



# The Road opens up to Sydney 2010

by John Brock

With FIG 2010 set for downunder next year, our doughty correspondent unveils some plans for the island continent's big year.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS in Sydney are always brilliant to view so another Topp Tour showcased the best of these. K-G thought that this may be a surveyor-free night, for once, but as we were partaking of a festive supper at Lady Macquarie's Chair gazing across the fairyland of Sydney Harbour, I was compelled to bring everyone's attention to the survey control station in the rocky headland, first placed by surveyor **E.A. Amphlett** when setting the triangulation for the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The marking is now used to monitor subsidence of the Opera House, which is slightly in the foreground of the bridge from that aspect.

## Dinner with star of No. 96

Attending the IATG (Australian Tour Guides) Christmas party at the Pavilion Restaurant opposite the Art Gallery of New South Wales, I was amazed to see sitting on the other side of my table a former actress from the first sexually explicit television show on Australian TV in the 1960s called "No. 96". Lyn Rainbow is now a tour guide having once been beamed into most Aussie households during her time on the show.

## Bathed in beauty tour

First surveyed by **Edward Wyndham** in 1868 for settlement, Mt. Wilson still represents a fine example of late nineteenth century colonial gardens as well as a haven for wealthy Sydney businessmen both in those times and even now. **Patrick White**, the famous Australian Nobel Prize winning author, once lived in his family's residence Withycombe while in earlier times the benefactor of the Wynne Prize for Landscape Art, **Richard Wynne**, built Wynstay in 1878. To ease the pain of his cancer-afflicted wife he brought Scottish stonemasons to his estate to construct a private Turkish Bath in the 1880s, which has now been bequeathed as a museum of the local area in the care of the Mt. Wilson and Mt. Irvine Historical Society. **Marcus**

**Clark** built his residence Sefton Hall in 1912 while he had a well established chain of department stores in Australia. One prominent family in the nearby area of Mt. Irvine was that of Charles Robert Scrivener who was the surveyor of the Australian National Capital of Canberra from around 1910.

## TV documentary "The Road"

Next year is a big year in Australian history with the Bicentenary of the arrival of our most prolific Governor, the **Scot Lachlan Macquarie**.

Not only has he the distinction of constructing our most significant colonial public edifices but he loved his surveyors especially the emancipated Irish convict **James Meehan** who he described as being "a most excellent surveyor." Other surveyors in whom the governor entrusted the development and welfare of the new colony were Surveyor-General **John Oxley** and his deputy **George Evans**. It has taken the initiative of British film producer **Allan Bardsley** to pay homage to the monumental road construction of the first road over the Blue Mountains to open up the pasturelands of the western slopes for farming pursuits, a move that would rescue the settlement from starvation. His documentary "The Road" will detail the incredible feat of **William Cox** who took around 30 convicts from Sydney in 1814 to build 101½ miles (162 km) in just over six months. Featuring within the storyline, he plans to weave in the essential contribution of the man who traversed along the route forged by **Blaxland Lawson** and **Wentworth** leaving the marked line to be followed by the road builder. It is most commendable and quite exhilarating for a documentary producer to be so thorough as to consult historical experts in the cause of recreating contemporary authenticity. Planned release date for the saga is Australia Day 2010, which is 26 January.

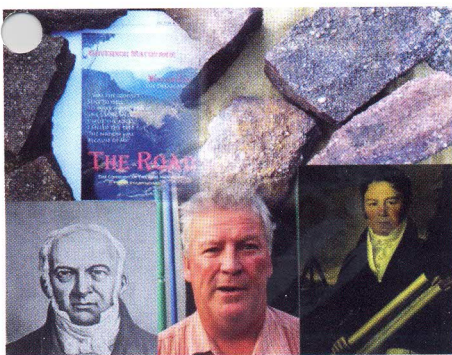
## History Workshop for FIG Sydney 2010

2010 is going to be a huge year for surveyors in Sydney with the hosting of the FIG Congress during April for only the second time in the southern hemisphere (first time in Melbourne 1994).

We hope to say hello to many readers of *GW* while showing off the variety of our icons such as the Harbour Bridge, World Heritage listed Opera House, Fort Denison and other historic buildings. History enthusiasts can be particularly excited because I have been entrusted with the assignment of creating a superb Two Day Workshop at two eminent venues – Old Government House in Parramatta and the Dixon Room of the Mitchell Library. On Friday 9 April I have a plan for the eight surveyors-general of all of our states and territories to give presentations on their first or most prominent predecessors while on the next day it is my wish to see the leaders of surveying from the four corners of the globe (strange saying seeing the world is actually spherical?) thrilling the audience with tales of their great surveyors. The President of the Institution for the History of Surveying and Measurement, **Jan De Graeve**, is proud to invite all interested participants to make sure that they book early for these two days of fascinating surveying history.

### The Road:

*'I was the surveyor, sent to hell.  
To build in the desert a living well.  
I split the rock, I felled the tree.  
The Nation is because of me...'*



• John Brock is a Registered Surveyor in Australia and is a stalwart of FIG and its Permanent Institution for the Art and History of Surveying.