

Laperouse

Friends of the Laperouse Museum



Members Quarterly Newsletter

January-February-March, 1992 - Vol. Two, No. 3

President's Message

I welcome this opportunity, in my first message as the new President of the Friends, to extend warmest greetings to members, and thank those who attended the Annual General Meeting at the Lapérouse Museum on Sunday 17 November 1991, for electing me to office. A teaching assignment at the University of Papua New Guinea prevented my attendance at the AGM, but I shall look forward to joining you on Lapérouse Day when the French patrol boat *La Moqueuse* and tender *La Garonne* will be visiting Botany Bay for a ceremony at the La Perouse Monuments Historic Site, to be followed by a festival organised by the La Perouse community. Many distinguished guests will be visiting the Museum on this special occasion.

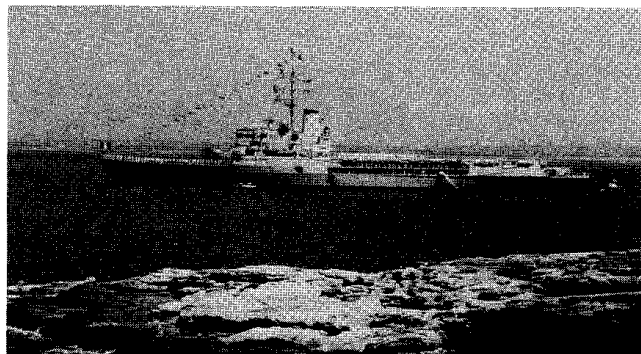
An important feature of the ceremony on Lapérouse Day will be the presentation to the Museum of a facsimile of one of the last despatches which Lapérouse entrusted to Capt. Arthur Phillip for transmission to France from Botany Bay in 1788.

The major goal of the Friends in 1992 will be to bring to fruition the project for the refurbishment of the central room of the former Cable Station, known as the Instrument Room, which will provide our association with an attractive and convenient location in which to hold exhibitions, and arrange receptions and related functions. Your participation in the events planned for Lapérouse Day will assist us in the realisation of our goal. I hope you will accept our invitation.

Peter Orlovich

LAPEROUSE DAY 23rd February, 1992

1992 is the 500th anniversary of one of the greatest voyages of all which led to the discovery of the continent of North America by Christopher Columbus. Not to be entirely overshadowed by this momentous event, Lapérouse Day 1992 promises to celebrate its own anniversary with a fair splash of pomp and ceremony.



The *Jeanne d'Arc* in Frenchmans Bay - 23rd February, 1988

This year there will even be a countdown and a reminder of the splendid Museum opening in 1988. On Friday 21st February, two naval vessels from the French Fleet in the Pacific will come to anchor in Botany Bay, to launch the celebrations and participate in the many activities planned for the week-end.

The La Perouse "grassroots" community headed by aboriginal elder Marjorie Timbery "dreamed an imagination wealth" to be shared as an experience at the Yalunga Festival (*Yalunga* in the Aboriginal language means Welcome). With music, singing and dancing, all kinds of nature related activities, celebrity appearances, a corroboree, market stalls, boomerang throwing, a fashion parade of resort clothes at 4.30pm and much more, it is sure to be a time "of remembering now for a new beginning... and gathering", as suggested by the Festival information sheet.

The crews of *La Moqueuse*, a patrol ship, and *La Garonne*, a supply and maintenance tender of 2300 tonnes, are looking forward to their visit and hope to meet as many of the Friends there as possible.

See page 4 for details of the Lapérouse Day celebration programme for Sunday 23 February...

Museum News

1992 has started with a new and exciting holiday programme. The "James Hardie Seasonal Ranger Programme" during January offers numerous guided walks of both natural and historical interest. The public has been very responsive according to Mishka Davies, the seasonal ranger for the La Perouse area.

The opening of the new map exhibition last November was a great success with a memorable talk by the visiting Director of the Maritime Museums of France, Rear-Admiral Bellec. Our thanks to Professor Clancy who has again generously lent the Museum precious items from his private collection.

On Sunday 16th February, Father Pat Hurley will be commemorating the

204th anniversary of Père Receveur's death with a mass at 11.00am. This year's Lapérouse Day will be celebrated in a special way. The French Ambassador, M. Philippe Baude, accompanied by the Consul-Général M. Michel Legras, will be delivering a gift to the Lapérouse Museum and two visiting French Navy ships will be anchored at Botany Bay. It promises to be an exciting event indeed!

A G M Sunny Sunday

The November grand picnic was favoured yet again by fair weather and fine company. The Friends' eminent and enthusiastic Honorary Life Member, Admiral Bellec, was on deck for the AGM. He gave a gently informative and amusing briefing on Professor Clancy's special collection of early French maps, on display in the Discovery Room for the international cartography conference.

The Friends and their guests were joined by the Mayor of Randwick. From Canberra came the First Secretary to the French Embassy, M. René Perraud and the Defence Attaché, Captain Leborgne with his wife, Mme Pauline Leborgne, now both members. It was a first visit and Friends' event for the Consul Général for France and Mme Legras who arrived armed with fine food and fair children.

On the veranda, the assembled "officers and crew" happily discovered and savoured the broad range of *Henri Maire Jura wines*, and relished the *Spirit of Lapérouse brie cheese*, matured to perfection and generously supplied by Unicorn Frencheese of Nowra.



Then there was the tantalizing aroma and taste sensation of authentic Breton crepes, made with tender care by Simone and Yann Tardif, to add to the tempting array of picnics laid out on tables and colourful rugs spread over the lawn.

Frenchmans Bay sparkled and rippled in the breeze, and the cranes of Port Botany might almost have been the masts of Lapérouse's tall ships...

Sunday 16 February

1992 Père Receveur Commemoration at La Perouse

The next annual Père Receveur Commemoration will occur on Sunday 16th February, 1992 at 3.00pm in the vicinity of Père Receveur's grave near the Old Cable Station at La Perouse.

The custom of holding a commemorative religious ceremony at Père Receveur's grave was revived for the bicentenary of his death in 1988 and continues on the Sunday nearest to the anniversary of his death on February 17th.

Biographical data on Père Receveur is held in the Documentation Collection bearing his name which has been formed by the Père Receveur Commemoration Committee since 1987 and also in the Local History Collection of the Bowen Library, Anzac Parade, Maroubra Junction.

The Royal Australian Navy will be officially represented at the forthcoming Commemoration.

BUSES FROM THE CITY

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Central Railway 393 - departs 1.33 pm

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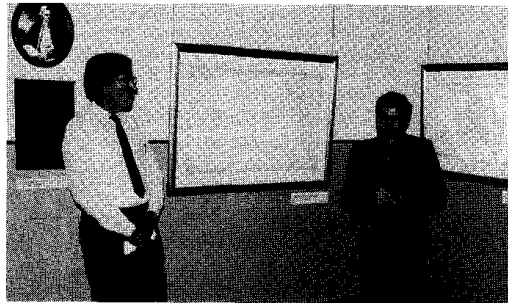
THE IMPACT OF LAPEROUSE ON FRENCH MAP MAKING IN AUSTRALIAN-PACIFIC WATERS *by Robert Clancy*

The disappearance of Comte Jean-Francois de Lapérouse following his visit to the east coast of Australia in early 1788 provided a major stimulus to a long standing interest by the French in exploration and discovery in the Southern Hemisphere. This interest began early in the 16th century when **Gonneville** recorded the discovery of a paradise in the southern oceans. The subsequent search for Gonneville's "lost paradise" in the southern Indian Ocean by the likes of **Bouvet** (1739) and **Kerguelen** (1771) did much to retract the hypothetical "Terra Australis" to within the Antarctic circle. This led to the claiming of isolated southern islands, and even, in 1772, of that part of western Australia not claimed by Cook. Spurred on by the publication in 1756 of Charles de Brosses' *Histoire de Navigations aux Terres Australes*, **Louis Antoine de Bougainville** in 1768 searched for a southern continent, and probably sighted the east coast of Australia before Cook. The lack of recognition given to French discoveries to the north and east of Australia by explorers such as **Bougainville** et **Surville** led **Fleurieu** in 1790 to publish an account of these voyages, protesting the importance of French discovery. The significance of Lapérouse's tragic disappearance must therefore be viewed in the context of a continuing French interest in the southern oceans, the French philosophy regarding exploration and colonisation, and contemporary international tensions particularly as they existed between the French and the English.

Thus in 1792, the French National Assembly dispatched a search and rescue expedition under the command of **Joseph-Antoine Raymond Bruni d'Entrecasteaux**. Later in 1800, **Nicholas Baudin** was commissioned to carry out further exploration and scientific observations in the southern Pacific. Although both expeditions significantly contributed to the charting of the Australian coastline, it is the maps by **Freycinet** from the Baudin expedition which made the greatest impact on the mapping of Australia, including the first detailed coastal map of Australia.

Subsequent to Baudin's voyage and the rapid colonisation of much of the perimeter of Australia by the English, French interest shifted to New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. Voyages by **Freycinet**, **Duperrey** and **Hyacinthe de Bougainville** consolidated French presence in the Pacific, but it was the three expeditions by **Dumont d'Urville** between 1820 and 1840 that were to have the most impact on the charting of coasts of New Zealand, the Antarctic and related Pacific Islands. This momentum of interest in Australia and the Pacific is best recorded in contemporary French maps. First the increasing interest in southern exploration through the 18th century was paralleled by an emergence of scientific mapping, in which France was pre-eminent, largely through **Guillaume de l'Isle**.

Jacques Bellin was appointed as the first *Ingenieur Hydrographie de la Marine* and was commissioned to provide up-to-date charts of coastlines throughout the world. Second, with the restoration of the Monarchy under Louis-Philippe came a new group of private cartographic businesses such as those of **Lapie**, **Levasseur** and **Brue**. Third, were the atlases that accompanied the great journals produced by the French explorers in the Pacific, voyages which strongly influenced the French chartmakers in both government and private enterprises. An example of this influence is the almost universal adoption by the French of d'Urville's ethnological divisions in the Pacific.



John Holt (left) introduces Admiral Bellec

The maps on display have been chosen to reflect these three areas, in the context of the central theme of Lapérouse's disappearance. These French charts summarise contemporary knowledge at the time of Lapérouse, while others exemplify the impact on charting the Australian-Pacific arena made by the d'Entrecasteaux and Baudin expeditions. Finally, typical

regional charts produced by the French reflect the impact on both government and private map makers in the 19th century and the expansion of colonisation throughout the southern oceans.

Selection from *French Maps* displayed in the Museum:

- *Océanique Centrale Nouvelle Hollande*. **Lapie** (1809)
The first known map to name the "Blue Mountains". One of the few maps of this time depicting Australia on its own, reflecting an intense French interest in the area.
- *Nouvelle Hollande*, M.L. **Freycinet** (1808). Published only in 1816.
Gravé par P.A.L. Tardieu. Écrit par Lale & Giralton.
Important map summarising the work of Baudin's expedition. The first detailed map of an Australian coastline.
- *Carte de l'Australie*, A. **Brué** (1826, revised 1834).
Brué was one of a group of geographers and map makers that construed French commercial map making in the first half of the 19th century. Shows the influence of Baudin (names along Australian coast and d'Urville ethnographic divisions in the Pacific).
- *Carte Générale de l'Océan Pacifique*, from d'Urville et Lotin after the expeditions of l'Astrolabe and the most recent discoveries. Gravé par Chassant. Écrit par Hacq (1833, revised 1834).
- *Planisphere*, **Vuillemin** (1859). Gravé par Langevin.
Elementary planisphere and drawing indicating: a geographic description of the world's known countries, the age of the great explorations and discoveries, the European Colonies, the principal routes, the liners, the era of departures and the long sea journeys.
Shows d'Urville's Antarctic discoveries (e.g. Terre Adélie in 1840), and the French discoveries and claims in Southern Oceans.
- *Australie, Botany Bay et Port Hacking*, **Musée de la Marine** (1868).
Reproduction of the map made between 1848-51 by Captains O. Stanley and J.L. Stokes of the British Navy.
Gravé par Regnier & Dardet. Now a very rare map.

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Friends of the Lapérouse Museum*

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EDITORIAL NOTE: Thank you for your many interesting, informative and entertaining letters. Sometimes only small extracts are printed, others not at all, but the Committee always reads, notes and appreciates their contents.

Carole Roussel

NEXT ISSUE

Part I of Admiral Bellec's paper given at the International Cartography Conference, 19th November, 1991.

AGM NEWS

PETER ORLOVICH was elected President of the Friends of the Lapérouse Museum Limited at the last AGM, John Holt having decided to retire after holding the office since the Friends came into being. John has serenely steered the Committee and Friends through both hazardous and calm waters, and fully deserves our gratitude and recognition. He has agreed to remain on the Committee, where his expertise and experience are invaluable.

Like many other Friends' Committee members, Peter Orlovich was also on the Committee of the Lapérouse Association for the Australian Bicentenary. He is therefore quite familiar with the Museum's social, historical and political background. Peter has been a Senior Lecturer in Archives Administration in the School of Information, Library and Archive Study at the University of NSW since 1963.

He is also:

- Member of *Royal Australian Historical Society* since 1965.
- Member of *Geographical Names Board of NSW* since its establishment in 1966, representing RAHS.
- Former Chairman of *Botany Bay National Park Advisory Committee* advising the Director of NPWS on management of Captain Cook's Landing Place and Lapérouse Monuments and historic sites.
- Honorary member and counsellor of *Australian Society of Archivists*, an inaugural member since 1975.
- Honorary member of *Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives* since 1981, seeking to promote archival development in the Pacific Islands.

CAROL ABELA, from *La Perouse and Peninsula Society*, was elected to the Committee. She replaces **Jim Mackness** who has retired after many years of valuable and valiant service, both to the Friends and the Lapérouse Association for the Australian Bicentenary.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(extracts from letters received since the publication of the last "Lapérouse")

Présidence de la République 6/9/91

Chère Madame,

Merci pour l'envoi de votre bulletin. J'ai eu grand plaisir à visiter votre très intéressant Musée Lapérouse en mai dernier et vous félicite de cette très belle action. Veuillez agréer Chère Madame l'expression de mon meilleur souvenir.

M Andouze

Conseiller Technique du Président.

LAPEROUSE DAY

Sunday 23rd February, 1992

Programme of Events

11.00am - Wreath laying ceremony at the Lapérouse monument with the participation of the French and the Australian Navies.

11.30am - His Excellency the Ambassador for France, M. Philippe Baude, on behalf of the French Navy and his Government, will present the Museum with a maroccan bound copy of the most famous of the last letters written by Lapérouse from Botany Bay in 1788.

12 noon - Official Welcome to the *Yalunga* Festival.

Many distinguished guests are expected to attend these ceremonies. A reception for the Friends will be held on board *La Garonne* when the ships dock at Garden Island the following week, to be hosted by **Captain Mattera** and **Lt Commander Fermin du Sartel**, Captain of *La Moqueuse*. Crew members would be delighted to receive invitations from welcoming Friends to dinner or a party. Please contact **Captain Leborgne** preferably by Fax (06) 273-1398 or else by telephone (06) 273-2952.

Ministère de la Recherche
et de la Technologie 29 Août 1991

Particulièrement sensible à votre attention, j'ai pris connaissance avec intérêt du bulletin du Musée Lapérouse. Mon épouse et moi-même conservons le meilleur souvenir de notre visite du 4 Mai au soir et de l'amitié que vous nous avez faite de votre présence et de votre appréciation sur les souvenirs et présentations du musée...

Hubert Curien
Ministre

Le Chef d'Etat Major des Armées

Paris, le 4 Octobre

Je vous remercie vivement pour la très intéressante documentation que vous avez bien voulu me faire parvenir sur le musée Lapérouse de Sydney. Elle témoigne d'une belle détermination pour conserver bien vivante la mémoire d'un illustre navigateur français. Je me réjouis que le souvenir de ce grand marin soit aussi dignement conservé en Australie.

Je vous demande de bien vouloir faire part à, tous les amis du musée Lapérouse de mes encouragements pour le succès de l'oeuvre qu'ils poursuivent.

Amiral J. Lanxade