

# HERITAGE

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

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## Iconic Paragon at Katoomba under threat

The iconic Paragon Café at Katoomba which includes one of the oldest chocolate making factories in Australia, a candy factory and bakery is under threat of closure unless funding can be found to carry out urgent repairs to the roof of the building and over a longer period solve many complex issues concerning the continued use of the property.

The roof is just a small part of many, issues.

“ Even had there been good maintenance programs in place all these years there comes a time when something of this age needs a major rework and the Paragon is at this point, the Paragon’s lessee Ms Robyn Parker said.

“The problems are far more complex than a leaking roof and far more complex solutions than just this.

“The Paragon is an 80 year old piece of infrastructure in a modern world, trying to compete with modern cafes.

“The building is over 100 years old, the internal fitout is 80 years old and neither have been well maintained.

“What we are looking for from government is assistance to develop a conservation management plan combined with funding to assist in both conservation and restoration.

“It is hoped to develop a 5 year program to address conservation issues in order of priority.

“We are also looking for assistance to refit areas of the building that have fallen into a state of disrepair to enable them to be self supporting,” Ms Parker said.



**Panelled timber walls and plaster moulds of classical figures, adorn the Paragon cafe. Photograph courtesy Ian Jack.**

The property is listed on the State Heritage Inventory Form as being: ‘...of state significance, reflecting the flair and taste of a Greek immigrant family with a wide experience in catering and the need for a high-class tea room, sundae parlour, confectionery and ballroom in inter-war [years] for locals and visitors’.<sup>1</sup>

In a bid to find assistance, Ms Parker invited the NSW Minister for Heritage Robyn Parker (no relation to the lessee) and the Member for Blue Mountains, Roza Sage to visit Katoomba, last month, to inspect the Paragon.

BMACHO president, Pamela Smith, vice president, Associate Professor Ian Jack, secretary, Jan Koperberg and former president, John Leary along with Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon Tourism chairman Randall Walker also attended the meeting to support Robyn Parker’s plea to the minister.

A daughter-in-law of the original owner, Mrs Simos, was also there to provide advice to the minister.

This shop is one of a suite of four built at 63-69 Katoomba Street more than a century ago.

The Paragon is one of the best known art deco restaurants and function rooms in New South Wales and its name remains a strong attraction to tourists.

In the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the Paragon fell into a state of disrepair.

Robyn Parker, who has loved the place since she was a child, is the woman behind the reinvigorated Paragon. She is passionate about ensuring the survival of the Paragon.

“I was fascinated by it,” she says. “I thought a princess must live here or something. It was just like nothing I’d ever seen.”

Every Christmas, Robyn would travel to the Blue Mountains from her family’s Sydney home and although she didn’t pass through the Paragon’s doors until she was much older, simply driving past was a highlight of every trip.

**Continued page 3**

## Contents.....

### HERITAGE

January - February  
2013

- \*P1 Iconic Paragon at Katoomba under threat
- \*P2 *Opinion* - Catastrophic bushfires
- \*P4 McLaughlin lecture
- \*P5 Paul Brunton --- the mysteries surrounding early explorers' rare manuscripts
- \*P5 High point for Cultural Centre
- \*P6 Sydney Lord Mayor built Mountains mansion
- \*P8 Welsh coal mining museum goes solar
- \*P9 Annie Davis - governess, gossip and go-getter
- \*P11 *HERITAGE* newsletter alive and well in USA!!
- \*P12 BMACHO joins planning lobby
- \*P12 200 years since Bennelong died
- \*P13 Inside and outside museums in Burma
- \*P14 Robinson's remarkable large scale maps of the Shire of Blue Mountains
- \*P16 Scenic Railway's last trip
- \*P16 History etched in glass
- \*P17 Cox's Road - Caley's Repulse named by Macquarie on false premise
- \*P22 A long march from Lithgow
- \*P23 Workmen find early kitchen at Eskbank House
- \*P24 'Keeping volunteers interested'
- \*P27 A tetradrachma from Thrace



## An opinion from the editor.....

# Catastrophic bushfires --- may need family histories in survival plan

CATOSTROPHIC bushfires this month have swept across the Australian landscape, often leaving nothing in their path other than a household chimney standing like a single sentinel guarding the memory of lost history and part of our heritage.

Until the late 19th century, family histories were almost exclusively of interest to persons who had obtained their wealth or rank by inheritance.

Other people, who had inherited nothing, might, in extreme cases, suppress their family history as a matter of shame.

Since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Australia, there has been a growing pride in the pioneers and nation-builders.

Much of our family history painstakingly researched and recorded is kept in private homes, while many artifacts of heritage value are housed in local history museums.

It is probably timely for a wake up call, that these recorded histories and artifacts need to be included along with our other treasures in our bushfire survival plans.

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## Blue Mountains Cultural Centre worth long wait

There have been times in the past decade and more that some have doubted if they would ever live long enough to visit the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, but it is now up and running. It is indeed a magnificent facility.

Many have worked hard to achieve that which was only a dream and they deserve credit; while there will also be many in public life who claim credit for which probably they do not deserve.

But one public figure who does deserve the community's thanks is the former Member for Blue Mountains and later Member for Macquarie, Bob Debus.

Bob Debus has an abiding love of the Blue Mountains and its people and his knowledge of local history and our cultural heritage is exceptional.

It was he, probably more than anyone, with his vision and tenacity, who ensured this project came to fruition.

While some see the cultural centre as primarily embracing the visual arts it also must be remembered that from the earliest time it was planned to be inclusive of our cultural heritage and to some degree this is being achieved through exhibits such as the World Heritage area exhibition.

Aboriginal people have lived in the Blue Mountains for many thousands of years.

The region incorporates significant parts of the traditional lands of the Gundungarra and Dharug tribal groups.

The cultural centre acknowledges the important histories of the traditional owners of the Blue Mountains region and the relevance of those histories to the Blue Mountains identity.

The Cultural Centre will play an important role in showcasing, celebrating and respecting the indigenous cultures of the region.

There are many aspects of our cultural heritage which will hopefully warrant subjects for exhibitions, particularly during the next three years as we commemorate the 'Western Crossings (1813 - 15)' bicentenary.

The Blue Mountains Cultural Centre is indeed a welcome addition to the amenities of this city.

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

# Minister for Heritage visits Paragon

Continued from page 1

"It was just so stunningly beautiful... and I fell in love with it," she says.

The Paragon, which used to be called the Paragon Sundae and Candy Store, was an upmarket cafe; somewhere where you wore your Sunday best.

It was brought to life in 1916 by a young Greek immigrant, Zach Simos, who'd moved to Australia four years earlier. By 1926, Zach had a roaring business.

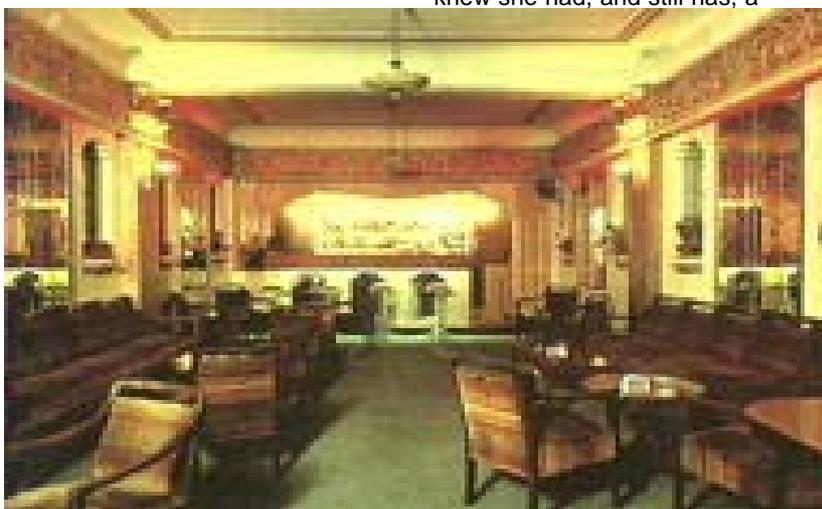
In 2000, however, the Simos family put their beloved cafe up for sale.

By the time Robyn had the opportunity to take over in 2011 it was "almost dying".

"It was about at the point of collapse," she says sadly, explaining that the back rooms had been shut-up, an action which ultimately had been their saviour.

These back rooms, which are now set up as a dining room and charming piano bar, were added to the original building in the mid-1930s; the dining room in 1934 and the bar in 1936.

Both were designed in a glamorous Hollywood art-deco style by architect Henry White, who also designed the State and Capitol theatres in Sydney.



*Paragon cocktail bar. Bartel photography c.a. 1980 - Courtesy Blue Mountains City Library*



*L to r: The daughter-in-law of the original Paragon owner - Mrs Simos, The NSW Minister for Heritage - Robyn Parker, current lessee of the Paragon - Robyn Parker and the Member for Blue Mountains - Roza Sage. Photograph courtesy Jan Koperberg*

Velour seats run along two walls of the lounge, behind which were once ornate plaster works and gilded mirrors.

Where the bar now stands, there used to be a stage, while the piano in the corner is the original.

Architecturally, the rooms are very significant, "but not many people know these details and it's one of the paradoxes of the Paragon," said Ms Parker".

"For something so special, it's been hidden all these years."

Although Robyn had always dreamt of owning the Paragon, which she says is Australia's oldest cafe, she knew she had, and still has, a

monstrous task of restoration ahead of her.

The kitchen sink the staff washes up in is 80 years old, along with other infrastructure, posing numerous challenges.<sup>2</sup>

Internally, the Paragon restaurant retains its inter-war art deco interiors.

The front section has a panelled timber shop fit out and timber booth seating with panelled timber walls and plaster moulds of classical figures. Original chairs with the "P" motif for the restaurant remain in service.

The rear rooms of the Paragon are fitted behind the adjacent shops and feature a ballroom/dining room lined with timber veneers with a coved plaster ceiling to the south influenced by the décor of ocean liners.

To the north is the bar (former banquet hall) with perforated plaster frieze work showing a pre-Columbian influence in its motifs. The toilet spaces also retain much of their original fitout<sup>3</sup>.

The chocolate-making machinery, imported after World War 1 from France and America (and possibly elsewhere) is still in store upstairs and will soon be inspected by experts in the history of technology.

**Continued page 4**

Continued from page 3

The four shops, 63 to 69, were built on Newlind's land in 1909 (photograph in Paragon).

The three to the north, 63 to 67, including the future Paragon, were all owned in 1911 by the Reverend John Russell, who was the Anglican rector of St Hilda's across the street from 1902 until 1913.

Since Russell did not own the fourth shop, it is likely that he was not responsible for building on the site but merely bought existing new shops as an investment.

Russell continued to own the properties as an income-earner until 1924, retaining thereafter only one other investment property, 100-102 Katoomba Street .

The income from the various shops was no doubt useful to Russell when he went to Sydney as senior curate to the rector of St James .<sup>4</sup>

Russell leased his shops as three separate entities. No. 63 was by 1914 leased by a jeweller, LP Goldstein, who bought the freehold from Russell in 1924.

The shop was later occupied by another jeweller, H Lloyd, and is currently Mine Shaft Jewellery. This is remarkable consistency of use over a period of almost one hundred years.

No. 65 was leased by Russell to a series of shopkeepers, Sullivan in 1914-6, Dagon from 1917 to 1919.

By 1923 it was leased to Zacharias Simos as refreshment rooms, called the Paragon, and in 1924 Simos purchased both 65 and 67 from Russell.

## Simos was a Greek migrant

Simos was a Greek migrant who had arrived in Sydney early in the century. After working and saving energetically, he arrived in Katoomba in 1916.<sup>5</sup>



*An old Paragon 1 lb chocolate box in the memorabilia at the Paragon cafe. Photograph courtesy Ian Jack*

After a period working as a caterer, in 1921 Simos bought the refreshment rooms owned by Miss Kelly and previously run by Mrs Banning at 110 Katoomba Street.

At the same time he also bought Miss Kelly's adjacent premises at n 112 - 114, then leased by the estate agents, Soper Brothers.

Simos was able to earn and save enough to retain 110 to 114 Katoomba Street while paying £9250 in 1924 for 65 and 67.

Simos and his wife were responsible for the art deco restyling of the Paragon in 1925 and for the addition of the banquet hall in 1934 and the Blue Room in 1936, utilising space behind 67 as well as 65.<sup>6</sup>

The high reputation of the suitably named Paragon was preserved by Mrs Simos after Zacharias' death and the tea-room has remained as a remarkably intact example of interwar art deco, outside and in, though it is no longer owned by the Simos family.

The fourth shop in the suite, 69, was never owned by Russell. From the outset in 1909 it was owned by Reuben S Hofman, who seems to have used it as his own draper's shop.

After his retirement, Hofman leased 69 initially to E Luce, also a draper, in the early 1920s, but it became a confectioner's in the mid-1920s, competing with the Paragon.

It was bought in the 1930s by Mrs Mary Simos, wife of Zacharias, so that the three shops, 65, 67, and 69, were all in the Simos family control. No.69 was always leased for income.<sup>7</sup>

*This article was prepared by John Leary, OAM from various sources including those listed as references.*

*The editor is grateful to Ian Jack for his oversight of the text for this article.*

### Reference

<sup>1</sup> NSW State Heritage Inventory.

K034 Paragon Café Group, <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/> Accessed

20 December 2012

<sup>2</sup> An interview with Ms Robyn Parker December 2012

<sup>3</sup> NSW State Heritage Inventory.

K034 Paragon Café Group, <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/> Accessed

20 December 2012

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Low, J, *Pictorial Memories: Blue Mountains* 1991

<sup>6</sup> Rotary Club of Katoomba, *Old Leura and Katoomba* 1981

<sup>7</sup> NSW State Heritage Inventory.

K034 Paragon Café Group, <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/> Accessed

20 December 2012

### McLaughlin lecture at Wentworth Falls

THE annual McLaughlin lecture organised by the Blue Mountains History Society will be held on Saturday, March 2, commencing 10am at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts.

Dr Siobhan Lavelle will be the guest speaker addressing the significance and impact of the Western Crossing.

Admission: by gold coin.

# Paul Brunton to speak of the mysteries surrounding early explorers' rare manuscripts

THE MITCHELL Library holds the eye-witness accounts by William Lawson, William Charles Wentworth and Gregory Blaxland of their journey over the Blue Mountains in 1813.

Those by Lawson and Wentworth are in manuscript while that of Blaxland is a rare privately printed volume, published in 1823, of which there are only about 10 extant copies.

All three items were early acquisitions by the Library following its opening in 1910, perhaps indicating the contemporary view of the pivotal nature of this event.

Paul Brunton will speak about these original sources and the mysteries surrounding them at BMACHO's annual general meeting.

The AGM will be held at the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, Katoomba on Saturday, March 23 commencing at 2pm.

Members of the association are welcome to have any interested person associated with their society to participate in the meeting in addition to one voting delegate.

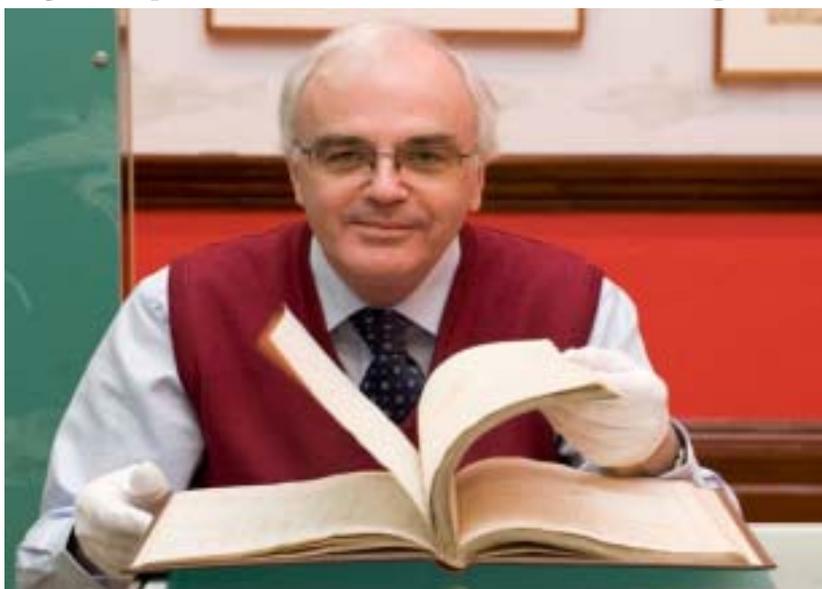
Those members of the public interested in history and heritage will also be welcome to hear this outstanding speaker.

Paul Brunton is Emeritus Curator, State Library of New South Wales and an Honorary Associate of the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, University of Sydney.

He was Senior Curator, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, from 2002-2012 and Curator of Manuscripts from 1986 to 2001.

Paul has published on archives administration and on various aspects of the State Library's collection including *Matthew Flinders: personal letters from an extraordinary life* (2002).

He is preparing an annotated edition of the original handwritten journal and logbook of William Bligh



**Paul Brunton, OAM with the Stokes diary**

kept on HMS *Bounty*, 1787-1789, for publication by Allen & Unwin.

Paul has curated many exhibitions including *Matthew Flinders: the Ultimate Voyage* (2001); *First Sight: the Dutch mapping of Australia, 1606-1697* (2006); *Politics and Power: Bligh's Sydney Rebellion 1808* (2008); and *ONE hundred* celebrating the Mitchell Library's centenary (2010).

He was president of the Australian Society of Archivists, 1991-1993. In 2003, he was awarded the Centenary of Federation medal for services to libraries.

In 2012, he was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for services to Australian history through various curatorial positions at the Mitchell Library.

## High point for Cultural Centre

THE BLUE Mountains Cultural Centre features the Blue Mountains City Art Gallery and World Heritage Exhibition which is devoted to education about the distinctive environment, history and culture of the Blue Mountains region which is co-located with the new Katoomba Library. The centre officially opened on November 17, 2012.

The Cultural Centre will showcase innovative, diverse, distinctive and creative cultural programs for enjoyment by residents of, and visitors to, the Blue Mountains.

Built on the highest point in Katoomba with panoramic views of the World Heritage area and its links to the main shopping precinct on Katoomba Street through enhanced pedestrian connections.

Being the first publicly owned and managed, purpose designed facility of the arts to be constructed in the

Blue Mountains, it is expected that the development will significantly contribute to the improvement of the economic health and cultural vitality of the Blue Mountains and the surrounding regions.

### HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday – Friday 10am-5pm  
Saturday + Sunday – 10am – 4pm  
Closed Public Holidays

Features of the Cultural Centre include:

- Foyer – providing cultural and visitor information
- Theatre/seminar room – for seminars, talks and presentations
- Multi-purpose workshop – for educational public programs
- Cultural Centre restaurant / café – for fine food and outdoor dining
- Cultural Centre shop – providing quality craft and mementos of the Blue Mountains region.

# Sydney Lord Mayor built Mountain mansion

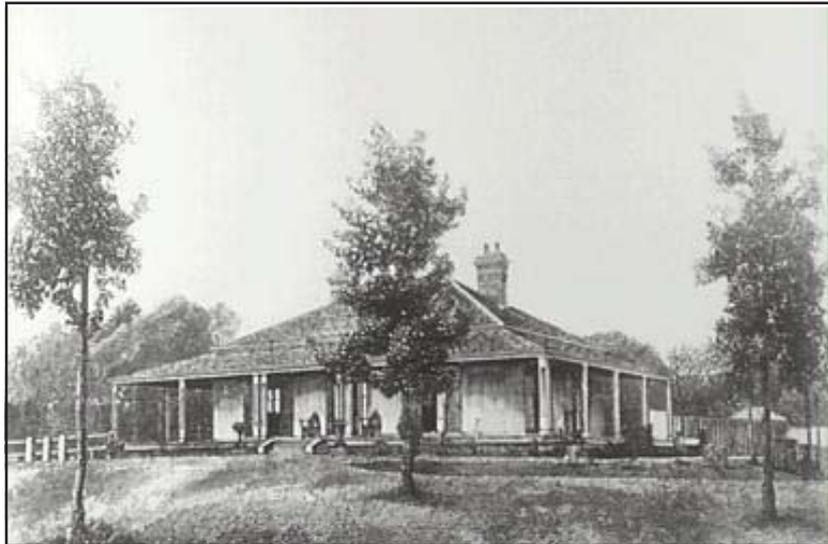
by John Leary, OAM

THE SON of an Irish farmer and his wife, Charles Moore (1820-1895) emigrated to Australia in 1849 to make his fortune as a draper in the 'gold-rush era' going on to become Lord Mayor<sup>1</sup> of Sydney in 1867<sup>2</sup>

He soon prospered and in 1860, Moore built a substantial house at Coogee and was elected to Randwick Municipal Council going on to be elected as mayor in 1863 despite being in the Coogee minority faction.

During his term on Randwick Municipal Council he was also a member of Botany-Randwick-Coogee Roads Trust.

In 1865 he was elected to Sydney City Council for Bourke Ward being the lord mayor from 1867 to 1869.<sup>3</sup>



**Moorecourt . Image - Blue Mountains City Library HS0\196**

Charles Moore built the single storey section of *Moorecourt* in Springwood in 1876, the rear two storeys being added in 1880.

At Pulpit Hill on the Mountains, there was an old government lock-up built of massive stone and Moore purchased it for a small sum, subsequently moving all of the useful material by rail to Springwood to build the cottage.<sup>4</sup>

At once he became busy in local affairs and in 1876 he was a member of the committee which sought the establishment of a public school.

In 1878-79 he was listed in the Post Office Directory along with 23 others as a resident of the Valley.

In 1880 he moved into *Moorecourt* a mansion he had built on land which is now part of Buttenshaw Park.

*Moorecourt* became a ladies college in 1897 and ceased to be Springwood Ladies College in 1949. The building was demolished in 1956.<sup>5</sup>

As Mayor of Sydney, Charles Moore won the reputation of being an "improver". First elected as mayor in December 1866 by a large margin, again in 1867 by a similar majority and for a third term in December 1868

It was during his term as Sydney's mayor the site for the Town Hall was

acquired, plans drawn and the foundation stone laid.

Moore induced the government to pass an Act transferring the old burial ground next to St Andrew's Cathedral to the Corporation, for a town hall site, thus eradicating what was seen as an eyesore in the best part of George Street, Sydney.<sup>6</sup>

He successfully championed earlier plans for making dams to improve the capacity of the Botany swamps, Sydney's main water source.

He had the Tank Stream covered, Macquarie Street extended to Circular Quay and the Tarpeian Way (lower Macquarie St) formed.<sup>7</sup>

Probably he gained most fame for improvement, involving the Sydney Common.

The land was part of 1000 acres (4.0 km<sup>2</sup>) originally set aside by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1810 for grazing and watering stock.

This sandy waste was generally believed to be crown land but in 1866 Moore traced documents proving that in 1811 it had been vested in Sydney's inhabitants.

Moore fought for the land to be dedicated as a leisure area for the people of Sydney and suburbs He planned to improve and sell part of it to provide funds to improve half of the rest; the remainder was to be gazetted as a water reserve.  
**Continued page 7**



**One of two Moorecourt gateposts still standing in Buttenshaw Park, Springwood,**

*Image - John Leary, OAM Nov 2012*

# Parklands a memorial to Charles Moore

Continued from page 6

The scheme was supported in parliament by the colonial secretary, Henry Parkes, and the secretary for lands, JB Wilson.

Early in 1867 work began on levelling the sand hills and planting them with grass and trees, and the council renamed the common 'Moore Park'.

Sydney's first zoo was established here in 1879 on 7 acres (28,000 m<sup>2</sup>) of land known as Billygoat Swamp. The zoological gardens covered 15 acres (61,000 m<sup>2</sup>) by 1906 but moved to Bradley's Head at the site now known as Taronga in 1917.

It was replaced by Sydney Girls High School which opened on this site in 1921.

Students transferred from Elizabeth Street, which became the site of the David Jones Department Store. Sydney Boys High School opened in 1928 on the remaining zoo land.

An infamous pack rape crime occurred in the park, leading to the 1886 Mount Rennie rape case. Nine men were sentenced to death and four were hanged despite controversy.

At the time of dedication, Moore Park was bounded to the south by Lachlan Estate and Randwick Racecourse, to the west by Dowling Street, to the north by Old South Head Road, and to the east by the Lachlan Water Reserve.

A road lined with stone and pines marked this eastern boundary of the



**The Right Honourable Charles Moore, MLC**



**Moorecourt circa 1937 when the building housed Springwood Ladies College Image – Blue Mountains City Library HSO\O92**

park and the western boundary of the water reserve.

Two other roads crossed Moore Park prior to 1866; the first was known as Old Botany Road and was used by hunters and fisherman initially and later by pleasure seekers traveling to Coogee and Botany.

The second road provided a western entrance to a cemetery that was located off South Dowling Street.

The dedicated land encompassed the Tunnel Reserve (1827-1838), the Military Barracks and the Military Cricket Ground.<sup>8</sup>

Charles Moore was one of Sydney's leading citizens and was also one of the outstanding pioneers of Springwood.

Born August 29, 1820 at Ballymacarne, Craven Ireland he was the 11<sup>th</sup> child of James Moore and Catherine Moore.

His grandfather and great grandfather were businessmen in Ballymacarne, but were believed to have come from London where they were connected with the Guilds of London and Sir William Moore who was Lord Mayor of London in 1395 is believed to have been of this family.<sup>9</sup>

Having decided to emigrate to Australia, he sailed from Plymouth in the *Minerva* in September 1849.

At Adelaide and Melbourne he disposed of part of the consignment of drapery he had brought and was so impressed by the profits, he dispatched at once orders to London for further supplies.

In Sydney he was soon well established as a draper and shared handsomely in the prosperity of the gold-boom period.

Subsequently he acquired Charles Newton's auctioneering business in Pitt Street, Sydney.<sup>10</sup>

Charles Moore was honoured by numerous memorials apart from Moore Park. Moore Street (Martin Place) was also named after him.

Other memorials to Moore's civic works include the Moore stairs at Circular Quay which were opened in 1868.

Years ahead of his time, he proposed an underground railway beneath York Street running from Central Station to Circular Quay.

In 1874 after a visit to England, he was elected to the Legislative Assembly as the Member for East Sydney to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of JAES Henry Neale.

Four months later the parliament was dissolved and in the ensuing election Moore was defeated.

Continued page 8

Continued from page 7

From 1880 until his death in 1895, he was a member of the NSW Legislative Council.

Charles Moore was deeply interested in the Church of England.

In St Philip's Church, Sydney there is a plaque to his memory. He was also involved with St Jude's Church in Randwick.

In Springwood, he first used part of his home for church services and after the appointment of a rector; he donated land and much of the money to build Christ Church. This was completed in 1889.

## ...a seemingly obstinate man

Moore was seemingly an obstinate man, both at St Jude's and at Springwood he had violent differences of opinion with other church members.

In Springwood one result of this was that he never transferred the house next door to the church to the trustees.

Moore had built this as a vicarage but after the disagreements it was no longer used as such.

The land on which the Lawson, Church of England is built was in Moore's name for many years.

Moore held other public positions on the Blue Mountains, such as trustee of the Springwood Cemetery and trustee of various sights and recreation areas in Lawson.<sup>11</sup>

In July 1895 Charles Moore, MLC died in Old Government House, Parramatta where he had moved from Springwood when it was found necessary to have his medical advisers constantly at hand.

He was buried in the Church of England section of Emu Plains Cemetery on July 6, 1895.

He was twice married but there were no children from either marriage.

In January 1854 Moore had married Sarah Jane Wilcox, who died without issue.

In 1882 he again visited Europe and in 1883 at Kingston, Ireland, married a widow Annie Hill Montgomery.<sup>12</sup>

The gateposts of *Moorecourt* were removed by the Blue Mountains City Council and reerected in the Wisteria Walk, Buttenshaw Park.

His coat of arms, showing the inscription 'Moore of Springwood' is evidence of his love for and interest in this district.

## End notes

<sup>1</sup> Charles Moore is variously referred to in this article as Lord Mayor and Mayor of Sydney. The office of Mayor of Sydney along with the Sydney municipality was created 20 July 1842 pursuant to the Sydney City Incorporation Act 1842 by Governor Sir George Gipps, of the New South Wales Legislative Council. This replaced the previous system under an Act of 1833, whereby three police commissioners were responsible for local conditions. The office of mayor was elevated to lord mayor in 1902 by King Edward VII, and as part of this process received the honorific The Right Honourable (The Rt. Hon.).

<sup>2</sup> Perdon, R, *Sydney's Aldermen: a biographical register of Sydney City Aldermen 1842-1992*, Sydney City Council 1995

<sup>3</sup> Lyons, Mark, *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Moore, Charles (1820-1895)*

<sup>4</sup> *Nepean Times*, July 27, 1895 An obituary to the Late Hon. Charles Moore, MLC

<sup>5</sup> Blue Mountains City Library, Notes attached to photograph of Moorecourt File HSO\0092

<sup>6</sup> *Nepean Times*, July 27, 1895 An obituary to the Late Hon. Charles Moore, MLC

<sup>7</sup> Lyons, Mark, *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Moore, Charles (1820-1895)*

<sup>8</sup> History of Moore Park, <http://www.nsw.gov.au/>

<sup>9</sup> Morony, TAM *Springwood Historical Society Bulletin No 26*, July 1979.

<sup>10</sup> Lyons Mark, *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Moore, Charles (1820-1895)*

<sup>11</sup> Morony, TAM *Springwood Historical Society Bulletin No 26*, July 1979

<sup>12</sup> Lyons Mark, *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Moore, Charles (1820-1895)*

## Welsh coal mining museum goes solar

A COAL museum seeking to save money on its electricity bill has installed 200 solar panels on its roof.

The panels at Wales' Big Pit National Coal Mining Museum are expected to save the museum about \$618,000 over 25 years, the trade magazine *Renewable Energy World* has reported.

Not a bad deal for an up-front cost of about \$100,000.

"Coal is such an important part of Wales' heritage and yet green energy will play a major part in the future,"

The museum manager has said. "A solar powered coalmining

museum is a fantastic way to celebrate this national journey"

Big Pit shut down in 1980 and reopened three years later as "a living , breathing reminder of the coal industry in Wales and the people and society it created", according to the museum's website.

UNESCO named it a World Heritage Site in 2000.



# Annie Davis – governess, gossip and go-getter

By Kate Nielsen Matthew

Governesses in Australia can be difficult to locate in the historical record.

Often only a shadowy reference in an employer's records, or a notation on an immigrant ship manifest, gives a clue that a governess had a part to play in that story.

Despite the impression of insignificance that these glimpses might suggest, governesses played a significant role in the history of Australian education in the nineteenth century – holding positions in both rural and urban homes and teaching the young ladies of the colony English and history as well as music, singing, drawing, dancing and how to navigate society.<sup>1</sup>

Through one of those serendipitous occurrences that historians are greatly indebted to, a body of letters survived to illuminate the individual lives of a group of English governesses who emigrated to Australia in the 1860s and 1870s.

The Female Middle Class Emigration Society assisted these women to travel from England to the Australian colonies in search of jobs.

In return, many of the women wrote to the Society giving their views on life in Australia, the employment prospects for governesses, the class and quality of employers, and sometimes on each other.<sup>2</sup>

Annie Davis was one such governess.

Opinionated, gossipy, and apparently quite good at her job, Annie's letters help to shed some light not only on her life, and that of her fellow governesses, but also on the position of women in a time of growing expansion of opportunities and personal freedom - if they could maintain economic independence.

Annie emigrated from England in 1863, arriving in Melbourne in July of that year.<sup>3</sup>

She was an experienced governess, with a comprehensive range of skills.

She could teach French, German, music, singing and drawing, and although English is not mentioned within her skill set, competence in English literature and poetry was assumed.<sup>4</sup>

This was typical of the range of subjects taught to young women in the 1860s, with some variations on

the theme of accomplishments depending on whether the governess played piano or violin, and was better at drawing or painting.

The choice of subjects was limited both by what society felt was necessary and desirable for female education, and by what the governesses themselves were capable of teaching.

As a result, educational reform for women was slow, and it was not until the 1880s that university educated governesses began to flood the market in Australia.

In the process they displaced many of the British governesses who were still trying to find work teaching what they themselves had learned during what was best described as 'a very indifferent education'.<sup>5</sup>

However, the 1860s was still the halcyon days before this revolution in teacher education had occurred. Annie's range of skills meant that, unlike many of the other governesses, she was rarely unemployed.

She had six positions that we know of after her transfer from Melbourne to Sydney soon after her arrival.

After 13 months working for Donald McIntyre at Glebe, where she was paid £90 per annum in addition to her board to educate three girls, Annie found herself unemployed and forced to take a morning engagement, which was 'not well paid', for six months.<sup>6</sup>

This was not unusual in the governessing profession. Contracts were often only for six months or one year, after which time they could be dissolved by either party for any reason.

Annie's next position was with William Durham's family at Wambo in the Hunter Valley, but again this only lasted six months.<sup>7</sup>

Between June and September 1865 she taught at two different schools, but again found some stability with the Allen family (a well-known Sydney family of solicitors) in January 1866.<sup>8</sup>

Continued page 10



*The Governess*, painted Rebecca Solomon (1832-1886), ca. 1851, exhibited at the Royal Academy 1854. In this image the governess wears black clothes and is occupied in teaching her pupil, while the probable daughter of the family that employs her is wearing a bright-colored dress, and is musically flirting with an eligible man.

Continued from page 9

Despite very short contracts, Annie was well paid – averaging between £80 and £90 per annum plus board – which was a reflection of her superior skills.

At the time, the average wage for governesses in Australia was approximately £67 per annum, slightly higher than the English average.

It remains difficult to explain why Annie did not apply to join the school system as a teacher.

The rates were far better, as were the hours and the level of personal independence and freedom.

One of her fellow FMCES emigrants – Louisa Dearmer – did pass the examinations required to join the state school system in New South Wales, and was earning £150 per year.<sup>9</sup>

Of course, governesses usually lived with the family, and therefore the cost of their room and board was added to their salary.

However, even with that taken into account, the position of school teacher was still better paid and was accompanied by more personal freedom and independence.

One reason why Annie might not have gone into the school system was the change that would have made to her social position.

Governesses at the time were largely considered to be ladies, a description that carried some very loaded connotations in nineteenth century society.

The stereotypical Victorian lady of leisure was an aspiration for English society as a whole, and although it was diluted considerably in the British colonies the concept of a lady in Australian society still required that she did not earn her own living.<sup>10</sup>

The role of governess, especially one that lived with the family, was one of the few that preserved a veneer of gentility by hiding the employment relationship within the household dynamics – in the same way that the position of lady's companion did.

Many of the advertisements in the newspapers of the day were worded as though the governess was looking for a home rather than a job, and that she would bestow her

services only on those worthy of her efforts.

Annie's letters, however, suggest that she may not have been one of those women who feared losing the veneer of lady-like respectability that came from governessing.

Although initially reporting that Mrs Dillon, the Society's contact in Sydney, should be accurately described as a scholastic agent rather than a philanthropic contact to Society emigrants to 'save Ladies some embarrassment', she later described her as having 'been a kind friend to me', suggesting an ongoing social intercourse.<sup>11</sup>

A further counter-point to the typical governess attitude lies within Annie's description of the shelf-life of governesses (no one over 40 had much in the way of career prospects in her opinion) and her declared intention to re-train as a nurse.<sup>12</sup>

## *...marriage was not for her...*

Annie had no intention of marrying, and saw nursing as a way to prolong her ability to earn her own living.

This recognition that marriage was not for her, and the foresight to plan for her future, distances Annie from those who were determined to maintain their status as ladies at all costs.

It is possible that she would not have been able to pass the teaching exam, but her ability to command a high salary as a governess in addition to her room and board makes this unlikely.

This aspect of Annie's career remains irreconcilable with the traditional parameters of a governess' life.

Gossip was not unusual in the letters that governesses sent to the FMCES.

In the nineteenth century, good-natured gossip was one of the few ways of getting news about mutual friends or acquaintances.

Reports of marriages, job changes, successes or failures were common reports back to the Society, and the Secretary, Jane Lewin, encouraged these reports from the governesses as much as possible.

However, Annie took it to a new level and, amongst the more than 450 pages of letters transcribed in the FMCES records, Annie's represent a very few correspondents who engaged in gossip of a malicious variety.

The worst offence was against two fellow governesses, who had been employed by the Allen family before Annie took up her position there.

She wrote to Miss Lewin that 'Miss Maize ... is a little insane', for which she offers no evidence except Miss Maize's propensity to change jobs regularly – something that most governesses did.<sup>13</sup>

Her charge against Miss Ford was more serious.

Annie reported that 'I believe her salary here was the same as mine but during the six months she spent every fraction she earned and ran up bills at two or three Drapers to the sum of £90!! making use of Mrs Allen's name.'<sup>14</sup>

It is a serious charge, but Annie's source was Mrs Walker, mistress of a boarding house, rather than anyone connected with the Allen family, so its veracity is difficult to determine.

Gossiping about her fellow governesses was not her only offence.

Two years earlier, Annie repeated some negative comments she had heard about the Society to a friend in England, which subsequently got back to London and proved very embarrassing for her correspondent, Jane Lewin.<sup>15</sup>

Although Annie was repentant in her letters, there is no evidence that it curbed her enthusiasm for gossip.

What we can piece together of Annie's life is therefore both typical and atypical of that of a governess in New South Wales.

She was typical in terms of the subjects she taught and the number of times she changed jobs, but atypical in the salaries she could command, her almost continuous employment and her pragmatic approach to her future.

Continued page 11

# Annie Davis the governess

## Continued from page 10

She was a delightful correspondent: entertaining, with an eye for gossip and a willingness to express her opinion with more candor than is often seen in letters of this nature.

Annie Davis' story ends with her last letter to the FMCES in February 1867, and although there are some clues, no further information can be verified at the present time.

## (End notes)

<sup>1</sup> Louise Dearmer to FMCES, letter, 1 June 1868, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 308 <sup>2</sup> M Jeanne Peterson, 'The Victorian Governess: Status

Incongruence in Family and Society', *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*, London, 1980

<sup>3</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 21 February 1867, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 90; Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 21 February 1867, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 175

<sup>4</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 21 February 1867, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 261

<sup>5</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 21 February 1867, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 261

<sup>6</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 21 February 1867, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 260

<sup>7</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 20 January 1865, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, pp 174-175

<sup>8</sup> The quote itself is from Jane Austen's *Emma*, referring to the provisions that Harriet Smith's guardian had made for

her schooling. Jane Austen, *Emma*, Macmillan & Co Limited, New York, 1896, p 53

<sup>9</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 20 January 1865, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, pp 172-177

<sup>10</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 21 February 1867, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, pp 257-262

<sup>11</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, 21 February 1867, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, pp 257-262

<sup>12</sup> For further detail on the life of a governess in nineteenth century Australia, please see Kate Matthew, 'Governesses', *Sydney Journal*, vol 3, no 2, December 2011, pp 17-25, [http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/ojs/index.php/sydney\\_journal/issue/view/170/showToc](http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/ojs/index.php/sydney_journal/issue/view/170/showToc), A. James Hammerton, 'Feminism and Female Emigration, 1861-1888', *Emigrant Gentlewomen: Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration, 1830-1914*, London, 1979, pp. 124-147

<sup>13</sup> For further detail on the FMCES governesses, please see Kate Matthew, 'The Female Middle Class Emigration Society in Australia: a failed vision?', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol 14, 2012, pp 107-130; Patricia Clarke, *The Governesses: Letters from the Colonies 1862-1882*, London, 1985; *Records - Female Middle Class Emigration Society*, Australian Joint Copying Project, Part 8, Reel M468, National Library of Australia (hereafter referred to as 'FMCES records')

<sup>14</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, September 1863, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 86

<sup>15</sup> Annie Davis to Jane Lewin, letter, September 1863, *FMCES Records*, letter book 1, p 89

## The author Kate Mathew

Kate Mathew (BA, MHist) is a historian based in the Blue Mountains.

In addition to governesses in nineteenth century Australia, her research interests include John Lucas MLA/MLC and the Fourth Parliament of New South Wales (1860-1864).

Kate was recently awarded a grant from the Royal Australian Historical Society to research the history of the site currently occupied by the RAAF Base at Glenbrook.

She is a member of the Blue Mountains City Council Heritage Advisory Committee and a casual lecturer at the Australian Catholic University at Strathfield.



Kate Nielsen Mathew

## HERITAGE newsletter alive and well in USA!!

Family historians are great 'detectives' and have very little trouble tracking down distant relatives, especially these days with modern technology.

In late September, I had an email arrive in the BMACHO gmail account, through the enquiry form on the BMACHO website, marked for my attention.

It was from Michael Thompson, who gave his location as USA.

Michael had seen my article **online** in the *HERITAGE* newsletter, September/October 2010, titled 'John Ross, Convict Labourer on the Cox's Road in 1814'.

He was writing to say that he too was descended from John Ross and Elizabeth Bennett, but through their son George Ross, whereas I am descended through their daughter, Mary, born 1814, while her father was labouring on the first road over the Blue Mountains with William Cox.

Michael was asking if he could add my article to his personal research, with appropriate acknowledgement, to which I agreed.

He went on to say that living in USA, he has to rely very heavily on the internet to gather information about his Australian ancestors.

I am pleased Michael found the *HERITAGE* article and that I was able to be of assistance.

**Jan Koperberg**  
Secretary BMACHO

**BMACHO's  
Annual general meeting  
Blue Mountains  
Cultural Centre,  
Katoomba  
23 March 2013**



## Australia Day breakfast in a Kurrajong vineyard

AUSTRALIA Day breakfast in a local vineyard seems a great idea!!

Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society is organising the event to be held at Remo's & Sons Vineyard, 58 Blaxland Ridge

Road, Kurrajong on Australia Day, January 26.

The event will celebrate the 12th anniversary of the founding of Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society and selective awards will be presented for outstanding contribution to the society.

Cost of the breakfast is \$35 per person, scheduled for 8.30am for a 9am sitting. The awards will be made at 10am.

Bookings before January 15 to the society's secretary, Suzanne Smith at (02) 4567 7410 are essential to allow for catering.

## BMACHO JOINS PLANNING LOBBY GROUP

FOLLOWING an article by local heritage consultant, Margi Fallon and an *Opinion* piece titled, *Heritage goes missing from proposed NSW planning reform* both of which appeared in the November-December 2012 edition of *HERITAGE*, the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Inc, has accepted an invitation to join the Better Planning Network.

Former president of the Royal Australian Historical Society Inc Associate Professor Ian Jack says: "the Better Planning Network is bringing together the dismay felt by many people. Margaret Fallon is drawing attention to what is happening, in her role as a heritage consultant."

Former president of BMACHO, John Leary OAM said: "the NSW state government is proposing legislation to remove the rights of individuals under the guise of streamlining the planning process.

"What that means is making it easier to get developments approved by removing community consultation from the approval process.

"The proposed legislation which has been outlined in a government green paper, *A New Planning System for NSW* will remove the right of communities to have a say in development proposals and planning matters directly affecting their lives.

"It will also diminish the role of elected councillors".

BMACHO president, Pamela Smith has said: "the Green Paper is frightening and heritage is only mentioned four times.

BMACHO's management committee in discussions last month decided to suggest that constituent members of BMACHO may also wish to join the Better Planning Network.

The planning reforms and process for consultation can be viewed at: <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/a-new-planning-system-for-nsw>. or to connect to the Better Planning Network at: <http://>

[betterplanningnetwork.good.do/nsw/email-the-premier/](http://betterplanningnetwork.good.do/nsw/email-the-premier/)

Better Planning Network (BPN) has advice from the NSW Planning and Infrastructure that the government's white paper will be released in early February 2013. It has been suggested that the consultation period on the white paper may be as short as 2-4 months.

BPN has advised the department that this timeframe (particularly anything less than 4 months) is unacceptable.

## Veteran journalist's epic walk

Newly elected chair of Woodford Academy management committee, Ian Harman and local historian Ken Goodlet late last month joined veteran Fairfax journalist, Malcolm Brown for part of the way on his walk from Sydney to Dubbo to draw attention to this year's bicentenary celebrations of the western crossing in 1813.

As he passed through Woodford he inspected a section of William Cox's Road.

In a bid for a wider impact from his epic walk Mr Brown hopes it might encourage people to get out of their cars and see the world from a wider perspective.

When he was a child, Mr Brown said it was not unusual to see Aboriginal people walking between towns — a notion that would seem alien for anyone today.

## 200 years since Bennelong died

Researchers believe they have located near Kissing Point, the grave of Bennelong a leader of the Eora people.

Bennelong was brought to the settlement at Sydney Cove in November 1789 by order of the Governor Arthur Phillip who planned to learn the language and customs of the local people living around Sydney Cove.

January 3, 2013 marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bennelong's death.



**Portrait (signed "W.W.") thought to depict Bennelong**

# Inside and outside museums in Burma

Peter Stanbury, OAM, PhD



*A typical sunset in Burma*

What seems a good idea at the time doesn't always turn out the way one had envisaged.

As Burma has been open to individual visitors for over a year it seemed an enticing place to visit *en route* to the UMAC (International Committee for University Museums and Collections) conference in Singapore.

Actually it is not really on the way at all, it is further north and west and one has to go via Bangkok or Kuala Lumpur. But what does that matter, once you have decided to go?

There are still places in Burma where visitors are not welcome, mostly near the borders of other countries, but there is still plenty to see and one feels welcomed by smiles and offers of advice from ordinary citizens.

Official welcome is less encouraging. A visa takes a month to obtain.

There is not one public ATM in Burma at the time of writing – this means you must carry an uncomfortable amount of cash that can normally be exchanged only at official banks. However, not once did I feel threatened by theft.

My reason for going to Burma was to see if the national or regional museums would appreciate volunteers as in Cambodia or the Philippines.

In spite of writing beforehand and offering in person it became clear that museums are still under strict control.

Locals seldom visit and it seemed to me, few international visitors bother to go.

The buildings are enormous caverns; in the galleries large historical exhibits cover along the walls.

Both labels and staff are scanty. Staff appear to be under strict instructions not to encourage communication; it is as though there is behind the scenes still a strong governmental control or influence.

Photography, with or without flash, within museums is prohibited for no good reason.

Private citizens with a collection of important objects may not start their own museum.

The conservation of animals and plants appears to be treated by the

authorities as important; national parks are established and there are trained rangers within the parks.

Burma is a land of spiritual people. Whereas Chinese often make money make more money, wealthy Burmese would rather endow a pagoda, temple or build a religious structure.

There are thousands upon thousands of temples and stupas, a few big and well patronised but many small and in ill repair.

To become a monk, or work for monks, even for a short time, is considered an important contribution to one's life and to the community. Buddhism is the way of life.

The pagodas and the philosophy of the people make the whole of Burma a living museum, so visit as soon as you can and enjoy whatever it is that fascinates you: you find it there in this country of 50 million people (5 million in the big city of Yangon (Rangoon)).

As in any Asian country, many crafts are practiced – weaving, lacquer work, carving and gilding although some souvenirs and many useful and industrial objects are imported.

Before the military rule people in different regions of the country wore distinctive clothing; even in one region clothes clearly distinguished one's position in the community.

Meals are built around rice with the addition of curry, clear soup, hot dip and vegetable fingers to scoop the dip, salad and cooked vegetables, crisps of some dried vegetable, followed by fresh fruit – really a mixture of Indian and Chinese cuisine.



*Bagan Museum*

# Robinson's remarkable large scale maps of the Shire of the Blue Mountains

By Peter C Rickwood and Peter R Atherden --- Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc.

For the first time, a set of 80 early 20th century detailed maps of the settled parts of the Blue Mountains have been made convenient to use. These are a most valuable resource for historians who now can not only readily read the information on these maps using computers at either the Springwood Library or at the Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc., Wentworth Falls, but also can obtain jpeg files of small areas.

Herbert Edward Cooper Robinson, (1856-1933), a renowned map maker and map publisher from 1895<sup>1</sup>, was commissioned in 1912 to produce detailed maps of the Shire of the Blue Mountains.

However the contract was contentious and Robinson's quotation was held over at the April meeting of the Shire Council<sup>2</sup> only to be reconsidered in July<sup>3</sup> when it was confusingly reported that: "Mr Robinson, of Sydney, had quoted £320 for the supply of 242 maps in sections ..." to be supplied over a period of four years. But it was moved that: "Ninety five maps of a scale of 8 chains to one inch would be required at once."

When the order was acknowledged in August<sup>4</sup> there were to be "... 93 maps at £3.10s each ..." drawn at an unspecified scale, and some councillors protested because the contract had not been put out to public tender.

Surprisingly it was reported in September 1913<sup>5</sup>: "In the office of Mr RB Paterson will be seen the complete series of maps of the Shire of the Blue Mountains, issued and published by Mr HEC Robinson, Government cartographer.", which seems dubious and may relate to only a part of the order.

Eventually the maps were provided at a scale of 4 chains to an inch [1: 3,168] but exactly how many is uncertain. Goodacre<sup>6</sup> wrote that: "Early in its history the firm began work on the first ever large scale map of the Blue Mountains area, for the Blue Mountains Shire Council. It was on 90 sheets, each measuring 30" by 40" and it took the draughtsman, Mr CH Richards, three years to draw. Herbert Robinson himself did survey work for it."

Four partial sets of these 4 chains to an inch maps are known to exist, two sets of original maps and two of copies.

One set of original maps is held by the Blue Mountains City Council Local Studies Library (BMMCLS - 80 Sheets) at Springwood and a second by the Blue Mountains Historical Society (BMHS - 64 Sheets) at Wentworth Falls.

A third set at the Mitchell Library<sup>7,8</sup> (84 Sheets) consists of "blueprint"<sup>9</sup> copies (white print on a dark blue base) and the fourth set is in the National Library of Australia (26 Sheets) but as shown on their website<sup>10</sup> these are "paper prints in negative format"<sup>11</sup> (white lines on a black background).

These sets overlap in area coverage and between them there are copies of 86 sheets. Four copies of the index map are known<sup>12</sup> on which are outlined 211 sheets but many parts of the shire area were wilderness and so were not mapped.

Clues come from notes printed in vacant space: eg on Sheet 112 (BMCCLS) has a signed annotation "H.E.C. Robinson 15 November 1915" (Figure 1) and Sheet 127 (BMHS) "H.E.C. Robinson 1<sup>st</sup> Dec' 1915" which may be handwritten. Sheet 93 has a similar note dated 1.12.13 but with a printed name and not a signature.

Before attributing a date to a map from such an addition, that text needs to be carefully inspected to see if it is printed or if it has been skilfully added to a base map in drawing ink; that is not always easy for some of the printed text seems to be handwritten as in Figures 1.

For convenience, 1915 is the date used here for these maps despite the fact that it post-dates the 1913 completion date reported in a newspaper<sup>14</sup> but it does fall within the three years that the draughtsman was said to have been working on these maps<sup>15</sup>.

However in their catalogue the National Library of Australia<sup>16</sup> use 1947 and explain: "Publication date based on latest date appearing in series. Sheets 101 and 116 "Proclaimed City of Blue Mountains 19th September 1947"

[Not seen on BMCCLS or ML maps so they pre-date 1947]. That information seems to be printed on the maps so might these be re-prints of the originals?

These maps are some of the most detailed of the Blue Mountains and they contain a lot of information of interest to historians researching aspects of the settled areas, such as original owners, Certificate of Title Volume and Folio numbers, Estate names, planned roads etc. (e.g. Figure 2).

Continued from page 15

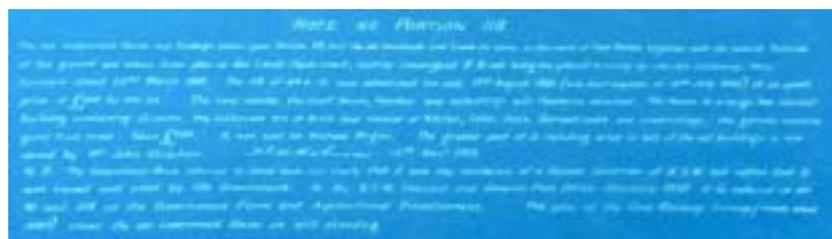


Figure 1. Text written on Robinson's Sheet 112 (ML Collection).

# Some of the most detailed of the Blue Mountains

Continued from page 14

But the maps are "40 inches x 30 inches" (101.6 cm x 76.2 cm) on sheets 109 x 87 cm so are cumbersome to use.

This is not helped by one set being stored in a basement archive in a vertical hanging map cabinet (BMCCLS); the second partly flat in a horizontal map cabinet but mostly in rolls (BMHS) and the third set (Mitchell Library) is inconveniently bound into two very heavy 'books'.

Moreover some maps in the BMCCLS and BMHS collections are cracked and shedding patches from their linen backing so that they are now very fragile.

It occurred to one of us (PCR) that it was high time that these be copied in electronic format both for preservation of the information and for convenience of use, and the other of us (PRA) had the photographic skill and equipment to make this possible.

So with the help of Mr John Merriman, local studies librarian, Springwood, the BMCCLS collection of 80 maps has been photographed in recent months and a complete set of images (as jpeg files) has been burned onto CDs for examination on a computer. These CDs can be consulted at either BMCCLS or BMHS, and it is possible to extract a part of any map as a jpeg file for use in publications.

## Abbreviations

BMCCLS = Blue Mountains City Council Local Studies Library, Springwood.

BMHS = Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc., Wentworth Falls.

ML = Mitchell Library.

## References

<sup>1</sup> p.484 in Branagan, D. (2005) *T.W. Edgeworth David: a life: geologist, adventurer, soldier*. National Library of Australia, Canberra. 648pp.

<sup>2</sup> Anonymous (1912a) Blue Mountains Shire Council. *The Blue Mountain Echo*, 5 April 1912, p.1, cols.1 & 6.

<sup>3</sup> Anonymous (1912b) Blue Mountains Shire Council. *The Blue Mountain Echo*, 19 July 1912, p.1, cols.1-2 & 5-6.

<sup>4</sup> Anonymous (1912b) Blue Mountains Shire Council. *The Shire Echo*, 2 August 1912, p.2,col.1.

<sup>5</sup> Anonymous (1913) Local and General. Maps of the Shire. *The Blue Mountains Echo*, 12 September 1913, p.7, col. 2.

<sup>6</sup> p.3 in Goodacre, M.M. (1966) *A bibliography of the firm H.E.C.*

<sup>7</sup> Robinson, H.E.C (1915a) Blue Mountains Shire: [plans]. Scale 4 chains to an inch. "Compiled to the order of the Shire Council by H.E.C. Robinson, Sydney" – map. H.E.C. Robinson, Pty. Ltd., Sydney. Sheets 1-92 and Index Sheet. [Mitchell Library XX/9v.i]

<sup>8</sup> Robinson, H.E.C. (1915b) Blue Mountains Shire: [plans]. Scale 4 chains to an inch. "Compiled to the order of the Shire Council by H.E.C. Robinson, Sydney" – map. H.E.C. Robinson, Pty. Ltd., Sydney. Sheets 93-158. [Mitchell Library XX/10v.2]

<sup>9</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blueprint> <Accessed 25 November 2012>; [http://www.ingenious.org.uk/site.asp?s=RM&Param=1&Sub\\_Param=1&Content=1&Article\\_ID={EDBC44-B0BF-4F17-AFAF-C9C1238FA1F0}&ArticleID2={AAE8AF81-0D46-4CD6AFDFCFED5-EEF8969}&Menu\\_LinkID={FB123E73-A026-4389-A4EF-7952465AEB83}](http://www.ingenious.org.uk/site.asp?s=RM&Param=1&Sub_Param=1&Content=1&Article_ID={EDBC44-B0BF-4F17-AFAF-C9C1238FA1F0}&ArticleID2={AAE8AF81-0D46-4CD6AFDFCFED5-EEF8969}&Menu_LinkID={FB123E73-A026-4389-A4EF-7952465AEB83}) <Accessed 25 November 2012>

<sup>10</sup> <http://nla.gov.au/nla.map-vn4983415> <Accessed 27 November 2012>

<sup>11</sup> [http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/4983415?lookfor=shire of bluemountains&offset =1&max=50945](http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/4983415?lookfor=shire%20of%20bluemountains&offset=1&max=50945) <Accessed 28 November 2012>

<sup>12</sup> Robinson, Hector E.C. (1915) *Index to sheets of 4 chains to an inch map of Blue Mountains. Scale 1 Mile to an inch*. "Each sheet when drawn on scale of 4 chains to an inch will measure 40 inches x 30 inches representing a rectangle 160 chains x 120 chains." [BMHS (mounted and rolled); Mitchell Library 812.17/1915 CC91/62; first map in Reference 7; National Library of Australia, <http://www.nla.gov.au/apps/cdview/?pi=nla.map-vn4983415-s1> <Accessed 28 November 2012>]

<sup>13</sup> References <sup>7 & 8</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Reference <sup>5</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Reference <sup>6</sup>

<sup>16</sup> [http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/4983415?lookfor=shire of blue mountains&offset=1&max=50945](http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/4983415?lookfor=shire%20of%20bluemountains&offset=1&max=50945) <Accessed 28 November 2012>



Figure 2. Part of Robinson's Sheet 72, Medlow Bath. (BMCCLS Collection).

## DEATH OF SPRINGWOOD HISTORIAN

A founding member of Springwood Historians, Lindsay Paish passed away peacefully in his sleep in the first days of the new year.

He was a contributor to *HERITAGE* and will be sorely missed by many.

# Scenic Railway's final trip

KATOOMBA'S Scenic Railway will depart on its last journey down to the pristine rainforest floor on January 13, 2013

The world's steepest passenger railway at 52 degrees is being replaced by a new Swiss-designed train and railway line under a \$30 million redevelopment of Scenic World, expected to be completed by Easter 2013.

Fondly known as the 'Mountain Devil', the current train has taken 700,000 journeys through the rainforest corridor to a parcel of the World Heritage – listed Jamison Valley.

Siblings and Scenic World joint managing directors, Anthea and David Hammon, said the decommissioning of the train would be a nostalgic time for their three-generation family business.

"This train has been a big part of our childhood, the generations before us, and the wider Blue Mountains community," said Mr Hammon.

"But it is now time for a new chapter at Scenic World and this railway transformation will provide our visitors with a fresh perspective on the rainforest with some new surprises with our history."

The legendary Scenic Railway was originally part of the remarkable



*The Scenic Railway in earlier days*

technology that accompanied mining activities in the Jamison and Megalong Valleys.

Philip Hammon and Philip Pells in their fascinating book, *The Burning Mists of Time* relate how some of the engineering works became part of one of Australia's major tourist attractions under the stewardship of Harry Hammon.

The coal mine operated until 1945 when the loss of a contract to provide coal to the Katoomba Municipal power house caused it to close.

The incline had however been carrying paying passengers for many years before this, because

the construction of the Giant Stairway, the Furber Steps and the Federal Pass walking tracks brought many hikers to the foot of the incline, begging for a ride to the top.

They were initially carried inside the coal skip; a little plank was installed at the back for the attendant miner to be seated, and hessian sacks were draped over coal dust coated planks to protect the passengers clothing.

A 12 seater car was built, called "Jessie". Jessie was used on weekends and public holidays carrying passengers at sixpence a time.

## History etched in glass

More than 13,000 glass negatives forming the Fairfax Archives Glass Plate Collection have been donated to the National Library of Australia.

The photographs taken by Fairfax photographers between 1908 and the mid 1930s, will be restored and put in digital form in a partnership between Fairfax Media, the National Library and the government's National Cultural Heritage Foundation which contributed \$425,000

Australia's rarest collection of photojournalism is an evocative insight into another time.

Not just into the events of that time - Depression-era dole queues, the first ANZAC Day march, bustling life in Sydney's streets but also into the intricate art of glass plate photography that was common a century ago.

The National Library of Australia's director-general, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich has said the collection was particularly significant for Australian's understanding of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

These images are special because they provide a complete archive of photojournalism during the era.

There are no comparable newspaper photo archives, "Ms Schwirtlich said.

The director of information services at Fairfax Media, Chris Berry, who has led the project over the past three years, said the goal was to preserve the images for all Australians.

'A lot of the stories are familiar ones, but the vivid nature of the glass plates bring them to life.'

The collection is expected to be available online by the middle of this year.

*The Sydney Morning Herald*

# The Cox's Road - Caley's Repulse named by Macquarie on a false premise

THE NSW Heritage Office in April 2011 concluded it will list representative portions of Cox's Road as part of the 1813 bicentennial celebrations of the crossing of the Blue Mountains in recognition of the importance of the road in the history of opening up western NSW.

Much of the credit for the initiative to have the NSW Heritage Office reach this decision has come from the Cox's Road Steering Committee formed in July 2006 to look at long term objectives and mechanisms to preserve the 1814 Cox's Road alignment between Emu Plains and the Blue Mountains and Bathurst. The committee was formed with delegates from the Lithgow, Blue Mountains and Bathurst branches of the National Trust of Australia (NSW), and operates under the auspices of the Trust as an informal committee.

For the November-December edition of *HERITAGE*, convenor of the Cox's Road Project Committee (CRPC) who is also an individual member of BMACHO, Patsy Moppett pictured, produced the first of a three part series of articles to provide some of the detail for each precinct of the road.

In this edition, Patsy covers the Caley's Repulse and Mt York precincts.



## By Patsy Moppett

The Caley's Repulse precinct is located off Railway Parade, Linden, on the ridge above the railway line and highway and to the north-west.

It is so named from the legendary "pile of stones", but does not define the location of the stones.

When Cox came to construct this section of road, he chose a lower route than Evans had surveyed, where the high rocky areas gave way to the more flat rocky areas.

In spite of this choice travellers found the going a jolting ride, and

many small deviations sought to find a more comfortable way through.

Even though Mitchell's route was laid in 1835, the old route was still in use as late as 1839.

The precinct is defined by a series of low rock cuttings and kerbs, rutted stone pavements and a small section of side drain.

The common width of the road in this vicinity is 6-7m, with almost vertical faces up to 60cm. Chisel and pick marks are common, and the rock shelves show signs of the scraping of vehicles drawn over the rocky surfaces.

In her report *Cox's Way*, Grace Karskens states that the precinct is "one of the longest and most intact sections of Cox's Road across the rocky ridge, and illustrates the simple methods and tools used by the gangs.....the rocky platforms and wild appearance of the area give a clear picture of the conditions of nineteenth century transport and travel".

The following extracts are taken from records of the time contained in *Fourteen Crossings of the Blue Mountains*, all observations referring to a "pile of stones".

### Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth - May 19, 1813

"..... from this ridge they first began to have an extensive view of the settlements below at a little distance from the spot they descended they found a heap of stones piled up in the Shape of a Pyramid by some European one side of which the Natives had opened if apparently to see if anything was deposited in the Middle....."

### Assistant-Surveyor Evans - November 21, 1813

"..... at about 11 o'clock I passed the Pile of Stones alluded to by a former party: soon after we were on a very high hill, which was clear of Mist..."

### William Cox - September 1, 1814

"Retained eight men to work on the bridge. Sent the rest forward road-making....."

Continued page 18



*Pile of stones fenced in 1974 appears not to been built by Caley as records indicate he did not penetrate into this part of the mountains*

# From Evan's Cave 'a view of the country as far as the eye can carry you'

Continued from page 17

**September 3, 1814**

"The road finished to Caley's heap of stones, 17 ¾ miles".

**September 4, 1814**

"Removed forward to Caley's pile...went to Caley's pile, and from thence up the rock to Evan's cave you get a view of the country from north-west round to south-west as far as the eye can carry you".

**Governor Lachlan Macquarie**

**April 27, 1815**

"Near to the 18<sup>th</sup> Mile Mark (it is to be observed that the measure commences from Emu Ford), a pile of stones attracted attention; it is close to the line of road, on the top of a rugged and abrupt ascent, and is supposed to have been placed there by Mr Caley, as the extreme limit of his tour – hence the Governor gave that part of the Mountain the name of "Caley's Repulse". To have penetrated even so far, was at that time an effort of no small difficulty."

**Major Henry Colden Antill - April 27, 1815**

"About 5 miles further on we came to a very extensive prospect from a lofty spot, where we found a heap of stones, supposed to have been placed there by an adventurer, who had penetrated thus far with much difficulty in his endeavour to cross the mountains.

He had arrived at it from a difficult direction from the one we had now taken, and much more difficult, but finding this place no end to the mountains, and the country looking most unpromising around him, and his provisions being nearly expended, he gave up what he thought a fruitless attempt, and retraced his steps, after erecting this pile of stones, to which the Governor gave the name of Keely's Repulse".

**Quoy, Gaudichaud and Pellion - 1819**

After crossing, by a wooden bridge, a very steep precipice, we found before us, near the road, a pile of stones surmounted by a pole; a rustic monument showing the termination of the venturesome journey of Mr Caley, an English



*Cox's Road alignment near Linden 2012*

botanist, at a time when the high road that we were travelling in so easy a manner had not yet been laid down".

## Further thoughts

In the vicinity of this stretch of road was supposedly located the pile of stones referred to in the many diaries of the time, and named by Governor Macquarie after George Caley, even though Caley never explored this section of the mountains.

George Caley was a botanist of note, an explorer and naturalist, publishing many journals, letters and observations relating to his travels through the Blue Mountains.

The stones were reported to be on the roadside at Linden, and many are the tales of how they came to be.

It was shown on maps to the 1830s, but not always in the same location. For over 70 years the site was "lost".

It then aroused considerable interest and conjecture in the early 1900s, in with the community attempting to establish cultural significance of the feature.

In particular the Australian Historical Society set out in 1913 to accurately locate and "restore" the stones.

The pile of stones we see today (off Tollgate Drive, Glossop Road, Caley's Lane) was fenced in 1974 and a plaque erected, but is probably not in the original location, which is thought to be nearer to the original route and near the current day Woodford Trig.



*Cox's Road edges near Linden*

## Mount York Precinct

The Mount York Precinct is located near Mount Victoria, just before the descent down into the Hartley Valley.

It contains Cox's Pass, so named by Governor Macquarie in 1815 in recognition of the feat of building the road on the descent from the Blue Mountains to the valley below.  
**Continued page 19**

**Continued from page 18**

A number of other tracks abound at the Mount York precinct, and without some research the casual observer would be forgiven for confusing one with another.

All routes were constructed with the idea of seeking the most effective and efficient way down the precipitous cliffs and ridges into the Hartley valley.

Cox's Pass was the first to follow Surveyor Evans. Other routes included Lawson's Long Alley, Lockyer's Pass (never completed), and Berghofer's Pass. The final descent was via Mitchell's Pass, which we utilise today.

The track down Cox's Pass today contains almost complete sections of the original road.

It is situated in the Blue Mountains National Park and the marked walking trail follows the course of the road.

There is evidence of two land bridges and indications of numerous variations to the route to avoid steep pinches and rocky outcrops, including at least two zig-zags.

## The works on Mt York became the focus of Cox's road building task

In her report Grace Karskens suggests that the remnants of Cox's Road in the Blue Mountains are very rare surviving examples of a significant road constructed in the simple style used during the period of Macquarie's governorship.

Its significance lies in its extensive display of Cox's methods and approaches, and also later attempts to improve some sections.



**Rectangular sockets cut in the rock to receive a 3-railed fence to prevent stock from falling over a precipice along Cox's Road at Mt York**

The precinct is also important because of the symbolic cultural meaning vested in it by writers and travellers, including Governor Macquarie in 1815, and a host of others since.

The works on Mt York became the focus of Cox's road building task.

The ascent (descent) features cuttings, retaining walls, earthen embankments, a bridge site and zig-zag formation.



**Bridge support rock cutting on Cox's Road, at Mt York**

The rocky sections near the summit have types of cuttings typical of Cox's works on other sections – the roughly cut low stone kerb up to 50cm high with a vertical face adjoining rock platform/pavement, which was probably quarried to form the retaining wall opposite.

This wall has partly collapsed and is of rough or broken stones up to 40cm in length.

The wall is approximately 20m long and the road at this point is 7m wide.

A little further on the road passes narrowly between two rock faces, partly covered with short chisel marks.

Rectangular sockets cut in the rock nearby appear to have received a three-railed timber fence to guard against stock falling over the immense precipice.

The following extracts are taken from records of the time contained in *Fourteen Crossings of the Blue Mountains*:

**Gregory Blaxland - Friday May 28, 1813**

"They got ready about nine O'clock and proceeded about 5 miles and three quarters ... until five O'clock when they encamped on the edge of the precipice (Mount York) and discovered to their great satisfaction that what they had considered sandy and barren land below the mountains to be forest land..."



**Hand chipped rock on Cox's Road, Mt York**

Continued page 20

# “...a road must be made to get off the mountain”

—William Cox' diary November 2, 1814

Continued from page 19

**Saturday May 29, 1813**

“They fetched up the horses and began to descend the mountain at 7 O'clock through a pass in the rocks about thirty feet wide they had discovered the day before ... going down they were forced to unload the horses part of the way and carry their loads themselves as they could but just keep their footing without a load... where a road for a cart might easily be made by cutting a trench slanting along the side of the mountain in the earth which lays against it and which at this place joins the earth on the top .....

**William Cox - November 2, 1814**

“Sent three men again to examine the descent of the mountain, and ascertained that there is no other way but from the bluff originally marked. Tomorrow I intend going to survey it, as a road must be made to get off the mountain.”

**November 3, 1814**

“At 6 this morning went forward with Lewis, Tye, and a soldier to examine the mountain at the end of the ridge – four miles. Found it much worse than I expected. It commences with going down steep between immense large boulders, when it opens with a very steep gulley in front, and towards the left it falls off so steep that it is with much difficulty a person can get down at all. The whole front of the mountain is covered with loose rock, at least two-thirds of the way down; and on the right and left it is bounded both by steep gullies and rocks, so that we cannot, by winding short to the left, get half length sufficient to gain ground to get down without a number of circular turns both to the right and left, and in that case the hill is so very steep about half-a-mile down that it is not possible to



*Upper reaches of Cox's Road, Mt York*



*Cox's Pass [Pass] ca. 1815-1816 by John William Lewin  
Mitchell Library State Library of NSW – PXE 888/6*

make a good road to go down and up again without going to a very great expense. I have, therefore, made up my mind to make such a road as a cart can go down empty or with a very light load without a possibility of its being able to return with any sort of load whatever; and such a road will also answer to drive stock down to the forest ground.”

**November 14, 1814**

“Got on erecting the bridge at the beginning of the descent off the mountain, and blowing up the rocks that are in the line of our intended road down to the forest. Find it difficult work, and it will cost us much labour.”

**November 18, 1814**

“Hard at work on the rocks this day. Kept our six pickaxes at work; and W. Appledon (a sailor) fixed the blocks and tackle to trees, and got a most capital purchase to turn out an immense large rock at the side of the mountain in the way of our road, which he performed well. Two men received slight hurts in doing it by one of the purchases slipping (J. Tindall and T. Adams).”

**November 22, 1814**

“Thick, moist morning. The sick list reduced to one (S. Davis). All hands again on the mountain.

Light rain and heavy fogs during the day, but the men continued out and did a good day's work. Turned out a great number of very large rocks this day; blew up one. The ground as we dig discovers many more rocks than we expected.”

**November 26, 1814**

“Issued to all hands one pair of trousers each. The stone on the mountain is uncommon hard, and flinty. Cuts extremely bad, and some of it will not split. We have been fortunate in turning out very large solid rocks 2 ft. thick without breaking them, and we have used by little powder this week.”

**Governor Lachlan Macquarie - April 1815**

“The road continues ..... on the ridge of the mountain ..... and there it suddenly terminates in a nearly perpendicular precipice of 676 feet high, ascertained by measurement. The road constructed by Mr Cox down this rugged and tremendous descent, through all its windings is no less than 3-fourths of a mile in length, and has been executed with such skill and stability as reflects much credit on him. The labour here undergone, and the difficulties surmounted, can only be appreciated by those who view this scene.

Continued page 21

## Cox's Road

Continued from page 20

In order to perpetuate the memory of Mr Cox's services, the Governor deemed it a tribute justly due to him, to give his name to this grand and extraordinary Pass; and he accordingly called it 'Cox's Pass'."

**Major Henry Colden Antill** (in company of His Excellency Governor and Mrs Macquarie) - **April 29, 1815**

"About 11 o'clock, at the 49-mile tree, we came to the pass down the mountain into the new country below, which could be seen to great advantage from the projecting rock on the left just before descending the pass .... The pass had been made with great labour down a very steep mountain of upwards of six hundred feet, and the way the road is made traversing the face of it makes it nearly a mile long; it was with much difficulty and exertion we got carts down by fixing drag-ropes behind and holding on with the people; it was so perpendicular in places that the cattle could scarcely keep their footing .... This pass was likewise named Cox's Pass, in compliment to the gentleman who had superintended making the road and pass ..... a piece of work which certainly reflects great credit on his exertions and perseverance."

### References:

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The final precincts in this article covering Mt Blaxland precinct and the Fish River and beyond will be published in the March-April edition of *HERITAGE*



*Members of BMACHO executive were invited to attend the meeting between the NSW Minister for Heritage and Paragon lessee Robyn Parker. Pictured left to right are Jan Koperberg, John Leary OAM, Ian Jack, Robyn Parker and Pamela Smith*

## BMACHO supports move to set up regional educational and research Foundation

BMACHO supports the formation of a Western Crossings Foundation and will hold a workshop in an endeavour to form a Western Crossings Foundation committee.

A planning meeting to organise the workshop will be conducted at Everglades on January 18.

Dr David Blaxland a descendant of the explorer Gregory has proposed the setting up of the Western Crossings Foundation (or Trust) as a permanent body for education and research concerning the natural environment and human development of the region.

The proposal could lead to increased employment opportunities in the fields of education, care of the environment, tourism and research.

Dr Blaxland a medical practitioner living in Wagga Wagga has pastoral interests with a farm employing environmental practices at Warrnambool, Victoria.

"There would be a potentially immeasurable contribution to the canon of historical knowledge of the region.

"This could be a valuable bicentennial legacy to future members of the local community," he said.

Dr Blaxland has suggested that the objectives of the foundation might be:

1. To facilitate and promote education and research concerning the natural history and human development of the region;
2. Through the above, to foster understanding and co-operation between local communities and groups of people; and
3. To make results of this work available for promotion of the region to visitors.

The work of the trust would also contribute to the historical knowledge of the region.

The outgoing chairman of WCC, Professor David Carment has suggested the establishment of links with one or more tertiary educational institutes such as the University of Western Sydney or Charles Sturt University and local TAFE colleges.

# A LONG MARCH FROM LITHGOW

REMEMBRANCE Day 2012 was an appropriate day for the launch by Lithgow & District Family History Society of its War Hero project.

Held at Club Lithgow the event with around 140 people attending was a very successful launch with the Federal Member for Calare, John Cobb speaking on the importance of remembering Australia diggers before officially launching it and congratulating the society for its initiative in taking on the project.

Lithgow mayor, Maree Statham also spoke on the importance of such a project and wished the society all the best for the publishing of the book in 2014.

War Hero project convenor Helen Taylor outlined the criteria for the project saying that a certain amount of the records will be on permanent display on the library's shelves but the full content will be available on computer.

Helen then announced the title of the book which will be launched on Remembrance Day 2014 to be *A Long March From Lithgow*.

A very large display of memorabilia including firearms, a trench telescope, kit bags, medals, photographs, flags and much more were viewed by guests.

Joe Elkusch from Springwood RSL Sub Branch then spoke on the Japanese submarine attack on Sydney Harbour and had the audience totally captivated.

This was then followed by a quite emotional DVD presentation covering the Boer War, WW1 and WW2. It featured many who were present along with their fathers, uncles and grandfathers.

The slide presentation also featured music by country music singer Darren Coggan from his *War Stories* CD.

Helen Taylor has said anyone who has a war veteran, man or woman who served their country either overseas or on the home front the Lithgow Family History Society would be pleased if they could contact the society.

The content for the book will be restricted to local areas and the society may be contacted for more information concerning the areas to be included, at the society's library at the corner of Tank and Donald Street Lithgow, telephone (02) 63 531 089 on Tuesday nights from 6pm – 9 pm or Fridays from 10am – 4pm and the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday each month from 10am – 4pm

Contributed by Helen Taylor

*Pictured at right is a leather coated cannister probably used to carry hot food in the trenches in World War 1 owned by WW1 6th Light Horse Regt soldier Walter Barker.*

*Pictured below is a framed montage of NX178842 Corporal William Thomas Martin who served with 55/53 Australian Infantry Battalion including medals, discharge certificate, colour patches and Japanese occupation money*



*L to r Bob and Helen Taylor with Danny Whitty OAM members of the Lithgow Family History Society at the launch of the War Hero project*

# Workmen discover early kitchen at Eskbank House

By Wendy Hawkes - cultural officer, Lithgow City Council

IN MANY houses the kitchen is the heart of the home and at Eskbank House workmen recently rediscovered the heart of this 1840s heritage property, with the revealing of an original kitchen flagstone floor under the Masonite workroom floor.

The flagstones were discovered during the installation of a new heating system in December 2011.

Everything was put on hold while a heritage architect supervised several access holes being cut into the flooring to determine the extent of the flagstones and to give recommendations on how to proceed.

The flooring was then removed revealing an area of flagstones (with a small area of bricks) and raising a million questions and mysteries.

While the flagstone were undoubtedly the most exciting discovery, the removed flooring, fireplace and what was discovered between the floor layers all had stories to tell as well.

There were several layers to the flooring that was removed and each told a tale about the different lives of Eskbank House.

The flagstones are thought to date from 1866 – 1875, when the wings



*Eskbank House circa 1878 which indicates a flue on the roof.*

were added to the original 1840s house.

In the 1920s the courtyard between the wings was enclosed and a floor added and this is likely when the cypress tongue and groove floorboards were placed over the flagstones to keep the damp and cold out.

The next layer of flooring was linoleum attached to a base Masonite layer and was probably laid over the floor boards during its time as a rental property, perhaps even when it was used as a

boarding house for the Small Arms Factory workers during World War 2.

The final layer of flooring was a Masonite layer with a red paint finish.

It is probable this was placed over the rest of the layers by the Lithgow District History Society after 1948 (Integrated Design, 2011).

It is amazing to see the story of Eskbank House, from a genteel wealthy residence through to a museum, told in the layers of flooring.

The fireplace also changed over time and some of these changes were revealed when the flooring was removed.

The original fireplace appears to have had a rectangular shape with the location of the former kitchen fit out (1920s – 1970s) visible in wall fittings and skirting cutouts.

An 1878 photograph of the house from the outside shows the presence of a flue on the roof and indicates a cast iron combustion stove may have been set in this fireplace.



*Lithgow City Council workmen, Al and Terry holding an old coin and brass hinge they found under flooring at Eskbank House*

Continued page 24

# A fireplace which has cooked the meals for Lithgow wealthiest citizens through to factory workers

Continued from page 23

The fire place was changed to a brick arch at some stage and this is still visible in the current fireplace.

During the time the house was run by the Lithgow District Family History Society a prefabricated cement slab was laid over bricks, over the flagstones.

Gas was also fitted in the fireplace and the gas fixture is still visible.

This fireplace has cooked the meals for Lithgow wealthiest citizens through to factory workers and even museum caretakers. What yarns it could tell!

Another small mystery in the kitchen is an area to the right of the fireplace where the flagstone has been replaced by bricks and the render on the wall is marked.

Those who are associated with the property have all speculated on what this might have been; a platform for a copper (but they were usually in the laundry) or a space for a cupboard are the most common suggestions, but it still is really not known.

Other finds that intrigued viewers were the objects that had fallen between the cracks and lodged under the floor boards.

A penny dated 1911, newspapers dated 1997, pencil stubs, pieces of tiles, nails and plant roots have all been found.

But the most exciting item was a Marvel comic which had been pulled under the floor boards by a mouse and torn up to make a nest in the hollow between the fireplaces flagstone and the floorboards.

There was even a mummified mouse itself which has been kept for the record.

At the beginning of the year the flagstone floor was completely excavated with decking placed over a third of it so that visitors could view it without damaging it.



**Flagstone floor and fireplace discovered during work at Eskbank House. Brick section of flooring on the right side of the fireplace**

It is proposed to install a recreated 1870s kitchen using objects already in the museum's collection, but staff are taking their time doing this as they want to get it right.

In the meantime, visitors are invited to spend some time gazing at this discovery and imagining and speculating on all that must have gone on there over the years.

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## 'Keeping volunteers interested'

VOLUNTEERS are the life blood of societies affiliated with BMACHO and most societies have difficulty in recruiting and keeping members interested.

To share ideas and discuss the issue BMACHO will hold a "Getting the people you need" seminar later this year.

All societies rely heavily on the hard work and commitment of the people who make up the committee and on the people who volunteer in every facet of an organisation from research, and marketing to manning exhibits in museum through to washing up after a meeting or activity.

Getting people involved in an organisation is a challenge for most societies, large or small.

Attracting younger people, in particular, who are willing to take up the reins from those who have been keeping the group going over many years is also a challenge.

The workshop's theme will be about creating an environment that attracts, develops and retains people who are willing to continually improve the society.

The workshop will look at how societies can work more effectively with people; how to help people get the skills needed; to sort out difficult situations; and how to demonstrate appreciation of each volunteer's effort.

Committees function most effectively when members have a broad mix of backgrounds, skills and experiences.

The sustainability of societies in the long term is dependent on continually recruiting, and developing interested and willing contributors.

The workshop will look at all these and other issues.

# Western crossing commemoration 2013-15

great ideas - thoughts - just being talked about or it's really going to happen!

## Pioneer walk to Mt York being planned

Marcia Osterberg has advised that Mt Victoria & District Historical Society will coordinate the Pioneer Walk to Mt York on May 28.

Vintage cars will be used to transport elderly and those unable to walk the distance. Descendants of pioneers who wish to participate in the walk must register on the website [www.bluemountainscrossings.com.au](http://www.bluemountainscrossings.com.au)

Marcia said that it was also hoped to include in the Western Crossing program, the Great Train weekend, a popular annual event at Mt Victoria which this year will be held on May, 25-26.

## Back to St Bart's Day

Blacktown City Council has a yearly event, Back to St Barts Day.

Blacktown City Council's community events manager, Peter Filmer has said, this year the event to be held on April 27, and will be part of the Western Crossing program.

St Bartholomew, constructed in 1841, is the oldest building in Blacktown and where the grave of William Lawson is located in the church's graveyard.

Restoration to this grave site has been commenced and it is the intention to unveil a plaque in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the crossing.

## Katoomba rifle shoot

Katoomba Rifle Club will conduct a bicentenary shoot at Leura on April 28.

A number of rifle clubs are expected to participate.

## Wiradjuri people

Wiradjuri people have agreed to meet with Hartley District Progress Association to discuss their involvement in local activities including the consequences of the stolen generation.

## New schools kit

Chair of the Western Crossings committee, Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker has advised that the National Museum has produced a new schools kit on the Blue Mountains crossing in the *Australian History Mystery* series, which ties in with the Year 9 history curriculum.

## Holey dollar

Bruce Ferrier has advised that the first proofs of the holey dollar and dump "look fantastic."

Probably 30,000 of these coins will be produced with 18,000 given to schoolchildren at the beginning of second term 2013.

The coins at \$10 will be marketed through two barrack vans which will be stationed around the mountains.

One of the vans is an 'approximate' reproduction, but its history is more related to the vehicles used on the convict built Great Northern Road.

## Flyover of crossings route

A flyover of the Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Bathurst is being planned as part of the activities marking the bicentenary of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth's Blue Mountains crossing.

Organisers hope everything from helicopters to small private fixed wing aircraft to World War 2 fighters and modern day military jets will take part in the event on May 25.

They are working with the RAAF for their assistance with resources such as staging areas and aircraft participation.

Once airborne, pilots will follow a similar path to that blazed by the three explorers in 1813, with viewing areas planned for Penrith, Glenbrook, Springwood, Hazelbrook, Wentworth Falls, Katoomba, Blackheath, Mt York, Lithgow and Bathurst.

Former RAAF Wing Commander Matt Hall, Australia's leading aerobatic display pilot, is

The public will be able to buy memorabilia photographs of themselves chained with convicts in the second van.

A notice will advise that the vans are not accurate reproductions.

## George Evans to be honoured

Surveyor, George William Evans has been nominated for a posthumous award for his contribution to the work on the road across the Blue Mountains.

Hawkesbury City Council's mayor, Kim Ford has advised that Evans' name will be added to the honour board at Windsor during the Australia Day 2013 luncheon.

## Trust members to walk Cox's Road

National Trust members will participate in a walk on the Linden-Woodford section of Cox's Road on June 1.

coordinating the event on behalf of Business Supporting the Bicentenary (BSB) and Blue Mountains Lithgow and Oberon Tourism (BMLOT)

BSB director Philip Hammon of Scenic World came up with the idea of a flyover to enable thousands of people to view the event and celebrate the bicentenary of their local communities.

"A flyover is something that demonstrates just how far we have come in the last 200 years since Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth made their historic journey, said Mr Hammon.

For more information about the Crossings Bicentenary, visit [www.bluemountainscrossings.com.au](http://www.bluemountainscrossings.com.au)

**Blue Mountains Gazette**

For more information about Western Crossing events contact: [www.bluemountainscrossings.com.au](http://www.bluemountainscrossings.com.au)

# A tetradrachma from Thrace (323-281BC)



THE practice of putting royal portraits on coins began after the death of Alexander the Great. This coin (pictured) is from Thrace, one of the ancient regions he conquered

It shows Alexander the Great in profile with ram's head horns associated with the god of Amon.

Nearly every state conquered by Alexander started to mint coins with his face according to Dr Anna Trofimova.<sup>1</sup> I spread his image over vast distances.

This coin is one of more than 400 items ranging from coins and jewellery to weapons and armour, frescos and statues.

Underpinning this extraordinary display is a thesis or rather several.

It seeks to explain how Alexander transformed the world through military conquest, spreading Greek culture and art. – Hellenism – from the shores of the Mediterranean to the deserts of central Asia and the borders of India

In the process Alexander the man became Alexander the myth; a deity to some, a tyrant to others.

His image, real, imagined and invented was stamped on coins and in the faces of statues and idols, pervading cultures and creeds.

Dr Trofimova claims that Alexander was very sexy. He was brave, died young and believed in his glory.

The real Alexander is as fascinating as the myth. A master tactician, the Macedonian king who conquered the world in the 4th century BC.

He displayed great humanity to the people he conquered. But he had a dark side too: an incandescent temper and a love of drink.

No discussion of Alexander can ignore the question of his sexuality. His lifelong companion was Hephaestion, a childhood friend and lieutenant. Some scholars believe they were lovers.

The debate is complicated by the sexual mores and social mores of the era.

The exhibition which opened last November runs until to April 28

Footnote

<sup>1</sup> Trofimova, Dr Anna of the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg is curator of *Alexander the Great: 2000 Years of Treasures* on exhibition at the Australian Museum.

## 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.

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

**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 World Heritage Institute, 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, Lithgow and District Family History Society Inc., Lithgow Mining Museum Inc., Lithgow Regional Library – Local Studies, Lithgow Small Arms Factory Museum 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 OAM, Ian Milliss, Patsy Moppett, Professor Barrie Reynolds, Dr Peter Rickwood and Dr Peter Stanbury OAM.

**COMMITTEE** The committee for 2012-13 is: Pamela Smith (president), Ian Jack (vice president), Jan Koperberg (secretary), Judy Barham, Joan Kent, Doug Knowles, John Leary, Dick Morony (public officer), and Scott Pollock.

**DISCLAIMER** Views and opinions expressed in *HERITAGE* originate from many sources and contributors. Every effort is taken to ensure accuracy of material. Content does not necessarily represent or reflect the views and opinions of BMACHO, its committee or members. If errors are found feedback is most welcome.