



Dear Hill Enders & Tambaroorians

Once more I am writing this introduction to our newsletter from a very warm Hill End. The village is looking lovely, but so dry, the grass has been ‘mowed’ to its lowest level thanks to the goats and kangaroos, as there is a severe lack of water in the area. The Turon is just a series of muddy puddles. We have already had one bushfire in the district, out past the Ullamalla Road, caused by lightning. It was in timbered bushland and thankfully no structures were threatened, and it was ably dealt with by the Hill End Rural Fire Service. One can only imagine what it was like back in the 1870s when there was a much larger population here all competing for every precious drop of water. Yet, they survived.

As we head into a New Year, we are already planning the next Gathering at the Kokoda Walkway at Rhodes. See further details on page 15. We are looking forward to catching up with as many descendants as possible on Saturday 7 March. Now is the time to start contacting your cousins, aunts and uncles to ‘save the day’ and start planning to meet up for an enjoyable day catching up with old friends and making new ones. We welcomed 54 new members in the past 12 months and you never know, you might just be connected.

Our Family History Centre at Holtermann’s Corner continues to be a popular place for visitors and researchers alike to pop in to say Hi or to research their family connections. We also hope to have some new and interesting stock available in time for Easter as well. We are currently preparing our Annual Report which will be available at our AGM at the Gathering on 7 March.

Lorraine Purcell,
Hill End & Tambaroora Gathering Group Convenor



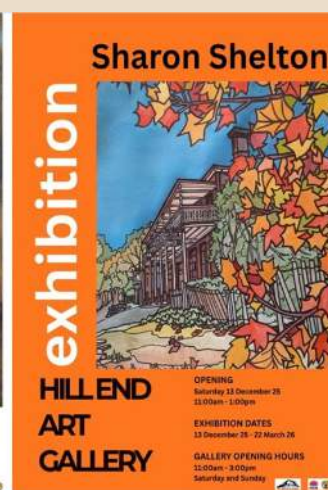
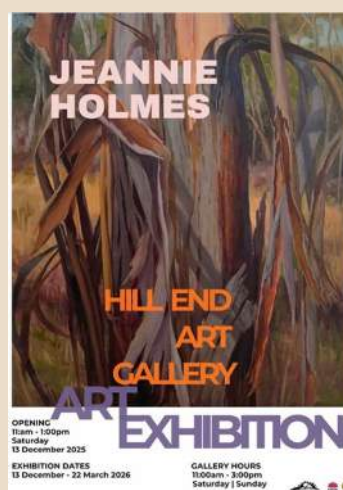
Two for the price of one, and both are FREE

Sharon Shelton, our talented volunteer and HEATGG co-convenor, is showcasing her artistic skills in an exhibition at the Hill End Art Gallery alongside fellow local artist, Jeannie Holmes, former manager of the 24 Carrot Café in Hill End.

The exhibition opened to acclaim on 13 December and will continue until 22 March 2026. Titled ‘The Colours of Hill End’, the presentation features works by both artists, each illustrating the distinctive qualities of Hill End through various media. The exhibition highlights the longstanding appeal of Hill End to artists over the past eight decades.

The Hill End Art Gallery is open 11 am – 3 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Entry is free.

Our local community



Hill End's latest venture



It's been a long journey

from this



via this



to this



With the temporary closure of the Royal Hotel for refurbishment before being leased out again, Hill End has received a hospitality boost with the resurgence of the Hosies building as a 'Micro Pub'. It is filling the gap left by the Royal Hotel's temporary closure and this new watering hole offers a cosy spot for local drinks, food, and community vibes.

Affectionately known as 'Hosies', this historic building in Hill End has undergone a mini transformation and is now known as the Hill End Micro Pub. New owners, locals Cara and Casey, both have longstanding family connections to the village and if the support and success of the first few weeks is anything to be excited about, then they could be there for the long haul. They aim is to 'provide a gathering place for locals, travellers, wanderers and curious souls seeking a true taste of small-town charm'.

Housed within the beautifully restored 1870s gold-rush store, the best of old-world character blends with the easy-going warmth of modern country hospitality. Downstairs, you'll find honest food, cracking local wines and craft beers, and a friendly crew who welcome you like you've always been part of the Hill End story. Upstairs, the charm continues with accommodation for up to 12 guests across seven heritage bedrooms, five queen rooms and two singles, making it ideal for couples, families, groups and retreats. Check it out on your next visit.

Their hours are Wednesday to Sunday: 11 am until late (latest 10 pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday and midnight on Friday and Saturday)

Kitchen Hours

Lunch: 11 am until 2 pm

Dinner: 5 pm until 8 pm

Light meals: available between services

Above-the-Pub Accommodation

Available daily, with self check-in and check-out for all rooms.

Check out the details at hillendmicropub.com.au

Harry seems to have got it right!

In chapter 2 of Book 3 of *The Hill End Story*, Hodge mentions that:

Hill End seems to distil a magic potion which draws its children back to it, sometimes after many years of separation. It generates an urge to return that cannot be denied... Hill End may relax its grip on its sons and daughters, but it never entirely lets go.

Over the years the Gathering Group has experienced this pull, not just on the sons and daughters, but on their extended families and even friends, who visit us to find out from us, and to share with us, the information that has been collected over generations regarding their ancestors.

It is not just the people who return, but also items that had their original home in the district. Amongst these objects returning recently was a cricket belt buckle (travelled from Tasmania), a precious copy of the 2-volume set of *Australian Men of Mark*, a 1920s desk from the Hill End school (came to us from Cairns in Queensland) and a small wooden crucifix purportedly from the Catholic Church. We have inherited many photos (named and unnamed), typewritten and photocopied family histories, home movies of school visits, oral histories recorded on now very outdated technology, and even small relics that have been prised from the soil during metal detector explorations. We love and respect them all.

Bill and Betty Maris, who led the Gathering Group for over four decades, frequently received such items when descendants were uncertain about what to do with family heirlooms and memorabilia that had adorned their grandparents' homes. This aspect of stewardship has been actively embraced and encouraged within the Group.

Now that we have our expanded facilities at Holtermann's Corner in Hill End, a few more wonderful donations have come our way. We don't have a lot of room and are certainly not a museum, but we won't say no if it is an item of significance to the district.

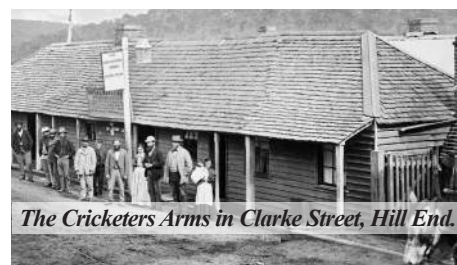
Mary McLean's Diary

One such objects that has come our way is Mary McLean's (of 'Little House Marshall') diary, handwritten on her journey to Australia under sail on the *Africana* in 1865.

Lost for almost a century, this diary had been rescued from a derelict house in Hill End in 1961 and had been held in private hands until mid-2025, when it made its way back from Tasmania to us. We were alerted to its existence when it was transcribed and included in a book about shipboard diaries, *No Privacy for Writing* by Andrew Hassam, in 1995.

The Coffee Pot

Another object that arrived by mail from South Australia is a coffee pot presented to John King Weir, the first publican of the 'Cricketers Arms', which was later called 'Weir's Hotel'. He held the licence from 1863 to 1886. The Masons established the Lodge Golden Star 296 Irish Constitution at Hill End on 23 September 1871 at the Cricketers Arms Hotel, and they met there until it dissolved around 1888. The members presented John King Weir and his wife with a silver-plated coffee pot in appreciation of their service to the Lodge. It had been lovingly handed down through generations of the Weir family and now resides in pride of place in the display cabinet at Holtermann's Corner.



The Cricketers Arms in Clarke Street, Hill End.

The inscription reads:

FROM GOLDEN STAR LODGE No. 296 D.C. Hill
End to Bro P.M. & Mrs J.K. Weir in fond remembrance
of their catering at the BRETHERENS MANY
PLEASANT GATHERINGS



If you have such objects, photos or documents, please contact us if you are considering disposing of them. If they are not suitable for our collection, then we will help find the right place for them.

Lorraine (phone 0408117784 or email heatgg@yahoo.com.au)

Vale Joan Auld (1935–2025)

Hill End lost another one of its long-term residents just before Christmas. Joan Auld, nee Warry, passed away peacefully on 15 December 2025 in Bathurst at the age of 90.

She was born Phyllis Joan Auld on 29 April 1935 in her grandmother Hocking's house in Denison Street, Hill End. Her parents were Reg and Vera Warry and she had 11 siblings, 10 predeceasing her — Iris, Norm, Neta, Joyce, Eva, Reg, Len, Geoff, John, and Rick. Just one her youngest sister, Pattie Gainsford, remains.

During her early years, her family lived in the Artist's House (Murray's Cottage), Northey's Store, and then Willow Glen at Tambaroora. She attended Hill End Public School from 1940–1950.

Over the years, she had various jobs — working as a housemaid and kitchen hand at Canobolas Hotel in Orange and then in Bathurst Hotel.

She returned to Hill End and married Ray Auld on 29 December 1956, and they made their home in Hill End, parenting 6 daughters. She remained in Hill End for around 76 years, until she moved to Bathurst to live with her daughter, Bev, in 2011 after Ray passed away.

She was the proud Nan to her many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Joan was remembered as having a heart of gold and a great fundraiser for many causes. Many recall that she almost always had a book of raffle tickets in her hand, raising money for the CWA, the Bush Fire Brigade, the school and the Cricket Club. She was a beautiful knitter and crocheter, spending time at the school teaching the children how to knit and listening to their reading. She is sadly missed by her family and many friends.

Joan was farewelled from St Paul's Church in Hill End on 29 December 2025, followed by a burial in the Tambaroora Cemetery, and a wake at the Royal Hall.



Get your family's copy now!

Our latest publication *Pan to Fire* by Karen Bates is an equal dose of family history and great recipes. Based on recipes with a Hill End flavour and handed down through generations it also includes historical details about the original cook and their family and their life in the district. Beautifully illustrated with the culinary results combined with the recipes, this will be a great gift for descendants of the contributors, or just those who like a cookbook that is much more than just recipes.

Check out the list of families represented in the book and order your copy here heatgg.org.au/publications/pan-to-fire



Vertex Community Newsletter

Every 2 months, Vertex Minerals sends out a newsletter. If you would like to receive the newsletter, you can ask to be added to their mail list via their website: vertexminerals.com/contact-us and ask to be added to their newsletter email list.



The National School in Tambaroora

In 1858, Mr. Forster, a local supporter of the school, remarked that most of the children in Tambaroora—indeed, an overwhelming majority—were growing up in a state of alarming ignorance. The situation failed to improve, and by early 1863, additional steps were taken to address the problem.

A formal application to the Board of National Education (dated 1863-02-18), for the establishment of the school, was signed by Joseph Cox, J. Renateau, Thomas Smith, William James Slack and J.W. Cullen and listing the following details:

- A grant of £200 from the government for the erection of the building and also a further annual sum in support of the teacher was required. (Subscriptions were made towards the construction of the building with the Board of National Education doubling what was contributed by the community.)
- Numbers of children in the district were 63 boys and 45 girls, 108 in total.
- The site for the school was half an acre situated on the ground known as the ‘Racecourse’ reserved by the government for the site of a National School.
- The proposed cost of the building was £300. The local patrons were of the opinion that the said sum would erect a building with the required school accommodation, together with school furniture and rooms attached for the teacher. The local patrons directed that the building should be weatherboard and shingled with stone chimneys, there being no bricks to be had in the district.

The following is a list of those who subscribed for the building of a National School in Tambaroora. The Treasurer wished to acknowledge the donations made by those who contributed amounts between £1 and £10. This list of names appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* February 28, 1863 on page 4. (nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13075004)

Was your ancestor supporting this cause and was amongst these names?

| | £ | s | d | | £ | s | d | | £ | s | d |
|-----------------------|----|----|---|----------------------------|---|----|---|----------------------------|---|----|---|
| Joseph Cox, Esq, P M | 2 | 2 | 0 | Dangar, Gilchrist, and Co. | 2 | 2 | 0 | Prince, Ogg, and Co. | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| J. G. Waller and Co. | 10 | 10 | 0 | J. O. Philips | 1 | 1 | 0 | John Kown and Co. | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| John Meillon, Esq | 5 | 5 | 0 | H. Peitzcker | 1 | 1 | 0 | Oriental Bank Corporation | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| J. G. Renateau, Esq | 5 | 5 | 0 | James Cullen | 1 | 1 | 0 | W. S. Friend and Co. | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Master J W F Renateau | 0 | 10 | 6 | M. Morgan | 1 | 1 | 0 | Keep and Parsons | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Miss R M Renateau | 0 | 10 | 6 | M. Green | 1 | 1 | 0 | Robert Wisdom. Esq, M.L.A. | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| E Smith, Esq | 5 | 5 | 0 | W. Sing Chie | 1 | 1 | 0 | Mrs Harriet Beard | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| J Reid, Esq | 5 | 0 | 0 | R. Farrington | 1 | 1 | 0 | Lawler (constable) | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| A. M. Arthur and Co. | 5 | 5 | 0 | W. Slack | 1 | 1 | 0 | Corporal Kelly | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| J. Frazer and Co. | 5 | 5 | 0 | G. Gain | 1 | 1 | 0 | Lewis Clark | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| E. Paten | 2 | 2 | 0 | H. Stevenson | 0 | 10 | 6 | Joseph Dixon | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| J Armstrong | 2 | 2 | 0 | John Johnson | 1 | 1 | 0 | Mrs Dixon | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Jackson and Hurley | 2 | 2 | 0 | William English | 1 | 1 | 0 | Mr Moriarty | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Haydon and Co. | 2 | 2 | 0 | Master Dudley Warren | 1 | 1 | 0 | Wong Ateak | 5 | 5 | 0 |



The School remained in this location up until 1877. This photo of the school was taken by the American & Australasian Photographic Co. in the early 1870s and is part of the Holtermann Collection at the SLNSW.

For further information about the schools check out our book *Strive with honour 150 years history of Hill End Public School 1870–2020* available in our bookshop:

heatgg.org.au/publications/public-school-history-book/



A Tragic Accident

The recent refurbishment of some graves in the Tambaroora Cemetery by grandsons of Charles Maris, Jack and Rob Flynn, reminded us of a tragic accident which occurred on Thursday 24 November 1938, when the residents learned of the accidental deaths of two of the well-known local Maris family members.

The press widely reported the incident and the inquest on 8 December 1938, which was published in the *Bathurst National Advocate* on 9 December 1938, revealing the heartbreaking details:

The pathetic circumstances in which Charles Maris, 57, married, and his son, Charles Patrick Maris, 23, single, both miners, met their deaths through having been buried when a tunnel collapsed and overwhelmed them in a shaft they were working at Sailor's Bluff on Thursday, November 24. They were the subject of a coronial inquest at the local Courthouse this morning. The finding was one of accidental death.

The chief witness was Arthur Toseland, miner, who stated that the deceased men camped near him along the Turon River whilst working their mine. On the date of the fatality, they called at his camp about lunch time and said they were going to a school picnic later that afternoon. The Maris's then left and went to their mine to do some work.

Witness, continuing, said he saw Maris, Jnr. wheel a truck out of the tunnel about an hour afterwards. He saw no more of them and when they did not return for tea, he thought they were away at the picnic and had no suspicion that anything was wrong. Next morning he went down to the Maris's mine but did not see them about. He went down into the tunnel and saw their dog go into it. He followed the dog and discovered that the roof of the tunnel had fallen in. From 20 to 30 tons of earth had given away.

Toseland went on to say that he hastened to a neighbour, Leslie Keech and armed with shovels they returned to the mine. After two hours' work the body of the father was dug out and it required a further hour's digging before the son's body was located.

Toseland's version was corroborated in evidence given by Leslie Keech.

Herbert Maris, a son and brother of the victims, said the deceased left home on Monday morning prior to the tragedy and had intended to return from their mine on the Friday. He added that as far as he knew the victim's lives were not insured. Dr. Jerome O. Flynn, Government Medical Officer stationed at Sofala in his testimony said on examining the bodies he found that the necks of both were broken. This was the cause of death. The fall of earth could have caused death.

The Coroner, Mr. W. F Hodge thereupon returned his verdict of death from injuries accidentally received through a fall of earth in their mine on November 24.

The funeral was carried out on Saturday 26 November and the details were again reported in the *Bathurst National Advocate* on 28 November 1938:

A very sad and impressive scene was enacted at the Hill End cemetery on Saturday afternoon when the double funeral of Mr. Charles Maris and Mr. Charles Patrick Maris, father and son, who were fatally injured in a mining accident on Friday, took place. The Rev. Mr. Mullins officiated at the home and again at the graveside and the services he rendered were very touching. The sobs of a very large gathering of relatives and friends around the graveside were audible as first Mr. Charles Patrick Maris and then Mr. Charles Maris were lowered into the grave. The heavy silver mounted maple casket in which the remains of Mr. Maris, senr. were encased was conveyed to and from the hearse and to the graveside by Messrs. William Whittaker, William Brodie, Eric Myatt and James Desmond. The identical beautiful casket of his son was conveyed to and from the hearse by Messrs. Arthur Thompson, Richard Thompson, Walter Trivena [Trevena] and Frank Trivena [Trevena]. The chief mourners were the deceased's sorrowing widow and mother [Mrs. Maris], Mr. and Mrs. W. Brodie, son-in-law and daughter, Miss Dot Maris, daughter and sister and Mr. and Mrs. H. Maris, son and daughter in law, Ronald and Thelma Elliott, grandchildren. Herbert and Max Maris, grandchildren. Douglas Brodie, grandson and many others. The very large number of wreaths and floral tributes including domes were the really beautiful tributes made by these men's relatives and friends to show the popularity and high esteem they were held in throughout the district. Mr. J. Tangye had charge of the funeral arrangements.

Remembering Mary Flynn

Many of our Gathering Group members who have had close association with Hill End may recall Mary Flynn (nee Maris, formerly Brodie), the very longstanding Post Mistress at the Hill End Post Office. She was the daughter of the above Charles (Snr) and a sister to Charles Patrick. On her passing on 13 December 1995 Mary Ann Flynn was buried near them in Tambaroora Cemetery.

Mary lived her entire life in Hill End and started her career as the assistant post mistress in Hill End in 1932, becoming the post mistress in 1945. She also then operated the manual telephone exchange, working 6 am to 10 pm on weekdays and slightly less on weekends. In 1992 she received an Advance Australia Award for community service and continued her work in the Post Office until her death in 1995. The camping area on the Turon River, where her father and brother were killed was named 'Mary Flynn Reserve' in her honour.

In September 2025, when her father's and brother's grave in Tambaroora Cemetery was refurbished and a plaque mounted on a plinth, a matching plaque with the following text was also installed at the Mary Flynn Reserve mine cave-in site on the Bridle Track:



The refurbished grave with plaque



The new plaque and plinth at the site of the cave-in at Mary Flynn Reserve on the Turon River

In Memory of
Alfred (Charles) Maris

06 September 1881

and his son

Paddy (Charles) Maris

26 February 1915

Who were both tragically killed
at this site in a mine cave-in
on the 25 November 1938

*Dedicated by the
Maris, Brodie and Flynn Families*

Hill End Easter Community Market 2026

Our popular markets will again be held on Easter Saturday 4 April 2026. All enquiries for stalls (\$15 a table) can be made to Ian and Julie Hodge on markets@heatgg.org.au by 21 March.

More information can be found here
heatgg.org.au/activities/markets-in-hill-end/

New stallholders are always welcome.



Chinese Masons on the goldfields of New South Wales

ourchinesepast.org.au/chinese-masons-on-the-goldfields-of-new-south-wales

By Juanita Kwok 18 November 2025

After landing taxes were introduced in Victoria in 1855 and South Australia in 1856 to deter Chinese arrivals, gold seekers from the Pearl River Delta area began landing in Sydney and making their way to the New South Wales goldfields.¹ There were already small numbers of Amoy men on the goldfields. In 1867, clear reference was made to the existence of Chinese Freemasons in Braidwood on the Southern Goldfields of New South Wales. The Braidwood Dispatch reported ‘members of the craft muster in great force in the Braidwood district’ and that there were no less than 400 Chinese members present at an initiation held at Jembaicumbene, where English gentlemen along with fifty Chinese men, were initiated into the Lodge. The report differentiated the Chinese Lodge from European Freemasonry, which it said, was also well-established on the goldfields.²

The Yee Hing were also active on the Western Goldfields of New South Wales. John Fitzgerald argued that Bathurst storekeeper Loong Hung Pun (Kong Loong) was ‘a Yee Hing leader of note who oversaw the local operation of the credit-ticket system on the western gold fields of New South Wales.’³ English language newspaper reports of Chinese on the Western Goldfields of New South Wales mention the existence of temples, but do not make specific reference to Chinese Masons. In 1861, the Sydney Morning Herald’s goldfields correspondent described a joss house in Sofala as ‘a large tent, gaudily decorated inside and out, with tapers lighted on a table inside at noonday, and an unmistakeable Chinese flag flying over the doors. Unfortunately, he did not report the appearance of the flag.’⁴ In 1865, Tambaroora was said to be the site of ‘their most famous joss-houses’.⁵

The Holtermann Collection contains a circa 1872 photograph titled ‘Bark huts in Chinatown Tambaroora’. Hill End Historian Brian Hodge identified the building as a Chinese temple. The couplets flanking the temples doors have been translated in English as, ‘His spirit shines in northern palace, His blessing shelters all the Southern Sea’.⁶ According to translator Ely Finch, the inscriptions identify the temple as nominally a Daoist temple dedicated to multiple deities, with the central hall dedicated to Pak Tai, one of the most popular deities in the Pearl River Delta.⁷ Pak Tai is the god of the northern sky/heaven, and is sometimes associated with the North Star, and at other times with the big dipper.



*‘Bark Huts in Chinatown, Tambaroora’, American and Australasian Photographic Company, 1870–75, Holtermann Collection, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.*⁸

On the Northern goldfields of NSW, there was a joss house at the Rocky River near Uralla in 1863. A new temple opened at the Rocky River in 1866. By 1870, Chinese miners were turning from gold to tin, with Chinese going to work on tribute on the tin fields of Northeast Tasmania and on tin fields at Tingha, Oban and Emmaville in northwest New South Wales. Research by ‘Our Chinese Past’ committee member Malcolm Oakes showed that storekeeper 鄭尚 (Chin Ah Song),⁹ moved from the Rocky River goldfield to Tingha in 1874, operating a store in Tingha for the next 29 years. It appears that those who moved from the Rocky River brought temple artefacts with them to Tingha. As will be discussed in the next post, Tingha and Northern NSW became a centre for Yee Hing activity.

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Doesn’t it make you wonder...

Our ancestors were on the goldfields. Just what happened to all that gold that was found during those early years? Did they sell it to the Mint, did they make it into jewellery (which may have been handed down through the generations), or did it just disappear into shopkeepers’ hands as the cost of living rose? Maybe they built or purchased large real estate properties, sent their sons to expensive boarding schools back in England or elsewhere, or maybe they travelled the world on the ‘Grand Tour’.

The price of gold in January 1853 was recorded in the *Empire* newspaper’s ‘Gold Circular’ nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60136426

As we go to press on the (9 January 2026) the price of an ounce of gold has soared to an amazing \$6,697.33 as reported by the Australian Bullion Company. (abcbullion.com.au/products-pricing/gold)

The following are the prices of gold realised at my sale this day:—

| | | | | £. | s. | d. | £. | s. | d. |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Ovens | ... | ... | .. | 3 | 12 | 6 | | | |
| Turon | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 11 | 3 |
| Tambaroora | .. | .. | ... | 3 | 11 | 4 | | | |
| Dirt Hole | .. | .. | ... | 3 | 11 | 2 | | | |
| Meroo | ... | .. | .. | 3 | 11 | 0 | | | |
| Ophir | .. | .. | .. | 3 | 11 | 6 | | | |
| California.. | ... | ... | 3 | 10 | 0 | | | | |
| Braidwood.. | .. | .. | 3 | 10 | 9 | | | | |

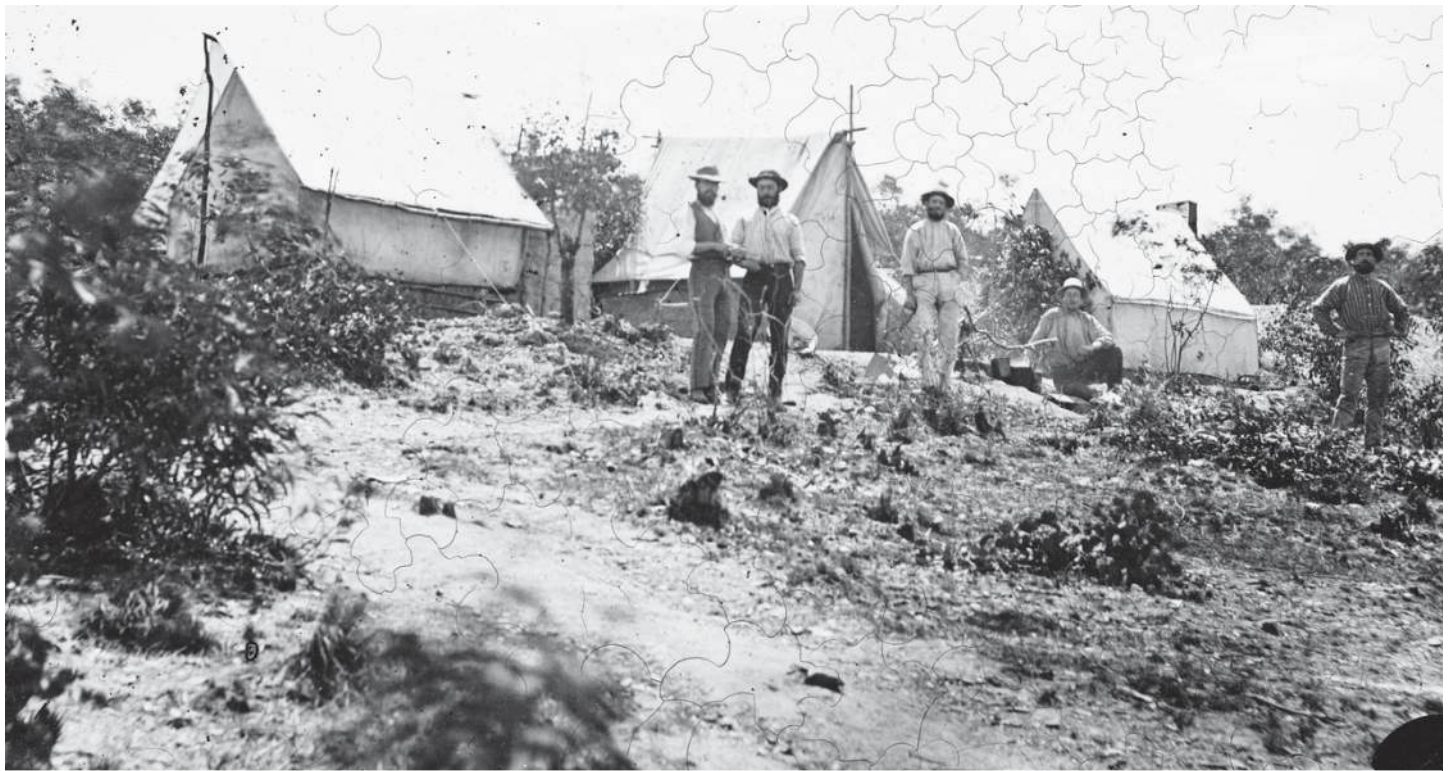
JOHN GODFREY COHEN,
Auctioneer and Bullion Broker.

490 George Street,
Sydney, January 21, 1853



Prospectors by T.S. Gill

Have you got a story to tell about your ancestors’ efforts and outcomes as a result of their search for GOLD? We’d love you to share it with us via our newsletter. Jot down your thoughts and send a copy to heatgg@yahoo.com.au



Miner's Camp, Hill End Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Tambaroora and Hill End: Streets shaped by necessity

The first arrivals on the goldfields in the early 1850s found nothing ... other than dirt, and scrub and possibly water in creeks or rivers ... sometimes there wasn't even that. Maybe a shepherd's outstation if they were lucky. They had to bring everything they needed, or thought they did, with them. Food, equipment and most importantly, shelter. Where they were headed there were no shops, no houses, no hotels or hospitals. Early miners slept under blankets, tarps, or nothing at all. However, when families started to arrive, they needed something more substantial.

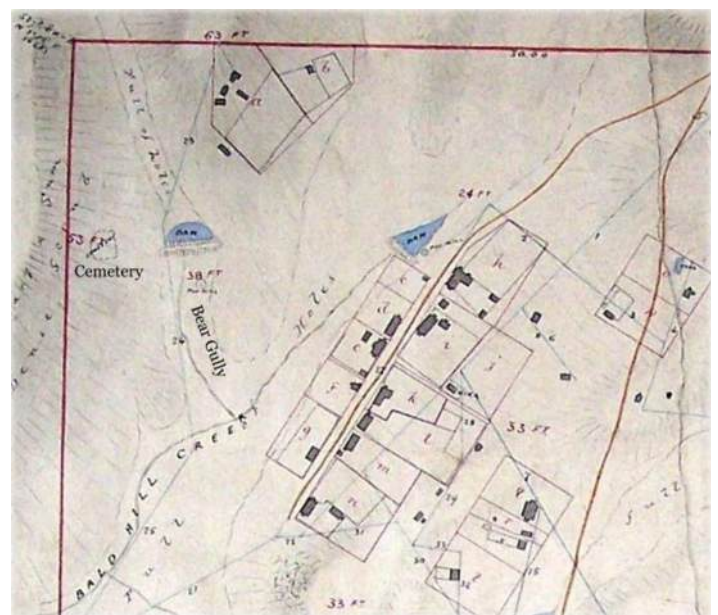
How long were they going to stay? Might be a few days, might be a month, or even a year ... all depending on how resilient and successful they (and their families) were.

Before long rough outlines of streets emerged when families settled in close proximity to each other for support and companionship. There were no surveyors or councils in those early days to say where you could pitch your tent or build your shelter. It wasn't until the late 1850s that thought was given to surveying these locations.

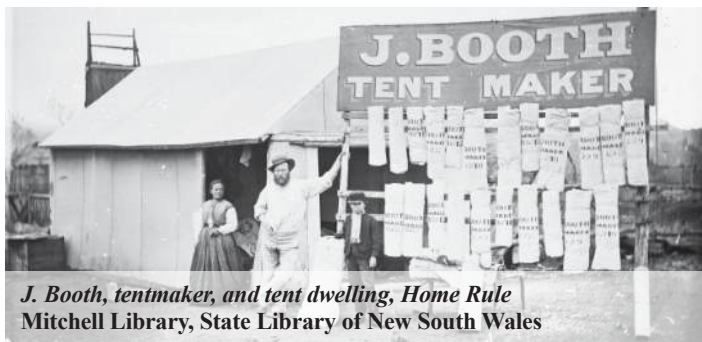
The early streets of Tambaroora and Hill End pay testament to this ad hoc arrangement. The rapid influx of people to the goldfields, combined with the lack of established infrastructure, meant that these towns grew organically and without any formal planning. Makeshift shelters, tents, and hastily constructed dwellings lined the rough tracks that served as streets, reflecting the urgency and resourcefulness of those seeking fortune. The haphazard nature of these settlements mirrored the uncertainty and flexibility of the goldfield pioneers, who adapted quickly to the challenging environment and created communities out of necessity and ingenuity.

This rough outline shows how land was 'acquired' and buildings erected. In between the commercial buildings were humble dwellings and tents. First in best dressed when space was available.

One of the earliest trades to arrive was the tentmakers. People may have brought some form of shelter with them but in the hot dry or cold wet conditions these only had a limited life and replacements were often sought. A proper tent was a necessity.



Early surveyor's plan of Bald Hills (later Forbes, then Hill End – late 1850s)



*J. Booth, tentmaker, and tent dwelling, Home Rule
Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales*

Miners with families especially needed good shelter and as their families grew so did the need for larger accommodation arise. It was an opportunity for those with skills in this area to prosper. They may have been sailors, used to sewing and repairing the huge canvas sails on the ships bringing the emigrants to Sydney. They may have had a background in military supplies, or even wagon builders and outfitters.

They were used to dealing with heavy canvas needed to make these tents. They were designed to cope with the heat and provided air vents for smoke. They stitched them by hand and reinforced the corners with leather and waterproofed the seams with tallow and wax. The Holtermann Collection of photographs shows many varying designs and sizes and adaptations. Augustus Baker Pierce had his 'Varieties Theatre' in a large tent. And even the first Catholic Church was a very large tent, before a more permanent one was built.

As towns stabilised gradually timber buildings replaced these tents and permanent streets were formed. No evidence of these earlier shelters remained, perhaps just the stone fireplace, and rows of quartz rocks outlining someone's once pride and joy. If they moved on, they took the canvas with them, leaving just flat cleared earth and compacted soil, and the rough wooden skeleton of the tent frame. When the canvas was next used new poles and supports were found nearby to replace those left behind.

By March 1872 a correspondent to the *Sydney Mail* reassured the readership that:

'A considerable amount of apprehension exists in the minds of non-residents, both on the matter of our township itself [Hill End] and the gold-bearing rocks that have made it what it is. I propose to disabuse the public mind as far as possible; the first as to our town. It does not consist of a collection of tents, pitched pell-mell, at the fancy of the proprietor. We have regularly laid out streets, with stores, houses, and hotels that would not disgrace Sydney itself...'

And the canvas to all intents and purposes had moved on...

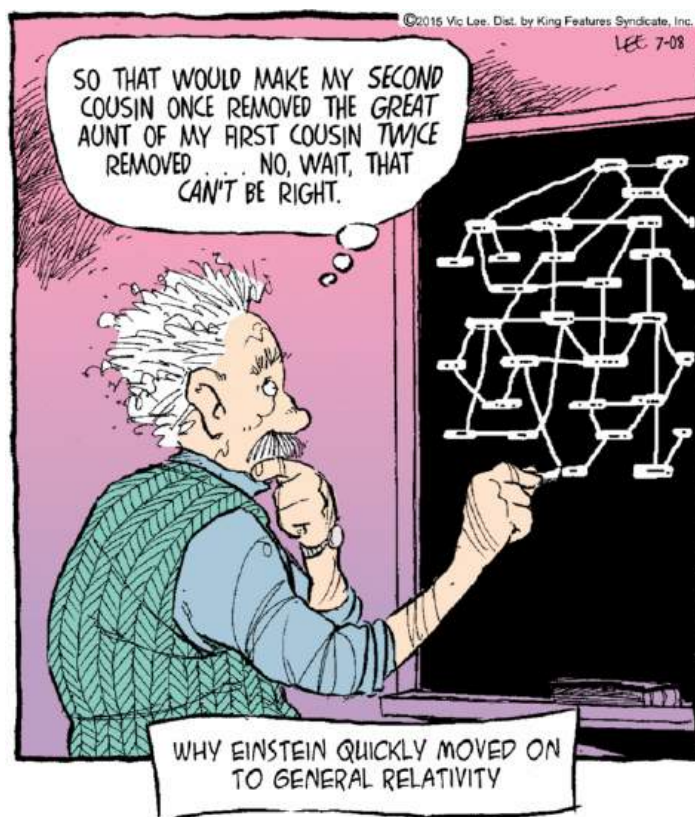
DIGGERS' TENTS, 12s 6d each, all sizes, qualities and prices. **JOSEPH MYERS**, Tent Store, Liverpool House, Thornton's buildings, Lower George Street, Seamans' Shipping Outfitter. Fishing Tackle.

TENTS, TENTS, TENTS. – 50 TENT-MAKERS wanted. I. Israel, wholesale and retail Tent and Tarpaulin Store, 712 Brickfield-Hill. The largest and best assorted stock of tents. Diggers' Tents, 12s 6p.

Advertising (1872, September 28). *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW:1842–1954), p. 9.



*Great Varieties Hall, tent theatre, Clarke Street run by William B. Gill and Captain Gus Pierce [i.e. Augustus Baker Peirce], Hill End
Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales*



Research enquiries

The following is a list of families Helen has researched. She usually provides any relevant information found in Hill End NPWS records and HEATGG files and also conducts further research (sometimes quite extensive) into the families in question and provide a report of her findings. Most people are appreciative and offer positive feedback. We do not charge for our research or sharing information; however, we do have a Donation box in the Family History Centre and a 'Donation' box at the heatgg.org.au/publications if you feel our work has been of some value to you.

[illegible]

Prior to 1856, when there were no official Birth, Death & Marriage registrations records kept, we need to turn to other sources to see if our ancestors were known to be in a locality at a particular time. One great source is subscription lists published in local newspapers. These lists may be the only record that they were present.

We recently came across such a list in the *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* of 4 November 1854. The following residents of Tambaroora contributed to the Fund for the erection of St. Michaels Catholic Church in Bathurst. Was your ancestor among them?

| | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| J. F. Andrews | Mr. Laurence Brien | Thomas Hughes | Thomas Murray |
| William Archer | Buckland | Mr. William Jackson | Isaac Newton |
| James Armstrong | Mr. George Clarke | William Jones | John O'Brien |
| Mr. William Barry | John Davis | Peter Kavanagh | Mrs. O'Brien |
| Mrs. Barry | Foreman | Miss Jane Levens | William Piper |
| Master W. John Barry | Mr. James Gains | Edward Long | Mr. Prior |
| Norman Barry | Miss Margaret Gillis | Mr. George May | Mrs. K Wallace |
| John Baird (? Beard) | Joseph Golding | George McCann | Samuel Ward |
| Thomas Bland | Mrs. Guddent | Mrs. Murdock | W. Williams |

HEATGG Committee

Convener: Lorraine Purcell (info@heatgg.org.au) Mobile: 0408 117 784

Co-convener and Family History Centre: Sharon Shelton

Secretary: Barbara Burnett

Treasurer: Barbara Burnett

Research Officer: Helen Wood

Membership Secretary: Debbie Court

Publicity Officer: Karen Bates

Family History Centre Coordinator: Michelle Brooks

Online Bookshop Officer: Alison Briggs

Committee Member: Debbie Taylor

Community Market Coordinators (ex-officio): Ian and Julie Hodge

Special notice regarding heatgg.org.au email addresses

It has come to our attention that there are emails being sent by scammer/s using the committee's heatgg.org.au email addresses. If you receive an email from Lorraine or committee members, do not click on any links unless the subject line contains the words 'Hill End'.

REMINDER: change of email or address contact details

Please let us know if you change your email or contact details – we don't want you to miss out on our notifications or newsletters.

A simple way is to reply to the email you receive from membership@heatgg.org.au. At the bottom of these emails you will find a link 'Update' to send updates or 'Unsubscribe' to send an email to let us know you no longer wish to receive Hill End and Tambaroora Gathering Group emails.

Debbie Court – Membership Secretary, Hill End and Tambaroora Gathering Group

Posted Newsletters

- Is your HEATGG Newsletter posted to you?
- Do you have an email address we could send it to you?
- Would you consider receiving your Newsletter by email?

This would save the Gathering Group money.

If you can to help the Gathering Group in this way, please email Debbie at membership@heatgg.org.au and she will remove you from the snail-mail list and make sure your email address is current.



Volunteers welcome!

We are always keen to encourage new volunteers who feel that they have skills or an interest in the work of the group to nominate to join the committee or just help out when they can. Now that we have settled into our new premises, it is a good opportunity to consider whether you have time to join us on some of our very interesting ventures.

We have become aware of a number of smaller projects that can be carried out 'remotely'. It may be transcribing or retyping old documents or updating digital records. We have something for everyone if you would like to be part of our volunteer team. Learn new skills!

We are especially looking for members who can help at our Family History Centre in Hill End on weekends or during the week. If you have an interest in the family or local history of the area and enjoy learning more and sharing your knowledge, then we would love to hear from you. If you live 'locally' – within an hour's drive from Hill End and can spare a day or so once a month this is a great opportunity to help us out in our Centre.

If you live not so 'local', you might like to take a few days and stay in Hill End. Basic accommodation can be provided at a very nominal cost too.

Contact Lorraine for more details (0408 117 784 or email heatgg@yahoo.com.au)



Hill End & Tambaroora Gathering Group 2026 Gathering and Annual General Meeting Information

Rhodes Rotary Park, Killoola Street, Concord West
(Adjacent to the Kokoda Memorial Walkway and Brays Bay)
Saturday, 7 March 2026 from 10 am until 4 pm
2026 Annual General Meeting commencing 12 noon

You are invited to the HEATGG Annual Gathering

Saturday, 7 March 2025 from 10 am until 4 pm, Rhodes Rotary Park, Killoola Street, Concord West

About the day

The day is a very free-form gathering with some arriving for morning tea (or earlier - just note the banner may not be up when you get there before 10 am). It is an excellent opportunity for those with ancestors from the region to meet with others who have a similar interest.

The day initially started as a reunion for those who lived/had lived in the Hill End and Tambaroora area to get together, the Gathering is gradually evolving into a meeting place for those with links to the district to join in as well and share their experiences and family history research.

Our meeting place for the past 18 years (minus the covid years), Rhodes Park, caters well to our requirements. Our venue provides public transport access, plenty of parking, and toilets and a large shelter shed which we have booked solely for our use all day.

There will be a small selection of reference materials on display on the day and a selection of Hill End related books and memorabilia available for sale. We will have credit card facilities available and we will accept cash too.

This may be an opportunity to meet the faces that match many of the names we have been corresponding with in the past 12 months. It is also an opportunity to renew the friendships made at previous reunions. As it is a very informal get together there is no need to 'book' to come to the gathering. We're sure to all fit in! Our venue should also provide enough shelter if the weather is inclement.

Please note the Kokoda Café appears to not be reopening, so bring a picnic lunch to enjoy. As usual, we will provide tea, coffee etc and boiling water for your convenience.

The bonus of attending the Gathering is you will also be ready to attend the annual general meeting. The AGM starts at 12 noon.

Further enquiries or details on parking and public transport can be made to Lorraine Purcell: 0408 117 784. Please leave a message if no answer or via email to heatgg@yahoo.com.au



Hill End & Tambaroora Gathering Group 2026 Gathering and Annual General Meeting Information

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Access by car:

Free parking is available at Rhodes Park, via Hospital Rd, Fremont & Killoola Streets or at Brays Bay Reserve off Concord Road. Stroll along the Kokoda Memorial Walkway to the Shelter Shed.

Parking is also available at Concord Hospital car park on Hospital Road. A parking fee applies depending on time. Please note there are time limits on parking in surrounding streets and remember to move your vehicles if necessary.

Public transport:

To make or check your travel plans closer to the event (including trackwork, disruptions to services) go to <https://transportsw.info> and enter your travel details in the trip planner.

Rhodes Railway Station

Train to Rhodes Railway Station, exit Blaxland Road, cross Blaxland Road, walk through Churchill Tucker Reserve and Cross Concord Road. Follow the Kokoda Memorial Walkway at Brays Reserve. The track continues after the carpark.

Burwood or Strathfield Railway Station to Hospital Road Concord

Catch either bus 410 (Burwood) or 458 (Strathfield or Burwood). These busses run approximately every 10–30 minutes. There is a short walk through the hospital carpark. Continue up the pathway on the right of the Kokoda Café to the shelter shed where we are gathering. **Look for the HEATGG banner as pictured on page 14.**

Route No. 410 from Burwood Station

Departs Burwood Station in Railway Parade Stand G (or E)

Route No. 458 from Burwood Station

Departs Burwood Station in Railway Parade Stand B

Route No. 458 from Strathfield Station

Departs Strathfield Station Strathfield Station, Everton Rd, Stand A

Ask the driver for closest stop to the Kokoda Walkway in Hospital Rd. (outside Concord Hospital). From here you can either walk through the hospital carpark or you can walk from Hospital Road up Fremont Street and along Killoola Street. (Map next page)

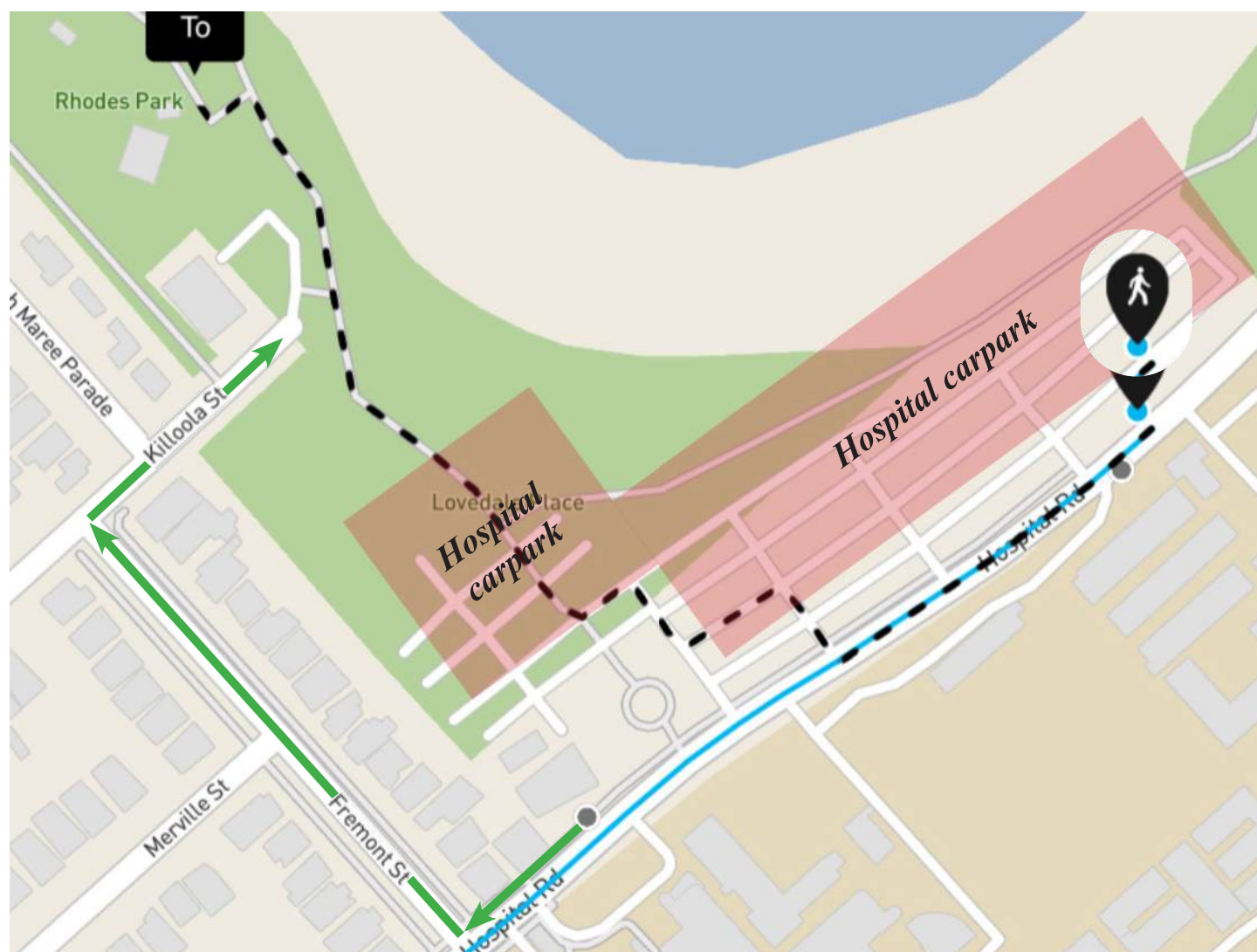
At the Rhodes Park carpark

Head up the pathway on the right of the Kokoda Café to the shelter shed where we are gathering.

Look for the HEATGG banner as pictured on page 14.



Walking from bus stop in Hospital Road (either green arrows or - - - -)



All enquiries to Lorraine on 02 9587 0352 or 0408 117 784