



BUSHRANGER RE-ENACTMENTS: LEGEND AND LANDSCAPE

Dr Janys Hayes¹

¹*Independent Scholar*

Abstract

The re-enactment of events from Australia's history as popular entertainment has dropped away in the twenty-first century. Whilst Old Sydney Town attracted crowds from 1973 through to 2003 with its daily parades of British red coats who marched down to an artificially constructed 'Old Sydney Cove', Australians today often have a more conflicted view of Australia's colonial history. If national identity is maintained through acts of 'remembering', as suggested by Ian McBride (2001), the past can be a contested issue that impacts on what is accepted as popular representation. Yet the persistence of bushranger escapade re-enactments, though set in colonial times, suggests that issues beyond Australian national identity are at work in maintaining the popularity of such events. Bushrangers in Australia have fuelled imaginative representations in theatre and then later cinema since the early 1800s, with Andrew James Couzens (2019) stating that the Australian "bushranger legend ... responds to the historic and mythic characteristics of outlawry" with "the outlaw as heroes". This paper investigates three specific bushranger re-enactments. In Braidwood, south-eastern New South Wales, from 1865-1867 the Clark Gang, Tom and John Clark terrorized citizens and were known as 'the bloodiest of bushrangers'. In 2017, the 150-year anniversary re-enactment of the Clark Gangs' shooting up of the small country town of Braidwood attracted crowds keen to witness, as well as take part in the drama. The second re-enactment occurs regularly through performances by the Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society. Opting to entertain tourists, the group have staged a 'Bushranger Show' at numerous sites throughout inland regional Queensland. The third re-enactment occurred annually, until Covid struck, at Canowindra in northern New South Wales. In 1863 the notorious bushrangers, Ben Hall and Johnny Gilbert locked a group of villagers in the Canowindra pub, the re-enactment takes place at the site of these events, the now named Royal Hotel in the main street of Canowindra. These re-enactments are investigated through multiple lenses of performance, place, and politics. The site-specific nature of these performances positions them as specifically different than performances depicting Australian bushrangers in the cinema or theatre.

Keywords

Australian Bushrangers, Bushranger Re-enactments, Site-specific Theatre, Ben Hall, Colonial Representations

The discovery of gold in Australia in 1851 opened a period in Australia's history where the image of the bushranger, a character both thief and daredevil, captured the imagination of the Australian populace. Bullion coaches traversing the country from goldmining sites to cities were held up or shot up by bandits wielding guns and rifles seeking easy pickings and escaping on horses back into the Australian bush. Although, prior to the discovery of gold there were numerous escaped convicts living rough in the bushland and thieving from settlers to survive, they were more often referred to as 'bolters' rather than bushrangers. It is the bandits of the gold-rushes, usually Australian born, certainly healthier than any escaped convicts, that became the iconic outlaws, famed for their daring exploits, known as bushrangers.

The names of the bushrangers have been set in Australia's cultural memory. Ned Kelly, Ben Hall, Captain Moonlight, "Mad Dog" Morgan, Frank Gardiner, to name just a few ... these men, often murderers, certainly ruffians, have held their places in Australia's gallery of the famous. Though belonging to the past, the bushrangers still preside in Australia's cultural present. The construction of the legend surrounding the exploits of these wild characters intermingles a number of ideologies: the growth of Australian nationalism, the lure of the outlaw, and a self-identification of Australian with "country", have all contributed to the maintenance of the bushranger in the forefront of Australian cultural memory. Representation of bushrangers through popular entertainment began simultaneously with bushranger history through colonial theatre and in particular, melodrama. As Andrew James Couzens (2019) illustrates in his *A Cultural History of the Bushranger Legend in Theatre and Cinemas, 1828-2017*,

already in the colonial melodramas of the 1820s through to federation, bushrangers were depicted in a uniquely local perspective. The bushranger legend evolved as a model for national representation. Sometimes as the evil villains of the plot, sometimes as the Robin Hood style hero, the bushrangers in the colonial melodramas were always there as a representation of the emerging colony. As Couzens outlines, visual representations of bushrangers through theatre and early cinema “participated in a feedback loop in which they simultaneously reflected on and participated in the formation of the bushranger legend”.ⁱ

This paper investigates contemporary popular performative practices that have contributed to the continuation of the bushranger legend. This paper concentrates on bushranger re-enactments, where the exploits of a particular gang of bushrangers or a particular bushranger is to some extent re-performed for a localised audience. Through a range of frames, Australia’s shifting sense of nationalism and attitudes towards colonialism, the creation of community and place-making through site-specific performance, and processes of re-enactment, this paper aims to throw light on the performative means through which contemporary audiences participate in maintaining bushranger history.

The celebration of events from Australia’s history as popular entertainment has dropped away in the twenty-first century. Whilst Old Sydney Town attracted crowds from 1973 through to 2003 with its daily parades of British red coats who marched down to an artificially constructed ‘Old Sydney Cove’, a recreation of colonial Sydney Harbour, Australians in the 21st century often have a more conflicted view of Australia’s colonial history. In particular with the repositioning of indigeneity in contemporary culture and the First Fleet’s arrival in 1788 no longer being identified with arriving in a ‘terra nullius’, contemporary culture has few remnants of celebrating colonialism. Even Australia Day itself, January 26th, set as the date that British Governor Arthur Phillip raised the British flag in Port Jackson signalling the beginning of the British colony, is now a contested celebration. Bushrangers as icons of Australian identity have however managed to bypass this developing scrutiny of colonial times. Couzens affirms that “the bushranger legend therefore emerges from the intersection between the outlaw legend and other legends constructed to describe and explain aspects of the Australian character.”ⁱⁱ

As outlaws the bushrangers were often country born lads who stood against the colonial law enforcers. They were adept at riding horses and using rifles and shared a general contempt of law and colonial society. They captured a sense of Australian masculinity as expressed by Russell Ward in 1958 in his seminal text, *The Australian Legend*.

According to the myth, the 'typical Australian' is a practical man, rough and ready in his manners and quick to decry any appearance of affection in others. He is a great improviser, ever willing to 'have a go' at anything, but willing too to be content with a task done in a way that is 'near enough'. Though capable of great exertion in an emergency, he normally feels no impulse to work without good cause. He swears hard and consistently, gambles heavily and often, and drinks deeply on occasion. Though he is 'the world's best confidence man', he is usually taciturn rather than talkative, one who endures stoically rather than one who acts busily. He is a 'hard case', sceptical about the values of religion and of intellectual and cultural pursuits generally. He believes that jack is not only as good as his master but, at least in principle, probably a good deal better, and so he is a great 'knocker' of eminent people unless, as in the case of his sporting heroes, they are distinguished by physical prowess. He is a fiercely independent person who hates officiousness and authority, especially when these qualities are embodied in military officers and policemen.ⁱⁱⁱ

There is no doubt that it is Ned Kelly who as a bushranger most clearly embodies this sense of the Australian masculine hero. Films have been made of his life, he appears in Sydney Nolan’s famous painting series which has stamped an enduring image of him in the Australian imagination, and he has even appeared as an icon in the opening ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games, held in Sydney.

As outlaws who flouted the colonial powers whilst knowing the ways of the bush, the bushrangers of the goldrush period, 1850s – 1900s, were often supported by many in their country provinces. With time it became a matter of pride that certain bushrangers had taken over towns or robbed certain banks or had escaped from particular jails. The exploits of these rough and ready men became the legends of eastern Australian inland localities. Particular country towns claimed them as theirs. In the events investigated in this paper: Braidwood is associated with the Clarke’s, both Tom and John Clarke who ranged from Braidwood to Bega and up the coast of New South Wales to Moruya; Canowindra and the Lachlan western plains of New South Wales are associated with Ben Hall, Frank Gardiner, and John Gilbert, to name the more famous of the Weddin Mountains gang; Gympie in Queensland is most noted for the bushranging of James McPherson, known as The Wild Scotchman. These localities then have become sites of re-enactments of bushranging exploits.

Site-Specific Performance and Re-enactments

On-location performance allows the local audience to share in experiences of recognised locations in newly inscribed ways. Site-specific performance can create new access points to the performing arts for audiences who would not attend cultural venues. Often the place or location speaks more clearly than the actors who perform in that site, allowing new community performers who would not necessarily define themselves as actors to become major players. Whatever narratives unfold they do so beyond the confines of theatre walls.

Sydney Performance Studies theorist, Gay McAuley has noted:

Site-based performance engages deeply with its chosen site and as a result tends to be drawn into engagement with the social and political issues that seem inseparable from place: issues concerning ownership and occupation, individual and group identity, power, boundaries, rights of inclusion and exclusion, memory and history.^{iv}

The performing body activates theatrical space but as Joanne Tompkins indicates “the performer and the setting intersect”.^v It can’t be assumed that either are stable entities. Discourses or issues of cultural memory and cultural nationalism associated with particular spaces may be interacting with any performing bodies there.

The performing body should be read in terms of place, just as place ought to be read in terms of the bodies that inhabit it. In other words the performer and setting intersect...^{vi}

British Performance Studies academic and practitioner, Phil Smith,^{vii} has reconsidered the role of performers within site-specific work, speculating that they can be viewed as signposts, or guides, pointing the audience towards the site, in an already meaning imbued environment.^{viii} Smith is concerned that a narrative viewing of the actor’s role in site-specific work can act as a “voice of closure”^{ix}, whereas as a signpost the performance may be viewed as “servicing the site, pointing away from themselves, away from an ‘inner life’, to the surface”^x.

Site-specific performance offers possibilities of popular entertainment, attracting crowds and demonstrating well-recognised performative techniques that are able to unite communities in a sense of belonging and place.^{xi} In relation to the sites of bushranger re-enactments Jen Harvie’s insights are particularly pertinent, that site specific performance has the ability “to explore spatial and material histories and to mediate the complex identities these histories produce.”^{xii} She pinpoints location as having a powerful ability to trigger memory, “helping to evoke specific past times related to the place and time of performance and facilitating a negotiation between meanings of those times.”^{xiii} The elicited memories in these circumstances do not require a specific text or set of words to be activated but rather the place or materials in the place produce a “ghosting”^{xiv} of a previous time that is intuitively encountered. The meanings engendered for any audience are not necessarily fixed, but rather this type of performance needs to be viewed always within the complex web of relationships that are stimulated.

Warwick Frost and Jennifer Laing suggest that re-enactments are “strategically planned to reinforce national or group identities by promoting concepts of shared memories and connections”^{xv} The intention of re-enactment groups is to recreate as accurately as possible, artefacts, details, events or settings from an historical period. Costumed re-enactors join in public performances often for commemorative events, historical anniversaries, community festivals, sometimes in conjunction with museums and educational facilities.

It is Rebecca Schneider’s text, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment*,^{xvi} who has captured the meaning of performed re-enactments most clearly in terms of performance research. She poses a question in relation to re-enactments that “if time (re)turns. What does it drag with it?”^{xvii} Schneider states that re-enactments “replay the liveness of the dead”^{xviii} It is this ‘liveness’ that enables a re-enactment to become popular entertainments. She suggests that re-enactments can be conversations across time, like a call and response, a “(re)composition in transgenerational conversation.”^{xix} Through re-enactments, such as the bushranger exploits investigated here, a conversation or negotiation about the past is staged by a particular group to produce an affective response in the viewers as well as the participants. These are not historiographic represented events, but rather conjectural interpretations of the past. This paper investigates what identities or heritages are maintained through these repetitions.

The Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society

The Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society began in 2001 and is known for recreating the days of the gold rushes and bushrangers. The establishment of the group was by George and Del Reid and was firstly conceived as providing entertainment for tourists on the then newly established Mary Valley Rattler, a heritage, tourist steam train ride, which opened in 2002. This heritage steam train line, originally constructed between 1911 through to 1915, runs from Gympie through to Imbil and is Australia’s third biggest heritage railway. It is one of the region’s largest tourist attractions.

The Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society became known in the region for staging a 'Bushranger Show' for the tourists boarding the Rattler on the third Sunday of each month from 2002 - 2012. The group staged this show, with the bushranger attempting to rob gold from the train being captured by the constabulary and then flogged. When the Mary Valley Rattler line was closed for safety reasons in 2012 the Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society relocated to the Gympie and District Historical Museum, producing their show occasionally for various events at the museum as well as creating skits and appearing in costume at festivals throughout the region.^{xx} The festivals have ranged across a number of inland Queensland regional towns: the Goomeri Pumpkin Festival; the Kybong Gem and Rock Festival; the Wondai Country Festival; Australia Day Festival at Imbil; the Beltane Fire Festival; the Mitchell Creek Gold Detecting Festival. The group of reenactors, have been welcomed and supported widely throughout their region. All volunteers, they have fluctuated in participation over the two decades of their presentations, with a number of the original members retiring as they grew older. As Queensland reopened after the Covid Lockdown of 2020, the Gympie Re-enactment Society has once again swung back into performance mode, appearing at approximately seven differing events in 2021.

In May 2021, the Society named the bushranger in their performance as James McPherson, known as 'The Wild Scotchman'.^{xxi} The Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society had read of McPherson and known he was active in the Gympie area and so chose to portray him. McPherson in 1865 and 1866 held up the mail on the road between Gladstone, Maryborough and Gayndah, all further north than Gympie, but was distinctive in being a Queensland bushranger. He never however had anything to do with The Mary Valley Rattler which was not built at that time nor with the town of Gympie. The mail he robbed was transported by horse. Also, unlike the Bushranger Show, McPherson was not captured by the police of the time but rather was apprehended by a local from a station near Gin Gin. On this point McPherson has been quoted as being proud.^{xxii} Whether McPherson ever endured being whipped whilst in penitentiary is unclear. He was held from 1866 until 1874 at the penal settlement on St Helena Island in Moreton Bay.

Given the blurry authenticity of the Bushranger Show the question can be asked of what it is that enables the endurance and popularity of the Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society's offerings. Frost and Laing suggest that re-enactments allow for remembering; such events affirm and reinforce memories that provide a sense of heritage.^{xxiii} Partly these stagings offer those at the festivals, heritage train rides or the museum, a sense of what it was like in the past. In particular the non-specific re-enactments can be viewed as "living history tourism."^{xxiv} Rural areas in Australia are linked through ancestry to the past, where farming families often stay residing on the same land or in the same towns with less mobility than suburban families. The performed presence of the past is an honouring of family history.

The presence of the bushranger and the staging of his capture and then punishment at the monthly bushranger shows plays into Couzens notions of Australian identification with anti-authoritarianism and toughness.^{xxv} By placing a well-known local as the part of the bushranger and in 2021, a Gympie Councillor as McPherson, the show generates a carnivalesque quality, turning the tables on authority and allowing the audience to participate safely in anti-authoritarian sentiments. Despite the lack of historical accuracy, the theatricality of the festival re-enactments solicit spectator attention, if not mere curiosity.

The re-enactment process as well as honouring the past also can be seen as "reconstituting" it.^{xxvi} For it needs to be noted that in honouring and remembering the bushranger legend, there is a displacement of the Aboriginal culture, the original presence in the landscape. The re-enactment is an interpretation of history and in these colonial representations the present is peopled with images of a white past that fails to acknowledge any Aboriginal presence in that past, though few locals would see the re-enactments in this light.

The Clarke Gang Re-enactment in Braidwood

Tom and John Clarke were captured on April 27th 1867 at Jinden Creek, south of Braidwood, (near the now Capital of Australia, Canberra) after eighteen months of bushranging throughout the mountainous southern region of New South Wales. The Clarke Gang, often simply referred to as "the boys" were a loose group; interrelated, ruthless, excellent horsemen, they were descended from convicts and robbed and killed, from the Snowy Mountains to the coast, with a ferocity that earned their title as "the bloodiest of bushrangers".^{xxvii} The Clarke brothers, Tom and John Clarke were the final two remaining members of the gang. Born and brought up in Braidwood they had considered themselves as an underclass compared to the squatters in the region and had been stealing stock from an early age. Tom in particular had progressed to robbing from stores, farms and gold coaches and was an alleged murderer.

Peter Smith, President of the Braidwood District Historical Society and author of *The Clarke Gang: Outlawed, Outcast and Forgotten* (2015)^{xxviii} became the instigator and producer of the 150th anniversary re-enactment of the events at Berry's Hut, just outside Jinden Creek, which led to Tom and John Clarke's arrests and later hangings for the crimes they had committed. The staging of these events, on the 30 April 2017, was at the Braidwood showgrounds, where a stringybark slab hut was built specifically for the occasion. Peter Smith became the commentator, issuing facts throughout the show, using a PA system and the main characters of Tom and John

Clarke were played by Tom and Luke Clarke, the great-great-grandchildren of James Clarke, one of the brothers of the original Tom Clarke. It is this family connection that distinguishes this particular re-enactment, not only through the two acting as bushrangers. As Peter Smith says “The families who were terrorised by or harboured the brothers are still in the community.”^{xxxix}

The description of the re-enactment, wryly reported in one of Australia’s well-respected longform journals, *The Monthly*, indicates that around 3,000 people attended the performance.^{xxx} The almost tongue-in-cheek description of the performance in *The Monthly*, plays on the rural enjoyment of the re-enactment and the rough and ready nature of the show. In contrast the reporting on the ABC New South Wales^{xxxi} views the event through an historical lens, pointing out the Clarke’s violence leading to the arrest, and Tom Clarke in particular being allegedly responsible for the murder of 5 policemen.

In the re-enactment, the Clarke brothers enter the hut of their cousin, Thomas Berry, little knowing that he has become an informer to the police. The mounted constabulary and plainclothes police and a tracker are already in position, hiding in wait. Once the bushrangers are inside the hut, the police untether the bushrangers’ horses, luring the Clarkes outside. Only Tom Clarke emerges. He realises the hut is surrounded runs inside and then all of the family inside rush out to hide whilst the brothers engage in a shootout with the police. The real siege in 1867 lasted 6 hours, however in the re-enactment the shootout lasts just 20 minutes. Tom Clarke is shot badly in the shoulder, a policeman and the tracker are wounded. Eventually Tom Clarke surrenders, it is thought, to protect his brother. In fact, they both shake hands with the police and submit to being arrested.

The commemorative re-enactment of this bloody and unedifying set of events indicates once more the Australian attraction for the outlawry of bushranging. In the ABC coverage of the re-enactment Luke Clarke states “If I was in the same position as them I probably would have done the same thing. It’s a fight to survive.”^{xxxii} The two-tier culture of the 1800s, with the poor, mainly Irish immigrants trying to eke out a living on the land, whilst the British squatters farmed lucratively is somewhat mirrored in today’s Australia, with those living in rural townships being far poorer than city dwellers. The re-enactment in Braidwood has enabled an audience to reconsider their own history and to identify with the bushrangers as outsiders in the primarily urbanised Australian culture. The events in 1867 were a matter of shame for Braidwood at that time, however a renegotiation, via the re-enactment, with a once shameful past, has become a celebration for a small country town. As Schneider understands, the re-enactment has created this reconsideration of history through its reverberations or ‘liveness’.^{xxxiii} The memorialisation of historic events through performance also carries a ‘place-making’ element. The Clarkes notoriety is highlighted through the event and Braidwood, as a site will feature more prominently as the Clarke’s birth place. As Tara Munjee has pointed out in relation to site-specific dance performances, “the performers and audiences, or rather ‘site-partners’- share a deep knowledge of the complexity and richness of their being together in this particular place.... The performance...in the site creates place through the performance events.”^{xxxiv}

Re-enactments of the Hall Gang in Canowindra

The association of the infamous bushranger Ben Hall with the small mid-western rural town of Canowindra in New South Wales is perhaps not as well-known as locals like to think. Whilst Ned Kelly, the most renowned Australian bushranger is recognised as associated with Glenrowan, Ben Hall, Australia’s other famous bushranger has a number of country towns associated with his name, including Forbes, Bathurst, Goulburn and Young, all larger country centres than Canowindra. Canowindra, however, was the site of an extraordinary escapade where Ben Hall’s gang of bushrangers held a three-day siege in Robinson’s Inn, (now the site of the Royal Hotel) and escaped without robbing or harming anyone before any police could catch them. The gang partied with approximately 40 locals, dancing with piano playing, they shared out cigars to smoke, locked the only constable in his own cells and entertained each other without fear of arrest from the main police force, situated at Cowra, because the local river was swollen and unable to be negotiated on horseback. At the end of three nights of revelry the bushrangers paid the publican for the cost of the party.

The re-enactment of the Canowindra siege has become a feature in the town and has been performed since the 1950s.^{xxxv} The historical accuracy is not a high priority in these varying re-enactments. History is clear that only five men raided Robinson’s Inn, on October 11th 1863; these included John O’Meally, Johnny Gilbert, Johnny Vane, Mickey Burke and Ben Hall^{xxxvi} but in the re-enactments sometimes Frank Gardener who had ridden and robbed with Hall in earlier days is added to the mix, sometimes John Dunn is added to the bushrangers even though Dunn did not ride with Hall until well after the Canowindra raid. Ben Hall is the most recognised of the bushrangers in this event, known as the “gentleman bushranger”, and often admired for his gallantry, and never having killed during his robberies. The re-enactments are popular and light-hearted, with the audience often laughing as locals take on the roles of the dangerous bushrangers. The action follows a repeated script.^{xxxvii}

The audience, gathered around the old Royal Hotel, view five or six or even more men on horseback riding down the main street. One introduces himself as Ben Hall saying that he has evaded the police at Cowra and now the Belubula River is too high for any police to cross over it, he is tired and he wants a drink. Different re-enactments play this out in varying ways. In some years a voice-over by Craig Lawler performing the role of Inspector Sir Frederick Pottinger narrates the action and with the entrance of the riders introduces each of the famous bushrangers present at the siege. Sometimes the horsemen perform whip cracking or pretend to intimidate the audience; usually the only policeman who was present in the small hamlet of Canowindra in 1863, Constable Sykes, is tied to a post outside the hotel; sometimes a coach travelling down the main street is stopped and the travellers in it, often women, are ushered by Hall into the hotel under gunpoint; ultimately the audience are encouraged to drink and celebrate in the hotel.

The re-enactments in Canowindra have been filmed by the ABC in 2018 for their Backroads program, in 2013 as part of the Sesquicentennial Jubilee of the siege and in 2019 the re-enactment was staged and filmed in collaboration with the NSW Education Department, as an enhancement of history programmes in the schools of the region.^{xxxviii}

The re-enactments in the past have formed one of the main tourist attractions in the small town, however with the passing of years, Canowindra is better known for its hot-air ballooning. The dwindling audiences, since Covid lockdowns across New South Wales, may be permanent. Whether this suggests that the bushranger history is receding as a means of reinforcing any sense of identity for the town is yet to be seen. The carnivalesque style of the re-enactment as mentioned earlier in relation to the Gympie Historical Re-enactments Society's shows is once again present. The local policeman has often played Constable Sykes, allowing himself to be tied up to the hotel's porch, by locals playing the bushrangers^{xxxix}. The sense that the re-enactment replays the humiliation of the constabulary is offset through comedy. Craig Lawler, performs as Inspector Sir Frederick Pottinger in a buffoon style, also signifying the cunning of the bushrangers in outwitting the highest laws of the land.^{xl} This identification with the wild and the unruly is part of the Australian bushranger mystique.

Conclusions

The bushranger re-enactments offer a dualistic perspective to audiences. There is a marked difference between the passion and commitment of those creating the shows and the locals participating and viewing them in comparison to out-of-town viewers. There is a sense of the quirky, or quaint from urban reviewers, with one using the term "archaic comedy"^{xli}. Sam Vincent in *The Monthly* introduces the Clarke Gang re-enactment with the following:

Luke Clarke couldn't even make the cut for his school's drama class, but this weekend he and his brother, Tom, will play the leads in a period piece before 3000 people – less a case of jobs for the boys than keeping it in the family. "Yeah nah, it'll be good," laconic Luke tells me in the southern NSW town of Braidwood, before licking froth from the beard he's grown for the role. Bushrangers nowadays drink weak flat whites.^{xlii}

The irony is thick. Respect for colonials of Australia's past is changing, yet in rural settings the bushranger myths are still held on to tightly, validating the family connections to the re-enacted histories and the bush skills exhibited in the re-enactments. The need for the displays of masculine outlawry and toughness still resonate. Yet in Australian cities cultures are changing rapidly. The effects of the Me Too and the Black Lives Matter movements are altering what is being performed and by whom. The static nature of the bushranger re-enactments is in direct opposition to changing urban performative cultures. The lack of any indigenous presence in the re-enactments is a point in case, for there were aboriginal bushrangers. The re-enactments are shaped by colonial official histories, taken from documents written in the mid 1800s and thus can be seen as extensions of institutionalised repressive histories. The re-enactments continue in the mode of erasing indigenous histories and peopling the rural landscape with only white colonists. The re-enactments stand holding numerous perspectives, as discursive and contentious performances resonating with differing histories for the differing audiences that view them.

- ⁱ Andrew James Couzens, *A Cultural History of the Bushranger Legend in Theatres and Cinemas, 1828-2017* (London: Anthem Press, 2019) 1.
- ⁱⁱ Ibid 7.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Russell Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1958) 1-2.
- ^{iv} Gay McAuley, "Introduction" *About Performance: Local Acts: Site-Specific Performance Practice* 7 (2007):7.
- ^v Joanne Tompkins, *Unsettling Space: Contestations in Contemporary Australian Theatre* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 15.
- ^{vi} Ibid
- ^{vii} Phil Smith, "Actors as Signposts: a Model for Site-based and Ambulatory Performances" *New Theatre Quarterly* 25:2 (2009): 159-171
- ^{viii} Smith, Signposts, 161
- ^{ix} Ibid 159
- ^x Ibid 161
- ^x Kevin Heatherington, *Expressions of Identity: Space, Performance, Politics* (London: Sage, 1998) 105.
- ^{xi} See Janys Hayes, "An Issue of "Place": Circus WOW, Women of Wollongong's Community Circus" in Gillian Arrighi and Victor Emeljanow, ed., *A World of Popular Entertainments: An Edited Volume of Critical Essays* (Newcastle, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars' Press, 2012) 163-175; Janys Hayes, "Reframing Tradition: Le Quy Duong's Festival Theatre", *Popular Entertainments Studies*, 4.1 (2013): 95-109
- ^{xii} Jen Harvie, *Staging the UK* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) 44.
- ^{xiii} ibid 42
- ^{xiv} Often references to 'the ghost and the host' are applied to site-specific performance descriptions. See Michael Cohen, "Tracing New Absence: Events for Place-Making and Place-Faking", *About Performance* 7 (2007): 189
- ^{xv} Warwick Frost and Jennifer Laing, "Commemorative Events: Ritual, Performance and Reenactment", Proceedings of CAUTHE (Council for Australasian Tourism and Hospitality Education) Conference 2013, 231-234.
- ^{xvi} Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment*, (London: Routledge, 2011).
- ^{xvii} Ibid 2
- ^{xviii} Ibid 139
- ^{xix} Ibid 111
- ^{xx} Information about the Gympie Historical Re-enactment Society has been gained pers. comm. From Nereda Gferer, the Secretary of the Society.
- ^{xxi} "The Wild "Scotchman" 1866", State Library of Queensland. <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/blog/wild-scotchman-queensland-bushranger-james-macpherson-pt1> Accessed 27/03/2024.
- ^{xxii} Ibid.
- ^{xxiii} Frost and Laing
- ^{xxiv} Ibid.
- ^{xxv} Couzens 7.
- ^{xxvi} Phil Smith, *Making Site-Specific Theatre and Performance: A Handbook*, (London: Red Globe Press, 2019) 111.
- ^{xxvii} <https://aguidetoaustralianbushranging.com/2018/05/02/the-clarke-gang-an-overview/> Accessed 16/03/2024.
- ^{xxviii} Peter C. Smith, *The Clarke Gang: Outlawed, Outcast and Forgotten*, (Dural, NSW; Rosenberg Publishing, 2015)
- ^{xxix} <https://thefirstmonthly.com.au/issue/2017/june/1496239200/sam-vincent/true-history-clarke-gang#mtr> Accessed 08/03/2024.
- ^{xxx} Ibid.
- ^{xxxi} <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-04-10/anniversary-of-clarke-bushrangers-capture/8431500> Accessed 17/03/2024.
- ^{xxxii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxiii} Schneider 3
- ^{xxxiv} Munjee, Tara, "Embodied place: Variations of spatial engagement in site-specific contemporary dance choreography", *Spaces and Flows: An International Journal of Urban and Extra Urban Studies* 1.4 (2011):1-8.
- ^{xxxv} <https://www.canowindrapphoenix.com.au/regs-last-ride/> Accessed 14/03/24.
- ^{xxxvi} <https://www.benhallaaustralianbushranger.com/p/video.html> Accessed 06/03/24.
- ^{xxxvii} See the following sites for footage of various re-enactments of the Canowindra siege:
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1445672082121630> Accessed 13/03/2024;
<https://www.blindfreddytravels.com/about> Accessed 13/03/2024;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bc5BfqMBefM&t=605s> Accessed 2/03/2024;
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