

# HERITAGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION  
OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

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## Grand house victim of bushfire now a ruin

By John Merriman, Local Studies Librarian, Blue Mountains City Library

THIS burnt out building ruin on the side of the Great Western Highway at Faulconbridge was once a grand house with a tower built for a wealthy businessman Andrew McCulloch in the early 1880s.

The stone used in its construction was quarried nearby and the work was carried out by a

well known local stonemason, Patrick (Paddy) Ryan.

McCulloch furnished his country house using the exclusive Sydney firm of Lyon Cottier and Co.

The property boasted a tennis court, flag-staff and beautiful gardens and an ornamental lake made by damming a gully.

McCulloch named his new residence 'Weemala', an Aboriginal word said to mean "an expansive view", and spent the next few years developing the grounds.

However, at the end of the 1880s, he began to experience financial difficulties and sold the property to JW Cliff in 1889.

When Cliff sold the property, then totaling about 113 acres in 1907, the new owner, a solicitor named George Evans, changed the name to 'Eurama', said to be a Greek



word meaning much the same as the earlier Aboriginal one.

Evans had also purchased the neighbouring house, 'Numantia', a wooden cottage adjacent to the railway line with its own rail platform, built in 1877 by Sir James Martin, and to this he transferred the name 'Weemala'.

This has proved to be a source of great confusion and many people today still refer to 'Eurama' as 'Weemala'.

When George Evans died 'Eurama' passed to his daughter, Mrs Emily Ethel McLaurin.

It was later sold to Mrs Katherine Nathan in the 1920s and around 1930, to Mrs Daisy Brown.

Following Mrs Brown's death the building was left vacant for a time and suffered from some vandalism. Over the ensuing decades many owners had their dreams cut short.

The depression, war and other hard times, falling on the owners. In the early 1960s the then owner, Mr Adams, set about restoring the decaying property.

Restoration had been completed just prior to the disastrous bushfires on 1968.

The fire consumed the house in all its grandeur and the building remains a ruin today.

As a postscript to the 'Eurama' story, the Blue Mountains City Library was given permission by Mr Watkins, the then owner, to stage an open air children's adventure theatre performance there during the Bicentennial celebrations in 1988.

With the ruins as a backdrop the property proved a most effective site for this project.

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*An opinion from the editor.....*  
**Western crossing bicentenary gets a dynamic boost**

THE REGION is indeed fortunate to have many dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers engaged in heritage and history work. This small army of people from Penrith to Bathurst is doing a great job in planning commemorations and celebrations for the 2013 -15 bicentenary of the crossing of the Blue Mountains, the discovery and development of the golden west.

BMACHO, the Royal Australian Historical Society and the National Trust of Australia some 6 or 7 years ago sounded the alert that 2013 -15 would be a golden opportunity to create a lasting commemoration, of the western crossing almost 200 years ago and the events that followed culminating in Governor Lachlan Macquarie arriving by coach in Bathurst to proclaim it a township.

Gradually local government has come on board with token finances from their limited resources for the project, while the state government at several levels including that of the premier and federal local members have promised support.

All this interest is welcome and part of the need to involve government at all levels and the people of this community who must be an integral part of the planning and event operating process.

But what has been lacking up to date has been a person or persons who might drive this project and bring to reality this great opportunity.

Just such a force has now emerged with the formation of the Business Supporting Bicentenary (BSB) funded by Phil Hammon of Scenic World and Tom Colless of Colless Foods. This body could take a key role in securing an estimated \$3 million in government grants and company sponsorships needed to make the events reach their potential.

[Some 4 years ago a rough calculation by BMACHO's executive suggested a budget of \$5 million. BSB has no doubt

refined BMACHO's earlier 'guesstimates' which included \$2 million government and sponsorship funds for developing public access and innovative interpretive signage at various sites along the original Cox's Road between Emu Plains and Bathurst]

Phil Hammon and Tom Colless are dynamic businessmen who have the Blue Mountains very much at heart and in the past have not been slow to "put their money where their mouth is". Their strong leadership in this vital part of the bi-centenary celebration and commemoration is the link in the chain the project so badly needed

However, the Western crossing is not just about Katoomba nor even the Blue Mountains. It is about the whole region from Penrith to Bathurst and possibly Parramatta, Blacktown and the Hawkesbury.

It is ludicrous to think no matter how many "Memorandums of Understanding" local government might sign that it has the capacity to co-ordinate, obtain the government and private funding and then manage the event on a regional level.

It is also a recipe for disaster to ignore the tremendous amount of work that has been done by the volunteers, in historical societies, National Trust, BMACHO and others in the heritage sector. This group under the able chairmanship of RAHS president, Professor David Carment has done much of the preliminary work.

It is after all, primarily a commemoration of a major historical event. The aim should be to use the commemoration to exploit the tourism potential which must then benefit the region's economy. Government funding is more likely to come for a regional project, rather than a series of parochial events.

Federal and state government should seize the opportunity to demonstrate how our heritage linked with tourism is good for the economy of the nation.

**John Leary, OAM - Past president, Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Inc.**



## Property name changes cause confusion

*Weemala (1880s) became Eurama (1907)*

*Numantia (1877) became Weemala (1907)*

### The Eurama owners

The subsequent owners of 'Eurama', who consolidated it into one estate and expanded that estate to the present 141 hectares, have been of individual significance: Andrew McCulloch as the epitome of the ruthless wheeler and dealer in sellable land next to a projected railway, the politician, conveyancer and real estate speculator who always had inside information, an anti-hero of the 1870s and 1880s; JW Cliff, as a lesser player in McCulloch's world; George Evans as a proselytiser for the Mountain tracks, the eponym of Evans Lookout, the builder of the State-significant 'Eirene' (now 'Cleopatra'); his daughter, the formidable Emily MacLaurin, and her husband, as heirs to the Rouses and Fitzgeralds, as well as the Evanses and the MacLaurins, who brought the first motor-car to the stables at 'Eurama' and the first Rolls Royce, and reigned there with something of the old-fashioned authority of the quondam squattocracy, leavened by scholarship of which Badham would have approved. *Source: NSW State Heritage statement of significance*

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'Weemala' is now situated close to the rail line behind the high stone wall.

The cottage originally on this site was erected about 1877 for Sir James Martin KCMG. It was to be his country residence and was named 'Numantia'.

Numantia being a region in Spain and it has been said that Sir James thought the countryside here similar to that of Numantia, Spain.

It was a wooden house set behind a high stone wall.



*'Weemala' originally named 'Numantia'*

Sir James had acquired a large amount of land from Sir Henry Parkes and it was his intention to build a huge mansion after he had built this small wooden cottage.

The grand mansion never eventuated.

The foundations only were laid. They later c.1914 -18 became the foundations for 'Banool' now 'The Bungalow' on the corner of Martin Place and Great Western Highway at Linden.

In 1876 a railway platform was erected to service the well-to-do residents of the area. It became the Numantia Platform but ceased operation in 1892 with the platform being removed in 1897.

In 1898 Adolphus Rogalsky purchased 'Numantia' and it was he who changed the name to 'Weemala'.

This coincided with the name change for the other 'Weemala' to 'Eurama'.

The high stone wall of 'Numantia', later 'Weemala', still stands.

The cottage was destroyed by bushfire in December 1977. Since then a new three bedroom brick veneer cottage was erected behind the stone wall. This building has been badly vandalised.

Photographs from the Blue Mountains City Library collection, from the McLaurin family album. John Merriman, Local Studies Librarian © 2009 Blue Mountains City Library

# Great - great - great grand - daughter of William Cox is guest speaker for BMACHO'S AGM

Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker (pictured), the great-great-great grand-daughter of William Cox, who built the first road over the Blue Mountains in 1814 -1815 will be the guest speaker at this month's annual general meeting of the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Inc.

Her talk will be on her great - great - great - grandfather, William Cox, Justice of the Peace, paymaster NSW Corps and road builder.



*Dr Anne - Maree Whitaker*

Anne - Maree is working on a biography of her ancestor and has recently undertaken a research trip to the UK and Ireland in pursuit of family information.

Dr Whitaker has a PhD in Australian history from Macquarie University in Sydney.

She has published widely in Australian Catholic and Irish

Australian topics and is an independent professional historian who undertakes research in a wide range of 18th - 20th century Australian topics.

Dr Whitaker is a Fellow of the Royal Australian Historical Society and the Royal Historical Society, and a member of the Professional Historians Association (NSW) and

the Australian Catholic Historical Society.

Dr Whitaker was the winner of a 2010 National Trust Heritage Award for 'Sydney Parks - Signage and History Website'.

She is also the NSW State Library's CH Currey Memorial Fellow for 2011 - 2012.

## Annual meeting marks 6 years of achievement

The existing management committee of BMACHO under the presidency of Pamela Smith for the past 12 months, has continued to provide innovative initiatives to serve the heritage sector.

Continuing on BMACHO's list of achievements in its first 5 years the committee's major milestones this year include; the publishing of the second *Blue Mountains History Journal*, several seminars or workshops, the publication of another 6 editions of the newsletter *HERITAGE*, support and advice on various issues as well as planning and organising the Blue Mountains History conference for later this year.

The committee has been particularly pleased to see achieved in 2011 one of its strategic aims, the creation by Blue Mountains City Council of a

heritage advisory committee which in past years has seen a major task of lobbying by BMACHO.

The annual general meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 14 at 2pm at the Grandview Hotel, Wentworth Falls.

In the past year, once again there has been a very compatible group of experienced men and women who have looked after the affairs of the association.

Particular mention is made of president Pamela Smith who has not had an easy job balancing her commitments, but has shown a strong lead in the affairs of the organisation particularly in the organisation of this year's major event the conference in October 2012.

The extraordinary capacity and ability of Jan Koperberg who as secretary has not only developed a very effective and timely communication with organisational and individual members, but in the wider heritage community continues to serve well past that of most others.

Nominations for all position close on March 9.

***Pictured below is Pamela Smith during a meeting with National Trust CEO Will Holmes a Court***



# Review of role and future directions for heritage association

A REVIEW OF BMACHO's past and possible future roles will be undertaken by a small sub-committee which will provide the management committee with a report and recommendations by June 30, 2012.

Former BMACHO president John Leary has said, "Voluntary organisations such as those in the heritage sector play a vital role in society, but without strong management much of their hard work can be wasted.

"From time to time an organisation needs to review its overall strategic direction.

"All organisations need a strategic plan and that plan needs to answer three things: where are we now as an organisation, where do we want to be in three years time and how do we get from where we are now to where we want to be?.

"In the six years of its existence BMACHO has achieved much and now is the time to capitalise on these successes.

"For the review to be a success we need input and suggestions as to what members would like to see the association provide in the way of services," Mr Leary said.

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*'Organisations need strong, visionary, experienced people to provide strategic direction'*

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The committee will comprise BMACHO's president, Pamela Smith, secretary, Jan Koperberg, and former president, John Leary with vice president Ian Jack and former treasurer, Peter Stanbury available to also provide advice.

The decision to conduct the review has been discussed for some time and recently the NSW Department of Fair Trading recommended this action should be taken every couple of years.

It is 6 years since BMACHO was established and it is now considered to be an appropriate time to look at various aspects of the association's role.

The review will consider the following issues:

- i. the quality and appropriateness of the services being supplied to members;
- ii. the expectations of both organisational and individual members;
- iii. the need and ability to provide extended and other services
- iv. the ramifications of the possible extension of the area to be served by the association;
- v. the necessity and desirability of a change in name for the association;
- vi. the desirability of affiliating or associating with one or more universities; and
- vii. any other area which the committee may think appropriate.

Some of the issues the sub-committee will investigate include:

\* The advantage or disadvantages of increasing BMACHO's constituency to include neighbouring, but historically linked areas, such as Hawkesbury, Penrith, Oberon or even Bathurst

\* The benefit to historical societies and other heritage groups

from having professional advice and guidance on site for e.g. exhibit display and management or archiving or restoration work.

\* The advisability and capability of BMACHO to provide support within the capacity of its members in their pursuit of heritage advocacy.

\* The need to broaden BMACHO's financial base to allow more services to be provided to members.

\* The possibility of linking BMACHO with a university and other research facilities.

The sub-committee will also look at ways to ensure that the association operates within the principle of 'best practice'.

Anyone interested in making a submission should make contact with Jan Koperberg at [j.koperberg@bigpond.com](mailto:j.koperberg@bigpond.com)

## Internet and e-mail workshops

A series of four introductory workshops for people wishing to improve their skills in the use of the internet and email will be offered by BMACHO on Thursday mornings April 5, 12 19 and 26.

The workshops will be free and are funded by a generous grant from Telstra Connected Seniors Program.

The Workshops will be held at Hobby's Reach, the home of the Blue Mountains Historical Society, 99/101 Blaxland Road, Wentworth Falls.

The class size is limited and preregistration is essential.

Further information from Barrie Reynolds: phone 4757 4725; email [barrie.r@bigpond.net.au](mailto:barrie.r@bigpond.net.au)

# Scenic World Sculpture awards announced

A SCULPTURE of wool and wire has taken out the inaugural Sculpture at Scenic World \$20,000 acquisitive award for pushing the medium's boundaries into the 21st Century.

Greer Taylor's work, *Distant Time*, is one of 26 sculptures by 27 artists from Katoomba to Belfast to be displayed along Scenic World's ancient temperate rainforest walkway, during the independent exhibition open until until March 11, 2012.

The award was presented by Scenic World's new joint managing directors, Anthea and David Hammon, on behalf of the Hammon Family Council during the official exhibition opening last month.

Taylor's winning sculpture comprises two parts, small and large formal pyramids composed with red woollen thread woven around steel wire, installed among the ancient trees to reflect a distant time that both contrasts and compliments the landscape.

Ms Taylor said after the presentation it was a privilege to create artwork for a beautiful natural environment that was being protected by the Hammon family's Scenic World.

"The respect for the art, artists and the environment is what inspired me to apply for this exhibition," Ms Taylor said.

"*Distant Time* reflects this forest. It's a web of random gatherings and by placing this form in the rainforest the sculpture and surroundings are mirrored and magnified by their differences."

The winning sculpture was selected by independent judges, UWS Curator Monica McMahon and Macquarie University Sculpture Park Curator, Leonard Janiszewski.

The works of Cassandra Scott-Finn, *Infinity?*, Elianna Apostilades, *Amber 302*, and Heidi Kenyon, *I'm Still Here*, have each been awarded highly commended by the judges. They stated:

"Scott-Finn's work achieves a mesmerising kaleidoscope of constantly changing colour and form that absorbs both viewer and environment as elements of its ongoing visual dance.

"Similarly, Elianna Apostilades successfully sculpts form, light, movement, environment and time, transcending preconceived notions



**The sculpture 'Distant Time', displayed along Scenic World's ancient temperate rainforest walkway**

of the traditional key canons of sculpture.

"Heidi Kenyon's magical work exposes the intricate preciousness of the organic through light, form and environment.

"The strength of all three works lies in their ability to challenge, readdress, reconstitute, and reinvigorate sculpture in the 21st century as an art form whose fundamental visual language incorporates environmental elements as essential."

Scenic World is an inaugural member of BMACHO and the Hammon family is active in the conservation and preservation of the early mining ventures in the Blue Mountains. Phil Hammon is the co-author with Phillip Pells of *The Burning Mists of Time - A Technological and Social History of Mining at Katoomba*.



Joint managing directors of Scenic World, Anthea and David Hammon with winner of the inaugural Scenic World Sculpture award Greer Taylor (holding the Keith Rowe trophy) with exhibition curator Lizzy Marshall).

Photograph by Peter Stanbury, OAM

## HERITAGE INDEX

BMACHO newsletter *HERITAGE* from January 2009 to December 2011 has been index by Joan Edwards of the Blue Mountains Family History Society.

The index is available on the BMFHS website at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nswbmfhs/res/bmacho.htm>

# The Red Admiral - an exhibition of Patrick White's years at Mt Wilson

IN 2012, the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society will celebrate the centenary of Patrick White's May 28, 1912 birth date by holding a year-long exhibition at the Turkish Bath Museum at Mt Wilson.

Patrick White spent his formative years as a young child at Mt Wilson in the 1920s and 1930s; the exhibition will highlight the impact of both the Australian natural environment and the influence of working class and wealthy society individuals and families that were to strongly shape him for the remainder of his life, as an individual and as a writer of international acclaim.

The story of Patrick White and his family at Mt Wilson in the 1920s and 30s (the so-called 'Golden Age' of Hill Station life in Australia) is rich in historical interest, and yet, remains well hidden to most people.

The project aims to heighten awareness of the formative years of White's life in an easily accessible and understood manner.

The exhibition has been specifically designed not to be an academic treatment of his literature, nor does it require an understanding or appreciation of White, or his works.

The goal is to foster a recognition of a vital influence on White that has previously been ignored, or misunderstood, for many years, despite the amount of research undertaken on the most famous and renowned Australian author.

The exhibition will be in the form of a series of framed A1 sized posters designed by a local professional graphics artist.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the name White used as a ten-year old. His first published pieces were about Mt. Wilson. The 'Red Admiral' was his favourite butterfly.

The exhibition is to be opened at 11am on Sunday June 17, by the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO at the Mt Wilson Village Hall.



**Ruth White, the mother of Patrick White, on the verandah of Withycombe with an unidentified friend in 1923. Photograph Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Collection**

In association with the exhibition, the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society is hosting an open gardens weekend on Saturday and Sunday April 28 - 29.

Three beautiful gardens – *Withycombe*, *Sylvan Close* and *Bisley* - that are seldom open to the public will be featured. Late April is traditionally the time of year when Mt Wilson's famous autumn colours are at their peak.

*Withycombe* was the childhood home of Patrick White. His parents, Dick and Ruth, bought the property in 1921 and held it until 1938 until it was sold to the Church of England for ten shillings.

Near the front gate of *Withycombe* is a tree which still carries, albeit very faintly, the initials PW carved into its trunk some ninety years ago.

The combined entrance fee to the three gardens is \$20 per adult; children are admitted without charge. Tickets are available at the entrance of any of the three gardens.

The gardens will be open from 10am to 4pm. Food, drink and toilet facilities are available on the weekend from the Mt Wilson Village Hall.

Additionally, the Mt Wilson Turkish Bath Museum will be open in conjunction on both days.

This unique heritage listed building is situated within the *Wynstay* Estate at the end of The Avenue, Mount Wilson.

It was one of the first properties to be established in Mount Wilson, as early as 1875, by Mr Richard Wynne who also established the Wynne Landscape & Sculpture Prize in 1895.

The building was in use for a few years for its initial purpose, as a Turkish Bath, but now partly restored it houses a museum of local history operated by the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society.

The building itself is very stylish, featuring many original features including arched windows of stained and hand painted glass. It has exterior walls of polychrome brickwork with Italianate decoration and an elaborate turret with cast iron finials and roof decoration.



**Ornate roof decorations on Turkish bath house, Mt Wilson**

# Dowell O'Reilly ... father of Eleanor Dark an author and poet in his own right

by Pamela Smith - Springwood Historians

WHAT can we give in return  
For her beauty and mystery  
Of flowering forest, infinite plain,  
Deep sky and distant mountain-chain,  
And her triumphant sea,  
Thundering old songs of liberty?'

DOWELL O'REILLY, better known perhaps as the father of author Eleanor Dark, was a schoolmaster turned parliamentarian and an author and poet in his own right.

Dowell, born in Sydney on July 18 1865, was the second of four children born to Anglican clergyman, Rev. Thomas O'Reilly and second wife Rosa (nee Smith).<sup>22</sup>

He was educated at Sydney Grammar School and took up a teaching post at 'Hayfield' to assist his mother after his father died in 1881.<sup>3</sup>

It was there that he met Eleanor McCulloch – the music teacher - who he married in a quiet, almost secretive, ceremony on December 28 1895.<sup>4</sup>

The bride's parents and close friends were absent which, according to Barbara Brooks and Judith Clark caused 'quite a stir' when the union became common knowledge.<sup>5</sup>

Albert Bathurst Piddington, who a year later married Dowell's sister Marion Louisa, was his best man.

Piddington, like Dowell, had been educated at Sydney Grammar.

Marriage to Eleanor Grace McCulloch meant that he became the son-in-law of the controversial politician, Andrew Hardie McCulloch.

McCulloch is perhaps better known in the Blue Mountains as the owner of the - now derelict - cottage 'Eurama' located at Linden.

The ruins of the cottage are a familiar sight to road and rail traffic as they pass by today.

O'Reilly was also related to Dr Charles Badham, Professor of Classics at Sydney University, through Badham's first marriage to Julia, sister to O'Reilly's mother.<sup>6</sup>

There is some speculation that Badham may have assisted O'Reilly's mother when she opened 'Hayfield' as a preparatory school for boys at Parramatta.<sup>7</sup>

An article in the *Illustrated Sydney News* in 1889, suggested that 'Hayfield,' presided over by Mrs. O'Reilly, was an efficient and comfortable school.<sup>8</sup>

Dowell and Eleanor had their first child, named for his father, in 1899. Eleanor, named for her mother, was born in 1901, while Brian arrived in 1905.<sup>9</sup>

Dowell junior died in 1926, Brian married Norah Wilson and died at Wentworth Falls in 1985 in the same year as sister Eleanor (then Eleanor Dark), who died in Katoomba.

In 1886/87, Dowell played cricket for Central Cumberland against the visiting English side, and in 1888, he was commissioned second lieutenant in the Parramatta Volunteer Rifles.<sup>10</sup> He transferred to the reserves in 1898.

Dowell was elected to the Legislative Assembly for Parramatta in 1894, on a free trade ticket.

Shortly after, he moved a motion in parliament in favour of female suffrage.<sup>11</sup>

Dowell's sympathies for female suffrage endeared him to Rose



Dowell Philip O'Reilly

Scott; they became firm friends.<sup>12</sup> In 1898 he returned to Sydney Grammar where he remained a master until 1909.<sup>13</sup>

Although his literary career began in the 1880s, it was somewhat less than spectacular.

He is known to have destroyed volumes of *A Pedlar's Pack*, because sales of the book of verse had been inadequate.<sup>14</sup>

By the 1890s his literary career seemed to have picked up because he regularly contributed poems and short stories to the *Bulletin* and other publications.<sup>15</sup>

Night classes at the University of Sydney in 1889 brought him into contact with scholar and writer, John Le Gay Brereton, and the equally talented poet, author and scholar, Christopher Brennan.

One-time Professor of Economics, Robert Francis Irvine, was also a mutual friend.

The men were involved in publication of the short-lived *Australian Magazine* and were members of the Casual Club.<sup>16</sup>

In 1910 Dowell contested the seat of Parramatta as a Labour candidate and counted WM Hughes among his circle of friends.<sup>17</sup>

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## Friendship with controversial prime minister 'Billy' Hughes



**WM Hughes, CH, KC - Prime Minister of Australia 1915 - 23**

His friendship with Hughes was to have long term effects and was thought to have caused a rift with his brother-in-law, AB Piddington.<sup>18</sup>

A column in the *Sydney Morning Herald* called 'Sydney Day by Day' carried a very tongue in cheek view of Dowell.

The article implied that he was somewhat of the 'Bohemian order,' and well thought of in 'local literary' circles.<sup>19</sup>

The article went on to suggest that Dowell found favour among the 'womenfolk of the State' although 'not an enormous number,' who, by that time, had won the right to vote. The *Herald* correspondent suggested that Dowell had written some 'acceptable poetry' and his 'crisp and appetising' style was reflected in a letter sent to the paper regarding his feud with Piddington.<sup>20</sup>

Michael Roe suggested that while Piddington was intellectually gifted, he was of a turbulent disposition and prone to recurrent 'displays of wayward emotion.'<sup>21</sup>

Thus, O'Reilly's claim (see below) may have been correct. However, over recent years a darker side to this feud has been revealed by

Helen O'Reilly and Marivic Wyndham, which had little to do with politics but more to do with personal issues within the family.<sup>22</sup>

Years of illness preceded the death of Eleanor Grace O'Reilly, who eventually died in 1914.<sup>23</sup> Dowell's second wife, Marie Rose Beatrice (Mollie) Miles, who he married in 1917, was a cousin he met in England in 1879.<sup>24</sup>

He continued contributing to periodicals and in 1913 published *Tears and Triumph*, that, while fiction, sketched an 'outline of his suffragette philosophy.'<sup>25</sup>

The local studies collection in Springwood library hold several of Dowell O'Reilly's works including *Tears and Triumph*, *Fivecorners*, *The prose and verse of Dowell O'Reilly and Dowell O'Reilly from his letters*.

Dowell died of pneumonia and vascular disease at Leura in 1923 and was buried in the cemetery at Blackheath.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> First verse of Australia by Dowell O'Reilly.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Sharkey, 'O'Reilly, Dowell Philip (1865–1923)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/oreilly-dowell-philip-7917/text13773>, accessed 21 September 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Barbara Brooks & Judith Clark, *Eleanor Dark, A Writers Life*, Macmillan, 1998, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Sharkey.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> *Illustrated Sydney News*, 3.10.1889, p. 19.

<sup>9</sup> NSW Births, Deaths and Marriage Indexes,

<sup>10</sup> Michael Sharkey.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Judith A. Allen, *Rose Scott*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994, p. 254.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Sharkey.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, The High Court, Identity of Mr X, Attack on Mr Piddington, 15.12.1922, p. 11; *The*

*Argus*, Appearance of "X" Remarkable Statement, "Mud Nine Years Old," 15.12.1922, p. 11. The incident referred to questions asked by Piddington about the part O'Reilly & Hughes played in his appointment to the High Court and his subsequent resignation because he felt compromised. O'Reilly argued back that it was Piddington's hysterical nature that caused him to resign.

<sup>19</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney Day by Day, 16.12.1922, p. 30.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Roe, 'Piddington, Albert Bathurst (1862-1945),' Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/oreilly-dowell-philip-7917/text13773>, accessed 21 September 2011

<sup>22</sup> Abuse as a muse, The Sydney Morning Herald Blogs, Entertainment, <http://blogs.smh.com.au/entertainment>, accessed 20.6.2011.

<sup>23</sup> Marivic Wyndham, 'A world-proof life': *Eleanor Dark, a writer in her times, 1901-1985*, UTSePress, Sydney, 2007, p. 26.

<sup>24</sup> Michael Sharkey.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

## The author

Pamela Smith a regular contributor to **HERITAGE**, is currently president of the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Inc, a founding member of Springwood Historians and a member of Blue Mountains City Council's heritage advisory committee.

Pamela has a BA (Hons) degree in History as well as an Advanced Diploma in Local Family and Applied History. Her honours thesis focused on private education in the Blue Mountains, while an earlier thesis dealt with the presence of the fascist Old Guard Movement in the Blue Mountains in the 1930s.

She is currently enrolled in the Master of History degree course at the University of New England, Armidale and has a special interest in non-government private venture schools, local/public history, the Old and New Guard and women's history, especially women involved in politics and local government.

# Sydney the soft touch

By Andrew Tink - Biographer of Lord Sydney

IN AN AGE when convicts could be transported for the most trifling offences, it may come as a surprise to read that the home secretary who sent the First Fleet to Botany Bay was a soft touch.

While the sentencing of convicts was a matter for the criminal courts, those who had been condemned to death could plead to the king for clemency. As home secretary, Lord Sydney was responsible for the paperwork and he often tested George III's patience with his lenient attitude.

When Sydney made sympathetic representations on behalf of a convict sentenced to death for forgery, the king replied testily: 'there cannot be the smallest reason for any farther delay as to the law taking its course on George Owen...the execution of this unhappy convict [is] absolutely necessary as an example'.

Sydney was once even castigated by a minister of religion. 'I am told that you have now obtained a pardon for a man convicted of the horrid crime of wilful murder', the Reverend Charles Hardy said. 'Do I now live in a country where a secretary of state can in effect annul our laws?'

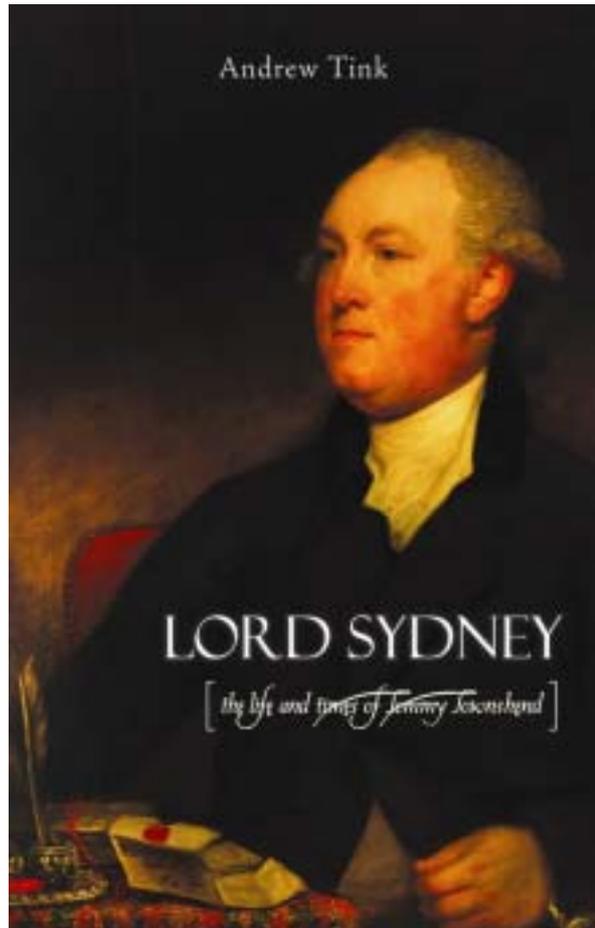
On Sydney's ministerial watch, the Transportation Act of 1784 had passed the British Parliament.

Among other things it provided that convict overseers 'could inflict...such moderate punishment...as may be inflicted by law on persons committed to a House of Correction'. Crude as it was, this imposed a duty of care on Lord Sydney and all others involved in organising the First Fleet.

Sydney's most important decisions included the choice of Arthur Phillip, a firm but fair man, to be the convict colony's first governor. And they shared the same vision for NSW:

- There was to be no slavery;
- The convicts would be encouraged to redeem themselves through emancipation and land grants;
- The ordinary rule of law rather than military law would apply to them;
- The Europeans were to live in 'amity and kindness' with the Aborigines.

In this short article Andrew Tink writes about the man who gave Sydney its name. The book *Lord Sydney: The life and times of Tommy Townshend* rrp \$39.95, is available from all good booksellers (in Sydney – including, but not limited to: Lindfield Bookshop, The Children's Bookshop, Abbey's Bookshop, Berkelouw Books, Dymocks booksellers, Novella Fine Books, Lesley McKay's, Shearer's on Norton, Pages & Pages Bookseller, Potts Point Bookshop, Hordern House Rare Books).



Equally importantly, Sydney resolved that the convicts on the First Fleet were to be as generously provisioned as soldiers going to the toughest outposts in the British Empire.

In all, Sydney spent £ 58,000 to transport about 750 convicts and 250 military men to Botany Bay, using a competent contractor, William Richards, to organise things.

As a result, there were only about 25 deaths during the voyage. Sydney's generosity was criticised by some of his cabinet colleagues though. And soon after the return of the First Fleet ships to England, Sydney retired.

Determined not to be a 'soft touch', Sydney's replacement as home secretary, the 29 year old political up and comer, George Grenville, ordered that the Second Fleet be prepared with 'least expense to the public'.

Richards was replaced by a firm of slavers, Camden Calvert and King. And over 1,000 convicts were shipped for just £22,370. As a result, 267 died.

Had Sydney the soft touch organised the First Fleet the way young George Grenville organised the Second, the first European settlement of Australia would have failed.

# Hazelbrook and Woodford history, 2nd edition

A SECOND edition of the 2007 National Trust award-winning Hazelbrook and Woodford history has recently been published.

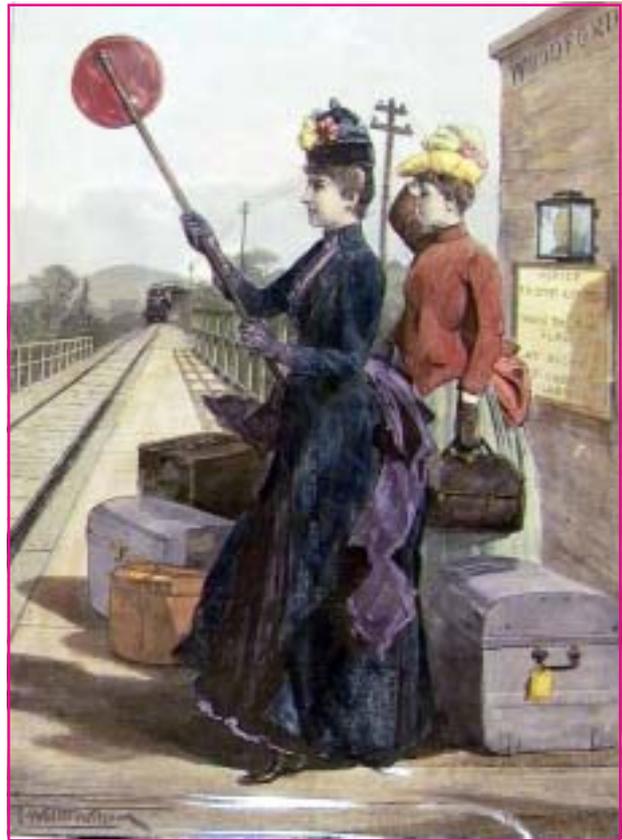
As the first edition of *Hazelbrook and Woodford: a story of two Blue Mountains towns* launched in early October 2006 had sold out by 2008, the historian and author Ken Goodlet thought it time to do a second edition for Christmas last year. That first edition is now in, roughly, one in four households in Woodford/Hazelbrook, but new residents have since moved in whom he thought might be interested in getting a copy.

Besides, new information and photographs had come to light and Ken wanted to incorporate in the history the events of the last five years, so there are more photographs, more general information, more appendices and obviously more pages. Important features are specialist chapters by Dr Eugene Stockton on geology and Aboriginal heritage and by Judy and Peter Smith on native animal and plant life.

The bulk of the book is about the early settlers, the holidaymakers, the community-minded spirits and the later suburban-dwellers in these two communities that have reinvented themselves over the decades.

While the book includes the fruit of research by earlier historians and by Ken, it also includes the memories of over 100 local people interviewed by him, supported by some 340 local photos and maps.

When Ken first undertook the Hazelbrook/Woodford project, he had hoped that there could be up-to-date histories of all mountains towns. The fine work by Dr Peter Rickwood on Blackheath has been a further step in that process. The new edition at \$30 is available from local bookshops and from the author at 4758 6591.



**Ken Goodlet's book cover image — *A Christmas Journey*, by T. Walter Wilson, Woodford Station, 1881. (The date indicates the drawing was the third of four stations at Woodford. The station pictured was, slightly west of the present station, just above the recently demolished old railway cottages.)**

*This picture has also been painted inside the waiting room of Woodford railway station.*

## An outstanding Mount Wilson potter of yesteryear

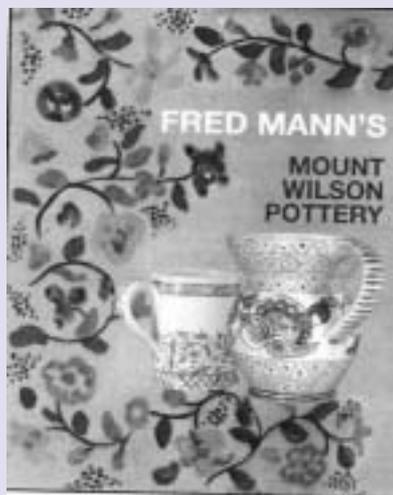
MT WILSON and Mt Irvine Historical Society have overseen the publication of an important new book that celebrates the life and creative output of an outstanding local identity, Fred Mann

*Fred Mann's Mount Wilson Pottery* was primarily the result of the efforts of two well-known local residents.

The book was the brainchild of Wendy Holland who has driven the project with extraordinary passion, energy and vision over the last two and half years.

Roger Howard-Smith shot most of the photographs in the book and most generously covered the initial printing costs

The book, to paraphrase John Valder, 'remains a cherished reminder of a generous, cheerful, friendly man'.



Many local or past residents of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine offered their much loved pieces for inclusion in the book.

The book is truly a local community effort celebrating the pottery that emerged from the white clay from diggings at Yengo. Jess Delbridge, grand-daughter of Arthur Delbridge a talented graphic designer who lives at Mt Wilson was responsible for technical layout of the book.

The book can be ordered directly from Wendy Holland 4756 2094, Florence Smart 9416 1957 or Tim Gow 4756 2031 for \$20. All proceeds of the sale of this book go to Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society to underwrite future projects. Republished from Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Newsletter No 28

# The blacksmith and his anvil the symbol of runaway marriages

BLACKSMITHING is a dying trade and with it the blacksmith tools of trade, the most prominent being the anvil, writes **John Leary**.

There are many references to anvils in ancient Greek and Egyptian writings, including Homer's works.

Because anvils are very ancient tools and were at one time very commonplace, they have acquired symbolic meaning beyond their use as utilitarian objects.

But by far the most romantic reference to the anvil is attributed to the anvil priest of Gretna Green, in Scotland site of the famous 'runaway marriage'.

Scottish law allowed for 'irregular marriages', meaning that if a declaration was made before two witnesses, almost anybody had the authority to conduct the marriage ceremony.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century almost every European village had a blacksmith and some carried on the trade near inns or staging posts.

Local folklore has it that at Gretna Green it was not unknown for the blacksmith to be one of the two witnesses.

The blacksmiths in Gretna Green became known as "anvil priests"

The local blacksmith and his anvil have become the lasting symbols of Gretna Green, Scotland weddings where the ceremony is usually performed over an iconic blacksmith's anvil.

Gretna's famous 'runaway marriages' began in 1753 when *Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act* was passed in England; it stated that if both parties to a marriage were not at least 21 years old, then parents had to consent to the marriage.

The Act did not apply in Scotland, where it was possible for boys to marry at 14 and girls at 12 years of age with or without parental consent.

Many elopers fled England, and the first Scottish village they encountered was Gretna Green on the old coaching route from London to Edinburgh.

The tradition of eloping English couples searching for blacksmiths resulted legally from the fact that blacksmiths were necessarily citizens and could often be recognised by strangers by their presence at their forge and anvil

The Old Blacksmith's Shop, built around 1712, and Gretna Hall Blacksmith's Shop (1710) became, in popular folklore at least, the focal tourist points for the marriage trade. The Old Blacksmith's opened to the public as a visitor attraction as early as 1887.

Since 1929 both parties in Scotland have had to be at least 16 years old, but they still may marry without parental consent.

In England and Wales, the age for marriage is now 16 with parental consent and 18 without.

Today there are several wedding venues in and around Gretna Green, from former churches to purpose-built chapels.

The services at all the venues are always performed over an iconic blacksmith's anvil.

There are an estimated 5000 weddings services in the area each year and one of every six Scottish weddings.

Anvils have today lost their former commonness. Anvils are still used by blacksmiths and metal workers of all kinds in producing custom work. They are also essential to the work done by farriers.

As much as the author of this article, would like to have been able to write, that the anvil on this page was one on which marriages were solemnised at Gretna Green or anywhere else this blacksmith's anvil is one which John Leary, photographed in a recent visit to the Lithgow Mining Museum.

Nevertheless, the anvil has an interesting history, as Ray Christison writes on the following page.



But well before Gretna Green the concept of an anvil may predate humanity. Chimpanzees have been observed using large sticks as hammers to crack nuts, using logs as anvils.

*An anvil photographed at Lithgow Mining Museum by John Leary, OAM*

# Large anvils still used by resident blacksmith at Lithgow Mining Museum

In its heyday the Lithgow State Coal Mine employed numerous blacksmiths, farriers and welders.

These men made and sharpened tools, repaired machinery, shod horses and ensured that the haulage ropes in the mine were safe and functional.

They worked from the large workshops building located at the northern end of the colliery headworks.

These were tough, muscular men who gained a reputation for their physical prowess.

Many trained in the art of boxing and quite a few obtained championship status.

Blacksmith's striker Billy Boyce came close to winning gold in his class at the 1948 Olympics.



**Reg Kerrison, former Lithgow State Coal Mine master blacksmith working on an anvil at a colliery in the Illawarra.**

## Heritage and the internet seminar

BMACHO, with a generous grant from Telstra Connected Seniors program, will be offering a public seminar on Heritage and the internet on Thursday, May 10 at 9.30 am.

Speakers will include Dr. Carol Liston (UWS), Michael Lech (Historic Houses Trust) and Dr. Peter Rickwood (UNSW and Blackheath). They will be speaking on the internet in heritage research, in the management and researching of museum collections and as a tool for publishing historical journals.

When the mine closed in 1964 the blacksmiths' shop was cleaned out and was used for storage.

Each speaker plans to distribute a list of relevant websites for the benefit of those attending.

The seminar will be held in the meeting room of the Blue Mountains Historical Society at Hobby's Reach, 99-101 Blaxland Road, Wentworth Falls.

For further details: phone Barrie Reynolds 4757 4725; email [barrie.r@bigpond.net.au](mailto:barrie.r@bigpond.net.au) .

Refreshments will be available and a gold coin donation will be appreciated.

When the NSW Government Railway Workshops at Chullora were closed in the late 1990s the City of Greater Lithgow Mining Museum Inc was offered the blacksmithing equipment from that facility.

This was gratefully received and formed the basis of a major restoration.

Among the pieces gifted to the museum were two large engineering anvils.

These are now regularly used by the museum's resident blacksmith and others involved in training courses.

The Chullora equipment is a significant ensemble within the museum's collection.

The Chullora blacksmiths' shop manufactured components for railway carriages and locomotives.

During the Second World War this equipment was turned to the manufacture of Beaufort bombers and Sentinel tanks.

The anvils are an important component of this historic ensemble.

## BLUE MOUNTAINS HISTORY CONFERENCE 2012

To be held at the historic Carrington Hotel, Katoomba on, Saturday, October 20  
Conference title: Colonial Society

For further information and early bookings (capacity limited to 120 participants) contact Jan Koperberg at [j.koperberg@bigpond.com](mailto:j.koperberg@bigpond.com) or [bmacho.heritage@gmail.com](mailto:bmacho.heritage@gmail.com)

# Wall hangings recalls pioneer ancestors

RECENTLY the Lithgow Learning Centre (Library) was the venue for The Lithgow & District Family History Society Inc. to celebrate the launch of a wall hanging in remembrance of pioneer ancestors.

Each member took a calico square and either embroidered, painted or sketched the details of their pioneers who arrived in the colony in 1788 - 1888.

The idea came from local member Velma McFadden and the hanging was designed by the members, the squares were then sewn together by Margaret Buckley and Sandra Haley.

The quilting was done by Lyn and Graham Husdon from Portland and the society would like to thank them both very much for the wonderful job they did with the quilting.

The wall hanging was unveiled by Daryl Jenkins the son of the late Yvonne Jenkins who was the founding member and first president of the society.

Daryl spoke of his mother's love of family history and how for many years she spent gathering information on both her own family and that of many other local families.

She was an incredible lady and would have loved to have been present to see the concept of the



**Lithgow Family History Society president Eleanor Martin and Daryl Jenkins beside the wall hanging**

wall hanging and the finished project.

Visitors and members were served morning tea at the launch and this gave them time to relate stories of their ancestors while being able to enjoy viewing the quilt.

The wall Hanging will be on display at the Learning Centre until Friday, March 16.

There is also a book with information on each pioneer available for anyone to view.

For further information contact on (02) 63531089 on Tuesday nights from 6 - 9pm or on Fridays from 10am - 4pm or Helen Taylor (02) 63557231 or email [taygun@bigpond.com](mailto:taygun@bigpond.com)

## Cox's Road walk at Linden

GLENBROOK & District Historical Society will conduct a walk along the Cox's Road at Linden on April 28.

Along the Linden section of the Cox's road there remain some excellent relics of carriageway and sandstone kerbs hand chiselled by convicts for whom work on the road represented emancipation as they laboured for their freedom.

Dr Grace Karskens writes in *An historical and archaeological study of Cox's Road and early crossing of the Blue Mountains NSW*, 1988 '... Cox following the example of other magistrates freely used the promise of pardons as payment for all aspects of the roadwork ... 'A total of 39 road labourers received between them 35 emancipations, 3 free pardons and one ticket of leave a further seven were emancipated for supplying horses and carts'.

For enquiries about the walk, contact Doug Knowles on 4751 3275.

## Blue Mountains an Illustrated Souvenir

Photographer, Andrew Merry, in his exhibition Blue Mountains: an Illustrated Souvenir responds to how the Blue Mountains has been represented in art over the past 200 years.

The exhibition at Everglades Historic House, Leura is open by appointment from 11am to 4pm from now until 15 April 15

His photographs explore popular visual styles including 'the sublime', the picturesque and the postcard traditions.

The images offered are of cloud filled valleys, cliff edges, brooding landscapes, valley floors, fires and the rejuvenation of the bush.

In doing so this exhibition presents both a critique of clichéd views and an enjoyment in 'acting out' these clichés.

Locations for the photographs include the Blue Gum Forest, Hanging Rock, and the Grose and Jamison Valleys. Enquiries to 4784 1938

# Walk beneath the trade union banner

LITHGOW STATE MINE Heritage Park is privileged to again host the Sydney Trades Hall collection of trade union banners.

Representing almost 150 years of trade union tradition these magnificent hand painted banners are listed on the NSW State Heritage Register.

They are rarely available for viewing by the public as there are few spaces large enough for them to be hung.

The former Lithgow State Mine Bath House is an ideal place in which to display the banners.

The bath house was originally constructed in 1923 as a power station for the colliery. In 1928 it was decommissioned and converted to accommodate showers and change rooms for the more than 700 men who worked in the mine.



With its open space and high ceiling the bath house provides a wonderful place to display the banners.

The State Mine's associations with the history of the Miners' Federation of Australia also make it a most appropriate venue for this exhibition.

The banners will be on display at the State Mine until the end of April 2012.

They can be viewed during museum opening hours, which are noon to 4pm Saturdays, Sundays, school and public holidays.

Group bookings are welcome at other times.

Admission fees are \$5 per adult and \$3 concession. Tours can be booked by contacting the museum at [statemin@lisp.com.au](mailto:statemin@lisp.com.au) or by phoning museum president Ray Christison on 6353 1812.

## Free journals available

THE following free offer will be of particular interest to members, both librarians and curators of museums, societies and also individual researchers.

Back copies of the following heritage and museum publications are available:

*Australian Heritage*  
*Museums Australia*  
*Museum Matters (NSW)*  
*Artbeat (Fed Dept Arts)*  
*Artfiles Arts Directory 2004*  
*Sydney University Museums News*  
*Museums Journal (UK)*  
*Museum Practice (UK)*  
*Conservation Perspectives (Getty Institute)*

also  
*CAM, Cambridge University Magazine*  
*Oxford Today University Magazine*

Contact: Barrie Reynolds phone 4757 4725; email [barrie.r@bigpond.net.au](mailto:barrie.r@bigpond.net.au)

## Venturing above and beyond

PENRITH City Council and Library's History conference Venturing Above and Beyond will be held on Saturday, March 10.

This year the conference will be looking at the crossing of the Blue Mountains and also hear about the first flight over the Nepean area.

The Nepean River was the launching point for many adventurers exploring the Blue Mountains in search of new lands for the fledgling colony.

Men such as William Dawes, George Caley and Francis Barrallier attempted the crossing prior to 1813 and the conference will acknowledge the efforts of these early explorers.

At this time the settlement at Castlereagh was less than 20 years old and the large estates along the river were not much more than bushland.

A century later in 1911, William Ewart purchased a plane and brought it to Penrith to learn to fly. He was the first pilot to obtain his pilot's licence in Australia in December of that year.

In January 1912 he established an aviation school at Penrith before transferring his operations to Ham Common (Richmond RAAF)

Keynote speaker at this year's conference is Associate Professor Ian Jack, who will present some history and development of the District of Evan.

Dr Jack will be joined by Dr Grace Karskens, who will be talking about her research on Castlereagh. Peter Finlay will be introducing the early aviators in the Penrith area – William Ewart and Leslie Jones.

For more information, cost and registration phone Penrith Library (02) 4732 7687 or e-mail [alisons@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:alisons@penrithcity.nsw.gov.au)

*From the editors mail box.....*

## Old Hartley bridge on Great Western Highway

**PAUL CARDOW** who kindly contributed the image (at right) of the old Hartley bridge circa. 1920s which appeared in **HERITAGE** January - February edition has written: 'I'm not trying to be pedantic, but the Old Hartley Bridge is part of the Great Western Highway, not Jenolan Caves Road.

The original caption inscribed on the glass plate, did say Jenolan Caves Road, which threw me

initially, giving me reason to check the remains of the old bridge.

Apart from this, I really enjoyed your article and the related articles.

I'm more than impressed that Cox's road is to be marked out and signposted. It would be nice to see Bonaventure and the Old Coach Roads at Rydal marked out before they disappear as well.

*Thanks for the correction Editor*



## More accolades

SEVERAL MONTHS AGO **HERITAGE** published some of the bouquets received in the e-mail.

Now published are a few more.

From **Dorothy Warwick, Holroyd Local History Research**: *Once again, can I congratulate you on a great newsletter! I have passed it on to various other groups that I belong to as it is such an interesting read. Congratulations and best wishes.*

From **John White, webmaster, Campbelltown-Airds Historical Society Inc**: *I received the Jan/Feb newsletter via Stella Vernon who has forwarded it to me. I'm very pleased to see the list of research web sites with journals of explorers in this edition.*

*You have saved many people a lot of time by doing the searches for these sites, now to just get time to read them. Thanks again, look forward to future editions.*

From **Lithgow City Councillor and managing director Westfund, Grahame Danaher**: *An excellent publication.*

From **Christo Aitken, Blue Mountains City Council's heritage advisor**: *I was on the mailing list previously and did receive a couple of your newsletters but you're right...at some time a gremlin must have dropped me off the list. Thanks for putting me back. It's a great newsletter...much time and effort spent by yourselves on its production...and good that you're readership is building.*

From **Julie Nixon, Holroyd Historical Family Group**: *I am currently researching my family who grow bigger and bigger the more I dig through our past. I look forward to receiving your newsletter, HERITAGE.*

From **Ken Goodlet, local historian and author**: *Once again, a great edition of HERITAGE. There is so much there that I'm interested in.*

## FRIDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> TWILIGHT TOUR

IT IS ALMOST as if organisers of 'twilight tour' for Friday, April 13 at Woodford Academy are tempting fate.

In March 1843, the convict George Conway, who was renowned for constantly escaping from his guards, met his end at Woodford Academy; some say his spirit resides here still.

Hear stories of the eccentric and colourful characters who resided at the Inn since the 1830's. Be welcomed along the front verandah by genial host of the 1840s, Mr Buss.

Tours commence 6pm, 6.30pm, 7pm and 7.30pm.

Cost \$20 adult, \$10 child. Supper included. Bookings essential prior to April 9 to 4758 7809.

## Bob Debus to reflect on 30 years in politics

THE BERYL McLaughlin lecture 2012 will be delivered by former state and federal minister, Bob Debus on Saturday, March 3 at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts.

The annual lecture honouring the memory of the Blue Mountains Historical Society's principal benefactor, presents the reflections of prominent Blue Mountains citizens on both early and contemporary life in this region.

Mr Debus was the state member for Blue Mountains from 1981 to 1988 and 1995 to 2007 when he turned to federal politics as the member for Macquarie retiring Minister for Home Affairs after one term in 2010.

Previous lectures have included the historian Dr Jim Smith and artist John Ellison.

All are welcome to the 10.30am lecture with admission by gold coin donation. Morning tea is available from 10am.

The Wentworth Falls School of Arts is located on the Great Western Highway at Wentworth Falls, a short distance from Wentworth Falls Railway Station. Parking is available in the village or at nearby Pitt Park.

# Two Blue Mountains Family History authors receive awards

THE WINNERS of two awards were announced last month by Vicki Edmunds, manager, libraries and customer services for Blue Mountains City Council, when she made presentations to Rhonda Flowers of Woodford and Jo Adam of Lawson after judging contributions to *The Explorers' Tree* magazines for 2011.

Commenting on the winning article for The Bob Howard award for best researched article: *Families at War "Lest We Forget"* by Rhonda Flowers, (*The Explorers Tree* March 2011), Vicki said it was a well written article that sets the scene by explaining where the Woodford War Memorial is, the recent history of the site and then the background to the monument.

"The reader gets an insight into some of the names on the war memorial.

"Rhonda has linked family members, discovered resting places and personalised an otherwise static sculpture.

"I especially enjoyed the postscript at the end of the article which encourages us all to remember the stories and families behind the names on a war memorial whenever we visit any town throughout Australia."

The Coolgardie Safe award for best article that does not fit the criteria for Bob Howard award, but which is worth preserving and exudes a breath of fresh air was won by Jo Adam's entry *A Walk Through my childhood – Tuesday is Washday* (*The Explorers Tree* March 2011.)

Jo did a wonderful job recreating her memory of washday in 1942 Australia.

"She set the scene very visually and I could even smell the story in some parts.

"It reminded me of watching my grandmothers' wrestle with their coppers and refusing any modern up to date washing machines.

"This piece on war-time washing not only captured what went on during washday but caught a lot of the social nuances that are hard to document. (Clothes-props, the health inspector, what it is like to have a husband MIA), Vickie said.

Blue Mountains Family History Society decided during 2011 to create *The Coolgardie Safe award* because so many articles submitted to the magazine did not fit the Bob Howard award criteria.

These are the stories that can be easily forgotten and lost, if not put into print.

Rhonda and Jo were both presented with certificates and their names will go on the shield in the family history section of Springwood library.

President of the Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc. Jan Koperberg said, thanks go to Vicki Edmunds for agreeing to judge the award and for her comments about both articles.

The society's thanks also go to Rhonda Flowers and Jo Adam for understanding the importance of research and recording memories.

Text and photographs contributed by Jan Koperberg, president Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.



Above Viki Edmunds with Rhonda Flowers and below Viki with Jo Adams



## Newsletter editor calls it a day

AFTER 15 years as editor of Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc, Elspeth Callender has called it a day.

During this period Elspeth has advanced her career as a freelance writer and highly skilled professional editor. She has worked for the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society in an entirely voluntary capacity with diligence and dedication.

Former president of the Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society, Florence Smart has said, "That along with the Turkish Bath, the newsletter is the public face of the

society and thanks to Elspeth, we enjoy a very positive reputation throughout the heritage sector and among our peer groups,"

Elspeth will now devote her time to editing and pulling together the large body of research and writing which Mary Reynolds and others have deposited into the society's archive, with the aim of producing a manuscript ready for publication which will present a history of Mt Wilson in an enjoyable, readable and saleable form.

The society has received a grant towards this project from the Royal Australian Historical Society

# Awards for three Valley Heights Rail Museum members

THREE MEMBERS OF VALLEY Heights Rail Museum have received recognition with awards from the Office of Rail Heritage (OHR)

They are Brian Coker, Dick Butcher and Phil Robinson

Brian Coker joined the fledgling New South Wales Rail Transport Museum at the inaugural meeting in October 1962.

In 1964, two years after the formation of the NSW Rail Transport Museum, Brian Coker was elected to the position of treasurer.

Brian remained treasurer for the next 13 years, standing down from the position in the late 1970s. For the next 10 years, he extended his assistance to the various treasurers as required.

It was during that time, that Brian joined a locomotive restoration team led by Bob Booth (and later Tony Eyre) working at firstly, Petersham Cable Shed, then the RTM site at Enfield locomotive depot. Brian remained with the group until the ultimate move of the RTM from Enfield to Thirlmere.

In the 1980s, treasurer's duties were, at times, carried out by a number of members (including at one stage, a full time paid employee), but Brian Coker was given the unofficial duty of assistant to the treasurer, a task which Brian performed long after he retired from full time employment.

As late as the year 2011, Brian assisted with RTM accounts, wages, and general financial duties, having worked at the various RTM offices at Burwood, Redfern, Thirlmere and Central Station.

Apart from 49 years of continuous voluntary work for the NSW RTM at Enfield, Thirlmere and Sydney, Brian carries out voluntary financial work for the Valley Heights group. Brian has been part of that group for more than five years performing the role of treasurer during that whole time.



***Pictured left to right are Ted Mullett, Peter Berriman and Marianne Hammerton (OHR) with award recipients Dick Butcher (second from left) and Phil Robinson (right), Brian Coker (inset left ) Photographs: courtesy of Andrew Tester.***

Brian has also been active in the Museum's retail department both at Thirlmere and at Valley Heights providing customer service to the museum's clients.

Richard (Dick) Butcher joined the NSW Rail Transport Museum in 1966. Dick has had an extensive service in various RTM activities at Enfield, Thirlmere and more recent times at Valley Heights.

These activities have included supervisory roles, running fitter on many RTM mainline tours and exhibit restoration of locomotives 5910 and 5711. Dick's passion for the railway preservation movement continued when the Eveleigh railway precinct was under early threat of redevelopment.

Having worked part of his career within the confines of Eveleigh Loco and the Large Erecting Shop, Dick knew of the industrial treasure that still existed at Eveleigh and led a personal campaign, writing many letters to relevant authorities with the aim of preserving what was left of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops.

Over the years Dick has passed on his vast knowledge in his railway trade of welding to many of his

volunteer counterparts and has assisted many kindred organisations with his expertise.

In recent times Dick has been called upon to assist with some extensive heavy duty welding repairs to exhibits belonging to the Steam Tram & Railway Preservations Society, at Valley Heights. During this past year Richard was asked to assist Lachlan Valley Railway (LVR) with some repairs to Steam Locomotive 5917's firebox.

This required a highly skilled and knowledgeable person in the field of welding. Dick is well known within the railway preservation movement for his welding abilities and as a result of his efforts LVR's locomotive boiler has successfully completed hydrostatic tests.

Richard also provided a training workshop to members of the Valley Heights Division of the RTM in the use of the MIG Welding machine.

These members lacked the knowledge in the use of this valuable piece of equipment and Dick provided his expertise and training from his many years in the welding trade to insure it is correct.

# Western crossing commemoration 2013-15

great ideas - thoughts - just being talked about or its really going to happen

## Business supporting Bicentenary

BLUE MOUNTAINS commercial interests have formed Business Supporting Bicentenary (BSB) with a view to securing an estimated \$3 million in government grants and company sponsorship needed to make the Blue Mountains Bicentenary Crossing reach its potential.

BSB funded by local businessmen Phil Hammon of Scenic World) and Tom Colless (Colless Foods) has prepared a prospectus document and information guide which includes a core of 12 Blue Mountains major events spread over the years 2013, 2014 and 2105.

Among the proposals are:

- a bicentenary launch in February 2013 featuring a grand parade at the Echo Point precinct, a fly over, entertainment, fireworks and an illumination display;
- a. Crossing Milestones Festival to feature a re-enactment of explorers Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson three-weeks journey of discovery over the Blue Mountains in May 1813, village events, fireworks, community and sporting events, illumination of icons such as Carrington Hotel chimney, Three Sisters, bridges;.
- an Aboriginal art and cultural event that explores the response of indigenous



**Randall Walker, chairperson Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon Tourism**

people to the European crossing;

- A Road Builders Celebration involving descendants of Cox and others, soldiers and period costume, hands on activities such as stone

Phil and Tom are joined on the committee by leading businessmen Randall Walker, Bruce Ferrier and others.

Randall Walker, chairperson Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon Tourism, said crossing bicentenary events in the Blue Mountains have the potential to reach an annual audience of five million visitors.

## Grand parade of descendants

MT VICTORIA & District Historical Society is planning a grand parade of descendants. The parade will recreate a similar event held for the 175th anniversary. The society will seek out descendants of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson as well as

William Cox and convict labourers who built the first road. Organisers are planning to carry horse drawn drays some of the parade participants unable to take the walk to Mt York on May 28, 2013.

## **Crossing! a Play**

Wendy Blaxland, the great-great-great-great grand-daughter of the explorer Gregory Blaxland has made an impressive presentation to a recent meeting of the Western Crossing committee concerning the production of a play *Crossing!*

The play looks at the personalities of the three explorers, the circumstances that led convicts, military personnel and free settlers to leave their homes in England to come to a unfamiliar land, the crossing itself and its consequences and the attitude of the Aboriginal inhabitants of the area.

Wendy told the meeting, "*Crossing!* is a re-creation of the expedition led by actors, with satisfying ways for its audience to be involved, not a theatrical spectacle to watch. Some individuals from the audience will become members of the expedition, and the audience itself will act as the Blue Mountains terrain, be invited to participate in songs and celebrate vital moments with the actors. The audience will experience the hardships and excitements of the crossing through drama, suspense and humour.

"The creative team will be professionals. The actors will interact with the audience to help populate the stage with the convicts, horses and dogs who accompanied the three named explorers, and the entire audience will become the terrain through which they travelled.

"Music will be an integral part of the show, and songs will provide an authentic feeling of the early 19th century. Costumes and props will help the audience travel back imaginatively in time. The play will last 50 minutes.

"As an experienced writer and theatre professional, I will write, direct and produce this production. Other creative talents are being assembled, from an experienced and distinguished composer through to young people with whom I have worked for some time," she said

# State Library puts \$1.8m, 194-year Australiana

## album on show

A REMARKABLE 194-year-old album of previously unknown drawings of colonial Sydney, Newcastle and its Indigenous people, was publicly unveiled at the Newcastle Art Gallery recently by NSW Arts Minister George Souris.

The Wallis Album was found in the back of a cupboard of a deceased estate in Ontario, Canada, in October last year before the State Library of NSW secured its passage home to Australia for \$1.8 million.

The album was largely created and compiled some 194 years ago by Captain James Wallis, Commandant of Newcastle between 1816 and 1818.

"The State Library is committed to connecting the original documents of Australia with local communities, and we're thrilled to be partnering with the Newcastle Art Gallery in

sharing this important artefact that has obvious historical and emotional significance to Newcastle," says Dr Alex Byrne, NSW State Librarian and chief executive.

"This remarkable album is the most significant pictorial artefact to have been made in colonial NSW during the 1810s and is a fantastic addition to the Mitchell Library's unrivalled collection relating to the history of our nation," says Dr Byrne.

The Wallis collection comprises 35 watercolours and drawings of Sydney and regional views of NSW, portraits of Aborigines and natural history illustrations made in Newcastle in 1818 by Captain Wallis and convict artist Joseph Lycett.

"Wallis painted named portraits of Awakabal Aboriginal people from the Newcastle area which are incredibly rare records of this community's



*An untitled drawing by Joseph Lycett*

ancestors," said Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville.

"The album includes a Lycett view of Sydney Cove as well as one of Wallis' portraits which feature Burigon with whom he shared many pleasurable hunting expeditions.

Wallis album includes early sketches of paintings by Lycett that are featured on the Macquarie Collector's Chest c. 1818, which Wallis gave to Governor Macquarie to thank him for his patronage.

## BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

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**THE ORGANISATION** Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Organisations Inc. (BMACHO) was established in April 2006 following a unanimous response to a proposal from Professor 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.

**HERITAGE** BMACHO's official newsletter is edited by John Leary, OAM.

**Blue Mountains History Journal** is edited by Dr Peter Rickwood.

**MEMBERSHIP** The following organisations are members of BMACHO: Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mount Tomah, Blue Mountains City Library, Blue Mountains Cultural Heritage Centre, Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc., Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc., Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon Tourism Limited, Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, Cudgegong Museums Group Inc., Eskbank Rail Heritage Centre, Everglades Historic House & Gardens, Friends of Norman Lindsay Gallery, Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc., Hartley Valley District Progress Association, Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Inc, Lillianfels Blue Mountains Resort, Lithgow and District Family History Society Inc., Lithgow Mining Museum Inc., Lithgow Regional Library – Local Studies, Lithgow Small Arms Factory Museum Inc, Mid-Mountains Historical Society Inc, 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, 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., The Darnell Collection Pty Ltd, Valley Heights Locomotive Depot and Museum, Woodford Academy Management Committee, 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, Patsy Moppett, Professor Barrie Reynolds, Dr Peter Rickwood and Dr Peter Stanbury OAM.

**COMMITTEE** The committee for 2011-12 is: Pamela Smith (president), Ian Jack (vice president), Jan Koperberg (secretary), Joan Kent (treasurer), Jean Arthur, Doug Knowles, John Leary, Dick Morony (public officer), Kathie McMahon-Nolf, Barrie Reynolds and Peter Stanbury.

**.AFFILIATIONS** BMACHO is a member of the Royal Australian Historical Society Inc.