

Blue Mountains History Conference 2025
***The Show Must Go On!* – Blue Mountains Performance and Entertainment**
An introduction to the speakers

Richard White



Richard White taught Australian history and the history of travel and tourism at the University of Sydney from 1989 to 2013. His publications include *Inventing Australia*, *The Oxford Book of Australian Travel Writing* and *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia*. His current research interests include the history of ‘history tourism’ in Australia and the history of the cooee but has to admit he spends more time in the garden than at a desk. A new edition of *Symbols of Australia* (co-edited with Melissa Harper and first published in 2010) appeared in 2021.

Colin Semmler



Colin Semmler is well known in the Blue Mountains for his involvement in things musical. He is a member and secretary of Orpheus Strings Orchestra whose goal is to bring vibrant classical music to the Blue Mountains community. Colin is also the Musical Director of Mountain Opera Chorus and has, for many years, been involved in various capacities with the Blackheath Choir Festival. When not out singing, Colin can be heard as a pianist, playing lounge music in The Carrington dining room on a weekly basis. He is a long-serving member of the Blue Mountains Radio players and has written several plays that they have performed. Colin is a Life Member of 89.1 Radio Blue Mountains and presents a Friday program, *Entertainment This Week*. Outside the arts, Colin is the secretary of the Blue Mountains Hospital auxiliary, a volunteer organisation that raises funds for equipment for the Blue Mountains ANZAC Memorial Hospital. Colin has also published several local, school and family histories.

Kate O’Neill



Kate O’Neill is a Blue Mountains historian and Chair of the Woodford Academy Management Committee. She is a graduate of Otago University and has postgraduate degrees in Arts Management from UTS and Local and Applied History from UNE. She has recently graduated from Sydney University with her Master of Museum and Heritage degree.

John Lanser



John Lanser is a semi-retired lawyer, graduate of the universities of Sydney, London and New South Wales. His post graduate thesis topic at the last mentioned was ‘Australian Bushranger Films from 1906 to 1977’. John is a member of the Blue Mountains Historical Society, the Royal Australian Historical Society, the former Australian Cinema and Theatre Society (now dissolved), and the National Trust, past president of the Australasian Pioneers’ Club and current editor of its journal, *The Pioneer*.

Lowell Tarling



Lowell Tarling has been a professional writer, editor and writing teacher since receiving a Lit Grant in 1980. He has written five novels and many other books. They include the Mythbusters book, Tiny Tim's biography, artist Martin Sharp's biography, the Driza-Bone book and South Side Story (about South Sydney's NRL football team). Lowell has written for many magazines including Rolling Stone, Australian Penthouse and the Southern Flyer. Lowell has ghosted 70 others, including Michael Chamberlain's account of the disappearance of his daughter Azaria and the helicopter rescue in the ill-fated 1998 Sydney to Hobart yacht race. Lowell lives in the Blue Mountains where he enjoys painting pictures, writing and reading poetry at local venues. He is married with three children and three grandchildren. Obsessions include pressuring government bodies to plant trees along Lurline Street - the road leading to Echo Point and the famous Three Sisters.

Lorraine Corne



Lorraine Corne is an author and psychologist who has her own practice in Sydney where she solely practices on Zoom or equivalent since Covid. Lorraine trained as a psychologist at UNSW and specialises in relationships and individual counselling. She has helped individuals, couples, families and adolescents across the Eastern Suburbs and North Shore of Sydney since 1994. Lorraine arrived in Australia with her parents as a 3-year-old. Her grandfather had bought the Katoomba cinemas from the Camphin family, and her father Les was brought out to run them. So, the Corne family owned the cinemas and managed them as well.

Robyne Ridge



Robyne was involved with both boarding and the day school at Kinross Wolaroi School in Orange, NSW from 1979 until 2011. She is now Vice-President of the Blue Mountains Historical Society and is their Publicity Officer. Robyne has written many articles for the Blue Mountains Gazette's History page and has also authored publications for the historical society.