

## **The Exterior**

Built between 1829 - 1832 by convict labour. Philip Gidley King chose the site and the design was based on the Lethbridge family home 'Madford' in Cornwall England.

Was the Bunya tree planted by Governor King as a marker before he set sail back to England in 1807?

The house is typical Georgian and quite primitive in design. No fancy ceiling roses, no fancy marble fireplaces, instead it is exceptionally elegant and masculine in its simplicity.

## **Hallway -**

This is the only original cornice in the house. When we purchased the house there was a different style cornice in most rooms - from Art Deco through to modern AVJennings. We had a pattern cast and then redid the cornices throughout. The present tv room had half the original cornice with an AVJennings mould attached, we left the half original which was set upside down to that of the hallway and then placed the new cornice to meet what was already there - that is why this cornice is larger than the rest of the house.

The floorboards throughout the entire house are original, unlike the majority of properties of this era. The soil is clay, the construction of the home was with shale sandstone which is quite brittle.

The glass above the front door is broken, however being original we are disinclined to repair it.

The settee is 1820s and is from the Scobie Estate (early Scottish settlers) - I purchased it at auction in the Hunter Valley.

The chandelier is from Paris. The sideboard is actually a very old Parisian bar and the mirror is also from Paris.

The terracotta and very rare and brittle statue is of Joseph from the Nativity scene - we found this in an antique dealer in Belgium and had it shipped to Australia.

The artwork is by celebrated Australian artist Tracey Moffatt.

The Knocker on the front door is original and the streaks of green paint on the door suggest that at one stage during its life it was painted green like the corrugated iron on the original stables which are behind The Garrison (museum).

The doorway between the front and rear halls would have been the differentiation point between the formal and informal areas of the home.

## **The Library**

The bookcase was actually moved from the master bedroom upstairs and rebuilt in what is now the library and what would have originally been the main lounge of the home.

The fireplace in this room is unlike any others throughout the house.

The floors are original ironbark and were (when we bought it) covered in either brown paint, brown boot polish or Black Japan.

The electricals were obvious and conduit ran down the walls and light switches, alarms and power points were obvious and detracting. We chose to install pull cord switches and I had the cords made overseas.

The lights throughout the house were purchased in Belgium and shipped back to Australia. When we purchased Werrington House there was only an energy saving bulb in each room.

The shutters and joinery are all Cedar. The shutters are recessed into the woodwork and are incredibly efficient in controlling the temperature. In winter - they keep the heat in and in Summer if shut early in the day keep the house exceptionally cool. The shutters feature a metal locking device which would have been installed to keep escaped convicts and natives out. This land was a frontier post and exceptionally remote.

Paint on woodwork was a sign of 'wealth and status'. When we purchased the house and restored the shutters to working order, layers of white paint were found on the inside of several shutters revealing that the woodwork had originally been white. We chose to leave the doors natural cedar and stain them. Several windows on the upstairs level were in terrible shape as the timber was rotten having been exposed to the elements. Our joiners managed to salvage these windows - we are very grateful, as the glass had been shipped to Australia on convict ships.

## **The TV room**

I believe that originally this room would have been the formal dining room.

The walls still feature the picture hanging hooks, even though the plaster in this particular room was in very poor condition - being 'drummy'. Vast sections of wall were replastered by specialist artisans.

You will note that there are two doors on either side of the fire in this room. This is a feature of true Georgian design. The door on the left would have been used by maids to bring food from the outside kitchen. As Georgian design is all based on symmetry, the door on the right is purely to balance the room. This door does nothing more than access a cupboard.

Above the fire is a depiction of the 'Mutiny on the Bounty'. This picture is poignant - in 1806 Governor Philip Gidley King was gravely ill and notified England that he would need to be replaced as Governor of NSW. His replacement was William Bligh and the two men reached an agreement of thanks - this would be ICAC worthy today! Governor Bligh granted the outgoing Governor King a 2,000 acre land grant to thank him for all his good work in the colony and Governor King granted Governor Bligh 2,000 acres for all the good work that he would do. You are standing on the last near 5 acres of Mary Kings portion of the original King family grant. Governor Blighs land grant is on the other side of the railway on what is currently the site of the Western Sydney University.

Adjacent to the window are 2 small portraits - one of Governor Philip Gidley King and the other of his son Captain Philip Parker King - his portion of the King family grant was called Dunheved - the house is long gone and the land is now the Dunheved Industrial area adjacent to Ropes Crossing.

On the small table beside the window is a portrait of Arthur Phillip - we owe the colonisation of NSW to his incredible navigating skills - to bring the convict ships to settle in Sydney Harbour. Philip Gidley King arrived with the First Fleet serving under Arthur Phillip who chose him as second lieutenant on HMS Sirius.

## **Current Dining Room**

I believe that this small room would have been an informal sitting room, perhaps a crafts room for the ladies or children. On the woodwork beside the door is a bell button - which would have been used to call servants, however

this I believe dates from the 1900s as I believe that servants bells would have originally been on a cord like the light switches.

The windows do not have shutters.

When we arrived the electrical wiring ran through the window and along the outside wall for the telephone and power.

We have hung Peter's relevant Ministerial portfolio folders on the walls.

We also have the original Attorney Generals bag - which was old, worn and torn and needed to be replaced when Peter became Attorney General.

Above the fire hangs an iconic John Coburn print of the Opera House.

The Regulator clock belonged to Jennine's father who was a clock restorer.

The table is the original Bar Table from central criminal court.

All fireplaces are in working order. The only issues with them being bees that like the idea of setting up home in the warmer months. A constant problem.

## **Rear hallway**

It is stated that Mary King on inspecting the workmanship of the house was horrified to find that the builders had forgotten to build the staircase. That is why it is so steep and only placed within the rear hallway space - instead of running from the front door to the second level.

The stairs were dark, almost black and the railing was very wobbly and dangerous. Once the stairs were sandpapered it was revealed that they were in fact fine Australian cedar. Once again, the design of the stairs is primitive and simplistic.

To the left of the stairs is the new hallway which was created from what had been a 70s kitchen space. This new hallway leads to the Orangery.

The Orangery is the current kitchen.

The original kitchen is now the billiards room - the kitchens were always built separate to the house, as there was a huge risk of fire.