

Heritage

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Tasman Island Lighthouse, Tasmania

Light houses have fascinated people for decades and originally served a vital part in the safety of sea and coastal navigation around Australia from early colonial days.

The Tasman Island Lighthouse is on Tasman Island off the coast of south eastern Tasmania, and is one of the most isolated lighthouses in Australia. It was built in 1906, automated in 1976 and demanned in 1977. It was the last of the manned lights to be built in Tasmania.

The 29m high lighthouse is one of the highest lighthouses in Australia and marked the final turning point for yachts in the Sydney-Hobart race. The island is separated from nearby Cape Pillar by the narrow Tasman Passage, which is less than 500m wide. It was one of the more isolated lightstations and for many keepers was not a popular posting.



Tasman Island Lighthouse and cottages

As early as 1885 discussions were held about the possibility of a lighthouse in the vicinity of Cape Pillar. After discounting nearby mainland sites, a site inspection was made to Tasman Island. Despite a recommendation in 1886 that construction should proceed, approval was not given until 1903.

Plans were drawn up by Huckson & Hutchison and a prefabricated cast-iron tower and 1st Order lens were shipped out from England. The components of the cast iron lighthouse were hauled piece by piece up the 250m high cliffs before assembly, some parts taking up to eight hours to reach the construction site.

The difficulties of working in such a precipitous location were highlighted when two members of the Marine Board fell in while attempting a landing. Despite this, builders Henriksen & Knutsen commenced construction in January 1904.

Three keeper's cottages were built of solid brick, with sheds for wood and coal under the same roof for protection from the wild weather. The first superintendent was George Johnston who arrived on Tasman Island in December 1905 and already had vegetable gardens growing by the time the light was officially opened on 2nd April 1906.



1910



1968



2015

The nature of most light house sites is their isolation and their vulnerability to the whims of climate and weather. This light house and its associated infrastructure certainly had their fair share of drama. There were problems with the lamp mantle which regularly fractured due to the swaying of the top of the tower in strong winds. During a storm in 1919, verandahs and fences were blown away, water tanks blown off their stands and out-buildings shifted off their foundations. The winds were so strong that the vibrations in the lantern room destroyed five mantles and two pounds of mercury jumped out of the race and had to be replaced.

Once thickly forested, Tasman Island was almost bare soon after establishment of the lighthouse due to cutting timber for firewood, and this compounded the impacts of strong winds across the island.

Much of the island was originally grazed with flocks of up to 500 sheep, cattle, pigs and goats. However, stock regularly disappeared down the various sink-holes and clefts on the island, never to be seen again. Today, the native vegetation is returning, with pockets of small trees and shrubs appearing in more sheltered areas.



A truly spectacular landscape

Access to such a remote light station was always difficult. Seas were frequently too rough for supply ships to approach the island. Landings were originally made on the north-west side of the island where a track known as the zigzag was built. Then a landing platform was constructed on the more sheltered north-east corner of the island with a crane operated by a steam-driven donkey engine. Today, access to the island is much easier by helicopter.

Some interesting facts:

- For the first 20 years pigeons provided a link with the Tasmanian mainland. However, the birds were so well fed that they were often reluctant to leave the island!
- Because of the isolation, most women left the island to give birth. However, in 1920 a daughter was born to the lighthouse keeper and his wife, nursed by a Nurse Cleary.
- In their remote location the keepers on Tasman Island were vulnerable to infections, and medical help was often unable to be obtained.
- During the war years the job of lighthouse keeping was considered a reserved occupation and keepers were not permitted to enlist.
- A major accident occurred in 1927. Rigger, William Groombridge was killed and Joseph Patterson was seriously injured when a crane, being installed on the landing, collapsed without warning. The body of the dead man was thrown into the sea and never recovered. With no direct communication with Hobart it took until the next day to get medical help for the injured man and another day to get him to Hobart for treatment.
- Unlike many other Tasmanian lightstations, there are no European graves on the island.

In the years following the automation of the lighthouse and removal of lightkeepers, the unoccupied buildings deteriorated badly. However, with dedicated work by the volunteer group *Friends of Tasman Island*, this trend is now being reversed. Formed in 2005, the *Friends of Tasman Island*, work in partnership with the Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service, conducting work programs on the island about three times each year. They have a membership of committed volunteers and supporters who focus on the restoration of both the cultural heritage and natural environment on the island.

Access by sea continues to be very difficult. The haulage route is no longer operational and tracks up the 250 metre cliffs are overgrown. A permit to land by helicopter must be obtained from the Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service and no commercial accommodation is available on the island, although tours are available.



The 2015 plaque



Original lens

A bronze plaque was erected in 2015 to commemorate lighthouse keepers and their families for their contribution to maritime safety in the Tasman Island region from 1906 to 1976. The island is now part of the Tasman National Park, and the lighthouse and associated structures, such as the keepers' cottages, are listed on Australia's Register of the National Estate.

The original first order Fresnel lens by Chance Brothers can be seen on display at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney, and the original lantern is stored at the Maritime Museum of Tasmania in Hobart.

Patsy Moppett

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http://www.wildcaretas.org.au/groups_details/tasman_island

Index

Tasman Island Lighthouse, Tasmania	1
Editorial - Back through the archives	4
Blue Mountains Historical Archives Storage	6
Moorecourt & Springwood Ladies College	7
Book Launch: Blue Mountains Geographical Encyclopaedia	10
Mount St Mary's College and Convent, Katoomba	11
Nissan Huts	14
Tour - Land and Property Information, Bathurst	17
Open Day at "Macquarie", O'Connell	18
Historical Tour of Cockatoo Island	19
Exhibition: Fire – a site-specific installation	20
Reminder: Exhibition at Mt Victoria Museum	20
New Blue Mountains Heritage Advisor	21
Yvonne Jenkins Memorial Award 2018	21
Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Historical Museum	22
Errors – Carlon's Farm	22
Blue Mountains Historical Society Activities	23
Blue Mountains History Conference 2018	23
Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail Update	24



Food for thought Editor's note

Back through the archives

In February 2009 the then President of BMACHO, John Leary OAM, launched the first edition of BMACHO'S Newsletter HERITAGE. His Editorial highlighted the need for communication and dissemination of information within the heritage world, and his words seem to be still pertinent today.

The current committee can stand testament to the aspirations expressed then, that the Newsletter would be widely spread and that communications since then have definitely come a long way, in part a credit to the work of previous BMACHO committees.

Bearing in mind that the mentioned MPs involved may have changed, that Editorial is repeated below in memory of John, and to demonstrate how far we have come in the wider Blue Mountains heritage community.

Patsy Moppett



John Jeary OAM



Issue No. 1



Issue No. 2



Issue No. 3

From the president's pen.....NEED FOR IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS

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 with Blue Mountains City Council, the former Federal Member for Macquarie, Kerry Bartlett, the State Member for Blue Mountains and now the Federal Member, the Hon. Bob Debus and the new Member for Blue Mountains, Phil Koperberg.

In discussions with these community leaders they have generally displayed more than a cursory interest and knowledge of the diversity of heritage in the Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Hawkesbury regions.

However, what they were not aware of was the large number of individuals, which includes amateur enthusiasts, academics and professionals who are active within the local heritage sector. 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 of 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.

There have been some excellent books produced by local authors on very well researched material, but little effort in promoting these publications. Even some of the newsletters which have been produced are in their own right worthy of commendation as sound historical documents. 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 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 (BMACHO)

Blue Mountains Historical Archives Storage

Following on from the article in the last BMACHO Newsletter (January-February 2018) relating to Mount Wilson's predicament on archive storage, comments have been received from Woodford Academy on their situation, and on the matter generally.

Woodford advise that due to the receipt of grants in 2017 the Academy has been able to undertake much needed collection management of their historical archives which were until recently stored on site. This process resulted in the archives being removed for urgent pest treatment and the services of Kate O'Neill were very much appreciated during the packing of the collection.

Due to poor climate control at the Woodford Academy, the archives are now held at the James Fairfax & National Trust property, Retford Park, Bowral, (where there is a specialized climate controlled storage facility), until such time as appropriate storage can be arranged at the Academy. The containers and an adjacent cottage were utilized by James Fairfax to hold furniture and paintings he brought back from Europe. They are lockable, powered, and the climate keeps temperatures inside remarkably stable.

Concerns have been raised generally in recent years however, about the loss of many local historical artefacts from the mountains. Whilst the Academy is sorry that the archives had to leave the mountains, Rae Clapshaw of the Academy advises that they are safe and in a clean environment, constantly monitored by data loggers and people living on site.

Access is restricted but not impossible. Thursday has worked out as the most suitable day and it is a matter of targeting your research, packing some lunch and travelling to Bowral. Academy volunteers take cameras, computers, scanners and other equipment, and work chairs and tables are provided.



Archive storage – Windsor



Archive storage – Retford

In regard to treatment of artifacts when freezing facilities are available, advice from Mt Victoria Historical Society Museum notes that freezing for borers was undertaken of some items for eight days, and the problem has returned. Advice from a Hobart conservator to members now suggests that freezing times should be closer to three weeks. So there is a lot of inaccurate and mis-information around.

A number of organisations, including BMACHO, have taken it upon themselves to investigate as to whether there are any other local appropriate storage facilities in the Blue Mountains local government area, as they and/or their members are struggling with the same issue. In doing this, to date it has been found that there was no known space available, at this stage.

In undertaking research for Mount Wilson, BMACHO established that funding opportunities were limited for small regional organisations due to the criteria set in those funding programs, and that larger organizations appeared to be able to comply more easily. BMACHO also undertook research into the cost of climate controlled storage units, finding that there is a range available. However, with the situation being that many organisations are located in heritage buildings on small sites, there is no space on site for a storage container to be located, the costs of such containers may be prohibitive, and there is often a local

government Development Control Plan which prevents the location of storage containers on the site due to heritage issues and visual amenity! A catch-22 situation. BMACHO also established that both long and short term solutions may be required for an organisation, depending upon their individual circumstances, along with opportunities for multiple user facilities. Access to the collections once archived is a part of the issue, if located off site.



Storage solutions

At its recent committee meeting at Mt Tomah, BMACHO discussed the issue with Rae Clapshaw of the Woodford Academy, who explained the access process as described above. She did emphasize that the Academy is lucky to be a National Trust property, and therefore have a large support system in place. They still need to find funding for remedial work at the Academy before the archives can return. They realise they are custodians of the collection and that they must be preserved for the future.

The State government has been undertaking an online community/industry survey of cultural infrastructure needs, and such survey closed on 11th February 2018. The Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office (CIPMO) was seeking feedback from the community and sector about arts and cultural spaces in NSW. In April 2017, the CIPMO in the Arts, Screen & Culture Division was established to provide a coordinated response to the planning and delivery of cultural infrastructure in NSW.

The Academy in their submission has included the need for accessible, appropriate historical archives storage. Woodford have suggested that there may be a local government solution, and that perhaps BMCC should undertake a similar such review. An email with regard to this survey was distributed to BMACHO members on 8th January 2018.

This Office, one of the first of its kind, works in partnership with Create NSW to ensure appropriate infrastructure facilities are developed and maintained to support the growing arts and cultural sector across metropolitan and regional NSW.

The Office can be contacted at their email address: ci@arts.nsw.gov.au It is unknown when the results of the survey will be published, but the aim is to draw up a Cultural Infrastructure Plan resulting, it is hoped, in funding opportunities. It must be understood though, that this will take time.

In the meantime, BMACHO would encourage members and the wider community to “have their say” and make it know also to local authorities of the issues which particularly relate to Blue Mountains’ organisations.

Feedback to BMACHO is always encouraged on issues such as this, within the bounds of the BMACHO aim, to foster and support cultural heritage activities related to the Greater Blue Mountains and beyond, through the sharing of experiences for a greater good.

Patsy Moppett

Moorecourt and Springwood Ladies’ College, Springwood

Moorecourt was a mansion constructed in 1876 by Charles Moore, former Lord Mayor of Sydney, which became the Springwood Ladies’ College in 1897, following Moore’s death in 1895.

Moore was born in Ireland in 1820, and sailed for Australia in 1849. He had been apprenticed to his brother in the drapery business, and arrived with a shipload of drapery

which he sold in Adelaide. He went to Melbourne and then on to Sydney, where he set up a drapery business, and then went on to auctioneering.

In 1854 he married Sarah Jane Wilcox, and built a substantial home at Coogee in 1860. He was mayor of Randwick Municipal Council in 1863, and was then elected to Sydney City Council. There he was Mayor from 1867-69. He became known as an improver, undertaking reclamation projects to utilize swampy land, covering the Tank Stream, establishing a number of public buildings, and developing Sydney Common which was to become Moore Park.

He refused to receive a Mayoral salary and in spite of his improvement works, was often criticized. In 1869 he resigned and went to Europe, returning in 1871, where he was Mayor again until 1886.



Charles Moore



Moorecourt

In 1876 he built Moorecourt at Springwood, and moved there in 1880. Soon after, Sarah died, having had no children. In 1883 Moore married a widow Annie Hill Montgomery in Ireland, during another trip to Europe. He remained childless, and died at Parramatta on 4 July 1895, being buried at Emu Plains Cemetery.

Moorecourt was built on a site to the northern side of the Great Western Highway between Springwood and Faulconbridge. The site falls away from the highway to a creek at the centre and rising again (to the present-day swimming pool) at the north. The mansion was demolished in 1858 and the south side of the park has now been cleared and landscaped adjacent to the highway, where there is an asphalt paved carpark and play area. Bench style tables and seats provide picnic facilities, in what is now called Buttenshaw Park. The Blue Mountains Shire Council acquired the land for recreational purposes in 1939 through the actions of a former Minister for Lands, E.A. Buttenshaw. The removal of the gateposts from Moorecourt when the house was demolished in 1958 was organised by the Springwood Historical Society.

A pair of sandstone gateposts in Buttenshaw Park mark the beginning of a wisteria walkway through the Park, relocated following the demolition of Moorecourt. Informal planting beds, partly planted with roses, are located to the northeast of the gateposts.

The Moorecourt gateposts are large square dressed sandstone posts with astragals and pyramidal caps. The Moore family crest carved on the posts has the motto "*PERSEVERANDO ET CAVENDO*". (By Never Giving Up and Taking Care). The crest is located on the east face of the northern gatepost and the west face of the southern gatepost. The northern gatepost has been set on a plinth at a higher level than the southern gatepost.



Moorecourt



Gateposts, Buttershaw Park



Memorial Plaque

A memorial plaque reads:

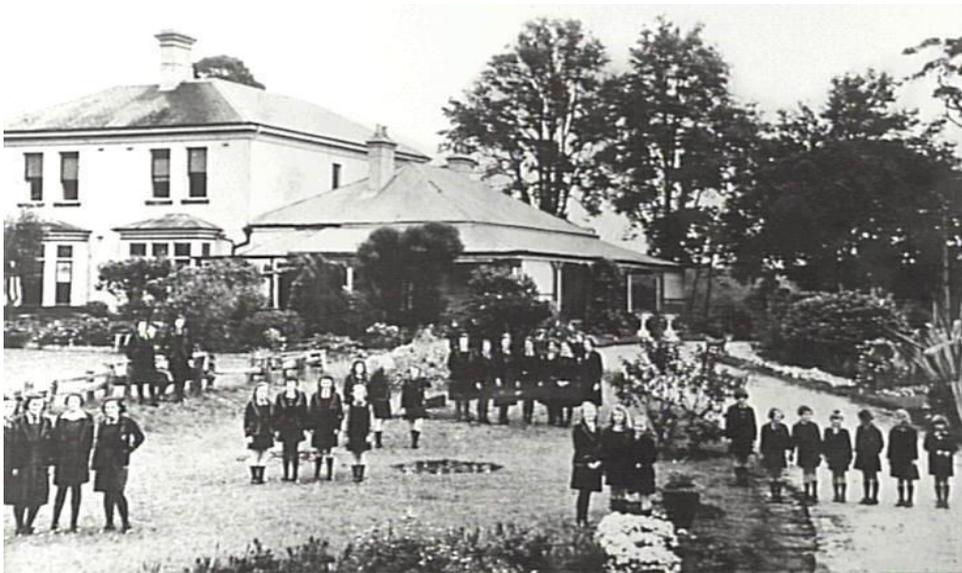
*These gates are re-erected
from "Moorecourt" Springwood
Residence of Charles Moore
Mayor of Sydney 1867-69
M.L.A. East Sydney 1874 M.C.L. 1880-1895
Moorecourt built 1876 Demolished 1858
Springwood Historical Society*

Moore had originally acquired some of the sandstone building blocks used in Moorecourt from the convict lockup on Pulpit Hill west of Katoomba, which dated from the 1820s. Originally constructed as a single storey country style residence, two storey additions were added to the rear at a later date. Extensive gardens were established with ponds, pathways, orchards and kitchen gardens.

After Moore's death in 1895, the residence became the home of Springwood Ladies College. Established in 1897, it was one of several private ladies' colleges in the Blue Mountains, which lent a colour and eccentricity to Australian education which is gradually fading in memories. Once the dominance of State and religious schools came to the fore, private schools almost disappeared. These private schools were reputed to possess exceptional advantages for young ladies desiring to complete their education.



Gate post detail



Springwood Ladies College

The longest serving proprietor and headmistress of the Springwood Ladies' College was Mademoiselle Mignon Durand, who transferred her Ladies Grammar School in Newcastle in the 1920s. She stamped her personality on the place, and her name became synonymous with the school. She was short, dark haired and of unremarkable appearance, but she knew how to dress, being stylish and elegant. She produced women of grace, courtesy and refinement. College life was one of order and Spartan comfort. The spacious and well-laid-out grounds surrounding the college enable students to enjoy outdoor exercises to their heart's content, thus acquiring a physique not obtainable in less favoured colleges.

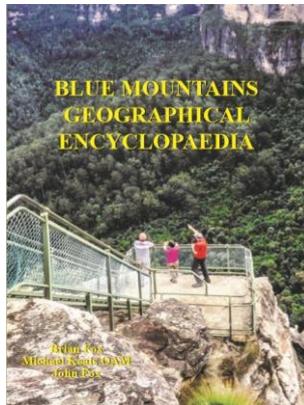
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Book Launch : Blue Mountains Geographical Encyclopaedia

The launch of this much awaited publication is set to take place at Hobbys Reach, Wentworth Falls, on Monday 26 March 2018, at 10am for 10:30am.

It was February 2017 when Brian Fox spoke on maps of the Blue Mountains at Hobbys reach where he also gave an invitation to anyone to help and contribute to this huge place names project, a number of our members are to be thanked for their contribution to this project.



Between the Nepean River and Mount Victoria is sandwiched over 200 years of European history and thousands of years of Aboriginal heritage, some 2700 names have been applied to the places in between. This book is about those names, the men and women who named them, why and when they did.

Lead author Brian Fox has been on the job for over 20 years, systematically collecting and documenting every fact and every event. Researching and honing the text has been the role of co-authors John Fox and Michael Keats respectively.

A tome of 544 pages, full colour, hard cover with dust jacket. It includes 180 colour photographs, 70 of different waterfalls.

This text is a must for every person interested in the Blue Mountains whether they are a resident, bushwalker, teacher, history buff or curious visitor, and follows on the heels of the first of Brian's geographical research book, A Geographical Dictionary of the Blue Mountains .

The new book will be on sale for \$50.00, and Brian asks to be contacted if you require more information. If you are unable to attend the book launch and would like to purchase a copy, this can be organised by an email or phone call.

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Mount St Mary's College and Convent, Katoomba

A wander around Civic Place at Katoomba takes you past an intriguing building, surrounded by vegetation, which was once the Mount St Mary's College and Convent, a building of State significance, listed on the NSW State Heritage Register in 2003. The Renaissance Action Group lobbied for this listing.

The place is significant due to its connection with education from 1909 to the 1990s, and in particular with the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity in Australia. It comprises an imposing complex of ecclesiastical buildings on a sloping site, dominated by the impressive, highly visible tower.

In the late 1890s the Sisters of Charity rented a small cottage, a former guest house in Katoomba Street, near the Catholic Church, as a place of respite for weary nuns. At the same time they realized a Catholic school was needed, and they opened a small college in 1901. They bought the adjoining house when student numbers rose, and joined them by a covered passageway.

Numbers increased again and they sought a larger site. The place chosen was located on a 1.6ha site on the northern side of the railway line, and with a northerly aspect. The entrance

was on the southern façade, and included a formal garden, now overgrown, and a courtyard with vehicular access.



Mount St Mary's 1910

The land was originally part of the Frank Grimley subdivision, and Lots 26-35 were bought by the Sisters of Charity in 1907. It was open paddocks with some mature eucalypts. In 1908 an additional 1.2ha was purchased from Grimley including orchards and vegetable gardens. The gardens established were extensive, and included low stone garden walls, terraces, ornamental trees and shrubs, paths and steps, urns, fountains, grotto and gazebo. It featured both exotic and native species, including orchards. The grounds had basketball and tennis courts.

The convent/college construction commenced in 1909 with the convent and college building, and the builder was Michael Byrne. It was designed by Nagle (James) and Nurzey, who became known as Henry E Budden & Nagle. The foundation stone was laid by Cardinal Moran in April 1909. It was completed quickly and by February 1910 boarding school students were being accepted.

In 1923 the College carried out a subdivision and sold off several blocks including its tennis courts, and also sold "The Rocks" cottage. The cottage "The Rocks" had been in the south west corner, and it had been relocated to the north east corner of the land.

In 1926 Mount St Mary's celebrated its silver jubilee, which resulted in the construction of the grotto. Some of the balconies at ground and first floor levels were infilled.

The school became a local landmark and a model of Catholic education, and with its attractive climate, attracted students from interstate and overseas.



Mount St Mary's 1984

In 1932 a reunion was held, synchronizing with the opening of the Harbour Bridge, as many ex-pupils would be in Sydney for that event. The local community heartily supported the

event, assisting in attending to the catering. Reverend Vaughan presided over lunch in the large college dining hall, decorated for the occasion. A concert was then held in the college concert hall, followed by a meeting of the students Ex-students' Union.

In 1941 the college provided refuge for the inmates and staff of St Vincent's Convent from Sydney when the Harbour was considered unsafe. The mountains were considered safe and an increase in student numbers occurred. In 1946 there were convent extensions, both internally and externally, to accommodate the increase in student numbers. This included a four storey extension at right angles to the original school building. In the 1950s a primary school bungalow was added to the site.

In 1957 The college and convent provided a temporary home for sisters and juniors from Leura and other community members left homeless by the terrible fires of that year. In the 1960s the science block was added, and Mount St Mary's became a regional girl's school, and also became co-educational, taking boys from St Bernard's College which had just closed.



Covered walkway



Renaissance Centre 2014

However, due to declining enrolments the school finally closed in 1974. The premises were then to be a centre for religious and training purposes, which occurred until 1984 when a fire order was placed on the building and the school was closed. As the costs of upgrade were prohibitive, the Church sold the property in 1985. It was purchased by John and Pamela Patterson and L Donivito, with the intention of turning the place into a tourist and cultural centre, housing 30 craft areas, shops, studios, galleries, performance and teaching areas. Extensive alterations were carried out to create the Renaissance Centre, which included a kiosk and walkway from Civic Place, into a restaurant and cultural centre. The Centre was opened in 1987, as a transformation of the historic building into a multi-functional community and tourist centre. Stage 2 would have seen the building of a motel and entertainment centre with a 500 seat theatre. The center was to house the Penzig Collection of relics of Australia's bush ranging past, and the Trantor Museum of local history and colonial artifacts.



Mount St Mary's College and Convent buildings 2017





Mount St Mary's College and Convent buildings 2017

However, the property was sold in 1992 to Crestown P/L, and despite the restoration and goodwill, tenants began to leave the premises, and it has been vacant ever since. Some discussions were held about 2001 for the building to be used as a tertiary institution for a university campus, but this did not eventuate. The building did have development approval for restoration and the construction of 122 apartments, however this DA lapsed.

Some of the original landscaping is still evident, although much over grown, and extensive vandalism has occurred across the site and in the building complex. Fires in the building in 2003 and 2010 have taken their toll. It was listed for sale in 2009 and in 2012, but did not sell.

Many old buildings such as this have their mysteries, and Mount St Mary's is not without its own. The tunnels, "the dungeon", were supposedly under the school and have puzzled people for many years. The Edge Theatre sits within what would have been the grounds of the school, on the playing fields. The tunnel went from the playing fields, or maybe from in the vicinity of the music room, due east under the railway line, to emerge in what is now inside a private residence on the eastern side, although all bricked up. There was a doorway bricked up at the railway station too. The purpose and size of the tunnel is puzzling, but it is thought it was probably an air raid shelter for WWII.

There is also supposed to a ghost nun who wanders the lonely, dark halls of the upper dormitory!

Patsy Moppett

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The Technical Side

Nissan Huts

Farm sheds can take on a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Many are built from scratch as new buildings, but the nature of farming over the years is that a great many others are reused buildings, relocated buildings, built from second hand materials and generally constructed from whatever materials the landowner had at hand. Making do was the name of the game. One particular structure that has been reused across Australia is the Nissan hut, sometimes called an igloo. Nissen huts have also been utilised for other purposes such as one converted to a church at Port Lincoln, South Australia, warehouses at Wyong NSW, migrant workers huts at Balgownie NSW, munition stores in Darwin, Northern Territory, Snowy Mountains huts, hangers, railway workshops and many converted to the ubiquitous wool or machinery shed across Australia.



Colonel Peter Nissen



Building sale advertisement

During World War I Major Peter Nissen of the 29th Company Royal Engineers, began to experiment with hut design. The need for the hut was dictated by a demand mainly for accommodation, but also for bomb/ammunition and material stores, machinery stores and administration buildings. War use demanded that they be made of economical materials due to shortages during the war, and also that they be portable and compact to transport, particularly by ship. This resulted in a simple form which was quick and easy to erect and pull down. The world record for erection was 1 hour and 27 minutes!



Shearing shed interior



Derelict hut

The semi cylindrical shape was derived from a drill shed roof at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. A number of prototypes were made, and many reviews undertaken of the design before production commenced in 1916. The design was patented in the UK. During World War I over 100,000 were made by Nissen Buildings Ltd. Production waned between wars but was revived in 1939. A number of similar shaped hut types were developed such as the Romney in the UK and the Quonset in the USA.

As wartime accommodation the huts were cold and draughty or stuffy, hot and humid. They were also used for accommodation on construction sites, and a two-storey version was marketed by Nissen-Petren Ltd. Nissen received the royalties from the British government for the original huts made during the war, but only for their sale after the war. For the project Nissen received a Distinguished Services Order (DSO).

Articles appeared on how to convert the buildings for domestic use, but this was not a success. Despite the low cost, the hut was not a house, and had none of the status of a house. Also, the use of the internal space was not conducive to the placement of conventional furniture. One wonders how the construction would be adapted in the current age, when alternate building design is all the rage.



Under construction 1916



Church conversion, Port Lincoln



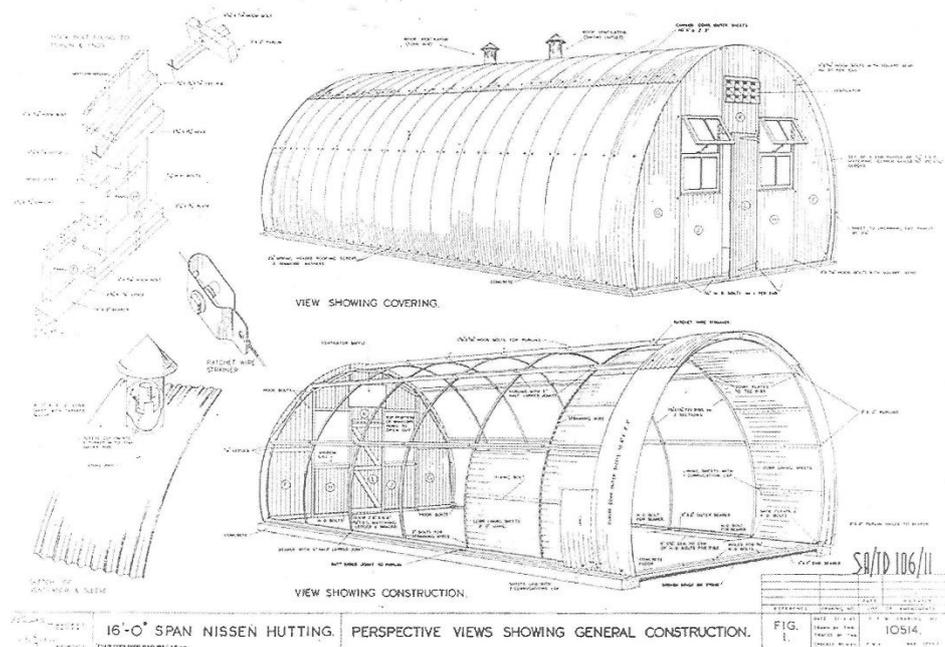
Accommodation – Perthshire

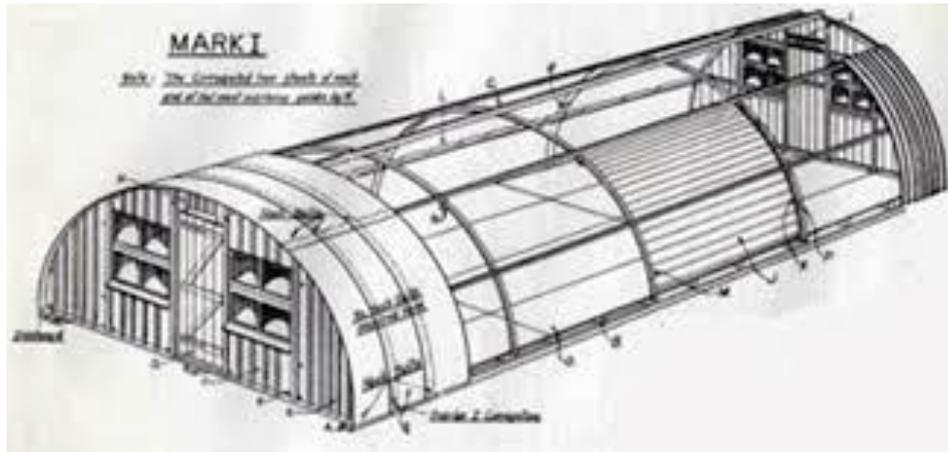


POW accommodation

A large number were constructed in Australia after WW II at Newcastle, to provide cheap, ready made housing for post-war British migrant families. Many were subsequently demolished after their original purpose ceased, but the remainder were refurbished, improved and extended over time.

The Nissen hut is made from a sheet of metal bent into a half cylinder and planted into the ground with its axis horizontal. The sheets were attached to wooden purlins, and spiking plates at the end of each floor joist. The purlins were attached to T-shaped ribs, which were bolted to the floor. During construction, straining wires were utilised, although these were not in the original design. Interior lining, if there was any, could have been corrugated iron or Masonite.





Basic construction

The internal height (radius) was 8 feet and the floor was 15 feet 10 inches. The building was rested on stumps and the floor was tongue and groove timber. Buildings at East Hills and Villawood in Sydney had concrete floors. Farm buildings often had earth floors. Either end of the building was closed in by a wooden frame clad in weatherboards, bricks or corrugated iron. Windows and doors were added where required.

Patsy Moppett



Farm shed at Sheep & Cattle Drome, Bathurst



Machinery shed near Bathurst

References:

Nissen hut, Wikipedia

Lightning Ridge woolshed, Ray Christison 2012

www.nissenbuildings.com

Save Nissen town, Sydney Morning Herald, John Huxley, 14 March 2009

Community events & updates

Tour: Land & Property Information , Bathurst

BMACHO is to undertake a tour of Spatial Services at Land and Property Information (LPI), Bathurst on Thursday 15th March 2018. BMACHO will hire the Blue Mountains City Council Access Bus for travel, seating about 20.

Much has changed at LPI since BMACHO last toured in 2010. The innovation, advances in technology and projects being undertaken right across the organisation will resonate with mapping and surveying enthusiasts.



Spatial Services implements and monitors standards for the survey industry in NSW. Spatial Services is the official source of land information for NSW, maintaining a digital cadastre map and a digital topographical map of the State. It also provides aerial photography, satellite imagery, addressing information, touring maps and a unique customised mapping service that tailors spatial information to meet specific needs.

The tour is due to arrive at Bathurst at 10am and will be provided with morning tea. The group will be divided into two smaller groups and the Spatial Services Managers will take groups to the various business areas.

A light lunch of sandwiches will be provided, dietary requirements withstanding, and the tour will conclude about 3.30pm.

The bus will pick up from Springwood and along the highway where required. Times are to be advised.

This tour will book up quickly and BMACHO can only take the number of persons who can be seated on the bus. **Bookings should be made by 7 March 2018.** Once numbers are confirmed for the bus, the final cost and travel times will be determined, but cost should be in the order of \$15.00.

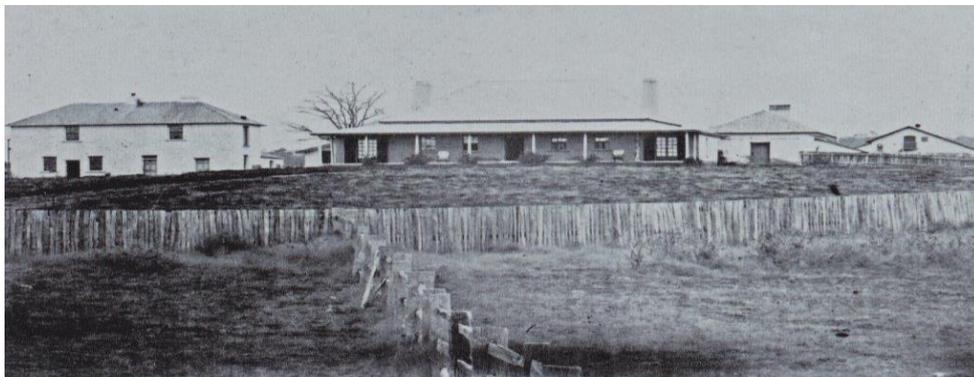
Jan Koperberg

For inquiries and bookings:

Email: www.bluemountainsheritage.com.au

Open Day at “Macquarie”, O’Connell

On 24 March 2018 the former Governor of New South Wales, Professor The Honourable **Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO**, patron of the Macquarie Society will **at 11.00 a.m.** formally unveil a plaque to commemorate the restoration of the two storey convict barracks (circa 1820-1822). The homestead at “Macquarie” (circa 1820–1822) has also been restored and the formal rooms will be open for viewing.



“Macquarie” “1863 Photograph courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – Icely Family Albums

Circumstantial evidence supports the assertion “Macquarie”, containing the original 1000 acre land grant to Lieutenant William Lawson by Governor Lachlan Macquarie as Lawson’s reward for his contribution in finding a way across the Blue Mountains, is the oldest farm and oldest continuing residence west of the Great Divide. In its 200 years of European history “Macquarie” has only had two owners prior to the Hennessy family, namely, the Lawson and McKibbin families. Accordingly, it remains remarkably unaltered.

“Macquarie” is situated approximately 12 kilometres south east of Bathurst on the O’Connell Road and approximately 8 kilometres from the Great Western Highway.

The property will be open from 10.30am to 2.30pm, at 3397 O’Connell Road, O’Connell (south east of Bathurst).

Refreshments will be available. It would be appreciated if visitors would bring their own folding picnic chairs. Limited seating will be provided.

Entry fee: \$10pp (Concessions for families, children and seniors). Net proceeds raised on the day will be donated to the Bathurst Community Op Shop.

Paul Hennessy

To assist with catering it would be helpful if you could **RSVP by 7 March, 2018 to:**

Paul & Bonny Hennessy

"Macquarie" 3397 O'Connell Road

O'Connell NSW 2795

Email: bonnyhen@bigpond.net.au

Telephone: Bonny - 0405 442 025, or Paul - 0405 442 026

Historical Tour of Cockatoo Island

Colo Shire Family History Group are holding a tour of the historic Cockatoo Island on Tuesday 27th March 2018.

In 1839 the Island was chosen as the site of a new penal establishment by the Governor of the colony of New South Wales, Sir George Gipps. Between 1839 and 1869 the Island was used as a convict prison. Initially, prisoners were transferred to Cockatoo Island from Norfolk Island, and were employed constructing their barracks and rock-cut silos for storing the colony's grain supply.



Dry dock 1872

In 1869 the convicts were relocated to Darlinghurst Goal and the prison complex became the Industrial School for Girls and also a Reformatory. In 1871, the name Cockatoo Island was dropped in favour of Biloela.

Ship building began on Cockatoo Island in 1870. In 1913, Cockatoo Island was transferred to the Commonwealth Government to become the Naval Dockyard of the Royal Australian Navy.

In 1933, Cockatoo Island was leased to the Cockatoo Docks and Engineering Company Limited for 21 years. The lease was renewed in 1954 for a further 20 years and again in 1972 for 21 years.

Itinerary:

- A train will leave Richmond Railway Station at 7.41am, arriving at Central at 9am, then change trains for Circular Quay.
- The Ferry for Cockatoo Island leaves at 9.45am and arrives at 10.14am, to meet the tour guide at the visitors centre at 10.40am to start the tour.
- After the tour you may look around at your leisure.
- It is recommended that you bring the following items with you: water bottle, hat & sun screen, wet weather gear, enclosed shoes and lunch.

Cost is \$16.00 for the tour. This does not include ferry or train to Circular Quay. Money is payable to Colo Shire Family History Group, posting cheques to PO Box 206 Richmond NSW 2753.

*For inquiries and bookings: Neil Renaud Ph: 0423 157 089 or Joy Shepherd Ph: 02 4588 5867
Bank details provided by the Group upon request.*

Exhibition: Fire: a site-specific installation

The Woodford Academy Management Committee launched “*Fire: a site-specific installation*” by Blue Mountains artist Kevin-Jo Smith on Saturday 20th January 2018. The exhibition was also available on 17th February 2018, and there is one day left to run on 17th March 2018. The installation engages with concerns of climate change and the bushfire season in the Blue Mountains, and responds to investigations of the Academy’s collection of research by historical guests, researchers, artists and the local indigenous community, the Darug and Gundungurra people, who have provided records of documenting bushfire in the past, through written word and illustration.



Smith’s artwork emerges from her collection and reuse of consumer by-product materials. Her process is a tribute to the natural world and a ritual against its destruction. Her work explores shelter, environments and cultural climates, through both exhibited works and the lived process behind those pieces.

Elizabeth Burgess

Museum Entry & Exhibition:

Adults \$6, Concession/Child (4-16yrs) \$4, Family \$15 (2 adults, 2 children)

Guided Tours - \$2/Person (4+years)

Woodford Academy 90-92 Great Western Highway, Woodford
(on street parking available on Vale Rd)

Hours 10am-4pm

Contact: woodfordacademy@gmail.com

Reminder: Exhibition at Mount Victoria Museum

There will be an exhibition marking the 150th anniversary of the railway to Mount Victoria, at the Mount Victoria & District Historical Society’s Museum, commencing on 5th May 2018. The event commemorates the Governor’s arrival by train on 1st May 1868 to declare the line open.

The exhibition takes the form of a photographic display relating to the railway and text describing the impact over the years of the railway to the village of One Tree Hill, as Mount Victoria was originally known. Various other attractions will be staged, such as shingle splitting on site and a poetry recital relating to trains.

The official exhibition opening by Trish Doyle will be held at 11.15 am. Champagne and nibbles will be provided.

Bring the family to share the fun! The museum will be open at 12 noon to 3pm for its usual session charging \$5 adults and \$1 per child.

Jean Winston

Please contact Jean Winston on 02 4782 7866 for further details.

Regular Opening Hours: Weekends, public & school holidays from 12 noon to 3pm.

Closed Christmas Day and Good Friday.

Guided groups and coach parties can be accommodated at other times by contacting the Curator or Publicity Officer. www.mountvictoriamuseum.info

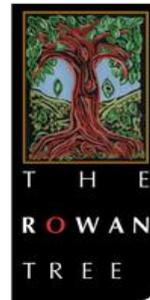
The Museum is located at the back of the Mount Victoria Railway Station at Station Street, Mt Victoria.



New Mountains Museum Advisor

A new museums Advisor has now been appointed by Blue Mountains City Council, to replace Lynn Collins.

Gay Hendriksen is a local based at Blaxland, and familiar with the special nature of the Blue Mountains and the many and varied communities which make up the mountains region. Some of you may have already met Gay and she may have already visited some of your museums and heritage/cultural organisations in the area.



Gay has said she firstly wishes to become familiar as quickly as possible with what each museum or organisation does, their custodianship of collections, their vision for their special places and their needs and challenges, so that she can be of best use under her role. She says it is a special thing being part of this kind of network, ensuring the tangible and intangible heritage survives, sharing the passion, the stories, the object and site histories the interpretations and the knowledge.

We look forward to working with Gay in the greater Blue Mountains region. *Patsy Moppett*

Contacts:

*Gay Hendriksen,
Founding Partner*

The Rowan Tree Heritage and Cultural Services

rowantree.hc@gmail.com

Ph: 0447 189 137

Yvonne Jenkins Memorial Award 2018

This award is held annually in memory of Yvonne Jenkins OAM, from Rydal, whose vision was to found the Lithgow and District Family History Society and was well known for her work as an author, artist and family and local historian.

The essay title for the Award, announced during 2017, is "A Favourite Family Heirloom I have, or would like to have". The winner of the Award will be announced on Saturday 19th August 2018.



Yvonne Jenkins



Heirlooms.....

The Award is in the form of a certificate and free membership of the Lithgow & District Family History Society Inc, for the following year. Entry is open to members and non-members of the LDFHS and is to be in the form of a short essay (not to exceed 1,000 words).

Entries close on 30th April 2018.

Further details about the competition are available on the Society's website and Facebook page, email or may be obtained by writing to the Secretary, PO Box 516, Lithgow NSW 2790.

Patsy Moppett

Email: ldfhs@lisp.com.au

Website: www.lisp.com.au/~ldfhs/

Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: MAJOR WORKS: MUSEUM CLOSED FOR MINIMUM OF FOUR WEEKS FOR ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORK

The Museum management reluctantly advise that due to the commencement of major works starting from Monday 12th February 2018, the Museum will be CLOSED to the Public until Sunday 25th March 2018.



The scheduled Public Open Days that were to be held on Sunday 25th February & Sunday 11th March have been CANCELLED.

The works are required to address the following:

- Reduction of injuries as a result of trips and falls.
- Improve accessibility across the site for the general public and those with mobility issues.
- Increase undercover storage for railway exhibits.
- Restoration of the Roundhouse forecourt area.

The works will enable a much better and safer Museum for everyone, visitors and staff alike.

Patsy Moppett

Check their website for further information.

Errors

A correction is offered on the advice of a reader with regard to a photograph printed in the January-February Newsletter, Issue 54, page 5, on Carlon's Farm, Green Gully. Megalong

Valley. The photograph is of a group of bushwalkers, the T.I.G.E.R. walkers – that being an anagram of their names, the ultra walking athletes of the day.

The error lies in that the woman, third from the right, is in fact not Alice Carlon, but Dot English, the famous “barefoot bushwalker”!

The other “error” mentioned was that the article stated that serious bushwalking did not start until after WW2. It is acknowledged that very serious walkers such as Miles Dunphy were out and about long before WW2. Perhaps the information provided in the research material referenced related to the publicity afforded bushwalking back before the war, given that the extremities of many of their extraordinary exploits have only come to light since the war. BMACHO apologises for these inaccuracies.

Recording history will always be a work in progress. Any corrections, additions, or incidental information is always welcome.

Patsy Moppett

Blue Mountains Historical Society Activities 2018

BMHS have planned an interesting range of speakers at Tarella, Hobbys Reach, for the first part of 2018, as follows:

3 March 2018 - McLaughlin Lecture

- Speaker: Phil Hammon – *Bleichert before and after*

7 April 2018 – AGM

- Speaker: Max Hill – *Living in the Kedumba Valley*

5 May 2018 – Monthly Meeting

- Speaker: Magda Cawthorne – *Hidden History of the Blue Mountains*

2 June 2018 - Monthly Meeting

- Speaker: Sue Castrique – *Convict History of Cockatoo Island 1839-1869*



Tarella cottage museum

Monthly excursions are also held and details will be provided in a full calendar of events on the Blue Mountains Historical Society website as they come to hand, so stay tuned!

www.bluemountainshistory.com

BMACHO Conference 2018: Heritage Landscapes

Book in now for the 2018 Conference, “*Heritage Landscapes*”. The Conference will be held on Saturday 12th May 2018, at Mount Victoria Manor, 11 Montgomery Street, Mount Victoria. Take advantage of the \$60.00, **early bird registration**, up to 12th March 2018. The cost will be \$70 for registrations from 13th March to 30th April 2018. This registration fee covers individual attendance at the conference, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Speakers have been confirmed, and a few changes made to the topics to be covered on the day:

- Keynote Speaker – Stuart Read, Office of Environment & Heritage: “Landscape and garden-themed trails as Blue Mountains lure”.
- Colleen Morris: Heritage consultant: “Sorensen Gardens”.

- Associate Professor Ian Jack, Senior Fellow and Archivist, St Andrew's College, University of Sydney: "Eurama and the nearby Parkes property at Faulconbridge".
- Kate O'Neill: Woodford Academy Management Committee: "Woodford Reserve 1830-2018: as good as the most capricious taste could desire".
- Mary Reynolds: Mount Wilson & Mount Irvine Historical Society: "Mount Wilson Gardens".
- Aunty Sharyn Halls: Gundungurra elder and member of the Gundungurra Aboriginal Heritage Association: "The Gully & Gundungurra Country".
- Bruce Cameron, historian & author: "The Blue Labyrinth".



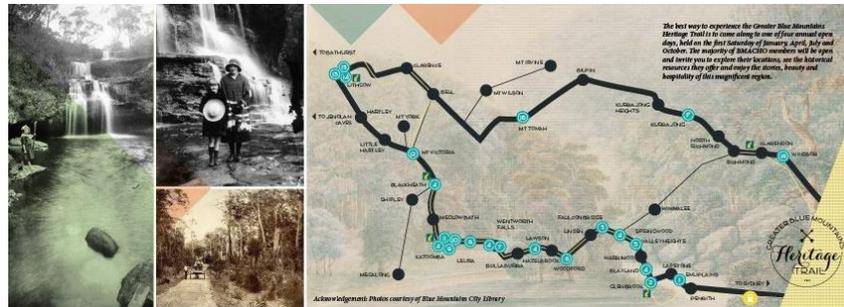
The Conference is Proudly sponsored by Scenic World Shared

Registration is from 8.45am and the Conference concludes at 4.30pm. Accommodation is available within Mount Victoria and at the Manor, and train access takes you to within walking distance of the venue. Trade tables will be available.

Full costs, program and booking details can be found on the BMACHO website.

Patsy Moppett

Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail Update



BMACHO continues to promote the Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail and members' upcoming events. BMACHO have reprinted the Heritage Trail brochure which has now been distributed to visitors' centres across the region. During 2017-18 BMACHO are holding a competition to encourage visitation to Trail participant properties, and the competition entry forms are incorporated into the brochure.

Visitors to any of the participating venues as identified on the Trail brochure can either answer the set-out questions or obtain a stamp showing they have been to a venue.

BMACHO will hold a prize draw approximately every six months.

So - Heritage with Altitude!!

The Trail is an ideal activity for the kids and grandkids, be it in the school holidays or any weekend! Collect the Greater Blue Mountains Heritage Trail brochure with the "Passport Competition and entry form" insert, and discover artifacts with altitude!

Great prizes to be won. Check our website <http://heritagedrive.com.au> for the brochure, form and list of prizes, or collect the brochure and insert from visitor centres at Glenbrook, Katoomba, Lithgow, Clarendon, Bathurst, Oberon, and Orange. Trail participants will also have brochures and forms available.

Email committee@bluemountainsheritage.com.au if you would like a brochure and form posted to you.

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

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

To find out more about BMACHO visit www.bluemountainsheritage.com.au

BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

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

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

Website: www.bluemountainsheritage.com.au **ABN:** 53 994 839 952

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

1. To raise public consciousness of the value of cultural heritage
 2. To encourage and assist cultural heritage
 3. To initiate and support cultural heritage activities not already covered by member organisations.
- One of the aims of BMACHO is to bring the various bodies into closer contact to encourage them to work more closely together and to provide a combined voice on matters of importance within the heritage sector.

Affiliations: BMACHO is a member of the Royal Australian Historical Society and is affiliated with the Better Planning Network.

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 Mountains Botanic Garden, Mt Tomah; Blue Mountains City Library; Blue Mountains Cultural Heritage Centre; Blue Mountain Education & Research Trust; 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; Eskbank Rail Heritage Centre; Everglades Historic House & Gardens; Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc; Hartley Valley District Progress Association; Hawkesbury Historical Society Inc; Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Inc; Leuralla NSW Toy & Railway Museum; Lithgow & District Family History Society Inc; Lithgow Regional Library – Local Studies; Mt Victoria & District Historical Society Inc; Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc (including Turkish Bath Museum); National Trust of Australia (NSW) – Blue Mountains Branch; National Trust of Australia (NSW) – Lithgow Branch; Nepean District Historical Society Inc; Norman Lindsay Gallery and Museum; Paragon Cafe, Katoomba; Scenic World Blue Mountains Limited; Springwood Historical Society Inc; Springwood Historians Inc; Transport Signal Communication Museum Inc; Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum, Woodford Academy Management Committee, Zig Zag Railway Co-op Ltd. The following are individual members: Wendy Blaxland, Fiona Burn, Ray Christison, Dr Wayne Hanley, Associate Professor Ian Jack, Ian Milliss, Patsy Moppett, Keith Painter and Dr Peter Rickwood.

Committee: The management committee for 2017-2018 (from March 2017) is: Patsy Moppett (President and *Heritage* Newsletter Editor), Ian Jack (Vice President), Jan Koperberg (Secretary), Philip Hammon (Treasurer), Jan Koperberg (web sites), Dick Morony (Public Officer/Membership Secretary/ Calendar Editor), Suzanne Smith (Events and Venue Co-ordinator), Fiona Burn, Peter Brownlee and Roy Bennett.

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

Blue Mountains History Conference 2018 sub-committee: Summar Hipworth, Ian Jack, Jan Koperberg and Patsy Moppett.

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