



# Rananim

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## A Thoroughly Thirroulean Time...

There's a lot about Thirroul in this 2002 issue of *Rananim*, which is as it should be.

For most of the time Lawrence was in Australia he spent in and around Thirroul, and, of course, he wrote his Australian novel *Kangaroo* in Thirroul.

Most of the "action" in the novel centers on Thirroul, and the main physical legacy of his visit, Wyewurk – his famous "cottage by the sea" – still stands, almost as it was in 1922, in Craig Street, Thirroul.

Indeed, the principal commemoration of his visit, the plaque organised by Joanna Skilton (see *Rananim* 7-8), is sited in the little park in Craig Street – a few doors south of Wyewurk.

(The other memorial [see *Rananim* 5/2] is at Circular Quay in Sydney: a large plaque – a roundel, in fact – set in the footpath of Writers' Walk [though one should probably also mention in this commemorative context the bogus notice outside "the Old Dairy" in Darlington, WA – see *Rananim* 2/3].)

So the coverage in this Thirroulean issue, which is lavishly illustrated, begins, chronologically, with the Dedication of that little park, now christened the D.H. Lawrence Reserve, by the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Cr. George Harrison, in April last year (see full report on p. 5).

Indeed, the ceremony was one of the principal events of the 2001 annual Thirroul Seaside and Arts Festival, the highlight of the Thirroul year.

This Festival, which the Society also took part in this year (see full report on p. 3), brings thousands of visitors to Thirroul over a weekend in April, and it is pleasing that its most distinguished literary visitor (and greatest publicist – for it must never be forgotten that the only house known by name outside Australia is Wyewurk) plays an important part in the event.

The Dedication was, however, not the only Lawrentian event at last year's Thirroul Festival. In the evening of the first day (Saturday, April 7) our very own John Ruffels put on the guise of a roaming troubadour and went from café to restaurant around Thirroul giving recitations of *Kangaroo* (see his report of this experience, p. 6).

So successful were last year's events that the Society was delighted when the Festival organisers asked if we could expand our activities this year and put on some sort of exhibition and readings of *Kangaroo* in a hall provided for us next to the Thirroul Library (which, I was glad to see, now has a small collection of works about Lawrence, including Joe Davis's book *D.H. Lawrence at Thirroul*, and my own small, speculative 1981 volume, *D.H. Lawrence in Australia*).

As mentioned in our report of this occasion (see p. 3), we put on a modest show, more in the nature of an exploratory event that a full-blown attempt to mark and represent

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Lawrence's contact with Thirroul. We are hoping that this experience will enable us to essay something more substantial next year, if we are invited again, which we hope we are.

Finally, there is (p. 9) our main feature article in this issue, on the very interesting provenance of the name Cooley in *Kangaroo*.

This has a strong Thirroulean element in it, not least because of the mention of Lawrence Hargrave, which is now the name of the main street that runs through Thirroul.

(It may also be of interest that this

feature also mentions Lucy Callcott, who is related to another modern Thirroul identity, Kerrie Christian, who is also a councillor on Wollongong City Council, and attended the Dedication Ceremony in D.H. Lawrence Reserve last April.)

Although our programme for the coming year is not yet finalised, we are hoping to include in it a BBQ or picnic in the D.H. Lawrence Reserve in Craig Street either before or during next year's Thirroul Seaside and Arts Festival.

Indeed, we have firm ambitions to make regular visits to, and contact with, Thirroul a feature of our future and ongoing activities.

– Robert Darroch



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## EDITORIAL

WELCOME to this edition of *Rananim*, an issue that has been brought to you by courtesy of an anonymous donor, who has forwarded a much-appreciated \$ 500, which has paid for the production of the 2002 *Rananim*. If you renew your subscription, and if every member signed up a new member, the Society's finances would be in a much healthier state, as the production costs of *Rananim* are fixed, almost irrespective of the number of copies produced: so the more members there are, the more issues there are.

There is, as usual, quite a variety of material here, with an emphasis on Lawrence in both Ceylon and Australia, and two intriguing pieces on Lawrence that are not related to "place" but "perception". We hope that you will find much to interest you, and also to encourage you, no matter what your interests, to contribute to future issues.

Our last issue announced, with front-page fanfare, the Society's web site. Unfortunately, we were too confident here, and soon discovered that our hard work was nullified by the importation of a lot of, to put it simply, "computer-generated gibberish" into our back issues of *Rananim*. I cannot begin to tell you of the difficulties this caused your Committee, and I have not the words to be able to adequately thank Margaret Jones, Sandra Jobson and Rob Darroch for their work in rectifying the problems. Basically, this involved retyping almost all of the

articles featured once more. And these were the people who had retyped and proof read the original items in the first place. This work covers almost **eight years** of *Rananim*, so you have now have some idea of the magnitude of the task. The corrected copy will go up on the site shortly.

But I want to look to the future, rather than back to the past. We are confident that by the time this issue reaches you, all the problems of the website will be behind us, and that it will work to attract more interest in Lawrence, the Society and our activities. Please help by promoting us, and the website, where and how you can. The URL is: [www.cybersydney.com.au/dhl](http://www.cybersydney.com.au/dhl) where you can see colour photos from the previous edition, and soon, this one, plus articles from the previous eight editions.

In the meantime (just to confuse you all!) there's another URL with more photos of the Society's *Lady Hopetoun* cruise, at my site:

[http://www.geocities.com/wp7713/sea\\_and\\_sydney.htm](http://www.geocities.com/wp7713/sea_and_sydney.htm)

Looking further into the future, if you would like to see "Ardnaree" for yourself, after you have read Sandra Jobson's account of the Darroch's visit there, I plan to be in Sri Lanka early next January. Do contact me if you are interested in walking in some of the Lawrence footsteps in Ceylon.

Looking forward to seeing you at the AGM on May 18. - **John Lacey**

## Business & Pleasure

Our 2002 AGM will be held in "the Library" at the Exchange Hotel, cnr Beattie & Montague Sts, Balmain, on Saturday May 18 at 12 noon followed by lunch. Nominations for office bearers should be addressed to the Secretary, PO Box 100, Millers Point, NSW 2000 (closing date, May 11). The **business** will be: to receive reports, to elect office bearers, and any other business. The **pleasure** will be the company of our Members and the lunch afterwards. To assist with our arrangements, please advise attendance to [jlacey@zeta.org.au](mailto:jlacey@zeta.org.au)  
We look forward to seeing you.

# A Small Step for Thirroul - But a Giant Leap for Us

The first D.H. Lawrence exhibition with readings of *Kangaroo* to be arranged in Thirroul in almost 80 years might seem an historic event, worthy of much drum-banging and trumpet-blowing, but, truth to be told, the occasion was less than spectacular, verging on the extremely low-key.

And we tried to keep it that way. The object of this particular, but nonetheless significant, occasion was to respond to an invitation and to test the waters.

The umbrella occasion was the Thirroul Seaside and Arts Festival, held on the weekend of April 6/7.

We had been asked if we, as the D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia, would care to stage an event that might be included in the Arts side of the Festival.

The organisers especially liked what John Ruffels had contributed last year (see report on p. 6), and wondered if that might be repeated, or even expanded into a longer, daytime event.

We responded (after checking with JR) positively. We said we would put something on. They promised that they would provide a small hall, next to the Thirroul Library, where the occasion might be staged.

We were under no illusions about the amount of interest a Lawrence-oriented event might evoke. We started with the premise that no one would be interested, and if anyone turned up, that would be a start.

We conceived of a two-pronged approach. We would put on a very limited exhibition of Lawrence material, and we would have readings of *Kangaroo* as and when an audience materialised.

So we (myself, Sandra Jobson, John Ruffels and our new Treasurer Doug Knowland) loaded up our old Volvo with an ad-hoc mélange of Lawrence photos and other materials, from both our own and JR's collections, and set off for the Illawarra coast.

We found the hall (a Senior Citizens' centre) and started unloading and setting up the (very modest) exhibition. Yet it was impressive, in the context of a local Arts Festival.

We had the blown-up Forrester snaps of Lawrence and Frieda at Wyewurk, at Lodden Falls, and later Frieda and Mrs Forrester in the Botanic Gardens and Australia Street, Newtown. We had a nice collection of photos of Lawrence and his Eastwood (part of a collection I had acquired on my visit to his home town on the occasion of the centenary of his birth). We also had a number of

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*Keith Bailey, our visitor from Eastwood, discusses Lawrence's birthplace with John Ruffels (left) and Robert Darroch (centre)*



*John Ruffels shows Keith Bailey a map of Thirroul marking where Craig Street and Wyewurk are*

## A Small Step...

*cont'd from previous page*

other photographs, plus maps and diagrams and, most significantly, a collection of pen-and-wash drawings of Lawrence in Thirroul produced by our friend Paul Delprat following our first visit to Thirroul in 1976. Also included were the first UK and US editions of *Kangaroo*, plus copies of Joe Davis's book and my own book on Lawrence.

Most importantly, I showed the photocopy of the original Thirroul manuscript of *Kangaroo* – what he actually wrote at Wyewurk – which I had had copied back in the 1970s from the original at the Humanities Research Centre Texas when I was being courted by the Cambridge University Press to take on the job of editing the novel (a task that eventually went to Bruce Steele). As it turned out, this was the hit of the show.

A glitch occurred when our preparations were interrupted by some folk who had been given the hall



*Keith and Pamela Bailey in the audience at the readings of Kangaroo at Thirroul*

between 10 am and 12 noon for story-telling to young children. This meant that we could put nothing on till the afternoon, which somewhat constrained our plans, though we were happy for the tots who trickled in to hear Miss Judy weave her magic. We retreated to the pub to await our turn.

The story-telling finished early, so we scheduled our first reading for 12. A small group, perhaps a half-dozen, came, and, after inspecting the exhibits (as a small but steady stream of casual visitors also did), sat down to hear our readings.

I introduced the proceedings from the dais and gave a brief rundown on how Lawrence hid himself into Thirroul. Then John Ruffels, attired in his troubadouring finery, read some passages from *Kangaroo*. I also contributed a few extracts, and Sandra Jobson added a few comments, suggesting what parts of the novel might be safely skipped

(such as “Harriett and Lovatt at Sea in Marriage”) if literary interest flagged.

Some questions followed. Then we learned that in the audience were two visitors who had actually come from Eastwood! This was an unexpected bonus, and we prevailed on Keith Bailey to read from *Kangaroo* in an Eastwood accent, which he most co-operatively did, to the delight and edification of us all.

The second tranche of readings (we closed up for lunch and enjoyed the excellent fare at the local pub in Lawrence Hargrave Drive) was put on at 3 pm, and was



*New member John Corker, who signed up at our Thirroul event, shows his copy of Kangaroo*

equally successful, though the audience was not notable for its numbers.

Nevertheless Doug signed up three new members who paid their dues on the spot (in exchange for which they got a free copy of Tom Thompson's edition of *Kangaroo*, kindly supplied by him to promote membership) and several more took membership forms away (but not copies of *Kangaroo*) and whom we will follow up.

The overall interest in Lawrence, *Kangaroo* and Thirroul was surprisingly strong, and encouraged us to think that a more extended and extensive event next year, accompanied by some selective publicity and promotion, would make the occasion a far greater success.

It was with this thought in mind that we packed up, and after a fraternal visit from Joe and Inga Davis, prepared to return to Sydney.

How times have changed. Now Lawrence is an accepted part of local Thirroul culture, and no one came in and told us that we were outsiders flogging a dead horse, or whatever.

We were not even asked who Lawrence was. Everyone who came in knew him and of his link with Thirroul.

We all decided that this was a base on which, not only could we build, but would be worthwhile building.

We think it is the start, or to be fair, the continuation, of something important, not only for Thirroul, not only for Australia, but for Lawrence interest world-wide.

# D.H. LAWRENCE RESERVE REMOVES RESERVATIONS

One of the highlights of the Lawrence year in 2001 was the dedication of the D.H. Lawrence Reserve in Craig Street, Thirroul.

Held as part of the annual Thirroul Seaside and Arts Festival last April, the event followed the earlier Naming ceremony and the even earlier unveiling of a plaque marking Lawrence's connection with Thirroul in general and Craig Street in particular (the reserve is a couple of doors away from Wyewurk, alas still "out of bounds" to Lawrence aficionados).

The Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Cr. George Harrison, officiated. However, the event was arranged by "Mr Thirroul", Don Gray, assisted by Mrs Nancy Kettley,



*John Ruffels and Don Gray pose for the camera*

said it was a substantive and visible reminder of the period Lawrence spent in Thirroul. He was particularly pleased that Wollongong City Council had played a role in its creation and now Dedication.

He said he himself had yet to read *Kangaroo*, but that was a matter he hoped to soon put right. (Robert Darroch promised, and indeed did, send him a copy of *Kangaroo* to read.)

Don Gray also spoke eloquently of the importance of Lawrence's time in Thirroul and expressed the hope that the Reserve would provide a focus for Lawrence fans to come and enjoy the view (the reserve overlooks McCauley's Beach) and the connection with the Great Man himself. He said he would like to see regular BBQs and picnics held at the Reserve and attended by both locals and "outsiders".

Joe Davis associated himself with the sentiments expressed and also pointed out that the nearby wet-land behind McCauley's Beach, where Lawrence and Frieda enjoyed strolling and exploring, was currently under threat of extensive and disruptive redevelopment by a property company. He urged everyone present to lend their support to local activists who were fighting the redevelopment. (Later we went down to the protest headquarters below Sandon Point and expressed solidarity with the protest movement, as we were sure Lawrence would have wanted us to do.)

Speaking on behalf of the D.H. Lawrence Society, Robert Darroch congratulated both the Council and local Thirroul people such as Don Gray and Kerrie Christian (who is related to Lawrence's landlady of 1922, Lucy Callcott) for their initiative and enthusiasm that led to the Naming and now the Dedication ceremony.

He said he could assure everyone present and interested in Lawrence's time in Thirroul that the Society would do all it could to further foster local interest and Lawrence-related activities and events.

He said the Society intended to take up Don Gray's invitation to hold Lawrence events in the Reserve.

"Nothing could please us more than to see this genuine and tangible renaissance in interest in Lawrence's period in Thirroul," he said. "Whatever distance there may have been in the past between us up in Sydney and you down here is dwindling away to nothing, as today's event proves.

"This, I hope and believe, is the start of a new era of Lawrence interest locally, and, indeed, elsewhere in Australia."

**- Robert Darroch**



*Robert Darroch says a few words at the Dedication ceremony*

proprietor of Ryan's Laundrette, who conjured up the delicious comestibles.

About 70 people attended the pleasant function, including a small delegation of D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia members from Sydney, led by the vice-president, Robert Darroch (in the absence of President John Lacey, who sent his apologies, he having school duties to attend to).

The other Sydney members were *Rananim* publisher and Membership Secretary Sandra Jobson, Society Secretary Margaret Jones, and John Ruffels (who is almost an honorary Thirroulean these days).

Locals included Joe and Inga Davis, Cr Kerrie Christian, and the owner of the house next door to Wyewurk, Mrs Ellen Bogue.

Officially dedicating the Reserve, Lord Mayor Harrison

# A Troubadour at Thirroul

Each April, the Thirroul Village Festival and Arts Committee organises various activities to boost interest in this former South Coast coal-town. To date, they have been quite successful, attracting some 1000 gawkers, sticky-beaks, window shoppers, bargain-hunters, general oglers, and even the locals.

The events are largely school-children-orientated: like amateur rock concerts, dancing displays and art exhibitions. But increasingly the emphasis is on adult interests and, latterly, adult cultural events. There is a full-blown art/sculpture exhibition of high order.

But the going has not been easy. The poetry competition for children attracted scores of entries, the adult section: one.

With this background, the Committee Organiser, Lynne Jones, has patiently approached our Society each year, for the past four years, hoping to get us to contribute some presentation to help raise the general tone.

Because Lynne Jones was “Frieda” at the unveiling ceremony for the D.H. Lawrence Monument back in 1998, she was aware of our Society and remembered the pleasing reaction of locals to the reading from Lawrence’s *Kangaroo*.

So, each year for the past three, I have patiently stood, at various venues in Thirroul’s shopping strip,



*“The competition was fierce. This was just one of the acts Lawrence and I had to compete with.”*

before crowds varying from 16 to three, in an effort to interest Thirroul festivalites in what Lawrence had to say about their town.

Sharing with Lynne Jones my disappointment at the crowd sizes, she suggested a roving commission: one where I strolled from restaurant to café to bookshop, giving impromptu readings from Lawrence before an unsuspecting crowd.

So, with the Festival in full swing, I was firstly roped into a joint reading of the junior poetry entries with Kate Conyngham at the Village Hall, which was well attended by dotting relatives.

That evening Lynne Jones had

thoughtfully brought along a brace of cooled Australian chardonnay to prepare me and my fellow entertainers for the journey.

At my first stop I met the Belly Dancer, the three-girl A Capella group, and an African drum duo who were to present themselves in their various acts at eight to ten prearranged venues.

The trick, I divined, was to stay and have another glass of wine, to let the other, more eager, performers push off ahead of me.

Thus fortified, I studied my map, and headed for Jim’s Fish Shop at Thirroul’s northernmost retail boundary. When I arrived, I announced my presence to Jim,

who was flat-out with the flat-head.

I immediately realised a most valuable lesson. People waiting for food orders are going nowhere: they are a captive audience. Cannily selecting my Lawrence vignettes, I launched forth (I was dressed in striped blazer, striped squared-ended tie, striped shirt and straw boater), reading clearly and deliberately. At the end of it, to my surprise, the five or six trapped listeners burst into applause! And a tiny girl asked me why people were riding horses up and down the street in Lawrence's Thirroul. I told her Thirroul people were poor in those days and nobody had a car. This seemed to satisfy her and she smiled and left, a trifle awestruck.

Striding out into the almost busy thoroughfare, flushed by my early success, I eaggally eyed the next couple of establishments. Manic Organic was not organic, it was closed...Café MMM too was Mpty.

Further down the strip, the Beach Art Coffee Shop and Gallery looked promising. Miss Belly Dance was just finishing, and the A Capella Choir was loitering by the paintings.

The ten to 14 patrons seemed receptive, as one would expect in such a superior type of establishment. Miss Belly Dance was warmly applauded - with one cowboy "whoop" - and she donned her shawl, took her "ghetto blaster" tape player and strolled away. The A Capella Trio, having caught the owner's eye, launched into their act. The waitresses stopped and listened; the proprietor glowed; the diners listened with rapt attention.

Discreetly I too signalled the owner and quietly introduced myself, explaining I'd allow a ten

minute break for the patrons to digest the last act and their meals.

The proprietress motioned me towards one of the complimentary bottles thoughtfully planted ahead by Lynne Jones for the performers. I took a seat and drank in the sweet voices.

All too soon, it was my turn. A quick explanatory intro: "One of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's greatest writers...right here in your town..." The Joy Flight piece, locals carrying suitcases, a description of "Wyewurk", a landscape and sunset description...

Five minutes, and they were applauding warmly (you could see them thinking: "that didn't hurt; not too long; not bad this Festival culture.").

Oscar's Wild Bookshop was deserted, to my surprise. It had been packed with diners and readers all day. So, it was round to the Flame'n Bean in a side street. (Flame Into Being? Almost Lawrentian.)

This place was packed: 25 people and more. Mellow candle lighting; Tex-Mex food. They were receptive. When I asked them if it was OK to do a reading, they all cheered and said "Yes". Did my bit, more applause, and "Thank yous" then off.

Fрати was a small but smart Italian pasta restaurant. Here I was fed and watered whilst waiting. A nice friendly management and clientele. Seeing the A Capella Girls looking in from outside I waved them in, they too were fed and wine before they performed.

Another appreciative audience. It was becoming a blurred list of names. A bit of a walk over the rail bridge along to the Thirroul Fast Food Shishkebab café. A Greek

father, his brother and two sons had taken their grill out onto the warm night pavement. Introductions. The sons seemed well informed about DHL. The father offered white wine and a free house delicacy.

I read for them. Thanked them. They were nice people. Two other customers listened.

The Hideaway Trattoria was packed and humming. Thirty people. They "shushed" while I did the spiel, then returned to their general hubub. Desultory applause.

Free glass of wine? Yes. Food? No thanks.

The same at Gringo's Mexican. Gave Kings Charcoal Chicken the miss, going instead to the last one: Toni's Thai Restaurant inside the Bulli Family Hotel.

The polite, efficient owners said I could perform if I consulted the guests. I asked a few, but it was now 10 p.m., so I bullied them. Having general consent I hushed the large room full of well-oiled diners, dropped in some cryptic gossip about DHL, Brett Whiteley and Thirroul, and went for it.

They actually stopped talking, listened, and then, when it was over, cheered and applauded. Who says Thirroul hasn't got culture?

One even corrected me about the motel room Whiteley stayed in, and died in.

And so, having put the Lawrence back in Hargrave Drive, I wended over the creek and round to Joseph and Inga Davis's place where - as had happened countless times before - convivial hospitality and a welcome bed awaited me.

- John K. Ruffels

# Sea and Sydney

The Society held its first cruise since the Olympics on Sunday 9 December 2001. The previous week had seen most unsettled weather: a very hot Monday, with a city temperature of 39°C was followed by a violent storm which saw winds as wild as 175 kmh. The unsettled weather continued all week, with high winds, followed by squalls.

Fortunately, the rain and wind had abated by the morning of the cruise. However, the wind and wave conditions meant that we were unable to follow our intended plan to explore the secret places of Middle Harbour, as the wave heights beyond Bradley's Head were beyond the safety margin for *Lady Hopetoun*. This was a great shame, as we had on board a knowledgeable guide, historian Gavin Souter, to all the recently-released Defence Department sites.

Once underway at 11 am, Clif Barker pointed out that the yachts involved in the Volvo Around-the World Classic Race had sailed into Darling Harbour, and so we detoured to see these. Along the way, we also saw the Russian Space Shuttle on display at Darling Point, this being a failed tourist attraction, and so for most on board it was their first and last sighting of it. Also in Darling Harbour, but looking a spectacular success, was the 1874 iron-hulled barque, *James Craig*, finally restored to the water after nearly 30 years of dedicated work by a small team from the Sydney Maritime Museum. *James Craig* is only one of four such passenger-carrying ocean-going sailing ships in the world, and it is a magnificent sight to see this fully-rigged vessel either off the coast or on Sydney Harbour.

A cruise through Farm Cove followed, and around the Naval establishment at Garden Island, where the last steamship in the Royal Australian Navy, the *HMAS Brisbane*, was seen close-up, although looking forlorn as a part of the bridge had been removed. The remainder of the *Brisbane* will soon be used as an artificial reef.

While the sun had by now appeared, the water was still choppy from the wind, and after passing *Radar* on its way to Shark Island with a load of picnickers, the Captain circumnavigated the island and headed for the northern shore. It was now decided to head for the calmer waters of the Lane Cove River, to seek a quiet haven for the lunch service.

As the *Lady Hopetoun* rounded Onions Point, the passengers began tucking into the sumptuous repast of various viands and accompanying libations. It was very peaceful here as we proceeded past Lloyd Rees Park, Northwood and then turned in Yacht Bay after the fearsome Butchers Block Point.

After lunch, it was time to drowsily contemplate the houses of Hunters Hill and Woolwich, before returning to the Parramatta River, Cockatoo Island and Yurrulbin. A close look was also made at the controversial Ballast Point (a former oil depot which residents want to stop from being redeveloped for yet more housing, instead agitating for a Gateway Park to match that of Balls Head

on the opposite shore, which was saved by Lang's Government in 1930). Such lively discussions continued that few had noticed that the *Lady Hopetoun* had returned to Rozelle Bay until it was time to dock under the shadow of the hull of the Pilot Steamer, *John Oxley*, which is the Maritime Museum's current restoration project.

It had been a windy, and partly wet day, not in the tradition of the Society's cruises; but an interesting and enjoyable one, which it certainly was.

See our *Lady Hopetoun* album on p 16.

-John Lacey

## OUR TRIVIAL PURSUITS

The D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia was invited to take part in a recent Trivial Pursuit night staged by State Records, the archive authority of NSW, and it bravely accepted the challenge.

Our connection with archives is strong (indeed, Dr Andrew Moore was also there, as part of the separate Australian Dictionary of Biography team). Alan Ventress, who invited us to the event, is a former Mitchell Librarian, now with State Records, and is a member of the Society (see *Rananim* 9.1), and several other members are almost permanent fixtures in archive reading rooms.

Our four-person team comprised Sandra Jobson, John Lacey, John Ruffels and Robert Darroch. A strong line-up to be sure, and it needed to be, for the other 17 teams looked formidable. They included State Records itself, the State Library, the History Society, The Friends of the Alexandria Library (Egypt, not Sydney), and some suspiciously professional groups with names like "The Untouchables" and "The Eager-Beavers". (Fortunately, perhaps, the Philosophy Department of Sydney University cried off at the last moment.)

The 60 questions ranged from pop music to history to sport (alas, not much about our forte, literature, and nothing at all on Lawrence).

We acquitted ourselves, we thought, surprisingly well. Sandra got the only mammal not to jump (the elephant), John Ruffels knew whom Matthew Flinders met at the mouth of the Murray (Baudin), John Lacey, despite being a non-sportsman, recognised Kathy Freeman's date and place of birth, and Robert Darroch guessed who Australia's top-selling recording artist is (Slim Dusty).

But there were too many gaps in our knowledge, and the DHL team scored only 37. Yet that was only five behind the winning team, and a creditable mere three shy of Dr Moore's daunting ADB team's score of 40 (our protest is pending on whether polar bears are right- or left-pawed).

We had in reserve our new Treasurer, Doug Knowland, who is to Trivial Pursuits what Walter Lindrum was to the green baize. So we are hoping to field an even stronger team on any future occasions.

Still, it goes to show how widespread, indeed catholic, are the interests and activities of our members. (Though we would like to see more questions of a literary nature in future.)



# THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE

By **ROBERT DARROCH** (with additional research by **John Ruffels, Sandra Jobson and Lindsay Foyle**)

THE connection between *Kangaroo* and aviation is not immediately apparent, or obvious.

Though interpretations of the novel range from the unlikely to the bizarre (one recent correspondent told me he was currently writing a thesis on *Kangaroo* arguing it was in the same genre as Ryder Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*), nobody has yet, as far as I know, seen Lawrence's Australian novel in terms of flying.

Yet there is an undoubted link between fascism and flying<sup>1</sup>, so the extent to which *Kangaroo* is a novel about fascism (as it is unquestionably) is the extent to which one might expect to perhaps find at least an aviation influence in the novel.

Of course, there are some evident aviation ingredients in the narrative that have long been recognised (and that is not to remind our readers of the fact that the author's wife was a relative of none other than the Red Baron himself<sup>2</sup>).

After Somers and Harriett travel down to Mullumbimby (Thirroul) with Jack and Victoria, and after they have settled into Cooee (Wyewurk), the four go for a stroll "across two fields" to see "an aeroplane which had come down with a broken propeller".

This is, as in much of the novel, almost certainly a reflection of a real happening, for the day Lawrence and Frieda arrived in Thirroul (Monday, May 29, 1922)<sup>3</sup> a Lieutenant Barkell made a forced landing on Sandon Point, at the other end of McCauley's Beach to Wyewurk, and in the process bent his

propeller. It was quite an event locally, and certainly deserving of a closer inspection the following day by some new arrivals from Sydney.

The same Lieutenant Barkell is probably also "the flyer" mentioned at the end of chapter 10:

*That old aeroplane that had lain broken-down in a field. It was nowadays always staggering in the low air just above the surf, past the front of Cooee, and lurching down on to the sands of the town "beach". There, in the cold wind, a forlorn group of men and boys round the aeroplane, the sea washing near, and the marsh of the creek desolate behind<sup>4</sup>. Then a "passenger" mounted, and the men shoving the great insect of a thing along the sand to get it started. It buzzed venomously into the air, looking very unsafe and wanting to fall into the sea.*

The passage ends with the views of an unnamed woman, the mother of a local boy, apparently. Lawrence quotes her seemingly verbatim:

*Yes, he's carrying passengers. Oh, quite a fair trade. Thirty-five shillings a time. Yes, it seems quite a lot, but he has to make the money while he can. No, I've not been up myself, but my boy has. No, you see, there was four boys, and they had a sweepstake: eight-and-six pence apiece, and my boy won. He's just eleven. Yes, he liked it. But they was only up about four minutes: I timed them myself. Well, you know, it's hardly worth it. But he gets plenty to go. I*



*Taylor plaque at Narrabeen*

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## The Man Who Wasn't There

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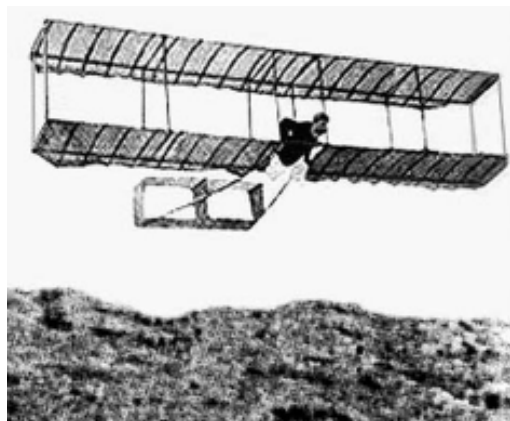
*heard he made forty pounds on Whit Monday, here on this beach. It seems to me, though, he favours some more than others. There's some he flies round with for ten minutes, and that last chap now, I'm sure he wasn't up a second more than three minutes. No, not quite fair.*

It is difficult to imagine this is not Lawrence reporting an actual conversation, given the fact that, according to the local newspaper, just such flying jaunts were taking place on McCauley's Beach at the time. It is also obvious that Lawrence is obtaining information from his informant, as the passage continues:

*Yes, he's a man from Bulli<sup>5</sup>: was a flying-man all through the war. Now he's got this machine of his own, he's quite right to make something for himself if he can. No, I don't know that he has any licence or anything. But a chap like that, who went through the war – why, who's going to interfere with his doing the best for himself?*

So it is most likely the “flying-man” was that very same Lieutenant Barkell. Maybe Lawrence was thinking of weaving him and his flying machine into the plot of *Kangaroo* (instead, he went up to Sydney and interviewed Jock Garden<sup>6</sup>). We also know who the mother and 11-year-old son were. The mother was Mrs Lucy Callcott, Lawrence's landlady, and the boy was her son, L.R. Callcott.

On the surface, the only other link between



*Taylor's first heavier-than-air flight at Narrabeen*

*Kangaroo* and flying is reflected in the (present) name of one of the main streets in Thirroul: Lawrence Hargrave Drive. This commemorates one of the greatest names in aviation, for it was Lawrence Hargrave's famous experiments with box kites at nearby Stanwell Park in the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that led to the Wright Brothers' first powered, heavier-than-air<sup>7</sup> flight at Kitty Hawk in 1903<sup>8</sup>.

While all this might seem tangential and peripheral, it is, as we are about to see, rather more germane than it might at first appear (and certainly less tenuous than our accompanying, more light-hearted speculations about Lawrence and Mullumbimby - see p. 26).

The possible linkage between Lawrence, *Kangaroo* and aviation was initially brought to my attention earlier this year by my friend and co-conspiracy-hunter, Dr (now Associate Professor) Andrew Moore<sup>9</sup>. He wrote to me on February 13:

*Dear Rob – I ran across this when tidying up at home. I send it just in case you do not know of it – though I imagine you do. There's an interesting thought on p. 5 though.*

It was the text of a paper, written around 1992, by Elizabeth Kenworthy Teather of the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of New England at Armidale (NSW)<sup>10</sup>. The title of the paper was certainly of interest: “The Taylors, Sir Charles Rosenthal and Protofascism in the 1920s.”

As it turned out, most of the paper's Rosenthal and protofascism content came from works by Dr Moore and myself (a reverse-reference phenomenon that many researchers will be familiar with). Nevertheless, the Taylor material was fresh, at least to me. Until I read this article I had never come across the name Taylor in this (much-trodden-over) context<sup>11</sup>.

As the article's Introduction went on to explain, it “summarises the evidence that George and Florence Taylor, prominent advocates of town planning in NSW...had fascist views and connections.”

Now, if there is a link or affinity between flying and fascism, it pales into insignificance compared with the link between fascism and the twin practices of architecture and town planning. Not every architect and town planner is a fascist (far from it), but there is

something is these professions that seems to attract people with authoritarian inclinations and dispositions<sup>12</sup>, as Ayn Rand<sup>13</sup>, among many others, have long recognised. (As it turns out, George Augustine Taylor is doubly-cursed - perhaps, as we shall soon see, even triply-cursed – for he was an aviator *and* a town-planner!)

The Introduction goes on: “It suggests that one aspect of fascism – militarism – may have been particularly significant in the development of the planning profession and its philosophy and practice in NSW.” Indeed, and vice-versa, one might add.

The paper briefly outlines the career of the pioneer aviator Taylor, highlighting his associated interests in publishing and journalism (among many other things, he edited the weekly journal of the RSSILA after the war<sup>14</sup>).

But it was the p. 5 reference that had caught Andrew’s eye, and now mine too. Referring to a novel, *The Sequel*, that Taylor had written in 1915, the paper commented:

*It is intriguing that Taylor has a character named “Cooley” in The Sequel and that, so far, researchers have not been able to find a source for this name, although many names used in Kangaroo were borrowed by Lawrence from locations he visited and people he met.*



Taylor’s 1915 novel

Lawrence calls the Rosenthal character in *Kangaroo* Benjamin Cooley, and the origin of this name has always, as Ms Teather rightly remarked, been a mystery. In my 1981 book, *D.H. Lawrence in Australia*, I had

speculated tentatively that Lawrence might have got the name from a Dr Cooley, whose nameplate was on a building in Macquarie Street, just up from Lawrence’s guesthouse where he stayed for two days before going down to Thirroul. But that was a very limp suggestion.



The Taylor monument outside the Post Office at Narrabeen

Had I been tied down to a possible origin, I would have, before seeing the Taylor reference, had speculated that Lawrence might have made up the name using one of the disguise or transformation techniques I had identified in my series of articles, “Mining Lawrence’s Nomenclature” (*Rananim* 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3). He might have, for example, chosen the first name Benjamin as a reflection of the ambivalent Jewish element in Rosenthal/Cooley, and the second name Cooley (which is Irish) as reflection of the need to find an opposite to the anti-Catholicism of the Rosenthal/Scott’s King and Empire Alliance. But I would not have attached any great conviction to this speculation.

Ms Teather in her paper went on herself to speculate about a possible connection:

*Did someone – maybe Rosenthal – lend Lawrence a copy of The Sequel? Did Lawrence find a copy in the library he is known to have used at Thirroul? Or is it a coincidence?*

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## The Man Who Wasn't There

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If it is a coincidence, then it is a remarkable one, and an even more remarkable one the deeper you delve into Taylor's background. However, before venturing further down that fascinating byway, one must go to Taylor's novel, *The Sequel*, and find the reference to "the character Cooley".

The novel's title is actually *The Sequel – What the Great War Will Mean to Australia*. It purports to tell the tale of a young Australian airman, Lieutenant Jefson, who goes off to war and dreams about the Australia that will emerge from the great conflict. It is a future in which aviation will become more important and in which authoritarian, not to say elitist, influences will, or should, triumph. Profascist is probably a good summation of the general drift of the plot, such as it is.

There are two references to the name Cooley in the novel. The first Cooley reference comes about half-way through the work, where Jefson is conjuring up his vision of post-war Australia. Outlining his Brave New World, Jefson says: "A great writer\* once said...", and the asterisk reference at the foot of the page reads: "Stoughton Cooley". And that's it. Nothing more – just: "Stoughton Cooley".

Well, if Benjamin Cooley was a peculiar concatenation of names, then Stoughton Cooley, to

say the least, is equally odd. Stoughton is a traditional Anglo-Saxon name (cf. the UK publishing firm of Hodder & Stoughton) for both places' and people's names. And Cooley is very Irish/Celtic. It looks, as does Benjamin Cooley look, suspiciously factitious<sup>15</sup>.



George Augustine Taylor

Fortunately, we have the Internet these days, and thus have no need to pore laboriously over drawfuls of library catalogue cards. Going to Google and keying in "Stoughton Cooley" turns up thousands of Cooley and Stoughton references (or, to use the proper jargon, hyperlinks). But there are only three references thrown up by Cooley+Stoughton.

One of these we can eliminate immediately, as it merely records the marriages, in about 1835 and 1875 respectively, of two Stoughton Cooleys in Ohio<sup>16</sup>. The other two citations refer to a Stoughton Cooley who was apparently a journalist and who was operating in New England (USA) in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And although one would be suspicious of any description of a journalist as "a great writer"<sup>17</sup>, its use by one journalist (GA Taylor) about a fellow scribe is perhaps explicable, under the dog-licks-dog convention.

This Stoughton Cooley is certainly of interest, though whether he has any connection with Taylor's Stoughton Cooley is another matter (and one which will be addressed below). This particular Stoughton Cooley was assistant editor of an American publication called *The Public* which apparently was primarily devoted to the cause and work of Henry George.

Even today, 107 years after his death, the name of Henry George is fairly well-known and, in some circles, revered (there are many more Henry George societies and associations world-wide than DHL societies, and both Australia and New Zealand – as well as far-flung places like Hong Kong and Sweden – have thriving Henry George groups, as the Internet will willingly attest to). It has been said that in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the three most famous



They often met before and fought,  
To gain supremacy in sport.  
They meet again now side by side,  
For freedom in the whole world wide.

A Taylor cartoon and verse

men in America were Thomas Edison, Mark Twain and Henry George.

Henry George is probably best-known today as the man who advocated a “single tax”. This was



Philanthropist Edward Hallstrom flying Taylor's glider

a very 19<sup>th</sup>-century concept, aimed at fashioning a way of effectively taxing the rich to assist the poor (remember, these were the days before income tax).

The idea behind it was that land was the birthright of all mankind, whether rich or poor, and those who alienated land (by, for example, owning it) should pay tax on that land, which could then be used for good causes, such as preventing people from starving, etc. Truth to be told, Henry George's ideas<sup>18</sup> were rather close to those of Marx, who believed, among other heresies, that all property was theft.

But his ideas and philosophy went far beyond that utopian ideal, and embraced a whole raft of progressive causes aimed, generally, at making democracy work in the modern (19<sup>th</sup>-century) world.

Indeed, *The Public* was just one of hundreds of similar socio-political journals that circulated in concerned and enlightened circles in the latter years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the new century, when democracy was struggling to supplant the more restrictive regimes of the past. Another such journal – and there is a point in mentioning it here - was *The Arena*, edited by another Henry George disciple, B.O Fowler.

If Stoughton Cooley was indeed “a great writer” he has not left behind any evidence of it which the standard search engines can track down. There are only two articles by him (and we assume it *is* him, for the dates and places tally) mentioned on the Internet. One is about Negro roustabouts on Mississippi riverboats, the other entitled “Proportional Representation” and published in a New England journal (not, in this instance, *The Public*) in 1895.

The latter article is of mild interest in a political context (it lauds “the Australian ballot”, or the Hare-Clark system of proportional representation which we

use in Senate elections), but there is nothing in it that connects it directly to either George Taylor or *Kangaroo*.

However, the trail hots up considerably when you open Taylor's 1915 novel, *The Sequel*. Not initially in the text of the novel, but in an advertisement before the title-page. The ad is for one of Taylor's other works, *Town Planning in Australia*, at the foot of which is a testimonial quote: “...a valuable book...” The source of this encomium is “*The Public (USA)*”.

There is little question that Taylor was familiar with, and probably on good terms with, not only *The Public*, but probably with other U.S. publications. He may well have sent some of his cartoons to America (it is said that he was the first Australian cartoonist to have a drawing published in the London *Punch*). In another of his works he praises *The Arena*, which, as mentioned above, was a Henry George-influenced journal. (Taylor, who was a publisher himself, made an extensive tour of American publishing groups in 1914.)



Florence Taylor, first woman to fly in Australia

Given all this, it is highly probably, if not certain, that the Stoughton Cooley he refers to in *The Sequel* is the same Stoughton Cooley who was assistant editor of *The Public*. However, there is nothing, apparently, to connect Stoughton Cooley to anyone else in Australia, and specifically Rosenthal, Lawrence and *Kangaroo*.

The second Cooley reference in the novel is more promising. It comes towards the end of the novel, in chapter 18, “The Age of Brain Passes”. In it Taylor conjures up the post-war world, taken over by socialism. Capitalism had been defeated and a “social cataclysm” was brewing. “Lawlessness was

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## The Man Who Wasn't There

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rife” and in Britain the government was trying to construct a helicopter (the invention of which was decades away). A factory had been set up, but the workers were refusing to build the machine, because they could not see any benefit in it for them. Taylor writes:

*I remember reading at the time that a leader in the experiments named Cooley pointed out that the successful machine would save much labor...*

Taylor goes on to attribute to this Cooley the view that if it had not been for capitalists, the Wright Brothers would not have flown at Kitty Hawk. This Cooley had visited America (as Taylor had done in 1914) and seen the new Hudson Tunnel, which, according to this Cooley, would also not have been built without risk capital. The burden of the ideas Taylor invests this Cooley with is that advances are only achieved by experimentation financed by capitalists.

The first Cooley's ideas, however, bear little resemblance to this Cooley's concerns. The first Cooley (the “great writer”) is interested in the “war spirit” which he likens to a boil that grows, causing bodily discomfort, until it is lanced. Peace can only come, says this Cooley, when the boil bursts.

In fact, the two Cooleys seem to have little in common, and the novel makes no effort to connect the one with the other. The fact that the second Cooley “visited America” would seem to imply he is not American, which would in turn seem to rule out Stoughton Cooley as the Cooley who insists that only capitalists (or the State) can support the sort of experimentation that, for example, aviation needs before it can prosper.

The only other clue to whom the second Cooley might be is contained in the words “a leader in the [aviation] experiments named Cooley”. Taylor, of course, saw himself (as he undoubtedly was) as a

leader in aviation experiments, so this, indeed both, Cooleys could have been pseudonyms for himself.

(Taylor's interest in aviation was profound – and historic. He was one of the pioneers of Australian aviation. He built<sup>19</sup> and flew the first heavier-than-air aircraft in Australia, a feat commemorated by a plaque and bust that stand today outside the Post Office at Narrabeen<sup>20</sup>.)

But there is another possibility.

Let us go back to Taylor's first heavier-than-air flight at Narrabeen in 1909. This was a big event in Sydney, and everyone involved in aviation at the time would have interested in the historic occasion. We have photographs of the event. They show that not only did he fly that day, but his wife Florence did also, becoming the first woman in Australia to fly in a heavier-than-air aeroplane. There is also a photo of the Sydney industrialist Edward Hallstrom (of fridge<sup>21</sup> and zoo fame) going up for a spin (and he was certainly a capitalist).

Yet one other prominent Sydney aviation enthusiast was almost also certainly there: Charles Rosenthal. Both he and Taylor were prominent members of the Aerial League of Australia, formed only a few months earlier to promote the development of aviation in Australia.

And he was more than just a fellow member.

He was joint secretary with Taylor of the League. Between them they ran the League. (Rosenthal's particular interest might be explained by the fact that the main military use of aircraft at that time was in mapping and spotting for artillery, and Rosenthal was an artillery officer.) So, unless he had something else

very pressing on, Rosenthal would have been at that first flight (for over 100 other spectators were also present that day.)

Ms Teather linked Rosenthal directly to Taylor. In her paper she says:

*He had for many years admired the architect Charles Rosenthal, having met him in various contexts before the war, when their mutual interests in wireless, aviation, music and*



*membership of the militia, as well as their overlapping professional fields, had brought them together.*

There is also no question they were even more closely associated after Rosenthal returned from the war. Not only did Taylor edit the magazine of the RSSILA when Rosenthal was on its executive, but as editor and publisher also of his own magazine *Builder* he had an almost professional relationship<sup>22</sup> with Rosenthal, who became President of the NSW Chapter of Architects in 1923.

Moreover, when Rosenthal and Scott formed the King and Empire Alliance in July 1920, Taylor (perhaps unsurprisingly) was among those who attended, and it is highly probable that he was part of the secret army that they organised behind its public façade. Indeed, given his various expertises – particularly in radio and mapping, not to mention his role in military intelligence – it is difficult to imagine he was not one of its leading lights. And after his sudden death in 1928, Rosenthal was one of a committee that organised a memorial lectureship in his name at Sydney University.

Given Taylor's other interests in the arts, literature and journalism<sup>23</sup>, it is amazing that he did not run across Lawrence and Frieda while they were in Sydney and Thirroul in May-August 1922. Rosenthal would certainly have seen a commonality of interest between them. Indeed, it is slightly odd that he is not portrayed in *Kangaroo*, cheek-by-jowl with his two colleagues, Scott and Rosenthal.

But he was not in Sydney in May-August 1922. He was overseas on a world tour, and did not return until after the Lawrences departed. Therefore it could not have been him who suggested the name Cooley to Lawrence.

So who – or what – did? That is the mystery.

Taylor conjures up the same (very odd) name Cooley that Lawrence uses in *Kangaroo* to describe their mutual friend Rosenthal.

What is just coincidence? Surely not.

If not, what is the connection?<sup>24</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> One could cite innumerable instances and arguments here, from the fact that Goering was a flyer to the name of the sinister fascist organisation in Huxley's *Brave New World* (Wings over the World). Kingsford Smith, Australia's greatest aviator, was a member of Campbell's New Guard, and Jack Scott's Old Guard had an aviation wing. Moreover, anyone who spends a lot of time gazing down at

Earth from the clouds is almost bound to entertain authoritarian views. Indeed, the deity Himself runs risks in this direction.

<sup>2</sup> Frieda's cousin was Baron Manfred von Richthofen, the "Red Baron", one of German's top air aces in World War 1. (And two of her other cousins, Wolfram and Lothar, also flew for The Fatherland.) Indeed, it is a common claim that it was an Australian pilot who finally brought the Red Baron down to Earth.

<sup>3</sup> Almost certainly in the company of Robert Moreton Friend and his wife, who were undoubtedly the people who directed Lawrence to Wyewurk (see *Rananim* 7/8, pp 26-27).

<sup>4</sup> Which places it on McCauley's, not Thirroul Beach, as the marsh and creek were behind McCauley's Beach.

<sup>5</sup> Sandon Point, where Lieutenant Barkell crash-landed, is in Bulli, not Thirroul.

<sup>6</sup> Willie Struthers in the novel.

<sup>7</sup> One must always add "heavier-than-air" because Zeppelins were flown in Germany some years earlier.

<sup>8</sup> The centenary of which momentous event falls next year on December 17.

<sup>9</sup> Dr Moore and I, along with John Ruffels, who helped research this article, have been the main Sydney-based Kangaroo-hunters since we all met in the Mitchell Library in Sydney more than 20 years ago. Andrew is the author, among many other things, of *The Secret Army and the Premier*, the definitive work on the Old Guard. He is also responsible for coining the term "the Darroch Thesis".

<sup>10</sup> To be included in, the article said, *The Australian Planner*, published by the School of Town Planning, University of NSW (1993).

<sup>11</sup> And given that I was the supposed expert on the subject, that meant either that I had missed something, or the connection was very slight. However, as in many things concerning these matters, my friend John Ruffels had come across the name, which is why he is helping me with this article.

<sup>12</sup> One does not have to go far past the name Albert Speer to recognise this phenomenon. And, of course, Rosenthal himself was an architect, as were the whole Vernon family (see accompanying article on Mullumbimby and various *Rananim* articles, notably "Nothing to Sniff At" in *Rananim* 7/8 op. cit.).

<sup>13</sup> *The Fountainhead*.

<sup>14</sup> The Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Imperial League of Australia, in whose NSW branch both Rosenthal and Jack Scott were prominent leaders.

<sup>15</sup> Bruce Steele, the editor of the Cambridge University Press edition of *Kangaroo*, speculates in an Explanatory Note that Lawrence might have derived the name Cooley from the former NSW Labor Premier Dooley, or else perhaps from the word "coolie" (explaining that Lawrence had been reading a book mentioning slavery).

<sup>16</sup> Cooleys abound in America – there's even a Cooley Society – and Stoughton crops up as a first or second name in many of the genealogies (as does the first name Benjamin!).

<sup>17</sup> Present company excepted, of course.

<sup>18</sup> His magnum opus was *Progress and Poverty*, published in 1880. Its subtitle was "An inquiry into the cause of industrial depressions and of the increase of want with increase in wealth – The Remedy".

<sup>19</sup> He owned a factory in Redfern, where he built his kites and aircraft for himself and Lawrence Hargrave.

<sup>20</sup> Almost on the very spot, ironically perhaps, where, 13 years later (May 28, 1922), Lawrence and Frieda bought soft drinks on their Sunday jaunt up to Narrabeen and Collaroy.

<sup>21</sup> Yet another possible source, for those with a fertile imagination, of the name "coolie".

<sup>22</sup> Among his multifarious interests, Taylor invented a new type of plaster ceiling, which was much used in the building trade. They were decorated with Australian motifs (Taylor was a fervent nationalist).

<sup>23</sup> He was a member of the Dawn & Dusk Club (a Bohemian fraternity of artists and writers), wrote and published both novels and poetry, and delivered lectures on journalism to the Australian Journalists' Institute.

<sup>24</sup> Merely guessing that Lawrence might have read *The Sequel* doesn't help much – for that still leaves unanswered the vital question: why did he attach it to Rosenthal?

# OUR LADY HOPETOUN ALBUM

## 2001



Our customary lavish luncheon on the Lady Hopetoun (left to right, historian Gavin Souter, Dr Andrew Moore, Douglas Newton, Dr Beverley Firth)



A view of the stern of the **Lady Hopetoun**, the groaning table, and two passengers enjoying the sea breeze and Harbour vistas



Angela Barker and Robert Darroch relax with a glass of wine as the **Lady Hopetoun** makes her way down the Harbour to its home berth in Blackwattle Bay



The recently-restored 1874 sailing ship, **James Craig**, passed us during our cruise



Facing into the Eye of the Wind: Dr Andrew Moore, Ceridwen Lee, Dr Robert Lee, John Lacey and Douglas Newton

(See report on our cruise p. 8)



# Kandy Will be Dandy in 2003

## Ceylon tours, Past and Future

**T**he last issue of *Rananim* contained mention of the plan to run a Society tour to Sri Lanka last July. This came about as Sri Lankan Airways offered an economical airfare, together with the option of an affordable stay at the otherwise quite expensive Triton Hotel on one of the beautiful beaches south of Colombo.

This offer spurred the development of a tour, and the plan was to spend four days relaxing in splendour at the Triton, together with a day trip to the wonderful city of Galle, Ceylon's port before Colombo's breakwaters were completed in 1872. The "New Oriental Hotel" here belies its name for it was built as the Dutch Governor's and Officers' Residence in 1684 and converted into a hotel in 1863. While the three-storey hotel is a gem in itself (modern plumbing in the 1920s, and a later frangipani fringed swimming pool in the back garden are the only signs of alteration since 1863), just outside are the Dutch Groote Kerk, the seventeenth century Dutch East India Company's fort and buildings, and the sixteenth century Portuguese fort. Surrounding all this is the British fort and moat, completed in 1872. Galle is truly a site of great historical interest, completed by a few art deco residences inside the fort.

After time to forget Sydney's winter in the sun at the Triton, the plan was to travel to Kandy, capital of the old Singhalese Kingdom before it was conquered by the British in 1815. A visit to the Lawrence bungalow, "Ardnaree", was planned; and it is not possible to move in Kandy without hearing the drumming from the Temple of the Tooth, or seeing elephants.

A day trip to the World Heritage site of Sigiriya was planned, as well as to the great standing Buddha statue at Aukunawa, and the Cave temples of Dambulla, during the four-day stay at Kandy. Kandy itself has a great many attractive walks, most notably through the great Botanical Garden at Peradeniya, where a day can be easily spent.

The next destination was to be Nuwara Eliya, just below the highest peak in Sri Lanka. This hill station, visited by Lawrence when it was the watering hole and summer home of the colonial elite, still has a few grand hotels, a golf course and trout stream. And the 1870s baronial-style Hill Club accepts temporary members (as long as the gentlemen dress for dinner) in its trophy-decorated public and bedrooms, where hot water bottles are needed to supplement the open fires. A few days here in the high country which produces the champagne of teas (rarely seen in Australia: supplies are available for purchase at the local Laksala), for exploring through the mountains and waterfalls before descending to the coast via the Ella Gap. On a clear day, the Kirinda lighthouse, three thousand feet below on the coast can be seen.

The final stop was to be Colombo, staying in the Galle Face Hotel overlooking the Indian Ocean.

Well, that was the plan, and four members were keen

to follow this. What happened? Well, unfortunately, the cost of the cars and the accommodation kept rising (all being quoted in \$US) after the initial arrangements had been made. This led to the reluctant decision to postpone the trip, and in retrospect it is just as well, for Sri Lankan Airlines lost many of its aircraft in that terrible attack at Colombo Airport last July.

However, Sri Lankan Airlines may resume flights to Australia this year.

John Lacey intends, as far as it is possible to know this far in advance, to travel in Sri Lanka in January 2003, from about the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>. He does not intend to make it a "travel in luxury" visit, but if anyone is interested, please contact him directly (see box page 2). The outline is much as above, but staying in Galle rather than at the Triton. And traveling by train to most places on the route rather than by hire car, although this is necessary from Ella to Matara to avoid the crowded buses. So the proposed basic outline is:

**3 Jan:** arrive Colombo Airport, stay Negombo (seaside town about 10 kms from the airport)

**4 Jan:** 07.00 train Colombo to Kandy (2.5 hours in First Class Observation Car); visit Ardnaree then or next day. Sigiriya (by car or Bus) or plan to stay overnight in the comfortable "Rest House" in Sigiriya. (Rest Houses were a part of the colonial administrations: house where travelling officials would stay. Most are now modest hotels, usually in ideal locations)

**5-8 Jan:** in Kandy

**9 Jan:** train to Nanu Oya (4 hours in First Class Observation Car) taxi to Nuwara Eliya (10 kms); stay at Hill Club

**10-13 Jan** based at Hill Club

**14 Jan:** Hill Club to Matara/Galle by car OR train to Colombo (6 hours in the Observation Car); if by train, stay O/N at Mt Lavinia Beach (or Galle Face and leave luggage there while traveling to Galle)

**15 Jan** (Matara/Tangalle O/N stay in rest House on beach at Matara if travelling by car from Nuwara Eliya) or Mt Lavinia/Colombo to Galle by train (3 hours)

**16 Jan:** Galle

**17 Jan:** Galle-Colombo train (3 hours-beautiful coastal scenery) Galle Face Hotel

**18 Jan:** Colombo Galle Face Hotel

**19 Jan:** very early AM dep to Airport if flying Sri Lankan Airlines (or previous night either in Negombo or at Airport Hotel) to Australia.

It is an easy, flexible itinerary with plenty of time to make adjustments.

If you are interested, contact John Lacey by either email or mail. Do keep in mind that it is not an organized tour as such; while John Lacey has made a number of visits to Sri Lanka in the past, the country has certainly changed greatly in the 17 years since his last visit and he is in no way offering any services as a "guide" or "tour leader".

# THE QUEST FOR “ARDNAREE”

“Ardnaree” was the name of the wide-verandahed bungalow where Lawrence and Frieda stayed in Kandy, Ceylon, in March and April 1922 before setting off for Western Australia.

Tucked into the jungle on the hillside above the Kandy Lake, “Ardnaree” achieved brief fame when Lawrence described his six-week Ceylonese sojourn in his 23 letters from “Ardnaree, Lake View Estate, Kandy, Ceylon”. Later, his American hosts, Earl and Achsah Brewster, both penned reminiscences of their time with the Lawrences at “Ardnaree”. Since then, however, the “spacious bungalow” has discreetly withdrawn from the limelight, settling back into the shady tangled bamboo and coconut palms swarming with monkeys and wild birds, becoming a mere literary footnote. By the time we visited Ceylon 70 years later in 1992, “Ardnaree” seemed to have been totally forgotten by modern Sri Lanka.

However, Robert Darroch and I were determined not to be deterred by the blank stares and apologetic denials of any knowledge of “Ardnaree”. We had come to Sri Lanka on a mission: to find the bungalow, and nothing was going to deflect us from our goal. We prided ourselves on our journalists’ skills for tracking things to their source (perhaps an old-fashioned interpretation of the role of a journalist, but, nevertheless, it was how we, perhaps rashly, felt).

Our first inquiry was with our contact at the Sri Lankan Tourist Board in Colombo who had offered us a station wagon and driver to take us around Sri Lanka (in return for a travel article we planned to write for a newspaper). No, unfortunately, he

knew nothing of “Ardnaree”, but perhaps the Tourist Centre by the lake in Kandy might be able to help.

We were driven out of the teeming streets of Colombo past armed anti-Tamil-terrorist guards patrolling the streets awaiting the start of a major regional heads of government conference. The TV news the night before in our hotel had been about nothing else. Indeed, there was no other program the entire evening. The Prime Minister of India was coming, representatives of the North Indian Ocean alliance would be there, the Maldives were sending a contingent. Flags decked the streets. Much money had been spent on ceremonial

arrangements. Streets on the procession route were closed off to traffic. Every bridge was heavily guarded and watching for Tamils. The city was tense.

Out of Colombo, however, the scene was more relaxed. En route to Kandy through narrow jungle roads we passed hundreds of thousands of tall, handsome Sri Lankan men and women wearing freshly-laundered saris and tunics, defying the obvious poverty of their corrugated iron roadside shacks. We stopped at the Elephant Orphanage where we watched baby elephants being fed

milk from bottles as big as watering cans. Their mothers, we were told, had fallen into jungle traps and died – or had perhaps been captured and sold.

Just as we were about to leave the Orphanage a great bellow came from over the hill and a stampede of enormous bull elephants came charging down towards us. “They have somehow got out of their pens,” explained our driver, “we’d better get back in the car.”



Elephants are, even today, an important part of the local economy, as they were when Lawrence was there in 1922 and saw the diminutive, frail young Prince of Wales attending the religious festival, the Perahera, that was held in Kandy. There was a parade of 108 elephants in the festival and Lawrence celebrated the spectacle in his poem "Elephant". Had those elephants run amok, like



*Preparing for the Perahera*

the ones we saw, British history might have been slightly different.

Arriving in Kandy we unpacked at the Hilltop Hotel and had a superb curry lunch waited on by charming Sri Lankan boys wearing tight white full-length skirts (called "lungis") and very white smiles. "We Sri Lankans are very good at charming smiles," said the hotel manager (who maintained that he had never heard of "Ardnaree") suavely, but a trifle wearily. He warned us to keep the shutters on our window closed at night to keep out the monkeys. (That evening we leaned out of our window to hear the recorded chanting from a nearby mosque calling the devout Muslim section of the population to prayers.)

After lunch we went down to the monkey-infested Temple of the Sacred Tooth where Lawrence's host, Earl Brewster, had diligently studied Buddhism during his time in Ceylon - much

to Lawrence's disgust (he was contemptuous of Buddhism). Nearby was the Arts and Crafts Centre. The woman in charge apologetically could not help with the location of "Ardnaree". But, she added, there was a woman who used to run a guesthouse, "The Chalet", by the lake, who might know. She gave us an address and, after some trouble explaining the directions to our driver, who knew little English, we arrived at a mock Tudor-style, two-storey house set in a garden overlooking the jungle.

A slim woman with pepper-and-salt grey-black hair came to the door. We explained our mission, but she said she couldn't help.

I told her that we had a close friend who was Sri Lankan, who lived in Singapore. When I mentioned his name she smiled warmly: "He is my nephew!" she said. From then on we got on well and talked a little more about "Ardnaree". Suddenly she said, "My husband might be able to help you. He's an invalid and is upstairs, I'll see if he's awake."

We sat on a bench in the garden observing the monkeys screeching and cavorting in the treetops below. A scent of frangipani wafted up and insects chirped and vibrated as the day grew hotter. I knew how Lawrence felt when he wrote to his sister, Emily King, saying: "It is very hot here in the sun...if one moves one sweats." Repeatedly, he dwelt on the heat: "It was very hot, and I nearly sweated myself into the grave," he told Robert Mountsier on April 16, 1922. Unfortunately for Lawrence, that particular March was the hottest in living memory, with temperatures in the 90sF and humidity reaching above 70 per cent every day, and no rain.



*The Kandy Lake*

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## The Quest for “Ardnaree”

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Finally the woman came back and told us that her husband knew nothing of Lawrence nor “Ardnaree”. Disconsolently, we prepared to leave. Then she heard a call from her husband and asked us to wait. She returned and invited us into the house and upstairs to a room where her crippled husband sat. It transpired that his name was Mr da Silva and he had been Sri Lanka’s Ambassador to the UN, and was also a former Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya. An alert old man, he told us that he had just telephoned his sister who had told him that a doctor she knew in Kandy used to visit “Ardnaree” which had become the residence of the headmaster of a boys’ private college which now occupied the Lake View Estate. The doctor still practised from a clinic in Trincomalee Street. (Mr da Silva, we learned, had been a founding father of this college.)

He gave our driver the address of the bungalow and we sped off, hopes high, turning off onto a winding, hilly road.

**“The bungalow is outside Kandy on a hill among trees – a sort of jungle of palms....Sharp wooded hills, Kandy lake below – birds shriek and pop and crackle out of the jungle, creatures jerk and bounce about,”** Lawrence wrote to Mary Cannan (3 April 1922).

Shortly after his arrival Lawrence had gone for a walk down to the lake with his hosts and had taken off his watch, which had apparently rusted during his sea trip to Ceylon, and threw it into the lake – perhaps a gesture to the timeless nature he discerned in the place. (It may well have been the very same watch he castigates in 1921 in *Sea and Sardinia*: “Of course this fraud of an American watch has stopped, with its impudent phosphorescent face...”.)

Now, 70 years later, we drew up at a bungalow that had been added to over the years, enclosing its verandahs. At the side was a gate with a flight of stone steps leading to a wide verandah surrounding a white-painted bungalow. As we went up the steps, we looked for the name “Ardnaree” but

there wasn’t one, although we could see where a name plate had been above the front door. Then we reached the verandah. Although it had been enclosed, we could see vestigial columns that had marked the perimeter of the original building which must have once been a fine example of Indian colonial architecture, now sadly in neglect.

**“We sit on the verandahs and watch the chipmunks and chameleons and lizards and tropical birds among the trees and bamboos, there’s only a clear space of about three yards around the house,”** Lawrence wrote to Emily King (24 March 1922).

A teenage Sri Lankan boy was standing drooped over the verandah railing. We explained our mission. The boy said in educated English tones that his father, the “master”, was asleep, but he would show us around the bungalow. Inside, there was a very large room with a number of other, smaller rooms opening off it. There were servants’ quarters at the back.

**“There’s a good deal of room in the bungalow, and practically no furniture except chairs and a table or two.”** Lawrence told his sister. **“We’ve got four servants – two men, one ayah, one boy of fifteen – but nothing is ever done: except meals got ready.”**

Achsah Brewster also described their mornings on the verandah:

**“Generally we sat on the north verandah in the morning. There was early breakfast; then tiffin;...Frieda stretched out on a rattan couch, sewed and embroidered with bright silks. Lawrence sat curled up with a school-boy’s copy book in his hand, writing away. He was translating Giovanni Verga’s short stories from the Sicilian.”** She also described the fear of meeting a boa-constrictor at night on the verandah (later, she describes it as a cobra which is more likely, as there are no boa-constrictors in Sri Lanka, they being native to Central/South America).

**“We shut the door very tight and Lawrence held the lamp down to the crack to see if it were large enough for a cobra to squeeze**

**through. He was convinced that the cobra would manage to get in. Then he would read what he had written through the day.”**

The bungalow looked much as Lawrence and Achsah Brewster had described. But could we be absolutely sure it was “Adnaree”? We went back to our car, feeling 90 per cent certain. Then the boy came bounding down the steps and put his head in the car window. “My father has woken up and he says you should go and see a doctor in Kandy who is writing a book on Kandy and about D.H. Lawrence.” He gave us an address in

looked puzzled and finally ushered us into the doctor’s surgery ahead of the other patients.

There, seated behind a large dark wooden desk, with a framed photograph of Clare College Cambridge on the wall behind him, was the doctor. His name was Dr Nihal Karunaratne. He, too, looked puzzled until we explained we were in search of “Ardnaree” and D.H. Lawrence. Then, as Rob Darroch put it, his face lit up like a “Halloween pumpkin” and he started reminiscing.

He had been visited in 1989 by a member of the D.H. Lawrence Society of the UK who had been in search of “Adnaree”, but at that time he had



*Elephants in a park by the river in Kandy - similar sight inspired Lawrence’s poem “Elephant”*

Trincomalee Street: the same doctor that Mr da Silva had told us about.

Back in the narrow, noisy, crowded, humid streets of Kandy we hunted around for the doctor’s clinic. We found Trincomalee Street and the clinic. It was down a dimly-lit corridor with a waiting room lined with dark wooden benches where many patients, mostly sari-clad women of varying ages, and children waited. An assistant greeted us and asked what we wanted. We tried to explain but he

been unable to help her. However, her quest sparked an interest in Lawrence, which he pursued. He was compiling a history of Kandy and decided to write a chapter on Lawrence and the Perahera, and started to research Lawrence’s activities in Ceylon. The more the doctor read, the more convinced he became that the house Lawrence stayed in was one he visited from time-to-time to look after the ailing wife of the

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## The Quest for Ardnaree

*cont'd from previous page*

headmaster who lived there. He paid another visit and, to his delight, saw that the sign on the house said “Ardnaree” – it had not been of any significance to him previously.

Then he had gone from room to room and spied through a window a sight that could have only been viewed from that bungalow alone: the entrance to a river from the Kandy Lake which Lawrence mentions in “Elephant” and which Earl Brewster mentions in his reminiscences:

**“In one direction we overlooked the Kandy Lake, in the other the Mahaweliganga or Great Elephant River.”**

(This is the greatest river of Ceylon: it rises near Adam’s Peak, passes Kandy and enters Tricomalee Harbour. It was dammed in a controversial irrigation/hydro scheme.)

Of course, we were very, very pleased. Our quest was completed. The doctor, an intelligent and erudite man, invited us to come to his house by Kandy’s Victoria Park, next day, for afternoon tea, where we met his wife and daughter and sipped tea in a room with a marble floor.

Mission accomplished, we then left Kandy and set off for Nuwara Eliya in the hills above Kandy, 6000 feet up, where Lawrence had gone to try and escape the heat. The Lawrences had travelled up by train (see article by John Lacey p. 24 ) but we went by road.

If I sound a little hysterical about this drive, you need to know that we are very fortunate to be alive to tell the tale. No car chase sequence in a movie can beat it. Our driver must have been prepared, for he took his thongs off the moment he got into the driver’s seat, and then proceeded to use his powerfully muscular feet and gripping toes on the clutch, accelerator and brake and his strong arms and hands to shift the gears to push the clapped-out station wagon through the nightmare traffic and procession of pedestrians and animals we experienced for the rest of that day. The whole country was on the move ... buses festooned with bodies hanging from the roofs and out the windows, cars, trucks, pedestrians, oxen, the occasional

elephant, taking up the entire road. The road itself was very narrow, winding up-and-up around the mountain. It had no fence between it and the ever-greater drop below. Looking down 6,000 feet as we swerved around buses and avoided on-coming vehicles, was a nightmare. A sense of delirium immersed me and I gave myself over to Fate.

We didn’t realise at the time, and our driver couldn’t explain, because his English was so minimal (the Sri Lankan policy has been to teach English in schools any more), that the day was the start of the biggest religious festival in the year. It



*An old postcard view of Nuwara Eliya*

was a festival that would culminate in fireworks and rejoicing. Nuwara Eliya was one of the major meeting places for worshippers and revellers.

We finally arrived in the evening at the hotel we had been booked into. This was a massive mock-Tudor barn of a place smelling of fried onions and we were delighted to learn that we would have to move elsewhere the following day as the hotel was over-booked. They suggested we try the Hill Club, which turned out to be a gem of purest ray: the original club frequented by the British families during the hottest season in Ceylon. As Lawrence put it:

**“Yesterday we went to Nuwara Eliya, the hill station, 6000 ft up. I thought we should get through the lid, but no, it presses tighter there. And all the white people on the island were flocking there, to be cool, grimly determined at least to seem to enjoy themselves.”**

The Hill Club’s furnishings – great, dark

wooden wardrobes, enormous porcelain wash basins, heavy wooden bedheads, wood-framed mirrors, and antlers mounted on the walls – would have been much the same in 1922. But there was one slightly more modern addition: a photograph of Sir Robert Menzies, who had visited the Club in the 1950s.

We played golf on the adjacent Nuwara Eliya golf course which looks out over the mountain to the plains below and which is planted with 3000 different plants – ranging from azaleas to wattle – a virtual botanic gardens. We had three golf caddies each, all wearing bare feet and able to hit a ball a very long way when we lent them our clubs. My best shot was the result of having to perform well from a high tee where a group of local villagers and an ox stood waiting for me to tee off. Halfway round the course we stopped for curry on the clubhouse verandah where we got into conversation with a friendly local resident whose face was disfigured by burn scars. He explained that he had been a Sri Lankan fighter pilot and had been in a near-fatal crash. He invited us to come to his villa for a drink after the golf, and we discussed literature and art.

That evening we returned to the Hill Club for dinner and a game of snooker in the poolroom where I was guided by a white-robed snooker attendant who helped me to win against Rob for the first, and only, time. That night we were awakened to what sounded like gun shots. Had the Tamil revolution begun? But it was only the fireworks celebrating the religious festival.

Our trip next day back down to the plains on the opposite side of the mountain was at least as dangerous as the trip up. This time it was made the more perilous by a heavy fog that settled over the lower reaches of the mountain, making visibility



*The private beach at the Hotel Triton*

impossible. Our driver had no way of knowing where the side of the road, and the 2000-ft drop below, was. He drove by pure instinct and collapsed in a heap over the wheel when we eventually arrived at the Triton Hotel in Ahungala that night.

I shan't rave on too much about the Triton – this is supposed to be about D.H. Lawrence. Suffice to say that it was superb: a modern hotel on the edge of the sea with an enormous pool, terrazzo floors, ceiling fans, superb food, and a relaxed atmosphere. One of the best hotels I've ever been to, on a par with the Kapalua Bay hotel in Hawaii, and almost as good as the Cipriani in Venice.

We watched TV that night and immediately realised something had gone very wrong with the forthcoming regional heads of government conference. All there was on the screen was a static photograph of the national flag. The conference had been cancelled because the Prime Minister of India had been warned of a possible Tamil attack. Unlike the Prince of Wales, he wasn't going to risk his life visiting the beautiful but hazardous island of Ceylon.

Lawrence, too, had deep misgivings about the place:

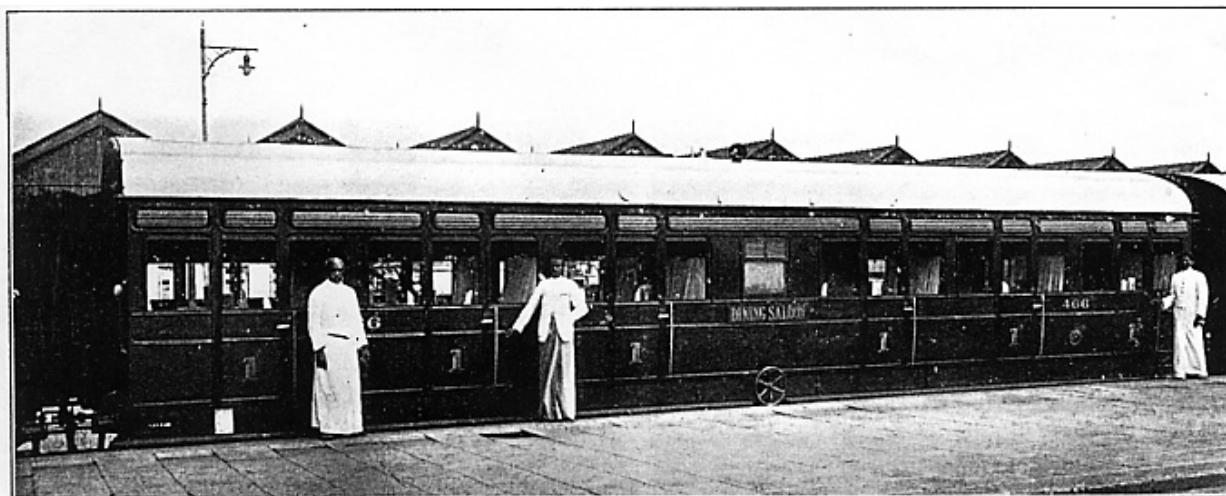
**“It is beautiful, in a lush, tangled, trowsled, lowsy sort of way. The natives, too, are quite good looking, dark-skinned and erect. But something about it all makes me sick – there is something smooth and boneless, and a smell of cocoanut oil and sickly fruits – that I can't bear.”** He wrote to Mary Cannan (5 April).

**“It has been lovely to *see* Ceylon. But I feel the East is not for me...One could quite easily sink into a kind of apathy, like a lotus on a muddy pond, indifferent to anything. And that apparently is the lure of the east: this peculiar stagnant apathy where one doesn't bother about a thing, but drifts on from minute to minute,”** he wrote to Koteliensky (17 April). **“I am not sure we will like Australia either. But it seems to me en route.”**

Seven days later Lawrence and Frieda set sail in RMS *Orsova* for Western Australia.

- Sandra Jobson

# By Train to the City of Light

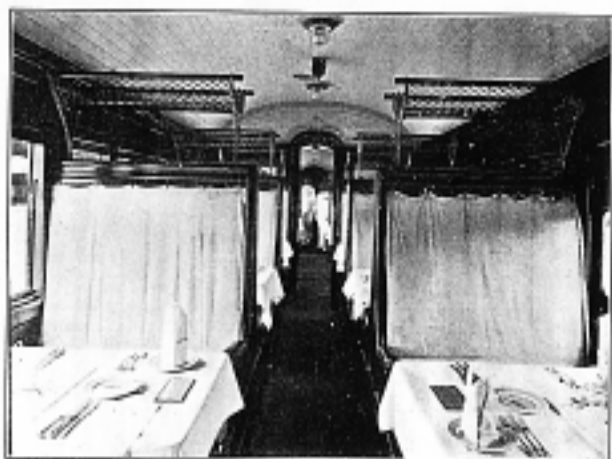


First-Class Dining Saloon, Ceylon Government Railway.

Ceylon's premier Hill Station, Nuwara Eliya, "the City of Light", has this name as it was one of the first places on the resplendent isle (which is the meaning of "Sri Lanka") to be lit by electricity.

It is located on the central mountains; just under the highest mountain on the island, Pidurutalagala, 2524 metres, and the summit was just a two-hour walk from the town.

Why did the colonial elite choose this spot for their holiday houses, their hotels and their trout



Interior of Dining Saloon, Ceylon Government Railway.

fishing? Its altitude gave relief from the heat lower down, and the high humidity of the coastal regions. And, eighty years ago, just as much as it was in the 1840s when it was first tentatively settled, heat and

humidity were very debilitating for the British living and working on the plains, and even in Kandy.

As a guidebook said, "We can enjoy the purest and most invigorating air, with a temperature best suited to the health of Europeans, and yet behold a luxuriant tropical country at our feet."

That March of 1922 was the hottest and driest on record. To escape, the Lawrences and the Brewsters caught the train from Kandy to Nuwara Eliya where much of the rest of the colonial elite had retired to. Although it was only a day trip, Lawrence made friends with some of the colonial officials at a fete, and later, before leaving Ceylon, he stayed with two of them in Colombo.

I have no access to a contemporary Time Table but a few years earlier there was a day train from Colombo to the high country, and to the railhead at Nanu Oya, six and a half miles from Nuwara Eliya. This train, as does today's, conveyed an Observation Car at the rear.

The journey from Colombo to Kandy is remarkable enough. There are pleasant parts where the railway runs along a riverbank and, at the right times of the day, elephants can be seen bathing. But once the junction for the north and northeast lines is passed at Poleghawala, the scenery, and the climb, begins in earnest. This is one of the great feats of engineering of the 1860s: this construction of a broad gauge railway (5' 6") up to the capital of the Kandyan Kingdom. Some idea of the nature of the climb is given by the names of



the landmarks, "Sensation Rock" for one, on the Kadugawanna Incline. In these thirteen miles, the line climbs 1500 feet, and there are not enough variations of "green" or "spectacular" to describe the scene.

Once the plateau has been achieved, it would seem the excitements are over, as the line beyond Kandy is merely undulating, and tropical, for some distance. But some travellers make the mistake of going no further than the environs of Kandy. While slow, very slow at times, the train journey to Nanu Oya is one of the scenic highlights of train travel.



There are great sweeping bends as the line climbs through tea plantations, with waterfalls cascading from the hilltops. And it is not a case of "the monsoon" falls - these streams are roaring and tumbling throughout the year. Some of the stations serve tea factories, or small hill towns. One, Hatton, is busy as the starting point for the pilgrim's trek to Adam's Peak to watch the sun rise cast the mountain's shadow on the land below (and then race back into itself as the sun rises). The summit is a pilgrimage place for Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians as there is a footprint in the rock which is venerated as the footprint of Adam, for this is where he first touched earth after he was cast out of Eden (or it belongs to Lord Shiva, Buddha, or St Thomas). It is also the place where butterflies go to die.

But back on the railway: the climbing goes on, remorselessly it seems at times, and there is the unusual Spiral Loop at Dematagoda where the train circles over itself to gain altitude in a confined space. There are some resonances of Australia too - stations named Rosella and Great Western,

though the scenery surrounding the latter is the exact opposite of its Victorian counterpart. Eventually, Nanu Oya at 5,600 feet is reached. The railway continues to climb to the summit at Pattipola, the highest main line broad gauge summit in the world, at 6,226 feet, before descending to Badulla, the end of the line at 2,400 feet.

The Lawrences then had a change of trains at Nanu Oya from the 5'6" gauge of the railway from Kandy to the 2'6" of the Uda-Pussellawa line which passed through even more difficult

mountainous country to reach Nuwara Eliya before continuing to its destination at Ragala, and enroute the railway reached a summit of 6,316 ft at Kandapola.

This line was very popular in the days before roads and motorbuses, running seven trains each way on weekdays, and five on Sundays. Such traffic led to the purchase of a new type of steam locomotive, a Beyer Garratt, in the middle of the Depression. If only it had survived the chaotic conditions of the 1940s and 1950s, this railway would have made a fine preserved railway operation and tourist attraction today. A few traces of it can still be seen in Nuwara Eliya.

But there are more than a few traces of the British in Nuwara Eliya: the pink-brick Post Office, the topiary in the Gardens, the country houses (many of whose gardens are now turned over to vegetables rather than flowers), the hunting and fishing ethos of the Hill Club. Perhaps that is why DHL did not seem to like it much in 1922?

It should be one of the major highlights of any visit to Sri Lanka.

**-John Lacey**

# What if...

**A light-hearted speculation by Robert Darroch of what might have been had Lawrence caught a different train that Monday morning in May**

**T**he interconnection between fact and fiction in *Kangaroo* – between what Lawrence’s hero Somers does and what Lawrence himself actually did – leaves ample room to speculate on what *might have* rather than *did* happen to Lawrence in Australia.

Indeed, scope for such speculation is considerably enhanced given that speculation up until now has been the basis of most research into Lawrence’s time in Australia.

So what if Lawrence had not run across a real secret army in Sydney? Or if he had decided to take up Pussy Jenkins’ offer and remain in Western Australia? Or he hadn’t run across Robert Moreton Friend, and consequently had gone somewhere else in NSW other than Thirroul?

In the novel the place his alter ego Richard Lovatt Somers does go to is Mullumbimby.

There is no reason why he could not have, in real life, gone to Mullumbimby (abbreviated to “Mullum” by the locals). Clearly the name attracted him. It would have taken a longer train trip to get there (it’s an overnight trip in the train from Central), yet remoteness from the hurly-burly of a metropolis was precisely what he was looking for after he arrived in Sydney on the Malwa on Saturday, May 27, 1922.

He could, for example, just as easily have had his mail redirected from Cook’s in Martin

Place to the Post Office in Mullumbimby, which is now the district museum.

On the surface, there is no evidence in the museum, or elsewhere in the town, of any connection with Lawrence or *Kangaroo*. Deirdre, the curator of the museum, did not even know that Lawrence had borrowed her town’s name as the (ostensible) setting for the most famous book written about NSW or Australia. In fact, I’m not at all sure she knew who this bloke Lawrence actually was.

Mullumbimby, in the Brunswick Valley on the far north coast of NSW, is today a thriving centre of 2500 or so souls. It’s a short detour from the Pacific Highway, and a 10- or 15-minute drive in from the coast.

It is, according to its promotional publicity, “The Biggest Little Town in Australia”. Its municipal slogan is “Out of sight, but not out of mind”, both mottos

seeming to point to some sort of civic identity problem.

It began life in the early 1880s as a cedar logging township (it was later a stop on the rail line between Lismore and Murwillumbah).

When the cedar ran out, it turned to bananas and other produce, and is now heavily into macadamia nuts, as is much of the surrounding area. Today, when you think of Mullumbimby, you should think of nuts.

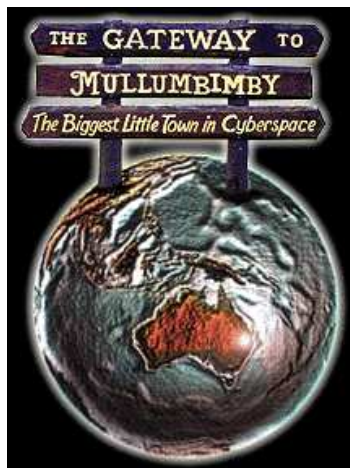
But it is also a major regional focus for the New Age movement which sprang up in the 1970s and is linked in that regard to nearby Nimbin and Byron Bay. It is very much on the hippie trail nowadays. (“Mullum” is also a much-sought-after brand of a particularly potent form of locally-grown marijuana, hydroponics being the other major staple of the district.)

Today, Mullumbimby is the headquarters of the Byron Shire Council, and thus the administrative hub of the surrounding district. (The name Byron, as in nearby



Byron Bay and Cape Byron, would have had some resonance with DHL – though he once categorised the Byron as “one of the Great Perverts”, and likened him to a slightly more upmarket Masefield.)

From the evidence of *Kangaroo*, there is at least one aspect of Mullumbimby that would have



attracted Lawrence’s interest, for it is one of the “Volcano Towns” that dot this part of the Australian coastline.

Lawrence does not specifically mention the volcanic origins of Mullumbimby in *Kangaroo*, but in

the chapter “Volcanic Evidence” (filched almost word-for-word from a May 11 – note the date - issue of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*) he mentions as a volcanic area “The Big Scrub on the Richmond River”, which is but a lava plop away from Mullum. (It was actually the Big Scrub, but the typist of the MS of *Kangaroo* misread the “b” for a “p”.)

The whole area around Mullumbimby is igneous, its most startling feature being the huge caldera of an extinct volcano that erupted eons ago and whose main legacy is nearby Mt Chincogan, a towering feature that leaves Thirroul’s Dark Tor somewhat in the shade, and which looms over Mullum like a conical version of Cheops’ pyramid.

Mullum is also known, mainly locally, as “The



*The old Drill Hall*

Tidy Town”. In fact it has won, or been highly placed in, this prestigious “Keep Australia Beautiful” competition no less than nine times in the past 20 years (it won in ’82, was second in ’83, 3<sup>rd</sup> in ’87, 2<sup>nd</sup> in ’90 – in the ‘90s it really hit its straps, tidy-town-wise - 2<sup>nd</sup> in ’91, 1<sup>st</sup> again in ’92, 2<sup>nd</sup> in ’93, 2<sup>nd</sup> in ’94, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in 99, after which its rivals must have given up the ghost).

It’s also a loyal town, at least so far as its street and building names are concerned (it surely would have had a local branch of Jack Scott’s secret army and Rosenthal’s King and Empire Alliance in 1922), and it would have been a much better loyalist recruiting area than working-class, Irish/Catholic-tainted Thirroul.

Today there’s an Empire Café, a Prince Street, and a Kings Creek, while the town’s cicadas sing contentedly in London plane trees that line the main street. In fact, the entire surrounding district is called New England, because it so reminded folk of the Old Dart. (The town also has a sense of



*The Museum/Library*

humour, the main footwear store in town being Imelda’s Shoes.)

The local Anglican church, formerly St Johns, changed its name after the 1914-18 war to St Martins, after the soldier bishop of Medieval Tours, and called itself “the War Memorial Church” in keeping with the ambient martial sentiment.

The Court House, built in 1908, was designed by none other than W.L. Vernon, a Kings School boy who personally begat a long line of secret army leaders, stretching from the 1920s through to the 1960s. One of his sons was the chap who kept the North Shore’s Old Guard records in the 1930s and afterwards (today you can view some of them amongst the Vernon Papers in the Mitchell Library in Sydney).

A plaque on the local School of Arts states that

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## What If...

*cont'd from previous page*

it is dedicated to the “sacred memory of those who fell in the Great War”, and one can imagine what Mullum’s returned Diggers would have thought of that treacherous Dooley Labor Government in Sydney in 1920-22.

There’s a capacious Drill Hall (now the local theatre) where Scott’s men could have assembled to discuss how local “disloyalists”, Labor-voters, Tykes, etc, could be tarred-and-feathered and run out of town.

And you get the impression that Mullum, even today, isn’t a solid Labor area (it returned Larry Anthony in the last Federal election, despite the strength hereabouts of the perfidious Greens, who gave their preferences to Labor).

Looking for clues to a possible link with Lawrence, one notes a model kangaroo in the street leading to the town museum, whose Historical Park display features various agricultural relics, including a well-preserved dunny, and a slab hut.

More interestingly, there’s a move afoot to have a local park renamed Summers Park. (There’s also a McCauley’s Lane - Wyewurk in Thirroul fronts McCauleys Beach - but that’s probably just a coincidence.)

A search of the local cemetery (always a good place to look for clues) revealed a few suspicious names (a Scott and an Ellis, for example), but if there once was a Lawrence connection, it has covered its tracks well.

However, what would have most interested Lawrence in and around Mullumbimby would have been its arboreal attractions.

Mullumbimby is to trees what Nottingham is, or was, to lace, and Newcastle to coals. It’s no wonder that the feral folk are so active in the area, for the place is the living, beating heart of Australian tree-worship.

One of the country’s most spectacular rain-forests (the Whian Whian Forest) lies but a short bush-walk away from the town center, and there are various other national parks, reserves, and other places of leafy pilgrimage nearby.

But the Temple of Timber, the Valhalla of Greeniedom, is Mullum’s riverside Heritage Park, dedicated to the over 200 sylvan saints that inhabit the adjacent bushland. (Mullum’s town emblem is *syzgium moorei*, or the coolamon tree, whose pink flowers and large white fruits are especially popular with local scaly-breasted lorikeets, which get drunk on the fermented flowers and, according to locals, “are a sight to see”.)

Visitors to Mullum are urged to adopt a tree and have their name linked to the foliage of their desire. Lawrence would certainly have been in his element here (students of Lawrence will, of course, be aware of his infatuation with trees - and specifically with their trunks - an obsession that went so deep that many of his works should be entitled as having been written by “Lawrence and Another”, the joint author being the particular tree he embraced as his collaborator for that work).

It might seem invidious to pick out, amongst so many species deserving of recognition, just one of Mullum’s multitude of trees, however the local manifestation of the macadamia, which has served commercially the district so well in recent years, should perhaps be mentioned.

This is the Red Bopple Nut tree, whose edible kernel was extracted by generations of Mullum boys by dint of a quick shimmy up the tree and cracking the subsequent download between two large stones beneath.

For Lawrence it could have served both a comestible and aesthetic purpose, and one can imagine him scribbling down a half-chapter in his notebook under its bowery aegis, then pausing for elevenses as he cracked another Red Bopple.

Interestingly, the precise relationship between species of tree and Lawrence’s plots has yet to be fully explored (now *there’s* a useful PhD thesis!). Indeed, contemporary snapshots of the garden at Wyewurk give little clue as to which particular tree he might have leant on for his novel of Australia.

Yet had Lawrence and Frieda caught a different train at Central that Monday afternoon in May 1922, and, after changing to the ferry at Grafton, crossing the Clarence, and taking the North Coast Mail, and alighted at Mullumbimby, his eyes would certainly have lit up, and we might have got a very different novel to *Kangaroo*.

**- Robert Darroch**

# BlueBlueBlue

**D.H.** Lawrence seemed to be particularly attracted to the colour blue. He often used the colour to evoke a sense of heightened emotion, mystery, mystic rites and finally darkness and death.

In *Sons and Lovers*, Paul and his mother gaze at a little dish that she has bought at the market, probably a true event. 'I love cornflowers on things', says Paul to his mother. 'The two stood together gloating over the dish.'

Lawrence, in an early poem *Blueness*, originally called *The Mystic Blue*, speaks of the wonder of blue:

*Out of darkness....*

*Jets of sparks in fountains of blue come leaping*

*To sight, revealing a secret.*

In a letter written to Koteliansky (October 1914) Lawrence asks if he would buy for him a necklace that he wants to give Frieda, 'round beads of lapis lazuli'. Lawrence had seen it hanging in a second-hand jeweller near Leicester Square. 'Much joy in the house' he writes back after receiving it.

Lapis lazuli comes into *Women in Love* as a paper weight, 'a beautiful ball of lapis lazuli', which Hermione wields against Birkin in a terrible moment after a disagreement. Hermione feels 'darkness breaking over her', 'she was going to have her voluptuous consummation', 'her heart was pure flame'. She is fortunate not to kill Birkin with the blow. Afterwards she tries to convince herself 'that spiritually she was right'. 'A drugged almost sinister religious expression became permanent on her face'. Birkin was also in 'a sort of darkness'.

When Lawrence hears of the death of Lady Cynthia Asquith's brother, he writes (September 1916), 'I suppose you are wearing black clothes for mourning – an ugly thought. I tell you, only the dead are real. For them one should wear a lovely blue... I shall send you a tiny brooch of blue chalcedony. That seems to me the only thing one should wear to the dead, it is so beautiful and immortal'.

A gift from Mary Cannan when Lawrence is leaving Taormina is a seal of lapis lazuli. He thanks

her. 'The lapis seal is perfectly lovely... I love the feeling of the stone... I love the way the blue of the lapis lazuli seems to live inside a film of crystal... I hope it will stay with me all my life'.

In his travels Lawrence often lived in view of the sea and wrote about it often. A letter to Maria and Aldous Huxley written in the last year of Lawrence's life sums up all that the sea meant to him: 'We picnicked on the north coast high above the sea, mountainous, and the bluest blue sea I ever saw – not hard like peacocks or jewels, but soft like blue feathers of the tit – really very lovely – and no people – and the big blueness shimmering so far off, north – lovely.'

*Aaron's Rod* starts with the chapter "The Blue Ball". At key moments in the novel the colour blue is introduced.

'I've got the *blue ball*'... 'It was your blue ball, wasn't it father?' The child is speaking to Aaron about a Christmas decoration of 'hardened glass, of a magnificent full dark blue colour.' The ball is not supposed to break but the little girl throws it onto the edge of a tile and it disintegrates. Something breaks in Aaron too. That night he leaves his wife and three children; just walks out. (He does, however, see that they are financially secure.)

Aaron follows his friend Lilly (who has been 'drifting about') to Italy. Although Lilly has already moved on from the house of Sir William and Lady Franks, Aaron is warmly welcomed by them. He is a musician, a flautist, and music opens many doors to Aaron. He is shown to a beautiful 'blue silk bedroom'. At dinner Lady Franks wears emeralds and sapphires on her fingers and there is talk of music and other things. Aaron is asked why he left his family. 'I just left them', he replies. Admonished by Lady Franks, Aaron retreats to his blue room, 'his soft warm room' with its luxurious 'soft warm bed'. He sleeps 'too well'; the room has acted like a 'narcotic'.

Towards the end of the novel Aaron has a brief affair with the Marchesa del Torre. At their first meeting her 'dark-blue, heavy, haunted-looking eyes were resting on him as if she hoped for something'.

*cont'd over page*

He is 'whirled away by his evening's experience, and by the woman.'

Invited to dinner by the Marchese and the Marchesa, Aaron finds her air of mystery deepens when she appears in 'a wonderful gown of thin blue velvet' with 'gauzy gold thread down the sides', 'dark blue sapphires' round her throat. Aaron 'thought her wonderful and sinister. She affected him with a touch of horror'. Later 'he was as if sightless, in a stupor'. A musical rapport develops between them. The pure musical line of Aaron's flute frees her soul and she is able to sing again.

The Marchesa wears a thin blouse and a blue skirt at their next meeting. Then later a soft dress 'again of blue, like chicory flowers, a pale *warm* blue. And she had cornflowers in her belt.' Aaron wants to resist her magic, but he is drawn back once again. She was 'like a priestess utterly involved in her own terrible rites'. Aaron wanted to be 'neither God nor victim'.

As in another of Lawrence's leadership novels, *Kangaroo*, the hero 'needs to be alone with his soul'. Aaron's flute is smashed in a bomb blast. 'It chimed with something in his soul: the bomb, the smashed flute, the end.'

Written in Taormina, "Purple Anemones" is a light-hearted poem about the Persephone myth. Here the dark flowers become a symbol for Pluto: 'little hells of colour... in pursuit of her.'

*Dark blue anemones!  
Hell is up!.....*

## **WE ARE NOT ALONE!**

OUR D.H. Lawrence Society is by no means the only literary society in Australia.

We have fraternal (assuming such societies are masculine) links with several other single-author groups, most particularly with the Jane Austen Society of Australia (JASA) and the Henry Lawson Society (based in Victoria).

The former produces a regular newsletter, *Practicalities*, and the latter *The Lawsonian*.

The JASA also has a website at <http://jasa.net.au>.

We hope to arrange some fraternal functions as exigencies permit, and we will keep you informed of these.

*Flowers came, hell hounds on her heels.*

Else, Frieda's sister, visited Lawrence around the time that he was writing the several versions of the poem which was to become "Bavarian Gentians" in *Last Poems*. She said that in his bare room was 'a great bunch of pale blue gentians'.

Lawrence's gentians are dark blue in one version of the poem *Glory of Darkness*:

*What a journey for my soul  
in the dark blue gloom  
of gentians here in a sunny room!*

In the other version of this poem we descend to the wedding of Persephone and Pluto in 'the blue depths of mountain gentian flowers' among 'all the dark great ones of the underworld'.

*it is so blue, it is so dark  
in the dark doorway  
and the way is open  
to Hades.*

There are two versions of the poem "Bavarian Gentians" the longer one written before the pared down final statement. In the longer poem the gentians are 'torch-flowers of the blue smoking darkness' leading the poet down to the realm of Pluto.

*Give me a flower on a tall stem and three  
dark flames,  
for I will go to the wedding, and be a  
wedding-guest  
at the marriage of the living dark.*

Reading "Bavarian Gentians" brings to mind the book which Lawrence borrowed from Ottoline Morrell in 1916, *Hesiod, Homeric Hymns and Homerica*. The Hymn to Demeter is the first written version of the myth of Persephone, which initiated the Eleusian mysteries. Demeter teaches the secret mysteries to men 'but he who is uninitiate and who has no part in them, never has lot of good things once he is dead, down in the darkness and gloom.'

The Hymn describes Persephone gathering flowers in a meadow where she is lured by a gleaming plaything that Zeus has made Earth produce: 'a marvellous radiant flower. It was a thing of awe whether for deathless gods or mortal men to see'. As Persephone reaches out for the flower the earth opens 'and Hades seized her and took her, loudly

# Did Lawrence Hear Red?

When Marylyn Valentine submitted her interesting article on Lawrence and the colour blue (page 29) I began to wonder if DHL, like me, had synaesthesia – a condition which merges various sensory perceptions such as colour, smell and sound.

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, 2000, defines synaesthesia (spelt in the USA “synesthesia”) as: *1. A condition in which one type of stimulation evokes the sensation of another, as when the hearing of a sound produces the visualization of a color. 2. A sensation felt in one part of the body as a result of stimulus applied to another, as in referred pain. 3. The description of one kind of sense impression by using words that normally describe another.*

I am one of about 10,000 Australians with one form or another of synaesthesia. We share it with such people as Sibelius, Nabokov and David Hockney, to name just a few. In my case I have two forms: firstly, relating colours to letters of the alphabet, words and numbers – the most common form of synaesthesia. For example, the letter “B” for me is pink. Thus, when I see the word “Blue” I see it as pink (although of course I can also see blue as a colour quite normally); and secondly, relating colours to sounds – for me, musical instruments each have a distinct colour, but so do the individual notes they play - which makes listening to music a “multi-media experience”.

Leaves rustling, motorbikes roaring, waves breaking, peoples’ voices – anything that makes a sound also has a colour in my mind. Those who don’t have synaesthesia – the vast majority of people – can’t begin to appreciate how lovely this condition is, enriching one’s perception and appreciation of the world.

The concept of synaesthesia was first popular in the pre-First World War years - Henry James wished he had it - he dreamed of a blending of the

senses, but it was not synaesthesia..

Since then a great deal of waffle has been published on the subject, with academics speculating about something they do not have a clue about. They tried to imagine what synaesthesia is like; they didn’t study it scientifically.

Some academics and media commentators have imagined having synaesthesia is like being high on LSD, others have marveled that people with synaesthesia are “normal” ...“as normal as you or me”. The published work, in the main, has been almost universally blinkered. It’s like reading what blind people might write about what it would be like to see.

But at long last it is becoming better-understood. Scientists and psychologists, such as a team at Monash University in Victoria, are studying actual cases of synaesthesia (I am part of their survey) to try to determine the causes and implications of it. Hopefully, such research will bear fruit not only in explaining synaesthesia but in learning more about the functions of the brain.

So back to my question: was Lawrence synaesthetic? Or was he simply interested in the phenomenon? I decided the only way to find out was to read and re-read his own work, checking particular short stories such as “Odour of Chrysanthemums” which had been quoted in the learned treatises on synaesthesia that I had found on the Internet.

After a Lawrence binge covering novels, poems and short stories, and targeting any possible examples of synaesthetic activity, I have to report that I found absolutely no examples. Yes, he was obviously a writer with exceptional visual sensitivity, and yes, colours evoked certain emotions in him, but nowhere could I find any examples that would define him as a synaesthete.

And after all, it takes one to know one.

**-Sandra Jobson**

(I’d like to hear your views.)

crying, in his chariot down to his realm of mist and gloom’. And ‘Deo wandered over the earth with flaming torches in her hands’ looking for her daughter. Torches played a significant role in the ritual of the Eleusian Mysteries.

In the final version of “Bavarian Gentians” the poet wants to be ‘among the splendour of torches of darkness’:

*Reach me a gentian, give me a torch!*

*let me guide myself with the blue forked  
torch of this flower*

*down the darker and darker stairs, where  
blue is darkened on blueness*

Lawrence is yielding to the ‘marvellous radiant flower’, no longer a guest at a wedding, but the initiate embraced by the dense blue gloom, in communion with the mystery of death.

**- Marylyn Valentine**

# Bits...

It is interesting to see how the idea that Lawrence encountered an actual secret army in Sydney is beginning to take hold round the world. The thesis mentioned in the article in this issue, "The Man Who Wasn't There" (p. 9), takes it as a given that Cooley is based on Sir Charles Rosenthal and that the Diggers/Maggies are a real secret army. And in an article in a recent issue of the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* ("Lust in the Dust", 14/4/02) on Lawrence in Taos, the author said: "The Lawrences first came to New Mexico in 1922, directly from their unsuccessful sojourn in Australia. [Lawrence] saw NSW as something of a lotus land, while his brush with the right-wing paramilitary group the Old Guard, fictionalised in *Kangaroo*, unnerved him." In the absence of any other credible explanation, the Moore-Darroch interpretation is, apparently, spreading.



*Laurence Pollinger, the 80-year-old firm that administers the Lawrence Estate, has gone public, being floated in England as part of Oak Media, an intellectual property group. "If I should die, think only this of me/That there is some corner of the financial world/That is forever Lawrentian."*



Pamela Bailey, who attended the D.H.L. reading at Thirroul with her Eastwood-born husband, Keith, worked for a pair of Australian dentists in Eastwood in the house which has been identified as the one featured in *Mr Noon*. She recalls how excited the dentists were when *Lady Chatterley* was made available in the UK while still banned in Australia. "Immediately they heard the news they sent me round to the local bookshop to purchase a copy," she said.



# Letters...

Dear Robert Darroch

Thank you for your letter asking about J.T. Lang [Labor Premier of NSW in the 1920s]. I had more than one conversation with "the Big Feller". I certainly raised *Kangaroo*, the New Guard and Lawrence, but very little came out of it. Within a few seconds his mind went on an endless loop excoriating the Bank of England for exacerbating the Depression in Australia. I read *Rananim* with interest.

Barry Jones  
(ex-MP & former President of the Australian Labor Party)

## About the D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia

The aims of the D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia are to foster interest in Lawrence generally, and his time in Australia, and also to promote the preservation of Wyewurk, the Californian-style bungalow where he stayed in Thirroul south of Sydney and which he portrayed in his novel, *Kangaroo*.

The Society holds regular meetings and outings and publishes its journal, *Rananim*.

If you are not already a member of the Society, or know somebody who would like to join, please fill in the our Membership form and send it with a cheque for \$30 (A\$50 for overseas members) to the Secretary, D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia, PO Box 100, Millers Point, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia.  
[www.cybersydney.com.au/dhl](http://www.cybersydney.com.au/dhl)

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM THE D.H. LAWRENCE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

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I enclose a cheque for \$30 (A\$50 for overseas members) for membership for one year.