



Big sky of the Great Dividing Range, NSW

Charles STURT

Explorer of New South Wales in the time of Governor Darling

Governor Ralph Darling (1772-1858) lived in Government House Parramatta from 1825 until 1831 and was in constant demand for decisions on guiding the community. There was excitement through discoveries made by explorers seeking new farming grounds beyond the Blue Mountains and there was a belief there must be an inland sea because the rivers rising in the mountains flowed to the west.

Charles Napier Sturt was born to British parents in Bengal, British India, and educated in England for a time after which he was placed in the British Army. With a detachment of the 39th Regiment of Foot, Captain Sturt escorted convicts aboard the



Charles Sturt



Governor Ralph Darling

Mariner arriving in Port Jackson on 23 May 1827. Sturt enjoyed the climate of New South Wales and developed a great interest in the country. Governor Darling formed a high opinion of Sturt and appointed him major of brigade and military secretary during which time he became friendly with John Oxley, Allan Cunningham, Hamilton Hume, and other explorers. In 1828 he received approval from the Governor to raise a party to explore western New South Wales, consisting of his servant Joseph Harris, three soldiers, eight convicts and Hamilton Hume as his assistant. They crossed the Blue





Sturt's Desert Pea

Mountains and broke in oxen and horses in the Wellington Valley, setting out on 7 December 1828. The country was in drought and the party had difficulty in finding sufficient water. Fortunately they discovered the Macquarie, Bogan and Darling rivers which provided what they needed. Five months was spent surveying this north western district near the present site of Milparinka. Townships followed - Narromine, Nyngan, Wilcannia, and Tibooburra.

Sturt proceeded down the Murray, until he reached the river's confluence with the Darling. Sturt had now proved that all the western-flowing rivers eventually flow into the Murray. In February 1830, the party reached a large lake, which Sturt called Lake Alexandrina. A few days later, they reached the sea, later named as the Southern Ocean. There they made the disappointing



Wilcannia Darling River



Dry adaptation at Milparinka





discovery that the mouth of the Murray was a maze of lagoons and sandbars, impassable to shipping.

The party faced the ordeal of rowing back upriver on the Murray and Murrumbidgee, against the current, in the heat of an Australian summer. Their supplies ran out and, when they reached the site of Narrandera in April, they were unable to go any further. Sturt sent two men overland in search of supplies and they returned in time to save the party from starvation. But Sturt went blind for some months and never fully recovered his health. By the time they reached Sydney again, they had rowed and sailed nearly 2,900 kilometres of the river system.

Charles Sturt is commemorated by Sturt's Desert Pea, Sturt Stony Desert, Sturt National Park, Charles Sturt University, and TS Sturt – a Training Ship of the Australian Navy Cadets. He was born 28 April 1795 and died 16 June 1869 aged 74 years.

Photographs courtesy Andrew Patrick, principal of ZestforBirds.com, birdwatching tours around Sydney with experienced guide.



*Eastern Verandah*

The Story of Hambledon Cottage

The history of Hambledon Cottage is part of the Macarthur family story.

Following his return from political exile in 1817, John Macarthur turned his attention to the expansion of his family enterprises. Central to these activities was a building programme which included additions to his Parramatta home, Elizabeth Farm, and the erection of supplementary accommodation of the estate, then referred to as “the cottage on the plain” and now known as Hambledon Cottage.

With a shortage of bedrooms at Elizabeth Farm, Hambledon Cottage accommodated his children, grandchildren and close friends for varying periods from several days to many years.

Henry Kitchen, a young architect seeking patronage in the colony, completed designs for a building for Macarthur at Camden

which was described as a “small but extremely beautiful dwelling in the cottage fashion”. The design, which featured French windows opening onto a wide verandah leading to park-like garden, so impressed Macarthur that in 1820 he instructed Kitchen to prepare plans for a similar cottage to be erected on his Parramatta estate.

The final plans submitted carry the marginal note “cottage for Miss Lucas” suggesting the dwelling was ultimately intended for Penelope Lucas, governess to the Macarthur daughters. As a link with her former home in Hampshire, England, Penelope Lucas chose the name “Hambledon” for her Australian home.

Because of Kitchen’s premature death in 1821, Macarthur sought the professional help of Henry Cooper, a competent draughtsman. He was able to transfer Kitchen’s original and innovative designs into working plans for the building of the distinctive and elegant colonial Georgian style domestic bungalow which we now refer to as Hambledon Cottage.



Opening hours are from 11am, with the last tour at 3pm. General tours are held on Saturday and Sunday. Visits by Groups [15 or more] can be made by appointment on all days subject to Covid restrictions.

We are fully Covid compliant.

You can also enjoy a 360 degree Virtual Tour of the Cottage Museum by visiting

www.hambletoncottagemuseum.org.au

The virtual tour of the Hambleton cottage will give the visitor an authentic, 19th Century experience of the lifestyle that John Macarthur's family and friends once lived.

The Society has a range of historical books for sale, including 'The Cottage on the Plain - Hambleton Cottage 1824' for only \$5.



The Kitchen



The Dining Room

Hambleton Cottage wins Award!

Hambleton Cottage Museum & Parramatta & District Historical Society were successful in winning the prestigious award for their new website and 360° virtual reality tour in Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) IMAGinE annual awards in the Resilience & Innovation Award section for projects with a budget of \$10,000 or less.

The website was built in collaboration with Western Sydney University tourism students and has improved the appeal of the museum by providing online access to domestic and international visitors, and has significantly enhanced the Society's ability to promote Hambleton Cottage.

There were six other entrants - Australian Design Centre, Grafton Regional Gallery, Southern Highlands Artisans Collective, Sydney Living Museums, Tamworth Regional Gallery and Tweed Regional Museum.

All the other entrants have full-time staff whereas Hambleton Cottage Museum is represented by volunteers, which makes this a fantastic achievement for this fabulous Museum and Historical Society.



The Withdrawing Room



Ken Smith, Manager, Hambleton Cottage Museum



John Macarthur's
Hambledon Cottage
HOUSE MUSEUM

NEW!
360° VIRTUAL
TOUR NOW
AVAILABLE
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**DISCOVER REAL AUSTRALIAN
HISTORY**
where it happened!

**The Cottage is now open to the public
in accordance with
NSW Health Covid regulations**

Visit Hambledon Cottage website for an exciting 360
degree virtual view of the Cottage and its treasures.

**JOHN MACARTHUR'S HAMBLEDON COTTAGE
HOUSE MUSEUM**

Gregory Place, Parramatta. Ph: 9635 6924

www.hambledoncottagemuseum.org.au

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Female Factory Exhibition

