



Heritage & Tourism Awards

How enjoyable it is to be able to share our fully restored Ebenezer Church property with visitors to the church.

The Model T Ford rally that is briefly reported below is one example of functions we have had at the church. Visitors are most complimentary of what they experience and they enjoy the fascinating story of pioneer settlement of Ebenezer and the building of Ebenezer Church.

How good is the restoration work on Ebenezer Church and how well do we look after our visitors? Earlier this year we put these questions to the test by entering a state heritage competition and a Greater Sydney Tourism competition.

We were most excited about the results! Ebenezer Church was declared the winner of the NSW Heritage Branch Heritage Award that was sponsored by the Heritage Council of NSW and the NSW Department of Planning. In tourism we took out two silver awards. Both of these awards are reported on in this newsletter.

And so to everyone who supported the restoration of Ebenezer Church in recent years, we once again thank you. Your money was well spent!

And congratulations to our volunteer church caterers!

Ted Brill

On behalf of Ebenezer - Pitt Town Uniting Church

International Model-T Ford Rally visits Ebenezer Church



The Model T Ford Club of Australia (NSW) held the 10th International Model T Ford Rally in the Hawkesbury district in the last week of September. The vintage vehicles headed out on a different drive each day and on Friday 1 October over 100 of the magnificent Model T Fords made their way to Ebenezer Church, the church congregation catering with devonshire teas for 165 people.



Church Contacts

Minister

As we do not currently have a full-time minister, all inquiries should be made to the secretary.

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Ebenezer Church Shop 02 4579 9350
Bookings & Inquiries:
Ebenezer Church Shop,
PO Box 7048, Wilberforce, 2756

Ebenezer Church wins a Top Sustainable Cities Award!



Church Secretary Ted Brill receiving a state heritage award from Petula Samios, NSW Director of the Department of Planning's heritage Branch

Media Release:

Ebenezer Church in the Hawkesbury region was a winner at the Sustainable Cities Awards Dinner hosted by Keep Australia Beautiful NSW and City of Canada Bay Council, and attended by The Member for Drummoyne, The Honorable Angela D'Amore MP, Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Minister for Climate Change and the Environment.

The Sustainable Cities program is a Keep Australia Beautiful NSW initiative to recognise outstanding environmental initiatives implemented by local government authorities, schools and community groups and businesses whilst raising public awareness of a range of environmental issues affecting metropolitan NSW.

The incredible and lengthy work undertaken by the Ebenezer Church Council to restore Ebenezer Church in Ebenezer was the winning entry of the NSW Heritage Branch Heritage Award.

Peter McLean, CEO of Keep Australia Beautiful, said the project was particularly impressive for the way in which it pulled the small congregation together for a common goal:

"Ebenezer Church was incapable of meeting the costs of the restoration work but with some lateral thinking, the council was able to contact descendants of the 15 pioneer families who built the church in 1809, and obtained 60 percent of the needed funds."

The church is the oldest existing church in Australia and the five year restoration of Australia's oldest

existing church projects included roof repairs, water tank replacement, new toilets, painting, and weed clearing from river banks with some funding through the NSW Government's Heritage Grants Program administered by the Department's Heritage Branch.

The NSW Heritage Branch Heritage Award is sponsored by the Heritage Council of NSW and the NSW Department of Planning.

Petula Samios, Director of the Department of Planning's Heritage Branch, said: **"The conservation work undertaken on the Ebenezer Church over the past five years has demonstrated a high standard of workmanship and has engendered strong feelings of community ownership of the site.**

"This is evidenced by the high levels of support received from the local community, including the donation of skills and labour by experienced retired tradesmen, and the endorsement of Hawkesbury City Council which has identified the project as a model of best practice.

"The project has increased and improved public access, use and enjoyment of the site, including the installation of disabled toilets and maintenance work on the church grounds.

"The project has also benefited the local environment through the removal of weeds along the adjacent river bank."



2010 Greater Sydney Tourism Awards



In the 2010 Greater Sydney Tourism Awards Ebenezer Church has received a silver award in the category of **Heritage & Culture**.

The awards in Heritage & Culture were:

GOLD Hawkesbury Regional Museum

SILVER Ebenezer Church

BRONZE Elizabeth Farm

This tourism competition was judged by a panel of twelve judges.



The **People's Choice Award** was decided by people voting on the internet and in this category it was announced that only one award would be made.

However, with an overwhelming 1700 votes between them, two nominations stood

out and so two awards were made:

GOLD The Golden Slipper Festival 2010

SILVER Ebenezer Church.

Thanks to everyone who supported us in this way.

Link with Crown Court Church of Scotland



As reported in the last newsletter, Ray Johnston, a descendant of church pioneers Andrew & Mary Johnston, and his wife Lyn, had arranged to attend a Thursday morning service at Crown Court Church of Scotland in Covent Garden when they travelled overseas earlier this year.

On behalf of Ebenezer Church and its pioneer descendants, Ray presented Crown Court with a bicentenary commemorative plate.

The photograph shows Ray with Reverend Philip Majcher, minister of Crown Court, who accepted the plate at an afternoon tea that followed the service. Ray reported that it was an enjoyable few hours.

MACQUARIE GARDEN



To commemorate the 200th anniversary of Governor Lachlan Macquarie's period of Governor of the Colony of New South Wales Governor Macquarie roses were planted at Ebenezer in June 2010 and will be planted at Scots Church Pitt Town in October. A special area was prepared at Ebenezer. It is

located on the edge of the cemetery to the left as you enter church grounds. Two roses were planted with a background of a low post-and-rail fence and hedge. Elizabeth Macquarie irises were added later. A plaque in the garden acknowledging Governor Macquarie's visit to Ebenezer Church on 4 December 1810 was unveiled at the Pilgrimage on 19 June.

On the other side of the hedge is a special area set aside for the interment of stillborn babies. By setting such an attractive area aside we will be supporting bereaving parents at sad times of their lives. It will be a place to visit and reflect and so assist in the process of healing.

The roses and the plaque were purchased with funds from the Marjorie Johnston and Charles Kemp bequests and the project was financed by the Ebenezer Church Cemetery Trust.



Farewell to Grant & Wendy Bilbey

A well-attended farewell lunch was held at Ebenezer on 1st August 2010. Amongst the people present were members (past and present) of our congregation, friends and family of Grant & Wendy and couples Grant had married or had baptized their babies.

Gifts presented to the Bilbeys included an oil painting, a clock made from wood from the historic tree, bilby books, photographs and a hand-painted plate.

In the week before, Grant was the focus of special assemblies at Ebenezer and Pitt Town Public Schools. At Pitt Town, Principal Michael Miller invited back to the school the principals of the school during Grant's fourteen-year period of teaching scripture at Pitt Town. Rev. Bilbey is now the presbytery minister for the Georges River Presbytery of the Uniting Church.

A Special Thank you to ...

The Stubbs Family Association for a donation of \$4,000 for the Ebenezer Church property. The donation was spent on sealing the road entrance near the pavilion and so making it safer for minibuses with aged-care passengers. A garden seat will also be installed.

GRONO FAMILY

**The next GRONO FAMILY REUNION
will be held
on Sunday 1st May 2011
in the grounds of
Ebenezer Church, Ebenezer, NSW**

Please direct inquiries to:
Mandy Waller, 1 Johnston Street,
Pitt Town, NSW, 2756.
gronofamily@gmail.com

STUBBS FAMILY

32nd ANNUAL REUNION Saturday 30 October 2010

Ebenezer Church, Coromandel Road, Ebenezer, NSW.
From 9.30am
BYO picnic lunch, folding chairs, ...

Please direct inquiries to:

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Lillyan MacDonald,
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Killara NSW 2071.

Stubbs Family Website:

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~stubbs1802/>

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