

Heritage

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Heritage Organisations Inc*

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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



Issue 100!!!!!!



Blue Mountains Journeys: 1839-1849

As a result of the establishment of Cox's road across the Blue Mountains and the subsequent construction of Mitchell's road, a journey across the mountains to Bathurst presented many and variable impressions of the journey and the landscape to travellers. Most experiences were established by their reasons for going west, the circumstances of their travelling situation and their individual backgrounds. Here we look at two such journeys with a ten year gap between, to see just how things had changed in that time and what things struck them as significant as they went along.

1839: A lady's travels

Louisa Meredith, author and poet, arrived in Australia with her husband in September 1839 and one of their first excursions was out to Bathurst. When they travelled across the Blue Mountains along the western road during the spring in October that same year, they left from Paramatta and passed through to Penrith amongst '*pleasant scenery, although chiefly monotonous enough*', and she stated that the heat was intense. She commented on the continuous loud noise of the grasshoppers. Her first stay was at the inn by the river, with a fine view of the Blue Mountains. However, she found the mosquitoes by the river annoying and noted the appearance of fireflies after dark. Next day they were ferried across the river with all their gear on the punt. She saw emus along the Emu Plains and then ascended the steep '*excellent road*' winding up the side

of the mountain. She noted the magnificent scenery and was looking forward to the remainder of her journey. They breakfasted at a '*small wayside public house*' and disliked the slovenly slipshod women, dirty floors and tobacco smoke which made her decidedly uncomfortable. She went for a bushwalk and observed in detail many aspects of the local forest.

Her party moved on through a '*wild and barren country*', uninviting and recently marred by bushfire. Here the road was '*bad beyond an English comprehension*' and they had to '*jolt and bump*' along as best they could. She noted heavily laden drays pulled by oxen moving along to and from Sydney carrying produce and farm supplies. It was a time of drought in the colony and dead oxen were to be seen regularly along the way. The climate changed and before long they were feeling the cold and rain, quite a contrast to the heat of the Nepean valley.

They reached the '*Weatherboard inn*', only to find it was full! Not surprising in such weather. A settler returning to Bathurst had commandeered the whole place and '*not a sleeping-place was to be had*'. They proceeded on about 6 miles to a smaller hostel known as '*Blind Paddy's*', cold, tired and hungry. A couple of '*decent elderly women*' served them to her satisfaction and they passed a tolerable night's sleep. The next day her party continued on through this desolate landscape to Soldiers' Pinch, where they made a precarious descent, and on to the Pass of Mount Victoria. Louisa had favourable words to say about Major Mitchell's road but noted that where it fell across dangerous portions it was not constructed well. She noted that a new survey was pending, and the track was to be '*a more level and rational track*'.

They observed the magnificent views of the Vale of Clwydd and saw a large gang of convicts road-making, which made her nervous. At midday they rested at the Rivulett, where a new smart looking inn provided accommodation. They were however, served by a drunken maid and had trouble getting anyone to tend to their horses as everyone was drunk. The outhouses were less ostentatious than the inn and were dirty, old and ruinous. They approached Hassans Walls where she saw the rock bearing '*a strong resemblance to the venerable and veteran Duke of Wellington*'.

Their next notable place was at the Cox's River, from where they moved on up the steep ascent of Mt Lamby [sic], bare and sterile, which she notes was better than Mitchell's road across the mountains! They then stayed the night at an inn half way up the mountain, the Queen Victoria Inn. Once again the inn was full, accorded by the same party they had encountered at the Weatherboard! However, they were accommodated in a small parlour and bedroom. They found the proprietors to be '*sober, industrious and civil*'. The next day they rested at another tidy public house, which was acceptable, in spite of the drunkenness of the hostess again, where they saw the effects of the drought with limited feed for their horses available.

They then reached a spot where they were able to view the drought ravaged Bathurst plains and Louisa was not impressed. They noted the straggling houses and a church on the eastern side of the Macquarie River, and then across the river she reached their destination of the Bathurst settlement to stay with relatives who resided at the bank building, thus completing a '*not very long, but tedious and fatiguing journey*'.

1849: New settlers' journey

Move forward ten years and view this journey by a different group with different goals, attitudes and aspirations.

In 1837 John Macarthur engaged six German winegrowers to work on his property at Camden. These workers and their families arrived in Sydney in April 1838 under the bounty scheme, sponsored by Macarthur. However, they were a minority as few Germans had settled in the Colony in the early part of the nineteenth century. It was not until 1847 that the Colonial Government widened the scheme to include European workers with special skills, such as vine dressing and carpentry.

In 1849 another group of German settlers arrived in Sydney under the same bounty scheme, (ship *Parland* 5th July 1849) emigrating to New South Wales to seek a better life. They included Eberhardt Mayer aged 32, a vine dresser and wagon driver, and Engelbert Hahn aged 31, a vine dresser, carpenter, wheelwright and sexton. They came with their families to escape a daunting life of poverty, starvation and oppression in Germany. They were not driven by the gold rush, which came some two years later, but simply for a better life, and were following under the guidance of Wilhelm Kirschner who was recruiting in Germany for settlers requiring labour in the early Australian colony. Thomas Icely of *Coombing Park* at Carcoar had offered employment by contract to such immigrants, knowing they were good, dependable and hard workers, and paying their bounty. Some of their relatives were already working for Icely. He was their Master [sic] and they saw the opportunity in a '*Land Where Milk and Honey Flows*' and where they could have '*full freedom in word and spirit*'.

But their trip across the western road in mid July was very different from Louisa's, and their experiences were documented in letters back to relatives in Germany. They were poor, having sunk their savings into aspects of the ship journey, notwithstanding that Icely had paid their bounty, and they could afford little in the way of comforts. At first when they arrived in Sydney they saw a beautiful harbour surrounded by beautiful trees and were thankful to have arrived safely. They saw a large town with beautiful houses, with no pavements but wide roads. Relatives who worked for Icely met them at the dock and drove them by wagon to Penrith where they were halted for 3 days due to heavy rain.

The journey from Sydney to *Coombing Park* was estimated to be about 150 miles (240km) and took some 12 days. At first they had to climb the mountain chain '*about the height of the Feldberg*' [highest mountain in the Black Forest]. It was a '*bad time*', always through forest. They saw no towns of substance, only some small villages with 15-20 houses and post offices every six to eight miles, and the roads were bad. They had to sleep under the wagons in the forest for nine nights because the inns were too expensive, lighting large fires to keep warm, which lasted all night, and on which they cooked meat and drank tea. Icely must have made provision for their substance as they said they had more than they needed from him on the way. The women and children rode on the wagons whilst the men walked, but the really young were at risk from the cold and frosts and snow fell several times. They noted the steep chasms along the way, which were unfenced, and daunting to them. Once in Bathurst they stayed but one night in the growing town. After the forests they had travelled through they noted the cleared land around the town for about 12 miles.

Another two days took them on to Carcoar where Icely's people received them hospitably. They were treated well by Icely at *Coombing Park* and their letter home encouraged family back in Germany to come out too. '*We have found a new Homeland where we are better off than in Germany*'.



Convicts work on Mitchell's Pass 1826 and 1832
Painting by Augustus Earle



Impression held at Mitchell Library



Mitchell's Pass – Charles Rodius 1833



Victoria Pass – TL Mitchell 1833-1855

Conclusion

The above images demonstrate the type of countryside the early travellers across the Blue Mountains were dealing with. Even by the 1840-1850 period the road conditions were still challenging – steep inclines, heavily forested ridges, or exposed bare rock sections.

It is interesting to note the differing observations of landscape that they made. Louisa travelled through what she saw as bare, barren and bleak. Hahn and Mayer saw forest all the way! All noted the steep chasm and gorges which they had to negotiate and all declared the road very bad! Some things didn't change much in that ten year gap! Hahn and Mayer make no mention of the lesser discomforts such as insects, although it was winter, and do not outline any detail of the bush. They appear to see the forests as intimidating. Louisa outlines descriptions of flora and fauna. Perhaps the German folk had other things on their minds, such as managing the oxen teams, caring for their families and coping with the weather.

Personal circumstances governed their accommodation and although Louisa was able to afford stay at inns, they were not all worth the effort!!!! Perhaps the German group would have preferred their beds under the wagons by the fires if they had visited the inns.

By October Louisa was feeling the heat at Emu Plains but getting a bit chilly by the time she negotiated the upper mountains. The German group however were moving through in the heart of winter and they suffered somewhat all the way.

The German group travelled by wagon pulled presumably by oxen, which contained their families and all their worldly possessions, and made for a slow 12 days. Louisa had travelled with carriages and horses and was only travelling for a short sojourn to

Bathurst. Her trip took only five days conveying less luggage. Perhaps the oxen drawn wagons she passed along the way were the type of mode of transport used by Mayer and Hahn. Overall both trips had to negotiate the western 'road', and a *tedious and fatiguing* journey was had by all.

Patsy Moppett

Note: My particular thanks go out to Margaret and Greg Hahn of Carcoar who shared the Hahn history with me and the letters from Mayer and Hahn back to Germany.

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Fourteen Journeys Over the Blue Mountains of New South Wales 1813-1841: George Mackaness 1965

Greetings from the Land Where Milk and Honey Flows: Patricia Kloos and Jurgen Tampke [this publication incorporates the letters from Mayer and Hahn to their families in Germany]

German Migration Stories: Museums of History NSW

Index

Blue Mountains Journeys: 1839-1849	1
Editorial	5
St Peter's Anglican Church, Mount Victoria	6
19th Century Clerics of Hat Hill Road, Blackheath	10
National Trust Tour: RAAF Base, Glenbrook	18
National Butler Gathering	19
Blue Mountains Local Heritage Assistance Fund 2025/2026	19
Springtime at Arms of Australia, Emu Plains	20



From the Editor

Welcome to the **100th edition** of *Heritage!!!* Who would have thought back in January 2009 that the Newsletter would prove so popular! Perhaps the Editor at the time knew better! BMACHO President John Leary produced the first issue in Jan-Feb 2009 as Editor, a position he maintained until his passing in 2014. The Committee in 2009 thought long and hard about how to disseminate heritage information in the community and the Newsletter was an early initiative. Words from John as set down in his first Editorial are quoted as follows:

Some time ago, the committee of BMACHO identified as a major issue, the need to improve communications in the local heritage sector. Across a broad range of issues it was considered that various organisations were not sharing information which could not only make their operations more effective, but would also make life easier and more pleasant in the bid to achieve goals of conserving, researching, recording, preserving and promoting our heritage. The executive has spent considerable energy and time, with some success in opening up communication

Community leaders have accepted the need to improve two-way communication and BMACHO's executive has seen some tangible improvement at government level. Many of those active in the heritage sector appear to have operated in isolation for many years — sometimes, totally unaware of the importance they play in the fabric of Australian society.

For more than five decades societies in this region have been party to hosting most informative historic talks and presentations and yet there has been very little done in the way of publishing these interesting dissertations.

While there is an urgent need to promote publications in print, there is an even greater need to share information between like organisations. It is imperative that organisations, if they are to succeed in maintaining membership, become more proactive in selling their group to the public. One of the best ways of doing this is to communicate and share ideas with like minded bodies. To participate in the process of improving communications, BMACHO's executive has initiated this newsletter, HERITAGE which currently it is proposed to publish every couple of months. The newsletter is designed to reach as many individuals as possible. Too often communications addressed to busy secretaries do not seem to go any further down the line. It is hoped that secretaries on receipt of HERITAGE on their e-mail will simply forward it on to those members who have registered their e-mail. Hopefully those who do not have e-mail will be provided with hard copies by other members of their organisation.

- John K Leary, OAM - President and newsletter editor, Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations

The first edition covered topics including archaeology of the Katoomba coal mine, which included a tour of the site by the BMACHO Committee by our current Treasurer Phil Hammon!!! It also announced BMCC's employment of heritage advisors, and advertised hosting of heritage lectures by BMACHO on astronomy, the Lee-Enfield rifle, the Bi-Centenary of Charles Darwin's birth. It disseminated information on speakers and seminars, exhibitions and grants, and mystery chimneys! Also was an article on the Woodford Academy, and on the scarecrow Clampett family's visit to Kurrajong!

A wealth of information has been shared within the heritage community since then, and the current Committee have endeavoured to continue delivering John's legacy. The *Heritage* Newsletter has been issued every two months and past copies can be accessed at the online archive on the BMACHO website:

www.bluemountainsheritage.com.au

St Peter's Anglican Church, Mount Victoria

Mt Victoria began life as a convict stockade in the 1830s. It was known as One Tree Hill and sometimes Broughton's Waterhole, One Tree Hill being one of two high points in the locality, with Mt Piddington the other. One Tree Hill itself is actually the highest point on the western road over the mountains. It was marked on an early map dating from 1834 by the Surveyor General, Sir Thomas Mitchell.

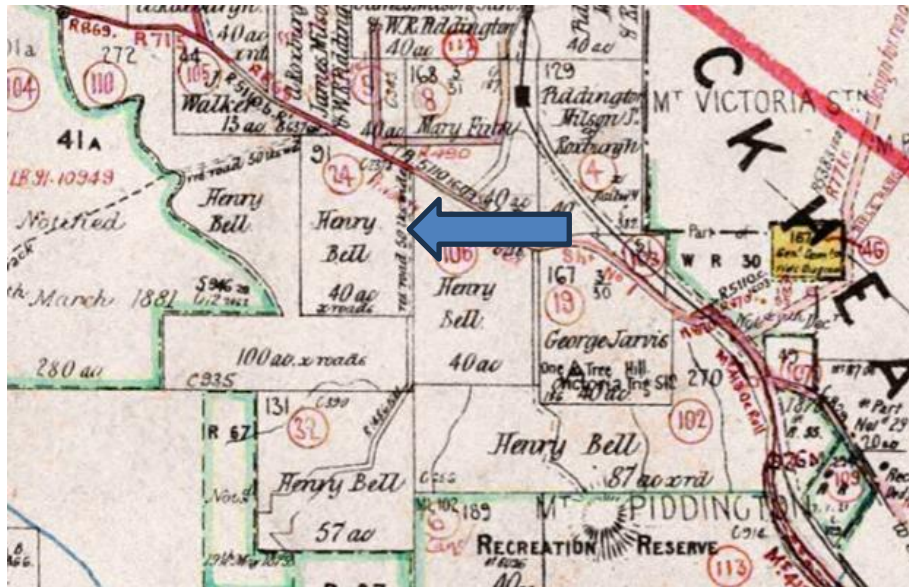
When the railway arrived at Mt Victoria in 1868 and a school had been established, the village became Mount Victoria, the town's name being made official in 1876 when the first Post Office was built. The 1849 Toll House still exists by the Highway, and the Imperial Hotel was constructed in 1878 on the old school site.

Over time there were exclusive private schools, and it was seen as a popular mountain retreat for wealthy Sydney families who would take the train and stay either in the large guest houses or in the homes they built for themselves.

But early on there were no churches!

In 1874 land was given for an Anglican Church by prominent landholder, Henry Bell, who owned most of the land to the south of the Western Road at Mt Victoria. This would have been on Portion 91 Parish of Hartley, and this became St Peter's Church of

England. St Paul's Catholic Church, just along the road to the north west, was not built until in 1890.



Portion 91 Parish of Hartley

On 18th September 1874 the foundation stone for St Peter's was laid by Bishop Frederick Barker, Lord Bishop of Sydney for St Peters. An inscribed parchment was laid in a cavity before the official stone was lowered and Dr Barker was presented with a trowel and mallet as a memento. The church was completed the following year as the earliest church in the Upper Mountains. Interestingly an inscription above the entrance door of the porch records the year 1871, and the relevance of this date is unclear. The church was on a rising piece of ground commanding an extensive view of mountain scenery at the time. The building, a Victorian rustic gothic style church, is of rubble sandstone construction thirty feet by eighteen feet inside with a chancel – that is, the part of a church near the altar, reserved for the clergy and choir, and typically separated from the nave by steps or a screen.

Leadlight windows with central pivot sashes mark the internal bays. A pair of pointed arch stained glass windows is at the western end and a large pair of pointed arch stained glass windows is at the chancel end, being of St Peter and St Paul. The porch has a pointed arch opening leading to a pair of pointed arched, diagonal boarded doors. The building cost two hundred pounds, and the architect was David Macbeath, with the builder being Alexander Armstrong. Its simple form was set in lawn surrounds and gave a quiet, rural character to the site.

Its original affiliation was with St John the Evangelist Church of England, at Hartley, which had opened in 1859. The Rev. Mayne was rector of St John's, and so became the first minister at St Peter's. From 1875 to 1964 St Peter's was to remain part of the Parish of Hartley. However, on 1st January 1965 following a reorganisation of parish boundaries St Peter's became part of the Parish of Blackheath.

Soon after the church construction it was realized that a parsonage was needed, but the matter lapsed. It was raised again in 1886 by Bishop Barry, and on 25th July 1887 a meeting of parishioners was held at Eucalyptus Hall, Mt Victoria to decide on a site. The meeting determined to accept the offer of a site by Mrs Bell. On the day of the laying of the foundation stone on 9th November 1889 Mrs Bell was unable to attend, However,

she was presented with a massive silver trowel and mallet mounted in ivory via a relative Colonial Baynes who attended to her duties for her.



Early 1900s, post 1920's

It has long been thought that Mrs Bell was the wife of Henry Wyatt Bell, son of Archibald Bell Jnr (explorer). However, this Henry Wyatt Bell never married. So, who was Mrs Bell? And therefore, who was Henry Bell?

The Sydney Morning Herald had stated that Mrs Bell could not attend and that the ceremony was undertaken by a relative, Colonel Baynes. This may be the clue. Colonel Baynes was one Thomas Beindge Baynes. Colonel Baynes' son Richard Beindge Baynes had married an Annie Augusta Bell in 1880. Annie was a daughter of one Henry James Bell of *Fernhill*, Mulgoa (Cox family), and also associated with Bell's Chambers in Sydney. Henry James was indeed descended from Archibald Bell Jnr., as the Bell and Cox families had close family connections. So, the 'relative' who attended the ceremony was Annie's father-in-law, Colonel Thomas Baynes, and Mrs Bell was Annie Augusta Bell's mother, Laura Godfrey Bell. Henry James Bell had died earlier in 1889.

At the same time as the parsonage was established it was resolved that the Church itself needed enlarging.

The Church's wooden roof shingles were replaced in the 1920s with cement shingles laid in a diamond pattern which are now covered with colorbond corrugated steel. Over the years other extensions have been made. The back part of the church was remodelled to include the front porch as a welcoming area. For some time a shed-like structure was in use as a vestry, in which Sunday School was sometimes conducted. There arises the issue of 1871 being displayed above the porch door. As the porch was added in the 1920s, the date is to be questioned. Upon examination of the face of the stonework, it can be seen that the date is not actually inscribed into the stone. A thin concrete veneer has been attached to the wall and the date inscribed in this. So did someone simply get the date wrong??!!!!!!

In 1995 the church's floor was replaced. The original floor had been based on dirt and had rotted away. Some forty tonnes of soil was dug out from under the building and piers inserted for air space and ventilation.

In 1999 a separate brick hall was built to accommodate the needs of the by then very active church, incorporating windows salvaged from St Aidan's Church Hall, Blackheath.



Church service 1959

Bell ringing has always been a feature of the Church community and started when the Church was established. The bell is still rung a few minutes before each Sunday service. When the original ten inch square wooden post which housed the bell finally rotted away in 1986, local grazier Ross Fragar was instrumental in undertaking repairs and he installed a new, round yellow box post from his property. In 2014 Jack Thompson was the church's bellringer. A special bell-ringing took place on Sunday, 11th September 2022 to mark the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Bell ringer on the day Ron Simon rang the bell 70 times - one toll for every year of her reign.



St Peters 2020

A plaque on the front fence records:

To the Glory of God - This fence and gates were erected by - St Peter's Church Ladies Guild - and dedicated by - The Most Reverend H W K Mowll DD - Lord Archbishop of Sydney - and Primate of Australia and Tasmania - on Sunday 16th November, 1952.



Porch inscription



The bell

St Peter's is the highest church above sea level in the Sydney Diocese and as a parish probably the largest in terms of area given that it takes in Hartley, Mt Wilson, Mt Victoria and Blackheath.

Patsy Moppett

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Inquiry: Mt Victoria Historical Society 2025

19th Century Clerics of Hat Hill Road, Blackheath

Introduction

In Blackheath there are three churches that are on, or very close to, Hat Hill Road: St Aidan's Church of England (2-8 Hat Hill Road), Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church (167-171 Wentworth Street) and the Presbyterian Church (123-125 Wentworth Street). Here the interest is in the properties of the Anglican clerics that over a century ago made for an unofficial 'enclave' along Hat Hill Road about 2km from the Great Western Highway. Their houses are discussed below in successive order of location along the southern side of Hat Hill Road, plus one house (*Eytham* No.193) which is accessed by a long laneway heading south-east off that road (**Figure 1**).

The first curate-in-charge of St Aidan's, Blackheath (1883-1892) was the Reverend Edward Symonds who, by giving lantern slide lectures in bush communities, collected sufficient money to build the original Anglican church in 1880; it was consecrated on 6th December 1884¹. For many years he resided in Blackheath in a house on Portion 39 (*The Elms* **Figure 1**) and at times was joined in Blackheath by Canon Hulton Smyth King who had holiday houses (*Borrisbrook* and *Glenroy*) on the adjacent large block of land - Portion 40.



Figure 1: Aerial photograph of houses on the SE side of Hat Hill Road, Blackheath ex City Blue Mountains 2025; Spatial Services NSW 2025

The clergy residing in the 'enclave' were wealthy and in the case of Rev. Symonds the wealth was apparent by his use of a "buggy and pair" to travel around NSW².

Portion 39

At an auction held at Hartley on 16th March 1881³, Edward Symonds paid £64-7s-3d for Portion 39 in Blackheath⁴ which is a large block that extends from Hat Hill Road down to Popes Glen Creek (**Figure 2A**)*. He had a 'cottage' erected 'in the bush' on that land which became known as *The Elms* (now 179-181 Hat Hill Road); an undated and indistinct photograph of that house is in Reference⁵. The Revd. Edward Symonds was Curate-in-Charge of Blackheath and Katoomba from 1883-1892 but not continuously as he went to England in 1885 only returning in 1888⁶. On retirement in 1892 he resided in *The Elms* until 15th April 1899 when he sold that property to Mrs. Martha Elizabeth McKenzie⁷ (the wife of a Blackheath resident and "Inspector of Schools"⁸), after which Reverend Symonds returned to England where he died on 2 November 1920 at Reigate, Surrey⁹. In 1910 *The Elms* was let to the prominent Sutton family of Blackheath¹⁰ but they never owned it.

*[At a subsequent auction at Hartley on 17th August 1881¹¹ Edward Symonds purchased other portions along Hat Hill Road viz: Por.20, Por.36 and Por.41. But primarily these portions were acquired for investment and were not intended as family residential sites.]

A direct link between the Symonds and King families came when Miss Frances Symonds, the daughter from Edward Symonds' first marriage¹², married William Cooper Smyth King on 10th August 1889¹³ at Ashfield¹⁴.

Portion 40

Also attending the auction in Hartley on 16th March 1881 was The Reverend Robert Taylor, Rector of St Stephens, Newtown (who became Canon of St Andrews Cathedral, 1891-1907¹⁵) and he bought Portion 40 (**Figure 2B**) for £51-1s-2d; a purchase that was registered on 26th September 1881¹⁶. That parcel of land was on-sold on 5th May 1884 "To Hulton Smyth King of Surry Hills, Clerk in Holy Orders"¹⁷. [Rev. King came to Australia in 1855 to be the first Rector of St Michael's Church, Flinders Street, Surry Hills; in 1873 he was appointed Canon of St. Andrew's Cathedral and in 1874 Dean of East Sydney¹⁸ but he was never curate-in-charge of St Aidan's, Blackheath¹⁹. However, he is said to have conducted the first Anglican services in Blackheath in 1877, long before St Aidan's was constructed so those services were held "in a private home in Govetts' Leap Road"²⁰.]

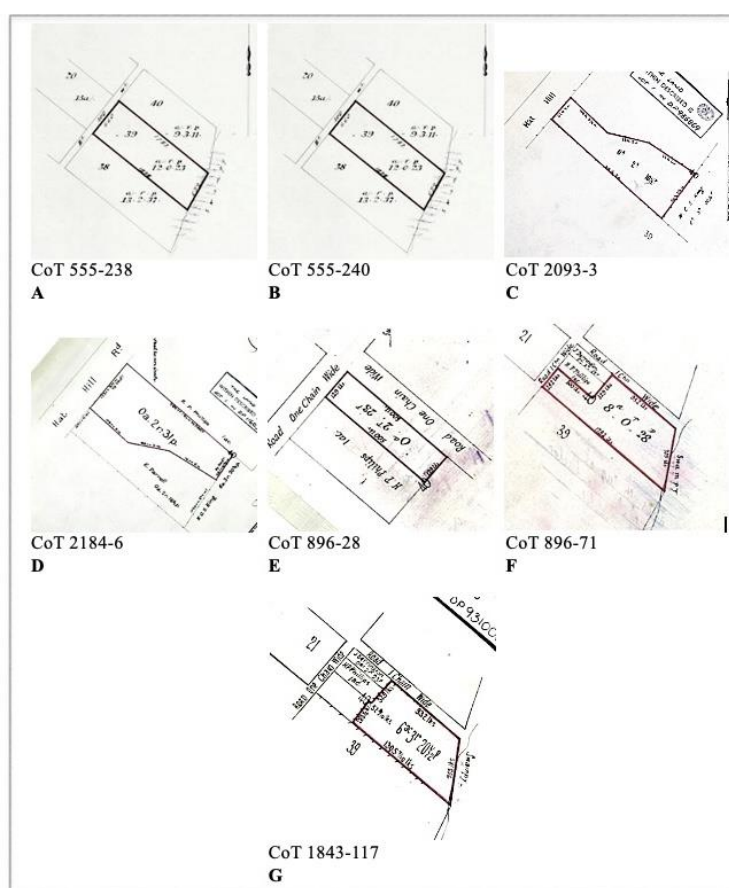


Figure 2: Plans in Certificates of Title



Figure 3: *Borrisbrook* (now 195 Hat Hill Road)
ex Showcase of Property, September 2019, p.79

In December 1885 the furnished cottage *Borrisbrooke* (*sic*) of "6 rooms etc." was being advertised to let²¹ so it is inferred that Canon King had it built in 1884 or early 1885. Originally that cottage was intended "as a holiday house but it was not flash enough for Frances" ²² (i.e. his wife). However, Canon King remained owner of *Borrisbrook* for the rest of his life which ended in 1897 but for legal reasons it was another 13 years after that when ownership left the King family. The purchaser was investor Miss Emma Parnell who acquired the 3/4 acre block²³ (with an unusual eastern boundary - **Figure 2C**) which contained *Borrisbrook*. Overtime, Miss Emma Parnell (1851-1940) bought other lots in Hat Hill Road but she was a resident of Ashfield and not a clerical member of the enclave²⁴.

Rhododendron trees are synonymous with Blackheath so it is of significance that it has been claimed that the first plantings of rhododendrons in that village were made by Canon King at *Borrisbrook* in "about 1882" ²⁵ but at that date there was no house so if the presence of a dwelling was implied then 1884 was the earliest that the planting could have occurred.

Glenroy (now 197 Hat Hill Road) (**Figure 4**)

Canon King married Frances Uther in 1858 ²⁶ and apparently she did not take well to *Borrisbrook*, the original spartan cottage that had been erected²⁷, so in 1886 Canon King had a more substantial house (**Figure 4**) built for her in an area a short distance to the northeast; that house became Canon King's principal holiday residence *Glenroy House* (*sic.*)²⁸. But that second building was not to the liking of Mrs King either (!) being deemed "too cold" ²⁹ and additionally living conditions were somewhat 'primitive' as residents obtained water from a well located near the house; most probably the renters of *Borrisbrook* also got their supply from there.

Canon King retired in 1887 and while living at 77 Broughton Street, Homebush he died on 7th June 1897 ³⁰. However, ownership of *Glenroy* remained in the name of the deceased for a few more years until the property was sold to Miss Emma Parnell on 1st September 1910 ³¹.



Figure 4a: Glenroy in 2016
Photo Peter Rickwood
Metromap



Figure 4b: Glenroy in 2025

Figure 4b: <https://www.property.com.au/nsw/blackheath-2785/hat-hill-rd/197-pid-768686/>

In 1911 another subdivision of Por. 40 created a second 3/4 acre block with an unusual shape (**Figure 2D**) (a rotated version of that containing *Borrisbrook* - **Figure 2C**) and that is the land on which the house *Glenroy* sits³².

The Chalet (now 201 Hat Hill Road) (**Figure 5**)

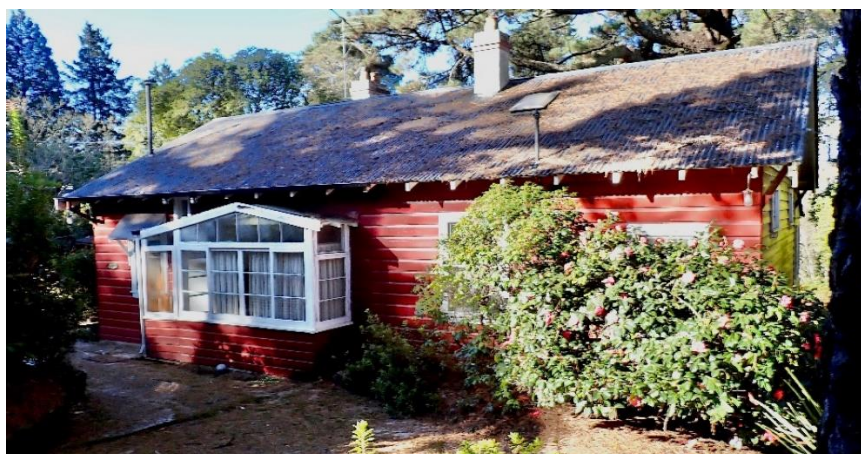


Figure 5. *The Chalet* in 2025
Photo: Peter Rickwood

A year after acquiring Portion 40 Canon King sold one acre of that land to Miss Helen Plummer Phillips on 25th June 1885³³ (see **Figure 2E**). A "delightful cottage"³⁴ was built and subsequently named *The Chalet* (**Figure 1**). [An indistinct photograph of the building taken in 1925 is in Reference³⁵]. When that property went on sale in 1907 it was described as "A Mountain Snuggery"³⁶, but in fact it was primitive as that house had "no water, gas, sewerage or phone"³⁷. Moreover, after spending four and a half hours³⁸ sitting in a railway carriage drawn from Sydney by a steam train³⁹, intending occupants next had to face a horse and buggy ride to get from Blackheath Railway Station to *The Chalet* - a daunting and moderately uncomfortable journey for most, yet in 1896 a member of a group of school girls once wrote "I don't believe any of us ever enjoyed a drive so much as that one"⁴⁰.

Miss Phillips was a staunch Anglican who from 1884 to 1890 was Principal of "The Clergy Daughters' School" in Waverley⁴¹ which subsequently was renamed *St Catherine's School*⁴². Although she sometimes called for mail to be delivered to *The*

*Chalet*⁴³ it was never her principal residence. Miss Helen Plummer Phillips died on 25th May 1929⁴⁴ but long before that in June 1892 the property became subject to 'Power of Attorney' and on 3rd March 1893⁴⁵ the executor sold it to Henry Ebenezer Barff (An administrator of the University of Sydney⁴⁶)

The Glen (now 205 Hat Hill Road) (**Figure 6**)



Figure 6. *The Glen*
ex Focus on Property, November 2007, p.57

In 1888 Canon King sold a 3/4 acre part of Portion 40 to "Joseph Derrington of Blackheath, Labourer"⁴⁷ (**Figure 2E**) and he in turn sold that land to Jeremiah Overall "Gentleman" in March 1892. Development followed and by at least 1900 Mr. Overall was in residence there⁴⁸ and by February 1907 it had become the site of an "early farm house"⁴⁹ known as *The Glen*⁵⁰. Next it was sold to Mrs Louisa Salt in August 1907 and then on 1st May 1914 Mrs Emily Blanche Sutton bought *The Glen*⁵¹ for her son Peter Sutton, and his new wife Margaret, to reside in after their marriage later that year⁵². [Peter Sutton became Mayor of Blackheath in 1931⁵³.]

Interest now turns to the one residence of the 'enclave' located down slope from Hat Hill Road which is currently owned by the artist Jenny Kee.

Eythan (now 193 Hat Hill Road) (**Figure 7**).

After the sale of *The Glen* in 1888 a six acre sized block of Portion 40 existed to the southeast of *The Chalet* (**Figure 2F**). Like that house *Borrisbrook* and *Glenroy* are also located adjacent to Hat Hill Road, and it was away from those buildings, and towards the centre of that block, that Canon King had a house built for his 'unwell' third son William (aka Billy) Cooper Smyth King⁵⁴ intended for occupation after he was married. It was named *Eythan* supposedly after a family ancestor, Baron Eythan of Scotland⁵⁵, that curious name meaning "One who is firm and steadfast"⁵⁶.

That house is 110m from Hat Hill Road and the slope necessitated that it be built single storey at the front and double storey at the back (**Figure 7**).



Figure 7: *Eythan* on a steeply sloping site



Figure 9: The kitchen hut at *Eythan*, with Billy King, housekeeper Miss Smithers ** and her niece Dorothy Doggett

Figure 7 Photo: Claire White collection

Figure 9: Photo: cropped from one in Claire White's collection

Portion 40 is a block with a slope that progressively increases in the southeast direction and becomes so inclined that the lower half down to Popes Glen Creek (pink arrow **Figure 8**) is impractical to use.



Figure 8: *Topography of Portions 39 & 40*
Ex City Blue Mountains 2025; Spatial Services NSW 2025

The precarious location of *Eythan* is best seen in video photographs taken by a drone and used in a 2025 TV interview program; that vision is also available online⁵⁷. Surrounded by ferns and tree ferns and located a short distance south-westward of the southwest corner of *Eythan*, is a spring from which a bountiful supply of water is available. In former times occupants of both *The Chalet* and *The Glen* would get water

from that spring, and probably those in *The Elms* as well. There were also two tanks to collect rain water that came off the roof of *Eythan* but spring water was preferred for drinking. The original primitive dwelling of *Eythan* had a kitchen that was just a small wooden 'hut' which, for fire safety reasons, had been built close to, but separate from, the main building (**Figure 9**) as was the common practice of the time. The occupants of *Eythan* lived in what a neighbour called "genteel poverty" ⁵⁸.

*[**An account of Billy's longtime housekeeper, Miss Alice Smithers, has been published separately⁵⁹.]*

On 10th August 1889 ⁶⁰ Billy married Frances Symonds ('the girl next door' ⁶¹ a daughter from the first marriage of the Reverend Edward Symonds to Frances Bailey). The couple did live in *Eythan* (**Figure 7**) where in 1891 a daughter was stillborn⁶² but on 16th June 1894, at a hospital in Redfern, there was a live-birth of a son William Devereux Smyth King ⁶³ [subsequently "known as Rex" ⁶⁴]. The marriage was a troubled relationship which Frances left in about 1899, taking Rex with her, and after a period spent in England (9th July 1900 ⁶⁵ – 2nd August 1906 ⁶⁶) mother and son (then aged 12) returned to Sydney on 22nd September 1906 ⁶⁷. Divorce proceedings were finalised in 1910 ⁶⁸ after which Rex did re-connect with his father during a visit in 1912 but there is no indication that his mother ever returned to Blackheath. Frances died several decades later⁶⁹ in Strathearn Private Hospital, Stanmore, on 21st August 1942 ⁷⁰ and was "privately cremated" ⁷¹.

Eventually the remaining six acres of Portion 40 (**Figure 2G**) were subdivided into three blocks each containing one of the houses *Borrisbrook*⁷² (**Figure 2C**), *Glenroy*⁷³ (**Figure 2D**) and *Eythan*⁷⁴ (**Figure 2G**).

Despite the death of his father in 1897 ⁷⁵ it was not until 7th November 1907 that William Cooper Smyth King actually became the owner of *Eythan* ⁷⁶ and he kept it until he died on 9th September 1947 ⁷⁷. Then, according to the wishes expressed in his will, but contrary to the expectation of his son Rex, on 30th July 1948 ⁷⁸ ownership was transferred to Billy's sister Minnie Elizabeth Byrne (née King - fifth child of Hulton and Frances Smyth King). Next Minnie's nephew Noel Freeman acquired *Eythan* on 17th July 1951 ⁷⁹ not long before spinster Minnie died on 16th January 1952 ⁸⁰.

On either side of the 'enclave' of clerical residences were portions of land (38 & 41) that were acquired by clerical gentlemen (Reverend Thomas Wilson & Reverend Edward Symonds) at various times⁸¹ but are not known to have been built on by those clerics and were never sites where they resided.

Conclusion

The unofficial 'enclave' of Anglican clerical ownership of land and dwellings along Hat Hill existed from 1881 effectively until 1910, although Canon King's son Billy occupied *Eythan* until he died in 1947 and Canon King's sister Millie thereafter until 1952 but they were not clerics as such.

The clergy of the 'enclave' were wealthy and while occupying dwellings at Blackheath they traded in land not only in the Blue Mountains but also in the Central Coast around Woy Woy Bay⁸².

Peter C. Rickwood, Joan E. Steele & Robert F. King

Acknowledgements

We are most grateful to Trish Davies for supplying scan files of early 20th century prints (the sources of **Figures 7 & 9**) which many years previously the late Claire White (great granddaughter of Canon King) had allowed her to make.

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

PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES AND NOTIFICATIONS TO THE EDITOR FOR THE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2025 ISSUE OF *HERITAGE* IS **Monday 27th October 2025**

Community events & updates

National Trust Tour: RAAF Base, Glenbrook

The Blue Mountains Branch of the National Trust, in conjunction with BMACHO, will undertake a tour of the RAAF Base at Glenbrook, which incorporates the former Lapstone Hill Hotel and Road Bar, now part of the Headquarters of Air Command, on **Saturday 11th October 2025**.

This is a rarely available opportunity to tour the extensive grounds and explore interiors that were the epitome of inter-war luxury. Learn something of this now important defence facility and the heritage that is preserved at the Base.



Former Lapstone Hill Hotel



The Road Bar 1948

The land occupied by the present RAAF Base was originally owned in the 1870s by John Lucas (1818 - 1902), a controversial Sydney politician and investor. He built a country retreat on the land, which enjoyed access from a railway stopping place known as Lucasville, of which some remnant evidence exists.

In 1949 the Lapstone Hill Hotel (opened 1930) was offered to the Commonwealth Department of Defence as a new headquarters for the RAAF's Eastern Area command. The Commonwealth occupied the site from 1950 and subsequently acquired adjacent land to today's total of 28 hectares (70 acres).

The tour will include the grounds and interiors of the former Lapstone Hill Hotel, and the former Road Bar, to contemplate a time when motorists were encouraged to travel, and to buy and consume alcohol on their journey. The grounds include a portion of Cox's Road.

Morning tea will be provided. The tour will commence promptly at 9:30am. Latecomers cannot be admitted. The formal tour will conclude by midday, but the morning might

spark many questions! The event includes moderate walking, some uneven ground and stairs. Please note that this is an operational defence facility, and persons not identified in bookings will not be admitted.

Cost: \$65 for National Trust Members and \$85 for non-members.

*Bookings: **Close 27th September 2025.** Book via - 123tix RAAF GLENBROOK Tickets - 123 Tix*

National Butler Gathering

Are there Butler's in your Irish family tree? The National Butler Gathering may be of interest. It will be held from **Friday 17th October to Monday 20th October 2025** at Warwick Farm. The event will comprise four days of events which present a variety of fascinating stories about Butler men and women and will include a visit to historic sites. This is an opportunity to meet other people who have an interest in Butler family history and are keen to share and exchange information. By sharing your family history who knows, you may discover a previously unknown cousin!



The Butler Society Southern Cross Region

The Southern Cross Region was established in March 1972 as a Branch of The Butler Society to give recognition to the many Butlers who have contributed to the history and development of Australia and New Zealand. They celebrated their 50th Anniversary in March 2022.

The four day event will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel, 355 Hume Highway, Warwick Farm, NSW 2170.

Cost: Total Cost for all events \$420.00 Australian per person.

If requiring accommodation, email reservations@holidayinnwarwickfarm.com.au or telephone 02 9726 1222. Quote "the Butler Conference" to get a discount on accommodation.

Society Contacts: 8 Victoria Ridge, Upper Ferntree Gully, VIC 3156, Australia.

- *President: Abigail Butler, Tel 03 9758 6469.*
- *Secretary: Kerry Butler Phillips kerrybutlerphillips@yahoo.com*
- *Treasurer: Alan Squires squiresa@bigpond.net.au*
- *Webmaster: Bruce Butler brucebutler1978@gmail.com*

Blue Mountains Local Heritage Assistance Fund (LHAF) 2025/2026

Applications are now open for the 2025/2026 for the Blue Mountains City Council's Local Heritage Assistance Fund. This round of funding will support conservation works for heritage buildings listed as local heritage items and/or contributory buildings within heritage conservation areas identified in the Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan (LEP). Property owners and managers are encouraged to apply.



Priority would be given to:

- Minor conservation works to buildings located on main streets in town or village centres.
- Projects that offer a public benefit, such as improvements to building frontages or features visible from the street.

Council would also consider funding for strategic heritage documents (e.g. conservation management strategies or interpretation plans) in cases where buildings are under threat or in exceptional circumstances.

The LHAf is jointly funded by Blue Mountains City Council and the NSW Government and provides dollar for dollar grant funding for minor conservation works on privately owned heritage properties. The Fund would have a total of \$20,000 to award in 2025, and individual grants will be up to \$3,000 each.

Applications are open from Wednesday 30th July and will close at 5pm on **Monday 1st September 2025**. This year applications can be made online at the LHAf Have Your Say page. Please note that a pdf application form is available upon request via HeritageAssistanceFund@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

For any enquiries, checklists and guidelines, please contact Council's Built Heritage Team via the following options:

Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Post: Locked Bag 1005 Katoomba NSW 2780

Springtime at Arms of Australia, Emu Plains



Airing of the Quilts: SATURDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2025 at the Museum from 9.30am to 2.30pm.

Attractions will include gift and book stalls, trading table, tea room, a sausage sizzle and a quilt raffle, the proceeds going to Motor Neurone disease.

This year the quilts are being donated to local hospitals, palliative care and neonatal wards, organisations providing welfare services to the local community.

Cost: \$5.00 donation to see the quilts, plus admission charges to the museum.

The event is organised by the Caring Hearts Community Quilters and supported by The Nepean District Historical Society.

For more information phone 0438 670 012 or email info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au

Please note: In the event of inclement weather, the Airing cannot be held.

Historical Festival and Open Day: SUNDAY 26th OCTOBER 2025 at the Museum.
Attractions will include amusement rides, old fashioned schoolroom, face painting, animal farm display, many other displays. Refreshments will be available.
Free entry!

For more information contact the Museum phone 02 4735 4394 or email info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au

*Venue: The Arms of Australia Inn Museum
Cnr Great Western Hwy & Gardenia Ave, Emu Plains*

Winbourne Spring Market Day, Mulgoa: SUNDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2025, from 10am to 3pm

The Nepean Historical Society will attend this event as usual and hope to see you there. Winbourne has a history dating back to the pioneering Cox family in the 1820s. The Edmund Rice Retreat centre displays original buildings preserving the sense of the past blended with modern facilities.



Attractions will include market stalls, food trucks, historic museum, and a rural fire brigade display.

Venue: 1315 Mulgoa Road, Mulgoa

For information: Ph: 02 4773 5555 Web: www.winbourne.org Email info@winbourne.org

BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

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

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 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; National Trust of Australia (NSW) – Lithgow 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, Adrian Howie, Ian Milliss, Patsy Moppett, Keith Painter, Dr Peter Rickwood, and Dr Robert Strange.

Committee: The management committee for 2025-2026 (from March 2025) is: Patsy Moppett (President and Newsletter Editor); Rod Stowe (Vice President); Philip Hammon (Treasurer and Membership Secretary); Jan Koperberg (Secretary/ Public Officer); Fiona Burn, Dick Morony 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.