A HOUSE FULL OF ARTEFACTS

OR

ARTEFACTS FOR THE HOUSE?

papers from a seminar about
the interpretation and presentation
of Old Government House, Parramatta
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The National Trust of Australia (NSW)
A HOUSE FULL OF ARTEFACTS OR ARTEFACTS FOR THE HOUSE?

drations from a seminar about the interpretation and presentation of
Old Government House, Parramatta.

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FOREWORD - RICHARD ROWE?

PAPER YET TO COME.
OPENING.

I feel we should begin by reminding ourselves of the broad objectives of the Trust, and these objectives are incorporated in the National Trust Act of 1960 and they are summarised in the report. 'To acquire, protect and preserve for the benefit of the public lands and buildings of beauty and of national, historic, scientific and architectural cultural significance; to safeguard natural features and to conserve wildlife and to encourage and promote public appreciation, knowledge and enjoyment of these things.'

We may also be reminded that the Trust was formed in 1945 and forty years on in 1985, though it has been working within the scope of these objectives enormous changes have taken place in the entire heritage scene. The Trust membership has grown from the original handful of people in 1945 to over 33,000 now, and this reflects the increasing awareness among the general public of the value of heritage and the need to conserve it. We have an enormous increase in professional expertise, expanded beyond belief in many areas, much of which will provide the basis of our discussion. I might mention the commercial production of a whole host of historic items which were simply unheard of before and I should also like to draw your attention to the production of books and periodicals which make the latest information accessible to all. So all of these avenues and a great many others have improved the standard over the last forty years.

Now - what has not expanded to such an extent is - as it were - the theoretical aspects of heritage matters and of course this is the particular concern of this seminar. What we are looking at is a philosophy for Old Government House.

The house was acquired by the Trust in 1967 and after three years of restoration it was opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 30 April 1970. Amid all the rhetoric of such a royal occasion there shines through the ideal that this was the most important step the Trust had taken to date; that this is the most significant and important property that the Trust owns and that it will become the centre and showplace of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) properties.

These high ideals have been cherished by those associated with the house and over the years another factor has crept into the pattern and that factor is affection. More so than any property I know Old Government House seems to have developed a personality of its own, seems to have a spirit, a powerful mana which envelopes those who work with it and for it: the Old Government House Committee, staff and managers, full time staff and part-time staff, volunteers and guardians, so all of them develop a great love of the property and a great pride in it and, with this, a desire to maintain it and keep it in the light of the ideals as seen at that opening.

For the past fifteen years of deep affection and plain hard work in maintaining the house they deserve our gratitude.
But things do change. Fifteen years on since 1970 it is time to take stock of what we are doing and where we are going and this, of course, is the purpose of this seminar. We look forward to a fascinating two days, we look forward to learning a great deal, to taking part in the development of proposals for the next stage in the life of Old Government House. So, let us hope that this powerful mana of which I spoke before will have a benign influence on the deliberations and that our discussions will be profitable and we will reach a successful conclusion.

PAT MCDONALD.
A HOUSE FULL OF ARTEFACTS OR ARTEFACTS FOR THE HOUSE?

A background paper for the seminar about the interpretation and presentation of Old Government House.

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INTRODUCTION – THE PREPARATION OF A CONSERVATION PLAN FOR OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND THE PURPOSE OF THE SEMINAR

1.1 The Colour Change at Old Government House (OGH)

Over the past couple of years some members of the Curatorial Committee of the National Trust and its predecessors have been considering changes to (OGH). Some of these changes have been to the building itself - such as the recent repainting, and others to the interior, including changes to the arrangement and display of furniture and furnishings. Understandably, these changes have met with opposition from people who are attached to the concepts and the view of history embodied in the current display.

The most obvious change has been the repainting of the exterior from green and white to golden-beige, cream and green. The exterior walls are now lime washed. The choice of the colour scheme was described in the National Trust Journal, February 1984, as follows:

Painstaking research has uncovered the exterior colour schemes of Old Government House at two different periods in its early history, and has prompted the Trust's Curatorial Committee to undertake a meticulous "facelift" for the property, authentic for the period when Governor FitzRoy lived there.

This particular period was chosen, above the second scheme researched which was that of Governor Macquarie, because it shows the house as it was at the end of the era when our early governors made Old Government House their country home.

The earlier (Macquarie) scheme is essentially grey, with black, ochre and umber variations and is believed to have been selected by Mrs. Macquarie from the very few colours available in the Colony at the time, 1815-17. The second (FitzRoy) scheme comprises variations of beige, grey, cream and green, and is believed to have been applied before 1847 when Lady Mary FitzRoy was killed in a carriage accident in front of the house.

When complete, the change in colour scheme and other changes were reported in an article in the Journal in June 1984 (copy attached).

The change in colour scheme was no doubt accompanied by much thinking and agonising (What would the Guardians say? etc). A similar change - from a 1950/60s colour scheme to an historic scheme - was attempted several years ago, at Como, the property of the National Trust in Victoria. A very detailed examination of the fabric of the building was undertaken by Peter Lovell, and a scheme replicating exactly an historic scheme was proposed. A change was not accepted by the 'Victoria Trust'.

It might be nice to believe that the change in the colour of OGH could be attributed to a more intellectually-rigorous approach to conservation in NSW or to the effusion of time, but I suspect that it occurred because of the way decisions about such matters are made in the NSW Trust compared...
with the Victoria Trust, and because the architect involved, Clive Lucas, is a Senior Vice-president of the NSW Trust, with a long established reputation, whereas Peter Lovell was not a councillor of the Victoria Trust, and he was not so well known then as he is now.

The changes proposed to the colour schemes of OGH and Como, both the 'flag ships' and their respective Trusts, can be considered as symbolic of the changes occurring in the conservation movement - an outward and visible sign of an inward and intellectual change. An activity that was once the keeping of a few grand buildings, the hobby of a few, has developed to encompass almost all aspects of the cultural environment, and has become a popularist movement. The knowledge of the history of architecture, building, and associated fashions that was rare in the 1950s and 1960s is relatively common place in the 1980s, and the National Trusts have played a large part in this.

The colour schemes chosen for OGH and Como, whilst based on historic research, are also in keeping with current fashions of what is appropriate for old buildings: just as white was the right colour in the 1960s, shades of stone, and cream and green, are now the right colours in the 1980s - almost regardless of the era of the building. It is not surprising that the Trust favoured the beige, cream and green 'Fitzroy colour scheme', rather than the grey scheme of Macquarie - which would have been the first scheme applied to the building in its then newly created Palladian form.

Just as a review of the exterior was thought timely, so also is a review of the interior and the grounds. However, they are not separate exercises, all aspects of the interpretation of the property - the buildings, the grounds, the setting, and the interior should be considered together.

In a sense, the information about the past presented in the displays at Como and OGH and various other older house museums in Australia has been largely absorbed in the public consciousness, and people visiting properties displayed for the public are expecting information and a approach based on historic research and scholarship rather than good taste and connoisseurship. In changing the colour scheme the Trust has made the first step towards a review of OGH and towards a more rigorous approach, and this seminar can be considered the second.

1.2 A Conservation Plan for OGH and this Seminar

Rather than make piecemeal changes - no matter how well intentioned, simple or obvious, the Trust has decided to prepare a Conservation and Management Plan - ie, a report based on methodical and rigorous investigation and analysis. The report will contain both an assessment of significance and a statement of significance, including the contents. It will involve consideration of all the matters concerning the future of the place and the development of policies about the interpretation of its significance, the care of the fabric and the contents, use or uses for rooms, management, and strategies for the implementation of these policies.

Conservation Plans have been prepared or will be prepared for all other Trust properties. The plan for OGH will follow the method described in general terms in Jim Kerr's 'The Conservation Plan', first published by the Trust in 1982, and the detailed method described in 'The Guidelines to the
Of course, much of the information needed for the Conservation Plan is already available, but the expertise needed to assess it and to synthesise the various aspects of significance into a coherent whole is 'spread' over a wide range of people.

This seminar is one way of gathering this expertise, and its purpose is to consider, albeit briefly, the matters to be considered in the Conservation Plan. More specifically, its purpose is to propose one or more schema for the interpretation, presentation and use of the property, including the role of the current collection. These schema — and I hope there will be at least two — can be investigated in more detail in preparing the draft Conservation Plan'.

This seminar will not be the only opportunity for having a say, or for discussion. I expect that when the various schema are investigated in detail, a seminar/workshop, on a smaller scale than this one, will be desirable.

1.3 What the Seminar is Not About

It might be useful to say a few words about what this Seminar is not about. We will not be talking about how to solve some of the obvious problems with the condition of the fabric — i.e how to solve the rising damp. Similarly, we will not be talking about how to prepare educational material, or how to guide people around the house; the detail of these matters will follow from the decisions about significance and interpretation.

Before discussing some of the issues in detail, some explanation of why a review of OGH is needed, may be necessary.

Since OGH was officially opened by HRH Queen Elizabeth II, on 30 April 1970 (almost 15 years ago), a philosophy or theory of house museums has developed, which has its own protagonists here. It is therefore worthwhile to compare the interpretation and presentation of OGH developed in the later 1960s with the theory of the 1980s.

House museums demonstrating this theory have opened in Sydney and elsewhere and more are likely. These museums present information based on rigorous research, or — as in the case of the Calthorpe house in Canberra, the Sampson house at Fremantle, and Saumarez at Armidale — they present intact interiors — artifacts that were used by the inhabitants of the house — fact, not fiction. Some of the houses with re-created interiors, where very detailed research was undertaken, namely, Elizabeth Bay House, Vaucluse House and Elizabeth Farm — present aspects of the same period covered by OGH, with more authenticity, and more care than at OGH, and OGH obviously needs review for this reason.

1.4 The Seminar Title

The title of the Seminar, "A house full of artefacts or artefacts for the house", reflects the development of house museum theory. At present at OGH there is a building which contains an outstanding collection of
furniture arranged in the form of a house (with other artefacts and furnishings); the choice is to keep this 'house full of artefacts' or to re-create an environment which will demonstrate aspects of life as it might have been at OGH, with artefacts chosen for their ability to contribute to this environment, rather than for their own intrinsic worth: i.e., 'artefacts for the house'.

Another and equally important reason for reviewing OGH is the obligation of the National Trust to the public, both generally under the National Trust Act and specifically in accepting OGH as its responsibility. People visiting National Trust properties should be able to expect the highest standards of scholarship commensurate with the times.

1.5 Good-will and OGH

Another matter that deserves mention is good will. OGH has been surrounded by an enormous amount of good will, dedication and hard work; at its greatest when the house was first restored and the display established, but which has continued since and is manifest in the dedication of the Manager, the Guardians and the Trust's Curatorial and Garden Committees.

Of course, change must be approached carefully, and based on well-developed, clearly explained policies. People will be interested to know why the changes are being made, and those who have been directly involved - for example in restoring the house, establishing the museum, or giving or lending furniture - will need a precise explanation of changes.

To change the colour scheme of OGH, to change the display, or indeed any aspect of OGH is not a criticism of the work done to date. Quite the contrary, and no doubt many people have thought of small changes over the years and some of these have been implemented. But to keep things as they are (because you don't believe in change) as some sort of symbolic accolade of good work and dedication, or for fear of upsetting people, is misplaced.

It is intellectually offensive and absurd to think that the people involved in establishing and caring for OGH could not understand or accept the reasoning behind the changes. Changing displays is now recognised as a natural part of museum responsibilities, i.e., the responsibility to present educational information that is up to date with current knowledge. Of course, intact collections such as Calthorpe house which have historic significance in themselves should not be changed, but the display at OGH has no historic significance.

I believe that the rigor of investigation and documentation as advocated by William Seale (in "Recreating the Historic House Interior", 1979) is not the perogative of paid professionals but is the wish of most of us, and is just more difficult to organise in the part-voluntary, part-paid professional 'system' of the National Trust, than in, say, the Historic Houses Trust.

The wish to 'do good' should not be allowed to transcend the objective of presenting the past. It sometimes seems to me that the more one is associated with good works the less one's view is challenged. In presenting the past through OGH, we are trapped in our own 20th century view of history. However, the bias of our personal knowledge, preference and
affiliations can to some extent be overcome by fastidious research, analysis and by discussion. As a major property of the Trust it is essential it be conserved, presented and managed to the highest possible standard.
2 THE IDEALS AND THEORY OF HOUSE MUSEUMS

2.1 The ideals of House Museums

The use of OGH as a house museum has probably never been questioned and although this Seminar is arranged with little obvious questioning of a house museum being the major role of OGH, suggestions for other types of museums and associated Trust-type uses should also be considered.

What are the objectives, the ideals of house museums? From looking at house museums around Australia, and speaking to their curators and guardians, I have the impression that the ideal in house museums is as follows:

- A house of a well-known and respected family, of high achievers and 'good-lookers'; they should be associated with good-works and involved in local affairs.

- A family of good-breeding, with good taste in all the arts, particularly in the choice of an architect, and landscape architect.

- The interiors should be intact and date from the first use of the house.

- In particular the family should have good taste in the past, and poor taste in the present (so that the removal of accretions can be easily substantiated, and the few offensive recent changes made can be easily down-played in any interpretation).

- The family should take photographs, particularly of the interior of the house.

In short, many museum curators would like the house and its occupants to reflect their own taste and values, and have aspects of all the matters which people commonly wish to highlight in house museums.

Of course, I am taking a humorous view, but it reflects one of the common problems of house museums — i.e., attempting to present many different themes (and none in detail) in the one place at the one time.

There are many different ideas about museum display, and in Sydney recently there has been debate about the appropriateness of the displays in two of the city's oldest buildings — the Mint and the Hyde Park Barracks. Both these buildings have considerable significance and had potential for display as themselves, rather than as vehicles for other, mostly unrelated subjects.

In the case of historic buildings this dilemma — i.e., of the relationship of a display to the building in which it is housed — is a common one around Australia. Whilst the notion of detailed research is well accepted, from observation and discussion there are different views about how much research is necessary and how far one can 'approximate', particularly in recreating historic house interiors.

Like restoration work to buildings, a more scholarly approach is now evident in recreated interiors with the main aim being educational rather than recreational. There is a wish now to be as 'authentic as possible', but the views on what is possible or acceptable vary, as do the views
on what aspect of history should be given the star-billing; - the discussion surrounding Elizabeth Farm being an example of the latter.

2.2 The Theory of House Museums

The theory of house museums is best described in a talk given in 1981 by James Broadbent at Vaucluse House for the Historic Houses Trust, to celebrate International Museums Day, and published in the Historic Houses Newsletter. I'll paraphrase what he said, the underlining and words in brackets are mine.

"The basic aim of a house museum is to evoke a past era by recreating an environment. Too often this is attempted without sufficient thought being given to the validity of furnishing a house 'in period' and without a sufficient effort being made in its presentation. There must be a sound philosophy to justify the exercise, for there is no historical value in a recreation. ....there is no point in recreating domestic environments if they do not demonstrate, teach or contribute something to our understanding of the domestic life of a particular era. ....

They are rigorous exercises in historical research into a particular place at a particular time, recorded in a three dimensional way. ....

The philosophy and type of presentation must vary for each case, but there are two aspects which are essential,

1. That the recreated environment must sensibly correlate with the building and its history, and it must be one particular place at one particular point in time only, and

2. that the recreated environment must be a tightly-woven fabric wherein no part has precedence over another, and the intrinsic value of an individual object is of no importance.

The first point, that the recreated environment can only be of one place at one point in time, needs little explanation. It may attempt to show the accumulated collections of several generations, but it can still exist at one point in time only."

Some further explanation is, I believe, necessary; all houses change with time; repairs, alterations and additions are made, and to some extent the effect of these on the ability to recreate a past era has to be ignored - the use of electricity is an example. Each house should be interpreted according to its significance. It may be possible to present different periods in different areas, but great care would be necessary with such an approach in order to avoid confusion to visitors.

But to continue with the theory.

"... Generalities (in display) must be accepted, of necessity, through lack of information. But if there is insufficient detailed information one should question the value of creating a house museum."
The second point ... (explained in another way is that) the intrinsic values - whether artistic or monetary - of individual objects are irrelevant to the recreated environment. Individual objects are simply pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. What is important is the contribution to the whole. This is a fundamental difference between an historic house museum and a museum of the decorative arts.

For a house museum there is only one criterion for the selecting of an object: its appropriateness within the limits of one's historical knowledge of the environment being recreated.

The way in which the room was used historically must dictate the furniture arrangement. For example, on the simplest level, you don't arrange all the chairs in a room to face the viewer so that he has the best view of each. That half of them have their backs to the viewer adds a sense of reality and life to the scene.

But whatever approach is taken it is important to solicit the viewer's response (although) the performance should not be adulterated to suit the audience."

The points made by James Boradbent are made in other ways, together with other points by William Seale, a U.S. historian, in his book "Recreating the Historic Interior", 1979, and also by Peter Watts in a paper presented at a seminar on interpretation held in Canberra on 1 December 1984.

Perhaps the theory of house museums as it is now can be compared with the approach at the end of the 1960s as follows:

A change from using museums to display generalities about taste and fashion, with a dash of authenticity, to an approach which displays accurately a particular period of a house - authenticity with (to fill in the gaps) a dash of 'generality'.

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3 OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE NOW

3.1 The Use of OGH Now

The principal use of OGH now is as a house museum. There are several other uses which are complementary or ancillary to this use.

The current uses and aspects of OGH can be briefly described as follows:

Displays
- house museum display
- archaeological display
- display of Governors
- display of history of OGH

Ancillary Uses
- managers quarters and garden
- storage
- bookshop/souvenirs
- cafe
- toilets
- car parking (alongside OGH in Parramatta Park)
- guardian's room
- curator's room
- garden storage area

Ancillary Areas
- the front and side gardens
- the courtyard

3.2 The Possible Use of OGH

In his paper at the ACT Interpretation Seminar, Peter Watts made the point that faithfully recreating a house interior is not the only aspect of interpretation: "...at every house there is so much more that could be explored. Houses reflect our history, and equally history makes our houses. If we accept this then we must also accept the responsibility of placing our houses in an historical context, and not just indulging in the highly esoteric, and enjoyable, exercise of recreating an environment (buildings, interiors and gardens) to a particular point in time."

In respect of OGH the number of subjects that might be considered in respect of displays is almost limitless, but only a few can be used at any one time. Some of the most obvious subjects for displays and interpretation materials include:

**House Museum:** e.g., at a single period, such as Macquarie's governorship, or, rooms with displays at different periods (frozen moments).

**Furniture Museum:** e.g., a gallery display of colonial furniture already in OGH, or occasional displays of other furniture owned or lent to the Trust.
Thematic Displays: only the most obvious are listed below. These could be undertaken on permanent, occasional or regular basis (2 per year), and swaps arranged with other museums such as First Government House.

- the occupants - particularly the Governors
- development of house, garden
- building techniques, architects associated with house
- the Domain and Parramatta Park
- early Parramatta, nearby events - such as the establishment of the railway in 1850s
- Palladian architecture in Australia
- history of Government Houses (in NSW)
- history of the colony up to 1857
- the early history of Parramatta River
- colonial gardening and farming in Parramatta
- use of OGH after sale by government in 1857
- OGH and georgian revivals in 1910s-20s and in 1970s
- OGH and the conservation movement
- the archaeology of OGH

Information and Services

In addition to the book and souvenir shop other Trust services could be considered, e.g.,

- information about National Trust listings in the Western Region of Sydney
- resource centre, library, advice, etc.
- area for talks about the house and its displays etc, and for meetings (co-ordinated with other house museums and attractions in the locality).

Ancillary Uses

In addition to the existing uses, consideration should be given to a larger cafe/restaurant as was foreshadowed in the 1970s. It should be noted also that the space available for the book and souvenir shop is very restricted; and the arrangement of the manager’s quarters - in two parts - is far from ideal.

3.3 The Interpretation of Old Government House now

The policy of the National Trust in respect of the interior of OGH is explained in the 1971 Guide under the heading 'Introduction to the Collection and Furnishing'; it states:

The policy of the National Trust has been to furnish the principal rooms of Old Government House, Parramatta in the overall period of its use as a vice-regal residence between 1800 and 1855. It has sought to reflect its occupation by all the early governors who occupied the house during this period. These men made an immense contribution to Australia's early history and the history of the house is concerned with them all.

All the furniture in the house was made prior to 1850. Until nearly the end of the 19th century most Englishmen regarded their own furniture of the earlier periods (i.e. 18th century or before) with indifference and considered it valuable only to the extent of its usefulness to the owner at the time, or perhaps on account of some affection held for a previous
owner. Those who could afford it procured pieces 'a la mode', as they did not as a rule keep or collect furniture for its age and beauty as we do today.

Many of the pieces are of Australian manufacture. Early inventories of the house show that a considerable amount of its original furniture was made in the Colony. Wherever possible the National Trust has sought to obtain such pieces and has succeeded in forming a major collection of this furniture.

The emphasis is on the collection of furniture, rather than on the authenticity of recreating an interior as a whole - which is the current approach to house museums.

The approach to the restoration of OGH is described in the 1977 'Dunhill Guidebook':

In the restoration of Old Government House the National Trust has been guided by 'preserving wherever possible, restoring wherever necessary'. The original fabric of the house and any additions made irrespective of date, have been preserved, so long as the later work was in harmony with the original in design and materials. Restoration has been confined to the replacement of old work by new, only where the alterations and additions were unsympathetic in design or materials, or where the old work had deteriorated to such an extent that preservation was made impossible.

The aim of the National Trust has been twofold; to authentically restore and preserve a building of architectural and historical importance and to use or interpret the restoration to obtain an understanding of the domestic manners and customs of the people who lived there during its use as a vice-regal residence.

[The degree of authenticity has been increased in respect of the exterior colour scheme, as described at the beginning of this paper, and the choice of the Fitzroy colour scheme, by being the last scheme during occupation of the house by Governors, is intended, in some symbolic way, to represent the whole period of occupancy by Governors]

3.4 Some Comments on the Interpretation and Display

As described in the 'Dunhill Guidebook', the restoration and interpretation of OGH has been very ambitious. To present information about the domestic manners and customs over a period of more than 60 years is a 'tall order'. Manners and customs were not so static, or so universal that all the Governors could reasonably be expected to have had the same manners or customs, or the same needs for their families or friends. If displays in Elizabeth Bay House and Vaucluse House are to be believed, there was considerable variation in manners and taste in the 1840s, 1850s periods.

Two of the aspects of the OGH display that are not historically appropriate in respect of customs of the pre-1857 period are the arrangement of the furniture, and the 'house-keeping'.

The Governors had servants, and the care of the house, and the furnishings would have been more fastidious than present-day standards. The shutters,
blinds, curtains and furniture would have been used to suit the time of day, the weather and the seasons, but as far as I can discern there are very few of such changes.

In respect of furniture arrangement, William Seale had this to say (Seale p.93):

Arrangements and uses of furnishings represent periods in history more accurately than do the furnishings themselves. When the parlor of 1831, intact in every respect, is rearranged in 1915 to feature conversation groupings of chairs, side-tables, and sofas, it suddenly becomes a room of the twentieth century. The living room in the new house of 1928 in Larchmont, New York, with its antique American furnishings of the 1740 to 1780 years, its authentic eighteenth-century woodwork, its carefully selected accessories, is betrayed as much by its arrangement as the antiquarian taste that assembled it. The room clearly serves a 1920s way of living. Furnishings arrangements are virtually inseparable from lifestyle; one creates the other, and one is mirrored in the other.

In my visits to OGH, the furniture has been arranged at least partially, to suit the viewer, and the rooms have been described by the Guardians in terms of the individual pieces of furniture rather than customs and manners.

The Trust has a valuable collection of early Australian furniture. Not only is OGH compromised by the pretence that this furniture portrays an accurate picture of the lifestyle of the Governors and their families, but the collection is itself compromised by being shown as an adjunct to OGH. It is, I believe, fortunate indeed that the good will associated with OGH has provided the opportunity for this collection to develop.

To quote James Broadbent again - one of the few people who has spoken on the subject of house museums - and it is unfortunate that so many people prefer to 'hide their light under a bushel' in these matters,

"The interiors of Old Government House are not environments created with historical objectivity. Rather they are "settings of tasteful repose" which display an unrivalled collection of colonial furniture - but whose taste? They have a lot to do with connoisseurship, but not much to do with historical reality. In its separate parts it is often historically based, but as whole rooms they are as modern as the standards of selection that created them.

"This is, I think, what distinguishes these interiors as being Colonial Revival rather than re-created colonial. The furnishings are of uniform high quality; there is a deliberate policy of refinement, of weeding out 'inferior' pieces according to mid-twentieth century standards of connoisseurship. They are arranged in static groupings for general effect which have little to do with the ways of living within a nineteenth century vice-regal residence. Why, for example, should the sofa table,
designed for reading or working at, be placed behind the sofa in the drawing room? This was a fashionable arrangement of interior decorators of the 1930s; it has nothing to do with nineteenth century practice. Polished floors, oriental rugs and chandeliers all reinforce this impression of Colonial Revival, of a romantic never-never world furnished with genuine artifacts of the highest quality."

It is relatively easy to comment on OGH now that we have experienced Elizabeth Bay House (EBH) and Elizabeth Farm, and with Vaucluse House in the midst of a substantial 'development period'. In the context of this Seminar it is interesting to note that Elizabeth Bay House, which was first opened to the public in 1976, is now undergoing a progressive review as the need arises for repainting and replacement of furnishings, etc. Last year, paint scrapes were taken in some of the rooms in order to determine more authentic historic colour schemes than at present. Whilst the general approach to EBH remains the same, the historic base for decisions is being continually refined, as knowledge increases, techniques of investigation become more refined, and as furnishing fabrics - such as reproduction chintzes - become available.

But in 1976, the display at EBH was very remarkable (just as OGH was in 1970) and, as Peter Watts comments "Of course the presentation of (EBH) only seemed, in 1976, to be daring. Rather, it was truthful of how such a house may have appeared in early Victorian times. But in 1976 we were not accustomed to seeing the truth in these matters." However, in 1985 we are accustomed to 'the truth', and we are accustomed to questioning the basis for decisions in restoration and also in museum display.

Rather than consider the detail of the display at OGH as it is now, it is the intention of this Seminar to examine the cultural significance of the property as it is now, and including its contents, and from that to consider how this significance can best be interpreted, and particularly, what part the existing artefacts should play.

I hope we don't take the view of Linus in a Charlie Brown cartoon, when asked by Charlie Brown his approach to life Linus replied, "Well the way I see it, there's no problem so big, so overwhelming that it can't be run away from". Charlie Brown could see no consolation in the fact that everybody was running in the same direction.
4 THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS SEMINAR

The objectives for this Seminar are many and varied and overlap each other; some matters will only be dealt with briefly. The objectives are:

1 to develop a common understanding of the significance of OGH: the building, the grounds and the artefacts;

2 to consider the role of OGH in relation to other house museums, what aspects of significance and history are presented elsewhere, e.g., at Elizabeth Bay House, Vaucluse House, Elizabeth Farm, etc.

3 to consider the role of OGH in relation to Parramatta Park, and Parramatta generally.

4 to assess which aspects of OGH are peculiar to it, e.g., association with the Governors, Paladian design, furniture collection, etc, that are particularly worthy of consideration?

5 to develop two or more schema for the interpretation, presentation and use of OGH for further investigation;

6 to consider (briefly) the need for associated facilities, curators, education officer, guardians, caretakers, shop, cafe, toilets, car parking.

7 to develop a list of matters that require investigation in order to compare the schema (options);

8 to devise, in outline, a process for the preparation of a conservation plan and further consideration of the issues raised in the Seminar;

9 to make recommendations to the National Trust Executive about all these matters.
There are many aspects of OGH that are worthy of consideration at this Seminar, and it will be difficult to discuss all of them and have time for a full discussion of the future interpretation, presentation and use of OGH which are the fundamental issues. Some people may be reluctant to suggest major changes for fear of offending others, and there may be a temptation for people to let others speak and keep their own views private until after the Seminar.

I hope that doesn't happen. And to encourage the expression of ideas and discussion, I will stick-my-neck-out and suggest a schema which can be used for the purposes of argument. In the discussion, on Friday afternoon, the discussion leaders - Joan Kerr, John Wade and James Broadbent will be asked to put forward their versions, their schema, for the OGH.

The disadvantage of my schema is it is prepared without the benefit of the expertise of the participants. In particular, my knowledge of the furniture and the decorative arts is limited.

To suggest a schema it is necessary to have a view about the significance of OGH. Having regard to the history of the buildings, particularly the works in 1909, the architectural significance of OGH lies more in its form than in its detail. The general form of the building, with central 2 storey building with single storey wings, was created by Governor Macquarie. The front facade has changed little since then, although various changes have been made at the rear. OGH is one of relatively few surviving examples of Palladian architecture in NSW.

The furniture is remarkable for its collection of early colonial pieces, and it also includes a substantial number of pieces dating from the Macquarie era.

My proposal is based around these two ideas, and is as follows:

In the main building:

- a house museum on the ground floor, with interiors recreated to the Macquarie period (1816-1822), and an arrangement of rooms as shown in the Bonwick Plan (copy attached) with the exception that the store room (between the kitchen and the servants hall) will become a room for the guardians. Entrance will be from the front door.

- on the upper storey, a gallery display of furniture in the rooms now shown as bedrooms, and displays in the display rooms (these could be chosen from the list given earlier and changed from time to time in conjunction with First Government House Museum).

- the 'cafe area', at the rear of the southern wing would be a display/ticketing area, with changes to direct visitors around to the front of the building.

- the toilets remain.
The rear building:

- This will be used for ancillary services, for which there are many competing possibilities. As much as possible should be available to the public. Perhaps an enlarged bookshop, an enlarged/upgraded kiosk/restaurant - with night-time opening?, plus an area for talks and meetings, and for a curator. The manager's quarters could be more adequately housed in one of the gatehouses in Parramatta Park (which at present are to be restored for residential use [for P.G.C. staff?] and not for display). (Advice from Crown Lands Office).

The grounds:

- A recreated garden and changes to the courtyard, preferably based on the Macquarie period, but not the 1970s.

Of course, there are several matters that require detailed investigation: the security of the property; the ability to recreate the Macquarie period; and the obligations relating to the collection; and the storage of pieces not on permanent display, to name a few.

Any changes will require investigation and will involve 'problems'. But I believe the OGH has much more to tell than it does at present.

In this schema, the house museum would reflect as accurately as possible the way in which the house was used in Macquarie's time. (In the present arrangement, 7 out of 12 rooms on the ground floor (excluding halls and corridors) are used according to the arrangement in the 'Bonwick' plan.) The most notable change is the recreation of the Governor's office in the room now 'Archaeologists Display'. The discovery of these features was very exciting and further analysis and research in the light of the knowledge gained at FGH site may provide a more certain hypothesis than at present. It seems very likely that there are other similar remains at OGH, but finding them does not seem of great consequence in the light of FGH, which covers the same period. The discoveries can be adequately preserved and the Governor's office re-instated. Perhaps the new floor could have removable panels to allow occasional display and monitoring.

At present, the absence of the Governor's office from the room uses is to me one of the most disturbing aspects of the display. Where did Mrs Macquarie finish her breakfast when people called on her husband at breakfast time? Or did Macquarie interview visitors in the hallway? It's easy to make fun, but I believe that the mixed functions of office and residence intrinsic to a Government House can be more accurately conveyed by recreating the two offices and butler's room as shown in the 'Bonwick' plan, and moving the ancillary uses elsewhere.

There is of course more to say, and I hope the Seminar will provide an adequate venue for discussion.

MEREDITH WALKER.
REFERENCES


National Trust (1977) Old Government House Parramatta NSW and Experiment Farm Cottage, Alfred Dunhill Pty Ltd.


Ground Plan of Government House, Parramatta, from the Bonwick Transcripts, Box 36, Mitchell Library, copied from documents held in the Public Record Office, London. Early room uses are indicated by a key accompanying the plan.

KEY

A. Drawing Room  J. Lobbys  S. Porter's Lodge
B. Hall  K. Breakfast Parlor  T. Dove & Hen House
C. Dining Room  L. Bed Chamber  U. Wash-house
D. Porch  M. Dressing Room  V. Laundry
E. Passage  N. Kitchen  W. 
F. Staircase  O. Store Room  X. Servants' Rooms
G. Governor's Office  P. Servants' Hall  Y. 
H. Butler's Room  Q. Pantry  Z. Guard House
I. Sergeant Walfan's  R. Bake House &c.
OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE, PARRAMATTA

Current Interpretation and Presentation

OPERATION AND VISITORS.

Hours of Operation

Currently Old Government House is open for general inspection 10 am - 4 pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday and Public Holidays, (i.e., some Mondays). It is closed during the Christmas period (1984: December 23, 24 25 and 26) and during February it closes for maintenance, cleaning and repairs (1985: 1 Feb to 4 Mar inclusive). During Heritage Week it has become a practice by the Trust to open Old Government House for the entire period of Heritage Week (8 days).

On average then, Old Government House is open for 24 hours per week.

Open for What?

Old Government House is open for many different reasons:-

(1) General tourism  (2) School visits  (3) Special Education - visits by museum studies students, technical seminars, launchings; Events e.g. "Green and Growing"; Launch of Australia Day Committee and Program, 1984
(5) Entertainment: candlelight evenings; Music and Heritage; dinners (National Trust)  (6) Filming - TV programs; advertisements, both still and moving picture.

Staff

Old Government House is staffed by a permanent, full-time Manager who is also responsible for Experiment Farm Cottage. The Manager is assisted by a ticket office secretary, shop staff, part-time cleaning staff, a janitor and a kiosk caterer. In addition, the Manager is assisted in a variety of ways by other Trust staff - i.e., Executive Director; Finance Director; Publicity & Marketing Director; Curator; Trust Architect; Committees Liaison Officer and the Education Officer. The Manager is called upon for a variety of duties, especially when staff and guardians are ill.

Advertising

The Trust places advertisements for Old Government House, giving opening times, charges, location, each Saturday in the Sydney Morning Herald. Additional promotion is obtained through local press, Trust Magazine, tourist journals, Parramatta Tourist Office and the Properties to Visit brochure. Occasionally, radio interviews give additional opportunities for promotion.

Old Government House Guardian Roster

The roster of volunteer guardians is an essential component of the current presentation and management of the house. Unless permanent guides and other staff were employed and the presentation of the rooms modified, it would not be possible to open the house without them. The use of volunteer guides/guardians to assist in the operation of museums is very widespread, both here in N.S.W. and overseas.
There are currently 10 groups of volunteer guardians whose duty time ranges from half-a-day per month to once a week. Guardians are rostered for Tues. Wed. Thurs. and Sun, whilst for Public Holidays guardians are obtained from Mowll Village, Castle Hill.

Each group of Guardians is responsible to an O.C. - Officer-in-Charge, who in turn is responsible to the Manager. The Officers-in-Charge, of which there are 10, manage the allocation of guardians throughout the house on their day (taking into account absenteeism), relate information about bookings back to the guardians (type, size, etc of group), check doors, windows, lights, assist in the flow of traffic, attend to small "problems", refer various other aspects to the Manager and generally oversee the guardians. Many strong friendships have formed and it is not unusual for the Officer-in-Charge to take 'parental care' of their Guardian group - even checking up on those who are ill, to see if they are OK. This friendship determines, not only what day many guardians attend, but also how frequently. This aspect has assisted in the retention of many a guardian over the past 14 years.

On an average day, each Guardian arrives before 10 a.m., notes any relevant information on the noticeboard in the Guardians Room and makes his way to a particular room. Standing behind the ropes, the guardian deals with each group or individual as they arrive in a friendly conversational manner. A thorough knowledge of the room is expected without being pedantic. For each Guardian, the basic reference is a folder, located in each room, containing: the Dunhill book; Catalogue of Contents; National Trust Education Kit and Worksheet. They also adhere to a set of rules.

Guardians are, in the main, female and represent all walks of life. They are loyal to Old Government House and proud of their involvement. Not all are Trust members; some are local residents.

The number of Guardians currently on the roster is 280. Last year it was shown that over a 10 year period (1974-1983) the number of Guardians on roster had fallen from 312 to 169. Under the present system 15 per day are required for optimum functioning. So recruitment was undertaken. In addition education courses were planned for the new Guardians.

The first drive was held from Feb-May 1984 and 100 participants attended the courses - held on 4 consecutive Tuesdays and two Sundays. Of the 100 participants, 94 joined the roster.

During November, 1984, an additional course for established Guardians was organised. This course dealt with motivation, orientation, house museum philosophy and conservation, rather than factual data. This was thought necessary to help explain changes to the presentation of the house then being introduced.

A more recent course for more recruits attracted 44 interested persons of whom 33 completed the training and 30 joined the roster (commencing March).

All Guardians now receive a news-sheet and regular excursions to other house museums are arranged. A library has been established for their use as well.
Visitors

The average number of visitors to Old Government House over the past 10 years is approx. 35,000 p.a. Of these about 14,000 are school children, attending as part of a group excursion.

Admission charges are:

- Adults $2.50
- Pensioners $1.00
- Children .50c
- National Trust Members - Free
- 2 Accompanying teachers with Group - Free

The public areas at Old Government House are as follows:-

- half of the verandah of the Garrison Building
- rear courtyard
- Kiosk awning
- toilets
- house rooms as marked (see map floor plan)
- Front garden of house
- cellars?

All groups must book, although they are accommodated if they don't.
An average group tour is 50 mins. It has also been a practice at Old Government House to admit visitors up to 5 mins. before closing time.

There are a variety of groups. Primary, secondary, tertiary and general interest tours.

The Visit

What does a visit entail?

Travel to Park - bus - time and conditions of travel affect attitudes
- walk

Assemble at ticket office - leader presents money, everyone gets a tick (Garrison Building)

Assemble in Courtyard - brief talk by Manager (opportunity for disciplinary action) Toilet? Bags?

Enter as group of 15 or so at rear of building into -

(1) Dressing Room

Then:

(2) Governor's Bedroom (3) Breakfast Room (4) Nth Colonade Archaeological Display (5) Middle Hall and ADC's Office
(6) Upstairs to Wall Room (7) Down Hall into Picture Room
(8) Nursery (9) S.E. Bedchamber (10) small bed chamber
(11) Hall and Blue Bedchamber (12) Middle Hall (13) Entrance Hall
(14) Drawing Room (15) Dining Room (16) through second door to sth Colonade (17) Servants Hall (18) Kitchen (19) Kiosk/ toilets/shop.

A visit to the front of the house is available but apart from any suggestions from the Guardians, there is no form of encouragement such as signs. The Group departs via the way they entered.
Points to Note:

Access to each room is limited by ropes and a Guardian. Interpretation results from the interaction of the room presentation, the Guardian, teacher, students' worksheet and questions. Display rooms are only rooms with signs.

In the following rooms free access i.e., no ropes, allowing freedom of movement and opportunity to get a close-up view, is possible: colonnades, entrance hall, kitchen and bake house, display room and external walls.

OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE RULES FOR GUARDIANS - See Sheet.

Interpretation is modified by many variables: ethnic background, home environment, classroom preparation, weather, a bad 'start'. Accommodation of these is not always possible. Worksheets - note variety of standards.

Interpretative Materials Available

- Dunhill Book (1977)
- Green Brochure
- Brown Brochure
- Mobil Brochure 1982 - out of date
- Under development - information sheet for schools
  inservice course for teachers

These materials emphasise the period of occupation by the Governors and the furniture. Most visitors are encouraged to see the house as the country residence of New South Wales Colonial Governors, from Hunter until the 1840's.

What is not Apparent During the Visit

(but, not necessarily what should be expected)

- Trust - who are we?
- Kings School occupation
- The two 'restorations'
- History - 1857 - 1909
- Conservation
- Biographies of Governors
- Servants of the House
- Parramatta History
- The system of government in the colony.

Other Presentations

Finally, Old Government House frequently used in TV productions as a suitable setting to illustrate colonial government in action. Such productions use the Breakfast Parlour or show external shots of the house. We see the Governor singing documents, greeting a successful explorer or reprimanding a crafty Hargreaves.

Such depictions endorse our presentation of the house as a place where Governors lived and worked. For better or for worse?

Christopher Levins

National Trust Education Officer
SAMPLE WORKSHEET

OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE

1. Dressing Room:
   a) What did the hat and epauletttes belong to?
      Admiral
   b) Why are some doors of different heights?
      Private rooms have low doors. Public rooms high doors

2. Bedroom of Gov. Macquarie:
   a) What is box in the corner?
      Indian jewellery box
   b) What other purpose did the steps have?
      A commodore - toilet
   c) What is the rug on the bed made of?
      Platypus

3. Breakfast Pantry:
   a) What are the 2 globes of?
      The Earth and the heavens
   b) Who is the portrait between the 2 doors of?
      Mary King
   c) Where do the French doors lead to?
      Lady Ship's Bow, Lady Gipsy's Bow
   d) What effect does the 'colonade' have?
      A long hallway, Big House

4. Office:
   a) What uniform is displayed on the chain?
      Sergeant's uniform
   b) What is the case on the window sill for?
      Sergeant's weapons
   c) What was the strong box for? To hold valuable and money

5. Display Room:
   a) What time do the exposed bricks date from?
   b) What was the 1st Government House built of?
      By whom? When?
   c) By whom was part of this house built by? Hunter
   d) Who ordered the enlargements, extensions?
      When? Macquarie
      Which architect was associated with the
Old Government House. Governor Philip established a cottage in this site in 1790. St 1820 Governor Hunter replaced the cottage with the first part of the present house—the central block. Governor Macquarie employed J I John of Sydney to design and construct the residence by 1816.

Which rooms are situated in this wing? Governor's Bedroom, Governor's Dining Room, Governor's Library, Governor's Study, Governor's Sitting Room.
19. **OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE**

This is the oldest Vice-Royal residence in Australia, serving as a country retreat until the 1850's. It was first constructed as a lathe and plaster building by Governor Phillip in 1790. The structure rapidly weathered into disrepair and was replaced by a two-storey English style brick building by Governor Hunter in 1799 (i.e., the central building). This building underwent many additions and extensions. Whilst listening to your tour-guide, indicate on the map when the following additions were made and the Governors responsible for their construction.

![Diagram of Old Government House](image)

**20. N.B.** Part (a) and (b) are best answered after you have toured the top storey.

(a) Measure (approximately) the middle wall of the central block. Measure one of the other internal walls. Which is thicker?

What explanation can you give to account for this difference?

(b) Some of the door hinges show the convict symbol (†) indicating that they are of convict workmanship. Locate one of these and write down where you located it.

**21. Describe how the Governor's office differs from modern offices (compare its furniture with that of modern offices)**

**22. From the furniture in Old Government House (especially the Drawing Room), what would you say were the main evening pastimes?**
OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE

1) What Governor first built Old Government House?

2) In what year was it built?

3) Who designed the initial building?

4) What changes did Governor Macquarie make to the still standing building?

5) In what year were the extensions commenced?

6) Who designed the extensions?

7) What happened to Government House after Macquarie's rule?

8) What purpose does the position of Government House have?

9) What function did the Bath House serve?

10) Sketch the Bath House.
RULES AND GUIDE-LINES FOR OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

MARCH 1984.

THE DUTIES OF GUARDIANS ARE TWO-FOLD.

FIRSTLY, TO PROTECT THE HOUSE AND ITS TREASURES, AND SECONDLY, TO HELP THE VIEWERS TO ENJOY THEM TO THE BEST ADVANTAGE BY POINTING OUT AND DESCRIBING THE IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE ARCHITECTURE, ARTIFACTS ETC.

YOU ARE IN FACT THE INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT OF O.G.H.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE UNIFORMITY IN THE INFORMATION GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC REFER TO CATALOGUES, BROCHURES AND PRINTED LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN EACH ROOM, HEARSAY IS NOT VALID INFORMATION SO DON'T REPEAT IT.

TO MAINTAIN THE APPEARANCE OF A ROOM, GUARDIANS WISHING TO TAKE THEIR HANDBAGS WITH THEM ARE ASKED TO HIDE THEM BEHIND SOME SUITABLE PIECE OF FURNITURE. BY THE SAME TOKEN, KEEP YOUR INFORMATION BOOKS IN A NEAT FASHION, (NOT ON THE MANTLEPIECE OR ARM OF A SOFA ETC). IF YOU WALK AROUND THE ROOM, PLACE THE BIG FOLDER ON THE CHAIR PROVIDED, THERE IS ALWAYS A RISK OF KNOCKING IT AGAINST A FRAGILE PIECE.

WHERE POSSIBLE POSITION YOUR CHAIR ON THE CARPET, IF THIS IS NOT PRACTICAL TAKE CARE NOT TO SCRATCH THE POLISHED FLOOR BOARDS.

SECURITY AT NO TIME IS A GUARDIAN TO DISCUSS SECURITY. IF QUESTIONED SIMPLY PLEAD IGNORANCE OF THE MATTER.

INSURANCE GUARDIANS ARE ASKED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE BOOK ON ARRIVAL IN THE GUARDIANS ROOM. THIS REQUIREMENT IS FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES. NOTE A.M., P.M., ALL DAY.

TIMES OF ARRIVAL ENDEAVOUR TO BE AT THE HOUSE HALF AN HOUR BEFORE DUTY, THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A CUP OF COFFEE AND GIVES THE OC MORE TIME TO POSITION GUARDIANS. HOURS ARE 10a.m. - 4.00 p.m. ON TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, THURSDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

HOLIDAYS.

PARKING CARS TO BE PARKED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARK BY-LAWS.

TELEPHONES THE TELEPHONE IN THE GUARDIAN'S ROOM IS TO BE ANSWERED BY THE NEAREST GUARDIAN, WITH THE RESPONSE "GUARDIAN'S ROOM". IF A LINE IS REQUIRED PLEASE LIFT THE PHONE AND A LINE WILL BE ALLOCATED AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE. IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY THEN AND THEN ONLY, ACTIVATE THE PRESEL LUGS UP AND DOWN 5 OR 6 TIMES QUICKLY.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS, TAKE CAREFUL NOTE AS TO WHERE THE EXTINGUISHERS ARE POSITIONED. NOTE, THESE EXTINGUISHERS ARE SODA/ACID.

1. ROOM 6. ADC'S OFFICE, BEHIND THE DOOR.
2. ROOM 18. CONTROL ROOM. THIS IS FOR ELECTRIC FIRES ONLY.
3. ROOM 22. KITCHEN, BEHIND THE DOOR.
4. ROOM 29. UPSTAIRS STORE ROOM.
5. ROOM OFF WESTERN WALL OF THE NORTH COLONADE.
RULES FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC (CONT.)

NO TRANSISTORS TO BE PLAYED IN THE HOUSE.
NO SPORT EQUIPMENT OR UMBRELLAS TO BE CARRIED THROUGH THE HOUSE.
NO WET SWIMMING TOGS.

IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE WITH THE PUBLIC REGARDING THESE RULES, RUDENESS OR ANY UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE CALL FOR YOUR GUARDIAN-IN-CHARGE, WHO IN TURN WILL SEEK ASSISTANCE FROM THE MANAGER SHOULD THE SITUATION WARRANT HIS HELP. THE MANAGER WILL NOTIFY THE OC. SHOULD HE BE ABSENT FROM THE SITE.

N.B. WHERE PRACTICAL, REMAIN BEHIND THE GUIDE ROPES IN EACH ROOM IN A POSITION FROM WHICH YOU CAN OBSERVE THE VISITORS ENTERING THAT ROOM. ONLY UNDER EMERGENCY CONDITIONS WOULD YOU SPEAK TO YOUR VISITORS WHILE SEATED.

NOTICE BOARD. THE BOARD IN THE GUARDIAN'S ROOM IS DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS.

a) GUARDIANS

b) THE MANAGER.

YOU ARE REQUESTED TO MAKE YOURSELF FAMILIAR WITH THE NOTICES WHICH ARE RELEVANT.

ONE COPY OF THE ABOVE IS PLACED WITHIN THE FOLDER AND GUARDIANS ARE ASKED TO MAKE THEMSELVES FAMILIAR WITH THESE GUIDE-LINES AND RULES.

PHOTOGRAPHY. ANY VISITOR WISHING TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE MANAGER FOR PERMISSION. FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY IS NOT PERMITTED BECAUSE OF THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECT OF SUCH LIGHT ON FABRICS, PAINTINGS AND OTHER DELICATE ITEMS.

ROBERT J. GREEN.

MANAGER PARRAMATTA PROPERTIES.
CURRENT INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION: THE DISPLAY.

Old Government House, Parramatta was established as a museum by the National Trust in 1970. It was the third Trust-run property to be opened to the public in New South Wales - some seven years after the establishment of Experiment Farm Cottage, Parramatta and Lindesay, Darling Point.

The interior and exterior restoration was carried out under the guidance of the Old Government House Restoration Committee, which included the architect Mr. Les Buckland. In 1970, responsibility for the care and presentation of the property was assumed by the newly-established Parramatta Properties' Committee; this role was subsequently taken over, in mid 1983, by the Curatorial Committee.

Policy guidelines for the restoration of the interior were laid down in the late 1960s and were partly based on an earlier report prepared by Daniel Thomas, former Curator of Australian Art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

It was decided that "rather than confine the furnishings to any one governor, the policy should be directed to the (building's) period as a vice-regal residence. Precedents that could be considered would be the White House, Washington, where the furniture is directed to no one President, but to its occupation by all presidents up to the present. The rebuilt Governor's Palace at Williamsburg, completed by 1720, is furnished in the 18th century style reflecting its use by early governors as late as its destruction in 1781, rather than confining the furniture to any one governor or narrow field".

The introduction of the 1971 Catalogue of Contents begins as follows:

"The policy of the National Trust has been to furnish the principal rooms of Old Government House, Parramatta in the overall period of its use as a vice-regal residence between 1800 and 1855. It has sought to reflect its occupation by all the early governors who occupied the house during this period ... All the furniture in the house was made prior to 1850 .... (Furthermore) many of the pieces are of Australian manufacture. Early inventories of the house show that a considerable amount of its original furniture was made in the Colony. Wherever possible the National Trust has sought to obtain such pieces and has succeeded in forming a major collection of this furniture".

These fluid guidelines were laid down for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was difficult to acquire any objects with a gubernatorial provenance; secondly, there was a marked variation in both the level of usage by the Governors, and in the functions of the individual rooms, throughout the first half of the nineteenth century; thirdly, it was felt that the vice-regal associations rather than the occupation by any particular governor were of paramount importance.
Presentation.

The room arrangement was based on the Macquarie Plan of 1821, as documented in the Bonwick Transcripts (Mitchell Library). Some modifications were, however, introduced. The Governor's Study has become an archaeological display, while two of the upstairs bedrooms were also converted to display areas. Other rooms were also set aside for the use of the Guardians, for storage and for the installation of the Royal toilets. The location of the Macquarie drawing room and dining room were also reversed. It should be further noted that the original garrison building now houses the manager's office, the shop and the manager's residence.

Evidence for the internal colour scheme was based on an invoice of May 1816 which specified yellow Oker and Umber, although other colours are known to have been used in this period were also selected. Most of the light fittings are reproduction Argand lamps, several chandeliers were acquired after the house was opened.

According to the 1971 catalogue, all the fabrics used in curtains, bed­hangings, upholstery etc. were found in colonial houses during the early nineteenth century. Damasks, sateen, cottons and muslins have been used for curtains and bed hangings and their arrangement has been copied from contemporary pattern books such as Loudon's Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture (1833). The grey holland blinds are mentioned in the 1837 inventory of Government-owned furniture at Old Government House. The carpets are mainly late nineteenth century Persian or Turkish carpets but of designs current throughout the century. Modern Portuguese carpets similar to early nineteenth century needlework carpets are also to be found in the house.

While the principal rooms reflect the house's vice-regal associations, a more domestic atmosphere has been introduced in some other areas. One upstairs room has a very feminine appearance and presumably suggests the occupation by one of the Governor's daughters; a nursery has been established in another bedroom. The service wing of the house however, has been reduced to a servants' hall and a kitchen/bakery.

Some minor changes have occurred since 1970, for example walls have been repainted, blinds replaced and furniture moved from one room to another, but the early 1970s presentation of the house is still basically intact. The collection itself, apart from the return of various loans and an overall policy of upgrading, is also basically intact.

Although the house is carefully maintained by the Manager and his excellent domestic staff, little attention has been paid in the past to conservation principles, e.g. light-control, cross ventilation or the protection of the furniture surfaces. The long-term effects of continual visitor usage has also received little attention.

In early 1984 the Curatorial Committee drew up a list of proposals to freshen up the house and introduce a greater degree of historical accuracy, e.g. the whitening or ash-ling of the fireplaces, the re-arrangement of
some furniture units to suggest a specific activity, and the intro-
duction of cloths on some tables. These proposals were fiercely opposed, however, and it was decided to abandon the project at that time.

Interpretation.

On a day-to-day basis, the house is solely staffed by the Manager and a team of voluntary guardians. This has had major implications for the presentation and interpretation of the property, affecting security, traffic flow and circulation and the handling of visitors. The public enter the house through a rear door, adjacent to the Governor's dressing room and are briskly moved from room to room and guardian to guardian along a prescribed route. Any deviation is firmly discouraged, if not impossible. Again, there are no signs within the house and as the 1971 catalogue is now out of print the guardians are the sole repository of knowledge.

Basically, the interpretation focuses upon the individual objects rather than considering the house itself and the functions of the rooms that make up the whole. Some guardians are very knowledgeable, particularly about antiques and local Parramatta history; others are less well-prepared. However, their commitment and dedication cannot be questioned.

Finally, it should be pointed out that visitor attendances are of the utmost importance. Unlike houses owned by government agencies, the Trust's properties must show some return or they are unable to remain open. This has a relationship with the number of visitors and the speed of the visit.

As far as I can ascertain, no training courses have been run in the past - the guardians are provided with notes on the development of the house and its collection. Reference is also made to the Guidebook which was published in 1977. Since 1984 the Trust has organised two training sessions for new guardians and also organised a two part interpretation session for existing guardians which attracted approximately 45 participants.

Patricia McDonald.
HISTORY OF THE DISPLAY.

Old Government House was vested in the National Trust by the New South Wales Government in 1967. Long before the event the Trust had begun overtures to secure the property in the face of some local opposition from people who sought to obtain the property for their own varied purposes.

In October 1968 the Trust established a restoration committee of six members to supervise the restoration and furnishing of the house. The numbers of this committee were increased during the following year and the present system of manning the house by voluntary guardians was organised and commenced operation in 1970, following the official opening of the house by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The existing committee was renamed the Parramatta Properties Committee and it continued to supervise the management of Old Government House and Experiment Farm Cottage until its replacement in 1984 by the Curatorial Committee of the National Trust.

The problem of obtaining suitable furniture for some twenty-four rooms was a daunting task that had begun by 1966 with attempts to locate suitable items subject, at that time, to the approval of the Portable Antiquities Panel of the National Trust. While some $1,400 was provided for the purpose in 1967 a proposal to establish a fund to enable furniture to be purchased as it became available to the value of $1,000 per month for 12 months was rejected. From that time to the present relatively small amounts of money have been available for the acquisition of furniture. It is unlikely that the Trust ever spent the current value of a single major item in its present collection on all its purchases over the years.

An examination of its furniture catalogue published in 1971 shows that of over 200 listed entry items less than half were by purchase, over a third were by gift, and the balance was made up of loans from institutions and private collectors. Later purchases of furniture were made by the Women's Committee of the National Trust and by a number of generous benefactors including the house's guardians. Over the last 5 years I am aware of the single purchase of a pair of hall chairs by the National Trust although I suspect, or hope, that there were others. It is a pity that the Trust did not avail itself of so many opportunities that are unlikely to present themselves again.

The policy of furnishing Old Government House was strongly influenced by a report prepared by Daniel Thomas in 1964. This outlined four themes in using the house as a museum. They can be summarised

1. A museum of the governors - the house being the one building in existence which was lived in by the majority of the early governors up to 1850, prior to the change to self-government.
Although some of the first had completed their terms of office before the completion of the building as it stands today the house is nevertheless the one building in Australia to have had a lengthy personal association with these men who so moulded our history.

Daniel Thomas envisaged that each governor should have a strictly biographical exhibit covering his life both before and after his Australian appointment but would be of course chiefly concerned with his time in Australia. His personal character could be defined and likewise his particular contribution to the history of Australia. Various effects that could be related to the governors and their families could be incorporated into the various personal exhibits but they should not predominate, and in general be kept in the period museum section.

2. Period Museum. As Australia’s oldest major residential building some of its principal rooms should exhibit the decorative arts of the period the house was built 1800 - 1816. The report recommended a fairly elaborate furnishing of the rooms more along the lines of a decorative arts museum and the exclusion of any cottage style and unsophisticated objects.

3. The Building. A display to illustrate the history of the building right up to the twentieth century and its occupation by the Kings School.

4. The history and topography of Parramatta was also mentioned although the report stated that no museum should illustrate too many varied themes and that the lives of the governors should remain the principal theme of Old Government House.

This report was augmented by a further report in 1968 in which it was stated that to furnish the principal rooms to the decorative arts and furniture of the period 1800 - 1816 was too restrictive and it would be almost impossible to acquire furnishings in any amount that would be required for the building, particularly furniture of colonial manufacture which was known to have comprised almost one third of the total.

Rather than confine the furnishings to the period of any one governor, the policy was directed to its period as a vice-regal residence or to the first half of the nineteenth century. It was felt that cottage furniture should not be excluded. Apart from the furnishing of servants' quarters such pieces could well be found in minor rooms where utility rather than quality would have been the guide. The term "cottage" style had wide shades of meaning and could be easily applied to much colonial made furniture. While furniture of a predominant English colonial origin was sought it was felt that pieces of other origins such as Anglo-Indian could also be considered.

It was noted in this report that the main guides to the furnishing should be the furniture inventories made in 1821, 1837, 1846 and 1855,
as well as other documentation, and the several auction notices of the dispersal sales of various governors' effects on their departure from the colony together with a number of newspaper advertisements indicating the furniture and furnishings available in the early colony.

While the furniture envisaged for the furnishing of Old Government House encompassed some fifty years a unity of design was still apparent in English furniture design during this period. Several English furniture pattern books and catalogues were re-issued with few revisions and were current for up to thirty years and while current London fashions changed, older styles remained long in vogue. One major Sydney cabinetmaker is known to have used designs from a pattern book of 1808 as late as 1845.

It is unlikely that the furnishings of Old Government House were ever of high fashion. Its erratic use by the various governors and the large amount of government owned furniture as described in the several inventories suggest that much of its furnishings changed very little between the times of Governor Macquarie and Governor Fitzroy - even if they were augmented from the various governors' personal effects.

It is certainly true that between 1800 and 1850 Old Government House was occupied by no less than 9 families with different, often unrelated interests, backgrounds and furniture requirements. Room usage was frequently changed, far more than would be likely to be encountered in a usual residence which over a similar time span would probably relate to no more than two families or generations with their various additions and subtractions of furniture.

KEVIN FAHY.
HISTORICAL INVENTORIES AND THE FURNITURE.

Despite the existence of several furniture inventories and a limited amount of documentation from other sources no pictorial evidence of the interiors at Old Government House during its use as a vice regal residence is known. Casual claims have been made for a few items of furniture as having once been in the house but none can be entertained seriously. Of all the furniture in the present collection only one chair from a set of six ebonised drawing room chairs could possibly be claimed as appearing in the 1855 inventory prior to their removal to Government House, Sydney. Various claims have been made for furniture belonging to several governors. Even if correct it would be largely impossible to determine whether such items were ever at Parramatta as in most cases they would more than likely have been placed at Government House, Sydney.

The earliest reference to furniture at Old Government House can be found in the Returns of Government Labour kept by Richard Rouse, the Superintendent of Carpenters at Parramatta between 1811 and 1820. In 1816 there is an entry "making looking glass frame for Government House". During November of that year "one side Board 8' long and 2' wide for the use of Government House" was received from Sydney. In January 1817 "16 single and 2 elbow drawing room chairs, 12 hall chairs, one round table and 2 sofa tables, 1 dressing table and 1 bedstead" arrived from Sydney for the house; "2 elbow chairs, 2 chests of drawers and 2 butter boxes" followed a few days later.

Important guides to the furnishing of the house are the several inventories made in 1821, 1837, 1846 and 1855. While mostly incomplete as with the exception of the 1837 inventory they list only the government owned furniture in the house, they do serve to show the range of furniture to be found throughout the house as well as providing an indication of the various alterations in room usage. The latter point will be discussed in some detail by James Broadbent.

The 1821 inventory, a copy of which can be found in Helen Proudfoot's 'Old Government House' pages 83 and 84, which has already been distributed to participants in the seminar, was prepared by Henry Colden Antill in March 1821, almost a year prior to Macquarie's departure from the colony. Despite the absence of small items, pictures, curtains, floor coverings and lighting, almost a third of the furniture listed, numbering over 70 pieces, was of local manufacture made from cedar, rosewood, beefwood and bluegum. These pieces would probably have been made by convict labour at the lumber yards or government workshops in Sydney and Parramatta. The inclusion of several of those locally made items of furniture in the furnishings of the principal rooms of the house suggest that they were of some quality.

By 1831 Governor Darling was to describe that much of the furniture at Parramatta was unfit for use and in the following year furniture additions and repairs totalling £677.8.6 were made.
The 1837 inventory made a few days before the completion of Governor Bourke's term of office was prepared by the Colonial Architect, Mortimer Lewis. It appears to list far more than just the government owned furniture. Apart from an increase in the amount of furniture to be found in the various rooms, a number of smaller decorative items are listed as well as rugs, mats, carpeting and oil cloths together with curtains and blinds. The absence of pictures and more personal furnishings suggests that this inventory may have omitted the governor's own effects even though the caption for the inventory has had the word 'public' crossed out. The only lighting mentioned in this inventory is a pair of diamond drop candlesticks and 8 lamps - 4 of which were stored in the "Lamp Room".

In July 1846 a few days before the departure of Governor Gipps, a third inventory of furniture at Government House, Parramatta was made. Vague descriptions can be identified with items appearing in the earlier inventories, including "2 Half circular Tables 'old'" and floor covering carpets are described as Kidderminster and Brussels. The fourth and final inventory was made in February 1855, a month after Governor Fitzroy - the last vice regal resident of the house, had left the colony. Various items were noted as being removed to Government House, Sydney. Others were noted as being removed to Maitland Police Court and a number of items were despatched to Andrew Lenehan, the Sydney cabinetmaker, possibly for repair or sale. Lenehan was active at this time in work for the government. Throughout the period the house was used as a vice regal residence much of its furniture would have been augmented by the personal furniture of various governors which would have been brought out with them from England or provided locally. This furniture would have been taken back with them to England or disposed of locally at the end of their terms of office.

In the Sydney Gazette of 4 January 1822 the "Household Furniture, Books, Plate, Table Linen, China Ware, Carriages &c. belonging to Major General Macquarie" were offered for sale at public auction by Simeon Lord. "Ornamental Lamps" were sold a few weeks later and during the following year the balance of Macquarie's effects "consisting of several Articles of Household Furniture, table linen, napkins, books, chandeliers (beautifully ornamented), pictures, window curtains and a complete mounting for a carriage, with other items too numerous to mention" were auctioned. Although the earlier advertisement mentions catalogues available, none are known to have survived.

In the Australian of 8 December, 1825 there is an auction announcement of the "valuable effects, the property of Sir Thomas Brisbane KCB.... comprising an elegant and substantial yellow bodied carriage, with silver mounted harness for 4 horses, complete; capital double and single barrelled fowling pieces .... choice books, maps, charts, beautiful dinner service, globe and hall lamps, excellent saddlery, a very handsome and highly finished French clock with a glass shade, a musical time beater &c". His astronomical instruments at the Observatory were purchased by the government and were later transferred to the Sydney Observatory.
The Australian of 16 September, 1851 reported that the effects of Governor Darling, including the family plate, pictures, carriages &c., are all going—and going to the hammer—and readers were promised rare bargains. The Sydney Morning Herald of 1 January 1855 offered for auction the "most substantial and well selected furniture of Governor Fitzroy prior to his departure from the Colony consisting chiefly of 18 bedsteads, 8 arm and easy chairs, 24 tables, 12 washstands, wine, brandy, ale and stout".

With the exception of a few pieces of furniture removed to Government House, Sydney, and to Andrew Lenahan's and to some government departments, the government owned furniture at Government House Parramatta was sold by public auction on the site in June 1855. The Sydney Morning Herald of 30 May 1855 announced that "Mr. J. Staff has received to sell by auction as above, a quantity of household furniture consisting chiefly as follows: 32 dining, tea, card, square, dressing and kitchen tables; 9 clothes presses, 30 easy, arm, and single chairs, 2 sofas, 4 chest of drawers, lamps, carpets, and rugs, 2 bidets, a first rate Norfolk Island drip stone, 4 side-boards, 1 cabinet, cupboards, a large flour bin, a set of beds tops, wash-stands, pier glass, a number of single iron stump bedsteads &c. The whole to be sold in lots to suit purchasers."

The dispersal of this furniture was brought about by the abandonment of the house as a vice regal residence, a result of the refusal by the English and local government to maintain two official residences following the completion of the new Government House at Sydney. No items of the original furniture that were sold at auction in 1855 have yet been located and authenticated. While a few pieces were sent to Government House Sydney, the balance which would appear to have included items from the various inventories, was probably sold to local residents of Parramatta. Future research may be able to identify some of this furniture which, hopefully, one day will be returned to the house.

Much of the furniture at Old Government House today has been selected from the information based on the several early inventories and other documentation mentioned. This applies particularly to those items of colonial manufacture which reflect the varying level of craftsmanship in the colony during the early nineteenth century, ranging from the sophisticated and high quality design to the mundane and cottage quality that was to be found in the lesser rooms of the colonial interior.

The reader of isolated inventories should be cautioned. Valuable as these documents are they must be used carefully, ideally in conjunction with others of similar households, in similar areas, and of the same period. They cannot tell us of the placement of furniture in a room and more frequently than not include only the type of furniture with no mention of its timber, style, size or fabric upholstery.

KEVIN FAHY.
HISTORICAL INVENTORIES AND ROOM USAGES AT OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

In doing my homework for this seminar, I began analysing the inventories of furniture and floor plans at Old Government House and analysing what these inventories tell us about the room uses here. I will explain to you what my summary analyses are. I am not sure that they are correct in every detail, but I am sure that what they tell us is a very different story from that told by this house as it is now presented.

1. BREAKFAST ROOM  
2. NEW BED ROOM  
3. DRESSING ROOM  
4. SMALL LOBBY  
5. COLONADE (sic)  
6. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
7. MIDDLE HALL  
8. PANTRY  
9. FRONT HALL  
10. DRAWING ROOM  
11. DINING ROOM  
12. SGT. WHALAN'S ROOM  
13. PANTRY  
14. SERVANTS' HALL  
15. STORE ROOM  
16. KITCHEN  
17. BAKE HOUSE

PLAN OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE, PARRAMATTA, IN 1821, FROM THE BONWICK TRANSCRIPTS.

The earliest plan we have is dated 1821. It is well known and is illustrated in Helen Proudfoot's Old Government House. It was also referred to - although its room arrangement was not faithfully adhered to - when this house was turned into a museum. This room we are now in, No. 10 on the plan, is described as the drawing room, and No.11, now the drawing room is described as the Macquarie's dining room. Why in 1970 these rooms were transposed and this room (no.10) furnished as a dining room I don't know. Probably it was thought that the dining room should be closer to the kitchen and its offices. Apart from this transposition the room usages in the house today are notionally based on those of 1821, the main exception being the governor's office, now used as an archaeological display.
Let us now look at the plan dated 1839, which I have drawn from Lady Franklin's description of the house. It is Lady Franklin's observation which first started me thinking about the room usages here.

Visiting from Tasmania in 1839, Lady Franklin clearly described the room on the north of the entrance hall - the present drawing room - as the dining room, that is, as it was in Macquarie's day, and she described this room - the present dining room and Macquarie's drawing room as a bedroom - Lady Gipps' bedroom. One would not have thought that one of the principal ground floor rooms would have been a bedroom, but Lady Franklin's description is clear. But, having accepted this room as a bedroom, I think one can understand more fully other furniture inventories, those of 1837, 1846 and 1855.

These inventories have previously presented a puzzle for they do not appear, as is usual in such lists, to have progressed logically through the house, listing, as in the Macquarie plan, the rooms in sequence. But accepting that the present dining room was a bedroom, one can arrive at an interpretation of room usages that suits, with minor variations, all these inventories. But if you insist that these rooms on either side of the hall were dining and drawing rooms, you cannot interpret these inventories as having been compiled in a logical sequence. Try it out - you become hopelessly lost.
Let us look at the latest, and last, inventory— that of 1855 and follow it through on a plan of the house: 1. entrance hall, 2. staircase—straight forward enough—3. aide-de-camp's room—perhaps that's the room at the foot of the stairs (to the south), it had one blind and that room has one window. But if that was the aide's room there is no logical progression. If however, the aide's room was that to the north of the stairwell, i.e. if the maker of the inventory, after coming through the entrance hall turned right in the stairhall and progressed southwards down the crosshall, a logical sequence is maintained. But what of one blind only if the room to the north of the stair was the aide's room? Perhaps only the window facing the western sun was fitted with a blind, the other being under the verandah and not needing it, or perhaps that window was already infilled.

From here I suggest that the clerk went to the far north of the house to the governor's study, No.4, with two windows and two blinds, then to the small room adjacent, No.5, the Governor's dressing closet (a not unusual adjunct to an office or study) and then to the main front room of the wing, the drawing room, No.6, with two more blinds (the third opening in this room as you know was a set of French doors leading onto the trellised porch known as Lady Gipps' bower, and would not necessarily have required blinds.

ROOM USAGES INTERPRETED FROM 1855 INVENTORY
Coming southwards back along the spine of the house, you have the dining room, No. 7, once again, or perhaps one should say as always, in the position of the present drawing room, then No. 3, the "large bedroom ground floor", the same room that Lady Franklin described as Lady Gipps' bedroom. What other room could No. 8 be, for it had three blinds? It is possible to explain less blinds than windows in a room, because of orientation or furniture arrangements, but rather difficult to explain more.

And so the clerk progressed to the kitchen offices in the south wing and then I suggest back into the main block and upstairs, via the stairhall door, taking in, on the way, the room at the foot of the stairs, No. 8, the butler's pantry.

Now let us go back to the 1837 inventory, taken two years before Lady Franklin visited. In this one it is likely that the clerk started, as in the Macquarie list of rooms, in the north wing, in the room Macquarie used as a breakfast parlour. It had two blinds, but three sets of curtains - again suited to the two windows and the French doors to the trellised porch.

No. 2 is "the passage next to dining room" and presents no problem, and leads to No. 3, the Governor's study - as it was also in the 1855 list - although Macquarie had added it as his bedroom. Apparently the windows each with a blind, were united by one set of curtains, a typical early nineteenth century furnishing detail.
No. 4 presents some difficulty, but I cannot see why, progressing southwards, the small room to the north of the stair could not have been the governor's sitting room. The valet and aid-de-camp's offices (Nos. 5 & 6) were probably those to the south of the stair in the back range, the valet's office being that I have interpreted as the butler's pantry in the 1855 list. Taking the rooms in the front range we have No.7 the "hall and foyer" and the dining room, No.8, either of the two front rooms perhaps, but considering the evidence of all the other lists almost certainly the northern room, and No.9 the "lower bedroom" which appears to corroborate Lady Franklin's description, but it has only two sets of blinds and curtains. All I can suggest is that the bed, if it were large, covered the southern window and that, if you try to apply the list in any other way you have no sequence of rooms at all. The clerk then progressed upstairs before listing the kitchen offices.

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1. ENTRANCE HALL
2. INNER HALL & STAIRCASE
3. AIDE-DE-CAMP'S (sic) ROOM - 1 bell pull
4. GOVERNOR'S STUDY - 2 pair bell pulls.
5. GOVERNOR'S DRESSING CLOSET
6. DRAWING ROOM - 3 pairs curtains, pair bell pulls
7. DINING ROOM - 3 pairs curtains, pair bell pulls
8. HOUSEKEEPER'S ROOM
9. BUTLER'S PANTRY
10. KITCHEN
11. BEDROOM GROUND FLOOR
12. BEDROOM GROUND FLOOR "continued".

ROOM USAGES INTERPRETED FROM 1846 INVENTORY.

The remaining inventory to be analysed is that of 1846. Like that of 1855 I believe that the clerk started in the entrance hall, worked northward along the back range of the wing, then southward to the kitchen offices. The usage of rooms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 appear identical to those in the 1855 inventory, that is the northern wing lounge, the governor's study and the dining room, the drawing room being, as ever, to the north of the entrance hall. The governor's
study, No.4, is described as having a pair of bell pulls. If it had remained in the small back room where it was in 1821 it would have been unlikely to have had two pulls, but if as suggested it had been transferred to Macquarie's bedroom, two bell pulls would not have been unusual for the size of the room (or indeed as remainders of its former use).

Oddly this list appears to omit the room we are in, the present dining room, and continues with the kitchen offices, however, before proceeding upstairs there are Nos. 11 & 12, the "bedroom ground floor" and "bedroom ground floor continued". I suggest that these are this room, and one of the rooms behind in the back range, possibly that at the foot of the stairs, both left out by the clerk until he began his list of bedrooms.

It is very difficult to explain these inventories to you. All I can do is suggest that you try to arrange them in any other sequence and see what a mess you get into. As I said, I am not adamant that my interpretation is totally correct, particularly in the service areas, but I am convinced that it is a substantially correct interpretation of the changing usages of the principal rooms in the house.

So, it seems that the only room that this wasn't, is the dining room as it is shown now.

JAMES BROADBENT.
BUILDING CONDITION AND PROBLEMS.

As a building Old Government House, although a fine example of the Palladian Georgian style, is not a very stable structure. It has been moving up and down around the site ever since the 'front range' of buildings was built by Hunter in 1799.

The reasons for its instability can be traced mainly to clay foundation material. Clay is possibly the most unstable material the early builders could have built on. When wet it swells and when dry it shrinks and subsides, leaving great cracks in the earth which continue up through any structure which happens to be built on it.

It has been found that the parts of the house with the least movement are over the cellars which have successfully carried the structure down to a more stable soil condition.

This differential movement between the parts of the building is further aggravated by the differences in types and sizes of footings at the base of those walls not over cellars. Some of the walls to the Macquarie section at the rear of Hunter's building are built directly onto the base of earlier walls by Governor Phillip without any effort to strengthen them, while the wall to the south of the stair hall is built with no footing at all, directly onto the clay at a shallower depth than the surrounding walls.

The whole building is built of brick with soft lime joints and is inherently flexible and should move whenever and wherever these movements in the clay subsoil require it to. That is assuming the plaster applied to the walls is also flexible.

Unfortunately for us the Government Architect in 1908-9 removed the whole of the original internal soft lime plaster which was flexible and also the original external plaster, and replaced it with very hard and brittle cement render which has no elasticity. Internally this has been set with a thin coat of hard plaster to give us our present finish. This cement render — particularly internally — has also partly caused the present rising damp problem, but structurally it has not been flexible enough and has cracked in many parts of the house. Some of the larger cracks, in the south lobby outside the kitchen and servants hall and the north lobby outside the Governor's bedroom will be stopped up with lime putty later this month, but we must expect that the cracks will continue to occur to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the season. We must remember that this summer is an unusually dry one. Replacing the cement render with traditional hair reinforced lime plaster in 3 coats should reduce the number of cracks which occur, but where the movement in the building is severe enough, some cracks will still appear.

A look at photographs of Old Government House, taken prior to the 1909 restoration show many areas of the building where the external plaster had cracked and fallen off as a result of building movement. The present external render has also required extensive repairs at various times.
The 1909 restoration was an extremely extensive one. The whole of the roof structure was replaced and for the first time the roof was slated. Prior to this it was timber shingles covered with iron.

Almost all the ground floor windows were replaced, the first floor windows moved around, many new external shutters added and much internal joinery replaced with some details lost in the process. All ceilings and floors were replaced and the walls stripped and re-plastered. Most of what is visible today is 1909 work with repairs to much internal joinery dating from the 1967 restoration.

The other major problem suffered at Old Government House is that of rising damp and the subsequent damage by salts to the wall finishes and picture rails.

The method used to treat this problem until very recently has been to renew the cement render to the walls after first sealing the brickwork. This has caused the dampness to rise even higher, causing further damage by salts. Much of the internal render in the south east corner of the Dining Room and also the north east corner of the Drawing Room is now saturated with salt and the only solution is to remove it and replace it with traditional hair reinforced lime plaster. If this is combined with treatment of the basement walls with sacrificial render then the moisture and salt should be removed below ground floor level and so not damage the wall plaster above.

As a trial this could be tested first in the corner of the Dining Room and monitored. If successful, then the Trust should consider the possibility of removing all of the internal cement render - at least to the ground floor - and replacing it with traditional lime plaster. A very expensive undertaking, but one which may have to be considered in the long term.

In 1983 a test panel of sacrificial lime plaster was done externally to the corner outside the Drawing Room and in the basement below. This was done to test the possibility of solving the damp and salt problem from the outside. The test was reasonably successful, particularly in the basement where the salt is being leached out in large amounts. However, the problem still exists with the internal cement render being saturated with salts. The removal of this render suggested before appears to be the only solution.

Renewal of the internal plaster would allow the reconstruction of the staff mould details to the chimney breasts and other details lost in the 1909 restoration.

During the past 12 months minor repairs have been carried out to the eaves soffits, guttering, downpipes, etc. to prevent rainwater from entering the building. The first floor string course was repointed before the repainting work and the window sills are to be repointed this month. This will stop any possibility of a problem with falling damp for the time being, but repairs will always be necessary.

The major work carried out in 1984 involved the research of the 19th century colour schemes and the subsequent repainting of the house and all its outbuildings. It was found necessary to do many minor repairs especially to the rainwater goods and eaves prior to the repainting to ensure that the painters' efforts would not be wasted.
The research was tackled from two different aspects. Firstly, all the known illustrations of the house from the 19th century were looked at in the original form and the colours noted. The most valuable of these was a sketch by Elyard dated 1874, which is well drawn and was the basis for a later watercolour by the same artist. This sketch shows good details of the planting in front of Old Government House, but much more importantly for us, Elyard had written at the top of the sketch a list of colours of the various elements of the building as he saw them when he sketched. Walls - yellow-orange, shutters - blue-green. Here was a much more accurate description of the colours than could be interpreted from the other watercolours, as for all we know, they may have had their colour applied some time after the building was sketched. Elyard's sketch did not conflict with any of the other illustrations, it just confirmed that they were right.

This yellow-orange colour first appears in the illustrations from the early 1850s and continues up until the oil painting by Campbell c.1890.

The second most important line of research was with the building itself. This was not an easy task as the 1909 work had left us with apparently no original external plaster, one original ground floor window, but many originals on the first floor, all of which had been burnt off very thoroughly. This included the original shutters. The front door had been completely burnt back and the porch completely rebuilt using very few parts of the original structure, and those that had been used were cleaned back thoroughly as well.

We knew that when the roof was rebuilt the central valley had been roofed over, leaving parts of Governor Hunter's chimneys undisturbed. These still have their original plaster, the same as can be seen in the present northern display room, but the chimneys show traces of coloured limewash. We also knew that the entrance wall to Macquarie's cellars was still exposed at the present entry to these cellars. This wall shows three limewash colours - all in buffs and brown.

It was discovered that a substantial section of Macquarie's plaster still exists on the south wall of the garrison building at the west end. This section of the building was demolished by the Government Architect in 1909 but he left the south wall standing and blocked up the window openings. This wall has a plaster very similar in colour to that of Hunter's and is also marked out to look like stone. On top of this are traces of limewash - again in buffs and brown.

The joinery proved more difficult, having been burnt back and moved around more than once. A lump of paint residue was found on the top edge of one of the top sashes to the first floor which, when put under the microscope revealed 16 layers of paint with dirt between various layers where some time had elapsed between coats, also damage by heat when the face of the sash was burnt off and no separation of layers where there was an undercoat.

Good areas of early paint were found around the front door and window frames. A list of most likely dates for repairs and painting of the house was set out based on descriptions and reports from the various Governors and visitors and this compared with the number of paint layers.
Close study of the very fine black and white photo taken by the Government Printer in the early 1870s gave us the tonal range of the colours and was compared with the rest of the information.

Even though we were very sure of the Macquarie colour scheme, it was decided to use that which existed at the time of Fitzroy - the last Governor to use Old Government House. There were two main reasons for this, first, that Macquarie copied Hunter's plaster and left the building unpainted and we could not go back to this finish without replastering the whole building or painting it grey. Second, that the interior has been presented as representing all the early Governors up to and including Fitzroy and that was a good cut off point. Following the departure of Fitzroy the house was very poorly looked after until 1909.

The exterior is now limewashed, using a traditional recipe and will weather and bleach with time. Re-limewashing may need to be done every 5-7 years, but unlike normal painting, no preparation is necessary, thus cutting costs considerably. Some damage has already occurred by people rubbing the surface with their feet, etc. but this must be accepted as part of the wearing process. This building is at least 160 years old and cannot be expected to look like it was just completed.

It was decided to paint the porch in sand paint - a technique in use last century to make timber appear to be made of stone. This can also be seen in Macquarie Street in Sydney on the first floor columns of the Mint Building - only the ground floor has stone columns and on the external architraves to the Royal College of Physicians building. The stone painted porch and the oak grained door are consistent with the attitude of faking up a grand mansion of stone, but of plastered brick and timber; something which the 18th and early 19th century builders were extremely good at.

The research for the colour scheme revealed to us that there is considerably more information locked in the fabric of the building and in the surrounding grounds than is at first apparent. An archaeologist may be able to help us find traces of the internal detail and finishes which were destroyed in the 1909 restoration and to a lesser extent in 1967 when all the underfloor areas were shaved back and cleaned out of all rubble.

More research on documents could be done to extract information on structures and details now lost. All the disciplines, architect, archaeologist, curator, garden researcher, surveyor, etc. must work in close association to put together a more complete picture of Old Government House.

It is time we set about rectifying some of the injustices and neglect it has suffered in the past.

Alan Croker
Clive Lucas & Partners Pty. Ltd.
Architects
I have been asked to present to you today a short paper on the cultural significance of Old Government House as I see it, and also to give a brief history of the house and Parramatta Park. As I think you all know the history of the house fairly well by now, perhaps I can summarise by recapitulating on a few dates which signify changes in the house's history. I will then dwell only briefly on its cultural significance, and go on to make a few remarks about matters that have occurred to me in the reconsideration of the building in the last few days, that is, fourteen years since I first wrote down a version of its history, which was published as Old Government House, the Building and its Landscape, by the State Planning Authority in association with Angus & Robertson in 1971. Just a few dates:

1790, July. Governor Phillip directed the laying out of the town of Rose Hill, and the principal street, George Street, was marked out. A modest house of lath and plaster, 44 feet by 16 feet, was built for the Governor on the rise of the hill at the end of the axis of this principal street. At the other end was the wharf, with the barracks and store nearby.

1799, 7th June. Governor Hunter reported that the partially completed new Government House at Parramatta had been damaged although not destroyed by a fierce gale. Phillip's house had fallen down six months before, being "entirely decayed" so the recently commenced house was pulled down and begun anew. This house was 60 feet long and 24 feet wide with a second storey and cellars.

1811. Governor Macquarie determined the Government Domain should be reclaimed from public use as a common, for use by the Governor himself, and restricted indiscriminate public entry.

1816. The Macquaries had the house extended to a plan drawn with the help of John Watts and a portico supervised by Francis Greenway. In Macquarie's own words: "The old Government House was repaired, enlarged and much improved" by making it a double house and adding wings to it so as to afford sufficient accommodation for the Governor, his family and staff. Other ancillary buildings were also constructed.
1832. Lady Bourke died in the house.

1847. Lady Fitzroy was killed in sight of the front door.

1855. Governor Denison decided to dispose of the building, and arrangements were made to sell the furniture, most described as "old and inferior". The move away from the house by the Governors had been foreshadowed since 1832 when queries were raised in London about the Governor having a second residence. Once the new Government House in Sydney was under way, the house at Parramatta continued on as a Governor's residence only under sufferance. The expense of maintaining the building was to come out of the Governor's own pocket after 1845. In March 1857 a bill was passed to provide for the disposal of the Domain lands as waste lands of the Crown, excepting an area of not less than 200 acres to be set aside for the health and recreation of the citizens of Parramatta. Old Government House stands within the 246 acres then marked out. Five trustees were appointed.

1860. The railway cutting crossed the Domain alienating the area south of it. Then begins a long period of decline. However, during this period the house was recognised, if fairly casually, as an historic building and an important relic of the past.

1909. The New South Wales Department of Public Works, under W.I. Vernon, prepared plans for alterations, additions and restoration for the house in preparation for its use by The Kings School. Although this 'restoration' constituted a major assault on the fabric of the building, as we learnt yesterday, it is interesting as an early attempt at rescuing an acknowledged historic building. It is also interesting that Vaucluse House was acquired in order to preserve it for the public, in the following year, 1910. In the 1960s The Kings School moved to its new site and did not renew the lease. In 1967 Old Government House was vested in the National Trust and the second major restoration began. It was completed by 1970 when it was opened by the Queen.

So we have a site here with a succession of three Governor's houses upon it, the extant one heavily restored, set within an area of land which was variously a farm, the Governor's almost private domain, and a park for the recreation of citizens.
One could say a great deal about the cultural significance of Old Government House and its grounds, relating it to the usual Burra Charter categories of cultural significance; that is, historical value, aesthetic value, social value and scientific value. There may be other categories you might like to think of.

Just dealing briefly with these: under historical value you might mention the builders, the occupiers, the importance of the site itself, the symbolic importance of both the site and the house. Under aesthetic value you might mention its architectural qualities, its form and its placement in the landscape. You would have to mention that it was heavily restored with much of its materials and surfaces replaced; you would mention that it echoes the Palladian ideal in its layout. You would mention that the evidence of the early fabric which remains within the structure is very limited indeed. Under social value you would mention that it was identified with the Governors and their way of life, that it was acknowledged as an historic place. The period of its decline would also be recognised, and of its use as a boarding school. Under scientific value you might say that important scientific activities were carried on around the house and even within the house by the Governors and others in the fields of agriculture, astronomy and botany. You might also state that it has potential for further archaeological investigations.

You would also make the point that the extent of the records relating to the building is quite considerable. Old Government House is outstanding as a building with an impressive complement of detailed contemporary documentation, much of which remains unexplored and certainly most of which is unpublished. There is also a great deal of information compared with other houses in New South Wales about how the house was furnished at various times.

Now, in the view of the title of this seminar, "A House Full of Artefacts - or Artefacts for the House", could one include its present furnishings and decoration within a definition of the place's cultural significance? And, if so, how could the collection be seen to relate to the other cultural values that the house is considered to have?

Now, at this point, I will digress and say that perhaps I can claim an acquaintance with Old Government House, Parramatta, over as long a period of time as most people here today, or even longer. I first visited the
house when I was preparing a small booklet in 1960 on the buildings of Parramatta which were listed in what was then known as Register A, a very select list of about twenty buildings compiled by the Historic Buildings Committee of the Cumberland County Council, a list which was the forerunner in fact of the National Trust's own now extensive and impressive Register. I saw the house then with innocent eyes, innocent that is of any carefully considered theory of conservation, restoration or decoration. It was then part of a boarding school, a residential house for small boys who were boarding at another famous Parramatta institution, The Kings School, and it bore all the marks of such a use. Unfortunately, I don't have total recall of that visit, I wish I did. I still have impressions of iron bedsteads, rows of tidy beds upstairs, a comfortable sitting room on the right hand side of the entrance hall with generous, sagging armchairs covered in faded floral linens, the province of the house master.

There was a tennis court near the back door and a gravel driveway behind. Monochrome paint colour everywhere. The atmosphere was utilitarian, perfunctory, spartan; there was nothing that could be termed a "style" in the interiors, self-conscious taste or fashion were irrelevant. This was to be discovered, or re-discovered, if you like, by the Trust somewhere during the process of restoration. I even knew some people who had lived in the house as school boys and could remember them talking about the long walk down across the Park to the main part of The Kings School in the mornings before school. Perhaps, indeed, this was the halcyon period on the house's long history, and this period, I might add, lasted for roughly fifty years, or over one quarter of the house's life.

Where has the evidence of those times gone now? Someone might ask this one day. I bring this up when we are trying to define the role of Old Government House in the coming decades because it is a period of the house which is little thought about these days when our eyes are readily seduced by the fine and indeed pleasing objects of the later Georgian period that we see all about us. We seem to have a deep need to prove to ourselves that our national ancestors were not uncultured, unlettered, rip-roaring colonial stereo-types, as indeed all of them were not, but were capable of appreciating the finer things of life. It is comforting to us to see a beautifully furnished house representing one of the roughest and most uncertain periods of Australia's history.
But is it enough to be comforted? That is the question that is beginning to be asked. Perhaps it is more important to find out the truth about our founding fathers, and mothers, the fascinating truth with all its inconsistencies and surprises. Always when I am looking at a house or a building, particularly a house I haven't seen before, I find the furniture a distraction, an intriguing distraction but a distraction nevertheless, that is, if I want to concentrate on the architecture or the feeling of the house itself, when I'm trying to catch the essential qualities of a building.

I must concede of course that a house is meant to be furnished and that the furniture is capable of conveying messages about the people who have used it in the past. The professed aim of the display and decoration of Old Government House is to present information about the domestic manners and customs of the period when the house was occupied from time to time by the various Governors, from Macquarie to Gipps. I begin to wonder, however, whether a selection of fine furniture can, on its own, really convey manners and customs. To take an example: only last week I was looking at a number of artefacts, a seventeenth-century chair, a walking stick, a pipe, some books, a chess set, in the Museum of London; quite interesting at one level, but in their historical and personal context, fascinating. This leads me to ask "Can a recreation of a corner of Samuel Pepys' library tell us much about the busy, complicated, zestful, fallible and yet purposeful life of that marvellous gentleman by themselves alone? Can those objects tell us much about the essential qualities of the man and London in the late seventeenth century?

Without Pepys' diary we could only catch a ghostly glimpse of him and his times from these objects. However, taken with his diary and with a detailed knowledge of the period, they become evocative and quite powerful artefacts. This leads to a point about the presentation of historic houses generally in New South Wales, a matter that will become more important as we realise what a stereotyped romantic version of our history we see presented to us again and again.

We see fine furnishings in Elizabeth Bay House and Vaucluse House attempting to recreate the ambience of a period and of a family's life within that period. But do we know whose ambience is being pursued? There is no definitive biography of Alexander Macleay; there is little published knowledge about the Macleay scientific circle; there is no definitive biography of William Charles Wentworth; that figure looming large over the foundation of this...
country's parliamentary and legal systems. We have to rely mainly on one man, now dead, M.H. Ellis and his interpretation of both John Macarthur and Lachlan Macquarie. Where are the books about the other governors and their wives? The great body of Macquarie's letters and diaries remain in manuscript, untranscribed and unpublished. Hunter, King, Bligh, Gipps, Denison, where are their biographies, where are the assessments of their contributions? Research and the writing of history remains, I'm afraid, as usual, at the bottom of the pile; the humble and poor handmaiden in the process of acquisition, restoration and decoration.

In this process I might ask what proportion of the considerable sums of money involved in the presentation of an historic house to the public is devoted to basic documentary research and publication of information and extending the public's knowledge, basic knowledge, of the people who lived there and the role those houses played?

So, we see the fine objects, which we like, but do we go away any better informed about our past, do we recognise the evidence if it is allowed to remain? I am suggesting that the process of historical interpretation is beginning to become top heavy; the re-creation needs to go hand in hand with the study of the documents; the ghostly image needs the substantiation of a body of knowledge.

We no longer subscribe now to a Darwinian theory of human progress. The events of the twentieth century have brought out modern pride to a greater fall. This makes each age in the past more precious to us, as we can see it as a time having its own integrity, rather than as merely a prelude to the present. To me the great fascination of a building, any building, is two-fold. It lies first in how it exemplifies, in its fabric, the times in which it was built, how it reflects the ideals and conditions of those times - aesthetic, practical, political, social, economic and so on. Secondly it lies in how it has travelled through its time span so far, how it has survived the buffeting of succeeding generations, how it reflects their occupancy, how it has grown and changed and been adapted in relationship to its original framework; how it has retained its patina of age, or lost it; how it has survived both neglect and the dread hand of the "restorer"; how the evidence it presents still carries the feeling of its former times.

Old Government House speaks to me of various things. Of course this is the
great dilemma of the restorer and the curator. Because I know the house so
well, it has become a concept in my mind as well as a house of bricks and
mortar. Perhaps this is one of the functions of an historic house museum,
to become such a concept in the mind. Though I began my introduction with
a description of the house as it was in 1960 largely as a reminder to you that
Old Government House had other lives apart from those of the early governors,
yet I have to admit that it speaks to me plainly of the Macquaries. It was
Macquarie who conceived of the house as a small gentleman's residence standing
on its own landscaped domain overlooking the adjacent village of Parramatta,
grouped as it was around the twin spires of the parish church which Mrs. Ma­
quarie had suggested to John Watts to build as a reminder of the departed
shores of England. It was he who directed the transformation of the earlier
two storey building into a "modest" country house in the Palladian manner.
It was he who instructed Francis Greenway to supervise the portico. It was
Mrs. Macquarie who planned the planting scheme in the Domain near the house,
with its citrus hedges, and a bower, overlooking the Crescent, for breakfast in
the cool of a summer's morning.

By speaking of the various levels at which Old Government House can be per­
ceived, I have introduced a problem which needs to be resolved when its
future role is being considered. One needs to come back to the fact that it
may be desirable for the building to be presented to the public in a coherent
way which can overtly demonstrate the significance of the place. So we have
to think hard about what we find significant on this site. We have to try to
define it, to pick the eyes out of it as it were, and then see how this can be
demonstrated through the presentation. There is a need for simplification
and for focussing. Too many messages mean confusion; at the same time the
wealth of background documentation needs to be more rigorously researched
and made available for publication. There is work by people in this room, —
by Joanne Capon and Carol Liston for example, that needs to be published as
soon as possible.

It is evident that Old Government House is a place that speaks to many people,
that calls forth their affections, that is capable of becoming a concept in
the mind. The way in which it is presented should allow this concept to
flourish and even grow. The ghosts should not be laid, they should be re­
surrected.

Helen Proudfoot.
THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NEW SOUTH WALES)

OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE, PARRAMATTA
HISTORY OF THE EXISTING FABRIC

Compiled from Proudfoot H, 1971 Old Government House The Building and its Landscape, and original notes by H. J. Buckland

R Mackay 1985
OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE
PADDAMATTA
Diagram 1.

1-2 - Location of Clay Roof Tile Fragments
3 - Location of Timber joinery fragment
4 - One of many locations where plaster, paint and timber fragments were found.

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

old government house, parramatta

some results of survey w.r.t existing archaeological features

8-2-85
OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE, PARRAMATTA
CONJECTURAL EARLY BUILDING PHASES

DIAGRAM 2
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

The archaeology of Old Government House is one aspect of its cultural significance, which has been largely ignored in the interpretation of the house to date, except for a cursory explanation of the brick footings presently exposed in what is presumed to be the Governor's Office. Certainly as far as most of the visitors to the house are concerned the archaeological display is a mere curiosity in relation to the rest of the house exhibits. This perception, however, will recently have changed, largely as a result of the recent re-discovery and subsequent media coverage of the remains of the footings at the site of the First Government House in Sydney. Clearly there are significant parallels which can be drawn between the two sites. At this point therefore it is both topical and relevant to consider the archaeological and research significance of Old Government House as an essential component of any conservation plan for its future restoration and interpretation.

'Archaeological' Significance

The term 'archaeological significance' has a number of meanings. It is not mentioned as one of the criteria on which the Australian Heritage Commission assesses cultural significance. Nevertheless, archaeological considerations are clearly relevant to cultural significance as has been shown by recent treatment of sites such as the Mint, Barracks, and of course the site of the First Government House. In this paper I wish to distinguish between different sorts of archaeological significance. The distinctions I make already have been discussed by Bickford and Sullivan, (1984). Bickford and Sullivan point out that the term archaeological significance is usually meant to mean one of two things. It may mean that the site has been investigated by archaeological methods, or it may mean the site has potential for future research. (Bickford and Sullivan 1984; p.21). As far as the first interpretation is concerned, I would re-label a component of that sort of significance at its 'tourist potential', i.e., the site is
of interest to the public because it is a place where archaeology has been carried out. The value of such significance has, in fact, already been demonstrated at the site of Old Government House. (The manager attests that attendance records at Old Government House were set the day after media coverage of the excavation of the drain in the grounds of the house.)

A further dimension of this form of archaeological significance is the contribution which the restoration of a site makes to the discipline of archaeology, or in other words the importance of new methodology and techniques which were developed during the excavation and their relevance in the field of archaeology in general. I shall, however, confine this paper not to these interpretations of archaeological significance, but rather to archaeological significance as research potential.

Since the publication of Schiffer and Gummerman's influential volume CONSERVATION ARCHAEOLOGY, (Schiffer and Gummerman 1977) archaeological significance has generally been interpreted as research potential or relevance to timely and specific research questions. In the Australian historical context Bickford and Sullivan have devised three questions which form a guide for assessment of archaeological significance in Australian sites within a relevant framework. The questions are:

1. Can a site contribute to knowledge which no other resource can?

2. Can a site contribute knowledge which no other site can?

3. Is this knowledge relevant to general questions about human history or substantive problems relating to Australian history, or does it contribute to other major research questions? (Bickford & Sullivan 1984: pp23/24).
Using this broad framework as a guide for the assessment of archaeological significance I would further divide the potential archaeological significance of Old Government House into two discrete sections: Significance in relation to the broad field of historical archaeology in general, and its significance in relation to the conservation and interpretation of the house itself. The fact that the house itself is a potential source of information for its own conservation and interpretation increases its significance, but this potential has far greater importance once the overall significance of the house is independently established.

I shall deal separately with each of these two levels of significance.

OLD-GOVERNMENT HOUSE AS A BROAD RANGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE

Old Government House is the only seat of eighteenth century British Colonial government, complete with Governor's Domain, which remains in Australia; and it may well be the only one in the world. As such, it has outstanding research potential to answer broad historical questions about the spread of British Colonialism, for example, or about social issues such as the early translation of British gentility to Australian conditions. In this capacity it has a unique and complementary relationship with the site of the First Government House.

Clearly all three of the abovementioned criteria are satisfied:

1. The site has the potential to contribute knowledge which no other resource can. (I shall indicate later that written evidence alone is not necessarily adequate. It does not, for example, enable the establishment of the physical history of this House.)
2. In conjunction with its adjacent Domain, now preserved in Parramatta Park, this site has the potential to contribute knowledge which no other site can.

3. The potential knowledge to be gained is relevant to many general questions about Australian history. I have only mentioned eighteenth century British Colonialism. Other fields of research are almost limitless. The main problems of assessing the significance is that to date there has been insufficient research produced by Australian historical archaeologists to provide a sufficient data-base against which to judge this side. This problem has been dealt with at some length by Pearson in his recent paper on "SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES" (Pearson 1984).

Papers by Birmingham (1985) and Murray (1985) at the most recent seminar on the First Government House Site indicate the wide range of broadly based research questions for which a site such as Old Government House Parramatta might reasonably be expected to reveal relevant data.

I am not in this paper going to suggest any program of work which should be undertaken in order to tackle any of these broadly based research questions. I do note that the site of Old Government House should not be perceived only as the building not just as the building and grounds under the National Trust's control. Parramatta Park contains a significant number of features which relate directly to the original Government Domain, many of which might be subject to archaeological investigation if there is a valid reason for doing so. The Bath House to the west was in fact excavated in a limited...
3. way some years ago (Temple, n.p.) and at least one report has been
done on the case for archaeological investigation of the Old Parramatta
Observatory, which is also nearby (Brenchley, 1980). As far as I
am aware, remnants of the Dairy and possibly the Stables (though
severed by the Railway Line) not to mention Gate Houses, remain.
Though not directly the concern of the National Trust, their
relationship with Old Government House and the contribution they
make to its range of archaeological potential must be taken into
account in any assessment of the site's archaeological significance
and therefore in any conservation plan.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE AS A SOURCE OF EVIDENCE
FOR RESTORATION AND INTERPRETATION

One major reason for archaeological investigations which have been carried
out at a number of Australian historic sites has been to provide data for
subsequent conservation. The excavation of the garden at Vaucluse House
is a case in point. The fact that this work is not done directly for
academic reasons does not mean that it is useless for research, and
indeed the results are often used by archaeologists.

As far as Old Government House is concerned a major facet of its
archaeological significance is most certainly its usefulness as a source
of evidence for restoration and interpretation. In this role it also
fulfils each of the criteria outlined above since it is necessarily the
only site with physical evidence of its own history.

As part of the preparation for the seminar Alan Croker and I, accompanied
by Bob Green, made a brief inspection of some of the sub-floor remains of
the house in order to ascertain what, if any, of earlier fabric remained,
which might prove useful in this regard.

The three main areas of evidence were apparent as follows:-

(i) Small Artefacts (building, joinery, paint details etc)

Even though the reports of Mr Les Buckland (1967-71) on the
restoration work carried out at OGH in 1967 indicated that
approximately 300 tons of fill were removed from the house, a
significant number of small fragments remain which will no doubt
prove invaluable in documenting precise details of many features
of the house.

It is unfortunate that the surviving material is not stratified,
no doubt as a result of significant disturbance during the
various stages of work that has been carried out; Smiths Chips
papers, and plastic conduit are freely mixed with early brick
fragments and all is spattered with a liberal covering of
modern render. Nevertheless some valuable information can be
gained from the horizontal patterning of the material which at
least gives a clue to which part of the house each item came
from. Items noted to date include fragments of painted wood
and early plaster, plus some more recent pieces.

Two fragments of early clay roofing tile have been found and
have been verified as being of the same type as discovered at
the Old Government House Site and at Elizabeth Farm.
The discovery of these tiles is consistent with Governor Phillip's letter to Grenville, 4th March 1791, which referred to tile roofs of stores at Parramatta (see Proudfoot 1971 p.8). It may be that these stores were ancillary buildings to Phillip's (shingled) house.

(ii) Larger Features

A number of larger scale features were also observed, the most significant of which is a drain which is presumed from the size of the bricks to have been constructed by Governor Hunter. The drain runs along the rear of Hunter's original building and is capped with sandstone pieces. It is almost identical in design to the drain discovered at the site of the First Government House in Sydney.

(iii) Evidence of Building Sequences

Footings, walls and numerous other features are still visible throughout the space under the house floor.

Alan Croker and I consider that these clearly relate to several different periods; some are similar to the exposed remains attributed to Phillip, others to sections known to have been built by Macquarie, others are different again. A cursory investigation has revealed that the most obvious key to the determination of the different periods of construction of these remains is the size (and texture) of the bricks.

Brick Size Variation Observed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early (Phillip?)</td>
<td>230-240 x 110-120 x 60-76 (highly variable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter</td>
<td>220-235 x 53-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macquarie</td>
<td>220 x 100 x 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(C1909 Dry Press Bricks & 1967 Bricks are easily visually distinguished).
(iii) Based on this assumption the following conjectural identification of some of the extant features is offered:

(a) **Footings relating to the First Buildings on Site**

These are present in the archaeological display and in the room adjacent to the north of it where they have been used as footing for a wall built c1909.

An entire section of wall in these early bricks is also present in the room immediately south of the present Guardians' Room. This wall does not abut the wall of the colonnade, but is separated from it by a rammed earth plug. The wall is built directly on clay, over a foundation course of headers.

(b) **Evidence of early alterations by Macquarie**

Several wall footings are present along the colonnade at the rear of the drawing room and dining room. Most significant are those constructed at the rear of the respective fireplaces, which are exactly aligned with the wall behind to the west. Close examination of these walls and measurement of the bricks indicate that the walls were built in Macquarie's time. However it was not at first clear why such footings might have been built until it was realised that the adjoining walls of the rooms on the western side of the house actually abut these footings. The footing at the northern side (between the archaeological display and the drawing room) cuts across the drain mentioned above and there is a clear join in the brickwork. Investigation of the SW corner of the archaeological display room reveals that the outside wall here also abuts the wall which is the continuation of the footings (see diagram 1).
(iv) Interpretation

It is suggested that the earliest footings found are part of the outbuildings to Phillip's original building on the site which are evident in Collins' picture (see Proudfoot 1971 p.15). It is suggested that Phillip's original building stood at the rear of the building built by Hunter in between the extant footings and that this building was demolished during Hunter's governorship, and some of the materials re-used to build Hunter's house. I further conjecture that at this stage the original wings or outbuildings remained behind Hunter's house, and it is these which are visible in the watercolour attributed to Evans (see Proudfoot 1971, p.21).

The interpretation of the additional footings built in Macquarie's time, which I would suggest is that an intermediate stage of alteration was completed between 1811 and 1815, when the present hallway and ADC's office were added. It is possible that even another stage of extension - addition of the archaeological display room, and the Governor's Office - preceded the 1815 additions, which gave the house its present layout.

This conjectural sequence is shown in diagram 2.

CONCLUSIONS - PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Contrary to what has largely been assumed there is a vast wealth of physical evidence relating to the history of the existing fabric of Old Government House which might also be used as a source of evidence for details of any future restoration.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Old Government House Parramatta has two major areas of archaeological significance:

1. It has a great potential for research when considered in conjunction with its Domain and First Government House Site in Sydney, in relation to broad historical questions.

2. The physical evidence makes it a valuable resource for documenting the history of the house, particularly sequence of building, painting and interior detail; thereby providing evidence for future restoration and interpretation.

It is therefore recommended that as part of any conservation plan a most thorough documentation of the existing physical fabric should be carried out based largely on brick size (and texture), analysis of existing sub floor walls and footings. This would necessitate the removal in many places of render which has been subsequently applied.

A thorough collection and documentation of all building fragment remnants is also advocated, as is the limited excavation in the area of the junction of the drain and the Macquarie footing identified in order to establish whether any stratified remains at all have survived the ravages of previous restorers. The way of integrating the information so revealed with historical data and with all other evidence is the use of Harris Matrix. (See Harris 1979).

It is firmly recommended that professional advice be sought as to the appropriate treatment, if any, of any early remains, so as to ensure their long term preservation.
Any decision on the display and conservation of the archaeological features mentioned above, or any others found as a result of ongoing investigation will depend necessarily on the broad thrust of the conservation plan and the option for future interpretation of the house which is ultimately decided; I do not, for example, necessarily oppose the concept of reinstating the Governor's Office, although given the current public interest in all things archaeological it may be that this would be a mistake.

RICHARD MACKAY
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Imagine a large house - the shell of an old house - roofless, without floors, without windows or doors, stripped of its joinery and detailing, its plaster hacked off - as desolated as if ravaged by fire. Up until a year or so ago the National Trust possessed a faded photograph of this house - hardly recognisable as it showed such a gutted shell as I describe. Unfortunately this unique and embarassing photograph has been mislaid.

The house is not a restoration - unless one defines restoration as Ruskin defined it: "the most total destruction which a building can suffer: a destruction out of which no remnants can be gathered: a destruction accompanied with false description of the thing destroyed". (Seven Lamps of Architecture).

The house in which we are now sitting is largely a fake - a replica. The bricks and mortar within the walls may be colonial work, but most that one sees and touches - these highly polished floors, these ceilings, these smooth plastered walls, these cornices and mouldings, the entire portico and most of the window sashes, doors and chimney pieces - is twentieth century work. "You may make a model of a building as you may of a corpse, and your model may have the shell of the old walls within it as your cast might have a skeleton, with what advantage I neither see nor care: but the old building is destroyed, and that more totally and mercilessly than if it had sunk into a heap of dust, or melted into a mass of clay: more has been gleamed out of desolated Ninevah than ever will be out of re-built Milan."

The National Trust's listing description of this house is unusually perspicacious when it says the house "seems to illustrate the best of elegant colonial Georgian architecture of the period". The whole is an allusion - and one that, regretably, has been perpetuated by the Trust.

* This photograph was found in December, 1985.
But perhaps I have misunderstood the Trust's statement of the building's significance. Perhaps it is "the best of elegant colonial Georgian architecture of the period" - the trouble is that the listing does not specify what period - I suggest that the period is that of the Edwardian Georgian revival. If we are really to judge the architectural significance of what is here, now - the whole building as it now stands - we are not assessing the significance of an early nineteenth century house, but that of an early twentieth century institution.

I remarked years ago that the colonial Georgian revival in N.S.W. probably started and finished at Old Government House, Parramatta - and I still believe it. Just as these rooms are furnished with the tasteful, romantic selective approach of revivalism instead of the objective, historical approach expected today, so the house was rebuilt in 1909 as one of the first examples of the colonial revival in Australia, and at the same time one of the first steps in architectural conservation. It was rebuilt several years before Hardy Wilson's Purulia and Eryldene, and this must be its major architectural heritage significance - It is unfortunate however that during its restoration the original house was largely destroyed. The closer one looks at its details the more Edwardian it appears - except of course for the mid-twentieth century details added during refurbishing in the 1960's by the National Trust.

If however, you perpetuate the myth, or try to deassociate the bricks and mortar of the walls from the rest of the construction - a rather difficult excercise - forget that the building is a fake, that the house had not been mostly demolished when it was restored, what then would have been its architectural heritage significance - or, if you prefer, what is the cultural significance of the architecture of the house?

I think, that is far simpler to determine than the heritage value of what actually exists now.
Up until 1909 the architectural heritage significance of the house was, I believe, that it was the major domestic example of Governor and Mrs Macquarie's building work in the Palladian style, a style which they promoted in the colony from 1813 onwards - (Remember, I am talking of architectural heritage significance - others will be assessing its historical significance - its association with all of the early colonial governors - but for me any stains - physical or metaphorical - that their occupancy may have left on the place have been thoroughly removed by two restorations and the polish of mid-twentieth century good taste. For me there is more of Governor Brisbane in the fragment of stone up the hill - all that remains of his observatory - that in this house in which he lived.

But I am considering the architecture only, and of the house only - not the domain - and that architecture is almost totally Macquarie - husband and wife. Mrs Darling did not add a Grecian colonnade, nor Lady Mary Fitzroy fit the drawing room out with Louis revival papier maché mouldings, - at least that we know, for so much has been destroyed - and there seems as much archaeological evidence and possibly more documentary evidence of the house's appearance during the Macquaries' residence that there is for its appearance under any other governor.

Old Government House is neither the first, nor the biggest, of the Macquaries' Palladian schemes. That distinction must be given to the Female Orphan School, which, fortunately, has never suffered a major restoration.

The first Palladian styled house in Sydney however appears to have been Captain William Kent's house in George Street, built in 1797. In this the Palladian theme was diluted almost beyond recognition and it was not until the middle of Macquarie's term as governor that a series of projects was undertaken which was clearly influence by the ubiquitous Palladian style of eighteenth century English - and Scottish - country houses.
The first of these projects - the Female Orphan School at Parramatta - was begun in 1813. Although it was built for institutional rather than domestic use, it is central to the theme and, as Jimm Kerr has discovered, had a particular Scottish model, Airds House, Appin, the house of Mrs Macquarie's uncle.

The Orphan School was still building in 1815 when the Macquaries decided to rebuild Government House, Parramatta, for their country seat. Lieutenant-Colonel Godfrey Mundy, an unusually sensible and discerning chronicler, described Parramatta and its Government House in a contradictory, but appropriate way:

Parramatta [sic] is the Richmond, the Versailles, the Barrackpore of Sydney. The 'plaisance' of the Governor is situated on a gentle eminence above the fresh-water stream.....The dwelling house looks like that of an English country squire of gentleman farmer of some 1,500 l. a year. (43)

Although Mundy was not being deliberately cynical, the notion that the vice-regal focus of the town, the country resort of the colony's first family was a decent manor house gives a perspective to the aspirations and the achievement of the colony's taste-makers. (44)

That the Macquaries had stated their architectural careers in the colony, modishly, with the Judge Advocate's and Colonial Secretary's houses seems more a matter of chance, directed by the architectural pattern books which Mrs Macquarie had brought with her than to any real conversance with current fashionable taste. As informed as Macquarie may have wished to appear, his, and his wife's ideal of a country mansion seems to have reached no further than Airds House, the 'overblown farmhouse type with Palladian trimmings' as Sir John Summerson has described (45) this type of house which was being replaced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by 'villa' types, more compact and more sophisticated.
The choice of Airds House as the model for the Orphan School may have precluded its adoption for the rebuilding at Parramatta. Instead, the old house was reformed, probably not after any specific model but in a generically Palladian way, aping on a moderate scale the corps de logis with centre portico and isolated wings connected to the main body by low galleries which had become de rigueur for grand country houses in England eighty years before.

The form typified solid, landed wealth and status. The Palladian mansion was not a romantic or picturesque object (46) and it did not represent generally, as Tudor styles were to represent in England from this time (47) (and in the colony later), the ambitions of informed, would-be landed gentry at home, who, building fashionable, free-standing classical or picturesque villas, to all appearances unencumbered by inconvenient wings, probably would have regarded the reproduction of such forms as provincial indeed. (48)

For all its Palladian planning and massing - certainly used fully here for a domestic building for the first time in the colony, it is farmhouse-Palladian, blocky and undecorated with only a modicum of refinements: a simple water-table, a string course around the centre block at first floor level and wide eaves. The water-table and string course were probably legacies of Hunter's building but, significantly, when the roof was repaired or replaced, more fashionable eaves were added. (59)

The most obvious refinement at Parramatta however, the centrepiece of the house, valiantly attempting to modify its farmhouse-Palladian appearance, was Greenway's portico.

The Parramatta portico was the most elaborate piece of architectural decoration yet applied to a house in the colony. Columns had been attempted previously on public works with unsatisfactory results - notably on the General Hospital which Greenway criticized.

At Parramatta however he had the opportunity of demonstrating his
superior learning and showing how things should be done. Here, for the first time in the colony, was a simple but academically correct late eighteenth century Roman Doric portico with modillioned cornice, plain metopes, and triglyphs but no guttae. It might have come from any late eighteenth century architectural handbook.

Government House's remodelling was finished by 1818 - but it was already architecturally rivalled by Greenway's design for Samuel Marsden's rectory building on the opposite hill. The Rectory developed the Palladian theme - used it in a more sophisticated way but by the late 1820's - certainly by the 1830's, both houses appear to have been regarded as old-fashioned and unfashionable. Nevertheless Government House, simple, reasonably solid and comfortable, remained unaltered.

Although each successive Governor or Governor's lady appears to have refurnished these rooms in various ways and with varying degrees of elegance, fashion or dowdiness - reflecting their good or - as a card-carrying member of the National Trust - dare I pronounce it? - bad taste - remarkably few changes were made by the governors succeeding Macquarie to the form and fabric of the house. Old Government House stands - or stood until 1909 - beautifully and essentially Macquarie - and within if was the shell of Governor Hunter's house, just as now, the present house is rebuilt from the shell of Macquarie's Palladian farmhouse-mansion.

If I were to rewrite the architectural heritage significance on the National Trust's listing card for Old Government House, I would write something like this:

"One of the earliest, most influential and major examples of the twentieth century colonial Georgian revival in Australia - a replica, although containing the shell of the Palladian House built by Governor and Mrs Macquarie, and also containing the shell of the house built by Governor Hunter - as well as archaeological remains believed to be those of the
cottage built by Governor Phillip, there making it one of the richest building archaeological sites in New South Wales. It is also one of the first, if misguided, steps in architectural conservation in Australia."

Given this, what can one make of its present interpretation. If, as I have said, this house represents the beginning and the end of the colonial revival in N.S.W., then the presentation of these rooms is completely consistent - absolutely justified - perfectly complimentary to the rebuilt house - furnished as they are, to borrow William Seale's description of 1930's Williamsburg - "to symbolize an elegant colonial past" - not to objectively recreate it.

The question is, is it worth the effort to continue this - at the expense of making nonsense of life as it was really lived in the house at any time between 1818 and 1855?

Old Government House does not, as its guidebook declares, provide "an understanding of the domestic manners and customs of the people who lived there during its use as a vice-regal residence" - one look at the silly placement of the sofa table in the drawing room confirms that.

These fine furnishings cannot represent, at the same time, the different tastes of various governors and their wives - or the vast difference in taste between 1818 and 1855. It is nonsense to state that the rooms are furnished "in the overall period" between 1800 and 1855, as if Mrs King and Mrs Macquarie and Lady Mary Fitzroy were one in the same person.

All this is greatly misleading and irresponsible.

Perhaps Mr Glanville could advise me if the National Trust could be sued for false advertising under the Trade Practices Act?

JAMES BROADBENT.
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FURNITURE.

The major achievement of the National Trust at Old Government House, Parramatta is that, in the space of a few years, it has been able to assemble and display an unrivalled collection of early colonial furniture, a task that would today be impossible and beyond the resources and opportunity of even the best endowed public institution and wealthy private collector. Its collection of well over 100 items dates from the early years of the nineteenth century to the second half of that century and includes several items that can be attributed to known cabinetmakers.

The earliest and best known is the Packer cabinet which was made in 1815. This is the earliest known piece of Australian furniture signed and dated by its maker. Made by the first major native born Australian cabinetmaker it is a key documentary piece providing us with a means of firmly dating and attributing on style, materials and construction those few examples of locally made furniture that have survived from this period. It was Undoubtedly made in the workshop of Lawrence Butler, Packer's master, who was the first active cabinetmaker of note in Australia - none of whose work has been firmly identified. Other important items from this period include 2 chests of drawers, 2 four post bedsteads and a rectangular breakfast table as well as a number of lesser items including work tables and a tea caddy.

There is no public collection to rival the quality and quantity of this one and only one private collection can equal its coverage of furniture of the Macquarie period and earlier. The quality of its coverage of the later periods is more varied and while individual items in private collections may be superior, no private or public collection can equal its coverage of Australian furniture of the first half of the nineteenth century.

The current widespread interest by collectors and institutions has been almost entirely due to the interest aroused by this collection which has been widely featured in numerous newspapers and magazine articles as well as in a number of more serious publications on the subject of colonial furniture which have drawn heavily on this collection, (together with those pieces belonging to the National Trust and now housed at Experiment Farm Cottage). It is no co-incidence that all this apparent sudden interest dates from 1970 when Government House, Parramatta was officially opened for public inspection.

The Trust with the assistance of a number of private collectors and antique dealers has succeeded in arousing a public interest to an aspect of our heritage which only a few years ago was regarded of little significance other than of a quaint curiosity. Not only has the Trust drawn public attention to early Australian furniture by its displays at Old Government House and Experiment Farm Cottage, but it has further created a public awareness of the subject by several exhibitions. The best known of these was First Fleet to Federation which was held at.
Lindesay, Darling Point in 1976 and which succeeded in attracting a record attendance and a renewed interest not only in colonial furniture but also into other aspects of early Australian decorative arts. Regrettably the Trust has unleashed a monster it cannot control. Alas, the day is long gone when it was able to acquire for little, examples of early Australian craftsmanship because no one wanted club footed copies of English provincial furniture. A different song is now sung in antique shops and auction rooms. Fifteen years ago it was a different story.

KEVIN FAHY.
The small garden which today lies in front and on the northern side of Old Government House bears little resemblance in either area or appearance to the gardens which surrounded the Governor's residence in its three stages of development.

When Governor Phillip built the first Government House on the site in 1790, the garden he made was bounded in front of the house (the eastern side) by a picket fence which extended in a straight line from the end of the present day Pitt Row to the Parramatta River. The western boundary of the garden was formed by the present day Macquarie Street. The crescent to the north west of the house, which had been the first area of land to be cleared for cultivation at Rose Hill in 1788, was also included as part of the Governor's garden.

Governor Phillip's garden, in front of the house, was laid out in straight beds which ran down the hill to the picket fence in an English "Parsonage" or "Cottage" garden plan. At first this garden was planted with a variety of staple crops such as wheat, maize, flax, tea, cotton and sugar, though orange trees, fig and other fruit trees were also included in the garden - as the colony developed these crops were soon replaced with more decorative plants and domestic vegetables, these included geraniums, stocks and strawberries. At the same time the cultivation in the crescent was increased, 8,000 vines and a variety of fruit trees including apple and pear trees were planted on the slopes and a vegetable garden was created on the flat land above the river. Governor Phillip's "Parsonage" garden was retained when Governor Hunter rebuilt the house in 1799 and it remained in that form until the arrival of Governor Macquarie in 1810.

Governor Macquarie did not consider either Governor Hunter's house or the "Parsonage" garden appropriate for the residence and surroundings of the Governor's country house, and he proceeded to remodel both. Macquarie set his remodeled Palladian house in an English style park. To achieve this he enlarged both the grounds of the garden and the Domain and linked the two together. The southern boundary of the Domain was extended to the Great Western Road, Pitt Street no longer ran to the Parramatta River but ended at its junction with Macquarie Street. At this junction an entrance gate and driveway to the house were created, this entrance and the line of the driveway still exist today. The eastern boundary of the Domain was extended to O'Connell Street with the main entrance to the grounds placed opposite George Street. A driveway from the main entrance wound up the north eastern slope of the hill to the house, the site of
the entrance and part of the line of the driveway are still extant today. The "Parsonage" garden in front of the house was replaced by cleared parkland with clumps of trees. The garden was extended behind the house past the bath house, and an alley way of lemon trees skirted the top of the crescent. The crescent still contained the vines, the orchard and the vegetable garden. Below the house at the eastern end of the crescent lay the "English" garden with paths that wound between orange and lemon trees.

During the Macquarie period the Domain was enclosed with a variety of fencing to try and keep out trespassers. This fencing included wooden paling fences, an iron fence which ran from the Governor's stables to Toongabbie Creek and a seven foot high wall which ran along the O'Connell Street boundary up Macquarie Street to the second entrance.

Despite the years of neglect at the end of the Governor's tenure at Old Government House, the garden retained the shape and size of the Macquarie period until the formation of Parramatta Park in 1857. The Park which was created from 246 acres of the Domain, decimated the garden. All that the Government retained was Old Government House, the Garrison building behind it and the land immediately surrounding the buildings, the carriage loop and a paddock in front of the house.

When Old Government House was acquired by the National Trust in 1967 the garden consisted of this same area of land around the house, the carriage loop, and part of the paddock, which had by then been incorporated into part of the front garden.

Though the garden was greatly reduced in area after 1857 some of the features and plants that had formed the Governor's garden still remained in the diminished area, and these formed the basis for the garden around the boarding house that Old Government House became. The features that remained included the carriage loop, and Lady Gipp's bower. The carriage loop is first recorded in 1850 but in all probability dates to an earlier period. It appears to have been slightly altered. Lady gipp's bower was still in existence and today it has been renewed. The trellis leading from the Breakfast parlour was part of the Macquarie additions. So too was the pathway that ran through it from the garden- a shrubbery in front of the southern end of the house, orange trees beside the front door, a white cedar and a hoop pine which appear in photographs of the house from the 1860's were all certainly part of the old Governor's garden. The orange trees were those seen by Mrs Robert Lowe in 1844 and may have dated from the Macquarie period.
Remnants of the garden still remained in Parramatta Park as well. The remains of the lemon alleys, the gardeners hut and the vegetable garden in the crescent were shown in Ebsworth's 1887 Surrey. While some of the pear trees from the orchard in the crescent continued to grow and fruit well into this century.

By the end of the nineteenth century the house was once more vacant and derelict and the garden overgrown - the house and garden were rescued from total disintegration by the Kings School in 1909. The garden became well cared for once more but apart from the white cedar and the hoop pine most of the planting that could be dated to the Governors' Era had vanished. Of the other features dating to the Governors' period only the carriage loop and the path from Lady Gipp's bower remained, the bower itself was removed and the doorway was turned into a window during the 1909 renovations.

When the Trust acquired Old Government House in 1967 all that remained in the garden that related to the Governors' occupancy was the carriage loop, the pathway around the north of the house, the stump of the white cedar and some older trees on the northern boundary.

The Trust carried out major restorations to the house and the Garrison building. The changes that were made to the garden at this period included altering the size and shape of the carriage loop, while retaining it on roughly the same site, restoring Lady Gipp's bower in a slightly altered form but removing the pathway leading from it. At the same time the planting in the garden was considerably simplified.

In comparing the garden in its present form with the garden as it developed during the Governors' period 1790 - 1857 and with the small garden of the boarding house, boarding school period 1857 - 1967 a crucial element is missing. During the earlier periods the garden was an integral part of the house; this is no longer so. The interrelationship between the house and the garden is missing and both the house and the garden are the poorer for it. This schism warrants attention, particularly as the garden played such an integral part in the history of the house. Not only was it extremely important as an experimental garden for the colony, it was then an excellent example of an English landscape garden transferred to Australia. Nor did the significance of the garden end with its depletion in 1857, the smaller garden of the boarding house period made from the remnants of the larger Governors' garden was typical of the late Victorian period and equally unified the house and
garden - I feel that it is the continuous unity of the house and the garden which should be recreated again today.

Recommendations

1. To replant the garden in a way that recaptures the former relationship between the house and garden. To incorporate into the plan plants that relate to the former periods, such as the orange tree. To also incorporate into the plan the former pathway which led from Lady Gipp's bower into the garden.

2. To have on exhibit in the house a display which would show a brief history of the garden, emphasising the importance of the garden to the house and to its various occupants - to also show the changing pattern of the garden from the first Governor's garden until the end of the nineteenth century. This could be illustrated with plans, pictorial and photographic evidence as well as excerpts of descriptions of the gardens by such visitors as Captain Thaddeus Bellingshausen - in 1820.

3. To ask the Guardians to emphasise the importance of the garden to the house and its occupants while showing people the rooms. This particular point could be made well in the Breakfast Parlour.

4. To truly recapture the relationship between the house and the garden. The entrance to the house should be through the front door. At present with visitors entering and leaving the house through the back courtyard they must make a conscious effort to reach the garden - by entering through the front gates the visitor would pass through the garden and be aware of it before entering the house through the traditional entrance.

5. An archaeological investigation in both Old Government House grounds and in specified areas in Parramatta Park would both increase the knowledge of the changes that occurred in the original garden area.

6. As the house and garden were originally an integral part of Parramatta Park it is to be hoped that the Trust would exert as much influence as it can in monitoring any new roadways or planting within the area of the Park that relates to the house. It would be helpful if the Trust could suggest to
to the Park authorities some work which could be carried out in the Park which would revive some of the older features relating to the garden such as the lemon alleys. Projects such as this would help to enhance not only Parramatta Park but also Old Government House.
artifact to prevent on-going deterioration and destruction by inherent problems of structure and material, and people and the environment; in other words, stabilisation.

The factors which contribute to deterioration are all related and become more evident over time. For example, a watercolour when first painted is fresh and colourful. With exposure to sunlight, fluctuating humidity and an accumulation of fine dirt particles, the inherent weaknesses of the work will become evident. Over time colours fade, the paper ripples and foxing or spots of mould may appear. Modern works of art are even more vulnerable. Artists experiment with new materials whose longevity is unknown. Even under ideal museum conditions incompatible materials can react to destroy each other. For instance, adhesive tapes, of which there are numerous varieties on the market, generally yellow and lose their tackiness within a short time. We know this, but there a temptation to use the product because of its availability.

Control of the environment surrounding the objects does not only refer to dust and dirt. Light is a major factor. The type of light used, whether fluorescent, incandescent of reflected, the intensity of light and the duration of exposure are all factors to consider. Also fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity need to be monitored and controlled.

Conserving and presenting artefacts is a contradiction in terms. It is impossible to display objects and at the same time protect them from light, dust, handling and other factors. Compromises must be made if the original artifacts are to be preserved for future generations.

If the problems can't be completely solved, try to find ways of accommodating the objects so that least harm is done. Interior rooms generally buffer environmental changes more effectively than corner rooms with large windows. The most susceptible objects could be placed there.
I suggest that the collection should be graded into:

(a) historical significance,

(b) durability of materials.

There should be a facility to enable regular rotation of displays. An artifact storage area is essential. It should be outfitted with appropriate storage furniture to support the reserve collection and be clean, secure and environmentally controlled.

I suggest that ways of minimising the need for handling and cleaning should be investigated. Also keep an eye open for evidence of mould and insects. Wood borers, cloth moths, book lice, termites and silverfish are the enemies. Get to know a reputable fumigator. Some companies will send a representative to survey the building free of charge.

In summary, conservation is about preservation of objects or an environment as living evidence of the way things were. To maintain this state it is essential to identify existing and potential problems for each type of material. These problems can exist within the object itself, they can be caused by the environment surrounding an object or by the way people treat them.

By analysing a collection in situ, an experienced conservator can recommend where treatment is required, what form it should take and the best ways of handling and displaying the objects.

The following Conservation Policy for Museums, taken from Museum Notes for Community Museums in Ontario, Number 4, 1983, is included as an example of one that a historic house museum might establish. Each museum will need to adapt the policy according to their building, staff capabilities and other factors, but all of the points should be included.
A Conservation Policy for Museums

1. The museum is responsible for preservation of the artifacts in its collection. It will provide the best possible physical environment, preventive maintenance programmes and conservation services to meet this responsibility.

2. The museum will consult with qualified experts in the field of conservation before taking any course of action which may affect the physical state of the artifacts.

3. The museum will attempt to achieve optimum environmental standards for the preservation of the collection in all physical areas where artifacts may occur. Control standards for temperature, relative humidity, lighting and air cleanliness will be established in consultation with qualified experts. The museum will provide the facilities and equipment to achieve and maintain these standards, and will delegate responsibility for regulation and maintenance of these standards and systems to a qualified person.

4. The museum will establish procedures and provide support for protection of the collection from damage or loss through fire, flood, water damage, theft, vandalism, accident and damage from insect pests and vermin.

5. The museum will establish procedures for care of artifacts in the event of physical emergencies such as fire, flood, accident, etc., pre-designate an emergency work area, and ensure that all staff are thoroughly familiar with these procedures.

6. The museum will provide storage areas and artifact workrooms sufficient to accommodate the size and material composition of the collection.

7. The museum will provide storage space for the collection which will be orderly, clean and environmentally controlled, and will allow adequate physical access to the artifacts. Access will be restricted.
to (the curator or designate). The storage area will be used only for the storage of museum artifacts.

8. The museum will develop standards and procedures and will designate appropriate responsibility for handling, storage, exhibition, packing and transport of its artifacts in order best to preserve the collections.

9. The museum will provide in-house training for all staff, both paid and unpaid, in the handling and preventive care of artifacts. Where further training is deemed necessary the museum will provide (financial or other) support for staff participation in outside training programmes. Only staff with appropriate training will be permitted to handle artifacts.

10. The museum will ensure that a sufficient size of staff is provided to implement preventive care of collections programmes.

11. The museum will ensure that all artifacts in the collection, whether owned or borrowed, are correctly documented with respect to ownership, incoming and current condition, and need for conservation treatment.

12. The museum will ensure that all artifacts loaned to other institutions will be protected from damage both in transit and in the borrowing institution.

13. The museum will designate a qualified person responsible for determining conservation priorities and the nature and extent of conservation treatments to be carried out.

14. The museum will ensure that cleaning, repair or restoration of any artifact in its collection is carried out only by qualified personnel, and in such a manner as to maintain the historic and artistic integrity of that artifact.
Suggested Reading


   Contact: Museum Advisors
   History, Museums & Administration Unit
   Heritage Branch
   Ministry of Citizenship and Culture
   77 Bloor Street West
   Toronto, Ontario M7A 2R9
   Canada

5. Smithsonian Tape/Cassette Kit, Housekeeping Techniques for the Historic House.


DONNA MIDWINTER.
I have been asked to formulate a statement of significance of the house from our discussions so far. This has been done as we have proceeded today and is very imperfect. The points raised are certainly not in order of merit or in any particular sequence. It is important to try and hone down and refine a statement of significance before the process of deciding the future of the house is commenced. This is the course recommended by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

So now I will read out what I have put down here as the cultural significance of the site, the site being the house, the garden and the setting. The reference given is the participant from whom the idea originated, although they might well not agree.

The cultural significance of the Old Government House (OGH) site is principally:

1. It was the official country residence, domain and farm of all the Governors of N.S.W. from 1788 to 1850.
2. It contains a major, albeit altered and re-finished work of Governor and Mrs. Macquarie in the Georgian Palladian style of 'overblown farmhouse' type.
3. It contains the only relatively intact 18th century interior spaces surviving in Australia (drawing room and dining room)

The cultural significance of the Old Government House site is secondly that (in random order):

Architectural Significance

4. It contains the first scholarly portico built in Australia (by Francis Greenway)
5. It contains Old Government House (focal point)
6. It contains buildings of individual significance (gate house, bath house, etc.)

Reference
7. It contains interior spaces with interpretation potential to display rare Australian architectural planning and features

8. It contains interiors with interpretation potential to display furnished interiors and other displays showing aspects of the history of the buildings and their occupants.

9. It contains buildings albeit altered and refinished, that are amongst the few pre 1820s buildings and amongst the extremely rare pre 1800 buildings surviving in Australia

Historic Significance

10. It contains OGH the 1909 renovation of which is possibly the first example in Australia of the Georgian Revival style

11. It contains OGH which was possibly the first conservation project in Australia

12. It was the site of part of the King's School for a substantial part of its post 1788 history.

13. The 1909 work to OGH is one of the works of the N.S.W. Government Architect, W.L. Vernon

14. It contains OGH which is one of the surviving works of the important colonial architect, Lt. John Watts

15. It contains OGH which was the first major historic property to be acquired by the National Trust of Australia (NSW)

16. It reflects attitudes to conservation by the National Trust and others in the 1960s and 70s

Scientific Significance

17. It is the site of the first organised scientific botanical studies in Australia

18. It is the site of early astronomical studies in Australia

Archaeological Significance

19. It contains a unique resource for the study of the way of life, architecture, landscape, attitudes, etc. of a British colonial vice-regal and government establishment of the first half of the 19th century

20. It contains a unique resource for the conservation and interpretation of the place
Agricultural, Landscape and Garden Significance

21. It contains the much depleted remnants of a unique British colonial vice-regal and government farm, landscape scheme and evolution of the first half of the 19th century  
    JC & ML

22. It contains the remains of possibly the first town planning scheme in Australia (George Street axis, house on hill, etc.)  
    IS

23. It contains The Crescent which ..... (agricultural significance)  
    HP

24. It is the setting for OGH  
    IS & ML

25. It is part of the Parramatta historic area  
    MW

Fine Arts Significance

26. It contains the finest collection of early Australian colonial and other early 19th century furniture in Australia  
    KF

27. It contains a collection of furniture (as above) of unique potential for use in interpreting a house museum of the first quarter of the 19th century  
    KF & PM

Social Significance

28. It is one of a small number of historic sites in Australia that are landmarks (historic monuments) of Australia's social development  
    IS

29. As the "Flagship" of the National Trust it has a unique potential for public education in heritage matters.  
    MK

Aboriginal (Pre Historical) Significance (?)

Initials in right hand margin indicate source of item (please forgive any loose interpretations)

JB equals James Broadbent
JC equals Joanna Capon
KF equals Kevin Fahy
MK equals Max Kelly
ML equals Michael Lehany
CL equals Clive Lucas
FM equals Patricia McDonald
RM equals Richard MacKay
HP equals Helen Proudfoot
JS equals Jessie Serle
IS equals Ian Stapleton
MW equals Meredith Walker
PW equals Peter Watts

/ S. 

Ian Stapleton
9/9/85
Tel: 29 7281
11.7 MANMADE ELEMENTS IN PARRAMATTA PARK

PROMINENT BUILDINGS
HISTORIC BUILDINGS
ROADS CAR PARKS AND FOOTBRIDGES

JUMBERLAND GROUNDS

RANVAI
DSTAND

CUMBERLAND RACING
GRANDSTAND

RIDERS WAR
MEMORIAL

BATHHOUSE

OLD
GOVERNMENT
HOUSE

GOLF
CLUB

BOWLING
CLUB

MCGREGOR
STREET
GATEHOUSE

MACQUARIE
STREET
GATEHOUSE

SOUTHERN
MAIN
GATEHOUSE

WESTERN
HIGHWAY

LEGGER STREET

CROSS STREET

MORRIS STREET

VICTORIAS ROAD

MACQUARIE ROAD

MORRIS STREET

HANFORD STREET

QUEENS ROAD

WESTERN
MAIN
GATEHOUSE

BANTRY
GOTTCHA

DADDYMAN
GOTTCHA

LEYTON
HIGH BRIDGE

SHELTER
DEVELOPMENT PLAN
PLAN OF MANAGEMENT • PARRAMATTA PARK 1983
area to be used principally for sporting purposes

area to be used for both active and passive purposes

area to be used principally for passive purposes

PARK USAGE

PLAN OF MANAGEMENT • PARRAMATTA PARK
4.4 OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE PRECINCT

The primary feature is Old Government House and its grounds. This building is an important link to colonial times: it was the country residence of the Colony's Governors from the earliest days of settlement until the 1850's, then a school until the early 1970's.

The grounds in which the building stands are not legally part of the Park, as they form a reserve for the preservation of historic buildings under the control of the National Trust of New South Wales. Nevertheless they do represent a significant feature and, together with the bathhouse and the various memorials, have considerable influence on this part of the Park. The area has a formal atmosphere which is emphasised by the landscape styles. Little development is required, however upgrading and replanting is particularly important.

Objective

To emphasise the historical importance of the unit, and improve and reinforce the existing formal landscape.

Requirements

* redesign circular access road from Macquarie Street to provide one way traffic circulation and tourist bus parking.

* relocate roadway away from wall of Old Government House.

* construct parking areas adjacent to the bowling club and in the riverside area.

* remove roadway adjacent to the railway line and terminate in loop road and new car park adjacent to bowling club.

* investigate the historic landscape associated with Old Government House with a view to reinstating the formal tree planting, particularly in the area leading from the George Street gatehouse.
Requirements (Cont'd)

* provide appropriate signage for bathhouse and observatory sites.

* clean billabongs below Murray Gardens, plant and develop as picnic areas.

* remove old picnic shelter adjacent to children's playground.

* define and upgrade the Murray Gardens as a formal garden area.

* reinforce existing trees and shrub planting adjoining watercourse through gardens.

* clean watercourse and undertake minor landscape treatment of banks.

RECOMMENDATION

59. Prepare and implement detail design proposals for the development, restoration and upgrading works set down for the Old Government House Precinct.

4.5 MACQUARIE GATE PRECINCT

This area includes the bowling club, Macquarie Street entry and gatehouse and the adjacent grassed areas.

As the major vehicular entry point to the Park from the south, it requires a special detail study to resolve the poor entry arrangements. The appearance of the Park from both Macquarie Street and Old Government House also requires detail study to assess the improvements required.

Objectives

To improve pedestrian and vehicular movement to and from the Park. To provide an attractive entry area from Macquarie Street, with improved car parking facilities and information display.
Requirements (Cont'd)

* initiate detail design and implementation of improvements to the entry area adjacent to Macquarie Street.

* reconstruct car parking area adjacent to the Bowling Club for use by the general public.

* liaise with Bowling Club to effect upgrading and landscaping of structures.

* investigate and restore, as appropriate, the Macquarie Street gatehouse.

* establish facility for information display on the Park.

RECOMMENDATION

60. Prepare and implement detail design proposals for the development, restoration and upgrading work set down for the Macquarie Gate Precinct.

4.6 RAILWAY PRECINCT

The railway bisects the Park, and together with Park Parade, forms a narrow strip which is a visually and aurally intrusive element in the Park landscape. It adjoins the Dowain Creek, Southern, Old Government House, High School and Macquarie Gate precincts and physically divides the Park. Recent rail works have increased the intrusion of the railway into the Park.

Objectives

To minimise the intrusive effects of the railway into the Park.

To reduce the view of the railway and rail traffic from the Park and provide visual relief for train users.
Requirements

* selective planting of native trees and shrubs in the Park, particularly at points where the railway is on embankment.

* intense planting to reinforce existing native and exotic species in sensitive locations, particularly in the vicinity of the bathhouse.

* monitor plantings on S.R.A. land on north side of the railway and on the embankment between Park Parade and the railway (seek replacement planting as required).

RECOMMENDATION

51. Prepare and implement detail design proposals for the planting set down for the Railway Precinct.

SOUTHERN PRECINCT

Most of the area has been developed as a nine hole golf course with clubhouse and associated parking and greenkeeper's cottage. Domain Creek, which bisects the area, has been developed into a series of ponds which provide a water hazard for the course. There are residences along the southern boundary and small groves of trees suitable for picnicking on the western part of the precinct.

Objectives

Develop a multi-use recreation area.

Retain and improve the golf course, to be reviewed in the longer term in the light of public requirements.

Encourage use for passive recreation.
HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF FEATURES IN THE GARDEN OF OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND ADJOINING AREAS OF PARRAMATTA PARK 1788-1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Governors' era 1788-1857</th>
<th>School era 1858-1966</th>
<th>National Trust era 1967-</th>
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<td>Carriage Ways</td>
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<td>To Bath House and round Crescent</td>
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<td>Along river</td>
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<td>Lemon alley on top of Crescent</td>
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<td>and into Crescent</td>
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<td>Carriage loop</td>
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<td>Rush post and fence</td>
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<td>Stone wall</td>
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<td>Dwarf stone wall with railings</td>
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<td>Lady Gipps Room</td>
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<td>Macquarie's Gate Lodge</td>
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<td>Late Lodge</td>
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<td>Macquarie's tree house</td>
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<td>Park house</td>
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<td>Areas of Garden</td>
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<td>To Crescent</td>
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<td>In front of Government House to Pitt Row</td>
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<td>In front of Government House to O'Connell St</td>
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<td>In front of House to Carriage loop</td>
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<td>Mite cedar</td>
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<td>Upper tree</td>
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Compiled from on site inspection
Plan showing which features
still remain from Government
Ownership 1941-1957.
Compiled from
on the inspection visit
held from MA Gemmill Smith
plan based on a Burton and
the Packham 1975 plan for
planning at Old Government House

1985

Based on J. T. S. Ryan, Fink, & Co.
Plan of Old Government House
1868
Compiled from various photographs

Kings School

The Garden is the same size as the present National Trust Garden

Based on J.T. Puhan Print & Co.
Plan of Old Government House 1965
Compiled from
Two watercolours of
Government House, Parramatta
by G.W. Evans
and relative written evidence.

PARRAMATTA RIVER

BRIDGE

STREET (later Pitt Row)

SOUTH STREET (later Quay Street)

O'CONNELL STREET

GEORGE STREET

Governor's House

Governor's Garden

The Crescent

袁

10m

40m

street

street

street
Compiled from 1790 plan of the Town of Parramatta.

A View of the Governor's House at Rose Hill in 1793, drawn by Edward Edwards.

View of Rose Hill 1793. (source: Edwards)

A watercolour of the Crescent.

A cad survey of the landvidence.

Plants in The Crescent:
- Figs
- Oranges
- Tomatoes
- Peppers
- Potatoes
- Spinach
- Onions
- Melons
- Peaches
- Mushrooms

Plants in the Governor's Garden:
- Flax
- Cotton
- Wheat
- Sugar
- Vines
- Maize
- Orange Tree
- Fig Tree
- Fruit Trees
- Powdery
- Apple Trees
- Strawberries
- Calotrope Inquinata
- Pecan nuts
- Melons
- Improved Grassland

South Street
- Macquarie Street
- Bridge Street
- Pitt Road

1793-1798

10m 20m

O'Connell Street

Parramatta River

The Crescent
PRESENTING THE INTERIOR.

This paper is a slightly amplified version of the talk I gave at New Government House, Parramatta on 15 February, 1985. I refer to the property as 'New' rather than 'Old' Government House, because it is, in fact, the last Government House at Parramatta. Shortage of time and references in the papers of some of the previous speakers to some material I had intended to include (e.g. the Richmond, Versailles etc) led me to make some cuts in the material I had prepared. That material is re-instated here.

As someone unconversant with the detailed problems involved in any of the options I suggest, I make no firm recommendation as to my preferred option other than to make clear in Option 7 what I would do if we were back in 1967. That is, 'present Macquarie'. I believe that those who know what the options involve should make that final decision. I merely say very strongly, as I do within this paper, you cannot leave things just as they are.

Something must be done, and those with the necessary knowledge should decide.
I would like to thank the National Trust of Australia (N.S.W.) for inviting me to contribute my sixpennyworth on the problems and contradictions inherent in New Government House, Parramatta. It was 'the Richmond, the Versailles and the Barrackpore of Sydney', yet we constantly hear that it was totally uninhabitable, utterly ruinous, quite rotten and ravaged. Given those adjectives it is standing up pretty well under National Trust care and is obviously in far 'better nick' than the first Government House in Sydney was in 1845, when Mortimer Lewis noted that 'some portions of the exterior walls...remain perpendicular'.

In contemplating possible changes in the presentation of this house we need to remember that 'Every old building presents peculiar problems and demands individual solutions, we can therefore only attempt to define the rough outline of what on no account must be done'. Whether or not the current presentation of history in this building is wholly suited to the 1980s, the Trust is to be congratulated on avoiding for the most part 'what on no account must be done' to the house itself, and on the splendid collection of early colonial furniture which was amassed at a time when other institutions were largely ignoring colonial things.

Before considering possible options for New Government House, Parramatta for the future, I would like to sound a warning against making too high claims for history. History is currently 'all the go' in the restoration industry around the world. Mt Vernon and the White House have both recently been re-restored in line with much more 'historically based philosophies', and at the White House they have now opted for one period rather than trying to demonstrate all simultaneously. This new approach is of course only possible because there has been a great deal of new research over the last ten or fifteen years which has resulted in a flood of new books in England and America and a great deal of new primary source material from which interiors can be re-created with great accuracy. When we began work on Werribee Park in 1974, Terry Lane and I could find no illustrations of Australian interiors of the 1870s and 1880s and were forced to rely on American prototypes for our guidelines. That of course can be dangerous, since we were not entirely the same as America in what we did in our homes. The fact that we now have collected over 1000 illustrations of pre-1914 Australian domestic interiors indicates something of the change that has occurred since the Trust faced the task of managing and presenting this building to the public in 1967.
Despite all this new stress on evidence, of which I totally approve, and despi a much more rigorous historical approach to historic house restoration, we must remember that all history is not reclaimable, and that we can arrive at no immutable truth about the past. We can only partially ever understand how they looked at life and how they spent their days. Whatever you do as a result of this stocktaking it will be a product of the 1980s, just as the original ideas about, and policy for, this building were a product of the late 1960s. There are fashions in restoration just as there are fashions in furni and room arrangement. We are all prisoners of our own time and our perceptic of the past, as well as documented facts, determine how each generation sees and portrays its past. We re-write our past to some extent to make the here and now bearable.

That said I turn now to a number of options which could be adopted, suggest some things which would flow from their adoption, and indicate 'what on no account must be done' if a particular option is espoused.

OPTION 1:

If you wish to go rigorously for an historical approach based on evidence rather than instinct, there is a case for presenting this house as it appear in the only-known illustrations of its interiors - a view of the hall and a view of the drawingroom, taken about 1903, when it was a boarding house. No one has canvassed that option with me and that suggests that you all accept that the governorial history of this house is what matters and has cultural significance, over and above this rare illustrative evidence. No matter how objective we try to be historically, we still make subjective judgments. If they are judgments based on real understanding and knowledge, in so far as we can reclaim it, we can do no more, but let's not kid ourselves.

OPTION 2:

Leave it as it is. Trust literature states that this building is furnished 'in the overall period of its use as a vice-regal residence between 1800 and 1855' and that what we see arranged in a domestic manner reflects the occupa of the early governors. In the light of recent research and far greater knowledge of the period I have difficulty in accepting that the present arrangements of this very fine collection of furniture, which dates substant to the period of governorial occupation, do demonstrate what these rooms loc like at any time between 1800 and 1855. They are very attractive arrangem and a great deal of work has gone into their creation, but I have difficulty in seeing how things, which I don't believe (from my knowledge of the govern and of contemporary practices), would have been there, can symbolize what we there. Quite frankly I have trouble with the idea of 'symbolizing', and I
I think that the public also has trouble with it and settles for the simpler idea that 'this is how it really was'. And if that is the case we are not illuminating the early governors' lives, but confusing the public.

I will shortly show why I think the original concept of showing the occupants of all the governors simultaneously, won't wash. I am sure a great deal of thought went into that difficult decision, and that the people who made it were very aware of the difficulties involved in presenting a house occupied by nine different families, and a house which witnessed extraordinary discontinuities rather than continuities, in its internal treatment over the year. The recurring sales of gubernatorial furniture make the discontinuities very apparent. It has been a fractured house rather than an evolving house. The endeavours and the very laudable aims of those who put it together in 1967 are now part of the house's history, and in fact the present interiors have survived longer than any governor's arrangements. Whether that makes them culturally significant to the point where they should be preserved still needs to be decided, given the great cultural significance of the house as a government residence.

History did not stop dead in 1967 and the concern now being expressed at the prospect of change indicates that these interiors have by now attracted their own sense of pietas among those who have come to know them and especially among those who worked so hard to get them together with very limited funds. Given the historic importance of this house, perhaps that sense of pietas to the 1967-1970 restoration, should not be allowed to override other considerations but it must be taken into account. If these interiors are now changed somewhat will be lost, and some goodwill will evaporate. The difficulties that are now present in determining the future of the house and its presentation, makes it perfectly clear that 'scratch as a starting point is forever unattainable' at Parramatta. It does not of course necessarily preclude change forever, but post-1967 history must be taken into account. With hindsight and more knowledge of the period, a different decision might have been made in 1967, but it wasn't.

The present interiors are composed of some very fine objects and are made up to a very large extent from the nation's most important collection of Australian colonial furniture. They also demonstrate very clearly a stage in the history of restoration and historic house presentation in this country. They show how some of us perceived our gubernatorial past in the late sixties, and they now constitute a very accurate record of the history of restoration in this country and as such they should not be dismissed out of hand. But they do not form accurate re-creations, in so far as re-creations can ever be entirely accurate as to what the living was really like at any time between 1800 and 1855. It was a brave and very conscientious attempt to do what I believe was impossible.
If they are to remain as a museum which demonstrates our perception of our history in 1967-1970, they must no longer be presented as something approaching the reality. If they remain I believe that the literature which interprets them, must be re-written to say quite honestly and without any apology, what they do represent. And that of course presents some difficulties with the public which is infinitely confused, as is clear from the fact that most people believe that the present interiors do represent the real state of domestic affairs in government house between 1800 and 1855, and are not just a symbol of it. I turn now to a group of slides which I think make it clear that it is impossible to present, in any one room arrangement, an accurate reflection of domestic living over fifty years.

SLIDE 1:

This slide indicates how sparsely middle-class rooms were furnished at the beginning of the 19th century and it indicates how furniture was still large placed against the wall rather than about the room. Governor Macquarie's eighteen drawingroom chairs could only have been accommodated in his drawing if such a practice was adopted. His twelve halls chairs suggest the same treatment.

Figure 38. William Wilkie. *Nathan Hawley and Family*. 1801. Water color, 14 in. × 18 3/8 in. (36 cm × 48 cm). Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, N.Y.
SLIDES 2 AND 3:

These two slides taken together illustrate the same thing as well as what happened as the century progressed. In slide 2 you see Robert Adam's formal scheme for the furnishing of the 'Glass Drawing Room' at Northumberland House with furniture designed to go against the wall. In slide 3 you see what has happened as furniture gradually crept out. By 1873 it has been heavily supplemented and is all over the place. The exact date of this movement is difficult to pinpoint, and it obviously varied in different households. John Cornforth, who is well worth reading on the subject, says in *The Quest for Comfort*, that it occurred somewhere between 1790 and 1825.

SLIDE 2:

SLIDE 4:

In this slide you see the same 'backs to the wall' arrangement, which typifies the 18th century and early 19th century room arrangement, although we have moved down the social scale. Still, things are sparse.

[Image of the white room at Aubrey House, London. Plates 110-114 are watercolours by Laura Goldsmith about 1816.]
SLIDE 5:

This slide shows the drawingroom at Syon House, now open to the public. The proper formal arrangement of the room has been disregarded, as often happens in the interests of giving the public more for their money, and instead of Adam's formal style, the room has been broken up and the public is getting a quite misleading impression of how things really were in this house in the 18th century.
SLIDES 5 AND 7:

These two slides need to be looked at together. The Rhode Island room is not unlike New Government House Parramatta looked at about the same date. The second slide, No. 7, shows Hardy Wilson's reconstruction of a room in Clarendon which was removed to the National Gallery of Victoria. It shows a similar interior to the one we have been looking at, but it also shows one of the pitfalls which restorers should avoid. Wilson has improved things with a parquet floor, which he very much liked, and there is distinctly more furniture than we see in the Rhode Island house.

Figure 34. Artist unknown. *Rhode Island Interior*. C. 1800-1810. Oil on canvas, 9 1/2 in. x 11 3/4 in. (25 cm x 30 cm). Collection of Mr. Fenton Brown.
Here we see 'Mrs Sperling murdering flies - assisted by her maid who receives the dead and wounded' at Dynes Hall sometime between 1812 and 1823. It indicates as do other illustrations in Mrs Hurst Dancing, the relative simpl of things in the houses of quite well-established people. The table is again the wall and the floor is largely bare.

Floor coverings were quite modest during the first seventy years of our hist and New Government House Parramatta probably saw a lot of bare boards, floor cloths and India or China matting. Lateish in our period there may have bee some Brussels or Kidderminster carpeting. Governor Bligh's order of floorel for Government House Sydney, is an indicator as to what was likely to have b in this house. It is worth remembering that Camden Park was still without carpets in the 1840s. This may seem surprising, but a look at documentary evidence shows that very grand establishments relied on such floorcoverings in the first half at any rate of the 19th century, and often for much longer. Carpets seldom appeared on floors anywhere before the mid-18th century and in 1797 Washington, in a country where things were much more settled than th was contemplating a Wilton 'if not dearer' for Mt. Vernon, but advising that a 'Scotch' carpet (i.e. Kidderminster or ingrain) would do instead if the
Wilton proved too expensive. In 1799 a Salem mansion had floorcloth in the drawingroom. This tends to surprise us, but we need to look at the evidence and remind ourselves that our perception of the early 19th century is heavily coloured by our knowledge of the wealth of material which was around later in the century. To turn to evidence nearer home, we find Bishop Nixon, who arrived in Hobartown in 1843 with fifty-two cases of worldly possessions, had only one carpet - a 'cross bar carpet'.

SLIDE 9:

This illustration probably depicts the combined drawing-dining room at Blackdown, near Bathurst about 1830. The furniture could well date to considerably earlier and it could have been made in the colony to turn of the century designs. With so much going on, it can't, for quite practical reasons, all be accommodated against the wall, although it might have been moved back when the room wasn't in use. Although modestly elegant, this furniture is still light and simple and markedly different from what you will see shortly.
SLIDE 10:

This slide illustrates Bishop Nixon's drawing room in 1845, which appears to be covered not with the cross bar carpet, but with some of the matting which he bought at the Cape on the voyage out. It again demonstrates the relative lightness of furnishing even among those who brought a lot with them. Looked at in conjunction with slide 9 it suggests that the move out from the walls varied in date, and was determined by both conservatism and the reality of colonial conditions. You were obviously limited by how many rooms you had to fit normal things into.
This slide takes us into the drawing room at Bignor Park in Sussex, c. 1840. You can see here reminders of an earlier look, but you see too a strong dose of what was to become commonplace by the middle of the century. There is a couch drawn out in a comfortable position for enjoying the fire and the centre table had taken control of the room. It was to dominate things in Australia until the 1870s, and around it was ranged a circle of drawing room chairs.
SLIDE 12:

When we look at Camden Park about 1858 we see that a very great change has occurred in terms of both furniture design and room arrangement. The furniture has thickened up and is spread around and you couldn't possibly mistake this room for one put together in 1800.
SLIDE 13:

Finally we see a Hobart drawingroom c. 1860 which demonstrates the full mid-century preference for strong, floral wallpaper, Victorian furniture, a wealth of engravings and altogether a lot more stuff than we saw in 1800.

As well as these slides I have several pages of illustrations of carpet designs dating to the forties and early fifties which give some indication of the sort of thing which might have been in this house in Governor Fitzroy's time.

I hope that these slides have made it clear that it is impossible to present interiors covering a fifty-year period and show things as they really were at all times during that period. In a normal house it may be possible to show a credible interior which had evolved over that time, since people do 'hang things' in normal houses. At Parramatta, which was distinctly abnormal in rapid turnover of everything but government-owned furniture, such an exercise would have very limited validity. That validity is further compromised by fact that the Fitroys hardly lived there.
OPTION 3:

A modified 'leave it as it is' approach. You could leave it substantially as is, but make minor changes in the light of new evidence and attitudes. You could, for instance, come in the front door and could wire your lights into a central switch board and get rid of those schizophrenic bell pull-cum-light switches, some of which are in very improbable places. Such an approach would, of course, destroy the worth of the present interiors as a record of how restoration was approached in 1967, but it would be in line with what, I understand to be, the 'evolving' attitude to date. The film which showed the Queen opening the building indicates that changes have already occurred. While minor changes may make some things more rational they would not address the major inconsistencies. You would still have Persian rugs which so far have not been documented in Australia before the 1870s, and you would still have the improbability of chandeliers, when, in fact, the new Government House in Sydney was still battling with oil lights in the drawing room in 1850s.

OPTION 4:

Use the present collection to demonstrate the house as it may have been in 1847 at the end of its occupation by governors, i.e. a limited and manageable period in terms of fashions in furnishing and room arrangement. It would need a detailed analysis of the collection to see what could be used in the light of fuller knowledge as to what was likely at that date; it would need some elimination of material and perhaps, some acquisition. It would be worth checking up all the available inventories and putting the evidence about each room irrespective of its site in the building, in consecutive order. Such an exercise would tell you some things which aren't immediately obvious when you just flip from inventory to inventory trying to work it out. This kind of analysis needs to be done before you will be in a position to know how much would have to go. Such a solution would probably accommodate a great deal of your collection, it would tend to give all governors equal billing, when in fact, Macquarie is your outstanding figure. Brisbane made his mark at Parramatta, but you are now considering the future of an observatory.

OPTION 5:

Have your Australian collection upstairs and period rooms downstairs, furnished to a definite dateline, or datelines. Side by side with this option is the option of giving the Australian collection 'intact' to some other institution as collection of Australian decorative arts, or of putting it 'intact' in some other Trust-owned building. To give your Australian collection to some other body, when it is the country's finest collection of local furniture would cause great heartburning among those who have slaved to put it together. I have doubts about the Trust establishing a straight collection of Australian
decorative arts, since that function seems to me more properly the function of museums. The Trust does not have air-conditioning and the variety of curatorial skills which such a collection demands. Moreover, some of the material in your collection, although extremely interesting on other grounds, does not meet the very high and different criteria which govern museum collecting. Your collection has been determined by both 'excellence' and 'Australianness' of the material. If removed to another Trust site or another institution it would leave this historically-important building free to speak of the governors, but something would be lost for those who associate the collection and the building.

OPTION 6:

present each governor in a separate room or rooms; This would allow a far greater use of the collection you own, without fracturing it dramatically. It would be a 'new disposal of old bricks', with some elimination and some supplementation. While I accept the fact that some elimination would have to be made if reasonably accurate interiors are created, I do not believe that material which was given to the Trust can be sold. It could of course be re-located at other Trust properties, with the consent of donors, but it is a very sensitive issue and would have to handled very tactfully. It is a tricky, but by no means impossible option.

If you were to adopt such a policy it needs to be understood that the result would look much simpler than what you have in the rooms now. A look at the history of this house and a look at Downing Street's attitude to the colony suggests that it was never very grand. Before this building was completed by Macquarie it was described in 1812 as 'much simpler than Sydney'. In 1819 the new, and major house in Sydney, was still described by Eugene Delessert being furnished 'tres simplement'. In 1855 Governor Denison referred to the furniture remaining here as 'old inferior' stuff. Throughout our history the Home Government was trying to be economical over a shilling and from the mid-thirties onwards, when a new house was on the way, there was a concerted push to spend nothing here and get rid of the place. Governors could, of course, have furnished lavishly in spite of this, but they were mostly men seeking preferment, without great wealth behind them. Even Fitzroy, the high-flyer of them all, had had to 'renovate' his fortunes. Macquarie, who gave this building its final form, got into frightful hot water when he spent £551 on Bengal tents to provide accommodation as he moved about the country. Had they been wealthy men and able to pay for such things themselves, they would not have come to Australia to do a hideously difficult job in the face of constant criticism. Many of them had fought at Waterloo and Australia was supposed to be a personal Waterloo for more than one governor. As serving officers they were used to bivouacing as they wandered round the world, and some at least may have done little more than bivouac here, while others achieved more.
elegance. How they set themselves up depended in part on their view of the role as governor, in part on their purse and in part on their own cultural background. Mrs. Macquarie, who was an excellent lady, was clearly surprised at the elegance and style she found in the home of Sir James Gambier, on the way out, and her interiors probably reflected her own background - that of a provincial Scottish gentlewoman, not a smart London lady. Ellis Bent, who of course had a high opinion of his own arrangements, felt that his house was better kept than Mrs. Macquarie's. If an historically-based restoration is contemplated, a great deal of work needs to be done on the evidence relating to the governors and on parallel evidence of interior decoration. If for instance Governor Darling is to be represented, attention should be paid to William Dunaresq's inventory of what Darling brought out for his main establishment. More research would need to be done on the lights that were here, or are likely to have been here. There are countless inventories and letters which can help to flesh the picture out. Things such as grey blinds would to replace the present blinds to square with the evidence. Such an approach would I think, necessitate the removal of certain items such as Fitzroy's which would sit more happily in a museum area, devoted to the governors and their memorabilia.

If this option were adopted you would be destroying what at present exists, which, as I have pointed out, has its own problems and inconsistencies, and you would be creating instead a new set of more historically-oriented and informed fake room arrangements, which one hopes would come closer to showing the public what the living was really like then. They wouldn't be the real thing, but if well done, they would keep 'the level of lying', which is unavoidable in any re-creation, as low as possible. This would be much more acceptable to those concerned to illuminate and present history as it really

OPTION 7;

Present the rooms to one dateline and one governor. This would involve a subjective decision as to who deserves the nod. All other things being equal if this option were adopted, I would certainly go for Macquarie, that Flash of the colony, who both built the house in its present form, made a major contribution to the country's future and lived here for substantial periods after he moved in in October 1816. I would certainly by-pass Fitzroy, whom you have saluted on the outside of the building, on the grounds that on 9 March, 1847, 'the regal pair' had 'not been to reside at Parramatta yet, as Government House here is under considerable repairs', and by December that the Governor's unfortunate penchant for accidents had 'done for' Lady Mary and led the Governor to abandon the place. In terms of evidence of a relat sort there is a case for Darling, and some, perversely, may opt for Bligh. Whoever might be chosen to demonstrate the history of the house, it would b
impossible to represent their style adequately without further research. Primary resource material needs to be looked for in public records, letters, reminiscences etc., and inevitably there would still have to be some informed imagination jumps to make up for lack of hard facts. A truly historical approach could lead you to utilize the sort of evidence which is exemplified in a letter written by Sophie La Trobe, the wife of Victoria's first Lieutenant-Governor, who wrote of a basket of wool, which was to be found under the drawing room table. Such things can add verisimilitude to an interior. The twelve chairs could go back in the hall if you opt for Macquarie, the butter boxes could appear, and more attention could be paid to the domain of servants. If Macquarie were chosen the nursery could be tackled with more precision - there is some evidence as to what young Lachlan had. All these things would have to be considered if one governor is honoured, and the others could of course get due recognition in the museum areas. There is nothing wrong with making a choice based on knowledge of their relative claims for attention. If this policy were adopted what I have mentioned about tactful disposal and re-location would have to be looked at closely. If we were back in 1967 I would have no doubt that Macquarie is your man, and Mrs. Macquarie is your lady.

OPTION 8:

A centre for gubernatorial history. It can be argued that as there is so far no vast body of evidence for any one governor, the building should simply become a museum of gubernatorial history. This would leave you with the problem of what to do with the collection, would destroy what does exist, and would be a departure from what the Trust is best known for in the restoration field, i.e., house museums. While imaginative approaches are to be welcomed for historic buildings, it seems to me that the flagship of the Trust, our oldest surviving domestic building in Australia, a place with traditional connotations, a place where great events were contemplated, is not the place for innovation but tradition. At Parramatta I believe the Trust should stick to its traditional role as a preserver of buildings, and a presenter of them as places where people lived and worked. Although a gubernatorial museum would have its followers I suspect the public would stay away in droves. Although I do not recommend pandering to popular taste, if you have no audience you might as well shut up shop.

OPTION 9:

Give it back to the Governor as a country residence. This and many other possibilities, which I have not mentioned, could be canvassed before you decide on the future of New Government House Parramatta, although I think a quick decision could be reached which would resolve present unhappiness. There are a great many new departures which could go hand-in-hand with some of these options, or you could settle for a mixed-grill composed from some of these
options. It would be wise however to keep Daniel Thomas’s warning in mind about doing too many things at once. A mixed-grill can easily become a mixed mess—

- I find the simultaneous presentation of period rooms and museum material very distracting.

In spite of my dislike of re-creations I would like to see replicas of Philli tent, of one of Macquarie’s Bengal tents and of an early Parramatta hut erected in the grounds. You could also with some degree of licence as to ingredients sell cups of that ‘kettle of excellent soup’ which Surgeon White mentioned having enjoyed in 1788, when Parramatta was first discovered. But these are mere asides to the house.

CONCLUSION:

Unlike the garden which seems to me a relatively simple matter of collating evidence and deciding what to do, the house presents problems, whichever opt you think of. Ideally the investigation should precede decision-making, but looked at practically a great deal is already known, and unless further work uncovers some miraculous patch of evidence, you probably are in a position to make a firm policy decision now, based on a well-thought out statement of cultural significance. Whether you go for cosmetic fiddling, ‘a new dispensation of old bricks’ or radical change, you need to do more research on the govern their style and their stuff if the house is still to contain period rooms and museum areas. If you opt for historical re-creation you will need to look for parallel evidence where gaps exist - I refer such things as Bent’s account of his early interior, Dumaresq’s inventory, the inventories taken at Lyndhurst I would urge that you make a public appeal through the daily papers for original material, in the hope of increasing the authenticity of the restoration.

Contemporary practice in terms of social custom, domestic usages and costume all need to be looked at. All this will help to keep the level of lying as low as possible, and it needs to be done if an historically-based approach is adopted. And it would be odd to ignore history in such an historic setting. Again I stress don’t claim more for history than history can sustain.

Whether you decide on one of the solutions I have outlined or whether you settle for something quite different, it may be some comfort to realize that all our work will eventually be re-restored by another generation, just as surely as Hunter followed Phillip, and Macquarie followed Bligh. And whatever you do it with as little heat as possible. The decision is a difficult one and there is nothing to be gained by emulating Nancy Mitford. Faced with the possible demolition of Abingdon Street, Westminster, she threatened to chain herself naked to the railings of the House of Commons.

Jessie Serle.
Sources for this paper include, in no proper order:

H. Proudfoot: Old Government House Parramatta.
Historical Records of Australia
M. Ellis: Lachlan Macquarie.
R. Gillespie: Vice-Regal Quarters.
Clyde Company Papers (P. L. Brown ed.) - Vol. IV.
The Future of the Past: (Jane Fawcett ed.)
J. Cornforth: The Quest for Comfort.
E. Delessert: Souvenirs d'un Voyage a Sydney.
J. White: Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales.
M. Bassett: The Governor's Lady and Realms and Islands.
S. Macarthur-Onslow: The Macarthurs of Camden.
Transcripts of Ellis Bent's papers, supplied by J. Broadbent.
Museums, including historic house museums are defined as institutions which acquire, conserve, study, assemble and exhibit a collection of artefacts. In order to control the size and function of each museum, it is essential to formulate policies for the acquisition and conservation of objects. The collections' policy will need to be sympathetic to the conservation needs of the objects and so it is beneficial to consider the two policies together.

Old Government House, Parramatta has been operating as an historic house museum since 1970. Objects have been acquired to furnish the rooms and I expect certain criteria were followed; i.e. a collections' policy was written. The National Trust is aware that further guidelines are required and so the seminar "A Conservation Plan for Old Government House" was organised in February 1985. Curators, interpretors, educators and a host of other museum professionals were invited, but alas an objects conservator was contacted as an after thought only days before the seminar. It shows that there is a need for conservators to publicise themselves so that related museum professionals can make use of their unique training and experience.

Good housekeeping is an essential part of conservation. However it forms only one aspect of a preservation programme. With reference to the curatorial care of a collection, preventive conservation rather than remedial conservation (restoration or conservation treatment) is paramount. Preventive conservation is defined as doing everything possible for an
OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND PARRAMATTA PARK

MEREDITH WALKER

PAPER YET TO COME.
OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE - EDUCATIONAL AND TOURIST POTENTIAL

It is not my purpose here to explain situations which relate to people-management (traffic flow, maintenance, etc) nor to offer a complete educational program. However, I will be certainly dealing with aspects that show the potential Old Government House has as an educational resource.

Yesterday, we all had the opportunity to walk through and around the house and inspect every room - even the VIP toilets - with some well informed guides. What was really interesting was the group dynamics as each party of participants looked around the house and interacted with each other. As each group moved through the house the individual members asked questions, made comparisons, tested theories and data, made observations.

Later the same thing occurred when we watched the films relating to the restoration and official opening of Old Government House. Whilst we all had a laugh we were also involved in a quite serious attempt to find out more about the history of the house.

It appears that Old Government House can provide an enormous amount of information and that from the events of this seminar it appears that it will continue to do so for many years. They key appears to be our approach.

Even though Old Government House has undergone change over the years - sometimes quite drastic change - there is always some fragment of its past which gives up one of its secrets. In addition primary source material continues to come into the light and give new evidence or validate some new theory.

This, of course, is the delight and nature of historical enquiry - the search for truth about something that happened in the past by looking for clues and evidence, establishing and testing theories, using a variety of disciplines, skills and sources and having some response - academic, creative, emotional.

It is hard to imagine someone on a visit to Old Government House who does not want to ask questions. viz:

Level 1
How old is that?
What is it?
Of what is it made?
Who made it?

Level 2
Why was it made?
How was it made?

Level 3
What does it tell me about the people who made or used it and about their lives?

By some means people who visit the house are able to find an answer. Maybe not immediately; maybe not to their complete satisfaction. In that case further questions will be asked and further evidence sought.

Let us recall yesterday's discussion of the route through the house and the current presentation.
What was not apparent:

1) The National Trust - who we are, what do we do?
2) The King's School occupation
3) Old Government House History 1857 - 1909
4) Aspects of conservation
5) History of the Governors occupying the house
6) History and settlement of Parramatta
7) Aspects of the function of rooms
8) Servant life
9) The grounds and their evolution

This is not a complete list and although the two restorations are mentioned, the information is pretty limited. And, of course, what I have listed is not necessarily what should be presented.

There is the potential at Old Government House to explore a variety of aspects and provide some useful answers to questions about its history.

Let's take a look at another aspect of this educational potential. May I quote a short passage.

"More is now being made of the educational potential of National Trust houses open to the public which are visited annually by more than a million young people who come on their own or with their parents and schools. While the traditional presentation of its houses may evoke a limited response from children, it has become apparent that their reaction is very different when emphasis is placed on the human element: the people who made them, served in them and owned them."

Those words are not from a recent Trust Magazine editorial. They come from an English National Trust brochure "The National Trust and Young People". Its point remains relevant.

Old Government House has enormous potential to tell about the people of the house and the associated history. There have been many occupants of Old Government House and the building could reflect their contributions - their ideas, society, daily routine, significant events.

If we focus on this aspect and then consider the people who would visit the house, the result would be an entirely fresh approach. There are many possibilities:

1. tailor-made tours, novelty tours
2. rotating exhibitions
3. rooms demonstrating different functions throughout the history of the house
4. conservation of historic houses
5. the associated history
6. fine arts displays
7. Old Government House and Parramatta

There are many approaches:

1. Archaeological 'detective' work - finding out
2. Subject approach - history, geography, natural history, art, political science
3. Synoptic studies
4. Creative activities - drama, re-enactment, music, craft
5. Society and culture - people 'upstairs' and 'downstairs' or those at the bottom of the hill

Really, all this is acknowledging what we already know and want to see at Old Government House. Let us recognise the history of this site and its significance. But let us also recognise that it is impossible to accommodate the whole of the house and its potential in one visit.

However that is exactly what we try to do with those 30,000 people who visit us each year. No matter what you want to look at when you visit or what your interests are, you get essentially the same treatment as everyone else.

At Old Government House we do not have a structured program to cater for individual needs - neither for students nor the general visitor.

Each visit should be special and so encourage a return visit.

Perhaps the more pertinent point in discussing the potential of Old Government House is the need for honesty. We advertise Old Government House as the place where the early governors lived and worked so most people come expecting to see exactly that. But really what they see is a museum of fine arts with displays arranged as room settings.

We pay lip service to the whole history of Old Government House and further confuse things by not making up our minds as to what the most significant feature of the house is - the furniture or the history - and then trying to shoehorn all this into the concept of Old Government House as a house museum. I don't think it matters that Old Government House is or ever will be a house museum. Its significant features are its history and the furniture collection and the potential to learn from these aspects.

Historic House Museums or rather, in the case of the Trust - the ownership and management of historic buildings, are but one aspect of the Trust's work. This is one mechanism which the Trust uses to pursue the conservation of Australian heritage and the encouragement of public awareness. The building reflects an historic period in the Trust's growth and from it we can learn something about the history of house restoration in New South Wales.
Being motivated by the Trust's objectives and role in heritage conservation, we must be mindful about the Trust's present commitments—Saumarez at Armidale; Juniper Hall, Paddington; our Berrima property, Harpers House; and Woodford Academy in the Blue Mountains. We may decide that Saumarez is our best vehicle to demonstrate current Historic House Museum philosophy.

Is it more important to accept Old Government House as it is but be more open about its presentation and creative in the visitor services we offer? It may be best to put our energies into the conservation of Parramatta Park and the grounds of the house. Research into the fabric and history of Old Government House should continue and should be presented through appropriate displays and other information packages.

And what of money? Is it justifiable for the Trust to carry the expense of a completely new presentation of Old Government House whilst its other properties require urgent repairs and attention? Surely the question of the role of Old Government House as the Trust's flagship must be considered in making these decisions.

I have not made any direct comments about the tourist potential of Old Government House. This will be determined by our goals and objectives and the decision we make about the presentation of the house. We should remember that a visit to Old Government House may be someone's first contact with the National Trust or the conservation movement. There is the potential encouragement of long term appreciation of historic and beautiful places and the desire to protect them.

An important point to remember is that Blacktown is now the demographic centre of Sydney. Our attendance figures for the past 10 years at Old Government House do not reflect this shift and the increase in population. If more and more people are moving to western Sydney why haven't we seen at least a proportional rise in attendance at Old Government House? I would certainly argue that we do not promote Old Government House as a place to visit more than once.

What must be avoided is the approach so easily adopted by tourist organisations—an approach I recently experienced at a 'Parramatta Tourism Potential' seminar. That gathering gleefully advocated Disneylandish development to bring in thousands of overseas tourists. There was no thought of focusing on what Parramatta offered which would complement other metropolitan attractions. Rather, it seemed that what most of the participants desired, was finding everything which was successful in other parts of the Sydney area and duplicating them in Parramatta, so as to attract more and more people. One contribution to improving the drawing power of Historic Houses was to suggest the park surrounding Elizabeth Farm as the site for a permanent wool and agriculture exposition.

In looking at the tourist potential of Historic Houses we must remember that as well as informing people we are involved in conserving these places for long term appreciation. The potential to be exploited must not exploit the house—it is a resource which needs careful management.

So, to summarise:

For the short term—

1. let's be open and recognise the full history of Old Government House and the contribution of the people associated with it.
2. let's give a new deal to the visitors; better tours; displays; exhibitions; treatment which is responsive to the situation.

3. let us promote ongoing research.

Long term:

4. determine the significance of the house through a Conservation Plan, then reassess 1 - 3.

Christopher Levins
National Trust Education Officer
I wish to talk about a number of things; among them the objectives of house museums and the scope and contents of house museums in Sydney. I propose to mention two aspects briefly. Firstly, the objectives - conservation must be the first objective of a house museum and of institutions such as the National Trust. It must over-ride all other considerations. If a house is fragile then any public visitation threatens its conservation, and its use as a traditional house museum with access five or six days a week will not be appropriate. I think we have heard that the opposite applies here as far as the building and grounds are concerned. The surfaces and finishes of the buildings are nearly all twentieth century, it seems, and have no intrinsic historic value. The contents are another matter altogether.

The other major objective of house museums is education. In the past we have paid lip service to this, relying very much on the presentation of the rooms to be the vehicle of education. But, lately we have seen a more concerted effort and a more concentrated education programme at some of our houses. Education does not have to be pressed on every visitor, but we do need to present a truthful picture to those who want to learn, and to provide information the opportunity for those who want to have an intensive educational experience. But let's not fool ourselves, the vast majority of people who come to our houses come for something that is a mixture of entertainment, outing and an escape from the modern world: to see something they regard as beautiful or peaceful or to indulge in a bout of real or imagined nostalgia. Let them indulge in what they like - but let us not be a vehicle by which they convey themselves to a false romantic past. Leave that to Visconti and Fellini, they do it much better.

Since this house was set up these objectives have not changed very much. What has changed is that we have a much more sophisticated and demanding public and we have, in Sydney and its region, a number of other house museums which are fulfilling the same objectives in a more vigorous and creative way. Let us look at those museum houses, (I exclude from my comments the smaller houses such as Don Bank and Harrisford, because as yet these do not have clearly defined policies). This leaves Vaucluse House, Elizabeth Bay House, Elizabeth Farm, Experiment Farm and Hambledon.

A brief word about each of these:

Vaucluse House is being developed as a building, interior and garden at the mid nineteenth century with a few additions to the interiors which are of the 1870s. It is attempting a full and detailed re-creation based on extensive research. Once the presentation of this house is right the emphasis will change to an education programme based around a few themes: mid nineteenth century architecture, interiors and gardens being one, and another being William Charles Wentworth and his contributions and interests. A third is the nature of environmental change. This is very well demonstrated at Vaucluse House because of the very adequate pictorial documentation.
Elizabeth Bay House as we all know is largely an interior of the 1830s and a wonderful and strong architectural statement. It is also attempting a full re-creation of the 1830s so far as the rooms of that time remain. Again it is based on extensive research. Its exhibition programme on the other hand explores a wide variety of aspects relating to nineteenth century life in Australia.

Elizabeth Farm is also a property of the 1830s but not one which attempts the detailed re-creation, but attempts to show a way of life in the 1830s. I think, more than any other house, it has an integrated interpretive programme. To date — and in the foreseeable future — it has been finely interpreted in the sense that it has drawn on the wealth of documentary evidence about the house and the Macarthur family. This is not being exclusive, because we have explored aspects from colonial life and the wool industry, and certainly the education kit looks at aspects of migration and travel.

The remaining properties are Old Government House, Experiment Farm and Hambledon. The problem that faces those houses is that they are all from a similar period and therefore we must use that to our advantage and try to emphasize the differences. There is no point at all in having five or six houses all showing decorative detail of the same period, especially all in Parramatta. Each must have a policy that complements the others and adds to the richness of the experience and knowledge of the visitor.

You might like to compare this with the fun-fair where you go to have a ride on the slippery dip, the dodgem cars, and you go into the horror house. I am not suggesting that one can equate these things with the museum houses of Parramatta, but one goes for a variety of experiences in the same way as one visits a stable of houses in the Parramatta area. Unfortunately the balance has always been weighted towards the physical presentation of the interiors of the houses.

The proposals for Elizabeth Farm before the Historic Houses Trust became involved were an extreme case where those who were involved had not really looked beyond the physical fabric of the building and certainly had not looked at the possibilities of the historical context and historical association of the building. This can be understood because it was in those areas that there was the most expertise. One has only to hear the quality of the talks over the past two days to realize that there is an immense amount of expertise in New South Wales on the physical fabric and interiors of nineteenth century houses. But this has been at the expense of placing our houses and their occupants in context; we should take the opportunity to use these houses as springboards to examine all aspects of nineteenth century life, taste, architecture etc.

For example, Vaucluse House provides a very good opportunity to examine aspects of life in society. William Charles Wentworth was from aristocratic stock and married the daughter of a convict and there are very interesting letters which talk about this. One can look at aspects of self-government, not just at what Wentworth's role might have been in establishing self-government for Australia but what self-government means to us today.
We can also look in the same way as aspects of freedom of the press, and of trial by jury. All sorts of things which Wentworth was involved with. We can look at urban development and the history of the eastern suburbs. We can look at the environmental changes and their causes. In her paper, Meredith Walker has suggested a range of themes for this property. This is not a particularly difficult matter for any house. These themes are all fairly self-evident. Any of them can be developed in temporary or permanent exhibits, publications, seminars, theatrical performances, re-enactments, demonstrations, guided tours, and in the presentation of the house itself. Much the more difficult task is accepting the challenge of presenting our houses in a variety of ways, not just for the sake of being smart and different, but because different approaches will avoid the boredom of similar houses, and because it forces us to examine different aspects of each house.

Elizabeth Farm has done this very successfully. But there are other ways as well. All the papers presented over these days suggest that this house provides a good opportunity for a house museum that examines house museum philosophy. I always find that people love to walk around Vaucluse House and hear the whys and wherefores. Why did you choose this? Why is the wallpaper this way? In other words you give them a pop talk about philosophy. Not so much the date of a particular item, why it has a cabriole leg or a straight one, but why. People are fascinated by the detective operation. It would be an ideal opportunity for a conservationist in residence. After all there are artists-in-residence. Perhaps David Attenborough or Marcus Binney or Sheila Stainton living in this house or in any other National Trust house, might advance the cause of the National Trust much more than we do by presenting all of these houses as museums.

The houses can also be used as specialist museums. They do not have to be house museums. We seem to have developed over the last two days an approach where we have discussed only the possibilities of this house being a house museum. It could be a museum of costumes, of furniture of all sorts other specialist things with, of course, the necessary changes which would have to accompany such functions.

The house could be developed with policies and activities which are specially designed for children. If we presented a house just for children I feel sure that it would be quite different from the way we present most of our houses at the moment. It might look at the house simply from the point of view of the servants and the support systems which went to look after the family. We might do a house to be seen specifically at night and not ever seen during the day with the emphasis on lighting. We might focus on a particular aspect of its historical association. This house presents an ideal opportunity to look at the role of the Governor in colonial society and the role the government played in the development of Australia. I am not suggesting for a moment that one ought to dream up a fancy idea and then impose it on a given house. Quite the contrary. The building, its contents, its documentation, its setting all must be the basis on which policies will grow.
But there also needs to be that creative spark and that willingness to look beyond the property to the wider needs of the Trust and the community and our minds must be open to ideas which might seem quite ridiculous at first.

I well remember the day that Maisy Stapleton, Ann Toy, James Broadbent and I sat around Elizabeth Farm on the grass and someone had the bright idea of a house with no barriers and a stylized presentation, much as you see it today. I remember at the time that we thought it was a rather crazy idea. But it's there, it works. It does not seem to be compromising the historic fabric of the building. So, what seemed to be a way out idea inspired a very exciting, innovative museum house.

Let me put up this suggestion: I would be quite excited to be seated at the dining table in this house and be served by footmen in full livery. I would be less excited certainly even embarrassed, to play out the role of footman! But doing either would tell me a great deal about the dining room.

I can attend a number of colonial dining rooms in Sydney but I cannot eat in them, in fact, I can hardly go into most of them. Certainly the less we know about the history of a room or of a house or its garden and the less of the early fabric that remains, then the more creative we need to be in our presentation. If it happens to be a bedroom and that is all we know about it, should it be furnished at all? Why not use it for display? If it is a wonderful architectural space such as this house, why not leave it empty? Or put in some valances or abstract pieces or furniture which suggest the type, shapes and sizes that might have been in a room and then perhaps light it according to the best evidence we have of lighting of a colonial house.

So often the discussions of the ways we have of presenting a property centre around the period of which a room will be presented, or which occupants it will reflect. Decision making has largely been dominated by architects, curators, furniture historians, decorators and so on because they are the people who have been involved and who have had the knowledge.

The scholarly and intellectual debates which surround the making of these decisions, joyful as they are, often cloud or totally conceal the real function of these houses. I am not saying these debates are unimportant. They are vital. But we must not forget that the presentation is only the means to the end but not the end in itself. I mentioned before the need for variety in the presentation of houses. In Parramatta we have the unique opportunity to present to the public a collection of some of the oldest houses in Australia. The fact that they are among the oldest, spanning only a few decades, is also the greatest problem. We need to avoid a sameness about them so we need to look at ways to turn this to our advantage to allow each to develop a theme, a style, a policy or whatever you like to call it. Some of the themes on Meredith Walker's list could apply equally to other museum houses in Parramatta.
Although I would generally be loathe to see another re-created colonial interior in Sydney, if you are looking at Parramatta as a package then the sparse furnishing policy adopted at Elizabeth Farm leaves room for a re-created interior and garden at either Hambledon, Experiment Farm or here. But at only one of these three, and it should probably be at the one that has the most information and then not necessarily done in every room.

I am not offering any solution because I do not have the facts for all these other houses. Certainly Old Government House has reasonably good information about its contents. It also has additional justification for a re-creation since it presumably would be done to the period c.1820 and this has not been undertaken anywhere else in Australia to my knowledge. On the other hand it is only the spaces in this house that are real. The surfaces and detail are all twentieth century and therefore would suggest an entirely different policy. I cannot help but feel that the future direction of this house must be an acceptance that it is the space and not the detail that has value as has its historical association, and that a clever solution needs to be found which recognises these facts. The costs of correcting the detail of the building and just the small part of the grounds that the Trust manages would run to several hundreds of thousands. Authentic furnishings would make this astronomical, and would be virtually impossible to procure.

From what we have heard most of the work to the building would be conjectural in any case. So why do it? One wonders whether the half million dollars or so (a minimum I suspect) required for such an exercise would not be better spent on conserving something real or on educational programmes, in the broader context of the Trust. I am sorry in many ways that this seminar is not looking at the other Parramatta houses because the opportunities for this house should be partly dictated by the opportunities presented by the others. Certainly the owners of the respective houses should be encouraged to co-operate in formulating complementary policies for this group of houses. Co-operation can also extend to everyone's benefit in many other ways, e.g. by sharing advertising costs, promoting each other's properties, sharing publications, and training sessions for voluntary guides. If I could be permitted a little aside it doesn't help to have visitors to this house told not to bother going to Elizabeth Farm "because it is full of fakes". The tables could very well be reversed after what we have heard over the last two days. Obviously it would be useful for the guides at all the houses to have a better understanding of all the houses and the philosophy involved in their presentation.

There are two other points which are quite unrelated. I was interested to read in Helen Proudfoot's book that Old Government House had been the site of military fête champêtre. It was reading this and information about balls and soirées held at Old Government House and the realisation of the part that this house played in the life of Parramatta - and Sydney - that reminded me of a conversation that I had with a group of Parramatta aldermen a year or so ago. They kept mentioning the foreign embassy and eventually I had to ask what they were talking about.
It was Old Government House. The sentiment that they were expressing was that the house operated in isolation of the city rather than with it. But of course that is only their viewpoint and probably the Trust and its management would not agree with that. Nevertheless, it is the way they feel and that certainly should not be the case. This house was, and still should be, a part of the activities of the Parramatta community. To foster a sense of continuing tangible association between Old Government House and the Parramatta community should be high on the Trust's list of priorities for this place, regardless of what changes may take place to the house itself.

A good start would be to try and salvage something of the former mutual relationship of the house with the town and encourage the Council to take a more sensitive attitude to the park especially the area around the house. Meredith Walker has referred to that in more detail. Old Government House presents an image to the public of the Trust and therefore the Trust must get it right.

If I could be permitted to add a few remarks about the administration of National Trust houses - I know we cannot focus on all aspects at this seminar as it relates to Old Government House specifically, but it seems to me that this seminar can achieve little if there is no single administrative and decision making process which can implement and guide any recommendations which may flow from these two days. I am not talking here about the conservation planning process, but about the administrative process of implementing a conservation plan.

In the Victorian National Trust to replace a gutter needs the recommendation of the Properties Officer and the Administrator. The opinion of the individual property committee is sought, and the Branch Committee, and the honorary architect. Frequently the advice of the Technical Advisory Committee might also be sought, and if the Structures Report Committee has not yet commissioned a report, then it may delay the process. And of course a permit from the Historic Building Council was needed.

It is not quite so bad in New South Wales, but throughout the Trust I find that the lines of communication, authority and decision-making are often blurred.

PETER WATTS.
TOWARDS A CONSERVATION PLAN.

I would like to say that this building was one of the things that interested me in conservation in Australia. I would like to suggest that we should talk about short term and long term aims of what we might do, and one of the first things that might be done is to think about a name change for this place. I wonder if it was ever called, in the nineteenth century, Old Government House? I presume it was called Government House, Parramatta and now that we have two Government Houses in Sydney you might like to consider calling it Government House, Parramatta rather than Old Government House. Not only because of the need to indicate that in fact it is part of the town of Parramatta.

The first thing that in the short term we should look at, and I don't think anyone has mentioned this, is that there is a need for the people who run this place to have a commitment to always doing things better. There seems to me to be an unwritten belief here that because the place was set up in the late 1960s and has done a very good job of what it was intended to do, that it should stay like that. I think you have to say that you have a commitment always to improving the product. Secondly, as Peter Watts suggested there is a need to review the management structure in relation to Government House, and the way in which decisions are taken. One of the aspects of that is the need to find roles for the various staff involved. In that context I'd also like to suggest that people look at the naming of people as 'guardians' of the house and whether that is the function that they should be performing. It would be worth considering your view as to whether they should be renamed 'guides' who have more of a function of explaining to people what the house is, rather than protecting the individual items that may be in it as a primary aim.

Thirdly, there is a need for some urgent steps to be taken in basic conservation and maintenance. Those have to be well clarified and understood by all the staff and people allocated roles in what has to be done. The Trust, I realise, has a house-keeper in this house and I suppose that will remain her responsibility. Most importantly, there is a need to review the public relations policy of this house, particularly in regard to the authorities who own the land around it, and the city fathers of Parramatta. On taking the school bus to Parramatta Station I had the rare opportunity to see that there are in fact other areas of historic interest in Parramatta apart from historic house museums. One of the areas that is an historic area is, in fact, under the G.I.O.

Even in relation to long term aims there's obviously a continuing commitment needed to research, the house and its site and various areas, and that is a preliminary to a study to determine cultural significance. That research should be carried on in a number of areas, firstly archaeological, secondly in research into the garden, thirdly the history of the house and its surroundings, fourthly into the architecture of the building, fifthly into the scientific importance of the botanical and astronomical research carried on on the site, and of course into the furniture of the house and the social customs of its various occupants.
We have to recognize that, if we as a group, are saying anything, we have to say precisely who we are. Most of the people here are young, or middle-aged, professional people, with their own prejudices, preoccupations not only about period but also about our professional backgrounds. We have to recognize that the history of the house goes right up to the present day, that the research goes on into the future.

Issues to be stressed in any conservation plan include the relationship of the house to the garden, which is brought out by the illustrations used by Joanna Capon where the house is never shown until 1900 or so except in its garden context.

The house not only had a relationship to the garden, but also to the river, the hills, various structures around, to the town and - hard to say it - to First Government House in Sydney. Any studies carried on in relation to First Government House should be complemented by studies that are undertaken in relation to First Government House in Sydney.

There is no point, however, in doing any work on the house until we have some idea as to what use the house is to be put.

I think it has been made very clear today and yesterday that one gets a much greater appreciation of this house from sitting in the eighteenth-century space listening to people talking about it than one gets from walking around the house and looking at objects. Looking at objects placed in room settings is not the best way to interpret the house for the benefit of visitors. I suggest one looks at ways of using spaces as educational spaces, using video tapes to demonstrate aspects of the house.

In determining that for the house the first question to ask is whom we are trying to reach. There is no point in putting across any message that sounds as though it is in a foreign language.

I think the papers that this conference should be published and it would be wonderful if the Trust could look at further funding from Esso so that the already committed money would have some lasting result in the form of publication.

Lastly, we will not achieve in the remaining hour or so all that needs to be achieved. There is a need to have workshop sessions with the curatorial committee as the plan proceeds through its various stages.

JOHN WADE.
This large complex of buildings marks the country residence of New South Wales Colonial Governors from Governor Hunter until the 1840s when it became vacant following the completion of the present Government House in Sydney. It was leased to the Kings School in 1910 and was used as a boarding school until acquired and restored by the National Trust in 1970. The original part was built c1799 and enlarged in 1815 to a design by Lieut. John Watts to form a central two storey block; two single storey end pavilions and two link blocks forming a symmetrical Colonial Georgian composition. Construction is of stuccoed brickwork and sandstone, hipped slate roofs, shuttered small pane windows and a fine central doorway with elliptical fanlight and sidelights. A Classical timber portico of the c1816 period is attributed to Francis Greenway.

The building stands within the Old Governor's Domain, part of which is now Parramatta Park and nearby stand other related structures such as the Garrison Building, Governor's Bath House, Dairy and remains of Governor Fitzroy's Observatory. Old Government House remains as one of the most charming examples of Colonial Architecture in Australia and is a dignified and beautiful building in a marvellous landscaped setting.

The oldest public building remaining on the mainland of Australia being associated with the administration of the colony from its early days until superseded by the 1845 Government House on the shores of Sydney Harbour. Has now been suitably restored and seems to illustrate the best of elegant Colonial Georgian architecture of the period.
One of the most historic urban parks in Australia. It was here that the first successful crops were grown in the colony which thus firmly established the settlement in New South Wales. The Crescent by the river became the genesis for the early township and government farm of Parramatta. From 1790 to 1857 it was the inland residence of all colonial Governors and in Macquarie's time Government House and its domain was considered the showplace of the colony. Imported plants and trees were nurtured here and native species sent to Kew Gardens. The park, its landforms, landscape and remaining historic buildings and monuments retain the potential for this remarkable domain to regain its once fine visual status.

Description

The park as set aside from the original domain was intended to be of 200 acres, but since 1857 much of the then existing 250 acres (approx.) has been alienated and eroded by a large number of unsympathetic uses (see attached list), such that the area is now less than 200 acres. It still possesses a topography of great natural charm, in particular the Crescent which sweeps down to the curve in the river, and dominating this originally settled area is the recently restored Old Government House at the crest of the grassed hillock. Around the eastern area of the Park are a number of early historic structures while at a number of places around the perimeter are interesting gatehouses (see attached list). The boundaries proposed are the present park perimeter which largely remains as the original eastern part of the Government Domain and Farm, as shown on attached map.

Recommendations

There exists with this park a unique opportunity for skilful reinstatement of a very fine urban landscape with a status and management comparable to that of the Royal Botanical Gardens and Centennial Park. It is essential to preserve Landscape features of particular importance such as the Crescent with its close links with the early settlement of the Parramatta area. Further alienation must be prevented and every effort should be made to progressively phase out those alien uses as leases expire.

Bibliography

David Collins, "An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales" - London 1798
Helen Proudfoot, "Old Government House, the Buildings and its Landscape" - S.P.A. 1971
James Jervis "The Cradle City of Australia" - Council of City of Parramatta 1961
J.F. Campbell, "Rose Hill Government Farm and the Founding of Parramatta" RAHS J. Vol. 12 Pt. 6 1926.
Designed by Colonial Architect S. L. Harris in 1822, this is a large circular stuccoed brick structure with a steeply pitched metal roof meeting at an apex and said to have been built by Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane in 1823 as a bath house for use by Vice-regal personnel. The main bath or baths was said to be in the form of a Roman Balneum having suites of rooms surrounding it. Water was pumped from the river in lead pipes at a place known as the amphitheatre which was also the site of a famous orchard. After use, the water was run off in drains of tunnelled brickwork leading to a duck pond near the site of the Bowling Club. The man in charge of the flag telegraph which kept the Governor informed of ship arrivals in Sydney once lived in the bath house suite of rooms and thus its building may have not been as idiosyncratic an act as first appears. In 1886 most of the surrounding structure was removed when it was converted into a pavilion.

An important reminder of the days when the Park was known as the Governor's Domain and an interesting early Colonial structure in itself.
In 1822 Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane had built at his own expense an Observatory, probably designed by the then recently appointed Colonial Architect S. L. Harris. The sandstone remnants were part of the building described as a 'curious looking structure, rectangular in shape, 28 ft. to each side with a bulge on the North and South sides to help support the two domes, each 11 feet in diameter, which rose from the roof and which was otherwise flat.' In this building the first appointed Australian astronomer was installed, namely Carl L. Rumker and his assistant James Dunlop. Rumker left in 1823 and Dunlop became the Principal, carrying out research until 1827. Following a journey to Scotland he again took up his post in 1831 but resigned in 1847 because of ill health and died the following year. The Observatory later was abandoned and demolished in the 1860's.

Reasons for listing

Important remnants of Australia's first Observatory and reminders of Australia's involvement in astronomy from Cook's voyage of discovery until the present time.
PARRAMATTA

PARRAMATTA PARK (FORMER GOVERNOR'S DOMAIN)
LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AREA

CITY OF PARRAMATTA

BOUNDARY OF LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AREA

P. SHEEDY      17 APRIL 1978
FOR: LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W.)
LIST OF STRUCTURES AND MEMORIALS WITHIN THE PARK HAVING:

A. National Trust CLASSIFIED listing

Old Government House. A fine symmetrical Colonial Georgian residential composition built 1799 - 1816 and substantially designed by Lt. John Watts for Governor Macquarie. Occupies the site of the original house built by Governor Phillip in 1790 and was the vice regal residence until 1857. Now owned by the National Trust and faithfully restored (1967 - 70) it is furnished as it would have appeared in the 1830s.

Former Dairy Cottage. A simple yet typical Colonial Georgian farmhouse probably built by Governor Macquarie for the Government Farm and later converted by him into a dairy. It is a pleasant stuccoed brick cottage with verandah supported on turned timber columns under a large hipped roof.

Observatory Remnants. The stone transit piers of the 1822 Observatory designed by the Colonial Architect, S. L. Harris. The remains of Australia's first observatory which fell into a bad state of repair after the Astronomer James Dunlop left in 1847.

Pavilion. This structure contains part of the walls of the Governor's Bath House built in 1822 by S. L. Harris for Governor Brisbane. It was vandalised after the Domain became a public park in 1858 and was converted to a pavilion in 1886.

O'Connell Street Gatehouse. A Tudor style gatehouse designed by architect Gordon Mackinnon and built in 1885. It replaced the gateway and lodge built by Governor Macquarie at the main entrance to Old Government House.

Boer War Memorial. This memorial is sited on one of the finest sites of the Domain and consists of four sandstone Doric columns taken from the 1837 Parramatta Courthouse being re-erected under a stone canopy in 1904.

B. National Trust RECORDED listing

House adjacent to dairy. A small brick cottage of the 1870s still used as a dwelling and is basically intact except for its verandah.

Pitt Street Gatehouse. A picturesque cottage in 'gothic villa' style built 1887 kept in good repair and still used as a dwelling.

C. Historic Interest

Southern Domain Gatehouse - Great Western Highway. A late 19th century brick cottage with verandah designed in the picturesque tradition.

Western Domain Gatehouse - Westmead Ave. A plain brick late 19th century gatehouse with a timber addition still used as a dwelling.
Two Georgian Cannons - adjacent to the Boer War Memorial. Two large iron cannon bearing the dates 1806 and 1810 mounted on concrete bases.

Obelisk to Lady Mary Fitzroy - near the O'Connell Street Gatehouse. This Obelisk marks the spot where Lady Fitzroy and Lieutenant Masters were killed in a carriage accident in December, 1847.

Boundary Stone - Western part of the Domain near the railway viaduct. One of the five remaining Boundary Stones put in place by David Lennox for Governor Sir George Gipps in 1839.

Memorial to William Ewart Hart. This memorial was placed to commemorate an early pioneering flight from the Domain to Penrith by William Ewart Hart in 1911.

Stone gate piers, iron gates and iron picket fencing - that remain in Pitt, Macquarie and O'Connell Streets.

LIST OF ALIENATED PARK AREAS

Northern side of river: Swimming pool with shelters
2 major sports ovals and attendant structures
A large car park for a Football Club House

Southern side of river: 2 bowling greens with club houses
An R.S.L. Club House
A nine hole golf course and club house
A high school
Great Western Railway
Ground filling of the Crescent for a proposed amphitheatre.
O.G.H. CONSERVATION PLAN.

IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS PUT FORWARD AT THE SEMINAR 14 + 15 February, 19

NB. These ideas and suggestions are not arranged in any particular sequence.

1. RECENT HISTORY.
   The knowledge of Bob Green, Bob Muldoon and others involved with the early period of Trust ownership should be written down. Les Buckland's reports should be collected.

2. ARCHAEOLOGY - HARRIS MATRIX.
   A 'harris matrix', identifying the date of all the present fabric, should be undertaken.
   
   Further investigations should be undertaken of the early history of the house, Phillip - Macquarie, including analysis of materials.
   
   Archaeological investigations at the rear of the house, in the courtyard may confirm the position of Phillip's house and provide other information about the use of the building.

3. SURVEYING.
   Have the Ebsworth Plan of the OGH Domain, 1887, drawn up again from the surveyors' note books.

4. ARCHAEOLOGY OF OGH GROUNDS.
   Search of all documents concerning the Domain, and relate to current plans. Undertake select archaeological digs - stables, railway and barns.

5. OGH GARDEN.
   Rebuild garden buildings, privy, plus Lady Gipps' bower.

6. OGH BUILDING.
   Remove additions made in 1909 by Govt. Architect and works of National Trust in late 1960s - remove rooms alongside corridor

7. SECURITY.
   Small study of security, including evaluation of the need for a live-in manager, for security purposes.

8. FURNITURE.
   Get inventories and catalogues up to date. Have furniture etc. valued.
   Investigate NT furniture, including that in other houses to see suitability for OGH.
   Value Persian carpets with a view to sale, because of their inappropriateness.
   Consider the sale of some pieces, e.g. Graham Clock, pages out of books (now framed).
9. WOMENS' COMMITTEE.
When Conservation Plan is prepared, consider asking Womens' Committee for a donation.

10. GUARDIANS PURCHASE.
Guardians have $6,000 - what should be bought with it?

11. OPTIONS.
The conservation plan should develop and consider several(3) options for the presentation and interpretation of the property.
Jessie Searle considered 3 or 4 options of the interior of the property (see J. Searle's paper for details).

12. HISTORICAL RESEARCH.
Compare, and place in context with other Government Houses in Australia and overseas.

13. ENTERTAINMENT.
Consider holding dinners, candlelight evenings and TV advertisements - as done before.

14. SCHOOL CHILDREN.
Prepare an 'out-of-school - hours brochure' for school-age children.

15. PLASTER.
Undertake a trial of removing cement render, and applying lime plaster. (Removal of current render may be the only solution to problems of dampness). (Archaeological investigation may help).

16. DISPLAYS.
Remove existing display (Governors and history of house) and replace with new displays.

17. SHUTTERS.
Adjust shutters for seasons and weather. (J. Kerr's question - why have all rooms got shutters?)

18. GUARDIANS.
Change names of guardians to guides, (this may clarify their role). Reduce number of guardians.

19. SCHOOL CHILDREN TOURS.
Special tours for children.

20. HISTORICAL RESEARCH.
Consider more (solid) research of documents, e.g. Macquarie peri-

21. USE OF FRONT DOOR.
Why not use the front door?
22. ROOM ARRANGEMENT.

Why not use the house in the way the Governor's did, either Macquarie as per Bonwick plan, or later period with "Dining Room used as a bedroom?"

23. UNDERFLOOR SOIL.

Find the soil etc. removed during 1967-70 restoration work and analyse.

24. GOVERNORS' FURNITURE.

Search for authentic pieces owned/used by Governors during their occupation of OGH.

25. NAME.

Call the building Government House, Parramatta.

26. FILMS.

Examine films for evidence of house and grounds 1967, and for restoration work.

27. CONSERVATION OF ARTIFACTS.

Grade all artifacts for priority for care, conservation etc. Institute a programme of care.

28. OPENING TIMES.

Open on Saturdays, as does Elizabeth Farm and Hambledon Cottage. Open during February, which is a 'heavy' Trust month for other house museums.

29. PROPERTY AND HOUSEKEEPING MANUAL.

That a manual be prepared setting out rules and guidelines for management of property, artefacts, and housekeeping. That such a manual might be based on a general property and housekeeping manual that could apply to all NT property.

30. INTERPRETATION.

That a policy be prepared for interpretation and presentation of Old Government House, including the role of the guardians.

31. COMMITTEE FOR OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

Establish a small committee to supervise and organise and investigate 2 or 3 options for the conservation and interpretation of Old Government House.

32. SEMINAR PAPERS.

That the Seminar papers, the conservation plan and the management plan be published.

33. RESEARCH.

Research dates of gatehouses and wings, archaeological trenches etc.

34. DISPLAY.

Macquarie downstairs, crisp and severe, * vignette in corner of 1850s. Other periods shown in contrast, e.g. using wallpaper.
35. ADVICE OF DANIEL THOMAS.

Look at original advice given by Daniel Thomas in 1964.

(One biographical exhibit for each governor, some principal rooms should illustrate decorative arts of the period of the building; display of history of the building, history of Parramatta. 1800 - 1816 too restrictive, not sufficient information, furniture etc., therefore policy as general vice-regal residence, and cottage furniture?)

36. SHUTTERS

Why are they all the same, why have all openings got shutters?

37. GUARDIANS.

Why is there a large number of guardians? Could the guardians be given further information to enable them to be more sati in their explanations?

38. FILMS & RESEARCH

Examine films of Old Government House for evidence of changes to Old Government House.

39. RESEARCH.

Research social customs, e.g. Army etiquette/protocol; how the meals were served, etc., housekeeping.

40. RESEARCH.

Storage of clothes, in trunks etc. (when was the hanger introduced?)

41. DISPLAY.

Show rear courtyard as a service area.

42. VALUATION AND SALE.

Why not sell the old valuables (not relevant to the place or its display) and buy new valuables?

43. RESEARCH.

Could guardians be involved in doing research? e.g. transcrib Macquarie? Prepare a clear programme of research.

44. GUIDEBOOK.

Re-write the guidebook.

45. DISPLAY.

Consider changing the display from one governor (and period) to another.
"A HOUSE FULL OF ARTEFACTS, OR ARTEFACTS FOR THE HOUSE" SEMINAR

OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE, PARRAMATTA
14 & 15 FEBRUARY 1985

LIST OF SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

CHAIRMAN:

Richard Rowe, Architect (former National Trust President)

NATIONAL TRUST STAFF:

Peter James, Executive Director
Bill Richards, Publicity & Marketing Director
Patricia McDonald, Curator
Chris Levins, Education Officer
Penny Murray, Committees' Liaison Officer
Brendan Lennard, Architect
Richard Mackay, Archaeologist
Bob Green, Manager, Parramatta Properties
Miriam Hamilton, Honorary Housekeeper, Old Government House, Parramatta.

NATIONAL TRUST COMMITTEES:

Ian Rae, National Trust President
Pat McDonald, Curatorial Committee (Chairman)
Clive Lucas
James Broadbent
Margaret Calder
Joanna Capon
Myrtle Cowling
Kevin Fuhy
Prof. Joan Kerr
Caroline Simpson
Howard Tanner
Cherry Jackaman
Pat Stratton, Women's Committee (Chairman)
Anne Ross, Garden Committee (Chairman)
Max Kelly, Executive Committee, National Trust Council
Maisie Stapleton, Historic Buildings Committee (Chairman)

Other:

Meredith Walker, Planning Consultant.

Peter Watts, Director, Historic Houses Trust
Anne Toy, Curator, Vaucluse House
Shar Jones, Curator, Elizabeth Bay House
Chris Searle, Education Officer, Historic Houses Trust
Sue Hunt, Assistant Curator, Historic Houses Trust
John Wade, Senior Curator, Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences
Donna Midwinter, Conservator, Museum Association of NSW
Alan Croker, Architect, Clive Lucas & Partners
Ian Stapleton, Architect, Clive Lucas & Partners
Michael Lehany, Landscape Architect, Public Works Dept. of NSW
Ann Watson, Curator of Furniture, Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences
Richard Allom, Architect, Brisbane.
Helen Temple, Archaeologist, Heritage Council of NSW
Jenny Cox, Department of Territories, Canberra
Dr. Carol Liston, Historian
Helen Proudfoot, Historian
Jessie Serle, Historian and Consultant
"A HOUSE FULL OF ARTEFACTS, or ARTEFACTS FOR THE HOUSE"

A Seminar about the interpretation and presentation of Old Government House, Parramatta.

Thursday 14 February and Friday 15 February, 1985 at Old Government House, Parramatta.

PROGRAMME

CHAIRMAN: RICHARD ROWE

THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY 1985 1.00 P.M. - 6.30 P.M.

1.00 PICNIC LUNCH (participants to bring sandwiches; tea and coffee will be provided).

2.00 OPENING
Pat McDonald, Chairman, Curatorial Committee, National Trust of Australia (NSW).

2.10 A REVIEW OF OBJECTIVES
Meredith Walker

2.20 OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE TODAY

2.20 Current Interpretation and Presentation
Chris Levins and Patricia McDonald

2.40 Building Condition and Problems
Alan Croker

3.00 History of the Display
Kevin Fahy

3.20 Discussion

3.30 Afternoon Tea

4.00 Relationship between historical inventories and the furniture.
Patricia McDonald and James Broadbent

4.20 Inspection of Buildings and Grounds

5.30 Films of Restoration Work and Opening of Old Government House by Queen Elizabeth II.
Chris Levins

6.15 Drinks
FRIDAY 15 FEBRUARY 1985

9.30 A.M. THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE

9.30 THE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS
Helen Proudfoot

9.50 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE
Richard Mackay

10.10 THE INTERIORS AND FURNITURE
Kevin Fahy and Patricia McDonald

10.30 DISCUSSION
Discussion Leader: Maisy Stapleton

10.45 MORNING TEA

11.00 INTERPRETING AND PRESENTING SIGNIFICANCE

11.00 THE BUILDINGS
James Broadbent

11.20 THE GROUNDS
Joanna Capon and Michael Lehany

11.50 THE INTERIORS AND FURNITURE
Jessie Serle

12.10 CONSERVING AND PRESENTING THE ARTEFACTS
Donna Midwinter

12.20 DISCUSSION
Discussion Leader: Max Kelly

1.00 P.M. LUNCH

1.45 OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE IN ITS CONTEXT

1.45 OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE IN RELATION TO PARRAMATTA PARK
Meredith Walker

2.05 OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE: EDUCATIONAL AND TOURIST
OPPORTUNITIES
Chris Levins

2.30 OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE IN RELATION TO OTHER HOUSE MUSEUMS
Peter Watts

2.50 DISCUSSION
Discussion Leader: Pat McDonald
3.15  AFTERNOON TEA

3.54  TOWARDS A CONSERVATION PLAN

Discussion of obvious possibilities and alternatives for interpretation and presentation.

Discussion Leaders: James Broadbent, Joan Kerr and John Wade

4.45  WHAT TO DO NEXT

Discussion of the needs for further investigation: who should do what and when, and recommendations for the Curatorial Committee of the National Trust.

Discussion Leader: Richard Rowe, Chairman

5.30  CLOSE