

The sculpture *Rediscovery*, by locally-based artist Trevor Weekes, explores the Convict Lumber Yard and the rich layers of artefacts uncovered during archaeological examination of the site. The sculpture also evokes the accidental rediscovery of the yard, by local Historian Dr John Turner, who was walking the site with his King Charles Spaniel at the time. A slab is covered with dog prints and the single footprints of a human, with the piles of dirt and hole revealing the object of discovery. See image on front cover.

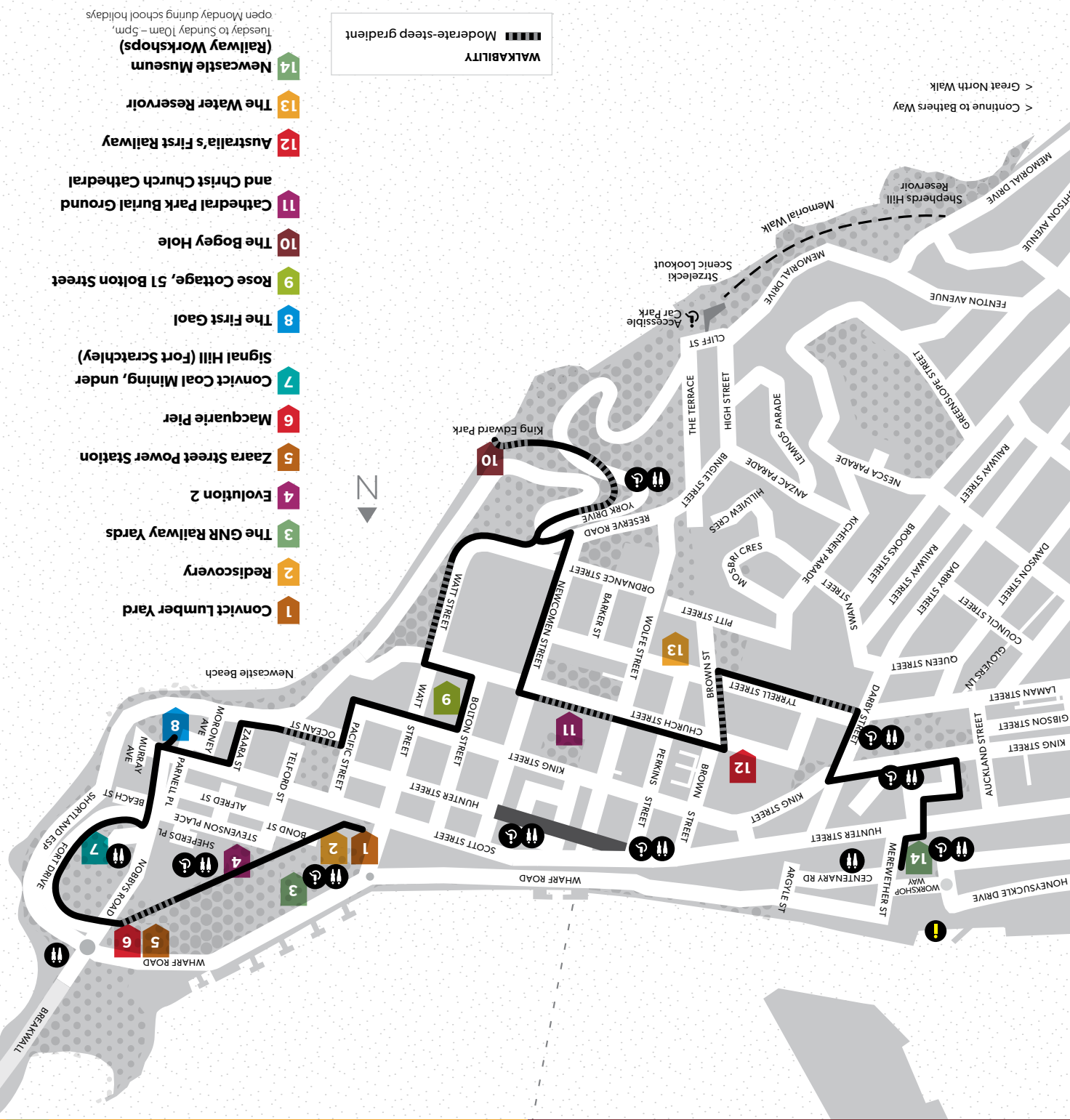
2 Rediscovery

From 1804 to 1822, Newcastle was a penal settlement established for the punishment of secondary offenders from Sydney. Convicts were employed in the coal, timber and lime-burning industries. This was the location of Newcastle's Lumber Yard and represents one of the earliest sites of convict industry in Australia. Newcastle was once rich with Red Cedar, a timber used in construction and ship building. Cedar logs felled along the river were bound together and poled downstream by convicts, cut into planks at the water's edge near Watt Street and stored here. The site's significance was established during extensive archaeological digs. Hundreds of objects relating to both Indigenous and European settlement were discovered.

1 Convict Lumber Yard



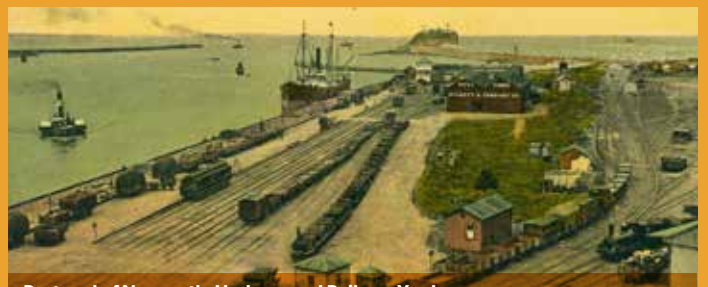
Convict Barracks Frame Trevor Weekes 1999, corten steel



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3 The GNR Railway Yards

The now tranquil parklands of the foreshore were once a vast maze of railway sidings and goods yards. The Great Northern Railway, running from Honeysuckle Point to East Maitland, was extended to Newcastle East in 1858. For more than a century this place was filled with the sounds and smells of bustling locomotives and clattering wagons. The exchange sidings allowed trains to meet the ships for loading and unloading of cargo along Queens Wharf. Coal from all over the region was transported in wooden hoppers to this point where a row of steam cranes would lift the bodies of the wagons out of their frames to be emptied into the holds of the waiting ships. The goods yards remained in use until the 1980s, when the process of transformation into park lands began.



Postcard of Newcastle Harbour and Railway Yard Photograph courtesy of Newcastle Region Library collection 163000167

Smith General Contracting Pty Ltd

Robert and Bill Smith arrived in the Hunter in 1955. The Great Northern Railway had been severely damaged by floods in Maitland and these two Aboriginal brothers were part of the army of workers tasked with getting the trains moving again. Robert and Bill spent many years working on the N.S.W railways and in 1969 borrowed six dollars from their brother Roy to open a company bank account. This was the beginnings of Smith General Contracting Pty Ltd. Utilising their railway skills, the brothers applied for contracts completing railway maintenance. The company made over a million dollars in its first full year of operation. The company completed contracts for BHP and was responsible for building the railway to the Port Waratah coal loaders. At its busiest time, the company employed more than 130 people and over 70% of its employees were Aboriginal. Robert and Bill were proud of their company, not just for its financial success but also for the opportunities it provided Indigenous Australians to develop skills and gain employment.

Convict and Industry

Much of the modern Newcastle landscape has been shaped by the hands of convicts and industry.

Explore the city's early years as a convict settlement. Visit remnants of the great industrial enterprises that once defined the city. Discover amazing engineering feats that allowed the city and its people to prosper.

This walking tour starts at the Convict Lumber Yard, one of the most significant archaeological sites of convict industry in Australia. It ends at Newcastle Museum, the home of incredible objects and exhibitions that celebrate the industrial and convict heritage of the region.

- Newcastle Art Gallery**
Laman Street, Cooks Hill
Tuesday to Sunday 10am - 5pm, closed Monday
www.nag.org.au
- Fort Scratchley**
Nobbys Road, Newcastle East
Wednesday to Monday 10am - 4pm, closed Tuesday
www.fortscratchley.com.au
- Newcastle Museum**
Workshop Way, Honeysuckle
Tuesday to Sunday 10am - 5pm, open Monday during school holidays
www.newcastlemuseum.com.au



WALKING TOUR

Convict and Industry

Explore Newcastle's industrial and convict past through a self-guided walking tour of the city.



Rediscovery Trevor Weekes 1999, timber, concrete and stainless steel

Moderate
2hrs 45mins / 5km

Audio and other information
www.visitnewcastle.com.au/attractions/walks-and-rides

4 Evolution 2

Reflecting the bustling movement of people and trains are local artist Sandra Minter-Caldwell's sculptures *Evolution 2*.

Consisting of an assortment of silicone bronze cast legs fitted with wheels, the work reflects the energy of the area, recalling the rotating wheels of busy locomotives moving wagons and freight to feed local industry. The sculptures also explore the movement of people through the park today, with people walking, jogging and riding bikes, scooters and skateboards in all directions.

Evolution 2 Sandra Minter-Caldwell 1998, silicone cast bronze

5 Zaara Street Power Station

In 1915 the Zaara Street Power Station joined the locomotives and steam ships to belch soot over the East end of Newcastle.

The Power Station was built by the New South Wales Railways. It was capable of supplying so much electricity that it was connected to the grid of the Newcastle Borough Council in 1917 and supplied much of Newcastle's electricity needs throughout the 1920s.

Zaara Street Power Station remained in operation until 1975 and was demolished in 1978.

6 Macquarie Pier and Nobbys Island

During the early years of Newcastle, navigation of the Harbour could be a perilous task. To protect lives and shipping something had to be done.

On August 4th 1818, Captain James Wallis, Commandant of Newcastle, brought Governor Lachlan Macquarie to this spot and proposed constructing a causeway between the mainland and Nobbys. The next day the foundation stone for Macquarie Pier was laid.

Convict labour was used to construct the pier through to its completion in 1846. It went through several rebuilding programs, vastly improving the safety of the harbour entrance. In the 200 years since construction, the city's most iconic beach, Nobbys Beach, has formed along its length.



Cathedral Park

11 Cathedral Park Burial Ground and Christ Church Cathedral

Approximately 3,300 people were buried in what is known today as Cathedral Park. In 1817 Governor Macquarie declared the three acres of land that looked down upon the fledgling penal settlement for use as a church and cemetery, making this the oldest official European burial ground in Newcastle.

The headstones were either relocated or destroyed when the site became a park in the 1960s. Today the park is being restored and the surviving headstones are being returned to their undisturbed burial position, revealing the history of the park.

12 Australia's First Railway

Just off Church Street is the site of the first railway ever constructed in Australia. Built in 1831, it didn't use horses or locomotives to propel its wagons but rather gravity.

The Australian Agricultural Company built an incline plane and gravitational railway for the transportation of coal from its mines on The Hill to the waiting ships below. This pioneer railway was double track and its wagons each held a ton of coal. Loaded wagons were lowered down the inclined plane by a rope passing around a large wheel. To control the speed of their descent, the other end of the rope was attached to empty wagons, which were returned to the top of the hill for reloading.

Once the wagons arrived at the bottom of the hill they were pushed by labourers out onto the wharf, where a shoot hanging over the waiting ship meant that the coal contained in the wagons could be loaded directly into the vessel's hold. Remnants of the railway survived in a modified form, utilising locomotives, until demolition in 1923.



Signal Hill (Fort Scratchley), Stratigraphical sketch, William Keene, 1854

Courtesy University of Newcastle Cultural Collections Services, Auchmuty Library

7 Convict Coal Mining

Lieutenant Shortland happened upon the Hunter River while searching for escaped convicts in 1797. He found no evidence of the escaped convicts, but he did find coal. Coal had been a part of local Indigenous culture for thousands of years. The earliest European coal mining in the Southern Hemisphere commenced here in 1801 under what was to become Fort Scratchley.

Early coal mining in Newcastle was a hard task performed by unskilled convicts. These convicts were led by a professional miner named John Platt and together they raised nine tonnes of coal a day.

Coal mines dominated the landscape of Newcastle for decades, much of the ground beneath the city's CBD is a honeycomb of pits. The old tunnels beneath the Fort are still there, having been sealed by the 1880s construction of the military installation.

8 The First Gaol

Newcastle's gaol was constructed in 1818 on this site. The Gaol was separated from the rest of the town by large sand dunes formed by the vegetation being removed to prevent escaping convicts concealing themselves. The first gaolers were convicts themselves and it was not only a place of confinement but also a place where corporal and capital punishment took place.

In 1828 women from the overcrowded Parramatta Female Factory were transported to Newcastle.

The original gaol was modified with new walls, lodges, gates and partitions to accommodate them. Although the gaol had housed female prisoners before, the building modifications signalled the beginning of the Newcastle Female Factory.

In 1870 the gaol was abandoned. Eventually the crumbling ruins were demolished and a depot for Newcastle's steam trams was built on the site.



Inner view of Newcastle (detail) Joseph Lycett c1818, oil on canvas. Purchased with assistance from the National Art Collections Fund, London UK 1961. Newcastle Art Gallery collection

Joseph Lycett, Convict Artist

Much of what we know of how early European settlement in Newcastle looked, as well as insights into local Indigenous culture and traditions, are drawn from the paintings, engravings and sketches of a convict.

Joseph Lycett was convicted of forgery and sentenced to 14 years with transportation to Australia in 1811. Found to be responsible for further forgery in Sydney, he was sent to Newcastle as punishment. It was here that his skills as an artist came to the attention of Captain James Wallis.

Wallis allowed Lycett to utilise his creative talents on a variety of projects. He drew up the plans for the first church on this site. Completed in 1817, he also produced paintings for the altar piece. Captain Wallis

encouraged him to paint the local Aboriginal people. Wallis wanted to prove to his superiors in Sydney he was capable of maintaining harmonious relations between the convict and Indigenous populations of Newcastle. The resulting works provide a valuable early record of the Aboriginal way of life.

After receiving an official pardon, Lycett returned to England in 1822 and published books of his illustrations.

Several prints and paintings produced by him are held in the Newcastle Art Gallery collection including *Inner view of Newcastle* 1818 which travelled to the Royal Academy, London in 2013 for inclusion in the exhibition *Australia* spanning 200 years of Australian art.



Rose Cottage

9 Rose Cottage, 51 Bolton Street

Behind the modern buildings of Bolton Street sits Newcastle's oldest surviving building, Rose Cottage. It is believed to have been constructed in 1828.

By this time the only convicts remaining in Newcastle were employed in mining and breakwater construction. In 1824 Newcastle was divided into 190 allotments that established the layout of central Newcastle as it exists today. Rose Cottage occupied allotment 35.

Cut off from the road by a realignment of the street, Rose Cottage survives today as private offices.

10 The Bogey Hole

Another lasting project produced by convict labour is the Bogey Hole, located at the base of Shepherds Hill. Construction began in 1819 by order of Commandant Morisset for his personal use. Originally known as the Commandants Bath, the pool was cut by hand into the rock platform by convicts. While its completion date is not known, it was in use when the Commandant left the settlement in 1823.

It remains a popular swimming spot to this day.

13 Water Reservoir

This is the site of Newcastle's first water reservoir.

By the 1870s Newcastle was home to thousands of people, with no reliable source of fresh drinking water. Wells dried out in summer and were easily contaminated by the city's waste. People were dying from preventable water born diseases.

To ensure safe drinking water was available, the Hunter River Pumping Scheme was initiated in 1880. This ambitious engineering project pumped water from Maitland to Newcastle.

The works began supplying clean drinking water to Newcastle's population in 1882.



Workers at The Honeysuckle Point Railway Workshops, 1887

Photograph courtesy of Newcastle Region Library collection 001003631

14 Newcastle Museum (Railway Workshops)

The buildings that house Newcastle Museum once formed part of the Honeysuckle Point Railway Workshops. These works were a crucial part of the Great Northern Railway's operations. Established during the construction of the railway in 1854, the assembly, repair and maintenance of the region's fleet of locomotives and wagons took place here.

From an enormous 60 tonne ladle used for pouring molten steel at BHP, to a button from a convict's tunic uncovered at Stroud; Newcastle Museum is home to objects, exhibitions and stories exploring Newcastle's convict and industrial heritage.