



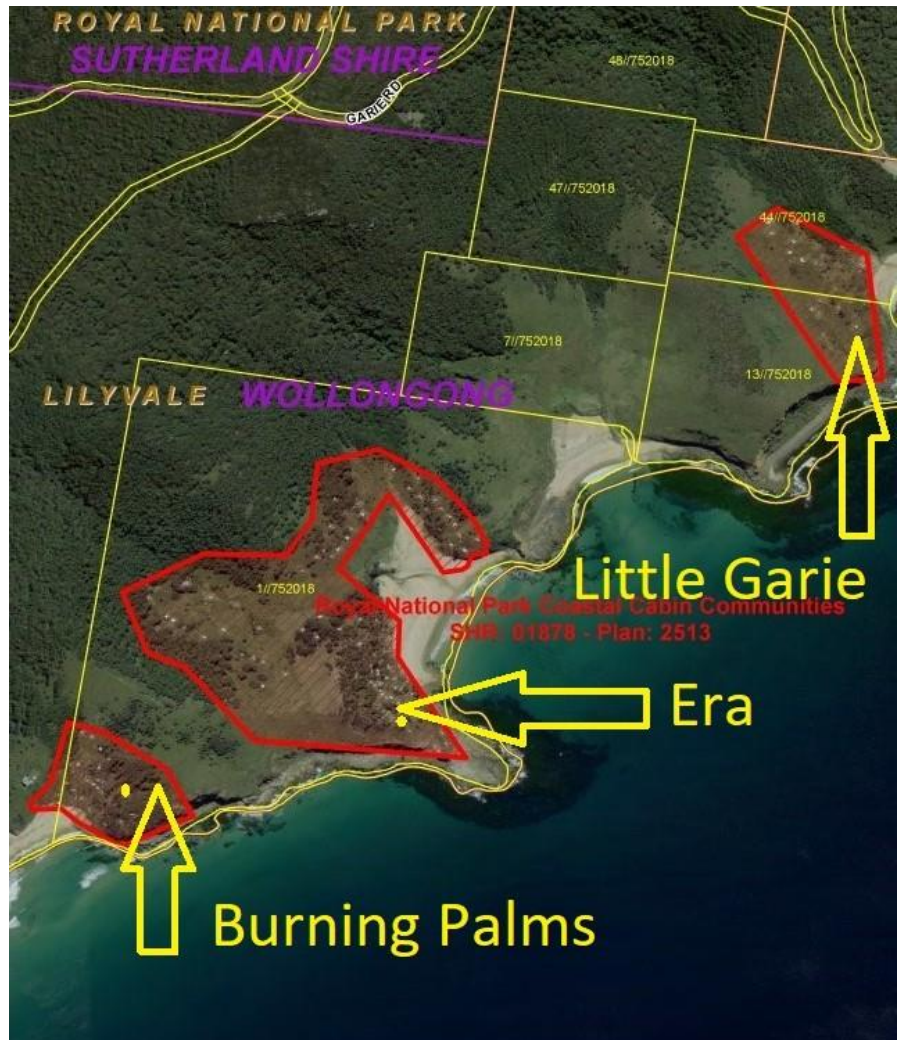
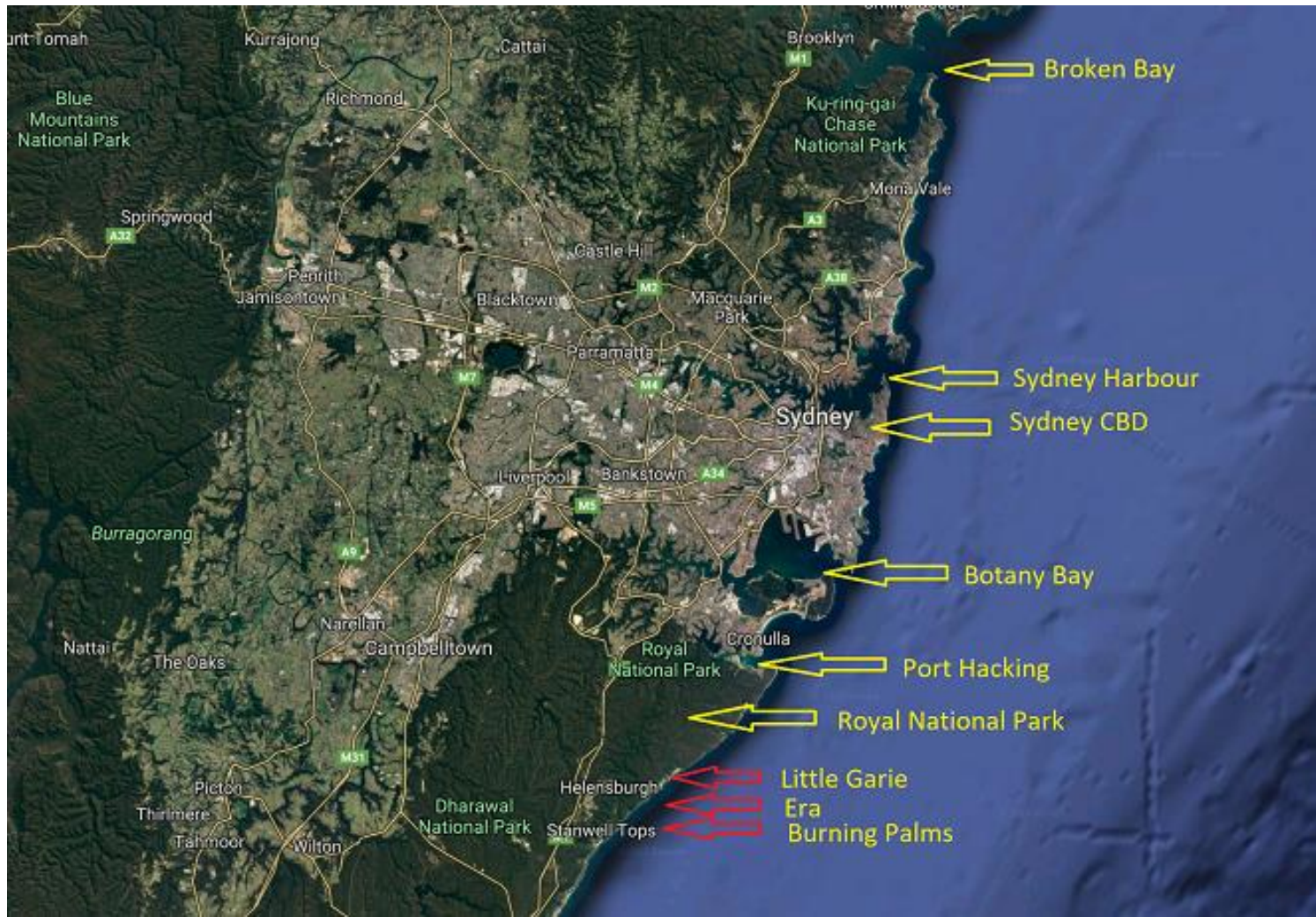
Contested Landscapes: Private Shacks – Public Lands

Culture: Conserving it Together
ICOMOS, Suva, Fiji, October 2018

Geoff Ashley, AICOMOS

Shacks on Burgh Hill, Era, Royal National Park, Sydney

Royal National Park Shack Communities



Above, location of RNP shacks in relation to Sydney (Source: Google Maps). Right, State Heritage Register listing curtilage plan for the three shack communities (Source: OEH)

Royal National Park Shack Communities



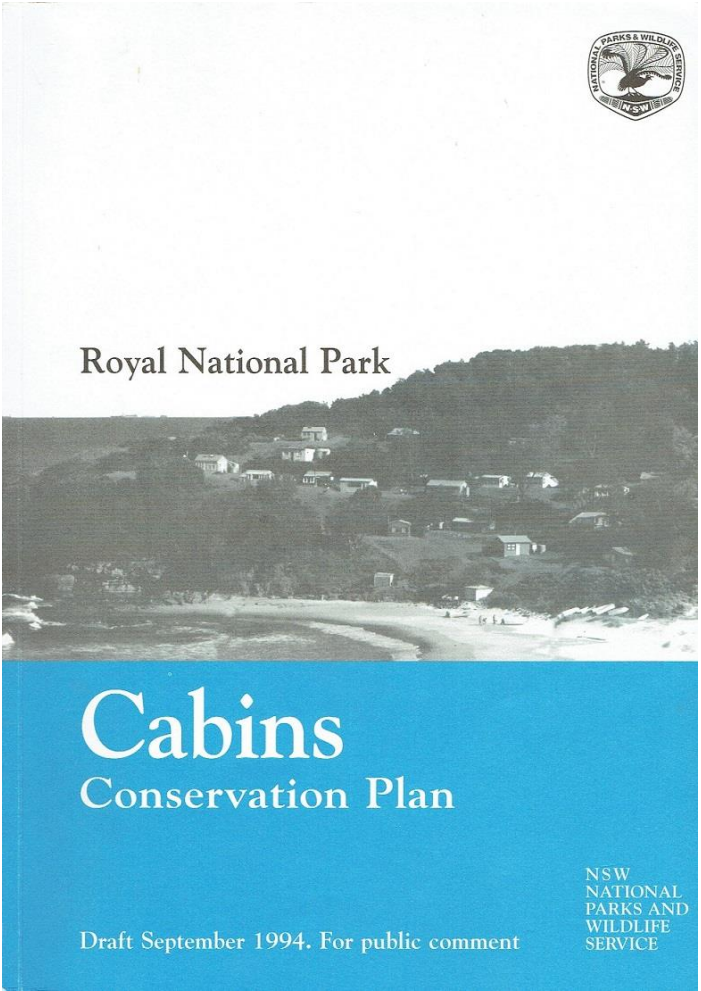
Above, these were mostly cleared pastoral lands in the 1930s when people first built shacks.

Right top, original wool bale shack, 1934, and later additions.

Bottom right, existing shack, Era.



Royal National Park Shack Communities



Royal National Park Shack Communities



Historic photo of Era surf club, left (Hal Missingham) and Bulgo families below left



Little Garie exterior, above, and Little Garie interior left

Royal National Park Shack Communities



Little Garie, above, Burning Palms below and Era from the air, right



Bulgo shacks, left and above

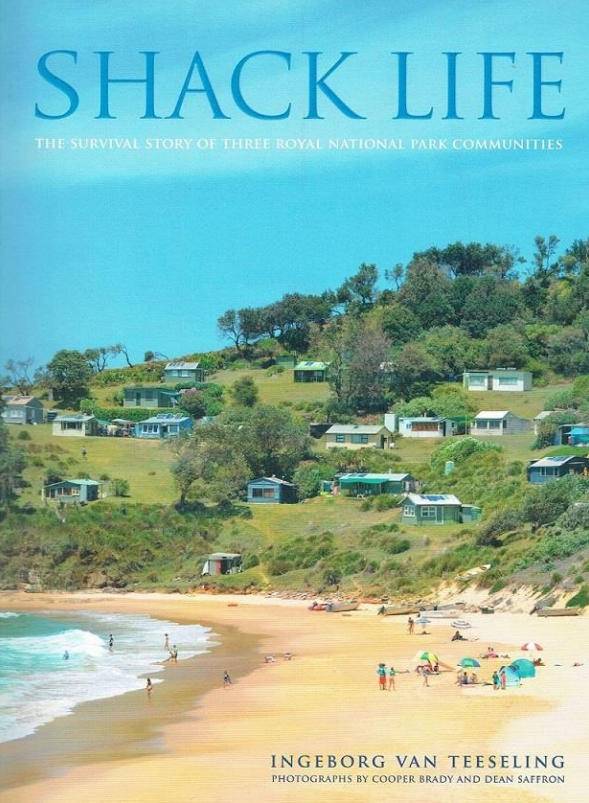
Royal National Park Shack Communities



Era, above and right, Little Garie, below



Era, left and above



Left, *Shack Life*, 2017,
by Ingeborg Van Teeeling

Cultural Landscape Values of Shacks and Huts

Huts and shacks are directly connected to specific landscape places for temporary accommodation: for work in relation to huts and for recreation in relation to coastal shacks.

Shack communities are rare evidence of a way of living now lost in Australia and of the organisation of human settlements, when in theory, there is no organisation

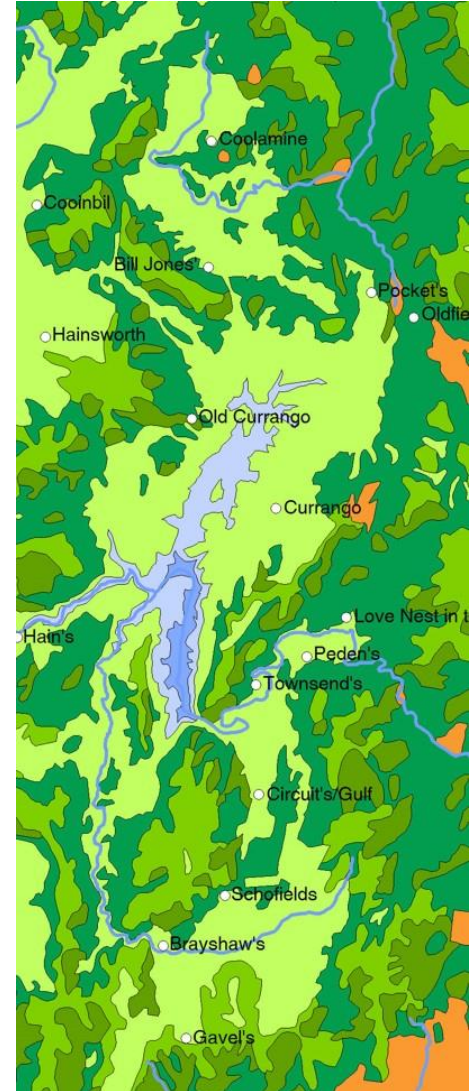


Left, Mawson's Hut, 1912, Cape Denison, Antarctica

Cultural Landscape Value of Shacks and Huts



Above, Hainsworth Hut and its associated pastoral family, Kosciuszko NP. The red arrows on the map, right, show summer sheep movement into Kosciuszko in 1950. The map on the far right shows in light green the natural grass plains where the sheep were taken and the huts around the edges of these grass plains.



Royal National Park Shacks – Current Issues

Issue 1: NPWS appear ambivalent about how to manage the shack communities



Royal National Park Shacks – Current Issues



Bushfire behind Little Garie shacks, January 2018 and later that night an international traveller who was camping in the Park sheltering there (Photos P Stitt).

Royal National Park Shacks – Current Issues

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Issue 2: Shack owners need to work out the governance arrangements that they desire



Left, shack consultation meeting 'tea break' during a January 2018 bushfire

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Royal National Park Shacks – Current Issues



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Issue 3: Shack communities responsibilities flowing from the ‘benefits of history’ and public values in regard to Royal National Park

Issue 4: Society is changing



Social media photo posts from the Figure 8 Pool

Royal National Park Shacks – The Way Forward

Four ways forward to the issues identified:

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- Idea 3: Aim for agreements with key stakeholders in Conservation Management Plans, not just consultation
- Idea 4: More work and then agreement for both land agencies and shack communities. For the land agency adopt Idea 2 and for 'shackies': work out the form of governance and then tenure they desire, responsibilities for public engagement and access from the benefits they have from history; develop a code of conduct and work on external and internal relationships

Wedge and Grey (WA) Shack Communities



Wedge and Grey (WA) Shack Communities



Findings for Heritage Practice (and Government)

- Coastal shack communities and rural huts are intimately part of cultural landscapes and should be managed as such
- Cultural landscape that are also public landscapes will reflect multiple values involving some degree of contestation that should be embraced and managed in dynamic manner as a cultural landscape
- Public land agencies should do more to document public values for these lands and the historic structures within those lands
- Resolve conflicting values by identifying shared values and resolve actual rather than conceptual problems at the interface of values
- Where stakeholders have an actual interest in the land then Conservation Management Plans should have agreement not just consultation on policy

Relevance to Conference Sub Themes

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The Role of Communities in Managing Landscapes

The RNP shack communities wish to do more in managing landscapes by developing self governance models that in turn support the identified social heritage values

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The RNP shack communities do already but wish to do more in managing landscapes by developing self governance models that in turn support the identified social heritage values

Integration of Cultural and Natural Values

The cultural landscape approach recommended here allows for the integration of values and the addressing of issues at the interface practically rather than conceptually

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Managing Intangible (Associative) Values

Both land agencies and shack communities should work to identify the tangible and intangible attributes of associative/social values – the shack communities to identify a code of conduct to allow generational transfer of values. Individuals to develop shack family histories to identify tangible and intangible attributes of each shack.



Concluding Remarks

Shack settlements in Australia established in the middle part of the twentieth century reflected a simple weekend recreation escape for working people that is now mostly lost, along with the shacks themselves. Those that exist are on public lands and struggle for air under the pressures of ‘normalisation’.

The remaining shack communities require management that respects the social heritage values held by both the directly associated communities and the public — a dynamic cultural landscape approach that, through agreement, leads to engagement, trust and ultimately a generational transfer of responsibility. This approach by public lands management agencies will see the resolution of differing quietly contested values via the common ground of landscape.