

THE SIRIUS LEGACY-A CONVERSATION

TUESDAY APRIL 14, 2015 HERITAGE WEEK

HISTORIC HOUSES ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA THE SIRIUS BUILDING AND SITE CUMBERLAND STREET & GLOUCESTER WALK BUNKERS HILL THE ROCKS



TOP PHOTO: SIRIUS APARTMENT, BUNKERS HILL, THE ROCKS, (CENTRE) 2015 PHOTO MARY SUTTON

MIDDLE DRAWING: BUNKERS HILL C.1820, DRAWING RICHARD READ SENIOR (BUNKER'S VILLA - PARTIAL VIEW - FAR TOP RIGHT)

BOTTOM DRAWING: BUNKERS HILL C.1811 DRAWING JOHN EYRES (BUNKER'S COTTAGE FAR TOP RIGHT OF OBSERVATORY HILL)

THE SIRIUS LEGACY-A CONVERSATION

OVERVIEW

Sirius sits prominently atop Bunkers Hill, right in the middle of The Rocks, an Australian tourist, residential and commercial precinct, beloved by locals and Sydney-siders alike.

I'm pleased to speak today to encourage conversation about what the Sirius legacy represents ~ a legacy drawing on conservation and the colourful history of the infamous Sirius apartment complex and the explorers, entrepreneurs, residents and Government policies - whether penal, ports, planning or tourism; all contributing to building NSW economies associated with this magnificent site.

I'm Mary Sutton and I've always loved the Sirius apartment building on its Bunkers Hill site for its;

- ✚ impressive sandstone locality,
- ✚ bold Brutalist architecture,
- ✚ innovative adaptation of sculptures, textiles, wood, colour, concrete and glass,
- ✚ collaborative design by Government, local residents and conservationists,

all elements that have seamlessly combined to provide treasured homes for the residents since Sirius was constructed in 1979.

The earliest maps of The Rocks nominate Sirius' site as 'Bunkers Hill'. This prime maritime locality was a c.1803 reward, made by way of a town grant of land, to Captain Eber Bunker for some services to Governor King and originally overlooked the Harbour on both sides of the hill. Bunker commanded his world from the southern end of what was afterwards noble Princes Street, since demolished for the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Sirius rightly takes up its richly deserved place nestled in, and as a renowned architectural addition to, the local and internationally culturally recognized Rocks precinct.



The "Sirius" apartment complex (above) was named in honour of the First Fleet vessel, HMS "Sirius" and her Commander, Captain Arthur Phillip – photographer unknown

On 19 March 2014 the NSW Government announced the sale of the Sirius building, resulting in debate over what legacy this building and its rare and important location represents and what we'd like to take forward.

THE SIRIUS LEGACY-A CONVERSATION

OVERVIEW

Sirius was built following a lengthy period of discussions and negotiations. Sirius arose out of the world renowned Rocks 1970's Green bans, a movement prominently associated with Jack Munday, later to become patron of the Historic Houses Association of Australia. Richard Roddewig, in his book *'Green Bans The Birth of Australian Environmental Politics ~ A Study in Public Opinion and Participation'*, writes

'In 1975, a major compromise was reached. Green Bans were lifted on three specific sites. The Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority, in conjunction with The Housing Commission of New South Wales, proposed to develop on one of the sites eighty housing units, in a medium-rise, nine-story building, for affordable income persons'.

Sirius is a building designed by architect Tao Gofers in 1978 for the Housing Commission of New South Wales to accommodate about 200 people in 79 apartments ranging from one to four bedrooms. Sirius is an architectural innovation showcasing what can be achieved.

A welcoming brochure was produced in 1980 for the newly housed residents by The Housing Commission of New South Wales - now the NSW Land and Housing Corporation; the holder of the Sirius lease with the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority. The brochure proudly commented that:

'The stepped roofline and face of the building were planned to blend and harmonise in good neighbourly fashion with the general roofscape of The Rocks. Shading precast concrete sills surround bronze anti-sun glass resiliently mounted to reduced noise and glare.

The new building has been named "Sirius" in honour of the First Fleet, HMS "Sirius" and her commander, Captain Arthur Phillip. Off the main entrance foyer is a large community room, the "Phillip Room" with generous outdoor plaza, tasteful furnishings, kitchen facilities and toilets.

The Housing Commission's apartment building makes a spectacular addition to the transformation and restoration of The Rocks, Sydney's most historic neighbourhood, near where in the early days the Tank Stream, flowing into the bay, provided drinking water for the tiny new colony. Cave shelters, humpies, stone cottages ~ all were stuff of the Colony's history.'



The Sirius building's Phillip meeting room horse sculpture inspired by Bunkers Hill caves art. Photo Mary Sutton

THE SIRIUS LEGACY-A CONVERSATION OVERVIEW



Above is the Phillip meeting room at the Sirius ~ an all party seven member Legislative Council Select Committee on Social, Public and Affordable Housing 'had a look at the Sirius complex' on 12 March, 2014 - source 13 March, 2014 Committee transcript at page 39.

Dr. Charles Pickett, curator and architecture author, commented at a 2014 Sirius parliamentary forum;

'A small number of public housing towers were ground-breaking architecturally and widely influential. Some public housing complexes were so successful architecturally that they eventually became sought-after and expensive addresses. Le Corbusier's Unite d'Habitation at Marseille, Lafayette Park, Detroit by Mies van der Rohe and London's Barbican Estate are perhaps the best known. For much of the twentieth century the Australian housing authorities also worked at the cutting edge of housing theory and practice. Sirius is a success story of public housing design. Sirius is a special building – not generic in format like much public housing, Sirius shows the potential of architecture geared to its site and its residents. It deserves to continue to be a part of The Rocks.'



Sirius apartment rooftop photo of gardens from level 8 deck by Mary Sutton, 12 March 2014

THE SIRIUS LEGACY-A CONVERSATION OVERVIEW

Most mornings I stroll along Gloucester Walk in The Rocks with Sirius sitting high on the prominent land of Bunkers Hill. The Sirius building always looks imposing. I think of the Sirius building as '*concrete poetry*'.



Photographs taken from the 1980 residents 'welcoming brochure' (above and below) depict the simple, but innovative, off-form concrete walls, combined with acid-etched picture windows, to produce Sirius' distinct stabled building block appearance, reminiscent '*of a Native American pueblo*'. Sirius shares '*the magnificent panorama of the harbour in all its moods, the exciting city skyline, and nestling against the Harbour Bridge approaches.....just across the water from the famed Opera House.*'



THE SIRIUS LEGACY-A CONVERSATION

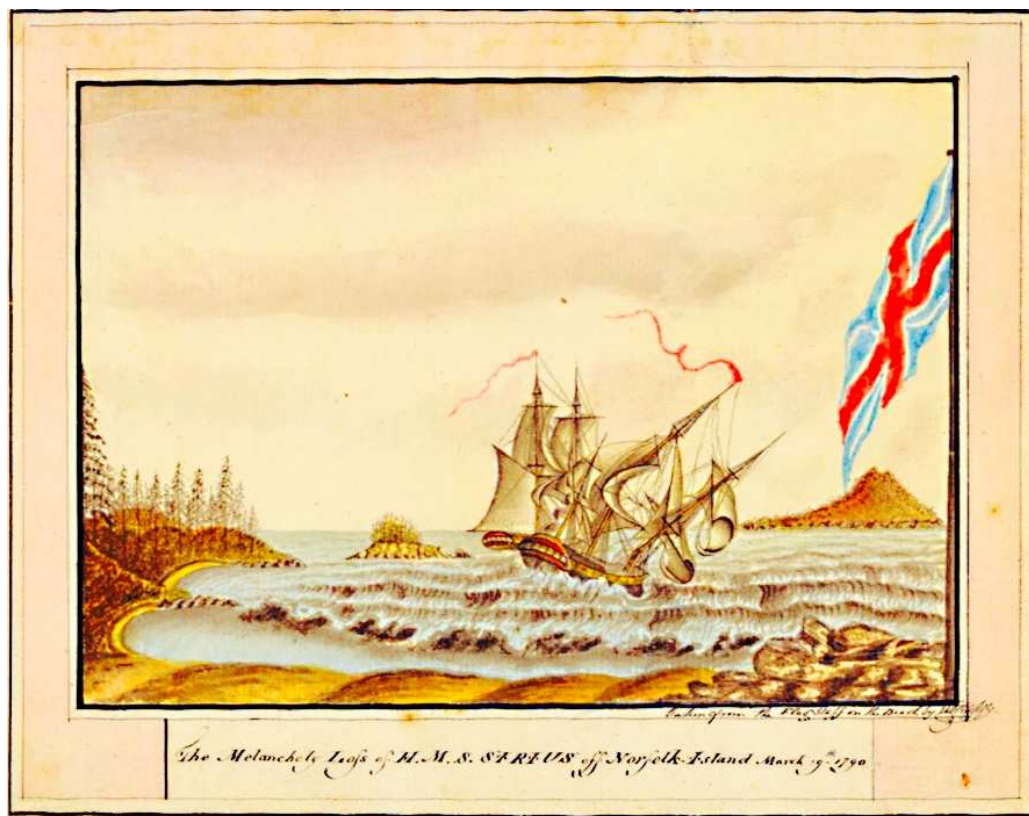
OVERVIEW

Earlier last year, I had the opportunity to showcase Sirius, being what some may call an 'unpolished diamond' to the seven members of the NSW Government's Legislative Council Housing Select Committee. Thank you to The Hon Paul Green [Chair] and his Committee members for taking the time to see first hand why Sirius is an architectural, commercial, conservation and mixed tenure, housing success – an asset for Sydney that should be world renowned – the best example I know of pristine Brutalist 'Concrete Poetry'.

The Sirius apartment building is named after Governor Phillip's Sydney bound First Fleet vessel, HMS "Sirius" - scarcely larger than a Manly ferry – "Sirius" traversed the world's seas with its ten travelers, including HMS "Supply", and their unwilling passengers, arriving to set up the penal colony in January 1788.

Sadly, this crucial supply vessel was sunk at Norfolk Island whilst landing vital food supplies and lost forever to the fledging Sydney Cove community on 19 March, 1790. George Raper, a naval officer and illustrator, recorded this melancholy event in his wonderful drawing held by the National Library of Australia (below).

The young NSW penal colony, along with the British Empire hopes for a profitable deep water South seas port, now precariously rested on HMS "Supply" as the sole maritime, particularly of foodstuffs, Sydney link to the world. The small NSW settlement's sense of isolation is evocatively captured in the drawing overleaf. For the 1791 Third Fleet convict transports, Phillip prudently requested sturdy, wide beamed whaling ships.



We are now gathered because of a second equally significant 19 March Sirius event – an announcement by the NSW Government on that exact date, 224 years on, that is writing another chapter in the history of the Sirius building. The question for us to reflect on is, what is the Sirius legacy and what will it be for the future?

What I'd like you to consider today is what makes Sirius and its site so notable.

I must start by noting that the Sirius building sits prominently on land owned by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (SHFA) and part of the answer to the question, I think, lies with the vision of SHFA 'to make unique places in Sydney that the world talks about'. Does the Sirius building and its location satisfy this SHFA vision? you might ask. Is the Sirius building and its location a 'unique place' in Sydney that the world talks about? It seems 'yes'.

THE SIRIUS LEGACY - A CONVERSATION - OVERVIEW



HMS "Supply" moored in Sydney Cove c1790 after the HMS "Sirius" 19 March, 1790 loss. View taken approximate site of Bunkers Hill, The Rocks. Artist unknown. Courtesy of Mitchell Library

THE SIRIUS BUILDING

Sirius on the Rocks, Bunkers Hill

The story as to how the Sirius building came to be at The Rocks is told below by Dr. Charles Pickett, an eminent historian. Dr Pickett is also an architecture author and curator of note.

The Sirius chronicle is taken up directly from his blog of 8 May 2013; when he was in residence as a curator at The Powerhouse Museum, Sydney (reprinted with kind permission).



*Sirius apartments, watercolour and ink on board. Power House Museum Collection 2013/36/1
Gift of the family of Jack and Jean Nagle.*

‘We have just acquired this watercolour elevation (above) of the Sirius public housing apartments in the Rocks. Most architects’ elevations use a street level viewpoint – this bird’s eye view is different and striking.

Sirius was built to rehouse public tenants displaced during the controversial redevelopment of the Rocks during the 1960s and 1970s.

Eventually building work in the Rocks was halted by the world renowned union Green Bans and The Rocks resident opposition.

In 1975 the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority agreed to suspend most of its development plans and rehouse displaced public housing tenants in new public housing. Most of Sirius’ original tenants had lived in terraces on George, Playfair and Atherden Streets.

Somewhat ironically, Sirius is the only high-rise building in the Rocks.

THE SIRIUS BUILDING

Sirius on the Rocks, Bunkers Hill

Sirius was designed in 1978-1979 by Tao Gofers for the NSW Housing Department. The painting at page 8 was presumably produced in the architect's office during the approval and commissioning stage of the project. It hung in the Sirius site office and was given to the donor's father Jack Nagle, a construction foreman, at the conclusion of the job.

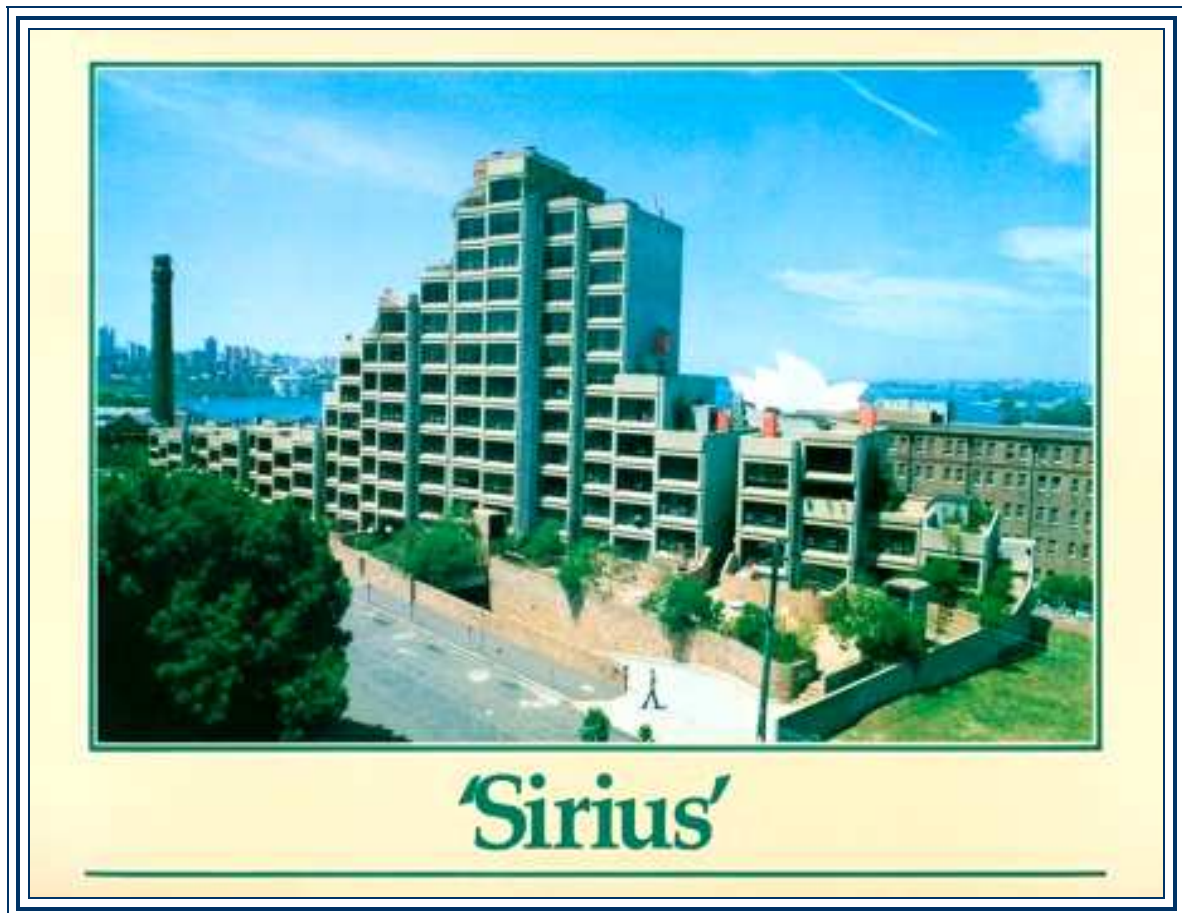
Sirius was designed to accommodate 200 people in 79 apartments of one, two, three and four bedrooms, ranging from single storey and split-level units to two and three storey walk-ups at street level.

Unusually, potential tenants were interviewed during the design phase. Many of the apartments were designed with particular families in mind, while a central part of the building brief was the tenants' preference for

'A design...that was neither of orthodox square or rectangular design but which would blend in with the then existing skyline'.

The result is a twelve storey structure resembling individual flats stacked to form an apparently rambling, terraced pile.

The flats benefit from a combination of roof gardens –one tenant's roof is another's garden – street level courtyards and balconies. There is a communal garden on the eighth floor.



Sirius as depicted in Housing Department promotional booklet published in 1980.

THE SIRIUS BUILDING

Sirius on the Rocks, Bunkers Hill

Copyright NSW Department of Housing.

Apparently Tao Gofers wanted Sirius to be finished in white –as in the painting –to match the Opera House on the other side of Sydney Cove.

Unfortunately budget got in the way and to Tao Gofers eternal regret, Sirius is standard Brutalist grey, although its original interiors were certainly colourful as you can see in the photos from the Housing Department booklet.



This kitchen with dining area has a view over Sydney's busy docks.



The main bedroom of this apartment has mirrors reflecting wharves and city.

Sirius building interiors, 1980

Copyright NSW Department of Housing.

Sirius is an artifact of a time when governments believed that all citizens deserved quality housing. For much of the twentieth century Sydney's public housing was at the cutting edge of apartment design.

Some of Sydney's first apartment buildings are a few streets away in Lower Fort Street, designed by Walter Vernon and built in 1910 as public housing for people left homeless by the first, post-Plague, Rocks 'slum-clearance'.

The 1950s and 1960s saw massive public housing developments, most of them aimed at low-income workers as well as those not in the workforce. In both Victoria and NSW the housing commissions were the major developers of housing in this period.

The abiding visual image of this period is of apartment towers, yet cottages and walk-up flats were also rolled out in large numbers.

Although community housing organizations such as Mission Australia provide an increasing share, the infrastructure of post-war public housing remains the main form of shelter available to the unemployed and the socially challenged.

THE SIRIUS BUILDING

Sirius on the Rocks, Bunkers Hill

The architecture of apartment towers was widely regarded as an incentive to social dysfunction, however the reality is more complicated as the success of apartment towers in the private market suggests.

The livability of public housing estates has proved to be mainly dependent on the resident social mixture plus the availability of basic community facilities such as a concierge service, shops and transport.

Yet there is no doubt that the architecture and construction (frequently using concrete prefabrication systems) of many public housing towers was defective and inappropriate, in some cases resulting in their eventual demolition.

A small number of public housing towers were ground-breaking architecturally and widely influential. Le Corbusier's Unite d'Habitation at Marseilles and Lafayette Park, Detroit by Mies van der Rohe are in this category.

Some other housing estates survived initial dysfunction to become sought-after addresses – these include London's Barbican Estate and Trellick Tower.



Barbican Estate, London. Photo by Charles Pickett, 2011.

Sirius was designed at the peak of reaction against public housing towers, part of a general reconsideration of the generic formats of Modernism.

THE SIRIUS BUILDING

Sirius on the Rocks, Bunkers Hill

Moshe Safdie's widely-applauded Habitat, built for Montreal's Expo 67, created a new apartment format that was clearly influential on Tao Gofer's design for Sirius.



Habitat, Montreal. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

Like the low-rise formats also popular during the 1970s, the Habitat complex format gave an individual presence to each component dwelling while reducing the monolithic and repetitive character of the whole. Some other Housing Department developments of the 1980s adopted this approach.

Gofers designed a similar low-rise Housing Department complex at Sans Souci, while Habitat's influence is also apparent in Suters & Snell's design for the sprawling Newcastle East public housing precinct completed in 1989.

Sirius was completed in March 1980. The *Sydney Morning Herald* (20 March 1980) reported that it attracted 'strong public criticism from several quarters including the National Trust.

The architect was quoted to the effect: 'I am not worried about the criticism. People will accept it in three or four years'.

This prediction has proved to be correct.

Charles Pickett,
Curator'

THE SIRIUS SITE

Entrepreneurs, Residents, Global Government Policies—Penal, Ports, Planning, Tourism

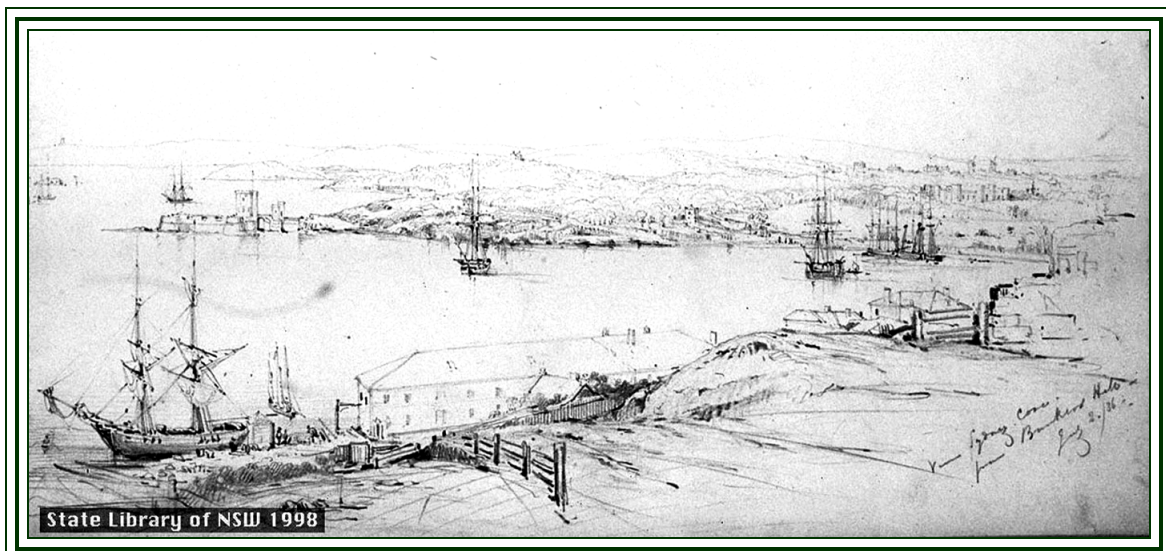
We have heard much today of the uniqueness of the Sirius building, particularly its architecture and concrete construction and its international recognition as such.

There is also much historical evidence of the uniqueness of Sirius' Bunkers Hill location, as depicted in:

- the earliest colonial drawings of
 - ✚ John Eyres,
 - ✚ Jacob Janssen,
 - ✚ Thomas Watling,
 - ✚ Richard Read Senior,
 - ✚ Joseph Lycett,
 - ✚ Conrad Martens, and
 - ✚ Frederick Garling,
- Governors' Phillip, Hunter and King's official Colony papers featuring the penal settlement and planning for its hoped for mercantile promise arising from being an ideal port in the Pacific, and
- centerpiece policies that valued the emerging whaling, pastoral, wharf and maritime economies, all the way through to the sights and sounds as you stroll along Gloucester Walk and Cumberland Street today, as many Sydney and international visitors do, helping to build an expanding tourism asset.



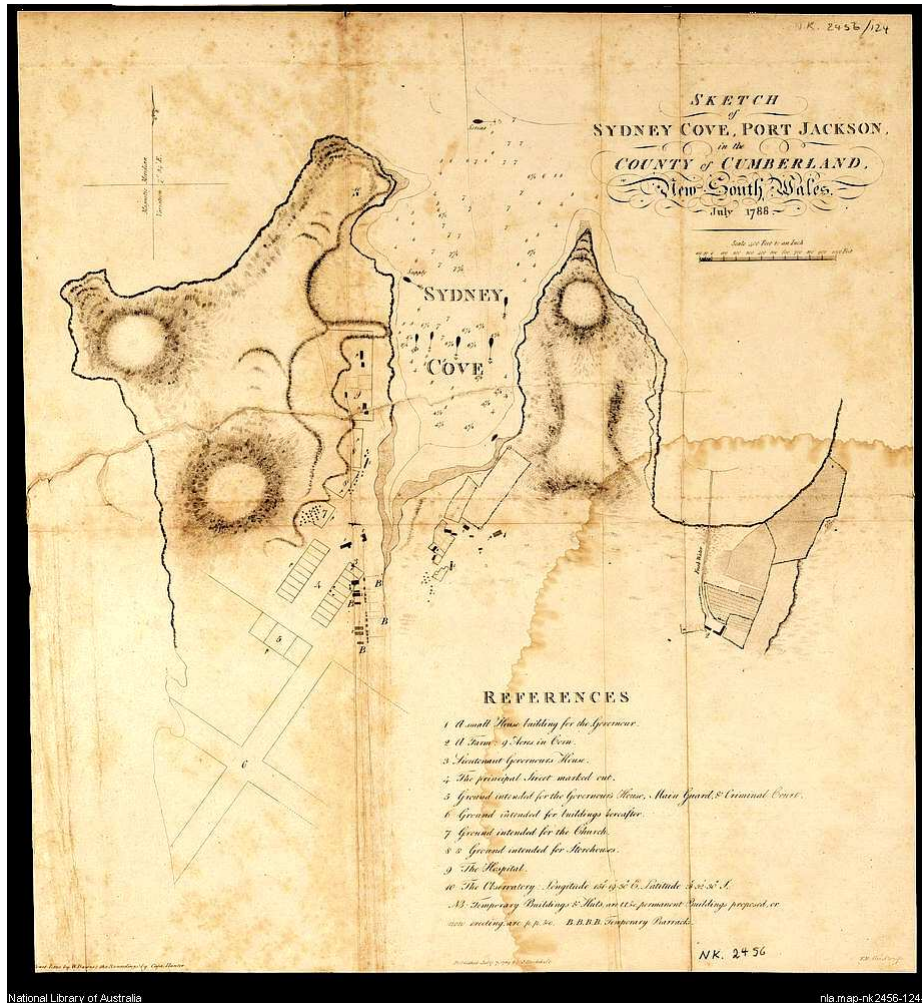
Sydney Cove from "Benn Long's Point" c.1810 To Bunkers Cottage and Stores Above Campbell's Wharf House and Stores, Artist Unknown



Conrad Martens 'View Sydney Cove from Bunkers Hill July 2, 1836' Mitchell Library of NSW

THE SIRIUS SITE

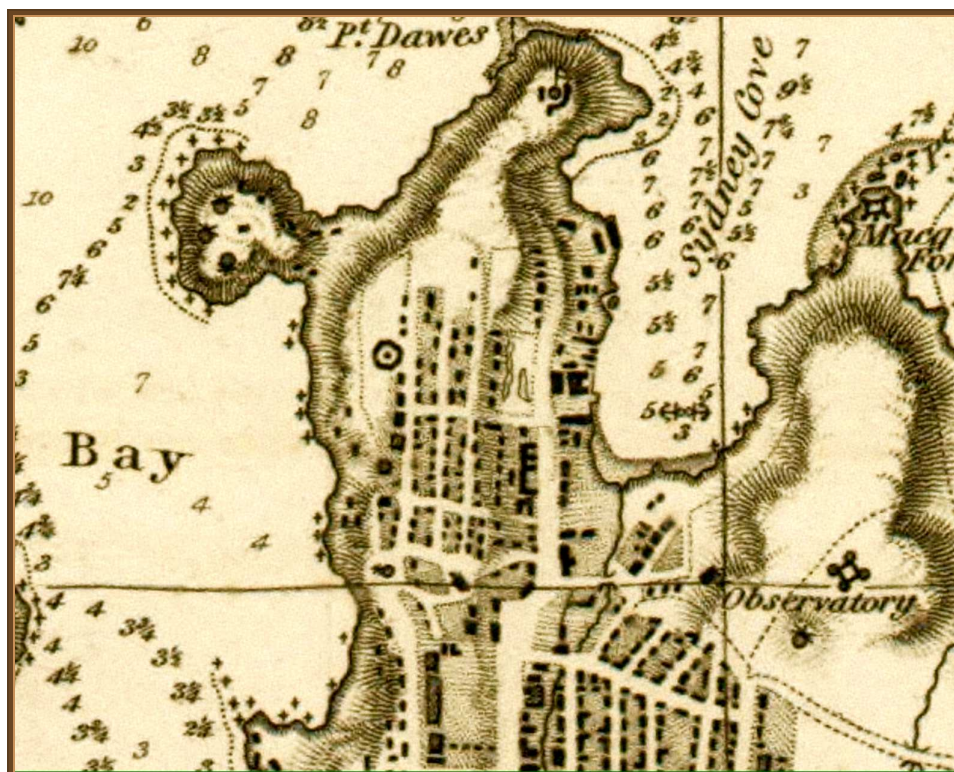
Entrepreneurs, Residents, Global Government Policies—Penal, Ports, Planning, Tourism



National Library of Australia

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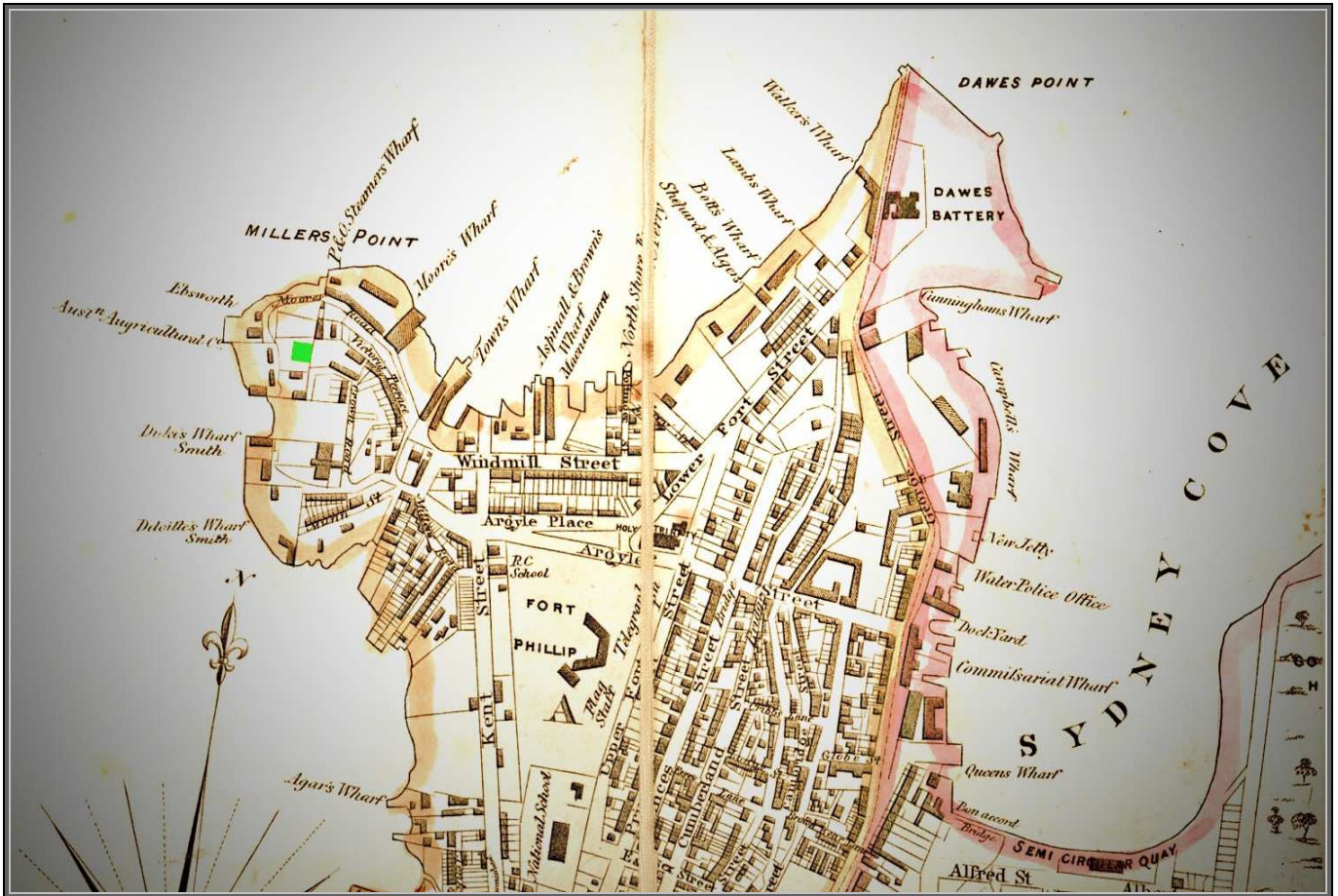
Ltn. Dawes map of cartographical information obtained by HM Sirius' Cpt. John Hunter & Ltn. William Bradley in 1788 (Bunkers Hill to left of word 'Sydney')



John Septimus Roe's 1822 Map of Sydney; Bunkers Hill landward on hill top ridge to left of words 'Sydney Cove'

THE SIRIUS SITE

Entrepreneurs, Residents, Global Government Policies—Penal, Ports, Planning, Tourism



Woolcott & Clark's map of City of Sydney 1854 (extract above)) showing wharf, port, commercial and residential growth of NSW economy.

Freeman Bros Photo (below) c.1870's. Impressive mansions high on Bunkers Hill overlook Circular Quay, Sydney Cove, NSW commerce



There is no doubt in my mind the Sirius building and the explorers, entrepreneurs, Government administrators, residents, etc associated with its site, creates a rare and important class the world talks about – something that SHFA and the residents of Sydney and Australia can quite rightly be proud of.

THE SIRIUS SITE

Entrepreneurs, Residents, Global Government Policies—Penal, Ports, Planning, Tourism

Specifically, the Sirius building and its location are tourism, educational, cultural, commercial and conservation assets for NSW. The world has talked of Sirius' and its locality in many ways, including:

1. The opportunistic sailor who foundered the colonial whaling industry and sometime Liverpool, Hawkesbury River and Hunter Valley farmer, Ebenezer (Eber) Bunker, is said by Governor Hunter to have '*cultivated land in a style one would expect from a sailor*', (SMH 2/3/29). Captain Bunker was granted the site on which the majority of the Sirius complex now stands, for some services to Governor King, a site well known until at least the 1830's as Bunkers Hill.

Eber Bunker was a master mariner and landholder credited with being the 'father of Australian whaling', an explorer of the East Coast and of New Zealand. The SMH of 2 March 1929 records,

'On his vessel being moored in Port Jackson in 1791 he had an interview with Governor Phillip and astounded that gentleman by his calculations of the possible great profits for a whaling industry for the new settlement.....Within six months he had secured 600 barrels of oil to enhance the interests of the Colony (and no doubt of himself).'

Bunker's arrival in NSW in 1791 was as master of the Third Fleet convict transport "William and Ann" (with 185 involuntary passengers aboard), one of the whalers chartered to bring early prisoners to 'Botany Bay'. He then went whaling in the South Seas and later accompanied the "Lady Nelson" in the vessel "Albion" to establish the Derwent settlement in Tasmania in 1803.

Bunker brought his family to the Colony in the "Elizabeth" in August 1806. He became a landholder at Bunkers Hill, Liverpool, Bankstown on the Hawkesbury and the Hunter Valley. Bunker had built a stone house and stores atop Bunkers Hill (replacing his earlier wattle and daub c. early 1800's structure) and from this high ground in The Rocks with views to the Heads, Kirribilli and the Parramatta River, Eber ran his global whaling and later pastoral empires.



Watercolour Eber Bunker, c.1810. Courtesy State Library of New South Wales

Eber Bunker's achievements in having the world talk about him also included presenting the first West Australian black swan to the King of England and ferrying cumbersome, limited use, weaponry to Hawaii's king, in support of a Church request '*to be kind to the missionaries*', (SMH 2/3/29), together with naming Bunkers Islands in Queensland and various New Zealand islands.

Eber Bunker's cottage stood on Gloucester Street at Bunkers Hill c.1803, and was in due course replaced by his more substantial villa and stores constructed c.1820 during Macquarie's reign. The villa and stores ultimately became Bunkers HQ – itself later hemmed in by taller, more elegant residential terraces, such as those of Young and Miles, all demolished around 1909 as part of the Rocks reconstruction works (Sirius was eventually built on this locality in 1977-1979).

THE SIRIUS SITE

Entrepreneurs, Residents, Global Government Policies—Penal, Ports, Planning, Tourism

2. The HMS “*Sirius*” association represents a tangible link to the most significant vessel associated with early migration of European people to Australia and to the “*Sirius*” midshipman, Captain Henry Waterhouse, a godson of Prince Henry, the younger brother of King George III. Some short time after his arrival in the Colony, Captain Waterhouse was granted land on which the northern apartments of the present Sirius complex and all of the adjacent Ajax Building now sit.

HMS “*Sirius*” was guardian of the first fleet during its epic voyage to Australia between 1787 and 1788, which brought the convicts, soldiers and sailors who became Australia’s first permanent European settlers. HMS “*Sirius*” was also the mainstay of early colonial defence in New South Wales and the primary supply and communication link with Great Britain during the first two years of the settlement until its loss in 1790. (Source: *Heritage Council of Australia*)

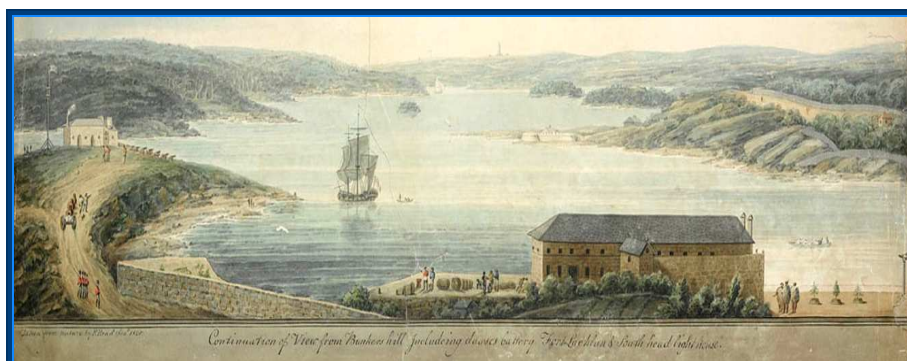
The careers of the first three governors’ of the colony of New South Wales, Arthur Phillip (1788-1792), John Hunter (1795-1800) and Philip Gidley King (1800-1806) are closely associated with the history of HMS “*Sirius*” as all three sailed as senior officers on board HMS “*Sirius*” during the voyage of the first fleet to New South Wales. John Hunter drew “*Sirius*” picture below in 1788.



Hunter was also Captain of HMS “*Sirius*” during its last ill-fated voyage in 1790, when it was totally wrecked at Norfolk Island. The loss of HMS “*Sirius*” at Norfolk Island on 19 March 1790 was a disaster for the fledgling colony during a period of crisis, when the settlement at Port Jackson was in danger of collapse and abandonment.

It has been argued by some that the adaptability, ingenuity and grim determination to survive, demonstrated by the colonists at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island following this disaster, became an enduring trait of the Australian people.

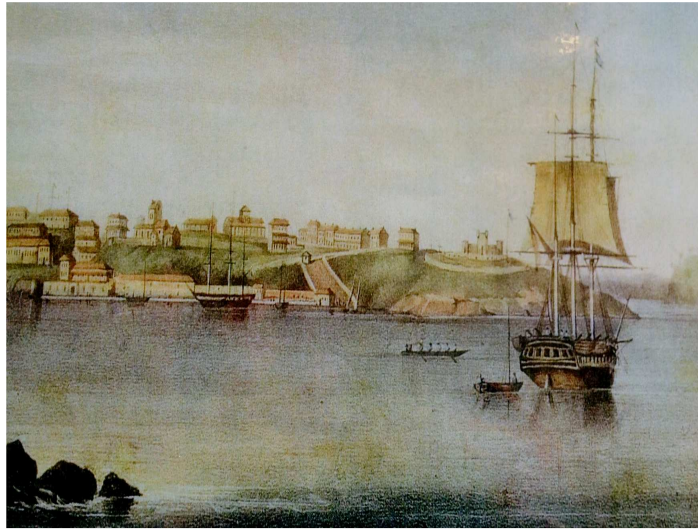
3. Wharf Owner Robert Campbell Cumberland Place Bunkers Hill & Sirius’ Henry Waterhouse Land.



View c1820 from Henry Waterhouse’s Bunkers Hill Lease Sold to Robert Campbell c1800 when Captain Waterhouse left the Colony

THE SIRIUS SITE

Entrepreneurs, Residents, Global Government Policies—Penal, Ports, Planning, Tourism



F Garling's c.1840 "Sydney Cove" a view towards Bunkers Hill (center), Lower Fort St and Dawes Battery from Mitchell Library

Captain Henry Waterhouse left Australia permanently in 1800 and leased his grant covering part of the Sirius site to Campbell Cove's famous wharf owner Robert Campbell. In the 1830's the town leases, grants and permissive occupancies of the past were formalized and Robert Russell produced section plans showing the owners of the land (*SHFA Heritage and Conservation Register*). This part of the site remained unoccupied land until the 1840's, as did much of Bunkers Hill land surrounding Bunker's house in current Gloucester Walk. In the 1820's Robert Campbell developed the prestigious landholding of Cumberland Place, designed by Francis Greenway, on his Bunkers Hill land, adjacent to his Waterhouse grant and nearby wealthy Dawes Point wharf and landowners. F. Garling captures Bunker's Hill c.1840 above.

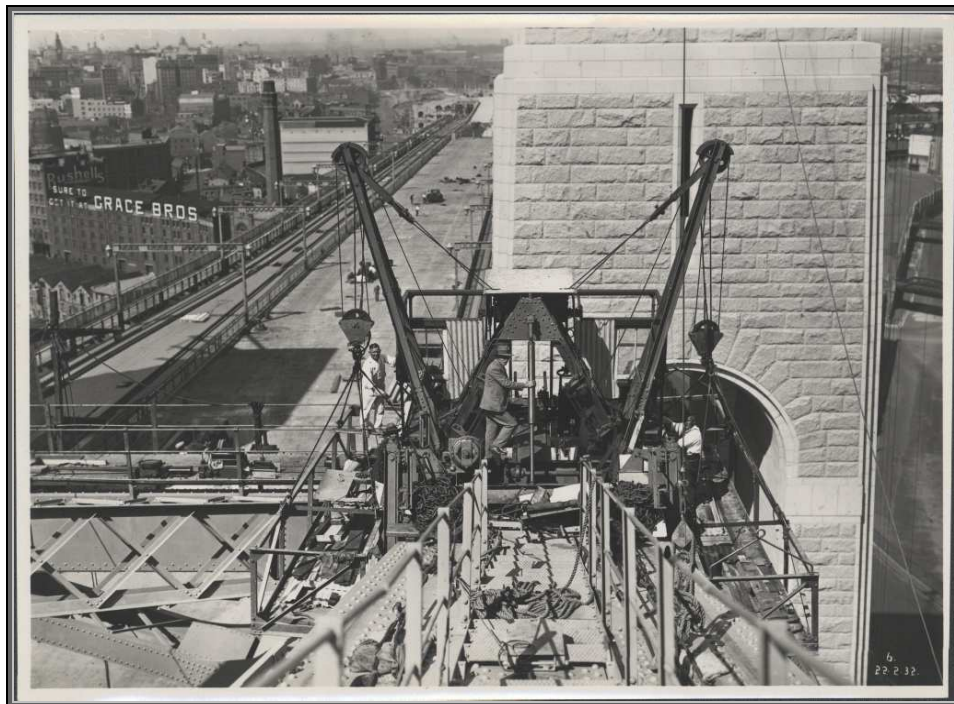
4. The Mitchell Library's benefactor, David Mitchell, was born in 1836 in Campbell's Bunkers Hill's elegant 'cottage ornee' at Cumberland Place (since demolished) and Mitchell spent his childhood there before moving with his large library to modern digs in Darlinghurst. Mitchell famously collected colonial documents associated with Bunkers Hill, and all aspects of Colonial Sydney maps, art and memorabilia to found the Mitchell Library Collection.
5. Australia's first Prime Minister Edward Barton lived as a child in the 1850's in one of the Young's townhouses. This four storied townhouse (three stories with a basement kitchen) was one of a terrace of three houses built by Adolphus Young on land developed adjacent to Bunker's land on Gloucester Walk in the early 1840's and may have been designed by John Verge's protégé, John Bibb, (who also built the nearby Mariners Church). The imposing terrace of three homes survived until the early 1900's Rocks reconstruction project. This land forms part of the Sirius site today.
6. Innovative concrete technology and an early example of Australian public town planning can still be readily viewed as the Federal Electrical Company (Ajax Building) on the corner of Gloucester Walk and George Street – also a part of the "Sirius" Captain Waterhouse's land grant. This concrete technology and the Arts and Craft movement design of the building, was developed by the recently formed New South Wales Housing Board's architect, William Henry Foggitt, in association with the Public Works Department, for The Rocks reconstruction works during the period 1912-15. Occupiers included Young and Stewart cordial manufacturers.

In January 1915, the Sydney Morning Herald reported this was the first building in Sydney to be constructed entirely of reinforced concrete. The building was a warehouse, with an office building on the top of the southern end of the building. Several bays of the building's southern end and the office building were demolished when the Sirius complex was built.

THE SIRIUS SITE

Entrepreneurs, Residents, Global Government Policies—Penal, Ports, Planning, Tourism

This inspirational concrete technology was later used on Millers Point's High Street flats. Concrete's innovating impact was a feature of the cutting edge Sirius building constructed by Anderson and Lloyd, described as a '*bold and exceptional experiment*' in '*Concrete's Rearview*'.



Rowans Bond (centre left building above/right Harbour Bridge Rig) and Gloucester Walk in 1926 & 1932 – Powerhouse Museum Collection

7. Sirius now sits on the location of a major employer in the Rocks, Rowans Bond and The Federal Electrical Company, (New Federal Building) that utilised modern loading and storage technology.
8. Sirius was the 1986 setting for the movie of Ruth Park's popular novel '*Playing Beatie Bow*'.

THE SIRIUS LEGACY

What does it represent to us, what would we like to take forward as our legacy?

Sirius in 2015 – The Continuing Conversation

The most recent example of the world talking of the Sirius building, and its rare and important position in Sydney, was in response to the NSW Government's 19 March 2014 announcement of the sale of the Sirius building, which was reported in local and international press.

People have also commented recently about the Select Committee's hard won recommendation, I think directed at the Sirius building, that the NSW Government, when selling multi-unit properties in the Sydney area, include in the contract for sale, a requirement that at least 10 per cent of all dwellings on that site be allocated as social, public and affordable housing.

Each unique aspect I've cited has stamped its mark on the Sirius building and its location as a rare and important place talked about in the world's press and by visitors. For me, I'm attracted to the description of the Sirius building as simply "concrete poetry".

I imagine that SHFA and all of Sydney must regard the interest in the Sirius building and its site, and modern day Bunkers Hill including Gloucester Walk, as an inspired and visionary success.

In concluding, you have heard much today about the Sirius building and its location and I invite you to walk around the Rocks and take time to ponder all that's been said.

Bear in mind the "concrete poetry" of the Sirius building, its location and its history. Consider too the connection to Sydney's past of Sirius, its locality and particularly the tie to the people who helped build NSW and its economy. This is a legacy contribution both to the present and links us to the future, e.g. maybe neighbouring Barangaroo (below). Overall, ponder Sirius' deserved place in a revitalized Rocks.

If you would like to continue the conversation, the Minister for Planning and for SHFA - owner of Sirius' rare and important site and holder of the lease with the Land and Housing Corporation - the Hon. Rob Stokes' address is 52 Martin Place, Sydney 2000 and I'm sure he'd be interested in hearing your views.

Thank you for your time.



Barangaroo – Sirius' next-door architectural, residential, cultural, tourism & commercial economies – the 'port of new ideas'

THE SIRIUS LEGACY

What does it represent to us, what would we like to take forward as our legacy?



Lithograph of John Eyres' 1812 Picture of Bunkers Hill, Campbell's Cove and Sydney Cove from then Benn Long's Point (Opera House site)

Legacy For Us

Sirius Level 8 Rooftop Photo by Mary Sutton, March 12 2014 During Visit of Legislative Council Housing Select Committee

Reflections On Our Legacy For The Future?

