

# HERITAGE

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OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

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## The Hartley Rock, the pivot for 'A moment in time'

By Joan Kent BAHons.  
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THE ACTIVITIES associated with the commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the European crossing of the Blue Mountains have generated a reappraisal of this 'historic' event.

The images exhibition, 'A Moment in Time' to be presented by the Hartley District Progress Association at the Old Hartley School Hall in May and June this year will contribute to this reassessment.

In terms of European settlement over the last 200 years 'the Crossing' certainly is significant, as it is for the Aboriginal peoples upon whom this expedition had such a profound impact.

However, it also focusses our attention on the vast period of time over which the 'New Country' is represented geologically.

For that reason the Hartley Rock is the pivot of the exhibition for 'To see tomorrow, you must first know yesterday.'

'The Hartley Rock has lain in the Hartley Valley *substrata* for over



***The Hartley Rock has lain in Hartley Valley for more than 300 million years. Image: John Leary, OAM.***

three hundred million years; a fossilised *brachiopod* nestled in a cavity of the bedrock, smaller shell fossils embedded in the surface.'

The history of the Hartley Valley can be traced far beyond the upheaval when the Australian continent – then part of the great southern supercontinent of Gondwana which comprised all the major southern landmasses – finally severed its last links with Antarctica 45 million years ago.

In ancient times the landscape which now surrounds the valley of the Cox was a vast plain which over ten to fifteen million years was gradually invaded by the sea – at a rate of 7 millimetres per year! An uplift which created the Blue Mountains, including the valley of the Cox, occurred between ninety and sixty million years ago – at an estimated rate of 2.5cms per century.

This ancient rock and its' embedded fossils were formed in an even earlier period of the planet's evolution, the Devonian period, now revealed after 300 hundred million years of oblivion.

It is appropriate that the Hartley Rock is the witness to both Aboriginal habitation over many thousands of years and the recent overlay of European settlement.  
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***The separate fossilised brachiopod which nestles in a cavity in The Hartley Rock'. Images: Nigel Ryan.***

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**An opinion from the editor.....**  
**Two centuries on we commemorate the Western Crossings**

In the run up to the events from 2013 to 2015 which will commemorate and celebrate the achievements of the crossing of the Blue Mountains by the party led by the three explorers, Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson, the subsequent surveying of the route by Evans from Emu Plains to what would become the City of Bathurst, the extraordinary feat of the convict party under the supervision of Cox in building a road to open up the golden west and the journey along this road to proclaim the site for the township of Bathurst; we perhaps need to pause to reflect on what effect this would have in lifting the colony of NSW into the great nation and economic wonder of today.

Not in the wildest dreams of Lachlan Macquarie or his masters back in London could there have been perception of a future nation of the dimension of Australia, which 200 years later stands, with a status based on most indicators of human wellbeing, democracy, social, industrial, political and economic achievements, among the top in the world.

Without the events of 1813-15, although it may in the long-run have prospered, it is likely that had not the golden west been opened up, the fledgling colony, with its small population, largely centred on Sydney Cove with some expansion north, south and to the west as far as Parramatta would have perished and been abandoned.

Those who came to the colony in its first 30 years including some, erroneously classed as felons because of minor misdemeanours or indiscretions, became the true pioneers and foundation stock of this now great nation. Of course, others were to follow in the next two hundred years including those of the last 50 years who have contributed to our now multicultural society.

Continuing the policy of promoting the research and recording of the region's cultural heritage, in the pages of this edition of *HERITAGE* are stories of some of these early pioneers and their achievements, as well as reports on the activities associated with the commemoration of this significant event in Australian history.

Among these reports is welcome news of the state government's recognition of the work of a small army of volunteers in the region's heritage sector; firstly through an amount of \$80,000 to be distributed through the Royal Australian Historical Society and secondly through Lithgow City Council to the Cox's Road Project Committee a grant of \$20,000.

One of the groups to benefit from the government's support is BMACHO which will receive up to \$5,000 to be used for legal administrative costs of setting up a philanthropic foundation for research and education in the region, first proposed by Dr David Blaxland a direct descendant of the explorer, Gregory Blaxland.

While there will always be need for celebratory activities which in their own right through tourism bring benefit to the region, it is important there be some lasting benefit to the community with commemorative activity such as the proposed Western Crossings Foundation.

Finally, the front page article about the Hartley Rock brings starkly into contrast the 200 years of human achievements related to the western crossings and the existence of that 300 million years-old piece of geological mass, reminding us our achievements are but a blink of an eyelid in the evolution of the universe.

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

# Hartley rock linked with Bonnie Blink

Continued from page 1

Much attention is paid to the crossing of the Blue Mountains but it must be remembered that it is the story of the descent of Mt York on May 29, 1813 and the subsequent utilisation of the country beyond which is of lasting significance for regional and national history.

The development of the Hartley Valley played a vital role in this process, initially as a place for resting and provisioning weary travellers and settlers to the New Country, prompting the erection of a number of inns and small businesses, but also as a coaching depot and the first agricultural and pastoral activities west of the Mountains.

A large number of these buildings remain, centred in the Hartley Historic Site but the history of the Valley and the early western expansion is also illustrated by the inns and domestic dwellings which mark the route of the 'new' Great Western Road from the 1830s.

Even earlier are the inns in Hartley Vale on the original alignment of Cox's Road – Collit's Inn (1823) and the Comet Inn (1879) from the shale mining period.

Another icon with a strong link to 'the Hartley Rock' is *Bonnie Blink* (believed to mean happy face or smile) – our rock was discovered by Mrs Pat Connell in the grounds of *Bonnie Blink* some ten years ago, as a result of ploughing. The 80 acre property was granted to Hugh Brady in 1854.

Here it is believed he built the original house with an associated school, run by his sister. This house had been demolished by late 1884 but the school building remained intact until demolished in 1996.

The property passed through several hands between 1876 and 1884, including for a short period the Anthony Hordern family. It is believed that the Horderns continued their practice of planting an English oak tree (which survives and flourishes) at Hartley in keeping with their trademark 'While I live I'll grow'.

In 1884 the property was purchased



***Bonnie Blink where the Hartley rock was discovered.***

by the colourful and prolific colonial architect Charles Henry Edmund Blackmann, who was then in partnership with Varney Parkes (son of Sir Henry Parkes) and the renowned John Sulman in a prominent Sydney architectural practice.

It was Blackmann who constructed the French provincial style country villa, possibly on the foundations of the earlier building.

This surviving 1884 building was built of local sandstone which Blackmann found on the property, reputedly left after plans for a nearby church were abandoned.

The iron gate at the front of the house bears his initials 'CHEB' as proof of his ownership although it may well have been a speculative project as it was sold in 1886.

Again there were a series of new owners of short duration until 1903 when the properties came into the ownership of the McKillop family, cousins of the beatified Mother Mary McKillop.

In 1916 *Bonnie Blink* was purchased by Oliver Alexander Baaner and has remained in the Baaner family, OA Baaner's granddaughter, Mrs Pat Connell being the present owner.

Mrs Connell was responsible for extensive renovations with the advice of heritage architect Christo Aitken during the early 2000s.

Now restored to much of its former glory and set in beautiful gardens complete with the Horden oak tree, the 'Bonnie Blink' building is approaching its' 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary, treasured by the Baaner/Connell family and the Little Hartley community.

This year of 2013 is an appropriate vantage point from which to view both our ancient and recent past and our future – being aware of our past will better equip us to decide our future.

**The contributions of Mrs Pat Connell in the preparation of this article are gratefully acknowledged.**

## THE AUTHOR

The author of this article, Joan Kent (pictured) is curator of the exhibition *A Moment in Time*

reflecting on the earliest history of the Hartley Valley and the consequences of the western crossing.

Joan is an individual member of

BMACHO and its former treasurer. She is involved in numerous other community activities and with her husband Tom runs an alpaca farm at Kanimbla.



# Gregory Blaxland's wine medals

**By David Blaxland**

FEW PEOPLE realise that Gregory Blaxland won the first medals overseas for Australian wines.

The first vines in the colony were grown from cuttings that arrived with the first fleet in 1788 on board the *Lady Penrhyn*. These were obtained at Rio de Janeiro and Capetown, and are thought to have been planted in Sydney Cove.

Unfortunately the vines died due to the disease anthracnose ('black spot' or 'blight').

Several later plantings were established including those at Rose Hill, Camden Park and Norfolk Island.

Gregory Blaxland, his wife Elizabeth and their three children left England on September 1, 1805, above decks on the *William Pitt*, a transport carrying 121 prisoners, all except one being female. This was the only convict transport to participate in an overseas expedition, sailing as part of a fleet intended for the reduction of the Dutch settlements at the Cape of Good Hope.

After the longest passage from England of any female transport between 1801 and 1820 the *William Pitt* arrived at Sydney Cove on April 11, 1806, bringing the news of the battle of Trafalgar to the colony, as



**The silver and gold medals won in London for wines produced by Gregory Blaxland in NSW.**

well as vines that Gregory had procured at the Cape.

These initial vines and shoots suffered from blight, almost certainly due to anthracnose.

However, with experimentation he found a variety of grape which appeared resistant to this disease.

This variety, Black Constantia, had probably been brought from the Cape with the first fleet, and was the variety of grape first planted at Brush Farm, his 185 hectare property in present day Eastwood.

Several years later he planted two new varieties he thought to be Claret, but which were probably Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier.

The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers & Commerce offered

a medal for 'the finest wine of not less than 20 gallons of good marketable quality made from the produce of vineyards in New South Wales'.<sup>1</sup>

Gregory sailed for London from Sydney Cove on the *Royal George* on March 19, 1822 with 86 gallons of wine in two casks. He submitted a quarter of a pipe (26 ¼ gallons) for judging, and sent a letter dated February 12, 1823 to the Secretary of the Royal Society, in which he stated that 'the red wine got too much heated in the fermenting tun before I was aware of it and the white wine has flavour of rum from being put in a cask which had that liquor in it some time before the wine was put in.'<sup>2</sup>

He was awarded a silver medal, the judges' comments being: On examination by the committee it appeared to be a light but sound wine with much of the odour and flavour of ordinary Claret, or rather holding an intermediate place between that wine and the red wine of Nice. The general opinion seems to be that although the present sample, from the expertness of the manufacturer and the youth of the vine, is by no means of superior quality, yet it affords a reasonable ground of expectation that by care and time it may become a valuable article of export.<sup>3</sup>

After returning to Sydney, Gregory continued experimenting with wine making. Several years later, on being selected to travel to London with a petition concerning civil rights and taxation, he took the opportunity to take samples of his wine to enter for the 1828 awards of the Society.

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## About the author David Blaxland

Dr David Blaxland is a direct descendant of Gregory Blaxland and the prime mover in the establishment of the Western Crossings Foundation. He is acknowledged as a "Blaxland-ophile" having extensively researched the Blaxland family.

He has been a general pathologist since 1987 working initially in northern Tasmania, then south west Victoria and southern NSW having previously practised as a GP. Based at Wagga Wagga David is the regional pathologist for a large medical service in the Riverina area. He is a general pathologist with a special interest in histopathology, haematology, and medical undergraduate education.



Although a full time medical practitioner he also finds time for his farm at Warnambool where he employs the best environment methods including the use of native grasses for stock feed. He is also a breeder of Clydesdale horses.

# Businessman's move on explorers' busts

AT THE CEREMONY to unveil the statue of Governor Lachlan Macquarie in Hyde Park earlier in the year the sculptor, Terrance Plowright also unveiled three models he described as "roughies" of busts of explorers Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson.

Commissioned and funded by Businesses Supporting Bicentenary (BSB) member Tom Colless, it is hoped local fund raising over coming months will ensure the bronze busts of each explorer will be installed in the Blue Mountains towns named after them. Mr Colless said he hopes to make busts part of a lasting legacy from the upcoming Blue Mountains Crossings Bicentenary events between May 2013 and December 2015.

People who donate to the project can have their names engraved on plaques.

Plaques will identify the first 200 people to support the cost of each of three busts.

Business listings of up to 2 lines will cost \$220, private donors \$110 for 1 line or \$220 for 2 lines.

The great-great-great-great granddaughter of Gregory Blaxland who also attended the Hyde Park, Sydney launch was impressed with the designs.

"He (sculptor Terrance Plowright) has made him (Blaxland) look very handsome, even more than Wentworth and Lawson, I think," she said.

To find out more about the project, visit [www.bluemountaincrossings.com.au](http://www.bluemountaincrossings.com.au)

## BMACHO AGM

Saturday, March 23 2013

Blue Mountains Cultural  
Centre, Katoomba

For details see page 6



*Wentworth Falls sculptor Terrance Plowright (centre) and Business Supporting Bicentenary members Philip Hammon and Tom Colless beside Mr Plowright's designs for bronze busts of the three explorers.*

## Blaxland's wine medals on loan to Mitchell Library

Continued from page 4

This wine was probably made from his Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier grapes.

So in February 1827 he departed from Sydney with three half pipes of wine from his vineyard, fortified with 10% French brandy to withstand the voyage.

He subsequently won the Gold Ceres Medal, the committee commenting that the wine was wholly free from the earthy flavour that unhappily characterised most of the Cape wines. The colour of the wine was a tawny red.<sup>4</sup>

The large silver medal awarded in 1823 measures 5.2cm in diameter, and the smaller gold medal of 1828 is 4.0cm in diameter.

Fortunately, even though ownership of the medals was retained by the Blaxland family, in 1911 the Trustees of the Mitchell Library agreed to hold both medals for safe custody.

### Acknowledgements

My cousin Chris Blaxland for allowing access to a letter dated November 21, 1911 from Fred Blaxland, solicitor of Cooma, to his cousin Charlie, our great grandfather, relating the circumstances under which the

medals were placed in the Mitchell Library.

The Mitchell Library, for permission to photograph the medals.

Ron Buttrey whose research for and writing of *A Short History of the Life of Gregory Blaxland* provided me with an invaluable source which forms the basis of much of the material in the article I have written for *HERITAGE*.

### References

Excerpts for this article have been taken from the following books:  
*The Convict Ships 1787 - 1868* by Charles Bateson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1969, Pub: Brown, Son & Ferguson, Glasgow.  
*A Short History of the Life of Gregory Blaxland* by Ron Buttrey, 2006 Pub: Brush Farm Historical Society Inc. ISBN 0 9751419 37  
*Mixed Dozen* by Charles Gent, 2003 Pub: Duffy & Snellgrove, Potts Point, NSW ISBN 1 876631 75 9  
Specific sources as recorded in *A Short History of the Life of Gregory Blaxland*:

<sup>1</sup> Houison, JKS 'John and Gregory Blaxland, *JRAHS*, Vol.22, 29 October 1935, p 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Sydney Gazette*, 12<sup>th</sup> August 1824.

<sup>3</sup> *Transactions of the Royal Society of the Arts*, Vol.41 (1623-4) pp 285-89.

<sup>4</sup> *Transactions of the Society of the Arts*, Vol. 46 *op cit*, pp 134-135.

# COX'S ROAD HERITAGE SIGNAGE PROJECT GETS \$20,000 GRANT

ROADS MINISTER Duncan Gay and Member for Bathurst Paul Toole have announced the NSW government will provide \$20,000 to the Lithgow City Council for road signs along Coxs Road in commemoration of the bicentenary of the crossing of the Blue Mountains.

"Coxs Road was the first road from Sydney to Bathurst, built by William Cox at the instruction of Governor Macquarie in 1814," Mr Gay said.

"It was named and proclaimed by Governor Macquarie on April 25, 1815 after he travelled along the road by carriage.

"Cox's Road is a unique example of early road building in NSW. Sections of the original road remain and are of historic significance.

"The funding allocation follows representations by Member for Bathurst Paul Toole.



**Paul Toole, MP**

"The Coxs Road Project Committee, a volunteer organisation dedicated to mapping, preserving and sharing the story of Coxs Road, will manage the sign project," Mr Gay said.

Mr Toole said the committee will use the funds to install interpretive signs, route alignment signs and route direction signs along Cox's Road.

"The signs will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the building of the road and are expected to become a significant community resource featuring historical, educational,

tourism and research information," Mr Toole said

Asked to comment on the grant, convenor of the Cox's Road Project Committee, Patsy Moppett said, the success of Lithgow Council in procuring this funding is excellent news.

"Lithgow can now join with Bathurst and Oberon councils in signposting the route of the Cox's Road route where it passes through those local government area.

"The Cox's Road Project Committee has provided advice in regard to the design and location of the signage, and will continue to act in an advisory role.

"Lithgow will now move to erect the signage as part of the western

crossings commemorations activities which will take place over the next 2-3 years, both in Lithgow and in various towns along the Cox's Road route," said MsMoppett

Mayor of Lithgow, Cr Maree Statham said, the Cox's Road played an integral part in the early settlement of the Lithgow area.

"Lithgow City Council is very pleased to be able to join with NSW Government, Oberon and Bathurst Council's in signposting the historic Cox's Road.

"Some parts of the road are still evident today and signage will enable visitors and locals to learn about why this road was so significant and the different journeys that have been made upon it." Cr Statham said

## Top librarian to talk about explorer's 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.

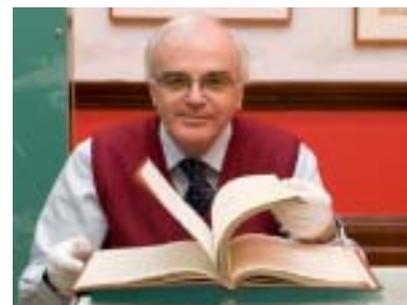
Members of the association are welcome to have any interested

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 Brunton**

# Governor unveils sculpture of Lachlan Macquarie

A BRONZE SCULPTURE of Governor Lachlan Macquarie the work of Wentworth Falls sculptor Terrance Plowright has been unveiled in Hyde Park by the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir, AC CVO.

The statue holds a scroll in its left hand that symbolically contains plans of Sydney Town and from its elevated aspect gazes towards Macquarie Street.

Governor Bashir described the sculpture as outstanding and said, "we commend you (Mr Plowright) warmly on your work".

Revealing it was Macquarie's birthday that day (January 31) she said, "the Australia of today, I think would have been a source of great pride to Lachlan Macquarie".

"I based the sculpture on a painting by Senator Richard Reed, but I also made sure I had my own input into the face, as just (carving) one millimeter here and there can change the character immensely," Mr Plowright said.

"Governor Macquarie was an incredibly dignified man, he had a strength of character and a face of humility and he was a man of great intelligence — I wanted to show that in the face."

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell said, "we see him (Macquarie) with that sense of fair go that we see in this land today." *Shane Deslatinik Blue Mountains Gazette.*

***Pictured are the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir, with Wentworth Falls sculptor, Terrance Plowright and Lord Mayor of Sydney, Cllr Clover Moore at the unveiling of the bronze sculpture of Governor Lachlan Macquarie. Image: Paul Patterson, courtesy of City of Sydney.***



## Harbour honoured

SYDNEY HARBOUR has officially been recognised as an iconic National Landscape.

The harbour will be the 16th landscape listed and the first that takes in natural and architectural wonders, along with thousands of years of human history. It joins the Great Barrier Reef, the Kimberley and the Red Centre.

Sydney Harbour's shimmering sapphire waters, sunburnt sandstone headlands, white sand beaches and grey-green iron bushland are legendary.

The harbour holds stories of the Aboriginal dreaming and European settlement, while beneath the waves lives a wealth of marine life, hundreds of fish species, penguins, dolphins and even kelp forests.

## Hammerhead crane

NATIONAL TRUST will be commenting on a proposal to remove the historic hammerhead crane at Garden Island which was listed on the National Trust Register in 1996 and listed on the Australian "Our Heritage at Risk" list in 2007.

The Trust will be opposing the removal of this landmark of Sydney's Working Harbour and has questioned the quoted cost of annual maintenance.

The Trust believes there are options for private funding of the Garden Island hammerhead crane restoration and conversion to a major Sydney tourist attraction.

The Clydebank titan crane in Glasgow, has been fully restored and is now promoted as Scotland's most unique attraction.

## Cockatoo ghost

COCKATOO ISLAND in Sydney Harbour housed convicts in the early days of the settlement and has had a long naval history of which much has been written.

Not so well known nor written about is the brutal history of Biloela Industrial and Reformatory School for Girls, a forbidding presence on the harbour island.

Author Yvette Posogillan has taken two years researching the history of this institution for destitute and wayward girls, for her novel, *Escape from Cockatoo*, writing some of it in the very rooms where girls like those fictional characters of her subject would have lived and worked. Biloela was established in 1871 to deal with 'street arabs', a term used to deal with orphans and homeless children.

# GEORGE WILLIAM EVANS

***'...he created the western road to open up the interior.'***

NEW South Wales is about to embark on three years of commemoration of the crossing of the Blue Mountains.

The western road goes across a great watershed and its creation in itself is a watershed, the act which changed Australia from being a small colony along the coastal plain around Sydney Cove to a state coming to grips with an immense inland country for grazing and agriculture, altering the environment and displacing its traditional occupants.

The Great Dividing Range is well named.

There were four well-defined phases in the Western Crossing in Governor Macquarie's time.

First, of course, there were the dauntless three, the self-interested explorers, Lawson, Blaxland and Wentworth, who reached the Hartley Valley, hoping for new grazing lands for their stock.

Then immediately afterwards, at the behest of the government, there was the professional surveying of the ridge-top route.

Next came the road-making itself, done in exemplary fashion by convicts under William Cox, buoyed up by a promise of remission of their sentence when the road was completed

And finally in 1815 there was the establishment of Bathurst, followed by the first settlements on the Bathurst Plains.

I want to say something about the man who did the all-important surveying and mapping of the route blazed by Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson.

They had turned back at Hartley Valley, but the surveyor went much further west and created his own route to what became Bathurst.

The surveyor, in short, was also an explorer, the first European to stand on the Bathurst Plains.

George William Evans was a well-educated Englishman, who came to New South Wales via the Cape of Good Hope.

He had eloped to Cape Town in 1798 with a fifteen-year old bride and moved on to Sydney in 1802, where he was soon appointed Acting Surveyor-General while Charles Grimes was in Britain.

Evans's story is not, however, a simple one of colonial success.

He was dismissed for some unspecified fraud in 1805 and went to live on the quite large Hawkesbury farm which he had

been granted in trust for his two infant daughters in 1804.

Evans's 519 acres was immediately adjacent to the 200 acres held by the young children of William Cox. This is half-way between Windsor and Richmond: the present Richmond Air Base is just to the south on this map

The association of Evans and Cox did not begin with the planning of the western road, but had begun a decade earlier, with an unexpected intimacy.

Both the Cox and Evans farms were largely rich arable land on the Hawkesbury river flood-plain, with a small strip of high land at the south end, adjacent to the common.

The two farms, looking towards the river with the Blue Mountains evocatively in the distance.

When the rains come in earnest, all that lowland as far as the Blue Mountains can be under water, even today. Cox prudently built his house, Clarendon, on the strip of high land.

**Continued page 9**



**George William Evans nla-pic-vn3509777-v**

George William Evans is the text of a talk by Associate Professor, R Ian Jack, former president of the Royal Australian Historical Society to members and guests of the society on Australia Day 2013.

Ian is the vice president of BMACHO.



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Cox extended his original cottage in Macquarie's time, but the core of this house was already there when a big flood hit the Hawkesbury in March 1806.

## Evanses rescued from roof top by boat in flood

Evans had unwisely built his house down on the flood-plain and he, his wife and the girls had to be rescued by boat from the top of their roof.

Their first rescuer was a neighbour from the other side of the Hawkesbury, but as the flood waters rose that house too was threatened and the Evanses had to be rescued again.

This time their boatman was William Cox himself who rowed them across the torrent to Clarendon, which was nice and dry, comfortably above the highest flood.

The message was not lost on Evans who at once built a new home for himself on his own high land immediately adjacent to Clarendon.

Unlike Cox, Evans built a two-storey house. And, unlike Clarendon, which fell down a century ago, Evans's house still exists, essentially intact.

It is the oldest two-storey house in Australia. It had the second storey because of the belt and braces approach of Mrs Jennet Evans.

We know this because Jennet wrote a hysterical letter to Governor King about her experiences clinging to the roof ridge during the 1806 flood and the King family kept her letter.



*The flood plains below Evans' house. Photograph - Ian Jack 2011.*



*Cox's Clarendon from south-east c. 1890 Photograph courtesy RAHS*

Although the house was built in three phases between 1806 and 1810, each phase was two-storey.

The first, in mid-1806, the second was very soon afterwards, probably late in 1806; while the larger section was added by 1810.

Jennet Evans was unduly cautious. The house has never had any flood-water even on its ground floor and even the cellar has never been flooded.

The house faced away from Clarendon. The frontage faced the common: what this says about Jennet Evans' hang-ups I'm not sure.

William and Rebecca Cox chose to have their front view over the flood-plain.

So George and Jennet lived nice dry lives in their new house as Hawkesbury farmers from 1806 until Governor Macquarie changed their lives.

Macquarie restored Evans to favour as a government surveyor and, along with James Meehan, Evans laid out the sites of the new Hawkesbury towns like Windsor and Richmond in 1810 and 1811.

During his years as a local farmer, Evans had continued to paint: he was a most talented topographical artist and three of his water-colours of the village which became Windsor survive.

The Evanses had social cachet. It is striking that George and Jennet attended the famous dinner party in December 1810 when Macquarie named the new towns, whereas the senior surveyor James Meehan was not invited.

William Cox was present, of course, as the new magistrate for the district.

The dinner party was held in the government cottage.

Evans was sent to Tasmania as surveyor in 1812, but it is striking that Macquarie recalled him to New South Wales in 1813 specifically to lay out a suitable road across the Mountains after the news of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson broke.

Evans did not sell the Hawkesbury farm and Jennet, who did not go to Tasmania with him in 1812, was still there in 1813.

So the survey of the western road and its construction were master-minded by the two neighbours Evans and Cox.

Even after George and Jennet finally went together to Tasmania in 1814 and leased the Hawkesbury farm, Evans was again recalled by Macquarie to accompany the governor on the famous trip across the new road in 1815 which culminated in the naming of Bathurst on a site discovered by Evans.

There is a full-size statue of Evans in Bathurst, where he is still appreciated.

Evans was again recalled to New South Wales from Tasmania in 1817 to assist John Oxley in his exploration of the interior and he did many of the illustrations to Oxley's book.

But after Macquarie left Australia, there were no more recalls.

Continued page 10

## ‘Evans house still intact, a touching testimony to a wife’s hysteria about flood-water’

Continued from page 9 Evans published a justly famous book about the geography, history and topography of Tasmania in 1822 (which was translated into French a few years later).

But Jennet died in Tasmania in 1825 and he resigned his surveyorship.

Though he promptly remarried in Tasmania, Evans returned to England in 1826.

The final stage in the Evans saga was his return to Sydney in 1832 with his wife and five new children.

In Sydney he sold books and stationery and published other people’s books.

He supplemented his income by teaching boys to draw at The King’s School, while his wife Lucy ran a finishing school for young Sydney ladies.

But Lucy went back to Tasmania in 1839 and George finally followed her in 1844.

Lucy died in 1849 and George died in Hobart in poor circumstances three years later.

His career petered out, but Evans should be remembered for his fundamental work in creating the western road and the opening up of the interior, for distinguished exploration, for really important and attractive topographical painting and drawings and for his contribution to Tasmania.

And not least because his Hawkesbury house is still intact, a touching testimony to a wife’s hysteria about flood-water.



*Evans’ house 1806 -18110, front view. Photograph by Ian Jack, 1989.*



*Green Hills, 1809 by George William Evans.*



*Bathurst, 1815 by John Lewin. Macquarie’s Bengal tent on the site of the township.*

### **LOST IN THE STORY OF THE ‘DAUNTLESS THREE’**

When the expedition led by Gregory Blaxland (1778-1853) William Lawson (1774-1850) and William Charles Wentworth (1790-1872) left Blaxland’s South Creek farm on May 11, 1813 in quest of a passage over the Blue Mountains, their departure was noted quietly in a paragraph on page 2 of the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser several days later. Noting their spirit and determination, the writer also made special mention of their ‘prudentially taking with them four sumpter horses’ (Anonymous 1813). Source: Low, John *Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Historical Paper No 13.*

# Community leaders support Western Crossings Foundation

AT A MEETING held at Everglades, in January it was decided to form the Western Crossings Foundation.

At a further meeting at Bathurst earlier this month it was decided that the mission statement would read: To facilitate the study of heritage and consequences of the crossing of the Blue Mountains.

The aims and objectives of the foundation are:

- \* To facilitate and promote education and research concerning the natural history and human development of the region;

- \* Through the above, to foster understanding and co-operation between local communities and groups of people; and

- \* To make results of this work available for promotion of the region to visitors.

Federal member for Macquarie, Louise Markus attending the first meeting of the steering committee said, "A celebration is important for the crossings, but to want to invest in something of a long term basis is quite an exciting proposal."

Ms Markus suggested a project which could be considered was a mobile education unit to travel the area.

Dr Blaxland suggested another project might be setting up spur lines from the National Trail.

David suggested that the Foundation should target projects not already being funded by government.

## **The Turkish Bath in Spring**

The *Turkish Bath in Spring* a painting by Mt Irvine artist Ray Harrington recently acquired by the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society has now been hung in the Turkish Bath Museum at Mt Wilson.

Source Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Newsletter No 27.



***Pictured at the meeting at Everglades, Leura to form the Western Crossings Foundation are from left to right, the Mayor of Bathurst Cr Monica Morse, the Member for Macquarie Louise Markus, MP, Dr David Blaxland great great grandson of the explorer Gregory Blaxland, John Leary, OAM former president of Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Jasmin Smith representing the Vice Chancellor, Charles Sturt University (Professor Susan Thomas) and Jan Koperberg secretary BMACHO and former president Blue Mountains Family History Society.***

There will need to be broad spectrum funding. The area of embrace from the Cumberland Plain to the Bathurst Plain and include the Hawkesbury area.

The steering committee now comprises: Dr David Blaxland, Dr Ian Jack, the Member for Macquarie Ms Louise Markus, John Leary OAM, the Mayor Bathurst Cr Monica Morse, Ms Jan Koperberg, Jasmin Smith representing the Vice

Chancellor of Charles Sturt University (Professor Sue Thomas), former principal Yanco Agricultural High School, Colin Brown, Philip Hammon and Professor David Carment. The University of Western Sydney will also be asked to be represented on the committee.

The steering committee will conduct seminar or workshop at the Imperial Hotel on Sunday, June 23.

## **More accolades for HERITAGE**

From Peter Stanbury OAM PhD, vice chair UMAC - ICOM'S International Committee for University Museums & Collections, Librarian, Australian Society of Anaesthetists: *Really John the newsletter goes from strength to strength - congratulations and thank you for the hours and hours (weeks and months!) of work you put in. I hope this year turns out really well for you and Nanette*

From Dorothy Warwick, Friends of Linnwood, Holroyd Local History Research: *Congratulations on another GREAT issue! I look forward to receiving it every time and forward it on to all members of*

*the Forum of societies we facilitate. Love the article on The Paragon. My husband and I were in Katoomba recently and actually spoke to Robyn about all the issues she is having with the owner of the building. We hope that something can be done to preserve such a brilliant piece of history.*

From Peter Webber: *Many thanks for a stunningly informative and impressive issue.*

From Stella Vernon Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society: *Thanks for the opus Blue Mountains John - I was interested in William Cox.*

# Mums, Children & Mustard Gas, The Blue Mountains Goes to War

**Joan Edwards – former president Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc. writes a preview of her forthcoming book, *Mums, Children & Mustard Gas, The Blue Mountains goes to War***

LIFE WAS CHAOTIC on the Mountains and Lithgow areas once Japan attacked Pearl Harbour.

Never before had the population to deal with so many changes concurrently, almost daily.

The war related industries and the vulnerable road and rail access to the west were prime targets to be defended and all activities were compounded by the rush of evacuating Sydneysiders.

Priority activities ranged from home defence to personal welfare, all impacting greatly on the region's infrastructure and human resources.

The immediate response to the Japanese attack on Hawaii was Katoomba Municipal Council's change of five Leura street names within 48 hours.

The patriotic names remain today: Britain, Winston, Churchill, Franklin and Roosevelt streets in lieu of their original Japanese names given by the late Alfred Ickerso.

Then it was down to more practical matters such as ensuring the public understood what to do, and not to do, in an air raid even how to extinguish incendiary bombs.

The latter was well demonstrated in newsreels of city theatre usherettes in full evening dress and would have been seen by locals 'at the pictures'.

Volunteers dug air raid trenches at local schools and classes practised evacuations, remembered by many as fun rather than of any practical value.



*The author, Joan Edwards (centre) pictured with State Member for the Blue Mountains Roza Sage and Federal Member for Macquarie Louise Markus. Photograph by Glenis Geldard BMFHS, image courtesy Blue Mountains Gazette.*

Some families built air raid shelters while others planned refuge in nearby bushland.

Parents and the community generally, protected children from worst case scenarios such as the Japanese chemical weapon atrocities in China.

Yet Glenbrook children were aware of the importance of weapons in Glenbrook tunnel and knew it was not to be mentioned. Similarly children elsewhere were silent about local happenings.

My mother never told me about chemical nasties, but in her VAD first-aid book she had handwritten notes on a variety of poisons including prussic acid and cyanide and even the antidote for opium poisoning. Can't imagine her administering that!

Young people made significant contributions. Young lads with billy carts collected paper, metals and whatever else was required for recycling.

Young teens on bikes were messengers conveying memorised verbal messages and replies. Telephones were not considered safe and messengers would not be carrying vital information if they were captured.

Bike riding in brownouts or blackouts over potholed unsealed roads was challenging but they coped.

Girls, too, contributed with fund raising, sewing and knitting. Even primary school lasses knitted scarves but many, including myself, found seeming never ending scarves too boring.

One Leura lass chose to knit gloves and balaclavas. I chose socks, only navy socks for the air force because I hated khaki. Even picky little girls made valuable contributions. Others made camouflage nets including Ascham girls evacuated to Blackheath.

2013 – 2015 marks the bicentenary of crossing the Blue Mountains: the achievements of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth, Evans' survey and Cox's Road. Four thousand AIF troops followed in their footsteps 73 years later of as they marched from Ingleburn to Bathurst in 1940.

Four main contingents of the 7th Division undertook the 12 day march, starting two days apart. Each group spent 8 nights in our area namely at Springwood, Hazelbrook/Lawson, two nights at Katoomba, Blackheath/Mt. Victoria, Lithgow and Wallerawang.

**Continued page 13**

# 4000 troops marched across the mountains

Continued from page 12

Many believed it was because there were no trains. Not so.

The 2<sup>nd</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> was followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> followed by Signals, Field Ambulance, Anti Tank Squadron etc. They were billeted or bivouaced and entertained by locals all the way.

It was designed to harden the troops quickly and test not only men and equipment but catering, the field hospital and other support services so adjustments could be made.

It was a well publicised promotion to convey a sense of readiness, to arouse pride and patriotic fervour and, hopefully, persuade many more to enlist.

Lasting friendships were made between locals and these troops that were renamed the 9th Division



**Officers and men of the 2nd/13th Infantry Battalion received a warm welcome as they marched into Katoomba on their way to training camp at Bathurst. Photograph courtesy The Sydney Morning Herald.**



**Pte Harry Dick led the 2/13th march down Katoomba Street with borrowed "Boris" as mascot. The authoress of this article, Joan Edwards, was a cousin some 20 years younger and she did not know he was involved until given the newspapercutting. Photograph courtesy The Sydney Morning Herald.**

en route to North Africa where they served with distinction in many battles and siege of Tobruk. Locally they became "our boys".

These are snippets of some stories of life on the home front in *Mums, Children & Mustard Gas, The Blue Mountains Goes to War*.

It is far from definitive as I negotiated my way as best I could through censorship and propaganda but if it encourages others to add to the story, I will have achieved my aim. If all goes to plan it will be published later this year. Further information will be added to [www.bmfh.org](http://www.bmfh.org) in the coming weeks.

## Bid to fence Woodford graves

WOODFORD Academy's management committee has asked Blue Mountains City Council to provide the low key identification and fencing for the 1840s gravesites in the adjacent Woodford Reserve.

This action is included in the Blue Mountain City Council's plan of management for the reserve.

Woodford Academy's committee has also asked council to apply for a grant to restore the gravestones.

The graves are part of the history of the road across the mountains and the humble people and their families who lived and died here.

The graves are of a child, a soldier and a convict.

These people have been identified from the broken headstones in safekeeping at the Academy.

The Reserve is part of the area originally known as Twenty Mile Hollow and was valued because of the availability of water near Cox's Road.

The damaged gravestones are for safekeeping stored inside Woodford Academy and can be viewed on open days on the third Saturday of each month between 10am and 4pm. Woodford Academy is a National Trust property.

# The Cox's Road - some of the most significant features on Mt Blaxland

THE NSW Heritage Office in April 2011 concluded it will list representative portions of Cox's Road as part of the 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 two previous editions 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 two 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 Mt Blaxland and the Fish River and beyond precincts, the final in the series.

## by Patsy Moppett

THE MT BLAXLAND precinct is located off McKane's Falls Road, south west of the city of Lithgow, and continues on to the south west from there to cross the Rydal Hampton Road.

The rocky outcrop of Mt Blaxland itself is located on the property *Mt Blaxland*.

Mt Blaxland was traditionally thought to be the point reached by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth in May 1813, having been previously identified by Surveyor Evans.

Although some doubt has now been cast on the accuracy of the description of the landscape, some of the most significant features of the Cox's Road can be found around the zig zag section of the precinct. However, these road remnants can only be reached across private land.

The road from the lower slopes of Mt Blaxland winds around the hills via a significant zig zag formation, short sections of stone work and bridge embankments at creek crossings, stone retaining walls, some pavement remains, stone box culvert, and a number of diversions.

Much of the alignment is indistinct in open areas and where diversions have occurred.

Monuments are located both at the top and the base of Mt Blaxland.

In her report *Cox's Way*, Grace Karskens states that William Cox marked out the road at Mt Blaxland in December 1814, and sent out men to camp there, whilst the rest of the party were still working on the bridge at Cox's River.

The present day farm track actually runs some distance north of the early McBrien's survey, so Cox's Road would have involved little cutting or forming over the easy grades, and would have left little or no trace.

The farm track from McKanes Falls Road has a graded earthen surface with side drains and concrete pipe culverts.

There appears to be an earlier diversion on the north side, running below the present approach to Lowther Creek where the road swings out wider than at present. No bridge was built at Lowther Creek; the existing ford was probably used.

Then the road swings off the track to the south west and commences to ascend immediately, following the present day fence line through more thickly timbered country.

**Continued page 15**



*A primitive stone box culvert along the Cox's Road on the lower slopes of Mt Blaxland.*

# Road cuts through pink granite

Continued from page 14

At one point the road cuts through pink granite, where broken stone is lying around, and a quarry formed in later years.

A short retaining wall of field/faced stones is built on the north west side and matches the work further along.

The pavement here has packed stones, and the width is about 3m, although variable.

Approximately 750m from the base of the hill, the road is formed into a significant zig zag of about 140m, with one major turn and another contoured curve above.

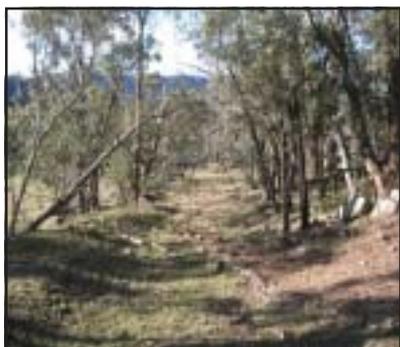
It is supported by substantial retaining walls of relatively careful construction and in good condition, apart from one section on the first reach and some loose sections at the top.

A 'primitive' stone box culvert is located about 30m from the end of the wall, set on walls of two courses of squared stone, with a roughly cut lintel and an earthen floor.

Beyond the zig zag section the road levels out and is edged intermittently with broken stone.

The formation is not so worn here, as it reaches to the top of the walls.

There is evidence of a steep short section where an attempt has been made to improve the gradient in later years.



Cox's Road below the road's zig zag



A portion of a substantial retaining wall on the zig zag of the roadway on the lower slopes of Mt Blaxland.

Cox's road continues directly up hill while the second road curves slightly along its outside edge.

The road is typical of Cox's work, with steep unbroken climbs, narrow width, minimal cuttings, retaining walls and scattered pavement stones.

From the summit the line is not visible, running directly down the grassy slopes of the ridge, with a slight cutting near the McDonalds Road junction.

The following extracts are taken from records of the time contained in *Fourteen Crossings of the Blue Mountains*, relating to Mt Blaxland:

**Gregory Blaxland - May 31, 1813**

*The party encamped by the side of a fine stream of water [Lowther Creek] at a short distance from a high hill, in the shape of a sugarloaf [Mt Blaxland]. In the afternoon they ascended its summit, from whence they descried all around, forest or grass land, sufficient in extent in their opinion, to support the stock of the colony for the next thirty years. This was the extreme point of their journey.*

**William Cox - December 11, 1814**

*After passing Mt Blaxland we ascended a high ridge, and found it continued to ascend until we got extremely high...the hills to the west, north, and south are extremely high and difficult of*

*access, but in many of them the feed is good to the highest part.*

**December 13, 1814**

*Mr Hobby went forward to Blaxland's Mountain to superintend the 10 men ahead in road making...*

**December 15, 1814**

*At 7am, went forward myself, and come up with the party at the 10-mile, to which they had completed the road, except turning some rock out of it after you ascend the hill at Blaxland's Mountain. Returned at 10, and sent forward three men with crow bars, pickaxes etc, to complete the road, and remain with the party ahead.*

**Governor Lachlan Macquarie - May 1, 1815**

*Early on Monday May 1, they were back on the road headed for the Fish River.*

*They continued past Mount Blaxland and two small hillocks in the shape of sugarloaves that Macquarie named for Wentworth and Lawson.*

*This day proved exhausting for the livestock traversing the road over a succession of steep hills for nearly sixteen miles.*

Most of this difficult terrain was covered by Governor Macquarie and Elizabeth on horseback.

Continued page 16

# “A mist rises from a part I suppose to be a River or a large Lagoon ...”

Assistant Surveyor Evans, November 30, 1813

Continued from page 15

## Major Henry Colden Antill - May 1, 1815

*This day proved the most fatiguing and trying for the cattle of any we had yet experienced; the road lay over a succession of steep hills for nearly sixteen miles, one hill in particular about 3 miles on the road was very steep, and obliged us after one cart was up to send back the horses to help up the other...about two miles from our encampment passed Mount Blaxland, and a little further on Wentworth's and Lawson's sugar loaves.*

## Fish River Precinct

The Fish River precinct commences from Pitts Corner, the intersection of Cut Hill Road with Jerry's Plains Road, within the Lithgow local government area.

It follows a crown road to the west and down to the Fish River bridge site near Phil's Falls, south west of the City of Lithgow.

William Cox selected a line towards the Fish River from the east and found the land on either side of the river "extremely hilly and awkward for road building".

The western slopes proved particularly difficult, and it was not long before alterations were being made to improve gradients on the eastern side.

The original route ran along the ridge, while easier grades were built on the lower slopes.

The road from Pitts Corner clearly follows the crown road through private properties.

Its upper reaches have experienced some erosion, defined by remaining eucalypts.

About 1.5km east of the Fish River a major deviation occurs, defined by significant retaining walls.

The original route runs along the ridge, barely visible, descending down to the river, as defined by McBrien's survey.

The later deviation is cut around the hill with an easier grade, at 6m wide. It is supported by a significant retaining wall from 30cm to 2m in height, of un-coursed rubble work. Tree growth and stock use have caused some areas to collapse.



Upper section of retaining wall for the road.

In her report Cox's Way, Grace Karskens describes another road, between the original route and the deviation, cut out of the hill, and with a flat surface, which may have been another attempt to improve the road.

The road then continued south of the crown road and down to the river, defined by another line of timber, where there are shallow cuttings and the indentation of the old road.

The banks of the Fish River show no sign of Cox's 25 foot long bridge with stone filled approaches.

Both banks today are well vegetated, with a stony base on the western side.

An earth mound on the eastern side may have been part of the approach to the crossing site.

Karskens states that this precinct is an excellent example of the progressive development of the road west; with three roads of progressively larger scale still clearly visible alongside one another.

They illustrate the typical growth of a road from a rudimentary track to a made road, both in location and construction, and reflect the growing importance of the western region and thus its link with Sydney.

Parts of the road pass through private land.

The following extracts are taken from records of the time contained in *Fourteen Crossings of the Blue Mountains*, relating to the Fish River precinct:

## Assistant-Surveyor Evans - November 30, 1813

*A mist rises from a part I suppose to be a River or a large Lagoon ... the descent then becomes steep for a ¼ of a mile, leading into a fine valley at the end of which I met a large Riverlett arising from the southern hills...my course is down the Riverlett...on the north of it at this place is a remarkable Sugar Loaf Hill having a Stone on the peak of it, which I have named after myself.*

## William Cox - December 18, 1814

*At half past 7 went forward to examine the road from hence to the Fish River. Found the country very hilly and rocky in many places...fixed on the road, except going up the hill, which must be avoided if possible.*



View from west down to Fish River crossing.

## William Cox - December 25, 1814

*At 8am, after serving out the rations, went forward to the Fish River, and removed the caravan and one cartload there, where I pitched my tent...examined the river to find the best place to cross it, and fixed on a spot about 10 chains below where Mr Evans crossed...the land on both sides of the river extremely hilly, and awkward for road making.*

## December 27, 1814

*We made the river at a spot where a small stream falls into it from north-north-east, about two miles below Evan's Mountain, to the west.*

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**January 3, 1815**

*The men finished filling in the piers at each end of the bridge...got all the split logs brought in for the bridge. They are very good heavy logs, well split.*

**January 5, 1815**

*Finished the bridge over the Fish River this evening. It is a strong and well-built one. On each end is a pier of 25 feet, which is well filled up with stone and a very little earth over it. The span across is 25 feet more, which is planked with split logs; and as flood will go over it, there is no earth put on top. It is altogether 75 feet long and 16 feet wide.*

*There is also another small bridge 10 ft. long across a creek leading to it, which is also completed this evening.*

**Governor Lachlan Macquarie - May 1, 1815**

*Early on Monday May 1, they were back on the road headed for the Fish River... a range of very lofty hills and vallies (sic) alternately form the tract of Country from Cox's River, for a distance of 16 miles, until the Fish River is arrived at; and the stage between these rivers is consequently very severe and oppressive on the cattle.*

**Major Henry Colden Antill - May 1, 1815**

*We passed Evan's Peak, a very remarkable hill, with a round rock crowning its summit... we arrived at our night's station on the banks of a small river, called the Fish River...The Fish River is now a small stream running through a valley...the feed for the cattle at this station is good and plentiful along the banks of the river.*

**Beyond the Fish River**

On the western side and beyond the Fish River the remnants of the road become less distinct.

This includes the precincts of Snakes Valley Creek and Sydmouth Valley.

At Snakes Valley Creek, the old road crossed the creek via a shallow stony ford, where it would appear as though a bridge was not required.



**Snake Valley Creek crossing.**

There remain trench like depressions curving up and around the bank from the creek on the western side.

On the eastern side the road came directly down the slope.

The approaches and the few remaining features are now grass covered and indistinct.

At Sydmouth Valley slopes were less severe, and the valley opened out around Sydmouth Valley Creek.

Cox's diary ceased here, and so the record of works beyond this point is not clear, other than he stated that the road beyond here was good for road making.

Remnants of the road have not survived for the valley, but a trench / ramp cut is still visible on the bank of Sydmouth Valley Creek, which may have been the site of a bridge, which follows McBrien's traverse.

Grace Karskens describes these precincts as examples and reminders of the early road illustrating the means of crossing the many streams.

Sydmouth Valley provided visitors with the English-type landscape that they longed for in its lush greenness and gentle horizons.

Further investigation may provide more evidence of the early road.

Once again, much of this part of the road passes through private land.

Beyond Sydmouth Valley there is little evidence of the road, right through to the O'Connell Plains and to Bathurst.

The following extracts are taken from records of the time contained in *Fourteen Crossings of the Blue Mountains*, relating to the Fish River precinct:

**Assistant-Surveyor Evans - December 1, 1813**

*I am more pleased with the Country every day; it is a great extent of Grazing land without being divided by barren spaces as on the East side of the Mountains, and well watered by running streams in almost every Valley:*

As Evans followed the Fish River and approached the O'Connell Plains and Macquarie Plains he became increasingly exuberant in his descriptions of the landscape.

**December 2, 1813**

*I think it equal to Van Dieman's Land, the River running through fine flats, and round the points of small Ridges that gradually descend to it, covered with the finest grass and intermixed with the White Daisey (sic) as in England.*

**December 4, 1813**

*My progress is through an exceeding good Track of Country: it is the handsomest I have ever seen with gentle rising hills and dales well watered.:*

Continued page 18

## ...an exceeding good Track of Country: it is the handsomest I have ever seen with gentle rising hills and dales well watered... *William Evans December 4, 1813*

Continued from page 17

### **William Cox - January 1, 1815**

While the bridge over the Fish River was underway, Cox travelled beyond and to Emu Valley, Sydmouth Valley and to O'Connell Plains and Macquarie Plains.

*During these three days travelling [probably December 30, 31 and January 1] we passed over a great quantity of most excellent pasturage. Fine, dry healthy hills, gravelly soil, and good grass, and so thinly timbered, that it resembled park in England rather than a forest...At Sydmouth Valley I never saw finer grass, or more on the same quantity of land in a meadow in England than was here, and just in a fit state for mowing.*

### **January 2, 1815**

Cox was back at the Fish River examining how they might make a way up the hill on the western side.

*The land got hilly, and falls more into gullies than lower down. It is also scrubby in places, and more timber on it, and altogether not so good as lower down.*



**Sydmouth Valley by JW Lewin  
courtesy State Library of NSW  
PXE 88813A.**

### **January 4, 1815**

*At 8am went with Mr Hobby, Tye and two soldiers to Emu Valley, to mark the intended line of road from thence to Sydmouth Valley. Returned at 4.30, having marked very good ground for road making. We also traced down the rich valley. There are about two miles of it equally good as where we cross, then it falls into a creek...removed the gang of 12 men forward to Emu Valley this evening, three miles.*

Cox noted that from this point they would have no further need of their forge until they reached Bathurst Plains.

### **January 6, 1815**

*At 8am crossed the river and the new bridge with the caravan and two carts, as also our horses, and went as far as Sydmouth Valley...In the afternoon marked the trees for our road from the valley to the next creek, where we have a bridge to build, and also one in the valley.*

### **January 7, 1815**

*Ordered the whole of the men forward to a creek about two miles ahead this evening, and rode up to the head of Sydmouth Valley.*

The diary ended here. The road was completed to Bathurst on January 14, 1815.

### **Governor Lachlan Macquarie - April 29, 1815**

*Passing on from hence (Mount Evans) the country continues hilly, but affords good pasturage, gradually improving to Sydmouth Valley...the land here is level, and first met with unencumbered timber; it is not of very considerable extent, but abounds with a great variety of herbs and plants. Leaving Sydmouth Valley, the country becomes again hilly, and in other respects resembles very much the country to the eastward of the valley for some miles from Sydmouth Valley...there began to exhibit an open and extensive view of gently rising grounds and fertile plains.*

### **May 4, 1815**

*The Governor and Suite arrived at these Plains (Macquarie Plains and O'Connell Plains) on Thursday the 4<sup>th</sup> May, and encamped on the southern or left bank of the Macquarie River – the situation being selected in consequence of its commanding a beautiful and extensive prospect for many miles in every direction around it.*

### **Major Henry Colden Antill May 2, 1815**

*Our encampment this day was picturesque and beautiful, situated*

*in a valley with a chain of Ponds running through it, a high hill bounding each extremity, and very good grass and water for our cattle. After passing the first three or four miles we seemed to be leaving the hilly country behind us, and to be fast descending into a more open one.*

### **May 3, 1815**

*...we came to an extensive plain, called by Mr Evans, who first discovered it, O'Connell Plains,... A considerable tract of land without a tree, fit for both pasture and cultivation. Continuing along the banks of the river we came to another extensive plain called Macquarie Plains...the most extensive of the two, and equally good for pasture and cultivation.*

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*Historic Woodford and Linden* 1980, Allan Searle.

## Travelling to the UK?

**National Trust members  
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Trust properties and gardens  
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# Walk and Talk to Duckhole

*Pictured is the chute down which coal was delivered to the site of a steam driven pump alongside Glenbrook Creek. The engine was used to pump water up to the lagoon. The water then fell by gravity to Glenbrook Station for filling steam train engines. At bottom of chute is the late Ted Nolan (sitting) and Henry Lawson's son Will. Photograph Nolan Collection*



AS ONE of their regular "Walks and Talks" events, members of the Glenbrook Historical Society walked to Duck Hole on Saturday, March 16.

The activity included walking the old roadway, visiting the Duck Hole, the pump site and wind eroded caves.

As early as 1867, locomotives watered from a water tank at Glenbrook.<sup>1</sup> There were no stations on Lapstone Hill. Trains had to stop at a water tank near what later was to become the village of Glenbrook.

The trains' boilers were empty after the long climb up the zig zag.

A wooden pipeline brought water to the tank from Glenbrook Lagoon. There was also some water brought by rail from Wentworth Falls to fill the water tank.

The nameless railway stop became known as 'Water Tank'<sup>2</sup>

The Lagoon had been dammed to hold more water for the train engines and the top of the dam wall became part of a new road to be known as Glenbrook Road.

This was a link to Great Western Highway for almost 60 years.

Even with the damming there was not always enough.

The pumping site has a significant connection with the early rail transport across the Blue Mountains to the west.

Steam trains required huge amounts of water to be supplied during the trip across the mountains.

Early water supply to the filling point at Glenbrook was gravity fed from Glenbrook Lagoon.

A series of drought periods between 1877 and 1884, combined with the increasing rail traffic brought a rising need for more water. It was in this period that the steam pump was installed.<sup>3</sup>

In 1913 the pump was removed.

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<sup>1</sup> Bailey, William A, *Lapstone Zig Zag Railway* 1972

<sup>2</sup> Aston, Nell, *Glenbrook and District History*, Glenbrook Historical Society Inc. 2009

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

## Springwood Historians donate \$1000 for newspaper digitisation

IN 2007 the National Library of Australia together with all Australian State and Territory Libraries embarked on a program to digitise Australian newspapers for access and preservation purposes.

For those newspapers digitised so far this free online service provides full text searching of newspaper articles published prior to 1955.

Newspapers published after this date may be digitised with the agreement of the publishers.

The cost of digitising is estimated at \$2.00 per page plus GST.

Up till now no Blue Mountains newspapers have been digitised.

However, under the State Library of N.S.W. Digital Excellence Project the *Blue Mountains Echo* is being included.

The *Nepean Times* is very nearly ready to being available for searching. (perhaps at the time of publication already is)

Springwood Historians have appreciated the availability of historic information from this source and have recently given the Blue Mountains City Library \$1000 to facilitate the digitisation of additional Blue Mountains newspapers.

The Library has added a further \$1000. Other history groups might be able to contribute to this worthwhile project.

**Contributed by Shirley Evans**

## WALK WITH MEMBERS OF GLENBROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Next walk: Saturday, April 13 --- Eastern zig zag railway, Knapsack viaduct**

**Bookings are essential. For those wishing to participate in this and other interest filled walks contact Doug Knowles on 4751 3275**

# FIRE IN THE MINE

THE CITY OF GREATER Lithgow Mining Museum Inc is excited to announce the launch of Fire in the Mine, the museum's newest permanent exhibition.

Fire in the Mine, a pepper's ghost interpretation developed by The Shirley Spectra Australia Pty Ltd, tells the story of the coalminer's life in the mid 20th Century.

It is the culmination of a twelve year conversation clearly demonstrating the value of a strategic vision and long-term planning in community museums.

Fire in the Mine relates stories of the working lives of coalminers and the horses they worked alongside through the persona of Marion Curry.

Marion is the wife of Ned Curry who worked as a wheeler at the Lithgow State Coal Mine from 1946.

As coal mining is a very 'blokey' industry, filled with hard working, coal-dusted men it was decided that the story should be told through the eyes of a miner's wife.



*Miner Ned Curry with his horse Snow, circa late 1940s.*

"This allowed us to approach the work of mining quite objectively," says Ray Christison

"As a close family member, Marion has as much knowledge of the industry as we need to communicate to visitors."

She far better expresses the dangers of coal mining than her husband, avoiding the temptation for bravado.

For the miners themselves the dangers they faced were not a

matter of courage but simply all in a day's work.

Marion's character recounts the dangers of life in the mines and the comradeship of the men and women associated with coalmining.

She also talks of Ned's love for the horses he was privileged to lead.

Her account culminates in the tragic story of an underground fire in 1953 that took the lives of twenty seven 'of the best horses a man could ever have'.

The museum has converted a former shower block in the former Lithgow State Coal Mine bath house to accommodate the pepper's ghost theatre.

The room has been sealed and carpeted to minimise sound echo but much of its character has been conserved with original wall tiles and soap holders still adorning one wall.

Companion interpretations explain the role of bath houses in collieries from the early 1920s.

These incorporate artefacts related to showering and bathing.

**Continued page 21**



*Pictured is the space in the bath house converted for the theatre.*

# Fire in the mine

Continued from page 20

These artefacts include miners' baths donated by various local families, a miners' clothing basket from Kandos Colliery and photographs of showering and change facilities.

A companion interpretation, featuring a miner's pushbike, talks about getting to the pit in all kinds of weather.

The museum's display horse, Socks, completes the companion exhibits.

This project has been a real community collaboration that has been funded through the Mine Workers Trust supported by donations from Biogas Energy, Delta Electricity and Hartley Corporate. Lithgow's wonderfully talented artisans have contributed to the success of this development.

Blacksmith Phil Spark has undertaken all metal fabrication, sculptor Tim Johnman has made models and a coalface bas relief,



**Miners and their horse at Lithgow State Mines circa 1930s**

and cabinet maker Trevor Beutel has crafted a traditional door for the theatrette.

Local trades people have also contributed their skills to the development.

Ancillary décor has been funded through the Museums and Galleries NSW Volunteer Initiated Museums Small Grants Program.

In addition to the theatrette it has been possible to modify the bath house toilets to incorporate an accessible toilet, and to create a

new food preparation area within the old bath house ambulance room.

Volunteers have undertaken substantial building works to complete the project.

This project is the springboard for a series of planned multimedia interpretations designed to enhance the capacity and appeal of the museum.

**Contributed by Ray Christison, president, The City of Greater Lithgow Mining Museum Inc.**

## Lithgow's hidden sandstone heritage

LITHGOW Branch of the National Trust will lead tours around the built legacy of Andrew Brown, one of Lithgow's earliest and most famous sons, on Saturday 21 April 21 and Sunday April 22 , between 9.30am - 1pm.

This will be a rare and special treat.

Those wishing to participate will meet at Lithgow Visitor Centre, 1 Coerwull Road, Great Western Highway (The Miners' Lamp) the coach assembly area at 9.30am.

The tour will allow participants to discover the buildings which are links to the opening up of pastoral development after the Western Crossings of the Blue Mountains in 1813.



**The front of Coerwull House shows Andrew Brown on the verandah, about 1880, with his wife Christina and daughter Grace in the carriage. Copyright Ian Jack**

Philanthropist Scotsman Andrew Brown (1797-1894) established a great pastoral empire which commenced at "Coerwull" Homestead (now western Lithgow).

Led by historian Dr Ian Jack, travel by coach to churches, schools, mills, houses, and back in time to the rustic outbuildings of Andrew Brown's once thriving homestead.

**COST:** \$30 per person includes morning tea.

**BOOKINGS:** Essential

**ENQUIRIES:** Helen Clements  
(02) 6353-1501

# History and art at Tarella

HISTORIC *Tarella* at Wentworth Falls will be the venue for an art exhibition later this month.

The Blue Mountains Historical Society owners of the 1890s holiday cottage have joined with the Blackheath Art Society to stage the exhibition on Saturday and Sunday, March 23 -24, 1013

*Tarella* will be open for inspection in the grounds of the historical society's property at 99 Blaxland Road, Wentworth Falls. It will be open from 10am to 4pm

Admission to the exhibition is \$5 per person and morning and afternoon tea will be available.

*Tarella* was built in 1890 by John McLaughlin, a Sydney solicitor, on a 50 acre grant of land awarded to him for his service in the Volunteer Reserve.

The cottage stands in its original state, and is set up in the period of the early 1900s.

John built *Tarella* around 1890 as a holiday cottage for the family to have relief from the summer heat and to escape the smells that pervaded the air in Sydney.

The cottage stands on Cox's original road on a stretch constructed under the watch of Lt Thomas Hobby which Cox observed on his return, 'at the 29th mile is a very handsome long reach, quite strait, which I call, from the layer of it out, Hobby's Reach'. (*Hobby's Reach* is the name used for the Research Centre of the Blue Mountains Historical Society).



***Tarella* cottage as it now stands.**

# WAY FORWARD THROUGH STORIES



***Elders knowing - Elders showing - Children watching - Nyree Reynolds.***

Way Forward through Stories is a series of art works on Aboriginal cultural and history awareness and art expression from the first in a series of workshops run at Eskbank House during February 2013.

The works exhibited in the Courtyard Gallery at Eskbank House is a collaboration between Lithgow City Council, Lithgow Community Projects and Mingingan Aboriginal Corporation.

The exhibition will be open on Wednesday through to Sunday from 10am to 4pm through March 27 to April 14, 2013.

The workshop series aims to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities together through the experience of culture, history and art.

It aims to explain and discuss the wrongs of the past, many a result of the crossing of the Blue Mountains by Europeans, in order to move forward towards a harmonious community with a greater understanding and appreciation of each other.

The first workshop was very successful with participants looking keenly forward to the next one.

"This is such a positive workshop for the community," said Lithgow City Council Mayor Maree Statham.

"Art is such a great way to bring people together. In this workshop participants are able to discuss and express tough topics relating to Aboriginal history in a safe, creative environment."

The response to the workshop has been overwhelming. A group of Lithgow High School students and teachers attended along with community members of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal descent.

The first workshop began with the group watching a documentary called "Contact" which tells the story of the Martu community who were removed from the dump zone for the Woomera Rocket Tests in 1964.

Mai-Lynn Elliot from Lithgow Community Projects then led a discussion focusing on the feelings and thoughts the documentary had created.

Kamilaroi artist, Nyree Reynolds, then introduced the medium of acrylics to the group who went on to paint their reflections on the documentary.

These images are currently on display in the Courtyard Gallery at Eskbank House and the exhibition will build over the next few weeks as the workshops continue.

# BLUE MOUNTAINS JOURNEY

by Ken Goodlet

ISBN 978-0-646-59522-1

Journeying has always been part of the mountains story, but of particular significance in this bicentenary year.

Local historian, researcher and author Ken Goodlet has written his latest book, *Blue Mountains Journey* to be launched during celebrations of the Western Crossings Bicentenary later this year.

As well as the tale of the wayfinders' traverse of the Blue Mountains barrier two centuries ago, here there are accounts of many earlier and later mountains journeys, coming up to the present time.

Set within a detailed biographical context in many cases, there are journeys by indigenous peoples, colonial explorers and surveyors, fortune-seekers, travellers heading west, wagoners, marauders, rail travellers and workers, holidaymakers, settlers, commuters, trailblazers and rambles, cyclists and motorists.

There are more or less detailed accounts of the lives and mountains journeys of Matthew Everingham, Gregory Blaxland, Elizabeth Hawkins, Archibald Bell, Robert Hoddle, William Govett, James Backhouse, Charles Darwin, Louisa Anne Meredith, Sophia Stanger, Godfrey Mundy, Edward Hargraves, Chinese prospectors, bushrangers, Rachel Henning, James Hunter, Edwin Fearnside, railway workers, the Countess of Belmore, John and David Heron, George Gascoigne, John Deering, Eccleston du Faur, Myles Dunphy, Paddy Pallin, early motorists, Mark Foy, the Cooe marchers, Ken Cale, the Leeton cyclists, Fish travellers, Adrian Paul, John Seymour, Ken Ames, Ken Groves, Queen Elizabeth II, Gerald Harvey, Harry Van Den Bout, arry Van Den Bout, Eleanor Dark, Grace Bayley, Oonagh Kennedy, Lynette Stanger, Ian Brown, Andy Macqueen, Bill Davis, Emily Mohr, Randall Walker and Emily Davis.

Continued page 24



*Travellers going west, passing Woodford House, a guesthouse at this time, now known as Woodford Academy. 'The Illustrated London News, 16 February 1889, p.212'.*

## The author --- Ken Goodlet

As a child, the author Ken Goodlet and his family holidayed most years in the mountains.

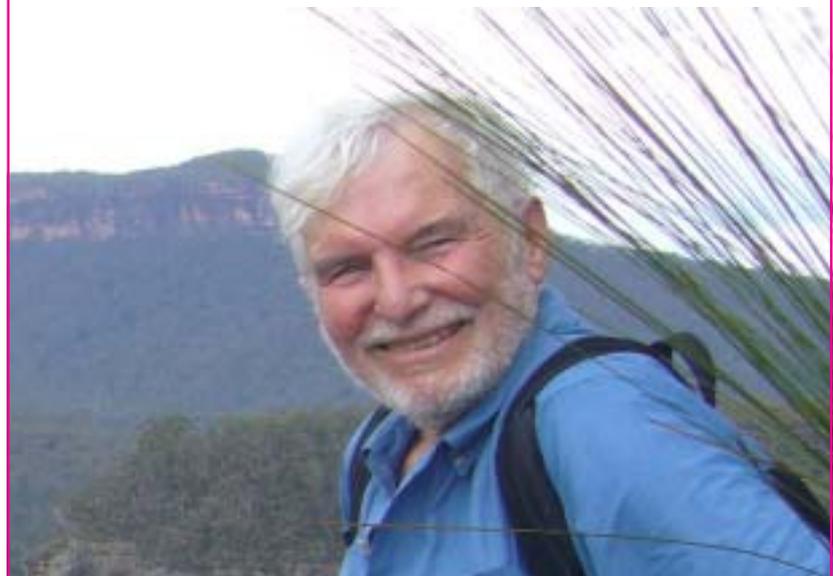
When he and his wife Jan married at the end of 1961, they bought a cottage at Springwood.

After returning from eight years working in Malaysia, they moved to Hazelbrook where they have lived since 1973.

Their four sons, their wives and nine grandchildren have all lived in the Blue Mountains.

Ken has been a teacher and school administrator in Malaysia and Australia, editor for an Australian book publisher, and has written four published community histories, the earliest, published in Malaysia, being his University of Sydney thesis.

His two published histories on the mountains community are *Mountain Springtime: a History of Blue Mountains Grammar School* and the National Trust highly commended *Hazelbrook and Woodford: a story of two Blue Mountains towns*.



# Blue Mountains National Trust plans bus tour and to Kelly's Bush and Vienna Cottage

THE BLUE Mountains Branch of the National Trust will be conducting a bus tour to and walk in the Woolwich/Hunters Hill area on Saturday, April 21.

The walk will incorporate a visit to the old graving dock (Mort's Dock), Vienna Cottage and Kelly's Bush which was the site of the first Green Ban in the world.

Vienna Cottage is a rare example of an artisan's home of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Built in 1871, it was the home of John and Ann Hillman.

It is a typical tradesman's cottage with 4 rooms in the main building and a detached kitchen and laundry at the back.

The house remained in the ownership of the family until 1984, when it was purchased by the National Trust.

Kelly's Bush was originally inhabited by the Guringai-speaking Wallumedegal clan and rock waterholes, engravings and middens remain within the area.

The tour will be led by two very experienced local guides, who know the area and its history comprehensively.

Participants in this activity should meet at 9am Whitton Park, Glenbrook for the buses to Woolwich. It is anticipated that the party will arrive back at Glenbrook at 4.30pm

The tour accommodates both those who wish to walk and those who don't. An appetising boxed lunch will be provided.

COST: NT members \$35, others \$40. Those choosing to meet at Woolwich: NT members \$25, others \$30.

Bookings essential by April 14 - call Sandra 4739 3003 or email [BlueMtsNatTr@gmail.com](mailto:BlueMtsNatTr@gmail.com)

Those wishing to meet at Woolwich should also contact Sandra on 47393003



*Vienna Cottage a National Trust owned property is a rare example of an artisan's home of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

## Blue Mountains Journey

**Continued from page 23**

We meet in these pages the disinherited custodians and their long search for home, the wayfinder yeoman who sought to recreate in this alien landscape his family tradition of enterprise, the Bathurst-bound settler mother of eight who thought how fortunate she was to be in this new land of opportunity, the Quaker who walked all over Australia on behalf of the disadvantaged, the naturalists whose curiosity and sense of wonder inspired them amidst the shuddering bumps of the road, the 'Celestials' who shuffled across the mountains in search of gold, the travellers who encountered bushrangers and lived to tell that story, the surveyor who championed the reserves for public enjoyment, the conservationists who tramped through the wilderness and sought

to preserve it, the royal traveller who thought the mountains the most beautiful place in the Commonwealth, the engine driver who revelled in the might of his 57 class engine, the recent bushwalker who learnt life lessons while enjoying her bush experience.

It is hoped that this A4 book of 240 pages, 140,000 words and over 350 small and a score of large illustrations and maps, some in colour, will enhance and enrich the readers' appreciation of the Blue Mountains. *Blue Mountains Journey* will soon be available from outlets through the Blue Mountains including: Turning Page at Springwood, Lamdha at Wentworth Falls, Megalong Books at Leura and Glee Books Blackheath or from Ken Goodlet at [kgoodlet@tpg.com.au](mailto:kgoodlet@tpg.com.au)



*Travelling by coach over the Western Road, a sketch in colour by Mary Martindale, wife of the NSW Commissioner of Roads 1860. State Library of NSW – PXA 2498.*

# DR JAMES NORTON MLC (1824-1906)

An MP who inherited his love of horticulture and his green thumb

by Shirley Evans - Springwood Historians

JAMES NORTON acquired portions of crown land in the 1880s and purchased more land from John Ellison in Springwood adjacent to the Frazer property of *Silva Plana*.

Here he built his country residence *Euchora* where he pursued his passion for horticulture and botany.

His primary residence in Sydney was *Ecclesbourne* in Double Bay which he had bought in 1857.



**The Springwood property *Euchora* circa 1920 when it was a guesthouse where the owners advertised that they provided fresh milk. Note a cow in the image above.**

The garden at *Ecclesbourne* boasted a huge variety of Australian trees and shrubs, ferns and orchids.

Exotics were also planted in abundance – proteas, deodars, palms, agaves, jacarandas, hollies, camellias and more.

He planted camellias although they were not fashionable in the late 1880s and 90s according to the *Australian Town and Country Journal*, October 14, 1899, because of the flowers' lack of perfume', sweet smelling flowers being in vogue at that time.

One of the horticultural features of *Ecclesbourne* was the *Sparaxis* lawn.

A collection of about a thousand different varieties of this multicoloured South African flowering bulb were naturalised in the lawn and every spring provided a brilliant display.

According to the *Town and Country Journal* "the lawn rivals the richest of mosaic work in colouring". Norton frequently held a garden party at this time.

In Springwood he set about landscaping the *Euchora* garden, experimenting with cold climate trees while not neglecting the abundant native flora in the Springwood bush.

At the time the late Lindsay Paish was working on his book *Hawkesbury Road and the Development of North Springwood* he compiled a list and a plan of the planting of the trees and shrubs still growing in the grounds of Buckland Retirement Village, once the site of *Euchora*.

He listed more than 60 species. Of course we cannot know how many of these were planted by Norton or how many of Norton's original plantings survived.

James Norton was born in Sydney, one of ten children of James Norton, senior and Jane McKenzie.

His father was a successful solicitor who came to Australia from England in 1818.

In 1834 he bought *Elswick*, a 100 acre property in Leichhardt where he planted a beautiful old-world garden complete with roses, peacocks and a pond full of eels.

Son James obviously inherited his love of horticulture and his green thumb.

James, the younger was married twice. His first wife was Harriett Mary Walker, daughter of the late Deputy Commissary-General Walker of Rhodes, Parramatta River.

They had two daughters and a son. One daughter, Gertrude, after her marriage to James Bell, established *Cochin Cochin* homestead garden in Queensland, famous for its horticultural features as well as its important visitors who included members of the Royal Family and Agatha Christie.

Harriett died in 1860 and James married Isabella Stephens, sister of Professor William Stephens, in 1862. Another daughter and son were born. The daughter, Alice, became a well known painter.

James became a very successful attorney, the senior partner of Norton, Smith & Co.

He had the degree of LLD conferred on him by St Andrews University, Scotland in recognition of his services. He was a director of the Australian Gaslight Co., the North Shore Gas Company and the Australian Joint Stock Bank, a trustee of the Australian Museum and the Public Library and a trustee of Hyde, Phillip and Cook Parks.

He was nominated to the Legislative Assembly serving as Postmaster-General, was solicitor to the University of Sydney and had a very special interest in the establishment of the Mitchell Library.

**Continued page 26**

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On his death, Mr HCL Anderson, the public librarian (and for a time an orchardist in North Springwood) thought Norton's epitaph should be: *His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world, "This was a man."*

James was a founder of the Linnaean Society of NSW in 1875 and he studied the native flora as well as Australian birds.

## Australian Birds. Useful and Noxious.

He wrote a paper, *Australian Birds. Useful and Noxious*. He read this at a conference of fruit and vine growers and it was later published.

He was a friend of Edward Daintree and Robert D Fitzgerald who wrote a book on Australian orchids. Fitzgerald named an orchid for James – *Adenochilus Nortonii*.

In the 1800s flower shows were very popular, particularly those that featured native flowers.

Whole plants were uprooted and branches lopped for display and set up in elaborate artistic arrangements.

James wrote a number of letters to the *Sydney Morning Herald* deploring these displays and warning of the long term effects of this wholesale removal from the bush of rooted plants and large branches.

The Manly Flower Shows of the 1880s he mentioned in particular.

I have been researching flower shows for a while now and will save my more detailed information for another article.

One of James' projects was to compile for the *Sydney Morning Herald* a list of wild flowers suitable for pot culture but I have not yet been able to find this.



**James Norton by an unknown photographer, courtesy State Library of NSW PX D624.**

Another letter I found which he wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, December, 15, 1871 was on the subject of women's rights: *I am not an advocate for conferring on women the right of voting at elections, as proposed by a bill now before Parliament, or any such other so-called right, as would not only make them ridiculous, but unfit them for the performance of those duties which laws of nature and of Christianity alike impose upon them.*

This leads us nicely into James Norton, part time resident of Springwood.

The construction of Christ Church of England in Springwood was a time of turmoil and controversy in the little town.

On March 9, 1889, the bishop, when consecrating the church is reported in the *Nepean Times* as having preached a sermon in which he emphasised very strongly that when a church had been consecrated it became the property of the parish and that no contributor to its erection, however generous, had any more interest in it than any other parishioner.

The Hon Charles Moore, a man prone to grand philanthropic gestures, decided opinions and a difficult temper, had set aside for the new church what was known as the Church Acre, adjacent to Mrs Hoare's residence *Homedale*.

Suddenly he changed his mind and set aside a smaller piece of land near his own residence *Moorecourt*.

Although an official church committee had been set up he continued to keep a second bank account in his own name in which he deposited donations.

He built a parsonage for the rector, the Rev Edward Cranswick, but would not hand it over to the church.

He said he would do this in his own good time.

He decided to charge the Rev Cranswick £52 per annum but would put £1 per week in the church collection plate to cover this.

Then he changed his mind and only put half a crown in the collection. He and the Rev Cranswick did not get on so he evicted the Cranswick family from the rectory leaving them homeless.

Moore kept his own key to the church and when he acquired a second hand black reredos (screen) inscribed with the Ten Commandments from St Phillips Church in Sydney which they no longer wanted, he moved it into Christ Church.

He became very angry when the parishioners refused to set it up as it did not fit in with the light decor of the church.

At this time one of the church wardens became so upset he resigned and the Honourable James Norton stepped in.

It is very hard, with the information available, to get a clear picture of what was going on.

What is clear however is that Moore and Norton, aging, wealthy and very important men in the city were not considered so important by the regular townfolk.

True, they spent money in Springwood and provided some employment but Springwood people were hard working, intelligent, conversant with world affairs and liked democratic processes where everyone was equal and had an equal voice.

The unrest over the church came to a head at a vestry meeting in April, 1891.

**Continued page 27**

### Continued from page 26

More than seventy people attended and the Rev Cranswick took the chair.

James Norton was absent. There was disagreement over the minutes and the accounts and, as stated by the *Nepean Times* correspondent that, 'notwithstanding that a number of ladies were present it must be admitted that their influence did not wholly prevent some unseemly remarks.'

It would appear that a remark made by Martin Olsen about James Norton was reported to him. Olsen was a colourful Springwood character. He had emigrated to Australia from Norway in 1874 and lived in Springwood for nine or ten years.

He was unmarried, about 36 years old, and obviously, from his participation in the Springwood Literary and Debating Society, well educated and took an active part in all local affairs including those of the church, despite acknowledging that he was not religious.

He worked for William Rayner, the general store keeper who was also a well educated and literate man.

James was most annoyed by what Martin was reported to have said so he sent his employee, John Watson, to tell William Rayner that if he allowed his 'man' to attend Church meetings or any other meetings he would not get any more of his custom.

The town folk were outraged and a public meeting was called. It was attended by about 60 people. The headline in the *Nepean Times* read:

#### **An M.L.C. Severely Handled**

There were many impassioned speeches about freedom of speech.

William Rayner asserted that his employees' lives outside of their working hours were their own and they could attend whatever meetings they liked.

Mr Robert Anderson, the school teacher, a young energetic artistic man told the meeting that James Norton had reported him to the Minister for Education for holding office in local organisations – he was president of the Springwood

Club and secretary of the Springwood Progress Committee – and he was officially instructed by the Department of Education to resign.

Somehow, as part of all this unrest Mr John Huddy's employment at *Silva Plana* was terminated.

The meeting formally extended their sympathy and presented him with a purse of sovereigns and an illuminated address designed and painted by the school teacher, Robert Anderson.

## **Norton's action...a base attempt at curbing freedom of speech...**

A formal resolution was passed: 'That the action of Hon James Norton in threatening to boycott Mr Rayner if he allowed his assistant to attend public meetings is a base attempt at curbing freedom of speech in the community and is deserving of the strongest condemnation, being particularly unworthy of one holding the office of clergyman's churchwarden and a member of parliament.'

James Norton was not present at this meeting. He wrote to William Rayner denying he had given John Watson any such message to deliver.

He wrote, 'Since my residence in Springwood I have always looked upon you rather in the light of a friend than of a mere tradesman supplying me with goods'.

After this, life in Springwood returned to normal.

The Reverend Cranswick and his family went to live in *Silva Plana* while the Frazers had an extended overseas trip, John Huddy found a new and better position,

Martin Olsen attended all the meetings he liked and presumably

James Norton returned to his gardens and his work in the city.

James died at *Ecclesbourne* at the age of 81.

*Euchora* was sold and later became a boarding house offering fresh milk, proximity to the golf course, ideal winter climate and a wireless set.

On May 31, 1907 it was announced in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that Mr Thomas Buckland had offered the property with its 127 acres to the government for a convalescent mental hospital. Today it is the site of a very extensive retirement village.

*Ecclesbourne* remained in the family until 1931.

In more recent years it was bought by the Cancer Patients' Assistance Society and used for accommodation for patients and family.

It was recently sold again. It is believed that there is little of the garden remaining and no sign of the Sparaxis lawn.

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More information about Martin Olsen, HCL Anderson, William Rayner and Robert Anderson may be found in *The Making of a Mountain Community: a Biographical Dictionary of the Springwood District*, Springwood Historians.

# Western crossing commemoration 2013-15

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

## Support for commemorative coins

BUSINESS and individuals can help sponsor coins free to all school students in the Blue Mountains.

Sponsorship of \$500 can ensure that 100 or more students receive this historic memento which can be accompanied by a message from the sponsor's company or business.

Business's and individuals can also make a wholesale purchase of coins at \$5 each (minimum order 100 coins). The coins can either be sold at a rrp of \$10 each or used as promotional gifts

The coins are also available to individual members of the community at \$10 plus postage. Orders for 6 or more are free of postage.

All enquiries to [sponsorship@bicentenary.com.au](mailto:sponsorship@bicentenary.com.au) or telephone (02) 4757 1425.

## COX'S ROAD WALK

MEMBERS of Blue Mountains Branch of National Trust will conduct a walk from Mt York car park, at the end of Mt York Road to Hartley.

Those participating will walk the road constructed by William Cox and his band of convicts in 1814-15 and follow in the footsteps of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson almost 200 years to the day on June 1, 2013

The walk is quite steep and good, strong footwear is required.

Lunch will be provided at the bottom of the road and a bus will take walkers back to Mt York.

Cost including lunch is \$30 for National Trust members and \$35 for non members.

Enquiries and books to Liz on 4757 2694, Rhona on 4757 2424 or by e-mail to [BlueMtsNatTr@gmail.com](mailto:BlueMtsNatTr@gmail.com) by May 27

## NSW government grants for Western Crossings groups



*Blue Mountains MP Roza Sage and RAHS president, Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker soon after announcing the Western Crossings bicentenary grants. Image courtesy Blue Mountains Gazette.*

NSW Government grants totaling \$40,000 will be issued by the Royal Australian Historical Society to help groups commemorate the Western Crossings bicentenary.

RAHS president Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker announced the grants at the February meeting of the Western Crossings committee.

Recipients of the grants include Ancestral Pathways of the Blue Mountains (Gundungurra Aboriginal Heritage Association), Western Crossings Foundation (Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Inc.), Blue

Wave reenactment (Blue Mountains Blue Wave), Crossing A Play! (Marian Theatre for Young People).

The grants were the result of a delegation to the NSW Premier by the previous RAHS president, Emeritus Professor David Carment and Blue Mountains MP Roza Sage.

Dr Whitaker has paid tribute to "their hard work on behalf of the community".

Dr Whitaker urged all local residents and organisations to participate in the bicentenary commemorations with diverse activities planned for the whole community.

### WENTWORTH FALLS CELEBRATIONS

WENTWORTH Falls Chamber of Commerce will the bicentenary with an event around the lake on May 25 .

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

# Smoke signals from the Vatican

NO CHIMNEY in history has been more scrutinised than the simple stovepipe running up through a window in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.

In one of the Roman Catholic Church's most sacred traditions, the election of their pontiff, cardinals sequestered among Michelangelo's masterpieces use the iron stove and its narrow metal chimney to communicate with the outside world.

The chimney is not permanent fixture.

Workers scale the roof of the Sistine Chapel and attach the chimney pipe that bellows white smoke to alert the world that a new pope has been elected.

Attached by a safety clip and cable, a worker inches down the tiled roof and uncaps a small top that had covered the chimney.



He replaces it with a tall, thin pipe fed to him by another man in dress pants and a tie who was standing in an opening in the chapel's sloped roof.

The tradition is simple: black smoke means a vote has failed to produce a pope; white smoke means the cardinals have come to agreement.

Locked in the Sistine Chapel, the eligible cardinals conduct a secret ballot until someone receives a vote of two-thirds plus one.

The ballots are burned after each vote.

If a new pope has been elected, the papers are burned with chemicals (it used to be wet straw) to give white smoke.

Otherwise, they give off black smoke

On April 6, 2005, it was announced that, in addition to the white smoke, the bells of St Peter's Basilica will be rung to signal the election of the new pope.

This will avoid any doubt about whether the smoke is white or black.

The first mass in the Sistine Chapel was celebrated on August 9, 1483, the Feast of the Assumption, at which ceremony the chapel was consecrated and dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Source:

<http://italian.about.com/library/weekly/aa050901a.htm>

## 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.