

DICTIONARY *of* SYDNEY



www.dictionaryofsydney.org

Fare thee well

After seven years involved in the project, Shirley Fitzgerald has decided it's time to step back from the Board of the Dictionary. This great project was her idea and she galvanized the history community and other stakeholders to create the Dictionary of Sydney. The Board wishes to express its heartfelt thanks to Shirley for her intellectual rigour and drive, and her commitment to Sydney's history. Shirley has made a particular mark on the practice of public history in Sydney and we are all beneficiaries. The ongoing growth and success of the Dictionary is really a tribute to her vision. In handing in her resignation, Shirley wished the Dictionary "all the best for a brilliant future". All at the Dictionary are dedicated to maintaining Shirley's enthusiasm and commitment.



Santa's brought you a new Dictionary of Sydney

We've just made the new, rebuilt Dictionary of Sydney live at www.dictionaryofsydney.org, and there's lots of summer reading for everyone. Two new features have been added:

- Multimedia browse, enabling users to browse through the images, film and sound in the Dictionary, and
- A 'Cite this' link which provides the full citation information for every article, including the code to add Dictionary references to Wikipedia

There are also 42 new articles, thousands of new links and entities, and hundreds of new images and captions. Find out more about the rebuild in detail at our blog, [Looking up](#). We'll be posting about all the new material over the summer.

Image: Radio station 2CH's Children's Christmas party at the Trocadero, 22 December 1936 / by Sam Hood, State Library of NSW, Home and Away 30091



Our audience grows

We are very happy with the growth of the Dictionary's audience in our second full year of operation. Google analytics for the period 1 December 2010 to 30 November 2011 (compared with same period last year) are quite encouraging.

- 226,354 visits, up 54.39% on previous year
- 180,617 unique visitors, up 52.54% on previous year
- 468,671 page views, up 22.35% on previous year

Top entries for the full year were:

- Vietnamese, 5288 pageviews, up 141% on last year
- Surry Hills, 4217 pageviews, up 121.4% on last year
- Pemulwuy, 3263 pageviews, (only in for a few days last year)
- Darlinghurst, 2842 pageviews, up 189.94% on last year
- Long Bay Prison, 2758 pageviews, up 11.8% on last year
- La Perouse, 2741 pageviews, up 12.7% on last year
- Housing Sydney, 2540 pageviews, up 123.2% on last year
- Planning, 2240 pageviews, up 111.32% on last year

We also have growing numbers of people reading the blog, and following us on Twitter and Facebook. These are important ways to reach new audiences, and also part of the key performance indicators we must improve to retain our City of Sydney funding. If you are active on Facebook, or have a Twitter account, it would help us if you could like the [Dictionary page](#), and follow and retweet our tweets as well.

A Christmas gift - for the Dictionary?

The advent of Christmas and the New Year often prompt us to take stock, show our appreciation, and plan for the future. The Dictionary continues to gather together and connect Sydney's fascinating history for your enjoyment and your research - so why not send a little Christmas present to the Dictionary by making a [donation](#)?

The Dictionary of Sydney is not a branch of any government department or institution - the Dictionary is made possible through sponsorship and fundraising. The City of Sydney is a major government partner, and the SMSA has been outstanding in their support, but they can't pay for the whole thing. The Dictionary of Sydney Trust has to garner support through grants, sponsorship and philanthropic trusts. This is proving very difficult in the current fundraising climate and our superhuman efforts in fundraising this year have gone unrewarded.

As a result, the Dictionary's sustainability is in a precarious state. Our tiny team of paid staff will be working fewer hours next year, and we will be trying even harder to raise some more funding. But we need your support now. Donations to the Dictionary are tax-deductible and you can make a donation easily online at [Everday Hero's Dictionary page](#). If you like the Dictionary, and want it to keep going into the future, please make a donation. It will be the best Christmas gift the Dictionary can receive.

A new face for the Dictionary is coming

We've been toiling away on a redesign of the Dictionary's front page, and it should be revealed early in the New Year. It's been decided that the Dictionary needs a more integrated website, with the details of the Trust, fundraising, projects and teams, as well as the blog's ongoing posts and comments, brought together with the Dictionary's resources. All this good stuff should soon be available right on the front page at www.dictionaryofsydney.org. We'll keep you posted.

Image: Sneak preview of our new look



Changes in the guard

A number of our highly valued staff are moving on to other things, and we will miss them.

Paul Howard, who has been researching images for the Dictionary for some years, and has been working part time from England in the last 12 months thanks to the wonders of the internet, has taken a position managing a program for the National Trust (UK), placing contemporary art in historic buildings. Sounds like a great project, and we wish him all the best. Paul has also been artist-in-residence at Metal Culture in Southend, England, during 2011. You can keep up with his future career at <http://www.paulhoward.info>

Krissie Scudds, our tireless Communications officer, who brought the Dictionary into the social media world, and taught us all so much about marketing and audience development, has moved on to work for Mixed Media on the [SOYA \(Spirit of Youth Australia\) Campaign](#), amongst other projects. We wish her all the best with her new venture, and thanks for all the tweets!

Brendan Day, our Fundraising and Sponsorship officer, is stepping into Krissie's shoes and taking over the Dictionary's public face, which is a great help.

New issue of Sydney Journal

We have also published a new issue of [Sydney Journal](#) this quarter, with 10 new articles and suburb entries to add to the six previous issues. You can find Sydney Journal at [UTS ePress](#), and all articles are free to download.

Christmas in the Town Hall

Harry Rickards, actor, director and theatrical entrepreneur, liked to mark Christmas by feeding the poor. From 1904, he would stage a special charity matinee of his Christmas show at the Tivoli, and using the proceeds and his own funds, give Christmas dinner to 1000 poor Sydneysiders in the basement of the Town Hall, provided for free by the City Council.

After he died in October 1911, his wife, the former acrobat, trapeze artist and music hall star Kate Leete, continued the dinners in his memory for some years. The 1911 dinner was written up in the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

When the doors were opened they came with a rush. The Town Hall ushers drafted them without delay or confusion - men on the right, women in the centre and children to the left. The tables were decorated with palms and holly and Christmas bush, and Christmas bells, and looked most inviting.

The crowd just enveloped the floor like an army, and soon there was the merry clatter of utensils making play amongst Christmas ham and Christmas pudding. (26 December 1911, p 22)

The practice was continued by the family until at least 1917, when all the women and children were also given free tickets to a Tivoli matinee.

Image: Harry Rickards, SLNSW Mitchell Library P1/1449



Holiday greetings from us all at the Dictionary

We wish all our readers, authors, researchers, supporters and friends a safe and happy holiday season, and a great summer. The Dictionary office will be closed over Christmas - New Year and short-staffed in January, but we will be back on deck from February. We look forward to working with you, and hearing from you, then.

Image: Father Christmas at Manly Beach, 1970, National Archives of Australia, A1500, K26950



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