

The background of the entire page is a light blue architectural floor plan of a building. The plan shows various rooms and their layouts. Labels visible on the plan include: DAIRY, SERVANT DINING, COURT-YARD/ WELL, GRAND DINING ROOM, BAKERY, WASHROOM, ENTRY, MEN'S WC, LADIES WC, GUEST ROOM, BOYS DORMS, and LADIES LOUR. The plan is oriented diagonally across the page.

EXPLORERS

NARRATIVES OF SITE IN CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE

Presented by

MODERN ART PROJECTS
BLUE MOUNTAINS

EXPLORERS

NARRATIVES OF SITE IN CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE

Presented by

MAP BM

Published in Blue Mountains (NSW), Australia in 2017

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DR JACQUELINE MILLNER

EXPLORERS: NARRATIVES OF SITE IN CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE

Explorers: narratives of site in contemporary art practice sits within a broad tradition now in Australian art of artists engaging with museums and historic houses. This tradition—which has its roots in institutional critique pioneered by conceptual and minimalist artists who demystified the neutrality of ‘the white cube’—has been developing at least since the 1990s, when artists began to redirect their attention to colonial collections and artefacts. Such practice was driven by a desire to deepen and complicate existing cultural understandings, of Australia in the first instance, but, by extension of broader territory, including: the relations between the past and the present, how best to tell stories that genuinely capture a diverse spectrum of experience while still honouring collective memory, and the role of art in knowledge-creation.

Over the last couple of decades, artists have diversified their engagement with the museum critique in ways that complement and extend, as well as complicate, the role of the museum, the practice of art and the viewer’s experience. That diversification has an engagement with the creation of knowledge that straddles the divide between art and non-art museums, specifically historical, ethnographic and natural science museums. And artists have increasingly relied on the full range of aesthetic effects at their disposal, while maintaining the incisive rigour of conceptual interventions. We see that range

in *Explorers*, from work that recognises the complexity of the aesthetic experience and its capacity to induce critical self-reflexivity and new conceptual engagement in the viewer—beyond ‘pure visual pleasure’—to subtle re-readings that rely on wry humour and expert knowledge. Such approaches target directly one of the historic house’s core concerns: how to connect contemporary audiences to the past, and encourage their contemplation of the consequences of that past for the present and the future.

Bringing artists into the historic house always poses risks and sets up the likelihood of an awkward and difficult culture clash. Over the years, museums and historic houses have expressed their reservations: some have been of the view that artists are concerned less with audience than exploring their own creativity; that artists’ processes lack rigour; that because artists are not embedded within the institution, they cannot be held accountable in the long term.

Yet more recently, this very culture clash and the discomfort it may cause have been recognized as generative and at the heart of the rationale for such site-specific work. For example, museums that wish to develop new audiences or recontextualise existing collections are often after the very paradigm shift offered by an accent on the aesthetic experience, on displaying objects according to criteria radically different to conventional museological practice, and this process can actually be facilitated rather than hindered by an outsider. Sometimes, the very licence granted an artist to say whatever they want is just what the museum needs.

When artists enter the museum, they work not only with collections, but also with ways of thinking. Artists have the potential to animate museums in novel ways, to bring in new audiences, and to extend our thinking on those things about which we may have become complacent. Artists may place their own, new works amongst the old, or rearrange what is already there; they may aim to confuse and unhinge a viewer who’s come

in search of facts and certainty. Artists may chance upon a long-neglected archive, create a new archive or read 'authoritative' archives against the grain to create different narratives. They may shake up a collection by inserting their living, physical selves amongst the inert artefacts. They may play around with the language of museum display and ordering principles, redeploing the erstwhile vitrine or the museum's taxonomic modes of display and categorisation.

Independent curator James Putnam proposes that artists bring to the museum an 'intuitive sense of perception and presentation', diverse interests and an emphasis on subjective, as opposed to objective, systems of meaning-making. They are 'free agents', given licence beyond what in-house curators 'would be allowed to consider', and 'not constrained by any formal museological precepts', with 'freedom to deconstruct the self-conscious, enforced neutrality of conventional museum displays'.¹ The artist as curator is able to blur the boundaries between interpretation and classificatory systems, and promote 'more open ended ways of looking' by treating objects as 'sculptural material' rather than as historically or scientifically specific artefacts.²

British artist Richard Wentworth suggests that the belief that most artists 'are not necessarily natural collaborators or even suited to "project" work—their ways may be too messy, too private, too arcane, or too inconclusive'—is often a key factor in the effectiveness of their museum/historic house intervention.

Explorers has gathered artists with a deep commitment to locale and an intimate knowledge of site built up over time, in some cases, over decades. They bring a diversity of aesthetic and conceptual approaches to engage with a historic house, which, while not prioritised by state heritage authorities, has played a role in many histories and many lives: it provides a rich platform for the creation of new narratives but also for the exploration of contemporary art practices. The Woodford Academy resonates in a variety of ways with different publics, as

these artists attest. Its institutional rank may actually serve to facilitate creative interpretation, and certainly offers much freer access to objects and locations that have clearly excited the artists here: the ability to leaf through a notebook from the 1890s, to pick up the beekeeper's bonnet worn by one of the residents, to step into rooms not cordoned off to the public, to work with the at times disintegrating fabric of the house. These are all rich aesthetic and conceptual avenues the artists here have taken full advantage of to create compelling experiences, experiences that take us from one temporal zone to another, from landscape to domestic interior, from the realm of the personal to the realm of the social and back again.

The opportunity to explore this dynamic of outside/inside, now/then is particularly evident in Daniel Kotja's endurance expedition that takes Academy resident and renowned 'explorer'—from the South Pole to Mount Kosciuszko—Edgeworth David as its point of departure. Kotja has been travelling throughout the exhibition, tweeting snippets of his experiences as he and his wheelchair make the trek from Lake Eyre to Mount Kosciuszko, musing on the relationship between the myth of the 'explorer' and the contemporary realities of such feats. Danica Knezevic also locates her work physically inside and out. Knezevic, whose practice explores the personal and social role of carer, engaged with the ambivalent domesticity of the house, which since it was first built in 1854 has seen a variety of uses including as an inn and a boarding school. Wearing the clothes of her grandfather—one of several close family members for whom the artist has been primary carer much of her adult life—Knezevic performed maintenance tasks on the house's exterior, embodying the constant, labour-intensive and often invisible care that all homes (and all they entail), but especially those with long histories, require. Her video of domestic linens caught in a gathering storm powerfully animated one of the interior rooms with the often-conflicting energies inherent to the act of caring (a task closely related to 'curating').

Michael Petchkovsky and Emma Rooney's video installation draws on some of the forgotten histories of the Academy. Both artists were moved by their discovery of the ruins of a tiny house during their rambles through the Academy's extensive grounds. Concerted inquiries revealed that the house had been occupied for many years by a gay couple renowned for taking in those cast out by their families because of their sexuality. The artists literally reignited the spirit of this generous gesture, lighting a fire in what remained of the stone and brick fireplace, and ensconcing the video record of the ritual in the main house. *Dark Room* (Carolyn Eccles and Sean O'Keeffe) also respond to a specific story, albeit one that is well known and widely coopted for Blue Mountains ghost tourism: the 1840s murder of 17-year-old Catherine Collits. Through video, performance and a collectively plaited braid of grey hair (the mark of age that Catherine would never attain), the artists seek to cut through the mythology and reconnect us of the grim facts of this violent death and its misogynist cultural context which remains pertinent today.

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Fiona Davies reimagines and revitalises lost histories too, in this case bringing her sensitivity around the medicalization of vulnerable people to the boy boarders once resident here. Davies has rendered the basins in the boys' washroom into pathology slides: as we peer down, we catch a glimpse of disease and possible institutional responses to it, gaining a visceral sense of how these young bodies were once patrolled and controlled. The boys' presence is also evoked in Mahalya Middlemist's video installation in the tiny locker room adjoining the Academy's classroom. Vivienne Dadour's collages meantime mobilise the memories of longtime tenants and prolific letter-writers the McManamey sisters, drawing on their archives of wartime magazines.

Anne Graham takes an object she found on site as her imaginative source: a beekeeping hat (depicted also in an archival photograph). Graham brings her refined sculptural sensibility to make compelling links between the everyday horticultural rituals of the house and a

significant event in its history, namely its accommodation of scientists gathered to witness the Transit of Venus in 1874. This highly charged event—which immediately underscores the colonial discourses that necessarily accompany the nineteenth century historic house —also inspired Jacqueline Spedding. Her delicate star maps projected on the ceiling of the servants' quarters reflect the site's indigenous astronomy interpreted through her material response to the Academy's landscape architecture, in particular its sandstone paths.

Like Spedding, Melissa Grahovac and Vicky Browne mediate between the Academy's natural environment and its interiors heavy with memory. Grahovac brings in traces of the Academy's signature trees to make architectural interventions, while Browne enlivens the hallway with sounds of local birdsong mixed with NASA recordings to tie this house and its histories to broader phenomena. A similar move occurs with Miriam Williamson's work, set in the Woodford reserve among a colony of silver poplars. The artist invites us to sit and contemplate these introduced plants, beautiful but at the same time evocative of the loss and displacement wrought by colonialism. Sarah Breen Lovett also creates a space of contemplation in the Academy's gardens, re-purposing the bark of the ancient eucalypt that dominates the building's street frontage to mark out a circle on the ground, counterbalancing the myriad voices emanating from the house with an accepting silence.

Working less with stories than with the architectural presence of the Academy is Beata Geyer's colour sculpture, whose crisp geometry and luminosity renders our physical responses to the house's interiors all the more palpable. Meantime, the institutional presence of the Academy is deftly pinpointed by Ian Milliss's *Statement of Insignificance*. This ironic re-writing of the heritage assessor's stock-in-trade sits open on the schoolroom desks with mock authority, both a wry comment on the exhibition's whole enterprise and evidence of the power of art to open up new and critical perspectives.



Danica Knezevic, *Dissolution Line, and Windows*, 2017. HD Video, 7:54 min and 4.05 min. Photography by Mandy Schoene-Salter.

Explorers adds to the important critical strain in Australian contemporary art that takes the historic house as a platform. The artists have created a range of provocations and contributed new knowledges, not only about the Woodford Academy itself, but also the relationships between history, site, and art.

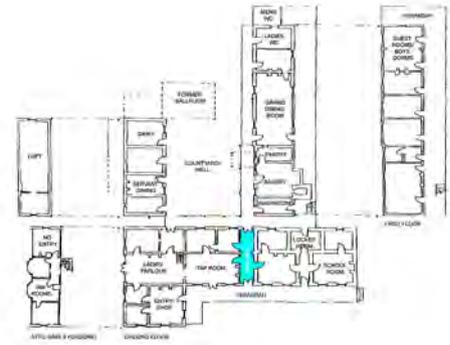
JACQUELINE MILLNER is Associate Professor of Visual Arts at La Trobe University and author of several books on Australian and international contemporary art including (with Jennifer Barrett) *Australian Artists in the Contemporary Museum*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014.

Endnotes

- 1 James Putnam, *Art and Artifact: The museum as medium*, London: Thames and Hudson, 2009, 132, 136.
- 2 James Putnam, *Art and Artifact: The museum as medium*, London: Thames and Hudson, 2009, 143, 147.

VICKY BROWNE

BIRDS IN SPACE



Birds in Space is a collection of works that inhabit the hallway of Woodford academy. The sound is recordings of birds found around Woodford mixed with space recordings made by NASA. The record is made in NZ by Peter King and is hand-cut by a lathe machine. The space theme in the sound recording is continued through the hallway by the hanging glassworks.

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Thanks to: Modern Art Projects Blue Mountains, National Trust (NSW) Woodford Academy, Katoomba Kiosk, Peter King, Locust Jones, Sylvie Jones and Galerie Pompom

Vicky Browne, *Birds in Space*, 2017.

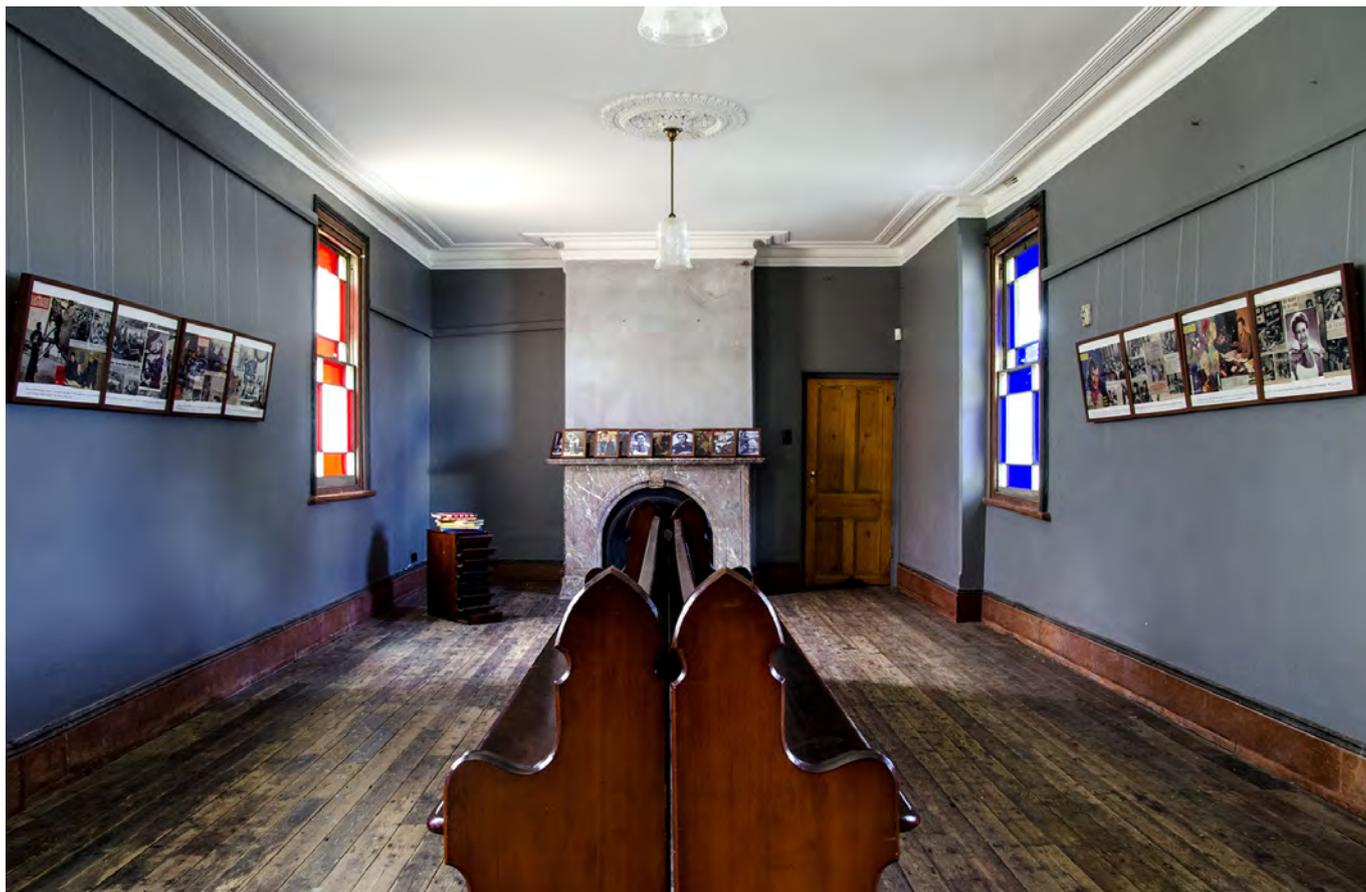
Turntable
lathe cut
polycarbonate record
glass laser toner powder
lead came thermal foil.
Dimensions variable.

Photography by Mandy
Schoene-Salter









Vivienne Dadour,
*Illustrated: Women, Work
and War 1940–1946*,
2017.

Selected archival and
contextual material.

Photography by Mandy
Schoene-Salter and
Vivienne Dadour (over)

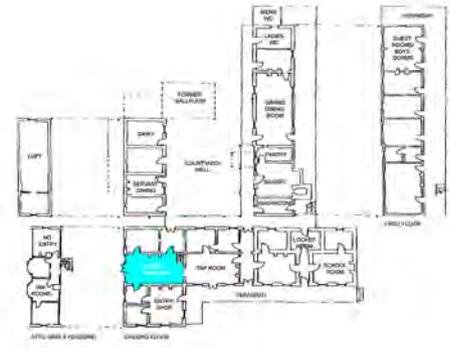


*Listen to the booming of guns... we heard the whine of the shells from enemy submarines...
 Everyone is keyed up waiting for the genuine air attack... We shall be thankful to get our baptism over.*
 1942 To Gerti McManamey from Marjorie Sydney



DARK ROOM

THE CATHERINE COLLITTS PROJECT



The murder of Catherine Collitts and the sensationalism surrounding the trial of her murderer and later her ghost became the subject of much mythology including a well-known poem by Henry Lawson. Borne of the story of her murder is the legend of a ghost that haunts a section of the Great Western Highway. Within the locality of the Blue Mountains and to the west, children and adults alike retell the story of the ghost of Hartley Pass.

Ghost tours feature the ghost story and many a bus driver has titillated nervous passengers descending the steep and precarious curves of the Hartley pass with the story of the spectre. The grim details of the murder are retold with relish but the passing of time and embellishment of storytellers has distanced the story from the simple reality that the ghost of Hartley pass is the story of a tragically violent death of a young woman.

Dark Room has attempted to unpack and separate the mythology from the facts concerning Catherine Collitts and the tragedy of her death. Accessing historical documents provided by Woodford Academy we examined the court records of the trial in which testimony was given by both the prosecution and defence as to the sequence of events leading to the young womans death.

It quickly became clear that there were inconsistencies on both sides and that the real truth of the events of the night may never be known. So in an effort to connect meaningfully with some sort of human reality with the subject, a series of investigative and performative works were devised to create audience connection and possibly empathy with Catherine Collitts. These works form the basis of the final work exhibited in the exhibition.



Dark Room (Carolyn
Eccles and Sean
O'Keefe), *The Catherine
Collitts Project*, 2017.

Grey human hair, lock
360 degree video, live
performance, chair, soil
and Tarmac.

Photography courtesy
of the artists







Fiona Davies, *Painting the Throat*, 2017.

Zinc, found objects, rice and other papers, iodine and ink site specific.

Photography by Fiona Davies and Mandy Schoene-Salter (over)







Beata Geyer, *Colouring Space: Empire Neptune Blue*, 2017.

Mdf and acrylic paint.

Photography by Beata Geyer







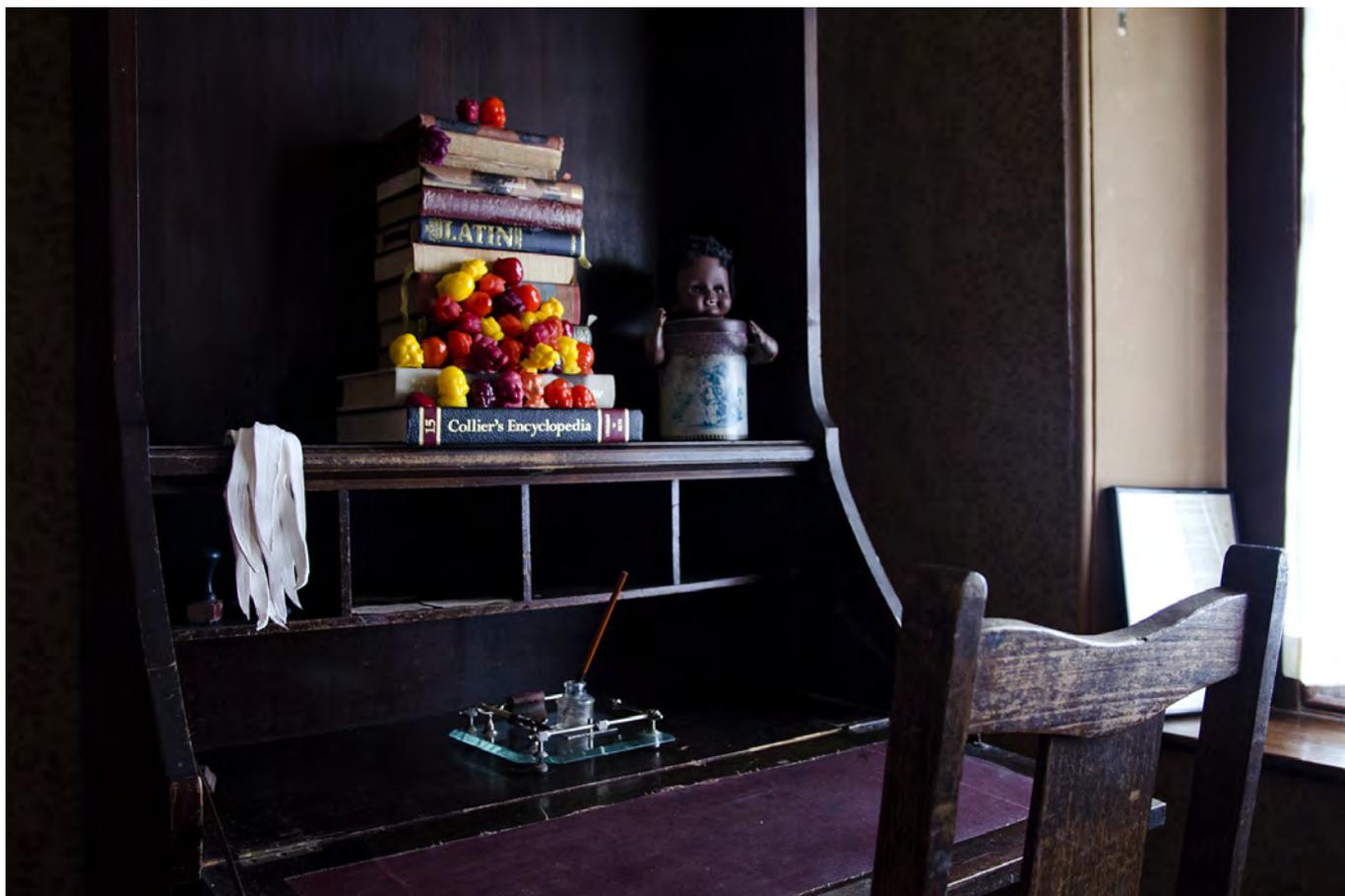
Anne Graham, *The Beehive Lady and The Beehive Observatories*, 2017.

Music by Boris Hunt titled *The Transit of Beeness*, sound, LED globes, steel, fabric, beekeeper's hat and beehive.

Photography by Mandy Schoene-Salter







Melissa Grahovac, *S/weep*, 2017.

Porcelain clay, found objects and resin.

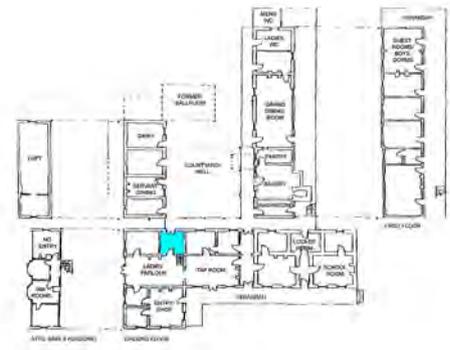
Photography by Mandy Schoene-Salter.





DANICA KNEZEVIC

DISSOLUTION LINE, WINDOWS AND READY TO HAND



In *Dissolution line*, Knezevic films an occurrence that would happen even if the camera were not rolling. In a suburb, in the background, on the Hills Hoist or washing line hang the newly cleaned clothes and doilies that surround her home. They are being dried overnight. The wind is strong, as a storm is brewing.

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The work is reminiscent of the nostalgia, the apprehension of the everyday and the longing of home. The sensor light turns on at times, highlighting a hyperawareness of movement as well as an association with a being that is lurking. Just before the storm hits, the washing is taken off the line.

Windows is a video work, which reflects on the ambiguity of shadows. The figure is purposefully cleaning while the weather then washes away the dust. Both are doing the same action but have a different purpose. The window is a threshold that is structurally sustained with glass to withhold the outside.

Ready to hand is a performance where Danica Knezevic cleans, gardens and executes everyday labour for her performance Ready to

hand, at Woodford Academy. The echoes are of the stories and lives that have pasts but aren't concrete in the archive. Remembering the repetitive domesticity is highlighted through the space, and its history of maintenance throughout it's time as an inn, and place of education.

Wearing her grandfather's clothes, she imparts her own autobiography. Her grandfather, an immigrant to Australia, was a worker of land in his homeland and maintained their family home: everything outdoors was his thing, taking care of the garbage, making sure the house was secure and safe while growing vegetables in the garden.

Many people have passed through Woodford Academy. This work wishes to acknowledge those stories, in particular the handwork of the women who worked in order to survive and provide a warm, nourishing space.



DANICA KNEZEVIC,
Dissolution Line, and
Windows, 2017.

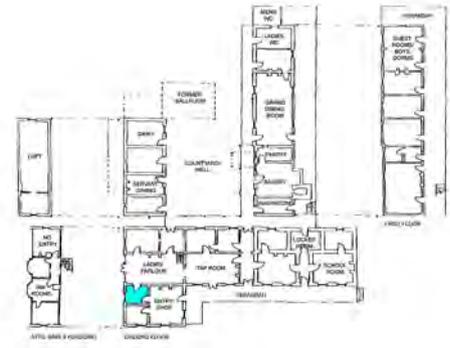
HD Video, 7:54 min and
4:05 min

Photography by Mandy
Schoene-Salter and Alex
Gooding (p 39)





NIMROD



Lowest to Highest. Expedition from Lake Eyre to Mt Kosciusko

I am researching the incredibly adventurous explorer, Sir Tannatt William Edgeworth David whose main place of residence was a cottage he built named Tyn-y-Coed, (meaning house in the trees) on the 26 acres that Woodford Academy now stands. In the early part of the twentieth century, the cottage was expanded to meet the needs of the family where orchards and gardens were established.

Sir Ernest Shackleton appointed Sir David as leader of the scientific team accompanying him to the South Pole in 1907–09. He led the party that discovered the South Magnetic Pole and his team scaled the active volcano Mount Erebus. In 1909, following his return from the Antarctic, the David's entertained the crew of the polar expedition ship, *Nimrod* at Tyn-y-Coed in Woodford.

There are many similarities between the enthusiasm Sir David had for exploration through scientific inquiry, and an artist captured by the awe of new territories of roaring volcanoes to polar ice monoliths. In an incredible feat of human endurance, the most

awakening and inspiring coincidence for me personally was Sir David's continued thirst for adventure and scientific discovery in climbing Mt. Kosciusko.

On my expedition from Lake Eyre to Mt Kosciusko I am proposing to make one recording each week as an image captured by contemporary media: from the Go Pro, the DJI Phantom drone, intuitive responses captured by the analogue in my film camera, illustrations in my Expedition Journal and small objects. Each weekly discovery will combine a voice-over; either describing the discovery in scientific narrative, or, an intuitive response along with a comparative image from Sir David's expeditions. Each week, I will share these experiences by post or when possible email or fax, and the final collection will illustrate the journey as a complete work. A cabinet of curiosities, a collection of awe, an invitation to share the endurance.

The expedition will offer an incredible challenge. The comparative union of our shared experiences through time will find Sir David and I breathing the same air, the same soil, and the same endurance to continue through to the end. From 1908 to 2017.



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Daniel Kojta, *MAP*
Explorers Project:
NIMROD, 2017.

Lowest to Highest.
Expedition from Lake
Eyre to Mt Kosciusko.

Go Pro and DJI
Phantom drone images,
analogue photographs,
illustrations, objects,
voice recordings and
comparative images from
Sir Edgeworth David's
expeditions.

Photography courtesy of
the artist

GUEST
PROFESSOR SIR EDGEWORTH DAVID
 (UPON HIS RETURN FROM CENTRAL AUSTRALIA)

Tickets may be obtained at **BISHOP'S CAFE**, Rundle Street, up to 5 p.m.
 WEDNESDAY, 25th July.

Images for Luncheon will be 7s. 6d., if tickets be purchased before
NO TICKETS CAN BE ISSUED AFTER THAT DATE.



Tweets **13** Following **149** Followers **5** [Follow](#)

Edgeworth David
 @GeologistEDavid

Sir Edgeworth David, Woodford resident (1899 - 1934), and South Pole explorer with several important expedition successes; first ascent Mt Erebus, Antarctica.
 Woodford, NSW 1899 - 1934 • Edgeworthdavid.com.au

Edgeworth David @GeologistEDavid · Oct 19
 Replying to @GeologistEDavid
 Edgeworth David at Woodford home grounds with his most trusted Geological dig companion. A scientist himself, his discoveries profound.

Edgeworth David @GeologistEDavid · Oct 19
 How I long for the trust in my most valued expedition member. I will be joyous to my companion.



Edgeworth David @GeologistEDavid · Oct 4
 Time may have fled beyond the distance that weaves beyond us but I am well. I envied the gravity that held you in my absence. We are ashore.



Edgeworth David @GeologistEDavid · Aug 22
 Replying to @GeologistEDavid
 Absent in the longing of my love I am present in the preparation of this expedition. I will miss her touch whilst I venture through the void



Sir Tannatt William Edgeworth David KBE, CMG,DSO,FRS (28 January 1858– 28 August 1934) photographing his wife, Caroline (Cara) Martha Mallett (Lady Edgeworth David) as they shared their combined love of climbing in aid of geological survey and palaeontology prior to his departure to the South Pole expedition.

Cara remained with their children, however, she was the main proponent in the first movements towards equal rights for women in many aspects of society, beginning here in Woodford at their home 'Tyne Coed' surrounding the grounds by the Woodford Academy.

Both true explorers of social justice, science, and world exploration.

SARAH BREEN LOVETT

CONTEMPLATING THE VOID



In reaction to the historically dense saturation of significant stories surrounding the Woodford Academy site, this work acknowledges the void.

The void is the complete history of the site, such as: movement of the stars, air, fire, water and earth; growth of flora and fauna; occupation by Durug and Gundungurra people and post-colonial settlement; use for star gazing, ritual, gatherings, hunting, drinking, residence, education, relaxation, sanctuary and historicity; experiences of the sublime, happiness, infatuation, love, sadness, anger, fear and regret; and ...

In this way, the void is a place of no-thingness, where no separate moment has identity, where everything merges together, everything that is known and unknown.

A circle is cast from bark shed by the large Eucalyptus tree at the front of the Academy. The bark has departed from its life source and is in a state of temporal transference; it is in between being, leaving its perceived physical unity called 'tree' to being a fragmented entity called dust which returns to the earth, and ultimately to the void itself.

Each piece of bark is wrapped in a state of contemplation with the string responding to existing contours – a tracing of layers of history. The pieces emerged from the making process with various acknowledgements of the past evident in its visual language.

The bark is laid with each axis of the circle in relation to various aspects of the landscape, the silent witnesses to a million stories. The circle is placed with a gateway open to the north that invites the viewer to lay within.

Once within the circle, one can choose to listen my contemplation of the void, through a sound recording that was generated through meditation, free association and channelling in the circle; or connect to the void through one's own mind.



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Sarah Breen Lovett,
Contemplating the Void,
2017.

Recycled cotton on
Eucalyptus bark & sticks,
dimensions variable;
sound recording 8
minutes loop (in garden)

Photography by Alex
Gooding.







[Mahalya Middlemist,](#)
Boy, 2017.

HD video three minutes.

Photography by Bette
Misfud. Model Sasha
Grahovac.



The two boys
The boys are standing in front of the house. They are holding hands. The boy on the left is wearing a white shirt and the boy on the right is wearing a white shirt. They are both wearing shorts.

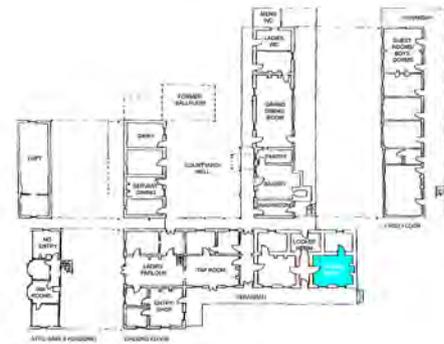


Men in uniform
The men are sitting on a bench in front of a building. They are wearing dark uniforms. There are four men in total. The building in the background has a chimney.



IAN MILLISS

STATEMENT OF INSIGNIFICANCE



All heritage properties have a Statement of Significance and as a sometimes heritage consultant I have helped write many. It always struck me how they were always too narrow in focus and colonial in their assumptions. I have attempted to redress this in my Statement of Insignificance for Woodford Academy by placing it in a much wider context.



[Ian Milliss, Statement of Insignificance, 2017.](#)

Text-based work on paper.

Photograph by Mandy Schoene-Salter

Statement of Insignificance

Woodford Academy



features and the lifestyle of the occupants over time. The site has considerable historical archaeological value and research potential to demonstrate the general character of its types of occupation from the early nineteenth century onwards. Previous monitoring of works indicates that significant archaeological deposits survive here which will provide evidence of the specific construction, form, nature, function and occupation of this former buildings and other structures on this site and its environs.

Date significance updated: 3 Oct 2017

Note: There are incomplete details for a number of items listed in NSW. The Heritage Division intends to develop or upgrade statements of significance and other information for these items as resources become available.

Description

Builder/Maker: Michael Pembroke

Construction years: 1828-1835

Physical Site:

description: The topography of the original site and some small features of aboriginal occupation remain but they have been overlaid with European buildings, weed species and roadworks. There is a high probability that these will be destroyed by future bushfires as climate change progresses, leaving open the possibility of some reconstitution of pre invasion landscape.

The features contemporary with the construction of the post invasion building such as sandstone flagging, the stone tank, make a large contribution to the significance of the complex and should be considered as an integral part of the buildings. Not much seems to have survived from the Fairfax and guest house periods with the possible exception of some of the paving and perhaps the water pumps. These are also important as parts of this phase of the development of the buildings.

Vandalism by the descendants of the European invaders is a conspicuous site feature however, the names engraved (with boy students of the Academy's names: there are many such, e.g. RSBS who was Ralph Sanders Barclay Sillar, a student in 1909 and after World War 1, a successful lawyer, who lived on until 1970 (Jack, 2014, 7)) on the massive rock shelves at the site's rear (east) are probably the most interesting because they graphically demonstrate the use of the building as a school in the early 20th century. The various names personalise the history of the building (sic: site).

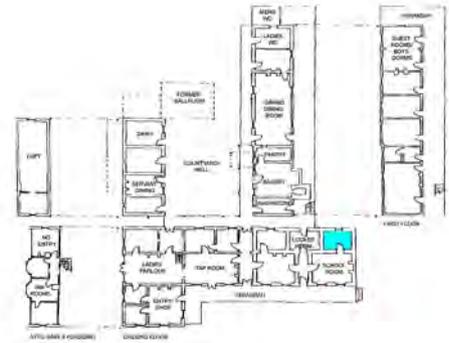
The inherent significance the landscape created over at least 20,000 years by the Aboriginal inhabitants has been severely comprised by earthworks, the European buildings, planting of European plants. Only small remnants of the original native fauna remain. Although the the European plantings were clearly intended to provide an aesthetically pleasing setting for the buildings they show little trace of intentional design or sophisticated knowledge of plants. A number of the mature trees are clearly remnants of the Victorian and Edwardian period(s)(CLP, 24).

Four Monterey pine trees (*Pinus radiata*) flank the south-west edge of the property onto the Great Western Highway. A large mature and significant eucalypt tree grows close to the centre of the main building facing the highway. Three more Monterey pines, two poplars, a lemon-scented gum and two paths - one stone, one brick, comprise the southern front boundary plantings, running roughly from mid-main building to both sides of the rough driveway and the property's eastern boundary shared with the Presbyterian church.

MICHAEL PETCHKOVSKY

EMMA ROONEY

SLOW BURN FOR JON AND DAVID



World War 1 Room

Walking the bush trails beyond the Woodford Academy stimulated conversations about the area and its' historical significance; personal memories and our associations with various sections of the tracks. We have both spent time on these trails over the years, as individuals in separate time frames. By walking together and revisiting the three waterfalls on the Transit of Venus Route, and a ruin halfway to Paradise (a waterhole known to locals) where an old chimney still stands, we decided on working with specific landmarks which we could then re-contextualise into the Woodford Academy. By focussing on these sites our intention was to allow for other narratives than the dominant well-documented histories within the building itself. Once we brought our work into the building, new resonances were discovered.

In the installation *Slow burn for Jon and David*, we have chosen to work with a ruined chimney, the remains of a dwelling of gay couple who built a house out on the ridge beyond the Academy (as a place to live in freedom perhaps?) during the 1940's. By

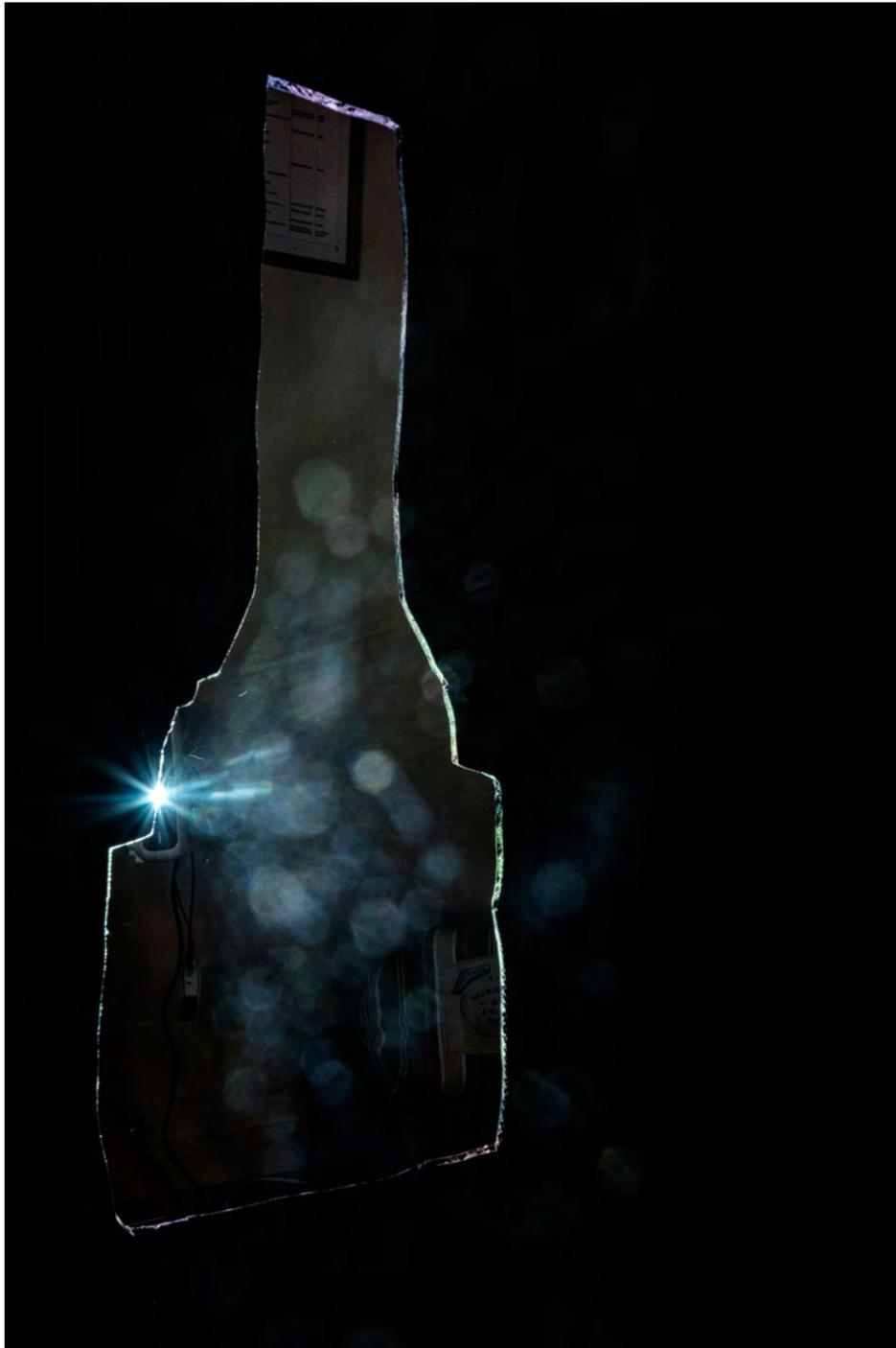
re-igniting the chimney, and videoing it, then projecting the chimney with a burning fire onto a wall in the Academy's 'World War I Room', we wanted to bring a sense of life to the ruin, in contrast to the six dormant unlit chimneys in the present day Academy. The masking of the burning chimney, using a large chimney-shaped matte that is placed in front of the projector, brings another element of dislocation to the space. The blackening of the window with oiled carbon paper effects the light and atmosphere in the already dark room. A remnant of an old iron Singer sewing machine is displayed in an existing display case. Words rubbed onto carbon paper from the embossed word "Singer" (reigns, singe etc.) found on the chimney, cover the window and resonate with engraved letters on windowsill. The GPS map of our walks outlined in white stitching (sewn on a Singer sewing machine onto black fabric) references "pitch falling map line" our installation in the 'Entropy Room', and the walking tracks behind the Academy. The three old trunks (that were already in the room) add to the heaviness of bricks, iron and the weight of the stored history of war that is archived within that room.



Michael Petchkovsky and
Emma Rooney, *Slow Burn*
for Jon and David, 2017.

Mixed media installation
and projection.

Photography by David
Brazil.





MICHAEL PETCHKOVSKY

EMMA ROONEY

PITCH FALLING MAP LINE



Entropy Room

The materials and colours in *Pitch falling map line* reference colonial picturesque images of the Australian landscape and the dark blue ink on the multitude of documents that are archived within the Academy. A carbon paper silhouette of a pitcher on the window pours a line of finger-knitted wool cord onto the floor where it outlines GPS map of our walks. Another hidden (behind a curtain) pitcher, leaks an inky line of wool out the window, dropping down to the flagstones below. The largely undocumented Hazel Falls- is framed within a fire screen as an endlessly falling cascade. A tiny version of chimney video, burning slowly, can be seen in a small viewfinder. Beyond the window, in a direct line but out of view, is the ruined chimney.

A distant lyrebird song (mimicking other birds) is occasionally heard through the endless flow of water. An elliptical mirror is placed in the far corner, to reflect the opposite wall, with its layers of peeling wallpaper. The elliptical frame is repeated to frame a romanticised landscape of the Blue Mountains on a fire-screen that restricts the viewers entry to the Entropy Room.



Michael Petchkovsky
and Emma Rooney, *Pitch
falling map line*, 2017.

Mixed media installation
and projection

Photography by David
Brazil.







Jacqueline Spedding,
Skyscapes, 2017.

Mixed media installation.

Photography by Mandy
Schoene-Salter.







Miriam Williamson, *Seeds of Empire*, 2017.

Animal skins, botanical specimens, audio, antique furniture.

Photography by Alex Gooding (right) and Miriam Williamson (over)





THE WOODFORD ACADEMY

The Woodford Academy, a National Trust property, is the oldest surviving complex of colonial buildings in the Blue Mountains, and a rare treasure. Built originally as an inn in the 1830s, the academy has been expanded and adapted to changing lifestyle and building fashions. It has served as a gentleman's residence, a guesthouse, a boarding house and then, from 1907 to 1936, a private school called Woodford Academy, run by rector John McManamey. McManamey's daughters remained in the academy after his death, ensuring its survival until 1979 when Gertrude McManamey gave the property to the National Trust of Australia (NSW). It is now a museum that offers a rare and multi-faceted window on the heritage of the Blue Mountains and its highway.

The site

On the northern side of the academy in what is now a local council reserve, there is a ten-metre-long deeply engraved groove in the sandstone slab, believed to indicate ancient Aboriginal occupation and to represent a 'connection line' between one place and another.¹ Human occupation of the Blue Mountains goes back at least 22,000 years and the area's traditional custodians are the Dharug and the Gundungurra people.²

The 1813 route of the explorers Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson, and the 1814 road built by William Cox's convicts, passed by the academy site bringing Europeans, whose desperate search for pasture had a destructive impact on the traditional way of life of the Dharug and Gundungurra people and the Wiradjuri, custodians of the western plains. Finds of bottles and coins on the site, which contained water and native grasses, suggest it was used as a camping ground by European people in the 1820s.³

Days of isolation and desperation

In 1831 Woodford was known as 20 Mile Hollow and the only building there was an illegal sly-grog shop along the Cox's road, run by a William and Mary James.⁴ In that year Governor Darling granted former convict Thomas Pembroke two acres (0.8 hectare) of well-watered, well-grassed flatland to establish an inn to the east, overlapping James' squat.⁵

By 1834, having been granted a publican's licence, Pembroke had constructed 'a respectable inn... having stone masons, carpenters, splitters and fencers employed'. It was known as 'The Woodman'.⁶ This appears to be the eastern wing of the main building, which has five bays and a typical pattern of rooms for the period consisting of two large rooms with three smaller ones on the north and with a detached kitchen.⁷ In 1835, in recognition of this effort, Governor Darling granted Pembroke an additional 48 acres (19.4 hectares) of land north of the inn, the more southerly and flat part of which was used for livestock, sheep yards and a productive garden.⁸

Until the mid-1840s The Woodman was a day's travel from the nearest inns at Valley Heights and Wentworth Falls. Today these distances are traversed in just 20 minutes by car but in the nineteenth century they were a welcome sight for travellers undertaking the treacherous, bone-shattering trek through what was considered a forbidding and dangerous landscape.

It was a hard and isolated life for the publicans. James' wife Mary appears to have committed suicide (with a little help from her husband), saying she would be 'better off in a better world'.⁹ Thomas Pembroke and his wife Frances also suffered. Thomas was gaoled in 1837 for theft and Frances appealed to the governor to release him as she was an 'unfortunate and destitute wife' with a 'young and helpless family of nine children'. In desperation she had sexual liaisons with coachmen in return for material support.¹⁰ Pembroke was admitted to a mental asylum and Frances later remarried.¹¹ In 1839

a new owner, Michael Hogan, agreed to purchase the heavily mortgaged property and inn for £450.¹²

Clive Lucas has said Hogan was ‘a man of some financial standing’ and his property appears to have been managed as a landlord – the inn was leased to a succession of publicans.¹³ It was renamed ‘The King’s Arms’ by licensee Josiah Workman in 1840, perhaps because of a close connection with the road maintenance convicts and soldiers at 17 Mile Hollow (Linden) and 18 Mile Hollow (Bull’s Camp), east of the inn.¹⁴

The presence of convicts brought a measure of prosperity, particularly during James Nairn’s time as publican. In 1907, three tombstones dating from the early 1840s were discovered on the site. They suggest a connection between the inn and the 50 non-commissioned soldiers, their families and the convicts. Furthermore, Captain John Bull, magistrate and assistant engineer in charge of the maintenance of the road, and based at 18 Mile Hollow, resided with his family at the inn for some two years, and a child, Frederick, was born there to John and his wife Mary Bull there on 4 October 1843.¹⁵

Woodford during the gold rushes

The discovery of gold in the Bathurst district in May 1851 ended the isolation at 20 Mile Hollow. Thousands of people from all walks of life travelled along the Western Road from Sydney to Bathurst, keen to seek their fortune.

There is no evidence to suggest Hogan carried out any construction on his Woodford property.¹⁶ Most historians cautiously opt for 1855 as the year the extensions were built and when Hogan sold the property. At that time the inn tripled in size. The main stone building was extended on the western side and a suite of rooms was added on a first floor on the west of the main building. These tiny, low, quaint rooms are rare surviving examples of mid-nineteenth century building and are little changed – one feels the history as one enters them. A large two-storey building—the dairy—was added to the western side of the courtyard, and a more substantial kitchen was added on the eastern side, incorporating or replacing the old

one. The arched fireplace and stone sink were installed in the kitchen at this time as well as a separate stable farther north of the kitchen.

In 1855–1856, the police lockup and mounted patrol station was relocated from Wentworth Falls to 20 Mile Hollow, on a 10-acre (four hectare) site that impinged on the western side of the inn.

William Buss purchased the inn in 1855 for £1,040. A former convict, Buss was renowned as a colourful character, reportedly wearing a scarlet waistcoat to welcome guests at the front door. Although still licensed as The King’s Arms, the inn was known as ‘Buss’s Inn’ until his death in 1867. [17] Buss prospered from the onslaught of hopeful gold diggers and hosted, as honoured guests, the soldiers tasked with escorting the gold safely back to Sydney. The fact that he attempted (unsuccessfully) to sell the property in 1863, the year of the railway survey, suggests he saw the writing on the wall for the future of his roadside inn.¹⁸

At this time the ground floor of the main building consisted of a large taproom, a ladies’ parlour and self-contained quarters for Buss, his wife and their six children. Additional accommodation for guests or employees was provided in the first floor attic. The taproom, or the bar, was the busiest room of the inn and still features a cartouche of painted grapes, peaches and corn, representing the fruits that were fermented to make spirits. The dairy wing and the newly constructed wooden ballroom to the north closed off the courtyard.¹⁹

A gentleman’s residence and guesthouse

In 1868 Sydney merchant Alfred Fairfax purchased the property for £450 as a country retreat, renaming it Woodford House and making it the first substantial private dwelling in the Blue Mountains. The construction of the main western railway from Penrith to Weatherboard (now Wentworth Falls) in 1867 might have influenced his decision to purchase the inn. By 1869 the property was serviced by a railway platform, called Buss’s Platform, located slightly west of the inn. The railway platform

was renamed Woodford in 1871. Fairfax expanded the property to a 90-acre (36 hectare) estate. [20] He bought portion 17 with the house, a 40-acre (around 16 hectare) block extending northwards to Mabel Falls and portion 24, a block of the same size that included an orchard.²¹

The use of the house as a retreat for Fairfax and his friends represents a significant change in perceptions of the Blue Mountains. No longer feared as a wild and threatening landscape, the mountains were now valued for their fresh, healthy, cool mountain air and for their waterfalls and broad vistas. Land grants released in the early 1870s were taken up by a number of wealthy Sydney businessmen, who built substantial mountain retreats.

John Shiels was the first manager in the Fairfax era, having formerly managed Regentville House near Mulgoa. At an 1868 inquest into the fire that had destroyed Regentville House, Shiels stated he had a mountains property ‘...which I keep as an accommodation house’ and had taken ‘the house so well-known as Buss’s, on the Western Road, which will in future be called Woodford’. From this point, Shiels disappears and there is no knowledge of another caretaker/manager until 1876.²²

The transit of Venus expedition at Woodford

In 1874 Fairfax gained fame for hosting the observation of the transit of Venus on the former police lockup land, immediately northwest of Woodford House. Woodford was chosen because of its clear steady atmosphere and proximity to the rail and electric telegraph, enabling connection to Sydney Observatory. Fairfax was an amateur astronomer who was willing to open up his property to the observers, and owned a 4.75-inch (120-millimetre) refracting telescope, considered one of the finest in his day.²³

Refinancing and reconfiguration

From 1876 Fairfax was heavily indebted, owing to failing investments in mining ventures at Hill End. He transferred the management of Woodford House to his business

associate and brother-in-law Hague-Smith to run the inn as a paying concern. The property was listed for sale in 1876, mortgaged to the Australian Mutual Provident Society in 1877 and then in 1878 to CH Myles, who appears to have been a well-off fellow Congregationalist.²⁴

The 1879 railway guide of New South Wales records that ‘Alfred Fairfax has a commodious residence and large gardens named Woodford’. Around this time Hague-Smith constructed a second storey on the northern wing above the kitchen and replaced a wooden dining room between the kitchen and the stables with the present substantial brick room.

In 1880, main rooms of the building were organized into two sitting rooms with three smaller bedrooms, a drawing room with two smaller bedrooms and a large bedroom with a hall and linen room. The southwest wing had a large smoking room and two smaller bedrooms. On the first floor on the western side were servants’ quarters. The two-storey building west of the courtyard had a meat room, servants’ dining hall, tool room and stores. The two-storey building east of the courtyard had a pantry, kitchen, cooks’ pantry, the new large dining room and two bedrooms on the ground floor, with new guest bedrooms and a sitting room on the first floor. The courtyard was enclosed on the north by the wooden ballroom.²⁵ An 1889 painting in the London Illustrated News shows the large two-storey block.

In 1884 the Evening News advertised Woodford House for sale, apparently unsuccessfully.²⁶ The property appears to have passed through a succession of managers. John Robert Place applied for a publican’s licence in 1886.²⁷ In 1889, a Mrs Farr had her licence withdrawn because there was no liquor on the premises and by October, Woodford House was under the management of Mrs Margaret Shiels, widow of John Shiels.²⁸ In 1893–1894 the property was leased to Mrs Shiels who had tenancy to 1 March 1896. For a year from 25 January 1896, Mrs Shiels held a colonial wine licence.

An 1890 Woodford House accommodation receipt book shows that accommodation at Woodford was expensive for the time – two weeks' board for one person for 30 December 1890 was £4/4, equivalent to a fortnight's pay for a skilled worker.

In 1895 the guesthouse had been mortgaged to the Hon Sir William Manning and Charles George Shaw.²⁹ The property, comprising portion 1 of 50 acres (20 hectares) and portion 17 of 40 acres (16 hectares), was placed on the market in June 1897. It was promoted as having 'superior accommodation,' providing a 'change of air & mountain scenery' and having 'a capital tennis court on the grounds'.³⁰ The property was sold to David Flannery and mortgaged back to Sir William Manning who retained his suite of rooms. Flannery continued to run it as a guesthouse, leasing it to a succession of tenants.

Woodford Academy

In the early twentieth century small private boarding schools proliferated in the formerly grand estates of the Blue Mountains. The appeal for those families wealthy enough to afford the fees was the fresh mountain air and bracing climate that were perceived as beneficial to both children's constitutions and academic performance.

In 1907 a distinguished scholar, John McManamey, leased Woodford House from Sir William Manning, establishing the Woodford Academy for Boys and taking the title of rector.³¹ In its first year the school had 28 pupils—15 of them boarders, ranging in age from nine to 21—and quickly achieved academic success. In 1914, as World War I began, McManamey bought 12.5-acres (five hectares) from his neighbour Mary Jane Waterhouse, which he immediately mortgaged back to her and paid off over the next few years.

There was no structural expansion of the academy in the McManamey period. The main four rooms of the main building were, working east to west, two classrooms and the McManamey private rooms, which were the library and main bedroom. The southwest section was

a McManamey family area. Upstairs on the west were the staffrooms. In the dairy wing on the west of the courtyard working north there was the dairy itself, staff dining, store and chemistry rooms and further storage upstairs. Working north on the ground floor of the wing east of the courtyard were the kitchen/washroom, pantry, dining/assembly/chapel room and staff sitting room and bedroom, while upstairs were the student dormitories. The wooden ballroom, enclosing the courtyard on the north, blew down in 1910.

Woodford Academy schooldays

Each morning, at 7.00am the boarders would come downstairs from their dormitories and run 1.5 kilometres north to Mabel Falls where they would swim before running back – hopefully a practice that did not apply in winter! They would then wash in the scullery/washroom where there was a long bench with holes to hold tin washbasins. They would dress, breakfast in the dining room at 8.00am and at 9.00am assemble, entering via the locker room from the door opposite the steps to the dormitories. They sat in the classrooms for prayers, scripture reading and classes until 12.30pm when they would adjourn for dinner. Classes resumed at 1.45pm and tea would be served at 3.45pm. There would be lesson preparation for two hours from 7.00pm and then bed for the night.

The curriculum consisted of English, History, Mathematics, Science, Latin and one modern language, as well as bookkeeping, music, dancing and, on occasions, Greek. Religious instruction was non-sectarian but the boys were taught the catechism of their respective churches. The rector did not believe in punishing with the cane, and thought lines a waste of time, preferring to impose extra study and manual work on the wayward. Sport, particularly Rugby Union and cricket, played a big role. There was participation in such events as the 1913 centenary of the mountains crossing, World War I support efforts, concerts and dramatics. Neryl Medcalf writes:

*In spite of the Spartan and rigorous life...letters, cards, and visits by ex-pupils and later on, by their descendants, all point to John McManamey being a good and fair 'Boss' and the school a happy place. Mr McManamey's wife and his two young daughters, Jessie and Gertrude and the small number of students would have contributed to an atmosphere more of a large country family than a very strict boys' boarding school.*³²

Over 300 students were educated at the Woodford Academy between 1907 and 1925, the largest enrolment being 37 boys in 1921.³³ McManamey's distinguished academic career in the classics (ancient greek and latin) was an attraction as latin was necessary for university admission in arts, medicine, law and dentistry at the time.

Believing his fine students would 'make their mark' in history, John McManamey encouraged them to engrave their initials on the desks, window frames, and outside on the rocks in the playing fields (now the Woodford Reserve and the Presbyterian Church).³⁴ Many of them did indeed make their mark, becoming university-trained professionals and distinguished servicemen in both world wars.³⁵

In 1925 the school closed. It reopened in 1929 as a local day school for boys and girls, with 31 students in 1935, but closed permanently in May 1936. Mary Campbell, a student at this time, has 'many lovely memories' of the school and of the McManamey daughters, Gertrude and Jessie, who taught drawing and sewing respectively. Mary recalled walking each day to and from her home in neighbouring Hazelbrook; the cows and the old bull called Theseus that were herded into the property each day; the children; and the kindness and eccentricities of John McManamey. Mary revisited the academy in the 1980s to see Gertrude McManamey, for whom she retained affection.³⁶

Private residence

John McManamey continued to tutor private students in the late 1930s and early 1940s. He died in 1946 after being hit by a car as he crossed the highway outside

the academy. His two spinster daughters, Jessie and Gertrude, lived on in the building, taking in boarders and selling off property as sources of income. From 1945 to 1965, there were at least ten long-term boarders at various times.³⁷ In 1972, Jessie died and in 1979, McManamey's sole surviving daughter, Gertrude, bequeathed the property to the National Trust on condition she would retain lifetime residency. Gertrude lived on in the house until 1986 when she required better care and went to Queen Victoria Hospital at Wentworth Falls, where she died in 1988.³⁸

A National Trust property

Once again, the property was reinvented to suit the times. It now occupied modest grounds, surrounded by private residences. The National Trust improved the eastern wing of the main building for occupation by Gertrude. Between May 1979 and November 1982 the roofing, drainage, plumbing, windows, verandah, chimney, flagging and stone walls—including buttressing—received emergency repairs.³⁹

In 2000, the National Trust received a Federation Cultural and Heritage Projects Program grant of \$1 million for the restoration of the property, which was completed by October 2001. The Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage at the time, Senator Robert Hill, stated:

The Commonwealth Government is now pleased to have played its part in the property's colourful history by supporting the trust in its valuable restoration work. The work has included work on the east wing stairs, interiors and verandah. It has also involved conserving the McManamey collection and having the principal rooms of the main house interpreted.⁴⁰

Works also included repair of flooring and joists, plaster and skirtings, windows, wiring and electrical items, wallpaper, woodwork and architraves and roofing, as well as plumbing and toilets, fencing, polishing, conservation of the collection, security, storage and landscaping.⁴¹

The Friends of Woodford Academy was set up at this time. On behalf of the National Trust, this group of volunteers, numbering as many as 130, handled

exhibitions, open days and events, and group visits, until February 2008.⁴² Since 2008, day-to-day administration has been the responsibility of the Woodford Academy management committee.

Woodford Academy today

Today, the academy is set up as a museum of this significant building's past. The modern entrance faces the southern verandah and is on the southwest wing of the main building. The first room, originally the William Buss sitting room, is now the reception/office space. The next major room on the western end of the west wing is set up as the ladies' parlour of the Fairfax guest era, with its double doors on the west side leading to what had been the Victorian pleasure garden. The steep stairway in the northeast corner of the ladies' parlour leads to the attic rooms – left much as they were when constructed in 1855 and one of the most historically atmospheric parts of the building. Farther east is the 1855 taproom with its evidence of liquor shelving and the cartouche, afterwards the academy library, with some of John McManamey's books displayed. Beyond the hallway moving east is the original part of the building, the east wing, the western room of which, a hundred years ago, was a classroom of the academy and today set up with McManamey-era memorabilia. To the north of this room is the academy locker room with its original school lockers. At the eastern end of the building is the other classroom set up as it was 100 years ago, with the original desks scored with student initials and other memorabilia. A display of school memorabilia is in the small room north of the classroom.

The northern two-storey wing of the building, also called (somewhat confusingly) the east wing, is set up very much as it was in academy times and contains the washroom and the kitchen. The latter is perhaps the most historically significant part of the building, with its archway fireplace and stone sink. The adjacent dining room has been set up as a Fairfax-era guesthouse room, though it was a chapel in academy times and hosted Presbyterian church services from 1908 to 1965.

Significant sites in the surrounding property are the underground tank under the courtyard, which is four metres deep with a steady two metres' depth of water and may date from the 1840s; the Aboriginal groove; an 1860s china pear tree (that still bears abundantly); and rocks on site carved with 100-year-old initials inscribed by students.

There is a lot more to be unearthed about the Woodford Academy in the still not completely explored archives on site, in the property around, and in information constantly coming to light in the National Archives, on Trove, in libraries around the state, and through descendants of the academy's many past inhabitants.

The author wishes to acknowledge the support of Woodford Academy colleague Elizabeth Burgess in contributing substantially in the early stages of preparing this essay.

Further reading

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Searle, Allan. *Historic Woodford and Linden*. Springwood: Springwood Historical Society, 1980.

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<http://www.nationaltrust.org.au/nsw/woodford-academy>

Notes

[1] Archaeologist Dr Eugene Stockton and Kamilaroi man, Wayne Brennan, the Senior Team Leader Heritage, NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, studied this site in 2004 and came to the conclusion that this line is of Aboriginal origin. In December 2014 Brennan confirmed to the author this groove in the Blue Mountains City Council Reserve was a connection line but to what, and from what, is unknown. In May and June 2015, Brennan did a thorough survey of the site. Dharug elders Auntie Carol Cooper and Auntie Jacinta Tobin believe that a spring in the centre north of the reserve was a preparation site for birthing at Gloria Park further west in Hazelbrook.

[2] Ken Goodlet, 'Blue Mountains Journeys' (Hazelbrook: self-published, 2013), 1

[3] Peter Staton, Hazelbrook antiques dealer, was given permission by Gertrude McManamey to search the site in 1979 prior to the takeover of the property by the National Trust. An encrusted and unidentifiable coin that was found on the site in 1934 and subsequently given to the State Library of NSW has been labelled by the SLNSW as an 'early 1815 penny' and may be a holey dollar, in which case it predates the withdrawal of holey dollars from circulation in 1829.

[4] Colin Johnston, 'A History of Woodford Academy' (unpublished research paper, National Trust of Australia, 1979), 3, available through the local studies collection, Blue Mountains City Library, Springwood

[5] Ken Goodlet, 'Hazelbrook and Woodford: A Story of Two Blue Mountains Towns' (Hazelbrook: self-published, reprint 2012), 21

[6] State Records NSW, Collector of the Internal Revenue, Licence to Retail Wines & Malt & Spirituous Liquors, no 34/100, Sydney, 27 September 1834 to Michael Pembroke. Clive Lucas considers that Woodman's Inn existed by 1835. Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners Pty Ltd, Conservation and Analysis Guidelines of Woodford Academy Arising out of the Statement of Cultural Significance (Sydney: The National Trust of Australia, NSW, 1984) 9, ref 2.1.5

[7] The first sketch we have of the five-bay east wing of the building is Sir Oswald Brierly's in 1842, the year Hogan received certificate of title to the property. On the basis of the roofline and what appear to be additional wooden rooms at either end, Clive Lucas argues this is a different building from the present ESE section of the building. Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners Pty Ltd, Conservation and Analysis Guidelines of Woodford Academy Arising out of the Statement of Cultural Significance (Sydney: The National Trust of Australia, NSW, 1984). It is, however, possible that the 1842 sketch shows the 1834 building with modified roofline and wooden extensions, especially as the building resembles Pembroke's father-in-law Pierce Collits' earlier inn at Hartley Vale, and Pierce Collits' involvement in the construction of the inn at Woodford was a government condition of Pembroke's grant.

[8] Heritage Council of New South Wales, 'Woodford Academy', <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/visit/ViewAttractionDetail.aspx>, viewed 6 May 2015; Allan Searle, *Historic Woodford and Linden* (Springwood: Springwood Historical Society, 1980), 34

[9] J Kinchela, *Sydney Herald*, 15 August 1836

[10] Ken Goodlet, talk, Hazelbrook Public School, 14 September 2013

[11] *Sydney Herald*, 14 June 1839. A child was born to Frances and the coachman Charles Fenn in November 1838 and the property listed for sale in September 1839. Thomas Pembroke was admitted to a mental asylum four days before his death in June 1840. Another child was born to Frances and John in October 1840 and they were married in January 1841, seven months after Thomas Pembroke's death.

[12] New South Wales Land and Property Information, Certificate of Title Appn No 14594, Vol 3614, Fol 164 Register Book 4840 Fol 164 of 1937. This document states Hogan received this land as a Crown grant in 1842. Complications with the mortgage may account for the three years' delay from 1839–1842.

[13] Government liquor licences for the inn were issued to Josiah Workman in 1840, James Nairn in 1841–1845, William Barton in 1846, John Cobcroft in 1847, Joseph Cobcroft in 1848, Thomas James in 1853 and 1855, Anne James in 1854 and William Langford in 1856. State Records NSW, Index to Publicans' Licences, 1830–1861, <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/state-archives/guides-and-finding-aids/archives-in-brief/archives-in-brief-61>, viewed 10 June 2015

[14] Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners Pty Ltd, Conservation and Analysis Guidelines of Woodford Academy Arising out of the Statement of Cultural Significance (Sydney: The National Trust of Australia, NSW, 1984), 11; Allan Searle, *The History of Faulconbridge, Linden and Woodford* (Springwood: Springwood Historical Society, 1977), 21; Gwen Silvey, 'Woodford Academy' (paper citing Lithgow Historical Society research, Woodford Academy archives, March 1992)

[15] Some interpret the headstones as indicating the inn was a military barracks during the 1840s. There is no evidence to support such a claim, though Captain Bull's men and their families either lived at the inn at some junctures or visited it. The headstones may not have originated on the property as there was a cemetery at the military barracks at 18 Mile Hollow. Siobhan Lavelle, 'Information Report for the National Trust Cemetery Committee' (Sydney: National Trust, September 1990). The information about the Bull family living at the academy was provided by Philip Bull, a direct descendant of the child Frederick born there at Woodford Academy in 1843, in interview with the author April 2015.

[16] Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners Pty Ltd, Conservation and Analysis Guidelines of Woodford Academy Arising out of the Statement of Cultural Significance (Sydney: The National Trust of Australia, NSW, 1984), 11

- [17] Allan Searle, *The History of Faulconbridge, Linden and Woodford* (Springwood: Springwood Historical Society, 1977), 37; Ken Goodlet, 'Hazelbrook and Woodford: A Story of Two Blue Mountains Towns' (Hazelbrook: self-published, reprint 2012), 22
- [18] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 July 1863, 11
- [19] Leary, Nanette and Neryl Medcalf, 'Woodford Academy 'Time Travellers' Teachers Kit,' National Trust Australia (NSW) <http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/schoolsprogram/educationkits/woodford.pdf>, viewed 6 May 2015
- [20] Ken Goodlet, 'Hazelbrook and Woodford: A Story of Two Blue Mountains Towns' (Hazelbrook: self-published, reprint 2012), 29
- [21] Fairfax purchased the 10 acres (four hectares) of the police lockup west of the inn in 1871 and some time later another 10 acres (four hectares) that incorporated Mabel Falls adjacent to and just north of the original northern 40 acre (19 hectare) block.
- [22] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 May 1869; 27 May 1869
- [23] Ken Goodlet, 'Hazelbrook and Woodford: A Story of Two Blue Mountains Towns' (Hazelbrook: self-published, reprint 2012); Fairfax hosted the scientists at Woodford House but whether he or some caretaker/manager assisted we can only speculate. Nick Comb, *The Transit of Venus* (Ultimo: Powerhouse Publishing, 2004), 15–16
- [24] On 22 July 1876, the *Sydney Morning Herald* records a 'For prompt sale, Woodford House' notice. In May 1877 the property was mortgaged to the AMP and in October 1878 to Charles Henry Myles, whose will in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 7 June 1918 indicates that he had the means to assist Fairfax financially and the bequests suggest that Fairfax and Myles had common links with the Congregational Church.
- [25] Leary Nanette and Neryl Medcalf, 'Woodford Academy 'Time Travellers,' Teachers Kit', National Trust Australia (NSW) <http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/schoolsprogram/educationkits/woodford.pdf>, viewed 6 May 2015
- [26] *Evening News*, 12 February 1884
- [27] *Nepean Times*, 9 January 1886
- [28] *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 October 1889
- [29] Sir William Patrick Manning (1845–1915) was a leading Sydney financier and politician, serving as mayor of Sydney 1891–94, knighted in 1894. The name of the English Lord Rosebery crops up at this time as being related in some way to the inn, possibly as Manning managed Rosebery's affairs in Australia. Manning kept a suite of rooms at the academy. John M Ward, 'Manning, Sir William Patrick (1845–1915)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/manning-sir-william-patrick-7477/text13031>, published first in hardcopy 1986, viewed 10 June 2015; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 April 1915, 12
- [30] Auction notice 29 June 1897 in Leary, Nanette and Neryl Medcalf, 'Woodford Academy 'Time Travellers,' Teachers Kit', National Trust Australia (NSW) <http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/schoolsprogram/educationkits/woodford.pdf>, viewed 6 May 2015
- [31] Ken Goodlet, 'Hazelbrook and Woodford: A Story of Two Blue Mountains Towns' (Hazelbrook: self-published, reprint 2012), 42
- [32] Neryl Medcalf (unpublished, 2005) during which time she was a Friend of Woodford Academy
- [33] Woodford Academy Admissions Register, 1907–1936, Woodford Academy archives
- [34] Leary, Nanette and Neryl Medcalf, 'Woodford Academy 'Time Travellers,' Teachers Kit', National Trust Australia (NSW) <http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/schoolsprogram/educationkits/woodford.pdf>, viewed 6 May 2015
- [35] The academy archives are particularly detailed for this period and include a complete set of school admissions from 1908 to 1925. This has enabled volunteers at the academy to trace the World War I records of every one of the 54 former students who enlisted, as well as their repatriation records.
- [36] Mary Campbell, interviewed by Neryl Medcalf, August 2001
- [37] A receipt book, with dates and amounts, in the Woodford Academy archives
- [38] Leary Nanette and Neryl Medcalf, 'Woodford Academy 'Time Travellers' Teachers Kit', National Trust Australia (NSW) <http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/schoolsprogram/educationkits/woodford.pdf>, viewed 6 May 2015
- [39] Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners Pty Ltd, *Conservation and Analysis Guidelines of Woodford Academy Arising out of the Statement of Cultural Significance* (Sydney: The National Trust of Australia, NSW, 1984), 67–72
- [40] Media release, Senator the Hon Robert Hill, 'Federation Fund Supports Facelift for Blue Mountains Landmark', 20 October 2001
- [41] Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners Pty Ltd, in association with Mr Michael Leahy, 'Woodford Academy, Woodford NSW, Conservation Management Plan Upgrade' (unpublished, The National Trust of Australia NSW, 2000)
- [42] Friends of Woodford Academy files, Woodford Academy archives

JON AND DAVID



'...that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself.' 1 Samuel 18

In 1977 it was a small, pink, fibro house with white trim, a sturdy chimney and large terraced garden spreading to the north and east. The iron roof was steeply pitched with timber framed casement windows, rainwater was caught from the roof in a galvanised water tank. Every decent rock crevice had its container to catch rain, iron buckets and ancient, cast iron cooking pots. All that is left today is the chimney, rusting scraps of kerosene heaters and buckets, a laundry tub under the trees, the terraced walls and the carvings. The rest is buried under layers of roofing iron, eucalypts and banksias.

Carefully engraved into a rock platform to the east – 'Jonathan', 'David' - curved around entwined initials 'JD', with the number '150' to the right. On the north end of the platform is the precise carving of a compass with additional points inside.

In 1948 Jack Swan, a 30yr old music teacher from Strathfield, and Ernest Harding, a 35yr old Lakemba shop assistant, bought the plot of land from Nth Sydney Electrician, Bill Pollard. The land was undeveloped bush with a rough track and a grand title of 'The Wellington Estate'. By 1953 the cottage was built and the large spread of terrace gardens had been painstakingly created

with the bush rock. Except for the railway resuming a small section of road for electricity lines and the Woodford Academy to the southwest, there were no other houses or developments in the area, it was secluded and isolated.

Both Jack and Ernest had served in the army, Jack was demobbed from the 4th Australian Infantry Battalion in 1946 and Ernest was a trooper posted at the 1st MG Reg and discharged in 1942. It's not known if they served together or if they knew each other in Sydney, Ernest enlisted in 1941 at Lakemba while in 1940 Jack signed up in Goulburn.

Jack Swann died in 1968 and was remembered as a fond uncle and a beloved brother and son. Five years later Ernest sold the property to a Sydney couple. In 1977 bush fires burnt this little cottage down.

Kate O'Neill, Central Mountains History
Thanks to Local Studies Library, Springwood

CAROLINE COLLITS AND JOHN WALSH

On the night of 3rd of January 1842, John Walsh, his sister-in-law/lover Caroline Collits and her estranged husband William, were drinking at Jagger's public house at the foot of Mt Victoria Pass. Caroline's pregnant younger sister, Maria, was at Gardner's Inn in Blackheath.

Collits was trying to persuade his wife to return to him but she refused, saying 'she had plenty of money, and did not want any of his bringing.' According to Collits, John Walsh implored her to 'Come home with me, my girl, while I have got a home you shall have one, and while I have got a shilling you shall have half of it.'

As the group returned up Victoria Pass to Blackheath, Collits began arguing with Walsh. Caroline stepped in between them, giving William time to flee, but becoming the victim of Walsh's rage. He may not have intended to kill her but he had a past history of violent assault and had twice been charged with murder, escaping conviction each time.

The inquest transcript gives lurid details of the attack and the devious means by which Walsh presented himself as a victim. William Collits fared no better in his testimony, abandoning his wife to her fate. John Walsh was found guilty and was sentenced to hang while William returned to his family and later remarried and settled out west near his brothers.

Henry Lawson's 1891 poem *The Ghost at the Second Bridge* tells of the spectre of a Woman who haunted Victoria Pass, omitting the fact that Caroline was killed on the other side of Mt Victoria near Soldiers Pinch:

She'll cross the moonlit road in haste
And vanish down the track;
Her long black hair hangs to her waist
And she is dressed in black;
Her face is white, a dull dead white —
Her eyes are opened wide —
She never looks to left or right,
Or turns to either side.

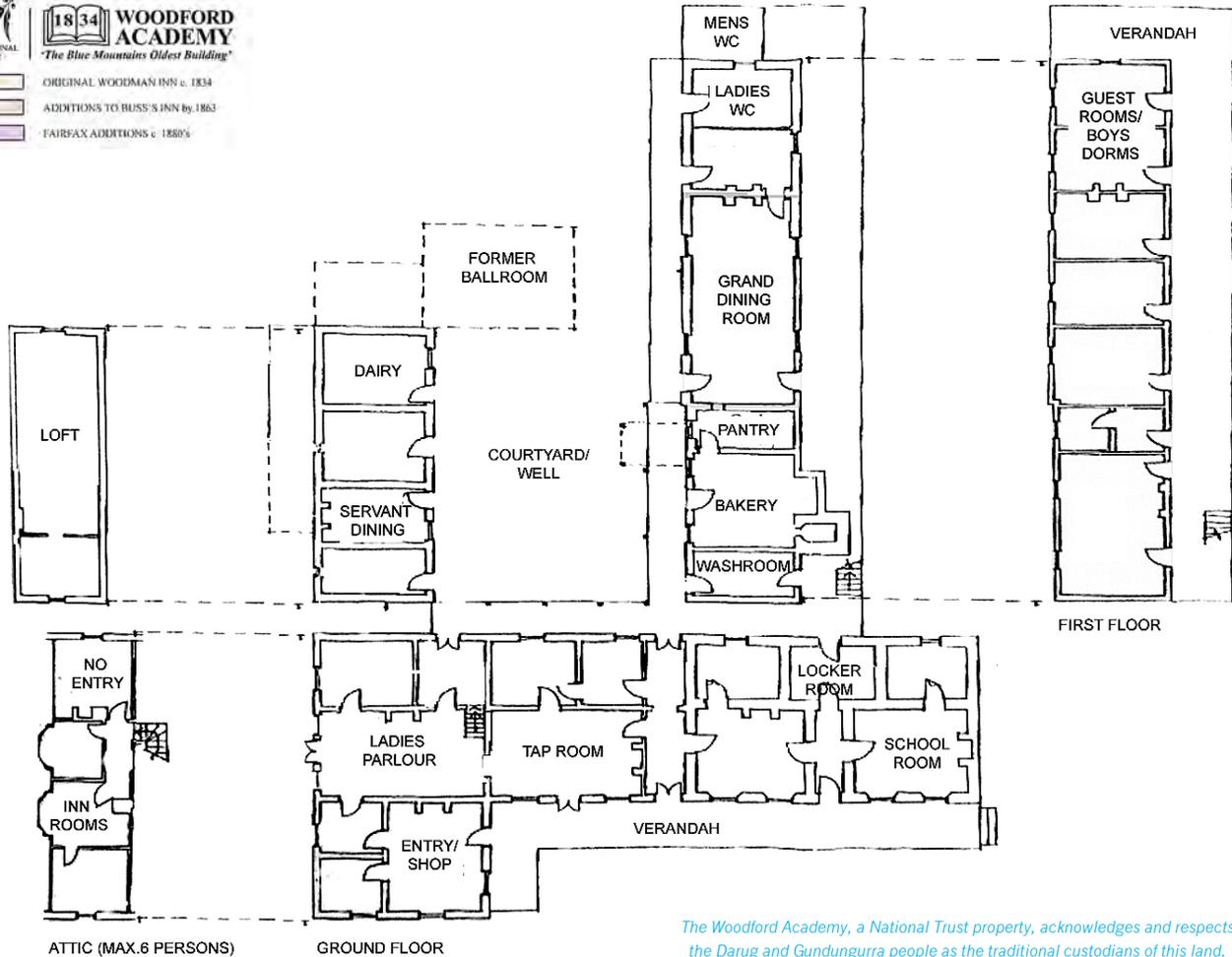
Henry Lawson, *The Ghost at the Second Bridge*, 1891

Kate O'Neill, Central Mountains History
Thanks to Local Studies Library, Springwood



1834 WOODFORD ACADEMY
 'The Blue Mountains Oldest Building'

- ORIGINAL WOODMAN INN c. 1834
- ADDITIONS TO BUSS'S INN by 1863
- FAIRFAX ADDITIONS c. 1880's



The Woodford Academy, a National Trust property, acknowledges and respects the Darug and Gundungurra people as the traditional custodians of this land.

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