

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

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Disclaimer: these are unreferenced ideas and notes to assist preparation of the final Significance Assessment report.

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Statement of Significance

The Significance Assessment in draft form has found the collection to be significant at a National level because, while showing signs of distress and deterioration, it generally demonstrates a high degree of quality, comprehensiveness and representativeness, as well as provenance to well known local people, places, towns and homesteads. It also

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demonstrates links to Sydney public life and development of the fledgling colonial economy. In particular, it is a faithful depiction of family and pastoral life in the Upper Hunter and other parts of the River, predating the impacts of coal exploration and mining in the Hunter Valley during the second half of the 20th Century.

National Significance

Established in 1966, the Museum has a unique character and breadth of local subject material that predated the museum profession in the Hunter region, when the closest respected museums were Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS, Powerhouse Museum) and the Australian Museum were both in Sydney. The Newcastle Regional Museum only appeared after 1984.

Hunter families, individuals and industries gathered the collection with energy and optimism, trusting that their history and personal stories were important enough for future generations, and informing visitors to the area.

There was not a well-formed intellectual framework for starting this museum – local captains of industry wanting to find home for relics from the dairy factories drove the need. There is scant evidence that the museum did receive some professional assistance from the MAAS and other professional quarters such as the University of Newcastle and historians on an honorary basis.

The breadth of themes, subjects and personal stories represented in the collection include early settlement, evolution of agriculture, homesteads & domestic technology, transport and opening up the valley, pastimes and celebrations (including an extraordinary collection of 19th century musical instruments), evolution of technology in sound reproduction and telephony, historic firearms, clocks, the emergence of influential families and eminent individuals. There is also a collection of sensitive cultural material from Aborigines and indigenous groups of Central Australia, Northern Territory and Melanesia. There is also a fascinating and extensive stand alone geological collection by an unknown local collector (Aurisch).

Although the collection has been well hidden from the public over the past twenty years, and had modest beginnings, the museum has emerged as an important national collection because of the quality and comprehensiveness of the objects, as well as its strong links to well known local places. In particular, it is a faithful representation of family and commercial life in the Upper Hunter and other parts of the River, predating the impacts of coal exploration and mining in the Hunter Valley during the second half of the 20th Century.

The 1966 collection, while being added to *ad hoc* until the mid 1980s, has become an historical snapshot of the lives of Hunter families. Some of the families shaped the destiny of the Hunter and the NSW colony, almost incidentally to their daily business. The items families donated to the Museum were precious, rare, and very, very old on the scale of colonial history. According to acquisition documentation, many of the items were donated “*in memoriam*” of family members who had passed away. Some items exist nowhere else, except perhaps in far-flung collecting institutions or circulating around the antiquarian market. These items might have the same intrinsic value as others, but comparative items rarely have such a strong local and historical provenance.

The heritage material contains items that are no longer manufactured, and are very rare, at times well-preserved examples of their kind. For example in the area of domestic technology, there are items such as a hydraulic mixer and fruit processing gadgets (including wine making and fruit preserving), washing machines from wooden hand agitators to pre-modern electrical models. The vacuum cleaners equally represent the evolution from hand pump to electrical.

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The people represented in the collection were pivotal in the development of the early years of the Colony of NSW (Windeyer) and in the development of important primary industries such as wine growing (Carmichael, Busby) and the horse industry (Robert and Helenus Scott). There are also local merchants such as EP Capper who was the first merchant and ironmonger in the early township of Maitland.

The collection is representative of a type because of the vivid way in which it can demonstrate the life of Hunter farmers and industries from the early part of the 19th century through to the mid 20th century. The artefacts in the areas of agriculture, dairy production, engine manufacture domestic technology and sound reproduction/telephony represent a continuum of development. By comparison to other collections in the region and perhaps in NSW, the collection is complete and able to be conserved. There are also unique geological and indigenous material culture collections, though not necessarily of local provenance.

Unfortunately, over the past 20 years very little has been done to improve the museum apart from basic cleaning and building maintenance. Some items made of leather and papers have perished and an important collection of pianola and phonograph rolls have been lost to rodent attack. The farm machines outside of the museum are rusted but their patina has stabilised. Fragile instruments such as the musical instruments and clocks are under threat however the climate of Glenbawn has not been so harsh to have caused permanent damage

The collection has the potential for students of history and technology to be able to see at close quarters the evolution of technology and the interplay between local and international markets. The textiles and machines provide an insight into the sewing and manufacture of the eras represented. The musical instruments are peculiar to an era, some of which are no longer being manufactured. The range of wheeled vehicles – Stanhope carriages, sulkies, bullock drays and wagons, goat carts and commercial carts for milk, bread and funerary purposes would be a tremendous attraction to those studying autos and transport technology.

The agricultural collection offers rare glimpses into how farmers acquired locally produced and imported equipment to make their work more efficient. There is a complete range of common and rare ploughs such as the Pearce's single furrow plough, and shire ploughs used for road works, bullock and horse drays and a range of seeding and sowing machines, threshers, winnowers, chaff cutters, wool and hay presses. Sheep shearing was a common industry in the district and as a result there are many machines and parts. Horse husbandry, riding and veterinary medicine is well represented as well as a full range of saddlery for users of all ages and genders.

The most extensive sub-collection is that from the dairy industry. The Hunter Valley Dairy Cooperative, once located in Raymond Terrace, and Hunter families have given the collection butter moulds, processing tables, cutters, coolers, separating machines, commercial equipment and a range of milking machines.

Overall the provenance, while not detailed, is relatively good. Most of the items brought into the collection have a clear family history and included date of relevance, who used it and where. Often collection items came directly from the families of the original owners of the items.

Around 90% of the collection is able to be saved, based on the professional opinion of conservators.

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History of the locality

Since Governor Macquarie released land to free settlers in the Hunter Valley in 1821, Upper Hunter properties such as those around Glenbawn, and represented in the Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life, were thriving centres for agriculture, forestry mining and pastoralism, all of which had a profound effect on the economic development of the new colony. Many homesteads became landmarks. Some of these homesteads have been partially, or wholly submerged under Glenbawn Dam, such as *Arden Hall*, home of the Campbell clan. Homesteads that would have been located within the Park boundaries would have been built over the former Portions 45, 46, 47 & 48 over Parish Macqueen, and Portion 366 over Parish Rouchel.

From the first free settlers after the 1820s to the extensive leasehold selections stimulated by the *Robertson Act 1861*, the Hunter Valley was a prosperous and highly desirable district. The Hunter, Williams and Paterson valleys had more cultivated land than any district outside Cumberland while the upper Hunter districts specialised in stock of Saxon and Merino sheep, Durham and Teeswater cattle and on farms that were run by the work of migrant settlers, convicts, and Aborigines. It appears that throughout the development of the NSW colony, the farms and fledgling industries of the Hunter Valley kept the growing metropolis of Sydney supplied with tobacco, grain, dairy and poultry products, coal, sheep, cattle and horses, and a steady supply of good land.

The Industrial Age, post dating the 1840s Depression, 1850s goldrush to the turn of the 20th Century saw a dramatic change in the manually operated and labour intensive industries to automation and mass production.

The history of the Valley development and drought were intertwined, so that the NSW Water Conservation & Irrigation Commission decided to dam the Hunter River because of an increasing demand for water for stock, irrigation and an assured potable water supply to the towns of Scone, Aberdeen, Muswellbrook, Denman and Singleton. The main wall of the Dam was complete towards the end of 1957 and storage commenced in 1958. For the 50 years since, the Glenbawn dam infrastructure has continued to attract many thousands of visitors to the Park.

The artificial lake at Glenbawn, surrounding hills, and valleys of the Hunter River are spectacular. The Lake laps the foothills of the Mount Royal range with Mt Woolooma and Barrington Tops towering in the backdrop. The area also offers diverse natural and cultural heritage of bushland, flora and fauna, and a number of prominent historical landmarks, leading the National Parks & Wildlife Service to declare it a Park in 1958. Today Lake Glenbawn State Park is a thriving public recreation area with ample camping, accommodation and fishing facilities on the eastern and western shores.

History of the HVMRL

The history of the Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life within the Park boundary began in the early 1960s with the winding down of the Hunter Valley Cooperative Dairy Company Ltd (precursor to Dairy Farmers), that required a place to store historical artefacts, and retirement of the Manager Mr Jack Scarr. Scarr spent his sabbatical surveying many overseas museums in England, Denmark and USA, including the Smithsonian. After returning, he was able to call together like-minded captains of industry from the local community to establish a museum.

They formed a museum committee under the (then) Department of Lands' Lake Glenbawn National Park Trust. An account in the Scone Advocate on Friday November 20 1964 (p 14)

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stated, “a rural museum [that was] properly housed and equipped will become a focal point of the widest interest, and will for all time keep before succeeding generations the spirit of determination and foresight with which the early settlers opened up the valley”. The Chair of the Trust Cr WA Bishop declared that the museum would be the first of its type in the Southern Hemisphere.

The first steps of the museum came with much fanfare in the local press in April 1964. Mr TSD Ellis (Newcastle Technical College) offered to draft the architectural drawings and model for the museum, whose octagonal structures would allude to the structures found in the rural industry in bygone eras. The press recorded the design brief, “...It is understood the museum will be modern in design and probably embrace in part the popular hexagonal type of building featuring large areas of glass...The building will also be partly raised, with a basement area for display of heavy pieces of machinery...” While the model completed by Ellis in 1964 generally reflected this brief, the museum building had been constructed without the basement and remained a ground level design.

The earliest proposed displays included relics exhibited at the Maitland Showgrounds, including the nucleus of the collection from Hunter Valley Cooperative Milk Company, a sausage filling machine by Capararo at Caraboli in 1880, wooden clothes washer from the Daveron family of Dalwood 1905, Edison phonogram Hunter Valley Cooperative Dairy Company, hand-drawn seed dropper used by the Capper family at Pokolbin and an iron bottomed bed used at Martindale in 1830 (all still in the Museum today). The NSW Water Conservation & Irrigation Commission offered a temporary building to the HVMRL to house the items already in their possession.

The Minister for Lands (Mr KC Compton) advised the Trust that it would make a grant available of £7,500 (“\$15,000” in 1966 decimal currency) in order to build a proper museum, with the promise to consider further loan funding in the 1964/5 financial year. Upon advice of the funding the Trust requested additional land from the Water Conservation & Irrigation Commission adjacent to “The Oak” milk bar kiosk, and near to the entrance road to the Park. The proponents considered this location to be “neutral ground”, where passing visitors from all over Australia and residents of the Hunter Valley could enjoy both the museum and natural environment.

With Trust and community funding to supplement the £7,500, in July 1964 The Trust called for tenders to build the HVMRL, estimating the cost to be £20,000 (“\$40,000” in 1966 decimal). In spite of the severe drought conditions widespread in the Hunter Valley, the Trust was able to raise additional funds from the community over a five year interval with “small annual quotas ...allotted each district”.

With these modest funds, the Trust engaged the firm R&N Constructions to construct the present day museum buildings according to Ellis’ design in 1965, near the wall of Glenbawn Dam. Unfortunately, the proposed reconstruction of the slab pioneer homestead *Nandowra* did not eventuate. The final construction cost reached £25,000. The decision to locate the museum near the dam wall was fateful, because of the 1984 access changes to the retention wall.

With great community pride and optimism, the Minister for Lands (Mr Tom Lewis MLA) opened the HVMRL at 3:00 pm, on Sunday 12 June 1966. He marked the occasion by cutting

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a large white ribbon before a crowd of 3000 guests.

Then, the main entrance to the building was heralded by three prominent flagpoles with fluttering flags, surrounded by a cement brick apron and terrace where a *“fountain with polished steel basins plays as it falls into a mosaic tiled main pool”* (Scone Advocate 7/6/1966 p1). The fountains’ mosaic basin bore the proud inscription,

“...to the memory of the Pioneers of the Hunter Valley, whose foresight and determination gave the country the wealth it now enjoys...”

The newspapers of the day enthused about the Museum and surrounds,

“...unusual design with a central hall and two octagonal buildings with windows largely of glass to allow natural lighting of the exhibits.

...it is flanked by gardens and a terrace on which a fountain will play and it is conveniently close to the Oak cafe operated by the Hunter Valley Cooperative Dairy Co.

...the whole area has been developed into lawns and rose gardens and shrubs with shelters for alfresco meals and providing an ideal spot for a day’s picnicking.

...the museum will be of great interest to tourists from all over Australia and it is an important contribution to the Hunter Valley.” (Scone Advocate 1/4/1966 p 1)

Jack Scarr spoke of the burgeoning industry in the Valley: shipping, heavy industry, coal, wine, dairying, studs, bloodstock, and fat cattle. He added that potentially *“85 per cent of all electricity produced in the State would originate from the [Liddell Power Station in the] valley...all these things just gave emphasis as to how important the valley was to Australia”*.

It gave him great pleasure to think that in years to come the museum would not only be a local one but would be a national one (Scone Advocate 14/6/1966 p1). Scarr acknowledged the hard work of other Trust members, in particular, Chair Bishop and Secretary Flint who, due to illness, could not attend the opening ceremony.

Minister for Lands Tom Lewis paid tribute to the museum documenters Messrs Gibson, Avard and Hicks, all employed by the Hunter Valley Cooperative Dairy Company Ltd, and shared a quip for the amusement of the guests about the honour he felt at opening a *completed* building, whilst another at Bennelong Point, (Sydney Opera House) remained *incomplete*.

The popularity of the dam as an engineering marvel waned when NSW State Water raised the main wall by 24 m between 1984 and 1986. After constructing the extra height, the public could no longer drive to the eastern foreshore over the top of the dam and State Water redirected traffic around the dam base to the south of the wall. Visitors were less inclined to visit the HVMRL because the custom was to stop at the kiosk for an ice cream, at the museum for history, and drive over the dam wall to see a feat of engineering.

The condition of the museum declined over the next 20 years, until appeals from the Park Trust in 2007 led to community agitation and the formation of the S355 Committee through the Upper Hunter Council. The condition of the museum became the subject of critical newspaper accounts and the (then) Department of Lands assisted community and council in finding resources for the care of the museum. In 2009 the S355 Committee and Trust appointed a Lands officer, trained and experienced in national and local museum collections, to conduct a Significance Assessment (in progress). The community also proposed shifting the collection to another location at Aberdeen; however, they have chosen no suitable alternatives with any certainty.

The recent renewed interest in the collection has led to important work in its care including assistance from trained Conservators from the University of Newcastle and Powerhouse Museum in conserving very fragile and significant textiles including a 175 year old wedding

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dress. Other special interest groups have offered assistance in caring for the agricultural machinery.

In the 40 years since opening, because of the lack of professional staff and dwindling visitor numbers, the museum buildings have become increasingly isolated, transforming them into a unique time vault and sealing the collection almost exactly as it was in 1966.

Unfortunately, features such as the rose garden, fountain, terrace and two flagpoles have gone and natural threats such as pest invasion, water ingress, dust and gradual corrosion have taken their toll on all but the most robust of collection items. Prior to the installation of a security system certain collection items have been stolen from the building.

Preliminary conservation assessments have determined that this deterioration can be stabilised if not totally reversed for most of the collection.

Stakeholders

People of NSW

The collection belongs to the people of NSW, under the care control and management of Lake Glenbawn State Park Trust, administered by the LPMA on behalf of the Minister for Lands, under the *Crown Land Act 1989*.

Due the fragility of the collection and the insecure nature of the building, it won't be open to visits from the general public until basic conservation and collection management have been completed.

NSW Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA)

LPMA provides staff as necessary to care for the museum. LPMA officers with the assistance from community volunteers are taking steps to ensure the collection has been stabilised.

The actions include:

- Cleaning the building and special cleaning of objects
- Removal and conservation of fragile objects
- Creating an inventory of the collection and indexing for categories
- Applying for grant funding to progress other phases in the redevelopment of the museum

The LPMA, under its Crown Land Reserve System, provides support and funding to Crown Trusts such as the Lake Glenbawn State Park Trust. The LPMA ensures that Trusts are managing their obligations according to good governance standards.

The Park has experienced changes in name and controlling agency, under the various portfolios:

- The original park established in 1958 as Lake Glenbawn National Park under control of a Trust acting on behalf of the Minister for Lands and Department of Lands.
- Following enactment of the *National Parks & Wildlife Act 1967* it was renamed Lake Glenbawn Park.
- 13th December, 1974 (*National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974*) it was notified as Glenbawn State Recreation Area.
- January, 1987 it was renamed Lake Glenbawn State Recreation Area.
- November, 1996 it was again renamed Lake Glenbawn State Park.
- 30 May 1997 National Parks & Wildlife Service formally transferred this site to the (then) Dept of Land & Water Conservation (DLWC) as a Dedication for Public Recreation as Reserve 1001337.
- 4 December 1998 the Reserve Trust established as Lake Glenbawn State Park Trust.

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Since 2003 and the dissolution of DLWC, the Trust has been under the control of the reformed Department of Lands, renamed in 2009 Land & Property Management Authority.

Upper Hunter Shire Council

The UHSC has identified the HVMRL as important for its communities and development of the tourism industry in the LGA. The UHSC S355 Committee is responsible for advising the Museum. Comprises UHSC staff, Councillors, community members, Upper Hunter Museums Advisor (Museums & Galleries) and LPMA representatives. Various forms of assistance have been given by Coordinating staff for the Arts & Culture, Tourism and Grant applications in the past. It was largely due to the effort of the S355 committee that the Significance Assessment phase had been initiated.

Community volunteers (Upper Hunter Museum of Rural Life Committee, Aberdeen)

There have been many volunteers over the years who have selflessly given their time to the museum – managing busloads of visitors, researching objects and preparing displays. This number has dwindled over the years due to lack of government and professional support from museum trained staff. There have been professional historians who have also given their time in researching the collection.

In 2004 the Aberdeen community formed a group affiliated with the S355 Committee under the banner of Upper Hunter Museum of Rural Life Committee (UHMLRC), based in Aberdeen.

With the assistance of a NSW State and Regional Development grant in 2008, the Aberdeen group used the grant to engage Australia Street Company to draft a Business Plan and feasibility study for the removal of the Glenbawn-based collection to Campbells Store in Aberdeen, a highly significant historic building in private ownership. The Aberdeen subgroup planned a campaign to raise funds to buy the building or have the government acquire it, to refurbish it as a museum, and to bring cultural pride and tourism back to Aberdeen.

Scone, Muswellbrook, Singleton & Paterson Historical Societies

The Historical Societies comprise members of families who have donated items to the museum and who have an ongoing interest in the collection. Many other amateur and professional historians have had a role in the functions of the societies. Under their own banner, they have published numerous historical monographs of relevance to the collection, invaluable for drafting the Significance Assessment.

Historians & archivists

As mentioned above in other stakeholder groups, historians and archivists have had a role in either supplying historical information or providing links to members of the community who would provide relevant background data. One historian in particular (Lesley Gent) has been instrumental in collating data about the collection electronically so it could be converted into a database. Other historians have provided their own publications to assist with research for the collection and Significance Assessment.

Museum Professionals

There have been several museum professionals who loaned their time and expertise to the Museum. Museums & Galleries provided a field officer to Upper Hunter Shire LGA and who has provided advice to the HVMRL. Powerhouse Museum has made several field visits as a team of curators and conservators and has subsequently taken fragile items (eg wedding dress, parasol, sampler, Mary Bray collection) from complete conservation and reboxing.

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Status of preservation & museum care

A curator has already drafted a Significance Assessment (in progress) and volunteers have contributed to the provenance documentation and historical notes from the past 40 years. While the Significance Assessment has provided the rudimentary means of finding and cross-matching collection items, and making broad generalisations about object groupings and conservation needs, any future professional team needs to protect object materials and to preserve individual nationally significant objects.

A draft Preservation Needs Assessment (2010) has identified the 3 stages (**see below**), required to bring the museum to an adequate level of function. The collection has undergone basic auditing and additional documentation to complete a database and a Significance Assessment is nearing completion at the time of writing. Therefore, the HVMRL has just arrived at Stage 1, short-term needs for preservation.

Stage 1 Short Term		
Recommendations	Priority	Resources
Developing comprehensive documentation	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment of conservator for supervising the project. • Transportation of the movable material to temporary standard storage facilities • Training and assigning staff (paid and volunteers) for the proper documentation. • Rearrangement of the museum material. • Digital cameras. • Stationary and safety gears.
Developing efficient data base for museum	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cataloguing and museum management software (KE Emu http://www.kesoftware.com/emu-home.html) • Training in database use • Personnel to undertake work
Seek funding for conservation treatments on the damaged objects	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel to write grant application
Stage 2 Medium Term		
Recommendations	Priority	Resources
Preparing conservation plan and policy	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel to write the plan
Re-housing the collection material	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New shelving, protective covers for big machinery, preservation quality storage boxes, Mylar sleeves. • Personnel to undertake work
Stabilizing damaged objects	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds for employment of conservators to undertake treatments. • Funds for material required for conservation measures
Stage 3 Long Term		

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Recommendations	Priority	Resources
Developing new collection storage and display area for the Museum	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contractors to do the developmentNew museum furniturePersonnel to undertake work
Transferring the objects to the new built storage place	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Transportation equipmentsPersonnel to undertake the job.

A museum volunteer group, trained to basic level by TAFE has recently formed to care for the collection under the supervision of LPMA staff, one day per month.

There is also an identified need for curatorial policy and documentation including guidelines for accessioning, deaccessioning, collecting, storage/transport and conservation. The UHSC S355 Committee has embarked on a process to find suitable authors for these documents.

Collection overall

- The collection shows the transition from manual farming through to the Industrial Age, beginning in Europe during the late 18thC and spreading to the Americas from 1810 to 1840 and Oceania during the mid 19thC, particularly after the gold rush in the 1850s to the turn of the 20th Century.
- Although factories and production dominated handmade cottage industries, there was still a subsistence strategy in the home, especially during hard times such as the 1840s depression. Butter making and stock production remained unchanged in certain districts.
- The collection demonstrates global through to local relationships, networks of demand and supply, merchandising, mass production, transport, and culminating at the farm gate or homestead.
- A vivid picture of homestead preferences for farming and domestic technology and influence of American goods over European or even local developments
- Local innovation and technology represented.
- Dramatic change in transportation from bullock to horse drawn
- Opportunity to for HVMRL to illustrate the importance of agricultural and rural history while giving rural families and visitors an opportunity to see history in the 3D.

Agricultural & pastoral technology

- Between the eighth century and the eighteenth, the tools of farming remained uncomplicated but effective for the need of early rudimentary farms, based on “simple machines”.
- The agricultural revolution spread from Europe and America to Australia between the 18th century and the end of the 19th century, accompanied by a massive increase in productivity brought about by improvements in farm technology.
- There is a changing face of agriculture and the rural landscape, and net movement of populations into the city centres.
- Gives insight into how the food arrived at our table over time (targeted to city dwellers)
- History traces the human impact on the rural landscape while finding subsistence and later economic strategies.
- Tools, instruments and wheeled carts compare modern agricultural methods to as far back as the 1850s.

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- The era between 1820 and 1850 is well represented in the collection, illustrating the Squatting or Pastoral Age.
- After 1860s there was a surge in exports, and cultivation contributed almost as much as pastoralism to GDP.
- During this time, the US economy grew only at half the speed as Australia. Hoes gave over to ploughs.
- The rapid changes post Gold Rush (1850s in NSW, 1860s in the Hunter) in arable farming and the influence of American technology.
- Hunter Valley has important wine, horse, and dairy industries of international calibre.
- Many regional and cottage industries disappeared (eg dairy), as primary industries became corporatised.
- Agriculture and farming has become a global interest during periods of economic downturn, climate change, trade and migration, food crops decline and pressures on rural traditions.

Collection examples

- Agricultural machinery ranges from the simplest of ploughs from the early 19th Century to the 20th century steam engines. There are machine and hand operated agricultural equipment that easily demonstrate the transformation from lone farmer to stock assisted to machine and finally chemical improvers. Most of the material in the early years was Australian made where imported versions were not available, finally giving way to English then American influences, illustrated by the agricultural equipment. The collection themes cease around the 1960s.
- 1918 Jelbart single cylinder farm tractor
- Dairy industry – collection from a butter factory
- Agricultural steam and mechanical machinery (inside & out).
- Hay & wool presses
- Wine industry implements and instruments
- Tangye horizontal steam mill engine (parts – textile industry?)
- Horse husbandry equipment and horse drawn machines (eg mowers, rakes and ploughs)
- Items for veterinary medicine
- Rabbit, fox and rat traps

Sewing & textiles

- Collection illustrates major steps: harvesting and cleaning the fibre or wool; carding and spinning into threads; weaving the threads into cloth; and finally fashioning and sewing cloth into garments.
- Before the invention of the sewing machine, women did most hand sewing at home, however, there were tailors or seamstresses offering services from small shops, where wages were very low.
- Manufactured cloth was local and hand sewn, and tailors and seamstresses made bespoke items according to the tastes of customers.
- Elias Howe, born in Massachusetts in 1819, looked for work in the town of Lowell then eventually moved to Boston to work out the problem of the sewing machine and the lock stitch.

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- After much he and his family suffered much hardship and poverty, Howe patented his first invention in 1846 that ran more smoothly and was more compact than his earlier attempts.
- Isaac Singer appropriated some of the design and with the assistance of Walter Hunt and infringed Howe's patent and by 1854 the copyright courts found in favour of Howe.
- In 1851, Singer patented a machine that was stronger than the others, with a pressure foot and treadle leaving both hand free for work. His business skills caused "Singer" to become a household brand. The machine was also strong enough to sew leather for shoes, etc.
- The domination of names such as Singer, Howe, Wheeler & Wilson, Gorver & Baker in America and Europe continued until after 1877 when the patents expired.
- Singer sold a machine that poor tradespeople in every small town or district could afford, enabling the machine price to fall.
- After the sewing machine came ready-made clothing.
- Textiles were functional and made for use by contemporaries, but could also be decorative.
- Textiles were first hand made with looms for national and international markets, then mostly using automated methods in factories.
- Production became mechanised, with machines powered by steam and later oil engines - links with steam engine and commerce/mill themes.
- The majority of textile factory workers and seamstresses were women.
- Women went to work in factories and mills to leave crowded homes, earn a living for themselves and their family farms, and for personal development such as being able to see the world outside of home.
- During 18th Century, Britain dominated the international markets (and shipping lanes) and patented machines and drawings were embargoed for export.
- North American textiles were made by hand loom and spinning machine until 1786 in Massachusetts where two Scotsmen invented and patented a local version of the horse operated spinning frame (Arkwright), but this failed.
- By 1814, Francis Cabot Lowell with Paul Moody appropriated designs of the British power loom, and established the first cotton mill in the world (Waltham Mills), where all cotton textile steps, from raw fibre to cloth, were under the same roof.
- The Hunter had many international companies including Bradmill, Osti, Katies, Courtaulds and Dri-glo.
- Corporatisation of textile manufacturers saw some staff being expatriated from originating countries (eg Cortaulds Tomago and "Pommie Hill" near Raymond Terrace).
- Synthetic fibers such as nylon were invented during the twentieth century.
- In this collection, the evolution of type of dress has limited representation, apart from single examples

Collection examples

- Bradmill Industries power loom
- Sewing machine Wilcox & Gibb 1871
- Beale sewing machine
- Sewing machine 1865
- Brass sewing tidy (Capper EW)
- Clothes hook fits to the corner post of an iron bed
- Sewing machine mid 19th century

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

*****DRAFT ONLY*****

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- Upholstery material for chairs
- Steel needle case cross box
- Wilcox & Gibb sewing machine 1883 belonged to the Abbott family of Murulla, Wingen
- German Wertheim sewing machine 1900
- Spinning wheel 1915 lessons given at belltrees homestead during the war & the spun wool used to knit articles for the soldiers
- Singer sewing machine 1883 owned by the Smith family of Fullerton Cove
- Lace making machine

Domestic Technology

- Domestic implements are some of the earliest we remember and we attach a great deal of emotion to them.
- These objects reflect our identities, our sense of “home” and occupy everyday spaces.
- Domestic technology shaped the economies of rural Australia by servicing the home front, and making it more efficient.
- They are as important to the development of the Hunter as the larger industries such as agriculture.
- They also show how global technology, trade, and style networks filter to the home front and evolve over time.
- The domestic technology of farm homesteads also demonstrates the self-sufficiency of isolated rural communities, and the ability of families to hone their practical skills day-to-day.
- *Mrs Beeton’s household management* would have been the ubiquitous, but unrealistic guide, due to its British elite class sensibility, but would have been a manual of sorts for running the home of the day.

Collection examples

- Washing machines, wooden manual, metal, oil run and electrical automatic.
- Hand operated vacuum cleaner 1910, later electric model 1925
- Wringers, mangles and dolleys
- 12 lb collar iron made late 19th century
- Gas iron 1902
- Tailor’s goose iron 1885
- Flat iron 1900
- Mrs Potts iron, handle and stand
- Charcoal iron used by the Misses Lizzie & Annie Lyall, Clarence Town 1850
- Iron used at Aberglasslyn house 1870 by the Mckeachie family
- Goffering iron 1900 used for crimping material
- Benzene iron 1918
- Pressure iron Shellite
- Polishing iron 1890 used for polishing the front of dress shirts
- Bed warmer
- Cooking and kitchen implements
- Enterprise Raisin Seeder
- Tin groover
- Coffee grinders
- Copy of *Mrs Beeton’s household management*

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

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- Marble bath imported from Italy in 1834 by Potter McQueen, the first owner of *Segenhoe*.
- Hydro cake mixer using tap water to propel.

Personal & intimate

- Includes personal letter, drawings, artefacts, clothing, and domestic artefacts, especially associated with an occupation.
- Items that were carried close to the body or were used by a particular individual for a special purpose
- Personal items are able to elicit emotional responses from those who look at them, and convey an idea of the person, without text.
- Are rare because they are discarded when no longer required through death, relocation or growing up.
- Can take on historical significance if associated with a celebrated individual
- Have deep significance and sensitivity for families particularly if family members who have died closely wore the objects.

Collection examples

- Hat Made in 1902 by Mrs George Priestley from Cabbage Tree Palm (*Livistonia australis*), grown at Fullerton Cove
- Celluloid doll, *The Cuan* Wybong
- Personal artefacts of EP Capper (Capper & Sons, Maitland merchants)
- Man and woman's clothing, undergarments, Manchester, Black ladies shoes, ceremonial books & cups, 1930 from the estate of MJ Bray (nee Bates), *Woodland Grove* sheep station, Wybong
- Button hook 1890
- Fine muslin (?) Wedding dress 1823 worn by Sarah Campbell, nee Buchanan, married in Argyle, Scotland and came to the Colony in 1839
- Wedding parasol (calico), 1860 used by Agnes Rodd Robertson Born 1840 died 15/12/1902, present from father Sir John Robertson (*Robertson Acts 1861*) at *Millgara* Wybong Creek. Married George Douglas Bell at Scone
- Spectacles, sunglasses, clay pipe owned by EP Capper
- Tobacco cutter
- Cigar case
- Hat pins Late 19th Century
- Spectacles used by the JK Fleming of *Kelvinside* and *Russley*

Ritual & ceremonial

- Artefacts of spiritual, religious or marks of achievement and related to ceremonies, festivals, life cycles, and rites of passage.
- Relevant for cultural group, or family.
- Importance to family histories and genealogy
- Historical events, accidental (eg rescue flooding) or intentional
- Regardless of how humble they appear to be, these items have significance beyond their time of use, as inspirational symbols for future generations.

Collection examples

- Illuminated address presented to The Hon JN Bruncker MLA for East Maitland 1880-1905

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

*******DRAFT ONLY*******

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- Campbell, Windeyer Family Bibles
- Bibles in Welsh and German
- Achievement awards
- Invitation to the Hon Sir JP Abbott KCMG & Lady Abbott to the opening of the first Parliament 1901 from the Prime Minister, Sir Edmund Barton.
- Newcastle Centennial medal 1797 – 1897

Decorative Arts & Design

- Design is the bridge between art and function in furniture, fittings, and decoration of everyday bric-a-brac.
- Interior design is an outward manifestation of how the creator wants the world to see his/her environment and the personality it projects. It can be functional, showy and often highly sentimental.
- Motifs, materials, or form will define the era for most interior designs, however, retrospective use of these may confuse dating.
- Art and craft studios tend to serve or allude to a utilitarian purpose, though they are sometimes treated in the home as though they are visual art objects.
- Everyone at some time has had a favourite piece that may be useful (eg a teapot or plate) but it has been placed safely out of reach.
- Victorian decorative arts refers to the style in the later part of the 19th C known for its eclectic revival of historic styles, and cross-cultural influences, especially the middle east and Asia. It was characterised by highly stylised motifs from nature.
- The Arts and Crafts movement, the aesthetic movement, Anglo-Japanese style, and Art Nouveau style have their beginnings in the late Victorian era.
- There was a predominance of Victorian style, or interpretation in the homesteads of this and later eras.
- Victorian interiors were noted for orderliness and ornamentation.
- A typical house was neatly divided in rooms, with public and private space carefully separated.
- The Parlour was the most important room in a home and was the showcase for the homeowners; and where the family entertained guests. A bare room was in poor taste, so every surface was filled with objects that reflected the owner's interests and aspirations.
- The dining room was the second-most important room in the house. The sideboard was most often the focal point of the dining room and very ornately decorated.
- Some farm homesteads might not have demonstrated such opulence, and items would have been simpler and more functional in form. The later modernist and Art Deco eras allowed this streamlined simplicity to take on an elevated importance in society.
- Post-war production of plastics and composites dramatically changed what was possible for designers in the 20th century.
- These new materials created a fascination in the 1950s and 60s with science fiction and the possibilities of the future.
- The clock collection illustrates the transition from a simpler Art & Craft style with brass clock movements of the mid to late 19th C to one of the 20th C where clocks could be mass-produced with greater reliability and accuracy over longer periods.

Collection examples

- Ansonia clocks from USA

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

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- Fine porcelain and silverware
- Entertainment ware and art pieces
- Ornate clock given as a wedding present to Rev J. May by a Chinese Hawker 1903
- Late Victorian style chairs and chaise lounge

Indigenous artefacts (investigating repatriation)

- Items in this collection are highly crafted and beautiful, and some items are sacred and not for public viewing.
- Representation of technology and art in ancestral Aboriginal communities and each has a specific story.
- For indigenous communities, these items not only represent their ancestral past but may also trigger sentiments about European invasion and appropriation.
- If this is not the case, the items can reflect collecting philosophies of local identities, who kept these items for their beauty, historical significance, and possibly mystical values imbued through their makers.
- Their material and spiritual significance are almost always linked to future posterity and longevity, being important for transfer of culture and future generations.
- These items need further research from indigenous Traditional Owners and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.
- Indigenous and Museum community believes that these objects should have Class A status under the moveable cultural heritage legislation. All material relating to secret/sacred subject matter should be given Class A status.
- Consultation with Elders/Traditional Owners/Heritage Consultants is an essential part of the assessment process.
- There have been many museums and galleries signatories across Australia to a repatriation program for Aboriginal artefacts, where items return to the original owners, their descendants, or an appropriate repository (eg Australian Museum in Sydney).

Collection examples

- Maori stick 1880
- Aboriginal axe (andesitic greywacke) grooved hammer, dressed ground edged found near Willis Hill, Gundy
- Native seed necklet x 2, belt x 1 & mat x 1 Warrabri mission, Northern Territory
- Returning boomerangs
- Ochre stones x 2
- Chief's breast plate "martin" - chief of the Kobarrah
- Native canoe paddle – Solomon Islands
- Gourd (Egyptian water bottle) 1850
- Flint knives x 2 Roper River
- Native bees wax Central Australia
- Digging stick Central Australia
- Woomera Central Australia

Telecommunications & radio

- Radio development began as "wireless telegraphy"
- Many scientists proposed that electricity and magnetism, both capable of causing attraction and repulsion of objects, were linked.
- In 1875, Thomas Edison noted "etheric force", the mysterious force pervaded the ether, understood now to be high frequency electromagnetic waves, or radio.

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

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- Guglielmo Marconi, equipped ships with wireless communications, conducted a reported transatlantic radio communications experiments in 1901 and established the first commercial transatlantic radio service in 1907.
- Nikola Tesla, could reliably produce radio frequency currents, publicly demonstrated the principles of radio, and transmitted long distance signals. In 1943 the US Supreme Court upheld Tesla's patent number U.S. Patent 645,576.
- Without the telecommunications industry, rural communities would have been cut off from the rest of the world.
- Important for home, schools, medical emergencies and business. This might explain why a large section has been devoted to this topic in the HVMRL.
- By 1861 there were at least 110 telegraph stations across the eastern colonies
- Reuters, in competition with local news agencies, operated in Australia from 1860 onwards. The cost per word for a message from London was at that time equivalent to the average weekly wage.
- For the first fifty years of its existence, most people in Australia experienced telecommunications through telegraphy even where the telephone was available. It was thus at second hand, rather than person-to-person.
- At the time of Federation 1901, there was a 'telephone [divide](#)'. Public phones were available in a handful of post offices and otherwise restricted to major businesses, government agencies, institutions, and wealthier residences. Eight million telegrams were sent that year over 43,000 miles of line (in the UK there were around 89 million messages).
- The PMG department was the first government department responsible for international shortwave services - particularly from the 1920s - and for a new Coastal Radio Service in 1911.
- Management of the telecommunications network reflected the image of the Australian Broadcasting Commission and the British Broadcasting Commission – one critic characterised as "male, middle class, middle brow and middle aged".
- The PMG was a major employer in rural areas, the Minister generally came from the Country Party, and there was an emphasis on in house development and local manufacturing.
- In rural areas uptake of telephony prior to 1945 was inhibited by cost for wiring beyond a short length of line near the exchange.
- Many farmers accordingly constructed the lines themselves on a 'part privately erected' (PPE) basis that frequently involved use of substandard components (eg iron rather than copper wire) and layouts (eg strung from trees or along fences) with consequent poor performance and little privacy on shared 'party lines'.
- In modern times during the 20th century, telephony is characterised by landline and mobile telephone services and more recently internet/broadband services with rural services lagging behind that of the cities but will have improved services within the next couple of years.

Collection examples

- Wireless – early model
- Marconi wireless 1920
- LeClanche cell batteries early 1900's each cell generates 1.5 volts used for telephones etc.
- 1940 Hotpoint portable wireless 4 valve - 2 x 4.5 batteries
- Morse key & sounder

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

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- Pendograph semi automatic transmitting device used by Wally Carter, a former outstanding operator of the Hunter Valley
- Wall type telephone 1904 British Ericsson pattern. with modifications this model was used up to the 1930s in Australia, by which time most were replaced.
- Manual telephone exchange stc – Standard Telephones & Cables Pty Ltd. silicon rectifier model 1 cd 50/6/20 – 1973
- Circuit diagrams. for approx 40 line switchboard
- Transmitter & receiver home made in wooden box
- Telephone generator early 1900's

History of sound

Sound recording & playback

- Phonograph was invented by Thomas Edison in 1877, a cylinder covered with a hard material such as tin foil, lead, or wax or later polymer that rotated while the stylus engraved grooves
- The depth of the grooves related to air pressure changes caused by the original sound. The recording could be played back by a needle tracing the groove and amplifying vibrations.
- Phonograph cylinders could not be mass produced.
- Emile Berliner patented the disc gramophone in 1887.
- The gramophone imprinted grooves on the flat side of a disc and the vibrations across the width of the track caused vibrations.
- Early disc and cylinders had equal fidelity but the disc could be mass produced by molding a master on shellac.
- Cylinder copies occurred by pantograph, allowing 25 copies and each progressively destroyed the original
- Recordings required ten or more machines around the artist to record multiples. A single performance could produce only a few hundred salable copies
- By 1902, successful molding processes for cylinder recordings were developed.
- The speed standardized to 78 rpm at first, later 45 and 33½ rpm
- By then the material changed to vinyl.

Collection examples

- Phonophone 1897
- Edison diamond disc reproducer c1914
- Edison home phonograph 1906
- Table model phonograph 1918 "rexonola grand"
- Edison blue amberol cylinder records
- Edison phonograph 1905 owned by mrs kidd, paterson
- Ferris portable car or home radio
- Gramophone horn or tone chamber x 5 and one stand

Musical instruments

- To be completed

Collection examples

- Claviola 1910 used to convert an ordinary piano to a pianola
- Harmonium 1880
- Melodia music box 1881

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

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- Edison Fireside Phonograph
- Organ 1870
- Banjo Mandolin Guitar
- Accordion 1912
- “Kirkman” grand piano 1840 owned by Lady Windeyer of Tomago House.

Firearms, wartime ephemera

- Items are in various locations including shipping container, NSW Police Tamworth.
- Unable to gain access
- Is a specialised area, will call in an expert
- Ephemera is more domestic and personal and will describe in main report

Collection examples

- RIFLE 12 Gauge muzzle loading shot gun made by J. Hollis & Sons - 1865
- MAUSER RIFLE. Dated 1875 Stock dated 1875 – Breech dated 1896
- FLINT LOCK Very old Arab flint lock, captured from the Arabs in the Great War 1914- 1918 in the Sinai Desert Campaign
- POWDER HORN Carried by sportsmen to load muzzle loading shot gun, it measured out the exact charge of powder. It is over a hundred years old.
- SHELL CAP of 75mm high explosive shell fired into Anzac Cove and the gun was captured by the Australians in the Battle of Sula Bay in 1915. The interest of the cap is that it was fired by a gun, captured by the Turks in the Balkan war of 1911-1912
- TURKISH CARTRIDGE 1914 – 1918. Brought back from Gallipoli by the donor in 1915
- SINGLE BARREL MUZZLE LOADING PERCUSSION GUN 1865
- GUN HAMMERS
- CARTRIDGE RELOADING TOOLS .410 Calibre
- COMPLETE SET OF CARTRIDGE RE-LOADING OUTFIT
- MUZZLE LOADING PERCUSSION GUN 1840 Owned by the Late B. Hill
- FUSE CAP 25lb shell fuse cap made 1941-1943 at Emco, Sydney. This was made by Thomas Hume of Muswellbrook who was a Casing Machine Operator at Aberdeen Meat Works before the war. Mr Hume tried three times to enlist but because of machine experience joined Emco. For the war effort. When commencing at Emco, production of this cap ran at approximately 80 fuse caps per person per eight hour shift. When leaving Thomas Hume had raised production to 500 per person per eight hour shift.
- SWORD BAYONET 1860 British Army Issue standard military equipment of all soldiers of that time
- ROUND NOSED BULLET 1885 2200 FT PER SECOND. 480 – g.n. 475 No:2 Nitro Express One of the first cartridges to be developed in 1885 by Jeffery of England. Used for hunting big game e.g. elephants.
- SNIDER 577 CARTRIDGES MARK I – 1865 Used in the Snider conversion of the Enfield Rifle. Made by narrow strips of annealed brass. 1200 foot per second.
- LEAD BULLET 577 – 450 Martin Henry. Used in the single shot rifle of that name 1871 Popular sporting cartridge of that time and used for game in Africa. 1350 foot per second.
- GERMAN QUACKENBUSH RIFLE 7.6 mm Cal Unusual action owned by Les Weidman, Muswellbrook
- SHOT CARTRIDGE RELOADING OUTFIT

Outline of collection & significance – Hunter Valley Museum of Rural Life

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- BULLET MOULD & CARTRIDGE RELOADING OUTFIT Ideal Manufacturing Co. 1884
- .32 CALIBRE WINCHESTER BULLET MOULD 1870
- BULLET MOULD 1880
- BREECH SECTION 19th Century 6ft long muzzle loading duck gun
- .32 CALIBRE WINCHESTER BULLET MOULD 1870
- .32 - .20 CALIBRE WINCHESTER RE-LOADING OUTFIT 1892
- LEE ENFIELD RIFLE. Made at Lithgow 1922 - butt made 1943
- MUZZLE LOADING SHOT GUN 1870 Owned by Rubin Tranter of Albion Park, Woodville
- POWDER FLASK
- PERCUSSION CAPS
- .32 CALIBRE WINCHESTER BULLET MOULD 1870

Automotive and transport

- New advances such as steamboats, canals, and railroads lowered shipping costs which caused people to buy cheap goods that were produced in other places instead of more expensive goods that were produced locally.
- Advances through steamboats, cars and railroads lowered “shipping” costs by manufacturing goods centrally and transporting out to the consumer.
- Therefore goods became more inexpensive and mass produced compared to those produced locally from cottage industries.
- Transport networks and reliable vehicles were fundamental to a farm business surviving and mechanical work, and manufacture of parts had to be done on the farm.

Collection examples

- Milk, timber and bread transport vehicles
- Truck, open tray similar to EP Cappers merchant Maitland
- BUGGY LAMP 1881
- Early MODEL CAR HEAD LAMP 1900 – 1910 x 2
- WHEEL WRIGHT’S TYRE SHRINKER Used in the Morisset District
- TYRE SHRINKING MACHINE - 1900 Used when fitting iron tyres on wagon wheels.
- VULCANIZER - 1914. For Ford cars for patching tyres of early model cars. The unit was filled with water and heated by spirits and clamped on the outside of the tyre
- CAR JACK Supplied with early “T” Model Ford car
- MOTOR TYRE CLAMP 1910
- FRAMED ITEMS Motor Spirit Consumers Licence 1949 Drivers Licence 1925 Motor Spirit Ration Tickets
- BOOK - AUTOMOBILE ENGINEERING 1926
- ADVERTISEMENT Tinsley Tyre Applying Machine
- “PLUME” - PETROL CANTEEN
- MOTOR TYRE RIM CLAMP - 1920 Used for reducing the diameter of the rim while the tyre is fitted
- MACHINERY BOOKS x 3