



# Tours galore and an important election

By John Brock

Our columnist reflects on last year's dining, attends the first conference of "BMACHO", learns more of Flinders and Baudin and takes a trip to Port Macquarie.

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Life is great at the moment. Topp Tours to Hill End and Bathurst and a Christmas celebration at Hillview Homestead took us gold panning in a former gold rush era river and dining where 16 NSW governors had previously called their country retreat from 1884 to 1957 (two hours south of Sydney on the Southern Highlands at Sutton Forest).

### Dining with the Stars

Last year saw me dining out with stars at various events. To name a few: Australian fast bowling legend **Glenn McGrath** at a Rugby League match; Austrian Royal Archduke Dr **Michael Habsburg-Lothringen** and his wife **Pia**, with Belgian Ambassador **Frank Recker** and wife **Anna** at their residence, while we were at the International Map Collectors Society Symposium in Vienna; famed Australian batsman **Doug Walters** and bowler **Len Pascoe** (whose uncle **Jim Durtanovich** is a cadastral surveyor for the City of Sydney) and Rugby League players aplenty including **Mario Fenech**, **Darryl Brohman** and a room full of former Australian players at the Ambassador Club Grand Final luncheon at Bankstown Sports Club.

### The pride of Lord Carrington

We were privileged to attend the first conference of BMACHO (Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations) at the prestigious Carrington Hotel in Katoomba (3 hours west of Sydney) where we were feted with colourful tales and folk songs of the history of the settlement and development of the Blue Mountains area listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. This superb hotel was built in 1882 as the Great Western but when NSW Governor **Lord Carrington** visited it in 1886 he granted permission to the owner, **F.C. Goyder**, to rename it after him. A most magnificently restored icon of an era of glamour and elegance,

Mario Fenech, Corey Payne, Darryl Brohmann and the writer.



this venue was once described as "The largest and best known Tourist Hotel in the Southern Hemisphere"; a title well deserved.

### Baudin and Flinders Chance Encounter

The Australian National Maritime Museum is one of my favourite venues and a lecture by **David Hill** on two of my preferred historical

figures, **Baudin** and **Flinders**, could not be missed. David had just published a book about the time when each of these fabled navigators were circumnavigating Australia in 1802 and just happened to "bump" into each other at a place in the southern ocean off South Australia later to be named Encounter Bay in honour of their most ironic engagement. After dining together and exchanging a rather broken discussion, as neither spoke the other's language, they parted company little knowing how their destinies would once again intertwine on the Island of Mauritius (then called the Ille de France) where Flinders would be under house arrest for six and a half years and Baudin would be buried there. In fact Baudin died on 16 September 1803 with Flinders arriving on the island on 17 December the day after Baudin's vessel *Le Géographe* had left for France.

### Port Macquarie Topp Tour

Five days in the northern NSW coastal town of Port Macquarie was "Peter Pan in survey land" for me because the settlement was discovered and named by NSW Surveyor-General **John Oxley** on one of his expeditions in 1817. Another surveyor, **George Evans**, travelled with the S-G and he had previously been responsible for making the survey traverse past the end of the line of the route established by **Blaxland**, **Lawson** and **Wentworth** in 1813 as well as naming the new inland town after **Lord Bathurst** in 1814. Everything is named after S-G Oxley (including an injured koala at the wildlife hospital), hotels, bottle shops, highways, schools and even the local infamous financial advisor! The museum and many of the local attractions all display reverse survey shields, Gunter's chains and historical surveying maps from the the environs. Even the local weatherboard historic mansion Roto House was built for a local surveyor named **John Flynn** in 1890 with many of his personal artifacts displayed within the property testifying to him being one of the wealthiest residents of the town. Great stuff indeed!

### Elections for ISNSW

After the results of the elections for the Board of the Institution of Surveyors NSW Inc. and the Cumberland Group of Surveyors were announced, I had been elected onto the Committees for both organisations. I look forward to contributing to the promotion and development of the surveying profession in New South Wales and will keep the readership of *GW* informed of any events or items which may be of interest to you all.