



August 2025 Newsletter

Edition No 211

HAWKESBURY WINTER YULEFEST 2 DAY TOUR 19 – 20 JULY 2025

Hans – Our Driver/Guide



SATURDAY - MORNING TEA

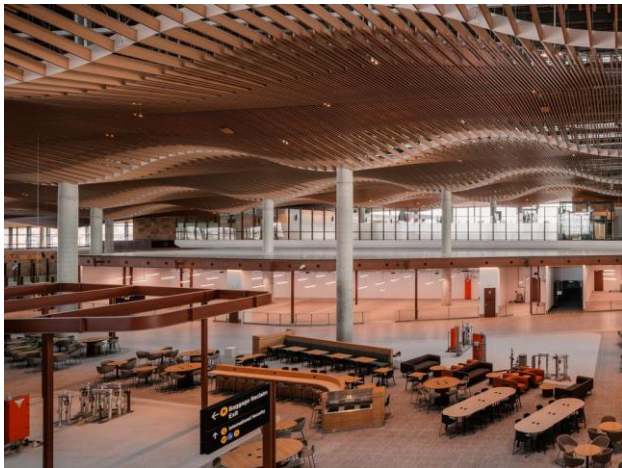


Fruit Cake cooked especially for us by
Margaret Ayre



WESTERN SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT





Construction of Sydney's second airport is almost complete and testing is underway. This is Australia's first "smart" airport.

When the new airport — formally named Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport (WSI) — opens in late 2026, it won't have a traditional air traffic control tower on site. Airspace controllers will instead be stationed at a data centre almost 20-kilometres away from where the planes are landing.

This facility, announced by Airservices Australia this week, will be the country's first major airport to operate without a traditionally manned tower. Aviation experts say it's a significant leap in Australia's technology and safety protocols.

Traditionally, airspace controllers were able to look out a control tower window near the tarmac and observe the movement of aircraft on the aerodrome. Nicole Lewis, the senior operations adviser for WSI, said for Sydney's newest airport, crews will monitor live feeds from an Eastern Creek data centre.

"What we are doing is placing a 45-metre mast with 20 cameras on top," she said. "Sixteen cameras in an array will see 360 [degrees] around the aerodrome and then four cameras on top will pan, tilt and zoom on anything they need to." All camera detections will be projected onto screens as a Digitised Aerodrome Service (DAS) at Eastern Creek.

Ms Lewis said each aircraft will be labelled on the screens with its call sign, altitude and speed, giving crews greater situational awareness. "That will enhance their ability to see items in low light such as debris on the runway or they'll be able to spot the aircraft further out," she said. "So, in most regards, [the technology] is better than what we have now."

Is it safe?

Ms Lewis said people could be assured this is a safe, tried and tested technology.

There are already digital airfields in United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, Argentina, Brazil, Hungary and Norway, with others being installed in Denmark and France.



The Western Sydney International will be controlled at a digitised centre in Eastern Creek.

SATURDAY - LUNCH IN CAMDEN

Delicious food in really nice surroundings



CAMDEN MUSEUM

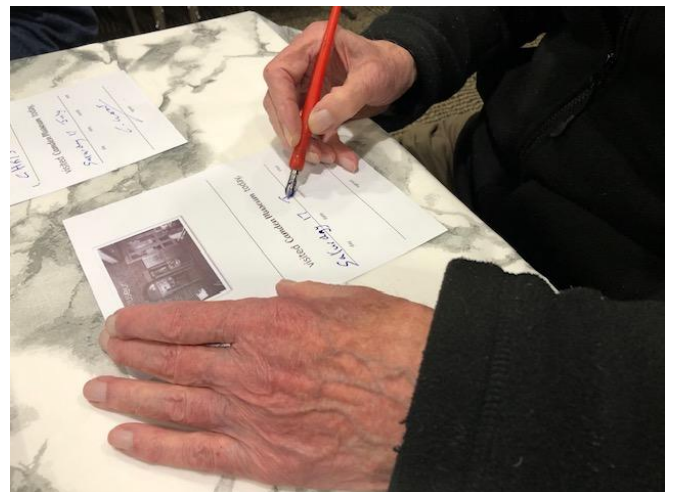
Located inside Camden Library, Camden Museum contains a rich collection of Camden's historical artefacts including photos, maps, clothing, uniforms, furniture, musical instruments and badges.

The Camden Historical Society is instrumental in keeping history alive in the Camden area through the museum and is responsible for the preservation and display of this heritage.

The history of the Camden district is as old as Australia itself, and this unique heritage unfolds in the exhibited stories and displays as you wander through

the large collection of Aboriginal and 20th-century material, which has been donated by the people of the town and district. These things reflect the everyday and familiar experiences that most people share - joy and grief, recreation and work, caring and learning, past and present.

On arrival we were offered an activity to try – writing with ink from inkwells and a nibbed pen, something we hadn't done since we were at school.







HAWKESBURY CROWNE PLAZA YULEFEST

The accommodation and food here was first class – “five star”. We enjoyed a full traditional and seafood buffet dinner, live entertainment and a visit from Santa.



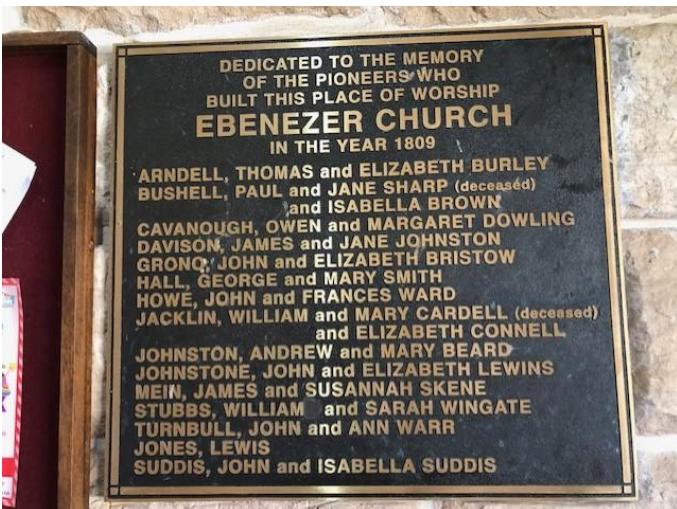


EBENEZER CHURCH





Upon arriving at the church we were treated to a scones and cream morning tea and then inside the church a very interesting talk by one of the church members on the history of the church and the first settlers in the area.



Ebenezer Church, located in Ebenezer, NSW, holds the distinction of being Australia's oldest church, established in 1809. It was also the first Presbyterian church in Australia. The church played a significant role in the early days of the colony, not only as a place of worship but also as a pioneer in education, with a school beginning in 1810. The building itself is also the oldest extant school building in Australia.

The church's origins can be traced back to 1802, when a group of families requested to settle together in the area.

The church was built over six years, starting in 1809, and was initially divided into two rooms: one for church services and the other for the school.

The school, established in 1810, was a significant early example of education in the colony, with notable teachers like John Youl and John Anderson.

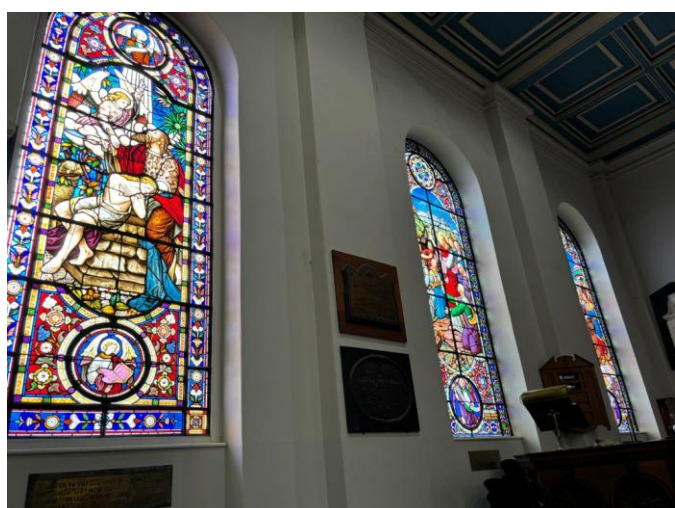
While worship began earlier, Ebenezer Church formally became a Presbyterian church in 1824, under the leadership of James Mein and the influence of Reverend John Dunmore Lang.

Ebenezer Church continues to be an active church and a site of historical significance, including its cemetery, which is considered one of the most important burial sites in Australia.

The cemetery is believed to have started in 1812; however, the oldest records were unfortunately lost to the significant 1967 flood. The oldest existing headstone in the cemetery was placed in 1813. The headstone inscription reads: "In Memory of SARAH GILKERSON who departed this life May 14 1813 Aged 3 weeks."

While burials no longer occur in this space, the cemetery is still used for the internment of ashes.

ST MATTHEWS CHURCH, WINDSOR



Unfortunately we were not able to see inside the church – these photo are from the Internet.

This church is renowned for its historic graveyard and we were taken on a tour of the most interesting graves and were told stories of early settlers buried there and why the graves were placed where they were.

St Matthew's Anglican Church at Windsor is considered to be the oldest Anglican Church in Australia.

In 1817 the foundation stone was laid and the church built to convict architects Francis Greenway's design. It became the second oldest church of any denomination, after the small Uniting Church out at Ebenezer. Governor Macquarie who ordered the church to be built believed that religion was a very important element for all classes of people and for the betterment of the nation.

Francis Greenway directed the building of the new church himself, overseeing the stonemasons and construction workers. It was built remarkably quickly to a high standard.

From its earliest days St Matthew's Church has been a well known landmark in the Hawkesbury. It has inspired many artists like Alfred T Clint, Lionel Lindsay, Sydney Ure Smith and Hardy Wilson to paint and to capture the outline of this Church which has featured many times in publications and paintings.

There are several first fleeters buried in this graveyard, Thomas Arndell a Surgeon, William Cox, the road builder who built the road over the Blue Mountains and Astronomer John Tebbutt.

