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FRONT COVER
Derren Lowe is the author of this issue's cover image and is a partner in the Newcastle based architectural practice hrmpfrd. Derren also teaches design studio and visual communications at the University of Newcastle's school of architecture. In both practice and research, he is interested in both craft and material detailing (the tectonics) and the conceptual, thematic and narrative ideas (the storytelling) that uses a marginalised method of documentation in contemporary architecture – the hand drawing. These drawings often take the more unusual style of the graphic novella to convey ideas, emotion and instruction. The cover image aims to provoke wider discussion and awareness of the regions 'beyond the sandstone basin'.

Please note: Aboriginal people should be aware that this publication may contain images of deceased persons in photographs.

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Buildings are becoming increasingly complex; they are increasing in scale, and these two factors will inevitably lead to a greater degree and need for specialists to help develop the design and construction process. As architects we can encourage this development to occur within our profession and facilitate the development of the specialist generalist architect or we can follow the traditional path and encourage those who decide to specialise to do so outside the profession. The future of the profession will follow one of these two paths. I wonder which one it will be? Does the Bulletin have a role here?

John L. Guy, FRAIA
19 November 2018

Congratulations on your publication of the Autumn 2018 Shift issue of Architecture Bulletin. It was an important reminder of the diversity of the architectural profession. I particularly liked Ken Maher’s description of himself as a ‘specialist generalist’. The various articles made me realise that not only he, but all the contributors were in fact specialist generalists.

Our profession has in the past preferred to maintain its purity by discarding specialist developments and letting them build up themselves outside the profession. Perhaps they might contaminate our purity. 

Buildings are becoming increasingly complex; they are increasing in scale, and these two factors will inevitably lead to a greater degree and need for specialists to help develop the design and construction process. As architects we can encourage this development to occur within our profession and facilitate the development of the specialist generalist architect or we can follow the traditional path and encourage those who decide to specialise to do so outside the profession.

The future of the profession will follow one of these two paths. I wonder which one it will be? Does the Bulletin have a role here?

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19 November 2018

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READER RESPONSES

Great round-up on Circular Quay [Lost Sydney issue] from Ken Maher. Cantrell and Harper. [The history of Circular Quay has had] more actors than a Shakespeare drama: Leslie Wilkinson (professor of architecture at the University of Sydney) declaring the elevated railway a ‘tragedy’; former NSW chapter president James Peddle strenuously opposing the overhead roadway; former NSW Government Architect Andrew Andersons insisting on pedestrian access around the Quay; former national president of the Institute Brian Zulaikha describing the Quay as resembling ‘post-war Germany’. And finally, current NSW Chapter president Andrew Nimmo’s bitter truth: the 2003 prediction that the fate of the Quay would remain no more than ‘clean-ups, as the carefully considered design concepts laid in place every 10 to 15 years [...] become diluted by the drip, drip, drip of parsimonious retailers, obstructive authorities and indolent regulators’. (Andrew Nimmo, Architecture Australia, May 2003, 92:3). The 15 year cycle has begun.

Michael Bogle
1 November 2018

WRITE TO US

Send your feedback or suggestions to bulletin@architecture.com.au. We also invite members to contribute articles and reviews to our Chapter section. We reserve the right to edit published responses and contributions.

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Regional NSW presents tremendous diversity across its landscapes, climates, settlement patterns, demographics and cultural heritage. Architectural practice in the regions is likewise characterised by great diversity. But how does architecture making happen outside metropolitan areas? What are the opportunities and challenges? And what relation do the realities bear to popular images, idyllic and otherwise? In this issue of Architecture Bulletin, we hear from rural, regional and city practitioners working across the state about their projects and experiences, and how the profession is shaping the built environment beyond Sydney.

Map from the Draft Urban Design for Regional NSW – see page 21 Courtesy Government Architect NSW
States of awareness

Aboriginal activism and the built environment in rural NSW

Catherine Donnelley

During the Freedom Ride SAFA (Student Action For Aboriginals) Trip in February 1965, University of Sydney students surveyed and protested about the Aboriginal living conditions in towns in western New South Wales. Pictured are Ann Curthoys and Louise Higham interviewing May Copeland (Fenella Stanley) and Tottie Barlow (Bertha Saunders) at Moree Aboriginal Station, February 1965. Photo: Noel Hazard. Courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales and the Tribune/SEARCH Foundation

With deepest respect I acknowledge the first and original custodians whose sovereignty has never been ceded; elders past, present and future with embedded knowledge and lived experience in their ways of knowing. I write with gratitude for what is shared and in respectful humility to listen, learn and strive for sustainable existence.
The built landscape in rural Australia gives a confronting picture of race relations in our country, if we are prepared to see. Contemporary and historical architecture have been the host of occupied states of apartheid and genocide but also more recently pockets of efforts of conscious recognition, respect, co-creation and sustainability.

UNAWARENESS

Many of us are in gross denial about the acute conditions of Aboriginal people in this country and are unaware that we continue to facilitate this reality. Architecture is a fundamental participant within the body of interlocking systems that form the framework of our society. Through its provision or neglect, architecture is an essential connective tissue, implicit in all facets of this system. The built environment can reveal a wounded spirit, dislodged joints and myalgic tendons as seen in many encounters in rural Australian towns.

Architecture for Aboriginal people in many small towns grossly neglects the provision of adequate conditions for education, health, housing, cultural, justice and public spaces.

FEELING: AWARENESS

In 2015, the Freedom Ride (revival) bus cruised forward into rural New South Wales. Our disquiet was combined with intense expectation as we set unidentifiable behind the sleekness of the glazed, air-conditioned capsule – a palpable discomfort in the implicit privilege that white middle class enables. We were to penetrate rural areas like needles of socio-spatial acupuncture.

Aware that the danger of a probing mechanism unsettles and disrupts – and certain that interventions may be of more harm than help – with empathetic hearts we hoped to learn and contribute to positive change. Activism requires a life of unfurling awareness, a slow burn towards enlightenment. But without a change in heart, there is no genuine change.

As architects and designers of the built environment, we are agents of change. Architecture is a political act, whether we are aware of it or not. I was confronted by the hypocrisy of our cultural relations laid bare. As the only architect on the bus, I was interested in seeing how architecture symbolises, frames and perpetuates inequity in Aboriginal relations in rural Australia.

I became aware that architects are further marginalising the marginalised. There is a severe failure in affordability and accessibility to services and fundamental living amenity, creating health problems that impact on learning and cause economic disadvantage. This ripple effect finds individuals in desolate circumstances without choice, entrapped within a cyclical, closed and failing system. The built environment is a fundamental player.

Native Title inadequacies and lack of Treaty see dispossession as a recurrent and dominant symptom, caused by an entrenched disrespect of Aboriginal place-space. Spatial infringements by an imposed postcolonial architecture have caused, disrupted and often severed connections to land, spiritual and cultural heritage. This dispossession bleeds into extremes within these small communities. Death, poor health and disability are embedded and inescapable realities. Vast holes of dispossession are filled by grief.

SEEING: AWARENESS

Although the blatant segregation symbolised in the Bowraville movie cinema has ended, deep inequity remains. The differentiated cinema entry for Aboriginal people – the back door – has metaphorically morphed into a chronic societal condition.

Architectural philosophers would recognise the visual symbolism entrenched in new architecture imposed: the Oasis Hotel in Walgett, for instance, is enclosed by steel razor tipped fencing. This precedent is replicated in different ways, many times over in rural Australia.

Moree’s architectural ironies bring more to our awareness. Renowned for refusing to allow Aboriginal children to swim in the community pool, 60 years on local Kamilaroi man Lyall Dennison highlighted the contrast in sports infrastructure sites for community recreational activity in Moree. The bright lights and amenity for the ‘white’ sports oval are glaring, while the ‘black’ sports oval remained for years literally in the dark.

Further architectural affronts include the newer Moree Police Station. The largest police station in north-west New South Wales, it bears an ominous scale disproportionate for its population. Its dominance in the landscape renders it a beacon of incarceration and a symbol of a failing system that manages symptoms and not the cause. This is exemplary of a punitive, not restorative, culture. How socially, financially and environmentally sustainable can this be?

As architects and designers of the built environment we should be sensitive to and grounded in wellbeing measures. Where are the post-occupancy evaluations? How is the architecture faring beyond the glossy image? Are we conscious and accountable in a systemic way? What is architecture signifying and where is it leading? Is it sustainable and what does it say about Aboriginal relations in this country and the health of our system? If wellbeing indicators are mirrored in the architecture and the built environment, are we aware enough to see the reality and brave enough to change it?

The UN special rapporteur has recently commented on the poor human rights and fundamental freedoms of Aboriginal people in our country. They are being criminalised for being poor. This is reflected in disproportionate
Research acknowledges the benefits of socioeconomic human environment interactions and their impact on wellbeing in Australia. Heralding this approach to building and regeneration of the environment is sustainable practice and whole system thinking, based on Traditional Knowledge and ways of being.

Incarceration and suicide rates of Aboriginal children and adults caught in an intergenerational cycle of poverty and crime. As architects of incarceration buildings, are we asking the right questions of the right people? Slowly and quietly there are some whispers of more holistic approaches and systemic changes to health, education and justice. As architects we need to be empowered to think beyond the building and reassess the typology, program and impact. We are not doing enough. As a professional body of pragmatic visionaries, we should be aiming for a built environment that is a visible beacon of light, not horror and shameful truths.

**SUSTAINABLE: AWARENESS**

Research is shifting. It acknowledges the benefits of socioeconomic human environment interactions and their impact on wellbeing in Australia. Heralding this approach to building and regeneration of the environment is sustainable practice and whole system thinking, based on Traditional Knowledge and ways of being. Globally acclaimed leadership in this space is taking place in holistic sustainable design. It is exemplified in the economic transition of Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) to the Quandamooka Aboriginal Corporation and the groundbreaking developments underway. Here is a prime example of what active ‘custodianship’ looks like. Quandamooka elder Aunty Evelyn describes the relationship of land and people:

‘Where mother earth nurtures us and we in turn look after her. My ancestors have left me with the legacy to always be progressive in thinking, resilient and moving forward, working towards a better future.’

This is the future condition of humanity and we have so much to learn. Let’s see it unfurl in a richer, sustainable built environment.

**RECOGNITION: AWARENESS**

In many regions around Australia, Aboriginal families are independently raising funds to publicly recognise and honour significant historic figures, such as William Ferguson in Dubbo. This Australian activist and freedom fighter of the early twentieth century was a hero at a time when the government was counting Aboriginals as part of the flora and fauna. The land is littered with statues, parks, buildings and streets in the name of European notables. Aboriginal visionaries who were determined to advance the conditions of their people (simultaneously not counted as citizens) are rarely celebrated in our landscape. Why have the activism and determination of Aboriginal people in the built environment not been honoured more readily?

**CO-CREATION: AWARENESS**

At the University of Sydney, I designed an Architecture Masters Studio inspired by such visions of hope. Asking future architects: why are we not collaborating with determined Spirit and Dreaming for reconciled, reciprocal and respectful futures?

The brief was community inclusive from inception and the building typologies and programs were determined through deep listening to community. The outcomes were inventive and served the culture of the local Aboriginal community in Dubbo, rather than preconceived briefs imposed. The outcomes were expressions of architectural hope in the built environment.

**BEING AWARE**

The Freedom Ride affirmed the potential of an architecture that is consciously designed to heal, inspire and uplift beyond itself. There is a place – in fact, an urgent need – for a culturally and socially sensitive architecture to unite Australian culture in the truth of our history. Let’s ensure an inclusive Australian architecture, designed and built through collaboration, sensitive to whole community impact and with an awareness to critically act beyond itself. As architects, designers and strategists of the built environment, what are we doing to amplify First People’s imperative and voice? We must not speak for, but ask, listen, learn, stand, design and build with.

Catherine Donelley is a PhD candidate in architecture at the University of Sydney, questioning how architecture can be a catalyst for social change, using the design studio as a vehicle for decolonising space and envisioning new spaces through co-authorship.

Donelley dedicates this article to Aunty Evelyn, Dean Parkin and their teachings through ways of knowing, being and as leaders of sustainable excellence. Let’s awaken and actively support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

1. The Freedom Ride bus was a mobile exoskeleton that travelled into rural towns in north-west New South Wales to observe and peacefully protest against the lived conditions and the truth of race relations in the rural Australian heart. The original Ride in 1965 was Australia’s response to the 1961 Freedom Rides in the US. Charles Perkins, aged 29, was the third year Aboriginal Arts student who led a bus of white University of Sydney students, to protest against Aboriginal relations in this country. 50 years later in 2015, a bus returned for a re-enactment tour with 17 of the original Freedom riders present and a group of University of Sydney students from various disciplines. I suggested it should be renamed a revival.

And the group from the Freedom Ride revival trip in 2015, including some of the original members. The 1965 survey exposed extreme poverty-stricken living conditions and the 2015 revival affirmed there is a long way to go.

© The University of Sydney / Victoria Baldwin
Butcher, baker, placemaker

Katharina Hendel and Brent Dunn

Quenching custom lights in carpenter’s home workshop (above), and the lights in situ at Escarpment House (lower left), Thirroul.
Photos: Brett Howard and Shantanu Starick

Takt directors Brent Dunn and Katharina Hendel (second and third from right) with their team.
Photo: Shantanu Starick

the regional practice of Takt
At Takt, we have always believed in the power of architecture to improve and shape our built environment and thus our wellbeing over time. On moving from Sydney to the South Coast / Illawarra area to start our studio 10 years ago, it was difficult to see how one practice might make even a small dint.

Initially, we felt isolated from the profession. We sought out local practitioners, to hear about their experiences and to ask the many questions that arise when starting a practice. Except, there were only six others north of Wollongong at that time. There still are fewer architects from the Royal National Park to the Victorian border than the 300-odd registered architects in the 2010 postcode in Sydney.

Aside from a few notable clusters around Newcastle and Northern NSW, out-of-the-city architects are scattered and scarce. For us, discovering the vibrant community of the Institute’s NSW Country Division provided a much needed balance. A collegiate group of diverse practitioners – many sharing similar feelings of isolation – members are also willing to share knowledge, largely free from competitive concerns. A local group of architects, designers and other creatives and building professionals has emerged in our area too. Such networks are an invaluable resource.

But sparsity also means opportunity. With a rising public awareness that an architect does something of value – something different from a drafts-person, building company or developer – what is needed is for architects to communicate what this something can be.

One of our greatest satisfactions here comes simply from being part of the diverse continuum of people that make up regional communities. Any given BBQ, school pickup or fireside conversation might see us socialise with teachers, photographers, small business owners, trapeze artists, baristas, bartenders, designers, makers, researchers, builders, landscapers, writers, yoga teachers, florists, miners and the odd musician or two. This makes it crucial that architecture gets spoken about in a language that is straightforward and inclusive.

Our region has a deeply held, hands-on mentality. In an area settled by those who made steel, mined, logged, fished and surfed, it is perhaps not surprising to find a lively sharing economy. Tools, tips and trailers are exchanged freely to have a go, make do and be self-reliant wherever possible. From beehives to tables, to sheds and decks, things are made and created; in many instances, thoughtful rebuilding of appropriate and beautiful homes.

We found that practicing here means embracing the knitted, interconnectedness of community. It takes a commitment to keeping honest open dialogue, as at any given moment the boundaries between friends, clients and builders can change. Neighbours’ complaints are different when they also happen to come from friends, who are also professional collaborators on other projects around the corner. All events and actions carry with them reverberations into the future of the community.

Exploring and sharing visions of client futures is an exercise in distillation, to the essence of an idea; articulating this idea in a language that is unambiguous is key. This translates too into how our projects are detailed: direct, readable, crafted and often with expressive structure. A good building has a certain degree of self-evidence of its purpose, form and presence. It should do what it is meant to do with the least effort; it should understand its place and of course be beautiful too.

Working regionally means that there is a limited number of people with the required specialised skills in an area. Collaborations have the opportunity to form again on more than one project, so that the benefit of learning about and from each other over the course of many projects can be a reality.

Given that almost everyone has a shed out the back, we have discovered to our delight that often tradespeople have a second calling. This may, with a bit of exploration and discussion, see its way into a future project. A lot of these side projects are wonderfully crafted: blacksmithing, leather working, weaving and Japanese joinery have all made their way into our work through fortunate encounters and open minds.

Most importantly, our regional work celebrates its place: in the life of the people within, in the landscape without and in time. In the beautiful settings our regions offer – and with people drawn there that share a similar appreciation of that place – architects can find great opportunities to engage deeply in regional issues, place-making and future shaping.

Architectural eyes in a regional area can help to make visible the inherent and sometimes overlooked qualities of these places. Unlike the developer who buys, builds and flogs for maximum profit – regardless of the loss of sense of place caused – architects can cultivate natural and social value by responding strategically to these qualities. After 10 years and about 40 completed projects, we hope that our valuing of considered slowness for our clients are indeed shaping some hidden corners of our region.

With completed projects on the coast, under the escarpment and beyond into the highlands between Canberra and Campbelltown, it is easier to see that the hours spent listening, dreaming and inventing futures for our clients are indeed shaping some hidden corners of our region.

On one level, regional practice is no different from practice in denser urban centres with communication, time, design and budgets being the same critical pieces. Perhaps the less experienced public and local government make it feel clearer that the voice of architecture can benefit the region. Yet most evident is how a tight-knit community, local skills and craftsmanship, and a sense of place have shaped our practice and will continue to do so into the future.

Katharina Hendel and Brent Dunn are the directors of Takt | Studio for Architecture in Thirroul.

‘Often tradespeople have a second calling and this may see its way into a future project. A lot of these side projects are wonderfully crafted: blacksmithing, leather working, weaving and Japanese joinery have all made their way into our work through fortunate encounters and open minds.’
Newcastle nuances

business, design and nonsense with

Anthrosite Architects

and

Curious Practice

Mark Spence, Louise Eddie and Dana Hutchinson of Anthrosite  Photo: Jon Reid

Warren Haasnoot and Greg Lee of Curious Practice
On a steep side street off Hunter Street Mall a large, round timber handle on a blackened steel door forms a punctuation mark in the bricolage streetscape. Nestled against an often-closed shopfront that spruiks ‘records, antiques and recycled oddities’, this doorway marks the entry to the shared office space of local architects Anthrosite Architects and Curious Practice. The collective has shared space in the city since 2012 and credits the sporadically-inhabited urban fabric of Newcastle as being integral to the formation of their practices. As two emerging design studios taking on the trials of early architectural practice, they each made a deliberate decision to establish themselves in Newcastle – a choice driven by their recognition of the potential to practice and produce architecture in a way that is unique to the context and culture of the city.

The directors of Anthrosite, Mark Spence and Dana Hutchinson, relocated to Newcastle with the intention of starting their own practice after working with leading architecture firms in Brisbane and Darwin. They were drawn to Newcastle by the beauty of the coastline and the charm and integrity of the built environment. After spending a short time living in the city they identified that their established methods of practice could close a gap in the market, which at the time included few architects offering similar design-focused services. At the same time Warren Haasnoot and Greg Lee, both graduates of the University of Newcastle, had just started collaborating as Curious Practice. Fresh from post-graduation architectural pilgrimages the pair were introduced to Mark via their shared interest in progressive architectural thinking, which lead them to become involved as tutors with the School of Architecture at the University of Newcastle.

Their first office space together was facilitated through Renew Newcastle, a scheme that saw the revitalisation of Newcastle’s vacant inner city commercial spaces by providing flexible and affordable tenancies to local creatives for use as studios, retail or exhibition space. The architects reflect on their relationship with Renew as being a valuable introduction to the robust creative community in Newcastle. This spurred a series of pluralistic creative pursuits that resulted from the architects’ willingness to contribute to the city at a civic scale. In the time that they have been established the studios have contributed art projects and placemaking initiatives across the city, ranging from gallery-exhibited installations to large-scale animated light projections in the public domain. Of their advent into private practice Warren reflects,

‘We have been extremely lucky to start a practice in a very quiet way. The benefit of starting small was we could work quickly, test ideas, understand materials and regulations and really engage with the city. In a short time, we have developed some amazing client and industry relationships.’
As Newcastle locals Curious Practice is a business built on relationships. When asked about starting their practice they say, ‘We received one commission and from there it grew very quickly and organically. We were asked by the plumbers, plasterers and carpenters who worked on the job to do simple additions to their houses. They hadn’t experienced architecture but understood what we were trying to do, they would tell their friends and it just grew. Newcastle is like that, if you do a good job for someone, everyone knows each other and talks.’

This culture of trust among Novocastrians has led to a steady stream of projects for Curious Practice. Yet the embedded model of word-of-mouth procurement presented an obstacle for Mark and Dana who found that building notoriety in the community was difficult without an established network of old school friends and relatives. To navigate this issue, Anthrosite have devised methods of proving the quality of their work to build a reputation and have utilised the Australian Institute of Architect’s awards program as a way of instilling confidence in prospective clients.

The directors all agree that the competition for exciting projects is a limitation of practicing in Newcastle. Collectively they feel that compared to Sydney, a smaller percentage of the community have experienced working with an architect and, of those that do, there are few who are looking for a full service scope of works. They also note that although Newcastle is within two hours of any major city on the east coast, in the mundanity of day-to-day practice, the sense of being once-removed can be felt. Simple tasks such as sourcing materials for projects, acquiring samples quickly, and limited access to show-rooms means inefficiencies in the design process that can make communicating design intent to clients more difficult. In voicing their frustrations, the group are quick to balance their commentary by highlighting the collegiality they feel within the profession in Newcastle, particularly at the ‘smaller end of town’ where architects share builders, consultants and contacts.

Regardless of which end of the architectural spectrum a firm may be operating from, the rapidly changing nature of Newcastle is unavoidable. The paraphernalia of urban revitalisation – demolition works, road closures and cranes – have become a semi-permanent fixture in the city. The NSW Government is investing more than $650 million into the expansion of Newcastle’s infrastructure, which includes the new public-transport interchange and light-rail system. As services to the city are being updated so too is the built fabric, with development and densification rapidly increasing from Newcastle West along Hunter Street. As a result of this development the teams at Anthrosite and Curious Practice are looking for a

**TWO PROJECTS BY ANTHROSITE**

“Our design approach places emphasis on a collaborative process and the critical response to people and place. We believe in enquiry and analysis. Understanding each project’s unique circumstances enables the process of procurement.”

**Nut House, completed 2018**

Nut house is a 60 m² investment property located on a rear lane, urban infill site. Brief requirements led to the use of structural insulated panels (SIP); high performing energy efficiency on a low budget. It is raised on a masonry podium due to the flood prone site, with a series of landscape treatments: terraced decks, grass mounding, climbing screens and seat stairs activate the outdoor relationship giving the house an extended liveability.

All photos: Jon Reid

**Brass House, completed 2017**

Brass House is a family home sited within a unique urban/rural condition, beside a 60 km/hr road bordering a state conservation area. Addressing these opposing conditions led to making a covered outdoor living room – the garden room. The importance and impact of the landscape, whether native or constructed, has been emphasised. Each room is orientated and framed towards a garden to enhance the internal experience.
new office space as their Thorn Street studio is set for demolition in the coming months.

Despite their pending eviction the group are optimistic about the direction of the city that they are playing a part in shaping, commenting that ‘it’s really exciting seeing respected architecture firms doing work in the city. It shows a changing climate and appreciation for architecture, which helps us a lot.’ High quality projects set the tone for development in the harbourside city centre and provide a point of reference from which to argue for the importance of architect-led alterations to the heritage fabric of Newcastle. The architects form part of the community in Newcastle and are equally sensitive to the rapid changes being made to their streetscapes and skyline. While they agree that densification is imperative to the vibrancy of the city, they have expectations for the future of Newcastle and advocate for the architectural success of future development. Mark is optimistic that as the community becomes more fluent in the language of design excellence they will demand that more funding be allocated to the design of civic buildings, public spaces and public amenities. From his perspective ‘the quality of future projects in Newcastle will rely heavily on leaders in the University and local Council advocating for architecture at the procurement phase.’

On the culture of the architectural community in Newcastle the group agree that while there is collegiality, much of which is facilitated by the University, the vitality of the profession would be improved by greater exposure to ‘the kind of great speakers and events that are being run in Sydney that extend to audiences beyond the profession.’ When thinking about progressive architecture in Newcastle it is easy for the spotlight to fall on the celebrated architects who are contributing large-scale projects to the city. However, it is clear that those operating in smaller local practices are as invested in the city and are mastering the nuances of architectural practice in Newcastle’s provocative climate. There is a civic mindedness to the way that Anthrosite Architects and Curious Practice talk about architecture, which translates in the series of thoughtful projects they have offered to the city to date.

Gemma Savio is a founding director of Sydney-based Savio Parsons Architects. Earlier this year she served as a member of Architecture Bulletin’s editorial committee; she is now the associate editor of Houses magazine.
Sitting at the drawing board in 2005, our Sydney practice of Mackenzie Pronk was about one year old. We were busy over-servicing our very local residential clients, we had a small baby in the office and not enough work. Our friends Anna and Christian from Fisher Design and Architecture had relocated to the Mid North Coast some years earlier. We had worked together at Tonkin Zulaikha Greer in the past; catch ups were brief and focused on some noisy Sydney watering hole.

Out of the blue Christian emailed us a brief – an EOI followed by a limited competition for National Parks – and it was due in a week. Without blinking or thinking we were working together again, exchanging emails of sketches, text and drawing files. We quickly devised a system of working together including operating the other’s mouse from 500 kms away during Skype calls. It felt like the remote working future had arrived.

Yet nothing beats being on the ground. I checked frequent flyer points and which airline would allow two surfboards and a design workshop was on. Work should be fun and life should triumph. We cruised the coast looking for the best waves, then with sandy feet in the Bellingen studio we worked till late, getting blurry and spilling wine on drawings.

Our partnership agreement was that we would aim to split all workloads and any fees 50–50, unless otherwise agreed. This has worked well for later projects, as have intensive periods working in the same room.

For a young Sydney practice, we enjoyed the broader range of projects, getting out of town and working with friends. For the guys up the coast on an acreage, teaming with a Sydney practice expanded the capacity of their office to aim for bigger projects.

In over a decade we have completed about ten projects together with few disagreements and now have a little bag of awards for the work we have done together. Pitching for work early on as ‘architects in association’ it seemed like a web of complexities may open up. We tested the waters with our insurers, lawyers and over time clients. There appeared no major barriers to working in this way. Sometimes with clients we worried that we might be seen as interlopers; other times Christian joked we were the grunt from the big city. But one thing we often noticed was a sort of pride from commissioners that a local firm was involved, but equally the project was important enough that a Sydney firm was also involved. It was a three-way win.

Our only real competitive angle for structuring our fees was that the client shouldn’t have to pay extra to have both practices working on a project. This meant we absorbed the cost of flights and when out of Sydney we slept on the very comfortable Bellingen studio floor – on reflection a very efficient practice.

Many regional centres in NSW are both expanding and being bypassed – a strange paradox. We Sydneysiders all know any number of design professionals who have sought refuge beyond the big smoke. Some find a different culture and expectations. By working collaboratively we have only dipped our toes into these realities in the regions. We did however grasp certain lifestyle benefits on offer and now feel a real connection to this area that we have been fortunate to have worked in.

Neil Mackenzie is a director of Mackenzie Pronk Architects, Sydney. They collaborated with Fisher Design and Architecture, Bellingen on the above design for Jetty4Shores Stage in Coffs Harbour. The bandstand won a commendation for Small Project Architecture in the 2018 Country Division Architecture Awards. Their Jetty4Shores Revitalisation Project with Coffs Harbour City Council also won the Urban Design Award.
A visiting Laminex representative once told me there are 200 architects on the Balmain peninsula alone. Glebe is the next suburb along the harbour line and I had been there for 30 years, comfortable as a sole practitioner and yet wondering what else was out there, beyond the traffic and the chaos. It was an easy decision to make a change. Eight years ago the practice moved to Armidale, seven hours drive north of Sydney and one kilometre above sea level: hence the new name architecture@altitude.

In Armidale we are one of four small practices – a friendly group of like-minded professionals who support one another and share the work, occasionally catching up for drinks or a meal. We understand the nature of each other’s practice and are happy to direct clients to the most appropriate architect for the job. Sometimes we don’t need any more referrals as practice here can be very busy.

Throughout each year we travel to meet at our Country Division events. We enjoy an injection of inspiration from the various presenters, mingle with our trade partner friends and socialise, while keeping up with our CPD commitments. Many of the 300+ architects in regional NSW often work in isolation and so the peer support from these gatherings is vital. Although the challenges we face are like those of any architect, there are some issues that are unique to a remote practice.

Support from local trade suppliers is valuable so we shop locally when possible, but material choices are limited. We often find ourselves working with city-based suppliers who understand the challenges and extra expense of transporting materials over a long distance, sometimes on rough roads in difficult conditions. Although work may involve trips over vast distances, they can be enjoyable journeys through the landscape.

Regional architects often have a variety of projects, which keeps practice interesting and also presents challenges of a small business needing to wear many hats. There is also the benefit of familiarity with the planners in some council areas. We develop good working relationships with these familiar faces as they support us in our applications, allowing a smooth process for clients.

Access to expertise can be difficult at times and choice of consultants is limited. Engineers are not always available locally, but the benefits of new technology are helping to overcome some of these challenges. Project budgets are often low and it is easy to overcapitalise as regional housing prices are slow to increase. Yet it simply needs a different approach: perhaps removing internal walls rather than adding on.

Regional practice offers a slower pace with the work–life balance being the greatest benefit. Less travel means more leisure time, so we often find ourselves out horse riding, bushwalking or swimming when we ‘should’ be working in normal office hours. The cost of living is less than in the city, so although we may have reduced fees, the overall financial situation can be much stronger.

Visits back to Sydney have become enjoyable as the challenges of living in a large city are no longer confronting on a daily basis. Cities have become holiday destinations where we enjoy all they have to offer while catching up with friends and family in a more relaxed manner.

Would I move back to run a practice in a city? Never say never, but for now … I’ll keep the change.
Resourceful projects provide leading examples

Isabelle Toland

Montoro Cellar Door, Lismore Regional Gallery and Jetty4Shores were all winning projects in the 2018 NSW Country Division Architecture Awards. While representing a wide range of scales, they hold in common resourcefulness and vision – skills that all architects, whether practicing in regional or urban centres, would do well to sharpen.

The Montoro Cellar Door is a simple and elegant project. It is a direct yet poetic solution to time and cost constraints that drove an innovative structural and construction process. The design maximised prefabricated elements and minimised components and material.

Providing a vantage point to admire its setting of open fields and the surrounding landscape of the vineyard, this elegant singular gesture provides a variety of spaces to enjoy and celebrate its context.

With two bold black offset supporting steel portal frames, its distinctive oversized roof profile and black timber clad core on a polished concrete slab that extends beyond the interior, the cellar door provides a new local landmark for visitors and locals alike to enjoy.

The project’s level of resourcefulness and the simplicity of its intelligent and beautiful design struck a chord with the jury, who awarded it the Commercial Award as well as the James Barnet Award, the top prize in the NSW Country Division Awards program. With a budget of only $370k, it is an excellent illustration that constraints of time and money can in fact result in the greatest rewards.
The Jetty4Shores project followed a rigorous community consultation process to identify the pragmatic and landscape specific needs of the precinct. Following the consultation stage, a masterplan was developed to provide a sustainable strategy that would improve safety, visitation and community value.

Jetty4Shores includes dune restoration works, improved beach access, upgrades of existing shelters, provision of new picnic shelters, a new covered outdoor stage and refurbished amenities buildings along Coffs Harbour Jetty. The robust and richly coloured palette of materials responds appropriately to the coastal location, incorporating timber screens, galvanised steel and coloured soffits.

The outdoor stage pavilion is a key feature of the market area. Inspired by the flight of the wedge-tailed shearwater, it is a generous and joyful structure. Timber elements here and elsewhere across the site are inscribed with the artwork of local school students. Other artworks scattered along the foreshore have been created by local artists working with local industries and tradespeople.

The works are inspired by the natural and cultural history of the area, providing opportunities to connect the local community with their place and with each other. In this way, the project reflects the character and efforts of a community working together. An admirable outcome and process that will undoubtedly yield value for the community for many years to come, the Jetty4Shores project is a worthy recipient of the Urban Design Award and Commendation for Small Project Architecture in the 2018 NSW Country Division Architecture Awards.

Isabelle Aileen Toland is a co-director and co-founder of Aileen Sage Architects – a collaborative design studio established in Sydney in 2013. She was a creative director for the Australian Pavilion at the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale and is a member of the State Design Review Panel for the NSW Government Architect; she was also a juror for the 2018 Country Division Architecture Awards.

Dominic Finlay Jones Architects with Phil Ward won a Heritage Award and Commendation for Public Architecture for their Lismore Regional Gallery. The project took a ‘light touch’ approach to reinvigorating a functional 1960s brick and concrete building, recalling their Lismore City Hall project. The latter earned the James Barnet Award, Heritage Award and Public Building Alterations and Additions Award in 2014.

This considered and restrained approach to delivering a simple and respectful adaptive reuse project that clearly identifies its additions in a contemporary manner resonated again with the jury. It shows how a successful and well-loved community facility can be created through an intelligent approach to celebrating the existing built form and materials, rather than feeling the need to contort or overcomplicate.

The project is impressive for its vision in perceiving the benefits that lay dormant in the existing dilapidated building. It recognises the greater possibilities that could be realised with the significant cost savings that an adaptive reuse strategy would achieve. These savings enabled the budget to extend to include broader precinct works that tie together the adjacent Northern Rivers Conservatorium and Lismore Public Library along with the Gallery to create a true cultural and community hub for the town.

Projects such as Lismore City Hall and Lismore Regional Gallery are exemplary works that highlight how value can be found in the existing built fabric of many regional towns.
Historic structures at risk in regional NSW

Duncan Gibbs, David Scobie, Brian Suters and Noel Thomson highlight some notable structures across the state that have their design integrity at stake or otherwise are at risk of demolition or abandonment.

Transport networks are evolving in regional Australia in response to changing markets, movement between old and new modes, new technologies, management and physical constraints, and opportunities presented by sites.

Recent and topical examples that highlight exciting adaptations are worth considering in brief. Regional Victoria is awash with walking and shared trails adapted from former regional railway lines. Byron Bay has a former diesel locomotive cleverly adapted in the Lithgow railway workshops to run on solar power. The Lachlan Valley Railway society runs profitable heritage train services through the west to picnic race meetings, festivals and events on demand while their Cowra roundhouse serves as an active rail museum and workshop.

Faced with a loss in services but an opportunity to integrate a valuable site into an open space network, the Shire Council in Temora has taken the long-term lease on their railway station and embarked on a range of uses powered by community groups.

The site is listed on the State Heritage Register and consists of a pair of original single-platform brick buildings: the Station building (1893) and the Refreshment rooms (1912) in the late Victorian style. While the town developed in response to successful gold mines in the 1860s, the railway in the late 1880s served the expanding wheat belt. During the boom of the inter-war period, the community grew into a key regional service centre. Today, the town hosts a major agricultural research and training facility, as well as the Aviation Museum and Airport Estate.

Council worked cooperatively with the John Holland Group and Transport NSW over three years to secure a future for the site and surrounds. It now provides a youth centre, rail museum, recreational vehicle visitor centre, interpretive rail trail and outdoor music venue, while the platform has become a popular entertainment and luncheon venue.

Further north in the central west, local arts and community groups in Canowindra have prepared a plan to reinvigorate an 800-metre-long rail precinct with performance spaces, markets, two existing museums and a range of industrial railway and agricultural structures. As a work-in-progress the project has the key ingredients for success: enthusiastic willing parties and a valued historic site capable of linking disparate existing uses within an industrial landscape.

Text by David Scobie
Acknowledgements: Temora Shire Council and John Holland Country Regional Network, Cabonne Shire Council, with John Holland Country Regional Network, the CORRIDOR project and Transport NSW
Newcastle Civic Park Fountain

Following the dramatic proposal by Newcastle City Council (NCC) to move the civic activities of the Council to the West End of Newcastle, Council exacerbated the decline of the Civic Centre by demeaning the Civic Park Fountain. Council has installed coloured lighting, which the CEO believes improves the fountain (not unlike the detachment of the Opera House sails for advertising the Everest Horse Race).

The change is contrary to the expressed wishes of the sculptor Margel Hinder. In 1973 following the installation of external green lighting, Hinder threatened legal action to have it removed. Council subsequently removed the green lights. She was ‘appalled, distressed, disturbed and downhearted’.

In 1929, Newcastle celebrated the completion of its City Hall by eminent architect Henry White. It was an exceptional project consolidating the centre of political and cultural life of the city. Fifty years later in 1977, the circular Administration Building was completed. Strategically located in Civic Centre, it balanced the axial planning concept by completing the tripartite composition with City Hall and NESCA (University House). The round building’s precast concrete reconstructed finish matched the colour of their Sydney sandstone. The proposal by NCC to vacate the Administration Building and relocate to the West End will break the civic nexus. Notwithstanding the loss of municipal activity, it is a must for the Administration Building to remain as an element of the civic memory.

Romberg & Boyd, in association with Wilson & Suters, were the architects. They produced an exceptional example of late 20th century building; its sculptural form and structural ingenuity utilising precast concrete contrasted with the anonymous slab-like glass boxes of the period. In true modernist language, the circular form was generated by the geometry of the site and reference to Soderstein’s art deco NESCA House. Despite a high water table, the use of a diaphragm RC system enabled the construction of a three-storey spiral underground car park for fifty cars.

A strong case was put to adapt the round building, with the adjacent Menkens’ Fred Ash Building, as the University of Newcastle School of Architecture. But the University declined and Council voted to accept the EOI submitted for adaption to a five-star hotel by Syrian billionaire Ghassan Aboud. A sketch in the Newcastle Herald (13 December 2018) indicates a six-metre addition to the roof by EJE Architecture. The sketch highlights the design problem of adding to a pristine form.

Despite the disappointment that the original raison d’etre for the building is to be changed, with sensitive adaption to a hotel, the result can be successful and contribute to a progressive architectural dialogue.

Newcastle City Council Administration Building

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Former Wagga Wagga Teachers College Library

The former Wagga Wagga Teachers College Library – now Blakemore building / CSU Riverina Archives – was designed in 1968 by the Government Architect Edward ‘Ted’ Farmer in the ‘international modern’ style and opened in 1971. The building is unique to Wagga Wagga for that period and not common in NSW. An interesting fact is that in November 1969 the construction work featured a 24-hour continuous concrete pour for the first floor of the library building.

After many years with Charles Sturt University (CSU) operating the north and south campuses in Wagga Wagga, CSU embarked on a program to combine all facilities onto the main north campus. In 2014, Saint Mary MacKillop Colleges leased the former teaching areas for their school and they continue to occupy part of the site. In 2016, all activities other than the Riverina Archives were vacated from the site and masterplanning was undertaken for development opportunities. The site has since been sold to private developers who are obtaining development approval for stage one of an aged care accommodation. So the future of this important building to Wagga Wagga is under threat.

Text and photo by Noel Thomson
Robb College, University of New England, Armidale Region

The announcement in early 2018 that the University of New England was going to demolish Michael Dysart’s 1964 masterpiece pushed me into the realm of heritage activist after witnessing battles, both ongoing and lost, to save Modernist (and modern) heritage in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

My newfound activism has exposed me to the realm of heritage law and its maladministration, as well as the contemporary corollary of the 1960s view that old buildings should be knocked down and replaced.

The campaign to save Robb College is a crucible of the issues that swirl around the area of heritage identification and protection and how contradictory laws are used to bypass the kinds of protections that we would reasonably assume should be used to stop the destruction of items like Robb College. The response is now to push for change so that the identification, nomination, assessment and listing of heritage should be de-politicised with suitable amendments to heritage law.

We must also continue to fight for the listing on the State Heritage Register of the remnants of Robb College and its proper redevelopment.

Text by Duncan Gibbs and pre-demolition photos by Clinton Cole

‘My newfound activism has exposed me to the realm of heritage law and its maladministration, as well as the contemporary corollary of the 1960s view that old buildings should be knocked down and replaced.’
The publication *Draft Urban Design for Regional NSW: a guide for creating healthy built environments in regional NSW* was released for public consultation on 27 September 2018. The project was jointly delivered by the Department of Planning and Environment and Government Architect NSW (GANSW), working closely with the regional offices in the department and informed by regional councils.

GANSW has had a long involvement with regional areas of NSW. The first officer in the role, which was then titled colonial architect, was Francis Greenway, appointed in 1816. Since then, 23 government architects have been responsible for leading the design and delivery of civic buildings in major towns and cities. Over 200 years later, GANSW now provides strategic design advice to ensure good urban design outcomes for the state. The role of place is important, and GANSW acknowledges the importance of our connection to our place and our land. We acknowledge the importance of this connection for Aboriginal people, who know that if we care for country, it will care for us.

The classic regional centre was generated around a main street providing the central stage for the town’s business and social activities. From this, a grid of streets extended over time, interspersed with regional and memorial parks, and lined with housing from a range of different periods. There are many quintessential attributes to regional towns that define these places – such as wide streets with angled parking, verandas and awnings over the footpath, corner pubs, inter-war fibro housing, municipal pools, or proximity to a river or coastline.

As the state developed, early colonial buildings established a civic sense of place, with the construction of district courthouses, town halls and banks. Other buildings such as libraries, schools and pubs provided for other social needs. There are many notable examples of all these from early colonial buildings, through to those more recently built, which have shaped the identity of our country areas.

As centres have grown, the need for more housing has also increased. Poor decisions such as locating housing developments or retail centres on the periphery of towns bordering rural land, have had an impact. These types of development rely on the car and impact the life and business activity of the main street. Design outcomes are often substandard, with little consideration for the landscape and the historical context.

GANSW believe that good design processes and outcomes are vital to the continued life of our regional communities. We need to encourage innovative and catalytic projects, which rethink the challenges that regional areas face. How do we create active main streets and deliver buildings and public realm projects – mixed use, community or housing design – that are sensitive to context and reflective of the region? How can we take
We need to encourage innovative and catalytic projects, which rethink the challenges that regional areas face. How do we create active main streets and deliver buildings and public realm projects – mixed use, community or housing design – that is sensitive to context and reflective of the region?

Issues raised through Council engagement have formed the scope of the guide. This has shaped the identification of seven urban design priorities for the regions, and four typical project types where the priorities can be implemented. Case studies are significant in being able to demonstrate best practice in these different project types, and a number will be included within the final guide.

The guide supports the implementation of the nine regional plans for NSW, and importantly, forms part of the suite of policies and guides developed by GANSW. This includes the pivotal link back to the seven design objectives of Better Placed, the integrated design policy for the built environment of NSW.

The guide was on public exhibition from 27 September to 15 November 2018. Feedback is currently being reviewed with the intent to release the final guide and accompanying case studies later this year.

Government Architect NSW looks forward to continuing to support the architecture profession and government across regional NSW to ensure good design outcomes for our cities and towns.

The draft guide is available on the GANSW website: www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au.

Jane Theeff is the principal of urban design at Government Architect NSW.

All policies and guides produced by Government Architect NSW can be found at: www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au.

Diagram from the GANSW publication Draft Urban Design for Regional NSW. Courtesy Government Architect NSW

Relationship between Better Placed objectives, the priorities and project types.

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Refer to Part 3.1

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CHAPTER

Elanora House in Pottsville by Aspect Architecture won the Award for Residential Architecture – Houses (New) in the 2018 NSW Country Division Awards

Photo: Daniel Evans
Advocacy and activism

Advocacy with impact is one of the four pillars of our 2018–20 Strategic Plan. Part of this involves initiating advocacy campaigns in order to influence both the policy discussion and policy outcome. So just how do we do that?

The Strategic Plan tells us we need: a clear agenda and priorities, research capacity and strategic political interaction. For me, examples of advocacy in practice include:

- Meeting with federal, state and local politicians to communicate our message
- Speaking with journalists, going on radio and television at any opportunity to communicate our message.
- Promoting our annual architecture awards, which remains the most rigorous peer reviewed database of what good design looks like in Australia
- Promoting public architecture discussion through talks, articles and events
- Initiating and contributing to research that supports our agenda and priorities
- Making the voice of architects heard on the many different third party panels that we are invited to participate on, be they Australian standards, building contracts, building regulations, design review panels, architectural education, Board of Architects and many more.

Yet for the advocacy to have impact, it sometimes needs to move into the realm of activism. There is a lot of overlap between advocacy and activism, but activism is more action orientated, more direct, sometimes interventionist.

Architects – and in particular the Australian Institute of Architects – have traditionally been reluctant to engage in what you might call activism. Perhaps it is seen as unseemly or too popularist, or we are worried about offending those that we need to work with. Activism cannot be done in a naive way: you need to fully commit to the action; understand why you are doing it and the potential risks involved; and have a strategy.

Just ask Shaun Carter, immediate past NSW president and chair of the Save our Sirius Foundation, about his ongoing campaign to save Sirius. This was a classic campaign of rigorous behind-the-scenes advocacy and bold in-your-face activism. Polite advocacy was never going to win the day. The campaign not only shone a light on the Sirius building, it brought public attention to the broader issue of modern built heritage. That is advocacy with impact.

Advocacy can take many forms: promotion of good design through our annual awards, providing commentary on government policy, lobbying for the interest of architecture and the profession, and, at times, a touch of old fashioned activism.

Andrew Nimmo
NSW Chapter President – @NSWChapterPres
More a shift than a departure

After two years in the executive director’s chair, I’m moving across the floorplate to the members’ lounge. I have approached my time in this role less as management and far more like an architect and, more to the point, as an act of design responding to an architectural problem. And if I understand anything about the nature of design, the result is determined most of all by the innumerable unseen decisions intended toward an outcome, so that ultimately it seems so inevitable and obvious it feels it could be no other way.

A RENOVATOR’S DELIGHT

Returning to Sydney from self-imposed exile in Darwin via Melbourne, I land at Tusculum. I must admit to feeling like Nehemiah returning to Jerusalem: the walls have fallen down. There is no business plan; no real calendar of events; scant budget management and few procedures; no consistency in partnerships. Our phones pre-date Michael Jackson, WiFi is a sci-fi fantasy, and there are more piles of paper than a decade’s worth of office paper supply.

The changes have been slow enough that you may not have noticed, but two years on we have made progress on all these fronts and the improvements run deeper than a lick of paint – though we have gone there too, and colourfully.

CLIENT(S)

But of course, the architectural project I’m talking about isn’t really the physical building; our task is to design and construct a home for the profession. An adaptable, responsive and sustainable home wherein our client(s) – our members – can enjoy a better quality experience that informs, assists, and perhaps even delights. As with any large project we have our key stakeholder groups, and to them I wish to say thank you. Thank you to our Chapter Council, committees, taskforces, practice forums – all of you who contribute and shape our work in so many ways. I’d particularly like to recognise Andrew Nimmo, who, as chapter president, has borne this D&C exercise of ours with great wisdom, integrity, patience and humility. If ever there were a client we’d all like to have it is someone like him.

BRIEF

Our brief asks us for a ‘building’ that promotes growth and during a period of significant change for the organisation we have nearly clicked over 3,300 members in NSW – a strong achievement. We’ve also seen an increase in the number of Fellows, although there is still more to be done to address historical imbalances in gender representation.

BUDGET

Well, in short, there’s never enough. But we have our house in order. The bottom line is growing stronger as together we enact stronger fiscal discipline, greater consistency and better financial policies.

VALUE MANAGEMENT

We all know what this means and probably know that this is good for us, that we get better buildings through the concentration it demands. As it should apply in thinking across projects of all scales, so too should it apply to our ‘building’. In this spirit I say to members who’d like us to do more and more of it: we know density done well trumps urban sprawl any day. Let’s live by our own belief here and strive for a building that pairs ‘compact’ with ‘impact’.

AN ONGOING CONSTRUCTION

Of course, it’s an ongoing project. Now I’m back on the (actively demanding!) client side, I look forward to seeing how the design develops from here and to witnessing our ambitious sketches – of gender equity, reconciliation and fair procurement, for example – built.

PARTING WORDS

I’ve always thought that it’s only worth doing architecture if it has something to say. Peter Corrigan used to encourage our studio to find their voice. I think that the lesson is also one for the profession. We need to find our voice and project it with poise, certainty and clarity. Our cities require nothing less.

Thank you for your support, it has been an honour and a privilege.

Joshua Morrin
Executive Director, NSW
Urban Design for Regional NSW

Our state’s very diverse regional areas present both challenges and opportunities for ensuring their sustainable futures; good urban design is integral to securing these. As such, GANSW’s guide is a valuable instrument for promoting understanding and appreciation of what good design means within a regional context. It provides critical insight into general priorities for regional NSW as well as the particular physical, social and economic opportunities and challenges for each of the state’s regions, and encourages sensitive and inventive design responses to these regional contexts. These outcomes improve liveability and support the ongoing wellbeing of regional communities.

The draft guide contains high quality information and practical guidance, particularly for its intended local government audience. We consider the next iteration will be improved by some structural refinement, more detailed case studies, incorporation of Aboriginal heritage and culture, and recognition of the importance of good procurement processes in achieving good urban design outcomes.

Sydney Opera House sails

When Sydney Opera House CEO Louise Herron was ordered by the NSW Government to allow horse race advertising on the sails of the world heritage-listed Opera House, the Institute voiced its support for Herron in upholding the policy of her organisation and opposing this exploitation. NSW Chapter president Andrew Nimmo registered the Institute’s grave concerns with the NSW premier and minister for environment and heritage. These concerns were picked up by media as well as the profession, who rallied in defence of the building’s integrity as an icon and a public space. Mr Nimmo said:

‘The Sydney Opera House is Australia’s greatest building and recognised around the world as perhaps the greatest building of the 20th century. That is why it has world heritage listing. With that listing comes a responsibility to treat the building with respect and dignity. It is not an advertising billboard.

‘The commercial benefit of projecting onto the Opera House is undeniable, and we understand that, as a major tourist icon, the Opera House will be expected to lend its prestige in the support of tourism from time to time. However, this must be done with the utmost care to ensure that community expectations are met, and the integrity of the Opera House as a cultural icon is maintained and not trashed.

‘It seems we are continually seeing the commercialisation of major public spaces for the benefit of private commercial gain. We fear that a new precedent has been set where exclusive commercial interests have been supported by government over public benefit.’

The Institute will continue to advocate for the integrity of this invaluable architectural, cultural and public asset.

Improving building certifier independence

Certifiers play a critical role in ensuring required health, safety, sustainability, amenity and performance standards are achieved. It is in the public interest that the framework within which certifiers operate promotes integrity and independence, and strives to cut conflicts of interest between private certifiers’ regulatory responsibilities and their commercial interests. It is also in the interest of the architectural profession; it is a fundamental aspect of design integrity that the standards architects have designed buildings to meet are realised in construction.

We welcome the Building Professionals Board’s work to improve certifier independence and its recent Options Paper, which presented three options for a certifier appointment process. The Institute voiced its preference for the Option 1 Rotation Scheme, which establishes a list of eligible certifiers who are selected at random, like a lottery system. This option best balances the need to manage conflicts of interest while still providing the developer to take part in the free market.

Irrespective of which option is adopted, this matter also needs to be addressed by other complementary mechanisms. Strengthened enforcement of the Building Professional Board’s code of conduct and increased, random audits of certifiers’ work are two such mechanisms the Institute has suggested government consider.

Automatic Mutual Recognition

Last October the Institute wrote to the NSW minister for innovation and better regulation in support of the Automatic Mutual Recognition (AMR) scheme for architects proposed in the Better Business Reforms. We noted that the Institute supports the development of a national scheme as AMR stands to offer a range of welcome benefits. Yet, its introduction needs to be managed carefully, given the variation between state/territory Architecture Acts’ requirements for maintaining registration.

While the Institute advocates practicable mutual recognition within Australia (and extending to New Zealand), there needs to be clarity and a rational approach to matters providing consumer protection (such as insurance and CPD) that does not encourage ‘forum shopping’ for a home jurisdiction. This would undermine the principle purpose of accreditation – to give consumers surety that an individual (or practice) is assessed as reaching a standard they are entitled to rely on. We advised that all differences between jurisdictions be eliminated and a harmonised system be introduced.

Kate Concannon
Advocacy & Communications, NSW Chapter
Country Division welcomes city architects

‘Interesting, stimulating and engaging’ describes the events over the last year. In summary of 2018, the NSW Country Division has continued to grow and maintain the high standard of professional development amongst the regional architectural community.

With Noel Thomson and Cameron Anderson to thank for inspiring a focus to rethink, recalibrate, regenerate with ‘architecture in an evolving context’, last year’s conference in the Hunter Valley was a standout. ‘The best conference I’ve been to’ was a recurring comment giving anticipation for the ‘evolving’ of the coming year and conferences. The awards dinner reflected this direction with a strong awards program with high quality entries.

ArchiMeet seminars represent and create the sense of community and support, which both forms and drives our group. Each of the seminar days in Orange, Port Macquarie, Byron Bay and Berry were memorable. Together they formed a rounded view on current and future practice and how regional architects have the ability to shape and contribute to this progression.

Both encouraging socialisation and a chance to ‘catch up’ and share ideas, the Country Division continues to attract and welcome architects from all areas. City architects attending ArchiMeet seminars and our annual conference expands our geographical reach and exposes individuals to various ways of practice and potential collaboration.

We look forward to another successful year.

Tricia Helyar
NSW Country Division Chair

Newcastle news and changes

I write this as 2018 comes to a close and reflect on both past and future activities of the Newcastle Division and its membership. Firstly, congratulations to Debra McKendry Hunt, David Rose and Justin Hamilton for being accepted as Fellows of the Institute. All have made a significant contribution to the local profession.

We welcome David Green as the new executive director for NSW Chapter and look forward to working with him in promoting Institute activities within our region.

Newcastle city continues to undergo a significant transformation with a large number of high-rise residential and commercial buildings under construction. Local, state and national architectural practices are contributing to the changing urban landscape. Our controversial 2.7 km light rail is now in testing phase.

Recently we hosted a successful ArchiMeet seminar on affordable housing. All agreed this is an area where architects need to become actively involved. It ended a year of interesting and well attended CPD and social events. Our local EmAGN committee has been active in facilitating talks by a variety of practitioners.

The Newcastle Architecture Awards are open for submissions and close on 5 February. We encourage members to submit their latest projects and look forward to another challenging assessment exercise for the jury.

Like other Chapter committees, the Newcastle Division committee members are elected for two years. It is now agreed that half the committee will stand down for re-election each year. We are seeking expressions of interest from members to join the committee. After three years as committee chair, it’s time for me to stand down and pass on the baton.

Here’s to an active and successful 2019.

Peter Kemp
Newcastle Division Chair
TKD Architects: strategies for Charles Sturt University

Working across the regional campuses of Charles Sturt University, TKD has developed a range of strategies for the renewal and transformation of the campus hubs and their teaching and learning spaces. These will make the university’s core assets reflective of contemporary university life.

BKA explores flexible learning facilities

While the heat has come out of the residential sector, BKA’s educational projects have increased. The latest approval is a 120-place childcare centre in Kellyville. BKA continues to explore flexible learning facilities to accommodate evolving pedagogies.

The Finery by Mirvac Design

Completion of Mirvac’s Waterloo development The Finery (pictured), highlights Mirvac Design’s people-first approach to architecture. The six four- to eight-storey buildings are on a more human scale with the pursuit of health, happiness and social interaction encouraged through open stairs and shared spaces.

Allen Jack+Cottier’s award-winning residential development

The Burcham, a multi-residential urban infill development in Rosebery, won the 2018 Sustainability Award for Interior Architecture and is a finalist in the Property Council of Australia Innovation Excellence Award for development innovation.

Allen Jack+Cottier is also pleased to announce the appointment of Innes Wilson as senior associate for interior design.

NBRS publishes a study on early learning environments

Taronga Institute of Science and Learning opened as a world leading research facility. Contextually it sits beautifully in the Sydney Harbour sandstone setting.

In October last year, NBRS Architecture’s research-based practice published a study into early learning environments titled ‘Building blocks’. The study explores the ways that these centres can form better community connections.

Crone recognises exceptional talent

Crone Architects has announced several new promotions and appointments to its senior team, including the promotion/appointment of Ashley Dennis (to principal – architecture), Paul Brace (as principal – interior design) and Martin Stacey (to associate director – technical design delivery), recognising exceptional talent and providing new leadership to the team.

Future growth approach at Conybeare Morrison

Conybeare Morrison is strategising for future growth with the appointment of Carolyn Mitchell as practice director and the elevation of Richard Nugent to design director. Michael Morony and Shelani Perera also recently joined as associate directors, leading mixed use and transport respectively.

PATRONS’ NEWS

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It’s about the ‘baby thing’

Stefania Reynolds

Most Australian architecture practices have set down policies to assist women – and men – balance childrearing and career. Yet the number of women in senior levels of architecture practices has scarcely risen over the past decade. Stories abound of women being marginalised and eased out of the big jobs post-baby, or giving up in exhaustion.

Conversely, for me, the reality was totally the opposite. My employers at Fox Johnston could not have been more supportive, from pre- to post-maternity leave. I joined Fox Johnston Architects five years ago as a junior architect. Since then, I have worked on everything from multi-residential to interiors, private houses and public projects, and everything between.

I never doubted that architecture was the right career choice for me. I love what I do. Eight years out from university, I am hitting my straps professionally. So, last year when I discovered I was pregnant my very first thought was: ‘I am terrified, I don’t want to lose my career.’ Even though it had been hard for us to conceive, when it happened, I wasn’t thrilled … not at all.

Like many young women in our industry, I dreaded the chaos that comes with having a child. Ours is a project-based industry, and you can never be ‘off’. My huge fear was that I would be ‘managed out’, marginalised, or put on the less ‘important’ projects.

My fears proved unfounded. Fox Johnston’s directors and founders Emili Fox and Conrad Johnston not only embraced my new condition but went beyond the expected and statutory responses. They said straight up ‘this is a family friendly workplace’, and they meant it.

Post-baby, they allowed me as much time as I needed to return to work and when I did, instead of moving me downwards, sideways or out, they promoted me to an associate level. They gave me more, not less, responsibility, and have done everything to support my return to work.

The experience of most of my friends stands in stark contrast. One friend who worked in a small architecture practice was already phased out towards the end of her pregnancy, excluded from jobs and meetings. Naturally, she left with a bitter taste in her mouth and did not return. Another friend was offered such a low post-baby salary package that she opted not to return. She is now struggling in her own small practice. Two other friends were demoted. We hear these stories again and again. They are devastating both for the individuals and for the industry. Yet it doesn’t have to be like that …

The enlightened attitude at Fox Johnston extends to all staff. Women get 10 weeks maternity leave on top of what is provided by the government; men get four weeks. Flexibility is inbuilt – your responsibility is to the task/role, however you achieve it. Nobody looks sideways at you if you have a sick kid or need to pick up from day care.

Conrad and Emili lead by example. Both are parents of young children, both have full time working partners with big careers – they get it. My husband and I are both working and raising a child in Sydney, without help or family close by. It’s not so easy. But having an understanding workplace and feeling that you are 100% part of a team is 10 times better and more important than having that help.

As a result, I have returned to work even more motivated, more passionate about what I do, determined to do great work and repay my employers’ confidence and trust in me many times over.

What’s more, when operating in a competitive market for talent, it makes good business sense to keep and build your employee team like this. It’s such a shame we lose talented people (women) from the industry because they did not have this kind of support and understanding around them.

I will always be grateful to Emili and Conrad for their support, and to my colleagues. I will work as long and as hard as I can to repay their confidence and belief in me, and to return it, many times over. Having babies is part of life. We can – and we must – do better as an industry.

Stefania Reynolds is an associate at Fox Johnston Architects and the mother of Theo, 10 months old.

STEFANIA’S KEY LESSONS FOR DIRECTORS OF ARCHITECTURE PRACTICES:

1. Provide flexibility for medical appointments.
2. Trust the staff member to do what is needed in her/his own time.
3. Keep in contact during maternity leave.
4. Allow her/him to return to when s/he feels ready and with the option of part-time work.
5. Offer more opportunities and greater challenges than before – it will motivate the staff member to want to work even harder to repay your confidence.
6. Always treat the person as a valued member of the team – don’t just say it, do it.
7. Day care hours, sickness and other commitments are all par for the course – take them in your stride and your support will be rewarded many times over.

Stefania Reynolds (right) with two colleagues at Fox Johnston Architects
2018 NSW Country Division Architecture Awards

THE JAMES BARNET AWARD
Montoro Cellar Door by Source Architects

PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE
Commendation – Lismore Regional Gallery by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects with Phil Ward

EDUCATIONAL ARCHITECTURE
Commendation – CSU Barraameilinga Indigenous Student Centre by Havenhand and Mather Architects

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE – HOUSES (NEW)
Award – Elanora House by Aspect Architecture
Commendation – Great Granny House by Cocks Carmichael with Harley Graham Architects
Commendation – Natural Lane House by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects
Commendation – The Eclipse House by Create Architecture

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE – HOUSES (ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS)
Commendation – Southern House by Source Architects

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE – MULTIPLE HOUSING
Award – Habitat Live Work by Dominic Finlay Architects
Commendation – two@twoseventwo by SPACEstudio

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE – AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Commendation – William Street Lane House by Tricia Helyar Architect

COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE
Award – Habitat Commercial by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects
Award – Montoro Cellar Door by Source Architects

HERITAGE
Award – Lismore Regional Gallery by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE
Award – Barrio by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects
Commendation – Byron Shire Council Foyer by SPACEstudio
Commendation – DUK by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects

URBAN DESIGN
Award – Jetty4Shores Revitalisation Project by Fisher Design and Architecture with Mackenzie Pronk Architects and Coffs Harbour City Council

SMALL PROJECT ARCHITECTURE
Award – Armidale – Refuge/Prospect by Virginia Wong-See, architecture@altitude
Commendation – Habitat Recreation by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects
Commendation – Jetty4Shores Stage by Fisher Design and Architecture with Mackenzie Pronk Architects
Commendation – Marvell Studio by Harley Graham Architects

TERMIMESH TIMBER AWARD
Armidale – Refuge/Prospect by Virginia Wong-See, architecture@altitude

VISION AWARD
C.A.L.M by Dominic Finlay Jones Architects
In a time when significant buildings of architectural merit are rejected for state listing and those that are listed seem to be increasingly at risk, the protection of our architectural heritage appears precarious. While the Institute of Architects endeavours to fight for significant architecture under threat, first we need to know it exists. This is one purpose of the NSW Chapter’s Register of Significant buildings, a list of over 3400 buildings deemed by the Institute’s heritage committee (both past and present) to be of architectural significance in New South Wales.

The register records outstanding architecture that contributes to the state’s physical, social and cultural heritage. The aim is to help protect the buildings on the list through identification and advocacy and to promote the quality architecture and built environment across the state. Although the list has no statutory power, it is often used as a reference by councils and in cases before the Land and Environment Court.

The register has grown from the first list made in 1949 that included 60 buildings considered to be outstanding pieces of architecture in New South Wales at the time. It was the first heritage inventory in the state. In 1955 the list included the County of Cumberland. By the early 1970s an agreement with the National Trust saw the focus of listings undertaken by the NSW Chapter shift to those buildings constructed after 1900. The first ‘Interim list of 20th century buildings’ appeared in Architecture Bulletin in 1973. In 1979 a much expanded version of the list was issued and during the 1980s and early 1990s extensive areas of regional NSW were surveyed with the help of the NSW Government’s heritage grants.

Like an historic building, the register needs maintenance. There are many entries for which vital information is missing; and demolition, major alterations and changes to local government areas mean some information is now out of date. In the second half of last year, the heritage committee formed a specialist subcommittee to reinvigorate updating the register. While we have industrious members on the committee, including from regional NSW, there is a lot of work to do, in particular for the regional areas. We seek your help in order for the register to reflect the wealth of architectural excellence that exists outside of the Sydney metropolitan area.

Some of the entries on the register are backed up by more detailed listing sheets and one of the committee’s aims is to increase the number of entries with detailed information about the buildings and their architects that could be made available to Institute members and the public.

The current Register of Significant Architecture in NSW can be found at www.architecture.com.au/nsw under Heritage and Collection. If you are able to give details that will help in completing missing information on the register and associated listing sheets, contact Sascha Garner, the NSW Chapter’s architectural heritage and collections advisor: sascha.garner@architecture.com.au.

Please note that all register updates need a published reference or original archival material.

Jennifer Preston is director of the architecture practice JPA&D in Sydney, and sits on the heritage committee of the NSW Chapter. She holds a doctorate in architecture from the University of Queensland.
Regional reflections
2018 NSW Country Division Conference

When you bring over 100 regional architects together on a golf course in the Hunter Valley for three days, what could go wrong? As it turns, nothing – apart from the 18-hole afternoon being rained out. In short, last year’s NSW Country Division conference (2–4 October 2018) was completely on par and inspiring – both creatively and commercially.

Under the creative direction of Cameron Anderson and Noel Thomson, the diversity of speakers and content was in line with the theme of rethink, recalibrate and regenerate – architecture in an evolving context. On reflection, it was the juxtapositions and honesty of the presenters throughout each day that brought it all together.

The theme for the 2017 conference was collaboration. It was evident that this theme continued into 2018 and not only with Harley Graham’s entertaining presentation on the trials and triumphs of working with other architects. Nobody present will forget his account of offering to buy the 91 year-old, LA-based Dion Neutra an A3 printer online to help get a project across the line, nor of Neutra’s insistence that all emails needed to be time stamped when they already were.

A day later, Ben Edwards and Emma Guthrey were talking different kinds of collaboration: making things happen in ways that perhaps we have not considered possible. Edwards received a round of questioning around flame zone regulations for his Wye River home, while Guthrey held the stage saying she was incredibly proud of installing a security screen in a women’s refuge. I did say it was diverse.

All jokes aside, three of the 10 presenting practices were founded by life partners with the James Barnet Award, the top gong on awards night, given to Source Architects – again, founded by a couple. Considering this in the context of living and working regionally, it is inspiring to see, but it does raise questions around how to balance personal and client relationships while making sure life works and isn’t all just work.

Lee Hillam, of Dunn & Hillam Architects, discussed their existence as B Corporation and how they were listed as a Best for the World Honoree in 2017 simply by being fair to their staff at Christmas bonus time. Based in Sydney with projects scattered across the nation, the Dunn & Hillam studio is placed in their backyard but with a distinct boundary, as is the case for Takt who live on the NSW South Coast.

Winners of the 2017 James Barnet Award, Takt presented what most considered a doctorate in the business of architecture. An in-depth reflection of their 10 years in practice exploring the projects that never broke ground and the reasons why. Communication or over-communicating, underestimation of budgets and not connecting with the client are relevant issues to any creative practice, regardless of postcode.

On a more conceptual side, Matt Hinds and Poppy Taylor took their first opportunity to present their internationally acclaimed krakani lumi project. They walked us through the design thinking and process of the standing camp within wukalina (Mt William National Park) in Tasmania. It is a stunning project that could not be fully understood without proper description and it resonates with the theme of working together – with each other, the people and the land.

On the same day that Lee Hillam described the Desert House, and Taylor and Hinds led us through such an exquisite piece of work barely touching traditional land, Dr Chris Tucker spoke about town camps in Alice Springs. In a similar fashion, the program placed Archier’s presentation of their months of work building a BIM system in ArchiCad in the context of Takt’s and Archiblox’s tactical responses to redesigning their businesses. This is where the diverse but cohesive threads of the conference’s curating really came to the fore – and I take my (golfing) hat off to Noel and Cameron.

But here is the here the real take-home: half of the presentations were made (in part or full) by women, with the audience comprising over 40% of female architects. It was a fact highlighted on the final day by speakers Emma Guthrey and Kerstin Thompson; the latter finished with a list of 10 pieces of advice for young female architects that should be heeded equally by men (see archiparlour.org/10-lessons). Representing a serious shift in the profession – and regardless of gender – the audience also included a significant cohort of a new generation of young, passionate architects, all based regionally.

Finding myself at a dinner where Dr Sandra Meilhubers spoke on the life and work of her late husband Paul Pholeros, something seemed to pull the entire conference together. Having left my notebook behind, I penned on my wrist a quote from Paul shared by Sandra that makes what we do as creatives – of any form and in any place – real, providing hope and inspiration. It read:

‘Don’t believe me until I turn up and do something.’

* Marcus Piper is the co-founder of Houselab.com.au.

* The quote referred to Paul Pholeros’s first encounter with the Nepali villagers who had endured 20 years of broken promises to improve sanitation.
Presenter Dr Chris Tucker (University of Newcastle) at the 2018 NSW Regional Conference

Attendees at a GANSW workshop on regional urban design guidelines

Award winners David and Sally Sutherland (Source Architects) with Mark Locke (Polyflor)

Pre-dinner gathering on the night of the 2018 NSW Country Division Architecture Awards

Conference presenters Mat Hinds (Taylor + Hinds Architects) and Kerstin Thompson at the awards night

NSW Chapter president Andrew Nimmo and Country Division chair Tricia Helyar

Fisher Design and Architecture team at the awards

Conference facilitator Marcus Piper (left) with members from Create Architecture

Staff from Dominic Finlay Jones Architects

Ann Gee with awards emcee Oliver Gee
Hosted by the Sherman Centre for Culture and Ideas (SCCI), the inaugural Architecture Hub was held in Sydney last year (12–21 October 2018). Under the erudite artistic direction of Dr Gene Sherman, the 10-day festival brought together architects, writers, artists and academics to spotlight the value of architecture as a creative muse and medium. Held across multiple locations throughout the city, including the SCCI headquarters in Paddington, the Art Gallery of NSW and the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), the program examined how architecture influences citizens, cities and culture.

More than 50 presenters contributed to the diverse schedule of events, which included keynote lectures from international speakers (Kengo Kuma, Ryue Nishizawa, Gurjit Singh Matharoo and Michael Rakowitz), curated architecture film screenings and ‘deep dive forums’. Each session balanced an interrogation of the profession with the innovation and ingenuity of exemplar architectural projects, providing insight into the way that architecture is produced and interpreted.

The opening keynote address delivered by architect Gurjit Matharoo (Matharoo Associates, Ahmedabad, India) set the tone for the festival. Entitled ‘Eat Love Play Discourse’, Matharoo discussed his nine philosophies of practice through a series of vibrant watercolour plans, architectural drawings and photographs depicting his work and enlivened by people and animals. The spirit of generosity with which he shared the ethos of his work was echoed by Dr Sherman, who at the close of the address invited all in attendance to share a plentiful meal in the MAAS Turbine Hall.

Over the course of Architecture Hub, deep dive forums provided a platform for in-depth panel discussions on resonant topics. A panel focused on the Sydney Opera House, which coincided with the despicable decision to adulterate public architecture with a large-scale racing advert, was followed by a frank discussion between Abbie Galvin (BVN), Camilla Block (Durbach Block Jaggers) and Penelope Seidler AM (Harry Seidler & Associates) that traced their individual careers and the pertinence of being a ‘woman architect’.

Each moderated forum dedicated enough time for panellists to lose themselves in conversation and immerse the audience in the subject at hand. A day-long session themed around architecture and writing was particularly transporting. Kerstin Thompson (Kerstin Thompson Architects), Peter Tonkin (Tonkin Zulaikha Greer) and Peter Lonergan (Cracknell & Lonergan Architects) opened the morning session reflecting on the literature that has taught them about architecture: a diverse range of reading material from seminal texts on architecture and landscape to obscure manuscripts and historical records. Perspectives shifted in the afternoon from reader to writer as authors Luke Slattery and Michelle de Krester were joined on stage by artist/writer Vanessa Berry to reflect on how architecture features in prose. Together they outlined architecture as both inspiration and storytelling mechanism – how the nuances of a richly described room, building or streetscape communicate the subtleties of characters and context.

The success of Architecture Hub 2018 was based on the quality of keynote speakers and panellists along with the diverse expertise, experiences and perspectives represented across the panels. The festival highlighted the enduring value of architecture as inherently influential on our collective identity and brought together a cross-section of the community. When asked how many people in the room were architects it was refreshing to see that the number of hands in laps outnumbered those raised. Architecture Hub engaged the community to educate and advocate for architecture as a vital cultural medium.

‘When asked how many people in the room were architects it was refreshing to see that the number of hands in laps outnumbered those raised. Architecture Hub engaged the community to educate and advocate for architecture as a vital cultural medium.’

Vanessa Berry, Michelle de Krester, Luke Slattery and Gene Sherman during an Architecture Hub panel discussion at the Sherman Centre for Culture and Ideas

Photo: Daniel Asher Smith

SCCI Architecture Hub

Gemma Savio

Gemma Savio is the associate editor of Houses magazine and a founding director of Sydney-based Savio Parsons Architects.
Some of the finest examples of our built heritage can be found in the regional areas of the state, often in a more intact and authentic condition than their counterparts in the cities. The regions also contain building typologies that are unique – grand pastoral estates with their elegant homesteads, utilitarian woolsheds and rustic barns. The power of government is expressed through regional courthouses, police stations and town halls, while commerce and industry are articulated by the banks, post offices, stores, market buildings and agricultural pavilions that emerge from the district’s enterprises. The history and activities of a region can be read through its architecture.

In the case of Bathurst and central New South Wales, its early built history is now described and illustrated in a magnificent two-volume set entitled *Building Bathurst* by Graham Lupp, covering the period from 1815 to 1915. The elaborate scale of the two large volumes in a protective slip case creates a rare treasure both in content and production values. The format enables the generous reproduction of a wealth of historic archival material including original architectural drawings and photographs (many previously unpublished), exhibiting a richness of both information and representation.

Commencing with the gunyah of the Wiradjuri, vernacular buildings and building techniques are examined. The work of early builders and building designers, and a detailed study of the planning of the early town of Bathurst and the role played by the colonial architects, surveyors and government men continues the story. Mortimer Lewis, James Barnet and William Kemp are amongst the government architects studied, as is the work of district government architects James Dowell and William Roberts.

Volume one concludes with a detailed exploration of the architect Edward Gell, the subject of Lupp’s undergraduate architecture thesis. A chapter on J J Copeman in the second volume also adds to the body of scholarship on Australian architects. The catalogues of works are detailed and comprehensive, enabling an understanding of the range and scope of the architects’ work, providing great value for future researchers.

Interspersed throughout the two volumes are the stories of specific properties, their buildings and the people involved in their creation. The front and end papers provide a detailed timeline of buildings and people with a useful comparison to wider Australian and world events.

This is indeed a *magnum opus*. The archival material alone would make a unique publication, but Lupp has supplemented these illustrations with his own photographs, paintings and measured drawings. Together they create a rich and wonderful document that is a rare treasure in contemporary architectural publishing.

*Building Bathurst* is available through the author’s website – www.grahamlupp.art/writing – or from the Bathurst Regional Council.

Jennifer Preston
Director, JPA&D
In late September 2010, my partner and I gathered with many others at Lady Davidson Chapel for the funeral of Bruce Rickard. I did not know him but my partner had worked for Rickard for several years in the 1980s and appreciated the lessons he had learnt both from Rickard himself and from working within the spaces, ideas and details of Rickard House II.

After the funeral there was a party held in Rickard House III at Cottage Point. It was not a wake – the celebratory feeling of Rickard’s life and work precluded that. There were so many people who had known or had a connection to him: people who had worked for him, clients for whom he had designed houses, personal friends, professional colleagues and family. The expected sadness was present, but it was an undertone. More forceful was the presence of life; stories about working with Bruce, his ideas, his architecture, his enthusiasms, his hospitality. Fond memories and humorous stories circulated with the wine and paella.

This beautifully produced book, rich in archival material and generously illustrated, is like that party; a celebration of Rickard’s life and work from a diverse collection of people who were influenced by the man and by his life in architecture. The essays are drawn from a multitude of perspectives that locate Rickard’s work amongst the architects of Sydney and contemporaneous architecture being undertaken more widely. Personal experiences of Rickard’s practice and private life are recounted by those who worked with him and by family members, with intimate photographs from family albums.

The book is wide ranging, covering both the specific and the general. There is a detailed discussion of Rickard House I, with an analysis of the building’s relationship with its site through views, terrain and space usage. The discussions extend out from the built work of Rickard to encompass a discourse on perspective drawing, the photographer Max Dupain and a consideration of both domestic aspirations and ideas of hospitality; all aspects tethered back to Rickard. The essays are accompanied by evidence of the historic records. There are pages from magazines and journals of the era, letters and – perhaps most gratifying – the reproductions of architect’s drawings. The latter have not been redrawn for presentation purposes and thus also illustrate architectural process.

Editors Julie Cracknell, Peter Lonergan and Sam Rickard have gathered a diverse collection of material here. Not simply the essays from a variety of authors but extensive and rich archival material: interviews, sketches, technical drawings, perspectives, letters and photographs, both professional and personal. Despite dealing with such varied material the book is cohesive and well structured. It is the only publication documenting Rickard’s life in architecture and for this alone it is significant. But it also shows the value of the architectural archive in telling the story of our lives more broadly – and for this it is invaluable.

Jennifer Preston
Director, JPA&D
Syed Sibtain
1935–2018

Syed was born in Iran but was living in England as a British citizen when he met his wife Nancy in London in 1957. They married in 1959, almost 60 years ago.

In London, Syed began to study architecture and worked in the office of Sir Albert Richardson who taught him the highest ideals of architecture. But in 1962 Syed and Nancy decided to return to Australia, Nancy’s homeland, where he re-started architecture at what is now the University of Technology Sydney, while working at the Commonwealth Department of Construction.

He completed his degree with first-class honours and the Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarship. His thesis ‘Traditional housing in Iran’ contained a section with a design for earthquake-resistant village housing. His great ambition, which Nancy supported, was to build for the ‘poorest of the poor’ in a developing country.

In late 1974, not long after gaining his degree, Syed suffered a heart attack, which required bypass surgery; at that time an operation offering a short life expectancy. The Department of Construction retired him on superannuation.

While recovering from surgery, news came of a massive earthquake in northern Afghanistan. Syed used to quote the Persian saying, ‘Better to live like a lion for one day than a sheep for 1000 years’. With Nancy’s blessing, he used his scholarship to fly to Afghanistan. There he came upon a northern village called Saighanchi, which the earthquake had destroyed. The villagers were huddled in the ruins of their homes.

Back in Sydney, he worked on a design for a new Saighanchi and sourced funding in Australia. He then went to Europe for more funding and to start recruiting a team with architectural and building qualifications. The team grew to include Australians Allen Kong, Bill and Robyn Hawkshaw, Swede Johan Martelius, Danes Jorgen Funck and Gorm Pedersen, and anthropologist Asta Olesen. All paid their own expenses.

Syed’s earthquake-resistant structure was unique in its design and execution. He used to say that village housing must be structurally sound, aesthetically and culturally acceptable to the people, compatible with their lifestyle and built of readily available materials. The basic design consists of a structure whereby, in the event of a catastrophic earthquake, the walls fall outward and structural columns supporting a light roof remain standing, protecting the people inside.

From 1976 to 1979, when the climate allowed, the village was built. Syed was insistent that the men did the construction work and learnt the skills required. The women were provided with funding for basic supplies and cooked simple meals for the whole village, including the members of the team – bread and tea for breakfast and lunch, and soup with a little meat for the evening meal.

The men of the village worked hard and learnt the skills, and a beautiful earthquake-resistant village took shape: with a home for each family, a mosque conditioned with traditional badgir, a bath house with solar panels for water heating, an animal shelter, a school, and a windmill. The latter pumped water from a spring to stand-pipes at various points around the village. The entire village precinct was planted with poplar trees to mitigate the effects of wind, dust and temperature.

Syed’s organisation took the name Integrated Development Group and more projects with different teams were completed in following years.

Over the years Syed had a bypass and other surgeries but he always recovered quite well after them.

While at home in Sydney he was always in contact with his friends in Australia, Europe and Afghanistan, and planning for the day that peace would come to Afghanistan – so that he could resume the projects he still had in his mind. Just before his death he had completed drawings for a trade school in Badakhshan.

Besides his heart disease, Syed suffered from diabetes and a condition that affected his legs and he was in much pain for many months before he died on 27 July 2018. He is survived by his wife Nancy, his son Dauid and grandchildren Hugh, Daisy and Harriet, whom he greatly loved.

Allen Kong
Director, Allen Kong Architects
Allan Manning Richards was born in Glebe, Sydney in 1920 and grew up on a farm 5 km west of Coffs Harbour on the Coramba Road. Life was tough for the family through the 1920s and depression years of the 1930s; and he left school when he was 14 to help his father on the farm. He worked hard felling and sawing trees, plus long days toiling in the banana plantation. This was a hard life and he escaped the farm by finding a job in a Coffs Harbour shop. He started to enjoy life more and joined the local surf club and enlisted in the militia. He obtained a job working in the banana ripening rooms at the Coffs Harbour Jetty and spent his days handling large timber cases of bananas. This physical work built up his strength and for a small man he was surprisingly powerful and enduring.

He rose up the ranks in the militia to sergeant through dedication and hard work as he prepared to enlist in the Australian Army. World War II had begun and enlistment teams were travelling from town to town in NSW assessing potential soldiers. Allan was devastated when he was rejected because he was half an inch too short! This did not stop him as he signed up to help train soldiers at army camps and found a way to join.

He joined the 2/13th Battalion and enjoyed the camaraderie and training that his new army life provided including a march from Sydney to Bathurst. His battalion sailed on the Queen Mary to Egypt via India and the Suez Canal. They were soon dispatched westward into the desert and took part in the famous Siege of Tobruk. This was the first battle of the war where the Germans were defeated. The Rats of Tobruk defeated the elite Africa Corp and their top German general Rommel.

The 2/13th Battalion was the only battalion to remain in Tobruk for the entire siege. Allan also fought in Palestine, Syria, New Guinea and Pacific Islands. Allan was also involved in the battle of the Kakoda Track. This was the first battle in which the Japanese were defeated.

On returning home he found he would qualify for a university scholarship if he could matriculate. He enrolled at Ultimo Technical College in February and matriculated to the University of Sydney in October. It was an amazing effort for someone who had very little secondary education.

He married Irene and had two children before he graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture and moved to Coffs Harbour to set up his business. Unfortunately, Coffs Harbour did not need an architect, so he moved to Grafton, took in a partner John McDonald and together they built a thriving business.

Some years later, Allan set up his own office in the family home. He was now at the top of his game. He designed clubs, schools, council offices, hospitals, churches, canal developments and resorts. One day, businessman Mr E York Seymour arrived at the front door and asked Allan to design shops for him. Mr Seymour owned the Fossey shops in most country towns throughout south-east Australia. Allan designed many shops over a vast area and supervised their construction. This presented a major problem as sometimes he was supervising up to five building sites at one time. As the distances were too vast, he had to fly. But this also presented logistical problems: he would fly out from Sydney and then have to fly back to Sydney and back out to another site. He soon obtained a pilot’s licence and flew himself.

Allan was one of the leading instigators of the NSW Country Division of the Australian Institute of Architects when it was established in 1960. He enjoyed meeting with his many friends and always had a wonderful time at their conventions. In 2010, at the age of 90, he attended the 50th anniversary of the Country Division and was thrilled to meet up with old friends.

Allan remained at home until a few months before his death in July 2017, aged 97. He is survived by four children and seven grandchildren.

Raymond Richards
Son of Allan Manning Richards

`Allan designed many shops over a vast area and supervised their construction. This presented a major problem as sometimes he may be supervising up to five building sites at one time. As the distances were too vast, he had to fly. But this also presented logistical problems: he would fly out from Sydney and then have to fly back to Sydney and back out to another site. He soon obtained a pilot’s licence and flew himself.`
A graduate of Harvard University’s Master of Architecture in Urban Design and the University of South Australia’s Bachelor of Architecture, Christopher Procter practiced in Sydney, Boston, Oman, Christchurch, Melbourne and Adelaide.

Blessed with the perfect cocktail mix of humility, humour, intelligence, energy and empathy, Christopher shone early in life. Recognised for abilities in athletics, music and academics, his leadership prowess saw him appointed school captain of Sacred Heart College in Adelaide.

The study of architecture opened Christopher’s eyes to expressive possibilities. Many were envious of the fluidity and ease his project work exuded. Fulfilling a tradition, I masked his final thesis drawings for airbrushing. My ineptitude resulted in long paint runs, which he argued presented the work in a more authentic light. His final year thesis for an art gallery at the corner of North Terrace and Pulteney Street won the annual prize. He may have been right, but his brilliance was starting to shine.

Architecture proved the perfect fit for Christopher. It provided sustenance for his intellectual and creative appetites and allowed him to exercise them in a realm that he negotiated with great ease – that of fellowship with other beings. His sharp intellect, great wit and warm heart appreciated by all: his family, friends, clients, colleagues and the young architects he mentored.

His move from Adelaide to Melbourne on graduation fell well with his cosmopolitan outlook, dapper dress sense and need of a good, dependable hairdresser. Travelling by tram to work at Bates Smart he spotted and stalked his wife-to-be, Bridget Smyth. Around this time he visited me at Harvard. I called in the favour and he pulled all-nighters to help build my thesis model. He didn’t see much of Boston but I was lucky enough to see the spark light in his eye as he audited some of my classes and realised the possibility of new levels to exercise his creativity and passion.

Two years later our paths crossed on a Los Angeles rooftop at dusk at some unknown’s party. He was on his way to Harvard and I was returning home. We huddled in a corner for hours as he grilled me on what lay ahead, excited with anticipation. Joined by Bridget a year later, they both completed their studies and chose to work in Boston for five years. Christopher was a lead urban designer on the Big Dig – the undergrounding of the elevated expressway that cut Boston in two.

In 1995 they returned home to settle in Sydney. Christopher initially opened the office of Bates Smart and then joined me at the City of Sydney in 1997. The offer to transform Sydney with the 2000 Olympics looming was irresistible to his urban sensibilities and began an almost-20-year collaboration. As deputy design director of city projects, he worked with an in-house team of 45 people and many young local architectural practices to transform Sydney and set future standards. Good, strong civic design decisions made over 20 years ago are still evident today. Public spaces, buildings, street furniture, paving and street lighting are testament to his clarity of thought and commitment to elevate Sydney’s urban conscience.

In late 2000, pondering life post-Olympics, we founded Project. The immense honour of collaborating with Christopher and a young enthusiastic office led to the design of projects including 710 George Street (a building that won a City of Sydney Design Excellence Competition); a precast 50 m span pedestrian bridge over Epping Road; a remake of The Rocks Square; one of five first-stage entry winners in the East Darling Harbour Competition (with Thom Mayne and George Hargreaves); and 10 urban projects for the City of Muscat, Oman.

When we agreed to dissolve Project in 2013 he undertook consultancy work including the reconstruction of Christchurch. In 2015 he founded a successful urban design practice within Ethos Urban.

Christopher is survived by Bridget and his gorgeous sons Lucien and Sebastien.

Bill Tsakalos
City Architect & Director Transformational Design, Blacktown City Council
The Taronga Institute of Science and Learning has been designed to support Taronga Zoo’s goals around conservation. The first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, the institute is a living laboratory for conservation education and scientific investigation, built to empower the scientists of tomorrow.

NBRS approaches all designs from a contextual research basis. The naturally finished, grounded form sits comfortably within the sandstone outcrops and Sydney vegetation that is part of the iconic harbourside locality. The materiality flowing from outside to inside reflects the Sydney sandstone tones and defines natural rhythms of cells and animal skins, expressed in aluminium perforated sun control screens.

The central concept was based around bringing together three major hubs: learning, science and visitor experience. These functions connect via branching arms intersecting in a central light filled atrium.

The scientific hub provides a unique, on-site facility to showcase and benefit from the zoo’s unique data and specimens. State-of-the-art research facilities allow Taronga’s scientists to explore ways to protect endangered species around the globe. It is a facility for both staff and university students, fostering the next generation of conservation innovation.

The design houses tutorial learning environments that allow students from all backgrounds and levels of study to interact with the zoo. From early learning through to high school and beyond to researchers and tertiary students, the learning hub is a space that will support over 150,000 visits per year and will elevate the depth of educational engagement. Three carefully crafted immersive learning environments themed around rainforest, arid and woodland habitats provide authentic learning experiences for students and transform education at the zoo.

The collaborative visitor hub is a unique space that allows a true connection between visitors and the institute. It is designed for experiences that create a closer bond between students, scientists and 300 staff. An aspirational environment, the space will provide more students and visitors with a remarkable opportunity to view science and discovery first hand. Taylor Construction, assisted by BKA, completed the project.

From the outset, the NBRS team – led by design director Andrew Duffin and project architect Ewan Saunders – worked closely with the Taronga Conservation Society to create a benchmark facility evoking its core ‘shared planet’ purposes. From the big idea of branching arms centred on a light filled atrium down to the detail of the cell-like facade, the result is a beautifully crafted experiential environment.

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex opened the Institute building during their royal tour of Australia last year.

Andrew Duffin
Director of Design, NBRS Architecture

'The central concept was based around bringing together three major hubs: learning, science and visitor experience. These functions connect via branching arms intersecting in a central light filled atrium.'
BKA Architecture was initially engaged by Western Sydney University to design a home for the NICM Health Research Institute at the Westmead Campus. The scope has now been extended to include the design of the temporary home for the university’s architecture program. The heritage significant listed building is four storeys and the program will occupy most of the fourth level. The space will cater for 130+ students and will include large studio spaces with crit and pin-up zones, as well as maker spaces equipped with laser cutters, 3D printers and workshop tools.

Western Sydney University established the architecture program in late 2017, starting the course in 2018. Professor Chris Knapp was invited as faculty chair to lead the development of the new program in architecture and urban transformation for the university. Formerly, Knapp served seven years at Bond University as an assistant professor of architecture in digital design. He is also director of his design practice Studio Workshop, bringing with him a rich background of academic and professional experience.

The new course capitalises on change and growth taking place in the Greater Western Sydney Region by relating the architectural design problems to urban transformation of contemporary cities, with the view to preparing architects for global employment. The undergraduate degree is available as a three-year full time program with a master’s program starting in 2019.

Together with the temporary space for architecture, the BKA team will deliver conference facilities on the fourth level, and a number of laboratories across three levels for NICM. These include:

- Clinical labs with cardiovascular and neuropsychological assessment facilities
- PC2 pharmacology labs
- In vivo/ex vivo facilities
- Herbal research and development labs.

NICM is globally recognised for its world-class research and innovations in integrative medicine. The institute’s herbal analysis laboratory is one of only two university laboratories licensed by the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration to provide certificates of analysis for herbal products in line with regulatory requirements. The fully equipped laboratories will support industry with independent and accredited testing and a broad range of research services.

As well as undertaking a number of projects with Western Sydney University, BKA Architecture has also completed projects with UTS, UNSW, University of Wollongong, Macquarie University and University of New England.

Mark Khoury
Director, BKA Architecture

‘The new course capitalises on change and growth taking place in the Greater Western Sydney Region by relating the architectural design problems to urban transformation of contemporary cities, with the view to preparing architects for global employment.’
Unpacking meaning in regional contexts

Crone Architects

From my experience working on regional public and cultural buildings with Crone, I’ve found that regional architecture is an extremely rewarding, intimate experience that results in a high level of satisfaction for the team and all parties involved.

Since we are building in their own backyard, we find that the public is more invested in the project and keener to share their input. Interested stakeholders often include residents, local community, council members and cultural groups. Their opinions and perspectives help to influence the brief, while working together to deliver a more meaningful response that is tailor-made for the community.

With Crone’s 40 year history I was surprised to learn that Crone had limited experience in designing a public or cultural building. Yet, in 2013 Crone’s high-level project vision and young emerging project team allowed us to be selected as the architects for the Orange Regional Museum. With our winning submission we were able to create a museum with a distinctive civic square for a local community in the Central West of New South Wales.

The highlight feature of the design is the sloped grassed roof and the idea of a new museum housed beneath a civic lawn/roof-scape resonated well with the user group. Their ambition for this project was encouraging and made the project richer and more meaningful as the design developed.

I am pleased to say that even before we put pen to paper, without subcontractors or intermediaries, we connected with the local community to understand their own visions for the museum.

We also had the same engaging experience on our second regional museum project, the Rocky Hill Memorial Museum in Goulburn, due for completion in 2019. Like the Orange Regional Museum, we had the opportunity to engage with the community and create a bespoke vision for them.

Both museums have benefited from federal government funding for a part of the project and have achieved a lot within the budget. However, it is clear that regional areas could do with more support as significant civic buildings and precincts really can transform local regional economies.

Beyond the reward in seeing successful built outcomes within regional contexts, I’ve developed a greater awareness for the incredible culture, ideas and projects coming out of regional based architects.

Following local recognition for the Orange Regional Museum in 2017, Crone has won many accolades including the Sulman Medal for Public Architecture, NSW Premier’s Prize, Australian Urban Design Award, and more recently the Chicago Athenaeum’s 2018 International Architecture Award in the Museum category.

Ashley Dennis
Principal – Architecture, Crone Architects

‘Both museums have benefited from federal government funding for a part of the project and have achieved a lot within the budget. However, it is clear that regional areas could do with more support as significant civic buildings and precincts really can transform local regional economies.’

Rendering of the Rocky Hill Memorial Museum in Goulburn, due for completion in 2019
The new visitor centre at the Warrumbungle National Park is a dramatic response to the landscape setting and cultural heritage of this unique part of Australia. Located 20 km west of Coonabarabran in regional New South Wales, the park was devastated by catastrophic fires in January 2013.

Shaped by an ancient volcano, said to be 13 to 17 million years old, the Warrumbungle National Park is known for its distinctive scenic beauty, rich biodiversity and geological value.

‘As a rare project offering, this was a great architectural opportunity to respond to the landscape in a creative way, resulting in something unique and lasting’, says project director Alex Kibble.

The three initial design concepts were direct responses to visiting the site and listening to community groups – all of whom connected to the particular characteristics of the park in different ways. Fracture was finally selected for its response to the unique geology of the remnant shield volcano, interweaving Aboriginal stories and European history of the region as an inspirational representation of the park.

With powerful curving walls clad in stone, the new building celebrates the iconic volcanic dykes and rock formations of the park. Visitors are offered a strong sense of arrival. The walls guide them to the heart of the centre, then to the spectacular southern view and to the walking tracks to the north, all the while providing a protective embrace to the visitor experience.

‘The stone walls are articulated as elements in their own right and, while they define the interior spaces of a building, they also appear to be archaeological remnants of something else – creating a sense of intrigue.’

‘The stone walls are articulated as elements in their own right and, while they define the interior spaces of a building, they also appear to be archaeological remnants of something else – creating a sense of intrigue.’

Due to the isolation of the site, there were real practical considerations required in the final design: sourcing commercial quantities of stone that were appropriate for use in a national park; supplementing the very limited power supply; water collection; and dealing with bushfire threat into the future. The spread of light from the building at night was also carefully thought out, adhering to the ‘dark skies’ policy of the region and in consideration of its visible neighbour, the Australian Astronomical Observatory at Siding Springs.

‘It is important to acknowledge the positive contribution of the many cultural and community groups and the significance of the collaborative approach taken by the project team and client, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, in developing the fracture concept and taking it through to completion’, says Kibble.

Tanner Kibble Denton Architects

Project design team: Alex Kibble (Project Director), Chloe Rayfield (Project Architect), Jocelyn Jackson, Maja Bricic, Gikja Gertaite, Jesamina Barbaro
When an architect lacks custodianship of his/her own work the outcome is mostly unauthored – something other than architecture. The struggle is to achieve a core of architecture authored with minimal impediment or compromise occasioned by external factors. This is not to devalue the enormous potential benefit of a healthy collaboration between client and architect. Rather it is to protect the work from the possible frailties of that relationship, which may lead to undesirable and inappropriate instructions.

The architect’s aesthetic advice should be regarded as ethical advice and – so long as it is compatible with the budget and brief – should be accepted and upheld by the client. But too often architects are unaware of their ability to refute an instruction and indeed that they shoulder a duty to voice and explain a refutation to their client. This obligation is of paramount importance where the advice relates to an exterior offering of a public nature; in this case the architect bears a responsibility to the wider public.

This is the distinction professions have from service industries: professions’ responsibilities to third parties extend beyond those they have to their client. It follows that architects who accept instructions to make a lesser offering to the street, for example, perform an act of professional treason, an abrogation of duty.

What remains, because of this underacknowledged phenomenon at this time of vast urbanisation, is that many architects do not create works of architecture. Instead, they offer a service to their clients with the result that the streets of our contemporary cities are ridden with exponents of minor or no architectural consideration.

In this way this is a sad time and, in years to come, it is not necessarily the award-winning projects that will be of any consequence but those few projects that have demonstrated an undertaking of the civic duties of an architect.

It is with this sense of duty that I make solemn consideration in every project undertaken by my office – particularly in the distraught end of the profession that is residential flat buildings – to produce work that offers something to delight those that might pass by in 50 years’ time and gives presence to the concepts of citizenship and civic propriety.

The most important delivery of meaning in architecture is vested in what we do as architects – not what we say. It is also clear that architecture through the ages has spoken to all history with its works, so the only language that is relevant sits somewhere between time and acts – not words and thinking; narrative is overrated.

I no longer consider that awards offered to contemporary works make definitive representation on the worth of that work in history. (Equally, the concept of compulsory awards is as absurd as the concept of carelessly not offering awards when they are due.) And yet it is not possible to avoid the pretensions of our own time. Awards therefore should only be seen in the context of a longer span of time and the memory of a period in time; for they are merely as good as the judgement of a jury and I am sceptical as to how any awarded work will present in the course of time.

Over the past 25 years I have developed the work in my office with a certain level of confident persistence, always improving on the priorities gleaned from the last project to develop work that prioritises the ‘public’ or the offering to the street over the ‘private’ or ‘interior adornments’. This approach seems to me to be in stark opposition to the desires of the times, which look at how best to offer amenity to interiors – evidenced even in our legislation. A building, as Col Madigan puts it, has rights too and there are collective rights that the citizens of our cities have to a moment of art on the street – a moment of art that is architecture; where plays of light matter, where proportions and details and constructional dexterity all matter.

The simple message I have for all award winners is that we are only as good as our time. The gravity of an award is something that may turn on a moment’s discussion, a moment in a jury’s conversation, as does the non-awarding of an award. I feel privileged that luck has come my way on so many occasions; and many times I have received awards I strongly feel I did not deserve. Time will tell if I am right.

‘A building, as Col Madigan puts it, has rights too and there are collective rights that the citizens of our cities have to a moment of art on the street – a moment of art that is architecture; where plays of light matter, where proportions and details and constructional dexterity all matter.’

Angelo Candalepas is the director of Candalepas Associates. This text is distilled from a talk presented at the Institute of Architects, by invitation of the Institute, following the 2017 Aaron Bolot Award for Multiple Housing to President Avenue (pictured above) by Candalepas Associates.

Provoke is an opinion series written by a different guest writer for each volume of Architecture Bulletin. To respond to a Provoke piece, please email bulletin@architecture.com.au.
CONTRIBUTE TO THE COUNTRY NSW 20th CENTURY HERITAGE SHOWCASE

From Ranclaud & Thomas’ Commercial Bank Building in Moree to Karberry & Chard’s Roxy Theatre in Leeton to Allen Jack+Cottier’s Rothbury Winery in the Hunter, the diverse built environments of rural and regional NSW boast a wealth of valuable 20th century assets. To promote awareness and appreciation of this rich heritage, the Institute is curating an online exhibition for 2019 and we are currently calling on members to nominate significant items for inclusion.

Nominations should include image(s) such as photos or drawings, and key supporting information about the item such as location, typology, architect, year of construction, use and reuse.

Please email content/questions by 28 February to: sascha.garner@architecture.com.au.

“An architectural practice should have, amongst other things, three fundamental project control documents: its Integrated Management Manual, the National Construction Code and NATSPEC.”

Tony Kemery
Director
Gran Associates Australia

“...Hence, the courts and others often look to the specification in particular to determine the message conveyed by the contract documents to those who work with them.”

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