

# Cultural aspects of Norfolk Island toponymy

Joshua Nash

*University of New England*

**Abstract:** Several Norfolk Island toponyms are considered for their significance to Norfolk Island ethnography, geography, and onomastics. The insider nature of toponyms in Norfolk, the Norfolk Island language, is assessed. The investigative character of the analysis reveals that understanding the insiderness and esotericity of Norfolk placenames is essential for appreciating how these names operate within this small island society, a community which is an integral element of cultural and political Australia. The examples submit toponymic research as a means to establish more detailed descriptions of language and culture in contact with place.

**Résumé :** L'auteur examine plusieurs toponymes de l'île Norfolk, du point de vue de leur importance pour l'ethnographie, l'histoire et l'onomastique de cette île australienne ; il évalue en outre la nature locale des toponymes en langage Norfolk, une langue particulière à l'île Norfolk. L'analyse révèle que la compréhension de la nature intragroupe et ésotérique des noms de lieux de Norfolk est essentielle pour apprécier la manière dont ces noms fonctionnent dans cette petite société insulaire, qui fait partie intégrante du paysage culturel et politique de l'Australie. Les exemples analysés dans l'article visent à montrer comment la recherche toponymique peut être utilisée comme moyen de décrire plus en détails les relations qui existent entre langue, culture et lieu.

**Keywords:** Australian territories, esotericity, insider names, island geographies, microtoponymy, Norfolk Island language



### Toponymy, ethnography, and culture

When considering toponyms, ascertaining the ethnographic and geographical import of linguistic implications is crucial. In this paper I analyse the linguistic, ethnographic, and geographical meaning of a number of illustrative and idiosyncratic toponyms on Norfolk Island. My intention is to pose toponymic research as a means to express cultural identity in the language and cultural contact context. These names are both in English and Norfolk, the Norfolk Island language. This exploratory examination should be of interest to geographers, language contact scholars, and anthropologists. The theoretical result extends recent work into island placenaming (Nash 2015, 2016), the role of fieldwork in accessing placenames (e.g. Basso 1996), and a phenomenological assessment of cultural applications of naming, place, and culture (e.g. Mark et al. 2011).

Norfolk Island, an external territory of Australia, is a remote archipelago in the South Pacific (29° 02'S X 167° 57'E) with a permanent population of about 2000. Around half of this population are descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers who were moved from Pitcairn Island in 1856. The archipelago consists of three major islands and several offshore rocky outcrops nearby. These islands in the archipelago run from north to south. Norfolk (35 km<sup>2</sup>) is the largest, and two smaller uninhabited islands are Nepean (1 km<sup>2</sup>) and Phillip (5 km<sup>2</sup>). The archipelago is approximately 1700 kilometres from Sydney and 1100 kilometres from Auckland. Norfolk Island's cultural history can be divided into four main periods:

1. The first convict settlement from 1788 to 1814. Some First Settlement toponyms are Queensborough, Morgans Run, Phillipsburgh, Duncombe Bay and Orange Vale.

2. The planned hell of the second convict settlement from 1825 to 1855. Notorious names from this period include Barney Duffy's, commemorating the convict who lived seven years in a tree stump on the west coast, and Bloody Bridge, the purported site of the massacre of an overseer by convicts who walled his body into the bridge, later discovered when the blood of the slain man seeped through the stonework.

3. The relocation in 1856 of the entire population of Pitcairn Island to Norfolk Island. There are many colourful names from this period, many of which are in Norfolk, the Norfolk Island language<sup>1</sup>, like Stone fer George and Isaac's (George and Isaac's Stone), Ar Pool fer Helen's (Helen's Pool), and Dar Coop (The [Chicken] Coop).

4. The Melanesian Mission headquarters and school were stationed on Norfolk from 1867 to 1920. The Mission used the Melanesian language Mota as its scholastic language. The Mota name for Norfolk Island is Novo Kailana. Other Mota placenames associated with the Melanesian Mission toponyms are Alalang Paen (Under the Pines), The Kerapai (The Big Tree), Geare Pere (place of big or scarred rocks), and Valis we Poa (Big Grass).

These four periods with one significant addition—the modern era—constitute Norfolk Island's historical tapestry. The modern era, spanning 1942 to the present, follows the creation of the airstrip during World War II, which heralded the development of a tourism economy. Tourism has had a significant effect on both English and Norfolk toponymy.

Norfolk stems from the contact language which emerged on Pitcairn Island from 1790 in a small community comprised of Polynesian and English speakers. All the Pitcairn Islanders were moved to Norfolk Island in 1856. This marks the beginning of Norfolk as a form of the language of Pitcairn Island which has undergone changes due to its transplantation to a new environment. Both English and Norfolk are official languages of Norfolk Island.<sup>2</sup>

I collected all the presented toponyms during three two-week field trips to Norfolk Island in 2008 and 2009. The names and locations were recorded during 12 informal interviews with 15 elder members of the Norfolk Island community. This group of people were mainly Pitcairn Island descendants, but also included long-term residents and other officials, including Norfolk Island Museum staff.

### **God's Country**

There are several unofficial toponyms which refer to Norfolk Island as a whole and describe general areas not linked to specific and precise locations. There is the colloquial The Rock (Norfolk: Ar Rock), which refers to the entire island, e.g. 'When you comen to Ar Rock?', and God's Country, a general term that reflects culturally directed notions of place. While the toponym and varied meanings of God's Country are not specific to Norfolk Island per se, and although its use in other English speaking countries may be similar, its application here and its connotations are specific to Norfolk Island and family place attachment.

I do not know when God's Country became a part of the toponymic lexicon. It could have happened shortly after the Pitcairners arrived in 1856—simple, well-mannered, God-fearing folk. On arrival, different families were allocated lots of land on different parts of the island. The Buffett family went to Steels Point, the Nobbs family to Rocky Point and Bumboras, and the McCoys to the Collins Head area. Many descendants of the original families still live in these initial allotments. As a result, family history is intimately connected to particular and distinct landscape and family specific toponyms have developed. For example, the array of coastal toponyms in the Steels Point area on the upper east coast of Norfolk are the linguistic assets of the Buffetts.

The names on the southern side of Ball Bay, e.g. Side Suff Fly Pass (literally Place Surf Flies Past), are insider names of the McCoy families. They form a part of the spatial and orientational sociolect of the people who know and use them, regardless of whether they speak Norfolk or not. To some extent, such names have become integrated into the larger ways of speaking of and about Norfolk

Island, particularly the use of offshore fishing ground names by fishers. Based on personal and emotional connections to the places they know and in which grew up, each family claims the area they inhabit and know like the back of their hand is God's Country:

God's Country is a general term often used in good-natured ribbing. If one Norfolk Islander talks to another about which part of the island they live in, you will often hear them talk about God's Country. It's a long-running joke, a subtle jibe and an allusion to the fact that they live in the best part of the island. But here is the irony: God's Country is no particular place at all. If you grew up at Steels Point, then that's God's Country. If you then moved to Shortridge, then funnily enough, that's God's Country too. At the end of the day, all islanders agree that Norfolk is God's Country. (Rachel Borg, personal communication, Norfolk Island, April 2009)

At a community meeting dealing with Norfolk Island toponyms on 4 April 2009, one gentleman humorously proclaimed:

*Come out mine I show you foot dem callet God's Country,  
hengen up een myse kitchen* (Come out to my place and I'll show you why they call it God's Country. It's hanging up in my kitchen. (Merv Buffett, p.c. Norfolk Island, April 2009)

He was referring to what looks like a halo of light around Steels Point on an old Australian Government satellite map of Norfolk Island. Naturally, he lives 'out' Steels Point.<sup>3</sup>

Looking at God's Country semantically, the toponym specific God indicates there is something special about the generic place or Country being referred to. Norfolk Islanders have tilled the soil, built houses, and brought up families in the particular places they have lived. They have created strong local support networks based around recreation, fishing, education, and work which are bounded by the areas where these activities occurred. Longstanding family ties create bonds, emotional attachment, and memories such as house names, e.g. Cuppa Tea's near Cascade and Annie Dong's on House Road.



**Figure 1.** God's Country (photo Albert Buffett 2011)

For people to think their own area is God's Country is apt. This designation implies an existential and spiritual relationship to Norfolk, a common method people employ to attribute mythical significance to the places they know and love. God's Country is a depersonalised and abstract realm which nevertheless incorporates local specificity and relationship to people through use. Cultural context is imperative to understanding the significance of the use of certain insider names. God's Country cannot be mapped; however, any mapping of Norfolk Island is nothing but mapping God's Country.

### **Fata Fata**

When considering a pure Tahitian toponym in Norfolk, Ross's (1955: 337) statement about the Tahitian influence on Pitcairn topo-

nymy is pertinent: “Very few of the names are Polynesian; so we must imagine that the English were the chief name-givers, as perhaps one might expect”. Because no full Tahitian speakers ever made it to Norfolk Island (see, for example, Maude 1964), the possible Tahitian influence on the linguistic and toponymic landscape from 1856 onwards is less than on Pitcairn Island post 1790. There are, however, several Norfolk Island toponyms which express a strong Tahitian influence. Three clearly expressed examples are Fata Fata, Parloo Park (literally Masturbation Park, less crassly Lovers’ Lane), and Gudda Bridge (Fuck Bridge).

Buffett (1999: 33) defines the Norfolk noun ‘fata fata’ as “an islet in a natural running stream or watercourse, whatever the size.” It is also the common term used to refer to an area of swampland on Norfolk. Buffett claims it has its origins in the Tahitian for ‘open, not filled up or closed’. The proper noun Fata Fata (variant spelling: Futtu Futtu in Edgecombe 1999: 102) refers to a specific area, a creek located on pleasantly undulating land near the Steels Point and Cascade area in the eastern part of Norfolk, just near the end of Cutters Corn. There is a large fata fata in Fata Fata.

It is not clear who named this area, but it must have been one of the original arrivals from Pitcairn Island. Tahitian toponyms are among some of the oldest Norfolk Island toponyms but this does not necessarily imply that all contemporary Tahitian names are of the same vintage (cf. the example of the 2008 anthroponymous naming of Tevarua Lane after one of the well remembered Tahitian women on Pitcairn Island detailed below). Fata Fata strongly links Norfolk toponymy and people who know this name to their Tahitian past. The name represents a transferral of Polynesian landscape ideologies as a way of describing a new setting. Fata Fata speaks of the past, a past linked to Tahiti and Pitcairn Island.

Even though this name is one of few attributable to Norfolk Island’s connection to Tahiti through Pitcairn Island, its existence in the linguistic landscape is pregnant with meaning. The name emplaces Norfolk toponyms and grounds the people who are privy to this name, its location, and its past to an important aspect of Tahitian cultural heritage, i.e. access to watercourses for livelihood. It is a strong reminder of the social and ecological networks that

evolve in subsistence societies, and the methods people use to situate themselves in these social and natural ecologies. Within the name *Fata Fata*, there is a deep relation of self to Tahiti and to the representation of Tahiti in what was a new landscape for the people who named this watercourse.

### **Lizzie's**

The name *Lizzie's* arose spontaneously when I was interviewing some Norfolk Islanders. The name was new to me so I queried it. "Oh," they said, "I mean Queen Elizabeth Lookout." This toponym refers to a lookout, which lies on a sharp bend on Rooty Hill Road, just down from where the late, well-respected local fisherman Bev McCoy used to live. *Lizzie's* looks down to the houses on Quality Row in Kingston and out to Norfolk Island's smaller, outlying islands Nepean Island and Phillip Island.

Queen Elizabeth Lookout commemorates the Queen's visit to the island in 1974 and it is acknowledged on both official (Australian Surveying & Land Information Group 1992) and unofficial maps (e.g. Edgecombe 1999: 102). The longer name is official and in common usage – signs appear in the area where one can park to take in the view. Queen Elizabeth is also remembered with Queen Elizabeth Avenue in Middlegate, just as Prince Philip is remembered in the Cascade area with Prince Philip Drive. None of these official names utilise the possessive -s to signify possession of name and place. *Lizzie's*, however, does. It is not that this is \**Dar Side fer Queen Elizabeth's* ('the place of Queen Elizabeth's'), using the common Norfolk syntactic form indicating possession, rather the diminutive *Lizzie* and the possessive -s represent something historically important for certain people on Norfolk Island. 'Queen *Lizzie*' visited. This is her place.

Many people who were present when the Queen came to Norfolk are still alive and this event is well remembered. However, what this occasion means for the people who know the name is related not only to its physical location, but to a time in history which has relevance. Unlike the toponym *Monty* (see next section), this is Queen Elizabeth's or *Lizzie's* place. It is unlikely a Norfolk Islander would



personally address the Queen using a nickname but this is how she and the time she visited are remembered emotionally in the landscape. The unofficial, sentimental, and emotional nature of Lizzie's makes this informal form grammatically and cultural acceptable.

Lizzie's is more than a name – it links a place to a person and an event and has created a larger-than-life place-based personality. No toponyms on Norfolk Island are named after Australian dignitaries. This could be read as an explicit statement of the Norfolk Islanders' stronger allegiance to England and the British monarchy than to Australian parliamentarism. This ideological allegiance to the British monarchy and British ways, while at the same time identifying with the Tahitian underdog, expresses one aspect of the anomalous nature of Norfolk Island, its inhabitants, and its linguistic history.

Lizzie's was elicited from a Norfolk Islander so I consider it a Norfolk name. Classifying such names as Norfolk, although they take a common English toponym form (i.e. proper noun + possessive), has implications for how Norfolk toponyms are classified. In Lizzie's, there is a system of toponymic classification based on ethnic and historical relevance and identity politics that cannot be appreciated by looking merely at grammatical form.

### **Monty**

The name Monty appears on the Edgecombe map (1999: 102). It is located on the south coast of Norfolk Island. Islanders use 'down' when describing where Monty is, so it is a coastal location. This is confirmed by the appearance of Monty Drown on an unpublished map from around the 1980s collated by Norfolk speaker and gentleman, Moresby Buffett (Buffett n.d.). There is a degree of mystery associated with this name, because no islanders knew who Monty was, or could recall the history of the name, possibly due to the number of variants of the name. When I questioned those present at the community meeting on 4 April 2009 at the local Norfolk community hall Christian's Cave, a commemorative name remembering the original Christian's Cave on Pitcairn Island, about the origin of Monty, one man narrated:

*Years ago yu naewa thinka aas why dem call et, you never think to ask other people why they call it that. (Kik Kik Quintal, personal communication April 2009)*

This is why so much Norfolk Island toponymic history has been lost. Monty is named after a gentleman named Monty who drowned there. Whatever the case and whoever Monty was, this name provides a linguistic and cultural insight into understanding principles and patterns of Norfolk Island toponymy, history, and social memory.

Six elicited variants by Norfolk speakers as well as five asterisked (meaning unelicited but grammatically plausible) possibilities for the toponym Monty are: (1) Monty, (2) Down Monty, (3) Monty Drown, (4) Down Monty Drown, (5) Side Monty Drown, (6) Down Side Monty Drown, (7) \*Monty's, (8) \*Down Monty's, (9) \*Down ar Side Monty Drown, (10) \*Side fer Monty's, (11) \*Dar (Side) fer Monty's. Although the specific element 'Monty' is present in all these forms, these names have differing degrees of implied cultural meaning. The secondary evidence suggests Monty drowned in this area. This 'side' (place) could then be attributed to Monty using the possessive or the common Norfolk syntactic form \*Dar Side fer Monty's (§ 11).

The absence of the possessive in the name Monty (i.e. \*Monty's) could be because there is a taboo associated with giving possession through naming to people who have died in unfortunate circumstances in specific locations. Monty then is not \*Dar Side fer Monty's; it is simply Monty or Monty Drown. Longer Norfolk toponyms, and those with verbs, indicate an earlier stage of naming. Verbal forms are uncommon in English toponyms anywhere, especially in English colonial forms like Emily Bay and Mount Pitt. In these earlier forms, all information relating to the activity and the origin of the name are recorded, e.g. Down Side Monty Drown and even Down a/ar Side Monty Drown ('a' and 'ar' are Norfolk articles). What has happened over time in Norfolk toponyms like Monty is that the transparency of names is affected due to close personal networks, and that there is a consequent reduced necessity to specify subject-predicate and agent-action relations.

In such situations, for example, in the resultant form Monty, the verb, possessive, and spatial elements are absent because they are not needed to specify the toponym; in this case the short form Monty adequately tells the story behind the name and the longer and more explicit forms are not necessary. It is not really ‘Monty’s Place’ because people prefer not to remember the meaning of this name due to the unfortunate event associated with Monty, thus the other ‘syntactic story’ need not be retold. This shows a direct relationship between Norfolk toponym syntax and the semantics of remembering toponyms. Over time the linguistic input is reduced and this reduced form represents an entire unit that was previously much longer. Brevity in naming is likely a distinction of insider knowledge.

Monty poses some serious historical consequences for the evolution of new forms, the loss of cultural heritage, and the importance of comprehensive language documentation. Through analogy and shortened name forms, much insider knowledge specific to a place is encoded into the specific or semantic element of the name, e.g. Monty or \*Monty’s, rather than the need to use a generic or syntactic component. If this encoded knowledge is not recorded or remembered, large amounts of covert or non-form specific cultural and geographical knowledge can be lost.

While no islanders recall the reason for the naming of Monty, beyond the recognition this was his place, cross-referencing with the Buffett (n.d.) map shows the name Down Side Monty Drown, i.e. the full toponym form describes what was considered central when the name was coined. This historical information and the processes which brought about the name have been lost in the shortened form. Monty represents the relationships between cultural salience and redundancy, the reduced explication of the meaning in a toponym, and the associated loss of cultural capital and history.

### **Gooty’s**

Gooty’s is a fishing ground named after Gustav ‘Gooty’ Quintal:

Gooty’s is close to Cascade, just off Bird Rock. It’s three or four miles out. You line up the Moo-oo Stone in the valley

down at the Captain Cook Memorial with some pine trees at Byron Burrell's property. Gooty lived on the corner of Pine Avenue and Country Road. (Bev McCoy, Norfolk Island, 2008)

This is a fishing ground still known to many Norfolk Island fishermen. No one I spoke to knew who named this place. I assume, however, it was one of the most frequented fishing grounds because several locals knew it. As it was named after Gustav Quintal, it is certain he used to fish there. Because it is a possessive anthroponym, the island fishermen respected him and wanted to remember him. The name is also a serious appellation and not one used in jest, or as a slant at Gustav Quintal; Gooty was important to the Norfolk Island fishing community. Anthroponyms of this form are never negative or jesting.

Gooty's is connected to a much larger cultural and toponymic network. It is unknown outside fishing history and fishing name usage, which means that Gooty's belongs to a particular nexus of people, names, and relationships. A past exists in this name, linked to a particular person, and the activities and remembrance of him in this specific place. This is because it was Gooty who first lined up the marks or because he often used to fish there. Gooty is animated as a person, an actor, somebody represented and recalled in and through landscape. Ultimately, Gooty's is a cultural description of space but it is also a name as a lineage of knowledge and information used pragmatically.

A living name like Gooty's is healthy and vital linguistic, social, and cultural property; Gooty's remains a positive cultural and linguistic artefact (for the memory of Gustav Quintal) in the minds of fishermen. Gooty's is a part of a near fishing 'songline' that has been 'sung', passed down, and constructed as a memory of a select few – although it does not appear to be taboo – but perhaps one that fishermen would be very reluctant to disclose to the uninformed, or those who do not have any need to know this history. Why would non-fishers and people who do not use these areas want or need to know or be interested in knowing this name?

Gooty himself could not have named Gooty's, but others

endowed the place with his name. They have linked Gooty's identity to the water – linking through naming renders fishing ground toponyms onto the seascape and landscape of Norfolk Island. Gooty, the person, is made real through linguistic means and through cultural means – the name is remembered and the place personalised, localised, and created.

Gooty's as a place and a person comes into being as an agent in a particularised social and ecological setting. The name Gooty's has become embedded and immersed in a lifeworld, and this is evidenced by the fact that it exists and is used. People privy to this name can locate, interact with, and move through these worlds created by Gooty's. In this perspective, toponyms are names and processes existing within the world (in a place). Therefore these toponyms are in the minds of a select group and in an actual location, although this place, or acculturated space, cannot be set apart or seen aside from the people who use it.

The linguistic manifestation of Gooty's – the formal structure and semantics – is only one element in understanding the importance of the pragmatic usage of the name, what it represents, and the realisation that the name exists and dwells. A toponym is a linguistic and cultural lifeworld that lives and exists both within the minds of those who know and use it, and in the physical and cognitive maps where the name is used. Gooty's represents a place, a spatial descriptor, and a story with a strongly grounded meaning. The syntactic component of the toponym is not necessary for this name to be classified semantically. Gooty's embodies a way of understanding how Norfolk Islanders perceive their people, culture, and language in terms of the place they inhabit. That people are remembered means they are either liked, were important, did good, bad, or significant actions, and are somehow democratically embedded in a micro-collective memory of language and place on the island.

### **House names**

Modern critical placename studies (e.g. Rose-Redwood 2008; Rose-Redwood, Alderman & Azaryahu 2010) have moved away

from etymology and taxonomy to analysing the spatial inscription of political semiotics and symbolic resistance, through methods such as house naming. Such perspectives, although strongly politically motivated, are relevant to establishing an understanding of the relationship between the grammatical form of house names and their linguistic and ecological embeddedness, and the role of house names as key linguistic orientational tools in the Norfolk Island landscape. In addition, house names present a stark example of the blurring of English and Norfolk forms. This analysis aims to establish what comprises a Norfolk house name and furthermore, how this unofficial toponymic taxon can illustrate the nexus between toponyms, spatial relationships, and cultural delineation. Figure 2 presents a large number of house names and locations.



**Figure 2.** Norfolk Island house names (compiled from Edgecombe 1999: 102; Varman 1984, and the author 2011)

There is a lot of structural ambiguity in the 393 house names, particularly concerning the appearance of proper nouns. In the absence of common Norfolk function words like *ar* and *dar* (the or that) and *fer* (of, for) and Norfolk pronouns (e.g. *auwas* - our, ours),

there are no criteria to establish whether proper nouns in Norfolk house names are English or Norfolk. This ambiguity cannot be solved using structural criteria. I therefore restrict my focus to names that are common, historically salient, and statistically prevalent, e.g. names which take the typical form of mono- and bilinear proper nouns + possessive, e.g. Hookys, Girlies, Everetts, Burrells, Dickies, Willie Boys, Lili Oodoos, Tom Baileys, Gus Allens, and Funny Bills. A subset of the data corresponds to this structural pattern but incorporates status nouns in house names, e.g. Auntys, Mumma Norns, Uncle Joes, Pa Collies, and Ma Nobbys. This use of honorific markers illustrates the localised and small-scale nature of Norfolk house names. Additional observations are:

1. House names can be a single uninflected proper noun, e.g. Lindisfarne, Palmerston.
2. Houses can be named using either a single English compound or a single Norfolk lexeme, e.g. Bedrock and Hettae.
3. House names can consist of Norfolk words, e.g. Auwas Hoem, or a combination of English and Norfolk words, e.g. Auwas Paradise Roof, Truly Auwas, Dar Shed, KettleseBoil.
4. Norfolk house names can be named after people, proper noun + possessive, e.g. Girlies, Ben Fishers, Dick Bens.
5. Norfolk house names can be exclamations, e.g. Hassette!!
6. Norfolk house names can use the common Norfolk syntactic form, e.g. Dar Side fer Honeys.
7. Homophony and analogy are productive in Norfolk house names, e.g. Tern Corner (alluding to tern birds and a bendy corner) and Ternwood (alluding to a wooded area with tern birds and the process of turning wood).
8. Nicknames as house names are productive, e.g. Cuppa Teas. This house name was named after a man 'Cuppa Tea' Buffett who lived in the Red Road area on the north coast

of Norfolk. He received his nickname due to his dark skin colour. Other islanders say he always welcomed people to his house for a cup of tea, hence his nickname.

### **Cascade Road roof name microtoponymy**

Since 2007 a system of micro language planning developed on a one-kilometre stretch of Cascade Road between the Norfolk Island Central School and its junction with New Cascade Road. A resident erected a sign on another resident's fence that read Orange Roof, a reference to the colour of the house's roof. A local in-joke developed with a series of signs playing on the word 'roof'.

The initial establishment of a single house sign and name began a process of linguistic landscaping (Landry & Bourhis 1997) and social networking (Milroy & Milroy 1985) that has involved residents living nearby and a large number of interested community members. The initial name giving sparked a creative outburst which focused on 'roof' as a key metaphor. This acted as a commentary on the other names, and provided patterns and distinguishing features that made social comment. These names place the namers of the houses within the cultural space of the road. Observing such microtoponymic processes in confined situations depicts house names as a defining element of social differentiation, contact, and belonging.

Given the naming patterns that have developed incorporate the use of Norfolk lexemes (e.g. Kaa Sii da Roof - Figure 3), the example is similar to Dray's (2010) analysis of the appearance of Jamaican Creole (i.e. the solidarity function of unofficial naming in the Jamaican linguistic landscape). However, this example is different, because the production of language (i.e. house names as toponyms) is not the result of an ideological struggle, but rather the product of humour, analogy, and unofficial spatial and linguistic narrative. The analysis of the creation of a micro zone of unofficial house name toponymy within a restricted geographical sphere elucidates many of the key factors involved in the relationship between language, toponyms, and place creation on Norfolk Island. Table 1 presents Cascade Road roof names data:





**Figure 3.** Kaa Sii da Roof (can't see the roof) (the author 2009)

Table 1. Data for Cascade Road roof names (the author 2016)

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Auwas Paradise Roof | 12. Orange Roof                    |
| 2. Gumm's Blue Roof    | 13. Red Roof                       |
| 3. Hip Roof            | 14. Redder Roof                    |
| 4. Holy Roof           | 15. Rented Roof                    |
| 5. Hot Tin Roof        | 16. Roof Roof                      |
| 6. Jazzy Roof          | 17. Rugs Roof                      |
| 7. Kaa Sii da Roof     | 18. Rusty Roof                     |
| 8. Leekee Roof         | 19. Silver Roof Party Headquarters |
| 9. Leslie's Green Roof | 20. Skeeters Roof                  |
| 10. No Roof            | 21. Woods Roof                     |
| 11. Nuffka Roof        |                                    |

Linguistic patterns of Cascade Road roof names are:

1. Roof is present in all names.

2. Roof is the generic element in all names (an exception is Roof Roof which is a name homophonous with English dog barking onomatopoeia).
3. Specific elements can be common nouns, e.g. Nuffka Roof (Nuffka [*todiramplus sanctus norfolkensis*] is the Norfolk Sacred Kingfisher), proper nouns, e.g. Skeeters Roof, adjectives, e.g. Orange Roof, Rusty Roof, and adjectival phrases, e.g. Hot Tin Roof.
4. Norfolk spelling is used in two names, Nuffka Roof, Kaa Sii da Roof.
5. The form No Roof is a humorous anomaly in the data (Figure 4).
6. The only name that does not have roof as the final syntactic element is Silver Roof Party Headquarters.

All names reflect the previously established template of roof-ness. Some of these names also work as an ecological commentary on neighbouring names (e.g. Red Roof and Redder Roof).

### **Cultural patterns of Cascade Road roof names**

The process of naming roofs on Cascade Road involves both residents who are Pitcairn Island descendants (Norfolk Islanders) and those who are not. By adhering to the roof name template, the namer affirms their adherence and loyalty to a group membership that bridges ethnic boundaries. In some senses, this harmonises the different ancestries on Norfolk by creating a focal point of shared interest. Initially, a trend was established, followed by nearby residents, based on a need for social inclusion and personal demarcation where one does not exclude the other.

There was also a degree of humour and a running joke between residents that eventually developed. As a result, a type of one-upmanship based on the degree of humour and irony of the naming situation came into effect, for example, Kaa Sii da Roof (can't see

the roof – Figure 3). Cascade Road roof names set a friendly, yet competitive template, where in order to be different to others, one needs to follow the template. Naming yields naming, naming begets naming. Identity is reflected in the personalisation and toponymic attachment of names (Kostanski 2009) to the place of Cascade Road and its many roofs. It designates and delineates community space and creates place and neighbourhood (Ingold 2000) among residents. Cascade Road and its residents are therefore set apart from the rest of Norfolk Island.

There are individual roof names and a collective of Cascade Road roof names. These roof names as a whole exist within a larger sphere of house naming and are simultaneously separated from them. They depict the inclusion and separation of different houses, their relationship to the road, and the aggregate of roof names as compared to Norfolk Island house names as a whole. Cascade Road roof names become symbolic and their inclusion into the island's toponymy becomes emblematic albeit anomalous.



**Figure 4.** No Roof (the author 2009)

Such a process is a vehicle for convergence between different backgrounds because the name surfaces as a thing detached from people or place. This is why this process of naming has shown itself to be easily manipulable. This roof template is so profound that some locals have suggested that Cascade Road be changed to Roof Road. If this were the case, this contextually sensitive name would reflect a similar pattern to the unofficial naming in Norfolk of House Road and Store Road. House Road has many houses on it, Store Road leads to the old store, and they are in the vicinity of Cascade Road. They are not official road names but illustrate how a road name can describe its surrounding environment. Roof-ness has imposed itself on the people of Norfolk Island; its expression can include No Roof (Figure 4), where roof-ness is present although negated.

### **Road names**

The naming of roads began soon after British forces arrived on Norfolk Island. Early maps, e.g. Murphy (1900), show Country Road and Middlegate Road, names conforming to common British colonial descriptive name practices. Since this time, Norfolk has had a long history of land use change, which has affected its corpus of road names, and many roads remained unnamed until a process of community consultation took place in 2008. The Norfolk Island Land Titles Office is responsible and answerable to the Commonwealth for matters concerning the maintenance and upkeep of crown land on the island, and for the establishment and maintenance of signage, maps, subdivision of land, and land titles. This includes the maintenance and upkeep of the island roads.

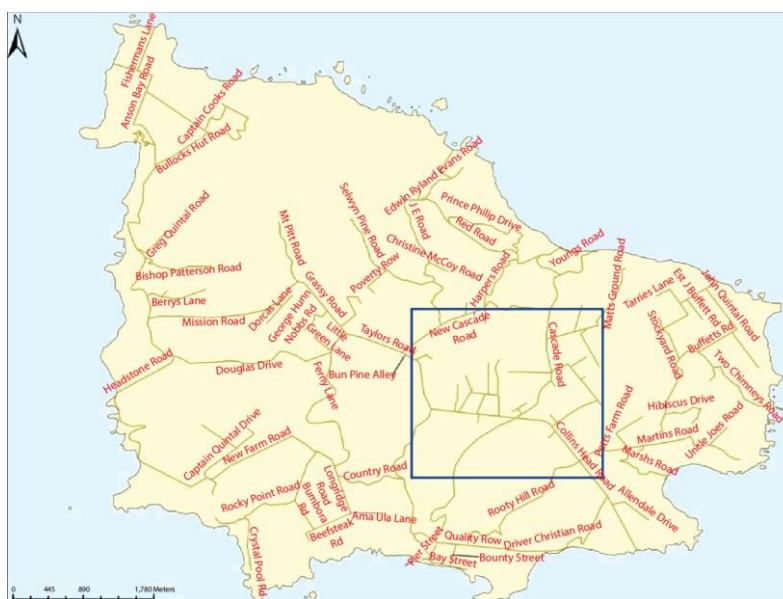
The applicability of Norfolk Island road names to toponymic analysis has been succinctly summarised by Azaryahu (1996: 479): “Spatially configured and historically constructed, commemorative street names produce an authorised rendition of the past.” Four major eras are reflected in road name toponymy including a combined history of First and Second Settlements, the names associated with Pitcairn Island and events post 1856, the history of the Melanesian Mission, and modern road names. Figure 5 maps well-known Norfolk roads and Figure 6 presents an enlarged map of roads in the Burnt Pine and Middlegate areas.

Norfolk Island road name forms are similar to English names. The only distinguishing feature between English and Norfolk road names is the use of a Norfolk lexeme. There were five Norfolk road names in the sample. Only three of these, i.e. Ama Ula Lane, Bun Pine Alley, and Yorlor Lane, actually contain Norfolk lexemes. The other two Norfolk road names are House Road and Store Road. These are acknowledged as Norfolk names on the Edgecombe (1999: 102) map, because they were first coined by the Pitcairners, and are generally only used by Norfolk speakers. Although these names contain English lexemes, they are pronounced in Norfolk, i.e. [hæʊz r3:d] (House Road) and [stɔ: r3:d] (Store Road).

There are numerous patterns in Norfolk Island road names:

1. Naming is commemorative, e.g. Prince Philip Drive, Queen Elizabeth Drive.
2. There are few roads named after women.
3. Several names describe the natural environment and local and introduced flora, e.g. Two Chimneys Road (the name Two Chimneys probably originates from the two old chimneys left in the area from the Second Settlement), Rooty Hill Road (named because of the large number of tree roots encountered when building this road). Country Road, Bay Street, Mulberry Lane, Ferny Lane, Grassy Road, Little Green Lane, Cutters Corn (possibly named because corn used to be grown in this area), and Hibiscus Drive all adhere to this pattern.
4. Several names point towards their destination, e.g. Beefsteak Road leads to Beefsteak, Bumboras Road leads to Bumboras and Store Road leads to the old store in Kingston.
5. Some road names were considered taboo and were sanitised to avoid inappropriate connotations, e.g. Dead Rat Lane was changed to Mitchells Lane (this is a similar process to that which occurred with the topographical name Murderers Mound being changed to Dar Cemetery).

6. Although there are roughly an equal number of road names commemorating the Pitcairn descendants compared to First and Second Settlements, it is difficult to decipher the extent to which a name commemorates a Pitcairn descendant or not, based on the available data.

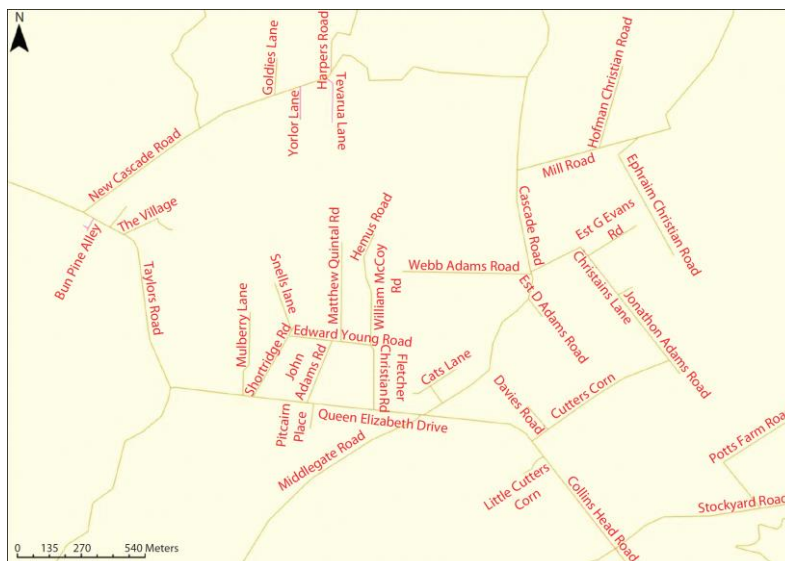


**Figure 5.** Norfolk Island road names (the author and Administration of Norfolk Island 2008)

Community consultation by the Norfolk Island Government in 2008 officialised 53 streets, roads, and easements. Many of these were well known and accepted by the community, but they needed official acknowledgement. Since approximately the 1960s, there has been a greater recognition and appreciation of the Polynesian heritage of the Pitcairn descendants. During this period names such as John Adams Road, Fletcher Christian Road, Edward Young Road, and Pitcairn Place were established officially as road names. Their appearance on Norfolk Island road signs links the island to Pitcairn Island. The period also heralded the beginning of the celebration and honouring

of the Polynesian ancestry of the Norfolk Islanders. Until this time, there was a great deal of shame associated with the events that took place in Tahiti and on Pitcairn Island.

There was a large degree of Eurocentric and normative male superiority that had an effect on naming on Pitcairn Island (Mü lhäusler 2003). Similar naming habits and hierarchies were initially employed by the Pitcairn Islanders on Norfolk Island. Such practices involved potentially racist names (e.g. Dar Nigger Head), dangerous names (e.g. Parloo Park), with few topographical names with Tahitian lexemes and a distinct lack of placenames commemorating women. There are no road names associated with people of Melanesian ancestry from the Melanesian Mission.



**Figure 6.** Enlargement of road names in Burnt Pine and Middlegate (the author and Administration of Norfolk Island 2008)

In 2008 this tendency changed with the naming of Tevarua Lane, in honour of Tevarua, a Tahitian woman who arrived on Pitcairn with the *Bounty* mutineers. She died around 1799 and was the consort of Matthew Quintal. Her name is entered as Te Walua in the Pitcairn

Register, which also lists Sarah and Big Sullee as her other names (Ross & Moverley 1964: 52). The officialising of Tevarua Lane as an iconic road name symbolises an acceptance within the community of the Norfolk Islanders' Tahitian heritage. This renaissance of Polynesian cultural symbolism is felt in realms of culture, such as Tahitian dance, tattooing, and music (Hayward 2006), and the use of personal names (Reynolds 2007; Wiseman 1977).

Tevarua Lane epitomises this Tahitian renaissance in a condensed linguistic form. Tevarua Lane emerges as a concrete entity; it symbolises both a process of linking ancestral connection to Tahiti, as well as to the depersonalisation of this past by creating a material sign. This is a symbolic re-enactment and re-evaluation which revisits the previous obscuring of female and Tahitian elements in the history of the Pitcairners. Linking and depersonalisation compete in a counter-cultural fashion with the pre-existing and continual hegemonic discourse of male whiteness on Norfolk Island.

### **Esotericity and toponymy**

The selection of Norfolk Island toponyms has explored the nature of relationships between linguistic and cultural form and content. Norfolk names, especially lesser-known Norfolk monikers, question strongly where we allocate boundaries between languages, among groups, and across geographies. That a name might at first glance appear English-like may on deeper consideration be deemed to have spirited connection to more Norfolk-like toponymic interpretations. It is within these more detailed determinations and critical interrogations of the operationalisation of toponyms within the emplaced life-, thought-, and language-worlds that we arrive at better ethnographic descriptions of a phenomenology of not only toponymy but emplaced language-as/in-structure.

Where Norfolk Island toponymy does an admirable job in blurring conclusions and making demarcations fuzzy, it does help linguists, toponymists, and ethnographers pose more complex questions relating people and place through language and to language. At least some of these results should be relevant to other remote toponymic situations, either in English or non-English



speaking environments, and whether or not there is language contact. Memory and toponyms, time and naming, and place and that which is and can be spoken (of) are all solidified within micro and macro worlds of emplaced language in the Norfolk Island cultural and linguistic landscape. It is these relationships which are implicated and necessitated in the writing of more detailed toponymic ethnographies.

### NOTES

1. Although the language name ‘Norf’k’ is common in modern linguistics, I prefer the name ‘Norfolk’. I use ‘Norfolk’ when referring to the Norfolk Island language and the full ‘Norfolk Island’ when referring to the name of the island.

2. See Nash (2013) for more details on the role of Norfolk in Norfolk Island placenaming.

3. I use inverted commas here to refer to the absolute spatial orientation system which has developed in Norf’k and has been lexicalised as prepositions used in directionals, locationals, and toponyms. This system has been detailed in Nash (2013: 74-82). According to this system, when speaking Norfolk or Norfolk English, Steels Point can only be referred to as ‘out Steels Point’. Examples of lexicalised prepositions as part of a placename are Out ar Mission (out at the Melanesian Mission) and Up in a Stick (up in the mountainous wooded area in the island’s north).

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