

Introduction

The Arms of Australia Inn Museum is a charming look at yesteryear, focusing on the early pioneer and agricultural history of the Nepean and Emu Plains region. Built circa 1826, of random rubble and extended in brick, it is one of only three hotels to survive from this period. It is an important early building within Emu Plains and reflects the area's development as an important stopping point at the foot of the ascent into the Blue Mountains – a role which declined after the opening of the railway line in 1867.

After 1867 the Inn was used as a private dwelling by several families until 1966 when it gradually declined until it was rescued by a joint effort between the Penrith City Council and the Nepean District Historical Society in the 1970s. The building was subsequently restored by the Society who also administers the artefacts, archival materials, building and grounds assisted by dedicated volunteers and committee members.

The Nepean District Historical Society (NDHS) is affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society (NSW), The National Trust of Australia (NSW) and the Society of Australian Genealogists.

We do have a few rules which are intended to safeguard the museum and visitor safety. Please study these rules on page 16 for implementation.

We hope to see you soon at the museum where students and visitors learn, and perhaps reflect upon, the differences and oddities of the past.

Brief History of the Museum

The first section of the Arms of Australia Inn was built in approximately 1826 and licensed as *The Mountaineer* in 1837. However old license reference sources state that the building was licensed by John Mortimer in 1841 as *The Australian Arms*. At this time it was one of only two Inns in Emu Plains, but by 1863, it was one of seven and had been renamed *The Arms of Australia*.

In 1969, the property was acquired by the Penrith Council and it was declared a Museum in 1976.



Facts about the building

The Shingles: Paul McCarthy carried out making and installing shingles, about 24,000 bloodwood shingles 4500-480mm x 70-200mm were used. Other shingles were often made from hardwood trees such as casuarinas, ironbark and stringy bark and are cut along the growth rings as this stops them twisting or splitting. Redwoods used in other parts of the world last 20 years but Australian hardwoods last up to 100 years, as did the original roof.

The Tenants: One of the families who lived in the house were the Armstrong's who migrated from England in 1958, a large family of six who paid £1 (one pound) rent a week and said that junk was everywhere. Miss Maureen Armstrong found an 1826 Britannia penny in the back yard and her brother Derek was always ferreting about in the yard finding things. The Armstrong's moved out in 1967 and the building stood vacant for many years.

Found artefacts within site: One pair of convict leg irons and a ball were dug up on the site, as well as other things, and even today, metal detectors give a loud signal when switched on and moved over the grounds. Many interesting artefacts were found under the floor during renovating and restorations such as shards of china, coins, keys, brooches, pipes, marbles, and dominos.

The building: The building was built at two different times. The east (Penrith) end has been made of stone while the west (mountains) end is made of brick. When NDHS was renovating the building in the early 1970's an 1826 coin was found in the wall cavity in the room on the northeast (the schoolroom). If that coin was put there sometime between 1826 and 1832 then that part of the building would have been part of the Convict Establishment of Emu Plains (established by Governor Macquarie in 1819 and dismantled in the early 1830's). There were only convicts here at that time so the rooms could have been an overseer's cottage or storeroom.

Inn: The first inn keeper was John Mortimer. Robert Beatson was also licensee for a while. There are copies of their licences in the History Room and lettering above the front door on the verandah facing the road.

Not many people slept in the Inn. Bullock drivers etc, slept under their wagons. Women slept inside.

Travellers came to an Inn for a meal, something to drink (ale and rum), company, and to catch up on the news. In one of the Museums show-cases are objects found under the floor (which had to be replaced due to termite damage).

Doors: You will notice that doors of the Inn are low because people were much shorter then today. Men were only about 1.65m (5 foot 6 inches – 5 foot 8 inches). Also a small outlet meant less heat escaped in the cold weather. The thick walls kept the rooms cool in summer.

Modifications to the Building Structure: The foundation of the original kitchen and cellar was found, uncovered then covered over again. Modifications to the Inn were carried out when the building was divided into two dwellings. An alcove for a fuel stove was made in the back wall of the taproom. Only one reticulated tap was found in the dwelling so it is assumed only one dwelling had running water inside. The well was operational when the Society moved onto the site in the 1970's.

Cellar: Recent investigations indicate there is a cellar under the Inn and eye witnesses who visited the dwelling when it was used as a private residence have located where the trapdoor is, although restoration crews say there is no evidence of this trapdoor when they cleared the floor. Recent subsidence (2007) has occurred on front paving that indicates a subterranean void as water poured into cracks does not fill up. Small alterations occurred in some room entrances, such as replacing arches with rectangular openings during restoration.



Time line

- The area was first seen by Captain Watkin Tench on 27th June 1789 who named the Nepean River after Lord Evan Nepean, under secretary to the British home department, and by 1800 there were settlers on the eastern side of the river at Castlereagh.
- Governor King began granting land in the area to settlers in 1804 with Captain Daniel Woodriff's 1,000 acres (4.0km²) on the banks of the first river the first land grant in the area.
- In 1814, William Cox constructed a road across the Blue Mountains which passed through Woodriff's land at Penrith. Initial settlement in the area was unplanned but sufficient for a Courthouse to be built in 1817.
- River flats were described by French Barrallier as a "Garden of Eden".
- Emu Plains, officially named in 1814 by Governor Lachlan McKenzie, was previously known as Emu Island.
- Government Stock Yards constructed in 1814.
- Government Agriculture Establishment started in 1819 and was in operation until 1832.
- Ban on private citizens crossing over Nepean River without papers or pass. No settlers on eastern side of Nepean.
- 1833 Joseph Montefiores buys 40 acres and 32 perches from the Agriculture Establishment for £89/9/5 (89 pounds, 9 shillings and five pennies). Joseph is an absent landlord and is a Frenchman of Jewish heritage. Apparently the French were not allowed to buy land in England but they could do so in Australia.
- Joseph knew Mortimer, Hunter and McKenzie from a Parramatta connection.
- Mortimer buys licence to operate an Inn.
- McKenzie arranges a land deal to buy land from Montefiores.

- 10th of March 1840, John Mortimer leases the property of one acre from McKenzie, to establish an Inn to service travellers on the Western Road. There is a default in McKenzie's mortgage and John Mortimer buys 20 acres from the original land holding, presumably from Montefiores.
- 1851, Government passes regulation that Inns have to provide accommodation for at least two guests and for women and children.
- Mortimer built four additional bedrooms for guests at the Inn onto the original building on the site. During restoration an 1826 coin was found, in good condition, in the wall. Often builders placed a coin of the year in buildings when constructing them.
- Licence fees were £25 (pounds) and could be traded, but Mortimer paid £30 for his licence.
- 28 hotels or inns were operating in the area.
- The Arms of Australia was a coach inn.
- It has been said that Montefiores, through Mortimer, was an honest and respectable person and he may have assisted Mortimer financially.
- Licence records review Mortimer held a licence in 1841-1849 and 1849-53 for Australian Arms Inn.
- Robert Beatson takes over the licence in 1852 and also takes licence to the building known as the Old Post Office in the corner of Old Bathurst Road and Western Road.
- John Mortimer dies in 1856 and his family held the licence in 1856 – 76.
- 1865, the Railway moves over the Nepean River and reaches Lithgow in 1877, an easier route to the goldfields and western runs resulting in a dramatic increase in traffic on the Western Road. Inns closed down or were put to other uses.
- When John Mortimer dies in 1856 the executors put the property up for sale.
- Arms of Australia Inn is purchased in 1867 by Thomas Ellison and used as a private house.
- 1905, property is inherited by Sarah Hunter and son James.
- 1916, property passes to N.A. Hunter and James Hunter and the old Inn is divided into two dwellings. One section was made up of the four bedrooms and the second section consisted of taproom, parlour and other two rooms.

- 1949, Property sold to Norma and Evvy Walker and continues to be a private dwelling to 1966.
- 1972 Lucas and Tait subdivide and put new estate up for sale.
- NDH Society approach Council about purchasing the Inn and surrounding land.
- A figure is reached of \$26,000. Council is tardy in issuing cheque and there is a threat of court action.
- Ivan Casson, a local, who worked for a development and subdivision company, arranged the transport of a bulldozer to the Arms of Australia site in the afternoon before Penrith City Council's meeting where the purchase payment matter is to be resolved.
- Ivan is at home at 10.30pm when he gets a call that Council has paid the cheque at the last minute of the deadline at 5.00pm. After Ivan receives word he goes to the Arm's site and disables the bulldozer. The bulldozer driver had orders to come in early to demolish the Inn and other structures. This is a common practice in demolishing contentious buildings with public interest. Ivan receives an early morning telephone call from his driver that someone has tried to "knock off" parts of the bulldozer. Ivan informs him that the Arms Inn has been saved and he has the parts to the bulldozer.
- 1972, Council own property and Society now has the mighty task of restoring the Inn which had been vandalised and some flagging stolen. Termites had destroyed the floor. The roof, or what was left of it, was in a sorry state and the weather poured in. Debris was everywhere and the old kitchen and cellar were gone. The work of restoration took three years.
- 1976, Inn restoration was finished and officially reopened.
- 1981, The Meeting Rooms and Amenities block was complete.
- 1996, The replica barn was completed and opened.
- 2005, Accessible amenities were added to meeting rooms.
- 2007, Monument dedicated to George Guildford and tree planted.
- 2008, Founder's Tree dedicated in grounds

Learning activities at the Museum

Although the Inn is a small museum, there are plenty of activities and artefacts to keep students and visitors engaged for a few hours. There are a few rules you will need to know before your visit – please see these on page 16.

Before commencing your visit, school children will need to be divided up into groups of no more than 10 per group. School groups are divided between the **Museum Inn Tour** and **Museum Ground and Barn Activities**. Usually each group takes turns in touring the museum and doing an activity. Groups are then rotated every 10 -15 minutes at the sound of a cow bell, which is rung by one of the volunteer guides.

Various volunteers will explain to school children about the exhibits and will encourage them to handle some of the artefacts, such as manacles, an ore crushing dolly, a gold ore sample, flat irons, and school slates, which give children an interesting experience of what it was like to live in the past. Teachers and parents are still encouraged to supervise and counsel children if necessary.

Museum Inn Tour – Subject to changes on the day.

1. Reception area and Tap Room

Here children are welcomed to the Inn and learn that a long, long, time ago this land was once inhabited by the indigenous Darug people of the Mulgoa tribe. Upon white settlement after Captain's Cook landing in 1788 this area became the site of Governor Lachlan Macquarie's farm (1819). It was also the place which was used as a penal settlement (or prison farm) for thirteen years where convicts grew all the food for old Sydney Town.

After 1832 the land was divided up for sale.

This building was built as an Inn (which is a type of motel or hotel). It was used by people who wanted to travel over the Blue Mountains. The Inn doors are small as people then were not very tall, and the building was built in a clever way, with thick walls which keep the building cool in summer and warm in winter.

People would travel by coach, horse, or horse and cart. It was a long, hard journey from Sydney Town, especially as there were bushrangers about who would rob people.

Bushrangers were controlled by mounted police and there would be lookouts posted on the roads to watch out for bushrangers to let travellers know about the dangers.

The men usually slept in the barn or under their wagons and women and children slept in the Inn.

When the building was renovated in the 1970s artefacts were found under the floor boards such as old marbles, coins, and nails – even an old bead necklace.

One day an old ball and chain was dug up out in the backyard. It is very heavy (19 kilos – about the weight of a five year old boy). If you were a bad convict you had to wear these even when you were asleep.

Children are then shown various artefacts and they can also feel the weight of the manacles and look at items discovered through the renovations that were hidden in the soil beneath.

Children are then walked through the taproom and a guide will explain to them that this part of the building was the old tap room where people came for a drink of rum or ale. Ale is a type of beer. Rum would be stored in a small barrel drinks and other drinks in large jars. Children will be shown the cooking place, where the food would be cooked such as stew, bread etc. Here toast was cooked on a toasting fork, not a toaster and all cooking was done on a fire as there was no electricity or gas. Children can also see the old clocks, cooking implements and have their questions answered. They will handle old flat irons and see ancient sewing machines which were used for doing ironing and making and mending clothes. This room also contains some more modern items to demonstrate differences between generations.

2. Parlour

The children will be ushered into the old parlour room where in the past, weary travellers would come for the evening to relax. As there was no television in the early days, people had to use their imagination and make their own entertainment. A pianola was great because you didn't have to play the piano – you could just pedal a tune. Here children can have a go pushing the pedals of the pianola if they are tall enough to do so.

Children can also play the organ if they are supervised as they can play the keys and use the pedals but they are not to touch the buttons for the pipes.

Please note: Children are not to play the piano and are not allowed to sit on the chairs. Don't lift up any of the children to look at the glass display case. If they cannot see this just tell them it contains ladies and gentlemen's items such as shaving items (cut throat razors, shaving brushes, and tobacco storage and ladies gloves).

3. Millennium Room

Children will see old curiosities such as old typewriters (which they can use) and adding machines. These implements were what people used to use before computers to type letters and the adding machines were used to calculate figures – before calculators.

Here children will see an old box telephone, 1950s TV, 1930s radio etc. The volunteer will explain about some of the old things in the cabinet. There are oddities such as fly paper, ladies travelling writing set, and a moustache cup which men would use so as not to wet their moustache when drinking tea. There is also an old Sylvester (telephone) switchboard and old children's toys.

4. Inn Bedroom and Bunyun Room

This is a small bedroom, which has a canopy and a mattress stuffed with horsehair, which was probably quite hard to sleep on. A volunteer will explain to the children about washing and bathroom facilities. What did people do in the past as there was no running water and no inside toilet? Here children are shown the pot (or goes-under), the commode and washstand with ewer (large jug) and china basin. Quilts were often used as bed coverings and even animal fur. A rug made of platypus fur is at Old Government House.

In the small Bunyun small room we have an impressive collection of Aboriginal and New Guinea artefacts – spears and shields and other carved items which were collected by past member George Bunyun a pioneer historian.

5. Schoolroom

Here children have a turn at sitting at the old wooden desks with inkwells. A volunteer will explain about that students in the past had no paper to write on – as paper was handmade and very expensive and so they used slates. Children can have a go at writing on slates. There are also oddities here, such as old bicycles hanging from the ceiling and old school room items such as an old blackboard illustrating running writing or cursive/copperplate script. There is even an abacus – an old fashioned calculator still used in parts of the world and originating from ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt and Asia.

Museum Ground and Barn Activities

1. Kitchen duties: mincing, juicing and churning butter

Children need to line up and take turns operating the equipment. Here they will grate carrots and make butter using cream.

When the children are using the butter churn a volunteer will hold the jar which will stop it tipping over.

A volunteer will press down on the carrots for the children so they can concentrate on turning the handle of the juicer or mincer *clockwise*. Children are not to put their hands in the mincer.

Each child will have a short turn of the mechanisms.

With the butter churn, at intervals, the top will be removed to show the children the thickening of the cream.

2. Washing day blues: washing tub, mangle, pegs and clothes line

Here children can have a taste of what washing was like for the maid, lady or housewife of the house in the old days. Sometimes men would do the washing but it was mostly regarded as '*women's work*' as men worked on the land, in the barn, or engaged in other activities.

Explanation is given about style of dress or clothes as they had to wash garments such as old long legged pantalettes. Washing was hard work - Monday was washing day – all day. Sometimes washing would be boiled in a copper and a wooden stirrer used to pull the clothes out of the copper.

Activity: The children can take turns scrubbing a cloth, putting it through the mangle and then hanging it on the line with wooden pegs.

Note: Children need to be supervised when placing washing in the mangle and turning the handle.

3. Loop the loop with a HOOP

Here children can let off a bit of steam and have some fun with an old fashioned bamboo hula hoop.

However, simple rules are: One hoop per student, no running or throwing the hoop. If there are too many children for individual hoops then they need to buddy up and each child gets a turn. Each child needs to give each other space so they don't strike each other with the rotating hoops.

In early days, children would roll a steel ring by using a wooden stick across a dirt paddock. The steel ring would be from a wagon wheel that was no longer required. If you look behind the barn, you will see these rings on the fence.

Activity: The hoop can be rolled back and forth on the ground or rotated on the body (arm, foot). The children can also ride a tricycle, push a mechanical lawn mower and lock their teacher in the stocks. The children then exit the barn and they can have a game of tossing horse shoes and quoits. This finishes the tour of the Inn and grounds.

4. Hey - what's in the barn?

Note: Make sure children are kept together as there are some dangerous objects here.

The volunteer will show the children old lamps and explain that in the old days there was no electricity just candle light and kerosene lamps. There are old washing machines and grinding stones. The grinding stone was used to sharpen tools which the blacksmith would make. The blacksmith was the heart of the community as he would make horseshoes and fit these on the horse. The smithy would also make tools used in on the land, such as branding irons to name cattle and bales (bags) of goods. Children will see some of the tools used by farmers and the blacksmith. They can have a look at the little model of the prison farm and other farming items, such as milk churns and large egg storage boxes, there is also a scale model of the Endeavour and children can be shown this and some explanation given about life at sea in the 1700s. Life was very hard – at sea for months at a time, often nothing to eat except salt beef and hard ship's biscuit (often full of weevils). There was also the threat of scurvy, a disease caused by not eating enough green vegetables and fruit. The disease could cause teeth, bone and skin problems. Later captains made sure they took on citrus fruit, or lime or lemon juice to make sure the crew was protected against scurvy,

Children will be brought over to the stage coach and an explanation given about travel in the past – via stage coach as there were no other means of public transport. Children can have a turn to go into coach or buggy and sit in it. Just watch them and make sure they are supported when getting up and down. Just hold their hand if they need the support.

Safety and Risk Assessment Report

Venue Name	Arms of Australia Inn Museum		
Location	Corner of Gardenia Ave and Great Western Highway, Emu Plains		
Contact Details	T: 02 4735 4394	F: 02 4722 5776	
	E: info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au	W: www.armsofaustraliainn.org.au	
Insurance	Does the venue have public liability insurance?		YES

Activity/ Program	Recommended age group/fitness level/prerequisite skills	Staff accreditation/ competence	Potential Risks	Control strategies to ensure visitor safety
Arrival and Departure	All ages	Trained volunteers and Historical Society staff.	Transport	Teachers and accompanying adults should supervise students while crossing roads and hopping on and off buses. Off street parking at the main entry gate is provided.
			Trips and Falls	Students should be reminded not to run whilst in the museum grounds and from the grassed areas to concrete paths. In wet weather steps and paths may be slippery.
			Access	Stroller, wheelchair and ramp access is available for the barn, meeting room and toilets.
			Lost students	Please make sure every student is accounted for before proceeding.
Cloaking	All ages	Trained volunteers	Lost Property	Bags cannot be taken into the museum. As no cloaking facilities are available, make sure your group bring only lunches (if required) and small bags. Ensure hats and other loose items are stored in bags. The museum staff will take all care but no responsibility for student's belongings. It is recommended that valuables not be bought on the excursion. Report any lost property to museum staff.

Activity/ Program	Recommended age group/fitness level/prerequisite skills	Staff accreditation/ competence	Potential Risks	Control strategies to ensure visitor safety
Student behaviour during the visit	All ages	Teachers, accompanying adults and trained museum staff	Injuries caused by trips and falls, climbing over safety barriers, touching electrical equipment, sharp objects or heavy objects.	Before the visit, teachers must go through the Museum Rules (web location and page 16 of this Guide) with the students and accompanying adults. Make sure every teacher and accompanying adult has a copy of the rules. Students should be reminded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not to run • to keep near handrails and take care while using stairs • to remain behind safety barriers • not to enter areas marked “No Access” • not to touch any object or electrical equipment. On arrival your group will be briefed about the exhibit areas, safety, and history and assisted with any other details.
			Lost students	Teachers should supervise students at all times and take head counts at regular intervals.
			Teachers free with ID	Teachers are encouraged to visit the museum prior to the school visit to familiarise themselves with the facilities.
			Lost students	Please make sure every student is accounted for before proceeding.
Specialist programs common to all	All ages	Teachers, accompanying adults and trained museum staff	Trips and Falls	Students must observe the instructions of the museum staff while undertaking activities in any of the museum’s facilities or programs.
			Injuries caused by the inappropriate use of equipment	A safety briefing is conducted on arrival to all students, teachers and accompanying adults. A second briefing is conducted with each individual group prior to commencement of the activity. Should any safety concerns be identified in relation to the activity, the teacher will be advised at the time of booking.
			Electrical equipment	Electrical tagging and testing undertaken.

Activity/ Program	Recommended age group/fitness level/prerequisite skills	Staff accreditation/ competence	Potential Risks	Control strategies to ensure visitor safety
Specialist programs common to all	All ages	Teachers, accompanying adults and trained museum staff	Glass panels enclosing exhibits	Safety glass is used for all enclosures and Perspex shields are used on moving exhibits.
			Students are exposed to possible allergens; soap when washing hands and scrubbing cloths; cream when churning butter, feathers and chalk dust in the school room, pollens in the garden.	Teachers are asked to inform guides of students with allergies or special dietary requirements. Such students are not required to actively participate in these activities.
Grounds	All ages	Teachers, accompanying adults and trained museum staff	Trips and Falls	Students should be reminded not to run whilst in the museum grounds and from the grassed areas to concrete paths. In wet weather steps and paths may be slippery.
			Students use water pump	Students are instructed on how to crank the handle safely and how to tilt the bucket to empty the water.
			Students use hand crank dryer (mangle)	Students are instructed on how to insert clothing into the dryer safely and are supervised by staff.
			Injuries caused by climbing over exhibits, safety barriers. Touching electrical equipment. Sharp or heavy objects.	Students to be reminded to keep near handrails and take care when handling equipment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to remain behind safety barriers • not to enter areas marked “No Access” • not to touch any object or electrical equipment. On arrival the group will be briefed about the exhibit areas, safety, history and any other details.

Equipment

Specialist Programs	wooden buckets, steel wash tubs. copper wash tub, wooden scrub boards, brushes, glass butter churn, hand crank dryer (mangle), grind stone, wooden drying frame, chalk boards, chalk, gramophone records, ore dolly, pianola, Sylvester switchboard, horseshoes, quoits
Other requirements	Sunscreen and hats are advised. Students should bring water bottles and food for the whole visit as there is no provision for students to purchase food and drink on site or nearby. Tap water (unfiltered) is always available..
Supervision/Services	Museum staff are allocated to each program. Group size restrictions apply to all programs. Please contact venue for details. Student behaviour is the responsibility of the supervising teacher. The Arms of Australia Inn Museum has a first aid kit available for use during your visit. The museum does not have a designated first aid room. Some museum guides have first aid accreditation. The Nepean District Historical Society cannot guarantee that a first aid trained staff member will be in attendance on the day of your visit. Most areas of the museum are accessible by wheelchair but others are not. There are no lifts or escalators in the museum.
Building	The entrances to the Inn building the have low beams, for tall people this would be a hazard
Access	Is access to and from the premises safe and without risk to health? YES Is the venue wheelchair accessible? YES Are toilets for the disable available? YES
Emergencies	Are emergency procedures in place in the venue? YES Are staff trained to deal with emergency situations? YES
Construction/ Maintenance/Repair	Are licensed personnel used for all construction, maintenance and repair work? YES
First Aid	Are first aid kits available for each activity? YES Is there a trained first aid officer at the venue? YES & NO Is a first aid room available? NO
Child related employment	Are employees of your organisation engaged in child-related employment as defined by the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 and the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998? YES If Yes, are all employees/volunteers on-site during school Related activities currently registered for "Working with Children" by Service NSW? YES
Covid -19	Is the premises registered as Covid safe YES
School Visits	The site will be considered closed to other visitors during The duration of the school visit YES

School Rules at the Museum

These rules have been designed to ensure your student's safety and help protect museum objects. They will also help you comply with Department of Education and Training Risk Assessment Guidelines for Excursions.

Remember at least one adult must accompany each group of 20 secondary students, or each group of 10 years 3 – 6 students, or each group of five K-2 students, or each group of two under 5's. This adult must stay with the group at all times and is responsible for the group's behaviour and safety.

- Travel as light as possible. Large bags and valuables should not be brought to the museum. If your students have valuables such as wallets, cameras, phones etc, it is recommended they remove them before placing their bags in the designated clocking area.
- Be considerate of other visitors to the museum. In particular, avoid blocking major thoroughfares, entry and exit points. **NO RUNNING** in the museum.
- Make sure shoe laces are tied and take care with floor length clothing.
- Students must not run or climb on displays or exhibits.
- Beware of the stone flooring surrounding the main museum as it is uneven and students should take care when walking on this surface.
- No eating or drinking in the museum.
- Swearing and foul language is not tolerated and students will be asked to leave.

Schools should plan to arrive 10 minutes early. In the case of delay please contact the museum on (02 4735 4394).

Booking and information: T: 02 4735 4394

Email: info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au

Web: www.armsofaustraliainn.org.au/schools.php

Amenities and Services

Disabled Access

Disabled access to toilets are next to the men's and women's toilets. Wheelchair access to the museum should be through the school-room or front door.

Fire

- Ring 000.
- The address is Corner of Great Western Highway and Gardenia Avenue
- Evacuation plans are situated in all rooms of the Inn.
- Fire extinguisher and a fire blanket is located in Reception area and the Meeting room.
- the school room door is unlocked as a safety precaution and escape whilst open
- In the event of fire make SURE all visitors have left the building
- Ensure site is evacuated.

First Aid

A First Aid box is located in the Meeting Room and a CPR chart is on the noticeboard. For emergencies dial 000.

Operating Times

The museum is open for schools and tourist groups and on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.00am til 2.00pm. Morning tea can also be provided at a minimal cost for Tour Groups. Note: When schools are on site, the museum will be closed to other visitors for the duration of their visit.

Tour groups can be arranged outside these days if necessary.

Ghost tours also operate by appointment. Contact Secretary Beth Moore 02 47351734

Parking

There is open air parking outside the museum.

Penrith City Council

Penrith Council owns the building and administers it through the 377 Arms of Australia Inn Committee, which is a Committee of Council. Council arranges for all maintenance and repairs and insures the buildings. Contact in the case of broken taps, toilet repairs etc, should be made through the Chairperson of the Committee. Penrith City Council, Civic Centre 601 High St, Penrith NSW 2750 Tel: (02) 4732 7777.

Police

The telephone number of Penrith Police Station is (02) 4721 9444 and is located at 317 High Street, Penrith NSW 2750.

Refreshments

Teachers and parent are welcome to water, tea and coffee, which is supplied by volunteers. We also have soft drinks available for purchase for \$1. Students are advised to take water bottles and supply their own food as there are no food outlets.

Smoking

No smoking on the site

Telephone

Calls can be made at no cost if a situation arises.

Article: Good old days... or not

By Rosanna Hawes

Every time when I look at the old flat irons, heavy pots and kettles, ancient sewing machines, and primitive washing implements in the museum I silently praise all the women (and some hardy men) who in the past, had to struggle with this equipment. No wonder pioneer women and men often looked old before their time. Some people may crave “*the good old days*” – before the Industrial Revolution and electricity, but I bet these people are the types who would like to recline on a chaise lounge being waited on by servants. The reality was that many people had to work hard – especially on the land. Our pioneers had to struggle with a harsh climate and difficult growing conditions – not to mention old fashioned cumbersome household implements and farming tools. Women had double the labour as they had to help on the land *and manage the home*.

Now we are fortunate to have electric or gas labour saving devices; we don’t have to scrub our clothes on old wooden washboards, chop wood, carry water from a well, stoke and cool over an open fire, sew all our own clothes, grow all our own food, feed and water livestock, bake bread, assist with home births if a midwife or doctor was not available, raise and home school children, make soap out of tallow (melted animal fat), concoct home remedies to treat illness, read (if we are lucky to have books) by kerosene lamp or candlelight.

Our ancestors had to be strong both mentally and physically – they just had to “*get on with it*” regardless. There was no counseling or treatment for depression or mental illness, antibiotics were not in use until after 1945 and terrible diseases such as tetanus, syphilis, polio, scarlet fever, small pox and cholera, killed and maimed. People had to endure solitude without current news – some may have been lucky to own and play a musical instrument. Mail took weeks or months to reach people especially if it came from overseas. Imagine the anxiety about not knowing about loved ones, especially in war times.

Sometimes the past may seem ideal especially when today we endure excessive advertising, high food prices, greedy banks, internet porn and scams, stupid reality (or unreality) television, slutty fashions, social media bullies, people smugglers and boat people, destructive middle-eastern conflicts, corrupt politicians and officials, binge drinking and drug smuggling. When human beings don’t have to struggle against the elements for survival – I guess they just struggle against each other. Perhaps that is why some people may want to live in the past – may be they think it would be more peaceful. However, while it is good to study and preserve the past - I certainly wouldn’t glorify it because, the past would have been rough if people did not work together. It’s a pity that many people still are unable to learn from the past about working together to solve problems – after all what is history for?

Reference: Antibiotics: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/antibiotics.htm> accessed 23/03/2013

Map of Museum