‘A continent that Australians must be proud to advertise’
Nature, Tourism and the National Image, 1905-1988

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own original work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged.

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Table of Contents

Abstract....4

Acknowledgements....6

Abbreviations....8

Introduction....9

I 'To Australia': Climate, Recreation and Australia's first 'national' advertising campaign, 1905-1914....40

II 'Australia – a place in the sun!': Advertising Australia Abroad, 1914-1929....78

III 'To Capture the Purple Veil': Advertising the National Capital, 1929-1950....118

IV 'Australia – god-child of the sun': Climate, Sunlight and Environment, 1934-1957....153

V A Destination to Sell the Nation: The Great Barrier Reef, 1958-1969....186

VI 'How far away from it all can you get?': The Cities and the Centre,1969-1983....227

VII 'Australians, who live life by the sun and not the clock': Recovering the national image, 1983-1988....252

Conclusion....272

Bibliography....280

Abstract

Since Federation, national tourism advertising campaigns have carried messages about Australia, its scenery and its people around the world. Tourism advertising has also served an important function as a bellwether for how the world perceives the nation from the outside. A unifying condition of twentieth-century Australian tourism advertising programs is their dependence on environmental imagery. Australia's crystal-clear waters, abundant sunshine, temperate climates, and unique and exotic flora and fauna are all recurrent and familiar tropes in the country's marketable image. Nevertheless, historians have paid scant attention to how advertising freighted Australia's natural and environmental symbols with the anxieties, values and attitudes of the wider settler nation. The question of how tourist advertising enrolled Australia's environmental and natural imagery in twentieth-century nation building, and how advertising images shaped and responded to contemporary discourses about the nation and identity of its people, remains unanswered. In undertaking a close analysis of the archives and sales materials of the nation's top national tourism promoters, this thesis fills a heretofore unexamined gap in Australian environmental and tourism history.

I argue throughout that an environmental dimension lays at the heart of the Australian tourist experience. Environmental imagery persisted across the century, even as values, tastes and opinions changed. Each chapter offers a case study of the nation's overall image, as well as of Sydney, Canberra, and the Great Barrier Reef. In each campaign, organisations and their administrators, particularly the Australian National Travel Association and the Australian Tourist Commission, recruited nature, whether of a specific destination or the continent as a whole, to enliven the wider image of the nation. Each organisation has left historians a vast record of sales ephemera (posters, brochures and television campaigns) as well as the internal correspondence, reports and memoranda that explain the decision-making driving advertising creation. But these organisations' commodification of nature went beyond the obvious commercial imperative to grow tourism as a profitable industry. Instead, the story of how promoters positioned Australian symbols of nature, scenic landscapes, and environmental attributes, like the conduciveness of the temperate climate for good health and mortality, belies a deeper twentieth-century narrative about how the nation imagined itself, and how it sought to be understood from the outside.

A careful analysis of these sources reveals a higher quality to tourism advertising than just driving up the bottom line of dollars and migrants for a productive economy. It is in drawing out what precisely this higher quality was that the original contribution of this work lies. The circulation of national advertising materials, in massive numbers at home and overseas, contains real insights into an intergenerational conversation between promoters and their likely audience about the nation and what its people aspired for it. Partly an effort to foster civic pride through the celebration of modernity and

progress, and partly an effort to remediate colonial and racial anxieties and project a distinctive Australian identity, tourism advertising sought to legitimise the nation in the eyes of the world, but more importantly, in the eyes of its own people. Current affairs and shifting cultural appetites and opinions affected the psychology of national tourist advertising. But as this thesis systematically demonstrates, the proclivity of advertisers to appeal to a human desire to spend time in nature remained ever constant.

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Abbreviations

ANTA – Australian National Travcel Association

ATC – Australian Tourist Commission

DMC – Development & Migration Commission

DoI – Department of Information

NSWGTB – New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau

Introduction

Australia is a great sunlit continent as colourful as the world – A continent that Australians must be proud to advertise![1]

> Harold Clapp, chairman of the Australian National Travel Association, radio address, circa 1930.

Soaking up the sun at the beach, bushwalks beyond the rural hinterland, road trips, boat trips and journeys into the red centre of the continent are among familiar tourist experiences for many Australians. Familiar also are the advertising campaigns that promote these experiences. 'Come and say G'day'; 'Where else but Queensland?'; and (more notoriously) 'Where the bloody hell are ya'?' are recent examples of slogans that hold a place in the collective memory. Memorable still is the famous Paul Hogan advertisement of 1984, in which the larrikin character told prospective American visitors he would 'slip an extra shrimp on the barbie' if they made the trip. This thesis, which begins its period of reference at the turn of the century and ends in the decade that Hogan became the face of Australian tourism, inquires into the foundations of national tourism advertising. Emerging as a professional enterprise not long after Federation in 1901, Australian tourist promotion has a long and complex history. It has drawn variously on national symbols and images to encourage people to visit, or travel within, Australia. The foremost concern of the pages and chapters that follow is what exactly tourist advertising says about Australia, its landscapes and environment, and the character, values and anxieties of the nation's inhabitants.

To attract the attention of consumers, tourist advertising has always drawn on striking imagery. Brightly coloured panoramic visuals of Sydney Harbour, the Great Barrier Reef, tropical rainforests, and the quintessentially Australian icons of the bush and the beach are all recurrent features of publicity disseminated to sell Australia. Rich in the visual language of these advertisements are a well-known cast of symbols – native plants and wildlife, blazing sunlight, the suggestion of pleasantly warm weather, crystal clear waters, and the friendly, hospitable Australian people found at each location. Advertisements have carried messages about Indigenous people too, and not unproblematically. Such advertising carries a vision of the nation, both within Australia and overseas, offering insights into how it is perceived from inside and out. Ever since state supported efforts to promote Australia began in earnest at the beginning of the twentieth century, advertising that has encouraged people to travel to

[1] Harold Clapp, Information Bulletin: Extracts from an address (wireless broadcast) by Mr. Harold W. Clapp (circa 1930), NAA: A458, AJ392/3 Part 1, 4.

Australia has also encapsulated something about the country and its people, for better or worse.[2] Many historical works have examined the rise of Australian travel and tourism, while others have investigated the connections between recreation and national identity.[3] A few existing works have explored the role of advertising images in contributing to the overall image of the country, but no substantial research has traced the environmental dimensions that rest at the core of twentieth century tourist promotion.[4]

This thesis seeks to help fill this gap in our knowledge on tourist advertising, specifically as it relates to how national campaigns connected symbols of nature and environment with the Australian tourist experience. Of course, innovations such as paid annual leave and the 40-hour work week gave more and more Australians opportunities to take holidays. But a point seldom acknowledged is that Australia's environmental and climatic conditions explained, at least to some degree, the early appearance (compared to other nations) of such entitlements in the first place. As Geoffrey Blainey argues in his *History of Victoria*, in the late-nineteenth century the colony was seen in many parts of the world 'as the real pioneer of the eight-hour day.' Climate, in particular the deleterious physical effects of labouring under Australia's hot skies, writes Blainey, led the formation of trade unions and the calling of strikes: 'Workingmen, faced with the choice of seeking shorter hours or a higher daily wage, often chose the shorter hours.'[5] Australia's challenging environment made work hard, but also lucrative, giving way to conditions ideal for a cultural preoccupation with leisure and recreation, pastimes around which a significant twentieth-century industry – tourism – was to form.

The rise of the tourism industry coincided with the emergence of yet another significant industry – advertising. Through advertising, symbols of nature but also of modernity contributed to the Australian national image as it was projected at home and abroad. Though state governments increasingly looked to control their image through state tourism bureaux, Australia's national image was, for much of the century, cultivated by a non-government organisation, the Australian National Travel Association (ANTA). Emerging in 1929 with a view to improving Australia's reputation at home and abroad, it was dissolved in 1967 when it became the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC). Unlike ANTA, the ATC was a statutory Commonwealth entity, and the advertising it produced can more correctly be labelled

[2] Susie Khamis, 'Brand Australia: half-truths for a hard sell,' *Journal of Australian Studies*, 36:1, (2010) 49-63; Robert Crawford, 'Learning to say g'day to the world: The development of Australia's marketable image in the 1980s', *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, 13:1, (2010), 43-59,

[3] Jim Davidson and Peter Spearritt, *Holiday Business: Tourism in Australia since 1870*, (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2000); John Richardson, *A History of Australian Travel and Tourism*, (Melbourne: Hospitality Press, 1999); Melissa Harper, "Locating histories of bush-based recreation in Australia," *History Compass* 15, no. 4 (2017), 6.

[4] Michelle Hetherington, *James Northfield and the Art of Selling Australia*, (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2006); and Peter Spearritt, 'Sights: Australian Travel Posters 1909–1990,' in *Trading Places: Australian Travel Posters 1909–1990,* (Clayton, VIC: Monash University Gallery and National Centre for Australian Studies, 1991). These works provide more of an overview of tourist promotion than an examination of advertiser's overarching reliance on nature in twentieth century tourist advertising. Josette Wells has written a substantial marketing history of ANTA from its inception in 1929 to its transition to the ATC in 1967. See: Josette Marie Wells, '"One voice for Australia": a marketing history of Australia's National Tourist Organisation 1929-1967'. Monash University. PhD Thesis. (2017). Wells offers much insight into ANTA's marketing and organisational history, but her work is not centrally concerned with nature as a recurrent theme.

[5] Geoffrey Blainey, *A History of Victoria.* 2nd ed. (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 187.

as government endorsed. Previously, various governments had supported ANTA, but only with limited funding. Today's national tourism agency, Tourism Australia, descends from ANTA and the ATC, and much of this thesis charts the foundations, lives and legacies of these organisations. I argue that the tourist advertising these institutions created remains a significant, yet overlooked, 'site' of twentieth century nationhood.

In creating a vision of Australia, promotional organisations sought to hold up a mirror to the nation. Mirrors do not always reflect truly, however, and the reflection of the nation offered in tourist advertising is no exception. Tourist advertising was aspirational, idealised, and withheld from view many of Australia's flaws and imperfections. In such evasions, it belongs, of course, to the wider history of Australian advertising.[6] Nevertheless, it remains a valuable, underutilised, though imperfect source in gauging the values and attitudes circulating in Australian culture during the twentieth century. Advertisements for travel found their way into people's homes, were part of people's journey to and from work, and formed a cultural reference point for how the nation and its people were perceived overseas. Between 1905 and 1988, tourist advertising, as the following chapters will show, became an increasingly recognisable type of visual communication in the lives of Australians. The rise of national tourist advertising occurred in an era when mass commercial advertising commonly deployed national themes, yet little historical work has sought to explain the vision of the nation government supported advertising offered.[7] The following analysis of the publicity campaigns led during this eighty-year period offers valuable insights into how symbols and motifs laden with archetypes of Australian nationhood and identity were promoted in everyday life, and how promoters conceived and deployed these themes with the specific purpose of attracting tourist patronage.

With its attention to Australian imagery and symbols, this thesis makes an important contribution to the field of scholarship on image-making and Australian visual culture. As Jane Lydon writes, visual culture plays 'an important role in giving form to more abstract ideas regarding community, belonging and rights, constituted through overlapping and mutually supportive official, popular and artistic imagery.'[8] Historian of Australian art and photography Melissa Miles identifies the term 'visual citizenship' as an increasingly popular historical term in recent historical work, used to 'describe how visual culture contributes to the meaning and value of citizenship.'[9] As Miles and Lydon both suggest, historical studies of visual citizenship have largely been associated with professional photography. Because of the scholarly preoccupation with photography, tourist advertising, which draws from photographic but also illustrative and written creative forms, remains largely overlooked in studies of Australia's visual culture. The national

[6] Robert Crawford, *But Wait, There's More! A History of Australian Advertising, 1900–2000*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008); Peter Spearritt, 'Symbols for Australia', *Artlink*, 17:3, (1997), 58-60.
[7] Melissa Harper and Richard White (eds), *Symbols of Australia: Imagining a Nation*, (Sydney: New South Publishing, 2021).
[8] Jane Lydon, "One People? A Visual Language of Australian Citizenship," *Australian Historical Studies* 54:2 (2023), 276.
[9] Melissa Miles, 'Painting Labour: A Case Study of Visual Citizenship in the Postwar Mass Migration Scheme', *Australian Historical Studies*, 54:2, (2023), 195-220.

advertising imagery analysed herein comprises a rich source base that contains unexplored insights not only into the Australian tourist experience, but also notions of identity, belonging and citizenship, and how these have been cultivated and expressed over time.

The idea that national tourist advertising communicated shared values around national life, culture and citizenship links this thesis to the field of scholarship on Australian nationalism and national identity. Although proponents of tourism were undeniably motivated by the commercial imperative of growing a tourism industry, they also (as the title of this thesis indicates) demonstrated ongoing preoccupations over fostering domestic civic pride. Consequently, much national advertising aimed to overcome stigmas relating to Australia's remoteness and inferiority in the eyes of other nations. As Lynette Spillman observes in her comparative study of American and Australian national identities, Australia's 'semi-peripheral' economic and geographical position made 'international recognition... much more significant to Australians than Americans.'[10] I argue throughout the thesis that an awareness of this perceived sense of being peripheral to world affairs played an important role in informing not only national advertising campaigns, but in the formation and operation of the promotional organisations themselves. Throughout, I build on the work of scholars such as John Hirst, Graeme Davison, Neville Meaney and Richard White, who have written on Australia's desperation for the world's approval and the effect that any such inferiority complex, perceived or otherwise, might have had on the national character.[11]

Tourist promotion remains an understudied documentary source in which the outward projection of Australia's image was ceaselessly tied up with Australians' own self-awareness of how they were perceived from the outside. 'Consider how often we find an imaginary visitor sitting looking over our shoulder when Australians set about describing themselves', writes the historian of the Australian symbols Richard White.[12] As we shall see, national tourism promoters constructed and disseminated the same advertising images for both a domestic and international audience, but their decision-making was often framed by the imaginary visitor. For reasons I explain further in the methodology discussion below, it is impossible to mount an analysis of how contemporaries interpreted advertisements. Nevertheless, it is a guiding principle of this research that the types of images deployed to boost tourism – the majority of which carried overt environmental themes – were more often than not guided by the acute Australian predisposition to project a respectable image of Australia in the eyes of the world, even if external interest did not always match that of the domestic population, at least until later in the twentieth century.

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[10] Lynette P. Spillman, *Nation and Commemoration: Creating national identities in the United States and Australia,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 128.
[11] John Hirst, *Looking for Australia,* (Melbourne: Black Inc, 2010), 58-68; Neville Meaney,' Britishness and Australian Identity: The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography,' *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 116 (2001); Graeme Davison, 'The imaginary grandstand.' *Meanjin* 61:3 (2002), 4-18.
[12] Richard White, "The Outsider's Gaze and the Representation of Australia." *Australia in the World: Perceptions and Possibilities* (1994), 23-24.

Frank Bongiorno reflects that nationalism in Australia 'emerged out of a series of conversations and connections involving smaller and larger places, from the family and household through to empire and world.'[13] National tourist advertising, circulated in Australia and overseas, provides much insight into the role of popular media texts in facilitating these connections. In each chapter, I ask how images of nature have been mobilised in Australia as a means of connecting readers with an imagined community that existed beyond their local experience. Art historian Michelle Hetherington writes that the tourism posters created by Victorian Railways, and later ANTA, 'served as a visual lexicon of Australian identity' and expressed the contemporary interwar tensions about what this identity might be.[14] I expand on Hetherington's observation by analysing advertising campaigns before, during, and after the interwar period.

Spanning most of the twentieth century, this thesis traces the rise of tourist advertising from its roots as an experimental venture carried out at the state government level through to its eventual legitimisation as a national enterprise. It is concerned with public, or state-sponsored, rather than private sector advertising. That is to say, it is not within the scope of this thesis to survey the advertising campaigns of those companies such as shipping lines, hotels or airlines, though the contributions of businesses such as Qantas in giving publicity to the nation have sometimes been memorable.[15] Out of the scope as well is a transnational or comparative approach that situates Australian national advertising against the efforts of other nations. Throughout, I draw from the campaigns of government-sponsored entities whose responsibilities lay more closely with the public than with the shareholder. The central institutions of the following chapters, therefore, are the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau, the Australian Railway Commission, the Australian National Travel Association (1929-67) and the Australian Tourist Commission (1967-2004). Advertising creation involved multiple actors and agents, from the content-creating artists and copywriters to the chairmen and editors who steered publicity organisations, and in so doing attempted to steer the national self-image in the interests of attracting custom. I have attempted to bring the efforts and motivations of these boosters, boasters and bureaucrats into each chapter, capturing their contribution to a vision of Australia recognised by their contemporaries. The symbols and messages they thought prudent to include in advertising, can be traced through to aspects of the image of Australia advanced in advertising today.

Tourist Advertising and Environmental History

This study aims to fill some gaps in Australian environmental history, in which relatively little attention has been paid to the heavy dependence of national tourist advertising on images and symbols of

[13] Frank Bongiorno, 'Australia: A New Political Geography?', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 47:4, (2023), 781-792. Bongiorno credits this explanation of Australian nationalism to Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia, Volume Three: Nation (Sydney*: NewSouth Publishing, 2014), viii.
[14] Michelle Hetherington, *James Northfield and the Art of Selling Australia*, (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2006).
[15] Leanne White, 'Qantas still calls Australia home: The spirit of the flying kangaroo, *Tourist Studies* 18:3 (2018), 261-274.

Australian nature and environment.[16] Environmental historians working in Australia and overseas tend to contextualise 'environment' in terms of the scientific management of natural resources and a mounting Western environmental consciousness that emerged in response to local and international concerns in the second half of the twentieth century.[17] Libby Connor's and Drew Hutton's *A History of the Australian Environmental Movement*, for example, begins its period of analysis in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, but in line with much scholarship argues that the movement did not truly formalise until the 1950s.[18] Environmental history that deals with tourism has tended to demonstrate a handful of core preoccupations, with a focus on ecological impact (usually negative) and on the socially constructed character of placemaking.[19]

It is difficult to say precisely what explains the dearth of research on tourist advertising's representation of nature in Australian environmental history. As the Australian environmental historian Ian Tyrrell argues, the field in Australia has been indelibly influenced by environmental historiography in the United States.[20] There, historians writing in the 1980s and 1990s emphasised the social construction of 'wilderness'. Scholars argued that natural sites such as national parks were freighted with the values of the culture that made and beheld them.[21] The environmental historian William Cronon's argument that the prevailing view of 'wilderness' needed to be rethought epitomised the height of this revisionist turn in environmental historiography.[22] Cronon argued that the 'habits of thinking that flow from this complex cultural construction called wilderness' were harmful to the goals and objectives of the contemporary environmental movement. 'Idealizing a distant wilderness too often means not idealizing the environment in which we actually live', he wrote. Cronon's work did not enter scholarship without

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[16] For an incisive argument on the value of tourist ephemera to historians see Paula Johanna Saari, "Marketing Nature: The Canadian National Parks Branch and Constructing the Portrayal of National Parks in Promotional Brochures, 1936–1970," *Environment and History* 21 (2015): 401–02.

[17] Paul Warde, Libby Robin, and Sverker Sörlin, *The Environment: A History of the Idea,* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018). These historians start their history of the environment in 1948.

[18] Drew Hutton, Libby Connors, *A History of the Australian Environment Movement,* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999).

[19] For works that focus on the environmental impact of the commercial travel industry on landscape see: Colin Hunter, and Howard Green, *Tourism and the Environment: A Sustainable Relationship?* (London: Routledge, 1995); Warwick Frost, 'Tourism, Rainforests and Worthless Lands: The Origins of National Parks in Queensland,' *Tourism Geographies* 6, No. 4, (2004); Richard Sharpley, and David J. Telfer, eds. *Tourism and Development: Concepts and Issues.* (Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2002); George Inskeep, "Carrying Capacity Reconsidered." *Annals of Tourism Research* 14:2 (1987): 284-296; Martha Honey, *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1999); Colin Michael Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage: Preserving Australia's Wilderness*, (Melbourne University Press: 1992); and Colin Michael Hall, "Tourism and the establishment of national parks in Australia," in: R. W. Butler & S. W. Boyd (Eds.), *Tourism and National Parks: Issues and implications*, (Chichester, Wiley: 2000), 29-38; Colin Hall, and Stephen Page, *Ecotourism in Australia,* (Sydney: Pearson Education Australia, 2009), and Peter Williams, *Tourism and the Environment: The Australian Experience,* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[20] Ian Tyrrell, "America's National Parks: The Transnational Creation of National Space in the Progressive Era," *Journal of American Studies* 46, no. 1 (2012).

[21] For national park histories that challenge the wilderness concept and its social construction in the U.S. see: Richard West Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Karl Jacoby, *Crimes against Nature: Squatters, poachers, thieves and the hidden history of American Conservation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Mark Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

[22] William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness: or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," Environmental History 1:1 (1996), 9.

controversy, and many historians rejected or sought to dampen the totality of his thesis.[23] Nevertheless, the idea that the environment is a pervasive feature of human experience, and that environmental history should connect to present-day environmentalist concerns, remains influential. In Australia, scholars writing since the 1980s have similarly critiqued the human-nature relationship – a habit that has extended into modern Australian environmental history today.[24]

Such critiques paved the way for environmental historians writing in the new millennium to assess the ways that humans engage with nature in non-wilderness settings. Though there exists much scholarship on regional sites – alpine, marine and forest environments, for example – Australian historians have in more recent years turned their attention to the environment of urban areas. Andrea Gaynor's *Harvest of the Suburbs,* for example, considers the effects of home food production on the distinctively non-wild environment – the suburban Australian backyard.[25] More recently, Australian historians, including Gaynor, have considered in greater detail how the rise of networked water infrastructure shaped Australia's largest cities.[26] Other city-focussed histories include Margaret Cook's *Brisbane: A River with a City Problem*, which explores the Brisbane river's existence 'long before humans occupied its banks.'[27] These and other works have repositioned Australian cities as important environmental sites, giving rise to a new field of environmental history that does not relegate nature to the remote and the far away, and asks more about the nature that is a little closer to the suburbs and cities that most of Australia's urban-dwelling population calls home.

It could be fairly surmised that Australian environmental historical literature has embraced Cronon's notion that the 'sacred in nature', and the 'wildness in our own backyards… is all around us only if we have eyes to see it.'[28] In this thesis, I examine both urban and regional areas, arguing that tourist literature held the environment and naturally occurring phenomena of both places as qualities of value to potential visitors. Water scenes, such as rivers, lakes and beaches, formed a key part of the national image in advertising, as did the abundant sunlight and warm temperatures that enhance these landscapes. Often the reliance on themes of sunlight, temperature and ease of access to 'natural' places

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[23] Donald Worster, 'The wilderness of history', in *Wild earth: wild ideas for a world out of balance*, ed. Tom Butler (Minneapolis: Milkweed, 2002), 221-229.

[24] Ian Tyrrell, "America's National Parks: The Transnational Creation of National Space in the Progressive Era," *Journal of American Studies* 46, no. 1 (2012); Katie Holmes, Andrea Gaynor & Ruth Morgan, 'Doing environmental history in urgent times, *History Australia*, 17:2, (2020), 230-251.Tom Griffiths, 'The Planet Is Alive: Radical Histories for Uncanny Times', *Griffith Review* 63 (2018): 65. Marcia Langton, "What do we mean by wilderness? Wilderness and terra nullius in Australian art," *The Sydney Papers* 8, No. 1, (1996), 10-31. Tracey Banivanua Mar, "Carving Wilderness: Queensland's National Parks and the Unsettling of Emptied Lands, 1890–1910: in *Making Settler Colonial Space: Perspective on Race, Place and Identity*, eds. Tracey Banivanua Mar, Penelope Edmonds (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 73-94. Mar's thesis follows that of Alfred Runte, the American national park historian who held that most American National Parks had been reserved only because they were 'worthless' from a resource extraction perspective. Runte's 'worthless lands' thesis was the subject of much contemporary debate, see Richard West Sellars, "National parks: worthless lands or competing land values?", *Journal of Forest History* 27:3 (1983), 130–134.

[25] Gaynor, Andrea. *Harvest of the suburbs: An environmental history of growing food in Australian cities.* UWA Publishing, 2006.

[26] Margaret Cook, Lionel Frost, Andrea Gaynor, Jenny Gregory, Ruth A. Morgan, Martin Shanahan, and Peter Spearritt. *Cities in a sunburnt country: water and the making of urban Australia*. (Cambridge University Press, 2022.)

[27] Margaret Cook, *A River with a City Problem*, (University of Queensland Press, Queensland, 2019), vii.

[28] Cronon, 'Trouble with Wilderness', 22.

pervaded advertising for urban and remote destinations. The scenic qualities of Australia's waterfront cities invoked the contemplation of a progressive modern nation built amid picturesque surrounds. A temperate climate, sunny skies, clean air, green space, easy access to nature in the form of beaches, public gardens and national parks, and the health-giving qualities of these amenities remain an underexamined feature of both regional and urban tourist advertisements.[29] This thesis therefore investigates how the conflation of nature and culture occurred in shared spaces, like beaches and parks, that were proximate to urban centres. In its analysis of advertising campaigns for both regional and urban tourism destinations, it follows Cronon's axiom that the natural world is not a construct limited to remote or non-urban areas.

I use 'nature' and 'environment' frequently in this thesis as umbrella terms under which subsidiary categories of nature and environment fall. Early twentieth century promoters rarely used the term 'environment', although as we will see in chapter one, it was still sometimes employed. Nature, by way of contrast, was a term promoters deployed frequently, as in the 1934 ANTA slogan for Mount Buffalo National Park in Victoria: 'Where Nature does everything in the grand manner'.[30] The advertising experts responsible for drafting and publishing this slogan clearly estimated that the idea of Buffalo's sweeping capital 'N' nature was enough to persuade consumers to visit. In advertising texts, Australian nature also served as an important contrast with the progress of the modern settler society. 'NATURE in the raw looms in the background, contesting the relentless onward march of civilisation, yet ever presenting a challenge to the adventurous', an ANTA guidebook of the 1930s boldly declared.[31]

Advertisements that depict human activity in nature-based surroundings, from sunbathing on the Great Barrier Reef to a walk in the afternoon sunshine along Melbourne's Yarra river, are also a window on to the environmental values of contemporary audiences. Posters that record the collection of, or at even interference with, marine life on the Great Barrier Reef in the 1960s, for instance, demonstrate that promoters still estimated that tourist souveniring of shells and corals remained a sought-after experience. The degree to which advertising shaped, or responded to, prevailing cultural values about the environment is a central question of this thesis.

Though Australian visions of nature and environment are the principal subjects of this thesis, it is not my intention to become tied up in too semantic a discussion of the meanings of these words. For the benefit of the reader, I hope to make clear from the outset that I approach and use both nature and environment as most people would understand them in 2026. That is to say, I assume that these words

[29] John Fiske, Bob Hodge, and Graeme Turner, *Myths of Oz: reading Australian popular culture*. (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 100.
[30] Advertisement for 'Mt. Buffalo National Park', *Walkabout,* December 1, 1934, 3.
[31] ANTA, *Picturesque Australia,* (Melbourne: ANTA, circa 1933), 1.

broadly pertain to the surroundings and conditions concerning the natural world.[32] Whether or not advertisers in the past used the term environment directly, they nevertheless identified Australia's sunlight, pleasant climate, weather, scenic landscapes and plant and animal life as key selling points in tourist promotion. All of these symbols have in common an environmental theme. Another related key selling point identifiable in twentieth century advertising texts are the Australian people. The population's health and vitality were associated in tourism advertising with Australia's warm weather, opportunities for recreation and year-round sunshine. How and why tourism campaigns, specifically those undertaken by state and national promotional enterprises, came to revolve around these symbols are the principal questions underpinning this inquiry.

The central focus of this thesis is to examine the persistent environmental theme that lies at the core of twentieth-century state and national tourist advertising texts. In over a century of national advertising, recurrent are the symbols of the bush, the beach, Australian wildlife, native trees and plants (think eucalypts and golden wattles), the red centre, and sunlight. Each chapter therefore engages with the work of a range of scholars who have explored the historical significance of these symbols.[33] The unifying condition of these symbols is that they are environmental, or natural. Appeals to experience nature, or some subordinate category of nature, such as wilderness, climate, seascapes, clean air, or the bush appear to underwrite any and all tourist advertising printed or broadcast in the twentieth century. As we will see, it is hard to find a pamphlet, poster, guidebook, magazine, or, in the later part of the century, television advertisement, that does not have nature embedded into its core argument that tourists should visit a particular state, city, national park, natural wonder, or tourist site.

Research aims

This inquiry into the use of symbols of nature, environment, and nation in tourist advertising is underpinned by a set of core research aims. The first aim is to trace the existence of and establish why a nature-themed continuity runs through twentieth century tourism campaigns. Historians have offered detailed accounts of the rise of twentieth-century tourism. Julia Horne in the *Pursuit of Wonder* locates the beginnings of mass-tourism in Victorian-era Australia, and in their book *Holiday Business*, Jim Davidson and Peter Spearritt explain how the industry grew to prominence in the twentieth century.[34] Adjacent to these overarching histories of Australian tourism are works that consider the improvements in transport technology, or that focus on individual experiences, journals and diaries of tourists.[35] Valuable

[32] Thomas Dunlap discusses the 'stickiness' of 'nature' as a term, settling on its definition as 'culture's understanding of the land and the living creatures on it.' On this level, says Dunlap, nature can be 'roughly but usefully divided into plants, animals, landscape, and climate.' See: Thomas Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora,* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999), 4-5.

[33] Mimmo Cozzolino, *Symbols of Australia*, (Penguin Books: Melbourne, 1980); Harper and White, *Symbols of Australia.*

[34] Davidson and Spearritt, *Holiday Business*; Julia Horne, *The Pursuit of Wonder: How Australia's Landscape was Explored, Nature Discovered and Tourism Unleashed*, (Melbourne, Miegunyah Press: 2005).

[35] For works that examine the effect of modern transport technology on travel see: Peter Putnis, 'The British transoceanic steamship press in nineteenth-century India and Australia: An overview', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 31:91, (2007); Justine

as these accounts are for their insight into the consumer experience, they pay little attention to the continuity between promotional organisations. As researchers of tourism and business Nina Mistilis and Neil Leiper argue there is a 'paucity of documented information about tourism institutions.'[36] This research aims to fill this gap. From the early efforts of the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau to promote Australia as a nation, described here in the first chapter, through to the highly commercial 1980s campaigns of the Australian Tourist Commission described in the last, there is a consistency of message, purpose, strategy and imagery that connects each organisation and campaign.

Existing scholarship has not identified and fully explored the origins of Australia's national advertising industry – a major focus of this thesis. Departing from past accounts of Australian tourism history, I argue that the responsibility for national advertising was first held in a de facto sense by the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau. The innovations and strategies first tested in NSW were later adopted by the Victorian Railways, overlooked as the organisation most responsible for steering the course of national advertising in the first half of the twentieth century. The Victorian Railways' modernisation of tourist advertising for Victoria marks a seminal moment in Australian advertising history that informed the creation of the Australian National Travel Association (1929), which became the Australian Tourist Commission in 1967. Charles Holmes, a key figure of this thesis, was head of the Victorian Railways' advertising wing in the 1920s. At the end of that decade, he parlayed his experience running state tourism campaigns into the creation and operation of ANTA, where he was managing director between 1929 and 1958. ANTA and the ATC presaged what is today Tourism Australia. Established in 2004, Tourism Australia is a corporate Commonwealth entity that oversees Australia's fourth largest export industry, employing five per cent of Australia's workforce and contributing over $60 billion annually to the national GDP.[37] Today we might take tourism for granted as a major industry, but Australia's eventual success in this venture was not always guaranteed. This thesis outlines some of the domestic, international, social and economic obstacles that proponents of Australian tourism overcame throughout the twentieth century, contextualising the rise of a travel industry against Australia's socio-political, cultural and environmental conditions. Its unique contribution is that it places Australia's environment and nature, key selling points in every campaign, at the centre of Australia's tourist history.

Greenwood, 'Driving through history: the car, The Open Road, and the making of history tourism in Australia, 1920–1940', *Journal of Tourism History*, 3:1 (2011), 21-37; Georgine Clarsen, 'Tracing the Outline Of Nation: Circling Australia by Car', *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 13, no. 3 (1999): 359-69. For works that document the travel experience through contemporary diaries see: Horne, *The Pursuit of Wonder*; Russell McGregor, 'Excursions Through Emptiness: Interwar Travel Writing on Northern Australia.' *Journal of Australian Studies* 41:4, 2017, 421–34; Richard White, "The Retreat from Adventure: Popular Travel Writing in the 1950s", *Australian Historical Studies* 27:109 (1997), 90–105; Angela Woollacott, 'All This Is the Empire, I Told Myself": Australian Women's Voyages "Home" and the Articulation of Colonial Whiteness', *American Historical Review* 102:4, (1997).

[36] Nina Mistlis, Neil Leiper, 'The Australian Tourist Commission's Early Years viewed by former senior managers', *Tourism, Culture & Communication* 2, (2000), 19.

[37] *State of the Industry 2018-19,* Tourism Research Australia, Canberra, 1.

Within tourism organisations, personnel, strategies and ideas had a curious way of moving from one place to another. While a handful of studies have linked the centrality of these individuals to the history of government supported national advertising, few have considered their contribution to an enduring national image of Australia that to this day remains heavily laden with symbols of nature and environment.[38] As important as the managers that led these organisations are the creatives who worked for them. Famous commercial artists James Northfield and Percy Trompf, for instance, contributed to the campaigns of several different organisations. Sometimes artists contributed works to organisations with competing aims, as we shall see in chapter three's account of advertising the national capital, Canberra. Each new generation of promoters incorporated the ideas and strategies of their predecessors into new campaigns, and a recurring theme of this thesis is an explanation of how these cycles of innovation occurred. In charting the course of national advertising across the century, as well as situating advertising campaigns within the public appearances and writings of the movement's main characters, a clearer view emerges of how symbols of Australia's nature and scenery have remained a pertinent and core aspect of the national image.

My second aim is to illuminate the role of tourist advertising as it relates to histories of Australia's transition from a dispersed collection of colonies to a unified Commonwealth. Whenever a nation is born, there arises a need to create images that give the citizens of that nation a shared sense of what that place is. In Australia, I argue, images that shaped, reflected, and documented the idea of a nation can be found in the country's rich historical record of state and national tourist advertising. I argue that the proponents for a strong national advertising culture oftentimes held, and believed that they intuited in their audience, a belief in a unified Australia that prevailed over the parochial rivalries that rived the federal project long after the colonies formed the Commonwealth in 1901. Travel, and the images that encouraged people to travel, played a role in eroding the boundaries and rivalries between the competitive colonies.

A third aim, closely related to the second, is the identification of a prominent trope in tourist advertising which advanced the notion that the climate, and the environment generally, positively shaped the character and disposition of Australian people. Advertising's suggestion that Australians, in particular those of Anglo-Saxon heritage, held some kind of innate appetite for a fun, outdoor life, appears as a common refrain in much twentieth-century advertising. But this idea has a deep and, I argue, overlooked environmental dimension. Promoters held that Australia's environment, with its plentiful sunlight and warm climate, had an indelible effect on the nation's people – who were, said the advertising, taller,

[38] Hetherington, *James Northfield and the Art of Selling Australia*. Colin Symes has written two articles analysing the posters of the Victorian Railways in the interwar period, though these works do not directly deal with how VR used nature in advertising images. See: Colin Symes, "Motion pictures: an analysis of the posters of Victorian Railways during the 1920s and 1930s," *Journal of Tourism History* 7, (2015), 210-227, and Symes, '"Even Our 2nd Class Cars are More Comfortable Than Motor Buses!": An Analysis of Victorian Railway Posters Between the Wars,' *Journal of Australian Studies 40* (2016).

more attractive, more relaxed, healthier and, perhaps consequently, wealthier, than their counterparts in comparable democratic nations elsewhere.[39] Geoffrey Blainey has pondered climate's effect on the Australian disposition, observing that Australians dreaded the heat and sunlight in the nineteenth century Australia but embraced them at some point in the twentieth: 'I am not sure in which decade this new attitude to heat in Australia became visible, but one answer would be to scan old photographs in order to see when manual labourers began rolling up their shirt sleeves', he writes.[40] Perhaps a more qualitative way to trace this transition is to survey Australia's vast visual record of mass-produced tourist advertising. In carrying out such an undertaking, this thesis traces how attitudes to heat, climate and weather became central tenets of Australian national tourist advertising, offering insights into how, when, and why Australia started to gain a reputation for its sunlight, the outdoor lifestyle it afforded the nation's people, and the ways in which environmental conditions became entwined with the Australian character.

A fourth and final aim is to add a personal dimension to the history of Australian tourism advertising by shedding light on the figures who created and curated it. While this work is by no means a biography of these people, it does contain biographical information that provides new insights into Australian tourism promotion. The lives and experiences of those who served in national advertising institutions can throw great light on the operations and culture of the national advertising industry, while also providing insights into the history and identity of Australia. Why did those at the heart of national advertising make Australia's environmental imagery such a central aspect of their publicity? My research in the archives of Australia's tourism promoters has shown that the people driving the image of Australia in advertising were hardly advocates for nature conservation. They did not represent an environmental movement, and they rarely advocated for environmental causes. Like many of the visitors to the destinations they advertised, they spent more time in the city, where they lived and worked, than in the bush or at the beach. The archival record of the key institutions indicates that they were populated with people that held the same ranging, but proximate, views. They also shared the political and racial convictions of the audience they targeted. Promoters perceived that Australia's environment and nature, its scenery, climate and native plants and animals, were of major interest to audiences within and outside Australia, in no small part because they shared this interest themselves.

Promoters (and their likely audience)

This thesis brings to light the activities and legacies of several integral figures of twentieth century tourism. Australia's foremost promoter of tourism in the first half of the twentieth century was Harold W. Clapp, the driving figure in ANTA's formation (1929). The chairman of ANTA until 1952, Clapp

[39] The idea that an invigorating climate occasioned superior civilisations has deep historical antecedents, see Geoffrey Blainey, 'Cold and White: The Role of Climate and Race', in *The Great Seesaw: A New View of the Western World, 1750-2000,* (MacMillan Press: London, 1988), 121-138.
[40] Geoffrey Blainey, 'Climate and Australia's History', *Melbourne Historical Journal* 10, (1971), 9.

belonged to a generation of bureaucrats and administrators that Blainey tells us, 'held the public's esteem to a degree not exceeded today by any similar group in any capital city.'[41] While Clapp has been the focus of some scholarship on early-twentieth century progressive reform, little is known about his contribution to Australia's tourist industry.[42] Less well-known than Clapp are a cast of boosters and bureaucrats largely elided from wider histories of Australian nation-building. These figures include Percy Hunter, director of the New South Wales Tourist Bureau from 1905-14; Charles Holmes (ANTA managing director 1929-52) and Basil Atkinson, who became ANTA's general manager in 1957 and oversaw its transition to the ATC in 1967. Also important are the artists, photographers and printing specialists that contributed their varied talents to the national advertising enterprise. The focus of this thesis is on the vision of Australia these people superintended, and not on the people themselves. Nevertheless, I have added the occasional biographical detail in order to add a personal dimension to the images and texts they curated, created and circulated. In so doing, I hope the reader will come to understand the idiosyncrasies, flaws and character traits that made these people human – regular people, who at least to some degree, shared a common vision of Australia with the tourists they were attempting to appeal to in their advertising.

As important as these publicity experts are the audience to whom they addressed their campaigns. Advertisers fostered a predominantly middle-class, aspirational image of tourist destinations. As Susie Khamis writes of Bushells tea, first introduced to Australian consumers in 1895, the brand 'fashioned an image closely tied to a distinctly middle-class mindset, as this was the most compelling force in the 19th century Australian marketplace'.[43] Likewise, tourist advertisers operating throughout the twentieth century cultivated advertising that they thought would best resonate with the urban middle class, whose relative wealth, increased leisure time and emerging consumer desires, such as being seen as respectable by way of possessing sought-after products and experiences, positioned them as the foremost consumers for nature-based tourism. Though this thesis is not exclusively concerned with framing advertisements through the lens of class, the middle class resembled the largest consumer demographic in twentieth-century Australia and national tourism promoters created most advertising with this in mind.[44] The foremost historian of advertising in Australia, Robert Crawford points out that advertisers in Australia have long envisaged the consumer 'as a rational, middle-class individual' because doing so endowed

[41] Blainey, *A History of Victoria,* 187.
[42] For an insight into the contribution of Harold Clapp to modernism and consumerism in Australia see John Sinclair, "Making the Market Modern: Sir Harold Clapp, Engineer of Consumption" in *Consumer Australia: Historical Perspectives,* ed. Robert Crawford, Judith Smart and Kim Humphery, (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 27-38; John Sinclair, 'Agents of 'Americanisation': Individual entrepreneurship and the genesis of consumer industries', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 31 (2007); Katie Holmes and Kylie Mirmohamadi, 'All Aboard the Train for Modernity: The Better Farming Train', *Agricultural History*, (2017), 215-238.
[43] Susie Khamis, "Class in a Tea Cup: The Bushell's Brand, 1895–1920," in *Consumer Australia: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Robert Crawford, Judith Smart, and Kim Humphrey (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 14.
[44] Woodward, 'Selling Mount Buffalo', 372.

'their wares with a greater sense of respectability.'[45] Similarly tourism promoters perceived that travelling required at least a modest disposable income. They catered to the consumer they imagined could spend both time and money. Nevertheless, advertisers did little to discourage those with slighter budgets. So, while much advertising was aimed at an imagined middle-class, it was aspirational too. It follows that the imagery and symbols promoters thought effective in attracting consumers spoke to and reflected twentieth century middle-class attitudes, while also potentially speaking to the values of those people on either side of this demographic.

Promoters, like their audiences, had anxieties. Pervasive in the documentary record of the promotional organisations are concerns about strategic and economic security, and about Australia's distance from the rest of the English-speaking world. Sometimes advertising, even if steeped in images of nature, betrayed the acutely felt essence of such concerns. Over the course of the twentieth century, Australia experienced a gradual shift away from its British roots towards a firmer sense of national self-identification.[46] The ways in which Australian tourist advertising depended on nature to carry its message that people should take holidays offers a revelatory account of the emergence, solidification and changing identity of twentieth-century Australia. The nation's colonies came together in 1901 as a federation, but only narrowly, and after the first referendum had failed.[47] How was this transition reflected in advertising that sought to capture the imagination of a settler Australian public making sense of its new nationalism? How does advertising reflect contemporary anxieties about Australia's place on the global stage, and insecurity over its distance from the old world? Because advertising produces an image that is calculated to resonate with the broadest possible audience, each image, description, and photograph deployed with a view of selling a place sheds light on the social concerns of the people and society that produced and consumed these texts. In its exploration of national advertising this thesis seeks to explain the degree to which national advertising was shaped by the experience of those who worked in the industry, while also reflecting on how these individuals attempted to synthesise the demands and anxieties of their audience in the material they created.

Advertisements, while providing us with a perspective on the time and culture in which they were created, also help us map those needs and desires that have not changed at all – and in this thesis I trace the consistencies that persist across advertising campaigns as much as the ways in which these campaigns reveal the particularities of a certain time and place. Despite significant societal and economic change

[45] Robert Crawford, 'Selling modernity: advertising and the construction of the culture of consumption in Australia, 1900-1950', *(2006)*, 24-25.
[46] See Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity', 76-90; McGregor, 'The Necessity of Britishness', 494; Geoffrey Blainey, *A Shorter History of Australia*, (Sydney: 2014), 170; Jared van Duinen, 'Bodyline, the British World and the Evolution of an Australian National Identity', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, No. 2, (2015), 250–264; Davison, "The Imaginary Grandstand.", 4–18.
[47] John Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: The Making of Australian Commonwealth*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 178-200.

in twentieth-century Australia, there were strong continuities in advertising imagery. Much of what promoters believed appealed to a tourist in 1905, when this inquiry begins, later generations of promoters still estimated appealed to a tourist at the end of the 1980s, when the scope of this inquiry ends. I suggest that certain images and tropes have persisted throughout the century, and if they were ever retired, had a habit of reappearing later in new iterations. Sunshine, warm temperatures, abundant scenery and easy access to outdoor recreation were perennial images in the twentieth-century vision of Australia advanced in tourist advertising. There was a continuing appeal in Australian national advertising for humans to experience nature – an appeal that has completely permeated any significant national advertising undertaken since 1905.

Why, despite all the social and cultural changes afoot in twentieth Australia, do these images seem to appeal across generations? As the historian Peter Coates argues, nature offered a powerful symbol to settler nations searching for their own identity. In the United States, settlers saw the 'absence of castles, cathedrals and other ennobling adornments', all determinants of old-world cultural identity, as conspicuous. In the new world, settlers recruited nature for 'patriotic purposes.'[48] In the United States this recruitment of nature had overt puritanical dimensions, which by comparison makes Australia's experience seem rather more secular. Australian tourism images sought to recruit nature for purposes of nationalism, but the conditions of the Australian experience remained unique. In Australia, the celebration of nature and environment in tourist advertising reflected a twentieth-century preoccupation with projecting a confident image of a nation and its people. Home-grown insecurities about Australia's legitimacy, its inferiority to and dependence on Britain, and the question marks around whether its environment degraded the racial stock, perceived by some as too hot and too harsh for settlement, all factored in tourist advertising that offered an alternative, positive vision of Australia's environment.

The nation follows the image of itself carried in advertising closely. People look to tourist advertising as a measure against their own experience. It informs their perception of where they fit into the nation's 'imagined community.' It also gives people a sense of what the world might think about them. Advertising images circulated in Australia and overseas are therefore a useful source for historians interested in how the nation is imagined, from outside and within. Graeme Davison observes how Australians have often exhibited a concern for how the outside world perceives them – a concern that was not always commensurate with the level of actual foreign interest! 'When Australians seek to describe their national identity they are often playing to the imaginary grandstand', he writes. Davison argues that this tendency is born from a determination to 'win the good opinion of Mother England' that dates back to Australia's colonial roots.[49] Indeed, as John Hirst writes, much Australian behaviour, nationally

[48] Peter Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes Since Ancient Times*, (Cambridge, Polity, 1998), 108.
[49] Graeme Davison, 'The imaginary grandstand.' *Meanjin* 61, no. 3 (2002): 4-18.

and abroad, has been prompted by a desire to avoid being thought of as second-rate.[50] Davison's and Hirst's idea that a preoccupation with how Australia is perceived from the outside informs this thesis's investigation into how and why proponents of national advertising, for much of the twentieth century, maintained a dogged fixation with projecting a positive image of Australia abroad.

Scope, Sources and Methodology

I have limited the focus to the advertising campaigns of a handful of organisations, each selected because of their major contribution to national advertising. States and territories often had independent agendas in attracting their share of the tourist dollar, and their campaigns form a small but important part of this thesis's appraisal of twentieth century tourist advertising. Though some chapters include a limited description of state and local campaigns, to include an in-depth analysis of every state's advertising is too great an undertaking for a project whose primary focus is on 'national' advertising. It is therefore important to point out here that though many of the publicity materials and advertising campaigns that I have selected for analysis featured specific places (Sydney, Canberra, or the Great Barrier Reef, for example), that national advertising campaigns enshrined these locations as places that were representative of the nation. Often advertising images bore the capitalised title 'AUSTRALIA', indicating how tourist sites were representative of a body politic or national identity that was larger than any one place. Local visions, at various times differed from or coalesced with the national vision offered by the centralised organisations tasked with selling the nation as a whole. By bringing to light how a certain vision was contested as the 'true vision' of that place, this thesis offers insights into the ideas and debates different groups had about national culture and identity.

The claim that national advertising's dependence on environmental themes remained relatively stable throughout the century is supported by this thesis's inclusion and analysis of a wide basis of advertising materials. Visual sales aids, including, but not limited to, posters, brochures, print advertisements and commercial magazine content, which depict Australia's nature, scenery, climate, and other environmental attributes, form the primary evidence for this inquiry. The following is not exclusively a visual analysis, but also a textual one, drawing from the advertising copy that promoters used to create what interwar advertisers called 'word pictures' of a tourist destination. To support the analysis of these materials, I draw extensively from the archives of promotional organisations, which in many cases offer an insight into the image-making process and importantly, whether or not promoters thought various campaigns successful. Annual reports, internal correspondence, public statements and, later in the century, consultant's findings and market research surveys, offer useful data on visitor numbers, organisational goals and the financial and social challenges that organisations faced. Though these archival sources are useful in understanding the operations of these organisations they do not always

[50] John Hirst, *Sense and Nonsense in Australian History*, (Black Inc: Melbourne, 2009), 25.

give an indication of why certain editorial decisions were made, or why one image was selected over another in framing national and international campaigns. They must also be read with care and a degree of scepticism, for they were written by people who had a flare for publicity and were not shy of harnessing such talents for the promotion of their own self-interests!

In order to better piece together an empirical picture of the beliefs and ideas underwriting tourism promotion, I look throughout the thesis towards the popular press. The public statements of key industry actors were frequently reported in national coverage. Sometimes promoters penned their own pieces in the leading dailies as well, informing the readership on the latest efforts to foster tourism. Throughout the century newspaper editors perceived that the nation's presentation in advertising was of interest to their readers, and journalists and editors offered their own appraisal of various tourist campaigns, as well as features and articles on the people who managed them. As we shall see, promoters were well-affiliated with the press, some even had backgrounds in the media, and they therefore knew well how to use it to good effect. Press coverage of national advertising must therefore be read critically, while noting that it cannot be overlooked as an important accompanying source to the 'official' record.

Tourist advertising was sometimes a contested site between local and national promoters, and the dissonance between competing advertising images gives us an insight into the contemporary discourses around national sites. Exploring tensions between locally and nationally situated promoters illuminates the idea of the nation, and the varying perceptions of it held by different communities and organisations. In the 1930s, for example, competing visions of Canberra in local and national advertising were a flashpoint in the interwar politics of decentralisation. The 1960s, however, saw cooperation between ANTA and the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau in advancing a vision of the Great Barrier Reef that these organisations thought amenable to both local and national tastes. What caused local and national promoters to cooperate in some instances, but to argue in others? At the heart of this question lie important insights into the national and regional identities that have existed within Australia since Federation. As indicated above, this thesis makes an important contribution to existing scholarship in its exploration of the Australian national image in the context of the political and economic ideas influential to Australia's twentieth century expansion and development.

The effort to expand travel had a spiritual dimension too. Travel's educational and social promise was as important as any economic motivations concerned with profits. Proponents of an expanded travel industry argued for its capacity in breaking down barriers, reducing parochialism and prejudice, and fostering a sense of civic and national pride by educating people about their country. In this sense, national advertising had overt cosmopolitan, as well as nationalist, dimensions, arising out of promoter's preoccupations with Australia as an emerging nation. Mark Hearn writes of the 'double consciousness' that characterised fin de siècle Australia, where 'old forms and new forces clashed and sometimes

uneasily merged in a fragile trajectory towards twentieth-century modernity – between mysticism and scientific rationality, the emergence of pluralist philosophy and nationalism in contest with cosmopolitanism or transnational ideas and movements.'[51] Images that carried the idea of the Australian nation in advertising have always been fraught with competing and discordant spiritual, intellectual and cultural ideas, which persisted well into the twentieth century.[52] Following Hearn, I hold that each era of promotion offers a window onto how the nation continuously attempted to reconcile the contradictory and complicated historical roots of its foundation and settlement.

Though they did not always do so correctly, national advertising organisations had a knack for interpreting popular opinion. Resultantly, the materials they produced offer a revelatory insight into prevailing trends and ideas in the periods in which they operated. Examples of questions that this thesis asks of advertising sources include: How did national advertising record the absorption and implementation of progressivism in early-twentieth century Australia? To what extent were national advertising campaigns aimed at improving Australia's reputation overseas borne from anxieties about the nation's past? Why did successive proponents of national advertising argue that the national image was in the national interest? Each chapter explores such questions, connecting the advertising material produced in any given period with the intellectual, cultural and political trends that historians have documented as having a profound impact on Australia's overarching moral and political character. Investigating the contexts in which advertising material has emerged calls on the vast historiography of Australian cultural history, particularly the works of historians such as Graeme Turner and John Rickard, who have sought in their work explanations for the social and cultural characteristics that make Australia distinctive.[53]

Each chapter includes multiple advertising texts and images. Situating these texts in the wider context of each promotional organisation's documentary archive, I ask of each document a set of recurring questions. What were the social, political, and economic contexts of each advertisement? What motivated promoters to publish a particular advertising text? How did each individual advertisement appear in the context of wider publicity campaigns? Did they belong, for example, to overarching campaigns to help sell the nation? How did advertising editors and the staff working under them intuit audience expectations? Market research played an increasing role in informing promotional material and, where the documentary record permits, I have included evidence that gives an insight into the decision-making of the executives, editors, photographers, and artists that drove advertising creation.

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[51] Mark Hearn, *The Fin de Siècle Imagination in Australia, 1890-1914*, (Bloomsbury: London, 2022), 1-2; Mark Hearn, 'Originally French but Afterwards Cosmopolitan: Australians Interpret the Fin de Siècle', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 43:3 (2019), 365-380.
[52] Scholars have recently argued that there is perhaps less of a conflict between cosmopolitanism and political nationalism than once thought, see: Craig Calhoun, 'Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism* 14:3, (2008), 427–448.
[53] John Rickard, *Australia: a Cultural History*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1996); Graeme Turner, *Making it National: Nationalism and Australian Popular Culture* (NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1994).

Interrogating advertising sources for their contribution to the national image, one cannot help but want to know how audiences received them. It is, nonetheless, outside of the scope of this thesis to attempt a study of how contemporary readers interpreted advertising material. Indeed, as Mitchell Rolls writes of ANTA's *Walkabout* magazine (1934-1974), the varied responses of readers to imagery are, in the main, unknowable, and 'such information can no longer be reliably obtained.'[54] Importantly though, as Australian environmental historian Andrea Gaynor points out, when using commercial media as a historical source it remains 'necessary to consider what readers, listeners or viewers are likely to do with the content of the messages.'[55]

Following Gaynor, I argue that tourist advertising sought to resemble closely the types of experiences that were possible for a tourist to undertake. Tourist promoters, ranging from editors to artists, had a general awareness of audience expectations, informed as they were by audience feedback, sales figures, and engagement with the readership through correspondence. Moreover, copywriters, editors, photographers, and other advertising staff belonged to the same strata of society and held many of the same aspirations as those they targeted. The subject positions they invited readers to occupy were informed by their own awareness of audience values and expectations – an awareness they intuited from belonging to the same class of non-Indigenous, predominantly (but not exclusively), middle-class Australians that they targeted. Furthermore, advertising invited consumers to visit tourist destinations where they might participate in recreational activities, and experiment with identities, that offered them the opportunity to be a part of a modern nation.[56] In this way, advertisements provided an indication of the tourist experience imagined by the promotional organisation and its readers, including the kind of experiences that readers, as would-be tourists, could expect to encounter.

Those promoting Australia as a destination for tourism conjured an image that was, more often than not, populated by people that looked and, within certain parameters, thought like they did. Nevertheless, as Fiona Paisley points out, the expansion of modern rail networks and increased opportunity for travel in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries heralded a new era of interest in settler tourist

[54] For a thorough argument against deterministic readings of *Walkabout* magazine, see: Mitchell Rolls, "Picture imperfect: re-reading imagery of Aborigines in *Walkabout*," *Journal of Australian Studies* 33, (2009). Rolls cites the following as problematic critiques of *Walkabout*: M E McGuire, 'Whiteman's walkabout', *Meanjin*, vol. 52, no. 3, (1993), 517-525; Glen Ross, "The fantastic face of the continent: the Australian geographical Walkabout magazine," *Southern Review*, vol. 32, no. 1, 1999, 27-41; Jill Barnes, 'Crystallising identities: the imagining of the centralian patroller tradition for tourism marketing purposes, 1929-1958', Strehlow Conference: Traditions in the Midst of Change, Strehlow Research Centre, Alice Springs, 2002, 151-167.

[55] Andrea Gaynor, "Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Suburban Food Production in Perth and Melbourne, 1880–2000" (PhD thesis, University of Western Australia, 2001), 8–10. See also: Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," in Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79, eds. Stuart Hall, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe and Paul Willis, (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, 1980), 128-138. P. Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, (London, Routledge: 1986).

[56] Josh Woodward, 'Glorious in Spring, Exhilarating in Winter: Advertising Mount Buffalo in *Walkabout* Magazine, 1934–1939', *Australian Historical Studies*, 55:3, 544-564.

experiences of Aboriginal culture.[57] Historians have documented well a burgeoning settler demand for tourism to Aboriginal reserves and missions, such as Lake Tyers in Victoria, that coincided with the expanding railway network.[58] As this interest grew, promoters began to depict Indigenous people in advertising images, usually relegating them to remote regions, and in so doing, reducing them to a pan-Aboriginal stereotype.[59] As I have argued elsewhere, implicit Indigenous absence and explicit settler presence reinforced the desirability of tourist resorts as modern places in a modern nation.[60] While advertising for the desert centre of the continent, or the remote north, featured Indigenous themes, advertising for cities and the tourist spots nearby generally did not. Blainey identifies the irony that tourist literature often describes places such as the Tasmanian old growth forests as 'primeval', even though they were once inhabited by Indigenous people.[61] Indeed, as Australian environmental historian Jarrod Hore tells us in his study of colonial era photography, settler-created images of nature and landscape undeniably disguised histories of Indigenous presence.[62] Much twentieth century national advertising extended this practise, bar the emergence of a handful of posters and sales materials that co-opted Indigenous themes – exceptions that, as the saying goes, prove the rule.

Tourist advertising often conflated Indigenous people with nature, with the intention of, as Rolls states, 'delineating the imagined and desired progress of the settler nation.'[63] The critical point here, as much of the advertising imagery discussed in the following chapters suggests, is that tourist promoters overwhelmingly did not estimate Indigenous presence to be of interest to a predominantly white, urban, settler audience, at least not for most of the twentieth century.[64] In each chapter, I allude to how tourist promotion organisations variously excluded and included Indigenous Australians. The archival record shows that organisations such as the New South Wales Tourist Bureau, the Australian National Travel Association did have policies, even if they were vague or ambiguously written, towards how Indigenous people should appear, or not appear, in publicity materials. In the closing decades of the century, the Australian Tourist Commission also had its own views as to how Indigenous Australians might feature (explored in detail in Chapter Six). While it is beyond the analytical framework of this thesis to definitively appraise how Indigenous people and culture appeared in each and every tourism campaign, any insights it contains into how advertising images say something about the nation and the people that

[57] Fiona Paisley, 'No back streets in the Bush: 1920s and 1930s pro-aboriginal white women's activism and the trans-Australia railway, *Australian Feminist Studies*, 12:25, (1997) 119-137. See also: Shannyn Palmer, *Unmaking Angas Downs: Myth and History on a Central Australian Pastoral Station*, (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press: 2022), 106-109.
[58] Nikita Vanderbyl, "'The Happiest Time of my Life': Emotive Visitor Books and Early Mission Tourism to Victoria's Aboriginal Reserves," *Aboriginal History* 41, (2017), 96.
[59] Gordon Waitt, 'Selling Paradise and Adventure: Representations of Landscape in the Tourist Advertising of Australia', *Australian Geographical Studies*, 35:1, (1997), 47-60.
[60] Josh Woodward, 'Glorious in Spring', 561-564.
[61] Geoffrey Blainey, *Triumph of the Nomads,* 79.
[62] Hore, *Visions of Nature*, 6.
[63] Rolls, 'Picture Imperfect', 22.
[64] For more on the problematized nature of associating Indigenous people with sites like national parks see: Langton, "What do we mean by wilderness?", 10-15.

live here, are made richer by a consideration of who, and who were not, the central subjects of advertising images.[65]

Histories of Australian photography and landscape painting offer a useful lens for assessing images loaded with national symbolism. Rod Giblett, for example, tells us that the work of Australian landscape photographers 'has played an important role in the formation and maintenance of Australian national and cultural identity.'[66] Historians such as Melissa Miles have written on how early twentieth-century photographers used symbols such as sunlight 'to define the nation in terms of a distinct race of people.'[67] Miles points out that photographers working in the early twentieth century were likely influenced by 'calls for a national photography grounded in Australia's clear, bright sunlight' that had gained momentum since Federation in 1901.'[68] In each chapter I have included illustrations and photographs that formed the basis of twentieth-century national advertising sales materials. Indeed, as Paolo Magagnoli points out, 'some of the most well-known photographers of the time' contributed to *Walkabout* magazine.[69] Building on the insights of Miles and Magagnoli, I argue that much of the nationalistic expression alive in twentieth-century landscape photography applied also to photographic images used in national advertising, adding that photographers working in advertising creation were often abreast of, and even at times at the cutting edge of, contemporary stylistic conventions.[70]

Though they are imperfect at capturing the experience of all Australians, advertising texts nevertheless offer a view of how bringing ideas about Australian nature, citizenship, and identity into the open was a shared project between those who made the advertisements and those who consumed them. Contemporary media perceived a demand amongst their readerships for news relating to the national image. The historian of national advertising is, consequently, afforded much documentary evidence in the form of newspaper reportage and editorial commentary that are a useful means of gauging the degree to which promotional campaigns aligned with popular opinion. In cases where there is cause to believe that contemporary actors or publics may have contested a message or vision advanced in advertising, I have drawn from the newspapers of the day in an effort to understand the basis of their critique. Similarly, if a particular image or campaign appeared to have resonated with consumers, I have

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[65] For an instructive discussion on the problematic nature of Aboriginal recognition in modern media, in particular the notion that how an Indigenous audience interpret media is difficult to know see: Eric Michaels, *Bad Aboriginal Art: Tradition, Media and Technological Horizons,* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press: 1994), 118-123.

[66] Rod Giblett, 'Shooting the Sunburnt Country, the Land of Sweeping Plains, the Rugged Mountain Ranges: Australian Landscape and Wilderness Photography', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 21, 2007, 335. See also: Sue Smith, *Queensland Pictorialist Photography* (Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 1984) and Helen Ennis, 'Postwar Australian Landscape photography: Olive Cotton and Max Dupain', *History of Photography* 23 (1999); A.M. Willis, *Picturing Australia: A History of Photography* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1988), 61.

[67] Melissa Miles, "Light Nation, and Place in Australian Photography", *Photography and Culture* 6, 2013, 262.

[68] Melissa Miles, 'Out of the Shadows: On Light, Darkness and Race in Australian Photography', *History of Photography*, 345.

[69] Paolo Magagnoli, '"A Library of Photographs Covering the Entire Continent": Walkabout Magazine and the Politics of Documentary in Post-War Australia.' *Photography and Culture*13:1 (2020), 34.

[70] Woodward, 'Making a modern marketing machine', 14-15.

attempted to include and discuss evidence of promoters' success, at least as it was recorded by promoters themselves, and by the media of the day.

Advertising, the nation, nature and the national image

Most of the sources I draw on, such as tourism posters and other visual and textual ephemera, contain depictions of nature and the environment. It is therefore important to situate these materials in environmental history, where there have been longstanding critiques of popular notions of nature, wilderness, and national parks. However, there remains, in the words of Melissa Harper, a paucity of research into how Australians have understood leisure and recreation activities as contributing positively to national identity and culture.[71] Setting this thesis apart from much environmental scholarship is that its central concern is with man-made depictions of the environment in advertising, rather than with the environment directly. Environmentalist narratives have been more traditionally concerned with the effect of people on the environment than the effect of the environment on the people.[72] Advertising sources that draw on the environmental attributes of a place, whether a specific tourist destination, or the attraction of a nation itself, offer an insight into how contemporaries might have perceived the ways in which the environment could improve their quality of life. All history is environmental in that it is rare to find a set of human affairs that is not in some way shaped by the material realities of the settings in which they took place.

Of major significance to this research is Australian and international scholarship relating to advertising, and its emergence as a professional industry over the course of the twentieth century. There already exists some research that is at the nexus of environmental scholarship and advertising, or advertising and the nation, or environmental scholarship and the nation, but there are few studies that bring all three into focus.[73] This research seeks to draw together these three fields and offers new interventions into how nature-related symbols have shaped and reflected ideas and perceptions about the settler attachment to the land and a sense of national belonging.

Historians of Australian advertising have chronicled the development and professionalisation of the Australian advertising industry.[74] Robert Crawford, the foremost historian of advertising in Australia, has traced the growth of the profession from one untrusted by the public at the turn of the twentieth

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[71] Harper, 'Locating histories of bush-based recreation', 2.
[72] Richard White, 'The Nationalization of Nature.' *The Journal of American History* 86:3, (1999): 976–86.
[73] Khamis, 'Brand Australia'; Jackie Hogan, 'Gender, ethnicity and national identity in Australian and Japanese television advertisements', *National Identities* 7:2 (2005), 193–211; Graeme Turner, *Making it National: Nationalism and Australian Popular Culture* (NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1994); Jillian Prideaux, 'Consuming icons: nationalism and advertising in Australia', *Nations and Nationalism* 15:4, (2009), 616–635.
[74] Robert Crawford, "The quest for legitimacy: The growth and development of the Australian advertising industry, 1900–1969," *Australian Historical Studies 36*, (2004), 355-374. For more on the individuals that helped shape the industry in this period see Jackie Dickenson, "'Signor Perugini' and advertising education in Australia," *History Australia* 16:2, (2019) 308-323; David S. Waller, "Truth in Advertising": The Beginning of Advertising Ethics in Australia, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 27:1, (2012), 46-56; Dickenson, The past in Australian Advertising, 1906-2010, *Journal of Australian Studies,* 36:1 (2012), 65-79.

century into a sophisticated and legitimate enterprise by the late 1960s.[75] Accounts such as Crawford's, and the work of advertising historian Jackie Dickenson, have helped explain the emergence of consumer brands and commercial products in the context of the widespread availability of goods that exploded in the early twentieth century and continued to grow throughout.[76] These advertising histories ask how marketers adapted printed materials and other forms of ephemera to historical and socio-economic changes. Crawford and Dickenson have written an account of the advertising industry spanning three decades of the mid- to late- twentieth century. Their book *Behind Glass Doors: The World of Australian Advertising Agencies, 1959-1989*, is an illuminating account of the unique culture of the advertising industry in its 'Golden Era' in Australia.[77] Though the Australian advertising industry operated with fewer resources and a more casual operational outlook than contemporary industries in the US and Britain, it was an era marked by creativity. The activities of agencies such as Mojo, who held the account for the Australian Tourist Commission in the 1980s, were informed by a corporate culture underpinned by a brash form of Australianness.[78]

In spite of these investigations into the corporate history of Australian advertising, rarely has advertising scholarship investigated how the state and its affiliated institutions embraced modern advertising to promote tourist assets, such as national parks, cities, and other destinations. Importantly, there is little in the way of an Australian history that relates to Australian nature as an important symbol in twentieth-century advertising campaigns. As Dickenson notes, advertising scholarship has yet to examine the 'relationship between Australian national identity and consumerism.'[79] Crawford, Dickenson and Richard Nile have written on how professional advertisers drew on and combined ideas of the bush and the Australian spirit to sell commercial products.[80] However, a deeper understanding of national identity and its mobilisation can be gleaned by a closer study of the nature-based tourism promotion created by state affiliated organisations, such as tourist bureaus, railways and national travel associations such as ANTA and later, the Australian Tourist Commission. In fact, there is a reasonable basis of evidence to suggest that the foundations of creative advertising practises and culture that are celebrated in the later part of the century were first brought to Australia by boosters and bureaucrats responsible for national tourism advertising. This line of inquiry, guided by some of the frameworks and ideas pertinent to advertising history, also offers insights into the relationship between nature and consumerism.[81]

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[75] Crawford, *But Wait, There's More!*
[76] Carolyn Fraser, 'The Poster Ball Craze', *Etsy Journal* 27 (2012); Jackie Dickenson, 'Living Advertisements': The Poster Ball in Australia', *Australian Historical Studies* 53:3 (2022), 452-472.
[77] Crawford and Dickenson, *Behind Glass Doors: The World of Australian Advertising Agencies, 1959-1989*, (Perth: UWA Press,
[78] Frank Bongiorno 'Don't wait to be told': the golden age of the Australian advertising agency, *History Australia*, 15:1 (2018), 184-185; Robert Crawford, 'Culture and the multinational advertising agency: the rise and fall of Mojo-MDA, 1964-1991', *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 12:1, (2020), 168.
[79] Dickenson, 'The past in Australian Advertising,' 66.
[80] Nile, *The Australian Legend and its Discontents;* Jackie Dickenson, "The past in Australian advertising, 1906-2010"; Robert Crawford, *But Wait, There's More.*
[81] Colin Symes, "Motion pictures" and "'Even Our 2nd Class Cars are More Comfortable."

Critically, the advertising industry was not exclusively developed by the private sector, and state-employed promoters made important and far-reaching contributions to the modernisation of advertising in Australia.[82] Dating back to the work of W.K. Hancock there is a rich historical record of the statism that has been an enduring feature of Australia's political economy, yet little remains known about how state supported tourism promotion emerged from this tradition.[83] Accounts of the Australian professional advertising business have tended to overlook the contribution of state affiliated institutions, namely the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau, the Victorian Railways and later ANTA, in making improvements and innovations in advertising that appeared in advance of those in the commercial industry.[84] These state-based or state-affiliated organisations were abreast of, and sought to improve on, developments in the international advertising industry.[85] Crawford makes the salient point that even 'improvements occurring within the local advertising industry [by 1920] should not be underestimated."[86] I would add to his assessment of the Australian advertising industry's capacity for innovation that we should also not underestimate the unique contribution of state and national tourism campaigns to the professionalisation of the advertising industry in Australia. Work such as Crawford's, Hetherington's, Sinclair's and Dickenson's, that seek to explain the rise of advertising and its relationship to national and consumer identities, provides context for my exploration of the artistic and commercial decision-making of tourist promoters, who were operating simultaneously to the rise of advertising as a profession and global industry.[87]

Historians elsewhere have better explored the interrelated nature of tourism and consumer culture in settler societies.[88] The Canadian historian Paula Johanna Saari calls for a closer historical reading of the tourist brochures promoting Canadian national parks. Saari argues that these texts 'have received little attention from scholars', despite Canada's parks having 'merited considerable interest from environmental historians, who have noted the shifting meanings of national parks and the cultural

[82] Hetherington, *James Northfield and the Art of Selling Australia*.
[83] W.K. Hancock, *Australia*, (Ernest Benn, London, 1930)
[84] Woodward, 'Making a modern marketing machine', 15-17.
[85] Woodward, 'Selling Mount Buffalo', 372-73.
[86] Crawford, *The Quest for Legitimacy,* 356.
[87] John Sinclair, "Agents of 'Americanisation': Individual Entrepreneurship and the Genesis of Consumer Industries," *Journal of Australian Studies* 31, no. 90 (2007): 17–33; Hetherington, *James Northfield and the Art of Selling Australia*; Dickenson, 'The past in Australian Advertising'.
[88] Alan MacEachern, *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935-1970* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001); Daniel Francis, *Selling Canada, Three propaganda campaigns that shaped the nation* (Vancouver: Stanton Atkins & Dosil Publishers, 2011); Marguerite Shaffer (ed.), *Rendering Nature: Animals, Bodies, Places, Politics* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Marguerite Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940*, (Smithsonian Books, 2001); Michael Berkowitz, 'A new deal for Leisure: Making Mass Tourism in the Great Depression' in Baranowski & Furlough, eds, *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture and Identity in Modern Europe and North America*. Shelley Baranowski & Ellen Furlough (eds.) (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001); David Louter, W*indshield Wilderness: Cars, Roads and Nature in Washington's National Parks*, (University of Washington Press, 2010); Michael Dawson, "'Travel Strengthens America'? Tourism Promotion in the United States during the Second World War," *Journal of Tourism History* (2011). Rudy Koshar, '"What Ought to Be Seen": Tourists' Guidebooks and National Identities in Modern Germany and Europe', *Journal of Contemporary History* 33:3 (1998): 323–340.

construction of national park nature.'[89] Michael Dawson has written a detailed history of twentieth century tourist promotion in Canada's British Columbia. In *Selling British Columbia* Dawson claims that historians of tourism in North America have tended to focus on the circumstances that allowed the industry to grow – increased leisure time, greater disposable income, and better access to transport. While noting that these observations are important, he claims that historians have overlooked the incorporation of tourism 'into the burgeoning culture of consumption.'[90] Dawson writes that travel 'is as much about purchasing goods and services as it is about obtaining "authentic" experiences.'[91] The birth and development of modern commercial advertising techniques feature heavily in Dawson's account. Few historians of Australian tourism have attempted to investigate the relationship between consumerism and tourism in such a way. Following Dawson, I seek to demonstrate that the history of nature-based tourism in Australia is emblematic of the growing links between consumer and national identity, new developments in technology, the rise of tourism and the national economic interest.

In Australia, promoters throughout the twentieth century aimed to cultivate a commercial tourist industry. In order to achieve greater participation in tourism, promoters had to create advertising that they thought would resonate with the widest possible audience. In their attempts to capture the attention of consumers, advertisers sought out images and language they estimated would emotionally resonate with the underlying values, aspirations, and self-perceptions of their target demographic. Determining the extent to which advertisers either sought to shape, or reflected, contemporary values and behaviour represents an opportunity for this research to make an important contribution to both advertising and environmental history and goes some way in addressing Dickenson's concern, stated above, that there is limited scholarly work on the settler-Australian relationship between national identity and consumerism.

The following analysis of national symbols and how they were deployed in efforts to expand tourism contributes to ongoing debate in Australia about national symbols and whose interests they might serve. 'Australia is a land of symbols', write Melissa Harper and Richard White in the introduction to their edited volume *Symbols of Australia*. Eucalypts, wattle, the kangaroo, Sydney Harbour and the Great Barrier Reef are among the symbols in Harper and White's anthology that make regular appearances in this thesis. Indeed, as Harper and White point out, built structures and natural imagery have signified

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[89] Paula Johanna Saari, 'Marketing Nature: The Canadian National Parks Branch and Constructing the Portrayal of National Parks in Promotional Brochures, 1936–1970', *Environment and History* 21, (2015), 401-402. Australian environmental historian Ian Tyrrell has argued that an exceptionalist American narrative dating back to US historians Roderick Nash and his student, Alfred Runte, 'remains largely intact' even though more recent scholars have undertaken 'extensive historical research' into the social construction of nature. See: Ian Tyrrell, "America's National Parks: The Transnational Creation of National Space in the Progressive Era," *Journal of American Studies* 46, no. 1 (2012). For a clear expression of the exceptionalist narrative see: Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967).

[90] Michael Dawson, *Selling British Columbia: Tourism and Consumer Culture, 1890-1970*, (UBC Press, 2005)), 9-10. For a discussion of public service advertising see: Jeffrey Stine, *Green Persuasion: Advertising, Voluntarism, and America's Lands*, (Washington: Smithsonian Press, 2021).

[91] *Ibid*.

certain ideas about Australia to a home and foreign audience. They argue further that the appearance of these symbols in visual media, particularly in commercial advertising, have explained Australia as a 'country with a leisurely lifestyle, industrial strength and cultural sophistication.'[92]

A prevailing narrative identifiable in much scholarship on national symbols, including Harper's and White's, is the notion that symbols are often 'used and abused' to suit the political or power aims of those who deploy them. In Australia this idea has its genesis in White's 1981 book *Inventing Australia*, in which he argued that 'a national identity is an invention', a false intellectual construct. 'When we look at ideas about national identity', said White, 'we need to ask, not whether they are true or false, but what their function is, whose creation they are, and whose interests they serve.'[93] Though it is over forty years old, and did not pass into publication without critique, the influence of *Inventing Australia* and its analysis of symbols has been enduring.[94] In particular, White's ideas about symbols serving the interests of capitalism are notable for their retention of a prominent foothold in contemporary scholarship.[95]

Following White, some historians have been too quick to dismiss images of national identity as false intellectual constructs that serve the power agenda of a ruling or capitalist elite. Catriona Elder 'extends and rethinks' White's arguments in her 2007 book *Being Australian*, asserting, much as White did, that 'dominant ideas of being Australian are invented' and 'that these inventions have been and continue to be organised around a desire for the land, a fear of others who may claim the land and, as a result of this, a deep ambivalence about belonging to this space.'[96] Jane Lydon, citing Richard White, extends a similar argument. For Lydon, Australian identity and egalitarianism are drawn from visual stereotypes, including the 'wide open spaces of the outback' deployed in service of 'the interests of the powerful and [which] are shaped by racism, capitalism and imperialism'.[97] Though these historians have added valuable contributions to histories of Australian image making, this thesis departs from their interpretations. In contrast to such accounts, I argue that the vision of Australia carried in state and national publicity cannot be reduced to an ideological construct asserting an elite agenda on a passive population. Such a reading does not allow for the civic motivations of promoters, and their participation in a widely embraced cultural program of nation building. Nor does this line of thinking credit consumers of national advertising imagery with sufficient agency, in the words of Rolls, to 'make of an image what they will'.[98]

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[92] Harper and White, *Symbols of Australia*, 20-68.
[93] White, *Inventing Australia,* viii.
[94] Graeme Turner, 'Australian Inventions: Review of *Inventing Australia* and two other publications', *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies,* 1:1, (1983), 120.
[95] On the enduring influence of *Inventing Australia* in late twentieth century Australian historiography see Jessica Carniel, 'Richard White's Inventing Australia: revisiting the invention forty years later', *History Australia*, 18 (2021),156-167.
[96] Catriona Elder, *Being Australian: Narratives of National Identity* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2007).
[97] Lydon, "One People?", 277.
[98] Rolls, 'Picture imperfect', 29.

In contrast to the abovementioned critiques of the national image, this thesis countenances the idea that advertising was a shared project between the people who created and consumed it, and therefore the images of the nation that advertising produced had a wide basis in public opinion. Neville Meaney argues that 'the nature of the dominant idea which gives national character to a people … is revealed most authoritatively in the rhetoric of leaders of representative institutions.'[99] Though they were not overtly political, the organisations tasked with articulating the image of the nation were representative in the sense that Australians looked to them to express what the nation was. Advertisements were democratic as well. Their display in the urban visual landscape meant they were accessible to almost all.[100] For the working-class Melburnian who might not be able to afford a holiday to Queensland, or for the Sydneysider who had no desire to travel to Adelaide, advertisements for destinations elsewhere in the country were a means of imagining the nation that existed beyond the confines of one's limited experience. Economies of scale and advances in transportation reduced the cost of travel, engendering greater opportunities for people to experience places that might have once been out of reach. Though the cumulative influence of advertising in persuading people to visit destinations like the Great Barrier Reef is unknowable, this thesis offers an insight into tourist promoters' belief in advertising as a long-term strategy to grow a national tourism industry, but also to foster a sense of national pride and identity.

Tourist promoters unquestionably sought to steer the national image, and at times attempted directly to foster a sense of national pride. I argue that they did so because they perceived a demand for leadership on these matters. The Australian political scientist Jillian Prideaux, in her study of expressions of nationalism in commercial advertising, argues that organisations appeal to national sentiments because they 'need to be able to position themselves within the broader national discourse' and can therefore, they hope, become effective in associating themselves with a national identity.'[101] It is not the case that companies or organisations determine what the national discourse should be through their advertising. Rather, they estimate what the national discourse is, and operate within the parameters of the prevailing societal discussion. Seen in this way, advertising is a revelatory source about its creators and likely audience, and the wider concerns confronting the nation. As promoters constructed advertisements for the nation and the destinations that supposedly best represented it, they estimated the prevailing attitudes, values and concerns of the people they expected would visit. In this sense, the images of Australia offered in tourist advertising records an important commentary about the nation, and about how the values and concerns of the population change, or remain the same, over time.

Advertising imagery often sought to transform Australian nature into a symbol of nationality. The discussion of this process in this research therefore engages with studies of settler-Australian nationalism

[99] Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian identity', 76-90.
[100] Colin Symes, "Motion pictures", 210.
[101] Prideaux, 'Nationalism and Advertising in Australia', 63.

and national identity. Questions of identity and nationalism are intimately connected to the mechanisms through which settler-Australians made sense of their attachment to the land. Benedict Anderson argues that newspapers were vital sites in the development of an imagined national consciousness. National advertising, along with other visual and literary mediums, functioned also as a space where people could 'think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways'.[102] Rolls and Johnston apply Anderson's notion of imagined communities to *Walkabout* magazine, arguing the magazine 'actively fostered a common engagement with Australian history, landscapes and people in a distinctly modern national imagining.'[103] Likewise, visions of Australia in national advertising, which, like *Walkabout* was cultivated for much of the twentieth century by ANTA, gave readers an opportunity to measure their own understandings of region and nation with those depicted in any given advertisement.

Where are we going on this Australian holiday?

The seven chapters that make up this thesis, like any good, all-expense paid tour of Australia, make stops all over the continent. The narrative is broadly chronological, but because some marketing campaigns commence before others have finished, there is a temporal overlap between some chapters. Chapter One tells of how pre-First World War New South Wales Tourist Bureau advertising for Sydney emphasised New South Wales's climate, sunlight, unpolluted air, urban and national parks, beaches, and other outdoor recreation sites. This early campaign, I argue, created a template for subsequent mass-produced nature-based publicity campaigns. Historians have given some attention to the formation of ANTA in 1929, but few have considered the degree to which the organisation's advertising instated and depended on a patriotic vision of Australian nature. This is the focus of Chapter Two, which investigates the first systematic attempts to advertise Australia according to a centralised strategy in the 1920s. It was in the advertising offices of Flinders Street Station in Melbourne that energetic copywriters and image-makers, under the leadership of Charles Holmes, designed publicity campaigns that not only encouraged people to take holidays, but sought to engender a sense of pride and participation in the nation. Chapter Three examines how the Australian National Travel Association incorporated the language of nature into advertising for the national Australian capital, Canberra, at a time when the viability of the inland city was an open question. Chapter Four considers the state of promotion in the 1940s and early 1950s. Historians have tended to overlook this period in Australia's tourism history because of the obvious interruption posed to the industry by the Second World War.[104] But there is a need to revisit these important years in Australia's tourist past, a time when promoters recruited natural and environmental symbols in sales materials aimed at rallying the nation in a time of

[102] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 36.
[103] Mitchell Rolls and Anna Johnston, *Travelling Home, Walkabout Magazine and Mid-Twentieth Century Australia,* (London, Anthem Press, 2016).
[104] Justine Greenwood, 'Driving through history', 21-37; Georgine Clarsen, 'Tracing the Outline Of Nation: Circling Australia by Car', *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 13, no. 3 (1999): 359-69.

war. Seen in this way, the experience of wartime had substantive impacts on the emergence of national tourism as a vital post-war industry.

Later chapters take us from the end of the Second World War to the Bicentenary in 1988. Chapter Five pays close attention to ANTA's marketing of the Great Barrier Reef in a decade of rapid economic and cultural change, the 1960s. Chapter Six explains the rise of the Red Centre in Australian campaigns, asking how remote places like Alice Springs and attendant locations such as Uluru came to represent locations that meant escape from Australia's modern urban living. In the final chapter, I appraise a range of national tourism advertising in the 1980s, the decade of the much-celebrated Paul Hogan campaign. These chapters consider in particular how mid- to late- twentieth century tourist advertising started to contend with emerging dialogues and concerns around environmentalism, Indigenous land rights, and the emerging idea of multiculturalism, while still exploring how configurations of nature, and the human relationship with nature remained a consistent feature of the advertising program.

Each case study draws on scholarship that has sought to uncover the historical importance of these places and the ideas that have shaped them. Histories of recreation in Sydney and New South Wales form an important historiographical context for chapter one's examination of early twentieth century advertising.[105] Recording how advertisers attempted to capture Canberra's symbolic importance rests on broader histories of the capital, to which Nicholas Brown, Christopher Vernon, Dianne Firth, Frank Brennan, and Eric Sparke have all made important contributions.[106] There has also been much scholarly attention on the Great Barrier Reef as a site of national importance also. It is not possible to mount an analysis of advertising for the reef and its surrounding islands and rainforests without engagement with the works of Celmara Pocock, Rohan Lloyd, Iain McCalman, Ben Daley, and James and Margarita Bowen, among others.[107]

As important as the histories of individual places are the works of history that elucidate the intellectual, political and cultural conditions alive in Australia since the beginning of the twentieth century. To date, the effect of prevailing intellectual and cultural currents on national advertising has received scant

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[105] Douglas Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf*, (Frank Cass Publishers: Portland, 2001); Caroline Ford, *Sydney Beaches: A History*, (New South Publishing: Sydney, 2014); Richard White and Caroline Ford (eds), *Playing in the Bush: Recreation and National Parks in New South Wales*, (Sydney University Press: 2012).

[106] Nicholas Brown, *A History of Canberra* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Dianne Firth, "CANBERRA'S LOVE AFFAIR." *Landscape Architecture Australia* 138 (2013): 31-33; Eric Sparke, *Canberra: 1954-1980*, (AGPS Press: Canberra, 1988); Christopher Vernon, 'An emerald city? Water and the colonial picturesque at the national capital, 1901-1964', *Australian Humanities Review* 36, (2005).

[107] Rohan Lloyd, *Saving the Reef: The human story behind one of Australia's greatest environmental treasures*, (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2022); James Bowen and Margarita Bowen, *The Great Barrier Reef: History, Science, Heritage*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Celmara Pocock, 'Blue Lagoons and Coconut Palms': The Creation of a Tropical Idyll in Australia', *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 16:3 (2005), 335-349; Ben Daley, *The Great Barrier Reef: An Environmental History*, (Routledge, Oxen: 2014), 138-140; Ian McCalman, *The Reef: A Passionate History*, (Melbourne: Viking Press, 2013).

attention in scholarship.[108] But the image of Australia in advertising has been variously influenced by movements such as turn-of-the-century urban progressivism, town planning, interwar cultural puritanism, modernity and other ideas central to the Australian experience such as civic nationalism, centralisation and federalism. As I argue in the first chapter, depicting Australia as a working man's paradise where, according to promoters, progressive policies had produced one of the world's healthiest populations and modern societies informed nascent national advertising. Contemporary anxieties about Australia's geographical distance from Britain and hyperventilation about physical and moral health of the population dominated interwar national tourist advertising.[109] In the 1960s, promoters conceived of new ways to modernise Australia's image, shaping and responding to a higher conversation about the era's so called 'new nationalism.'[110] These are but a few examples of the intellectual and cultural movements that this thesis identifies as crucial to the psychology and development of twentieth century national advertising.

There are some general works of history which have been instrumental in gauging the historical contexts in which national advertising campaigns emerged. The scholarship of John Hirst, Neville Meaney, Russell McGregor, Frank Bongiorno, John Rickard, Eric Richards, Justine Greenwood, Alan Atkinson, Melissa Harper, Stuart Macintyre and Alison Bashford, among others, is cited often throughout the thesis. Drawing from this rich selection of Australian history, this work adds to histories concerned with the rise of popular twentieth-century tourist attractions, and more importantly, what tourism to these places can tell us tell us about wider Australian culture, values and behaviours.[111] Further engagement with national advertising texts, I suggest, can help us trace the experience of wider publics, beyond the politicians, artists and other specialists normally associated with setting the cultural agenda.

The following examination of Australian tourism advertisements reveals an environmental dimension, primarily a latent desire to spend time in nature, that rests at the core of not just the Australian tourist experience, but the Australian experience. Throughout, I hold that the messages contained in advertising were compatible with the ideas most, but by no means all, Australians had about themselves

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[108] There have been limited scholarly interventions on Harold Clapp, see: John Sinclair, "Agents of 'Americanisation': Individual Entrepreneurship and the Genesis of Consumer Industries," *Journal of Australian Studies* 31, no. 90 (2007): 17–33; John Sinclair, "Making the Market Modern: Sir Harold Clapp, Engineer of Consumption," in Consumer Australia: Historical Perspectives, ed. R. Crawford, J. Smart, and K. Humphery (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholar, 2010) 27–38. Rolls and Johnston have recorded Charles Holmes' contribution as editor of *Walkabout* magazine, but his larger contribution to Australian tourism remains unwritten.

[109] There is a rich literature on Australian anxieties over distance from Britain and the Anglo-World, as well as on the health of the population. See: Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1968); David Walker, "Mind and Body" in *Australians, 1938,* Gammage and Spearritt (eds.), (Fairfax, Syme & Weldon 1987, second edition 2007); Russell McGregor, 'A Dog in the Manger: White Australia and its Vast Empty Spaces, *Australian Historical Studies*, 43:2, (2012), 157-173.

[110] James Curran, *The Power of Speech: Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image*, (Melbourne University Press: Melbourne, 2004).

[111] Andrea Scott Inglis, *Summer in the Hills: The Nineteenth-Century Mountain Resort in Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007); Kate Legge, *Kindred: A Cradle Mountain Love Story* (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2019); Siobhan Levelle, 'A Tree and a Legend: The Making of Past and Place in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 89 (2003): 1–25.

and their place in the nation. If advertising images did not have a sufficient basis in reality, and did not denote what was possible, consumers would have rejected them, which they sometimes, but rarely, did. As historians of Australian tourism and recreation have pointed out, the bush and bush-related imagery became central to national identity and culture during the first half of the twentieth century.[112] Melissa Harper, for instance, demonstrates that 'bush-based' recreations such as bushwalking helped shape the settler-Australian relationship with nature. Harper suggests that nature is not the exclusive preserve of conservationists and environmentalists, and that attachments to place arising through recreation 'could be very localised and intimate but they could also be expressed as something far more amorphous such as a connection to the nation'.[113] Harper's assertion that attachments to place also signify connection to the nation applies to much national tourist advertising, given that it at once mirrored and sought to shape an emerging contemporary relationship between the environment and ordinary people. This thesis argues further that the broader tourist experience depicted in advertising provides revelatory, and previously overlooked, examples of how the settler nation forged a connection with nature and the land, not just through mass recreation and tourism, but through the medium of advertising, which advanced not only pictures of Australia, but also ideas about the country and its people, across the world.

[112] Melissa Harper and Richard White, "How National Were the First National Parks?: Comparative Perspectives from the British Settler Societies," in Civilizing Nature: National Parks in Global Historical Perspective, ed. B. Gissibl, S. Höhler, and P. Kupper (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 52. See also Richard White and Caroline Ford, eds., Playing in the Bush: Recreation and National Parks in New South Wales (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2012).
[113] Harper, 'Locating histories of bush-based recreation in Australia', 6.

Chapter One

'To Australia': Climate, recreation and the first 'national' advertising campaign, 1905-1914.

No country in the world offers to the traveller such a wide range of climate, such a wonderful variation of interesting scenery, or such a wealth of entrancing, easily accessible waterside resorts.[1]

Percy Hunter, 1909.

Australia's early tourist program followed on from longstanding colonial era efforts to populate the country. 'It was recognised many years ago that the immense potentialities of the country could only be realised by the influx of a large population', reads a 1905 summary of the duties and functions of the New South Wales Intelligence Department.[2] But in the years following Federation, Australian authorities found it difficult to attract what the Department called 'men and women of the right stamp' (British migrants) to Australia. As migration historian Eric Richards writes, Australia's immigration system, until 1907, 'had fallen into desuetude and even the British had almost stopped thinking much about Australia as an active destination.'[3] A diminished flow of migrants coincided with the tail end of a steep decline in the national birth rate, which had trended downwards in all the colonies since the 1860s.[4] These demographic realities, acutely felt by contemporary politicians and administrators, gave urgency to the project of national advertising, which, in the dawning years of the Australian commonwealth, was an enterprise in its infancy.[5]

The New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau (NSWGTB) was Australia's first state organisation that wholly recognised tourism's importance to migration. Established in 1905 as a subsidiary agency of the Intelligence Department, and led by the journalist turned promoter Percy Hunter, the Bureau realised that migrants could not be lured to Australia only with promises of land and assisted resettlement. Armed with the awareness that Australia might not have appealed 'to the man in Great Britain', its revelation was that states, and the nation more generally, needed to demonstrate the attractiveness of Australia's way of life, the health of its people, opportunities for leisure, and the quality of its scenic resorts. New South Wales was 12,000 miles from Europe, after all – a journey that in the early 1900s took between four and eight weeks. The Bureau stated in one pamphlet that such distance may cause the likely settler 'to turn his thoughts in the direction of some nearer field for his endeavour

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[1] Percy Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture on New South Wales*, New South Wales Immigration and Tourist Bureau, (Sydney, 1909), 7-9.
[2] *Intelligence Department, N.S.W.: A Brief Summary of the Organisation and Functions of this Department, formed July, 1905* (Sydney: William Applegate Gullick, Government Printer, 1906), 15.
[3] Eric Richards, *Destination Australia: Migration to Australia since 1901*, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2008), 32.
[4] Elise F. Jones, 'Fertility Decline in Australia and New Zealand, 1861–1936', *Population Index*, 37, 4 (1971), 301–38.
[5] There was a colonial tourist industry in Australia, but the publicity of railways or other colonial 'boosters' were usually limited to the colony they sought to promote, see Julia Horne, *The Pursuit of Wonder: How Australia's Landscape was Explored, Nature Discovered and Tourism Unleashed*, (Melbourne, Miegunyah Press: 2005), and Josh Woodward, 'Pioneers, Progress and the Sublime', 64-80.

to carve out fortune from a new and kindly territory.'[6] The thought of distance, though, said the Bureau, 'should not deter him, nor turn him from the path along which lies the most material advantage.' That path was to Australia, and to New South Wales, 'the land of rapid advancement' and 'equal opportunity', where 'rich reward awaits application, energy, and perseverance.'[7]

Overcoming the challenge that distance, but also that of Australia's floundering international reputation, posed to increased British migration became the task of the NSWGTB. This chapter is concerned with the image of Sydney, and its immediate surrounds, that Hunter and his staff cultivated in the years between 1905 and 1914. While the Bureau promoted a range of destinations in Australia, its advertising envisioned New South Wales as the 'parent state' of the young nation. Tourism was a key part of this message and establishing New South Wales – as Hunter indeed tried to – as 'an unrivalled field for the tourist, holiday-maker, and health seeker' was part of a broader effort to have the state recognised (predominantly in Britain) as 'the queen of a group of marvellously progressive and wealthy countries.'[8] Distinct from its modern connotations, 'progress' at that time denoted Australia's supposedly superior social and material wealth – particularly in relation to middle-class experience.[9] In modern times it is less common for advertisers to sell a nation based on its achievements in the advancement of social and economic conditions. Sewerage, labour conditions and the availability of meat are not usually the factors that persuade us to book our flights, yet these were all key selling points in NSWGTB campaigns.

If New South Wales was at the centre of the Bureau's vision of Australia, so too was the nation's natural endowment. The nature-centric vision of Australia that it offered is an important starting point in this thesis's examination of the configuration of Australian nature in subsequent state and national tourism campaigns. Identifiable in much NSWGTB publicity were the environmental themes that are the foci of this thesis. Native plants and wildlife, abundant and accessible natural scenery, recreational opportunities, warm temperatures, clear waters, and the all-important, health-giving light of the sun all figured as core imagery in the Bureau's campaigns. Additionally, the healthy and vital population of Sydney, New South Wales, and by extension Australia, that advertising depicted as the benefactors of Australia's temperate conditions, featured prominently in advertising. Tourist Bureau information materials made much fuss about how easily a person could get themselves into nature, into the water or into the mountain air, all from the heart of town.

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[6] The Immigration and Tourist Bureau, *New South Wales, Australia, for the Settler*, (Sydney, 1909), 1.
[7] *Ibid,* 2-3.
[8] Percy Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture on New South Wales*, New South Wales Immigration and Tourist Bureau, (Sydney, 1909), 7-9.
[9] Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives: Vitalism in Bourgeois Social Thought, 1890–1960* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1984).

There are four sections in this chapter. Each work towards explaining how the Bureau's vision of New South Wales depended on environmental conditions. Furthermore, these sections connect NSWGTB tourist advertising with wider social currents, ideas and values. The first section considers how the Bureau's campaign was more than just a state-based tourism campaign, foregrounding the next chapter's discussion of the Victorian Railways, who assumed much responsibility for national advertising after the First World War. The second section analyses the NSWGTB's celebratory description of Australia's weather and climate, which signified a concerted attempt to connect environmental conditions with the nation's health and mortality. The Bureau's promotion of surf-bathing as a popular social activity forms the case study for the third section, which offers a record of Sydney as a progressive and healthy place where environmental conditions induced a healthy lifestyle for its inhabitants. The final section explores how the idea of a healthy environment and populace further supported the Bureau's effort to have Australia seen as a progressive, and economically productive, democratic society superior to its counterparts in Europe and America. Each section refers to contemporary anxieties around health, racial hygiene and eugenics, building on previous scholarship on these early century ideas, asking how they shaped configurations of nature in advertising.

The historians Peter Spearritt, Jim Davidson, and Justine Greenwood have pointed out that turn-of-the century-tourist advertising was closely linked to efforts to induce greater flows of migration. As Greenwood writes, the idea that the 'settler follows the tourist had become an article of faith amongst those who wished to encourage the growth of tourism and immigration to Australia.'[10] Greenwood points out further that the connection between tourism and migration has only received passing attention from historians. Works that have attempted to explain this link, including Greenwood's, have often focussed, however, on the second half of the twentieth century.[11] This chapter fills this gap in the research by more closely examining one of the first systematic tourist campaigns undertaken in Australia. The NSWGTB was an innovative organisation that was ahead of contemporary advertising and image making practises elsewhere, both in Australia and abroad. As I argue in the next chapter, there is direct evidence that the larger organisations that subsequently gained responsibility for national advertising followed the path first trodden by Hunter's Bureau. Though I argue that the NSWGTB's vision of the country was somewhat national (at least more than any promotional campaign that had preceded it), it should be remembered that Sydney and New South Wales were at the centre of this imagining of Australia. Ironically, it was in some respects the fixation with Sydney offered in early

[10] Justine Greenwood, 'The migrant follows the tourist: Australian immigration publicity after the Second World War', *History Australia*, 11:3, (2014), 74. Spearritt and Davidson, *Holiday Business,* 70-71.
[11] A. James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson, *Ten Pound Poms: Australia's Invisible Migrants* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Anna Haebich, *Assimilation in Australia 1950–1970* (North Fremantle: Fremantle Press, 2007); Eric Bouvet, 'French Migration to Australia in the Post WWII Period: Benevolent Tolerance and Cautious Collaboration', *Flinders University Languages Group Online Review* 3, no. 2 (August 2007): 15–37; Ruth Balint, 'Industry and Sunshine: Australia as Home in the Displaced Persons' Camps of Postwar Europe', *History Australia* 11, no. 1 (2014): 106–31.

twentieth century advertising that spurred on the Melbourne based effort to produce a vision of Australia that was more encompassing of other places (Chapter Two).

'To Australia': Percy Hunter and Australia's first national advertising campaign

Percy Hunter remains an underexamined figure in the history of Australian tourist advertising. Though the Tourist Bureau pamphlets that bore his name venerated Sydney, Hunter was born not in that city, but in Melbourne, in 1876. Hunter's Victorian roots much amused his Sydney contemporaries. A 1908 newspaper article reports how, at a dinner function held at the Australia Hotel, George Reid roasted Hunter on his Victorian heritage, a friendly tease that caused the audience to burst into cries of 'shame' and uproarious laughter.[12] The humour was good spirited, but nevertheless a reminder of the pervasiveness of colonial identity in the early years of Australian nationhood. People were aware of where other people came from, even if they came from within Australia. Hunter's association with the Federal cause gives context to his work as a tourist promoter with a view to crafting a vision of the nation. He had formed connections with Reid and other pro-Federation politicians while he worked as a rookie journalist covering the Federal Conventions in the 1890s. He wrote at that time for the *Daily Telegraph*, a paper which supported Reid's Free Trade government (1894-1899). Hunter's reputation in the nation's media landscape was solidified by his marriage to Lilian Blair, daughter of the well-known journalist David Blair, who had been an editor of Melbourne's *Age*.

Connections in politics, together with his background in the press, propelled Hunter to the directorship of the newly formed NSW Government Tourist Bureau. Men like George Reid and Joseph Carruthers (New South Wales Premier 1904-1907) depended on him as an astute analyst of the public mood.[13] He was not subservient to them – Reid described him as a 'man who would not follow every whim of the minister.'[14] Rather, Reid and others cherished Hunter for what they identified as his unique ability to create meaningful and resonant, mass produced publicity that struck a chord with everyday people, a rare talent that they recognised valuable to the modern art of politics.[15] Friends and political allies with roots in the NSW Free Trade Party, Carruthers and Reid believed a constant stream of immigrants from Britain would advance the state's economy and cement Sydney's place as a leading city of the British Empire.[16] Unsurprisingly, the Free Traders were more attracted to the cultural exchange and international exposure facilitated by tourism than their Protectionist rivals. Though Reid and

[12] 'Valedictory Gathering', *Sydney Morning Herald*, February 22, 1908, 12. For more on interstate rivalries in the early twentieth century see: Richard White, *Inventing Australia*, 146 and Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia, Volume Three: Nation* (Sydney: New South Publishing, 2014).

[13] For more on Reid and Carruthers' friendship and political alliance see: Zachary Gorman, 'A Contested Contest: George Reid's Election to the Leadership of the New South Wales Free Trade Party', *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 18 (2016), 182-197.

[14] *Sydney Morning Herald*, February 22, 1908, 12

[15] Zachary Gorman, *Sir Joseph Carruthers: Founder of the New South Wales Liberal Party*, (Connor Court Publishing, 2018).

[16] Josh Woodward, 'Making a Modern Marketing Machine: The NSW Tourist Bureau: 1905-1914', *Journal of Tourism History* 16:1, (2024), 55-72.

Carruthers' far-reaching contributions to New South Wales political history (and the history of Australian liberalism) have been the subject of biographical attention, little remains known about how these liberal politicians fostered a wing of the public service dedicated to bolstering Australia's local and international reputation.[17]

Arriving at the Tourist Bureau, Hunter found himself tasked with overcoming the stagnation in migration to New South Wales, which, at the turn of the century, had been in decline for over twenty years. He recognised that Australia suffered as much from an image problem as it did a distance problem, and that overcoming this question started with improving local attitudes towards New South Wales. Firmly set on this task, he proclaimed that 'it will not be the fault of [my] officers if any intelligent and inquisitive resident of New South Wales or visitor to that State now remains ignorant of the vast resources – agricultural, industrial, and scenic – of this richly endowed and beautiful part of Australia.'[18] Prior to the formation of the Bureau, the longstanding reputation of Australia had rested to a large degree on its pioneer history, not only of heroic explorers, but of the convicts, first settlers and pastoralists that had battled the land to carve out a life.[19] Though the pioneer theme had a rich and meaningful heritage to many turn-of-the-century Australians, it was clear to Hunter, and those that worked with him in fashioning a saleable image for New South Wales, that it would take more than the pioneer myth to attract the migrant, tourist or investor that Reid and Carruthers wished would populate and reinvigorate New South Wales.

Importantly, the Bureau's vision was not aimed exclusively at attracting prospective tourists, migrants and investors from overseas or interstate. It was also a vision around which the people of New South Wales, and particularly the population living in Sydney, could rally. In these campaigns, opportunities to participate in tourism became entwined with Australia's living standards and way of life. 'The Government Tourist Bureau… is doing much to advertise the tourist resorts of the State, and assist people who wish to visit them, both locally and from abroad.' To attract migrants, Hunter's Bureau had demonstrated a vision of a society where tourism, recreation and leisure were common aspects of the local culture. As the *Guyra Argus*, a regional daily from the northern NSW tablelands, reported, the Tourist Bureau, was 'popularising the scenic resorts of the State with our own people, our neighbouring states and travellers from abroad.'[20]

Anna Haebich has documented how post-war Australian migration publicity performs different functions at home and overseas. Within Australia, promotional images that depict the 'Australian way

[17] Gorman, *Sir Joseph Carruthers;* W. G. McMinn, *George Reid* (Melbourne, 1988).
[18] *Intelligence Department, N.S.W.: A Brief Summary,* 15.
[19] J.B. Hirst, 'The Pioneer Legend', in *Intruders in the Bush: The Australian Quest for Identity*, ed. John Carroll (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992), 14–35. Woodward, 'Pioneers, Progress and the Sublime', 73-76.
[20] 'Intelligence Department', *Guyra Argus,* 9 July, 1908, 6.

of life' speak to local values. However, when sent to a foreign country, the same image contributes to an overarching 'brand' image of Australia for which the image makers are reaching for, Haebich suggests.[21] Tourism publicity circulated within New South Wales had a different resonance among local, interstate consumers, and overseas consumers. The degree to which Hunter sought to shape a local sense of civic pride and patriotism within New South Wales while also communicating something distinctive about Australia to the outside world, all in the same sales texts, is a central idea of the pages that follow.

The Bureau's image of New South Wales then, attempted to function as a galvanising symbol for the local population, distilling what were generally seen as the most impressive facets of a society into a coherent message. Central to this message were the state's scenic beauty and environmental attributes – the scope of the Bureau's publications were not, 'confined merely to just a few show places, like the Blue Mountains and the Limestone Caves.' Rather, the Bureau showcased 'every district likely to attract visitors, whether on account of the beauty of its scenery the excellence of its climate, its shooting, its good roads (for motoring and cycling), or for its trout or ocean fishing.'[22] NSWGTB materials encouraged the New South Wales population to think of their own backyard in patriotic terms, to celebrate the new state's progress, and to revel in the amenities and healthy lifestyle that progress had afforded them.

What vision of Australia do we find in Tourist Bureau ephemera? Before a traveller had even alighted from their ship, the Bureau framed the first impression of the 'Island Continent' through the lens of nature. A 1914 pamphlet describes how a traveller from abroad might first view the city of Sydney, entering the harbour in the dusk light of a fine evening. Sydney was, the pamphlet read, 'a city in the metropolitan air imparted by a fine mass of splendid buildings, standing boldly on the hills running back from the water.' From the low perspective of the boat's deck, the city loomed on the banks of the beautiful natural harbour. Its shorefront properties 'silhouetted in clear-cut outline against an amber light in the western sky.'[23] The tourist found Sydney not only as a centre for commerce, but also as a scene of natural beauty. The commotion of maritime traffic a scene of picturesque tranquillity: 'The green and gold and evening haze of the harbour may be speckled here and there by the snow-white sails of a yacht beating home late; puffing tugs heaving on great towlines, at the end of which huge steamers glide sluggishly through the water, give an air of busy importance to the scene.'[24]

The evocation of nature extended beyond the waters of Port Jackson: 'Away in the western distance, where the harbour way merges mysteriously in sky and indefinite buildings and headlands, the dropping

[21] Anna Haebich, *Assimilation in Australia 1950–1970,* 118-120.
[22] 'Intelligence Department', *Guyra Argus,* 9 July, 1908, 6.
[23] New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau, *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City*, (Challis House: Sydney, 1914), 1.
[24] *Ibid,* 1.

sun pencils a range of light-blue mountains with burnished gold.'[25] These were the Blue Mountains, forty miles inland. The state's foremost destination for tourism, they were easy to reach by train, and an affordable destination for both working- and middle- class people, but they also occupied an important place in the settler imagination that dated back to the colony's early days and were therefore, as historians such as Siobhan Levelle and Richard Waterhouse have argued, integral to the foundational myths of the settler-Australian nation.[26] In any case, they were a worthwhile destination for the visiting climber, hiker, picnic enthusiast, sightseer and so-called 'health-seeker', who sought out salubrious climate and clean air to improve their physical and moral condition. The advertising of such recreations as means of fulfilling a healthy and moral life aligned with contemporary notions of progressivism and modernity. As Frank Bongiorno writes, modernity in Australia was not limited to the 'application of science and reason to the social and political order', and 'also involved a quest for bodily health, purity of mind and the elevation of the spirit.' Bureau materials expressed these values well, reflecting the spirit of a secular society 'that seemed to be casting aside the comforts of religious orthodoxy.'[27] Key to this form of national expression was the scenic backdrop staging Australia's progressive march. Note how the Bureau copywriter brought the reader's attention down from the distant mountains and back to the water, where 'well-laden ferry steamers of palatial size speed across the harbour and discharge their passengers and pick up new loads at the famous Circular Quay.'[28]

Hunter's Bureau estimated that this romantic vision of a modern city, endowed with nature's gifts, might capture the attention of the aspirant tourist in Britain, and to a lesser degree also in other English-speaking nations.[29] *Sydney: Queen of the South Pacific*, published in 1910, contained two watercolour paintings of Sydney (Figure 1 below) that encapsulate the literary description of Sydney the Bureau then aimed for in its written copy. In the cover image, a sleek white ferry boat cuts across Sydney Harbour from what appears to be the central hub of Circular Quay. In the second image, positioned at the end of the guide, children play near a doric column at Bradley's Head, the skyline vaguely outlined in the horizon across calm waters. The column, which remains there today, was taken from the demolished Sydney GPO in 1871 and placed at Bradley's Head as a nautical measurement used for sea trials. Whatever naval purposes the column may have served, its appearance in tourist imagery supplies the Bureau's vision of a newly settled landscape with a flavour of the ancient, perhaps suggesting to the prospective tourist a sense of distant history not usually associated with Australia. And while both of these images recall the soft focus and fuzzy style of the Heidelberg School of impressionist painters, they

[25] *Ibid*, 1.
[26] Richard Waterhouse, 'The Pioneer Legend and Its Legacy: In Memory of John Hirst', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 103 (2017): 12; Siobhan Levelle, 'Aa Tree and a Legend: The Making of Past and Place in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 89 (2003): 1–25; Woodward, 'Pioneers, progress, and the sublime', 65.
[27] Frank Bongiorno, 'A Short History of New Thought in Australia, 1890–1914', *Australian Cultural History*, 23 (2004), 25.
[28] NSWGTB, *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City*, 1.
[29] On Australian modernity in turn of the century Sydney see: Justine Greenwood, 'The 1908 Visit of the Great White Fleet: Displaying Modern Sydney,' *History Australia* 5:3, (2008).

are distinct for their envisioning of a city, as opposed to the pastoral scenes normally associated with that movement.

These watercolours of Sydney conformed to the fin de siècle expectation that a city was ennobled by its proximity to a large body of water. Christopher Vernon has explained well how water was one of the key criteria pervading the design process for the new planned national capital of Canberra taking place in 1911. Large bodies of water, it was thought, availed a city with an ornamental quality that made its buildings palatial by seamlessly connecting the artificial with the natural.[30] Such thinking was steeped in the visual language of the romantic and the picturesque, European aesthetic ideals that emphasised the beauty of a landscape's natural features. The Bureau was not averse to drawing on the picturesque in its advertising imagery, though it normally did so for places more traditionally conceived of as 'natural', such as the Blue Mountains. Sydney's natural setting, however, gave to New South Wales a special quality that the Bureau positioned as central to the Australian experience. The natural features of Sydney had a special prominence because they were the gateway into Australia for so many of its arriving visitors, whether they were tourists or migrants. In the words of a widely circulated article of 1908 that purportedly recorded the experience of an American tourist first arriving in Sydney Harbour: 'Oh the enchantment of a first view of a big bustling Australian city! After the enforced idleness of an ocean voyage, the wide serenity of the enchanting hill-encircled harbour, to grapple with the noise and stir of the city!' Sydney, said the supposed American visitor, was not like 'most modern cities – which are laid out with more attention to convenience than to the suggestions of beauty.' Instead, Sydney achieved 'a picturesqueness with which few deliberately mapped out cities can hope to vie.'[31]

[30] Vernon, 'Canberra, Where Landscape is Pre-eminent', 130-131.
[31] 'Sydney, Queen of the South Pacific: As seen by American Eyes', *Guyra Argus*, 10 September 1908, 6.



Figure 1 – Watercolour images of Sydney Harbour bookend a NSWGTB photographic guide. Sydney, Queen of the South Pacific, (NSWGTB, 1910). The artist of these images was likely the Government Printer, William Applegate Gullick. A talented image maker, Gullick made significant contributions to advancing photography and printing in Australia.

Though Sydney and its natural harbour occupied a prominent position in the Bureau's pamphlets and guidebooks, perhaps the most readily identifiable environmental tropes in Tourist Bureau advertising were the native temperature, scenery, and climate of New South Wales. Tourist Bureau advertising sold New South Wales, and by extension Australia, as the foremost country in the world for good weather

and climate. 'Many have been astounded at its wonderful richness and potentialities, and its magnificent scenery, so peculiarly Australian, yet so beautiful', reads the 1910 guide *To Australia.* 'The Climate of Australia is one of the most temperate and equable in the world', it continued. Celebrating the climate exclusively of Sydney as representative of the entire continent, the guide claimed Sydney's climate was 'strikingly similar to that of the Mediterranean seaboard.'[32] Attractive scenery, too, was in abundance and readily accessible. Sydney, said the guide, 'is within easy access of a series of scenic splendours unsurpassed in the world.' Again, all of these destinations were proximate to Sydney, and within New South Wales:

> The renowned Blue Mountains, the marvellous limestone Caverns of Jenolan and the Hawkesbury River, which for sustained beauty is said to eclipse the Rhine or the Mississippi, are reached in a few hours. The snowfields of Mount Kosciusko, the highest peak in the continent and the oldest land surface on the globe… are within a sixteen hours journey of the Metropolis.[33]

Indigenous people were notably absent from the Bureau's vision of New South Wales, and therefore Australia. This absence was not incidental but central to the Bureau's broader publicity campaign, which sought to construct a narrative of New South Wales as a modern, progressive, and peacefully settled destination. The colonial violence underpinning the state's development was rendered invisible in favour of a sanitised vision designed to appeal to domestic and international audiences. The racial ideology guiding this campaign is articulated in Hunter's *Notes for a Lecture on New South Wales*, where, under a section titled "Fauna and Flora," he expresses frustration with two persistent misconceptions among outsiders: that the country was 'overrun with hostile blacks,' and that 'venomous snakes constitute a grave danger to the settler.' He dismissed both claims, stating, 'in New South Wales there are absolutely no hostile blacks,' and that snake-related danger was minimal if 'ordinary care is observed.'[34] The juxtaposition of Aboriginal people and snakes within the same rhetorical frame exposes the dehumanising logic of the settler-colonial state, in which Indigenous people were reduced to elements of the natural landscape. They were either harmless or eradicated and would therefore not interfere with the supposed rights of settlers to enjoy the country.

Hunter's conflation of Indigenous people with fauna echoes the wider structure of racial governance in early 20th-century Australia. As Fiona Paisley notes, at Federation, Aboriginal affairs were routinely managed through departments such as Fisheries and Wildlife, reflecting their exclusion from political

[32] NSWGTB, *To Australia*, (Challis House, Sydney, 1910), 3.
[33] *Ibid*, 7.
[34] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture NSW,* (New South Wales Immigration and Tourist Bureau: Sydney, 1909), 7.

citizenship and their classification as part of the environment to be controlled.[35] Within the context of the state's treatment of Indigenous people, the Bureau's publicity campaign functioned to reassure tourists and potential settlers that New South Wales was a civilised and untroubled space. This is most starkly illustrated in Hunter's claim elsewhere in his lecture notes that:

> The state is especially fortunate in having no coloured problem to deal with. Of the aboriginal natives whom the first settlers found in possession there are now fewer than 4,000, and the race is dwindling yearly.[36]

Such statements reveal the foundational role of Indigenous erasure in the Bureau's production of an idealised settler state. Not only did the Bureau exclude Aboriginal people from public representation but it also framed them as a vanishing population whose disappearance was natural and desirable. This erasure occurred in spite of the Joseph Carruthers's enlightened but paternalistic view 'that white settlement had been detrimental for Indigenous people.'[37] In a pattern that would foreshadow much of twentieth-century advertising's approach to Indigenous inclusion, tourism advertising materials did not attempt to reconcile the troubled history of which Carruthers spoke.

Though the Bureau's concern lay with New South Wales, it publicised tourist trips that included other states, most notably Victoria and Queensland. There too, environmental conditions were key attractions deemed of note to the tourist. *To Australia* included photographs of Melbourne and Brisbane's lively, open thoroughfares, as well as descriptions of key attractions nearby. 'One of the finest trips for a visitor to Melbourne is to the charming fern glades of Healesville', it said, noting the 'lovely climate and fresh, bracing air.' The guide romanticised the setting of Brisbane in a similar fashion as the above description of Sydney:

> Across an amphibious theatre of dark blue hills the river winds like a silver ribbon; the city clusters along its banks and spreads over valley, undulation and ridge. The climate of Brisbane resembles that of Southern California, which means that it enjoys one of the mildest in the world.[38]

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[35] Fiona Paisley, 'Federalising the Aborigines: Constitutional Land Reform in the Late 1920s', *Australian Historical Studies 111* (1998), 261. For histories that explain the significance of the Blue Mountains, a popular tourist destination in turn-of-the-century New South Wales, to Indigenous people see: Martin Thomas, *The Artificial Horizon: Imagining the Blue Mountains* (Melbourne: University Press, 2003); Jim Smith, 'Aboriginal Voters in the Burragorang Valley, NSW, 1869–1953', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 98 (2012) and 'Illuminating the Cave Names of Gundungurra Country', in Indigenous and Minority Placenames: Australian and International Perspectives, ed. Ian Clark, Luise Hercus and Laura Kostanski (Canberra: ANU Press, 2014), 83–96; and Shino Konishi, 'Bennelong and Gogy: Strategic Brokers in Colonial New South Wales', in Brokers and Boundaries: Colonial Exploration in Indigenous Territory, ed. Tiffany Shellam, Maria Nugent, Shino Konishi and Allison Cadzow (Canberra: ANU Press, 2016), 34. See also: Chris Cunningham, *Blue Mountains Rediscovered, Beyond the Myths of Early Australian Exploration* (Kangaroo Press,1996).
[36] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture*, 4.
[37] Gorman, *Sir Joseph Carruthers,* 9.
[38] *Ibid*, 41.

Another nature trope, Australia's native plants and wildlife, was also key marketing point. A kangaroo illustrated the cover page of the 1910 brochure *To Australia* (see figure 2 below). Other guidebooks referred to Australia's 'Strange Flora and Fauna' as a unique curiosity. 'Cut off by the ocean for untold centuries from the rest of the world, the vegetation of the island continent of Australia has developed from the more primitive forms, while the animals, long extinct elsewhere, are relics of an age when the earth was younger', reads the guide *The Pacific Coast of New South Wales.* Wallabies, kookaburras, lyrebirds and, the 'native bear' (koala), and 'the queerest of all the native animals', the platypus, decorated the pages of many guides, and were presented as oddities, but also as representative of Australia's uniqueness and scenic beauty.[39]

In turn-of-the-century New South Wales there was an emerging link between the portrayal of these animals in national advertising and the creation of a national coat of arms. The government printer, William Applegate Gullick, to whom Hunter credited the 'variety of design' and 'attractive appearance of the booklets, folders and pamphlets', was around this time instrumental in the creation of the New South Wales coat of arms (1906) and the revised national coat of arms (1912). Gullick's armorial achievements, which remain in use today, were rich in Australian imagery and heraldic symbology, but crucially carried native Australian flora and fauna literally as supporting symbols of a new political state.[40] In the anthology *Symbols of Australia,* Bruce Baskerville writes of how Gullick's coat of arms emerged to placate English, Irish, Welsh, and Scottish patriotic associations that were displeased with an earlier design. Without venturing into the intricacies of heraldic traditions, it is interesting to consider that Gullick's lithographs, prints, illustrations and photographs of native plant and animal life, appearing in so many tourist Bureau materials, were to some degree a rehearsal in a larger project that aimed to help competing British identities find common ground in the symbols offered in the nature of a new nation. As we shall see in the next chapter, Australian-themed heraldic designs would become an important part of graphic design in 1920s tourism publicity.

[39] NSWGTB, *The Pacific Coast of NSW,* 9. On the cultural symbolism of the platypus see: Ann Moyal, *Platypus: The Extraordinary Story of how a Curious Creature Baffled the World*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2002).
[40] Bruce Baskerville, 'Coat of Arms', in *Symbols of Australia: Imagining a Nation*, Harper and White (eds.), (New South Publishing: Sydney, 2021), 490-513.



Figure 2 - To Australia (Sydney: New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau, 1910).



Figure 3 – Eucalypt leaves frame a harbour view. The Spit Middle Harbour, (*Sydney: Australia's Holiday City*, 1914), 5.

NSWGTB photography subscribed to the conventions of what the historian of Australian photography, A.M. Willis describes as the pictorialist aesthetic. Pictorialism, a modern approach to photography, sought to emphasise the beauty of landscapes rather than simply document them. Composition, manipulation and experimentation typified landscape photography from the mid-nineteenth century. These conventions include a 'single dominant highlight' that is framed somewhere away from the edges and the centre. Landscape photographers organised their images by 'seeking out elements such as framing trees, foreground logs, winding paths and rivers.'[41] As we can see in figure 3 above, the Bureau experimented with displaying Australian scenes through pictorialist framing devices then in vogue in contemporary photographic and artistic movements.

At a time when other state tourist Bureaus were in such a state of infancy (and often disarray), and when separate state identities were still strongly felt, NSWGTB materials that encouraged tourists from overseas to visit other states were among the first of their kind.[42] There is little in the documentary archive that directly suggests why the NSWGTB publicised other states. One of the Bureau's stated aims, however, was 'to develop tourist traffic' by all means, and to 'organise tours to new districts and encourage the opening up of new tourist resorts; and to co-operate with progress associations and the trustees of national reserves.'[43] As we will see throughout this thesis, it became increasingly common later in the century for larger promotional organisations to encourage traffic elsewhere, as increased

[41] A.M. Willis, *Picturing Australia: A History of Photography*, (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1988), 61.
[42] For the haphazard and inefficient administration of the Victorian Tourist Bureau in the decade 1900-1910 see Woodward, *Marketing the Mountains*, MA Thesis, (University of Western Australia, 2021), 92-97.
[43] *Intelligence Department, N.S.W.: A Brief Summary*, 4.

movement could beget a larger tourist infrastructure, and in turn supply more tourists. By enlarging the pie, New South Wales might win itself a bigger slice.[44]

Notwithstanding references to the attractions and conditions found in other states, what the New South Wales Tourist Bureau really meant when it said 'Australia' was New South Wales. This was because, in the minds of those operating the Bureau, New South Wales *was* Australia. As Hunter would say in his lectures, delivered in New South Wales and abroad, 'Australia was settled from New South Wales. New South Wales is the parent State, and it is the queen of a group of marvellously progressive and wealthy countries.' This interpretation of the continent saw the other states more as tributaries than self-governing polities: 'rich as all sections of Australia are, New South Wales leads in wealth, trade, and industrial activity.'[45] Hardly offering a genuinely nation-wide picture, the NSWGTB asserted the state it represented as the de facto national capital. Interestingly, no Bureau materials from this period indicated to the reader that Melbourne served as the interim seat of government until a suitable permanent capital was decided upon.[46]

Aside from the Bureau's jockeying to have New South Wales thought of as the 'Premier State', its materials nevertheless demonstrate a belief in the promise of Australia as a commonwealth. 'From small beginnings great things have sprung', Hunter told his lecture audiences. 'In a little over a century, Australia has been peopled, and has attained a leading position among Great Britain's colonies.' This vision had racial dimensions that elevated Anglo-Saxon heritage, elided Aboriginal people (and perpetuated the myth that they were a 'dwindling race') and conformed to the prevailing political ideology of the day – the White Australia Policy. 'The number of Chinese, by far the greatest foreign element in our midst, reaches about 10,000, but the numbers are gradually decreasing', Hunter would reassure lecture audiences.[47] But the Bureau's vision nevertheless belonged to the progressive and idealistic spirit of Federation. Hunter wrote that Australia was remarkable and unique among nations, writing that Australia was:

> The only continent occupied by a people belonging to one race, speaking one language, fired by the same impulses, hopes and ambitions, and from corner to corner of the vast territory within the girdle of the encompassing indissolubly united under a common Government – the freest, most democratic, and easily conformable to the popular will known on earth.[48]

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[44] Civic nationalism underpinned the Bureau's effort to attract tourists to Australia. Archival sources that document NSWGTB's efforts to build Australia's profile and reputation in the Pacific region refer to Australia more commonly than they do New South Wales. See, for example: 'To Attract Tourists: Advertising Australia Abroad', *Daily Telegraph*, 21 February 1911, 7.
[45] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture NSW,* 2.
[46] On the political economy of Federation in New South Wales see: Zachary Gorman, 'Birthplace of a Nation? Why Sydney Voted no to Federation,' *Agenda: A Journal of Policy Analysis and Reform* 27:1 (2020), 125-148.
[47] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture NSW,* 4.
[48] *Ibid*.

Such an Anglo-Saxon-centric visualisation of Australia closely corresponds with the expression of idealism for a united Australia that existed in contemporary Australian poetry. As John Hirst points out, poets such as James Brunton Stephens (1835-1902), and the writer of 'Advance Australia Fair', Peter Dodds McCormick (1833-1916), believed that 'God or destiny intended Australia to be a nation' because Australia was a 'single geographical unit, a whole continent with only natural boundaries.' Where other nations' borders were man-made, Australia's were natural, giving way to a 'social uniformity' that 'marked out Australia for nationhood.' The idea that Australia's political destiny was bound up with its geography was most famously expressed by Edmund Barton, who before becoming the nation's first prime minister, in the 1890s gave the Federation movement the slogan: 'A continent for a nation and a nation for a continent.'[49] The ideas that Australians were, in Hirst's words, of 'one blood or stock or race… spoke the same language… shared a glorious heritage' and enjoyed 'political freedom which had been extended in Australia to all men so that the country was the freest on earth' were all central to the prospects of the nation that contributed to the force of national feeling that drove federation.[50] The idealism Hirst locates in federation era poetry ran thick in Hunter's lectures, and furthermore in the visual and textual record that the NSWGTB created from its inception in 1905 up to the interruption to its operations caused by the outbreak of war in 1914.

Historians have tended to view state tourist Bureaus operating in the early twentieth century as parochial organisations that promoted the interests, attractions, and primary industries of the polity they represented.[51] But such an appraisal is not helpful in explaining Australia's early history of centralised national tourist promotion. The NSWGTB was certainly not the nation's first Bureau, a distinction held by Tasmania, whose Bureau opened at the turn of the century. However, once opened, it was the best resourced, most innovative tourist organisation of its kind, not only in Australia, but also in the Commonwealth, and perhaps even in the world.[52] And even though the Bureau's vision of Australia was unapologetically Sydney-centric, Hunter and his staff did more to advertise the other capitals and states than the other states were doing to advertise New South Wales.

Lifestyle, Climate and Environment in the new Australian Nation

[49] Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation*, 219; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia, Volume Three: Nation*, viii.
[50] Hirst, *Sense and Nonsense,* 352. See also: Libby Robin, *How a Continent Created a Nation* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007).
[51] Simon Harris, 'Selling Tasmania: Boosterism and the Creation of the Tourist State, 1912-1928', PhD Thesis, (University of Tasmania: 1993). See also Spearritt and Davidson, *Holiday Business*, 59-96.
[52] Josh Woodward, 'Making a Modern Marketing Machine', 55-72.

Since the early settlement of colonial New South Wales, writers, politicians and colonial administrators had long celebrated and admonished Australia's climate.[53] The NSWGTB built on nineteenth century attempts to sell Australia. Good climate, and the lifestyle it engendered, became key selling points in the campaign. The NSWGTB guidebook *The Pacific Coast of New South Wales* (1911), for example, extolled the phenomenal 'temperatures and equability of the climate of the coastal belt.'[54] Other bureau materials opened with similar proclamations about Australia's unparalleled climate. *To Australia* proudly stated, 'The climate of Australia is one of the most temperate and equable in the world.'[55] Sydney though, was the exemplar of where visitors could find the most amenable and temperate climes. 'Sydney's magnificent climate and beautiful surroundings place it above any other city in the world', reads a guidebook from 1910.[56] 'Throughout all seasons of the year, the normal conditions are bright sunshine and cloudless skies… It has been well called the City of July Sunshine', said another.[57] Bureau writers were clever to call on the laws of averages in their celebration of Sydney's weather cycle, noting that 'the difference between the average summer and winter readings of the thermometer is but 17 degrees.'[58]

As John Rickard points out, colonists 'used to the long cold winters of northern Europe', had long 'found virtues in the temperate climate of the Australian seaboard.'[59] Bureau advertising carried on a long tradition of celebrating Australia's warmer conditions over those in Europe, and that dated back to First Fleet marine Watkin Tench's 1793 assertion that no 'climate hitherto known is more generally salubrious, or affords more days on which… the state of the atmosphere can be enjoyed, than that of New South Wales.'[60] Clearly in Hunter's day, as in Tench's, there was an estimation by those who had experienced Australian weather that it would be the envy of those in cold old mother England. There was also, perhaps, a degree of self-assurance to these claims. Australia's supposedly perfect climate justified its vast distance from Europe.

Among the more hyperbolic claims by the Bureau are: 'The normal weather throughout the State is Bright sunshine with clear blue skies. There is no bad weather season', and; 'heat waves, such as occasionally sweep New York and other parts of America, are unknown.[61] A reader might have been forgiven for thinking that there was never a day in New South Wales spoiled by heat or rain. 'All the

[53] For more on European attitudes towards the environment in colonial Australia see: John Rickard, *Australia: A Cultural History*, 65, and Andrea Gaynor, 'Environmental Transformations', *The Cambridge History of Australia: Volume I, Indigenous and Colonial Australia,* Alison Bashford, Stuart Macintyre (eds.) (Cambridge University Press: Melbourne, 2013), 269-293; Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora.*
[54] NSWGTB, *The Pacific Coast of New South Wales*, 1.
[55] NSWGTB, *To Australia*, 7.
[56] NSWGTB: *Sydney: the Queen of the Pacific*, 6.
[57] NSWGTB, *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City*, 4.
[58] NSWGTB, *NSW, A Holiday Ground for the Tourist*, 10.
[59] John Rickard, *Australia: A Cultural History*, 3rd edition, 1st ed 1988, (Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2017), 41-42.
[60] Watkin Tench, *A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, (G Nicol: London, 1793).
[61] NSWGTB, *NSW, A Holiday Ground for Tourist*, 3 & NSWGTB, *New South Wales for the Settler*, 9.

year through, the rays of the sun beam from clear blue skies, and even during the warmest periods the heat is not oppressive, and then the tempering influence of the cool ozone-laden breezes impart a feeling of ease and luxury', reads one.[62] Another guide assured its readers that 'the experience of oppressive warmth or biting cold, hurricanes or blizzards, is one which Sydney residents are strangers to in their own city.'[63]

While textual description extolled Australia's abundant sunshine, the Bureau also selected photographic images of scenic destinations to make skies appear brighter and clearer. Bureau photography depicted 'immense open spaces filled with rugged bush terrain, monumental rock formations and skies that are either clear or have been manipulated to appear so. Harsh sunlight pours into these pictures, filling the nooks and crannies of every hillside and reflecting brightly from every cliff face.'[64] The Bureau's experimental photography and development techniques were driven by the same nationalist impulses alive in the contemporary Australian photographic movement.[65] In fact, the Bureau's nationalistic depiction of places like the Blue Mountains in the early 1900s predated the emergence of photographic societies such as the Sydney Camera Circle, formed in 1916 by photographers such as Harold Cazneux and Cecil Bostock, who are often credited with giving rise to Australian landscape photography.[66] Again, William Applegate Gullick, the government printer responsible for curating, editing and manipulating the Bureau's repertoire of pictures, was instrumental in presenting images that reflected and shaped an emerging, national, Australian visual lexicon.

The NSWGTB's favourable descriptions of climate were not limited to New South Wales. The 1910 guide, *To Australia*, compared the climate of Brisbane to Southern California and the French Riviera. The same guide encouraged tourists to visit Darwin, Thursday Island, and Townsville, all north of the Capricorn, places where tropical climates had long been thought ruinous to Anglo-European settlement and progress. The NSWGTB nevertheless extolled the climate north of the Capricorn, less for habitation, and more for the great aid it provided to Queensland's primary industries. 'Queensland is the great sugar-producing State of Australia because her rich agricultural lands are in tropical and semi-tropical latitudes', wrote the Bureau.[67] Of Darwin, the Bureau published that it was 'one of the finest harbours in Australia… destined to become an important shipping port and commerce centre.' Clearly the vision of the northern and north-eastern coast was tied to the potential for material progress, but tropical conditions were starting to be seen as favourable to progress rather than a barrier. A description

[62] NSWGTB, *The Pacific Coast of New South Wales*, 2-3.
[63] NSWGTB, *A Holiday Ground for the Tourist*, 10.
[64] Woodward, 'Modern marketing machine', 12-15.
[65] Melissa Miles, 'Light Nation, and Place in Australian Photography', *Photography and Culture* 6 (2013); Rod Giblett, 'Shooting the Sunburnt Country, the Land of Sweeping Plains, the Rugged Mountain Ranges: Australian Landscape and Wilderness Photography', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 21 (2007).
[66] Woodward, 'Modern marketing machine', 14.
[67] NSWGTB, *To Australia*, 23.

of the tropical products in Darwin's botanic gardens is given as an example of 'the wonderful fertility of the soil of the Northern Territory, which is rich in its deposits of various minerals.'[68]

Though these descriptions of Australia's tropical regions were admittedly sparse in the Bureau's materials, they nevertheless suggest a movement in attitudes away from the nineteenth-century idea of the Australian tropics as what Warwick Anderson describes 'as a separate, racially dubious territory.'[69] In fact, in an example of how beholden the Bureau was to Anglo-Saxon notions of democracy and material progress, the guide *To Australia* favourably described the supersession of the monopolistic "plantation" system in Queensland's sugar-cane industry to a free-market "Central Mill System". 'Under the old system' read the guide, 'the same man was planter, mill-owner, and manufacturer… and the largest percentage of the labour he employed was "black" – chiefly the Kanaka.' Labourers from the Pacific Islands, referred to then as 'Kanakas', were deported under the White Australia Policy, leaving the industry 'almost exclusively to the white man.' In line with prevailing settler attitudes, the Bureau was blind to the backbreaking Pacific Islander labour that had cultivated the productive sugar cane fields absorbed under the Central Mill System. Instead, the Bureau saw the reforms as encouraging signs of a functioning democracy. The sugar cane industry had changed 'from being the monopoly of a few rich planters and companies to a most essentially democratic industry.'[70]

The Bureau's record of the end of the plantation system marks a rapid change in consensus in the debate on whether white men could work in the tropics, which John Hirst writes was not over at the end of the nineteenth century.[71] Within a decade, oppressive tropical heat was no longer a blight on progress, but was rather a contributing factor towards it, and tourists, for the cost of 21 shillings, could visit these productive regions, 'by rail through the sub-tropical grandeur of the Blackall Range', where they could assess this new sight of national productivity all for themselves.[72] This alignment of tourist promotion with economic boosterism was a recurrent feature of NSWGTB publicity, but followed a tradition that dated back to the previous century. Private travel agents operating in NSW in the 1880s, for example, had imbued the land with myths of colonial conquest and the subsequent progress of the emergent settler nation. Sales materials for the Blue Mountains depicted exploration as an important precursor to the working of the land that had resulted in New South Wales's emergence as a self-sustaining and productive colony.[73] In that period, the preoccupation with notions of the land's fertility and ripeness for agricultural production had been contained to the colony. In the new century the NSWGTB

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[68] *Ibid*, 21.
[69] Warwick Anderson, *The Cultivation of Whiteness: Science, Health and Racial Destiny in Australia* (Melbourne, VIC: Melbourne University Press, 2002), 90.
[70] *Ibid*, 27.
[71] Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation*, 205; Warwick Anderson, 'Geography, Race and Nation: Remapping "Tropical" Australia, 1890-1930, *Medical History* 44:20, 146-159.
[72] NSWGTB, *To Australia,* 25.
[73] Woodward, *Pioneers and Progress*, 80-82.

extended these arguments around agricultural productivity to regions that were further afield, and in areas previously thought unworkable. As Patrick Wolfe writes, 'agriculture, with its life-sustaining connectedness to land, is a potent symbol of settler-colonial identity.'[74] The NSWGTB's continuation of economic arguments for agricultural development offers a commentary on how progress remained closely tied to the sense of an emerging national Australian identity even after the colonial era had ended.

The celebration of Australia's 'unrivalled' weather laid the foundation for another important marketing point – the ease with people in Sydney could participate in sport, outdoor activities, and perhaps most importantly, gain access to nature without venturing too far from the city. The connectedness of Australia's good outdoor lifestyle to the character of the people is a prominent theme in Bureau materials. For example, excerpts from Hunter's lecture notes introducing the section 'Social Conditions' described 'the social life in New South Wales' as 'easy going, and free from restrictions.' Outdoor activity was a key part of the liberal lifestyle: 'The people are hospitable, open-hearted, and live much in the open air, amusements of all kinds being much in vogue. Sport has a strong hold in the public imagination.[75]

But to what extent were these exultant claims about Sydney's meteorology factual? Sydney was known to suffer severe storms, sometimes with devastating effect. One 1912 storm, widely reported in the contemporary press, saw a half inch of rain fall in ten minutes. The deluge caused flood damage to public buildings and business premises across inner Sydney.[76] At a tramway construction site in the normally picturesque, harbourfront eastern suburb of Rose Bay, lightning struck, and killed instantly, the Sydney labourer Thomas Parkes. The tempest became so severe that rainwater inundated the metal roof of Central Station, which gave way and drenched the thousands of people who had rushed in to take shelter. Ultimo was so far underwater that tram passengers had to stand on the seats. In the lightning storm a factory on Botany Road was struck and 'crumpled up like a matchbox.'[77] Such scenes were not consistent with the Bureau's marketing, which generally favoured displays of people running into the water rather than away from it.

Of course, the 1912 storm offers just a single example, and normal conditions were somewhere in between what the Bureau promised and what mother nature delivered. Nevertheless, the Bureau's audacious claims about New South Wales having 'the best climate in the world', earned it some scrutiny.[78] In July 1914, John Joyce, a Liverpool shipping mogul, thoroughly and publicly refuted the

[74] Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', *Journal of Genocide Research* 8:4 (2006), 396.
[75] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture*, 4.
[76] 'Flood in Sydney', *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, Monday 25 November 1912, 4.
[77] 'Severe Storm in Sydney', *Bombala Times*, 29 November 1912, 5.
[78] NSWGTB, *NSW for the Settler,* 9.

notion that the climate in Australia was in any way hospitable. Following a six month stay in Australia he described the heat in Sydney 'intolerable.' 'During the four Australian summer months – November, December, January, and February – people die off like flies, notwithstanding the popular belief that the climate is ideal for consumptive patients', Joyce related to a reporter from the *Daily Post*. Joyce's dismissal of Australia was not limited to the weather. He openly criticised labour conditions, claiming there was little work for migrants who suffered under poorer conditions than in Britain. Joyce's critique had sectarian dimensions, and he derided what he saw as the neglected state of Protestantism (and therefore the intrusion of Roman Catholicism) into public life. He said that he saw in Sydney more drunkenness than he ever had 'in the course of his travels at home and abroad.'[79] Sydney's *Sun* newspaper published in full the report from the *Daily Post*, but gave Percy Hunter an opportunity to reply to Joyce, publishing his response on the same page. (Interestingly one of the stated functions of the Intelligence Department was to 'counteract promptly all injurious statements appearing in public').[80] Hunter dismantled what he said were Joyce's 'series of highly-misleading statements.' Replying to Joyce's commentary that Sydney's heat was oppressive, Hunter dispassionately stated:

> On this point I would only refer to the plain fact that the death-rate of Australasia as a whole is lower than that of any other country in the world. Measured by the rate of infant mortality, Sydney is the healthiest city in Australia, the deaths there in 1911 being 72 per 1000, as against 129 in London, 139 in Glasgow, and 156 in Dublin.[81]

Hunter's response, notable for the prompt dispatch of infant mortality figures, casts into sharp relief the social and political outlook that underpinned Tourist Bureau advertising campaigns.[82] Bureau advertising copy that ostensibly celebrated Australia's sunny weather and pleasing climate were a means for the Bureau to convey a deeper message – that Australia's environmental conditions had a direct impact on the physical health and wellbeing of the country's inhabitants. In Hunter's public lectures, he would openly and proudly state the adult deathrate:

> With a deathrate of only 10.13 per thousand it will be readily recognised that the climate is one of the healthiest in the world, and already several portions of New South Wales have achieved considerable reputation as health resorts.[83]

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[79] '"God's Own Country." British Scepticism. Shipowner snorts at Australia', *Sun*, 17 July 1914, 8.
[80] *Intelligence Department, N.S.W.: A Brief Summary of the Organisation and Functions of this Department,* 4.
[81] 'Hunter's Retort', *Sun*, 17 July 1914, 8.
[82] Milton Lewis and Roy MacLeod give an overview of colonial living conditions in the second half of the nineteenth century. Their work explains a preoccupation with public health in which there emerged a fixation with mortality rates (such as that exhibited by Hunter and the NSWGTB). See: Milton Lewis and Roy MacLeod, 'A workingman's paradise? Reflections on urban mortality in colonial Australia 1860–1900', *Medical History* 31:4, (1987), 387-402. For more on nineteenth century concerns with Anglo and Aboriginal mortality in the British colonies see Ruth Morgan, 'Health, hearth and empire: Climate, race and reproduction in British India and Western Australia', *Environment and History* 27:2, 299-250.
[83] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture*, 8.

The Bureau's sales aids reflected and reinforced contemporary preoccupations with health and vitality. *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City,* correlated Australia's outdoor lifestyle with the vigour of the population. 'Sydney is healthier than any other capital city in the old world or America', it stated, before comparing Australia's death rate (in that guide 10.41 per 1,000) to London (12.7) and New York (16.0). The next sentence of the guide reveals the Bureau identified the explanation of Australia's superior mortality was owing to the country's favourable weather, entailing a wealth of outdoor activities. 'In the salubrious climate, the inhabitants take their full measure of joy and indulge in surf-bathing, swimming, and all the aquatic pastimes and out-door recreation so favoured by the beautiful environment.'[84] The Bureau put much stock in repeatedly laying out the claim that New South Wales was a superior place to live in all criteria that related to living standards. No doubt these invitations to experience bracing climates and clean air resonated with a Western audience that was already primed with an obsession with health that had firmly taken hold in the Anglosphere by the end of Victorian era.[85]

The NSWGTB's grand claims about Australia reveal something further about the insecurities of the contemporary settler population. Australia had *the best* weather, *the best* tourist resorts and even *the best* institutions. Hunter told audiences that NSW had a judiciary that upheld 'the best traditions of the British Bench', and that the 'British Parliamentary system of Government prevails in Australia.' Not only had Australia inherited these institutions, but it had also improved on them. 'The law of the land is practically the common law of England, with, in addition, a number of statutes of an advanced democratic stamp,' he wrote.[86] These are clear insights into what the government tourist promoters must have perceived in the audience, and indeed themselves, as a general fear that Australian society was inferior to Europe and North America.

Perhaps in an effort to dispel this insecurity, the NSWGTB materials argued emphatically that Sydney was the equal of any city, and Australia the equal of any country, in the world. The thoroughfares were 'as broad and as handsome as the magnificent boulevards of Paris.' Sydney was 'bigger than Edinburgh' and 'richer than San Francisco.' According to the Bureau there was not a place on earth that surpassed Sydney for any attraction, institution, industry, or recreational activity. Coney Island might have, on a warm summer's day seethed 'with myriads of swimmers' and 'the long warm sweep of the breakers from the outer reef on the beach under Diamond Head on Waikiki' might have caressed 'the most daring surf-bathers in the world,' but nowhere, nowhere other than Sydney, the Bureau told readers, could

[84] NSWGTB, *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City,* 5.
[85] On middle class fixation with health in the early twentieth century see: David Walker, "Mind and Body" in *Australians, 1938,* Gammage and Spearritt (eds.), (Fairfax, Syme & Weldon 1987, second edition 2007). In the late-nineteenth century, France led the way in the pursuit of statistical objectivity in researching mortality rates see: Theodore M. Porter, *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life*, (Princeton University Press: New Jersey, 1995), 79-84.
[86] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture on NSW, 3-5.*

'the ocean bather find better sport than on the dazzling sunlit beaches that fringe the Pacific within half-an-hour's tram ride' of the city.[87] Advertising Sydney's low cost public transport, together with images of beaches crowded with 'surf-bathers' evoked an outdoor playground that was easy to participate in and where the health giving climate, abundant sunshine and public amenity afforded to the nation by the economic success also born of these environmental conditions, morally and physically enriched the populace.

The idea that Australia was superior to Europe and America in public health, but also in its institutions and industries was at the core of NSWGTB messaging. But what was driving the Bureau to present Australia in such a way? Assertions of Australian supremacy were no doubt tied to attracting migrants and tourists, and to that end fulfilling the voracious domestic political demand for growing the population. There were also deep seated domestic psychological explanations for presenting Australia in such a hyperbolic way. In this sense the Bureau answered what they perceived as a keenly felt perception within some segments of Australian society that the nation was held in low regard by the outside world. As Mark Hearn writes in *The Fin de Siècle Imagination in Australia,* 'as the world turned to a new century, observers from other nations saw Australia as a form of experiment, observing the productive energy that also seemed to convey anxieties that troubled progress.'[88] As an example of the Australian concern with its overseas reputation, Hearn cites a 1909 newspaper article, titled 'As Others See Us', in which the author writes that there existed a 'secret uneasiness' in 'many English minds… that the immense capacities of Australia were not being developed, and that sooner or later the task which the Australians expressly decline will be taken in hand.'[89] It was in the context of such perceived aspersions against the self-autonomy of Australians that the Bureau engaged in a project that persistently sought to lay to rest claims (whether real or imagined) from the outside world that Australia was inferior.

For some, the Bureau's clamouring about Australia's greatness may have had a ring of the insecure adolescent. Even so, the Bureau's determination to advance a vision of Australia as a productive and healthy society were driven by a widely felt concern about how Australia might have been viewed in the eyes of others. But in the eyes of the Bureau, Australia had gained a certain superiority from the environmental conditions and resources that were unique to the continent. Australia's distance, vast landscapes and harsh conditions, instead of encumbrances, resembled the keystones of its promise and its success. In the Bureau's vision, the Australian experiment was revealing itself a triumph. Instead of breaking down in the face of adversity, British Europeans in Australia had mastered a rugged land. Nature had not just been tamed in Australia. It had been so sufficiently dominated that it now provided the backdrop for where the nation spent its leisure. In this sense, Bureau advertising recorded Australia's

[87] NSWGTB, *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City*, 8-9.
[88] Mark Hearn, *The Fin de Siècle Imagination in Australia,* 5.
[89] 'As Others See Us', *Mercury*, 13 April 1909, 3.

inhabitants enjoying the fruits derived from over a century of hard-won labour and progress. Such a vision was at once an advertisement for Australia overseas, but a powerful reminder within Australia about how far the nation, and its people, had come.

The Bureau's celebration of Australia's institutional, social, and material progress was steeped in the history of colonisation. Guidebooks celebrated the social and material progress achieved since 'British pioneers a century and a quarter ago planted the banner of England, and a new colony was founded on the banks of a tiny stream running into Sydney Cove.'[90] With adulation, the guide, *Sydney, Australia's Holiday City*, continued to describe how far Australian society had come since those days:

> To-day mammoth ocean-going steamers up to eighteen thousand tons berth at huge wharves at the spot where the little stream debouched into the harbour, and the flag of Britain, the same old flag which the gallant Arthur Phillip and his little band saluted in 1788, floats proudly in the Australian breeze from scores of magnificent buildings, which would adorn any city in the world.[91]

Promoters likely thought such celebrations of colonial progress would resonate with the target demographic in Britain, but also with the established population in New South Wales. As Geoffrey Blainey notes, Australians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were proud to belong to the British Empire, but 'believed they had a fuller dose of what they saw as the stoutest British qualities – courage, self-reliance, and the appropriate blend of independence and loyalty'.[92] Indeed, pre-Federation tourist guidebooks for places like the Blue Mountains had idolised stoicism, grit, and 'energy and pluck' as essential qualities of the British character.[93] NSWGTB materials continued this tradition, but in a new, more easily digestible form that celebrated progress without evoking in too great detail the harshness of the environment encountered by European pioneers in the nineteenth century.[94] Guidebooks regaled the British as 'the greatest colonists the world has ever known', and celebrated 'their achievements in Australia' that had 'secured and preserved for the Empire the greatest acquisition ever won by conquest or discovered by intrepid exploration of unknown seas.' Such invitations in tourist advertising for both people living in Britain and Australia to acknowledge their colonial heritage are a testament to the pervasiveness of Britishness in Australia at that time.

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[90] Sydney, *Australia's Holiday City*, 1-2.
[91] *Ibid*, 2.
[92] Geoffrey Blainey, *A Shorter History of Australia*, rev. ed. (Sydney: Vintage Books, 2014), 170; Neville Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity', 76–90.
[93] Woodward, *Pioneers, Progress and the Sublime,* 73-79.
[94] Hirst, "The Pioneer Legend", 15.

Repeated claims in tourist Bureau advertising about health, climate, and mortality, tallied up to a comprehensive and overarching vision of Australia's innermost character – an evaluation of the nation through its most identifiable, best environmental attributes. Hunter had internalised in a profound way what he saw as intractable data that set Australia apart as a healthier place to live than any other place in the world.

Bodies, and bathing in NSWGTB publicity: The Beach becomes a national icon

Bureau advertising promoted a variety of resorts, national parks, and other nature-based scenic attractions. But the Bureau's substantial promotion of the beach and waterside resorts mark the emergence of what would become a hugely important theme in twentieth century Australian tourist advertising. Tourist literature recorded the growing popularity of the beach as a site for the patronisation of both male and female bathers. Importantly, advertising materials that directed tourists to Sydney's beaches are a good example of how the Bureau sought to connect the country's favourable weather conditions with the disposition and (comparatively to Europe), laid-back social attitudes of the Australian people. The pamphlet *The Pacific Coast of New South Wales*, for example, stated 'Sydney is justly proud of its array of ocean beaches which, in the season, pulsate with the gay life of surf bathers of both sexes.'[95]

The Bureau's documentation of the popularity of surf-bathing marks an early appearance of the beach, and the bodies of swimmers, in Australian tourist advertising. This came at a time when the public debate over the moral dimensions of public bathing were far from settled. As Douglas Booth, author of *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf,* writes, surf-bathing remained a 'site of tension and debate within the middle-classes' well into the twentieth century.[96] On one side of the debate, health-faddists and medical practitioners claimed that surf-bathing was a 'panacea for the ills of urban life.' On the other, 'moralists condemned it as an indecent pastime.' 'Mrs Grundies', a contemporary term for a subset of professionally disgusted middle-class moralists who 'insisted that bathers lacked restraint and self-control over bodily desires, and that bathing stimulated desire for flesh, aroused erotic thoughts, and encouraged sexual crimes.'[97] Again, the context for this debate was closely linked to an ever-expanding obsession with health, both physical and moral.

At the most extreme ends of this debate eugenicists and military nationalists saw the healthy, athletic bodies surf bathers as 'national assets against the inevitability of war.'[98] Such sentiments doubtlessly

[95] NSWGTB, *The Pacific Coast of NSW,* 2.
[96] Douglas Booth, 'Healthy, Economic, Disciplined Bodies. Surfbathing and Surf Lifesaving in Australia and New Zealand, 1890 - 1950', *New Zealand Journal of History,* 32, 1 (1998), 43-58. See also Douglas Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf*, (Frank Cass Publishers: Portland, 2001).
[97] *Ibid,* Booth, 45-46.
[98] *Ibid,* Booth, 'Healthy Economic Disciplined bodies', 47.

foreshadowed ideas about Australian racial superiority that appeared before and during the First World War. Richard Waterhouse recounts how in 1907 Charles Bean was already 'reiterating a picture of the itinerant bush workers once articulated by the *Bulletin'*, promoting them as 'the unique Australian type, utilitarian, egalitarian, pragmatic and anti-authoritarian.'[99] As Waterhouse points out, Bean would extend these arguments around racial and physical superiority in his post-war work. I discuss in the next chapter how some of the militaristic eugenic arguments that Bean was disposed to emerged, at least in a partial sense, in the post-First World War tourist literature. Importantly though, less militaristic eugenic ideas also had some grounding in popular opinion in the pre-war period. As Grant Rodwell observes, the first decade of the twentieth century saw the rise of a widespread 'belief that the sun's rays possessed great eugenic powers.' This fixation on the health-giving effects of the sun underpinned public sentiment that Australian beaches were 'the pleasantest and healthiest of national playgrounds.'[100] NSWGTB tourist literature made such claims about Sydney's beaches, among other recreational sites. Bureau advertising records well the 'healthy, virile masses gathering at Manly, Bondi, Coogee, and other famous surfing attractions' that Rodwell describes as having flocked to the beaches in ever increasing numbers from the city and its expanding suburbs.

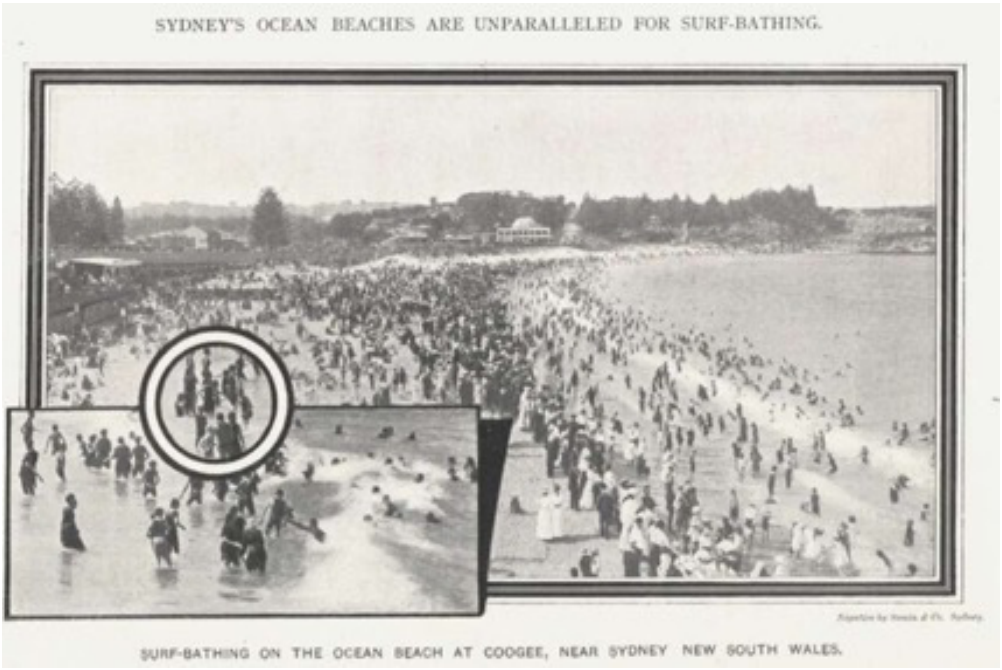


Figure 4 – Surf Bathing at Coogee as depicted in NSWGTB promotional literature.

The Tourist Bureau's promotion of the accessibility of public, mixed bathing, evokes an image of Sydney at the turn of the century that was egalitarian, free, and socially exciting. Photographs in the

[99] Richard Waterhouse, 'Australian Legends: Representations of the Bush, 1813–1913, *Australian Historical Studies*, 31:115, (2000), 221.
[100] Grant Rodwell, 'The sense of victorious struggle': The eugenic dynamic in Australian popular surf-culture, 1900-50, *Journal of Australian Studies*, 23:62, (1999),60.

NSWGTB's materials record the immense popularity of the beach, at least among Sydney's urban population. Indeed, as Rodwell illustrates, the discovery of the surf as a form of recreation was particular to Sydney in the early years of the century. Taking on the surf had eugenic qualities but also gave urban living people a taste of the 'challenge of the frontier at their very doorstep', Rodwell writes. Drawing on contemporary media coverage of the activity, Rodwell further demonstrates a fixation in the discourse 'concerning the open-air recreation, the struggle against the elements, and the general 'health-giving' physical experience', from which he concludes that surfing had a 'special place as a eugenically inspired activity.'[101] In the context of the wider eugenic preoccupations with surf-bathing, it is notable that the NSWGTB's descriptions of surf bathing elided the wider eugenic discussion. Descriptions of the pastime were couched more in the language of establishing beaches as sites of national pride than that of celebrating surf culture as an instrument of racial betterment. I am not sure what explains the Bureau's lack of commentary on the eugenic dimensions of surf-bathing, especially when elsewhere in tourist Bureau propaganda, Hunter sustained a prevailing racial belief that elevated white Anglo-Saxon civilisation above other races and cultures.[102]

Advertising the widespread popularity of mixed bathing was, perhaps, a nod to the silent majority of beach goers who were not aroused by the vociferous arguments for and against unsegregated bathing. Furthermore, Bureau materials touted the beach as an inexpensive destination for leisure for the masses. Publicising the availability and convenience of public transport to and from the beach reinforced its accessibility as a shared public space. Indeed, as Caroline Ford writes in *Sydney Beaches: A History*: 'there has been a longer tradition of mingling of the classes at Sydney beaches than at many beaches elsewhere.'[103] There was also emerging a tradition of mingling of the sexes, which, perhaps, was part of a wider and powerful vision of a cosmopolitan Australia that was beginning to challenge the heavily masculine alternative articulated by the cultural nationalist *Bulletin* writers in their idealisation of the bush and the hard working shearers and settlers that worked it. The Bureau clearly perceived that images of crowded beaches, and prose that celebrated the virtues of mixed bathing, were of interest to both a home and international audience:

> Magnificent ocean beaches fringe the metropolis along the Pacific littoral, to which Sydney residents repair in thousands to enjoy the delightful sport of surf-bathing in the "long wash of Australasian seas."

As we shall see in later chapters, the idea that the Australian beach was a place for play, self-display, relaxation, and encounters with the opposite sex would, over the course of the century, become one of

[101] *Ibid*, 56.
[102] Woodward, 'Making a modern-marketing machine', 70.
[103] Caroline Ford, *Sydney Beaches: A History*, (New South Publishing: Sydney, 2014), 13.

the definitive images of Australia in domestic and overseas advertising. Though this trope would reach its cultural apotheosis in the Mojo 'Come and Say G'day' campaigns, featuring Paul Hogan, in the 1980s, (explored further in chapter six) the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau was the first centralised promotional organisation that depicted, and indeed recorded, Australia's vibrant beach culture. While belonging to this long tradition of the beach in Australian national image making, the efforts of the NSWGTB to promote Australian surf culture offer some insights into contemporary values and attitudes around race and gender relations around the turn of the century.

Essentially, the image hints that young women were getting dressed and undressed just out of the public view. We might imagine that such an image encouraged a little excitement in some men, but perhaps in some women too, who might have seen the beach as a space free from the social mores of past generations. Indeed, the campaigns of the Tourist Bureau coincided with the tail end of a revolution in gender relations and attitudes towards sex and the body. Frank Bongiorno points out in *The Sex Lives of Australians,* in Australian cities around the turn of the century, the ratios of men to women were not as unbalanced as they had been a generation earlier: 'most young men no longer had any reason to expect lifelong bachelordom'. A greater incidence of romantic relationships saw young couples take advantage of 'increased opportunities for unchaperoned intimacy.' Public transport was of great aid to those 'who wished to remove themselves from the prying eyes of family and neighbourhood.'[104]

The Bureau was enthusiastic to point out the ease with which people could reach Sydney's beaches via public transport. 'Bondi and Coogee are reached by electric cars along the route through the eastern suburbs, and as the tram approaches the ocean, a vast expanse of magnificent coastal panoramas unfold.'[105] Elsewhere, Bureau guides spruiked the low-cost of state owned transport networks: 'The electric tramway system, owned by the Government, is unexcelled in the world for speed, comfort and cheapness'.[106] Seen in this light, the Bureau's attempts to connect public transport and the beach might have signalled to some readers the opportunities for romance, or at least encounters with the opposite sex, that existed in Sydney at that time. No doubt, the attraction of beaches as an escape from the suffocation and embarrassment of the family home was well known by couples who might have retreated to them via public transport, and in doing so might have felt at the cutting-edge of modern gender relations.

Importantly, the Bureau celebrated beach culture not only in an effort to attract people from overseas, but also to provide the world with a definitive vision of Australia. Because advertisers' visions were, and have always been, followed by people living in Australia, images sent overseas become part of the

[104] Bongiorno, *Sex Lives of Australians*, 157.
[105] NSWGTB, *The Pacific Coast of NSW,* 3.
[106] NSWGTB, *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City*, 4.

domestic population's understanding of their own nation. In the chapters of this thesis which deal with tourist advertising in the post-war era, we will see how the Australian cultural fascination with the beach and the water built on and departed from the foundations of surf-culture recorded in the advertising discussed here. Later in the century, emerging notions of how advertising material could straddle a fine line between creating subject positions that invited women to experiment with independent identities and coding women according to a narrow definition of femineity and womanhood became more prominent.

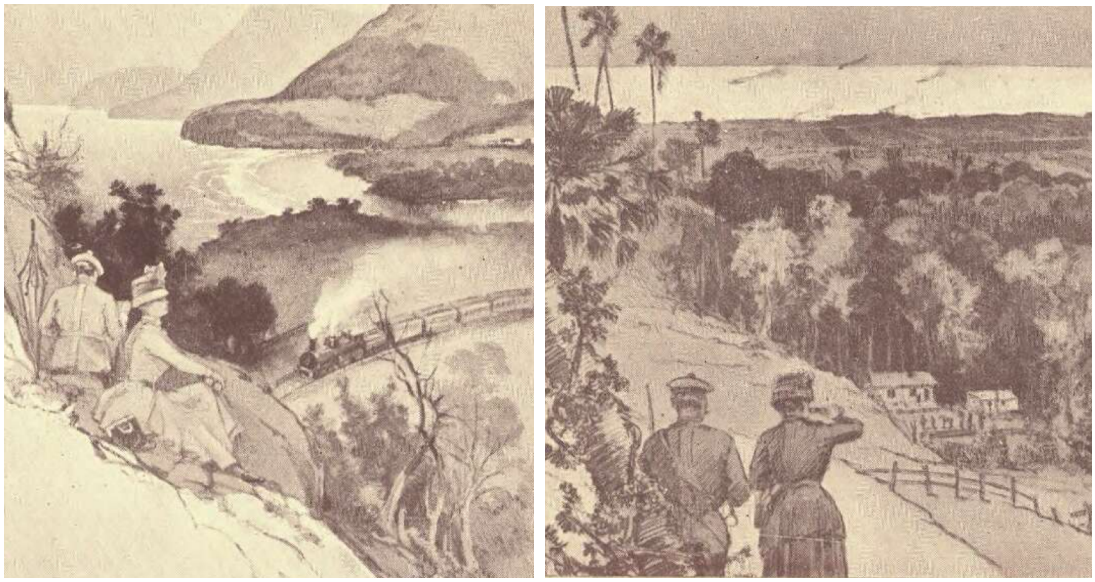


Figure 5 – Tourist literature often presented hiking as a couple's activity. 'Coastal Promontories, NSW' (left) and 'Illawara District' (right). *Pacific Coast of New South Wales,*(NSWGTB, 1911), *6.*

Overcoming the urban malaise: Healthy progressive people and a healthy progressive economy

Historians have documented well the strains of progressive thinking active in late nineteenth century and early twentieth century Australia, particularly as it intersected with early twentieth century modernism.[107] While much has been written on the politicians and intellectuals who led the progressive movement, little has been written on its presence in and influence on tourism. Tourist advertising projects and documents how contemporary ideas and values played out in social reality. The unexplored archive of NSW government tourist advertising sheds some light on how progressive ideas were likely understood more broadly, and to some degree record how progressive beliefs about health and activity were lived out by contemporary Australians. Images of recreation also recorded people simply enjoying

[107] Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*; Marilyn Lake, *Progressive New World, How Settler Colonialism and Transpacific Exchange Shaped American Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019); Bongiorno, 'A Short History of New Thought in Australia'; Sarah Mirams, '"For their moral health": James Barrett, Urban Progressive Ideas and National Park Reservation in Victoria, *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 33, no. 120, 2002; David Walker, 'Introduction: Australian Modern: Modernism and its Enemies 1900-1940,' *Journal of Australian Studies,* 32, (1992), 1-6.

themselves outdoors, or the promise of participating in such recreation, and one needs to be cautious reading ideology into everyday activity. Nevertheless, the Bureau's anthology of sales publications must contain some insights into the popular opinion and values of the time in which they were created. In the Bureau's words, its sales materials 'strikingly set forth the various phases of social and industrial life, the tourist resorts, and the different sports in vogue in Australia and New South Wales.'[108] The pronouncement of such a claim is testament to the wide array of social commentary that the Bureau sought to capture, and this section complements and builds on earlier histories of progressivism in Australia by drawing on this unexplored advertising archive.

Attempts to respond to contemporary progressive concerns can be seen throughout Bureau documents and are not strictly limited to the publicising of Sydney's parks and playgrounds. One guide, for example, speaks to how the natural situation of Sydney lent itself to a 'naturally perfect drainage system.' Sydney's 'scheme of its sanitation is progressive,' said the Bureau, 'and in harmony with the science of hygiene.'[109] Such appeals to modern progressive trends reveal that the Bureau were alert to the existence of these concerns in the wider community, and further positioned Australia as a progressive society to markets overseas. The writers and editors that authored the Bureau's materials likely held these progressive ideas themselves and imbued them into their materials. Importantly, the Bureau's praise of public sanitation followed major reforms to Sydney's sewerage and waste water infrastructure, which contributed to a healthier public environment in Sydney by the turn of the century, even though there remained ample room for further improvements.[110] The result was the creation of vision of Sydney, and by extension Australia, that ameliorated the potential worries consumers had over their physical wellbeing. At the same time, the Bureau's vision advanced Australia as a healthy and clean society with accessible nature, clean air and, most importantly, as a nation that facilitated the enjoyment of these in-demand commodities.

The Bureau's association of New South Wales's climate with a healthy, vital populace was also connected to its presentation of Australia's productive economy. Bureau advertising materials tended to follow a recurring formula. After advertising the attractions of the state, its climate, and the lifestyle of the population, the literature turns to workforce productivity and economic prosperity. Following effusive descriptions of Sydney's climate and scenic environs, the 1914 pamphlet *Sydney: The Holiday City* rhapsodised that Sydney was fifth 'on the list of the great seaports of the British Empire… Its trade, reckoned by imports and exports, already approximates pounds 100,000,000 sterling annually and has more than doubled in thirteen years.'[111] Australia was superior in its climate and attractions, and was likewise in its industrious workforce, made up of the same population of health-seeking citizens

[108] Immigration and Tourist Bureau, Report for Year Ended 30th June 1913. NSWA: NRS 14087, [5/3499B].
[109] NSWGTB, *Sydney, Holiday City*, 1914, 5.
[110] Lewis and MacLeod, 'A workingman's paradise', 393.
[111] *Ibid*.

advertised in the tourist literature. Guides told of 'the ceaseless clang of hammers on the anvils of dockyards' and the 'healthy maritime industry' conjures the image of a muscular citizenry neither work shy nor idle.[112] In typical Bureau fashion, these claims came backed with the raw economic figures – the state's '1,800,000 inhabitants produce annually pounds 35 per head.'[113]

Hunter was acutely conscious of the economic and social forces afoot in shaping an Australian identity in the early twentieth century. In his lectures on New South Wales, he made other observations about the state's social conditions and the material wealth of its people. He celebrated what he saw as aspirational and egalitarian qualities of life in Australia. 'Wages are good, and the cost of living compared with that in other lands is fairly low', he said. 'Even the poorest families eat meat once or twice a day, and there is scarcely any real poverty. No man is so poor and so lacking of opportunity, but, if he have sufficient grit, he may not lift himself out of the ruck of labourers into a position of comparative ease and comfort.' He would tell audiences that New South Wales had 'only a little more than a million and a half people' but had 'commerce nearly as large as Japan with 48 million.'[114] Clearly NSWGTB publicity included this information to appeal to migrants, engaged in weighing their position before embarking on a long, and likely permanent, voyage. Importantly however, the Bureau's spruiking of progressive conditions in materials aimed at both migrants and tourists was indicative of a contemporary appetite for such information, deemed to be of interest to the early twentieth century traveller. Promoters estimated in their readers, at home and overseas, a personal interest in the present health and growth of the colonial economy. Key to this celebration of Australian progress was the overriding notion that Australia's unique conditions had been conducive to prosperity.

The Bureau's celebration of Australian outdoor lifestyle, taken in the context of Hunter's claims about Australia's progressive and egalitarian society, were aimed at fostering a sense of inclusivity and a strong civic culture. Not only did this reinforce latent attitudes in the domestic population about social cohesion and identity, but the Bureau also estimated that these social attractions appealed to the likely tourist or migrant. This vision cast a wide net. For example, the Bureau advertised that the price of holidays and daily excursions was not out of reach for the working classes. In fact, as the guidebook *New South Wales for the Settler* claimed, the distribution of wealth in Australia had resulted in 'the absence of class distinctions and violent contrasts between rich and poor.'[115] The messaging here was clear – the benefits of living in Australia, including access to public beaches, national parks and other 'natural' attractions were available to the majority of its inhabitants. Crucially, many guides described such places under headings like 'the people's parks', and 'magnificent playgrounds for the people.' Such representations

[112] NSWGTB, *Sydney: Australia's Holiday City,* 7.
[113] *Ibid*.
[114] Hunter, *Notes for a Lecture on NSW*, 8. Since the 1870s, colonial promoters often touted the average Australian's consumption of meat as an attractive feature of Australian conditions. See: Lewis and MacLeod, 'A workingman's paradise', 392.
[115] NSWGTB, *NSW for the Settler*, 28.

record, and to an extent must have contributed to, the idea of Australia as a working man's paradise. That messages about Australia's egalitarianism and comparatively relaxed class structure indicates that the NSWGTB deemed these features of the Australian scene to be of value to both migrants, tourists and the local NSW population.

As we have seen above, the Bureau often touted the affordability of public transport that connected the city to nature reserves and beaches as a benefit of life in New South Wales. When the Bureau wrote that 'The harbour resorts and ocean beaches are reached by a frequent service of ferryboats from a focal point at Circular Quay at the cost of a few pence', as an example from one guide reads, they were very much connecting the economic hub of the CBD with Sydney's warm, invigorating climate and opportunities for outdoor play. More outdoor play meant more opportunities to meet a romantic partner, spectate or participate in sport, and contributed generally to an image of a healthy and happy population. Not all Bureau literature mentioned the New South Wales economy, and many texts restricted their purview only to scenic attractions. But those pamphlets that abstained from detailed economic information still found a way to include statements like: 'The commercial importance of Sydney, and its marvellous growth as a trade centre are matters outside this booklet.'[116] Sydney had great natural attractions, but also a great economy too, and the Bureau wanted the world to know!

For all the Bureau's superlative claims about Sydney as a Mecca for health it remained undisclosed in Bureau materials that slums, overcrowding and disease still existed in Sydney, and sometimes not all too far from the sights venerated in the advertising.[117] Indeed, as Janet McCalman and Rebecca Kippen point out, high demand for cheap labour in the boom-era 1870s and 1880s led to an oversupply of unskilled casual workers that 'created a pool of intractable urban and rural poverty that would not begin to be resolved until World War 2.'[118] We have already seen in this chapter that the Bureau's presentation of Australia's weather and climate was embellished, and we should not be all that surprised that their treatment of Australian social and economic conditions were embellished, or concealed, also. It is not a ground-breaking discovery that tourist boosters overstated perceived benefits of life in Australia. Nor is it likely that all consumers digested these claims uncritically. The pertinent question here, however, is to ask what was the deeper ideology that motivated the Bureau to present New South Wales, (and, really by extension, Australia), in this hyperbolic way. In other words, why did the Bureau feel so strongly compelled to repeatedly, and almost dogmatically, associate Australia's environmental conditions with the country's economy and the supposed health and wellbeing of its people?

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[116] NSWGTB, *NSW, Holiday Ground for Tourist*, 9.
[117] On the clearing of slums in central Sydney in the first half of the twentieth century, see: Pamela Barnett-Spies, 'The Early Years of The Preservation Movement in New South Wales: 1900 to 1939', (Master of Arts: Sydney University, 1987).
[118] Janet McCalman and Rebecca Kippen, 'Population and Health', in *The Cambridge History of Australia: Volume I, Indigenous and Colonial Australia,* Alison Bashford, Stuart Macintyre (eds.) (Cambridge University Press: Melbourne, 2013), 305.

There are two important considerations that go to the heart of the Bureau's determination to have Australia seen as a natural and social paradise. The first is that Tourist Bureau literature appeared in the context of a broader, general fixation in English speaking countries with public health and morality. As Sarah Mirams writes, a number of progressives such as the medical reformer James Barrett (1862-1945), formed an intellectual movement in Australia that became active between 1890 and 1914. Australian progressivism, which followed similar trends occurring in North America and Europe, was united by passionate beliefs about efficiency, utilitarianism, and 'a view that nature and the natural world' were the 'source of humankind's vitality and freedom.'[119] Importantly, progressive thinkers were preoccupied with what they perceived as the moral and physical deterioration of an increasingly urbanised population. Their fixation with public health and morality was underwritten by the notion that urban life had become disconnected from nature. Bureau advertising that esteemed Australia's healthy living conditions and abundant nature responded to these entrenched concerns in Australia, but also abroad, about the essentiality of nature to a healthy, virtuous life.

The urban malaise compounded Australians' proclivity to worry about health, which dated back to the previous century. On the extent to which Australians have been historically troubled by matters of mental and physical well-being, historian David Walker writes that many 'felt a nagging worry that the whole basis of modern life, at once sedentary and stressful, had created new maladies which needed new remedies. Some people doubted that it was possible to live healthy lives in the modern world.'[120] National parks emerged partly in response to what urban progressives saw as the debilitating effects of the industrialised city. The New South Wales government set National Park (later Royal National Park) aside precisely for this reason in 1879. As Michael Hall writes, the creation of the National Park 'was inspired more by a desire to ensure the health of Sydney's working population than to provide a wilderness.'[121]

Historians can sometimes overstate the role of individual actors or intellectual movements in the legislation of national parks or similar reserves, without explaining the broad public support for them that existed in mainstream opinion. Michael Roe's work on Australia's progressive movement, for example, is undertaken through a biographical lens of the 'nine Australian progressives' which give the book its title.[122] Similarly, Sarah Mirams work on James Barret views national park creation through the prism of only one of the movement's advocates.[123] Though such a framing is useful in understanding the intellectual history of progressive ideas, it gives rise to a view of history that arguably overstates the

[119] Mirams, *"For their moral health'*, 249. See also: Tom Griffiths, *Hunters and Collectors: The Antiquarian Imagination in Australia* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
[120] David Walker, "Mind and Body", 233.
[121] Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage*, 92.
[122] Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives.*
[123] Mirams, 'For their moral health'.

role of a handful of individuals while doing little to explain how everyday people (as in, people who were not specialist reformers), made up the broad base of the society that supported and experienced reform. Tourist advertising literature, which as we have seen in this chapter recorded people at leisure in urban and natural settings, accounts for the experience of wider publics in deriving the benefits to health and lifestyle that structural reforms entailed.

National advertising emerged not long after the appearance of national parks and nature reserves, and it makes sense that promoters presented these attractions as indicators of a robust and healthy civilisation. Guides pointed to the availability of The National Park, (now Royal National Park) which lay 'within an hour's journey.'[124] Another national playground, Kuring-gai Chase, was just '30 miles away.'[125] The 'rare magnificence' of the Blue Mountains were 'within a distance of 50 miles.'[126] As with the ocean beaches, the Bureau presented the state's public transport as vital in connecting people in the city to nature: 'A hundred launches with picnic parties aboard streak over the shimmering, laughing face of the port, to meander eventually into some secluded nook in the upper reaches. Within half an hour, thousands of people may be transferred by ferries or electric cars, to a dozen ocean beaches, and by train to numberless forest glades, fern decked gullies and fishing grounds.'[127] The supposed distance of any of these places from Sydney really depended on which part of Sydney the Tourist Bureau decided to measure from. The point was, nevertheless, that nature abounded, was convenient to access, and belonged to the people. As one guide explained, these 'great national forest reserves' provided 'glorious recreation spaces for Sydney's citizens.'[128] As Melissa Harper and Richard White point out, early parks in Australia were designated as national not because their scenery represented the nation, but because the people who visited them did.[129] Bureau advertising is a window onto how the process Harper and White describe occurred. Images of national parks in the Bureau's ephemera indicated that national parks were more tourist resorts than areas for conservation or nature preservation, even though there was a contemporary environmental interest in preserving such areas.[130] Such advertisements invited tourists to be amidst nature rather than protect or preserve it.

[124] NSWGTB, *Sydney, Australia's Holiday City*, 9.
[125] *Ibid*, 10.
[126] NSWGTB, *Sydney, Australia's Holiday City*, 10.
[127] NSWGTB, *The Pacific Coast of NSW,* 6-7.
[128] NSWGTB, *Sydney, Queen of the South Pacific*, 6.
[129] Melissa Harper and Richard White, 'How National Were the First National Parks?: Comparative Perspectives from the British Settler Societies', in *Civilizing nature: National parks in global historical perspective.* eds Gissibl, B., Höhler, S., & Kupper, P. (Berghahn Books, 2012), 61.
[130] Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora,* 139-164.

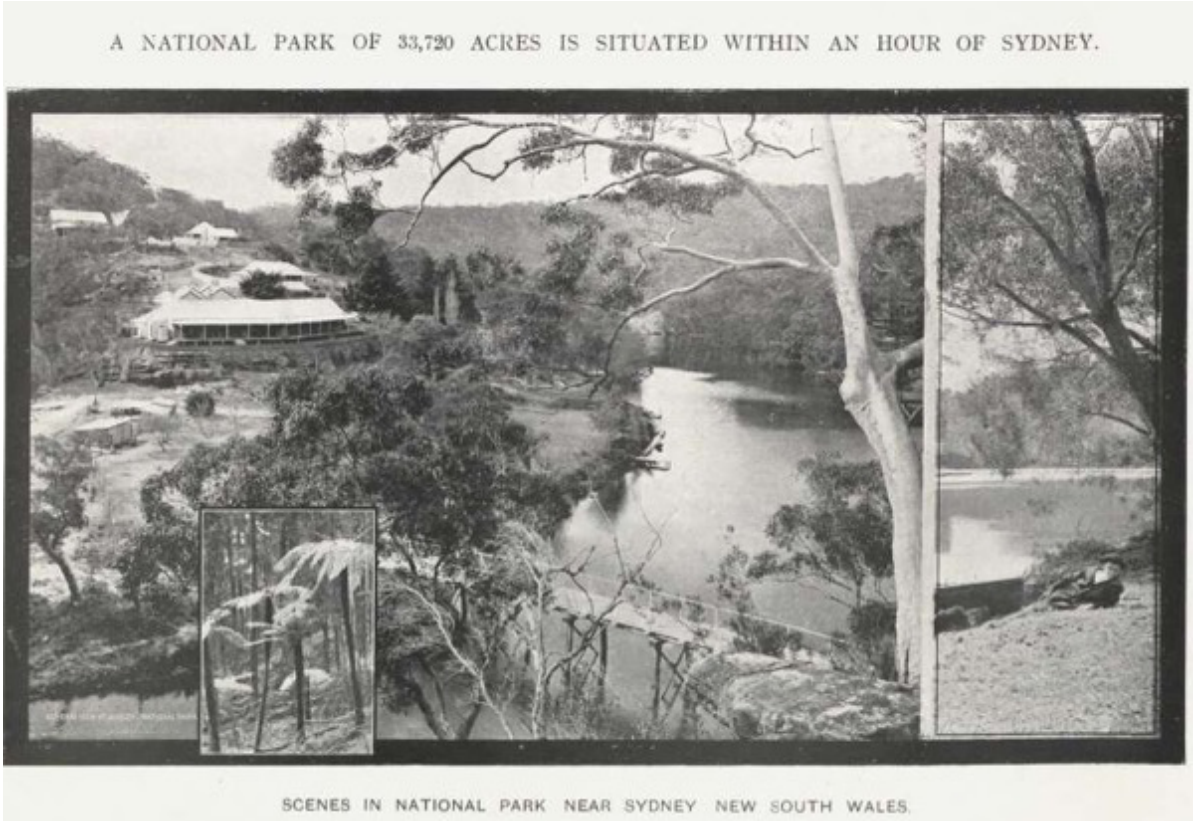


Figure 6 – 'Scenes in National Park Near Sydney New South Wales'. Note the eucalypt that foregrounds the main image. The pavilion, bridge and jetty denote the existence of a wider tourist infrastructure.

Hunter and the Bureau he directed belonged to the broader cultural trends of the Progressive Movement. Skilled publicists, they were apt to use any image at their disposal to sell a vision of New South Wales (and by extension Australia) that they believed would resonate with consumers and advance the reputation of the state, its people, and institutions. The textual and photographic record that the Bureau left behind suggests that the Bureau documented everyday life in Sydney, even if their view was a carefully chosen one. Clearly, they estimated that a vision of New South Wales as a place of good health (and therefore good moral character) was important to their audience, both domestically and abroad. Seen in this way, the Bureau's materials offer a new perspective on Australia's experience of progressivism in the early years of the twentieth century.

How the Bureau chose to represent Australia leads us to a second important consideration that is central to explaining the NSWGTB's presentation of Australia as a paradisaic utopia – the centralised management of Australia's reputation. We can see in the Bureau's desperate effort to compare Australia with other countries an insecurity about the country's distance from the rest of the English-speaking world. Colonial consternation with Australia's vast distance from the metropole of the Empire had characterised the social and political identity of settler Australia since Captain Arthur Phillip landed in

1788. As John Rickard writes in his cultural history of Australia, the country's 'convict origins ensured that a sense of exile was fundamental to the colonial psyche.' Rickard adds: 'whatever the satisfactions of colonial life any experience of disappointment or disillusion could invoke again the desolation of exile, and such feelings could easily be projected onto the environment.'[131] Indeed, as Richard White and John Hirst have often pointed out, a feeling of colonial alienation affected nationalist writers and artists, whose development of the popular image of the bush also contributed to an image of Australia as inhospitable.[132] Rickard writes, for example, that Lawson 'was determined to depict the outback as bleak and unrelenting.' The idealisation of the bushman or the pioneer, the shearer, or the settler, 'encouraged an image of a correspondingly harsh environment.'[133]

Herein lies a penetrating revelation about the nature of Australian nationhood. What John Hirst made clear in *The Sentimental Nation*, was that it was the Australian desire to avoid 'the stigma of being thought second rate' that animated political idealists like Henry Parkes to work for federation. Hirst writes that proponents of the federal project 'had an interest in the creating of a nation, not an economic interest but a status interest, the quintessential selfish interest, what Carlyle called the moral self.' This selfish interest, according to Hirst, was underpinned by an anxiety about perceptions of Australia's reputation as a colony, and its people, merely colonists, anxious about being thought of overseas as 'a second-class people.' Federation offered a solution to the tarring of Australians with the brush of colonial condescension. 'If the colonies combined,' writes Hirst, 'the colonists would become citizens of a nation and share the standing of other nations round the globe.'[134] As we have seen the Bureau's advertising conjured a promise that Australia offered a standard of living that, the Bureau said, surpassed other nations. This image was especially important in attracting migrants and foreign investment but had a dimension of self-assurance – a question mark hung over the colonial experiment no longer.

Conclusion

In 1901, Australia's transition from six British colonies to a federated nation did not immediately alleviate anxiety and uncertainty over competing state and national identities. Though the later campaigns of the Australian National Travel Association in the 1930s would begin to offer a united vision of Australia, the role of the NSWGTB was still formative in the history of Australian national advertising. Other state tourist Bureaus predated New South Wales's, but none were as attuned to modernised advertising, or as effective in communicating their message in Australia and abroad. Crucially, no other state offered as uniting a vision of Australia as the New South Wales example. Key

[131] Rickard, *Australia: A Cultural History*, 65-66.
[132] White, *Inventing Australia*, 101-109.
[133] Rickard, *Australia*, 65.
[134] This quote is from Hirst, *Sense and Nonsense*, 25. See also: John Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, (Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2000).

to this vision were the symbols of Australian nature and environment that were, in the first decades of the twentieth century, increasingly becoming the avatars of the Australian nation.

As we will see in the chapters that follow, every significant promotional organisation that emerged after the First World War would tread on the heels of the NSWGTB's example in orienting Australia's image around the nation's scenic and environmental attributes. The degree to which subsequent organisations, in particular the Victorian Railways and the Australian National Travel Association consciously imitated the NSWGTB is a matter that I will leave for Chapter Two. But a thought worth contemplating here is whether or not there was a degree of inevitability to the eventuation of the brand of national advertising. Percy Hunter and the staff that comprised the NSWGTB were pioneers in Australian national advertising, and their insight was that there existed a prevailing, latent demand for the type of nature they advanced in the Bureau's publicity.

The sudden onset of the First World War interrupted Hunter's ambitions to have Australia recognised internationally. During the war, the Bureau was converted into a 'War Council and Repatriation Organisation', and large portions of its expenses were paid for by the Federal Government.[135] The demands on Hunter and his staff to aid in the war effort were great, notably in preparing for soldier resettlement.[136] This limited the Bureau's capacity as a tourist advertising agency, thus suspending the pre-war project of building Australia's international image and reputation. But was the decade between 1905 and 1914, during which he directed the Bureau, successful in restoring Australia's reputation, at home and abroad? The Bureau measured its success overseas in terms of migrants gained from Great Britain. The NSWGTB Annual Report for the year 1910 tells us that the Bureau thought their efforts effective. Noting that in the years 1902-1905 (before the Bureau was established), 'New South Wales lost 3,616 people to Great Britain.' In 1906, however, the Bureau recorded a net gain of 1,104 British migrants. And for the four years, 1906-1909, the Bureau recorded a gain of 19,468. Though there were other, more complex reasons for rising immigration in and out of Australia, the Bureau's report writers were happy to claim at least a portion of this success as their own.[137] They proudly stated that this figure was 'a striking contrast' to the loss that preceded the turnaround and was a trend they expected to continue: 'the gain is steadily increasing.' The Bureau saw gains from other places, including a gain of 7,285 from New Zealand and 211 from Canada in 1909, and 3,498 from South Africa since 1906. 1909 also showed 'a fair gain from Germany, Italy and other foreign countries.'[138] Whether or not these gains were explained by the Bureau's publicity efforts, the increase in numbers validated their work.

[135] 'Settling Soldiers', *Weekly Times,* 11 March 1916, 35.
[136] 'Immigration Branch Occupied with Patriotic Duties', *Sun,* April 21, 1918, 4.
[137] For the more complex factors explaining migration statistics in turn-of-the-century Australia see: Stephen Constantine, 'British emigration to the empire-commonwealth since 1880: From overseas settlement to Diaspora?', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 31:2, (2003), 16-35.
[138] *Ibid*, 1-2.

Domestically, the Bureau saw its campaigns as successful also. Bureau data recorded that the passenger traffic to the heavily advertised tourist destination Jenolan Caves, in the Blue Mountains, increased to 9,638 tourists in 1913 compared to 3,975 in 1906.[139]

Hunter, who had cut his teeth in the press's coverage of federation, and whose career was supported by politicians who favoured the federal cause, supported an idealistic, uniting vision of Australia, albeit a vision that elevated New South Wales above the other states. Environmental conditions, such as sunlight and good climate (and the opportunities these created for outdoor activity), were at the earliest stage, central tenets of the domestic and international tourist promotion he oversaw. In this sense, the NSWGTB's promotion of Sydney and New South Wales betrays a prototypic vision and philosophy that went on to underpin Australian tourist advertising in subsequent decades. This philosophy was centred around a settler-colonial logic focussed on reassuring narratives of progress, constructing the state as a peaceful and civilised destination for an audience largely uninterested in Aboriginal experiences. As I discuss in the next chapter, the Australian National Travel Association, which took shape in the 1920s, urged settler Australians to respond patriotically to images of their country in an effort to overcome deep-seated anxieties about Australia's reputation and world standing. Charles Holmes, formative in the establishment of the Australian National Travel Association, would say in the 1930s, negative perceptions of Australia overseas required the telling of 'Australia's story in an attractive way.'[140] A variation of the same impulse fired NSWGTB promotion, which endeavoured to have Australia seen by its citizens, but also by its international contemporaries, not only thought of as excellent, but more importantly, not thought of as second rate.

And what became of Percy Hunter? After the war, he left the Bureau to organise the Nationalist Party, which held Federal government from 1917. Following the armistice, he accompanied incumbent prime minister Billy Hughes on his successful 1919 election campaign. He never returned to tourist publicity, but, as we are about to see in the following chapters, his efforts cast a long shadow in the history of Australian tourism advertising.[141]

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[139] The domestic tourist traffic to Jenolan Caves continued to rise even after the out- break of the First World War. See: NSW Government Tourist Bureau, *Achievements of the Government Tourist Bureau* (Sydney: 1919), 2. NSWA: NRS 14087,

[140] Charles Holmes, "Advertising Australia: The Work of the Australian National Travel Association," *Australian Geographer* 2, no. 5 (1935): 40–41.

[141] Joseph Carruthers worked as a campaign manager for George Reid. See Zachary Gorman, Sir Joseph Carruthers: Founder of the New South Wales Liberal Party, (Conor Court: Queensland, 2018), 81. Michael Roe briefly describes Hunter's role in post-WWI migration, undertaken from Australia House in London in the early 1920s, see: Roe, 'We can die just as easy out here': Australia and British migration, 1916-1939', in *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions Between the War*, 100-103.

Chapter Two

'Australia – a place in the sun!': Advertising Australia Abroad, 1914-1929.

> Australia is one of the world's tourist Meccas, a big place in the sun, and the most genial, most invigorating climate in the world —
>
> "An opal-hearted country,
>
> A wilful, lavish land"
>
> Come and see it! Leave next winter behind and follow the sun southward!
>
> *Australia – A Place in the Sun*, ANTA, 1929

Domestic tourism in most of Australia's states grew even after the outbreak of the First World War. The New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau (NSWGTB) reported annual increases in tourist traffic for every year of the conflict. The war had restricted immigration, but 'also had the effect of increasing beyond anticipation the tourist traffic within the state'.[1] Tourism offered an escape from global perturbations. 'The strain of war soon began to tell, and people found it essential to get away for rest and change', the Bureau claimed.[2] Limits on overseas travel also drove up internal tourist traffic – people who normally travelled overseas were prevented from doing so and looked for 'local places where they may recuperate.'[3] Other states also experienced steady increases in traffic. In 1918, the Tasmanian Tourist Bureau reported that hotels across the island reported record trade, exceeding what was known as the 'boom year' – the year before the war.[4] South Australia's tourist industry also grew. In 1915, the state's former premier, Richard Butler, was surprised to learn that visitor numbers were at record highs.[5] In Western Australia, the Commonwealth funded East-West railway connected Perth to South Australia in 1917, giving rise to 'a marked increase in the influx of visitors from the other States'.[6]

Although the First World War had not halted tourism in Australia, the war years had nevertheless curtailed the formative attempt at national advertising commenced, if only symbolically, by the NSWGTB (Chapter One). After the war, de facto responsibility for national tourism advertising transferred from the NSWGTB to the Victorian Railways (VR). Hunter's modernisation of NSW tourism had not gone unnoticed in Victoria where in contrast to other states in Australia, tourism had

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[1] NSW Government Tourist Bureau, *Achievements of the Government Tourist Bureau*, (Sydney: 1919), 2. NSWA: NRS 14087, [5/3499B].
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] 'Occupied with patriotic duties: War increases tourist traffic', *Sun*, 21 April 1918, 4
[4] 'Government Tourist Bureau', *World,* 2 September 1918, 3.
[5] 'Fostering Tourist Traffic', *Express and Telegraph,* 14 January 1915, 4; 'Tourist Traffic', *Register*, 10 March 1919, 4.
[6] 'Advertising the State', *Western Mail*, 8 February 1918, 20.

failed to flourish. In the pre-war period, a handful of politicians and the popular press agitated for an effective Victorian bureau that could compete with the state's northern rival. Progress was not achieved quickly. The *Age* lamented Victoria's failure to deliver an effective state tourist agency. 'Beyond making promises… nothing at all has been accomplished', the paper editorialised.[7] The *Herald* criticised the suggested premises for a Victorian bureau because the proposed site, on the corner of William and Bourke streets, was not equivalent to the central situation of the NSW Bureau's headquarters in Sydney's Martin Place. The offices 'may as well be in Oakleigh', one unimpressed Melbournian told the *Herald*.[8] Though places like the Dandenong Ranges, Mount Buffalo and the Grampians were well known beauty spots, commentators felt the state was not maximising their potential as tourist resorts. The Victorian Liberal MP Alfred A. Billson, concerned about the state's inability to advertise his electorate's Mount Buffalo National Park, wrote to the *Argus* that Victoria was ignorant 'of what is being done in other states of the Commonwealth and in other countries of the world to attract visitors, and generally to promote tourist traffic.'[9]

Despite these pleas to modernise Victoria's publicity program, the tourist industry there languished until 1920, when the state government appointed reforming railway engineer and administrator Harold Clapp to the position of state railway commissioner. Having lived away from Australia for twenty years, in the United States, Clapp had a sense of perspective unconstrained by prevailing Australian parochialism. When abroad, he found the American people knew little of Australia, but what surprised him most on his return was the ignorance of the man in the street about his own town, his own State, and his own country. 'Was it any wonder that so much ignorance existed in other countries in regard to Australia?', he later pondered.[10] Clapp's application of practises he observed in the United States to the management of Victoria's largest asset, the railways, included reforms not only to routes and rolling stock, but also to the Railways' advertising operations. Clapp designated special offices for an advertising division inside Melbourne's Flinders Street Station, at that time the busiest train station in the world (or so the Victorian newspapers claimed). As the 1920s progressed, it was increasingly from the offices situated above the turnstiles of the station's city-facing Flinders street concourse that VR incrementally increased its advertising efforts from local to national publicity. In 1929, the efforts of Clapp and his subordinates to win publicity for Australia coalesced into the founding of the Australian National Travel Association (ANTA), an organisation that tasked itself with the promotion of the nation, both inside and outside of the country.

[7] 'Mt. Buffalo in Winter: Great Attractions, But No Tourists: A story of Folly and Neglect', *Age*, August 9, 1910, 7; *Age*, September 17, 1907; 'Tourist Bureau', *Age*, Jan 12, 1907; and *Age* February 2, 1907, 6.
[8] 'The Tourist Bureau', *Herald*, July 19, 1906, 3.
[9] Alfred A. Billson, 'Central Tourist's Bureau: An Urgent Necessity', *Argus,* May 19, 1908, 9.
[10] 'Know Your Own Country', *Brisbane Courier*, 23 May, 1930, 2.

This chapter explains how environmental themes in national advertising became central to the campaigns of the Australian National Travel Association (ANTA) in the lead up to its 1929 formation. I argue that national publicity produced from the end of the First World War to the first signs of the Great Depression record contemporary attitudes towards health, national unity, race, and wider concerns about the reputation of Australia, its people, and its suitability for migration and development. A hybrid public–private organisation dedicated to promoting Australia domestically and overseas, ANTA's creation represented not only an effort to overcome people's ignorance of Australia abroad, but also to educate Australians on the attractions of their own country. But before ANTA came into existence, a number of formative and experimental campaigns aimed at selling Australia as a single, national entity came out of VR's Flinders Street offices. It was there that Harold Clapp's young protégé, Charles Holmes, worked tirelessly in his efforts to market Australia. Under the direction of Clapp and Holmes, VR instituted reforms that fostered the development of advertising unique to Australia's travel and tourism opportunities.[11] At the beginning of their reform agenda, the *Victorian Railways Magazine* proudly boasted that the railways' posters 'set an example to private advertisers in keeping up the artistic standards' of public displays of advertising.[12]

Few historians have considered the significance of the Victorian Railways revolution in advertising to everyday life in Victoria, and indeed Australia, and the impact that these campaigns had on the future course of Australian national advertising in the twentieth century. Advertising sources for the period between 1914 and 1929 give context to the emerging values and ideas of the settler nation, particularly as they related to Australian nationalism. Russell McGregor, building on Neville Meaney's idea that Australians' geographical awareness 'induced a sense of Australian distinctiveness and a determination to assert their own geopolitical interest', argues that it was 'not through instrumental concerns about power and strategy' alone that Australians attached themselves to their homeland. McGregor observes that although 'geopolitical interests doubtless promoted Australian territorial nationalism', 'poetry and paintings, sprays of wattle-blossom and the popularity of surf-bathing' were also important drivers of a national culture, identity and attachment.[13] We might add to this list tourism imagery, which was steeped in images of the nation's people at leisure amongst distinctively Australian natural surroundings.

Drawing from the national advertising texts produced by the Victorian Railways in the 1920s, this chapter seeks to gauge what McGregor describes as the period's growing 'emotional commitment of ordinary Australians to their homeland.'[14] It appraises the tourist advertising texts issued in the years

[11] John Sinclair, "Making the Market Modern: Sir Harold Clapp, Engineer of Consumption" in *Consumer Australia: Historical Perspectives,* ed. Robert Crawford, Judith Smart and Kim Humphrey, (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 27-38.
[12] 'Advertising's Artful Aid,' *The Victorian Railways Magazine*, January 1928, 11.
[13] Russel McGregor, 'The necessity of Britishness: ethno-cultural roots of Australian nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 12:3, (2006), 493–511.
[14] *Ibid*, 506.

leading up to the establishment of ANTA, revealing that nature-based imagery and description was a central tenet of Clapp and Holmes's emerging doctrine of national publicity. Australia's sun, sunlight, and sunshine, (symbols which had a strong association with progressive era understandings of integrity and transparency) served as evocative symbols in the presentation of Australia as a youthful, modern, healthy, and enlightened society.

Tourist advertising remains somewhat overlooked as a medium that carried popular ideas about sun and sunlight. As art and design historian Melissa Miles writes, 'through art, literature, plays and poetry, the energy and singularity of the sun came to penetrate the national psyche and stand for the promise and youth of the new nation.'[15] Sunlight figured prominently in tourist media also. I argue in this chapter that Clapp transported some of the ideas about sun and sunlight directly from his experience in the United States, but that the advertisers working for him also estimated that their sunlit propaganda would resonate with a homegrown audience. Climate, abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation, and flora and fauna were all attendant tropes in VR, and later ANTA's environmentally themed campaigns. In this chapter, I argue that Clapp and Holmes saw the sun in particular, but also a range of supporting environmental symbols, as having a potent effect in the campaign to improve Australia's overseas reputation and appeal, as well as in winning over the settler-Australian public, whose participation and cooperation in the project of national advertising ANTA sought.

The following exploration of the years leading up to ANTA's creation comprises three sections that chart the progression of the national advertising idea in the 1920s. The first section deals with the 1924 sales text *Australia Calls You*. Published by the Australian Railways Commissioners, and the Commonwealth Development and Migration Commission (DMC), the guide was nevertheless edited by Charles Holmes, and enlisted Percy Trompf's illustrations. Seen in this way, it was in essence a Victorian Railways led proof of concept for later ANTA national advertising campaigns, even though it predated the foundation of that organisation. With new issues printed every year between 1924 and 1928, *Australia Calls You* is notable for the wide array of press coverage it generated in the Australian newspapers – coverage which holds insights into how the nation (and the popular media) was starting to take interest in Australia's overseas image. The second section of this chapter discusses the early aims and philosophy of ANTA, established in 1929, paying close attention to how spiritual and intellectual movements in interwar Melbourne shaped the organisation's formation and mission. In the final section, I analyse a 1929 ANTA pamphlet, exuberantly titled *Australia – A Place in the Sun*. Analysing these sales materials in chronological order and situating them alongside contemporary archival records of the organisations that produced them, reveals a strong continuity in environmental symbols employed in pre-war and interwar marketing campaigns devised to sell Australia domestically and overseas. ANTA's

[15] Melissa Miles, "Light Nation, and Place in Australian Photography", *Photography and Culture* 6, 2013, 262.

recruitment of symbols of nature to inspire peace and unite what they saw as the fledgling federal enterprise remains a relatively overlooked aspect of Australian nation building and image-making in the pre-Depression 1920s. While historians have recorded well ANTA's visual record from the 1930s onward, ANTA nevertheless emerged more as a product of the 'Roaring Twenties' than the so-called 'Hungry Thirties'. Indeed, Paolo Magagnoli's observation that 'ANTA was a by-product of the economic and political crisis of the 1920s' is notable for locating ANTA's origins in that decade.[16] This chapter builds on Magagnoli's insight, asking what aspects of Australia's political and economic situation in the twenties drove a renewed interest in national advertising that drew heavily on symbols of nature and environment.

'Australia Calls You': The first centralised national advertising campaign, 1924-1929

While the Victorian Railways efforts sought to grow Victoria's tourism industry, Clapp and Holmes were also engaged in a parallel campaign to apply the lessons of Victorian Railways tourist publicity on a national scale. Their efforts produced in 1924 a 64-page book that bore the name of a new slogan aimed at promoting Australia in Britain – 'Australia Calls You'. The book was the first of its kind, unprecedented in its coherent effort to promote Australia as a unified nation. The *Daily Telegraph* reported 'a decided advance on anything previously attempted in this direction to advertise the scenic attractions of the Commonwealth'.[17] Indeed, 'Australia Calls You' saw a print run that eclipsed in volume any national advertising conducted before the war. Accounts of the exact number of issues printed differ, but it seems around 50,000 copies were printed and sent to the High Commissioner in London for distribution at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley Park. A further run of between 150,000 and 200,000 copies were distributed throughout the Anglo world, specifically in Canada, the United States 'and other countries from which tourist traffic might be attracted'.[18]

It is not clear how many copies circulated in Australia but press reports from 1924 suggest that *Australia Calls You* was the topic of considerable national interest. The Australian Railway Commission sent regional dailies 'special complimentary review' copies for advance preview. The wide coverage of the printing and dissemination of *Australia Calls You* indicates the Railway Commissioners, and the newspapers to which they sent issues, perceived that the image of the country about to be advertised overseas was newsworthy. Newspaper writers celebrated the 1924 edition for its striking cover designs, which were 'the winning efforts of a competition to artists throughout the Commonwealth.' Inside the covers, tinted pages offered decorations of Australia's fauna, 'beautiful half-tone pictures, and the fine clear type.' Holmes's letterpress was 'devoted to pithy descriptions of the tourist attractions of every State of the Commonwealth, prefaced by a brief summary of the immense resources of this

[16] Magagnoli, "A Library of Photographs", 31.
[17] 'Australia Calls You', Daily Telegraph, August 12, 1924, 3.
[18] 'Australia Calls You', *Daily Telegraph*, February 5, 1925, 8. 'Australia Calls You', *News*, 12 August 1924, 7.

"Wonderland of the South." Regional papers informed their readers of vivid descriptions of Australia's 'infinite variety of enchanting scenery, from tropical luxuriance to snow-clad alps.'[19] The Western Australian newspaper, the *Bruce Rock Post and Corrigin and Narembeen Guardian* review was glowing. Holmes, the paper editorialised, had offered a vision of Australia as 'a scenic wonderland of mild winter and glorious summer'. In their view, *Australia Calls You* 'must have a striking appeal to the tourist and the immigrant alike'.[20]

The guide credited its compilation to the railway publicity officers of New South Wales and Victoria. Later guides recorded the 'Australian Railways Commissioners' as its curators. Though some cooperation between state railways no doubt occurred, the book was primarily the work of the well-oiled propaganda machinery of the Victorian Railways. Charles Holmes edited, and probably authored, a great deal of the brochure's copy. A call for illustrations for a poster and brochure covers advertised in the *Daily Telegraph* said that 'designs are invited by the Victorian Railways, from artists within the Commonwealth, for a poster and booklet, each featuring the message, "Australia Calls You."[21] The address of the Victorian Railways indicating here that it was the control centre of publicity operations. Holmes also curated the artwork and photography for the first and subsequent issues.[22] Percy Trompf, who had been a regular contributor of commercial art to Victorian Railways' publicity, illustrated the cover art for the 1928 edition (Figure 1 below). The vast distribution scale of the pamphlet throughout Great Britain and North America, as well as the yearly printing of new editions, was a rehearsal for the scaled-up dissemination and marketing strategy of national advertising that Holmes would later oversee at ANTA.

[19] 'Australia Calls: Advertising the Continent', *Bunbury Herald and Blackwood Express*, August 26, 1924, 1.
[20] 'Australia Calls You', *Bruce Rock Post and Corrigin and Narembeen Guardian,* August 22, 1924, 4.
[21] 'Australia Calls You', *Daily Telegraph,* July 16, 1927, 11.
[22] 'Australia Calls You', *Areas' Express*, August 15, 1924.



Figure 1 - *Australia Calls You*, (Sydney: Australian Railways Commissioners, 1926 edition). Art by Smith & Julius Studios.



Figure 2 – Percy Trompf's cover art for the 1928 edition of *Australia Calls You*.

Holmes remains a relatively understudied character in Australian history. Born on the 10th of July 1891 at Albert Park, Melbourne, Holmes joined the railways at nineteen years old. He worked there for five years before enlisting for service in the First World War and embarking for Egypt in September 1915. He was promoted to Captain in 1916, serving in the 21st Infantry Battalion, which saw heavy action at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. For repelling a German counterattack at the Third Battle of Ypres in October 1917 he was awarded the Military Cross.[23] Returning from the front he found a new talent as an administrator, working in London with the Australian Imperial Airforce assisting veterans with non-military employment. Rolls and Johnston write that Holmes had 'prodigious energy and talents', attributes that saw him rise rapidly in the Victorian Railways, soon working as Clapp's secretary, in addition to his main responsibilities for 'all railway publicity, including the writing of tourist booklets and pamphlets, press replies and articles for newspapers and journals, the railways magazine, pamphlets and posters to assist primary production.'[24] Holmes devotion of his life and career to the expansion of tourism, an industry that he and other proponents saw as central to peace between nations, offers a remarkable insight into how his generation's war experience resolved them to commit themselves to constructive ends.

Industry leaders like Clapp provided organisations that allowed men like Holmes to release their energy, will and creative power. In the mid-1920s, Holmes began to mobilise an array of artists and writers in

[23] Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, August 30, 1918 [issue no.137], 1778.
[24] Rolls and Johnston, *Travelling Home*, 12-13. For the quotation the authors cite Mitchell Library (Sydney) 550/05 Box 4 (43) ANTA Letter from Holmes to the Committee, Australian National Travel Association, 21 May 1929, 2.

the task of articulating the first mass produced image of the nation. In 1926, he became the Chairman of the Victorian Railways Betterment and Publicity Board, the advertising wing of the railway. Lessons that the railway had learned in the early 1920s marketing of Mount Buffalo National Park, a railway asset and also the state's most popular tourist resort, would soon become central to a coordinated advertising effort designed to grow a national tourist industry. From the offices of the VR's Betterment and Publicity Board at Flinders Street, Holmes began to eke out a tourism empire that positioned Australia in the centre of the world and distributed its tourist message into every corner. ANTA brochures positioned Australia in the middle of the world map, reinforcing a view of the world that centralised the normally remote continent – see figure 10 on page 116). *Australia Calls You* was the dawning effort of what was to become a cogent and defining brand for Australia.

What did Australia look like, according to *Australia Calls You*? Holmes, and the coterie of artists, writers, and photographers he enlisted, rolled the symbols of Australian nature and environment into their campaign. The booklet advertised the conduciveness of Australia's environment and climate to prosperity and health: 'To live in Australia is to live in a country with the finest climate in the world,' read the copy on the opening page. This was soon followed by the statement:

> an ideal climate makes life out of doors a normal social condition. The natural surroundings are everywhere delightful, and as there are no violent contrasts of temperature, the seasons merging imperceptibly one into the other, city and country alike seem always to be en fete.[25]

Accompanying such descriptions were direct appeals to visit, or settle in, Australia: 'Australia Calls You to sunshine, freedom and prosperity,' and 'come to sunny Australia'. Variations of these catchphrases, and indeed the sun as a central symbol of ANTA's marketing, were becoming an ever more commonplace fixture in national advertising. These appeals were tied to a contemporary imperative of British migration and settlement. As had been the case in turn-of-the-century New South Wales, administrators identified tourist publicity as a means of reviving slowing migration.[26] Attracting greater numbers of migrants to Australia was germane to the Commonwealth's establishment of the Development and Migration Commission, which would later play a role in the formation of ANTA. These efforts belonged to the wider tradition of interwar migration and British settlement in the dominions.[27] As Josette Wells argues, Holmes and his contemporaries in Australian promotion were likely spurred on by examples of national publicity in the United Kingdom and California, where

[25] Charles Holmes, *Australia Calls You*, 1926, 1.
[26] On migration issues in the 1920s see: David Pope, 'Some Factors Inhibiting Australian Immigration in the 1920s', *Australian Economic History Review* 24:1 (1984), 34-52.
[27] Stephen Constantine, *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions Between the War*, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1990), 100-103.

boosters claimed their territories were able to retain a large portion of people that had visited first as tourists.[28]

Holmes's and Clapp's idealism for Australia's reputation was distinct from the pragmatic concerns of the Prime Minister, Stanley Bruce. As Frank Bongiorno explains, because Bruce's majority depended on the Country Party leader Earle Page, he was wedged into creating policies that were appealing to the Country Party's regional base. To help 'farmers compete successfully on world markets', the government introduced 'export bounties and incentives, worked towards more efficient marketing and encouraged migration from Britain, all to promote 'development' – understood as a predominantly rural phenomenon.'[29] To achieve this end, Bruce legislated the creation of the Development and Migration Commission. He appointed the industry leader and metallurgist Herbert William Gepp (1877-1954) to be the commission's chairman. On a salary of £5,000, (a record sum for a federal employee, and perhaps not coincidentally the same amount as Clapp's record-breaking state salary at VR) Gepp applied 'scientific methods to economic and political problems in the interests of national development and efficiency.'[30] Gepp, similarly to Clapp, had spent time in America and was resolved to apply the lessons of his overseas experience to Australian public administration.[31] The advents of advertising and public relations, newly legitimated industries in America, were key to their entrepreneurial vision. Once the DMC was established it began to collaborate with the Railway Commissioners in the project of national publicity.

The awareness of the DMC and the Railway Commissioners of overseas tourism and migration campaigns explain the appearance of appeals in *Australia Calls You* for likely migrants to visit Australia before making it their home. Invested in these appeals was the idea that Australia was open for settlement, and that tourists should visit before deciding to migrate. As one appeal urged, 'Australia is a grand country. You may make it your country. Come and see it!'[32] Inherent to this campaign was the idea that tourism precipitated migration, a notion that Justine Greenwood rightly points out had become entrenched among proponents of tourism and immigration to Australia.[33] Australia's declining immigration statistics explain the emergence of these direct appeals in *Australia Calls You.* Exhortations such as 'Come to Sunny Australia' were contemporary to other 1920s slogans like 'Eat More Fruit!' and 'See Australia First', coined also by the Victorian Railways advertising division where Holmes learned

[28] Holmes was well aware of developments in the comparatively advanced tourist industries of California, Canada, the United Kingdom, see: 'Selling Australia to the World', *Herald*, March 24, 1928, 11; Josette M. Wells, 'One Voice for Australia': A Marketing History of Australia's National Tourist Organisation, 1929-1967, PhD Thesis, Monash University, 2009, 255.
[29] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers*, 217-18.
[30] B. E. Kennedy, 'Gepp, Sir Herbert William (Bert) (1877–1954)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gepp-sir-herbert-william-bert-6298/text10861, published first in hardcopy 1981, accessed online 9 May 2024.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Australia Calls You*, 9.
[33] Justine Greenwood, 'The Migrant Follows the Tourist: Australian Immigration Publicity After the Second World War', *History Australia* 11:3 (2014), 74-96.

the advertising trade in the first half of the decade. Throughout *Australia Calls You,* the compilers repeatedly coupled the refrain of the book's title with copy that favourably described Australia, creating countless slogans that sang the nation's praises. 'Australia calls you to scenes of inspiring grandeur and a life of healthful independence'; 'Australia calls you: to unparalleled delights and wonderful opportunities'; and 'Australia is calling you to scenery of surpassing splendour in a land of glorious freedom, health, and happiness', are but a few examples. The appeals made in the booklet existed in the context of ever more rapturous advertising campaigns for migration in the 1920s.[34]

Such enjoinders echoed the war time propaganda of the previous decade. As Deirdre Gilfedder points out, messages that directed tourists to 'follow the sun' or 'visit your national capital' were common during the interwar era and recalled the famous 'Uncle Sam needs you' recruiting poster of the First World War.[35] Indeed, artists and writers of tourist propaganda had contributed their talents to the war effort. Moreover, as advertising historian Robert Crawford argues, First World War propaganda had demonstrated to advertisers that their medium could be deployed effectively to influence the hearts and minds of the people.[36] It might be said, however, that encouraging people to go on holiday was a different prospect than encouraging the nation to go to war, and that neither war propaganda nor tourist propaganda was necessarily digested uncritically by the reader. Indeed, as Wells points out, migration to Australia continued to decline even as the efforts of Clapp and Holmes and the Development and Migration Commission ramped up.[37] The key to these materials, however, is not the degree to which overseas consumers or Australians agreed with or accepted their messages, but rather their function in a home-grown movement aimed at bolstering the Australian economy through a patriotic celebration of Australian nature, and the advancing of an argument that environmental factors were a quintessential component of Australian welfare and prosperity.

Australia Calls You implied Australia's environmental attributes correlated to increased outdoor activity and therefore good quality of life and a distinctively healthy Australian character. 'Rugged health and commanding stature are Australian characteristics', enthused the 1926 edition. 'A virility springing from the unsurpassed living conditions makes the Australian excel in every branch of human endeavour, from the direction of commerce and industry to the pursuit of every manly sport; from the practise of every peaceful art to the grim duties of the battlefield.'[38] Here the association of the positive effects of the environment on the population with the military ability of Australian men reflected aspects of the

[34] Greenwood, 'Migrant follows the tourist', 74. Eric Richards, *Destination Australia: Migration to Australia Since 1901* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2008), 94.
[35] Deirdre Gilfedder, 'The Visual Rhetoric of Australian Travel Posters between the Wars: Branding a New Nation', *Cultures of the Commonwealth* 15:16, (2010): 95–105.
[36] Crawford, *But wait there's more*, 25.
[37] Wells, 'One Voice for Australia', 240-250.
[38] Australian Railway Commissioners, *Australia Calls You,* 40.

burgeoning Australia's ANZAC mythology.[39] It was at this time that Charles Bean extended his argument that the ANZACs had been superior fighters because of the characteristics they had inherited from the pre-War Australian frontier.[40]

Newspaper coverage of the 1924 edition of *Australia Calls You* foregrounded the effects of the environment on the national character. A 'beautiful surfing picture forming one panel of the cover' that indicated 'surf-bathing and sun baking on golden beaches is a national pastime', declared the *Bunbury Herald*.[41] Such reportage gives an insight into how after the Great War the beach had become the symbol of Australia at pleasure. Rickard comments on the many possible interpretations of the beach image in this period. One reading he offers is that the beach goer looks neither to the continent, the city or the bush, immersed instead in the hedonism and sociability of the sand and the waves.[42] One slogan in the 1928 edition of the Percy Trompf-illustrated pamphlet read, 'a land of infinite variety of enchanting scenery and sunshine', 'Australia for relaxation' and 'sunbathing and sun baking on golden beaches.' Variations of these catchphrases would become commonplace in ANTA advertising after 1929, as would a fixation with sunlight. As Josette Wells writes in her doctoral dissertation on the marketing history of Australia, symbols of the sun 'connoted a country of vitality, youth and vigour and "a flowering of confident nationalism"' that was an emerging feature of Australian national expression during this period.[43]

Australia Calls You demonstrated a visual and literary preoccupation with the sun and with sunlight that belonged to a wider solar fixation in the contemporary culture. In the first decade of the century, H.V. McKay's Sunshine Harvester was in mass production and enjoyed record international sales. In 1907, Braybook Junction, the industrial suburb of west Melbourne where McKay ran the Sunshine Harvester Works was renamed 'Sunshine' in the manufacturer's honour.[44] In 1910 Hugh Denison renamed *The Star* to *The Sun*, a Sydney newspaper that boasted one of the biggest circulation's in the country and remained in print until 1988. In the mid- 1910s landscape photographers Harold Cazneuax and Cecil Bostock headed up the Sydney Camera Circle, later known as the 'Sunshine School' for the movement's stylistic preference for 'harsh bright sunlight' in its revolution of Australian photography (Cazneuax and his Sunshine School co-member, and protégé, Laurence de Le Guay would later contribute sunny photographs to ANTA's *Walkabout* magazine, which commenced publication in 1934). In 1919, a region in the north Murray-Darling region, around Mildura, came to be named 'Sunraysia', after the sun dried

[39] Anna Clark, 'The Place of Anzac in Australian Historical Consciousness', *Australian Historical Studies*, 48:1, (2017), 19-34.
[40] Waterhouse, 'Australian Legends', 221. See also: D.A. Kent, 'The Anzac Book and the Anzac Legend: C.E.W. Bean As Editor and Image-Maker', *Historical Studies* 21:84 (April 1985): 376-90.
[41] 'Australia Calls', *Bunbury Herald and Blackwood Express*.
[42] Rickard, *Australia: A Cultural History*, 183.
[43] Wells, 'One Voice for Australia', 283.
[44] Charles Fahey, John Lack and Liza Dale-Hallett, 'Resurrecting the Sunshine Harvester Works: Representing and Reinterpreting the Experience of Industrial Work in Twentieth-Century Australia', *Labour History* 85, (2003), 9-28.

fruits that grew there.[45] Arguments made in the interwar era around Australian settlers deriving better health from abundant sunlight aligned with a rising interest in Australia and the British Empire, but also in Europe and America, on mental hygiene, physical fitness, eugenics, and race.[46]

The sun motif soon became associated with Australia in Britain. In 1923, Bertram Mackennal, eminent Australian sculptor, completed the striking *Phoebus Driving the Horses of the Sun*, placed above the main entrance of Australia House in London. British visitors also spoke of the sun's effects on the Australians. Upon visiting Australia in 1926, British journalist Lord Burnham, leader of the Empire Press delegation, said that he had found Australia to have a quality of 'clear, cheerful sunniness, which ought to make Australians all sun-angels.' In Burnham's view the healthy dose of sunlight meant that 'no children on earth were finer and of more cheerful growth than Australian children.'[47] Victorian Railways tourism posters, illustrated by James Northfield and Percy Trompf, celebrated Australia's 'scenic grandeur, sunny skies, and the opportunities to play and relax in the outdoors', and expressed 'a peculiarly Australian identity, where purely physical features such as the landscape and the weather were seen as a manifestation of a distinctly Australian character.'[48]

Such a positioning of Australia's climate as uniquely beneficial to health arose in opposition to an alternative view, held by some overseas, that Australian conditions were brutal and conducive to poor health and even death, particularly in the regions earmarked for agriculture, which were usually distant from the urban centres. Indeed, as Michael Roe points out, migrants in the 1920s began to 'stress the growing disappointment of hope for a decent Australian life.' The migrant experience in Australia was mixed, as Roe well documents.[49] Sufferers of Victoria's land settlement scheme were especially vocal, and into the early 1930s it was not uncommon for the disgruntled returnees to picket Australia House in London, advising any aspirant migrants not to embark for Australia, especially not to Victoria.[50] *Australia Calls You*, readily available for distribution from Australia House, was therefore an important piece of propaganda aimed at assuaging any doubts of new, prospective migrants.

[45] Rod Kirkpatrick, The Regional Daily unafraid to stand alone, (2005), 1-10.
[46] Stephen Garton, 'Sound minds and healthy bodies: Re-considering eugenics in Australia, 1914–1940', *Australian Historical Studies*, 26:103, (1994), 163-181; see also: Isobel Crombie, *Body Culture: Max Dupain, Photography and Australian Culture 1919-1939*, (Images Publishing, Sydney: 2004).
[47] 'Sun Angels: Australia's Cheerful Sunniness', *Mercury*, January 9, 1926, 9.
[48] Michelle Hetherington, *James Northfield and the Art of Selling Australia* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2006), 7-8.
[49] Roe, 'We can die just as easy out here', 112.
[50] 'Australia House Picketed', *Truth*, September 30, 1934, 16.



Figure 3 – Historiated initials in 'Australia Calls You' depict native animals as symbols of Australia and its states. (*Australia Calls You*, 1926).

As in New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau advertising of the pre-war era, the artists of *Australia Calls You* enrolled symbols of Australia's native flora and fauna to establish Australia's distinctive character. Most interesting are the 1926 guide's celebration of Australia's unique animal life, expressed in the technique of the historiated initial (figure 3 above). A printing technique that first appeared in 8th century Anglo-Saxon and Gaelic manuscripts, historiated initials gave viewers of such documents a glimpse into the meaning of text. Decorated lettering had an important function during the middle ages when 'practically no lay person, from kings and emperors downwards, could read or write.'[51] By depicting Australian animals in the style of a long-established tradition of Western image making, promoters recruited Australia's unique fauna into the burgeoning project of Australian nationalism. As historian Peter Coates argues, 'nature was a vital cohesive force' in settler nations 'whose white citizens are increasingly cut off from their pioneer pasts'.[52] Seen in this context, the above historiated initials invoke the deep traditions of the cultural achievements of Anglo-Saxon civilisation while simultaneously appropriating Australian fauna as the mascots of a new and better civilisation. In a country many thousands of miles removed from the historic monuments of Christianity, devoid of the romance of ruined castles and imposing cathedrals, new symbols were required to signify Australia's legitimacy and British cultural inheritance. Clearly Holmes and his collaborators perceived a cultural significance of this method of illustrative printing amongst the booklet's primarily British audience.

The decorative lettering in *Australia Calls You* announced Australia's wildlife as symbols of a unified nation with its own visual tradition. Each state was represented by its own animal, investing in the polity custodianship of a unique species. That the implication of fauna as representative symbols of the nation and its states was distributed overseas offers an incisive comment on the degree to which the compilers of *Australia Calls You* might have felt obliged to overcome a perceived cultural inferiority with the old world. Interestingly, printer William Gullick, designer of the 1912 Australian coat of arms, experimented with historiated initials in pre-war publicity for the NSWGTB, as we saw in Chapter One. But compared to pre-war publicity, the lettering in *Australia Calls You* had a clarity and crispness unmatched by any preceding advertising. In his history of Australian animals, Adrian Franklin comments on the rapidity with which Australian biotic symbols replaced traditional British symbols that had been hallmarks of commercial advertising prior to Federation.[53] Australian animals swiftly transplanted past symbols in the nationalisation process.[54] The historiated initials in *Australia Calls You*, and in the subsequent campaigns of ANTA, where the technique was repeated, indicate the rapid expansion of dependence on native animals in projecting Australia's national image. But even though

[51] Kenneth Clark, *Civilisation,* (London: John Murray Publishers, 1969), 61.
[52] Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes Since Ancient Times*, 108.
[53] Adrian Franklin, *Animal Nation: The True Story of Animals and Australia*, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2006), 123-24.
[54] M. Cozzolino & G.F. Rutherford (eds), *Symbols of Australia*, (Melbourne: Penguin, 1987). Geoffrey Blainey, 'Behind the Label', in Cozzolino & Rutherford, 12.

these images were distinctively Australian, they carried forth a visual tradition with very ancient antecedents. As McGregor points out, 'The myths, memories and symbols that vivify the nation and embed it in deep historical time are drawn from an antecedent ethnic heritage'.[55]

The positioning of Australia's nature and animals as central aspects of the Australian national identity set up further appeals for tourists to visit (and then, the guide makers hoped, relocate) to Australia. It was in the nation's scenery, in its accessible national parks and nature reserves, where the tourist could find an array of animal life. *Australia Calls You* described the 156 square miles of national parkland at Wilson's Promontory where Australia's fauna abounded in beautiful natural surroundings:

> It is practically in its native state with its woodland charms, its sequestered valleys, its fern-glades, its little bays, and beaches, unspoiled by the defacing hand of man. In the deep recesses of its forests, and among its rugged, granite mountains, Australian birds and animals have found a sanctuary which should preserve them forever to give pleasure to the nature-lover and add interest to a holiday. Here are the lyre-bird, that marvellous mimic, whose beautiful and quaintly shaped tail feathers give it its name; the emu, a giant among birds; the kookaburra or laughing jackass, with its cheerful cadenzas of joyfulness; all manner of cockatoos, and parrots, and waterfowl; and also such animals as kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, and, quaintest of all, fascinating little koalas, or, as they are popularly known, native bears, nibbling gum leaves in the trees.[56]

Such nature themed description and imagery was an important means of emphasising Australia's wildlife and attractions, which, like the national parks mentioned in the previous chapter, were considered national because of their association with the people.[57] As Ann Moyal, Beth Hatton and Linda Thompson have observed, both the koala and the kangaroo saw rising importance as national icons during the interwar decades. In contrast to the koala, seen at this time as a popular symbol, the kangaroo stood for 'the noble spirit of Australia.'[58] As Moyal points out, the kangaroo, along with the emu, decorated the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and was therefore 'repeated on documents, uniforms, masonry and postage stamps.'[59] Tourist advertising was another vehicle for reproducing and transmitting the official animals of Australia internally and overseas. Celebrating these unique marsupials in tourist literature was an important way of at once distinguishing Australia from its European past and forging a settler connection to the land through the animals that inhabited it. It is unsurprising that upon its establishment in 1929 ANTA would choose a kangaroo for its own logo (figure

[55] McGregor, 'The Necessity of Britishness', 498.
[56] Railways Commissioners, *Australia Calls You*, 27.
[57] Harper and White, 'How National Were the First National Parks', 61.
[58] Beth Hatton and Linda Thompson, 'Kangaroo' in Harper and White, *Symbols of Australia*, 44.
[59] Ann Moyal, *Koala*, 163.

4 below). As we shall see, the organisation sought to unify the settler nation by accentuating symbols it considered widely recognisable as Australian, indicating a perception such symbols, were imbued with patriotic meaning and therefore of value to their audience.

Australia, with its stunning animal life, brilliant climate and perennial sunshine was a land of endless contrast, new horizons, and endless opportunity. In the words of the introduction to *Australia Calls You:*

> Australia is a land where beauty abounds, where everyone who chooses may delight in mountain heights and wooded valleys, sparkling lakes and golden seashores, cool forest glades and gorgeous limestone caves, and in a social atmosphere unsurpassed for friendliness anywhere.



Figure 4 - Early ANTA logos from brochures printed in 1931.

It was the contemporary anxiety about legitimising Australia's reputation that drove this exciting and friendly vision of Australia. As McGregor writes, there existed widespread Australian anxiety in the interwar era, about the sparse settlement of the white population in Australia. These anxieties had significant 'implications for the representation of the environmental attributes of the supposedly empty spaces', he argues.[60] Though McGregor refers mostly to Australian's northern lands, the guide *Australia Calls You* circulated wholesale in Britain belonged to a concerted interwar effort to boost Australia's appeal and increase migration. The effort to populate the continent was adjacent to other contemporary concerns. Among these was that Australia's reputation would never improve if Australians were not good ambassadors for their country first. Instability in the decade following the First World War had

[60] Russell McGregor, 'A Dog in the Manger: White Australia and its Vast Empty Spaces', *Australian Historical Studies,* 43:2, (2012), 157-160.

not boded well for Australia's reputation. The war had wrecked global finance and trade, causing Australia protracted local economic problems in the 1920s. Efforts to respond to the aftereffects of the war engendered structural economic change that indelibly transformed Australia's industrial landscape. The advents of advertising and public relations, newly legitimated industries in America, were key to the entrepreneurial vision of men like Gepp, Clapp and Holmes, but also reflected wider trends in a transnational business world that gave new and unprecedented attention to public relations and consumer behaviour.[61]

Guiding the publication of *Australia Calls You* was a reformist progressive belief that national advertising could unify the country, instil civic pride, promote international peace, and, by doing all of these things, boost productivity. Such beliefs centred around Australia's place in the Empire. Was Australia to be a contributing partner in the imperial enterprise, or was it to languish on the other side of the world as it gave in to parochial bickering and a lack of vision? *Australia Calls You* offered a counterpoint to the idea of Australia as a remote and undeveloped colony that Holmes, Clapp and other boosters feared was taking hold overseas. Their efforts to publicise Australia abroad in the 1920s culminated in a further coordinated effort to scale up the kind of message carried in *Australia Calls You* for both domestic and overseas circulation. In this sense, they created advertising that they believed carried a unifying message that was an important part of the nation building project. Crucially, they believed these appeals to a cooperative and unified national polity would resonate with broad swathes of the Australian public.

[61] George Hannon Knoles, *The Jazz Age Revisited: British Criticism of American Civilisation During the 1920s* (Stanford: University Press, 1955), 131.



Figure 5 – Sydney Morning Herald, April 20, 1928.

'Australia for Sunshine and Romance': ANTA's spiritual and intellectual roots

ANTA emerged under the auspices of the DMC and the Victorian Railways in the second half of the 1920s.[62] The *Argus* reported in early 1928 that a DMC circular issued to railways commissioners, shipping companies, chambers of commerce, manufacturers and hoteliers proposed to develop Australia's tourist traffic sixfold from 20,000 to 120,000 in a five-year period. If the ambitious proposal gained financial support, Charles Holmes, then chairman of the Railways Betterment Board (the publicity arm of VR), was to be immediately appointed as director. The 'circulation of tourist propaganda abroad' would, they argued, achieve not only the development of overseas traffic to Australia, but also strengthening of the domestic tourist industry within Australia.[63] Later in the year, once the support of the travel industries had been gained, Holmes and T.E. Moorhouse, an executive of the DMC, reported to the Commonwealth that Australia's prosperity hinged on a 'greater zest in salesmanship'.[64] In May 1929, after a further year of shrewd lobbying, fundraising, and alliance-making with the transport and hotel industries, mostly undertaken by Holmes, ANTA was born.[65]

As has been shown, the notion of organised national advertising regained momentum after the war, and though there were proponents of national advertising across the country, the real impetus for organisation arose in the Victorian Railways offices of Flinders Street Station. Advocates for the movement were concerned with the nation's broader economic objectives and the 'national interest.' There was a sense amongst figures in public service, business, and industry that Australia was doing little to improve its national reputation. The 1920s had not been an easy decade in Australia.[66] Holmes' and Clapp's' agitation for improved national advertising occurred in the midst of mounting concerns over public health and against a backdrop of tensions around issues of trade union activity, employment and the price of food. National affairs were difficult as well. Droughts, the failure of the soldier's resettlement scheme and the rise of a radicalised labour movement did not bode well for Australia's overseas reputation and did little to aid the confidence of the domestic population in their newly formed Commonwealth.[67] In the face of economic and political challenges, Clapp and Holmes, innovators in the field of national advertising, believed that more could be done to favourably advertise Australia. As Holmes would later write, there was a 'need to tell Australia's story in an attractive way' and to challenge 'the opinion of Australia ... as a sun-scorched land noted for droughts, bushfires and strikes.'[68]

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[62] Michael Roe, 'H. W. Gepp: his qualification as chairman of the Development and Migration Commission', Papers and Proceedings, 32:3, (1985), 95–110.
[63] 'Tourist Publicity: An Ambitious Proposal', *Argus*, 15 February 1928, 21.
[64] Cited from John Sinclair, 'Agents of Americanisation': Individual entrepreneurship and the genesis of consumer industries, *Journal of Australian Studies* 31, 2007, 35.
[65] ANTA, Annual Report for 1966-67, (Academy Press: Melbourne, 1967), 4.
[66] WH Richmond, 'SM Bruce and Australian Economic Policy 1923-29', *Australian Economic History Review*, (1983), 238-257.
[67] John Lack, 'Class or Nation? Worker Loyalties in Melbourne during The Great War', *Victorian Historical Journal* 86:1 (2015), 141-160; Marilyn Lake. *The Limits of Hope: Soldier Settlement in Victoria, 1915–38*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).
[68] Charles Holmes, "Advertising Australia: The Work of the Australian National Travel Association." *Australian Geographer* 2:5 (1935), 40–41.

ANTA's core mission was to redress the lack of knowledge about Australia overseas. In a 1929 speech to representatives from the business industry, held on board the R.M.S. Orvieto, Clapp explained ANTA's two main functions. The first was to attract the investors, settlers, and tourists. The migrant he envisioned was Anglo-Saxon and of British descent. The 'most desirable type of settler' was the 'young man of British birth', said Clapp, an important detail when discerning the audience to whom ANTA directed its materials. The second object was to 'dispel some of the colossal ignorance existing overseas about Australia.'[69] Though improving Australia's standing abroad aligned with Bruce's concerns about Australia's poor reputation, it should be made clear that ANTA was not the outcome of government intervention and was therefore not beholden to the edicts of its government backers. In fact, the parsimonious attitude of the government toward funding ANTA at the outset suggests a degree of official ambivalence about ANTA's purpose and viability. None of this deterred Clapp. When ANTA was on the cusp of forming and Clapp was on the fundraising circuit, he would passionately tell his audiences that the job of advertising the country was too important to leave to the government:

> To me, advertising Australia is everybody's-not anyone's job. It is a function that can be carried out with more consistent energy and efficiency by private enterprise. My reason for this contention is that Governmental machinery is fraught with the possibility of change in control and outlook. In any case, why load the Government with a function that private enterprise can better handle?[70]

What kind of organisation did the circumstances of this time produce? ANTA's proponents believed they could not raise a tourist industry without first addressing the drifting allegiance of Australians to their young nation. Clapp and ANTA gave expression to a concern that Australians did not think in a united, national sense, and that too many overseas travellers from Australia disseminated a negative view of the country abroad. To address Australia's negative image, ANTA sought to reduce the parochial competition and rivalry between states. Clapp, and by extension the organisation he oversaw, perceived that inter-state rivalries in Australia were central to what they identified as a poor overseas reputation, and gave rise to a harmful fashion of speaking ill of the country abroad. ANTA tasked itself with reforming this lack of pride amongst settler Australians. As one report put it, the Australian public must be educated 'in order that they may properly represent our great Commonwealth.'[71] As I have written elsewhere, publicity and advertising, 'became the key instruments' through which VR and ANTA sought to 'inculcate a sense of national pride among settler Australians.'[72]

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[69] '£100,000 Wanted, Mr Clapp's Address', *Sydney Morning Herald*, June 1929, 14.
[70] 'Advertising Australia, by Harold W. Clapp', *Northam Advertiser*, May 29, 1929, 3'
[71] ANTA, *Australia's Tourist Business: Coordination of Effort*, December 1927, 3. NAA: B300, 7420 PART 2.
[72] Woodward, 'Selling Mount Buffalo National Park: Victorian Railways, Harold Clapp and the Blueprint for National Park Promotion in Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies* 45, no. 3 (2021): 371–84.

ANTA's second poster, (figure 6 below) released in late 1929 or 1930 and illustrated by James Northfield, depicted the silhouette of a Cobb and Co. Gold Escort running at full gallop against a setting sun. This image is noteworthy for its twilight setting (in contrast to the bright sunlight of modern imaginings of cities and destinations). Compared to other ANTA posters of the era it is a nostalgic image, rendering a view of the past rather than the present. The year of 1851 is revealed by the gilded lettering on the door of the coach. The drama and action of this image evoke the aura of romance and adventure of Australia's Gold Rush. As Gilfedder writes, travel posters that used the picturesque 'had a commercial advantage' because they 'positioned the target as participating in the romantic conjuring of a view.'[73] Here then, was the seductive allure of the interwar travel poster in all its glory, placing the tourist amidst an exciting scene of the bush, fast horses, guns, and gold. This image, distinctively of colonial Victoria, gives an insight into how Australians in the interwar decades might have imagined the colonial era as a foundational moment in their shared history. It carries into the twentieth century the theme of 'energy enterprise and progress' that had confirmed Melbourne's prosperity in the decades following the rush for gold that caused Victoria's population to explode from 97,000 to 540,000 in the decade after 1851.[74]

Clapp's father, Francis Boardman Clapp arrived in Victoria from Massachusetts in 1853. Referred to often by his initial F.B., he soon became a prolific figure in the coaching and transport business in Melbourne. In 1857, he bought and began operating the Cobb & Co Melbourne to Ballarat line. Within two years he was the owner of the largest mail contractor in the colony, and the political and commercial power he attained was formative in the establishment of Melbourne's tram and rail network that his son would later take over. ANTA commissioned Northfield's poster around a decade after Clapp senior passed away. It is not difficult to imagine that the vision of the gold rush offered in the poster would have given tremendous pleasure to the younger Clapp. He likely saw it as an expression of the success of free immigrants, like his father, in bringing to Australia in the 1850s what Graeme Davison describes as the 'special stamp of self-helping men, possibly more skilled and ambitious than the ex-convicts and assisted immigrants of other colonies.'[75] It is interesting that ANTA's editorial team deemed it a fitting image for the burgeoning project of growing industrial tourism in Australia. Perhaps the image evoked something of a shared history, and combined quintessential symbols of Australia – the bush, sunlight, romance, rugged mountains, towering eucalypts, and of course, progress – in an attempt to unite the country.

[73] Gilfedder, "The Visual Rhetoric of Australian Travel Posters", 99.
[74] Benjamin Mountford, *Britain, China, and Colonial Australia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 48.
[75] Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*, (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1978), 51.



Figure 6 - 'Australia: for Sunshine and Romance.' (NLA dates to 1929 or early 1930 based on contemporary article in The Mercury, 17 January 1930).

Mass sun worship offered ANTA an intoxicating opportunity to strike a chord with modern Australians. In a decade of reform at the Victorian Railways, both Holmes and Clapp had demonstrated a talent for inventing slogans and promoting imagery that both reflected and captured public attention. ANTA parlayed the popularity of sunlight into a recognisable brand for Australia. Sales aids soon adopted titles such as 'Australia – A Place in the Sun'. Year-round sunlight, the bush, and an array of nature related symbols formed ANTA's visualisation of a confident progressive nation. At a time of limited federal cooperation and interstate rivalry, the elevation of sunshine as a unique symbol of Australia attempted to transcend old colonial attachments. The aspiration of this patriotic vision was to bind Australians with an overarching visual language that all states, and all citizens, had in common. In this vision, sunlight and sunshine made Australia unique, and more importantly made it distinct from Britain, Europe, and even North America. In the words of one ANTA guide from the early 1930s, 'The visitor to Australia … can escape the winter of the northern hemisphere and, for a time at least, its alarms and excursions as well. He benefits in health and vitality from Australia's sunshine.'[76] Such appeals

[76] Australian National Travel Association, *Australia*, (Melbourne: G.W. Green & Sons Printers, circa 1930).

positioned Australia as a viable alternative to Britain, allaying the perceived disquietudes that potential tourists or migrants may have about travelling, or indeed relocating to Australian shores. As Miles explains, the dominance of the sun as a symbol during the early twentieth century provided Australians with a celebration of the continent's weather that distinguished it from the gloomy, wet and overcast skies of Britain.[77]

ANTA's orientation of its marketing around the sun and the continent was motivated by the historic impulse settlers had to dispel the idea of Australia as a second-rate place. Holmes and Clapp crafted the organisation's vision with careful consideration of the perceived demand in the domestic Australian middle-class for vision of a unified and productive nation. Civic and economic nationalism as well as contemporary anxieties around productivity, citizenship, health and morality all converged in ANTA's encapsulation of Australia. A talented reader of public opinion, Holmes estimated that there existed amongst at least a portion of the people they met and worked with a wish to embrace a form of national pride that overcame a perceived cultural malaise. Importantly the desire to form a national community predated Federation. Indeed, as the historian Neville Meaney writes, a 'sense of having but a fragile hold on a vast land set in an Asian sea' made colonists, also apprehensive about Australia's urban-centred and modernising democracy, receptive to the idea of collective identity.[78]

The preoccupation with sunlight at the turn of the century was not limited to Australia. Overseas as well, sunlight had become an allegory for moral probity, transparency, and integrity. It was in 1891, in the midst of America's decadent Gilded Age, that the progressive American jurist Louis D. Brandeis nourished the idea that 'If the broad light of day could be let in upon men's actions, it would purify them as the sun disinfects.'[79] Brandeis expanded this concept in his 1913 critique of the coercive control of American investment bank in monopolistic concentration of public assets. 'Publicity is justly commended as a remedy for social and industrial diseases. Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants; electric light the most efficient policeman', he wrote.[80] It is interesting to note Harold Clapp's physical and temporal proximity to such progressive sentiments. He was thirteen years into his career in America in 1913, where he had spent much time in the north-east directing electrification projects on suburban railways and street lighting. He was at one point the manager and later the vice-president of the Columbus Railway Power and Light Co.[81] For a period of years from 1908 onward, he worked for California's Southern Pacific Railroad as a lead engineer where he oversaw electrification of the

[77] Miles, 'Light, nation and place', 261.
[78] Neville Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity: The problem of nationalism in Australian history and historiography', *Australian Historical Studies* 32, (2001), 81.
[79] See Letter from Louis D. Brandeis to Alice Goldmark, February 26, 1891, in *Letters of Louis D. Brandeis: Volume I (1870-1907) Urban Reformer,* Melin I. Urofsky, David W. Levy (eds.), (State University of New York Press, Albany, New York: 1971), 100.
[80] Louis D. Brandeis, 'What Publicity Can Do', *Harper's Weekly*, December 20, 1913, 10.
[81] John Sinclair, 'Agents of 'Americanisation': Individual entrepreneurship and the genesis of consumer industries', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 31 (2007), 17-33.

Berkeley, Alameda and Oakland lines. As historian of the Southern Pacific Railroad Richard J. Orsi writes in *Sunset Limited,* this was a period where the railway sponsored large scale advertising campaigns aimed at selling fruit and holidays, industries from which the rail stood to benefit.[82]

Though there is little archival evidence available in Australia that illuminates Clapp's time in America, his focus on publicity, transparency, efficiency, and continuous leisure and education as functions of participative democracy while director of the Victorian Railways (1920 onward) suggests a strong ideological connection with Brandeis's progressive convictions. Returned to Victoria, Clapp called for many of the same things Brandeis had, namely greater education, transparency of public institutions, civic pride, and participative citizenship. Education and leisure were a key part of this philosophy. In 1915 Brandeis wrote that 'Every citizen must have education – broad and continuous.' An education that 'must continue throughout life' and that was attained through 'adequate conditions of working and living', including leisure, which Brandeis defined as 'an essential of successful democracy.'[83] Brandeis's philosophy was pure Clapp, and Clapp's philosophy would soon become pure ANTA. 'Education' was a central theme of VR and ANTA materials, especially *Walkabout*, which ANTA launched with the intention 'to educate Australians further concerning their own and the neighbouring lands below the equator.'[84] Such education was instrumental to good citizenship. 'Australians are the most timid and bashful people', wrote Clapp, adding that: 'they should have the courage of their citizenship to go out and boldly tell the world what a magnificent country this of ours is.'[85] Clapp's rhetoric recorded well his association of travel with civic education, participative democracy, and social cohesion. In the *Herald* in 1924 he wrote of the 'powerful educational factor' of travel:

> It has brought men together. It has developed friendships and business relations. In short, it has given the people with whom it has been associated a wider national vision and made them better Victorians and better Australians. Travel is a wonderful educator, and when travel is done in a neighbourly and enthusiastic fashion, with hearty co-operation everywhere… the good that can come from it is inestimable.[86]

Such thinking clearly echoed Brandeis's idea that there could be no true community 'save that built upon the personal acquaintance of each with each.'[87] American progressivism permeated Australian society in many ways, but for it to resonate with the Australian public there must have been an already

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[82] Richard J. Orsi, *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 55, 158.
[83] Brandeis, *True Americanism,* 1915.
[84] ANTA, Annual Report: Year ended May 31st 1935, (Melbourne: Brown Prior & Co, 1935), p. 5.
[85] Harold Clapp, 'Running Trains and Writing Slogans', *Herald*, October 18 1924, p.15
[86] *Ibid*.
[87] Brandeis quote cited from L.J. D'Amore, 'Tourism — A vital force for peace', *Annals of Tourism Research* 15:2, (1988), 269-270.

existing appetite amongst the population for its middle-class brand of moral instruction.[88] As Richard White writes, the 'dominant image of Australia' throughout the 1920s was of Australia as a 'clean, chaste, young, sane and wholesome being assailed by external evils.'[89] ANTA shaped and reflected this wider cultural fixation, perceiving a demand for a narrative that celebrated the nation and national efficiency that was embodied by the 'men, money, markets' slogan that characterised the Bruce-Page era. ANTA's literary and photographic materials reveal the organisation's commitment to having settler Australians see the land as a shared, productive space on which the nation's progress depended. Furthermore, according to this vision, the land was inhabited by a healthy citizenry on the cusp of taking their rightful place on the world stage.

ANTA's raison d'être – disseminating a positive message about Australia within and outside Australia – echoed the historian R.G. Collingwood's idea that civilisation hinged on good relations between the constituent parts of a community.[90] This philosophy was not wholly influential in Australia, yet as Greg Melleuish and Stephen Chakura observe, a parallel strain of British cultural idealism had taken root in 1920s Melbourne that emphasized the moral and spiritual advancement of humanity as central to progress.[91] ANTA formed in that Melbourne climate of idealism, which was then shaping the political outlook and liberal internationalism of Australia's longest serving Prime Minister, Robert Menzies (in office 1939-41 & 1949-66). Before his entry into politics, Menzies had been a legal counsel and adviser to Clapp at VR – a connection which has not been documented in Australian or Victorian historiography. Menzies would become a keen follower of ANTA, speaking at many of its events and conferences where his rhetoric on travel's importance as an educator and preserver of peace mirrored that of ANTA's executives and sales materials.[92]

Holmes and Clapp fretted that Australia lacked a positive message and vision to rally around. They further perceived that the states were divided according to colonial and sectarian animosities, and that without an effort to dispel such notions that they would remain persist across the nation. ANTA's thinking was that good relations between the states would unite Australians, and they sought to deploy the symbols and values common to Australia to facilitate further cooperation, progress, and inclusion. ANTA, emerging at the time and place that it did was the manifestation of the divisions that rived the national subconscious all the way back passed 1901. Perhaps the preoccupation with sunlight was a sign of a cultural demand to bring Australia out of the dark. In this sense, ANTA's vision countervailed

[88] Marilyn Lake, 'This great America: H. B. Higgins and Transnational Progressivism', *Australian Historical Studies*, 44:2, (2013), 172-188

[89] Richard White, *Inventing Australia*, 144.

[90] Richard Murphy, *Art, metaphysics and dialectic: R. G. Collingwood and the crisis of Western civilisation,* PhD Thesis, Swansea University, (2006).

[91]Stephen Chavura, and Greg Melleuish, *The Forgotten Menzies: The World Picture of Australia's Longest-serving Prime Minister*, (Melbourne University Press, Carlton, Vic., 2021), 52.

[92] Robert Menzies to the editor of The Age Melbourne, 'Eulogy for Clapp, Harold, Papers of Sir Robert Menzies, National Library of Australia, MS 4936. See also: 'Mr Menzies' tribute to Sir H. Clapp', *Age,* October 23, 1952.

decades old narratives of alienation, despondence, and criticism that had once been prominent in cultural nationalist movements.[93] As Rolls argues, ANTA's longstanding success in the middle decades of the twentieth century is a testament to the popular support and enduring appeal of ANTA's civic nationalist message among a broad swathe of the Australian middle class.[94]

Though publicity elided the effects of war, ANTA's proponents often mentioned peace in their public rhetoric. Furthermore, the materials that drew on Australia's natural and environmental symbols to convey the idea of a relaxed and progressive country across the oceans, also demonstrated a fixation with peace and collective security. In a 1929 speech, Clapp spoke of travel as a means of bringing Australia closer to its allies in the Empire (and in North America), but also as a way of averting conflict:

> Advertising Australia must on its highest plane help to strengthen the Empire bond and the English-speaking tie. Travel is not only an educator, it is a preserver of peace. Australia has done something for everyone of us. Let Us do something for Australia – for Empire.[95]

Prime Minister James Scullin, who won a landslide election against Bruce in 1929, echoed Clapp's sentiment in a statement, titled 'LET US WELCOME YOU!' published in ANTA's very first guide. 'The drawing together of the English-speaking peoples in the interests of world harmony and development makes it more than ever necessary that we should know each other better', it read. That ANTA materials called for the recognition of travel as a means of extending international peace is perhaps one of the most important features of ANTA's interwar legacy. Clapp and ANTA's advocacy for travel as a means of breaking down division belongs to a mainstream interwar tradition of aversion to renewed conflict that coincided with the popular widespread support, especially in women's peace movements, for internationalism and the League of Nations.[96] As Julia Horne writes 'by the 1920s, most Australians, whether they had served on the battle front or worked in the relative safety of the home front, had nonetheless suffered grievous loss.'[97] Read in this context, Clapp's urging for economic stimulus, civic participation, efficiency and peace were all based on his estimation that there existed among those who had suffered loss, a hope for peace. Aboard the *Orvieto*, he instructed his audience that it was:

> High time, indeed, that we broke down our parochial barriers, discarded our apathetic or let-the-government do it attitudes and got together to tell the world boldly, forcefully, and

[93] White, *Inventing Australia,* 101-102.
[94] Rolls, "Picture Imperfect", 19.
[95] 'All Help to Push Australia: Clapp's Appeal', *Sun*, June 7, 1929, 12.
[96] Kate Laing, 'The White Australia Nettle': women's internationalism, peace, and the White Australia Policy in the interwar years, *History Australia*, 14:2, (2017), 218-236. Jane E. Hunt, 'Finding a place for women in Australian cultural history: Female cultural activism in Sydney, 1900–1940', *Australian Historical Studies*, 36:124 (2004), 221-237.
[97] Julia Horne, 'The "knowledge front" women, war, and peace', *History of Education Review*, 45:2, (2016), 151-167.

> systematically, that here the visitor will find a warm welcome, a wealth of interest and enjoyment; and that we are at home from 1st January to 31st December in each year.[98]

Such direction was based on the view of Clapp and other ANTA proponents that there was a latent aspiration in the increasingly consumer driven marketplace for nation building. Later described in the *Sunday Times* as the first Australian public servant who 'smacked down on ironclad precedent and whiskered ministerial tradition', Clapp was not disposed to the idea of leaving the government's work to the politicians.[99] His position as one of the nation's highest paid public servants meant that such a notion was not immune from some measure of irony. By the 1920s, Australia's vast size had given rise to a degree of dependence on the government that engendered a brand of 'state socialism' that Clapp simply took for granted. Afterall, Clapp's plea for Australians to abandon their 'let-the-government-do-it attitudes' was contemporaneous to the Australian historian W.K. Hancock's famous observation that 'Australian democracy has come to look upon the state as a vast public utility, whose duty it is to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number.'[100] The creation of ANTA from the auspices of the Victorian Railways occurred only shortly before the publication of Victorian lawyer and politician Frederick William Eggleston's 1932 treatise *State Socialism in Victoria.* Eggleston, the Victorian minister for railways from 1924-27 (he would have known Clapp well), observed that: 'The public services operated by the State of Victoria… constitute possibly the largest and most comprehensive use of state power outside of Russia.'[101] Clapp, a powerful director of this vast state machinery, (the Victorian Railways were 'the biggest industry in the State', noted Eggleston), was clearly was not averse to mobilising it toward an end he saw as being in the public interest.[102]

In spite of their substantial state backing, Holmes and Clapp formed an entrepreneurial and progressive vision of Australia that they believed would resonate with the public. Apart from their relative expertise in the emerging field of public relations, market research capabilities were limited at the time. ANTA, and before that Victorian Railroads, measured marketing success primarily through recording increases or decreases in sales, or, by the popular demand for new issues of sales materials where the first or second runs had been quickly depleted. On the matter of how readers engage with popular media, Andrea Gaynor infers that commercial media messages speak to the gender, class position, and values of the 'ideal reader identity' which 'it may be assumed ... many (though by no means all) consumers sought to occupy'.[103] ANTA sales materials, and later, its flagship magazine *Walkabout*, created subject positions that editors like Holmes, but also the organisation's sub-editors, copy writers and other

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[98] *Sun*, June 7, 1929, 12.
[99] 'Clapp: Railwayman With a One Track Mind', *Sunday Times*, September 2, 1945, 9.
[100] W.K. Hancock, *Australia*, (Ernest Benn, London, 1930), 72–73.
[101] F.W. Eggleston, *State Socialism in Victoria*, P.G. King & Son, London, 1932, 1.
[102] For Eggleston's views on the management and operations of the Victorian Railways, see: *State Socialism in Victoria,* 111-146.
[103] Andrea Gaynor, "Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Suburban Food Production in Perth and Melbourne, 1880–2000" (PhD thesis, University of Western Australia, 2001), 8–10.

contributors, believed would have an influence on their imagined reader. Nature and environment, as we shall see, became core components of the advertised vision – the backgrounds against which advertisers set their idealised subjects.

Tellingly, ANTA spoke to what it identified as the prevailing values and opinions of the day. One example of this is clearly identified in the ways in which publicity promulgated the idea of Australia as a 'white man's continent' and a 'white settler's country.'[104] If we accept that ANTA was administered by and employed skilled readers of public opinion, they clearly did not perceive demand in their settler audience for images and materials that challenged contemporary orthodoxies. At this time, robust opposition to the White Australia Policy existed, especially among the women's peace movement.[105] But ANTA was hardly pushing the boundaries of plutocratic thought, and avoided engaging with what might have been considered controversial or peripheral political movements. It remains an overlooked fact of Australian history, however, that the expansion of domestic and international tourism during this period had far-reaching consequences for the eventual unviability of the White Australia Policy. As Kate Laing aptly points out, 'the experience of travel' made interwar women involved in the peace movement 'think differently about White Australia.'[106] Little thought is given over in such scholarship to how the agitation for a professionalised travel industry in Australia might have helped facilitate such social revelations in the broader population. Still, Holmes was hardly an agitant for bettering settler-Indigenous relations, and much of the advertising he oversaw erased Indigenous presence from national space and memory.

Holmes was aware of the existence of Indigenous cultural sites and the growing interest in opening such places to tourism. As historian of Indigenous Australia Nikita Vanderbyl writes, contemporary interest in Indigenous culture tended to be on reserves and missions where Indigenous people were confined to 'neat cottages, school rooms and church services that provided a pleasurable mix of the familiar and the exotic.'[107] In his memoir of travelling the continent, *We Find Australia*, Holmes recalled his own visits to such places. 'I have seen them being taught at missions. Some of them are as white as you and I, but inside, somewhere they are black.' Holmes perceived that the teaching of English on the missions was a cruel irony, because 'soon they will have enough knowledge to know how accursed they are.'[108] Perhaps because of these experiences, he actively opposed the inclusion of Indigenous based tourism in the national program. In 1929, he rejected a proposal to feature Indigenous corroborees as tourist attractions, claiming the idea was logistically difficult but, more tellingly, 'undesirable,' declaring that 'the aboriginals [sic] I have seen in Australia… are not a sight for the visitor. They are usually lower

[104] ANTA, *Australia – a place in the sun!* (The Specialty Press: Melbourne, 1929).
[105] Laing, 'The White Australia Nettle', 219.
[106] *Ibid*, 218. See also, Fiona Paisley, 'No back streets in the Bush', 119-137.
[107] Vanderbyl, '"The Happiest Time of my Life', 96-97.
[108] Holmes, *We Find Australia*, 132.

than the mongrel dogs they group with.'[109] Such comments reveal a continuity with the racialised institutional attitude that had excluded Indigenous people from the campaigns of the New South Wales Tourist Bureau before the First World War.

There was a cruel irony at the heart of Holmes's observation that Indigenous encounters be excluded from the tourist experience. Angela Woollacott points out that the conditions on reserves were deliberately kept poor 'to encourage Aboriginal people to leave them and assimilate', not least by pursuing employment on stations or through missions. Furthermore, 'the sanctity of the Central Aboriginal Reserve' facilitated what contemporaries saw as 'unwholesome contact between settlers and Aboriginal people.'[110] Not only did the reserve system confine Indigenous people to remote areas, it produced an environment Holmes thought was best kept out of view for the tourist, in effect concealing it from the world's view.

At many of the locations advertised by VR and ANTA there was no Indigenous presence for tourists to encounter in the 1920s. At Mount Buffalo, for instance, the Mogullumbidj and other Aboriginal groups local to the region had been killed or driven out in the mid-nineteenth century.[111] Yet Holmes's stance was embedded in the policies and promotional materials of the campaigns he directed. The advertising he oversaw promoted tourist destinations like Mount Buffalo as lively and picturesque social retreats, without any references to the violent dispossession that enabled their transformation into tourist sites. Rather than acknowledging the region's colonial history, Victorian Railways advertising presented most tourist destinations as timeless, uninhabited landscapes – an erasure that aligned with the contemporary settler-colonial logic of progress and terra nullius.

Out of the challenging 1920s, Clapp and other ANTA proponents worked towards connecting what they saw as the dominant market force of the period – the middle class. They saw leadership as a vital instrument in overcoming backwards interstate rivalries, and then created an organisation that disseminated, with industrial efficiency, enormous amounts of visually stimulating advertising, all with the purpose of reforming what they perceived as petty colonial feuding. The materials they would commission, curate, and circulate subsequent to 1929 were all laden with images of Australia's scenic attractions, outdoor lifestyle, good climate, weather, and ample nature. Crucially, Clapp and Holmes intuited an aspiration in the general population that Australians from across state lines might find common ground to overcome past grievances. A common set of symbols strengthened a shared sense

[109] Correspondence from C. H. Holmes to H. Farrands Esquire, 12 September 1929, NAA, A458, AJ392/3.
[110] Urwin, Jess. *Chain Reactions: Nuclear Colonialism in South Australia*, PhD Thesis, Australian National University, 2023, 90-91; Tim Rowse, *White Flour, White Power: From Rations to Citizenship in Central Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 8; Marcia Langton, 'Urbanizing Aborigines: The Social Scientists' Great Deception', *Social Alternatives* 2, no. 2 (1981): 16–22.
[111] Jacqui Durrant, "Mogullumbidj: First People of Mount Buffalo," *Victorian Historical Journal* 91, no. 1 (2020), 30.

of destiny and addressed Australia's ailing reputation overseas by fostering a sense of pride at home. ANTA's urging of Australians to respond patriotically to images of nature and environment was not jingoistic, overtly nationalist, or chauvinistic, not by comparison to tourist advertising overseas and not by comparison to other cultural nationalist media published in Australia at the same time. Rather, it was a gentle and optimistic ideation of a new, unified, and productive nation. *Australia – A Place in the Sun*, a place where people enjoyed leisure, were paid well, and were safe, happy, and free. A place where a strong nation could be built through federation. Clapp and Holmes laid down a blueprint at the Victorian Railways for what would become the primary technique of marketing the nation until the 1950s. The threads that connect ANTA, the Victorian Railways and the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau back through time have never been strongly enough emphasised in scholarship on this era.

ANTA's 1929 vision: 'Australia – A Place in the Sun!'

What was Australia like in 1929? The final year of the nation's so-called 'development decade' marked an exciting and auspicious year for the new, modern nation. On the third day of the year, Donald Bradman struck his first test match century at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The two halves of the Sydney Harbour Bridge's arch were inching every day towards completion. Mawson was on expedition in Antarctica. Charles Kingford Smith set a record Australia to England flight time of 12 days and 38 minutes. Parliament House was already completed, and Canberra had been the permanent seat of government for nearly two years. In August, the first ever train ran direct from Adelaide to Alice Springs. Western Australia celebrated the centenary of its founding. All of these achievements spelled greatness for the Australian future, and it is the spirit of this precise moment that ANTA sought to capture in its very first mass-produced tourist brochure.

As the first cover image of any of ANTA's mass circulated materials, Northfield's cover design for 'A Place in the Sun' is amongst the most important in this thesis. It is an expression of how ANTA perceived Australia at a precise moment in time, just before the onset of the Great Depression. Importantly the cover art depicted a scene that ANTA believed would resonate with the domestic public while also attracting migrants and tourists from overseas. Beaches boomed in America, Britain and along the Mediterranean coast in the 1920s. It is more than likely that Northfield's design imagined one of Sydney's beaches, which as Caroline Ford tells us, grew in popularity as well in the 'hedonist years following the end of the First World War and in the wake of the devastating influenza outbreak.' Bondi, Bronte, Coogee and Manly attracted crowds as large as half a million people over a weekend. One Sunday in 1934 'saw an estimated 60,000 people on Bondi Beach alone.'[112] This is but one image in the

[112] Caroline Ford, Sydney Beaches: A History (New South Publishing: Sydney, 2014), 114.

rise of the Australian beach as an important visual shorthand for Australia that extended back to the NSWGTB and, as we will see in the coming chapters, continued to persist throughout the century.





Figure 7 & 8 – Cover and rear cover images for ANTA's first guide. Australia – A Place in the Sun! (1929).

Just as symbols of Australian nature and environment had been integral to VR's publicity, they would soon find themselves at the heart of ANTA's advertising message. Central to ANTA's vision was the idea of a united, sunlit, continent where everything the light touched could be harnessed for the progress and development of the nation and its people. 'Australia is a great sunlit continent as colourful as the world – A continent that Australians must be proud to advertise!', Clapp's slogan from which this thesis takes its title, encapsulated the idea of a unified nation with a cohesive identity.[113] The slogan's invocation of sunlight, colour and civic pride embodies the style of nation building that underpinned ANTA's messaging for the next forty years. The parallel refrain of 'Australia… Continent… Continent… Australians', belongs to the same tradition of collective identity that Edmund Barton had invoked at the turn of the century.[114] Indeed, as the above cover of *Australia – A Place in the Sun!* indicates, ANTA's materials spoke to an exclusively Anglo-Saxon population whose imagination of the nation they inhabited was entirely populated by people like themselves. McGregor is insightful on this point, writing that the attachment of Australians to their homeland depended on their conception of 'their

[113] Harold Clapp, Information Bulletin: Extracts from an address (wireless broadcast) by Mr. Harold W. Clapp (circa 1930), NAA: A458, AJ392/3 Part 1, 4.
[114] Meaney, 'Britishness and Australian Identity', 81.

homeland in ethnically exclusivist terms.'[115] Northfield's cover art for 'Australia – A Place in the Sun' gives expression to how such imagining of Australia as a single geographical entity with an ethnically homogenous population was playing out in the contemporary culture.

ANTA copy writers perceived that up to date statistics about Australia in the year 1929 would be of interest to readers and potential visitors. The population was 6,366,770. Eighty-four percent were native born. Ninety-seven percent were of British extraction, proclaimed the guide, in line with a contemporary fixation with (and boastfulness about) white racial purity and British ancestry.[116] There were 600,600 motor vehicles on the country's roads, (one to every 10 persons). Coal was the largest resource extracted and wool was the largest resource produced. It earned the country over 12 million pounds in revenue and was the main source of power for Australia's 22,000 factories. 'There is an abundance of electric power in the main centres of population… generated either from black coal, water, or brown coal', said a later section of the guide. Wool and wheat had a combined value to the economy of over £100,000,000. Australia was 'A New Tourist Mecca' the guide announced. The average cost of a hotel room in the cities was between one and two pounds, without breakfast. In the country a room cost between 15 shillings and £1, a price for which breakfast may have been included, but was apparently not guaranteed. The tourist need not fret about infrastructure to support their travels. There was 26,738 route miles of railway, and 5,880 route miles of airways (enough route miles to span the continent's width twelve times over). These statistics pointed to Australia's wealth and good economic position. Salaries and wages totalled over £90,000,000 and Australians collectively had £548,000,000 in the bank. None of these figures indicated in the slightest that which was already becoming obvious to some – the looming economic disaster on the near-horizon.[117]

The brochure had two prominent themes – environment and development. Both were intrinsically linked. The celebration of Australia's bracing, health-giving climate and the country's instinct for progress were deployed with the clear purpose of differentiating Australia from the old world. 'Why not see Australia?' the guide asked rhetorically. The answer came supplied: 'It's atmosphere is not heavy with mediavel (sic) history and tradition. There are no crumbling monuments of centuries of civilisation-building to "do" according to guide-book ritual. One doesn't attune one's sense of enjoyment to the past.' ANTA's primary sales pitch was that Australia's natural and environmental conditions were especially conducive to health and prosperity. Here we can see how the environmental theme that had run through the materials of the NSWGTB, the Victorian Railways and the Development and Migration Commission found a newly invigorated expression in ANTA publicity. Predictably, the first

[115] McGregor, 'The necessity of Britishness', 506.
[116] Hirst, *Looking for Australia*, 55.
[117] Bruce would later say that by 1928 that he understood serious financial and economic crisis on an 'almost unprecedented scale was looming', see: C.J. Lloyd, 'The Formation and Development of the United Australia Party', PhD Thesis, Australian National University, 1984, 14.

word of the pamphlet's main copy was 'SUNSHINE'. As in *Australia Calls You,* the curators employed historiated initials in the copy to emphasise Australia's distinctive environmental qualities. In the below image, the letter S appears in an illustration of Australia's rolling plains. The picture is foregrounded by the prince of Australian symbols of the environment – the gum tree.[118] From beyond the hills beam perfectly straight rays of sunlight, drawn at even intervals that radiate from a concealed central point.



Figure 9 – Historiated initials. *Australia – A Place in the Sun!*

There were three historiated initials in the brochure. After 'S' for 'Sunshine' came 'U' for 'Untapped Wealth of soil and mineral power'. The illustrated U depicted a pastoral scene with cows troughing. The next was a capital 'A' which began the sentence 'A white man's continent.' (The racial values of the time perhaps precluding the compilers of the guide from spelling SUN – a missed opportunity!).

[118] For the symbolic significance of the gum tree see Lucy Kaldor, 'Gum Tree' in Harper & White, *Symbols of Australia*, 98-108.

The 'A' features a sole drover on horseback running a stream of sheep that vanishes beyond the horizon. Why ornament modern publicity materials with such flourishes? ANTA would have taken for granted the literacy of their readership, and unlike the lavish manuscripts of the middle ages, this brochure was mass-produced – ANTA printed 1,100,000 copies. But the illustrated dropped initial in the brochure, and elsewhere in nascent ANTA materials, Australianised a medieval script system that had been vital to the carriage of tradition and the written word through the ages. Like Gullick's heraldic armorial achievements in the national coat of arms discussed in the last chapter, the use of ancient European visual imagery legitimised Australia as a civilisation in its own right.

Though the illustrated tiles are easy to glance over, their appearance in ANTA's first mass produced guide is significant. They announced Australia's own national imagery, and in so doing laid claim to an inherited visual culture, that along with Australia's inherited institutions, had been improved. Crucially, the picture of civilisation ANTA advanced was at its core based on a visual lexicon of Australia's unique nature symbols. All of this was aimed at distinguishing Australia from the Old World, in opportunities, customs and in scenery. As the guide enthused:

> Australia sends her "coo-ee" of invitation across the world to the tourist, a little jaded, perhaps, by the ultra-sophistication of old-world holiday tracks. Australia has something new, something virile and constructive, something infinitely varied, something essentially different, yet still redolent of the romance of the early gold diggings and the pioneers to show him.

If it is the function of historiated initials to give readers a sense of the text before reading in detail, then what do these three little tiles tell us about ANTA's vision of Australia in 1929? Again, the use of decorative lettering emphasised Australia's distinctive environmental inheritance. Radiant sunlight and open plains likely suggested to the contemporary reader the unlimited opportunity of the continent for development. The passage of copy that follows from the sunlit tile expounds in romantic prose Australia's bountiful environmental endowment, good climate and sunshine that allowed for a variety of recreations. 'He can do business, go to the races, play golf, polo or tennis, motor, yacht, ride a horse, a camel or a surf-board.' The guide boasted Australia's unsurpassed quality of life, enabled by its abundant sunshine. 'Whatever he does he will enjoy, because the golden sunshine that is the essence of Australia will permeate his very being.' Here again appears perhaps one of the most important themes of twentieth century tourist advertising – that good weather had a direct effect on the demeanour and character of not only a person, but a whole society. 'Australia for health!' declared one heading of the brochure. As in Hunter's publicity of the early 1900s, ANTA cited up-to-date mortality rates as evidence of Australia's natural advantage. ANTA boasted a death rate of just 9 per 1,000, compared with nearly 12 in Great Britain and 11.5 in the United States. Sunshine, and the unmatched clean air, made people

healthier, friendlier, happier and all of this added up to a society that was more welcoming, more democratic and where there was more social opportunity than any equivalent society in the world.

In the rhetoric of the guide, the chronicling of the rapidity of progressive developments was a cause for pride. The guide welcomed the tourist to 'concentrate his attention on the evidences of the country's vast resources, or on its physical beauties, or both.' In the cities, they would find all the modern amenity and cultural interest of Paris, London or New York, only better, and all the more remarkable for the fact that they were 'evidences of a development that has created a record in time. Stock runs of four or five generations ago have given place to parks, boulevards, hotels, shops, public buildings, cinemas and theatres.' As in NSWGTB promotion, ANTA highlighted the convenience of public transport, and its role in connecting people with recreational activity:

> Electric railways and tramways whisk the suburb-dweller back and forth from his work, his home, and his beach, bush, and hill playgrounds hard by. Ferry boats dart from wharf to quay. Lines of cars thread busy but well-controlled streets.

These transport networks connected people with the environment – Australia's main attraction. Under the heading 'The Great Outdoors' the guide told readers of the 'spacious Australia of plain and forest, gorge and mountain, river and lake' that lay beyond the cities. Here was the ultimate evocation of Australia, from the bush to the Barrier Reef:

> The visitor sees the Australian bush that pen and pigment have made famous – giant red and blue gums, mountain ash, tree fern, golden wattle and crimson waratah, the home of the kangaroo and the wallaby, the emu, the parrot, the mocking lyre bird, the laughing kookaburra, the golden-throated magpie, the wombat, the opussum, the tiny native bear and the platypus – that furred, duck-billed, web-footed, egg-laying mammal freak at which scientists still marvel.

Australia's scenic marvels were anywhere and everywhere. Magnificent tropical forests awaited the visitor in the far north. There were impressive peaks to climb, the jewellery of nature's caves to explore, spas to visit and 'magnificently scenic roads' to drive along for days. The visitor could enjoy the winter wonders on the 'exhilarating white slopes' of the Great Dividing Range, 'and, a couple of days later, plunge into the rollers of a sun-drenched coast.' The Great Barrier Reef was earmarked as a destination of special and unique interest, 'explore fascinating tropical marine and vegetable life on a thousand-mile coral reef of indescribable colorings [sic]'. Australia was unmatched for vastness and variety. It was, said the guide, 'one of the world's tourist Meccas, with a big place in the sun, and the most genial, most invigorating climate in the world.' The section of the brochure concludes with a soaring patriotic

quotation of the famous first two lines of the final stanza of Dorothea Mackellar's 1908 poem *My Country*, 'An opal-hearted country, A wilful, lavish land.'

We should not be surprised to find that ANTA promised that a continent of opportunity lay in waiting for development by the white man. Much of the 'A Place in the Sun' brochure ran thick with the language of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority. Though references to the devastation wrought by the First World War were non-existent in ANTA's materials, the inaugural brochure did celebrate the country's development and progress as the by-product of 'the unique atmosphere of the Australia that bred the Anzacs [sic], and is to-day breeding men and women of broad, constructive vision.' According to this view, increasingly aligned with that espoused by Bean, it was the environment, the climate, the sunshine, that had shaped the Anzac into a productive and healthy citizenry, and it was the prosperity inducing phenomenon of Australia's nature that ANTA saw as the foremost selling point for the likely migrant, tourist or investor. The guide quotes the testimony of Sir Arthur Duckham, leader of the British Economic Mission to Australia in 1928-29. 'If you look at Australia, you will immediately realise its wonderful assets, the wonderful prosperity of the country, its natural resources and the virility of its people.' Such statements reveal a preoccupation with physical and moral health that accorded to contemporary ideas around racial hygiene, which were influential in the contemporary town planning movement.[119] ANTA told the reader that there were hundreds of such testimonials 'from well-known citizens of the world who have either visited the Commonwealth, or who have regarded this country of sunshine sufficiently attractive to work in.' Herein we can see the degree to which ANTA presented Australia's favourable environmental conditions not only as the foremost reason to visit, invest in, or migrate to, Australia, but also as a eugenic accelerator that exponentiated the best attributes of the Anglo-Saxons that lived there.

[119] Paul Ashton 'This villa life': town planning, suburbs and the 'new social order' in early twentieth-century Sydney, *Planning Perspectives*, 25:4 (2010), 457-483.

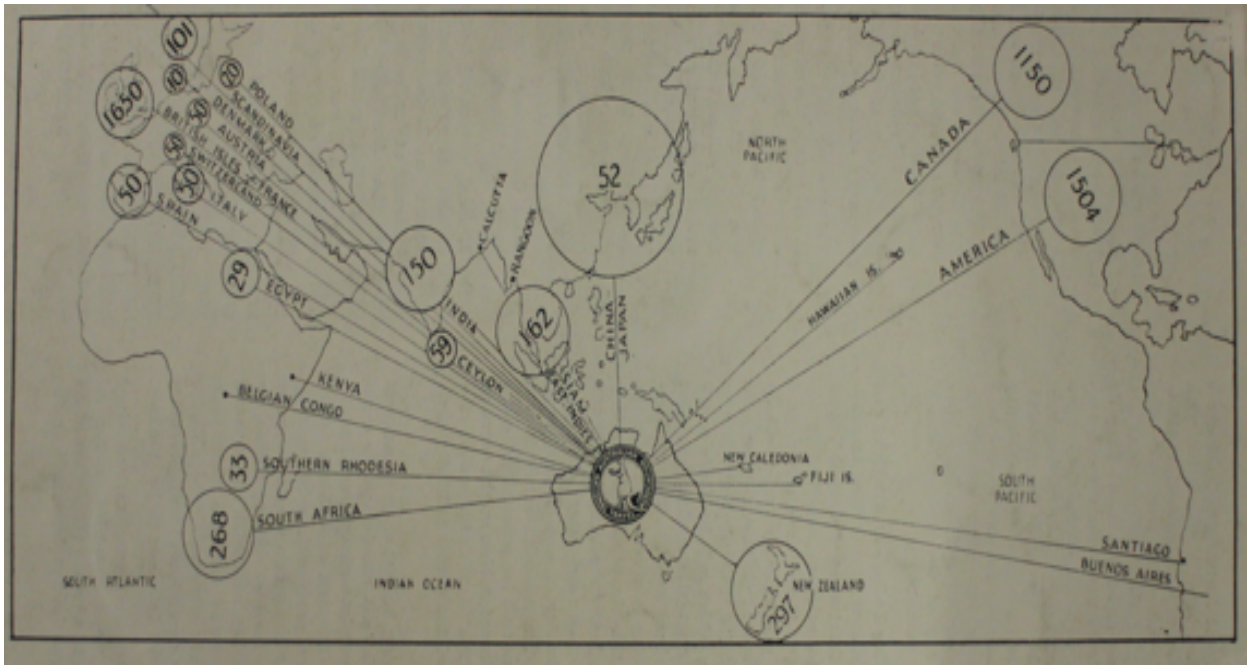


Figure 10 - ANTA repositions Australia at the centre of the world. The figures shown represent the number of circulation points, (travel agents, shipping offices, permanent hoarding sites) where Australian posters were continuously exhibited. ANTA, *Tourism in Australia, (Sydney, 1930).*

Conclusion

If the economic challenges of the mid- to late- 1920s informed ANTA's creation, the organisation's efforts to 'project a positive and reassuring image of Australia as a prosperous and civilized country' would take on an entirely new dimension after 1929 and in the wake of the Great Depression.[120] Nevertheless, as we have seen in this chapter, ANTA's emerging contribution to the Australian national image was irrevocably shaped by the challenges of the 1920s. ANTA emerged as the conclusion to a decade-long reform of the Victorian Railways, which began with Harold Clapp's arrival in Melbourne from America, where he had worked as a railway executive in New York and California, in 1920. ANTA's preliminary efforts to sell Australia, as seen in the guidebook 'Australia – A Place in the Sun', firmly belongs to a pre-Depression Australia with a widespread appetite for modernity and progress and little foresight into the pending economic crisis of the early 1930s.

ANTA emerged as a logical consequence of a decade of experimental national image making undertaken at the Victorian Railways. It was from Flinders Street Station that image makers, working under the watchful eye of Charles Holmes, made environmental themes central to their reconfiguring of Victoria as a tourist destination. Victorian marketing became a jumping off point for future campaigns aimed at promoting not just one state, but the entire nation. Before ANTA commenced

[120] Magagnoli, 'A Library of Photographs', 31.

operations in 1929, VR collaborated with the DMC in the formative campaign 'Australia Calls You.' Published in the second half of the 1920s, the *Australia Calls You* pamphlets depicted Australia as an exciting and prosperous country whose progress and prosperity derived from its environment and nature. Mass-produced advertising in the 1920s consequently made sunlight, climate, abundant nature, scenery and native flora and fauna constitutive features of centralised Australian national travel promotion. Towards the end of the decade, Harold Clapp and Charles Holmes, reformers of the Victorian Railways in the 1920s, together with commercial leaders including Charles Lloyd Jones, through ANTA, assumed the mantle of Australia's national promoters. Under their stewardship, ANTA began to mass-produce sales literature that was heavily laden with symbols of Australian nature and environment. This chapter has shown that their efforts did not begin abruptly in 1929, and that ANTA was in fact the culmination of a decade of promotional activity and experimentation that had begun with Clapp's arrival at (and subsequent reform of) VR in 1920.

1929 stands out as a pivotal moment in early twentieth-century Australian, and indeed world, history. Over ten years' distant from the First World War, the year marked the culmination of a decade of 'roaring' change. Australia experienced social and political upheaval during the 1920s, and though some would later claim to have understood the economic peril the country was in, it is unlikely that anyone completely foresaw the enduring, devastating effects the Great Depression that followed the Wall Street crash of September would have in the dawn years of the next decade. The economic imperative of tourism as a productive industry would take on new meaning in the difficult years of the Depression. As an early issue of *Walkabout* would later assert in 1934, ANTA was busily 'meeting the "hurrying to and fro" demands of the world's peoples, whether by train or tram, ship or plane, car or camel.' All of this constituted what ANTA said was 'a tremendous industry – there is none greater!'[121]

[121] 'An Export Commodity that Costs Nothing to Produce', *Walkabout* 1:2, December 1934, 7.

Chapter Three

'To Capture the Purple Veil': Advertising the national capital, 1929-1939.

> 'Canberra lies at the end of a cockspur railway, off a money-losing dead-end branch railway. It has no visible prospects, commercial, shipping, manufacturing, agricultural or mining, and it is nothing special even in a pastoral way.' – *The Bulletin*, September 16, 1931.

> 'Scenically, Canberra is unequalled.' – Federal Department of the Interior tourist guide, *'Canberra: A City of Flowers',* 1934.

'Photographer employed. Arrives Canberra train Monday morning. Grateful if you would provide a car enable comprehensive photographs to be taken. Urgent. Advice appreciated.'[1] So went a telegram sent from the Australian National Travel Association offices in Flinders Street Station, Melbourne to the Department of the Interior in March 1933. Up until his receipt of the message, Charles Daley, the assistant-secretary of Interior's Civic Branch, had on numerous occasions tried to assure Charles Holmes, director of the Australian National Travel Association, that his office could provide its own photographer. Daley, whose vigorous campaigning for the capital in the 1920s had already earned him the sobriquet 'Mr Canberra' was eager to assist the newly formed ANTA. 'This Branch could supply pictures within a week' he wrote Holmes, noting that ANTA could 'avoid the expense of a special visit.'[2] But Holmes was loath to countenance the employment of any photographer other than his own. This chapter explores the disjuncture between Holmes's and Daley's respective organisations (ANTA and the Civic Branch) in promoting a vision of Canberra each thought appropriate. The insistence of each administrator to use their preferred photographer is emblematic of the competing local and national visions of Canberra emerging in the 1930s – a decade where the eyes of the nation fell upon the seat of government after Parliament House opened there permanently in 1927.

Akin to contemporary publicity for other tourist destinations, the image of Canberra in sales materials drew on themes and symbols of Australian nature and environment. Canberra's geographical situation, the mountains, rivers, and the Molonglo valley figured in most 1930s Canberra tourist ephemera. Advertising gave much attention to the region's climate. It was variously warmer, cooler, sunnier and drier than any other city on the continent. Planned parks, manicured gardens and tree-lined boulevards, all features of the Garden City movement that had partly driven Canberra's development, were also presented in advertising as an integral part of the capital's character and atmosphere. But Canberra's

[1] 'Australian National Travel Association to Civic Representative Canberra', March 2, 1933, (NAA): A6006.
[2] Charles Daley, 'Publicity per medium of The Australian National Travel Association', Internal Memorandum, Department of the Interior, March 3, 1933. NAA: A6006.

remoteness and pastoral heritage complicated the presentation of a planned city. Local publicity associations, one led by New Stater and Country Party affiliate Ulrich Ellis, sought to connect the city on the plains to the quintessential myths and symbols of the settler-Australian nation. The disjuncture between Ellis's local vision, which romanticised Canberra's rural roots and 'bush' landscape, and that of the newly established ANTA, whose director, Charles Holmes, imagined Canberra offers a heretofore unexamined commentary on how clashing ideologies of cosmopolitanism and decentralisation were then shaping the national image.[3]

What do the attempts of promoters to connect Canberra with the environmental qualities of the Federal Capital Territory, but also with the continent the capital symbolically represented, reveal about Canberra's place in the life and history of the Australian nation? Historians have overlooked the role of the Australian National Travel Association in shaping Canberra's image in its nascent years as the seat of government. Accounts tend to focus on the lead up to the competition for the city's design in 1912 and the following piecemeal implementation of Walter Burley Griffin's winning plan.[4] Canberra suffered from an image problem in the first half of the century, and was seen then, (and is still sometimes seen today) as a makeshift place, or a 'bush capital'. Nicholas Brown notes in his *A History of Canberra* that 'at the beginning of the 1920s Canberra had stalled to such an extent that, at this point more than any other, it might conceivably have been abandoned.'[5] The Canberra heritage expert and professor of landscape architecture Dianne Firth asserts that the onset of the Depression in 1929 put a halt on construction and population growth that did not recommence until the final years of the Second World War. 'After the rapid development period of the 1920s Canberra in the 1930s assumed the mantle of a quiet country town', she writes.[6] As I argue in this chapter, the concern that Canberra was not viable as a planned capital remained very real in the national conversation well into the 1930s, particularly in Melbourne and Sydney. Canberra's reputation improved over time. But historians have often located attempts to repudiate Canberra's negative image mostly to the post-war era.[7]

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[3] For a thorough account of decentralisation, modernity and the urban-rural divide alive in early twentieth century see: Kate Murphy, *Fear and Fantasies: Modernity, Gender and the Rural-Urban Divide*, (Peter Lang Publishing: New York: 2010).

[4] Canberra has been the subject of much historical inquiry among scholars of architecture and urban planning. Many works share a preoccupation with the Walter Burley Griffin design and other submissions in Australia's Federal Capital Competition (1912). See: K F Fischer, *Canberra: Myths and Models, Forces at work in the formation of the Australian capital* (Hamburg: Institute of Asian Affairs, 1984); Paul Reid, *Canberra following Griffin: a design history of Australia's national capital* (Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 2002) Christopher Vernon, 'Canberra: Where Landscape is Pre-eminent', in *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*, David Gordon (ed.), (New York and Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2006), 130-149; Ed Wensing, 'Walter Burley Griffin Is Dead: Long Live Walter Burley Griffin's Planning Ideals!', *Urban Policy and Research* 31:2 (2013), 226–40. Vernon, 'Daniel Burnham and Australia's Federal Capital, 1893–1912', *Planning Perspectives* 29:4 (2014), 501–525.Vernon, 'Australia's Lost Capitol', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 70:2 (2016), 284-299. David Rowe, 'Murdoch's Canberra: National Designs for a National Capital', *Canberra Historical Journal* 85 (2020), 1–12.

[5] Nicholas Brown, *A History of Canberra* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 62.

[6] Dianne F. Firth, 'Behind the Landscape of Lake Burley Griffin: Landscape, Water, Politics and the National Capital 1899-1964', (PhD Thesis: University of Canberra, 2000), 120-122.

[7] For histories that explore Canberra's revival after the Second World War see: Frank Brennan, *Canberra in Crisis*, (Dalton Publishing: Canberra, 1971); Eric Sparke, *Canberra: 1954-1980,* (AGPS Press: Canberra, 1988); Christopher Vernon, An emerald city? Water and the colonial picturesque at the national capital, 1901-1964', *Australian Humanities Review* 36, (2005);

How ANTA presented Canberra as part of its broader campaign to sell the nation, at home and abroad, remains an overlooked aspect of Australian tourism history. This chapter fills that gap and also examines the degree to which ANTA clashed with the aspirations of the local Canberra population (comprised of a growing number of public servants and their families) to project a vision of the city that Canberrans, and not just as Australians, recognised. Through a chronological analysis of 1930s Canberra advertising images, posters and photographs, it asks to what degree different promoters incorporated varying conceptualisations of nature and environment in their advertising. Vital to this chapter's exploration of Canberra's appearance in 1930s tourist advertising is how closely images of the city reflected, and reacted to, the broader national sentiment towards Canberra, as well as how contemporary political culture and current events played a role in shaping publicity.

Decentralisation: Ulrich Ellis and the rural vision of Canberra

The below Percy Trompf poster was perhaps the first image to portray Canberra in the emerging context of ANTA's activities. The Victorian state tourism bureau was essentially an arm of the Victorian Railways, and therefore this image belongs to the suite of VR and ANTA images from this time, indeed, ANTA's head offices were situated on the second floor of Flinders Street Station. Trompf's 1929 poster depicted a view of Parliament House from the South-East and contrasted the white edifice of the building with Black Mountain in the distance.[8] Clear skies, bright light and the gentle curves of planned roads and classical arches was emerging as a favoured style in which Trompf and his contemporaries started to envision the Australian capital.[9] But in Canberra, a different view of how the capital should be presented in advertising was percolating – a view that would rub up against the vision of the united country that ANTA was attempting to form.

Two Canberra publicity associations, separate from Daley's Civic Branch, were the Canberra Tourist and Publicity Committee (CTPC), and the closely affiliated Kangaroo Club.[10] At the heart of these Canberra champions was Ulrich Ellis, political secretary of Country Party leader Earle Page.[11] Ellis was a central figure in both the Kangaroo Club and the CTPC. Remembered now for his partisan devotion to the Country Party, he had moved to Canberra from Queensland in 1927. His involvement with the

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Robert Freestone, 'Shaping 'the finest city region in the world': Gordon Stephenson and Canberra's National Capital Development Commission 1960-73', *Town Planning Review* 83:3, (2012), 335-375; Nicholas Brown, 'Entering the Salami and Pumpernickel Range: The Cultural Transformation of Canberra in the Post-War Decades', *Canberra Historical Journal* 71 (2013): 11–19. For a history of Canberra that spans the interwar decades, see: Jim Gibbney, *Canberra 1913-1953* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1988).

[8] 'Canberra Poster', *Canberra Times,* 17 September 1929, 4.

[9] Rowe, 'Murdoch's Canberra', 1–12.

[10] 'Better feeling towards Canberra: Good work of Tourist Committee', *Canberra Times,* 26 September, 1934.

[11] In the 1930s and 1940s Page advocated for the expansion of Australia's tourist industry. See Stephen Wilkes, *Now is the Psychological Moment,* 213-214; and 'A National Industry' Dr. Earle Page and Travel', *Newcastle Sun*, 19 July 1935, 7.

Country Party began in 1928, when he became secretary to the party leader, Page. Almost from the moment of his arrival in Canberra, Ellis made his adopted city one of his foremost political causes. Ellis's entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* states that 'as a Canberra resident he was a passionate advocate of local self-government, and of the need to improve Canberra's amenities and to attract tourism to the national capital'. The entry suggests that he was a founding member of the Kangaroo Club, established around 1930 to 'keep Canberra hopping'.[12] The Armidale New Stater, Phillip A. Wright, father of poet and Great Barrier Reef environmental campaigner Judith (see chapter five), described him as the 'arch-priest' of the New State movement.[13] To Ellis, and indeed to his contemporaries in the New State movement and Country Party, Canberra represented an opportunity to transfer political power from Melbourne and Sydney. Regional sympathies for a relocated capital were longstanding, dating back to Canberra's selection as a site for the national capital during the Federal Conventions of the 1890s. As Dianne Firth astutely comments, 'for rural supporters the idea of remoteness of the Federal capital from other cities was also an opportunity to start anew.'[14]

[12] Andrew Moore, 'Ellis, Ulrich Ruegg (1904–1981)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ellis-ulrich-ruegg-12459/text22409, published first in hardcopy 2007, accessed online 27 March 2024.
[13] Moore, 'Ellis, Ulrich Ruegg (1904–1981)', ADB.
[14] Firth, 'Behind the Landscape of Lake Burley Griffin', 47.



Figure 1 – Canberra, Percy Trompf *(Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, 1929). Image source: PROV.* [15]

Ellis's vision for Canberra was unquestionably shaped by his politics of decentralisation – an ideological movement that was reactionary to Federation and elevated local political organisation over Commonwealth government. Surrounded by New Staters and other disciples of the Country Party, Ellis soon became one of the movement's most outspoken proponents. Since its formation in 1920, the Federal Country Party, had been a vehicle for decentralisation and new state ideology.[16] Nicholas Brown writes that the decentralisation movement was 'an effort to define an organisation of life which embodied the virtues of voluntary association, privacy, the nuclear family and individual autonomy.'[17]

[15] For more on Trompf's 1929 visit to Canberra, see 'Mr. Trompf's Visit', *Canberra Times*, 6 March, 1929, 4.
[16] Nicholas Brown, 'Possess the Time: The Formation and Character of Australian Intellectual Conservatism in the 1950s,' PD thesis, (Australian National University, 1990), 134. On the support the Country Party had for the New State Movement in the 1920s, Brown cites Ulrich Ellis, *A History of the Australian Country Party*, Melbourne, 1963, 67-9.
[17] *Ibid*, 16.

Decentralisation romanticised rural life. Exponents of the ideology believed that in contrast to the decentralised organisation of society they advocated for, centralised systems of social organisation were morally corrupt. The Queensland grazier and first chairman of the ABC Richard Boyer encapsulated such thinking when he claimed in 1951 that 'the excessive devotion to the glamorous possibilities of metropolitan development' caused nations to suffer the 'spiritual loss of the simpler, sterner values.'[18] As we are about to see, the tenets of decentralisation can be clearly deduced in Ellis and the Kangaroo Club's vision of Canberra.

In 1931, Ellis looked enthusiastically to ANTA to help with the promotion of Canberra. The CTPC and Kangaroo Club lacked the resources enjoyed by Holmes's national association. Ellis, operating as the de facto press officer for both, did not have the direct link to Holmes that Daley in the Interior Department's Civic Branch had. In August 1931, he leaked to the press a false, but ostensibly official, memorandum that detailed how the Kangaroo Club and ANTA were engaged in an exciting new collaborative effort to publicise the city via a poster competition. The press dutifully reported Ellis's fake memorandum. 'The poster must not be merely an artistic picture, but must possess a publicity appeal to travellers, creating in them a desire to view the city for themselves', read an article in the *Daily Telegraph*. Similar copy appeared in other newspapers, with one noting that the successful design would 'imbue the travelling millions with a desire to view the national city with their own eyes.'[19]

But what was the vision of Canberra outlined in the 'official memorandum'? Ellis asked the potential artist to illustrate the connection between Canberra's national significance and its natural setting. 'The symbolic nationalism of Canberra must be captured and blended with the beauties of the landscape', said the memorandum. Clean air (and the implication therefore of a favourable, health-giving climate), was a key part of this representation, Ellis asking the artist to 'ensnare the stereoscopic atmosphere and the clean, clean air of the early morning.' Integral too, was the binding of the scenery of the capital with notions of national destiny. Ellis required the successful artist to 'capture the subtle purple veil which falls upon the hills at eventide; or weave with the colours of the palette the powder-blue of the towering snow-capped alps and the opal-azure sky.' The idea of Canberra's 'purple veil', the shade of violet light that proponents of the city said fell over the city in the crepuscular hours, dated back to the earliest aspirations for Canberra's development around the turn of the century.[20] The colour purple implied a connotation with the privilege and authority of classical Rome, of which there had been a revival of interest and appropriation of classical themes in both architecture and civic life throughout Britain and

[18] *Ibid*, 143. Brown cites the Boyer's lecture 'The Retreat from the Country' (noted as delivered at Armidale, 27 October 1951.
[19] 'Canberra Poster: To "Capture the Purple Veil"', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 August, 1931, 9; 'World-wide renown awaits Australian Artist for Canberra Poster', *Daily Examiner,* 6 August, 1931, 6.
[20] Christopher Vernon identifies A. Evans, a delegate of the Congress of Engineers, *Architects, Surveyors and Others Interested in the Building of the Federal Capital of Australia,* as the first to describe Canberra's twilight as 'purple.' See Vernon, 'An emerald city'.

the Empire in the Victorian Era.[21] The idea that a special light fell on Canberra, and that this light occurred as a result of Canberra's inherent geographical position, echoed the conviction of the nineteenth century poets, as well as the framers of the constitution, that civilisation in Australia was unfolding according to providence. Such a rendering of Canberra must have resonated strongly with newly arrived residents to the city, such as Ellis, at a time when many who had relocated there associated the development and success of the capital with the health and integrity of Australia's democracy.

Ellis's drawing on environmental themes in the invented memorandum agreed with contemporary tourist advertising, at least partially. But the vision he offered was exceptional. Ellis's belief in decentralisation filtered into the way he imagined an artist would present Canberra. Once his instructions exhausted themes of clean air, natural setting, and purple evening light, the brief moved on to overtly rural themes. For example, the artist needed to picture 'the sheep feeding in peaceful flocks a stone's throw from the Houses of Parliament, tranquilly unaware of the eternal fights of political warfare; or the drover upon his horse, silhouetted against the skyline his pack horses with his outfit and his mob of spare mounts upon some neighbouring knoll.' Ellis drove the pastoral vision to its apotheosis with his suggestion that the poster should depict the sundowner drifting by, 'corks around his hat, his bluey up, his billy in his hand, while the vice-regal limousine glides past him.' Here was the incarnation of the country dwellers, graziers and farmers, who as Bongiorno writes, were determined 'to carry the venerable pioneer legend into the modern era.'[22] As we are about to see, this vision of the capital, steeped in the mythic rural pioneer past, was too provincial for Holmes and ANTA.[23]

The press relayed Ellis's criteria for any aspiring artist willing to put themselves on their mettle. Newspapers around the nation reported that the two organisations had commenced a search for an Australian artist 'who can produce a publicity poster advertising Canberra for display throughout the world', and that would 'hold its own against the criticism and competition of the famous poster artists of all nations.'[24] Crucially though, where the press believed the memorandum to be the result of cooperation between the Kangaroo Club and ANTA, they were unwittingly advancing a vision that belonged only to Ellis. He was a shrewd operator. And though his spirited attempt to gain for Canberra an ANTA commercial poster did not eventuate, the memo expresses a visceral imagining of how Ellis saw the city – the spiritual and political centre of the nation, surrounded by characteristically Australian bush scenery. But in Ellis's vision, the heavy emphasis on the setting of parliament in the midst of a pastoral scene was to be celebrated, not shied away from. It honoured the pioneer tradition and legend

[21] Quentin J. Broughall, *Assuming the purple: the rehabilitation of ancient Rome in Victorian culture, 1837-1901.* PhD thesis, (National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2015).
[22] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers*, 397.
[23] Richard Waterhouse, 'The Pioneer Legend and Its Legacy: In Memory of John Hirst', Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society 103 (2017).
[24] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 August 1931, 9.

that attributed Australia's progress to the working of the land, the wool trade, and the pioneer spirit. In the valleys and plains of New South Wales, west of Sydney and the Blue Mountains, these tropes had important cultural and historic currency for citizens of the new settler nation.[25] There was an added dimension to these themes in the 1930s, when there existed a contemporary hope that the wool trade to the rest of the Empire would lead Australia out of the Depression.[26]

The 'official memorandum' was a contrivance. Neither the CTPC, the Kangaroo Club, nor Ellis had ever corresponded with Holmes, or ANTA. The first Holmes heard of the cooperative effort was when he picked up the newspaper on 10 August 1931. Fiercely assertive in controlling ANTA's brand image for the nation, Holmes was frustrated with the meddling efforts of unknown local promoters interfering with ANTA's editorial control. The following week, Holmes, released a statement denying any connection with Ellis, the Kangaroo Club, or the CTPC. So dismissive of the notion of a poster for Canberra was Holmes that he did not even refer to these organisations by name. 'This association is not collaborating with any tourist organisations at Canberra to that end', Holmes said, adding that the information had been circulated 'without our knowledge or authority.' His dismissal of the idea was direct and final. 'Any artist who is interested' he declared, was to deliver 'not to the ANTA, but to Canberra.'[27]

Whether Holmes was hostile to Ellis's poster brief because of the discourteousness of Ellis's stunt, or if he took issue with the fundamentals of the vision that Ellis suggested remains unknown. Likely it was a combination of both. ANTA was not averse to boosting rural themes in its publicity materials. Primary production and rural development were bread and butter content in ANTA's *Walkabout* magazine (1934-1974). As Mitchell Rolls points out 'in bringing information about the remote and rural regions of Australia, the people who lived there including Aborigines, and accessible details about native flora and fauna to its many urban readers, *Walkabout* too was promoting knowledge instrumental to any imagining of place.'[28] Rolls cites the historian Alec Bolton, who wrote in the 1960s that the magazine 'discovered outback Australia to the popular imagination.'[29] Though ANTA was enthusiastic about exposing an urban audience to rural themes and issues, the depiction of the nation's capital in an exclusively rural way did not accord with ANTA's self-imposed editorial task of delivering to its readers

[25] Grace Karskens, 'The Blue Mountains Crossings: New Histories from the Old Legends', Journal of Australian Colonial History 16 (2014): 197–200. Waterhouse, 'The Pioneer Legend', 12; Siobhan Levelle, 'A Tree and a Legend: The Making of Past and Place in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales', Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society 89 (2003): 1–25.
[26] Kosmas Tsokhas, *Markets, money and empire: the political economy of the Australian wool industry*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1990). Kosmas Tsokhas, *Making a Nation State: Cultural Identity, Economic Nationalism and Sexuality in Australian History*, (Carlton South: Victoria, 2001).
[27] 'Canberra Poster: Travel Association Denies Knowledge,' *Canberra Times*, 18 August 1931, 1.
[28] Mitchell Rolls, 'Flora, Fauna and Concrete: Nature and Development in Walkabout Magazine (Australia: 1934-1978)', *Australian Studies Journal* 27:3 (2013), 17.
[29] *Ibid*.

a vision of the nation they estimated had cache with mainstream Australians – most of whom lived in cities.

ANTA proved itself a good judge of popular opinion. The Sydney and Melbourne newspapers pilloried Ellis's decentralist vision. *Smith's Weekly,* one of the most circulated newspapers in Australia at that time, with over 200,000 issues in print per week, mocked the memorandum by having six of its cartoonists contribute a design.[30] One of these cartoons had two biplane pilots catching a 'purple veil' (the same purple veil that the Kangaroo Club had asked prospective artists to capture for a tourism poster).[31] Instead of a romantic light that invoked the prestigious aura of the ancient world, or subtly invoked the scenic beauty of the Capital Country, the crimson veil was a cloud of invective emanating from the quarrelling politicians of Parliament House. In mid- to late- 1931, in the midst of the Labor Party caucus crisis that brought down both the prime minister and NSW premier, *Smith's* depiction of parliament was probably more accurate than those quiet and sterile images of Parliament House used in ANTA and CTPC publicity photographs. Of the bellowing arguments that emanated from Labor Party meetings, the journalist Warren Denning later wrote, 'so terrific was the turmoil at times that all Parliament House was aware of it, although there were double and padded doors separating the party room from the lobbies.'[32]

Another poster suggested by *Smith's* cartoonists depicted the drover that Ellis's poster brief had called for. But instead of the heroic image Ellis conceived, *Smith's* depicted a defeated old man atop a sad and slumping donkey, who after descending down from a steep slope grumbles 'what the 'ell have we got to go over the knoll for when we could have gone round it.' It is easy to read this cartoon as an allegory for the relocation of the capital itself, which as conservative politician Wilfrid Kent Hughes and other critics had vehemently stated, was an unnecessary, expensive, and exhausting obstacle for the nation to surmount in light of readily available alternative capitals in Sydney and Melbourne. Frustrations with Canberra's cost and the associated behaviour of the political class were not uncommon. As the concerned citizen John Esmond wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Bulletin,* 'Until the states are superseded and a truly National Parliament deliberates at Canberra, instead of the present half-baked compromise, super-imposed on the old system, the true significance and value of the capital will never be realised.' Esmond interestingly coupled Canberra's viability with its natural setting, describing it as 'a place of beauty' that once Australians came to know, would 'be an inspiration and a source of pride to all nationally minded citizens.'[33]

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[30] On circulation figures in the 1920s see Roger Osborne, 'A National Interest In An International Market The Circulation of Magazines in Australia during the 1920s', *History Australia*, 5:3, (2008), 75.7

[31] '"Smith's" Artists Design That Canberra "Purple Veil" Poster, *Smith's Weekly*, August 15, 1931, 10.

[32] Warren Denning, *Caucus Crisis*, (Parramatta: Cumberland Argus Ltd, 1937), 66.

[33] John Esmond, 'Canberra', Letter to the Editor, *Bulletin*, October 7, 1931, 19. See also 'Sydney as Federal Capital', *Bulletin*, September 16, 1931.

The dissonance between the Kangaroo Club's aspirational vision for a poster and the cynical images offered in *Smith's* are an insight into the political and economic turmoil facing the nation at the end of 1931. The Lang constitutional crisis, when the NSW governor dismissed the Labor premier using the reserve powers of the crown, and the subsequent fallout with the Federal Scullin government led the headlines. In 1931-32, when unemployment was around its height at around 27 per cent, these kinds of articles decrying the political establishment were not uncommon in the press and spoke to a sense of national disenfranchisement with the state and federal government, with the depression, and most of all with politicians themselves.[34] Canberra, though in its infancy, was intrinsically associated with this nadir of Australian politics. Clearly, this was not the optimum time to attempt to lure tourists to the capital.

ANTA's Challenge: Advertising an 'Empty' City

A long-standing accusation against Canberra is its artificiality and its seemingly socially starved environs – problems for those tasked with promoting and developing the capital from the very start. Parliament opened in 1927 but neither the building or the city were immediately filled with the federal ministers and senators required to fill the benches. That Parliamentarians preferred to commute to and from Canberra just for parliament did not aid the image of Canberra's unpeopled streets. Government did not fully inhabit the city until after the Second World War. As Vernon writes, the government's initial presence there 'was more ceremonial than actual.'[35] Ministers were reluctant to embrace the new capital. They avoided it. In the early 1930s, their aversion partly owed to the financial restraints of the Great Depression. But deeper, more resentful roots stretched back to the compromises to state power demanded by Federation and the constitution. One such compromise was the relocation of the seat of government away from Sydney, on to a pastoral site in the middle of nowhere, where sheep had outnumbered humans as the main occupants for nearly a hundred years.

Though Canberra was supposed to spiritually represent the nation and its people, few visited as tourists. Not even the experienced traveller Charles Holmes had been. Having circumnavigated Australia while writing *We Find Australia,* Holmes and his travel companions find themselves returning to Melbourne by train. 'Over toasted raisin bread we expressed the vain wish that time would have permitted us to return via the Prince's Highway and the infant model capital at Canberra.'[36] If it did not merit a visit even by the nation's tourism director, how could the national travel promoter sell Australia, domestically and overseas? Foreign tourists would want to know about the nation's capital. ANTA's domestic mission to educate Australians about their country necessitated representing the capital in advertising. At the exact

[34] For more on the NSW Lang government, the Mungana affair and the effect of the scandal on Australia's political landscape, see: Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers*, 441-454.
[35] Vernon, 'Canberra: Where Landscape is Pre-eminent', 140.
[36] Charles H. Holmes, *We Find Australia*, (Hutchinson & Co: London, 1932), 217.

moment that ANTA became incorporated and tasked with a mandate to sell the nation, the capital city of that nation was not yet a fully realised, inhabited place.

ANTA's first sales aid, *Australia – A place in the Sun,* studied already in the previous chapter, presented Canberra's situation as 'A Tale of Two Cities', (figure 2 below). Not quite as Dickensian as the novel it invoked, the guide told readers that one city 'typifies Australia's amazing century of past development: the other, Australia's unabated urge to continue nation building.'[37] The larger photograph shows the grid like plan of Melbourne's CBD, bursting at the seams with both established buildings and new development. The smaller photograph, the guide said, 'is a glimpse of Canberra, Australia's picturesque capital in the making, with the new Parliament House in the middle distance.' But the photo is not discernibly of anything closely resembling a city. It shows a large white building in the middle of what would otherwise be a landscape photograph of a typically Australian pastoral scene. The gumtree that foregrounds the image, a classic trope of Australian landscape photography, does little to imbue Canberra with the spirit of modernity. In fact, the juxtaposition of these two images serves only to reinforce Canberra's remoteness from the rest of the country.

[37] ANTA, *Australia – a place in the sun!* (The Specialty Press: Melbourne, 1929).

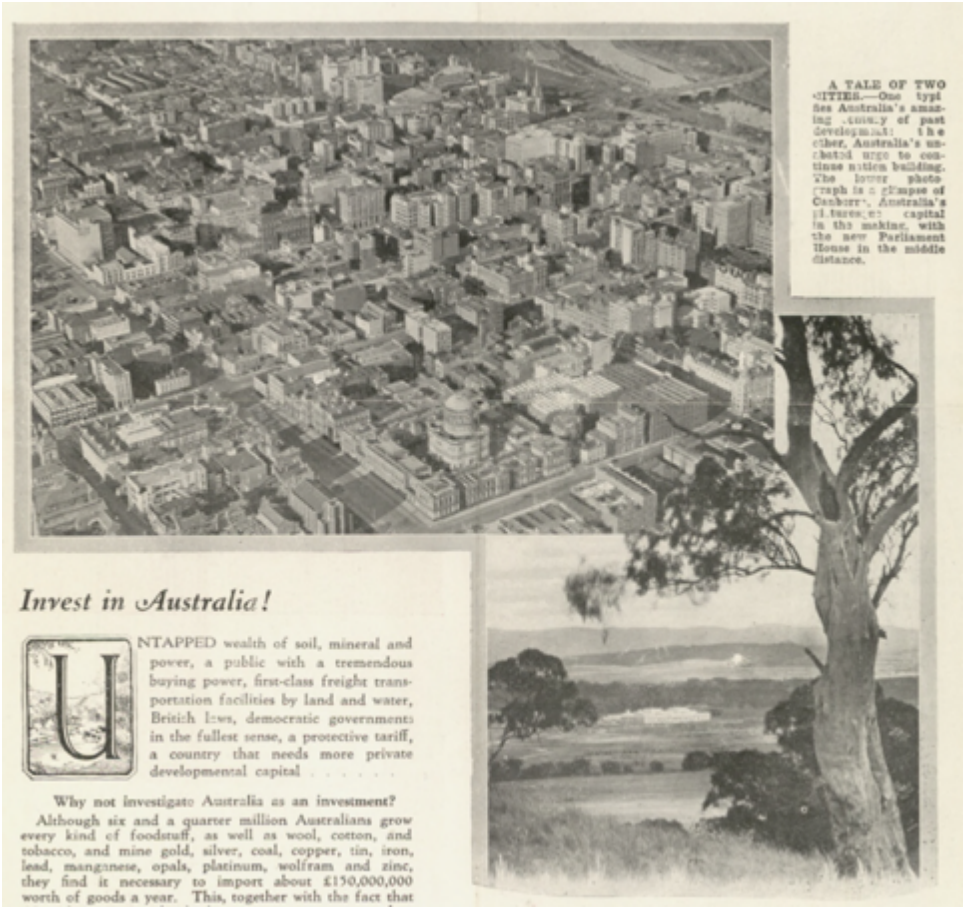


Figure 2 – A Tale of Two Cities. Canberra and Melbourne as depicted in *Australia – A Place in the Sun*, 1929.

Canberra's financial and political situation was not conducive to good publicity. Early in the Depression the government disbanded the Federal Capital Commission, an advisory body charged with implementing the 1912 Walter and Marion Burley-Griffin design. The FCC crisis had an appreciable effect on the city's image. So too, did the Depression, which rendered the Civic Branch financially weakened, and unable to furnish ANTA with funds in exchange for greater publicity.[38] The historian of Canberra's urban development and architecture Christopher Vernon writes that after the abolition of the FCC, there occurred little progress for the next three decades. 'Canberra languished into the 1950s', it lacked a 'palpable urban fabric' and was referred to 'derogatorily as the 'Bush Capital.'[39] The abolition of the FCC indicated the wider challenges to Canberra's reputation.[40] Daley, luckier than some of his former colleagues, retained his employment with the Department of the Interior, again as secretary. The collapse of the FCC, however, was inauspicious for Canberra's public image. The

[38] Letter from Charles Holmes to Charles Daley, June 23, 1930, (NAA: 6006).
[39] Vernon, 'Canberra: Where Landscape is Pre-eminent', 140.
[40] For more on local criticism of the FCC see: Jean Stewart, 'Dr Robert Mandeville Alcorn and the Federal Capital Commission', *Canberra Historical Journal* 84 (2020), 17–25.

Canberra Times expressed concerns at the time that the affair would have a disobliging effect, in the eyes of the nation, on what Canberra was supposed to represent:

> To Canberra, the national capital of Australia, more sentiment attaches, or should attach, than to any other place in the whole Commonwealth. Canberra lives on sentiment, and it is a pity that more is not shown in it. If those whose places it will be to administer the city whether through departments or through any local authority in the future cannot show more human feeling than has been shown during the last week, there is poor outlook for Canberra.[41]

Such concerns fuelled charges from interstate that the capital lacked a discernible personality, let alone one that represented the nation. Alas, ANTA, in its capacity as national promoter was still obliged to publicise the capital in its sales materials. But ANTA texts reveal a degree of uncertainty about how to represent Canberra. For example, *Talking Points on Australia* (1930), a small booklet consisting of sixty-six brief factual bullet points about Australia, described Canberra as a 'second Washington' that Australia was building 'to express its nationhood.' 'Canberra promises to become one of the garden cities of the world,' read the guidebook.[42] The use of future rather than present tense is indicative of Holmes's and ANTA's hesitancy around whether Canberra could be fairly described as a viable destination.

Part of ANTA's challenge was that there were too few people in Canberra to photograph, giving a bizarre, abandoned atmosphere to advertising images taken there. The photographs that ANTA's photographer, Roy Dunstan, captured during his 1933 visit were austere and desolate (figure 3). And though Dunstan sought to capture the capital in a way that drew out its planned environmental features – such as manicured garden beds and streets lined with newly planted trees, he could not produce the kind of images Holmes was after. Not long after Dunstan's trip, Holmes asked Daley for copies of photographs made by the Civic Branch photographer. Daley sent the best sixteen he had. Holmes was dissatisfied with most of them as well. 'Generally speaking, I would have liked to have seen more people in them to create more interest,' he wrote Daley.[43] Herein lies a key insight into ANTA's methodology for Australian national tourist promotion. Australian people were as much a part of the country's attraction as any scenic attribute or landmark – a concept that would return with Paul Hogan's 1980s catch cry that in matters of national advertising, Australia's people were as important in attracting the tourists as the scenery (chapter six).

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[41] 'Has Canberra Lost its Soul', *Canberra Times*.
[42] ANTA, *Talking Points on Australia*, (Melbourne: Australian National Travel Association, 1930).
[43] Correspondence from C. H. Holmes to C.S. Daley, 13 June 1933, NAA, A458, AJ392/3, Part 1.



Figure 3 – These were among the first images of Canberra featured in ANTA's Walkabout magazine. These are likely views selected from Dunstan's March 1933 visit. *Walkabout*, 2:1, (1935), 18. The photo of Parliament also appears in ANTA 1934 booklet 'Australia'.

Debates between ANTA and Daley's Civic Branch about how to photograph what was an essentially an empty city go to the heart of the competing metropolitan and provincial ideations underpinning the capital's image. Sure enough, Daley's idea of how Canberra should look had roots in the Griffin design. Vernon argues that the Griffin plan was not constrained by Canberra's lack of population. In early twentieth century Canberra, there was a 'spatial insignificance of human population' that made

landscape pre-eminent.'[44] Vernon cites an assertion made by D.H. Lawrence in *Kangaroo* (1923) that in Australia 'people mattered so little' as evidence of a cultural preference for empty, unpopulated landscapes. Vernon identifies other cultural nationalist artistic sources as causative of a stylistic proclivity influential on the selection of Canberra as the site for a planned national capital. He writes:

> By the 1912 Canberra competition, fuelled by domestic sources such as Heidelberg School landscape paintings, an idealised image of 'the Bush' had already gained potency as a symbol of an inextricably 'grounded' national identity. The competition judges possibly saw the Griffins' design as a celebration of the national landscape; owing to the significance it awarded their capital's physical site.[45]

But by the 1930s it was no longer the case that romanticised, unpeopled landscapes were the ultimate symbol of national identity. ANTA's insistence on imagery that contained both landscapes and people belonged to an emerging effort to connect images of a unified citizenry with Australia's rugged bush scenery, but also with its population centres. Human subjects were therefore fundamental to ANTA's publicity. A nation could not advertise itself through scenery alone. It was a nation's people, as much as anything, that made it unique. Such advertising had an important message for Australians and for the world – here is Australia, and here too are its people.[46] If it was the case that Australians had a cultural preference for empty landscapes, as Vernon argues, this was not the view of Holmes in the early 1930s. In fact, Holmes had the opposite view, believing that Australians preferred places that felt alive with an active population, at least in images used to promote tourism.

In Canberra though, image makers could not understand, or indeed accommodate, ANTA's demand for images with human subjects. On the fifth of July 1933, Daley promised Holmes he would soon send 'further photographs, which you may find interesting.' 'I shall arrange as far as possible for them to contain the "personal features"', he wrote.[47] J.M. Mildenhall, the Civic Branch photographer, protested Daley's request for photographs that featured human subjects:

> Pictures of Canberra with the spring blossoming are available. They do not, however, contain personal features as indicated in the Assistant Secretary's [Daley] letter. On this point I am at variance with the Assistant Secretary. The personal feature is a very good one from the point of view of the tourist, but when it is remembered that making personal features would

[44] Vernon, 'An Emerald City'.
[45] *Ibid*.
[46] Woodward, 'Advertising Mount Buffalo in *Walkabout* Magazine, 1934–1939', 19.
[47] Correspondence from C.S. Daley to C.H. Holmes, 5 July 1933, NAA, A458, AJ392/3, Part 1.

necessitate the transport of individuals on weekends when the photographing work is carried out, it is not practicable.[48]

Clearly Canberra's population was so few that any photos featuring residents patronising the boulevards and monuments would have to be staged. Logistical difficulties were only one part of Mildenhall's reluctance. As with any photographer, style was also a consideration, and Mildenhall's style venerated spring blossoms and scenery over pedestrians and peregrinators. As Mildenhall wrote to Daley: 'the personal element would, to my mind, spoil the setting of the picture.'[49] Canberra lacked the same appeal as the other capital cities, and, due to the difficulty in obtaining populated photographs, ANTA was unable to do much to reframe its image. At the dawn of the 1930s, the sparse, unpopulated vision of Canberra above featured in over a million copies of publicity folders circulated overseas.[50] Most of what consumers saw of Canberra was inferior compared to other destinations, least of all with the vision of Australia offered in promotion for Sydney and Melbourne. But soon ANTA would redouble its efforts, bringing forward a new vision of the Capital that balanced Australia's unique environment, but also its progress and achievement as a young modern nation.

Federal Capital and Garden City: Northfield's Cosmopolitan Answer, 1933-34.

Against the inchoate political landscape of Canberra in Depression era Australia two conflicting conceptions of the national capital started to take shape. Where Ellis and the Kangaroo Club imagined that citizens should locate in Canberra the foundational myth of the pioneer legend, ANTA imagined Canberra as a place that represented the nation and all of its people. The current of Country Party ideology ran deeply through Ellis's aspiration for Canberra's image. Bongiorno locates the party's roots 'in the longstanding grievances and self-validating beliefs of country-dwellers, and especially of farmers determined to carry the venerable pioneer legend into the modern era.'[51] Ellis's effort to induce ANTA into depicting Canberra in national publicity as a place where a drifting sundowner waved at the limousine of high officials from the side of the road, demonstrates how regional interests attempted to countervail what they perceived as 'a sense of neglect at the hands of a city-dominated political establishment.'[52]

These vying presentations of Canberra represented the two different, but not necessarily conflicting political movements that rose to prominence in the wake of the anti-party feeling engendered by the Lang-Scullin rift. These were the Country Party and the United Australia Party, led by Page and Joseph Lyons respectively. The popular support for these parties coincided with what Bongiorno describes as

[48] Correspondence from J.M. Mildenhall to the Senior Clerk, Interior Department, 19th October, 1933. NAA, A458, AJ392/3, Part 1
[49] *Ibid*.
[50] Holmes to Daley, June 23, 1930.
[51] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers*, 393.
[52] *Ibid*.

the 'major mobilisation of those who have been called 'the anxious class' – the middle strata of society.'[53] This middle-class movement, writes Bongiorno, was based 'on private enterprise, sound finance, the sanctity of contracts, personal probity, national honour and imperial loyalty.'[54] Clapp and Holmes sensed that in this middle-class demographic there existed a latent demand for the kind of national publicity that spoke to liberal middle-class values.[55] It is likely that they valued these characteristics themselves, and consequently the influence of wholesomeness and national efficiency, strong in the administration of the Victorian Railways under Clapp in the 1920s, can also be felt in ANTA's advertising for tourism, but also in its vision of the nation and, most importantly, its people.

Photography then, had failed to capture Canberra's aura. Remaining at Holmes's disposal, however, were the commercial artists on whom he had depended for the advertising campaigns of the Victorian Railways. Poster artists were capable of achieving something that photographers were not. The medium offered a freer form of creative expression (and license) than photography allowed. Northfield's 1933 poster bursts with colour and light. Importantly for Holmes and ANTA, this meant that poster artists could populate Canberra with people, and specifically, tourists. Holmes wrote to Daley in August 1933, informing him that Northfield would visit Canberra with a view to producing an ANTA endorsed poster. 'I have arranged for Northfield, whom I consider one of the leading commercial artists in Australia, to pay a visit to Canberra with a view to getting out a poster (size 40 x 50) which we propose to circulate through the English-speaking world. I may be able to make a number of copies of the poster available for exhibition on the Australian Railways.'[56] Daley thanked Holmes for the 'kind co-operation on the question of Canberra publicity', noting that Holmes' proposal that Northfield visit and produce a poster was 'an excellent one.' [57] Compared to a poster commissioned by the CTPC, an ANTA poster came with the ready-made global distribution links that Holmes and his staff in Flinders Street had been busily cultivating since the mid-1920s.

Northfield's vision of Canberra cleverly navigated the constraints Canberra had posed in photography. Rather than imitate the attributes of Melbourne or Sydney, he seeks out features unique to Canberra in an effort to give a sense of geographic identity and place. He achieves this by choosing the city as his subject, and not parliament house. Northfield's vision therefore looks towards the future development of the city according to the Griffin plan and reflects the artist's estimation that tourists might have been interested in seeing Canberra as an evolving planned national capital where development was unfolding

[53] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers,* 451.
[54] *Ibid*. See also: Judith Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class: From Alfred Deakin to John Howard* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003), 94–100.
[55] Woodward, 'Selling Mount Buffalo National Park: Victorian Railways, Harold Clapp and the Blueprint for National Park Promotion in Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies* 45, no. 3 (2021): 371–84.
[56] Holmes to Daley, August 31, 1933.
[57] Daley to Holmes, September 4, 1933.

according to progressive modern principles. Notice the softly curved lines that run through nearly every section of the picture. At the bottom of the picture, the curved line of the garden path neatly separates the manicured lawn from the pathway and the garden bed. Above the pathway, in the middle of the picture, Northfield suggests a subtle concave depression in the tree opening that leaves a clearing through which the tourists direct their admiring gaze. Beyond the grounds of Parliament House, where the tourists are standing, lies a long and winding boulevard from which extends a web of curved streets and pathways – giving a sense of the city's design and importantly, a sense of completion, that had been noticeably lacking in prior images of Canberra's tourist advertising.

The two subjects are well-dressed, respectable, middle class, if not more affluent. They symbolise the kind of visitor Northfield estimated might visit in the early years of Canberra's expansion. They are dressed for leisure, clearly tourists instead of visiting officials or locals. The presence of the tourist couple solves Holmes' and Daley's longstanding difficulty in the taking of photographs that were populated by people as well as monuments and landmarks. An important detail of this poster is that the couple have their own camera and are therefore free to capture whatever views of the city they identified with. It is interesting that Northfield thought the likely tourist would take interest in photographing Canberra from an internal vantage point outwards, in contrast to shooting pictures of monuments and state buildings front on. In this sense, Northfield's poster offers a completely different framing of Canberra than anything captured by contemporary photographers.

In light of the difficulty of ANTA obtaining photographs of Canberra with people in them, the significance of how Northfield chose how to present them deserves some consideration. To what strata of society do they belong? What are their occupations? Do they have children? They have about them a sense of upper-middle class respectability, an aspirational evocation of the responsible and informed Australian couple with enough wealth to enjoy the occasional weekend excursion. This is the critical point about their placement in Northfield's poster. He brought into his work characters who seemed as if they had travelled from the cosmopolitan scenes of commerce and heritage that existed elsewhere in Australia, though not yet in Canberra. These were the idealised Australian visitors to whom Northfield, and ANTA, believed most interested in visiting Canberra. Informed and civic-minded citizens eager to see for themselves how the nation's capital was unfolding, and how the planned city (and the landscape in which their capital was situated) represented *them.*



Figure 4 – Canberra, Federal Capital & Garden City, Australia. (James Northfield Commission, ANTA, 1933).

Of note in Northfield's poster are the title words 'Federal Capital & Garden City.' The idea of Canberra as a planned garden city dated back to the Griffin design and had been amongst the chief objects of the FCC in its efforts to develop Canberra in the 1920s.[58] Commissioner of the FCC, Sir John Butters, made clear in 1927 that FCC was not 'setting out to rival the old cities of the world', but was 'establishing quite definitely the garden principle that corresponds with Australian sentiment and climate.'[59] The Garden City movement, championed by the British urban planner Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928), advanced the idea of planned cities as kinds of utopia where humans existed in harmony with nature. Crucially, depicting Canberra as a garden city offered a middle ground between ideations of the capital as a vibrant city akin to Sydney or Melbourne, and the image of a rural town centre advocated for by Canberra proponents of decentralisation Ulrich Ellis.

Robert Freestone, historian of the garden city movement in Australia, has detailed how the movement became popular among many amateur reformers in Australia, who saw it as a means of redressing the ills of urban Australia. Needless to say, such ideas were particularly attractive to advocates for decentralisation.[60] Freestone cites C.E.W. Bean as an example, who wrote in 1945 that 'people evenly distributed in small or medium sized towns tends to be stronger, morally and mentally as well as physically, than one concentrated in a few big cities.'[61] Freestone also explains in several of his works that 'the founding, planning and development of the national capital, Canberra, offers a good case study of ideas and events associated with the garden city tradition in Australia during the first three decades of the twentieth century.' Nicholas Brown records how the ideas of Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City movement directly influenced Ulrich Ellis's ideas about social organisation and citizenship.[62]

Walter and Marion Griffin had intended that the surrounding hills and ridges of Canberra would feel seamlessly integrated into the city. As Christopher Vernon points out, the Griffins imagined a 'land axis' connecting lines of sight through the city from Mount Ainslie at one end and Mount Bimberi at the other. 'By using topographical features as axial determinants and visual foci, the Griffins "monumentalized" the future city's physical site', writes Vernon.[63] Northfield clearly believed that tourists would be drawn to Canberra to see for themselves how the nation's capital was developing in infrastructure and amenities. But he also perceived that the rugged landforms into which the planned city was snugly tucked were equally a part of its attraction. The curved silhouettes of the horizon's rolling

[58] The Garden City movement coincided with the American 'City Beautiful' movement, which was also an influential on the urban planning of Canberra. See: Anne Claoue-Long, 'Cultivating a Capital City', *Canberra Historical Journal* 85 (2020), 13–23.
[59] 'Garden City. Federal Capital', *Brisbane Courier,* June 11, 1927, 18. For more on the influence of the Garden City movement
[60] Robert Freestone, 'The Garden City idea in Australia', *Australian Geographical Studies* 20:1, (1982), 40.
[61] C. W. E. Bean, *War aims of a plain Australian,* (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1945), 125.
[62] Brown, *Possess the time*, 142.
[63] Vernon, *Canberra: Where Landscape is pre-eminent,* 134.

hills – in the middle part of the picture – therefore provide a natural counterpoint to the artificiality of the Griffin's design – just as they had intended.

The idea of Canberra as a garden city was prominent in the publicity efforts of the Civic Branch. Cooperating with community-based publicity ventures, the Interior Department saw to the publishing of a handful of tourist aids, such as maps and brochures.[64] The CTPC printed its first tourist aid in 1933, its administrators expressed a 'debt of gratitude' to the Department of the Interior 'for gratuitously supplying' the map that furnished the entire run of 25,000 copies.[65] The point here is that the promotional capability of the small outfit was so limited that it completely depended on larger institutions for the provision of maps and other information. The brochure gives an idea of what kinds of experiences local promoters estimated Canberra had to offer the potential tourist. The CTPC drew heavily on Canberra's environment, its distinct climate, and its suitability for the growing of flowers and trees. 'Canberra is essentially a Garden City', one such brochure told tourists, 'which each season clothes in distinctive garb.'[66] The brochure echoed other contemporary travel advertisements that deployed Australia's rich sunlight as a trope. But the sun somehow fell on Canberra with a radiance not known to any other place on earth. According to the letterpress aside the tourist map:

> Nowhere has nature given such sunshine to paint the landscape with. Nowhere has the sunshine lent such soft and changing colours to supplement the arts of man. Nowhere are the sunsets so beautiful or do the cloud effects so suit the scenery of plain and mountain. Canberra has a sunshine all its own which bathes the countryside with golden warmth even in the depths of winter, and endows the Territory with a calm stillness and an atmosphere of stereoscopic clearness.[67]

The Canberra Tourist and Publicity Committee emphasised the Australian Capital Territory's climactic charms elsewhere. In 1933 it prepared two graphic diagrams that compared statistical rainfall and temperature data for Canberra as compared to the state capitals. The first diagram, which took the form of a golden sun, had the names of the capitals on each beam of sunlight together with the average number of days with no rainfall. Canberra's beam, with 274 rainless days, outshone Melbourne's 126, Sydney's 213, Perth's 244, Adelaide's 248, Brisbane's 237, and Hobart's 186. The second diagram, designed as a thermometer, showed Canberra's highest recorded temperature as 102 degrees, the lowest of all the capitals.[68] So, Canberra had more sunlight and was not as likely to be as oppressively hot as any other city in Australia. That local promoters described their hometown in these climactic terms was

[64] 'Tourist Map: Kangaroo Club's Move' *Canberra Times*, 29 October 1932, 5
[65] 'Better feeling towards Canberra: Good work of Tourist Committee', *Canberra Times,* 26 September 1934.
[66] Kangaroo Club/CTPC, Canberra Guide, *Canberra*, (Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, 1933).
[67] *Ibid*.
[68] 'Canberra, compared with other cities: Publicity Statistics', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 May 1933, 11.

reflective of the contemporaneous publicity undertaken by the tourist bureaus of the state capitals. As we have seen, such emphasis on figures that indicated the supremacy of local weather and environmental features were in fact common to most contemporary publicity.

Up until 1933, local advocacy for Canberra tourist promotion had asserted a localised image of Canberra coherent with the rural politics of the Country Party. There was a measure of advocacy from local groups in Canberra for having the capital advertised according to a more metropolitan image. When ANTA received a large grant in 1933, the CTPC agitated for a portion of the new funding to go towards an ANTA stamped poster for Canberra. According to the *Canberra Times*, the CTPC believed that Canberra should have an equivalent poster to 'a recent poster [that] depicted Collins Street, Melbourne in striking colours.' 'The unique and varied attractions of Canberra should offer a fertile field for the best of all the Travel Association's artistic posters' the CTPC suggested. [69] The CTPC thought that something similar to that poster, likely a work of Trompf, could be achieved for Canberra. But were their expectations in touch with reality? It is immediately apparent today, and would have been even more so in the 1930s, that Trompf's rendering of Collins street offered no comparison with the somnolent Canberra streetscape. To start, Melbourne's neo-gothic architecture was strikingly different from the classical aesthetic in the capital, but other inconsistencies between the former (if only temporary) capital Melbourne, and the new one in Canberra, persisted. Melbourne differed in population, culture, heritage and in the sheer weight of history. It had been settled and developed for nearly a century and had enjoyed booms and endured busts in the late nineteenth century that by the 1930s were woven into the fabric of Melbourne society and identity. Though the medium of poster art gave Northfield and his contemporaries a certain creative freedom and artistic license that their counterparts in photography never enjoyed, they still could not rightly create work that was not congruent with reality.

National Publicity, National Criticism, 1934-37

In spite of the commitment of local promoters and the involvement of ANTA in the early years of the decade, there was little success in allaying criticism of the national capital. It was against consistent and vehement calls to abandon Canberra that promoters attempted to attract visitors. Around the nation, organised citizens' associations and 'taxpayers' leagues' expressed mounting disgruntlement with the cost Canberra posed to the taxpayer. The Federated Taxpayer's Association criticised the Lyons government in 1934 for plans to spend 500,000 pounds on the capital, for example.[70] A.S.H. Gifford, of the Victorian Taxpayers' Association, described the sum as an outrage that threatened the solvency of the nation. Echoing the Victorian Premier Sir Stanley Argyle's solution, Gifford said that the Federal

[69] 'Poster for Canberra: Proposed for World Circulation', *Canberra Times,* 21 March, 1933, 2.
[70] 'Defence of Canberra: Paying Handsomely', *Daily Mercury,* 9 September 1935, 5.

Parliament should be shifted to the State Savings Bank in Sydney.[71] Ellis responded to Gifford in the *Daily Mercury*. Canberra was already showing that it would 'pay for itself handsomely', he insisted, ever determined to publicly refute Canberra's detractors.[72]

To Canberrans, the barbed rebukes of their countrymen must have struck painfully. Among those who had migrated to Canberra there was emerging a distinct optimism about Canberra's future that bred an attachment to the place that residents hoped to communicate to the nation. The marginal place of Canberra in the national discourse irrefutably coloured locally made advertising. The Department of the Interior's promotional guide to Canberra, *A City of Flowers,* published in 1934 by the Civic Department, gives an insight into the local anxieties Canberrans felt about the nation's antipathy toward the budding capital, which was, after all, their home. The beauty of Canberra could only be realised with a visit, said the guide. Description alone was not adequate. If one visited Canberra and, upon their return home, tried to describe its beauty to a friend the friend would interrupt them 'with the exclamation: "Oh, yes – Canberra! That's Australia's National Capital!" – never dreaming, as you never dreamed, that a modern city of to-day could at the same time be a fairyland of exotic trees, shrubs, blossoms and exotic blooms.'[73] Amongst the small population of Canberrans, there must have existed some insecurity that this was the kind of critical dialogue unfolding about Canberra in homes across the nation.

The *City of Flowers* guide can be read as an attempt on the part of local interests to respond to the criticisms they perceived from outside Canberra. Though the *City of Flowers* guide is notable for its images of the capital's civic buildings, particularly Parliament House, the composition of the guide offers a glimpse into the emerging tensions around what local promoters thought were the most striking images and attractions of the capital. Increasingly, local promoters made efforts to draw attention away from Canberra's civic buildings and towards its natural attractions. But the omnipotence of the seat of government as a symbolic representation of the capital persisted. 'There's Parliament House! Dazzling white it stands out, glistening like a pearl threaded in a necklace of shimmering green. To the right and left huge buildings loom, in striking silhouette against the mountains that cup them.'[74] The CTPC expressed a desire to move away from the dependence on Parliament House as a symbol for Canberra. A 1934 report suggested 'that some other form of representation should be adopted if possible.'[75] But the association between Canberra and Parliament was obstinate, and apart from Northfield's 1933 poster, few artists, photographers, or editors had the confidence to articulate a vision of Canberra that excluded the building altogether.

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[71] 'Canberra soon self-supporting: Abandonment Proposal Ridiculed', *Courier Mail,* 9 September 1935, 15.
[72] 'Defence of Canberra', *Daily Mercury.*
[73] *Canberra, A City of Flowers: Official Tourist Guide to Australia's National Capital*, (Canberra: Department of Interior, 1934), 5.
[74] *Ibid.*
[75] 'Better Feeling Towards Canberra', *Canberra Times*, 26 September 1934, 2.

In Charles Daley's memoir, *As I Recall: Reminisces of Early Canberra,* the early promotional activities of the CTPC do not rate a mention. What stands out in Daley's memoir, however, is his devotion to developing Canberra according to the Griffin plan whilst doing everything in his power to maintain the surrounding area's scenic integrity. In a chapter of his memoir, tellingly titled 'Preserving Our Landscape' he wrote:

> The most valuable features, perhaps, in our city's landscape are our lovely soft, purple hills, Black Mountain, Ainslie, Majura, Red Hill and Mugga, and it is, I feel, essential to preserve them, as far as is humanly possible in their natural condition.

Daley recalls that one morning in the early thirties, by chance he happened to be in the office of the secretary for Works and Railways, where he overheard a proposal to open a large stone quarry on the face of Mount Ainslie. Daley passionately objected. He was told the proposal would go ahead. Daley dropped his schedule for the day and charged immediately for Prime Minister Scullin's office. Scullin agreed with Daley, and had the quarry moved to some other 'obscure site.'[76]

By the mid-1930s, the CTPC had evolved its view on human subjects, conscious that advertising for Canberra needed human activity if it was to have any chance of engendering a tourist trade for the city. At a CTPC meeting in September 1934, the committee agreed 'that an effort should be made to influence photographers to secure views of Canberra when people and motorcars are about and so counteract the impression given by most views that the capital is a "dead city." Promoters seemed conflicted over just how much nature and how much development, and how many people and how much open, uninhabited space, that advertising for Canberra should carry. Significantly, these tensions paralleled contemporary discussions around similar arguments made about places thought more typically 'natural', like national parks.[77] As Charles Daley wrote in his memoir, striking a balance between development, modernity and Canberra's natural scenery was a challenge that persistently confronted the capital.[78]

These principles around developing Canberra according to its natural scenery were built into the instincts of those public servants responsible for growing the city in its earliest phases. They took it for granted that the natural features and scenery should accentuate the human development. Canberra was an experiment in planning where nature and man-made infrastructure marched forward in lock step. In ascertaining the competing visions and opinions of Canberra in early national tourist publicity, it is

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[76] Charles Daley, *As I Recall: Reminisces of Early Canberra*, (ACT: Mulini Press, 1994), 72.
[77] Woodward, 'Glorious in Spring', 544-564.
[78] *Ibid,* 72.

important not to underestimate the degree to which Daley, Ellis, and their fellow Canberrans sought to promote the city according to the symbols and landmarks that they identified with themselves. The very landscapes they sought to preserve were the ones that they aspired to have represented in tourist advertising. By the mid-1930s ANTA was sending a good deal of material overseas and noticeably lacking from their publicity materials was any comprehensive advertising for the capital, at least to the same degree enjoyed by the state capitals. Though Canberra had escaped some of the fierce criticism seen under Scullin, there remained a certain animosity towards it. ANTA, the CTPC and the Kangaroo Club needed to bring in tourists, but they also had to overcome the persistent intolerance of many Australians towards Canberra. Going back to 1932, the CTPC had reported to the press its hope that greater advertising would 'combat the prejudice against the capital'.[79]

What did this 'prejudice' look like? Charges against Canberra's viability persisted well into the 1930s and came thick and fast from Melbourne. The Victorian Minister for Railways, Wilfrid Kent Hughes, friend, and parliamentary colleague of Robert Menzies, described Canberra in 1934 as a 'ghastly failure' and said that many leading politicians of the day chose to retire rather than relocate to Canberra. 'It would be better', he said, 'to place the Federal Parliament in Sydney if it could not be brought back to Melbourne.'[80] Not only did the Victorian Premier, Sir Stanley Argyle, refuse to reprimand his minister, he doubled down on Kent Hughes's criticism.[81] 'I have always thought Canberra a tragic mistake', he said, adding that the relocation of the centre of Parliament to a 'remote fastness' had severed legislators 'from the chastening influence of daily public opinion.'[82] (A charge that is still levelled in the present embodied by the recently attributed 'Bubble' epithet). That these slights came from Melbourne is unsurprising given that it had housed parliament from Federation up until the first convening in Canberra in 1927.

In this context of a national conversation that diminished Canberra, many Australians might not have seen it as a worthwhile capital, let alone a worthwhile place to visit. Why should domestic tourists travel there when parliamentarians were disinclined to do so? This was a central concern of Ellis and the CTPC in the early 1930s. Keen to overcome the problem of a lack of government business in Canberra, the CTPC lobbied the Federal Government in the early 1930s with proposals that premiers' conferences and Federal Cabinet meetings be held in Canberra. 'The holding of Cabinet meetings and national

[79] 'Attract Visitors To Canberra Intensive Publicity Campaign', *Western Argus*, 1 November 1932, 19.
[80] 'He Dislikes Canberra', *Burrowa News,* 10 August 1934, 6.
[81] Hughes's contempt for Canberra is notable because of his proximity to Menzies, the UAP, the Victorian Railways, and therefore Holmes, Clapp, and ANTA. See I. R. Hancock, 'Kent Hughes, Sir Wilfrid Selwyn (Billy) (1895–1970)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kent-hughes-sir-wilfrid-selwyn-billy-10723/text19001, published first in hardcopy 2000, accessed online 19 April 2024.
[82] '"Tragic Mistake": Canberra and Politicians', *Argus,* 27 July 1934, 11; 'Big Outlay for Canberra, Protest by Taxpayers's Conference', *Shepparton Advertiser,* 2 April, 1936, 5.

conferences in State capitals brings Canberra and the Commonwealth into contempt', Ellis argued. He said that if the Federal Government moved operations toward the new capital and away from the old cities, it would 'set an example in fostering the Australian national ideal.'[83] Ellis's sentiment reflected the sanguine impetus of those parliamentarians such as the Victorian MP, and father-in-law of Ellis, George Arnot Maxwell, who saw through the bitter resentment around Canberra to a certain ideal around which the nation might one day rally. Maxwell, the Nationalist Party member for the dairy farming electorate of Fawkner, just north of Melbourne, told the journalist Warren Denning that in Canberra lay an opportunity to concentrate 'national sentiment into one focus' and therefore free 'the members of the national parliament from the parochial influences of state viewpoints and jealousies.'[84]

But in Australia, parochial jealousies died hard. The CTPC found itself mounting ever more vigorous defences against Canberra's detractors. Ellis, speaking for the CTPC, maintained that the Federal Capital had 'all the facilities necessary to make it the most popular tourist resort in the Commonwealth.' Environment, scenery, and nature were key to this aspiration. Canberra 'has beautiful parks and gardens' he said, adding that there was 'magnificent scenery in the mountains nearby.' With all its scenic features already in place, 'Canberra only needs advertising to attract a steady stream of visitors.'[85] But the central question that repeatedly vexed those tasked with creating such advertising for Canberra was how to render a vision of Canberra that would legitimise the new capital as a desirable travel destination, but that also gave due consideration to its significance as the place enshrined with the democratic spirit of the nation, embodied not only by the national seat of government relocated there, but also by the courts, the civil service and manifold other institutions on which the administration of the country depended. On top of these domestic concerns rested international ones, too. Canberra would be the future home of embassies and visiting foreign dignitaries, and therefore a place instilled with the responsibility of representing Australia to the world.

The Country Party and the Canberra Tourist Bureau, 1937 onwards

In 1937, Ellis became the chairman of Canberra's first dedicated tourist bureau. The *Canberra Times* reported that his appointment 'would be most acceptable as he had had a wide experience of publicity work and was an ardent champion of Canberra.'[86] One of the Canberra Tourist Bureau's first major events was its hosting of ANTA in Canberra, in July of the same year. It was the first formal meeting of ANTA in Canberra, and was attended by Harold Clapp, Charles Lloyd Jones, and other senior ANTA board members. Charles Holmes, who had harshly rebuked the Kangaroo Club's attempts to get a

[83] 'Canberra Off The Map: Tourist Committee Anxious', *Age*, 25 May 1933, 12.
[84] Patrick Mullins, 'Warren Denning and the making of Caucus Crisis', *History Australia* 18:1, (2021), 104-105.
[85] 'Canberra Off The Map: Tourist Committee Anxious', *Age*, 25 May 1933, 12. Ellis boosted Canberra's 'magnificent climate and glorious scenery' in several representations to the press. See, for example, 'Kangaroo Club at Canberra', *Evening News*, 14 February 1933, 7.
[86] 'Tourist Bureau for Canberra', *Canberra Times,* 3 March, 1937, 2.

poster in 1931, was also in the party. Ellis gave them all the full tour of Canberra. After showing his visitors the offices of the new bureau, Ellis took them to see nearby natural attractions, the Cotter River, and Red Hill.[87] It is easy to imagine the pleasure Ellis derived from conducting ANTA representatives around Canberra – a satisfaction that he had perhaps long awaited.

Towards the end of the following decade, Ellis finally got the chance to commission his own poster (Figure 5 below). Illustrated by regular ANTA collaborator Percy Trompf, the 1939 poster provides a telling insight into the competing visions of Canberra that had characterised publicity efforts from the beginning of the decade. Though Trompf's poster shares a visual language with Northfield's 1933 poster, the subjects of the two images were almost opposite. Where Northfield's poster made Canberra and the tourist couple its central subjects, Trompf's poster, returns its focus to Parliament House. Unlike Northfield's poster, Trompf's divorces Parliament from Canberra's surrounding environs. This is a telling stylistic choice given that much of the promotion we have seen in this chapter drew on the mountainous terrain of the capital territory as a way of situating Canberra in the rugged, characteristically Australian pastoral landscape. The lower perspective of the building, the framing of the image through a pink cherry blossom gives the impression of a building rising up from the darkness. Viewers might have identified in this image of parliament a sense of permanence and nobility to what was then a relatively new (and only temporary) structure. It is not difficult to imagine that Ellis might have commissioned the poster as a reminder, perhaps, to critics such as Argyle and Kent-Hughes, that the seat of government was in Canberra, and in Canberra to stay!

Ellis's role in advancing a decentralised vision of Canberra in its early tourist publicity remains an underexamined episode in the capital's visual history. As we have seen, his efforts to promote a vision of Canberra congruent with his brand of new state, or Country Party politics, dated back to his arrival in Canberra in the late 1920s. Trompf's 1939 poster gives further insights into the decentralist ideas that motivated Ellis. The well-tended garden beds and spring blossoms, accompanied by the detail of the gardener mowing the lawns of Parliament House, suggests a sense of pride and of modest but attentive upkeep in the Federal grounds. The well-tended garden beds, curved driveways and newly planted saplings are all evocative of the Garden City movement that Ellis found influential. Clearly Ellis's view of Canberra had evolved from the brief he had attempted to beguile ANTA into producing in 1931. There is no cork-hatted drifting sundowner or pioneering drover present in this image. But it is in the figure of the well-dressed horseback rider that we can glean still Ellis's rurally motivated decentralism.

[87] 'National Travel Association Meets in Canberra', *Canberra Times*, July 16, 5.



Figure 5 - Canberra, Australian Capital Territory (Trompf Commission for the Canberra Tourist Bureau), NLA dates this poster to 1939.

The rider, who looks back over his shoulder at parliament suggests a romanticised Australia not yet reconciled with the challenges of modernity. Such thinking was implicit in the politics of decentralisation, and was, as we have seen, at odds with the modern image of Australia that ANTA

hoped to convey domestically and overseas.[88] Who is the rider? Surely not a tourist, and probably not even a local. In the context of Ellis's emphasis on regional themes elsewhere in Canberra publicity, it is plausible that the rider is there to evoke the regional man of Australia who straddled the country and modern worlds. The appearance of this trope in the poster reveals Ellis's appreciation of looming conflict in Europe, and his subsequent relief in the distance Australia enjoyed from such troubles. In 1938, returning to Canberra from a trip in Europe with the Australian Trade Delegation, Ellis said:

> Canberra is still a village without a history, but neither crowded population, nor the dust of antiquity are necessary ingredients of pure beauty, and that is the quality in which Canberra excels. To any homecoming traveller who has seen restaurants in the heart of London converted into gas proof air raid shelters, fitted with all modern conveniences, who has walked in Continental streets filled with soldiers, and who has seen heavily armed policemen at the street corners in most of the other capitals, it is a genuine relief to return to the tranquil personification of that natural love of peace which marks the outlook of all Australians.[89]

In light of Ellis's first-hand experience of the mounting tension overseas, Trompf's 1939 vision might be read as offering a refuge from such global perturbations. Though Australia's entry into any European war was not in the late 1930s a foregone conclusion (see chapter four), there was still an appeal to Ellis in the isolation afforded to Australia by its distance. Trompf's poster of the capital evoked an atmosphere of tranquillity and peace no longer recognisable in the dystopian Europe that Ellis described. But such an image was still painfully divorced from ANTA's efforts to connect Australia with the modern world, rather than hide away from it. Where ANTA hoped to attract tourists from urban Australia, Ellis was still determined to create an image for Canberra that he thought would resonate with the regional town centres – the base of Country Party support. Ellis's vision of Canberra announced to the regions that Canberra was the town centre of all town centres. Here was a version of Canberra that welcomed, rather than alienated, Australians living in the regions, and had regional issues, not international ones, at heart.

The eventual emergence of Ellis's regional politics carried in a poster for Canberra is a testament to the currency of Country Party politics in Australia in the 1930s. Bongiorno identifies the appearance of the Country Party as 'arguably the most significant development in Australian politics between the wars.'[90] The party's rise to popularity, he writes, 'reflected and shifted understandings of political representation.' Where a country member of the nineteenth century did not have to be seen in his electorate, and 'could even have been a city man', twentieth century improvements in communications

[88] On decentralisation as a reaction to modernity see: Brown, 154.
[89] 'Peace and Beauty: Canberra personifies', *Yass Tribune Courier*, October 24, 1938, 1.
[90] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers,* 407.

and travel soon produced 'a kind of country parliamentarian much more embedded in his local community.'[91] It is more than likely that Ellis would have enjoyed the suggestion in Trompf's poster, however subtle, that the man on horseback might have been a country parliamentarian, or prototypic regional lobbyist, who could respectably advance the interests of his electorate in the democratic centre of the nation, all against the indignant clamouring of the city MPs. Such an imagining of the morally upright country representative would have had extra currency in the regions around Canberra, where the myth of Clancy of the Overflow and the man from Snowy River still held the local imagination. Not to be missed in the Trompf poster is the cavalcade of motor cars, which gave an extra dimension to the idea of Canberra as a functioning capital inhabited by those MPs actually determined to travel to Canberra, attend parliament, and then return to their electorates. In the visual politics of the Country Party, the motorcar was the vital link between the bush and the world.[92] Viewed in the context of Ellis's agitation for politicians to patronise Canberra as a matter of their national duty, the Canberra Tourist Bureau poster expressed the brand of Australian idealism that sympathisers of the Country Party identified in their conceptualisation of what the national capital should represent.

[91] *Ibid.*
[92] *Ibid*, 397.



Figure 6 - ANTA poster no. 101 James Northfield, 'Canberra Australian Capital Territory', & ANTA poster no. 102, Northfield, 'Pastoral Australia.' (NLA dates these images to the early 1940s, but publicity for the posters in Walkabout magazine dates their release closer to 1952).

Contrastingly, Holmes saw Canberra as the symbolic heart of a modernising nation and sought out art that accentuated Canberra according to his modernist sympathies. Where Ellis rejected, or at least aimed to control, modernity, ANTA posters embraced it. In the following decade, ANTA posters featured riders on horseback, but these images were isolated to the outback, and not the capital cities. We can see this contrast clearly in ANTA's posters 101 and 102 (figure 6 above) which feature landscapes of Canberra and an unknown pastoral scene respectively. The composition of the pictures is strikingly similar. Each is crowned by a mountainous horizon, though one is more rugged than the other. Each image connects the foreground with the background via subtle curving lines, though one curve is a road and the other is a river. Each image suggests an openness and size that was at the time associated with Australia's vastness and potential for agricultural development, but also for the settlement of a rising population. But for all the similarities in Northfield's configuration of these two places, when the images are side by side, we can see clearly how ANTA limited pastoral themes to images that were rural, and celebrated modern themes of development, such as scientific town-planning, in images that were urban. As with ANTA's representations of Indigenous people and culture in other

advertising, the organisation knowingly juxtaposed images of modern society and the pioneer past to 'indicate how Australia has bridged the gap between the primitive and the present'.[93]

Historians of *Walkabout* (commenced 1934) have noted how the magazine's juxtaposition of conflicting visions of modern and rural Australia was an inevitable consequence of ANTA's editorial ambition to offer an image of Australia that would unite the mainstream population. Rolls and Johnston write, for example, that 'Modernizing cities – Canberra and Darwin were particular foci of attention, given the period of the magazine's publication – formed the counterpoint to images of remote Australia.'[94] This is true of *Walkabout*, and also of ANTA's broader visual catalogue, which regularly carried images that existed in the same sphere of representation as Northfield's 'Pastoral Australia'. Depicting regional Australia in the cultural nationalist tradition was part of the magazine's editorial objective to connect an urban readership with, in the words of an editorial in the inaugural edition of *Walkabout* magazine, 'the romantic Australia that exists beyond the cities.'[95] Motivated by a federalist politics and civic nationalism that sought to overcome extant colonial rivalries, ANTA published images of the outback and the centre that drew on a common settler past.

Without doubt, Northfield's 'Pastoral Australia' riffed on the visual language of cultural nationalism that predated Federation. But as Rolls and Johnston point out, *Walkabout* (and, I would argue, by extension) ANTA did not exhibit 'bucolic pastiche or nostalgia for the so-called pioneering values of yesteryear'. In other words, the virulent antipathy cultural nationalist writers and artists directed towards the cities was not a central feature of ANTA's vision (even though some of *Walkabout's* contributors may have held such sentiments). Rolls and Johnston note that '*Walkabout* was quietly critical of the strident individualism and exclusionary nationalism the *Bulletin* magazine endorsed.'[96] ANTA's separation of the romantic rural and what one contemporary magazine described in 1928 as the 'glittering spun-glass palace of city life', distinguishes the organisation from the cultural nationalist tradition adhered to by proponents of the Country Party such as Ellis.[97]

Historians critical of ANTA have tended to underestimate the social and demographic drivers that caused the association to advance a vision of Australia that celebrated the modern cities on equal terms with the regions. These critiques have in common a preoccupation with the idea that Harold Clapp and ANTA represented powerful capitalist interests.[98] Few of these critiques allow for the possibility that

[93] J.F. Murphy Memorandum, "Aboriginal Corroborees, Suggested Tourist Attractions," 16 March 1937. NAA: A458, AJ392/3 Part 1.
[94] Rolls and Johnston, *Travelling Home*, 122.
[95] Editorial, *Walkabout*, November 1934, 7.
[96] Rolls and Johnston, *Travelling Home*, 202.
[97] Cited in Rolls and Johnston, *Travelling Home*, 122.
[98] Michael Symons, *One Continuous Picnic: A History of Eating in Australia* (Adelaide: Duck Press, 1982), 128. For further critiques of ANTA and Walkabout, see M.E. McGuire, "Whiteman's Walkabout," *Meanjin* 52, no. 3 (1993): 517–25; Glen Ross, "'The

ANTA's vision was an organic (but nevertheless organised) urban reaction to the longstanding aversion of the Australian literati to the cities. As Amanda Laugesen writes, Australian authors in the 1930s, and in particular the Jindyworobak movement 'remained wary of modernity and its effects and saw the bush as a refuge from the city.'[99] It should not be a surprise to us that an increasingly urbanised population, who found a sense of belonging in the cities (and increasingly suburbs) they called home, began to reject a vision of Australia that was hostile to a foundational aspect of their identity. As we have seen already in this thesis, Australian national tourist advertising emphasised the natural qualities of urban environments as much as regional ones, in part because promoters believed urban living Australians valued the natural qualities of these environments as well.

In his consideration of *Walkabout's* contradictory themes, Paulo Magagnoli touches on the cultural forces that brought about ANTA's visualisation of a complicated and multivalent national vision. First pointing out that *Walkabout* published many authors who 'endorsed a negative view of the city and promoted the rural ideal', Magagnoli then explains how the 'pastoral and egalitarian society' was, by the early 1940s, vanishing as a rising 'plethora of middle class educated engineers, managers, scientists, public relations experts and highly skilled workers' began to govern 'a more and more technologically advanced industrial economy.'[100] If ANTA were to succeed in selling the nation at home and overseas, it needed to articulate a vision with which these mainstream, city-living professionals could identify. Herein lies an important point that underpins the central inquiry of this thesis – tourist promoters worked diligently to create materials that they believed would resonate with the mainstream public to which they belonged and identified with. Naturally this resulted in ANTA's celebration of both regional and urban Australian life, but ANTA did not alienate the urban-living middle-class by reinforcing a cultural dogma that Australian cities were wretched hives of moral bankruptcy, poor health and corruption.

These were the circumstances that explain the design of Northfield's final poster of Canberra, which was published after the Second World War. Northfield rejected the individualist and nostalgic regionalism that characterised Ellis's vision. Though both posters feature Parliament House as their central subject, Northfield's poster takes an aerial view of Canberra, (no doubt Northfield worked from emerging aerial photography of the city). Importantly, the poster situates the seat of government in the geographical context of the Molonglo valley and amid the gentle purple hills that Charles Daley described as Canberra's most valuable attractions. Northfield's vision was perhaps the first that

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Fantastic Face of the Continent': The Australian Geographical Walkabout Magazine," *Southern Review* 32, no. 1 (1999): 27–41; Lynette Russell, *Savage Imaginings: Historical and Contemporary Constructions of Australian Aboriginalities* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2001). See also Lynette Russell, "Going Walkabout in the 1950s: Images of 'Traditional' Aboriginal Australia," *The Olive Pink Society Bulletin* 6, no. 1 (1994): 4–8.

[99] Amanda Laugesen, 'Writing the North-West, Past and Present: The 1930s Fiction and Drama of Henrietta Drake-Brockman', *History Australia* 8, no. 1 (2011): 118.

[100] Magagnoli, 'A Library of Photographs', 43.

combined the aspirations of moderate Canberran promoters, such as Daley, and also carried the symbolic hopes of the nation in a shared capital that situated the monuments of the nation amid the nation's scenery. Perhaps Northfield's depiction of the ample greenery and tree-lined open spaces resonated with a war weary local Canberran and national Australian audience. Whether Northfield's elision of the National War Memorial was a conscious attempt to relieve his audience from reminders of conflict we will never know. In any case, Northfield's image reflected a dignified and completed national capital. It showed with an understated sense of pride, the seat of power, tucked neatly (and perhaps even by providence) into Australia's rural hinterland, amidst scientifically planned, modern satellite suburbs. It was here that the country's decision-makers had successfully navigated and emerged on the other side of a global conflagration.[101]

Conclusion

That Holmes continued to publicise Canberra during the Depression indicates his awareness that it was not possible to undertake national publicity while ignoring the nation's capital. It was a necessity, though perhaps sometimes an embarrassing one, to advertise the focal point of the federated nation. Read in this context, it is easy to understand Holmes's frustration with a lack of imagery that sold Canberra with the vitality that would match his, and ANTA's, overarching sales vision for the nation. The difficulties borne from the Depression, chiefly the lack of funds for Canberra to subscribe to ANTA's publicity model, combined with the stunted development of the Capital, had a turbulent effect on Canberra's image in 1930s national advertising. In its early days its long-term viability never seemed guaranteed. Crises with floods, politics, funding, and a stream of national criticism persisted well into the twentieth, and the twenty-first, centuries. Canberra's reputational difficulties were not relegated to the interwar decades. A February 1971 issue of *Walkabout* posited the question 'Is Canberra Really Necessary?' on its front cover.[102]

These tensions over Canberra's symbolic place as the national capital have beset the city from its earliest history. It is probably true today that few Australians living outside of the city once described by Menzies as a 'remote fastness', have much of an appreciation of how or why it represents the nation.[103] As the historian of Canberra Jim Gibbney wrote in 1988, a generalisation 'hurled at Canberra since its foundation' is that it is a 'city without a soul.' Canberrans rallied around the negative perceptions of their city, sometimes taking a 'defensive attitude towards their fellow Australians.'[104] This chapter has

[101] On the effect the Second World War had in engendering a 'wider acceptance of Canberra', see: Brennan, *Canberra Crisis*, 149-151.
[102] *Walkabout*, (ANTA), February 1, 1974.
[103] When I asked a group of my Victorian friends to tell me in ten words or less what Canberra meant to them, one replied with just two: 'Manuka Oval'. That Canberra could be so readily reduced to a stadium affiliated with a Sydney based Australian football team speaks volumes on how Canberra is rarely perceived from outside as the concrete expression of Australian nationhood that its founders hoped for.
[104] J.H. Gibbney, *Canberra: 1913-1953*, PhD Thesis (Australian National University), 1988, 1.

attempted to bring to light the efforts of Canberra's early residents to publicise an image of Canberra they identified with, often in the face of external critics who not only disliked Canberra, but actively wished for its failure. The attempt of outspoken Country Party staffer and energetic Canberra advocate Ulrich Ellis, for example, to manipulate ANTA into representing Canberra according to the political ideology of decentralisation is a remarkable, and hitherto untold, story in Canberra's history.

What do the publicity campaigns of ANTA and local promoters tell us about the broader state of promotion in Australia at this time? Holmes hegemonized ANTA's creative output, and at no stage was he prepared to subordinate his national vision to the provincial demands of local publicity agencies. As an attentive publicity man, he liked to control, to the best of his ability, the creation and dissemination of advertising material. To submit to the demands of local promoters would have weakened ANTA's ability to control the overarching image of the nation. However, jostling between local and national promoters was a vital part of the image making process for destinations, and the evolving image of a place in its marketing never completely belonged to any one organisation. Rather, a series of visions of Canberra evolved over the 1930s. Sometimes ANTA's vision was in tension with local promoters. Sometimes these visions were in accord. Less important than ANTA's occasional disagreements with local promoters is the contribution these minor disputes and tensions had in the image-making process for the capital city, but also for the nation more generally – which as we have seen in this chapter, was well underway in the 1930s. This chapter has shown that the image of a place is determined by organisations with competing interests, whose efforts to synthesise a destination into a particular image or advertisement is determined by their responsibility to serve those interests. The small population of Canberra meant that local publicity reflected community sentiment in a way that national publicity had yet to fully capture. This chapter has recorded to a degree the previously untold story of how some Canberrans advocated for a vision of the capital that they identified with, which like other places in Australia was highly driven by the regional environment that it was situated in – a story that has not received much attention from scholars of the city, or indeed, of the nation.

Chapter Four

'Australia – God Child of the Sun': Climate, sunlight and environment in overseas advertising, 1934-1957.

'Australia is the best advertised country in the British Empire.' – H.W. Brodie, Canadian Pacific Railways Overseas Manager, 1936.[1]

From 1931 to 1938 visitor numbers to Australia from overseas almost doubled, rising from 17,616 to 33,480.[2] As the tourist traffic grew, ANTA approached the cusp of legitimisation as the national promoter. By the mid-1930s, ANTA had produced and distributed more than three million items of publicity globally. The Federal Government started to take notice of ANTA's success and increased financial support accordingly. In 1934 the Commonwealth increased its annual grant to the association five-fold, from £1,000 to £5,000. In 1935 it gained a further £6,000 from the Melbourne City Council to publicise the City's centenary celebrations (held across 1934 and 1935). 1934 also saw ANTA launch its monthly magazine, *Walkabout*, which enjoyed a vast readership until the 1970s. It 'ploughed profits' from its growing readership in the second half of the 1930s 'into ANTA promotional funds'. Improved finances meant greater promotional activities overseas, particularly in the United States and Great Britain. On Central London's famous Strand, ANTA leased the largest hoarding site in the British Empire to sell Melbourne's centenary celebrations and the Sydney Festival Fortnight.[3] In 1937 ANTA became a limited company and in the following year, the Commonwealth increased its annual contribution to £17,000. In the same year, ANTA's London and San Francisco offices were measuring their record-breaking contributions of Australian publicity to newspaper column space not in feet and inches, but in miles.[4] The spectre of war loomed, however, and as one ANTA report would later recall of 1939: 'Hitler struck, and the lights of ANTA – in Britain, New Zealand, India and America – went out one by one.'[5]

This chapter compares environmental themes in ANTA's national advertising as they appeared before, during, and after the war years. Advertising material from this era carried the environmental themes of sunlight, climate and the Australian outdoors that are the topic of this thesis. The chapter asks how old Australian anxieties were configured in advertising alongside long-running environmental messages as the world inched closer to another international war. As we shall see, environmental themes became entwined with perennial fears about the unoccupied northern regions, Australia's distance from its

[1] 'Australia Well Advertised: Best in Empire', *Argus*, 23 May 1936, 20.
[2] 'Extracts from the association's annual report', *Walkabout*, 6:11, September 1940, 44.
[3] 'Centenary Poster', *Sun*, 25 August 1934, 1
[4] ANTA, Annual Report 1966-67, (Academy Press, Melbourne, 1967), 1-2.
[5] *Ibid*, 7.

Western allies, and the need to attract migrants as a means of shoring up national security. There are three sections in this chapter. The first section draws from ANTA's pre-war campaigns and describes the association's vision of Australia on the eve of conflict. Up to 1939, the association expanded the branding of Australia it had begun over a decade earlier. Australia was a colourful, breathtaking, and invigorating place, with many sites of national significance, be they natural or built. It was also a country with an egalitarian outdoor culture with much to celebrate. In a decade of centenary and sesquicentenary celebrations celebrating the settler origins of Melbourne and Sydney, ANTA's envisioning of Australia entered into a new phase of meaning, promoting a modern and progressive nation. The middle section examines ANTA materials published during the war. I focus on ANTA's *Australia Handbook*, a 140-page volume aimed at advertising Australia's attributes overseas.[6] Printed annually, but remaining largely the same in its compilation and written text between 1941-45, the handbook series is an overlooked source on how Australia projected information overseas in a time where anxieties over isolation and invasion ran high and international tourism, in the traditional sense, had ceased even while hundreds of thousands of foreigners, especially military personnel, entered the country and had touristic experiences. In the final section, I outline how the association embarked on its recovery from war, analysing one of ANTA's first post-war publications, the 1955 brochure, *Follow the Sun to Australia.*

The story of how war affected the country's national advertising strategy remains relatively unexplored in scholarship to date. Historians of Australian tourism and migration have often turned their focus to the publicity campaigns that occurred either side of the Second World War.[7] However, as Michael Dawson points out in his appraisal of domestic tourism in the US during the Second World War, there are 'more complex understandings of tourism's wartime role' than have been previously considered.[8] In Australia, scholarship that examines tourism during the war tends to deal with regional tourist development in places like the Solomon Islands, explaining the tourist-like experiences of service personnel rather than the direction of the national tourism industry.[9] In a similar fashion, historian John Hammond Moore records the tourist experiences of American soldiers on the Australian home front between 1941-45.[10] ANTA's contribution to the war effort, and its projection of Australia's image during the war years, has largely been overlooked in histories of the organisation. Historians have taken some interest in an adjacent, government organisation, the Department of Information (DoI), for whom

[6] For a brief period in the 1940s, ANTA changed its name to the Australian National Publicity Association (ANPA). To avoid a proliferation of acronyms, I refer to the organisation as ANTA throughout the text.
[7] For works that begin their inquiry in the post-war era see: James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson, *Ten Pound Poms: Australia's Invisible Migrants* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); John Lack and Jacqueline Templeton, *Bold Experiment: A Documentary History of Australian Immigration since 1945* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1995).
[8] Michael Dawson, 'Travel Strengthens America'? Tourism promotion in the United States during the Second World War. *Journal of Tourism History*, 3:3, (2011), 218.
[9] Charlie Panakera, 'World War II and tourism development in Solomon Islands.' In *Battlefield Tourism*, (Routledge, 2007), 125-141.
[10] John Hammond Moore, *Over-Sexed, Over-Paid & Over Here: Americans in Australia 1941-1945*, (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1981).

Charles Holmes worked briefly from 1941-42.[11] However, ANTA remained a functioning organisation throughout the war, operating as a vehicle for the dissemination of DoI materials, while also continuing to produce new publicity, analysed for the first time in the pages that follow.



Figure 1 - 'Centenary Poster', depicted in the Sun newspaper, 25 August 1934, 1.

In this chapter, I argue that environmental themes and imagery remained prominent in ANTA publicity throughout war. Importantly, however, the confident environmental messaging that had characterised ANTA materials in peacetime became less central to the wartime vision of Australia, overtaken at times by more urgent strategic and geopolitical messaging. Although the war disrupted ANTA's prewar aims, it also provided the organisation with new opportunities and paradigms through which to advance the national image at home and overseas. Importantly, the implications of Australia's environmental inheritance took on new dimensions in wartime advertising imagery. Where pre-war tourist advertising invited the visitor to experience Australia's environmental attributes for individual recreation and leisure, ANTA's wartime publicity deployed images of nature and environment in an effort to shore up the nation's defences, boost citizen morale, and perhaps most importantly, gain publicity for Australia in the United States of America, to whom the nation increasingly looked for protection. From 1941

[11] Greenwood, 'Migrant follows the tourist', 76; Edward Louis Vickery, *Telling Australia's story to the world: The Department of Information 1939-1950,* PhD Thesis, Australian National University, 2003.

onward, the organisation undertook a dedicated information campaign in America in an effort to court public opinion there. This campaign coincided with the official efforts of R.G. Casey, Australia's Minister to the United States, to 'create an American awareness of Australia's existence' while America still remained neutral.[12] As Bridget Griffin-Foley points out, Casey drew on a large collection of brochures and sales aids, many furnished to him by ANTA. Australia's publicity campaigns in the early years of the war subtly intimated the country's capacity as a viable staging ground for the Allied war effort in the South Pacific. They also projected an image of a productive and moral society that merited protection from its more powerful ally. The degree to which national tourist advertising recruited environmental imagery during the pivot towards the United States is a central theme of this chapter.

'Australia Speaks with Posters': National Advertising Before the War, 1934-39.

ANTA's 1930s success, in attracting both funding and tourists, rested on its ability to settle on distinctively Australian visual imagery in its publicity. Although ANTA produced advertising for specific destinations (for example Canberra, as discussed in the last chapter), it was also concerned with publicising the nation as a whole. Posters and other ephemera that sold the nation consistently touted Australia's nature and environment as key selling points. Iterative campaigns expanded the environmental messaging first laid out in the 1929 brochure *Australia – A Place in the Sun* (chapter two). A 1935 booklet, *Picturesque Australia*, captured the dependence on environmental themes in its opening paragraph:

> Sunshine, an age-old mystery and charm, the intriguing originality of unique flora and fauna and the tremendous spread of its distances give Australia an identity only to be appreciated by a comprehensive visit. In the quality of its sunshine alone the continent has a singular appeal. That mellow radiance of pearl and gold tints the throngs on the beaches to a healthy brown and is agleam through the seasons to enrich the spring with glorious flowers and bring a touch of wine to winter airs.[13]

Here was a distillation of ANTA's vision of interwar Australia – a sun-kissed continent, rich in scenery, dependable in weather and populated with a healthy, Anglo-Saxon citizenry. An extension of the pre-Depression vision discussed in chapter two, ANTA's campaigns of the mid- to late- 1930s continued to advance its message that the health-giving effects of an outdoor lifestyle were a central feature of Australian life. A distinctly Australian form of eugenics that valued the strength of Australia's beach and outdoor culture, perhaps most famously encapsulated in the Max Dupain's famous photograph *The Sunbaker* (1937), all informed this imagining of Australia. Significantly, the adaptation of the Australian

[12] Bridget Griffen-Foley, "'The Kangaroo is coming into its own': RG Casey, Earl Newsom and public relations in the 1940s." *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 23:2 (2004): 1.
[13] ANTA, *Picturesque Australia* (Melbourne: W.T. Baker, 1935), 2.

people to the continent's conditions explained Australia's rapid progress. Nature was a key part of this imagery, and though Australia had 'all the comforts of an old world civilisation', looming in the background was Australia's capital 'N' Nature, which contested 'the relentless onward march of civilisation.' 'Untamed wilderness and jungle, vast sandy wastes … tropic streams and swamplands' as well as 'great forests and wide plains, big rivers, alpine heights with their skiing slopes in winter and the all-the-year loveliness of valley and crag', were among the 'colorful [sic] features of Australia whose existence the city dweller seldom suspects.'[14] It was the juxtaposition of nature and modernity, ANTA said, that the tourist had to see to believe.

The environmental theme in ANTA messaging had grown especially prominent by the end of the 1930s. ANTA's *Discovery Series* celebrated Australia's plant and animal life in terms that revealed a more developed contemporary environmental consciousness than prior centralised publicity. ANTA's *Trees of Australia*, released in the second half of the decade, catalogued Australia's arboreal species. The book told readers of its aim to stimulate 'a forest conscience' and reinforce 'a civilised distaste for wanton or misguided destruction', for example. A companion book in the series, *Fauna of Australia*, hoped to 'encourage the student and the amateur naturalist to probe deeper in the fascinating natural history of Australia.' These booklets were in step with a rising contemporary interest in travel and nature writing.[15] Indeed, *Walkabout* featured many of the country's leading nature writers.[16] ANTA demonstrated an awareness that environmental themes were of interest to contemporary Australians as symbols of the nation. 'The Kangaroo is as symbolic of Australia as is the lion of Britain, the eagle of America or the bear of Russia', read the entry for the bounding national marsupial in *Fauna of Australia.*[17] The positioning of Australia against three of the world's major powers perhaps reflected no small attempt for Australia to stake its own claim on the international stage.

'Trees are part of our individual history and the story of our people', proclaimed *Trees of Australia,* which described eucalypts as the building blocks of the nation. 'From them are made houses, furniture, bridges, boats, carriages, posts and piles, railway sleepers, cases for merchandise, honey, medicines, oils, perfumes, fuel, paper, and a thousand other things.'[18] These symbolic meditations formed a small part of ANTA's drive to have Australians see their nation in patriotic terms but they circulated among English-speaking international visitors as well, announcing Australia as a bona fide nation with its own material culture, founded on a distinct environment. Sales materials and the association's monthly geographic magazine, *Walkabout*, further invited consumers to visit tourist destinations where they might

[14] *Ibid*.
[15] Thomas Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora: Environment and History in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[16] Tom Griffiths, 'The natural history of Melbourne': The culture of nature writing in Victoria, 1880–1945, *Australian Historical Studies*, 23:93, (1989) 339-365; Libby Robin, 'Visions of Nature: *Wild Life* 1938-1954', *Victorian Naturalist* 102, (1985), 153-61.
[17] ANTA, *Discovery Series: Fauna of Australia*, (Melbourne, circa 1940), 6.
[18] ANTA, *Discovery Series: Trees of Australia*, (Melbourne, circa 1940), 1-3.

participate in nature-based recreational activities that offered them the opportunity to be a part of the modern nation.[19]

Images of Australia, its scenery, flora, fauna, and its people, had never before enjoyed such widespread distribution. The *Adelaide Chronicle*, reporting on an exhibition of ANTA's posters held in Adelaide in 1934, remarked that history and nature were the keys to ANTA's marketing. 'For the first time, Australia is awake to the glory of its color, natural and historic.' Posters conveyed Australia's promise through the incandescence of its sunshine, which offered a stark juxtaposition with the stifled and overpopulated cities of Europe and North America. According to the *Chronicle,* Australian posters added a touch of colour to the bleak 'catacombs of the London Underground in fog-time' and to the crowded 'mazes of the Gare du Nord and the Pennsylvania Station'. Interwar British concerns with poor public health arising from urban overcrowding likely meant that the advertising images posted there had a certain appeal among some Londoners. As Alison Bashford records, this was a time when prominent writers in London complained that Australia was doing little to 'receive a fair share of the unemployed who are now crowded into the British towns.'[20]

But poster campaigns were as much about projecting Australia's image overseas as they were about attracting migrants. As Lynette Spillman writes of Australia in the twentieth century, 'international recognition became a core part of Australian national identity.'[21] How ANTA engaged overseas audiences through the medium of the travel poster explains to some extent how the image Australia projected overseas correlated with how Australians perceived the nation at home. Clapp had insisted at the beginning of the 1930s that ANTA would engender for Australia a 'national pride strong enough to insist on our country being properly advertised abroad'.[22] Exhibitions, such as that in Adelaide, showcased to the Australian public how the nation presented itself overseas. Public displays of ANTA's posters in Australian cities were therefore an important site of engagement between urban Australians and the national image. The reportage of the Adelaide exhibition also contains insights into contemporary tensions and anxieties. The *Chronicle* was pleased to report on the sunny message that ANTA offered in the middle of the turbulent decade:

> Thanks to the activity of the National Travel Association and the South Australian Tourist Bureau, Spring this year is setting the hoardings of the city early alight with bright ideas, inviting us to Melbourne, to the Murray, the Centre, to Buffalo, and the Barrier Reef, the hawthorn

[19] Woodward, 'Glorious in Spring', 548.
[20] Alison Bashford, *Imperial hygiene: A critical history of colonialism, nationalism and public health*. (Springer, 2003), 157.
[21] Spillman, *Nation and Commemoration,* 107.
[22] Harold Clapp, Information Bulletin: Extracts from an address (wireless broadcast) by Mr. Harold W. Clapp (circa 1930), NAA: A458, AJ392/3 Part 1.

> lanes of Tasmania – anywhere so long as we travel and arrive with a light heart. Winter is over. The posters are in full bloom.

According to the *Chronicle's* coverage, the collection of posters on display in Adelaide was not only attractive to the eye but also fulfilled a much-needed civic function. The transportation of Australia's sunny image around the world provided 'stimulus to national sentiment of which we have too long been in need', said the newspaper. The article betrayed a sense of relief, perhaps also shared by the *Chronicle's* readers, that Australia had found a way of projecting a positive image of itself overseas: 'through the seeing eyes of her children, Australia is awakening to a realisation of her own unusual beauty.'[23] The article further declared the curative properties of Australia's land and climate to a troubled world:

> In a world a little jaded with overcrowded humanity, these posters that are "full of the warm south" will tell a story vitally new, of an opal-hearted country with a brief bright past and a great future. Australia – god-child of the sun.

ANTA's poster images aroused the national sentiment identified by the *Chronicle* because they foregrounded a readily identifiable and distinctly Australian environmental imagery. The newspaper reported that notable posters were those that showcased Australia's distinct scenery, such as Northfield's 'Blue Mountains' poster, which displayed 'peak and valley in smouldering colours and sombre haze, and across the living red of gums the burnt gold of a late sunset'. Another poster, 'Australia in the Sun,' by Trompf, exhibited 'a symphony in sunlit fleeces'. Trompf's vignette of the outback sheep station (figure 2 below), a strong rural image, conveys the calmness of the rider working the land. The rider, his horse and his collie, instruments of taming the land, muster from the shade of the eucalypt while steering the herd into the hot sun. Such juxtaposition indicated the imposition of order on to the land, while also celebrating the primary industry – wool – so central to Australia's prosperity and post-Depression economic recovery.[24]

As with ANTA's depictions of Canberra discussed in the last chapter, the full suite of interwar posters struck a careful balance between the regional and metropolitan. Nature, in the form of sunlight, eucalypts and accessible scenery, were integral to both. Another Trompf poster displayed in the 1934 Adelaide exhibition was 'Adelaide, a City in a Garden'. When compared with 'Australia in the Sun', Trompf's poster rendition of Adelaide illustrates how ANTA deployed potentially conflicting visions under the same conceptual heading: 'AUSTRALIA'. The portrait of Adelaide conveyed 'the quiet dignity of North Terrace and the glamor of the hills beyond', said the *Chronicle*. Although the image

[23] 'Australia Speaks with Posters: Striking Slogans of the Sun', *Chronicle*, September 6, 1934.
[24] John B O'brien, 'Empire v. national interests in Australian-British relations during the 1930s.' *Australian Historical Studies* 22:89 (1987): 569-586; Tsokhas, 'People or money?', 1-20.

feted the modernity of a planned, garden city, and suggested the attendant civility and amenity of such a cosmopolitan place, the faded hills and cloudless skies reminded the viewer that all of this progress had occurred under distinctly Australian conditions, and not so far away from the countryside. As John Hirst argues in *Adelaide and the Country*, the jurisdiction of the city's merchants over the South Australian countryside in the late-nineteenth century had made Adelaide 'more akin to a city-state' than a colony, albeit one that was 'encircled not with a wall but a ring of parklands.'[25] Trompf's vision of the Garden City paid tribute to this history of Adelaide's settlement, depicting the tree-lined streets and green belt that symbolised the city's affluence, and its sense of cultural and civic progress. It was a celebration of a people's victorious triumph over the countryside from which it derived such wealth. But significantly, Trompf's poster bore the imprimatur of the national travel association and was exhibited alongside many other vivid posters of national capitals and tourist destinations, whose main title, 'Australia', eclipsed the sub-headings that informed viewers of the depicted location. The bigger picture of the 1930s poster campaigns, then, was to tie together the distant and disparate places that advertising represented, and in so doing, unify the nation in the way Holmes and Clapp imagined.

Trompf's urban and rural images have more in common than a first impression reveals. Though they depict urban and regional scenes, both suggest the mastery of Anglo-Australian civilisation over nature. Neither city nor sheep station can flourish without the steady hand of man. Furthermore, both of these visions share a heritage in the depiction of Australia as a sun-drenched continent of rugged mountains and bush that stretched back to the art and literary movements of the late nineteenth century. The Heidelberg School artist Arthur Streeton's 1896 oil painting *The Purple Noon's Transparent Might*, for example, depicted a sunlit pastoral landscape where the sun's radiant light washed out the distant hills on the horizon. Streeton's contemporary Frederick McCubbin wrote of the painting that there was nothing 'more typically Australian', and that the 'poem of light and heat' with its 'sense of boundless regions … long rolling plains of the Never Never, the bush crowned hills, the purple seas of our continent' could almost be taken as a national symbol.[26] Trompf, Northfield, and other poster artists invested their work with national symbols such as the bush, eucalypts and sunlight, that by the 1930s had a symbolic weight built up over at least four decades. As the *Chronicle* reported in 1934, the Heidelberg School artists like Streeton 'found Australia long ago, but their unique discoveries in color are for the most part hidden away in the art galleries … where few seek them out.' Indeed, as revealed in some of Northfield's remaining papers, held by the National Library of Australia, the Melbourne-based artist experimented with painting styles clearly derived from the Heidelberg movement (see figure 3 below).[27] Significantly though, ANTA's posters brought the stylistic conventions of the last century

[25] John Hirst, *Adelaide and the Country, 1870-1917: Their Social and Political Relationship*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1973), 217-218.
[26] White, *Inventing Australia*, 108. White attributes McCubbin's quote to Bernard Smith, ed., *Documents on Art and Taste in Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1975), 274–75
[27] Papers of James Northfield (1930-2003) Manuscript, National Library of Australia, 3096312.

into the present. 'Now new names have flashed into being and the wizards of the poster are telling the world with a broader brush' said the *Chronicle*.[28]



Figure 2 & 3 – 'Australia in the Sun' and 'Adelaide - A City in the Garden', Percy Trompf, ANTA, 1934. Both were displayed at the Adelaide exhibition.

[28] 'Australia Speaks with Posters', *Chronicle*.



Figure 4 – James Northfield, untitled landscape painting, (Papers of James Northfield, ca. 1930-2003, NLA).

Not all commentators were as touched by ANTA's poster campaign as the *Chronicle*. Harold Herbert, artist, critic and detractor of modernism, criticised the Australian posters, if only mildly. Writing in the *Australasian,* Herbert contended that the exhibition's 'Australian section is a little commonplace'. Herbert perceived that most of the designs had probably been 'adapted from enlarged photographs', inferring that they had not been illustrated on location, and therefore lacked authenticity. 'Trompf and Northfield show their usual type of arrangement, design and colour – nearly all of a good standard if somewhat derivative', he wrote. Indeed, as John Williams writes in *The Quarantined Culture*, by the 1930s many commentators, including W.K. Hancock, were starting to feel the Heidelberg School vision somewhat dated.[29] Herbert retained praise for the posters of German Australian artist Gert Sellheim, whose work he thought 'clever and striking', fulfilling the 'functions of the ideal poster. They are not merely enlarged illustrations in colour, which many of the others are, they show imagination and express an outlook far beyond the ordinary.'[30]

Because Herbert was a noted and influential detractor of modernism, his praise for Sellheim's work (strikingly modernist compared to his contemporaries in Trompf and Northfield), deserves mention. Perhaps something about Sellheim's vision stood out to those proponents of Australian cultural affairs, like Herbert, who believed national artistic achievement should dare to strive for something different. Sellheim's symmetrical Art Deco compositions, exemplified by his vision of the Great Barrier Reef

[29] John Frank Williams, *The Quarantined Culture: Australian Reactions to Modernism, 1913-1939,* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1995), 209.
[30] Harold Herbert, 'Art', *Australasian,* 17 February 1934, 16.

(Figure 5 below), were undoubtedly modern, but they were also distinct. His stylised depiction of coral fish and tropical islands conveys a sense of order and allure about a remote destination still unknown to many Australians. In a time when major campaigns were underway to attract tourists to the Reef, Sellheim omitted specific tourist amenities or recreational activities in favour of a uniform set of symbols that suggests nothing of the difficulty of reaching and exploring the exotic location.

Sellheim's Reef is more of a contemplation of its mystique and natural wonder than a direct invitation to the tourist. The practicality of travel arrangements was a secondary concern to Sellheim's encouragement of the viewer to dream of and aspire to visit. As such, it conveyed a sense of wonder and charm that would become a feature of Barrier Reef advertising during the explosion of tourism development in Northern Queensland in the 1960s and 70s, (chapter six). In any case, the lack of a viable tourist industry to support travel to the Reef also meant that artists had to be careful about the kind of experience their artwork suggested.[31] In an era when the tourist industry in Northern Queensland was still in its nascent stage, Sellheim's symmetrical portrayal concealed the reality of an undeveloped tourist infrastructure in the region.[32] As we will see in chapter five, such depictions of the Great Barrier Reef partly explained tourist dissatisfaction in the middle decades of the century, because the actual experience of the region was out of touch with the advertised image.

[31] Even in the 1930s, ANTA was attuned to not enticing tourists to experiences that could not be fully realised. See: Woodward, *Glorious in the Spring,* 550-52.
[32] Ben Daley and Peter Griggs, '"Loved to death": coral collecting in the GBR, Australia, 1770-1970', *Environment and History* 14 (2008), 89-119.

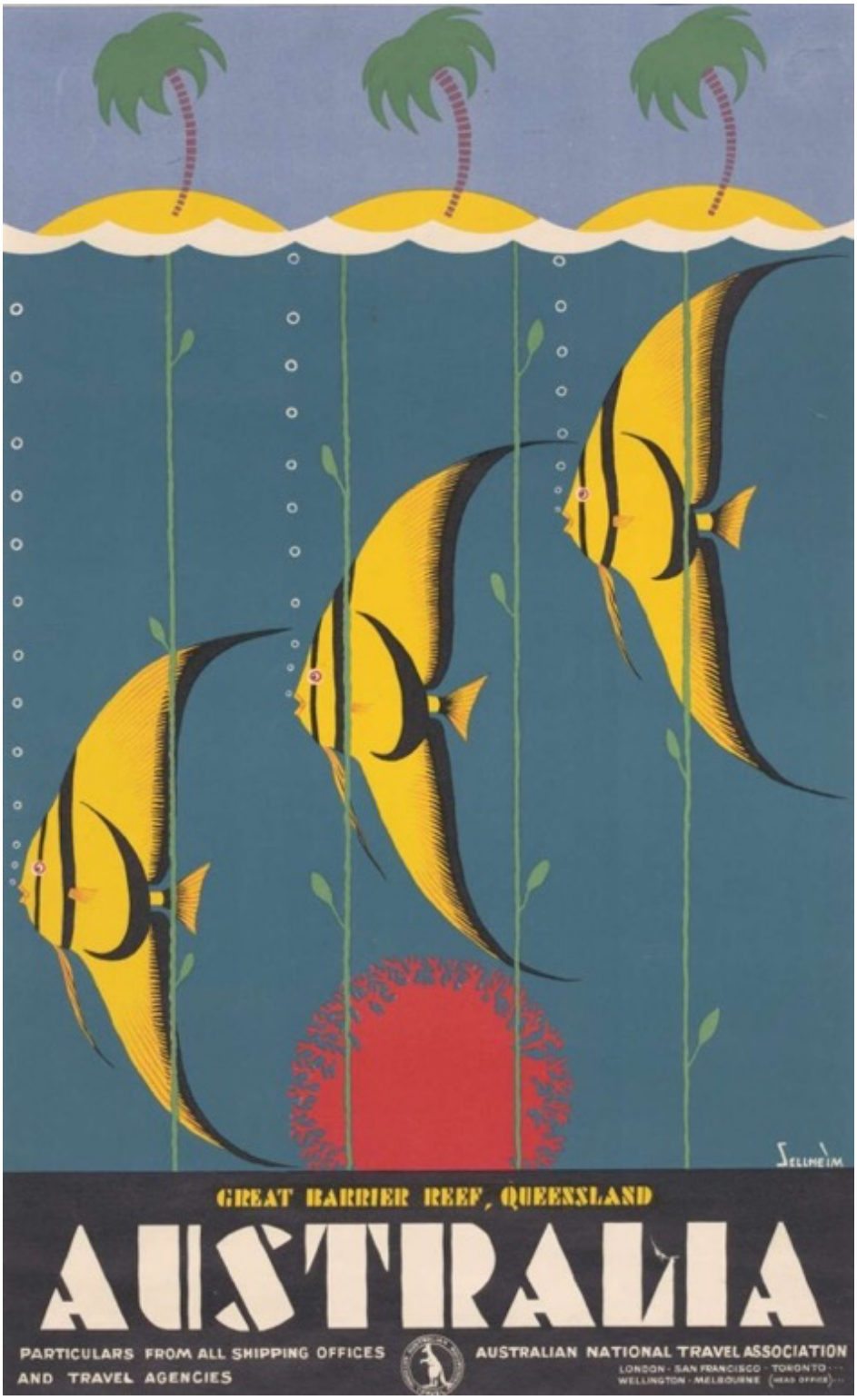


Figure 5 - Sellheim, 'Great Barrier Reef, Queensland', (ANTA: 1935). It is not clear from the Chronicle's coverage which Sellheim works were displayed at the Adelaide exhibition.

Herbert's appraisal of the Adelaide exhibition offers a commentary on how ANTA negotiated the broader artistic currents of modernity and the national image. Herbert would soon become a founding member of the Australian Academy of Art. Established in 1937 under the patronage of Robert Menzies,

and with financial support from the businessman and arts patron Charles Lloyd Jones, the academy is regarded by some art historians as a traditionalist movement formed as a reaction to the disruptions of modern artists.[33] Menzies and Jones (Jones sat on the ANTA board from 1929 and would become its chairman from 1952-56), were well affiliated with Clapp, indicating a proximity of relationships and interests that circled on cultivating a culturally distinct vison of Australia. Herbert thought poster design important to modern society, as well as contemporary art: 'Poster designing is a very important branch of art', he wrote, adding that 'the brains and ability of some of our most celebrated present-day painters have been requisitioned for the purpose.'[34]

Trompf, Northfield and Sellheim's conceptions of Australia were also gaining recognition overseas. H.W. Brodie, manager of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, visited Australia in 1936. He identified a misapprehension where Australians believed 'their country was not well advertised.' Brodie assured that Australia was well advertised throughout Canada, and in the United States, 'having regard for the size and the population of that country.' Australia was 'exceptionally well-advertised in Great Britain', said Brodie, adding that: 'no part of the British Empire, in fact, receives more favourable publicity abroad'. He thought impressive the array of symbols at Australia's disposal for luring the tourist. 'Koala bears', he said, were 'as good an advertising medium for Australia as the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the caves, or the Great Barrier Reef; wallabies [and] boomerangs.'[35] Glowing reviews of the koala would soon stand, seemingly, at odds with the views of the ex-NSWGTB boss Percy Hunter, who in 1937, 'established himself as Koala Bear public enemy no. 1' when he said: 'it will be a good job if koalas soon become extinct.' According to the *Daily Telegraph*, Hunter delivered the controversial remarks at a luncheon where he entertained Stanley Crick, Australian manager of the Fox Film Corporation. Hunter was reported to have admonished the bear even further:

> They wouldn't be so bad if they were kept in their place with the platypus, the wombat, the dingo, and the rest of the fauna. But we seem to have made them into the great national symbol … I hope all the bears die out soon, and then we can perhaps concentrate overseas publicity on some of our really great features. We have sunken gorges in the mountains that are equalled only by the Grand Canyon of Colorado. We have the best beaches in the world, winter and summer sports, great cities, magnificent scenery, a wonderful climate. But all tourists seem to know about us is — bears! I wish they had never existed.[36]

[33] Jane E. Hunt, "'Victors' and 'victims'?: Men, women, modernism and art in Australia." *Journal of Australian Studies* 27:80 (2003), 65-75
[34] Harold Herbert, 'Art', *Australasian,* February 17, 1934, 16.
[35] 'Australia: Publicity Abroad', *Sydney Morning Herald,* April 21, 1936, 10.
[36] 'Says Australians Look Like Koalas', *Daily Telegraph*, July 15, 1937, 1.

Hunter, publicity expert that he was, would have been aware that the national promoter was doing much to publicise Australia's urban and regional attractions. An article published a few days later in the Melbourne papers hints that the episode may have been a tongue in cheek publicity stunt. Following a rehash of Hunter's koala critique, the *Sun News* asked, 'But what does Australia say?' For an answer it selected three Melbourne men, supposedly 'at random'. One happened to be Charles Holmes, who said 'the koala was a splendid symbol in Australian advertising', and that Hunter's remarks 'need not be taken seriously.'[37] Whether Hunter's remarks were purposefully deployed for publicity effect or not, the episode foreshadowed internal Australian debates later in the century about the koala's suitability as a national symbol, which as we will see in chapter six, played out on the international stage in the 1980s.[38]

In addition to advertising Australia's koalas and other attractions, ANTA posters announced important state milestones. Melbourne celebrated its centenary in 1934, Sydney its sesquicentenary in 1938. ANTA commissioned posters for both events, and both posters featured environmental themes. Melbourne's 1934 poster was more forthrightly a celebration of the colonial achievement of that city's progress. It nevertheless had in common with other ANTA posters a preoccupation with order, resembled in the representation of Melbourne's skyline rising neatly from the well-manicured and tree-lined banks of the Yarra. ANTA's Sydney sesquicentenary poster (Figure 6 below) was more overt in its deployment of the sunlight trope, with a bright yellow sun superimposed over a crowded beach scene, inside which bold red lettering told consumers to 'FOLLOW THE SUN'. In the foreground of the image are a beach-going family of three, whose health and happiness are indicated through their brightly lit, smiling faces, the pearly whites of their teeth glinting in the sun. Indeed, as discussed earlier in chapter two, such invitations to experience Australia's bright sunlight and outdoor culture were indelibly tied up with contemporary racial-national and eugenic beliefs.[39]

[37] 'Melbourne Men Ridicule Criticism of Koala', *Sun News-Pictorial*, July 15, 1937, 17.
[38] Justine Greenwood, 'The migrant follows the tourist', 88. For further analysis of contemporary attitudes to Koala bears in the conservation movement and wider society see: R. Ekkel, 'Real Men Don't Kill Koalas: Gender and Conservationism in the Queensland Koala Open Season of 1927', *Australian Historical Studies* 56:2 (2024), 274-292.
[39] Thomas J Kehoe, Andrew May, Carolyn Holbrook, Richie Barker, David Hill, Hayley Jones, Rob Moodie, Andrekos Varnava, Ann Westmore, 'The past as present in health promotion: the case for a 'public health humanities', *Health Promotion International*, 38:6, 2023, 1-13.

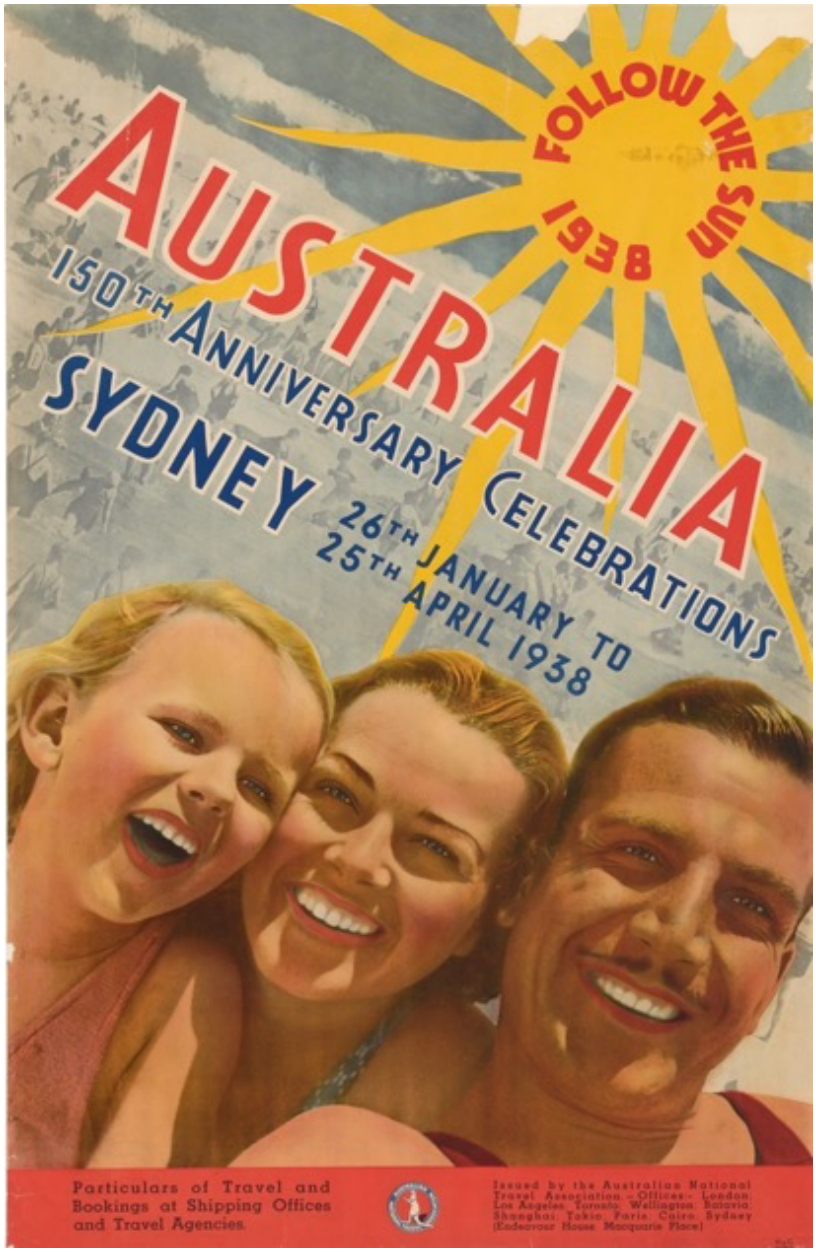


Figure 6 - 'Follow the Sun' depicts an Australian family at the beach. ANTA, Sydney 1938.

Historians of Sydney's and Melbourne's commemorations have given scant attention to the advertisements that publicised them. Resultantly, little about these posters is known. As Richard Waterhouse, who has written extensively on state and national celebrations, aptly points out, 'the nature and form' of commemorations can 'tell us more about those organising and participating in the commemorations than they do about the original historical events themselves.'[40] In the context of ANTA's larger nation building project, their commemoration posters offer an insight into how important Australia's environment, particularly the quality of sunshine, was to the unfolding national

[40] Richard Waterhouse, 'Commemoration, Celebration and 'the Crossing.'' *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 16 (2014): 186–96.

story in the middle decades of the twentieth century. As cultural artefacts they are contemporaneous with iconic images such as Charles Meere's painting "Australian beach pattern" (1940) and Max Dupain's "Sunbaker" (1937), the latter of which is often regarded as Australia's most famous photograph.[41] Dupain was in that decade a regular contributor to *Walkabout*, placing his photographic work in the same creative environment as ANTA's. As Shaune Lapin writes, Dupain's pictures conveyed 'contemporary debates on the terms and conditions of Australian national identity … and the shifting landscapes over which that identity was staged.'[42] Seen in this context, commemoration posters, but also ANTA's broader visual catalogue, belong to a wider category of Australian cultural outputs that record the entanglement of contemporary notions of modernism and the sun's 'special cultural salience for ideas about beauty, physical health and social interaction.'[43]

The pre-Second World War image of Australia in national advertising is best captured in one of the final ANTA publications printed only months before Prime Minister Robert Menzies steeled the nation for war in September 1939. 'Australia – General Information', a richly illustrated handbook of 21 pages and with vivid cover art by James Northfield. The publication offers a snapshot of Australia at a very particular moment in time – in this case on the eve of war. It is replete with the prices of accommodation, transport and tourist activities, and fashion advice. 'Speaking generally, it is a good idea to take both light and warm clothing to Australia, always bearing in mind that there is never extreme cold in any of the States except in the Alps.' The guide also offered a comprehensive table, titled 'Australia in Figures', that detailed Australia's economic activity, population and even weekly wages. All of this was deemed pertinent information for the likely tourist (and potential migrant or investor) at whom ANTA aimed its sales materials.

But Australia's sunny climate, scenery and outdoor recreational culture outshone economic growth and progress as the nation's central attractions. 'Australia is a sport and pleasure-loving country', announced the guide, 'and the visitor will find almost unlimited opportunities for gratifying his tastes.' Photographs and illustrations in the handbook displayed sailing, sunbathing, golfing, surf-lifesaving, skiing, surfing, among other outdoor activities. Again, the healthy, fun-loving and prosperous sunlit society communicated in so many early-twentieth century Australian sales materials was advanced as Australia's most prominent attribute. The handbook invited the reader from the Northern Hemisphere to enjoy 'a ready and pleasant escape from winter … in the warmth and sunshine of a continent still young in travel history but abounding in interesting features.'[44] Like the cooperative campaigns of the

[41] Shaune Lakin, 'The iconic power of the Sunbaker', *History of Photography*, 31:1 (2007), 92-93.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] Thomas J. Kehoe, Andrew May, Carolyn Holbrook, et al, 'The past as present in health promotion: the case for a 'public health humanities', *Health Promotion International* 38, (2023), 3. Isobel Crombie, *Body Culture: Max Dupain, photography and Australian Culture, 1919-1939,* (Peleus Press: 2004), 1-9; Michelle Arrow, *Friday on Our Minds*, (UNSW Press, Sydney: 2009).
[44] ANTA, *Australia*, *General Information*, 1939.

Railways Commissioners and the Development and Migration Commission discussed in chapter two, ANTA deemed that many visitors could be enticed to visit Australia primarily on the promise of its better-than-European weather.

Along with climate, ANTA thought that it was Australia's nature and scenery that appealed to the overseas visitor. The handbook listed 'the fragrant forests of giant eucalypts, so unlike the trees of other lands.' Again, ANTA was attempting to institute a narrative that Australia's appeal lay in the distinctiveness of its nature. Most of Australia's important scenic landscapes figured in this narrative, as did its flora and fauna. The guide drew the reader's attention to the variety of Australia's attractions:

> The lovely fern gullies of the temperate south and the luxuriant palms and vines and orchids in the rain forests of the tropical north; the clean sandy beaches offering amazingly good surfing; the tropic islands of the Great Barrier Reef, where gaily-coloured fish hide amongst the delicately-tinted coral formations in beautiful marine gardens; and, in particular, the unique fauna— the kangaroo that hops when it walks and sits down when it stands up; kookaburra, the bird that laughs; koala, the child's toy 'teddy' come to life; platypus, the amphibious freak that is part bird, part fish, part animal; and a host of other oddities, including richly-colourful parrots and cockatoos.[45]

Such enjoinders for tourists to experience the width and breadth of Australia's scenery reinforced a vision of a confident and young nation whose identity rested on the natural symbols that made it distinct. Of note is the guide's identification of the Great Barrier Reef as an important national site, which as we will see in the following chapter, would come more fully to fruition after the war. And though the tourist infrastructure on the Reef was still in its infancy, ANTA clearly gleaned the Reef's allure for potential tourists. Elsewhere in the handbook ANTA described a 'marine wonderland' where, 'on one of the many islets, the visitor may, at low tide, explore the coral gardens with their strangely-shaped and gaily-coloured fish, and where game-fish provide thrilling sport for the angler.'[46] These florid descriptions of the Reef accompanied further colourful poster art works by Trompf and Northfield that emphasised the colour and abundance of the Reef's coral and fish species. ANTA perceived that such colourful descriptions would strike a chord with the overseas reader, ideally enticing them to visit, and perhaps even relocate to Australia.

ANTA regularly employed a slogan in the 1930s, 'Australia, the land of endless contrasts.' This tagline was ostensibly about the variety of Australia's scenery, recreations and, as we have seen above, it described the juxtaposition between its regions and its cities. But the slogan also captured the contrast

[45] *Ibid.*
[46] *Ibid.*

between Australia and the countries from which ANTA sought to attract visitors. The handbook implored readers in its final, capitalised sentence:

> WHY NOT UNDERTAKE A CRUISE TO AUSTRALIA TO INVESTIGATE AT FIRST-HAND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE?

In the anxious days of the late 1930s, ANTA positioned Australia as a refuge from the fretful state of affairs unfolding overseas. In a particularly foreboding sentence in the introduction to the handbook, ANTA described Australia as 'a land that is peopled by a white English-speaking race using the one currency and that offers the peacefulness of a holiday far removed from the political instability and adventurings of the Old World.' This appeal encouraged the tourist to visit Australia not only because of its cultural familiarity, but also because of Australia's distance from European political turmoil – distance was now a benefit, not a drawback. Nevertheless, as we are about to see, Australia's participation in the war effort would go on to have a drastic effect on domestic living conditions, proving false the sanguine pre-war belief Australia's isolation would somehow keep the effects of any eventual conflict at bay. Still, in the global political atmosphere of the 1930s, ANTA deemed that tourists could be lured to Australia by the promise of escape from not only the cold and overcrowding of Europe and America, but also from the looming clouds of war.

Holmes and Clapp were starting to exhibit a greater fear for the nation than invasion – that of being forgotten. In the early part of the war, getting Australia recognised in the United States became ANTA's foremost war aim. Clapp wrote in the April 1940 issue of *Smith's Weekly* that ANTA had the intention of 'continuing, to the fullest extent practicable, the publicity activities which we have been carrying out for Australia overseas.' ANTA's United States office, as well as the head office in Australia, remained operational. Clapp guaranteed that, at least in a limited capacity, ANTA was 'continuing to function as in the past.' He tied the continuation of the association to the national interest: 'All this publicity means something to the people of Australia. Not only is it stimulating the overseas travel industry, but it is winning for Australia goodwill and understanding which was never more essential.'[47] There was still some optimism that in a prolonged European war, the Pacific would remain a safe ocean. 'There is every possibility of American tourists in increased numbers booking to countries bordering the Pacific', said Clapp in February 1940.[48] But the organisation soon became alert to its role as a propaganda machine in the event of a larger conflict. An article in the *Telegraph* published on New Years Eve, 1940, noted that ANTA 'has now offered its services to the Government to carry out any additional work that may be required to stimulate the interest of the American people in Australia generally and in our war

[47] Harold Clapp, 'Publicising Australia Overseas: Work of Australian National Travel Association', *Smith's Weekly*, April 27, 1940, 18.
[48] 'Travelling to Australia: Safe Pacific Attracts Drive for Tourists', *Sun*, February 5, 1940, 7.

effort.'[49] In this sense ANTA found itself operating as a kind of de facto wartime propaganda department.

'Sunlit continent of the Southern Seas': National Advertising During the War, 1940-45.

The 1930s had been an auspicious decade for ANTA. Untold prospects lay on the horizon for an association finally getting its message heard within Australia, and overseas as well. The onset of war in September 1939, however, quickly reversed nearly twenty years of hard work. In the first nine months of the war, visitor numbers plummeted from over 30,000 to 19,143. With international shipping under threat, and safe passage across the seas no longer guaranteed, ANTA closed its overseas offices in London and Bombay (Mumbai). According to a later annual report, ANTA's lights were extinguished in Europe by the end of 1942, leaving 'only a glimmer in Head Office, at Melbourne.' ANTA's 'economic fuel sadly reduced to much dependence on reserves and "*Walkabout's*" profits.'[50] But the war gave new meaning to ANTA's mission of national publicity. 'These days of war, the forging of closer ties born of greater knowledge and understanding between the English-speaking peoples is almost a fundamental to their continued existence as free peoples', said the 1940 annual report. It was therefore a 'matter of national importance', ANTA said, that it continued to create and disseminate Australian publicity.[51]

War invested overseas publicity with a new, strategic meaning. Though ANTA continued to operate throughout the war years, it was a period characterised by organisational upheaval. The war effort required the organisation's resources. Paper was in short supply and from 1942, ANTA printed few brochures or sales aids. In my research across multiple state and national libraries and archives I have not been able to locate annual reports for the years between 1941-49, perhaps owing to the fact that few were printed in these years. As Rolls and Johnston write, so severe were paper restrictions that in 1944 *Walkabout* 'was obliged to use 25 percent newsprint per issue.'[52] Perhaps more demanding for ANTA was the war's requisitioning of the abilities of those who administered it. Kay Saunders writes astutely that in wartime liberal democracies, journalists, poets, broadcasters and film makers 'men such as Keith Murdoch, Archibald MacLeish, Robert Sherwood and John Grierson' constituted an important class of professionals 'who knew the power of words and images to convey complex messages without offending the intelligence of the audience.'[53] Holmes and Clapp, along with the poster artists they had worked with so closely over the previous two decades, also belonged to this category of influential persons. ANTA's administrative and artistic leaders offered their talents to the nation's

[49] 'Publicity in the East and in America', *Telegraph*, December 31, 1940 8.
[50] ANTA, Annual Report 1966-67, 2.
[51] 'Extracts from Annual Report for the year ended 31st May, 1940', *Walkabout* 6:11, September 1940, 44.
[52] Rolls and Johnston, *Travelling Home*, 38.
[53] Kay Saunders 'An Instrument of Strategy': Propaganda, Public Policy and the Media in Australia During the Second World War, *War & Society*, 15:2, (1997), 75-90.

propaganda front after 1939, diverting their skills and energies to the war. From 1939 to 1942 Clapp oversaw the Department of Aircraft Production, where he again commissioned James Northfield to produce wartime propaganda posters – works that, as figure 7 on page174 below indicates, offer a window onto Australia's war time anxieties.

In May 1940, ANTA published one of its first war time brochures, titled *Australian Holiday*. The organisation aimed to capitalise on those westerners that war in Europe had stranded in the subcontinent and Southeast Asia. 'Wartime conditions have made it undesirable to-day - if not impracticable - for most people in India, Ceylon, and the Eastern countries generally, to consider spending their long leave in Europe, as so many have made a habit of doing in the past.' There were few alternatives to Europe for 'the businessmen, planters, military and Government officers in the East', said the guide. Few alternatives other than Australia, of course, which offered 'a complete change in climate, scenery, and peoples, while at the same time assuring modern standards in accommodation, transportation, and service, as well as a wide range of sport and entertainment.' Nowhere 'presents a greater appeal than Australia, the democratic British continent in the south, which is rapidly becoming the Playground in the Pacific.' Australia's 'cooler climate' was a key part of this appeal, as was the attraction of the Australian people, 'noted for their friendliness and hospitality.'[54] Such invitations recalled the long tradition of marketing the Australian colonies to furloughed soldiers, to whom Australia's climate and sunshine offered benefits for recuperation, and potentially even permanent migration.[55]

Holmes temporarily left ANTA at the end of 1941 to serve as the interim director of the Department of Information, a body established in June 1940 and tasked with censorship and the production of wartime propaganda. The director position was hardly an enviable one. As Edward Louis Vickery outlines in his PhD thesis on the Department of Information, the organisation was beset from its inception by turmoil and controversy, responsible for a high turn-over of its leadership. 'The attrition rate for the senior administrative officer was even higher than for Ministers for Information', writes Vickery.[56] In November 1940, only months after the DoI's inception, controversy toppled Keith Murdoch, its first Director-General. The powerful media baron resigned after clashing with press and radio interests over the government department's potential ability to direct the media what to publish. In September 1941, with a further two directors having left the department, the minister for information Senator H.S. Foll turned to Holmes.[57] He announced that in Holmes the government 'had been fortunate in securing the

[54] ANTA, 'Australian Holiday', (Specialty Press: Melbourne, May 1940).
[55] Andrea Scott Inglis, *Summer in the Hills: The Nineteenth-Century Mountain Resort in Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007), 56. See also: James Beattie, 'Imperial Landscapes of Health: Place, Plants, and People between India and Australia, 1800s–1900s, *Health and History* 14:1, 100-120.
[56] Vickery, *Telling Australia's story to the world,* 58.
[57] 'Right Information: Holmes Should Give It', *Smith's Weekly,* October 4, 1941, 12.

services of a man of such wide experience in publicity.' Foll's assessment is a testament to the standing Holmes had achieved in connection to matters of national publicity and image. Forming part of Holmes's selection for the job at the DoI was ANTA's production of an official handbook of Australia, 'the most comprehensive publication of its kind yet published' said Foll.[58] As we shall see, these handbooks were a prominent means of advancing Australia's image overseas during, and beyond the war.

Announcing Holmes's ascension to the head of the DoI, an article in *Smith's Weekly* commented: 'Selling Australia was Holmes' life's work'. The article ended with a rhetorical question. 'Will he find it more difficult to sell the Department of Information to Australia?' An answer came sooner than the writers at *Smith's* might have anticipated. Holmes resigned in October 1941 after falling out with the new government, whose dealings and interference with the DoI he asserted were 'contemptible and false.'[59] Though he was only at the DoI for a short time, his importance to the organisation, as Vickery argues, lay in the fact that his appointment resembled the 'shift towards an overseas audience that his appointment represented.' Foll found in Holmes someone who 'had seen the need to publicise Australia overseas and who had the rare benefit of practical experience in the area', writes Vickery.[60]

Holmes's brief tenure at the DoI indicates a closer link between it and ANTA than historians have perhaps realised. His prompt return to ANTA did not mark the end of his contribution of his talents in publicity to the information front. If anything, he returned from the DoI with a renewed conviction that ANTA's means of communications production could be utilised as a better vehicle for the soft projection of Australia's image than could be achieved by the DoI. ANTA's quasi-government status meant that its administrators did not have to report to a minister, and that it could therefore advance a vision of Australia unconstrained by political diktats. In his official history of the Australian home front during the war, Paul Hasluck, who had been a wartime public servant, locates March 1942 – not long after Holmes's resignation – as a significant point of departure between government propaganda and public opinion. Many in the public 'grew weary', wrote Hasluck, 'of being harangued in the humiliating manner which suggests that Australians are cravens, whose courage needs the continual spur of exhortations by ministers."[61]

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[58] 'New Information Director: Mr. C. H. Holmes', *Argus*, September 17, 1941, 5. *Walkabout* magazine similarly reported the handbook to be 'the most comprehensive publication of its kind yet produced in Australia.' See: 'The Story of Australia', *Walkabout*, 7:12, October 1, 1941, 41.
[59] Vickery, *Telling Australia's story to the world*, 53. 'Director replies to minister', *Argus*, January 10, 1942, 3
[60] *Ibid*, 65.
[61] Hasluck drew his observation from letters to the editor in Melbourne's *Age* and Sydney's *Daily Telegraph.* See Hasluck, *The Government and the People*, (Canberra, Australian War Memorial: 1970), 127.



Figure 7 - Ringed with Menace! Bar the Gates with 'Beauforts'. NLA dates to 1942.

ANTA's wartime publicity coincided with the rise of a new 'information front'. The importance of this new paradigm of national war fighting was increasingly apparent in the Western liberal democracies challenged with persuading, rather than coercing – as was the practise in authoritarian nations – their populations into campaigns of total war. Before the 'all in' war years of 1942-45, winning over American opinion was a primary concern in Australia, just as it was in Churchill's Britain during the blitz. The assistant director of the United States Office of War Information Archibald MacLeish encapsulated the geopolitical consequence of public relations early in 1942 when he famously said that 'the principal

battleground of this war is not the South Pacific. It is not the Middle East. It is not England or Norway or the Russian steppes. It is American opinion.'[62] Bridget Griffin-Foley has outlined well the similar realisation of R.G. Casey, Australia's minister to the United States in the early 1940s. Casey perceived that Americans had a 'great suspicion of "propaganda" of any type' and that Australia must therefore avoid 'the taint and taunt' of overt publicity. As Griffin-Foley writes, 'Casey wanted Americans to get used to seeing the name 'Australia' in their newspapers and to foster a picture of a young and virile nation composed of people like themselves.' ANTA's publicity formed one of the cultural products produced at the time to fulfil such a function, giving a friendly overview of Australian society without suggesting 'what the United States should do about the war.'[63]

Clapp, who spent the first two decades of the twentieth century modernising America's rail network, understood well how the American economy, properly configured for war, would likely be the deciding factor in any eventual conflict.[64] With Holmes, he began to mobilise ANTA's publicity machine to argue for Australia's strategic significance to the Allied war effort, while also alluding to the military importance of Australia as a staging ground for the United States campaign against Japan in the Pacific. Moreover, he foresaw Australia's pending role as a staging ground for war in the Pacific theatre, writing in the preface to the 1941 handbook:

> Under the stimulus of war, Australia is rapidly becoming a vast arsenal in the south-western Pacific for the production of materials of war for the British Empire. The continent is also an inexhaustible reservoir of foodstuffs and other materials.

The official handbooks of 1941-45, all of which carried Clapp's opening remarks, were primarily intended to gain Australia favour in America. Though copies circulated in the British and allied countries in the East, and some copies were eventually printed for a domestic Australian audience, *Walkabout* told readers that 'distribution of the book will be primarily in the North American continent, where it is obviously of the greatest importance to Australia that the maximum publicity be secured for this country.'[65] Clapp's language was certainly mindful of Australia's Commonwealth ties. 'In their nation building Australians have ever cultivated British traditions of justice and fair play', he wrote. Clapp wrote that the central purpose of spreading information about Australia overseas belonged to a project among the English-speaking nations that would 'materially strengthen the bonds of friendship and understanding that forever must endure between all free peoples.' Herein was a substantive factor

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[62] A. MacLeish, 'We Cannot Escape History', speech of 19 March 1942, cited in Saunders, 'An Instrument of Strategy', 77.
[63] Griffin-Foley, 'The Kangaroo is Coming into Its Own', 3.
[64] In his 1945 report on railway gauge standardisation Clapp wrote argued for the 'essential value of railways as a fighting weapon', see Harold Clapp, *Standardization of Australia's Railway Gauges: Report*, (H.E. Dawe, Government Printer: Melbourne, 1945), 7.
[65] *Walkabout*, 7:12, October 1, 1941

of Clapp's global outlook, best captured in a remark he is reported to have made long before the Second World War, when he told his secretary: 'I believe that the British Commonwealth and America, in unity, will lead the world morally and materially.'[66] The shift from strategic dependence on Britain was famously captured in Prime Minister John Curtin's declaration in a December 1941 article for the Melbourne *Herald* 'that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom.'[67] Nevertheless, as Eric Richards points out, this pivot to the US was long anticipated, predating the war and extending back at least to the mid-1930s.[68] ANTA's handbooks, circulated predominantly in North America, record well how the realignment to America was playing out in the softer field of international publicity, as opposed to the more formal channels of foreign affairs, diplomacy and state produced propaganda.

What kind of wartime vision of Australia did ANTA broadcast in North America? The 1941 handbook demonstrated a preoccupation with bolstering the white Australian population – an effort that largely mirrored the nation's broader racial and geopolitical goals. As Richards writes, the war years fully exposed Australia's 'ingrained fear of oriental invasion and domination.'[69] The vision of Australia ANTA offered overseas readers in the official handbook was thus informed by the White Australia Policy – a doctrine which the increasing likelihood of war in the Pacific entrenched and made more urgent. But ANTA remained conscious of how outsiders might interpret Australia's attitudes to non-white migration, stating in the handbook that 'it may clear away misconceptions to give a brief outline.'[70] The description that followed suggested the policy was supported across political lines 'for the economic reason that the white man's standard of living would be endangered by the introduction of coloured labourers who would be prepared to accept wages and to work under conditions that are not acceptable to a white workman.' Unrestricted migration policy would therefore, said ANTA, create economic crisis and a 'dislocation of the national life.'[71]

Holmes coupled with this description of the White Australia Policy explanations of Australia's geographic and demographic realities. In the 1941 handbook, he addressed what he saw as a prevailing misconception that 'Australia as a vast empty continent could readily absorb an unlimited number of settlers from the densely populated countries.'[72] These propositions about Australia's potential for settlement and migration policy only marginally predated William Douglass Forsyth's 1942 book *The Myth of Open Spaces* which, as Richards points out, 'registered a shift in thinking about Australian population and the ultimate demographic capacity of the continent.' Forsyth argued that Australia was

[66] Peter Fenton, 'Harold Clapp: The Man', *Walkabout,* December 1, 1952, 9.
[67] John Curtin, 'The Task Ahead', *Herald*, December 27, 1941.
[68] Richards, *Destination Australia,* 145.
[69] *Ibid,* 142.
[70] Australian National Publicity Association, *Australia: Official Handbook*, (Flinders Street, Melbourne: 1941), 33.
[71] *Ibid*, 33.
[72] *Ibid.*

mostly uninhabitable because of its deficiencies in rainfall and soil fertility, and that it could not adequately support large, internal settlement.[73] This analysis reflected a significant shift in thinking about the demographic capacity of the continent, but it also came at a time where fears of a Japanese invasion, or at least encirclement, ran high. As McGregor writes, in 1941 Australian political figures such as John Latham, then Australia's Chief Justice and soon to become Australia's minister to Japan, 'urged his compatriots to desist from depicting the north as a potential land of plenty.' Exaggerating the resources and population carrying capacity of tropical Australia 'attracted the envious eyes of an over-populated Asia', Latham argued.[74] Clearly ANTA's messaging straddled contemporary debates about Australia's ability to support overseas migration. Evidently the national promoter deemed the explanation of Australia's position on these matters to be of interest to the handbook's intended American audience.

The environmental dimension at the heart of ANTA's wartime vision of Australia dovetailed with national migration ideology. ANTA perceived that every migrant buoyed the nation's defences. The handbooks were therefore explicit in their efforts to attract migrants. In the words of the 1941 issue, Australia was 'a young country rapidly expanding in primary and secondary industries, it merits consideration as a place for permanent residence, or the investment of capital.'[75] Arguments made to attract prospective migrants from English speaking countries rested on the assumption that Australia was an attractive destination for relocation, not just a visit, because of its environmental attributes, and the quality of life that these entailed. Such appeals entwined racial and environmental themes. The guide stated, for example, that the Australian people's 'fondness for outdoor sport', was 'inherited from their Anglo-Saxon forbears.'[76]

Importantly Australia's conditions had produced an athletic population who valued participation in recreational activities, and therefore in national life. 'Surfing and sea-bathing may truly be called the national pastime, because it is for pleasure alone that practically everyone indulges in this sport', read the handbook. It was the enthusiasm for such recreations that revealed the 'love of the Australians for the outdoors.' Descriptions of other recreations included sailing, horse-racing, football, cricket, tennis, golf, winter sports, fishing and shooting, all of which alluded to their accessibility and low-cost, at least relative to other countries. Subsequent pages dealt with the attractions of each state and territory, from the Blue Mountains and the Great Barrier Reef to the wildflowers of Western Australia. Such celebrations of the outdoor culture and scenery led to an important imagining of Australia as 'a land of the outdoors', where all of the features described were on offer to the visitor as well as the resident:

[73] Richards, *Destination Australia,* 153.
[74] J. G. Latham, White Australia and the Vast Empty Spaces, 29 May 1941, cited in McGregor, *'A Dog in the Manger',* 171.
[75] ANPA, *Australia: Official Handbook*, 110-112.
[76] *Ibid*, 110.

> There are the beautiful bushlands and the unique fauna and flora … the surf beaches in summer and the snowfields in winter: the tropic isles of the coral seas: the beautiful cities: the temperate climate and the alpine regions with their appeal to visitors from tropical countries. When countries north of the equator are in the grip of winter, Australia is a sunlit continent.[77]

The handbook's descriptions of Australia's culture, productivity and social life belonged to the long tradition of national publicity's attributing of social and material progress to the capacity for settlers to adapt to the natural conditions of the continent and eventually to exploit them. The first sentence of the handbook described Australia: 'a nation of over 7,000,000 British people, proud of their heritage of freedom in the great, sunlit continent of the southern seas keen to maintain the high standards of living that have been built up through 150 years of unremitting effort in developing the resources of a virgin land.' Closely following the introduction's account of Australia's financial and economic achievements was a description of the geography of the capital cities, where lived 'forty seven percent of the population'. Nature and modernity were, as in past (and future) ANTA materials, intertwined. 'Cities are an essential part of Australia's national life, but they are also easy centres from which to inspect, in leisurely fashion, a diversified hinterland'. Each capital had 'in close proximity, delightful hill country, clothed in forests of eucalypts, the characteristic vegetation of the continent.' The language of the introduction imbued Australia's plant and animal life with a heavy symbolic significance:

> The groves of giant eucalypts form pictures never forgotten, and the scent of the wattle brings a homesick feeling like the smell of sage to a Westerner. The flora is not only beautiful; it is unique and has no counterpart in other lands. The trees are indeed those of a bygone age. The impression that one is looking at a landscape which has forever disappeared from other parts of the world is so vivid that the elms and maples and oaks of the city streets strike a jarring note. And in these primeval forests are gaily-plumaged song-birds, while in the bushlands and on the open plains are found quaint marsupial creatures, survivals of a past age.[78]

Setting this text apart from earlier publicity is its yearning nostalgia for an Australian homeland, enriched by its own distinct symbols and landscape. The guide featured a long description of the significance of the wattle, 'beloved by all Australians as the national flower' for it gilded the banks of Australia's streams and hillsides with 'living gold' and drenched the air 'with a delicate perfume'.[79] Such sentiment is notable for appearing in a handbook designed primarily for circulation outside of Australia. In a time of war, the association of Australia's symbols with the notion of a shared polity took on a new

[77] *Ibid*, 112.
[78] *Ibid*, 5.
[79] *Ibid*, 108.

significance, tied perhaps, to the existential mission of uniting the nation in the face of adversity, and threats from foreign enemies.

First printed in 1941 and annually thereafter, the handbooks, which ran between 140 and 150 pages long, were somewhat encyclopaedic in content. They offered a high level of detail regarding Australia's geography, climate, culture, and social conditions. The series covered many aspects of national life, making an incremental case with every page that Australia was a progressive society every bit as civilised and culturally distinct as any other English-speaking nation. Yearly issues scarcely varied in text, although the images and photographs changed.[80] As ANTA proposed, the handbook 'will be maintained in print, revised from time to time, as the standard Australian publication for overseas circulation.'[81] So detailed were the handbooks they were replete with shaded maps that denoted where the highest populations of sheep lived, and where the greatest amounts of rain fell. Crucially, Australia's natural environment was a central aspect of handbook. Holmes placed sections on Australia's 'geographical description' and 'rainfall and climate' immediately after the introduction, coming before the third section, on Australia's history. Holmes perceived these descriptions of the country's environment and conditions were of high informational value to North American readers.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Australia placed itself on a total war footing. As Frank Bongiorno observes, 'during the early months of 1942, the government drastically increased its control over Australia's economic and social life as the nation turned itself into a combination of Allied arsenal and food bowl.'[82] With America's entry into the war, the statistical information about Australia's primary production coupled with descriptions and illustrations of Australian factories churning out materiel served as powerful reminders that Australia was a viable base for operations in the Pacific, and, perhaps more importantly, the home of a young and confident society worth allying with. As Stuart Macintyre points out, Australia figured in both American and Japanese planning 'as a southern base on which the Allies might regroup', but before Pearl Harbor, American partnership had not been a foregone conclusion. 'The extent of [US] commitment was difficult to gauge', writes Macintyre.[83]

Concerns among high-level American diplomats that Australians had a sense of complacency about the war was the source of at least some hesitation regarding the depth of US commitment.[84] But as Hasluck observed, fears and doubts about the 'fighting mood' of the Australian public were not wholly accurate:

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[80] In 1935 ANTA estimated it had the 'finest representative Australian collection in existence'. It was from this collection that ANTA drew for its wartime photographs. See: ANTA, 'News Bulletin', circa 1935, held by the State Library of Victoria.
[81] 'Australian Handbook', Walkabout, 7:10, August 1, 1941, 47. Variations in the texts of the 1941, 1944 and 1945 volumes are mostly to numerical figures relating to primary industries.
[82] Frank Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers*, 255.
[83] Stuart MacIntyre, *Australia's Boldest Experiment*, (Sydney: NewSouth, 2015), 80. Paul Hasluck, *The Government and the People*, 128-129.
[84] MacIntyre, *Australia's Boldest Experiment*, 180.

> The Australian people in March 1942, as far as their opinion is revealed in the press, by their actions and by their acceptance of the direction of their lives, were aroused by danger as they had never been stirred before, and having been aroused, they had not turned away but were bracing themselves to grapple with their foes no matter how numerously they might come.

In the crucible of war, however, American perceptions counted more than reality. Subsequently, much diplomatic work was done under the Curtin government to communicate Australia's resolve, culminating in President Roosevelt's January 1942 declaration 'of the determination of the United States to assist Australia in the Pacific War'.[85] Shortly after, Curtin made his 'Speech to America' where he said Australia 'will pull knee to knee with [America] for every ounce of our weight.'[86] To a limited degree, ANTA's publicity from this period records how the changing tides of foreign relations were playing out, at least in the context of wartime tourist publicity.

Since the beginning of 1940, almost two full years before America mobilised, ANTA had foreseen that publicising Australia's message in the country it looked to most for assistance was a necessary function of war preparation. Furthermore, it was a task that it sensed it could perform for the nation. In this sense, ANTA had operated, at least in a limited way, as a de facto Department of Information, advancing what its senior administrators perceived to be the national interest overseas – a notion that might be dismissed or overlooked if not for the fact that Holmes himself had served, if only briefly, as the DoI's director.

'Follow the Sun': ANTA and the national recovery, 1945-1957

The wartime demand for ships had halted the cruise industry and diminished overseas visitor numbers. As in the First World War, Australians had continued to take holidays at home. In July 1940, for example, the *Argus* noted that in spite of a 'tremendous drop in ocean travel and a marked decline in interstate trips, State holiday services and resorts report plenty of business.'[87] Tourism officials in Victoria and South Australia reported a 'tourist boom', with unprecedented bookings in the 1941 season.[88] The later years of the war brought to Australia a record influx in overseas visitors as well. Many were visiting Allied servicemen, who spent their furlough (and importantly their pay) in Australia. So well patronised were the Blue Mountains by the end of the war that the prospect of peace worried the Katoomba council publicity officer, R. Gadd: 'Can we still maintain this advantage when normal conditions again prevail?', he pondered.[89] Writing in the *Blue Mountains Advertiser*, published out of

[85] 'Proposal to use Australia as Operational Base', *Weekly Times,* January 3, 1942, 4.
[86] John Curtin, 'Speech to America', 14 March, 1942.
[87] 'Tourist trade active: War-time holidays', *Argus,* 24 July, 1940, 4.
[88] 'Tourist Trade Booming, but Petrol is Problem', *Mail*, 28 June, 1941, 15.
[89] Publicity Officer's Report, *Blue Mountains Advertiser*, 8 March 1946, p. 3.

Katoomba as well, Country Party leader Sir Earle Page was optimistic that the experience of servicemen would bode well for Australia's future tourist industry. 'We know they had money to spend; that they liked our country; and that many will return'. He lamented that because of wartime shortages 'of goods, accommodation and transport', Australia had been 'unable to derive the same economic benefit from visiting British and American and Dutch Allies as we would in times of peace.' But just as Australia had been 'a great base for operations' in the war, it could, he hoped, 'likewise be a great peacetime base – a jumping off ground – for the tourist traffic of the world.'[90] As we shall see in the next chapter, much of ANTA's energy in the 1950s and 1960s would come to be devoted to how to turn Australia into such a jumping off ground, both for servicemen and the West's growing market of holidaymakers.

In spite of Page's ambitions to kickstart a tourism industry, other considerations prevailed in Australia after the war. In lean times, ANTA struggled to secure meaningful federal funding for years. As Page wrote in the *Blue Mountains Advertiser*, before the war ANTA had been 'subsidised by the Commonwealth to the extent of about £20,000 a year.' Though ANTA still existed in 1946, 'it is no longer subsidised by the Government which considers that the expensive cumbersome and discredited Department of Information is the best authority to attend to tourist development.'[91] Later ANTA records were more diplomatic. 'The Association was slow to regain its feet after the war', reads the 1958 annual report, which accurately recognised 'Australia had changed since the association was founded.'[92] As we shall see in the next chapter, 'change' would become a term well known by an organisation that, in the exciting and transformative decade of 1960s, would have to make repeated attempts to modernise.

Incrementally, ANTA returned to its pre-war mission of publicising Australia. With paper stocks replenished and no longer subject to rationing, a trickle of ANTA stamped literature began to reappear in the late 1940s. *Walkabout* had survived the war without a pause in publication and therefore remained an important vehicle for disseminating ANTA's message. As Jillian Barnes observes, *Walkabout* in the 1940s played an important role in presenting sites such as Ayers Rock (Uluru) as pristine wilderness, overlooking histories of Aboriginal human occupation, and therefore as uncomplicated sites destined for settler-recreation and tourist development.[93] As we shall see in the remaining chapters, such imaginings would have complex ramifications for Uluru and the Great Barrier Reef in the second half of the twentieth century. By 1948 Australia's visitor numbers again approached pre-war figures. In 1952 ANTA joined the newly formed Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA), a trans-Pacific commercial alliance aimed at building Pacific Ocean tourism. Clapp died in the same year, aged 77. 'Harold Clapp

[90] Sir Earle Page, 'The Development of the Tourist Industry', *Blue Mountains Advertiser*, November 8, 1946, 8.
[91] *Ibid*.
[92] ANTA, *Annual Report for 1958*, 3.
[93] Jillian Barnes, 'Crystallising identities: the imagining of the centralian patroller tradition', 101.

was one of the outstanding public servants of our time', eulogised Menzies, adding that 'in common with all Victorians and Australians of my generation, I shall continuously live in his debt.'[94]

Almost at the moment of the travel chief's passing, there arrived a new era in international transport and travel. The age of rail was giving way to that of the motor car and the jet liner, even if the latter remained beyond the financial reach of many Australians. The war, which in Australia had caused a reorientation of the country away from the global North and towards the Asia-Pacific region, induced ANTA to promote Australian tourism more within the South Pacific. This meant the development of new sites for mass tourism. As we will see in the next chapter, destinations that fringed the Pacific, particularly islands along the Great Barrier Reef, soon supplanted traditional railway-linked resorts like Mount Buffalo and the Blue Mountains. In 1954, under the chairmanship of long-serving board member Charles Lloyd Jones, ANTA saw the return of substantive Commonwealth support. In the following year, an unprecedented 53,565 overseas visitors travelled into the country. This rapid growth made clear the monetary value of tourism as a national industry, giving urgency to new marketing campaigns aimed at attracting the attention, and money, of the likely tourist or migrant.

The publicity campaigns of the early- to mid- 1950s were characterised by their prompt return to the environmental themes of the pre-war era. ANTA commissioned new poster designs from old and new artists, upgrading ANTA's vision of Australia for the new times. Gert Sellheim together with new artists like Douglas Annand and Eileen Mayo produced modernised images which gained acclaim in worldwide advertising journals and competitions. Annand's 1957 'Black Swan' poster was awarded a bronze medal at the 7th International Poster Competition, held in Milan in 1968.[95] Three of Mayo's posters featured in the 1955-57 magazine *Modern Publicity*, the worldwide advertising journal. One of these was her striking underwater vision of the Great Barrier Reef, discussed at length in the following chapter, of which ANTA disseminated over ten thousand copies overseas.

Mayo migrated to Australia from England in 1952 and based her studio in Sydney. Her illustrated close up of an underwater Reef scene brought her unique techniques of poster art to the Great Barrier Reef, which I discuss in further detail in the next chapter. But many of her posters used extreme close ups, bold colours and few subjects in their attempt to encapsulate a message about Australia. Her acclaimed poster *Koalas*, for instance, featured that perennial marsupial which the Australian national image could seemingly never escape. These prints preceded Mayo's series of Commonwealth postage stamp designs, notable for being the first stamps to feature Australia's native animals. Mayo's biographer Jillian Cassidy, offering an insight into Mayo's legacy to Australia's visual history, notes that the stamp designs

[94] Robert Menzies to the editor of The Age Melbourne, 'Eulogy for Clapp, Harold, Papers of Sir Robert Menzies, National Library of Australia, MS 4936. See also: 'Mr Menzies' tribute to Sir H. Clapp', *Age,* October 23, 1952.
[95] Letter from Basil Atkinson to Douglas Annand, June 8, 1972.

soon 'became the benchmark against which Australian stamp designs were measured.' Cassidy explains Mayo's success 'was due, in no small part, to her ability to immerse herself in a new culture, to capitalize on the exotic flora and fauna she found there, and to draw together a multiplicity of strands to comment effectively and graphically on the distinctiveness of the environment.' The 'complex rhythms and intersecting arcs of Mayo's posters', accentuated by 'bold, bright colours and decorative patterning', combined with her philosophy that 'good design is as fundamental to commercial commissions as it is to the so-called fine arts' made her art irresistible to ANTA as it sought to modernise in a changing world.[96] From the Adelaide exhibition of ANTA art attended by Herbert in 1935 to the new post-war world order, the Australian relationship between modernity and the environment, between nature and culture, was showing no sign of being loosened.



Figure 8 - Posters of Eileen Mayo for ANTA, 1950s.

[96] Jillian Cassidy, 'Eileen Mayo: Her Prints, Posters, and Postage Stamps', *Woman's Art Journal* 24:1 (2003), 20.

Conclusion

A decade on from the end of the war, ANTA publicity advanced the environmentally centred vision of Australia and its people that had characterised so much national advertising since the beginning of the century. The 1955 brochure *Follow the Sun to Australia* envisioned the environmentally enriched nation now familiar to the reader of this thesis. Climate, sunlight, outdoor recreation and the celebration of progress all returned in messaging aimed at 'attracting the visitor from overseas.' *Follow the Sun* offered a concise example of just how persistent these key selling points were across time:

> Australians are a friendly, hospitable people, with an ingrained sense of fair play. They have the energy and time for amusements which, because of the climate, largely take the form of out-of-door sport, picnics or other relaxation. The visitor will enjoy the golden Australian summer, which draws thousands to the bush-clad hill country and to the beaches and the coastal lakes. Bays, harbours and estuaries are patterned with white sails and bronzed surfers shoot breakers on surf-boards, surf-skis and surf-boats and take part in exciting surf carnivals.[97]

By the 1950s such an imagining of the nation in tourist publicity now belonged to the long-established conventions and tradition of the medium.[98] Nevertheless, as this chapter has shown, there was a certain malleability to the core symbols of nature and environment identifiable in so many advertising texts. Though consistently deployed by image makers, their inclusion was indelibly shaped by the forces driving contemporary opinion. In peace, Australia's environmental symbols addressed anxieties over social cohesion, external threats and perceptions of Australia's international reputation. In war, the same symbols played a role in projecting a cohesive and self-actualised Australia that could meet the expectations of the industrially superior nations on whom its economic and existential survival depended.

ANTA's proximity to the DoI and its capacity to function as a wartime information agency reveal that the relationship between tourism promotion and war propaganda is more complex than previously realised. As Vickery suggests, ANTA's activities were adjacent to the DoIs throughout the war, and to a large degree informed the functions of later Commonwealth informational agencies, particularly the Australian News and Information Bureau, which modelled its network of overseas offices, as well as its mission to tell Australia's story to the world, largely on ANTA's example.[99] As we are about to see in the remaining thesis, the fretful years of the Second World War were not to be the last time Australia's environmental imagery adapted to the changing times. In fact, as the rapid social and cultural changes

[97] ANTA, *Follow the Sun to Australia,* (Specialty Press: Melbourne, 1955)
[98] Richard White, 'The Australian way of life' *Historical Studies*, 18:73, (1979), 528-545.
[99] Vickery, 'Telling Australia's Story to the World',148-9.

of the 1960s loomed, the country's natural symbols would find themselves adapted, contorted and rejuvenated to suit interests and values, old and new. And nowhere was this revision of Australia's visual imagery more pivotal than at the site rapidly becoming one of Australia's key scenic destinations – the Great Barrier Reef.

Chapter Five

A Destination to Sell the Nation: The Great Barrier Reef, 1958-1969

> The Great Barrier Reef of Australia, like the Grand Canyon of North America, the Victoria Falls of Africa and the Swiss Alps of Europe, is one of the world's spectacular fantasies of nature.
>
> Great Barrier Reef Guidebook, ANTA, 1963-66.

In the 1960s, several of Australia's post-war political, environmental, and economic realities converged at the Great Barrier Reef. Improvements in rail, motor and air travel helped to realise longstanding attempts to open the coral wonderland to large scale tourism, triggering an exponential cycle of growth and investment that allowed for new infrastructure and, in turn, greater numbers of tourists. As Reef historians James and Margarita Bowen note, 'in 1947 the Queensland Tourist Board reported an annual average of 5000 visitors; a decade later it had increased to nearly 60,000 and in 1963 more than doubled to 125,000, the majority arriving by air.'[1] This chapter is an inquiry into the ANTA publicity campaigns for the Great Barrier Reef that coincided with this rising public interest and visitation to far North Queensland. I argue that in the decade between 1958-69 the Reef became a priority for ANTA, whose campaigns increasingly positioned it as an important national site. Why and how images of the Reef came to dominate national advertising campaigns, and what ANTA's vision of the Reef looked like, are important questions that speak to this thesis's broader consideration of environmental themes as they relate to Australia's twentieth century national image.

In this chapter, I examine a series of advertising posters for the Great Barrier Reef in the context of the wider promotional agenda of ANTA, and its successor organisation, the Australian Tourist Commission (est. 1967). I argue that the core messaging of ANTA's campaign to sell the Reef continued national advertising's longstanding tradition of deploying environmental imagery in service of projecting a distinctive image of the nation – both at home and overseas. The following advertisements invited consumers from Australia and elsewhere in the world to spend time in nature, outdoors under blue skies and in the warm sun. Key to these advertisements were the promise of participating in water-based leisure activities, swimming in crystal clear waters, and enjoying the unique flora and fauna of the tropical north. But the physical landscape of the Reef and of tropical Queensland diverged from the more typically 'Australian' scenery ANTA had marketed for much of the century. It is interesting to consider, then, the ways ANTA promoters attempted to reconcile the Reef as a place supposed to be

[1] James Bowen and Margarita Bowen, *The Great Barrier Reef: History, Science, Heritage,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 324. Roy Claringbould, Jane Deakin, Pat Foster, *Data Review of Reef-Related Tourism 1946–1980*. (Townsville: GREAT BARRIER REEF MPA, 1984), 2.

distinctively Australian and that was at the same time different, novel, and perhaps even sublime. ANTA's solution was to package an array of old and new environmental themes with the intention of growing tourism at a site that, by the mid-1960s, the association deemed one of Australia's foremost and representative attractions. Seen in this way, advertisements that featured healthy, young Australians, whose vitality and happiness ostensibly derived from the freedom of an outdoor lifestyle, help explain the rise to prominence of the Great Barrier Reef in the public imagination. Publicity images for the Reef, above or below the title text 'AUSTRALIA' enlivened the wider image of the nation. How tourist images of the Reef chart contemporary environmental attitudes towards it, and the degree to which these images explain the Reef's emergence as a significant national site, are key considerations of this chapter.

Scholars in varying disciplinary fields have explained well how visitor encounters have shaped the history and heritage of the Reef.[2] Others have sought to explain the Reef's depiction in contemporary media.[3] These accounts have produced further research on the relationship between attitudes and environmental behaviours of Great Barrier Reef user groups. Consistent across this interdisciplinary research is the notion that the Reef holds intrinsic value to the nation and its people, as well as local stakeholders and interests.[4] But few studies have considered how the Reef has been presented in advertising campaigns.[5] Little has been written on how ANTA and the ATC marketed the Reef in the 1960s, using modern advertising techniques to disseminate its image around the world. Like the eucalypt, the wattle, the kangaroo or the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Reef is an icon indelibly linked to the idea of the Australian nation. As the opening quotation of this chapter suggests, tourist promoters sought to imbue the Reef with such symbolic significance.

This chapter analyses the advertising imagery ANTA and the ATC used to market the Great Barrier Reef between 1958 and 1970. On the surface, it deals with ANTA's attempts to bring its visual marketing strategy in line with contemporary advertising standards, particularly those practised in the United States. Though ANTA had commissioned illustrated posters for the Reef since the 1930s, these depictions tended to be of a general nature, with little attention to the tourist infrastructure, or lack

[2] Celmara Pocock, *Visitor Encounters with the Great Barrier Reef: Aesthetics, Heritage and the Senses* (Routledge: Oxon, 2020); Susan Mclntyre-Tamwoy, 'My Barrier Reef: Exploring the Bowen Community's Attachment to the Great Barrier Reef' *Historic Environment* 17:3 (2004), 19–28.
[3] Alexandra Coghlan, Char-Lee McLennan & Brent Moyle, 'Contested images, place meaning and potential tourists' responses to an iconic nature-based attraction at risk: the case of the Great Barrier Reef', *Tourism Recreation Research,* 42:3, (2017), 299-315; Scott Shafer & Dominique Benzaken, 'User perceptions about marine wilderness on Australia's Great Barrier Reef', *Coastal Management*, 26:2 (1998), 79-91.
[4] Goldberg, J. A., N. A. Marshall, A. Birtles, P. Case, M. I. Curnock, and G. G. Gurney, 'On the relationship between attitudes and environmental behaviours of key Great Barrier Reef user groups', *Ecology and Society* 23:19, (2018); Rohan Lloyd, Maxine Newlands & Theresa Petray, 'Coral Battleground? Re-examining the 'Save the Reef' campaign in 1960s Australia, *Environmental Sociology*, 3:1, (2017), 54-63.
[5] Ann Elias, 'Aquariums and human–animal relations at the Great Barrier Reef', *Queensland Review* 28:2, (2021), 98-113.

thereof, of the North Queensland coast. But in the 1960s its strategy changed. Photographic imagery started to present a more realistic, or so it seemed, window into the reality of the tourist experience.

In tracking this change in how promoters depicted the Reef, this chapter brings to light a range of sources and actors not well examined in scholarship to-date. I draw on ANTA's archival record, its internal communications as well as the public statements of its leaders, in the following investigation of why advertising the Great Barrier Reef in an international campaign became among the organisation's core post-war priorities. Furthermore, the advertising images analysed in this chapter contain important insights into the evolving environmental consciousness of the 1960s. And the degree to which tourist advertising may have shaped and reflected contemporary environmental attitudes, and the ways in which tourism itself at the same time posed environmental hazards to the Reef, are key considerations of this chapter. Advertising images increasingly came to associate female subjects with the Reef, tracing changes in gender conventions and attitudes towards self-display and the human body. But most of all, advertising images for the Reef show us how promoters sought to connect people with the nation by encouraging them to appreciate its nature.

The first sections of the chapter consider Reef advertising between 1958 and 1965. These years were characterised by the ambition of a new generation of leadership at ANTA. But the enthusiasm of the new administrators was tempered by the practical realities of the state of Australia's tourist infrastructure. A lack of roads, accommodation, airports, and other facilities necessary for large-scale tourism were issues the tourist industry faced nation-wide in the late 1950s. ANTA turned to market research to grow a local tourist industry that would eventually expand to a capacity sufficient for the arrival of the rising numbers of international and domestic tourists. Latter sections deal with ANTA's post-1965 images of the Reef. I argue that posters from this era offer a sharp departure from earlier advertising efforts, giving a different picture not only of the Reef, but of the nation.

Advertisements in the latter half of the 1960s followed a significant moment in ANTA's organisational history. In 1965, under its new General Manager Basil Atkinson, ANTA commissioned a thorough review of Australia's tourism industry. Crucially, and in a move that was fashionable in a decade where Australia increasingly aligned itself with the rising superpower of the United States, the review was carried out by an entirely American taskforce. The report they handed back to ANTA became known internally as the 'HKF report' (named for the initials of one of the New York firms contracted to undertake it Harris, Kerr, Forster & Company and Stanton Robbins & Co., Inc). Spearritt and Davidson observe that the 250,000-word report was 'the most substantial stocktake ever undertaken of Australian tourism.'[6] Yet the report remains largely overlooked in historical accounts, including in

[6] Spearritt and Davidson, *Holiday Business*, 314.

Spearritt and Davidson's. In this chapter, I have limited my analysis of the report to its consideration of the Great Barrier Reef. I discuss in more detail how the report informed the style and content of national advertising between the 1970s and 1990s in the final two chapters. The consultants had big plans for the Great Barrier Reef. Australia's marketing had been too disparate, and confusing to consumers, they said. The nation (or ANTA, at least) needed to decide on a limited set of images that decisively portrayed the essence of the nation. In this chapter, we will see how Australian promoters responded to the consultant's recommendation that the Great Barrier Reef should capture something quintessential about Australia, and, to what degree efforts to make this so succeeded.

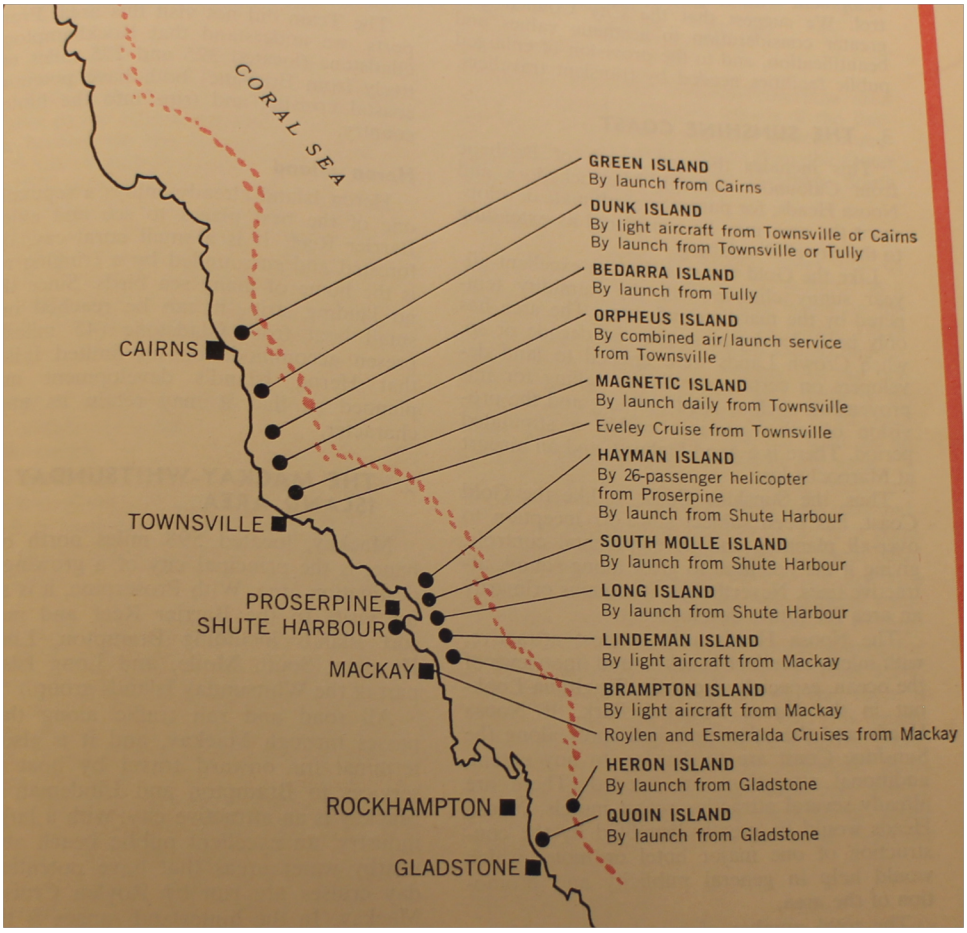


Figure 1 - Great Barrier Reef, Principal Islands, HKF Report, 1965.

ANTA's Challenge: Developing and Promoting the Remote Far North

Before the rise of far North Queensland as a popular tourist hotspot, the distant coastline that abuts the Reef – from about 364 kilometres north of Brisbane – long held a reputation in the settler nation as a hostile and uninviting stretch of land and sea. Beset with shallow corals and submerged reefs, fatal to maritime navigation it also resembled a place of natural wonder and economic opportunity. From the moment of Europeans' first encounter with the Reef, when James Cook's *Endeavour* ran aground in its 'Coral Jaws', to the present day, the Reef has held an important place in the foundational myths of the

settler nation.[7] Key to these narratives is the notion that successive generations of explorers, pioneers and settlers had effectively tamed the Reef, its waters, islands and coastline, into a productive and utilitarian site. Historians including Rohan Lloyd, but also Ben Daley, James and Margarita Bowen, and Iain McCalman have documented well the political economy of the Reef throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[8] Though these works record the aspirations of many settlers to visit, explore, develop and eventually protect the Reef, little remains known about the publicity campaigns that sold it. This chapter fills a small part of this gap, focussing on how national tourism promoters marketed the Great Barrier Reef in a decade that saw not only its formalisation and rise as a destination for mass tourism, but also in a new era of commercial advertising.

Tourism operators saw the potential of the Reef early in the twentieth century, but it was not until World War II, that, as Lloyd writes, it became clear 'tourism would form the greatest source of the commercial wealth to be extracted from it.'[9] Indeed, the Queensland Government passed legislation to develop the state's tourist resorts in 1946, 'particularly islands of the Barrier Reef and the Northern wonderland between Bowen and Cooktown.'[10] So monumental was the passage of this resolution that Queensland Parliament's Speaker, Labor's Samuel Brassington, brought it to the attention of the then Prime Minister, Ben Chifley. Optimism abounded. The development of the Great Barrier Reef, was 'in the national interest', Brassington said, and it was of pressing importance that the Commonwealth and State Government make every effort to 'develop the tourist industry and facilitate all modern forms of transport and accommodation so that Queensland may share in the tourist trade at as early a date as possible.[11] But as Queensland historians Ross Fitzgerald, Lyndon Megaritty and David Symons note in *Made in Queensland*, the politics of large scale development would soon betray deep-seated rifts between the state's many competing interest groups, leading to a series of confrontations and scandals that defined much of the state's post-war history.[12]

Though proponents of the Reef were excited to pronounce its pending development, by the late 1950s little headway had been made in establishing infrastructure on the scale they had imagined. Though Queensland faced its own challenges in developing the far north, Australia's nascent tourist industry was poorly equipped to deal with the global post-war tourist boom. By 1958, ANTA's administrators were aware that a lack of money, combined with the inability of the organisation to move with the times, were becoming fatal to Australia's tourism prospects. Effective national publicity required, in the words

[7] Rohan Lloyd, *Saving the Reef: The Human Story Behind One of Australia's Greatest Environmental Treasures* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2022, 19; Geoffrey Blainey, *Captain Cook's Epic Voyage*. (Random House Australia, 2020).
[8] Iain McCalman, *The Reef: A Passionate History*; see also McCalman, *John Büsst: Bohemian Artist and Saviour of Reef and Rainforest* (NewSouth, 2024); Bowen & Bowen, *The Great Barrier Reef*.
[9] Lloyd, *Saving the Reef*, 34.
[10] Samuel Brassington, Correspondence to the Prime Minister, January 20, 1947. NAA: A458, AJ392/3 Part 1.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] Ross Fitzgerald, Lyndon Megaritty, David Simons, *Made in Queensland: A New History*, (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2009), 155-164.

of the 1957-58 annual report, 'radical changes.'[13] Hotel accommodation was in short supply, and where it was available, much was in poor shape. Proposed tourist sites along the North Queensland coast suffered from these conditions more than places that were closer to major cities. Road and sea access were undeveloped. The Reef was a long way from supporting the kind of mass tourism already underway in comparable Pacific destinations like Fiji and Hawaii.[14]

The Reef's distance from Queensland's commercial and industrial heartland, located much further to the state's south, hampered access well beyond the end of the Second World War.[15] As Iain McCalman observes in his biography of artist-turned-Reef-activist John Büsst, even the construction of private houses on the Reef islands was a difficult prospect in the middle decades of the century.[16] Materials were scarce. Even more unreliable was their transportation. Because of the lack of infrastructure and comfortable accommodation, visitors travelling in the late-1940s and 1950s often complained the Reef was misrepresented in advertising, and the experience there unsatisfactory.[17] Indeed, in the post-war years, there had emerged a rift between reality and Reef advertising. A 1947 report to the Queensland Tourist Development Board, for example, advocated for a better control of advertising to avoid creating expectations amongst tourists that did not align with the physical reality at the Reef.[18] As Reef historian and heritage researcher Celmara Pocock writes, complaints about misleading advertising may have been related to the false comparison of the Reef to other, more accessible Pacific locations.[19] When ANTA tasked itself with better promoting the Reef in the 1960s, its challenge was not only to modernise the image of the Reef in advertising, but also to help facilitate construction and development so that the tourist experience came in line with the advertised vision.

Such an undertaking would require the energies of a new generation of ANTA leaders. In 1957, Charles Holmes stepped down as ANTA General Manager. The Perth-born Basil Atkinson, a Royal Australian Air Force veteran who had found a career after the war reporting for London's *Evening Standard*, replaced him. Returning to Perth from London in 1954, Atkinson saw Australia's travel industry as worryingly deficient. Atkinson wrote to Holmes, sometime between 1954 and 1956. In the impassioned letter, he told Holmes that tourism had been a lifebuoy to Britain's economy after the war. Indeed, as the historian of British tourism Victor Middleton suggests, there was 'an approximate doubling of the volume of pre-

[13] ANTA, *Annual Report for 1957-58, 4.*
[14] *Resorting to Tourism: Cultural Policies for Tourist Development in Australia* (Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1991)
[15] Toby Martin, 'Socialist paradise' or 'inhospitable island'? Visitor responses to Palm Island in the 1920s and 1930s', *Aboriginal History* 38 (2014), 131-153.
[16] McCalman, *John Büsst,* 94-100.
[17] Celmara Pocock, 'Blue Lagoons and Coconut Palms': The Creation of a Tropical Idyll in Australia', *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 16:3 (2005), 335-349.
[18] Queensland Tourist Development Board, *Report on the Tourist Resources of Queensland and the Requirements for their Development* (Brisbane, QLD: Government Printers, 1947), 50-51.
[19] Pocock, 'Blue Lagoons and Coconut Palms', 342.

war holiday travel in Britain by 1955.'[20] In reply, Holmes offered Atkinson a job, tasking him with opening ANTA's new San Francisco office, the first foreign office reinstated since the war.[21] Impressing Holmes with his leadership in America, Atkinson returned from San Francisco to take over as general manager in September 1957. Over the next decade, his leadership brought substantial change. His oversight of modernised campaigns increasingly embraced post-war advertising methods, especially those already widely practised in the United States. As we will see, Atkinson's clearly perceived the apparent value of the American market to Australian tourism and began to conceive of ways to extend Australia's appeal across the Pacific.[22]

Shortly after Atkinson's first anniversary as manager came the 'First Australian Travel Convention', held in Sydney Harbour onboard the *SS Orsova*, in September 1958. Atkinson's keynote address highlights best his aspirations for Australia's tourism industry and offers an early insight into how the Great Barrier Reef soon became a central destination in ANTA's plans to advertise the nation. He made clear that if Australia was to attract the international tourist, it must first educate Australians at home by overcoming 'a general apathy towards tourism and a sad lack of awareness of the benefits that tourism can bring.'[23] Such a view belonged to the long-held ANTA view that improved international visitation rested on Australians being good ambassadors – a notion that premised the association's foundation in the late 1920s. Atkinson cited statistics that demonstrated the Pacific was among the world's most rapidly expanding tourist markets. 'It is obvious, therefore, where the bulk of our travel promotion effort must be directed,' he said. 'The market with the greatest potential is the United States. We must intensify our efforts there to make a greater impact.' The Pacific, said Atkinson, was 'one of the most rapidly expanding travel areas in the world', and it had exceeded North America, Europe, and the Caribbean in terms of a percentage increase in visitors. 'It must be remembered that it is only in recent years that we in the South Pacific have lost our remoteness', he said, adding that Australia must direct the bulk of its travel promotion to 'the market with the greatest potential', the United States. Atkinson's years in ANTA's San Francisco office no doubt shaped his rhetoric. As he looked to lure the lucrative American market the Great Barrier Reef.

Eileen Mayo's Great Barrier Reef and Atkinson's industry transformation

In the late 1950s and early 1960s two key ideas were taking form in ANTA's national promotions strategy. First, Australia's relative lack of sophisticated tourist infrastructure might be overlooked by the

[20] Victor T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism: A Remarkable Story of Growth*, (Elsevier, Oxford, 2005), 20-21. Don Beresford, 'Tourism Chief put Australia on the map', *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 9, 2013.
[21] 'Australian National Travel Association's Representatives at New San Francisco Office', *Walkabout*, 22:12, December 1, 1956, 46.
[22] On the exoticisation of the Pacific in the post-war era see: Colin Michael Hall, 'Making the Pacific', in Gregory D. Ringer (ed.), *Destinations: cultural landscapes of tourism* (London 1998), 140–53 & Colin Michael Hall, "Heritage tourism in the Pacific: modernity, myth, and identity." In *Cultural heritage and tourism in the developing world*, (Routledge, 2009), 114-119.
[23] 'ANTA Looks Ahead', Basil Atkinson Speech in Report of the First Australian Travel Convention, held on board the liner "Orsova" in Sydney, September 8, 1958, 28-34.

foreign traveller if promoters could sufficiently present Australians as friendly and hospitable. 'Show them friendliness and a blind eye is turned to possible shortcomings', Atkinson said at a conference in 1960.[24] Second, for mass tourism to succeed in Australia, ANTA had to induce tourists to travel in the South Pacific. By building up the region, Australia could win over the lucrative American tourist market. It was against this backdrop that ANTA began to market the Great Barrier Reef, Australia's most geographically proximate region to Hawaii, as a serious destination for the American consumer. Atkinson's astute appraisal of the international tourism industry, and his realisation that proper marketing required in depth market research informed these positions, engendering far reaching consequences for the presentation of the Reef in national advertising. Through an appraisal of the advertising images that ANTA produced for the Reef in this time, a clearer picture emerges of how these considerations would go on to shape its appearance in national campaigns.

Despite Atkinson's vision and ambition, the organisation he led remained old-fashioned. Change would come slowly, as indicated by the work of Eileen Mayo, from whom ANTA had commissioned a poster of the Great Barrier Reef in 1957, the same year that Atkinson became manager. Mayo's poster is a good example of how ANTA's advertising in the late 1950s remained largely a product of the organisation's pre-war culture – it is an illustration designed to conjure the idea of a place more than reflect reality. In the 1930s, Trompf, Northfield, and Sellheim's interpretations of the Reef (discussed briefly in chapter four) had experimented with completely and partially submerged framing of illustrations, giving a sense of the Reef's colour and wonder underneath the ocean surface.[25] Mayo's poster is set apart from earlier portrayals in the extremity of its closeup, its dearth of subjects, and consequently, the minute detail of its illustration. Nearly a quarter of the image is taken over by the black and white striped butterfly fish that dominates the frame. The attentive tourist could place the image, however, by its inclusion of the colourful spiral 'Heron Island volute', (named in the title) that decorates the seabed. Declared a national park in the early 1950s, Heron was popular (and so appeared in much marketing paraphernalia) because 'its mainland stepping off point, Gladstone, is only 328 miles north of Brisbane'.[26] 'Surrounded by extensive coral reefs and a nesting place for a variety of sea birds and turtles', Heron became a visual shorthand for the Reef. The island would remain the location of choice for marketing images for much of the 1960s.

[24] 'Planning for the Sixties', Basil Atkinson Speech to the ANTA Travel Convention, 1960, 8.
[25] Elias, 'Aquariums and human–animal relations', 99. Elias identifies in Reef advertising 'a pictorial device that developed alongside the rise of modern tourist advertising images of Great Barrier Reef – a split-level viewpoint that approximates the effect of looking at the Reef through the glass sides of an aquarium.'
[26] ANTA, *Great Barrier Reef: Australia*, (Melbourne, 1963),



Figure 2 - Eileen Mayo, 'Australia, the Great Barrier Reef: Longspined Butterfly-fish & Heron Island Volute' Melbourne: Australian National Travel Association, 1957-58.

Mayo's image conveyed the real-life colour of the Reef in an era where black and white photography still dominated. As Ben Daley notes, coral was used for both commercial and official purposes and displayed at global tourist exhibitions and in Qantas offices. This practise persisted well into the 1960s. At the 1967 Exposition in Montreal, for example, Australia's representatives displayed over 1,350 coral specimens in an effort to amaze and allure attendees.[27] But when taken from the water, corals lose their colour. At exhibitions, travel agents would therefore bleach or paint them to try and evoke some of the

[27] For a discussion of how the physical transplantation of coral supported tourism at Green Island and other tourist sites, see Ben Daley, *The Great Barrier Reef: An Environmental History*, (Routledge, Oxen: 2014), 138-140.

colour of the Reef. Mayo's poster performed an important function at these exhibitions, where it was displayed alongside real corals that had been lifted from the Reef. The poster therefore gave an extra dimension of colour and perspective to artificial arrangements of dying, or already dead, expropriated corals.[28] Nevertheless, Mayo's image does little to suggest to the likely consumer what the experience of a holiday to the Great Barrier Reef might actually look like, doing little to address contemporary perceptions the Reef was not being accurately represented in advertising.

While ANTA distributed Mayo's vision of the Reef around the world in the late fifties, Atkinson's transformation of the organisation was already underway. Early on in his administration, he committed himself to a complete overhaul of ANTA's organisational structure.[29] To achieve this end, he steadily implemented far-reaching reforms that were every bit as innovative as Clapp and Holme's. First, he reorganised ANTA's offices in Australia and established new ones in London, Wellington, and New York. He then persuaded the state government tourist bureaus to work together rather than compete. Each state would have a representative on ANTA's honorary board. States could then present their aspirations and interests to the national body. This gave ANTA an unprecedented ability to centralise power by commanding the separate interests within Australian tourism. The ANTA annual report for 1957-58 indicates that the Queensland government was an eager participant in this new cooperative relationship, perhaps sensing the benefits ANTA offered the state's burgeoning tourism plans. Along with Tasmania, Queensland 'made direct contributions to the funds of the Association throughout the year.'[30] Other states were slower to come to the table, but national advertising was increasingly reflecting a cooperative effort arrived at in consultation between the states and ANTA.

Under Atkinson, ANTA became preoccupied with locating Australian tourism more firmly in the Pacific. This reorientation converged with the interests of other Pacific nations in growing tourism, giving way to the founding of the Pacific Area Travel Association – a federation of countries with a common interest in attracting the world's travellers. As Atkinson would later recall in the 1990s, PATA was inaugurated in 1956 with a view to bringing 'Pacific people together to compete against European countries.'[31] The founding of PATA dovetailed with ANTA's regional objectives, and in the mid- to late-1950s ANTA helped facilitate the Pacific association's growth by hosting a number of its conferences, some of which were attended by then PM Robert Menzies. In spite of ANTA's cooperation with PATA, Atkinson still had a concern that the body better served the interests of the North Pacific countries. He nevertheless took the 'broad view [that] PATA is doing an excellent job for the Pacific as

[28] For an image of such a display see Ben Daley, *The Great Barrier Reef*, 140.
[29] ANTA, Annual Report for 1957-58, 4.
[30] ANTA, Annual Report for 1957-58, 4.
[31] Nina Mistilis & Neil Leiper, 'The Australian Tourist Commission's early years viewed by former senior managers', *Tourism, Culture & Communication*, Vol. 2, (2000), 19.

a whole.'[32] Atkinson's public rhetoric revealed a consistent preoccupation with the economic value of tourism to the national economy, at a time that he perceived a need for Australia 'to build up quickly our export earnings.'[33] He repeatedly demonstrated the high return on investment of the promotion budgets of Britain, but also smaller nations like the Bahamas and the US territory of Puerto Rico had yielded for those countries. 'It is axiomatic that before you can earn sales pounds you must spend promotion pounds', he pronounced. But Australia's promotion budget was far too small to garner international attention, depriving the nation of millions of tourist dollars, in his view.

Atkinson planned to optimise Australia's modest budget by luring American tourists already on holiday in the Pacific. Commenting on Hawaii's ten-year forecasts for the year 1970, Atkinson said:

> It should not be beyond us to obtain at least one of every ten Americans going to Hawaii – instead of about one of every 16 at present – which should give us a total of about 100,000 Americans a year by 1970.[34]

This attempt to draw American tourists further across the Pacific was much influenced by the success of Hawaii in attracting tourists since the war. Australian tourism bureaucrats saw the Hawaii example as the high-water mark of Pacific tourism marketing.[35] At ANTA's 1958 Convention, G.H. Turner, Executive Director of the Pacific Area Travel Association, declared the significance of Hawaii's annual $750,000 promotion budget, which made it 'the Pacific leader'. He credited Hawaii's success to its creation of an 'image of a most delightful and relaxing place. A sort of Utopia where the jaded can find peace, romance, rest, and an atmosphere.'[36] Another delegate, Leon Trout, President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of Australia, believed Hawaii's example be replicated in Australia. Trout suggested that 'we study the Hawaii story closely in Australia and adopt what we can from their experience to improve our tourist facilities and promotional efforts.'[37] Though the Great Barrier Reef had been earmarked for development since the Second World War, it was in large part the Australian administrator's desire to apply the lessons of Hawaii's example that was to shape the vision of the Reef in early 1960s advertising.

Interestingly, the large-scale resort tourism emerging in Hawaii was not a realistic proposition on the Reef islands until the 1980s. The 1963 ANTA brochure for the Reef region described Magnetic Island's

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[32] Atkinson, 'Planning for the 1960s'.
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] On mass tourism and environmental effects in Hawaii see: Mansel G. Blackford, *Fragile Paradise: The Impact of Tourism on Maui, 1959-2000,* (University Press of Kansas: Lawrence, 2001).
[36] Speech by G.H. Turner Executive Director Pacific Area Travel Association "Pacific Travel Trends" ANTA convention, in ANTA, Report of the First Australian Travel Convention, held on board the liner "Orsova" in Sydney, September 8, 1958, 17-21.
[37] Speech by Leon Trout, in ANTA, First Australian Travel Convention 1958, 22-27.

accommodation as 'mainly of the cabin or bungalow type.'[38] North Queensland lacked the large holiday complexes that were growing in Hawaii, Fiji, Tahiti, and New Zealand. In those destinations, hotels, restaurants, entertainment and shopping, and facilitated recreational and social activities were a dependable feature of the tourist experience. It was in the late 1960s that ANTA resolved to bring the Great Barrier Reef into this constellation of Pacific resort destinations, while at the same time aiming to establish it as a distinctively Australian natural attraction.

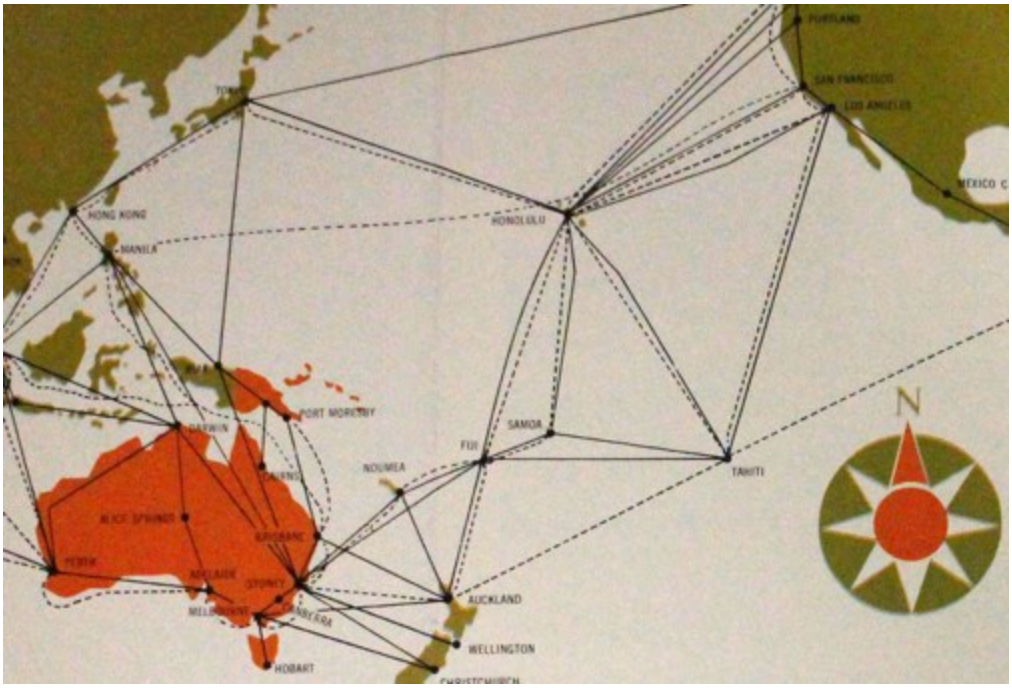


Figure 3 - Air and Sea Routes to Australia, This is Australia, ANTA, 1962.

It is important to think about the HKF Report in the context of Australia's geo-political and strategic situation in the early period of the Cold War. Atkinson had been frank about capitalising on the presence of US military personnel in Asia as a viable market for tourism years before the escalation of the Vietnam War.[39] In 1957 he argued that ANTA 'mustn't lose sight of the thousands of American servicemen and their families' stationed in Asia, who might be convinced to travel to Australia on periods of leave.[40] Without question, Australia's deepening alliance and relationship with the United States over the next decade further impacted ANTA's outlook. This was a time complicated by shifting ideas about British identity and Australian nationhood. As historian James Curran explains, there were emerging questions over 'the validity of a British race identity' which began 'to buckle under the weight

[38] ANTA, *Great Barrier Reef: Australia*.
[39] Chris Dixon, Lisa Featherstone and Jon Piccini, 'Tourism, Americanization and the Vietnam War R&R Scheme in Sydney Australia, 1967–71.' *Journal of Contemporary History,* (2024).
[40] Atkinson, 'Planning for the sixties', ANTA Conference, 1960, 31.

of the new circumstances.'[41] Herein was a tension that Atkinson's administration of ANTA seemed to embody. ANTA, like the nation it represented, was stuck between the historical allegiance to Britain and the rising superpower across the Pacific. The benefits of the American market to Australian tourism identified during the Second World War (discussed in the last chapter), were too lucrative to ignore.

Orienting Australia's publicity efforts towards the Great Barrier Reef had cultural as well as economic dimensions, and ANTA likely interpreted the intensification in western interest in the region. Books such as Neville Shute's *On the Beach*, (1957) and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), as well as the 1958 film adaptation of the Rogers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific* (adapted from James A. Michener's 1947 book) suggest the tropical Pacific was a place of considerable interest in the popular culture of the period.[42] In Australia, there had been a longstanding literary interest in the Reef, dating back to Ted Banfield's 1908 bestseller *Confessions of a Beach-Comber.* Other popular works included Leslie Rees's children's book *Digit Dick and the Great Barrier Reef* (1942) and the University of Sydney emeritus professor of zoology William J. Dakin's *Great Barrier Reef* (1950), which ANTA published. Indeed, as Helen Rozwadowski's illustrates, popular interest in the sea and the underwater world took on a new dimension in the West after 1945.[43] Intuiting this expanding cultural interest in the Reef and in the Pacific, ANTA launched a 'Sou'west Pacific' campaign that sought to unite Australia, New Zealand and Fiji as a 'Glamorous Triangle under the Southern Cross.' The poster for 'Come to the Sou'west Pacific' was laden with symbols of Pacific island culture, demonstrating ANTA's effort to capitalise on the contemporary popularity of the region.[44]

Advertisers for the Reef worked with new, tropical symbols and ideas that were perhaps less commonly associated with the Australian visual landscape. The tropical beaches of the Reef islands were distinct from the urban beaches of the cities. As John Fiske, Bob Hodge and Graeme Turner write in *Myths of Oz*, the 'central image of the Australian beach is not that of the tropical hideaway. That does exist, but is reserved for holidays, preferably outside Australia.'[45] Advertising materials for the Reef in the 1960s suggest the rising significance of the tropical setting to a domestic holiday experience, but were they really quintessentially 'Australian'? Pocock argues that the Reef and the islands that dot the coast of northern Queensland were long subjected to the artificial depiction of a landscape congruent with a stereotypical, Pacific theme. 'The bounty of fruits, lushness of vegetation, ferns, and palms', Pocock writes, were 'accentuated as symbolic elements of Pacific landscapes' during the mid-twentieth

[41] Curran, *Power of Speech*, 83-85.
[42] On the rise of the Pacific in the popular imagination and in film media see: Sean Brawley and Chris Dixon, *Hollywood's South Seas and the Pacific War: Searching for Dorothy Lamour*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
[43] Helen, Rozwadowski,' Wild Blue: The Post-World War Two Ocean Frontier and its Legacy for Law of the Sea', *Environment and History*, 29:3, (2023), 343–376.
[44] On the vogue for pacific themes in the United States see P.D. Andersen, 'The Hollywood Beach Party Genre and the Exotification of Youthful White Masculinity in Early 1960s America', *Men and Masculinities* 18:5, (2015) 511–535.
[45] Fiske, Hodge, Turner, *Myths of Oz*, 100-101.

century.[46] Symbols less commonly associated with Australia, and more with the tropical Pacific, became a feature of Great Barrier Reef imagery in the 1960s – brochures and imagery for the Reef islands in particular, were heavily populated with coconut palms and lush vegetation, indicating a continuing habit of promoters to mimic the tourism campaigns of destinations further afield, like Fiji and Hawaii.[47]

But Atkinson knew that attracting the American market would depend on more than imitating the Hawaiian example. He began to commission visitor surveys to better understand the target demographics for Australian tourism. Historians of the advertising industry have chronicled well the movement towards a scientific approach to advertising during this period.[48] But as Robert Crawford points out, market research was a relatively unknown concept in Australia's private advertising industry in the early 1960s.[49] Sensing the value of this novel, but untried innovation, Atkinson stressed the need for ANTA to adopt it. Significantly, the 1960s vision of the Reef in ANTA materials followed visitor surveys that determined what motivated people to travel to Australia, how long they stayed, where they went, how much they spent, and what their overall impression had been. ANTA's Research Committee was led at the time by Eric McClintock, a journalist turned PR man, whose knack for consumer psychology eventually led him to direct the Woolworths supermarket chain in the 1980s. Market research information, said Atkinson in 1960, 'is of particular importance to our Promotions Committee which advises the Board on all matters relating to advertising and publicity and our publications.'[50] But the emerging focus on market research was limited and was not at that time guiding any coherent strategy used to publicise the Reef. 'We are also in the process of finding out much more vital information about the visitor which we do not at present know', Atkinson said, indicating that his creative teams were then responding more to their intuition than any qualitative market research data in their construction of ANTA's publicity materials.

Though it yielded limited information, Atkinson's urge to know the consumer quickly shaped Australian advertising. To sell Australia effectively, Atkinson insisted 'we must know what the visitor thinks of us. We must know what he likes and what he dislikes so as we know what bait will catch him and what will turn him away.' From this desire to understand what made the visitor tick, ANTA had in the late 1950s commissioned a small pilot survey. With its market research capacity still in its infancy, ANTA found it

[46] Pocock, 'Blue Lagoons and Coconut Palms', 340-41.
[47] Though Fiji was a popular destination, the rise of mass tourism on the island faced development challenges and impacted local communities. See: Yoko Kanemasu, 'Fiji tourism half a century on: Tracing the trajectory of local responses', in *Tourism in Pacific Islands*, (Routledge, 2015), 63-84; Stephen G. Britton, *Tourism and underdevelopment in Fiji*, (ANU Press, Canberra 1983).
[48] Crawford, *But Wait… There's More.* For a detailed account of the rise of the American advertising industry see: Juliann Silvuka, *Sex Soap and Cigarettes*.
[49] Robert Crawford, 'Creating a creative industry: Australian advertising agencies in the 1960s–1970s', *Creative Industries Journal*, 9:2, (2016), 149.
[50] Address by Basil G. Atkinson, 'Planning for the sixties', Basil Atkinson General Manager, ANTA, to ANTA Travel Convention, Melbourne, November 23, 1960.

difficult to process the 3,000 returned questionnaires. One key finding stood out that was to inform much of ANTA's early 1960s publicity. As Atkinson observed:

> In almost every case the departing visitor has written that the thing he enjoyed most about Australia was the people and the hospitality… That is the best commodity we can offer to make sure that the visitor will come back.

Here was a clear rearticulation of the long-held notion that it was the friendliness and character of the Australian people that could best attract the overseas tourist. Atkinson declared that 'scenery is not everything'. But importantly this notion was now supported by market research – a promotional instinct no longer. Australia was fortunate, said Atkinson, that 'we have gained a reputation overseas for the friendliness and hospitality shown to our visitors.' The small number of visiting Americans sampled in the pilot survey had agreed that 'the thing that really impressed them about Australia was our friendliness.'[51] Soon the notion that Australia was a friendly place would become entwined with the very image of the Great Barrier Reef, and also of the Reef's parent state – Queensland.

ANTA brochures espoused the inviting attitude and exciting atmosphere of modern Australia – a vast and untarnished 'vacationland' of 'white beaches… glittering cities, countless coral islands, frontier towns, [and] a rugged, robust people ready to extend a hearty welcome.' As this small piece of copy indicates, the reenvisioning of Australia as a friendly place was correlated to descriptions of the Reef as a significant national site, where there lived friendly locals waiting to welcome and accommodate tourists. Indeed, the cover image for ANTA's 1962 *This is Australia* pamphlet, which contained this copy, used as its cover image a photograph of a beach scene taken at Great Barrier Reef's Heron Island. ANTA's positioning of Australians as a friendly people correlated with contemporary Queensland Government Tourist Bureau advertising that sold Queensland as a 'sunshine state' that:

> Invites you to come and holiday amid its array of natural attractions – to bask in the tanning rays of the sun – to cruise the coral seas – to relax on tropic isles – to explore exotic wonders of the tropics. But most of all, Queenslanders want to MEET YOU! They are a friendly people, whose welcome is as warm as it is sincere. No matter where you go in this Sunshine State, you'll find you're met with a smile and the ready hand of friendship; for with Queenslanders, hospitality is a tradition.[52]

The epithet 'the sunshine state' was intended as an indicator of the disposition of a people as much as a descriptor of the weather conditions. The evocation of sunshine and friendship in the QGTB brochure

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[51] *Ibid*.
[52] *This is Queensland* (Queensland Government Tourist Bureau: 1960-1970).

echoes a verse from Clyde Collins' *'The Sunshine State'*. Collin's verse, written for the 1959 Queensland centenary, linked the friendly disposition of Queenslanders to the state's abundant sun: 'friendship's great in the Sunshine State/May its sunshine keep smiling for you!'.

How successful was ANTA's South Pacific campaign? In their history of the Australian tourism industry, Spearritt and Davidson are sceptical that ANTA's employment of South Pacific themes garnered any success. They write: 'the campaign flopped. Instead of nostalgic South Seas memories, it got war veterans thinking of mosquitoes and wartime experiences they would rather forget.'[53] Indeed, ANTA soon changed tack. In 1963 it launched a new campaign, 'Destination South Pacific' which, according to that year's annual report, gained better traction in the United States.[54] An analysis of ANTA's sales materials and photographic library from that year reveal a style of photography and composition that moved away from the stereotypical Pacific themes and towards a more documentary 'Australian' style. The below image *Exploring the coral wonders off Heron Island on the Great Barrier Reef* belongs to this period, though it is notable for its surrealist, dreamlike quality – a style that was not usual for ANTA's contemporary image making. The poster is also notable for its striking similarity with another contemporary poster released by the QGTB, who, as we have already seen, cooperated with ANTA in getting the state, and the Reef, national publicity. This poster campaign stands apart from previous Reef imagery for two reasons. First, it records an otherworldly vision of the Reef, not really seen in ANTA's previous depictions. Second, the poster records the collection of, or at least interference with, marine life at the Reef, offering a window into contemporary environmental values, at least as advertisers perceived them.[55]

Atkinson was aware of the problem of producing advertising that gave an impression of an experience that tourists could not actually have. In a 1960 speech, he emphasised ANTA's 'responsibility to ensure that the gap between the advertised dream and the reality at the destination is not too great.' Advertising that was out of step with the actual tourist experience would result in poor visitor satisfaction, and lead to 'bad word-of-mouth publicity that will keep others away.'[56] Mayo's poster explicitly depicts a scene that plausibly existed at the Reef, but remained opaque about the wider tourist infrastructure that a visitor would need to navigate in order to experience such a scene for themselves. It was this type of representation Atkinson wanted the organisation to avoid. But in order to lessen the gap 'between the advertised dream and reality', greater organisational change would have to take effect to engender a spirit of cooperation, across multiple government agencies and industry stakeholders, to instate the infrastructure necessary to support the high numbers of tourists that Atkinson envisioned. Such a plan

[53] Spearritt and Davidson, *Holiday Business*, 311.
[54] ANTA, Annual Report 1963/64, (Melbourne, 1964).
[55] Ben Daley and Peter Griggs, '"Loved to death": Coral collecting in the Great Barrier Reef, Australia, 1770–1970', *Environment and History* 14:1 (2008), 89-119.
[56] Atkinson, 'Planning for the sixties'.

was derived to a large degree from Atkinson's close analysis of the British Travel Association, who Atkinson perceived had 'used tourism as a tool for economic development as few other countries have done' precisely because of its ability to foster 'successful working partnerships' between Government and private enterprise.[57]



Figure 4 - 'Exploring the coral wonders off Heron Island on the Great Barrier Reef', ANTA, 1963.

The above posters demonstrate how the Reef's unique geography and ecology was slowly becoming entwined with the national identity. The advertisement's use of a human subject made it distinct from the 1957 Mayo image, indicating to the tourist an impression of something resembling the actual tourist experience. It quickly became one of ANTA's leading images for Australia in overseas marketing, used as the cover photo for pamphlets in North America, Britain, and Europe. It adorned the cover of a 1963 brochure on the Reef, of which ANTA printed 100,000 copies of the 'lavishly illustrated' in its first year, with new editions released up until at least 1965.[58] Importantly the sales materials that bore this image were deployed in an effort to market Australia, not just the Great Barrier Reef. Not only does the colour photograph mark a significant departure from ANTA's interwar and wartime advertising style, but it

[57] *Ibid.*
[58] See ANTA, *Annual Report 1962-63*; and ANTA, *Annual Report for 1963-64.*

also resembles a new envisioning of the Reef altogether. For the first time an ANTA national advertising poster for the Reef depicted the possible tourist experience, not just an illustration of novel marine life. In the new era of the 1960s, ANTA materials increasingly sold the Reef and its holiday islands as a place where the tourist could relax and enjoy the spiritual benefits of the Australian environment. In the words of ANTA's primary brochure for the Reef, which circulated for much of the 1960s:

> The warm waters and climate of the Reef Islands are perfect for you when you are on vacation. In fact, the balmy atmosphere and friendliness at these resorts are pretty much as you would expect paradise to be.[59]

Here again is the familiar appeal for the tourist to experience Australia's unique environment and the people, whose friendly character was unfalteringly derived from the environmental conditions they lived in.

The subject of *Exploring the Coral Wonders* poster, a young woman reaching into the coral waters and collecting a starfish, gives an insight into the tourist industry's perception of contemporary environmental values. Reef historians have documented well the tourist souveniring of shells and corals, activities which heavily impacted marine life and Reef structures.[60] Art historian Ann Elias argues in her work on Reef imagery that tourism advertising posters promoted 'the kinds of human activities that soon led to the Reef's deterioration, and that were protested by Judith Wright and the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland when they became outspoken in 1963 in their opposition to 'coral collectors, shell collectors and tourist interference'.[61] Indeed, starfish were among the most commonly souvenired animals from the Reef, and souvenired starfish suffered an especially grim fate. Boiled after being caught, they were transformed 'from deep-blue living creatures to deep-red inanimate ornaments.'[62] The effects of such human interference with the Reef were so well known in the mid-to-late 1960s that even resource industry lobbyists attempted to play down the effect of oil exploration on the Reef by calling out what they said was 'the peaceful exploitation of the Reef' through tourism, shell and coral collecting, and fishing.[63] Even amid this cultural discourse, ANTA perceived the collection of aquatic souvenirs as a central part of the Reef experience, making the activity the subject of its national and international campaigns.

As we have seen so far in this thesis, promoters intuited existing behaviours as much as they shaped them, and advertising that depicted human interference with marine life reflected longstanding patterns

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[59] ANTA, *Great Barrier Reef: Australia.*
[60] Daley, Griggs, 'Loved to death', 89-119.
[61] Judith Wright, *The Coral Battleground*, (Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 2014), 2.
[62] Elias, 'Aquariums and human-animal relations', 107.
[63] Bowen & Bowen, *The Great Barrier Reef,* 321-22

of behaviour. Wildflower collecting in early twentieth-century Victoria and Western Australia, for example, had prompted debates in those states around the environmental impacts of removing native flora from the bush.[64] The localised practise of flower (and indeed coral) collecting belongs to the timeless ritual of souveniring, a pastime that historians and sociologists argue gives much insight into the material culture of tourism.[65] As Hume argues, souvenired objects in the form of pebbles and seashells 'represent the geology and fauna of the experienced site.'[66] Seen in this way, ANTA's depiction of a woman collecting the starfish offers an insight in ANTA's perception that female visitors possessed a latent desire to connect with nature through touch, interaction and collection. Emma Gleadhill writes in her history of eighteenth and nineteenth century women's souvenir culture that 'women, finding themselves variously excluded from connoisseurship, science and politics, found the souvenir a particularly useful mechanism to negotiate meaning and value.'[67] In those years, she observes, British women travelling in the Mediterranean placed a high value on shells and corals as souvenirs of their experiences. While values and attitudes had changed much from Gleadhill's period of focus to the 1960s, it remains a truism that an object a traveller 'takes home from the travel environment' serves 'as a memento, or evidence that they were *there*.'[68]

Elias argues that *Exploring the Coral Wonders*' depiction of human interference suggests a human 'desire for power over the wilderness.'[69] But another possible interpretation is that the poster perceives a demand in ANTA's tourism market for experiences that connected them with nature, building on a long-established tradition of settler recreational and educational engagement with the natural world.[70] Nevertheless, ANTA materials, like those of the QGTB before them, promoted 'the Reef's visitors fossicking and scavenging the fringing reefs for corals and shells.' ANTA literary aids were scarcely ambiguous in their encouragement of shell collecting. The 1963-66 issues of *Great Barrier Reef: Australia* suggested that tourists observe the 'bizarre sea creatures' of the 'coral marineland' from the comfort of a glass-bottom boat. But an image from the same guide depicted a female tourist plucking a starfish from a shallow rockpool. At Heron Island, said the guide, 'the visitor has only to walk out onto the reef at low tide to inspect the coral at close quarters.'[71] Contemporary ANTA magazine *Walkabout* described

[64] Lise Summers, "Wildflower season: The development of native flora protection legislation in WA, 1911-1975," *Studies in WA History* 27 (2011), 39-44; Meredith Fletcher, "Exotic natives – the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria's Wildflower shows", *Victorian Historical Journal* 79 (2008), 93-106.
[65] Emma Gleadhill, *Taking Travel Home: The Souvenir Culture of British Women Tourists 1750-1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2022);
[66] Hume, *Tourism Art and Souvenirs: The Material Culture of Tourism*, 82.
[67] Gleadhill, *Taking Travel Home,* 2. Dunlap argues that the activities of collecting plant and animal specimens that were central to natural history ('a hobby and a study') helped settlers form connections to the land and settler society. See Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora,* 21-22. On the movement from 'collection' to 'observation' among scientists and natural history enthusiasts in Victoria see: Tom Griffiths, 'The natural history of Melbourne': The culture of nature writing in Victoria, 1880–1945 , *Australian Historical Studies*, 23:93, (1989), 339-365.
[68] Gleadhill, *Taking Travel Home*.
[69] Elias, 'Aquariums and human-animal relations', 107.
[70] Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora,* 299-301; Harper, 'Locating histories of bush-based recreation in Australia', 2.
[71] ANTA, *Great Barrier Reef*.

the same activity at Green Island, where 'low tide means reef-walking and shell collecting'.[72] Such descriptions give context to the late twentieth century findings of researchers of the environmental impacts of tourism at Heron Island, which describe that the island's environmental problems 'would have been avoided if environmentally based planning had been followed.'[73] ANTA's visual record of the tourist experience at Heron and other islands records that no such regulation or planning was being seriously contemplated at the reef in the 1960s.

'Why should anyone go to Australia?': The Great Barrier Reef in and after the HKF Report, 1965-1971

1964 had been Australia's best ever year for travel. The number of overseas visitors was increasing, (165,000 in 1964), but perhaps more importantly, so was the amount of money each visitor was spending. But ANTA administrators were cautiously optimistic. They complained that it was 'becoming increasingly difficult for Australia to maintain its rate of growth' because of Australia's 'disadvantages of distance and cost' in relation to tourism's established overseas markets. Australia had to 'make a disproportionately greater effort than its competitors to maintain its position.' [74]

Sensitive to the changing global landscape of tourism, but also of advertising and public relations (and the emergent influence of Madison Avenue), ANTA in 1964 appointed two New York consultancy firms to report on the state of the Australian travel industry. ANTA's Board justified the report's expense out of concern for 'the efficient development of our visitor markets', particularly those in the U.S. and U.K, and drew up terms of reference for a comprehensive evaluation of the Australian tourist industry's needs. They appointed two New York firms: Harris, Kerr, Forster & Co. and Stanton Robbins & Co., Inc. And though this was the era of the New York agency and the high-flying advertising executive, both companies came with industry experience. 'Both companies… have an international reputation for their work in Israel, Ireland and Puerto Rico.'[75] ANTA's chairman (and deputy chair of the shipping company P&O Orient Lines of Australia), John Bates, thought highly of the survey team's credentials. They 'represented two firms of world standing in the highly specialised field of destination travel and tourism development and promotion', he wrote in the preface to the report. The consultants presented their final findings to ANTA in October 1965. The report, said ANTA, 'is the first comprehensive survey of the travel and tourism industry to be carried out in Australia and probably the most detailed of its kind to be done for any country.'[76] The recommendations found within had far reaching

[72] 'Your Barrier Reef Holiday', *Walkabout*, 30:10, (October 1964), 15.
[73] Greg Hill, Johanna Rosier, Pam Dyer, 'Tourism development and environmental limitations at Heron Island, Great Barrier Reef: a response,' *Journal of Environmental Management*, 45:1, (1995), 97.
[74] ANTA Annual Report 1964-65, (Melbourne, 1965), 7-8.
[75] *Ibid*.
[76] John D. Bates, Preface, in 'Australia's Travel and Tourist Industry: 1965', (Harris, Kerr, Forster & Company: Sydney, 1965). Hereafter 'HKF Report.'

consequences not only for Australia's entire tourism industry, but also for the development of the Great Barrier Reef, identified by the consultants as a premier destination.

'Why should anyone go to Australia?' was a question which the authors of the *HKF Report* frankly admitted they had thought before travelling from the United States. Once they had carried out their extensive travel in Australia, the authors were unanimous in their view that there were 'numerous unique attractions of international interest… which provide persuasive answers to such a question.' But they identified that the competing interests of Australia's state tourist bureaus meant that the attractions of each state were often advanced as the most typically Australian. The New York marketing experts saw this decentralised practise as deeply problematic to Australia's ability to market itself and advocated for a more concentrated approach. Australia, the report's authors said, needed to come up with a definitive list of decisively Australian attractions. The authors were diplomatic in their assessment of this issue. 'Obviously, in a vast land of nearly 3 million square miles there are many actual and potential attractions (natural as well as man-made ones) and beauties for the traveller – Australian or overseas visitor.'[77]

To eliminate Australia's confused branding, the consultants argued that major attractions needed to be settled on, and 'kept in the forefront of Australia's travel promotion and publicity planning.' A marketing strategy that focussed on predetermined locations evolved out of the HKF team's repeatedly stated belief that Australia should adopt a 'basic marketing plan' in which key images emphasised 'direct promotional efforts by trained and expert personnel.' Deeper into the report, the HKF team expanded on this philosophy:

> In countries of the size and latitudinal extent of Australia, it is not possible to single out one image or to devise a satisfactory composite. Therefore, it is our opinion that more than one image is necessary for Australia just as it is for the United States, and other large countries. By obtaining agreement and the basic images to be used in promotion and by consistent and concentrated use of these images… the greatest promotional impact will be achieved.[78]

The *HKF Report* made explicit that Australia (meaning ANTA, but existentially, the nation, too) must agree on a uniform image that consumers, in Australia and internationally, would instantly recognise as Australian. One set of recommendations in the report urges ANTA to adopt a marketing policy founded on notions such as directing marketing 'towards specific areas' and 'towards specific types of travellers.' Such a view accorded with Atkinson's 1950s organisational objective to inculcate a sense of national pride among the domestic population. Key to his vision was the idea that Australia 'must speak with

[77] *HKF Report*, 70
[78] *Ibid*, 102.

one voice overseas'.[79] This doctrine guided ANTA policy but also mirrored the values and political outlook of the incumbent Menzies government.[80] Seen in this way, the consultant's advice to have ANTA agree on 'consistent' images formalised ANTA's preexisting, but previously nebulous, aims. Of vital importance to their strategy was the idea that 'images should be devised which will identify Australia more definitely as an outstanding international travel attraction. It should seek industry wide cooperation for the consistent and concentrated use of these images by all concerned.'[81] Informing this strategy was the vast size of Australia's geographic territory, which gave rise to a proliferation of images that was potentially confusing to the consumer. The report writers subsequently identified six 'major elements' which they believed were 'distinctive to Australia and should form the basis for consideration as promotable images.' In order, these elements were:

(1) The Outback.
(2) The Great Barrier Reef.
(3) The Flora and Fauna.
(4) Australia as a dynamically developing country and the land of opportunity – for pleasure, business, and immigration.
(5) The Australians – a friendly, energetic people.
(6) Australia – a land of outdoor activity – golf, tennis, surfing, sailing, fishing, safari trips, etc.[82]

Out of these six elements only the first two were scenic attractions. For all of the many hundreds of attractions Australia could offer, the Reef was selected (equally with The Outback, discussed in the next chapter), as a place that would embody the idea of the nation. The remaining 'major elements' celebrated Australia's environment and the social and material progress of the nation. As we have seen throughout this thesis, none of these themes were particularly new, but they had never before been so clearly delineated. Elsewhere in the pages of the report, the consultants notably contemplated the 'place of Aborigines in Australia's tourist programme.' But in line with prior national tourism policy dating back to the 1930s, the HKF writers placed the participation of Aboriginal people 'at missions, settlements and stations of the Aborigines' traditional way of life'.[83] Significantly, the Report's taking of such a view, while perhaps well intentioned, had the consequence of prohibiting a greater consideration of the Indigenous history of places other than Australia's remote north. The Great Barrier Reef was one such place. Its extensive and unique Indigenous history was overlooked in national advertising

[79] Nina Mistlis, Neil Leiper, 'The Australian Tourist Commission's Early Years viewed by former senior managers', *Tourism, Culture & Communication* 2, (2000), 19.
[80] Woodward, 'A Cure for Prejudice': Robert Menzies, Travel, Nationalism and Peace in the 1960s, in *The Menzies Legacy: Ideals, Change, Procession, 1960s and Beyond*, Zachary Gorman (ed.), (Melbourne University Press: Melbourne, 2026).
[81] *HKF Report*, 99.
[82] *Ibid*, 102.
[83] *Ibid*, 281.

campaigns.[84] This practise of elision as it related to advertising's inclusion and depiction of Indigenous people is a notion that I explore in greater depth in the next chapter.

How did the HKF consultants see and experience the Reef? The report writers travelled to many of the Reef's major islands and accommodation sites, including resorts at Hayman Island, South Molle and Long Island. At Long Island, they flew in a resort plane over many of the principal reefs visited by tourists and made special note of a 'great canal-like waterway 150 feet deep' that they found was 'one of the really dramatic sites.' At Hayman they found a 'highly professional, highly successful resort development' they believed would be 'competitive anywhere in the world.'[85] Elsewhere in the report they stated, 'The Great Barrier Reef… extending for 1,200 miles along the northeast coast of Queensland, is unquestionably a great natural attraction, with its myriad forms of marine life inhabiting the coral formations in the semi-tropical waters of the area.' Importantly, they added, the Reef's proximity to the mainland, and the protection it offered from rough seas made 'it one of the world's finest salt-water recreation areas.'[86]

Resort-based tourism, characterised by infrastructure development and the availability of entertainments and recreations, was the ideal that the HKF consultants imagined for the future viability of a tourist inhabited Great Barrier Reef. 'A critical need now exists for planned development in the areas of the Great Barrier Reef', the report said in its opening pages.[87] Development meant continuous action by key stakeholders, including state governments, to open up 'destination areas, attractions and facilities.' Islands with limited tourist facilities, such as those at Lindeman Island, which in 1964 did not have air conditioning, and Brampton Island, required considerable investment and infrastructure construction to achieve tourism at a profitable scale. 'In addition, numerous uninhabited islands have potential either for resort development around "home-beach" leaseholds or islands for ancillary use in relation to the developed islands.' In the eyes of the HKF report writers, the entire geography of the Reef's island chain might be steadily evolved to support an ever-expanding supply chain for tourists and tourist activities.

In spite of the HKF consultants' impulse to develop the Reef as a tourist destination, they still argued for what they called 'balanced development'. The consultants identified that 'the Greater Barrier Reef area, the paralleling coast and the many islands constitute one of Australia's most important travel assets.' Planning and oversight were important, they insisted, in the establishment of attractions and facilities. 'The entire Barrier Reef area should be made a Marine National Park primarily for its

[84] Celmara Pocock, 'Aborigines, Islanders and Hula Girls in Great Barrier Reef Tourism', *The Journal of Pacific History*, 49:2, (2014), 170-192. Martin, 'Socialist paradise' or 'inhospitable island'.
[85] *HKF Report*, 212
[86] *HKF Report*, 21.
[87] *Ibid*, 3.

protection, but also for its proper development and use as one of the world's most interesting coral and marine areas.'[88] Such a concern reflects the changing environmental attitudes of the 1960s, and the rise of the global environmental movement of that decade that gave expression to the 'Reef environmentalism' of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, established in 1962 by poet Judith Wright.[89] Lloyd writes, the Queensland Government's attitudes towards tourism and Reef management in the mid-1960s was 'indicative of a government, and a public, struggling to come to terms with the future of an environment as vast, isolated and scientifically unknown as the Reef.'[90]

For the first time, Australian tourism advertising started to take on a conservationist dimension. At least in a limited sense, tourism experts expressed concern for the natural areas that tourism sought to commercialise. Perhaps sensing these tensions in the wider public, the HKF consultants had the foresight to see that tourism would have to find a way to co-exist with the environment in order to extract value from it. Herein lay a small but important part of the social and political conditions that preceded the legislation of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act in 1975. The American consultant's urge to preserve areas of national, scenic significance was not limited to the Reef. Undoubtedly influenced by the federally administered United States National Park Service, the writers argued for greater establishment of national parks and reserves across Australia. They suggested that each Australian state 'consider at least one area of truly national significance for inclusion in a federally supported system under a National Parks Authority.'[91] Such an undertaking never eventuated in Australia, revealing perhaps the consultant's limited understanding of Australia's complex state and federal jurisdictions. Nevertheless, as Chris McConville writes, the passage of American environmental legislation in the 1960s and 1970s 'emboldened demands for parallel laws in Australia.'[92] Perhaps the consultant's aspiration for a legislated Australian National Park system was not too wide of the mark in its reading of transnational environmental politics.

In light of the changing environmental consciousness around the Reef, it is interesting that the first poster to emerge after the HKF Report, *Riding a Catamaran Great Barrier Reef*, did not feature an underwater viewpoint. Nor did it depict human interference with marine life. There is no, to borrow from Elias, 'aestheticization and containment of marine life.'[93] The depiction of the young woman, thrilled by the clipping of the catamaran through the water, also embodies the kind of excitement and possibility that the HKF writers hoped would portray Australia as a dynamic country full of opportunity

[88] *Ibid*.
[89] Rohan Lloyd, *Saving the Reef,* 94-95. For more on the Australian environmental movement in this period see: Hutton and Connors, *A History of the Australian Environmental Movement*, 89.
[90] Rohan Lloyd, *Saving the Reef,* 104.
[91] HKF Report, 6.
[92] Chris McConville, 'Dams, Freeways and Aerospace: How Australian Environmentalists responded to Transnationalism and World Heritage, 1964-1984', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*: 61:3, (2015), 381.
[93] Elias, Aquariums and human-animal relations', 110.

for pleasure. In their travels around Hayman Island in the Whitsundays, the consultants had found that people travelled to the Reef region for the resort experience. There was 'constant activity' available to the customer, including 'half-day and full-day boat trips four times a week; different entertainment and dancing every night; and a late nightclub at a remote location which guests can enjoy until 2:00 am.' Guests could avail themselves of fishing boats, catamarans, swimming pools, tennis courts and a bowling green. Interestingly, the HKF reporters found that 'the great majority of guests do not go to Hayman because of the Outer Barrier Reef, in fact, many of them never visit this attraction. They come for the vacation, fun, etc., which this resort provides.'[94] *Riding a Catamaran* distilled this observation into poster form. It drew further from the 'major elements' identified by the consultants as those themes which should form the basis for national and overseas advertising. The Great Barrier Reef provides the backdrop against which Australians, 'a friendly energetic people' (major element 5), played in 'a land of outdoor activity' (major element 6).

[94] *HKF Report*, 212-213.



Figure 5 – Riding a Catamaran, Great Barrier Reef, ANTA, (circa 1966-67)

Riding a Catamaran further reflected ANTA's embrace of modern advertising strategy. In the 1960s, international advertising emerged as a fully legitimated industry, characterised by creative strategy, market research and an increased awareness for consumer psychology. The period spanning the 1960s

through to the mid-1970s saw an 'expansion of consumer affluence led businesses to increasingly look to advertising to 'find a way through the crowded marketplace'.[95] Commercial agencies in Australia started to apply the American psychologist, and proponent of market research, Dr. Ernest Dichter's idea that 'advertisers had to discover the sexual symbolism that the id has given common objects of daily life [and] tie the brand name to the fundamental human urge.'[96] As Australian advertising historian Kevin Blackburn notes, advertising's application of Dichter's Freudian derived psychology collided with the prosperity of the post-war period giving way to a consumer purchase rationale based not on 'economic necessity, but… illogical reasons, such as improving his or her image, or satisfying some pleasure.'[97] *Riding a Catamaran* therefore belongs to a period where selling sex, lifestyle and status were predominant features in commercial advertising. Perhaps ANTA's image makers sought to cut through the flooded marketplace by entwining these values withs the idea of a laid-back nature experience.

Like 1963's *Exploring the Coral Wonders*, ANTA used for *Riding a Catamaran* a woman model as the central subject for its Reef campaign. But in the latter poster, the body of the woman is more clearly on display. Such a framing raises the question of how the national promoter deployed representations of femininity in their attempt to drive visitation to the Reef, and to Australia in general. Historians such as Annette Pritchard and Nigel Morgan argue that representations of women in government tourism advertising sees 'women being represented as exoticised commodities that are there to be experienced.' Tourism images that feature female subjects, they maintain, privilege a 'male gaze' that highlights 'the dominance of desirable female attributes such as youth, beauty, sexuality, or the possession of a man.' According to this view, representations of women in natural landscapes construct a gendered fantasy vision of landscape that reinforce the 'founding myth of patriarchy.' They conclude that the dominant image in tourism generating countries is 'one of scantily clad young women in exotic surroundings appealing to the fantasies of middle-aged businessmen who are feeling threatened by the improvement of women.'[98]

It is difficult to say if such an analysis can be fairly extended to ANTA's *Riding a Catamaran*, or indeed to other images in ANTA and the ATC's national campaigns. Images of women in bathing costumes had a long history in Australia and had been used as well in the nascent ANTA campaigns of the 1930s. As I have maintained throughout this thesis, there is no way of knowing how contemporaries interpreted these materials, and we cannot presume how different demographics or individuals might have felt

[95] Robert Crawford, 'Creating a creative industry: Australian advertising agencies in the 1960s–1970s', *Creative Industries Journal*, 9:2, (2016), 146-161. See also, Amanda McLeod, *Abundance: Buying and Selling in Postwar Australia*. (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007).

[96] Kevin Blackburn, The 'consumers' ethic' of Australian advertising agencies 1950–1965, *Journal of Australian Studies*, 16:32, (1992), 60-74.

[97] *Ibid*, 67.

[98] Annette Pritchard, Nigel J. Morgan, 'Privileging the Male Gaze: Gendered Tourism Landscapes', *Annals of Tourism Research* 27:4, (2000), 884-905.

about them.[99] ANTA's archival record and annual reports omit any detail about the selection of models and would not begin to separate demographics by gender until the 1980s. But industry experts had an awareness about contemporary trends. In the 1950s more young Australian women set out to travel overseas than their male equivalents. Penny Warner-Smith, who discovered this revelation through a survey of Australian Bureau of Statistics data, argues that images of women travelling in contemporary popular media, particularly in *Women's Weekly*, spurred young women on to travel at a rate that, in the 1960s, likely outpaced young men. From 1965 onward, travel advertising in the *Weekly*, 'began to focus on youth, and later to show young women without male companions.'[100] Such a positioning of unaccompanied young women appealed to the perception of travel 'as respectable means of living away from home', which was 'important to many women who were still single, but would have been stigmatised if they had left home for reasons other than marriage, nursing or travelling overseas.' Warner-Smith records the flow of female traffic away from, rather than within Australia. She notes, however, that by the early 1960s there was a 'discourse of the young woman traveller as independent, adventurous and self-reliant – capable of organising her own accommodation and finding her own pleasures.'[101] *Riding a Catamaran* and other posters analysed in this chapter belong to such a discourse. It is possible that ANTA, and later the ATC, recognised the importance of young women as a market which they sought to chase through advertising. On the other hand, annual reports for the 1960s and the 1970s, with all their attention to market research and publicity strategy, are ambivalent about the construction of advertising to appeal specifically to any age or gender demographic.

Riding a Catamaran appeared in the context of a more relaxed approach to the body and self-display that was embodied in other popular media at the time. These images, along with others in ANTA's catalogue that featured female subjects, did not objectify women to the degree practised in contemporary beach or surf themed media.[102] Unquestionably, ANTA preferred images that used women subjects in its 1960s Reef poster art. But it is worth asking more of the context in which these images emerged. As we have seen, the organisation under Atkinson strove 'to ensure that the gap between the advertised dream and the reality at the destination is not too great.' In this sense, ANTA's imperative to have advertising denote what it was possible for tourists to do must have driven the production of *Riding a Catamaran*. A further driver was the HKF Report emphasis of a sales strategy premised on Australians as a 'friendly and energetic people' and Australia as a 'dynamically developing country of opportunity.' Clearly the image of the happy young woman ticked these boxes for ANTA – it even depicted the activity of sailing, which the consultant's listed as an emblematic Australian recreation (major element 6).

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[99] For a reading of *Women's Weekly* that argues for the agency of the reader, see: Susan Sheridan 'Reading the Women's Weekly: feminism, femininity and popular culture, in *Transitions: New Australian Feminisms*, B. Caine and R. Pringle (eds.), (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1995).

[100] Penny Warner-Smith, 'Travel, Young Women and 'The Weekly', 1959– 1968', *Annals of Leisure Research*, 3:1, (2000), 33-46.

[101] *Ibid*, 42.

[102] Douglas Booth, "From bikinis to boardshorts:" Wahines and the paradoxes of surfing culture." *Journal of Sport History* 28:1 (2001): 3-22.

ANTA promoters perhaps estimated that consumers could be persuaded to visit tourist attractions through the evocation of the idea that time spent in natural surroundings, admiring nature, was conducive to romantic opportunity. This was a key idea of the film *Tropics to the Snow,* a 1962 Commonwealth Film Unit piece that fictionalised an account of two male advertising executives discussing a potential advertising campaign for Australia. In one part of the campaign the men are conceiving, they imagine a story of a young American man who meets a young Australian girl at a hotel in the Reef Islands. Actors play out the creative directions of the two advertising men. The young couple soon exchange the resort scene for an isolated beach. 'They play out a love scene' says one of the executives. 'But they've only just met!', objects his counterpart. 'Ok! It's love at first sight', says the first speaker. In the scene, a cutaway from the embracing couple to crashing waves leans into a well-known cinematic trope. The advertisers conclude that audiences are not ready for this type of material. 'We must avoid anything that must be misinterpreted', frets one of the men.[103]

While hardly a documentary record of ANTA's decision making, the tongue-in-cheek film nevertheless provides a good insight into the predominantly male process of 1960s tourism advertising creation. In particular, the film suggests that tourism advertising creatives were considerate of contemporary values, and hesitant to create images that were overtly sexual or exploitative. Sensing cultural trends and increasing sexual themes in commercial advertising, there is little doubt ANTA wanted to, in the words of the ad men, 'introduce a little sex' in their campaigns as well. But, as in the Commonwealth Film Unit film, image-makers were conflicted, or at least cautious, about how to present such material. In this sense, the debate between the two advertisers in *Tropics to the Snow* is a good approximation of the kinds of conversations that may have been guiding image making at ANTA. The national promoter sought to induce the widest possible demographic to travel, including women, and were slowly moving with the sexual politics of the 1960s.[104] Dickenson and Crawford note that the 'hyper masculine environment' of Australian commercial advertising in this era 'meant that the agency could be a challenging and difficult workplace for women.'[105] ANTA's 1960s annual reports from the 1960s demonstrate a heavily male executive culture at the organisation, suggesting a professional environment that no doubt posed similar challenges to women.

The organisation did employ women, however, and sometimes in senior positions.[106] *Walkabout* often featured the work of women photographers. Olive Ashworth and Janet Featherstone were two photographers whose visions of the Queensland beaches and the Reef made it onto the covers of

[103] Australian Commonwealth Film Unit, 'From the Tropics to the Snow', Richard Mason and Jack Lee (Directors), 1962.
[104] Bongiorno, *The Sex Lives of Australians*, pages?
[105] Dickenson and Crawford, *Behind Glass Doors*, 5.
[106] The 1965-66 Annual Report lists several women in executive positions, including Miss M.B. Wilson as *Walkabout's 'Advertising and Circulation Manager'.*

Walkabout magazine, for example (figure 6 below).[107] Such images informed the wider milieu of Reef and Queensland themed photographs designed to showcase 'Australia's Way of Life', to which *Riding a Catamaran* also belonged. Modest and unlikely to offend traditional sensibilities, these images followed a long tradition of Western advertising that invited women to occupy subject positions that valued self-display and 'modern' femininity, irrespective of whether women themselves had been part of the editorial process.[108]



Figure 6 - Queensland themed photo covers for Walkabout. Photographers Olive Ashworth (Left) and Janet Featherstone (Right).

'Exploring the coral wonders': Australian Tourist Commission advertising, 1967-1971

In 1967, ANTA became the Australian Tourist Commission, realising another of Atkinson's ambitions to further legitimise the tourist organisation as integral to Australia's national and international image and reputation. Commission operations began on 1 July 1967, taking over ANTA offices and staff. John Bates and Basil Atkinson's roles as respective chairman and GM transferred to the new organisation. 'It really was first-class', Basil Atkinson would later say of the HKF Report, in large part because the consultants gave him and his executive team 'just what we wanted' – statutory protection. The

[107] *Walkabout* 30:10, October 1964.
[108] Liz Conor, *The Spectacular Modern Woman: Feminine Visibility in the 1920s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 29; Erica Wilson and Candice Harris, 'Meaningful travel: Women, independent travel and the search for self and meaning', *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal* 54:2 (2006),161-172.

commission, now financed entirely by the Commonwealth, and protected under new legislation, commenced as a voice for tourism at a national level. It also tasked itself with encouraging greater awareness of the nation's attractions among Australians. Where ANTA had operated without any legislated mandate, the ATC now had statutory authority to 'carry out Australia's travel promotion overseas.'[109] It enjoyed a honeymoon period in the closing years of the 1960s. Nascent advertising revealed a new burst of creative energy. The inceptive campaigns featured an array of striking colour photographs, many of them taken by David Beal, who photographed *Exploring the Beauty of a Coral Pool* (figure 7 below). Sunshine, open spaces, clear waters, tree-lined cities and scenic attractions all around the country formed part of this new, colourised vision of Australia. The work of Beal and his contemporaries showcased a breadth of life and scenery in urban and regional Australia. As we shall see more clearly in the next chapter, this creative wave gave way to a corpus of early-1970s ATC publicity built on a confident and colourful vision of Australia.

Around this time, Australia's tourism industry, like its politics, was caught somewhere between Britain and America. The Holt and Gorton governments faced a rhetorical bind whereby they felt it necessary to assure audiences of Australia's British heritage, while also seeking a 'new sense of Australian progress and direction.'[110] A new Australian identity did not find expression overnight. A September 1966 speech, delivered by Harold Holt to the Royal Commonwealth Society, reveals the uncomfortable bind in which Australia found itself: 'If we're going anywhere we're not going American, we're going Australian', Holt said.[111] Curran writes that the Prime Minister John Gorton (1968-71) 'crafted a nationalist rhetoric which had as its basis not a rejection of Britain or the chanting of bush ballads but an appeal to the Australian people to prioritise the nation over the states.' Gorton believed state loyalties 'detracted from a broader allegiance to the nation, threatened the march of national progress and thwarted the new 'burgeoning belief in our nationalism.'[112] Holt and Gorton's political rhetoric is interesting to consider given Atkinson's determination to break into the American tourist market and to hire American consultants to aid his efforts to do so. If Australian tourism was going anywhere, it was increasingly going towards where the biggest and most lucrative market for tourists were. Much of the sales literature and advertising developed with the intention of growing the stream of visitors from America circulated all around the world. And though America was a priority market for Atkinson, it was not until the 1980s that visitor numbers for the US would outpace those from the UK.

It was in this context of a hunger for a new cultural identity that the Great Barrier Reef became a focal point in political and environmental discourses. A spirit of federation was playing out regarding Great

[109] *ANTA Annual Report for 1966-67.*
[110] Curran, *Power of Speech*, 46.
[111] Holt quotation cited in Curran, *Power of Speech*, 95.
[112] Curran, *Power of Speech*, 105-106.

Barrier Reef policy. In 1967, all seven parliaments enacted identical legislation ('mirror legislation') that 'divided royalties extracted from the Reef between the states and the commonwealth.'[113] Nevertheless, this was a time where the Queensland Government under premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen and his deputy Ronald Ernest Camm was determined to exploit rather than preserve the Reef. As Lloyd writes, the state was then 'under the leadership of two men whose disposition towards the environment was far less nuanced' than that of the previous government, and 'for whom geological exploration of the Reef was far less problematic.'[114]

[113] See Bowen & Bowen, *The Great Barrier Reef,* 320.
[114] Lloyd, *Saving the Reef,* 143.



Figure 7 - 'Exploring the beauty of a coral pool on the Great Barrier Reef at Heron Island', Photograph by David Beal, Australian Tourist Commission, (Posters Pty Ltd, Sydney, 1969)

In September 1968, three weeks after becoming premier, Bjelke-Petersen granted prospecting leases to two resource companies in which he was a major shareholder.[115] The public outcry and subsequent environmental campaigns for preservation have been well covered by historians.[116] In federal politics, both John Gorton, the Liberal Prime Minister, and Gough Whitlam his ALP challenger, vowed to preserve the Reef if they were elected. Such electoral promise-making indicated that many Australians

[115] Lyndon Megarrity, 'The Lion and the Fox: Whitlam, Bjelke-Petersen and the Queensland Electorate 1961–1975', *ANU Historical Journal* 3, (2022), 23–52; Evan Whitten, *The Hillbilly Dictator: Australia's Police State* (Crows Nest: ABC Enterprises, 1989), 19-20.
[116] Lloyd, Petray, Newlands, 'Coral Battleground?'; McCalman, *The Reef: A Passionate History*.

felt that there was something about the Reef that merited protection, reinforcing its place as an important national site. As Lloyd, Newlands and Petray point out, the 'Save the Reef' campaign of the late-1960s was more complex than a 'David vs. Goliath' battle between a 'rag-tag group of activists' and the 'collective might of the oil industry.'[117] Indeed, the Australian public demonstrated widespread support for the prevention of offshore oil exploration. And as Iain McCalman argues, the 'legal formation of the Great Barrier Reef National Marine Park' in June 1975 grew out of the collective concern of activists, scientists, trade unionists, politicians, academics, and 'citizens from all over Australia.'[118] We might add to this list Great Barrier Reef tourists, real and aspirational, whose affinity for the Reef must have been shaped to a degree by the prominent images and pictures ANTA and the ATC thrust into the 1960s Australian visual landscape.

During the 'Save the Reef' period, the ATC's leading image of the Reef was David Beal's *Exploring the beauty of a coral pool on the Great Barrier Reef.* Born in Middlesex, England in 1934, he migrated as a teenager with his family to Sydney in the wave of 'ten-pound poms' that looked to Australia for change after the Second World War. Little about Beal's contribution to Australian tourist advertising is known. A contemporary and colleague of the celebrated photographers David Potts and David Moore, he belonged to a class of photographers whose experimentation with, and manipulation of, modern camera technology better captured bright light and colour. Beal was a significant contributor of colour photographs to *Walkabout*, *Life* and the *Bulletin*. In 1967, he collaborated with the social critic Donald Horne on the photobook *Southern Exposure*. Horne and Beal's book was a market competitor to the highly popular *The Australians,* an ANTA backed photobook collaboration between photographer Robert Goodman and Australian author George Johnston.[119]

Australian photography historian Martyn Jolly argues that *The Australians* and *Southern Exposure* were 'in dialogue with each other'. He describes the latter book, however, as 'almost a visual encapsulation' of Horne's *Lucky Country* (1964).[120] The *Walkabout* review of *Southern Exposure* described Beal's photographs as 'magnificent' and 'achieved with considerable thought, imagination, great technical skill, and doubtless, some luck.' But *Walkabout's* reviewer, who praised *The Australians* (without disclosing that ANTA had backed it) found it difficult to reconcile the vision of Australia offered by one of its stable photographers with Horne's biting social commentary. 'Beal's pictures have not, in the main, the feeling of Horne's text, with which they have been editorially associated.'[121] Horne's views were 'not necessarily those of the Australian majority', the reviewer further editorialised. Perhaps ANTA and the ATC

[117] Lloyd, Petray, Newlands, 'Coral Battleground?' 54.
[118] McCalman, 'The Great Barrier Reef', in *Symbols of Australia,* 226. See also Lyndon Megarrity, *Northern Dreams: The Politics of Northern Development in Australia* (Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2018), 115.
[119] ANTA, *Annual Report for 1964-65.*
[120] Martyn Jolly, 'Exposing *The Australians*: Australiana Photobooks of the 1960s', *History of Photography*, 38:3, (2014), 276-295.
[121] *Walkabout,* 33:9, September 1967, 53-54.

thought their ability to gauge public opinion was stronger than Horne's. 'Most Australians agreed with *Walkabout's* assessment and were not going to pay good money to be insulted', writes Jolly.[122]

Beal's work continued to bear fruit for ANTA. In 1968, his poster for the ATC, which depicted Ayers Rock (Uluru), won poster of the year at the Australian Federation of Travel Agent's annual conference.[123] A 'fish-eye lens study of the Rock at sunset captured on film', Beal's award winning colour photo was a sign of the ATC's determination to, in the words of one annual report, assist 'film-makers, writers and photographers to show Australia's attractions to the world.'[124] The Reef and the red centre, or the outback, had become central pillars of national advertising's imagining of Australia, just as the writers of the HKF report had recommended.

Beal's *Exploring the Beauty of a Coral Pool* therefore emerged in the context of a new paradigm in the Australian visual landscape that emphasised Australia's scenery and its people as key attractions. But what does the above image of the Reef tell us about how the ATC positioned the destination in late-1960s marketing? On a first impression this imagining on the Reef had much in common with past advertising, in particular its female subject. Beal's less censorious approach to depicting the female body was a sign of the changing times and attitudes to self-display. It appeared around the same time as the famous photograph of Prime Minister Harold Holt with his bikini-clad daughters-in-law at a Victorian beach – a photo Frank Bongiorno describes as suggesting, 'the stodgy conservatism of the Menzies era had passed.'[125] Indeed, much of Beal's work encapsulated the beginning of a cultural shift away from the Menzies era toward the more liberal, open-minded zeitgeist that came in the later decades of the twentieth century.

It is hard to think that the poster's title was not a play on words, referring to both the human and natural beauty depicted in the coral pool. But Beal's photograph was hardly salacious or exploitative. The submerged bather's body remains opaque, concealed by the refraction of light through the water. In this sense, the ATC navigated a middle course through public opinion. Similarly to *Riding a Catamaran,* the poster had sex appeal – just not too much. Such an approach recalls the copy deployed by the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau, whose publicising of mixed bathing at Sydney beaches in the first decade of the century celebrated the pastime without inciting controversy (chapter one). Significantly, the ANTA and ATC posters for the Reef discussed in this chapter passed into circulation without comment or criticism from the Australian press. Not only does this make them remarkable compared to other images discussed in this thesis, which the media often demonstrated an eagerness to report on, it also suggests they were unremarkable, or at least uncontroversial, to contemporaries.

[122] Jolly, 'Exposing *The Australians*', 290.
[123] ATC, *Second Annual Report for year 1968-69,* (Commonwealth Government Printing Office: Canberra, 1970), 13.
[124] *Ibid*, 11.
[125] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers*, 689.

Viewed in the context of the ATC's post-HKF direction, they depicted Australian people, in most, if not all, cases women, as bright, friendly and attractive representatives of the sunlit nation, participating in outdoor recreational activity. These were all central tenets of nascent ATC marketing strategy, but as we have seen throughout this thesis, these themes derived from a much longer sales tradition that marketed Australian people as products of the nation's unique environmental and climactic conditions.

Beal's image also depicted a person interfering with marine life, indicating the ATC's continuing belief that visitors still wanted to interact with the Reef environment through physical touch. Indeed, as Ben Daley writes in his environmental history of the Reef, 'regardless of the prohibition of coral collecting, visitors continued to remove specimens from the Great Barrier Reef' throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s. Daley gives an example of a 1973 visitor to Green Island who was 'appalled to see the number of people returning to the mainland with plastic bags full of coral and shells.'[126] Such an account followed on the heels of ANTA and ATC advertising that depicted human interference with marine life as a key dimension of the possible tourist experience, even if *Exploring the Beauty of a Coral Pool* did not infer the possibility of souveniring to the degree that *Exploring the Coral Wonders* (1963) did.

Though tourism to the Reef had long posed significant problems to its fragile ecology, ANTA and the ATC saw themselves as belonging to the emerging environmental consciousness of the 1960s and 70s, rather than standing apart from it. This was a new development in Australia's tourist history, and as we will see further in the next chapter, considerations about sustainability and the environmental values of the Australian public started to figure far more prominently for the ATC than they had for ANTA. The rise in visitation to the Reef in the 1960s corresponded with greater national awareness about its ecological value, and greater media coverage of the Reef's troubles. Issues of *Walkabout* carried feature articles that advocated for the Reef's protection from oil drilling and for further research into the parasitic coral eating Crown of Thorns starfish. 'As custodians of the greatest natural resource of its kind in the world, we have exposed nothing more than our own ignorance and rapacity', wrote the influential fishing and outdoor writer Vic McCristal in the pages of the April 1970 issue, which featured another of Beal's images as its cover (figure 8 below). 'The battle for the Barrier Reef', he said, 'has thrown light on a new kind of Australian, who shows enough concern for his environment to be willing to fight for it.'[127] Of all the 'great problems attaching to our stewardship over the Great Barrier Reef' that McCristal identified, no consideration was given to the effects of tourism on the Reef, least of all from the tourist interference with marine life that Beal's cover image depicted.

Key to ANTA's 1960s vision of the Reef is the prevailing theme that tourists could connect with its nature on their own terms. Such a view reflected ANTA's intuition of a mounting 1960s environmental

[126] Daley, *The Great Barrier Reef,* 140.
[127] Vic McCristal, 'Stop! The Reef Needs Time*, Walkabout*, 36:4, April 1970, 31.

consciousness, but also a determination to link tourism with conservation.[128] ANTA through the 1960s became increasingly aware of travel's role in educating wider publics about ecological matters. In its 1971 *Case for Government aid to Travel and Tourism*, for example, the association argued that the environmental benefits of tourism were among the industry's main benefits to the 'economy and welfare of Australia.' In the section 'Travel and Environment' ANTA shared its finding that 'the ability to experience and enjoy the many unique features of Australia is an important factor in the quality of life of the individual citizen.' Most interesting is the association's emerging view that travel performed an important function in generating environmental awareness. 'Ecologically, travel is the means of interaction with the environment, supporting the preservation of natural and historic features, and the creation of natural areas', said the report.[129] ANTA and ATC posters, but also other imagery in *Walkabout* and in brochures and handbooks, had recorded and presented such 'interaction with the natural environment' as a central feature of the possible tourist experience.

[128] Hutton and Connors, *A History of the Australian Environmental Movement.*
[129] ANTA, *Case for Government aid to Travel and Tourism*, (Sydney, 1971),



Figure 8 - David Beal Cover, Walkabout Magazine, April 1970.

Conclusion

This chapter has only skimmed the surface of the Reef's advertising history. Situated in this thesis's broad consideration of twentieth century advertising, it resembles more of a half-day snorkel trip than a deep-sea scuba dive. The structural parameters of this research project, which necessitate a steady account of ANTA's and the ATC's administrative history, has no doubt constrained a deeper analysis. It has not been possible here, for example, to situate these materials in the wider context of Great Barrier Reef promotion, while also paying closer attention to the minutia of Queensland politics vis-à-vis the

Reef. But this chapter has at least chronicled how the Reef appeared in national campaigns between Eileen Mayo's 1958 illustrative poster *Australia: The Great Barrier Reef* and David Beal's 1969 photographic *Exploring the Beauty of a Coral Pool.* In so doing, it offers an important example of how technological and strategic changes shaped national tourism promotion in the 1960s. Advertisements from this phase of Great Barrier Reef advertising drew on the scenery and wonder of the Reef, but also on distinctively Australian symbols of modernity, a vibrant outdoor culture and a hospitable local population. Setting this era of tourist promotion apart from pre-war campaigns was that promoters were starting to consider the environmental implications of tourism, shaping and reflecting the contemporary concern with environmental matters. Remaining prominent in the imagery were climate and sunlight, and the effect they had on the Australian people, as well as the opportunities good weather and conditions afforded for swimming, snorkelling, diving and sailing the Reef's calm waters. As we shall see further in the next chapter, the new vision of the Great Barrier Reef, documentary and photorealistic, was analogous to the new vision of the nation that the ATC presented in the 1970s and 1980s. In a sense, the Reef was an emerging aquatic test case for subsequent advertising campaigns designed to sell all the parts of the nation located to its Southwest (i.e. the Australian mainland).

What explains ANTA's and the ATC's seemingly disproportionate focus on the Reef in these years, and not the outback, or the Blue Mountains, Tasmania, or any other important Australian destination? The Reef was by no means the only significant tourist site in Australia in the 1960s. Economies of scale had not yet fully reduced the expense of travel to far North Queensland either, making a trip out of reach for many Australians, let alone international tourists. But beyond the Reef's material potential, boosters grasped its potential as a national symbol, but only after its significance had been advocated for by foreign consultants. ANTA and the ATC sought to grow domestic tourism and ran campaigns for the nation and for more specific destinations throughout this time. As we have seen, a post-war ANTA placed heavy emphasis on attracting American tourists and building a stronger network for tourism in the Southwest Pacific. The eventual tourist infrastructure that flowed from these recommendations shaped the physical appearance of the Reef by way of hotels, roads and airports, in turn influencing how tourists navigated and experienced it.

Another key idea driving ANTA and ATC Reef advertising in the 1960s was Atkinson's determination that the organisations should only advertise what was possible for the tourist to experience. But to what extent had the national promoters diminished the 'gap between the advertised dream and the reality' at the Reef? It is difficult to argue that the headline marketing images used in posters for the Reef were an authentic reflection of the holiday experience. They denoted little information about the wider tourist infrastructure. However, as ANTA's 1971 business case for improving the tourist industry in North Queensland argued, the region had no 'resort hotels of the type found in other destination areas of the

Pacific.'[130] Perhaps the omission of the resort and hotel experience from posters was to avoid inducing tourists to think that luxury accommodations were commonplace. Furthermore, these posters were not the only images and materials deployed to sell the Reef and were supported by a volume of brochures and guidebooks that pictured resort accommodation, swimming pools, dining and transport options more fully.

In any case, ANTA and ATC poster images mostly promulgated a one-dimensional vision of the Reef. According to posters, the Reef seemed to be inhabited only by young women tourists whose preferred activities were sailing, swimming, snorkelling, touching, and possibly collecting, marine animals. But as we have seen, shell and coral collecting was a possible, if not common, dimension of the tourist experience, and one that ANTA and the ATC were not eager to discourage. Reef marketing sold these experiences through the prism of exploration and adventure, and arguably this was, and remains, a central component of travel to and holidaying there. Significantly, images that portrayed human interactions with the aquatic world were unquestioning about the effects that the types of engagement pictured in the advertising were having on the fragile ecology of the Reef. Advertising was also unquestioning about the history of the Indigenous peoples who had lived and subsisted on the North Queensland coastal waters.[131]

Despite these shortcomings, the 1960s represented a watershed decade for ANTA and the ATC. Advertising for the Reef, bold not only in colour but also in national vision, precipitated the highly commercialised campaigns of the coming decades. ATC campaigns from this era appear to have been successful in attracting tourists. Earlier in the chapter, I cited Atkinson's 1960 estimation that Australia would receive 100,000 American visitors by the end of the decade. Australia would not see these kinds of numbers from across the Pacific until the 1980s.[132] However, the flow of American travellers to the Reef was not insignificant. In 1970-71, 74,497 Americans travelled to Australia, with nearly one in every three Americans exiting Australia reporting having visited the Reef.[133] These were considerable numbers for the emerging ATC, and a validation of the decade's marketing reforms and modernisation program. As we shall see in the next chapter, the belief that Australia's tourist future lay in the American market informed Australia's national marketing strategy for rest of the twentieth century. Post-1965 photographic posters (and the suite of images that revolved around these posters in other ephemera) reflected the HKF Reports recommendation to 'adopt aggressive marketing plans for promotion in the

[130] ANTA, *Travel Appraisal and Recommendations: The North Queensland Region, Establishing Travel as the major industry in North Queensland,* (ANTA, Melbourne, 191), 7:6.
[131] For accounts of the Reef's Indigenous history, or the ways in which the settlement and development of the Reef have impacted Indigenous people, see: Ben Daley, *The Reef: An Environmental History,* 72-112; Ann Elias, *Coral Empire: Underwater Oceans, Colonial Tropics, Visual Modernity*, (Duke University Press: London, 2019); Martin, 'Socialist paradise' or 'inhospitable island'?; Pocock, 'Aborigines, Islanders and Hula Girls in Great Barrier Reef Tourism'.
[132] Atkinson, 'Planning for the sixties.'
[133] Claringbould et al., *Data Review of Reef-Related Tourism,* 75.

principal markets abroad.'[134] Never before in Australian tourist advertising history had promotion unfolded according to such a dogged and determined, centralised sales strategy. The advertising images this strategy produced, and the extent to which they were aggressively marketed, undoubtedly influenced subsequent tourist promotion. The ways in which Great Barrier Reef advertising subsumed the recommendations, but also the advent of the HKF Report remains an underexamined moment in Australian tourist advertising history – a moment that indelibly changed the practise of Australian tourist advertising for the rest of the twentieth century.

[134] *HKF Report*, 8.

Chapter VI

'How far away from it all can you get?': The Cities and the Centre, 1966-1983

> 'The visitor rapidly senses the attitude of the Australian towards life, conditioned from the hardy pioneers' dreams down through the growing mastery of successive generations over the environment.' – Harris Kerr Foster Report, 1965.

It was a cool morning in March 1964 when 600 delegates representing the tourism industries of twenty-three Pacific nations arrived at Sydney's chic new Menzies Hotel. Attending the thirteenth Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA) conference, representatives from the United States, Japan, New Zealand, China, the Philippines, and numerous Pacific islands slowly filled the lobby. Seventeen double-glazed windows, at the time the tallest window units in Australia, stretched from the first-floor lounge to the function room on the floor above. Opened the year before, the 300-room hotel boasted that it had been constructed from the wonder materials of the decade – precast concrete cladding and bronze anodized aluminium. The dark bronze plating that decorated the walls and fittings gave the lower floors, where the delegates were busy gathering and registering, an aura of novel elegance, that the hotel's owners proudly claimed was unknown in the architecture of its competitors.[1] Selected by the host organization, the Australian National Travel Association (ANTA), to showcase the first-class accommodation available in Australia, the Menzies was a fitting hotel for the convening of an industry that saw itself at the cutting edge of international advertising and public relations. Named after a famed nineteenth century hotelier, it was also a fitting coincidence that the Menzies shared its name with the conference's much-anticipated keynote speaker.

Robert Menzies, then fourteen years into his second prime ministership, delivered an address that spoke to travel's higher purpose. Properly managed, he argued it stood to eliminate the spiteful antipathy that had scourged the twentieth century. It was not the scenery that a tourist should set out to see, he said, but rather 'the people, and what they are like, and what they do.'[2] Menzies's rhetoric echoed that of Harold Clapp's (Chapter Two), at least in its appeal to a universal humanitarianism. Australia's scenery nevertheless remained front and centre in ANTA's contemporary national advertising campaigns. Despite travel's promise to place people closer together in an ever-complex post-war order, the industry's advertising experts still estimated that placing people in nature was the best way to sell Australian holidays. Australia's sunny conditions and abundant nature increasingly stood for stability in the context of wider and uncertain changes. A new environmental consciousness in Australia, but also

[1] 'Anodised Aluminium in Lower Part of New Sydney Hotel', *Canberra Times*, December 13, 1963, p. 32.

[2] Menzies, Robert, Sir, 1894-1978 and Pacific Area Travel Association. *Robert Menzies speaks at the Pacific Area Travel Association Conference, Sydney. March 2, 1964.* Menzies MS 4936 collection, NLA.

globally, doubtless informed this attitude. As we saw in the last chapter, Australia in this period was seeing a transformation of values around environmentalism and conservation. Governmental environmental policy was becoming, for the first time, an important national election issue, indicating a broader concern in the electorate that extended beyond specialists and activists.[3]

It was in this context that the Red Centre and Australia's 'Outback', identified as a distinctive national attraction in the Harris Kerr Foster (HKF) Report (1965), became indelibly associated with the idea of 'escape', and 'getting away from it all.' This chapter examines the post-1967 ATC national advertising campaigns that followed the Report's publication. In a period of rapid urbanisation and social change, promoters thought the idea of the remote and the seemingly untouched had renewed cachet with the travelling public. As the populations of the 'immigration gateways' of Sydney and Melbourne exploded, locations further afield offered opportunities for respite and reprieve.[4] The difficult task of promoters was to present Australia as modern and exciting, while at the same time offering a range of slower pace experiences. I argue in this chapter that promotional campaigns were initially successful in this endeavour, invoking environmental themes in a confident national campaign that spanned from 1969-1975. Titled *Australia Welcomes You*, the campaign gave a balanced view of Australia's competing regional and metropolitan identities, straddling the urban-regional divide that had so longed harried Australia's marketable image. But by the mid- to late- 1970s, this confidence gave way to crisis, and the ATC lost its footing. While environmental imagery remained prominent, campaigns lost their depth and conviction. This chapter asks how escalating national and international turmoil affected the national advertising program. In a global consumer marketplace beset with consternation over inflation, oil shocks, political upheaval and violence, Australia's environmental imagery perhaps lost the appeal it had once enjoyed. Importantly, the descent of the national brand into relative obscurity echoed a wider national malaise, which set the stage for the Paul Hogan campaign of 1983, studied in the next and final chapter.

As in previous eras of advertising, promoters contended with Australia's contrasting metropolitan and regional images. Cities were presented as modern, cosmopolitan, and exciting, but promoters were cognisant that people yearned for escape from them. The 'Outback' (denoting the remote interior of the continent) was more accessible by improved roads and more affordable air travel and presented as a remote and exotic contrast from the coastal cities. As important as the vision of the ostensibly confident and progressive nation that national advertising celebrated were the images and ideas that it left out. Absent from much of the advertising catalogue studied in this chapter and the next (1966-1988) were deeper considerations about Australia's contemporary environmental politics, of the country's altered

[3] Christopher McConville, 'Dams, Freeways and Aerospace: How Australian Environmentalists responded to Transnationalism and World Heritage, 1964-1984', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 61:3, (2015), 382.
[4] Seamus O'Hanlon, *City Life: The New Urban Australia,* (NewSouth Publishing, Sydney: 2018), 101.

demographic composition in the wake of new migration policy, and the improved political status of Indigenous people. As we shall see, those involved in national advertising demonstrated an awareness of changing values and attitudes around cultural diversity, migration and pluralism, Indigenous policy, and environmentalism, but often struggled to fully reconcile these matters with its wider commercial objectives.

Australia Welcomes You: A confident environmental nationalism, 1969-1975

1965's HKF Report cast a long shadow over Australia's subsequent tourism history. In line with the report's recommendations, the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) needed to improve Australia's appeal in the US, and in other foreign markets. The ATC's first major publication *Australia Welcomes You* (1969) spoke to this ambition. The 47-page, full-colour booklet was printed in the millions, and in several foreign languages. 'Australia is an island continent, about the size of the United States, pulsing with new developments, new experiences and new ideas. Australia is a country on the move,' it declared.[5] Central to this confident vision of a modern and exciting nation were images of the Australian environment, its abundant nature (accessible from the cosmopolitan capital cities), and the warmth of Australia's people. The campaign reflected an assertion of Australian nationhood that all but disappeared during the economic and political malaise that struck the country, and indeed much of the world, from the mid-1970s.[6] It was not until the confident Paul Hogan campaign that tourism promotion returned as a vehicle for projecting a renewed and reinvigorated sense of Australian identity.

With a title that recalled the *Australia Calls You* guidebook of the Australian Railway Commissioners in the 1920s (Chapter Two), the 1969 campaign showcased Australia's monumental scenery and landscapes. It also sought to showcase the modern and cosmopolitan aspects of Australia's cities and tourist destinations, always with an emphasis on the natural qualities of these places. *Australia Welcomes You* was the 'Commission's major promotional publication', said the 1970-71 ATC annual report.[7] ATC annual reports indicate the booklet remained popular in Australia, but also abroad, for most of the 1970s. The ATC printed 'the popular colour pictorial booklet' in six languages' – English (240,000 copies), German (25,000), French, Dutch and Japanese (10,000) and Italian (5,000).[8] These numbers are a good indicator of Australia's expanding appeal to international markets at a time where the country was further shedding its past restrictive migration policy and on the cusp of embracing the official policy of multiculturalism.[9]

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[5] ATC, Australia *Welcomes You* (Mason, Firth & McCutcheon: Australia, 1969), 3.
[6] On the contemporary economic and cultural exhaustion of the United Kingdom during this period see: Dominic Sandbrook, *Seasons of the Sun: The Battle for Britain, 1974-1979*, (Penguin: London, 2012).
[7] ATC, *Fourth Annual Report for Year 1970-71*, 14.
[8] ATC, *Seventh Annual Report for Year* 1973-74, 18; ATC, *Eighth Annual Report for Year 1974-75,* 18.
[9] On the demographic Seamus O'Hanlon and Rebecca Stevens, A Nation of Immigrants or a Nation of Immigrant Cities? The Urban Context of Australian Multiculturalism, 1947–2011', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 63: 556-571.

The *Australia Welcomes You* campaign was as strong in its dependence on environmental imagery as any campaign that preceded it. The golden hue of the cover photo, a close-up portrait of a smiling young woman, perhaps sunbathing, foreshadowed the colourful theme of the rest of the guide. Rich in both text and images, it introduced Australia as a land 'so old and isolated for so long from the rest of the world that it has more unique natural features, flora, and fauna than any other country.'[10] Following on from the transnational environmental movement of the 1960s, such copy doubtless aimed to capitalise on the growing popular appreciation of nature. In Australia, wilderness legislation such as the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Act (1967) had in part been inspired by burgeoning United States environmental legislation such as the Clean Air Act (1963) and the Wilderness Act (1964).[11] Such legislative milestones reflected a broadening transnational interest in the environment that had become part of mainstream discourse.

Embracing the rise of a new environmental consciousness, ATC copywriters even steeped descriptions of the populous cities of Sydney and Melbourne with nature themes, offering a counterpoint to their celebration of Australia's progress and modernity. As in the campaigns of the New South Wales Tourist Bureau seventy years earlier, the ATC entwined Sydney's progressive achievements with the environmental conditions that had kindled its very development. The title for the Sydney section announced: 'SYDNEY – PROGRESSIVE, WARM AND WELCOMING.' An aerial photograph displayed a vibrant sunlit metropolis, where 'Sydney's futuristic Opera House' (still under construction in the image) 'dominates the harbour scene'. Another image captured the brightly coloured sails of yachts on Port Jackson, suggesting a more tranquil atmosphere. Adjoining that photo was a scene of one of Sydney's beaches, likely Bondi, so radiantly yellow it appears to reflect the actual sun on the page's glossy paper. These vignettes gave a sense of a modern society built in gorgeous, natural surrounds.

[10] ATC, Australia *Welcomes You*, 3.
[11] McConville, 'Dams, Freeways and Aerospace', 382; Libby Robin, "Wilderness in a global age, fifty years on." *Environmental History* 19, no. 4 (2014), 721-727.



Figure 1 – Australia Welcomes You cover, ATC, 1969.

The ATC thought Sydney's average sunlight hours of interest to international readers. Copy writers extolled Sydney as 'an outdoor city' where 'sports-loving Sydneysiders enjoy an average 7.1 daily sunshine hours in summer and 6.1 hours in winter.' The appeal of blue skies was no doubt alluring at a time where smog and urban air pollution were often the topic of international headlines.[12] Participation

[12] On the historic and modern links between air pollution and tourism see: Sefa Awaworyi Churchill, Lei Pan, and Sudharshan Reddy Paramati, 'Air pollution and tourism: Evidence from G20 countries', *Journal of Travel Research* 61:2 (2022), 223-234; Celeste Eusébio, Maria João Carneiro, Mara Madaleno, Margarita Robaina, Vítor Rodrigues, Michael Russo, Hélder Relvas et al. 'The impact of air quality on tourism: a systematic literature review.' *Journal of Tourism Futures* 7:1 (2021), 111-130.

in the pictured pastimes was egalitarian, too. 'You can join with them in their favourite pastimes – yachting on the harbour or surfing in the miles and miles of ocean beaches within the city limits.' Sydney offered the tourist ready access to nearby Ku-ring-gai Chase where '40,000 acres of rugged natural bushland … shelters a reserve for native animals.' Australia's regional scenery was not hard to see from Sydney, either. Those inclined could 'visit a sheep station on one day air or coach tours from Sydney', said the guide.[13] Such activity was tied into the celebration of Australia's pastoral history and the triumph of its pioneers over the environment, themes which, as I argue further below, were central to ATC imagery.

If Sydney was the home of the outdoors, then Melbourne was the home of culture and commerce. But in the language of *Australia Welcomes You,* the attractions of Victoria's capital rested on the city's abundance of green space. The ATC sold Melbourne as 'a tranquil, gracious city, noted for its parks and gardens, wide tree-lined streets, theatres, art-galleries, restaurants and elegant shops.' 'The bustle and enterprise of Melbourne's commercial centre contrast with the quiet parklands and Yarra River', reads the caption for one photograph of Collins Street. 'Sunny parklands' and the Royal Botanic Gardens offered a counterpoint to the 'multi-storied headquarters of the industrial giants' that crowded the skyline. Short day trips from Melbourne landed the visitor in nearby nature destinations that had been a mainstay of the Victorian tourism offering since the early 1900s.[14] 'The blue Dandenong Ranges offer visitors pleasant hours of relaxation among giant eucalypts, cool green fern gullies and rich red-soil farmlands.' In the Sherbrooke Forest, 40km east of the CBD, they might glimpse the 'unique lyrebird who struts nonchalantly along the bush tracks.' Or at Healesville's Wildlife Sanctuary, just north of Melbourne, they could find 'Australia's living fossil, the duck-billed platypus', as well as kangaroos, koalas, emus and 'a sleepy wombat [who] blinks at you from the warmth of his burrow.'[15]

'A cruise on the lake is one of the best ways to see Canberra's main features', said the blurb on the national capital. In spring the visitor would find 'the blossom trees in full bloom', but autumn's colourful foliage afforded the most picturesque time to 'appreciate the attractive setting of Canberra with its hills forming a backdrop to some of Australia's most interesting architecture.' The array of brightly coloured photographs for Canberra captured the essence of the vision of a planned city that Holmes and Daley had tried so hard to capture forty years earlier (Chapter Three). In contrast to the difficult task of promoting Australia's capital in the 1930s, the ATC could now better acknowledge Canberra's place as a 'city of the twentieth century'. Holmes, who argued so determinedly in the 1930s for the need for human subjects in order to sell Canberra to tourists, might have been interested to see that the photos of Canberra's public buildings and monuments remained sparsely populated! The accompanying page

[13] ATC, Australia *Welcomes You*, 9.
[14] See: Andrea Scott Inglis, *Summer in the Hills: The Nineteenth-Century Mountain Resort in Australia* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007).
[15] ATC, Australia *Welcomes You*, 12.

for Canberra, though, gave an idea of where the locals had gone – crowds of alpine tourists packed the slopes at the Snowy Mountains' ski resorts. From Canberra, Thredbo and Perisher, 'the best-known ski villages' were easy to access. 'At your doorstep are snowfields which extend over much of the Kosciusko National Park … Check into a ski-lodge, and enjoy the mountain air for a day, a week, or as long as you would like to stay.'[16] 'The mountains are just as beautiful when the snow melts', the guide reassured those who might travel in summer, and still 'blue skies, blue lakes and fresh mountain air' awaited the tourist.[17]

Australia Welcomes You recognised the emerging multicultural characters of Sydney and Melbourne, but only as it related to the culinary diversity available in the cities. Seamus O' Hanlon and Rachel Stevens demonstrate that there was an 'urban bias in Australian immigrant settlement patterns [that] widened since the end of the White Australia policy in the early 1970s.' This process heavily favoured Melbourne and Sydney as places of migrant settlement, giving them a level of ethnic diversity that by the 1970s separated them from 'the national ethnic profile.'[18] O'Hanlon and Stevens argue the outcome of post-war migration made these cities completely distinct from the broader national experience.[19] 'Rather than Australia being a multicultural nation it should more rightly be classified as a nation of multicultural cities; with two – Melbourne and Sydney – more appropriately called hyperdiverse, such is their level of their ethnic diversity', writes O'Hanlon.

ATC materials barely recorded the rapidly changed demography. Instead, they focused on these city's environmental attributes, their proximity to nearby natural sites and their sporting and cultural pastimes. Either promoters were not interested in the changing demographic make-up of Australia's two-largest cities, or they thought them of little interest to the potential traveller. Though cultural diversity was not yet a key selling point, *Australia Welcomes You* did indicate the emergence of a more multicultural society, at least through the 'variety of restaurants in the capital cities, ranging in style from Continental and Middle East to Chinese and Pacific Island'. 'Due to the number of migrants of Italian descent in the community, Italian restaurant cuisine is prevalent in Melbourne,' read another section of the guide.[20] In their effort to attract tourist visitors, these snippets of information about Australia's restaurant scene were marginal when compared to more robust appeals to have people visit to experience Australia's nature and outdoor life.

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[16] For histories of Alpine New South Wales see: Deirdre Slattery, *Australian Alps: Kosciuszko, Alpine and Namadgi National Parks*. (CSIRO Publishing, 2025); Tracey Dickson, 'Australia's Alpine areas: motivations, experiences and satisfaction of visitors to Mt Kosciuszko.' In *Mountain tourism: experiences, communities, environments and sustainable futures*, (Wallingford: CABI, 2016),147-156.
[17] ATC, *Australia Welcomes You*, 19.
[18] O' Hanlon, *City Life*, 102.
[19] Seamus O'Hanlon & Rachel Stevens, 'A nation of immigrants or a nation of immigrant cities? The urban context of Australian multiculturalism, 1947–2011', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 63:4 (2017), 556-571.
[20] ATC, *Australia Welcomes You,* 45.

In line with the HKF Report's key recommendations, *Australia Welcomes You* focused on the Great Barrier Reef and the Outback. As we saw in the last chapter, American consultants had earmarked both as distinctly Australian locations that should lead visual marketing campaigns. Copy described the Great Barrier Reef 'which rises from warm, sunlit, crystal clear waters' where tourist resorts sat upon 'sanctuaries for sea birds and marine life.' Evoking a scene brimming with life in and out of the water, the ATC promised the visitor abundant flora and fauna of all kinds, and a variety of recreational activities: 'bush walks are as much an attraction as swimming, sunbathing, fishing, cruising and golf.'[21]

International visitor numbers to the Reef and the Red Centre remained relatively low in the early 1970s (see Figure 2 below). The arguably disproportionate attention given to them in advertising is an indicator of the ATC's push to adopt both as significant sites of national symbolism. In advertising for the Reef islands, colour photographs depicted resort swimming pools amid lush green coastal scenes, long stretches of sandy coast and groups of tourists sunning themselves on the decks of cruising boats and enjoying sunset cocktails: 'Evenings are for relaxing or dancing at the Great Barrier Reef resorts.' Such a vision of coastal northern Queensland captured a still 'rough and ready' tourist experience soon to be made obsolete by the extravagant development of resorts funded by the soaring ambition (and borrowed money) of Australia's coming 1980s entrepreneurs.[22]

[21] *Ibid*.
[22] Bongiorno, *The Eighties,* 346.

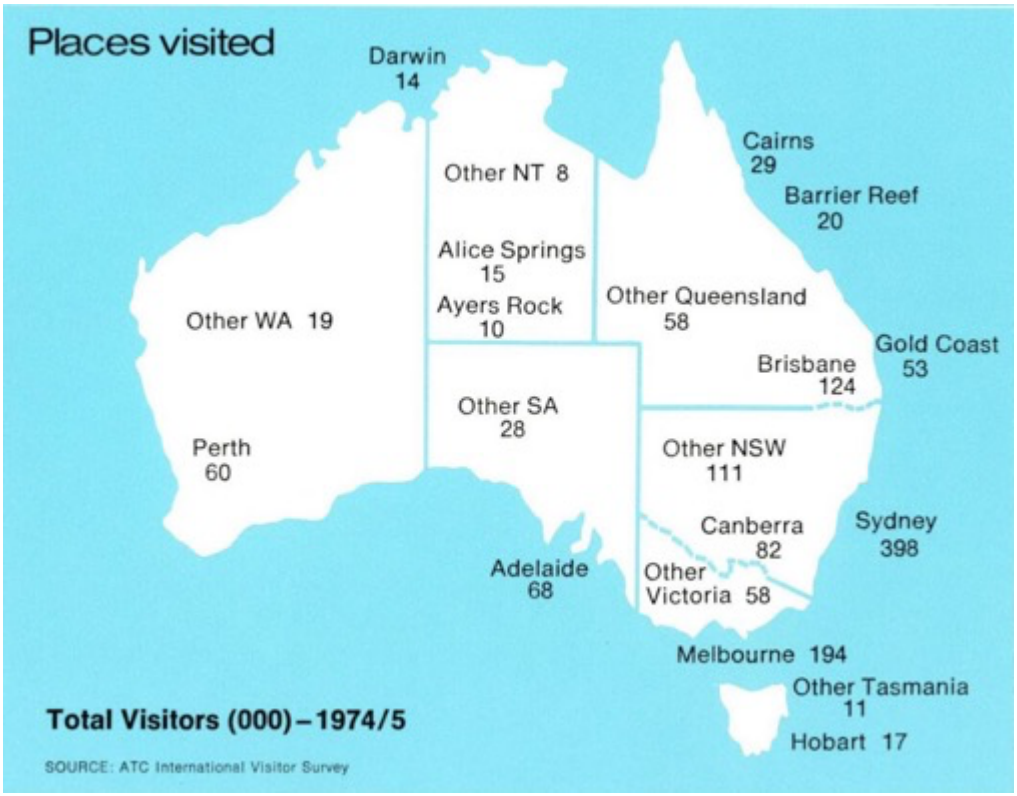


Figure 2 – International Tourist Visitors to Australian destinations, 1974/75.[23]

The Outback as a distinctively 'Australian' attraction

The writers of *Australia Welcomes You* pitched Alice Springs as the 'Centre of Australia's Great Outback' and described the regional tourism hub as 'an oasis … set among the red and purple MacDonnell Ranges.' A 'modern country town with neat homes – Queen Elizabeth stayed in one of them – and tidy gardens', Alice Springs was at once exotic and luxurious. With accommodation fit for the monarch (albeit in 1963), the town enjoyed 'wide and tree-lined streets' and was equipped with 'air-conditioned hotels and motels, swimming pools, souvenir shops, art galleries and restaurants' which, the guide admitted, 'seem strangely out of character.' The guide further reassured the reader that 'it is not always hot in Alice Springs', noting that 'the days are cloudless and sunny, but day temperatures moderate and evenings cool', at least between May and September. In town, tourists might encounter 'Aborigines, in from the cattle stations, cluster in the shade of a gum tree' or the 'aboriginal children [who] play in the dried-up bed of the Todd River.' In a photographic collage below the description, positioned next to the valley in which the town is situated, were two photographic portraits of men. One was white, the other black. 'The faces of the Outback: the cattleman; the Aboriginal stockman', read the description.[24]

[23] ATC, *Eighth Annual Report for Year 1974/75*, (Government Printer of Australia: Canberra, 1976), 12.
[24] ATC, Australia *Welcomes You*, 22.

In emphasising Alice Spring's remoteness from other Australian cities, the ATC reprised the commonly employed twentieth century refrain that tourists could escape the hustle and bustle of big city life and modern living via travel. 'How far away from it all can you get?' asked one of the major posters for the *Australia Welcomes You* campaign (figure 3 below). Photographed by Richard Woldendorp, also a regular contributor to *Walkabout*, the poster depicted tourists enjoying a bush picnic at the Ross River Cattle Station Resort. The resort, still operating today (under new ownership since 2001), is 80 kilometres east of Alice Springs, and therefore formed a part of the region's possible tourist experience. Woldendorp's poster image depicts tourists kneeling around a campfire barbecue tended by an Aboriginal guide. Such a portrayal records how promoters were beginning to incorporate Aboriginal Australians into advertising not simply as passive cultural motifs, but as active agents such as guides, performers or artists. This reflected the historic reality of the interior. As Shannyn Palmer writes, by the end of the twentieth century Anangu relationships to place had been reorganised through 'the act of migration, and the encounter with white settlers, rations, work, tourists and camels.'[25]

The HKF Report had documented a rising contemporary interest in Australian Indigenous culture and encouraged ANTA to capitalise on it. During the 1960s, improvements in transport to and accommodation in the centre aligned with shifting cultural attitudes towards Aboriginal affairs. The 1967 referendum, in which about 91 per cent of Australians voted in resounding support of amending the Constitution to allow Aboriginal people to be counted in the census and for the federal government to legislate on their behalf, reflected a further re-evaluation of Aboriginal people's presence in national life.[26] Anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner's 1968 Boyer Lectures further exposed how the Australian public culture had systematically ignored Aboriginal history and experience, giving rise to what he famously described as 'the Great Australian Silence'.

The HKF Report writers were cognisant of the racial politics of the day. 'The Aboriginal Australian and his culture are of great interest to many people, both at home and abroad', wrote the consultants.[27] Quoting the Australian ethnologist Dr. T. G. H. Strehlow, they further noted that some tourists were 'sympathetically interested in our dark people', while others were 'possibly contemptuous of "inferior races"'.[28] Sensing contested but changing values, the consultants recognised that the incorporation of Indigenous people into the national tourist program was mutually beneficial to 'both tourism and the Aborigines.' Such a view was probably framed through the consultant's North American experience,

[25] Shannyn Palmer, *Unmaking Angas Downs: Myth and History on a Central Australian Pastoral Station* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2022), 25.
[26] As historian Kenneth Coates notes, 'it is not that aboriginal peoples discovered their voice in the 1950s and beyond. Rather, select groups of non-indigenous peoples and countries discovered how to hear the words and pleas that had so often been spoken. Coates, *A Global History of Indigenous Peoples,* 232–33.
[27] On the rising concern for Australia's international reputation regarding Indigenous people see: John Chesterman (2001) Defending Australia's reputation: How indigenous Australians won civil rights, part two, *Australian Historical Studies*, 32:117 (2001), 201-221.
[28] *HKF Report*, 281.

where Native Americans featured more prominently in the cultural imagination.[29] This awareness, however tentative, marked a departure from earlier decades in which the Aboriginal presence was either omitted entirely or rendered invisible in national tourism narratives. As the report optimistically stated, 'Properly presented, Aboriginal culture and art would be one of Australia's very important and unique tourist attractions. In addition, it would be influential in convincing every one of the dignity and achievements of the Aboriginal Australians before the days of white settlement.' The consultants, with their external, North American perspective, perceived a growing desire to incorporate Indigenous culture into a modern national image, even though they perpetuated a temporal framing that confined Aboriginal achievement to a pre-colonial past.[30] The eventual advertising images that would flow from these recommendations continued to depict Indigenous people in remote, exotic regions, through a romanticised lens oblivious to the effects of dispossession. Nonetheless, as the Ross River poster suggests, there was now emerging a deeper consideration of Indigenous people's inclusion in tourism.

[29] Shari M Huhndorf, *Going native: Indians in the American cultural imagination*. (Cornell University Press, 2015).
[30] Tim Rowse, 'The Centre: A Limited Colonisation', 158-60; For accounts that explore the settler psyche as it relates to the temporal and topographic framing of urban and remote places see: Tracey Banivanua Mar, "Carving Wilderness: Queensland's National Parks and the Unsettling of Emptied Lands, 1890–1910," in Making Settler Colonial Space: Perspectives on Race, Place and Identity, ed. Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmonds (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 73-94; Tracey Banivanua Mar, "Settler-Colonial Landscapes and Narratives of Possession", *Arena Journal* 37:38 (2012), 176–98; Tony Birch, "Nothing Has Changed: The Making and Unmaking of Koori Culture," *Meanjin* 69 (2010): 229–46.

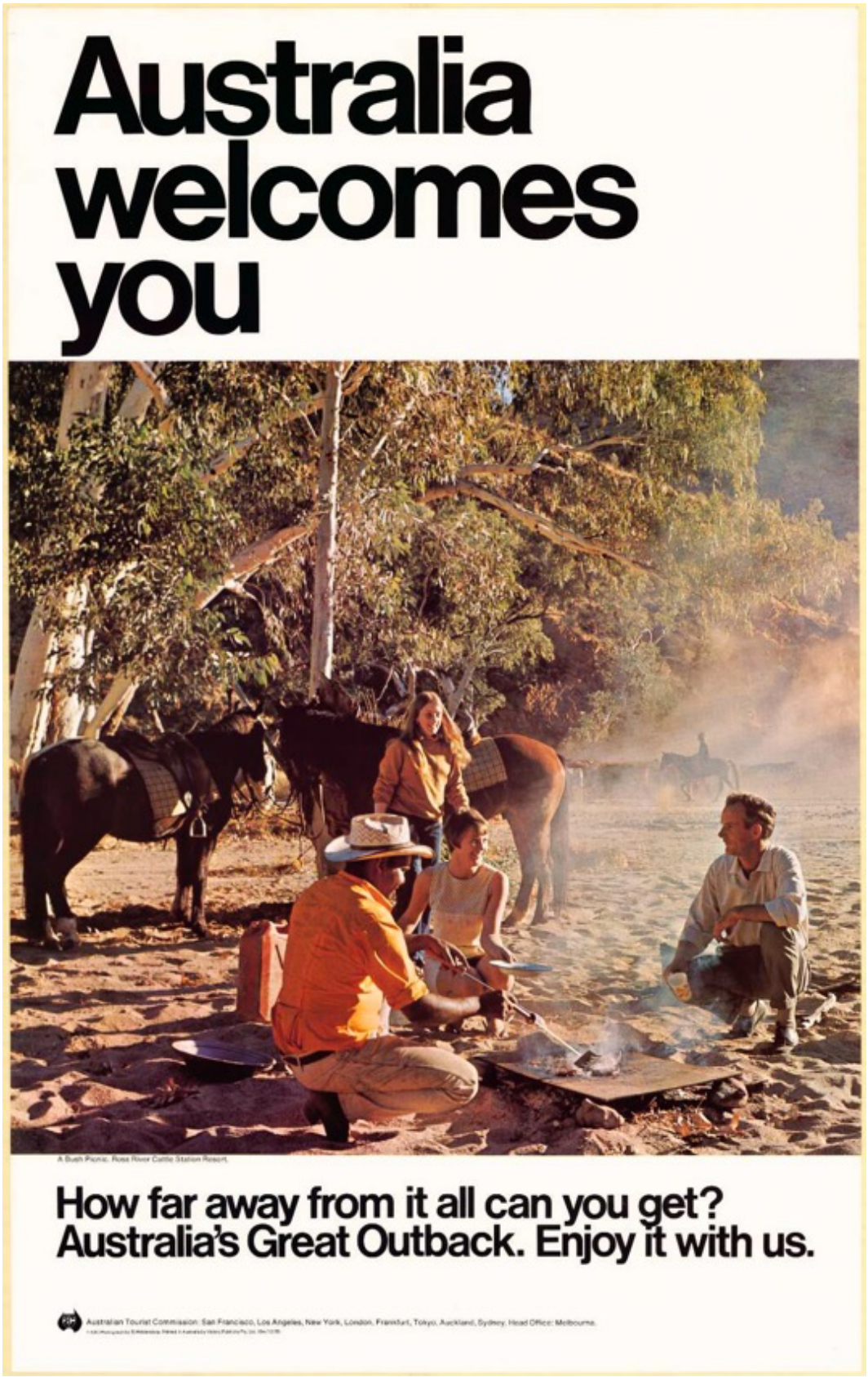


Figure 3 - A Bush Picnic, Ross River Cattle Resort, ATC, NLA dates to 1969.

Nowhere in ATC materials did copywriters include specific information about the culture, history or beliefs of the Arrernte and Anangu people who were local to Alice Springs. Nor did they countenance the complicated history of regional settler-Indigenous relations, or the government policies of exclusion and rationing that drove Indigenous groups away from their ancestral lands and towards white settlements.[31] Ironically, it was these historical mechanisms that explained the presence of Indigenous guides and stockmen at the pastoral cattle ranches featured in ATC tourist guides. As Shannyn Palmer points out, 'coercive protectionist and assimilationist policies, periods of prolonged drought and Aboriginal people being captured by the rations' were key to the 'helpless drift' (described by Strehlow as a 'flight or rout') of central Australian Indigenous people away from their desert homelands.[32] Indeed, as Tim Rowse writes, early- to mid- twentieth century assimilationist policies were 'intended to empty the desert of its nomads, leaving Europeans free to recognise and develop the tourist potential of Ayers Rock and Mount Olga.'[33] ANTA and ATC literature (along with post-war contemporary settler opinion) had been for the most part unquestioning about these histories of movement and migration. Instead, *Australia Welcomes You* coupled Alice Spring's isolation, 'the only town for hundreds of miles in any direction', with a simplistic depiction of the local Aboriginal population merely to conjure a sense of the remote and the exotic. Such a vision reinforced longstanding settler attitudes about Alice Springs. As Rowse writes, the town was long seen as a 'a garrison of white values, an antidote to settlers' sense of disorder, discomfort and danger on the frontier.'[34]

Suggesting the possibility of authentic tourist encounters with Aboriginal people and customs nevertheless resembled a departure from the status quo approach the ATC's predecessor, ANTA, had maintained for most of the century. Though ANTA included Indigenous themes and people in its advertising, seldom did it suggest that encounters between tourists and Indigenous people were a likely feature of the tourist experience. As discussed in chapters two to five, between 1929 and 1958 Charles Holmes had overseen an organisation perpetually hesitant to induce tourists towards direct experiences with Indigenous people.

Indigenous presence, perhaps, could no longer be so easily ignored. The ATC's second annual report (1968-69) recorded that the Commission 'is continuing to work closely with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs for the proper involvement of aboriginals (sic) in tourism.'[35] Efforts to seek the consultation of Aboriginal people in how they might participate in tourism programs mirrored their inclusion in other

[31] Shannyn Palmer, 'Exodus'? Rethinking histories of movement and migration in the Western Desert and Central Australia from an Anangu perspective, *History Australia*, 13:4 (2016), 495-496.
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] Tim Rowse, 'The Centre: A Limited Colonisation', in *Australians from 1939*, Anne Curthoys, A.W. Martin, Tim Rowse (eds.), (Sydney: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1987), 153.
[34] *Ibid*, 162.
[35] Australian Tourist Commission, *Second Annual Report for year 1968-69*, (Commonwealth Government Printing Office Canberra: 1970).

Federal cultural policymaking in the 1960s and 1970s.[36] In those years, a slow but perceptible change emerged in advertising imagery. Aboriginal people increasingly appeared not only as subjects of representation but, in some cases, as active participants in the industry. *Australia Welcomes You* explained the tourist experience at Ross River in further detail:

> Try to find time for Ross River resort, 48 miles east of Alice Springs and once a cattle station. Here's the place to throw a boomerang, eat a witchetty grub, a delicacy with the aborigines [sic].

Adjoining photographs depict Aboriginal men performing a traditional dance and a female tourist standing next to an Aboriginal man preparing to throw a boomerang. 'An aboriginal stockman will teach you to throw a boomerang', read the caption. While the promotional material leaned heavily on tropes and performative authenticity, it nevertheless marked a shift in how Aboriginal people were presented in tourist settings. They were not passive subjects of display, but active participants offering a curated, if constrained, cultural encounter. As Rowse argues, historians must be careful not to concede to a 'coercion thesis' which holds the movement of central Australian Aboriginal people 'off their homelands and into settlements' as 'a contrived effect of welfare policy.' More nuanced interpretations, he argues, allow for an 'interplay of Aboriginal agency with the circumstances forced on Aborigines by European settlement.'[37] With this historical framing in mind, ATC advertising images that presented Indigenous people as guides and performers recorded, at least to a limited degree, the outcomes of the 'continual assessments' Indigenous people had made of the European experiment thrust upon them. Indeed, as Mitchell Rolls writes of similar imagery in *Walkabout* magazine, photographs frequently showed that Aboriginal people were 'engaged participants in the changes being wrought upon their lands.'[38]

The ATC advised those interested in Aboriginal experiences to travel onward from Alice Springs to Darwin, 'main city of the North.' From there, 'one day photographic safaris take you eastward through the tropical jungles and Aboriginal reserves of Arnhem land.' In these promotional narratives, the environment remained a backdrop that depicted the desert and the bush as wild, remote, and timeless. The Indigenous presence was positioned as a feature of the landscape to be experienced, interpreted, and, occasionally, learned from. Such representations reflected a post-1967 awareness that Aboriginal people could no longer be ignored in national storytelling, even as the terms of their inclusion remained shaped by settler expectations. David Beal's image (figure 4 below) of two white tourists admiring Uluru, then still referred to as Ayers Rock, nevertheless suggested that there remained a narrative of implicit

[36] Eleanor Foster, "A Healthy Nationalism": The Inclusion of Indigenous Australians in the Federal Cultural Policymaking of the 1960s and 1970s, *Journal of Australian Studies*, 45:3, (2021), 385-399.
[37] Tim Rowse, 'Aborigines as historical actors: Evidence and inference', *Australian Historical Studies,* 22:87, (1986), 176-198.
[38] Rolls, *Picture Imperfect,* 31.

Indigenous absence and explicit settler presence in the interior. Seen in this way, photos like Beal's reinforced settler, and marginalised Aboriginal, claims to Uluru in the same decade that preliminary discussions about handing it and the surrounding country back to Traditional Owners were underway.[39] Though the HKF Report had acknowledged the site as 'a tribal mythological centre', Beal's image did not countenance its spiritual significance to the original inhabitants. Perhaps the curators of the *Australia Welcomes You* campaign perceived that while travellers might have desired to meet Indigenous people as part of their experience, they did not seek to do so in ways that confronted their supposed rights as settlers to enjoy the country on their own terms.

[39] Bongiorno, *The Eighties, 162.*

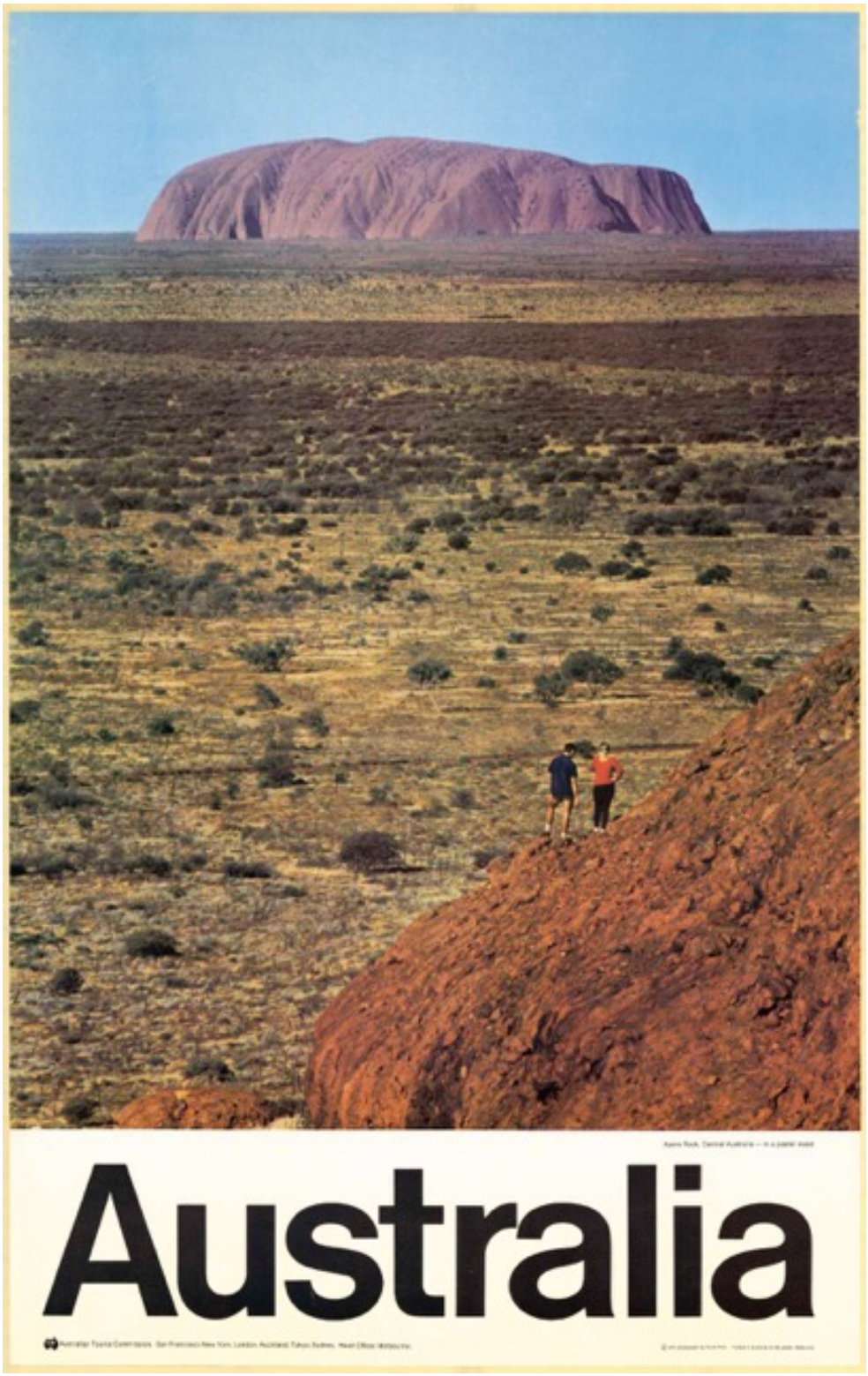


Figure 4 - Beal, David and Australian Tourist Commission. *Australia Ayers Rock, Central Australia: in a pastel mood.* Melbourne: Australian Tourist Commission. NLA dates to 1969.

'Three million miles of contrasts': Cities, regions and the Australian way of life

Though ATC advertising ascribed greater agency to Australia's Indigenous people, the juxtaposition between life in the remote regions and the cities remained stark. And it was in the cities more than the regions, that the HKF report had predicted that the 'visitor will encounter many of the elements of Australia's attraction as a "new" country, growing rapidly through a vibrant period of expansion and general development.'[40] Nevertheless, contrast was a theme that the ATC, like ANTA before it, celebrated. As the introduction to *Australia Welcomes You* declared: 'Australia is three million square miles of contrasts.' Such language echoed ANTA's sales rhetoric of the 1930s, when 'Australia is a land of endless contrasts' had been the tagline for so many sales aids. Embracing contrast, the ATC sold Australia's diversity of life, variety of experience, and multitude of scenery. Colour photography, whether of the Reef, the desert interior, or Australia's other diverse destinations captured well the continent's renowned bright sunlight and warm climate, even though the differences between these places were vast. The point was that Australia was 'pulsing with new developments, new experiences and new ideas.' There was nothing new about this progressive imagining of Australia, a modern country on the move where the opportunities to participate in the outdoor lifestyle were almost infinite. You could ski in the Snowy Mountains or stand on top of Ayers Rock 'under a warming sun and cloudless sky… and look in any direction across red sunlit plains stretching towards the sea a thousand miles away.' [41]

While the ATC extolled the variety of Australian experience, climate and weather remained a unifying theme of its sales pitch. Brisbane and the Gold Coast had the subtitle 'Great Climate, Golden Beaches', and the copy led with a description of the region's sub-tropical temperatures that gave way to 'a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.' Brisbane was 'a pleasant city, colourful with poinsiana trees, jacarandas, hibiscus, palms and poinsettia.' Low temperatures need not concern the visitor. 'Winter, if you can call it that, comes in June, July and August, and means mild, sunny days: average 70 F. 21.1C.' Perth, capital of the 'booming west… remains a relaxed open-air city, sunniest in Australia.' Kings Park, in the heart of Perth boasted 1,000 acres of natural bushland overlooking the Swan River. Finally, Adelaide's residents were said to 'enjoy a near perfect climate' that was ideal for golf, quiet strolls by Lake Torrens and year-round outdoor dining. Such description culminated in a sunny vision of the nation not dissimilar to those offered in prior tourism campaigns. 'Australian seasons are the reverse of the Northern Hemisphere', read the guide, appealing to longstanding trope that Australia's superior weather offered sanctuary from frosty winters on the other side of the equator. 'Climates vary from area to area. But the sun is always shining somewhere in Australia, making it an ideal country for year-round visits.'[42]

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[40] *HKF Report*, 25.
[41] ATC, *Australia Welcomes You,* 3.
[42] *Ibid*, 44.

Appeals to experience Australia's weather reinforced what had become a long-established and dominant message about Australia's people, whose friendly character and disposition were shaped by the continent's unique climate and environmental conditions. The HKF Report had described 'an intangible which the visitor rapidly senses; the attitude of the Australian towards life, conditioned from the hardy pioneers' dreams down through the growing mastery of successive generations over the environment.' In this imagining, Australia's appeal was the Australians themselves, and the prosperous society cultivated since European settlement. The HKF consultants had summarised the Australian attitude 'in simple terms' as a 'desire of the individual for enough income, based on reasonable hours of work, to be able to own his own home with all its modern facilities and his own car.' Discerning the Australian proclivity for fairness, the consultants wrote further that above all, Australians insisted on 'enough time' to enjoy these material possessions, as well as 'his family during and after a 5-day 40-hour working week.' The consultants felt these conditions were the base ingredients for a quintessentially Australian way of life. 'And this is what he has, with his free time and the favourable climate and the open spaces which are a pleasant feature everywhere.'[43]

This observation holds a historical insight into the relationship between climate and social conditions in Australia. Australia's working conditions, much improved in comparison to other places, stemmed back to workers' demands for a shorter week in the mid- to late- 19th century.[44] Over a hundred years later, the preference for short hours and increased leisure had become an entrenched component of the national psyche. Such an attitude was tempered by the overarching prosperity Australia had enjoyed since settlement, where the nation derived material wealth from the agricultural and mineral resources afforded by the climate and the land. As Geoffrey Blainey writes, climate 'has been a vital determinant of the prosperity and location of the wool industry, dairy farming, and every rural industry ranging from sugar to wheat.' Less obviously, he argued in the 1970s, climate influenced 'many Australian social customs and preferences', such as the early prominence of spectator sport, the high consumption of tea, and even the 'tendency for Australians to wash themselves more than Englishmen.'[45]

In Blainey's view, climate, and the social and material conditions it engendered, steadily became a concept through which Australia made itself distinct from other places. Such a framing of Australia's circumstances doubtless affected the nation's image in advertising. All through the twentieth century national advertising promised the overseas tourist a taste of the Australian way of life born of these environmental conditions. Advertising emphasised repeatedly the idea that Australians were friendly *because* of the climactic conditions they enjoyed. Over the course of the century, Australia had earned for itself a friendly reputation, a quality the HKF consultants had been keen to commodify. 'Reports

[43] *HKF Report*, 25.
[44] Geoffrey Blainey, *A History of Victoria*, 111; Sean Scalmer, *A Fair Day's Work: The Quest to Win Back Time*, (Melbourne: MUP, 2025).
[45] Blainey, 'Climate and Australians', 5-8.

from many visitors confirm that the Australian people are known for their friendliness. This is a most valuable travel asset and one which should be accorded full opportunity for community expression because of its contribution to visitor satisfaction', read their recommendations.[46] In the 1970s, it was the challenge of the ATC to translate the hospitable image of the Australian people into sales materials entering a global market, competing for the attention of more consumers than ever before.

By way of the advent of market research, the ATC was attuned to the branding power that climate and friendliness held for Australia. In the 'Outgoing Visitors Survey', for example, conducted between August 1971 and July 1972, 30,000 people reported 'a range of detailed information on international travel to and within Australia, which was not previously available.' Among its findings was that 'friendly people; climate' and 'landscape and scenery' were 'what visitors liked most about Australia.'[47] This finding followed the *Australian Welcomes You* campaign, already running in 1973 and soon to be replaced by a new, but less effective, national strategy. In this sense the research findings confirmed what promoters already knew to be true – that Australia's principal selling point lay in the environmental conditions that made its landscape, but also its people, unique. The very title of *Australia Welcomes You* denoted the idea that the nation was friendly and welcoming. In the words of the guide, 'Australia is a big country, but its people welcome you.'[48]

Malaise and the national image: The 'Australia' Campaign, 1975-83

ANTA's transformation to the Australian Tourist Commission in July 1967 was not the sovereign remedy for a nationalised tourist association that Basil Atkinson and his executive team had, perhaps naively, envisioned. By 1973 its newfound proximity to government had stripped the ATC of the independence that their forebears at ANTA had enjoyed since 1929. The fledgling ATC's relationship with the Commonwealth soon began to sour. Straining the relationship further was the contemporary economic situation. In the early 1970s, the long boom of the post-war era was all but over. Unemployment and inflation were rising. Economic trouble in the US spelled disaster for Australia.[49] Contemporaries began to worry that the nation, and perhaps the world, was heading for a repeat of the troubling 1930s, the very decade in which national and global crises brought ANTA into being.

In 1973 the newly established ATC had found its existence under threat. As Nina Mistilis and Neil Leiper write, the ATC increasingly had to 'justify its existence and its allocation of public funds.' Basil Atkinson later said that he and his team 'were battling government all the time.' Tourism was 'looked

[46] *HKF Report*, 63.
[47] Australian Tourist Commission: Fifth Annual Report for year 1971-72, (Commonwealth Government Printing Office, Canberra, 1973), 20-21.
[48] ATC, *Australia Welcomes You, 3.*
[49] Robert M. Collins, 'The Economic Crisis of 1968 and the Waning of the "American Century"', *The American Historical Review*, 101:2, (1996), 396–422.

on as a fun industry', he said, and there was a prevailing view in Treasury that tourism would grow itself. The 1973 Coombs Report, the outcome of an advisory inquiry that investigated potential areas where government spending could be reduced, proposed that the ATC could be 'cut back over a period of years', and that the private sector 'called on to do more.'[50] Coombs, previously the first governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia and then economic advisor to Gough Whitlam, argued for a complete reversion to ANTA's pre-1967 model. *Walkabout*, the profits of which had seen ANTA through lean times in the past, was now running at a loss. It ceased publication entirely in 1974. Many of the recommendations of the HKF report, specifically the consultant's tabling of a 'national plan of tourism development', had not yet been adopted.

Described as a 'decade of disasters', environmental and political turmoil characterised the years between 1974 and 1983.[51] The double dissolution election of 1974 and the loans affair scandal plagued the Whitlam government. As Michelle Arrow writes, 'the worsening economic outlook and its own political ineptitude' spelled doom for the government, leading to the infamous dismissal of November 1975.[52] Against this tumultuous backdrop came hard won progress, indicated by reforms to Indigenous land rights and support for equal pay, reforms to family law, and the introduction of no-fault divorce. Such developments, however, were overshadowed by a deepening economic malaise. The broader downturn, combined with oil shocks and waning international consumer confidence, relegated major tourism to the periphery. In this climate, the ATC's ambitions appeared increasingly out of step with government policy. Tourism, dismissed as a leisure industry unsuited to serious public investment, struggled to justify its relevance amid competing national priorities.

Imperilling the ATC further was the impending collapse of the postwar boom. Rising inflation, coupled with the quadrupling of oil prices during the 1973 OPEC crisis, shocked the global tourism industry, dashing further the ATC's hopes of expanding tourism in Australia.[53] Inflation and currency revaluations significantly undermined the Commission's efforts in 1973/74. With its $3 million budget frozen at previous levels, it was worse off in real terms, especially given rising costs in overseas offices. Inflation also devalued the dollar against international currencies, making Australia a more expensive destination for tourists. Travel from the US increased by fewer than 3,000 visitors that year. Tourism performance for 1973-74, wrote the new ATC chairman Alan Greenway, 'might best be described as a standstill.'[54] In 1975 Basil Atkinson resigned to take up the position of Director of Tourism in the Bahamas. Greenway noted that 'in a year of considerable difficulty', Atkinson's resignation was

[50] Mistilis & Leiper, 'Australian Tourist Commission Early Years', 20.
[51] Beverley Raphael, Warwick Middleton, 'Mental Health Responses in a Decade of Disasters', *Hospital and Community Psychiatry,* 38:12, (1987), 1331-1337.
[52] Michelle Arrow, *The Seventies*, (New South: Sydney, 2019), 171.
[53] David Hammes and Douglas T. Wills. "Black Gold: The End of Bretton Woods and the Oil Price Shocks of the 1970s." *Independent Review* 9:4 (2005), 501-11.
[54] ATC, *Seventh Annual Report for Year 1973-74,* (Government Printer of Australia: Canberra, 1975), 3.

accepted 'with regret.'[55] Things got worse before they got better. The ATC's annual report for the following year noted that the effects of 'the 1974 world-wide recession in international tourism belatedly reached Australia in 1975.'[56]



Figure 5 - Koalas, Cuddles, and Clowns, ATC Publicity Brochures, 1975.[57]

The ATC's advertising strategy after 1975 reflected this wider malaise in both the tourism industry and the national mood. A new campaign, simply titled *Australia*, supplanted *Australia Welcomes You*. The

[55] ATC, *Eighth Annual Report for Year 1974/75*, (Government Printer of Australia: Canberra, 1976), 5.
[56] ATC, *Annual Report for 1975-76*, (The Acting Commonwealth Government Printer: Canberra, 1977), 8.
[57] *Ibid*, 23

booklet, 40-pages long, was largely photographic, lacking the confident prose of the prior campaign. Though visually striking, it lacked the understated patriotism that had defined the campaign that preceded it. The cover, an aerial photograph of Uluru overlaid with six images, including the face of a laughing clown, (figure 5 above) suggested a confused attempt at representing the national identity. Rather than a unified vision, it revealed the identity crisis gripping both the ATC and the country more broadly. This vision of Australia reflected the contemporary political discourse around nationalism and identity during the Whitlam-Fraser era. As James Curran argues, Malcolm Fraser rejected 'aggressive nationalism' but was hesitant to assert an alternative bold or cohesive image of Australia.[58] Fraser's government preferred understatement and individualism, a position that left tourism promotion on shaky ground when attempting to invoke a compelling national story.

The ATC struggled throughout this period. It could not seem to recover the creative confidence it had enjoyed between its inception in 1967 and the early 1970s, or, for that matter, the self-assurance that characterised the earlier ANTA years. Post-1975 campaigns betrayed this uncertainty, even a deeper institutional malaise that rived the Commission. Although the 1965 HFK report had explicitly recommended a coherent national plan for tourism development, by the late 1970s, no such framework had come into being. As Mistilis and Leiper observe, doubts continued to circulate about whether a national plan was feasible at all. For Basil Atkinson, the Commission's founding director, the problem was structural. He would later reflect of the period that tourism departments globally were overly bureaucratic, failed to attract specialists, and were rarely staffed by people with industry experience.[59] Building and retaining a skilled, innovative team was more difficult than ever. Robert Crawford and Jackie Dickenson have detailed well in *Behind Glass Doors* how the 1960s and 1970s culture and creative freedom of private advertising firms became increasingly attractive to talented creatives.[60] This redistribution of Australia's talent pool no doubt affected the Commission, which increasingly resembled a stifled government department, rather than an exciting, creative advertising agency.

The ATC's growing awareness of its limitations paralleled broader anxieties about Australia's place in the world. Internally, the Commission fretted that the country was falling behind comparable global markets. Annual reports from the mid-1970s onward consistently expressed concern over stalled development and poor coordination between Commonwealth and state governments. 'The lack of activity throughout Australia in the planning of new developments and improvements to existing attractions, facilities and services remains a cause for concern', read the report for 1976-77. Following the HKF Report, now over a decade old, the ATC had argued for action in priority areas like the Great Barrier Reef and Ayers Rock (Uluru), but its ability to make progress remained constrained. The *1973-*

[58] James Curran, *The Power of Speech*, 105.
[59] Leiper and Mistilis, 'Australian Tourist Commission Early Years', 27.
[60] Dickenson & Crawford, *Behind Glass Doors*, 87-114.

74 Annual Report lamented that the Great Barrier Reef Visitor Plan (completed 1971) had produced no meaningful results, delayed further by the ongoing Royal Commission into oil drilling in the region.[61]

A similar fate befell the proposed tourism development plan for Ayers Rock (Uluru).[62] First submitted to government in 1969, it had by 1977 yielded little progress. 'What should be a major destination area of international quality' said the Commission, 'is now a discredit to this country.'[63] Competing tensions over Aboriginal land rights claims and tourism development were at that stage underway. The 1966 Gurindji strike at the Northern Territory's Wave Hill Cattle Station (1,000 kms north of Alice Springs) gave way to the 1976 *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory)*. This new legislation afforded the Arrente and Anangu people, Traditional Owners of the lands around Uluru and Alice Springs, an opportunity to reassert ownership over their country.[64] The ATC was not blind to these shifting social and environmental currents. It recognised, for example, that public attitudes toward unrestrained development in culturally and environmentally important sites were changing. In the 1971-72 report the Commission observed: 'an accelerating groundswell of opinion which signals the folly of environmental despoliation.'[65] Changing attitudes, the ATC perceived, meant that unregulated development in scenic or 'Aboriginal tribal' areas was likely to meet community resistance.[66]

But there were limits to the Commission's realisation that tourism had to evolve in response to new cultural and ecological sensibilities. ATC Reports, which in the late 1960s had suggested cooperation between tourism and Indigenous interests, fell silent on the implications of the emerging Aboriginal Land Rights movement. The report for 1975-76 expressed frustration that the difficulties of businesses in acquiring leases in central Australia was contributing to a decline in the quality of 'the facilities and environment at Ayers rock.' At the same time, Traditional Owners consistently argued that 'if given ownership they would lease the Ayers Rock area back to a conservation authority for management as a park and subsequent tourist entity.'[67] The debate over ownership and management, which followed on the heels of other contemporary political dilemmas around uranium mining leases in the Northern Territory, played out until the end of the decade in Canberra.[68] For the duration, the Northern Territory Reserves Board (NTRB) remained hesitant in renewing and granting leases.

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[61] ATC, *Seventh Annual Report for Year 1973-74*, (Government Printer of Australia: Canberra, 1975), 3.
[62] Jillian Barnes, 'Tourism's role in the struggle for the intellectual and material possession of 'The Centre' of Australia at Uluru, 1929–2011.' *Journal of Tourism History* 3:2 (2011), 147-176; Annette Hamilton, 'Spoon-feeding the lizards: Culture and conflict in central Australia.' *Meanjin* 43, no. 3 (1984), 363-378.
[63] ATC, *Tenth Annual Report,* 1976-77, (Commonwealth Government Printer: Canberra, 1979), 3. See also: ATC, *Seventh Annual Report*, 2-3.
[64] Langton, 'What do we mean by wilderness?', 22; Robert Layton, *Uluru: An Aboriginal History of Ayers Rock*, (Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1986).
[65] ATC, *Fifth Annual Report for the Year 1971-72*, (Government Printer of Australia: Canberra, 1974), 26-29.
[66] ATC, *Sixth Annual Report for the Year 1972-73*, (Government Printer of Australia: Canberra, 1974), 27.
[67] 'Fight for the Rock', *Tribune*, September 5, 1979, 6; 'Ayers Rock National Park: Black's claim may be recognised', *Canberra Times*, April 14, 1979), 3.
[68] Jessica Urwin, 'Better active today than radioactive tomorrow: Environmentalism and the Australian anti-uranium movement, 1975-82', *International Review of Environmental History* 9:2 (2023), 123-144; Greg Adamson, *Stop Uranium Mining! Australia's Decade of Protest 1975–85* (Chippendale, NSW: Resistance Books, 1999).

The ATC steered away from the political debate, but its frustrations with the NTRB, or at least the wider political situation, were clear. 'Ayers Rock has the potential to become one of Australia's outstanding international attractions of the order of Treetops in Kenya or Niagara Falls in Canada', wrote the Commission in 1974. 'There is a danger that if there are further delays, this proposed tourist development could become a compromise which fails fully to capitalise on the awesome qualities of the area.'[69] The ATC, during a period in which its flagship publicity materials displayed Uluru as a focal point, and further depicted Aboriginal stockmen as key components of the tourist experience, could not seem to reconcile the implications of land rights with tourist development. In delay, it could only see failure, a 'regrettable missed opportunity for Australian tourism.'[70] Such rhetoric laid bare the ATC's developmentalist ethos, in which considerations of progress were subordinate to the spiritual and political claims of the Indigenous people it increasingly depicted in advertising.

Conclusion

Paralysed by underinvestment and without political influence, the ATC of the mid- to late- 1970s was unable to curate effective campaigns. As Atkinson would later remark, 'our biggest problem was funding; we only had a fraction of what was needed. This position went on through the Holt, Gorton, McMahon and Whitlam governments.'[71] The arrival of Malcolm Fraser in the Lodge did little to curtail this trend. By the end of the decade the ATC was completely adrift. There was high attrition among senior staff. In the 1981 Annual Report, another chairman, R. J. Ritchie, described the late 1970s as 'years of refinement and consolidation'. But in a letter to the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Phillip Lynch, he also criticised staff ceilings and budget constraints that limited what the organisation could achieve.[72] Sales materials from the time reflected a concentration on regional publications rather than national ones, perhaps a further indication of the lack of confidence in expressing a unified nationalism. In this sense, the ATC's publications during this period resembled the wider public culture of the unassertive and anodyne Fraser years. As Curran points out, 'for Fraser, Australians possessed a love of country that dare not speak its name. Yet when it did, it only illustrated again how confused and unpractised Australians were in expressing a sense of national pride.'[73] The ATC, like the government that funded it, appeared unsure of what it was or who it was for. Environmental imagery sustained the campaigns of the 1970s. But after the *Australia Welcomes You* campaign of 1969-75, subsequent marketing lacked the assertive confidence of past efforts. Not even environmental imagery could overcome the malaise. The ATC seemed hesitant about committing to a conception of the nation around which

[69] ATC, *Seventh Annual Report for Year 1973-74*, 2.
[70] *Ibid*.
[71] Mistilis & Leiper, 'The ATC's early years', 24.
[72] ATC, *Thirteenth Annual Report, 1979-80*, (Commonwealth Government Printer: Canberra, 1981), 3.
[73] Curran, *Power of Speech,* 119. Curran offers a compelling thesis on Cold War geopolitics as a cause for the decline of nationalism in Australia at this time.

people could rally or that it could confidently project overseas. Against the backdrop of a broader national malaise, the ATC's hesitancy set the stage for a dramatic resurgence of the Australian national image, fronted in the 1980s by Paul Hogan, in a campaign that depended as much on environmental themes as any that had come before.

Chapter VII

'Australians, who live life by the sun and not the clock': Recovering the national image, 1983-1988

> To promote the continent the hard thing is where do you start? Because you know, geographically, and climatically, and beauty to the eye, and all that there's just so much you don't know which to pick first.
>
> Paul Hogan, National Press Club address, September 26, 1983. [1]

Australia's most famous advertising campaign was conceived over a beer. More correctly, it followed an advertising campaign for a beer. The beer was Fosters and it was the success of Paul Hogan in marketing 'the amber nectar' in England in the 1970s that caught the eye of John Brown, minister for sport, recreation and tourism in the Hawke government. He sought Hogan out in London, only months after the Hawke election victory of March 1983. 'You're going well over here, Hoges, selling beer to the Poms,' said Brown. 'Back home we're going to have a couple of hundred thousand kids leaving school this year, and we've got no jobs for them… You sold beer to the Poms, do you think you could sell Australia to the Yanks?'[2] Brown's appeal to Hogan's patriotism (and seemingly his sense of economic nationalism) set the tone for the most confident and best funded Australian national tourism campaign ever conceived, the "Come and Say G'day" campaign. As with past campaigns, Hogan's effort was to rest on long-established national marketing precepts, chiefly a combined promotion of the people, but also their surroundings.

The advertising images of the Hogan campaign, coupled with his turn of phrase and his flashing 'pearly whites' are still remembered as an iconic encapsulation of Australia, at least as it was in the 1980s. Though Hogan's character and accent were novel, the landscapes in which he appeared and the appeals he made for people to visit were as grounded in Australia's natural scenery and environmental qualities as any of the campaigns that came before, signifying an inescapable environmental dimension that lies at the core of the Australian national image. Though the campaign is well remembered as a trailblazing exercise in bold Australian marketing, almost completely forgotten is the way that it built on the generations of promotion that came before it. Indeed, as the Australian historian of advertising Robert Crawford argues, historians often view the Hogan campaign in isolation, without proper consideration of its wider historical context: 'the astounding success that Brand Australia enjoyed in the 1980s cannot

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[1] Paul Hogan & John Brown address at the National Press Club on 26 September 1983 [sound recording], 1983. (nla.obj-222445283)

[2] Hogan, *Tap Dancing Knife Thrower*, (Harper Collins: Sydney, 2020), 82.

be understood without reference to the broader social and cultural conditions that precipitated it.'[3] In light of Crawford's assessment, this chapter aims to better situate the Hogan campaign in the longer history of twentieth century national advertising history, asking how 'Come and Say G'day' followed on the heels of the tourism campaigns, and public discourse, that preceded it. The Hogan campaign was distinct from past advertising because it enjoyed substantial government support and financial backing, imbuing it with an air of confidence and legitimacy previously unknown. According to Brown at the campaign's launch: 'Constrained by funds the last few years they [the ATC] nevertheless managed to do a good job. But now with increased funds… they can get out and tell the rest of the world what a great country we have here.'[4] Such rhetoric paralleled that of the organisations that preceded the ATC. Important here too is the legacy of the 1965 Harris Kerr Forster report which, as Mistilis and Leiper observe, was seen as highly influential by the executive leadership at the ATC and shaped national advertising for well over a decade after its release in 1965.[5] As in almost every twentieth-century campaign, the ATC recycled images of the healthy, vital sun-soaked Australian people that had for so long been a key marketing point aimed at boosting the national reputation. This chapter also considers the ways the campaign, now remembered as successful, did not pass into the zeitgeist without criticism.

Where Crawford argues that an explanation of the 1980s campaign's success lies in a more concrete understanding of the 1960s and 1970s, I argue further that the location of 'Brand Australia's' appeal in the 1980s stretches all the way back to the beginning of the century. As we have seen in this thesis, the systematic commercialisation of Australian nature for the purposes of stimulating domestic and overseas travel did not begin in the 1980s, the 1960s or even in the 1930s. The ATC advertising campaigns of the 1970s and 1980s drew on the storied tradition of deploying environmental themes that dated back at least to the beginning of the century. Certainly, the ATC's efforts were more commercialised, in line with private advertising's changing methods. Distinct from earlier campaigns as well, was the employment of the larrikin character of Hogan as Australia's tourism ambassador.[6] In particular the brash and 'ocker' turn of phrase in Hogan's copy represented a new expression of Australian identity at a time where the nation was proudly relinquishing its British heritage.[7]

'We need to get past our cultural cringe': The ATC as an instrument of the Hawke government

[3] Robert Crawford, "Learning to Say g'day to the World: The Development of Australia's Marketable Image in the 1980s." *Consumption Markets & Culture* 13:1, (2010), 44.
[4] Hogan & Brown address. National Press Club, 26 September 1983.
[5] Mistilis and Leiper, 'The Australian Tourist Commission's early years', 26.
[6] Melissa Bellanta, *Larrikins: A History*, (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2012).
[7] C. J. Coventry, 'Sedimentary Layers: Bob Hawke's Beer World Record and Ocker Chic', *Journal of Australian Studies* 47:3, (2023), 496.

The malaise of the late 1970s damaged Australia's tourism traffic. Only after the national political situation worsened did a more confident national image emerge. This renewed vision of Australia rested, however, on a reassertion of national environmental imagery. Historians have noted how the decade between 1974-83 paralleled the troubled 1930s. As Curran argues, by the end of the 1970s, the clearly defined lines of the post-war era had become blurred. 'Australia, and indeed the West in general, was drifting dangerously towards a repetition of 1930s Europe.'[8] In Australia, the Franklin Dam Blockade of 1982-83 was a local flashpoint for environmental issues. Images of protestors clashing around the proposed dam site gained Tasmania and its wilderness society national and international attention.[9] Later that year, a thousand striking steel and mine workers descended on Canberra, some of them smashing windows at Parliament House. Frank Bongiorno writes that the summer months of 1982/83 were 'the hottest, driest summer that many could recall', and stifled further by 'the worst economic conditions since the Depression of the 1930s'.[10]

Troubled times caused concerns about Australia's reputation to resurface. Brown expressed his fears about Australia's image, but also of the nation's self-perception, in the 1983 press conference. Standing next to Hogan, he lamented: 'I'm rather sad that we've maintained the cultural cringe… the feeling that we seem to promote we're inferior.' Brown argued that Australians needed to rise above the cringe and feelings of inadequacy. Australia's environment, sunlight and distinct national attractions were, in his view, all key to the national recovery. 'In 130 years, we've turned an island remote from the rest of the world with, in some ways a hostile environment into one of the world's wonders,' he said. He listed Australia's 12,000 miles of coast, its beautiful sandy beaches, and beautiful cities as evidence of Australia's inherent value: 'Here in Canberra we've got the most attractive national capital in the world.' Australia's cities, but particularly its natural attractions were to again play a role in rekindling the civic nationalism that had so deteriorated in troubled times:

> Wonderful wilderness areas of our centre and anybody that's not been to Kakadu National Park has really missed something. Anyone who's not experienced the spiritual joy of a night at Ayers Rock has really missed one of the world's delights. And anybody that's not been to the Great Barrier Reef, well I don't know what's happened to them.[11]

The ATC's mandate coalesced with that of the Hawke government. The son of a South Australian congregationalist minister who had risen to prominence in the federal union movement and Labor Party, Hawke launched his election campaign in February 1983. His platform, focused heavily on consensus politics, had a strong urge to unify the nation. Harold Clapp would have been proud of the

[8] Curran, *Power of Speech,* 107.
[9] Robin & Connors, *A History of the Australian Environmental Movement,* 159-162.
[10] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers,* 404.
[11] Hogan & Brown address. National Press Club, 26 September 1983.

campaign slogan, 'Bringing Australia Together.' As Curran writes, Hawke's upbringing and life experience produced in him an inviolable 'desire for harmony' that informed both his political rhetoric and popular appeal.[12] His campaign launch, delivered at Sydney Opera House, promised that in an era with the 'highest unemployment rate since the Great Depression' a government he led would reverse the economic disaster and 'the politics of division' that threatened to 'poison the very well springs of the national life.'[13] Hawke's 'egalitarian mateyness' and his 'capacity for compromise' underpinned his electoral success. He won a 25-seat victory with 53.2 per cent of the two-party preferred vote.[14] His winning of a mandate by such a margin could be credited to the Labor campaign's adept reading of the public's appetite for unity and cohesion over divisiveness and malaise.

The changing government heralded the beginning of a new era for Australia's tourism industry. ATC annual reports from 1983 onward stand out for their shift from bleak pessimism to entrepreneurial possibility. This coincided with the arrival of a new ATC chairman in Peter Derham, which gave a level of stability not seen since Basil Atkinson's departure. Derham had an eye for publicity and capturing the public's attention that placed him well to reform the listless tourism body. Born in Melbourne in 1925, he served in the Royal Australian Air Force and Royal Australian Navy in the closing years of the war. He returned from the war to the plastics manufacturer Nylex, where he rose to managing director. His claim to advertising fame was his 1961 gambit to have the Melbourne City Council permit the installation of a giant NYLEX branded 24-hour clock above the Richmond grain silos. The bright lettering, visible from the Melbourne Cricket Ground, became an enduring landmark in late-twentieth century Melbourne. Derham clicked with the Labor government's minister for tourism, John Brown, making possible the rebranding of Australia that the Hogan campaign signified. In June 1983 Derham wrote to Brown that he was 'delighted to be able to thank the Government … for the assistance given to the ATC and to the tourism in Australia.'[15] By the following year, ANTA's dire financial situation reversed. The Hawke government doubled the ATC budget and in so doing explicitly recognised the 'importance of tourism to the Australian economy', as Derham wrote in the 1983-84 report.[16]

With the ATC now on a more certain financial footing, Derham contracted the Mojo advertising agency, led by leading ad-men Alan 'Mo' Morris and Allan 'Jo' Johnston. Crawford writes of the agency that its 'ambitious goal of becoming Australia's first multinational agency' was premised on its director's unwavering belief in its distinctive, brash culture. The ATC account would turn out to be the agency's most important, and indeed Australia's 'most successful tourist campaign.'[17] Hogan, an irreverent

[12] Curran, *Power of Speech,* 127.
[13] Bob Hawke, Speech at the Sydney Opera House, February 16, 1983.
[14] Bongiorno, *Dreamers and Schemers*, 407.
[15] Australian Tourist Commission, *Annual Report 1982-83*, (Parliamentary Paper no. 300/1983), 2.
[16] Australian Tourist Commission, *Annual Report 1983-84,* (Parliamentary Paper no. 152/1985), 7.
[17] Crawford, 'Culture and the multinational advertising agency: the rise and fall of Mojo-MDA, 1964-1991', *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 12:1, (2020), 156.

television personality and larrikin figure was the ideal frontman. His background as a maintenance worker on the Sydney Harbour Bridge gave him a working-class authenticity that was enhanced by the landmark's own iconic image. This, coupled with his broad Australian accent, placed him well to personify the quintessential 'Aussie'.

The ATC campaign sought to capitalise on the 'ocker' appeal Hogan had generated in the previous decade. He had fronted campaigns for Foster's Lager and Winfield Cigarettes, the latter of these campaigns conceived by Johnston while working for a different agency. As Crawford writes, his 'spectacular success in the British market… was identified by the ATC when it was preparing to target consumers in the US. There was now only one spokesman to be had.'[18] At the National Press Club in September 1983, Brown spruiked Hogan's credentials. The Winfield and Fosters campaigns were the most successful in Australia's history, he said, adding with some measure of humour that Hogan was so successful in selling cigarettes the 'health commission had to stop him.'[19]

The Hogan campaign was national advertising's first foray into television. And though television was first introduced in Sydney and Melbourne in 1956, it was the mass-production of television and the advent of colour (introduced 1975) that set the stage for the Mojo campaign's exploitation of national scenery. Indeed, as Frank Bongiorno points out, the Tasmanian Wilderness Society had in 1983 used colour television documentaries to great effect in their campaign against the development of the Franklin River Dam.[20] In a similar fashion, the creatives at Mojo, literate in the emerging form of commercial television, seized on colour TV to generate interest in Australia's outdoor spaces.[21] Broadcast domestically and overseas, with a focus on the American market, it reflected a decisive shift in mood that followed improved economic circumstances, and a renewed national spirit spurred on by achievements like the America's Cup win. Hogan teased Americans in one advertisement that Australia was 'where the America's cup is.'[22] As Graeme Turner argues, official and commercial Australian advertising broadcast in America in the 1980s had overt implications not only for the Australia-United States relationship, but also for the construction of the Australian national identity.[23] 'Australia's profile,' the ATC 1983-84 report noted, 'is now probably at its highest point.'[24] Furthermore, the global success of Australian music and cinema had recalibrated how the country saw itself, giving a sense of confidence to national advertising.[25] This rising sense of self-belief had economic as well as cultural dimensions. The ATC described the period as one of 'innovative marketing and commercial activity' across the

[18] Crawford 'Learning to say G'day', 49.
[19] Hogan & Brown address. National Press Club, 26 September 1983.
[20] Bongiorno, *The Eighties,* 102.
[21] For more on Australia's television culture in the 1970s-80s see Tom O'Regan, *Australian Television Culture*, (Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1993).
[22] Mojo, 'America's Cup' Tourism Advertisement, 1984.
[23] Turner, *Making It National,* 161-162.
[24] ATC, *Annual Report 1983-84*, 16.
[25] Jon Stratton, 'Nation Building and Australian Popular Music in the 1970s and 1980s', *Continuum*, 20:2, (2006), 243-252.

travel sector, energised by a buoyant U.S. economy and, before 1985, favourable currency exchange rates that made Australia newly accessible to American travellers. Hogan gave the optimism born of the times an international face and voice. Importantly, however, as in prior tourist advertising campaigns, Australia's nature and environment offered the backdrop for this renewed and confident proselytising of Australia's achievement at home and overseas.

Though the ATC's revival occurred in the 1980s, it followed broader undercurrents influential in reshaping popular culture in the late-1970s, particularly in what had become the closely related fields of advertising and music. As Jon Stratton writes, Australian music from the late 1970s and early 1980s was 'deeply imbricated in a nation-building project which sought to produce a culturally based national identity for the country.'[26] Celebratory songs like Mojo's jingle *Come On Aussie, Come On* (1977), Peter Allen's *I Still Call Australia Home* (1980), and Men at Work's *Down Under* (1981) were catchy, and had in common shared themes of belonging, distance, and pride, even if *Down Under* had a darker theme than most people noticed. Each would come to be associated with the Australian national image, either in formal advertising for World Series Cricket or for Qantas, or, as in the case of Men at Work's *Down Under,* as an unofficial anthem for the 1983 America's Cup campaign. *Come On Aussie, Come On,* writes Robert Crawford, had similarly served as a de facto anthem 'often sung with greater gusto than God Save the Queen.'[27] It is no coincidence that the popularity of these songs followed on the heels of the 1970s quest for a non-British de facto national anthem, which had been a theme of political debate in the Fraser years.[28]

Derham shrewdly perceived that Mojo, bursting with creative talent and success, could extend Australia's publicity reach at home and abroad. Moreover, Mojo's youth and fresh take on the culture gave it an edge that ATC advertising was no longer achieving in-house. The ATC's dependence on a private firm represented a break from past national advertising strategy. Though ANTA had commissioned commercial poster artists earlier in the century, it had never ceded so much creative control to an outside party. Alert to Mojo's dominance in the Australian market and Hogan's rising popularity in the United Kingdom, the ATC sought to put the entertainer front and centre for the entire campaign. As Crawford points out, Morris and Johnston, talented readers of cultural undercurrents and attitudes, understood that Hogan's appeal went beyond his larrikin, 'ocker' demeanour, and that it was 'his distinctive wit and his ability to use it to make audiences feel better about themselves and, indeed, the advertised product.'[29] As John Brown noted, Hogan was not 'just necessarily a bronze Anzac ocker',

[26] Stratton, 'Nation Building and Australian Popular Music', 243. See also: Leanna White, *Commercial Nationalism and Tourism: Selling the National Story,* (Channel View Publications: Bristol, 2017), 3-24.
[27] Crawford, 'Learning to say G'day', 46-47.
[28] Curran, *Power of Speech,* 115.
[29] Crawford, 'Learning to say G'day', 47.

but was 'a very acute and very sophisticated salesman. In his own unique style, selling a product. He now has got the greatest product in the world.'[30]

Hogan's appeal lay in his ability to parlay his common touch into the commercial world. Bill Baker and Penny Bendell, who managed the American side of the campaign, remarked that it was the ATC's employment of 'friendliness, the Australian accent, a cheeky sense of humour, and a sunny invitation at a time when Americans were concerned by terrorism abroad' that endeared the US market to Australia.[31] Hogan was alert to these global fears, observing that Australia's appeal lay in the country's peaceful society. Australians drank 'water out of a tap' and were 'not throwing bombs in the street', as Hogan put it.[32] He embodied a friendly Australian character that made people feel safe, a notion later reinforced by his famous coolness when confronting New York street thugs in the film *Crocodile Dundee* (1986). Critically for the ATC, he offered a personable and endearing antidote to the malaise of the 1970s and early 1980s, but these were characteristics deeply grounded in a much deeper tradition of Australian masculinity.[33]

Hogan recalls in his autobiography that 'it did not take long for him and the boys from Mojo … to come up with a tourism campaign that was fun but also authentic.' Perhaps overstating his influence in the creative direction of the campaign, his recollection nevertheless offers an interesting philosophical insight into the principles that guided it. What he and the advertisers agreed, he recounts, was that instead of advertising Australia's scenic qualities, they 'would advertise the people.' The inspiration for 'Come and Say G'day' therefore arose from their perception that 'advertising tourism campaigns… all had beaches and beautiful waterfalls and the same sort of thing, but what our idea was, was to promote the people, and what wonderful, hospitable friendly people we are.'[34] From this Hogan derived a revelation he would often repeat in the coming decades, that it was the 'company and not the furniture' that attracted the tourist.[35] The Mojo campaign, writes Hogan, was to differentiate Australia from an otherwise saturated international travel market, not by promoting the scenery, but the people:

> The best thing about Australia is the Australians. They're friendly, they like their sports, drinks, parties, weekends. Don't like working much. And they're the perfect hosts. So come on down, you'll have a good time and we'll be glad to see you.[36]

[30] Hogan & Brown address. National Press Club, 26 September 1983.
[31] Cited in Crawford, 'Learning to say G'day', 49.
[32] Hogan & Brown address. National Press Club, 26 September 1983.
[33] Janice Newton, 'Domesticating the bush', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 20:49, (1996), 78.
[34] Hogan, *Tap Dancing Knife Thrower*, 82.
[35] 'Paul Hogan blasts new tourism ads', *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 29, 2008.
[36] Hogan, *Tap Dancing Knife Thrower,* 83.

Hogan's recollection, for all its insight into the campaign's populist tone, remains blind to the fact that promoting the furniture *and* the company had been a perennial feature of Australia's tourist advertising since the beginning of the century. As we have seen in this thesis, from the earliest national tourism publicity campaigns, promoters sought to draw together the symbolic appeal of the country's natural attributes with idealised portrayals of its inhabitants. The campaigns of the NSWGTB, of the Australian Railways Commissioners, and of ANTA had long projected Australia as a nation shaped by a healthy climate and outdoor lifestyle. Hogan and Mojo's effort built on this tradition. Athough the campaign amplified the friendliness of the people, the attraction of the Australian environment was by no means absent.

As with the tourist campaigns that came before, the Hogan campaign packaged Australian nature, scenery, environmental attributes, and people as desirable qualities for tourist consumption. Hogan's famous television advertisements, combined with the campaign's marketing collateral, offered a familiar parade of iconic beach, bush and desert images. For a campaign reportedly just about the people, it featured an inordinate amount of scenery. In one commercial Hogan stands in front of Victoria's Twelve Apostles, a surf-rod over his shoulder, and teases 'that some Americans still don't know where Australia is.' 'Well, I'll tell you exactly where it is', he then declares, before the advertisement cuts to a vast, empty beach, the sky brimming with sunlight: 'Australia is where the sun shines on thousands of miles of the world's great beaches.' The advertisement then depicts a pastoral scene, the sun setting over rugged mountains. A tent and four-wheel drive are positioned near a eucalyptus tree. Australia is 'where you can go bush and get away from it all.' Next, beside a koala in a eucalypt grove, he describes Australia as 'where wild native animals roam free in the untamed Australian outback.'[37] Taken together, these vignettes of Australia added up to a clear evocation of a nation with as much scenery as national character, a theme that subsequent 1980s advertisements broadcast domestically and abroad would build on and reinforce, and that would remain a cornerstone of ATC advertising until the end of the twentieth century.

Central to Mojo's and the ATC's vision was the notion that Australia merited visiting because its distinctive environmental conditions had instilled in the population a friendly and helpful disposition. The appeal lay not just in the scenery, but in the suggestion that the climate had produced a healthy, relaxed, friendly and good-humoured citizenry. Mojo presented Australia as 'the world's biggest island,' where everyone spoke English, the sun always shone, and the locals would not only say g'day but help unload bags from the ferry, take a photo for visitors, or, most famously, throw an extra 'shrimp on the barbie.' Such appeals were as grounded in the conflation of nature and national character as *Australia Welcomes You* and the ANTA campaigns of the pre-war era.

[37] Mojo, 'America's Cup' Tourism Advertisement, 1984.

The 'Come and Say G'day' campaign drew on the historical idea that that Australia's national destiny was entwined with its unique geography.[38] Hogan teased American television audiences, for example, that if they visited, they were 'going to get wet because the place is surrounded by water'. That advertisement, titled 'Language Barrier', offered a satirical commentary on Australia's supposed regional differences. 'The accent varies noticeably from one place to another', he said, before a series of vignettes shot around the country presented mostly young, attractive, white Australian men and women each addressing the camera with the Australian greeting: 'G'day'. A shorthand for Australian hospitality, egalitarianism and laid-back character, the greeting advertised Australia's supposed social uniformity by playing on the assumption that the country's size must have necessitated regional differences, when in fact, the opposite was true.

This narrow interpretation of the Australian cultural landscape, somewhat out of time in an era when Australia was celebrating its diversity in other contexts, was also the object of some critique.[39] At the September 1983 campaign announcement, Kate Kerrigan of Aus Radio News pressed Hogan on this theme. 'What type of things will you be promoting? You're going to get away from the Bronzed Aussie ocker type image apparently. Will you be promoting the multicultural aspect of Australian society?' Though Hogan's answer was characteristically humorous, he struggled with the theme of the question. 'It's hard to get away from the bronzed Aussie ocker image 'cause that's me', he said. He acknowledged that Australia was multicultural, and that the people 'were different and friendly' but quickly reverted to familiar environmental and climatic talking points:

> To promote the continent the hard thing is where do you start? because you know, geographically, and climatically, and beauty to the eye, and all that there's just so much you don't know which to pick first.[40]

Anne-Marie Nicholson of Capital Seven News asked whether the Hogan campaign would extend to Asian markets. Brown answered there would be a separate campaign there, not featuring Hogan. Seizing on Brown's answer, John Lombard of ABC Radio Australia asked Hogan how he would promote Australia to the Southeast Asian market. Hogan's reply was curt. 'I'm not doing it at the moment, obvious reasons. I'm doing it in America first because it's going to work there, and it's going to make a lot of money. And we might make so much money out of there we mightn't even want anyone else.'[41] Though the ATC perceived the value of Asian markets (annual reports measured growth and

[38] Libby Robin, *How a Continent Created a Nation* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007).
[39] The ATC campaign was not the only contemporary cultural medium to carry an 'out of time' image of Australia. See discussion of *Neighbours* in Bongiorno, *The Eighties*, 278.
[40] Hogan & Brown address. National Press Club, 26 September 1983.
[41] *Ibid*.

visitors throughout the 1980s), selling Australia's burgeoning diverse culture was not yet a priority in winning the key overseas market in America.

Australian Made Holidays, 1983-84

Domestically, the ATC's new strategy was no less ambitious. To coincide with Hogan's international advertisements, it launched a domestic campaign explicitly focused on revitalising interstate travel. Beyond building a strong local tourism market, ATC documents suggest a deeper project of restoring national pride by travelling in one's own country was underway. Hogan appeared in a series of light-hearted TV spots that underlined Australian informality and charm, while the accompanying *Australian Made Holidays* book packaged the nation's attractions for local consumption. As the 1983-84 Annual Report proudly recorded, this promotional activity was remarkable for the extent of 'co-operative support from the States and tourist industry.' With financial backing coming from state authorities, industry partners, and corporate sponsors including Holden, TAA, and Ansett, the ATC's publicity strategy mirrored the contemporary political discourse of consensus championed by Hawke, as well as the supply-side economic philosophy that characterised the mid-1980s.

The ATC-Mojo Hogan campaign nevertheless echoed older beliefs about the national duty of tourism. The ANTA slogan 'See Australia first' was an exhortation that blended economic nationalism with settler identity. In the 1980s, the tourism industry's appeal to national duty found new form in the domestically targeted *Australian Made Holidays* campaign. The title alone invoked patriotic consumption at a time when Australian manufacturing faced increasingly intense overseas competition. As with earlier campaigns, domestic travel was framed not just as recreation, but as a form of civic participation. One advertisement, broadcast domestically, depicted how Australians might contribute to the national economy. Hogan, shirtless, reclined on a sunlounge at a resort pool, addresses the viewer. A chorus of kookaburras give their signature call before he starts his appeal:

> G'day.
>
> I suppose you think I'm just lazing around, taking a holiday.
>
> Well don't be fooled by the surroundings. I'm actually working flat out for our mighty nation.
>
> You see, when you give yourself an Aussie holiday, you give the Aussie economy a boost.
>
> And help provide badly needed jobs — because right…
>
> *(A waitress hands Hogan a drink)*
>
> Ah, thanks love. See? I just provided a job.
>
> Now, there's not one of us that can deny this is the greatest country in the world, but not many of us have seen it.

There's so many different Aussie holidays, it could fill a book.

And that's just what we've done.

No matter what you're into — it's in this book.

The book's free — in the April *Women's Weekly*.

(A man lying on an inflatable in the swimming pool gives a thumbs up)

There's another bloke workin' flat out for the country.

Keep up the good work, son.

(Hogan winks at the camera)

Workaholic.

It's a tough job — but someone's gotta do it.

The television advertisement is a testament to how the campaign aimed to build national sentiment by invoking environmental themes. The *'Aunty Doreen'* advertisement captured this well, with Mojo's own rendition of *Waltzing Matilda* played against Hogan's patriotic narration. The white Australian body formed a key part of this image. Hogan's thin, athletic frame, tanned skin and 'pearly whites' featured prominently across television and written media. He was the picture of the healthy Australian outdoorsman – a theme with a heritage dating back to the bushman and the digger as symbols of Australian masculine identity. As Turner writes, Hogan represented 'one of the purest living examples of the 'national type' described by Russell Ward in the 1950s.[42] The ATC exploited his physique for full effect on the cover of the *Australian Made Holidays* brochure, published in 1984 (below), which pictured a shirtless Hogan prepared for snorkelling.

In depicting the ideal of the 'healthy Australian' the campaign drew on many other images of Australian men and women. The liberal employment of female actors and models, always sun-tanned, smiling and, in some scenes, clad in slight bikinis, further emphasised themes of national health and virility. Not only did these images give the campaign sex appeal, but they also carried forward an enduring tradition of outwardly projecting Australia as a country with superior health and living standards, simultaneously configuring these qualities as central conditions of Australian identity.[43] In Hogan's words, taken from the *Australian Made Holidays* brochure, an Australian holiday promised the Aussie tourist the opportunity to 'join in the work, ride, swim in the dams, bushwalk, or just check out the animals.' The best part of participating, said Hogan, was that in joining in, the tourist would 'meet Australians, who live life by

[42] Graeme Turner, *Making It National*, 162. See also: Bongiorno, *The Eighties,* 474.
[43] Jon Stratton, 'Multiculturalism and the Whitening Machine, Or How Australians Become White', in *The Future of Australian Multiculturalism: Reflections on the Twentieth Anniversary of Jean Martin's The Migrant Presence*, ed. Ghassan Hage and Rowanne Couch, 163–188. Sydney: University of Sydney, 1999), 180.

the sun and not the clock.'[44] Here again was the common metaphor that the environment and climate, principally sunlight, had an indelible effect on the 'true' Australian disposition and way of life.

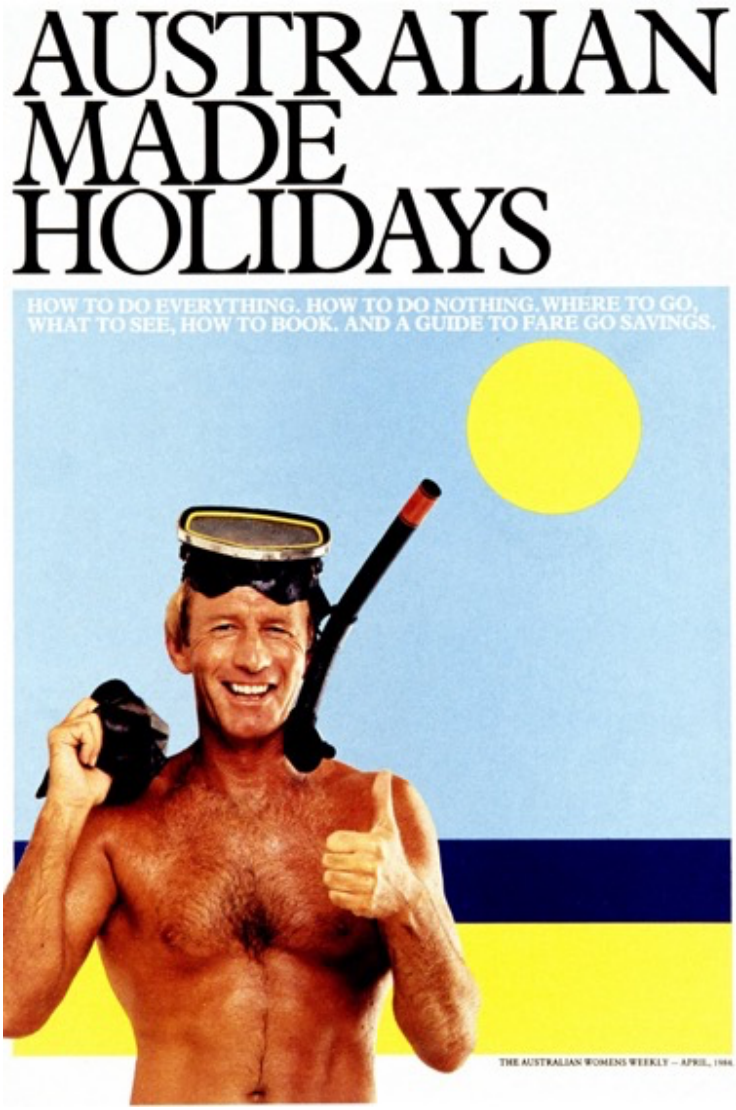


Figure 1 - ATC Domestic Campaign Brochure 'Australian Made Holidays', which came free in the April 1984 issue of Women's Weekly.

The *Australian Made Holidays* brochure, designed to accompany the campaign, employed principles of commercial art to further entwine the 'furniture' and the 'company'. Three blocks of bold colour background Hogan's bare-chested physique. Yellow equals beach, represented by a flat yellow line at the bottom of the page and perfectly round sun at the top of the image, a deep blue line represents water, and a light blue block denotes clear skies. Taken with Hogan's figure, the image underlines the implicit connection between the environment, Anglo-Saxon descended Australian people, and their lifestyle. This vision of Australians as inherent fixtures of the sunny landscape was a theme of both the guide, and the television campaign. Whether in beachwear or fully dressed, Australian men and women

[44] ATC, *Australian Made Holidays*, 36.

(all seemingly white and of Anglo descent) were invariably healthy, thin, smiling, and outside. These subjects served as an invitation for tourists to come and experience the friendly Australian conditions that had produced the people and the society. The message was clear: the climate makes the people.

Mojo, Hogan and the ATC stood on the shoulders of past national campaigns. Even Hogan's reluctance to employ native fauna as an advertising symbol belonged to a grand theme of Australian tourist promotion. Hogan claims to have told the Hawke cabinet in a sales pitch for support and funding that Australian 'tourist promotion is built around the kangaroo and the koala. People won't travel halfway around the world to visit a zoo.'[45] Such a remark echoed Percy Hunter's critique of ANTA's interwar advertising, which depicted native plants and animals to emphasise Australia's remoteness and unique identity (see chapter four). But as Justine Greenwood astutely points out, the symbolic use of Australia's marsupials has always fallen in and out of favour with tourism promoters. After 1945 'there was a conscious attempt to avoid the inevitable koala bear and kangaroo', she writes.[46] In the 1970s, the koala returned to advertising in a well-known Qantas advertisement that featured a grumpy koala who said it was 'un*bear*able' that Australia was 'crawling with tourists' because of the airline. When Hogan appeared on David Letterman's late night talk show to promote the 'Come and Say g'day' campaign in America, he was swinging the pendulum back in the other direction when he described the koala bear as a kitsch and embarrassing symbol of Australiana. 'The only ad we had on for my country as a tourist destination in the US were talking koalas, and no one wants to get on a plane with a koala flying it', Hogan wryly quipped.[47] In spite of Hogan's supposed aversion to the koala, ATC marketing posters, and even the television advertisements that Hogan starred in, featured the animal. To those behind the Hogan campaign, the koala had too much global appeal to risk its omission.

Environmental themes in the ATC's vision of Australia ran deeper than its deployment of the well-known marsupials. In a double-page spread titled 'Wilderness, Wildlife and Wildflowers', the Hogan-styled copy noted that: 'Out here skyscrapers are trees that grew up before the white man arrived.' Drawing on the perennial marketing ploy that nature offered an escaped from the debilitating effects of the industrialised city, the guide added that in the bush 'the telephone is replaced by the ringing of the bellbird and the traffic lights by wildflowers that change colour more regularly.' 'All over Australia there are more than 500 national parks', the guide boasted. 'You may think of them as sanctuaries for animals and birds, but really they're places that protect a real endangered species: people who have been driven wild by city life.' Hogan, or more accurately the copywriters employing his turn of phrase, promised that the park rangers and guides would 'nurse you back to your senses before they set you free again.'[48]

[45] Hogan, *Tap Dancing Knife Thrower,* 84.
[46] Justine Greenwood, 'The Migrant Follows the Tourist', 74-96.
[47] Late Night with David Letterman, *Interview with Paul Hogan*, September 23, 1986.
[48] ATC, *Australian Made Holidays,* 30.

These were not just exhortations for tourists to escape the city, they were also appeals designed to strike into the hearts of domestic consumers an emotional response to the landscape. Seen in this way the Hogan campaign belongs to the broader historical process of cultivating and reinforcing a settler-Australian attachment to the land that was centred around a collective Anglo-Saxon identity. The guide's rampant nostalgia in these sections offered a retrograde image of Australia, out of touch with many aspects of national life. The 'Down on the Farm' section of *Australian Made Holidays,* for example, featured the poetry of Lawson, as well as an uncredited stanza, perhaps written by Hogan (or the team of copywriters pretending to be him): 'Amidst the city prattle I hear the low of cattle – And once again start thinkin' of the stations way out west.' Here the guide reanimated a vision of Australia with symbolic roots in the hundred-year-old myths first expressed in the cultural nationalist Australian art and poetry of the 1880s. It added to this tradition overt appeals to contemporary patriotism. 'It's O.K. to read Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson', said Hogan, 'but it's better to live the life'. According to the rhetoric of the campaign, participating in a holiday, especially one out 'the back of beyond', was akin to participating in national life. 'It's hard to call yourself Australian if you've never been outback', read the copy.

Such appeals followed on the heels of 'the breakdown of postwar social democracy, the rights movement and the end of the White Australia policy.' As C.J. Coventry writes, this period saw advertisers such as John Singleton seek to capitalise on a 'yearning among the populace for representations of Australianness.' In this view, advertising that envisaged 'the real Australia' was about addressing the anxieties of the 'middle class white masculinist.'[49] Indeed, Mojo and the Hogan campaign were doubtless fashioned by the brand of masculine anxiety that Coventry describes. As Robert Crawford points out, Mojo was viewed by some detractors as a 'boys club' marked by a culture of 'swearing, heavy drinking and crude misogyny.'[50] As one former Mojo staffer recalled, women hated the 'blokey [masculine] ethos… Women with brains could not stand to work there.'[51] Afterall, this was the corporate atmosphere that produced advertisements in which Hogan commonly encountered and was surrounded by beautiful, young Australian women. But the campaign can hardly be dismissed as white masculine propaganda. The employment of Hogan's masculine ocker personality did not pass into the national discourse without critique. At the National Press Club, journalists queried his appropriateness as national ambassador, but Hogan rebuked such commentary. 'I'm not going to damage our image by this ocker thing. The ocker you refer to is the John Singleton-type, a sort of low-class basic bottom line person. I'm not that.' He continued: 'I don't consider myself to be an unattractive Australian. I'm an Australian all the way.'[52] Further, Mojo and the ATC identified *Women's Weekly* as a means of

[49] Coventry, 'Sedimentary Layers', 489.
[50] Crawford, 'Culture and the multinational advertising agency', 156.
[51] Crawford, R. (2012), interview with Rob Palmer, November 23, Title No. 1489216, National Film and Sound Archive, ACT, Australia.
[52] Hogan & Brown address the National Press Club, 26 September 1983.

distributing *Australian Made Holidays*. As Penny Warner-Smith writes, from the beginning of the 1960s the 'Weekly' contained 'a discourse of the young woman traveller as independent, adventurous and self-reliant.'[53] Clearly the ATC and Mojo perceived a widespread appetite for tourism, their campaigns extending Australia's appeal far beyond the narrow interests of a solely masculine audience.

Wilderness, the Bush and the Pioneer Legend

The Hogan campaign's appeals to a domestic reader's sense of national belonging and identity followed on the heels of a renewed interest in Australia's pioneer past. In 1978, the Australian historian John Hirst penned his case for the national significance of a pioneer legend as a counterpoint to Russel Ward's *The Australian Legend* (1958). Ward had argued Australia's character and nationalism evolved from itinerant bush workers who 'adhered to an ethos' of 'mateship, anti-authoritarianism… egalitarianism, and adaptability.'[54] In Hirst's view, there had long existed a more profound national origin mythos that accorded heroic status to all who had settled and worked the land. 'Frequently the pioneers were squatters, but small settlers were also honoured with the title. The pioneer legend transformed the low status selector of the nineteenth century into a nation builder', writes Hirst.[55] Coinciding with Hirst's publication of 'The Pioneer Legend', came the popular literary works *The Thorn Birds* (1977) and Albert Facey's memoir of rural survival *A Fortunate Life* (1981). These books, which sold in record numbers, together with films like *The Man from Snowy River* (1982) and *Gallipoli* (1981), extended into the present a sense of what Hirst had described as a 'generalised nostalgia' for the Australian frontier. And while they depicted much hardship and suffering, they nevertheless appealed to a popular readership for, like the works of Lawson and Paterson in the previous century, they presented 'a highly specific past … free from the social evils of the present.'[56]

ATC copywriters perceived this renewed cultural interest in the pioneer past. Of significance is a section of *Australian Made Holidays* titled 'Sydney or The Bush?' which encouraged tourists to visit the Blue Mountains. There, they could 'follow the tracks of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth, the three pioneers who opened up Australia's great inland.'[57] Referring to the 1813 expedition of three prominent Sydney settlers, 'The Crossing' holds an important place in the Australian mythos that celebrated the efforts of colonial explorers and settlers as catalysts for the material wealth of the nation. As Hirst writes, the crossing of the Blue Mountains is of special import to the pioneer legend because it 'could be linked much more closely than other expeditions to the settlement of the land.'[58] Indeed, as Richard Waterhouse, Siobhan Levelle and others have since demonstrated, state government-led tourist

[53] Penny Warner-Smith, 'Travel, Young Women and 'The Weekly', 1959–1968, *Annals of Leisure Research*, 3:1, (2000), 33-46
[54] Richard Waterhouse, 'The Pioneer Legend and Its Legacy: In Memory of John Hirst', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 103 (2017): 12; Russell Ward, *The Australian Legend*, (Oxford University Press: 1958).
[55] John B. Hirst, 'The pioneer legend', *Historical Studies* 18:71 (1978), 316–337.
[56] *Ibid*, 329.
[57] *Ibid,* 330.
[58] *Ibid*, 319.

campaigns in NSW had long invited tourists to make pilgrimage to the Blue Mountain's historic sites.[59] The 1980s ATC campaign echoed this tradition. It celebrated the pioneers, but also encouraged tourists to walk in their footsteps.

Hogan's Akubra-wearing Aussie image, which would later reach its cultural apotheosis in the international film hit *Crocodile Dundee* (1986), drew on the dominant cultural pioneer myth. As the Australian art critic-turned-historian of colonial Australia Robert Hughes observed, Hogan was popular in Australia and America exactly because he resembled a modern day Davy Crockett, and thus evoked a certain 'nostalgia for the vanished frontier.'[60] As Frank Bongiorno points out, the popular reception of Hughes's history *The Fatal Shore* (1987) was itself a marker of the contemporary interest in Australia's colonial and convict past on the eve of the 1988 bicentenary. Tourism promoters, attuned to public sentiment, capitalised on the 1980s fascination with Australia's colonial mythology in the Hogan campaign, shaping and responding to this popular interest in Australia's Anglo-Celtic heritage. At least to some degree the guide's effort to celebrate Australia's colonial history reflected the modern discourse about multiculturalism. As Bongiorno writes, contemporary advocates 'sought legitimacy by giving' the policy 'deeper roots in the country's history.'[61] Observing this fashion at least to a limited degree, *Australian Made Holidays* noted that 'all the original settlers didn't come from England', and that Chinese, Japanese and Germans had also formed part of Australia's colonial past. [62]

In repurposing the pioneer legend for the 1980s, the ATC advanced a settler colonial narrative. But the organisation was also tentatively shifting toward greater inclusion of Indigenous peoples in Australia's national story. The *Australian Made Holidays* guide's 'wilderness' focus, as in the 'Wilderness, Wildlife and Wildflowers' section, framed national parks as urban sanctuaries while overlooking their significance to Aboriginal custodians. Such language reflected what Christopher McConville identifies as the shaping of 'Australian environments through the American concept of wilderness' which forced image-makers 'to acknowledge Aboriginal prior occupation and accept that their wilderness was in fact an historic cultural landscape.'[63] There was evidence of this practise in *Australian Made Holidays*. The guide cast Indigenous Australians as 'our first tourists' who 'walked overland for a bit of a squizz' and as 'the first to discover the joys of Australian camping,' who told 'jokes while they waited for the kangaroo to cook.' At Katherine, in the Northern Territory, the guide urged tourists to 'take some snaps of the waterfalls, eyeball aboriginal (sic) paintings and never smile at the crocodiles.' Ostensibly intended to express pride in Aboriginal heritage and achievement, these informal descriptions were supposed to denote greater

[59] Siobhan Levelle, 'A Tree and a Legend: The Making of Past and Place in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 89 (2003): 1–25; Richard Waterhouse, 'Australian Legends: Representations of the Bush, 1813–1913', *Australian Historical Studies* 31:115 (2000): 201–221.
[60] Robert Hughes, *Telegraph*, 11 February 1987, 65. Cited in Bongiorno, *The Eighties,* 474-475.
[61] Bongiorno, *The Eighties*, 72.
[62] ATC, *Australian Made Holidays,* 51.
[63] McConville, 'Dams, Freeways and Aerospace', 382.

inclusivity of Aboriginal people in the national story. Nevertheless, the colloquialisms still relegated Indigenous people to remote areas and reduced complex cultural traditions to pan-Aboriginal stereotypes. As Alan Pomering writes, such decontextualised and aestheticized representations of indigeneity endured in Australian advertising into the early twenty-first century. Campaigns like *Come Walkabout* (2008), which Pomering argues risked reinforcing colonial fantasies rather than unsettling them, have a direct lineage to the highly commercial campaigns of the 1980s, and the national advertising that came before.[64]

Compared to the earlier campaigns that either erased or disguised Indigenous presence, the Hogan campaign attempted, at least superficially, to better include Australia's First Peoples. Images in the guide depicted Indigenous people and important Indigenous sites and ancient rock art. The caption for the latter read 'compared to this anything is modern art.' Hogan described the 'Devil's Marbles', near Tennant Creek: 'huge boulders' that the 'aborigines (sic) reckon … were laid by the rainbow serpent sometime in the dreamtime.' In spite of these allusions to the cultural and religious beliefs held by Australia's Indigenous people, the 1980s campaign remained steeped in an Anglo-Saxon view of settlement. Elsewhere in its copy, *Australian Made Holidays* praised settlers who 'hated the natural bush and scrub so much, they set about building another England'. Such assuredly Anglo-Celtic framing hardly disguised the ATC's belief in the supremacy of the settler-colonial narrative, and tellingly indicated the types of messaging they thought would best appeal to tourists.

In the following decade and in large part responding to the overt nationalism of the 1980s, scholars such as Jon Stratton and Gordon Waitt critiqued the ubiquity of Anglo-Celtic mythology in the national discourse. Stratton contended that 'the ideology that underlay the White Australia policy still haunts us.'[65] Waitt tied the prevalence of such thinking to the ATC's 1990s advertising campaigns, writing that they marketed 'fantasy and desire that contribute to the maintenance of a national mythology which defines Australianness as Anglo-Celtic, masculine, and rural.' According to Waitt, 'the ATC's representation of Indigenous peoples… communicates, amplifies and reinforces those invented by the colonising white Australians of the eighteenth-century.'[66] Though Waitt's period of analysis does not cover the 1980s, it is logical to assume that the advertising conventions of the 1990s had to a large degree been informed by the perceived successes and failures of the campaigns that preceded them. Indeed, as Susie Khamis and Robert Crawford argue, advertisers in the twenty-first century still tend to see the

[64] Alan Pomering, 'Indigenous Identity in the Nation Brand: Tension and Inconsistency in a Nation's Tourism Advertising Campaigns', *Corporate Reputation Review* 16:1, (2013), 71.
[65] Stratton, 'Multiculturalism and the Whitening Machine', 183.
[66] Gordon Waitt, 'Selling Paradise and Adventure: Representations of Landscape in the Tourist Advertising', *Australian Geographical Studies* 35, (1997), 48.

Hogan campaign as the high-water mark for subsequent Australian tourism publicity and have aimed to repeat the campaign's success ever since.[67]

While Stratton, Waitt and others have recorded well the problematic nature of Indigenous presence in mass media representations, few analyses have considered the treatment of Indigenous people specifically in the ATC's 1980s campaigns.[68] While 'Come and say G'day' and *Australian Made Holidays*, did not disguise or veil the actual presence of Indigenous people, it scarcely included them in its imagining of the 'company' that Hogan so often referred to when invoking the idea of the Australian people. This evasion betrays what had by the 1980s become a structural defect of Australian national advertising. In the highly polished commercial medium, with its short television spots and premium on print space, promoters found it difficult (or did not attempt) to address that the country's long history of settler progress, so often represented by its tourist attractions, had been made possible by Indigenous dispossession. In the early- to mid- 1980s, a period characterised by 'a bitter national controversy over Aboriginal land rights', the ATC veered away from involving tourism, and the predominantly urban, white Australian tourist, in such public debate.[69] At a time when there was 'considerable opposition to land rights in middle Australia' the ATC may have been further hesitant to deploy Aboriginal themes. To do so was not likely to sell holidays among key demographics.[70]

National tourism's reluctance to broach issues of Aboriginal sovereignty was doubtless solidified by what must have been a tacit perception that the spiritual claims of Aboriginal people might extend to national tourist sites – an idea that the industry was not then prepared to countenance. Though the ATC's 1968-69 report had recorded the organisation's hope of cooperating with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs to better include Indigenous people in the industry, subsequent reports fell silent on such matters. It was not until the annual report of 1988/89 that the topic returned, when authors disclosed the heightened interest of 'foreign buyers' in 'special-interest products, a category that includes outback and wilderness safaris, Aboriginal and nature and wildlife tours.'[71] Notable here is the fact that the ATC perceived such experiences were sought by the international, not domestic, market, echoing Charles Holmes's observation in the early 1930s that Indigenous tourist experiences were largely driven from overseas (Chapter Two). In the 1980s, then, ATC administrators, Hogan and Mojo could not find a way to restore national morale and bring the country's reputation from the nadir of the calamitous 1970s in a

[67] Crawford, 'Learning to say G'day', 43; Khamis, 'Brand Australia', 53.
[68] Marcia Langton describes well the problematic notion that most Australians only relate to Aboriginal people through visual-aural mass media representations. See: Marcia Langton, *Well, I Heard It on the Radio and I Saw It on the Television: An Essay for the Australian Film Commission on the Politics and Aesthetics of Filmmaking by and about Aboriginal People and Things* (Sydney: Australian Film Commission, 1993).
[69] Bongiorno, *The Eighties,* 145.
[70] *Ibid*, 151.
[71] ATC, Annual Report, 1988/89, 35.

format that simultaneously included a more than one-dimensional account of Indigenous people and their history.

As astute interpreters of the public mood, Mojo and the ATC did not sense in their audience much of an appetite for a vision of Australia that challenged the prevailing dominant image of Aboriginal affairs or Australian history. Much easier, and safer, to portray the traditional image of the typical settler-Australian type, shaped by the climate and sunny weather, and friendly and inviting to all, than to entertain a contradictory narrative that might undermine the otherwise cohesive and welcoming image of Australia they were trying so hard to project. This was not only an insight into the state of Australia's social and political culture on the eve of the 1988 Bicentennial, but also the structural outcome of a national tourist advertising program that had for so many decades omitted and elided the more difficult aspects of the Australian past in lieu of a tourist vision that celebrated the sunny side of Australian life. The key point here though, is the degree to which this vision still cohered with the values and expectations of the Australian mainstream. As Frank Bongiorno writes, the Bicentennial celebrations were themselves 'dominated by a feeling that the things which made life in Australia worth living had little to do with the nation's political system or its politicians. It was the land, the beach and the sunshine – and the kind of relaxed lifestyle that these gifts made possible – which most white Australians thought to celebrate.'[72] From its earliest inception at the beginning of the century, Australia's tourist advertising had played a meaningful role in inculcating exactly the kind of outlook that Bongiorno describes.

Conclusion

The influence of the Hogan campaign remains strong in twenty-first century advertising.[73] Indeed, as Crawford argues, the Hogan-Mojo campaign resembled 'a high point of Australian advertising – one that occurred at the cusp of the global age.'[74] Because of its foothold in the popular memory, promoters continually attempt to recreate its success. In 2022 for instance, Tourism Australia recycled the 'Come and Say G'day' slogan for its global brand platform, writing that the new advertising strategy 'echoes the same friendly invitation first extended by the Legend of Australian Tourism, Paul Hogan.'[75] But as we have seen in this chapter, the 'Come and Say G'day' campaign did not so much revolutionise Australia's tourist image as reanimate a longstanding, and already coherent national vision. Indeed, Mojo and the ATC translated familiar themes of health, hospitality, climate, and landscape, into the language of commercial television, combining the irreverence of Paul Hogan with the production polish of international advertising. Hogan's ironic larrikinism may have appeared new, but the campaign's assumptions about the character of Australian people, settler-belonging, and conjuring of Australia as a

[72] Bongiorno, *The Eighties*, 286.
[73] Alfio Leotta, 'This isn't a movie . . . it's a tourism ad for Australia': The Dundee campaign and the semiotics of audiovisual tourism promotion. *Tourist Studies*, 20:2, (2019) 203-221.
[74] Crawford, 'Learning to say G'day', 44.
[75] Tourism Australia, Fact Sheet for the Come and Say G'day Campaign, 2022.

place made attractive because of is friendly company were as old as ANTA and the New South Wales Government Bureau. Whether in the pages of *Australia Welcomes You* or in the lecture notes of Percy Hunter, promoters had always sold Australia as a land of sunshine, friendly people and natural wonders. The Hogan campaign worked because it refreshed these ideas, not because it invented them. Rooted in the traditions of twentieth century tourist advertising, it was nostalgic and concealed from view much that was real about modern Australia. Nevertheless, the campaign succeeded because it launched at an opportune moment of renewed optimism and national cohesion that followed a period of national malaise.

Indeed, the campaign's success was not merely a product of slick marketing or celebrity endorsement. It came at a time when Australians themselves were being invited to reconsider the national image. As Robert Crawford argues, *Brand Australia* in the 1980s can only be understood within the broader social and political shifts that enabled it. Bob Hawke's consensus politics, a buoyant U.S. economy, and Australia's growing cultural confidence (symbolised by the America's Cup victory and global recognition of Australian music and film) combined to provide fertile ground for a resurgent national tourism brand. The ATC's move to television advertising and its collaboration with Mojo marked a pivot to global marketing, even as it retained the core environmental-national motifs that had underpinned promotional strategy since the early twentieth century. The advent of television combined with and accelerated the emerging culture of celebrity, enabling a charismatic entertainment figure to become a national ambassador. The longstanding themes of nature and environment that were common to twentieth century promotion endured this exciting technological and cultural revolution.

The visual language of the campaign, with its golden beaches and tanned bodies, also reaffirmed the settler claim to landscape. Hogan represented the healthy, masculine, sun-tanned fit Australian man, which harkened back to the image of the bushman and the pioneer. That such an image continued to dominate, even as Aboriginal tourism programs gained ground in remote regions, highlights the campaign's limits as much as its influence. Though ATC materials increasingly included Aboriginal guides and performers, their presence was often confined to remote or 'authentic' settings, reinforcing rather than unsettling established settler geographies. Ultimately, the campaign's achievement was to sell a vision of Australian life, an ideal made by climate and entailing settler progress. But this success also carried the risk of mythologising the past. As Crawford warns, nostalgic interpretations of national identity can obscure the structural and cultural exclusions they rest on.[76] For all its warmth and humour, *Come and Say G'day* left intact many of the contradictions at the heart of the national image.

[76] Crawford, 'Learning to say G'day', 44-45.

Conclusion

In 1988 the number of overseas tourists to arrive in Australia in one year surpassed two million people for the first time. In that Bicentenary year, the Bureau of Tourism Research estimated visitors spent $4.5 billion. By 1991, this amount had almost doubled, with international tourism generating $7.3 billion in revenue, surpassing traditional exports (coal, iron ore, wool, wheat and meat) long the backbone of Australia's economy. The entry of Asian tourist markets into Australia, fuelled by the rapid economic expansion of China, Japan and South Korea accelerated growth. Since then, many of the appeals made in twentieth century advertising texts to experience Australian nature and outdoor culture have been retooled in these overseas markets with great effect. The result is an industry that has surpassed by orders of magnitude the wildest imaginations of tourism's earliest proponents. In 2024, just shy of one hundred years since ANTA's formation, the Australian Trade and Investment Commission recorded total visitor economy spend at over $207 billion. They forecast this number will increase by another 10 per cent by the end of the decade. In the year to August 2025, international short term visitor arrivals reached a record high of 8.6 million. Whether it's to meet the people, get a taste of the lifestyle, or to experience the scenery and climate, more and more people holiday in Australia with every passing year.

The highly marketable image that Australia enjoys today was never guaranteed or inevitable. Certainly, complex international economic factors shape global flows of tourist traffic. Nevertheless, it is unrealistic to assume that tourists visit Australia just because it is here. As a destination, Australia competes with many other countries for the attention and custom of millions of potential consumers. In the 1960s, ANTA officers complained directly about the disadvantages of distance from the English-speaking world, and the subsequent high advertising spend incurred by attracting overseas tourists (chapter 5). But for a nation so distant and a continent so large, it has always been incumbent on Australia to make compelling arguments in its effort to attract people, visitors, and migrants alike. Making these arguments was the task of organisations whose efforts and contributions have been charted in this thesis. As I have shown throughout, these organisations were often far from certain of their own survival, operated on thin budgets, stretched resources and sometimes, without government support. The campaigns they ran shared a common goal, not only to facilitate nation building through tourism, but also to countervail the challenges of Australia's geographical reality by projecting a coherent image of the nation domestically and overseas.

In a century of change, one aspect of the advertising remained constant. Symbols of the bush, the beach, crystal clear waters, Australian flora and fauna, and the all-encompassing quality of Australia's incandescent sunlight pervaded brochures, pamphlets, posters, travel guides, and, later in the twentieth century, television advertisements. This thesis has brought to light the prominence of these environmental themes, which were at the core of each organisation's advertising campaigns. The

foregrounding of the most attractive elements of Australia's natural environment formed the basis for tourism marketing's subsequent claims about the vitality and health of Australia's people, an industrious national economy, and the strength of the nation's culture and institutions. Seen in this way, tourist advertising offers a powerful commentary on how Australia's environment has been understood to have shaped the character and outlook of the nation's people. Advertisements, while providing us with an insightful view of the time and culture in which they were created, also help us map those needs and desires that have changed only a little. Charting how Australian national advertising evolved over time, and adapted to changing social values and attitudes, while also exploring the consistencies that persisted across campaigns, have been the foremost concerns of this thesis.

Historians have argued that settler societies share their turn towards nature as a source of patriotic meaning.[1] In Canada, America, South Africa and Australia, nature took on a vital importance because the political and cultural identities of the new settlers lacked the deeper historical foundations available to older European nations. In Australia, the turn to nature was expressed through many cultural forms and nationalist movements. Australia's nature and environment loomed large in the *Bulletin* and Heidelberg schools, in the Jindyworobaks, in the sun-drenched photography of Max Dupain, in the modernist artworks of Sydney Nolan and, later in the century, in the films of the Australian New Wave. Twentieth century tourist advertising was but one of these modes of nature-laden cultural expression. But perhaps owing to its commercial intent, it remains relatively underexamined in historical scholarship, particularly in its function as an expression of cultural nationalism. In bringing to light a range of advertising sources and charting their heavy dependence on environmental imagery throughout the twentieth century, this thesis has addressed broader academic questions about tourism advertising's historic role in national image-making and visual citizenship.

In his influential 1990 book *The Tourist Gaze*, historian John Urry argues that the viewpoint of the tourist is a constructed one. Interpreted through this lens, tourist advertisements perpetuate an idealised view that is not part of the everyday experience.[2] Urry's thesis has been a useful framework for historians in deepening the understanding of tourism as a cultural, social and political practise. However, when applied to tourist advertising texts, Urry's analysis risks denying the possibility that they contain real insights into the places they aimed to sell. Potential tourists seldom conceive of advertisements as true representations of reality. By their very nature, tourism advertisements capture an idealised snapshot of a place, and the types of experience that could reasonably be expected to be had there. In instances where the advertised dream did not match the state of things as they existed, promotional agencies invited the ire of the market to whom they sought to appeal. Without a certain verisimilitude,

[1] Coates, *Nature: Western Attitudes Since Ancient Times*; Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora;* White, *Inventing Australia*.
[2] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies*, (Sage: London, 1990), 1-2.

advertisements lacked credibility and could prompt criticism in the press. Worse still, they risked stifling the domestic travel industry and diverting custom away from Australia to other destinations.

Inducing the traveller on false premises therefore ran against the interests of the promotional organisations whose goal it was to grow mass tourism. As we have seen, ensuring the 'gap between the advertised dream and the reality … is not too great', to use the words of Basil Atkinson in 1960, was one of the central ambitions of Australia's post-war national advertising program.[3] Across the century, tourist advertisers were held to fierce account by an Australian public that followed their nation's representation in advertising closely. This meant bringing the quality of domestic tourist infrastructure up to international standards through advocacy, investment and in partnership with governments and other private enterprises. But it also meant a steady approach to advertising creation that was faithful to the places and people it sought to depict.

Atkinson's allusion to the advertised dream and reality bears thinking about, at least in the historical context of how Australia has imagined itself. In his famous work *The Australian Legend* Russel Ward wrote that 'the dreams of nations, as of individuals, are important, because they not only reflect, as in a distorting mirror, the real world, but may sometimes react upon and influence it.'[4] Australian national advertising operated in just this way, sometimes distorting reality, but often reacting upon and influencing it too. A shared project between the promoters and their likely audience, each advertisement and each campaign holds a revelatory insight into how the settler nation perceived itself, but also the ways in which it collectively dreamed about itself. The advertisements that form the documentary source base for this thesis condensed important messages about Australia into attention-grabbing images that competed in a crowded marketplace for the attention of consumers. They are therefore valuable texts that can help us understand the nation, how it was perceived, and perhaps most importantly, how it thought, and even dreamed of itself. Publicity images bestowed national status onto places like Sydney (Chapter One) Canberra (Chapter Three), the Great Barrier Reef (Chapter Five), and the Outback (Chapter Seven). Though such places had distinct local histories, when depicted under the title text 'AUSTRALIA', they took on a symbolic character that enlivened the image of the nation.

Nations are so vast and contain so much internal diversity that it is hard to make generalisations about them. 'National characteristics are not easy to pin down', wrote George Orwell in his synthesis of what made England English. 'Are there really such things as nations?', he pondered in *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1941). Orwell discerned that the divisions between national cultures could be identified by talking to foreigners, or by reading foreign media. Another way to understand a nation and its people is to observe how it chooses to represent itself. Tourism advertising, for all its aspiration and idealism, still offers a revealing window onto the ambitions, anxieties and self-conceptions that animated Australia across the

[3] Atkinson, 'Planning for the sixties.'
[4] Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend,* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1958), 211.

twentieth century. It is a mirror that reflects the amorphous idea of the country that promoters estimated would resonate with most, though not all, Australians, as well as the visitors they hoped to attract. This thesis has shown that tourist advertising generally conveyed a benign image of a peaceful, friendly and healthy settler Australian society. A nation that celebrated its hard work and achievement but also celebrated hard-won leisure.[5] At times advertising images revealed an obsession with Australia as an egalitarian, progress driven and success-oriented society. But this too reveals a distinctive characteristic about the nation and its people. So keenly felt was the stigma – the cultural cringe – of being thought 'second rate', of being a 'second-class people' that, over the decades, tourist advertising explicitly and implicitly sought to dispel such notions.

To build trust with the consumer, Australian tourism promoters adopted decisive marketing strategies based not only around what it was possible to do and see, but also whom it was possible to meet. While nature and the environment were important symbols in successive tourism campaigns, so too were the friendly Australian people who populated the advertisements. Shaped by the very climate and outdoor culture that posters and other sales aids venerated, the human subjects themselves appeared as a natural consequence of the environment they lived in. Their apparent adaptation to the continent's conditions explained both Australia's rapid progress and the friendly demeanour and easy-going disposition of the populace. Such a depiction loaned itself to a vision of Australia where the modern and progressive settler population existed in tandem with a genial natural environment, whether in the city or near the sea. Offering a visual shorthand for Australia's egalitarian, 'have a go' culture, national advertising's human subjects denoted the achievements of Australia since settlement. This vision for the most part evaded or omitted from view Australia's Indigenous history and culture – an elision that in and of itself revealed a nation either unprepared, unwilling, or perhaps even unable, to come to terms with the complicated and confronting history of displacement and dispossession, as discussed in Chapters Six and Seven.

National advertising was in this regard a flawed project, but that did not mean that its proponents did not have lofty and idealistic ambitions for their chosen industry. In the middle decades of the century, promoters worried that Australia's reputation suffered because travelling Australians spoke poorly of their home country overseas. 'The Australian National Travel Association has been formed on a basis of community advertising to persuade tourists, investors, and investor-settlers to look our country over, and to dissipate misleading ideas which exist overseas in regard to Australia', announced Harold Clapp upon ANTA's formation in 1929. Symbols of nature, the temperate climate, the light of Australia's sun and the perceived beneficial effects of these features on the character and disposition of the Australian people became the unifying themes of advertising campaigns designed to boost tourism, but also to shore up national pride and a sense of shared settler belonging. Few scholarly works have considered the function of such environmental symbols in advertising campaigns that were not only designed to

[5] Sean Scalmer, *A Fair Day's Work*, 18-44.

encourage travel, but also participation in national life, and beyond civic nationalism, called for travel as a means of nation building and an avenue for facilitating peace.

Speaking in 1957, Charles Holmes (former protégé of Harold Clapp, then ANTA managing director and PATA president), expressed 'that travel is accepted as a potent force in more closely uniting understanding and goodwill the peoples of the free world.' With adequate government encouragement Holmes argued that travel could become a 'diplomatic weapon of some consequence that would make an important contribution to that elusive and enduring peace which the world is most in need of.'[6] Such remarks belonged to ANTA's long-tradition of associating travel with education and peace that had characterised the organisation from its 1929 inception. Harold Clapp declared in 1929: 'travel is not only an educator. It is a preserver of peace.'[7] Holmes and Clapp aimed to grow the tourist industry, but they also aspired, without perhaps always succeeding, to bring the nation together. In a 1964 address to the Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA) conference, the prime minister, Robert Menzies, spoke on travel's social promise. He recalled the divisive colonial politics that lingered after Federation: 'when I was a small boy, it was considered a phenomenal thing for anybody to move into another state on a visit.' 'We were parochial', he lamented.[8] It was the twentieth-century revolution in transport and reduction in the cost of travel that had changed this mentality, Menzies said. Holidays were a shared experience, and when promoted in advertising made an important contribution to giving many, though certainly not all, a shared sense of the nation. How promoters projected and articulated images of nature and landscapes, and celebrated Australia's environmental features as not only distinct but better than those of other places – particularly Europe – in efforts to project a shared national image has been a key consideration of this thesis.

In the 1970s tourism campaigns grew ambivalent about Australia's 'new nationalism' and the closely associated contemporary policy of multiculturalism. These features of the Whitlam-Fraser era resembled a new means of ordering political and cultural community.[9] ATC internal reports displayed an awareness of changing cultural values and opinion. But advertising at this time offered a seemingly apolitical vision, perhaps in an effort to offer escape from contemporary social upheavals. Similarly, in an age of increased Indigenous cultural and political recognition, the ATC anticipated that the politics of land rights would shape tourism, particularly in Central Australia. Nevertheless, reconciling Australia's nostalgic national myths, centred around pioneer settlement and the taming of the land with a more modern politics of inclusion, was a task at best handled awkwardly. National advertising promulgated the idea that the Australian way of life had evolved from the travails of the nineteenth century Anglo-Saxon pioneers. But it was the dissonances, between the reality of Australia's political

[6] 'Australia to be host nation at Pacific Travel Conference', *Walkabout* 23:2, (1957), 9.
[7] 'All Help to Push Australia: Clapp's Appeal', *Sun*, 7 June 1929, 12.
[8] Robert Menzies, 'Keynote Address', Pacific Area Travel Association 13th Annual Conference, March 2, 1964.
[9] Curran, *Power of Speech*, 84.

economy and the ATC's advertised vision, that produced the most distinctive Australian national advertising campaign of all time – the Hogan 'Come and Say G'day' campaign.

The history of tourism in Australia is so much more than the rise of a billion-dollar industry. This analysis of what aspects of Australia promoters celebrated and those they chose to conceal, comprises a history of how settler-Australia battled with its own superstitions and insecurities, and inched towards an ever more progressive, prosperous, multicultural, and inclusive society. Historian John Hirst described the 'roots of the tolerance' that date back to Australia's attempts to resolve colonial and sectarian divisions, all of which predated the emergence of social circumstances after the Second World War 'which allowed for the accommodation and melding of peoples to proceed relatively smoothly.'[10] Travel, and the images that encouraged people to travel, was an important national cultural form that broke down boundaries and rivalries between the competitive states.

As much as travel's expansion was driven by promoters' aspiration for peace, the domestic anxieties that promoters held, and more importantly, perceived as being shared by significant cross section of the urban settler populace, also factored in advertising creation. Concerns over public health, a perennial fear of Australia being thought of as second rate, overcoming interstate rivalries and of populating the interior of the continent all drove advertising's creation. The revelation of the HKF Report, commissioned in the 1960s and introduced in Chapter Five, was its recommendation that Australian promoters speak with one voice to overseas visitors. For Australia to flourish as both a tourist destination, promoters increasingly identified that the country needed to throw off the parochial strictures that undermined Australia's singular marketable image. By the end of the 1980s, Australia projected a consolidated, definitive vision of itself in advertising. Though the Hogan advertising campaign was highly commercial, it rested on the precepts and lessons of all that preceded it. In this sense, Australia's discovery of a national voice was not the result of the clever marketing of Mojo, or even the penetrating recommendations of the HKF Report. Rather, it was the outcome of a decades long project, spanning multiple individuals and agencies, with each campaign building on those that came before.

Documenting the ways that national advertising deployed Australia's environmental symbols in service of overcoming national insecurities and fears has been a central contribution of this thesis. Flora and fauna were important symbols in consecutive advertising campaigns. So too were opportunities to spend time outdoors facilitated by the proximity of Australia's cities to nature reserves, national parks, and sun-soaked beaches. The elevation of sunshine as a unifying symbol of Australia, however, was a pervasive feature of twentieth century advertising. The aspiration of advertising's sunlit patriotic vision was to bind Australians with an overarching visual language that all states, and all citizens, had in common. While promotional organisations operated in distinct periods characterised by changing values, tastes and opinions, the bright light of Australia's sunshine remained constant. The light and

[10] John Hirst, *Sense and Nonsense in Australian History*, (Black Inc: Melbourne, 2009), 25-30.

colour of illustrated advertising posters, of tourist brochures, and of tourism photographs nationalised the sentiment of Dorothy Mackellar's 'sunburnt country', while veiling its 'droughts and flooding rains'. And though advertising envisioned a continent of sweeping plains and ragged mountain ranges, it also spelled out a narrative about Australian progress, its liveable cities, advanced economy, and its friendly people. These attributes, the tourist advertising implied, had in common their debt to Australia's distinctive environment, its vast open spaces, its hot sun, the temperate climate, and the unique antipodean flora and fauna. Over the century, tourist promoters consistently homed in on these features of the Australian experience, celebrating what differentiated it from Britain as well as other nations.

This thesis has chronicled Australia's twentieth century national tourism campaigns, providing a new perspective on the social history of the Australian settler population. It establishes tourism advertising as a significant source base for future work on how institutions mobilised images of nature to sell holidays, but also to cultivate belonging and international legitimacy. Subsequent research might scale this framework to a transnational study, offering comparison of the similarities and differences that characterised the promotional campaigns of other nations. As we have seen throughout this thesis, Australian promoters variously included or omitted Indigenous people and culture in line with their estimation of mainstream values. More work could be done to investigate the national advertising archive with a specific focus on how representations of Indigenous people changed over time, the degree of agency that Indigenous people had in that process and how Australia's experience compared to that of other settler nations.

Over the course of the twentieth century, the tourism campaigns studied in this thesis were strongest and most popularly supported only when advertising texts cohered around simple imagery and presented a cohesive, distinct vision. Anita Manfreda and Simon Pawson, Australian tourism researchers, have critiqued the 2025 Tourism Australia campaigns for feeling 'stuck in 1984.' 'For a country that prides itself on diversity, the 2025 campaign feels strangely one-dimensional', they write.[11] They point out that the campaign seems to cut against Tourism Australia's own research, which 'shows travellers are increasingly interested in meaningful, authentic experience'. This thesis's analysis of what contributed to the success and failure of various campaigns offers a historic example to future advertisers who might apply the lessons of past successful campaigns in modern contexts. Though we live in an increasingly complicated world, positioning campaigns around nature and strong cultural narratives offers a way to cut through stereotypes and tell important stories about the nation and its people. Recent examples of nature-rich advertising that have enjoyed tremendous success include 100% Pure New Zealand and Tasmania's 'Come Down For Air' campaign. Both campaigns feature strong environmental messaging. They hold at their core the idea that nature offers the kind of meaningful

[11] Anita Manfreda and Simon Pawson, 'Still throwing shrimp on the barbie: why is Tourism Australia's advertising stuck in 1984?', *The Conversation*, August 7, 2025. https://theconversation.com/still-throwing-shrimp-on-the-barbie-why-is-tourism-australias-advertising-stuck-in-1984-262623

and authentic experience that consumers seek. As we have seen in this thesis, this is not a revolutionary or new idea.

In Australia, the project of national advertising persisted throughout the century, even while the country faced economic crises, obstinate interstate rivalries, and endured two world wars and other conflicts. In the second half of the century, with British global hegemony in decline, Australia faced new challenges related to its social cohesion and identity. The emergence of a post-war Western environmental consciousness and a rising cultural interest in Australian Indigenous rights coincided with the expansion of an industrialised tourist industry. Though values and attitudes changed, much of what appealed to a tourist in 1910 also appealed to a tourist in 1980. Technologies, media and language changed too, of course, and advertisements appeared differently depending on the mediums that carried them. But what remained constant in twentieth century Australian national advertising was a perennial appeal for humans to experience nature. Across time, promoters overwhelmingly perceived a consumer desire to travel as a means of fulfilling what the distinguished environmental historian Donald Worster describes as an 'other-than-cultural hunger for the natural world that persists across time and space.'[12]

[12] Worster, 'Wilderness of History', 225.

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