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Who we are

The Dictionary of Sydney

Digital story telling is our business. We work collaboratively, linking people, places, events, artefacts, buildings and organisations to tell a bigger story about Sydney.

Accessible

The Dictionary of Sydney is a free online public history resource about Sydney the city and the greater Sydney region.

Our audience includes: citizens of Sydney; domestic and international visitors to Sydney and region; history enthusiasts; professional historians; specialists; writers; members of the heritage sector; educators; primary, secondary and tertiary students; arts and cultural industries and institutions; journalists for television, radio, online and print media; Federal, State and local governments; commercial users of information and our community and content partners, subscribers, donors and supporters.

Innovative

With a digital collection of images, essays, multimedia, maps and facts about Sydney from over 400 contributors, the Dictionary is like no other city encyclopedia in the world.

The Dictionary has multiple platforms and channels:

- website with over 1.5 million items
- app for mobile devices with downloadable tours
- education packages for teachers and students
- weekly local radio spots on 2SER, 2RPH and occasional segments on ABC 702.

Collaborative

The Dictionary enters into projects with like-minded organisations and individuals to build resources that enrich public understanding and appreciation of Sydney’s history.

Reliable

Our content is rigorously compiled and validated by an expert team of editorial staff and researchers. As a result, our users trust the Dictionary as a source of reliable, accurate historical information about Sydney.
Our purpose

To preserve and publish historical and cultural information about Sydney for the broadest possible audience

Our aim

To document and celebrate the history and diversity of Sydney through collaboration and sharing
What we do

The Dictionary generates new content through grant-funded and fee-for-service projects, and volunteered contributions.

Grant funded projects

New opportunities arise annually for grant-funded projects. We work with local councils, state and federal government, and the history, heritage and arts sectors to develop new material for the Dictionary. In 2015-16, we undertook projects with:

- Australian Government
- Australian National Maritime Museum
- Royal Australian Historical Society
- Transport Heritage NSW
- Varuna, The Writers House

Fee for service

The Dictionary generates income in return for creating and uploading new content linked to the people, places, events, landmarks, artefacts and buildings of Sydney.

In 2015/16 we worked with Randwick City Council to create content about the city's heritage sites both online and as a mobile tour via the free Dictionary of Sydney app.

Volunteer contributions

The Dictionary has over 400 contributors including individuals and organisations. We regularly receive volunteered entries that are reviewed by an expert editorial team. Once accepted, the entries are edited and fact-checked to the highest standard.
Our team

The Dictionary of Sydney is made up of a small team of part-time staff and dedicated group of volunteers. A board of management oversees and supports our work.

Our board

Professor Paul Ashton (Chair); Professor Grace Karskens (Deputy Chair); Professor Michael Fraser AM; Dr Kate Harrington and Dr Suzanne Rickard.

Previous members: Sarah Barnes, Andy Bateman, Dr Ian Johnson Dr Lisa Murray (ex officio) and Dr Heidi Norman.

Our staff

Jacqueline Spedding (Executive Officer and Editorial Coordinator); Linda Brainwood (Multimedia Editor); Jenny McInerney (Research and Editorial Assistant); Kim Jackson (Technical Consultant); James Wu (Finance Manager).

Previous staff: Kim Hanna (Executive Officer); Naomi Parry (Project Editor); Noella Lopez (Market Development Officer); Nicole Cama (Research).

Our volunteers

Karen Bryant, Nicole Cama (Radio 2ser) Michaela Cameron, Ross Coleman, Dr Catie Gilchrest, Trudy Holdsworth, David Morgan, Dr Lisa Murray (Radio 2ser), Dr Neil Radford

Foot drill, HMNS Vernon 1870s, State Records NSW (NRS 4481: Sh47)
Our organisation

The Dictionary of Sydney is an independent, non-profit association with charitable gift recipient status.

Major partners

Since its inception, the City of Sydney has been our major government partner.

In 2015, the Dictionary formed a new partnership with the State Library of New South Wales to host the association’s main web resource, www.dictionaryofsydney.org

In 2016 the Dictionary received funding from the City of Sydney to transfer its website to the SLNSW where it will be maintained through in-kind support and a part-time position funded by the Dictionary of Sydney.

Community partnerships

The Dictionary has partnerships with local Sydney radio stations 2SER and 2RPH involving weekly segments about Sydney’s history live-to-air.

We have reciprocal agreements with the City of Sydney and the NSW History Council to promote and share content and broaden our collective audience base.

Boys skipping rope in Kepos Street, Redfern 1952 City of Sydney Archives (SRC19002)
2015-16 Highlights

This Annual Report summary presents highlights from the 2015—16 financial year.

Income

In addition to City of Sydney sponsorship, over $66,000 in income was generated in 2015—16 through successful project grant applications. In addition, the Dictionary of Sydney received over $9,000 in donations, $3,500 in service fees and $1,500 in bank interest.

**ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT**

**DICTIONARY OF SYDNEY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>This Year (2016)</th>
<th>Last Year (2015)</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$280,900.00</td>
<td>$297,010.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
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<td>Operating Profit</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of Sydney</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ALL METRICS**

- Blog entries: 63 vs. 55 (18% increase)
- Facebook: 2403 vs. 1651 (45% increase)
- Twitter: 1786 vs. 1413 (26% increase)
- App downloads: 2184 vs. 1040 (110% increase)

Audience development

In 2016, the Dictionary developed a partnership with ABC 702. This partnership joins our existing partnerships with local radio 2RPH (reading service) and 2SER (weekly on air segment broadcast during the Wednesday morning breakfast program).

Google analytics for the Dictionary site show an average visitation of around 30,000 visitors per month, with the average time spent on a page being two minutes.
Content

As at 30 June 2016, the Dictionary has over 980 entries, 12,900 entities, 39,400 factoids, 31,000 annotations and 4,300 digital media items.

The Dictionary of Sydney published 76 entries during the year. This comprised unsolicited entries, some commissioned pieces and four curated content projects.

Special projects

Anzac Ultimo Honour Board

The Dictionary of Sydney received funds from the Australian Government’s Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program to highlight the Ultimo Community Centre World War 1 Honour Roll that records the names of 36 World War I soldier’s names. This content was published in October 2015.

Blue Mountains Icons

The Dictionary of Sydney, in partnership Varuna, The Writers House, received funds from the Blue Mountains City of the Arts Trust to commission five writers to create essays relating to significant Blue Mountain sites – the Blue Mountains icons. This content was published in March 2016.

Second Fleet Project

The Dictionary of Sydney received funds from the Australian National Maritime Museum through the Maritime Museums of Australia Project Support Scheme (MMAPPSS) to produce seven new entries on the Second Fleet. This content was published in March 2016.

Sydney’s Railway Heritage

The Dictionary of Sydney, in partnership with the Australian Railway Historical Society, received funds from the Transport Heritage Grants Program administered by the Royal Australian Historical Society to present essays on Sydney’s railway history. This content was published was also in March 2016.
Dictionary of Sydney app

We published three new walks to the Dictionary of Sydney app in 2016:

Convict Parramatta

Written by historian Michaela Cameron for the Dictionary of Sydney, this self-guided walk through Parramatta takes visitors to where convicts lived, worked and rioted, where they were punished, treated in the emerging health care systems and where many of them were buried. Launched in September 2015.

Along with the app text, Michaela wrote 13 related entries for the Dictionary website.

Sydney Harbour Islands

Written by historian Nicole Cama for the Dictionary of Sydney, this self-guided tour provides a fascinating insight into the rich history of the Sydney Harbour Islands. Launched in January 2016.

Randwick Heritage

Written by historian Dr Catie Gilchrist for the Dictionary of Sydney, with original commissioned photography by Marilia Oliva, this self-guided tour of Sydney’s oldest municipality is based on Randwick City Council’s heritage plaques program. Launched in May 2016. Supported by Randwick City Council.

St Jude’s Cemetery, Randwick, December 2015, Marilia Oliva Photography www.mariliaphalva.com
Principal sponsor

City of Sydney

Project sponsors

Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program, Blue Mountains City of the Arts Trust, Maritime Museums of Australia Project Support Scheme, Transport Heritage Grants Program, Randwick City Council, Royal Australian Historical Society, Sydney Mechanics School of the Arts, Oral History NSW.

Dictionary of Sydney

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