

Macquarie Schoolhouse Bicentennial

Newsletter - Issue 5 – May 2021

BICENTENNIAL PLANS BACK ON!

It is with great joy that we have once again begun planning towards a weekend to celebrate the bicentennial of the Macquarie Schoolhouse. After the planned events for last year were postponed due to COVID-19, the team is back into planning this year's event.

Much of the plans for last year's event have been kept, with the weekend being changed.

This is to incorporate the annual St John's Anglican Church Spring Fair into our historical fair.

The Bicentennial Fair will be held on Saturday 11 September on the grounds of St John's Anglican Church at Wilberforce. This event will be exciting in all that it will offer, from historical displays, live performances, food and drinks, kids activities, history tours – something for everyone!



In the evening, we will have a screening of *Amazing Grace* – the story of William Wilberforce's life and the man who the suburb is named after. This will be held in the Church Hall.

On Sunday 12 September, a commemorative service will be held in the Church

Hall with a guest speaker. It will be followed by a morning tea.

The afternoon

will see the first big Gow family gathering to take place. Please see the advert on the back page for more details.

We are excited for what the weekend will bring. Share the details with your family and friends, we want to celebrate this milestone well!

Alicia Bates

Coordinator – Macquarie Schoolhouse Bicentennial

GET INVOLVED

Are you interested in the local history of Wilberforce or the Hawkesbury generally?

Did your ancestors attend school at the Macquarie Schoolhouse?

Were your ancestors involved in the Sunday congregation that met at the Macquarie Schoolhouse?

Was your family involved in the Wilberforce community?

Are you a descendant of a Schoolmaster or Minister?

We would love to hear from you!

Please get in contact with the team through our contact details listed in this newsletter.

THE SCHOOLHOUSE DURING FLOODS

With the recent floods, we were reminded of Governor Macquarie intentionally setting the original township of Wilberforce up high to avoid the severe floods that impacted the farms along the Hawkesbury River. He wanted to offer the community a place of refuge during those times. During the floods, the Schoolhouse has been used as a safe place for families to be kept high and dry while the river rose.

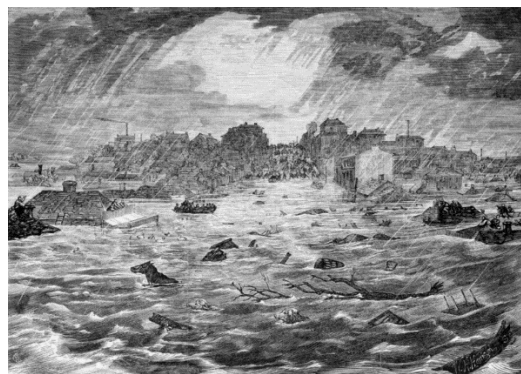


Illustration of Windsor during the 1867 flood
Image courtesy Illustrated Australian

SHARING HISTORY

Recently we welcomed students from years 3 and 4 at Wilberforce Public School to the Schoolhouse to take a tour of the historic building and learn about the history of the site. It was a great time of sharing about colonial Australia and the roots of schooling that would eventually lead to the beginnings of their own school. They had some great questions and seemed to really enjoy learning about our shared history.

SCHOOLMASTER SPOTLIGHT – JOSEPH NASH (1871-1874)

It took some research to find anything on this elusive schoolmaster. It appears that Joseph Frederick Nash was born in Sussex, England in 1840. He married Louisa Ann Richard in Mauritius in 1865, where he is listed as teacher, before travelling to Australia. They had 5 children while at Wilberforce. He had a relatively short teaching stint there before he is mentioned in a correspondence piece in 1874 where the author claims to know Mr Nash well, finding him to be an excellent teacher and the criticism that had been levelled at him was unwarranted. He went back to England about 1880 and had 4 more children. He went back to working in shipping before he died in 1913.

SPONSORS

Macquarie Schoolhouse

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Descendants of
William PT Gow (c.1795-1872)
are invited to attend a
Gow Family Gathering
Saturday 11 & Sunday 12 September 2021
Macquarie Schoolhouse
St John's Anglican Church
43 Macquarie Road Wilberforce NSW

For further details email: wptgowdescendants@gmail.com

After arriving as a convict in 1817, William went on to become a schoolmaster, farmer and father of 10.



**Look out for our next
Newsletter. Due out in
July 2021**