

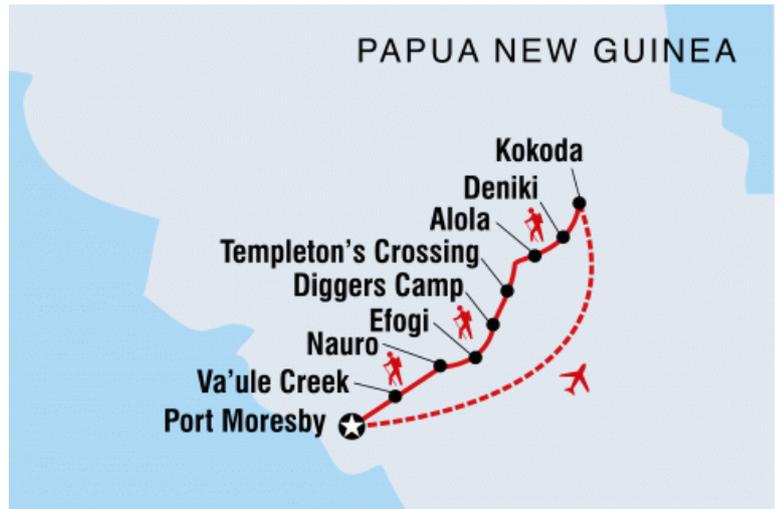
## March 2021 - Bulletin No 31

Welcome to the NDHS monthly bulletin which will keep you posted on what's happening during the month.

### March Meeting Guest Speaker

Our Guest Speaker for the March Monthly Meeting on Saturday 27th March will be a young man, Adrian Holley, who will talk to us about the Kokoda track. Incidentally, Adrian is the Grandson of Don Holley who created the display showing how Emu Plains looked 200 years ago.

With the events of early 1942 in the Pacific War, Japan had expanded south towards Australia but had been halted by naval engagements on Midway Island and the Coral Sea. Japan had suffered ship losses so sea assaults were more risky. In July 1942, an amphibious landing was made at Buna and Gona in the north of the Territory of Papua. A land assault was undertaken to capture the strategic town of Port Moresby in the south, over the rugged Owen Stanley Ranges. With stiff resistance from the Australians and heavy fighting by the Americans on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, the Japanese were forced to abandon



the land based campaign in New Guinea. Adrian, who has walked the track, can give us a good idea of the hardships the soldiers of both sides must have endured. It should be an interesting insight.

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### Aston Martin Owners Club of NSW

On Sunday 21st February 2021 the Arms of Australia Inn Museum hosted the Aston Martin Owners Club of NSW as a meeting point for their Katoomba Blue Mountains Lunch Run.

The Event was organised by Phillip Hammon, who



is a Member of the Club and one of our previous Monthly Meeting guest speakers.

Phillip had given us a very informative insight into the area both, past and present, around Scenic World at Katoomba.

The morning was bright and beautiful with no rain on the horizon.

The Members of the club had come from many parts of Sydney so it was an excellent opportunity to show off our beloved museum.



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# ‘The Best and Most Illustrious of his Race’

by

**Alexander and John Staats**

In a time when ‘History Wars’ divide us, it is satisfying to find an area of consensus among the controversies of the past. Happily, historical agreement can be found concerning the topic of one black and white cat by the name of ‘Trim’. Among the exalted list of ‘explorers’ of Australia, Trim, the loyal and clever companion of the great navigator Matthew Flinders, is a figure worthy of note and celebration.

## Humble Beginnings

Trim was a jet-black cat, with white on his paws, upper lip and in the shape of a star on his chest. His compact head and animated eyes bespoke intelligence and his long bushy tail, elegance. He was born in 1799 aboard the HMS Reliance on its journey from the Cape of Good Hope to Botany Bay. Cats played an important role aboard ships as excellent mousers who kept the rodents out of the provisions and away from chewing ropes. Flinders tells of how Trim won the heart and admiration of the Reliance’s crew. Trim, from kittenhood, had no fear of water; when he fell overboard into the turbulent seas, he swam beside the ship. The crew, taken with his courage and resolution, threw down a rope to the brave and reckless kitten, whereupon Trim ‘took hold of it like a man and ran up it like a cat’. This strong survival instinct endeared him to the crew and to Flinders alike. His personable nature won him the name ‘Trim’ (after the steadfast and loyal butler in Lawrence Sterne’s novel *Tristram Shandy*) and Trim quickly rose to prominence as the ship’s favourite cat.



Statue of Trim, outside State Library NSW

## The Ship’s Cat

Trim demonstrated aptitude for all aspects of ship life. He would mount the gangway steps faster than anyone else and was without peer for speed when climbing the mainmast. His agility on the rigging, and supervision of the sailors aloft, did not elicit jealousy or resentment; rather he won praise and caresses from the crew, as well as a trip in their arms back to the deck. Trim always took his personal role of protecting the provisions very seriously. Flinders records how Trim would enthusiastically chase any rodent as soon as they were disturbed by the movement of supplies in the hold; this was often to his peril, as he was heedless of the crush of moving barrels when chasing his quarry.

Trim was equally at home with the officers as the crew. Being aware of his universal appeal, he would throw himself full-length in front of officers on their rounds of the quarterdeck, and demand the attention that was due to him as the ship’s cat. He also ‘assisted’ the officers when they took readings or made astronomical observations. He was ‘on hand’ to offer advice, mewing to the officers whenever he felt his opinion or explanation of a reading was required. Flinders attributes Trim’s partiality to matters astronomical with his general fascination with all things spherical, an interest that officers and crew alike indulged with musket balls on strings and spheres of various forms rolled across the deck for Trim to bat and chase.

When the day’s work was done Trim knew his place at the officers’ table. He would take his position before the meal began and thence proceeded along the table stopping at each man, in turn, to elicit a titbit from each plate. If the officer was slow to offer up a morsel, Trim saved him the trouble by swiping from his fork mid air.

Trim’s character, charisma and cheekiness endeared him to all ranks and regardless of the ship or crew, he held and won affection and regard.

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## First Cat to Circumnavigate Australia

After time in the colony, Trim travelled to England with Flinders and had a taste of London society. Here he had a series of adventures that involved smashing glass windows, upsetting fine china cabinets and travelling in style in London coaches. In 1801, upon returning to NSW, Trim joined Flinders aboard the HMS Investigator on her mission to circumnavigate the continent of Australia.

Among Trim's admirers on board was an extraordinary Aboriginal man called Bungaree from the Kuringgai people north of Sydney. Bungaree was a vital part of the success of the voyage; he acted as a valuable intermediary between the ship and local tribes on the voyage along the coast. Bungaree too succumbed to Trim's charm and the two became fast friends. Flinders records how, on the course of the voyage, Trim was sure to approach Bungaree whenever he wanted food or drink; Trim recognised Bungaree's kind and gentle nature and was inevitably spoiled by his Aboriginal friend.

By the time the Investigator completed its journey around the continent, the ship was in poor condition. Flinders, and his faithful feline friend, changed ship to board the HMS Porpoise for the return journey to



*Trim statue, Donnington Lincolnshire*

England. It was aboard this vessel that disaster struck. The ship was wrecked on 'Wreck Reef Bank' about 170km south of the Great Barrier Reef. Despite the confusion and struggle, Trim was among those who survived and made it to the shore with his master. Flinders, Trim and the crew were stranded on the coast for two months before being rescued. In these difficult times Trim maintained his high spirits, sense of duty and fun. He faithfully guarded the provision tent from rodents and his high spirits, charm and capers played an invaluable role in maintaining the morale of the shipwrecked crew.

Upon being rescued, Trim followed Flinders onto the HMS Cumberland journey bound for England.

### A Sad End

When Flinders and Trim left Australia, the Treaty of Amiens had brought peace between the warring states of France and England.

On the journey to England, the Cumberland was obliged to stop for repairs on the French Island of Mauritius. Hostilities between France and England had renewed in the months the Cumberland was at sea and Flinders, Trim, and the crew were taken prisoners as suspected 'spies'.

For a time Trim remained in the prison with Flinders and he took on his role of improving morale amongst his inmates. Not long after Flinders was moved to the Maison Despeaux (the garden prison) and Trim took his liberties to leave the prison and wander afield. One night he failed to return. A handsome reward of ten spanish dollars was offered for his return by a French society lady whom Trim had charmed. After a two week wait Trim was declared dead. Flinders was distraught at the news, and believed that his noble companion must have been caught and eaten by a hungry slave. In 1809, whilst still a prisoner, Flinders penned the eulogy to his beloved Trim and pledged to erect a monument and epitaph to him. Flinders eventually returned to England in 1812 where he died of kidney failure. His pledge to Trim had to wait more than a hundred and fifty years to be honoured.

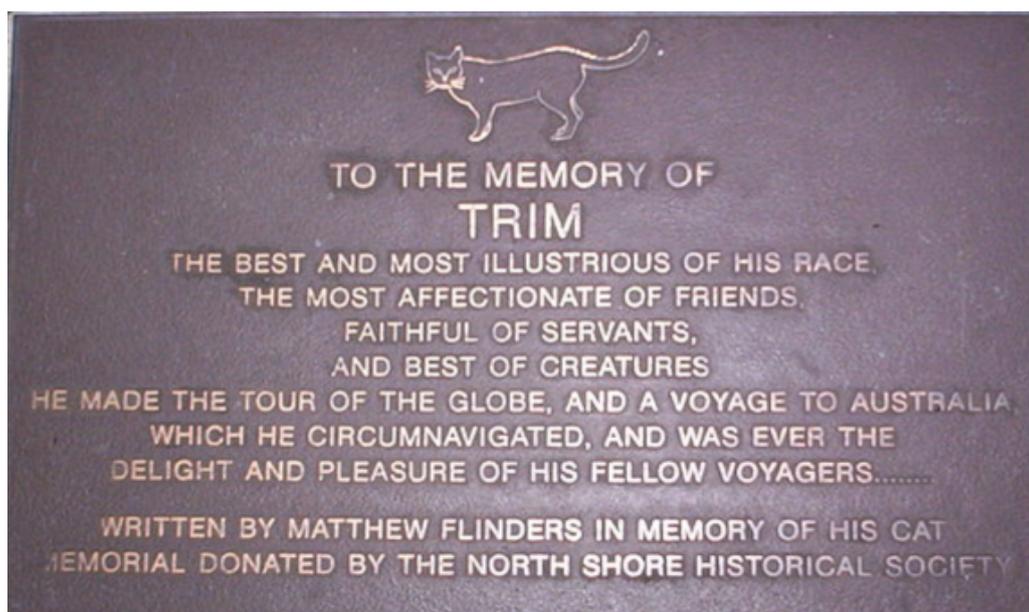
## Feline Legacies

Trim was forgotten to history until the journals of Matthew Flinders resurfaced when his grandson, the famous Egyptian archaeologist, William Matthew Flinders Petrie, gave them to the State Library of NSW in 1925. Flinders Petrie made an offer to donate Flinders' papers to the first Australian library to erect a statue to Flinders. When Flinders' biography of Trim was rediscovered in the archives of the British Royal Marine Museum in the 1970's, his pledge to Trim became known and, in 1985, a statue and epitaph to Trim was erected closeby to Flinders' statue at the State Library.

Since then, it has become fashionable to erect statues to Flinders AND Trim. Today statues of Trim can be found at Flinders' birthplace in Donnington, Lincolnshire; Flinders' burial place at Euston Station, London; at Port

Lincoln, South Australia; and at Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia.

Although belated, these statues are a fitting memorial to an extraordinary feline worthy of the title 'Best of Creatures'.



Flinders epitaph to Trim, outside State Library NSW

## 'History Walks' Programme 2021

All on Saturdays. Walks led by Doug Knowles and Greg Nowland.

**EASY** gradients. Firm underfoot. One and a half hours average.

**MEDIUM.** Short steep sections, some rough sections. Two hours average.

**HARD.** Steep, rough, four to five kilometres. Three hours plus average.

**March 13 9.00 am** "Glenbrook Lagoon Precinct

**EASY** Early campsite and railway dam construction (1880) for water supply to the first Glenbrook Station.

**March 27 9.00 am** "The Descent to the West, Mt York

**MEDIUM** Short return walks on three of the most historic roads to the West — Cox's Pass (1815); Lawson's Road (1822) and the newest Berghofer's Pass (1909). (Includes tea/coffee, biscuits.) Special Walk: \$12.00

Adults: \$10.00 Accompanied Children under 16yrs:

**FREE**

**BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL:** Phone Doug on 4751 3275 (Please allow the phone to ring longer than usual) for details re: meeting place, time and grade of walk. Good walking shoes are essential. Please bring a hat

and drinking water. (No dogs please.)

**BAD WEATHER ON THE DAY:** Excessive wind or rain could cause cancellation due to hazardous conditions.

For a copy of the full program please see Trish Montgomery

## What's on at the Inn

**Wednesday 10th March**

St Marys South Public School

**Thursday 11th March**

St Marys South Public School

**Sunday 21st March**

Plant Sale

**Saturday 27th March**

NDHS Meeting

**Monday 5th April**

Easter Monday closed

**Wednesday 7th April**

St George Community Transport

Seniors Tour & Morning Tea

**Saturday 10th**

Airing of the Quilts

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## Fieldwork: Landscapes of The West

The Penrith Regional Gallery is thrilled to be part of the Art Gallery of NSW travelling exhibition of Fieldwork: Landscapes of the West.

This exhibition has a focus on outdoor paintings of the Hawkesbury River, Blue Mountains and Sydney's western suburbs.

There are works on display from some of the Art Gallery of NSW significant artists.

Elioth Gruner's "Spring Frost" will be on show, which as we know was originally painted not too far from the Museum.

The dates for this not to be missed Exhibition are 12 March 2021 to 9 May 2021.

It is recommended that you contact the Gallery for further information:

gallery@penrith.city  
(02) 4735 1100



UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

**FIELDWORK**

12 MAR - 09 MAY

FREE / PAINTING



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## The Sands Penrith Directory of 1902

The Sands Sydney, Metropolitan and Country Directory of 1902 was published by John Sands, the owner of the greeting card company.

The directory listed the names and types of the businesses that were located in Penrith.

The names of the business which, in most cases were the owner's names, would be highly recognisable to us today, as they have been honoured in our local street names, parks and buildings around the Penrith local area, and those businesses that still stand today.

In the directory, Penrith was described as 34 miles west, by rail direct.

Banks, Commercial, NSW boots and shoes appear to rank first with seven in all doing trade in Penrith. Four tailors were apparently kept busy providing clothes for the wheelwrights, butchers, dairymen, fruiterers, blacksmiths, watchmakers, grocers, saddlers, tanners and drapers.

What a different list we could compile today with our shopping centres, supermarkets, photographic shops, chemists, hardware, whitegood shops, computer shops, telcos, real estate agents, cafes, take-away foods, pop up vendors and cinemas.

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## Penrith City Library

**Author Talk** with Jessica North as she talks about her book "Esther", a rags to riches love story of a convict girl who arrived in Australia on the first flee

Dates & Times

8 March 2021 - 10:30 AM

The event is COVID safe.

Registrations essential.

Tickets are \$5.

Book your spot at Eventbrite.

### Research Room Reopened

For all history hounds the Local Studies Research Room at Penrith City Library has finally reopened. It will be opened seven days a week from 2.00pm-5.00pm.

In line with regulations, a maximum of four visitors will be allowed in the room at one time.

### U3A MOVIES

SCHOOL OF ARTS 7.30pm

Saturday 13th March "1917"

Saturday 27th March "Emma"

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## On a lighter note

I'd like to thank my legs for always supporting me, my arms for always being by my side and my fingers... I could always count on them.

## January Guest Speaker

At our January 2021 Monthly Meeting we had our first guest speaker since January 2020.

We welcomed, Dick Morony from Springwood Historical Society who spoke about the connection between the naming of the town of Warrimoo and a ship called the *SS Warrimoo*.

Dick enlightened those present of many interesting facts on both stories surrounding the ship and the town.

The name Warrimoo is an Aboriginal name meaning "Eagles Nest" but why a ship built in 1892 was of the same name, still eluded Dick.

Warrimoo, in the Blue Mountains was named after the nearby Railway Station in 1918.

It still remains a mystery today.

## Quote

The older you get the more you realise how precious life is.

You have no desire for drama, conflict or stress. You just want good friends, a cozy home, food on the table and people that make you happy.

Anonymous

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

membership renewals are still being accepted.

Payment can be made by direct deposit, cheque or cash.

Bank details for a direct deposit are:

**Account Name - NDHS**

**BSB - 032 271**

**Account Number - 683 727**

By cheque:

**NDHS**

**PO BOX 441**

**PENRITH NSW 2751**

Cash

**On any Wednesday between 10am to 12pm at the Museum**

## Riddle

What do you call a sad coffee?

Answer to Last Month's Riddle  
Breath

## Contacts

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Heritage Advisory Rep.	Beth Moore	02 4735 1734
Speakers	Richard Nutt	0407 014 157
Books, Photography	Anthony Grainge	02 4731 2303
Catering	Elsa Speechley	02 4721 4993

Please note that the inn alarm is now on.

If you can't make your duty day, please change with somebody who can.

Please remember to sign in the diary in the meeting room, and write any information in the diary, pertinent to your time on duty.

### Birthday Wishes to the following members

John, Harry, Connie, Paul Wheeldon, Allison.

### Raffle Prizes

Marie Viviani always needs raffle prizes, so if you can help in providing some, please take them to the inn.

## Meetings

The NDHS meets on the 4th Saturday of each month with a guest speaker at 1pm on the premises, Cnr. of Great Western Highway & Gardenia St, Emu Plains.

## Museum Opening Hours

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 9am to 2pm  
1st & 3rd Sunday 1pm to 4pm.

**Contributions for the next Bulletin to - trishmontgomery1970@gmail.com**