

Donovan News

Number 30

Spring 2002

... keeping in touch with clients and other friends ...

Historians as Time Lords

We noted in issue No 19 of *Donovan News* that historians could be considered as 'Past Masters' because they seek to understand and explain the past. They might also be termed 'Time Lords'. As historian Graeme Davison wrote in his book, *The Unforgiving Minute*, 'Time is the very stuff of history, as fundamental to its character as land to geography or matter to physics.' He continued, 'Historians constantly shape and reshape time, arrange events within it, make metaphors for it'.

Historians do not shape time, in the sense that they change it: after all, discrete events happen at particular times. However, historians can choose to concentrate or overlook particular events and, in this sense, arrange events within time. This ordering of events in time, defining significant periods, and highlighting milestones and features helps historians make sense of apparent non-sense: it gives them a sense of perspective and the facility to differentiate between issues that are fundamental to an explanation of the past and those that are largely irrelevant. This sense of perspective sets historians apart from antiquarians who delight in each fact from the past and fail to apportion significance to these. It also sets historians apart from many journalists and commentators who are essentially concerned with the present: while reporting events accurately enough, they often have little understanding of underlying issues when their roots lie deeply in the past.

Historians are rarely surprised or unduly excited by what they might discover because of their understanding of time and the story of human activity that takes place within it. Their writing may not have the sense of urgency and sensationalism displayed by many journalists, but this is not what should be expected from one who studies the past.

This ability to read time makes historians so valuable in interpreting the present and providing a sense of perspective. Managers and others risk their future if they do not have an understanding of their past, which, after all, is the foundation upon which the future is built. Historians, the 'Time Lords', can help impart this understanding.



D&A's Scope of Work

Several projects have been completed by **Donovan & Associates** during the past six months.

Our history of Tip Top Bakeries was delivered to the client in May 2002.

We delivered our Conservation Management Plan for the Edinburgh Defence Precinct to the client on 12 September.

Since July 2002 June Donovan has been working as a cultural heritage officer with the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) at Edinburgh. Her task is to document, assess and sentence items of cultural heritage collected by DSTO and its predecessors. This project admirably complements the heritage work we have carried out at Edinburgh during recent years.

Meanwhile, **D&A** has undertaken two projects at the RAAF Base at Edinburgh in association with development works there. One of these (for PPK Environment and Infrastructure) involved a detailed study of the construction and use of one hangar. The other project (for Hansen Yuncken) was concerned to ensure that

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Scope of Works

new developments respect the physical heritage of the area and reflected the aims of the Conservation Management Plan.

Other new work has flowed from projects undertaken previously. Peter Donovan provided a short biography of Edward Connellan for inclusion in the forthcoming volume of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

Peter Donovan also provided a short piece on the history of the De La Salle Brothers in Armidale, NSW, for inclusion in a book providing details about stained glass windows in the Catholic Cathedral in Armidale. The book was launched on 21 September.

Peter Donovan has also overseen the reprinting of his history of Port Wakefield, which was published in 1978.

A major new project for D&A has been a commission from the Adelaide Cemeteries' Authority to produce monument design guidelines for the historic West Terrace Cemetery. In one sense this represents another repeat project. In 1988 D&A was the history sub-consultant involved with a multi-disciplinary team formed under consultants PPK which was charged with formulating a conservation management plan for the cemetery.

Copy editing of *Donovan News* is by Bernard O'Neill. The cartoons are by Stephen Stanley.

Port Wakefield

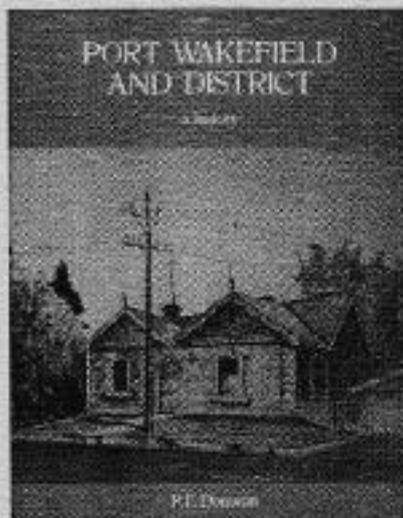
The reprinting of our history of Port Wakefield represents another milestone for Peter Donovan. It is an opportunity to reflect on significant changes since the book was published in 1978.

Port Wakefield and District: a history was Peter Donovan's first book: it predated the foundation of **Donovan & Associates** by two years. It was a modest book of 80 pages. Since then, however, D&A has been involved in more than 40 books of all shapes and sizes, along with many project reports, journal articles and contributions to publications and reports. The scope of D&A's work has encompassed projects throughout Australia, with many being for clients with national businesses.

The Port Wakefield District Council, the publisher, no longer exists. It amalgamated with the District Council of Balaklava to form the District Council of Wakefield Plains in a move to rationalise local government areas in South Australia.

There has been a virtual revolution in the printing industry since 1978. The typescript history of Port Wakefield was first retyped onto galleys, proofed, then pasted on boards marked out to the size of each page: these were laid out to the size of the plates to be used and photographed. This film was used to make a photographic impression on metal plates that were then put on the presses for printing. Our most recent work has gone forward already laid out on a CD. This was loaded on a computer and a large plate inserted into a peripheral machine and the images of each page transferred directly to the plate ready for printing.

The reprinting also continues a long-standing relationship with OpenBook Print, which has been responsible for more than 20 Donovan books. Such partnerships and the development of others which complement our work has been the basis of any success won by D&A.



Port Wakefield and District: a history, written by Peter Donovan was originally published by the Port Wakefield District Council. It has been reprinted in hardback by the Port Wakefield Community Management Committee. It measures 180mm x 240mm, has 80 pages, with an index and is illustrated in black and white.

New Books



Number One: *A History of Tip Top Bakeries in Australia*, by Peter Donovan was published by George Weston Foods Baking Division, Chatswood, NSW. It is hardback, measures 210mm x 260mm, has viii + 368 pages, an index and is illustrated in colour and black and white.

This book details a major part of the history of baking in modern Australia. George Weston began operating in Australia in 1949 after acquiring the Gartrell White bakery in Sydney. It soon acquired leading bakeries in Adelaide and Melbourne, and later in Brisbane and Perth. It became a major 'change-agent' in the baking industry as it consolidated operations in ever larger and modern bakeries, built a national brand, and supported this by nationwide advertising. Tip Top remained virtually unchallenged, except in regional markets, until 1986 when continued industry rationalisation led to the formation of the Goodman Fielder group, that was able to compete nationally with Tip Top using its Buttercup brand. Competition has been intense since then, exacerbated by Goodman's acquisition of major regional brands.

Ironically, the rationalisation of the plant bakeries, largely initiated by George Weston, led to the proliferation of small hot-bread shops and in-store bakeries. All this is part of the Tip Top story.

The history continues to move on. George Weston Foods Ltd, of which the Baking Division was a major part, remained a subsidiary of the British parent. In recent months, however, the parent company has acquired all shares in the Australian subsidiary, with plans to integrate the Australian business more directly in its international operations.



A Conservation Plan for the *Edinburgh Defence Precinct* was written and published by Donovan & Associates for the Department of Defence. Produced in hardback and softback, it measures 210mm x 300mm, has x + 368 pages, an index and is illustrated in black and white.

The site occupied by the Edinburgh Defence Precinct is in the Register of the National Estate. It was originally the site of the Salisbury Explosives Factory that began production in 1942. After World War II it was used by the Anglo-Australian Joint Project in conjunction with the Woomera Rocket Range to develop and test modern weapons. A major part of the site continues to be a home of Australian defence science under the Defence Science and Technology Organisation, while another part has taken on new significance with the development of the RAAF Base at Edinburgh as the home of Australia's airborne maritime reconnaissance squadron.

The assessment of the heritage significance of the site was commissioned by the Department of Defence to ensure that places of particular heritage value are protected while the site undergoes redevelopment to ensure its continued utility.

History Cycles

The recent history of George Weston Foods Ltd indicates that history remains dynamic. We learned recently of an unusual twist to this, when, on 1 July 2002, the Australian Protective Service (APS), the federal government's security organisation, became an operating division of the Australian Federal Police (AFP). This was part of the federal government's re-assessment of its counter-terrorist capabilities.

We completed *Changing the Guard: A History of the Australian Protective Service* in 1994. A feature of the story was the manner in which the APS had evolved out of the AFP. A reason for the push for independence was the development of disharmony and a class distinction within the AFP between those involved in policing, and others involved in guarding duties.

Once independent, the APS was charged with becoming a commercial entity and competing with private security firms for many government contracts. It strove to develop a new culture.

It seems strange, then, that the government should revert to a formula that was seen to be inadequate in 1984. But then, history has moved on. We trust that those responsible for the new situation took note of our history.



DONOVAN & ASSOCIATES

History & Historic Preservation Consultants

Donovan & Associates is a consulting firm which specialises in matters relating to aspects of historical research, writing and historic conservation. The firm undertakes a wide variety of tasks based upon these specialties. Major projects completed by the firm include large commissioned histories and heritage studies, recording of oral history and providing advice on records management.

Donovan & Associates was established in 1980 and has since undertaken work for clients throughout southeastern Australia on projects that have involved research and work in all parts of the country.

Donovan & Associates' services include:

- * Corporate and institutional histories
- * Regional and local histories
- * Heritage surveys and assessments
- * Land tenure research
- * Oral history programs
- * Advice on cultural tourism
- * Advice on historical displays

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