



L - R: St John's Anglican Cathedral in Parramatta; Richmond Park in Richmond; and Macquarie Place in Sydney.

2010 – a busy year for Heritage

2010 has clearly been as busy and exciting as the action-packed 2009 at the Department of Planning's Heritage Branch, with several important announcements and events having taken place.

Readers will, of course, be aware that this year is the 200th anniversary of Lachlan Macquarie's tenure as Governor of New South Wales. To mark the occasion, the Premier Kristina Keneally announced on 31 January – the 248th anniversary of Macquarie's birthday – the listing of three items closely associated with his governorship on the State Heritage Register (SHR).

The announcement that Macquarie Place in Sydney, Richmond Park in Richmond and St John's Anglican Cathedral in Parramatta would receive the State's highest form of heritage protection set the scene for the year of celebrations that will see more than 50 separate events, including a three week period in May-June during which Macquarie Street in the centre of Sydney will come alive each night with unique light and audio displays.

More Macquarie-themed listings are also expected throughout 2010 and further details on events and other information can be found at <http://www.Macquarie2010.nsw.gov.au>

And these aren't the only iconic sites to have received State heritage listing so far this year.

In February, the Premier also announced the SHR listing of three well-known Sydney buildings – the Sydney Town Hall, the Queen Victoria Building and Luna Park.

Many have commented that they were amazed to learn that such iconic buildings were not previously State heritage listed, but were pleased to know that they will now be protected in the strongest way possible under NSW legislation.

The listings form part of an ongoing commitment by the NSW Government to have a range of State significant heritage items that represent the unique and rich history of NSW. These three buildings in particular embody the history, prosperity and identity of Australia's first city over two centuries as the central places of Sydney's governance, market life, events and harbour entertainment.

Not all the activity has surrounded well-known or iconic sites however. The very first State Heritage Register listing for the year occurred on just 2 January with the listing of the Linden Observatory in the Blue Mountains.

Listing of the landmark amateur observatory marked an end to the International Year of Astronomy in 2009. It includes about 40 hectares of bushland around the facility essential for preserving its dark sky conditions.

The telescope, designed and engineered in the late 1930s by amateur astronomer and leading optics and instrument maker Ken Beames, was the largest Australian made telescope in New South Wales up until the mid 1960s.

Together with its observatory dome, the telescope was also one of the first in Australia to incorporate electric motors in its operation.

In welcoming the listing, Ian Bridges, one of three trustees of the Linden Observatory, said that 'it was Mr Beames' wish to maintain the observatory for ongoing amateur and education use'.

Listing the observatory on the State Heritage Register will certainly help to achieve that goal.

With plenty going on at the Department's Heritage Branch, whether it be listings or broader policy initiatives, as always more information can be found on our website at www.heritage.nsw.gov.au

In particular, the website has plenty of information about the Government's themed listings program. In addition to the Macquarie-themed listings, the other themes being progressed in 2010 are:

- **Aboriginal heritage** – to ensure this important aspect of the State's history continues to be recognised
- **Convicts** – acknowledge work associated with the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage nomination, and
- **World Wars I & II** – to acknowledge the important contribution of servicemen and women during both World Wars and the 70th anniversary of the beginning of WWII (2009).



The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP with Heritage Council Chair Gabrielle Kibble