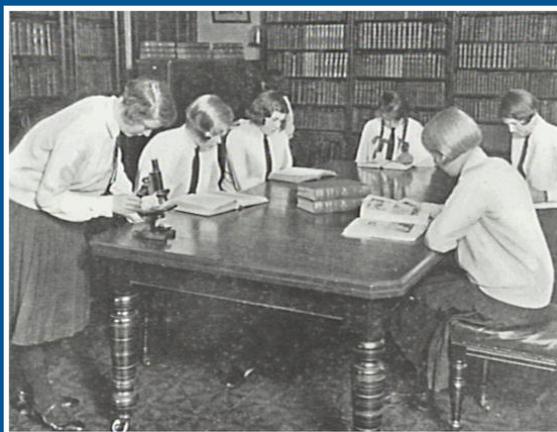


Blue Mountains Civic Education Kit

Information of interest to students and teachers about local government and in particular, Blue Mountains City Council.





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This kit was put together with information from the Local Government NSW Education material. This material, and more, is available on their website at www.lgnsw.org.au

More information about Blue Mountains City Council is available on Council's website www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au



01. About Blue Mountains City Council

Blue Mountains City Council is responsible for one of the largest local government areas in the world. The area comprises approximately 140,000 hectares (1,432 kms), 27 townships/villages and has a population of approx. 78,000.

History of Blue Mountains City Council

The inauguration of local government in the Blue Mountains commenced on 4 January 1889 when the Municipality of Katoomba was incorporated and in 1890 when the first Katoomba Council was formed.



Blue Mountains City Council c.1960s
Photo from Blue Mountains Image Library.

On 13 June 1906 the Kanimbla Shire Council was incorporated. This Council covered the major part of the Mountains, except for Katoomba.

On 14 December 1919 the separate Municipality of Blackheath was incorporated. For a long time there were three separate councils operating within the Blue Mountains, but it soon became necessary to form a County Council to supervise the distribution of electricity and water supplies in the area. On 1 July 1944 The Blue Mountains County Council was established. Other duties of the county council were the supervision and operation of sewerage schemes.

In May 1946 Katoomba was proclaimed a City. On 1 October 1947 the Municipality of Blackheath, the City of Katoomba and the Blue Mountains Shire Council, together with the Blue Mountains County Council, incorporated to become the Blue Mountains City Council.

Further changes took place on 1 January 1980 when the electricity function was transferred to Prospect County Council and on 1 July 1980 when the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Boards assumed responsibility for water supply and sewerage services in the City.

Further changes to the structure of local government and Blue Mountains City Council were made on 1 July 1993 when the NSW Local government Act took effect. This Act changed the responsibilities of the Mayor and Councillors and separated the functions more clearly from those of the General Manager. The new act forced local government to become more responsible and accountable. One of the significant changes was to place all senior staff on performance-based contracts.



Last Meeting held in Town Hall, Parke Street, Katoomba on 10th April 1962. *Photo from Blue Mountains Image Library.*

Blue Mountains City Council has 12 Councillors (including the Mayor who is elected by the Councillors) representing 4 wards within the City. The General Manager appoints the staff within Council.



02. Government - Who needs it?

Without government, life becomes very difficult.

Imagine living in a town where the garbage was not collected, roads were not maintained and there were no playgrounds, sports fields, schools, hospitals or libraries.

We depend on governments to take care of many of these things. Each local community is unique and all have different needs. Things that are important in your town may not be relevant in the next town, the next state or other parts of Australia.

That's why we have local government – to look after the needs of the local community and its people.

Three levels of government

In Australia, we have three levels of government to make decisions – Federal, State and Local. In all levels of government we have regular elections. These are held so that if people are not happy with decisions the current government is making, they have the opportunity to vote in another group of people to form a new government. The representatives we elect, for each of the three levels of government, make decisions on important matters and issues on our behalf, because it would be a very slow and expensive process for people to have to vote on every issue.

In the time between elections, groups and individuals will often be active in trying to convince governments to change suggested policies or create new policies if they are not happy with the current situation or outcome.

Our system of government is often described as being a democracy. To be precise, we are in fact a parliamentary democracy. Democracy means “ruled by the people”.

In Australia we have one national government, six state governments and over 700 local governments. In addition, we have two territory governments, the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory, which have similar roles as the state governments.

The national government is called the federal government and its job is to decide on matters which affect the whole country – things like foreign affairs, the defence forces, TV and telephone services. The leader of the national government is called the Prime Minister and the national government meets in the national capital, of Australia in Canberra at Parliament House.

Each state has its own government. The states are responsible for education, health, police railways, main roads, public housing. The leader of the state government is called the Premier and state governments meet in the capital city of their state; in NSW this is Sydney.

Local government is responsible for things like garbage collection, local roads, buildings, parks, libraries, childcare, youth services, social planning and the local environment. The leader of the Council is called the Mayor.



02. Government - Who needs it?

Why do we have three levels of government?

When European settlers came to Australia, the British established the Colony of New South Wales at Botany Bay.

Shortly after this, colonies in Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia were established. Originally the Colony of New South Wales was the whole of the east coast of Australia but later Victoria and Queensland became separate colonies.

During the 19th century, the six colonies won self-government. Following the British system of government, they established local governments. In New South Wales, most of the metropolitan councils and larger country towns were established between 1859 and the turn of the century.

As the colonies developed and increased in population, people began to recognise a growing number of areas of common concern. Issues such as trade between the colonies, the need for a common immigration policy, and the need to sort these issues out quickly and locally, led to a call for the young colonies to join together as the one nation.

After lengthy discussions involving the six colonies and the British Government, the Colonial Governments agreed to give up some of their powers, seen to be of common or national interest, to a new Federal Government. The Colonial Governments, at the time of Federation in 1901, became known as State Governments. The State Governments retained most of the powers they had as Colonial Governments including Local Government.



**Which Number goes with what level of government?
Can you match them correctly?**

State/Territory Parliamnets

Local Councils

Federal Parliament



03. How Local Government came into being

The first attempt to establish local government goes back as far as the 1840's when the councils of Sydney and Melbourne were both established. However, it was not until 1859 that the first general municipal (or local government) legislation was proclaimed in NSW.

Most metropolitan councils and councils of larger country towns were established between 1859 and 1900.

Rural areas of NSW (including some areas which have now become part of metropolitan Sydney and Newcastle) were not incorporated until 1906, when the first shires were established.

The present system, which covers all parts of the state, was established under the Local Governments Acts of 1906 and 1919 when the various pieces of existing legislation concerning local authorities were consolidated.

The expanding role of Councils has increased the demands on the financial and legal structures of Local Government.

Traditionally, the primary area of responsibility of councils was the provision and regulation of property related services. The major concern of the first local government authorities was to achieve an adequate system of roads and public sanitation.

Although these matters continue to be important, councils are now increasingly involved in a wide range of community, cultural and recreational services.

Today many local councils are major organisations in their own right.

State/Local Government Relations

Local Government is not specifically mentioned in the Constitution so it gets its authority from a State Government Act. The relevant State Government has ultimate power over all local councils in that State. In New South Wales this is the Local Government Act (1993). A total overhaul of this Act in 1993 resulted in extensive reforms to local government.

If Councils act within the provisions of the Local Government Act, the State Government is unlikely to interfere. But if things go wrong in an individual council, such as allegations of corruption or gross mismanagement, the State Government may dismiss the elected councillors and appoint an administrator to sort out the problem.

Under the Local Government Act (1993) and other State legislation, such as the Public Health Act, Environment Assessment and Planning Act, the Bushfire Act and the Dog Act, councils are empowered to look after local matters, such as local roads, footpaths, garbage collection, parks and gardens, libraries and swimming pools. Councils also have a planning and coordinating role in the provision of community services.



04. Types of Councils

In New South Wales, all local governments are called councils. Some are referred to as city councils, while others are called shires. Although shires are usually rural, some of Sydney's outer councils still retain the title shire, such as Sutherland and Hornsby Shires.

In all councils, elected representatives are called councillors and the elected leader of council is known as the Mayor. Council is usually divided into wards with a number of councillors representing each ward.

The Council meets in the council chambers or the town hall on a regular basis to discuss local issues and make decisions on behalf of the local community. Residents are allowed to come along and attend council meetings and address the Council on certain issues

County Councils and Regional Organisations

Some jobs are too big for one local council to do, but too small for the state or federal government to undertake.

Councils sometimes join together to get the job done. Sometimes they form a county council which can look at regional issues, such as water control or flood plans. Representatives are elected from local councils and headed by a chairperson. Often the county council will be formed for specific jobs, and will have no power beyond those jobs.

Sometimes councils join together to form a regional organization of Councils. These do not have any specific power but can be a good way for councils to get together to discuss regional issues which affect more than one council such as air pollution, job creation, insurance.

Wards

Some councils like Blue Mountains cover large areas and are separated into wards. In the Blue Mountains each ward has three elected Councillors to represent the people of that area.

Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4
Bell to Leura, Megalong & The Mounts	Wentworth Falls to Falconbridge/ Springwood	Falconbridge/ Springwood to Warimoo	Warimoo to Lapstone
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kerry Brown Kevin Schreiber Don McGregor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chris Van der Kley (Deputy Mayor) Romola Hollywood Brent Hoare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shae Foenander Mick Fell Daniel Myles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Greenhill (Mayor) Brendan Chrisite Darryl Bowling



05. At work in the Community

Blue Mountains City Council is one of the 152 Local Government Authorities in New South Wales. They all provide government of the local area by local people.

Originally, in New South Wales, the major responsibility of councils was constructing local roads and sanitation. As the local communities grew so did the demand for additional local services. Local councils took on an expanded role in providing services to meet the needs of the local community. Today these areas include recreational, social, cultural and environmental matters.

Blue Mountains City Council Services at a glance:

Looking After Environment

- Natural Environment
- Waste Resource Management
- Water Resource Management

Using Land

- Burial and Ashes Placement
- Building Certification
- Land Use Management
- Town Centres

Moving Around

- Transport and Public Access

Looking After People

- Aquatic and Leisure Centres
- Community Development
- Cultural Development
- Emergency Management
- Environmental Health & Regulatory Compliance
- Family Day Care

- Libraries and Information

- Sport and Recreation

Sustainable Economy

- Economic Development & Tourism
- Commercial Activities

Civic Leadership-Good Governance

- Administrative Property Portfolio
- Asset Planning
- Central Warehousing and Purchasing
- City-wide Strategic Planning
- Corporate Communications and Marketing
- Corporate Strategic Planning and Reporting
- Customer Service
- Finance Management
- Fleet
- Governance and Risk
- Information Solutions
- People and Safety



Blue Mountains City Council also manages, to support the provision of services, over \$1 billion worth of assets and facilities.

This includes:

- 27 towns and villages
- 2 waste resource management facilities
- 1 dam
- 300km of water ways
- 665km sealed roads
- 120km unsealed roads
- 34 bridges
- 73,000 sqm of sealed car parks
- 523 km kerb and gutter
- 153km stormwater pipes
- 175km footpaths
- 105 parks
- 66 playing courts
- 5 swim leisure centres
- 5 skate parks
- 15 halls including 5 community centres
- 12 child care buildings
- 6 libraries
- 126 bus shelters
- 189 litter bins
- 493km kerbs & gutter
- 7,935 drainage pits
- 120km walking tracks
- 35 playing fields at 22 sportsgrounds
- 31 RFS & SES buildings
- 300 bushfire asset protection zones
- 88 public toilets
- 9 cemeteries

Building control and preservation

Plans for all new buildings must be approved by Council to make sure they are safe and well built and comply with all regulations. Anyone who wants to build, or alter, a house or building must first get approval from Council.

If a building is of historical importance the person wanting to make alterations must comply with Council and the NSW Heritage Council regulations. In this way Councils can help save historic buildings.

Councils also inspect buildings at each stage of construction to make sure the work is being done properly.

Council areas also have different zonings so that factories are not built next to people's houses and the environment is protected.

06. Making decisions

Councils do a lot of different things to keep the local area running. The elected Councillors do not do these things themselves; they do not maintain parks or build roads. Their job is to make decision about what work should be done and when it should be done by.

They must take into consideration all the things that need to be done in the community, how much money the Council has to spend and work out what things have priority. The Councillors are there to represent the views of the community.

The main duties of elected Councillors are:

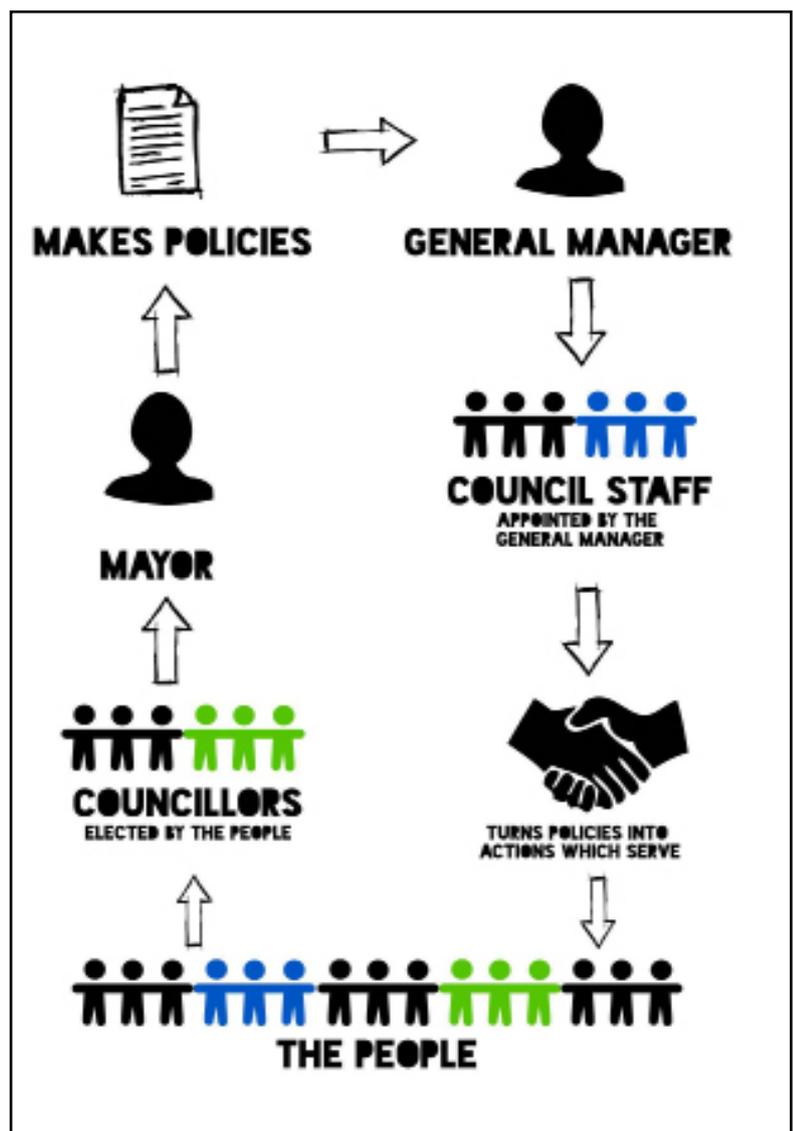
- To make decisions about the running of the community and the Council
- To listen to the problems and ideas of local people and take those ideas to the rest of Council.

With some issues, groups in the community may actively try to convince council to make a particular decision. For example, bicycle users might want bike paths made or a group of residents may be concerned about plans to remove some trees. These groups are called Pressure Groups. Some are highly organised, permanent groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, while others are less formal; forming over a particular issue then disbanding once the matter is resolved.

Each year, the councillors elect one councillor to be the Mayor. The Mayor presides over council meetings and represents the Council at formal functions. The Mayor makes sure that the general manager and council staff carry out council decisions.

Councillors are not paid a salary but receive an annual allowance to help cover expenses in fulfilling their role on the Council. They generally carry out their council duties in addition to their full time job in the workforce and/or commitments at home.

Council staff provide reports to the Council to assist Councillors in their decision making. For example, the council's engineers have the expertise to provide information on which roads require maintenance work, the cost of this work in the current financial year and how much more it could cost if this work is delayed.



07. Looking after the Community

Local councils are concerned with directly helping members of the community. They do this by protecting public health and providing community services and recreational and cultural facilities.

Community Services

Councils can provide services especially for their residents. These include:

- Running baby health centres, child care centres, play centres
- Providing meals on wheels for elderly and sick people
- Providing housing and organizing activities for elderly people
- Providing drop in centres and activities for young people

Working with other government agencies to plan and provide services

Recreation and culture

Councils provide and run a number of places which help people living in the community, and visitors to the community, enjoy their free time. Blue Mountains City Council runs libraries, sports centers, swimming pools and maintains parks and sports fields for the community.

As well council provides community halls or buildings for locals to use for meetings, and supports local arts and cultural events such as festivals, galleries.

Council also provides information to visitors to the area through the tourist information centers at Glenbrook and Katoomba and through the Blue Mountains Tourist Authority.

Public health

Council makes sure that we all stay healthy by:

- Destroying rats and vermin
- Making sure public buildings, restaurants and shops are clean
- Providing public toilets
- Registering pets and collecting strays
- Protecting the environment

Business Community

Councils can support local business by supporting business networks, cleaning and maintaining shopping areas and promoting the area to visitors. This support of business can help create jobs in the region for local residents.



08. Doing the Work

To carry out the decisions made by the councillors, and council, who is one of the largest employers in the Blue Mountains, employs a number of staff.

Blue Mountains City Council has around 500 staff members whose duties range from administrative services, street cleaning, construction workers, health inspectors, mechanics, engineers, child care workers and life guards just to name a few of the things that council officers do.

Each council employs a General Manager who runs the council and makes sure that council decisions are turned into actions.

The General Manager is responsible for:

- employing all other council staff
- ensuring all the money council receives and spends is accounted for
- making sure council records are properly kept
- making sure the Councillors receive accurate and expert advice from council officers

Examples of the different types of work council officers do, include:

- All councils employ engineering staff who are responsible for public works such as roads, bridges, parks and special projects.
- Environmental health surveyors look after public health and make sure the environment is clean and safe. They inspect shops and businesses to make sure they are following health regulations.
- Local government planners make sure that development occurs in an orderly way by keeping activities (such as houses and factories) separate. They prepare plans setting out what building and activities can take place, and where. They work with building surveyors, who approve building applications and check construction to make sure that building rules are followed.
- Council employs youth officers, recreation officers and community liaison officers, as well as child care workers, librarians, education officers, garbage collectors, gardeners and road workers.
- Council also has planners who can talk to the community to find out what the residents would like in the area and where they see their community in the future.

All these people work together to provide the day-to-day services that council provides and to help work out what services the community will need in the future.



09. Meetings and committees

Council meetings

Councillors have regular meetings to make decisions about what council staff should do and what should happen in their area (or wards).

Most Council meetings are open to the public and Blue Mountains City Council provides the agenda for the meeting to the public before the meeting. It is available on Council's website, in the libraries and at Council office's.

This gives residents the chance to see what will be discussed at the meetings, and to see if they would be interested in coming along to the meeting, if there is something of interest or that will affect them.

The Mayor chairs the meeting and the General Manager and council staff are there to provide more detailed advice to the councillors if needed.

There are detailed rules about how Council meetings are run and what records must be kept. The decisions made at the council meeting are recorded in the council "minutes". These are then made available to the public.

Members of the public may make an address at a Council meeting on issues that concern them. There are some limits as to how many people may talk on each subject and for how long they can speak. Generally it is three members of the public that may speak for three minutes each on each item on the Council agenda.

Council committees

It would take too much time at Council meetings to discuss the details of everything that Council is doing in the community. For that reason Councillors form committees to deal with specific issues, for example one may deal with financial issues, while another may deal with the revitalization of the town centre. Sometimes special committees are formed to deal with a particular matter that is concerning the community.

Committees generally make recommendations to a full Council meeting where a final decision on the issue will be made. This system helps councils get through the large amount of work they have to do.



10. Elections

The people who live in or own property in each local government area can choose who they want to represent them on their local council.

The state government makes the rules about how and when council elections are held. Elections are held every 4 years in NSW. A returning officer, who is appointed by the state government electoral office, runs them.

There are four main stages to electing a new council – nominating, campaigning, voting and vote counting.

1. Nominations

The first stage is to call for nominations, which the returning officer does by advertising in the local paper with information about how people can stand for election.

Anyone who is allowed to vote can stand for election. They must be nominated (have the written support) of two other people in the community. A person standing for election is called a candidate.

2. Campaigning

The candidates must convince the voters that they should be elected to council. They also want to let the voters know what they “stand for” – what their position is on certain issues and what they will do for the community when they are elected.

They can do this by:

- Media stories and advertisements
- House to house visits
- Public meetings
- Pamphlets
- Talking to clubs and societies

3. Voting

All residents must vote if:

- They are 18 or over
- An Australian citizen
- have lived in the area for at least three months

People who own property in the area can vote in council elections even if they live somewhere else as long as they notify the council beforehand.

On Election Day each voter goes to the polling booth and is given a ballot paper which lists the names of all candidates in the election. The voter must mark the paper with numbers.

4. Counting the votes

When the polls close the votes are counted to determine the new council. The results are formally announced by the returning officer and published in the media.



11. How do we pay for all the work?

There are four main ways councils get the money to pay for the things they do.

Rates

Most of Council's incomes come from taxes on land – these are called rates.

Everyone who owns land, houses or other properties must pay rates to the council. The amount they pay each year depends on the value of their land. The amount paid by the owner of a flat would be less than the amount paid by the owner of a large property.

However rates do not have to be paid on all land. The state and federal governments do not pay rates on the land they own, nor do charities, churches, schools or local hospitals.

Charges & Levies

Another way council collects money is by charging a fee for some of the services they provide. Councils do not include the cost of collecting garbage in their rates – this is a separate charge.

You may have noticed that you are charged to take rubbish to the tip, to swim at the local pool or to use the council run sports centre. You are also required to pay for building inspections and to register your cat or dog.

These charges help council pay for the services it provides.

Grants

Councils sometimes get money from the state or federal government in the form of grants. A grant is a sum of money which is given to be used for a particular purpose.

Every council is given a yearly grant from the federal government and the council can decide how to spend this money in its district.

Other grants may be for specific projects and cannot be used for anything else. For example a grant to fix a road could not be used to buy books for the library.

Loans

Councils can also borrow money for major projects if they cannot afford to pay for them all at once. The council must eventually pay this money back, with interest.



12. The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area

On 29 November 2000 the Greater Blue Mountains was announced as Australia's 14th World Heritage Area. The Greater Blue Mountains Area was nominated for its outstanding natural values, including the biodiversity of its plant and animal communities, its vegetation dominated by Australia's unique eucalypts and for the unmatched beauty of its natural landscapes.

The World Heritage Area listing of the one million hectare Greater Blue Mountains area:

- Grants international recognition of Australia's eucalypt forests and other sclerophyll (hard leaved) vegetation.
- Includes the largest protected, most intact, sclerophyll forest wilderness remaining within a broad range of temperate climates.
- Provides an exceptional living example of evolution of the modern Australian flora, to its present distinctive character in the classic Australian circumstances of low fertility soils, a drying climate and geographic isolation which is one of the great stories of the evolution of the earth's plant cover.

The listed property is made up of seven outstanding National Parks as well as the famous Jenolan Caves Karst Conservation Reserve. These include Blue Mountains, Wollemi, Yengo, Nattai, Kanangra-Boyd, Gardens of Stone and Thirlmere Lakes National Parks.

World Heritage - What does it mean?

World Heritage sites belong to all peoples in the world. Sites have been selected for World Heritage after they have been carefully assessed as to whether they represent outstanding examples of cultural, natural and / or mixed cultural and natural criteria.

All three tiers of government, and the community at large, supported the Blue Mountains World Heritage nomination. The World Heritage Committee was unanimous in supporting the nomination.

For more information go to www.bmwhi.org.au.



13. Councillors Contact Details

Ward 1 – Bell to Laura, Megalong Valley & the Mounts

BROWN, Kerry	Mobile: 0414 195 980 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: kbrown@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
McGREGOR, Don	Mobile: 0434 306 143 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: dmcgregor@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
SCHREIBER, Kevin	Mobile: 0431 501 981 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: kschreiber@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 2 - Wentworth Falls to Faulconbridge/Springwood

HOARE, Brent	Mobile: 0431 501 984 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: bhoare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
HOLLYWOOD, Romola	Mobile: 0414 195 983 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: rhollywood@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
VAN DER KLEY, Chris (DEPUTY MAYOR)	Mobile: 0427 805 810 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: cvanderkley@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 3 – Faulconbridge/Springwood to Valley Heights

FELL, Mick	Mobile: 0414 195 991 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: mfell@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
FOENANDER, Shae	Mobile: 0414 195 986 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: sfoenander@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
MYLES, Daniel	Mobile: 0414 418 161 PO Box 455 SPRINGWOOD NSW 2777 Email: dmyles@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Ward 4 - Warrimoo to Lapstone

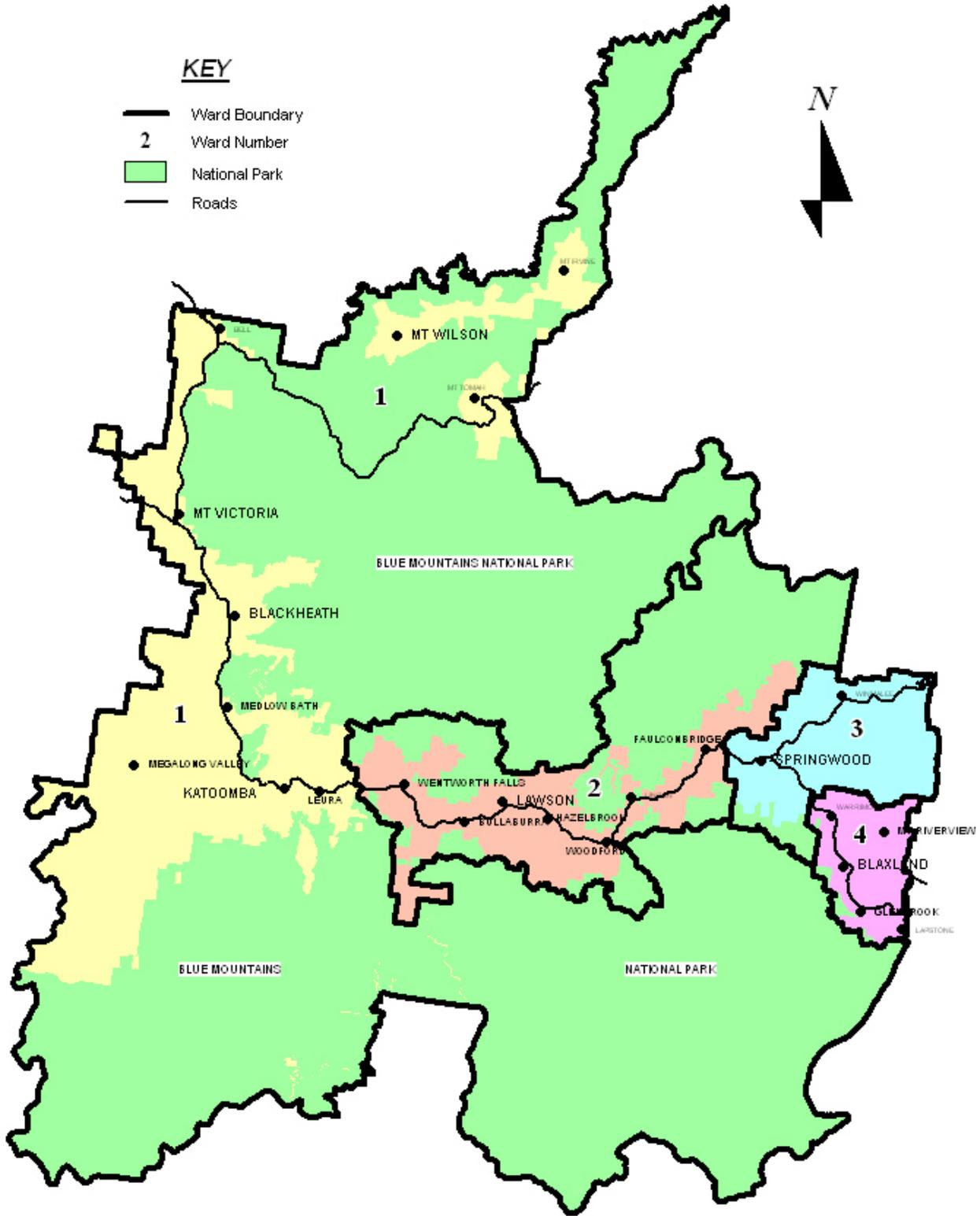
GREENHILL, Mark (MAYOR)	Mobile: 0414 195 990 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: mgreenhill@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
BOWLING, Darryl	Mobile: 0414 195 989 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: dbowling@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
CHRISTIE, Brendan	Mobile: 0423 565 988 Locked Bag 1005 KATOOMBA NSW 2780 Email: bchristie@bmcc.nsw.gov.au



14. Ward Boundaries

City of Blue Mountains

Ward Boundaries



15. Blue Mountains Towns and Villages

Lapstone (160m). The name “Lapstone Hill” was in use from at least the 1820s and derives from the shape of numerous water worn stones in the area which were once a part of the bed of the ancient Nepean River. To road workers and travellers they resembled the lap stones used by cobblers. In 1822 Mrs Elizabeth Hawkins, on her way to Bathurst, wrote: “We now began our ascent up the first Lapstone Hill, so called from all the stones being like a cobbler’s lapstone.” It was not until 1964, with the subdivision of Arthur Hand’s estate, that a railway station was established with the name Lapstone.

Glenbrook (164m). The origin of this name goes back to 1818 when Sir John Jamison, while exploring the Nepean and Warragamba Rivers, named a tributary Glen Brook (now Glenbrook Creek). When the railway was built across the Blue Mountains the location became known as Watertank, a stopping place for the steam engines to draw water from the nearby lagoon. When a crossing loop was established here in 1874 (for trains to pass on the single line) the name was changed to Wascoe’s Siding and later still, with the addition of a passenger platform in 1878, to Brookdale. The name Glenbrook was given in 1879 and the Village of Glenbrook was proclaimed in 1885.

Blaxland (234m). This area at the junction of the first three roads up the eastern escarpment was first referred to by the name of the inn, The Pilgrim, which was established here in the late 1820s. When a platform was built here on the arrival of the railway in 1867 it became known as Wascoe’s after the licensee of the inn, John Outrim Wascoe. The name of Blaxland was assigned in 1879, in memory of the explorer Gregory Blaxland who led the expedition which found a route across the Blue Mountains in 1813.

Mount Riverview (270m). Land in this area did not go up for public sale until 1920. One of the early purchasers was Bernard Francis Cummins who appears to have named his property Mount Riverview. In 1931 he erected a lookout in a tree on his property which he advertised as the Mount Riverview Lookout. For a small fee tourists could climb the ladder to the lookout platform and obtain an expansive view of the Nepean River and beyond. Near the lookout Cummins also ran a tearoom and an art gallery. All three, as well as his residence, were destroyed by bushfire in December 1944. In the early 1950s an attempt was made to establish a settlement for ex-servicemen promoted as the Mount Riverview Village. Further independent subdivisions followed. The name Mount Riverview was not officially gazetted, however, until April 1964.

Warrimoo (273m). In 1881 a small timber railway platform was built approximately 500 metres west of the present railway station. This meant to serve a new Richardson & Wrench subdivision named Karabar Estate. By the end of 1897 lack of patronage led to the closure of the Karabar platform. When the railway line was duplicated in 1902 an emergency loop and signal box was placed at Karabar but later removed during regrading work in 1913. When Arthur Rickard & Co. subdivided this area the present railway station was built (1918) and took its name from the subdivision - Warrimoo, an Aboriginal word (not local) meaning “eagle”.

Sun Valley (321m). The area known as Sun Valley lies between Warrimoo and Valley Heights in the lower mountains and has a wealth of historical and geological significance. Dating from the early Jurassic period, this extinct volcanic vent was inhabited by local Aborigines for thousands of years. Dharug and Gundungurra people were thought to have originally crossed and occupied the area. Stone artefacts and cave art have been found in the valley.



Sun Valley, named so in the 1960's to coincide with the residential subdivision, has also over time been known as The Valley, Fitzgerald's Valley, Valley Flats and Deane's Valley and was used in the 1800's as a vital stopover for explorers crossing the Great Dividing Range. The creeks, rich soil, open forest and native grassland environment was ideal for the farming, grazing and logging conducted in these times.

The valley was once roamed by wild brumbies and is renowned for its magnificent stands of mountain blue gum trees, pretty setting and walking tracks in and around Long Angle Gully and the historical "Warrimoo Pool" site. European relics dating back to the early 1800's are known to exist around the mountains. In the mid 1900's the area was heavily used by bushwalking clubs and scout groups. To this day Sun Valley remains a small, semi-rural community incorporating a pony club, a local produce store and supporting a vital fire trail system used to protect the area.

Valley Heights (322m). William Cox referred in 1815 to "The Valley" as a suitable site for watering and feeding stock. By 1832 it had been designated as a resting place for stock and was known as Fitzgerald's Valley (possibly after Richard Fitzgerald who Governor Macquarie had appointed Superintendent of the agricultural farm at Emu Plains in 1819). Above the valley on the Western Road an inn was opened in 1831 under the name The Valley Inn (later known as The Woolpack and The Welcome Inn). With the arrival of the railway the inn closed and was sold to the Hon. Geoffrey Eagar MLA. A railway platform was opened as Eagar's Platform in 1875. This became The Valley in 1877 and Valley Heights in 1880. A steam locomotive depot operated here from 1913 until the electrification of the railway line in 1957. The actual valley itself is now known as Sun Valley.

Springwood (371m). This location was named by Governor Lachlan Macquarie when he camped here on his outward journey over Cox's new road in April 1815. He wrote in his journal: "We then halted at three o'clock in a very pretty wooded plain near a spring of very good fresh water, and pitched our tent near the side of the road ... The place being very pretty I have named it Spring-Wood." In 1816 a military depot was established near the site of this camp. When the military presence was eventually withdrawn in the early 1840s, Thomas Boland built the Springwood Inn. During the period of the military stockade and Boland's Inn, Springwood was a popular stopping place for travelers along the Western Road and, particularly during the gold rush which began in the early 1850s, became at times a huge encampment of tents etc. Following the construction of the railway, Springwood became popular with the wealthy citizens of Sydney as a place to build their country homes.

Winmalee (310m). This area was originally known as North Springwood until, in 1969, the Geographical Names Board made the decision to seek a new name. As the result of a community competition the name Winmalee was chosen and became official in 1972. The word is said to be of Aboriginal origin (not local) and to mean "in a northerly direction".

Yellow Rock (235m). Yellow Rock is a small town adjacent to Winmalee in the city of Blue Mountains local government area. The name derives from the rich yellow sandstone common in the area. The reserve was gazetted in 1891 and the suburb name was assigned by the Geographical Names Board in 1971.

The first home of the area was built by Mr Holyer Fog on Yellow Rock Road in 1929, it was spared in the 1978 bushfires but now only the chimney remains. The village of Yellow Rock has a Rural Fire Service station which is a satellite station to Winmalee Rural Fire Brigade; and a Greek Orthodox monastery.

Yellow Rock was heavily impacted by the 2013 bushfires. When high temperatures, low humidity and strong winds unleashed the firestorm on October 17th, it was one of the towns to pay the highest toll in



the aftermath of the bushfires. The fire spread over 3,500 hectares (8,600 acres), primarily in Winmalee and Yellow Rock and nearby bushland, completely destroyed 193 houses and partially damaged approximately 200 more. Yellow Rock has since flourished, the community has come together and the friendships are stronger.

Hawkesbury Heights(264). Hawkesbury Heights is one of the smallest towns within the Blue Mountains. It shares the same postcode as Springwood and Winmalee but received its own name in the mid 80's. At the 2011 census, Hawkesbury Heights had a population of 451 people.

The name derives from Hawkesbury Road being the main access road, and in turn from Sir Charles Jenkinson, Baron Hawkesbury, president of the Council of Trade and Plantations in England in 1788. In 1982 Blue Mountains City Council carried out a poll to rename the area, previously known as North Springwood. It was gazetted as a locality within the local government area of the Blue Mountains City Council on 9 January 2004.

The suburb reaches a height of 264 metres above sea level, and the height changes abruptly to the east where the Hawkesbury-Springwood Road cuts a pass, including at the top the Hawkesbury lookout with picnic and toilet facilities. Hawkesbury Heights also offers a newly rebuilt youth hostel also known as the North Springwood Youth Hostel and the area contains a Flora & Fauna Reserve. From Hawkesbury lookout there is a winding drive down the escarpment which regularly experiences falling rocks and has been extensively rock-bolted and stabilised by Blue Mountains City Council.

At the foot of the descent to the left hand side a short distance into the bush is a hidden attraction. Evidence of the Darug tribe who inhabited the area in ages past can be seen through aboriginal art carved into a large, flat rock surface adjacent to Shaws Creek. Remarkably preserved today is the ancient rock carving known as "the flight of the Great Grey Kangaroo".

The southeast of the suburb contains a portion of the Yellomundee Regional Park. Winmalee Rural Fire Brigade covers much of this area and conducts regular training at the lookout and surrounding areas.

Falconbridge (446m). Sir Henry Parkes bought 600 acres of land here in 1876 and named his residence Falconbridge, the maiden name of his mother. A railway platform with this name was built to service his needs in 1877. Parkes, his first wife and two of his sons are buried in the cemetery he established here.

Linden (526m). This location was originally known as Seventeen Mile Hollow. A toll house and turnpike gates were erected here in 1849. The toll keeper, Thomas Ellison, acquired some 5 acres of land adjacent to the toll bar and built an inn here in 1857. The toll-house, gates and inn were all demolished during the railway works of the mid-1860s. In 1874 a railway platform was constructed here and took its name from the nearby Linden House, a private residence only recently erected by businessman William Henderson.

Woodford (609m). This location was first referred to as Twenty Mile Hollow. In the early 1830s an inn called The Woodman was opened. During the 1840s this inn became known as The King's Arms and, when its last licensee William Buss took over in 1855, it was popularly referred to as Buss's Inn. When the railway arrived in 1867 the first station also took the name of this popular publican. However, the inn was soon sold to Alfred Fairfax, a Sydney jeweller, who converted it into a private residence and renamed it Woodford House. The railway station was renamed Woodford in 1871. Woodford House eventually became the Woodford Academy, a private school for boys. It is now in the hands of the National Trust.



Hazelbrook (674m). In the 1870s a private residence, Hazelbrook House (no longer in existence), was built by Edward Higgs on the south side of the railway line. When a railway station was opened opposite it in 1884 the name Hazelbrook was adopted. There is a popular view, unsubstantiated by other than oral evidence, that Hazelbrook House took its name from a “Hazel Brook” flowing in the area that in turn got its name from “hazel-like trees” growing nearby.

Lawson (732m). This location appears in early references as The Swamp or Christmas Swamp and, in the 1830s, as Twenty Four Mile Hollow. Following the opening of Henry Wilson’s Blue Mountain Inn in the mid-1840s the area became popularly known as Blue Mountain, a name adopted by the railway when a station was opened here in 1867. The name of the town and its railway station was changed to Lawson in 1879 in honour of William Lawson, the explorer.

Bullaburra (769m). Much of the land here was originally owned by Sir Henry Parkes who named the locality The Village of Colridge. In the 1920s Arthur Rickard & Co. opened a large subdivision here and gave it the name of Bullaburra, an Aboriginal (not local) word said to mean “blue sky” or “fine weather”. The railway station opened with this name in 1925.

Wentworth Falls (867m). In May 1815 William Cox, while building a road over the Blue Mountains, erected a “weatherboard hut” as a supply depot here. Subsequently, the locality became popularly known as The Weatherboard and that name was adopted by the inn which opened here in the mid-1820s (though its official name appears to have been The Bathurst Traveller until at least the mid-1840s). A mounted police station was also located here from the early 1830s until 1855. A railway station was opened as Weatherboard in 1867 and, along with the township that gradually grew around it, was given the name of Wentworth Falls in 1879 in honour of William Charles Wentworth, the explorer.

Leura (985m). It is said that William Eyre, who subdivided this area at the end of the 1880s, intended to call the township Lurline after his daughter. However, when the railway station was opened in 1891 it was given the name of Leura. At the end of 1892 the prestigious Leura Coffee Palace (later to become The Ritz) opened for business. It has also been suggested that “leura” is an Aboriginal word which describes the “volcanic” geology of the area.

Katoomba (1,017m). Early names given to this location include William’s Chimney and Collett’s Swamp, their origins unknown. From the mid-1830s there was also The Shepherd & His Flock Inn near Pulpit Hill to the west of present day Katoomba, where Louisa Meredith spent “a tolerable night’s rest” on her way to Bathurst in 1839. With the arrival of the railway a platform was opened here in 1874 as The Crushers, the name referring to a nearby quarry operating to supply ballast for the railway line. Goods trains also made The Crushers a regular stop in order to adjust their loads before the run down to Penrith. The name Katoomba replaced The Crushers in 1877, just prior to the opening of the Katoomba Coal Mine. Katoomba is said to be Aboriginal in origin, deriving from a Gundungurra word meaning “falling waters” which was probably applied by the indigenous people to all the waterfalls in the Katoomba/Wentworth Falls area that drained into the Jamison and Kedumba Valleys. Katoomba achieved municipality status in 1889, becoming the first local government area in the Blue Mountains.

Medlow Bath (1,050m). The location here of Brown’s Sawmill saw the first railway platform opened here in 1880 as Brown’s Siding, Pulpit Hill. This was changed to Medlow in 1883 to avoid confusion with another Brown’s Siding near Lithgow. The origin of the name Medlow is uncertain, the argument coming down to it being either a corruption of the Aboriginal word for Megalong or a borrowing of the name of a small town in the north of England. In any event, the name was changed again in 1903 when the addition of Bath was made to distinguish it from another Medlow in NSW and



to mark the imminent opening of Mark Foy's grand Hydropathic Bath. In the early 1900s Foy purchased three properties on the cliff edge, including the Belgravia Hotel, and incorporated them into the complex known still as the Hydro Majestic.

Blackheath (1,025m). The location of Blackheath was named by Governor Macquarie while returning from the west in 1815. On his way out he had given it the name Hounslow, after Hounslow Heath in England, but reconsidering, he wrote in his journal: "This place having a black wild appearance I have this day named it Black-Heath." In the early 1830s Andrew Gardiner opened The Scotch Thistle Inn and in the 1840s a convict stockade was established here. A railway platform was opened in 1869. Blackheath was proclaimed a village in 1885 and achieved municipal status in 1919.

Shipley (1,025m). The plateau was named by Robert Smith Longton who took up land there in 1892. He named it after his birthplace near Bradford in Yorkshire, England. Shipley is famous for its orchards.

Megalong Valley (578m). The name Megalong is of Aboriginal origin, said to mean roughly "valley under the rock". The valley, first surveyed in 1838, was settled long before the railway crossed the Blue Mountains, the pioneers travelling up from the districts of Burragorang and Camden. In the 1880s, with the opening of the Six Foot Track from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves and the development of shale mining, the population at the Katoomba end of the valley increased and a small mining township grew up at the base of Nellie's Glen. When the Megalong Valley Road opened in 1897 and mining operations began to peter out, the orientation of the valley community shifted to Blackheath.

Mount Victoria (1,064m). This name was given by Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell to the mountain down which his Pass of Victoria was constructed in 1832. His surveyors also marked the highest point in the area which appeared on Mitchell's map as One Tree Hill. In 1849 a toll bar was erected about a mile and a half to the east of Victoria Pass at a spot called Broughton's Waterhole, a popular camping site for travellers and stock from the earliest days of the road. The toll bar cottage still exists. Though the railway platform erected in 1869 bore the name of Mount Victoria, the use of both One Tree Hill and Mount Victoria for the location caused confusion until the 1880s when official preference for the latter triumphed.

Bell (1,067m). A railway platform was opened here in 1875 with the name Mount Wilson. This was changed to Bell in 1889, in honour of Archibald Bell Jnr., of Richmond Hill, who discovered a route over Mount Tomah to the Cox's River in 1823. This alternative route across the Blue Mountains became known as Bell's Line of Road.

Mount Wilson (1,009m). This location was surveyed by W. R. Govett in 1833. However, it was not until after 1867, when it was rediscovered by George Bartley Bowen and subsequently surveyed and subdivided by Edward Sanford Wyndham of the Government Survey Department, that the area was settled. In 1868 the Deputy Surveyor-General P. F. Adams, while visiting the survey camp, named the area Mount Wilson after the Minister for Lands John Bowie Wilson. The lots did not sell quickly until the opening of the Mount Wilson railway platform in 1875, within twelve months of which all the original blocks were sold.

It is claimed that those responsible for naming the mountain beyond Mount Wilson in the late 1860s mistakenly gave it this name in the belief that it was located within the parish of Irvine. It is actually in the parish of Bilpin. Another theory suggests that the name was given in honour of John Bowie Wilson, Minister for Lands at the time, who was born at Irvine in Ayrshire, Scotland, in 1820. Mount Irvine was not settled until 1897, when Charles Robert Scrivener, Basil Knight-Brown and Harold Morley each took



up land there.

Mount Irvine (789m).

Information coming soon.

Mount Tomah (1,000m). Mount Tomah is a locality and a mountain located in the Blue Mountains region of state of New South Wales, Australia. The locality is known for the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden on the Bells Line of Road. The village of Mount Tomah is located approximately 40 kilometres west of Richmond, on the Bells Line of Road.

The Darug Aboriginal people were the original owners of the land and 'Tomah' is an Aboriginal word for 'tree fern'. The mountain is thought to have special significance to the local Aboriginal people and there are many signs of occupation around the springs, rainforest and associated sandstone cliffs.

In 1804, naturalist and explorer George Caley became the first European to visit Fern Tree Hill, now known as Mount Tomah. In 1823, Archibald Bell, with Aboriginal guides, found the route across the northern Blue Mountains now known as Bells Line of Road. He was followed later that year by botanist Allan Cunningham (Superintendent of the Sydney Botanic Gardens 1837-1838).

In 1830, Susannah Bowen received the area's first land grant. The property was later used for dairying and as cattle resting paddocks. Three sawmills also operated, milling coachwood (*Ceratopetalum apetalum*), sassafras (*Doryphora sassafras*) and brown barrel (*Eucalyptus fastigata*). These species still dominate the rainforest sections of the mountain.

In 1934, the French-born horticulturist Alfred Brunet and his Australian wife Effie acquired the property now occupied by the Botanic Garden. They operated a cut-flower farm to supply Sydney florists, specialising in bulbs and other cool-climate plants. In the early 1960s, the Brunets proposed to donate their land at Mount Tomah as an annex of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney. They presented the land for Mount Tomah Botanic Garden in 1972. With State and Commonwealth Bicentennial funds for development, the Garden opened to the public on 1 November 1987.

Berambing (757m). Berambing is a small village in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, Australia. The village sits on the Bells Line of Road, between Windsor and Lithgow, 10 kilometres west of Bilpin. It is situated across both the City of Hawkesbury and City of Blue Mountains local government areas. The settlement had a population of 28 people at the 2011 census.

It is known for its lush apple, nuts and stone fruit orchards. The peace and natural beauty of the area attract many visitors to stay at the many local holiday rest retreats and bed & breakfast establishments. It is in close proximity to the Mount Tomah Botanic Garden and the Wollemi and Blue Mountains



national parks.

The area was first visited by Europeans in November 1804 when George Caley, the explorer and botanist, camped nearby during his unsuccessful attempt to cross the Blue Mountains. The area has had European settlement since at least 1832 when the property 'Bulgamatta' was established; now the location of the Chapel Hill Retreat.

During the mid-nineteenth century Bells Line of Road was a busy thoroughfare for herds of sheep and cattle being driven to the Sydney markets.

Well known children's author, Hesba Fay Brinsmead, was born in Berambing in 1922 and her upbringing in the area inspired much of the background for her books. Her popular "Longtime" trilogy was set in the area and based on her experiences as a child/teenager.

Reference: Blue Mountains Local Studies.



Blue Mountains Towns & Villages

words go in all directions



Bell
Blaxland
Glenbrook
Katoomba
Leura
Megalong Valley
Mount Tomah
Shiplay
Valley Heights
Winmalee

Berambing
Bullaburra
Hawkesbury Heights
Lapstone
Linden
Mount Irvine
Mount Victoria
Springwood
Warrimoo
Woodford

Blackheath
Falconbridge
Hazelbrook
Lawson
Medlow Bath
Mount Riverview
Mount Wilson
Sun Valley
Wentworth Falls
Yellow Rock

