



DISCOVER THE
Hawkesbury

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Heritage Highlights

By 1794 the first 22 European settlers had arrived on the banks of the Hawkesbury River and South Creek. The following years many more families came, and the settlement of Windsor, then called Green Hills, was established.

On 6 December 1810, the town of Windsor was one of five selected by Governor Lachlan Macquarie to provide safe residences and storage of produce for farmers who had already settled on flood prone land on the banks of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River. It was named nostalgically for the township it resembled in England.

Drawn up by surveyors on Macquarie's personal instructions during January 1811, his plan for Windsor town was a grand, united township with no less than nine cross streets and three to five long parallel streets. Centred around St Matthews Anglican Church and McQuade Park, it encompassed today's suburbs of Windsor and South Windsor (now divided by the railway line).

Although the plan was for a town of surprisingly modern dimensions, the charm of the old Green Hills township was retained. Today the original settlement may still be seen in the stately public buildings, the river and Thompson Square on the northernmost end of the ridge.

This brochure includes many privately owned buildings which aren't open to the public and may be viewed from the street only.

Windsor

Heritage Highlights

1 St Matthews Anglican Church, Cemetery and Rectory

1 Moses Street

St Matthews is the masterpiece of the convict architect Francis Greenway and is one of the most beautiful buildings in Australia. The site, looking towards the Hawkesbury River and the Blue Mountains, was specifically selected by Governor Macquarie. The corner stone was laid in October 1817 and the building consecrated in December 1822, with cleric Samuel Marsden conducting the opening service.

Predating the church is the burial ground surrounding the church which includes the graves of notable Hawkesbury citizens including Andrew Thompson, Dr Thomas Arndell, Captain John Brabyn, William Cox and John Tebbutt.

The Rectory is the oldest rectory in Australia, Georgian in style, and built by William Cox to the plan of an unknown architect. The building is of exceptional design with elegant front entrance door and fanlight. Also note the two storey brick stable at the rear of the building.



St Matthews Anglican Church, Windsor by M Nichols

2 McQuade Park

Moses Street

Planned by Macquarie in 1810 as "the great square" that was to stand in front of St Matthews Anglican church, the park became known as 'Windsor Park'. It was controversially renamed after J.M. McQuade, Mayor of Windsor in 1872 & 1874, on the strength of his own casting vote.

In the park opposite St Matthews Anglican Church you will find the statue of Governor Macquarie which was unveiled in 1994 during the celebrations of the bicentenary of the establishment of European settlement in the Hawkesbury. The band rotunda in the park was built by the Onus Brothers in 1915 and was lit by electric light, a new innovation at the time.



McQuade Park, Windsor

3

St Matthews Catholic Church

12 Tebbutt Street

The foundation stone was blessed by Archbishop Bede Polding in 1836 and opened in 1840. The building was completed with the assistance of a bequest from James Doyle together with public subscriptions.

The Windsor Catholic Cemetery (corner of George Street and Hawkesbury Valley Way) is one of the earliest Catholic burial grounds in Australia, established by the early 1830s. Several fine examples of the stone carver's craft may be found here amongst the graves of notable citizens such as James Doyle who donated the land for the church, members of the McQuade family, and Eliza Wilson, the only fatality from the Great Fire in 1874.



Windsor Catholic Cemetery, Windsor 1994
by Stan Stevens, Hawkesbury Library Service (HLS)

4

Former Hawkesbury Hospital and Convict Barracks

Corner of George and Christie Streets

Examine the four interpretive panels located at the rear of the building which provide interesting insight into the history of this site which includes a former mortuary. The original building was erected in 1820 as a male convict barracks, then extended and converted into a hospital for convict work gangs. Following the end of transportation to NSW in 1841, the building lay abandoned until reopening in 1846 as a hospital and asylum for the poor and destitute.

The original building was in need of upgrading to the standards of health care of the day and was refurbished, reopening in 1911. Designed in the Federation Arts and Crafts style by George Matcham Pitt, the building works completely altered the appearance of the building. The hospital, with many additions and alterations, continued to serve the Hawkesbury district until 1996.



Hawkesbury Hospital, Windsor 1879
State Library of NSW

5

Mrs Cope's Cottage

312 George Street

Maria Cope was a Windsor property owner and businesswoman who, in 1840, subdivided a block of land between George Street and The Terrace, resulting in the formation of New Street. This house was built around that time.



Mrs Cope's Cottage, Windsor 1979 by Margaret Chadwick (HLS)

6

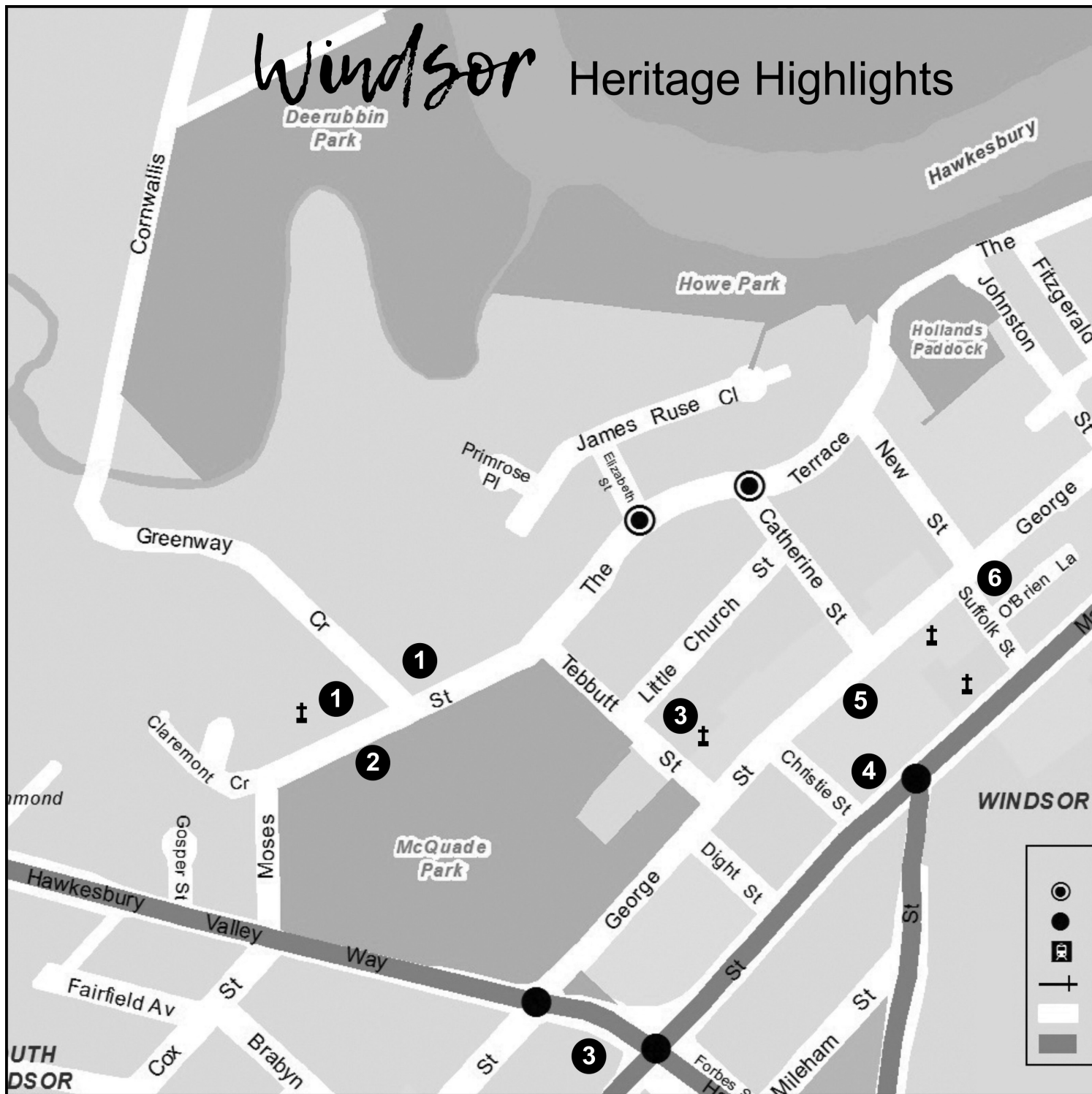
Former Royal Picture Theatre

266 George Street

Opened in 1926 with the Cecil B. De Mille's production The Ten Commandments, the theatre was owned by Messrs Terry and Dixon. Contemporary advertising noted the marble stairways which led to the dress circle and the brown morocco leather chairs in the gallery. The floor was made of tallow wood which was ideal for dancing and the building was lit by electric light.



Royal Picture Theatre, Windsor 1979 by Margaret Chadwick (HLS)



7

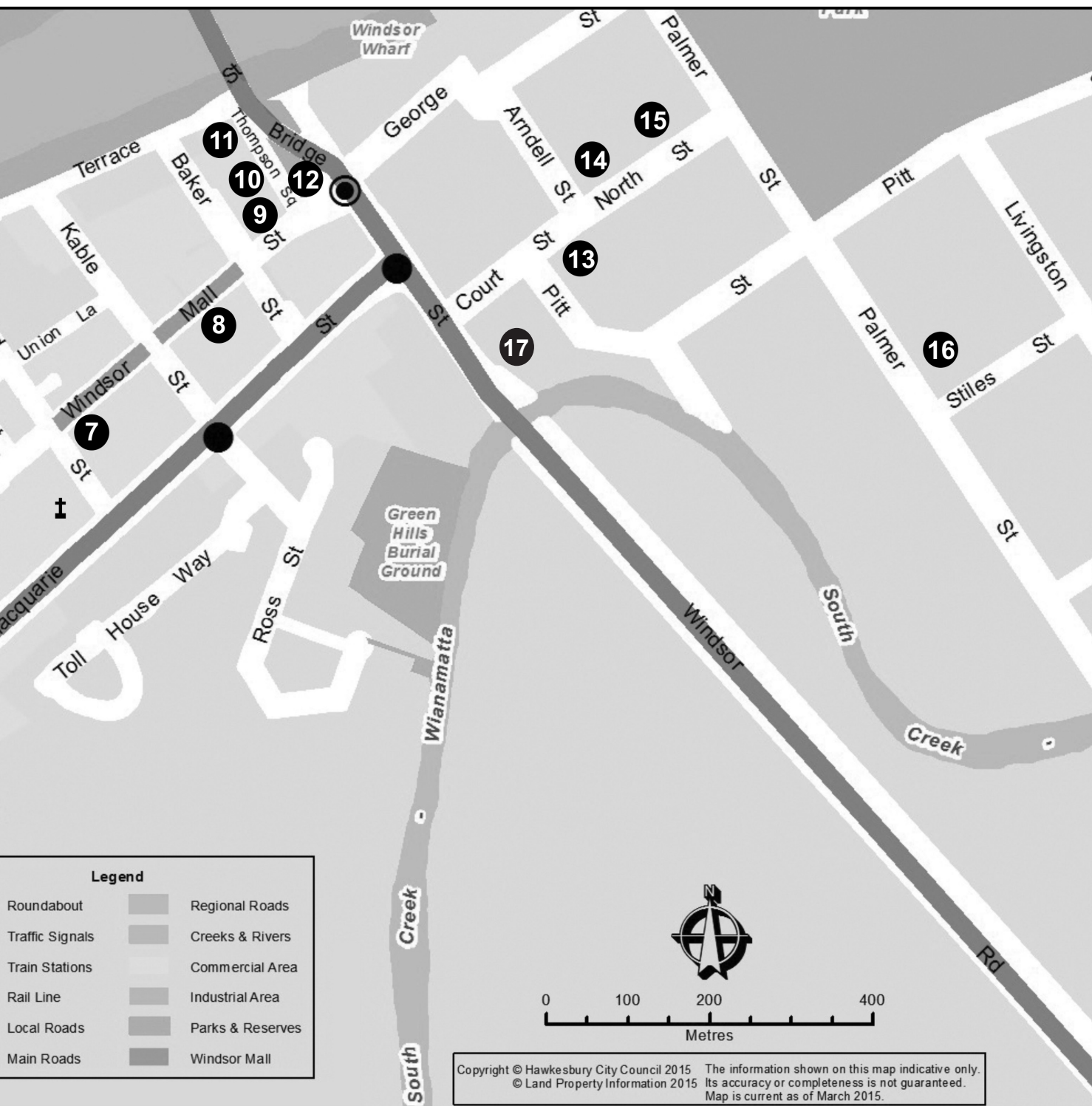
Former Post Office

Corner of George and Fitzgerald Streets

The first Post Office in Windsor opened in 1828. This elegant building, designed by Colonial Architect James Barnet and built by Michael Leeds, was opened in 1880. Thomas Cambridge II was postman at that time and the family tradition continued with his son Thomas III continuing on as postman until 1925. A single storey wing in Fitzgerald Street was added in the late 1890s to accommodate the telegraph and telephone service.



Old Windsor Post Office, George Street, Windsor
State Library of NSW



8

Loder House

126 George Street

A fine example of Georgian architecture this house was built in 1834 for George Loder II, farmer and storekeeper and a member of the influential Windsor family. Loder died before the house was completed. The Victorian style balcony and lacework were added under the ownership of Daniel Holland who also sold a range of fabrics, hats and accessories from these premises.



Loder House in George Street, Windsor 1979 by Margaret Chadwick (HLS)

9

Macquarie Arms Hotel

99 George Street

This two storey brick Georgian building with cellar and attic rooms was built in 1815 by emancipated convict Richard Fitzgerald and is the oldest hotel building in Australia (though it has not had continuous licence and is therefore constantly having to defend its title). It was occupied by the military during the 1830s, Although there have been extensive additions, much of the original interior woodwork is still intact, including the elegant staircases and colonial fanlights. A plaque on the garden wall facing the square indicates the height of the Great Flood of 1867, when the river reached 19.3 metres.



Macquarie Arms Hotel, George Street, Windsor (HLS)

10

Howe House

7 Thompson Square

This former residence, inn and newspaper office stands on part of an allotment made to John Howe in 1811. Howe arrived as a free settler aboard the Coromandel in 1802 and became a man of prominence in Windsor, taking over many of Andrew Thompson's business interests and public duties on Thompson's demise. From 1962 to 2000 the building housed a museum, run by the Hawkesbury Historical Society, and is now part of the award-winning Hawkesbury Regional Museum. Howe House is open on weekends and on weekdays by appointment. Please check opening times with the Museum at 8 Baker Street, or call (02) 4560 4655.



Howe House, Windsor

11

The Doctors House

3 Thompson Square

From 1858 to 1992 this house was occupied by a series of doctors, the most famous being Thomas Fiaschi of Tizzana, a winery of distinction, near Ebenezer. Note the fanlights above the entrance doors, the columns to each side, the sandstone flagged verandah and the delicate iron railings, all giving the building a distinguished air. At the height of the 1867 flood, the water lapped the balcony on the first floor.



Doctors House Windsor 1879, State Library of NSW

12

Thompson Square

Northern end of George Street

Named after Andrew Thompson and dating back to 1795, this is the only intact 18th century Georgian square in the country. Windsor (then known as Green Hills) was essential to the survival of the infant colony based in Sydney, which depended on the farms of the Hawkesbury and the river to carry their produce. The collection of colonial buildings around the square has remained largely unchanged since being built between 1815 and 1880. At the top of the square is the Pioneer Families memorial featuring an anchor, symbolizing the importance of the river in the history of the town.



Thompson Square, Windsor

13

Windsor Court House

Corner of North & Court Streets

One of Francis Greenway's best known buildings, the court house was completed in 1822 by William Cox using convict labour. During the early years of the settlement at Windsor, the building was used for everything from church services and meetings to elections. An 1820s portrait of Governor Macquarie, commissioned by local citizens, hangs in the public gallery (though doubts about its authenticity have been expressed in recent years).



Windsor Court House, Windsor 2009 by J Auld (HLS)

14

Former Peninsula Inn

37 North Street

Also known as the Court House Inn and Swallows Inn, this building is a fine example of the period. The first licensee of these premises was John Shearing. In spring and summer, fairy martins (swallows) nest here under the eaves.



One of the North Street Cottages (former Peninsula Inn), North Street, Windsor 1979 by Margaret Chadwick (HLS)

15

North Street Cottages

North Street

Named after Samuel North, the police magistrate at Windsor from 1829 to 1843. Many of the buildings in central Windsor were destroyed by fire in 1874, so these cottages provide an interesting example of the streetscape in the mid-nineteenth century. The roofing style on numbers 25 to 23, known as jerkin-head, provided shelter for people during times of flood.

16

John Tebbutt Observatories

1 Palmer Street

John Tebbutt, astronomer and scientist, built his first observatory in 1863 (now demolished) and a second building (circular) in 1874 to accommodate a larger telescope. The square building was constructed in 1879. A large celestial globe owned by Tebbutt is now part of the collection of the Hawkesbury Regional Museum. Famous for discovering the "Great Comet of 1861" Tebbutt's astronomical and meteorological observations earned the respect of the scientific community and he was made a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society London in 1873.



Tebbutt's Observatories, Windsor (HLS)

17

The Toll House

off Court Street

The Toll House, now overshadowed by the modern bridge, was built in 1834 but was damaged during the 1864 flood. It was rebuilt on the existing foundations and was in use after 1887. The tolls collected were used to maintain the roads and bridges. The bay windows gave the tollkeeper a good view of the people using the roads.



Toll House Windsor, adjacent to South Creek and the Fitzroy Bridge 1979 by Margaret Chadwick, (HLS)

A few notable *Windsor* characters

Andrew Thompson (1773-1810) arrived in the colony as a convict aboard the Pitt in 1792. Despite his origins, he was appointed constable at Green Hills (now Windsor) and became a respected land owner and businessman. He died a hero at the early age of 37, having rescued a number of citizens in the flood of 1809, during which he is said to have contracted a chest complaint which led to his early demise. He is buried at St Matthews Anglican Cemetery, where the stone covering his grave was commissioned by Macquarie and is inscribed with an emotional tribute to his life and achievements.

John Howe (1774-1852) arrived as a free settler aboard the Coromandel in 1802 and became a man of some prominence in Windsor, taking over many of Andrew Thompson's business interests and public duties on Thompson's demise, including Chief Constable and Coroner. He also engaged in a number of civil projects of his own, such as the enlargement of the wharf at Windsor, and is credited with leading several expeditions which resulted in opening up the Hunter region.



Francis Greenway

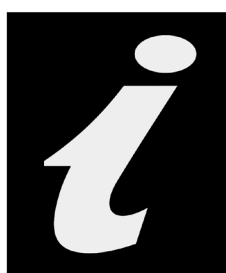
Francis Greenway (1777-1837), an English-born architect, was convicted of the capital crime of forgery, his sentence being commuted to fourteen years transportation to Australia. He arrived in NSW on 7 February 1814 and was used by Governor Macquarie to rectify the poor standard of building in the colony. In 1816 he was appointed Civil Architect by Macquarie and as such became the first government architect of New South Wales.

Some of the buildings still in existence include the Hyde Park Barracks and the Supreme Court in Sydney, Windsor Court House and St Matthews Anglican Church in Windsor.

Maria Cope (1792-1849), her husband and four small children arrived in Sydney in 1827. Within 18 months Maria was a widow and tragedy struck again in 1830 when her son drowned in the Hawkesbury River. Maria was an astute property owner acquiring up to 600 acres of land in the Windsor District. She subdivided the area from George Street to The Terrace in 1840 into 40 blocks.

Want more?

We have a series of four longer walks covering 83 historic properties and places in Windsor. To download a copy go to www.discoverthehawkesbury.com.au/heritage/heritage-trails



For further information call the
Hawkesbury Visitor Information Centre
(02) 4560 4620
www.discoverthehawkesbury.com.au

The Centre is at Ham Common
(opposite Richmond RAAF Base)
328 Hawkesbury Valley Way
RICHMOND NSW 2753

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