



# THE BAUDIN LEGACY

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THE BAUDIN LEGACY: A NEW HISTORY OF THE FRENCH  
SCIENTIFIC VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIA (1800-1804)

The Baudin Legacy Project is an interdisciplinary project funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the National Funds for Scientific Research (Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique [FNRS]) in Belgium. The project participants are: Professor Margaret Sankey at the University of Sydney, Associate Professor Jean Fornasiero and Dr John West-Sooby at the University of Adelaide, and Professor Michel Jangoux at the Université Libre in Brussels.

## The Work of the Project...

The work of the Project is in a phase of consolidation, with the transcription of all journals nearing completion, and with the translation of some of the journals already completed. The laborious process of verification of the transcriptions and translations is just beginning. During the later half of this year it is envisaged that the journals will progressively become available on the website.

In this issue, the Baudin project researchers offer some insights into their work and interests related to the project and to French voyages to Australia before the Baudin Expedition.

◆ **Jean Fornasiero and John West-Sooby both recently spent some time in France conducting research on various aspects of the Baudin Legacy project.**

### **John West-Sooby writes:**

During January (2007), we worked at the Fort de Tourneville in Le Havre, where the Lesueur Collection of the Muséum d'histoire naturelle is housed. As on previous visits, the welcome extended by the curator of the Lesueur Collection, Gabrielle Baglione, was both helpful and friendly. The purpose of this visit was to finalise preparations for our translation of François Péron's *Mémoire sur les établissements anglais à la Nouvelle Hollande, à la Terre de Diémen et dans les archipels du Grand Océan Pacifique* - to be published by the Friends of the State Library of South Australia. Our first task was to complete our transcription of Péron's manuscript and double-check the more problematic passages - a daunting task given Péron's handwriting and the frequent crossings out and corrections he made when compiling certain sections of his report. We were also able to make many useful notes on Péron's preparatory work for his *Mémoire*.

While in Le Havre, we met a number of people working on different aspects of the Baudin Expedition. Of particular interest was our meeting with the team engaged in producing the *bande dessinée* devoted to the life of Charles-Alexandre Lesueur: Yves Boistelle, Hervé Chabannes and Ritsert Rinsma. We were privileged to be given a sneak preview of some of the illustrations and *planches* destined for the first volume of this excellent publication project.

I then spent the month of February in Paris, working at the Archives Nationales. The bulk of this time was spent checking and correcting the transcriptions of some of the journals made by the Baudin Legacy team, in particular the journals of François Heirisson and Emmanuel Hamelin. Although this is painstaking work, it is an essential part of the project, and one which also has its rewards - it is always moving to turn the pages of these journals that document the early exploration of Australia's shores. While in Paris, I had the opportunity to meet a number of scholars whose research relates to the Baudin expedition - among them Marie-Noëlle Bourguet (Université de Paris VII), who has worked extensively on the history of science and scientific exploration, and Jean-Luc Chappey, whose book documenting the rise and fall of the Société des Observateurs de l'Homme is essential reading for anyone interested in the anthropological dimensions of the Baudin expedition.

All in all, it was a very productive and enjoyable trip.

**◆ Michel Jangoux, directs the laboratories of marine Biology at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, the Université de Mons-Hainaut, also in Belgium, and the Aqua-lab based at the Université de Tuléar in Madagascar, as well as teaching zoology and marine biology, and supervising doctoral students in these disciplines. He explains how he first became interested in the Baudin Expedition, and his current research interests relative to the Baudin project:**

Spécialisé dans l'étude des invertébrés marins du groupe des échinodermes, j'avais dans les années quatre-vingts et à la demande du Dr Gérard Breton, alors Directeur du Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, identifié les astéries représentées sur une centaine d'aquarelles et de dessins au crayon réalisés par le naturaliste havrais Charles Alexandre Lesueur. Les espèces figurées étaient toutes originaires d'Australie. Elles avaient été observées à l'occasion du voyage de découvertes aux Terres australes (1800-1804), dirigé par le capitaine Baudin. Ce fut mon premier contact avec Baudin et ses compagnons de voyage.

Depuis la fin des années nonante, je me suis de plus en plus intéressé au voyage austral de Baudin, notamment sur le plan de l'histoire naturelle. J'achève le récolement de l'herbier ramené par l'expédition et qui se trouvait

dispersé dans le 'grand herbier' du Muséum d'Histoire naturelle de Paris. Outre l'aspect naturaliste, la conception du voyage, les préparatifs, les relations entre les protagonistes et leurs activités lors des relâches sont autant de points qui suscitent ma curiosité. Les recherches que je poursuis portent aussi sur les activités du capitaine avant le voyage austral, notamment lors de l'expédition aux Antilles à bord de la *Belle Angélique*.

Je travaille actuellement à la préparation d'un ouvrage qui revisite l'expédition australe en s'appuyant principalement sur les lettres et rapports laissés aussi bien par les personnes embarquées, que par celles -à Paris, à l'île de France, à Sydney et ailleurs- qui ont participé à sa conception, aidé à sa réalisation et/ou exploité le matériel ramené en France. Je me suis également attelé à la rédaction d'un ouvrage qui traitera plus particulièrement de l'expédition de la *Belle Angélique*.

Specialist in the study of marine invertebrates of the echinoderm group, in the eighties, at the request of Dr Gérard Breton, then Director of the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle of Le Havre, I identified the starfish represented in one hundred watercolours and pencil drawings by the naturalist, Charles Alexandre Lesueur. The represented species had been observed during the voyage of discovery to the Southern Lands (1800-1804), led by Captain Baudin. This was my first contact with Baudin and his fellow voyagers.

Since the end of the nineties, I have become more and more interested in Baudin's Southern voyage, in particular in relation to natural history. I have completed the cataloguing of the Herbarium brought back by the expedition, which was dispersed throughout the 'great herbarium' of the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle in Paris. In addition to the natural history, other aspects which equally arouse my curiosity are the conception of the voyage, the preparations, relations between the protagonists, and their activities during the various places visited. The research which I am pursuing also concerns what Baudin did before the Southern voyage, notably during the expedition to the West Indies on board the *Belle Angélique*.

I am currently working on the preparation of a book which revisits the Southern expedition, principally using the letters and reports left not only by the voyagers, but by those - in Paris, in Mauritius, in Sydney and elsewhere - who participated in its conception, assisted in its realisation, and/or exploited the material brought back to France. I am also hard at work editing a book which will deal with the expedition of the *Belle Angélique*.

For more information about the work of Michel Jangoux, his website is:

<http://www.ulb.ac.be/sciences/biomar>

On his site there is a link to his work on the Baudin expedition. Click on "Voyages de découvertes". The site is in French and English.

◆Margaret Sankey attended a symposium in Hobart, *The D'Entrecasteaux Expedition: A Celebration of the history, culture, science and technology of Recherche Bay*, and she reports on a visit to the Bay and the diverse contributions of the conference participants...

Of interest to all those who work in the area of early French exploration of Australia was the Australian National Academies of the Sciences, Humanities and Technologies Forum symposium held in Hobart, Tasmania, from 26-28 February 2007 and entitled "A Celebration of the history, culture, science and technology of Recherche Bay". The focus of the symposium was the visit to Recherche Bay in 21 April-15 May 1792, and then again in 22 Jan- 15 Feb in 1793 of Joseph-Antoine Bruny D'Entrecasteaux, sent by Louis XVI to look for the missing Jean-François de Galaup de Lapérouse but also to continue the scientific work which had likewise been Lapérouse's brief. As the name of the symposium suggests, its aims were to explore the scientific work done by the expedition but also to discuss the preservation of this historical site, one of the first in Tasmania where encounters occurred between Europeans and Aborigines. Indeed, the symposium was a celebration of the site's preservation after a long-running struggle between logging interests and those interested in preserving this important cultural landscape. Initially a local action group formed to protest against the proposed logging of the site, alerted the scientific community and approached politicians and other concerned citizens to support their claim that the site was a historic one. Subsequently, on a national level, historians, archaeologists and heritage experts weighed into the debate and the historic North-East peninsular site was finally purchased in 2006 from its owners by the businessman, Dick Smith, with subscriptions invited from supporters all across Australia. The site is now under management by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy whose brief is to develop and put in place strategies for conserving the diverse and rich heritage of the site, which has gone through many industrial usages since D'Entrecasteaux's visit.

The symposium began with an all-day cruise in a catamaran from Hobart to Recherche Bay and back. After a rough passage across the mouth of Storm Bay, at the mouth of the Derwent we turned into the calm D'Entrecasteaux Channel, protected for most of our passage from the open sea by the long line of North and South Bruny Island. Having travelled to the South of the island by car, I found it interesting to see the coast from the perspective of the sea in relation to the profiles drawn during the D'Entrecasteaux and Baudin expeditions. Until we arrived at Recherche Bay, on the Southeast tip of the island we travelled at a good pace to cover the considerable distance, passing fish farms, oyster leases and abalone and scallop businesses. In the middle of the channel we passed then circled the *Lady Nelson*, the replica of a sailing ship which played a prominent role in the early English colony.

As we drew nearer to Recherche Bay, we recognised the jagged row of mountains referred to by the French explorers, the entrance to the Black

Swan lagoon and the sandy beach just south of it, which heralds the entrance to Recherche Bay. It was on this beach that the French had their first encounters with the Aboriginal inhabitants.

Recherche Bay consists of two lobes, the Ports du Nord et du Sud, the Southern and Northern ports, as they were named by the D'Entrecasteaux expedition, the irregular coastline of each one broken up by a series of inlets. On entering, we first of all slowly travelled round the Port du Sud, identifying the place of the observatory set up on the expedition's return visit in 1793 (now Snake Point), and where there is now the sculpture of a whale commemorating the past use of the Bay by the whaling industry, and one the watering points of the expedition. Since the time of D'Entrecasteaux the bay has undergone various transformations, much of it having been logged in the past and several industries having been based there. Now it is a sleepy backwater, punctuated by a few holiday houses, and the little hamlet there, Cockle Creek, is the starting point for hikers going on the Southern Walk. Although it has changed - there are no longer the tall trees and the undergrowth of the ancient forests - it is still very beautiful and relatively unspoiled and would no doubt still be recognisable to the D'Entrecasteaux travellers.

Underwater cameras projected pictures of the seaweed forests in the Bay as we slowly cruised round the bays, eating our lunch from Bento lunchboxes and identifying the D'Entrecasteaux sites. Dr Barton (ANU) gave an interesting talk on the electromagnetic work carried out by the expedition at Bennett's Point, evoking the commemorative event held there in 1992 for the bicentenary of this first manifestation of European science on Tasmanian soil. Professor John Mulvaney (ANU) pointed out the location of various of the historical sites, notably the location behind the trees where a vegetable garden was planted by the French, and traces of which possibly exist up to this day.

Leaving the Bay, we returned north along the east ocean side of Bruny Island, admiring the steep sandstone cliffs and passing alongside historic Adventure Bay, discovered by Abel Tasman in 1642 and named by Furneaux in 1773, and where the French inspected the apple tree that Bligh had planted in 1788. We turned west at Storm Bay and arrived back at Hobart as the sun was setting.

Then came a trip to the site of the Rossbank Magnetic Observatory in the grounds of Government House. The observatory was the first permanent geomagnetic observatory set up in Australia, and it was an important station for observing changes in the Earth's magnetic field and operated from 1840 to 1856. All that remains of it now is a metal plaque at the side of a croquet lawn, and an octagonal stone structure that is now a room in a neighbouring house.

On two following days, after being welcomed to the country by Debra Hocking, a descendant of the Mouhenneer people, we heard a variety of papers given by experts in their fields. On the first day, Dr Hugh Tyndale-

Biscoe, the Symposium convenor, underlined the historical importance to science of Recherche Bay, and of the socio-political significance of this site. The morning session was devoted to the history and archaeology of the D'Entrecasteaux visits: Professor Alan Frost (Latrobe University) set the context by discussing the background of the D'Entrecasteaux expedition and placing it in the framework of European exploration. M. Jean-Christophe Galipaud (University of Noumea) discussed the problems of finding and identifying archaeological data at Recherche Bay. Professor Mulvaney (ANU) spoke of the encounters of the French with the Tasmanian natives and the importance of the cultural landscape of Recherche Bay, and Professor Ian Davidson spoke of Aboriginal languages. The afternoon was devoted to scientific aspects of the site: Professor Kurt Lambeck, the President of the Academy of Science, spoke of Botanical history and research; Dr Gintaras Kantvilas (Tasmanian Herbarium and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery) focussed on Labillardière and the beginnings of botanical exploration in Tasmania, and Professor Pauline Ladiges (University of Melbourne) discussed questions of Eucalyptus taxonomy. Professor Roderick Home (University of Melbourne) spoke of measuring magnetism in Van Diemen's land; Professor David Lindenmayer (ANU) spoke of the scientific underpinnings of the conservation and management of ecological communities in the context of Recherche Bay, and Professor Stewart Nicol, from the University of Tasmania, discussed historical views of the echidna and the nature of hibernation.

The second day began with a session on the Science of magnetism, navigation and astronomy. The first paper was Dr Charles Barton's (ANU) paper explaining the science of magnetism - one of the highlights of the conference because of its lucid explanations and imaginative visuals; Professor Michael Dopita spoke of the first chronometers and Dr Michael Pearson of the ANU spoke of the hydrographic charts of Beautemps-Beaupré comparing them with those of the English. The papers following, under the heading of sociology, were concerned with questions of the preservation of the historic site of Recherche Bay: heritage (Ms Joan Domicelj); legal (Mr Tom Baxter, University of Tasmania), Professor Aynsley Kellow (University of Tasmania). Mr Max Kitchell (Tasmanian Land Conservancy) spoke of the importance of the scientific evaluation of the site in order to determine the appropriate means of its preservation, and the necessity for historians, conservationists and scientists to work together to achieve the best possible outcome.

Thus the symposium finished on an optimistic note, with the recognition that all involved are at the beginning of a process which will involve difficult decisions and much consultation in order that the magnificent Franco-Australian cultural landscape that is Recherche Bay will continue to provide both delight and interest for future generations.

The publication of papers from the symposium is currently being managed by the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia. Their contact details are available at the following website:

<http://www.assa.edu.au/>

The Australian Academy of Science Newsletter has a report on the Symposium, see pages 1 and 7:

<http://www.science.org.au/newsletters/aas67.pdf>

### **News from the Natural History Museum in Le Havre, France**

Gabrielle Baglione, Curator of the Lesueur Collection at the Museum, sends us an update on the progress of the construction of new exhibition room for the collection. Currently, the work is focused on the most important aspect, the air conditioning, and also on the picture rails and the security entrance. The main entrance and reception area of the Museum is also undergoing renovation. In addition, the Museum is planning the addition of a new room for educational activities, and sanitary facilities for the disabled. Also under development are plans for the updating of electrical wiring and the creation of emergency exits.

In December, the Museum, in collaboration with the University of Le Havre, is hosting a conference to celebrate the opening of the Lesueur Exhibition room, and the bicentenary of the first publication of the official account of the Baudin voyage, and we are pleased to publish the organisers' call for papers:

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### **“Conquering Terra Australis : from discovery to collection**

Francois Péron's *Voyage de découvertes aux Terres Australes* celebrates its bicentenary in 2007. This year also marks the opening of the Lesueur Room in the Natural History Museum of Le Havre. These events provide an opportunity to discover certain less well-known aspects of the Baudin expedition.

#### **I. An early nineteenth-century expedition: men and methods**

- Political and scientific context: reasons for the voyage, links between scientists and politicians at the turn of the century
- Technical and material organisation of the voyage: issues relating to health and supplies
- The actors of the expedition: personalities, personal and scientific ambitions, individual contributions to the collective project, relationships on board

#### **II. The scientific collections : collecting and utilising**

- Collecting : techniques used in the different scientific disciplines, difficulties on the ground, collecting priorities as they relate to the scientific and political context
- Fate of the collection on its return to France : destination, dispersal, scientific interest

#### **III. The Lesueur Collection in 2007 : what is at stake?**

- Preservation and restoration

- Enhancing its heritage value

One day will be set aside for the wider public on the general subject of the expedition: principal stopping places, scientific interest, Lesueur and the expedition, comparison with other voyages of discovery during the same period. This day will feature presentations by specialists invited by the organisers.

This conference is organised by the Natural History Museum of Le Havre and by the University of Le Havre (Departments of Literature and Human Sciences). It will be held from 6-8 December 2007 in Le Havre (France, Seine-Maritime). The venue for the conference presentations will be notified at a later date.

### **Call for papers:**

Papers must be of about twenty minutes (maximum) in duration and may be presented in French or in English.

We invite you to submit an abstract of your paper, which should not exceed 1500 characters (equivalent to 250 words). Proposals for papers in French or in English must be sent by email to:

[ColloqueTerresAustrales@ville-lehavre.fr](mailto:ColloqueTerresAustrales@ville-lehavre.fr)

no later than 15 July 2007.

The decision regarding which proposals have been accepted will be communicated as from 1 September 2007. The papers will be published, so we ask participants to submit their texts during the conference."

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### **Publications**

◆ *BAUDIN-FLINDERS DANS L'OcéAN INDIEN Voyages, découvertes, rencontre/Travels, discoveries, encounter* edited by Serge Rivière and Kumari R. Issur. Published by L'Harmattan in April.

Nicolas Baudin died in Mauritius in September 1803. Matthew Flinders arrived in December 1803 and was detained until 1810. In October 2003, the University of Mauritius commemorated two hundred years since the misfortunes of Baudin and Flinders linked them to this island, with a conference which brought together key researchers on the voyages of the two explorers.

The conference papers all appear in this new work, and include the following papers by the Project participants:

Michel Jangoux, "Le retour du *Géographe* (août 1803): récit naturaliste et politique d'une fin d'expédition à l'Île de France", Jean Fornasiero, "Of rivalry and reputation: Nicolas Baudin and Matthew Flinders", John West-Sooby, "Baudin, Flinders and the scientific voyage", and Margaret Sankey, "The English Translation (1809) of the *Voyage de découvertes aux Terres Australes* of François Péron: The politics of discovery in early nineteenth century France and England".



Other papers in this work are by Claude Wanquet, François Bellec, Muriel Proust de la Gironière, Jacqueline Goy, Mayila Paroomal, Robert Furlong, Pierre Rivaille, Edward Duyker, Marina Carter, Marc Serge Rivière, Gillian Dooley, Niel Rigby and Peter Ashley.

This book can be ordered online from L'Harmattan:

<http://www.editions-harmattan.fr>

◆ Margaret Sankey's critical edition of the seventeenth-century Abbé Jean Paulmier's work, *Mémoires touchant l'établissement d'une mission chrestienne dans le troisième monde. Autrement appelé, La Terre Australe, Meridionale, Antartique, & Inconnuë*, was published in the Collection *Géographie du Monde* by the Éditions Honoré Champion ([www.honorechampion.com](http://www.honorechampion.com)) in September 2006.

This edition of Paulmier's *Mémoires*, the first since 1664, is preceded by a critical essay demonstrating the importance of Paulmier's work to the prehistory and genealogy of early French exploration in the Southern Hemisphere as well as on numerous utopias and imaginary journeys. The *Mémoires* occupy an important place in the myth of *Terra australis* and conditioned the French search for *Terra australis* from the end of the seventeenth century until late in the eighteenth century. Seeking his proofs in cartography, Paulmier claimed in addition to be the descendant of an inhabitant of these regions, brought back to France by the Norman Captain Gonneville at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

In the context of the book, a study day was held in the seminar of Professor François Moureau, director of the *Centre de recherche sur la littérature des voyages*, at the Maison de la Recherche of Paris-Sorbonne on 15 May 2007. Details on website [http://www.crlv.org/swm/Page\\_colloque\\_detail.php?P1=54](http://www.crlv.org/swm/Page_colloque_detail.php?P1=54)

### **Other Publications Received**

◆ Wolf Mayer, "Deux géologues français en Nouvelle-Hollande (Australie): Louis Depuch et Charles Bailly, membres de l'expédition Baudin (1801-1803)", *Travaux du comité Français d'histoire de la géologie*, 3e série t. XIX (2005)

Wolf Mayer is a Visiting Fellow in the Department of Earth and Marine Sciences at the Australian National University in Canberra.

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◆ Robert King, "Jorgen Jorgensen and the Baudin expedition", *The Great Circle*, Vol. 23. No. 2, pp. 44-52

Robert King is an independent researcher at the National Library of Australia in Canberra.

He can be contacted by email: [robertking@msn.com](mailto:robertking@msn.com)

◆ Danielle Clode, *Voyages to the South Seas In Search of Terres Australes*, published by the Miegunyah Press and the State Library of Victoria. This is a beautifully illustrated book by Danielle Clode, who is a science writer and research associate at the Department of Zoology, University of Melbourne. She writes as if on the boats of the French explorers, d'Entrecasteaux, Baudin, Freycinet, Hyacinthe de Bougainville and Durmont d'Urville, combining a unique scientific and historical perspective. For more information, [www.mup.com.au](http://www.mup.com.au)

### **Baudin on the Web**

**Encounter 1802-2002 Celebrating Flinders' and Baudins' expeditions in search of the 'unknown' southern coast of Australia.**

<http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/encounter/>

This site, created by the State Library of South Australia, celebrates the bicentenary of the meeting between Nicolas Baudin and Matthew Flinders, 8 April 1802, in Encounter Bay off the South Australian coast. This is a comprehensive site which provides information not only on the meeting, but also on both voyages, with biographies of Baudin and Flinders, the naturalists and artists of the expeditions, a timeline and links to other sites and reference works. Some of the artwork published in the official account of Péron and Freycinet can also be viewed on this site.

The Mitchell Library in Sydney also has an excellent site on Matthew Flinders, the James Fairfax Matthew Flinders Collection Electronic Archive, found at: <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/flinders/archive.html>

Here it is possible to look at the original manuscripts of Flinders. The description of the encounter between Baudin and Flinders is to be found in volume one. In the 'Biographies' section, there is a short biography of Baudin and a sketch of Baudin after Nicolas Petit.

For books on the meeting of Baudin and Flinders and their voyages, the Art Gallery of South Australia published in 2002, *The Encounter, 1802 Art of the Flinders and Baudin Voyages*, a magnificently illustrated book, not only about the encounter of Flinders and Baudin, but about their encounters with the Australian continent and the Aborigines, and the visual record it inspired. And for a thoughtful account and analysis of the two expeditions, their leaders and their achievements, read *Encountering Terra Australis The Australian Voyages of Nicolas Baudin and Matthew Flinders* by Jean Fornasiero, Peter Monteath and John West-Sooby, published in 2004 by the Wakefield Press.

For more information about the project, to submit a news item or if you do not wish to receive this newsletter in the future, please contact Jennifer Genion on: [jennifer.genion@arts.usyd.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.genion@arts.usyd.edu.au)