# A new structure for ANPS

As we reported in the last issue, the Survey has reached the end of the five-year financial support provided by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy since 2002. We have been working behind the scenes to provide a new supporting structure for ANPS, and we can now announce that **Placenames Australia** has been registered in NSW as an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1984*.

The object of the association is to conduct the work of the Survey. It will be responsible for appointing the Director, for publishing this newsletter, and for promoting the Survey by fundraising and encouraging community participation in ANPS.

The inaugural meeting of Placenames Australia was held at Macquarie University on 18 December, when it was resolved to submit the application to be registered as an incorporated association. The meeting also appointed a management committee for 2007, which met for the first time on 26 February.

The meeting also asked Flavia Hodges, Dale Lehner and David Blair to form a sub-committee to produce this newsletter. We are grateful to the English Department

within the Division of Humanities at Macquarie for continuing to support the ANPS. The Department provides accommodation and the basic infrastructure needs of the Survey. This is particularly valued, since ANPS has no outside funding and is staffed entirely by volunteers. The NSW Geographical Names Board has continued its long-standing support of the Survey, and has generously enabled the printing of this quarterly newsletter.

We record our appreciation of staff who have laboured hard on the Survey but who have now moved on to other things.

- Clair Hill, who's doing her PhD overseas
- Susan Poetsch, at the NSW Board of Studies
- and particularly Flavia Hodges, who was Director of APIT and without whose expertise and dedication the Survey would not have survived. ❑

**The Committee**

| | |
|---|---|
| President | Professor Colin Yallop |
| Vice-President | Dr Joyce Miles |
| Secretary | Dr Jan Tent |
| Treasurer | Mr Bill Noble |
| Members | Dr Michael Walsh |
| | Mr Greg Windsor |

## Feedback...

**Wallace township**

For several years, I have wondered why the officially surveyed Township of Wallace is so far from the physical township. Angus R Watson has provided the answer in his most interesting article in the December 2006 issue of *Placenames Australia.*

Angus makes a number of passing references to the railway that served Wallace and Gordon. Some of these references need clarification, which is the purpose of this letter.

When the railway from Geelong was opened in 1862, the citizens of Ballarat were delighted. They had a reliable link to their nearest port and reasonably convenient transport to Melbourne, even if it meant changing trains at Geelong. More importantly, the cost of transport, and hence goods, was greatly reduced.

The first section of what is now the direct line to Melbourne is that between Warrenheip and Gordon, which was opened in 1879. The rich chocolate soil of this area may be great for farming, but roads quickly become impassable in wet weather. The railway was the direct result of lobbying by the district's farmers, who wanted a reliable way of transporting their produce to Ballarat.

The line meandered along, passing through stations at Dunns-town, Bungaree, Wallace, Millbrook (opened some time later) and Gordon (all of which have long since closed). With little expectation that it would one day become a main line, it was built to branchline standards.

Branchlines have light rail, relatively steep grades and sharp curves, all of which limit train speeds. While heavier rail and more powerful locomotives can overcome the first two, the only solution to sharp curves is a major deviation, to which Angus refers in his final paragraph.

Angus's last sentence is not correct, however, because (in spite of vociferous protest and lobbying by local landholders) a direct line has been built as part of the fast train project. The new line commences at the site of Millbrook station and rejoins the original line east of Dunnstown. Surprisingly, the original line is still in use and forms a long loop used to pass opposing trains.

*Ron Woods*
Place Names Officer, Ballarat

☙☙☙☙☙☙☙☙☙☙

**Queensland Surveying**

I first met Bill Kitson, Curator of the Queensland Museum of Lands, Mapping and Surveying in about 1999. I had run into a couple of brick walls with my Darling Downs research. Bill proceeded to demolish them one by one, producing relevant maps and obscure information with the greatest of ease. His mastery of the records at the Queensland State Archives is legendary and a couple of enjoyable days out there with him resolved all my queries.

At last Bill has been prevailed upon by Judith McKay to put some of his vast knowledge on paper. What a treat for history buffs and geographers everywhere.

Dale Lehner
[see our book notice below]

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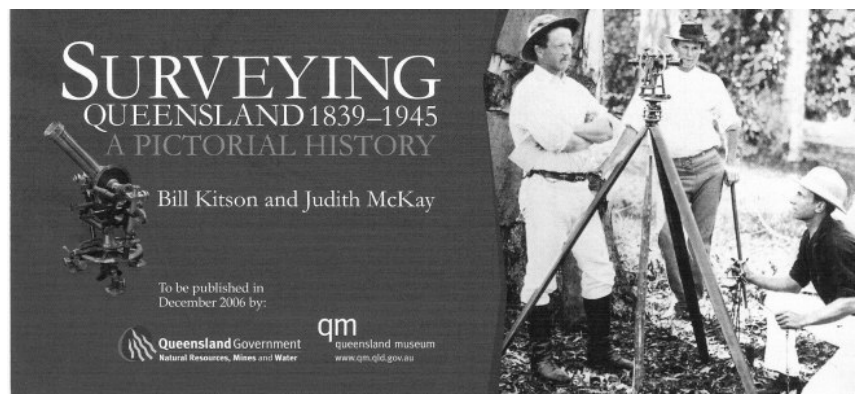### Surveying Queensland 1839-1945
*- Bill Kitson and Judith McKay*
The labours and achievements of Queensland's early surveyors are recog-nised in this timely and fitting tribute, based on many years of research by Bill Kitson, one of the State's best known surveyors and a good friend to ANPS.
Copies may be ordered from:
*Queensland Museum*
*PO Box 3300*
*South Brisbane BC, QLD 4101*

# Placenames of Fiji
## (part 6)

### Ups and Downs, or why there are few black ducks in Black Duck Bay

In the last instalment of this series, we looked at the Fijian place names Tavua and Tavuyaga, and decided that they mean, or rather originally meant, 'volcano'. They were originally derived from the verb 'tavu' meaning 'burn' and the suffix 'a' or 'yaga' meaning 'place'. So by using etymology, this student of placenames discovered that there were active volcanoes in Fiji within human occupation long before the vulcanologists made the same discovery!

Today I would like to look for place names that tell us about ups and downs—or, to put it rather more technically, tectonic movements. We will start our exploration in a broad, deep, mangrove-fringed bay on the south coast of central Kadavu, the most southerly of Fiji's larger islands, that was a coaling station in the 1860s, much frequented by trading vessels, mail packets and men-o-war out of Sydney, and went by the rather quaint name of 'Black Duck Bay'.

So why was it called 'Black Duck Bay'? Well, there is indeed a native Fijian wild duck that is black-ish—*Anas superciliosa* to be precise, also known as the Australian Grey Duck—but it's fairly common all over coastal Fiji, especially around mangrove swamps, so there's no particular reason why this bay should be so named. In fact, the English name is simply a fanciful mistranslation of the Fijian. The Fijian name of the bay, and the largest island in that bay, is Galoa (note that 'g' in Fijian represents the velar nasal, like the 'ng' in English 'sing'), and this was misunderstood by visitors to be a compound of the Fijian words 'ga' meaning 'duck' and 'loa' meaning black. The main problem with this interpretation, apart from the ducks being not particularly thick on the ground, or on the water or in the air for that matter, is that the first vowel in the placename Galoa is short, whereas the 'a' in the word for 'duck', 'ga', is long. So the placename Galoa and the Fijan word for 'black duck' are actually pronounced differently, though non-native speakers would normally not realise they're different because the spelling is the same.

Another reason for not accepting the 'black duck' translation is that there is an alternative etymology, for which we must return to our old friend the 'a' suffix that has done such a sterling job of making verbs into nouns—for example, turning 'tavu' ('burn') into 'tavua', meaning 'burning place, volcano'. If Galoa is similarly made up, then it must be based on the verb 'galo'. Unfortunately, there is no such verb in contemporary Fijian, but that's no problem, because when we cast our net around closely related languages we find that 'galo' is a verb in Samoan, Tongan and other Pacific languages, with meanings like 'disappear' and 'submerge'. So it's likely that this word also existed in early Fijian, perhaps the 'Proto Fijian' that was spoken by the earliest settlers some three thousand years ago, and that Galoa therefore meant simply 'submerged place'.

Strengthening this theory is the fact that there are at least two other places in Fiji called Galoa, and they are both on or near the coast. One is a village on the coast of Serua, a part of southern Vitilevu roughly opposite Kadavu, and the other is a small inhabited island just off the coast of Bua, in northwest Vanualevu. There is also an uninhabited stretch of coastline on the island of Ogea, in southern Lau, called Nagaloa, with the definite article 'na' prefixed. These names suggest that there has been visible subsidence in these places within the past three thousand years of human occupation.

So much for the downs, what about the ups? Well, the Fijian word for 'emerge' or 'appear above the surface of the water' is 'votu'—and unlike 'galo' it's a word that is still in regular use, not only in Fiji but throughout the Pacific. In Tonga, it's pronounced 'fotu', meaning 'come into view', and in New Zealand Maori 'hotu' means 'to dawn'. In Rotuman it is 'hofu', meaning 'emerge', and related words further north and west include Kiribati 'oti' meaning 'appear, come into sight', Mota (Vanuatu) 'wot' meaning 'rise up, appear', Nggela (Solomons) 'potu' meaning 'rise, swell' and so on.

When we add the 'a' suffix which we have come to know and love, we end up with Votua. This is the name of a number of places in Fiji, the best known being a village at the mouth of the Gusunituba (Ba river), another village at the mouth of the Lekutu river in Bua, and a village on the coast of Nadroga in southwest Vitilevu (the coast now called by tourists the Coral Coast). Certainly for the first two, the likelihood is that they are lands which have recently 'emerged' from the sea, built up from sediment brought down by floods.

But what about the third? Votua on the coral coast of Nadroga doesn't seem to have been formed from alluvial deposits, being situated at the mouth of a very insubstantial stream with no sign at all of an alluvial plain. So this name must indicate a different kind of 'emergence'. It turns out, from discussions with my colleague Professor Patrick Nunn of the University of the South Pacific, that much of what is now termed the 'Coral Coast' is actually quite aptly named, since it consists of outcrops of emerged coral reef. Now, uplifted coral reef is far from being a rarity in Fiji, but what is unusual about the 'Coral Coast' area is that the uplifting probably occurred within the last five thousand years - that is, it may well have occurred at a time when Fiji was occupied, and was most probably caused by an earthquake, so the emerging would have been quite dramatic to the beholder. If this was the case, then the name Votua would be as appropriate for land formed from an emerged reef as it appears to have been for land formed from alluvial deposits.

In the next issue, we move on from Votua to the next village, Votualailai, literally 'small Votua', and ponder the question: why is Votualailai actually bigger than Votua?

❏ **Paul Geraghty**
University of the South Pacific

# Lena Hill

There is a small West Australian eminence, 60 metres high and located 11 km NNE of Wyndham, which was approved as *Lena Hill* by the Surveyor General on 1 August 1985.

Although named Andrew Hill by H.S.Ranford in 1886, this name was apparently not locally known. In 1935, Miss Lena Gee, a local resident won a beauty contest, being named most beautiful girl in Wyndham. The prize was to have this hill named in her honour.

Miss Gee wrote to the Surveyor General in May 1985 seeking to have her name shown on maps and following investigation and the support of the local shire, the name was approved.
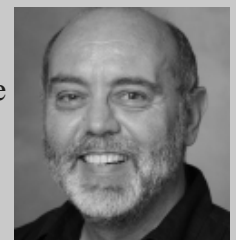
I think she wanted it named Mt Lena; but as we noted it is only 60 metres high, and is actually an island hill on the coastal mud flats near Wyndham. I'm not so sure it was much of a prize!

❏ **Brian Goodchild**

## News from the PA Committee

### A new Director for ANPS
At the February meeting, ANPS Director David Blair announced his intention to stand down from that position, in order to concentrate on database work and news-letter editing for the Survey. The committee was delighted that Dr Jan Tent was willing to take up the position, and appointed him as ANPS Director for 2007.

### PA membership
Friends of the Survey will be asked to join Place-names Australia as supporting members. The various categories of membership will be confirmed in the June issue of the newsletter.

# Placenames from house names in Sydney suburbs

W hat have a first-century BC Roman scholar and Frederick the Great's palace at Potsdam to do with modern Australian suburban placenames?

Australian placenames originate from many different sources – the honouring of important people (Darwin), commemorating relatives and friends (Elizabeth Bay), location (Riverton), animals (Kangaroo Island), other languages, links with towns overseas, local industries, views, literature, flowers, trees, goats, sharks—the variety is both diverse and interesting. It was, however, a surprise to discover during my research on the origins of the naming of some Sydney suburbs just how many place names came from house names in the area. Further investigation revealed that this practice was not confined to suburban Sydney, but that there are towns in all the states with placenames derived from the names of early dwellings.

Although the naming of houses in Australia is not as widespread as it is in many European countries—for example, many English villages still have no house numbers and house names are therefore a necessity— the custom of naming Australian houses came over with early settlers who quite often named their properties after their birthplace (*Pewsey Vale, Berkshire Valley, Teddington*). Once suburban development commenced, the practice began of adopting the name of a house of some significance in the locality as its placename. This practice continues today.

An excellent example is **Varroville (**right) in the Shire of Campbelltown. Around 1812 Robert Townson, a scientist, emigrated to Australia from England and was granted a large estate by Governor Macquarie around 1809. Townson, being an eminent scholar and author, named the property *Varro Farm* (subsequently it became *Varro Ville*) after the Roman high-ranking naval officer and author of some 490 books, Terentius Varro (BC116 -28) who is said to have been regarded as "the most learned of the Romans". In l837 the property was purchased by the explorer Charles Sturt and later it was owned by the first NSW Postmaster General. The current house dates from



1858. Following a long period as a dairy farm and a family home, it was given to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) by Cherry Jackaman, President of the Trust from l977-81, but sold in l991. It is now listed under the Heritage Act of l977. In l976 the Campbelltown Council decided to name its new suburb **Varroville.** *(i)*

Australia's first clergyman, the Rev. Richard Johnson, who had been chaplain of the First Fleet, was granted 400 acres of land to the south of Sydney, which he named *Canterbury Vale.* It seems highly likely that it was named after Canterbury in Kent, UK, the Archdiocese of the Primate of the Church of England. The land was initially intended for the building of a church, but Johnson was unable at the time to obtain any help in clearing the land and a church was not built in the area until l858. In 1800 Johnson sold what had become agricultural land to William Cox. By the mid 1800s the area possessed several "palatial colonial mansions" one of which was *Canterbury House*, built about l850 by Arthur Jeffreys. This was a large dwelling set at the end of a wide avenue of trees of sufficient importance and interest to have been painted by Conrad Martens. The subdivision of 1841 led to the development of the suburb of **Canterbury**. *(ii)*

Present day **Vaucluse** has aristocratic connections and a rather colourful history. According to Barrie Dyster in "*Servant and Master – Building and Running the Grand Houses of Sydney 1788-1850*", Historic Houses Trust l989, *Vaucluse House* began as an "architectural jumble". Originally it was a farmhouse built by Sir Henry Browne Hayes in 1803, but it eventually became a residence of some significance. Sir Henry appears to have been a somewhat flamboyant character. His entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography refers to him as a "convict adventurer, from Ireland". Transported to NSW for kidnapping an heiress, he was jailed on arrival in 1802 for causing trouble en route. Nevertheless, "despite an inclination to irregular

behavior" he became a sheriff and won an influential place in the community. He named *Vaucluse House* after the village in the South of France, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse (from the *Latin* 'vallis clausa ') so named, it is said, because the site was a sheltered, enclosed valley and because **Vaucluse** was celebrated by the renowned medieval poet Petrarch.  Hayes returned to Ireland and the house was bought by William C. Wentworth in 1827.  Over the years re-building, alterations and additions took place and it became a Sydney landmark with its castellations and turrets.  The surrounding development eventually took the name **Vaucluse,** the proclamation of the **Borough of Vaucluse** being gazetted on 1st April, 1895. *(iii)*

The name of the present day suburb of **Crows Nest** was first used by Edward Wollstonecraft for a cottage he erected on land granted to him after his arrival in Sydney in 1819.  Wollstonecraft was a merchant, landowner and businessman.  His brother-in-law, Alexander Berry, records in his *"Reminiscences"* that *Crows Nest Cottage* (right) was named on account of its elevated and commanding position and heavy timber.  In 1850 Berry completed a large stone house called *Crows Nest House*.  Although the house (below) was demolished in 1929 the gates, which date from the



l890s, remain at North Sydney Demonstration School which was built in the grounds. *(iv)*

A somewhat different story lies behind the name of the suburb of Roseville which lies on the North Shore railway line. This was once an area of market gardens, the produce being carted into Sydney or sold from carts in the neighbourhood.  According to an article published in the *Evening News* 18 – 22 July, 1921 by James G. Edwards the grandson of Robert Pymble (who gave his name to the more northerly suburb of **Pymble**) , in the 19<sup>th</sup> century a George Wilson created an extensive orangery and erected a stone cottage on the site of the present railway station.  The plate on the front door of the cottage was inscribed "*Roseville*".  The cottage was demolished to make way for the new railway station but the name **Roseville** was adopted for the station and its surrounding area, thus preserving a valuable piece of local history. *(v)*

By the 1830s much of the area today known as Ku-Ring-Gai had been cleared of timber and orchardists had moved in. It was claimed that here were the best orchards in the colony with a wide variety of fruit being produced which was transported into Sydney or sold locally. The name of one of its suburbs—**Lindfield** (OE '*Lime-tree field)*—is, therefore, most appropriate although it was not chosen for this reason.  In l884 a house was built and occupied by a Mr John List, a builder originally from England.  It stood in spacious grounds near the site where the railway station was subsequently built some six years later.  The station and the



suburb took the name **Lindfield** from the house.  According to a character named Tom Jones who made many trips through the area from the 1850s onwards, Mr List came from Lindfield in the county of Sussex, England and had named his house from that locality *(Evening News, l921 op. cit.)*.  Research undertaken in 1983 by a member of the List family suggests that this is not so, although John List may have been familiar with this attractive Sussex village.  In the l920s the house was removed to a location in Narrabeen. *(vi)*

The selection of the name **Sans Souci** for a Sydney suburb might seem unusual at first sight.  What has it to do with the famous *Sans Souci* palace, located in a magnificent park in Potsdam, built by Frederick the Great, King of Prussia during 1745-47? *Sans Souci* means 'without worries' and the name is appropriate in view of the 'no worries' expression frequently used by Australians today. It stems from the fact that Thomas Holt, a Yorkshire wool merchant who represented the family firm in Europe, met and married Sophie Eulert in Berlin in 1841.  A year later they emigrated to Australia.  Here they prospered and Thomas became extremely wealthy through his interests in wool, gold mining, insurance and other enterprises. He bought an estate extending from Botany Bay to Port Hacking. After living in a number of grand mansions (one named *Sophienburg*), he leased the Rocky Point Estate and renamed the house *Sans Souci* after the summer palace at Potsdam near where Sophie Holt had been born.  Sophie did not like the house and they never lived in it.  The house

# Who's Who...

## on the *Placenames Australia* committee

**On the front page we listed the members of the new PA committee. So that they're not just names to you, in each issue of our newsletter we'll feature a member of the committee. This issue, it's…**

**Colin Yallop, President**: Colin is Adjunct Professor in English at Macquarie University, and an Honorary Fellow in Linguistics at the University of Melbourne. He has been Editor-in-Chief of the Macquarie Dictionary in recent years. Colin's background was in modern languages—he's a generous source of advice in the ANPS office on matters of French, German and Dutch! His PhD, though, was on Alyawarra, a language related to Arrernte and spoken in Central Australia. Colin's dual interest in Australia's indigenous languages and Australian English helps ANPS to link the two areas of its brief: indigenous and introduced toponymy. Colin and his wife Maureen live in Melbourne.

eventually became the Sans Souci Hotel.  It was demolished in 1921, but the name lives on in the suburb of **Sans Souci**.. *(vii)*

A strange story lies behind the name of the central Sydney suburb of **Ultimo.**  According to an article by C.A. Irish on "*Names of Railway Stations in NSW with their meaning and origin"*,  Dr John Harris, surgeon, public servant and landholder who had his house there, had to attend a court martial. During the reading of the charge, that day was referred to as "the 12th ultimo" instead of "the 12th instant".  Dr Harris was said to be so proud that he was the only person present with sufficient classical knowledge to notice the mistake that he wrote verses about it and decided to call his house *Ultimo Place.* This led to the suburb being named **Ultimo.** *(viii)*

These are just a few of the fascinating stories that lie behind the naming of some of  our suburbs and illustrate that house names can, in some circumstances, play an important role in the preservation of local history.

*Photo Credits:*
**Crows Nest Cottage & House**—North Sydney Heritage, Stanton Library Collections
**Varroville, St Andrew Rd, Varroville, 1979**—Local Studies Collection, Campbelltown City Library

*References:*
i      Wm. Smith *Classical Dictionary of Biography, Mythology and Geography,* Seaby, London, rep.1972, p.604;

Jeff McGill and Keith Richardson,  *Campbelltown's Streets and Suburbs – How and why they got their names,* Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society, 1995

ii      F.A. Larcombe, *Change and Challenge, A History of the Municipality of Canterbury, NSW,* Canterbury Municipal Council, l979;
     *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, l926-27, Vol. 12, Part 5, p.253;
     Mitchell Library, *Ref.XV\*/SP.COLL/MARTENS/1.*

iii     *Supplement to the New South Wales Government Gazette,* No.223, lst April, 1895 pp.2171-2

iv     *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society,* Vol. XIII, Part 1, 1927, p.33*;*
     *Naming North Sydney,* North Sydney Council, 2n ed., l996

v       Kerrin Cook, *The Railway Came to Ku-Ring-Gai,* Genlin Investments, Pymble, 1991, p.v, p.xi

vi     Cook, o*p.cit.,* p.xi;
     Articles by Judith Cleland (nee List), Ku-Ring-Gai Municipal Library,  Local History Collection, l983

vii    Philip Geeves, *Holt, Thomas (1811-1888),* ADB Online Edition;
     R.W. Rathbone, *The Sans Souci Peninsula,* Book House, Glebe, 2002 pp.18-19

viii   *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society,* Vol.XIII, Part 2, 1927, p.138

❑ **Joyce Miles**

### Sportspersons

The clues reveal placenames which are those of famous sportspersons (disregard spelling). e.g. (VIC) Freestyle record-breaking swimmer; a valley …… THORPDALE

1. (VIC) Australian cricket icon moving to the UK
2. (VIC) Not Guy the singer, but Coe the Olympic athlete
3. (VIC) Seven times winner of the *Tour de France*
4. (VIC) Skating with Jane
5. (NSW) Medical Knight first to run the under four-minute mile
6. (NSW) Will bend it for over a million a week in LA
7. (TAS) Oo-ah Mr McGrath
8. (TAS) A sterling British motor racing champion, l947-62
9. (TAS) First name of he of the famous "baggy green"
10. (TAS) Todd is also a tennis commentator
11. (TAS) Sounds like a happy, cheerful female horse trainer
12. (SA) This big cat is burning bright on the golf course; tapering extremity of land
13. (SA) Now known as Mohammed Ali; holes drilled for water, oil etc.
14. (QLD) This golfer has nothing to do with the 1066 Conquest; place for cars
15. (WA) World class tennis playing sisters
16. (WA) His Everest triumph coincided with the Coronation
17. (WA) The initials WG are enough to identify him; densely populated settlement
18. (ACT) He broke the world's land speed record in Bluebird in 1935
19. (ACT) She won gold medals for swimming in three successive Olympic Games
20. (ACT) Granted he can swim

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# Contributions

Contributions for *Placenames Australia* are welcome. Closing dates for submission are:

| | |
|---|---|
| 31 January for the March issue | 31 July for the September issue |
| 30 April for the June issue | 31 October for the December issue |

Please send all contributions to the Editor, David Blair, at the address below. Electronic submissions are preferred, and photographic or other illustrations are greatly appreciated.

**Answers:** 1. Warne 2. Sebastian 3. Armstrong 4. Dean 5. Bannister 6. Beckom (Beckham) 7. Glen 8. Moss 9. Don (Bradman) 10. Woodbridge 11. Waterhouse (Gai Waterhouse) 12. Woods Point (Tiger Woods) 13. Clay Wells (Cassius Clay) 14. Norman Park (Greg Norman) 15. Williams (Serena And Venus) 16. Hillarys 17. Gracetown 18. Campbell (Sir Malcolm Campbell) 19. Fraser 20. Hackett