

Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Inc.

ARTEFACTS



Occasional Papers Number 2

Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations
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**The texts of talks presented at a Conference held at
The Victoria & Albert Guesthouse, Mount Victoria
on 7 May 2016.**

Occasional Papers Number 2

II

Conference Sub-Committee:
Jan Koperberg, Patsy Moppett, Suzanne Smith & Roy Bennett

Editor: Dr Peter C. Rickwood

Cover Design and layout: Peter Hughes

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OPENING ADDRESS

Patsy Moppett,
(BMACHO President)
380 Yetholme Drive,
Yetholme, NSW 2795.
pmoppett@gmail.com

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet. We pay our respects to their elders past and present and the elders from other communities who may be here today.

Welcome to the village of Mount Victoria. Those of you who stayed here last night will have experienced this wonderful building, and maybe you will have had the chance to have a look around the village.

To other attendees, there are lots of interesting buildings and places to have a look at if you are going for a walk around the village at lunch time today, or after the meeting is finished. Other than this building, directly across the road is the Police Station, on the same side but up the hill a little is the Memorial Park with the War Memorial and some the lovely parklands to wander around in. On the corner at the top of the hill is the Imperial Hotel, and the Post Office is right at the intersection. Down the hill at the Railway Station is the Historical Society Museum - a fascinating place to visit - and the theatre (Mount Vic Flicks) is just around the corner in Harley Avenue.

So, do take this opportunity to have a wander.

The village came into being about 1866 and was originally known as One Tree Hill; it was not until the Railway Station was opened in 1868 that the name Mount Victoria started to be used. The Post Office was opened in 1866 and operated until it was decommissioned about 1978, but the building remains and openly displays some of the signage of its original purpose. The One Tree Hill Inn was opened in 1867 and now is The Victoria & Albert Guesthouse - the location where we are meeting today. The school opened in 1868.

This site was a land grant to Mary Finn (from Hartley) in the 1860s. The One Tree Hill Inn was renamed the Royal Hotel and as such changed hands many times but eventually William Lees acquired the premises in 1914, and he called it the Mount Victoria Hotel. Around about that time, he also bought the Imperial Hotel at the top of the hill and so he dominated hospitality trade in Mount Victoria for quite some time. But in 1943 this building became the Church of England Grammar School, and just after the war it was a convalescent home for retired servicemen, followed by a home for handicapped children. In 1975 it was taken over by Bob and Irene Reid, and today it has another new owner and is under the management of Roman & Katie, who will welcome you here today. So, this building has had many lives.

So just a bit of housekeeping before we start – toilets etc. Morning tea will be served in the Cockatoo Room and I believe there is a short story attached to the naming of that room, which Roman may fill us in on later. Lunch will be in the dining room which is out on the verandah beyond the Cockatoo Room.

Welcome everybody to our conference on Artefacts. I hope you enjoy your day, and maybe we will meet at some point and have a chat.

INTRODUCTION TO ARTEFACTS

Master of Ceremonies

Lynn Collins,

13 Smith Street,

Rozelle, NSW 2039

lynngcollins@inet.net.au

Welcome to ARTEFACTS

It's a timely theme to ponder in this cluttered world, when museums grapple to make sense of distant and modern history, where, for instance, a museum in Gunnedah continues to build more containers for artefacts dropped on their doorstep.... that are hoarded (Figure 1), and processed for expanding displays (Figures 2-4)....which I've noted thrill some visitors. But on my visit last year, I failed to find very much specifically about the town (how it evolved... why?), the region (what makes it distinct, significant..?) nor its people, through time.....



Photo Lynn Collins 2015

Figure 1. Artefacts to be processed, Gunnedah Rural Museum.

I was needed by the Gunnedah Rural Museum, as it represented my personal situation, dealing with Things – STUFF, at home – my attempting to DOWN-SIZE, fit everything into a terrace dwelling, with family – **what now needs to go...** what objects could I not bear to part with? All this material culture from past lives ...in Adelaide, Britain, Israel ...different personal situations in New South Wales? For some items there is a sense of obligation, to retain tools, books, photos, letters of antecedents...**but** I have brought from Adelaide a tall, pull-down drill-press my father in the 1950s bolted to the top of a chest of drawers in the workshop he virtually lived in, and invented

things...what of this cumbersome, anachronistic, worn, wonderful thing made of water-pipes that stands occupying scant space in my garage



Photo Lynn Collins 2015

Figure 2. Gunnedah Rural Museum.

Fortunately I now have a 6 year-old boy – who is developing into a Collector (tea-bag labels, footy cards, bottle tops, Lego personalities; Jewels (= shiny things and interesting stones, natural objects) he picks up in the street; interesting business cards and pamphlets... I feel I can leave a lot of my Down-sizing conundrums to him.

What could I not bear to part with? –

- (1) My partner, Jo, insists I keep a tattered jacaranda-coloured shirt with my Mum's darning and the collar she turned for me.
- (2) I value a beautiful miniature **clockwork train engine**, I have thus far kept carefully from The Boy.
- (3) **Stamps, coins, matchbox labels** – thousands of them, processed into albums – hard won since my



Photo Lynn Collins 2015

Figure 3. Gunnedah Rural Museum.

early teens, pored over, probably not so valuable,
...but part of my life, ...and my father's, that I built
on...

So, I've introduced myself, by way of objects....and I
thought I'd introduce each speaker through the day by



Photo Lynn Collins 2015

Figure 4. Artefacts, Gunnedah Rural Museum

way of Artefacts. To that end, I emailed each pro-
grammed speaker a week ago seeking responses re-
garding personal items of importance.

So...to our first Speaker:

Ian Jack: the esteemed historian and educator.... I posed the emailed question -

What object could you not bear to part with? Why?

His response....

“When I was a wee boy, I visited the archaeologists excavating a Roman fort in rural Dumfriesshire, near my home. This fort, on the very edge of the Roman world, had been burnt when the locals recaptured it nearly 2000 years ago and the granary and the granary still contained heaps of blackened grain. I was allowed to run my hands through this evocative pile of cereal and to take some away in a jar. It was my first confrontation with the artefact and its ability to connect one with the realities of life on a vanished site.

So I introduce Ian Jack –

- Senior Fellow at St. Andrew College, Sydney University and
- BMACHO Vice- President...

THE HISTORIAN AND THE ARTEFACT

(Plenary Lecture)

R. Ian Jack

St. Andrews College,
University of Sydney,-
19 Carillon Avenue,
Newtown, NSW 2042.

ijac0745@usyd.edu.au

Key words: Burial ground, coffin, pottery, *Cliefden*, quilts, *Cooerwull House*, Windsor.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the cultural heritage organisations that give BMACHO its name and its purpose have museum collections of some sort or another, and museums are by definition awash with artefacts. The term is very broad brush. Artefacts are simply things made by human agency, whether from scratch or through modification, so they include items of a bewildering variety. Artefacts can be made from almost anything and vary alarmingly in size. An artefact does not need to be portable or even moveable. Aesthetic appeal is no doubt a bonus but it is basically irrelevant. The worst of brutalist architecture is as much an artefact as a Fabergé Easter egg. And museums are just the beginning. The whole material world outside the museum doors is also brimful of artefacts, new and old. Our homes are bulging with artefacts, even though most people do not think of their possessions in these terms: indeed our homes are themselves artefacts.

I am approaching the artefact as a piece of evidence. As such, it doesn't really matter whether it is complete or broken, beautiful or plain or downright ugly. Museum curators need constantly to be reminded that the appearance of an item is not the only criterion for its acquisition and display. I admire beauty as much as the next chap, but the cardinal reason for preserving a museum object is the insight which it can give to another age.

The artefact should be as important and as essential to the historian of any period as written or spoken material. I have always rebelled against the distinction made between the historian and the prehistorian. The prehistorian relies solely on material evidence, what we might call archaeological evidence, whereas the historian relies primarily on the written word. 'Pre-history' means 'before history'. This terminological distinction implies that history can be compiled only after there is recorded speech. Yet the great interpreters of the Stone Ages or the Bronze Age saw them-

selves as posing historical questions about a preliterate society. Gordon Childe, the greatest Australian archaeologist of the twentieth century, reinvented early Europe, using, as he said,

"cultures instead of statesmen and migrations in places of battles" (Childe 1981)

all understood through the evidence of material things, meaningfully collected in a comprehensible context. In his valedictory lecture as he retired from the chair of Archaeology in London in 1958, Childe roundly claimed that;

"A prehistorian, like any other historian, should aim not only to describe, but also to explain;" (Childe 1981, p.173).

If one can write such sophisticated history from the artefactual evidence, 'like any other historian', aided only by the geological and the ecological context, how can one possibly justify the neglect of material culture once there is also written evidence? Yet too many professional historians of the literate world are exclusively library-based and have a manifest reluctance to go out into the environment or into the museum. This is happily much less true of local historians who instinctively recognise that one must know intimately the physicality of the place about which they are writing and that physicality includes both the nature of the land and water and the artefacts which have survived from the entire period of human occupation. The modern artefact can offer evidence just as potent as any ancient object.

There is a marvellous book entitled *Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage*. The author, an American academic called Bill Rathje, argued that:

"If archaeologists can learn important information about extinct societies from patterns in ancient garbage, then archaeologists should be able to learn important information about contemporary societies from patterns in fresh garbage." (Rathje 1996, pp.157-177).

Rathje & Murphy (2001) reminded us all that the pieces of pottery, broken stone tools, and cut animal bones which traditional archaeologists dig out of old

refuse middens provide a surprisingly detailed view of past lifeways, just as all the precisely labelled packages and the food debris and the discarded clothing and batteries in modern middens reveal the intimate details of our lives today.

This sort of insight can come to one in many different ways. In his introduction, Lynn Collins has already told you the story of how I first came to history, as a bairn in Scotland, still in primary school. It is seventy years since I was encouraged to run my fingers through those piles of burnt barley still lying in a Roman granary destroyed by my forebears nearly 2,000 years ago. The enlightened archaeologists who were excavating the fort saw my interest and, instead of saying ‘Don’t touch, boy’, encouraged me to put some of the barley in a poke and take it home. I have never forgotten the magical effect of all this. It was my Eureka moment. I had come face to face with the daily bread, the daily lives, of exotic legionaries and local natives an unimaginably long time ago, in a way that Caesar’s *Gallic Wars* never did when I read it a year or two later.

I lived in rural Dumfriesshire during World War II and its aftermath. My family had farmed *Pierbank* (Figure 1) throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. My grandfather and my aunt used to talk to me about *Pierbank* and I liked to go out and look at the old farm house and the neighbouring village of Torthorwald (Grose 1789, pp.145-146), overshadowed by the crumbling remains of a medieval castle (Figure 2).



Photo Ian Jack 1978

Figure 1. *Pierbank*, Torthorwald.

I did not then know that Francis Grose, the busy antiquary who published an evocative view of the castle (Figure 2) as it was when my great-great-grandfather was young, was the father of another Francis Grose, who was appointed Lieutenant Governor of New



Grose (1789, between pp.144 & 145)

Figure 2. Torthorwald Castle.

South Wales in the very same year, 1789 (Fletcher 1966). But all this gave substance to the material things that I later inherited from the Pierbank family: heavy folio books of Presbyterian prayer, a fine French clock, a silver fob-watch and a silver-topped walking-stick, all in this house 150 years ago. The marble clock now on my College mantelpiece remains an enigmatic contrast to the six volumes of nightly readings still in my bookcase. These artefacts have all helped me to understand a rather conflicted family during the half century of disruption in the Scottish church which took up most of Victoria’s reign both in Scotland and Australia. I could read for myself the book from which my great-great-grandfather read aloud to his family every night after dinner. I knew that my great-grandfather had in his late teens begun to woo a lass from a farm a couple of miles away and failed to get back to *Pierbank* in time for the evening reading. He was banished from *Pierbank*, despite his mother’s entreaties, went off and married my great-grandmother (Paton 1898, pp.247-254.). The family took many years to recover its solidarity. To hold the very book which ignited the family’s troubles and to see the signature of my great-great-grandfather on the title page made another indelible impression on a young mind.

The wealth and variety of old buildings within a boy’s cycling range in Dumfriesshire stimulated a broader interest in the past. Another early memory is being taken to meet Mrs. Johnstone at Amisfield Tower (Figure 3).

The impressive sixteenth-century tower had been supplemented by a trim seventeenth-century house and in 1803 a comfortable new mansion was added between the two older houses. Mrs. Johnstone took me to explore the ruinous tower, with its endless spiral staircase, opening abruptly through empty doorways

leading onto vanished floors and thrilling drops: it was a dangerous heaven for an intensely curious child (Grose 1789, pp.155-158; Anonymous 1920, pp.196-198). The tower has now been restored.



Grose (1789, between pp.154 & 155)

Figure 3. Amisfield Tower.

The simple point I am making is that this exposure to the material remains of a vanished or vanishing world raises questions, demands answers and excites the young mind.

Excavated Artefacts

And that is basically why I became a historian, first of medieval Europe, then, from the 1970s onwards, of the two hundred years of European Australia. Because the written sources for medieval history are so patchy, many medievalists use a lot of archaeological information whenever it can be useful. And there are many excavated medieval sites in Europe. By contrast, before the 1960s, there was virtually no archaeological work done on European sites in Australia and the work of historical geographers like Dennis Jeans or inspired ecological historians like Sir Keith Hancock had barely begun (Jeans 1972; Hancock 1972). As a result the excavated artefact and by extension the contents of the increasing number of good local museums made little impact on the horizons of the ordinary Australian historian.

This changed primarily through initiatives by the archaeology students at the University of Sydney in the late 1960s and early 1970s. They desperately wanted some field experience in Australia before they joined our digs overseas, in places like Cyprus, Greece or Jordan. Aboriginal sites did not offer appropriate experience, so the students demanded that they ran their own dig on a European-Australian site, with professional supervision (Jack 2006, pp.9-10; Ireland & Casey 2006).



James King's bill-head c.1836

Figure 4. Irrawang pottery.



Photo Judy Birmingham 1968

Figure 5. Irrawang excavation, clay-pit & horse-mill.

Irrawang near Raymond Terrace, where James King had a successful pottery in the 1830s and 1840s, was a vacant and available site. Nothing was left above ground, but there had been no disturbance except grazing for a hundred years and it was owned by the Hunter District Water Board. Excavations began in 1967 and quite soon a kiln and a horse-mill for puddling clay just like the one shown on King's bill-head (Figure 4) were identifiable (Figure 5). Irrawang then went on as a student enterprise (Figure 6) for an astounding 30 seasons over the next three decades. The number of pieces of diagnostic broken pottery recovered and interpreted over the years exceeded 3,000. Most of the sherds came from functional pieces, but sometimes there were highly decorated commissioned pieces like the Aphrodite vase (Figure 7), showing the goddess of love on one face and the American coat of arms on another (Birmingham 1976, pp.306-317; Jack & Liston 1982, p.102.).

All this sustained student enthusiasm, coupled with the irresistible movement towards heritage protection



Photo Maureen Byrne 1975

Figure 6. Irrawang, excavation, drainage.



Photo Ian Jack 1975.

Figure 7. Irrawang, Aphrodite vase.

and ultimately the Heritage Act of 1977, led to three of us introducing the first interdepartmental course in Historical Archaeology at the University of Sydney in 1974. This was a combined venture of archaeology, history and geography, with soil science and engineering soon joining in. By the happiest of chances, within weeks of the course opening in 1974, demolition and

building works between Sydney Town Hall and St. Andrew's Cathedral opened up some graves unexpectedly surviving from the eighteenth-century burial ground there (Figure 8). This aroused intense public interest and our students were taken straight from class to conduct a much publicised excavation of the vaults of Old Sydney Burial Ground which the bulldozers had disturbed. The best preserved brick vault was intensively excavated by the ablest of the students. It proved to have a coffin and bones surviving, but the metal plate of the coffin lid had either been removed or had decayed (Figure 10). The coffin and its contents were reverently removed from the vault by two star students, Maureen Byrne and Jenny van Proctor (Figure 11; Birmingham & Liston 1976).



Photo Judy Birmingham, March 1974

Figure 8. Old Sydney Burial Ground.

This was the critical moment when archaeologically excavated European artefacts really entered the public and the academic consciousness in Australia, for press interest was intense. This was an extraordinary experience for the thirty students in the first Historical Archaeology course and for those of us who were still fighting to establish the legitimacy of the interdisciplinary course itself in a very conservative university? (Jack 2006).

I am not trying to give artefacts from a dig precedence over artefacts which have entered museum collections in some quite different way or over artefacts still in a

private home. But it is vitally important that we know as much as possible about the context of any item. Because we know precisely the origin of every one of the thousands of pottery pieces found at Irrawang and have as a result a rough chronology and inter-relationships, it has been possible to create a typology of the



Photo Judy Birmingham, March 1974

Figure 9. Old Sydney Burial Ground, vault 1.



Photo Judy Birmingham 1974

Figure 10. Old Sydney Burial Ground, vault 1.
Coffin Lid.



Photo Judy Birmingham, March 1974

Figure 11. Old Sydney Burial Ground, vault 1.
Jenny van Proctor & Maureen Byrne

pottery made there. Since James King produced no illustrated catalogues of his wares, unlike say the Lithgow Pottery half a century later, and since less than ten intact examples of Irrawang ware survive in museums or in private hands, this work of young archaeologists who, for years after the digs, patiently sifted bag after bag of broken pots, is of crucial importance

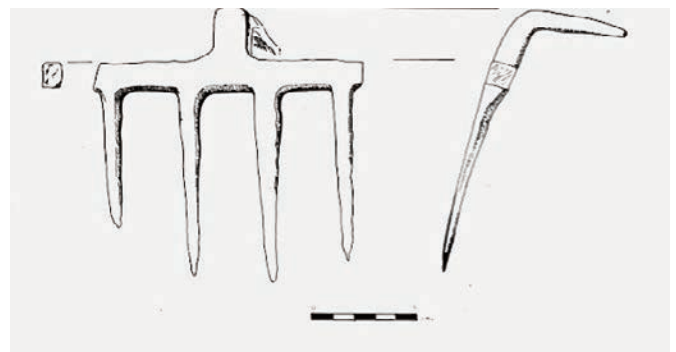
for the history of the pottery industry. And also for historical archaeology in Australia.

One of those young archaeologists went on to excavate the living accommodation at the remote mining site of Arltunga, 200 kilometres out of Alice Springs. Kate Holmes found in the remains of the pub the slate base of the only billiard table ever to have been excavated (Figure 12). It had been brought to the centre of Australia with extraordinary labour in 1903 first by train and then by camel or bullock, and left behind when the short mining boom ended about 1910 (Holmes 1983).



Photo Kate Holmes 1976

Figure 12. Arltunga, NT, billiard table *in situ*.



Drawing: Suzanne Macalister 1983

Figure 13. Cape York, Ah Toy's Garden.

From sluicing rake to garden rake.

The evidential value of an artefact was driven home to me in 1983 when my team recorded and excavated a Chinese mining site and market garden in a remote part of Cape York peninsula. It was the first excavation of a Chinese settlement in Australia. Among lots of things, we found this broken rake (Figure 13). It had four tines surviving. It became evident on close examination that tines on one side had broken off and that then the same number of tines on the other side were sawn off to make the implement stable and usable. It had originally been a ten-tined sluicing rake for alluvial gold-mining and then, after he broke it, Ah

Toy converted it to a very usable four-tined rake for use in his extensive market garden (Jack et al. 1984, p.56). I think it is a perfect example of how a broken and unattractive artefact can tell a powerful story. The National Museum of Australia thinks so too and plans to exhibit this and other finds from Ah Toy's garden in Canberra.

Other Artefacts

But the overwhelming majority of artefacts does not come from excavations. In any well-run archaeological dig, every artefact is meaningfully documented, but how do we authenticate artefacts which have not got an archaeological provenance? We have all had problems of artefacts without a firm context, for they are hard to date, hard to understand, hard to use as historical evidence.

Here are some examples from my own experience, where artefacts can be fully usable as historical evidence. Old bricks are one danger area, since many people have collected bricks from demolished buildings or elsewhere, but failed to record the place of origin on the actual brick. Too often labels fall off or get eaten by hungry insects and one is left with sandstock bricks which are attractive but meaningless. In a properly controlled store, however, labels stay on and there are few insects. For example, before a recent excavation at Samuel Terry's house and barn near Penrith, called *Mount Pleasant*, when I was asked to do an initial history, I was delighted to find that the Nepean District Historical Archaeology Group had twenty years ago found early bricks on the site and put them away carefully in their collection. Neatly labelled (Figure 14), this was a useful exemplar to the archaeologists for what might be found when the site was excavated. .

By contrast, when Jan Barkley Jack acquired a brick at Archibald Bell's old house of *Belmont* at North Richmond (Figure 15), there was really no need to label it at all, since it is the ultimate in punning brick-marks and, as far as I know, the bell-mark was never used anywhere else. So it has survived very well, wrapped in a bag with indestructible signage. It is a fabulous display item and makes the dour Archibald Bell senior a little more likeable. These things matter, not least since Archibald Bell senior was the father of that Archibald Bell who discovered Bells Line of Road over the Mountains just about the time this brick was manufactured. It is hard to reach out to the personalities of people of the past and this brick, with its combination of humour and arrogance, is a small help.

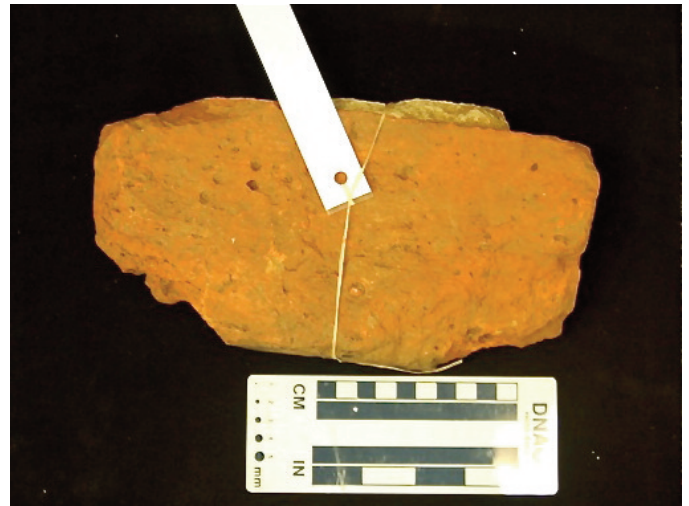


Photo Ian Jack 2016

Figure 14. *Mount Pleasant*, Cranebrook, brick. Nepean District Historical Archaeology Group.



Photo Ian Jack 2016.

Figure 15. *Belmont*, North Richmond, brick - in a Private Collection.

The really critical factor in the use of artefacts is in the information available about them. Most of you will have been to *Rouse Hill House* and seen James Broadbent's theories put into practice, the scrupulous preservation of every item in a cluttered house, which gradually became more cluttered under a single family's ownership over 180 years. Every surface, every drawer at *Rouse Hill House* contains what it did when the family finally gave up ownership. These are richly documented contents.

There are very few other Australian houses which have remained as the owners left them, but we can think of *Meroogal* in Nowra, owned, like *Rouse Hill*, by Sydney Living Museums, or Mrs. Traill's house in Bathurst, run by the National Trust, and there are a few privately owned homesteads, like *Cooerwull* at Lithgow, which have never left the original family and still have a fair integrity of furnishing.

Cliefden, Blayney Shire

I will say something about the artefacts at *Cooerwull* presently, but first I want to talk about a less familiar property. *Cliefden* in Blayney Shire near Mandurama has been owned without interruption by the Rothery family since 1831. Both the homestead of the 1830s (Figure 16) and the great omnipurpose shed, built in 1842 and known simply as The Barn (Figure 17), contain artefacts acquired over 200 years, for some came from England. In The Barn there is still the landau brought from England by William Rothery in the 1830s (Figure 18). In 1842 the Rothery family travelled in it over Mitchell's Great Western Road, down the new Victoria Pass, to take up the estate as their primary residence. The carriage is still in remarkable condition.



Photo Ian Jack 2002

Figure 16. *Cliefden* homestead, c.1838-1841.



Photo Ian Jack 2002.

Figure 17. *Cliefden*, The Barn, 1842.

The Barn housed all the usual services as well as all aspects of a big wool enterprise. In the meat-room (Figure 19), for example, all manner of nineteenth-century implements, including a truly great cleaver, still hang on the walls. And there is an evocative curiosity for those excited by bush-rangers. In the wooden shutters for the windows of the west side of The Barn there is a bullet-hole (Figure 20). The bullet was fired by Ben Hall who dropped by in 1863 and tied William Rothery to an armchair which was still in the house until recently (State Heritage Register 2010).



Photo Ian Jack 2002

Figure 18. *Cliefden*, The Barn, landau 1830s.



Photo Ian Jack 2002

Figure 19. *Cliefden*, The Barn, meat room.



Photo Ian Jack 2002

Figure 20. *Cliefden*, The Barn, bullet hole, 1864.



Photo Ian Jack 2002.

Figure 21. *Cliefden*, shearing area; Penny King & Meta Rothery.

How do we know such about the objects at *Cliefden*? We can document the Rothery family through the usual historical documents, of course (and the rich Rothery private archive can be accessed in the Mitchell Library), but what makes these artefacts peculiarly special is the oral tradition of the owners. When I first visited *Cliefden*, fourteen years ago, I had the pleasure of getting to know the two elderly, unmarried sisters, Lorna and Meta Rothery (Figure 21), who owned the estate and showed me the bullet-hole, among many other things.

Ben Hall had discharged his gun 139 years before I was talking to the Rothery sisters, yet the evidence of Meta and Lorna came from an eye-witness. They had been told the story of Ben Hall by their father, Henry, and Henry had actually been there in *Cliefden* homestead in 1863. Although he had been only a toddler when he met Ben Hall's gang, as he grew up Henry Rothery was told the full story repeatedly by his own father, William. William was the man whom Ben Hall had tied up. Moreover, William Rothery had been the owner of *Cliefden* since 1831. It was this William who had driven the landau over the Bathurst road in 1842 (State Heritage Register 2010).

So when I talked to Meta and Lorna Rothery in 2002, I was talking to two highly intelligent and voluble old ladies who had got their information directly from their father who had been there in 1863 and at only one remove from the first Rothery of all, their grandfather. The Rothery men had married exceptionally late in life and as a result 205 years separate the birth of the first William Rothery and the death of his last grand-daughter in 2009. Although this does not mean that one has to accept as gospel truth everything that the Rothery sisters said, it does give a rare authenticity to what I was told about the contents of the house and

The Barn. This is how I know that in the 1850s the Rothery butler lived in the stone cottage beside The Barn. This is how I know that the convict-built kiln (Figure 22) still intact in a nearby paddock was used to burn lime for building the entire complex. This proves that it is the earliest known lime kiln erected over the Mountains. Listening to the Rothery sisters talking was like running my hands through Roman barley all over again.



Photo Ian Jack 2002

Figure 22. *Cliefden*, lime kiln.

Craigmoor, Hill End

A very different house which has preserved a remarkable degree of integrity is *Craigmoor* at Hill End (Figure 23), built in 1875. *Craigmoor* was built by an interesting Scottish engineer and gold-miner, James Marshall, who in the employment of Suttor, had actually created the first stage of the Californian gold-rush of 1849. He then came to Australia and made a fortune at Hill End, where he built a replica of an aristocratic hunting lodge in Scotland. His family lived on in Hill End long after it had declined into a ghost town and after exactly 100 years the Marshall heirs gave the property with all its contents to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. National Parks have had the great good sense to keep it exactly as it was (NP&WS 2016).

Bedspreads are very significant artefacts in a number of collections and are featured later in this conference. At *Craigmoor* each bedroom still has its quilt made by the Marshall womenfolk (Figures 24, 25 & 26). I find the presentation at the Hill End house more attractive than the box after box of great quilts kept by the National Gallery of Australia or even than the marvellous quilt exhibition held last year at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery in Sutherland. Each of the *Craigmoor* quilts, still on its original bed, is different: one is made partly from kangaroo skin.



Photo Ian Jack 2015

Figure 23. *Craigmoor, Hill End.*



Photo Ian Jack 2015

Figure 24. *Craigmoor, quilt A.*



Photo Ian Jack 2015

Figure 25. *Craigmoor, quilt B.*



Photo Ian Jack 2015

Figure 26. *Craigmoor, quilt C.*

Cooerwull House, Lithow

All this adds an extra dimension to our understanding of the social function of the quilt. Quilts ought to be seen on beds. My favourite, though no longer on a bed, is now a treasure of the National Gallery. This is the crazy quilt made lovingly by Christina Brown for her ageing husband Andrew at *Cooerwull House* about 1880 (Figure 27). The title of the Hazlehurst exhibition where this was displayed last year was *Labours of Love*, which fits Christina's quilt to a tee. She stitched the initials AB for Andrew Brown in a prominent position among the 167 fabric shapes (Figure 28). The letters are intertwined with the little blue flower which the Wiradjuri people called Cooerwull and which gave the Brown estate its name. That in turn reminds one of the unusually warm relations which Andrew Brown maintained with the Aboriginal people both in Lithgow and out on the Castlereagh River, where he grazed his enormous flocks of sheep. Christina Brown's quilt is a very satisfying object (Mitchell 2015, pp.26-27).



Photo Ian Jack 2015

Figure 27. *Cooerwull House*, Christina Brown quilt c.1880.



Photo Ian Jack 2015.

Figure 28. *Cooerwull House*, Christina Brown quilt c.1880.

As with the Rotherys, there is a wealth of private, unwritten information about Andrew Brown's family (Figure 29), including the diary kept by Andrew for fifty years. Andrew was born in the eighteenth century, but I knew his great-grandson very well and Douglas Trevor-Jones remembered vividly what his own grandfather had been told by *his* father, the original Andrew. All this can be reinforced by a treasure-trove of family photographs from the 1860s onwards, showing the evolution of the many properties, the immediate family members, Andrew and Christina with their children, John Laurence, William and Grace. So one can still see Christina just at the time she was making the quilt around 1880, sitting in the family carriage

with her daughter and her top-hatted husband at the front of *Cooerwull House* (Figure 30). A combination of evidence is needed to bring the artefact alive in its social context.



Figure 29. Browns of *Cooerwull*, c.1860.



Figure 30. *Cooerwull*, Brown family, c.1880.

John Laurence was the only child to outlive Andrew, so he inherited everything. But since he and Caroline produced ten children, the worldly goods of Andrew Brown have become scattered among the families of his many grandchildren. So *Cooerwull House* is not like *Cliefden* or *Rouse Hill*, although it is still lived in by a great-great-grandson. Critical artefacts like the magnificent canteen of Edinburgh silver (Figure 31), given to Andrew by the Walker family when he married Christina in Scotland in 1840, are now separated

from the quilt, which is now in a major museum, and from the dinner-service and the dining-table (Figure 32), which are still at Coerwull. But the important thing is that many of the scattered artefacts can be identified, recorded and put to historical use (Jack 1987).



Photo Ian Jack 2015

Figure 31. Coerwull, silver service, 1841.



Photo Ian Jack 2015

Figure 32. Coerwull House, dining-room.

These examples have come from well-to-do families on the land. But artefacts come from all matter of environments.

St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Windsor

For example, my wife and I are just completing a bi-centenary history of St. Matthew's Anglican Church in Windsor (Figure 33), a compelling part of the legacy of Lachlan Macquarie and Francis Greenway. I have had the privilege of rummaging around in various locked cupboards in the church as well as in its massive safe. No-one at the church today has any notion of what lurks in these places.



Photo Ian Jack 2009

Figure 33. St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Windsor.

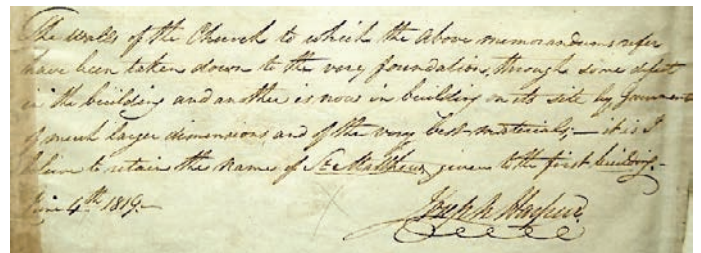


Photo Ian Jack 2016.

Figure 34. St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Windsor, Harpur's notes in register, 1819.

I knew that there had been some uncertainty about the saint to whom the church would be dedicated in 1822: this doubt was subtly enunciated in 1819 by the parish clerk, who wrote on the end page of his original register book (Figure 34) that he believed the new church is to

“retain the name of St Matthew given to the first church” (Anonymous 2003, p.xv).

And in 1916 the local Presbyterian minister alleged that the communion service given to the new church by George IV in 1822 was dedicated not to St. Matthew but to St. Andrew (Steele 1916, p.72). The odd thing is that no-one seems to have tried to find out whether this is true. I finally tracked down the chalice (Figure 35A) and paten (Figure 35B) wrapped in a plastic bag within a shopping basket in the safe and



Photo Ian Jack 2016.

A Chalice, Garrard, 1821.



Photo Ian Jack 2016.

B Paten, Garrard, 1821

Figure 35. Silver ware at St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Windsor.

sure enough both fine pieces of Georgian silver bear the name of 'St. Andrew, Windsor', made by Garrard, the royal silversmith, in London. This unexpected dedication on an important, forgotten piece of plate leads on to a variety of speculations and interpretations, which belong to another publication.

Hidden in one of the locked cases in the nave, I found the parasol used by a bride in 1862 (Figure 36A), with all the necessary, verifiable information written neatly on a card, while my wife found that a local family still preserved in beautiful condition the wedding dress worn by Ellen Fergusson at St. Matthew's in 1839 (Figure 36B). All these things are necessary parts of the history of this iconic church.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, writing the bicentenary history of St. Matthew's posed a challenge because I have been accustomed in my heritage work to write more intensively about the changing fabric of buildings than about their social significance. We have accordingly been seeking out stories and photographs of rites of passage, weddings and baptisms and confirmations, from old families in the congregation.

Artefacts such as wedding dresses, billiard tables, broken pottery, carriages and bullet-holes all stimulate questions, give partial answers and provide the most wonderfully meaningful illustrations to any publication. I congratulate BMACHO on devoting a conference to the significance of the artefact.



A
Phoebe Walters'
wedding parasol,
1862



B
Ellen Fergusson's
wedding dress, 1839

Photos Ian Jack 2009

Figure 36. St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Windsor.

Abbreviations

LMFHG	Lake Macquarie Family History Group Inc.
NP&WS	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

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Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

The parlour game of Associations involves participants asking the holder of a Mystery Name indirect questions, together seeking out the identity of a noted person – Napoleon; Marilyn Monroe, Roger Federer...

The object is to find the person with the minimum number of questions, for instance -

What COLOUR do you think of, relative to your Person? (the response: Black);

What TIME OF THE DAY do you associate with your Person? (the response: Late evening);

What HEADWEAR? (Crown);

What TYPE OF MEAL? (a Feast, lightly picked over);

What CLOTHING? (a long gown);

What sort of FLOWER do you think of ? (Lily);

In relation to your Person, what VEHICLE best suits? (Horse-drawn carriage);

What DOG? (Irish wolf-hound);

NEWSPAPER? (The Times)

DOMESTIC VESSEL? (Teacup)with 10 questions, Queen Victoria comes to the fore

A few years ago I was amongst some museum curators killing time in a pub playing a variation of Associations, describing colleagues: I recall being described by, amongst other things.... Deep Maroon; Prostrate Grevillea; Potato.....

By way of Associations, I approached our next Speaker, **Rebecca Turnbull** with the emailed question

Are there 3 objects in your home that epitomize who you are?

Her emailed response – (what does it say about her?) -

“No problem at all, (at the end of a weekend of thinking) it was just hard to select only three!

So my three objects are:

A copy of the book *Playing Beatie Bow* by Ruth Park – it sparked off my intense and lifelong interest in Australian history after I first read it, when I was 10 years old.

My extensive postcard collection - I have to date collected almost 1,000 postcards of all different types and all have either been sent, or given to me by friends and family, or ones that I have collected myself when travelling - which I enjoy doing often.

My one-of-a-kind, handmade pool cue. Not many people know that I enjoy playing competition 8 ball, and have been quite successful at it in the past, at one point being NSW Female 8 Ball Champion, and also part of a winning team who made it to play in Las Vegas in the International Championships. I enjoy the competition and skill of the game, plus winning always feels good!”

...Rebecca is also Curator of the Hawkesbury Regional Museum

INTERESTING OBJECTS: 60 YEARS OF THE HAWKESBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

Rebecca Turnbull

Curator,

Hawkesbury Regional Museum,
8 Baker Street, Windsor, NSW 2756

Rebecca.Turnbull@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Key words:

Hawkesbury Regional Hawkesbury Historical Society, Minute Book, voile, lace, sampler, gaff rigged cutter, deed, miner's couch.

INTRODUCTION

So what do a doll called Ruth, a miner's couch and a 222 year old document have in common?

They are all part of our newest exhibition at Hawkesbury Regional Museum (HRM) and in line with the theme of this year's conference of Artefacts - I have been asked to speak to you today about this new and entirely artefact centric exhibition at the Hawkesbury Regional Museum named *Interesting Objects - 60 years of the Hawkesbury Historical Society Collection*

A quick introduction to the museum and its collection in case you are not familiar.



Figure 1. Hawkesbury Museum and Tourist Information Centre, Windsor.

Hawkesbury Museum and Tourist Information Centre (Figure 1), as it was then known, was originally located in this building at 7 Thompson Square, Windsor. It was operated by the Hawkesbury Historical Society (HHS) from 1962 to 2007 and during that time they collected and displayed what grew to almost 5000



Figure 2. Photo Hawkesbury Regional Museum.

A Outside new building, *Photo Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2014*

B & C Museum exhibitions, *Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2014*

D New Building opening in 2008, *Photo Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2008*

objects of local, state and national significance - some of you may remember the museum during this period. A back extension and excavation of the basements area were added to provide more exhibiting space for the growing collection in the 1980s, but it was still not enough and this important collection of artefacts became overcrowded in the museum space.

Fast forward, and in 2000 after the instigation and recommendation by HHS, Hawkesbury City Council began to look at ways and means of upgrading the museum; funds provided by Arts NSW enabled an assessment of the collection and the development of exhibition themes. Further grants from Arts NSW and the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure resulted in the construction of the new building and the employment of professional staff. The new building (Figure 2A) was completed in 2008, and the inaugural exhibition was opened by Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, Governor of NSW (Figure 2D). In 2012 the 'old' museum was re-interpreted and reopened as *Howe House* (Figure 3), name after the original owner John Howe.



Photo Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2012

Figure 3. Howe House, Windsor.

Hawkesbury Historical Society

That is some background to the museum and collection, so why did I develop this artefact centric exhibition? Well In September this year the Hawkesbury Historical Society will be turning 60 years old and it is one of the older historical societies around. Initiated by local identity, school teacher and historian (not necessarily in that order!), Mr. Douglass Bowd who said “... together with a few friends I am desirous of forming... an Historical Society for the district of Windsor ...” (Bowd 1947).

And so began a movement to establish the Hawkesbury Historical Society. Although it did take nine years for the first meeting to occur in September 1956 that meeting was well attended by over 50 people; Mayor V.W. Gillespie was elected Patron and the inaugural President was Rev. William Carter from St. Matthews Anglican Church.

From that establishment in 1956, the aim of the Hawkesbury Historical Society has been to promote and encourage the study of the history of the Hawkesbury area and to collect and preserve artefacts relating to the history of the Hawkesbury District. It is due to the foresight of HHS members that we are fortunate to have the museum.

So the curatorial rationale for this exhibition was to celebrate this 60th anniversary but I wanted to do more than just acknowledge the milestones of the society; hence the intriguing artefacts in this historically significant collection that I discuss today.

Significant Artefacts

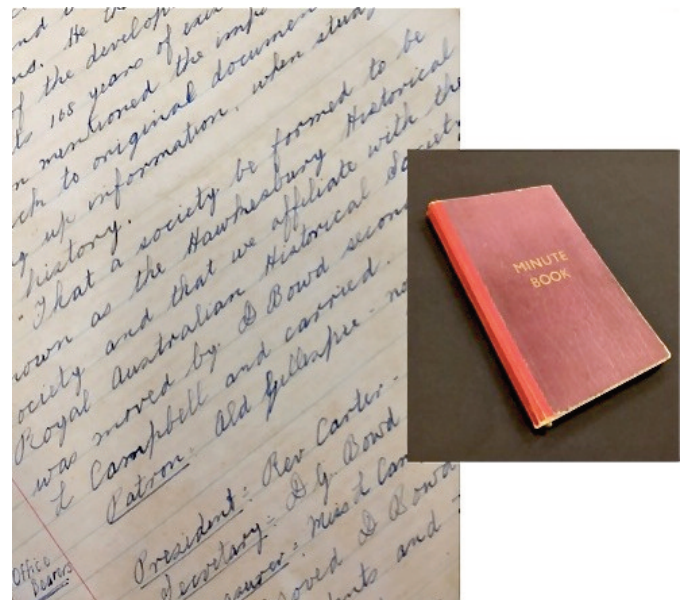
I was able to highlight the 60th celebration of the HHS through artefacts selected by, and personal thoughts

of, the members. I accomplished this by selecting 12 long standing members of the Society and asking them.

- What is the most significant object to them and why?

I was surprised (and very relieved!) by the scope of objects selected by the members for the exhibition, otherwise it would have made things a lot harder for me from a curating aspect. There was no doubling up of an object type, no selecting the same object, they were of all different mediums and sizes and they were very varied - some picked groups of objects and others couldn't decide and had to pick two!

So today I am going to talk about some of these interesting objects.



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2015

Figure 4. Hawkesbury Historical Society first Minute Book.

To start off with the first Minute Book of the HHS (Figure 4) was selected by our current President, and the keynote speaker of today's conference, Ian Jack. As so well put by Ian, the minute-books of the Society have accordingly a special significance in the Museum, for without the sixty years of volunteer activity there would be no Museum or collection of artefacts.

It is possible that only a historian would recognise the true significance of an artefact like this minute book, which records the meetings and activities of Hawkesbury Historical Society from its inauguration on 14 September 1956 until the sixth general meeting in 1961.

It also importantly records the first items given the HHS collection - in June 1957 by the Windsor Town Clerk, Frank Mason on behalf of W.J. Ross, a local solicitor: It was a letter from Governor FitzRoy from 1853, agreeing that the new bridge over South Creek should bear his name. The first artefact to be donated, one month later, was an evocative Georgian brandy bottle, the gift of Mrs. Kilduff.

Doug Bowd, who I mentioned just before, had been the prime mover for the creation of the Society and whose histories of the Hawkesbury are still regarded as essential reading, was the foundation Secretary so the minutes are recorded in his characteristic handwriting. An artefact like this is perhaps reason to ponder on whether similar artefacts are important or accessioned into your own museum or organisations collection for future generations.

Textiles

The next item... but Carol was one who had to choose two!

Both are textile pieces.

This first one we call the little black dress you can see a close up here of the fabric (Figure 5) - we had to work on the dress re-sewing on by hand many of those delicate beads.



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2016

Figure 5. Black Dress and Carol Carruthers.

As Carol said

“This sleeveless black voile dress has been beaded by hand in a black and white geometric pattern. At some stage a portion has been cut from the hem to make the dress shorter.”

It is significant because it represents the dramatic changes in dress and lifestyle experienced by women of the post WWI period, suddenly freed from the rigid Victorian and Edwardian expectations of covering ankles, wrists and necks. Now there was freedom, as

shown in their clothing, with ladies smoking, drinking, dancing the Charleston and generally enjoying their lives. This is very true, as you can see by comparing these images (Figure 6).



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2016

Figure 6. Edwardian and post WWI dress styles.

The second textile piece that she selected was a beautiful lace collar (Figure 7) made by a convict lady named Susannah Walters (née Lallimont). Susannah was a member of a French Huguenot family of lace makers who were persecuted in France and fled to England after the Napoleonic Wars. These French lacemakers lived together making their lace and on-selling it, but with the mass manufacture of lace, these artisans found it difficult to find work.



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2016

Figure 7. Lace collar made by Susannah Walters

For stealing a £10 note from her employer Susannah was tried and sentenced to life in the Colony. In 1812 she was initially put on board the *Emu* bound for Botany Bay, but in the Caribbean some pirates captured the ship and left the crew and passengers on the Island of St. Vincent, in the Atlantic Ocean. They remained there until rescued 11 months later where they were returned to England and put onto prison hulks. The convicts eventually were put on the *Broxbornbury* which arrived in the Colony in 1815. On board the

ship she met the ship's armourer, Aaron Walters, and later married him. In 1823 they were granted 50 acres of land at St. Albans, on the Macdonald River, where Aaron built a slab hut for his growing family.

As her contribution to the family finances Susannah made this beautiful fine needle-run lace collar (Figure 7) and many others at home in her slab hut. This delicately made collar would have been much sought after by the wealthy at that time. It is significant in terms that it is of the highest quality, but also because of the life story of its maker, who produced this high quality lace while tending her children in a slab hut at St. Albans, having travelled so far and seen so much of history. She died in 1840, having her eighth child. Her family is to be congratulated for saving this sample of her beautiful work. It was donated to the museum by Susannah's great-great-great-granddaughter.

Model Ships

What is the opposite of female lace making, well men building model boats perhaps?



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2016

Figure 8. Model of a gaffed rigged cutter.

This (Figure 8) is a model of a gaffed rigged cutter - which for those that are unfamiliar with that a gaff-rigged cutter is a small to medium sized boat designed for speed. Its rig (configuration of sails, mast and stays) is four-cornered, fore-and-aft rigged, controlled at its peak and, usually, its entire head by a spar (pole) called the gaff. This item was selected by Ted Books (who you can see on the left in the photo Figure 8) taken when the boat was originally being donated to the museum back in the 1980s.

The river history of the Hawkesbury has always been important to Ted, a descendant of both of the big names in early boat-building: the Gronos and the Books. It is largely due to Ted that we have many significant artefacts relating to boat building and river history in the Collection.

As the donor of this model, Lloyd Grono, said "Gronos are men of the sea". They were also one of the great pioneering families of the Hawkesbury - John Grono and his wife Elizabeth (née Bristow) having arrived in the Colony in 1799, and settled on a grant of land on the Eastern side of the Hawkesbury River opposite Portland Head (Ebenezer).

But this model boat is a significant artefact not solely because of its connection to the Grono family, but because of its unique fabric.

The model was built by Thomas Joseph Grono, born in 1857 at Maraylya, the great grandson of John Grono. Thomas was a bridge carpenter and foreman who worked on many projects including the South Creek railway viaduct (between Windsor and Mulgrave Train Stations), when it was raised to its present level in 1883. This gifted artisan also carved many model ships, and the one selected by Ted as important to him for this exhibition was actually carved from an off-cut from one of those viaduct stanchions.

As you can see, from the selection so far, people's ideas of an artefact's importance or significance changes from person to person. Their interests play a large part as well as their experiences, knowledge and background and their own (family) heritage.

And of course objects that are classed at the oldest are always interesting too!

A Land Title Deed

Like this one which is one selected by our local historian Jan Barkley Jack.

Jan's choice from Hawkesbury Historical Society's Collection is one of the oldest and the most historically significant artefacts in the collection - the *original Grant Title Deed to the Farm of ex-convict settler, Samuel Jackson, issued in November 1794* (Figure 9). And it is one of my favourite artefacts also. As Jan described when selecting her object:

"The granting in New South Wales of the first land portions in the third mainland district of Mulgrave Place (informally referred to as Hawkesbury) by Europeans in 1794, was the act that was to have the most serious ramifications of any, for the area's development.

This Title Deed is the Grant Certificate to one of the first farms given at Hawkesbury to Europeans, and as such is the earliest artefact from European



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2015

Figure 9. Samuel Jackson's 1794 Deed to his farm and a painting of the land.

settlement of the Hawkesbury district in existence. Ex-convict Samuel Jackson's title was the 59th grant registered for the whole of Mulgrave Place. The Deeds were registered and issued by Acting Governor Grose on 19 November 1794. The Jackson Farm is typical of the over 100 farms set up by the Hawkesbury River in that first year, almost all of 30 acres like Jackson's; its location is known exactly, and what it looked like is also known (Figure 9), as an early illustration of this farm exists, drawn within the first twenty years of the Jackson's farm existence, and showing little change over those years.

This Deed represents the arrival of European beliefs, cultural systems and laws in the area. The ever spreading farms and towns of the Hawkesbury District not only brutally displaced the Aboriginal peoples living off Hawkesbury lands at that time, but it also impacted widely by changing the landscape its-self, as well as the way it was managed and regarded" (J. Barkley Jack, 2015).

Jan and I have concurred that this grant deed has absolute provenance and is unique, as the only 1794 grant deed known in Australia, and the earliest Hawkesbury item in the Hawkesbury Historical Society Collection held by the Hawkesbury Regional Museum.

It is a tangible part of that period of early history of which not many artefacts remain. From this one artefact we can glean so much information and particularly when we can link it to other sources, such as the image, it give us a real understanding of what the area was like and what life was like for those early settlers.

Furniture

Our long standing former secretary chose this piece of furniture (Figure 9) for her interesting object, which added to the depth of size of the artefacts on display.

For Judy, this fine example of an early 19th century miner's couch (Figure 9) brought to mind the early period of European settlement, the need for furniture for



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2016

Figure 10. Miner's Couch and Judy Newland.

the early settlers, and the magnificent Australian red cedar that was used widely in the construction of all manner of things until it was finally exhausted around the time of the First World War.

These couches (sometimes known as 'colonial day beds') were made with single or double ends, and sometimes with backs. The ends were connected by three or four spindles. The ends were bolted together and the base consisted of loose wooden slats. They were put together in such a way that they could be easily dismantled and moved from place to place.

Australian cedar was discovered in 1790 by Governor Phillip, in the Hawkesbury, and samples were sent to

England the following year. Trading in cedar grew so extensively that a general order was issued forbidding the cutting cedar without permission. Other supplies of cedar were found from 1797 on the Hunter River, the Shoalhaven and in the Illawarra and then up to northern Queensland. Cedar cutters were mostly ticket-of-leave men, sometimes runaways; they worked in gangs of about 30 and floated the logs down the rivers. Gradually the cedar cutters worked their way up the NSW coast during the 1820s to the 1840s.

This miner's couch was significant to Judy for a historical but also aesthetic reason. As she says

“During the 1980s we (*that is Judy and her husband*) acquired the remains of a miner's couch from my father-in-law who was a collector. This couch could have been in his possession for many years. My husband on inspecting the Society's couch after seeing it on display in the museum, assembled our remnants with two new curved cedar side pieces to support the four turned spindles we already had, plus inserting new slats for the base. As commented on above, the side pieces were bolted down for ease of transporting if needed. This was then despatched to the upholsterer for a cover and bolster most in keeping with the look of the 19th century furniture. It's a prized piece of furniture in our family home, inspiration for which came from the artefact in the museum” (J. Newland 2015)

To Judy - the history of our Australian furniture is a fascinating one and maybe we can look at a simple miner's couch with new eyes, how it came to be and reflecting on the struggles of our early ancestors and the hardships they endured as they adapted to the harsh conditions of a new continent.

Sampler

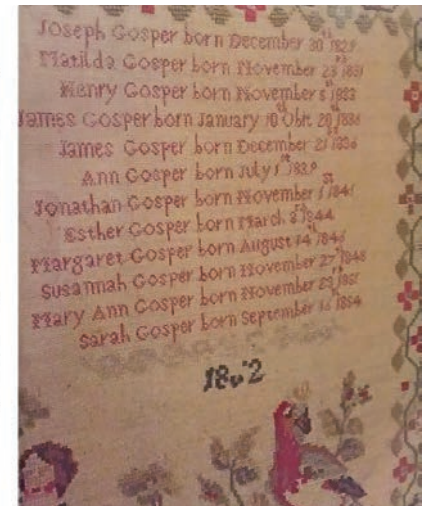
The next object was a surprise.

Jean Stephens said that when I asked her to choose her favourite artefact this amazing creation came to mind, when she came to view it (as it was not on display then) and I came back with what Jean called a beautifully conserved and framed work (Figure 11). She was thrilled to discover that more people shared her enthusiasm about this artefact.

An artefact like this can give so much information! And the stories are continuing as can often be the case.

This is the Gosper Sampler (Figure 11) and a close up

of some of the work. I'm sure that you all know, but in case not, a needle work sampler, or sampler for short, is a piece of embroidery produced as a demonstration of skills in needlework. It often includes the alphabet, figures, motifs, decorative borders and sometimes the name of the person who embroidered it and the date.



Photos Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2015

Figure 11 . The Gosper Sampler, Hawkesbury Regional Museum.

This tapestry sampler, had always intrigued Jean because of the incomplete number in the date it was made -18?2 – it seemed to be perhaps a 6? , but if so that would mean that Sarah was 8 when she completed this work- how could an eight year old child sew such meticulous work? Jean could hardly believe it when the 6 was subsequently confirmed by comparing it with the 6 in Margaret's and James' birth dates. This amazing creation of such fine cross-stitch has always been a favourite museum item of Jeans.

But there are so many stories in an artefact like this. Here is the story so far...Sarah Gosper (b.16 September 1854) was the 12th and last child of Joseph Gosper and Ann Gosper (née Marsden). See in Figure 11 the parents' names and birthdates in the circle and a list of the children close up here on the right.

Sarah's grandfather, Thomas, had arrived in 1790 on the transport *Sunrise*. The ships of that fleet were infamous, but the *Sunrise* was the best as only 36 deaths occurred whereas the other two ships had a total of 331 deaths. Nevertheless, the 448 who survived the voyage were too ill to work and many died.

Thomas Gosper's crime, aged 19, was to cut the mooring rope of a lighter (barge), a prank, which misfired.

Sarah's grandmother, Mary, was apparently a gullible

victim of a smooth talker, whom she aided and abetted in the theft of a considerable amount of very valuable jewellery. Her role was to leave the house unoccupied so Mary was transported on the Third Fleet in 1791. After one mésalliance, she married Thomas and together they raised four hardworking sons in the Hawkesbury. Their third son, Joseph was our little seamstress' father.

As recorded on the tapestry, Sarah was the last born of the 12 children. The two boys named 'James' were because the first (obit) died at birth, and it was customary to replace a deceased child with another of the same name.

Sarah never married, and what became of her in later life is a mystery. Did she make anything of her gift for sewing? Was she disappointed in love? Did she devote herself to her parents or occupy herself with good works in the community? Her idle years were lost to history and all we know is that her final years were spent with her nephew, Albert (son of Mary Ann), and that she died in 1935 aged 81.

Our volunteer Jean (who is in her 80s) when reflecting on Sarah Gaspers story said

Life is so much more fulfilling today.

Or so we thought- in continuing to try and find out more about Sarah and her idle years as Jean called then some recent information has come to light about a dalliance- perhaps with a forbidden man. Sarah was a daughter who was sent away and then there was a child born out of wedlock, but that research is continuing.

Building component

The last object (Figure 12) (again selected by Jan Barkley Jack) illustrates so well the worth and value that can be found in an artefact.

Any guesses to what it might be?

It is one of the original external window shutters of the *Macquarie Arms Hotel* (built in 1815) situated in Thompson Square in Windsor; you can see the shutters in place in the 1870s photograph (Figure 13).

To Jan this artefact is interesting on many levels, and it demonstrates a vitally important fact relating to historical collections: that historical importance is not necessarily related to pristine or pretty appearances or high monetary value. This shutter has flaking, mismatched paintwork, cracking and broken end locks

also oppose its importance, yet it is 200 years old and of social significance as well as having historical and technical value.



Photo Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2016

Figure 12. Window shutter from the Macquarie Arms Hotel, Windsor.

This original shutter is the earliest moveable heritage artefact from Macquarie's governorship in our collection, given extra significance by having come from the oldest extant Inn building in Australia in the oldest civic Square (begun in 1795). This close connection with Governor Lachlan Macquarie gives the shutter high significance for it was Macquarie who commissioned the building of the hotel privately, as part of his new planning renewal throughout the Colony.

In January 1811 Governor Macquarie had given land to Government store-keeper, Richard Fitzgerald, on condition that Fitzgerald built an inn of a stipulated high standard

"as there was no house of public reception at Windsor capable of accommodating....genteel companies" (Macquarie 1811, p.42)

Richard Fitzgerald, who had the hotel built, was to become a foremost Hawkesbury ex-convict land-holder and a long-time public servant, himself a direct example of Macquarie's controversial policy of restoring social status to outstanding ex-convicts, made tangible

in a small way by the existing original shutter.



Photo Hawkesbury Regional Museum 2016

Figure 13. *Macquarie Arms Hotel, Windsor.*

The building was finished and officially opened by Macquarie himself on 26 July 1815. The *Sydney Gazette* reported enthusiastically:

“...the *Macquarie Arms*, from its extent, plan of building, and adequate number of apartments, will be doubtless found worthy the most liberal patronage and support.” (Anonymous 1815).

This shutter was part of that original ‘worthy’ fabric.

Macquarie is recognised as the greatest of planners in the early Colony, whose attention to architectural, planning and social detail allowed not just the Colony to transform in ways still apparent and relevant today, but for Windsor to become one of the foremost towns in New South Wales at the time. Macquarie attended functions in the Inn many times while Governor.

Concluding Remarks

So to finish up: in this the jubilee year of the Hawkesbury Historical Society, you can see how we are grateful that members past and present had the foresight to collect artefacts of such historical significance, such as those on display in this exhibition.

They have an important place in not only the history of the Hawkesbury but many extend hold a significant place in the history of NSW and even Australia.

I haven’t mentioned them all today as it would take up too much time, but also because it gives you a reason to come visit the museum see the others.

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Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

In my increasing need to down-size, to discard, or in assessing at what point there should be a handover of my Treasures to the off-spring, I ask: What objects are significant? What family history do they convey? What do they say about predecessors...what items say something about me?....

The thousands of matchbox labels from across the globe thrilled me; humdrum flotsam with their wondrous pictorial material, encyclopaedic ...miniature gems... compressed legends, emblems and propaganda; their printing... their users – smokers from around the world - the journeys the matchboxes and their labels took; their survivalthey had a role in shaping me and in what I do.

And so to **Ray Christison** –

- Principle Consultant of High Ground Consulting (Heritage & Archaeology)
- President of the City of Lithgow mining museum, State Mine Heritage Park...

My emailed question to him was –

Can you detail a much-prized possession that survives from childhood that might even have signalled your destiny?

His response –

“What a very novel way to make introductions!

After giving this matter some thought I have settled on a cast metal farm animal – a Hereford bull to be precise.

I was about six years old when I found this bull in a garden bed beside the driveway of our home in Chamberlain Avenue, Caringbah. The house was of inter-war vintage and I believe the animal to be also. Most of its paint had been worn off and its legs, often the most fragile part of these toys, were either bent up to the torso or broken off.

It is still a mystery to me why the animal was where I found it, however from a young age I revelled in the process of discovering the past. Perhaps the bull was the beginning of that. As an archaeologist I love the process of using the fabric of a place to tell me its story. In my historical research I thrill at discovering the story that has lain hidden or been forgotten.

I’ll bring the little bull with me.”

....and his Topic:

MYSTERIES OF THE CRAFT – THE MORE BIZARRE IMPLEMENTS OF THE COALMINER

Ray Christison

116 Hassans Walls Road

Lithgow, NSW 2790

raychristison@higround.com.au

Key words: coal, miners, implements, crib

INTRODUCTION

What I want to discuss are some of the strange artefacts and implements associated with coalmining and also to look at some of the unique dialect associated with the craft.

Coalmining is a mystery to most. The collier's labour is hidden from the world and the tools of the trade have names that are often curious and often incomprehensible to the uninitiated. At the Lithgow State Mine museum we often note a sense of wonder among our visitors as this world is revealed to them.

Some coalmining terms, brought in from other countries, especially language of coalmining areas in Wales and Europe are:

- Bord & Pillar: A method of coalmining whereby a grid system of roads (bords) is established leaving pillars of coal.
- Darg: The agreed quota of coal to be hewed by contract miners.
- Rib: Side wall of an underground roadway.
- Goaf (Gob): Area left to collapse after the removal of coal.
- Damp: Gases within a coal mine. From German dampf - vapour.

Crib Tin

The miner's meal was also known as his crib and the crib tin (Figure 1) was a personal item which each miner had in the old days; these are often donated to our museum so we have a few on display and quite a few in storage. The question I always ask children visiting the museum is "why did the men take their food underground in a tin? Why don't they use a bag?" and generally ask the children what they take their lunch to school in, which is usually a plastic lunchbox. Miners needed the tin to protect their food from the rats and horses. Rats were encouraged in the mines, as they could sense danger. If rats left an area, the miners would know it was time to get out. The miners would throw food to the rats to encourage them. We also know that some horses like Duke, at the Lithgow State

Mine, were adept at opening crib tins and stealing food.



Figure 1. George Mackie at the Lithgow Valley Colliery. George is taking his crib, his tin is visible, and he is sitting in the head of the mine.



Figure 2. Greasy Pot Lamp.

Greasy Pot Lamp

The Greasy Pot Lamp (Figure 2) is another common item. The Greasy Pot has a number of names, but basically it is a little oil lamp and it is probably one of the more primitive forms of head-gear used by miners. It is alternatively called a Scotch lamp or a stinker, due to the smell of the burning oil. These lamps gave off

a very poor light and there is an eye condition that miners suffered in the old days when using these lamps, called *nystagmus*, which was the result of working in low light conditions. However, a lot of miners used the Greasy Pot Lamps because they believed that the fat dripping down their faces protected them from the coal-dust. Interestingly, in the coal-fields around Lithgow, there were lower levels of methane than elsewhere in New South Wales and naked lights were tolerated here longer than elsewhere. It was not unusual to see Greasy Pot Lamps used in Lithgow up until the 1940s, well after they were replaced for safety reasons in Newcastle and the Illawarra.

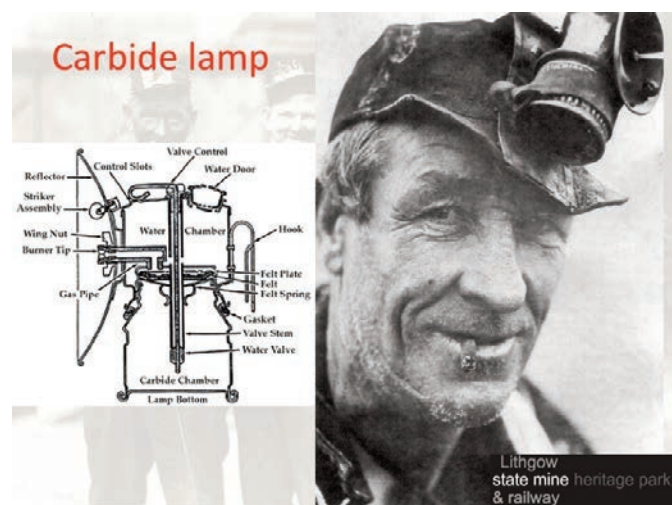


Figure 3. Carbide Lamp.

Carbide Lamp

Early in the twentieth century, the Greasy Pot Lamp was replaced by the Carbide Lamp (Figure 3), which is a compact acetylene lamp. There is a water chamber and a carbide chamber and water drips are controlled by a regulator. Regulated water reacts with the carbide. However, once again, the naked flame was used in the Western Coalfields up until the 1940s. They are quite collectible, we have been given quite a few over the years and we have quite a few in the collection.

Skip

Another item common to the coalminer is the Skip (Figure 4) which was used to transport coal out of the mine and depending on the colliery, they either carried one ton or 1½ tons of coal. Initially most of the skips were wooden and then later made of steel.

When underground, the miners would work in pairs and load the skips together. Miners had what was known as a Darg, an agreed daily production quota intended to equalise incomes.



Figure 4. A group of boys at the pit top are rolling a Skip to re-rail it.comes.

The State Mine at Lithgow had a Darg of six tons so each pair had to fill four skips per day.

Once the miners had filled a skip they would put a token on it to let it be known that it had been filled. Every miner had a set of tokens; the first skip of the day was marked with a stainless steel token and the rest of the day with a copper token. It could take a couple of days for the skips to reach the surface so the appearance of a skip with a stainless steel token indicated that it was the first of a day.

Coal was transported from the working face in skips pulled by horses called wheelers that would wheel the skips from the coalface to a marshalling area known as the flat. There the skips would be clicked onto an endless rope hauling system and dragged to the pit bottom from where they would be taken out to the surface by lifts (cages). At the State Mine the shaft cages could take two skips at a time, i.e. three tons and they broke a record in 1932, when they hauled over 3,000 tons of coal out of the mine in one day. Apparently the State Mine and the Steel Works Colliery would race one another.

Skips were used until mechanisation of the industry in the 1940s and 1950s and miners were paid as contractors so by the ton. There was a catastrophic fire in the State Mine, in 1953 after which steel skips were introduced and one survives at Eskbank House Museum, Lithgow.

Organ Grinder

Early in the twentieth century, explosives were brought in, which the miners referred to as **fracture**. They would drill up to 8 or 10 holes in the coal-face

and they would be packed with explosives and fired to loosen the coal ('blow it down') so that the miners could shovel it into skips. Initially the miners used hand drills (Figure 5), often made at the pit by the blacksmith and the miners referred to the drill as an **organ grinder** or a monkey-on-a-stick,. Later on the hand drills were replaced by compressed air or electric drills.

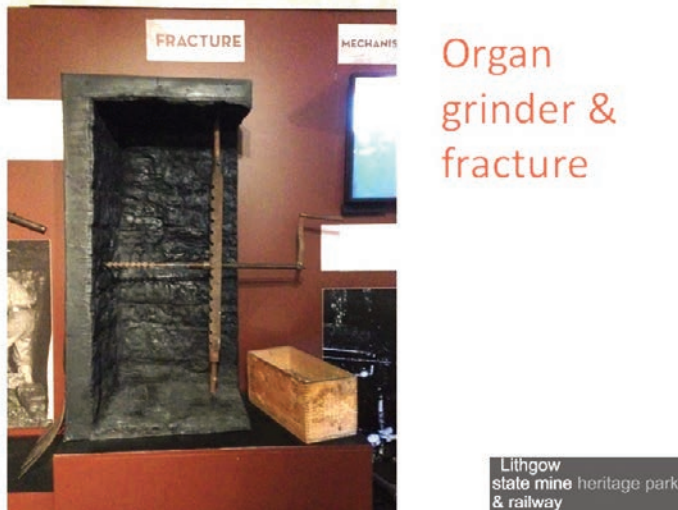


Figure 5. Hand Drills and Explosives



Figure 6. Breathing Apparatus.

Proto breathing apparatus

The Proto is a self-contained breathing apparatus (Figure 6), a re-breather which would recirculate the air the wearer breathed. They were shockingly heavy and they were used from the early twentieth century right through to the 1970s when they were replaced by much a lighter apparatus. The State Mine has a collection of Protos from the Western Mines Rescue Station and we have donated one to the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney which is expanding to represent each of the branches of the Armed Services.

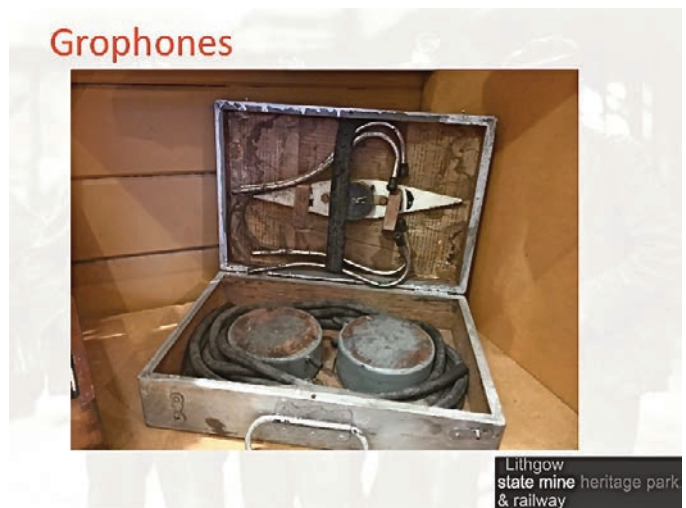


Figure 7. Mine Rescue listening device.

Grophones

Grophones (Figure 7) look like a giant stethoscope; they were used by mine rescuers to detect movement when they were trying to locate people trapped underground. This is the instrument that was used in the film 'Beneath Hill 60' to detect the location of the Germans in the tunnels. A lot of this sort of gear has come to the State Mine from the Western Miners Rescue Station.



Figure 8. Lamps and Miner's Dial.

Miner's Dial

This group of artefacts (Figure 8) were given to the museum by a surveyor, Ian Stevenson, who had trained at the Lithgow State Coal Mine in the early 1950s. The Miner's Dial (circumferentor) is basically a compass with two large sighters that was used to survey Blue Mountains Colliery. John also donated two safety lamps; a small Mini Wolf Manager's Lamp and a larger Ashworth, Hepplewhite and Gray Safety Lamp, which a number of the miners at the State Mine used. We are looking at putting it in the Surveyor's Room in at the State Mine Museum so are currently working out new displays and decommissioning some

old ones within the space.



Figure 9. Horses underground.

.....and the horses:

We have on display at the museum, a fibreglass horse (Figure 9) we call 'Socks'. We purchased him from the maker of fibreglass animals who is based in Sans Souci. He physically looks like a stock horse and had his legs feathered out with real horse hair and when we set him up in the museum a former miner said that he looked like *Socks*, the horse he used to work with in the State Mine. *Socks* is wearing a harness that is part of the New South Wales Department of Mines collection, donated to the State Mine in the 1990s. *Socks* is included in the "Fire in the Mine" display.

Currently, the museum is custodian of a large number of items from the former Earth Exchange at the Rocks and items from the NSW Government Department of Mineral Resources collection. We have made a case to the current NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Museums & Galleries that there should be some assistance with custodianship of state significant collections such as these.

Quoits

Quoits (Figure 10) was once a social aspect of the coalmining communities. Playing quoits came to Australia from the Midlands of England with the mining industry and the quoits were made of cast iron, similar to horse-shoes. So, it was a sport that required skill and strength. We are fortunate to have one cast iron quoit in our collection. There was a quoit field in Lithgow, near where the Aldi store is now located but quoits were also played at the Royal Hotel at Cullen Bullen and in the Hunter. It is one of those older practices that has all but disappeared.



Figure 10. Recreation.



Figure 11. Fraternal Organisations.

The Friendly Societies

One of the big social aspects of Lithgow in the nineteenth century and through the twentieth century was the presence and influential nature of the quite diverse groups of Friendly Societies, such as Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows and the Freemasons. There were also societies such as the Good Foresters, the Druids and one that was prominent in Lithgow was the Loyal Order of Free Gardeners and the artefact I have displayed in the photo (Figure 11) is an apron belonging to that society. It is an apron with the compass, square and pruning knife and is now in the Eskbank House Museum collection. The Free Gardeners and Oddfellows were quite prominent in the establishment of the mining union in Lithgow in the nineteenth century.

The most bizarre object of all

The most bizarre in our museum is "Deedy" Mason's



Figure 12. Arnold Mason's Prosthetic Leg.

prosthetic leg (Figure 12). Arnold Mason worked at the Wallerawang Colliery and lost his leg in a motor-bike accident and some years ago somebody noticed this home-made prosthetic leg on the tip and donated it to the museum. This is the leg that “Deedy” used to wear underground at the colliery. It is made from the tyne of a wheelbarrow and it has been modified with a platform for the stump of his leg, leather brace for his knee, at the bottom a piece of car tyre, and a strap that would have gone around his waist. It was featured on the ABC Radio National website for “Object Stories”.



Figure 13. Enema pump.

Last object....what is it?

It (Figure 13) looks like a bicycle pump, but it is a drencher for treating colic in horses. Horse bowel enema-pumps were used to introduce warm soapy water into the large bowel – rectum of a horse with impaction colic, to assist passage of manure from the anus.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to Jan Koperberg for creating the written text from our conversations.

Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

Amongst the items desperately needing downsizing in the garage is a tea-chest of stuff I sent home to Mum, from Belsize Park, London, in 1969 – a most distracting, Beatlemaniac time. Jean Winston knew The Beatles – lived next door to one of them, but decided to come to Australia. What more could one learn about her by posing the question -

Can you describe a cherished object reluctantly or inadvertently left when emigrating to Australia?

Her response -

“Your request has been difficult for me to answer. It's not only the time factor, 59 years, but when I search my memory I think I took everything I had with me, except for a radiogram and my tennis racquet. It all went in a not very large trunk and, of all things, a navy blue kitbag. I think this shows that our material possessions were not so numerous in those days.

The only thing which I used to think about, and wish I had, was a book of my father's which was called, I think, 'People of the World' which showed the Hottentots with their big backsides and the people who stretched their earlobes and others who put wooden plates in their lips. The one European group which I remember was a lovely young Swedish woman with lighted candles in her hair for the Festival of Light. I don't suppose any of this is much use to you for your introduction but it is interesting to me to think back and realise that was the only material thing which I remember wanting.”

Presenting Jean Winston, President, Mt. Victoria & District Historical Society...

THE 200 YEAR OLD QUILT

Jean Winston

7, Mission Street,
Katoomba,
NSW 2780

jeanwinston@inet.net.au

Key words: Quilt, Mount Victoria, linen thread, Mary Smith.

INTRODUCTION

In two years time the object from the Mount Victoria and District Museum, which I am going to talk about will be two hundred years old. It is a cotton quilt, which was donated to the museum in 1972 by John Bradley of Bullaburra, who told us that his great-grandmother had started to sew it by hand when she was eight years old. The quilt was finished ten years later. We do not know when the family came to Australia but the little girl, Mary, married a man called Smith.



Photo Stephen Davis, 2016

Figure 1. The 200 year old quilt in the Mount Victoria and District Museum.

Mary Smith

She was born in 1800 and lived in Cowling, Yorkshire, a village which stands on the road between Yorkshire and Lancashire. Cowling is 12 miles from Ilkley (of “Ilkla Mooar baht ‘at” fame (Anonymous 2016)) and 15 miles from Bradford once the world’s leading centre of wool dealing and the weaving of woollen fabrics. The first spinning factory was opened in 1798 and the power loom came in 1825. Mary was born between those dates. These were the times and one of the areas where the Luddites broke the looms as they saw mechanisation ruining their livelihoods.

Cowley was an area where wheat was grown and milled, but after the Industrial Revolution wheat came in cheaply from other parts by canal and so that particular industry was discontinued. The local people turned to weaving either at home or in the local factories.

The Quilt

I had always known there was a quilt somewhere in the museum but for a long time we could not find it. One of our hard working volunteers when cleaning near one of the display cases saw a long bundle of green calico which seemed to have something inside it. When we rolled it out sure enough there was the quilt.

I remember one of our curators seeing it years before and it was in such a filthy state that she took it home and washed it by hand in a gentle washing solution. Probably this action would be frowned upon by professionals but the quilt did not seem to come to any harm. Part of the quilt is very ragged whether by use or maybe chewed by rodents, we don’t know.

Quilt details

By chance when we were working one day at the museum when a local man brought in a friend named Hilary and asked if we could show her around. We were happy to do this and she took a great interest in the textiles which we have in the collection. When queried further she told us that she had been curator of textiles at the Museum of London for several years. I asked her if she would tell us what she could deduce from the various exhibits and asked her to come back especially to look at the quilt.

Together we laid it onto a table and Hilary Davidson swung into action examining it in minute detail on both sides. She told me that the main panels which are blue and pink with a pattern of peony flowers (Figure 1) are furnishing fabric. These would have been inspired by Indian chintzes.



Photo Stephen Davis 2016

Figure 2. Centre panel - block printed.

The centre panel (Figure 2) and one side of the quilt have been block printed. Block printing is done with a wood block and the colours put on one by one. It is possible to see that the colours do not quite fit into the outlines of the pattern made by the block.

Hilary thought the textiles had been re-used as was often the case with quilt fabrics. Some were estimated to have been made in the 1790s, which of course is not long after the French revolution began.



Photo Stephen Davis, 2016

Figure 3. Stitching.

The quilt is completely hand stitched, some of the stitching (Figure 3) is quite crude as you might expect from an eight year old.

One of the patterns on the material is of brown hearts. It seems to have been a fabric made at a later date and could be an 1820s dress fabric.

The dyes would all have been vegetable. The original

blue-green colour of the fabric been lost and the green colour now appears blue because the yellow has faded from it. Red would have come from madder, this colour and purple were derived from the brazil wood of the tropical tree that gave its name to the country of Brazil as well as to its nuts. The blue colour would have been made from the indigo plant and the yellow from the flowering plant golden rod or other yellow-producing plants. These colours were printed over each other one by one.

A red worsted tape edging has been used (Figure 4). Worsted is a twisted yarn from long staple wool, similar to material that was used to make underwear quite cheaply. The red backing is twill of woven wool. The weave gives the effect of parallel diagonal lines.

The backing has fabric printed by roller printing. It is very precise and part of it is of fine lines with dots, probably dating from 1810 to 1820. Apart from the red worsted all the other fabrics are pure cotton, the fine grey one would be a roller printed dress fabric, used for children's and servants' dresses.



Photo Stephen Davis, 2016

Figure 4. Worsted tape edging.

The wadding, sometimes called French wadding, was probably cotton. One edge of the quilt has a violet pattern (Figure 5) also done with a roller. This seems to date from about 1810. An 1820s pattern depicts a spray with leaves. Another type of printing is Cornelli printing, a curlicue pattern based on the style of plain stitch embroidery.

At this stage Hilary looked more closely at the back of the quilt and made an interesting discovery. She deduced that the centre part of the quilt was started as a practice piece and then it had been extended to make a large body of work. This is called an accumulative

practice piece. All the fabrics on the back are dress fabrics apart from the red wool.



Photo Stephen Davis, 2016

Figure 5. Violet patterned fabric.

Another thing to look at is the thread. On this quilt it is mainly linen. Linen was superseded by cotton at about the end of the 1810s but maybe our sewer's mother had plenty of reels of linen thread to keep her daughter going for years.

One of the most interesting things for me about the way in which Hilary deduced things about the quilt was the fact that she went about the whole thing as a detective would look for clues in a criminal case. She looked meticulously at all the fabrics, the type of fabric, the printing, the colours, the thread, the stitching and the way in which the fabrics had been put together. She could tell so much from all the above that a whole story emerged about the history of the quilt. I found it fascinating.

Acknowledgement

This account has been greatly enhanced by the input from Hilary Davidson who is thanked for her advice and comments.

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2016>Photo Lynn Collins 2015

Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

The way of viewing artefacts at museums and galleries these days involves less than 2 seconds, usually using the mobile phone to take pictures, presumably for intense discussion, later. I have noted museum and gallery attendants getting twitchy and bringing radios to hand watching my poring over an exhibit for a minute or three – perhaps this is happening to you too?

Vladimir Nabokov wrote in “Transparent Things” of the act of looking, and thinking he called “temporal vertigo” -

“When we concentrate on a material object, whatever its situation, the very act of attention may lead to our involuntarily sinking into the history of that object....such that we become not of the now”

In my downsizing I have pondered the transporting power of artefacts and was interested in the thoughts of others, including the next speaker, Keith Ward to whom I posed an emailed question linked to temporal vertigo. To find out more about the Publicity Manager, Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum, I asked Keith...:

“Can you describe a prized possession surviving from your past that continues to set you dreaming?”

But he did not reply.

THE CAVES EXPRESS

Keith Ward

40 Farm Road,

Springwood, NSW 2777.

Kwa40124@bigpond.net.au

Key words: Caves Express, Jenolan Caves, railway carriage

INTRODUCTION

As our artefact is much too large to bring along: you have a piece of it to take home! (Figure 1).

Of course what you have in your hands is only one piece of a beautiful jigsaw puzzle!

You are all part of the puzzle. The next ten minutes will help you appreciate the solution!

On Remembrance Day in 1929 a significant event took place on NSW railways, when the Depot witnessed a new arrival on the tracks with an express service which was to become a flagship of the railway fleet for many years. The 'Caves Express' which began operations between Sydney and Mount Victoria in that year was targeted at the Blue Mountains tourist market.

As the Great Depression came to a close, increases in employment and wages, coupled with the falling cost of motor vehicles due to mass production, meant that



Figure 1: Postcard of a carriage in the 'Caves Express' train.

The 'Caves Express'

Many visitors to the Jenolan Caves pass through the sometimes bustling, sometimes sleepy, villages and towns of the Blue Mountains on their way. Today, the settlement of Valley Heights is one such sleepy village, but this is a far cry from its status for most of the 20th century. It was the site of a busy Railway Depot, which housed up to ten steam locomotives and employed 80 men at its peak.

the growing popularity of the motor car and vast improvements to road conditions had challenged the supremacy of train travel. In common with railway operators around the world, including the Great Western Railway in England (which my accent may reveal was my home patch for many years!), New South Wales Government Railways fought back. Schedules were dramatically accelerated with the use of limited-stop running and a lightweight train of only five American suburban carriages.

The carriages were adapted for tourist use by enclosing the end platforms, grouping seats in settings of four either side of an aisle and adding buffet facilities. The train was originally hauled by specially assigned superheated steam locomotives of the C32 class of which four are preserved including recently restored loco 3214 at Valley Heights. Two of the four are operational and we occasionally see them on heritage specials. The ‘Caves Express’ train ran non-stop from Sydney to Hazelbrook, then it stopped at all stations to Mount Victoria to pick up eager patrons from the many guesthouses along the route. After the 2½ hour journey from Central to Mount Victoria, passengers could enjoy a stop at the Railway Refreshment Rooms (now the home of some wonderful memorabilia), prior to the, at times, perilous journey by motor coach down to Jenolan Caves!

Thus a new era was born and a vital link to the future success of *Caves House*, which was run by the railways for many years, was forged.

This early venture into packaged holidays, with train travel, coach ride and accommodation being promoted as one, proved highly successful - it was billed as ‘The fastest mountain train in the world’ and its popularity temporally helped stay the end of this period of luxury train touring. Of course there are swings and roundabouts – the current successful operation of the ‘The Ghan’ and ‘Indian Pacific’ trains may be threatened, although similar luxury travel over long distances is still popular overseas (‘The Rocky Mountaineer’ in Canada, ‘The Blue Train’ in South Africa, and of course the modern versions of ‘The Orient Express’ quickly come to mind).

The Caves Express carriages were initially presented in a new livery of Blue body colour with Russet painted along the window line. This unlikely colour combination is described in a report of the first trip in 1929:

“The new train comprises five luxurious coaches, which will accommodate 230 passengers, (*comprising*) 94 first-class and 136 second-class. Externally of Queensland cedar, painted in blue and russet, the train was an object of much attention and favourable comment.” (Anonymous 1929).

This livery lasted until 1932 when the Russet was replaced with Golden Yellow.

RBR 1049, a first Class Buffet Car, is the last survivor of Set 108 which comprised “R” type carriages.

Painted in colours of Royal Blue and Golden Yellow when introduced to service in December 1936 it now enjoys its glorious retirement at Valley Heights ([Figure 1](#)). Set 108 was the third set specially prepared for use on the Caves Express. The carriage had been converted from a nearly thirty year old ‘Dog Box’ type, originally built by Clyde Engineering as the improbably named, but railway specific,

“Bogie Express Lavatory Side Loading Composite Mansard Roof Carriage.”

Luckily the railway used codes so it was originally known as BX1049!

Following that conversion, our carriage had a small kitchen at one end, where light snacks were prepared en-route and served to drop-in tables in each compartment. The fittings were typical of the era, with folding armrests, comfortable upholstery, luggage racks, drinking water bottles and black & white tourism photos completing the scene.

Retired from the ‘Caves Express’ in 1942, it still ran in various guises including spells on the long established named train ‘The Fish’ (which still plies its trade after 150 years in the timetable) and was finally retired from service in 1975.

As is common on railway systems worldwide, operators are very adept at modification, and adaptive re-use. This carriage was almost unrecognisable from its present appearance when it arrived at the Museum in 2009. Over its years of running, the beautiful match wood external side panels had been replaced with Masonite, and an extra door had been added, amongst other alterations. RBR1049 has been superbly restored to its former glory and painstakingly repainted in colours of Garter Blue and Golden Yellow ([Figure 1](#)). The THREE year restoration was finally completed during 2014 and brings back for some of us, memories of the heady days of Agatha Christie and Hercule Poirôt and for the younger generations, Harry Potter! One compartment has been redecorated with its full table settings of glass, crockery and cutlery and even some newspapers from the period. Passengers were given an explanatory guide map which carried a potted history of the towns and villages along the way; a copy of this is here (today) for inspection at your leisure. Also with me are some images of the restoration and some of the source documents for the project.

In August of last year, we reminded the management of the Jenolan Caves of this important link between

our two bodies and an article was published in the local tourism magazine *Discover the Blue Mountains*.

Details

Now for the train buffs, some locomotive facts: The C32s only hauled the 'Caves Express' train for three years, being replaced in 1932 by the C35 class, of which there is still one operational, loco 3526. They in turn were supplanted by the C36s in 1935 performing CE duties until the cessation of the service in 1942. Of course loco 3642 is operated at least once a year to Katoomba by Heritage Express, another arm of our parent organisation. There was a common thread throughout this period and that was the desire of the Railways to impress their patrons. As well as a large European looking silver star on the front of some, these locos sported at various times, paint schemes of Black, Brunswick Green or Blue, possibly inspired by the famous steam loco 'Mallard', of the LNER in England, which in 1938 had set a still unbroken world speed record.

Our carriage RBR1049 was a finalist in the National Trust awards in 2015 (being the Centenary of ANZAC).

This famous, and much admired, exhibit is a first class restored masterpiece from a bygone era and is on display and open for inspection at the Museum on our regular Open Days.

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Rod Hawkes, who was responsible for much of this restoration; Allan Leaver, Brett Fitzpatrick & Garry Saunders (from the then Rail Transport Museum) who provided much of the research behind it; Jennifer Edmonds from Transport Heritage NSW who supported the project, and especially Ted Dickson (Museum vice Chairman and co-founder) whose foresight in 1989 lent weight to the creation of the Museum, and who is of course here today, for his input to my presentation.

REFERENCE

Anonymous (1929) Caves Express. Up to 64 Miles an Hour. *Singleton Argus*, 11 November 1929, p.4, col.6.

Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

...this question was sent to **Lois Sabine** from Blue Mountains Historical Society....

Can you describe a cherished artefact that is very personal to you and readily summons a past incident?

For me, it is the shirt, the shirt my mother continued to repairwhich brings to mind my boyhood home; my mother's bustling around the house, her working; my coming home in winter and the smell of fresh ironing; the warmth; dinner – boiling potatoes and pumpkin on the stove... in the kitchen she'd spent the day in.

Lois' response? – I'm not going to tell you – she sent back an email with a fulsome synopsis of her talk which I will withhold only saying by way of introduction that Lois is a committed Blue Mountains Historical Society worker, a Guide at *Tarella*, who cares very much for textiles and a tussle with historical research connected with her Mystery Artefact. She said at the conclusion of her helpful précis of her talk –

“This has become a personal ongoing story, to solve a mystery, and to give credit where it is due, to an unknown woman, who created an item of practical beauty”

– and so Lois' 10 minute presentation this afternoon.

THE BEAUMONT BEDSPREAD: FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW.

Lois Sabine

39, Hawkesbury Road,
Springwood, NSW 2777.

lsabine@bigpond.com

Key words: Bedspread, Quilt, Foxglove, Susan Beaumont, Tarella, Wentworth Falls.



Photo Linsi Braith 2016

Figure 1. The Beaumont Bedspread in *Tarella*, Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc.

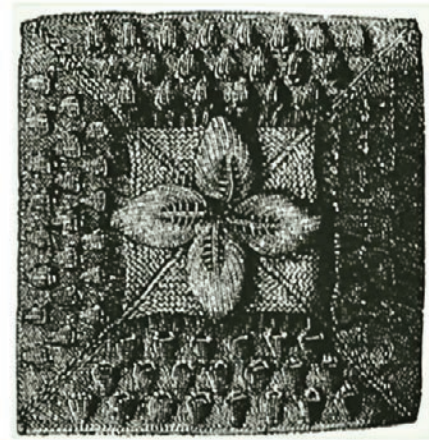
INTRODUCTION

It is hard to imagine that with only yarn of soft cotton thread, [hold up yarn] and a pair of knitting needles [hold up needles] how much time and patience was needed to make this hand knitted double bedspread (Figure 1), or counterpane as they were often called in the early days. It was donated to *Tarella Cottage Museum* in the grounds of the Blue Mountains Historical Soc. and recent research showed the bedspread to be more than 100 years old and made by Mrs. Susan Beaumont.

Following my email enquiry an earlier version of this account was published online by Barbara Smith (2016).

Manufacture

The elusive original knitting instructions for the main Foxglove Square (Figure 2), the basis of the bedspread, has been found to have been published early in 1883 in London. They were in a book called *Needlework for Ladies for Pleasure and Profit* (Dorinda 1883). This book proved to be so popular that a revised second edition was published in the same year, with a third edition soon after.



Square for Quilt in Foxglove Pattern

Anonymous (1886, col.4)

Figure 2. Foxglove knitted square.

This clever and practical volume was designed with instructions “for Making Numerous and Useful, Pretty and Saleable articles”. Having made items from the instructions in the book, ladies could then turn to the back section where a list of twenty six charitable “Established Work Societies” promised help with sales under certain conditions. Many pointed out that their assistance was designed for ‘Gentlewomen’, or ladies of ‘Gentle Birth’ who should be well educated, and able to supply good references, preferably from a clergymen. They should have leisure time, but were likely to be in distressed circumstances and could get help with their income by making handwork for sale. Only one society mentions ‘the poorer classes’. The societies aim was to get the poor better wages to enable their work to be sold ‘at the lowest possible price’.

However, a mere three years later, the *Australian Town and Country Journal* in July 1886, featured the identical instructions for the Foxglove Square (Figure 3), simply under the headline of ‘Work Corner’ (Anonymous 1886). Doesn’t have quite the same class distinction to it, does it?

The Australian magazine instructions for knitting the foxglove square appeared to have been followed exactly by Mrs. Susan Beaumont.



Figure 3. *Australian Town & Country Journal* 24 July 1886, p.190.

The square was commenced by knitting the first of four small triangles. Each were designed as follows.

You cast on one stitch, and knit 1, purl 1, and knit 1 into it, and then turned. Each following row had different instructions. You widened the triangular shape by increasing the stitches during and at either end of each row, until you had completed 59 rows. Four completed triangular sections were then stitched together and pressed.

When you had finished knitting forty two, ten inch squares, made up from 168 triangles, the squares were plain sewn together into a block of 7 squares long by 6 squares wide. This completed the pattern for the central section of the double bed spread only.

After following the published pattern of a popular square, one could make their bedspread more individual by selecting from the myriad of knitted edging designs published in the 1880s. Mrs. Beaumont chose a design called 'A Column of Leaves' for her basic edging pattern. It was knitted separately in several lengths like a huge scarf, and on completion sewn edge to edge onto the completed central section.

Finished? But Wait, there's more. In the final row of the wide edging there needed to be added 728 individual tassels (*we counted*). Each was made up from six threads, no more, no less. The bedspread was now complete.

Mrs. Susan Beaumont.

The information given at the time of the donation of the bedspread to the Blue Mountains Historical Society was sketchy, to say the least. They were only the maker's name, Mrs. Susan Beaumont, and the fact that she had lived in Blaxland. End of story.

Recent research has shown that the Beaumont family had come from Huddersfield, Yorkshire, England. Mrs. Beaumont was in her early forties when she and her four children boarded the Orient liner *Cuzco* in London and the ship arrived in Sydney on the 6th February, 1883.

In 1903, while living at *Bhuvana*, Noble Street, Mosman, Mrs. Beaumont bought a small wooden cottage on the corner of Railway Parade and Glenbrook Road, Blaxland. Of simple construction, it was painted, but unlined, and had an iron roof, three bedrooms, a kitchen, with a verandah wrapped all around. It appears to have been used as a holiday home by the family. Mrs. Beaumont was staying there when she died from illness and exhaustion on 21 November 1911 aged 72 (Anonymous 1911).

It is not known where the bedspread spent the next one hundred years but time had not been kind to it as one could see when it was donated to the *Tarella Cottage Museum* early in 2000. It was discoloured and in very poor condition. Over many years, where threads had perished and broken, damaged areas had been roughly cobbled back together with any coloured thread which happened to be on hand.

The repair.

When working in *Tarella* on an open day, I went to tidy the double bed spread which was displayed on an upstairs single bed and saw that the damage caused by old age was really very noticeable. The basic design, attractive as it was, had over the years developed problems. They showed by the few remaining stitches in the very centre of each square, and in each outer corner, where the aging cotton thread had broken down, resulting in many gaping holes. In a moment of insanity, I suggested that I repair it, and with permission, folded it up carefully and took it home.

It was clear that considerable darning was going to be

needed, but even that alone would not give it sufficient support, due to the overall weight on the old thread. I spread a clean old cotton bed sheet onto my lounge room floor and carefully placed the bed spread on top of it as gently as I could. This enabled it to be spread out and restored to its original shape. Multiple large nappy pins were then used to attach the bedspread onto the old sheet to give it stability. I was then able to slip my arms safely underneath and move it onto my very large work table.

With a blunt tapestry needle it became possible to darn the multiple holes in the spread itself. In one very large section close to the edge, the old thread had disintegrated entirely leaving a gaping hole about 8" long by 6" wide. To fill the hole I knitted a wider strip in plain and purl and sewed it under the few remaining threads, attaching them in their appropriate positions.

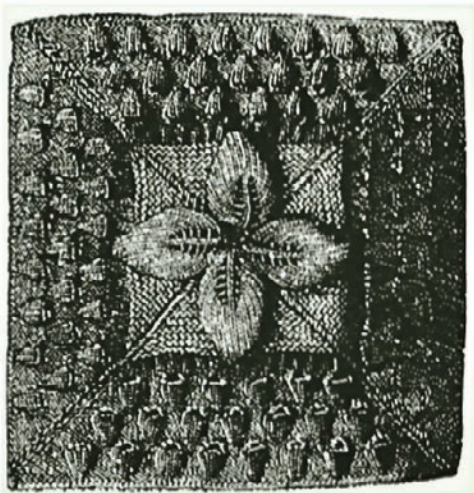
After several months of intermittent work I had a look at the repaired item with a critical eye. While the bedspread was successfully repaired and still pinned to the support sheet, the many darns were quite noticeable. So I crocheted more than 80 small rosettes and darned each by its outer edge to cover the centre of each square with another rosette sewn into each outer corner. Consequently, this remedial work is not orig-

inal to the design as the rosettes are only there for support. As the fabric of the spread now appeared to be stabilised sufficiently, I bought a strong, well washed cotton double bed sheet from the Salvos and the bedspread was re pinned onto the strong new/old sheet. Finally, I was able to sew around each individual square through the supporting sheet as well. The bedspread was now both repaired and supported, but despite my efforts, it still looked both shabby, and grubby.

I discussed the problem with my helpful local dry cleaner who told me in detail how he had very good results when he had recently washed a similar old cotton bedspread. He had soaked and gently washed it in his bathtub at home, rinsed it out very carefully, and allowed it to drain in the bath over several days. Then, with the help of his children, they hung it out to dry in the fresh mountain air. Convinced, I passed it over. The repairs with the backing withstood the test and about ten days later I picked it up looking fresh for the years to come.

Susan Beaumont's counterpane is on display on monthly open days in *Tarella Cottage*, Blue Mountains Historical Society, Wentworth Falls.

So From This



Square for Quilt in Foxglove Pattern

Anonymous (1886, col.4)

Figure 4. Foxglove knitted square (Figure 2).

To This.



Photo Linsi Braith 2016

Figure 5. The Beaumont Bedspread in *Tarella*, Blue Mnts. Historical Society Inc. (Figure 1)

Which only goes to prove that:
From Little Things Big Things Can Grow.

REFERENCES

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Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins.**

The emailed question sent to find out something about the man who is the Past President of the Glenbrook & District Historical Society, **Doug Knowles**, was -

What is a prized possession that has gone straight to your Pool Room (as per the classic Australian film “The Castle”) or equivalent, maybe the centre of the mantelpiece, or trophy cabinet?

I was trying to get Doug to reveal his passions and prowess, who he is, in the same manner as previous Speaker, Rebecca Turnbull....but I'm not going to give away his Mystery Artefact by relaying to you his response to me, only the object is of a size that it is able to be displayed here today.

THE SKARRATT WATCH.

Doug M. Knowles,
2 Sun Valley Road,
Sun Valley, NSW 2777.
sunvalley5@bigpond.com

Key words: Skarratt, Glenbrook, wash-away, train, watch, medal.

INTRODUCTION

Good morning everybody, my talk is about the Skarratt Presentation Watch.

Firstly, a brief outline of the story and then I will deal with the details.



Photo Jan Koperberg 2016

Figure 1. The Skarratt Watch.

[All photographs used in this paper were taken of items displayed behind glass at the Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc. Museum. That accounts for the somewhat unfortunate quality of the images.]

Item 1.

“The watch (Figure 1) was presented by a rail passenger in appreciation of action taken by Donald Skarratt (named as just Mr - Anonymous 1906a,b,c), on 24 March 1906 and the time was around about 5.30 p.m., therefore still daylight, just after the equinox.”

[But note that Anonymous (1906d) wrote of “Messrs. Donald and Thomas Skarratt” as participating and that corresponds with the ‘local legend’.]

The place that it occurred was on Lapstone Hill and you have to imagine a train approaching the Lapstone single track tunnel. Now this tunnel is in a deep gully, usually known as ‘Tunnel Gully’ and it is immediately south of the big bend as you drive down Lapstone Hill. So, I will read an extract of an account which was published in the *Nepean Times*, so you historians will know where to look that up yourselves.

“This, perhaps, was the biggest thing coming out of the storm on Saturday, and one that will long be remembered in the annals of railway working. The storm there was more severe than at any other place we have heard of. At about half past 5 Mr J Salvana, artist, who was engaged finishing an oil painting from Lucasville, just opposite Mr Colin Smith’s house, tells the history of the storm as no one else can. Just before the troubles came on Mr Salvana removed his paraphernalia into the house at the request of Mr Skarratt, the gentleman in charge of the place, and they intended settling down until the storm had passed; but just then there was a fearful disturbance of rushing wind, loud thunder claps, and vivid flashes of lightning. In fact, the noise was, to those who heard it, as if they were in the vicinity of a terrific military engagement. Then the rain came swooping down in torrents, and the noise was even greater. The parties could stand it no longer and went out. Then they saw trees being snapped off like carrots, limbs cut down, leaves shredded, and pieces of bark cut from the trees by the terrific fall of hail. Both stood out in the open then, never minding the rain, to watch further developments. All at once, so Mr Salvana says, Mr Skarratt appeared to have suddenly gone mad. He jumped the fence in front of him and went down the mountain side, over huge rocks and boulders, at break-neck speed. Mr Salvana followed, wondering what was going to happen. As Mr Skarratt got down on to the line he noticed a train approaching from Penrith and Mr Skarratt signalling the driver (Mr P Murray) to stop. Just ahead, and about 100 yards this side of the tunnel, there was a sight that fairly paralysed our artist. About 10 chains of the main line had been washed to a depth of two or three feet. The line had been lifted and arched in one place so that a man could stand up underneath it. Willis’ Siding had been partly washed away, some of the lengths of rails with sleepers attached being carried clean over the main line and down the bank. Huge rocks were lying here, there, and everywhere. In fact, it is said that thousands of tons of debris covered the main line.

Mr Skarratt, having prevented a terrible catastrophe, then made all haste to give the information to the Glenbrook stationmaster. This having been done, news was sent to Penrith, and a little later on the fireman of the train (Jack Sinclair) having also walked on (*to Glenbrook*), instructions were given for the train to be propelled back to Emu Plains. While this was being done preparations were being made for the sending on of a special train, with all available men, to the scene of the trouble. About 50 men, with loads of ashes and the usual breakdown vans, in charge of Mr W Pearce (traffic inspector), and Mr J Daws (permanent way), were sent off.

Information was sent to Mr Inspector Culnane, who came at once to the Penrith Station to superintend operations at this end. The “Fish” train arrived in due time, and there was a busy time at Penrith Station. Parties were made up, and proceeded by coach to different parts on the Mountains, passengers had also the option of returning to Sydney by special and ordinary trains, and having their tickets endorsed for the following week or of remaining and being provided for by the Commissioners. Nearly half the passengers returned to Sydney, whilst others found accommodation at the hotels or in the railway carriages. A special train with some 50 workmen, under Mr Phil Roberts, arrived in Penrith at 2 a.m., and at once proceeded to the spot, carrying with them a big supply of tucker. At 3 o’clock (*in the morning*) Mr Daws sent word that the road would be completed at 6 o’clock (*in the morning*), and arrangements were made at once for the despatch of the various trains. ” (Anonymous 1906c).

It is worth noting at this stage that it was a westbound goods train that was stopped, no doubt travelling relatively slowly. So, that is the account of the wash-away, according to the *Nepean Times*. Naturally, we can expect some degree of variation in other people’s accounts, just like the present day newspapers.

Now, I will read you a letter from the Office of the Railway Commissioners. We have the original on file at Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc., headed up “Office of the Railway Commissioners Sydney, 30th March 1906”, signed by R.W. McLachlan, Secretary and addressed to Mr. Donald Skarratt (Figure 2), *Mount Side*, Glenbrook:

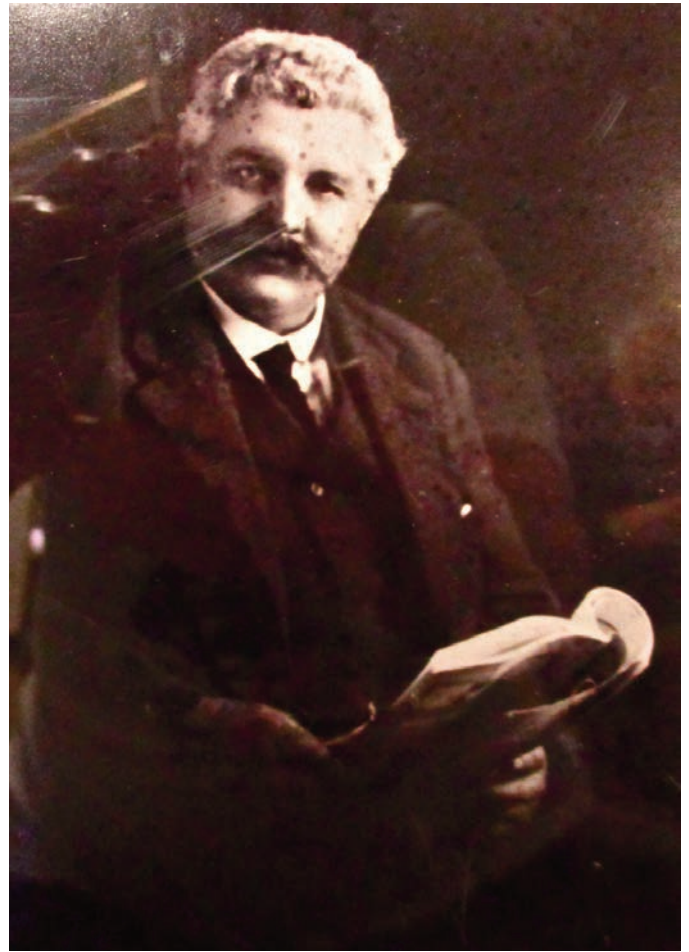


Photo Jan Koperberg 2016

Figure 2. Donald F. Skarratt.

[Photo donated to the Glenbrook and District Historical Society Museum by John Skarratt, the grandson of Donald F. Skarratt.]

“Sir,

With reference to the interruption that occurred to the railway traffic Glenbrook on the 24th instant, when you and your brother gave information of the wash-away that took place on the railway line, I am directed to inform you that the Railway Commissioners desire me to convey to you an expression of their appreciation of your prompt action to avoid accident.

The Commissioners have authorised the payment to you of the sum of £25 in connection with the matter, and a voucher is being forwarded for payment.

The Cheque may be obtained on application to the Station Master Glenbrook, in the course of a few days.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant
(signed)
Secretary.”

Item 2.

The next section of my talk involves a letter addressed to the Station Master Glenbrook on April 10th from a passenger who was travelling towards Sydney. The train this passenger was travelling on was held overnight at Springwood and Mr. Henry Goodwin, who gave his address as *Agincourt*, Wylde Street, Potts Point wrote the following letter:

“Dear Sir

May I ask you to present to the Skarratt Brothers, the enclosed souvenirs of appreciation (from my wife and self, occasional travellers on the G. W. Line) of a meritorious deed (only duty) done in peacetime, which in war-time would have secured the Victoria Cross.

Thanking you in anticipation.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Faithfully yours
(signed) Henry Goodwin”

I have since found out that Henry Goodwin, at the time, owned a considerable mansion at Hazelbrook and clearly he was travelling home to his Sydney address.

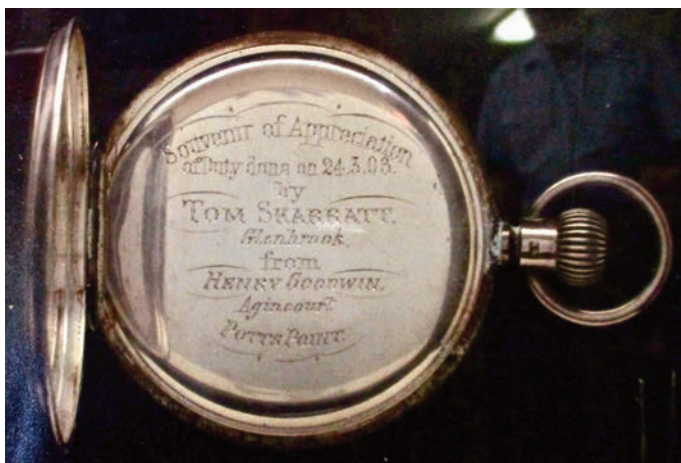


Photo Jan Koperberg 2016

Figure 3. The inscription in the Watch presented to Tom Skarratt.

The inscription on the Presentation Watch (Figure 3) reads as follows:

“Souvenir of Appreciation
of duty done on 24.3.06.
by
Tom Skarratt,
Glenbrook,
from

Henry Goodwin,
Agincourt,
Potts Point.”

[Comments: Purchased in Sydney. Middle priced item].

Printed on the face of the watch (Figure 1):

“Stewart Dawson & Co.
A W W Co.
USA”

[A W W Co. stands for Americal Waltham Watch Company.]

Watch experts told me that it is quite a hybrid watch, parts of it from the USA and other parts from Birmingham.

Item 3.

Next we have in the collection photographs of a medal and an accompanying letter from the Office of the Railway Commissioners Sydney, dated 18th June 1906, addressed to Mr McDonald F. Skarrett (*sic*), Glenbrook (*N.B. the inscription on the medal names the recipient as Mr Donald F. Skarratt - Figure 4B*).

“Dear Sir,

With reference to the inscription on medal, I placed the matter in the hands of Messrs Read & Co. and they have engraved the inscription, which looks very well.

I think it would perhaps be safer if you called for the medal at Messrs Read & Co’s.: it might go astray if sent by post.

Yours faithfully
(signed R W McLachlan)
Secretary.”

Conclusion

In conclusion it is fair to say that the Skarratt Brothers did OK. Each got £25, a medal and a watch. £25 in 1906, was a princely sum, worth about six or seven weeks pay for a foreman bricklayer.

The present whereabouts of the medals is not known, for they have been stolen or lost, but this watch does exist and was presented to Springwood Historical Society by the Skarratt family and later was transferred to the ownership of the Glenbrook & District Historical Society with everyone’s approval. On behalf of Glenbrook & District Historical Society, I thank the members of the Skarratt family and the Springwood



Photo Jan Koperberg 2016

Figure 4 A. The Skarratt Medal and Inscription.

[Photos donated to the Glenbrook and District Historical Society Museum by John Skarrat, the grandson of Donald F. Skarratt].

Historical Society. Lynn Collins, who is here today, we will need your advice on exhibiting this artefact and its original documentation, in our museum at Glenbrook.

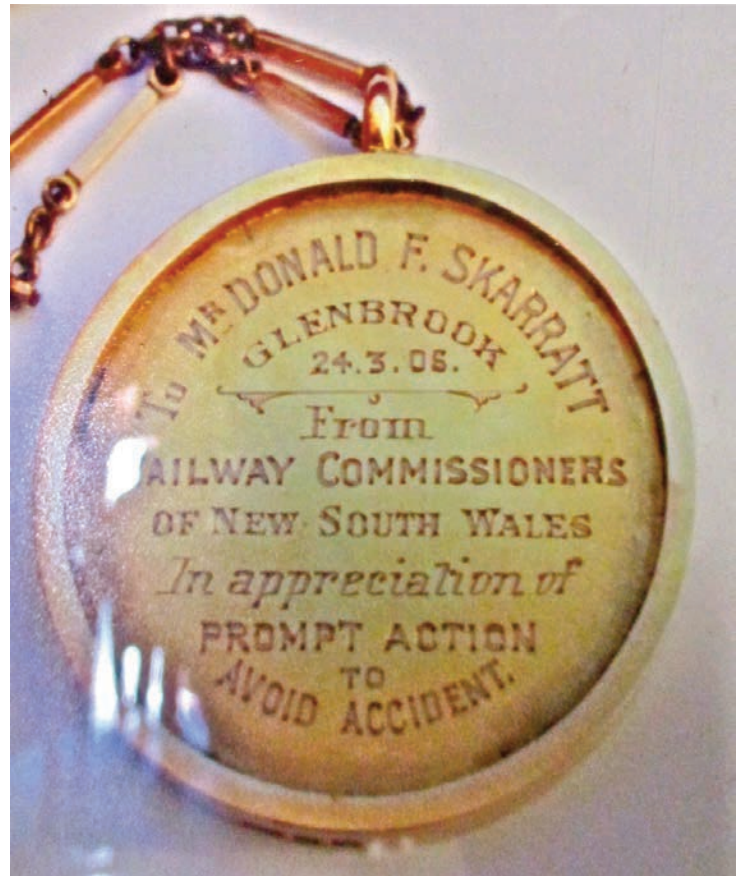


Photo Jan Koperberg 2016

Figure 4 B.. The Skarratt Medal and Inscription.

Footnote

I must recommend our 2017 History Walks programme, which will be available on the BMACHO website and the Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail website. I never miss a chance to promote our History

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- Anonymous (1906d) *no title* *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 April 1906, p.1, col.1.

Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

The question sent to **Joan Edwards** was

Is there a much-loved Victorian-era object you own or have for ever hankered after? Why?

Joan was surprised by my email and question aimed at knowing something about her other than she is a well-known Mountains Identity, a teacher, and author of a recent book whose title I won't reveal because it may relate to her Mystery Artefact....

THE VICTORIA & ALBERT GUESTHOUSE, MOUNT VICTORIA IN WORLD WAR 2

Joan Edwards,
87, Blaxland Road,
Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782
jed.2782@gmail.com

Key words: Mount Victoria, Victoria & Albert Guesthouse, Hotel, Small Arms Factory, Shore School.

INTRODUCTION

In November 1940 the *Victoria & Albert Guesthouse* was leased by the Government as accommodation for 26 single men working at Lithgow Small Arms Factory – until January 1942. Leased – or should that be requisitioned?

My challenge was to navigate through censorship and propaganda because absolutely nothing could be believed. It all came down to sources – so what have I used?

Firstly, family historians, especially at the annual NSW & ACT conferences. When asked by his daughter, Ken Cranfield was happy to share his story. He had just finished his training as a tool maker and was one of the 26 living there.

Individuals in the SAF workforce were not named, but I had one.

I soon learnt to never underestimate family and friends. Years later my grown up funeral celebrant daughter was preparing the eulogy for a 94 year old whose family insisted he was only a toolmaker for a chemical company and mentioned he was sent to Lithgow early during the war. So Ern Stephenson doubled the number of tool makers I can name. There were 30 to 40 employed.

When you know a Bren Gun required 300 body operations, and all were made without a complete set of plans, specifications, tools and even a prototype – to supply Australian, British, New Zealand and Indian armies – & then imagine the wear and tear caused by the inexperienced workers.

Ken and Ern were just two of those who created tools to do the job.

Remember the four groups of 1000 each who marched from Ingleburn to Bathurst camp in May 1940? They marched past on that road, NOT down Victoria Pass as an internet map shows. Why am I sure? Hartley children were taken by bus to cheer them on – not past the school on the main road; and again a photo showing the 2/17th marching down Lithgow's main street towards the highway.

There is also footage of the 2/13th marching up Mitchell Pass, lustily singing *It's a Long Way to Walk to Bathurst* to the tune of *'It's Long Way to Tipperary'*. They are the men who served in Tobruk – there is a War Memorial photo of two using a Lithgow Bren gun.

Then there was the Family Court solicitor, (who was the Faulconbridge lad who lived opposite and played with my children), who emailed my son in Canberra to “tell your mother to buy a copy of the *Railway History* magazine just out”.

I did, oh – was Ken Cranfield again, another railway nut. I have the copy here if you would like to look at it. There are two pages of photos of this area. You never know what will turn up!

A School

A Japanese invasion was a strong possibility in 1942. The Blue Mountains had several boarding schools full to overflowing, and two small and five well known harbour-side schools set up temporary boarding houses in the Mountains.

In 1943 Sydney Church of England Grammar School for Boys, Shore, bought *The Victoria & Albert Hotel*; the *converted* purchase price was to be \$1,300 in decimal currency. Places at Mount Victoria were offered to boys from 3rd class primary to Second Year high school. Modifications had to be made with a budget not to exceed \$3,000. The hotel and staff annexe had to be rearranged into classrooms and dormitories. They dealt with electrical, plumbing and numerous other problems in the 1914 building.



Figure 1. Students from Shore (Sydney Church of England Grammar School for Boys) outside of Key House, Mount Victoria - now the *Victoria & Albert Guesthouse*.

The four classrooms downstairs occupied the former lounge, ballroom, billiard room and bar. There had not been a licence for years, but that did not stop an elderly inebriated local who would wander in to order a beer when the door was open.

There were four teaching staff and Matron Hubby, a trained nurse, with an assistant and together they were responsible for the health and housing with adequate domestic assistance at first but that soon declined due to labour shortages.

Mischief abounds unless there are activities to keep young people occupied. Their challenge was to teach and keep 75 young lads busy and active. Books and board games were available in times of inclement weather, impromptu plays, woodwork and other interest groups were organised. As far as possible teaching ran parallel to the classes at North Sydney with some exceptions such as Science as there was no gas for a Bunsen burner.

Some 30 or so years after the war, Shore organized many of the lads to record their memories and I was privileged to be given a copy a few years ago and to make phone contact with one, then 94 or 95. I learnt so much about the rough, stony area with a lake at the end – that's Browntown Oval & *Imperial Hotel's* 9 hole golf course just over the railway line, enjoyed by staff and older lads. According to the lads, it was part of the town water supply that guzzled golf balls as the oval's water hazard devoured cricket balls.

Unfortunately there is not time to recount some of the boys' exploits but they rode bikes down to Hartley (Figure 2) and went east as far as Wentworth Falls.

They were active in the community and contributed with plays etc. for fund raising activities in Blackheath.



Figure 2. Boys from Shore on bicycles outside the *Victoria and Albert Hotel*.

American Convalescent Home

Petrol shortages meant few vehicles but US heavy vehicles went back and forth after dark. Then there was the spot just west of the Hydro Majestic guarded by two US soldiers, that they assumed was a fuel supply. I located the area on a 1943 aerial map, it was the local source of construction materials, namely sand and gravel, much needed resources.

Children of all of the temporary schools went home for the school holidays –

Oops – home when the Japanese midget subs entered Sydney Harbour!

One lad, who parents ran the *Cremorne Point Hotel* watched the event from an upstairs window!

When a teacher was called up, it was clear that the Mount Victoria school had to close at the end of the year.

What happened to this building? Not mentioned anywhere – that could only mean one thing – Americans were using it.

The assumption was additional facilities for American hospitals. I had read the late Brian Madden's *Hernia Bay*. I knew of his more than two months research at John Hopkins University in USA and we had discussed many aspects by phone.

It had to be something other than medical.



Photo Joan Edwards

Figure 3. Graffiti at the *Victoria & Albert Guesthouse*.

R & R was likely but there was no way of getting proof in Australia – until I saw the graffiti in this building! (Figure 3). Problem solved!

Was there more than one JFK in the thousands of American troops who came to our shores? Probably!

The timing is right as PT109 was struck by Japanese destroyer *Amagin* on 2nd August 1943. Maybe one of his crew? Or was it just an American admirer?

We have no positive evidence as to exactly who was the responsible but the Americans were in this building and I can personally make one claim about it –

In all my years of research, that is the only time I have relied on just one piece of graffiti for evidence!

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Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

I asked of **Peter Rickwood**:

Very briefly can you detail a prized heirloom that speaks to you? Of what?

He replied obliquely

“My talk will be mostly on the history of Gardners Inn leading up to two artefacts one a fountain and the other some masonry.”

Peter is

- A Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the School of Biology, Earth & Environmental Sciences (BEES) at the University of NSW, and formerly taught in the School of Applied Geology.
- A Past President of the Blue Mountains Historical Society,
- An individual member of BMACHO and Editor of the BMACHO *Blue Mountains History Journal*.

GARDNER'S INN ARTEFACTS

Peter C. Rickwood

BEES,

University of New South Wales,

Sydney, NSW 2052.

p.rickwood@unsw.edu.au

Key Words: Thistle Inn, Hydora, Astoria, Gardner, Gardiner, keystone, Blackheath, Blue Mountains.

INTRODUCTION

The initial (1833) publican's license issued to the owner of the first building in Blackheath named it as *The Scotch Thistle* (State Records 1833) but it acquired several other names before in July 1938 it became *Gardner's Inn* which is still what is displayed on the facade (Figure 20) although the apostrophe is now seldom used in printed matter.

[Other names by which it has been known are *The Scotch Thistle Inn*, *The Black Heath Inn*, *The Scottish Thistle Inn*, *The Thistle Inn*, *Govett's Leap Hotel*, *Hydora Hotel*, *Hotel Hydora*, *Hydora House*, *Hydora House Hotel*, *Hotel Astoria* and *Astoria Hotel*.]

To put the *Gardner's Inn* artefacts into context it is necessary to convey some background information. For several decades the authoritative account of *Gardner's Inn* has been that written by Geoff Bates in 1981, but it was published 35 years ago and in the interim many relevant sources have been digitised and made available online so additional information has come to hand much of which I have incorporated in this presentation.

The Scotch Thistle Inn

The Inn was built in 1831 for Andrew Gardiner; a photograph supposedly taken in 1920 (Figure 1) should have a building in the background but it has been removed - long before the Photoshop era ! The earliest known photograph to include the Inn was taken in 1904 (Figure 12) but the building is too far away to see much detail. The original roof was probably wooden shingles but by the time that this photograph was taken it had been replaced with corrugated iron - whether galvanised is not determinable. It is evident that the Inn was positioned at right angles to the road so that the front door faced North.

Andrew Gardiner

[He, and others, used different spellings of his surname in various documents e.g. Gardiner, Gardner and even Gardener.] The first owner of the Inn was born in Perth, Scotland but accounts of the year vary from 1787-1793. He died at Antonio Creek (near Sodwalls, c. 15 km SW



BMHS P1982 & Bill Hume collection.

Figure 1. *The Scotch Thistle Inn* in 1920.

of Lithgow) in 1861; the death was registered at Hartley (NSWBDM 1861), and Andrew was buried in the South Bowenfels Presbyterian Cemetery (Figure 2), opposite the South Bowenfels Rural Fire Brigade headquarters. In 1875 his wife Sarah Gardiner (born 1803?) died at Antonios (*sic*) Creek aged 72 years (NSWBDM 1875) so she is interred there as well. By 2003 the engravings on the lichen covered tombstone were only partially legible and the grave was in poor repair.



Photo Peter Rickwood 2003.

Figure 2. Andrew Gardiner's grave in the South Bowenfels Presbyterian Cemetery.

Andrew Gardiner was a convict who arrived in 1818, and initially he was assigned to Reverend Samuel Marsden at Wilberforce and subsequently he became an overseer on one of Marsden's properties in the

Bathurst district. He gained a ticket-of-leave in 1824 which allowed him to be married in 1825, and in 1826 Gardiner became the first settler in the Antonio Creek area, a grazing area near Sodwalls, west of Lithgow, and 27 km from Blackheath.

In 1827 Governor Brisbane granted him the 640 acres of land that he had requested and by 1828 Andrew Gardiner employed four servants on the eight acres that had been cleared for *Berry Farm*, on which he ran 145 head of cattle, and he had

“established an accommodation house on his farm he called Gardiner’s (*sic*) Inn” (Bates, 1981, p.12).

He had become very successful in his first four years of freedom.

Blackheath

There were no real residents at Blackheath for the fifteen years after Cox had formed the road over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst. The pioneer was Andrew Gardiner, who in 1829, under the terms of the old system of land grants, selected an 20 Acres (8.1 ha) plot at Blackheath for which he sought approval:

“... for establishing an Inn, with suitable accommodation for respectable travellers.” (Bates, 1981, p.13)

“At the beginning of November [1829], His Excellency attended by a large military escort, journeyed up the Mountain Road, unofficially attended by Andrew Gardner.” (Yeaman, 1976, p.168).

They halted at the proposed location of the Inn and were heard to praise the spot; they were similarly impressed on the return journey. As a result, on 1 December 1829 Governor Darling approved it

“as a special reserve for the purpose of erecting an Inn thereon” (Yeaman, 1976, p.28).

Gardiner took possession of the land on 20 May 1830, and eight months later in December 1830 Surveyor Elliott, as Engineer-in-Charge of the Blue Mountains road parties, wrote complaining of the intemperate habits of a sub-inspector in that

“he has constantly frequented the “hut” or grog shop as it is called at Blackheath on the pretence of inspecting No. 20 Road Party.” (Yeaman, 1976, p.169).

After some delay in getting suitable men for the erection of the building, he opened the *Scotch Thistle Inn* on 11 July 1831 shortly following which William Romaine Govett completed a survey of the land (Figure 3).

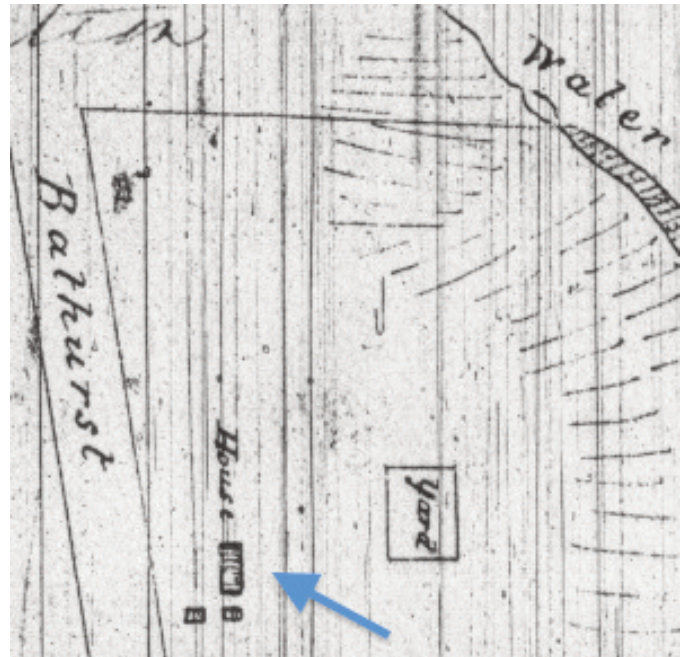


Figure 3. Part of William Romaine Govett’s 1831 survey of Andrew Gardiner’s 20 acres at Blackheath.

But note that on that plan Govett drew the building (Blue arrow) as extending N-S and hence the door would be facing west so parallel to the road which is what most might envisage as being appropriate. But anyone who has experienced the winds in Blackheath knows that they mostly come from the west so the front door needs to be away from that direction and Gardiner quite wisely did have it installed on the sunny north side (Figure 1). Those winds have led to the village gaining the nick name of *Bleakheath* and have even led to the writing of some doggerel which I recently discovered (Figure 4).

When one goes goosey.

As in winter one drives through Blackheath,
One does nothing but chatter one’s teeth,
What with cold winds and sleet,
And the holes in the street,
One needs spring and more wool underneath.

Figure 4. Extract from a Bracey’s Ltd. advertisement (1924).

The Scotch Thistle Inn must have been thriving within a short time of opening to have been listed in *The New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory 1832* by Raymond (1832, p.109) who stated:

“69 (*viz.* Miles) Blackheath: a new inn kept by Gardner. A mile or two to the North-east is another fine cataract, named Govett’s Leap.”

But the Inn soon proved to be attractive to criminals for in 1833

“... Mr Gardner, of Blackheath, near Mount Vittoria, whose house was lately robbed to a considerable amount” (Truth, 1833).

A Digression for Expansion

On 20 September 1835 Gardiner applied for more land at the bottom of the Victoria Pass with the intent of building *The Plough Inn*. In fact he occupied, and re-named, an existing Inn which was licensed in Gardiner’s name from 1837-1840 (Bates, 1981, p.20) and was said to have been located to the SW of the road and opposite the old Stockade site. There has been some controversy over the exact location of *The Plough Inn*. It has been claimed that most probably it was the *Harp of Erin* at Little Hartley (Anonymous 2016) but descriptions of the location might correspond with *Farmers Inn* at Hartley.

Back to Blackheath

While Andrew Gardiner was busy at the foot of Victoria Pass he installed a manager at Blackheath - one John Gorden (Figure 5).

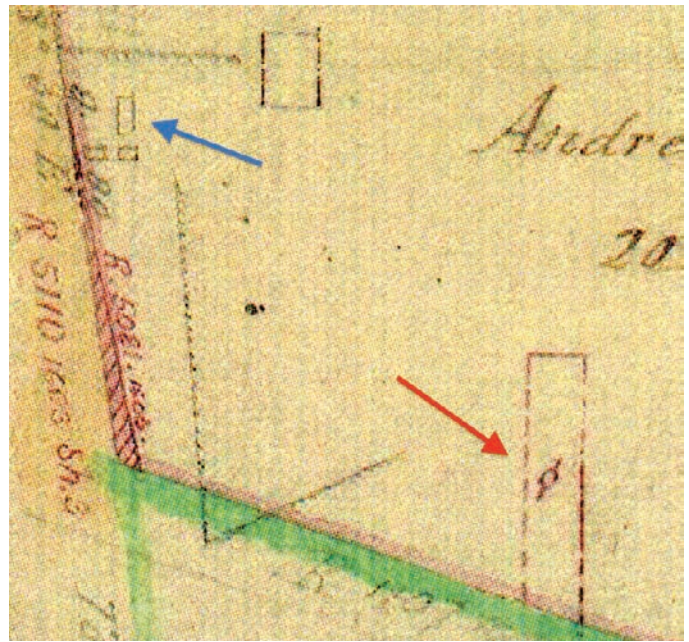


Figure 5. Advertisement. Scotch Thistle Inn, Blackheath (Gorden 1836).

The date on that newspaper is July 1836 and in the advertisement John Gorden indicated that he had been running the Inn for three years so he would have been ‘mine host’ when Charles Darwin had a brief overnight stay on 17 January 1836 - surely the most renowned visitor ever.

Gardiner’s grant of 20 acres was surveyed again in 1843 by W.R. Davidson (Figure 6) but the result would seem largely to be a copy of Govett’s plan with

the same error of the orientation of the inn but with a few additions and notes. The plan was modified subsequent to completion, the most notable change being



Lands Department, Sydney.

Figure 6. Annotated plan of part of Andrew Gardiner’s 20 acres (Davidson 1843).

the 1909 addition of the block (RED arrow) intended for the Post Office.

The Scotch Thistle Inn remained the only significant building in Blackheath until several dwellings were constructed for the Stockade in 1844. Governor Fitzroy visited Blackheath on 12 November 1846, accompanied by his cousin Lt Colonel Godfrey Charles Mundy (Low, 1991, p.14) who wrote

“The settlement of Blackheath consists of a convict stockade under charge of that officer (*i.e. Bull*), and a pretty good inn—Gardner’s, more lately Bloodsworth’s. ...” (Mundy, 1852, p.158-159).

A century later the author of an overview wrote:

“In the Stockade days (1844-1849), Gardiner’s Scotch Thistle Inn was looked upon as an out of the way nook, set in idyllic surroundings, for red coated officers and their ladies, and the hostelry with its high toned accommodation soon became a honeymoon haven” (Yeaman, 1976, p.169).

Apart from Andrew Gardiner and his successors, there were no landholders East of the Great Western Highway prior to 1879 yet the staff of the Inn must have resided somewhere - **but where?**

Death and Inheritance

Andrew Gardiner died on 16 December 1861 at age

74 (State Records 1861; NSWBDM 1861). His son John Gardiner inherited the property at Antonio Creek having already bought land there (Bates, 1981, p.21); he died in 1898 (NSWBDM 1898) seemingly unmarried. Andrew Gardiner's daughter Mary Ann inherited the land and Inn at Blackheath but by then she had married George William Bloodworth on 16 February 1847 (Anonymous 1847) at South Bowenfels Presbyterian Church. She died in 1892 and on 25 March 1893 her sons George W. & Thomas sold the property to Alfred Goodare (CoT 1893a) and it went out of the family.

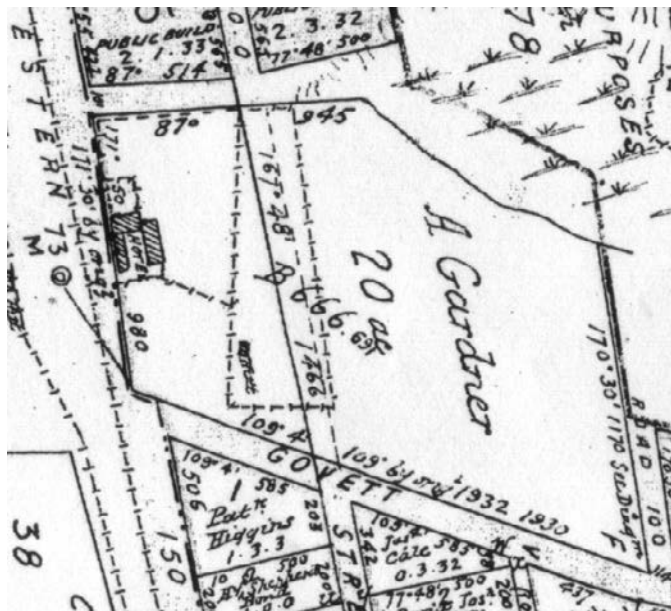
Depression

The name *Scotch Thistle Inn* lasted in some form for at least 36 years, but after 1867 no name is known until 1877. The Railway line opened on 1 May 1868 and immediately thereafter customers for Blackheath's facilities essentially ended. Indeed, one visitor to the village wrote that from the station platform:

"when one looks round from this spot the view is not encouraging. Everything speaks of ruin, decay, and neglect. The old inn looks like some spot upon which the curse of an evil deed has fallen." (Anonymous 1871)

So in 1872 there was no Inn providing accommodation at Blackheath (Trollope, 1967, p.321) and in 1876 W.H. Hargreaves visited and found the Inn to be "...in a dilapidated condition, and in charge of a caretaker who utilised a portion of the building as a piggery" (Campbell, 1924, p.217).

After being in the doldrums for about a decade the Inn was once again licensed in 1877 but as the *Govett's*



BI 2206, Lands Department, Sydney.

Figure 7. Part of Mylne's 1878 Plan of the Village of Blackheath.

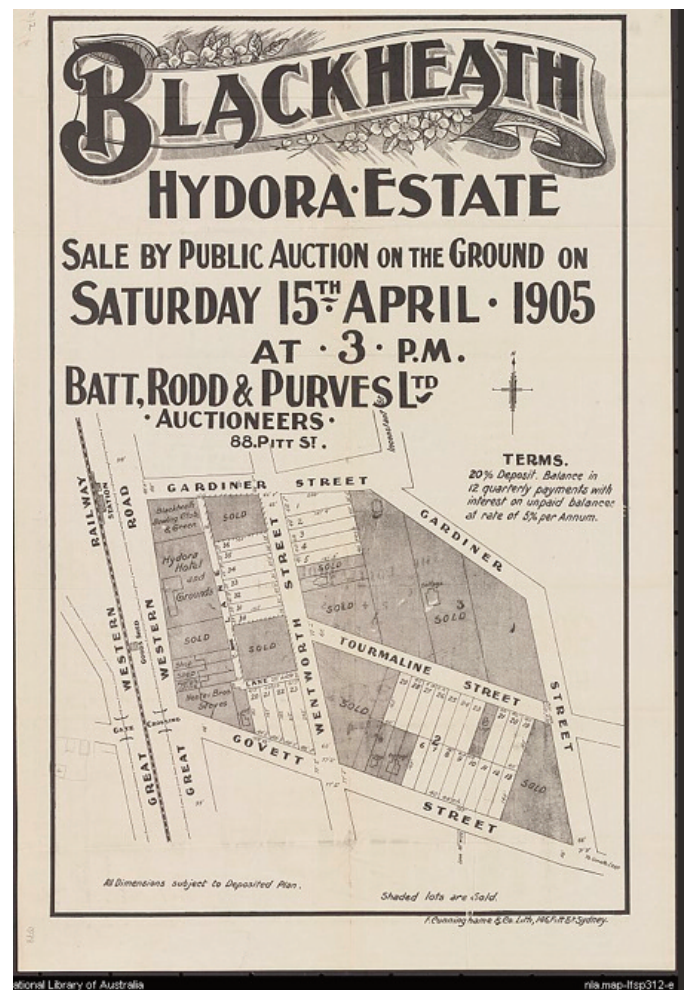
Leap Hotel and then in 1879 it was renamed the *Hydora Hotel* and was such until 1918. An 1878 plan (Figure 7; Mylne 1878) shows an enlarged and consolidated set of buildings

In 1885 it was acquired by John Francis Cripps who installed a succession of managers to run it for him. A photograph showing the Inn and the more prominent London Chartered Bank (Figure 8) can be roughly dated by the duration of that bank (December 1887-April 1895). In that interval the Inn was called the *Hydora Hotel* or *Hydora House*.



Photo BMCC Local Studies Library PF655.

Figure 8. The London Chartered Bank of Australia c.1891.



National Library of Australia nla.map-lfsp312-v

Figure 9. Auction notice for the 1905 sale of lots in the Hydora Estate (Batt et al., 1905).Of

significance for the development of Blackheath was the release of most Gardiner's original grant of the land in February 1893 which was when it was put up for sale as the "*Hydora*" Estate. That subdivision (Mylecharane 1893) made blocks available which eventually became the business area of the town (Yeaman, 1976, pp.44, 192).

The sales went on for some years but the 1893 plan (Mylecharane 1893) only differs from the 1905 version (Figure 9) by the shading of blocks which had been sold.

Parallel to that release of land, the *Hydora House* Hotel was acquired by Mr. Alfred Goodare (CoT 1893b) who took possession on 8 February 1893 (Anonymous, 1893b) and quickly commenced making alterations which were finished by June (Anonymous, 1893c). Note the symmetrical roof frontage with a single apex (curve-sided) and the four post (three alcove) balcony shown in Figure 10; if the lettering on the north wall was still valid that photograph must have been taken in the interval when the premises were operated as *Hydora House Hotel* and Alfred Goodare the publican i.e. June 1893- August 1895.

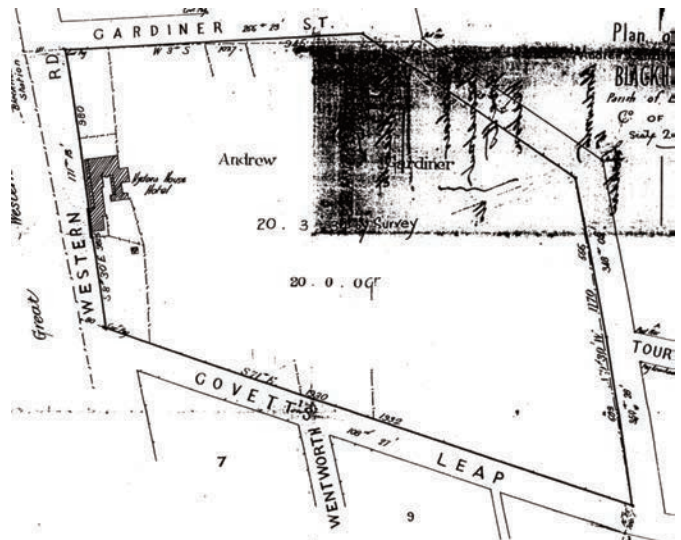


Photo BMHS P35.

Figure 10. Alfred Goodare's *Hydora House Hotel*, c.1894

An 1899 plan (Figure 11) can be partially dated by the reverse printed overlapping label with what seems to be initials and a date written as /99; the building name *Hydora House Hotel* was used for many years either side of that date.

A bowling club was formed when the enterprising publican Sarah Goodare allowed the members the use of part of the hotel land. The bowling green was started in 1903 and completed by February 1904 although not opened for 'general use' until April 1904 (Figure 12).



Mitchell Library ZTP: B8/45.

Figure 11. Plan of Andrew Gardiner's 20 Acres Anonymous 1899).



Anonymous 1905, p.8.

Figure 12. Bowling green; first used in April 1904 (Anonymous 1904).



Photo BMCC Local Studies Library PF1138.

Figure 13. Blackheath's first bowling green.

Two images of games in progress are held, one was in a book published in 1905 and has the original inn and the *Hydora Hotel* in the background (Anonymous 1905). The second was taken from a different angle and would appear to show that the green was by no means a perfect lawn! (Figure 13) - but that photograph is undated.

Re-modelling

The Hotel building was modified in 1907 when it was reported that :

“Pulling down operations are well on the way at Hydora House, preparatory to the erection of the new building.” (Anonymous 1907)

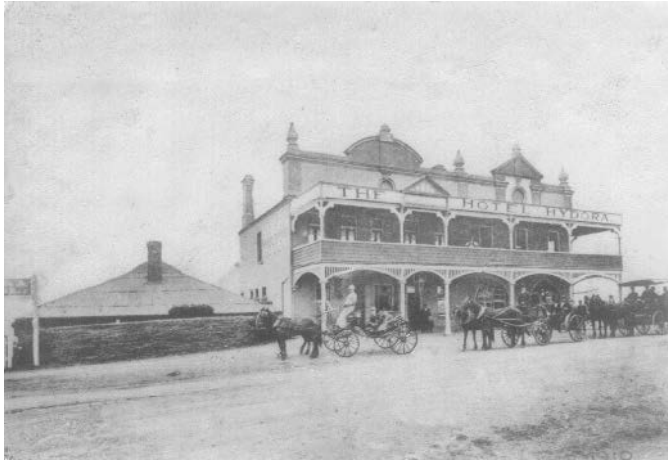


Photo BMHS P1409.

Figure 14. *The Hotel Hydora*, 1910.

A photograph dated 1910 (Figure 14) shows that additions had been made on the south side, resulting in an asymmetric frontage, with two roof fronts each with an apex of different shape. That extension also added two extra balcony posts and therefore two extra alcoves (Figure 15).



Photo BMCC Local Studies Library PF1151.

Figure 15. *The Hotel Hydora*.

In the garden was a very distinctive fountain (Figure 16) shown here in a photograph dated 25 March 1911, and that it was outside the old *Scotch Thistle* building is confirmed by Figure 1.

Yet another expansion occurred in mid 1918 when it was reported

“Big alterations are in progress at the Hydora Hotel, ... By the time these are finished, the Hydora will be fit to rank with the best hotels on the mountains.” (Anonymous 1918c).

The ‘new’ building was opened in October 1918 and

renamed the *Hotel Astoria* (Anonymous 1918b) and that name was used for 18 years.



Photo BMHS P7101 (Bill Hume collection).

Figure 16. Ornate Fountain in 1911.

More building activity was in progress in mid 1920 when it was referred to as “the new wing on the Astoria Hotel” (Anonymous 1920). A photograph taken about 1922 (Figure 17) shows that a third section had been added on the south side of the Inn so giving three roof fronts each with a different apex.



Photo BMHS P7103 (Bill Hume collection).

Figure 17. *The Hotel Astoria* c.1922.

[In the foreground is Rodriguez’s Estate Agency Office which was built in 1918 (Anonymous 1918a)].

Demolition

In 1936 the owner of the *Astoria Inn* was served with an order

“to demolish the old portion of the existing licensed premises situated on the western side of the building” (Anonymous, 1936)

yet the 1831

“inn is still in good repair – the walls are 4ft. in thickness”.

A protest was expressed, nevertheless in 1937-1938



Photo BMHS P1356.

Figure 18. *The Astoria Hotel 1937-1938.*

the *Astoria Inn* (Figure 18) was remodelled and “... in 1938, the original old structure that Gardiner first built was demolished.” (Bates, 1981, p.84; Figure 19); mostly being done in April (Anonymous, 1938a,b).

What a bad decision it was to demolish the old inn after 107 years – it would have been a god-send for tourism if it still remained. The hardwood timber which had been “hewn from near-by trees” was still in good condition and the masonry blocks were still stoutly held together by a mud and lime mortar (Anonymous, 1938b). Some of the original blocks were trimmed for use in the solid wall along the Bathurst Road frontage (Figure 18), some in the Macquarie Monument (Anonymous, 1939), and some in the boundary wall of the nearby Baby Health Centre on the corner of Gardiner Crescent and Wentworth Street (Yeaman 1976, p.168).



Photo Gerd Ewart Collection.

Figure 19. *Demolition of the Scotch Thistle Inn, 1938.*

The building of 1938 was called the *Astoria Hotel* (Figure 18) and it has changed imperceptibly in the last c.80 years so what was *Gardner’s Inn* in 1946

(Figure 20) is little different from the building as it is today (Figure 21).



Photo BMCC Local Studies Library PF885.

Figure 20. *Gardner’s Inn in 1946.*



Photo Peter Rickwood May 2016.

Figure 21. *Gardner’s Inn, 18 May 2016.*

Artefacts

The first artefact which I bring to your attention is not portable. It is the fountain - known to have been in place by 1911 (Figure 16) and which was probably installed at, or just after, the major re-building that occurred in 1907. It was once (and probably originally) on the north side of the old *Scotch Thistle Inn* (Figures 1 & 16) but at some stage it was moved to the proprietor’s house (*The Oaks*, 36-50 Gardiner Crescent) where it still resides (Figure 22). The ornamental top has been lost (compare to Figure 16) but the fountain is still in working order.

The second artefact of note is the keystone of the front door arch of the old *Scotch Thistle Inn*, but there are no known photographs showing it in place in. After the tragic demolition in 1938 two arch stones and the keystone were given to Blackheath aldermen (Anonymous, 1938c). The keystone with the carving of the Scotch Thistle was placed in the care of the Mayor (Anonymous, 1938c) but in 1943 a local historian



Photo Wayne Hanley May 2016

Figure 22. Fountain in the garden of 36-50 Gardiner Crescent.

(A.J. Hillier) and the Town Clerk (C.C. (Sandy) Phillips) rescued it from under a pile of rubble at the back of the Blackheath Municipal Council Chambers

in Wentworth Street (Hillier, 1946; Bates, 1981, p.87; Anonymous, 1986).

The Blackheath Municipal Council amalgamated with others in 1947 to form the Blue Mountains City Council and on 27 February 1948, A. Mayne the Secretary of the Blue Mountains Historical Society wrote to the new Council asking to allow “this Society the custody of the Keystone for safe-keeping” (Mayne 1948a).

Subsequently at a meeting on 4 September 1948 (Anonymous, 1948)

“The keystone was placed for safe-keeping with the Blue Mountains Historical Society” (Bates, 1981, p.88)

Two days later it was recorded as being:

“at present in the Mayor’s Room, Town Hall, Katoomba” (Mayne 1948b)



Photo Peter Rickwood 2003

Figure 23. *The Scotch Thistle Inn* keystone.

but it now safely resides in the Society’s *Tarella* museum at Wentworth Falls (Anonymous, 1986). It is seldom on display and despite the fact that it weighs 17kg, I have brought it to the Conference for you to see (Figure 23).

Postscript

As the *Scotch Thistle Inn* keystone must date from the latter part of the building period, say early 1831, this keystone is probably the oldest known artefact resulting from the European settlement of Blackheath and possibly of the Upper Blue Mountains.

Abbreviations

BMHS	Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc., Wentworth Falls.
CoT	Certificate of Title.
NSWBDM	New South Wales, Justice, Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages.

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Master of Ceremonies: **Lynn Collins**

The final speaker today is **Philip Hammon** of whom I asked:

What is an object – however humble or grand – that you feel is of great significance? Why?

There was no response.

Philip is

- A Director of Scenic World, Katoomba
- The Treasurer of BMACHO

Philip's Topic:

BLEICHERT JOINS SCHULZE – THE JOINT THAT MATTERS THE STORY OF INNOVATION AND CROSS TRADE TECHNOLOGY

Philip Hammon,

190, Cliff Drive,

Katoomba, NSW 2780

phammon@scenicworld.com.au

Key Words: J.B. North, Oscar Schulze, Bleichert ropeway, Scenic Railway, Katoomba, Blue Mountains.

INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time in a valley far away, a man was exploring; looking to make his fortune by taking up the earth's bounty. His name was Campbell Mitchell Esq. and he was way before his time, so far, in fact that twenty years had to pass before that bounty could be realised and not by him, but by others who could take advantage of technological change. This is a tiny part of the story of how we unearthed history's tenuous secrets, and how we wrote *The Burning Mists of Time* (Pells & Hammon 2009).

North's Mining Empire

John Britty North (1831-1917) and Robert Henry Reynolds (1831-1913) started the Katoomba coalmine. North, after going broke for the third time in 1872, turned his attention to mining, and by 1874 was applying for mining leases south of Sydney. In 1878 he and Reynolds applied for MCPs (Mining Conditional Purchases) in Katoomba and to finance this, the basic plan was to get an MCP on as much land as possible and to sub-divide and sell it for housing lots, which they started doing straight away. The MCPs took in the out-crop of the coal seam on the western side of the escarpment and because they did not know whether the coal was any good, they selected the lot. When mining commenced in 1883 it was the only mine in the area, and they constructed the incline (now the Scenic Railway) and a tramway to transport coal to the Railway Siding from the top of the incline.

The presence of Oil Shale in the Ruined Castle had been known to North for some time when he took out MCPs in the area in the mid 1880s, and subsequently it was to that location that he needed to construct a ropeway.

Gladstone Pendant Tramway

In 1885 it was reported that:

“Still another addition, and perhaps one of the most enterprising additions, to the list of New South Wales coal-mining enterprises was formally celebrated on Saturday by the opening of the Gladstone Colliery, Katoomba. The superlative in this case is adopted advisedly, as must be admitted by those who were fortunate enough to secure an invitation to the ceremony of recording the mine's birthday. A special train left Redfern railway station about 9.30 a.m., containing about 250 ladies and gentlemen who had been asked by the directorate to make merry on the occasion. Amongst the number were Mr. Judge Dowling, Messrs. W. S. Targett and T. R. Smith, MLA; J. J. Farr, A. T. Holroyd, F. E. Rogers, Walter M. Noakes (Messrs. Fowler and Co., Leeds), Walter Keep, Captain G. R. Stevens, E. P. Stephen, J. B. North, John Wittingham and Charles Brown (Melbourne), George Pile, T. H. Neale, P.M. (Hartley), H. G. Rowell (Katoomba), F. Senior,” (Anonymous 1885).

Of those people who attended the opening, H.G. Rowell owned the Carrington Hotel at the time and J.B. North was one of a group that were involved with the Gladstone Coal Mine.

The resource of the Gladstone Mine was a 7ft (2.1 m) seam of ‘dirty’ coal, and the mine was located in the valley below today's Gladstone Point; the area where the ropeway came up is now Leura Golf Links. The drive station was near the current Fairmont Resort tennis court, the track rope tension pit was in the bush north of the Fairmont Resort and the unloading facility was just near Bate Street, Wentworth Falls. It was unusual to use concrete in 1883 as the cement had to be brought out from England in wooden barrels. But concrete was used in the construction of the tension pit which became more accessible in November 2014 when the ‘firies’ went through and cleared away a lot of the bush and trees.

The drive station used a haulage rope that came up

from the return wheel at the mine (Figure 1) to the horizontal six grooved drive wheel, using two counter-wheels, one on the north side and one on the south side. The buckets came up from the mine suspended from the track rope and were disconnected from the haul rope at the drive station, then run on a rail past the past the drive wheels. Then they were reconnected to the haul ropes and were sent off to the railway siding.



Photo P.J. Hammon

Figure 1. The turn-wheel that was formerly situated on what is now the Great Western Highway, but is now down in the Megalong Valley, (which is another story).

Oscar Schulze, a civil engineer, was engaged by R.H. Reynolds to erect a Bleichert patent ropeway to the Gladstone mine and he paid for the equipment although it is still not clear as to how he could afford to. When completed, 1200 tons of coal was pulled out of the mine in a week and at that stage Mr. Schulze asked to be paid, however Reynolds, Stephen & Co. did not pay Schulze. There was a court case involving Rabone, Feez & Co. who were trying to recover monies, but it is not clear from whom; maybe that company lent money to Schulze to pay Bleichert. That resulted in a bigger court case about a year later viz:

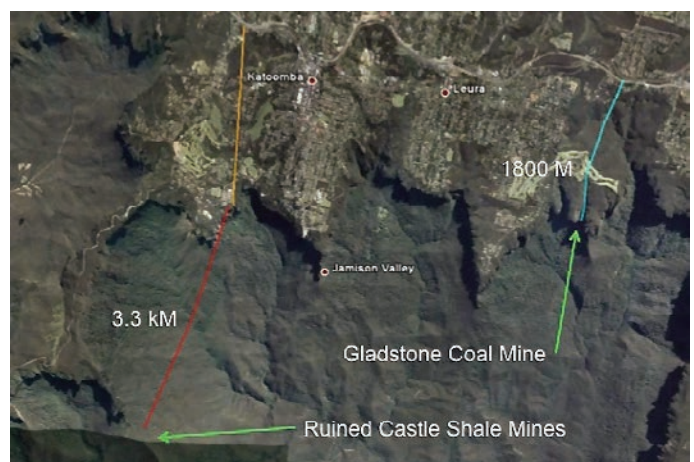
“This was an action brought by Oscar Schulze, civil engineer, against Robert Henry Reynolds, Ernest Parish Stephen, Charles Bate, Matthew Henry Stephen, and Louis Cohen, directors of the Gladstone Coal Company, for £5000 damages for breach of agreement, and for work done, and material provided, and interest on money due. The defendants, it was alleged, had failed to complete an agreement to pay the plaintiff the sum of £3256 in respect of the erection of a pendent (*sic*) railway on the principle of Bleichert’s (*sic*) patent, from a siding on the railway, between Katoomba and Went-

worth Falls, over gorges and ravines, to the defendants’ coal mine, about a mile and a half distant. ...” (Anonymous 1887).

Schulze lost this second court case so the ropeway was auctioned to recover the money, and J.B. North bought it for £3256, which is about \$430,000 today. Who the money went to I don’t know but I guess it went to Reynolds and the others and poor old Schulze missed out again.

Moving the Ropeway to Katoomba

The Gladstone Ropeway was only 1800 metres long so in order for the Katoomba ropeway to reach to the Ruined Castle Mine it needed to be extended to 3.3 kms (Figure 2), hence North had to get more rope.



Map data ©2008 Google

Figure 2. The Ruined Castle and Gladstone ropeways.

One source was found in Melbourne. We think that initially as a sales gimmick the firm of Schulze and Wagemann brought a small Bleichert installation out, presumably from Germany, and erected it at a Melbourne exhibition in 1881 or 1882 as a demonstrator. Then after the exhibition finished, the demonstrator was used to dredge mud out of the Yarra River and it was sitting in Melbourne when the work was completed. That installation used 130 metres of rope, so even after acquiring it the total length was inadequate for the Katoomba ropeway so they must have got more rope from Germany.

When they moved the ropeway from the Gladstone Mine at Wentworth Falls (near the boundary with Leura) to Katoomba they erected the winder on top of the ridge, (which is now the Scenic World car park), and the terminal was on the edge of the cliff where the Cableway Tower is now.

This photograph (Figure 3) was taken from Orphan

Rock; the faint spot in the trees (top right in [Figure 3](#)) was the mine site. Here they are lowering equipment down over the cliff; the davit is on the edge of the cliff,



NLA HF1693B-01: probably H. King.

Figure 3. Photograph of the construction crew of the Ruined Castle Ropeway at Katoomba.

the windlass is at a higher level and there is also a dis-assembled steam engine. There is no known authentic



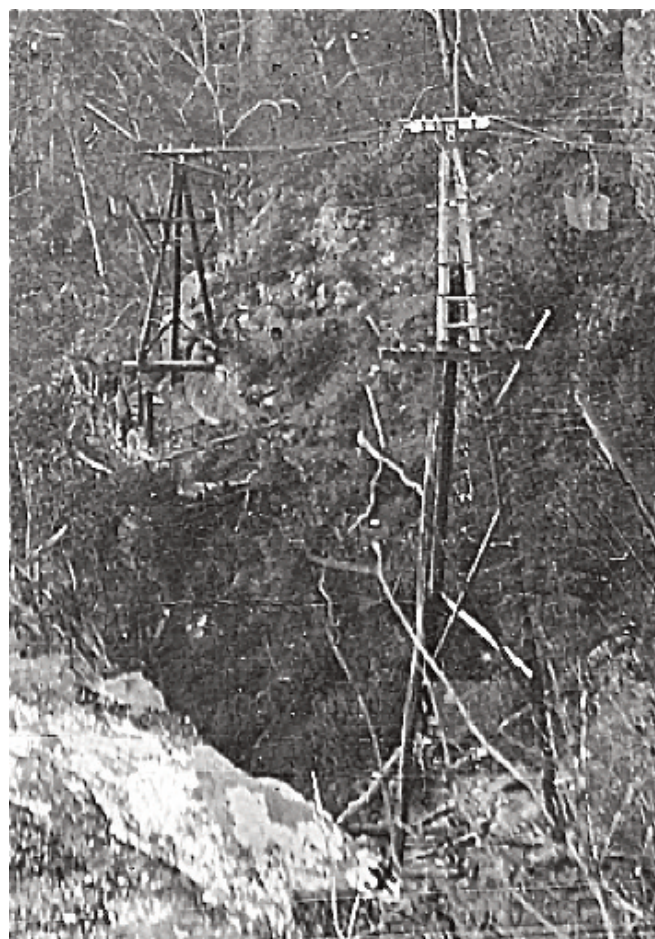
Figure 4. Could this be Mr. Schulze? (Extract from [Figure 3](#)).

photograph of Oscar Schulze so hopefully that is he ([Figure 4](#)) standing alone and supervising the work.



Map data ©2008 Google

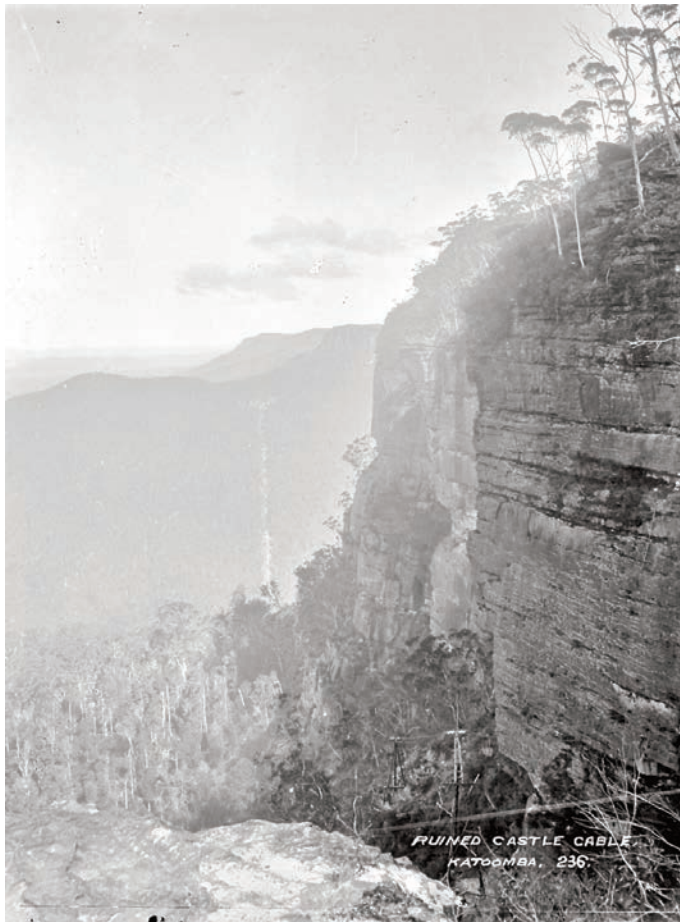
Figure 5. Location of the Towers shown in [Figure 6](#).



An enlargement from Figure 7. Charles Kerry

Figure 6. Photograph showing Towers 9 & 8 (left to right) of the Ruined Castle Ropeway.

Tower 7 was on the edge of the cliff and Towers 8 and 9 were on ledges further down ([Figure 5](#)). Tower 10 was 150 metres further down towards the mine site. In [Figure 6](#) there is a bucket near Tower 8 and another bucket near Tower 9; if you look closely you will see that there are men standing in those buckets.



Charles Kerry stereograph No.236 1888

Figure 7. Photograph of the Ruined Castle Rope way.

Figure 7 is the left image of a stereograph taken in 1888 of the ropeway (Kerry 1890 - but that date must be disputed for the rope broke in September 1889). We found it in the National Library of Australia collection under 'S' for 'stereo pair'. It took a lot of finding!

The buckets went out to the Ruined Castle mine and returned with shale. The bucket was held upright in its hanger with a little fork and the fork could be released and the bucket tipped upside down to empty the shale. This was a second-hand exercise, the ropeway was not designed for the site and had many shortcomings.

Track Ropes

The steel ropes were in lengths of about 140 or 150 metres and wound into coils about 2½ metres in diameter which weighed about two tonnes each and was about all you could move about in those days. Sections of long lengths of rope were joined (Figure 8) with what looked like an inside-out turn-buckle and inside was a double threaded collet (Figure 13). There was a right-hand thread on one end and a left-hand thread on the other end with two sockets and the wire

rope terminated inside. They drilled two holes, for a retaining pin, which you can see are misaligned (Figure 9). When you make something like this, there is no way you can re-assemble and line it up, hence the misalignment of the holes. They had to take the risk of them unscrewing. Each piece was stamped with L24, 'L' is for 'linke' (German for left) and '24' being the size in mm.



Photo P.J. Hammon

Figure 8. An unscrewed Bleichert patent cable coupling revealing the internal collet.



Complete Patent Coupling, showing half in section.

Fig. 3. Bleichert Instruction Manual 1889.



Photo P.J. Hammon

Figure 9. Diagram and photograph of a Bleichert patent cable coupling.

The way the ropes were constructed was in strands, and from the outside to the core the strands were in a pattern 12-6-1 or 13-12-6-1, with no internal support for the wires. [Modern ropes are 'fully locked coil'.] In 1883, before the invention of the blast furnace, cast iron was poured into a crucible and carbon was added to make 'crucible steel' which was better than cast iron but still relatively soft - too soft for the durability of ropes.

The Rolling Saddle

At the top of each tower, there was a cross arm at the end of which was a cast iron saddle that the rope sat in and the separation was three metres. As the buckets

crossed a tower, the track rope moved across the tower and the saddle (Figure 10) was put in place as an attempt to minimise the rope wear.



Photo P.J. Hammon

Figure 10. Photograph of the Rolling Saddle above Cascade Creek.

But there was a lot of pressure on the rope where it sat in the saddle and that was a problem. As the carriers ran along the steel ropes, they flattened and deformed the wires and produced micro cracks along the edge of the flattening. In those days they knew nothing about metal fatigue and it was thought that the flattening was wonderful because the mechanism no longer made a noise. However, the cracks propagated into the wire until it broke. The solution was to cut out a piece 30 metres long and replace with a solid iron bar.

Oscar Schulze had been working on the Hawkesbury River Railway Bridge (Figure 11) just before he came to do this job and on the railway bridge, he had used a lot of tension bars, so that is where we think he got the idea.



Photo Henry King No.1050 (PowerHouse Museum, Tyrrell Photographic Collection 85/1285-838)

Figure 11. Hawkesbury River Bridge.

This photograph (Figure 11) shows the men who

worked on the Hawkesbury River Bridge so Schulze may be in the photograph, but we don't know.

By September 1889 they had already replaced two sections with iron bars, when the return rope on the edge of the cliff broke a wire. There must have been a workman up on a ladder putting a clamp on to stop the wire unravelling when the rope broke. That was the end of the ropeway which was allowed to fall over the cliff and after the ropeway was abandoned AKO&M (Australian Kerosene Oil and Mineral Company) cut the remains away and dumped those over the cliff edge and into the valley where bits of steel and bolts can still be seen today. However, for a time, the company continued to use the ropeway winder to power the Tramway to the Glen Shale Mine in Megalong.



Photo P.J. Hammon

Figure 12. Photograph of the end of the broken steel rope.

Fitting and Turning in 1883

Figure 12 is a photograph of the end that they dumped over the cliff. It was found in 2012 just two metres from a waterfall with a rope joiner (Figure 8) and collet (Figure 13) that Schulze had used to replace part of the rope with an iron bar. The inside of the rope joiner was pristine, because it was such a beautiful fit that no water had been able to enter.

Figure 13 shows a beautiful example of the ability of the German fitters to make the collet with a left and right hand thread and a taper. At the end of the collet you can see the centre dimple and the saw marks where it was cut off (Figure 14).

Metric Standards

Napoleon Bonaparte was instrumental in creating metric standards, which by the late nineteenth century had not spread around the world. So when supplying a



Photo P.J. Hammon

Figure 13. A rope joiner collet.

country still using Imperial measurements, Bleichert's solution was to make equipment to the metric dimension closest to an Imperial dimension. Thus for 1-13/16 inches he chose the whole metric number 46 mm, because it was so close, just 15 thousandths of an inch smaller.



Photo P.J. Hammon

Figure 14. The end of the collet with distinctive saw marks.

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CLOSING REMARKS

Master of Ceremonies

Lynn Collins,

13 Smith Street,

Rozelle, NSW 2039

lynngcollins@inet.net.au

There is a well-positioned museum beside a major (remote) highway in the NW region of NSW, available to visitors day and night, with no entry fee. Notice the sign? (Figure 1). Perhaps you know it.

For the rationale of the collection of this rural museum, one had to concentrate quite hard.

Presumably there was an Intent for the museum – a Vision.

Somebody – a team? – has gone to the trouble of sitting (*sic*) and building the Museum.

Maybe there was - and is –

a Museum Plan,

a Collection Policy,

a Strategic Plan.

From memory, and from my short observations, the Museum was relaxed in regard to:

Preservation and Conservation...atmospheric conditions,

Interpretation,

Display methodologies...themes, ordering artefacts,

Security.

It seemed to me that the collection was in a constant state of flux – objects probably just came, and were souvenired, or recycled...

STUFF

Vladimir Nabokov said:

“When we concentrate on a material object whatever its situation the very act of attention may lead to our involuntarily sinking into the history of that object (such that we become NOT OF THE NOW)”

Artefacts need some care, and some help to speak and they may speak eloquently.

Artefacts are not just ends in themselves; as conduits they can explain how we conduct our lives now, and how we might in the FUTURE.



Photo Lynn Collins

Figure 1. Rural NSW museum STUFF.

