

# Placenames Australia

Newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey

an initiative of the Australian Academy of Humanities, supported by the Geographical Names Board of NSW



## Ipswich ~ ~

### did the Governor have a sense of humour?

Ipswich is Queensland's oldest provincial city; it is spread over 1090 square kilometres to the west of Brisbane, and has a population of about 180,000 people. But why is it called Ipswich? How did the city get its name?

It is generally accepted that it was named after the English town of Ipswich, but there is no obvious reason for the name to have been transported to southern Queensland. So far as we know, none of those responsible for the naming had any connection with the English town; and the Australian site bore little geographic resemblance to the Ipswich on the estuary of the River Orwell in Suffolk.



*St Marys Cathedral, Ipswich  
(photo: Ipswich City Council)*

The name of the Suffolk town is derived from the medieval form *Gippeswic*, which in turn represented Old English *gips+wīc*. The second element means 'a dwelling, or a collection of buildings'. The first element is less certain: it may mean 'a wide estuary' (in this case, referring to the River Orwell), or it may be a personal name. The English

Place Name Society suggests, on this basis, two possible meanings: 'the trading centre by the yawning estuary' or 'Gip's trading centre'.

This second proposed meaning suggests an intriguing possibility, one that implicates the governor of the time in a little cryptic self-promotion. George Gipps (1791-1847) was governor of New South Wales from 1837 to 1846. Although the district in Queensland had been known as *Limestone* since at least 1827, a town plan was submitted to Governor Gipps by surveyor Henry Wade in 1843 and in that plan the town name was shown as *Ipswich*.



*Governor George Gipps  
(photo: by Unknown. Historic Houses Trust, Government House Sydney)*

It is tempting to think that the Governor was aware of the medieval form of the name (or even of its Old English origin) and that he rather mischievously incorporated his own name into that of the new antipodean town.

**David Blair**

## From the Editor



We have a mix of content in this issue. The indefatigable Jan Tent has written, as well as the usual Puzzle, two articles for us on general toponymy. On the other hand, we have the second part of Paul Geraghty's analysis of the Fijian island of Taveuni; and shorter pieces on Ipswich

and Dee Why, as well as some notes and queries on items our readers have requested.

Some of us are heading to Perth shortly for the annual meeting of PCPN, and I hope to bring you a brief report on that meeting in December. Our AGM for Placenames Australia (Inc) will be held a little later than usual this year; details in **David Blair** [<editor@anps.org.au>](mailto:editor@anps.org.au) our next issue.

## We recommend...

Bush explorers and authors Michael Keats, Brian Fox and Yuri Bolotin have been exploring the Australian bush for years. As part of their work they have produced a website which is an important resource for bushwalkers and others interested in the Australian bush, as well as a range of printed materials which provide a wealth of information about the Greater Blue Mountains National Park and the Gardens of Stone National Park.

[<www.bushexplorers.com.au>](http://www.bushexplorers.com.au)

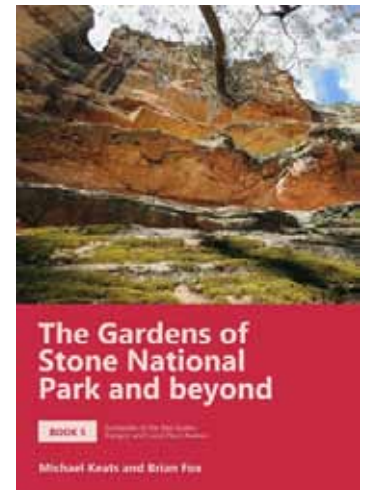
Of particular interest to *Placenames Australia* readers is Book 5 in the series *The Gardens of Stone National Park and Beyond*. This volume by Michael Keats and Brian Fox, entitled *Bushwalks in the Ben Bullen Ranges and Local Place Names*, presents historical material on over 760 placenames in the National Park. Also included are 24 individual maps, and these record many toponyms which are not elsewhere reported. The text is of high

## Placenames of the Gardens of Stone National Park

quality, and the authors are to be highly commended for this scholarly work.

Readers who wish to see the quality of the book's toponym entries can do so by browsing the website's Encyclopaedia page, which is continually updated and where over 1000 entries can now be found.

The book (and all other publications from the Bush Explorers initiative) can be ordered from the website, with free delivery promised within Australia.



## Notes and queries

### Penwhaupell (Qld)

Lyn Grimes has responded further to her own query (*PA*, June 2016) about this locality. *Penwhaupell* was the name of a paddock on the Ban Ban property, and Lyn noted that there are similar placenames in Ayrshire, Scotland. We can confirm that indeed there are—*Penwhapple Glen* and *Penwhapple Burn* are recorded in Ayrshire from the 1850s onwards. How and why the variant might have been transported to Queensland is, however, still unclear!

### Tungamull (Qld)

Geraldine Neal has asked about the locality name *Tungamull*, near Rockhampton. We know that a station on the Emu Park railway bore that name, and that a nearby property was called 'Tungamull Tank'; but further information is lacking.

### Trafalgar names

What effect did the Battle of Trafalgar have on Australian popular consciousness, Clinton Ferndandes asks. How many places do we know of that were named to commemorate Trafalgar or its participants (Nelson, Collingwood...)? Email the Editor with your answers!

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# Of what? *Taveuni* and other truncated placenames ~ ~

## Placenames of Fiji - 10

In our last instalment of the continuing saga of island names of Fiji, I proposed that Taveuni, the third largest island in Fiji, was previously known as *Vuna*, but when the powerful state of Cakaudrove moved from Vanualevu across the straits to Somosomo on the western coast of Vuna/Taveuni, maybe some 250 years ago, it changed the island's name from **Vuna** to **Taveuni**. This had been the name of a small part of the western coast, but because the Cakaudrove people were most familiar with that part of the island and settled there, they used this name for the whole island—not unlike, perhaps, the common use of 'Holland' as the English name for the whole of the Netherlands. 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.

Whence, then, the name *Taveuni*? First, let me explain that, like many other Fijian placenames, *Taveuni* consists of two morphemes (meaningful units), the base being *taveu* and the suffix *-ni*. This suffix *-ni* is a common element in Fijian placenames, translating roughly as 'of' or 'for'. We have already encountered a couple of examples in this series of articles: **Yanucanibeka** 'small island of fruit bats', close to Yanuca to the north-east of Taveuni, and **Nanuyanikucuve** 'small island of rats' in the Yasawa Group in Western Fiji. Unlike its English translations, *-ni* is only used with common nouns, not proper nouns—for which the suffix *-i* is used, as I hope we will explore in a later article.

By far the most common use of this suffix *-ni* is with places that are named after trees, the usual forms being (using *niu* 'coconut' as an example) *Vuniniu* or *Navuniniu*, meaning respectively 'coconut tree' (literally 'tree of coconut') and 'the coconut tree', where the *vū* element means 'tree'. At a rough count, there are over fifty such placenames currently used for villages in Fiji; five species of tree, all prominent and useful, yield three village names each: *bau* 'Palaquium', *sea* 'Parinari insularum', *sei* 'fan palm, Pritchardia', *vutu* 'Barringtonia' and *yasi* 'Syzygium'. So, for example, *bau* has given rise to these three village names: **Vunibau** in Macuata, **Vunibau** in Serua and **Navunibau** in Namosi.

There are many other examples of the use of the suffix *-ni*, the second most common being with *wai* 'water,

river'. There are about twenty villages thus named, such as **Wainiura** 'prawn river', **Waininubulevu** 'river of the big pool', and Wainikai 'river of freshwater clams'. Other nouns that are often suffixed in the same way are *koro* 'mountain, village', *mua* 'end', and *qara* 'cave', as in **Koronikalavo** 'mountain/village of rats' in Serua, **Muaninuku** 'end of sand, i.e. sand-spit' in Kadavu, and **Qaranivai** 'cave of stingrays' in Macuata.



*Bouma Falls, Taveuni (photo: Geoff Wakeley)*

Now, the more alert among you may have been following this discussion with some puzzlement, since what I have been describing are tri-morphemic placenames with *-ni* in the middle, whereas *Taveuni* is clearly a bi-morphemic placename with *-ni* at the end. The explanation for this discrepancy is that *Taveuni* is an example of the common Fijian phenomenon of a truncated placename: one that must have started out as three morphemes, but over time has lost the last one, presumably because of the universal human tendency to abbreviate, and also because the last morpheme is not necessary for purposes of differentiation.

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## Taveuni...

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Let me illustrate this phenomenon by returning to an example given above: **Qaranivai** ‘cave of stingrays’, a village in Macuata. What then are we to make of **Qarani**, a village on the island of Gau, and **Naqarani**, a village in Rewa province? Literally they mean, respectively, ‘cave of’ and ‘the cave of’, but it appears as if the last morpheme has been lost, so that we now have no way of knowing what is, or was, in the caves in Qarani and Naqarani, only that there are caves there containing something the identity of which is no longer knowable. Note that while the etymology is lost in this truncation, the placenames still serve quite adequately the function of identifying the place, since there are no other places named *Qarani* or *Naqarani* with which they might be confused.

Another example is the noun *sawa*, meaning ‘beach, landing place’. It occurs in two perfectly normal village names, **Sawanikula** ‘landing place of red lorries (a kind of small parrot)’ in Naitasiri, and **Sawanivo** ‘beach/landing place of gobies (a kind of small black freshwater fish)’ in Ra; but it also occurs in its truncated form, *Sawani*, the name of two villages, one in Bua and the other in



One of Taveuni's many orchid species  
(photo: Geoff Wakeley)

Naitasiri, meaning literally ‘beach of’, again leaving us wondering what exactly frequents that beach or landing place.

Having said that the full name is no longer knowable, I must admit that I have never asked anyone from Qarani

or Naqarani or Sawani whether they know what is in their caves or on their beaches, though I suspect that the answer would be in the negative. I know of only one exception, and a rather curious one at that. I was told by some elders of **Lovoni**, a village on Ono in southern Lau, that the full form of the name of their village was *Lovonikaisevau*, literally ‘earth-oven (or pit) of wattled honey-eaters’. Unfortunately I do not recall

if there was a story to account for this unexpected name, honey-eaters being birds that are not normally baked and eaten.

So if *Taveuni* is a truncated placename, what is the meaning of the base *taveu*? Unfortunately, it rather looks as if I have run out of space again, so I look forward to revealing the answer in our next issue!

**Paul Geraghty**

*University of the South Pacific*

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## The Canning saga continues...

Our Queensland correspondent Michele Lang notes that WA is not the only State with a legacy of *Canning* toponyms. She points out that Rockhampton has a Canning Street, and reports that:

in the *Central Queensland Herald* dated Thursday, August 24, 1950, page 15, in an article titled, ‘Where and When: Central Queensland Place Names,’ Canning Street is said to have been named ‘after Viscount Canning who was a member of the Aberdeen and Palmerston administrations.’

This of course is the *Charles John Canning*, Governor-General of India, who Alex George believes (*PA*, June

2016) gave his name to the **Canning River** and the **City of Canning** in WA. The other candidates so far have been the Viscount’s father, Prime Minister *George Canning* (nominated by Ian Murray, *PA* March 2016), and the surveyor *Alfred Canning* (according to the Australian Electoral Commission).

Viscount Canning served in India during the Rebellion of 1857 and was later made the first Viceroy of India. As far as we know, neither he nor his father had any direct connection with the Australian colonies. We wonder how many other Canning toponyms there are in Australia, and which of the several contenders were so honoured?

# How we name lakes, capes, mountains and points ~ ~

## Antecedent generics

Just after you drive through Dora Creek, on the western shore of Lake Macquarie, NSW, on the way to Toronto, you drive over a causeway that divides a small lake. Its sign-posted name, *Muddy Lake*, stuck me as unusual, because most lake names read *Lake X*, such as *Lake Cargelligo*, *Lake Macquarie*, *Lake Eyre*, *Lake Jindabyne*, *Lake Pedder*, *Lake Wobegon*, or so I thought. *Muddy Lake* looks more like a descriptor than anything else. ‘Perhaps’, I thought, ‘toponyms with the form *X Lake* might be more descriptive in nature than the *Lake X* form.’ There was only one way to find out; go to the Gazetteer of Australia and do an analysis.<sup>1</sup>



*Muddy Lake sign, near Dora Creek (NSW)*  
(photo: Jan Tent)

I counted only toponyms that had the generic *Lake*, occurring either before the specific or after.<sup>2</sup> To make sure I was dealing with lakes and not other features, I counted only those toponyms that had the feature code LAKE or INTL (intermittent lake).

This is what I discovered: There are 1731 lakes with the *Lake X* form of name, and 1475 with the *X Lake* form. So, the *X Lake* form is not so unusual after all—there are only 15% fewer examples than the standard form. From a national perspective then, there does not seem any significant difference between naming lakes *Lake X* or *X Lake*.

### The *Lake X* form

An examination of the *Lake X* toponyms, using the ANPS toponym typology,<sup>3</sup> quickly reveals that only 73 (4%) of these lakes have a Descriptive specific (i.e. descriptive, associative, occurrent, or evaluative)—in names such

as *Lake Surprise*, *Lake Sunday*, *Lake Speculation*, *Lake Skeleton*, *Lake Sheepwash*, *Lake Pleasant View*, *Lake Pure*, *Lake Ovoid*, *Lake Nameless*, *Lake Massacre*, *Lake Echo*, *Lake Grassy*, *Lake Copper Colour*. All the other 1658 (96%) *Lake X* specifics have a non-Descriptive specific element (i.e. eponymous or placename shift)—*Lake George*, *Lake David*, *Lake Blair*, *Lake Amadeus*, *Lake Bagdad*, *Lake Bongbong*, *Lake Mount Gambier*.

### The *X Lake* form

The *X Lake* name form reveals a different story. As I suspected, it has a higher percentage of Descriptive specifics: there are 609 (41%) Descriptives, leaving 866 (59%) having non-Descriptive specifics.

### Other ‘Generic’ *X* toponyms

As is generally recognised in the toponymic literature, a toponym’s generic customarily follows its specific element (i.e. *X* ‘Generic’). However, capes, mounts and points (and the occasional river, fort, port and gulf) can also have the reverse structure. An analysis of their structure reveals the following.

### Capes

Of the many headlands in Australia, 394 have *Cape* as the generic; of those, 366 (93%) have the structure *Cape X*, leaving only 28 with the structure *X Cape*, all of which have a Descriptive specific: *Table Cape*, *Rocky Cape*, *Fluted Cape*, *Danger Cape*, *False Cape*. A further thirteen of these have a specific which gives a compass bearing: *North West Cape*, *South Cape*, *West Cape*. A total of 342 (93%) of the *Cape X* form have an non-Descriptive specific element, whilst the remaining 24 (7%) have a specific that is Descriptive: *Cape Adieu*, *Cape Bowling Green*, *Cape Catastrophe*, *Cape Keerweer*, *Cape Manifold*, *Cape Tribulation*, *Cape Upstart*.

### Mounts

All mountain and hill features that bear the generic *Mount* in the Gazetteer of Australia were counted. There were 6446 with the structure *Mount X* and 153 *X Mounts*. For a number of technical and linguistic reasons I excluded the many toponyms with the structure *X Mountain*. One

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# How we name lakes...

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reason was that it is exceedingly rare to get a reverse of this structure (*Mountain X*) and when it does occur it has an alternative *Mount X* name anyway. Of the *Mount X* toponyms, 854 (13%) had Descriptive specifics, whilst 5592 (87%) had a non-Descriptive specific. The *X Mount* form had 64 (42%) Descriptive specifics, and 89 (58%) Non-descriptive specifics.

## Points

A very similar story can be seen with headlands that bear the generic *Point*. The Gazetteer lists 4605 such toponyms—397 (9%) are *Point X* forms and 4208 (91%) *X Point* forms. Of the *Point X* forms, 23 (6%) are Descriptive and 374 (94%) non-Descriptive. The *X Point* form has 1970 (51%) Descriptive specifics, whilst the non-Descriptive specifics comprise 2238 (49%).



photo: supplied by Jan Tent

## Discussion

When we conflate all the above figures (Table 1) we can see that non-Descriptive specifics outnumber Descriptive specifics in both forms, with the *X 'Generic'* form having significantly more Descriptive specifics than the '*Generic*' *X* form. This means we tend to use the *X 'Generic'* structure much more often when giving a feature a Descriptive name.

Placename type			
'Generic' X		X 'Generic'	
Descriptive	non-Descriptive	Descriptive	non-Descriptive
974 (11%)	7966 (89%)	2671 (46%)	3193 (54%)

Table 1

The Permanent Committee on Place Names (PCPN)<sup>4</sup> does not issue a guideline on naming places with regard to whether the generic should precede the specific or

vice versa.<sup>5</sup> One reason for this is perhaps because it would be superfluous, given features that can have the structure '*Generic*' *X* were named long ago. Apart from the occasional new artificial lake perhaps, no such new features are likely to be named.

Having said that, however, the South Australia Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure in its *Geographical Names Guidelines* does state that '*river* should be used as a generic term following the specific name of the feature – e.g. *Onkaparinga River* except when referring to the *River Torrens* or *River Murray*'.<sup>6</sup> The naming authorities of Victoria (Land Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment) and NSW (Geographical Names Board), on the other hand, record the Murray River as *Murray River*.

In a usage note in the entry for **river**, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) states that 'the proper noun [i.e. the specific element] immediately following *river*' is 'now chiefly in British English referring to British rivers and certain other major, historically important rivers, as the Nile, Rhine, Ganges, etc.' It adds that it was uncommon before the mid-seventeenth century for the specific to immediately precede *river*. That style developed 'as the predominant North American use' and is now 'the most common use in all contexts'. This would account for the very rare use of *River X* forms in Australia.

## A French origin?

A French origin of the '*Generic*' *X* form has been hinted at by some authors. The editors of the two Oxford placenames dictionaries, Ekwall (1951) and Mills (2003) declare that the major influence French had on English placenames was firstly the bestowal of French names on castles, manors, estates and monasteries, and secondly in the spelling of some established English names. Apart from that, the French influence was minor '[...] in spite of the far reaching effects of the Norman Conquest on English social and political life and on the English language in general' (Mills, xvii). One of these effects may have been the francophone style of naming lakes, points, capes, etc. However, much more detailed research needs to be conducted to confirm or deny this hypothesis. In the meantime, a cursory examination of the etymologies of the generics under discussion will be a small start. The OED shows that they are all derived



## ...Antecedent generics

from, or their use was reinforced by, Anglo-Norman < Old French, and have first attested uses between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries—**lake** ca. 1275; **cape** ca. 1405; **mount** < Latin, subsequently reinforced by Anglo-Norman, ca. 1200-1275; and **point** ca. 1474. I venture to hypothesise that the ‘Generic’ *X* pattern in some toponyms is probably not the result of any endo-linguistic force or any specific class of generic, but rather, purely a matter of naming fashion and style, perhaps based on French naming patterns.

Linguistics is the science of discovering and describing patterns in human language. Language is, after all, purely patterned behaviour, and it is precisely the existence of these patterns (or rules, if you like), at all linguistic levels, that facilitate the learning of language as well as the generation and comprehension of utterances and texts. Placenames are simply another form of language behaviour, and hence my overriding aim in studying placenames is to find patterns in their formation and their labelling of the landscape. But, as is often the case, humans do not always behave in an orderly or predictable fashion, and this also applies to linguistic behaviour. Occasionally, there simply isn’t a pattern, or we cannot discern one yet. There does seem to be a partial pattern in Australian toponyms for lakes, capes, mounts and points. This pattern was outlined above. I suspect similar patterns exist in other English speaking countries.

The question of why certain toponyms allow antecedent generics whilst others do not remains to be answered. Is it that grammatical and/or semantic constraints are operating? Or are they vestiges of their etymologies? Or, are they just a result of linguistic fashion? These questions are for another day. One may ask: ‘Who cares?’ or ‘Of what use is such information, anyway?’ My response is

that answers to such questions ultimately lead to our discovering previously unrecognised aspects of cultural history, and facets of human nature expressed in naming the world.

Jan Tent

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> It is at this point that I must thank David Blair for extracting all the LAKE features from the *Gazetteer of Australia 2012* (see: <http://www.ga.gov.au/place-names/index.html>) and converting the Access file to an Excel file for me. Thanks David! Where possible, I have used toponyms from the *Gazetteer* as examples.
- <sup>2</sup> I omitted any toponym that commenced with the definite article (e.g. *The Lake, The Blue Lake, The Mount, The Point* etc.). Toponyms of this sort form a special class for which there is no consensus in any of the toponymic or grammatical literature on how to analyse them.
- <sup>3</sup> See: ANPS Technical Paper No 2. *Motivations for naming: A toponymic typology* (2009), available at: <http://www.anps.org.au/documents/ANPSTechPaper2.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup> This is a standing committee of the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping. Its role is to coordinate placenaming activities across Australia and New Zealand, and to communicate the consistent use of placenames to ensure they meet the requirements of the whole community, including government bodies and emergency services, and indigenous people.
- <sup>5</sup> See *Guidelines for the Consistent Use of Place Names*, available at: [http://www.icsm.gov.au/cgna/consistent\\_place\\_names\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.icsm.gov.au/cgna/consistent_place_names_guidelines.pdf)
- <sup>6</sup> See: <http://www.sa.gov.au/topics/housing-property-and-land/property-and-place-information/suburb-road-and-place-names/geographical-names-guidelines>

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## Placenames in the media

We couldn’t resist bringing you this, courtesy of our friends at the *Sydney Morning Herald*—from an item earlier this year:

“Whilst travelling in Tasmania recently,” reports John Ellis, of Westleigh, “we crossed Wye Creek. A helpful explanation has been added to the sign: ‘Because it is smaller than a river.’”

We have to admit to a degree of puzzlement, however.

Although our records show a *Wye Creek* in Victoria and a *Wye River* in Tasmania, we can’t find Mr Ellis’s ‘creek’ in the island State. Does anybody know where it is?

The world is not well supplied with *Wye Creeks*. Perhaps the best-known is near Queenstown in NZ; but even there the toponym is not official, merely ‘recorded’. The US has three that we know of—in Alaska, Idaho and Washington. As to the origin of *Wye*, we know not.

*'If you want to make enemies, try to change something'*  
 -Woodrow Wilson

## Part 2

As we noted previously, the most common motivation for renaming is political. One of the most common reasons for a country changing its name is its newly acquired independence. When borders are changed, whether due to a country splitting or to two countries joining together, the names of the relevant areas can also change. This, perhaps, is not so much an act of geographical renaming as it is the creation of a different entity.

Another motivation is the signalling of a new political era. As a post-revolutionary symbolic change, for example, new régimes remove evidence of the deposed régimes to establish their identity. Placenames are among the first symbols of a country or dynasty to be created, altered, and distorted. One case is that of *Persia / Iran*. A country's endonym is usually different from its exonym.<sup>1</sup> For the people of Iran this issue has been very controversial: *Persia* was its exonym, but Iranians have been calling their country *Iran* for over a millennium; the name *Persia* evoked for them their old culture and civilisation; *Persia* and the name of a province of Iran (*Pars*) are from the same root, and thus caused confusion. As with *Holland* and *The Netherlands*, the meaning of 'Persia' had shifted to refer to the whole country. As an illustration of this, in Western languages all famous cultural aspects of Iran have been recorded as 'Persian'—Persian carpet, Persian food, Persian cat, etc.

Typical examples of countries renamed following régime change or independence include:

- East Pakistan (East Bengal) → Bangladesh (1971)
- Gilbert Islands → Kiribati (1979)<sup>2</sup>
- Ceylon → Sri Lanka (1972)
- Siam → Thailand (1949)
- Portuguese Timor → East Timor (1975) → Timor-Leste (2002)
- Ellice Islands → Tuvalu (1978)
- New Hebrides → Vanuatu (1980)
- Southern Rhodesia → Rhodesia (1965) → Zimbabwe-Rhodesia (1979) → Zimbabwe (1980)

Cities also have been renamed for the same reason:

- Salisbury → Harare (1982)
- Saigon → Ho Chi Minh City (after the fall of South Vietnam in 1975)

- Byzantium (under Greek rule) → Constantinople (under Roman and Ottoman rule) → Istanbul (since 28 March 1930)
- Sunda Kelapa → Jayakarta → Batavia → Jakarta (after end of Dutch rule in 1946)
- Derry (until 1623) → Londonderry
- Hanyang (1392) → Hanseong (1395) → Keijō or Gyeongseong (1914) → Seoul (1946)
- Rangoon (1852) → Yangon (1988)



*A clear political statement (photo: Jan Tent)*

The dates when places are renamed reveal a political and historical story, and none more so than the renaming of two cities in Russia:

- Saint Petersburg → Petrograd (1914) → Leningrad (1924) → Saint Petersburg (1991)
- Tsaritsyn (1589) → Stalingrad (1925) → Volgograd (1961)

In Australia we have also been busy renaming places for political purposes. Many German placenames were removed and replaced during World War I. South Australia was perhaps the most active in this endeavour, though names were also replaced in other states. The following list is representative:

- Bismarck → Weeroopa
- Hahndorf → Ambleside (original name restored in 1935)
- Hoffnungsthal → Karawirira (original name restored in 1975)



## ...of placenames

- Kaiserstuhl → Mt Kitchener (original name restored in 1975)
- Steinfeld → Stonefield



*The new name refers to a battle in France during WW1.  
(Source: <http://www.germanaustralia.com>)*

To get an idea of how common the renaming of places is in Australia, I recommend you have a look at the following website: *Renamed Places in Queensland* <<http://www.chapelhill.homeip.net/FamilyHistory/Other/Renamed-Places-in-Queensland.html>>

The most iniquitous motivation for renaming a place is a powerful and often dangerous symbol of appropriation, and the current dispute over the South China Sea is a good example of this. China has recently been building artificial islands on uninhabited reefs in the Spratly Islands in an attempt to lay a territorial claim to them. The dispute is a long, ongoing territorial dispute between China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam, all having territorial claims in the Sea. Consequently, most of the maritime features in the island group have at least six names. The Philippines' objection to China's claims in the region is further reflected by rejecting the name *South China Sea* and naming it the *West Philippine Sea*.

Another territorial dispute in the region involves what Japan calls the *Senkaku Islands* (*Senkaku Shotō*).<sup>3</sup> China and Taiwan also lay claim to them and have bestowed their own names upon them—the *Diaoyu Islands* and *Diaoyutai Islands* respectively.

It is a troubled region. The international name for the body of water that borders Japan, North Korea, South Korea and Russia is also disputed. Objections to the name

*Sea of Japan* were first raised by North Korea and South Korea in 1992, at the Sixth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.<sup>4</sup> Japan, naturally, endorses the name *Sea of Japan*, whilst South Korea supports the name *East Sea* ('East' being the compass bearing from Korea), and North Korea, less subtly, the *East Sea of Korea*.

Yet another dispute in that neighbourhood concerns the Scarborough Shoal, about 200 km off the coast of the Philippines. It was seized by China in 2012 after a three-month standoff with the Philippines' coast guard. The reef has been dubbed *Huangyan Island* by China.

Another dispute, in a different ocean, involves Argentina and Britain over the Falkland Islands, known by Argentina as the *Islas Malvinas*. The outcome of the war over the sovereignty of the islands in 1982 means that the islands are generally referred to internationally as the *Falkland Islands* rather than the *Malvina Islands*.

One final example of appropriation by naming will suffice here, and concerns Israel's wiping Arabic and English names from road signs in Israel, East Jerusalem and the West Bank in 2009. Only Hebrew names were to be retained. The rhetoric used at the time stated that road signs would be 'standardised'.<sup>5</sup>

Renaming may be recognised locally but not internationally (especially when there are linguistic differences)—*Burma / Myanmar* is a recent example which has caused some uncertainty in diplomatic circles.

**Jan Tent**

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> **Endonym** 'a locally used placename, or a placename in one of the languages occurring in the area where the placename is located', e.g. *Wien*; **exonym** 'a name used by speakers of other languages instead of a native name', e.g. *Vienna*. In other words, exonyms differ in their forms from the name used in the official language or languages of the area where the geographical feature is situated.

<sup>2</sup> 'Kiribati', pronounced /**kiri**-bas/, is actually the Gilbertese rendition of 'Gilbert'.

<sup>3</sup> See: 'Japan sends in lobbyists over US school textbooks' <<http://www.smh.com.au/world/japan-sends-in-lobbyists-over-us-school-textbooks-20140124-hv9lo.html>>

<sup>4</sup> See: 'Sea of Japan naming dispute' <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea\\_of\\_Japan\\_naming\\_dispute#cite\\_note-MOFAJ-0](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_of_Japan_naming_dispute#cite_note-MOFAJ-0)>

<sup>5</sup> See: 'Israel's plan to wipe Arabic Names off the map: New battlefront over road signs' <[www.dissidentvoice.org/2009/07/israel-s-plan-to-wipe-arabic-names-off-the-map/](http://www.dissidentvoice.org/2009/07/israel-s-plan-to-wipe-arabic-names-off-the-map/)>

# We thought you'd never ask!

*Dee Why, the Sydney suburb (and beach), has a name that most people don't give a second thought to—but it really is a bit odd. Your editor suggested that **Jeremy Steele** might again take up the challenge, and indeed he couldn't resist...*

## Dee Why

Can anywhere in Australia have had as many theories about its name as Dee Why? Here is how it all began: an entry made by one-time political convict, Irish explorer-surveyor James Meehan (1774-1826). After arrival in Australia in 1800 he was soon working as a surveyor out of Sydney, and in Victoria and Tasmania. On 27 September 1815 he recorded in his Fieldbook 86: *Dy Beach—marked a Honey Suckle Tree—near the beach ...* Meehan' later rewrote it as *D.Y.*, later still it became *Deewhy* and finally *Dee Why*. And speculation about the name began.



A century later, on 9 November 1921, Archibald Meston (1851-1924) wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

'Narrabeen and Deewee-deewee were the aboriginal names of the well-known lakes near Manly. "Narrabeen" was the swan... and "deewee-deewee" was a widely spread name of the little grebe... Five aboriginals who were camped there called the honeysuckle... "gnarrabeen," ...'.

So according to Meston, *Dy* was *deewee-deewee*, the name of a bird.

Among a dozen or more theories suggested were: an Aboriginal word for stingrays; Doña Ysabel, a wrecked Spanish galleon (or the name of the captain's wife), with the initials carved onto a rock nearby. These are just two of the least unlikely. Finally in 2009 Richard Michell in his booklet *Why Dee Why?* dismissed them all, to conclude that the name must have been Aboriginal—though he did not know what it might have meant.

Here are two possibilities. If *Dy* were the whole word, the 'y' pronounced as in *Sydney*, it would sound 'dee'. Respelt, this could be **di** or **diyi**, meaning 'here'.

Perhaps the Aboriginal informants were telling Meehan the place was 'here!', and not providing an actual name.

Aust.	respelt	English	EngJSM	source
"Di-e"	diyi =	"Here!"	this :	King MS [:402:23] [BB]

On the other hand, if the form were *D.Y.* (as supported by Meehan's later version) and hence **diwayi**, the closest word would be **diwara**: 'hair'.

"Dteéwara"	Diwara	"The hair"	hair	Dawes (b) [b:5:10] [BB]
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Unless any nearby grass were regarded as hair, this seems unlikely, especially with the additional '-ra'.

Finally, we should note that Meston's affirmation of the name of the bird as **diwi** is supported by the bird **diwidgang** of one of the First Fleet painters:

"Dee-weed-gang"	diwid-gang	"Variegated Bee-eater"	Rainbow-bird	Painters [:12165:] [BB]
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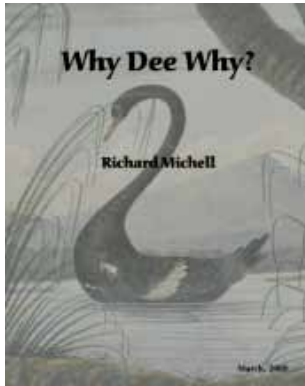
The problem then, though, is that pronunciation of **diwi** would be distant from Meehan's apparent preferred spelling *D.Y.* So the matter, sadly, remains unresolved.

## Reference

Michell, Richard. *Why Dee Why?* Dee Why, NSW: Friends of Dee Why Lagoon, 2009.

## More recommended reading

If you'd like to know more about the many wonderful speculations about **Dee Why**, you can't do better than read the booklet that Jeremy Steele mentioned in his



article. *Why Dee Why?*, by Richard Michell, can be downloaded from the website of the Friends of Dee Why Lagoon:

[www.fodyl.asn.au](http://www.fodyl.asn.au)

(They would appreciate a small donation to cover their costs, if you do download it.)

ANPS has published two items this year in a new series, *ANPS Data Reports*. They present placename data from the research of Joshua Nash on Norfolk Island and the Dudley Peninsula (SA). They are freely available through the 'Publications' pages of the ANPS website.

Jan Tent has published two articles this year that will be of interest. One relates to the naming of Christmas Island: 'The Ghosts of Christmas (Island) Past'. The other is an extended treatment of antecedent generics—the subject of his article in this issue. A trip to the 'Publications/Published Articles' page of our website will give details and reveal the links to download them.

## Placenames Puzzle Number 59

### A potpourri of 'potty' toponyms

*How many types of pot can you think of? We ask you to work out what type of pot is revealed in the placename hinted at. e.g. (VIC, creek) east of Benambra, a pot in which a food made of dried maize kernels is made...*

*Hominy Pot Creek*

1. (QLD, creek) between Mackay and Rockhampton, a vessel made of a ferrous metal
2. (TAS, hill) near Geeveston, Dover and Cygnet, a container for blooms
3. (VIC, creek) nor-nor-west of Mallacoota, a vessel containing adhesive
4. (NSW, beach) at Forster, a contraption to entrap crustaceans
5. (NSW, mountain) north-east of Dubbo, with an archaic name for a pot
6. (NSW, creek) east of Armidale, a drinking vessel able to hold an imperial liquid quantity
7. (QLD, creek) in Stanthorpe, a container holding an imperial liquid quantity twice the amount of clue no. 6
8. (NSW, gully) between Jenolan and Katoomba, a receptacle for a sticky, gooey black substance
9. (TAS, bay) north-west of the tip of Bruny Island, a smelly vessel and a term of abuse
10. (VIC, creek) near the NSW-VIC border, a vessel holding a refreshing hot beverage
11. (NSW, mountain) west of Narrabri, the container used for storing a type of spice
12. (TAS, creek) west of Triabunna, a pot made of thin metal sheeting
13. (NSW, creek) near Toronto, a vessel containing a hot and energizing beverage no-one seems to be able to do without these days
14. (NY, bore) south-south-west of Darwin, a pot for a sweet golden-coloured runny substance
15. (QLD, creek) north-west of Emerald, a pot containing conserve
16. (TAS, hill) west of Sandy Bay, a pipe that funnels smoke
17. (TAS, cave) west of Deloraine, someone who is a crank or crazy
18. (TAS, creek) south-east of Campbell Town, named after something you might have found under a bed in former times
19. (VIC, lake) near the SA border, a small container we used to have on our school desks
20. (WA, well) east of Geraldton, named after a vessel containing a golden brown paste-like lubricant

[Compiled by: **Jan Tent**]

- |                      |                    |                      |                      |                      |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Iron Pot Creek    | 6. Pint Pot Creek  | 11. The Pepper Pot   | 15. Jampot Creek     | 20. Greasepot Well   |
| 2. Flowerpot Hill    | 7. Quart Pot Creek | 12. Tin Pot Creek    | 14. Honeypot Bore    | 19. The Inkpot       |
| 3. Blue Pot Creek    | 8. Tarpot Gully    | 13. Coffee Pot Creek | 13. Coffee Pot Creek | 18. Pisspot Creek    |
| 4. Lobster Pot Beach | 9. Sinkpot Bay     | 14. Honeypot Bore    | 14. Honeypot Bore    | 17. Crack Pot (Cave) |
| 5. Mount Pottinger   | 10. Teapot Creek   | 15. Jampot Creek     | 15. Jampot Creek     | 16. Chimney Pot Hill |



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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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## Closing dates for submissions are:

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June Issue: 15 April      December Issue: 15 October