



# RAHS CONFERENCE

## *Windows into Local History*

Campbelltown Catholic Club  
26 – 27 October 2024



RAHS members visit St Peter's Church in Campbelltown on 27 June 1942 (RAHS Collection)

Local history, with its intimate view of the past, is a key to understanding the interconnectedness of history at all levels. It reveals how global and national events have shaped local communities and how local events have contributed to the Australian story.

The 2024 RAHS History Conference, *Windows into Local History*, will be a fantastic opportunity to engage with local history and discover what it can reveal about your community. The conference will take place in Campbelltown, on the traditional lands of the Dharawal People. It is the perfect site for our conference as the region's rich tapestry of heritage sites, landmarks, and festivals reflects the development and diversity of New South Wales. The annual Fisher's Ghost Festival also provides a unique window into how Australians engage with local legends and folklore over time.

We are sure you will enjoy the RAHS Conference program and your visit to the Campbelltown region. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Campbelltown and Airs Historical Society and the Campbelltown Council for their invaluable contributions to a fascinating conference program.

For more information and to book your place, please go to the 2024 RAHS Conference website:  
<https://www.rahs.org.au/2024-rahs-conference/>

**Friday 25 October 2024**

**Pre-conference Drinks 5.30 pm – 7.00 pm**

**Campbelltown Arts Centre, 1 Art Gallery Road, Campbelltown**

**Hosted by Campbelltown and Airs Historical Society (CAHS)**

Join conference delegates, members of the CAHS, and guests for the pre-conference drinks at the Campbelltown Arts Centre. The Arts Centre, owned by the people of Campbelltown and supported by the Campbelltown City Council and Create NSW, showcases contemporary visual arts, performance, dance, and music. This venue has deep connections to the local community. It is the perfect place to kick off our conference and celebrate the connection between local history and contemporary culture.

## DAY ONE: SATURDAY – 26 OCTOBER 2024

<b>Session A Welcome and Keynote Address</b>	
<b>Chair: Lynne Allen, Chair of RAHS Affiliated Societies Committee</b>	
<b>8.30 am</b>	Registration
<b>9.15 am</b>	Aunty Glenda Chalker: Welcome to Country
<b>9.30 am</b>	Welcome to the RAHS Conference
<b>9.45 am</b>	The Lesley Muir Address: Emeritus Professor Mark McKenna: <i>Writing a 'Local' History of Australia</i>

10.30 am – 11.00 am: Morning Tea and Book Sales

<b>Session B Windows into Local History: Views on Campbelltown's Past</b>	
<b>Chair: Angela Phippen</b>	
Our speakers will open windows onto Campbelltown's local history, revealing its rich heritage, diverse stories, and the impact of the growth and expansion of this region on the broader Australian story.	
<b>11.00 am</b>	Stephen Coppins: <i>Campbelltown: The Story of the 'Rural Metropolis'</i>
<b>11.30 am</b>	Uncle Gavin Andrew: <i>The Appin Massacre</i>
<b>12.00 pm</b>	Bob Gosling: <i>History of the Ingleburn Military Heritage Precinct</i>

12.30 pm – 1.30 pm: Lunch and Book Sales

<b>Session C Windows into Local History: Opening Classrooms to Community Stories</b>	
<b>Chair: Stephen Coppins</b>	
This session explores how creating interest in history in schools fosters a deeper connection to community heritage, enriches students' understanding of their surroundings, builds a sense of belonging and pride, and strengthens connections.	
<b>1.30 pm</b>	Fran Musico Rullo: <i>Local History Comes Alive! The History Club at St. Patrick's College for Girls, Campbelltown</i>
<b>2.15 pm</b>	Anne Gripton: <i>Local Heroes: Connecting to Classrooms</i>

3.00 pm – 3.15 pm: Conference Day One Wrap Up

<b>Tours and Dinner</b>	
<b>3.30 pm</b>	<b>Conference Tours:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Option 1: Campbelltown Heritage Guided Walking Tour</li><li>• Option 2: Campbelltown Heritage Highlights Bus Tour</li><li>• Option 3: Glenalvon Historic House Tour</li></ul>
<b>6.30 pm</b>	Conference Dinner at Campbelltown Catholic Club

## DAY TWO: SUNDAY – 27 OCTOBER 2024

<b>Session D Windows into Local History: Showcasing Affiliated Societies and Celebrating Volunteers Contributions</b>	
<b>Chair: Suzanne Holohan</b>	
<b>Time</b>	9.30 am to 10.30 am
<b>Summary</b>	Kickstart Sunday with a dose of inspiration! Join us to explore inspiring projects by historical societies and honour the passionate volunteers who bring local history to life. Don't miss this energising start to the second day of the conference.

10.30 am – 11.00 am: Morning Tea and Book Sales

<b>Session E Windows into Local History: Expanding Horizons through Digital Tools and Resources</b>	
<b>Chair: Carol Liston</b>	
Step through the digital window into local history with us. Discover how AI can support local historical societies to achieve their goals. You will also learn about new digital records and website resources that support local history research.	
<b>11.00 am</b>	Suzanne Holohan: <i>AI in Action: ChatGPT as a Tool for Historical Societies</i>
<b>11.30 am</b>	Gizette Waldron: <i>Navigating Place Names: Understanding the Geographical Names Board and its role in NSW</i>
<b>12.00 pm</b>	Sarah Middleton-Jones: <i>Unreserved Access: Discovering the Histories of People and Places in the Reserve Bank Archives</i>

12.30 pm – 1.30 pm: Lunch and Book Sales

<b>Session F Windows into Local History: Exploring Ghost Stories and Unveiling the Shadows of the Murderous Past</b>	
<b>Chair: Lorraine Neate</b>	
We will draw the curtains on the conference by delving into the dark side of history. Our speakers will focus on crime records, the infamous legend of Fisher's Ghost and the changing cultural impact of the annual Fisher's Ghost Festival, shedding light on how legends and history intertwine.	
<b>1.30 pm</b>	Rachel Franks: <i>Murder and mayhem, just around the corner</i>
<b>2.00 pm</b>	Christine Yeats: <i>Bessie Fisher and her road to perdition</i>
<b>2.30 pm</b>	Andrew Allen: <i>Frederick Fisher and The Legend of Fisher's Ghost</i>

3.00 pm – 3.15 pm: Conference Close



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