

COX'S ROAD DREAMING®

A Natural History of Cox's 1814/15 Road – Australia's First Inland European Road

Greening Bathurst has prepared this scoping document describing a proposed tourist guide and supporting activities to be launched in the second half of 2015 to celebrate Bathurst's Bicentennial Year.

This brochure is intended to inform potential financial sponsors about the Project as well as state the guiding principles for the production and development process.



European Knowledge Gaps:

A conversation in 1826 in Sydney



Captain Dumaresq
in his mid-fifties

Dumont d'Urville and other French officers visiting
Port Jackson C 1826 from the French ship *Astrolabe*:^{1,2}
We are perfectly astonished at your superb country

An Australian gentleman responds:
What is it that most excites your surprise?

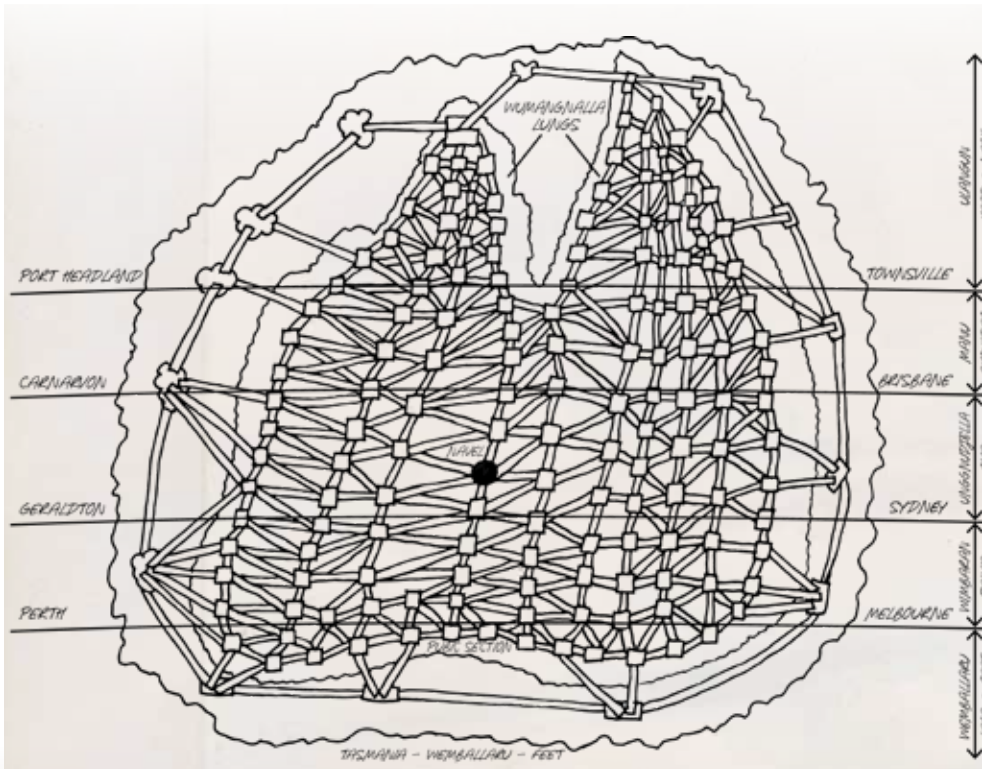
French Officers:
That you have been so long in it, and know so little about it!



Naturalist and French Officer
Dumont d'Urville

Captain Dumaresq writes subsequently about this conversation
in 1827, using the pseudonym X, Y, Z, after an excursion across Cox's Road to Mount York and thence to Bathurst.
*It was a just reproof, and ought to sink deep into the minds...redeem the character of our countrymen from the reproach
of the Frenchmen...nothing will be done...the government hands are too full of business.*

Neither French visitors nor colonial settlers in 1826, nor for that matter most contemporary Australians, knew or know about the dreaming-trade-ceremonial routes that criss-crossed Australia pre-1788. Along such routes flowed goods and knowledge, spiritual and cultural values. Such routes, likely in existence for millennia, were rapidly disrupted, destroyed or incorporated into European transport routes as roads or tracks.



David Mowaljarlai's** 1993 map of trade routes and storylines linking Aboriginal nations across Australia.**Mowaljarlai, D & Malnic, J. (1993), *Yorro yorro everything standing up alive: spirit of the Kimberly*. Magabala Books, Perth. Re-drawn by Tony O'Neill.

The sandstone ridge that briefly hosted Cox's Road was a meeting ground for the Gundugurra, Darug and Wiradjuri Nations.

There is significant evidence of such dreaming and communication routes criss-crossing the Blue Mountains as they also likely did so in the vast Wiradjuri Country further to the west. These story 'strings' also played a major role in Aboriginal conservation ethics, aided and abetted by the Aboriginal concept of Totem.

¹ The Australian 20th December 1826.

² The Australian 24th March 1827, p.2, A Ride to Bathurst. Letter IV.

³ We have usually followed The Geographic Names Board of NSW non-use of the apostrophe as in Campbells River but have retained its use in all references to Cox's Road.



Greening Bathurst Introductory Statement - Ashley Bland, President of Greening Bathurst.



Ashley Bland,
Chair Greening Bathurst

Greening Bathurst is a community-based volunteer conservation group dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment in the Bathurst region. This project is our attempt to create a contemporary Australian Dreaming Trail from Emu Ford on the Nepean River at Emu Plains, across the Blue Mountains, through to Bathurst, Australia's first inland European settlement (1815). Our dreaming story centres on one relatively narrow tract of this remarkable country, Australia's first inland European road, constructed by William Cox, soldiers, convicts, free settlers and two Aboriginal men⁴ in six months in 1814 and 1815. It was a remarkable achievement. Our project has been inspired by a growing appreciation of Aboriginal Dreaming stories, trails and song-lines. Cox's Road passed through pre-existing dreaming and communication routes, in use for perhaps 40,000 years or more. That knowledge serves to keep this rather more recent road in an appropriate historical perspective. Our dreaming story focuses attention on the natural history⁵ of the road, the observations of various astute travellers on their way to and from Bathurst, as well as integrating contemporary knowledge, heritage, European and Aboriginal histories (mainly Darug, Gundungurra and Wiradjuri Nations). We trust that our projects will help address some of the concerns and insights of those one-time French visitors in 1826.

The Mayor of Bathurst



Gary Rush,
Mayor of Bathurst

The opening up of Cox's Road was a significant milestone in the story of European settlement in Australia but this is only a small part of the unique history and heritage of this fascinating part of NSW. I congratulate Greening Bathurst on this important Cox's Road Dreaming project that will add a valuable dimension to the Bathurst 200 Bicentenary program and help shine a light on the unique heritage of this beautiful area west of the Blue Mountains. More importantly the maps and collected materials will ensure the 400 million years of geological and natural history and the 40,000 years of Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area, will be preserved, and told to the current and future generations of Australians. The opportunity this project will provide for expansion of cultural tourism enables us to enhance the reputation and visitor experience to our Region. The broad range of tours and activities encapsulate the sense of wonder and adventurous spirit of Aboriginal communities who walked this land for thousands of years before the European explorers and pioneers who then forged a path to the wide open spaces of the Bathurst Plains and beyond. This project is a perfect example of what can be achieved through collaboration and is more than worthy of endorsement in the Bathurst 200 Bicentenary program. On behalf of Bathurst Regional Council, I commend Greening Bathurst in developing and coordinating this project.

⁴ It is not well known that two Aboriginal men were also involved with the development of Cox's Road. They were Colobee from the Darug Tribe and the Boorooerongal Clan, and Joe from the Mulgoa Clan. They were important to the success of the venture because of their hunting and negotiating skills, since Cox was acutely aware of the 'presence' of unseen local Aboriginal people.

⁵ Natural history (from Latin *historia naturalis*) is the study of organisms in their environment. It was widely practiced in the 19th and early 20th centuries as a very fashionable hobby, often in a form little different from stamp collecting, but nevertheless has an honourable history stretching back to the ancient Greeks. When approached from a more scientific perspective it focused on life cycles of living organisms and systematic collections to help classify living organisms into similar groups using the binomial system (two part name) devised by Linnaeus in 1753. This system remains in place today.



Project Summary

Greening Bathurst's contribution to the 2015 bicentenary celebrations of the naming and founding of Bathurst in 1815 centres on organising two projects with a biodiversity theme. The Cox's Road tourism project (Cox's Road Dreaming), focuses on interpreting the biodiversity and natural history of this road built in six months in 1814/1815. This important road in our European history and heritage remains mostly unknown and unprotected in spite of being a national treasure.

Cox's Road persists east of Mount York as fragments on the edges of the now dominant Great Western Highway, mostly buried underneath metres of filling and layers of bitumen, housing developments, and occasionally as a relic bituminised section. Fortunately much of Cox's Pass coming off Mount York remains in rude form. A significant relic has miraculously survived near the Woodford Trig, west of Mount York. Much of Cox's Road persists on private land, although not necessarily in its original form, or as readily accessible narrow bituminised or dirt minor public roads. The exact location of Cox's Road after it crosses the O'Connell Road is less certain. Signposting indicates the direction and its likely location. A recent find of an historic map by Dr Robin McLachlan places Cox's Road entering the proposed 1815 Macquarie town plan and confirms earlier work by the Cox's Road Project Committee of the National Trust.

We have identified 111 sites stretching from the Cumberland Plains just east of the Nepean River to the Flag Staff at Bathurst - a distance of over 160 kms. These sites have been chosen because linked together they provide a fascinating story (Cox's Road Dreaming) re the natural history of Cox's Road and subsequent routes that of necessity rapidly developed through to Bathurst.

Project products and costs

Greening Bathurst is seeking to raise \$80,000 to develop or support five integrated projects related to Cox's Road that are briefly described below and more fully later on in this document. The flagship Project 1 is on target and nearly fully funded by existing resources or in kind input, due mainly to the generous support of the LPI (Land and Property Information), the NSW government mapping agency headquartered in Bathurst. Projects 2 and 3 are dependent on raising the appropriate funds. Project 4 if it comes to fruition will be fully funded by participating walkers. Project 5 will be partly funded by the author if self-published or through working with an established publisher.

The Projects are:

1. Hard copy, tourist focused, map package:
Cox's Road Dreaming – A Natural History of Cox's 1814/15 Road– Australia's first inland European Road.

This package aims to tell the story of Cox's Road and to interpret the chosen sites to help participants understand its natural history within an historical context. The package will contain:

- An 80 page booklet with eight strip maps housed in back pocket;
 - Four maps (each 805 x 210) mm illustrating the location of colonial features, geography, geology and plant communities along Cox's Road, and
 - A series of 4 concertina strip maps (805 x 210mm) identifying 111 sites between Bathurst and the Nepean River together with descriptions of each site, photos, images, accounts by travellers, poems and prose, Aboriginal sites and experiences;
 - Links will be provided to a stand-alone project web page.
2. Development of a stand-alone static web site to complement Project 1.
 3. Preparation of a smartphone/tablet app:
The proposed app would be suitable for a mobile phone, with GPS capacity, or preferably iPad or laptop. The app would embrace a subset of around 40 sites used in Project 1 above.
 4. Cox's Road excursions, Mount York to the Flag Staff in Bathurst.
Participants in these excursions will, if permission of landholder can be negotiated, walk the length of this section of Cox's Road. Much of the route is on private land and is unlikely to be readily available again. This project will be self-funding.
 5. Book: *Cox's Road Dreaming: A Natural History of Cox's 1814/15 Road*.
This book is currently being researched and developed independently by David Goldney, chair of the organising committee.

Project funding will be prioritised in the order 1-3, and then to 5 above, cascading to the next priority only when a higher priority project is completely funded. For businesses, donations may be tax deductible under some circumstances. A pro-forma facilitating donating to the project is provided at the back of this information pack.

Greening Bathurst needs your support to bring these initiatives to life so please consider facilitating this unique and historically important project.

A. In-depth detail: Introduction

Following the 'crossing' of the Blue Mountains by Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson in 1813, Governor Macquarie engaged surveyor George Evans to further investigate the country west of their expedition's end point (Mount Blaxland), about 5 km short of the then unknown Great Dividing Range (~25km south of Lithgow). Evans completed his expedition in 1814 naming *en route* a range of geographical features including Evans Crown, Mount Blaxland, Lawsons Sugarloaf and Wentworths Sugarloaf, the Fish, Campbells and Macquarie Rivers, and a series of associated plains including the Bathurst Plains.

Based on the information gained as a result of the three explorers' expedition and Evan's subsequent trek to the Bathurst Plains, Lieutenant William Cox, under instruction from Governor Macquarie, masterminded the building of Cox's Road. In reality it was little more than a cart track with high ongoing maintenance costs, running from the Nepean River at Emu Ford to the inland plains. Nevertheless it was a challenge that his team accepted and accomplished in six months on the 14th January 1815, in all a distance of approximately 101.5 miles (163.4 km). He was aided by a team of settlers, convicts and soldiers as well as two Aboriginal men who assisted as guides and intermediaries. It was a remarkable achievement, from both a logistic and an engineering point of view. Nevertheless it was a 'road' that would soon need upgrading and major and minor route changes to improve travel times and road grades.

Cox's Road and subsequent derivatives and/or alternate routes, provide the back drop for the many descriptions of landscape, including paintings and photographs, and natural history associated with these various routes as recorded by explorers, naturalists, scientists, travellers, landholders, miners and settlers who travelled over them. Contemporary ecologists⁶ view these routes as 'sampling transects' from the Nepean to Bathurst, enabling a focus on various aspects of the natural history and ecology of these transmontane⁷ routes. These hug a narrow ridgeline across the Blue Mountains, while west of Mount York they cross granite country, the geological change

partly accounting for the quite different vegetation east and west of Mount York.

By visiting the sites chosen to interpret the natural history of Cox's Road and its derivatives, participants will be able to reflect on what various travellers saw or did not see, and how their various world-views constrained their understandings.



George Evans Memorial, Kings Parade Bathurst

Most early travellers failed to recognise the ridge-top route across the Blue Mountains as a meeting ground of at least three Aboriginal nations: the Darug, Gundungurra and Wiradjuri people, prior inhabitants since time immemorial of their various Countries. Long-term Aboriginal land practices resulted in a 'contrived cultural landscape' that was able to support the Aboriginal lifestyle. Such landscapes were viewed by most Europeans as 'waste land' and Cox's Road as a triumphant gateway through Hartley Vale to what would be ironically and literally dubbed 'West-more-land', soon to be transformed by grazing, farming, squattocracy, infrastructure and an array of fledgling industries. Cox's Road was for many years effectively the Bathurst region's umbilical cord⁸ joining Sydney with its first inland settlement and the imagined lands beyond.

Cox's Road persists east of Mount York as fragments on the edges of the now dominant Great Western Highway, mostly buried underneath metres of filling and layers of bitumen, housing developments, and occasionally as a relic bituminised

⁶ Ecology is a branch of science exploring the interactions of living things with their environments, often using the skills shared in common with natural historians, but seeking to create patterns of understanding that help make sense of a complex world. It is somewhat similar to gathering pieces of a jigsaw and ending up with a picture that makes sense, although in practice there are always missing pieces! Ecology as a science began to emerge in the mid-19th C. Hence Charles Darwin when visiting Bathurst on leave from the Beagle in 1836, was a great example of the emerging science being both a superb natural historian, a collector of organisms and geological specimens as well as gathering observations from around the world, subsequently using them to synthesise his theory of evolution – putting a very complex jigsaw together. PS Darwin came inland to Bathurst using parts of Cox's original route as well as sections of alternate routes that had been constructed post 1815!

⁷ A widely used term in the 19th C meaning to cross the mountains.

⁸ The Bathurst region until around 1850 was more-or-less equivalent to Wiradjuri Country bounded by the Murrumbidgee River and included the Lachlan and Macquarie catchments, an area representing about 25% of the land area of contemporary NSW.



section. Fortunately much of Cox's Pass (named by Macquarie) remains in rude form with its challenging 1:4 steep grade sometimes dropping precipitously down the northern side of Mount York to the adjacent western valley floor. A significant relic has miraculously survived near the Woodford Trig Station and even today would be a challenging ask to cross its sandstone bumps and ridges in a conventional modern motor vehicle, let alone by bullock-pulled, heavily laden wagons or poorly sprung horse drawn carts and stagecoaches. We can be reasonably certain as to the authenticity of the remaining sections of Cox's Road east of Mount York. West of Mount York, much of Cox's Road persists on private land, or as readily accessible narrow bituminised or dirt minor public roads. The exact location of Cox's Road once it crosses the O'Connell Road south of Bathurst (developed by the Cox's Road Project Group formed by the Bathurst, Lithgow and Blue Mountains Branches of the National Trust) is less certain. However,

where the route remains in reality a tentative best guess or a hypothesis we indicate this for particular sites and in the accompanying text.

There is much more to be explored and to know about this cultural relic. That is partly the task of this Greening Bathurst bicentennial project to help celebrate and rediscover a national treasure – one layer in time – and to reflect on its associated natural history that began in one sense, with the Big Bang some 14.7 billion years ago. Some of that history is written in stone, some in the artistic and industrial endeavours of ancient Aboriginal nations, in the plants and animals, the sculpting force of water, wind and lichens over aeons, and through soils and local landscape features. Other components of the natural history are described in song, verse and written records as seen through the eyes of particularly observant and resourceful travellers, skilled artists, photographers, and first nation people.



Original section of Cox's Road near Woodford Trig tracking over a sandstone platform. Note worked rock edge, likely acting as a guide mark, rather than a gutter.

B. Project Objectives:

Enable Bathurst people, fellow Australians and overseas visitors to:

1. Visit at their leisure selected sites facilitating a better understanding of events leading to the construction of Australia's oldest inland European road – Cox's 1815 transmontane bush track from the Nepean River to the Flag Staff at Bathurst, and the subsequent alternate routes and modifications that followed relatively rapidly in the quest for a more efficient passage.
2. Understand that the narrow Blue Mountains ridge over which Cox's Road tracked was in 1815 a pre-existing meeting ground for at least three Aboriginal nations (the Gundungurra, Darug and the Wiradjuri) with existing well-defined trading, dreaming and communication routes criss-crossing the mountains.
3. Integrate participant understanding of associated cultural and natural features at sites along Cox's Road and in the immediate surrounds, (e.g. buildings, original road components and road-building techniques, convict contributions, alternate tracks, geology, geography, geomorphology⁹ and soils, climate, flora and fauna, vistas and Aboriginal heritage).
4. Visit the approximate sites where John Lewin, the colony's first professional artist, painted a series of water colour landscapes from Emu Crossing to the Bathurst Plains in 1815 as part of Governor Macquarie's entourage. These and other paintings from that era allow a comparison to be made about changes in natural features that have occurred since 1815, such as native vegetation.



The Rock at Lawson, the westernmost extensions of the Narrabeen sandstone.

⁹ Study of landform features and the processes that shape them.

5. Appreciate the numerous 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' Blue Mountains crossing events attempted by Europeans between 1788 -1813, that together with aboriginal knowledge, eventually enabled Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth to complete their 1813 'crossing' to Mount Blaxland, eventually leading to the building of Cox's Road in 1814/1815.

6. Appreciate the effort and organisation required to build Cox's Road, Cox's observations about natural history and the technologies his working team used.

7. Read or listen to brief accounts from a range of perceptive travellers who used Cox's Road or alternate routes, recording their views on natural history observations and/or other interesting insights and behaviours they encountered during their various journeys.¹⁰



John Lewin's 1815 watercolour, Wiradjuri elder from the Bathurst Plains in 1815 wearing a signature possum skin cloak

8. Better understand the reasoning behind the mushrooming of alternate transport routes between Emu Crossing and Bathurst in the period 1815 – 1912 (important when considering the views of people who wrote re their crossing experiences since they were often using differing routes). These routes were developed to alleviate the difficulty of ascending Lapstone Hill¹¹, finding more efficient passageways through to Mount York, finding substitute tracks that would enable Cox's Pass to be avoided, and to find more

efficient routes across the Great Dividing Range. Not long after the completion of Cox's Road the discovery was made of an alternate mountain crossing (seemingly a well-known Aboriginal walkway) via Kurrajong, Bell, the Darling Causeway and thence to Hartley Vale. These alternate routes are listed opposite.



Lennox Bridge (1833) is the oldest surviving stone arch bridge on the Australian mainland, forming part of Mitchells Pass.

¹⁰ George Mackaness's *Fourteen Journeys Over the Blue Mountain* covers the period 1813 – 1841. Some of these journeys were wholly confined to the original Cox's Road whilst others were combinations of parts of the original road together with deviations or completely new routes (see point 8 above).

¹¹ The first Hill encountered after crossing Emu Ford.



John Lewin's 1815 painting of the Emu Crossing on the Nepean River.

C. Site selection

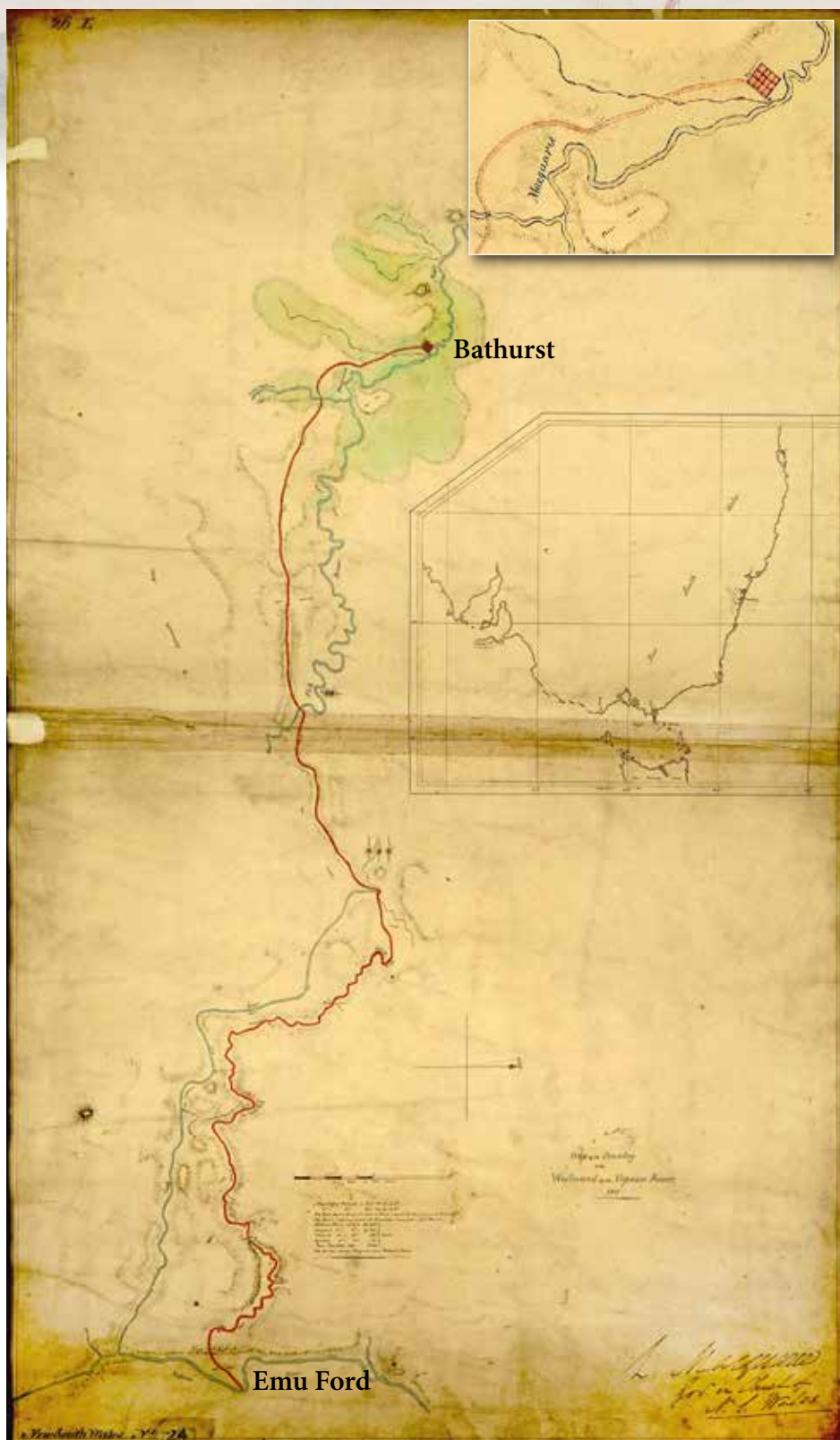
Preamble

Much of Cox's Road has disappeared over the years due to road works associated with upgrades and route changes to the Great Western Highway east of Mount York, particularly during the lengthy and ongoing construction of the four-lane highway and infrastructure through to Mount Victoria. A number of publically accessible sites that we have chosen are located along the remaining sections of Cox's Road. Other sites are located well away from Cox's Road or in the immediate surrounds of the historic route, but nevertheless will help participants to understand some aspect of natural history or heritage related to the road's history as well as gaining insights into the 'spirit of the age'. Such linkages will be highlighted in the accompanying text.

It is unlikely that a participant could visit more than 6 to 12 sites in any one day and engage meaningfully with each site's complex history and relevance to Cox's Road. On some days, only one site might be completed, particularly when walking and exploration is involved. Rather like the reading of a good book, a participant's journey will require a measure of persistence to cover sites between Emu Ford on the Nepean River at Emu Plains and the Flag Staff on the western bank of the Macquarie River in Bathurst. However the project material will provide a number of suggestions as to how one might tackle the route based on time availability, and indicate the likely time required to visit and engage with each location.

Of course participants are free to pick and choose their preferred order of visitation and involvement that suits their needs and interest. In engaging with this particular interpretation of Cox's Road, like a good wine, time itself will be an important ingredient in acquiring a mature understanding. As this remarkable story gradually unfolds many links will be provided through the WWW and elsewhere to enable anyone to follow up particular point of interest in greater depth.

- **Emu Ford Crossing/Cumberland Plains to Mount Victoria:**
Bells Line of Road via Kurrajong and the Darling Causeway and Hartley Vale (1823); Old Bathurst Road via the Zig Zag from Emu Plains to Blaxland (1826); Mitchell's Lennox Bridge Pass (1834) served as part of the main western route for 93 years; deviation of the Great Western Road via the Knapsack Viaduct (1926) – a previous railway bridge re-cycled; and the current Great Western Highway via a disused 1867 railway alignment from Zig Zag Street to Blaxland.
 - **Bypassing Cox's Pass & other routes:**
Lawsons Long Alley (1822); O'Connell-Kelso deviation (1823); Lockyers road (1828); Mitchell's Victoria Pass (1832) and then via Bowenfels-Rydal-Mount Lambie-Yetholme (1832-1836); Berghoffers Pass (1907-1912); plus multiple variations and side-tracks from 1815 – present].
9. Gain some insight as to vehicular traffic, herds and flocks, and numbers of people who came over the mountains between 1815 and 1850.
 10. Appreciate the great expanse of time that has elapsed since the formation of the earth to the present time through visiting particular geological formations up to 400 million years in age.
 11. Appreciate that Cox's 1815 Road is but one of many cultural layers in time.



'Map of the Country to the Westward of the Nepean River 1815'

This is the earliest known map of Cox's Road (The Road to Bathurst) and attributed to the Surveyor General John Oxley, a member of the entourage who accompanied Governor Lachlan Macquarie to the Bathurst Plains in 1815. The map is signed by Macquarie. It was only recently 'discovered' by Charles Sturt University historian, Dr Robin McLachlan. The original map is held in the National Archives (UK) and measures (1.2 x 0.7)m at a scale of 2 miles to the inch (1.29km/cm). Dr McLachlan believes this is the map which Macquarie enclosed with his 24 June 1815 despatch to Lord Bathurst reporting on the completion of the road to Bathurst and the subsequent proclamation of Bathurst. The map colour has been digitally enhanced, since the now 200 year old map has faded considerably. The place names *Bathurst* and *Emu Ford* have been added to this enhanced image with apologies to John Oxley!

Cox's Road is represented by the double dotted lines and shaded red. The various treeless plains near Bathurst, named by Evans in 1814 are shaded green and their respective areas recorded in the legend. The enlarged inset (in original colour) at the top right hand of the map, which we have added, focuses on the treeless plains, the entrance via William Street and the Queen Charlotte Vale Creek crossing and the extensive series of chain of ponds along this creek-line, illustrated by Oxley.

An A3 version of this important map will be included in the tourist package described in this document. Bathurst Regional Council has provided us with the high quality scan of the original map. The map is orientated with west to the top of the map and north to the right of the map.

1. Site identification

111 sites have been identified stretching from the Cumberland Plains just east of the Nepean River to the Flag Staff at Bathurst (See front cover illustrating the Flag Staff in 1815) - a distance of over 160 kilometres. These sites have been chosen because they can be linked together to provide a fascinating story (Cox's Road Dreaming) re the natural history of Cox's Road and subsequent routes to Bathurst, a rather different perspective to that adopted by the many historians who have written so eloquently on this subject.

Mostly the better known tourist locations have been avoided unless essential in the telling of this tale.

Sites have been located in the following locations: Bathurst (13), Gormans Hill to Phills Falls (12), Evans Crown to Victoria Pass (22); Mount York to Mount Victoria (15), Blackheath (4), Meadow Bath (1), Katoomba (12), Wentworth Falls (6), Lawson (3), Woodford (3), Linden (1), Faulconbridge (2); Springwood (2), Valley Heights and Warrimoo (1), Glenbrook-Blaxland - Emu Plains (11), and east of the Nepean River (1).

An Example of a draft site description associated with Map 7: (Site No 73) Reids Plateau (Katoomba) is provided below, together with a panoramic photograph looking south from the Plateau.

The number of words for each site description on the proposed maps will be limited in most cases to 100 words. A fuller description will be located on the web pages.



Short site description

1. Site description

From this location, one can view the Katoomba Falls, The Three Sisters, Pitts Amphitheatre (See 74) and to the south, Orphan Rock. Below in the valley the rainforest vegetation is regrowth from an area once cleared to access coal and shale deposits. Much of the water tumbling over Katoomba falls derives from stored water within pervious layers of the upstream sandstone formations. This stored water seeps from rock formations above and below The Gully (Site 71) through side and valley swamps to emerge into the Kedumba River. The Falls support a small population of a rare and threatened conifer, The Blue Mountains Pine. The nearby Furber Steps allow you to walk down to the base of the falls, through the relic rainforest, to obtain a better view of this coniferous shrub. The rainforest represent a Gondwanan relic (from 30+ million years ago). The clifftop vegetation is a direct result of the drying out of the Australian continent due to an ice age and a rain shadow effect. This occurred when the leading edge of the Australian tectonic plate collided with the Pacific Plate forcing up the New Guinea highlands some 15 million years ago, thus creating a rain-shadow effect.

See associated web page links for further information and background on this and other sites

2. Significance of this site to understanding Cox's Road:

Whilst Cox's Road is around 2 kilometres north of this plateau, it was the escarpment and other landforms that constrained its construction to the relatively narrow ridge between the Cox's River Valley to the south and the Grose River Valley to the north (See Maps 1 & 2). The stored water from the pervious layers of sandstone

that was filtered and held back via hanging and valley swamps made it possible for Europeans and their stock to negotiate the upland ridge. The rainforest pockets remind us of the vegetation that was once dominant in the Blue Mountains, and puts Cox's Road in an appropriate perspective as a very recent layer in time. The view 'supposedly' also takes in Pitts Amphitheatre, the subject of one of Lewin's 1815 paintings somewhere near this location, indicating that he left Cox's Road to sketch the amphitheatre. The escarpment cliffs with their brilliant and changing colours were objects of awe for early explorers and travellers as they continue to be today.

3. Key Question for consideration

How does this particular site illustrate that Cox's Road is just 'one layer in time'?

4. Time required to visit the site:

15 minutes if only taking in the views or 1-2 hours if walking down and back to the base of Katoomba Falls via the Furber Steps.

5. Directions:

Reids Lookout/Plateau is about 2 kilometres south of the Great Western Highway at Katoomba. Turn left into Katoomba coming from Sydney or right from Bathurst at the traffic lights leading to Parke Street, then via Katoomba Street turning right at Cliff Drive (also called Katoomba Falls Road). Proceed to the Kiosk where vehicles can be parked nearby. It is a short south walk to the lookout. The Furber Pass walking track can also be accessed nearby.



View from Reids Plateau including Katoomba Falls, Three Sisters, misting rain, rainforest in the valleys, Orphan Rock and Scenic World Skyway.



Web page site description

Reids Plateau consists of a number of lookouts and is accessed from near the Kiosk in Katoomba Park along Cliff Drive. From this location, one can view the Katoomba Falls, The Three Sisters and the view known as Pitts Amphitheatre (See Site 74). Below in the valley, rainforest vegetation can be clearly seen, regrowth from an area once cleared to access coal and shale deposits. Above the falls are the Katoomba Cascades that cannot be seen from this lookout. Much of the water tumbling over the cliff derives from stored water within pervious layers of the upstream sandstone formations. This stored water seeps from rock formations above and below The Gully (Site 71) through side and valley swamps to emerge into the Kedumba River, as well as being supplemented by urban runoff when it is raining. (See descriptions for Sites 71 and 82 for an explanation about how mountain swamps function in this landscape).

Orphan Rock can be seen directly south of this point. The falls hold yet another secret. They support a small population of a rare and threatened conifer, The Blue Mountains Pine (*Microstrobus fitzgeraldii*). Only seven populations containing around 450 individual plants are known. This species has a very specialised ecological niche¹² and habitat¹³, preferring spray zones on south facing cliff faces. Using binoculars it may be possible to see this small shrub with drooping branchlets and tiny leaves. It occupies the lower part of the waterfall above the cavernous ingress visible on the lower cliff face. The nearby Furber Steps allow you to walk down to the base

of the falls, through the relic rainforest, to where you will likely get a better view of this amazing coniferous shrub.

If you take the path slightly to the left as you return from the top lookout, back towards the kiosk, you can view at close range the rainforest component in this landscape. This represents an example of a Gondwanan vegetation relic (from 30+ million years ago). The rainfall here is generally not high enough to support rainforest. However, the landform provides protection from all day sun and decreases the evaporation rates, thereby creating ideal locations where pockets of rainforest can survive. There is a sharp boundary between the rainforest vegetation, cliff face vegetation and the vegetation above the cliff line. Some of the cliff face vegetation is reliant on seepage from layers in the cliff face. The cliff top vegetation is a direct result of the drying out of the Australian continent. This occurred for two reasons:

1. A recent ice age that retreated around 20,000 years ago;
2. Around 15 million years ago, a rain shadow effect¹⁴ resulted from the leading edge of the Australian tectonic plate on which Australia now floats colliding with the Pacific Plate forcing up the New Guinea highlands.

If the rainfall was to increase substantially again in the Blue Mountains, then these refugia¹⁵ rainforests would begin to 'march out' over the landscape!



¹² An organism's ecological function, in this case a producer being able to photosynthesise.

¹³ The address (location) including the environmental conditions where the organism lives.

¹⁴ A rain shadow is a falling off of rainfall due to the presence of a high mountain chain.

¹⁵ Refugia – localised environments that provide the conditions needed for particular living organisms or vegetation communities to survive.



D. Project products

Greening Bathurst, depending on raising the necessary finances, proposes to develop or support the following five integrated projects related to Cox's Road. Project 1 is on target and nearly fully funded by existing resources or in kind input. Projects 2 and 3 are dependent on raising the necessary funds by no later than early March 2015. Project 4 if it comes to fruition will be fully funded by participating walkers. Project 5 will be fully funded by the author if self-published or through an established publisher. Nevertheless, additional funding would help facilitate its publication.

Funding raised by Greening Bathurst will be allocated to Projects 1-5 in that order, cascading to a lower order project if and when a higher order project has been fully funded.

Copyright for Projects 1-3 will be vested jointly with Greening Bathurst and LPI.

The proceeds of the sale of the Project 1 mapping and information package will be held in trust by Greening Bathurst for use in any subsequent revisions of Projects 1-3 and a Project 1 reprint run when needed.

1. Tourist Guide - Hard copy map package:

Cox's Road Dreaming © A Natural History of Cox's 1814/15 Road– Australia's First Inland European Road

The Package will consist of an 80 page A4 booklet with eight strip maps housed in a back pocket. The booklet will contain:

- An index
- A brief overview of the history of Cox's Road
- A brief over view of the geology and flora
- How to best use the tourist resources
- A list of equipment and additional maps that would likely enhance the experience
- An assessment of safety issues
- A portfolio of A4 images including most of the John Lewin 1815 watercolours of locations along the route, some additional A4 maps demonstrating Aboriginal Dreaming Trails, routes of early explorers and alternate roads and tracks constructed between 1816 and 1912 that replaced partly or wholly Cox's 1815 road.

- An A3 centrepiece of John Oxley's 1815 Bathurst Road only recently discovered.
- 100 – 200 word descriptions of each of the sites selected with links to a stand-alone web page allowing access to more information.

The first two maps will overview Cox's Road with both plan and side elevation views, will be double height, folded along the long edge and then concertina folded. These two maps will aid participants' better understanding of the geography of Cox's Road.

- I. Map 1 will illustrate a side elevation of the topography of Cox's Road from Bathurst to Emu Ford, relevant towns and rivers, information on climate at a number of locations, features named by early explorers, the Great Dividing Range, elevation in metres on the X-axis and kilometres on the Y-axis, cross-section of major rivers, map scale, and title etc.
- II. Map 2 will illustrate a plan view of Cox's Road at approximate matching scale to the upper map, identify the great escarpment using shading to emphasise its height, identify also the escarpment associated with the Grose Valley, locate the various valley names that were identified by early travellers, the names of significant rivers and creeks, the names of important plateaux and map scale and title.
- III. Map 3 is a plan view of Cox's Road with a simplified vegetation map along the route.
- IV. Map 4 is a plan view of Cox's Road with a simplified geological map along the route. Interesting aspects of the geology of the route are described in the booklet as are the views about geology and land forms of early colonists.
- V. Each successive strip map of a section of Cox's Road (Maps 5 – 8) will be backgrounded with topographic data including roads (current and historic where appropriate), railway line, rivers and creeks, relevant towns, place points, National Parks and State Forests, contours, shaded escarpment where relevant, site number with a short descriptive name, northings and eastings, and any special features relevant to the project. The site numbers will be located on each map.



When maps are folded the front page will show the map number and title against a feature photo specific to that map strip. The sites to be visited are numbered sequentially and located on each map from 1 - 100+. Each site is accompanied with a description in the booklet provided

- The proposed production stages are:
 - I. Drafts completed by December 2014
 - II. Final ground-truthing and peer review by March 2015
 - III. Printing April 2015 (print run of 4,000)
 - IV. Launch in second half of 2015 as determined in consultation with BRC within the context of the wider bicentennial program.
- An additional feature will be access via the WWW only of recordings of particular persons, past and present who journeyed over Cox's Road or its subsequent derivatives, detailing what they observed, thought and in some cases how they behaved! Such recordings will be limited to sites where wireless access to the WWW is possible.
- The product will be sold at \$20 per package through newsagencies, tourist bureau sites, councils, secondary schools and colleges, and bookshops in the Blue Mountains and Bathurst regions, Penrith and Parramatta.



John Lewin's 1815 painting of the Campbells River crossing showing White Gum along the river bank and Yellow Box Woodland in the background.

2. Development of a stand-alone static web site to complement Project 1.

This web site will enable additional information re the project and individual sites to be accessed by the general public as well as providing linkages with other relevant sites. The development of this proposed site is dependent on the provision of a funding source and data that will become available as product 1 and product 5 come to maturity. Being a static site, it would need little in the way of an ongoing maintenance budget. The location of the web site is yet to be determined. There is a wealth of existing web sites that can be utilised as links to our proposed web page. The proposed completion date is May 2015.

3. Preparation of an app:

The proposed app would be suitable for mobile phone or preferably iPad or laptop that would embrace a subset of sites used in product 1 above (Approximately 40 sites). It would also facilitate the use of additional information from the project web site and/or other web locations. This component outcome is dependent on financial backing being available. The app would be available for downloading free from the internet.

- The following would be available on the app:
 - I. The route will be developed as an active site linked with a GPS system and around 40 embedded sites.
 - II. As each sites is approached, information about this site will automatically appear on the smartphone screen or tablet screen.
 - III. Ability to overview the route and range of available sites and to make choices depending on time available of participants.
 - IV. Move through a series of layers at each site including location, site photo or historic painting etc, to site description and significance, linkages between sites, site-flyovers using Google earth or LPI public data, pertinent questions for the participant to think about, etc.
 - V. Voiceovers with comment and views from scientists, explorers, travellers, drovers etc. (past and present), who have commented on particular sections of the route.

The proposed completion date is May 2015.



4. Retrace the Steps – Cox’s Road Dreaming ©: Cox’s Road excursion, Mount York to the Flag Staff in Bathurst

The feasibility of an excursion from Mount York to the Flag Staff at Bathurst along Cox’s Road is currently being assessed by Tim Cox (a member of the Greening Bathurst Bicentennial Committee, and a direct descendent of William Cox) and Wayne Holgate, chair of the Central West Bushwalking Club. There are significant difficulties in organising such a walk concerning safety and insurance issues, gaining access to private land, organising buses, toilet facilities, meals and accommodation.

5. Book:

Cox’s Road Dreaming ©

A Natural History of Cox’s 1814/15 Road – Australia’s First Inland European Road)

This is currently being researched and developed independently by David Goldney. There is a significant overlap between this book and the development of Projects 1 - 3. The book will provide valuable background reading to those who take up the challenge of working through the tourist information.



Walking party descending a very steep section of Cox’s Pass, Mount York.

E. Project Budget: \$80,000

Project 1: Hard Copy map package, \$15,000, mainly for purchase of high quality digital copies of various prints, images and expendables to be purchased for use in the project, minor employment of specialist sub-consultants, and peer review of final product.

Project 2: Complementary Web site for Projects 1 and 3, estimated \$10,000 to develop a more-or-less static professional site with minimal yearly upgrades, linking with many other knowledge sites. This assumes that all material web searching etc. will be carried out by volunteers. Minor upgrades by Greening Bathurst for three years after publication. Peer review by specialists.

Project 3: Preparation of an app based on a subset of 40 or so sites from Project 1: Estimate \$30,000. This has two components: (1) the preparation of a brief and concept document, and (2) development of the app. Peer review by specialists.

Project 4: Proposed Cox's Road walk from Mount York to the Bathurst Flag Staff. Self-funded by participants meeting all costs.

Project 5: Book: Mainly self-funded but any surplus funds after meeting the costs of developing Projects 1-3 may, at the discretion of Greening Bathurst, be used in off-setting some of the costs of this publication. Preparation of specialist maps and technical drawings, purchase of additional high quality images - \$15,000.

Project Publicity: \$10,000

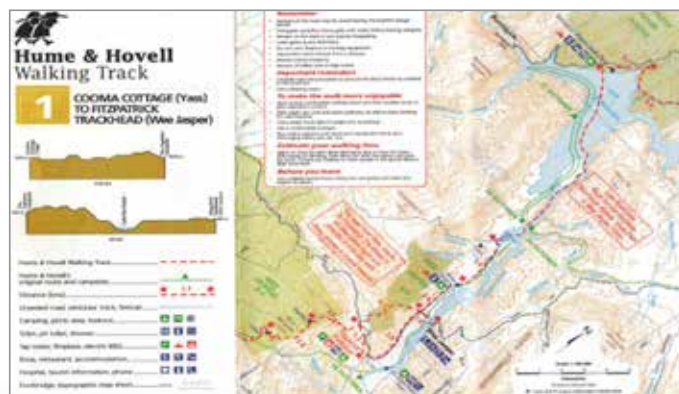
In the event of fund raising exceeding the proposed budget, Greening Bathurst will, with the approval of sponsors:

- Direct further funding to components of the project where the use of specialist consultants will speed up the preparation process; and/or
- Investigate with organisations such as the ABC or SBS the possibility of developing a film/TV version of the project.

F. Current Project 'In-Kind' Sponsors

The current 'in-kind' project sponsors include:

- **The LPI (Land and Property Information)**, a NSW State Government division within the Office of Finance and Services. LPI have undertaken to prepare Maps 1-8 and print the hard copy tourist package, Project 1, as well as printing this sponsor information booklet.
- **Greening Bathurst:** Greening Bathurst is a volunteer community organisation that supports best practice in the management and conservation of biodiversity across the Bathurst Regional Council area by advancing the implementation of the various environmental management plans prepared by BRC as well as considering a wide range of local environmental issues. Its current Chair is Ashley Bland and the Secretary is Hugh Gould. Greening Bathurst has already invested significant time and effort through its bicentennial committee research and development work, development of project concept, and writing project material. Greening Bathurst has also set aside \$2,000 toward the costs of implementation.
- **Bathurst Regional Council:** BRC is co-ordinating and determining those projects that will be part of the official bicentennial programme in 2015. This Project is one such event and thus we are able to use the official event logo.
- **The National Trust Cox's Road Project Committee,** through the Bathurst Branch has provided in-kind help, baseline mapping of Cox's Road at 1:25,000, the Application for listing on the State Heritage Register prepared by the CRPC as well as being holders of significant local knowledge.



Part section of 800mm long strip map of the Hume and Hovell walking track, illustrating how this concept can be adapted to the Cox's Road Dreaming project.



G. Financial Supporters, Sponsors and Benefactors

You and/or your firm have been specifically approached as potential financial sponsors of this project, providing an outstanding opportunity to be actively involved in supporting Bathurst's Bicentenary Celebrations (Bathurst 200) via this well researched and professional programme. We expect it to have a life of many years. You or your firm can choose to be involved in one of the following ways.

Supporter:

\$1,000 - \$2,000

Acknowledgement of support in Project material.
Invitation to various Project Launch Events in Bathurst in 2015. One copy of various project materials. One free copy of book when published.

Sponsor:

\$2,000 - \$5,000

Acknowledgement of support in Project material and on the project web page. Invitation to Project Launch Events in Bathurst in 2015. Invitation to celebration thank you dinner for two people following main project launch. Offer of placing limited discreet loose leaf advertising material supplied by a sponsor in Project 1 packages. One free reserved place in Cox's Road bicentennial walk if it eventuates. One copy of various project materials. One free copy of book when published.

Major Sponsor:

\$5,000 - \$10,000

Acknowledgement of support in Project material and on the project web page. Invitation to Project Launch Events in Bathurst in 2015. Invitation to celebration thank you dinner for four people following main project launch. Offer of placing limited discreet loose leaf advertising material supplied by the Major Sponsor in Project 1 packages and additional advertisements on the Project web page. Two free reserved place in Cox's Road bicentennial walk if it eventuates. Two free copies of book when published. One free place in a one day tour of sections of Cox's Road led by David Goldney.

Principal Sponsor:


\$10,000 - \$15,000

Acknowledgement of support in Project material and on project web page. Invitation to Project Launch Events in Bathurst in 2015. Invitation to celebration dinner for four people following main project launch. Offer of placing additional limited discreet loose leaf advertising material supplied by the Principal Sponsor in Project 1 packages and additional advertisement space on the project web page. Additional discreet advertising in Project 1 hard copy products. Three free reserved place in Cox's Road bicentennial walk if it eventuates. Three free copies of book when published. Private eleven-seater bus one-day tour of selected portions of Cox's Road led by David Goldney for four employees or friends with a picnic lunch and champagne provided. Negotiations with Greening Bathurst as to further recognition of support.

Benefactor:

\$25,000 or more

Acknowledgement of support in Project material and on project web page. Invitation to Project Launch Events in Bathurst in 2015. Invitation to celebration dinner for six people following main project launch. Offer of placing additional limited discreet loose leaf advertising material supplied by Benefactor in Project 1 packages and on the project web page. Additional discreet advertising in Project 1 hard copy products. Four free reserved place in Cox's Road bicentennial walk if it eventuates. Four free copies of book when published. Private eleven-seater bus one-day tour of selected portions of Cox's Road led by David Goldney for five employees or friends with a picnic lunch and champagne provided. Negotiations with Greening Bathurst as to further recognition of support. Four-hour helicopter ride along Cox's Road for two passengers, with David Goldney and pilot.



Looking west from the summit of Mount Blaxland (the end point of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth's Blue Mountains' crossing in 1813) to the Great Dividing Range - a distance of about 5km. This is the landform seen by the three explorers. Certainly they could not see any part of the western plains. Cox's Road winds its way to the ridge top to the left of this photo before heading down to the Fish River. The first ridge on the left hand side of the photo has sometimes also been named Mount Blaxland (For example Captain Dumaresq). On the horizon at the far right is Mount Lambie, adjacent to the current Great Western Highway.



H. Project Committee

This sunset committee members are: Professor David Goldney (chair), Ashley Bland, Tim Cox, Tracey Carpenter, John Fry, Hugh Gould, Wayne Holgate, Steve Woodhall, Rev John Kellett, Dr Anne Kerle, Dr Barbara Mactaggart and Sister Patricia Powell.

I. Acknowledgements

- I. **LPI:** Greg Burgess, Director Information Sourcing, Land and Property Information Division, Bathurst, for his willingness to support this project with in-kind outcomes; Leanne Mills, Supervisor of topography and mapping program for support and input to the Project on an as-needs basis; Susan Fietz, Graduate Spatial Technician for working on selected Project outcomes including all map products.
- II. **National Trust:** The National Trust Project Committee, formed in May 2006, has assessed the heritage values of Cox's Road leading up to the bicentenary celebrations in 2015. It has been proactive in mapping, interpreting and signposting the road in the Bathurst, Oberon, Lithgow and Blue Mountains local government areas, supported by financial assistance from these councils. The CRPC has also developed a comprehensive application for State Heritage listing of the Cox's Road to be considered by the Heritage council at its December 2014 meeting.
- III. **State Library of NSW:** Permission to reproduce the Lewin 1815 watercolours as well as other images utilised in its production.
- IV. **Magabala Books, Perth:** Permission to use David Mowaljarlai's 1993 map of trade routes and storylines. (See image legend).
- V. **Rahamim Ecological Learning Centre (Sisters of Mercy):** Provision of regular meeting rooms.
- VI. **Karskens, Grace (1988):** Cox's Way: Historical and Archaeological Study of Cox's Road and Early Crossings of the Blue Mountains, New South Wales. Part One. Department of Lands, a report prepared for Cox's Road Trust.
- VII. **Reviewers to date:** Dr Robin McLachlan, Wyn Jones, Dr Col Bower, Patsy Moppett, Brian Fox and Iain McPherson.

VIII. Readability of promotion documents:

Bruce Andrews, Charles Sturt University.

- IX **Kent, J (2013):** A Moment in Time. Western Crossing Trust.
- X **Bathurst Regional Council:** Provided us with high resolution images of Lewin's paintings and Oxley's 1815 map.
- XI **National Library of Australia:** Permission to use Lewin's painting of a Wiradjuri Elder

If you have further queries please consult further with your Greening Bathurst contact person or with:

1. Ashley Bland (0428 533 026: abland@skillset.com.au), Chair of Greening Bathurst;
2. David Goldney (0417 460 935: dgoldney@bigpond.net.au), Chair of GB Bicentennial Sub-Committee.
3. Hugh Gould 0427 323 499: hugh.gould@gmail.com, Hon Secretary Greening Bathurst

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Document author: David Goldney
Document design: Tony O'Neill



Greening Bathurst Bicentenary Sub-committee, from L to R, Tim Cox, Wayne Holgate, David Goldney, John Kellett, Steve Woodhall & Barbara Mactaggart. Absent - Ashley Bland, John Fry, Anne Kerle, Sr Patricia Powell, Hugh Gould & Tracey Carpenter.



COX'S ROAD DREAMING®

A Natural History of Cox's 1814/15 Road –
Australia's First Inland European Road



John Lewin's watercolour of Evans Peak (Crown), from a position west of the Fish River.