

Standing stones, bagpipes and kilts in the Australian bush

The construction of a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes



**Rixt Bijker
August 2007**

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Preface

This thesis forms the completion of the master of Cultural Geography that I have followed at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. How does a Dutch girl end up writing about a Celtic town in Australia? Me and my friend Vanessa Wiggeraad thought it would be interesting to do the research for our master's thesis in Australia. Through contacts of our supervisor prof. dr. Huigen it appeared that we would be welcome at the University of New England in Armidale. After having searched for that place on the map of Australia both of us went looking for an interesting topic for our research. While reading in the Lonely Planet and on the internet the town of Glen Innes caught my attention. A town with a Celtic stone circle and Gaelic streetsigns in Australia seemed to be an interesting place for a cultural geographer. And interesting it was. My time in Australia and especially the period of fieldwork in Armidale, has been a really good and positive experience.

I would very much like to thank prof. dr. J. Walmsley and dr. T. Sorensen for welcoming us at the University of New England in Armidale. Jim Walmsley has been a great support during our research period in Armidale and also when we were back in the Netherlands by sending us all kinds of useful material.

I would like to thank prof. dr. P. P. P. Huigen for making it possible that we could go to Australia and also for his supervision during the writing of my thesis. I have experienced his feedback as useful and stimulating.

All the people in Glen Innes that were approached for an interview agreed to participate and I'm very grateful for that.

Thanks to my parents and friends for their support and the interest they've shown in my research.

And, last but not least, Vanessa, I really had a good time in Australia with you. It was very good to do the research together, but I also will not forget our nice weekend trips. Thanks a lot for that, rightio!

Rixt Bijker

Groningen, August 2007

Summary

The Australian country town of Glen Innes (population approx. 10.000) presents itself as 'Celtic Country'. How the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is constructed is the subject of this thesis.

Payton (1997) sees Glen Innes, and more specifically the Standing Stones, as an example of the re-invention of Celtic Australia. According to Harvey et al. (2002a) also worldwide in recent years there has been an increasing interest in all things Celtic, providing a revitalisation of Celtic studies, debates, culture and politics (Harvey et al., 2002a). In the book 'Celtic Geographies' it is discussed that apart from being viewed as a reaction to globalisation and modernity through a rise of interest in alternative lifestyles, spiritualism and cultural identity, the Celtic Revival has also opened up entrepreneurial opportunities. This is particularly manifested in the commodification of the Celtic through its landscape, culture and heritage (Harvey et al., 2002a).

It is a short step from entrepreneurial opportunities to the concept of place marketing. Place marketing has become commonplace throughout Australia, Europe, North America and elsewhere, also in rural areas (Gibson & Davidson, 2004). To what extent economic motives played a part or whether a Celtic consciousness was more important in the decision to create a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes, is one of the key questions in this thesis.

The main method to find an answer to the research questions are semi-structured interviews with key actors. Also some persons who are not directly involved in the construction of the Celtic place identity have been interviewed. The information from the interviews is supplemented by observations in the town, a qualitative analysis of promotional material (brochures, program of the festival and websites) and an analysis of newspaper articles.

The Celtic identity of Glen Innes is mainly created by using five places in the town. First, and most important, the site of the Australian Standing Stones, a monument built in recognition of the involvement of the Celtic races in the building of the Australian nation. Second, the Visitor Information Centre; third, an entrance built of menhir-like stones with Celtic Country written on it which one sees when driving into Glen Innes; and fourth, the Celtic room in the local museum the Land of the Beardies History House. The fifth place is the town centre, where the theme is present in a very modest way. The annually held Celtic Festival is another way of creating a Celtic identity for Glen Innes. From the research it becomes clear that Glen Innes is not a real 'theme town', In those towns the theme is present everywhere in the town, while in Glen Innes it becomes visible in certain places.

The Standing Stones (inaugurated in 1992) can be seen as the start of the construction of the Celtic place identity. The Celtic Council of Australia came with the idea of building this monument to honour all the Celtic pioneers. To create publicity for the Standing Stones the first Celtic Festival was held in May 1993. From that moment on the Festival has been organised every year. The Celtic Council called Glen Innes with reference to the Standing Stones 'Celtic Capital'. Around 1994 they adopted that title themselves. Around 1998 they transformed it into Celtic Country because it is a broader term, it offers more possibilities for marketing.

It can be said that three actors have been dominant in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic. First, a network of actively involved citizens who do a lot of volunteer work. The people who were interviewed representing this actor were involved in a lot of different committees. They are white, mostly older people, most of them with a Celtic background themselves. Second,

the council has political and financial power to influence the construction of the place identity of Glen Innes and supports their initiatives and sometimes takes the initiative. Third, the Tourist Association represents the people who have direct or indirect economic interests and because their interest is the same as that of the council: the prosperity of the town, both actors can work together.

For the actors in Glen Innes economic motives seem to have been the most important for representing Glen Innes as Celtic. They wanted to create a uniqueness for Glen Innes and by doing that attract tourists. Developing the theme is an economic development strategy, a way of strengthening the Glen Innes economy. The Celtic Country theme was chosen because of the already existing Standing Stones. The Standing Stones itself can be seen as an opportunity that came by and was taken by Glen Innes.

For the actors in Glen Innes economic motives may have been the most important, for other actors a feeling of Celtic identity is important as well. The Celtic Council of Australia wanted to mark the Celtic share in the history of the country by building a monument for the Celtic pioneers. Further, the identification with the Celtic theme may be a reason for tourists to come to Glen Innes. It seems that at least part of the tourists may identify with the theme and for them maybe it is specifically the Celtic element that brings them to Glen Innes. Based on this you may say that maybe the 'identity' aspect of the theme is part of the economic success. It is not 'just' a tourist attraction, it is something people can relate to.

The meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes is for a great part similar to the meaning the concept has in Europe. The symbols, images and events used in the promotion of Glen Innes have a lot in common with the images used in tourism in the traditional Celtic regions.

But the Standing Stones incorporate two symbols that are really different from the stone circles in Europe. In the Standing Stones a Celtic cross is symbolized and in that way the monument gets a Christian meaning. This represents the Christian background of the Celts that helped to build Australia. By creating the Southern Cross in the Standing Stones, a typically Australian symbol which you see also in the Australian flag, and naming one of the Stones 'the Australis stone', a link is created between the new world and the old world, between Australia and the Celtic. It can be said that this specific Australian symbol makes the monument unique. It makes it an Australian array, an Australian Celtic monument.

Most of the respondents think that there are no aspects of Glen Innes and its history that are left unrepresented by focusing on the Celtic theme. The coordinator of the Local Aboriginal Land Council thinks that in the promotion of Glen Innes could be recognized more that it is Ngorabul country. But he also mentions that with regard to that positive things are going on.

There is a small group of people in Glen Innes who really identify with the theme, who really feel Celtic. There is a slightly bigger group, probably partly overlapping with the former, who feel proud of the Standing Stones and like the fact that Glen Innes is represented as Celtic. But the majority of the people seem more or less indifferent to the whole situation. According to most respondents there are no people who are known to be opposed to the Standing Stones, the Celtic Festival and the Celtic Country theme. The group that is interested and positive about it seems to be growing, according to the respondents mainly because they start to see the benefits for the town more.

It is interesting that the development of the Standing Stones and later on the Celtic theme has stimulated the Celtic consciousness in Glen Innes. People are more aware of the Celtic history of the place and they have for example started wearing the Glen Innes tartan, in the form of a tie or kilt.

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1. Introduction

Driving into Glen Innes one enters ‘Celtic Country’, which is clearly indicated by an entrance built of menhir-like stones next to the highway. Glen Innes might sound Scottish, but the town is located in the rural New England region in New South Wales, Australia (population approx. 10.000). In this Australian country town one can find some bilingual streetsigns (English-Gaelic) and in the Visitor Information Centre souvenirs with the specially developed Glen Innes tartan are sold. Most important are the Australian Standing Stones, the official monument for the Celtic pioneers in Australia. These Standing Stones are the venue for the yearly celebrated Celtic Festival. How the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is constructed is the subject of this thesis.

Payton (1997) sees Glen Innes, and more specifically the Standing Stones, as an example of the re-invention of Celtic Australia. According to Harvey et al. (2002a) also worldwide in recent years there has been an increasing interest in all things Celtic, providing a revitalisation of Celtic studies, debates, culture and politics. As well as witnessing a growth in the vitality of Celtic cultures and politics within the constituent Celtic countries, the present period has according to these authors indeed also experienced an exportation of Celticity to the world. This process is partly associated with the existence of diasporic Celtic communities in various parts of the world, and is illustrated, among other things, by the interest shown by the inhabitants of the New World in tracing their Celtic heritage and roots. Historical processes of migration are not the only explanations for the internationalisation of the Celtic. In many ways, the signs and symbols of Celticity have been appropriated by a variety of media of popular culture (Harvey et al., 2002a).

In the book ‘Celtic Geographies’ it is discussed that next to being viewed as a reaction to globalisation and modernity through a rise of interest in alternative lifestyles, spiritualism and cultural identity, the Celtic Revival has also opened up entrepreneurial opportunities. This is particularly manifested in the commodification of the Celtic through its landscape, culture and heritage (Harvey et al., 2002a).

It is a short step from entrepreneurial opportunities to the concept of place marketing. Place marketing has become commonplace throughout Australia, Europe, North America and elsewhere (Gibson & Davidson, 2004). In recent years research has been done on place marketing in rural areas, from which it becomes clear that a wide range of themes is used: from Elvis to aliens, from country music to Christmas (Brennan-Horley & Gibson, 2007; Gibson & Davidson, 2004; Paradis, 2002; Winchester & Rofe, 2005).

To what extent economic motives played a part or whether a Celtic consciousness was more important in the decision to create a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes, is one of the key questions in this thesis.

1.1 Scientific and societal relevance

In *Australian Folklore*, a journal of folklore studies issued annually, being edited and published at the University of New England, a few articles about some aspects of the Celtic identity of Glen Innes have been published (Auster, 1996; Keller, 2001; Tregurtha & Ryan, 1992). In this thesis the construction of the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is analyzed from a broader perspective. Instead of focusing on separate aspects of the Celtic place identity, in this research various aspects of this place making process are taken into account.

It is investigated what is being done to present Glen Innes as Celtic, the development of this process, which actors have been important in this process and why it is done. How the residents feel about it, the meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes and possible aspects that are left un-represented by focusing on the Celtic theme are also considered.

Research has primarily been done into the place promotion of traditional Celtic regions (Butler, 1998; Kneafsey, 2002; Markwick, 2001). The construction of a Celtic place identity outside these traditional Celtic regions (Harvey et al., 2002a) has not often been investigated before. In that way this research can help to get some further insight into the field of Celtic Geographies. That this can be useful is discussed by Harvey et al. (2002b):

‘Given the evident territorial connections associated with Celtic issues, and the obvious spatial themes inherent in both ‘old’ and ‘new’ interpretations of Celticity, it is somewhat surprising that the contribution of geographers to this contemporary academic debate has been largely conspicuous by its absence. Although there are a few notable exceptions, we would suggest that the Celtic category has not received the sustained interrogation of space and place that it deserves (p. 3).’

According to Harvey et al. (2002b) Celticity, as a category, contributes to the illumination of number of issues that are of crucial importance to contemporary society. Examples include the promotion of difference as a political, cultural or economic device, and the search for identity and belonging within a post-modern, consumerist society.

It is in that sense also interesting to compare the meaning ‘Celtic’ has in Glen Innes with the meaning of the concept in the Celtic regions in Europe. Research has been done into the place promotion of for example Brittany, Ireland and Scotland (Butler, 1998; Kneafsey, 2002; Markwick, 2001). It will be interesting to see if the same kind of images are used to represent Celtic at the other side of the world, so if Celtic has a kind of universal representation.

In Australia some research has been done on place marketing in rural areas (i.e. Brennan-Horley & Gibson, 2007; Gibson & Davidson, 2004). What makes the research in this thesis different is the Celtic theme, which you can describe as a more ‘ethnic’ theme (Schnell, 2003). The process of construction and the involvement of residents and visitors could be different when such a theme is used.

Besides being scientifically relevant this research also has practical relevance. In the first place it may provide the people of Glen Innes with a good overview of some of the place making processes that have taken place in their town. Secondly, country towns that are in a similar position could benefit from the experience of Glen Innes. They may learn about the process, the actors involved and the factors they have to take into account when starting a development like this.

1.2 Research questions

The goal of this research is to investigate how the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is constructed. The central question in this thesis is then:

How is the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes constructed?

To be able to answer this question six research questions have been formulated:

- *How is the Celtic identity of Glen Innes created?*
- *How has the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic come into being and which actors have played a role in this?*
- *Why is Glen Innes represented as Celtic?*
- *What is the meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes?*
- *What is left un-represented in the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic?*
- *To what extent do the inhabitants feel connected with the identity that has been created?*

1.3 Data

The main method to find an answer to these research questions are semi-structured interviews with key actors. Also some persons who are not directly involved in the construction of the Celtic place identity have been interviewed. Some of the respondents were selected in advance, others were traced by using the 'snowball method'. The information from the interviews is supplemented by observations in the town, a qualitative analysis of promotional material (brochures, program of the festival and websites) and an analysis of newspaper articles.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

In Chapter 2 relevant theoretical concepts and previous research on the subject are discussed. In chapter 3 the method of research is described, with attention for the method of data collection and the way the data are analysed. The results of the research are presented in chapter 4. For each of the six research questions the results for the relevant data sources are discussed. Finally in chapter 5 there is a conclusion and discussion of the results of the research.

2. Place identity, place marketing and Celtic geographies

In this chapter relevant theoretical concepts and previous research related to the subject are discussed. In the first section the basic notion underlying this research is emphasized that place must be seen as a social construction. After that place identity, the central concept in this thesis, is defined. Place identity is used in and created by place marketing. It is described how this concept usually linked to cities, is increasingly applied in rural areas, worldwide and in Australia. Some examples of research into place marketing in rural areas are discussed.

After that the attention switches to the Celtic. Worldwide there has been in recent years an increasing interest in all things Celtic and also in Australia a Celtic 're-invention' has taken place. Glen Innes, and more specifically the Standing Stones, can be seen as an example of this. The Celtic origins of Glen Innes and previous research on the Celtic identity of the town are described. To finish off the chapter Celtic images used in tourism in the traditional Celtic regions are discussed.

2.1 Place

Human geography is the study of places. All over the world people are engaged in place-making activities. In conformity with the social construction approach, argued forcefully for within cultural geography (Hilary et al., 2003; Simon, 2004), places can be seen as socially constructed. Places don't just exist, they are always and continually being socially constructed by powerful institutional forces in society. Places don't have meanings that are natural and obvious but ones that are created by some people with more power than others to define what is and is not appropriate (Cresswell, 2004).

Harvey (1996) sees place as a form of fixed capital. Places compete to get a share of the mobile capital. Investment in consumption spectacles, the selling of images of places, competition over the definition of cultural and symbolic capital, the revival of vernacular traditions associated with places as a consumer attraction, all this is involved in inter-place competition.

An important part of the creation of a sense of place is through a focus on particular and selective aspects of history. Next to a personal thing memory is also social. Some memories are allowed to fade, are not given any kind of support. Other memories are promoted as standing for this and that. One of the primary ways in which memories are constituted is through the production of places, for example monuments (Cresswell, 2004)

Related to this construction of place is the concept of representation. For many geographers, an important way in which we come to know about people and place is through their representation. All representations potentially communicate place myths in one way or another, even if that was not necessarily the intention of the author who created the representation. Geographers tend to focus on the partial and selective nature of representations, exploring how this selectivity contributes to the production of place in people's imaginations by emphasizing some things and ignoring others. In this sense representations are not neutral, because they promote certain senses of place at the cost of others. Appreciating whose images and ideas are being put in representations of place, and whose are excluded, is therefore crucial in interpreting the meaning of place imagery (Holloway & Hubbard, 2000).

2.2 Place identity

An important concept in this research is place identity. Huigen and Meijering (2005) state that the academic world appears to have reached a broad consensus on six aspects of place identity, to a great extent related to the concepts mentioned above.

First, place identity is a social construct, it is something that is attributed to a place by people. The process of attributing an identity to a place can be described as the construction of place identity.

The second aspect of place identity is that it is based on the characteristics of the place. Actors attribute an identity in order to achieve certain implicitly or explicitly stated goals. The actor bases the place identity on the distinguishing features of the place, which are often considered as characteristics and identity markers.

Thirdly, place identity is to a large extent based on the past. 'The history of a place can be seen as a lucky dip. Everyone reaches into it for 'facts' to support their own particular goals.' (p. 22)

Fourthly, place identity is open for discussion. Every society is composed of different actors with different goals, who therefore attribute different identities to a place. Actors who are powerful in terms of authority and/or resources can impose their dominant place identities at the expense of other actors.

Fifth, place identity is attributed within, and characterized by, a particular context, the spatial context or location and the socio-cultural context.

The sixth aspect of place identity is that its identity attribution is a continuing process in which new actors establish themselves and goals and ideas change (Huigen & Meijering, 2005).

2.3 Place marketing

Place identity is used in place marketing but is also created by it. Place marketing has a long history, for example during the age of colonial expansion migration was stimulated by advertisements with attractive images of possible destinations like Australia. Another well-known example are the seaside resorts which in search of tourists have promoted themselves through press advertisements, posters and brochures, with ingredients as golden beaches, nice climates and welcoming hotels (Gold & Ward, 1994).

Economic and cultural globalization has meant that places and regions throughout the world are increasingly seeking to influence the ways in which they are perceived by tourists, businesses, media firms, and consumers. As a result, places are increasingly being reinterpreted, reimagined, designed, packaged and marketed. Through place marketing, sense of place has become a valuable commodity and culture has become an important economic activity. Furthermore, culture has become a significant factor in the ability of places to attract and keep other kinds of economic activity (Knox & Marston, 2004).

Central to place marketing is the deliberate manipulation of material and visual culture in an effort to enhance the appeal of places to key groups. In part, this manipulation of culture depends on promoting traditions, lifestyles, and arts that are locally rooted; in part it depends on being able to connect with globalizing culture through new cultural attractions and specially organized events and exhibitions (Knox & Marston, 2004).

The concept of place marketing is often used in the context of major cities reinventing themselves because they have to face a post-industrial future, with projects as waterside developments and the Cultural capital of Europe (Gold & Ward, 1994). But also in rural areas place marketing is increasingly applied.

2.4 Place marketing in rural areas

Western nations have experienced major structural change in rural areas as a result of global economic, political, social and technological change. This structural change has led to a number of responses in government policy which have often focused on attempts to generate new patterns of economic activity in order to diversify the rural economic base (Butler, Hall, & Jenkins, 1998). Much government attention has been given to the economic benefits of tourism. Tourism development has therefore received increasing recognition as a regional and national economic development tool over this period (Hall & Jenkins, 1998; Jenkins, Hall, & Troughton, 1998).

Although some rural areas have long served to attract visitors through their inherent appeal, it is only in recent years that regions have explicitly sought to develop, image and promote themselves in an integrated fashion in order to make themselves more attractive to tourists, investors and employees. As described above, within the geography, tourism and marketing literature, the concepts of 'place marketing' also described as 'selling places', 'geographical marketing' or 'reimagining strategies', has come to receive significant attention over the past decade (Butler & Hall, 1998; Gold & Ward, 1994; Hall, 1994). According to Butler and Hall (1998) rural imaging processes are characterised by some or all of the following:

- the development of a critical mass of visitor attractions and facilities;
- the hosting of events and festivals;
- the development of rural tourism strategies and policies often associated with new or renewed regional tourism organisations and the related development of regional marketing and promotional campaigns; and
- the development of leisure and cultural services and projects to support the regional marketing and tourism effort.

The principal aims of imaging strategies are to attract tourism money, generate employment in tourism and related industries, help create positive images for potential investors and local inhabitants, and provide an environment which will attract and retain the interest of professionals who now constitute the core work force in the new service industries, whether it be for second homes, early retirement, commuter housing or the electronic cottage (Butler & Hall, 1998).

In this way places are now perceived as products to be promoted and sold. Places are increasingly being commodified around a series of real or imagined cultural traditions and representations (Butler & Hall, 1998).

2.5 Place marketing in rural areas in Australia

Rural Australia is also going through a time of major change. The future of country towns, in particular, is attracting a good deal of attention (Walmsley, 2003). Economic restructuring, demographic change (especially outmigration and ageing) and the loss of social capital are widely acknowledged to be major problems (Brennan-Horley, Connell, & Gibson, 2007; The National Centre for Rural & Regional Tourism, 2005; Walmsley, 2003).

What Australian rural communities try to achieve most of all is sustainable economic growth. Very often this is thought to lie in the field of tourism (Butler, Hall, & Jenkins, 1998). The Australian Commonwealth Department of Tourism (1994, as cited in Hall & Jenkins, 1998, p. 23) argued: 'Tourism creates jobs, stimulates many traditional industries in rural and regional areas, tourism offers an opportunity to revitalise regional Australia and spread the social benefits of tourism'.

There is such a general plea for the development of rural tourism that some authorities have suggested that tourism is often viewed as a 'panacea' for rural problems. Despite the widespread adoption of such a view, some authorities have warned against this sort of blind trust in tourist development. Despite this controversy, there can be no doubt that tourism plays an important role in some local economies. The smaller the place in question is, the more important tourism seems to be to the local economy, a fact that is important in a rural Australia that is characterized by many small settlements (Walmsley, 2003).

Numerous places in inland Australia have tried to reinvent themselves through staging festivals. Next to music, many rural festivals have focused on food and wine, literature, film, multiculturalism, gardens and sporting competitions. Small, struggling towns in rural Australia have promoted festivals of all sorts, both as a community-building exercise and because they can attract wealthy, usually urban, visitors. In selected cases, festivals have become integral elements of local and regional economic revitalisation strategies. In short, they can place or keep towns on the map (Brennan-Horley, Connell, & Gibson, 2007).

Festivals can be small or large, simple or complex, and oriented to any theme. Each, however, is a formal period or programme of entertaining activities having a festive character and publicly celebrating some concept, fact, or happening (Janiskee & Drews, 1998).

Festivals that celebrate, commemorate and perform aspects of local, regional and international cultures are a world-wide phenomenon receiving growing attention from the academic research community as well as from policy-makers and professionals in the fields of tourism, the arts, and community development. Certainly from the point of view of destination and promotion agencies trying to expand tourist markets for economic gain, festivals have become highly significant (Long, Robinson, & Picard, 2004).

The observance of and participation in festivals, and what we may broadly term 'celebratory events', is an increasingly significant aspect of the contemporary tourist experience (Picard & Robinson, 2004).

2.6 Tourism and identity

According to Walmsley (2003) some goods and activities become 'markers' of lifestyle and identity in the field of leisure, recreation and tourism. The example is mentioned of a trip along the Birdsville Track or the Canning Stock Route as becoming a marker of 'Australianness', but also trips to Tamworth (marketing itself as Australia's Country Music Capital, see 2.7.3) or Gympie (with an annual Country Festival) are examples of activities marking individuals as members of the country music 'fraternity'.

This fits in with the idea that an underlying characteristic of the consumption society is that tourists are not motivated to travel because of specific destination attributes, but in order to fulfill psychological needs such as self-actualisation and social interaction (Waite, 1997). This is a fundamental point that is opposed to much of traditional thinking in the tourism industry 'where the building and advertising of attractions have been seen as the way to go' (Walmsley, 2003, p. 65). A good example of this traditional thinking is the Australian obsession with building 'Big things', from the famous Big Banana in Coffs Harbour, a Big Ned Kelly in Glenrowan to a Big Golden Guitar in (again) Tamworth (for more examples see www.bigthings.com.au). Recognition that it is culture, in its broadest sense, that makes places interesting is a key prerequisite for successful tourism promotion (Walmsley, 2003).

2.7 Examples of place marketing in rural areas

Several articles have been written about the construction of a certain place identity by means of place marketing in towns in rural areas (e.g. Brennan-Horley & Gibson, 2007; Frenkel, Walton, & Andersen, 2000; Gibson & Davidson, 2004; Panelli, Stolte, & Bedford, 2003; Paradis, 2002; Schnell, 2003; Winchester & Rofe, 2005). The five articles that are the most relevant for this research are discussed in more detail now.

2.7.1 Parkes and the Elvis Revival Festival

Brennan-Horley, Connell, and Gibson (2007) have investigated the construction of a new place identity for the small town of Parkes by means of the annual Elvis Revival Festival. Their article explores the way in which a remote place in rural Australia with few economic prospects has created a tourism product, and subsequently captured national publicity, through a festival based around the commemoration of the birthday of Elvis Presley.

Parkes, a small country town of 10,000 residents, deals with the same problems as many other inland country towns in Australia (as mentioned above). The emergence of the Elvis Presley Revival Festival in Parkes was the result of what you might call a local coincidence, the right people meeting each other at the right time. As the authors put it: 'Parkes happened to have a restaurant called Gracelands, and a small group of committed fans willing to organise an event. This suited the pragmatic aim of the local council of the time, namely to improve summer tourism.' (p. 74). An Elvis Revival committee was subsequently formed and, in 1992, what was essentially a very small group of local fans decided to stage Australia's first Elvis festival. The first festivals were largely ignored by the local media as inappropriate or trivial and that exclusion has only partly disappeared. By contrast, the national media have regularly covered the Festival.

The organisers emphasise the importance of being unique, doing something that no one else is doing. This is also seen in an effort to combine the success of Parkes' two major attractions, Elvis and the Parkes Radio Telescope, by combining both in one image. By doing this they make 'the Elvis unique to Parkes. He's not just any Elvis that could be found anywhere – he's the Parkes Elvis'. (p. 82).

The Festival is supported financially by the council, but it is run largely voluntarily by a committee of locals, tourism promoters and Elvis fans. Interesting is that until very recently, Parkes rarely mentioned the Festival in any of its standard tourist publications. Amongst the local businesses opinions about the appropriateness of the festival as a marker of place identity were divided. But seeing the the growing success of the Elvis Revival Festival (in 2006 organisers estimated that over 5000 people participated in the festival) and the economic benefits that tourism provides has helped to change local perceptions of the event and gain further support and interest from local businesses and the wider community.

It is remarkable that although it has now become known throughout Australia as a location associated with Elvis, Parkes has wholly invented this association. In a sense Parkes has become the site of an 'invented tradition', where a particular image has been fixed on to a place, linked to a particular imagined historic past, but assumed to have been ever present (Hobsbawm, 1983). However, unlike 'traditions' now widely if incorrectly accepted as innate, it is quite clear to all that there is no Elvis tradition in Parkes.

2.7.2 Roswell, New Mexico and the development of the UFO theme

Paradis (2002) researched the theme development in Roswell, New Mexico (population approx. 48,000). Since a mysterious crash in 1947 this town is associated with UFO's and extraterrestrial phenomena. But only since the 1990's the UFO theme is consciously used in

the promotion of the city as a tourist destination. The author describes the development since then and the actors who played a part in this development.

The origin of the UFO theme in Roswell can be traced to the interests of three local residents who claimed to have been involved in the 1947 incident. In 1991 these three persons opened a UFO museum which developed in the next years into the dominant visitor attraction in Roswell. With the help of the committee Mainstreet Roswell a UFO festival was started in 1996. After a modest start the festival became a big event in 1997, the 50th anniversary of the Roswell Incident, attracting an estimated number of 48.000 visitors. All this attracted a lot of media attention and when the economic potential became clear the city council eventually warmed up to the festival and the theme. According to the author the local newspaper played a vital role in promoting the festival and indirectly in the theming of Roswell by publishing a lot about the growing popularity of Roswell in important media.

Not all the Roswell residents were enthusiastic about the UFO theme in town. But except for occasional letters to the editor the public opposition has not stimulated any organized opposition to the theme.

According to Paradis it is tempting to view theme development and tourism promotion in smaller urban places as a product of structural forces and external trends. But that view does not take into account contingencies of locality, history and agency rooted in specific places. Paradis emphasizes the importance of further scholarly investigation into the processes through which theming occurs, how themes are manifested in the cultural landscape, and the implications of theme generation in smaller towns.

2.7.3 Tamworth, Australia's Country Music Capital

Gibson and Davidson (2004) have researched the development of Australia's 'country music capital' Tamworth. Since the 1970's this country town in rural New England, New South Wales (population approx. 50.000) has become well known by that name. Its annual Country and Western Music Festival has become the leading event of its type in Australia. The festival, and country music more generally, have become central to the town's identity and tourism marketing strategies. According to the authors its claim to the status of 'country music capital' is simultaneously 'a pitch for a musical genre, and a claim, by association for 'country' - a much more general descriptor used in Australia for rural places and lifestyles.

Country started in Tamworth in the 1950's and 1960's with the development of a country music radio show. Several recording studios came to Tamworth and the tag 'country music capital' was applied to the town. Gradually a country music festival developed. It was not until later that it was perceived as a serious boost to the local economy and seen as a local economic development strategy. The festival today includes a 10-day program with around 60.000 visitors. The authors have analysed which actors created and sustained Tamworth as 'country music capital'. Further on they have investigated which construction of country is used in Tamworth and how the music style is captured in the town's built landscape. In the article is described how in the beginning the residents of Tamworth were quite negative about the constructed identity. They left town during the festival, wrote letters to the editor of the local newspaper and bought t-shirts with 'I hate country music' on it. There was little support from local business either. Over time, resistance to the festival became less though it did not entirely disappear. The reaction of residents is now overall positive.

2.7.4 Leavenworth, Washington, a Bavarian theme town

Frenkel, Walton, and Andersen (2000) investigated the process by which the small town of Leavenworth, Washington, with its nearly 4.000 residents, developed into a theme town in 'Bavarian' style. The town is decorated with half-timbered facades, hanging flower baskets, painted murals, German lettering, lederhosen and you can hear German brass bands and eat

bratwurst. The concept of the 'ethnic theme town' is quite an extreme example of the tourism development strategies small towns use. Although the theme is usually based on a resident ethnic population, in the case of Leavenworth it is completely invented.

In a period in which tourism was already important in Leavenworth a study was done of how the economy could be improved. The final result of that was amongst others the adopting of a theme. It is interesting that no attempt was made to base the theme in any way on the history of the town. Two entrepreneurs took the initiative to really execute the plan. Representing the place as real or authentic is important in the production of a themed landscape. Authenticity is a polyvalent concept, presenting different meanings to different people. In Leavenworth they tried to reach that authenticity by keeping as closely as possible to the physical design of archetypal villages in Germany. The initiators of the plans received a great deal of support from the Leavenworth Echo, the local newspaper. From the start, the publisher and several writers made it known that the town was involved in an authentic project. It is that the completely invented nature of Leavenworth is no secret. Indeed, a prominent interpretive display proudly documents the whole process of Bavarianization. Few people, therefore, have illusions about the town's authentic heritage. The residents are divided in their opinion about the tourism in their town. They complain about the parking and the high prices, but seem not to disagree with the way in which the town is presented.

2.7.5 Little Sweden, U.S.A.

Schnell (2003) wrote an article about Lindsborg, Kansas (population approx. 3.300) also known as Little Sweden, U.S.A., a Swedish theme town. Contrary to Leavenworth the theme of this town is rooted in the history of the place, which was settled by Swedes. The author tries to trace the evolution of Swedish consciousness in Lindsborg and the conceptions and perceptions about place, ethnicity, and identity that exist among its residents. From his research it appears that in the beginning of the town (1869) there was a great Swedish consciousness. Later on this consciousness disappeared more or less for a while, but then it came back as a kind of Swedish Americanness (in the 1930's) and a more folk Swedishness (1960's). Now also non-Swedes join in the wearing of costumes, participating in dance groups, etc. Schnell sees all this as searching for a sense of connectedness to the past and to the community that such expressions offer. According to him ethnicity (Swedishness in this case) per se is not what people are after when they choose to wear Swedish outfits.

2.8 Celtic revival

Payton (1997) sees Glen Innes, and more specifically the Standing Stones, as an example of the re-invention of Celtic Australia. According to Harvey et al. (2002a) also worldwide there has been in recent years an increasing interest in all things Celtic, providing a revitalisation of Celtic studies, debates, culture and politics. You could say that a Celtic renaissance is taking place, in which there has been a renewed interest in Celtic societies and cultures, and an increasing awareness among Celtic peoples of what it means to be Celtic (Basu, 2005; Harvey et al., 2002a; Norman, 1995).

The Celtic revival can be viewed as a reaction to globalisation and modernity through a rise of interest in alternative lifestyles, spiritualism and cultural identity. The Celtic renaissance has also opened up entrepreneurial opportunities. This is particularly manifested in the commodification of the Celtic through its landscape, culture and heritage (Harvey et al., 2002a). Tourism and heritage sites build upon identifiable features of Celtic history and landscape that have some basic appeal to contemporary visitors (Gruffudd et al., 1999).

Running parallel with this growth of interest in 'things Celtic', however, there has been an increased questioning of the exact nature of the concept, and a degree of scepticism concerning the use of the term 'Celtic' as a meaningful category (Harvey et al., 2002b; McCarthy & Hague, 2004). It is argued that the 'myth of the Celts' represents a 'continuity of naming' rather than a continuity of experience. Although many modern writers assume that some groups of people in early Europe 'called themselves Celts', very little evidence for this actually exists (Chapman, 1992). Rather, according to some authors the category is purely a social construction, stitched together from written sources and archeological remains (Harvey et al., 2002b; Payton, 1997).

The traditional Celtic regions are Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man, Wales, Brittany and Cornwall. Though traditional territorial or linguistic interpretations of Celticity are still important, they are being supplemented by alternative versions of Celticity. In a post-modern world, the (perceived) old and secure Celtic categories of the past are being reworked in interesting and new ways (Harvey et al., 2002b). Therefore Harvey et al. (2002b) have adopted a relatively broad definition of Celticity, one which tries to reflect the flexibility of the Celtic category today. According to these authors, 'the term Celtic refers to a group of people living on the Atlantic seaboard of Europe who share common cultural and/or ethnic characteristics, but it has been reworked and appropriated in recent years to include a large number of other individuals, living beyond the Celtic territories, who feel an affinity to various aspects of Celtic culture' (p. 4). The Celtic, and the idea of 'being a Celt', form, a convenient and very real identity for a range of people and groups, both in the traditional Celtic territories and beyond. For them, the Celtic is a social and often personal construction that carries weight and a great deal of meaning (Harvey et al., 2002b; McCarthy & Hague, 2004). To explore that meaning is the analytical task for researchers (Johnston, 1996).

Hague (2002) has researched the Scottish diaspora in the United States. The growing interest in Scotland is symbolised by the designation of Tartan Day. March 1998 the US Senate formally recognised 'the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States', when it unanimously passed Resolution 155 annually establishing 6 April as 'Tartan Day'. Next to Tartan Day there are growing numbers of magazines serving the Scottish-American community, the number of Scottish Highland Games is increasing and many US states now have official Scottish tartans (Hague, 2002).

Since the mid 1970's genealogy has become increasingly popular. The nationwide celebration of the Bicentennial in 1976, the ideological promotion and political recognition of 'multiculturalism' and the success of popular television programmes and novels about searching one's roots have stimulated this development. Roots provide an ethnic 'anchor' for many people in the USA (Hague, 2002). This can be seen as the continuing aspiration in the face of the apparent fluidity and uncertainty of contemporary Western society, 'to acquire a supposedly authentic, natural, and stable 'rooted' identity' (Gilroy, 1993, p. 30).

This leads Hague (2002) to state that over time, the meaning of 'diaspora' has changed. In today's world, individual decisions to assert 'ethnic' identities when and where one wants mean that diasporas are fluid and flexible cultural constructs, varying across time and space as people opt in and out of membership. This is what Cohen (1997) terms a 'cultural diaspora', namely a diaspora where connections between people are not based on shared historical experiences or movement to return home, but on belief in common ethnic and cultural origins.

2.9 Celtic Australia

Payton (1997) calls the mass emigration overseas a central experience for the peoples of the Celtic lands. There were disproportionately large numbers of 'Celtic' immigrants who went to

colonial Australia. Relatively few Cornish and Scots came to Australia as convicts, the overwhelming majority being free settlers (Gibson, 2000). In contrast, the Irish featured strongly in the transportation of convicts (Payton, 1997).

Each of the Celtic groups exhibited, sometimes with differing motives, an identity and experience which was not English or Anglo-Saxon and which, on occasions, was 'self-ascriptively Celtic' (Payton, 1997, p. 86). Lack of common interest and the absence of common consciousness did not prevent them from demonstrating their non-Englishness, nor did it prevent (conflicting) notions of 'Celticity' from emerging (Payton, 1997).

Since the Second World War there has been a vigorous 're-invention' of Celtic Australia, first as part of the Australian search for 'roots' and historical identity and, more recently, as part of the assertion of 'multi-culturalism' and the celebration of ethnic diversity. This has involved not only an awakening of what it is (or might be) to be of Irish or Cornish descent but has also constructed a certain Pan-Celtic consciousness (Payton, 1997, p. 87).

The re-invention of Celticity in contemporary Australia is to some extent a mirror image of what is has been happening in the Celtic lands of north-western Europe, where the emergence of Breton, Welsh, Scots, even Cornish cultural and political nationalism has re-emphasised the inherent ethnic and territorial diversity of the British, French and Irish states. This, too, has had a Pan-Celtic component, so that developments in Europe and Australia have been both complementary and mutually reinforcing (Payton, 1997).

The increasing emphasis on multiculturalism is seen as one of the factors stimulating this emerging 'Celtic consciousness' (Payton, 1997). In Australia over the past two decades the ideology of multiculturalism has become dominant. Multiculturalism as a national ideal has tried to uphold and develop an overarching framework of Australian values, in which the right of individuals from minority backgrounds to maintain their ethnic identity was assured. It is about the recognition, toleration, and acceptance of cultural diversity at a national level, within the framework of a consensus on fundamental values that is applicable to all Australians (Smolicz, 1997). Not only recent immigrants seem to respond to this, all citizens experience an increasing consciousness of their own ethnic background, be it Scots, Irish, Welsh, Cornish or even English.

This has led to a heightened interest in the historical impact of the Celtic peoples in Australia, ranging from the widespread enthusiasm for family history to more specialised studies such as that of the transplanted Cornish mining technology. But, perhaps more intriguingly, the emergence of 'Celtic consciousness' in Australia has involved not only a re-examination of Australia's Celtic past but also the borrowing of a new repertoire of symbols invented by the Celtic revivalists of post-War Europe. For example, Cornish enthusiasts in Australia have adopted the Cornish flag, the Cornish kilt and tartan, and the Cornish language (Payton, 1997).

According to Payton (1997) the re-invention of Celtic Australia has reached new heights, including not only the co-option of revivalist symbols, but also the construction of new, specifically Australian Celtic symbols. The most significant example is the stone circle at Glen Innes. Adopting the stone circle as a symbol of Pan-Celtic experience is itself an interesting act, given that such henges, although common in the Celtic lands, are in fact of a distinctly pre-Celtic origin (Payton, 1997).

2.10 Celtic Glen Innes

In 1838 the first white settlers came to the area where Glen Innes is now. They were led there by 'the Beardies', two (Irish) men named that way because of their long beards. These men, Chandler and Duval knew the area well and earned some money by guiding landseekers to

land available to take up as a station. Archibald Boyd, originally from Scotland, registered the 'first run'. In 1854 the town got the name Glen Innes. It was named after Archibald Clune Innes, also born in Scotland, who was an important land owner in the area. He named one of his stations Glen Innes. After he became bankrupt the new owner suggested Glen Innes as name for the town (Cameron, 1987; Cameron & Chappell, 1996).

Greiner and Jordan-Bychkov (1997, 2002) investigated Celtic migration patterns by looking at epitaphs on tombstones. According to them the New England district is noted for Scottish concentrations. In 1901 the two counties of New South Wales with the highest percentages of Scots both lay in New England (Greiner & Jordan-Bychkov, 1997). They nuance this by saying that no graveyard in New England revealed a Scottish majority.

Some aspects of the Celtic identity of Glen Innes have been described in a few articles in *Australian Folklore*, a journal of folklore studies issued annually, being edited and published at the University of New England (Auster, 1996; Keller, 2001; Tregurtha & Ryan, 1992). Based on material supplied by John Tregurtha, who was heavily involved in the coming into being of the Standing Stones, John Ryan has described the development of the monument (Tregurtha & Ryan, 1992). Keller (2001) describes in his article the Celtic background of Glen Innes and what was done at that moment in time to create a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes. Auster (1996) discusses in a philosophical way the meaning of the Standing Stones.

2.11 Celtic images in tourism

According to Chapman (1992), a fundamental feature of the definition of the Celts has been that they are on the edge of a more dominant world. Until the eighteenth century the nations of Europe had been preoccupied with establishing their own political, linguistic, religious and intellectual centrality. Once this centrality was established, the possibility of celebrating the disorderly but non-threatening 'ethnic fringe' emerged (Chapman, 1992). In that period the negative stereotypes were overlaid by more romanticized stereotypes. 'Writers, poets and artist cast the minority Celts as pre-modern peripheral 'other' to the modernising core of Western Europe' (Kneafsey, 2002, p. 123).

In the context of popular perceptions ideas about the Celt are often linked to things spiritual, ancient, 'alternative' and natural. It is increasingly recognised that these contemporary constructions of Celticity have their origins in the existence of historically layered social relationships whereby Celts have been positioned as 'peripheral others' to a defining 'centre' (Kneafsey, 2002).

Kneafsey (2002) discusses tourism images of Ireland and Brittany. Romantic constructions of Celts tended to portray them as living simple, rural, pure lives close to nature, in contrast to the complex, corrupt, urban lives of modern people who had lost their connection to the natural world. Present-day Breton and Irish brochures continue this theme by featuring many representations of rural and/or natural settings. Breton brochures add to this a sense of magic and mystery. Within both sets of representations, therefore, there are themes linking a sense of Celtic spirituality and mysticism with a feeling of 'oneness with nature'. The inhabitants of these mystical, almost otherworldly places are often portrayed as being integral to the rural landscape (Kneafsey, 2002).

A different sense of time seems to exist. Especially in the marketing of Ireland the idea of hospitality is important. Pints of Guinness, laughter and music are frequently incorporated into these images and descriptions of hospitality and warmth. People in Ireland and Brittany are often portrayed taking part in 'traditional' practices which in turn become cultural markers that confirm authenticity. Examples of this are music sessions, Irish sports like hurling and

rural work. It is interesting to notice that Brittany is promoting itself more and more as Celtic, thereby looking at the example of Ireland. For example, in contrast to French language information, which is presented in standard Roman type, Breton lettering is often written in a font associated with Irish art and, by extension, is Celtic in general (Kneafsey, 2002).

Markwick (2001) made an analysis of Irish travel brochures obtained from a sample of travel agents in London and Paris. Her results are for the greater part comparable with the results mentioned above that Kneafsey describes. From her analysis also became clear that rural areas were dominant in the images. She also found that Irish people and their activities are depicted in rural contexts and are associated with idealised constructs of rurality and nature. Irish people are often depicted in service roles – smiling, friendly and consequently ‘hospitable’. The representations depict a country that is apparently timeless, unchanging and firmly embedded in the past. Traditional activities, historical features and symbols are highlighted to establish a continuity with the past. The selection of photographs conspicuously focused on monuments and Celtic crosses simultaneously establishes the religious element that has dominated Ireland’s past, as well as the secular aspects of Irish history.

In his discussion of Celtic constructions in youth culture Kent (2002) mentions stone circles, Celtic knotwork, mountains and mining as standard ‘Celtic’ imagery. With regard to the use of stone circles as Celtic symbols it can be said that there is some discussion about the period in which we should place the Celts. According to Robb (2002) the history placing in time began with the use of ‘Celtic’ as a ‘catch-all term’ for pre-Roman artefacts. In that way an association developed between for example Stonehenge and the Celts which is now firmly imbedded in the popular imagination and according to Chapman (1992) ‘is thus truly part of the myth of the Celts’ (p. v).

Butler (1998) states that compared to many countries in the world, Scotland has a very strong and distinctive image, even if this image is stereotypical and artificial to a great degree. He describes this image as ‘including primary features as mountains, tartan, bagpipes, castles and kilts, and secondary features such as highland dancing, haggis, heather, golf, Balmoral and lochs/lakes’ (p. 122). This ‘tartan image’, as he calls it, is a very strong and positive one. According to Butler it has been reinforced for almost two centuries by a peculiar combination of geography, emigration, social stratification, romantic appeal and attachment in literature and art.

2.12 From theory to practice

In this chapter relevant theoretical concepts and previous research related to the subject have been discussed. It has become clear that place must be seen as a social construction. The concept of place identity, a key concept for this thesis, has been defined. Place identity is used in and created by place marketing, a concept increasingly applied in rural areas worldwide and in Australia. Some examples of research into place marketing in rural areas have been described. Glen Innes, and more specifically the Standing Stones, can be seen as an example of the Celtic re-invention that has taken place in Australia. Also worldwide there has been in recent years an increasing interest in all things Celtic. This Celtic revival in general and in Australia is discussed. And finally the Celtic origins of Glen Innes and the images used in tourism in the traditionally Celtic regions are described.

In the next chapter the methods of data collection and data analysis which are used to answer the research questions are described. It is made clear how the four data sources: interviews, observations, promotional material and newspapers, are used to answer the research questions.

3. Method of research

In this chapter the methods of data collection and data analysis which are used to answer the research questions are discussed. Four data sources were used: interviews, observations, promotional material and newspapers. The way these four data sources were used in answering the research question, is described.

3.1 Qualitative approach

The aim of this research is to investigate how the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is constructed. To do this a qualitative approach was chosen. Qualitative research methods focus on getting an in depth understanding of the way people experience their environment, the way they attach meaning to things around them and their construction of reality (Wester & Peters, 2004). The most utilized data collection method in qualitative research is the interview. Valentine (2005) states that the aim of an interview is to understand how individual people experience and make sense of their own lives. The emphasis is on considering the meanings people attribute to their lives and the processes which operate in particular social contexts. One of the additional strengths of this approach is that it allows respondents to raise issues that the interviewer may not have anticipated. The material generated in this way is rich, detailed and multi-layered (Valentine, 2005). Because of all this it seemed that for reconstructing the process of place making in Glen Innes, for mapping the interests and the motives of the actors involved and finding out what this Celtic identity meant to them a qualitative approach, mainly based on interviewing, was the most suitable.

3.2 Interviews

The most important research method was interviewing key persons. Twelve people were interviewed. Eight of them were more or less directly involved in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic, four were not or only indirectly involved. This was done to get another view apart from the perspective of insiders. Some respondents were selected in advance, they were seen as important based on things read on the internet and in literature. In the interviews was also asked who else should or could be interviewed about this subject, the so called snow ball method. After having done some interviews it appeared from the answers to this question that the main actors in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic had been covered. The respondents were called in advance to make an appointment and there was nobody who refused to cooperate.

This is a list of the respondents:

- Tourism Manager: Wendy Fahey
- Tourism Manager in the period of the development of the Standing Stones: Lex Ritchie
- Chairman of the Standing Stones Committee: John Tregurtha
- Member of the Australian Celtic Festival Committee: Raelene Watson
- Mayor of Glen Innes: Steve Toms
- Chairman of Australian Standing Stones Management Board: Colin Lute
- Volunteer at the Standing Stones: George Robertson
- Secretary of the Glen Innes and District Historical Society: Eve Chappell
- Coordinator of the Glen Innes Local Aboriginal Land Council: Trevor Potter

- Owner of a lunch room: Kathy Sharmann
- Owner of a clothing store: Susan Judge
- Real estate agent: Fred Alletsee

The interviews were conducted with the help of a list of open questions, these questions were based on the six research questions. The questions were adapted to the different respondents and their roles. Examples of interview questions can be found in the Appendix.

During the interviews the answers were noted. The answers were analysed by writing down in a matrix for every respondent the relevant answers for each of the six research questions. During this process already the things that were notable were written down. Based on the matrix and these notes it was tried to answer each of the six research questions.

3.3 Observations

Observations were done in Glen Innes on two occasions. One time in the beginning of the research, without the knowledge from the interviews, and a second additional time later on. In fact basically the route a tourist would follow in Glen Innes was taken. Driving into Glen Innes on the highway, then visiting the Visitor Information Centre, walking around the town center, taking a look in the Land of the Beardies History House, and last but not least, visiting the Standing Stones. All of these places were observed carefully. The observations were noted and photos were taken. Based on these notes an overview was written with some photos used as illustration.

3.4 Promotional material

Promotional material was collected that is directly meant to create a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes. That is why no brochures of certain attractions or events were analyzed that only use the Celtic Country logo but are not directly part of it. The following promotional material was used in the analysis:

- Glen Innes Visitor Guide
- four Glen Innes Visitor Guides used in the past years
- Guide to the Australian Standing Stones
- Dvd of the Australian Celtic Festival 2006 (sold as a souvenir in the Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre)
- Australian Celtic Festival 2007 program booklet
- official Australian Standing Stones opening booklet
- www.gleninnestourism.com
- www.australiancelticfestival.com

First the images were viewed and notable things relating to the research questions were written down. After that the same was done while reading the text. From this a couple of main conclusions were drawn and these were illustrated by some images and quotations.

3.5 Newspapers

Articles in the local newspaper the Glen Innes Examiner and the national newspaper the Sydney Morning Herald were viewed. The Glen Innes Examiner was available on microfilm. Time did not permit to view all the volumes from before the Standing Stones till now. That is why some significant moments in this period were chosen: the period prior and during the building of the Standing Stones, the second Celtic Festival in 1994 (there was no edition available during the first Celtic Festival), the Celtic Festival of 2006 and the Celtic Festival in between those two, of 2000. The issues in those period and around those Festivals were viewed and all articles relating to Celtic in any way were printed out. Those were analyzed and notable things relating to the research questions were written down. From this analysis some conclusions were drawn which were illustrated by means of quotations.

The Sydney Morning Herald was available in a digital version. All articles related to Glen Innes and the Celtic theme were analyzed.

4. Results

In this chapter the results of the research are discussed. For each of the six research questions the outcomes for the relevant data sources: observations, interviews, promotional material and newspapers, will be described.

4.1 How is the Celtic identity of Glen Innes created?

4.1.1 Observations

Driving into Glen Innes one is passing an entrance built of menhir-like stones with Celtic Country written on it. A bit further along the highway is the Visitor Information Centre. A sign is indicating 'Glen Innes, Celtic Country, Visitor Centre, Sapphires', Glen Innes is written in a kind of Celtic lettering and on top of the sign you see a bagpipe player and a dancing girl. Next to the Australian and aboriginal flag the Cornish flag is waving. On the glass door there is a Celtic symbol. As in every Visitor Information Centre there are a lot of brochures. On many of the Glen Innes brochures the slogan Celtic Country is used. Quite a lot of souvenirs can be bought here. It is a mixture of Glen Innes souvenirs, Australian souvenirs and Celtic souvenirs, with the first ones being in the majority. On many of the Glen Innes souvenirs the Standing Stones or the Celtic Country logo are used, varying from stubbie-holders to tea towels and clothes. A special category are the souvenirs with the Glen Innes tartan: ties, scarves and clothes hangers (figure 4.1).

But there also local products sold as souvenir, for example olives, olive oil and jam. The Celtic souvenirs consist of jewellery, birth signs and badges and pins. Next to the souvenirs there is also a maquette of the Standing Stones, a display of the Land of the Beardies History House, attention for the winemakers in the area and in a separate part sapphires are sold.



Figure 4.1 Souvenirs with the Glen Innes tartan

Walking around the corner to the town centre one soon passes the first bilingual (English and Gaelic) street signs (figure 4.2). They are not very dominant, they could be missed easily at first sight. A couple of streets have their names indicated by these signs. In the middle of the main street there are banners with 'Welcome to Glen Innes, Celtic Country' on it with some Celtic symbols. On the town hall are next to the Australian and aboriginal flag some flags of the Celtic countries waving.



Figure 4.2 Bilingual streetsign in the main street of Glen Innes

In the mainstreet there are a few small references to the theme: one shop is called Celtic Pets, on some places there is a Celtic symbol on the window and one hotel has the Standing Stones in stained glass above its entrance. But that is about it, no souvenir shops have been discovered, the theme is present in the centre, but in a very modest way.

The most important place in the branding of Glen Innes is the site of the Standing Stones (figure 4.3). This monument is built 'in recognition of the involvement of the Celtic races in the building of the Australian nation', as a plaque at the site indicates. From the town centre one has to drive a short distance and there they are, on top of a hill overlooking Glen Innes. The Stones stand between the typical Australian eucalypt trees. It is a nice place for picnics, benches have been placed for that purpose. The whole site is well kept. The Standing Stones were visited a couple of times for this research, it was never crowded but there were always tourists coming and leaving. One time a whole bus group got a tour around the Stones. Three times a week a volunteer, dressed in kilt, welcomes the tourists, hands them a Guide to the Standing Stones and answers questions. A lady is playing the bagpipe once a week at noon, on another day she does that at the town hall. Walking around the Standing Stones there is more to see. One can try to pull Excalibur, the famous sword of King Arthur, out of the stone. The sword is dedicated to the Welsh communities. There are also plaques dedicated to the Cornish pioneers and the 'Scottish Gaels' who came to Australia. In a Wall of History stones of historical sites from all over the Celtic world are placed, mostly dedicated by clans or families.



Figure 4.3 The Australian Standing Stones

To the side of the Standing Stones stands Crofter's Cottage, built of basalt rock as a replica of the small stone 'black house' of the early Celtic peoples. There you can have a drink or something to eat, buy a souvenir or a postcard. There is a guest book to sign and some tartans are displayed.

One Celtic place in Glen Innes is left to be described: the Celtic Room in the Land of the Beardies History House. Here pictures of the building of the Standing Stones are shown, next to different tartans, historical maps, an overview of all Scottish clans, a traditional piper costume and an explanation of the Glen Innes tartan.

Observations are available of the Saturday of the Celtic Festival in 2007¹. During the Grand Parade in the main street the crowd seemed to be reasonably large. The Grand Parade went up and down Grey Street. The term 'Celtic' seemed to be interpreted loosely. There were people dressed up as Romans (the Ninth Legion), their link to the theme could be that they fought the Celts (figure 4.4). However, there were also quite a few medieval maids, some early colonial Australians, and even people who seemed to have no connection with the Celts other than having a dog (i.e. a Scots terrier) linked to the area. Several clans marched along behind their banner, their tartan. Some clans had more than 30 people marching, others were very tiny. Next to the parade there were quite a few flag raising ceremonies in the main street.



Mid morning attention then shifted to the Standing Stones. The organisation of the festival was very good. Several roads were closed around the Stones and the cars were all directed to parking in a field to the east of the site. It cost AUD 20 per person to get into the festival, this included parking. At the circle there was virtually continuous music with around eight bagpipe bands and then a couple of folk bands, which could be described much more as early Australian colonial than Celtic. There was Scottish dancing more or more continuously, plus Australian colonial dancing. There was also a caber tossing competition and "strong men" running over 30 m carrying 100 kg rocks. There were also "strong women" running over 30m carrying 50kg rocks. The 'stonarium' was used by the clans for little speeches and flag raising.

Figure 4.4 The Spanish 9th Roman legion in the Festival parade

Maybe a bit curiously, there were representatives from the re-enactment society that covers the Irish brigade in the US Civil War.

Around the outside of the stone circle were countless stalls. There was a lot tartan on sale, and many bagpipes and bagpipe accessories. The food was distinctly non-Celtic, more the great Australian meatpie and hamburger. Most of the stalls had a Celtic theme although some seemed to be more general. There was, for example, one which had medieval fighting weapons. You could say that the festival was a mixture of the authentic and the very inauthentic in which a very general interpretation of the term 'Celtic' was used.

¹ I would very much like to thank Jim Walmsley for sending me his impression of that day.

4.2 How has the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic come into being and which actors have played a role in this?

4.2.1 Interviews

The process of constructing a Celtic place identity

In the 1970's tourism really started in Glen Innes. The first (unofficial) tourist office, a few stands with brochures in the local museum Land of the Beardies History House, was opened. Tourists were people visiting relatives or passing by on the highway. Themes that were used in tourist promotion were festivals (for example the annual 'Show'), autumn colours, cattle and sheep sales, trout fishing and the national parks in the surroundings. Also later on important themes were the national parks, the seasons, heritage and the gems that could be found in the area. A Celtic theme wasn't used in any way in that period.

In 1988 Australia celebrated the Bicentenary, the first colonists arrived in Australia 200 years ago. For that occasion Scotland offered a gift to the country: a cairn consisting of stones from every parish in Scotland. Glen Innes tried to get the cairn in the town, but there were more competitors, for example Maclean and Scone. Eventually the cairn went to Mosman, a suburb in Sydney.

The cairn only honoured the Scottish, therefore the Celtic Council of Australia came with the idea of building a monument to honour all the Celtic pioneers. They approached different towns with granite in the surroundings and asked if they were interested in this monument. Glen Innes was also approached, they remembered their enthusiastic attempt to get the cairn. The tourist officer, Lex Ritchie, was positive about the request and persuaded the council to do something with it. Because of the high costs of the plan that took some time and effort. A submission, with pictures of the area and the type of rocks around, was sent to the Celtic Council. In the submission the naming after a Scottish major was mentioned. Other arguments that were used were the 'Scottish flavour' of the area, the Gaelic streetsigns that would be placed and the wide availability of granite in the area. As part of this submission the Mayor of Glen Innes visited Scotland. Finally the Celtic Council gave the right to build the Standing Stones in Glen Innes. A Standing Stones committee was set up to coordinate this building process.

On 30th October 1990 a number of Gaelic street signs were unveiled in the town centre of Glen Innes. They were meant to create the right atmosphere for the monument. Then the search for the suitable stones started. This was primarily done by a group of volunteers, who went looking for stones in the bush around Glen Innes. It appeared to be difficult to find stones with the right sizes (they had to stand 3.7 metres from ground level, which meant each to be 5.5 metres in total length), therefore a technique was developed to split bigger stones. People involved in all this were amongst others Lex Ritchie the tourism manager, John Tregurtha, a pharmacist who was appointed as Chairman of the committee, and two councillors (it may be interesting to mention that one of them was Polish). Also some local companies helped for free with cement and putting the stones in place. 35 stones were sponsored for 1000 dollar each, the rest of the costs were taken care of by the council.

The Standing Stones can be seen as the start of the construction of the Celtic place identity. The inauguration was by the Governor of New South Wales on 1 February 1992. A few years later the monument was officially acknowledged as a National Monument by the National Trust. The Australian Standing Stones Management Board is established as a committee to take care of the Stones. They are also responsible for putting new things on the site. In 1991 Excalibur, the famous sword of King Arthur, was added to the site as part of the mythology of the Welsh people. In 1993 Crofter's Cottage was built, as a replica of a Black House, to create a tourist centre on the site. In 1998 the Wall of History was build, a wall with holes in which

stones from historic places in the Celtic world can be placed. Besides the Management Board there are also the 'Guardians of the Stones'. Their task is to 'guard' the Stones more in the long term. The head guardian is the Mayor of Glen Innes. Further on there are members of the Management Board, members of the Celtic Council and some Mayors from other towns.

Already in 1991 the Glen Innes tartan was developed and officially acknowledged by the Scottish Tartans Society. Lex Ritchie came with this idea. After that the tartan was developed by Lex Ritchie and Peter Bruce, another pharmacist under the responsibility of the Standing Stones committee and the council. To create publicity for the Standing Stones the first Celtic Festival was held in May 1993. The initiative for the Festival came from the people involved in the Standing Stones Management Board. From that moment on the Festival has been organised every year. The Festival has grown as far as number of days and events are concerned and also the number of visitors has increased. After a couple of years the organization of the Festival was separated from the Management Board by establishing the Australian Celtic Festival committee. It may be useful to mention that both committees are so called '355-committees', which means that they are a committee of the council. One of the reasons for this is the public liability insurance which has become very high. The council has two representatives in the committee, the other members are volunteers. The council has a more facilitating role, also in the sense of arranging the financial side and administration.

The Celtic Council called Glen Innes with reference to the Standing Stones 'Celtic Capital'. Around 1994 they adopted that title themselves and used it for about three years. But it was rather something they said about themselves than something that was really used in promotion. According to tourism manager Wendy Fahey it wasn't a good name because the expectations it creates are too high. That's why they transformed it into Celtic Country around 1998, it is a more broad term, it offers more possibilities for marketing. It was the Council together with the Tourist Association who took the initiative to start using the slogan Celtic Country.

After adopting the Celtic Country slogan the stone entrance at the beginning of the town was build. A photo of this entrance was used at first as logo, after that a 'real' logo was developed (figure 4.5). Businesses and other organisations are stimulated now to use that logo, 'to communicate it everywhere' (tourism manager).



Figure 4.5 Celtic Country logo

About the few souvenirs that can be bought in the town the tourism manager comments that Glen Innes is a country town, and not a tourist or theme town. That's not what the residents want and you can not force them to do it. She doesn't think it will transform into a theme town either, tourism is not the most important thing in Glen Innes and it is likely that it will stay this way.

She thinks that the rootedness of the promotion in the history of the town makes it 'real', otherwise it would be only superficial.

There has been a lot of media attention, in the news and in so called 'travel stories'.

The brochures have been changed through time, in a way they are less 'Celtic', a broader approach has been chosen.

Actors involved in the process of constructing a Celtic place identity

Several actors have played a part in the construction of the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes. Most of them have been mentioned in the history above. The role and interests or motives of the different actors will be discussed now. An overview of the actors involved is given in figure 4.6.

The first actor with an important role in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic can be described as ‘**actively involved citizens**’, or **volunteers**. They did and are still doing a lot of work in the different committees and they took some important initiatives, for example to organize the Celtic Festival. Interesting in that sense is also the role of individual persons, especially the role played by former tourism manager Lex Ritchie. As employee of the council he ‘belongs’ to the actor which will be discussed next, but you may conclude that what he did was more than might be expected from a tourism manager and so it had some ‘volunteer’ aspects. That is why he also can be seen as an actively involved citizen. He saw the potential of getting the Standing Stones to Glen Innes and devoted a lot of effort to get them and really build them. Would another person have been in his position it might well be possible that Glen Innes would have no Celtic place identity at the moment, which shows the importance of the role of individual persons.

The motives of these volunteers seem to be a mix of wanting to promote the Celtic and economic motives, of which the economic motives seem to be the most important. ‘The potential benefit for the community’ (John Tregurtha) and ‘the prosperity of the town’ (Colin Lute) are mentioned as reasons for their voluntary work. These are not people who are directly or indirectly involved in the tourism business. The general economic well being of

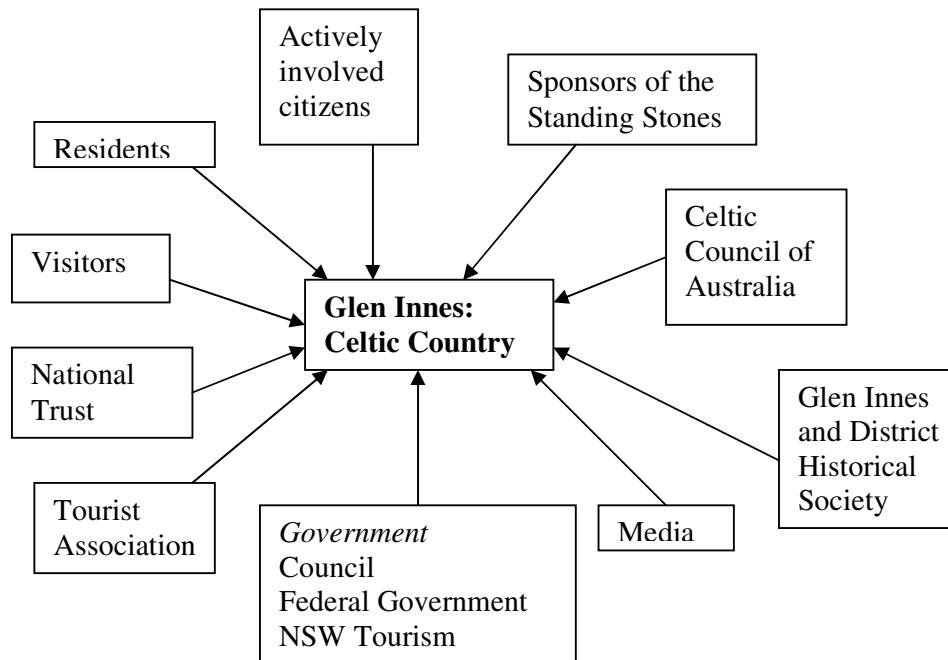


Figure 4.6 Actor-network through which the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is constructed

their town seems important to them, it wasn't their Celtic background who drove them. George Robertson, volunteer at the site of the Standing Stones, sees it as his task to promote the Celtic. But he also sees the economic possibilities the Celtic theme offers as important.

The second actor that has been important in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic is the **council**. At some points they have taken the initiative in the development, in the person of Lex Ritchie and in starting to use the Celtic Country theme for the town. They did this in co-operation with the Tourist Association. This actor will be discussed next, but it is important

first to explain the relation between these two actors. The Tourist Association's most important objective is fostering the establishment, development and promotion of tourism. The members are mostly companies or organisations who benefit directly or indirectly from tourism (e.g. motels, shops), but also some companies who profit from the economic well being of the town in general (e.g. real estate). The council and the Tourist Association work together in the Visitor Information Centre which deals with the promotion of the town and is run by council employees and volunteers. The council also injects money in the Tourist Association, together with the money from the membership fees this is the budget that is used for promotion. The tourism manager forms the 'bridge' between the council and the Tourist Association. The Tourist Association has a lot of influence on the promotion activities. Another important part of the role of the council can be described as supporting and facilitating the development. The initiative for the Festival and partly for the Standing Stones was taken by people in town, but later on the council started supporting it. They support the Standing Stones financially, they own the site and they also support the organisation in the sense that the committees have become part of the council. In case of the Celtic Festival the council takes care of for example traffic plans and some facilities. It is interesting that the Celtic theme is not only used in tourism promotion, but also by the council itself for example in the new council logo. Almost two years ago the Glen Innes council and Severn council have merged into Glen Innes Severn council. For the new council a new logo was developed with the Glen Innes tartan used in it (figure 4.7).



Figure 4.7 The new council logo

For the council the main reason for constructing a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes is 'creating a uniqueness' (tourism manager), a way 'to be different from everyone else' (Lex Ritchie). In that way it is an 'economic development strategy' (tourism manager). Their interest is the economic well being of the town.

The **Tourist Association** has, as an actor, already partly been discussed above with regard to its objective and members. Its role has been important in co-initiating the use of Celtic Country as a brand for Glen Innes and in the continuing promotion of the town and the brand. The motive for this is already implicitly mentioned above. The interest of the members are the direct and indirect benefits of tourism and an increasing long term prosperity of the town.

The **Glen Innes and District Historical Society** has as its goal 'to collect, conserve, store and disseminate the history of Glen Innes' (Eve Chappell, secretary of the society). Next to keeping an archive and issuing books and bulletins they run a (folk) museum: The Land of the Beardies History House. As part of all this they also run a research centre, of most use for people researching their family history. Their role in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic is 'providing history', 'help publicize about Celtic history' (Eve Chappell). Sometimes they have a stand at the Standing Stones. In the museum is since the mid 1990's a Celtic room with an explanation of the (Glen Innes) tartan. They have brought some information about tartans into Crofter's Cottage and during the Festival they have longer opening hours. In all these ways you could say that they give an extra (historic) dimension to the Celtic identity. For the application for the Standing Stones they have done research into the Celtic history of Glen Innes. It can be said that they play a certain part in constructing the history of Glen Innes as Celtic. For example in 1996 they published a small book about the Scottish pioneers in the district (Cameron & Chappell, 1996).

The interest of the Society in all this is to continue to be able to fulfil its goal mentioned above related to the history of Glen Innes. They don't need to make money out of it, extra tourists mean extra resources to do investments and to fulfil their task.

The **Celtic Council of Australia** is a national association of the organisations of the different Celtic groups. Their objective is the stimulation of the Celtic consciousness in different ways. Their role in constructing Glen Innes as Celtic is important in the sense that their idea of developing a monument for the Celtic pioneers in Australia has been the start of everything. Their approval gives the Standing Stones an official (Celtic) character. That is important, because it distinguishes Glen Innes from other places with Celtic monuments. For example about possible competition with Maclean (which promotes itself as Scottish) is said:

No, there is no real competition. They have their own cairn there, but they have just put it down by themselves, it is not officially acknowledged (Lex Ritchie).

The Standing Stones are recognised by the Celtic Council as the national gathering point for Celtic descendants and clans. This gives also the Festival an official character, which distinguishes it from other Festivals. During the Festival new chiefs of clans are inaugurated and that doesn't happen during other Celtic Festivals in the country.

The **National Trust** is a non-government organisation whose goal it is to promote and conserve Australia's heritage. The National Trust has officially recognized the Australian Standing Stones as a National Monument. This official acknowledgement increases the status of the attraction, it is something that is mentioned on the website of Glen Innes.

By visiting the Standing Stones, buying Celtic souvenirs or participating in the Festival **visitors** help constructing a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes. George Robertson, volunteer at the Standing Stones, estimates that 60 % of the tourists has no Celtic background and that 40 % does. Colin Lute of the Standing Stones Management Board mentions that 50 % of the Australian population has Celtic roots, and 'that attracts'. He also guides coach tours around the Standing Stones and tells that people find it special to see a stone from their 'home country' in the Wall of History. From all this it seems that at least part of the tourists may identify with the theme and for them maybe it is specifically the Celtic element that brings them to Glen Innes. Another group may just be coming to see a nice attraction, out of curiosity, or while passing by on the highway, or for other reasons.

Like the visitors, **residents** who for example visit the Standing Stones or the Festival, or wear the tartan are participating in constructing the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes. Their involvement with the theme is discussed in more detail in section 4.6.

Media contribute to the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic by publishing about Celtic things happening in the town. The local newspaper, the Glen Innes Examiner, shows an extensive coverage of for example the Celtic Festival and in the past of the coming into being of the Standing Stones. Also regionally the Celtic Festival gets attention in local tv news programs. In national newspaper several articles have appeared about Glen Innes, for example about the Standing Stones, the battle around getting the Scottish cairn and the Celtic Festival. The interest of the media is publishing things they see as important and interesting and in that way attract and keep their readers and viewers. A local newspaper has to publish about the important things that happen in a community and in the case of Glen Innes that is the Celtic

aspect. For regional or national media it is news that has to be told or an interesting place that can be shown in a travel report.

The **Federal Government** and **New South Wales Tourism** (State Government) approved grants as financial assistance in building the Standing Stones and NSW Tourism also approved a grant to be used for promoting the Celtic Festival. In that way they have assisted in constructing Glen Innes as Celtic. Their reason for this was that they thought it would create a lot of publicity for Glen Innes as a tourist destination and that this would stimulate the economy of Glen Innes and the surrounding area.

35 Of the Standing Stones were 'sold' for 1000 dollar each to sponsors. In this way these **Sponsors of the Standing Stones** have helped to construct the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes. The list of sponsors is shown on the site and in the Standing Stones brochure. The list shows individual persons, clans, celtic associations and families, from Australia but also from for example Scotland, Cornwall or Ireland. Also the city of Tamworth and British Airways have sponsored a stone. Sponsoring is usually about making one's company known to people, the two sponsors last mentioned seem examples of that. But apparently also families, clans and other Celtic organisations want to make their name known to the world, show their commitment to the Celtic consciousness in Australia and by doing that make possible to create a Celtic monument. What Colin Lute said about the motives of the sponsors seems to point in this direction:

They wanted to mark their organisation or their family. They wanted their part of the world recognised.

As a conclusion it can be said that three actors are and have been dominant in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic. First, a network of actively involved citizens who do a lot of volunteer work. The people who were interviewed representing this actor were involved in a lot of different committees and in small town like Glen Innes you soon know each other. They are white, mostly older people, most of them with a Celtic background themselves.

Second, the council has political and financial power to influence the construction of the place identity of Glen Innes and supports their initiatives and sometimes takes the initiative. Third, the Tourist Association represents the people who have direct or indirect economic interests and because their interest is the same as that of the council: the prosperity of the town, both actors can work together.

4.2.2 Newspapers

As described above, the Glen Innes Examiner can be seen as an actor in the process of constructing a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes. When looking through the newspaper it soon becomes clear that this process is extensively covered. Every step in the development of the Standing Stones is shown and every year the preparations for the Celtic Festival are described and of course also the Festival itself, in words and in a separate photo page. This is not strange if you consider that the Glen Innes Examiner is a local newspapers and these type of events are of course news in a small town like Glen Innes. If you take a better look at the articles it becomes clear that the tone of publishing is in general factual, with an inclination towards a positive way of bringing the news, sometimes maybe even chauvinistic. Example of this are headings like 'Standing Stones are ours' (Glen Innes Examiner, September 11th, 1990) and 'Unveiling our Celtic roots' (Glen Innes Examiner, October 30th, 1990). In a positive editorial about the Standing Stones is said: 'While sceptics may continue to question the actual cost of the project to the community, the return is of unknown quantity. There certainly

could be no better guarantor for any community investment than the word of those solid citizens who have lead the project and whose lives are dedicated to the future of Glen Innes'. In the same issue: 'The completion of the cultural monument is perhaps the biggest, boldest and certainly among the most exciting visions in Glen Innes for a long while' (Glen Innes Examiner, January 16th, 1992).

The Glen Innes Examiner sometimes also offers the people involved in developing the Standing Stones a means to get the message across. For example by publishing a Standing Stones Community Quiz (Glen Innes Examiner, September 3th, 1991) or a column of Lex Ritchie in defence of the Stones (December 6th, 1990).

But at some points also a more critical tone is used. In an editorial about the Celtic Festival it is mentioned that there is still some reluctance on the part of the population to become involved in the Festival. This editorial ends with asking: 'But has anyone asked residents if they want their town and lifestyles changed by hordes of tourists and more development?' (Glen Innes Examiner, May 3th, 1994). In the editorial with the title 'Not only Celtic Country' is warned that it must not be forgotten that Glen Innes is a multi-cultural place (Glen Innes Examiner, May 4th, 2000). Parts of this editorial are quoted section 4.5.2.

In the Sydney Morning Herald the battle between the different towns to have the Scottish cairn is covered quite extensively, with headings like 'Battle over a wee pile of stones' (Sydney Morning Herald, December 15th, 1987), 'Our Scots will leave no stone uncaired' (Sydney Morning Herald, June 3rd, 1988) and 'Stone me! It's Mosman' (Sydney Morning Herald, June 30th, 1988). In these articles it is described how these towns fight a battle about which of them is the most Scottish. The cairn eventually goes to the Sydney suburb Mosman, apparently because of smart lobbying by the Mayor.

The Standing Stones are described as Australia's own Stonehenge in 'Kinship and tourism to link hands' (Sydney Morning Herald, June 29th, 2004) and in a travel report about New England (Sydney Morning Herald, December 7th, 2002).

4.3 Why is Glen Innes represented as Celtic?

4.3.1 Interviews

Why is Glen Innes represented as Celtic: to what extent did economic motives play a part or was a Celtic consciousness more important in the decision to create a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes is a key question in this thesis. This question can be answered by looking at the motives and interests of the actors mentioned above.

For the actors in Glen Innes economic motives seem to have been the most important. For the council they were the driving force to try and have the Standing Stones in town. For the council and Tourist Association they were the main reason to develop the Celtic Country branding for the town. Lex Ritchie, tourism manager at the time, says about the reasons for wanting to have the Standing Stones:

We were looking for something tourist wise. We were looking for something to be different from everyone else.

About the reasons for branding Glen Innes as Celtic tourism manager Wendy Fahey says:

We wanted to create a uniqueness. We wanted to attract consumers, to raise awareness for Glen Innes as a destination.

Developing is an economic development strategy, a way of strengthening the Glen Innes economy. Unlike in many other country town the population number is stable in Glen Innes. The composition is changing however, in the sense that a lot of younger people leave the town. According to several respondents Glen Innes hasn't a lot to offer to young people, by creating employment, tourism is one of the ways to counter this problem.

The respondents are in general positive about the effects tourism has. They see more tourists coming to the town, there is development in businesses and companies and population growth is expected.

But why was the Celtic theme chosen for this strategy. The Standing Stones can be seen as an opportunity that came by and was taken by Glen Innes. According to tourism manager Wendy Fahey the Celtic Country theme was in fact simply building on the already existing Standing Stones. A lot of effort and resources had already been put into this monument and there was the feeling that this could create a uniqueness for Glen Innes. No research has been conducted if this feeling was right, it just seemed a good idea. Other themes like the national parks in the surroundings, fossicking and seasons have been discussed, but the Celtic seemed to offer more possibilities for promotion.

The respondents were asked about the 'Celticness' of Glen Innes before everything started. The town was already Celtic in the way that the settlers of the town were Scottish and there are a lot Celtic placenames in the surroundings. Examples of this are Dundee, Glencoe, Llangothlin, Ben Lomond and Torrington. There was for quite a long time a Caledonian Society (it does not exist anymore) and Glen Innes has its own pipe band. In that sense they are not unique, in the whole of New England area interestingly enough every town seems to have its own pipe band. In that period people maybe knew about the history of the town, but there was not a real Celtic feeling in the town.

For the actors in Glen Innes economic motives may have been the most important, for other actors a feeling of Celtic identity is important as well. The Celtic Council of Australia wanted to mark the Celtic share in the history of the country by building a monument for the Celtic pioneers. Further, as described above the identification with the Celtic theme may be a reason for tourists to come to Glen Innes. The connection with the theme becomes clear when for example visitors like to see a stone from their 'home country' in the Wall of History (figure 4.8). Also members of clans meet each other at the Celtic Festival. Colin Lute says:

50 % of the Australian people has Celtic origins, that is why the theme attracts people.

Based on this you can say that maybe the 'identity' aspect of the theme is part of the economic succes. It is not 'just' a tourist attraction, it is something people can relate to.



Figure 4.8 Stone dedicated by clan in 'Wall of History'

4.3.2 Newspapers

The heading of the Glen Innes Examiner of February 4th, 1992 leaves no doubt about the interest of Glen Innes in the monument: 'Standing Stones to gather dollars'. But in the article the same link as mentioned above between identity and economy is described: 'The Minister for State Development and Tourism, Michael Yabsley described the Standing Stones project as 'cultural-tourism' at its peak, creating the motivation for people to travel' (Glen Innes Examiner, February 4th, 1992). The same is implied in another article when it is said: The Standing Stones (...) will be a major tourist attraction with cultural significance (Glen Innes Examiner, March 28th, 1991).

In a recent article in the Glen Innes Examiner (August 2nd, 2007) an idea is given of the benefits for Glen Innes of the Celtic Festival. Research has been conducted and the outcome is that the Australian Celtic Festival of 2007 brought an estimated benefit of \$ 1,5 million to the Glen Innes economy, which is ten times the cost. The survey found the average festival visitor spent in the order of AUD 150 a day in and around Glen Innes. Most visitors came from south-east Queensland and Sydney, 86 % of them came to Glen Innes solely for the Festival. 64 % said visiting the Festival had encouraged them to visit the region at other times of the year as well.

4.4 What is the meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes?

4.4.1 Interviews

The most important source to answer this research question are the brochures and other promotional material. In the interviews a couple of interesting things have been said about this subject.

First, the slogan which is used in Glen Innes is 'Celtic Country'. Country is not just an attachment, it has its own meaning. According to tourism manager Wendy Fahey it indicates 'rural', it is also about 'experience' and a place for families. The attachment 'country' offers more possibilities than Celtic on its own, it offers a broader perspective and in that way an expansion of the customer market. Celtic in Glen Innes is thus explicitly linked to the rural.

Secondly, the Standing Stones are built after the example of the old stone circles in Europe. An architect (with a Celtic background) from Melbourne designed the Standing Stones. Lex

Ritchie gave him the idea to put the Southern Cross in the design of the monument, to symbolise the 'new world meeting the old world'. At first the Celtic Council did not like this idea, they wanted it to be 'purely Celtic' (Lex Ritchie). But later on they agreed and the Southern Cross was incorporated in the design of the Standing Stones. According to John Tregurtha this specific Australian symbol makes the monument unique. It makes it an Australian array, an Australian monument. From the Southern Cross the Celtic Cross came easily to the front, which adds a Christian symbol to the monument:

This represents the Christian background of the Celts that helped to build Australia (John Tregurtha).

4.4.2 Promotional material

The first source to answer the question the meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes is the official opening booklet of the Standing Stones. In this brochure it is made very clear that the Standing Stones are meant to be Australian and Christian. Both are themes that are not directly associated with the original stone circles known in Europe. It is mentioned that the people involved in building the Stones are intensely proud of being Australian and that for that reason the Southern Cross is included in the monument, 'so that all Australians might identify with it' (Australian Standing Stones Committee, 1992, p. 5). Also is made very clear that the Standing Stones are not meant for 'heathenistic rites', to underline that a Christian cross is also included in the monument. In the text is acknowledged that the standing stones in Europe were built before Christ, but, is said, as soon as the Christian religion came to the Celtic countries the Celts embraced this religion very quickly and rejected their former belief in nature and spiritualism. In this text therefore not only the monument is made Christian, but the Celtic people also. This part of the brochure concludes with:

In consideration of all the contingencies that pervade into the present day within this country, it has always been the object to create and symbolise within this array, the cultural heritage of the Celtic peoples but in a manner that is Australian (p. 5).

Interesting is that an extensive description is given of the history of the Celts as prehistoric people, while also could have been chosen for the story of the emigration from Europe to Australia. In this way is shown that the Celtic people belong to an ancient culture, which may give a certain status to them.

From the 'Guide to the Standing Stones' it becomes very clear at the first glance that this is about a Celtic monument. A 'Celtic' lettering is used, we see a man playing the bagpipe, standing stones shrouded in mist with the sword of Arthur in the front (figure 4.9) and a kind of Arthurian knight against the background of flames. The Standing Stones have a kind of calendar function, with 24 stones representing the hours of the day and designed able to indicate the summer and winter solstices. A lot of the European stone circles are thought to have had such a function. And connecting to the strange myths and legends surrounding the stones in Europe, it is said that 'some visitors have felt a powerful, spiritual, influence as they walked through the array'.



Figure 4.9 Standing Stones in the mist with Excalibur in the front in 'the Guide to the Standing Stones'

The history of the stone circles in Europe is often unclear, which is a big difference with these Standing Stones which were built very recently. But that clear history is not kept a secret. The building process is described in a detailed way, from this description becomes clear that a lot of personal effort of residents of Glen Innes was involved. Maybe this is a way to create a kind of authenticity for the Stones, instead of being really old, it is at least a real community thing. Their location and their being recent is even used to present them as unique: they are the first of their kind built anywhere in the world for 3500 years and also the only ones in the southern hemisphere.

One of the Stones is the Australis Stone, for all Australians and symbolising the link between the old and new worlds. Other stones are representing the different Celtic nations: Scotland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany.

In the program booklet of the Celtic Festival of this year images of tartan, people dressed in traditional clothing and bagpipes are dominant (figure 4.10). A few images of running people and Roman soldiers don't seem to fit into this traditional Celtic picture. In the program itself there are a lot of events that you expect at a Celtic Festival. A look at the program reveals events like: parade of tartans, strongman events, kirking of the tartan, piping in the haggis, pipe bands, Gaelic and tin whistle workshops, a re-enactment of an Irish household in the 15th century and performances of dance groups called 'Sydney Irish Ceili Dancers' or Gilnockie Dancers.

The Festival celebrates the six 'Celtic nations': Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Isle of Man and Brittany, every year another nation is singled out. That is probably what makes this Celtic Festival different from celebrations in the original Celtic regions. In this Festival different traditions from different regions are combined.

There are also some events which seem a bit less traditional Celtic. Quite a prominent role is played by a group called 'Spanish 9th Roman Legion', also re-enacting a gladiator combat, test-firing a Roman war machine and performing a military drill. So apparently also the former enemies of the Celtic are incorporated in the definition of Celtic in Glen Innes. Interesting in that sense is also the 62nd New York Irish Brigade, which, in its original version, fought in the American Civil War. According to the program booklet they were famous for their 'Celtic bravery and gallantry'. In this way a part of Celtic history from another part of the 'new world' is incorporated into the Celtic tradition in Glen Innes. Other maybe more 'standard' festival events have been given a Celtic flavour: a Celtic Fun Run, Celtic Dog Show and Celtic Yard Dog Trials. The last event has a clear rural connection, according to the program booklet it gives Festival visitors 'a taste of the country'.

The website of the Celtic Festival is very similar to the program booklet, so the observations

made above are the same for the website. A souvenir dvd of the Celtic Festival in 2006 is sold in the Visitor Information Centre. It is a compilation of images with a kind of Celtic ‘muzak’ as background. At one point this is replaced by a live recording of a massive bagpipe group. The dvd starts with quite a lot of images of the surroundings of Glen Innes, mainly covered in the deep red and yellow of autumn. Also some Celtic symbols and knotwork come along. The content of the dvd directly related to the Festival is very comparable with the images and program presented in the program booklet and on the website.



Figure 4.10 Bagpipes during the Celtic Festival in the program booklet of the Celtic Festival 2007

The appearance of the Glen Innes Celtic Country Visitor Guide is different from the festival program and the guide to the Standing Stones. On the cover we see children playing between the Standing Stones on a sunny day. Also from the images used in the brochure appears a more mixed picture. Really ‘Celtic images’ of bagpipes, Standing Stones in the mist, a woman in

traditional clothing and a friendly Celt serving drinks at Crofter’s Cottage are accompanied by more general rural images, for example of people walking and camping in a national park and a man fishing with his son, and images of heritage buildings in the centre of Glen Innes, the regional saleyards and the museum Land of the Beardies History House. The ‘Celtic lettering’ is used again and the Glen Innes tartan appears besides every page. But from reading the brochure it becomes clear that under the umbrella of Celtic Country, Celtic is linked to a lot of different attractions and events in Glen Innes. The sapphires and gems are mentioned, the distinctive seasons, the wide range of national parks, the heritage buildings and the Land of the Beardies History House, the Cooramah Aboriginal Cultural Centre, other festivals, foods and wine, fishing and arts and culture. The theme that connects all this is ‘country’: ‘so accessible, so relaxed, so hospitable’. Several references are made to ‘country’, from which this one is very clear:

No traffic lights, no parking hassles, but a warm country welcome awaits in retail stores, photographic and art galleries, antique, craft shops and cafes offering gourmet to home-style foods.

The website of the Visitor Information Centre is made in the same style as the Visitor Guide. A Celtic lettering is used and it is made very clear that Glen Innes has a Celtic history and therefore can be called Celtic Country. Like in the brochure there is a mix of Celtic images and attractions and rural and more general images and attractions.

If you look at the Glen Innes visitor guides used in the past it becomes clear that it hasn’t always been like this. The content of the brochures has not really changed, during the years themes like the national parks, heritage, fossicking and fishing have been used connected to the Celtic theme. But the covers show a clear development: from more purely Celtic to Celtic Country. On the first covers people are shown playing the bagpipe, dressed in kilts. After that a cover was made showing the different aspects of Celtic Country: Celtic, rural, heritage, fishing and fossicking. In the last cover all that is combined in one image: the children playing between the Standing Stones (figure 4.11). Celtic Country forms a kind of umbrella which

covers many aspects of Glen Innes. The specific Celtic part is used to distinguish Glen Innes from other towns which also can offer a nice rural setting and a nice old town centre.



Figure 4.11 Image used on cover Glen Innes Visitor Guide

4.5 What is left un-represented in the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic?

4.5.1 Interviews

Most of the respondents think that there are no aspects of Glen Innes and its history that get too little attention by focusing on the Celtic theme. Some think that there would not have been another option. Others think that the theme is not so dominant that other things are overshadowed by it or that other aspects are integrated in the Celtic theme.

One respondent thinks that the Chinese people who worked in the mines in the area should get more attention. Also the climate and the national parks in the surroundings deserve more attention according to him.

None of the respondents mentions the aboriginals and the aboriginal history. The coordinator of the Local Aboriginal Land Council, Trevor Potter, is clear in his opinion: he does not like the Celtic branding of Glen Innes. They did not consult the aboriginal community and in that way 'they did not recognize the people who own the land'. The aboriginal community in Glen Innes consists of about 300 people. In the period previous to the building of the Standing Stones there has been consultation with the Local Aboriginal Land Council. The plan was to incorporate a Koori (aboriginal) Stone in the monument. According to the people involved in building the Standing Stones the Local Aboriginal Land Council was positive about this but that eventually the Land Council in Sydney blocked the plan. According to Trevor Potter it was the Local Aboriginal Land Council who did not want a Koori Stone, because they did not want it to be part of a Celtic monument.

Potter thinks that in the promotion it should be recognized that it is Ngorabul (the local people) land and maybe there might be more attention for the traditional ways of the aboriginal people. Also the national parks in the area might get more attention. There are some aboriginal sites you can visit, but except for the Cooramah Aboriginal Cultural Centre, they are not really promoted. According to Trevor Potter this has two sides, promoting them more would make that people visit them more, but on the other hand increase the chance of destruction.

After the start of the new council positive things in the sense of acknowledging the aboriginal people are going on, Trevor Potter tells. When you enter Glen Innes you see signs indicating 'Welcome to Glen Innes, traditional land of the Ngorabul people', they have been put in place 18 months ago. Since the same time the aboriginal flag flies on the Town Hall.

4.5.2 Newspapers

In an editorial in the Glen Innes Examiner (May 4th, 2000) there is a warning that in all the talking about Celtic Country it should not be forgotten that Glen Innes is a multi-cultural place. After a discussion of the positive development of the Celtic Festival it is said that the Celtic influence must not become all-consuming:

‘This area owes a huge debt to people from throughout the world, not only those of Celtic origins. (Not?) Least of all the first inhabitants of our area, the Ngarrubul people. Chinese immigrants flocked to this area in their thousands to work in the mines of Vegetable Creek, Bear Hill and Kookabookra, some staying and making their homes here. Families such as the Young family of Kwong Sings remain here to this day. German, Dutch, Greek and Lebanese names are easily found in our local directories. English settlers were also well represented among the first squatters in the area. So, as we join in the Celtic celebrations this year, it might behove us to remember that Glen Innes and District is truly multi-cultural.’

4.6 To what extent do the inhabitants feel connected with the identity that has been created?

4.6.1 Interviews

No survey has been executed among the population of Glen Innes. The results for this question are based on the answers of the 12 respondents who were interviewed. These respondents were selected to get a good picture from all possible perspectives. 8 Respondents were chosen because of their involvement in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic and therefore for their overview of the place making process. 4 Respondents were chosen because they were not or only indirectly involved, by doing that it was attempted to also get the view of ‘outsiders’. The answers of the 12 respondents show quite some similarities, even though their positions and roles are quite different. Based on that it seems that a reasonably good overview is reached by this method.

There is a small group of people in Glen Innes who really identify with the theme, who really feel Celtic. There is a slightly bigger group, probably partly overlapping with the former, who feels proud of the Standing Stones and likes the fact that Glen Innes is represented as Celtic. But the majority of the people seem more or less indifferent to the whole situation. According to most respondents there are no people who are known to be opposed to the Standing Stones, the Celtic Festival and the Celtic Country theme. The group that is interested and positive about it seems to be growing, according to the respondents mainly because they start to see the benefits for the town more. The council and Tourist Association try to increase the involvement of the population by stimulating them for example to become volunteers during the Festival or by asking people to offer a place to stay for the Festival visitors. At the moment there are about 200 volunteers, all residents of Glen Innes, during the Festival. The support of businesses, for example by advertising in brochures, is also increasing because they realise that they can profit directly or indirectly from a successful promotion of Glen Innes.

In the beginning only a small group was involved in developing the Standing Stones, the Festival and the Celtic Country theme. Some respondents say that in that period it would have been better if this group had the other part of the population drawn into it more. Now they were more or less ‘pushed into’ it, as one of the respondents says:

You can't push people to become Celtic by putting up a sign (George Robertson).

In the beginning there has been some opposition against the Standing Stones and therefore also against the Festival. Partly because people thought that this money might be better spent on something else. But also because people were afraid of the unknown, they expected witches and druids to come to the town. Especially Christian people thought this way. There was opposition but no real protest, more in the way of not attending functions. Most respondents agree on the fact that it are mostly the older people who are involved in the construction of the Celtic theme and in attending the Celtic Festival.

Interesting is that the development of the Standing Stones and later on the Celtic theme has stimulated the Celtic consciousness in Glen Innes. People are more aware of the Celtic history of the place. They have started wearing the Glen Innes tartan, in the form of a tie or kilt. People research their family history and are discovering their family tartans. More people are going on holiday to the Celtic countries. Maybe also the weather and the landscape, with some fantasy resembling the Celtic countries, make them feel Celtic.



An example of a Glen Innes citizen who truly feels Celtic is George Robertson, volunteer at the Standing Stones (figure 4.12). He does his job dressed in a completely Scottish outfit. He is a member of a clan and they march in the Festival parade. In the 1970's he discovered his Scottish roots. His grandmother was a Robertson, his real name is Dryden, but he changed it into Robertson to be able to belong to clan. He went to Scotland three times and that really felt as 'home'.

Figure 4.12 George Robertson, volunteer at the Standing Stones and the author

John Tregurtha and Colin Lute are examples of the increasing Celtic consciousness in Glen Innes. Tregurtha tells that before everything started being Celtic was no part of his identity. Now he says:

I'm an Australian, with Cornish blood.

Lute also feels Australian, but he has become more proud of the Celtic history and is more aware of it. Both men didn't think of wearing a kilt before, now they wear their kilts with pleasure while showing people around, during the Festival and other special occasions.

A Celtic background is not necessary to be proud of the Celtic background of Glen Innes. Fred Alletsee, German by birth, calls the Standing Stones 'great and unique'. Personally they don't mean anything to him, but he is proud to have them in 'our' town. The same goes for the Celtic Festival, according to him 'it puts Glen Innes on the map'. Also Susan Judge, with an English background, thinks it is an honour for Glen Innes to be chosen to have the Standing Stones.

Kathy Sharmann is a young owner of a lunch room. She also says that mainly the older people are involved in the Celtic theme, it doesn't interest the young people that much. She does not think of Glen Innes as Celtic and she does not identify with the Celtic theme at all. It only has meaning to her in a business sense.

Trevor Potter, coordinator of the Local Aboriginal Land Council, does not like the Celtic branding of the town. He would like to see the Standing Stones disappear and he doesn't go to the Festival, 'they don't have the right to do it on our country'. About the general opinion in the aboriginal community he says that they still don't fully accept the Standing Stones, but they are there and there is nothing to do about it. Some aboriginals will watch the parade or go to the Festival. Mayor Steve Toms thinks that the opinion about the Celtic theme is mixed in the aboriginal community, but more likely to be negative than positive. Maybe more because of the white, European presence in general, than specifically the Celtic theme.

4.6.2 Newspapers

Looking through the Glen Innes Examiner in the period of the building of the Standing Stones there is no news about protests or other opposition. Only in the feature 'Examiner Streetbeat' (Glen Innes Examiner, January 9th, 1991) is said: 'Glen Innes residents are rumoured to be rather divided on the issue of whether the Standing Stones project ought to proceed'. But in the survey held by the newspaper most people are positive about the project. From the eight people the paper quotes, seven are positive. One woman thinks the monument is 'a waste of money'.

Letters to the editor could also be an indication of the opinion of the residents. The Glen Innes Examiner is issued twice a week and in every issue there are usually 4 to 5 letters of readers. Scanning them for the significant moments only one negative letter is found of a person who thinks that the money might be better spent on improving roads (Glen Innes Examiner, November 6th, 1990). Two letters were found thanking the volunteers involved in building the Standing Stones (Glen Innes Examiner, February 13th, 1991; September, 10th, 1991).

In the Editorial of the 2nd of May, 2006 (Glen Innes Examiner) positive developments are described for the Festival. In this context it is mentioned: 'The more local businesses can directly benefit from the festival – rather than just 'trickling down' from accommodation providers – the greater the community ownership of an event that has, historically, been viewed by many as being held primarily for other people'. In 2000 (Glen Innes Examiner, May 4th) is said that Glen Innes 'seems to embrace the festival with a little more enthusiasm each year'. And that in the past the Festival was perceived by many to be an outside event, with outside interests and was considered a bit of an imposition. This has been changed by bringing the Festival events more to the town, instead of only at the site of the Standing Stones.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter the research questions will be answered. It is discussed how these results relate to the concepts and results of previous research described in chapter 2. Also the limitations of the research are pointed out and recommendations for further research are given.

5.1 Introduction

The Australian country town of Glen Innes (population approx. 10.000) presents itself as 'Celtic Country'. How the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is constructed is the subject of this thesis.

Payton (1997) sees Glen Innes, and more specifically the Standing Stones, as an example of the re-invention of Celtic Australia. According to Harvey et al. (2002a) also worldwide in recent years there has been an increasing interest in all things Celtic, providing a revitalisation of Celtic studies, debates, culture and politics (Harvey et al., 2002a). In the book 'Celtic Geographies' it is discussed that apart from being viewed as a reaction to globalisation and modernity through a rise of interest in alternative lifestyles, spiritualism and cultural identity, the Celtic Revival has also opened up entrepreneurial opportunities. This is particularly manifested in the commodification of the Celtic through its landscape, culture and heritage (Harvey et al., 2002a).

It is a short step from entrepreneurial opportunities to the concept of place marketing. Place marketing has become commonplace throughout Australia, Europe, North America and elsewhere, also in rural areas (Gibson & Davidson, 2004). To what extent economic motives played a part or whether a Celtic consciousness was more important in the decision to create a Celtic place identity for Glen Innes, is one of the key questions in this thesis.

The objective of this research is to investigate how the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes is constructed. The central question in this thesis is:

How is the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes constructed?

To be able to answer this question six research questions have been formulated:

- *How is the Celtic identity of Glen Innes created?*
- *How has the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic come into being and which actors have played a role in this?*
- *Why is Glen Innes represented as Celtic?*
- *What is the meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes?*
- *What is left un-represented in the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic?*
- *To what extent do the inhabitants feel connected with the identity that has been created?*

The main method to find an answer to these research questions are semi-structured interviews with key actors. Also some persons who are not directly involved in the construction of the Celtic place identity have been interviewed. Some of the respondents were selected in advance, others were traced by using the 'snowball method'. The information from the interviews is supplemented by observations in the town, a qualitative analysis of promotional material (brochures, program of the festival and websites) and an analysis of newspaper articles.

5.2 Answering the research questions

5.2.1 How is the Celtic identity of Glen Innes created?

The Celtic identity of Glen Innes is mainly created by using five places in the town. First of all the most important place: the site of the Australian Standing Stones, a monument built in recognition of the involvement of the Celtic races in the building of the Australian nation. Secondly, the Visitor Information Centre, with a sign indicating 'Celtic Country' written in a kind of Celtic lettering and showing a bagpipe player and a dancing girl. Further on there is an entrance built of menhir-like stones with Celtic Country written on it which one sees when driving into Glen Innes and there is the Celtic room in the local museum the Land of the Beardies History House. In the town center itself there are some bilingual streetsigns (Gaelic-English), banners with 'Welcome to Glen Innes, Celtic Country' on it and on the town hall some flags of Celtic countries are waving. In the mainstreet there are a few small references to the theme, but no souvenir shops have been discovered. The theme is present in the center, but in a very modest way. The annually held Celtic Festival is another way of creating a Celtic identity for Glen Innes. It is a combination of 'real' Celtic elements and some elements more loosely connected to the theme.

A Celtic identity is thus created for Glen Innes by using certain places in the town and the yearly Celtic Festival. But from the description it becomes clear that Glen Innes is not a real 'theme town' like for example the 'Bavarian' Leavenworth and the Swedish Lindsborg in the United States (Frenkel, Walton, & Andersen, 2000; Schnell, 2003). In those towns the theme is present everywhere in the town, while in Glen Innes it becomes visible in certain places.

5.2.2 How has the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic come into being and which actors have played a role in this?

From the 1970's on tourist promotion started in Glen Innes. In that period a Celtic theme wasn't used in any way. Things started to change when on the occasion of the Australian Bicentenary in 1988 Scotland offered a gift to the country: a cairn consisting of stones from every parish in Scotland. Glen Innes tried to get the cairn in its town, but there were more competitors and eventually the cairn went to Mosman, a suburb in Sydney.

The cairn only honoured the Scottish, therefore the Celtic Council of Australia came with the idea of building a monument to honour all the Celtic pioneers. They approached different towns with granite in the surroundings, among which Glen Innes, and eventually the Celtic Council gave the right to build the Standing Stones in Glen Innes. On 30th October 1990 a number of Gaelic street signs were unveiled in the town centre of Glen Innes. They were meant to create the right atmosphere for the monument.

The Standing Stones can be seen as the start of the construction of the Celtic place identity. The inauguration was by the Governor of New South Wales on 1 February 1992. A few years later the monument was officially acknowledged as a National Monument by the National Trust.

Already in 1991 the Glen Innes tartan was developed and officially acknowledged by the Scottish Tartans Society. To create publicity for the Standing Stones the first Celtic Festival was held in May 1993. From that moment on the Festival has been organised every year. The Festival has grown as far as number of days and events are concerned and also the number of visitors has increased.

The Celtic Council called Glen Innes with reference to the Standing Stones 'Celtic Capital'. Around 1994 they adopted that title themselves. Around 1998 they transformed it into Celtic Country because it is a broader term, it offers more possibilities for marketing.

Several actors have played a part in the construction of the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes: actively involved citizens, the council, the Tourist Association, the Glen Innes and District Historical Society, the Celtic Council of Australia, the National Trust, visitors, residents, media, the Federal Government and New South Wales Tourism and the sponsors of the Standing Stones. This is not the place to discuss them all extensively, this has already been done in chapter 4. Here the most important aspects will be highlighted.

First the important role played by 'actively involved citizens' and, partly because of that, the importance of the role played by individual persons. Actively involved citizens did and are still doing a lot of work in the different committees and they took some important initiatives, for example to organize the Celtic Festival. The former tourism manager saw the potential of getting the Standing Stones to Glen Innes and devoted a lot of effort to get them and really build them. Would another person have been in his position it might well be possible that Glen Innes would have no Celtic place identity at the moment, which shows the importance of the role of individual persons.

The role of the Glen Innes and District Historical Society can be described as giving an extra (historic) dimension to the Celtic identity. For the application for the Standing Stones they have done research into the Celtic history of Glen Innes. It can be said that they play a certain part in constructing the history of Glen Innes as Celtic. For example in 1996 they published a small book about the Scottish pioneers in the district (Cameron & Chappell, 1996).

The role of the Australian Celtic Council and the National Trust is important in the sense that they give the Standing Stones and the Celtic Festival an official (Celtic) character. The National Trust has recognized the Standing Stones as a National Monument and the Celtic Council recognizes them as an official Celtic monument and as the national gathering point for Celtic descendants and clans. This official character distinguishes Glen Innes from other places with Celtic monuments and Celtic Festivals.

Place identity is open to discussion. Actors who are powerful in terms of authority and/or resources can impose their dominant place identities at the expense of other actors (Huigen & Meijering, 2005). It can be said that three actors have been dominant in the construction of Glen Innes as Celtic. First, this network of actively involved citizens who do a lot of volunteer work. The people who were interviewed representing this actor were involved in a lot of different committees and in small town like Glen Innes you soon know each other. They are white, mostly older people, most of them with a Celtic background themselves. Second, the council has political and financial power to influence the construction of the place identity of Glen Innes and supports their initiatives and sometimes takes the initiative. Third, the Tourist Association represents the people who have direct or indirect economic interests and because their interest is the same as that of the council: the prosperity of the town, both actors can work together.

Brennan-Horley, Connell, and Gibson (2007) see the emergence of the Elvis Presley Revival Festival in Parkes as the result of a local coincidence, the right people meeting each other at

the right time. Also the start of the UFO-theme in Rosswell can be traced to the interests of three local residents who claimed to have been involved in the 1947 incident (Paradis, 2002). You might say that the same happened in Glen Innes. The idea of the Celtic Council to develop a monument for the Celtic pioneers was an opportunity that came by and was recognized and taken by some people who were at the right position at the right time, of which the former tourism manager was the most important.

5.2.3 Why is Glen Innes represented as Celtic?

For the actors in Glen Innes economic motives seem to have been the most important. For the council they were the driving force to try and have the Standing Stones in town. For the council and Tourist Association they were the main reason to develop the Celtic Country branding for the town. They wanted to create a uniqueness for Glen Innes and by doing that attract tourists.

Developing the theme is an economic development strategy, a way of strengthening the Glen Innes economy. Unlike in many other country towns the population number is stable in Glen Innes. The composition is changing however, in the sense that a lot of younger people leave the town. By creating employment tourism is one of the ways to counter this problem. In this way Glen Innes is one of many (Australian) country towns which sees tourism as a tool to strengthen the local economy in a period of major structural change in rural areas (e.g. Brennan-Horley, Connell, & Gibson, 2007; Butler, Hall, & Jenkins, 1998; Walmsley, 2003).

But why was this Celtic theme chosen for this strategy. The Standing Stones can be seen as an opportunity that came by and was taken by Glen Innes. The Celtic Country theme was in fact simply building on the already existing Standing Stones. A lot of effort and resources had already been put into this monument and there was the feeling that this theme could create a uniqueness for Glen Innes and offered a lot of possibilities for promotion.

The respondents were asked about the 'Celticness' of Glen Innes before it all started. The town was already Celtic in the way that the settlers of the town were Scottish and there are a lot of Celtic placenames in the surroundings. There was for quite a long time a Caledonian Society (it does not exist anymore) and Glen Innes has its own pipe band. In that period people maybe knew about the history of the town, but there was not a real Celtic feeling in the town.

In this way Glen Innes differs from Leavenworth, the Bavarian theme town, in which case the theme was completely invented, not in any way based on the history of the town (Frenkel, Walton, & Andersen, 2000). Like in Little Sweden USA the theme is in some way rooted in the history of the town (Schnell, 2003). A difference with this town is that there always has been more or less a Swedish consciousness, while in Glen Innes that has started rather after the development of the theme (see also 5.2.6).

For the actors in Glen Innes economic motives may have been the most important, for other actors a feeling of Celtic identity is important as well. The Celtic Council of Australia wanted to mark the Celtic share in the history of the country by building a monument for the Celtic pioneers. Further, the identification with the Celtic theme may be a reason for tourists to come to Glen Innes. It is estimated for example that 40 % of the tourists has a Celtic background. It is also mentioned that 50 % of the Australian population has Celtic roots, and 'that attracts'. People find it special to see a stone from their 'home country' in the Wall of History. From all this it seems that at least part of the tourists may identify with the theme and for them maybe it is specifically the Celtic element that brings them to Glen Innes.

Based on this you may say that maybe the 'identity' aspect of the theme is part of the economic succes. It is not 'just' a tourist attraction, it is something people can relate to. This fits in with the vision of Walmsley (2003) who points out that the recognition that it is culture,

in its broadest sense, that makes place interesting is a key prerequisite for successful tourism promotion. According to him in the field of tourism, some goods and activities become 'markers' of lifestyle and identity.

5.2.4 What is the meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes?

The meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes is for a great part similar to the meaning the concept has in Europe. The symbols, images and events used in the promotion of Glen Innes have a lot in common with the images used in tourism in the traditional Celtic regions, as described in 2.11. The Standing Stones itself are based on the popular association that exists between stone circles (for example Stonehenge) and the Celts. An association which is called by Chapman (1992) 'part of the myth of the Celts' (p. v). The images and events of the Celtic Festival like tartan, bagpipes, strongman event and performances of Scottish dancers really fit with the 'tartan image' Scotland has according to Butler (1998), 'including primary features as mountains, tartan, bagpipes, castles and kilts' (p. 122).

In Glen Innes Celtic is explicitly linked to country and thereby to the rural, by choosing the slogan 'Celtic Country'. This is supported by images for example of people walking and camping in a national park and texts like country, so accessible, so relaxed, so hospitable'. Kneafsey (2002) shows in her discussion of tourism images of Ireland and Brittany that Breton and Irish brochures also feature many representations of rural and/or natural settings. She sees this as a continuation of the romantic construction of the Celts as living simple, rural, pure lives close to nature. She also mentions the importance of the idea of hospitality in the marketing of Ireland.

The Celtic Festival also shows some events and images which are different from the 'traditional' construction. Quite a prominent role is for example played by a group called 'Spanish 9th Roman Legion', in that way also the former enemies of the Celtic are incorporated in the definition of Celtic in Glen Innes. Other maybe more 'standard' festival events have been given a Celtic flavour: a Celtic Fun Run, Celtic Dog Show and Celtic Yard Dog Trials.

While these events and images can be seen as some funny additions, the Standing Stones incorporate two symbols that are really different from the stone circles in Europe. In the Standing Stones a Celtic cross is symbolized and in that way the monument gets a Christian meaning. This represents the Christian background of the Celts that helped to build Australia. In that way a more recent meaning of Celtic (the religion of the immigrants) is combined with a pre-historic symbol (Chapman, 1992) and therefore definitely pre-Christian symbol: the stone circle.

By creating the Southern Cross in the Standing Stones, a typically Australian symbol which you see also in the Australian flag, and naming one of the Stones 'the Australis stone', a link is created between the new world and the old world, between Australia and the Celtic. It can be said that this specific Australian symbol makes the monument unique. It makes it an Australian array, an Australian Celtic monument. By giving the global concept 'Celtic' a local Australian touch this is an example of hybridisation, an interaction of the local and the global (Holloway & Hubbard, 2001; Knox & Marston, 2004).

5.2.5 What is left un-represented in the representation of Glen Innes as Celtic?

Most of the respondents think that there are no aspects of Glen Innes and its history that are left unrepresented by focusing on the Celtic theme. One respondent thinks that the Chinese people who worked in the mines in the area should get more attention and also the climate and the national parks in the surroundings. Interestingly enough none of the other respondents mentions the aboriginals and the aboriginal history, while the coordinator of the Local Aboriginal Land Council thinks that in the promotion of Glen Innes could be recognized more

that it is Ngorabul country. But he also mentions that positive things are going on, for example that at the beginning of the town signs have been placed with 'Welcome to Glen Innes, traditional land of the Ngorabul people'. In an Editorial in the Glen Innes Examiner there is a warning that the Celtic influence must not become all-consuming. In that article also the Ngorabul people and the Chinese are explicitly mentioned, next to some other nationalities. In their view it is the multiculturalism of Glen Innes in general that should not be forgotten.

One explanation for the fact that people in general think that not really any elements are neglected is the broad perspective the Celtic Country theme has. A lot of attractions and events are incorporated in the theme. Another explanation might be that Glen Innes is no theme town, the theme is not so prominent in the town that people get the feeling that other things are pushed out of sight. An explanation for the fact that the other respondents do not think about the aboriginals as a forgotten group is that they are themselves in majority part of the group that is represented. Like Holloway and Hubbard (2000) state, appreciating whose images and ideas are being put in representations of place, and whose are excluded, is therefore crucial in interpreting the meaning of place imagery.

5.2.6 To what extent do the inhabitants feel connected with the identity that has been created?

There is a small group of people in Glen Innes who really identify with the theme, who really feel Celtic. There is a slightly bigger group, probably partly overlapping with the former, who feel proud of the Standing Stones and like the fact that Glen Innes is represented as Celtic. But the majority of the people seem more or less indifferent to the whole situation. According to most respondents there are no people who are known to be opposed to the Standing Stones, the Celtic Festival and the Celtic Country theme. The group that is interested and positive about it seems to be growing, according to the respondents mainly because they start to see the benefits for the town more. The same process is seen in Parkes, the town with the Elvis Revival Festival. According to Brennan-Horley, Connell, and Gibson (2007) seeing the growing success of the festival and the economic benefits tourism provides has helped to gain further support and interest from local businesses and the wider community.

In the beginning only a small group was involved in developing the Standing Stones, the Festival and the Celtic Country theme. Some respondents say that in that period it would have been better if this group had drawn the other part of the population into it more. Now they were more or less 'pushed into' it.

It is interesting that the development of the Standing Stones and later on the Celtic theme has stimulated the Celtic consciousness in Glen Innes. People are more aware of the Celtic history of the place and they have for example started wearing the Glen Innes tartan, in the form of a tie or kilt.

About the general opinion in the aboriginal community an aboriginal representative says that they still don't fully accept the Standing Stones, but they are there and there is nothing to be done about it. Some aboriginals will watch the parade or go to the Festival.

5.3 Limitations of the research

The results discussed above must be considered within the limitations this research has. Firstly there is the question of positionality. Holloway and Hubbard define this as an awareness of how our personal characteristics influence the way we 'ask' questions and 'listen' to responses. Gibson and Davidson (2004) state: 'Textual analysis also remains subjective; it is naïve to assume that texts have a single meaning. Instead, they contain

multiple layers of meaning depending on how they are read, and the background and own life experiences of the reader.’ (p. 388) On the other hand, Valentine (2005) explains how scientists who take a humanist or post-structuralist approach to research argue that there is no such thing as objectivity in social science research. Rather they argue that all research work is explicitly or implicitly informed by the experiences, aims and interpretations of the researcher who designed the questionnaire or the interview schedule and that researchers should treat participants in their research as people, not objects to be exploited or mined for information. In this research it has been tried by using multiple methods and different sources (several respondents were asked the same questions) to try and maximise the understanding of the research questions, this is known as triangulation (Valentine, 2005).

Secondly, the research question about the extent to which the inhabitants feel connected with the Celtic identity could have been answered more completely by conducting survey research next to the interviews. By using an aselect sample a representative picture of the feelings of the residents could have been achieved. Unfortunately there was no time available to conduct such a survey. The results for this question are now based on the answers of the respondents. Their answers show quite some similarities, even though there positions and roles are quite different. Based on that it seems that a reasonably good overview is reached by this method.

Thirdly, the research question about the meaning of Celtic in Glen Innes could have been answered more extensively and precise by conducting a quantitative content analysis. Then the different features of images and text could have been counted and could have been presented in an exact way. Because of time constraints a more interpretative method was used.

5.4 Recommendations for further research

More research could be done on the construction of the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes. As mentioned above, by conducting a survey among the residents and a content analysis of promotional material an even more complete picture could be obtained of the situation in Glen Innes. It would be also interesting to draw the position of the visitors of Glen Innes into the research. This research is only directed to the production side of the place identity. Visitors could be interviewed and/or surveyed about their motives to come to Glen Innes and about the meaning Celtic in general and the Celtic place identity of Glen Innes has to them. In that way also a picture of the consumption side could be obtained.

It would be useful to investigate other ‘Celtic’ towns, in Australia and in the rest of the ‘new’ world. In that way it could be discovered to what extent the construction of a Celtic place identity in Glen Innes is a unique case or rather a universal process.

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