

# Laperouse

Friends of the Laperouse Museum



Members Quarterly Newsletter

October - November - December, 1991 - Vol. Two, No. 2

## President's Message

Our plans for the Instrument Room have now been approved in principle by the National Parks & Wildlife Services and our fundraising is now under way - it will be a superb room!

We hope to see you at the A.G.M. and picnic on 17th November at 11.30am. Come with your family and friends and meet Rear-Admiral Bellec, Director of the Maritime Museums in France who will address us on the Early French maps on exhibition at the Museum.

I retire as President this year, and would like to thank you all and your Committee, and the former Trusts and Local Committees, both at Laperouse and Captain Cook's Landing Place for the loyalty and support I have had over the years.

John Holt

## Coming Events

Sunday 17 November 1991

A.G.M. at 11.30am

followed by

**PRIVATE VIEWING**

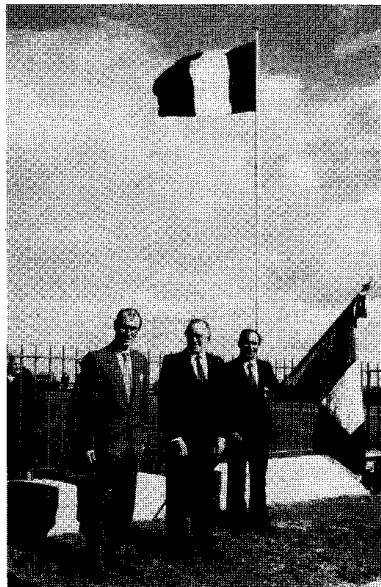
for Friends and their guests of Early French Maps on exhibition at the Museum during the International Cartography Conference, and **COMMENTARY**

by Rear-Admiral Bellec

*Director of the Maritime Museums in France*

(see page 4 for Conference details)

## Le 14 Juillet 1991 AU REVOIR Monsieur Driencourt



A tried and true friend and supporter of the Friends, M. Xavier Driencourt, Consul-General for France since 1989, chose to hold this year's Bastille Day reception in the Instrument Room adjacent to the museum. A lover of history and the traditions which historic events so often engender, M. Driencourt was delighted by the idea of inviting his compatriots and consular colleagues to celebrate July 14 at La Perouse. What more appropriate place could Sydney possibly offer!

The fete was preceded by a brief ceremony at the Laperouse monument. Decked out with flags and flowers, the

Instrument Room then came to life and throbbed to the sounds of France. The Consul-General gave a fascinating address, then his guests, glass in hand, flowed out onto the verandah and the lawn to enjoy the view, appreciate the history and (we hope!) savour the extraordinary potential of this historic site.

The Friends thank M. Driencourt for his parting gesture of appreciation and goodwill which drew so much attention to the Instrument Room restoration project, still our number one priority. We also take this opportunity to welcome his successor, M. Michel Legras.

then **GRAND "PIQUE-NIQUE"** from 1 pm

with a selection of *GRANDS VINS* HENRI MAIRE  
AU CHATEAU MONTFORT, Crepes Bretonnes etc...



## Museum News

The Laperouse Museum has recently gained a new staff member. **Diana New** joins **Afonso Dugue-Portugal** as an interpretive assistant replacing Michelle Dickson who is on extended sick leave.

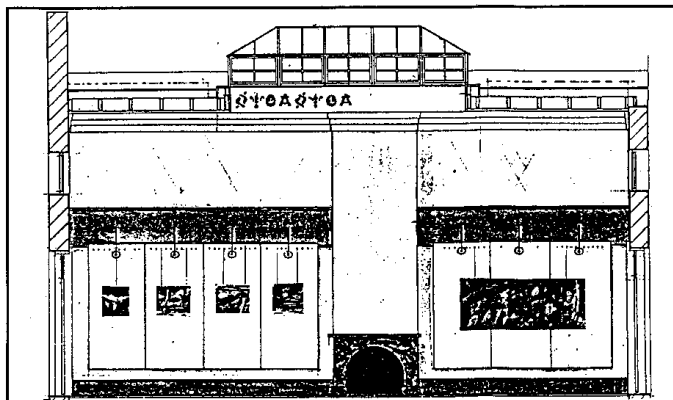
Diana is trained as a teacher and has taught in Australia and overseas for five years specialising in Children's Drama

and English as a foreign language. She has performed in Educational Theatre and has been involved in interpretive work and the development of educational programmes for the Powerhouse-Museum and other cultural institutions in Sydney.

The Museum staff delivered an exciting and successful holiday programme during the September/October school holi-

days. This included childrens' discovery tours, local history walks and scenic nature walks to Henry Head. Other projects the staff are working on include the development of special childrens' tours and Christmas activities. Afonso attended a week long seminar which was run by the Museum Education Association at Sydney University. He has returned to the museum brimming with lots of new and exciting ideas for 1992.

## The Friend's Project for the Laperouse Museum Extension



### THE INSTRUMENT ROOM in the historic Cable Station at La Perouse

The restoration of this room will add an extra dimension to the Laperouse Museum, providing the space to receive local, overseas and interstate exhibitions.

This magnificent setting would also be available for corporate and private receptions, seminars, concerts, product launches, fashion parades and community functions.

Corporate and private sponsorship is needed to make this project a reality.

We, the Friends, have already raised some \$30,000 for this special project. We need additional funds - some \$110,000 - to ensure the successful completion of the project, as shown by the budget outlined below:

- Masonry & Plaster Work	\$ 25,000
- Skylight .....	\$ 40,000
- Painting .....	\$ 8,000
- Joinery .....	\$ 20,000
- Flooring .....	\$ 7,000
- Lighting .....	\$ 14,000
- Display System .....	\$ 6,000
- Stencils .....	\$ 2,000
- Security .....	\$ 3,000
- Consultant Fees .....	\$ 15,000

Total \$140,000

### SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

**\$ 50,000** - Room naming rights and other benefits listed below.

**\$ 10,000** - Name inscribed on a roll-of-honour board prominently displayed. Acknowledgment in promotional material associated with room.  
- Free usage of room once a year for 3 years for activity of your choice.  
- Free Life Membership of Friends  
- Invitation to all museum events.

**\$ 5,000** - Name inscribed on a roll-of-honour board.  
- Free usage of room once for activity of your choice.  
- Free Life Membership of Friends  
- Invitation to all museum events.

**\$ 1,000 and under** - Appropriate acknowledgement is assured.

The Laperouse Museum is housed in the historic Cable station which established international telegraphic communication between Australia and the rest of the world.

The **Instrument Room** adjacent to the museum was the operational centre of this activity. The Friend's proposal will carry out this international communication once more through its local, interstate and international exhibitions, concerts and community events.



### Anne Sullivan's Designed Tours

#### Discover France's unique contribution to early Australia!

Walk with me as part of a small group (10-12) through Sydney's history and hear stories of French navigators, scientists, settlers and convicts. Morning tours include printed outline in French and tea.

*Circular Quay - Dawes Point - The Rocks Walk \$ 25 --- Macquarie Street Walk \$ 30*

(Special Rates for larger group) For Bookings, telephone (02) 327-2954 or fax (02) 327-1639

## TO VANIKORO - IN THE WAKE OF LAPEROUSE

by naval purser Lucien-Brun

Translation of article from *Cols Bleus*

(magazine of the French Navy) No. 2084 - 24 June 1990

(On March 14 1990, the frigate AMIRAL CHARNER left Noumea with the following programme of ports-of-call: Tarawa, Guam, and 3 Solomon Islands' locations: Honiara, the Capital City, on the island of Guadalcanal, N'Dende, and Vanikoro in the Santa Cruz Archipelago, Temotu Province.)

If our first three ports bear the names of famous naval battles fought in the Pacific, N'Dende and Vanikoro recall the more historic, more mysterious but also more moving times of the tall ships and the great navigators.

On April 10, the *Amiral Charner* anchors in Graciosa Bay, N'Dende, where the famous explorer Alvaro de Mendoza died from tropical fever. Having left Peru in 1595, he reached this Santa Cruz island believing it to be a Spanish colony. But mutinies, malaria and the unfriendly attitude of the natives overtook his ambitions. His wife, Dona Isabel, was to take the survivors back to the new Spanish colony of Manilla.

To pay homage to subsequent explorers and their voyages to this area of the Pacific Ocean, Mr Guillou, representing the Association Salomon of Noumea, and Mr Gallipaud, an archeologist with Orstom, who had boarded the *Amiral Charner* in Honiara, gave the Prime Minister of Temotu Province a reproduction of Nicholas Monsiaux' painting depicting Louis XVI giving his instructions to Laperouse in the presence of the Marquis de Castries and the Comte de Fleurieu. That evening, Mr Malachi Mechano, the deputy Prime Minister, boarded the *Amiral Charner*, to sail with us to Vanikoro, our next port of call.

At first light, having covered some one hundred nautical miles, we sighted Vanikoro, the island so sadly renowned in our maritime history. It was here, on the surroundings reefs, that ended so abruptly in 1788 the maritime and scientific expedition of Laperouse. Having set out from Brest three years before, the *Astrolabe* and the *Boussole* had safely rounded Cape Horn and sailed the length and breadth of the Pacific Ocean, from the coast of California to the Philippines and the Kamchatka Peninsula, then south to Botany Bay.

We approach with caution the coast of this mountainous island of Vanikoro, eternally shrouded in mist. A zodiac is launched with divers whose role is to mark out a safe passage through the Paeu reef. It takes all of three hours for us to navigate the many hazards of the lagoon and cast anchor a few hundred meters from the "Camp des Francais". Landmarks are immediately fixed on the shore to ensure safe anchorage.

The same afternoon, a team of sailors armed ... with scrapers and paint brushes begins restoring the existing monument erected in

1959 to the memory of Laperouse's crew. Soon after, the throb of a zodiac outboard heralds the arrival of those granted shore-leave on the little beach of Paeu.

Some of the sailors are invited by the island fishermen to travel up the Laurence River on frail outrigger canoes. The spectacle of tropical wilderness soon becomes grandiose and fantastic. In the jungle, there is complete silence. Time is measured only by the slow and regular rhythm of paddle strokes. Even the notion of distance is lost, for the plant life is all-encompassing, the vines and giant tree ferns reflected to perfection in this "mirror-river". The rare gaps in the greenery occasionally allow us to wonder at the flightpath of a kind of fruit-bat which the islanders still hunt with bows and arrows. We are unlucky not to sight any of the crocodiles which frequent this river.

Other fishermen show us their dwellings. Built on stilts, the huts offer sanctuary from the heat. Inside we share with our hosts a delicious drink made from coconut-milk. The menfolk enjoy chewing betel nuts which stain their teeth and their lips red; the juice is actually a mild, local drug whose bitter, sour taste is attenuated with ground coral powder.

The next morning, an official ceremony to the memory of the 220 shipwrecked crew takes place at the monument to Laperouse. Captain Portalier, in command of *Amiral Charner*, and M. Mekano speak a few words in the presence of the naval guard-of-honour and the villagers. A plaque, affixed to the monument to record the *Amiral Charner*' visit, is then unveiled.

After a lunch which gathers the chief islanders for one last time together on board ship, we weigh anchor for N'Dende where we disembark our Solomon Islands' passengers, then head due south towards Noumea.

### Extracts from *Amiral Charner* logbook:

- Local population very reduced in number (roughly 20) showed curiosity and were welcoming...
- General ambiance: this part of island totally isolated (700 inhabitants on opposite coast). Inhabitants of Polynesian origin (from Tikopia Island) not accepted by West Coast islanders of Melanesian origin. This visit gave M. Guillou and M. Gallipaud from Association Salomon, Noumea, the opportunity to negotiate with Temotu province diving expedition to wrecks of *Astrolabe* and *Boussole* as well as archeological dig on land in August 90. Construction of a Laperouse Museum in proximity to monument foreseen by Temotu Province authorities.
- Gift of petrol for outboard motor and various products to most isolated inhabitants. Medical attention given by ship's doctor.



## LAPEROUSE

*Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Friends of the Laperouse Museum*

**Editor:** Carole Roussel  
Tel: (02) 389-8010  
**Publisher:** Friends of the Laperouse  
Museum, PO Box 230  
Paddington NSW 2021  
**Design:** Stadia Graphics  
**Printed by:** Uri Instant Printing

**Friends of the Laperouse Museum  
Limited** was established in 1989.

**Patron:** The Hon. E.G. Whitlam, A.C., Q.C.  
**President:** The Hon. John Holt, Q.C.  
**Vice-Pres:** Guy de Compiegne  
Carole Roussel  
**Treasurer:** Stan de Hauteclouque  
**Secretary:** Michele de Tarle  
**Committee:** Hugh Birch  
Camille Dezarnaulds  
Daniele Elfassy  
David Elfassy  
Marie-Helene Gilly  
Peter Orlovitch  
Angela Raymond

**NPWS:** Malin Blazejewski  
**Curator:** Jennifer Carter

## MEMBERSHIP

It is still time to renew or  
join the Friends for 1991-92

Quickly mail your application  
form with your remittance to:

The Secretary  
Friends of the Laperouse Museum  
PO Box 230, Paddington, NSW 2021

### 1991-92 MEMBERSHIP FEES

<b>Life Member</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Corporate</b>	<b>\$250</b>
<b>Family</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Single</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>\$20</b>
<b>Pensioner</b>	<b>\$20</b>

Your membership card will be  
mailed to you upon receipt.  
All members are invited to attend the  
AGM on Sunday 17 November, 1991

## Curatorial Notes

Preparations are underway for the new exhibition of maps in the Laperouse Museum. The maps will be available to view from November and you are all welcome to see them on Sunday 17th November at the Friends annual "Pique-Nique". You will see a very different collection of maps this time - more accurate and detailed than before, demonstrating the increase in technical information available to explorers from the time of Laperouse and on through the 19th century... The collection will illustrate the contribution made by Laperouse and subsequent French navigators and explorers to the accurate mapping of Australia and the Pacific.

For those who are interested in the wider perspective of European exploration of Botany Bay, the new Captain Cook exhibition will be opened in November at Captain Cook's Landing Place, Kurnell. Entitled "Eight Days that Changed the World", this exhibition completes the Discovery Centre project and presents the dramatic impact for both Europeans and Aborigines of this historic visit to Botany Bay.

Jennifer Carter

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

ALBI, April 15, 1991

We would actually like to celebrate the bicentenary of the departure of the d'Entrecasteaux's expedition at the research of Laperouse, and the 250th anniversary of Laperouse's birth. For this, we are organizing an exhibition based on three elements:

- 1 - Give an account of the d'ENTRECASTEAUX Expedition through documents and objects...
- 2 - Presentation of an original and previously unpublished manuscript written by Henri de LAMBERT which relates the d'Entrecasteaux expedition....
- 3 - Issuing in Albi of the last book edited by the National Library on the Voyage of Mr de LAMBERT, written by Numa Broc.

Do you think these diverse manifestations would interest your compatriots so that we can eventually envisage a common work on some points.

Pierre M. AMALRIC, M.D. President of the  
ALBI/FRANCE LAPEROUSE ASSOCIATION



are sponsors of the

## "UNFOLDING AUSTRALIA" CONFERENCE

State Library of N.S.W.

17-19 November, 1991

- Conference hosted by the *International Map Collectors Society* and the *Australian Map Circle* in conjunction with the State Library of N.S.W.

- Four important exhibitions of early Australian maps at  
The State Library of N.S.W.  
The Laperouse Museum  
The S.H. Irwin Gallery  
Archives Authority of N.S.W.

- Rear - Admiral Bellec, *Director of the Maritime Museums in France* and first Honorary Life Member of the Friends of the Laperouse Museum, will be the keynote speaker at the State Library of N.S.W. on **Monday 18 November at 12 noon**. He will address the meeting on the impact of Laperouse on mapping of the Australian-Pacific Region by the French explorers.

The Conference convenors have advised us that the FRIENDS ARE MOST WELCOME to attend Rear-Admiral Bellec's address and join the Conference for its afternoon session at the Laperouse Museum from 3-5pm.

To attend the conference or receive the complete programme, contact:

IMCOS CONVENOR:  
- **Professor Robert Clancy**  
PO Box 48 New Lambton NSW 2035  
Tel: (049) 26-6135 (Work)  
AMC CONVENOR:  
- **Mr John E Roberts**  
c/- Department of Geography  
University of Sydney NSW 2006  
Tel: (02) 692-2552 (Work)