

# *Heritage*

*Newsletter of the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural  
Heritage Organisations Inc*

*March-April 2025*

*ISSUE 97*

*ISSN 2203-4366*

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

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

## **The Blue Mountain Inn, Lawson**

In exploring the history of the *Blue Mountain Inn* (or *The Henry*, as we know it now), we must start with a family history or two!!!

Dipping back into the BMACHO *Heritage* Newsletter archives, we wrote an article about the old Log Cabin Hotel at Emu Plains (*Heritage* No. 83 November-December 2022).

Two names associated with that premises were Josephson and Wilson. Charles Abraham Wilson was Jacob Josephson's son in law and Charles ran the Hotel as the *Pineapple Inn*. His brother Henry Charles Wilson soon arrived in the colony and joined his family at Emu Plains.

But we must step back further to England. In 1781 an Emma Leah Moses was born to Emmanuel and Lydia Moses in London. In 1802 she married Joseph Wilson. Joseph however, died in 1813, having fathered three children with Emma (Sara, Charles Abraham and Henry Charles). In 1814, with small children to raise, she married again, to Jacob Josephson. They then had two children (Joshua and Lewis), and Jacob adopted Emma's children from the previous marriage.

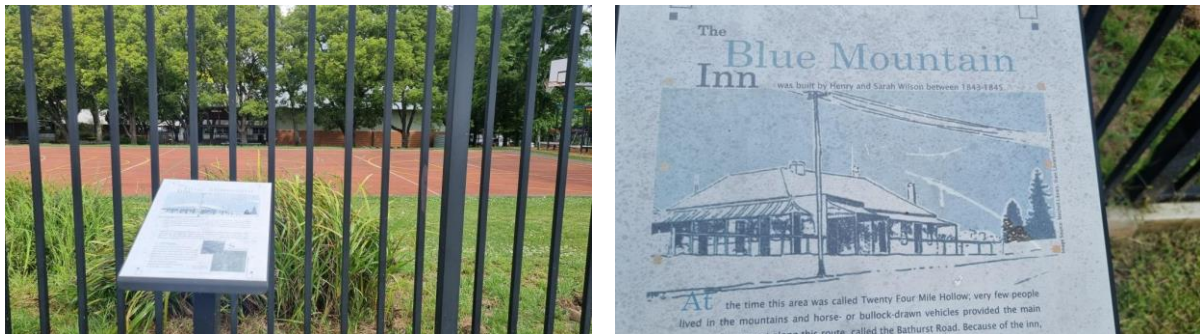
Unfortunately, in 1818 Jacob was sentenced to 14 years' transportation to Australia for having forged bank notes in his possession. Emma was tried and acquitted. Josephson came to Australia on the *Neptune* in 1818, and Emma joined him in New South Wales about 1820 with the family, where they had two more children, Manuel and Isaac. Jacob Josephson died in 1845 and Emma died in 1868. Emma's sons continued to make their way in the new colony. It was a small world back then and publicans did the rounds, and we will follow Henry Charles.

Henry was born at Bishopsgate in 1814 and had arrived free in New South Wales in 1826 on the *Sir George Osborne* at age 13 with his mother. At first he lodged with Jacob and his brother at Emu Plains, but by the age of 17 was listed as licensee of the *Scotch Thistle* at Blackheath in 1838-40 and then the *Welcome Inn* at Valley Heights.

In 1838 he married Sarah Affriatt at Castlereagh. Sarah was born in London in 1819 and came to New South Wales as a bounty immigrant on the *Canton* in 1835. In 1843 at a public auction Henry acquired 100 acres at 24 Mile Hollow, purchasing from Thomas Pembroke, which incorporated part of what is now the Lawson primary school. Within the future school grounds area Pembroke had a hut which he had operated as an 'inn'. Pembroke went on to be the builder and original licensee of the *Woodman Inn*, ie. Woodford Academy.

Henry Wilson did build a two storey building as an inn on the site of Pembroke's hut, but it burnt down soon afterwards. He rebuilt immediately, a single storey building, and in 1845 applied for a publican's licence for the premises, thus making it the third *Blue Mountain Inn* on that site.

*[In 2008 ground-penetrating radar surveys of the Lawson Public School grounds have revealed a complex archaeological site with many as yet unexplained features. Three trenches were dug, exposing flagstones and stone footings where the old inn once stood. The findings were recorded and the trenches were filled in, to enable upgrading of the highway without disturbing the remains. An interpretive sign is sited just outside the fence of the school on the highway to indicate the inn location.]*



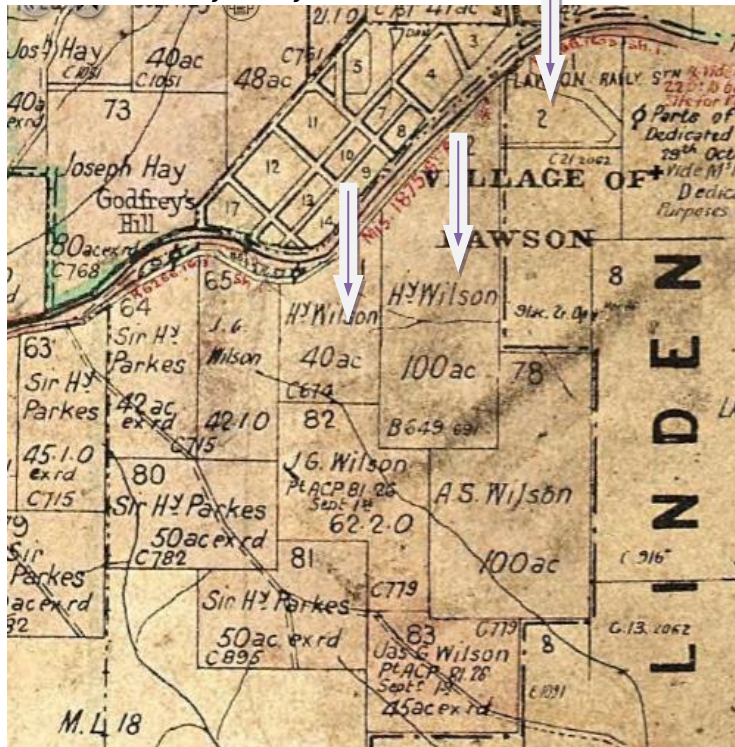
*Interpretive sign at Lawson Public School*

Henry and Sarah's daughters Dinah Fanny, born 1845 and Adelaide (Adelina) Mary, born 1850, were reportedly the first Europeans to be born in Lawson and in 1879 Adelina Falls was named after their second daughter. Their son Affriat Sydney was born at Emu Ford in 1853, which indicates their residential location at the time.

The Wilsons had moved away from Lawson but returned after the disastrous floods at Penrith in 1867 to run the Blue Mountain Inn. They felt that the upcoming establishment of the railway would benefit their business and were keen to operate a premises near the station to take advantage of the break in travel that took place at Lawson when travelling by steam train. However, they found that the new railway platform had been erected 300 metres to the east of the Blue Mountain Inn so Henry built another inn in 1875 on the current site Portion 12, transferring the name to this building. However, Henry Wilson died in 1880, and Sarah continued to run the inn. Probate was granted to Sarah.

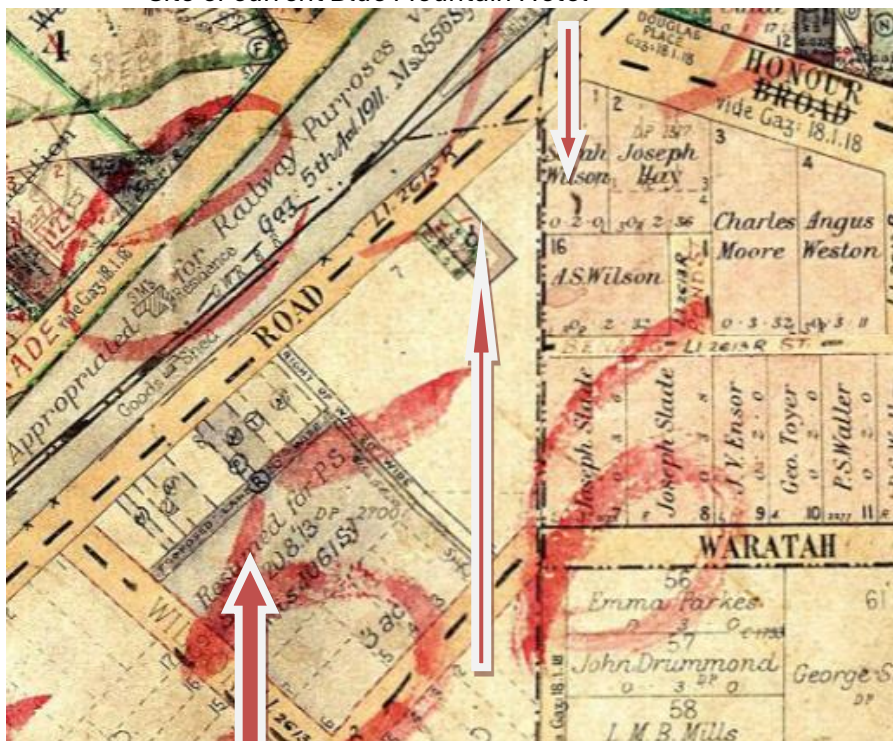
In 1882, soon after Henry Wilson's death, allotments in the newly surveyed government village of Lawson were offered for sale. Sarah bought an allotment of land immediately adjacent to her portion 12 and in 1887 built new single storey premises there, the first Blue Mountain Hotel. This building was on the site of the current Blue Mountain Hotel.

Land owned by Henry and Sarah Wilson



Extract from map - Parish of Jamison

Site of current Blue Mountain Hotel



Lawson Public School

Land resumed for Post Office

Extract from map - Town of Lawson

### LICENSING COURT.

Before Messrs J. K. Lethbridge and Dr's Bond and Duncan, J's.P.

Renewals were granted to Sarah Wilson, Blue Mountain Hotel, Lawson; William T. Dickson, Royal Hotel, Springwood; William Deamer, Springwood Hotel, Springwood:

*Licence 1885*

### A VETERAN HOTELKEEPER.

LAWSON, Thursday.—At the last sitting of the Penrith Licensing Court the 62nd licence was issued to Mrs. Sarah Wilson, of the Blue Mountain Hotel, Lawson. This is a record for the colony, exceeding by about two years that of Mrs. Mulholland, of Windeyer, near Mudgee.

*Licence 1889*

By 1887 the Wilsons owned two former inns and one functioning hotel along the main western road. Once the old premises closed it became a greengrocer's shop, although still owned by the Wilson family and occupied by them as a residence by their son Affriat, who died in 1897.



*Blue Mountain Inn 1887*

*[It is noted that one Martha Conway worked as a domestic servant to Sarah Wilson in 1884 when the premises was known as The Retreat, later to become the Blue Mountain Hotel. She had borne a son at the Sydney Benevolent Asylum the previous year and was sent out to assist Sarah. She established a relationship with a local man (Henry) Harry Sams, of Chinese origin, and had a number of children with him, later moving to Forbes.]*

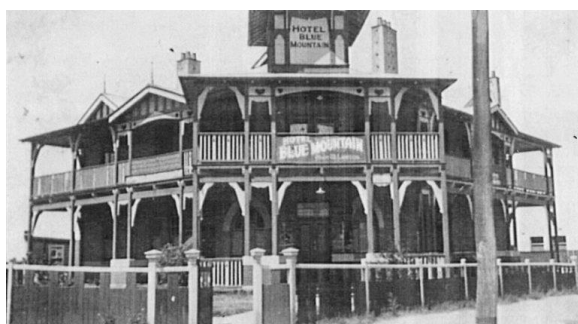
In 1900 Sarah Wilson was reported as being ill with rheumatic fever in June and had had a fall in October in the parlour but was still hale and hearty and running the Inn.

However, by 1901 she had relinquished the licence to her grandson, Charles Abraham Wilson, although still active and healthy aged 82 years.

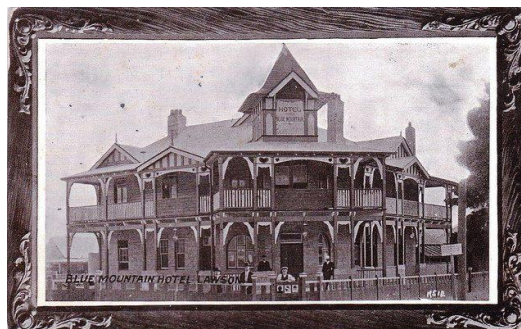
In 1909 work commenced on hotel renovations by a Mrs Theresa Sarah Ann Thomas (nee Wilson, a relative of Sarah's), preparing the foundations of a new brick building for the Blue Mountain Hotel opposite the railway station. The architect was Bertram Ford and the builder was W J Knight.

*[Theresa Thomas had been married to John Smythe Thomas. He worked on the railways when they lived at Rylestone. She sued him for divorce in 1904 for desertion.]*

The Wilson's Blue Mountain Hotel of 1887 remained on its corner site, a single-storey building facing both Douglass Square and the highway. When the main part of the present hotel was built in the early years of 1900, it may have incorporated part of the older building, but this is not clear. It is likely that the older hotel was located on the adjacent site and was demolished after completion of the new hotel. By around 1910 there existed a fine two storey Federation arts and crafts hotel with a small central tower which is so prominent in early twentieth-century photographs.



1900



1911

The new hotel was opened in April 1910 by Mrs Thomas and a grand banquet was held to celebrate. Mrs Thomas and the Wilson family had held the licence for some 64 years. The lower part of the new building was brick and the upper part was weatherboard, topped by the ornamental tower. There were twelve bedrooms, two bathrooms and five parlours, and many other rooms. Stables and a garage were built in the rear yard, and an underground water supply provided.

Sarah died later that year and was buried at Lawson cemetery with her husband. They are commemorated by a marble headstone, within a double plot with a sandstone kerb with cross finials and railing of 'barley-twist' cast iron. A marble column to their son Affriat Sydney Wilson (who died 1897, and daughter Adelaide Mary Wilson who died in 1898) is within the same plot. Masons for the column were Andrews Bros., Sydney.



*Graves of Henry, Sarah, Adelaide and Affriat Wilson, Lawson General Cemetery*

In 1911 Sarah's grandson Charles Abraham Wilson and Dinah Jones (nee Wilson) challenged the granting of probate to Frederick Jones and George Holliday, executors of Sarah's will. They believed Sarah had senile dementia and did not know or understand what she was doing, as she had added codicils which benefited Frederick Jones and George Holliday. The judge found however, that Sarah was capable and of sound mind and body when she altered her will in 1903, which cut her grandson back to a life interest, and the remainder went to Mrs Jones.

In the same year the village of Lawson was reported as being quite progressive, and the former Blue Mountain Inn had been replaced by the *magnificent modern building*, but the old outbuildings connected with the Inn were reported to be in a dilapidated condition and were in need of either demolition or thorough renovation. In 1914 the

remains of the old Blue Mountain Hotel was dismantled. The sale of timber, iron etc was well attended with good prices being paid.

As an aside, a site in Honour Avenue had been set aside and developed as the Lawson Public School with the building being constructed in 1888. The school was small but well built with two classrooms. With the increase in population through the early years of the twentieth century and the release of land for development the needs of the school expanded. When the provisional school opened Lawson comprised only fifty houses, nine shops, a hotel and a number of guest houses.

By 1910 the first school was full with children having to sit on the floor. The Education Department acted in 1913 by resuming 3 acres of land in the vicinity of the old Inn, *The Old Farm* as it was known, owned by Henry Wilson fronting the Great Western Highway. However, little happened with the commencement of the war. The new school was finally opened in 1918 and the Lands Department took control of the old school site. In 1915 the land for the post office was also resumed from the Wilson Estate and the brick post office was opened on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1925.

Then in 1916 *The Old Farm* was deemed by Blue Mountains Shire Council as a place unfit for human habitation or occupation and was vacated. This 1840s original inn remained in existence until 1917, when the building was demolished. Although the walls were as sound as the day they were erected, the building did not conform to modern requirements, therefore a Demolition Order was issued. The block was sold in 1922 as 'vacant land and ruin.



1917



1936

The Blue Mountains Echo reported:

*What a story of human interest is doubtless entwined in the history of the old house. What memorable meetings its walls have witnesses, mayhap, tragedies too, who knows? In a few days there will be nothing to mark the spot where it stood but a heap of stone and timber.*

The Wilson family finally sold the Hotel in 1923 to W Finister of Manly. A series of owners and proprietors ran the business for many years. Often it is hard to differentiate between the two:

1920 – Frank Green

1923 – Frederick Cutts

1925 - Chris P Walton/Walker

1927 - Mrs Mason

1933 - Kathleen Trautwei

1923 – W Finister

1924 - Mr Gilroy

1926 – Mary Hollier

1927 - W Morrison/Morrow

1936 - Mrs E Vears

The tower, originally located on the splayed corner was for a time lost, probably due to construction work in the 1940s, of the bar and other additions.

Frank Walker recorded in 1942 regarding the old Inn:

*.... that the Blue Mountain Inn enjoyed the distinction of entertaining governors, judges, merchants, and even the humble, and in those days, fairly plentiful, bushranger...the unpretentious little building has long since been demolished. Built of brick, with the original shingles concealed by the iron roofing, the shape of its doors and windows soon marks it, to the observant eye, as a building of the past.*

The Phillips family then owned the Hotel from the 1980s. However, in the early 1990's the NSW Government determined to widen the old Great Western Highway, which narrowed to just one lane in each direction through Lawson. Many historic buildings were demolished, including a large part of the old Inn.



1989 drawing



Looking east 2002

In 2005 Janine Phillips returned to operate the pub, only to find it in a sorry condition. Having nothing but an old circa 1900 photograph to go on, she set about constructing a new building in memory of the original Hotel, including fire and egress code upgrades. Construction of the work began in 2006 and took several years until about 2009, and the tower was reinstated. The major remodelling occurred also in response to the road widening of the Highway and the compulsory acquisition of part of the land on which the Hotel was situated. The c.1940s front bar encroached upon the land acquisition and was demolished as part of the changes.

The building is now a combination of masonry and timber construction with the upper level being timber with splayed weatherboard cladding. The roof was originally terracotta tiles but has now been reclad in red Colorbond. The gables are finished with timber battens in a simple vertical pattern. Roughcast chimneys survive, most retaining their simple terracotta pots. A considerable amount of original joinery remains including windows and doors, some with decorative leadlight glass. Some of the leadlight is sympathetic reproductions.

In 2017 the Phillips' family finally called time on running pubs and parted with the period-style Blue Mountain Hotel which they had owned for 33 years, and they placed the premises on the market.

By 2019 the Blue Mountain Hotel was in the hands of new and energetic owners, Paul and Angela O'Brien, and was geared up to thrive again, following a protracted sale process.

Then in 2022 it was sold again to a Sydney based company, K2 Property Development Group. They felt that the establishment would continue to provide the surrounding area with the excellent service for which it was already known.



*During renovations 2007-2008*



*2011*



*2019*

Several of the subdivisions which have taken place over the years in Lawson have commemorated the Wilson family and some of the streets are named after members of the family, e.g. Wilson, Charles, Henry, Adelaide, as well as Wilson Park. The Wilsons' land originally extended from what is now Douglas Square to Ridge Street.

*Patsy Moppett*

**Note:** The reference list is detailed in a separate document issued with this Newsletter.

### ***Index***

The Blue Mountain Inn, Lawson	1
Editorial	9
The Travelling Cinema	9
One of the First Detailed Tourist Maps of Blackheath	15
Book Launch: Wollemi National Park: Wilderness Adventures Bk1	20
School Tours Presentation	20
BMHS – Annual McLaughlin Lecture: Paul Sorenson	21
Show and Tell Presentation	22
Blue Mountains History Conference	22



## ***From the Editor***

In this issue of *Heritage* we visit another of those early inns of the Blue Mountains, which has survived many layers of history to still be with us today, strong and more proud than ever! What a glorious building to be seen on the main road through Lawson! In line with the theme for the pending BMACHO Blue Mountains Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2025 (*The Show Must Go On!*), we present an aspect of theatre seldom mentioned, but which displayed the early enthusiasm for entertainment in the late 1800s through to the period between the wars – the travelling cinema. It took on many forms and was staged in the most unlikely of places, from sheds and barns to halls and out of doors.

Brian Fox takes us through the last of his mapping series, this time on an early map of Blackheath. His Bushexplorers group also advise about their latest book regarding Wollemi National Park.

BMACHO's recent school tours presentation is reviewed, and the Blue Mountains History Conference is flagged.

Details in regard to the Annual McLaughlin Lecture by Blue Mountains Historical Society is also documented, coming up on the 1<sup>st</sup> March at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts. The Lecture will be presented by Stuart Read regarding Paul Sorensen, the landscape designer. His projects covered a number of sites in the Blue Mountains. Note that bookings are not required.

We regret that we had few community news items to present this time, as notification of many events are not reaching us in time for publication. Please note the closing date for the May-June issue, **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025**, if you would like your event publicized.

## ***The Travelling Cinema***

A hundred years ago, travelling picture shows toured the countryside bringing entertainment to small towns and villages. At first they largely drove around showing silent films in an old vehicle or cart loaded up with a generator, a projector, and an early record player called a phonograph – sometimes letting customers pay with a chicken or a loaf of bread when times were tough.

Many people first saw films at these travelling shows. They seem to have been initiated about the 1890s and were popular throughout the early 1900s. Essentially they were descended from magic lantern shows, and they were held in small schools, local churches, courthouses, community halls, tents with black interiors, and other makeshift tents and sheds.

The income that could potentially be made, in a line of independent work that involved entertainment and travel, was tempting. To be a truly successful exhibitor, ideally you had to provide a full evening's worth of entertainment. So, some shows would include music as well as slide shows accompanied by lectures. In Australia, Hoyts and the Gilby Talkies Pty Ltd were touring talking pictures to country towns by the late 1920s. Not only were slide shows already popular, but they were also meant to give people a break from films. It's an interesting fact that in the early cinema days there was much concern over eyestrain.

Lecture topics might include *The Grand Canyon*, *The Sights of Paris and the Exposition*, *Around the World in 80 Minutes*. Presentations of passion plays and other Biblical stories were also popular. There were illustrated song slides and comic slides. The amount and variety of films included everything from travelogues to short comedies to single-scene dramas to documentaries on countless subjects. *A Pastry Cook's Jokes*, *How Buttons Got Even With the Butler*, *A Mysterious Portrait* were some such productions. Most were under two minutes in length, and the longest films ran about ten minutes, including *A Trip to the Moon* and *Life of an American Policeman*. Rural areas and mining towns were often good business, since travelling shows were the only way residents could experience the novelty of films. Exhibitors usually stuck to small towns also, because the lack of competition made it easier to establish a successful show. They were responsible for all their own publicity, and many shows were advertised as educational or else touted as having “*beautiful effects*” that were “*suitable for all.*”

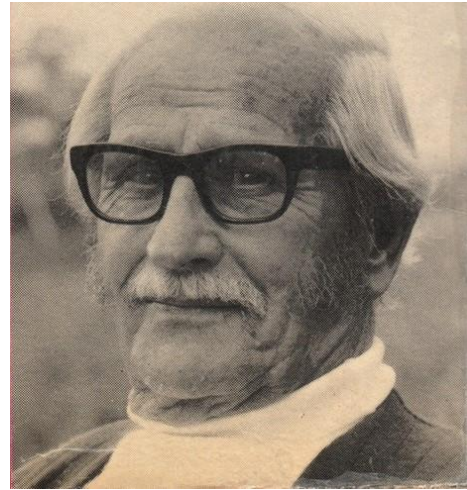


### **Some picture show notaries**

- Robert Henry Lawrence Penn (1872-1952):** Penn was born in Torquay, UK, in 1872 and came to Australia about 1899. He conducted picture theatres at Newcastle, and then at Tamworth where he operated an open air theatre as well as performing in a hall. When about 40 years old his first wife died and he decided to go on the road with his son Lyle. His transport was a horse and buggy, his cinematograph was hand operated and was lit by lime-light. One feature film shown was the 1913 Tamworth Show, showing trotting, hurdling and high jumping. And another was the sporting film *A Day with the Rabbits and Fences*. Robert performed songs between films and varied the acts with his performing dogs, with Lyle operating any special effects required. In 1927 he settled in Coffs Harbour where he operated a theatre in the School of Arts, finally retiring in 1949.  
 A film was made in 1977 starring John Mellion, *The Picture Show Man*, about Penn's life as a travelling film exhibitor, based on the book of the same name by Lyle Penn.

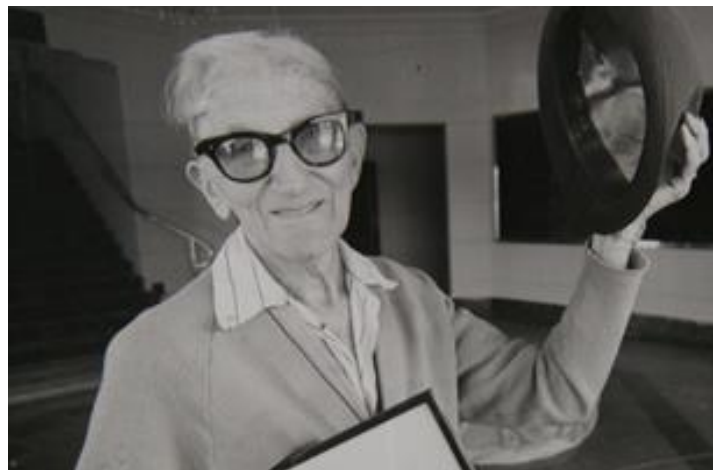


*Robert Penn*



*Lyle Penn*

- Clarence Patrick (Paddy) Baker (1898–1986):** Paddy was born in 1898 at Matlock, Victoria, the fourth of seven children to Victorian-born Irish parents Henry Baker, an itinerant miner, and his wife Arabella. In 1901 they moved to Western Australia. His parents separated and at the age of 8 he went with his father to Mount Morgan on the Murchison goldfields, north of Kalgoorlie. They set up camp at Sandstone, where Paddy attended the local convent school and worked for fourpence a night at Charlie Hebbard's magic-lantern show. His father died in 1914 and he rejoined his mother and three sisters at Subiaco. He was sent to board at Christian Brothers' College, where he showed films to his fellow students.



*Paddy Baker*

In 1916 Baker was assistant-projectionist at the Coliseum picture garden at Subiaco. He and his sisters also sold tickets and refreshments.

In 1919 Paddy acquired a second-hand picture-show plant and motorcar. He named his enterprise *Baker's Photoplays Deluxe* and headed for the bush. Screening at a different venue every night, he showed silent films from Esperance to Geraldton, then travelled south through the wheat-belt. Times were tough and his patrons paid either by coin or with produce. Baker performed in weatherboard halls, rough canvas tents and makeshift sheds.

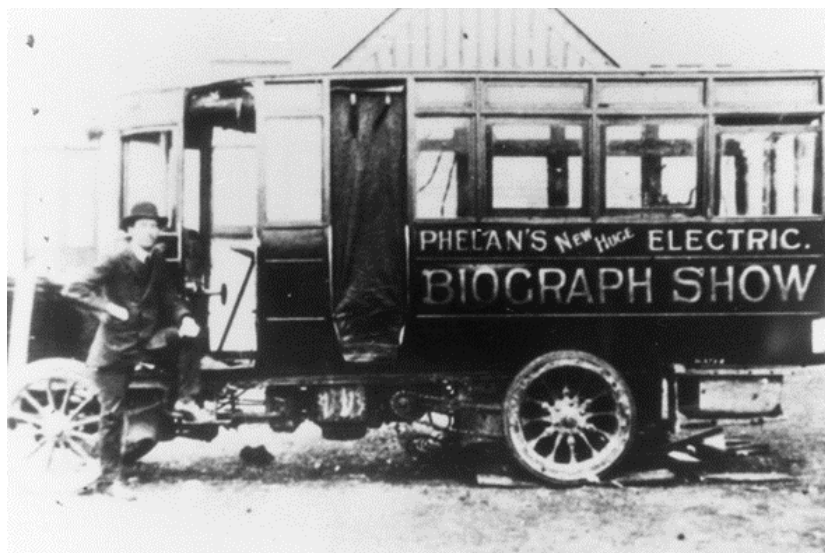
Sometimes he used a sheet for a screen, mounted the projector on the bonnet of his car, and ran the engine to generate light and power.

In 1946 Baker purchased the Regal Theatre at Subiaco, built in 1938, to show 35-mm films. He continued to service regional cinemas, and from 1962 established a chain of drive-in theatres in country towns. In 1977 he renovated the Regal as a venue for live productions, later restoring the building to its original art deco elegance.

- **John Stephen Phelan (1850-1935):** Phelan and Sons' (Edward and Albert) Electric Biograph and Cinematograph Company featured at the Haymarket Hippodrome, and the pictures were reported as being *splendidly shown, and provided excellent entertainment*. The program included a steeplechase series and other subjects.

He was born at Bacchus Marsh and spent his early years on the goldfields. He started as travelling showman in 1899, and Phelan's Biograph became known throughout Australia.

He purchased several former government steam buses and fitted them out with electric generating plants. Converting them into travelling show units for use on country circuits for a number of years. He retired to Wallsend in 1915.

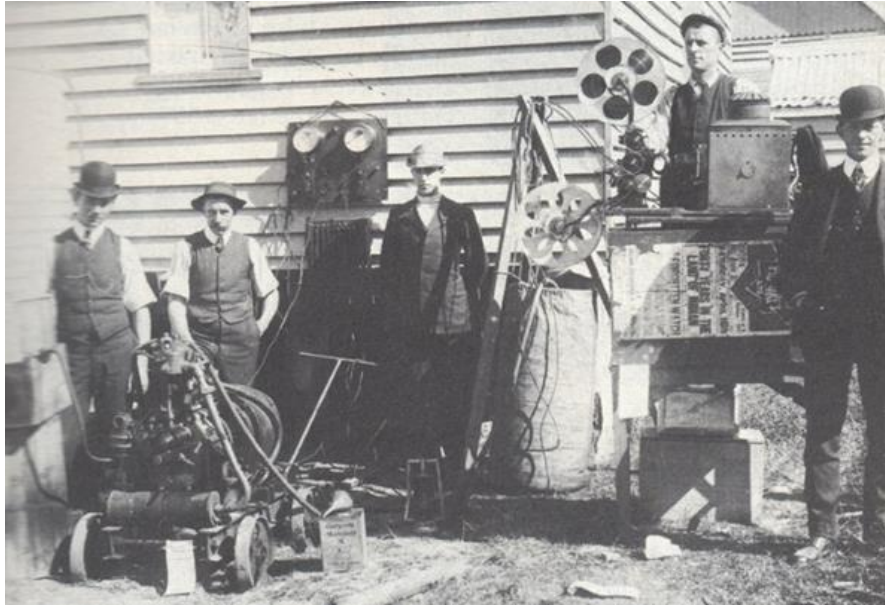


*Edward Phelan with the company vehicle*

A large and varied assortment of films, humorous and serious, was presented in their travelling show and owing to the pictures being shown by means of the electric rather than the ordinary lime light, there was a noticeable reduction of the flickering or vibration characteristic of such exhibitions.

In 1909 they visited the Shoalhaven in their huge motor caravan with the finest and most up to date equipment and were a never-ending source of attraction. They illuminated the interiors and exteriors of their various venues with festoons of electric lights and their *exhaustless supply of the latest and highest grade biograph films, which are shown by means of their electric arc lantern*, were quite sufficient to secure them overflowing houses at every performance.

In 1910 his show set up in the Masonic Hall in Bathurst and featured *Shackleton's Dash for the Pole*. The remainder of the performance featured the latest scenic, fantastic, cinematic and comic films.



*Picture show apparatus*

- **Harry G Kirby:** Cinema Motor Electricity Company advertised at Gulargambone in 1925 that he would be travelling with a free exhibition of moving pictures. He proposed to cover some 8,000 miles and visit 168 towns, intending to advertise commodities of Australian manufacture such as Berger Paints, Mary Gold Essences, Hubmobile cars and Bex Powders.
- **Harry Gordon:** Gordon's touring cinema visited various Hunter valley locations in 1927. On this tour he featured *The Ten Commandments*, which was enhanced by musical interpretations on piano by his wife Frances. The shows were shown to record audiences and was reported as being a fine presentation. In 1925 he had been in Lismore, where he was acclaimed as having Australia's best travelling cinema. His means of transport was a six wheel motor conveyance carrying the latest and most up to date projection plant. Choice music and photo plays were presented, popular films being *The Covered Wagon* and *The Virginian*, along with *The Arrival of the American Fleet in Sydney*.
- **Gilby's Talkies P/L:** In August 1929 the Shell Company were advised that the Gilby Talkies P/L would be travelling overland with the first travelling talkie pictures across Australia. .... *Needless to say they were travelling on the good Shell spirit and oil.*
- **Hoyts:** In 1929, with help from Studebaker and the Shell Oil Company, Hoyts loaded cinema sound equipment onto a truck so regional Australia could experience the latest in 'talking pictures'. When the truck visited regional areas, Hoyts temporarily installed sound equipment at the local cinemas. They then presented a variety of talking pictures that included singing and dancing as well as vision. The set-up time for each location was a long four hours, and it took six hours to pack up after the program was completed. The roadshow then travelled to a new location and started the process over again. Of the four trucks travelling the countryside there was one in Victoria, one in Queensland and two trucks servicing regional New South Wales.



*Hoyts travelling cinema van*

### **Disasters**

- A cinema plant was burnt out at Riverton, South Australia in 1923, although circumstances were not elaborated upon in the press.
- A tragedy occurred in Limerick, Ireland in 1926 when a travelling cinema which had set up in a room above an old wooden barn, caught fire, the fire originating in the film apparatus. There was only one ladder exit and about 50 people died. The room was packed to capacity with about 120 people. The cinema had visited the village previously and had been staged in the barn once before. The owner of the cinematograph and the operator were detained, and a crowd smashed the windows of the operator's house.

### **Innovative cinema experiences across the world**

- An innovative use of the medium was to be found in India. In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Eastern Bengal Railway travelled around to remote villages providing a free exhibition showcasing goods and services, but also showing educational and recreational films. These features include methods of hygiene, agricultural practices, stages of tropical diseases, and uses for their produce. The films also provide entertainment on a social level, which would never be experienced by the villagers otherwise.
- A surprising appearance of a travelling theatre occurred in 1917 when a Young Men's Christian Association cinema appeared at El Kantara, the desert outpost of the Australian Troops in Egypt. The theatre was conveyed across the countryside by two motor cycles and showed in a different place each night. Charlie Chaplin films were popular, and the service provided a much needed diversion for the men.
- In 1920 it was reported that Labour in Britain was purchasing motor lorries designed to travel to provincial towns to give outdoor shows in the summer evenings, as an extensive cinema propaganda program.
- Another travelling cinema was established in London in 1924. It was mounted on the chassis of a pneumatic tyred omnibus and featured open air talking exhibitions in broad daylight to draw people to visit the city. The films were of an educational nature to advise people of the various attractions to be seen around London.
- In 1924 The Flying Scotsman, travelling between London and Edinburgh, was the first train to include a *cinema Pullman* to entertain passengers with the latest films.

## **Conclusion**

By about 1908 the heyday of the travelling moving picture show was over, although in some areas they persisted well into the 1910s and 1920s, as can be seen above. They were replaced by the wildly popular nickelodeons, which of course eventually evolved into the big theatres we are familiar with today.

Their modes of transport were many and varied, and the way of life on the road must have been challenging, given the equipment they had to carry and the distances they had to travel. Eventually many gave way to the establishment of small permanent theatres in towns and villages, many of which then had to shut down after the launch of television in the 1950s and still more when home video became popular in the 1980s. Theatre and cinema have always been a very popular form of entertainment, with the travelling show as they knew it in the early 1900s being relegated to the good old days. People love being drawn out of their day to day hum drum and being thrown into the world of imagination, laughter and general entertainment. The cinema has played many roles in recreational film, advertising and propaganda and educational film. Disasters too have occurred in unfortunate circumstances, but overall, cinema has changed dramatically over time for the better. We are thoroughly spoiled with our options today for film experiences.

But whatever the choice and time, *The Show Must Go On!!*\*

*Patsy Moppett*

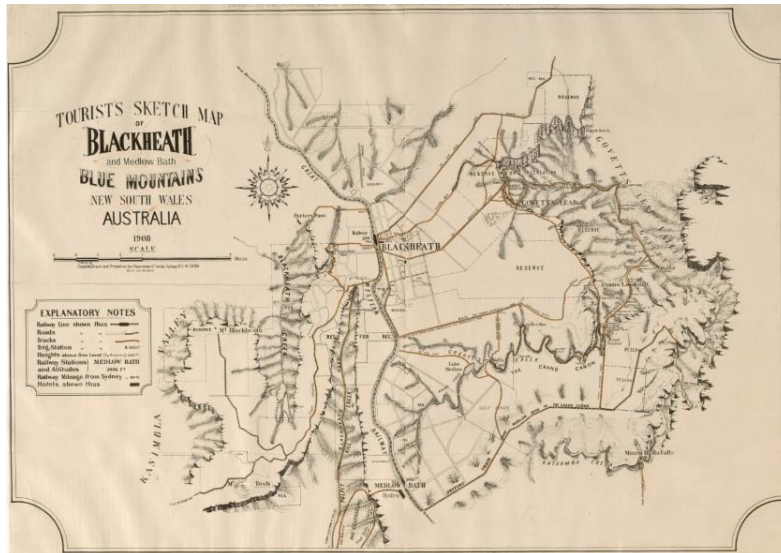
**Note:** *The reference list is detailed in a separate document issued with this Newsletter.*

*\*See later in this Newsletter for details in regard to the BMACHO Conference in May 2025, with the theme being, The Show Must Go On - Blue Mountains Performance and Entertainment*

## **One of the First Detailed Tourist Maps of Blackheath**

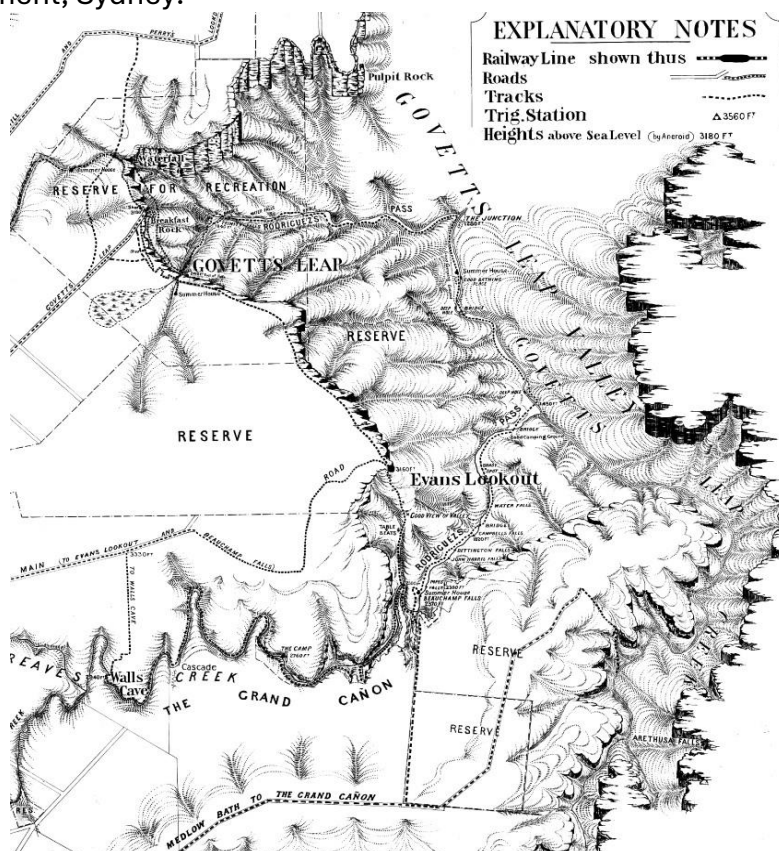
Of the 15 maps recorded as compiled by Isaac Le Pipre Barrow during his employment at the NSW Department of Lands, 12 relate to the Blue Mountains. The maps were drawn between the years 1889 to 1915. All of his maps were oriented towards the tourist industry and the promotion of the Blue Mountains as a tourist destination. The three most important maps in terms of detail and promotion of the Blue Mountains included Tourist Sketch Map of Blackheath and Medlow Bath, printed around March 1908; Tourist Sketch Map of Wentworth Falls, printed at the end of 1908; and Tourist Sketch Map of Mount Victoria printed early 1909.

This map, prepared for the tourists, shows the railway line and stations, places of interest, roads and creeks, hotels at Blackheath and Medlow Bath, the walking tracks, waterfalls, bridges, dams, reserves, summer houses, good views, camping grounds, good bathing spots, tables and chairs, as well as heights above sea level of various features.



*Tourist's Sketch Map of Blackheath and Medlow Bath, Blue Mountains, New South Wales Australia, 1908. Compiled, Drawn and Printed at the Department of Lands, Sydney, N.S.W. 1908. No. of Litho. 08.69D. I.L. Barrow, 30.5 x 43.4 cm. Scale ca. 1:31 680. 1 inch equals 1/2 mile.*

The precise detail recorded on Barrow's Blackheath map would have come from a number of sources, including previous maps and survey plans, prominent local track promoters and trustees. Reserve information at the time was under the auspices of the Lands Department, Sydney.



*Section of Sketch Map from the original linen  
Brian Fox collection*

For Isaac Barrow to include so much detailed and accurate information, he must also have walked most of the constructed walking tracks throughout this area as well as gleaned information from Blackheath locals, such as the local station master Tomas Ramon Rodriguez. Rodriguez was instrumental in the creation and construction of a walking track to the base of Govetts Leap in 1899, a pass from Govetts Leap to Evans Lookout in 1900, and a track through the Grand Canyon in 1906-1907.

Maps drawn during Isaac Barrow's time frame were compiled on linen. Line work and hand lettering were all done manually, using traditional equipment, Indian ink and nibs, ruling pens, metal and or paper protractors, ivory scales and brass parallel rulers. Isaac would have been well versed in various styles and alphabets, including Roman, Egyptian, French, stump, and diligently practiced all of them.

A lithographic process was used to print the maps. This entailed a photo/lithography transfer that was prepared and placed on the lithographic stone for subsequent proofing and printing. Made from Bavarian limestone, these stones were very heavy and up to four inches thick. A wrong reading image on the stone was alternatively rolled with water and ink, the ink adhering to the image, the water being absorbed into the stone, preventing the ink from spreading. A sheet of paper when pressed onto the stone produced a right reading print.

It is this map in particular that gave impetus to the author in 1999 to name the lookout on the Cliff Top Track between Govetts Leap and Evans Lookout that overlooks the main waterfall (Govetts Leap), Barrow Lookout. The name Barrow Lookout was officially approved by the NSW Geographical Names Board 6<sup>th</sup> August 2004.

### ***Who was Isaac Le Pipre Barrow***

Isaac Richard Souton Le Pipre Barrow and his wife Anne had seven children. Their second child and first son was Isaac Le Pipre Barrow, who was born in Yass on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1844. This being a frontier town, the family moved to Gundagai in the latter part of 1846. That meant there was considerable delay between the birth and the child's christening. In the case of Isaac, he was not christened until he was two and a half years old by the Church of England clergyman, the Rev. Charles Ferdinand Brigstocke, on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1847.

The town of Gundagai has the Murrumbidgee River dividing the main section of Gundagai from South Gundagai. On the 25<sup>th</sup> June 1852, a major flood devastated and almost entirely destroyed the town. Seventy five people drowned in the flood, a third of the population. To this day, the Gundagai Flood of 1852 remains the deadliest flood in terms of loss of life in our Australian history.

Due to the flood, the Barrows moved to Melbourne, where Issac's education was at the Church of England Grammar School. He finished his schooling in 1861, when he was aged 17.

From an early age, Isaac most likely had an aptitude for drawing and maths, and he found a position with the Victorian Department of Crown Lands and Survey in their Geodetic Survey section, being employed as a draftsman from 1864 to 1876.



*Isaac Le Pipre Barrow*  
*Photo: Elizabeth O'Connor collection*

Isaac's next move in 1876 was from Melbourne to Sydney. Why did he move? He was a 33 year old bachelor with a good employment record with the Victorian Department of Crown Lands and Survey. He had no wife or children to tie him down. Was it because Sydney was already exerting a pull for young talented men to advance their careers? Or was it because in 1876 the construction started on the NSW Lands Department building in Sydney, a sure indication that land survey was an expanding business. Was that enough of an incentive? Maybe the move was at the instigation of a surveying friend, Thomas Parrott. Thomas had also previously been employed by the Victorian Department of Crown Lands and Survey, and in 1870 moved to Sydney to be employed by the NSW Department of Lands in the Sydney office in 1872.

Whatever the reason, Isaac was able to present to the Lands Department a very good reference of being a surveyor assistant to his previous employer, William Thornhill. Thornhill was a Geodetic Surveyor, an examiner in connection with the appointment of contract surveyors, and Acting District Surveyor of Geelong.

So, it was just five days before Christmas, on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 1876, when Isaac Le Pipre Barrow joined the temporary staff at the Department of Lands, Bridge Street, Sydney.

Isaac married Grace Louisa Hagon at St James Church, Sydney on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1880. The church no doubt was chosen for sentimental reasons by Isaac, as his mother and father had been married there nearly forty years earlier. A year previously, in May 1879, Isaac had purchased two adjoining Lots of land in Yule Street, Dulwich Hill, Sydney. The land was to be the site for the family home for over 50 years, from the time their house was constructed eight months after their marriage until Grace died in 1935. The Barrows also had a country home at Woodford which they purchased in 1894. This home was held within the family for the next 56 years.

*Note: Garnet Creek: A creek rising on the Blue Mountains Range and on the southern side of the Great Western Highway between Valley Road and Mona Road, Woodford, is named after their son, Garnet Lyndon Barrow (1890-1976).*

On the 5<sup>th</sup> December 1888, after two previous attempts, the Board of Examining Surveyors passed Isaac's third examination, and he qualified to become a Licensed Surveyor in NSW.

Interesting that now a qualified surveyor, he continued to work as a draftsman. At this stage in his life, Isaac was married, had young children and was content with the stability of a job that did not involve travelling to all parts of NSW, a job that a surveyor was required to do.

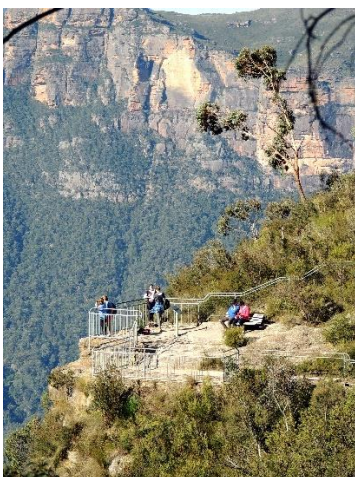
Isaac retired from the Miscellaneous Compiling Branch, Lands Department, Sydney, on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1915, aged 72. Incidentally, I started my employment at Department of Lands, Bridge Street, Sydney on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1971, 56 years after Isaac retired. I was placed on the second level, where all draftsmen were situated, and who knows if I sat at the same desk as Isaac, as the desks would not have changed in all that time. An old parish map, dated from the 1870s, was in the desk I first occupied.

Isaac died on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1930 and was buried at the Church of England Cemetery, Waverley, Sydney. His wife Grace died on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1935 and was buried in the same grave site as her husband.

### **Conclusion**

Like a lot of early maps, they are forerunners for the maps to follow, building on and refining data for future maps. Isaac's last legacy is Barrow Lookout, even though the information on the lookout signage is not quite correct. A full referenced account of Isaac Barrow's life and mapping can be found in *Fox, Brian. Isaac Barrow Blue Mountain Map Maker, 2015.*

*Brian Fox*



*Barrow Lookout*



*Brian Fox at Barrow Lookout  
Photo Jeanette Holdsworth*

## **Book Launch: Wollemi National Park: Wilderness Adventures- Book 1**

*By Michael Keats OAM, Yuri Bolotin, Brian Fox*

The recent authors' talk and launch of their new work on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025 at the Lithgow Library, gave readers an opportunity to learn first-hand about multi-day wilderness bushwalking from the experts. The Bushexplorers' new book contains detailed track notes from a series of unique multi-day wilderness adventures in the Bylong Labyrinth and the Northern Wollemi, two most extraordinary, challenging and beautiful parts of the Park. In addition, there are three Wollemi Essays, as well as a comprehensive list of place names.



*Bylong Labyrinth*

Cost of the publication is \$66.00. Further details about the book and its availability can be obtained from Yuri Botolin [yuri@bigci.org](mailto:yuri@bigci.org) or the Explorers' website [www.bushexplorers.com.au](http://www.bushexplorers.com.au)

**PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES AND NOTIFICATIONS TO THE EDITOR FOR THE MAY-JUNE 2025 ISSUE OF HERITAGE IS**  
**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

## **Community events & updates**

### **School Tours Presentation**

The presentation on 8<sup>th</sup> February, a joint event staged by BMACHO and the National Trust at the Woodford Academy, was well attended and an informative couple of hours was provided by Yvonne Kattell and the other Academy volunteers, through oral presentation and site tours.

Attendees, who came from far and wide, were asked to describe their own circumstances and how their museums operated. Attendees who shared their experiences included:

- Former Westpac Bank (originally Bank of NSW) at Dunedoo – Dunedoo Historical Society and Museum.
- Linnwood at Guildford – McCredie residence, school and museum.
- Eskbank House Museum at Lithgow – former residence of Thomas Brown.
- Carisbrook House Museum at Lane Cove, former Brooks family home – Lane Cove Historical Society.

- Mt Victoria and District Historical Society and Museum – the railway Refreshment Rooms.
- The Arms of Australia Inn Museum at Emu Plains – Nepean Historical Society.

Yvonne explained how to work with educators to address the school curriculum, and how to interact with children to achieve a high level of appreciation for the life and times of the building, through interactive experiences at the museum.



*An animated Yvonne addresses the group*



*An attentive audience*

She described things to be decided when planning to accept tour groups, things to provide and consider for the attending group, such as risk assessment and working with children checks, and provided resource suggestions for tour operators including reference to resources provided by the National Trust on their web site.

*Further information in regard to resources and information generally in regard to holding tours of your museum for school groups, may be obtained directly from Yvonne at the Academy, or from BMACHO. Slides of the event are now available from BMACHO or the Academy: Using Your Property as an Educational Resource.*

### ***Blue Mountains Historical Society – Annual McLaughlin Lecture Paul Sorenson: His Life and Career***

The Society's Annual McLaughlin Lecture is to be held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025 at Wentworth Falls School of Arts, 217-219 Great Western Highway, Wentworth Falls, from 10am until 12.30pm.



*Paul Sorenson*



*Charles Hoskins Church and gardens, Lithgow*

Stuart Read, Senior Heritage Officer, Heritage NSW, will present an overview of the life and career of garden designer Paul Sorenson. This Danish born nurseryman and 'place maker' worked on over 100 private projects spread across NSW over the course of several decades. While best known for his Blue Mountains gardens, he worked on gardens in Canberra, Illawarra, the Central West and on the New England tableland.

No bookings are required.

For information contact Blue Mountains Historical Society:

Address: 99 Blaxland Road, Wentworth Falls NSW

Postal: PO Box 17, Wentworth Falls 2782

Phone: 02 4757 3824

Web: <https://bluemountainshistory.com>

Email: [bmhs@bluemountainshistory.com](mailto:bmhs@bluemountainshistory.com)

## **Show and Tell Presentation**

BMACHO is set to hold a half day event in 2025 to allow people to tell some stories and share their own heritage.

We urge you to drag out the family or town memorabilia and bring it along with a short story describing its provenance. It could be a photo, or an old tool, some jewelry or a doll, a precious book, a certificate or a pipe!

Each speaker will be given 10 -15 minutes to share their tale of days gone by. (The time allowed will depend on the number of people attending with items and willing to give a talk). We would like to compile a list of items before the day so we might contact you by email once you have booked.



The event is to be held on **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> Mar 2025**, from 9:30am - 12pm. It will be held in Room 2 upstairs at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub, 106-108 Macquarie Road Springwood. Arrive at 9.30am and we will start the event as soon as everyone is seated.

The cost is \$10 per person and bookings can be made through Eventbrite – obtain the link from the “Events” page on our website

Parking is available in the carpark at the rear of the building and there is a lift up to Room 2. This event is supported by the 2024 BMCC Community Assistance Grant.

## **Blue Mountains History Conference 2025**

The next BMACHO Bi-Annual Conference is set down for **10<sup>th</sup> May 2025**, with the theme being ‘*The Show Must Go On!*’, covering entertainment and the arts, theatres and cultural development over the years across the Blue Mountains.

**---SAVE THE DATE---**

Richard White will be the keynote speaker, presenting the Ian Jack Address.

The other speakers have been confirmed and include Colin Semmler, Kate O'Neill, John Lanser, Lowell Tarling, Lorraine Corne and Robyne Ridge. Most exciting will be a radio play to be presented by Blue Mountains Radio Players!

A raffle with some lucrative prizes will be undertaken on the day! Raffle tickets can be purchased before the event and on the day of the event. The raffle will be drawn just before close of the conference. Tickets are one for \$5 or three for \$10. Contact BMACHO by email if you wish to purchase tickets before the day.



The venue will be the Carrington Hotel at Katoomba which provides limited onsite parking and community parking nearby, with close access to the railway station for travellers. Considerable accommodation opportunities are available at the Hotel and in the vicinity.

The Carrington, of course has been a premier venue for entertainment and the arts from its construction in 1881-1882 through until today.

**Bookings:** Now open via Evenbrite. Look for Blue Mountains History Conference 2025.

**Cost:** \$85 per person or \$80 per person early bird registration which will end 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**Time:** Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2025 from 9.00am to 4.30pm. Registration will open 8.30am-8.45am

**Where:** The Ballroom, The Carrington Hotel, 15-47 Katoomba Street, Katoomba

*If you are a member of BMACHO and you would like further information, or if you would like to become a member, please email BMACHO at [committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au](mailto:committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au)  
For general information about BMACHO, see <http://bluemountainsheritage.com.au>*

## **BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.**

**Registered office:** 1/19 Stypanra Place, Springwood 2777. Ph: 0410 198 737

**Email:** [committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au](mailto:committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au) or [j.koperberg@bigpond.com](mailto: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 aims and 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.

**Registered Charity:** BMACHO is a not-for-profit incorporated association and has been added to the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC) charity register.

**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 City Library; 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; Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc; Hartley Historic Site, NPWS NSW; Hawkesbury Historical Society Inc; Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Inc; Lithgow & District Family History Society Inc; Lithgow – Eskbank House Museum and Lithgow Regional Library – Learning Centre; 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; Nepean District Historical Society Inc; Norman Lindsay Gallery and Museum; Penrith RSL Military Museum; Scenic World Blue Mountains Limited; Springwood Historical Society Inc; Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum; Woodford Academy Management Committee; Zig Zag Railway Co-op Ltd. The following are individual members: Fiona Burn, Philip Hammon, Dr Wayne Hanley, Gay Hendriksen, Ian Milliss, Patsy Moppett, Keith Painter, Dr Peter Rickwood, and Dr Robert Strange.

**Committee:** The management committee for 2024-2025 (from March 2024) is: Patsy Moppett (President and Newsletter Editor); Rod Stowe (Vice President); Philip Hammon (Treasurer and Membership Secretary); Jan Koperberg (Secretary/ Public Officer); Roy Bennett, Fiona Burn, Dick Morony, Gay Hendriksen and Kate O'Neill.

**Finance sub-committee:** Jan Koperberg, Fiona Burn, Ian Kendall.

**Disclaimer:** Views and opinions expressed in the ***Heritage*** Newsletter 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.