

Welcome to the **Camden Haven**, - a diverse landscape of mountains, rivers, lakes and beaches, rich in both plant and animal life. Culturally significant indigenous sites confirm the presence of Aboriginal people in this area prior to European settlement.

On the 12th May, 1770, Captain James Cook sailed past and named the local mountains, "The Three Brothers". The Camden Haven was later explored by John Oxley in October 1818. The area was settled by Europeans in the 1820s, the first settlers being Soldiers guarding the southern exit to the Port Macquarie Penal Settlement.

The Camden Haven became a thriving community by the late 1880s based on the area's fishing and timber resources. The area now supports a strong tourism industry based on its natural scenery and national parks.

The **Camden Haven Historical Society** is a community museum that researches, collects and interprets the history and heritage of the Camden Haven Valley and villages.

The museum, which is run by local volunteers out of the Laurieton School of Arts, features displays on the history of the timber, fishing and shipping industries, local farming and more. It is a work constantly in progress with history, as they say, 'starting with the morning's news'. The Museum also sells a range of books and postcards on the local history.



Camden Haven Historical Society

Laurieton School of Arts
58 Bold Street
Laurieton NSW 2443

Website: camdenhavenhistoricalsociety.org

Email: camdenhavenmuseum@yahoo.com.au

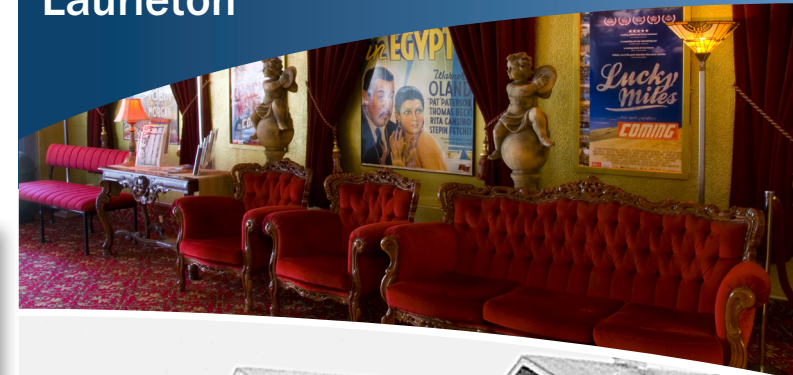
Phone: 0408 113 313

Opening Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday
9am to 1pm

Camden Haven Historical Society

A self-guided walking tour of historic Bold and Laurie Streets, Laurieton



**Local History
Local Stories**

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1911 - School of Arts: There have been three 'School of Arts' in Laurieton. The first, then a 'Mechanics Institute', was flattened by the 'Maitland Gale' in 1898. The second burnt down in 1910. The third, built in 1911, is still in use with past events including balls, movies, concerts & exhibitions. It was also used as a refuge during the 1963 floods. The "proscenium" decorative arch, which separates the auditorium from the stage, is one of the finest in NSW.

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1877 - Public School: In 1875 an application was made for the establishment of a school at Peach Orchard, Camden Haven, (later called Laurieton). The school, constructed in 1876 for £187.10, opened in 1877 with an enrolment of 30 pupils. Only one building, the library, remains in use today from the original school and is now the computer classroom.

1875 - Post Office & Residence: The first Post Office operated from Joseph Laurie's house. He was appointed the first postmaster in October 1875. Then a separate residence & new "Post Office" were built by Robert Longworth and opened in March 1914. It remained in use until January 1990 when replaced by the current Post Office on the corner of Lake & Seymour Streets.



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1970 - Swimming Pool: After 23 years of meetings and fund raising efforts, the Laurieton War Memorial Baths were officially opened in March 1970. This day was a milestone in Laurieton's history - the pool was reported in the media as "a most fitting tribute to those who served and died". Note the "Remembrance Torch" in the main foyer at the entrance to the baths.

1881 - Government Wharf: Critical infrastructure at the time, a wharf was built here for £400 with a government grant in 1881. A shed was later added, eventually becoming the first Fish Co-op. All that remains today are four of the original support pylons which can be seen on the riverbank.

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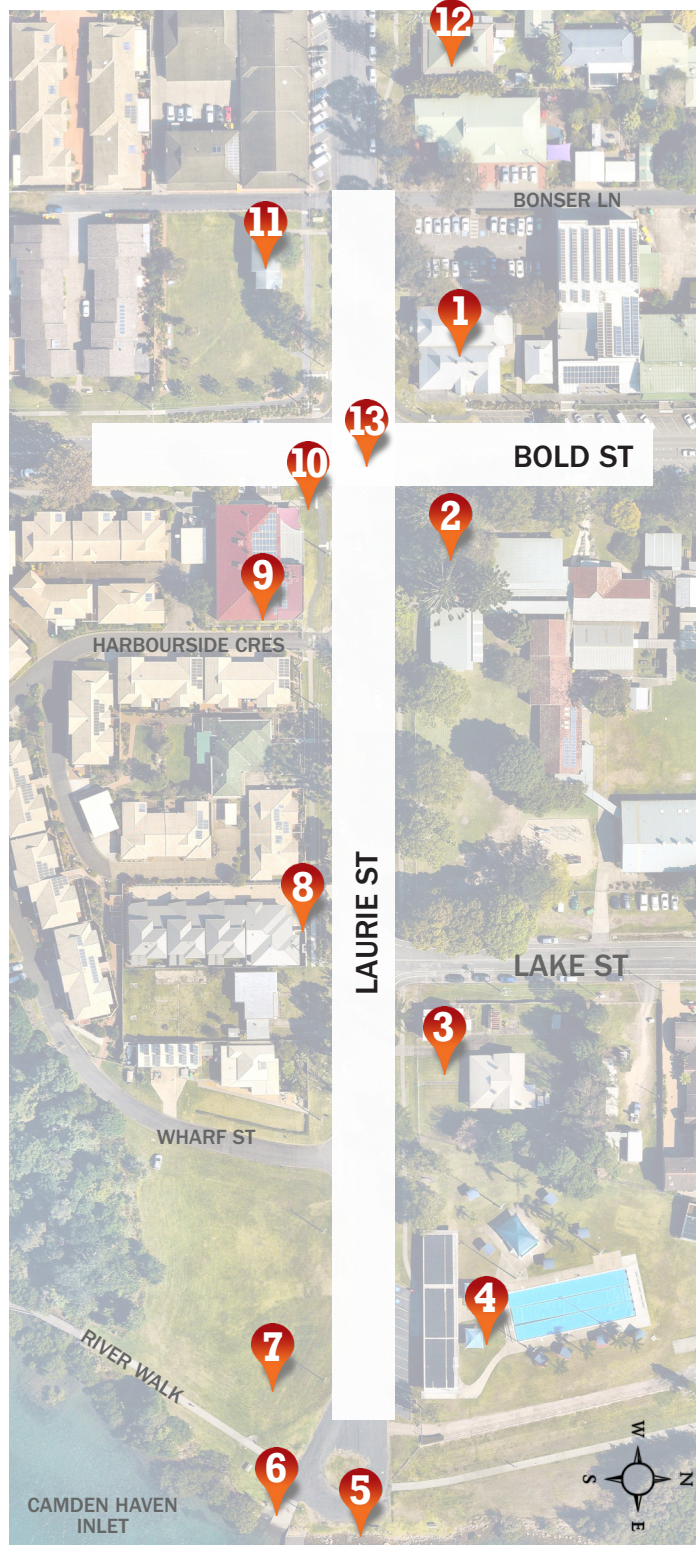
1896 - Punt and Ramp: Initially a small 'hand-pulled' punt operated across the river to Dunbogan. It was 'motorised' in November 1949, and then replaced by a larger ferry around 1957



to accommodate trucks working the rutile sand mine at Diamond Head. When the Dunbogan Bridge was built in 1966, the ferry was moved to the Hastings River at Port Macquarie. The punt 'ramps' on both sides of the river, are still there today.

1960s - McGregor's Cottage: Former miners from Cessnock, the McGregor brothers lived next to the ferry where they grew and sold vegetables. Both died in the early 1960s. The cottage was eventually demolished, but can still be seen in the 1968 aerial photos.

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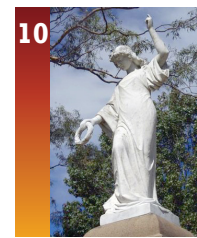


1890s - 1920s - Laurie Street Shops: Several shops were built in this vicinity including a butcher, draper & general store owned by George De Fraine. He also had the Laurieton Hotel built in 1900. Joseph Laurie's home was located along this section of Laurie Street. Photos and historical records are the only evidence left to recall these bygone days.

1959 - Plaza Theatre: In February 1959 the new Plaza Theatre was opened. The front entrance was constructed around the then Laurieton War Memorial until it was relocated in 1974. The Theatre has been modified over the years and today has the latest technical capabilities for the industry. It was the first North Coast cinema to install digital 2D & 3D production. A smaller 50-seat theatre was added in 2004.



1924 - War Memorial: In November 1924, a War Memorial was built on the corner of Bold & Laurie Streets diagonally across from the School of Arts. The Memorial was relocated to Laurie Park, Bold Street at the northern entrance to Laurieton in 1974. A circular imprint of where it was located can be seen in the tiling at the front of the Plaza Theatre today.



1898 - Longworth Park and the Holy Trinity Church: This land was purchased in 1898 by the Longworth Brothers for £20 on behalf of the Church of England. The Church was consecrated by the Bishop of Newcastle in March 1899. It was deconsecrated in November 2001 when a new Church was built elsewhere. This land and church was then purchased in 2005 for the community with funds raised by the Council and local groups. The park was renamed in honour of the Longworth family.



1898 - 'Rosebank': This house was built by Robert Longworth, timber miller and merchant. In 1900 the family established a sawmill on the Camden Haven Inlet and started one of the largest enterprises in the industry.

1914 - 1918 - Avenues of Honour: As you look down both Laurie & Bold Streets you will see the remnants of the planting of 193 World War I Memorial Trees to honour those who enlisted from the Camden Haven District. Planted in 1916 and 1918, this was the first such memorial in NSW. It encompasses Laurie Street, the main street at that time, and Bold Street in the form of a cross. Today only 33 of the original trees remain.

