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Governor to open Locomotive Depot museum at Valley Heights

by John Leary, OAM

LONG GONE is the excitement of the steam train, like a great steel monster white steam gushing from its nostrils, as it pulls out of Sydney Central, quickly passing the back yards of another generation's dwellings of the western suburbs, then racing at what in those days was considered a break-neck speed across the Cumberland Plains much of it then still farmland until the noisy loco and its train reached Penrith, then a small country town soon to develop as the hub of a satellite city with new suburbs housing a considerable population.

At Emu Plains the speed slowed with the loco chugging along as it wound its way around the lower Blue Mountains until it reached Valley Heights.

At Valley Heights a pilot engine which had been waiting steamed up ready to do its work was hooked to the front of the main loco adding to



Engine 5183 is turned at Valley Heights. Photograph - Australian Railway History Society (NSW RRC) 060615 NJ Simons Collection.

the needed power to pull the carriages up the mountains to Katoomba.

The Valley Heights Locomotive Depot was officially opened in January 1914 and the Valley

Heights Locomotive Heritage Museum has organised a year-long centenary celebration of events.

On January 31, the Governor of NSW, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, CVO will officially open the Valley Heights Locomotive Heritage Museum. (The opening is by invitation only). Some 47 years earlier, on July 11, 1867, the first official journey by train was made between Penrith and Weatherboard (Wentworth Falls) where the line terminated.

The depot's locomotives assisted up to 30 trains a day from Valley Heights to Katoomba. Located on the steeply graded line to Katoomba in the Blue Mountains, the depot served the railways for 75 years.

However, its days became numbered when more efficient and powerful electric locomotives were introduced - eventually resulting in the closure of the depot, marking a major milestone in the state's railway history. **Continued page 3**



Engine 3827 and standard good pilot ready for departure from Valley Heights.

Photograph: Australian Railway Historical Society (NSW RRC) 004024.

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An opinion from the editor.....

What is cultural heritage? ...Is it all about the past?

I am frequently asked: What is cultural heritage? ...Is it all about the past?

Definitions of cultural heritage are highly varied.

The definition perhaps I find to be the simplest and most decisive is, ...cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.

The definition embraces simply the 'physical' and 'intangible' and has a timeline of the past, present and future.

I often think of the precise nature of that statement when I ponder a trust that was placed in me some 20 years ago by a very influential Japanese friend when he as the mayor of a large city and I, were directing efforts of a sister cities relationship which has endured from the 1980s to the present.

He had expressed to me a concern that young people in Japan were no longer interested in traditional music, but instead followed blindly the American trends.

These trends have built-in obsolescence that was gradually seeing the emergence of everything without an apparent use, being placed on the scrapheap of oblivion when its used-by date is reached.

My friend, Shimamura *sensei* asked if I would accept three instruments as personal gifts to be kept and passed down through generations of the Leary family to which I hesitatingly agreed to accept, being mindful of the obligation being placed on me.

His vision was that if and when the traditional musical arts and craft were lost to Japan, that some time

in the future some historian or musical researcher may find in Australia the instruments given to me and return them to their native country to see a revival in the tradition.

He recently passed away, but before he did, I told him that while I had kept the shakuhachi, the other two instruments, the koto and shamisen had been gifted to two separate institutions with the hope that a wider distribution of the artefacts might make possible the enactment of his vision.

The shakuhachi flute has been traced back as far as ancient Egypt and is thought to have migrated through India and China before being brought back to Japan by monks who were studying abroad in China during the 6th century.

Is this cultural heritage? I believe it is — it certainly fits the definition, that I most like, albeit the experience is more in the nature of Japan's cultural heritage and the vision of a far thinking and generous man.

Is it all about the past? No. It has a timeline embracing of the past, present and future.

Another reputable definition is that ... cultural heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values.

Cultural heritage is often expressed as either intangible or tangible cultural heritage (ICOMOS, 2002).

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

***'The care of our own
historical memory
reveals the degree of
civilization and
morality of a country.'***

“The Fish” and “The Chips”

Continued from page 1

Although the depot has been on its Valley Heights site since 1914, February 2, 1957 saw the end of steam operations from Valley Heights.

On this day No. 27 passenger train was hauled by steam locomotive 3662 and on arrival at Valley Heights electric locomotives 4611 and 4617 backed out of the depot and assisted the train to Katoomba.

From that train all steam hauled trains, both freight and passenger were electrically assisted to Katoomba, until complete electrification saw steam removed from the scene.

The depot in latter years was basically a very efficient freight wagon and electric locomotive repair workshop, the electric engines receiving minor repairs and complete overhauls at the depot.

The demise of Valley Heights depot began when the 85 class electric locomotives were introduced in 1979 and through working of freight trains commenced.

The demise was accelerated with the introduction of the 86 class locomotives in early 1983. From the mid 1980s the number of trains requiring piloting from Valley Heights had been reduced to a handful each day, until the depot closed in 1988.

The site is now home to the Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum which provides interactive exhibits of engines and carriages, along with other unique displays of railway memorabilia.

Rail travel for more than 150 years in Australia has been popular, despite the sometimes uncomfortable conditions with the odd coal cinder in the eye when one opened the windows and today, cramped and dirty commuter rail services.

There were and still are in Australia interesting services available to travellers who prefer the slower pace.



A 53 class engine assisting a 35 class out of Valley Heights - Photograph Australian Railway Historical Society (NSW RCC) 012376

But for commuters in the Blue Mountains trains like the “The Fish” and “The Chips” were a way of life.

“The Fish” is still the name of one of the peak hour train services between Sydney and Lithgow.

For about fourteen years this service was regularly driven by a Mr John Heron who, being a big man, gained the nick name “The Big Fish” which eventually transferred to the train itself.

The original engine pulling “The Fish” survived about 20 years.

The era of steam trains which fascinated travellers around the world, may be long gone, but for those who enjoy a stroll along ‘memory lane’ the Valley Heights Locomotive Heritage Museum will go a long way towards bringing back that enchantment with steam train travel.

For details of centenary activities www.infoblueMountains.net.au/locodepot/centenary.shtml

References:

Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum <http://www.infoblueMountains.net.au/locodepot/history.shtml>

<Accessed January 13, 2014>

Another year for BMACHO --- annual general meeting

ANOTHER YEAR has come around as BMACHO goes into its 9th year of operations.

The association’s annual general meeting will be held at the Woodford Academy on Saturday, March 22, 2014 commencing at 2pm.

The business including president’s report, financial reports and election of office bearers will be followed by a guest speaker and afternoon tea.

A guest speaker soon to be finalised will be announced on Facebook and by e-mail to members.

Members of the association and their representatives at the meeting will also be given the opportunity to look through this building the property being the oldest on the Blue Mountains.

Formal notice of the meeting together with the calling of nominations for the 10 member management committee will be distributed in the near future.

'For the cricket tragics'

By John Leary, OAM

MANY of our readers have probably spent considerable time during the 2013 - 14 festive season, watching grown men throw a usually red leather covered ball at three sticks, which another player seems to protect, while others on the field stand by in silly mid on and in slips seemingly with little to do.

It seems there have been five tests this summer between England and Australia and the uninitiated must wonder why so many examinations for what seemingly is a simple sport.

And they have played in these tests for the doubtful prize of a set of bails burned to ash and secreted in a small wooden urn.

Patriotically, the writer must state Australia seems to be the brightest, its team having succeeded in all five tests while the English have failed each time they were before the stumps behind which stands a man in a white coat and a number of hats.

Perhaps those 'cricket tragics' might ponder this little piece about the origins of this manly sport.

The game of cricket has a *known* history spanning from the 16th century to the present day, with international matches played since 1844, although the official history of international Test cricket began in 1877.

However, no one knows for sure when or where cricket began but there is a body of evidence, that suggests cricket was devised by children and survived for many generations as essentially a children's game.



Cricket at Melbourne Cricket Ground
January 1, 1864

Adult participation is unknown before the early 17th century.

Despite many other suggested references, the first definite mention of the game is found in a 1598 court case concerning an ownership dispute over a plot of common land in Guildford, Surrey.

A 59-year old coroner, John Derrick, testified that he and his school friends had played *creckett* on the site fifty years earlier when they attended the Free School.

Derrick's account seems to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the game was being played in Surrey circa 1550.

There is also a reference to cricket being played as an adult sport was in 1611, when two men in Sussex were prosecuted for playing cricket on Sunday instead of going to church.

In the same year, a dictionary defined cricket as a boys' game and this suggests that adult participation was a recent development

Cricket has had an influence on the lexicon of nations around the world, especially in the English language, with such phrases as "that's not cricket" (unfair), "had a good innings", "sticky wicket", and "bowled over".

Cricket has been played in Australia for over 210 years.

The first recorded cricket match in Australia took place in Sydney in December 1803 and a report in the *Sydney Gazette* on January 8, 1804 suggested that cricket was already well established in the infant colony.

Intercolonial cricket in Australia started with a visit by cricketers from Victoria to Tasmania in February 1851.

The first tour by an English team to Australia was in 1861 - 62, organised by the catering firm of Spiers and Pond as a private enterprise. A further tour followed in 1863-64, led by George Parr and was even more successful than the previous.



English cricket legend WG Grace "taking guard" in 1883. His pads and bat are very similar to those used today. The gloves have evolved somewhat. Many modern players utilise more defensive equipment than was available to Grace, notably helmets, and a thing called a "box".

Cricket has a close relationship with Australian rules football and many players have competed at top levels in both sports.

In 1858, prominent Australian cricketer Tom Wills called for the formation of a "foot-ball club" with "a code of laws" to keep cricketers fit during the off-season.

The following year, Wills and other Victorian cricketers founded the Melbourne Football Club and codified the first laws of the game. It is typically played on modified cricket fields and borrows terminology from cricket, such as "umpire" and "sledging".

It is often said that in Australia the office of test captain is second in stature behind the office of prime minister.

As a member of the No Cricket and Football League, the author is now so overloaded with cricket minutia it is perhaps an appropriate time, as the cricketing fraternity say, to 'take tea', which may well be an euphemism for consumption of a beverage better known as a beer

Editor's note. Some of this material has been sourced from Wikipedia and we leave it to the reader to check the veracity of the information. jkl

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_cricket_to_1725

An alternative crossing: Bells Line of Road part 2: 1823 to 1872

by Ian Jack

IN THE November/December 2013 issue of *HERITAGE* I discussed the making of an alternative road leading across the Blue Mountains to Hartley Valley in 1823.

The main problem with the new route was Mount Tomah: the road from the Zig Zag descending westwards from Kurradjong Heights and leading to Mount Tomah was relatively level and straight, with good fodder for animals.

This section of Bells Line of Road soon attracted some settlement, in Bilpin and Berambing.

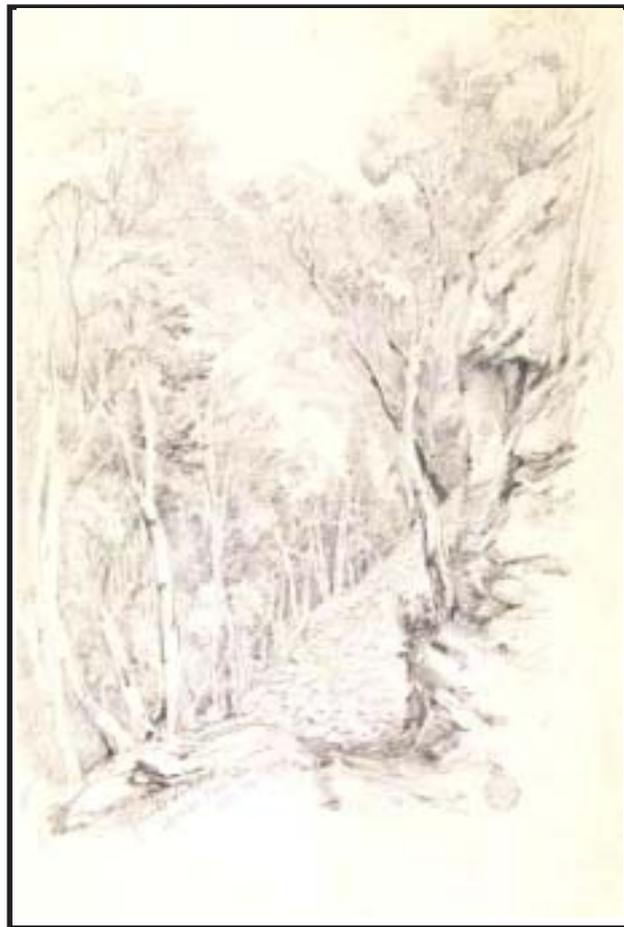
The Royal Veterans Company in New South Wales had been formed in 1810 mainly from old Napoleonic soldiers. When it was disbanded in 1823, it was anticipated that its members might be settled along Bells Line.¹

This did not happen but when reincarnated veterans' companies arrived in the colony in 1826 and proved quite unsuitable in government employ, Governor Darling offered them either a passage back to Britain or a land grant of 40 to 100 acres.

Some of the veterans took up the offer of land and in 1829 twelve allotments each of 100 acres (40 hectares) were surveyed at Bilpin and Berambing, of which ten were taken up and occupied for a while.

In 1830 it was anticipated that three bullock teams would transport the necessary equipment to these veterans' farms over Kurradjong Heights, but, despite petitions from the new settlers, Mitchell in 1832 refused to spend public money on improving the Zig Zag at Kurradjong Heights.²

The other new owners of land on Bells Line in 1830 were Mrs Susannah Bowen and her son, George Meares Countess Bowen, a retired army man, who occupied substantial grants on Mount Tomah (1280 acres) and at Berambing (2560 acres) respectively.



Jacob's Ladder, on the notoriously difficult western pass leaving Mount Tomah in the nineteenth century. Conrad Martens made this drawing in November 1876 soon after improvements had been made but just before a by-pass was created. State Library of NSW, Mitchell Library, PXD307 vol.2 fo.13. Reproduced by courtesy of the State Library.

Bowen built a fine stone house called Bulgamatta (the Aboriginal name for the area), with three sitting rooms and four bedrooms along with outbuildings and a sawmill on the creek below, but in 1836 was obliged to sell to the entrepreneur Robert Towns (the later founder of Townsville) after he 'lost a large portion of [his] capital and some of [his] best years'.³

Bowen's mother returned to England in the same year and sold Mount Tomah, where she had not built any residence, to her son's army acquaintance, Captain George Bartley, in 1838.⁴

Bowen had built huts for his employees about 2 kilometres west of Bulgamatta. These probably remained in occupation under the overseer for Robert Towns, Sam Seinor, an ex-convict who lived in Bulgamatta homestead and had a number of workers on the property,

with two farms under grain and pigs being reared.⁵

Because of this increased occupation of the stretch of Bells Line between Kurradjong Heights and Mount Tomah in the 1830s, because of the pressure applied by Bowen and Towns, because of overnight accommodation being offered by the Douglasses at Kurradjong Heights, and because of increased citrus orcharding on the Kurradjong foothills, there was increased local interest in improving the road from the Hawkesbury.

Accordingly a Committee of Management of the Windsor and Bathurst New Road, with the Surveyor-General, J.L. Scarvell, as its secretary, was formed and in 1839 was soliciting tenders 'for making a Dray Road from Richmond, through the Kurradjong, by Mount Tomah, over the Mountains to the present Bathurst Road'.⁶

'£100 for dray road from Richmond over the mountains'



The stone cottage called Bulgamatta, built on Bells Line of Road by George Meares Countess Bowen at Berambing, just east of Mount Tomah, as soon as he entered on his grant of 2,560 acres (1,030 hectares) in 1830. The pencil drawing was done by Conrad Martens in July 1838

(State Library of NSW, Mitchell Library, SSV SP Coll Martens 3).

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The sum of £160 was raised and spent in 1840, principally for 'clearing' the road from Mount Tomah to Bowenfels, but Sam Seinor was also paid for 'clearing the eastern side of Mount Tomah' and James Douglass a similar amount for a rock cutting on Tabaraga ridge on Kurralong Heights, while Thomas Dargan (who gave his name to Dargans Creek beyond Bell) had two men employed 'improving the pass at Mount Tomah'.⁷

Despite these locally funded efforts, the 'new line of road over Mount Tomah' was described in 1841 as only 'a bridle road', though it was hoped that it would 'shortly become fit for the carriage'.⁸

This was optimistic, for, in particular, the descent of the Western Pass, known as Jacob's Ladder, was acutely steep and contained dangerous rock steps called 'jumps'.⁹

The first crossing with a bullock team was indeed in 1840, with experienced men, including the blacksmith William McAlpine who had gone with Bell in 1823, and Thomas Dargan who had been supervising road works, but they used a 'slide' instead of a wheeled dray, dragged by four bullocks, and the slide was soon broken on a bad stretch of road at Mount Charles.

An improvised slide was created out of a tree-fork and the return trip to North Richmond was completed safely.¹⁰

This was, however, an exceptional act of bravura and did not create a habit. Sam Boughton, who knew most of the bullockies and the drovers, was quite clear that no drays coming from the Hawkesbury could get beyond Mount Tomah until the 1870s.¹¹

Until a new Road Trust undertook successful improvements to the road in 1872 and subsequent years, Bells Line as a through-way to the west operated primarily as a drove road.

The western graziers regarded it as a desirable alternative to the Great Western Highway. George Cox, for example, wrote to his sons in 1848: '... when you come down ... find out whether it will be at all practicable to send the sheep across ... either down Bell's line of road, or onto the Mountain Road at Blackheath. Either of which must be preferable to their going up the Mount Victoria Road to avoid all that pounded Red Ironstone up Mount Victoria.'¹²

The drovers on Bells Line were familiar faces in Richmond. Some were larger than life, like Jack Timmins of Yarramundi, born in 1813 and still yarning to Sam Boughton in 1903: 'the only man I ever heard of [wrote Boughton] crossing the mountains with a drove

of cattle without human aid. His only help was his dogs, which were the wonder of the age.'

One dog brought firewood to the nightly camp, another water and the third controlled the cattle, Timmins boasted, though Boughton expressed discreet reservations.¹³

The road was consistently used. Alfred Smith, born in 1831, was a drover in his youth and recalled how he had brought 63 flocks of sheep over Bells Line.¹⁴

Droving required yards and some occasional inns. Sam Seinor, Towns' overseer at Bulgamatta, built stockyards for drovers at Dargans Creek near Bell, at Mount Charles and at Bulgamatta.¹⁵

During the Gold Rush years of the 1850s there were many prospectors on the move, walking across Bells Line to Ophir and the Turon, so Thomas Sherwood opened an accommodation house near Bulgamatta, built with timbers from Bowen's old house.

Sherwood and his sons regularly went a distance west to meet drovers coming to the coast and to help them up Jacob's Ladder.¹⁶

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‘no ride in the colony can be more enchanting’

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The Hawkesbury end of the road, from Kurrajong to the river, was by far the busiest part of Bells Line.

Not only was there increasing farming and orcharding, but the Putty Road, which was an important drove route from the Hunter, joined Bells Line at Kurrajong, so the final eastern stage saw cattle and sheep converging from both the western plains and the Hunter Valley.

The Packhorse Inn at North Richmond (later the Woolpack) became an important place for the Sydney butchers to acquire stock, just as Joseph Collett's inn in Little Hartley was a rendezvous for Hawkesbury dealers to acquire stock cheaply in the 1850s before city price-rises were known over the Mountains.¹⁷

All the characteristics of Bells Line in this period are summed up in a letter from Thomas Cadell junior of Ben Bullen, published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in July 1851.

He went on horseback from Windsor, crossed the river on the punt and rode up to Douglass' accommodation house: it was a good road and 'no ride in the colony can be more enchanting than this of a fine evening'.

Cadell had to walk his horse over Kurrajong Heights, but then he rode for two hours to Towns' Tomah House, now unoccupied, and an hour later he came to Mount Tomah, where he dismounted and led his horse as any 'merciful man' would do.

There he met a herd of Fitzgerald's cattle coming from Dabee to the coastal markets, 'winding slowly round the mountain in "single file", adding not a little to the scene'.

Cadell remounted and rode on westwards to Dargans Creek 'over a monotonous road, some parts of it very good, others not quite so, but mostly free of the heavy sands which are such a hindrance on the other line [the Great Western Highway].¹⁸

And so Bells Line remained for another twenty years, until the local Roads Trust was formed in 1872 which was instrumental in opening the entire road to wheeled vehicles.

(Endnotes)

¹ Cutting from *Morning Herald*, 21 June 1824, Mitchell Library, ML 1493, reel CY 907, p.390b.

² M. Hungerford, *Bilpin, the Apple Country: a Local History*, Bilpin, 1995, pp.34, 37-40.

³ *Sydney Herald*, 4 January 1836 p.4 c.5; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, pp.31-32.

⁴ H.A. MacLeod Morgan, 'George Meares Countess Bowen', *Australian Genealogist*, 8, 1955-8, pp.113-114; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.37.

⁵ W.L. Havard, 'Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki', *Journal of Royal Australian Historical Society*, 26, 1940, p.41; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, pp.64-65. Seinor's surname was later misremembered as 'Senior'.

⁶ *Australian*, 16 May 1839; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.66.

⁷ *Australian*, 20 October 1840; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.66.

⁸ *Australian*, 6 April 1841; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.67.

⁹ Hungerford, *Bilpin*, pp.94-95.

¹⁰ 'Cooramill', *Reminiscences of Richmond, from the Forties Down*, ed. C. McHardy, Kurrajong, 2010, p.107; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.67.

¹¹ 'Cooramill', *Reminiscences of Richmond*, pp.107, 116, 120-121; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.96.

¹² *George Cox of Mulgoa and Mudgee: Letters to his Sons, 1846-1849*, ed. E. Hickson, Mudgee, 1980, p.72.

¹³ 'Cooramill', *Reminiscences of Richmond*, pp.103-104: cf. J.T. Ryan, *Reminiscences of Australia*, 1894, reprinted South Penrith, 1982, p.65.

¹⁴ A. Smith, *Some Ups and Downs of an Old Richmondite*, Nepean Family History Society, Emu Plains, 1991, pp.30-31.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.116; letter from T. Cadell, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 July 1851, p.3 c.4.

¹⁶ Smith, *Some Ups and Downs of an Old Richmondite*, p.123; Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.90.

¹⁷ Ryan, *Reminiscences of Australia*, 295-8; 'Cooramill', *Reminiscences of Richmond*, p.117.

¹⁸ Letter from Cadell, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 July 1851, p.3 cc.3-4; partly printed in Hungerford, *Bilpin*, p.72.

Heritage churches subject for BM history conference

HECTOR ABRAHAMS has now agreed to be one of the speakers for the Blue Mountains History conference to be held at the Carrington Hotel, Katoomba on May 10, 2014.

He has been asked to present an address about the architectural and cultural heritage value of religious buildings in the Blue Mountains, Lithgow, Hawkesbury and Sydney regions.

Hector Abrahams BSc (Arch) (Hons), BArch, ARAIA is an architect with diverse experience in public and private work in the areas of conservation, cultural projects and adaptive re-use since graduating from the University of Sydney over 25 years ago.

A particular interest is in Christian churches. He is chairman of the NSW Heritage Council Religious Property Advisory Panel as the representative of the Australian Institute of Architects and serves on several architectural panels in the Anglican Church. He is trustee and honorary secretary of the Camperdown Cemetery Trust. He is a former councillor and vice president of the Royal Australian Historical Society.

He is the author of the entry for Church architecture on the *Dictionary of Sydney*, and the very substantial entries for Edmund Thomas Blacket and John Horbury Hunt in the *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*.

Heritage pear tree remnant of Woodford Academy orchard bears fruit

IT WASN'T A PARTRIDGE IN THE PEAR TREE from the English carol lyrics first published in 1780, but it was four pears in a tree, the image captured by Elizabeth Burgess on a delightful festive greetings e-mail from Woodford Academy which leapt off the computer screen just before Christmas 2013.

Closer inspection revealed the pears had been growing on what is probably a heritage tree planted at Woodford Academy in the time of Alfred Fairfax's occupation circa 1868 -1880s.

Local professional horticulturalist and former horticulturalist teacher with TAFE, Doug Knowles has recently inspected the tree and suggests it could be as old as 150 years.

Mr Knowles says that the tree is in an advanced state of decreptitude. It has very short incremental seasonal growth and extensive wood rot.

"What we see are the remains of a very old tree easily one of the original trees. It could have been planted 150 years ago :1860/70," Mr Knowles has suggested.

"The Camden Park Catalogue of 1857 liists 31 cultivated varieties,



This magnificent image of the pears fruiting on what may well be a heritage tree on land adjacent to Wooford Academy was taken by Elizabeth Burgess, Woodford Academy Management Committee - summer of 2013

but no descriptions and I cannot therefore cast any light on its varietal name," Mr Knowles said.

Fairfax bought the property in 1868 from the widow of William Buss.

Buss had conducted an inn which was licensed as 'The Kings Arms' in 1855. The establishment was more popularly known as Buss' Inn.

There had been an inn on the property since circa 1834 with Thomas Pembroke having been granted 2 acres of land in 1831.

Pembroke named the inn 'The Woodman' and lived there with his wife and 6 children.

The inn provided food and lodgings for travellers from Sydney on their way to Bathurst and the western plains. Soldiers and colonial officials were some of their guests.

In 1835 Pembroke was granted a further 48 acres at what was then known as Twenty Mile Hollow

Pembroke fell on hard times, heavily mortgaging the property and being sentenced to 2 years on a road gang for stealing slabs of wood at Springwood.

His sentence was later reduced to one year but forced him to sell the property in 1839.

But back to the pears and in particular the tree which is most likely to be the last remnant of an orchard and garden planted for Fairfax who developed the property as a gentleman's residence.

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The pear tree in all its glory of spring bloom. Photograph by Elizabeth Burgess, Woodfrod Academy Management Committee - spring 2013

Pear tree probably planted 150 years ago in Alfred Fairfax's orchard

Continued from page 8

Fairfax renamed his home, 'Woodford House' and built the second storey east wing primarily to accommodate his Sydney friends and their servants.

It became an exclusive retreat for Fairfax and his friends.

During his time at Woodford he bought more land circa 1868 and then owned 90 acres on which he created an orchard and house garden to provide fresh food for his guests.

One of the more notable events at Woodford House was in 1874 when members of the scientific community visited the Fairfax property to observe the transit of Venus. Portable observatories were set up in tents for the observations.

In 1897 losing money in his financial dealings in mining ventures, Alfred Fairfax sold the house to a David Flannery who

subdivided the property and sold some of the land.

The fruit in the picture on this page is in fact a China pear, not very good for eating unless cooked or made into bottling fruit and chutney.

REFERENCES

1. Leary, Nanette *A Brief History of Woodford Academy*. 2004 Friends of Woodford Academy.

2. I am also grateful to Hazelbrook historian and author Ken Goodlet who has knowledge of the tree's more recent existence having sighted a 1943 aerial photograph in which a grown tree appears in the location of the subject tree.

3. I also acknowledge the advice of Sun Valley horticulturist and current president of Glenbrook District Historical Society Doug Knowles who recently visited the site to examine the tree and its gnarled trunk.

4. Finally, I pay tribute to Elizabeth Burgess for her skills as a

photographer and the initiative and innovating use of the image as a greeting card and for the promotion of Woodford Academy which stands on the site which has been occupied by a building longer than anywhere on the Blue Mountains.

Jazz in the artist's gardens



THIS VERY popular Jazz in the Garden event celebrates the birthday of one of Australia's finest artists Norman Lindsay.

This event is scheduled for Saturday, February 22, 2014 from 5 to 9pm in the gardens of the Norman Lindsay Gallery, Falconbridge

This vibrant picnic event attracts 800 jazz lovers from all over NSW, the very popular legendary Galapagos Duck will perform jazz classics and some upbeat jazz-rock from the gallery verandah.

Now is the time to organise your group of family and friends.

Bring with you some food and beverages, chair or blanket, free parking is included as is admission to the gallery.

The Friends of the Norman Lindsay Gallery and Galapagos Duck promise this evening of jazz will be like you've never heard before.

Tickets: adult \$30, children \$15 members \$25.

Enquiries: (02) 4751 1067

info@normanlindsay.com

100 years of wedding dresses at Everglades 1880 to 1980



Photograph credit: © Cavalcade - Timeline Photography

The Friends of Everglades are holding a fabulous display of wedding dresses through the ages staged by The North Shore Cavalcade of History and Fashion. The presentation is accompanied by a fascinating talk on changes to wedding dresses over the years.

at the Leura Golf Club
1 Sublime Point Road, Leura
on Saturday 12 April 2014
2pm.

\$35 per person
\$30 National Trust members
includes afternoon tea.

Bookings essential - phone
Anita McIlwrath 4784 1974 or
Birgitta Sandstrom
0448 219 254

Wendy Hawkes to talk about the Cooks

THE LIVES of Sir Joseph Cook and Dame Mary Cook will be the topic for the guest speaker, Wendy Hawkes at a BMACHO general meeting to be held on Saturday, February 8, at the Paragon Restaurant, Katoomba.

Wendy Hawkes, is the cultural development officer with Lithgow City Council and curator at Eskbank House, Lithgow, where an exhibition about the Cooks was recently staged.

Wendy was to have been the guest speaker at a general meeting last

HMS Bounty cannonball on display

A CANNONBALL from HMS Bounty is currently part of an exhibition at Hawkesbury Regional Museum at Windsor.

A very special recent acquisition, the cannonball is from HMS Bounty, infamous as the vessel whose crew mutinied and cast off their commander, William Bligh.

This is one of the best-known stories in the English-speaking world, and to have a material part of it in a local museum is very exciting, particularly because of Bligh's association with the Hawkesbury:

After the mutiny, Bligh came to New South Wales as governor, and helped the Hawkesbury to recover from the disastrous flood of 1806.

He established a farm for himself at present-day Pitt Town, installing Andrew Thompson as manager, and was supported by the people of the Hawkesbury in the conflict with John Macarthur and his cronies that culminated in what became known as the Rum Rebellion.

The relic is a donation by Barry Craft, who spent time on Pitcairn Island and was given the cannonball, as well as a replica of HMS Bounty made from local timber and using actual Bounty nails.

For more details T: 4560 4655 museum@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

year, however the meeting was cancelled because of the bushfires which raged through the Blue Mountains and Lithgow.

The Cooks moved to Lithgow in 1886 and Sir Joseph worked in the Vale of Clwydd Colliery as he studied and worked his way up through the unions and into politics. He became prime minister 27 years later.

A light lunch will be provided, in the Paragon (at BMACHO expense), at approximately 12.30 pm

After lunch, from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm (or earlier) a workshop will be conducted, where a suggested format for an

"Explorers Cultural Trail" brochure will be presented.

Those attending the workshop will be asked for input into this project.

Please RSVP by email j.koperberg@bigpond.com or



Wendy Hawkes

phone Jan Koperberg on (02) 4751 5834

When: Saturday, February 8, 2014 from 10.30 am to 3.30 pm **Where:** Paragon Restaurant, Katoomba Street, Katoomba.

Cost to participants: FREE.

Yvonne Jenkins memorial award

YVONNE JENKINS of Rydal was a well known family historian and author of several books on family history in the Bowenfels, Rydal and surrounding areas.

She was the convenor of the Lithgow and District Family History Society in 1986 and encouraged members to write stories about their ancestors.

The Lithgow and District Family History Society has chosen to commemorate Ms Jenkins memory each year by conducting the Yvonne Jenkins Memorial Award.

Entry is open to members and non-members of the society and is in the form of a short essay (1000 words).

The topic for the 2014 award is "My Ancestor was a.....".

The winner will receive a certificate and one year's membership of the society.

Entries close on April 30 and must be accompanied by an entry form, available on the society's [website www.lisp.com.au/ldfhs](http://www.lisp.com.au/ldfhs).

DIARY DATE; Blue Mountains History Conference at the Carrington Hotel, Katoomba May 10, 2014 j.koperberg@bigpond.com

Lesser known accounts of early and mid-19th Century journeys over the Blue Mountains

by Peter Rickwood

Dr Peter Rickwood the researcher and author of this article is a regular contributor to *HERITAGE and* in describing some of the perils faced by lesser known travellers than the three celebrated explorers, he has meticulously transcribed reports which have appeared in the earliest publications of the colony.

Peter is currently the editor of BMACHO's *Blue Mountains History Journal* which late last year released its fourth online edition although hard copies are available and will in time become a collector's item. He is a member of Blue Mountains Historical Society and its former president.



Introduction

The diaries of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth relating to their discovery of a route over the Blue Mountains in 1813, of Evans in extending that route to Bathurst in 1814, and of Cox in building the road, all predate the type of journey that is of concern here.

Well known, and often cited, are the descriptions of journeys over the Blue Mountains road that were collated by Mackaness in his "Fourteen Journeys"¹. Amongst these are accounts of travel on the 'road' by Antill (1815), Macquarie (1815), Quoy, Guadichaud and Pellion (1819), Hawkins (1822), Field (1822), Lesson (1824), Dumaresq (1827), Backhouse (1835), Darwin (1836), Meredith (1839) and Stanger (1841) - many published long after the year of their journey. Accounts by 'celebrities' such as Louisa Meredith² and Rachel Henning³ have recently been followed by John Low's discussion of the travels of Mrs Mary Elizabeth Martindale.⁴

But lying in the newspaper archives are some enchanting and graphic descriptions by lesser mortals whose turn of phrase warrants repeating. [The quality of copies of newspaper extracts is seldom good so what follows are carefully made transcriptions.]

The Journey Commences

In 1858 one writer, appalled by the opposing traffic on the road, pleaded for a railway:

"The first thing that attracts the attention of the traveller leaving Sydney for the far west is the long string of drays laden with wood for the fires of the good people of that city, which he so

frequently encounters, and as he passes dray after dray, with the miserable horses crawling and staggering under their heavy loads, he cannot but wonder why the railway is not available to this purpose, and so much labour and horse flesh devoted to some more useful and profitable occupation."⁵

A railway service to Penrith did not commence until July 1862⁶ so prior to that year horse conveyances still had to be used and another who travelled in 1855 described the harrowing conditions encountered before even reaching the Nepean River:

"I crossed the eastern creek, and on descending the hill opposite Minchinbury was enveloped in a perfect quagmire. There I got stuck up to the axel, and but for the assistance of two friendly good-natured bullock drivers, who lent their aid, I might have remained at the mercy of the elements all the live-long night.

After being released from this unpleasant dilemma, and scraping off the mud and dirt which was pretty heavy and thick upon my members, I made an effort to get along through a mere pond of mud and slush knee-deep, for half-a-mile long. Oh ! shade of M'Adam, thy mantle has not yet descended upon the sapient members of the trust for this great thoroughfare, for it is sadly, it is grossly neglected; the chasms and rents which stand yawning wide to embowel man and horse, are fearful to contemplate."⁷

And with that traveller's experience already soured it is not surprising to read his summary:

"It was my fate some days since, from urgent circumstances, to make a journey to the western interior for the first time, and I earnestly hope it may be the last, for the dangers and difficulties I have experienced

through the execrable state of the roads, and other obstacles were truly appalling."



Figure 1. *Emu Ferry - sketch by Conrad Martens, 15 May 1835*

State Library of NSW, DL PX 24/No.3

<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=446239> <Accessed 6 January 2014>

Continued page 12

Crossing the Nepean River

Crossing the Nepean River in those times was quite an 'adventure' (Figure 1), an informative account of which was published anonymously in 1858:

"A quarter of an hour's drive brings us to the banks of the Nepean, which have a gradual slope down to the river. The punt is all ready, and we are slowly driven into it, coach, horses, passengers, and baggage; but the puntman is not quite ready; he presently shows up, and with provoking coolness sets about adjusting preliminaries for our puntation across the river, which is a fine sheet of water. About a quarter of an hour, or perhaps more, is spent in slowly dragging us over, by means of hawsers extended from one bank to the other, and traversing over certain pulleys fixed to a kind of hand-rail or frame, which protects the passengers and cattle from falling over the sides of the punt. This piece of business is an index to the whole history of travelling on the Great Western Road. Nearly seventy years have passed away since the colony was founded; vast strides have been made by us in the interval, in settlement and civilization, but we still use the rude punt to cross the Nepean. The Western District yields a large revenue to the public treasury, and yet we have not a bridge across the Nepean, distant only 33 miles from the metropolis."⁸

But the real journey was only about to begin and according to this description even the approach to the Lapstone Hill proved uncomfortable as late as 1858:

"After a great deal of pulling, and tugging, and straining, we are conveyed across in our barbarous conveyance; the chain in front of the horses is cast off, and away they plunge as if eager for a gallop; but they are now on the wrong side of the Nepean for galloping. Large boulders crop out of the ground as if they had been purposely placed there to upset the coach and break our necks.

'...with a crash and a bump; the shock is tremendous; your seat seems to leave you in mid-air, and down you come with a horrible jolt...'

The horses make a desperate plunge; the wheels slowly rotate until they have arrived at the apex of these egg-shaped stones, when, all of a sudden, down go the front wheels with a crash and a bump; the shock is tremendous; your seat seems to leave you in mid-air, and down you come with a horrible jolt which shocks your whole frame, your teeth coming together with a gnash which sends fire out of your eyes; your bones knock against each other as though they would break off short, and you now for the first time begin to realise the dreadful stories of

your friends about the Western Road. Shock No. 1 is the initiatory shock; shocks *ad infinitum* follow closely upon its heels; you almost feel inclined to implore the driver to stop and let you out were it not for very shame. By this time you get on to the last decent piece of road between the Bathurst Plains and the Nepean, and are whirled over Emu Plains at the rate of about eight miles an hour."⁹

The Ascent of Lapstone Hill

An 1827 account of an ascent contrasts with those of most travellers who have described this obstacle in terms amounting to 'horrendous' (Figure 2):

"The first ascent of the Blue Mountains, by this new Lapstone Hill is excellent. It would be perfectly practicable to take over, as I said before, a train of twenty-four pounders. ... it would ... be a fine sight to see fifty bullocks harnessed to a gun marching in array up the bristling hill."¹⁰

Nevertheless the topography was deemed to be 'frightening' even in 1858:

"A couple of miles over a rough cobblestone road now carries you, across the Emu Plains, to the foot of the Blue Mountains, and here you commence the ascent of Lapstone Hill.

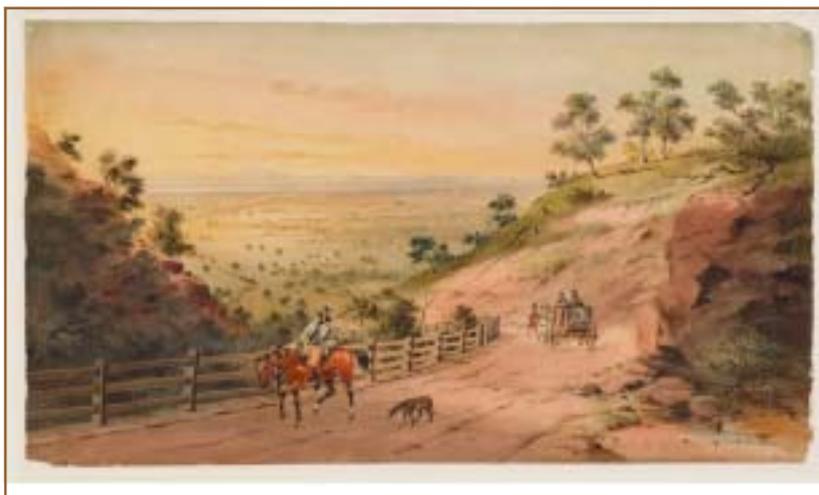


Figure 2. Lapstone Hill - watercolour (no date) by Samuel Thomas Gill (1818-1880).

Dixson Galleries, State Library of NSW DG v*/Sp Coll/Gill/12

<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=840625>

<Accessed 6 January 2014>

Continued from page 12

After a short distance, you find yourself on a broad road escarped from the side of a tremendous precipice of sandstone formation, and following the windings of a deep chasm; on the left, the rock rises some hundreds of feet in perpendicular height above you, crowned with loose masses, hundreds of tons in weight, which seem ever about to fall, and, like an avalanche, crush all beneath them; on the right, you look down for a fearful height when nothing is to be seen but heavy masses of rock, dark sombre looking trees, and scrub clinging to the side of the precipice, which gradually fade into gloom and darkness; while the precipitous and rocky mountain on the opposite side covered with stunted trees, casts his shadow over the road and seems to defy the power of man to reach his summit. The ravine now becomes more and more shallow as you proceed, and a sudden turn in the road leads to a fine bridge of one arch, over which the escarped way takes a sharp turn or two, and leaving the ravine and precipices behind soon leads to the top of the mountain and places you upon a table land from which you will not descend for forty miles. The road up the pass is in good condition, with the exception of a couple of hundred tons of rock piled upon the bridge for the purpose either of testing the strength of the arch, or trying the skill of the teamsters who have sufficient to contend with in the sharp turn on both sides.”¹¹

On the Lower Blue Mountains

Conditions were still bad in 1858 immediately after the ascent:

“... to the top of Lapstone Hill, two miles beyond Wascoe’s Inn, the road becomes very bad, the naked rocks protruding, and rendering it almost impassable; a little further on a Canadian cord wood road has been laid down for about a quarter of a mile, the logs used being in the round and of unequal diameter, rendering the floor rough, and the vibration of the timber irregular – consequently it is full

‘...I discovered a large white tarantula, about the size of a dollar, just over my head...’

of mud holes, and forms one of the worst parts of a bad road. Still further on, and a patch of squared log work occurs; this is much better, and appears to stand, but is not equal to the sawn plank.”¹²

And just a decade after the road had been completed, even a horse ride could be a challenging experience as was found in 1827:

“We now rode on for Springwood, and had an unpleasant ride the last six or seven miles in the dark, the road not being here so good, many stumps being left standing in the middle, on which my tired horse made a frequent stumble. From Sydney to Springwood in one day is no joke, to one not accustomed to the saddle: and I thought this ten or twelve miles in the dark, longer than all the rest of the journey put together. Once or twice, from the blackness of the night, and the narrowness of the road, I got into the bush, till suddenly brought up by a thick scrub, which the horse could not penetrate, or receiving a knock on the head from an impending bough, I was obliged to exert my lungs and cooey out for my companion, who cooeyed in return, and by the sound of his voice I was enabled to find my way back to the road. I thought we should never get to Springwood, and from the horrid length of the miles, had I been asked, at the moment, how I liked the Blue Mountains, I must certainly have answered with Maiochi ‘*piu no que si.*’ At last the yelping of some dozen angry curs, resounding through the silent forest, gave symptoms of the abode of man – it must be Springwood – but it was a miserable melancholy hole – not a glimmer of light of any kind shone askaunt (*sic*) the lofty trees, and but for the noisy dogs, we might have passed it in the dark. I got off my saddle with a slight groan, and was soon convinced by the dark

dungeon-appearance of the place, we were not exactly on the Bath road. “How many quarts of corn shall I give your horses?” said a private of the 57th regt. one of the road party under charge of a corporal usually stationed at this first stage of the Mountain road. I had previously heard that our horses would be very badly off going over the Mountains, but I was not prepared to hear of corn being sold by the quart. I thought I could not do better than refer the good natured soldier to the horse himself, and requested he might have for his supper as much as he could eat.”¹³

Before the coming of the railway to Wentworth Falls in June 1867 and to Mount Victoria in May 1868¹⁴, establishments on the Mountains often only provided ‘very basic’ accommodation and at Springwood in 1827 it could be zoologically ‘interesting’:

“I discovered a large white tarantula, about the size of a dollar, just over my head, upon a piece of cotton that served as a curtain to the couch or bed, outside of which we lay. We had made up our minds to fleas and bugs in quantity, and were not disappointed, but had made no reckoning for any of the spider species; my companion therefore seized a fork to run this tarantula through, but though an excellent shot in general, he missed his aim, and the tarantula fell down upon the bed, ... As an additional comforter to us, one of the soldiers in the adjoining room cried out “ah! there’s a good many tarantulopes (*sic*) in that ‘ere room.” So what with the fleas, bugs, and the aforesaid tarantulopes, and the noise of two entire horses, who were fighting and kicking one another all night, loose in the paddock, we had not a wink of sleep, and were glad to jump out of our dungeon at the first peep of day.”¹⁵

‘...the passengers drunk, to the annoyance of the sober...’

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Coach travellers were at the mercy of the driver when it came to the number and frequency of the stops. One in 1858 wrote that after leaving the Pilgrim Inn at Blaxland:

“Thus we go on hour after hour, stopping at public-houses where there is no need whatever to stop, but to make one portion of the passengers drunk, to the annoyance of the sober portion, and to fritter away the time which would be infinitely better spent by the post-master in Bathurst, on the following evening, in sorting and delivering the letters to the good people of that town, about whom the mail contractor or his servants do not appear to care very much.”¹⁶

Some parts of the Western Road were particularly bleak in the early years of its existence:

“Near the 16 mile tree, for the trees are marked all the way to Bathurst, is the spot where some years ago, a gentleman of the name of O’Brien lost himself. It is supposed he left the ridge for the purpose of obtaining water for himself or horse, and going into the dell, met with some accident, and died, as he has never since been heard of. The horse was found some weeks afterwards, grazing on the mountain road with his saddle on. It is a melancholy spot, – “all the evils of

dereliction rush upon the thoughts.” We imagine the dying unfortunate, ...”¹⁷

There is a corroborating, but less detailed, report of that disappearance¹⁸ without specifying that location, which is not a well known modern site – so where was the 16 mile tree? William Cox wrote in his diary:

“August 26. — At 10 a.m. arrived at Martin’s ...”

“August 27. — Measured to the 16th mile, immediately after which the ground got very rocky, and in half-a-mile we came to a high mountain, which will cost much labour to make a road over.”¹⁹

“September 3. — ... The road finished to Caley’s heap of stones, 17¾ miles”.²⁰

[Evans saw Caley’s Heap of Stones on the ridge at the W end of the boundary between numbers 2 & 3 Caley Lane, Linden²¹, from where Cox reported that there was a view of “A table rock...”²². The identity of that summit is uncertain; it might be what is now known as ‘Flat Top’ (Figure 3A) which lay c.14 km to the WNW in the direction that they were travelling, or more likely it was the more prominent feature which in 1804 Caley called ‘Table Hill’ (Figure 3B) that is c.20 km to the NNW.

Irrespective, that comment indicates that it relates to a vantage point on the top of the ridge whereas the present location of Caley’s Repulse (as it is now called - Figure 4) is below the ridge line so it cannot be in the original position - the offset from the true location is c.50 m in an ENE direction.]

Based on that measurement and measuring along the route of Evans



Figure 4. The present location of Caley’s Repulse.

Photograph: Peter Rickwood, 2013

Survey, the 16 mile mark was between Faulconbridge and Linden at about Weemala Avenue. Thereabouts is the junction of four deep valleys (Figure 5) with Weemala Avenue having been constructed along a narrow ridge trending to the NNW and Cox’s Road (now the Great Western Highway) along a NE-SW aligned narrow ridge - a fire prone and bleak spot indeed.



Figure 5. Topographic map of East Linden. © Land and Property Information NSW 2013 © City of Blue Mountains 2013

The “high mountain” mentioned by Cox was the summit where today is Linden reservoir²

³.

Continued page 15



Figure 3A. Flat Top



Figure 3B. Mount Bell (aka Table Hill)
Photographs: Peter Rickwood 2013

'...the sooner we get off the mountain the better...'

Continued from page 14

When travellers eventually got to Lawson (Figure 6) in 1855 the road conditions ahead were no better:

"At Perry's Blue Mountain Inn, which is reached a little before noon, and which terminates another stage, the country descends, forming a valley, above which, in the distance, tower the mountains from which the inn takes its name. Hitherto, the roads, although nowhere as good as could be desired, have been tolerably firm and regular. After leaving the Inn just named, however, a striking change for the worse begins to be perceptible. In some places, the rock appears at a very dangerous height above the sand and gravel with which the road is covered; while in other places, wide and deep ruts render very careful driving necessary, in order to keep at a distance the probability of an upset."²⁴

But further on there were inns to distract travellers, such as at Woodford and Wentworth Falls:

"Well, here is the Twenty-Mile Hollow. Don't go in! "Why?" you ask. Simply because we wish to perform a day's journey, and if we once get in there, our day's work is at an end, for the agreeable host and hostess will surround you with so many comforts that you cannot leave them to face the d—d ugly road again. The sooner we get off the mountain the better, so let us push on to the "Weatherboard," which is a very decent inn; the present proprietor has made wonderful alterations – in fact, completely metamorphosed the place, and it wanted it (*sic*)."²⁵

Even in 1827 Wentworth Falls was a 'settlement' of note (Figures 7 & 8), but this description would not have appeal for a modern traveller!



Figure 6. The second Blue Mountain Inn - built 1875.
Royal Australian Historical Society Inc., Walker Collection U0152

"The weather boarded hut was only two miles further; and there we refreshed, at the highest inhabited spot, of the Blue Mountains. It is a bleak and forbidding place, at the entrance of Jamison's Valley; the soil, is a wet and rotten peat, that after the least shower, will take a horse up to the girths at every step. In addition to the corporal's party stationed in this sterile region, we were surprised at finding an opposition shop newly opened, for the entertainment of travellers. What will not the spirit of English competition bring about! Here we are in one of the wildest spots in nature, thirty miles in the midst of the mountains of Australia, and nearly 4000 feet high; and yet the question arose "which house shall we go to?" We patronised the nearest, and found ourselves and horses, after a couple of hours, all the better for the rest."²⁷

Establishments on the Mountains only provided 'survival' food, and even as late as 1858 that was not always available:

"Daylight breaks in and we draw up to get a cup of coffee at a public-house some distance from the road side; we get a cup of some kind of decoction (*sic*)

resembling coffee in colour, but in all other respects tasting like burnt maize, sans milk, sans flavour, sans relish; having hastily swallowed the cup of coffee, the modest charge of one shilling is made, and we set forth upon our journey once more. A couple of hours driving bring us to Black Heath, where we ought to have breakfast if matters were properly arranged, but where we cannot from some cause of which everyone is ignorant."²⁸

Thus what we now know as the Upper Blue Mountains was reached, and according to this 1858 writer the road improved although he seems to have misconceived ideas about the slope of the land!

"The traveller has now a desert mountain road before him. From the soft and friable nature of the sandstone – the only stone to be obtained along the ridge for many miles – it is in the worst possible condition, and with this material it is equally impossible to keep it in repair. The road for the whole distance to Mount Victoria is carried along the crown of a ridge, with frequent escarpments, to avoid the many rocky peaks and summits that occur in its course;

'Finally the descent from Mount Victoria had to be faced.'

Continued from page 15

it rises by easy gradients until it reaches the Weatherboard Hut, and then gradually descends to the top of Mount Victoria. It requires nothing but a hard solid roadway to make it one of the best mountain roads in the world; as it is, it may be classed with the worst."²⁹

Finally the descent from Mount Victoria had to be faced. In 1827 the unstated route was by Lawsons Long Alley:

"The descent down Mount York did not surprise me, after so much has been said about it. It was the new road and comparatively easy. It is perfectly safe, but rather too narrow, as it will soon become cut up by water channels, after a winter's rain. It should be at least twice the present breadth, with a deep grooved gutter on the high side for the water, and a low parapet on the off-side, of solid stone work, with numerous holes underneath, like scuppers in a ship's deck, to let the water off. We soon arrived at the bottom, where the ground was strewn with fallen trees, in great numbers, all regularly arranged by the road side. As the country was by no means thinly timbered, I could not conceive what these trees were intended for. They all appeared more or less black by age; and it was only after my companion had rode up from the rear, that I understood how the trees came there. ... It appears that all carts coming down the Big Hill, as this is called, must, ere (?sic) they descend, cut down a tree at the top, to fix behind the dray, instead of locking the wheel. They were all of great weight and size, and I should have thought much too large for such a purpose."³⁰

However by 1848 the Pass of Mount Victoria had long been completed and was then the normal route off the Blue Mountains, but this 'better' descent still troubled some travellers:

"Descending Mount Victoria by a somewhat precipitous road, covered with loose stones like cannon balls, a viaduct presents itself, connecting the road which is about to be left behind, with a road cut out of the rock in an opposite mountain. This viaduct or causeway is, at a rough guess, about one hundred yards long, is about sufficiently wide barely to allow of two teams passing each other, should such an emergency ever arise, is according to one of the passengers on the coach, who is familiar with the district, 1000 feet high, and is curbed (?) on either side by a row of small flags placed upright, end to end. This peculiar parapet which I previously had occasion to notice along the road, gives the causeway a baby-house appearance which contrasts most singularly with the stupendous nature of the works in other respects. Passing to the other side, the descent commences towards Hartley, which is now about four miles distant, the road being, for some length, somewhat similar to that

at Lapstone Hill – the hewn rock ascending on one side, while on the other the gully precipitously descends almost interminably. Here is shown the spot where, a short time since, the mail coach went over, killing two passengers out of seven. ... , where the broken carriage remains to this day."³¹

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to Graham Warmbath (Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc.) for providing electronic files of Figures 7 and 8.

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- ¹ Mackaness, G. (editor) (1965) *Fourteen Journeys over the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, 1813-1841*. Collected and Edited by George Mackaness. Horowitz Publications Inc. Pty. Ltd. and The Grahame Book Company Pty. Ltd., Sydney. 273pp.
- ² Meredith, Mrs. C. (1973) *Notes and Sketches of New South Wales During a Residence in the Colony from 1839-1844*. Ure Smith, Sydney. 164pp. [originally published 1844.][Mitchell Library 309.194402/1]
- ³ Adams, D. (editor) (1985) *The Letters of Rachel Henning*. Penguin Books. Ringwood, Victoria. 292pp. (1969, reprinted 1985).



Figure 7. *The Weatherboard Hut (1814-c.1836)*²⁶ - 1815 watercolour by John William Lewin (1770-1819). State Library of NSW; PXE 888/3

Early journeys in the Blue Mountains

Continued from page 16

⁴ Low, J. (2011) The Martindale Family and the Sketchbook of Mary Elizabeth Martindale. *Blue Mountains History Journal* 2: 1- 14.

⁵ column 1 in Anonymous (1858b) The Western Road. [By a Gold-digger] The Sydney Morning Herald, 22 November 1858, p10, cols.1-3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.newsarticle13019771> <Accessed 12 November 2013>

⁶ Anonymous (1905) Statement showing the dates on which the various sections of the Railways were opened for traffic. Appendix IX, p.22 in Joint Volumes of Papers presented to the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly and ordered to be printed during the Second Session of 1904 (being the First Session of the Twentieth Parliament). Volume III. Sydney, New South Wales.

⁷ column 1 in Winkle, P. (1855) The Perils and Impediments of a Journey to the Far West. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 May 1855, p.10, col.1. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article12969496> <Accessed 12 November 2013>

⁸ column 1 in Anonymous (1858a) A visit to the capital of the Western District. *Empire*, 29 March 1858, p.6, cols.1-3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60427148> <Accessed 12 November 2013>

⁹ column 2 in reference 8.

¹⁰ column 2 in X.Y.Z. (1827a) A ride to Bathurst. Letter III. *The Australian*, 20 March 1827, p.2, cols.2-3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article37074865> <Accessed 12 November 2013>

¹¹ column 1 in reference 5.

¹² column 2 in reference 5.

¹³ column 2 in reference 10.

¹⁴ see reference 6

¹⁵ column 2 in reference 10.

¹⁶ column 2 in reference 8.

¹⁷ column 3 in reference 10.

¹⁸ column 2 in Anonymous (1827b) Domestic Intelligence. *The Monitor*, 1 November 1827, p.3, cols.2-3.

¹⁹ p.63 in Cox, W. (1901) *Memoirs of William Cox, J.P. Lieutenant and Paymaster of N.S.W. Corps or 102nd. Regiment. Late of Clarendon, Windsor.* Sydney and

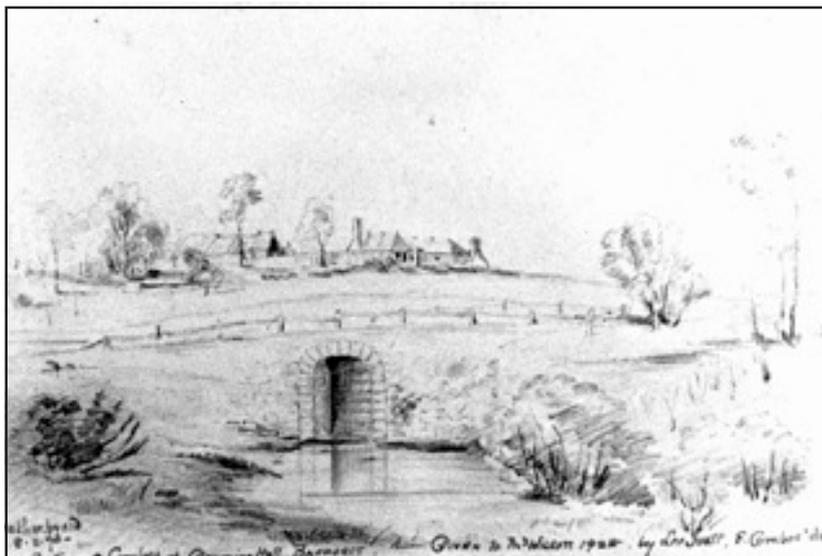


Figure 8. The Weatherboard Inn (1826-c.1880) - 1873 sketch by Edward Coombes (1830-1895). Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc., P1238

Brisbane: William Brooks & Co., Printers. Library of Australian History, Facsimile Series Number 21, 1979. 149pp.

²⁰ p.64 in reference 19.

²¹ pp.23-25 in McCann, B. (2009) A Bicentennial Project. Tracing the Original Route of Cox's Road over the Blue Mountains. Chapter 2, pp.19-27 in Yeaman, J., McCann, B. and Ivin, W.C. (2009) *A Treatise of Cox's Way or "Footsteps in Time" initiated by John Yeaman, City Engineer, B.M.C.C.* Winmalee, N.S.W. 95pp. [Mitchell Library 994.45/133][Blue Mountains City Library LS 994.45 YEA] [BMHS 303.01REF].

²² p.74 in Andrews, A.E.J. (Editor) (1984) *The Devil's Wilderness: George Caley's journey to Mount Banks, 1804.* Blubber House Press, Hobart. 150pp.

²³ p.6 in Searle, A.E. (1980) *Historic Woodford and Linden.* Springwood

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²⁴ column 3 in Anonymous (1855) Notes of a Journey through The Western District. *Empire*, 16 January 1855, p.5, cols.3-4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60202767> <Accessed 12 November 2013>

²⁵ column 2 in Anonymous (1848) A trip to the Far West. *Bell's Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer*, 12 February 1848, p1, cols.1-3.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article59767182> <Accessed 12 November 2013>

²⁶ Warmbath, G. and Rickwood, P.C., 2010. *The Weatherboard. Hobby's Outreach*, 22(1) April-May 2010, p.1-3.

²⁷ column 3 in reference 10.

²⁸ column 2 in reference 8.

²⁹ column 2 in reference 5.

³⁰ column 2 in reference 10.

³¹ column 3 in reference 23.

Honour for Andrew Tink

POPULAR former politician, and historian Andrew Tink (pictured) was listed in the 2014 Australia Day Honours list and becomes a (AM) Member of the Order of Australia.



Andrew was recognised for his services to the NSW Parliament, local history and the law.

He has been a great supporter of BMACHO and its member societies being readily available as an excellent speaker.

He has had published three major works: *William Charles Wentworth - Australia's greatest native son*; *Lord Sydney - The Life of Tommy Townshend*; and *Air Disaster Canberra - The plane crash that destroyed a government*. In July 2013, Tink was appointed as an Adjunct Professor at the Macquarie University Law School.

Joan Smith retires to Melbourne

JOAN SMITH who was highly respected locally for her work as Blue Mountains Historical Society's research officer, has retired from this position.

She is going to live in Melbourne to be close to her daughter and family. This is a loss for the society which will be deeply felt for some time to come.

President of Blue Mountains Historical Society, Mrs Judy Barham said: "Joan joined the Society in 1997. She became research officer and secretary in 2004.

"Joan was an active committee member until she retired from the committee in 2011 while still remaining research officer.

"Joan's contribution to the society has been enormous.

"She has done the research required for over 1,000 house histories which has greatly added to the pool of local knowledge in our files.

"Often phone queries came in which she could answer without hesitation.

"Members with that pool of knowledge are hard to replace. It takes time, dedication and an inquiring mind.

"She was highly regarded by members of the Blue Mountains City Council for whom she did occasional research," Mrs Barham said.

Members of the society who want a quick answer to a question, will no longer be able to say "Let's ask Joan. She'll know".

"We will miss you Joan but the society is so grateful to you for the great contribution you made and we wish you well in your new life."

Joan Smith was a member of the original management committee of the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations and her valuable contribution was appreciated.

The railway to the west

AS ALL STUDENTS will know the Blue Mountains was first crossed by Europeans in 1813 and within a very short time Evans had surveyed a route and Cox and his party of convicts had built a road to Bathurst. It was not until the late 1860s when the Lapstone Hill section of the western railway was conquered that the real movement of stock and grain was able to be achieved.



Doug Knowles

Cost constraints by the colonial government meant that expensive tunnels could not be built, so a zig zag layout was devised to get the single track line over the top of Lapstone Hill.

The limitations of the zig zag were later eased by building a single track tunnel through the top of the ridge in 1892.

This single track tunnel created almost as many problems as it was supposed to solve. In 1910 it was decided to build a double track railway through the Glenbrook Creek Gorge.

President of Glenbrook and District Historical Society, Doug Knowles who has lived in the area most of his life with his inquisitive mind is an excellent choice as a speaker on this subject at this Blue Mountains History Conference on May 10 at the Carrington Hotel, Katoomba.

For conference bookings contact Jan Koperberg
j.koperberg@bigpond.com

Sydney's hard rock story ...the cultural heritage of trachyte

WHAT IS TRACHYTE and how did it become the unsung hero of Sydney's building stones?

The answer is found in this fascinating story of how hard stone quarried in the Southern Highlands of NSW became the city's most important stone after sandstone.

The title provides an apt description: trachyte was Sydney's hard rock.

Sandstone with all its virtues was the premier building stone of Sydney's early and middle years but trachyte had qualities sandstone lacked and so it perfectly complemented the 'yellowblock' of our heritage buildings.

Sydney's hard rock provided what sandstone, with all its beauty, could not provide.

This tough, distinctively coloured igneous stone was first quarried at Mount Gibraltar near Bowral in the 1880s and soon began appearing in the kerbs and gutters along the growing city's streets.

Soon it was adopted by builders and architects and can still be seen overhead in the keystones of the great buildings as well as under foot, in myriad small and large scale projects throughout New South Wales and beyond.

Its importance in the city is why the authors have called their tale *Sydney's Hard Rock Story*.

The book traces trachyte's extensive uses, starting with its geology and some of the dramas of Bowral's 'Gib' and its quarrymen.

It continues by examining its basic utilitarian beginnings like kerbing. After designers were awakened to its qualities they used trachyte to create some of our finest monuments, foundation stones, commemorative plaques and paving.



350 George Street, Sydney, formerly The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States building. Its American architect, Edward Raht, believed it would last 'a thousand years'. The facade is almost entirely of trachyte.

A special feature of the book, showcasing many fine and surprising examples of this special stone, is the illustrated trachyte walk in central Sydney. Handsomely illustrated throughout with 245 illustrations including 25 colour photographs.

Publication date: April 2014

Retail price: \$29.95

Potential readers: Those fascinated with Sydney's built environment, architects, and engineers.

The authors

ROBERT IRVING is an architectural historian, a fellow and former president of the Royal Australian Historical Society (1987) and was a senior lecturer in architecture at UNSW.

He was the co-author of *Identifying Australian Architecture* published in 1989 as well as several other works including *First Views of Australia 1788 - 1825*, *The History and Design of the Australian House* and *Fine Houses of Sydney*.

RON POWELL is an architect and stone consultant. For a decade until recently he was manager of the NSW Centenary Stonework program, which provides strategic approach to the 'catch-up' of state-owned, heritage stone buildings and monuments; he was also landscape director for Darling Harbour and public domain co-ordinator for the Pyrmont/Ultimo Redevelopment.

A resident of the Blue Mountains Ron is a member of the Blue Mountains City Council's Heritage Advisory Committee.

NOEL IRVING is a research assistant and picture researcher who has worked on publications including *Paradise Purgatory Hell Hole* and *Twentieth Century Architecture in Wollongong*.

He was co-author of *Donald Thomas Esplin Architect: His Life and Work*.

Noel has also served as a member of Sydney City Council's Sandstone and Trachyte Committee.

Wasteland, Wilderness, Wonderland.

Getting to know Sydney's Sandstone Country Gil Jones

Wasteland, Wilderness, Wonderland is the latest publication produced by Blue Mountain Education Research Trust (BMERT) at Lawson.

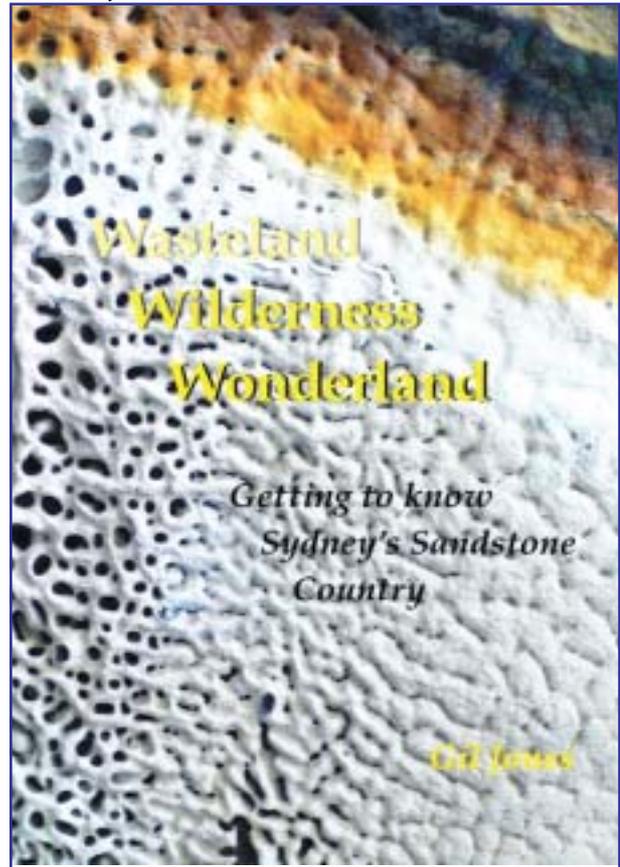
The official launch of Gil Jones book will be at Jamison Park, Wentworth Falls on Saturday, 12 noon on February 1, 2014.

Other publications produced by BMERT, can be viewed at their website <http://www.catholica.com.au/marketplace/bmert/> or contact BMACHO secretary, Jan Koperberg j.koperberg@bigpond.com for a full list, with jpgs of the covers and a descriptive list of the publications.

BMERT encourages those with interesting historical and cultural heritage research to commit it to paper and have it published. The books are beautifully illustrated and would make a fine gift.

The following is the description for *Wasteland, Wilderness, Wonderland*: Sydney city stands on the eastern rim of a shallow basin defined by deeply dissected sandstone plateaus encircling the lowlands of western Sydney and extending west to Lithgow, north to the Hunter Valley, and south to the Illawarra escarpment.

In this book, surveyors, scientists, writers and artists are joined in the physical and intellectual exploration of Sydney's sandstone country – its landscape and landscape history, and its distinctively Australian vegetation with its Gondwanan inheritance.



Also recalled is the ruthless dispossession of its first people whose rock engravings and cave paintings provide a glimpse of a sense of country and belonging which is critical to a fulfilled future in this privileged place.

Recommended retail price - \$40 including GST, plus postage and handling ISBN 978-0-646-91496-1

Accolades for *HERITAGE*

THROUGH THE YEARS we have received numerous e-mail and communications congratulating those associated with the production of *HERITAGE* and this encouragement is really appreciated.

We strive for excellence, but regret that some times we fall short of the mark. There are many people involved in this publication from writers, researchers and contributors to proofreaders and all deserve credit for the work they are doing to keep alive an interest in our heritage and history and promote it as a living legend.

Space will not allow the publication of each accolade received and again this edition records just a sample of those received since the last edition.

From Dr Peter Stanbury OAM – Individual member of BMACHO: *Another great issue; especially the lead article and yours about the sealing of the road. In fact full of well written news, very welcome in Phnom Penh. Elections here in a week's time, present PM has been in power for 34 years, but will be challenged this time so lots of marching, loudspeakers, roads closed and mass demonstrations here.*

From Kate Santben: Look forward to reading *HERITAGE* and congratulations on five years of publication...

From Wendy Blaxland, author and descendant of Gregory Blaxland: Thanks so much for another great issue, and many thanks for everything you have done and continue to do to keep the history of the Blue Mountains alive.

From Len Ashworth, OAM – Editor Lithgow Mercury : Congratulations on another great effort. I love reading it (and occasionally stealing from it).

From John Low, OAM - author and historian: *Thank you for the latest edition of HERITAGE and for all the work you put into its production. It is one of the most interesting 'newsletters' around and greatly appreciated.*

From Marcia Osterberg-Olsen Mt Victoria and District Historical Society: *Thanks for the wonderful HERITAGE newsletters.*

The kangaroo that could rewrite history

AN IMAGE of what is thought to be a kangaroo on a 16th-century processional could lend weight to the theory that the Portuguese were the first explorers to set foot on Australian soil, before the Dutch or English.

The document, acquired by Les Enluminures Gallery in New York, shows a sketch of an apparent kangaroo ("canguru" in Portuguese) nestled in its text and is dated between 1580 and 1620.

It has led researchers to believe images of the marsupial were already being circulated by the time the Dutch ship Duyfken - long thought to have been the first European vessel to visit Australia - landed in 1606.

Portugal was extremely secretive about her trade routes during this period, explaining why their presence there wasn't widely known.

The pocket-sized manuscript, known as a processional, contains text and music for a liturgical procession and is inscribed with the name Caterina de Carvalho, believed to be a nun from Caldas da Rainha in western Portugal.

Peter Trickett, an award-winning historian and author of *Beyond Capricorn*, has long argued that a Portuguese maritime expedition first mapped the coast of Australia in 1521 - 22, nearly a century before the Dutch landing.



National Library of Australia curator of maps Martin Woods said that while the image looked like a kangaroo or a wallaby, it alone was not proof enough to alter Australia's history books.

"The likeness of the animal to a kangaroo or wallaby is clear enough, but then it could be another animal in south-east Asia, like any number of deer species, some of which stand on their hind legs to feed off high branches," Dr Woods said.

"For now, unfortunately the appearance of a long-eared big-footed animal in a manuscript doesn't really add much." Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/16thcentury-manuscript-could-rewrite-australian-history-20140115-30vak.html#ixzz2qpBjYloh>

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 Mountain Education and Research Trust, 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 Historical Society Inc. (including Turkish Bath Museum), Mudgee Historical Society Inc., National Trust of Australia (NSW) - Blue Mountains Branch, National Trust of Australia (NSW) - Lithgow Branch, Nepean District Historical Society Inc., Paragon Restaurant - Katoomba, 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 2013-14 is: John Leary, OAM (president), Ian Jack (vice president), Jan Koperberg (secretary), Kevin Frappell, Wendy Hawkes, Doug Knowles, Patsy Moppett, Dick Morony (public officer), Scott Pollock and Jean Winston.

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.