



1772: The French Annexation of

∞ New Holland ∞

THE TALE OF LOUIS DE SAINT ALOÛARN



PHILIPPE GODARD AND TUGDUAL DE KERROS

*1772: The French Annexation of New Holland.
The Tale of Louis de Saint Aloüarn.*

by

Philippe Godard and Tugdual de Kerros

Translated by

Odette Margot, Myra Stanbury and Sue Baxter

Report to the Western Australian Museum Foundation

By

Myra Stanbury

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Introduction

This report is submitted in compliance with the Foundation Grant Agreement. It includes a brief narrative report and statement of account for project activities, and a descriptive summary for reference in preparing the Foundation's Annual Report.

Project Summary

The principal aim of the project was to publish an English translation of the book *Louis de Saint Aloüarn. Un marin Breton à la conquête des Terres Australes* by Philippe Godard and Tugdual de Kerros, published in 2002 by Editions les Portes du Large (pp 362 with full colour illustrations) and selling for 60 euros (\$96).

The book deals with French naval commander Louis de Saint Aloüarn and his exploratory journey to Australia in 1772; his annexation of Western Australia for the French; and, with the subsequent modern discoveries on Dirk Hartog Island, Shark Bay, including the Museum's discovery of one of the deposition bottles and French coin dated 1767 in April 1998.

Ms Odette Margot was contracted by the Western Australian Museum to undertake the translation of the text into English, funding for this work (\$5 000) being provided by the Museum, with additional sponsorship of 2000 Euros (c. \$3 400) from the French Embassy in Canberra. Unfortunately, the translation of the book took longer than anticipated due to the complexities of the French text. By the time it was completed (2005), the funding allocated for publication was no longer available, and restrictions imposed by the Zero-based budget for the fiscal year 2005–06 precluded its inclusion in the publications budget for that financial year.

To progress the pre-press preparation of the book, funding (\$5 000) was sought from the WA Museum Foundation by the applicant for editing and typesetting in December 2005. The funding was duly granted for 2005–2006. Unfortunately, because of Executive Management hold-ups that were beyond my control, mainly relating to restructuring, economic issues and the format that the final publication should take, it was not possible to complete the design layout and typesetting before 30 June 2007. A request to the Foundation for an extension of the Project was submitted and agreed to.

Funding for publishing the book was finally included in the 2007–08 publications budget, and the appointment of a Publications Manager in December 2007 enabled the necessary design and editing work to proceed. The aim was to submit the electronic manuscript to the printers in early June 2008. While work was on track to meet this deadline the resignation of the Publications Manager caused some minor delays. The proofs were sent to the printers on 9 July 2008 with final sign off in August. Printed copies (1000) were received in September.

Key goals and objectives of the project

- *To promote the part played by the French in the history of early European coastal exploration and discovery of Australia as part of the 400-year anniversary celebrations — Australia on the Map 1606–2006.*

Although the book was not completed in time for the 2006 'Australia on the Map' celebrations, the archaeological site of de Saint Aloüarn's annexation on Dirk Hartog Island, Shark Bay, was recognised as being of national heritage significance by virtue of being situated within the 'Dirk Hartog Landing Site 1616—Cape Inscription Area' that was added to the National Heritage List in 2006 (see <<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/national/sites/cape-inscription.html>>). Further archaeological work was undertaken in October 2006 by the Department of Maritime Archaeology with funding under the Commonwealth Government's *Gifts to the Nation*, and the research undertaken by authors Philippe Godard and Tugdual de Kerros for their book provided valuable information for the historical interpretation of the site (see Green, *et al.* 2007; Stanbury, 2007a). A museum web site and brochure were prepared to publicise the historic sites within the National Heritage listing and included the de Saint Aloüarn story (www.museum.wa.gov.au/maritime).

The contents of the English manuscript also provided valuable background information for exhibits relating to the voyage of Louis de Saint Aloüarn in the WA Museum's exhibition *Voyages of Grand Discovery* held at the Western Australian Museum — Maritime from 20 July – 18 November 2007 (Stanbury, 2007b). This exhibition was attended by 50 000 visitors and received good feedback from visitors and school groups.

The French annexation bottle and coins were also temporarily loaned to Shark Bay for the opening of the World Heritage Interpretation Centre at Denham, further promoting the part played by the French in the history of early European exploration and discovery of Australia.

- *To communicate the results of historical research and archaeological field investigations undertaken by museum staff in collaboration with Honorary Associate, Philippe Godard; co-author Tugdual de Kerros, a descendant of Louis de Saint Aloüarn; members of the Batavia Coast Maritime Heritage Association; and, other academic and community personnel.*

As indicated above, the historical research undertaken by Philippe Godard and Tugdual de Kerros in respect of de Saint Aloüarn's voyage greatly assisted museum staff in their archaeological field investigations and historical

interpretation of the 1772 annexation site, and the preparation of two major exhibitions — *Voyages of Grand Discovery* and *Journeys of Enlightenment* (Stanbury, 2008a & b). Publication of the archaeological investigations (Green, *et al.* 2007), public lectures and conference presentations have also helped to communicate the results of this research to a wider public and academic audience.

Desired outcomes for the project

- *To improve knowledge and understanding of Australia's maritime heritage.*

Until comparatively recently, relatively little emphasis has been given to the French explorers who visited Western Australia in the 18th and early 19th centuries. The archaeological discoveries, in 1998, associated with the 1772 annexation of New Holland by Louis de Saint Aloüarn, and the subsequent historical research undertaken in preparation of the French volume *Louis de Saint Aloüarn. Un marin Breton à la conquête des Terres Australes* by Philippe Godard and Tugdual de Kerros, published in 2002 by Editions les Portes du Large, have already heightened awareness of this little known explorer both in France and Australia. It is hoped that the English version of the book will further help to improve knowledge and understanding of this aspect of Australia's maritime heritage.

- *To make the most of the Museum's community profile.*

In September 2008, following the publication of *1772: The French Annexation of New Holland*, the applicant prepared a presentation, 'Vive la France' — *a French explorer receives recognition at last!*, for the joint Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology [AIMA]/Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology [ASHA]/Australian Association for Maritime History [AAMH] conference *Archaeology From Below*, in the session 'Publications from Beyond the Bureaucracy' (Stanbury, 2008c). The presentation outlined the contents of the book and emphasised the collaboration between the Museum and members of the community in achieving the outcome. One hundred flyers were displayed at the conference and all were taken! Flyers advertising the book have also been included in a mail-out to members of the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology, a national organisation with 18 overseas countries represented in its membership.

- *To foster bi-lateral French/Australia cultural relations through the French Embassy and French community in Australia, as has been established between the Commonwealth Government, the Netherlands Embassy and Dutch community in respect to the United Dutch East Company (VOC) shipwrecks off the Western Australian coast.*

The discovery of the French annexation bottle and coins at Dirk Hartog Island in 1998, attracted considerable media coverage in France and Australia, and many other parts of the world. It also acted as a stimulus for the Department of Maritime Archaeology to consolidate several programmes with which it was involved under the title 'The French Connection'. Visiting French Cultural and Scientific attachés from the French Embassy in Canberra expressed their interest in the projects and encouraged a formal submission in 2004 whereby they might assist in various ways. One outcome of the submission was their assistance with the translation costs of the de Saint Aloüarn book.

Contacts with French researchers familiar with archival sources in France have also greatly facilitated access to archival documents and essential information.

The French Embassy in Canberra has received copies of the de Saint Aloüarn book and expressed their thanks and compliments to the museum Publications Department.

- *To encourage further research and archaeological investigation of shipwrecks and maritime heritage sites in Western Australia, and overseas, associated with French exploration and discovery, and connection with Australia — the Department of Maritime Archaeology's 'French Connection' programme.*

The 'French Connection' project includes a number of historical and archaeological aspects, several of which have already achieved positive outcomes. Of particular significance is the work of museum personnel in the Falklands, investigating the loss of Louis de Freycinet's ship *Uranie* that was taking the de Vlamingh plate back to France (McCarthy 2004); the survey of the recently discovered camp of the *Uranie* at Péron Peninsula, Shark Bay, where Rose de Freycinet came ashore (McCarthy, 2005; 2008; Gainsford & Prall, *et al.*, 2005); and, a forthcoming publication on the French-built ex slaver *James Matthews* (Henderson, in press). Evidence of much of this research may be seen in the current exhibition '*Journeys of Enlightenment: French Exploration of Terres Australes*' at the Western Australian Museum — Maritime.

Project evaluation*Qualitative measures*

Circulation of the book to academic and other reviewers has been requested. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Museum and national distributors UNIREPS is in progress and when this is finalised copies will then be forwarded to reviewers by the Publications Department.

The book has been published in an attractive paperback form, the volume containing 269 pages, an index and 60 pages of colour photographs, illustrations, maps and diagrams.

Quantitative

The book has been on sale in the museum bookshops at the WA Museum — Maritime and WA Museum — Shipwreck Galleries since October 2009, being promoted from the time of the opening of the *Journeys of Enlightenment* exhibition. The Recommended Retail Price is \$AUS 24.95 inclusive of GST. Forty-three copies have been sold to date.

As soon as the UNIREPS contract is finalised, this should lead to greater publicity for the book and potentially more retail sales.

An official book launch has not yet been held. Subject to funding, this too may be organised to coincide with the UNIREPS advertising and would also help to generate sales.

Project expenditure

Cost Centre Details - - 23401150 – St Alouarn Book				
Date	Expenditure	Amount	Balance	Details
	Opening balance Ex GST	\$4,545.45 CR		
28-Mar-2007	Images vc 28/03 STANB EFT #13/4/	(107.65)		Purchase of electronic image files from Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF)
30-May-2008			4,437.80	
12-Jun-08	Indexing	(2,260.00)	2,177.00	B.L. Howarth
	Printing costs	(1,600.00)	577.00	McPhersons
Jan-09	Balance		\$577.00	
NB. All expenses ex GST				

Summary

The Western Australian Museum Foundation provided a grant of \$5,000 (\$4,545.45 ex GST) to Myra Stanbury, Curator of Maritime Archaeology, for the purpose of assisting with the publication of the book *1772: The French Annexation of New Holland. The Tale of Louis de Saint Aloüarn* by the Western Australian Museum.

The book is an English translation of the 2002 French publication *Louis de Saint Aloüarn. Un marin Breton à la conquête des Terres Australes* by Philippe Godard and Tugdual de Kerros. The work was translated by Odette Margot, Myra Stanbury and Sue Baxter.

The French-English rivalry in the 18th century set the backdrop for exploration in the Indian and Pacific oceans. In 1771, the French Government decided to support an expedition that would solve the mystery of *Terres Australes*, restore the prestige of its navy and equal Lieutenant James Cook's achievements.

Two young, ambitious, French naval officers and Breton nobles, Yves-Joseph de Kerguelen de Trémarec and Louis de Saint Aloüarn, were given permission to undertake a voyage to discover and claim in the name of France, *Terres Australes* or New Holland. The expedition sailed from the Île de France (Mauritius) in January 1772 and discovered what is now known as Kerguelen Island in the southern Indian Ocean. Separated by bad weather, Louis de Saint Aloüarn continued with his orders and sailed to the coastline of New Holland. On 30 March 1772, the annexation ceremony took place on the northernmost cliff of Dirk Hartog Island, Shark Bay.

1772: The French Annexation of New Holland is a story of this epic voyage; a retelling of a chapter of Australian history whose significance has failed to attract the recognition it deserves. (Author Tugdual de Kerros is a direct descendant of Louis de Saint Aloüarn.)

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