

RESEARCH NOTE

MAY I HAVE YOUR NAME PLEASE? NORFOLK ISLAND HOTEL NAMES

JOSHUA NASH

School of Behavioural, Cognitive, and Social Sciences, University of New England,
Armidale, New South Wales, Australia

The role of hotel names has not been examined in detail in tourism and language research. A list of 52 Norfolk Island hotel names are analyzed. Findings suggest the names perpetuate the stage and staging of tourism and their (in)accurate persistence within Norfolk cultural domains. Hotel names and their concomitant stories simultaneously illuminate and obfuscate socially driven truths and complex cultural history. The toponymy of hotel naming serves to reconcile several contentious domains of the linguistics and culture of Norfolk Island.

Key words: Linguistic landscape; Naming; Norfolk Island language; Place-names; Toponymy; Tourism

Checking-In

A body of research comprising names and naming, linguistic landscapes, and tourism has developed in the social sciences and tourism literature. Explorations into Internet domain name branding for tourism (Hashim & Murphy, 2007); souvenirs, tourism, and naming (Trinh, Ryan, & Cave, 2014); the semiotics of text, space, and globalization (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010); naming sites as management tools in indigenous tourism (Clark, 2009); tourism and toponymy (Light, 2014); and tourism and linguistic landscape (e.g., Kallen, 2009) recognize connections involving onomastics, place, and the

human–language interface. The role of hotel names has not been examined in detail in tourism and language research. In this research note, I present a list of hotel names (I use the generic expression “hotel name” to refer to hotels, lodges, apartments, inns, flats, cottages, and other monikers applied to tourism accommodation) recorded during fieldwork between 2007 and 2009 on Norfolk Island—an external territory of Australia in the South Pacific, some 1,700 km east of Sydney. Theoretically this work contributes to examinations of naming and tourism, naming and consumption, naming and leisure, and signs in the linguistic landscape. It extends a preliminary investigation by Mühlhäusler

(2002, pp. 78–80) of Norfolk’s *global names*—namely, hotel names, business names, and names in tourism. Empirically, the name data document the changing and evolving nature of one aspect of the tourism industry on a small South Pacific island, an island that receives many thousands of tourists every year. Collaterally, this work contributes to my own engagement with island toponymy (place-naming) and the linguistics and insularity of island languages.

With Mühlhäusler, I have examined the development of new forms of tourism on Norfolk Island and the various ways in which the Norfolk Island language, Norfolk, is used in enhancing the visitor experience through the creation of a somewhat contested multilingual *landscape* (Mühlhäusler & Nash, 2016). I have also presented an argument regarding the role of myths and narratives as key modifiers of names in the Norfolk linguistic landscape (Nash, 2013–2014). Continuing in this vein and investigating a place-name taxon that has received little attention in toponymy or tourism studies, I assess the role hotel names play in creating and maintaining the ever evolving linguistic landscape of Norfolk Island. This research is relevant to studies of varieties of English, particularly small (island) contact Englishes, and the role of landscape terms in contact linguistics and creole toponymy. My argument should be of interest to toponymists, island studies scholars, and tourism researchers.

The Norfolk Linguistic Landscape vis-à-vis Hotel Names

This is not the place to provide background on either Norfolk Island’s history or the history of the Norfolk Island language, Norfolk. Other accounts of Norfolk, the language spoken by the descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers and their Tahitian counterparts, give sufficient details (e.g., Harrison, 1985; Laycock, 1989). Because Norfolk is used, albeit marginally, in Norfolk Island hotel naming, it is essential to give some context about the nature of the island’s language contact situation. Norfolk stems from the language that emerged on Pitcairn Island from 1790 in a small community comprised of Tahitian and English speakers along

with a single Saint Kitts Creole speaker. 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 that has undergone changes due to its transplantation to a new environment. The influence of Pitcairn Island toponymy is apparent and was expanded in the new cultural and natural milieu of the larger Norfolk Island.

Beyond the realm of hotel name toponymy as an element of Norfolk Island toponymy (I include both English toponymy and Norfolk language toponymy under the banner “Norfolk Island toponymy”), I am not concerned with the social and linguistic status of the language. Mühlhäusler (2002) outlined a preliminary account of Norfolk toponomastics that I expanded on with a more detailed ethnographic inventory of linguistic and cultural description of Norfolk toponyms (Nash, 2013). What is essential for this analysis, however, is to consider how Norfolk hotel naming fits within general tourism operations. In addition, it is a key component to evaluate how hotel names help in assessing relationships involving authenticity, permanence, and historical accuracy within bounded small island environments.

I have previously presented a toponym taxonomy that I applied to Norfolk Island place-names (Nash, 2013, p. 42). This taxonomy only considered four taxa (three terrestrial and one sea-based): topographical names, house names, road names, and fishing ground names. This article adds another terrestrial toponym taxon, in addition to the inclusion of diving site name toponymy (Nash & Chuk, 2012), as a worthy place-name taxon for analysis. I classify hotel names as a different category to topographical names and house names. Whereas some of the hotel names in my data set are both topographical names and house names, the major difference with this name taxon is that hotels are businesses, which are an essential economic element of Norfolk Island tourism operations. Because this article looks at the act of tourism on Norfolk Island, it takes into account the most recent research into the island’s tourism—for example, Best’s (2007) perspective on death tourism and tourists’ visitor emotions as well as Prideaux and Crosswell’s (2009) and Prideaux and Watson’s (2010) research into visitor surveys and processes of rebranding Norfolk Island for tourism purposes.

Data

I collected data over four fieldtrips to Norfolk Island during the period 2007–2009. The alphabetical list presented in Table 1 is a compilation of sources, including names derived from my own photographic data; published and unpublished maps as well as archival sources (e.g., Edgecombe, 1991, p. 102); and hotel, business, and accommodation names from the *Norfolk Island Telephone Directory* (Norfolk Island Telecom, 2008). It is by no means an exhaustive list; creating any such list would not only be extremely difficult due to the nature of Norfolk Island tourism—businesses close down, signs are removed—it is not necessary. I present a list that is appropriate to observe patterns in naming and relationships between names and landscape. Hotel names are a suitable microscope for assessing broader associations involving language, place, and environment as they concern tourism and leisure studies. With the development of the modern tourism industry since around the early 1960s with the advent of air travel to Norfolk, new patterns in hotel naming have emerged.

There are several linguistic patterns in the hotel name data:

1. Hotels can take generics such as “apartment,” “hotel,” and “resort” (e.g., Tropicque Apartments, Whispering Pines Luxury Cottages, Sunhaven Guest House, Paradise Hotel, South Pacific Resort) and exist without them (e.g., Pacific Palms, Tintoela, Trade Winds, Rigger’s Retreat, and Dii Elduu [see Fig. 1]).
2. Anthroponyms are used as hotel names (e.g., Aunt Em’s Guest House, Cheryl Apartments, Selwyn Cottage [named after Bishop Selwyn, the first Bishop of New Zealand and founder of the Melanesian Mission; the Mission was stationed on Norfolk from 1867 to 1920]).
3. Norfolk lexemes are used in four hotel names—that is, Dii Elduu (can do, can cope, that will do), Tintoela (darling, sweetheart), Plun Park (Banana Park), and Nuffka Deluxe Studio Apartments (the Nuffka bird [*Todiramplis sanctus norfolkensis*] is the Norfolk Sacred Kingfisher).

Table 1

Hotel Names (in Alphabetical Order) on Norfolk Island

No.	Hotel Name
1.	Aunt Em’s Guest Hotel
2.	Blight Court Cottages
3.	Bounty Lodge
4.	Cascade Apartments
5.	Castaway Hotel
6.	Channer’s Corner
7.	Cheryl Apartments
8.	Christians of Bucks Point
9.	Daydreamer Holiday Apartments
10.	Dii Elduu
11.	Dolphin Inn
12.	Endeavour Lodge
13.	Fantasy Island Resort
14.	Fletcher Christian Holiday Apartments
15.	Forrester Court
16.	Hibiscus Lodge
17.	Hideaway Retreat
18.	Hillsdene Flats
19.	Hotel Norfolk
20.	Islander Lodge
21.	Jacaranda Park Holiday Cottages
22.	Kentia Holiday Apartments
23.	Kingfisher Airtel
24.	Lavendula Garden Cottage
25.	Middlegate Apartments
26.	Mokutu Inn
27.	Morningside Apartments
28.	Nuffka Deluxe Studio Apartments
29.	Ocean Breeze Luxury Cottages
30.	Oceanview Apartments
31.	Pacific Palms
32.	Panorama Court
33.	Paradise Hotel
34.	Pine Valley Apartments
35.	Plun Park
36.	Poinciana Cottages
37.	Polynesian Hotel & Apartment
38.	Ponderosa Apartments & Cottages
39.	Rigger’s Retreat
40.	Rocky Point Lodge
41.	Seavista Holiday Apartments
42.	Selwyn Cottage
43.	Shearwater Scenic Villas
44.	Shiralee Executive Cottages
45.	South Pacific Resort
46.	Sunhaven Guest House
47.	Tintoela
48.	Trade Winds
49.	Tropicque Apartments
50.	Viewwrest Inn
51.	Whispering Pines Luxury Cottages
52.	White Heron Lodge

Note. This list is compiled from personal photographs, the *Norfolk Island Telephone Directory* (Norfolk Island Telecom, 2008), and a map published in Edgecombe (1991, p. 102).

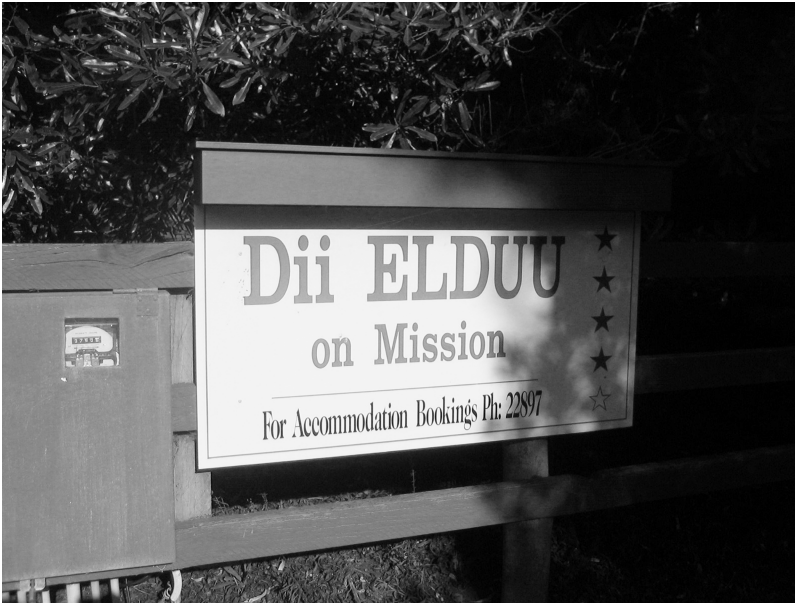


Figure 1. Dii Elduu. Source: The author, 2007.

4. Several hotel names are associated with Pitcairn Island and *Mutiny on the Bounty* (e.g., Bligh Court Cottages, Bounty Lodge, Christians of Bucks Point, and Fletcher Christian Holiday Apartments [see Fig. 2]).
5. Names use biotic and life forms, especially birds (e.g., Dolphin Inn, Hibiscus Lodge, Jacaranda Park Holiday Cottages, Kentia Holiday Apartments, Kingfisher Airtel, Lavendula Garden Cottage, Mokutu Inn, Nuffka Deluxe Studio Apartments, Pacific Palms, Pine Valley Apartments, Plun Park, Poinciana Cottages, Shearwater Scenic Villas, Whispering Pines Luxury Cottages [see Fig. 3], and White Heron Lodge).
6. Nonanthroponymic and nonbiotic hotel names tend to favor atmospheric, dramatic, and global perspectives, and names involving the sea, the ocean, Polynesia, and the Pacific (e.g., Castaway Hotel, Daydreamer Holiday Apartments, Fantasy Island Resort, Islander Lodge, Ocean Breeze Luxury Cottages, Oceanview Apartments, Pacific Palms, Panorama Court, Paradise Hotel, Polyne-sian Hotel & Apartment, Ponderosa Apartments & Cottages, Seavista Holiday Apartments, Sun-haven Guest House, Trade Winds, Tropicque Apartments, and Viewwrest Inn).

Cultural Patterns

The corpus of Norfolk Island hotel names exists as a stage upon which many elements of the theater of tourism on the island are performed. Along with the delineation of Pitcairn Island descendant/non-Pitcairn Island descendant, which drives much of the social and language-demarcated discourse of tourism, several cultural processes of hotel naming have developed within the broader Norfolk Island linguistic landscape.

There are template-like emblems that have evolved, and adherence to these procures and induces more names. The three major motifs are the *Bounty*–Pitcairn theme, “the sea and Polynesia,” and nature and wildlife. These concepts are packaged well within the grammars of standard English and local Norfolk naming—that is, there are no grammatical aberrancies in English and Norfolk hotel names. By adhering to the three motifs, the namer, who in most cases is the hotel owner, affirms a degree of adherence and loyalty to a group membership established through naming. This “toponymic loyalty” not only demonstrates a degree of uniformity and conformity in the linguistics of naming in the Norfolk tourism industry but it somewhat



Figure 2. Fletcher Christian Holiday Apartments. Source: The author, 2007.

bridges boundaries and harmonizes tensions and dichotomies involving place and unnamed space, built and unbuilt domains, residents and tourists, as well as insiders versus outsiders.

The use of demonstrative, suggestive, and leading Norfolk names—for example, Tintoela (darling, sweetheart)—acts as a medium for reconciling the different ancestries on Norfolk Island by creating a focal point of shared interest. By making Norfolk explicit in the languaged landscape, the outsider tourist is availed a degree of entrance into some of the mystique behind the façade of the still present Pitcairn Island language and culture that is otherwise little offered within the arena of the tourist experience. Whether the presence of Norfolk is unfeigned and unelaborated, its reality of

appearance at least superficially extends an invitation of an amount of social inclusion in a realm of linguistic and personal distinction that is normally not offered to outsiders such as tourists.

I speculate that there is a degree of performance and even humor between residents that may have influenced naming, especially “the sea and Polynesia” naming motif. That one cannot view the sea from Oceanview Apartments and that Panorama Court does not offer huge panoramic views suggests that tourists should not necessarily take hotel names too literally. As with other elements of Norfolk Island place-naming, the connection to Pitcairn Island and *Bounty* persists strongly. This cultural history made toponymic through naming has both a blurring and illuminating effect on the Norfolk



Figure 3. Whispering Pines Luxury Cottages. Source: The author, 2007.

linguistic landscape: Names are both accurate and inexact, as culturally stringent as historically wayward. An example from 2008 illustrates my point: Several tourists spoke adamantly and convincingly to me atop Mount Pitt, the island's highest peak, about how they thought it was amazing that the *Bounty* had made it to Norfolk Island. The *Bounty* was burned on Pitcairn Island shortly after the mutineers and the Polynesians arrived in 1790.

Checking-Out

Whatever the fact or fiction about Norfolk Island hotel names, these appellations exist and persist within a continually transforming tourism landscape impelled to a large extent by economic priorities; attractive, memorable, and remembered names can lead to better business and greater hotel occupancy. That names should be pronounceable and readable and their physical appearance legible are further matters that hoteliers-as-linguistic-innovators must keep in mind in coupling their business operations with(in) their budding linguistic enterprises and enterprising.

Hotel signs pepper the physical and cultural landscape. They are more than generic geographical

markers and collective identity measures; they are vivid cultural capital that is to some extent intended to be understandable and intelligible within the very hotel and tourism industry of which they are a part. Hotel names as linguistic resources are a crucial constituent of the overall economics of this small island, an insular society that prides itself as being separate from the Australian mainland. The impending changes to Norfolk Island's political and social welfare systems in the coming years will no doubt have both positive and negative influences on the nature of the linguistic landscape and how tourism interacts with other economic and cultural strata of and in the community.

I have previously described the nature of historical sanitization of the Norfolk toponoscape through the action of naming, where history has been changed through the changing of names (Mühlhäusler, 2002 [for Norfolk Island]; Nash, 2013; Rose-Redwood & Azaryahu, 2010 [for a theoretical description of methods of altering geographies of spatial inscription through place-naming]). Where hotel names may be changed to forget or create an altered spatio-temporal rendition of the past, and where names remain although the physical buildings may be defunct—as happened with Paradise

Hotel, which is no longer standing in Kingston, which is Norfolk's administrative center—the hotel name corpus is evocative; the evocations Shiralee Executive Cottages, Tropicque Apartments, and Fantasy Island Resort invoke are not arbitrary. Norfolk Island hotel naming toponymy endures as a subtle and indirect yet significant participant within the larger and more explicit spectrum of Norfolk tourism ventures.

Since I began fieldwork on Norfolk in 2007, I have taken more than 1,000 photographs of signs. I have seen both the erection of new hotel signs and witnessed the periodic removal of old and changed hotel signs and their represented names. Tourism embodies changeability and fluctuation, the outcomes of which can be measured and documented linguistically and, as I have argued here, toponymically. The field of linguistic landscape, which has as its primary methodology the recording and archiving of physical signs through the use of photography, necessarily implicates arenas of interest to modern language documentation. Hotel signs and the names they bring into existence are often so fleeting, temporary, and ephemeral that their documentation is a worthy, symbolic, and hopefully accurate constituent of the impermanence of a transient archive. These names appear as either an accurate or erroneous rendition of the past in terms of the present, and the current seen in light of temporally and geographically distant and distinct fabrications. The truth value of the linguistics of Norfolk Island hotel names may not be as important as who, where, and for how long tourists check in and inevitably check out of the island's many hotels.

References

- Best, M. (2007). Norfolk Island: Thanatourism, history and visitor emotions. *Shima: The International Journal of Research Into Island Cultures*, 1(2), 30–48.
- Clark, I. D. (2009). Naming sites: Names as management tools in indigenous tourism sites—An Australian case study. *Tourism Management*, 30(1), 109–111.
- Edgecombe, J. (1991). *Norfolk Island—South Pacific: Island of history and many delights*. Thornleigh, New South Wales, Australia: Author.
- Harrison, S. (1985). The social setting of Norfolk speech. *English World-Wide*, 6(1), 131–153.
- Hashim, N. H., & Murphy, J. (2007). Branding on the web: Evolving domain name usage among Malaysian hotels. *Tourism Management*, 28(2), 621–624.
- Jaworski, A., & Thurlow, C. (Eds.). (2010). *Semiotic landscapes: Text, space, globalization*. London, UK: Continuum.
- Kallen, J. (2009). Tourism and representation in the Irish linguistic landscape. In E. Shohamy & D. Gorter (Eds.), *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery* (pp. 270–283). London, UK: Routledge.
- Laycock, D. C. (1989). The status of Pitcairn-Norfolk: Creole, dialect, or cant? In U. Ammon (Ed.), *Status and function of languages and language varieties* (pp. 608–629). Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter.
- Light, D. (2014). Tourism and toponymy: Commodifying and consuming place names. *Tourism Geographies*, 16(1), 141–156.
- Mühlhäusler, P. (2002). Changing names for a changing landscape: The case of Norfolk Island. *English World-Wide*, 23(1), 59–91.
- Mühlhäusler, P., & Nash, J. (2016). Signs of/on power, power on/of signs: Language-based tourism, linguistic landscapes and onomastics on Norfolk Island. In G. Puzey & L. Kostanski (Eds.), *Names and naming: People, places, perceptions and power* (pp. 62–82). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Nash, J. (2013). *Insular toponymies: Place-naming on Norfolk Island, South Pacific and Dudley Peninsula, Kangaroo Island*. Amsterdam, the Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Nash, J. (2013–2014). Norfolk Pitcairn *Bounty*: Myth narrative place. *Te Reo*, 56–57, 177–190.
- Nash, J., & Chuk, T. (2012). In deep water: Diving site names on Norfolk Island. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 10(4), 301–320.
- Norfolk Island Telecom. (2008). *Norfolk Island telephone directory*. Norfolk Island: Author.
- Prideaux, B., & Crosswell, M. (2009). The value of visitor surveys: The case of Norfolk Island. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 12(4), 359–370.
- Prideaux, B., & Watson, T. (2010). Rebranding Norfolk Island—Is it enough to rebuild visitor numbers? In A. Lewis-Cameron & S. Roberts (Eds.), *Marketing island destinations: Concepts and cases* (pp. 23–36). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Rose-Redwood, R., & Azaryahu, M. (2010). Geographies of toponymic inscription: New directions in critical place-name studies. *Progress in Human Geography*, 34(4), 453–470.
- Trinh, T. T., Ryan, C., & Cave, J. (2014). Souvenir sellers and perceptions of authenticity—The retailers of Hoi An, Vietnam. *Tourism Management*, 45, 275–283.