

# HERITAGE

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OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

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## GOVERNOR CONTINUES HER SUPPORT FOR BLUE MOUNTAINS HERITAGE

HER EXCELLENCY, Professor Marie Bashir, AC CVO earlier this month continued her close support of Australia heritage with yet another visit to the Blue Mountains, when she officially launched Hazelbrook historian and author, Ken Goodlet's latest book *Blue Mountains Journey*.

Professor Bashir said it was a privilege to have been invited to be the bicentenary patron and praised *Blue Mountains Journeys* as a "glorious book" and "a gift to Australia".

She said she was pleased that Australians were embracing their history.



*NSW Governor, Professor Marie Bashir congratulating author Ken Goodlet. Photograph: David Hill BML0T*

## Three years of Crossing events gets underway

THREE GRANITE boulders in the Hartley Valley have been placed in a new position in symbolic preparation for the bicentenary of the first European crossing of the Blue Mountains into Hartley

The boulders were taken from the property of Hartley resident Dick Austen and transported to the grounds of the Hartley School to commemorate the valley's history



*Local sculptor Henryk Topolnicki overseeing the placement of the granite boulders.*

which includes Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson's journey through the area in 1813.

The NSW Governor, Professor Marie Bashir will "inaugurate the rocks on June 1, the date when it is thought the explorers passed close to the school's location.

Hartley District Progress Association secretary Ramsay Moodie said the commemorative rocks also acknowledged the special geology of the valley from high sandstone escarpments down to its granite base.

Events big and small, some conceived five or more years ago and some in recent weeks have started to get underway across the region and in other parts of the country to commemorate the bicentenary of the Western Crossing.

The Hartley Valley rocks memorial is only one of many such events ranging from the magnificent

re-enactment walk by descendants of the three explorers along the route taken by Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson, to a mass flyover the region by civilian and military aircraft, fireworks displays and the presentation of holey dollars to school children.

Meantime, 200 years to the day on May 11, 2013, on the site, once the property of Gregory Blaxland in St Mary's, NSW Governor, Professor Bashir farewelled descendants and other participants on a trek --- one of the more innovative activities the Blue Mountains Blue Wave - authentic re-enactment.

Professor Bashir said the first recognised European crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813 not only provided fresh farmlands for the starving colony and a pathway to future gold, sheep and wheat wealth, it represented the enormous string of achievements throughout Australia's history and the world-renowned "Aussie" quality of mateship.

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## An opinion from the editor.....

### Three years of festivities and commemorations have begun with little help from government

As one of the largest commemoration and celebrations ever to occur in this region gets under way it is worthy to note that the ideas, planning and organisation of most of these events has been the result of dedicated individuals, community groups assisted by the RAHS..

Had it not been for the enthusiasm, dedication and ingenuity of these people there would not have been this iconic series of events to commemorate and celebrate the bicentenary of the first European crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813 by the party led by Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson; the subsequent surveying of the route across the Great Dividing Range by Evans in 1814 which led to the opening of the golden west to allow the nations great pastoral wealth to contribute to the country's economic stability for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century; and the building of the road by William Cox and his party of convicts which allowed Macquarie to travel inland to a site where he proclaimed Bathurst as a town in 1815.

There has so far been a dismal failure of government to contribute more than a token amount of funding to either the overall commemoration or the multitude of events so far planned for the next three years as celebrations roll from St Maryd to Bathurst. It appears so far that the Australian government has contributed very little while the NSW government has done little better and local government despite all its rhetoric was never expected to come to the party with loads of money.

This *Opinion* hastens to be grateful for what government has contributed but far more funding should have been forthcoming for this magnificent opportunity to promote this region. Had government provided funds to say 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the budget expended on

the political advertising under the guise of public information in the run up to an election for just one of its projects, then the economic gain to this region through tourism alone would have been tremendous.

As it is, it has been the generosity of people like Philip Hammon and Tom Colless, those associated with local business houses and other individuals who have so far funded many of the bicentenary activities while groups like Blue Mountains, Oberon and Lithgow Tourism (BLOT) and Business Supporting the Bicentenary (BSB) have made their contribution through entrepreneurial skills. It is not too late for government to accept the challenge of a substantial funding for events planned from now until 2015.

There are many exciting events which are occurring as part of the commemoration and celebration in May and June 2013. However, the prize for sheer guts and determination against all odds for a brilliantly conceived authentic re-enactment which has captured the imagination of large numbers must go to the John O'Sullivan and his small group of volunteers.

The NSW government bureaucracy should hang its head in shame for its shambolic attempts to stifle both the participants in the Blue Mountains Blue Wave re-enactment 21 day trek and for ensuring that campsite locations were kept secret for fear that too many people might turn out to meet with the participants, some of them descendants of the three explorers. This over governing of our lives has reached the height of ridiculousness and full marks must go to those who persevered with the pioneer spirit along the pioneer way.

**John Leary, OAM -  
President, Blue Mountains  
Association of Cultural Heritage  
Organisations Inc.**

# New faces, new ideas for BMACHO management committee

NEW FACES often bring fresh ideas to an organisation, as will no doubt be the case with the four new members of BMACHO's management committee.

Following the recent annual general meeting of BMACHO, Kevin Frappell of Glenbrook, Wendy Hawkes of Lithgow, Patsy Moppett of Yetholme and Jean Winston of Mt Victoria became members of the committee.

John Leary, OAM has returned to the presidency following a break due to illness after 5 years as the inaugural president

Associate Professor Ian Jack continues for the 8<sup>th</sup> year as vice president, while Jan Koperberg was re-elected unopposed as secretary. Others re-elected unopposed for 2013-14 were Dick Morony, Doug Knowles and Scott Pollock.

Former president, Pamela Smith did not seek re-election as she has moved from the region.

Speaking at the annual general meeting, John Leary complimented Pamela on the work she had done during her two years at the "helm"

"I personally was most grateful that Pamela had accepted my invitation to be the president when I stepped down two years ago.

"Pamela certainly deserves credit for many of the things that she and Jan were able to do and which certainly brought credit to the association.

"In particular Pamela's proactive approach to many of the advocacy issues on the periphery of our organisation's aims and objects was most admirable.

"I certainly admired her part in trying to save the Springwood civic centre and her support of the Better Planning Network lobby group.

"I strongly believe BMACHO should be involved in advocacy although it may be in a limited fashion.

"Of course the crowning glory of the two years must be the effort Pamela put into finding speakers for the Blue Mountains History Conference.

"Pamela's work in leading BMACHO will not be forgotten and I do thank her sincerely and hope that through Springwood Historians and Pamela's Blog, she will continue to be associated with the heritage and history of this region," Mr Leary said.

"Few organisations are so fortunate as BMACHO to have as secretary, Jan Koperberg and without her dedication and pleasing manner many of the achievements over

recent years probably would not have occurred.

"Jan is well known among members of historical societies and admired for her attention to detail.

"Societies often comment favourably about the up-to-the-minute information over wide range of topics, so promptly conveyed by e-mails to societies which are members of BMACHO.

"In the absence of a treasurer for the past year or more, Jan has also diligently filled this role and for this I am very grateful," John Leary said.

"It goes without saying that any historical or heritage group that has the support of Ian Jack is indeed fortunate.

For many years Dr Jack has been, and remains, an active exponent and promoter of Australian history and of the heritage of the built environment.

"Ian has been described as a consummate scholar, but the free advice and the benefit of his vast knowledge is a living legacy.

"Ian was a long-time serving president of the RAHA and was elected as Fellow of the Royal Australian Historical Society in 2003.

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***Jan Koperberg has been elected as secretary a position she has held since 2010 Jan has also been acting as treasurer for sometime***



***Associate Professor Ian Jack continues for the 8th year as vice president of the Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations Inc.***



***John Leary , OAM returns to lead BMACHO having been the inaugural president from 2006-11.***

# New faces join committee

"Ian's dedicated support of BMACHO has brought much credit to this organisation.

"I look forward to continuing to work closely with this pre-eminent Australian historian as he starts off on his 8th year as vice president.

"The incoming committee is well balanced with people like Dick Morony, Doug Knowles and Scott Pollock who have worked on the committee for a number of years.

"Dick has been responsible for membership matters while Doug has been working behind the scenes ensuring meetings and events are organised.

"Scott as the association's webmaster has redeveloped this valuable communication tool and is expected to work closely with newcomer Wendy Hawkes in developing social media for the association in this current year.

"The quiet input into BMACHO's deliberations and the wise counsel of former treasurer, Joan Kent of Kanimbla and that of Judy Barham neither of whom sought re-election, will also be missed," Mr Leary said.



Joan Kent (pictured above) holds an Honours Degree in History from Macquarie University and a Masters Degree in Social Science from the University of Birmingham as the holder of a British Australian Bicentenary Scholarship.

She has worked as a professional historian and as the research historian to the National Parks & Wildlife Service.

In retirement she operates an Alpaca breeding stud with her

husband Tom in the Kanimbla Valley and is involved in the 2013 commemoration of the European crossing of the Blue Mountains.

Judy Barham is the new president of Blue Mountains Historical Society having been elected at the society's AGM last month.

Judy has known for about 12 months that she would be taking over the reigns and leading the society in their role as host society for the RAHS State Conference, to be held in Katoomba early November this year.

Both Judy and her husband, Ken, worked in IT.

The four new members of BMACHO's management committee are, Patsy Moppett, Wendy Hawkes, Kevin Frappell and Jean Winston

## PATSY MOPPETT

Patsy has worked as a town planner and heritage officer in local government in the central west of NSW for some 22 years, her work including management of heritage programs, heritage advisory service, heritage committee and local heritage funds.

She has also worked in private consulting, undertaking planning, heritage and environmental research and reporting.

She has a Bachelor of Town Planning Degree and a Diploma in Conservation and Land Management, and has completed other courses related to heritage, planning law, property planning, the environment and permaculture.

Patsy undertakes history and heritage research and report writing, having written the book "*A History of Cow Flat*". She is currently working on a history of the Lower Turon goldfields, and various family history projects.

She is convenor of the Cox's Road Project Committee, which was formed to undertake the listing of the road on the State Heritage Register. Under this committee she has assisted in the preparation of reporting for the NSW Heritage Office, addressed a number of



**Patsy Moppett**



**Jean Winston**

groups in regard to the history of the road project, undertaken site investigation, and assisted in many other research aspects of this original western crossing.

She lives at Yetholme

## JEAN WINSTON

Having been born and brought up in the UK Jean has always been interested in history. Jean says the high school which she attended was the oldest girls' day school in England. It was founded in 1844 and was visited by Charles Dickens.

Soon after Jean moved to Katoomba in 2001 she joined the Mount Victoria and District Historical Society and has been a volunteer at the museum ever since.

Jean has worked as publicity officer for most of that time. Jean says she finds the eclectic collection fascinating and enjoys working in the only general historical museum in the mountains.

Mount Victoria Museum was represented in BMACHO by Jean Arthur until she was unable to continue and Jean said she is proud to follow in her footsteps.

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# New faces join committee

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## WENDY HAWKES

Having trained as a school teacher, Wendy Hawkes in 2000 started teaching in primary schools in the Blue Mountains and Lithgow areas focusing on special education and emotionally disturbed students before becoming the cultural development officer at Lithgow City Council which includes managing Eskbank House and museum.



**Wendy Hawkes**

Wendy says her interest in culture began as a child when she moved with her family to Papua New Guinea and spent her childhood and teenage years amongst a culture that values art, dance and music highly.

Returning to Australia at the end of high school Wendy completed a teaching degree.

Wendy began a Masters of Art Administration in 2006 at the College of Fine Arts, UNSW and realised she wanted to pursue a career helping others enjoy art as much as she does, especially in rural areas.

When Wendy moved to Lithgow she added a love of history to her love of art as she began exploring the area with the local photographic group.

“Beginning my new career as cultural development officer at Lithgow City Council is a fantastic

opportunity as it allows me to fulfil my ambition of helping others access culture and history, either by creating it or experiencing it, while being surrounded by culture and history myself,” Wendy said.

“Eskbank House and museum, at which I am based part of the time, is an excellent venue for storing knowledge and history and from which to share it.

“I hope to make Eskbank House and museum a place that the community calls home and in which it feels a real sense of ownership as well as a place people like to come to visit from outside Lithgow.

“I look forward to forming links with other community cultural organisations.

“There are other exciting cultural projects outside the museum that I will be involved in and I am very much looking forward to sharing in the exciting cultural future of Lithgow,” Wendy said.

## KEVIN FRAPPELL

A former councillor who served for 4 years on Blue Mountains City Council, Kevin Frappell is the vice president of Glenbrook and District Historical Society.

A resident of the Blue Mountains for 30 years, Kevin spent almost 40 years in the NSW public service dealing with the administration management of Crown Lands.

He retired in 1999 holding a senior position, State Manager - Crown Lands.



**Kevin Frappell**

Kevin is currently a director of the Catholic Cemetery Board which is responsible for the management of a number of metropolitan cemeteries.

These cemeteries include Catholic cemeteries at Rookwood and Field of Mars, Liverpool, Kemps Creek, North Rocks and Greendale.

Kevin has a particular interest in built history and its preservation for future generations, including the various early rail constructions, buildings, roads, cemeteries etc.

He and his wife Frances have three children and five grandchildren.

## Blue Mountain Education and Research Trust a new member of BMACHO

Blue Mountain Education and Research Trust has joined BMACHO as a new member.

The trust is a small not-for-profit organisation located at Lawson.

The objectives of the trust are to publish and promote research and education on Blue Mountains history, archaeology, religious ideas and philosophy.

The chair of the trust is Father Eugene Stockton, DD, PhD and author, biblical scholar and self described “local hermit” .

The trust also auspices the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Archaeology Forum.

One of the better known publications of the trust has been *Blue Mountains Dreaming: The Aboriginal Heritage* which is now published in its second edition.

This second edition has new chapters written by experts in their fields and gathers together the latest research and information about the original inhabitants of the Blue Mountains. It provides a fascinating account of histories, languages, legends and European contact and serves as a model for regional studies elsewhere.

# 1813: THE FOUR SUMPTER HORSES OF BLAXLAND, LAWSON AND WENTWORTH

by John Low, OAM

WHEN THE EXPEDITION led by Gregory Blaxland (1778-1853) William Lawson (1774-1850) and William Charles Wentworth (1790-1872) left Blaxland's South Creek farm on May 11, 1813 in quest of a passage over the Blue Mountains, their departure was noted quietly in a paragraph on page 2 of the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* several days later.

Noting their spirit and determination, the writer also made special mention of their "prudentially taking with them four sumpter horses" (Anonymous 1813).

The *Gazette* writer's particular comment on the decision to take packhorses is interesting.

As the "grand narrative of the Blue Mountains crossing (Lavelle 2012, p. 28) developed over the next two hundred years the four horses, along with the four 'servants' and five dogs, slipped into the background, becoming mere decorative appendages to the main story of the "dauntless three".

Little thought and few words have been given to them.

Was the decision to take the horses in fact a prudent one, introducing, as explorer/historian Ernest Favenc argued in 1888, a new era of exploration in which horses would play a significant part or is bushwalker/historian Ross Brownscombe (2004, p. 223), writing over a century later, correct in concluding that the decision to take them was a bad, even stupid, one with the horses proving more of a hindrance than a help?

The four sumpter horses deserve reflection and offer an interesting angle from which to approach the 1813 expedition.

## The horse in earlier Blue Mountains exploration: George Caley

While Francis Barrallier (1773-1853) was toying briefly with the idea of using horses as part of a supply chain to provision his November 1802 expedition (Macqueen 1993, pp. 69-70), the botanist George Caley (1770-1829), son of a Yorkshire horse dealer, was also giving thought to the role horses could play in exploration.



*The sumpter horse*

His correspondence with his employer Sir Joseph Banks gives some insight into his thinking.

Writing to Banks on November 1, 1802, a month or so after Barrallier had made a reconnaissance journey using two horses, Caley made the following remarks:

"[Barrallier] is upon the eve of setting off again with a larger party, and instead of horses he takes out two bullocks. ... I am so vain as to think that with another man besides myself, and a horse, that I can go further than what this party will, provided the weather is favourable. I have often lamented that being bred a horseman had been all lost labour in forwarding a pursuit in natural history, but at length I am undeceived, for as a traveller in this country it has

given me an advantage over all others. When Mr. Barrelier (sic) returned I perceived his loss for the want of the like." (Macqueen 1993, pp. 70-71; Andrews 1984, p. 15)

Again, on November 8, 1802, he continued:

"Mr. Barrelier (sic) set off on his journey on Thursday last. They were 10 or 11 in number, and all had guns [and] a cart with two bullocks. This party, I understand, are likely to go a great way if we credit the report; but in my opinion it will fail, for they cannot go above 2 days' journey before they must part with the bullocks, and then every man must carry his own provisions, and he must be a very strong man that can carry 20lb extra of his gun, ammunition, etc. They talk of making stations in order to have supplies forwarded. Upon a horse I can take 100lb of food extra of all other articles for my pursuit. I am not afraid to travel by having only another person besides myself. By this I have not the encumbrance that will always be found in a large party." (Macqueen 1993, p. 71)

Caley's observations proved accurate for, having established his first depot at Nattai, Barrallier's planned supply line of depots failed to materialise and he and his men returned "footsore and short of provisions" (Richards 1979, p. 20) on December 2.

Subsequent letters to Banks suggest Caley may have made a number of Blue Mountains excursions using a horse, though only one appears to have been documented.

Lasting nine days, it occurred in February 1804 when he crossed the upper Nepean River and journeyed some distance into the mountains with one companion and a mare laden with provisions (Andrews 1984, p. 15).

# Did Caley meet with Blaxland as early as 1810 to discuss Blue Mountains venture?

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This was not, however, “the grand mountain journey” (Andrews 1984, p. 15) he was dreaming of and about which he had written to Banks almost a year earlier, on May 13, 1803, telling him that “next spring I mean to visit the ruggedest part of the Blue Mountains” and adding that “this will be a tract impassable for to take a horse”.

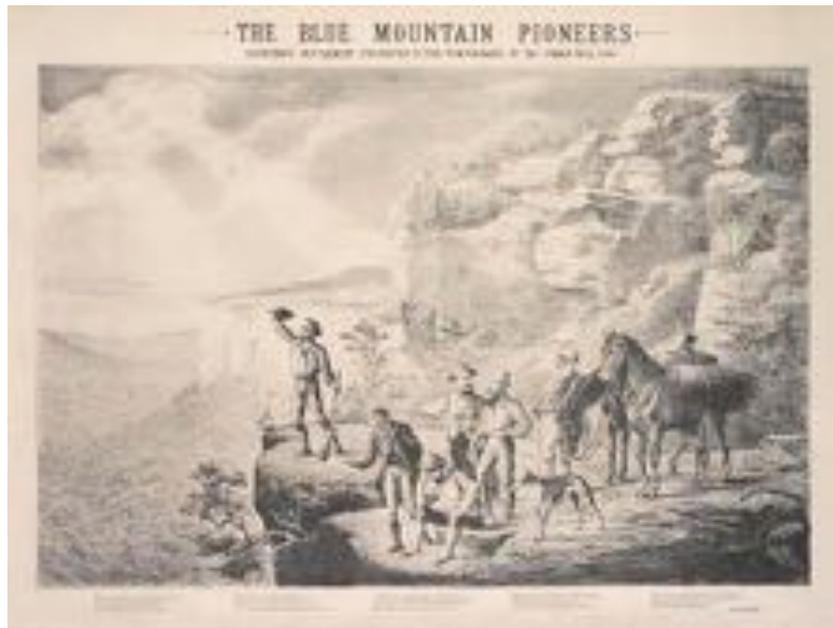
His opinion on the horse’s place in his own plans had clearly changed and the February 1804 expedition (and any others he may have made) did not persuade him otherwise for on August 18, 1804 he informed Banks: “In the course of a month I think of going a journey into the mountains for about a fortnight ... I have already travelled the ground that can be done with a horse.” (Andrews 1984, p. 16)

And again on November 1, 1804: “Upon the eve of going a journey ... Having tried every part to the westward for to penetrate into the interior with a horse but always having been prevented by very barren rocky ground I have now fitted myself out as well as the colony will afford for such a journey.” (Andrews 1984, p. 17)

A day or two later Caley set out with three companions and a dog, equipped for about 20 days. In his journal he listed in some detail his provisions: biscuits, flour, rice, portable soup, pork, sugar, tea, “two fusees (small muskets) and a brace of large pistols”, 20lb of ammunition, cooking utensils, compass, brush clearing implements etc.

The total weight to be divided between Caley and his companions must have been at least 250lb and this was unlikely to have lightened as the expedition progressed because “as the food diminished the natural history collections took its place”. (Andrews 1984, pp. 101-102)

When he returned, his comments to Banks (December 16, 1804) on the conditions he encountered were blunt: “My journey to the Carmarthen Mountains was a very



*The 1813 Expedition depicted in the Sydney Mail Christmas Supplement, December 25, 1880 (State Library of NSW).*

rough one. I was out three weeks which was as long as I was able to abide for the want of provisions. The roughness of the country I found beyond description. I cannot give you a more expressive idea than travelling over the tops of the houses in a town.” (Andrews 1984, p. 24)

Such conditions certainly seemed to confirm the unpracticality of a horse.

But could Caley have later changed his mind again?

Though his expedition got bogged down in the Devil’s Wilderness and failed to re-find the ridge that would have seen them into the Hartley Valley, Caley did report from the top of Mount Banks that “to the eastward very high land is seen” (Andrews 1984, p. 79) and found cause to reflect upon the possibilities such high land might offer for easier travelling (Andrews 1984, p. 81; Cunningham 1996, p. 118).

Could he have thought more on this and not only seen the potential of the ridges but also renewed his faith in the value of the horse?

Though there is no evidence to substantiate it, is it possible that Caley met with Gregory Blaxland

and discussed Blue Mountains exploration prior to his departure for England in May 1810? (Richards 1979, pp. 38-39) Sir Joseph Banks, after all, was a mutual friend (Blaxland, in fact, sent Banks a copy of his Blue Mountains journal in 1816).

Blaxland also mentioned Caley by name in correspondence with Commissioner JT Bigge in 1819, though including him with others who had believed that a Blue Mountains crossing was impossible (Richards 1979, p. 175).

While this might suggest that if indeed he had met with Caley their discussion was unfruitful, it should be remembered that by 1819 Blaxland was nursing a grudge against Macquarie.

He was feeling badly treated and ignored and was playing up his achievements to Bigge, a ready listener to complaints against the governor.

It has also been suggested that Caley met with William Lawson while the latter was in London between 1810 and 1812 ostensibly to act as a witness at the court martial of his superior officer, Lieutenant Colonel George Johnston.

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The anonymous writer 'X.Y.Z', probably the tobacco merchant Thomas Horton James (Havard 1953), believed this and wrote in March 1827, in an article for Wentworth's *The Australian*, that: "no sooner [had Lawson] arrived from London where he had met Mr Caley, and frequently discussed the practicability of a mountain pass, than he determined to set out on the expedition to find a passage over the Blue Mountains". (Jervis 1954, pp. 74-75)

While there is no record of Lawson ever confirming James' statement, nor did he deny it.

Despite the lack of direct evidence, it is still interesting to speculate that, if such meetings did take place, issues such as ridges and packhorses may well have been discussed.

For Caley's part, it is clear that he never lost his interest in the Blue Mountains, as can be seen from a letter he wrote to his friend George Suttor on August 10, 1812: "Oh! Botany Bay! I wish I could forget you! But this will never be the case as long as your mountains haunt me." (Webb 2009, p. 80)

### The decision to take horses in 1813

By 1813 Gregory Blaxland, his pastoral concerns under pressure from the deteriorating conditions on the coastal plain, had clearly been thinking for some time on the possibilities of expansion and had made several earlier trips into the mountains.

The first began as a picnic excursion by boat up the Nepean River with Governor and Mrs Macquarie in November 1810, during which they ventured into the gorge of the Warragamba and would almost certainly have discussed the possibilities of a crossing.

Blaxland was clearly enthused and made a quick return journey a few days later and soon followed this up with a further more rigorous exploration that strengthened his conviction "that it was practicable to find a passage over the mountains ... by the ridge which appeared to run westward, between the



**A moment during the 1951 re-enactment of the 1813 crossing (Blue Mountains City Library).**

Warragomby and the River Grose" (Blaxland 1823, p. 65).

This latter expedition was undertaken in the company of "three European servants and two natives, with a horse to carry provisions and other necessaries" (Blaxland 1823, p. 65).

Blaxland was clearly aware that the length of time an expedition could stay out depended on the provisions it was able to take and that, if on foot, a leader had to balance what each man could carry against his ability to still manage the hard graft of walking and clearing a path.

## ***"Four horses laden with provisions, ammunition and other necessaries"***

This was certainly a problem that had plagued earlier expeditions and his use of a horse in his 1810 excursion shows that he was giving practical thought to the matter.

Though discouraging him, mistakenly perhaps, from the use of Aboriginal guides (he felt their geographical knowledge was too limited; (Blaxland 1823, p. 65), he seems to have been satisfied with the role of the horse and when the main expedition left his farm at South Creek on May 11, 1813 it was equipped with "four horses laden with provisions, ammunition, and

other necessaries" (Blaxland 1823, p. 67).

It has been suggested by Ross Brownscombe (one of the few historians to give the subject more than a passing thought) that the decision to employ horses in 1813 was a bad one, made simply on the basis of class, that this was "a 'gentleman's excursion' and unlike their predecessors, the 'dauntless three' had no intention of carrying their own provisions." (Brownscombe 2004, p. 223)

This seems to me, however, too cynical and shallow a judgement, down-playing the seriousness of their intent and ignoring their obvious willingness to embrace hard physical labour.

Colonial gentry and driven by economic self-interest, certainly, they were nevertheless, as Lawson's journal in particular makes clear (Lawson 1813), prepared to share the heavy work of exploring and cutting a path with their 'servants'.

The horses seem to have been a deliberate strategy to save all five members of the expedition from the extra burden of carrying their arms and supplies.

Brownscombe states further that the decision to take horses was "not very smart because most of the difficulties the party encountered, particularly the hand cutting of the track ... , were the result of the horses' inability to make their way unaided through the thick bush" (Brownscombe 2004, p. 223).

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# They proved it possible to get animals over the mountains and open the way to the west

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While the explorers, as we shall see, did encounter difficulties with the horses this judgement again seems too hasty and misses what I think was another important reason for taking the horses, other than as beasts of burden.

The explorers' journals make it clear that, unlike Caley, they were not primarily interested in "going farther than any person has yet been" (Andrews 1984, pp. 17-18) but, rather, in finding a practical route across the mountains along which both men and livestock could travel.

By taking the horses they were proving that it was possible to get animals over the mountains and, to this end, the labour invested in cutting a path was a necessary imposition.

Towards the end of his account, while admitting that they had not completely crossed the mountains, this was clearly what Wentworth was saying when he wrote (using 'cattle' in its older and broader sense): "we have at all events proved that they are traversable and that too, by cattle – a circumstance which ... has been hitherto deemed impossible". (Wentworth 1813, p. 114)

## The horse in Australia 1788-1813

When the First Fleet arrived in early 1788 nine horses, purchased from the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope and primarily of Spanish origin, were landed: one stallion, three mares and three 'colts' (1 male, 2 female) plus a further stallion and mare bought privately by two of the marine officers (Binney 2005, p. xvi).

Though a government stud was soon established, the authorities showed little interest in horse breeding in the early years and the better quality Arab, Thoroughbred and Jennet horses that followed were imported largely through the commercial enterprise of the officers of the NSW Corps and various wealthy free settlers ('exclusives').

The importation of large numbers of Spanish Jennet mares during the 1790s and the fact that Arab stallions dominated breeding up to the 1820s meant that the colony's horse population by 1813 was primarily composed of Arab and Arab-cross horses.

Such strong Arab bloodlines, combined with the freedom of open pasture lands, began to produce a local horse of hardy character, strong and with good wind and increasingly suited to the local environment (Kennedy 1992, pp. 12, 80, 84).

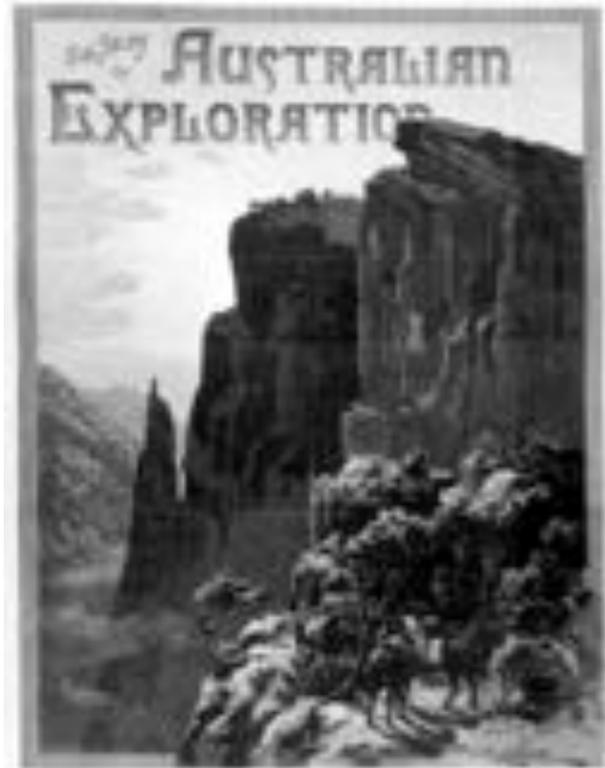
Even Commissioner JT Bigge, loaned a saddle horse by John Macarthur during his time in NSW 1819 -1821, was impressed with the quality, endurance and speed of the colonial bred horses (Kennedy 1992, p. 85).

The success of early horse breeders such as John Macarthur, D'Arcy Wentworth and Samuel Marsden was founded on Jennet mares and Arab stallions (Kennedy 1992, p. 83).

Because the business practices of these 'privateers' were not always strictly legal and they sometimes operated without official approval it is difficult to track exact numbers of horses in the colony.

Illegal imports did not always appear in official census figures (Binney 2005, pp. xvii-xviii).

By the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, there were probably something like 300 horses in the colony, most owned by



*The 1813 Expedition as depicted in the Illustrated Australian News, January 1, 1891 (State Library of Victoria).*

officers and wealthy free settlers. Horses were expensive and the preserve of 'gentlemen'.

Their number had increased to almost 1000 by 1808 and by 1815 numbered close to 2,500. (Kennedy 1992, pp. 13-14).

The first officially sanctioned race meeting was held at Hyde Park in October 1810 (at which Wentworth Jnr rode one of his father's horses to victory) and by the time Blaxland's party set out for the mountains horse breeding was a minor (compared to cattle and sheep) but established part of pastoral activity on the Cumberland Plain.

All three of the explorers owned horses and large pastoral properties.

Blaxland had 'Brush Farm' and 'Lee Home' at Eastwood and South Creek respectively, Lawson 'Veteran Hall' at Prospect, and Wentworth 'Vermont' on the Nepean River.

Continued page 10

# The four sumpter horses were likely locally bred

## Continued from page 9

On his first small property acquired at Concord in 1807, Lawson had kept six horses and his interest continued when he established Veteran Hall.

Following his retirement from the military in 1824 he became a significant player on the Australian equine scene, importing a number of stallions and breeding and racing numerous horses. (Binney 2005, pp. 35-38)

His horses were also prized by the emerging coaching services.

In an 1826 memorial written to Earl Bathurst of the Colonial Department he claimed to own 70 horses (along with 9,000 sheep and 1500 head of cattle) (Magann nd., p. 68)

The four sumpter horses chosen in 1813 were most probably locally bred, selected with an eye for fitness and stamina and, in light of the above, primarily of Arab descent.

They were the precursors of a great equine heritage, for the pasture lands to which they helped open a passage would become, with increased Thoroughbred imports, a nursery for that hardy Australian stock horse, the Waler, a horse that later found its place in both the 'bush' ('Man from Snowy River') and 'ANZAC' (Australian Light Horse) legends. (Yarwood 1989, p. 17)

## The performance of the horses during the expedition

Though a detailed list of the expedition's provisions is not available, a list of sorts can be made by using the journals themselves and the list of Caley's provisions mentioned earlier.

In this way some idea can be formed of what the horses were required to carry.

The expedition took seven muskets plus ammunition, tents, brush clearing implements (hooks, hoes etc.), compasses and cooking utensils.

Their food included salt meat and flour and probably, like Caley, also a

supply of biscuit, rice, sugar and tea and perhaps even the portable soup which Caley valued greatly.

With seven men, the weight of these provisions would have been considerably greater than Caley's.

Five dogs and four horses, of course, also had to be fed and while the odd bird or wallaby might have helped feed the dogs, as we shall see the natural fodder available for the horses proved inadequate and had to be cut where available and added to their load.

The horses were not burdened, though, with a growing collection of natural history specimens!

There is no doubt that the loaded horses experienced problems with the mountain terrain and sometimes stumbled and fell. (May 13, 19, June 4) They "travelled very awkwardly", wrote Blaxland, "being much incommoded by the small trees and brush at places and the ridge they followed being very crooked and intricate between the gullies" (Blaxland 1813, p. 3).

The ground too, often with sharp, jutting rocks and loose stones that made ascents and descents especially difficult, severely tested the horses.

The general method of proceeding was to cut a path through the bush and then bring the loaded horses forward.

A camp would be established and a couple of men left to look after the horses and provisions while the others cut and cleared a path forward through the often thick brush, returning to camp at the end of the day.

The daily distances achieved often varied considerably and sometimes, when the going was especially difficult, they camped in the one spot for a couple of days and were forced to re-walk the same section of cleared track several times. It was tedious and exhausting work.

Several times they were forced to redistribute the horses' loads.

Descending Mount York (May 29) they used a hoe to cut a small

trench to prevent the horses from slipping, but even so "the descent was so steep, that the horses could but just keep their footing without a load, so that, for some way, the party were obliged to carry the packages themselves." (Blaxland 1823, p. 74).

On the return ascent of Mount York (June 2) they again had to carry the horses' loads for part of the way and later, towards the end of the return journey (June 4), "one of them fell this day with its load quite exhausted and was with difficulty got on after putting its load on the other horses" (Blaxland 1813, p. 11).

On only one occasion did they actually lose a horse. It got away in the night (May 16) and fortunately they found it again the next morning "about a mile and a half back" (Blaxland 1813, p. 4).

The most serious and regular problem was lack of feed and water.

Good grass was generally difficult to procure on the mountains, reported Blaxland, the horses surviving on "coarse swamp grass or rush [as] nothing else could be got for them." (Blaxland 1813, p. 5).

"It was", confirmed Wentworth, "the scanty fare which these swamps afford that enabled our horses to exist." (Wentworth 1813, p. 112)

Where grass and rush was available it had to be cut and loaded on the horses for later use.

Occasionally only enough water could be found for the men and the horses went without.

Perhaps the decision, unlike the majority of earlier expeditions, to go out in the cooler months was made not only with the men in mind, for there is little doubt that the horses would have fared very badly in the hot, dry months (Brownscombe 2004, p. 223).

By the time they got the horses down Mount York "they were getting into miserable condition" (Blaxland 1813, p. 9).

**Continued page 11**

## A wise innovation or silly mistake?

Continued from page 10

Soon, however, they passed into "open meadow land clear of trees, covered with grass two and three feet high" and "encamped on the bank of fine stream of water to rest themselves and to refresh their horses" (Blaxland 1813, p. 10).

Feed for horses continued to be a problem even after the road was built and had to be carried, until inns offering baiting facilities began to appear in the 1820s and 1830s.

It is interesting that many of the feed and water locations identified in 1813 eventually became regular stopping places for stock, then as locations for inns and eventually towns.

Springwood, Lawson ('Christmas Swamp') and Wentworth Falls, for example, can trace their stories in this way.

### Conclusion

So, back to the question posed at the beginning – a wise innovation or a silly mistake?

It seems to me that the inclusion of sumpter horses to carry the provisions and equipment was a carefully planned one made in conjunction with the strategy of tracking along the ridge and that their presence was also important in demonstrating the practicality of moving livestock along the route the expedition travelled.

The horses certainly experienced difficulties but they did cope and, despite all the problems, all four returned safely, proving the quality of locally bred horses and their ability to survive in inhospitable terrain.

As suggested by Favenc, this was the horse's first real test in inland exploration and did in a sense begin what he termed "a new phase of exploration" (Favenc 1888, Ch. 2).

George Evans, sent out by Governor Macquarie to confirm and survey the newly discovered route later that year, saw no reason not to follow Blaxland's example and also included horses in his party.

After the road was built, Bathurst established and exploration extended further inland, horses became a common component of exploratory expeditions.

John Oxley in his exploration of the Lachlan River in 1817 took 13 horses, while explorers like Parr, Howe and Gregory Blaxland's nephew John who later (1817-1824) explored the Northern Blue Mountains also made use of horses. (Macquene 2004)

When Melbourne folk were confronted with the extraordinary sight of Burke & Wills leaving that city in 1860 with 28 horses and 24 camels; horses (and other baggage animals) were well and truly taking "their share of sacrificing their lives in the cause" (Favenc 1888, Ch. 2).

**The text of this article formed the research for an address by John Low OAM to the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Historical Society Inc on November 10, 2012 and was later published for that society as Historical Paper No.13.**

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Continued page 12

## The author ... John Low, OAM

Long term former president of the RAHS and vice president of BMACHO, Associate Professor Ian Jack in a tribute to John when it was announced that John had been honoured with the Order of Australia Medal probably more than most succinctly summed up the man, when he wrote:

"All students of heritage and history in the Blue Mountains are much in the debt of John Low.

"By developing a local studies centre of excellence at Springwood Library, John has been an essential force in broadening public awareness of the diversity of surviving evidence.

"John's amiability, unflappability and determination, combined with his own effortless mastery of so many unfamiliar corners of Mountains history, have given him a very special place in the affections of all right-minded scholars," wrote Dr Jack.

John was employed by the Blue Mountains City Library as a local history librarian in March 1982 on a 6 month contract to establish a local history collection.

Following an extension of this contract, he was appointed on a permanent basis in September 1983 and retired in August 2007.

*Wild Ephemera* a collection of some his poems is indicative of his ability and skill as an unbiased observer of the natural and human history of the Blue Mountains.

John is a regular contributor to *HERITAGE* and other newsletters



and journals and has published a number of books.

John is a much sought after and accomplished public speaker.

He is an individual member of BMACHO and served a term on its management committee.

# 1813: The four sumpter horses of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson

Continued from page 11

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## The ubiquitous plaque

Blue Mountains City Council will conduct the invitation only 'Mount York Civic Event' as part of the Blue Mountains Crossings bicentenary celebrations on May 28. A commemorative plaque will be unveiled.

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## Grant to research Woodford Academy students who served in World War 1

Fifteen graduates from Woodford Academy who enlisted in the First AIF during the First World War will be the subject of further research.

A grant of \$2859 from the NSW Office of Communities (Veterans Affairs) will be used to assist this research.

They served in a variety of capacities. Two were killed in action and one was awarded the Military Medal.

They can now be seen as a mini-study of the time and experience of men who served in that war.

There is a large collection of unprocessed resources and records that contains information about these men and their school experiences.

This includes photographs, school records, fees paid family contacts and the like.

It is proposed to research these boys and the period 1910 -1918 and to add their military records to create a teaching and learning experience for schools in the area and the wider community.

The information will be of particular interest to a study of the social history surrounding the men and the motivations that caused them to join.

The untapped material will also be valuable to university undergraduates and research students

A number of years ago, Mrs Neryl Medcalf carried out an extensive study of the men and this formed the basis for an interesting standing display at Woodford Academy.

# 1813: A tale that grew in the telling

1813 has been long celebrated as the year that three intrepid European explorers – Gregory Blaxland, William Charles Wentworth and William Lawson – successfully penetrated the sandstone prison walls around the prison colony at Sydney.

The First Crossing of the Blue Mountains is thus a key historic story of early Australian exploration, as it was the first significant land-based expedition into the continent's interior.

Over 200 years the Blue Mountains have been heavily inscribed figuratively and materially by European travellers, settlers, and their descendants.

First perceived as a barrier to westward progress the mountains were reviled for their 'wildness' in early accounts, but once they had been travelled over, the 'fair prospect' they provided gained them more positive descriptions.

Eventually the mountains became a health and recreation resort in their own right.

The language of bodily health and enjoyment associated with tourism continues to this day.

Parallel with the figurative inscriptions upon the landscape came the material ones.

Trees were marked, cairns built, roads made and later memorials were erected.

Dr Lavelle's book, *1813: A tale that grew in the telling* does not deal in detail with the events of the 1813 Crossing.

Instead it examines the commemoration of the First Crossing through poetry, literature, and visual images as well as commemorative ceremonies, monuments and plaques.

Five chapters are devoted to sites and monuments regarded as icons, each of which marks a focal point or key event in the story of the crossing.

The sites were associated with 'original' events or reputed



**Siobhan Lavelle, OAM, MA, PhD with her latest book *1813: A tale that grew in the telling*.**

happenings, and with later commemorations and celebrations.

The region contains about a dozen sites associated with the First Crossing, ranging from simple monuments such as rock cairns, to more complex sites thickly populated with elaborate landmark structures and explanatory plaques.

The author explains that the sites were erected by local people to claim their part in the historic narratives about European exploration, discovery, possession of the country, national progress and expansion, with explorers as central heroes – the agents of empire and transformation.

Thus an historical narrative may be written both *about* the landscape and also *in* the landscape or place, by the people who live or lived there.

Chapters 1 and 2 examine the genesis, evolution and re-casting of the master narrative during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Chapter 3 examines the commemorative celebrations and ceremonies. Chapters 4 to 8 deal with specific sites, their histories and their roles within the overall ideological construct and requirements of the narrative of the 'First Crossing'.

The 1813 book argues that the details of memorialisation and twists in the overall narrative of the First Crossing are inextricably tied to significant changes in the settler ideology and to historical explanations about Australia's origins and key events.

The sites are discussed in chronological order based upon when they were first identified or memorialised.

Sites discussed in detail include: the Explorers' Marked Tree (Chapter 4), Mount York (Chapter 5), Caley's Repulse (Chapter 6), a series of smaller monuments or sites (Chapter 7), and Mount Blaxland (Chapter 8).

**Continued page 14**

# 1813: A tale that grew in the telling

Continued from page 13

These sites were valued as the product of a dominant narrative that remains remarkable for its longevity.

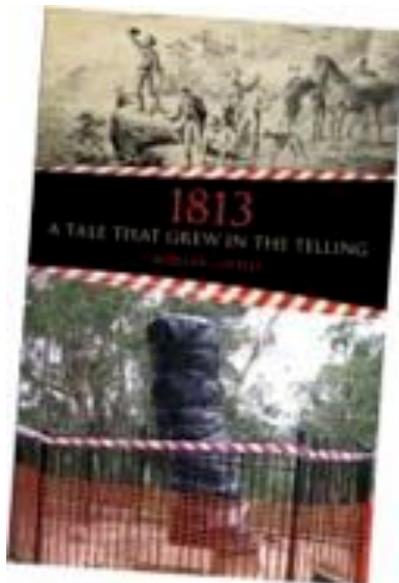
The first site was memorialised in 1884; the last new monument was added to a site in 1988.

Some renewal of structures has occurred recently and new monuments, additions and refurbishment of some existing sites will happen in 2013.

It is argued that the importance of the sites examined in this study lies not in issues about authenticity or otherwise but in the way they have been used in different historic contexts and eras.

With the 1813 First Crossing bicentenary occurring in May 2013, this account of earlier commemorative efforts has special interest.

Dr Lavelle's book was launched in Sydney on April 18, 2013 at History



House by by Associate Professor Grace Karskens and in the Blue Mountains at the Cultural Centre, Katoomba, by Wendy Blaxland on May 3, 2013.

It is available in Blue Mountains independent book shops with a rrp of \$35

## About the author - Siobhan Lavelle, OAM, MA, PhD

Siobhan Lavelle has worked in archaeology and heritage since 1985.

She commenced her career at the NSW National Trust, then established a private consultancy in 1989 providing advice and assistance to the private sector, government and community groups.

From 1994 to 2003 she was the consultant archaeologist for the Heritage Council endorsed "Convict Trail Project" with much work undertaken on an honorary basis.

Between 1990 and 2004 Siobhan won several heritage awards, both state and national.

Siobhan completed a history PhD on the First Crossing of the Blue Mountains in 2004.

In 2008 she received a National Trust Commendation (Bronze Medal).

In 2009 she received an OAM for service to historical archaeology and heritage conservation, particularly the preservation of colonial roads and cemeteries.

Siobhan re-joined the public sector full time in 2005 and works as a senior heritage officer for the Heritage Council of NSW.

## BMACHO support for Thompson Square National Heritage

### Listing

Nomination of Thompson Square, Windsor for National Heritage listing has been supported by BMACHO with a submission made to the Federal Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Tony Burke, MP

Thompson Square, Windsor, the oldest town square in Australia, is under threat from the present plans of Roads and Maritime Services, to replace the existing historic Windsor Bridge with a high level road and bridge, which will cut a swathe through Thompson Square, isolating some of the colonial buildings on the northern side from the rest of the square.

A new bridge is planned and this would encroach on Thompson Square and the remaining historic buildings.

The current bridge can be repaired for a lot less than the cost of a new bridge and these repairs would last for at least another 20 years. There is an alternate route that could be taken for a new bridge over the Hawkesbury River.

Thompson Square, Windsor, has the highest significance and value in the course of Australia's cultural history, as the first developed example of this country's town planning.

It is within the planned structure of Macquarie's largest and first developed rural town, yet still visibly within the context of its 1794 farming roots.

Thompson Square retains its civic structure and the form it evolved between 1795 and 1800. The Square remains still legible, useful and esteemed in 2013, after 218 years.



**A BASTILLE DAY LUNCHEON** will be held at Everglades Historic House and Garden, Leura on July 14.

A delicious French flavoured luncheon will be served in the stunning art deco tearooms. Bookings essential to 4784 1938 or [everglades@nationaltrust.com.au](mailto:everglades@nationaltrust.com.au)

# Scenic World sculpture exhibition stands well in heritage rain forest

Blue Mountains artist, Daniel Kojta, has been awarded the \$20,000 Scenic World acquisitive prize for his highly polished stainless steel sculpture, *Reflect Phi [a momen]*.

*Kojta's work* is one of 35 artworks from as far as America and Ireland, on exhibition for selection along the rainforest floor at Scenic World.

The award was presented by Scenic World's joint managing directors, Anthea and David Hammon, on behalf of the Hammon Family Council, during the official exhibition opening last month

The winning artwork consists of three independent but related sculptures translated through the mathematical Phi formula of Australian natives.

Kojta said: "it was an incredible opportunity to receive the award at an exhibition that is growing and supporting professional contemporary arts in the Blue Mountains".

Judges for the 2013 exhibition were: artist and Environmental Research Initiative for Art (COFA) Director Allan Giddy, Dinosaur Designs Creative Director, Louise Olsen, and Associate Professor in Art History and Theory at the College of Fine Arts (COFA), Dr Alan Krell.

The judges said the winning sculpture was a unique response to site that reflected both a modernist and contemporary aesthetic sensibility.

"What appealed to us about Kojta's work was its beguiling ability to reflect subtly the immediate environment and successfully create a dialogue between the geometric and the organic," they said

Highly commended sculptures are;

- Last year's winner from Wollongong, Greer Taylor's *resting place* – "a delicately knitted wire structure that belies its materiality and seemingly floats in the rainforest";

- Nigel Harrison's *Bypass* – "an enigmatic work that references and challenges the rainforest through its evocation of 'energy' both literally and figuratively; and

- Ireland's Darragh O'Callaghan's "copper pipe configuration, *Serosa* that resonates wonderfully with the calligraphic qualities of the rainforest."

Exhibition manager, Lizzy Marshall, said Sculpture at Scenic World had again pushed the boundaries of onsite responsive art.

"All of our exhibiting artists have magnificently created within the context of an environment that is adherent to the complexities of sculpture and its mass, tension, formalist ideals and narrative objectives," she said.

Australia's only dedicated rainforest sculpture exhibition includes the indoor *Sculpture Otherwise* exhibition, and public programs featuring guided and independent tours, free evening lectures, and family and children's activities.

Sculpture at Scenic World 2013, offered a \$20,000 acquisitive award, the new \$5000 artist peer award, a \$2000 Scenic World staff choice award and The Carrington Hotel's \$1000 people's choice award.

Scenic World has also released a series of special overnight exhibition packages, starting at \$207.50 for couples and \$299 for families, at a collection of iconic Blue Mountains hotels and resorts.

Sculpture at Scenic World closed on May 19, 2013.

For more information about Daniel Kojta, visit [www.onaircontemporary.com](http://www.onaircontemporary.com) For interviews, images or media familis, contact Australia PR director, Michelle Grima, on 0416 114 911 or email [mtgrima@gmail.com](mailto:mtgrima@gmail.com). For more information about the event and packages, visit [www.scenicworld.com.au/sculpture](http://www.scenicworld.com.au/sculpture) Scenic World is an inugural member of BMACHO



**Daniel Kojta's highly polished stainless steel sculpture, *Reflect Phi [a momen]*.**



**David and Anthea Hammon standing with sculptor Daniel Kojta winner of the \$20,000 Scenic World sculpture award . Photograph: Cindy Waldron.**

# Mt Victoria museum creates new displays

MOUNT VICTORIA and District Historical Society is working hard to present new displays at the museum for the Crossings commemoration on May 25 and 26.

One room will be devoted to aspects of the crossing from the time of explorers to Evans, Cox and the Macquaries.

Dramatic images will be in place and tools of trade on display from cross cut saws and a boot-maker's last to the historic circumferenter, an early surveying instrument.

Another new display is of artifacts from the Gundungurra tribe which were donated to Melbourne Ward for his local museums and later donated to the Mt Victoria and District Historical Society.

The third major display is of farm implements from farms in the local valleys, showing how resourceful the settlers were and what tough lives they led.

It is hoped to improve signage for all these displays.



*Mt Victoria museum is uniquely situated in the beautifully restored sandstone building which continues to service passengers travelling to the west*

Opening hours for the museum for the month of May have been extended and are from 12 noon to 5pm each weekend. The hours for the crossing weekend will be from 10am to 5pm. The museum is housed in the Mount Victoria Railway Station.

There are five display rooms on the ground floor which are wheelchair accessible and there are displays in most of the upstairs rooms. Admission is \$5 adult/ \$1 child.

**Contributed by Jean Winston.**

## Powerhouse Museum Movable Heritage Fellowship 2013

POWERHOUSE Museum Movable Heritage Fellowship 2013

Coming up with an idea for a research project was not difficult for Leanne Wicks from Kandos, living as she does on the Western coalfields of NSW.

Leanne has just been awarded the Powerhouse Museum Heritage Festival for 2013.

Evidence of Kandos' past reliance of the winning of coal doesn't take much digging.



*First hard hat issued to miners in 1947. It is lined with copper mesh. It replaced the cloth hat.*

With superior Kandos cement from kilns heated with Kandos coal contributing to the concrete footings of Sydney Harbour Bridge no wonder it stands strong after 80 years.

Evidence of the regions' present reliance on coal is also easy to find with many coal mines still dotting the landscape.

Fascinated by objects in the Kandos Bicentennial Industrial Museum, which came from the Kandos Collieries, Leanne wanted to tell the story of the many men who have mined the black treasure from 1913 to 2001.

"Having grown up with green coloured glasses, I'm enjoying the challenge of respecting the history of coal-mining, researching the facts about the industry and recoiling from at what some mines are doing to the land," Ms Wicks said.

## Museums workshop

BMACHO will conduct a workshop to assist volunteers to better manage local museums and collections.

The workshop to be facilitated by Lynn Collins will be held at the Mt Victoria & District Historical Society Museum on Saturday, July 20 commencing at 10am and finishing at about 3pm

Lunch will be provided by BMACHO at the Blue Mountains Manor House.

As numbers are limited, only the first 30 registrations will be accepted. Contact Jan Koperberg at [j.koperberg@bigpond.com](mailto:j.koperberg@bigpond.com) or 4751 5834 (leave a message if unanswered) by July 13.

# Newspapers and genealogy

By Audrey King, president Blue Mountains Family History Society

NEWSPAPERS have always played an important role in Australian life.

A wooden-screw printing press came to the colony with the First Fleet and in 1796 George Hughes, the first "government printer", was at work in a small building behind Government House, his job being to print government orders, broadsheets, and so on.

But until 1841 most of the government's printing was contracted out to the many private presses.

In December 1840 Governor Gipps established a government printing office on the corner of Bent and Phillip Streets, and appointed John Kitchen as government printer, with two free men as assistants.

One of these was my husband's great-grandfather, John Spring, who had previously worked on the *Sydney Herald* from its inception in 1831. In 1831 John Spring was not a free man!

At the beginning of 1838, *The Australian* contained a notice advising intending migrating pressmen, that there was constant employment available, as 17 papers were being printed in the colony.

Immigrating pressmen were given free passage for themselves and their families, and *The Australian* itself required two pressmen.

Wages were 50 shillings per week. This was in 1838.

Not all the newspapers established in the colony were successful.

Many were started by men with a bit of spare cash and an axe to grind, and the freedom of the press was abused so much that sensitive governors unsuccessfully attempted to introduce censorship.

Battles raged between various editors, often on sectarian grounds, and libel suits were common.

When people began moving out of the cities, newspaper men followed closely behind, for information was important.

It was the printer or compositor who was the important person behind the newspaper, and in fact many early editors were artisans rather than creative writers. Perhaps we could say the same today in many cases!

The gold rush spawned many newspapers, and when the fields closed and the diggers moved on, so did the presses.

Even away from Sydney the rivalries between newspapers was keen, and Goulburn was a good example, with five papers being printed in the early 1850s and quite a bit of unhealthy rivalry existed.

The first newspaper in Katoomba appears to have been *The Mountain Advertiser* (1876).

William Spring (son of the aforementioned John Spring) started *The Katoomba Times Plain Dealer* in 1889, and then sold it to his son and a partner.

It was not a success and the plant was moved to Kaduna South Australia about 1894.

*The Mountaineer* was begun in 1894, *The Observer* c1895.

Others began, faded, were resurrected, died again and amalgamated throughout this century and now there is just *The Blue Mountains Gazette*.

As I said before, many of the early newspapers were started by men with a message to spread, but today's editors need to be a little more circumspect in expressing their opinions and they usually try to ensure an appearance of impartiality.

The advent of a better educated community means that most people can now think for themselves, and are not keen on having the opinions of others rammed down their throats.

The big metropolitan dailies attract a loyal readership, but the local papers, usually supported by advertising and free to householders, are community-based and so cater for the local area.

They provide us with council happenings and non-happenings, community events, town plans, local gossip, public notices, advertisements for just about everything and (a source of considerable amusement and amazement) letters to the editor.

**Continued on page 18**

## The author - Audrey King

Born and schooled as Audrey Eamens at Parramatta, I became a high school teacher (French) at the new and absolutely huge Fairfield Girls High School back in the 1950s.

My later country service at Murrumburrah Inter High was an absolute pushover after such an introduction. Marriage to another teacher, and a move to Narrabri, was followed by a return to Parramatta.

When the last of our four children started school I was dragooned into primary teaching, which I actually enjoyed, for the next 15 years.

When our two married sons moved to Springwood and Kurrajong we found it easier and cheaper in 1988 to move to Springwood, having taken up a new career in building and renovations on their behalf.

Fortunately, as we've grown older so have they, and even the grandchildren no longer require child sitting.



# Newspapers and genealogy

Continued from page 17

These often provide unbalanced and very partial views, but whether or not we agree with the opinions expressed, at least there is a forum for expression, and in our local area there is a fairly good chance of having a letter printed (unpaid journalists?).

Unfortunately even in country papers we find amalgamations having an effect, and there are very few independent local newspapers left.

So many local newspapers now have a few outside pages devoted to local news, and then the greater part is common to newspapers from one end of the state to the other.

The few remaining independent papers are the successors of those dear to the heart of the family historian.

All newspapers are important to family historians because they set the background for the social history of the times we are interested in, but it is the true country or local paper that makes our eyes light up and takes up an inordinate amount of our time as we are diverted by the trivia in our search for relevant information.

It was in the *Braidwood Observer and Miners' Advocate* of 1862 that I read of the steepness and the narrowness of the road to Araluen that necessitated "up days" and "down days" for traffic.

It was in the *Maitland Mercury* of 1892 that I read "The number of deaths for April is lower than in that month for 10 years past. The government statistician says that this is because people who might otherwise have died in April had died previously from influenza." A touch of Hibernianism here, surely.

I can still remember the hours wasted in taking up linoleum and carpet squares when I was younger.

In those days underfelt was not used — the linoleum or carpet was laid on a few thicknesses of newspapers, and how interesting those papers were many years later!

That's where the waste of time came about.

However, I digress. The great importance of local newspapers for family historians is in the publication of the trivia.

When my mother-in-law holidayed with us in the early 1960s the event was recorded in the Harden paper (she came from Harden) and the Narrabri one (we lived at Narrabri).

The information did not come from us directly, but I guess each paper had its own "gossip writer" whose job was to collect such trivia.

But you all know the sorts of things I have in mind — graduations, weddings, competitions, etc. And if you're lucky you might even find a photograph.

The really big plus is the obituary!! I spent a small fortune trying to discover the death in Victoria of my husband's great -grandmother.

I knew she was still alive in 1863, but every search I requested of the VPRO for later years came back negative.

Eventually, after a plaintive complaint from me, they informed me that Victoria doesn't cross-reference, and that she may have remarried.

This, of course, is exactly what had happened. But it was in the days before public access to BDM's, so I took a trip down to Melbourne and read through the Broadford papers in the Latrobe Library until I found her obituary in 1905.

Obituaries in themselves can be a source of wonder. I have read some very flowery ones (especially from the Grafton and Maclean area) and some that make you feel good, like the one in the *Cootamundra Herald* in 1901: '...Her case was a hopeless one ...Mrs King was ever ready to assist in any local matters, and she was of such a happy nature as to make all around her feel happy with her. In her illness she was visited by a large number of kind friends.' [my husband's grandmother!]

Over the years I had tried to discover more about John Spring and his time in Goulburn in the early 1850s, but the local history association was unable (at that stage at any rate) to help me.



At left, the front page of the first newspaper printed in NSW, *The Sydney Gazette and NSW Advertiser* on March 5, 1803. *National Library of Australia, Trove, Australian Newspapers.*

Continued page 19

## Newspapers

Continued from page 18

Last year I wrote to the Goulburn Family History Society and BINGO! treasures galore!! These included photocopies of advertisements, reports etc culled from the local papers of the time.

Do you wonder that I like local newspapers, and sing the praises of family history societies?

Goulburn obviously has indexed its local newspapers, and it is a hope of mine that the Blue Mountains Family History Society may someday complete a similar index for the benefit of future family (and other) historians.

With my interest in names you can surmise quite rightly that I am also fascinated by the names of newspapers.

In actual fact, there are really not all that many when you consider the vast number of newspapers.

The owners show a lamentable lack of originality or an over-desire for conforming to tradition.

Off the top of my head I can think of: *The Globe, The Sun, The Star, The Gazette, The Press, The Herald, The Mercury, The Advertiser, The . . . Daily, The Observer, The Courier, The Express, The Advocate, The Mirror, The Dispatch and The Signal.* I leave you to add all the others you have come across. Now be honest! Are there many more?

In this article I have done little more than scratch the surface of the importance generally of newspapers in and to the local community.

### ***From underwear to hardware***

HAWKESBURY REGIONAL MUSEUM will celebrate its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary on May 25-26 with a weekend of talks, activities for kids, things to eat and drink and the opening of a new exhibition, *From underwear to hardware* (Hordern Brothers, Windsor 1962-1998)

## Funds for flagging works at Woodford Academy



SANDSTONE FLAGGING areas at Woodford Academy will receive a much needed restoration following a successful application for a grant from the NSW government.

A grant of \$16,000 under the Community Building Partnership Program has been received and the Trust has allocated a further \$21,000 totalling \$37,000 to lift and repair the sandstone flagging areas of the Academy and repaint the external timberwork.

Meantime, Libby Burgess of the Woodford Academy Management committee has been instrumental in the new town entry signs showing Woodford, "Home of the Woodford Academy c 1834.

Libby is also the liaison person with Abigroup, which has agreed to build a connecting path between the Academy and Woodford Reserve, for the Lend Lease Community Day project in September 2013.

This will provide a pleasant alternative entrance for visitors after the dual highway is completed.

In 1979 this property was gifted to National Trust which in 2001 received an Australian government grant of \$1 million from the Centenary of Federation fund for renovation.

***Flagging at the rear of Woodford Academy. Image by John Leary, OAM***

# ***A moment in time...*** **a remarkable exhibition at Hartley**

OPENING MID-MAY *A Moment in Time*, is an exhibition that examines the celebrated crossing of the Blue Mountains by Europeans in 1813, and the consequences of that crossing.

Duncan Wass, chairman of the Hartley District Progress Association 1813 Sub Committee said: "In settling on the name *A Moment in Time*, we have tried to capture the essence of the crossing.

"It was but a moment in time and this is an exhibition that considers what existed before and what came after".

Curated by retired professional historian Joan Kent, now a resident in the Hartley Valley, *A Moment in Time* examines much more than the crossing by Blaxland Lawson and Wentworth and their party.

It begins with a consideration of the rich and ancient geology of the landscape into which the explorers intruded, where ancient sedimentary rocks lie juxtaposed with igneous granite.

In fact, the opening display in the exhibition is a most remarkable large mollusc or Brachiopod fossil, that has never before been on public display.

Discovered in the Hartley Valley, it nestles in, but is removable intact, from the block of late Devonian grit stone in which it was discovered.

Whilst geology is the opening theme, the exhibition explores many aspects of the crossing story, from the Indigenous peoples whose country was being traversed, through the explorers and the development of the Bathurst Road, to the first European visitors to Bathurst.

It closes with a consideration of the life and achievements of some of the earliest settlers in the Hartley Valley, John and Jane Grant and Pierce and Mary Collits who settled here in the early 1820s.

"This significant exhibition is a comprehensive, sophisticated, accessible and absorbing presentation of that exciting yet poignant moment when the Europeans vigorously fanned out westwards - it's a must-see amongst Crossings commemorations," commented noted museums adviser Lynn Collins who has acted as an occasional adviser to the project.

The exhibition has been open to the public on weekends from May 18 and will be until June 16, from 10am until 3pm, and by appointment midweek.

Party viewing can be arranged at any time by contacting Barbara Johnson on 6355 2017.

The exhibition will be held at the historic Hartley School and Hall located just off the Great Western Highway in Mid Hartley Road, Hartley.

*A Moment in Time* is just one element of the commemoration activities the Hartley community is undertaking, all promoted under the 'Hartley Rocks' logo.

Other activities include guided walks and rides along the line of Cox's 1814 road through the Hartley Valley, a project to date sign many of the heritage assets located within the valley and the commitment of a time capsule to inform 2113 residents of the valley.

The Cox's Road walk represents a unique opportunity to walk some of the country traversed by Cox and the explorers, much of which is located on privately owned land and is not normally accessible to the public.

For information on the Hartley Valley's Bicentenary events, go to [www.hartleyvalley.org.au/hartleyrocks](http://www.hartleyvalley.org.au/hartleyrocks) .

For more information on the Bicentenary of the Crossings, go to <http://visitbluemountains.com.au/bicentenary.php>

For any further information contact: Duncan Wass chairman Hartley District Progress Association 1813 Committee, telephone (02) 6355 2043 0414 506 643, Email: [hartleyprogress@gmail.com](mailto:hartleyprogress@gmail.com)



***The Hartley Rock has lain in Hartley Valley for more than 300 million years. Image: John Leary, OAM.***

# Festival to recall bushranger Ben Hall's 1863 raid on Bathurst

A FESTIVAL to mark the 150th anniversary of the Ben Hall raid at Bathurst in 1863 is being planned for the weekend September, 27-29, 2013

The raid on Bathurst saw some far-reaching effects that changed people's lives and the government of the day.

Bathurst District Historical Society president Alan McRae, FAIHA said, the anniversary will take the form of a weekend festival with numerous activities planned over three days.

There will be a full program of re-enactments, talks, tours, historic bushranging and colonial displays and memorabilia, book launches as well as a special dinner with guest speaker and bushranger historian Peter Smith with his talk entitled "Heroes to Villains."

A sub-committee of the Bathurst District Historical Society has been meeting since May last year to organise this special weekend.

This event marks the raid on Bathurst by the Ben Hall Gang and the effect it had not only on Bathurst but the Colony of New South Wales and the police system.

The raid took place on the evening of Saturday October 3, 1863,

sending many residents into a panic as the news was passed around.

It was during the time in history where bushrangers roamed the country from the 1860s till the 1880s.

"Plans for the weekend are well in hand and coming together nicely. There is only a short time before visitors start arriving in Bathurst so be sure to book or arrange your weekend accommodation if you plan to stay for the weekend," said Alan McRae.

The Bathurst Regional Council has granted permission to close Russell Street in front of the historic Bathurst Court House to hold the activities on the Saturday afternoon and has agreed to finance the cost of the closure.

The Bathurst District Historical Society and the committee are very appreciative of their assistance.

Details, locations and information on the dinner, historic displays, talks, tours and other activities over the three days will appear in various issues of a special e-newsletter and media as details are confirmed.

It is hoped some families will use the weekend to incorporate a family reunion, especially on the Sunday.



**Ben Hall - Penzig Collection**

Some may wish to put a plaque on Bathurst's Pioneer Wall which can be organised through the Bathurst District Historical Society on [info@bathursthhistory.org.au](mailto:info@bathursthhistory.org.au) to arrange for the information and application form.

To receive the e-newsletter direct just email [amcrae@lisp.com.au](mailto:amcrae@lisp.com.au)

**Contributed by Alan McRae, FAIHA, President Bathurst District Historical Society**

## BEN HALL RAID DINNER TO BE HELD AT HISTORIC BATHURST SHOWGROUND



A SPECIAL Ben Hall raid dinner will be held on the Saturday evening May 28, 2013, in the historic Beau Brown pavilion at the Bathurst Showground.

It was re-constructed in 1891 and 1892 and was initially known as the Showground Art Gallery (pavilion) having been purchased at Ashfield and dismantled and numbered before bringing it to Bathurst on the train and re-erected on the grounds.

# CABLE CLERICAL INDEX ONLINE

AN INDEX to Anglican Clergy in Australia, prepared by the late Dr Ken Cable and his wife, Leonie is now available for searching online.

Ken Cable was a former councillor of the Society of Australian Genealogists.

Initially, his index was only intended to cover clergy who served in the diocese of Sydney from 1788 to 1890, but it was later extended to cover up to December 31, 1961 (when the Church of England became the Anglican Church of Australia).

Each entry provides both biographical details as well as information on the individual's 'career' within the church.

The Cables initially prepared the index on thousands of hand-written cards and these have now been transcribed in a Word document which is downloadable as a 2826 page PDF document <http://anglicanhistory.org/aus/ccij/>.

## TRUST WALK ON COX'S ROAD

BLUE MOUNTAINS Mountains Branch of National Trust are organising a walk from Mt York to Hartley, down the road constructed by William Cox and his band of convicts in 1814-15.

The walk on Saturday, June 1, follows almost 200 years to the day in the footsteps of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth.

Those who wish to participate should meet at the Mt York car park at the end of Mt York Road, Mt Victoria at 9.30am.

There is much to see to remind us of the past.

The walk is quite steep and walkers need good, strong footwear.

There will be a hearty lunch to greet participants at the bottom and a bus will take walkers back to Mt York.

There is the possibility of a pickup and return to Blackheath Station.

Cost: includes food and drinks, NT members \$30, non-members \$35, child \$10. Bookings/tickets: essential. Contact: Liz Van Reyswood (02) 4757 2694 or [BlueMtsNatTr@gmail.com](mailto:BlueMtsNatTr@gmail.com)



*Cox's Road, Mt York stockyard rail anchorage*



*Cox's Road, Mt York rock cuttings for bridge support*



*Cox's Road, Mt York chipped rock face*

## HAZARDOUS TO HERITAGE

THE BETTER PLANNING Network (BPN) says the new planning laws proposed by NSW Planning Minister Brad Hazzard will endanger our heritage buildings and sites.

BPN's Corinne Fisher said: "With the government proposing that 80% of development will be approved with no opportunity for heritage assessment, community comment or involvement, we can expect a huge decrease in heritage assets over the coming decade.

"We are particularly concerned that Aboriginal heritage which has not yet been listed on a heritage register will simply be bulldozed."

Under the current system things like rock carvings and middens that neighbours are aware of but

are not officially listed on the National Parks register, or are only discovered once the site is surveyed, can be protected.

"The proposed system opens the way for destruction of many priceless carvings, middens and artifacts simply because they have remained hidden and undisturbed, sometimes for thousands of years.

"Now they could be in the way of development where there is no heritage assessment and the community has no right to comment or raise objections," said Ms Fisher.

"We have to rely on the goodwill of developers to declare these heritage items and to protect them."

The same fate will await heritage houses that local government has

been slow to place on heritage registers.

The new planning laws allow buildings with heritage value but which have not been formally listed as heritage to be demolished without any opportunity for their character to be preserved.

"We urge residents who do not want the local character of their suburbs to be demolished and who do not want what is left of our Aboriginal heritage to disappear to voice their opinion strongly to the minister."

"The minister can act to protect heritage. It's up to the community to show him we care."

For more information contact: Corinne Fisher 0421 831 889

## Bradman house wins Trust award



THE ICONIC tank stand, where a young Don Bradman honed the skills that would see him become part of Australian Folklore, is among the amazing and varied pieces of heritage restored and recognised at the 19th annual National Trust Heritage Awards.

The awards have come to represent the pinnacle for those saving our past for the future.

2013 winners include the restoration of a now-vibrant wetlands in the Hunter Valley, re-building a crumbling church, reviving Wollongong's North Beach Bathers Pavilion, creating a 'sand library' to assist with vital mortar restoration projects, and re-shaping the Chinese Gardens in Darling Harbour.

For more information and a list of all the winners visit <http://bit.ly/12SNnFc>

Image: Bradman Project, Conservation Built Heritage - Community/Individual, Joint Winner - Clive Lucas Stapleton & Partners

## The servants and kangaroo hunter

THE NAMES of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson already household names in Australian history are being thrust before the community with regular monotony as this year's Western Crossings bicentenary celebrations and commemoration proceed. But what of the lesser known characters in this much lauded adventure.

Marcia Osterberg-Olsen of the Mt Victoria & District Historical Society has written and had published in the *Sydney Morning Herald's* RSVP column a plea to find and to recognise the descendants of the three servants and the kangaroo hunter who accompanied the three explorers. Marcia wrote that there appears to be no record of these men.

STOP PRESS Two of the convicts with Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth have been named. The kangaroo hunter was John Burns or Byrnes and one of the convicts was Samuel Fairs, discovered recently by Christine Yeats, senior vice president, RAHS. Christine found the information on a petition written in 1817 by Samuel Fairs to the Governor.

## More accolades for HERITAGE

From Conrad Mathias, St Joseph's College Hunters Hill: *Thank you very much for forwarding your excellent newsletter. I am once again struck by the professionalism and accessibility of your publication. The preservation of historical issues and the oral testimony of learned people is such an important facet of a civilised society.*

From Mary Reynolds, research officer Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine Historical Society: *The newsletter is a remarkable triumph.*

From Wendy Blaxland, a descendant of Gregory Blaxland AND playwright *Crossing!* the play: *Just loved the March-April 2013 edition of HERITAGE, and have said so at length in an email to other members of the committee. Well done!*

From Wendy Hawkes cultural development officer, Lithgow City Council: *What a FANTASTIC edition of HERITAGE John. Thanks for popping so much Lithgow things in, especially our workshop. Really appreciate it. The Mercury has agreed to do a column for us on the Crossings every fortnight and I was wondering if I could forward this on to them as a resource as it has so much well researched info on so many events and stories.*

From Kate Matthew – Historian and member of Blue Mountains City Council's heritage advisory committee: *Thank you for another great newsletter – it is a great source of information on the work*

*being done on Blue Mountains history and heritage.*

From Associate Professor Ian Jack former president of Royal Australian Historical Society: *My warmest congratulations on HERITAGE, which goes from strength to strength.*

## BMACHO WILL PROMOTE MEMBERS EVENTS

DICK MORONY, email address [richardmorony@optusnet.com.au](mailto:richardmorony@optusnet.com.au) compiles the 'Calendar of Events' list for BMACHO members and sends it out by email monthly.

Member organisations can send their events for the whole year if they wish or as they plan during the year.

Scott Pollock, email address [everglades@nationaltrust.com.au](mailto:everglades@nationaltrust.com.au) will add members' events, with a description and photograph to the BMACHO website.

Scott would like to receive the submissions about six to eight weeks before the event.

Events are also published in the association's newsletter *HERITAGE*.

*HERITAGE* is published and distributed by e-mail six times a year in January, March, May, July, September, November.

Material including photographs should be e-mailed to John Leary at [johnnanette@optusnet.com.au](mailto:johnnanette@optusnet.com.au) about 6 to 8 weeks before the event for the best coverage.

It is suggested BMACHO members make use of these options for publicity.

In addition to publicity and promotion, it also helps other societies and organisations with their planning.

# Western crossing commemoration 2013-15

great ideas - thoughts - just being talked about or it's really going to happen!

## Poem for bicentenary

LINDEN BUSH POET Gregory North has been commissioned to pen a commemorative ode to mark the first recognised European crossing of the Blue Mountains.

The poem will be recorded and performed at events throughout the Blue Mountains Crossings Bicentenary.

Blue Mountains Lithgow and Oberon Tourism chairman Randall Walker said the crossing is 'such an iconic piece of local and national history that it deserves its own piece of poetry to commemorate the bicentenary'.

"There is no better talent than the Blue Mountains' very own champion bush poet Gregory North, who has already encapsulated many times through poetry the essence of what it is to be Australian, this magnificent World Heritage landscape and the wonderful characters who have formed the community in which we now all live," he said.

Mr North said trawling through the annals of history had provided rich pickings for countless priceless anecdotes to inspire and weave into his poem.

## Music, markets and plane spotting

HARTLEY DISTRICT Progress Association is planning for Saturday May 25 from 10am to 3.30pm, music and markets day at Hartley School Hall, Mid Hartley Road, Hartley.

They are planning for a memorable day of lively music, varied market stalls and the opportunity to view the bicentennial flyover as they pass over Hartley School during the day.

The exhibition *A Moment in Time* will also be open for viewing on that day.



*Businesses Supporting the Bicentenary founders Tom Colless OAM (Colless Foods) and Philip Hammon (Scenic World) at the recent Blue Mountains Bicentenary Community Ball. Photograph: David Hill, Blue Mountains Lithgow & Oberon Tourism.*

## Support for coins to school children

BUSINESS and individuals can help sponsor coins free to all school students in the Blue Mountains.

Sponsorship of \$500 can ensure that 100 or more students receive this historic memento which can be accompanied by a message from the sponsor company or business.

Businesses and individuals can also make a wholesale purchase of coins at \$5 each (minimum order 100 coins). The coins can either be sold at a rrp of \$10 each or used as promotional gifts

The coins are also available to individual members of the community at \$10 plus postage. Orders for 6 or more are free of postage.

Produced by Philip Hammon of Scenic World and co-founder of Business Supporting Bicentenary,

### WENTWORTH FALLS CELEBRATIONS

WENTWORTH Falls Chamber of Commerce will celebrate the bicentenary with an event around the lake on May 25 .

the holey dollar coins are a lasting memento of this historically significant occasion

All enquiries to [sponsorship@bicentenary.com.au](mailto:sponsorship@bicentenary.com.au) or telephone (02) 4757 1425.

Governor Lachlan Macquarie acquired Spanish silver coins to overcome the problem of the early colony not having a currency.

He punched the centre out of the coin, the larger coin being known as the holey dollar and the smaller the dump creating two coins of different values.

## Radio plays

BLUE Mountain Radio Players will present *1813 an all that*, a lighter side of the crossing of the Blue Mountains by Colin Semmler on May 25 at 2.30pm in the Mt Vic Flicks (bookings 4787 1577) and on May 26 at 2.30pm in the Mountain Heritage Ballroom (bookings 4782 2155).

The *Lost Special* by Arthur Conan Doyle will also be presented on each day.

# Beam holds clue to Mayan calendar

CARBON-DATING of an ancient beam from a Guatemalan temple may help end a century-long debate about the Mayan calendar.

Experts have long wrangled over how the Mayan calendar correlates to the European calendar.

Texts and carvings describe rulers and great events and attribute the dates according to a complex system denoted by dots and bars, known as the Long Count.

But the date of its starting point is unknown. Spanish colonisers did their utmost to wipe out traces of the Mayan civilisation, destroying evidence that could have provided a clue.

An example of the confusion this has caused is the date of a decisive battle that shaped the course of Mayan civilisation.

It occurred 1,390,838 days from the start of the count, but attempts to transcribe this into the European calendar have given estimates that vary by hundreds of years.

Anthropologists led by Douglas Kennett at Pennsylvania State

University took a sample from a carved wooden lintel found at a temple in the city of Tikal.

Using a technique called accelerator mass spectrometry, the team concluded the tree was cut down and carved about AD658-696.

The estimate closely matches that of a decades-old benchmark for Mayan dating, the Goodman-Martinez-Thompson method, which put the battle at about AD695-712.

The small discrepancy may be explained by the wood itself, Kennett's team believes. The study, published in *Scientific Reports*, says the huge lintel was taken from a sapodilla tree, which has a very hard wood and would have taken years to strip and carve using stone-age implements.

Historians should now be able to build a more accurate chronology of the rise and fall of the Mayan civilisation, the study says. **AFP**



Mayan mask. Stucco frieze c.250-600AD

## BLUE MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS INC.

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Website: [www.bluemountains.heritage.com](http://www.bluemountains.heritage.com)  
ABN 53 994 839 952

**THE ORGANISATION** Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Organisations Inc. (BMACHO) was established in April 2006 following a unanimous response to a proposal from Professor Barrie Reynolds at the 2004 Blue Mountains Local History Conference which sought from Blue Mountains City Council the creation of a cultural heritage strategy for the city. BMACHO in its constitution uses the definition: "Cultural heritage is all aspects of life of the peoples of the Blue Mountains which was later changed to cover Lithgow and the villages along the Bell's Line of Roads. It therefore involves the recording, preserving and interpreting of information in whatever form: documents, objects, recorded memories as well as buildings and sites." The objectives of the organisation are:  
i. To raise public consciousness of the value of cultural heritage.  
ii. To encourage and assist cultural heritage activities of member organisations.  
iii. 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 Inc.

**HERITAGE** BMACHO's official newsletter is edited by John Leary, OAM.

**Blue Mountains History Journal** is edited by Dr Peter Rickwood.

**MEMBERSHIP** The following organisations are members of BMACHO: Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mount Tomah, Blue Mountains City Library, Blue Mountains Cultural Heritage Centre, Blue Mountain Education and Research Trust, Blue Mountains Historical Society Inc., Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc., Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, Eskbank Rail Heritage Centre, Everglades Historic House & Gardens, Friends of Norman Lindsay Gallery, Glenbrook & District Historical Society Inc., Hartley Valley District Progress Association, Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society Inc, Lithgow and District Family History Society Inc., Lithgow Mining Museum Inc., Lithgow Regional Library – Local Studies, Lithgow Small Arms Factory Museum Inc, Mt Victoria and District Historical Society Inc., Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine History Society Inc. (including Turkish Bath Museum), Mudgee Historical Society Inc., Mudgee Regional Library, National Trust of Australia (NSW) - Blue Mountains Branch, National Trust of Australia (NSW) - Lithgow Branch, Scenic World – Blue Mountains Limited, Springwood & District Historical Society Inc., Springwood Historians Inc., Transport Signal and Communication Museum Inc., The Darnell Collection Pty Ltd, Valley Heights Locomotive Depot and Museum, Woodford Academy Management Committee, Zig Zag Railway Co-op Ltd. The following are individual members: Ray Christison, Associate Professor Ian Jack, Joan Kent, John Leary OAM, John Low OAM, Ian Milliss, Patsy Moppett, Professor Barrie Reynolds, Dr Peter Rickwood and Dr Peter Stanbury OAM.

**COMMITTEE** The committee for 2012-13 is: John Leary, OAM (president), Ian Jack (vice president), Jan Koperberg (secretary), Kevin Frappell, Wendy Hawkes, Doug Knowles, Dick Morony (public officer), and Scott Pollock, Jean Winston.

**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 members. If errors are found feedback is most welcome.