



Newsletter

Museum Maintenance & Closure Museum works conducted by Camden Council

The long anticipated temporary closure of the Museum, to allow for repair work to the Museum building by Camden Council, has now commenced.

Following a successful Australia Day Parade in which the Historical Society participated – Ian and Marilyn Willis as passengers in Max Boardman’s delightful blue vintage vehicle - together with a large number of visitors to the Museum afterwards, the doors have shut. Dianne Matterson walked in parade.

Staff from International Conservation Services have commenced carefully to move items out of the Nixon Room. Building work should commence on or about 9 February, and last about 5 to 6 weeks. ICS will then return all display items to their previous position in the Museum, and ensure that the Museum and its displays are in a clean condition. It is anticipated that the Museum will be ready to reopen after Easter.

Photos taken by Fletcher on 29 January show the stage reached by ICS.

A big thank you to the many volunteers who assisted with the opening of the Museum on Australia Day. Similarly, the work of volunteers who manned the reception desk for the short period we were open in January is much appreciated. **(Peter Riordan)**



Nixon Room upstairs mostly empty (F Joss)



Empty Nixon Room with some curious folk looking at the gutters (I Willis)

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General Meetings

- 11 February
- 11 March
- 8 April

Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.00pm

40 John St, Camden. All welcome

During closure meeting places will be advised on Camden Museum Facebook and email.

Ph: (02) 4655 3400

A Thought by Peter Riordan

The object of CHS is to study, promote and preserve interest in the history of, in particular, the Camden district. A history that commenced with the First Nations people, and expanded rapidly through the vision of the Macarthurs, the toils of the early Camden Park families, free settlers and regulated convicts, and the growth of the village of Camden from 1840.

It is estimated that the population of the municipality will grow to in excess of 240,000 people in the next 10 years. The population grows by an average of about 100 new residents each week. As part of the Australia Day celebrations this year, Camden welcomed 176 new citizens.

Events occurring today will soon become part of Camden’s burgeoning history. We must endeavour to make our community a tolerant, peaceful and engaging one, a place of opportunity for all. To draw attention to all the good deeds and acts that have occurred in our history. To be kind to one another. We need to embrace, and be inclusive towards, all our new residents and citizens.

The museum has an important role to play in this endeavour. We must promote it with vigour.

All correspondence to: secretary@camdenhistory.org.au • Editor: Dr Ian Willis OAM • President: Peter Riordan • Vice Presidents: Jo O’Brien & John Wrigley OAM • Treasurer Fletcher Joss • Secretary: Vacant • Immediate Past President Dr Ian Willis OAM • General Committee: Frances Warner, Robert Wheeler, Julie Wrigley, Ian Ramsay, Dianne Matterson • Volunteer Co-Ord: Dawn Williams & Leonie Jackson • Webmaster: Warren Sims Facebook: Jo O’Brien

Editor's Notes

Planner for 2026

Upcoming events and meetings:

February 11th: 7pm CHS General Meeting. Guest speaker: Peter Claxton

February 20th- 22: Spin Out Rock and Roll Festival

February 21: Car show on John Street & CHS exhibition in Galleria

March 11 : 7pm CHS General Meeting

March 20 & 21: Camden Show

April 3- 6: Easter

April 8 : 7pm CHS General Meeting

April 18-May 18 Australian Heritage Festival

September 5-13 History Week

Australia Day 2026



Historical Society car in the 2026 Australia Day parade (Thanks to P Sweeney)

Fashionable ride in a 1920s tourer driven by Don from the Razorback Crankhandle Car Club. (P Riordan)

A Tribute to Eda

Dawn Williams writes:

Eda Mai Woodward 5th January 1949 – 27th September 2025 pictured above with her best friend since school days Christine Pietyga.

Eda loved to participate in school productions, and later in her life she became a cub leader in the boy scout movement where both her brothers were involved, it was during this time that she met her husband to be Gordon Woodward. Her friend Christine along with her sister and sister-in-law were bridesmaids for that wedding. Christine moved into Blue Hills Village about 20 years ago and Eda became part of that scene as well joining in social events and outings. When Eda joined the Camden Museum as a volunteer she invited Christine to join her and they have worked side by side for many years, always having a big smile, kind words and lots of laughs. Eda was also a volunteer for the Camden Hospital and their street stall outside the chemist in Argyle street. She is sadly missed by us all and we extend our thoughts and best wishes to Gordon and their sons Stuart and Paul.



Dianne Matterson

Citation Nomination for Arts and Culture Award Camden Council 2026

In 2011, Dianne commenced the extensive task of transcribing the oral history interviews held by Camden Museum and Camden Library's Local Studies and followed this by scanning, transcribing and indexing the convict records held by the Museum. During the late 1990s, a series of "fireside chat" conversations allowed community members to share their memories of local shops and residents. These stories existed only in handwritten notes until Dianne undertook the task of digitising them. This inspired her to begin an even larger project: researching the history of the businesses and buildings of Argyle Street from 1840 to the present day, and collating information from Museum archives, online records, books, photographs, and local knowledge into one cohesive resource. Her research is meticulous and methodical, ensuring even the smallest details are captured. The resulting timelines—available at the Camden Museum—are complemented by indexes of businesses and individuals, providing an invaluable resource for family historians, researchers, and anyone interested in Camden's rich history.

Dianne is also a regular contributor to the Camden Historical Society's journal, writing engaging articles about Camden's history. She has delivered presentations to Camden Historical Society and Camden Area Family History Society, and contributed to the Australian Heritage Festival exhibition 'Argyle Streetscape Camden' and the History Week exhibition 'A River Runs Through It'. Dianne recently accepted the position of minutes secretary on the Camden Historical Society committee and has devoted considerable time to producing a new edition of the Camden Museum Volunteers' Guidebook.

Dianne's work has created resources that directly enrich Camden's cultural identity, strengthen community connections and ensure that valuable historical knowledge is preserved for future generations.

Kellee Cordina



Nixon Room, Camden Museum



Ian Willis writes:

For those who want to reminisce this is what the Nixon Room looked like before ICS cleared out all the displays and objects.

The room was originally set up in 1998 when a two-storey extension was added to the northern side of the building.

The plinths and the displays were constructed by members of the society who are mostly not with us any more.

The members were male tradies who had a range of skills that are clear to see from the professional standard of work.

The construction process took months to complete with a crew of about 10 members.

CHS 1950s inspired display

Peter Riordan writes:

Preparation is now underway by Jo and her team for a CHS display, in the Galleria, on "Camden in the 1950s", as part of Spirit of Camden's Spin Out rock and roll weekend (20-22 February). Please get involved in this task, and be present to enjoy the many activities in John Street on the Saturday. We will need to have a presence in the Galleria between 9.00am and 2.30pm on Saturday 21 February.

CAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC



PO Box 566
Camden NSW 2570

Camden Museum & Camden Library
40 John St, Camden.

General Admission Free

Opening Times

Thursday– Sunday 11.00am – 4.00 pm

Phone: Museum 02 4655 3400

<http://www.camdenhistory.org.au>

<http://camdenhistory.org.au/cmindex.html>

email: secretary@camdenhistory.org.au

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The Camden Historical Society

The society was founded in 1957. Its aim is to promote the local history and heritage of Camden. It primarily does this through managing the Camden Museum which opened in 1970. General admission to the museum is free, although visitors are encouraged to leave a donation. The museum is conducted entirely by volunteers. It also receives substantial and continuing assistance from Camden Council.

Historic Precinct

The museum is located in Camden's historic precinct. It is part of the Camden Library Museum Complex. It provides an ideal start for a walking tour of the town area where the visitor can observe the charm and character of the town centre.

Research

The Society's archives are open to the public. General enquiries are free. Specific research by our volunteers attracts a fee plus photocopying. Extensive use of the Society's records is by negotiation.

MEMBERSHIP 2025-2026

Individual \$20, Family \$25

All donations to the Camden Historical Society Inc over \$2 are tax deductible. The accredited value of objects donated to the society are eligible for tax deduction.

Camden Park House

Established on a 5,000-acre land grant in the Cowpastures district in 1805, Camden Park was the visionary estate of wool pioneers John and Elizabeth Macarthur. The current mansion, a masterpiece of Colonial Regency architecture, was designed by architect John Verge. Construction began in 1832 and was completed in 1835, just one year after John's death.

The estate became a hub for agricultural innovation. Under Sir William Macarthur, it hosted Australia's first commercial nursery and pioneered the domestic wine and dairy industries. The property is historically significant for its continuity; it has been occupied by seven generations of the Macarthur family and remains a private residence.

Today, the Macarthur-Stanhams family maintains the house and its internationally renowned gardens. While primarily a private home, the estate opens to the public during an **annual spring weekend** each September. Would you like more information on the **annual open weekend** dates or how to book a **private group tour**? Contact Camden Park at <https://www.camdenparkhouse.com.au/overview>



**Camden Park House 1906. State Library NSW
Photographer AW Allen from family photograph
album of Allen family.**