

Soundings

EDEN KILLER WHALE MUSEUM

Established 1931

Newsletter November, 2023

In the Wake of Matthew Flinders

Bern Cuthbertson, sailor, sail commercial fisherman, fish cannery operator/innovator, adventurer, great citizen and Friend to EKWM.

As that list, is somewhat abridged, Bern was a man of many talents and left few maritime pursuits untried. A quick read of the easily accessible bits of his story makes you want more. Oh, to do an oral history with him. I have no doubt that this has been done by a fortunate few, especially as his the history conscious Tamar River area of Tasmania is his home ground.

Bern passed away on 13th December, 2013 aged 89, with his love for the sea in no way diminished.

On October 10th 1798 Matthew Flinders, now a lieutenant, accompanied by Surgeon George Bass and several crew, set out from Sydney in the sloop *Norfolk*, of which Flinders was given command. It was to be a voyage of discovery and cartography. With orders "to sail beyond the Furneaux Islands and should a strait be found, pass through it to south end Van Diemens Land."

The 25 ton *Norfolk*, was built on Norfolk Island of norfolk pine.

Here on the homefront, the dual anniversary, that of the 225th anniversary of Flinders' remarkable journey and and Bern Cuthbertson's late twentieth century bi-centenary e-enactment of that event, slipped by unheralded.

October 17th marked twenty five years since the plaque at the wharf, was unveiled to mark the Bern and his crew re-enactment in the (replica) *Norfolk*

In European history of the continent, given the time and tools, few can eclipse the achievements of

Matthew Flinders. It was to commemorate and celebrate the centenary of the east coast journey, including Twofold Bay, of this great mariner, that Bern was sailing

Bern Cuthbertson saw the wonder of Flinders, generally, the south-east coast to Tasmania, particularly so. Bern had passed the biblical lifespan of three score years and ten when he went full steam ahead into this undertaking. He was the driving force behind the building of the replica from priceless Huon and Celery pines and the re-enactment was therto pursue.

I don't have clear, detailed recollection of the lead up to the plaque placement. I do remember there was plenty of discussion as to the wording and some last minute changes. So too, there was a small, supplementary plaque affixed at a later date. This

was placed. if my memory survives, after a complaint was received. It adds little to the story.

Notwithstanding I had a hand in the plaque happening, but now, look at it with disappointment. While I know its about Flinders and apart from the local significance, the fact that Flinders was the first to use the name Australia is reason enough to recognise, Bern's unveiling of the stone and achievement needs to be more prominently displayed

If someone a bit more tech savvy than myself chose to set up a QR code to tell more and direct to more information sites???? It would be great



Matthew Flinders
Per Mitchell Library



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This was the unveiling party of October '98. I can't positively identify those other than Bern, the older gentleman. I have tried at different times to put names to the photograph. The little girls might likely have little girls of their own, about this age in 2023'

Note the Norfolk Island flag used for the occasion. The Norfolk pine tree in the background. Is worth inspecting a quarter of a century one a look at it now.....

Continued overleaf

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This may be something we could "unveil" on 16th March, 2024 as part of a 250th anniversary of Flinders' birth, would add considerably to a commemoration and also an ongoing, local appreciation of the great mariner's, achievements.

The Launceston Examiner reported on 11th October, 1998, regarding the Sydney beginning of the Cuthbertson adventure the previous day, "A Wave of Adventure"..."the crew waved from the deck of the Norfolk as the sloop nears the Sydney Heads on the journey to Tasmania to retrace the voyage of Bass and Flinders"

The replica is now a much treasured exhibit of the Bass and Flinders Museum in George Town, Tasmania Museum



There is another information board on the site, added in later years, by whom, I have no knowledge. It

tells a good story of the whaling industry. But what a pity that it wasn't placed in another spot around the wharf, adding to the attraction to the area and leaving that space to the Flinders and Cuthbertson achievements to be featured without distraction.

We have had an Historic Marker beside the "skinny" wharf en-

trance, to mark the vicinity of the Raine whaling position. Needing renewal it was taken down and was caught up in the fires/covid/ internal management problems but will return to situ.

Coincidentally, in the early hours on 28th November on the Overnight programme there was an interview with a bloke who had a vast knowledge of Flinders. Half asleep, by morning I had forgot the bloke's name and most of what he said!



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November 2023

PAUL BRUNTON

During the early part of the newcentury, we were fortunate to be able to form a friendship it with Paul Brunton. I have no recall of how it came about, though I remember his friendly disposition and his willingness to share his vast knowledge of early European discovery and settlement.

Paul held a management position at the NSW State Library, again my memory fails as to the actual office title that went with his job.

The state Library holds many treasures of James Cook and Matthew Flinders in the collection..

On the first of two occasions Paul addressed us was of Cook, to which we issued a fairly broad invitation. It was well supported. Those attending were treated to a vast outline of Cook's life, his journeys successes and those parts that he would have wanted to end otherwise.



Paul Brunton

With that success still in mind we thought it would add to the lustre of the the forthcoming Whale Festival. Accordingly, we arranged with Paul to visit again, with Flinders as the subject.

Whether it was of little interest with so much else happening, or we may not have promoted it satisfactorily, but the support was abysmal. My embarrassment; maximum.

Paul. of course was as gracious as always, enjoying what we had to show him around the town before boarding the plane back to Sydney on the Sunday.

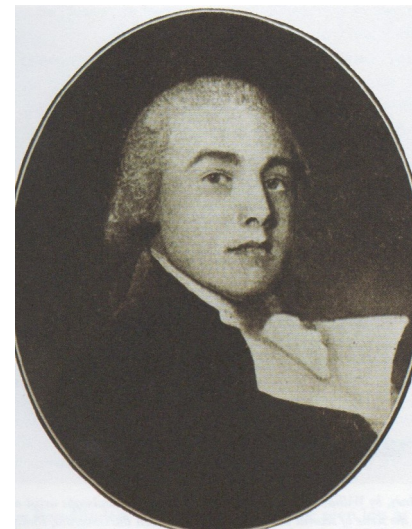
I read of Paul's retirement from the Library a few years ago, though I imagine he would then move into a volunteer phase.

Matthew Flinders who, after all his efforts did not receive the accolades due and passed away at the young age of 40 years. He left hand

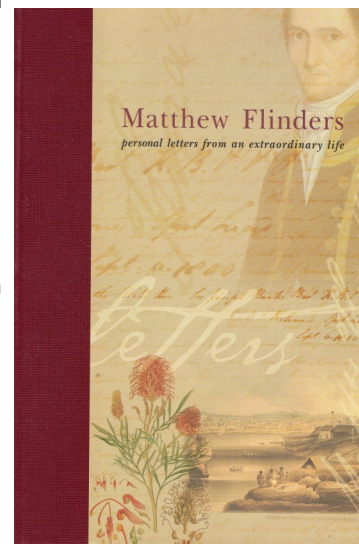
written letters two major collections which came into the possession of the SLNSW, One came from a bequest of Flinders' grandson, with a condition that a statue of his Grandfather be commissioned for siting at the Library. This was duly completed and its centenary would be about now.

A sponsorship by the Reid Family Charitable Trusts, allowed Paul Brunton to research the Library's collection and other sources to compile and edit, "Matthew Flinders personal letters from an extraordinary life", in which representations of documents are offered.

In the foreword, Alastair Goodlad writes, inter alia . "We should be grateful, then, to Paul Brunton, the Stae Library of NSW, and Hordern House For the insight into the life of Matthew Flinders through his letters. Paul Brunton has brought together the correspondence of the Mitchell Library, public collections in the United Kingdom and private collections in Australia. Though historians of Australian exploration have drawn on Flinders' correspondence for more than a century, this is the first time that many of the great navigator's letters to family, friends and supporters have been assembled in a single volume."



George Bass



Soundings

November 2023

Our Own Space Race

Congratulations are well deserved to Collection Manager, Angela George, her offside volunteer Stephanie Rawlings and all others who have brought the galleries to the class that they exhibit.

The wisdom of moving forward with the extensions is well and truly to the fore, even though the big move is yet to take place.

It is regarded as irrefutable, that as one ages, time gallops away at lightning speed. That notwithstanding, its hard to believe that the four year bell is due to be rung to mark what can easily be said is the toughest gig that EKWM has encountered. That everyone else suffered too, does not detract from our particular ration.

At this particular time o the 2019 calendar, fires were already causing alarm to those in the north of the state and the Blue Mountains. Our dose came to the town precincts as a new year "gift".

As the chip heap which had resembled a small volcano, barely cooled and people who lost homes and possessions were still contemplating those losses and the way forward, as accesses were still coming on stream, the big whammy hit. The "once in a century" world pandemic came to visit. And stayed. With the necessary cautions, we joined the focus on preventions, government regulations, all to be learned on the run.

Lock-downs were to be observed, staff to be considered, lack of income a given.

There is little doubt without the Job Keeper programme, restful sleep would have been even more challenged.

With what means we had, we endeavoured do as best we could towards our loyal staff. A mighty thanks to them.

Into this whale boil down pot, came the \$2m building start, the loss of long serving staff members and others in the finance section, who were not as skilled as they presented to be, creating havoc which has only recently been overcome And so it went.

To now a walk into the galleries, it offers not only informative source, that can handled by the disabled as easily as the able bodied. Increased visitation is covered, while importantly, maintaining a welcoming atmosphere

The big move is yet to cam. It will be handled with the same professionalism.

Congratulations all.

Our Calendar

December

7th Seabourn Odyssey Arr. 7AM
 13th Silver Whisper Arr.11AM
 18th Brilliance of the Seas Arr. 8AM
 19th School break up
 19th Silver Muse Arr.8AM
 22nd Silver Muse Arr 10AM
 25th Christmas Day, Museum closed
 30th Azamara Journey 10AM

January

3rd Crystal Symphony 10AM
 6th Seabourn Odyssey Arr. 7AM
 7th Disney Wonder Arr 09 AM
 9th Europa Arr 8AM
 12th Silver Whisper 08 AM
 14th Queen Elizabeth Arr 08AM
 15th Norwegian Spirit Arr 11AM
 17th Norwegian Spirit AM 2M
 22nd Disney Wonder Arr 09 AM
 28th Coral Princess Arr 9AM
 29th Vasco Da Gama Arr15.30

February

3rd Disney Wonder Arr 10 AM
 5th Azmara Journey Arr7.30
 8th Norwegian Spirit Arr 11AM
 10th Norwegian Spirit Arr 11AM
 13th Silver Whisper 07 AM
 14th Viking Sky Arr 8AM
 16th Viking Neptune 8AM

"Adieu, my beloved, be happy and ever believe me to be most affectionately and sincerely thy anxious husband"

Matthew Flinders. Closing words to Ann, Investigator, Port Jackson, 20th July. 1802.

Thanks all....

Jack

