The Speewah

Among the imaginary places unique to Australia, the Speewah has to rank as the one with the most attributes. The others recognised by dictionaries are mostly known just for their remote rural location: Bullamakanka, Bandywallop, Oodnagalahbi, and quintessentially Woop Woop. Snake Gully adds a perception of backwardness, and the Black Stump focusses on the remoteness. A lot more is known about The Speewah, a vast pastoral station 'used as the setting for unlikely and tall stories of the outback' as the Australian National Dictionary (AND) puts it, of which the best known collection has been Wannan (1965 and later editions).

The name *Speewah* differs from the other imaginary places in another two respects. First, *Speewah* is formed neither from a template of an Australian language, nor from descriptive English. Second, the name occurs on two actual places dating from the 19th century: Speewah, near Kuranda in the hinterland of Cairns; and Speewa, a locality spanning the Murray River downstream of Swan Hill.

The legendary placename has long been entertained as deriving from one of these real ones. The folklorist Blake's (1965:243) investigations led him to the latter location as the original, but he was still unsure:

> *But one question remains unanswered—did Speewa take its name from the legendary sheep station, or did the legends originate in the area? Does anyone know the answer?* (Blake 1965:243)

We can now assemble evidence unavailable to Blake which bolsters the conclusion that the Speewa near Swan

Hill predates the legends. Thanks to the AND, we know that the earliest record of a figurative usage is from 1890[1], and the oral tradition would not have been established

An origin for Speewah? The entrance to 'Puah' property, Speewa Road, NSW - 35°10'34"S 143°28'47"E

too long before some mention would have been made in a newspaper of the time. However the placename was in use at least thirty years earlier: see the caption on Ludwig Becker's rather well-known 1860 painting of the Burke and Wills expedition 'Near our camp at Spewah'.[2] And the name was officially recognised: in the Wakool local government area (NSW) there are two adjacent parishes, Puah and Speewa, dating from 1874 or before.[3]

From the Editor

We hope you'll enjoy the return of two regular features in this issue, as well as a new column which we trust will be a regular item from now on.

An old favourite, Paul Geraghty's series on Fiji placenames, returns with a focus on the island of Taveuni. 'Reports from the Trenches' also returns, this time with a very personal view of local placenaming issues from Julian Woods in Tarago, NSW. Our new feature, 'We Thought You'd Never Ask', is the result of our plea to Jeremy Steele, to write brief notes on the origin of some of Australia's iconic placenames—and he agreed to begin with *Woolloomooloo*.

David Blair
<editor@anps.org.au>

We recommend...

Just published in February by Multilingual Matters:

> Guy Puzey and Laura Kostanski (editors): *Names and naming: People, places, perceptions and power*

The publisher's note says the book 'explores international trends in naming', and examines 'why names are not only symbols of a person or place, but also manifestations of cultural, linguistic and social heritage'. For more details and for ordering information, see:

> http://www.multilingual.co.uk/display.asp?k=9781783094905
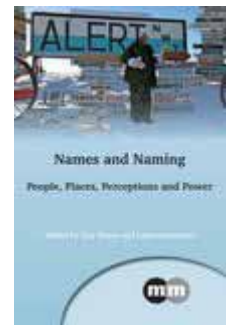
Notes and queries

In our December 2015 issue we asked you for help on finding the origin of several local placenames. We can now report progress, thanks to our loyal readers.

Trunketabella

Both Harold Koch and Jeremy Steele assisted with this one. Jeremy really got involved and provided a wealth of material—too long for this issue, so we've made it an ANPS Occasional Paper:

> *www.anps.org.au/documents/Trunketabella.pdf*

George Boyd Lookout

Chris Woods tracked down an old newspaper cutting which shows that **George Boyd** was a district forester in the area in 1942. Peter Orlovich then took up the question of whether the 'Boyd' in *Kanangra-Boyd National Park* and its associated features *Boyd Range* and *Boyd Creek* had anything to do with George Boyd. The short answer, says Peter, is no—those names were first recorded before 1900. So our conclusion is that the lookout near Nowra almost certainly commemorates the district forester, but that the National Park does not.

Ruth Park Walking Trail

Thanks to some detective work by our Canberra colleague Sharon Priestly, it seems that this Victor Harbor feature most likely honours **Ruth Alison Park**, President of the CWA at Victor Harbor during the 1990s, rather than the author Ruth Park.

D'Aguilar Range

Bill Forrest has recently asked us why the D'Aguilar Range and the D'Aguilar settlement near Caloundra in Queensland are so-named, and whether there's any connection with the D'Aguilar Range in Tasmania. We've discovered that the Qld mountain range was named by Major Edmund Lockyer who explored the Brisbane River in August-October 1825. He apparently named it after **Sir George Charles D'Aguilar**, with whom he served in campaigns in Sicily, Spain and India. The Tasmanian 'connection' seems to be a coincidence: the first recorded form was actually *Dagular*, and that was in 1824 before Lockyer arrived in Australia. And there's no record that Sir George D'Aguilar had any independent connection with Australia or Tasmania.

The island of Taveuni

It is a great pleasure for me to return, at the kind invitation of the editor, to the pages of Placenames Australia, *and I hope that I can continue to interest readers with my ramblings on placenames of the distant archipelago of Fiji. In this new series, to give the impression of at least a modicum of organisation, I would like to talk about the names of the islands of Fiji, in decreasing order of size,* says **Paul Geraghty**.

This means I start with the (relatively) enormous island of Vitilevu, home to the nation's capital, Suva, the second city Lautoka, the international airport at Nadi, and the bulk of the nation's industry, the major players being sugar and tourism. We will not, however, be detained long on this topic, since I have already expounded on it, in the very first instalment. Since that was a number of years ago, I will recap. My belief is that the first inhabitants of Fiji, now called 'Lapita people', set out from the eastern Solomon Islands or northern Vanuatu approximately three thousand years ago and settled on the island of *Naviti* in the Yasawa Group. They named it *Naviti* for a very simple reason: in the language they spoke, 'na viti' meant 'the sunrise' or 'the east'. It would not then have taken them long to discover that there was a much larger land, indeed the largest in the group, not very far to the southeast. Naturally, they called it *Navitilevu*, meaning 'larger Naviti' or 'the larger island to the east', which is now often shortened to *Vitilevu*.

The tagimaucia, national flower of Fiji, endemic to the island of Taveuni

(meaningful parts of a word). I do not follow this practice for three reasons. One is that such placenames are a kind of compound, and there is no reason for writing compounds with their component parts separated, which is why we write in English of a 'blackboard' and a 'blackbird', or indeed placenames such as *Newcastle* or *Greenland*, which are patently bi-morphemic. Secondly, there is no consistency in the practice, since it seems that 'Viti Levu' and 'Vanua Levu' (see next) are the only placenames that get this discriminatory treatment:

Map: CartoGIS and College of the Asia & Pacific, ANU

Note that I spell the name of this island as one word, *Vitilevu*, whereas on most maps and documents you will find it spelt as two separate words, *Viti Levu*, presumably to indicate that the name consists of two morphemes

witness the plethora of places called *Korolevu* 'big village' or 'big mountain', rivers called *Wailevu* 'big river' and so on. Thirdly, there is no official placenames board in Fiji

The island of Taveuni...   ...Fiji placenames 9

to enforce irrational spelling decisions, so I can do what I think is right!

So quickly on to the next in size—the northern island of Vanualevu which, with its two urban centres of Labasa and Savusavu and its industries of sugar and tourism is very much like Vitilevu writ small, though a little bit hotter (rather hyperbolically referred to as 'the burning north'). Again, this will not detain us for long, since it has the honour of being perhaps the most transparent – hence rather uninteresting – placename in Fiji, meaning simply 'big land'. Although it is clearly not nearly so big as Vitilevu, it was presumably given that name because Vitilevu had already been named by the first inhabitants, so can be read as meaning 'biggest land in Fiji beyond Vitilevu'.

Now we turn to number three, the long island to the south-east of Vanualevu now known as *Taveuni*. I say 'now known' because there is evidence that this is a relatively new name. The earliest piece of evidence

The coast of Taveuni
(Photo: M. Sundstrom)

for this comes from a list of islands known to the Tongans that was collected by William Anderson, the ship's surgeon who was one of the more assiduous and astute observers of things linguistic on Cook's voyages. When he was in Tonga in 1774 he asked the locals for names of islands that they knew but he didn't. They obliged with a long list of islands, most of which are easily identifiable, mostly in Tonga, but some clearly in Fiji, Samoa and Kiribati, and some arguably as far away as the Solomon Islands—testament to the sailing prowess of the Tongans, even though it was in decline by the time of Cook's visits.

Though they named the major islands and kingdoms of eastern Fiji, the list contains no island named *Taveuni*, or a Tongan version thereof. But it does contain an island known to the Tongans as *Funa*, and its positioning in the list makes it clear that it could well refer to the island we now call *Taveuni*. Given that Tongan /f/ corresponds regularly to Fijian /v/ (for example, Tongan *fale* and Fijian *vale* both mean 'house'), it seems likely that the Tongans referred to the island of Taveuni by a form of the name *Vuna*, which is now reserved for the south-western part of the island. Not only that, but a number of European

accounts of the early nineteenth century also refer to the whole island by the name of *Vuna*.

So how did the demotion of *Vuna* from the whole of the island to the south-western part come about? A plausible explanation is that it had to do with politics. Vuna is well known to be an ancient kingdom, with long-established close connections to the chiefly families of other parts of eastern Fiji; but one that was, at least from recorded history beginning in the nineteenth century, relatively powerless in military terms and subject to the upstart state of Cakaudrove, with its seat at Somosomo on the western coast of Taveuni. It is also well known that the chiefs and people of Cakaudrove only moved to Somosomo relatively recently, from an island off the coast of eastern Vanualevu across the straits from Somosomo.

So a plausible explanation is that *Vuna* had indeed been the name of the whole island, but when the powerful state of Cakaudrove moved across the straits to the island of Vuna, it called the island by a different name, *Taveuni*, which had previously been the name of just a small part of the western coast; but because the Cakaudrove people settled there, they used this name for the whole island. To this day, Tui Taveuni ('king' of Taveuni) is the title of a chief who rules not over the whole island, but just the village of Welagi next to Somosomo.

And the origin of the name *Taveuni*? Unfortunately we seem to run out of space, so we will return to that question next time!

Paul Geraghty

Paul Geraghty is our long-standing Fiji correspondent. Paul is associate professor in linguistics at the University of the South Pacific, Suva. He was Chief Editor of the Fijian monolingual dictionary *Na ivolavosa vakaviti*, and co-editor (with Jan Tent and France Mugler) of the *Macquarie Dictionary of English for the Fiji Islands*.

Reports from the trenches

Julian Woods is our correspondent from Tarago, NSW. He was our informant on the pronunciation of his home village in our September 2013 article. He's had a long-standing interest in placenames, with experience at local council level, as he reveals below. We encourage others 'in the trenches' to contribute their own stories of local toponymy., or to offer their own 'rant' about what bugs them. Email them to the Editor!

Why do placenames cause the community so much angst?

Our problems with placenames have many sources. We modify our placenames so that they sound 'nicer', more familiar to us, more 'English': so *Tarragal* becomes *Terrigal*. And we shrink from names that are pessimistic or have unsavoury associations; so our developers give us Disney-like and Shirley Temple-like names like *Gold Coast*. Other countries seem to be braver—we in Australia wouldn't put up with *Rotten Row* as the Londoners do.

Other names, we know, are changed because of war and politics, as the replacement of German-origin placenames during the Great War reminds us. Communities sometimes feel that their placename is offensive to its citizens and their enterprises: recent argument in Sydney about *Blacktown* and the long-ago replacement of *Sleepy Hollow* by the second-hand name of *Albury* are notable examples.

We love our *Gunns Gully*-type Australiana—in theory, at least, but not necessarily in practice. And placename-creation should not in my view tip too heavily either towards our Anglo background or to Aboriginal culture: so why not indeed both *Uluru* and *Ayers Rock*? Both histories should be out there, as the dual-naming policy says. After all, *Korea* and *Chosun* are both correct names for the one country, and both in international use.

As David Nash demonstrated with his recent article on *Akuna* (*Placenames Australia* December 2014), Aboriginal names are spread about with no forethought. Obviously many of the people who make these decisions, often local council employees, simply can't be bothered doing anything appropriate. I was once asked to give a name to a new street in Fairfield municipality (in Sydney) in a period of expansion in the 1960's when little attention was paid to relevance. Name it quickly by next Council meeting! At the time western Sydney had

large numbers of recent English migrants as well as older-established Australians. I noticed that the new street ran parallel to Sussex Street, so I gave the new road the name of Hove Street after the Sussex seaside resort. It had a great Australian sporting connection as every Australian touring team had played cricket there from late in the 19th century. The Sussex/Hove conjunction would have been nostalgic for so many residents. That is all I had to go on in those days. My recommendation was rejected by the engineer, who named it *Mallee Street*. How very Australian! Evidently it never struck him as incongruous that the nearest mallee trees were the other side of Hay.

It does make you wonder whether, with the creation of so many new streets in new suburbs, temporary numbers should be used to fill in until an appropriate local name emerges! In new subdivisions, names of previous residents are bestowed as street names, but without any notable events, scandals or controversies to justify their use. After fifty years what remains of the Williams or Craig family in *William Street* or *Craig Street* apart from a name shared with many others?

A major quite trite and meaningless name change is Southern Cross Station in Melbourne. What was wrong with Flinders Street Station? Imagine London renaming Fenchurch St. Station as the *Northern Aurora* or a similar irrelevance!

Pronunciation

Today, the greatest threat to pronunciation of established placenames lies in the growth of massive urban centres like Sydney or Melbourne, where people are so firmly anchored in their own suburban lives that they've lost any awareness of the wider countryside and its history. Once upon a time city-dwellers were more in balance with the larger rural population, and since they more often had country relatives, visits to and from the city were constant. Now our country placenames are

Toponymy 101

B: How toponyms...

*This is the second in a series of articles by **Jan Tent** which we have dubbed 'Toponymy 101' which presents a sequence of short vignettes on toponymy and some of its theoretical issues.*

Placenames are generally considered in terms of 'specific' and 'generic' elements. They can consist of a **specific** alone (e.g. ***Darwin, Sydney, Perth***) or a **specific** with an accompanying generic (e.g. ***Botany*** *Bay*, or *Mount **Kosciuszko***). The generic element is usually a geographic feature term. However, a generic can sometimes fulfil the role of a specific (e.g. *Point* ***Lookout***). Similarly, placenames that comprise the definite article often just have a generic following the article (e.g. *The Basin, The Bight, The Spit*), but may also just have an accompanying **specific**, or both a **specific** + a generic (e.g. *The* ***Three Sisters***, *The* ***Armchair***, *The* ***Battery*** *Creek*, *The* ***Bunyip*** *Waterhole*).

However, we can look at placename structure from a slightly different, more grammatical, perspective. We then see that they have various types of structure.[1] They can either consist of a single word (e.g. *Darwin, Sydney, Perth, Bell*)—in which case they are simply 'specific elements'—or multiword items.

Word types

a. **Simple**—consists of a single free morpheme, e.g. *Orange, Epping, Darwin.*[2]

b. **Complex**—consists of two or more morphemes (1 free + at least 1 bound), e.g. *Manly, Carpentaria, Watsonia, Mount Hopeless, Kissing Point, The Friars.*

c. **Compound**—consists of two or more free morphemes, e.g. *Blackheath, Newcastle, Blacktown, Lucyvale.*

d. **Compound-complex**—combination of types b. and c., e.g. *Cowpastures, Rushcutters Bay.*

Typical structural forms

Our focus in this article is on the structure of toponyms whose specific element is non-simple; that is, those where the internal structure consists of compound or complex words or a combination of those. Such placenames may, among other things, display the following surface structures:

1. **Solid Forms** [i.e. single orthographic words], e.g. *Rutherglen, Bankstown, Forestville, Brookvale, Chatswood, Alberton, Ellendale, Streatham, Bellbird, Figtree, Tasmania*, etc. A distinctive subgroup is the form known as:

- **Blends or portmanteaux** [solid forms resulting from the blending of two words or names], e.g. *Belrose* (from Christmas Bell + native rose), *Lidcombe* (from Aldermen F. Lidbury + H.J. Larcombe), *Kurmond* (from Kurrajong + Richmond), *Wangara* (Perth suburb, from Wanneroo + Gnangara).

2. **Hyphenated Forms** (hyphenated orthographic words + an optional generic), e.g. *Tomato-Stick Cave, Bob-a-Day Park, Brighton-Le-Sands, Bergen-Op-Zoom Creek, Dunn-Field Creek*, etc.

3. **Open Forms** [separate orthographic words, comprising either a multiword **specific** with an optional generic; or a single **specific** with a generic], e.g. ***Dee Why***, ***Devils Marbles***, ***St Kilda***, ***Dead Man*** *Crossing*, *Port* ***Jackson***, ***Lane*** *Cove*, *Mount **Disappointment***, ***Church*** *Point*, ***Mona*** *Vale*, ***Violet Town***, ***Sandy*** *Creek*, etc. Distinctive subgroups with an open-form structure are:

- **Binomials** [nouns, adjectives, verbs joined by *and*, with an optional generic], e.g. *Coal and Candle Creek, Sow and Pigs (Reef), Cow and Calf Rocks, Linger and Die Creek, Free and Easy Creek, Boy and Dinghy* (ISLAND GROUP), *Bishop and Clerk* (MOUNTAIN PEAK), *Old Man and Woman* (POINT), etc.

- **Verb Phrases** [often based on either a participle, or on a verb with its particle, plus a generic], e.g. *Rotten Swamp, Unnamed Corner, Disputed Plain, Felled Timber Creek, Broken Bay, Tessellated Pavement, Broken Ridge; Tumble Down Creek, Rising Fast Creek, Boiling Down Creek, Bedding Down Creek*, etc.[3]

- **Noun Phrases** [noun phrases + optional generic], e.g. *Valley of the Giants, Leg of Lamb Bank, Chain of Lakes, Butt of Liberty* (POINT), *Tower of Babel* (HILL), *Rock of Ages* (HILL), *Run o' Waters Creek, Bust Me Gall Hill, Meeting of the Waters, The Plains of Promise*, etc.

The spelling of placenames is often a contentious issue and is frequently a matter of debate within and among placenaming authorities, both here and abroad. For instance, some jurisdictions permit hyphenated forms whilst others do not. There are numerous examples of

...are structured

compound names that have more than one possible rendering, for example: *Colovale* (WA) v *Colo Vale* (NSW), *Hilltown* (SA) v *Hill Town* (SA), *Campbelltown* (NSW & VIC) v *Campbell Town* (TAS), and *Mossvale* (WA) v *Moss Vale* (NSW).

An interesting case is that of the *jumpup*. It is defined by ANPS as 'a sudden steep rise or escarpment, especially presenting as an elevated, step-like obstacle on an ascending road or track'; and is designated under the feature set <CLIF>. We see *jumpup* as a **specific** spelled as: **Jump Up** *Creek*, **Jump-Up** *Creek* (both in NSW) or **Jumpup** *Spring* (SA). As a <u>generic</u> it seems to be always spelled as an open compound, e.g. *China Wall <u>Jump Up</u>* (NT), *Frog Rock <u>Jump Up</u>* (NT), *Borroloola <u>Jump Up</u>* (NT), *The <u>Jump Up</u>* (NSW). So, there are various ways of representing multiword placenames. Indeed, there is a lack of consensus among toponymists and lexicographers as to how the term 'placename' itself should be represented. One sees *placename, place-name* or *place name* used in official toponymic literature from the various place-naming agencies around the world. (ANPS uses the spelling *placename*, the standard Australian usage as reflected in the *Macquarie Dictionary*.)

As illustrated in category 1 (**solid forms**), a generic element often forms part of the compound. Often, however, the generic is veiled because the placename is so ancient that the generic is no longer part of our everyday language: its original meaning has become lost in time. There are abundant examples of such toponyms in Britain, many of which have been transported to the Australian context. Some include:

- *Melbourne* – from Old English (OE) *burna* 'stream'
- *Mornington* – from OE *tūn* 'fence, enclosure, homestead'
- *Ashburton* – a combination of the above two generics
- *Epping* – from OE *-ingas* 'people of'

- *Tumby (Bay)* – from Old Scandinavian (OScand) *Tūn-býr* 'settlement by the fence'—OE *tūn* 'fence, enclosure, homestead' + OE *by* 'settlement, homestead', from ON *býr / bær*
- *Tamworth* – from OE *worþ* 'enclosure, homestead', from Old Low German (OLG) *wurð* 'soil'
- *Stanmore* – from OE *stan* 'stone' + *mōr* 'moor'
- *Millthorpe* – from OE *þorp* 'farm, hamlet', from OScand *þorp* 'farm, new settlement'

Other such attached generics are more transparent, for example: *Newtown, Riverglen, Lindfield, Rockdale, Westleigh, Lewisham, Edithburgh*, etc.

So next time you look at a map or drive along, spare a thought for the the way the names you encounter are formed. Is it a compound, if so what kind? Is it a blend, a binomial, a verb form or a phrase? It would make a good game to pass the time by keeping count of the different toponym structure types on a long trip.

Jan Tent

Endnotes

[1] I shall refrain from including an analysis of Indigenous placenames or elements thereof because it is so often the case we do not know the true meaning or structure of these.

[2] A 'morpheme' is the smallest meaningful element in a language. They often coincide with suffixes and prefixes. However, they can also be words comprising single meaningful elements, e.g. *girl*. A 'free' morpheme can stand on its own, e.g. *black, go, wise*, etc. A 'bound' morpheme is a word element that cannot stand on its own; it needs to be attached to a free morpheme, e.g. *-ing, -ed, -s, -es, un-, in-, pro-, -ness, -ly, -ment, etc.* Hence, *boys* is a word consisting of two morphemes: *boy* (a free morpheme meaning 'male child') + *-s* (a bound morpheme meaning 'PLURAL'); *walked* comprising *walk* (free, meaning 'to perambulate') + *-ed* (bound, meaning 'PAST TENSE').

[3] Notice how the placenames with a present participle (i.e. the *-ing* verb form) often refer to streams. This is not so surprising because streams are dynamic and are, therefore, more likely to contain a present participle to convey this dynamism. Static geographic features such as mountains are more likely to have a past participle (i.e. *-ed* or *-en* verb forms) in their name.

The Oops! Corner

- Greg Eccleston points out that, in Stuart Duncan's December article on Brisbane street names, Governor **Gipps** of NSW appeared as 'Gibbs'. Greg warns us that the good folk of Gippsland in Victoria will not be pleased, and he's probably right!

- And in last issue's Puzzle, as Mary Anthony spotted, **Rottnest Island** seemed to have been transported from WA to SA. Blame the Editor's typing fingers for that one, Mary!

- In our 'Skeletons in the toponymic cupboard' article, we noted a newspaper report—based on the Australian Electoral Commission's description—that **Canning** electorate was named after surveyor Alfred Canning. Ian Murray is sceptical; he believes the electorate's name, like the *Canning district* and *Canning River*, honours George Canning, Prime Minister of England. We suspect Ian's right, but the AEC's supporting documents are hard to access!

Consider now the form of the placename. Here are the years of the first appearance of the various spellings (of any sense) as found by searches in Trove Newspapers http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/:

Speewa 1874[3]	*Speewah* 1892[4]
Spewa 1876[5]	*Spewah* 1891[6]
	Speewaa 1900[7]
	Speerwah 1919

Note that the newspaper spellings with final *h* postdate the rise of the Speewah legends (as does the rarer *Speewaa*). There is a loose fit with a contrast in the pronunciation: The Speewah of legend is /ˈspiːˌwaː/ (OED /ˈspiːwɑː/, or /ˈspiwa/ in the *Macquarie Dictionary*), while from my recent inquiries near Speewa (Victoria) I learnt that the locals pronounce it /ˈspiwə/. Of course, one expects locals through familiarity to use a more reduced pronunciation.

We turn finally to the origin of this placename on the Murray. Blake (1965:243) reported that 'local belief is that Speewa is an aboriginal word'. An Aboriginal origin makes sense given the word isn't known in English (or other immigrant languages), even as a placename anywhere else. On the other hand, the /s/ and the initial consonant cluster does not fit the phonology of Aboriginal languages of the area.

One might suspect a relation to the nearby placename Puah, especially given their association in 'Puah or Speewa Creek'. This creek is an anabranch of the Murray on the NSW side (NSW GNR); Puah apparently applies more to the downstream (western) part, where the property name 'Puah' is still current, while the 1st edition of the map of the Parish of Speewa shows an area set aside at Village of Puah, around where the 'Puah or Speewa Creek' anabranch departs from the Murray.[8]

The most plausible source of this name would be Biblical, from one of the two Hebrew midwives Puah and Shiphrah of Exodus 1:15, and the name Puah is said to mean 'splendid'.[9] The main alternative possible source would be from the language of the area, namely Mathi-Mathi (Hercus 1986). The closest match in its vocabulary is *puwath-in* 'drag-Past' or *puwath-a* 'drag-Pres'; if this is to be related to *Puah*, the dropping of the last syllable would be unexplained.

Becker's more careful *Spewah* and the relatively early spelling *Spewa* could reflect a pronunciation /ˈspjuwa/, or perhaps, /ˈspuwa/—that is, with the spelling based on the English word *spew*; and this would then align with Puah, /ˈpuwa/ or /ˈpjuwa/. If this equivalence is valid, it contains a puzzle as to why the initial /s/ would be added.

Unfortunately there is no record of associated meaning or origin story; and the RASA questionnaires from the region contain nothing matching Puah or Speewa. My inconclusive investigations of Speewa lead me to appeal to readers of *Placenames Australia* for any further clues about its origin.

David Nash

Endnotes

[1] *Truth* (Sydney) 16 Nov. 1/4 Dear Mr *Truth*—I have just returned from 'the Spewah Country', where we have to crawl on our hands and knees to get under the clouds.

[2] See http://burkeandwills.slv.vic.gov.au/archive/archives/near-our-camp-spewah and Becker's diary report of Wednesday, 12 September 1860: From Swan Hill, 'away we went and arrived after a 13 miles march at Speewah an out-station of Mr McKenzie'. http://www.burkeandwills.net.au/Journals/Ludwig_Becker/Beckers_Second_Report.htm - thumb

[3] 'Crown Land Sales' *Australian Town and Country Journal* 7 February 1874, p.33 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article70472310; also in *Speewa Creek* in the diary of Edwin Welch, surveyor with Howitt's 1861 Victorian Relief Expedition http://www.burkeandwills.net.au/Journals/Welch/Welchs_Journal_July_1861.htm

[4] 'Stories told round the camp fire: The champion liar of the Queensland coast' *The Western Champion and General Advertiser for the Central-Western Districts* (Barcaldine, Qld), 2 August 1892, p.3 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77215611 includes legends set at 'the famous Speewah Station on the Herbert'. *Speewah* was also the spelling in Becker's 1860 diary.

[5] 'Land notes.', *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* 13 March 1878, p.4 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article101937511

[6] 'Sporting.', *The Riverine Grazier* (Hay, NSW), 11 September 1891, p.2 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article140473435 as a man's nickname; *Spewah* is the spelling in the *AND* 1890 citation which is not yet available through Trove, and is the spelling in Becker's 1860 caption.

[7] 'Australian Workers Union', *The Worker* (Wagga, NSW) 6 January 1900, p.7 http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article145902716

[8] http://parishmaps.lands.nsw.gov.au/

[9] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puah

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Should dictionaries include toponym entries?

Joshua Nash, now at the University of New England (Armidale), has contributed several articles to Placenames Australia *dealing with the toponymies of Australia's island communities. In our September and December issues in 2013 and again in June 2015, he reported on placenames on Norfolk Island . In the March 2015 issue, he discussed some of the names on Kangaroo Island, South Australia. Dr Nash recently gave a paper at the 2015* AUSTRALEX *annual conference in Auckland, in which he noted some benefits of placename databases such as his own material on Norfolk Island. The following remarks are an edited extract from that paper.*

My Norfolk Island toponymy database, stored at the Norfolk Island Museum and downloadable from the Internet as my PhD thesis, is a placename listing which comprises the island's various historical periods. These placenames are an important part of the folk lexicon of the Norfolk island language, and raise the question of the proper place of toponyms in general dictionaries.

Jan Tent spoke about similar issues in theoretical fashion in his 2009 Australex paper entitled 'The Placename Dictionary'. [See our link to this paper on the ANPS homepage, www.anps.org.au/about.html] Here I apply this question to a specific case study. What insights are available for lexicography, toponymic theory, and the compiling of placename gazetteers and maps when we access such a large database corpus as the Norfolk Island data?

The digital dictionary on my computer lists countless numbers of placenames—*Paris, Fleet Street, Mount Everest*. The question of what should and should not be included in dictionaries does not have a value judgment-free answer. The simple answer is: it all depends what the dictionary is meant to accomplish. In the case of presenting word lists and dictionaries in Norfolk and its relationship to the variety of English spoken on the island, because of their importance to the place and the language, placenames have traditionally been included. My work then fits in well within this 'let's-include-placenames-in-dictionaries-and-databases' aspect of writing about and documenting Norfolk. Peter Mühlhäusler's 3000+ entry lexical database of Norfolk and the Pitcairn Island language includes placenames. It seems I am in reasonable company.

Placenames do offer great value for dictionaries. However, lexicographers have long debated the difference between a dictionary and an encyclopaedia. If the distinction were to be maintained, one would expect scholars to consign placenames to an encyclopaedia if they mention them at all. A similar distinction is incorporated in what Tent identifies as 'placename dictionaries' and 'dictionaries of places'—the former deal with the etymology and meaning of toponyms, whilst the latter primarily contain encyclopaedic information about the places to which the toponyms refer. Some placename publications are a blend of the two; and it's true to say that in the world of dictionaries in general, the distinction is only rarely maintained: most general-purpose dictionaries these days contain encyclopedic material.

The prime reason for this may well be a commercial one: publishers are well aware that readers want encyclopedic entries (that is, words that begin with a capital letter) in their dictionaries. But there are good linguistic reasons, too. Encyclopedic headwords, including those which are placenames, contain archaic or fossilised lexical and grammatical forms which may give insight into the non-toponymic lexicon. This is certainly the case with Norfolk. For example, several Norfolk placenames encode spatial description and locationals on Norfolk and in Norfolk—*Down-a-Town, Out ar Mission, Up in a Stick*. If included in a non-toponymically focused dictionary, encyclopaedia or word list, such placenames give more than mere toponymic information; they give insight into the pragmatics and history of spatial relationships in the presentation of other types of information. For example, the physical location of people's houses can be encoded grammatically, e.g. *Up Chat's*—'Up at Chat's place'. Including these linguistic relationships in dictionary listings is beneficial to general lexical documentation. Not including them can thus result in loss of information. And that seems a good enough reason to include encyclopedic entries, including toponyms, in general-purpose dictionaries.

Joshua Nash
University of New England

We thought you'd never ask!

*Have you noticed how we often take some of Australia's most well-known placenames for granted? We assume they must be of Aboriginal origin; but we don't stop to think further about how they came to be. We've asked **Jeremy Steele** to tell us more about these placenames, in this new regular column.*

Woolloomooloo

Woolloomooloo was first recorded in the *Anon Sydney Language* notebook around 1790:
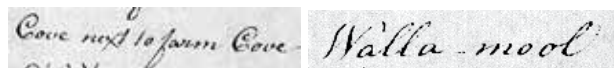
It subsequently cropped up on maps and lists, and after a century a meaning was proposed for it:

> 'a burial-ground or place of interment" (George Thornton, 1892)

Around 1900 surveyor and language collector R.H. Matthews jotted on p.112 of Notebook 4: "what does it mean?"

In September 1902 *The Science of Man*, an anthropological journal that ran from 1896 to 1913, carried an article entitled 'The meaning of the word Woolloomooloo' (pp. 129-132). Basing his conclusion on First Fleet records, the writer W.H. Huntingdon asserted that it derived from 'wallaba-mulla', meaning 'the home of the young black male kangaroo'. He had to introduce a *-ba* for this work.

Other meanings were to be proffered:

> —'home on top of the bay': (H.H.Richardson, n.d.)
> —'a resting place for the dead': (F.D. McCarthy— placename booklets, 1921-59)
> —'a young kangaroo': (J.R. Tyrrell—placename booklets, 1933-51)

Decades have passed, computers have been invented, and another look at *Woolloomooloo* might be worth a try. Assuming, as first recorded, it is actually two words, what might each of *wula* and *mula* mean?

wula

Various placenames suggest *wula* meant 'bay'. Respelt, three of these are:

miliya-**wul**	'a small **cove**' (Campbells Cove)
wula-dur	'a safe harbour' (Ulladulla)
bilangali-**wul**	Clark Island

mula

Likewise there are several records for mula meaning 'blood' and 'ill':

mula	'blood'	Monkhouse, 1770
mula	'sick'	Collins, 1791
mula	'blood'	Rowley/Ridley, 1875

This would yield 'blood / ill bay', a concept somewhat akin to the 'burial ground' suggestions above.

To the east of Woolloomooloo, and still in Cadigal country, is Rose Bay, where spears were traditionally thrown, and blood shed. These were ritual punishments, accounting for its name *banarang*. *bana* means 'rain'—or 'liquid'; *-ra*, denotes 'actively proceeding'; and *-ng* forms the noun.

These two bays might have had related names:

Woolloomooloo	Rose Bay
wula mula	bana-rang
	liquid active
bay blood / ill	*bleeding*

We can never know for certain.

Jeremy Steele

News from CGNA...

The news from CGNA is that there's been a change of name! The *Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia* was formed in 1984 to coordinate placenaming activities across Australia and New Zealand. Since 1993 it has been a permanent standing committee of ICSM—the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping—with the support of Geoscience Australia.

In recognition of its status as a permanent committee, and in order to better match the nomenclature of other committees, ISCM has accepted the recommendation that CGNA now be named the Permanent Committtee on Place Names (PCPN).

The current Chair of PCPN is Danielle Stefani, Manager Geographic Names, Landgate, WA; the Secretary is Susan Birtles, Land and Spatial Information, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, QLD. The PCPN website is still located at *www.icsm.gov.au/cgna/*

mispronounced as never before, and no-one seems interested to correct them.

It may seem trivial, but one telling example is Gundagai. You can tell instantly that someone comes from the Riverina as they don't say /ˈ**gun**-duh-guy/ but /ˈ**gun**-dee-guy/. Perhaps I shouldn't be too critical— at least the spelling remains constant regardless of the mispronunciation!

Near the Wombeyan Caves is the old mine and farm, Joadja (joh-ˈ**ad**-juh). The last local from the Burragorang valley, and from that region extending from Mittagong to the Caves, is long gone. One of the last of them, Tony Carlon, born at Barralier in 1898, told me that the pronunciation is 'Jo-ja'. Nothing will now bring that back. And that's understandable, because we all do it to some extent, when confronted with a name never heard spoken. We carefully pronounce every letter just to make sure. Children reading books do it constantly.

Lastly, we in Tarago are fighting a battle to preserve /ˈ**ta**-ruh-goh/, not /tuh-ˈ**rah**-goh/ as the Toyota company pronounced it. As *Placenames Australia* discovered for us, the car was named after the place! Who will win eventually? Probably the overwhelming weight of Toyota advertising will be too much to withstand. Fortunately Canowindra /kuh-ˈ**nown**-druh/ still survives—although strangers have been known to be shocked when their /kan-uh-ˈ**win**-druh/is corrected!

It is frequently pointed out that a great many people pronounce our national capital /kan-ˈ**be**-ruh/, and always have done so. In a sense this is 'a people's choice', as /ˈ**kan**-bruh/ sounds rather upper-class British to many. Perhaps one day, if the ABC continues to pander to current jargon and slang, we'll *all* end up saying /kan-ˈ**be**-ruh/...

Julian Woods
Tarago, NSW

Placenames Puzzle Number 57

Dimensions

Most toponyms are descriptive. One very common method of describing a feature is by its dimensions – size and shape. The following clues reveal such toponyms. e.g. (NSW) A diminutive cove... Little Bay

1. (QLD) A strait / channel or stretch of water between the mainland and an island that is wide
2. (McDonald Is., AAT) A level promontory
3. (NSW) A lofty mount west of Canberra (but its generic is another word for a solid geometrical shape, of which the base is circular, and the summit a point)
4. (QLD) An expansive cove
5. (WA) A high well
6. (WA) A slender canyon
7. (QLD) A headland named by James Cook that has a varied and diverse appearance
8. (NSW) An elongated ridge jutting out into the ocean between Dee Why Beach and Collaroy Beach (Sydney)
9. (SA) The nation's prodigious gulf
10. (AAT) A squat point (but its generic is the principal organ of taste and speech)
11. (AAT) A skinny mass of stone
12. (NSW, QLD, WA, VIC) Numerous watercourses with this name, the inspiration for Glenn Shorrock's 1975 Melbourne-based rock band
13. (VIC) A minute stream
14. (SA) A silver-tongued, glib landmass surrounded by water
15. (WA, TAS) A haughty line of mountains
16. (QLD) A flat, even, small watercourse
17. (QLD) A bumpy, uneven channel (ravine) formed by the action of water in a hillside
18. (TAS) An uneven, irregular cove
19. (TAS) A stunted strand (as in a shore line)
20. (NT) A serrated point

[Compiled by: **Jan Tent**]

1. Broad Sound
2. Flat Head
3. High Cone
4. Wide Bay
5. Tall Bore
6. Narrow Gorge
7. Cape Manifold
8. Long Reef
9. Great Australian Bight
10. Low Tongue
11. Thin Rock
12. Little River
13. Tiny Creek
14. Smooth Island
15. Lofty Range
16. Level Creek
17. Lumpy Gully
18. Rough Bay
19. Short Beach
20. Jagged Head

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We realise that not everyone who wishes to support the Australian National Placenames Survey can do so by carrying out toponymic research and supplying information for our database. There *is* another way — become a supporting member of Placenames Australia! In doing so, you'll help the Survey and its volunteer researchers by providing infrastructure support. In return, you'll have the assurance that you'll be helping ensure the continued existence of this prestige national project, and we'll guarantee to keep you in touch by posting you a printed copy of this quarterly newsletter.

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Supporting photographs or other illustrations are greatly appreciated.

Closing dates for submissions are:

March Issue: 15 January   September Issue: 15 July
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