women gradually increased over the following decades.

Certain individuals or groups of inmates may have been deliberately selected by authorities to come to Newcastle on the basis of them not having family and friends in the colony. Most of the adult males admitted on the same day from the same institutions during the 1871 and 1872 were foreign born, with only 20 per cent born in Australia. Most of the adult males admitted on the same day from the same institutions during the 1871 and 1872 were foreign born, with only 20 per cent born in Australia.  At least half of this first group are recorded as 'single', and 20 per cent as 'married' as shown in Table 8.9.. Unfortunately there is minimal information about spouses or children.  Many of these men never returned home after their admission because discharge rates were low from the Newcastle Asylum.[42]

It is clear that the first inmates admitted to the Newcastle Asylum were a socially disadvantaged group for several reasons.  At least half of this first group are recorded as 'single', and 20 per cent as 'married' as shown in Table 8.9.  Forty per cent were over fifty years of age. At the time, Manning argued in this *The Causation and Prevention of Insanity* (1880) that social isolation and the 'absolutely friendless' way of life in Australia contributed to insanity in the colony.  Colborne has also written about this in *Madness in the Family* suggesting loneliness, isolation and dislocation were common experiences.[43]    Many Australian medical books acknowledged these factors regardless of whether inhabitants were poor or well to do. In 1880 half of all asylum inmates in NSW had no relatives in the colony.[44]   Manning identified high rates of insanity in remote areas where many migrant workers were employed as shepherds and

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[42] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 639.
[43] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 47.
[44] Mark Finnane, *Asylums Families and the State, History Workshop*, 20 (1985), 137.

stockmen.[45]   He found that this group was susceptible to a rural madness' associated with 'isolation' and 'pure nostalgia'.[46]

> This isolation, which is something terrible to a new emigrant, and which lasts often for years...to some extent prevents marriage; and it is fostered by the peculiar mode of life both of the miner and the bushman, by the shifting from place to place with the seasons in search of work, and by the relentlessness which seems an inherent feature of colonial existence at present.  A system of family, instead of isolated, emigration would do much to prevent this cause of insanity...with the growth of a native-born population; this cause of insanity will no doubt lessen and in time disappear. [47]

These beliefs of migrant social isolation also relate to current understanding of the cause of mental illness of migrant workers. Furthermore, some may have had pre-existing mental health conditions making them restless and willing to emigrate.  Not unlike immigrants today this group who were susceptible or vulnerable to mental illness, the different cultural, linguistic or social environment often exacerbated conditions.[48]   Other factors including employment uncertainty, physical and psychological stress and substance abuse are evident of migrant populations in the twenty first century.[49]   The Newcastle Asylum provided permanent institutional care for this group. Formal support provided by government replaced the care of family.  There were generally more men than women in asylums in Australia at this time,[50] and as Figure 8.4 shows there was a high proportion of men at Newcastle during the first ten years.   This may have been a deliberate strategy taken by authorities to select certain inmates such as those who were single and or foreigners without friends or family in the colony to come to Newcastle.

The mental health system during the 1870s absorbed those who were vulnerable in society. Not only was there the high rate of admissions of older men to the Newcastle Asylum during the first few years, but there was also many with different nationalities. There were various nationalities in the NSW. From 1830s many young single migrant men came to NSW, this movement was amplified during the Gold Rush years and it continued in the 1870s.[51]   Of the 3203 of those in asylums in NSW during 1883 only 856 were born in Australia. There were 1887 inmates admitted who were born in Great Britain and Ireland, 23 from France, 77 from Germany and 70 from China.[52]  Some people suffering mental illness were being looked after by family and friends in the community, however as suggested many of those without social supports ended up in the asylums.  Average population of NSW during 1878-1887 was 847,725 and the following table shows where residents of NSW had come from. As Table 8.11 shows there was a culturally diverse mix of inmates at Newcastle from 1871 to 1875, with the majority coming from England, Ireland and Scotland.  Appendix 1 shows this diversity continued to the 1890s, but this was to a lesser degree, with increasing numbers of Australian born inmates admitted.

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[45] Frederic Norton Manning, "The Causation and Prevention of Insanity (Read before the Medical Section of the Royal Society of NSW, 10 Sept 1880)", in Royal Society of the New South Wales (Sydney: Government Printer, 1880), 342, 341.

[46] Manning, "The Causation" (Other causes Manning identifies are intemperance, syphilis, brain injury, epilepsy, congenital, influence of modern civilisation)

[47] Manning, "The Causation" 342.

[48] J Sundquist, "Refugees, Labour Migrants and Psychological Distress," Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology 24, no. 20 (1994).

[49] Brian Gushulak and Douglas MacPherson, Migration Medicine and Health: Principles and Practice (Hamilton, Ontario: McGraw-Hill, 2006), 213.

[50] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 38.

[51] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 44-47.

[52] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands,  641.

**Table 8.11** Place of Birth of people admitted to the Newcastle Asylum in 1871-1875.

| Year | 'Native' born (%) | English (%) | Irish (%) | Scotland (%) | Wales (%) | China (%) | France (%) | Norway (%) | America (%) | Other (%) | Unknown (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1871 | 20 | 28 | 16 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | 25 |
| 1872 | 49 | 15 | 23 | | | 2.5 | | 2.5 | | | 8 |
| 1873 | 90 | | 6 | 2 | | | | | | | 2 |
| 1874 | 85 | 3 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | 2 |
| 1875 | 78 | 9 | 6 | 3 | | | | | 3 | | 1 |

**Table 8.12** Place of Birth of people in NSW in 1878-1887 the rate of insanity for people from various national origins and insanity according to population at Gladesville Asylum.[53]

| Place of Birth | Population in NSW (%) | Insanity according to Population (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Australia | 60 | .17 |
| English | 12 | .74 |
| French | 0.5 | 1.3 |
| Irish | 8 | 1 |
| Chinese | 1 | 0.5 |
| German | 1 | 1 |
| Welsh | 0.5 | 0.7 |
| Scandinavian | 0.5 | 1.1 |
| Scottish | 3 | 1.8 |
| USA | 0.5 | 1 |
| Other | 13 | Data unavailable |

**Source:** From figures shown in Ross, "Race and Insanity in New South Wales, 1878-1887" (Table II & III), 857.

Very small numbers of the inmates were of Chinese background. Two inmates admitted on the same day in 1872 were Mr Wing A aged 57 years and Mr Robert L aged 67 years. Mr Wing A was born in China and his occupation recorded as 'digger'. He was transferred to Newcastle from Albury in southern NSW.[54]  Mr Robert L, a 'gold miner,' came from northern Victoria.[55]   Both of these men were single and there is very little other information regarding their transfer or how they were transported to Newcastle.  They may have been assessed at an asylum (or Reception House) in Sydney before being transferred to Newcastle, because as mentioned Manning, who was in charge of transfers and admissions regularly visited government asylums including the one at Newcastle. These men were hidden from society, they were in this sense and also as individuals without personal connections in their new homeland.

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[53] Chisolm Ross, "Race and Insanity in New South Wales, 1878-1887," Medical Journal of Australasia (1881): 857.
[54] New South Wales Archives, "Medical Case Book".
[55] New South Wales Archives, "Medical Case Book".

Excessive drinking may have also contributed to the need for institutions. As mentioned intemperance was believed to contribute to insanity in Australia in the nineteenth century, and it was thought that alcohol was more common due to the warm climate.[56]   Boucher has written about this issue and how the body of the white male was seen as not being able to withstand the Australian environment in colonial Victoria.[57]   The concern over alcohol's link with mental health coincided with the emergence of temperance societies throughout the colonies which sought to curb excessive alcohol consumption and problems associated with it.

The Newcastle records reflect the shift to a modern system of mental health reporting, and provide valuable information about where a person had been admitted from and how long they had been in care. For example, John D was transferred to Newcastle from Tarban Creek Asylum on 6 October 1871 having been an inmate there since 1849.[58] Other inmates transferred to Newcastle in the 1870s had been admitted to Sydney institutions decades before, some had spent more than thirty years in government asylums.[59]

Moving groups of inmates already known to one another could have promoted a sense of familiarity and comfort and alleviated anxieties about coming to a new home at Newcastle.   The transfer of inmates known to one another to the NGD was a compassionate way to settle a group that was already socially disadvantaged. These men were possibly transferred because they had no social ties; instead they were part of an institutional network in the colony. They were hidden colonists, not in the same sense that Evans suggests, that there were deliberate attempts to have inmates isolated and confined in asylums, away from society.[60]   But 'hidden' in that they did not have informal community connections from where they had come. Many men did not have the care of loved ones to help them remain living in the community. Their occupations were often transient and associated with rural employment and this further contributed to social isolation and need for care. As Coleborne has found, migrant and settler histories were shaped by the anxiety of colonial life and this was also often expressed by institutional personnel who too had concerns of the unsettling effects of life in the colonies.[61]

The men arrived in large groups to the Newcastle Asylum from the same institutions. Twenty inmates were transported together on the government surveying steamer *Thetis* from Sydney and admitted on the same day.[62] This was the same boats that transferred many of the girls to Newcastle, as discussed in the previous chapter. These first inmates arrived the evening of 6 October 1871 and there was a large crowd at the wharf to watch. Police were in attendance assisting inmates from the steamer to omnibuses that took them to the asylum.[63]  This trend of group admissions continued throughout the 1870s and 1880s and is discussed further in this chapter in terms of the admission of children from various regions of NSW.Others admitted on the same day at Newcastle were three Welshmen from Tarban Creek asylum at Gladesville in 'October 6th 1871'.  These were William O aged 61 years, Patrick W aged 57

[56] Garton, *Medicine and Madness*, 55.  Manning, "The Causation", 342.
[57] Leigh Boucher, "Masculinity Gone Mad: Settler Colonialism, Medical Discourse and the White Body in Late Nineteenth-Century Victoria," *Lilith*, no. 13. (2004)
[58] Medical Case Book, Reference CGS 5066,1871,6 October 1871 - 28 Feb 1973.
[59] Medical Case Book, Reference CGS 5066.
[60] Raymond Evans, "The Hidden Colonists: Deviance and Social Control in Colonial Queensland" in Social Policy in Australia: Some Perspectives 1901-1975, ed. Jill Roe (Sydney and Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1976), 82.
[61] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 43.
[62] "Newcastle Lunatic Asylum," *Empire* (Sydney) October 13, 1871.
[63] "The Newcastle Lunatic Asylum," *Empire* (Sydney) October 10,1871.

years and Edward A aged16 years. According to their case notes they had all 'worked on cutter'. They shared a Welsh heritage and were possibly acquaintances at Gladesville prior to their transfer, where they could continue their association at Newcastle. They may have even been one another's support system there and a comfort whilst settling in at Newcastle. The level of functioning can be traced and assessed through examining previous occupation of inmates, which are mostly well documented in the Newcastle records. Two inmates admitted in 1871 whose previous occupations had required a high level of expertise, were 48 year old William C and 58 year old Patrick K, both of Scotland. William C was a former policeman and transferred to Newcastle from Aberdeen in NSW[64] and Patrick K a former 'Captain of a ship' was transferred from Liverpool Hospital in Sydney. Both professions would have required good judgement and a high level of cognitive function, much higher than those considered to be imbecile or idiot. As relative high number of them were from the seafaring profession.

Asylum admissions were not associated with imbecile or idiot classes at all, which raises the question of what conditions these men really had. One explanation may relate to the increasing prevalence of syphilis during the 1870s and 1880s in Australia. Many men came directly from lunatic asylums in Sydney to Newcastle and were possibly selected for transfer because of symptoms associated with syphilis and to a lesser extent alcoholism rather than imbecility or idiocy. The condition syphillis was in epidemic proportion in the northern hemisphere and because many of the inmates came from there this increased their chance of contracting the condition. It was not known to be sexually transmitted. Although syphilis was not in the same diagnostic group as idiot and imbecile, it did induce mental impairment similar to behaviours associated with imbecility and idiocy. Prior to the use of antibiotics to treat syphilis, it was a terminal condition and caused widespread damage to the nervous system, bones and joints. During the end or tertiary stage sufferers usually experienced neurological and cardiovascular symptoms, including delusions, confusion and general paresis.[65] General paresis also known as general paralysis of the insane affects the brain and central nervous system, caused by syphilis infection. The final stages of the condition resulted in severe brain complications and always in death in the 1800s. Asylums worldwide experienced a rapid increase of general paralysis of the insane during this period, and this was associated with syphilis affecting a person's mental functioning. As Hayden has identified, it was not unusual for inmates with syphilis to have their symptoms described as 'general paralysis of the insane', 'paresis' and 'dementia paralytica' or just 'paralysis' for the later stage dementia.[66] Many of the terms were used loosely because of problems with proper assessment and attempts to classify particular conditions. The terms 'imbecile' and 'idiot' are commonly used in the Newcastle records, however the term does not always denote intellectual disability, but may relate to other conditions such as syphilis. What emerged was a new class of imbecile in the colony, and those with syphilis were placed in the same class as imbecile and idiots because of their incurability.

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[64] Colonial Government of New South Wales, Newcastle "Medical Case Books", Reference CGS 5066. Sydney: NSW State Archives, 1871. 6 October 1871 - 28 Feb 1973.

[65] Molly E Kent and Frank Romanelli, "Reexamining Syphilis: An Update on Epidemiology, Clinical Manifestations, and Management ", ed. The Annals of Pharmacotherapy (Harvey Whitney Books Company, 2008).

[66] Deborah Hayden, *Pox, Genius, Madness and the Mysteries of Syphilis* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 61.

One of the entries in the Newcastle Medical Case Books describes behaviours and symptoms that were possibly associated with the condition syphilis.  This was 36 years old John S a former seaman from America who was admitted to Newcastle on October 1875.  The following is an account of the admission :

> On admission he was restless, fidgety inclined to be irritable unless humoured. He had all parts of extravagant delusions, spoke of his boundless wealth and tons of gold which he has sent from the mines thought he was some relative to the queen. Uncle drove her away with 20 horses…

John S suffered general paralyses, experiencing mental and physical symptoms. Although there is not enough known of John S, as the description of the condition given indicates he may have been in the final stages of syphilis.  He was delusional and had thoughts of grandiosity and wealth. At the age of 42 John S died on the 21 July 1880 and was buried nearby at Newcastle's Christ Church cemetery.[67]  This was six years after he had been admitted to Newcastle.  Other inmates may have also suffered syphilis, such as David M, a former captain of a ship from Scotland and French born John D who was a sailor. David M was admitted to Newcastle from 'Hunter's Creek' in October of 1874 at the age of 29 years.  John D, aged 48 years, was described as 'imbecile' and transferred from Gladesville asylum where he had been since early 1871.  With their careers cut short they spent the rest of their years at the NGD, dying relatively young.  It is unknown whether these men had syphilis; however is a possibility because of their association with seafaring.  It was not until towards the end of the nineteenth century that the links between syphilis and general paralysis became known.

Assessment was made complex because syphilis was neither properly understood nor consistent with other known cognitive conditions and its symptoms changed over the course of the disease.  Therefore reliable assessments were compromised.  It was much simpler to categorise these incurable inmates as idiots and imbeciles. The 'special' asylum at Newcastle was used to accommodate men in need of permanent institutional care who may have had syphilis, as well as those with congenital conditions. There was no clear criterion for admission to the Newcastle Asylum; instead factors deciding whether a person would be admitted were associated with incurability.

What most of these people shared was a diagnosis as 'incurables'.  It is difficult to ascertain accurately whether the early inmates did fit the category 'imbecile' or 'idiot' because many of them came from overseas and regional NSW and as mentioned had no reliable witness available to describe their cognitive decline.  Instead the sexually transmitted disease syphilis is more likely to have been associated with behaviours and symptoms that mimicked idiocy and imbecility (particularly the later stages).[68]  Because syphilis was untreatable this meant that inmates needed full time care at the end stage of their illness.  Many of the men in the first years are unlikely to have had a congenital intellectual disability.   There are inconsistencies in the records because many men had functioned well prior to their admission, having at least moderate intellect.  The admission criteria appear to have been more strictly followed as the decades progressed, with admissions reflecting intellectual disability.  These incurable inmates were sent to the imbecile and

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[67] Engel and Roulston, "Christ Church, Newcastle, NSW 1804-1900".
[68] Cocks, *Under Blue Skies* , 21.

idiots institution at Newcastle.[69]   This did not negate the colonial Government's commitment to a framework of care that would eventually see a specialist institution come to fruition.[70]

## Women at the Newcastle Asylum

As shown in Table 8.13 women were less prominent in early admissions. The first female to be admitted to the Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots was 17 year old Margaret A on the 7 April 1871.[71]    She was born in Sydney and transferred to Newcastle from Gladesville where she had been since 1861, she was 7.  She died at Newcastle aged 20 years in 1874.  The cause of her death is unknown.  Several other female inmates at Newcastle had quite early first admission dates when at Gladesville lunatic asylum as well.  Many were children when first admitted and by the time they came to the Newcastle Asylum were young women in their late teens and early twenties.  Table 8.4 shows the population of the asylum and proportion of males and females from 1871 and over five year increments to 1899. Females become more prominent at Newcastle during the 1880s and 90s as shown in Table 8.13.  This also corresponded with the decrease of average age and increased admission of children.

**Table 8.13**  Sex and average age at admission to the Newcastle Asylum, 1871-1900

| Years | Males (%) | Females (%) | Males Under 21 years (%) | Females Under 21 years (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1871-80 | 67 | 33 | 14 | 17 |
| 1881-90 | 58 | 42 | 21 | 23 |
| 1891-00 | 53 | 47 | 38 | 34 |

There is little information about the social situation of these women prior to their admission or why they needed care. Unlike the men, prior employment of women was not always noted in the Newcastle Asylum records, nor were details about family marital status and whether they had children. Some of these women, mostly those who were single, had been in employment prior to their admission, usually as servants.    Isabella M and Jessie M both aged 19 years were admitted on 7 April 1871 along with Sarah T aged 26 years and Ellen H aged 21.  They were all transferred from Tarban Creek Asylum to Newcastle along with Mary D who was one of the oldest women admitted to the Newcastle asylum, she was 67 years old and had been at Tarban Creek asylum since 1867.[72]

The presence of a significant population of young women in care opens up issues relating to sexual relations at mental health institutions during this time. This is a sensitive area that has not been widely researched.   Of all the primary sources analysed relating to the Newcastle Asylum, the Record of Inspection provides the best evidence of human interactions at the asylum.[73]   There is a notation written on the 15 October 1893 stating that, "Sarah Jane H was

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[69] Colonial Government of New South Wales, "Medical Case Book", (Sydney: NSW State Archives, Kingswood Office, 1871).
[70] "Newcastle Imbecile Hospital," Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate (Newcastle)  January 22,1890.
[71] New South Wales, "Medical Case Book".
[72] New South Wales, "Medical Case Book".
[73] Unknown, "Record of Inspections".

delivered of 6½ months to Marlene M".[74]   According to the case records a male attendant was the father. It is not known whether Sarah Jane H remained with her mother at the Newcastle Asylum, or whether she was cared for by staff, or perhaps raised in the community. A search of the Births, Deaths and Marriages of NSW failed to find a registration of birth of 'Sarah Jane H' in 1894, however a search of her death found a 'Sarah Jane H' of parents 'unknown' who died in Newcastle in 1964.  This raises questions about accurate reporting and registration of births at institutions during the late 1800s and the attitudes towards sexual relations between staff and inmates which would now be classed as abuse.



**Figure 8.14**  Unidentified female patient 1899.
Source: State Archives of NSW

There is more research needed into young women who resided in colonial government institutions to explore further why permanent care was required. It is particularly important to trace the pathways they took prior to coming to Newcastle, the Newcastle asylum records can assist greatly in this area. Further research into records of other colonial institutions in NSW may also provide knowledge about what chronic conditions existed. The transfers to Newcastle suggest the 'revolving' door phenomenon whereby inmates were transferred from one institution to another. As mentioned their need for care is likely to have been due to their social circumstances rather than their mental state. Many of the inmates transferred to the NGD by administrators were admitted on the grounds that they had no support.  These inmates were the voiceless class in society; the chronic institutionalised who appear to have had no one except government authorities

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[74] Unknown, "Medical Case Book".

to watch over them.  This 'revolving-door' phenomenon is still apparent today in many government institutions within the mental health and the judicial system.[75]

## Aboriginal People and Mental Health

In Australia there is an absence of Aboriginal people in asylums and therefore a lack of substantial historical information. Historians such as Colborne and Martyr have written about indigenous admissions. Manning found that there was rapid increase in cases of insanity in the Aboriginal population "...since the natives have learned the vices that accompany civilisation, and the so-called civilised aborigines show a greater tendency to insanity than the other members of a tribe."[76]   However, Indigenous people were not routinely admitted to psychiatric institutions in NSW.  It is likely that there were not a lot of Indigenous people in locations where asylums were established due to their removal and dispersal throughout Australia by the 1860s and 1870s.  Like convicts, those with a mental illness were more likely to have ended up in gaols, on missions or to have been such outsiders that their mental illness went unnoticed.  There were very few Aboriginal people admitted to asylums in NSW.

This is certainly reflected in the asylum records at Newcastle that only account for two identified Aboriginal admissions over a period of three decades. One of these was 21 year old 'Billy a half caste,' a labourer from 'Buggabadah' in 1873. Admission of Aboriginal inmates in NSW was uncommon during the 1870s as Manning's research of indigenous mental health shows.[77]  He identified eighteen cases in asylums in NSW, and fourteen in Queensland asylums.   Martyr found thirty cases relating to Aboriginal people between 1870 and 1914 at the Fremantle Asylum.[78]   This is far different to the situation in NSW that had very few indigenous admissions to lunatic asylum.[79] There may have been others in the records that are now unidentifiable because they had adopted European names. The standardised colonial mental health records did not specifically address aboriginality, and unless explicitly  stated in the case notes there is no way of identifying Aboriginality. 'Nativity' or place of birth is indicated, however this does not confirm nationality.

## Children at the Newcastle Asylum

Once the asylum population had been established through large scale transfers of mainly older men, the stated aim of catering for imbecile and idiot classes was gradually implemented. The patterns of admission beyond the first decade show an increase of admissions of women and children.  This continued well into the twentieth century when feebleminded children became the primary group at the institution.  Figure 8.4 shows that in 1890 there were 319 inmates at the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane, the largest number recorded at the institution during the 1800s. Asylum

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[75] Patricia Erickson, Crime, *Punishment and Mental Illness : Law and the Behavioural Sciences of Conflict* (Piscataway: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 47.
[76] Frederic Manning, "Insanity in Australian Aborigines, with a Brief Analysis of Thirty-Two Cases, and a Case of Sporadic Cretinism. By Dr. F. Norton Manning, Inspector General of the Insane in NSW," *American Journal of Insanity* 46, no. 4 (1890): 500.
[77] Manning, "Insanity in Australian Aborigines", 2.
[78] Philippa Martyr, "'Behaving Wildly' Diagnoses of Lunacy among Indigenous Persons in Western Australia, 1870–1914", Social History of Medicine, 24 (2011): 316-33.
[79] ShulaMarks,. Chapters 12, 13. In *Insanity, Institutions and Society, 1800-1914: A social history of madness in comparative perspective* Melling, J. & Forsyth, B (eds). London: Routledge, 245.

population also increased at other asylums in NSW in the 1890s.[80]  The *Record of Inspection for the Newcastle Asylum* suggests that this increase was related to admissions from the community that came directly from family and friends. [81] This was a significant change in the earlier mode of admission that was predominantly from other government institutions.

Support from government authorities was not only for adults with intellectual disabilities.  The colonial government in NSW took care and responsibility for other children and young adults with special needs, many of whom had been abandoned in orphanages and other institutions.  Many of the existing children's institutions such as Benevolent Societies and orphan and Roman Catholic schools in NSW in the second half of the1800s were overcrowded, experiencing the same rise in demand as lunatic asylums.  Resources to care for the special needs of children with an intellectual disability were limited, or non-existent. 'Idiot' children were scattered throughout the general asylums.   In 1887 at the Kew Asylum in Victoria a specific ward was established to care for these children. Once it was established, many of those categorised as idiots or imbeciles children in NSW institutions were transferred to Newcastle.[82]   In order to understand whether these children were suffering a mental illness or had an intellectual disability, some individual cases must be considered to explore the social dimensions that impacted on their need for care.

Roman Catholic Orphan School at Parramatta closed in 1886 when the boarding out scheme was implemented as a result of the State Children Relief Act (1881). The boarding out scheme was a scheme whereby destitute and some delinquent children were fostered to respectable families that were paid a small wage for caring for these needy children.[83]   There was a significant increase in the admission of children to Newcastle during this time and children were 90 per cent of all new admissions.  During the 1890s, 72 per cent of the total asylum population at Newcastle were 21 years of age to as young as 2 years old, as shown in Table 8.13.  It is not known what caused the high rate of admissions at this time; however as Megahey has stated numbers of people with intellectual disabilities also steadily rose during the 1880s at the Fremantle Asylum in Western Australia.[84]  However there was a general population at the Fremantle Asylum  and often difficulties in identifying those with anintellectual disability, mostly due to incomplete records.  Both asylums (Newcastle and  Fremantle) saw an increase in admissions of idiot and imbecile classes and the age of admission fall considerably throughout the 1890s. At Fremantle the ages of children ranged from nine to fifteen years,[85]  whereas, at Newcastle ages ranged from two to fifteen years. What differentiated these asylums was that the one at Fremantle was not a specialist home for idiots and imbeciles like the asylum at Newcastle.

Children entered Newcastle from various regions and a range of institutions. Of the young inmates under the age of 21 years during the first decade, 27 per cent were from Sydney, 47 per cent were from regional NSW, whilst only 4 per cent came from the Newcastle area. Sixteen per cent of the young people were transferred from other institutions.

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[80] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 63.
[81] Colonial Government of New South Wales, "Record of Inspections", (Sydney: NSW state archives, Kingswood, 1879).
[82] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 641.
[83] Robert van Krieken, *Children and the State: Social Control and the Formation of Australian Child Welfare* (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991).
[84] Norman Megahey, "Living in Fremantle Asylum: The Colonial Experience of Intellectual Disability 1829-1900" In *Under Blue Skies: The Social Construction of Intellectual Disability in Western Australia*, edited by Errol Cocks, Charlie Fox, Mark Brogan and Michael Lee (Western Australia: Optima Press, 1996).
[85] Megahey, "Living in Fremantle", 31.

There were 5 per cent of cases of unknown origins. One of the youngest inmates was 5 years old Frederick P admitted in 1871 from Waverley in Sydney. This location (Waverley) may indicate that he was at the Benevolent Society Home there, however due to incomplete records this level of detail is not documented.[86] A few years later, up to six children at a time were admitted, transferred from the same institutions. For example, Frank R aged 7 years, Emily R aged 8 years and Charles C aged 10 years arrived from the 'PO school' (Protestant Orphan School) at Parramatta on 31 March 1874. As mentioned in the previous chapter the Protestant Orphan School was an amalgamation of the female and male orphan schools and had been established in 1850.[87] Other children were Alfred S aged 26 years, James S aged 12 years and Thomas S aged 6 years all arrived at Newcastle from the 'Chilcott Parish' orphanage in the district in Singleton, NSW on 29 January 1874. Although Alfred was not a child, it seems he was sent along with relatives. These transfers from local private or church-run orphanages to a government asylum lessened the burden on charitable institutions, enabling them to take further underprivileged children from rural areas. Shared surnames appear regularly in the records of the Newcastle Asylum suggesting that siblings were transferred there together. As with the men coming from one institution, this may have been on compassionate grounds to reduce the stress of being placed in an unfamiliar environment. Often as many as three or four children requiring permanent care were admitted from the same family. Manning suggested in 1885 that heredity may have been a factor relating to the incidence of imbecility and idiocy, this train of thought was compatible with the later eugenics movement of the early twentieth century. He was dismayed with the attitude of the families of these children who had little understanding of the "unhealthy unions" that caused many congenital defects.[88] It is difficult to ascertain whether these young inmates admitted to Newcastle in the 1870s were intellectually disabled, or whether they were social admissions due to neglect, but by the 1880s the institution was caring for its intended clientele of idiots and imbeciles.

Other institutions mentioned in the Newcastle records relating to children reflect the numerous name changes of these other institutions. The name of an institution provides a clue to when a child was initially admitted there prior to coming to Newcastle. For example, there were nine children admitted from the 'Benevolent Society'. As mentioned in Chapter Four the Benevolent Society of NSW was founded in 1818, and funded by private subscription to care for underprivileged children.[89] This was a purpose built asylum at Randwick that later became known as the Randwick Asylum for Destitute Children. Prior to this the institution had briefly located at the Ormond House at Paddington.[90] All of the inmates admitted to Newcastle from the' Benevolent Society' in 1874 were female; the youngest was 5 years of age and the eldest 26 years. This institution was known in 1874 as the Institution for the Relief of Destitute Children and was similar to the industrial school that was established at the NGD earlier. Another institution that sought admission for children at Newcastle was the Biloela Industrial School for Girls. This was the institution originally established at Newcastle as discussed in Chapter Two and transferred to Cockatoo Island (*Biloela)* a few months prior to the Newcastle Asylum opening. Mary Jane C aged 10 years was transferred from Cockatoo Island (*Biloela)* to Newcastle on

[86] New South Wales Archives, "Medical Case Book".
[87] Beryl Bubacz, "The Male and Female Orphan Schools in New South Wales 1801-1850" (University of Sydney, 2007).
[88] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 55.
[89] Margaret Conley, "The Undeserving Poor: Welfare and Labour Policy" in *Australian Welfare History:Critical Essays*, ed. R Kennedy (ed) (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1982), 283.
[90] Dickey, *No Charity There*, 44.

7 February 1880 due to 'imbecility.' After a year she was recorded as deceased. Other children admitted include 2 year old Christopher C admitted in 1875 with the diagnosis 'idiocy', 'congenital', 'from birth'. He too died just two years after admission. Lizzie B was 9 years old when admitted in July 1875 with a diagnosis of 'sunstroke' and after eight days she was transferred to Gladesville asylum. Her records show that she suffered epilepsy. Much of the documentation in the case notes for these chronic young inmates is brief. As Coleborne suggests often long-term inmates were not thought of as being worthy of careful observation.[91] This was certainly true at Newcastle, as the notes are extremely brief in their descriptions.

By the 1890s, children as young as five and six years of age were being relinquished into care at the Newcastle Asylum by family members or guardians. Some 70 per cent of these children were admitted at the request of families.[92] Once handed over, many of the young people had no family contact shown and received no visitors during their stay. This was especially the case for children suffering congenital or 'from birth' conditions such as epilepsy. Many children were transferred from other institutions such as Frank R aged 7 and sister Emily R who were transferred from the Protestant Orphan School in 1874 where they had been since late 1873 with their older sibling Edward R. Edward did not come to Newcastle with his siblings and it is not known what happened to him.[93] There are no details of his parents mentioned. Charles C aged 10 was transferred with these other children from the same institution where he had been since aged 2. His father's name is mentioned in the records. There are very scant records identifying many children. For example John Y who was at the Randwick Asylum for Destitute Children from the age of 4 has an alias noted. It would seem the identification of this child was concealed by adults, possibly one or both of his parents.

Epilepsy was common among the idiot and imbecile population. The medical understanding of this disease developed gradually over the past centuries, and prior to this was associated with activity of the supernatural.[94] It has only been considered a medical condition since the 1800s and is characterised by the epileptic episode or seizure. The three main categories of epilepsy are partial seizures, generalised seizures and undetermined types.[95] The term 'dementia' was used to describe the group suffering seizures because they often complained of poor memory after having an attack and their condition referred to as idiotic epilepsy.[96] There was no clear understanding of the mental impairment related to epilepsy as being separate from imbecility and idiocy. Cases at the Newcastle Asylum include some that had been life long, whilst others worsened over time due to epileptic seizures.

The paucity of case notes makes a sound understanding of diagnoses impossible. Reporting in the records is scant and to gain accurate account of diagnosis and conditions of inmates is very difficult. The following notes about two men indicates that the asylum population was shifting towards those with an intellectual disability. Two young men who were presumably siblings were institutionalised for a short time in 1879. They were 26 year old John W and 18 year old Noah W both from East Maitland and each classified: with 'imbecility', 'congenital', 'from birth'. It is unclear how severe their

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[91] Coleborne, *Madness in the Family*, 55.
[92] Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded'.
[93] State Records NSW, "Orphan Schools" (NSW Government, 2013).
[94] Eadie M.J and Bladin P.F, *A Disease Once Sacred: A History of the Medical Understanding of Epilepsy* (Eastleigh, England: John Libbey and Company Ltd, 2001).vii.
[95] Christina Gurnett and W Edwin Dodson, "Definitions and Classifications of Epilepsy" in *The Treatment of Epilepsy* (3rd Edition), ed. Simon D Shorvon, Emelio Perucca, and Jerome Engel (West Essex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 3.
[96] Walter J Friedlander, *The History of Modern Epilepsy: The Beginning, 1865-1914* (United States of America: Greenwood Press, 2001), 217 & 229.

conditions were, however after nineteen days John W was 'deceased' and his brother Noah had been discharged from the asylum with no indication of where he went. Perhaps concerned family members took him from the asylum in fear that he would come to the same end as John.

In other cases, symptoms consistent with epilepsy and treatment for it are evident. Another child admitted to the Newcastle Asylum was four year old Frederick S from Rushcutters Bay in Sydney who was placed into care in December 1875. He was one of the youngest of the inmates at the Newcastle Asylum for Imbeciles and Idiots,[97] and described as "…a pale child, tall for his age and having thick lips and a long tongue, required great care". The description of a swollen tongue is associated with prolonged high doses of medication to relieve symptoms of epilepsy. Ten year old James C from 'the Ridge' in Newcastle was admitted and his records state he suffered an 'attack of dementia at 9 months of age' probably associated with epileptic seizures.[98] The term 'dementia' used in the case notes appears to describe the symptoms. He died in August 1886 at the age of 11 years of 'Bronco-pneumonia'. Similarly other references in the records refer to 'epilepsy' and describe episodes of choking and fitting, rather than the condition (epilepsy).

The treatment of epilepsy at this time was medication with Potassium Bromide. Potassium Bromide was an anti convulsant medication and considered the first effective medication in treating epilepsy. Unfortunately the medication became a primary solution and quick 'fix' for this condition, leading to significant problems associated with overuse in many institutions. The medicine was supposed to be administered in very low doses because its long half-life meant that it stayed in the body for quite a long time. Its use became a vicious cycle because further use exacerbated symptoms. Inmates who exhibited unmanageable behaviours were sometimes given increased doses of Potassium Bromide in the belief behaviours were a result of epilepsy. There was a side effect of a build-up of the medication in the inmate's system. High doses over a lengthy period resulted in chronic toxicity, called Bromidism.[99] Bromide was also common in England in the late 1880s and Bromide toxicity continued unnoticed for many years during the late 1800s.[100] Eventually authorities there became concerned with the increased doses of the drug causing further abnormal mental disorders, including psychosis, delirium and further seizures.[101] Dr Williamson at Newcastle also had concerns about the drug. He noted: "The difference in the approach of actually taking medication is due to the fact that I have stopped the somewhat severe administering of Potass Bromide Fluloral and increased hydration to Epileptics in the male division." [102] Potassium Bromide remained in common use well into the 1900s in Australia.

Children were relinquished into care because their parents often had little extended family and there was no community support offered for a child with an intellectual disability at this time. Financial relief was not introduced in NSW until the1940s.[103] The situation was exacerbated by the 1890s depression which saw many families endure social and financial hardship, often resulting in domestic breakdown and a child not being able to remain in the care of his or

[97] New South Wales, "Medical Case Book".
[98] New South Wales, "Medical Case Book".
[99] Kent Olson, ed. *Poisoning and Drug Overdose* (New York: McGraw-Hill Medical Publishing Division, 2006).
[100] C Medawar, *Power and Dependance, Social Audit on the Saftey of Medicines* (London: Social Audit Ltd, 1992), 49.
[101] Marc Galanter and Herbert Kleber, *The American Psychiatric Publishing Textbook of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 4th ed. (Arlington: American Psychiatric Publishing Inc, 2008).
[102] Unknown, "Record of Inspections".
[103] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Accessed 20 January 2014
http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/94713ad445ff1425ca25682000192af2/8e72c4526a94aaedca2569de00296978!OpenDocument

her family.[104]  Manning in 1892 refers to the "...indirect results of financial embarrassment in driving to public support a number of dements and imbeciles, cared for at home in more prosperous times."[105] These were difficult times, however despite this authorities continued to build infrastructure such as the new wards for the 'imbeciles' at Newcastle to help care for children.

When families relinquished their loved one into care, it was often with a plan to resume them when circumstances improved. A period of five years applied in Britain, after which inmates were returned to their next of kin.[106]  The Newcastle Asylum had no strict limitations on length of admission and there was no expectation that families would reclaim their child, recognising what a struggle this was for parents without support.  The Newcastle Hospital for the Insane supported families at a time when there was little support offered elsewhere.

Education and training also became part of care of intellectually disabled children. At Newcastle Dr Williamson introduced practical training and education for imbecile and idiot children.  This development came out of a more balanced approach whereby moral therapy, training and education were all part of care.  The Newcastle Asylum approach was similar to what Wright describes of the Earlwood Asylum, where education in vocational and domestic skills was seen as paramount to the idiot and imbecile classes.[107]  The NSW Defective and Epileptic Children's Act of 1899 like the 1894 legislation in Britain allowed local education authorities to conduct special classes for these groups.[108] In this aspect as well it was colonial authorities who took charge rather than families, community and charitable organisations as in Britain.

The transition towards an asylum population that really was an idiot and imbecile population did not occur until the late 1880s when many more young people were admitted to the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane.  The Newcastle Asylum was a 'branch institution' of the Lunacy Department under the same regulations and controls as other institutions for the insane, and had in its first decade and half to accept long term incurable patients from other asylums within the system.[109]  By the late 1880s, children dominated the intake and the hospital came to resemble other institutions for special children in Britain and Australia in the 1880s and 1890s with their focus on child admissions, special education and structured occupational training.  Legislation in NSW for special education and training of defective and epileptic children paved the way for special schools to be established at existing Hospitals for the Insane expanding the focus on training.[110]   It took three decades for Newcastle to become the primary children's hospital for intellectual disability in NSW, but once established, it fulfilled that role for many years.

## Asylum Deaths

Asylums in NSW were places where many people lived for years at a time, particularly the chronic cases that required permanent full time care. Asylums also became places of death.  The most common cause of death in government

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[104] New South Wales Archives, "Medical Case Book."
[105] M.D. F. Norton Manning, Inspector General, "New South Wales: Report for 1892 of the Inspector General of the Insane", *American Journal of Psychiatry* (July 1893 ):101.
[106] Wright, *Mental Disablity*, 34.
[107] Wright, *Mental Disablity*, 153.
[108] Wright, *Mental Disablity*, 188.
[109] "Newcastle Imbecile Hospital"  *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate*(Newcastle) January 22, 1890.
[110] Gladstone, "The Changing Dynamic of Institutional Care: The Western Counties Idiot Asylum 1864-1914", 156.

institutions in NSW in the 1870s was due to 'cerebral or spinal diseases'. These included conditions such as epilepsy, tumours and cancers of the brain and generally other diseases of the brain including cerebrovascular accident, known today as stroke. Of 165 deaths in the colony's asylums in that decade, 85 were attributed to cerebral causes, 41 with thoracic (such as heart and lung disease), 19 with abdominal maladies and 20 deaths related to general debility and old age.[111] Abdominal disease was the final category of cause of death and included conditions and trauma associated with organs in the torso. Death rates at Newcastle were similar to the average of asylum inmate deaths in NSW. Table 8.15 is based on the average number of all inmates in government asylums from 1869 to 1878.

**Table 8.15.** Number of Deaths in Asylums in NSW (per cent) for ten years from 1869 to 1878.

| | |
|---|---|
| Callan Park | 8.08 |
| Gladesville | 7.23 |
| Newcastle | 6.61 |
| Parramatta | 5.90 |
| Hospital for the Criminally Insane | 1.9 |
| Average number of inmate deaths NSW | 6.58 |

The following Table shows the deaths that occurred at Newcastle from 1871 to 1900.

**Table 8.16** Deaths at Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots from 1871- 1900

| Year | Male Deaths | Female Deaths | Total Deaths | Asylum Population Females | Asylum Population Males | Total Asylum Population |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1871-80 | 66 | 31 | 97 | 84 (1880) | 124 (1880) | 208 (1880) |
| 1881-90 | 89 | 73 | 162 | 112 (1890) | 134 (1890) | 246 (1890) |
| 1891-00 | 79 | 64 | 143 | 143 (1900) | 176 (1900) | 319 (1900) |
| TOTAL | 234 | 168 | 402 | | | |

Table 8.16 shows the ratio of male to female deaths during the first decades at Newcastle, alongside shows the asylum population at the beginning of each decade. In the first decade of the asylum opening death rates were higher, this was due to the advanced age of many of the people admitted. The most common causes of death during the 1880s were liver disease possibly associated with long term alcohol abuse, also bronchitis and phthisis, a term used to describe tuberculosis of the lung. These diseases affected the vulnerable older inmates whose conditions were often complicated with multiple health problems.

As the asylum population's average age dropped with the admission of more children the cause of death also changed. Life expectancy in the general population was rising in the 1890s,[112] but these children were exceptions. Many died young due to 'fits of epilepsy' and pneumonia. The asylum experienced an increase in deaths in the 1880s

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[111] Frederic Manning, "Ten Years at Gladesville" (Sydney: Read before the Medical Section,5 September,1879), 3.
[112] Life expectance at birth was mid 50s for men and late 50s for females towards the end of the nineteenth century.

because of the prevalence of epilepsy which many did not survive past the age of 10 to 15 years.  Later decades of the 1880s and 1890s saw a reduction in the death rate but a decrease in the average age at death.  Inmates who died at the Mental Asylum were usually buried at the Newcastle Christ Church and are shown in the church's burial register.[113]

Inmates at the asylum also suffered from less serious injuries and ailments.  These were fractured bones and ophthalmic disorders that required medical treatment.[114]   Dr Williamson commenced his duties as Medical Superintendent just before the scarlet fever and measles epidemic in the asylum in1889. This outbreak was much later than when these diseases were endemic in the general population in the 1860s and 1870s.[115]   Williamson commented that there were about fifty cases complicated with pneumonia and cardiac failure resulting in seven deaths and many being bed ridden.[116]  This epidemic occurred during September and October striking hard over a ten day period.[117]   Dr Russell the Visiting Medical Officer at Newcastle, also reported on the 11 of November 1889 of the diseases 'blight', measles and scarlet fever, and the need to seclude inmates from one another.[118] 'Blight' or sandy blight (later known as trachoma) was often related to malnutrition and lack of fresh fruit and vegetables, especially carotene-rich pumpkin and carrots. Although vitamins were not fully understood during this time it was reported that in 1855 the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum found that blight disappeared if cabbage was replaced with pumpkin.[119]  There is insufficient evidence to suggest whether Newcastle inmates were adequately fed in general and these cases represented an exception.  There is much evidence that vegetables were grown as therapy and as a food supply, but they were reliant on adequate rainfall and would have been affected by drought, as represented in 1882.  Tucker noted that inmates at Newcastle were sometimes fed Irish stew and roast beef for dinner during the late 1880s.[120]  He also noted at this time that beer was replaced with milk as the staple beverage. Both are nutritious but milk was likely thought to be more suitable for the younger patients.  Some conditions required further intervention to manage inmate care, this involved secluding inmates from others.


**Seclusion**

Seclusion and restraint were only resorted to occasionally at Newcastle. Seclusion was used at Newcastle for several reasons.  Firstly, it was a way to isolate inmates who had transmittable conditions, and secondly, a management strategy for inmates with difficult behaviours who were disturbed or aggressive. Seclusion would have been a last resort for behaviourally disturbed inmates, but necessary for the protection of the disturbed person and those around them.[121]

Space was found at the asylum to manage violent inmates to ensure the safety of other inmates.   The need for seclusion was essential at this asylum in Newcastle, because there was nowhere else to manage difficult inmates. The Newcastle Asylum managed difficult violent inmates rather than sending them to the local gaol. During the late 1800s no

[113] Engel and Roulston, "Christ Church, Newcastle, NSW 1804-1900".
[114] Wales, "Record of Inspections", 1895.
[115] Cliff Andrew, Peter Haggett, and M.R Smallman-Raynor, *Island Epidemics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). Marks and Beatty Curson, "Australian Scarlet Fever Epidemic of 1875-76", in Encyclopedia of Plague and Pestilence: From ancient times to the present,Third Edition, ed. Childs Kohn George (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2008), 25.
[116] NSW, "Record of Inspections".
[117] Unknown, "Medical Case Book".
[118] Unknown, "Medical Case Book".
[119] Berwick Walker Robin and Roberts Dave, *From Scarcity to Surfeit: A History of Food and Nutrition in New South Wales* (Sydney: New South Wales University Press, 1988), 38.
[120] Tucker, "Lunacy in Many Lands", 648.
[121] New South Wales Archives, "Medical Case Book".

other mental health institutions existed nearby that could accommodate these types of inmates. The majority of inmates did not need to be contained, restrained or placed in seclusion, however there was some agitated and violent inmates managed there until Stockton Mental Hospital opened in 1910. After this many of the more difficult inmates were transferred across the river to Stockton Mental Hospital.[122]

Unfortunately there is no indication in the records exactly where difficult inmates were isolated to, however is reasonable to suggest that it was in one of the smaller rooms or 'cells' in the main former military buildings. They may have been placed in a 'cell' that was '7.6 x 12.9' feet located in the additions built on the southern and northern ends of the military barracks. Some architectual plans used whilst the asylum operated referred to the single rooms as 'cells', reflecting the former use and punitive nature of the site.[123] There were six cells on the ground floor and two on the upper floor. Two other larger rooms or dormitories were on the upper floor, and these were sized '35.6 x 16.6' feet and '33 x 22' feet.[124] These smaller 'cell' rooms would have been useful as places of seclusion, particularly those on the ground floor that fronted the main Dining Room where regular observation could be carried out by attendants.

One inmate placed in seclusion and confined on a regular basis for violent behaviour was James F. On the 3 May 1879 James F was observed to have been "very violent, mischievous…shoving other inmates" and needing to be separated for risk of injury from his actions. He was put in a separate room between the hours of eleven o clock in the morning to six o clock in the evening..."[125] It is unlikely that he would have been secluded in the Guard or Gate House where the girls had previously been locked up because by the 1880s the building was the 'Chief Attendant's Quarters'.[126] Seclusion in this instance helped to ensure the safety of other inmates, particularly the young and elderly.As the demographics and mental health conditions changed, so did the use of this versatile site adapt to accommodate the changing paradigm related to the specific care of idiot and imbecile children. With this shift came different treatments. There was a gradual move away from moral care, towards work therapy.

## Transition to a Medical Model of Care

The Domain represents the foundational years of modern mental health care in NSW. It is unlikely that public institutions for idiots and imbeciles would have evolved as rapidly as they did if the Newcastle barracks had not been available in 1871. The opportunity provided by the empty buildings was one which the mental health system and the specific individuals involved with the site capitalised upon, allowing for the establishment of a distinctive asylum in which moral therapy could be applied for the betterment of the inmates. It was difficult to sustain moral therapy in later years because of the growing influence of the medical profession on lunacy policy, including the care of feebleminded children.

The period from 1900 to 1950 was a time of change. The openness at the asylum and the way the community engaged with the Government Domain as described in previous chapters was gradually eroded, making it a more

[122] Laila Ellmoos, *Beneath the Pines: A History of the Stockton Centre* (Sydney: Ageing, Disability and Home Care. Department of Human Services NSW, 2010).

[123] James Barnett, "Plan of proposed additions to asylum for imbecile, Newcastle". Public Works Department, Ref. MH 14/109 876 (Sydney: Public Works Department, New South Wales Government, 1873).

[124] Unknown, "Plan of Proposed Additions to Asylum for Imbeciles, Newcastle" (Sydney: Public Works Department, New South Wales Government, 8 September 1873).

[125] New South Wales Archives, "Medical Case Book".

[126] James Barnett, "Plan or Proposed Alterations & Additions to Chief Attendants Quarters, Hospital for Insane, Newcastle" (Sydney: Public Works Department, New South Wales Government, 1883, 22 October).

isolated place. The financial and social cost of caring for a child with an intellectual disability was considerable and from 1900 to the 1990s, governments allocated significant resources and developed strategies to care for these children, many of whom became long term patients. Although retaining many of the education and training methods of care for those with intellectual disability, by the 1950s, the institution had become a typical psychiatric hospital and casual and outside visitors were not as frequent as they had been in the late 1800s.

The significant increase of children in the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane in the 1900s meant more specialist resources were needed for this group. In 1903, it was recognised as the "only public institution in NSW which confines itself exclusively to inmates suffering from congenital mental disease"[127] including epilepsy. There were 280 inmates receiving permanent care, 60 per cent of whom were male and 40 per cent female. Many functioned well and were able to do some form of work.[128] About 60 female inmates were employed in sewing at the recreation room under the guidance of Nurse Briggs, whilst Matron Newton held educational lessons each morning teaching elementary subjects to the children. Mr Price was in charge of the tailoring workshop using a variety of materials to make clothing for inmates. The use of the Visitor's Room by fifteen of the boys engaged in tailoring under the supervision of Mr E Johnson suggested that visitors were not frequent.[129] By 1914, there were more than 440 inmates, 100 of whom were children. The hospital was full to capacity. Some tended to the 'kitchen garden', or the 'avenue, the bush house and the gardens'. Boys and girls learned sewing, painting, carpentry and boot repairs all under the supervision of Dr Robert Usher Russell, the superintendent from 1898 until 1923.[130] Inmates continued to play games such as cricket, with the wards playing against one another.

The admission of children increased over the first three decades of the 1900s as ideas emerged about their need to be segregated from the wider community. A new category of mental disorder 'feebleminded' was created. Anne Williams in her thesis 'Managing the Feebleminded 1900-30'[131] examines 'feebleminded' children and how they were perceived and managed at the Newcastle Mental Hospital at the Government Domain. She found this institution at Newcastle was the centre of juvenile admissions in NSW. On maturity the females were transferred to Stockton Hospital for the Insane, whilst the males were transferred to Morisset Hospital or the institution at Rabbit Island on the Hawkesbury River.[132] In 1914 Eric Sinclair, inspector general of the insane (1898-1915) argued that mental defectives had on 'evil effect' on the community and that institutions should be transferred to separate residential 'colonies' cut off from towns and cities.[133] He reflected a genuine belief at this time that children with an intellectual disability were best segregated from the community and often in remote places to ensure that they had no opportunity to influence others or to reproduce. Significant government funds were needed to help care for them in these isolated institutions.

Feebleminded children remained at Newcastle during the first decades but increasingly were out of sight from the community due to the idea that this group was contagious. The mental hygiene movement of this era believed that these children were better cared for behind the walls of a hospital. Although the Government Domain was not in a

[127] "How It Was Conducted", *Herald*.
[128] "How It Was Conducted", *Herald*.
[129] "How It Was Conducted", *Herald*.
[130] *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) July 9, 1914.
[131] Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded', 124.
[132] Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded'", 12.
[133] "Mental Diseases," *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miner's Advocate* (Newcastle) May 27, 1914.

remote location, it did change to become disconnected once again from the wider community similar to when the girls were there in the 1860s, an island in the midst of a city, cut off by high walls and a closed gate. This was a much different asylum environment from that described at the Newcastle Domain in the previous chapter of the late 1800s.[134]  However some occupational activities such as the game of golf were taken up at Morisset Hospital. This was due to Dr Minogue who was instrumental in establishing a golf course to be used by inmates as he thought it would improve "treatment of mental inmates who were now encouraged to work and participate in sport".[135]

The mental hygiene movement was also behind a program to identify intellectually disabled children in the schools.[136] The Department of Education made it mandatory to identify a child's physical and mental defects.[137] Government policy and programs were instituted to assess the intellect of a child and whether they should attend an ordinary school or if 'sub-normal', be institutionalised. This was a radical policy that resulted in another wave of overcrowding in Newcastle. Mr Edwards, the acting Superintendent at Newcastle in 1925, stated the institution was "...understaffed with some 400 congenitally mentally defective children under the age of 14 years."[138]  The need for institutionalisation increased further after a Mental Defective Act in NSW was passed in 1934, introducing the use of the Intelligence Quotient or IQ test to measure intelligence.[139] Testing had a significant impact on children and families in NSW and many children identified as having a mental deficiency were placed in state care. It was the responsibility of teachers to notify authorities of a 'defective' child and there was little support for them remaining in the community with their families.  The perceived need for institutionalisation was exacerbated by the perception that defective children were 'contagious', and should be kept away from the wider community. The eugenics movement influenced the isolation of this group, perpetuating the problem of overcrowding in mental institutions.[140]

The eugenics movement was also associated with segregation and sterilization of 'defectives' so not to pass on their weaknesses to the next generation. Segregation became popular in NSW in the first half of the twentieth century and many supported sterilisation programs for persons with an intellectual disability, although these were never adopted in Australia. John Bostock was the Medical Superintendent at Newcastle in 1927[141] and supported the sterilisation of women and girls with an intellectual disability.  However his successor favoured the less invasive approach of separation rather than sterilisation.[142]  There was considerable debate during this period about whether intellectual disability was heredity or acquired.  People with intellectual disabilities increasingly were locked away for long periods of time, becoming invisible to the community.[143] Gladstone saw this era as dominated by the 'warehouse' model of the twentieth century that saw significant permanent admissions of the intellectually disabled, whereas earlier care focused on training and self-sufficiency of the institution. This culture of 'warehousing' continued for much of the twentieth century in Australia.

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134 Garton, "Seeking Refuge", 38.  Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded'", 106.
135 "Mental Patients 'Provision of Golf Course,'" *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney)November 19,1936, 17.
136 S H Smith and G T Spaull, *History of Education in New South Wales: 1788-1925* (Sydney: George Phillip & Son, 1925), 261-63.
137 S H Smith, *History of Education in New South Wales,* 266.
138 Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded".
139 Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded",105.
140 Stephen Garton, "Asylum Histories: 21
141 Tom O'Brien,, 'Bostock, John (1892–1987)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bostock-john-12233/text21943, accessed 24 October 2013.
142 Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded'", 94.
143Gladstone, "The Changing Dynamic of Institutional Care: The Western Counties Idiot Asylum 1864-1914", 138.

Many children were deemed to require permanent institutional care even though their disabilities were mild. The incurability of the feebleminded drove very specific methods of care, centred on occupational work as therapy. This educational scheme devised for these 'mentally defective' children in NSW, was implemented at the NGD where they were provided with basic education. Although a school at the Government Domain had been an informal part of care since 1890s it was formalised when a special Montessori class was set up in the 1920s by Superintendent G E Miles, CBE.  A committee was formed in 1925 to help administer funding for 'sub-normal' children at the 'hospital school'.[144] There are no official records of this school from the Department of Education; however a 'School Roll' for the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane from 1924 to 1931 is held at State Archives of NSW in the health records.[145] The 'Class Roll' shows children aged from 2 to 18 years of age attended classes five days a week, for half days only. Figure 8.17 shows a photograph of children playing at the Government Domain in the 1950s; they attended a wide fronted purpose built school; with continuous windows for natural light and fresh air.  The building was south facing overlooking the area where the asylum gardens had once been.  At the front was the children's playground.  The schoolhouse was demolished in the 1980s to make way for a new psychiatric centre, the Thwaites Building, constructed in 1989.



**Figure 8.17** Children playing at the front of the school house at Newcastle Mental Hospital. 1957.
Source:  Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales. Picman Database GPO 2 – 08872

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[144] Williams, "Managing the 'Feebleminded'", 227.
[145] New South Wales Archives, "Medical Case Book", School Records are located with inmate Medical Records 1910-1936.

The belief that the community should be protected from feebleminded children limited contact between the local community and the Government Domain. Activities were still undertaken outdoors, however they revolved around play and recreation rather than the earlier spectator sports, band concerts and Sunday afternoon strolls. Noise was a factor with the community turning away from the Domain because of the loud noises and screams from the wayward girls and later, the more disturbed inmates.[146] There was growing expectation that the hospital should be both invisible and inaudible. These factors contributed to and set the scene for the introduction of general psychiatry where inmates were kept inside and quiet through the use of drug therapy. By 1940s the asylum was transitioning away from caring for the intellectually disabled towards caring for general psychiatry inmates and therefore was fortunate to miss the insulin coma therapy of the 1930s, the electroconvulsive therapy of the 1940s, and the psychosurgery of the 1950s.[147]

By the time the institution did become a general psychiatric hospital in the late 1950s medical therapies had become quite advanced enabling many patients to return to the community. Many of the long term intellectually disabled patients were transferred to Stockton Mental Hospital and Morisset Mental Hospital in the 1950s. After this time psychiatric disorders were treated at Newcastle, and the culture of care changed from one of education and training to one of drug treatment and rest. In the 1960s and 1970s, patients remained in Newcastle for short stays, rather than the previous long and permanent admissions. The open community model of care of the 1800s had long gone.

The absence of long term institutional care related to psychiatric inmates protected Newcastle from the negative associations with outmoded treatments and too frequent scandals which engulfed other institutions. Many of these institutions were closed on recommendation of the Richmond Report into health services for the psychiatrically ill and the developmentally disabled in the 1980s and 1990s as part of a policy of decentralisation and deinstitutionalisation based on early assessment and intervention as well as home based care.[148] This was a broad service delivery strategy which also included an array of rehabilitation services, support teams and accommodation for people living with mental illness in the community. It was thought that reducing institutional care would help to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, however inadequate services left many socially isolated and without support. Unlike the larger and older Gladesville Hospital (formerly Tarban Point), the Newcastle Psychiatric Centre at the Newcastle Domain survived the closures and remained a mental health site. The buildings at Gladesville were purpose built from 1838 and are now listed as items on the NSW State Heritage Register of NSW, and on the Register of National Estate in 1978, but they were blamed for the bad experience of patients there in the second half of the twentieth century. From accidental beginnings, the Newcastle Asylum outlasted its peers. In early 2013 the former military building at the Domain are empty, awaiting a new use. Also vacant is the relatively undiscovered landscape of the Domain in the urban environment of Newcastle.

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[146] "The Asylum Grounds," *Newcastle Herald & Miners' Advocate* (Newcastle) July 26,,1889.
[147] Garton, *Seeking Refuge*, 29.
[148] N.S.W. Department of Health, Division of Planning and Research, "Inquiry into Health Services for the Psychiatrically Ill and Mentally Disabled", (Sydney,NSW: Department of Health, N.S.W., Division of Planning and Research, 1983),Part 1.
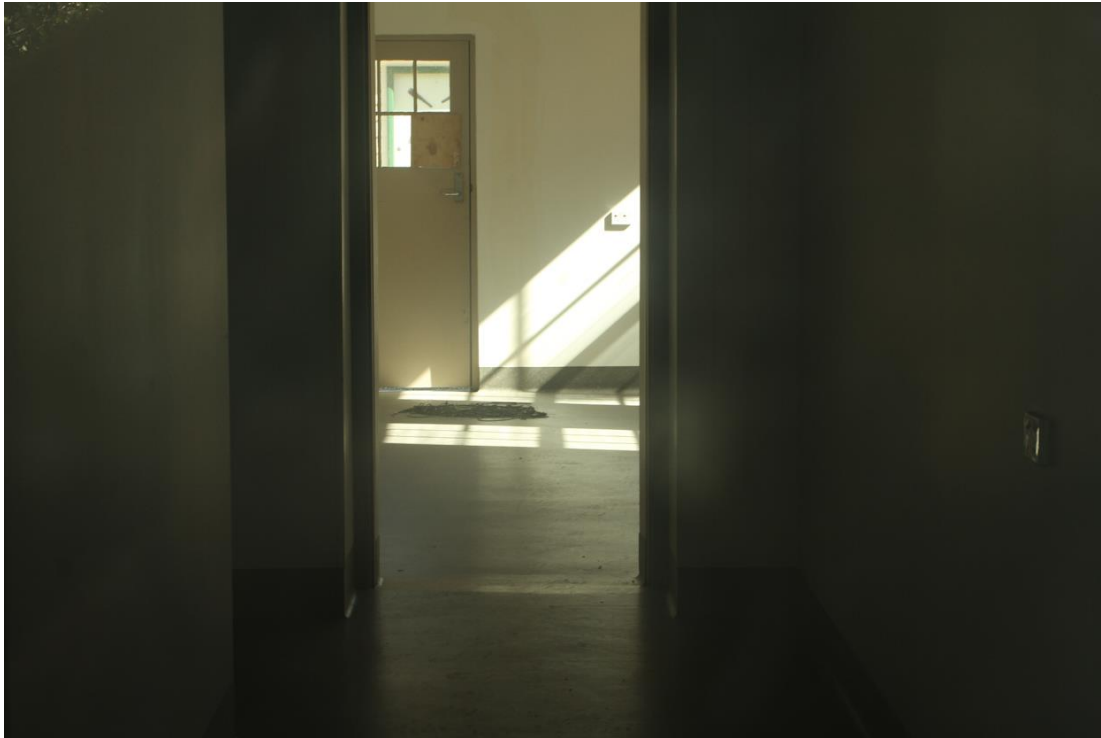
**Figure 8.18** – Interior of unoccupied Barracks building. Photographer Charles Hardy 2013.



**Figure 8.19** The Cultural Landscape of the Government Domain facing south
Source: Charles Hardy, 2013.

## Conclusion

This chapter on the asylum at the Government Domain shows the role of government authorities was significant, as well as the state of mental health care in NSW.  Although influenced by models from institutions worldwide, the NSW system did not follow the British tradition of charitable and private care but placed the government squarely in charge of providing care for the mentally ill and the intellectually disabled.[149]  Inmates generally had little support from family or friends and there was no assistance for them to live out in the community in contrast with Great Britain.  Even though some charitable and philanthropic organisations were involved in caring for children, government funded much of the maintenance costs for these institutions.  It was mostly left to government authorities to provide structured care, particularly for children and the ageing male migrant population. The cost of caring for vulnerable members of society in the absence of charitable or family support was considerable. However the colonial government found a cost effective way to implement institutional care for imbecile and idiots by using the surplus military barracks at the NGD.The Newcastle Asylum was the first attempt by the colonial government at a specialist asylum for the care of imbeciles and idiots in NSW.

   The Newcastle Asylum had catered for both incurable inmates and imbecile and idiots at the same time. However it was not until later decades of the 1800s that the later (imbecile and idiot) become the primary group. The Newcastle Asylum was not planned prior to 1871 and although the new classification policy was activated there, it did not become effective straight away. The segregation policy implied the inmates that would come to Newcastle would be a 'quieter' class. In reality the 'imbecile and idiot' classes would not became predominant in the Newcastle Asylum population until towards the twentieth century.

The name Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots (1871-1878) which was given to the institution did not reflect the condition of inmates sent there in the early years. Instead the name may have been given to appease the Newcastle community who had grown angry with authorities who seemed resolved to send unruly members of Sydney society to their city.

   The idea of a specialist asylum may have been a 'smokescreen' to conceal the stark reality of the crisis occurring in the mental health system in the 1860s, and of the increasing needs of the ageing men in NSW. Many of the first inmates at the Newcastle Asylum were lone figures, isolated and without familial support. As this chapter suggests, there is evidence that these unsupported inmates were specifically chosen to be moved from Sydney to Newcastle, leaving places in institutions in the capital for those who had family there.

   Finally, Part 2 of this thesis has shown that the NGD is evidence of the evolution of mental health care and reflects the changes to mental health care: from moral care to medical care; and from residential to outpatient care, as well as the landscape, embody resilience and strength associated with adaptation to changed legislation and treatment regimes. The place, its fabric and natural setting were the key components to providing care to many people.  This study thus far sets the scene for a discussion of

Contemporary heritage issues, not only in the context of the NGD but the cultural heritage paradigm that is rapidly changing in Australia. Health and cultural heritage in 2014 are on a collision path.  They are intertwined and there is a growing body of research looking at how cultural heritage can provide positive health outcomes to communities.  The

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149 Wright, *Mental Disablity* ,46.

NGD is emblematic of this shift in changing meanings regarding cultural heritage, because not only is it a caring institution, but it has potential to bring communities that have been impacted by mental illness together. The Domain provides a re-engagement with the place, a time and place to heal, a way to look back at the past and break down the social barriers associated with mental illness and the 'asylum'. Chapter Nine *Heritage Conservation and Australian Government Historic Places* explores the heritage status of the Government Domain and associations that cultural heritage has with health, including physical and mental well-being.

## PART THREE-     Cultural Heritage & Australian Government Historic Places

## Chapter 9: Newcastle Government Domain a 'Government Heritage Place'

Historical research into the Newcastle Government Domain (NGD) is important in understanding contemporary heritage conservation issues. From historical investigation a better understanding, respect and care for cultural places will develop. This project originally set out to investigate the treatment of the psychologically ill at the site from 1871 to the present, however the author quickly realised that the rich history associated with the Domain demanded a deeper investigation back to its transformation from Aboriginal country to government domain. Many government heritage places like the NGD have contributed to the Australian landscape and society and few places continue to survive in public ownership.  Once these places lose their initial use they become more vulnerable, such as the former Newcastle Post Office (1903) that is a few blocks from the NGD, was sold to a private owner by the Commonwealth government in 2003, and sat derelict until purchased by the state government in 2010. Although listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR) it continues to be unused in early 2014. Another site in Newcastle is Nobbys Headland, managed by the NSW state government. The headland contains the still working Nobbys Head Lighthouse (built circa 1857). In 2007 a proposal to develop this sensitive and prominent headland was made and included a restaurant that would 'wrap around' the historic lighthouse, as well as six luxury units. This proposal was finally overturned by the Commonwealth because of the site's historic role in the functioning of the port.[1]

There is a need for cultural care. Interpreting this record has increased urgency because during the writing of this thesis, the long term psychiatric residential care function (permanent care) was removed to a new site linked with an existing general hospital.  With only short term and outpatient care being conducted on site, many spaces are now unused and the Domain is vulnerable to unsympathetic reuse or redevelopment.  This thesis will inform future heritage studies, providing a detailed account of the history of the Domain which will assist professional heritage interpretation. Until 2009, there was a silence about the significance of this place at the state level and this is likely due to its use as a mental health institution spanning over three centuries.  The shadow cast by the stigma associated with mental health care added to the site's vulnerability and made it critical to record the story of this place prior to 1871. For this reason is it is critical to record and understand the site's history and past uses so that it can be properly cared for and interpreted in the future. This thesis thus far has explores how some of the spaces at the Domain were used, however this chapter expands the heritage discussion by presenting how the term care can be applied in the cultural heritage field to places such as the NGD.

The exploration of historical features at the NGD in Parts One and Two of this thesis provides a foundation from which contemporary heritage issues affecting this place can be addressed in a comprehensive way.  Attempts to protect heritage items and areas often proceed without an understanding of the historical and spatial complexity that resulted in their formation.[2]

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[1] Clive Lucas, Stapleton and Partners Pty Ltd, "Heritage Impact Statement for Nobbys Lighthouse" In *Prepared for the Department of Environment and Water Resources,* edited by Architects and Heritage Partners (Sydney, 2007).

[2] Jennifer Hill, ed.*The Double Dimension: Heritage and Innovation* (Canberra: Royal Australian Institute of Architects 2004).

Historical knowledge enriches the heritage analysis and allows for well-grounded interpretations of a place. Historical research into the Domain site is particularly important because of the need for heritage recognition. Although the Domain was listed on the SHR in 2009, it is also thought to have national heritage values and its nomination for the National Heritage List (NHL) in 2013 is under consideration.

This chapter explores the current state of heritage theory and practice, including the acknowledgement of cultural landscapes as just as important as the built environment and other heritage items. Other changes to heritage are the impact of weakening heritage legislation and planning, that has resulted in an increase in grassroots community groups taking action to resolve heritage conservation matters. This broadening of the definition of heritage is bringing heritage and environmental conservation groups together in NSW. Although community activity may be a response to poor heritage legislation, community engagement is bringing about some positive results for heritage and how it perceived. The broadening of the definition of heritage is also seeing new disciplines becoming involved in the cultural heritage discussion. This chapter explores the multi-disciplinary model used by the University of Newcastle's Coal River Working Party (CRWP). The working party is gaining some successful heritage outcomes and bridging the gap between in the community and academics. The model considers regional heritage and brings individuals from different groups together to have a much broader heritage discussion focused on community and place.

This chapter also explores the link between heritage and well-being. New research suggests cultural heritage can provide many positive physical and mental health outcomes. Cultural heritage can provide communities with a renewed sense of belonging and empowerment, and by nurturing social inclusion and community participation, can improve social and emotional well-being. The renewal of older urban areas contributes to the health and well-being of communities.

Finally this chapter explores what the future may hold for the Domain. In 2014 mental health services and heritage are both part of the Domain. As the focus shifts to cultural heritage, the site has the potential to nurture well-being as well as help heal those associated with it. These include the descendants of those who resided at the Domain during the nineteenth century and others with a more direct association, who worked or were patients there in the twentieth century. The link between health and heritage can provide new ideas about the future use of the Domain, possibly in the area of arts health.


## Cultural Heritage in the Twenty First Century?

What exactly then is heritage in the twenty-first century and where does it sit in regard to history? To answer this we need to look at what has been happening in this field in Australia in recent years and the particular conditions that have produced changes to the heritage discourse. Over the past ten years the meaning of heritage has changed from being almost exclusively related to physical objects to become increasingly aligned with the concepts of cultural landscapes, intangible inheritances and narratives including Aboriginal Dreaming stories. Heritage has expanded away from preservation of individual buildings and now encompasses memory, community engagement and connecting people with

the environment to enhance the development of social identity.[3]  The following statement from the federal *Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities* provides a contemporary definition of heritage in Australia.

> Heritage is all the things that make up Australia's identity - our spirit and ingenuity, our historic buildings, and our unique, living landscapes. Our heritage is a legacy from our past, a living, integral part of life today, and the stories and places we pass on to future generations.[4]

This shift in how heritage is defined occurred during the first decade of the 2000s. Findings of the federal *State of the Environment* 2006 report suggested a need for a better alignment between heritage and environmental policies and programmes.[5]  This is also seen in the understanding that natural landscapes are also cultural ones, with layers of history (natural, Aboriginal and historical or post contact) co-existing in the environment over thousands of years.[6]  There is also an increasing acceptance that humans are part of nature and should not be considered as separate from it.  Chris Johnston suggests that there should not be the separation between heritage and natural resource management, saying that "there is a closer alignment today than there has ever been, but more is possible".[7]  However the reality is that there still is a separation in terms of heritage management frameworks which entrench separation between Indigenous, post-contact and natural heritage.[8] Heritage needs to be perceived holistically and not as artificially separated strands.

Another shift away from the individual building or object is the emphasis on cultural landscapes.  A cultural landscape is defined as "a physical area with natural features and elements modified by human activity resulting in patterns of evidence layered in the landscape, which give a place its particular character, reflecting human relationships with and attachment to that landscape."[9]  An essay by Joann Schmider and Peter James, *Whose Heritage is it?*, shows that Indigenous, non-Indigenous and natural heritage are all intertwined and the Australian cultural landscape is a far more fitting concept than the individual element.[10] This perspective helps to overcome the artificial separation of natural, Indigenous and historical heritage by making place central.  This is one way of putting Australia's European history, which has dominated the Australian heritage discourse, into the context of the rich Indigenous history and natural heritage.

Cultural landscapes therefore include natural environments and encompass a landscape changed by human occupation, as well as the built environment. This concept can apply to the non-Indigenous context just as much as to

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[3] Department of Richard Jenkins, Social Identity (London: Routlegde, 2004).

[4] Department of Environment, Heritage and Arts website. http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/index.html

[5] Environment Australian Government; Department of Sustainability, Water, Population and Communities, "Australia State of the Environment 2006:Independent Report to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Heritage", ed. Buckley Kristal I Beeton RJS (Bob), Jones Gary J, Morgan Denise, Reichelt Russell E, Trewin Dennis (Canberra 2006). See Key Findings.

[6] Damein Bell, "Essay: Whose Heritage?" in *Australian Government; Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities* (Canberra: http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/strategy/index.html, 2013).

[7] Heath McDonald, "Final Research Report: Understanding Public Involvement with Australian Heritage" ed. Deakin University (2006).

[8] Don Garden, "Essay: Who Are the Players in Heritage and What Roles Do They Play?" in *Australian Heritage Strategy-commissioned essays*, ed. Environment Australian Government; Department of Sustainability, Water, Population and Communities (Canberra 2013), 4.

[9] Jane Lennon and Steve Mathews, "Cultural Landscape Management: Guidelines for Identifying, Assessing and Managing Cultural Landscapes in the Australian Alps National Parks", edited by Australian Alps National Parks Prepared for the Cultural Heritage Working Group of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee, 1996.

[10] Joann Schmider and Peter James, "Whose Heritage Is It?" in *Australian Heritage Strategy-commissioned essays*, ed. Environment Australian Government; Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (Canberra: 2013). Jane Lennon and Steve Mathews, "Cultural Landscape Management: Guidelines for Identifying, Assessing and Managing Cultural Landscapes in the Australian Alps National Parks", ed. Australian Alps National Parks Prepared for the Cultural Heritage Working Group of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (1996): 4.

Indigenous context.  There are more Indigenous and natural listings than convict listings.  There has been a gradual shift towards cultural landscapes becoming more commonly recognised through heritage listing in general, landscapes that recognise Indigenous cultural heritage.[11]

The compilation of the new National Heritage List provides an opportunity for an assessment of trends amongst the items which are slowly being added to it. The National Heritage List replaced the Register of National Estate that has now been phased out.[12] Of the twelve places included on the National Heritage List in 2008, five had Indigenous heritage values.[13]  Although there were some non-Aboriginal heritage sites such as Port Arthur Historic site in Tasmania and Old and New Parliament Houses included on the National Heritage List, the layering of cultural heritage associated with Indigenous and European use is rarely recognised. This balance between Indigenous and other cultural sites is not evident in state listings in NSW where out of 1600 items on the SHR created in 1999 there are 97 associated with the theme Aboriginal cultures and interactions with other cultures. This proportion seems very low because Indigenous heritage is recognised through a separate system, managed by Parks and Wildlife Service under the National Parks and Wildlife Service Act 1974. However this separation is not sending the right message about Australian cultural heritage. The NSW Government is reviewing Aboriginal cultural heritage with the aim to establish a new system of management that focuses of Aboriginal heritage beyond objects and places, and instead a greater recognition and protection of intangible Aboriginal heritage values.[14]  Reorienting heritage from the individual item to layered cultural landscapes provides a better framework for acknowledging Indigenous cultural heritage and enriching our sense of place.[15]

What is acknowledged and protected as heritage is in a constant process of change, shifting according to contemporary judgement about what is important. Each generation decides which elements of its inheritance to keep and which to throw away.[16]  The process of selection is associated with what people think are important links between past, present and the future. Some cultural landscapes such as the Coal River Precinct and the NGD represent a different set of heritage values from the world heritage convict sites, whose completeness and surviving physical fabric were important to their listings.[17] At present, one of the valued aspects is extensive surviving fabric, often labeled intactness.  To meet national heritage criteria, places must have outstanding natural, Indigenous and historic heritage values to the nation. This implies places that are intact and in good condition such as the earlier mentioned nationally significant sites at Port Arthur and parliamentary buildings in Canberra. When determining whether a place has national heritage significance key concepts are considered during the assessment process. One of the threshold is an analysis of

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[11]Australian World Heritage Sites that relate to natural, Convictism and Indigenous heritage.  http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/world/list.html

[12] In 2006 the federal government's Productivity Commission's report *Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places* recommended the 'freezing' of the Register of the National Estate (RNE) on 19 February 2007.  This meant that the *Australian Heritage Council* (formerly Australian Heritage Commission, 1975-2003) could no longer add or remove places from the register. The 'freeze' also meant that the Australian government distanced itself from the approximate 13,000 heritage items listed on the RNE that had been deemed to be of outstanding national significance, no longer offering them statutory protection.  In 2004, a new National Heritage List was started to be filled by nomination.  In comparison with the 13,000 items on the RNE, currently the NHL has 85 items.[12]

[13] Chairman Australian Heritage Council Tom Harley, "Notice Concerning Assessments of Places for the National Heritage List and the Commonwealth Heritage List," ed. Australian Heritage Council (Canberra: Australian Government, 17 June 2008).

[14] State of NSW and Office of Environment and Heritage. *Reforming the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sysytem in NSW. A discussion paper.* Developed by the independent Aboriginal Cultural and Heritage Working Party (Sydney: 2013). vi.

[15] Schmider and James, "Whose Heritage Is It? ", 8.

[16] Susan Tonkin, "What Is Heritage?" in *Australian Heritage Strategy-commissioned essays*, ed. Environment Australian Government ;Department of Sustainability, Water, Population and Communities (Canberra 2012): 1.

[17] David Andrew Roberts and Erik Eklund, "Australian Convict Sites and the Heritage of Adaption: The Case of Newcastle's Coal River Heritage Precinct" *Australian Historical Studies* 43, no. 3 (20 Sept 2012), 364.

integrity and intactness, something that may not be present if there has been continuous occupation of a site.[18]  Many European sites assessed for the NHL are fairly preserved and intact.   As Roberts and Eklund argue, the Coal River Precinct in Newcastle is not intact partly because it provided a foundation for layers of works which have been added to the site since the convict period.[19]  The Precinct has living, intangible and inclusive heritage, but cannot show this through intact structures built by and for convicts like the group of sites nominated by the federal government for the World Heritage List and inscribed in 2010.  For example intact and highly regarded cultural sites such as Old Government House at Parramatta and Sydney Opera House are on the World Heritage List. However places like the NGD differ significantly due to these nominated sites intactness, and has problems gaining national heritage status. The current process for national heritage listing is very slow, with very few listings added annually. This 'bottleneck' in recognizing nationally significant places also means that potential world heritage places are also being overlooked. Sites that may not be intact, but have outstanding heritage associated with continuous occupation and use, such as the Coal River Precinct in Newcastle does not currently fit the heritage assessment criteria.

Intactness was not an essential criterion for the World Heritage listing.  The World Heritage Committee in 1994 sought to broaden the definition of world heritage and therefore adopted a global strategy to recognise and protect places of "outstanding demonstrations of human coexistence with the land as well as human interactions, cultural coexistence, spirituality and creative expression."   Australian heritage processes and legislation have not kept pace with changing perceptions of heritage. The laws and regulations governing heritage in Australia and NSW are similar to other developed countries, both culturally constructed and politically shaped.[20]

Legislation with regard to heritage matters in practice has become 'rubbery' and is not as robust as it was for several decades after the NSW *Heritage Act 1977*.[21]  During the past five years, numerous heritage places have been delisted at both the state and national level leaving vulnerable many heritage places. Delisting often occurred after responsible bodies took no action over long periods of time allowing owners of these places to neglect the maintenance required under heritage legislation. This is primarily due to states and local councils lacking the will to enforce laws, and massive under resourcing in terms of funding and staffing levels. Heritage protection grew out of grassroots action and community interest continued as legislation came into effect. Called to action by the ineffectiveness of current heritage legislation and practice, communities have again begun to protest and lobby to 'save' particular places.

In this new wave of heritage action, traditional heritage organisations such as the National Trust of Australia are moving towards a much greater awareness of the natural environment and cultural landscapes in their mandates.  Returning to their first aims in the 1940s and 50s, the National Trust seeks "To be trusted as a leading independent guardian of Australia's built, cultural and natural heritage, and defender of our sense of place and belonging in a changing world".[22] This is not all that different from the Nature Conservation Council of NSW and the Total Environment Centre which

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[18] Australia Heritage Council, "Guidelines for Assessment of Places for the National Heritage List", Australian Government (2009): 9.
[19] David Andrew Roberts and Erik Eklund, "Australian Convict Sites', 364.
[20] Graeme Aplin, *Heritage: Identification, Conservation, and Management* (Australia: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[21] New South Wales Government NSW Legislation, "Heritage Act 1977" in *No 136*, ed. New South Wales Government (www.legislation.nsw.gov.au1977).
[22] National Trust NSW, "Strategic Direction: Charting the Future" http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/about/publications/.

campaign for natural heritage, wilderness areas and environmental protection in urban and rural areas.[23]   Heritage is gradually being perceived as an environmental matter.

These groups have become increasingly aware of the growing threats to cultural and living landscapes in NSW. One conservation campaign that saw environmental concerns and heritage come together was the Tillegra Dam proposal in NSW.  The threat it posed to the precious eco-systems of the area and to whole historic townships and landscapes[24] created a united voice amongst advocates of human and natural heritage.  The joining of environmental and heritage groups is not always the case as Meredith Burgmann argued when she wrote about the so called 'green' Sydney City Council favouring of the environment over cultural heritage.[25]  Preoccupied with carbon reduction plans such as cycle ways and renewable energy, the council approved the demolition of early colonial properties such as Bathurst House.  Burgmann's concerns are supported by Young who says that sustainable solutions are not only to be found in new green buildings but through retrofit, reuse and preservation of existing buildings, harnessing their embedded energy.[26]

It is certainly not universal that environmental groups support heritage.  However in many cases managing cultural heritage is now seen as an important aspect of managing the natural environment.[27]  Environmentalism is no longer only about wilderness areas or natural landscapes, but also about urban landscapes because the threats and solutions can involve cultural heritage.  Prominent amongst them is climate change which poses additional threats to cultural heritage, in particular rising sea levels, and extreme weather events.[28]  On the positive side of the ledger, the energy savings to be gained by retrofitting older buildings rather than building new structures have brought them support from green groups.[29]  Rypkema argues that the environmental and economic cost of rehabilitation can be less than that of new construction.[30]  Cultural heritage and environmental groups are now part of the heritage conversation.

Many states of Australia have seen a decaying of places and a weakening of legislation relating to heritage. As government activity has been curtailed the onus is shifting back to the local and voluntary groups. A typical example is Catherine Hill Bay on the NSW Central Coast where a cultural landscape has come under threat from inappropriate planning and development.  It is one of many sites which are vulnerable because of their aesthetic locations and the tempting financial rewards to be gained from development.  At Catherine Hill Bay the historic mining hamlet is under threat from large scale residential development.  An initial proposal was overturned by the *Land and Environment Court of NSW* in 2010[31] after significant community opposition.  Although Catherine Hill Bay's built heritage including historic miner's cottages was threatened, what was of greater concern was the impact that large scale housing development

[23] Nature Conservation Council of NSW website http://nccnsw.org.au/content/what-we-do
[24] Wendy Frew, "Family's Farm to Be Flooded for Other Peoples Water", *Sydney Morning Herald, 5* January 2007.
[25] Meredith Burgmann, "City Streetscape Losing Charm as Old Beauties Get Bulldozed Away", *Sydney Morning Herald,* 8-9 September 2012.
[26] Robert A Young, *Stewardship of the Built: Sustainability, Preservation, and Reuse* (Washington: Island Press, 2012), 1.
[27] K May, "Indigenous Cultural and Natural Resource Management in the Working on Country Program" ed. CAEPR Working Paper No.65/2010 (Canberra: Centre for Aboriginal and Economic Policy Research, ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences, 2012): 1-2.
[28] Josh Gordon, "Climate Threat to Heritage Sites", *The Age* 2 August 2009.
[29] M Townsend and M Meearasuriya, "Beyond Blue to Green: The Benefits of Contact with Nature for Mental Health and Well-Being" in *A literature review from the School of Health and Social Development*, ed. Deakin University for Beyond Blue:the National Depression initiative (Deakin University, 2012):18.
[30] D Rypkema, *The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide* (Washington: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2005),13.
[31] Ms Sylvia Hale, "Catherine Hill Bay and Gwandalan Development Graythwaite Estate".

abutting the historic village would have on the cultural landscape and natural setting of where to town was located.[32] Planning for the development continued despite Catherine Hill Bay being given the state's highest level of heritage protection in 2010.  In 2013, mediation occurred between the Catherine Bay Progress Association and developers to find a more appropriate solution. The final outcome was a subdivision of land that was approved in the similar location to the original proposal at the southern end of Catherine Hill Bay. Concessions to heritage included a 25 metre setback from the waterline to ensure coastal public access, lower roof heights to reduce the visual impact on the historic setting and a significant reduction in scale.  This case is a good example of a community taking back control of its own identity, which Smith says is becoming increasingly common.[33]

Community activity is also used to break the dominance and the entrenched position of those involved in what Hewison called the heritage industry.[34]  The action of local interest groups can be very empowering and provide the momentum needed for change, which may not be suggested by those inside the industry. As Chris Johnston argues, heritage bureaucracies are stuck in an old paradigm where heritage is seen as a fixed, technically determined value, whereas the community expects (perhaps demands) a wider and more fluid reading.[35]  Independent consultants are brought in, report and move on to the next project without ever developing an intimate knowledge of a locality or having to live with the implications of their recommendations.  Communities are beginning to take some of the power back from heritage 'experts' who have previously dominated the field.

Community action and political campaigning is an approach that many heritage experts are either unable or unwilling to take on because their professional careers may be jeopardised.  Instead local residents are taking up this challenge and articulating a sense of place.  Communities are also demanding a respect for heritage and the environment and this is influencing how people perceive heritage. This is reminiscent of the 1970s when there was minimal planning and legislation to protect heritage.  In NSW, this brought about the *Heritage Act 1977* as it did the respective heritage acts of other Australian states.  Initially, the management of heritage was conducted by the state governments and experts without significant input from community groups. Gradually, day to day responsibility for heritage was devolved largely to local government, increasing the capacity of local people to become more engaged in culture heritage matters.  In recent years, the range of groups involved in heritage has expanded refocusing attention on approaches, issues and themes not typically part of heritage.  Heritage is no longer merely a branch of urban planning but has been opened to other disciplines.

Concern at local levels about places under threat and not being protected by existing heritage provisions has drawn together groups typically associated with heritage with those previously focused on the natural environment. It is at this local level that authorities need to interact and involve themselves with the community. In NSW there has been a shift whereby a variety of groups are taking up conservation issues principally  at a grassroots level and joining with non-government organisations to gain greater support.  However Dietrich Schmidt-vogt suggests that the reorganising of

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[32] Rose Group, "The Hon. Tony Kelly Alga.Mlc Minister for Planning Nsw Department of Planning. Request for Ministers Opinion under Clause 6 Sepp Major Developments and Directors Generals Requirements for Subdivision under Part 3a of the Epa Act 1979", in *https://majorprojects.affinitylive.com/public/9494378caeb450e23d3fd2d9cb9bc86d/01.%20Part%203A%20request.pdf accessed 21 October 2012* (2010),3.
[33] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 35.
[34] Robert Hewison, *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Methuen, 1987).
[35] Chris Johnston, "What Are the Community Expectations for Heritage Protection", in *Australian Heritage Strategy-commissioned essays*, ed. Environment Australian Government; Department of Sustainability, Water, Population and Communities (Canberra 2012): 5.

conservation practice to involve local people more intimately in the planning and management phase would be a positive step for these movements.[36]  Unfortunately this does not seem to be happening in NSW. Social media is helping mobilise communities to take action on particular environmental issues.  Since the Catherine Hill Bay campaign began, other campaigns have been initiated such as 'Save the Cove' at Fullerton Cove on northern side of the Hunter River where residents are attempting to stop coal seam gas exploration.[37] This particular case relates to potential damage to the Hunter Estuary Wetlands which is recognised as having international significance under the Ramsar Convention on wetlands.[38] The upsurge in campaigns is a phenomenon that is occurring nationwide and will remain prevalent as long as environmental and planning legislation is weak and places are under threat.  These environmental impacts are causing communities to collaborate and unite to protect cultural landscapes.

The weakening of planning and heritage legislation in NSW has woken the community up to the importance of cultural heritage.  There needs to be a social, cultural and political shift in NSW in terms of how cultural heritage is perceived with all levels of government and community coming together.  The resurgence of conservation groups that are taking a more 'green' environmental and cultural landscape approach represent the future of heritage.  To increase their effectiveness, they should recruit high profile individuals to support the cause of heritage and target appeals to young people who will one day be the defenders of Australia's heritage. Heritage in the twenty first century is about communities.

Although as suggested in this chapter cultural heritage in Australia in the twenty-first century has shifted towards cultural landscapes and non-tangible concepts, the built environment remains an important element of those landscapes and conveyor of intangible cultural values.  The following section discusses built heritage, bringing the discussion back to the NGD, the barracks and their association with Australian architecture.


## 'Care' and conservation at the Newcastle Government Domain

The conservation management plan for the James Fletcher Hospital site states that it has "exceptional significance to Australia, NSW and the City of Newcastle because it contains buildings and grounds used to house the military during the early formation of the colony and the then new town of Newcastle." [39]  As this thesis has shown, the Domain has had several other important roles and associations. Once established as a government place, the Domain was put to several related purposes.  It was from the Domain that Newcastle's role as a place of secondary punishment was overseen and from which the coal mines were worked.[40]  It was a place to send unruly girls and then the growing insane population of the colony in the 1870s. The site was adapted from one use to another, often with minimal planning.   The Newcastle Asylum and later Mental Hospital became a relief valve for the problems of overcrowding in the colony's other psychiatric facilities.[41] In 2014, the Government Domain remains a mental health site, but for how long is uncertain as is the next

[36] Dietrich Schmidt-vogt, "Our Second Nature: A Reflection on Conservation Paradigms," *Historic Environment* v. 19, no. 1 (Dec 2005).
[37] Michelle Harris, "Poll:State Failed to Use Guidelines in Fullerton CSG, Court Told," *Newcastle Herald* (Newcastle)November 8,2012.
[38] NSW Government, "Hunter Estuary Wetlands," http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wetlands/HunterEstuaryWetlands.htm.
[39] NSW Department of Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan for the James Fletcher Hospital Site (Final Report) Report Vol. 1," : 9.
[40] Donald McDonald. "The Newcastle Lunatic Asylum: 'So human a purpose." *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society,* June 1980. 20.
[41] Donald McDonald. "The Newcastle Lunatic Asylum. 20.

purpose to which the state government will put it.  Its long history of changing uses has created a valuable site which should be protected.

In terms of built heritage, the site contains built and landscape elements which represent almost a century and a half of transitions in mental health care.  The extant buildings provide evidence of the changing standards and practices affecting those suffering mental health problems.  The most recent changes have left many of the former military buildings vacant, some other structures demolished and the construction of new facilities which match the contemporary assumption that outpatient care is most desirable.  This new construction sends mixed messages to the community because it implies there will be ongoing mental health services on what will remain a government owned space while the vacant historic buildings on the site suggest that the long term role is coming to an end.



**Figure 9.1**  The Cultural Landscape of the Government Domain
Source: Charles Hardy, 2013.

**Figure 9.2** The Cultural Landscape of the Government Domain
Source: Charles Hardy, 2013



**Figure 9.3** Facing east towards Gate House
Source: Charlie Hardy, 2013.

**Figure 9.4** Outbuildings behind former Military Barracks
Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.



**Figure 9.5** Outbuildings behind former Military Barracks. Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.

**Figure 9.6**  Side view of north end of former Military Barracks. Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.



**Figure 9.7** Engineer's office behind outbuildings behind former Military Barracks.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.

In combination with related historical sources, these buildings offer insights into how the British colonial authorities adapted to suit local conditions.   It has only been in recent years that Australian architecture has been thought of as being quite different from architecture in Britain, Europe or America.[42]  The Newcastle military buildings are a good example because although modeled on plans drawn up in Britain and sent to the colonies, the buildings were altered to fit the Australian conditions.  In general, Australian was hotter and drier than Great Britain, but it also experienced more intense storms and heavier seasonal rainfall.  Geography played a role, in terms of the landform on which structures were built and the availability of suitable building materials.  Adjustments were made more difficult due to the geographical distance from expert knowledge and specialist materials in England.  Instead the colonists learned to improvise.

Work on the surviving buildings at the Domain can be said to have started in the 1830s with the levelling of the site by convict labour.  Construction of military buildings in NSW in the 1840s was administered by the British Ordnance Office which was also responsible for the later maintenance of buildings.[43]  The contract for the construction of the military buildings at Newcastle was awarded to Richardson and Hudson in 1836, although work did not begin until 1841.  However, a significant problem arose because there was no representative from the British Ordnance Office present in NSW to oversee work on the military buildings during their construction. [44] Works were supervised in NSW by the Commissariat or civilian contractors.  The public building program during the 1830s and 1840s was not at all efficient and many projects were delayed due to the lack of support and knowledge.  In Newcastle, some of the British architectural designs for the military buildings were unsuitable because of the land chosen. This was due to the nature of the site and its location on a sloping hillside.  Authorities had to improvise and alter slightly the original building designs and position of buildings.  For example Guard House and the cells were to be located on the north boundary of Church Street, however because of the steep rise these buildings and the main entrance were put on the east boundary. The slate for the roof and cast iron fixtures ordered from England never arrived and instead locally made wooden shingles were used for the barracks.[45]   It is suspected that costs and timing may have been the issue here.  It was often cheaper to build in brick and shingle than stone and slate.  The buildings were built in brick with stone footings, stone architraves and windows with stone sills. Using shingles led to other variations.  It has been suggested that the original hipped roofing of one of the outbuildings may have been altered to allow for gables to be used to accommodate the wooden shingles.[46] Variations such as substituting local materials for imports were common in colonial architecture.[47]   Workers applied their own skills in construction methods to overcome unforeseeable obstacles and this is something to be mindful of when interpreting colonial architecture.  Their running variations to designs and plans ensured that delays were minimised and that the colony gained the needed structure as soon as possible.

[42] Judith Blane, "Charting Shifting Views of Port Arthur and Associated Methodological Problems", in *Shifting Views: Selected Essays on the Architectural History of Australia and New Zealand*, ed. Leach Andrew, Moulis Antony, and Sully Nicole (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2008).
[43] NSW Department of Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan for the James Fletcher Hospital Site (Final Report) Report Vol. 1", History B: 35.
[44] NSW Department of Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan":32.
[45] Office of Ordnance WO55, "Office of Ordnance to Inspector General of Fortifications", (Canberra: Australian Joint Copying Project, 4 October, 1843).
[46] NSW Department of Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan for the James Fletcher Hospital Site (Final Report) Report Vol. 1," : 32.
[47] Cleveland Salmon, *Architectural Design for Tropical Regions*, ed.
http://books.google.com.au/books?id=zCKMirIg6MMC&pg=PA68&dq=alterations+to+british+architectural+designs+in+Australia&hl=en&sa=X&ei=uXyLUOy uC_DlmAXAn4CICA&ved=0CD8Q6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=alterations%20to%20british%20architectural%20designs%20in%20Australia&f=false (United States of America: John Wiley & Son, 1999). 66.

**Figure 9.8** North end of Former Military Barracks
Source: Charles Hardy, 2013



**Figure 9.9** Contemporary plantings at the Parade Ground & Gate House in background
Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.

**Figure 9.10** Military Parade Ground and Military Barracks
Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.

When the Imperial forces left Newcastle and the colony in 1851 as described in Chapter Three, the barracks were in good condition and ready to be used for a new purpose. The Imperial authorities sought good tenants to ensure that their relatively new asset was going to be looked after.  In doing so, the Imperial authorities set a good example for colonial authorities to follow when they gained title to the site.  The care of the buildings at the Domain continued after 1851 when they were handed over to the colonial government. After the unsuccessful experiment with housing wayward girls, the barracks were repurposed as an asylum which fit well with Piddock's model for an ideal asylum discussed in Chapter *Six Picturing' the asylum* .  Adaptive reuse and government ownership and management is part of the Domain's heritage.

Appendix 2 shows Australian asylums and their current use.  Most asylums from the nineteenth and early twentieth century are no longer used for the purpose of mental health care, with only the James Fletcher Hospital, Stockton Centre and Glenside Psychiatric Hospital in South Australia having continued use for mental health care. The institution at Orange shown in the table was established much later and is not mentioned alongside older ones because it does not relate to 'asylum' culture of institutions from the nineteenth century.  The James Fletcher Hospital is the longest established mental health site in continuous use in NSW.  Other government health sites have not been as fortunate with many sold to private enterprise, whilst others have changed use.  While some have been deemed to be unsuitable for contemporary purposes or too heavily burdened by past events and reputations, threats to old public mental health sites include the valuable land that many are on.  In the early twentieth century it was common for mental

health institutions to be located on islands or peninsulas, such as Peat Island on the Hawkesbury River and Morisset Hospital on the shores of Lake Macquarie. These remain in public ownership however Peat Island closed in 2008 and its future uncertain.  In NSW the former Rozelle Hospital remains in public use, similarly the Gladesville Hospital however this site has been redeveloped.  The former Kenmore Hospital at Goulburn is being prepared for sale by the state government.  In South Australia a portion of the site of the historic health precinct at Glenside Psychiatric Hospital was sold to developers, and in Western Australia the entire precinct of the former Claremont Hospital was sold to private developers in 2008.  Others sites include the former Kew Hospital in Victoria now residential apartments, and the former Beechworth Asylum is also being prepared for sale. Site's such as the one at Newcastle is particularly vulnerable because of its urban coastal environment.

Private redevelopment or adaptation to another public use of the site would be hampered by its current low profile.  Despite its central location in the business heart of Newcastle, the NGD has been on the margins of society. As discussed in Chapter *Eight Frontier Reality: A Government Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots,* during much of the twentieth century mental health care was implemented indoors due to drug therapy becoming more common. This gave the perception that the place was off limits to all other than patients, families and staff. This of course was much different from the earlier asylum years as described in Chapter Seven *Visitor's to the Asylum* when the community used the site. Shields in *Places on the Margin* talks about marginality as not always geographical but also cultural. Culturally the Government Domain did become increasingly insular or disassociated from the community in the twentieth century with changing mental health policies and treatment regimes.  High walls and an attitude that mental health was a private affair led to the community increasingly forgetting about the place.  However, Winter has encouraged a reconsideration of places on the margins, boundaries and frontiers, and need to weigh up the implications of places 'dropping off' or disappearing from community consciousness.[48]  The NGD has already 'dropped off' culturally with very little interaction between the community and the site.  Ideas need to be formulated about how the Domain can once again come into the public focus as the type of active community space it was in the 1870s.

Being on the periphery can have its advantages in terms of heritage conservation.  At the Domain there has been low impact of human traffic and minimal disturbance to the hospital grounds. This lack of contact and interest has been assisted by the lack of funding and mental health care being a low profile area of health. Heritage there being hidden has been protected and this has helped retain the integrity of much of the built environment.  Any other use during the twentieth century may have seen the place damaged and destroyed as it was expanded and modernised to cater for its clientele. Therefore on one hand the stigma of mental health at the NGD has assisted built heritage being retained there, whilst on the other hand, its significance been unacknowledged and its role has largely been forgotten by the community.

At present, the Government Domain is perceived as secluded and out of bounds.  The lack of community awareness has contributed to memories about the place remaining private, not spoken or written about.  This apathy did not apply to the publicly owned Royal Newcastle Hospital located a few hundred metres away, also on the coastline. Memories, technological achievements and stories about the Royal Newcastle Hospital were known and celebrated

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[48] Tim Winter, "Heritage on the Margin," *Historic Environment* v.20, no.2 (Dec 2007).

informally and in numerous publications.  Despite its public profile, its fabric has been destroyed for apartments and a hotel and redeveloped into luxury housing.   Many who worked at the Royal were emotional about the demise of the hospital, their departure was very public, expressing their stories about the place.[49]  The history of the James Fletcher hospital has not received the same attention, and it is unlikely that its final closure would bring about a strong community reaction.  Nonetheless, with its age, intactness and cultural significance, the Domain should be recognised as one of Newcastle's most important heritage sites.

The Government Domain is a significant portion of land in the inner city of Newcastle. At six hectares, it is the equivalent of four city blocks in size.  It is comprised of valuable land and infrastructure that has remained government owned. Other government infrastructure has been removed from the city, and its site reused or left idle.  Prominent of amongst these sites are the Zaara Street Power Station, now public housing; the Newcastle Post Office, now in state government ownership and vacant; and the Royal Newcastle Hospital.   Although health authorities continue to own the Domain site there is a significant cost in maintaining and potentially having to restore buildings there.   If history is taken seriously, there will also be future costs involved in further research, resources and telling of stories.   Examples of features of the site which are under researched are the coal shaft at the south-west corner and the Wallis shaft near the site entrance discussed in Chapter Two *Government Care and Convict Culture 1801 to 1841* and shown in Figure 9.11.[50] These shafts were accessed and investigated in 1987 and the one located at the south-west corner is reported to be in good condition and not filled.  However, the Wallis shaft had been filled and sealed.[51]  The 1987 study did not confirm the age of the shafts and no further archaeological investigations have taken place. Further research is needed to find official documents verifying the age of these shafts and early methods used in mining and to ascertain whether it is connected to a drainage adit running to the nearby coastal cliffs at Newcastle South Beach as shown in Figure 9.13 as a study in the 1980s suggested.[52]   Knowledge of underground workings is of more than just heritage interest as these workings impact on the current city and on development.   A potential challenge is posed by a large water tank, or a 'subterranean cistern' built underground at the Government Domain by the Military in the 1840s (Figure 9.12).[53]  A convict tunnel believed to have been constructed in 1810 was unearthed on the northern boundary of the Government Domain in 2010 during repairs in Church Street.[54] The site and the city of Newcastle more generally is riddled with old mine workings and convict culverts.

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[49] Alice Kelly, "Staff, Patients Parade Royal Hospital's Proud History," *Newcastle Herald* (Newcastle) March 27, 2006.
[50] Windross and Ralston, *Historical Records of Newcastle.*
[51] Newcastle City Council, "Newcastle C.B.D Archaeological Management Plan", Item no. 1124 and Adit Item no.1123. 'Asylum Mine Shaft in 'good condition'.
[52] M Earnest, "1908 Royal Commission Revisited" in *1908 Royal Commission Revisited*, ed. Chief Executive Officer Ernest, Mine Subsidence Board NSW (Sydney1980s). The Ladies Beach was at the same location as the adit at Newcastle South Beach.
[53] Mike Scanlon *Newcastle Morning Herald* (Newcastle) March 6, 1969. , "History's Blood Beats in Hospital's Hidden Heart,"*The Herald* July 4, 1988.
[54] Gabriel Wingate-Pearse, "Treasure Found beneath City Road," *The Newcastle Herald* (Newcastle) April 10, 2010 "UNDERGROUND treasure" is how Newcastle City Council describes a 200-year-old tunnel beneath Church Street in Newcastle East which is being repaired at a cost of $150,000.

**Figure 9.11** Main entrance to Domain. Roadway bitumen and concrete curb repaired after sinking occurred due to  early coal shaft that exists under roadway (Wallis Shaft).  Source: Charles Hardy, 2014.



**Figure 9.12** Entrance to underground water tank located in front of the workshops at end of main drive.
Source: Charles Hardy, 2014.

**Figure 9.13** Adit in cliff at Newcastle South Beach.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2007.

An important landscape feature of the Domain around which the Health Service must work are the quarried walls which resulted from site preparation work during the convict period. The landscape was sculpted by a convict workforce. Appreciation of this special landscape has been enhanced since the recent demolition of Shortland Clinic (referred to as the 'roundhouse') that occupied a portion of land at the southern boundary of the Domain from 1966 until 2009 (as shown in Figure 9.15). The landform is now uninterrupted and almost the entire length of the quarried southern boundary can be seen. Because of the previous focus on built heritage and fabric, landscape features like this quarried rock wall have received little attention or acknowledgement. Any protection and enhancement is due to the continuing utility of the feature as a site boundary.

**Figure 9.14** Shortland Clinic prior to its demolition in 2010.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2009.

In contrast, the case of the 1818 parsonage sheds light on the vulnerability of heritage values when they conflict with other priorities at a working site like the Newcastle Domain. Located at the North West corner of the Domain, the parsonage had associations with the mental hospital, as well as the Church of England in Newcastle.[55] Elements of it were incorporated into the Reception House, known as Kirkwood House, in 1902. Kirkwood House is shown in Figure 9.15.



**Figure 9.15** Shortland Clinic prior to its demolition in 2010.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2009.

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[55] Ian Kirkwood, "Shred of Convict Brickwork to Be Kept," *Newcastle Herald* (Newcastle) June 11, 2009.

**Figure 9.16** Archaeological site of the parsonage showing the '2nd Bedroom' prior to demolition in 2009.[56]
Source: Ann Hardy, 2009.

When demolition of both a newer Reception House and parsonage was proposed in 2007 for the construction of a new 20 bed mental health facility concerns were raised by heritage advocates about the original fabric of the parsonage within the existing building.[57]  This new facility was the 'Immediate Stay Mental Health Unit', a non-acute transitional unit for those no longer requiring acute mental health care.[58] The proposal to build it reflected a changing type of demand for services, in this case to provide support to those recovering from mental illness before their discharge to the community. This is not new but indicates a reinstatement to services provided before the turn to deinstitutionalisation in the 1960s and 1970s when patients were treated over lengthy periods until well enough to return to the community.  Despite heritage concerns, Kirkwood House was demolished in 2008. An archaeologist was available before and during demolition of the components related to the parsonage, and in late 2012 a final archaeological report was lodged with the local council.[59]  This report stated that the retained relics of the parsonage are considered to be some of the oldest European relics in Newcastle, that this was one of the earliest buildings remaining from the convict period and that it should had been considered to be state significant once. Figure 9.17 shows the Parsonage prior to it being demolished in 2009.

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[56] Blaxland, "Journal Commencing July 14th 1821 on Which Day We First Crossed Hunter's River and the Second of the Our Arrival at Wallis Plains. Ending August 1821", Contains floor plan of parsonage.
[57] Murray, *The Vision Splendid*, 21-22.
[58] Minister for Health, "New Mental Health Unit Puts Patients on Road to Recovery", ed. N.S.W. Department of Health (Sydney: NSW Government, 18 November 2010).
[59] AMAC Archaeological, "Final Archaeological Report Kirkwood House James Fletcher Hospital 15 Church Street Newcastle," ed. Archaeological Management & Consulting Group Pty Ltd (Newcastle: NSW Department of Commerce Newcastle & Hunter-New England Health, 2012).

**Figure 9.17** Archaeological site of the parsonage showing the '2nd Bedroom' prior to demolition in 2009.[60]
Source: Ann Hardy, 2009.

The NGD did not have proper heritage acknowledgement at the time the parsonage was demolished. If the site had been recognised on the SHR, then the NSW Department of Planning's Heritage Branch would have provided a heritage assessment to the Heritage Council of NSW, offering recommendations to the minister. Certain conditions may have been placed on the development application. However, this did not occur.[61] In the absence of formal heritage listing, there was nothing to prevent the demolition of convict era walls and footings. The state government authorised demolition that was carried out by the NSW Health Department. There was not a huge community outcry and this reflects the disconnect that exists between the community and the Government Domain.

Concerns over the imminent loss of this structure prompted a state heritage nomination for the NGD. The nomination was prepared by the author of this thesis on behalf of the National Trust NSW and is an example of community groups stopping governments from working in a vacuum. The National Trust was joined by other community groups to support the nomination, which was also endorsed by government agencies including local council and the health department which had carried out the demolition. The Newcastle Government Domain was listed on the SHR in 2011.

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[60] Blaxland, "Journal Commencing July 14th 1821 on Which Day We First Crossed Hunter's River and the Second of the Our Arrival at Wallis Plains.Ending August 1821", Contains floor plan of parsonage.
[61] Kirkwood, "Shred of Convict Brickwork to Be Kept".

**Figure 9.18** Photograph of convict built foundation of Parsonage.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2009.

A section of the wall showing what the fabric looked like has been preserved near the new facility. It is presented as a single piece of brickwork about four metres high as shown in Figure 9.19 and secured to a security gate and open to the elements. There is no signage or interpretation stating what it is. This token gesture does not adequately reflect the significance of the convict era building that was demolished. Foundations exposed during the archaeological excavation show the crude way that buildings from the convict period were constructed. There were no substantial footings laid down, instead large rocks set into foundation trenches cut into natural sand sloping eastward[62] were used to form a base for the parsonage to stand on. It is remarkable that much of this building for 191 years stood on this apparently weak foundation. The footings have been retained under the new building. This archaeological site related to the early settlement could have been presented and interpreted in a more effective way for future generations. As Vinton suggests, heritage interpretation is meaningful when those putting together the interpretation recognises the particular community they are representing.[63] The interpretation at Newcastle was on a very small scale and it is unlikely that those given the job of interpreting fully understood the heritage significance of the site because the archaeological report had not been published when the interpretation was undertaken. Heritage interpretation in this instance has not delivered a meaningful story. The Parsonage site as a tangible place had the chance to educate and inspire people; however this opportunity has been lost.

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[62] AMAC Archaeological, "Final Archaeological Report Kirkwood House James Fletcher Hospital 15 Church Street Newcastle." 130.
[63] Natalie Vinton, "It's All in the Telling: Interpreting Archeological Remains," *Historic Environment* v. 18, no. no. 3 (July 2005).

**Figure 9.19** Photograph of section of convict built Parsonage.
Source: Ann Hardy, 2013.

The long association of the Domain with mental health care, and the protection of the site it brought, is coming to an end. Heath services are being removed because new thinking suggests that mental health services should be co-located with general hospitals, a recommendation from *The National Mental Health Policy* in 1992.[64] The policy sought to reduce the stigma of mental illness, improve mental health services and increase access to services. *The Hunter Mental Health Strategic Plan* in 1996 proposed that mental health services be relocated from the James Fletcher Hospital to the John Hunter Hospital. A further *Project Feasibility Plan* was prepared in 2001 suggesting instead that mental health services be moved to the Mater Campus at Waratah. The construction of the new facility which damaged the remnants of the parsonage went against this planning, suggesting that at least some mental health services will remain on the Domain site. Now that listing of the site has been obtained, the former military buildings cannot be modified to meet mental health care standards and opportunities for new building are limited by subterranean features. Whether for mental health or for other purposes, it is a site that will be difficult to develop due to heritage limitations.

Although cultural heritage at the NGD may help protect the site from development many government places like the NGD are vulnerable. This is mostly due to changes to heritage legislation and planning in NSW, and particularly the

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[64] Commonwealth of Australia, "National Mental Health Policy", (Canberra1992).

recent practice of selling off public assets.[65] Unless governments take a more active lead in implementing changes in terms of caring for heritage and reusing buildings, the private sector is unlikely to follow suit.  The move of most of the mental health services from the Domain in 2009 left many of the buildings unoccupied.  Without official plans for the future of the site, it is increasingly vulnerable to vandalism and decay in the short term and redevelopment in the longer term.  Currently the NGD awaits re-invention, for the fifth time, this time with official heritage protection placing some constraints on its possible uses. Retaining cultural heritage of old city precincts is much harder in the current environment whereby revitalisation is occurring in many waterfront locations around Australia. People want to live in the heart of cities, close to where the cultural action is taking place. Places such as the NGD that are underutilised will come to the attention of private investors because of its prime coastal location and the desire of governments to raise funds by selling public assets.  In Newcastle development has occurred along the Honeysuckle Precinct at the harbour, bringing largely vacant former railway lands back to a lively use, with some heritage elements but largely through entirely new development.  It is up to communities and governments to choose whether or not to include heritage into the planning equation.

In some cases, adaptive reuse under private ownership is the best way to protect heritage significance. However, there are good reasons for the Domain to remain in public hands.  Its rich cultural heritage is associated with government ownership.  Retaining it in public ownership continues an important element of its heritage. There are some positive examples of adaptive reuse of government heritage sites in proximity to the NGD.  The former Police Station (1861) in Hunter Street is now a heritage interpretation centre and art gallery known as the *Lock Up*. Fort Scratchley (1882) was given Commonwealth funding for refurbishment in 2004 and now features a museum and site interpretation. The 1877 Newcastle Customs House is also another success story of government heritage sites being used sympathetically and effectively.  This building has not been changed dramatically and is currently used as a restaurant and function centre, retaining a strong presence at the foot of Watt Street as a reminder of the commercial past.

On the demand side, whether or not the NGD would be of interest to the private sector is unknown.  It may be that its use as a mental health institution has too badly tainted perceptions of the site and the buildings which would have to be retained there.  The asylum at Kew in Melbourne was initially considered as a site for a hotel, and then become apartments.[66] The buildings there were architecturally much more aesthetically pleasing and probably far more attractive as a place of residence than the old barracks at Newcastle.

If the use of the site were to change, the issue becomes how diligent the new owners or tenants would be. Would private or government owners best care and protect the heritage values of the Domain and would they would be held to account by the local community.  There was controversy at the Sydney Conservatorium in 1998 when an historic road was unearthed during building works.  Rallies took place against overdevelopment at the Francis Greenway-designed site and the impact it would have on the nearby Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain.  Debate focused on the state governments' role in the redevelopment of the Conservatorium and lack of consultation with communities.  Sydney City Historian Dr Shirley Fitzgerald summed up the situation when she stated "These gardens are public gardens, they

[65] Anna Paty,New Law set to benefit government building sell-off. *Sydney Morning Herald*, July 9, 2013.
[66] William Logan and Keir Reeves, eds., *Places of Pain and Shame: Dealing with 'Difficult Heritage'* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

are ours-not the Government's".[67]  The community in Sydney in this case defended the Domain, a space they believed belonged to them. The lack of personal connection with the Newcastle Domain suggests that there would not have been the same response there.

While the Domain has long been a self-contained site, it was surrounded by other government services including the Newcastle court house, the family court, the police station, the post office and Royal Newcastle Hospital.  Over the past two decades, several of these institutions have been closed and their functions shifted elsewhere. When significant government infrastructure is built elsewhere the historic precincts of towns and cities, which have traditionally been government places, become vulnerable with buildings left vacant or demolished and fewer reasons for people to visit them.  Urban renewal priorities include enhancing urban amenity, jobs creation and enhancing public spaces, but what is often lacking is good heritage planning. It is a common understanding that it is more expensive to renovate old buildings, than build new ones but often such calculations are made without considering the savings in embedded materials and energy and the contribution to a sense of place made by heritage buildings.[68]  Governments offer owners of listed properties minimal assistance to take care of the built environment including access to advice, tax breaks and matching funding. Tax rebates may also be offered to eligible owners of heritage buildings for conservation works.[69]  Unfortunately government authorities offer minimal guidance and advice to owners of heritage properties to gain positive heritage outcomes.

Since at least the 1970s, one of the motivations for conserving heritage areas has been the expectation of economic advantages.  Heritage provides the type of unique attraction which can draw and hold tourists.  Hobart in Tasmania has protected its historic waterfront and has specific attractions such as the Cascades Female Factory Historic site. Other successful places for heritage tourism are Fremantle in Western Australia, the Rocks in Sydney and the old cities of Quebec and Montreal.  Many precincts or 'old' towns have been used to revive and renew cities because of their individuality in terms of history. Creativity and new thinking is needed about how to reinvigorate redundant buildings in these older urban spaces and governments can lead the way if the community demands this with vigour.  Renewal that is sympathetic to heritage is possible at the Domain.

Despite the NGD being in a populated urban environment, the absence of community is still evident and in a sense it remains an 'asylum'.  Community demand for the protection of the Domain has been limited, and muted. Because of its long use as a mental health site, residents are largely unaware of the heritage significance of the place. Much of the nearby population is newly arrived, occupying new apartments many of which adaptively reuse commercial and public buildings, others replacing older structures.

Although change has occurred in terms of there being more city residents, it is unknown whether this new group are aware of the significant heritage at the Government Domain. The community has kept away because of the perception that mental hospitals are private places.  For this reason it has been important that heritage groups get involved to have cultural heritage recognised. From proper recognition of the Domain will come appropriate heritage interpretation.

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[67] Geraldine O'Brien, "Trust out of Tune with Con Students," *The Sydney Morning* (Sydney)July 3, 1998, David Stewart (Letters), "The Heritage Value of That Old Road," *The Sydney Morning Herald*  (Sydney) July 4, 1998.
[68] Clark, "Only Connect",15.
[69] Aplin, *Heritage: Identification, Conservation, and Management*.

Unfortunately there is not the scope in this chapter for a comprehensive discussion about heritage interpretation, however this entire thesis will be useful in future preparation of interpretation strategies. Future implementation of interpretation strategies could include such things as websites, signage and brochures about the history of the place. This would be a positive step in terms of extending care not only of the site but to the community by let allowing spirit of the place to be better understood.

## Heritage Status of the Newcastle Government Domain

The lack of community interest in the NGD generally has had consequences in terms of recognition of its heritage value. In 2008 when announcements were made that the mental hospital would relocate, many assumed the place had adequate heritage protection. The Health Department believed that a number of buildings at the James Fletcher Hospital, as well as the former military parade ground, were listed on the SHR.[70] The 'James Fletcher Hospital Group' was assessed as having National heritage significance through the former process of inclusion on the RNE and listed on the Register in 1980.[71] Although national heritage listing did not guarantee protection, what it did ensure was that the site could be brought to the attention of commonwealth authorities when development and changes were being considered. With the decommissioning of the Register of the National Estate in 2007, even this moderate protection disappeared. Previously listed sites which had not been nominated to, assessed for and added to the National Heritage Register had no special status. This remains the case for hundreds of items from the Register of the National Estate. A recommendation that the NGD be listed on the SHR was made in the *Conservation Management Plan for the James Fletcher Hospital* (2005) but not acted upon.[72] Without any statutory protection, there was no requirement for the NSW Heritage Branch to be involved in guiding the relocation or protection of cultural heritage as mental health services were curtailed at the Government Domain in 2009. All of the inpatient and outpatient services moved from the site and leaving only the Hunter Institute of Mental Health and a few administrative services. There was a downgrading in the use of the site, which meant maintenance staff was also reduced putting reasonable care of the buildings and the grounds in jeopardy. Hunter New England Local Health District had few from whom they could take advice, and had been through a similar process regarding relocation of health services from an historic site. What was urgently needed was proper heritage acknowledgement.

As mentioned the author of this thesis put together a comprehensive nomination for state heritage listing and acting both as academic historian and activist help gain proper acknowledgement. Timing was crucial as a state election approached in early 2009 and the state member for the Hunter supported placing the Domain on the SHR.[73] The nomination was prepared and submitted 2010 by the National Trust of Australia and has support of local heritage groups including the University of Newcastle's Coal River Working Party (CRWP). It took some convincing of the health department that the site was unlistedAlthoughsome buildings had been on the RNE, this system of recogintion and

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[70] Radio Interview 1233 Newcastle ABC Radio http://governmenthousebarracks1804.wordpress.com/

[71] Australian Government, "James Fletcher Hospital Group, 72 Watt St, Newcastle, NSW, Australia Http://Www.Environment.Gov.Au/Cgi-Bin/Ahdb/Search.Pl?Mode=Place_Detail;Place_Id=101838," in *Register of the National Estate. Registered 12.10.1980* (Australian Government: Department Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts, 1980).

[72] Department of Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan",Policy 14, 148.

[73] Health, "New Mental Health Unit Puts Patients on Road to Recovery".

protection was being phased out and no longer applied. Even heritage advocates were initially confused about what protection the site had, because the NSW Department of Heritage database showed some of the military buildings as having state significance and some assumed this meant were on the owever this was bein SHR. This was incorrect as nothing at the NGD was on the SHR. Some of the members of the local National Trust and CRWP met with the Minister of the Hunter in early 2010 to discuss the confusion about heritage status of the Newcastle Domain and the urgent need for state listing. The Minister met with health department staff about the issue and there was an acknowledgement that the site did not have adequate heritage protection. In June 2010 there was a Ministerial announcement that the Domain would be listed on the SHR, interestingly listing had not been gazetted at this time.[74] The Newcastle Domain was not placed on the SHR until March 2011, at which time there was no fanfare or celebration. The earlier Ministerial announcement could be seen as political point scoring as a state election was looming. By using strategic tactics and liaising and talking with the Minister about this important heritage site meant that the facts could be explained as to how heritage had been overlooked. This was an outcome that started a coalition by talking about the Domain.

In 2013, almost four years after several significant heritage buildings were vacated they remain empty.[75] It is important that the Domain has national significance recognised. Only now are we seeing the fallout of changes with some national heritage legislation and places in 'limbo' and enjoying no safeguard at all. It is therefore necessary to be vigilant of places at risk and that may need to be re-assessed, and where appropriate, nominated for the relatively new NHL. The neglect of heritage at a state level has made it more of a challenge to gain national heritage acknowledgement for the NGD, and certainly there may be similar cases around the state. In Newcastle, the Coal River Precinct has also been nominated for the National Heritage List in 2007 and, as 'The Coal River (*Mulubinba*) Cultural Landscape' in 2009.[76] Both of these national nominations were unsuccessful. Of all of the nominations made in 2010-2011, just six were selected nationally for the 'priority assessment list' to be reviewed over the coming year. A third nomination combining Coal River (Mulubinba) and Government Domain sites was submitted early in 2012 and again in 2013. In this round there was just one place selected to the 'Finalised Priority Assessment List for the National Heritage List' for the period 2012-2013, the Coral Sea with its pristine coral reefs and wildlife and World War II naval heritage. This nomination reflects the shift heritage is taking towards cultural landscapes and natural environments as discussed earlier in this chapter. The fourth national nomination including the NGD was reconsidered for the priority assessment listduring 2013, however this was unsuccessful.

For the Domain, national listing is complex, because even if the community wants to have a say, the current managers, the Health Department, do not have the resources or inclination to liaise with the wider community about the future of the site. Roberts and Eklund point out that local authorities do not seem to be able to work with state and commonwealth authorities to advance a national nomination.[77] The Australian heritage system is basically very complex and fragmented with all three levels of government managing cultural heritage, and an overlay of World Heritage protocols.[78] This difficulty is also highlighted by Schmider and James.[79] The Domain at Newcastle is a typical example

[74] http://governmenthousebarracks1804.wordpress.com/2010/07/27/james-fletcher-hospital-ministerial-announcment-28-june-2010/
[75] Department of Commerce, "Conservation Management Plan",152.
[76] University of Newcastle's Coal River Working Party, http://coalriver.wordpress.com/
[77] Roberts and Eklund, "Australian Convict Sites".
[78] Report by Productivity Commission, "The Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places Inquiry" in *Report No.37,Overview, pxxiv*

of a place of national heritage significance that has been let down by state heritage legislation and needs to be urgently considered for national heritage listing.

One way of maintaining community participation is by using multiple disciplinary approaches that enable comprehensive analysis of historic places.  A group using a multi-disciplinary model is the University of Newcastle's Coal River Working Party (CRWP).[80]  The working party enables the community, academics and professionals from a range of disciplines to work together in heritage matters. This group uses many disciplines and local knowledge to draw out different heritage perspectives that consider the lengthy history associated with this place, and the cultural care that they derserve.

## Shared Heritage Care- Multi-disciplinary Approach in Cultural Heritage

The University of Newcastle's CRWP is a research group with an interest in heritage of Coal River in Newcastle, NSW. Coal River was the first name given to the settlement that would become Newcastle.  The Coal River Precinct is the area of Nobbys Headland and breakwater, and Fort Scratchley, containing the early convict coal mines.  This group uses a multi-disciplinary model to build respect by understanding individual perspectives. The CRWP was established in 2003 by Dr Erik Eklund from the university's History Department[81] and the group originally focused research on conservation of the Coal River Precinct (now also known as the Coal River (*Mulubinba*) Cultural Landscape), but has broadened its focus to look at other places in Newcastle such as the Domain.  In 2014, the CRWP is chaired by Mr Gionni di Gravio, archivist at the University of Newcastle.  Members of the CRWP come from a variety of backgrounds including history, engineering, geology, surveying, social work, archaeology, arts and education and share a special interest in research and conservation of Newcastle. There are representatives from the local Aboriginal community and various corporations and government departments, as well as individuals who are retired and have useful skills they can bring to the group. Some are longstanding 'crusaders' for Newcastle's heritage having valuable knowledge about the heritage, planning and conservation. One of the strengths of this group is that it includes many well connected and dedicated local people. Clark points out that this is important because the association between people and place is what gives meanings to stories.[82] The group is dynamic and membership is not static but allows people to come and go depending on their interest in certain projects.  The aim of the group is to achieve positive outcomes for history and heritage of the region. The CRWP is an independent and autonomous heritage group that has no affiliation with political or developer group.[83]

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(Canberra 2006).
[79] Schmider and James, "Whose Heritage Is It?", 11.
[80] The University of Newcastle, "Coal River Cultural Precinct Website",  The University of Newcastle, Australia.
[81] http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/archives/coalriver/index.html
[82] Garden, "Essay: Who Are".
[83] *ABC Stateline NSW*. In Newcastle the CRWP was instrumental in raising awareness of the significant aboriginal cultural heritage at the former Palais site in Hunter Street, after the 'biggest KFC in Australia' was built there in 2011. http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-11-30/rare-aboriginal-rock-art-faces-threats/4402252
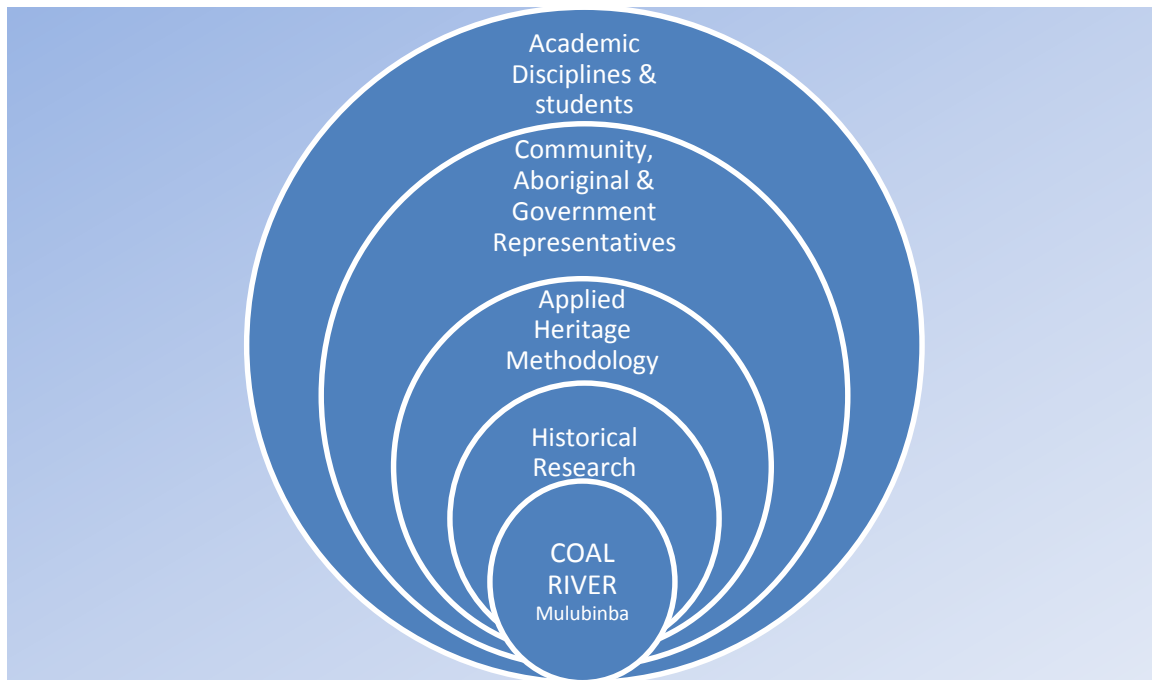
**Figure 9.20**- University of Newcastle's CRWP 'Multi-disciplinary Heritage Model'

The University of Newcastle's CRWP Multi-disciplinary Heritage Model is shown in Figure 9.20. Located at the forefront of this model is Coal River and surrounding this is historical research and heritage methodology that are of primary importance. Individuals and groups are on the periphery providing the essential specialist knowledge and expertise for heritage methodology to be applied. The CRWP has resulted in like-minded people co-operating in research, each bringing with them particular expertise and knowledge. Schmider and James suggest that taking a shared approach to heritage protection and management involving many disciplines facilitates and promotes creative solutions. [84] This group uses history as the foundation upon which other methodologies are applied to explore heritage. Further research is often undertaken to generate new knowledge and ideas. A major success for the CRWP was having the Coal River Precinct registered on the NSW SHR in 2004. The group continues to work towards national listing in recognition of the role of Newcastle in developing the nation's economy and establishment of the coal industry.[85]

Other projects undertaken by the CRWP have included exhibitions and collaborations between academic staff, students and organisations such as the National Trust of Australia (NSW) to interpret the array of historical material relating to early Newcastle and the Hunter Region. Some of the projects have involved developing new ways of presenting history using contemporary technology and media. There is a lot of material in Australian institutions and some of this material relevant to Newcastle is becoming available on-line. Links to these resources are made available electronically, via the University of Newcastle's Coal River 'Wordpress' website, their Facebook page, and through the

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[84] Schmider and James, "Whose Heritage Is It?",12.
[85] The Coal River Precinct is on the NSW Department of Planning's SHR. Item no. 0162. *The Coal River (Mulubinba) Cultural Landscape* nominated in 2006 & 2009 to the Department of Environment, Heritage and the Arts for National Nomination.

University archives' Cultural Collections 'Flickr' site.[86]   Other material that has been located overseas is available electronically directly from the University's website, where permission has been given.  The opening of the archives to communities electronically is harnessing a new interest in regional history and has nurtured a renewed practice of heritage. This is encouraging a new audience that includes those from other disciplines and the community to engage and interact with the region's history.

It is this independence that provides the environment to look objectively at the workings of heritage and advocate where possible for better processes.  According to Charles Percy Snow there can be great benefit of collaborating and having different viewpoints coming together to create exciting and new ideas. He says ''The clashing point of two subjects, two disciplines, two cultures of two galaxies, so far as that goes - ought to produce creative chances. In the history of mental activity that has been where some of the break-throughs came.''[87] Similarly Bartneck and Hu say that those who share the positive benefits of collaborations may foster networks that help build trust amongst different cultures and groups.

A multi-disciplinary approach to cultural heritage necessarily considers many perspectives and therefore fits well in the changing context of Australian heritage today. When it comes to cultural heritage, there are still many disparities between the disciplines and the multi-disciplinary approach helps bridge these differences. Community engagement at a local level is also important, and a shift is needed away from the primary focus of government authorities liaising mostly with heritage experts, to have a more local community approach.  This is where a multi-disciplinary approach can be useful, because it is more holistic, bringing about positive benefits that can enrich an understanding of places. It is a community based model.  Conservation groups such as the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and the University of Newcastle's CRWP are very important because they were able to collaborate with community groups to gain heritage outcomes. This was the case in getting the Newcastle Domain on to the SHR.

Heritage discussions need to include those from various backgrounds. Mackay suggests discussions about cultural heritage need to occur much earlier in the planning process and there needs to be a much more active approach that embeds heritage concepts into social, economic and environmental planning.[88]  Bell also suggests that there can be many players in decision making about heritage and that different people and groups will play distinctive roles.[89]  This means that many players are needed from a wide range of disciplines, something the multi-disciplinary model can offer. If concerns about the heritage status of the place can be brought to the attention of relevant authorities by conservation groups before proposals are even developed this would help integrate heritage into planning.[90]  This may be able to be achieved by producing cultural maps in consultation with local individuals and communities that identify areas of heritage significance. This would be a proactive approach achieved by using a multi-disciplinary model that has input from a variety of disciplines as well as the community.

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[86] http://coalriver.wordpress.com/, "Coal River Working Party".
[87] Charles Percy Snow, The Two Cultures: And a Second Look (University Press: Cambridge, 1964).
[88] Townsend and Meearasuriya, "Beyong Blue to Green",  22.
[89] Bell, "Essay:Whose Heritage?",1.
[90] National Trust E – Newsletter May 2009/issue 45. Was neither on the SHR or National Heritage List.

Frazer and Schalley argue that disciplinary interactions and collaborations are successful when they come about naturally through shared interests, cooperation and common objectives.[91] Their work looks at communication across disciplines and how there are often problems with interpreting terms used by various professions. Once terms are understood outcomes are usually quite fruitful.[92] Angela Brew has done some work on interdisciplinary affiliations within academia and suggests that a lot of contemporary identity around disciplines is still quite 'firm and fixed'.[93] The interdisciplinary approach integrates separate discipline approaches into a single consultation leading to a more rapid outcome whereas, the multi-disciplinary approach sees the individual practitioner operate in isolation but come together for ongoing group discussions about issues. She suggests there is a need for more fluid models that express the changing affiliations of academics and uses the metaphor of disciplines being like 'tribes' having a distinct academic, social and cultural identity. Rarely do these 'tribes' meet to collaborate on projects or research, particularly when they relate to cultural heritage. Brew suggests that undergraduates are more likely to embrace multiple disciplinary models because of their study of an array of subjects. Ideally, educational institutions are the optimum environment for nurturing multidisciplinary associations from students and new graduates keen to collaborate. There is greater likelihood that they will embrace other disciplines, if a multi-disciplinary model is available. What can be taken from these studies is that there is value in communicating and collaborating across disciplines to gain positive outcomes. The university campus is therefore an ideal environment for the multi-disciplinary model to be effective, such as the University of Newcastle's CRWP.

The health field has been using the multi-disciplinary model for some time. Multi-disciplinary teams involve health professionals collaborating and communicating about the care of clients with each discipline applying their own practice. Rebecca Jessop's study provides an insight of the multi-disciplinary approaches in the health environment,[94] whereby skills and expertise of the different practitioners (from various disciplines) are used to assess the needs of the client. Each professional comes up with what they consider the most effective intervention, in consultation with one another. The most valuable feature of this model is case conferencing where particular situations and issues are discussed and decisions made about interventions. Mental health care in Australia uses a similar approach whereby allied health and medical professionals now work in teams to find the best outcome for the client. Individual strategies are discussed to gain a better understanding of the greater issues. The multi-disciplinary model has worked well in the health setting and could be just as effective in discussing heritage involving various disciplines such as geology, architecture and engineering (to mention just a few) all discussing heritage matters. By forming partnerships with other disciplines and professions, valuable contributions not only help to strengthen research, but provide positive outcomes for cultural heritage.

An advantage of using a multi-disciplinary model in heritage conservation practice is that multidimensional issues can be addressed, which also suits the diverse heritage of NSW. Collective and diverse action is far more

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[91] Helen Frazer and Andrea C Schalley, "Communicating About Communication: Intercultural Competence as a Factor in the Success of Interdisciplinary Collaboration," *Australian Journal of Linguistics* Vol 29., no 1 (Jan 2009).

[92] Rebecca Jessop, "Interdisciplinary Versus Multidisciplinary Care Teams: Do We Understand the Diffence?," *Australian Health Review* vol 31, no. 3 (Aug 2007).

[93] Angela Brew, "Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Affiliations of Experienced Researchers", *Higher Education* Published online: 25 October 2007, Springer Science+Business Media B.V (2007).

[94] Jessop, "Interdisciplinary Versus".

effective in gaining positive outcomes for heritage than a single discipline's perspective acting alone.  The multi-disciplinary approach has been used by the Gunditjmara people of western Victoria to help connect the different ways of seeing and thinking about their culture.[95]  This group uses a process involving "various systems of knowledge (including local knowledge), disciplines, and technical expertise and management regimes to learn from each other".[96] It takes a regional and shared approach to heritage management working with locals and government organisations to gain positive outcomes for their Country. Tonkin also supports a regional approach to heritage research suggesting that it is local people who have the experience and understand the stories.[97]  The benefit of working with many stakeholders to manage heritage this approach supports social and cultural development, as well as economic opportunities. For example traditional owners of the *Budj Bin* National Heritage Landscape, the Gunditjmara people work with Lake Condah Sustainable Development Project to enhance cultural heritage.[98]  The place is already on the NHL and a nomination for world heritage listing is currently being prepared. It also recognises and respects each of the stakeholder groups' rights, interests and aspirations.[99]  This co-operative approach could certainly be used in other areas and groups of people. The experience of the Coal River Working Party supported by exemplars from other fields such as health and the theoretical literature on multi-disciplinary approaches suggests that diverse groups working together would enable a more comprehensive assessment of historic places in NSW, as well as the tabling and discussion of multiple perspectives. This Multi-disciplinary Heritage Care Team model could be productively applied to provide a more engaged community approach to heritage assessment and management issues, particularly in regional areas.  This new approach enables a group to 'case conference' a cultural heritage matter relating to their region and come up with strategies that consider many different viewpoints.  This model supports community discussion about heritage conservation matters, and brings various groups together to work with other professions not traditionally associated with history and heritage. This necessitates other disciplines to become part of the new heritage discourse in Australia. This new approach looks at increasing the care of heritage places and may be useful in the future if heritage policy makers incorporate a health focus as will be proposed in the following section.   This model may also give communities an opportunity to engage much earlier in the heritage process. In the long term, a more research based and proactive approach is needed that informs the public of heritage significance and provides better outcomes for cultural heritage. There is limited research in the area of the multi-disciplinary model typically used in the health sector and how it can be applied to heritage conservation; however the CRWP is testament that positive outcomes can be achieved.   Taking a wide disciplinary approach lets other narratives be explored in the contemporary context.  One example is themes associated with health and wellbeing.

## Cultural Heritage and Well-being

The shared approach of the multi-disciplinary model allows for cultural heritage stories to be told from various perspectives and this can help empower communities. Using the multi-disciplinary model to investigate the asylum may

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[95] Bell, "Essay:Whose Heritage?",10.
[96] Schmider and James, "Whose Heritage Is It? "
[97] Tonkin, "What Is Heritage?".
[98] http://www.lakecondah.com/objectives1.html Accessed 29 March 2013.
[99] Schmider and James, "Whose Heritage Is It? ",12.

help consider the links between heritage and wellbeing.   There is growing research looking at the benefits cultural heritage has on physical and mental well-being of communities.  As Avrami affirms it is important for all communities to have opportunities to embrace heritage and 'the need for access to one's heritage crosses all cultures and contributes to human flourishing and happiness'.[100]  The changing way that heritage is being considered and the significance of cultural landscapes and non-tangible elements is opening up a whole new area of research relating to heritage and well-being. There are many ways to embrace cultural heritage and the final part of the chapter looks at how the health of individuals and communities can benefit from heritage. Participation in cultural heritage can provide many health benefits to the wider community, generating environmental, economic and social benefits.[101]

Nurturing community engagement with heritage places such as the NGD, can lead to a better understanding of places and build respect, care and tolerance. As stated in the 'A Sustainable Population Strategy for Australia':

> Heritage and culture are at the heart of community identity. They define how we as a people view ourselves and our place in the world and how we define and respect each other. The engagement with heritage places, stories and cultural activities enables Australians to feel confident about national and local identity, better understand the different cultures, races and ethnicities that have shaped communities, and face a changing future with hope and optimism.[102]

Care of communities comes from nurturing cultural heritage and protecting heritage values. As Clark suggests a loss to the whole sense of people's lives occurs when there is a loss of place, a disconnection that often sees communities grieve.[103]  This can have long term consequences.  The impact that cultural heritage has on the lives of people is often difficult to measure. For this reason there is limited substantive research that has been done regarding the link between heritage and wellbeing. However there is growing evidence that the cultural sector and the arts are having positive effects on health and well-being.  Some studies have looked at the social impact the arts, museums and natural environment have on the health of communities.[104]  Arts and culture can improve self-esteem, personal development, creativity and increase cultural awareness and play a significant role in identity building and supporting social inclusion. Other social benefits that can come from cultural heritage are an individual's commitment to place. This is often seen in volunteering. Although individuals have different experiences and meanings related to heritage, it is the actual place that is important because many individuals have an attachment to place that inspires them to interpret.  The place is the focus and brings people together. This applies to individuals and communities, such as a person who invests a lot of time and energy in their cultural heritage work as a volunteer.  The contributions made by voluntary work have positive social benefits and enhance well-being not only to the individual but the wider community.[105]

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[100] E Avrami, R Mason, and M de laTorre, *Values and Heritage Conservation* (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2000).

[101] Clark, "Only Connect",6.

[102] The Allen Consulting Group, "Thoughts of the 'When' and 'How' of Government Historic Heritage Protection", ed. Prepared for the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (October 2005 ). Statement from Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Issues Paper. A Sustainable Population Strategy for Australia.

[103] Clark, "'Only Connect'",4.

[104] J Ashworth G, "The Georgian City: The Compact City as Idealised Past or Future Ideal," *Global Built Environment Review* Vol 4, no. No 3 (2005), F Matarasso, *Use or Ornament: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts* (Stroud: Comedia, 2005).

[105] Townsend and Meearasuriya, "Beyong Blue", 7.

Furthermore, as Ashworth points out cultural activities also contribute to personal development and increased cultural awareness and education generally.[106]  Local and regional volunteers are of particular value because of the strong commitment and connection to where they live and the knowledge they hold regarding local places. The relationship between people and places is continually changing.[107] Cultural heritage activities can bring about improved social interactions and enhanced community relations. This is the case of the CRWP where local people are involved in research of the Coal River Precinct and the NGD and have intimate knowledge of the history of these places. Community relations are not only enhanced among members of the CRWP but with other groups and communities that may not usually collaborate with heritage groups.

Social engagement and community participation needs to be supported by government authorities. It is important for governments to build trust with communities, because it can enhance positive cultural heritage outcomes. Clark suggests that it is often the emotional connections that people feel towards place that can entrench their commitment to help protect places.[108]  This is where social engagement and community participation in government processes associated with heritage, planning and the arts is important because doing so builds trust between the public and all levels of government.  Community participation at a very early stage is something the CRWP is already doing, nurturing positive relationships between the community and government agencies. These wide social benefits are a much wider suite of benefits than previously thought when thinking about heritage that mostly considered the economics of reusing older buildings. Rypkema suggests there is much more to cultural heritage preservation than meets the eye, it is about environmental sustainability  at a local level and in the long term heritage values far outweigh economic value.[109]  In this sense, valuing heritage  can contribute socially and emotionally to people's lives, a value that is not monetary, but relates to enriching well-being.

Communities that connect with, and value cultural heritage enjoy more social benefits than communities that do not value heritage. In Australia, this has been best researched with regard to Indigenous communities and association between cultural attachments and well-being.[110]  The link between health and cultural heritage is summed up best by Horin who refers to Indigenous communities specifically in terms of 'closing the gap'.[111] Horin says that the secret to improving people's lives is valuing and respecting their culture.  The main message of respect and value of culture helps individuals and communities to become the 'happiest and healthiest'.[112]  The link between nurturing culture and the health status of individuals clearly shows that cultural heritage is important in building healthy communities. This is particularly beneficial to Indigenous communities that have a close connection with cultural heritage, potentially making them much healthier. Public policy makers could consider heritage and health together in achieving positive outcomes in both of these areas and in doing so increases the well-being of communities. The exploration of the cultural heritage of all groups can help engage communities and enhance social cohesion.

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[106] Ashworth G, "The Georgian City: The Compact City as Idealised Past or Future Ideal.", Matarasso, *Use or Ornament: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*.
[107] Townsend and Meearasuriya, "Beyong Blue to Green".
[108] Clark, "Only Connect", 9.
[109] Rypkema, *The Economics of Historic*, 13.
[110] Alfred Michael Dockery, "Culture and Wellbeing:The Case of Indigenous Australians", *Springer Science+Business Media* Published oline: 3 February (2010): 329.
[111] Adele Horin, "Respect Helps to Bridge the Gap", *Sydney Morning Herald* 16-17 July 2011.
[112] Dockery, "Culture and Wellbeing:The Case of Indigenous Australians".

There are other health benefits that can come from cultural heritage. Walkability and well-being are increasingly being considered alongside heritage. Heritage parklands, reserves and national parks can offer different experiences in terms of culture and heritage, including having a positive impact on physical and mental well-being. Walkability is the latest 'buzz' word in terms of heritage planning providing a new conceptual framework for reusing cultural landscapes, particularly if health benefits are factored in their use. 'Walkability' is now considered in planning and is a compatible fit with cultural heritage because many cultural landscapes and natural environments are best experienced by walking. 'Parks Victoria' and their 'Healthy Parks Healthy People' iniative is based on well researched policy that acknowledges the links between open natural spaces and well-being.[113] This iniative has been adopted nationwide. There is mounting evidence that parks and open spaces generally have very positive health benefits. Vast open spaces that are culturally significant encourage physical exercise and are associated with improving general well-being (physically and mentally). Research in the Netherlands also supports the theory that green spaces can improve health, the benefits for most individuals were seen when greenery was within one kilometre from their home.[114] Clark describes that a regular walk in a park can reduce the risk of heart attack by 50 per cent and diabetes by 50 per cent.[115] Furthermore a study of green spaces in Japan shows that people exposed to these have longer life spans because natural views can help reduce blood pressure.[116] In this case it is not so much the physical exercise that is beneficial but the setting and ambience of a place that contributes to well-being.

The new walking city model based around heritage conservation is highly valued as a living space. Breen and Rigby refers to this in *Intown Living: A Different American Dream* and say that people want to live in such places that provide walkability, density, diversity, hipness and public transit.[117] Planners in the United States of America now consider that people want to live nearby their place of work and walkability is important because it can contribute to the overall wellness of a community. This was something common prior to the invention of the car with people living in villages close to their place of work and leisure, such as those who lived and worked at Newcastle East near the Zaara Street power station as described in Chapter Three *Military Barracks and Public Service 1841 to 1867*. Other modes of transport such as bikes, walking and public transit are becoming more common in downtown areas where older buildings are often situated close to "multimodal transportation options, unlike the suburbs".[118] The lifestyle of living near downtown amenities is important to communities in the twenty-first century, particularly as there is increased awareness of environmental and sustainability issues.[119] Young indicates that the heart of urban areas are becoming fashionable places where people want to live, seeking a change from the suburban isolation, lack of transport options, long commutes and costs and time associated with maintaining large yards.[120] Walkability can also bring about a greater sense of community cohesion that not only improves mental and physical well-being, but increase social relations.

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[113] Deakin University. Healthy Parks, Healthy People : the health benefits of contact with nature in a park context. A Review of relevent literature. 2nd ed. School of Health & Social Development, Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing & Behavioural Sciences. Melbourne: March 2008.
[114] BBC News. Green spaces 'improve health'. United Kingdom: 15 October 2009. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8307024.stm
[115] Clark, "Only Connect".
[116] CABE space, (nd). The Value of Public Space. How high quality parks and public spaces create economic, social and environmental value. London: Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.
[117] Ann Breen and Dick Rigby, Intown Living: A Different American Dream (Washington DC: Island Press, 2004).
[118] Young, *Stewardship of the Built*,13.
[119] Townsend and Meearasuriya, "Beyong Blue".
[120] Young, *Stewardship of the Built*,13.

These social advantages of living in communities that encourage walkability are seen at the village like suburbs of Marrickville, and Annandale in Sydney.  This new market of city dwellers is demanding the reuse of the built environment in urban environments.[121] These environments nurture social interactions and promote a sense of community where social connectedness is a sign of a healthy community.

To some extent social connectivity across time is beginning to happen at the NGD. During research of this thesis the author was contacted by members of the public about the site's history and heritage. Other enquiries come directly from descendants of the inmates who had been admitted to the asylum during the final decades of the nineteenth century.   One family had been researching their ancestor for well over a decade and had only recently found out that his final years were spent at the Newcastle Asylum. The family travelled to Newcastle and were astonished to find they were still able to visit the original buildings and the place where their relative had been cared.  It was in an almost unchanged location and it was quite an emotional time for them as they imagined what it may have been like for him living at the barracks, in its beautiful location.  It is this type of contact that adds meaning to the NGD; it gives some comfort to family and friends.  Research by Jane Ison, local historian and member of the CRWP mentioned in Chapter Four *Care of Girls "...the little volcano slumbered" 1867 to 1871*, is making public information about the girls at the Industrial Girls' School including records held at the State Records of NSW that identify the girls.[122] This research is crucial because it links descendants today to the Domain, the place where the girls were cared for. These associations with the Domain have the potential to have social and emotional impacts on family and friends, as well as many benefits to the wider community in understanding stories about the place.

Health and heritage can be enhanced if associations between places and communities are better acknowledged, as narratives about mental health history are just as relevant to heritage as other themes.  People continue to see mental health facilities as modern day 'asylums', as places without memory, and as Karskens reminds us there are certain places that we need to get to know again.[123]  We need to regain them by finding out their stories. The NGD is one of these places.  Asylums are places at risk because perceptions of them have been negative and community memory has been silent depriving the 'asylum' of meaning.  If we do not speak up, these institutions they will be lost forever.

But what does this mean for the future of historic health sites, such as the NGD that are to provide social and cultural benefits to the community?  Will it have a role in the new area of research that suggests cultural heritage is good for healthy communities?  There needs to be a healthy fascination with places on the periphery like the NGD so they can regain meaning and be accepted and understood by the community.  Stories relating to mental health and intellectual disability are important because many people suffering mental illness have not had the opportunity in the twentieth century to tell their stories due to the severity of their condition. Many have not had a voice in the historical literature until recently. The publication by Corinne Manning *Bye Bye Charlie* tells the personal stories of people at Kew Cottages in Victoria.[124]  This work about institutional life opens up new knowledge about those with an intellectual disability and

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[121] Young, *Stewardship of the Built*,13.
[122] The Newcastle Industrial School and Reformatory for Girls 1867-1871.Jane Ison .http://nis.wikidot.com/
[123] Karskens, *The Colony*, 17.
[124] Manning, *Bye-Bye Charlie.*

enabled these people to tell their own stories about life at Kew Cottages.  Works such as this are essential in breaking down the cultural and social barriers that have closed off places such as asylums to the wider community.  This thesis opens up old stories and contributes to knowledge of intellectual and mental disorders in the colonial period.  It is hoped that it will inspire people with their own stories to tell them to their friends and families, to publish them in books and to share them through on line digital media.  Associations with the NGD can help individuals and communities in the future have a sense of connection and provide real meaning to the place. The caring culture embedded at the NGD can contribute to a new heritage paradigm.  Heritage can contribute to the care and well-being of Australians.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how cultural heritage has changed in the twenty-first century to include intangible elements just as much as heritage objects and buildings. Cultural landscapes and stories in 2014 are an important part of the Australian heritage discourse. Changing definitions regarding heritage have seen collectives such as environmental groups embracing heritage. As well, threats to cultural heritage have brought new groups together to align with traditional heritage bodies to campaign to help save heritage. This has changed how communities perceive 'heritage' and this is particularly the case in NSW where many communities have united. It is of course not unique to NSW.  In Victoria, the National Trust joined with the Avenue Preservation Inc to successfully save the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour from being removed.[125]   Melbourne's 'Save Our City 'campaign was a response to plans to demolish some listed heritage items and successfully  advocated against inappropriate development and improved heritage and height controls in the city of Melbourne.

Heritage in 2014 is not part of wider public policy involving areas such as health and planning because there is a lack of research in Australia showing strong evidence of the links between heritage and well-being. However research in this area may help to embed into public policy strategies that support cultural heritage. The concept of embedding cultural heritage into wider discussions is something that can be nurtured by using a multi-disciplinary approach as shown of the University of Newcastle's CRWP.  It is important that research continues to be developed looking at the benefits of cultural heritage.[126]  At present the benefits of heritage are not widely considered in the context of health, and therefore not strongly represented in social or public policy.[127]  Heritage in NSW needs to be incorporated into other areas of policy making and not be isolated.  Until more evidence is gathered and studies undertaken that show the benefits of heritage, particularly in the area of health, places like the NGD will stand alone and will continue to be perceived narrowly as more or less attractive old buildings.

Heritage processes in Australia are not accurately acknowledging some heritage places and this is creating community uncertainty and in many cases resulting in public protests. Although popular ideas about heritage have changed throughout the 2000s, heritage assessment and legislation have remained relatively fixed and have not kept pace with the changing definition of heritage.  This is problematic particularly for the Coal River Precinct and the NGD

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[125] National Trust of Australia (Victoria), "Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour." http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/vic/save-our-city
[126] Townsend and Meearasuriya, "Beyong Blue".
[127] Clark, "'Only Connect'", 22.

because many now believe these areas have national heritage values, however heritage legislation does not support this view.[128]  Heritage legislation at a national level urgently needs to be reviewed.

In 2014 the city of Newcastle needs urgent rejuvenation and the focus is on new development rather than existing infrastructure. There are also many social problems including alcohol fuelled violence and unruly behaviour and this is the social cost of having a rundown city. The Domain is in the heart of the city is disconnected from the rest of the city, its future uncertain.  Impacts at this historic asylum at Newcastle could be vast if its social and cultural value is not understood.  The place needs to be re-introduced to the community so that historical stories and cultural activities are embraced, with resultant positive health and wellbeing outcomes. One way of doing this may be to extend what is already taking place in the older retail area of the CBD where the 'Renew Newcastle' scheme is revitalising the inner city of Newcastle. The innovator behind the project is Marcus Westbury, the creator of the Renew Newcastle project established in 2006.[129] Westbury's Renew project reuses buildings that are empty, usually on short term leases, rent free.   This project is re-introducing to the retail district the old culture of locally handmade products sold in what would otherwise be vacant shops.[130]  This supports cultural heritage by reusing older buildings that would sit empty.  It also supports the cultural arts community that as described in this chapter contributes to the well-being of individuals and the wider community.  Westbury has  thought 'outside the square', in this instance to gain better outcomes for places (many of which are heritage buildings), as well as supporting the local cultural and arts community.  The success of the Renew model in Newcastle has drawn notice and it is now being adopted in other cities in Australia and abroad.[131] His passion to drive change comes from seeing the decline of his hometown Newcastle during its early post-industrial phase.   The Renew program is generating new life into city centres, enhancing the well-being of individuals and communitiesThe project could be applied to the vacant military buildings at the Domain to be used by the arts community.  This is a 'win win' situation for all stakeholders, whereby the buildings would be used, the community supported and the Domain given an opportunity to host a new use, a creative and cultural endeavour.  Cultural heritage outcomes can support social stability and provide communities with a sense of identity.[132]

The NGD is both a place for mental health care use and is also a heritage site. The continued use of the Government Domain for mental health services validates the place's importance within the Australian asylum culture and history of mental health care. This creates a tension because the old structures are unsuitable in 2014 for providing contemporary mental health care. However the dual function of mental health care and heritage site may provide opportunities for new insights into cultural heritage and well-being.  The site could host the arts community or the more specialist emerging area of arts health to help improve well-being.  The establishment of a cultural heritage or interpretation centre would give the community a better understanding of the place.  The Government Domain could

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[128] Roberts and Eklund, "Australian Convict Sites".

[129] http://renewnewcastle.org/. 'Renew Newcastle takes on the world' SBS television. Available on-line http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1712431/Renew-Newcastle-takes-on-the-world, 12 November 2012. Finney, Tarsha. "Urban Change [the Renew Newcastle Program and Similar Proposals under the Renew Australia Concept.]." edited by v.101 [online]. Architecture Australia, no.1, Jan-Feb 2012: 70-72., 2012.

[130] Renew Newcastle, "Renew Newcastle:City Revitalisation through Creative Use of Empty Space".

[132] McDonald, "Final Research Report:Understanding Public Involvement with Australian Heritage".

continue its long tradition of government care by showcasing moral therapy in a contemporary way by finding similar programs that work well today. For example a community garden may be one way of opening the NGD to the community and helping to bring about social cohesion.  The gardens could be looked after by the various communities including mental health clients. As well there are many other events that could very well increase community engagement and enhance well-being of the general community, just as occurred under Cane's management in the 1880s.  All that is needed are the ideas and momentum from the community to help renew this special place.

# Chapter 10: Afterword- Caring for Country

This thesis has investigated the Newcastle Domain to gain a better understanding of how a culture of government care has developed in Australia.  The author has reflected on 'care' in a broad context from the establishment of Newcastle in1801 when convicts were sent there up to the present. Care during the early years was establishing a functioning society that involved building infrastructure and industry, predominantly for the procurement of coal which was vital to the colony. Coal became a major economic resource for Australia.  The progress that was made in Newcastle and the planning to secure future benefits for the colony was administered from the NGD. Ultimately, this administration helped to enhance the wellbeing of people in NSW.

Care was implemented more directly in later years when caring institutions were established at the Domain. Authorities were committed to providing care for girls deemed to be neglected and later for people with mental illness and intellectual disability.  The military buildings made these caring institutions possible.  Despite the girls' school eventually closing and going to Sydney, authorities were well meaning in attempting to look after them.  Unfortunately, the lack of trained or experienced staff to manage this group contributed to the problems at Newcastle.  It may have been a better idea for those from religious and charitable institutions with experience in specific types of care to collaborate with authorities to come up with workable solutions.  The asylum at Newcastle was more successful due to the commitment of superintendent Cane and his creative adaptation of the former military site.  Essential to the success of this asylum was the community who interacted with residents to create a social and recreational space in the city.

Colonial authorities made genuine attempts to provide care for the people of NSW.   Even in later decades of the nineteenth century when, it has been argued, the main aim of public industrial schools and asylums was social control of the poor and disadvantaged, governments were acting through necessity, responding to often dire situations.  Had they not acted, the situation for many would have been much worse.  Caring continued in new forms in the twentieth century and it is then that conditions deteriorated as out-of-door therapy was replaced by mental hospitals closed off to the community.  Interaction between the wider community and residents decreased.  There is perhaps evidence of a lowered commitment to caring in the later twentieth century when many mental hospitals were emptied out and people with mental illness moved to the community, often without supports. This situation was exacerbated by the lack of government funds to help these people stay well in the community.

Although former caring institutions may not be used in the same way as they were in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this does not mean they are no longer irrelevant to 'care'. Overcrowding of mental health institutions in Sydney during the nineteenth century flowed over to the Newcastle asylum that saw increasing numbers admitted there. Overcrowding at the Newcastle Asylum is what has maintained the ongoing use of the Domain as a mental health site to 2014.  Government buildings have been kept there because of the need to house patients in 'hospital' during the twentieth century. Large institutions are no longer the norm in the twenty-

first century, instead the focus is on care in the community. New caring strategies to support individuals and communities aim to assist in prevention, health promotion and early intervention. The downside to this is that care can become quite fragmented because is a wide societal approach and the many sectors that could receive funding to improve Australian lives.  Despite this Australian governments have played a significant role in promoting well-being at this community level.

There is a strong sense of government care is embedded into Australian culture in 2014. This is particularly seen in the high quality health care system compared with other developed countries. Government campaigns to prevent disease is Australia have been long standing and effective, such as anti-tuberculosis program in the mid twentieth century, the anti AIDS measures of the 1980s and  the 'Quit for Life' campaign to reduce smoking run in the 1990s and 2000s. This issue is further supported in the challenge by the commonwealth government of cigarette companies to put in place plain packaging on cigarette packets in 2012. Another example is the commitment of the commonwealth government to implement the National Disability Insurance Scheme, with a pilot project to be carried out in Newcastle.[1]  The Australian government generally has run some very strong health campaigns to improve the well-being of Australians. New approaches to implement 'care' are required in Australia. A modern day health innovator is Professor Patrick McGorry, youth mental health care advocate and Australian of the Year in 2010. He began his training in psychiatry in the 1970s, working at both the Royal Newcastle Hospital and the psychiatric hospital at the Domain.[2] McGorry has developed *Headspace,* a preventative mental health program providing social and vocational support for young people.[3] This program is a change from the use of clinical and hospital settings to treat mental illness.  It offers a user friendly shopfront approach that engages young people. McGorry's radically different approach to mental health care, take a pro-active approach in promoting wellness of communities.  His initiatives represent a shift from traditional approaches entrenched in the medical model that has remained dominant into the twenty first century. Not dissimilar to Cane, McGorry is delivering change and finding solutions to the growing demands on public mental health services and the crisis in the mental health care sector.[4]  Both Cane and McGorry used and are using less clinical and 'hospital' approaches to engage in care.

In 2014 the definition of care in the twenty first century is complex and has broadened significantly. Care is integrated in community strategies across many areas and requiring solutions that relate not just to the health of individuals and communities, but to the environments in which people live. Government care now extends to the environment and 'country' as highlighted in a recent commonwealth government initiative 'Caring for Our Country, Let's continue the conversation'.[5]  The term 'caring' in this campaign encapsulates the whole of society, its people, places and the wider environment. Ideas about care have gone in a full circle, shifting back to

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[1] ABC News. "NDIS Consultation Process Begins", abc.net.au, 23 October 2012.
[2] Jill Emberson, "Australian of the Years Links to Newcastle," ed. 1233 ABC Newcastle (radio) (2010, 24 February)."...where he first studied psychiatry and worked at Royal Newcastle Hospital. Professor McGorry is pushing for more funding for mental health, and he says our city [Newcastle] has always been the "poor cousin" to Sydney when it comes to health funding.
[3] South Australian Social Inclusion Board, "Stepping Up: A Social Inclusion Action Plan for Mental Health Reform 2007-2012", ed. Commissioner for Social Inclusion Monsignor David Cappo, Chair Social Inclusion Board (Adelaide 2006). Headspace- Australia's National Youth Mental Health Foundation, 2020 Headspace, funded by the Australian Government http://www.headspace.org.au/
[4] Australia National Day Council, "Australian of the Year Awards," Professor Patrick McGorry appointed Australian of the Year for 2010.
[5] Australian Government, "Caring for Our Country, Let's Continue the Conversation", *Newcastle Herald*, 21 July 2012.

planning and the environment, and a greater community awareness of cultural heritage. It is a broad perspective, similar to the way colonial authorities looked at the landscape and environment in advancing the colony as discussed in Chapter Two *Government Care and Convict Culture 1801 to 1841.* Care and protection of colonial Australia was paramount. Today these values remain integral to care. however what has changed is the increased knowledge and interest around the protection of the wider environment and cultural heritage values. Both of these beneficial to well-being.

The broadening of the definition of care to include the environment and cultural heritage also means there can be a diversity of solutions. Care is no longer about the bricks and mortar of institutions, instead is about community approaches that encourage social inclusion, cultural experiences and care for the environment. The growing evidence supporting the links between heritage and health suggests these should be used together to promote healthy living. Discussions and collaborations among various professions and disciplines are essential to find new ways to provide care and promote well-being. The multi-disciplinary model can help bring stakeholders together to share knowledge and collaborate to formulate new strategies that involve cultural heritage and health. Cultural heritage strategies to some extent are already being used by youth support and community workers to engage individuals in community activities and cultural events. For example thesocial work profession could play a role in promoting healthy communities using interventions that include cultural heritage. Both mental health care and cultural heritage are at a crossroads and innovative ideas are needed to deliver better outcomes for both. Different perspectives are needed to diversify the care strategies in the fields of heritage and well being, and this is an area for further research.

Healthy renewal of the Newcastle Domain includes community. Its location in the heart of the city is ideal; it is accessible and close to other cultural hubs. As they have done since the 1840s, the former military buildings can offer spacious and secure accommodation for social and cultural experiences, hosting activities such as art and cultural seminars and workshops, sculpture displays and music festivals. The Renew Newcastle project mentioned in the previous chapter was expertise in linking those in need of space with appropriate buildings and this could ensure that the old barracks were occupied and maintained until a more permanent tenant comes along. The built environment is important, however it is the community that can breathe new life into this disused place.

The Domain has always needed to adapt. The only planned use there were the military buildings, a use that lasted for only ten years. At the heart of the Newcastle Domain is the 'make do' approach, a culture of reuse and care of buildings. This approach is just as relevant in the twenty-first century where funding for cultural heritage and the arts is scarce, particularly in regional areas. To make use of sites such as the NGD and gain community benefit from this government infrastructure makes perfect sense. It is not an easy site because of the coal mines underneath, and its use as a mental hospital has made the community reluctant to begin a discussion about the site's future. Future use may again be accidental and likely to come as a response to the needs of the community. It is to be hoped that this time, it is the needs of the local community and not an issue creating

pressure on the state government not directly related to Newcastle which will be of greatest concern in the decision making process.

We need to open our minds to re-entering the old asylum grounds and think about the cycles of care that have taken place historically.  Care today is about improving social relations and making places meaningful to communities. It is no longer about the 'asylum' as an institution, but the whole of society.

In 1785, George Young in his treatise advocating the colonising of NSW included as a benefit the capacity to send convicts to the new colony.  "HERE is an asylum open," he wrote, which compared to the previous transportation of convict to the American colonies could reduce the costs of transportation and punishment and prevent the return of expirees.  Young's proposal was influential but not adopted in full.  Instead of convicts providing a small component of the population, initially the whole colony could be viewed as an asylum where the bulk of the population was damaged and in need of rehabilitation.  The welfare of these people was the responsibility not, as had been the case in the American colonies, private individuals, but the state.[6] This burden would be carried for a very long time by government authorities in Australia and acquitted in one small part at the Newcastle Government Domain.

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[6] Imperial Government,  "The Following Is a Rough Outline of the Many Advantages That May Result to This Nation from a Settlement Made on the Coast of New South Wales ", edited by British Archives. London: British Archives, Kew, 17 January 1785.

**APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Nationality of those admitted to the *Newcastle Asylum for Imbecile and Idiots* 1871-1900

| Year | 'Native' born (%) | English (%) | Irish (%) | Scotland (%) | Wales (%) | China (%) | France (%) | Norway (%) | America (%) | Other (%) | Unknown (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1871 | 20 | 28 | 16 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | 25 |
| 1872 | 49 | 15 | 23 | | | 2.5 | | 2.5 | | | 8 |
| 1873 | 90 | | 6 | 2 | | | | | | | 2 |
| 1874 | 85 | 3 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | 2 |
| 1875 | 78 | 9 | 6 | 3 | | | | | 3 | | 1 |
| 1876 | 86 | 3.5 | 3.5 | | | | | | | | 7 |
| 1877 | 84 | 12 | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| 1878 | 96 | | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| 1879 | 84 | 10 | | 3 | | | | | | | 3 |
| 1880 | 64 | 12 | 12 | 3 | | | | | | 3 | 6 |
| 1881 | 88 | | | 6 | | | | | | | 6 |
| 1882 | 90 | | 5 | | | | | | 5 | | |
| 1883 | 78 | 7 | | 4 | | | | | | 7 | 4 |
| 1884 | 44 | 4 | | 4 | | | | | | | 48 |
| 1885 | 50 | 2 | | | | | | | | | 48 |
| 1886 | 39 | | 15 | | | | | | | | 48 |
| 1887 | 90 | | 5 | | | | | | | | 46 |
| 1888 | 90 | | 7 | | | | | | | | 5 |
| 1889 | 84 | 4 | | 4 | | | | | | | 4 |
| 1890 | 72 | 9 | | | | | | | | | 8 |
| 1891 | 87 | | | | | | | | | | 18 |
| 1892 | 92 | 2 | | 2 | | | | | | | 13 |
| 1893 | 61 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 2 | 2 |
| 1894 | 88 | 4 | | | | | | | | 2 | 33 |
| 1895 | 91 | 33 | | | | | | | | 2 | |
| 1896 | 97 | 8 | | | | | | | | | 6 |
| 1897 | 88 | 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1898 | 87 | 3 | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| 1899 | 87 | | | | | | | | | | 9 |
| 1900 | 91 | | | | | | | | | 2 | 8 |

## Appendix 2 - Chronology of establishment of Australian Lunatic Asylums, location and current status

| Mental Asylum | Status | Opened | Closed | Current Use | Location |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Castle Hill Lunatic Asylum | Demolished | 1811 | 1826 | | Sydney, NSW |
| Liverpool Lunatic Asylum | Demolished? | 1825 | 1838 | | Sydney, NSW |
| Tarban Creek Asylum (Gladesville Hospital) | | 1838 | 1993 | University of Sydney Campus – no currently under consideration for new public uses | Sydney, NSW |
| Adelaide Parkside Lunatic Asylum | Partially operating | 1846 | 1902 | Glenside Psychiatric Hospital<br><br>Land subdivided and privately owned | Adelaide, SA |
| Parramatta Hospital for the Insane Asylum (Cumberland Hospital) | Operating | 1849 | | Cumberland Hospital<br><br>1893 to current day | Sydney, NSW |
| New Norfolk Hospital for the Insane | Closed | 1855 | 2000 | Accommodation and function centre | New Norfolk,TAS |
| Woogaroo Asylum | Operating | 1865 | 2001 | University of Queensland<br>The Park Centre for Mental Health, Treatment, Research and Education | Ipswich, QLD |
| Bay view House, Tempe | Closed | 1865 | 1947 | | Tempe, NSW |
| Fremantle Asylum | Closed | 1865 | 1929 | Fremantle Arts Centre | Fremantle, WA |
| Carlton Lunatic Asylum | Closed | 1866 | 1872 | Former Collingwood Stockade | Collingwood, VIC |
| Darlinghurst Reception House | Closed | 1868 | 1961 | | Sydney, NSW |
| Beechworth Asylum | Closed | 1876 | 1995 | Owned by La Trobe University<br><br>Currently being prepared for sale | Beechworth, VIC |
| Ararat Asylum | Closed | 1867 | 1993 | Owned by North Melbourne TAFE<br><br>Buildings currently empty. Working vineyard | Ararat, VIC |
| Newcastle Lunatic Asylum for Imbeciles and Institution for Idiots | Partially operating | 1871 | | James Fletcher Hospital | Newcastle, NSW |
| Kew Asylum | Closed | 1871 | 1988 | Residential<br><br>Cottages closed 2007 | Melbourne, VIC |
| Yarra Bend Asylum | Demolished | 1871 | 1925 | | Melbourne, VIC |
| Ballarat Asylum | Closed | 1877 | 1990s | Later known as Lakeside Mental Hospital | Ballarat, VIC |
| Cooma temporary hospital for the Insane | Closed | 1877 | 1884 | | Cooma, NSW |
| Callan Park Mental Hospital | Closed | 1878 | 2008 | Also known as Rozelle Hospital<br><br>Sydney Writers Centre, public open space | Sydney, NSW |
| Sunbury Asylum | Closed | 1879 | 1985 | Owned La Trobe University<br><br>Former Industrial School.  Functions as a centre for the intellectually disabled. | Sunbury, VIC |
| Rydalmere Hospital | Closed | 1888 | | University of Western Sydney campus | Sydney, NSW |
| Kenmore Hospital, Goulburn | Closed | 1897 | 2011 | Preparing for sale | Goulburn, NSW |
| Newcastle Reception House | Demolished | 1903 | 1971 | Mental health medium stay unit | Newcastle, NSW |
| Claremont Hospital for Insane | Closed | 1903 | 1973 | Privately owned<br><br>Sold by State Government 2008 | Perth, WA |
| Rabbit Island Hospital | Closed | 1909 | 2010 | | Hawkesbury, NSW |
| Stockton Hospital | Operating | 1910 | | Stockton Centre | Newcastle, NSW |
| Broughton Hall Psychiatric Clinic | Closed | 1921 | 1976 | On the grounds of former Rozelle Hospital. Vacant and derelict. | Sydney, NSW |
| Orange Hospital | Operating | 1925 | | Bloomfield Mental Hospital | Orange, NSW |

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