

Cultural policy in an Australian suburb:

A study of Campbelltown, Sydney,

from the mid-1950s to 1988

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Technology Sydney

2015

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text. I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to a number of people who have assisted in the preparation of this thesis.

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge and thank Paul Ashton, whose guidance, encouragement, enthusiasm, wisdom, knowledge and support and the opportunities that he afforded me as a doctoral research student have been immeasurable.

UTS Shopfront's inspiring leader, Pauline O'Loughlin, supported me in numerous ways and gave encouragement on many levels. The team at UTS Shopfront have been good spirited and supportive colleagues. Robert Crawford, David Aylward and Elaine Lally offered valuable insights and useful feedback as the thesis developed. Carl Hoschke from UTS Library greatly assisted me in tracking down difficult to find research material from libraries and other institutions near and far. Arthur Jones opened his substantial private collection of historic material to me. He and Muriel Jones hosted me in their home and engaged enthusiastically and patiently with my questions and observations. Ruth Banfield, Joan Long and Vija Heinrichs provided me with a range of material from local historical collections and archival material, as did Campbelltown Council's Local Studies Librarian Andrew Allen. Graeme Dunstan read several chapter drafts and offered positive responses to the perspectives that I formed about his work.

Each of my research interviewees gave their time generously to the project. Their reflections were invaluable and added a dimension to the project that would otherwise have not been possible.

Finally, to Carl and Anton, whose maintaining of life on the home front and endless support on a day-to-day basis made my doctoral research project enjoyable, balanced and achievable.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Area Assistance Plan
ABA	Australian Bicentennial Authority
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission
ACA	Arts Council of Australia
AETT	Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust
AGNSW	Art Gallery of New South Wales
ALP	Australian Labor Party
AUS	Australian Union of Students
BCC	Bicentennial Community Committee
CAB	Community Arts Board
CAE	College of Advanced Education
Campbelltown Council	Campbelltown City Council
CARDP	Community Arts and Regional Development Program
CCC	Cumberland County Council
CEP	Commonwealth Employment Program
DURD	Department of Urban and Regional Development
Friends	Friends of Campbelltown Art Gallery
IAC	Industries Assistance Commission
MDB	Macarthur Development Board
MDC	Macarthur Development Corporation
NSW	New South Wales
NSWBC	New South Wales Bicentenary Council
NSWRGA	New South Wales Regional Galleries Association
SROP	<i>Sydney Region Outline Plan 1970-2000AD (1968)</i>
Three Cities	<i>New Cities of Campbelltown, Camden, Appin Structure Plan (1973)</i>
SWMRADC	South Western Metropolitan Regional Arts Development Committee

SPA	State Planning Authority
UK	United Kingdom
UNSW	University of New South Wales
US	United States of America
WSI	Welfare State International

ABSTRACT

From the mid-1950s to 1988 Campbelltown, an area located fifty kilometres south west of Sydney's central business district, underwent physical and social change that was unparalleled elsewhere in Australia. Overarched by the post war nation-building project, a series of ambitious metropolitan and national growth plans re-imagined rural Campbelltown as an outer suburban utopia. A new city centre surrounded by carefully planned residential, neighbourhood and industrial estates was proposed and residents would enjoy a high quality of life. By the 1970s, however, the realities of Campbelltown's suburbanisation had deviated radically from these post war ideals. Whereas planners had based Campbelltown's future success upon a set of characteristics that had defined it since the early 1800s—its sense of independence, civic pride and white settler history—by the 1980s, it had become a notorious suburban 'bad land' and 'a welfare electorate par excellence'.

Concepts of culture featured within the ideologies and processes that were at play in the creation of 'new' Campbelltown. Governments at three levels—local, state and federal—fostered cultural activity in order to achieve specific policy objectives as Campbelltown became incorporated within the Sydney metropolitan area. At the same time that cultural policy directions were employed to determine what sort of place Campbelltown would be, local leaders were pursuing agendas for cultural development that encompassed a set of particular aspirations. As these various developments and forces took shape and converged, tensions, ambiguities and paradoxes became apparent.

This study of the relationship between cultural policy and suburban Australia situates the topic within a particular place over a three-decade period—Campbelltown. By doing so, it provides an expansive account that considers how the cultural development objectives of governments and communities have interplayed within and contributed to the creation of suburbia itself. The complexity that arises from this situation adds weight to a viewpoint that suburbia is a multi-faceted and evolving concept. It is for this reason—combined with the importance that suburban life has had in Australia's development—that it merits a level of attention in cultural policy discussions, which is currently lacking.