

FITZROY INN

HISTORIC RETREAT

History Walk



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\$15pp

Open to Public 10am to 2pm Wed. to Sunday.

Guided tours available. Available to guests at all times.

Wheelchair access available for viewpoints 1 to 10 only.

Floor plan & map in centre of book.



The Fitz Roy was erected in 1836 and is a Georgian style building. It comprises eleven luxurious guest rooms with ensuites, a magnificent conservatory restaurant, spacious state and lounge rooms and beautiful gardens in a colonial setting.

○ *History Walk 1* ○

The History Walk commences in the foyer of the Fitz Roy Inn, which is in original condition, including the stairs.

From this location move through to the main lounge room.



○ *History Walk 2* ○

The main lounge room features a large opening. Sliding doors once divided two rooms. On the front of doorway the number one is visible. This signifies it was an exclusive room. The two rooms were used for functions and accommodation. Original features are maintained in the lounge room, including the fire places and mantle pieces. The fire sprinklers in the passage near the courtyard were installed to comply with current building codes.

From this location move through the door on your right.



○ *History Walk 3* ○

The sketch of the Inn, from the late-1800s, was obtained from the Mitchell Library in Sydney. It is the only known sketch showing the full extent of the Fitz Roy Inn. The boy's dormitory built by Henry Edmund Southey, headmaster of the later Oaklands School, is identified together with the stables and the cow shed. The glass cabinets feature a selection of items located in the garden.

From this location move further down the passage towards the other glass cabinet.



○ *History Walk 4* ○

There are two maps on the wall. The first is a map of Camden. It is an unusual map, because it is orientated with west as the upward compass point.

The second map, dated 1912, is of the tourist districts of the Blue Mountains, Illawarra and the Southern Highlands and indicates the road and rail links to these areas.

From this location move through the doorway to the room on your right.



○ *History Walk 5* ○

This is the library, which was once used for accommodation or a meeting room. On the wall behind the bookcase there is a doorway, now inaccessible. In the early 1900s, the door was retained as the entrance to an adjoining room. This demonstrates the owner's commitment to preserve the integrity of the building; well before the NSW Heritage Act was introduced in 1977. The

fireplace, skirtings and architraves are original. Fireproof ceilings are installed throughout the building; to comply with current building codes.

From this location move through the doorway and turn right.



○ *History Walk 6* ○

This was a smoking room, which was established in the early 1900s. The glass cabinet was built into the doorway, which is the doorway observed from the library. This room features oak panelling. The doors have been decorated using a technique called skimming, which is a brush and comb technique giving the appearance of grained wood. This is a paint effect common in that era. The cast iron fireplace is in original condition. It was fuelled by coke. The room is now used as a private sitting room.

From this location move through the doorway into the billiard room.



○ *History Walk 7* ○

This billiard room was once the dining room. The sketch of the Inn in the passage clearly depicts the back door of the premises. This is now the exit door that is still retained. The wear and tear on the step from the verandah indicates this room was a main thoroughfare. The fireplace and windows are in original condition.

From this location move through the doorway to the enclosed verandah.



○ *History Walk 8* ○

Observe the sketches and maps on the walls. Commencing near the current kitchen, there is a sketch of the bridge on the Nattai River, which dates to the mid-1880s. The photograph of the Inn is dated 1836. This is the earliest known photograph of the Inn without its external dormer windows, but shows lift out style skylights on the corner of the building.

From the courtyard, the original dormer windows on the roof are visible. The sashes were replaced. The original timber shingled roof has been replaced with tin, but most of the shingles remain under the tin. Further down the passage way, there are further examples of photographs and sketches of the Inn. The next photograph dates to the 1920s and does not feature external dormer windows. Yet, the next photograph displays external dormer windows in the building. The next series of sketches depict the period from 1977 when the Inn was a private residence.

From this location move towards the restaurant and through the door adjacent to the kitchen.



○ *History Walk 9* ○

Opposite the switchboard there is series of photographs showing the renovations that were undertaken by Cosmo and Maria Aloi and Paul and Gail Lovell in the 1990s. Their restoration task was daunting, due to the derelict condition of the building, which had occurred from the 1960s. Due to the physical and major financial commitment of the two families, the building has been restored for the enjoyment of the public. Wingecarribee Shire Council presented the Aloi's and Lovell's with a heritage award for maintaining the historical significance of the building.

From this location move down the passage to the right through the doorway to the courtyard.



○ *History Walk 10* ○

From this position, the original dormer windows and the chimneys are again visible. Walk down the stairs to the basement area. Observe the stair treads. Due to heavy wear, the stair treads were turned over to retain its original purpose.

From this location move through the doorway into the dungeon.



○ *History Walk 11* ○

Observe the service bar area. Above there is a trap door now closed off. This door was originally used to pass supplies to the kitchen area. A ladder stair was placed there when the stairs were blocked off, during the time the Inn was used as a school. At the same time, the external basement stairs were also blocked off and a verandah floor was placed over that area. The floors and stone work are original.

From this location move through the doorway into the area which has the well.



○ *History Walk 12* ○

This is the original kitchen of the Inn, and is so retained in this state. The spring fed well is eight feet deep. It is likely that a spring was discovered in this spot and so the Inn was built around this valuable resource. After rain the water becomes murky but with movement from the spring, becomes clear again. The stone work is different. The square block stone is the same stone used to

erect the local Berrima Court House. George Cutter, who built the Inn, also had the contract to supply the stone for the court house. But instead, he personally used some of this stone on the Inn, until the theft was discovered and he lost the contract. This is the reason why there is a different style of stone work above the square block stone. Stone was also sourced from Sydney and nearby Welby. The Welby stone has some iron in it and frets away slightly. There was a cast iron stove in the fireplace. It is understood squatters occupied the Inn in the 1960s and they broke up the cast iron stove and made an open fire place. The cast iron stove was used for cooking of food for everyone who stayed at the Inn. The damper or bread oven in the wall does not have a chimney. The hot coals were removed from the stove and the bread baked daily in this oven.

From this location move through to the next section of this area.

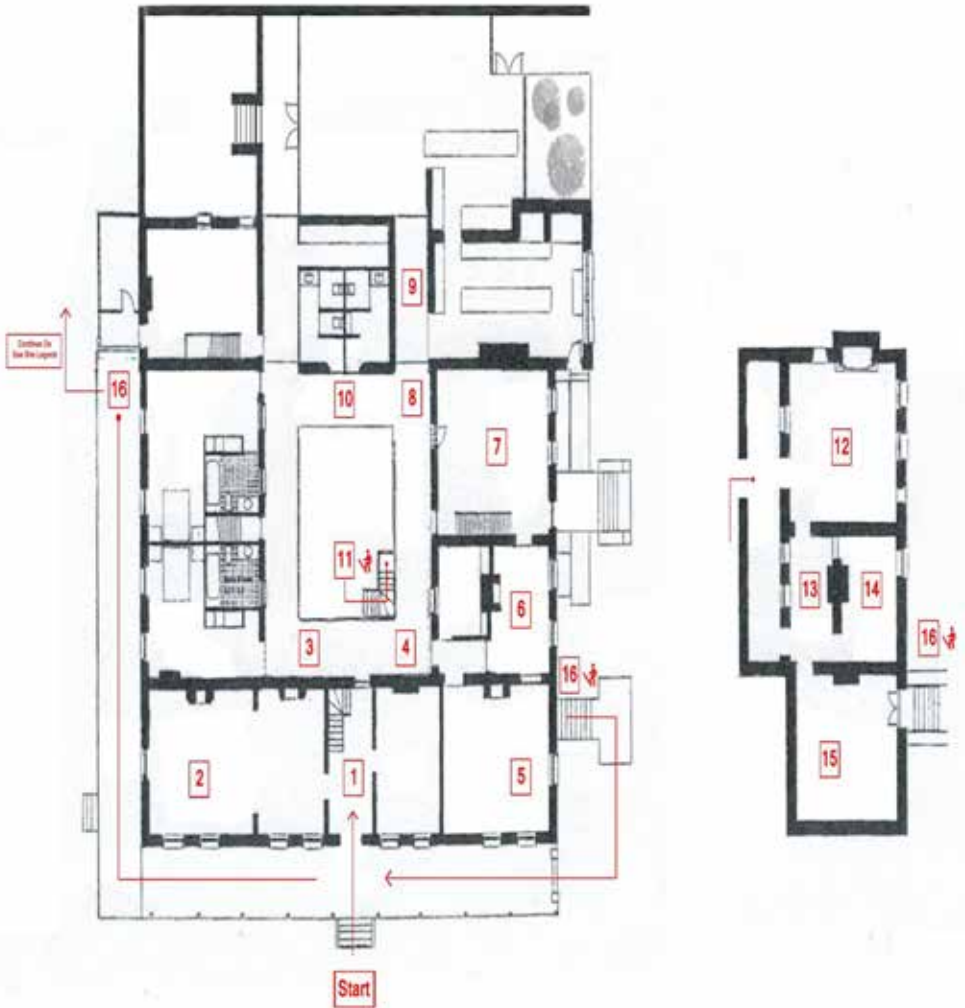


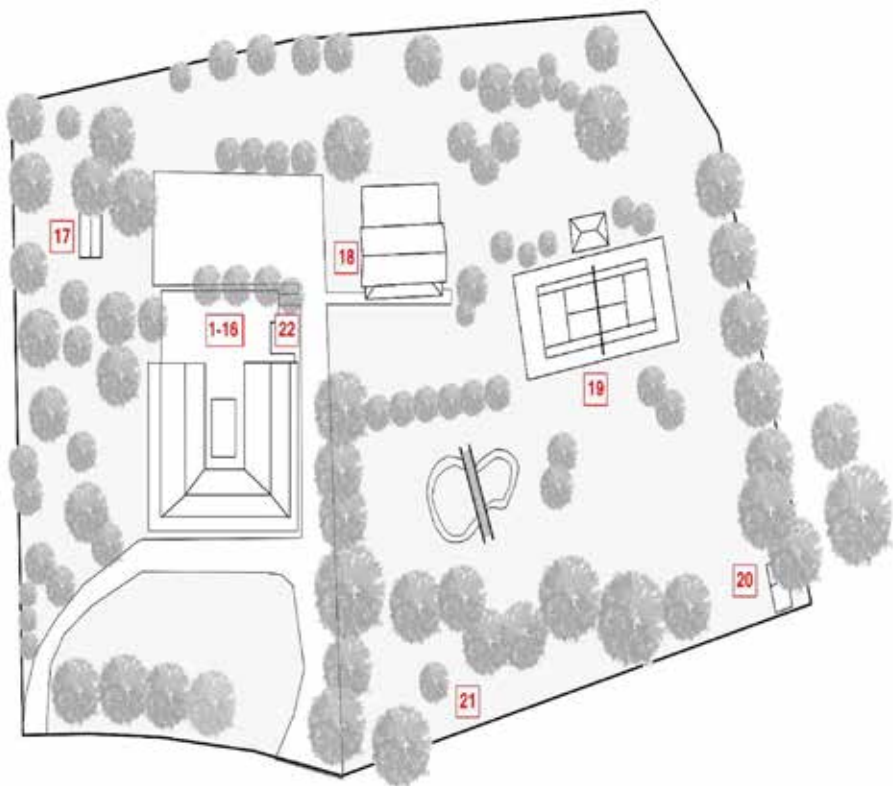
○ *History Walk 13* ○

This was the food preparation area. Observe the iron eye bolts, which are screwed into the floor joists. These were used for hanging beasts from, together with other prepared food. These bolts were imported from England because in the 1830s Australia did not have an iron industry. Australia's first ironworks, the Fitz Roy Iron Works were established at Mittagong in 1848, and were not productive until the mid-1860s. Archaeological remains from the ironworks are featured in the Highlands Marketplace and at a commemorative cairn opposite the Mittagong RSL Club. Observe the timber frames where the milk cans are. Notice the hinges. This allowed another frame to sit inside the first frame. The frames were covered with muslin cloth to prevent flies and insects getting into the food. This was the food storage area. The original floors feature bluestone. While there has been some repair work done the floors have worn well. The steel beam was originally a timber tree trunk, with a series of posts underneath to hold the floor up. There are nails in the lower section of the floor joist, this is because it has been turned over as the stumps sunk and floor bowed.

From this location move along the passage to the cell.







○ *History Walk 14* ○

The cell was a holding cell for prisoners being transported to, or from, Berrima Gaol to Parramatta. Accommodation for prisoners and guards was made available in towns between Parramatta and Berrima. Initially, the prisoners were transported by horse and cart. Following the inception of the railway service in 1867, prisoners were transported by this method. At the Thirlmere Railway Museum, there is a carriage on display that housed the prisoners. The railway had a significant impact on the success of the Inn.

From this location move along the passage to the next section.



○ *History Walk 15* ○

This is the area where the constabulary officers stayed. The lathe plaster ceiling is in its original form, indicating this accommodation was upmarket from the prisoner's cells. Again, the stone work is fretting, not being the same quality as the block stone seen previously, which is in excellent condition. The floor has been lowered. During the reassembling of the floor, each stone was taken up and marked and put back in its original position. The floor was lowered to increase the ceiling height to comply with current building codes.

From this location walk through the doors and up the stairs.



○ *History Walk 16* ○

This entrance was the area where prisoners and stores were delivered. There are photographs of the entrance in the passage way. Left is the original back door that led to the washroom, now the kitchen.

From this location walk around onto the verandah and the front of the building.



○ *History Walk 17* ○

The paving on the verandah is original but photographs of the Inn indicate that the posts have been replaced a number of times, either with timber or brick posts. Walk to the end of the verandah and turn right. The doorway at the end of the northern verandah leads to the accommodation room that is called Travellers Rest. This room specially catered for people who arrived late at night when the Inn was closed. Beds and water were available for the comfort of the traveller, thus the innkeeper was not disturbed. A travellers rest was common in this type of establishment.

Walk along the verandah and onto the pathway towards the rear of the property. To the left is the original orchard. There is also a rose bush that is around one hundred years old.

Walk up into the area below a large oak tree. There are stones under the oak tree which are the remains of the cow shed.

Walk into the car park. On the right hand side is the original blacksmith's hearth. The blacksmith's worked here shoeing horses and making items of iron. Again, this blacksmith's hearth was in operation well before the Fitz Roy Iron Works was established. The building beside the blacksmith's hearth is the stables.

From this location walk towards the conservatory.



○ *History Walk 18* ○

The conservatory incorporates the stables and is now the restaurant. The original timber and stone work from the stables was used in its construction. The fireplace was added in the renovation.

From this location walk straight ahead to the new building.



○ *History Walk 19* ○

This building was erected in 1999. It replaces the original boy's dormitory, which was built in the late 1880s, by Henry Edmund Southey, headmaster of Oaklands School, to cater for his large number of boarding students. An academic from Oxford in England, J W Fletcher introduced the game of tennis to Oaklands in 1875. It is claimed to be the first tennis court constructed in Australia. The original tennis court was laid down in front of the school. The new tennis court was re-laid at the side of the Inn in 2003.

From this location walk past the tennis court and down the stairs.



○ *History Walk 20* ○

Walk to the bottom of the garden to the weir and pump house. The weir was constructed in the mid-1800s to collect water and was used as a popular swimming spot. The pump house was erected once electricity became available. The nearby Tooth's Maltings was the first to connect to electricity in Mittagong in the early 1900s. The original pump and motor can be viewed from the door of the pump house. Please do not enter the pump house.

From this location walk past the Nattai River downstream.



○ *History Walk 21* ○

This is the Nattai River Bridge. The Great Southern Road (later the Hume Highway) once passed directly in front of the Inn. Two railway bridges were constructed in 1867 to allow the 'Great North Road' to pass directly in front of the Inn. This was at considerable expense to the government and demonstrates the importance of the Inn in the early development of Mittagong. In the 1950s

a deviation of the highway occurred and the old Hume Highway now runs parallel to the front of Ferguson Crescent, the site of the Inn. The town of Mittagong is now bypassed by the F5 Freeway, known as the Hume Highway.

The bridge is a State listed Heritage item.

This is the conclusion of the tour. We thank you for joining us and hope you enjoyed your tour around the historic Fitz Roy Inn. If you have any questions or comments, please visit us at reception. Meals and light refreshments are available in the restaurant during opening hours.

For restaurant bookings call +61 2 4858 0770

For accommodation enquiries +61 2 4872 3457



The Fitz Roy Inn has a fascinating history, not only because it is the first Inn erected in Mittagong on the Great Southern Road from Sydney to nearby Berrima in 1836; but because the personal history of the occupants reads like the script from a movie.

George Cutter is one of the main characters in the story. He supervised the construction of the Inn on land owned by James Foster. He also had the contract to supply sandstone for the erection of the local Berrima Court House, but he also used this contracted stone in the erection of the Inn. Government authorities suddenly discovered where the stone from the court house was disappearing to and Cutter lost the contract.

George's wife, Ann, became the first licensee of the Inn, then known as the Kangaroo Inn. In 1837, John Binstotf acquired the licence but, his tenure was short lived when Cutter assaulted him. Found guilty, Cutter was sentenced to six months' in Sydney Gaol and his witness; committed for perjury. William McGrath took over the licence in 1838. In a jealous rage, Cutter stabbed

McGrath and was sentenced to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) for a period of fifteen years. The licence reverted to Ann.

In 1846, Alexander Brand became the licensee and, in 1850, renamed the Inn, the Fitz Roy Inn, after Governor Charles Augustus Fitz Roy, who had stayed at the Inn in that year, when he visited the newly established Fitz Roy Iron Works in Mittagong. The lease from Ann to Brand stipulated that Cutter was only allowed on the premises under sufferance of Brand.

Following his release from gaol, Cutter returned to the Inn, and was not happy with the new arrangements between Ann and Brand and, in 1851, he allegedly shot Brand with intent to murder him during a struggle in the convict's quarters of the Inn. Both men attended the Berrima Police Station, but it seems that Cutter's account of the incident that Brand had tried to shoot him was believed, and he was released. Brand was retained, and had to prove his case to the court. He was found guilty of intent to shoot Cutter and forced to pay a £100. bond. Three gentlemen acquired the lease of the Inn from Ann. Cutter did not agree with her decisions and, in each case, he became aggressive towards the new licensees, resulting in court actions.

While returning from Sydney to Mittagong, in 1858, Ann was killed in an accident in Camden. Cutter remarried the widow of an innkeeper in Berrima, Winifred McMahon and he died in 1860. His remains are in an unmarked grave in Berrima.

It is of note that George and Ann Cutter are recognised by some historians, as the founding settlers of Mittagong. Prior to the establishment of the Kangaroo Inn on Foster's land, the Cutters conducted the Kangaroo Inn on Old South Road, Mittagong, which was the main route from Sydney to Berrima. When the road was diverted to the site of the current Fitz Roy Inn, they moved to this location. Cutter's contribution to the establishment of Mittagong is acknowledged in the street name, George Cutter Avenue, in the new Renwick subdivision.

One of the other interesting occupants of the former Inn was Henry Edmund Southey who commenced Oaklands School in 1871. Southey was an academic from Oxford, England. His school attracted the interest of many leading professional business people, who sent their sons to Southey's boarding school. Boys from the families of Fairfax, Knox, Tooth, Mort and Osborne were among the students, which numbered ninety.

Initially, Southey lived in the former Inn, with his wife, Eliza and their eight children, before erecting a private residence on higher land behind the school. He also built a dormitory for the boys at Oaklands. The school and grounds were a place of activity during the 1870s and the 1880s. Regular town cricket matches were conducted and musical events occurred. It is understood that the first game of tennis was introduced to Australia by a master at the school, J W Fletcher, in 1875. Southey immediately constructed a tennis court for his students to play and enjoy this new game. Oaklands was a significant educational and cultural centre.

The 1880s was not a good time for Southey. He had considerable debts, became bankrupt and the school closed. For a while he fossicked for diamonds in the Mittagong area before he moved to nearby Bowral where he enjoyed retirement in a home named Eldon. Southey was recognised as one of the finest classical scholars in the Commonwealth and taught languages to private pupils until his death at 76 years. Southey and Eliza are both buried in the Bowral Cemetery.

Southey's name is remembered in Southey Street Mittagong, which street runs parallel with, and behind, Ferguson Crescent, the site of the Fitz Roy Inn. Southey's private home in this street is now called Wandevan and is owned by Peter and Trish Law, who undertook a magnificent restoration of the home. In 1888 this residence was occupied by the Hon. Edmund Barton and his family. Barton was elected Australia's first prime minister in 1901.

Other owners of the former Inn retained the name Oaklands. The Downes family conducted the Oaklands Guest House for many years and made additions to the premises. In 1987, the property was purchased by Cosmo and Maria Aloï and Paul and Gai Lovell. Eleven years' later, in 1998, they began a huge restoration project to return the building to its former glory.

Today, in 2017, the Fitz Roy Inn is owned by John Griffin who is making substantial improvements to the property and protecting its heritage. John is deeply committed to retaining the colonial character of the Inn and to sharing with visitors the history of the people who have lived in the premises since 1836. John's interest in the historical past of the Inn is reflected in his decision to rename the premises, the Fitz Roy Inn, so named by Alexander Brand in 1850.

This decision was also inspired by the 2015 launch of the Fitz Roy Iron Works Heritage Trail, which reflects upon the historical significance and importance of the ironworks to Mittagong. A self-guided tour brochure of the trail, including a visit to the archaeological site of the first ironworks in Australia, situated at the Highlands Marketplace, may be obtained from the Southern Highlands Welcome Centre, 62-70 Main Street, Mittagong.

This is a brief history of the Fitz Roy Inn. In the future, John Griffin, through his occasional sessions on YouTube will share with the public, more stories of the former Inn, the school and its occupants.

Viewers who may wish to comment or add to these historical sessions are welcome to contact John Griffin at the Fitz Roy Inn, Mittagong. Telephone: 02 4872 3457 or email: bookings@fitzroyinn.com.au.



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