

CAMDEN HISTORY

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CAMDEN HISTORY

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P.O. Box 566, Camden, NSW 2570. Online <<http://www.camdenhistory.org.au>>

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Meetings are held at 7.30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month except in January. They are held in the Museum. Visitors are always welcome.

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The Museum is located at 40 John Street, Camden, phone 4655 3400. It is open Thursday to Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., except at Christmas. Visits by schools and groups are encouraged. Please contact the Museum to make arrangements. Entry is free.

Camden History, Journal of the Camden Historical Society Inc

The Journal is published in March and September each year. The Editor would be pleased to receive articles broadly covering the history of the Camden district. Correspondence can be sent to the Society's postal address. The views expressed by authors in journal articles are solely those of the authors and not necessarily endorsed by the Camden Historical Society.

Donations

Donations made to the Society are tax deductible. The accredited value of objects donated to the Society are eligible for tax deduction.

Front Cover William Macarthur brought in the "The Waratah Camellia" *anemiflora* (The Camden Park Camellia) arrived in Port Jackson in 1831 on HMS Sovereign. (Engraving courtesy CPH) **Back Cover** New varieties of camellias were developed at Camden Park by nurseryman, William Macarthur, and promoted in his nursery catalogues. (A McIntosh, Camden Park Open Day 2017). Read more <https://www.gardenclinic.com.au/how-to-grow-article/australia-s-first-camellia>

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The Camden District Hospital Nurses' Home

Ian Willis

Over 700 locals and visitors were present for the official opening of the Camden District Hospital nurses quarters, later known as the 'nurses' home', by the NSW Minister of Health WF Sheehan in June 1962. Official proceedings at the opening were led hospital-chairman FJ Sedgewick who said that the hospital-board had been working towards the addition of the new building for many years. (*Camden News* 27 June 1962)

Construction on the building had begun in mid-1961 and had cost £92,000. It was located on farmland purchased by the hospital-board in 1949 opposite the hospital in Menangle Road on Windmill Hill. The three-storey brick building had suspended concrete floors with a brick exterior. It was designed by architects Hobson and Boddington and influenced by mid-20th century modernism and International Functionalism. The nurses accommodation of 40 single rooms with separate bathrooms was a vast improvement on the war-time military barracks.

Adequate accommodation for nurses had been an issue for hospital administrators since the hospital opening in 1902. Originally Camden nurses were provided with two bedrooms within the hospital building which had soon proved to be inadequate. (*A Social History of Camden District Hospital*, by Doreen Lyon and Liz Vincent, 1998, p.17) Nurses were quartered within a hospital complex based on the presumption that this was necessary because of their 7-day 24-hour-shift roster that meant that they worked all hours. Added to this was the Nightingale philosophy that the respectability and morality of the nurses had to be protected at all costs. The all-male Camden hospital-board took their responsibility seriously and considered there was a moral imperative to protect the respectability of their young single female nurses.

Camden District Hospital was the major medical facility between Liverpool and Bowral and the booming Yerranderie silver field mines put pressure on the hospital. More patients meant a need for more staff. In 1907 a government grant allowed the hospital-board to purchase a four-room cottage next to the hospital for £340 and convert it to nurses' accommodation. (*Camden News*, 30 May 1907, 13 June 1907, 6 February 1908, 26 March 1908) Completed renovations in 1908 allowed the hospital-board to appoint a new probationary nurse, Miss Hattersley of Chatswood. (*Camden News*, 18 June 1908) The hospital's status increased in 1915 when the Australasian Trained Nurses Association (ATNA) approved the hospital as a registered training school. (*Camden News*, 28 January 1915) Continuing pressure on the



Camden District Hospital around 1930 in Menangle Road Camden. The nurses quarters built in 1928 are on the right hand side of image. The original hospital building has an additional floor constructed in 1916. The first matron of the Camden District Hospital was Josephine Hubbard assisted by Nurse Nelson with Senior Probationary Nurse Mary McNee. (Camden Images)

nurses accommodation stopped the hospital-board from appointing a new probationary nurse in 1916. (*Camden News*, 6 July 1916) While things were looking up in 1924 when electricity was connected to the hospital. (*Camden Crier*, 6 April 1983)

The hospital continued to grow as the new mines in the Burragorang coal-fields opened up and adequate on-site nurses' accommodation remained a constant headache for the hospital administration. In 1928 the hospital-board approved the construction of a handsome two-storey brick nurses' quarters at a cost of £2950 on the site of the existing timber cottage. (*Camden News*, 12 July 1928; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 July 1928) The building design was influenced by the Interwar functionalist style and was a proud addition to the town's growing stock of Interwar architecture with its outdoor verandahs, tiled roof and formal-hedged garden.

Temporary nurses' accommodation was added in December 1947 as each nurse was now entitled to a separate bedroom under the new Nurses Award. The hospital-board purchased a surplus hut from Camden Airfield as war-



This handsome Interwar building is the Camden Hospital Nurse Quarters built in 1928 on the site of the 1907 nurses cottage adjacent to the hospital in Menangle Road. The brick two-storey building has external verandahs and a formal hedged garden. The nurses' home is one of number of handsome Interwar buildings found in Camden town area. It was demolished for the construction of Hodge hospital building in 1971. (Camden Images)

related activities wound down and the airfield buildings were sold off by the defence authorities. The hut was formerly a British RAF workshop. It measured 71 by 18 feet, cost £175 and was relocated next to the hospital free of charge by Cleary Bros. RAF transport squadrons were located at Camden Airfield from 1944 and local girls swooned over the presence of the 'blue uniformed flyers' and even married some of them. Hut renovations were carried out to create eight bedrooms, two store cupboards and bathroom accommodation at a cost of £370. Furnishings cost £375 with expenses met by the NSW Hospital Commission. The new building was opened by local politician Jeff Bate MHR. (*Picton Post*, 22 December 1947. *Camden News*, 1 January 1948)

As the Burraborang coalfields ramped up, so did the demands on the hospital and the nurses' accommodation crisis persisted. The issue constrained hospital authorities from employing additional nursing staff (*Camden News*, 21



Camden Hospital Nurses Quarters opened in 1962 by the NSW Health Minister WF Sheehan. The building is influenced by 20th-century modernism International Functionalism and designed by architects Hobson and Boddington. The building is located in Menangle Road opposite the hospital complex. (I Willis, 2018)

September 1950) and the opening of the hospital's new maternity wing in 1951 did not help. (*Camden News*, 4 March 1954)

The new 1962 nurses' quarters did not solve the accommodation issue as the hospital grew from 74 beds in 1963 to 156 in 1983 (*Macarthur Advertiser*, 1 March 1983). Patient facilities improved with the opening of the 4-storey Hodge wing in 1971 on the site of the 1928 nurses' quarters. (*Camden News*, 3 March 1971)

The last intake of hospital-based training for nurses took place at Camden District Hospital in July 1984 and nurse education was transferred from hospitals to the colleges of advanced education in 1985. (*A Social History of Camden District Hospital*, by Doreen Lyon and Liz Vincent, 1998, p.58)

Some Nursing Memories

What follows are the memories of a number of local nurses who tell their story in their own voice. The reminiscences are largely unedited and reflect the lived experience of these nurses. This means that there is necessarily some repetition across the individual stories and the memories of the individuals who have written them independently (the editor).

Pat 'Tricia' Smith

I commenced my nurses training at Camden District Hospital in 1964. Back then it was four years training. I completed my training in 1968. Nursing was very different back then. You learnt on the job. Discipline was strict. You had to stand for anyone senior with your hands behind your back. So when you were a junior nurse, you never seemed to sit down, always up and down.

All nurses had to live in the nurses home. Junior nurses on the bottom floor, RNs (registered nurse) on the middle floor along with matron's flat. Senior nurses on the top floor. The nurses home was locked every night when evening shift finished and unlocked when the junior night nurse came over to call the day shift nurses. This was about 6.15am. No Workplace Health and Safety in those days. We were locked in.

We were allowed a late pass twice a month. This was 12 midnight. You had to go and find the night supervisor. She would come over and let you in. Of course, we had ways of getting in later. You would get one of the nurses on the bottom floor who had a balcony room and let her know you would be sneaking in. You had to be very quiet because our night supervisor Sister Kirby had acute hearing and could hear from the hospital, especially if a car stopped outside the nurses home. If you were caught, you were in big trouble.

We had visitors rooms at the nurses' home. It was a small room on the bottom floor. No male visitors passed this room. If you were off-duty or on days off, you had to go over to the hospital staff dining room for your meals. There was a kettle and a toaster in the little kitchenette of the recreation room on the bottom floor of the nurses' home. The RNs had a kitchen on their floor.

We nurses worked hard. We made lasting friendships. We had a lot of good times in the nurses' home because we were together for four years. We grew up together. Most of us were 17 years old when we came nursing and 21 years when we completed our training. We went on to further our training, got married and raised families.

I worked in nursing in Sydney Southwest Area Health until I retired in 2009. I have seen many changes. When I watch the television mini-series *Call The*

Midwife I did a lot of those procedures in the early 1960s. I had forgotten them until I saw it on the program.

Frances Warner

I came from Eastwood to start nursing training at Camden District Hospital aged 17 years in 1963. I lived in the nurses home opposite the hospital in a single room on the lower ground floor facing Menangle Road. There was plenty of room and a verandah. The rooms were cleaned by staff and linen given out each Monday.

We had a communal shower room and there were only females in the nurses home. There was a large community room, with lounges, table and chairs, TV, radio and a sunny verandah. There was a small kitchenette on the ground floor and a visitors' room, which was the only area for male visitors.

Rules. No going to Camden or out in uniform. No male company in the nurses' home, except for the visitors room. Nothing about cars at the back of nurses home. The front door to nurses home locked at 10.00pm. You were able to request a late pass for midnight and the night sister would unlock nurses home quarters.

Uniforms were supplied, washed and ironed and delivered upstairs to a store room. We wore a cotton dress, white full apron, wide white starched belt, with a starched white cap with Vs for every year of training. I extra starched my belt so it kept its shape longer.

Meals were supplied in the dining room at the hospital. There were large tables, white tablecloths and cloth serviettes. Mealtimes were breakfast, lunch and early dinner. There was a variety on the menu. Fish (battered flake) on Fridays. Tea, coffee and cool drinks whenever you wanted them.

Lectures were compulsory and held in a study room at the back of the hospital on the Old Hume Highway side. You might have to attend classes on your day off. There was a hospital kiosk outside the hospital. You were allowed to have 'tick', and pay account on pay day. We were paid in cash that we collected from the main hospital office near the left hand side of the main door. Now always locked. How much? Can't remember. I always had plenty of cash.

I mainly worked in male ward. There were two wards. The male public and an intermediate ward of four beds. The staff office was in the intermediate ward. There was an RN (registered nurse) office. The public male ward was L-shaped with 9-10 beds facing Menangle Road. The ward kitchen was off the public ward. The female ward KRAFT had 8 beds and verandah

A group of second year trainee nurses in uniform standing outside the Camden Hospital Nurses Quarters in 1965. Nurse Frances Fisher (later Warner) on right (S Roberts)



(Menangle Road side), and intermediate 4 beds. Children beds and cots. Isolation had a single bed. The emergency ward was in front on hospital facing Menangle Road. There was also the operating theater and maternity.

On duty. Starts were 6.00am, 9.00am, 2.30pm, 10.00pm. We had two days off and mostly had late shift after days off. Sometimes were had longer time off with three days together. Matron Harley's visit to the wards from 9.00am and you had to be ready! At change over there were oral reports and you needed a notebook. In the morning there was bathing and blanket bath. Tooth mug and bowl provided an oral toilet with glycerine swabs to clean mouth, lips and tongue, which also happened after each meal.

Nursing the pressure areas you would wash and dry and apply 'metho' or cream, or fish oil. This would apply to back, buttocks, elbows, feet and heels. Men were shaved by nurses if help was needed. The body was shaved for operations. Clean linen, hospital corners, bed spread. There was no lying on bedspread. There were wheels on the beds and they all faced inwards with a bed table at the end of the bed for a water jug and cup only.

Obs (observations) were done and noted on the chart at the end of the bed. You needed four coloured pen for recording pulse, respiration, B/P (blood pressure), temperature, urine and bowels. Patient meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner were in hot boxes. Nursing staff delivered meals to patients and also feed where necessary. Nurses made up morning and afternoon teas. There was a kitchen in the wards, with cake and biscuits coming from main kitchen. Tea, coffee, Bonox and Activate (chocolate) vitamins. There was

egg flip and 1oz brandy for special diet. Trainee nurses cooked dinner for nurses in ward kitchen. It was mainly lamb chops, boiled potato, fresh greens and salad. I had never cooked in my life.

Visiting hours were 2.00-3.30pm, and 7.00-8.30pm. A bell rang to finish visiting hours. For visiting hours papers and magazines were out of sight, quilts on and wheels-in-line, then the RN checked and then the doors opened. The 2.30pm shift: rolled up washed bandages; organised dressing trays and wound cleaning; needles checked and steelwool along shaft to check for burs. Bedtime and lights out at 9.30pm. Night shift: one RN and 2-3 nurses on duty; RN – Sister Kirby, Sister Emms. Before going on night shift there were tasks that trainees could do unaided – temperature, B/P, and stitch removal.

PV swabs. For females warm water wash, cleaning with cotton wool swabs (per vagina cleaning). There were metal bedpans for both sexes. These were warmed, not hot, with tissue paper covers. Metal urinals also had covers. These were never allowed to stay in the wards. Some urinals were concealed under sheets. Bedpans and bottles (urinals) were shined up with Bon-Ami (powder cleaner). Urine was tested by boiling in glass tubes over ‘metho’ burners. I still have my training, practical experience booklet.

With a death nurses needed to care for the body and prepared it to be taken down a steep ramp at the back of the hospital, Old Hume Highway side. You had to wash and shave males and put a little make-up on females. Hair was groomed, body cavities sealed, jaw bandaged and the body dressed in a shroud. You would wrap round white cotton robe. In the daytime, ‘Johnny’ helped with the fridge at the mortuary (morg) while in the evening and at night there were nurses only. There were no male nurses in my time.

I travelled by steam or diesel train from Strathfield station. There was the local bus. The taxi was owned by Max Fuller and many times he did not charge. Max’s wife, Mable, did her nurses’ aid training course in maternity as a mature aged student.

Entertainment was watching TV and *Dr Ben Casey* was popular. There was tennis at the nurses quarters in the evening. There was the pictures at Browne St in Campbelltown and there was knitting. And going home to my family at Eastwood.

My nurses group included: Dossie Small (Blatch); Judy Pell (Appleton); Carol Dee (Carmagnola); Wendy Thompson; Monica Williams (Hall); Frances Fisher (Warner); Pat Dredge (Smith) ; ... Scott; Matron Harley; kitchen – Elise Lord; wardsman – Bob Lavender; garden and odd job man – Johnny...

I did not finish my four year training course as I got married in January 1966.

Trish Clark

Although I am retired now, I often look back fondly on my nursing career and especially the time spent working in the Macarthur area at Campbelltown and Camden Hospitals and in Community Health. As I reflect on my time working in the Maternity Unit at Camden Hospital, one word to describe it was BUSY. In 1981, when I commenced midwifery training there, Camden was the only maternity unit between Liverpool and Bowral and the population in the area was already increasing.

As a pupil midwife a requirement for registration was to deliver at least 20 babies and attend and witness another 100 births. It did not take long to chalk up this tally as the labour wards were mostly always full, with overflow to 'prep' rooms. Postnatal mums often recovered in the adjoining female ward because the postnatal ward was full.

A prefabricated demountable building, which we nicknamed 'Fawlty Towers', was erected to accommodate the increasing numbers before the opening of Campbelltown Hospital Maternity Wing. At that time the original postnatal ward was located on the lower ground floor and the babies were trundled into the lift in their metal cots and taken back up to the nursery during visiting hours and at night. Many would remember displaying the pink or blue baby



Trish Clark (centre, back) at her 1982 nurses Midwifery Graduation at Camden District Hospital (T Clark)

name card at a large viewing window at visiting time and the midwife would wheel the cot with its precious cargo for friends and family to catch a glimpse of the new addition to the family. Rooming babies in with mums is now the order of the day.

There was often a baby for adoption in the nursery which was spoilt with lots of cuddles and affection by the nurses and midwives working there. I remember Matron J Harley who lived in the nurses home across the road doing her rounds with some old school methods ordering us to open up the windows to let in the fresh air, even in winter. We did so but closed them quickly when she had left.

I didn't ever live in the nurses home but there were still nurses residing there when I worked at Camden and we sometimes used the common room for meetings and study sessions. I stayed at Camden as a registered midwife after completing my training before moving into the Community Health sector.

Margaret Wheeler

We arrived in Camden in 1989, and in 1990 I applied at Camden Hospital as a Registered Nurse. It was the first time I had been interviewed by a male matron, or as they were then known, Director of Nursing.

The area was the beginning of change and I ended up working at the hospital for eight months. Many of the staff had been there for years. At first I worked in the surgical ward, where we were allocated a number of patients and were in charge of these patients until the end of the shift. Later I worked in the newly built rehabilitation unit. There was a great deal of settling in, and quite heavy nursing at times due to the type of patient to be looked after. There was a mix of geriatric care, palliative care, and rehabilitation for people recovering from injury or stroke.

Between 1963–1967 I trained at Sutherland Hospital and the matron was Miss B. B. Bonfield, an ex-army nursing sister. The hospital was fairly new to the area, and was set up with the wards on each floor set in wings – east and west— approximately 35 people per wing with 1 – 4 patients in each room. There was a Registered Nurse in charge of the ward, and each shift had a Registered Nurse and a junior and a senior nurse. The shifts were either 8 or 10 hours. (Some hospitals had split shifts and also 12 hour shifts).

Nursing training was made up of junior and senior terms. We worked in every section of the hospital, including operating theatres, recovery, casualty (as the emergency department was known then) . the sterilising department and out-patients. Of course there were the medical and surgical wards, where the



Margaret Wheeler (front left) with her nurses graduation group in 1967. (M Wheeler)

men and women were nursed in separate sections, and the children's ward.

Working for the New South Wales Health Department each trainee nurse in every hospital had a blue book to be filled as they went through their training. The first signatures were from the nursing tutors, and then later the ward sisters' as each procedure was attended. Each hospital that taught trainees in NSW had a curriculum, which was needed for the final exams. Each hospital had nursing tutors and at Sutherland Hospital there were two. Once a year we had a block of lectures, however I do remember having to get up in the middle of the day to do an exam, after I had been on night duty!

The final exams were held in The Great Hall at the University of NSW, and there were four groups that travelled over from Sutherland Hospital. Many trainee nurses were in that hall that day. Graduation ceremony was held on Friday 17 February 1967. We all read out the Nightingale Pledge (see below). We were given a hospital nurse's certificate in a bound cover with the signatures of the president of the board, the secretary, medical superintendent and the matron, B. B. Bonfield and my signature. Later, we paid annual fees to the Nurses Registration Board to remain registered.

Trainee nurses were not allowed to marry while they were training. After

training many nurses married and have fond memories of their trainee days. We all lived in the nursing home while we were training. There were restrictions for lights out. The home sister would do her rounds to ensure that we were in bed if we were not working night duty. Some people knew how to get around the system! Each year we had six weeks holiday, which we had to take as allocated – no applying for holiday leave!

As a Registered Nurse we had a blue book ‘Service Record in the Industry of Nursing New South Wales’. This was handed in to each hospital in NSW, and the record of service, payments of long service leave, sick leave, tuberculin reactions, and immunisation and vaccination. The last section shows that I have had BCG, many chest X-Rays, quite a few Mantoux tests (for TB), also tetanus toxoid, typhoid and Hepatitis B injections.

I also trained in midwifery at St. George Hospital, and then later finished a 12-month Intensive Care course at Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney. Later I worked at various Sydney hospitals and realised that different hospitals came to teach their nurses slightly differently. During the 1970s, nurses were first trained at the NSW College of Nursing and then later at university.

My experience of nursing over many years included working not only in Sydney, but Brisbane, Townsville, London and Bathurst. A very interesting time, which also included community nursing and ‘specialling’ (working through a nursing agency) and looking after patients who required extra care in their homes or hospital. My 12 months working at Sydney Hospital, in the Emergency department, gave me an insight into early nursing in Australia. The first Florence Nightingale nurses came to Sydney in 1868. I later found that Lucy Osburn, the superintendent of Sydney Infirmary and Dispensary, had connections with the Macarthur family in Camden.

Nightingale Pledge

I solemnly pledge myself before God and in the presence of this assembly to pass my life in purity and to practise my profession faithfully.

I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous, and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug.

I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession and will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and all family affairs coming to my knowledge in the practice of my calling.

With loyalty will I aid the physician in his work, and as a missionary of health, I will dedicate myself to devoted service for human welfare.

Camden Museum Volunteer Project

Dianne Matterson

It is 1855 and on the north-western corner of John and Argyle Streets, Camden, is a small, unassuming shoemaker's business that appears to be doing a good trade. Inside, John Viles can be seen tap, tap, tapping as he repairs the boots of a local farmer, pausing as a young woman enters to collect her new shoes; then pauses while another brings in a pair of child's shoes that are somewhat worse-for-wear and stops to bemoan the lack of rain in recent weeks. Now in his forties, John had worked in Sydney after emigrating with his wife and three young children from Somerset, England, in 1838. He moved to Camden where the sought-after Macarthur fleece was drawing business into town. John leased his site from John Lakeman who, at the time, owned considerable land fronting Argyle Street.

In 1878, and with a view to constructing a substantial building, the Commercial Banking Corporation purchased this corner site – taking in a 60' and 140' frontage along Argyle and John Streets respectively – for £500. This site (now the NAB) is still occupied today by the iconic building that was built by the bank between 1879-1880 at a cost of £3,480.

This history of the NAB bank site forms a small part of ongoing research that I am undertaking at the Camden Museum into each premises along both sides of Argyle Street from the former Milk Co-operative building in the east to the AH&I Hall in the west. The project aims to draw together different pieces of historical information currently held in various forms by the Museum, accompanied by contemporary newspaper articles and the memories of participants in local oral histories, as well as the resources of other agencies such as N.S.W. State Archives. It is anticipated that this historical resource – in the form of a timeline – will eventually be available to the public.



The Abusive Mr Chisholm (Part Two)

Peter McCall

In the last issue of the Camden History, an 1897 published speech of Alderman Henry Willis was used as the starting point for an investigation of a quarrel between Willis and the leadership of the Camden Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Society (AH&I) over the Society's expenditure, with accusations of corruption and cronyism. Some of the AH&I Society's Committee had finally attempted to deal with this by offering to resign, expecting however that they would be fully vindicated by a vote of confidence. They hoped to stop Willis's allegations by doing this.

Special General Meeting

But Henry Willis was not silenced. In another letter to the *Camden News*, Willis attempted to question the motives of James K Chisholm and Astley Thompson by suggesting that they were dragging the whole Committee of the AH&I to resignation without their knowledge. He felt that only the President and the treasurer had to refute the charges he had made, not the committee, stating that 'a few interested people have trumpeted (sic) a letter and with unblushing effrontery, dragged in their train the whole of the committee without their knowledge or consent'.¹ This was a little unfair as the motion had called for the resignation of some of the committee, not all of them. It was now clear that the matter was moving to a climax.

The special general meeting was attended by some 85-90 members of the AH&I Society. Henry Willis was one of them. The motion discussed was not about the resignation of the president and committee, Instead, a motion was proposed expressing "continued confidence in the president, hon. secretary and committee...."

JK Chisholm's speech,

The *Camden News* gave a very long account of JK Chisholm's speech, and a detailed summary of WR Cowper's refutation of Willis. There were a few brief summaries of speeches in support of the president and committee. Henry Willis was given two opportunities to respond, which he did, according to the account 'at great length'. Chisholm's speech was largely a response to Willis's attacks from the public meeting he had called earlier. He now adopted stronger language than previously. He called Willis slanderous and said that he had employed a special reporter to take down all that Willis said at the meeting. To this intimation of possible legal action, he used such phrases as 'utterly beneath contempt', 'low bred sneer at myself', 'his malevolence', and asked 'what good has Mr Willis done for the district or this society? And the

answer is nothing!’ He then dug deeper into what he believed were the real motivations behind Willis’s attacks. Chisholm believed he was trying to destroy the AH&I Society, ‘sowing the seeds of dissension throughout the country, and trying to set one class of community against the other’. He asserted that he should be ‘branded as the enemy of society’. Chisholm was basically accusing Willis of radicalism and even socialism. Willis’s own principles were not so extreme, but it is easy to see why Chisholm was thinking this way. The future career of Willis would indicate that he had no firm commitment to radical ideologies. However, this speech helps explain the origin of the phrase ‘The Abusive Mr Chisholm’ which headed the pamphlet Willis later wrote.

Cowper’s response was to compare the amounts spent by the AH&I Society on hospitality with other similar organisations and with earlier expenditure by the Society on these matters. He showed the Society was spending proportionately less than ten years before on hospitality and that it spent no more than other agricultural societies.

Standing in isolation

The vote was taken by asking those in favour of the motion to move to the right of the chair, those opposed to the left. Henry Willis was left standing alone to the left of the chair². However, Willis reported that, ‘my supporters, who were seated on the right, remained silent, but sent their congratulations [which] have reached me since’.³

Just above the report on the special general meeting, the editor of the *Camden News* stated that the paper would accept no more correspondence on the matters that Willis had raised. Both sides had been given an opportunity to present their viewpoints and that other news had had to be held over to leave space for this issue.⁴

The special general meeting of the Camden Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Society (AH&I Society) should have been conclusive. Henry Willis’s attempt to show that there was incompetence/corruption in the Society had been defeated, leaving him in a minority of one. He may have had some supporters among the members of the Society. It is possible that they knew that Willis would be heavily defeated and did not wish to be publicly associated with this, especially as the victors included many of the social elite of Camden including members of the Macarthur-Onslow family and the rector of St Johns at Camden.

Willis did not acknowledge his defeat. Now that he had been blocked by the AH&I Society and the *Camden News*, he still hoped the viewing of the AH&I accounts by Camden Council aldermen might produce results. To bol-

ster his case he called another public meeting, to be held in the Camden School of Arts on Monday, 20 December, 1897. Whether he was continuing the fight over issues where he knew he was in the right, or simply attempting to cancel out the humiliation of the Special General Meeting is not clear.

Willis had his speech from that meeting printed in a small booklet entitled 'The Abusive Mr Chisholm in War Paint'.⁵ We see here Willis's great talent with language, even if expended here on a lost cause. Public lectures were an important form of entertainment in pre-cinema days. Famous figures could charge large sums for attendance (eg Mark Twain, Charles Dickens). Camden did not attract speakers of this stature, but Willis was well known in the district and entrance to the speech was free. Schools of Arts were often used for public lectures; the only other venues suitable were churches where divisive or sectarian issues were not appropriate. In the history of the Camden School of Arts,⁶ between 1860 and 1908 33 lectures are recorded (including Willis's), but the list is known to be incomplete.

In the records of the School of Arts, the speech is described as a lecture by Alderman Henry Willis on 'The Agricultural Society and the Recreation Ground'.⁷

Poetry and debates

The speech demonstrates Willis's background in debating. He makes use of colourful and often colloquial metaphors, sarcastic and often literary insults, quotes poetry and perorates with reference to Shakespeare and comparison to Shakespearian heroes who, despite setbacks, triumph in the end. By quoting poetry, Willis at first gives the impression of a man of great erudition, but in fact it all comes from a single source, Charles Mackay (1812-1889), a Scottish poet popular at the time, who praised the virtues of liberty and the evils of tyranny. He quotes from four poems. Probably he could have got them from one book, *The Poetical Works of Charles Mackay*.⁸ A sample follows which was used as the conclusion of the speech.

We want no flag, no flaunting rag,
For Liberty to fight;
We want no blaze of murderous guns,
To struggle for the right.
Our spears and swords are printed words,
The mind our battle plain;
We've won such victories before,
*And so we shall again.*⁹

Willis had some familiarity with United States political issues of the time, using such American terms as 'Boss Croker', 'Tammany Hall' and 'mugwumps' as terms of abuse for corruption. The phrases 'Doodlem-Buck'



Portrait of Henry Willis, 1900s, The Swiss Studios (NLA)

and ‘Aunt Sally’ are harder to work out, but probably came from the same source. He also compared his enemies to oriental potentates, seen at the time as examples of corruption and decadence. Thus we have Minto Pasha (Chisholm lived in Minto) and a clique of satraps mentioned. Other insults suggested that Chisholm behaved like a savage (a racist but acceptable form

of abuse at the time), and included ‘Mr Chisholm had bedaubed himself with war-paint for the occasion’, and they watched him ‘gnashing his teeth, his visage florid with war-paint’. Another attack said that Chisholm’s arguments were ‘the stringing together of grimy epithets like so many sausages’. These sorts of descriptions continue for the entire 20 pages of the speech and explain why, even if his sentiments received little support, the meeting was well attended. There can’t have been too many places in Camden where you could hear the local elite being spoken about in such eloquent and sarcastic terms. This also helps explain Willis’s electoral success at local, state and federal levels. The virulence of the language used may also make clear why his terms in office were invariably short. He certainly was entertaining, but naturally caused a great deal of resentment amongst the victims of his eloquence.

There are a number of issues brought up here which do not figure in the summaries of other speeches made at this time. Willis suggested that Chisholm planned to sue him for slander by having a transcript taken of his earlier speech,¹⁰ he compared Chisholm to Boss Croker, the infamous and corrupt New York party boss,¹¹ he accused Cowper of taking over management of the failing Westbrook (Mount Hunter) Milk Factory knowing that the factory had no sinking fund to pay back investors.¹² The local historian Richard Nixon stated that, “he [Mount Hunter Co-operative Butter Factory] got into financial difficulty and Wm Cowper, the CBC Bank Manager got them out of the problem”.¹³ So Willis’s accusation here was probably unfounded.

Willis attacked AH&I Society President Chisholm for hosting ‘daily banquets’,¹⁴ with ‘prodigal expenditure’.¹⁵ He describes the luncheons as ‘sly grog shops’, suggesting that some of the guests were affected by alcohol and also as a ‘hole in the wall’,¹⁶ a current term for a small dingy shop or bar with an implication of sleaziness or impropriety. He claimed the closure of the *Camden News* to discussion of the AH&I was due to the influence of Chisholm and John Kidd, the state MP at the time.¹⁷

A more substantial focus was revealed in his response to Chisholm’s accusation that Willis was ‘trying to set one class of the community against one another’. Here followed an attack on the Macarthur-Onslow family. He began by stating that the AH&I Society had borrowed £50 from Elizabeth Macarthur-Onslow. It had not been repaid, thereby the people of Camden were being patronised. Of course the Macarthur-Onslows would have seen themselves as patrons of many worthy causes. However, here it was used in the sense of being put under obligation to someone. Willis believed that this debt gave a certain power and influence to the Macarthur-Onslows. Willis believed that Mrs Macarthur-Onslow was in fact unpopular. She was puffed up (or self-important) but in fact had contributed nothing of real value.

His main target was Astley Onslow Thompson who had played a major if subsidiary role in defending the AH&I Society from Willis. Onslow Thompson was manager of Camden Park Estate. The 1890s were a period of readjustment for the estate as it was moved to a more efficient dairying scheme. Part of this involved the eviction of some of the tenants who were seen as not fitting into the new scheme. Willis claims the Macarthur-Onslow's unpopularity was due to evictions. I can find no evidence that this was the case, although such evidence may not have been written down or published at the time. Onslow Thompson was accused as the instigator of evictions and also the blocking of trade seen below.

Old Tenant

At one point Willis makes a fictionalised account of 'the Captain'¹⁸ evicting an "Old Tenant" from land he had held and improved for many years. The account is heart rending-

Old Tenant: ... but this is my home- the fireside where my children lisped at their mother's knee. It is a sacred place to me and mine.

Captain: Enough! I will have this piece of land!¹⁹

Evictions had occurred since 1876 as the Macarthur-Onslows attempted to keep their enterprises economically viable.²⁰ By 1899 there were twenty new share farms on the property. Astley Thompson had stated the type of man he wanted for these new farms.²¹ This would imply that some of the current tenants may have been seen as unsuitable and that therefore evictions did take place. Whether they were as brutal as Willis suggests is unknown, but evictions, by their very nature are not likely to be pleasant. Willis's little dramatic piece here at least added to the entertainment value of his speech.

Blocking deliveries

As well, Willis claimed that the Macarthur-Onslows were forcing their tenants to use their company store at Menangle over stores in Camden. This was allegedly done by blocking deliveries from Camden whilst allowing those from Menangle. This led to lack of competition, higher prices and amounted to a virtual boycott of Camden. Once again, there is little evidence for this or the effects Willis alleged.

Willis's attack on the Macarthur-Onslows continued with a look at how the Macarthurs had come to be so influential in the first place. He suggested wrongly that John Macarthur received his initial 5,000 acre grant as a reward for helping get rid of Governor Bligh and that this was deserved because it removed tyranny. The land had now increased in value twenty times due to population growth, public funds, investment by private means and the labour

of workers. And in return the Macarthur-Onslows had given ten acres of swampy ground for recreation which was now being used a showground. The implication was that the Macarthur-Onslows had done nothing of value and that Willis would fight the “boycott” of Camden, notwithstanding the abuse he had received from the ‘family factotum’ (probably Onslow Thompson, but maybe Chisholm).²²

Pharisaical

Willis attacked Chisholm for dragging down the whole Committee by threatening that they all would resign, although the majority of the Committee were not involved with the issue. He called Chisholm and his associates ‘a clique of interested satrapies’.²³ He described Chisholm as “pharisaical” for claiming that because other Agricultural Societies spent money for hospitality, it was acceptable for the AH&I Society.

Some of Willis allegations are obscure in detail, but their intent is clear. He claimed that many of the beneficiaries of the Society’s hospitality were in fact locals and friends of Chisholm. The £18/12/6 spent on petty cash, postage, telegrams etc was in fact ‘petty cash which is a new brand of whisky’.²⁴ He next attacked committee member FWA Downes who, together with Chisholm, had asked what good Willis had ever done for the district. He responded that whilst manager of EM Moore’s estate (his deceased father-in-law) he had done what he could.²⁵ Downes on the other hand had been one of the first to stop sending milk to the Westbrook dairy. He thus associated him with Cowper for the failure of that factory. By 1896 the Westbrook dairy had been sold to the Macarthur-Onslows; it is not possible to tell whether Willis is referring to the period before or after the sale. The Macarthur-Onslows spent a good deal of money improving this facility.²⁶

Tammany Hall

Willis concluded his speech by suggesting that the Society needed to be purged and that if Chisholm and Cowper were honourable men, they would resign. He said “I am not to be frightened by ‘painted devils’ nor the Boss and myrmidons of little Tammany. Never mind the odds: ‘might is right,’ so we are sure to conquer.” Tammany Hall was the notorious centre of corruption in New York at the time which had effects on American politics.

His final flourish was to liken himself to Richmond who overwhelmed the evil Richard III in Shakespeare’s play of the same name. ‘Against our oppressors I will bend my bow till I have skewered every one of them’.²⁷

In the printed version of the speech, Willis had included two newspaper ‘reviews’ of his speech at the conclusion from *The Camden News* and *The Picton Advocate*. They were hardly ringing endorsements; however *The*

Camden News stated that ‘the hall was well filled’, and that ‘Mr Willis for over two hours delivered a spirited and sarcastic address’.²⁸

Willis’s public meeting had certainly allowed him to vent his opinion of the activities of the AH&I, but would his sarcasm and wit be sufficient to prove his charges?

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[Part 3 will be in the next journal]

***Baragal Ngurra darami* – Budbury and a paddock long ago**

Venessa Possum (Starzynski nee Williams)

Candidate in the Doctor of Philosophy in Fine Art. Queensland College of Art Griffith University. February 2019

During the winter of 2018, I was asked to write an article for the journal of the Camden Historical Society. At the time I was spending a week at the Camden Museum to immerse myself in the wonder of the collections. Writing this article is a great opportunity for me to discuss my research and upcoming exhibition at the Camden Library as ‘Artist of the Month’ in May. This happens to coincide with the National Trust Heritage Festival: ‘Connecting People, Places and the Past’.

When I am researching in situation I am often asked about my PhD topic. In brief, my archival and literary research coincides with a site-specific art practice. I explore meaningful connections to my Dharug, Dharawal, Muringal-Baragal and Irish heritages in the Australian context. I work independently



Venessa Possum, collecting reeds for weaving 2018. (V Possum)

and collaboratively to explore these signs as well as European and Western colonisations that reveal interesting concepts of intergenerational times.

The title of my journal article and my exhibition emphasise my ancestry, particularly my paternal Aboriginal heritage to Budbury in the area that became known as 'The Cowpastures'.¹ In the early 1800s a renowned Aboriginal guide Gogy used the word 'Baragal' to direct non-Aboriginal peoples towards a 'belgeny.' This was an original waterhole at Baragal close to the Nepean River on the outskirts of the current town of Camden, New South Wales.²

Australian historian Alan Atkinson writes, 'There are so many doubts and difficulties in tracing the lives of individual Aborigines at Camden'.³ This is true from an archival perspective, for example he found a baptism record for my Aboriginal ancestor John Budberry in 1842 at Camden and a death notice in 1860, whereas another prominent Australian historian Grace Karskens lists my ancestor as David Budbury (or Boothbarrie) born 1768 to 1833.⁴ Additional archival spellings, Bootbarrie, Boodbury, Budberrah, Broadberry and Bradbury reveal a conundrum for early colonial transcribers. I choose to write 'Budbury' and I pronounce his name with a rolling of the tongue for 'd' and a forceful projection dissolving 'ie' or 'y' as in Boo-rdb-ere.⁵

The Lachlan Macquarie journal (1810-1822) contains the earliest reference to my ancestor as a Dharug, Dharawal guide. He once led the Governor from Stonequarry Creek to the Nattai River, however the relationship proved fragile over time. To reiterate a better-known early colonial history, an ex-convict pastoralist named John Warby and my Irish convict ancestor John Walsh, who was assigned to Warby, refused to take part in a plan to attack Dharawal Yura (Peoples). They allowed Budbury and Bundle to escape and warn neighboring bands prior to the shocking massacre at Appin on 17 April 1816.⁶ As it happened, this allegiance led to the marriage of John Walsh and Budbury's daughter Mandagerry, my maternal ancestor.

My research reveals an original Dharug, Dharawal perspective of the past including intergenerational knowledges of places, peoples and languages. Dharug, Dharawal knowledges exist in continuity with guragal, darimi yuu yilabara, long ago, a long time and now. As a reflective experience of Baragal, I identify the 200 old oak tree on the grounds of the present day Belgeny Farm as a significant sign of continuity. Planted by William Macarthur from an English acorn seed, the majestic oak has embedded its roots in Baragal as a living presentation of people's coexistences dating back to Budbury's time.⁷

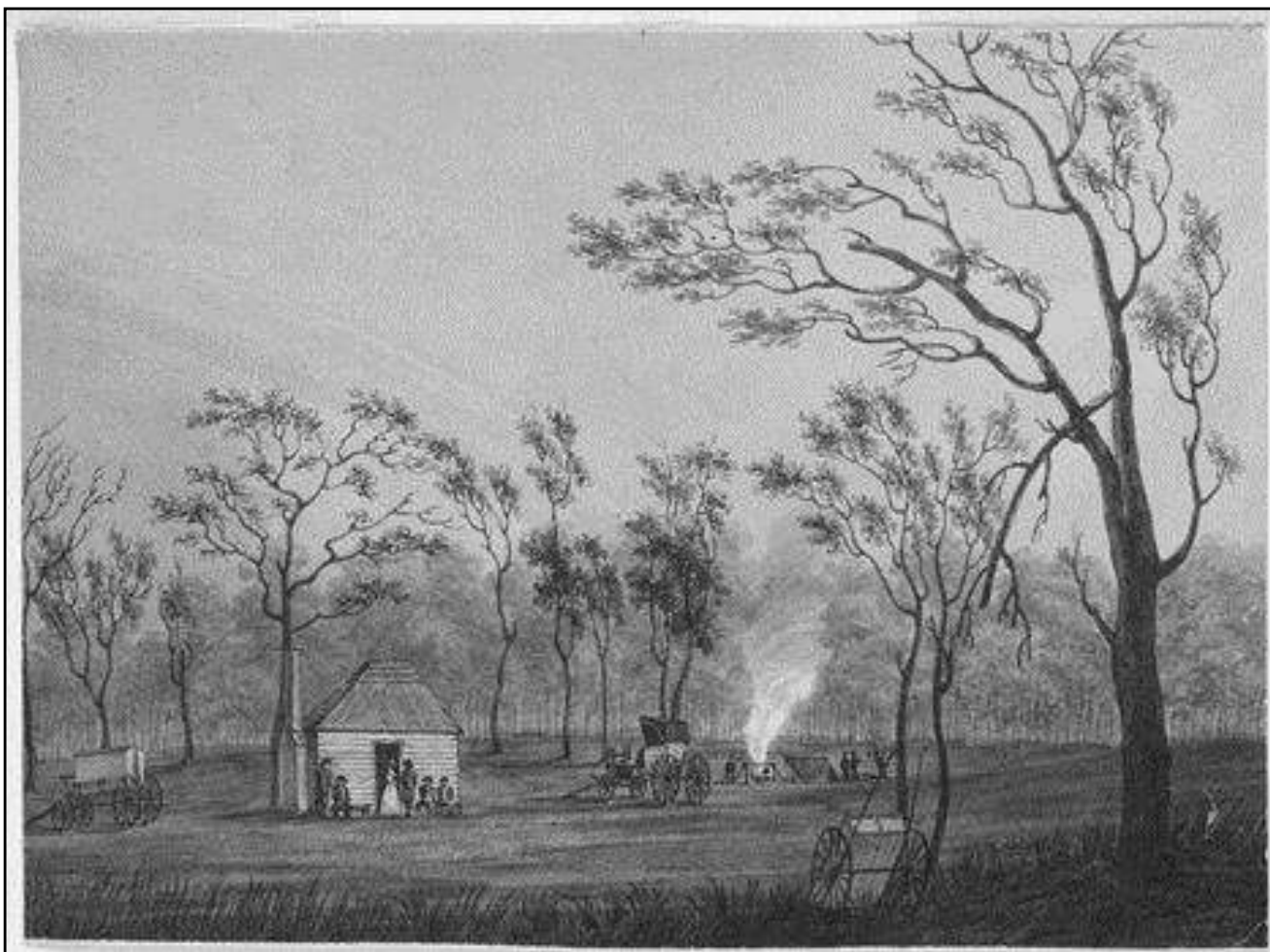


Dharug peoples axe carving of concentric circles on a rock platform along the Woodford Oaks Trail Blue Mountains National Park

The internal growth rings of the tree contain a plethora of experiences. The oak has shaded people from the harsh summer sun, felt the fluttering of birds' and bugs' wings, feet of animals and miniature creatures and seasonal cycles of the earth and cosmos. When picturing internal growth rings, I perceive the likeness to symbolic concentric circles, used globally as original signs for waterholes, places for ceremony and more.

My ancestor, Budbury, developed a lifelong relationship with the Macarthur family who were granted Baragal Ngurra, as land usurped by the English Crown. In a letter to his brother James in 1851 William, the youngest son of John Macarthur, speaks about his empathy for 'Johnny Budberry' and of his 'birth to this spot'. Perhaps without realising, William was acknowledging the first peoples of Muringal-Baragal Ngurra, a place with a belgeny (waterhole) and kirboowallie (a shallow area) used to cross durrubbin (the Nepean River) near Camden.⁸

On the Macarthur estate there was an area known as Budbury's paddock (c1840s). This is an irony, as I believe the paddock would have been the orchard. My study of a watercolour painting titled *View of the Government Hut at Cowpastures* 1804 helps me to picture the hut on the Macarthur estate.⁹ I imagine Elizabeth Macarthur discussing the farm with Budbury while he is taking a break from shooting the birds that 'preyed' on the orchard. I also



View of the Government Hut at Cowpastures 1804, by an unknown artist, FL3143926, SLNSW.

think about Budbury as ‘Johnny’ who slept in the supposedly ‘miserable hut’ with his beloved Nadaang also known as Black Nellie.¹⁰

For my exhibition at the Camden Library in May 2019 I have visualised site-specific experiences as Muringal-Baragal in conjunction with colonial historicisms. My collection of hand-made papers with drawings is a patchwork of compositions that resemble topographic maps I call ‘farmscapes’. They are a blending of significant Indigenous plants collected as Baragal and human residues such as newsprint, packaging, old letters and junkmail.

On some of my surfaces I have made drawings of cultural signs and reproductions of early colonial art, graphic archives, photographs of the region and an unusual map by one Crown botanist named George Caley. In my research I have come to describe Caley as an ‘accidental explorer.’ By adding him to my story I acknowledge that he travelled with Aboriginal guides to document original languages for Indigenous plants and animals. Even after the first paper mill was built at Botany Bay raw materials for papermaking were scarce.



Venessa Possum, *View of the Government Hut at Cowpastures 2019*, detail of hand-made paper and drawing. (V Possum)

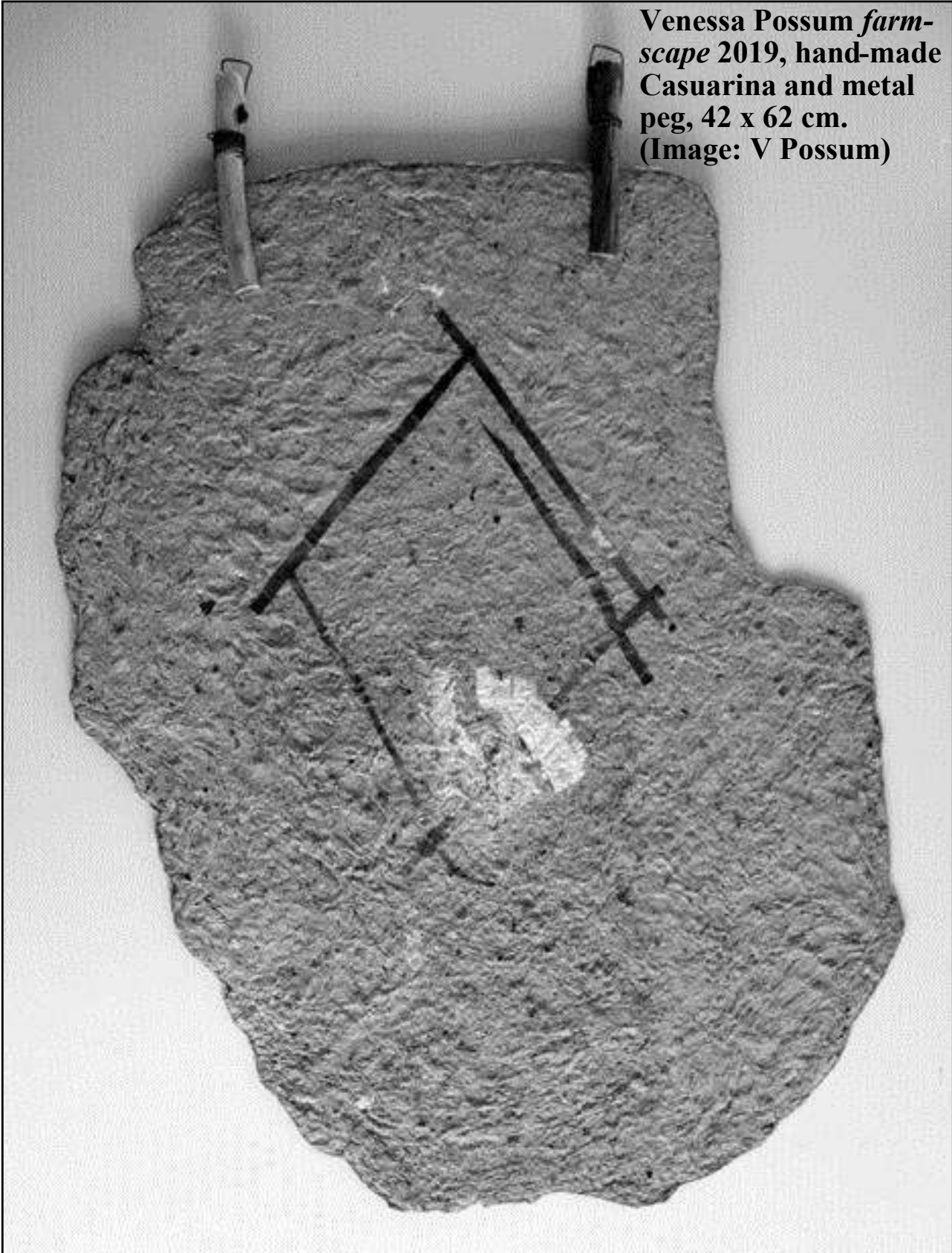
Caley often made his own paper to store botanical specimens and like Caley my papers combine salvaged materials.

Hand-made paper can be fragile however I observe conservation strategies in Australian archives where paper is fortified with linen. I use Irish linen as a sign of my European heritage. In the penal colony of Sydney Irish convicts were jailed as criminals or political prisoners and even after their release they were marginalised. Meanwhile the linen of their homelands was an esteemed and essential material, regularly listed in supply requisitions to England.¹¹

I suspend my paper with hand-made Casuarina, Eucalyptus and wire pegs, albeit a simplified version of antique wooden pegs. They are symbols of an Indigenous river-scape and the ingenuity of peoples to ‘make do’ by utilising materials in the environment.

As I bring my article to a close, I invite you to visit my exhibition at Camden and consider how my art presents ideas of connectedness between peoples and places in the past that continues today. Even though the works are fragile they speak of resilience and resourcefulness as well as a deep-rooted relationship as Baragal Ngurra and Camden country.

**Venessa Possum *farm-
scape* 2019, hand-made
Casuarina and metal
peg, 42 x 62 cm.
(Image: V Possum)**



Acknowledgments

As a final note, I would like to thank Ian Willis for including me in this journal. I also extend my thanks to the wonderful people at the Camden Museum and Historical Society and Camden Library for sharing my delight for research and creativity.

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Book Launch - *My Story: The Tandem Team* *Launch Tourism 1978-1988 Macarthur Country*

Betty Yewen

I believe my entire close family were relieved and proud of me finally completing *My Story*. A small book launch on Friday, 29 June 2018 with a number of my family and a few friends was arranged by my daughter Cheryl, who felt a great need to celebrate. Invitations from a variety of venues in the community to hold a more formal launch were proposed, however for personal reasons, I declined.

The book details the successful introduction of the tourism industry into local government areas that in the 1980s became known as **Macarthur Country**, (Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden and Picton).

This book would not have eventuated without the dedicated work and expertise, over a long period of time, of my very good friend, Evan Lopherd. He was able to put my ideas and thoughts in order and arranged its publication. I always needed to write *My Story* to bring out all the work that my dear friend and work colleague, Jenny Eggins, achieved and wanted to achieve.

I also felt strongly the need to tell of the work that many people gave, both of their time and professional expertise, to attain the goal in the 1980's, of successfully introducing the major industry of tourism to Macarthur Country. I received many kind words of congratulations on the quality and presentation of *My Story*. With Jenny's family's permission I include this very personal thank you:

Dear Betty,

I was moved to tears when Dad gave me a copy of your book. How hard you worked pulling it all together. I wish Delma (who died 10 years ago) could have seen it – she would have loved it.*

As I was away at boarding school, I missed a lot of what was happening at home. I knew a little but not the full extent of how long and frustrating was the road for the two of you. You were a formidable team. I had no idea you had so many matching jackets! How very smart you both looked. I loved looking at all the photos – such memories!

Mum would have been proud of you Betty, continuing on without her. You must have missed her so terribly as we did (and still do). She remains in my heart for ever. Thank you for being such a good friend to her, she did value your support. Thank you for this wonderful book, I'm sorry that the dream did not come to be.

Fondest regards, Astrid. 22 November 2018

*Delma was Jenny's mother, Astrid is Jenny's daughter.

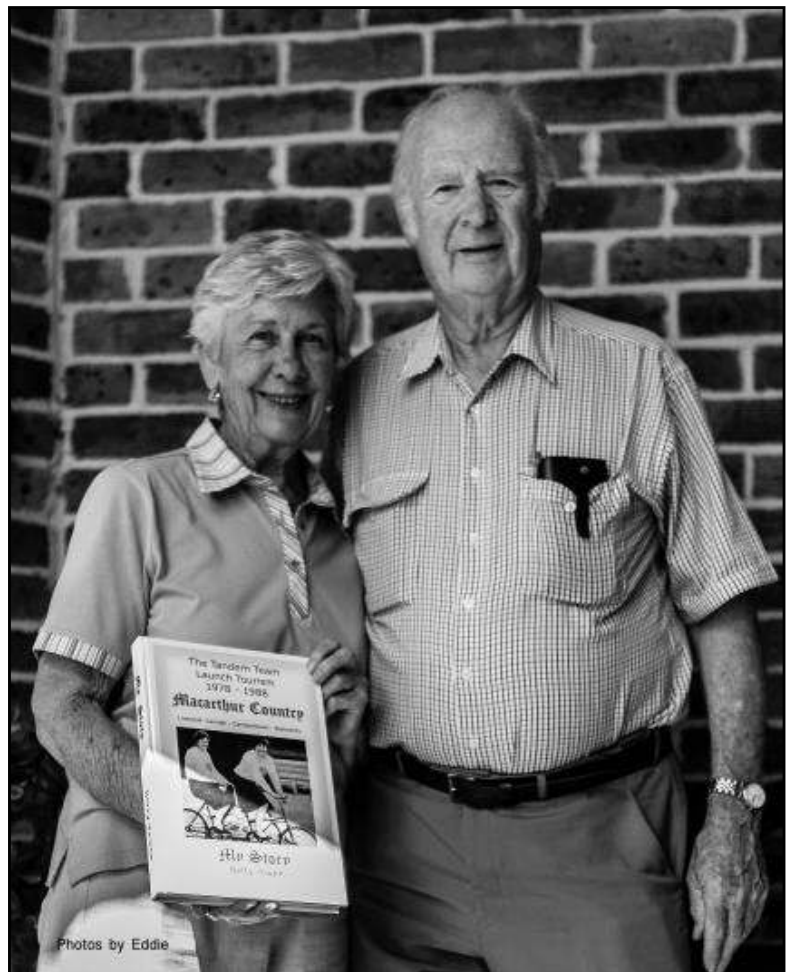
The book has been well-received and continues to gain interest. Readers were delighted and surprised with the volume of not-seen-before coloured photos I hold in my personal collection. I also received comments from a variety of people who were involved with the Macarthur Country Tourist Association.



Self-publishing this 262 page colour coffee-table book has been a tremendous experience, one that with great relief, along divine intervention, I finally achieved in my lifetime!

Copies have been placed in the local study section of the libraries of Camden, Campbelltown, Liverpool and Picton as well as in the National Library of Australia, State Library of N.S.W. and the N.S.W. Parliamentary Library as requirements of the *Copyright Act, 1968*.

As a self-published author I chose a print run of 100 copies that have sold extremely well with an excellent article in *The District Reporter*, 30 November 2018. Editor, Lee Abrahams kindly gave her wide area of readers my telephone details. This contributed further to the sales leaving just a few copies. I personally believe *My Story* will become a collectible!



Author Betty Yewen holding her book *My Story* standing next to publisher Evan Lepherd (Image: B Yewen)

A picture tells a thousand words. Fashion speaks just as loud!

Laura Jane Aulsebrook

It would come to no surprise to many that I have a great interest in fashion history. When looking at the photographs provided by Shirley Rorke for this issue, some might gravitate towards who is in the photographs, others reminisce about the setting or the long since updated technologies on display. For me it is the fashion and clothing choices that attract my eye. Far from being dismissed as superficial clothing, the fashion history of everyday photographs provides its own unique story, one that explores social mores, norms and cultural influences. Fashion is made to be photographed, and if a picture tells a thousand words, surely the fashion in the photo has a lot to say.

Poodle skirts, petticoats, and prom dresses; even for the least fashion conscious and non-history buffs among us, it is easy to call these to mind when picturing the fashion of the 1950s. Like any decade in history, the fashions of the 1950s were far more extensive than the stereotypical images we have constructed thanks to the revival culture that dominates the trends of main-



Shirley Dunk (Rorke) and Beth Jackman (left) both worked at the Clintons's Showroom in Argyle Street Camden in 1953. Clintons sold motor cars and a variety of electrical goods. (S Rorke)

stream media. Whilst the fashion magazines of the day, catwalk recordings and department store advertisements tell the tale of what was dictated as “on trend” it is the photographs of the everyday, ordinary Australians that show us just what it was that Australians wore and gives us an insight into how the fashion choices shaped who they were. Just as important as *what* and *who* is in the photograph, the fashion choices on display have their own story to tell.

To summarise an entire decade of fashion into a single style is far too simplistic. Yet there is a mainstay of 1950s fashion, it was overtly feminine and centred on the ideal hourglass figure, thanks largely to Dior’s 1947 ‘New Look’, which dominated the market until the early 1960s. Inspirations from the runways of Paris, the latest Hollywood films and film stars such as Audrey Hepburn, Grace Kelly and Marilyn Monroe, clearly influenced women’s wardrobes all over the world. Into this market entered a new tour de force in the fashion world, one with their own marked style and fashion image – that of the teenager and young adult. Emerging from the Hollywood set of Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland and Dena Durbin in the mid 1940s, teenagers became defined as a subculture in the 1950s. They were the burgeoning market, recognised for their increasing influence and their embracing of freedom after a childhood spent in relative constraints during the Depression and war years.

This newly emerging consumer group was leading the trends with their youthful outlook, modern views and sunny disposition that was embracing of the new and youth directed opportunities that a post-war world welcomed. In light of this, it is easy to presume that Australia, due to its geographical location, would be behind the eight ball when it came to the latest fashions and overseas trends, and that this would be even more delayed in rural country towns such as Camden. Recent Australian films such as *Ladies in Black* dispute this theory in the hustle and bustle of Sydney and surrounding suburbs, where David Jones was a world leader in fashion trends, and TV shows such as *A Place to Call Home* depict the fashions of small country towns as still being up-to-date despite their rural location.

A country film set

Immortalised on screen as the fictional rural town of Inverness, one could argue that the onscreen town Camden portrays in *A Place to Call Home* is also a fairly accurate depiction of a town like Camden at the time, with fashion choices and sense of style differing from those that regularly visited the city and those that remained in the rural setting. (Although the fashion anachronisms of said characters are best discussed another day!) These fictional portrayals have brought about renewed interest in Australian fashion history of the 1950s, yet it is the photographs of everyday people that lived during this time that tell the true fashion story and illustrate just how style

conscious Australians were - and we need not look any further than Camden and its residents for inspiration.

In the fast-fashion, easy access world of fashion in today's society, it is hard to imagine a time not that long ago when fashion was not so mass produced and easily accessible. Whilst department stores like David Jones were flourishing in the city and small boutiques were popping up in towns around the country, the vast majority of women made their own clothing or used dress-makers, with haberdashery and material shops offering fabric inspired by prints from the catwalks and latest fashion magazines. The array of women's magazines flooding the publishing markets, such as *Australian Home Journal* and *Australian Women's Weekly*, always came with easy-to-follow patterns showing how to recreate the latest fashions for the women at home. Along with the fashion designs, there were reviews of the latest Hollywood films and plenty of advertisements of the latest household appliances and gadgets designed to make life easier. It was an era where spending was encouraged and consumerism rapidly growing.

These fashion magazines targeted young women, both career driven and housewives, and often came with dedicated teen or youth orientated lift-outs that directed teenagers to their own trends. With the country coming out of the Depression and war years, the economy was booming and a brighter disposition was welcomed by the newest consumer market, one with a growing influence and an increased awareness and appreciation of the independence and freedom that they wielded: the teenager.

A stylish teenager

Enter into this world a very stylish teenager from Camden. This article was inspired by photographs of long time Camden Historical Society member, Shirley Rorke, who shared some pictures of her stylish teenage self in Camden in the early 1950s. The picture of Shirley posing with a new model refrigerator was taken in 1953 at Camden Clintons sales office in Argyle Street and shows that Shirley was a teen very aware of being up-to-date with the trends.

Shirley's outfit is fashion forward for a teen living in country Australia in the early 1950s. Her crisp white shirt with the Peter Pan collar and thin black bow at the neck was typical teen styling, along with a very full striped circle skirt. Although not clearly visible in this picture, it is easy to see that this skirt would have been tea-length, that is, between the knee and ankle in length and a full circle in diameter, worn with a rope petticoat. It is reminiscent of the poodle skirt trend that dominated the diner scene for teenagers in America in the mid 1950s, yet with a slightly more sophisticated vibe, com-

plete with swell cats-eye sunglasses and a wide patent leather belt which cinches the waist and provides the very definite 1950s fashion silhouette.

When questioning Shirley about the inspiration behind this particular outfit she could not quite recall, however she did mention that she and her mother made the majority of her clothing because of the lack of boutiques available. This certainly is a sentiment echoed by many who lived in Camden during the 1950s, that buying material and making clothing was much more commonplace than ready-to-wear, off the rack purchases. In today's mass produced world it is easy to acknowledge how this allowed for individual style and personal influences to be injected into one's wardrobe.

Whilst Shirley could not name a direct influence for this outfit, a certain famous 1950s fashion figure came to mind. Interestingly, this image was taken in 1953, not long before Shirley embarked on a European adventure, an experience far away from rural Camden. In the same way, a young woman clad in a similar outfit also experienced a European adventure in 1953, only this one was in Rome and played out on the big screen. *Roman Holiday* (1953 Paramount Pictures) starring Gregory Peck and a young Audrey Hepburn in her first American film role - one that earned her the accolade of being the first actress to win an Academy Award, a Golden Globe Award, and a BAFTA Award for a single performance - was a success around the world, and played at Camden Paramount Theatre.

The film depicts a young Princess who escapes royal protocol for a day and experiences a taste of freedom, much like the mainstream youth of the day. She symbolised an icon of a "free and easy" fun loving Roman spirit, in a country still recovering from the deprivation and stigma of World War II. The title outfit that Audrey wears throughout the film during the day long escapades, mirrors that of Camden's very own Shirley, a crisp white blouse with scarf at the neck, a mid-length circle skirt and wide

Paramount
THEATRE CAMDEN

Saturday & Monday, August 7th & 9th
MATINEE SATURDAY 2 P.M. — NIGHTLY 7.45

ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE FAMILY —
"ROMAN HOLIDAY" (G)
Starring: GREGORY PECK, AUDREY HEPBURN
(Picture of the Year)
(Technicolor)
Plus
You'll be Spellbound as Circus Dancer's Dely Death
as Performs Astonishing Feats

"THE BIG TOP" (G)
Made in Russia, is Something Really Spectral and Sensational
in Glorious Color
METRO NEWS, CARTOONS, SHORTS, ETC.
Matinee Saturday, 2 p.m. Above Programmes

Wednesday, August 11th

JOHN WAYNE IN
"ISLAND IN THE SKY" (G)
From Errol K. Ginn's Blood-racing True-Life Best Seller
Co-starring: LLOYD NOLAN, WALTER ABEL
Plus
FERNANDO LAMAS, ARLENE DAHL, GILBERT
ROLAND IN
"THE DIAMOND QUEEN" (G)
All in Thrilling Color
A Flaming Love Safari — Plus India's Fiery Jungle Heart
NEWSREEL, CARTOONS, SHORTS, ETC.

Comes —
"THE BLUE GARDENIA," "CHARGE OF FEATHER
RIVER," "SOUTH SEA WOMAN"
"BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON"

Camden News, 5 August 1954 (NLA)

belt, all in natural tonings. Short, neatly set hair and cats-eye sunglasses were to become an Audrey Hepburn trademark throughout the 1950s, showing Shirley was clearly on top of the trend!

Fashion trends, industry experts and fashionistas will tell you, come in cycles; and everything is created or influenced by a previous design in some way. Whether it be captured on film to display a character's emotional journey and characteristics, or footage of the catwalks of an international design house that influences a whole change in style, records from the fashion floor levels of an esteemed department store or evidence from the living room sewing machines of women and teenagers throughout the country, fashion and the clothing choices reflect the cultural and emotional stories of the time.

Private photographs provide an even more intimate glimpse into these choices. Whilst for many the 1950s was a period that was not that far in the past, as this mid-century period becomes more and more relevant in cultural history, it would be wonderful to see more private images appear of how the everyday citizens of all ages dressed and the stories behind them.

A picture may tell a thousand words but the clothing and fashion choices in the picture have just as much to say.

Audrey Hepburn's outfit in *Roman Holiday* (Paramount Pictures 1953) displays a striking resemblance to Shirley's outfit. (Wikimadia)



William Macarthur and the Empire of Science

**Julie McIntyre, University of Newcastle, Scholarly Talk,
State Library of New South Wales, 5 February 2019**

Notes by Anne McIntosh

Julie McIntyre has been researching the development of the Australian wine industry, particularly focused on the Hunter Valley. She wrote *First Vintage Wine in Colonial New South Wales* and her research on the history of viticulture is ongoing. Her presentation on William Macarthur draws upon the same body of research, but looks at Australian agriculture, industry and science in Victorian times. William took a scientific approach when establishing his vineyard at Camden Park, yet, he had not attended university.

William Macarthur was born in 1800, and was the seventh of Elizabeth and John Macarthur's eight children. He and his older brother, James, were educated in England where they boarded with their tutor, Mr Lindsay, between 1809 and 1815. William's formal education was probably completed by the time he was 15 or 16 years old, after which John Macarthur set off with the two boys on a year-long agricultural tour through France and Switzerland.

Based on family letters, it is clear that from an early age, William was a very active and curious child. Despite having spent time in England and Europe, he returned willingly to his family in New South Wales, and he saw great potential for the 'new land'. James, two years his senior, found greater favour with his teacher, and was described in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* as 'the more steady of the two'. Both boys were also educated in French, which almost certainly improved during their time in Switzerland, and James may have also had some capability in German.

At this time, a formal university education was not a prerequisite for participation in the global 'Empire of Science'. Information was exchanged through letters and many colonials subscribed to key journals and participated in the exchange of new knowledge. Taking into account communication and transport during early Victorian times, the shortest possible journey between England and Australia would have been three months. Access to recent information and a commitment to innovation enabled non-academics to make significant contributions in spite of their seeming isolation.

The idea that scientific thinking and knowledge should be secular, apolitical and accessible to all across the world, has underpinned scientific advances during the last 150 years. Through the application of scientific thinking and argument, it was believed that knowledge would be advanced to benefit man-



Camden Park House where William Macarthur lived during his lifetime. The house was completed in 1835 and is described as Georgian architecture and Regency in style. Architect John Verge was commissioned to design the house and it is built of sandstock brick and Australian Cedar has been used extensively on the interior for architraves and doors. (CPH)

kind.

In the areas of agriculture and botany, William Macarthur made a significant contribution. In addition to properties at Camden, James and William had major holdings on the Abercrombie River near Taralga. William fostered horse-breeding, assisted his family's wool business, introduced the camellia to Australia and then improved it, and grew many fruit trees, vegetables and flowers. From 1843, he published an annual catalogue of Camden Park plant offerings. Later he built a hothouse and imported valuable orchids. He had connections to local aborigines, spoke the local indigenous dialect and considered information gained when evaluating the potential value for local timbers and garden plants.

William's contribution through advice and cuttings assisted wine growers establishing and experimenting in the Hunter Valley. He had brought out several families of German vignerons to aid vineyard development at Camden Park. By 1849, the 25 ac (10 ha) vineyard at Camden was producing



Camden Park Estate camelia developed during the lifetime of nurseryman, William Macarthur. (A McIntosh, 2017)

over 16,000 gallons (72,737 L) of red and white table wines and brandies, and large volumes were stored in the cellars.

The Macarthurs subscribed to a range of key journals and catalogues, so William had access to the latest thinking in horticulture. He was aware of, and supported, the efforts of Linnaeus to logically classify living organisms, and this highlighted the relationships between them. Also providing support was older brother, Edward Macarthur, who lived in England and was the ‘agent’ for family interests. Even at Camden Park, the Macarthurs had a committed person who could provide publications, contacts and plant materials.

Through correspondence and the sharing of plant materials with Hooker, a botanist in Glasgow, William’s botanical knowledge and his passion grew. There were many collectors of botanical samples in Australia, but letters show that the relationship between these men was interactive. It was clearly a mutually beneficial relationship; when Hooker was appointed to manage Kew Gardens in 1842, William Macarthur became ever more connected to global leaders in horticulture. William was also a close friend of Ludwig Leichardt and even tried to lobby to overcome a possibly anti-German bias

when the manager for the Sydney Botanic Gardens was appointed.

The sophistication of William's collecting is evident in the material that he provided for the Paris Exhibition of 1851, which raised awareness of Australia and promoted trade. William provided samples of native timbers for display (which can be seen on display whenever Camden Park has an Open Day), and had a 'handout' prepared for interested parties. Published in French and English, this tabulated information included Linnaean genus and species, common colonial plant name/s, and their applications, and aboriginal names and uses for the plants (as provided by the Dharawal man from the Illawarra, Dr Ellis, whose contribution was paid for by Macarthur). Samples of Queensland timber were also on display and included in the catalogue, however the same depth of information was not provided.

While in Paris, William visited vineyards in France and the Pyrenees, and later toured vineyards in Germany (Burgundy and Rhine Valleys) and visited Switzerland and Italy for the same purpose. He was always seeking ways to make his own enterprises more efficient and productive. William Macarthur was later appointed to a lead role for the World Trade Fair held in the Sydney Botanic Gardens in 1879.

It is evident that William was committed to the 'Empire of Science'. He respected knowledge for its own sake. He would source the information across boundaries of race and sought to communicate his learnings for both intellectual and commercial benefit. He corresponded widely with the leading scientific thinkers, and because his words demonstrated his knowledge, he was rewarded with respect.

In 1836, William joined a committee at the Australian Museum and from 1853 was a trustee. In 1870, William was made a trustee of the Free Public Library (which later became the State Library of NSW). He also held senior positions in the Agricultural Society of New South Wales for 20 years. From its establishment in 1860, William served on the Senate of the University of Sydney.

Julie McIntyre did point out that William was somewhat selective in those with whom he collaborated. In particular, she highlights that James King, a more traditional experimental scientist who made enormous contributions to the understanding of plant nutrition and soil science through work done in vineyard development on the Hunter, was not respected by Macarthur. Their ties to the wine industry through families such as that of Alexander Walker Scott in a big country with a tiny population, ensured that although the two men may not have collaborated, they were aware of one another.

William should not be regarded as a scientist. As a nurseryman and amateur botanist, and through his connections in Australia and overseas, he made a significant contribution in furthering scientific knowledge and this had big implications for the nation's agriculture. In fact, William was a lynchpin in the progress made in these areas during the mid-1800s. William's nephew, Edward Macarthur Bowman, continued his passion for science, collecting specimens in North Queensland and liaising with Ferdinand von Mueller from the Melbourne Botanic Gardens.

At the time of his death in 1882, five Linnaean plant names or groups referenced William Macarthur. He had been able to turn his passion to profit, with the horticulture business at Camden Park selling many plants, and particularly recognised for camellias and orchids. He provided grape vines to help start the wine business in South Australia. Through international exhibitions, he marketed Australia and expanded trade for his family and the nation.

[For more on William Macarthur see <http://hortuscampden.com/>]

Camden Park garden showing a Chilean wine palm (A McIntosh, 2017)



