



Rananim

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WELCOME - TO THE AGE OF UNCERTAINTY

What is truth? asked Keats, so famously. Beauty, was his answer, adding: "That is all ye know, and all ye need to know."

And perhaps he had a point. For, as we approach the new millenium, we do so in a somewhat chastened mood as far as concepts such as "truth", "fact" and "reality" are concerned.

Some articles in what might be termed as this Special Post-Modernist Issue of *Rananim* explore what is real and what is not, and the extent to which such questions matter any more today.

But first, a little background. Around this time last century educated people thought they knew pretty much the way the world worked.

Then along came Einstein, Freud and their ilk, and what people thought was reality began to disintegrate.

Modernism - which some say is the defining creed of the present century - was one product of the erosion of the 19th century's belief in certainty and the link between cause and effect.

Picasso, Joyce, Corbussier, Pound, Wittgenstein, Brecht and Disney were some of modernism's great prophets. Lawrence straddled both worlds. He was both modern and anti-modern (he



detested Joyce, thought Pound a joke, would not have had any time for Picasso, and preferred Nietzsche to Wittgenstein).

He was "modern" mainly in the area of eroticism. He was to sex perhaps what Stravinsky was

to tonality.

Now we are in the post-modern era, which, in literature, implies a breakdown of the traditional critical norms, and a focus on the reader rather than the author.

Today texts no longer have primacy. Nowadays one reading is as "correct" as another, one person's understanding as valid as anyone else's.

History, too, has suffered in the post-modernist era. We no longer assume that there is such a thing as a history - a received reality, an accepted chronicle of

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Wyewurk Archive Report

Ten years ago in 1988 there was a flurry of activity in the inchoate DHL Society. At that time the Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee was set up by Sandra and Robert Darroch with the help of John Ruffels and many of the members of our present DHL Society. C. Manning Clark became chairman. Many letters were written to scholars and writers here and around the world asking for their

support to help save Wyewurk from alterations and additions that might destroy the house as Lawrence knew it.

As the newly appointed archivist (no previous experience) for the DHL Society it has been my privilege to sort through the correspondence, press cuttings, Save Wyewurk Bulletins, and submissions to the Commissioners of Inquiry for Environment and Planning,

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events. Rather we have today any number of different histories, each seen as valid as any other. What actually happened is dependent on your particular point of view.

The information revolution has exacerbated these trends. Each day new information snaps at our heels, making it almost impossible to be sure of anything any longer. We have no time to pause to consider what is true or fact or real – we are washed along with the flow.

Journalists no longer ask if their stories are true – they report what is said, or claimed, or alleged, almost regardless of considerations of accuracy. “Is that true?” “Well, it’s what he said,” today’s young Peterkins say.

So long as it’s “balanced”, it’s OK. Accuracy today resides somewhere along a continuum between two poles. Precisely where is a question we hardly dare to ask.

Anyway indeed, post-modernism teaches that it’s a question which shouldn’t really concern us.

As the information jugganaut rolls across our evermore spin-doctored world, it breaks up the foundations of reality, and truth crumbles before it, as sand through our fingers.

Coke is Real, and Real is Coke, that is all ye know, and all ye need to know.

That sums up the intellectual atmosphere at the Seventh International D.H. Lawrence Conference held in Taos in July and which was attended by our President, Paul Eggert, and our Vice-President, Robert Darroch, whose

quirky introduction to this post-conference issue of *Rananim* you are now reading.

His report of the event, in the style of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson – the “reporter” who put the “I” into “the New Journalism” – is on p15 (the paper Dr. D. actually – and the word “actually” carries some import here – delivered at the conference is on p26, while the paper our publisher Sandra Jobson was to have given, but couldn’t, is on p8, along with her written explanation for her absence).

(Information alert: Dr Hunter S. Darroch’s article may or may not be a true and accurate report of the event. Readers of *Rananim* will no doubt make up their own minds on this perhaps irrelevant point.)

Turning to the world of the visual arts, we have on p5 a post-modernist conundrum. Is that a picture of Lawrence, or isn’t it? Is that a gun at his feet? Is this a secret army rendezvous? Who is the other guy? Does it matter? Again, readers will draw their own conclusions.

Then we have the two pictures on p4 and p7. What is the Lawrence connection? Did Lawrence rest here? If not, why not? And who is this De Maistre chap? What’s he got to do with Patrick White (if indeed he did do anything with Patrick White)? Is White a post-modernist? And how does Schliermacher fit in to any of this? Does it matter?

Then there is, or isn’t, the Ashton connection (also see p5). Who or what is Ashton? Or Hum for that matter? Hum...Hmmm.

All in all, this is a very



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Letters and contributions to *Rananim* are very welcome. Please send to the above address, with your name, address and telephone number (and, if possible, fax).

Lacanian issue (see Dr. D.’s article, *op cit*).

Readers are warned.

WYGINWYS.

What you get isn’t necessarily what you see.

(And, anyway, wasn’t the line, Beauty is Truth? Which text is right? Does it matter?)

Who cares?

Welcome to the 21st century.

Contributions to *Rananim*

If you are able to send your article on a floppy disc (PC or Mac), it would be very helpful. Please label your disc with details of which program you used. We are trying to standardise the style. Please indent the first word of each paragraph 5mm and don’t make a line space between paragraphs. Put titles of books in upper and lower case *italics* with no quotation marks. If you want to quote from a passage from a published book, please do not indent it but make one line space before and after it and mark it as an indent on your accompanying hard copy. Many thanks - it will save a lot of time! Please contact the publisher, Sandra Jobson, to establish style details and disc formatting.

NEAR THIS PLACE STAYED LAWRENCE

Although the actual place where Lawrence spent most of his time in Australia is still "proscribed", and cannot be properly marked, we will soon have a "monument" nearby which will commemorate his visit and his time in Thirroul.

As mentioned in previous issues, a fan of D.H. Lawrence, Ms Joanna Skilton, has raised money to erect a plaque set in stone in a park at the end of Craig Street, Thirroul, a pine cone's throw from Number 3, Wyewurk, Lawrence's famous bungalow by the beach, where he wrote *Kangaroo*.

The project, we are pleased to announce, has been brought to a successful conclusion, and the plaque unveiling ceremony will be held in the park on Sunday, November 21 at 2.30 pm.

Ms Skilton has invited all those wishing to attend the ceremony to ring her on (02) 9630 3906 so she can make suitable arrangements.

Several members of our Society have expressed an intention to go down to Thirroul for the unveiling.

For further information, contact John Ruffels at the Society's box number, PO Box 100, Millers Point, Sydney 2000.

Our Society congratulates Ms Skilton on her perserverence in almost single-handedly seeing this useful project through.

We hope she and her guests have a very pleasant day on November 21.

We also hope that pictures will be taken of the event, and that we may be able to publish them, together with a report of the occasion, in our next issue of *Rananim* sometime in the next six months.

- J.K.R.

...and he strayed here, too (and so will we)

As mentioned in the accompanying Editorial, the Committee has tried to vary the location of our AGMs. We have held them in the North Sydney's Leagues Club, the Kuomintang building in the Haymarket, the NSW Writers' Centre at Rozelle, and the Kangaroo Inn at Berry.

This year's AGM will be held at one of the DHL Sydney sites mentioned in *Kangaroo* as "Canberra Hall" - the Trades Hall, 4 Goulburn Street.

The ground floor now houses the Trades Inn, so come early, have a drink at the bar and then descend to Room 1a in the basement for our Meeting at 5.45 pm.

The AGM will be preceded by a talk from our President, Paul Eggert, on "Grant Harvey, Socialist turned Fascist Sympathiser and *Bulletin* Versifier". (We hope to make these talks a regular event.)

For this occasion we've chosen a Friday evening in a central city location. Is this a good idea for future talks? The Editor or a Committee member would like to know your views so next year's talks can be planned.

Of course, given the location of the Trades Hall, it is but a short stroll to many excellent Chinese restaurants in the area. So the plan for Friday November 27, 1998, is simple: have a drink at the Trades

Inn, then Paul's talk at 5.45 pm, followed by a brief AGM, and then dinner at a Chinese restaurant. Feel free to drop in or out of any of the program.

Editorial

Welcome to the October edition of *Rananim*. There are no steam ferries or trains this issue, but you are sure to be amused by the analogy of the DH Lawrence Conference with a dog show.

Please note the change in venue for the AGM. Difficulty with setting a date (when would the accounts be struck? would the Secretary have returned from overseas? will the new buffet car be ready?) has led to the deferral of the AGM in the Southern Highlands to next year, and instead this year's AGM will be held at the Sydney Trades Hall on November 27 (see item this page). Please try to join us. We will endeavour to keep the formal business to the minimum, and devote ourselves to the business of pleasure.

One disappointing feature of this edition is the dearth of letters. Please write! (on any topic which, however vaguely, may relate to Lawrence, Frieda, or indeed the world).

The Editor's address is P.O.Box 847, Rozelle NSW 2039.

- John Lacey

Did Lawrence Sleep Here?

On 12 August, 1998, Joseph Davis of Thirroul phoned me to alert me to an item for sale in the catalogue of Wemyss fine art auctioneers of Wentworth Avenue, in Sydney. The item was listed as "D.H. Lawrence's Torestin". Would I, Joe asked, investigate further? The painting had an auction reserve price of \$25,000 - \$30,000.

My first steps were to see the painting; check the catalogue entry and discover from the gallery its version of the painting's provenance.

The catalogue entry read:- "*Lot 37: Leroy Leveson Laurant Joseph (Roy) De Maistre. Torestin (to rest in). Oil on wood panel. Signed & dated 'de Mestre 1926 lower left 46 x 63.5 cm.'*

"This exceptional work is considered to be an idealistic representation of the fictional cottage created by D.H. Lawrence in his novel Kangaroo (1923).

"Provenance: Direct from the artist to Lord and Lady Butler,

"Thence by descent to the present owner. \$25,000/30,000"

My untrained eye found the medium-sized painting reasonably uninspiring: the outline of the house and of the surrounding scattered gum-trees (see illustration) struck me as heavily outlined. (The gallery explained to me de Maistre was known for this style, called "wire-work")

The over-all effect was of a dark, turn-of-the-century, timbered house with high brick chimneystack, and wide verandahs all round. The roof was luminous white galvanised iron, with a large water-tank on the left-hand front verandah. A dark timber garage and a matching dark-timbered picket fence made up the complete scene, behind which could be seen a stretch of beach going off to the left and behind that, water: with waves.

The first thing that struck me was how inappropriate a depiction of Lawrence's fictional "Torestin" this was. In chapter One of his novel *Kangaroo*, D.H. Lawrence passes some uninteresting bungalows. He describes them:

' little squat bungalows with corrugated iron roofs, painted red. Each little bungalow was set in its own hand-breadth of ground surrounded by a little palisade fence...' "... little square bungalows"... "each one fenced around with a square rail fence..." (Torestin was) "... quite a clean little bungalow with just commonplace furniture, nothing very prosperous..." "... going away to inspect the two clean little bedrooms and the kitchen, and the outside .. "

"There was a scrap of garden at the back, with a path down the middle, and a fine Australian tree at the



end, a tree with pale bark and no leaves, but big tufts of red spikey flowers... some sort of bean-flower, in sharp tufts, like great red spikes of stiff wisteria, curving upwards, not dangling...

"there was a summer-house also, with a flat roof and steps going up. Somers mounted, and found that from the lead-covered roof of the little round place he could look down the middle harbour, and even see the low gateway, the low headlands with the lighthouse, opening to the full Pacific"

If anything, Roy de Maistre's depiction of "Torestin" looked more like a weatherboard substitute for 'Cooee', (which, of course, was 'Wyewurk' thinly disguised): the old garage, the large water-tank, the wide, shady verandahs, the ocean at the back door.

The colour of the sand in the background of de Maistre's 'Torestin' painting certainly had that north-of-Long - Reef pinky/orange look about it. Just as Narrabeen sand has. But the rest of the painting does not depict a scrap of garden at a little house, nor is there a palisade fence.

So what was the true origin of this painting? Was it a genuine de Maistre?

Both de Maistre's biographer Heather Johnson, and the Assistant Director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Mr Henrick Kolenberg, have both told the Wemyss Gallery they believe it is a genuine de Maistre.

The Managing Director of the Wemyss Gallery, Mr Antony Davies, answered my inquiries regarding provenance. "Received as a present from the artist around 1926-28. Sent from the estate of Lady Butler in 1958/9 to relatives in Queensland, who have had it ever since".

cont'd on p7



Was There an Ashton Link?

This issue of *Rananim* explores some interesting – intriguing – pictorial conundrums.

On the page opposite and on p7 are two pictures, both by the Australian artist who eventually styled himself Roy De Maistre (and we apologize that we cannot show them in colour).

The accompanying article by John Ruffels explains their presence and possible significance. On this page we show two images from the same photograph (and, again, we apologize that our pixel resolution is not adequate to show a detailed “blow up”). All four images are linked, though perhaps tenuously so. The connection is the name “Ashton”, and perhaps the name “Lawrence”.

Let’s take the images on this page first.

They are from a single photograph showing two men standing on a beach, and between them is a gun. (The “blow up” is of the face of the man on the right.)

Paul Delprat, a member of our society (his Lawrence/Thirroul pictures were shown as a colour insert in a past issue of *Rananim*), is the principal of the Julian Ashton Art School in Sydney, Australia’s oldest art school.

Founded in 1890 by Paul’s famous great-grandfather, Julian Ashton - the “father” of Australian painting - the school has trained many of the nation’s greatest artists, including Dobell, Whiteley – and Roy De Maistre. (Paul’s other great-grandfather was the famous G.D. Delprat, who ran BHP between the wars.)

The school has come down in the Ashton family

from generation to generation, and its legends and traditions with it. And one of the legends is that there was some connection between the family and D.H. Lawrence.

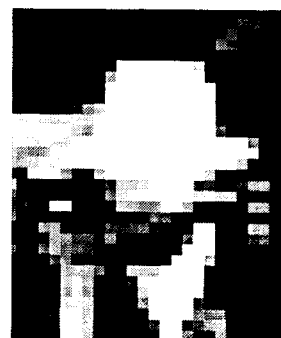
Recently Paul was recently given an old photo album belonging to his grandfather, Howard Ashton, Julian’s artist-journalist son. (Paul grew up in a studio in Howard’s garden in Burran Avenue, Balmoral.)

Howard was a very right-wing journalist and was probably editor of *The Sun* newspaper when Lawrence was in Sydney in 1922 (Lawrence cites *The Sun* – disguising its political slant – in the second-last chapter in *Kangaroo*.) He was also a man of considerable erudition, a critic, and a connoisseur of literature (his book collection was extensive).

Family legend has it that he was a member of the New Guard in the 1930s, though it would seem far more likely that he would have been a member of the Old Guard (Jack Scott’s 1930-32 secret army).

Family legend also has it that almost every Sunday Howard would invite to his Burran Av-

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Was There an Ashton Link?

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eneue bungalow his cousin Gerald Hum. Paul's mother, Howard's daughter, recalls the two men sitting together in the lounge room sipping sherry (or whatever), listening to Mozart (or Wagner) and talking about literature, politics and art.

A significant point here is that the name and address of Gerald Hum is the only Sydney name Lawrence wrote in the address book he had with him when he was in Sydney in May-August 1922. Indeed, the two had joined the same boat in Naples the previous February, and had travelled together to Colombo (where Lawrence disembarked, Hum continuing on to Sydney).

It is almost inconceivable that Hum and Lawrence did not renew their acquaintanceship when he himself arrived in Sydney on May 27, for we know of no one else he knew personally in Sydney. The fact that one of the characters in *Kangaroo* is described as a "stuggy" man (Hum was fat) who came from Cornwall (from where both Julian Ashton and his nephew Gerald Hum came from) makes such a likelihood a virtual certainty.

Which is why Paul Delprat was so interested in the above-mentioned snapshot he came across in his grandfather's photo album. He wondered if the man on the right could be D.H. Lawrence. Then the connection with the Ashtons would be proved, and the gun might mean...

Alas, like the other rumour that Lawrence visited Burradoo in the Southern Highlands, also mentioned in a previous issue, we have to quash this possible "connection".

The photo, as indicated by the men's attire and the vacant state of what is probably Tamarama Beach in Sydney (where Julian lived, and where Howard himself grew up), is from an earlier era, certainly pre-World War 1.

However, the Ashton connection might not end there. (In any case, Paul continues to rummage through the family archives, and further "evidence" might yet emerge from this promising source.)

John Ruffels asked me to show the De Maistre paintings to Paul, wondering if the bungalow shown might have been the one that Howard moved to from Tamarama, and in whose garden Paul still lives.

At first Paul was dismissive. Howard, he thought, did not move to Balmoral until the 1930s, and anyway the bungalow – allegedly "Torestin" – bore little similarity to the Ashton house in Burran Avenue (now demolished).

But Ruffels, as is his wont, dug deeper, and found in the Sands Directory of 1927 an entry for a

Howard Ashton in Balmoral. This meant that Howard could have lived in Balmoral in 1926 – the date marked on the De Maistre picture which Ruffels had turned up in the catalogue of the artist's works.

Paul, too, made further inquiries and found that Ruffels was right – Howard had moved from Tamarama to Balmoral around 1926, buying the Burran Avenue bungalow from a fellow artist. What was also of interest was Paul's revealing of the name of the said bungalow – "Tid' Apa", which turns out to be an Indonesian phrase meaning something like "Who cares?" or "Why Bother?", a rather similar name to the twin names Wyewurk and Wyewurrie that Lawrence found so amusing in Craig Street, Thirroul. But that probably is just coincidence, that sort of house name being quite common in the Sydney of the 1920s.

The vital question, of course, is – could Lawrence, perhaps under the guidance of Hum, have come to Balmoral, perhaps to meet Howard and the other artists and cultural figures who made their homes in that part of Sydney around that time?

Could he indeed have had some connection with a house in Balmoral – even stayed there on one of his trips up from Thirroul, sufficient to have given the supposed place the sobriquet "one of Lawrence's houses in Australia" mentioned by the "Lady Butler" in the De Maistre "Torestin" picture's provenance?

We tried to track down the bungalow, or where it might have been, and who might have lived there – a tough job 75 years or so on.

Paul thought it might have been in Edwards Bay Road, which leads down from Burran Avenue to Balmoral Beach (Burran Avenue being ruled out because of the closeness of the sand, etc). The garage looked to be on road level, the house lower, and the back of the house lower still, implying a steeply shelving site. But Ruffels' search of the relevant Sands entries revealed nothing that "connected". Mosman historian Gavin Souter thought the house might be in Botanical Road. But, again, nothing.

One possibly interesting clue might lie in why De Maistre painted the house at least twice, and why he took one of the pictures with him to London. It must have had some significance to him (for the "Torestin" version is both inferior to the "Balmoral" one and of little artistic importance).

It could well be that there was some personal connection, for in the 1920s Balmoral was refuge to groups in society who might have found their sexual orientation less acceptable in less-enlightened parts of Sydney.

Further clues or other comments will be gratefully received.

- Robert Darroch

Did Lawrence Sleep Here?

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I have since spoken to Sandie van der Stolk, who as Specialist Enquiry Officer at the Wemyss Gallery, was in charge of tracing the de Maistre painting's provenance. She told me a slightly different story:

"The painting was untitled and has never been exhibited. When an Australian nurse looked after Lady Butler in England, when she was dying of cancer, Lady B. said 'that picture must go back to Australia. It is one of D.H.Lawrence's houses. I don't know which one'".

The nurse cared for Lady Butler for two years. Then returned to Queensland where her own people lived. She too, died of cancer around 1954/5. And the picture, which had been brought back to Rockhampton, was bequeathed to her nephew, a local farmer with no knowledge of art. When he, in turn, fell sick many years later, his doctor paying a house call, noticed the painting, and on questioning the nephew, told him that he possessed a valuable painting. When the Managing Director of the Wemyss Gallery rode into town, the nephew brought the de Maistre in for appraisal.

However, questions remains for clarification: why has the de Maistre painting been linked to Lawrence's Australian novel? Why did Lady Butler claim de Maistre had depicted "one of Lawrence's houses"?

Was de Maistre a devotee of Lawrence's novels? Was he well-known for his love of literature? I turned to Heather Johnson's two volume biography. No, it appeared de Maistre was a bit of a snob, firstly styling himself as "Roi de Mestre" whilst the darling of the "Turramurra Wall Painters" in Sydney in the 1920's, because he believed his family was descended from Belgian nobility. When he got to England he became "Roy De Maistre", and sought the company of titled ladies and society dames.

I then read an article from a 1970's *Sydney Morning Herald*, which I discovered in the Art Gallery of New South Wales Library, entitled something like 'Literature Imitates Art'. It was a story of the close relationship which had grown up between Australian novelist Patrick White and de Maistre in the late 1930's. They met briefly in 1936 just as White was leaving for Germany. On his return, (when he smuggled in a banned copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses*) White cooled in his physical relationship with the painter, but their intellectual encounters and convivial dinner parties continued. Even to the point where White subleased rooms in de Maistre's rented building in Eccleston Street.

Some time later when de Maistre recounted the story behind his painting of his aunt from an old photograph found in a blitzed London building, White was so fascinated he wrote novel which he named *The Aunt's Story*. It was this account which formed the basis of the *Sydney Morning Herald* article.

My own hunch, after reading that article, and then David Marr's biography of White, was that White was in



"Balmoral Beach" 1927: a painting by Roy de Maistre.

the 1930s heavily influenced by two great writers: his main man was James Joyce, but he was still largely a great admirer of the writings of D.H. Lawrence. At one stage, White travelled to Zennor in Cornwall retracing Lawrence's footsteps. While waiting at a Cornish busshed on the return journey, White was moved to compose some of his early work in the form of poetry, which he had published under the title *The Plowman*.

My desultory search of de Maistre exhibition catalogues, and consultations with crack art historian and De Maistre buff, Cameron Sparkes, convinces me the Torestin painting was never exhibited under that title.

So I think Patrick White suggested the similarity to a description of a Lawrence house to de Maistre, and the painter then adopted the suggestion, knowing Lawrence's link would add cachet.

I should add in discussions with Robert Darroch, he disagrees. He feels there may be more to the fact the Torestin painting is very similar to one painted by de Maistre the following year (1927) which he named "Balmoral Beach, 1927". He feels there may be some significance in de Maistre lugging this seemingly ordinary painting of a house halfway around the world, and we should delve further into who actually owned the house depicted.

But there is nothing there to explain the Lawrence connection. As it stands at time of publication (inquiries are continuing), we do not know for certain how or why the De Maistre picture acquired its alleged Lawrentian conations.

Any suggestions, or further clues, would be gratefully received.

- J.K. Ruffels

Many people assisted with my research, but special thanks to Cameron Sparkes.

TAKE ME TO YOUR LIEDERTAFEL

This is a transcript of the talk SANDRA JOBSON prepared to deliver to the D.H. Lawrence and New Worlds Conference in Taos. Unfortunately, due to illness (severe flu) she was unable to attend, so ROBERT DARROCH delivered her talk in her absence. The Editor of the UK D.H. Lawrence Journal asked for a copy of her paper and has now accepted it for publication in the Journal.

As a young reporter on a Sydney newspaper I used to do the shipping round. This entailed going out on to the Harbour in a launch to meet ocean liners before they docked.

We would hove to at the stern of the boat and climb up a precarious rope ladder to the deck where the captain would greet us and take us down to the first class saloon where we would interview movie stars and authors at their breakfast tables.

I recalled those shipboard visits when I was reading the *Perth Daily News* about the arrival of D.H. Lawrence at Fremantle, Western Australia, on the *Orsova* on May 4, 1922.

A stringer for the *News* had gone out to the *Orsova* (as I myself had done years later) as it arrived at the mouth of the Swan River and had interviewed the famous Theosophist, Annie Besant, and also the English writer, D.H. Lawrence.

The stringer's name was Mrs Zabel. She was also the owner of the Booklovers' Library in Hay Street, Perth, which Lawrence was to frequent during his two-week stay in Western Australia.

After reading Mrs Zabel's item about Lawrence, I decided to retrace Lawrence's time in Western Australia as if I were a reporter again. I would go to all the places he went to and track down the descendants of people he met. It was to prove an exciting and worthwhile exercise because I made a number of new discoveries about Lawrence, one of which is the identity of the woman he based at least the outward characteristics of Victoria Callcott in *Kangaroo*.

(Overhead map of the world was displayed)

First of all, let us look at these maps and see where Lawrence travelled.

(Overhead of Australia and the United States)

As you can see, Australia is a continent roughly the same size as the US.

But there the similarities end. For, unlike North America which has a fertile interior, with a very large population, Australia is largely a flat, dry, uninhabited desert and its population today of around 18 million is still tiny compared with the US.

In 1922, when Lawrence arrived in Western

Australia from Ceylon, the capital city of Western Australia, Perth, was little more than a large country town. The total population of Australia in 1922 was only just over five-and-a-half million. The population of Western Australia was 341,462 and the population of Perth was a mere 161,770.

Nevertheless, Western Australia and tiny Perth, founded by a close-knit group of free settler pioneer families in 1827, prided themselves as being a cut above other Australian States which had started out as penal colonies.

Pioneer families such as Burt. Leake, Hare, Waldeck and Durack dominated Perth society, as they do to this day. Lawrence was to meet a number of members of these leading families during his time in Western Australia.

It was a very English society - many of the families sent their children back to England to be educated, and would have called England "home". They looked down their noses at the East Coast of Australia. As Mollie Skinner, co-author with Lawrence of *The Boy in the Bush*, said: "As a people of a free settlement founded for the most part by members of the British landed gentry and respectable farmers, they had no great desire to associate with a mixed bag of jumped up t'other siders."

I shall concentrate on this close-knit and inter-related circle rather than repeat what is already well-known and well-documented about Lawrence's dealings with William Seibenhaar. Katherine Susannah Pritchard and a number of other Perth literary luminaries.

Let us start at Fremantle at the mouth of the Swan River where Lawrence and Frieda were about to disembark from the *Orsova*.

Fremantle, the port for Perth, is situated at the mouth of the Swan River, so named after the black swans the first settlers discovered there. Lawrence, standing on the deck of the *Orsova*, would have seen a busy little port town with 19th century warehouses, banks and business houses.

The *Perth Daily News* stringer, Mrs Zabel, being a bookshop owner, was *au fait* with Lawrence's work and had probably been tipped off that he was



Pussy Jenkins

(Photo: Mary Brazier)

on board the *Orsova* by her friend, Mrs Jenkins.

Mrs Zabel duly recounted in the *Daily News* that Lawrence had thoughts of settling down on the south coast of Western Australia in the apple-growing countryside.

Waiting on the wharf for Lawrence and Frieda to disembark was Mrs Jenkins. Her real names were Annie Louisa but she was known to close friends and family as "Pussy".

In his volume in the Cambridge edition biography of Lawrence, *The Dying Game 1922-1930*, David Ellis calls her "Anna" (as does a reference to her in the *Collected Letters*). However, she was actually called Annie not Anna - as her birth certificate indicates, and her family confirmed this when I interviewed them.

Ellis also refers to her as being "wealthy". This, I discovered, was not quite the case. She came from a wealthy family, but, as we shall see, she herself was not well-off, which is why she had travelled second-class on the *Osterley* from Naples to Colombo when she had met Lawrence and Frieda, who had been seated at her table.

A warm-hearted, lively red-haired widow in her mid-forties, Pussy Jenkins was a member of one of the most illustrious Perth pioneer families, the Burts, who in turn were closely related to the Leakes. Sir Archibald Paull Burt, Pussy's grandfather, was the first Chief Justice of Western Australia and Lieutenant-Governor. His seventh son, Septimus, Pussy's father, was the first Attorney General after the establishment of responsible government in Western

Australia. (To this day, the Burts are a legal family.)

She regularly travelled by boat to London, partly to visit her son who had gone to school at an English public school, Repton, and had established himself later in London as a lawyer. She also visited her close friend, the Australian composer, Percy Grainger. And she was something of a "cricket groupie" and liked travelling with the Australian cricket team when it set off to play in the Old Country.

Pussy and Lawrence and Frieda had become well acquainted during the trip from Naples to Ceylon. It was Pussy who had suggested Lawrence might like to journey on from Ceylon to Australia, and she had given him her family mansion Strawberry Hill in Perth as an address for his numerous correspondents.

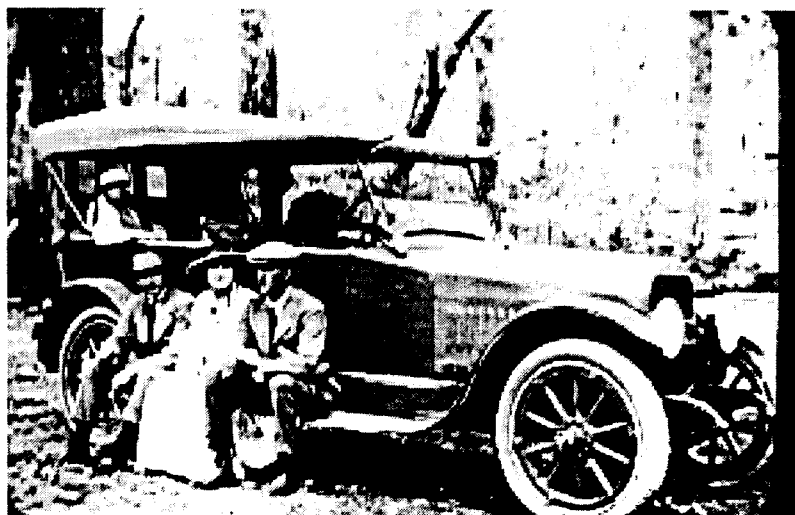
Lawrence's mail, which she no doubt brought with her down to the wharf, very probably included a letter from someone inviting him to come over to Sydney on the east coast, for Lawrence never again mentioned any thought of settling in the apple-growing country south of Perth. Indeed, he had completely changed his mind about his travel plans and was planning to sail to Sydney within a fortnight.

Pussy Jenkins led the Lawrences to the Burt family's chauffeur-driven car and they set off for Perth where she had booked them in to the Savoy Hotel in Hay Street.

I had always wondered why Pussy Jenkins had not invited the Lawrences to stay at Strawberry Hill. But when I tracked down and interviewed Pussy's great niece, Mary Brazier (nee Burt, who, by the way, lives in Leake Avenue in a Perth suburb), she explained why Pussy happened to be travelling second class and why she couldn't put Lawrence and Frieda up at Strawberry Hill.

The problem was that by 1922 Pussy was some-

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The Burt car in which Lawrence travelled to Leithdale (photo: Mary Brazier)



Tapestry by Mollie Skinner depicting white gums in Darlington landscape (courtesy of Elsie Gare of Fremantle)

TAKE ME TO YOUR LIEDERTAFEL

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what down on her luck. In her youth she had been a promising pianist, and the family, tired of hearing her incessant practising, built her a little bungalow in the grounds of Strawberry Hill where she could play to her heart's content. The family had nicknamed the bungalow the "Dugout".

Because nice girls from upper-class families didn't become professional musicians, Pussy was destined to marry someone fairly prominent, which she did in Perth's Anglican cathedral in 1895. Her husband was Arthur George Jenkins, son of Sir George Henry Jenkins, clerk of the Victorian parliament. Arthur George Jenkins, at the time of his marriage to Pussy, was a lawyer practising in the goldfields town of Coolgardie, where he was soon to become the Mayor. After her marriage, Pussy went to live in Coolgardie and became part of Coolgardie society. It is likely that, being musical, she joined the Coolgardie German vocal society, the Liedertafel, where she would have met a young basso, Charles Rosenthal, who was to become a prominent general in the Australian Army in World War 1 and later led a secret army style organisation very similar to the secret army portrayed by Lawrence in *Kangaroo*.

After their stint in Coolgardie, Pussy and her husband and young family returned to live in Perth. But, as Pussy's great-nephew, and brother of Mary

Brazier, Sir Francis Burt (recently Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor), wrote in a letter to me, Mr Jenkins mysteriously disappeared from the scene some years before his death in 1917. Nobody can recall what actually happened, but Pussy found herself in financial straits. She was forced to sell their house at Cottesloe (close to where William Seibenhaar lived) and her mother offered to let her live in the "Dugout", her modest little bungalow in the grounds of the big house. This was far too small a place to invite Lawrence and Frieda to stay.

As for the chauffeur-driven car, Pussy had no doubt persuaded her mother to allow her the use of it for the day that Lawrence and Frieda arrived. Pussy used it to take Lawrence and Frieda to the Savoy Hotel in Hay Street, where she had booked a room for them. Lawrence quickly realised that this hotel was far beyond his budget, so the next day Pussy again borrowed the Burt car and took the Lawrences out to Darlington, a hill resort about 15 miles east of Perth, where another of her relatives, Mollie Skinner (whose great-grandfather was George Leake's elder brother, Luke), ran a guesthouse-cum-convalescent home called "Leithdale", patronised by her friends and relatives who recovered there from scarlet fever and other ailments, and enjoyed their school holidays in the relatively cool mountain air.

On their way to Darlington in the Burt car, Pussy Jenkins asked the chauffeur to stop and pick up a friend of hers, Eva May Gawler, another member of a pioneering Perth family, the Waldecks. Like



Maudie Cohen (photo: Gresley Cohen)

Pussy, Eva May, now widowed, had fallen on hard times and had started a millinery business. Eva May Gawler might have been down on her luck, but she didn't lack confidence and was soon quizzing Lawrence on his need to be continually travelling from one place to another. Why couldn't he simply stay in one room and write? she demanded. Lawrence was uncharacteristically non-plussed by her question.

At Leithdale, a large, single-storeyed Victorian house with a wide verandah with iron-lace railings, Mollie Skinner decided to seat the Lawrences at the same table as a honeymoon couple, Eustace Cohen, an architect, and his bride, Maudie (who also happened to be convalescing from a broken leg caused by falling down a lift shaft a few days before her wedding). Lawrence obviously quizzed Maudie, for I discovered that it is her family history that he used for the character of Victoria Callcott in *Kangaroo*.

Previously, scholars had been deflected from the truth by the mention in *Kangaroo* that Victoria's family came from a farm "down the south coast". This was thought to refer to the south coast of New South Wales - on the east coast of Australia - not the south coast of Western Australia. Thus many possible, but incorrect, candidates for the basis of the character Victoria had been suggested.

Mary Brazier not only had her Burt ancestry,

but she had married a Brazier, and because of this I was able to make contact with Maudie Cohen's (*nee* Brazier) relatives. Thus I was able to track down Maudie's youngest sister Gwen Fitzharding and Eustace and Maudie Cohen's son, Gresley, who each gave me some very useful information.

They told me she had "warm brown eyes", and that her father, Major Noel Brazier, had been a surveyor in Victoria before moving to Western Australia where he established a dairy farm on the coast south of Perth. He had taken "the cream of the South West's young men" to the First World War and had been shot in the eye at Galipoli.

Maudie's mother, Edith Maude *nee* Hardwick, was from Somerset in England and had produced nine children, of whom Maudie was the eldest.

If these details are starting to ring bells, let me quote from *Kangaroo*:

Richard Somers asks Victoria Callcott:

"Was your home in Sydney?"

She replies:

"No, on the South Coast - dairy farming. No, my father was a surveyor, so was his father before him...Then he gave it up and started this farm down south."

And further down the page, Victoria speaks about her mother: "She came from Somerset. Yes she died about five years ago. Then I was mother of the family. Yes, I am the eldest except Alfred."

Lawrence's sojourn at Leithdale produced other far-reaching results. He wandered down the road one evening and found himself amongst tall, eerie white gum trees. This experience terrified him and is described in *Kangaroo*. Indeed, much of the descriptions of the bush in *Kangaroo* are not of the



Leithdale - Lawrence met "Victoria Callcott" on its verandah

east coast bush, which is more scrubby than that of Western Australia.

His friendship with Mollie Skinner, as we all know, produced *The Boy in the Bush*. But later Lawrence worked on another of Mollie's manuscripts

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featuring a bush nurse and her experiences in a mining town in Western Australia, which Lawrence re-named *Eve in the Land of Nod*, and to which he made extensive alterations and changes, many of which Mollie refused to accept.

One example is that he changed the case from the first person to the third, naming the protagonist "Evelynne" instead of Mollie's "I".

She then crossed out his corrections, and, to this day, the manuscript languishes in the Battye Library in Perth, waiting to be published (although a member of the D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia, Stephen O'Connor, is currently beginning work on editing it).

Although, in my opinion, it is not a very good piece of literature, *Eve in the Land of Nod* is nonetheless worth resuscitating if merely to see how Lawrence shaped and edited it, although parts of it where she describes the down-and-out patients in the little bush hospital, and the comings and goings of the local Aborigines, are quite vividly-written, and worth publishing.

And finally, the Rosenthal connection.

When Charles Rosenthal ended his stay in the gold mining town of Coolgardie, years before he rose to become a general in the First World War, he decided to ride a bicycle across that huge, flat, desert that stretches over 3,000 kilometers between Perth and Melbourne. Moreover, it was one of those old-fashioned bicycles that didn't even have tyres.

If Pussy Jenkins had met such a determined young man during her time in Coolgardie, and if she had kept in touch with him subsequently, she would have known that in 1922 he published a journal called the *King and Empire*.

Just as she gave Lawrence an introductory letter to a journalist on the weekly *Bulletin*, in the hope that Lawrence might find some income from writing for it, might she not have also given Lawrence a letter of introduction to Charles Rosenthal?

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mary Brazier; her brother, Sir Francis Burt; Ann Archer, Battye Library; the Cohen family; the former owners of Leithdale; the people of Darlington; Mollie Skinner's niece, Dot Muir; and Elsie Gare of Fremantle.

-Sandra Jobson

GARDEN NOTES

The Sydney Branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History's Journal *The Hummer* published an interesting article by Paul Tracey in its Summer 1997/98 edition (vol 2, no.9, p29-39).

The abstract reads:

Jock Garden was undoubtedly one of the most influential and controversial figures in the NSW labour movement between the two world wars. In the following piece, Paul Tracey offers a reassessment of Garden's role in developments in the NSW labour movement during the turbulent inter-war years.

The most pertinent section of the article to the Society's interests is found on p34:

...Garden was credentialled in 1922 to be joint Australian delegate to both the Profintern in Petrograd and to the Comintern in Moscow. Despite having only 750 members, the Australian Communist Party contained most of the NSW Labor Council officials and, probably with Soviet funding, ran an established weekly paper, The Communist, which Garden used regularly to spread the word.

Prior to his departure for the Soviet Union in September 1922, Garden was interviewed at Sydney Trades Hall by D.H. Lawrence who showed a keen interest in the possibility of civil war between returned soldiers and unionised workers. Garden was the prototype for the radical socialist leader, Willie Struthers, in Lawrence's novel Kangaroo, which depicts the socialist ideals of spreading the revolution to Australia and the counter plans by loyalists that involved the maintenance of secret armies to contain organised labour and promote conservative values of nationalism and fascism. Lawrence's account was well researched and accurately depicted both the influence of Garden's Christianity on his socialist values and the philosophies of the ultra-right King and Empire Alliance and the Diggers' Clubs whose leaders were determined to deal with Garden and his ilk.

- J.L.

Wyewurk Archive Report

cont'd from p1

which Sandra Darroch has kept so carefully.

The unfolding of the story of Wyewurk through these papers has revealed an exciting although worrying time; and much hard work and perseverance by all those involved.

Sandra Darroch has told the full story in *Rananim* (Vol. 3 No 3 Nov 1995) "How We Battled to Save Wyewurk". She tells us how in 1985, trying to see Wyewurk again, she climbed up from the beach only to encounter the owner mowing the grass. The incident was shown much later in a cartoon in the *Illawarra Mercury* with Sandra wielding an umbrella and looking rather like Hermione Roddice when she hit Rupert Birkin over the head with the lapis lazuli.

Robert Darroch's submission to the Commissioners of Inquiry was most eloquent and comprehensive, covering all aspects of the importance of Wyewurk. Writing to friends and colleagues Robert many times wore his heart on his sleeve when he thought that the integrity of Wyewurk might be threatened. Fortunately, as reported in the society's newsletter of June 1998, the Heritage Council still has an Interim Conservation Order on Wyewurk.

The letters of Patrick White, C. Manning Clark, and the Lawrence scholars Warren Roberts and James T Boulton reveal the significance that they attached to Wyewurk. Part of a letter to the Heritage Council from Tom Fitzgerald says:

it is nevertheless an objective fact that Lawrence is recognised as one of the supreme writers about place, whether it be in Mediterranean islands or valleys or British coal country or the Mexican countryside. It has been the extraordinary good fortune of the south coast of NSW, and specifically Thirroul, to have brought forth his evocative powers which were otherwise directed entirely to the northern hemisphere.

The archive is nearly ready: one set of papers will be sent to the Australian Defence Force Academy Library, Canberra, which has a large D H Lawrence collection; another set held by the D H Lawrence Society of Australia.

It would be a pleasure to help anyone who has any inquiries about the archive, Lawrence or his works. Please write to M.A.Valentine P.O. Box 317 Wahroonga N.S.W. 2076.

The Society's archivist, MARYLYN VALENTINE, has provided this list of the correspondence held by the Society regarding the Save Wyewurk campaign.

Note signed by Tom Thompson about meeting re Wyewurk
4/9/87 letter to John Ruffels from Leonie Kramer
4/9/87 letter to Bob Carr from Leonie Kramer
7/9/87 postcard to John Ruffels from Manning Clark
11/9/87 letter to Leonie Kramer from Bob Carr
Nov/87 letter to Michael Gross, Wollongong City Council, from Robert Darroch
13/4/88 letter to Heritage Council of NSW from Robert Darroch
14/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Leonie Kramer
letter to Sandra Darroch from Jim McClelland
letter to Sandra Darroch from Andrew Moore
letter to the Australian from Sandra Darroch (not published)
16/4/88 Memo to Staff: Threat to Wyewurk, Department of English, University of Wollongong
16/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Raymond Southall
17/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from DH Lawrence Review of North America
17/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Warren Roberts
17/4/88 general letter from Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee
17/4/88 letter to Illawarra Mercury from Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee (published)
19/4/88 letter to the Age from Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee (not published)
19/4/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Tom Fitzgerald
19/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Tom Fitzgerald
19/4/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Raymond Southall
19/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Keith Cushman
letter to Heritage Council Why Wyewurk Should be Saved from Robert Darroch
20/4/88 memo to ABC 7.30 Report from Sandra Darroch
20/4/88 letter to Wollongong City Council from Pam Robinson
20/4/88 letter to Manning Clark from Sandra Darroch
20/4/88 letter to the Australia Council from Michael Squires
20/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from James T Boulton
21/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Edward St John
22/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee
25/4/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from John Pringle
26/4/88 letter to Humphrey McQueen from Andrew Moore
26/4/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee from HP Heseltine, ADFA
26/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Judith Ruderman
26/4/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from CH Pratten, National Trust
26/4/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Peter Pierce
26/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Peter Pierce
26/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from James C Cowan
27/4/88 letter to Michael Morath from Robert Darroch (not sent)
28/4/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from JHG Dyson-Firth, Dental Surgeon
28/4/88 letter to Heritage Council from Tom Thompson
28/4/88 letter to Wollongong City Council from Tom Thompson
28/4/88 letter to heritage Council from Kerry Thomas
28/4/88 letter to SMH from Sandra Darroch (published)
28/4/88 letter to Manning Clark from Sandra Darroch
3/5/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Dorothy Green
6/5/88 letter to Illawarra Mercury from Raymond Southall published 16/5
7/5/88 letter to Robert Darroch from Bruce Steele

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Wyewurk Archive Report

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7/5/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Peter Pierce
7/5/88 letter to the SMH from Peter Pierce
8/5/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from James Wieland
10/5/88 letter to Wollongong City Council from Margaret Barbalet
11/5/88 letter to Alderman Bill Mowbray from Raymond Southall
12/5/88 Report by Sandra Darroch on phone conversation with Chris Pratten, National Trust
13/5/88 letter to Alderman Bill Mowbray from Pam Robinson
13/5/88 Note to the Darrochs from Pam Robinson
13/5/88 letter to Heritage Council from Pam Robinson
14/5/88 letter to Illawarra Mercury from Robert Darroch (published)
15/5/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee from Patrick White
17/5/88 letter to Illawarra Mercury from Sandra Darroch (no response)
17/5/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee from Tim Moore
18/5/88 letter to John Ruffels from Raymond Southall
25/5/88 Record of meeting with Patricia Forsythe of office of Mr Hay, Minister for Local Government and Robert Darroch
26/5/88 Memo from Robert Darroch to Nora Isert
26/5/88 Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee Agenda for meeting
26/5/88 letter re Wyewurk from Raymond Southall
27/5/88 Paper on FUTURE OF WYEWURK by Sandra and Robert Darroch
27/5/88 letter to Robert Darroch from David Hay
28/5/88 Paper on PROPOSALS FOR USES OF WYEWURK by Joseph Davis
Paper on SIGNIFICANCE OF WYEWURK
Submission to Commissioners by Joseph Davis
Submission to Commissioners by Raymond Southall
6/6/88 News Release re Wyewurk Extensions
7/6/88 Letter to Don Anderson from John Ruffels
9/6/88 letter to Raymond Southall from Robert Darroch
17/6/88 letter to Robert Darroch from Raymond Southall
22/6/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee from RH Bambrick, Department of the Arts etc
4/7/88 Paper on " Nutcote"
July 88 letter to Robert and Sandra Darroch from Tony Prescott
18/7/88 letter to Tony Prescott from Robert Darroch
25/7/88 letter to RH Bambrick from Sandra Darroch
27/7/88 letter to Peter Collins, Minister for the Arts, from David Hay, Minister for Local Government and Planning
28/7/88 letter to Robert Darroch from Sharon Luedecke, Office of the Commissioners of Inquiry for Environment and Planning
29/7/88 letter to Robert Darroch from Raymond Southall
2/8/88 letter to Robert and Sandra Darroch from Bruce Steele
3/8/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee from RH Bambrick
5/8/88 Newsletter from Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee:
LATEST DEVELOPMENTS RE WYEWURK
9/10/88 letter to the Editor, Overland, from the Eleanor Dark Foundation
10/8/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Leonie Kramer
10/8/88 letter to Committee from Sharon Luedecke
10/8/88 letter to Sharon Luedecke from Alan Roy Sefton
10/8/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Tom Shapcott
10/8/88 letter to Sharon Luedecke from Tom Shapcott
10/8/88 letter to the Committee from the Eleanor Dark Foundation
10/8/88 letter to Mrs L Brady, 1 Craig St, Thirroul, from Wollongong City Council
12/8/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Andrew Moore
12/8/88 letter to Sharon Luedecke from Andrew Moore

15/8/88 letter to Sandra Darroch from Pam Robinson
August /88 letter to Commissioners of Inquiry from Robert Darroch
15/8/88 Notes of meeting, Wollongong City Council, (with plans)
18/8/88 Submission to Commissioners of Inquiry from the National Trust of Australia
18/8/88 letter to Sharon Luedecke from Warren Roberts
letter to Heritage Council from Warren Roberts
23/8/88 Submission to Commissioners from Robert Darroch, Save Wyewurk Emergency Committee
23/8/88 Submission to Commissioners from Margaret Barbalet
24/8/88 letter to Robert Darroch from Raymond Southall
6/9/88 letter to Robert and Sandra Darroch from Bruce Steele
13/9/88 letter to Robert Darroch from Raymond Southall
15/9/88 letter to Raymond Southall from Robert Darroch
29/10/88 letter to heritage Council from Pam Robinson
3/11/88 Postcard to Sandra Darroch from Manning Clark
3/11/88 letter to friends of Wyewurk from John Lowe
5/11/88 letter to Heritage Council from John Ruffels
letter to Peter Collins, Minister for the Arts, from David Martin, Wollongong City Council
7/11/88 letter to Heritage Council from Sandra Darroch, Save Wyewurk Committee
8/11/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Committee from the Staff, English Department, Australian Defence Force Academy
8/11/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Committee from E Hankin
8/11/88 letter to Save Wyewurk Committee from Y Namamshi, Japan
letter from Barry Pearce Art Gallery of NSW
11/11/88 letter to Friends of Wyewurk from Peter Kiernan
1/12/88 letter to Robert Darroch from Raymond Southall
2/3/89 letter to Ian McManus MLA, member for Burrageorang from Wollongong City Council
10/3/89 letter to Ian McManus from Joseph Davis
21/3/89 letter to Robert Darroch from Commissioners of Inquiry
10/4/89 letter to Heritage Council from Loine Brady, 1 Craig St Thirroul
16/4/89 letter to Leonie Kramer from David Martin
16/4/89 letter to Patrick White from David Martin
19/4/89 letter and submission to Commissioners from David Martin
23/4/89 Wollongong City Council: Notice of Motion
31/5/89 Memo to Evan Williams from Robert Darroch
MAY REPORT FROM THE COMMISSIONERS OF INQUIRY for Environment and Planning re Wyewurk
2/6/89 letter to members from Save Wyewurk Committee
13/6/89 letter to David Hay, Minister for Local Government and Planning from peter Collins, Minister for the Arts
14/6/89 letter to David Hay from Sandra Darroch
23/6/89 postcard to Sandra Darroch from Manning Clark
18/7/89 letter to Sandra Darroch from Minister for Local Government and Planning
21/9/89 and 22/9/89 Report on calls from Tony Prescott and to Patricia Forsythe

AGM and Talk

Friday November 27, 1998 at 5.45 pm.

Room 1a, Trades Hall

4 Goulburn Street

Sydney

Talk by Paul Eggert on "Grant Harvey, a Socialist Turned Fascist Sympathiser and *Bulletin Versifier*"

Followed by AGM and Chinese meal

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS TAOS (or Forget Derrida - What about Detext?)

By Dr Hunter S. Darroch

Being the author's account of his dogged attempts to deliver a paper at the Seventh International D.H. Lawrence Conference held in Taos in July, 1998

From Sydney, Lawrence approached Taos from the west – boat to San Francisco, train to Sante Fe, “motor” up the mountains to the ancient pueblo (“village”) of the grain-growing Taos Indians, then to the adobe house hospitably provided by his new “padrona”, Mabel Dodge Sterne, who was currently queening it over the surrounding artists’ colony with her live-in husband-to-be, the statuesque indigene, Tony Luhan.

“We motored here 75 miles from Sante Fe across the desert,” Lawrence told his Australian friend Annie Jenkins in a letter written a few days later. “The place is 6000ft up, so one’s heart pit-a-pats a bit. I haven’t got used to it yet. It is sunny, and hot in the sun, but the rain is beginning. But still I haven’t extricated all of me out of Australia.”

I, on the other hand, homed in on Taos from the east – Singapore Airlines to London, United to Denver, then the stopping-bus to Taos, which, I was pleased to discover, rhymes with louse, rouse or souse.

From Denver – a pocket-Chicago, transposed to the foothills of the Rockies – the TNM&O (Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma) bus cruised south down Interstate 23 at a steady 70 mph through the well-heeled suburbs and satellites of “the Mile High City”, with the Rockies rearing up on the right, still snow-flecked, even though the temperature outside was over 100 Fahrenheit (the south-west was in the grip of a record heat-wave).

At Walensberg, three hours and a dozen stops later (bypassing Massana, home-town of its eponymous Mauler), the bus swerved sharp right and began the slow ascent up to the 7000-ft pass through the Rockies. The now white-tipped mountains loomed another 7000ft or so above us.

Semi-desert turned to pine forest, then, as we descended onto a vast, mountain-ringed basin-plateau, gave way to pasture and, further on, reverted to desert-bush again. Three hours and another dozen stops later on and Taos was hazily discernible, squat-

ting in the lee of its own set of foothills, a straggly ochre-coloured settlement set in a sea of grey-green sagebrush.

“It is a weird country, this high desert plateau covered with pale, yellow-flowering sagebrush, broken by deep canyons where rivers flow,” Lawrence wrote to his other West Australian correspondent, William Siebenhaar. “We have got a very charming house on the edge of the desert, one mile from the Mexican plaza and three miles from the old Indian pueblo. There are about 600 Indians in the pueblo – very nice they are.”

Today there are 6000 or so people in and around Taos, some of them of Indian descent, but mostly in the tourist and craft industries – and, of course, lots of “artists”. It’s still *au fond* an artists’ colony, and the countryside about is dotted with their habitats and studios, while the shops and galleries of Taos itself bulge with their paintings, rugs, pots, figures, books, poems, carvings and other products of their varied talents.

The Americanised Taos we see today (rather than the centuries-old Indian settlement and later Spanish-Mexican colonial overlay) was founded only late last century by two Yankee illustrators whose waggon broke down the other side of the Rio Grande canyon (700ft-down, a few miles east of town). They wandered into Taos, liked the place, and told their buddies back east (“Has it got *atmosphere!*”).

No longer the mainly Indian village they stumbled on, nor the mix of Spanish-colonial haciendas and adobe studios Lawrence found on his arrival in September 1922, modern Taos is strung out, haphazardly, on either side of the main road that runs for 10 miles or so from one side of town to the other (though most of the galleries and other touristy outlets cluster round the plaza at the northern end).

The local architecture is as distinctive as it is uniform. Almost every building, from the drive-in



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Fear and Loathing

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Bank of Taos, to the local cinema-complex, to the endless string of hotels and motels and take-outs, is unrelievedly mock-adobe, which means rendered-cement-over-brick, daubed a standard pinky-brown, with ersatz log-ends protruding from their back-lot facades. *Easy Rider* could easily have been filmed here - and, indeed, Dennis Hopper himself bought Mabel Dodge's house in the 1970s. Only the ubiquitous, cement-brick Wal Mart stands apart, in solitary, utilitarian defiance to Taos's otherwise civic-pink conformity.

The Sagebrush Inn - the (somewhat unusual) venue for the Seventh International D.H. Lawrence Conference - was typical, though boasting a genuine "old Mexican" central part, the new mock-adobe additions spanning out, taking in a spanking-new associated Comfort Suites motel, which housed some of the overflow Lawrentians from places as distant as Korea, Sweden, Australia and Zululand (though the majority of the hundred or so attendees were Americans).

The Sagebrush's accommodation, it must be said, was a distinct upgrade on that provided at the Sixth DHL Conference held at Nottingham two years previously. Instead of the spartan, monk-like cells of a university college there, we at the Sagebrush swanked about in spacious, well-appointed suites equipped with all mod-cons, including cable TV, air-conditioning and mini-kitchens (though not, most inconveniently, with any Internet facilities - communication-wise, we might as well have been in the Congo).

"Well here we are in the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave," Lawrence told his sister-in-law in late September, 1922, "but America is neither free nor brave, but a land of tight, iron-clanking little wills, everyone trying to put it over everybody else."

This sudden change of heart was due, partly, to Lawrence's contact with Mabel Dodge, and was to lead in December to his quitting Taos and moving to a remote log cabin far up in the mountains behind the town, where he wintered in the cold and snow, which he found preferable to the comforts of his

domineering padrona and her inbred artists' colony.

We know that Lawrence was not a naturally gregarious person - even his wife found him difficult to live with - and the company of trees were to him more congenial than human contact.

Indeed, it was his interest in such companionship that occupied my first few days at the conference, for I arrived to find that the handsome conference program had slotted me in for a paper I had not planned to give.

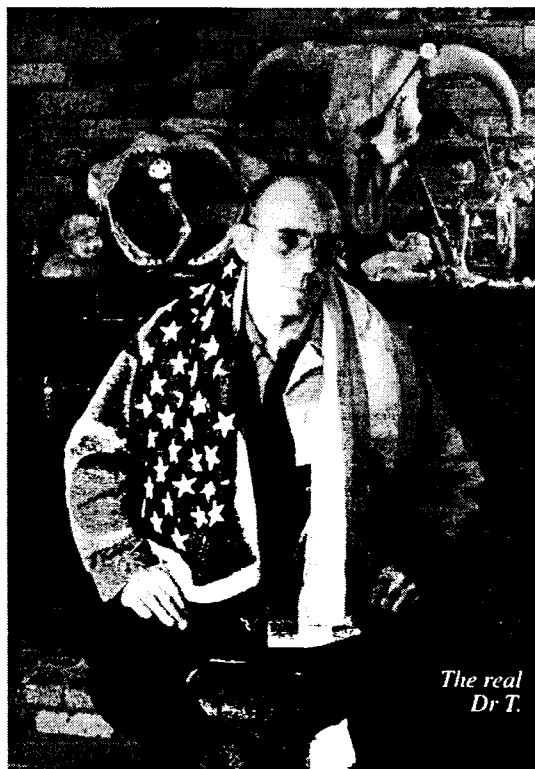
This was something of a blow. For the past several months I had been lucubrating over an address intended to sink forever any genuinely-held doubts about the so-called Darroch Thesis. It was to put to the literary sword those "sceptics" who had foolishly cleaved to the CUP orthodoxy, as laid down by Professor Bruce Steele in his Introduction to the CUP *Kangaroo* and the chapter on Lawrence in Australia in the CUP "official" biography of Lawrence recently put out under the authorship of Uni-

versity of Kent academic. David Ellis. It was to be Darroch's bid for literary, or at least Lawrentian immortality.

Yet, even so, I had entertained some reservations.

At the previous DHL conference I had unveiled, with proper colonial deference, my argument that the CUP edition of *Kangaroo* had been terminated prematurely (subsequently reinforced by a less deferential article published in the *DHL Review*). At Nottingham this had gone down like the proverbial lead balloon. I had been somewhat concerned that a similar fate might greet my Taos paper on the provenance of the secret army plot. As well, such conferences are expected to be fairly amicable occasions, and I had no wish to curdle the junket, so to speak.

So I had taken the precaution of sending off to the conference organisers a text of my proposed secret army paper, accompanied by a note saying that if they thought it too controversial, I could alternatively give an introductory talk on Lawrence in Ceylon and Australia, thus setting the scene for his arrival in Taos and the New Worlds of America and Mexico - which was the supposed overall theme of





A wing of the Sagebrush Inn - what is real and what a construct? (Note the protruding logs, right.)

the 1998 conference.

No, no, came back the reply. A bit of controversy would enliven the event. Good thing. Go to it. So that's what I arrived with, tired and put out (initially there was no room for me at the Inn, for they had mislaid my reservation), on the Saturday evening before the Sunday night opening of the conference.

In my suite I broke out my bottle of Scotch (the bus had been "dry", so it had been almost 12 hours since alcohol had passed my parched lips) and flicked through the programme. There I was in session 27 on Wednesday - "Twenties Lawrence" - sandwiched between a paper on "The Death of Maurice Magnus" and "*The Boy in the Bush in America*" [!]. I was put down to give a talk on "Lawrence's Response to the New Worlds of Ceylon and Australia".

Hmmm, I thought. Problem here. A breakdown in communications? Second thoughts? Surely not deliberate sabotage? Then, the further ramifications began to creep in. A set-the-scene paper delivered three days after the conference opens? What could I possibly talk about? By then we would have had such papers as "Celtic Cycles Recycled in *The Horse-Dealer's Daughter*", "Buddenbrooks and the Brangwens", "Animism in *St Mawr* and *The Escaped Cock*", "Lawrence, the Womb and Cooper's *Deerslayer*", "Lawrence, Silko and Southwestern Multiculturalism" (Silko - wasn't that a brand of cotton?), "Lawrence's Canadian Connections" (Canada? Lawrence?), etc, etc. Bit hard to go back to Ceylon and Australia from there.

Besides, where would my "Nothing to Sniff At - the Secret Army Plot in *Kangaroo*" fit in? I didn't

see a convenient gap anywhere - indeed, any gap at all. The session on *Kangaroo* was already full - in fact, I was due to chair it, and read Sandra's paper during it (she had succumbed to a tummy bug *en route*, and been obliged to return to Sydney). To inject my paper there would have compounded a session that was already looking a touch incestuous. Then there would have to be an announcement: "The paper Robert Darroch was to give...will now be...this means we will have to reschedule...etc". Disruptions like that wouldn't win me many hearts amongst the Lawrence establishment.

That evening I was pondering my dilemma over a New Mexican steak and a bottle of Cotes du Rhone in the Sagebrush's hacienda-style dining room when I recognised a familiar face at the next table. It belonged to Howard Booth, from the University of Kent (where David Ellis hailed from, though The Man Himself had not turned up to hear my riposte to his account of Lawrence in Australia - "You'll have the field to yourself!" the conference director, Earl Ingersoll, had chortled in an email to me). Howard I knew from the previous conference at Nottingham, so, as he too was alone, I invited him to join me and share the *bon vin rouge*.

We chatted politely, principally about the schism I had discerned at Nottingham between the British and North American Lawrence academics over the CUP edition. There had been almost a boycott by the Americans of the previous conference, apparently over the way the CUP had been doling out the prestigious Lawrence text-editing jobs to the Brits (and their colonial acolytes) rather than to U.S.

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Lawrence scholars. Glancing through the Taos programme, the Brits seemed to be mounting a counter-boycott, much as the Russians had boycotted the LA Olympics in retaliation for the Americans ostracising the Moscow Games. We agreed it would be interesting to see evidence of the spat during the current conference.

As we were exiting the dining room we passed a table of other Lawrence scholars, and Howard introduced me. Straight away my sensitive antennae detected what I took to be a slight coolness in the air, a chill that seemed, rightly or wrongly, to hang around me whenever, over subsequent days, I mixed with the other conferencees. One delegate even remarked on hearing who I was: “So you’re Robert Darroch. I thought you were just a myth.”

To say that I was beginning to feel like Adof Eichmann doing the room at a bar mitzvah would, of course, be an exaggeration. Nevertheless, my reception at the Sagebrush did bring to mind a function I had attended in Melbourne in 1976 in the aftermath of the Whitlam dismissal.

I had been sent down to cover a conference organised by Gareth Evans to pick over the sacking’s constitutional ramifications, and was asked along to a Labor cocktail party by my paper’s political corre-

spondent, Paul Kelly (who was then married to future Labor Minister Ros Kelly). “And what do you do, Mr Darroch?” asked one of the Labor bigwigs. “At the moment I’m writing editorials for *The Australian*,” I piped up, a trifle mischievously. As *The Australian*’s anti-Whitlam editorials (which I had refused to write, and had in fact gone off, interimly, to scribble for another rag) were regarded in Labor circles as a primary cause of their beloved Leader’s demise, you might imagine the consequent drop in room temperature.

So I went back to my Sagebrush suite – which then began to take on, to my paranoid mind, the ambience of a leprasorium – and wondered what I should do. My earlier wariness over the wisdom of unveiling the results of my hard-earned secret army research before what I was beginning to discern as an unappreciative, perhaps hostile audience were returning. Clearly prudence now demanded I essay something less dove-cote-ruffling. Nor really was a “set-the-scene” talk a viable alternative, given my Wednesday slot.

However, unbeknownst to the other delegates present, I had a third arrow to my Lawrentian quiver (here I recall what David Ellis had said at Nottingham two years earlier when, over a convivial drink at the college bar, I had answered his query as to what my enigmatically-entitled conference paper –



The hungry sheep look up and are not fed: a gathering of conferencees awaiting enlightenment

"The Mystery of the Missing Full-stop" - was actually about: "You don't mean to say you do textual analysis, too?" he had remarked, incredulously. That "too" had stuck in my craw for some time afterwards).

Well, if circumstance demanded, as it now apparently did, I too could wax tangential, along with the rest of them, for I had, for some time, been working up an egregiously arcane theory about Lawrence, one involving his possibly plagiaristic relationship with trees. Yes, I decided, that would cover the situation. And so I set to work.

While this effort took up much of my time on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, I did get to some of the sessions and conference functions (though I was careful to leave my name-tag off). I was punctilious in attending those involving our President, Paul Eggert, who was one of the few welcoming faces there (Keith Cushman being another exception, along with Hugh Witemeyer and Rosemary Howard). He chaired one of the early sessions, "News of the CUP Edition", on the Monday morning.

I was rather interested to learn what the CUP was going to do about their wrongly-ended *Kangaroo* edition, but there was no mention of that. Instead, Andrew Brown, the publisher of the CUP definitive edition of Lawrence's works, told us, ruefully, that had it not been for the Japanese (who apparently, and for reasons that remain a puzzle, suck up about half the world's Lawrence output), the whole edition would have been a financial catastrophe, and that anyway they were now curtailing it (ie, the CUP "definitive" edition would not lay down authoritative texts for all his works).

Brown (who had arrived from Trumpington Street with a trunkful of CUP editions which he was trying to flog off to conferencees at discount rates) went on to make it quite clear that there was no likelihood of the CUP reissuing any of the texts. *Kangaroo*, presumably, would remain authoritatively incorrect - in fact it had already been regurgitated as a "popular" Penguin, also featuring the incorrect text (and whose editor, who was present, gave me a very shifty, not to say shitty, look when Paul introduced us).

Meanwhile I was also out exploring Taos, on a bike I had hired for the week. I was keen to sample the local cuisine. I had once subscribed to a magazine called *Hot Chilli*, which was published out of nearby Sante Fe, and which was devoted to the use of chilli in food. Sante Fe was reputedly the hot food capital of the world, in much the same way that Taos was the terracotta pot capital of the world. So I did the rounds of the local eateries.

I don't know what you, dear reader, think about Mexican food, but I can assure you that once you've

been introduced to a burrito and the two sauces ("Green or Red?") that go with it, together with its range of stuffings ("Chicken or Beef?"), then you've pretty well scaled the heights of gastronomy as far as this corner of the globe is concerned. There are variations on the theme (tortillas, enchiladas, etc), and of course "chilli" (beans plus mince plus chilli), but Graham Kerr country it's not. Admittedly it's an advance on damper and charred roo, but if our local folk had stumbled on a sauce, then they would be right up there with Taos's Guadalajara Grill and its numerous mock-adobe clones. I was soon reduced to making the long pedal down the main drag to the plaza near which I had found a neat little Chinese diner that did a very good hot-and-sour soup, cheap and hearty. Even in Taos, mutlicutluralism has its compensations.

Don't get me wrong - Taos had many nice aspects, too. Like most of America it's efficient and fairly cheap, and the people are generally hospitable, though they do tend to give you an odd look when you start to speak. The alcohol is potable, the roads spacious, the sidewalks (such as they are - walking is almost an unAmerican pastime) clean, and everything seems to work. Yet I must say that Lawrence did have a point about those wills - a lot of Americans often seem more interested in telling rather than listening.

By Tuesday my new talk was going reasonably well, and so I made it to session 22, "The Spirit of Place". What had caught my eye here was the title of a paper to be given by Michele Potter of the University of New Mexico/Taos: "The Pines: An Eco-Critical Approach". Trees...pines...Lawrence - had someone else happened upon my discovery? I had to find out (with luck it would be of academic interest only - "Eco-Critical" looked very theoryish).

But it was not theoretical or even academic. It was mainly about the big pine tree in the front yard of the log cabin where Lawrence allegedly wrote *St Mawr* and some of his other few American works. She cited, most usefully, a list of works that were written, quite literally, under the influence of trees: *The Fox* (an apple tree in England); *The Lost Girl* (a lemon tree in Italy); *Fantasia* and *Aaron's Rod* (various fir trees in Bavaria); *The Plumed Serpent* (a willow tree in Mexico); *St Mawr*, *The Woman Who Rode Away* and *Pan in America* (the pine tree at Kiowa Ranch); *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (umbrella pines outside Florence); and *The Man Who Died* (a pear tree in Switzerland).

So my new theory wasn't that crazy after all. Someone else had stumbled on the Lawrence/tree nexus. It was like Crusoe finding Friday's footprint

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John Worthen snapped at the Sagebrush with a fellow conferencee, Virginia Hyde (no kin of the dreaded Mr Hyde, see p25)

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in the sand – I was not alone! I returned to finish my paper with new-found vigour, taking time out, however, to catch Paul Eggert's talk also given on Tuesday morning on "Lawrence, Travel-Writing, C.S. Peirce and Orientalism".

I have to confess that the name of C.S. Peirce was one I had not previously come upon in my now extensive study of D.H. Lawrence, and I dare say it was – as Paul himself conceded – one that few other Lawrentians would have encountered either. Peirce was an obscure 19th century philosopher whose work, if I understand correctly (and I may not), pre-figured some of the literary theorists that are so popular in post-grad Eng Lit courses nowadays.

Which brings me to one of the fundamental divides (and you could hardly miss it) that I found at the Taos conference – one might call it a difference between "high" Lawrentian discourse and "low", or ordinarily-intelligible, discourse. I don't think I'm particularly thick, but I confess that a lot of what goes for literary theory goes over my head, and with some clearance.

Take session 24 on Wednesday, "Lacanian Lawrence". There were three papers given: "Will Brangwen and the Lacanian Sublime" by Luba Slabyj of the University of Alberta; "Lacanian Musings on *Sons and Lovers* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*" by Gena Chandler of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and "*The Man Who Loved Islands: A Lacanian Reading*" by Ben Stoltzfus of the Univer-

sity of California, Riverside.

This, patently, was "high" discourse. I had by happenance caught a couple of lit. theory talks at Nottingham, and had come away little the wiser. One's enjoyment, or even appreciation, of, to take just one example, *Kangaroo*, did not to me seem advanced one jot or tittle by what the literary theorists had to say on the subject, which, as far as I could gather, didn't seem very much, if indeed any at all.

So at Taos, in between composing and revising my new paper, I, to my shame, dodged such talks as "The Unspeakable Democracy?: Schleiermacher, Lawrence and Derrida" and instead sought out what few "low" presentations as I could find, such as Lynn Talbots' excellent "The Lawrences' Mexico – Then and Now (slide lecture)". And, to be honest, I must report that while such "low" sessions appeared packed to the gills, those featuring Lacan, Derrida, et al attracted mainly the structuralist tendency.

But I, of all people, should not poke borak at the Derrida aficionadoes, for when it came to delivering my paper on Wednesday, my worst trepidations were confirmed, for the turn-up was of Lacanian, not to say Schleiermacherian, proportions. Indeed, John Worthen, the main CUP rep (and a most distinguished Lawrence scholar), kindly volunteered to go out into the conference corridors and attempt to waylay some passing Lawrentians in an effort to rustle up a more respectable audience, but without any success.

Which was a pity, not the least for my fellow

speakers, the first of whom I warmed to immediately. For Louise Wright of the Community College of Philadelphia took as her subject the truth about the death of Maurice Magnus, that curious remora who clung to Lawrence in Florence and Southern Italy, and for whose *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion* Lawrence not only found a publisher but wrote an Introduction (which Lawrence described as the best bit of writing, as writing, he had ever done).

Louise had taken the trouble to check the police and other local reports about Magnus's suicide on Malta and had found that the received biographical accounts were inaccurate (you can see why I warmed to her). I congratulated her on her investigative journalism and rose to give my address, whose aboreal focus must have come as quite a surprise, pleasant or otherwise, to John Worthen and the one or two others present who had come, I believe, expecting to witness my anti-CUP broadside, which, had I loosed it, would have resulted in as satisfying a spectacle as HMS Victory blowing an Egyptian bum-boat out of the water. I thanked the Gods that watch over people like me that at Taos at least I got one thing right.

As I sat down to what could be called muted applause – the sound about eight sets of hands patting together – and Margaret Storch of Framingham State College rose to speak about *The Boy in the Bush* in America, a rather irreverent idea struck me.

"I know what's going on here," I suddenly thought. "These papers aren't really about Lawrence. This conference is about people's pet subjects and how they might be related, however tenuously, to anything Lawrentian." And the more I thought about it, the more the conference came to take on in my mind the trappings of an all-breeds literary dog show, which just happened to be held in the Lawrence pavilion.

Baltimore University's Jane Keller, for example, introduced her pet poodle which was called Simenon (as in "Lawrence and George Simenon"); Michigan's William Lockwood's mastif was called Merton (as in "Thomas Merton's Assessment of Lawrence's Spirituality"); Webb Colleges' Richard Harris's hound was called Cather (as in "Lawrence and Willa Cather"); SALIX's John Poynter's pup was called Shepard (as in "Lawrence and Sam Shepard"); Clark University's Bonnie Grad's fido was called O'Keeffe (as in "Georgia O'Keeffe's Lawrentian Vision"); California State's C. Lok Chua's peke was called Laye (as in "Lawrence and Camara Laye"); Hood College's Courtney Carter's cur was called Saussure (as in "Lawrence vs Saussure"); Lyon University's Jacqueline Gouirand had two entries, Barthes and Kristeva (as in "*Lady Chatterley* Through the Eyes of Barthes and

Kristeva"); while other miscellaneous dogs at the show included mutts called Girard, Bakhtin, Simurgh, Cooper, Rosalie Fry, Gail Godwin, Robinson Jeffers, and of course the silky called Silko.

In common with other dog-owners, most of the Taos attendees were there, not really to admire the other dogs, but to parade their own pets, and were by no means taken by the good points of the other exhibitors' entrants. Most of the post-paper questions also reflected this, the matters raised being mainly couched in terms of how a particular paper's subject might be related to the questioner's own area of interest or expertise. Not so much an exchange of views or news as taking a sniff and raising a hind leg. Thereafter, I began to look at my Lawrentian running-dogs in a new and more interesting light.

A pleasant feature of this year's conference programme was what are called in conferenceese, "side trips". These included a tour of Mabel Dodge's former house, a visit to an exhibition of Lawrence paintings ("Don't give up your daytime job, Bert."), and an expedition to Kiowa Ranch, the subject of some controversy recently (as mentioned in our previous issue of *Rananim*).

This was not the Del Monte log cabin where Lawrence retreated to around Xmas 1922, but rather the one given later to Frieda by Mabel Dodge - in exchange for the MS of *Sons and Lovers* - and to where Lawrence returned after a his ill-starred trip to England in 1924, and to where Frieda herself retired to live out her long life after Lawrence's death in 1930 (and where his ashes are allegedly entombed).

Now in the care of the University of New Mexico, it was rumoured to be in disrepair and in danger even of being turned over to non-Lawrentian purposes. Happily we found it in fine fettle, and the vanloads of conferencees disported themselves around its tiny rooms and surrounding terrace-lawns as promiscuously as a charabanc of seasoned day-trippers on a regular outing to Blackpool or Coney Island. The big pine under which Lawrence reputedly wrote *St Mawr*, etc, was a focus of much attention, despite the killjoy actuality that Lawrence would have, as I later pointed out in my conference paper, preferred a more remote - from Frieda - trunk with which to commune.

Behind the log cabin was a steep pathway going up to the Lawrence "shrine", the whitewashed, Phoenix-adorned alcove in which the alleged Lawrentian ashes are encased in concrete (by Frieda, to stop Brett or Mabel running off with them). As I respectfully mounted the steps for the obligatory pilgrim's visit, pausing and panting in the thin air

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(Lawrence's supposed TB couldn't have been too bad in 1924 to have exerted himself around the environs of Kiowa), I found at the top the daunting but splendidly-hirsute figure of Hugh Witemeyer of the University of New Mexico, standing guard, like Milton's two-handed engine at the door, ready to smite anyone with a word of criticism. I was too bushed to do anything but recall our near-encounter (he missed the ferry) in Sydney when our society went on its 75th-anniversary-DHL-visit trip to Narrabeen/Collaroy, before I retreated back to the front gate and one of the return mini-buses (thoughtfully laid on by NMU) to Taos.

In the bus, as it joggled and jiggled down the bumpy road back to town, I encountered a rather gregarious, engaging gentleman attired in Western gear who conversed in a hearty manner with the other passengers in a broad Texan accent. To my astonishment it turned out to be Professor L.D. Clark, CUP editor of *The Plumed Serpent*, and probably the senior Lawrentian attending the conference – perhaps even, following the death of my friend Warren Roberts, the doyen of Lawrence studies, at least in America.

I had been particularly keen to meet him in person (though I had imagined him a tall, ascetic academician, dry and austere), for he had been instrumental not only in getting my “Not The End of the Story” article published in the *DHLR*, and had read favourably a previous but unpublished article

for the same publication about the secret army plot of *Kangaroo*, but he had actually come up, in response to a letter from me, with the conclusive evidence indicating that when Lawrence wrote “End of *Kangaroo*” after the Seltzer (and now CUP) mid-sentence ending, it referred not to what went before, but to what went after (ie, the Secker, and correct, ending).

I wanted to thank him in person, and so, as we debussed, I introduced myself. It was assuredly not a brush-off that I got – he was far too gentlemanly for that - but there was certainly no sign of that camaraderie and fellow-feeling I had come half-way around the world expecting. And so here, at this point, I will own up to my real motive in attending the Seventh International DHL Conference in Taos.

I had been, I must now report, rather cold-shouldered at Nottingham two years earlier, particularly by the UK academics, and especially those associated with the CUP. Those handful of Americans who had shown up – such as Chuck Rossman of Texas U and the *DHLR* – were, on the other hand, quite friendly, even comradely. I had concluded that, as a consequence of the Brit-Yank CUP schism, I would be better received by my fellow-CUP-outcasts - for I, too, had been passed over - in the good ol' US of A (“Give me your CUPless...”). So that was largely why I had come, and spent all those thousands of dollars getting here.

By now, however – with the conference not yet past its half-way point – doubts, very serious doubts, concerning the advisability of my coming had not merely begun to creep in, but were oozing under my



Dr David Barnes, whose excellent photographs, downloaded from his Website, accompany this article

suite door, spreading across the tiled floor, and climbing halfway up the bedpost.

What was going on here? Was some plot afoot? Could it be that a rapprochement was in the air? Now that the CUP project was (literally) finished - and there would be no more juicy CUP bones to be snapped and snarled over - were the rival Lawrence packs about to conclude a peace agreement?

That famous Low cartoon depicting Hitler and Stalin shaking hands over the prostrate body of Poland flashed into my mind. Had the CUP's Herr von Worthen flown in to sign a Taos equivalent of the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact? Now that they were marching in step again, was there a secret clause by which the Darroch Thesis was to trampled under their twin jackboots? No, no, this was getting too paranoid.

And yet, the more I thought about it, the more the pieces fitted into place. Most unusually, my only Australian ally, Paul Eggert, was leaving the conference two days early. Was it that he didn't want to stick round to witness my fate? Then again, two of my most-supportive American allies - Chuck Rossman and David Farmer - hadn't turned up at all. Had they got a whiff of what was in the offing, and decided they couldn't be a party to the sell-out? Then there was that suspicious-looking "Plenary Panel" on the concluding day of the conference: "The Battle of the Atlantic - English and American Lawrence Studies". That sounded ominously truce-ish.

Suddenly I could see it all...if the two sides were about to...the Brits would demand...the Yanks would be obliged to...then I would become...horror! A succession of dim or doubtfully-real figures passed before my mind's eye...the pariah, the scapegoat, the sacrificial lamb, the meat in the sandwich....

As I lay on my locally-crafted, pseudo-Indian bedspread, staring saucer-eyed at the mock-log ceiling, I conjured up various scenarios (yet maybe they weren't mock...perhaps they were real logs and genuine Indians - by now what was actual and what a construct, or a deconstruct, was starting to blur in my febrile mind).

One line of possible revenge especially appealed to me. It revolved around the story of the Greek millionaire who, last century, had decided to try to break into the New York social swirl. He constructed, at enormous expense, a swish mansion on Fifth Avenue, opposite Central Park, sent out invitations to the legendary 400, laid on the biggest party of the decade, and waited, bib-and-tucker, at the front door with his good lady for the neighbours' carriages to turn up. But came there none. Not a single solitary socialite.

The two of them, so the story goes, waited for a few hours, then sent the servants home, and just

walked away, leaving the champagne, the food-laden tables, the house and everything, behind, abandoned. Next day New York's tramps started moving in. From then on the mansion became a progressively rotting hulk, a mecca for the city's homeless, a festering carbuncle on the elegant purlieus of uptown Manhattan. They say that today Harlem is largely the consequence of the Greek's condign act of revenge. Substitute the Lawrence mafia for Fifth Avenue, and the Darroch Thesis for the Greek's mansion, and... Hmmm.

That felt better. I cycled off to my Chinese café for a bowl of hot-and-sour, with extra chilli.

Next day, back at the Lawrence pavilion, more dogs were being paraded. I waited in my suite for my turn to come, then slunk back into my den to watch cable TV, chucking the Wednesday evening performance of "I Rise In Flame, Cried the Phoenix", together with the entire next day's sessions, thus, alas, missing Michael Kramp's "Lawrence, L'écriture feminine and the Deleuzian 'Stutter'", Fereshyeh Zangenehpour's "The Fabulous Simurgh and the Phoenix Quest", and even Maria Aline Seabra (it was almost worth coming to encounter that name) Ferreira's "Lawrence and Cixous".

Then Friday rolled on, and came my second big moment - session 40, "Kangaroo", which I was to chair. I kicked off with a few introductory comments about the importance of Lawrence's Australian sojourn in the context of the conference's "New Worlds" theme, remarking that some of the first few weeks that Lawrence had spent in Taos had been devoted to revising *Kangaroo*. Not the slightest flicker of interest disturbed the ranks of blank faces in front of me.

Then I delivered Sandra's "Lawrence in Western Australia" paper. In contrast to the turn-up at my talk, this session was not only well-attended (there had been no call for John Worthen to go out and beat the Lawrentian bushes) but her paper - which admittedly fell into the "low" discourse category (it, too, was illustrated) - was also well-received...indeed, someone from the DHL Society of the UK came up afterwards and wanted a copy of it to reprint in their journal, a sure indication of its deviant intelligibility.

Then I introduced the other two speakers who had chosen to discourse in what I now regarded as the dingo section of the show. Neil Roberts from the University of Sheffield (a rare Brit!) spoke learnedly on "*Kangaroo* and the Narrative of Contingency" and then Barnard Turner of the University of Singapore spoke on "The Prefiguration of America in *Kangaroo*". The latter paper included a quick skate

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The Mexican band - The Eleven Amigos - with one element of its brass section on the right. I am at the bar, snaffling the last bottle of red. The band is preparing to encircle our table. The last hope of escape is marked, top right.

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through the extant Australian literature on *Kangaroo*, and cited Hope (one article), Pritchard (ditto), Wilding (three), Lee (one), etc, but omitted any mention of Darroch (26 articles). Par for the course, I thought.

However, my attention was beginning to drift away from matters Lawrentian, so I didn't even bother to point out to him that the novel's "Thirroul" ending ("Goodbye Jaz, I'm finished on this side.") was probably not, as he maintained, a reflection of Lawrence's rejection of Australia, but more likely a reference to DHL's pet saint, St Lawrence, who was toasted on a griddle and had, allegedly, remarked to his tormentors: "Turn me over brothers, I'm done on this side."

By now, after five days of conferenceville in Los Taos, my naive belief that the purpose of the convocation had anything to do with such old-fashioned ideas as "truth" or "fact" or "reality" had pretty well flown out of the Sagebrush's wide windows and dissipated into the crisp New Mexican air. *Full many a thesis is born to blush unseen...*, I mused idly to myself as I watched a tribe of little prairie dogs scurry in and out of their burrows in the yellow sand outside my verandah door.

After all, what does it matter what *Kangaroo* is actually about? Who cares what really happened to Lawrence in Australia (compared, for example, with the possible link between Schleiermacher and Lawrence)? So the standard text of *Kangaroo* is wrong

— so what? Maybe this is what post-modernism is all about.

It was getting warm, so I went inside and switched on the History Channel, which by chance happened to be showing a UK documentary about a Jewish lady from Tel Aviv who had gone back to Poland to check out a family rumour that her father had owned land in and around the town near where the Auschwitz extermination camp had been built, in which many of her relatives had perished.

The Poles hadn't been very helpful, but she did eventually track down a document that apparently supported her claims, which, if confirmed, would have made her quite rich, at least in zlotys. But it implied that Auschwitz might actually belong to her. In the end she went back to Israel without pursuing the matter. It was better not to know. Yes, I nodded to myself, sometimes you don't even want to know.

So, in this new mood, I cycled off down the dusty highway for my farewell bowl of hot-and-sour, skipping the afternoon's "Battle of the Atlantic" plenary panel.

As I pedalled along, some lines of poetry kept coming back to me ("...*Of other care they little reckoning make/Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast/And shove away the worthy bidden guest...*"). I knew where they were from - Milton's *Lycidas* (I'm rather partial to elegies, the Darrochs being a melancholy lot). But why were these lines haunting me now?

Then it hit me. They were part of the passage cited by Ruskin in *Sesame and the Lillies* to illustrate the necessity of knowing what an original text was meant to convey. Ruskin's point was that few

who read those famous lines (“...*Last came, and last did go/The Pilot of the Galilean lake...*”), realised that they were in fact an attack on the established church, and its corruptions (“...*Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold/A sheep hook...*”). Of course I realised now why they kept coming back to me.

Indeed, like Lawrence in Sydney, perhaps I too had come up against in America something sinister - maybe even the Taos equivalent of a secret Lawrentian army!

I cycled on, with the passage's concluding lines echoing in my mind (“...*they draw/Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread/Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw/Daily devours apace, and nothing said...*”). The grim wolf of Trumpington Street - yes, I liked that image.

At dusk, as the sun set behind the mountains that I would have to cross again tomorrow, I donned my finery and made my way out of the bunker and down to the main hall of the mock-adobe conference centre for the climactic Friday night event - the fiesta!

By now I had gone totally feral and had reverted to the slit-eyed, sidling persona of the Aussie journalist whose true identity I no longer had any need to disguise. The pseudo-literary Dr Jekell had swallowed the dread potion (Dewars, actually), and Mr Hyde, gonzo journalist, had emerged, hairy-handed, from his lair.

Almost 40 years experience in my profession has taught me, at such and similar functions, to first case the bar, ascertain how long its supply of alcohol might last (a wise precaution, as I got the last bottle of red before they had to switch over to weak beer and dilute margaritas), then post myself at a table close to the exit.

To my pleasant surprise a couple of other conferencees decided to join me (perhaps they, too, anticipated the possible need for escape), then, without bothering to find out who I actually was (I think they were from Baltimore, and no doubt assumed I was a stray British academic), began to chat about this and that, as though I was one of them.

Alas, our burgeoning acquaintanceship was interrupted by a passing Mexican band, togged out as extras from *The Three Amigos*. They gathered round the table and gave us a rendition of some well-known Mexican airs, their brass section - which included at least three trumpeters - choosing to showcase their virtuosity about six inches from my left ear.

When they had finished we got up as a table and made a retreat to the centre of the room. As we did so, the band formed a procession behind us - for our move must have been interpreted as a Mexican

gesture of approbation - and they rewarded us with a reprise of their performance when we were freshly seated!

Conversation was clearly impossible, so we joined one of the twin conga-lines sashaying towards the Mexican feast (queuing to the average American being as alien as pedestrianism).

The repast's cornucopian splendors I will gloss over, for in actual fact the event itself was quite pleasant, and when the band got far enough away (they serenaded each table in turn) even *La Cucaracha* took on a rosier hue, though admittedly by then I had disposed of the Californian *bon vin rouge*, and was even beginning to consider if my paranoia might have been just that. Then again, maybe not.

As the evening wended its way towards my bedtime, and the lowing herd of Lawrentians prepared to make its farewells, I and my new-found friends from Baltimore at last discovered that we had something in common - not Lawrence of course, but the Internet. The husband of one of the conferencees was helping build Internet II, the new high-bandwidth network that could obviate the expense of personally attending future functions such as this.

We discussed the concept of Internet literature, and we wondered how Lawrence would have handled it. If only he had had a Pentium II and some decent software, what wonders - *Lady Chatterley* on CD! - he could have wrought (for Lawrence himself was deeply into multimedia, even for the 1920s, as he could not only write, but paint, compose music, throw pots, and even knit - indeed, it's suprising he didn't get on better in Taos).

Before retiring, I decided that perhaps I would endeavour, after all, to deliver the “Nothing to Sniff At” paper that I had come 12,000 miles to give. So I put it in an envelope and gave it to Howard Booth to take back to David Ellis in Kent - at least one person might see what I had come all that way to say, though I expect that, should he read it, it would afford him little pleasure. (I had earlier dumped my load of Rananim on a table in the main hall, and left them to fend for themselves.)

Next morning I checked out, and made my way down to the Greyhound bus depot to await the 11am TNM&O back to Denver, and then United back to Sydney. Not once during the long trip home did I think of Lawrence.

Post-modernist Footnote: much of the above may well be incorrect. It might not have been Interstate 23. The Mauler's home town may be misspelt. So might Walenberg, or whatever. The Penguin chap might not even have been there. And the lady from Tel Aviv might be filing a land claim at this very moment. Who can be sure? It doesn't matter anyway.

Down in the Woods, Something Stirred

The following is the text of the paper which ROBERT DARROCH actually delivered to the Taos Conference. The opening part is a reflection of his need to produce something vaguely relevant to the title of his allotted Conference program topic - "Lawrence's Response to the New Worlds of Ceylon and Australia". We might publish the paper that he did not give in some future issue.

Lawrence left Europe in February 1922 with the intention of trying to write "an Indian novel" in Ceylon, to where he had accepted an invitation to stay by his American acquaintances, the Brewsters.

We have no indication what sort of novel he had in mind, except that he had previously expressed a desire or intention to write a novel about each of the continents.

In any case, he found no inspiration for novel-writing in Ceylon. The climate and the natives repulsed him, and he wanted to leave almost as soon as he arrived.

However, Lawrence had been flirting with mysticism, and, had circumstances been different, we might have had a Singhalese equivalent of *The Plumed Serpent*, perhaps with Buddha replacing Quetzacoatl. Or even *A Passage to Ceylon*.

Alas, it was not to be. Nevertheless, to get a better picture of his intentions before setting out for the New Worlds of the East, the Antipodes and the Americas, it is useful, I believe, to glance backward.

Certainly he was having problems completing his novels. After *Women in Love* a hiatus had set in. *Mr Noon* stalled, a planned Venice novel came to nothing, and *Aaron's Rod* proved difficult to finish.

And he was trying new things. *Sea and Sardinia* - a travel book based on a diary technique - was a successful experiment. Also he was thinking about technique. One particular work, written just prior to embarking for Ceylon, is of particular interest...*Fantasia of the Unconscious*.

Perhaps the most interesting passage in *Fantasia*, from the point of view of the themes he would elaborate on after quitting Europe, comes towards the end of the book where he writes of what he calls

"man's duty after 35" - "Deeply fulfilled through marriage, and at one with his own soul, he must now undertake the responsibility for the next step into the future." He explains that his life up to this point "is only a preparation for new responsibilities ahead, new unison in effort and conflict, the effort to make,

Lawrence and friend



with other men, a little new way into the future, and to break through the hedge of the many."

I think we can deduce a number of things from this. He was leaving Europe with the intention of starting what he described as a new cycle in his life. He had decided to expose himself to new places and new experiences in order to find fresh material for

his writing, particularly his longer fiction.

The new cycle also had a social or political dimension. The "breaking through the hedge of the many" consisted of exploring a new relationship "in a spirit of unfathomable trust and responsibility, service and leadership, obedience and pure authority. Men have got to choose their leaders, and obey them to the death. And it must be a system of culminating aristocracy, society tapering like a pyramid to the supreme leader." There was a need for what he termed "a new order".

Of course, Lawrence had had some exposure to a new order in Italy. He had observed some street violence in northern Italy. But there was nothing in what he wrote up until now that was particularly approving of what was happening politically in Italy in 1920-22. It seems more likely that he came to this authoritarian position by his own road, via war-time disillusionment with democratic politics.

On arrival in Ceylon Lawrence was immediately injected into a colonial ambience. Although he was staying with the American Brewsters at Ardenaree, high above the man-made lake in Kandy, all around him were the trappings of colonial authority.

The main fruit of his stay was his poem, *Elephant*, which describes the Raja Pera-hera that was specially convened to mark the visit of the Prince of Wales to Kandy on March 23, about a week after Lawrence's arrival. He describes the exotic occasion:

*But the best is the Pera-hera, at midnight, under the tropical stars,
With a pale wisp of a Prince of Wales, diffident, up in a small pagoda on the temple side
And white people in evening dress buzzing and crowding the stand upon the grass and opposite
And at last the Pera-hera procession, flambeau aloft in the tropical night, of blazing cocoa-nut
Naked dark men beneath...*

Ordinarily, one might have expected Lawrence to have sympathised with the colonially-oppressed Singhalese, rather than with British officialdom, which had so recently victimised him in Cornwall and Derbyshire. But that was not his current mood. It was the pale wisp of a Prince he felt sorry for, and even identified with:

*I wish they had given the three feathers to me;
That I had been he in the pavilion, as in a pepper-box aloft and alone
To stand and hold feathers, three feathers above the world,
And say to them...Serve me, I am to be served
Being royal of the gods.*

It is clear that leadership was beginning to activate Lawrence's mind, vicariously at least. But there was another theme touched on in the poem that was to resurface, first in *Kangaroo*, then later in *The Plumed Serpent*...the theme of blood-consciousness.

The poem ends with this stanza:

*And to the elephants:
First great beasts of the earth,
A prince has come back to you,
Blood mountains.
Crook the knee and be glad.*

This theme of blood-consciousness had long been associated with the theme of darkness in Lawrence's thoughts and writing, and both were to deepen after he left Ceylon in April 1922.

It is of interest that Lawrence was attracted to the realm of darkness from an early age. He once wrote: "If I think of my childhood, it is always as if there was a lustrous sort of inner darkness, like the gloss of coal, in which we moved and had our real being."

Lawrence regarded this shadowy world not as something negative and destructive, but positive and creative. To him, the realm of darkness was a source of life and power.

Probably the first specific mention in Lawrence's works of the gods who inhabit this darkness is found in his 1912 poem, *Mutilation*. In this love poem - he was trying to lure Frieda away from her marital duties - he calls on the powers of darkness to bewitch her:

"dark gods, govern her sleep...make her lapse me-ward, make her, Oh Gods of the living Darkness"

At this early stage in his writing career, Lawrence was rather in awe of the gods of darkness. A little later, after crossing the Alps, he wrote: "First of all gods was the unknown god who crushed life at any moment...His shadow was over the valleys".

These awesome deities remained only dimly-perceived until around 1916, when Lawrence's war-time experiences apparently resuscitated his interest in their realm.

In Cornwall, round the granite rocks and dark moors, he detected "strange vibrations" and "old awful presences". He could feel "his dark, blood consciousness tingle to it again, the desire of it, the mystery of it...". He permitted himself to drift "back, back into the semi-dark".

In his 1920 novel, *The Lost Girl*, he also wrote about "the grand, pagan twilight of the valleys, sav-

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Down in the Woods

from previous page

age, cold, with a sense of ancient gods who knew the right for human sacrifice.”

Significantly, the effect of these dark influences on Lawrence was to dull what he called his “mind-knowledge” and heighten what he referred to as his “half-consciousness”. He could feel a “passionate vibration” invade him “making him savage too...[but] at the same time strangely sensitive and subtle...”.

It was in *Fantasia* that Lawrence talked about his growing obsession with the lower regions of the body. At one point he locates what he calls the centres of sensual comprehension in “two great poles” of the body, the solar plexus and the lumbar ganglia, where largely automatic processes were tuned into what he called “the life truth”. And it was also here that he detected something he described as “a darkly vital presence”.

Whatever it was, this dark presence seems to have accompanied Lawrence on the next leg of his journey - to Perth, Western Australia, where he arrived on May 4, 1922.

The topic of Lawrence and Western Australia is the subject of a paper by Sandra Darroch to be delivered on Friday, so I will not steal her thunder in this talk. But I will mention one incident that is important, and which he later incorporated into *Kangaroo*.

One night, while staying in a guesthouse in the hills outside Perth, Lawrence went for a walk in the bush. He was alone, and the evening was, as he put it, “raving with moonlight”. Suddenly he detected “something” among the trees. His hair began to stir with terror and he turned and fled. What was it? he asked himself. It must be the spirit of the place.

Spirit of place is a phrase often taken to mean that Lawrence could distil out of a landscape some essence, and put it down in words. But I think it should perhaps be taken more literally - I think that Lawrence did come across what he thought was a presence in the bush at Darlington that night.

Lawrence, as Richard Aldington remarked once, was much influenced by external stimuli, such as the moon (Aldington himself believed Lawrence suffered from “moon madness”)...and most especially, trees.

As Michelle Porter pointed out yesterday, Lawrence had a thing about trees. He almost always tried to write sitting under one. You might recall what he said in *Fantasia*'s delightfully-named chapter, “Trees and Babies and Papis and Mamas”: “I come out solemnly with a pencil and an exercise book, and take my seat at the foot of a large fir-tree, and wait

for thoughts to come...”.

It is my belief that what happened to Lawrence in Sydney and Thirroul, the seaside resort 50 miles south of Sydney where he wrote his main Australian novel, *Kangaroo*, can only be explained in terms of him being at times under the influence of forces whose exact nature are, to say the least, something of a puzzle.

In this regard I would remind you of several odd things that Lawrence said about his novel *Kangaroo*. After first describing it as “a romance”, he later referred to it as “this gramophone of a novel”. What did he mean by that?

And in the chapter “Volcanic Evidence” he describes his day at Wyewurk, the cottage he rented at Thirroul. After listing his morning chores - making the fire, sweeping, getting in the coal and wood, making breakfast, helping wash up, and so on - he goes out and tries to write. But clearly he is encountering problems, and is reduced to recycling earlier material, and pinching bits from old newspapers, etc.

Then he says something quite significant. He says that nowadays, when he taps his unconscious, his devil just lashes its tail, angrily. And he asks: “Is this devil after all my god?” What does he mean by this, and by the phrase “tapping his unconscious”?

There are two major themes in *Kangaroo* - leadership and dark gods. I think that Lawrence brought both these themes with him to Australia. They were, however, affected and altered by what happened to him in Australia. And he took them on to America in those altered states.

What affected both these themes was, I believe, his contact with, on the one hand, the Australian countryside or bush, and on the other the political movement he so ingenuously stumbled upon on his arrival in Sydney on May 27, 1922.

This is not the occasion to go into the genesis of the secret army plot of *Kangaroo*, except, in this context, to make one explanatory comment.

It has always puzzled me why Lawrence did not go back and revise or rather disguise what he had written of what he was progressively discovering about the real secret army on which his Diggers Clubs and Maggie Squads are so obviously based. I now suspect that the answer to this puzzle will be found in what is implied by “tapping his unconscious” and “this gramophone of a novel”.

But let's not beat about the bush, as we say in Australia. *Kangaroo* is a fascist novel, or at least a highly authoritarian one. Lawrence takes the theme - the Fuehrer principle - pre-figured in *Fantasia* and paraded in *Elephant*, and attaches it to the movement he stumbled upon in Sydney. It may well be that one reason why the movement's leaders let him into their secret is that he brought to Australia those

right-wing authoritarian ideas that were beginning to take hold in Europe, and which the movement's leaders were themselves attracted to.

But Lawrence's fascination with authoritarianism did not survive the writing of *Kangaroo*. A dose of actual proto-fascism revealed to him the true nature of what he had been flirting with. In probably the novel's most telling sentence, he summed up what happened when the scales fell from his eyes:

It was as if the silvery freedom suddenly turned, and showed the scaly back of the reptile, and the horrible paws.

While the Australian experience revised his ideas about politics and leadership, it deepened his interest the realm of darkness and the gods therein. Whether in the land or the people, it seems he detected in Australia the same dark presence of *Fantasia*, and who now in Thirroul became the Dark God Who Enters From Below.

Who or what was this infamous subterranean Dark God? What relationship did it have with his demon - the ghost who, for example, turned what he described, contemptuously, as his "compositional" poems into something more elevated?

Later, in New Mexico, Dorothy Brett observed Lawrence going off into the woods equipped with exercise book and pencil and returning later with the product of the morning's writing. She asked him if he had any clear vision of what he was going to say when he went out to write. He replied: "No. I never know when I sit down just what I am going to write. I make no plan, it just comes, and I don't know where it comes from. Of course, I have a general sort of outline of what I want to write about, but when I go out in the mornings I have no idea what I will write. It just comes, and I really don't know where it comes from."

I contend that that is a very significant statement. For me, it begins to explain some otherwise inexplicable conundrums about, particularly, *Kangaroo*. This surely is what he is referring to, in part at least, as "tapping my unconscious" and "this gramophone of a novel".

Yet it does not explain the Dark God Who Enters From Below. An obvious speculation is that the Dark God consists of, or was influenced by, something sexual. Could it be that what Lawrence referred to as his demon or ghost - and whose input was such an essential ingredient in his creative processes - was activated by some hormonal stimulus?

I recently came across a book that touches on this aspect of Lawrence's creativity. It is *Seeing in the Dark*, by Bert States, published last year by YUP. Although States, who was Professor of Literature at

the University of California, Santa Barbara, does not mention Lawrence, he describes the process of literary creation in terms similar to Lawrence's theorising in *Fantasia*.

States starts with the observation that the process of dreaming is analogous to the process of literary creation, particularly the way in which the dream takes narrative form. He writes: "...the dream pops into visual life and the evolution of [its content] begins. From then on the dream follows its own inclination...To put it another way, the dream occurs at the pole opposite the repressive mechanism, which belongs to the day world."

Lawrence believed that his creative urge - his demon - was located in or at a pole of unconscious activity that could not be readily accessed by the conscious mind, but which might be turned on, fitfully, via some unexplained, perhaps hormonal, process - a process that seems to have involved putting himself partly into some dream-or-trance-like condition, if possible in close proximity to a friendly tree.

Lawrence himself may not really have wanted to know what the mechanism was that turned on his creative tap, that allowed him to "tap his unconscious" and transcribe the result on to "this gramophone of a novel". Yet in *Kangaroo*, and in his letters from Thirroul, he indicated that once it stopped, it was exceedingly difficult to turn on again.

Yet when it was turned on, it flowed with prodigious facility. I have just finished analysing the holograph manuscript of *Kangaroo*, trying to work out, from, amongst other things, the breaks in his handwriting, what Lawrence wrote and when he wrote it.

At Thirroul he wrote up to 6000 words a day - over 25 manuscript pages a session. The "drys" apart, it came out easily and fluently, with hardly a correction. He was, I believe, processing actual experience into fictional form, using some peculiar creative engine, of his own, or his demon's, devising. These are deep waters.

But if you want to catch a glimpse of how Lawrence wrote fiction, then I suggest *Kangaroo* repays a careful study. It is more than Lawrence reacting to a New World. It is like looking over his shoulder as he put pen, or pencil, to paper. It certainly sheds new light on *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, and his other faltering attempts to explain what he was doing when he wrote creatively.

When he was in Western Australia, Lawrence told a young assistant in a Perth library to take her time reading his novels, for they were complex and difficult to understand. I must say, having spent over 25 years trying to understand one of his novels - his 1922 novel, *Kangaroo* - that its complexities are such that many of them still elude me.

Bits....

There is an interesting footnote in P.N.Furbank's *E.M.Forster: A Life* (Cardinal, 1988, p101) concerning Forster's trip to Italy in 1903. Forster took his mother and her friend Mrs Mawe to Florence in 1903. The footnote reads: "Cecilia Mawe, a friend from Tonbridge days. She was an enormously tall woman, who published waltzes under her maiden name of Cecilia Friend. Her husband had been struck by lightning in Australia." Another Friend connection?

A Bit in the very first issue of *Rananim* reads: *One unusual Thirroul inhabitant was that mysterious ASIO operative Dr Michael Bialoguski, who brought the Russian spy Vladimir Petrov in from the cold. A few years previously, in 1948, he was working in Thirroul as a local GP.* On the eve of the Queen's Birthday Weekend, your Editor caught a different train to work in order to meet a group who were using this train to launch an extended visit to the Far North

Coast. On board was one old friend who after discussing events of the intervening years and learning of the existence of the DHL Society revealed that his first client on entering practice as a solicitor was Mrs Southwell, owner of *Wyewurk*. Mrs Southwell had received an offer to purchase *Wyewurk* from Dr Bialoguski and was keen to proceed as she wished to settle her affairs due to her age. A price was agreed, and contracts were drawn up. However Dr Bialoguski procrastinated and this angered Mrs Southwell who cancelled the sale. Mrs Southwell's family owned property, notably a corner store, in Epping and her family home still stands in High Street, although most of the other houses have been demolished for redevelopment.

Due to the computer problems mentioned in the last editorial, there were a number of typos and errors in the last *Rananim*.

Perhaps the most significant were the two missing words in the last sentence of Jean Temple's letter. This should have read:

"Stranger still, my grandparents' best friends were a Mr and Mrs Lacey of Heanor, Derbyshire."

A recently-published travel book (*On the Road to Santa Fe* by Henry Shukman) chronicles the American author's visit to Taos which he describes as "no place for the hyper-active".

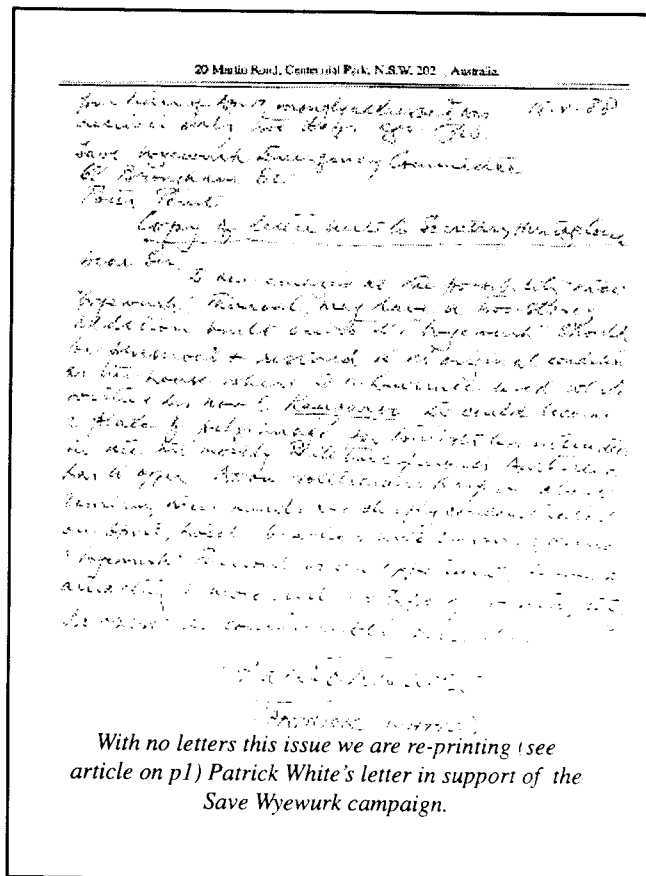
Indeed, it was so sleepy that it "seemed to accept every foible, every laziness, every wasted hour, so that nothing seemed wasted."

Gore Vidal tells many wonderful stories in his 1995 memoir *Palimpsest*. One concerns Edith Sitwell (Jean Temple's own Sitwell/Eric Linklater anecdote - "Madly" - will be published in our next issue). Vidal recounts one of many lunches he had with Dame Edith at the Sesame Club in London: "We shall have a red lunch. I have no money, you know. It all goes for lunch here.' She would not let me pay. The red

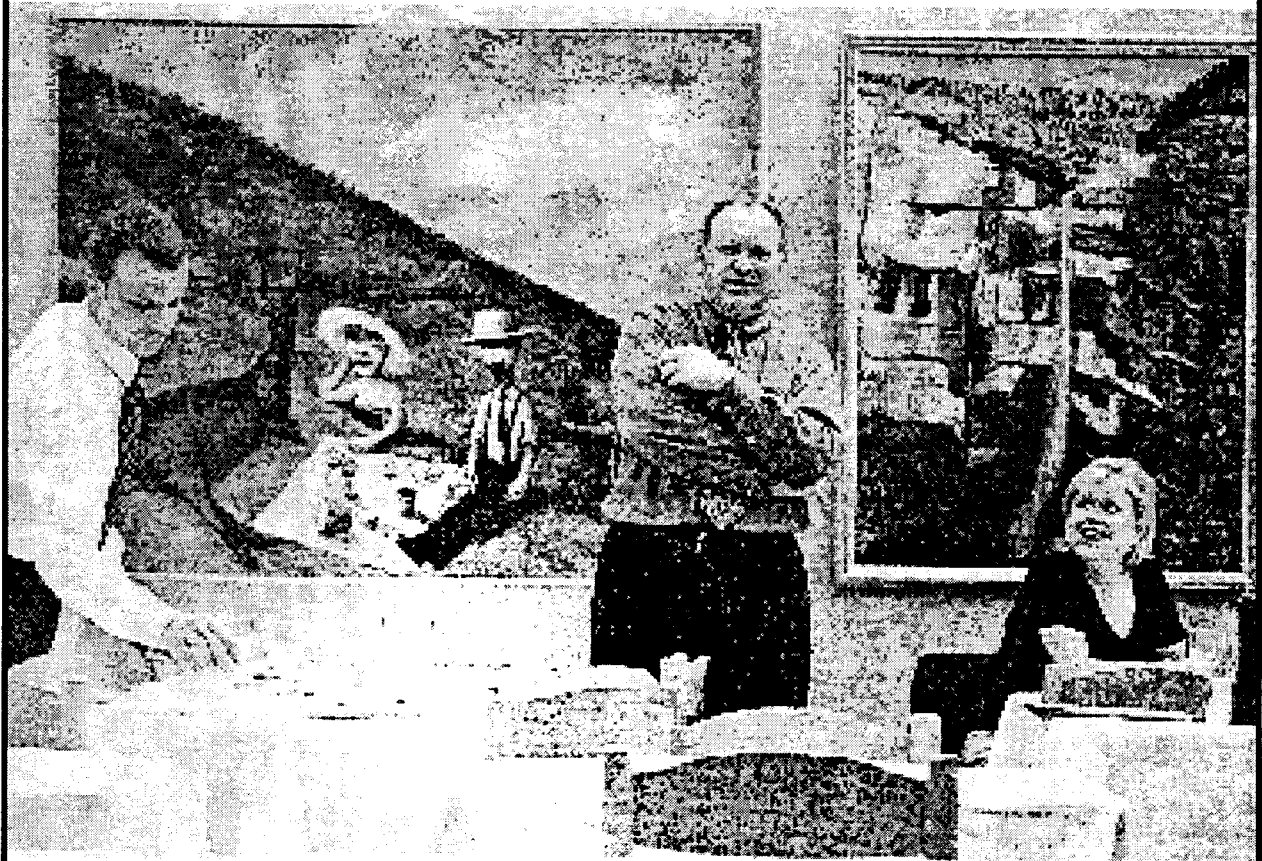
lunch was always lobster and strawberries and a bottle piece of red burgundy.

Towards the end of one splendid lunch we discussed the *Lady Chatterley* case. Lawrence's novel was being prosecuted for obscenity and most of literary London was in court, defending the novel and condemning censorship. 'We never forgave Lawrence, of course. He based a character in that book on poor Osbert, and we had been so kind to him.'

'Actually,' I said, the wine working its way into my brain, 'Lawrence did *not* write *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. It was entirely Truman Capote's work. You can tell from the style, and, of course, the dates,' I added, in a burst of creative scholarship, 'conform.'" Give or take half a century.



The 'Roo Who Came to Dinner



Garry Shead's Lawrence series was in the news again recently, as illustrated by this photo from the *SMH*. Garry was one of 15 leading Australian artists asked to contribute painted plates to mark the 15th anniversary of one of Sydney's most artistic restaurants, Lucio's in Paddington (formerly the combined restaurant/gallery, The Hungry Horse). The restaurant already has one of Garry's Lawrence paintings hanging on its walls. It depicts Lawrence, Frieda and the ubiquitous 'roo

in an idealised, presumably Thirroulean landscape, enjoying a picnic - and sort of South Coast version of *Dejeuner sur L'Herbe*. The repast looks somewhat spartan, which probably explains the pained expression on the 'roo's face. The man in the blue shirt standing in front of the picture is Lucio Galletto, mine host at the eponymous Lucio's. Other artists displayed on his walls, and contributing to the 15 *plats des annes*, include Colin Lanceley, also a South Coast resident.

Puzzle Corner

Last issue's question was which famous Australian poet composed the following review?:

The Ego of Aaron

*To those who hold decomposed souls in abhorrence
This wink is as good as a nod.
Look out for frightfully deep Mr Lawrence,
And likewise avoid 'Aaron's Rod'.*

Answer:

This poetic advice appeared in the *Sydney Sun* of 25 October 1922. It was composed by the 19-year-old Kenneth Slessor. This item was reproduced by the kind permission of the poet's son, Paul Slessor. In his letter Mr Slessor regretted that the copyright to his father's extensive poetry would expire in 25 years. " (I) can't help reflecting on the irony that if Ken had invented and patented a tin-opener or mousetrap, the family would never lose the rights!"

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 house where he stayed at Thirroul, and which is portrayed in *Kangaroo*. The Society plans to arrange regular meetings, seminars and outings, and will also publish three issues annually of its journal, *Rananim*.

If you are not already a member, or if you know somebody who would like to join, please fill in the 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, NSW 2000.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

THE D.H. LAWRENCE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
PO BOX 100, MILLERS POINT, NSW 2000, AUSTRALIA

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....

..... POSTCODE:

TEL: FAX:

e-mail:

I enclose a cheque for \$A30 (\$A50 for overseas members)

A *Rananim* Website Mooted

At a recent meeting of the Committee of the D.H. Lawrence Society of Australia, the matter of a new Web site was discussed. Our Society already has a vestigial site hanging out there in cyberspace, but it is very old and out-of-date both in content and appearance.

What use is a DHL Web site? you might ask. The answer is not 100 per cent certain. We know that quite a lot of scholars and others interested in Lawrence have accessed our early site over the past two years. Most of these people live in the USA, Japan, the UK and Europe. One lives in northern China. Many are students keen to know more about *Kangaroo*.

But none of us has the time to devote too many hours to developing a site. If any of you would like to volunteer – please do.

But in the event of nobody volunteering, we can do one fairly simple thing. This is to convert some of the articles in each issue of *Rananim* to HTML and put them up with enticing invitations for people, no matter where they live, to join the Society and thus subscribe to the full edition of

Rananim.

Our membership is dropping and with little Lawrence being taught by schools and most universities in Australia, an entire generation will soon not know the name Lawrence. And in today's laid-back society, illicit readings of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* no longer occur.

As a result, we need to trawl the overseas market for members. The Japanese, in particular, are showing an increasing interest in Lawrence. So why not see if we can get some of them to join via our Web site?

We will experiment over the coming months with which way to go. Should we be ambitious and try to convert existing Pagemaker files to HTML so that selected articles from *Rananim* look more or less as they do on paper, with photographs? Or should we simply convert the original text of the articles into HTML and forgo the embellishments?

If you'd like to suggest anything, please email: sandra@cybersydney.com.au or snail mail to: The D. H. Lawrence Society of Australia, PO Box 100 Millers Point, Sydney 20000.