

Heritage

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Acknowledgement of Country

BMACHO acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Blackheath Cemetery and its Marked Graves

Introduction

In the 21st Century advertising is everywhere, on billboards, in newspapers and magazines, on television and particularly in many website pages on the internet. It extends to all sorts of products and services even to those related to emotionally charged events like funerals. Grave site constructions (also called furnishings) sometimes have had a label attached by the constructor which aids to drum up future business and hence is a form of advertising.

Grave Furnishings

Once a body has been buried, and the ground has been levelled, it is usual for the site to be left to settle for several months after which it has been commonplace for relatives to have some sort of 'monument' erected. Those constructions vary in design, and some are specific to particular religions, but depending on the feelings and the affluence of the relatives they range from the ostentatious to the homemade; starting costs for commercial monuments range from about \$3,000 to \$5,000 for a single full memorial¹. It is on those gravestones (viz. actual markers i.e., headstones, footstones, sculptures²) that labels sometimes are added by the monumental masonry companies.

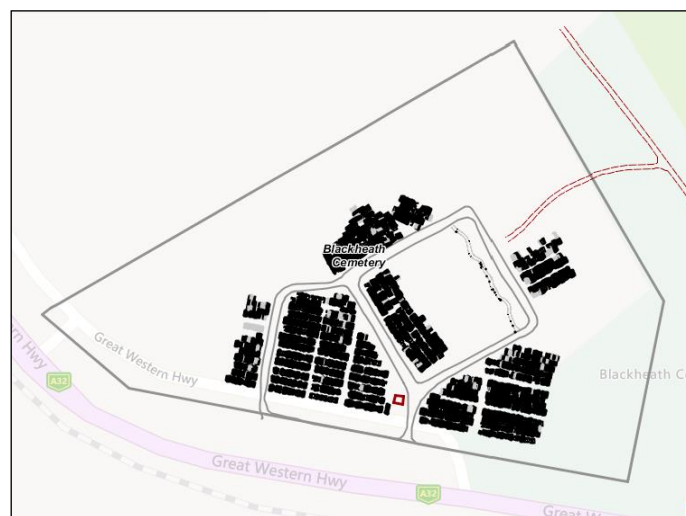


Figure 1: Areas currently used for burials: Reference ³

Labelled Marked Graves

A survey of Blackheath General Cemetery has been made during which every grave site was viewed. Many sites were found to be vacant, and others are unmarked but about 60% of all of the grave sites do have “construction”.

[The number of graves changes frequently so I have depended on information shown on the BMCC cemetery map⁴ that was online in mid 2021 (**Figure 1**). On enlarged versions of that map

- the sites are numbered but to get the total in each row the highest number sometimes has had to be adjusted to include minor inserts with out-of-sequence site numbers like -1,
- the used sites are shown with the family name of the occupant(s) and those with continuous borders were taken to be the marked sites (1133)
- unmarked sites also have the family name of the occupant(s) but their plots are shown by broken lines. (317)

Hence 1450 graves were shown to be occupied. New statistics have been issued subsequent to my survey⁵ and claim that 1736 burials have been made in Blackheath cemetery. Even allowing for the fact that there will have been multiple bodies placed in some graves, never-the-less if that number of 1736 burials is correct then the currently displayed maps are well out of date.]

Of the 1133 marked sites about 8% are ‘blessed’ with a company label but the percentages of marked sites with labels varies by religion, being most common on Baptist gravestones (approaching 12%) and next most labelled are Church of England gravestones (10.5%); labels are least common on gravestones in the Independent section (c.3%).

Forms of Labelling

During this survey the positions of labels on grave constructions have been recorded. The earliest advertisement or label on a gravestone in Blackheath Cemetery is an engraving on the bottom right-hand corner of the headstone of Oliver Biles who died in 1884 (**Figure 2**) and it is the only example found in Blackheath Cemetery of a headstone engraved with the name of the mason who created it. Commercial inscriptions on the front of headstones detract from the solemnity of the details of the deceased so it is fortunate that they are very rare.



Figure 2: Oliver BILES – 1884: Stockade Graves Photos: Peter Rickwood 2021

More discrete than engravings are separate labels but very few are on gravestones erected prior to the end of WW2 and then the practice of labelling increased significantly. Most are of a respectful size and rather than being placed on the headstones they tend to have been attached to the surrounds of graves (**Figure 3**) which sometimes are known as ‘kerbing’⁶ although the resemblance to pavement kerbs is tenuous.



Figure 3: Kerbing and label - Frances NICHOLSON (CoE R10 / 15) Photos: Peter Rickwood 2021

At one time grave labels were metallic (e.g., **Figures 3, 4, 7 & 8**) but now they seem to be made of plastic (e.g. **Figures 5 & 6**).

Mostly labels have been positioned at the foot of a grave, and commonly on the right-hand side (**Figure 3**), but sometimes they have been placed below, or to the right of, a headstone (**Figure 4**). It is uncommon for masons' labels to be put on the backs of headstones (**Figure 5**) as they are seldom seen so the advertising potential is minimal, and similarly affected are labels attached to the sides of headstones (**Figure 6**).

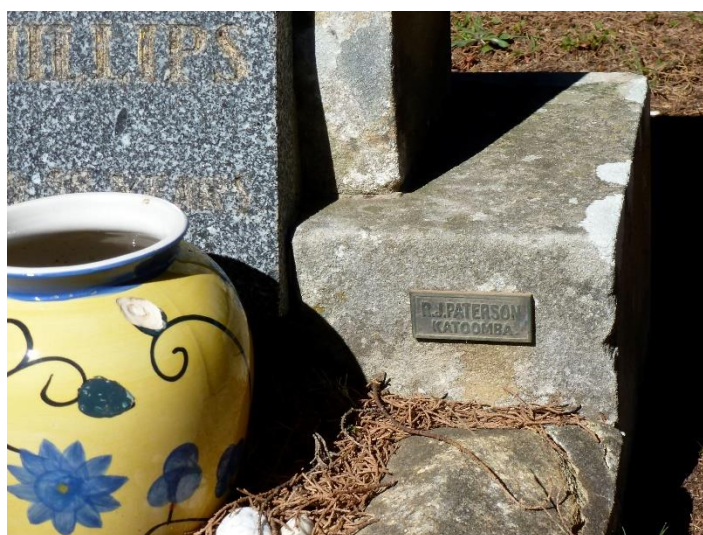


Figure 4: Label adjacent to the headstone, Samuel William PHILLIPS - 1956. (RC RA1 / 11)
Photos: Peter Rickwood 2021



Figure 5: Rear side labels - TIERNEY family – 2010
(RC RB / 24 & 25)



Figure 6: George Ernest KENYON
(Baptist R4 / 15) - 1999

Photos: Peter Rickwood 2021



Figure 7. Plinth label - James MAGILL - 1940. (CoE R8/ 12) Photo: Peter Rickwood 2021

Not only are labels attached to surrounds but also to plinths⁷ - the masonry slabs in contact with the ground on which the constructions have been created (**Figure 7**).



A Pedestal label below headstone



B Gravestone sculpture

Figure 8: Barbara Joan FAIRCLOUGH - 1954. (CoE R10 / 18) Photos: Peter Rickwood 2021

Labels sometimes have been attached to the pedestals on which headstones are mounted (**Figure 8A**), and many of those headstones are surmounted by elaborate carvings in various designs⁸ (e.g., **Figure 8B**). But most historians are more interested in the inscriptions than the grave furnishings for in those words are often gems of information that are unavailable, or difficult to obtain, elsewhere. Transcripts of most of the inscriptions on headstones that were in Blackheath Cemetery in 1989 have been published⁹ but that was over three decades ago, and many gravestones have been added since. And there are very few photographs of the headstones in that book but an overseas website¹⁰ has quite a few more pictures of the Blackheath gravestones and additions are still being made.

Dealing with the Deceased

When a person dies, it is the custom of some faiths for the individual to be interred in a grave excavated in the ground rather than being cremated although the balance between those processes has swung more to the latter in recent times. In heavily populated countries like India and Japan cremating is mostly used¹¹ to dispose of the vast number of persons that die each year yet in China cremations appear to have been nearly constant at c.50% for the last two decades.

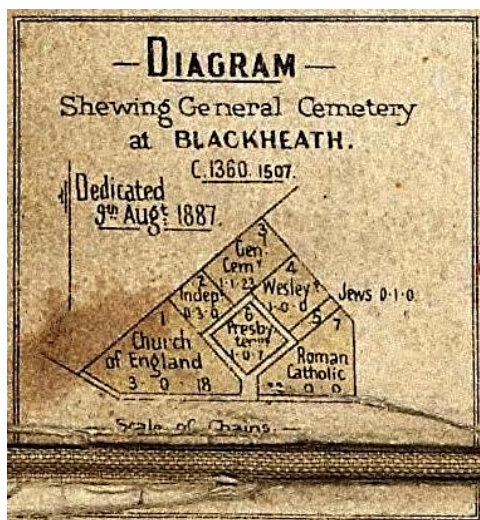


Figure 9. Plan of assigned burial areas:
Reference ¹²



Figure 10: Areas planned for more burials are highlighted green: Reference ³³

Fortunately, the Blackheath General Cemetery is blessed with extensive wooded areas into which to expand burial areas, and just south of the area designated for the cemetery is land set aside for the Judaic religions (**Figure 9**) that has never been occupied by them.

However, to the contrary the authors of the recent *Draft Cemeteries Strategic Plan*¹⁴ have claimed that there is only room for burials at Blackheath for another 5 years. Moreover, they have plans¹⁵ for significant expansion of the Catholic and Methodist burial areas but paltry expansion of the Church of England area (the largest and most in need of extra space). Their intent is to keep the Presbyterian area about the same size but to expand the burials into the tree covered part but there is no provision for expansion of the Baptist and Independent areas. Some areas to the east designated 'E. Oreades Tall Open Forest' have been deemed to be usable for expansion but inexplicably not those to the west (**Figure 10**).

Postscript

Graves do not last forever, not even those prepared for noblepersons of the ancient Egyptian kingdoms which have either been plundered by grave robbers or now are being opened up by archaeologists. In some countries sites are being recycled with the old headstones being respectfully displayed around the perimeters of the designated land area. But when religious faiths put up strong opposition to grave disturbances then alternative land areas have to be found in which to bury their dead and that can be problematical if contamination of the local groundwater is to be avoided.

Peter C Rickwood

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- ² p.28 in Part 1 of Guidelines for Cemetery Conservation. Second Edition (2009). The National Trust of Australia (NSW). 144pp. (pdf file). <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/services/cemetery-conservation/> <Accessed 19 February 2020 >
- ³ <http://emapping.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/connect/analyst/mobile/-/main?mapcfg=Cemetery> <Accessed 1 June 2021>
- ⁴ Reference ².
- ⁵ p.52 in BMCC (2021) *Blue Mountains City Council Draft Cemeteries Strategic Plan*. Katoomba: 98pp. <https://www.bluemts.com.au/posts/draft-strategic-plan-for-bmcc-cemeteries-on-public-exhibition/?daily-news> <Accessed 1 June 2021>⁶ p.41 in Reference ².⁷ Reference ².
- ⁸ pp.120-126 in Part 4, Appendix 4 of Reference ².
- ⁹ BMFHS (1989) *Our Past Blue Mountaineers*. Vol. II covering Shipley, Megalong Valley and Blackheath. Blue Mountains Family History Society, Springwood, NSW 2777. 306pp.
- ¹⁰ <https://www.findagrave.com/> <Accessed 1 June 2021>
- ¹¹ p.15 in Reference ⁵.

¹² Crown Plan 1360.1507 viewable at NSW State Archives & Records, Kingswood.

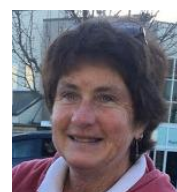
¹³ p.57 in Reference ⁵.

¹⁴ p.52 in Reference ⁵.

¹⁵ p.56 in Reference ⁵.

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Food for thought Editor's note

With so few events happening due to Covid lockdowns in this edition BMACHO offers more reading material, thanks largely to other contributors! What a wonderful array of subject matter this time! So, thank you to Peter, Andy, Kate, Gary and Jan for their input.

Heritage work in the field continues and a review of the useful resources provided on the NSW government website remains relevant: www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/search-for-heritage/conservation-product-or-service

The following information is quoted directly from the website:

The government's conservation products & services directory contains firms and specialist trades providing a range of heritage supplies and services across NSW. Also check for services, suppliers and tradespeople in your local business phone directory, newspaper or search on the internet.

There are a number of helpful publications on heritage conservation in Australia, available through the Sydney Building Information Centre and the National Trust of Australia (NSW) Bookshop. Another useful directory for heritage services is The World of Old Houses.

Before purchasing supplies or engaging a firm, you should always check their suitability for your project requirements first! Check their qualifications, membership/s and accreditation; ask about relevant experience and to see examples of previous work, as well as references from previous clients.

Please note that inclusion in this directory is not a recommendation or endorsement by Heritage NSW or Heritage Council of NSW of any qualifications, skills or experience, or ability to meet your project requirements.

The heritage council's technical advisory group have advised that sealers, surface waterproofing agents and other impregnating agents should not be used as a standard response to masonry deterioration. References to these products will not be included in this directory.

Together with direct consultation with heritage specialists, the Technical Guides accessible on the department's website also provide valuable assistance to heritage construction projects and home renovators.

And do not forget your local council! Council continues to support heritage conservation by providing advisory services, incentives and grant opportunities to the local community. Council's team of heritage specialists are able to provide advice on a range of heritage matters. This may involve the provision of general advice for potential buyers, general

conservation advice for owners, and specific advice regarding development applications and policy.

Development-related advice is provided on a wide range of matters including heritage impact statements, listings management, preparation of heritage management documents and heritage grant applications.

The Heritage Advisory service is also part of Council's ongoing service delivery program and is supported by Heritage NSW.

Patsy Moppett

To contact Council's team of heritage specialists:

Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au or

Phone: 02 4780 5000.

Apocryphal Tales: who reached the Hunter first?

There's nothing like a ding-dong argument about what Colonial explorers did or didn't do. In 2004 I published my book *Somewhat perilous*. It is the story of the first efforts by Europeans — assisted by Aboriginal people — to find a way from the Hawkesbury to the Hunter.

Soon afterwards, a series of old letters in the *Maitland Mercury* was drawn to my attention by Valerie Holland of the Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society. Back in 1887, five correspondents exchanged eleven sometimes vitriolic letters concerning who had first reached the Hunter. If I'd been aware of them when I wrote my book I would have discussed them in an appendix, for they not only make interesting reading, but they provide a salutary lesson in how stories can stray from the truth in just one generation.

Before examining those letters, here is a summary of the actual explorations involved:

- 1817: Benjamin Singleton made an exploratory journey to the Putty area, details of which are unclear.
- 1817: William Parr went as far as the head of the Macdonald River near Mount Kindarun but was beaten back by bushfires and uncertainty. His companions included Singleton, who dropped out midway in what appears to be a treacherous move in support of his own ambition.
- 1818: Singleton, accompanied by an Aboriginal assistant among others, and building on the knowledge gleaned during the Parr expedition, made it to Mount Monundilla. There he met a large group of Aboriginal people whom his assistant was afraid of. The party turned back.
- 1819: John Howe managed to go all the way to the Hunter River near Jerrys Plains (30 kilometres west-north-west of Singleton). His companions included his son-in-law George Loder and the Dharug man Myles (Mioram). At Burrowell, near Putty, they picked up a Darkinjung guide, but the final days of their route were unnecessarily convoluted and rugged.
- 1819: Having been instructed by Howe to find a better way, Myles set out again. It was an all-Aboriginal party. At Burrowell they picked up a different Darkinjung guide (named Whirle), who showed them a much better route beyond Howes Valley. While they did not reach the Hunter River itself, they clearly reached the Hunter Valley. Their route became known as The Bulga, forerunner of the Putty Road.
- 1820: Myles took Howe and a large party of other white men, including Loder and Singleton, along the above route. On St Patrick's Day they reached the river at Singleton (Patrick's Plains).

There is little room to move in the interpretation of the expeditions. Apart from Singleton's 1817 effort, all the events are either well described in Parr's, Singleton's and Howe's own accounts, route data, maps and sketches, or mentioned in correspondence with Governor Macquarie.

The 1887 letter-writers thought there was little room to move too, but unfortunately they were all in different rooms. The people concerned were:



Foundation stone of St Patrick's Church, Singleton

- George Thomas Loder (1823-1901) — son of the above George Loder and grandson of John Howe.
- Elizabeth Yeomans (1812-1894) of West Maitland — daughter of Ben Singleton.
- William Glas McAlpin (1810-1902) of Bulga — or possibly his son William Glass McAlpin (1840-1923), also of Bulga.
- William Collins — connection to any of the above unknown.
- Jus Sanguinis — possibly William Collins under a penname.

The first public hint of confusion on the subject appeared in a letter from Loder in February 1879, but things really heated up eight years later, when Howes Park in Singleton was officially so-named by the local member Albert John Gould on the occasion of Queen Victoria's jubilee celebrations, in June 1887.



*Burrowell, near Putty, where John Howe's Darkinjung guides were engaged.
Mount Yengo can be seen beyond*

During his speech Gould brandished a copy of Howe's first expedition journal and proclaimed that Howe had led the first expedition that reached the Hunter. In that he was correct—if we ignore the fact that Aboriginal people had been doing it for millennia. He also had the date right (5 November), except that he was one year out: he gave the date as 1818,

whereas it was really 1819. (The original journal does not have the year on it.) Gould also mentioned Howe's second expedition — the one that actually arrived at Singleton.

The Honourable Gould acknowledged in his speech that there were those who disagreed with what he said. He would not have been disappointed by what followed.

At the heart of the controversy, expressed in two letters by Yeomans, is her contention that her father Ben Singleton had undertaken two journeys of his own (which he did), that the second one got him close to the river (which it did not) and that he had then guided the Howe party to Singleton (which he did not, though he was one of the party). She had never heard of Parr, or of the expedition that was led by Parr.

Loder wrote three letters. He was evidently Gould's adviser. He was more or less right about Howe's two expeditions but knew nothing of Parr or Singleton's prior efforts. He also stated that the Governor was opposed to Howe's expeditions, which is incorrect. He suggested that the Singleton family had a personal interest in telling an incorrect story.

Jus Sanguinis wrote more or less in support of Yeomans, as did William Collins, who wrote three letters. After Loder referred to his opponents as "carping critics", Collins referred to Loder's letter as "a piece of impudent and sterile bombast". He pointed out that Loder also had a personal interest. He pleaded on behalf the Singleton family on the grounds that it was impoverished and forgotten, while the Loder family was wealthy and well-known.

Furthermore, Collins suggested that the Howe journal which Gould had brandished, and which Loder referred to, was fraudulent; and even if it was not, it was no more reliable than an oral account because certain matters could have been deliberately omitted in the writing of it. In one letter he seemed to concede that Singleton might only have seen the valley from the range, prior to guiding Howe there. (In fact, Singleton could not have seen the valley from his terminus on the slopes of Mount Monundilla and did not claim to have done so in his account. Moreover, Howe's routes never went near that mountain.)

McAlpin wrote two letters, in which he accused Yeomans of not studying her Australian history. He was the only one who knew all about Parr, and about Singleton's treacherous desertion from Parr's trip. His informant was apparently a convict named Paddy White who was assigned to McAlpin's father and who apparently was actually on Parr's expedition. However, McAlpin seemed not to know of Singleton's second expedition or Howe's first, contending only that Singleton returned from Parr's expedition and gave Howe the necessary information for Howe to lead what amounted to his second expedition. He knew that Singleton was on that expedition, as well as Myles, and named other Aboriginal people involved: Woolaboy, Jelmoroy, and Lazy Jack. (As far as I know that is the only source providing those three names, so it's impossible to know whether it's accurate.)

There is much more to the letters, including arguments based on how much land each of the protagonists was granted, but the point is that none of the writers presents the whole story and some had it quite wrong. None of them knew of all the expeditions involved, and none of them knew of (or was willing to acknowledge) the extent of the Aboriginal involvement. They don't hide the fact that Aboriginal people were on the expeditions, but their role was underplayed. Yeomans, for one, asserted that the explorers only took them along to help find water. Loder did at least acknowledge their role as guides.

Not one of the correspondents mentioned the crucial all-Aboriginal expedition led by Myles, which established the practical route which he then showed Howe.

I have related all the above not simply out of curiosity. Its significance is that it shows how the facts of exploratory endeavours — or indeed any historic events — can easily be distorted or totally falsified in a brief period of time. Loder, whose version was closest to the truth, at least had one journal to rely on. The others, however, appear to have been relying on oral history.

Oral history must always be received with caution, especially when reputations are at stake or there are axes to grind. Apocryphal versions can develop through error, ignorance or wilful distortion. Had there been no preserved documentation of those 1817-1820 journeys, today's accepted version of what happened might be far from the truth.

Andy Macqueen

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Springwood Military Station

'The past is apprehended as a sensuous quality of things presently observed'

On his first visit to Australia in 1842, artist **Oswald Brierly** visited the Blue Mountains in NSW and painted two watercolours, *Springwood Military Station New South Wales* (**Figure 1**) and *The Inn at 20 Mile Hollow* (**Figure 2**). They are part of the extensive Brierly collection held by the State Library of NSW but are relatively unknown and uncelebrated, especially in comparison with his later vivid renditions of sailing ships and sea battles that established his reputation as a painter of note and ensured his appointment as Queen Victoria's official marine painter. They also lack the drama of his artistic peers such as Augustus Earle's mysterious and overpowering Australian landscapes or Lewin's trailblazing revelations of new lands beyond the Mountains barrier. Despite this, these early works are a significant addition to the existing body of work characterising the European perception of the Blue Mountains since the 1813 crossing and are important in engendering a public consciousness of the heritage of the Mid-Mountains in particular.

The State Library's collection of Brierly's journals, sketches and large exhibition watercolours were originally bequeathed by its founder David Scott Mitchell in 1907 as part of his large collection of Australiana. Mitchell's original bequest was supplemented with additional artworks from Sir William Dixson's personal collection and by the State Library's ongoing policy of acquisitions. In 2018 several of the artist's works were purchased from the estate of Beryl Millbank, a descendent of Benjamin Boyd. These included the Springwood landscape which, prior to its purchase was exhibited at the Hunter Museum of Art, Tennessee in 1982 in *Sir Oswald Walters Brierly: Sailing Ships and Ports of the Seven Seas*, along with five of Brierly's watercolours from the State Library's holdings. The State Library held its own



Figure 1: *The Springwood Military Station New South Wales* – Oswald Brierly



Figure 2: *The Inn at Twenty Mile Hollow – Oswald Brierly*

exhibition of Brierly's sketches and large exhibition watercolours in 2005, focusing on works produced during his years working with the failed entrepreneur Benjamin Boyd and his journey surveying the Great Barrier Reef and the shores of New Guinea with Captain Owen Stanley. Brierly and Stanley's sketches and journal entries describing the journey also feature as a narrative on the State Library's website. The importance of Brierly's art and his written observations of the land and the people are acknowledged in the catalogue as being one of their most prized collections:

This collection is significant for its depiction of Australian Aboriginal and Pacific Islander maritime technologies, the nineteenth-century whaling industry in Australia, settlement of Twofold Bay, and representations of the various flora and fauna encountered during explorations of the South Pacific

Oswald Brierly, the son of amateur artist, Dr Thomas Brierly, studied art at a respected Academy in London and exhibited drawings at the Royal Academy in his early twenties. His studies in naval architecture and navigation and his knowledge and experience of ships and sailing put him in good stead for his later career as a highly respected marine painter who, *'in the manner of his time, delighted in depicting scenes of action and adventure associated with the sea, [taking] great pride in the accurate delineation of ships both of his own day and of the past.'* At the age of 24 he travelled with Benjamin Boyd on the topsail schooner *Wanderer* to Australia, arriving in Sydney in July 1842. He stayed for 5 months before travelling on to Twofold Bay as manager of Boyd's pastoral and whaling enterprises. He left in 1848 after Boyd's ventures went bankrupt but continued as a marine illustrator with Captain Owen Stanley on the HMS *Rattlesnake*, and after extensive tours of the Pacific returned to England on *The Meander*. He revisited Australia in 1868 with the Prince of Wales on HMS *Galatea* as the official artist for Royal Tours and was appointed marine painter to Queen Victoria and the Royal Yacht Squadron in 1874.

The State Library's digitised records of his journals and artworks reveal how detailed and meticulous Brierly's journal entries enroute to Sydney are, with observations of Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town, Teneriffe, Tristan da Cunha and Melbourne, including topographically accurate sketches of land formations, towns and cities. During his time at Twofold Bay he documented his journey inland to the Monaro plains where he was among the first Europeans to view land untouched by colonial settlement. Mark McKenna's award-winning *Looking for Blackfellas' Point: an Australian history of place* utilises the rich commentary of Brierly's journals in a personal exploration of the colonial and indigenous heritage of the landscape and people of Eden Monaro. McKenna writes of Brierly's *most magical journal wherein infused with the enthusiasm of the recent arrival, open to every encounter, his starry-eyed prose is broken by extraordinary sketches in ink and pencil.* Many of Brierly's early Australian works illustrating his journeys on the *Wanderer* or *The Rattlesnake* are part of a chronological sequence. They are often complemented by written entries such as the Eden-Monaro trip or have preliminary sketches accompanying the text. Considering his skills in recording his *reflections* and the *best first-hand account of what it meant to be a colonist...in the early 1840s*, it is disappointing, to say the least, to find no mention of any kind of his experiences in the Blue Mountains or any substantial account of the several

months he stayed in the city. During the six months he stayed in Sydney in 1842 he only completed a landscape of Garden Island and a panorama of Sydney Cove but, as Lawrence suggests, much of his time may have been spent socializing which, as a young man on his first visit to the Antipodes he could be forgiven. The only evidence of the 1842 Mountains visit in the State Library's collection are the two sketches, one purchased in 1937 and the other more recently in 2018, and while they lack any narrative their location is clear, and their connection is obvious when viewed together.

Springwood Military Station New South Wales is a watercolour, gouache and pencil sketch depicting a panoramic view over the Cumberland plains to the southwest. The military station of the title would be behind the artist to the north as it was moved from its original site in the south in 1833 to be sold within a few years to Thomas Boland, a founding settler of the area. Two men stand and admire the view while a third, possibly Brierly, sits on a log and sketches. The travellers' barouche stands by implying they are mid-journey, perhaps travelling to or from their accommodation at Twenty Mile Hollow.



Figure 3: Spring Wood – John Lewin 1815



Figure 4: View of the Gullies of the Grose River

The site would have already had historical significance to the visitor as the first campsite of Governor Lachlan Macquarie's inaugural journey across William Cox's newly completed Bathurst Road in 1815 when he wrote in his journal, *this place being very pretty I have named it Spring Wood*. John Lewin was the official artist accompanying the Governor and his wife, a large party of aides, officials and interested gentlemen. Macquarie's aide de camp, Major Antill, kept a journal which he later shared with Lewin in exchange for copies of the paintings. His entry for April 26th 1815 noted:

We were encamped in an extensive forest of large lofty trees mostly of stringy and ironbark. ...The different fires had, from the background where I was, a very beautiful effect, and enabled me to observe the scene before me. Some were busily employed cooking; others were smoking; making their huts, or cutting down timber for fuel, and reminded me by their various occupations of what I had read of a camp of gypsies or the bivouacs of a Continental army.

Lewin responded to this poetic description with the watercolour *Spring Wood*, which Neville describes as *aesthetically adventurous*. (**Figure 3.**) Unlike his 1810 camping landscape it is less structured and un-staged, placing the party in a confined setting of large trees, with people and carts dwarfed by the forest in the evening light. Hugh Spiers comments on this work how...

Lewin's watercolour helps us imagine that moment of pioneering history. It is probably Lewin's best work; with his strongly contrasting verticals and horizontals, and his penetrable darks, he achieves more aesthetic interest...than his other works.

Bernard Smith describes Lewin's 1815 series as *the first successful attempt to paint the local scenery with an eye unfettered by current artistic conventions* particularly in comparison to William Govett's images of dark canyons and overpowering cliffs (**Figure 4**) and Augustus Earle's noble frontiersman bivouacked in the romantic and mysterious Cabbage Tree forests of the Illawarra. (**Figure 5**)



Figure 5: Bivouac – Augustus Earle



Oswald Walters Brierly

Early travellers journeying through the Springwood country would often remark on how heavily wooded it was; William Cox's 1814 journal notes *the timber being heavy and the brush strong*; Governor Macquarie's 1815 journal describes the *very handsome open forest of lofty trees*; his ADC Major Antill gives a detailed account of the area's *extensive forest of large lofty trees mostly of stringy iron bark*; in 1822 Elizabeth Hawkins describes how the military station was completely in the wood, and magistrate Barron Field noted it was *a fine forest of tall trees*. Twenty years later Brierly's landscape is a marked contrast to these pioneering descriptions. The forest is sparse, denuded for construction and fuel and with few visible buildings. It is an image of colonisation, the land is cleared, the road is predominant, and the men survey the evidence of the advances of settlement. It is a wide expansive view to the Southeast, probably mid-morning, with smoke trails marking communities on the Cumberland Plains. With the exception of toll houses, roadside inns and stockades the mountains were still sparingly settled, being a *remote place where the loneliness and bewildering anarchy of the Australian bush were at their most unnerving*. The landscape is part of a trope of Blue Mountains landscapes looking to lands newly discovered, conquered and surveyed, usually to the west but in this case the non-threatening settled plains of the south-east. The initial impression is one of light, distance and space, contrasting with the confinement of Lewin's image and Earle's mystery and romanticism. The expanse of sky is dominant with a flock of white birds flying above the artist who is dwarfed, not by the trees or towering cliffs but by the expansive view. The figures within this landscape are not frontiersmen, they are fashionably dressed in morning coat and top hats, and they will have no intention of camping rough; they bring no provisions with them in their comfortable carriage but will drink port and eat well at the table of the closest licensed house at Twenty Mile Hollow.

The Inn at Twenty Mile Hollow is a familiar sight for those who know it as The Woodford Academy at Woodford in the Blue Mountains. (**Figure 2**). The *Hollows* referred to are places of water and fodder located at 10-mile intervals along the Bathurst route, starting at the river crossing at Emu Plains. In 1842 the closest inn to the west of this image was The Weatherboard at present-day Wentworth Falls and to the east, the Woolpack Inn at Valley Heights. There was no private accommodation at Springwood despite the settlement being the first named in the region, as its main purpose was as a military stockade established in 1815 for the protection and policing of travellers across the Mountains.

The artwork's clear dating and insignia place the artist's visit at a time when the Inn was known as *The King's Arms*, owned by Michael Hogan, but leased until 1845 by English settlers James Nairn, a Parramatta coach-driver, his wife Margaret, and their three children. It was a time of relative prosperity for the Inn after several tempestuous years of neighbourhood disputes and personal tragedy. The original owner, Thomas Pembroke, was

the son-in-law of Pierce Collits who was responsible for erecting a string of roadside inns for his family across the mountains from Woodford to Hartley. Pembroke was granted the land in 1831 and in 1833 reported that he had *erected a commodious Inn comprising 9 apartments*. It was advertised for sale in 1838 after he lost ownership of the property to his debtors:

Recently built containing nine Rooms, Verandah, and entrances south and east, where may be constantly enjoyed (even, this unpropitious season) the most delicious spring water, air most salubrious, with most extensive prospect of southern and eastern country. As it lies ten miles west of the Woolpack Inn, and nine miles east of Weatherboard, and no Inn between, is sufficient to convince the public that the situation cannot be excelled. Fifty Acres being a Grant from the Crown. Stabling, Stockyards, Garden, and twenty acres fell and nearly cleared. for a Paddock.

The watercolour depicts the timber and stone Inn, garden, stockyard and outbuildings in the morning light. The land surrounding has been cleared of trees but in the distance to the west is the faint outline of the slab hut that once operated as a sly grog shop and was a source of dispute between Pembroke and its owner William James. To the right is parked the traveller's barouche, similar or the same as the one in the Springwood image, the horses have been stabled and the passengers have removed inside to one of the nine apartments, possibly enjoying breakfast prepared in the kitchen, behind and apart from the main house in case of fires.

The work is small, the size of an A4 sheet, aesthetically framed in simple gilded wood with a decorative inner border that matches the tones of pencil and gauche. The watercolour within is smaller still, encompassing fifteen centimetres of exquisitely pencilled detail, leading the eye into small particulars that delight in their discovery. As an image of the earliest colonial structure in the region and the oldest surviving building in the Blue Mountains, it is tangible and easily identifiable and has proven to be crucial in visualising early archives of the building and informing later structural changes. Brierly's observational skills and navigational eye for detail embraces accuracy and artistry and until recently this landscape was the only example known of his visit to the region.

Looking at both 1842 works in a historic sense it is highly likely they were made on the same journey, probably with an overnight stay at the Inn. The trip would have been a lot faster and more comfortable than Lewin's expedition as the road was regularly maintained by convict gangs and was described as *good for carriages*. Did Brierly's party continue up to Weatherboard with its dramatic canyons and waterfalls or did they only travel as far as the mid-mountains, resting at the Kings Arms before returning? If they did venture further west it would have been unusual for the artist not to respond to the drama of the scenery that artists such as John Prout, Eugene von Guerard and Augustus Earle found compelling. He did revisit the Blue Mountains in 1868 as part of his world trip with the Prince of Wales and his entourage whom he sketched visiting the *Weatherboard Waterfalls in the Blue Mountains*, later reproduced as an etching.

The fine detail in Brierly's two works is critical in informing the heritage of locations like Springwood and Woodford. It completes existing structures, showing through the discipline and accuracy of a topographical illustrator what is missing and what remains. It explains the present and reduces speculation about the site's past. For a Blue Mountains resident, these two landscapes engender a strong sense of place and identity, as the views are still recognisable, even when obscured by railway lines, bungalows and traffic. Bernard Smith writes about the importance of visual, perceptible material in enabling people to gain a perception of heritage.

...history is something that he can see, here and now in the present, something which has happened to survive from the past. It is a kind of perception, an ability to see the past as one of the qualities of presently engaging things.

Whether it is the remains of a roadside inn behind a local McDonalds or Brierly's Springwood panorama, Smith's observation that a sense of history makes for a better neighbourhood is apt for a region that, despite its world heritage listing is still being challenged by overdevelopment, transport infrastructure and intrusive capital works. Awareness of the

critical interaction between the natural and built environment is enhanced by historical perception and this is sometimes lacking, despite the best efforts of local historical societies and regional councils.

There is an opportunity in Springwood particularly for this to be rectified with the forthcoming redevelopment of the local Library which includes the Blue Mountains headquarters of both the Family History and Local Studies organisations. Minimalist in design and large in scope the building could benefit from a reproduction of Brierly's panorama amongst its planes of wood and concrete as they both share a common aspect to the southeast to *provide light and views into this busy, thriving community facility*. It would be appropriate to also add heritage.

In summary, it may seem inconsequential that a minor artwork from the early period of a painter not noted for his Australian colonial landscapes has such significance for a region already well represented by more celebrated artists but the significance of these two artworks of Brierly is not just in their aesthetics. It is also in their heritage potential and capacity to engender at a more local level a sense of place, enhanced historical perception and appreciation of an area not well represented by the prolific body of art and literature based on the Blue Mountains.

Kate O'Neill

**Endnotes for this article are available upon request from the Editor*

Miss Ruby Board, feminist and community activist

Miss Ruby Board was an early leader in the National Council of Women at state and national level, and an advocate for women's involvement in the war effort through both world wars. She was prominent in a variety of other social causes, including the Country Women's Association, the Diabetic Association of NSW and the Rachel Forster Hospital for women. Miss Board did not marry and lived with her parents at Leura on the corner of Malvern Road and Abbey Street from 1923 until 1938. She was a founding office holder in the Blue Mountains branch of the CWA, based at Leura, and later its president, whilst also being involved in the formation of the Leura Music Club and the Leura Town Improvement Society. Throughout these years, she continued to be involved in national and state organisations and travelled to women's conferences overseas. She passed away at the Rachel Forster Hospital, Redfern in 1963.



SMH 19 March 1925, p.5



Rachel Hospital, Redfern

1. Personal Life

Ruby Willmet Board was born in Gunning NSW on 15th October 1880, the only child of Peter Board and Jessie Allen, née Bowes. Her maternal grandmother was Euphemia Bowes, a founder and early president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in NSW. Her maternal grandfather was a Methodist minister. Her father was the progressive NSW Director of Education from 1905 to 1922 and had been Inspector of Schools in the Lismore-Tweed district for some years.

Ruby went to school in Lismore, passing her Junior Examination in July 1897. She studied music received an intermediate pass in her piano exam in November 1898.

Ruby's father was transferred to Albury in about 1901 as Inspector of Schools. Subsequently they moved to Newcastle with her father's posting,

She obtained a Bachelor of Arts, apparently in languages, but it is unknown where this was obtained. In 1912 she spent six months at the Tilly Institute in Berlin, run by an Australian. A friend who met her there reported: She is one of Mr Tilly's *lightning changes* and had apparently forgotten every word of English she ever knew, so flowed on glibly in German. In 1922-23 her father retired as Under-Secretary of Public Instruction and the Department of Education. It was almost certainly at this time that they moved to Leura and Miss Board accompanied her parents.

In 1930 the Board family were listed in the electoral roll at Malvern Road, Leura, and again in the electoral roll of 1932-36. Her parents were at Malvern Road, and her father's employment was listed as Director of Education although he had not held that position for some years. Ruby's mother passed away at Ruby's house in Morven Road in May 1932. In the electoral roll of 1943 to 1949, she was listed at 199 Mowbray Road, with her employment listed as 'director'. Ruby and her father appear to have moved back to Sydney sometime after her mother's death, and she was living with her father until his death in Chatswood in February 1945.

Over the next few years, she lived at Darlinghurst and then Castle Hill. In December 1963 she had a fall and was moved into the Rachel Forster Hospital, where she passed away on 25th December 1963.

2. Community Activities

Ruby held a wide variety of community positions from 1913 onwards. At that point she took over the work of Mrs E. Jenkins, who had been the honorary general secretary of the National Council of Women (NCW), NSW for nine years. Miss Board had previously been the press secretary.

From 1914-1918 she was honorary general secretary or corresponding secretary of the National Council of Women, NSW.

In July 1915 she was elected to the executive committee of the Women's National Movement at the Women's Club in Sydney, attended by women from a large number of women's clubs and church societies in connection with a movement to close liquor bars and wine shops at 6pm.

Through the NCW she was most involved in the establishment of a national register of women to support the war effort, and the role of women in the war from an economic perspective.

1919 – She became interstate secretary of the National Council of Women of NSW in 1919 and led the Australian delegation to the International Council of Women in Washington in 1925.

She served as treasurer of the Federal Council of the National Councils of Women (NCW) Australia, and on her return from America, she became concerned at the use of the English language: *I have always much regretted that the Australian speech is getting very far away from pure English.* And in 1927 she published a pamphlet *Australian Pronunciation: A Handbook for the Teaching of English in Australia*, and then in 1928 she published another pamphlet, *Pupils' Practice Book for Vowel Sounds*.

From 1930 she became involved in the Blue Mountains branch of the CWA and was President from 1930-1938.

Then in October 1931 she was interim treasurer of the newly formed National Council of Women of Australia and became President of the Nepean Group of the CWA in 1934.

In 1937 she was appointed as a member of the advisory council for the Methodist Ladies College at Burwood, and from 1939 to 1958 Ruby was a vice-president of the Rachel Forster Hospital for Women and Children.

Her involvement in the NCW continued and she was president from 1938-1948, where she helped to establish the Women's Voluntary Services, modelled on a similar organisation of that name in Britain. Its purpose was to train women for national service. The

Commonwealth government had produced a form for women to fill in, listing their skills and experience, with a view to them being involved in first aid, driving ambulances and so on. *On the outbreak of war it would jump into life.*

3. Second World War

Ruby was president of the Women's Voluntary National Register, a member of the executive of the Australian Comforts Fund, Defence Director of the Women's Auxiliary National Service and president of the Housekeepers' Emergency Service. In June 1942 she was president of the National Council of Women and a member of the Committee of Advice to Commonwealth Manpower Organisation.

In a newspaper report, she was quoted as saying that there was no question of the suitability of most women to undertake light work on the land, while a certain percentage might be adapted for heavy work. In NSW, some women were already doing ploughing, and there was a shearing group.

She continued her involvement in the NCW Australia, focusing on the treatment and pay of women in the service, post-war reconstruction, especially housing, uniform, marriage and divorce laws and the nationality of married women (an issue which arose from wartime marriages).

She actually refused an MBE for her work on the National Council of Women of NSW, believing that her work deserved higher recognition.

4. Diabetes

Sometime during the 1930s Ruby became a diabetic, and from 1949 she was an office bearer of the Diabetic Association of NSW, becoming President from 1951 to 1960.

In 1953 she organised a lecture tour by two world authorities on diabetes to better inform the public on the disease, and in 1955 she attended the congress of the International Diabetes Federation at Cambridge.

In 1965 the *Ruby Board Clinic* for the diagnosis and treatment of diabetes was established at the Rachel Forster Hospital in Redfern.

5. Leura

By April 1923 the family had possibly moved to their house at Malvern Street, Leura, evidenced by Mr Peter Board speaking at the Anzac Day ceremony at Wentworth Falls. On 24 June 1924, the Blue Mountains Echo reported the following, when Ruby has taken her father to the railway station:

There was mild excitement at the top of the Mall on Tuesday morning. Miss Board, daughter of Mr Board, former Director of Education, now resident of Leura, had driven her respected parent to the railway station, and had left the car just on the crown of the hill near the bridge. While Miss Board was on the station platform, the car started off on its own and, gathering speed on the ugly decline, crashed into the brick wall of Mason & Co's office on the eastern corner. The wall was moved bodily but, strange as it may seem, the car did not seem to be badly damaged. This is the second brick wall that has been shifted by motor-cars within the past month. Good ads for the cars!

Peter Board was appointed to the Municipal Council in July 1925. He was chairman of the board of directors of the Katoomba Hospital when a new block was opened in February 1932, and in August 1938 Ruby and her father had come from their home in Double Bay to an event at the Niagara Cafe honouring his contribution to the hospital over ten years as a member and president of the board. Her mother Jesse had passed away in May 1932, being buried at Wentworth Falls.

Ruby was heavily involved in the Blue Mountains Branch of the CWA, being Secretary and helping with fund raising.

In 1932 she was honorary secretary of the Leura Branch of the United Australia Party. In the same year she was the chair of a meeting held in the ballroom of Chateau Napier to form a Music Club at Leura, joining the organising committee.

At the opening of the Red Cross Garden Party at *The Royal* at Katoomba in 1933, the Mayor said:

Her many activities in connection with political and social welfare are known far and wide. As well as holding other responsible positions, she is President of Leura Branch of the Country Women's Association and Vice President of the National Council of Women

She was frequently involved in organising stalls, fetes, fairs, music events, fund raising garden parties, judging at school shows and exhibitions, and doing educational broadcasts and doing some herself with the ABC. In 1935 Ruby protested at the council's decision to remove shrubs from the Leura Mall – it would be a calamity to replace the shrubs with pavement. It was claimed that the shrubs were an obstruction to business!

**From a research article by Gary Sturgess. An extensive amount of research has gone into this article and for anyone seeking references, inquiries may be made to the Editor.*

Vale Tim Miers

3 October 1929 - 4 July 2021

Glenbrook & District Historical Society wrote in a Facebook post on 4 July 2021 *It is with great sadness that we learned of Tim Miers' passing away today at Buckland's Springwood. Tim was a founding member of our Society, and he will be sadly missed. He lived most of his life in Glenbrook and his knowledge of our local history formed the basis of our history collection.*

Tim had many stories to tell and had a vivid memory of his childhood in Glenbrook. Some of his memories have been published in *The Glenbrook of Yesteryear – What it was like to live in Glenbrook* which can be read [ONLINE](https://glenbrookhistory.org/history/Localities/Glenbrook/Glenbrook%20Yesterday/Glenbrook%20Yesterday/Glenbrook%20Yesterday.pdf):

<https://glenbrookhistory.org/history/Localities/Glenbrook/Glenbrook%20Yesterday/Glenbrook%20Yesterday/Glenbrook%20Yesterday.pdf>

Tim remembered the Avro-Anson Aircraft crash at approximately 4.30pm on 28th January 1941, which crashed on the corner of Lucasville Road and Clifton Avenue, Glenbrook. Tim said he saw the plane flying low and almost over their home and they knew the pilot was in trouble. Tim later collected fabric covered wing parts from the Duck Hole Ridge area, which was reported to the RAAF investigating officers by his mother. No photographs were permitted.

He also remembered during the early 1940s war years, that a young man, who called himself *Tarzan*, built a cave dwelling on the north side of the old Blue Pool Track. On Glenbrook & District Historical Society History Walks, Tim would meet up with those on the Duck Hole walk with Doug Knowles, to show the location and tell the history of the cave and its inhabitant. Tim would then go back to his home and meet us all there for *cuppas* and refreshments on the lawn out the front of his home on Cowdery Street.



*Tim laying a wreath on behalf of
Glenbrook & District Historical Society
Courtesy of G & D H Society*



*Tim out in the field as a firefighter
Courtesy of Glenbrook Lapstone RFB*

Travelling salesmen were another strong memory - the milkman and the dairy at 44 Lucasville Road. The milkman would milk the cows and then deliver the milk twice a day, on foot, with a milk can in each hand and would fill the billy-can you left at the front gate. He remembered the pastrycook, Mrs Cotton (appropriately named) who sold haberdashery; the 1914-1918 War veteran, Charlie Steele, who sold buttons and bows from a Globite school case; the fruit and vegetable vendors, the Bottle-O and the chimney sweep.

Tim relayed how as young boys they rowed across Glenbrook Lagoon in their home-made canoe of corrugated iron and stole watermelons grown on the edge of the Lagoon. They started to sink, so they threw out the melons till they got to the shore. Then someone returned alone to retrieve them. In 2004 Tim said it was a shame to see the state of the Lagoon, because as young boys they were able to fish, swim and even drink the water from the Lagoon. Tim would be pleased now in 2021 to see that the Lagoon is bringing back wildlife and is in a much better state than it was earlier in the decade.

Another dedication of Tim's was the Glenbrook Voluntary Fire Brigade, which was formed in 1942. Tim tells funny stories from those days, and this was one of them:

During a fire in the area of the present-day Blaxland High School, we were told to go to the Copper Kettle Tea Rooms on the Western Highway for free tea and scones. It was a stinking hot day. The lady came out of the kitchen dressed only in a bra, panties and apron and said to the firefighters ".... don't mind me dressed like this; it is so bloody hot in the kitchen...." The boys replied, ".... no worries love, just keep up the tea and scones...."

In 1953 the then Board of Fire Commissioners took over the Station. Members of the old Brigade who lived and worked locally and were able to respond on a basis of 24 hours per day, seven days per week, were able to apply to join the Board's new team. Tim in later years became a member of the then Glenbrook Lapstone Volunteer Bushfire Brigade, (later Glenbrook Lapstone Rural Fire Brigade), holding many positions as outlined below. It had been formed in 1969 in response to the 1968 fires, with an initial membership of 48 volunteers and Tim later became a Life Member.

Tim's Service - Glenbrook Lapstone Rural Fire Brigade service and Glenbrook Lapstone Rural Fire Brigade:

- Joined GL VBFB 19-2-69.
- RFS Long Service Medal: 10 years; Clasp: 20, 30 & 40 years; Award: 35 years.
- National Medal: 1984; Clasp 1-1984; Clasp 2-2007.
- Operational Member from 1969 until 2014.
- Associate member from 2018-2021.
- Deputy Captain: 1969-1975 and 1988-1995.
- Senior Deputy Captain: 1975-1976.
- Captain: 1976-1983.

Jan Koperberg

Rest in Peace, Tim – a wonderful record of community service

References:

Glenbrook Lapstone Rural Fire Brigade Facebook page

Glenbrook & District Historical Society Facebook page

"The Glenbrook of Yesteryear – What it was like to live in Glenbrook" [ONLINE](#)

A Chapel in a Cave

Covadonga: Asturian: Cuadonga, from cova domnica "Cave of Our Lady"

A short distance from Cangas de Onís in Spain is the religious sanctuary of Covadonga, which is considered to be one of the most important and historic locations in the history of Spain. In this place King Don Pelayo and a force of Christians from Asturias in northern Spain, managed to defeat the then ruling Islamic Moors (c. 722AD) during the battle of Covadonga which started the 770 year long campaign to recover the Iberian Peninsula back to Christian rule known as the *Reconquista*, the reconquest of Spain from the Muslims.

Victory at Covadonga and the subsequent rout of the retreating Moors secured the independence of Asturias. This ensured that one small part of Iberia remained under Christian control.



The Chapel of Our Lady

The village of Covadonga is now a national shrine and a place of pilgrimage for the devotees of the Virgin of Covadonga, known as *La Santina*. The statue of *La Santina* is housed in a cave built into the rock surrounded by waterfalls. This, together with the beautiful pink stone basilica, makes this historic and religious place a site of peace, beauty and spirituality.

Covadonga is home to a religious sanctuary which consists of the basilica, the holy cave, a museum and a Collegiate church. Covadonga sits halfway up a mountain and the grand basilica can be seen for miles around as its two spires are distinctive.

It is said that Pelayo retreated to the cave where a hermit had placed a statue of the Virgin Mary. Pelayo prayed to the Virgin Mary for victory and later accredited his success to her. In recognition of this King Alfonso I of Spain commanded that a chapel and monastery be built and dedicated to *Our Lady of Covadonga*. The chapel has been frequently destroyed and restored, most recently after the Spanish Civil War (1936–39). The grotto where Pelayo and his followers reputedly took refuge from battle also contains the tombs of the king and his wife and sister, as well as the small Chapel of Our Lady (Virgen de las Batallas).

The Basilica of Nuestra Señora de las Batallas was built between 1877 and 1901, and outside it is a statue of Pelayo standing in front of a cross, sword in hand.



Covadonga Basilica

In the mountains above the town are located the two lakes of Covadonga, Enol and Ercina, and the road leading to the lakes is often featured in the Vuelta a España bicycle race. Southeast of the village, in the Europa Peaks, is the Covadonga Mountains National Park, which was established in 1918. The park's heavily wooded area of 65 square miles (169 square km) shelters chamois, roe deer, wildcat, bear, and numerous birds.

Patsy Moppett

References:

Battle of Covadonga www.britannica.com/topic/Battle-of-Covadonga
www.britannica.com/place/Covadonga
www.spainthisway.com/places/covadonga.php
Covadonga: www.en.wikipedia.org

PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES AND NOTIFICATIONS TO THE EDITOR FOR THE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2021 ISSUE OF HERITAGE IS 25th OCTOBER 2021

Community events & updates

Great Western Highway Upgrade, Medlow Bath

A single track railway main line from Katoomba to Blackheath was opened in 1868, with a halt stop established at Medlow Bath in 1881. Its initial name was *Brown Siding*, because of Brown's sawmill close by in Railway Parade. The station became Medlow in 1883 and Medlow Bath in 1903 with the opening of Mark Foy's Hydro.

The 1881 platform was 30 metres (100 feet) long and was situated on the down-side of the single line where the present station is located. Additions to the station buildings were made in 1899, but duplication of the line in 1902 prompted the replacement of the original platform by the present island platform. The existing buildings date from that time.

Also on the platform is a small timber signal box. An open interlocking frame was erected on the platform in 1909 but evidence suggests that the frame was not covered by the existing structure until c. 1922. It was taken out of service in 1957 but continued to be used as a store. It is now a rare example of a separate platform level signal box. An additional siding was built in 1926 and in 1942 the platform was extended at the Sydney end.



Medlow Bath Station c. 1954

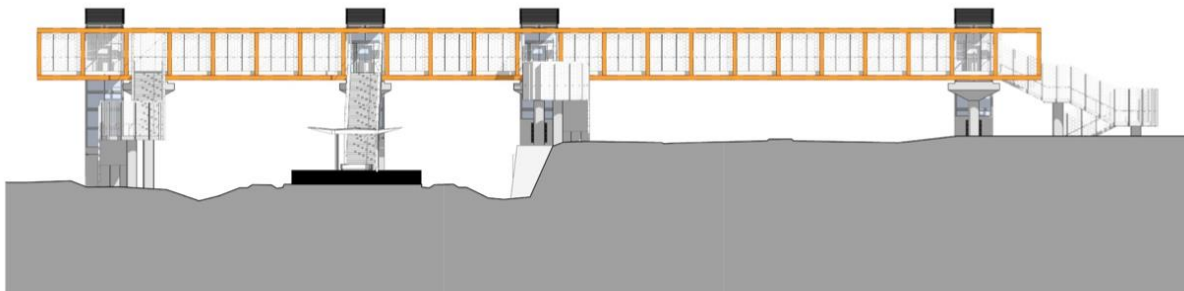


Former footbridge at north end

In particular, a footbridge was constructed in 1901 as a standard concrete slab structure supported on brick abutments and two steel trestles with new stairs to the platform and bridge with new concrete deck over the tracks spanning between the Great Western Highway and Railway Parade. The footbridge marked the northern end of the station. A concrete level crossing was also located on the southern end of the station, which still remains. In 1994 the footbridge was upgraded with new deck, stepway, and the superstructure was cleaned and repainted. Metal balustrades provided safety along the edges of the stairs and the bridge. In 2008 the condition of the footbridge was assessed as very good, although it was subsequently removed.

Transport for NSW (Transport) have advised of the latest upgrading program of works to be undertaken at Medlow Bath to follow on from the recently completed safety improvements at the southern end of the village. The upgrade will involve widening the Highway through Medlow Bath within the existing road corridor which has been long reserved for this purpose.

The design provides for two lanes in either direction, traffic lights, landscaping, a shared pathway, safety improvements and a pedestrian bridge providing safer access across the Highway and into the Medlow Bath train station.



Indicative view of bridge looking south

Medlow Bath Station has been identified for an accessibility upgrade as it does not currently meet the key requirements for the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (DSAPT) or the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA). The proposed Medlow Bath Station upgrade will provide a station precinct that is accessible to people with a disability or limited mobility, parents or carers with prams, and customers with luggage. The proposed Medlow Bath Station upgrade will be claimed to provide safe and equitable access to the platforms and to the pedestrian network surrounding the station.



Artist's impression of proposed bridge

The proposed Medlow Bath Station Upgrade removes the railway level crossing and pedestrian refuge in favour of a pedestrian bridge with lifts and stairs. This will improve safety by reducing pedestrians' interaction with vehicles and trains and provide for accessible public transport. Authorities state they are conscious that the pedestrian bridge will introduce a significant new structure to Medlow Bath. That is why they are proposing a weathered steel truss design with see-through lift shafts that will blend in with, rather than dominate, the existing cultural and aesthetic character of the village.

Construction of a new pedestrian footbridge would include:

- Four new lifts to provide access between the footbridge, bus stops on the Great Western Highway, station platforms and Railway Parade.
- Provision of accessible paths between the lifts, stairs and bus stops on the Great Western Highway

Upgrade of the station entrance on Railway Parade would include:

- modifications to the commuter car park along Railway Parade and provision of new accessible parking

- provision of new accessible kiss-and-ride parking on Railway Parade adjacent to the new station entry.
- provision of accessible paths between the footbridge entry, kiss-and-ride space and accessible parking.

Ancillary work includes adjustments to lighting, relocation or replacement of existing customer facilities (platform seating, bins, payphone, Opal card readers, fencing) and improvement to station systems including additional closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras, hearing loops and wayfinding signage.

Additional work includes power and wiring upgrades to ensure reliable supply to the Station.

Patsy Moppett

Transport for NSW (Transport) asked the community to view the Medlow Bath Upgrade REF and Concept Design at their virtual consultation room at www.nswroads.work/gwhdconsul

They welcomed all feedback on the Medlow Bath Upgrade REF and Concept Design.

They invited the Medlow Bath community and other interested stakeholders to submit feedback to the proposal during the Medlow Bath Upgrade Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and Concept Design consultation period from 26 July to 24 August 2021.

To have your input formally considered, and receive a response in the consultation report, the community was asked to use their online submission form at www.nswroads.work/gwhdconsult or mail a printed submission to: Great Western Highway Upgrade Program Medlow Bath Upgrade REF & Concept Design PO Box 2332, Orange NSW 2800.

Although the closing date has come and gone, you are still advised to consult the documents online to be aware of the proposals.

References:

Great Western Highway Upgrade Medlow Bath Review of Environmental Factors

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program July 2021: Medlow Bath Station & pedestrian bridge fact sheet

Great Western Highway Upgrade Program July 2021: Medlow BATH Upgrade Review of Environmental Factors Community Update

Great Western Highway Medlow Bath Upgrade: Frequently Asked Questions Aug 2020

Medlow Bath Consultation Summary Report Dec 2020

Medlow Bath Railway Station: Facts for Kids

Lapstone Hill Railway Tunnel

The historic Lapstone Hill railway tunnel will soon be open to the public for the first time in 130 years following a grant to transform it into a tourist destination.

Stuart Ayres MP, Member for Penrith recently announced that the NSW Government had allocated a further \$2.5 million from its COVID-19 stimulus program to prepare Lapstone Hill Tunnel to be used for recreational purposes by the community. Ayres says:

This recent funding is on top of the \$2.1 million which had already been invested in the project and will help bring to life community plans to transform the tunnel into a cycleway, walking trail and heritage tourist attraction once completed, the tunnel will link Glenbrook and Lapstone Villages with Leonay and Penrith's Great River Walk this recent funding is on top of the \$2.1 million which had already been invested in the project and will help bring to life community plans to transform the tunnel into a cycleway, walking trail and heritage tourist attraction.

The 660m tunnel was constructed in 1892 and operated as a railway tunnel before being used to store mustard gas and munitions during World War II. Subsequently it was used as a mushroom farm. The tunnel was built to the east of Glenbrook railway station and opened on 18th December 1892. But the line was never a success because of the steep incline and the suffocating atmosphere particularly in the west-bound trains. Traffic flow and water dripping from the roof also caused engines to slip badly on the reverse curve. The problem was finally addressed after the Lithgow Zig Zag deviation was completed in 1910 and the railway gangs were moved to Glenbrook. Bypassing Glenbrook Tunnel involved some major works, including a new viaduct over Knapsack Gully to the east. The new line then ran through virgin country south of the old alignment as far as the present Lapstone station and then

turned west through a short tunnel under The Bluff and finally north to the present Glenbrook station.



Railway usage in 1892



War time munitions & gas storage

Initially it was planned to continue using the 1892 Glenbrook Tunnel for up trains. When the new deviation opened on 11th May 1913 the tunnel was still used for east-bound trains. However, the deviation was quickly duplicated, and a new up line was activated. Glenbrook Tunnel was last used for trains on 25th September 1913 and old Glenbrook station was closed. The lines in the tunnel were raised and the tunnel left to quietly decay. Blue Mountains Mayor Mark Greenhill welcomed the announcement regarding the reopening of the Tunnel to the public:

The project will support council's Scenic Eastern Escarpment Master Plan which focuses on the potential of nature and culture-based recreation Lapstone Hill Tunnel is a significant historic structure and has great potential for adaptive re-use In particular, re-activation for public use that supports the amenity, economy and liveability of the lower Blue Mountains.

Patsy Moppett

References:

www.bluemountainsaustralia.com

Wikipedia: Glenbrook Tunnel 1892

Bathurst Remembers World War II: Exhibition 2021



Further to the article in *Heritage* Newsletter No. 75 of July-August 2021, readers are advised that new Exhibition dates have been announced due to the uncertainty of COVID restrictions. It will now be held:

**FRIDAY 3rd, SATURDAY 4th, SUNDAY 5th &
MONDAY 6th DECEMBER 2021**

All is ready for this mammoth event and the Exhibition will still be at the Bathurst Showground. All other arrangements and details remain the same.

For further details contact the Curator - Alan McRae on 02 6331 5404 or email amcrae@lisp.com.au

Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail Update

BMACHO continues to promote the Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail and members' upcoming events. At present participation in the Trail has been slow following on from the recent corona virus lockdowns, and activities are of course limited. The Trail is normally an ideal activity for the kids and grandkids, be it in the school holidays or any weekend! The 2019 trail brochures can still be collected at participating venues and Visitor Information Centres which have remained open.

The Trail brochure is currently being reviewed and is due for reissue in 2022. Should any business wish to be considered for inclusion in the next brochure, as a place of accommodation or an eating house along the trail route, please contact BMACHO at committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au

If you are a member and you would like further information, or if you would like to become a member, please email BMACHO at committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au

For general information about BMACHO and the Trail, see <http://heritagedrive.com.au> or www.facebook.com/GBMHeritageTrail

To find out more about BMACHO visit <http://bluemountainsheritage.com.au>



With the current set of lockdown restrictions effective across the community, BMACHO is mindful of the need to stay in touch with family, friends and colleagues. The HERITAGE Newsletter is one of many communication opportunities existing where we can share our experiences and trials at this time.

Please feel free to share with the heritage community how the COVID experience is affecting your organisation and/or the individuals within it, so that your advice may be able to help others.

BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

Registered office: 1/19 Stypanra Place, Springwood 2777. (02) 4751 5834

Email: committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au or j.koperberg@bigpond.com

Website: <http://bluemountainsheritage.com.au>

ABN: 53 994 839 952

The organisation: Blue Mountains Association of Cultural & Heritage Organisations Inc. (BMACHO) was established in April 2006 after local historical and heritage societies and individuals recognised the need for the creation of a cultural heritage strategy for the local government area (LGA) of Blue Mountains City Council. The constituency now embraces but is not limited to, the LGAs of Blue Mountains, Lithgow, Hawkesbury and Penrith. BMACHO membership includes historical and heritage groups, museums, commercial enterprises with an historical or heritage component in its core business, local government (local studies units, library collections) and a limited number of individual members by invitation such as but not necessarily academics. The objectives of the organisation are:

1. To raise public consciousness of the value of cultural heritage
2. To encourage and assist cultural heritage
3. To initiate and support cultural heritage activities not already covered by member organisations.

One of the aims of BMACHO is to bring the various bodies into closer contact to encourage them to work more closely together and to provide a combined voice on matters of importance within the heritage sector.

Affiliations: BMACHO is a member of the Royal Australian Historical Society.

Publications: BMACHO's official newsletter *Heritage* is edited by Patsy Moppett. The annual refereed *Blue Mountains History Journal* is edited by Dr Peter Rickwood and occasional papers are published from time to time.

Membership: The following organisations are members of BMACHO: Blue Mountain Education & Research Trust; Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mt Tomah; Blue Mountains City Library; Blue Mountains Cultural Heritage Centre; Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc; Blue Mountains Historical Society; Bygone Beautys Treasured Teapot Museum and Tearooms; City of Lithgow Mining Museum Inc; Colo Shire Family History Group; Everglades Historic House & Gardens; Friends of the Paragon Inc; Gang Gang Gallery, Lithgow; Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc; Hawkesbury Historical Society Inc; Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Inc; Leuralla NSW Toy & Railway Museum; Lithgow & District Family History Society Inc; Lithgow – Eskbank House Museum and Lithgow Regional Library – Local Studies; Mt Victoria & District Historical Society Inc; Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc (including Turkish Bath Museum); National Trust of Australia (NSW) – Blue Mountains Branch; National Trust of Australia (NSW) – Lithgow Branch; Nepean District Historical Society Inc; Norman Lindsay Gallery and Museum; Scenic World Blue Mountains Limited; Springwood Historical Society Inc; The Eleanor Dark Foundation Ltd; Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum; Woodford Academy Management Committee; Zig Zag Railway Co-op Ltd.

The following are individual members: Wendy Blaxland, Vaughan Bryers, Fiona Burn, Philip Hammon, Dr Wayne Hanley, Michael Keats, Ian Milliss, Patsy Moppett, Keith Painter, Barbara Palmer, Dr Peter Rickwood, and Dr Robert Strange.

Committee: The management committee for 2020-2021 (from March 2020) is: Rod Stowe (President); Patsy Moppett (Vice President and Newsletter Editor), Fiona Burn (Secretary), Philip Hammon (Treasurer), Dick Morony (Public Officer/Membership Secretary/ Calendar Editor), Suzanne Smith (Events and Venue Co-ordinator), Jan Koperberg (Correspondence Secretary), Roy Bennett.

Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail sub-committee: Fiona Burn, Jan Koperberg, Suzanne Smith.

Blue Mountains History Conference sub-committee: Patsy Moppett, Jan Koperberg, Phil Hammon, Rod Stowe.

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