

# HERITAGE

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OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS

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## LIEUT. WILLIAM DAWES

.....First recorded white man on the Blue Mountains

by Lindsay Paish, Springwood Historians

In December 1789, Governor Phillip charged Lieutenant William Dawes with the task of reaching the western mountains.

This was the first recorded exploration of the area, followed by a series of adventurers like Tench, Hacking, Bass, Paterson, Wilson, Barrallier and Caley.

All those explorations failed to cross the mountains, but their knowledge was the real reason that Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth succeeded.

There is no known journal of Lieutenant Dawes journey, the only record was a map dated 1791, signed by Dawes.

There is no doubt that Dawes, with his superior skill at "compass and pace" could produce a traverse of his journeys with comparative accuracy.

The actual line of Dawes' march, as per his inscribed map, can be located on the modern ordnance maps prepared by the Army Survey Corps.

The details of the creeks on Dawes' traverse favourably compare with the ordnance sheets.

To the "line of march." The first day he headed due west from Emu Ford to the crest of the first ridge, in the vicinity of Mount Riverview, and from here he had a direct view of Round Hill.

Dawes moved his "line of march" to a straight traverse and made a bee line for Round Hill crossing the now line of the highway just near the Sydney side of Warrimoo.

Keeping on, he crossed a series of creeks draining to the south side of Valley Heights, the ridge to the south of Springwood at Farm Road, the next ridge south of Bee Farm Road near the rifle range, into Sassafras Gully, then across the Main Ridge close to Faulconbridge Station.

By now "the line of march" was half way through their total route. The country was rougher on the west side of Faulconbridge. Most of the creeks and gullies they had crossed were precipitous with average grades being close to 1 in 2.

Further on, they encountered a series of deeper gullies – including Linden and Woodford Creeks – about 900ft [275 m] deep. The western flank of Woodford Creek is

a long unscaleable cliff, which forced a deviation around the head of the ridge. Back to the ridge top, located north of Linden, they returned to their "line of march."

An extensive view of the scene ahead appeared even rougher than that they had already negotiated. Immediately west was the deep Wentworth Creek, the roughest gully on the mountains and further ahead, the chasm of the Grose River.

Dawes and his party were near exhaustion and short of provisions, and considering the country they had already travelled, the prospect of a further, rougher portage, forced the party homeward.

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**Pictured is former Forestry Department cartographer, Lindsay Paish now 85 years of age, looking at the map he drew in 1959 from overlays of Dawes 1789 traverses on to Australian Army Survey Corps maps which lend credibility to the claim Dawes was the first white man on the Blue Mountains. Photograph by John Leary, OAM May 2010**



*From the president's pen.....*

# The magnificent Mitchell Library a researcher's dream

The front page piece by Lindsay Paish in this edition of **HERITAGE** like so many historical and heritage based stories is in part written as a result of research in Sydney's magnificent Mitchell Library which earlier this year celebrated its centenary.

On following pages, John Low also writes about a Blue Mountains connection among the *One Hundred* treasures on display at the Mitchell.

It is all but impossible to write or read about Australia, the Pacific and the Antarctic without incurring debts of gratitude to the Mitchell.

Libraries are the most personal public institutions. History never forgives those who destroy them and it remembers those who are book donors such as David Scott Mitchell.

The State Library of New South Wales traces its origins to 1826, with the opening of the Australian Subscription Library. In 1869, the New South Wales Government took over responsibility for the Library and created the Sydney Free Public Library. In 1895 it was renamed the Public Library of New South Wales, and in 1975 it became the State Library of New South Wales.

The Australian Subscription Library soon outgrew its premises, and a new wing was built in the mid-1880s. By the turn of the century this too was outgrown, and plans were prepared for a completely new 'national' library building.

The stimulus for this was David Scott Mitchell's offer of his immense and unrivalled collection of Australiana to the people of New South Wales. One condition of his offer was that a new building be erected to house the collection as a separate library.

Mitchell, book collector and national benefactor, became one of the first undergraduates of the University of Sydney (BA, 1856; MA 1859). In December 1858 he was admitted to the Bar but never practised though he is said to have later declined appointment as attorney-general.

Mitchell had been reared in a cultivated household; never robust, he preferred books and intellectual interests to business or politics.

By 1866 he had won some repute for scholarship in English literature and for the next 20 years he collected mainly English literary works, including many fine editions which in 1900 exceeded 10,000 volumes.

From about 1886, he turned almost solely to the record of Australia and its surrounding region.

Book-collecting, which had been an intellectual pastime in youth and a scholarly vocation in maturity, became his all-absorbing purpose.

Perhaps it could be said, Mitchell was favoured: he had wealth, leisure and position, with useful social connections yet was free from outside distractions.

His scholarly knowledge of books, coupled with education, experience

and a talent for book-collecting, approached genius.

After 1895 he was aided and encouraged by HCL Anderson, the principal librarian, who had seen Mitchell as the chief rival of the Public Library of New South Wales and set out to combine forces.

Apart from Mitchell, the library had the best Australasian collection and had demonstrated a capacity and will to develop it. Mitchell was aging and in poor health, with no relations of like interests to his own.

In 1898 he offered to bequeath his collection to the library trustees. The offer was immediately accepted and eventually his conditions were met: the trustees were incorporated in 1899 and the Mitchell wing of the new library building was begun in 1906.

Mitchell died in 1907 and bequeathed to the library trustees his entire collection with an endowment of £70,000. Despite his fine memory and erudition he wrote nothing and left as his one main memorial the Mitchell Library.

When opened in March 1910 it had some 60,000 volumes and much other material. It remains unrivalled in its field and is one of the great national collections in the world.

**John Leary, OAM  
President, Blue Mountains  
Association of Cultural Heritage  
Organisations Inc.**

## Pinchgut

Pinchgut Island (now Fort Denison) once boasted Sydney's finest weight loss cure – if you could stomach a week's solitary confinement.

As early as 1788, convicts were put onto Pinchgut for petty crimes such as stealing food. Back then, the place

was little more than a desolate rocky outcrop in Sydney Harbour.

The history of the name Pinchgut is a little hazy. It was named Pinchgut by Governor John Hunter, It is both an old nautical term for the point where a stream channel narrows and a word for being hungry.



# Greens Party heritage policy to ensure Heritage Council's independence

At a meeting organized by BMACHO in Springwood last month Ms Sylvia Hale, MLC (pictured) outlined the Greens Party policy on heritage which it will take to the next state election.

The meeting was the third in a series organized by BMACHO to learn of heritage policies of the major political parties.

The Greens will

- Ensure the independence of the NSW Heritage Council by guaranteeing its funding and making it directly accountable to the NSW Parliament in a similar fashion to the Ombudsman's Office, rather than to a minister.
- Reconstitute the Heritage Council to ensure the appropriate representation of community and professional organisations.
- Provide adequate resources to permit an increase in the rate of assessment of items for inclusion on the State Heritage Register.
- Facilitate the extension of Interim Heritage Protection Orders to items not on the State Heritage Register.
- Remove economic disadvantage as a reason to delist a heritage item.
- Remove the right of a minister to unilaterally delist a heritage item.
- Require the Heritage Council to approve any recommendation to delist any item on the State Heritage Register
- Require local councils to notify the Heritage Council of any item that may be of State Heritage significance and to seek the Heritage Council's advice prior to approving demolition or alteration to an item.
- Encourage and fund local councils to revise and extend their local heritage registers.
- Require any application to demolish a heritage item to demonstrate why alternatives such as adaptation of existing structures are not feasible, and forbid the demolition of any heritage item without prior approval of the relevant authority.

Thanking Ms Hale for her address and for answering question from the meeting, BMACHO president, John

Leary, OAM said many in the community especially those in the heritage sector would welcome the proposed policies.

Mr Leary said that it was farcical to believe that heritage could be adequately protected with the powers which had been given to the Minister for Planning under Part 3A of the Planning Act 2005.

Professor Ian Jack president of the RAHS who has had a long association with the former Heritage Council also welcomed the proposed policies.



## SUPPORT FOR HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

New support has recently come from a number of elected representatives including Blue Mountains City Council's deputy mayor Cr Janet May and Greens Crs Eleanor Gibbs and Howard McCallum

Heritage advisory committees have been established by many NSW local government units and are in fact widely used throughout Australia to allow councillors and staff to avail themselves of local and expert knowledge on a wide range of heritage and historical issues.

Formed under Section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993 these committees usually comprise one councillor and a number of community members, selected by council after newspaper advertisements calling for expression of interest from members of the community.

Those selected often include members of heritage or history societies and people either working in or retired from the heritage sector including academics.

For some time BMACHO has been seeking to have Blue Mountains City Council re-establish a heritage advisory committee and for several years

BMACHO's executive has been meeting with council's senior staff.

The suggested objectives of a heritage advisory committee are:

- a. To advise council in relation to reviews of local heritage listings;
- b. To advise council about increasing the community's awareness of heritage matters;
- c. To advise council on heritage matters relating to development applications before council;
- d. To advise council about heritage assistance, grant applications, review and recommendations;
- e. To advise council on improvements to the care of, public access to and site information for existing historic sites, buildings etc. and how these improvements might be achieved;
- f. To advise council in relation to long term planning of significant heritage cemeteries.

There is no shortage of people in this region who are eminently qualified to serve on a local heritage advisory committee.

They comprise long-term enthusiastic and experienced researchers of heritage and history or professionals and academics in the heritage sector including several with local government experience. BMACHO is confident that they would be prepared to serve on such a committee.

# 'He fought six rounds with the horse police' --- the shooting of Bold Jack Donahoe

by John Low, Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc.

In the current exhibition at the State Library of NSW, celebrating the centenary of the Mitchell Library, there are a number of items of interest to Blue Mountains historians among the *One Hundred* treasures on display.

The original journals of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth are featured as is a 1930s journal of bushwalker Myles Dunphy.

One item, however, that caught my attention, the relevance of which may not at first be evident, was a lithograph portrait of the dead bushranger Jack Donahoe attributed to Thomas Mitchell.

While Donahoe died at Bringelly, his death has a slight but interesting connection with Wentworth Falls (or The Weatherboard).

In 1902 the *Warren Herald* published a series of reminiscences by Edward Readford whose father, Thomas, had been the licensee of the Weatherboard Inn during the years 1833 to 1837.



At the time, the innkeeper's only neighbours were a small troop of mounted policemen housed in a 'Police Military Barrack' opposite.

Readford makes particular mention of one of these, a quiet young Scotsman named John Muggleston, who was stationed there "nearly the whole time my father kept the hotel" and regularly frequented his father's establishment.

Fate had given Muggleston a degree of notoriety among his fellows.

John Muggleston (also spelt Mugglestone, Muckelstone, Mucclleston, etc.) was born ca. 1804 in the Scottish agricultural and



*A lithograph portrait of the dead Jack Donahoe*

cotton milling town of Neilston in the Lavern Valley south of Glasgow. While nothing is known of his family or early life other than that he had worked as a groom, by the beginning of 1827 he had travelled south into England and had taken the king's shilling, joining the 39<sup>th</sup> (Dorsetshire) Regiment at Coventry.

His decision to become a soldier would take him even further from his birthplace for, in June 1827, the 39<sup>th</sup> Regiment embarked as part of the convict guard on board the 'Champion' and arrived in Sydney a little over four months later.

Following a twelve month tour of duty in Norfolk Island, Muggleston joined the mounted police in March 1829.

The mounted police had been established by Governor Brisbane in 1825 in response to a general increase in bushranging activities, a state of affairs that continued to worsen under his successor, Governor Darling.

Its principal role was to combat this and to pursue escaped convicts who contributed mightily to the membership of the bushranging gangs.

In these early years the mounted police had a strong military character, its officers and men being volunteers seconded from the regiments garrisoned in the colony and generally returning when these were transferred elsewhere.

Their uniform also reflected the military connection with 'full dress' resembling the 14<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons, though their 'bush uniform' included a cabbage-tree hat along with the patrol jacket and trousers.

They were armed with a sabre, carbine and horse pistols. By 1830 there were about 100 mounted policemen in the colony.

One of the most troublesome bushrangers operating at the time Muggleston joined the 'horse police' was a young Irish convict escapee who, following a conviction for highway robbery on the Sydney-Windsor Road, had dramatically avoided the hangman and fled into to the bush.

This was the "wild colonial boy, Jack Donahoe by name" whose depredations and continued evasion of the authorities in the Hawkesbury-Nepean and other districts around Sydney were notorious.

In the repressive climate of Darling's administration John Donahoe (sometimes spelt Donohoe) was rapidly becoming something of a folk hero among the 'lower orders' of society.

Born in Dublin ca. 1806, details of Donahoe's early life and family are as vague as those of his Scottish contemporary.

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# The shooting of of bushranger, Jack Donahoe

## Continued from page 4

A couple of years younger than Muggleston, he was sentenced to transportation for life in 1823 after being found guilty of "intent to commit felony", a rather vague charge that has been interpreted by some to refer to 'political' crimes.

As the child of a country exploited economically and repressed politically, he had good cause to dislike the English. Donohoe arrived in Australia on board the 'Ann and Amelia' in early 1825, not long before Brisbane's departure and the advent of Governor Darling.

In 1830 Muggleston's commanding officer and fellow Scot, Lieutenant Lachlan McAlister, devised a new strategy for his mounted police unit based at Goulburn.

Instead of the usual reactionary pursuit from place to place, allowing the villains greater options for escape, his troopers now conducted regular and systematic patrols of the known haunts of the Donahoe gang. It was a good plan and on Wednesday, September 1, 1830, it brought results.

As an early spring evening settled on the Bringelly bush, Muggleston and six other troopers unsaddled their horses and prepared to make camp.

In the dusk they spied, some distance away, three men riding slowly through the trees leading a packhorse.

These were soon identified as Donahoe, William Webber and John Walmsley.

At the later inquest Muggleston described the situation: "The bushrangers were in a hollow surrounded by bush, by which means they were prevented from observing our approach.

When Donahoe saw us he took his hat off, and waved it three times, threw it in the air, and bid us defiance ..." Both sides took cover and the bushrangers, with a reckless confidence borne of their earlier successes, began taunting the troopers with insults, obscenities and shooting.

What followed was described in detail in the *Sydney Gazette*: "Muggleston, who is reckoned one of the best shots, kept his eye steadily fixed on Donahoe, and when the latter peeped from behind his tree, shewing (sic) only his head and part of his breast, the wary soldier took aim, fired, and though a hundred yards distant, in less than a minute the vaunting hero was in eternity."

The 'troublesome' Jack Donahoe was dead but his memory would fuel a legend and inspire numerous popular ballads that circulated throughout Australia and overseas in places as diverse as Ireland, England, the USA, Canada, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

His nemesis, the young Scottish soldier, on the other hand, slipped quietly into obscurity.

Prior to his transfer to The Weatherboard, there are references to Muggleston's involvement in skirmishes with bushranging gangs in the Oberon area and near the Fish River (Jenolan) Caves in 1831.

He clearly preferred the life of a mounted trooper to that of a foot soldier and twice transferred to other regiments (the 4<sup>th</sup> in 1832 and the 80<sup>th</sup> in 1837) in order to remain in Australia.

By the end of the 1830s he was stationed at Newcastle and was probably involved in the pursuit of the 'Jew Boy' Gang (led by Edward Davis, the only Jewish bushranger on record) who were operating throughout the Hunter region between 1839 and the end of 1840.

John Muggleston died in Newcastle Hospital on January 13, 1841 at the early age of 37 and was buried in the Christ Church Cathedral Cemetery. I have not, however, been able to establish the cause of his death.

His colleagues in the mounted police erected a substantial headstone to his memory and, while no longer marking the spot where his body lies, this still exists.

On its face are inscribed the words: "Sacred to the memory of John

Muggleston who died January 1841 aged about 40 years. This stone is erected by the officers, non-commissioned officers and troopers of the Mounted Police Force".

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Ward, Russell. 'Donahoe, John (Jack) (1806?-1830)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 1. Melbourne: MUP, 1966.  
Information supplied by the Local Studies Librarian, Newcastle Region Library [Letter dated 9 January 2003]

## MOUNTAIN MURDERS

Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc. will conduct a walk "The Mountain Murders – Lee Weller's Grave" on Saturday, August 28.

For further details

[pplinden@yahoo.com.au](mailto:pplinden@yahoo.com.au)

## NATIONAL TRUST WALK

The Blue Mountains Branch of National Trust is organising a walk on the lower Blue Mountains eastern escarpment for Saturday, July 24.

The walk will visit Elizabeth's Lookout, Knapsack Gully and railway viaduct built in 1867, then traverse the original Lapstone Zig-Zag, cross the portal of the original Lapstone Hill railway tunnel, the subject of Arthur Streeton's painting 'Fires on'.

Morning tea and lunch will be provided.

For further enquiries Rhona Leach 4757 2424.

# Woodford's memorial for those who for king and empire enlisted from this village

In the aftermath of the Great War, communities across Australia built war memorials to perpetuate the memory of those who served their country and who lie buried in foreign soil or beneath the seas. Their memory must not be diminished by the passage of time.

Woodford like so many other towns was to see the creation of a Memorial Park in which was included a war memorial housed in a pavilion.

Often the memorials were built at the instigation of local residents who banded together in organisations such as progress, citizens and/or ratepayers associations.

In his book *Hazelbrook & Woodford – A story of two Blue Mountains towns* local historian Ken Goodlet, records: In February 1917, 'it was unanimously decided to form a local progress association, the object being to formulate plans for the enhancement of the district'.

The committee included such local identities as Gustavus Waterhouse (president), Thomas Thomas, Aubrey Murphy and Herbert Dakin<sup>1</sup>.

The local press saw this as marking 'an epoch in the history of this charming town'<sup>2</sup>.

The war memorial is described in the State Heritage Inventory as a square pavilion with an intersecting gable roof.



A rock faced stone balustrade with bullneck brick capping spans between the piers.

On the north side a terrazzo stair with stone spandrels provides access to the shelter.

On a monument in the centre of the pavilion is a rockfaced sandstone monument with tapered sides. Marble plaques at the base commemorate those who enlisted from the village in World War I. Granite plaques commemorate World War II<sup>3</sup>.

In 1919 details of Woodford Memorial Park appeared in the Government Gazette and the Woodford War Memorial and pavilion was designed and constructed in 1920 by local stonemason and master builder Thomas Thomas. The memorial and pavilion was built on a sandstone outcrop on the south east portion of the park between the train line and the highway.

Thomas Owen Thomas had built his home in Woodford in 1909 soon after he emigrated from Wales.

At the time of his death in 1973 his contribution to the Blue Mountains community was considered to be one of the most important in the development of this district.

He served as an alderman on Blue Mountains Shire Council, was a long term president of Woodford Progress Association, a chairman of Woodford Sights and Reserves

Trust, and a member of the 530A Committee [of council] caring for the Woodford parks and reserves at the time of his death.

In 1921, the Woodford Group of the Blue Mountains Sights Reserves was established, most of the early attention going into Woodford Memorial Park and much of the cost being paid as a loan by Gustav Waterhouse<sup>4</sup>.

It was not until 1962 that Memorial Park was transferred to Blue Mountains Council.

In recent times Woodford Memorial Park has been difficult to access from the Great Western Highway or the footbridge over the rail line. However, there is expected to be some enhancement of the park and memorial which will not be affected by construction work to upgrade the Great Western Highway.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The editor of BMACHO's newsletter **HERITAGE** is grateful to Ken Goodlet for permission to use information from his book, *Hazelbrook & Woodford. A story of two Blue Mountains towns*. Compilation and photographs by John Leary, OAM.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Goodlet, K., *Hazelbrook & Woodford. A story of two Blue Mountains towns*.

<sup>2</sup> *Blue Mountains Echo*. February 2, 1917, August 10, 1917, January 4, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> NSW Heritage Branch Heritage Databases, [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au) accessed June 10 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Goodlet, K., *Hazelbrook & Woodford. A story of two Blue Mountains towns*.



# ELIZABETH MACQUARIE: 'so young a campaigner'

by Jan Barkley Jack

As a twenty-six year old, Miss Elizabeth Henrietta Campbell of Airds, had met Lachlan Macquarie in their native Scotland in 1804.

Two years later, Elizabeth and her officer exchanged locks of hair as tokens of their joint affection before Macquarie returned to his military duties in India.

The youngest daughter of Macquarie's second cousin, Elizabeth had grown up on her father's estate in Appin, Scotland and attended school near London.

Elizabeth seems to have been a particularly capable, friendly and good-looking young woman who retained a sprightliness and humour, even in trying situations.

Her sensibility and sensibleness attracted Lachlan to his second marriage. The pair wed in November 1807 in Devonshire, as Macquarie took command of the 73rd Regiment.<sup>1</sup>

Late in 1808, whilst the Regiment was at Perth, the Macquaries began re-organising the Gruline estate Macquarie had bought on the island of Mull. It was on the estate, that Macquarie planned his first model township at Salen, to include tradesmen tenants (as with his founding of Liverpool, New South Wales).



**Remains of the quay whose construction Lachlan Macquarie supervised at Fishnish on Mull, Scotland, c. 1786. Source: taken by Jan Barkley Jack, 1997**

The town was situated west of Fishnish where more than twenty years before he had supervised the building of a stone quay for his uncle.<sup>2</sup>

Elizabeth's first child, a daughter, died in infancy in December 1808.<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth was to have six miscarriages before their only child who lived, Lachlan jr, was born a little over five years later in Sydney.

Though a sickly child he lived until 1845. Both children are buried in the large family vault at Gruline, as were Lachlan in 1824 and Elizabeth on her death in 1835.

After their return from Australia in 1822, for much of the time Elizabeth lived in the house they had prepared on the Gruline estate beside the tranquil Loch Ba.<sup>4</sup>

The Macquarie vault [pictured at right] is today under the care of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) in tribute to the couple.<sup>5</sup>

It was Elizabeth's blending of a genteel upbringing with a love of beauty and nature that made her popular and happy in the colony of New South Wales where she was first lady from 1810.<sup>6</sup>

At Airds, Scotland, before her marriage, she had planned and directed construction of a new walkway in the grounds of the

estate which Macquarie felt 'showed the good taste of this young lady for ornamental improvements of this kind'<sup>7</sup> - a skill Elizabeth extended in her well-debated contribution to the design and aesthetics of some colonial buildings and surrounds.<sup>8</sup>

An important but less discussed essence of Elizabeth is how the ruggedness of the landscape of her youth allowed her to embrace travel in the colony.

She was the first wife of a New South Wales governor to brave the colonial frontiers so extensively.

She was prepared to ride happily for long periods, sometimes up to seven hours on horseback in the bush with leeches attacking her ankles, and she felt at home sleeping in a tent.<sup>9</sup>



**The Macquarie mausoleum in Scotland maintained by the National Trust of Australia (NSW)**

From the frontier Hawkesbury to Van Diemen's Land and Newcastle,<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth took an acute interest in the scenery and the Indigenous peoples.

When the governor's forays became too energetic, Elizabeth could be found, with a soldier escort, exploring a closer hill and delighting in 'the beautiful prospect she had from the top'.<sup>11</sup>

On one official excursion in 1815, as the only woman in a large party of men, Elizabeth accompanied Macquarie on his April-May journey across the Blue Mountains to the newly discovered plains where Bathurst was to be founded.

**Continued page 8**

# Mrs Macquarie on horse-back bush excursions

## Continued from page 7

Riding in the carriage gave way to horseback on just the second day until the Nepean was forded, and then resumed on and off.

Accommodation that night at Springwood, as for the next 22 nights, was in tents, the couple sometimes relaxing with a game of cards after dinner.

The pass that William Cox had constructed down Mount York stunned the Macquaries, the road being so steep that Elizabeth and Lachlan had to walk the whole way down on foot, whilst three hours of struggle elapsed before the carriages and baggage came down safely.

A special halt was called by Elizabeth elsewhere, so she could sketch 'Mount Evans' [Evans Crown].<sup>12</sup>

Lachlan was proud of Elizabeth's fortitude and pleased with her companionship:

Mrs M. I am happy to say, has bore [sic] the fatiguing journey over the Blue Mountains to [Bathurst Plains]... wonderfully well indeed ...<sup>13</sup>

An earlier comment, written in the wilds of the Cowpastures, summed up Macquarie's affection and Elizabeth's varied talents succinctly. While needing fires and guards to encircle their camp site from fear of the wild cattle, her husband could note of Elizabeth:

we sat down eight at table to a most comfortable dinner; Mrs. M. tho' so young a campaigner having provided every requisite to make our tour easy, pleasant and happy...<sup>14</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> M.H. Ellis, *Lachlan Macquarie*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1978, pp. 121, 124-131, 133, 142-143.

<sup>2</sup> Ellis, pp. 123, 143; J.Ritchie, *Macquarie: a Biography*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1986, pp. 20-21, 91; Lachlan Macquarie, *Journals of His Tours in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land 1810-1822*, Library of Australian History in association with the Library Council of New South Wales, Sydney, 1979, pp. 3, 113; *Sydney Gazette* 22 December, 1810; Personal

communication from Meg Douglas of Bridges Cottage Aros, Mull to Jan Barkley Jack and Ian Jack, 27 June 1997; field trip to Gruline-Salen-Fishnish on Mull by Jan Barkley Jack and Ian Jack, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Ritchie, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> Ritchie, pp. 211-213, 221, 218-219; Ellis, p. 251; Personal communication from Meg Douglas of Bridges Cottage Aros, Mull to Jan Barkley Jack and Ian Jack, 27 June 1997.

<sup>5</sup> www.nationaltrust.com.au/properties/macquarie/default.asp

<sup>6</sup> Ellis, p. 134.

<sup>7</sup> Ellis, p. 131.

<sup>8</sup> J. Broadbent, *The Australian Colonial House*, Hordern House in association with Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Sydney, 1997, pp.124,145; J. Broadbent and Joy Hughes(eds.), *The Age of Macquarie*, Melbourne University Press in association with Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, Carlton, 1992, pp. 11, 168.

<sup>9</sup> Macquarie, pp. 2, 5-16, 25, 27.

<sup>10</sup> Macquarie, pp. 23-43, 45-79, 86-87.

<sup>11</sup> Macquarie, pp. 15, 82, 152.

<sup>12</sup> Macquarie, pp. 90-110.

<sup>13</sup> Macquarie, p. 98.

<sup>14</sup> Macquarie, p.7

THE AUTHOR. Jan Barkley Jack is a historian, educated at the University of New England, with a BA (Hons.) from the University of Western Sydney.

She co-authored the Hawkesbury City Council's Bicentennial book and has written many articles.

She has promoted history through being on Hawkesbury Historical Society, National Trust and Hawkesbury City Council heritage and celebration committees, and as honorary curator of Hawkesbury Museum for over twenty years.

Jan has presented Community Link courses for the University of Western Sydney and was a recipient of a Commonwealth Centenary Medal in 2003 for 'service to the community through the history and heritage of the Hawkesbury'.

In 2005 she was an advisor to SBS Television on historical content in their Living History series *The Colony*. Her latest book, *Hawkesbury Settlement Revealed* was published in 2009.

## Governor Macquarie exhibition

One of Governor Lachlan Macquarie's most enduring legacies was the setting out of five towns on the Hawkesbury River.

They were named Richmond, Windsor, Wilberforce, Pitt Town and Castlereagh, and, according to Hawkesbury Regional Museum director, Kath von Witt, they guaranteed the survival of the colony of New South Wales.

"Attempts to farm at Sydney and Parramatta had not produced enough food to support the population, and although the Hawkesbury had the rich alluvial soil needed to grow crops and raise livestock, regular flooding had swept much of it away," says Kath.

"With his five towns, Macquarie changed all that — by situating towns above flood level, grain and livestock could be protected from flooding and Sydney's food supply was assured.

"At the same time, Macquarie created settlements that, 200 years later, continue to reflect his town planning ability, his belief in the civilising influence of British

institutions, and his willingness to spend public money on infrastructure."

On show throughout 2010 at the award-winning museum in Windsor, itself located on a town allotment granted by Macquarie to John Howe in 1811, is a display about Macquarie's achievements.



It includes information about the time he spent in the area, and the thinking that went into the siting and naming of the towns.

Hawkesbury Regional Museum is at 8 Baker Street Windsor. Open daily 10am - 4pm except Tuesdays (pre-booked groups only) Selected public holidays 10am - 4pm. Closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Good Friday.

For further information  
Phone 4560 4654 museum@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au  
[www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)

# THE OLD COMMUNITY HALL - THE HEART OF THE LAWSON TOWNSHIP

by Nance Cooper, Mid Mountains Historical Society Inc.

Although the place that was to become the modern Lawson had appeared under its first name of Christmas Swamp on John Oxley's 1817 survey, it was not until 1867 and the arrival of a single-track railway line that the township had its real beginnings.

Up to this time its major function had been to serve the needs of the steadily increasing movement of people and trade both ways across the mountains. The Blue Mountain Inn and an official stock resting area (now Douglass Square) together with a good water supply had made Blue Mountain as it came to be known a major stopping place.

After 1867 a settled community began to appear. The name Lawson appeared in 1879 as part of a government clean-up of place names.

The Blue Mountain Inn was moved from its original site on what is now the public school playground finally ending up where the Blue Mountains Hotel now stands and a flourishing small shopping centre grew up to serve the needs of both the permanent residents and the increasing numbers of holiday makers.

By World War I, Lawson was one of the major holiday resorts of the Blue Mountains. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the story of Lawson's Old Community Hall begins many forces were having an impact even on a quiet mountain township.

The development of the Mechanics Institute movement as a social and educational force was under way throughout NSW and within the Lawson community new needs were being felt.

The result was at first a small venture called the Lawson Literary and Debating Society that was set up in 1896 with eight members and no money.

It met in what had been the second Blue Mountain Inn (on the present school playground).



A small library encouraged more members, so a move was made across the railway line to the Coffee Palace (later Stratford School of which only the tower still remains) in San Jose Avenue.

The purchase of a small billiard table against much opposition encouraged younger members so a permanent home was sought by the Progress Association.

In 1899 the state government came into the picture and set aside Lot 17 Section 1 of the Village of Lawson for a mechanics institute and the society with library and billiard table moved back across the railway line to a home in a temporary wooden building.

A more substantial masonry building was erected on the site in 1903 at the cost of £400 paid for by community subscription.

About 40,000 bricks from the old Lawson railway station were used as well as some from Mount Victoria station, all becoming available as the result of the upgrading of the railway line and the need for new stations.

Once again the community was directly involved in providing the transport for such a major movement of building material.

The new Lawson Mechanics Institute building was officially opened in December 1903.

The needs of current highway widening have had the effect of restoring the old community hall to its original appearance as created by the Lawson community.

The portico that provided a covered front entry to the building was not to appear until at least 30 years after the original building was completed.

A 1905 photograph shows a set of steps from the footpath to the doorway that still faces the highway. Exactly when the portico was added is a matter of question but photographic evidence shows the hall without portico up to the time of World War II.

In all probability its appearance coincided with the use of the building on a regular basis as a cinema up to the advent of television.

The new building was put to immediate use. By 1905 the library, now a circulating library, had reached 1000 volumes and membership continued to grow. A permanent caretaker was needed and the library and billiard room were open all day in the holiday season.

**Continued page 10**

# Lawson Mechanics Institute a venue for university lectures in 1906

## *Continued from page 9*

It became a venue for young men and women for Christian conferences with up to 200 in attendance and was also used in 1906 as the site of university lectures for students from NSW and Victoria.

It provided a venue for the new Blue Mountains Shire Council that took over the building temporarily in 1907 before relocating to San Jose Avenue, first to *Avon* on the corner of Park Street, then into its permanent home in what is now the library building where it stayed until 1947.

A major change occurred in 1911 when the Lawson Mechanics Institute was renamed the Lawson Literary Institute reflecting a changing attitude to the building and its use.

In 1909 its move to becoming Lawson's entertainment centre accelerated. The stage was enlarged and wings were added. Moving pictures were first exhibited in the hall by a travelling show and skating appeared as a hall activity in 1912.

The connection of electricity in 1931 increased its availability for a wide range of social activities. There are newspaper reports of dances, bazaars, lectures, school prize-giving functions and billiard competitions and until the early 1960s it was the local cinema.

In 1991 the building was renamed the Mid Mountains Youth Centre but was vacated in 2004 for its future to be determined.

While at one stage demolition seemed inevitable to meet the needs of highway widening, a realignment of the new line of highway coupled with the removal of the portico has made the retention of the building possible.

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**Christmas party given by RSL c. 1936 held in Lawson Mechanics Institute Hall. Photograph by A Manning of Katoomba**

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The Mid Mountains Historical Society was set up in 2000 at a community meeting to give a voice to the much neglected heritage and history of this forgotten part of the Blue Mountains.

Preservation, recording and publicising of material relating to the area is a paramount object which is reflected in the Society's website and various published documents

## Lt William Dawes named Mt Twiss



**Continued from page 1**

Mount Twiss, named after an officer of the Royal Engineers, and Dawes Ridge are enshrined on the Register of the Geographic Names Board.

There have been numerous attempts to pinpoint their exact location but there is no backing in any journals so their position will slip into the realm of mythology.

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# STRANGE DOINGS AT SPRINGWOOD

By Shirley Evans

**Nepean Times, February 1, 1890**

"Petty Thieving. – Petty thieving in and around Springwood seems to be the popular amusement – mean despicable appropriation of other people's goods – one of our hardworking neighbours has to pick his ripening fruit every morning before he goes to work; if not it is sure to go during his absence – another one left a few tools where he had been working some little distance from his house, the next day they were missing – and on Tuesday we met our road maintenance man plodding towards Springwood with a very doleful countenance, his road repairing tools having been left between two days – we believe some people would steal a dog-leg fence if they could get it on their shoulders – O Tempore ! O Moses! "

**Nepean Times, May 3, 1890**

"More petty thieving and wanton mischief in the back blocks, one poor fellow loses five of his best hens, and another has his wire fence cut in various places and some of the wire stolen – this is beyond a joke. Another had a few (a case or so) late apples on the tree one night – the next morning they had disappeared . We shall have to interview the war office and have a detachment of mounted infantry sent up here. They could make a dear little camp on peach tree flat, and it would be such fun for the girls. We are sure they would be just as useful in the country (even more so) than displaying their roosters' feathers in the neighbourhood of Sydney, and if our liberal government would supply them with a little ammunition, we might get rid of our flying foxes without trying to blow them up with dynamite. Lor! what a scare the wallabies would get."



**A pair of antique silver cruets, probably not unlike the set stolen from Miss Todd's Springwood home in 1890. Photograph courtesy of John Leary, OAM**

For more than 400 years, since the first ever newspaper, the *Relation aller Fürnemmen und gedenckwürdigen Historien* was printed in Strassburg, Germany by Johann Carolus in 1605; newspaper reporting has undergone many changes in literary styles.

From the early 18<sup>th</sup> century up until recent times it was not uncommon for provincial and even some metropolitan newspapers to supplement crafted writings of journalists with contributions from correspondents or as they were sometimes called 'stringers' who provided news from outlying areas.

The writings of these correspondents varied from the bland to the beguiling, the storyline sometimes quaint, sometimes questionable. The authors were sometimes humble, sometimes hostile while some tried homespun humour to get their story read. Unquestionably for future researchers and historians these correspondents have left a first-hand account sometimes complete with hyperbole of lifestyles of yesteryear.

The *Nepean Times* seems to have employed a 'stringer' in the then outlying township of Springwood. Springwood Historian, Shirley Evans in her ongoing research of old newspapers has contributed this interesting article. It is well worth the space given to it in this edition of **HERITAGE**. The editor.

**Nepean Times, May 10, 1890**

"The operations of our Springwood thieves are extending and taking a higher tone. A few days back they took advantage of Mrs Hoare's absence and forced an entrance into her house<sup>1</sup>, but they were evidently new at this branch of the trade for they decamped without taking anything of much value<sup>2</sup>. Their entrance was effected very clumsily as they had roughly bored holes in the front door and burst a panel in sufficiently wide to get their hands in and undo the fastenings of the door. This is certainly an upward tendency in the style of theft from robbing orchards, making a raid amongst the hen roosts, stealing and cutting wire fences to barefaced robbery. We shall next hear of them sticking up our local bank or stopping the mail train. We are as far too go-ahead in villainy as we are slow in other natures."

**Nepean Times, June 28, 1890**

"I daresay you have heard of the nefarious proceedings of certain

unknown "gentry" in the district of Springwood. Truly, we are in bad case. No one when he retires for the night can say he will have a peaceful time of it. He may examine under his bed with his rushlight to see if anyone is there, and he may perchance keep his revolver loaded too under his pillow; but for all those precautions he may find the next morning that his fowls have been stolen, or his beehives disappeared – the very wires of his fence may have been cut and taken away, or worse still his house may be broken into and many of his favourite articles gone. If he has goods consigned to him by rail and leaves them or his luggage on the Springwood platform, part or the whole may disappear in the twinkling of an eye without his authority. These are not fanciful cases. These things have happened and that lately. Some no less than last week. You may say the remedy lies in having one policeman stationed here, whose district extends from about Blaxland right away to Lawson and beyond. Well he is no doubt a very worthy constable, but so far has been unable to afford us any relief. He cannot even find one offender, and I fear it is hopeless to expect that he will be able to unless ably assisted by the Inspector General of Police's instructions.

**Continued page 12**

# From Springwood burglar to Peak Hill murderer

*Continued from page 11*

It is plain to me that we want more police here if only as a temporary expedient, then there may be some hope of being able to keep one's goods intact. If no help is afforded, and more burglaries and thefts occur it will have but one ending – somebody will be made a target of; perhaps the wrong man which would be a lamentable result. Revolvers are to be brought into requisition by several of our folk who are determined to use them too if occasion demand it. Perhaps our Progress Committee will make a move in the desired direction, for at present "our" policeman's lot is not a happy one."

**Nepean Times, July 19, 1890**

"Another petty robbery has occurred in the district. Miss Todd upon returning home, near the railway bridge, after a short absence, found it broken into and some blankets and a cruet stand abstracted. It is a curious thing that in all the late cases of robbery about Springwood, the thieves have appropriated a cruet-stand. It does not seem to matter much whether the stand is electro or silver it is all the same to them, it is taken. We wonder whether he, she or they are going to set up a dining saloon, and are thus commencing to appropriate the necessary stock. It's a risky game; and for our part we would rather buy the articles on terms, and leave before payment was required – with the articles, if not too bulky.

**Nepean Times, July 26, 1890**

"Theft. – In the midst of life we are in theft, at least we find it so this side of the Zig-Zag, and a consignment of tower muskets will have to be forwarded to the district. Neither our cruet stands or our clothes lines are safe. In fact this system of petty fogging appropriation of other people's underlinen is the meanest type of kleptomania. Last Saturday our two hotels had their clothes lines stripped in a most barefaced manner, and the night before Mr Humphries, a quiet hard working man, had his home broken into and a quantity of wearing apparel and papers taken. We can understand a starving homeless wretch filching from the super-abundance of a rich man's house, the temptation being so great, but for thieves to break in

and steal from a hard working tiller of the soil seems the very poorest kind of employment.

We would just as soon work for our living and take our natural rest at night."

**Nepean Times, August 2, 1890**

"No more robberies. – Since the stirring events of the last week have transpired, our village has returned to its usual placid serenity. We carefully take in all our washed clothes at night, lock the back gate with a six inch nail, and shove the cruet stand as far up the chimney as possible. Having made these preparations, we chain the dog up to the grind-stone, and feel easy for the night."

**Nepean Times, August 16, 1890**

"Mr Parker's house on Single's Ridge was entered the other day in the absence of the owner, but nothing much was appropriated, but there has been an increased demand for shot, caps and powder at Mr Rayner's store. We pity the marauders if the vengeance is carried out that we have heard threatened them. Life will be a burden and death a happy release to them."

**Nepean Times, October 11, 1890**

"A sensation is now being experienced through some discoveries made this week by Constable Illingworth. It will be recollected that our little community was moved by feelings of alarm and indignation some few months ago in consequence of the numerous burglaries and robberies which took place in our midst, some which 'took the cake' for barefacedness. Well the secret is being unearthed at last, much to our relief of mind, and very much to those who were unfortunately wrongly suspected of being participants in the proceedings. It is an old saying that 'murder will out', and it looks as if it is going to prove in our case. It appears that Mr Larsen<sup>3</sup> had in his employ as caretaker and gardener a man named Lars Peter Hansen. This individual enjoyed the confidence of his employer for over a year and left for 'fresh fields and pastures new'<sup>4</sup> about a month since. The next news we heard of Hansen was that he had been arrested for supposed complicity in the murder

of a man named Charles Duncker in the Peak Hill district. Opinions began to be expressed here that he might have been guilty of some of the crimes in this district. Then did our constable arise to the dignity of his profession. Without further ado he considered it advisable to make a little search for himself<sup>4</sup> in the house and grounds of Mr Larsen, and was well rewarded for his trouble by finding a 'plant'. A waterhole in the grounds was 'fished' with the result that two tin trunks and part of a leather portmanteau were found, minus the contents, the said packages being those which were mysteriously conveyed away from the station here in June last. Heaps of rubbish were overturned, resulting in the discovery of sundry articles, all of which have been already identified as stolen goods belonging to our villagers. In a cooking stove were found some lumps of white metal which had evidently been melted down in the hope of it being silver, but which it is probable is something baser. Much therefore has been done towards clearing up a great mystery. The circumstantial evidence thus afforded points strongly towards Hansen as the perpetrator of at least some of the robberies. As at present he is suspected of the most serious crime of murder, we can afford to wait and see how he gets on with that charge."



**A tomahawk like this missing from Springwood crime scene. Photograph by John Leary, OAM**

**Nepean Times, October 25, 1890**

"Since Hansen's departure from our district we have been free from robberies, for which much thanks. The various goods found on Mr Larsen's premises, after Hansen's arrest for the Peak Hill murder, which is believed to have been stolen by Hansen, have all been identified; some as belonging to some ladies at Miss Hooper's school<sup>5</sup> at North Springwood, and others as the property of Mrs Hoare.

# Murder of the little German on the Peak Hill road

## *Continued from page 12*

The only article missed by Mr Larsen is a tomahawk which that gentleman states he could identify. It is hoped he may have an opportunity of seeing the tomahawk which is said to have been in Hansen's possession about the time of the murder."

## **Nepean Times, January 24, 1891**

"Murder will out! We note that Hansen has confessed to the murder of the little German on the Peak Hill Road. Who in our little community would have suspected that so quiet a man as Hansen would have been guilty of the several robberies here, much less the serious crime of murder."  
\*\*\*\*\*

Lars Peter Hansen, 30 years of age, was born in Denmark and arrived in Australia in about 1889. After leaving Springwood (probably with some of his purloined pieces), he went to Sydney where he stayed in lodgings with a German man, Charles Duncker, aged 23, and a Swedish man called Peter Petersen.

In 1889 gold was discovered in Peak Hill in Central New South Wales between Parkes and Dubbo, hundreds of people rushed there to seek their fortune, and the area rapidly expanded into a thriving town.

Hansen and Duncker decided to try their hand at prospecting but rapidly reached the conclusion that it was not for them – as Hansen put it to several people he met, "the diggings are all duffered out" and "there were too many people". [This was not exactly correct as gold mining is still continuing in Peak Hill] They decided to return to Sydney although Hansen told one man he was going to catch a train to Springwood.

In September, 1890, Hansen and Duncker walked along the road from Peak Hill to Dubbo where they intended to catch a train. Several people remembered seeing the two men, describing Hansen as a tall stout man about 6 feet 7 or 8 inches [200cm] high with a thick accent and carrying a heavy swag with a tomahawk strapped to it. One man said he looked fierce and frightening. Duncker, a short

distance behind him and hurrying to catch up, was described as small and slight and carrying a light swag. The next morning some of these witnesses found the body of a man they believed was Duncker, lying on the remains of a fire with a knife nearby.

Hansen was immediately suspected of murdering Duncker and they finally found him working on the docks at Port Kembla.

He was known to be trying to earn enough money for his passage to Germany. He was wearing a cap he claimed to have bought from Duncker and admitted to the possession of a revolver, also bought from Duncker, which was in his box in Market Street. In the box they also found a number of pawn tickets for Duncker's clothes.

When arrested he said, "I no murder the little German". He was taken to Dubbo for the inquest and, on arrival at the railway station, was greeted with booing and hissing from the crowd. Duncker's body was officially identified by the Swede, Peter Petersen.

The knife was also identified as belonging to Hansen. The inquest into the little German's death concluded that "he was murdered by person or persons unknown". However, Hansen was immediately charged with the murder.

At the trial he pleaded not guilty and said in his defence, "I no guilty. I kill him to save myself". Mr Justice Stephen [son of Sir Alfred Stephen] passed sentence of death on him.

On June 2, 1891, Lars Peter Hansen, attended by Archdeacon Wilson, was led to the gallows of Dubbo Gaol<sup>6</sup> showing little anxiety or fear. When asked if he felt safe he replied, "Yes", shook hands and said, "Goodbye". He was asked if he had anything to say and he replied in his broken English, "I am not guilty of this murder. I die an innocent man and a Christian, and trust myself to Jesus Christ." Although death appeared to be instantaneous, the doctor said the

heart had continued for some minutes after the drop.

## **ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Mrs Alice Hoare, a wealthy widow, owned "Homedale", a handsome villa, valued at £5,600.0.0 in 1884, located at the corner of Homedale and Railway Parade. Mrs Hoare was the sister of John Frazer, benefactor of the Frazer Memorial Church. Edward Deane established the Blue Mountains Grammar School in Homedale in 1918. The house was demolished in 1975 to make way for Wingara, an aged persons' complex.

<sup>2</sup> "A cruet stand is a small stand of metal, ceramic or glass which holds condiments. Typically these include salt and pepper shakers, and often cruets or bottles of vinegar and olive oil."  
Wikipedia

<sup>3</sup> Gustav Larsen and his nephew Axel Bech were tobacconists in Balmain. They had come from Denmark and their country house in Springwood was "Elsinore" situated on the Bathurst Road on 4 acres of land with a frontage of 550ft stretching eastward from the first Public School (now the Springwood northern car park).

<sup>4</sup> Constable Illingworth's decision to search the grounds of "Elsinore" was prompted by Axel Bech's daughter falling in the water hole in the grounds. In retrieving the child Bech found portions of three empty trunks. He immediately reported this to the Constable.

<sup>5</sup> Miss Hooper's school for girls was "Hartlands" (now "Hartfields") on the Hawkesbury Road, Springwood.

<sup>6</sup> Dubbo Gaol 1871-1966 Eight men were hanged at Dubbo Gaol including Jacky Underwood who inspired Thomas Keneally's "Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith."

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My thanks to Pamela Smith and John Merriman for research assistance, S.Evans.

*'Australian history is almost always picturesque....It does not read like history, but like the most beautiful lies'*

--- Mark Twain, *More Tramps Abroad* (1897)

## Blue Mountains Bi-centenary of Crossing Organisation Committee appointed

Blue Mountains City Council has now decided on the composition of the Bicentenary of Crossing Organisation Committee which is as follows:

Aboriginal community - Gai Marheine (Darug Community)

Chambers of Commerce - Graham Reibelt (Lawson), Tom Colless (Katoomba) and Lew Hird (Wentworth Falls)

Historical/Heritage sector - Susan Warmbath (Blue Mountains Historical Society), Robert Clarke (BM Branch National Trust of Australia) and Jean Arthur (Mt Victoria and District Historical Society).

Community representatives - Bruce Ferrier, Dr Siobhan Lavelle, OAM, John O'Sullivan, John Wakefield, OAM and Kerrin O'Grady

## Heritage Identification and Protection – Revision of FAHS Heritage Handbook

Originally published in 2002 by the Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS), this guide to heritage identification and protection is intended to provide a practical guide for local historical societies that wish to identify and protect local heritage places, objects and records. The revision is available from the web only: [www.history.org.au/Heritage](http://www.history.org.au/Heritage) <<http://www.history.org.au/Heritage>> identification and protection.html

## NATIONAL TRUST APPOINTMENT

National Trust of Australia (NSW) has announced the appointment of Maisy Stapleton as a new deputy executive director.

## Joan Kent comes on board

Joan Kent of Little Hartley has accepted an offer to fill a vacancy on BMACHO's management committee.

Following an honours degree in history at Macquarie University, Joan spent five years as research assistant to Professor John Ward, then Vice-Chancellor and Challis Professor of History at Sydney University, followed by some years as a consultant historian engaged in the preparation of thematic studies and conservation plans.

An interesting period as the research historian at National Parks and Wildlife Service developed her interest in the conservation of the built environment, industrial archaeology and social history.

While living in the UK in the early 1990s she advanced this interest by completing a masters degree in social science (industrial archaeology) which, in between breeding alpacas is now utilised in



assisting residents in the Hartley area in attempting to protect this highly significant region from the ravages of four-laned highways and concrete flyovers.

Joan and husband Tom have been members of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) for 30 years and she has served as secretary of the Lithgow Branch.

## 2.1 million Torrens Titles online

The system of Torrens Title is named after its creator, Sir Robert Richard Torrens who in the 1850s developed this unique method of registering land ownership.

Robert Torrens' experience in merchant shipping law stood him in good stead when it came to developing a way of replacing the English land law of the time that was complex, inefficient, time consuming and expensive.

Before the Torrens Title was formulated, a rather inaccurate chain of documents existed that meant all land dealings had to be examined and registered, then placed on public record.

With the Torrens Title system title to a property is created simply by registering or recording this ownership in a central government register.

This simple system proved to be so revolutionary that the Registrar General of NSW at the time, Christopher Rolleston, travelled all the way from NSW to South Australia to learn about it.

Although he was shipwrecked on his return trip he managed to survive and on his return formulated the new titling legislation for NSW.

In January 1853 the Real Property Act came in operation introducing the Torrens system of Title to NSW. Today, even though Australia is a federation of sovereign states, each state having a different system of land law, all are based on the same Torrens Title system.

After the first Torrens Title (Volume 1) was issued in 1863, it took 33 years to register the next 250,000 titles made up of 100 volumes. The next 1,875,000 titles (7500 volumes) took 65 years to register.

There are 2.1 million records now available online and can be accessed on the SIX portal at: [www.six.nsw.gov.au](http://www.six.nsw.gov.au)

The Torrens system of title is also one of Australia's most famous legal services exports operating in many overseas countries.

Source: NSW Land and Property Management Authority.

# Mt Victoria exhibit recalls eccentric educator at Osborne Ladies' College

A collection of memorabilia, claimed as unique in the world, from Osborne Ladies' College formerly of Blackheath has been curated as an exhibition at the Mt Victoria and District Historical Society's museum.

The college was developed by Miss Gibbins in 1923 on 40 acres at Blackheath overlooking the Kanimbla and Megalong Valleys. It was renowned for being run in the tradition of the Royal Navy.

Miss Gibbins started a school at Bondi in 1910 initially for boys, but the school was later changed to girls. She later moved the school to Epping, changing the name of her school from the Epping Ladies' College to Osborne Ladies' College after the Royal Naval College, Osborne on the Isle of Wight.

The school uniform was in naval blue worn with Royal Navy Buttons.

Junior girls of the school were known as "Middies" from the term midshipman, with prefects being addressed as lieutenant and the head girl as captain.

Military courtesies applied with the senior girls being saluted. Miss Gibbins was known as "the admiral" while her governess, Miss Violet Everingham was known as "the commander".



The rooms of the school were known by names of Royal Navy ships such as HMS Dreadnought, HMS Nelson, HMS Neptune, HMS Pelican, HMS Rodney, HMS Sirius HMS Sydney and others..

An emphasis was placed on physical fitness, Spartan living (only one room was heated at the school, the library) archery, shooting and dramatic arts.

The school was closed in 1958 following the illness and death of Miss Gibbins. The original building a hotel built in 1883 was destroyed by fire in 1963.

The exhibition curated by Mr Ron Brasier will be officially opened by Dr Peter Rickwood on Saturday, July 10.

The exhibition will be open to the public at the museum Railway Station, Station Street, Mt Victoria

every Saturday and Sunday and public holidays and school holidays between 2 and 5 pm

#### Sources:

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:[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osborne Photos](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osborne_Photos) courtesy Blue Mountains City Council - Local History Studies Collection [www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/)

## National Family History Week

Blue Mountains Family History Society is planning a display in the Springwood Library for National Family History Week, from Friday, July 31, to Saturday, August 7, 2010. In addition, there will be two volunteers on duty each day to give personal assistance to members of the public wishing to research their family history world- wide.

Family History is not just family trees; the exciting part of family history is finding the stories behind the ancestors or putting "the flesh on the bones".

It is far more interesting finding out about the history and geography of the area/s your family came from, their occupations, anything that can be found to "bring them to life", so that they are not just a name, but a person. Of course, if there is a convict in the family, there is a wealth of information to be found and usually an easy trail to follow.

For further information, please contact Jan Koperberg [jank@eftel.com.au](mailto:jank@eftel.com.au) or 02 4754 1544.

## TAFE students to prepare marketing plan for Blue Mountains Historical Society

Blue Mountains Historical Society has enlisted the aid of students from two TAFE colleges to look at aspects of the future of the society.

Advanced Diploma in Marketing students are working on a marketing plan to grow the society. These mature students have already completed 3 years part-time study and are currently employed in the relevant sphere.

Another group, Diploma and Certificate IV TAFE students are creating a garden master plan for the future development of the

Wentworth Falls site previously developed by Colin Slade in 1991.

These works will take a year to complete, under supervision of their tutors and the two master plans are expected to be completed by the end of this year.

To engage private professionals for these plans, the cost would be considerable. And as the society is gaining the enthusiasm of multiple, bright, young students it can be expected that the plans might be better than perhaps those of a single professional.

## World War II in the Blue Mountains

In the 1920s and 1930s the Blue Mountains had a relatively small population in the townships along the highway and railway.

There were service centres, many guesthouses and holiday cottages, TB Sanatoria, etc. World War II saw many families and schools, including SCEGGS and Cranbrook evacuating from Sydney and relocating boarders in private homes, guesthouses, hotels, etc.

Workers from the Lithgow Small Arms Factory also occupied guesthouses on the Blue Mountains. Other guest houses were taken over as service hospitals, such as the Hydro Majestic for US servicemen and Sans Souci for the Brits. In Term 1 in 1942, Katoomba school had 350 new enrolments.

Blue Mountains Family History Society is compiling information about the Blue Mountains in this period and is seeking any personal stories, photographs and relevant information that can be used in the book that will be published. Please contact Joan Edwards [joan.geofocus@gmail.com](mailto:joan.geofocus@gmail.com) or Jan Koperberg [jank@eftel.com.au](mailto:jank@eftel.com.au)

### Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc.

#### Notice of mid-year general meeting

A warm invitation is extended to all members and friends to the Society's mid-year general meeting with guest speaker, Associate Professor Ian Jack.

**Saturday, 31st July 2010 at 10.30am at the Mt Wilson Village Hall, The Avenue, Mt Wilson**

11.00am **General meeting** with committee reports and an update on the Society's ongoing projects and activities. We are especially pleased to announce the awarding of Honorary Life Memberships to Arthur Delbridge and Bruce Wright.

12.00noon **Guest speaker** Associate Professor Ian Jack, President of the Royal Australian Historical Society will tell us about his recent research on the history of **Fernmount** at Kurrajong. This historic property was created in the 19th Century by William Scott, the very interesting Government Astronomer, Warden of St Paul's College and maverick clergyman. It seems that **Fernmount** attracted similarly unusual owners in the twentieth century.

Members and guests are invited to enjoy a warming lunch after the presentation. There will be a gold coin donation at the door to cover costs.

**FOR CATERING PURPOSES, PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE COMING MARY REYNOLDS: 4756 2006 / HELEN CARDY: 9871 3661 OR FLORENCE SMART: 4756 2063 EMAIL: [westring@bigpond.com](mailto:westring@bigpond.com)**

## A Digger's Best Friend arrives at Eskbank House

The Australian War Memorial's travelling exhibition, *A Digger's Best Friend* will be open to the public every day until Sunday, July 25, 2010 at Eskbank House, Lithgow.

Opening hours are 10am to 4pm, Wednesday to Sunday. Group and school bookings are welcome.

"Lithgow City Council is delighted to host this exhibition", Neville Castle, Mayor of Lithgow Council said.

"Curators of the exhibition have drawn together a fascinating array of images from the Memorial's National Collection, which have been specially chosen to suit the learning needs of children."

*A Digger's Best Friend* offers an A to Z of animals in war, from mascots and messengers to creepy-crawlies.

Animals are put to many uses in war. Sometimes they have jobs to do: the horses, camels, mules, and donkeys used to transport soldiers and equipment, as well as carrier pigeons and tracker dogs with their special talents.



While animals are often used as mascots and pets, or as symbols on badges and flags, *A Digger's Best Friend* also looks at those unwelcome animals, such as insects, rats, and wild creatures that make life in the field even more difficult and dangerous.

The exhibition has been developed with a young audience in mind, but visitors of all ages will enjoy its fascinating and moving stories.

The Australian War Memorial's Travelling Exhibitions Program is funded by the Australian Government's Commemorations Program.

For further information contact Naomi Parry, Lithgow City Council's Cultural Development Officer on 6354 9999 or e-mail: [naomi.parry@lithgow.nsw.gov.au](mailto:naomi.parry@lithgow.nsw.gov.au)

## MILITARY MEMORABILIA DISPLAY

Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc. is organising a display of military memorabilia at Tarella, Wentworth Falls for Saturday, September 18.

The society is seeking additional material from members and anyone who may have items of interest is asked to contact Susan Warmbath on 4757 3402.

# Dig finds world's oldest leather shoe

It is size six, has lace up design, and was worn more than 1000 years before the pyramids were built in Egypt.

Dated at 5500 years old, it is the world's most ancient leather shoe.

Its owner apparently cared enough about it to stuff it with grass to keep it in shape while in storage.

The well-preserved shoe made from a single piece of cow hide and worn on the right foot was unearthed in a cave in Armenia and studied by a team led by Dr Ron Pinhasi of University College Cork in Ireland.

While the shoe is small, about a woman's size six, it was not known

whether it belonged to a woman or man. Dr Pinhasi said. "The shoe could have well fitted a man from that era."

It was discovered along with household goods, including large containers, many of which held wheat, barley and apricots. A bone from a deer, with some meat still attached, two horns of a wild goat and fish bones were also found near the shoe.

The contents of the cave had been covered with a thick layer of sheep dung, which had kept them dried and preserved for thousands of years, said the researchers, whose study is published in the science journal PLoS ONE.



## BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

**REGISTERED OFFICE** 14 Bunnal Avenue, Winmalee 2777  
E-mail: jank@eftel.com.au or bmacho.heritage@gmail.com  
Website: www.bluemountains.heritage.com

**THE ORGANISATION** Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Organisations Inc. (BMACHO) was established in April 2006 following a unanimous response to a proposal from Prof. Barrie Reynolds at the 2004 Blue Mountains Local History Conference which sought from Blue Mountains City Council the creation of a cultural heritage strategy for the city.

BMACHO in its constitution uses the definition: "Cultural heritage is all aspects of life of the peoples of the Blue Mountains which was later changed to cover Lithgow and the villages along the Bell's Line of Roads. It therefore involves the recording, preserving and interpreting of information in whatever form: documents, objects, recorded memories as well as buildings and sites."

The objectives of the organisation are:

- i. To raise public consciousness of the value of cultural heritage.
- ii. To encourage and assist cultural heritage activities of member organisations.
- iii. To initiate and support cultural heritage activities not already covered by member organisations.

One of the aims of BMACHO is to bring the various bodies into closer contact, to encourage them to work more closely together and to provide a combined voice on matters of importance within the heritage sector.

**MEMBERSHIP** The following organisations are members of BMACHO: Blue Mountains City Library, Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc, Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc., Blue Mountains Tourism Limited, Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, Cudgegong Museums Group Inc, Friends of Norman Lindsay Gallery, Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc, Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Inc, Lillianfels Blue Mountains Resort, Lithgow Mining Museum Inc, Lithgow Regional Library – Local Studies, Lithgow Small Arms Factory Museum Inc, Mid-Mountains Historical Society Inc, Mid Western Regional Council Library, Mt Tomah Botanic Gardens, Mt Victoria and District Historical Society Inc, Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine History Society Inc (including Turkish Bath Museum), Mudgee Historical Society Inc, Mudgee Regional Library, National Trust of Australia (NSW) - Blue Mountains Branch (including Woodford Academy), National Trust of Australia (NSW) - Lithgow Branch, Scenic World – Blue Mountains Limited, Springwood & District Historical Society Inc., Springwood Historians Inc, Transport Signal and Communication Museum Inc., Two Centuries of Elegance, Valley Heights Locomotive Depot and Museum, Zig Zag Railway Co-op Ltd. The following are individual members: Ray Christison, Associate Professor Ian Jack, Joan Kent, John Leary OAM, John Low, Ian Milliss, Professor Barrie Reynolds, and Dr Peter Stanbury OAM.

**COMMITTEE** The committee for 2010-11 is: John Leary, (president), Ian Jack (vice president), Jan Koperberg (secretary), Kathie McMahon-Nolf (treasurer), Jean Arthur, Joan Kent, Doug Knowles, Dick Morony (public officer), Barrie Reynolds and Peter Stanbury. **AUDITOR:** Sue McMahon, B Comm CPA.

**AFFILIATIONS** BMACHO is a member of the Royal Australian Historical Society Inc.  
**HERITAGE** is BMACHO's official newsletter.