

SINGLETON COMMUNITY PRESENTS

# *Back to Singleton 2020*

## EVENT PROSPECTUS

COMMEMORATING THE  
BICENTENNIAL OF  
ST PATRICKS PLAINS

13 > 15 MARCH 2020



**SINGLETON**  
COUNCIL



## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

The area we now know as Singleton has a very long and rich history of people and cultures stretching over thousands of years. Yet it was just a mere 200 years ago that the explorer John Howe came up with the rather poetic description that it was – and continues to be – “as fine a country as imagination can form”.

The people of the Wanaruah/Wonnarua have belonged to this land since before time was kept, sustained by the ebbs and flows of the Hunter River and luxuriant plains.

More recently, our area played an important role in the growth and development of the colony of NSW, laying the foundations for the agricultural, mining and tourism industries that have supported the development of the township and cemented Singleton's ongoing importance to the State's economy.

The bicentennial may mark the anniversary since John Howe and his exploration party, including Benjamin Singleton, arrived at Whittingham on 15 March 1820. But this commemoration is about more than the European settlement of the Singleton local government area. It's about our connection with the land and with each other, an acknowledgement of the richness of our community and that sense of fulfillment that comes from belonging.

This is a great occasion for us all to learn more about each other, for residents to reflect on what they love about home and for previous residents to come back and retrace old footsteps. It's an occasion for people to celebrate what makes Singleton the best place to live, work and visit.

The Singleton Bicentennial Commemorations Working Group is leading a whole-of-community series of events over 13-15 March 2020 to encourage all people and all cultures to come together.

But this commemoration belongs to all of us. That's why our vision is for a program of events not just over the weekend, but throughout the year for everyone right across our local government area – from the Singleton town centre to our historic villages – to get involved.

We're looking to sporting clubs to host a home game that weekend, or your community organisation to hold a concert or performance, or historical displays. We'd also love businesses to get into the spirit and pubs and clubs to think about a historical theme for their entertainment, or to organise a special dinner or event to reflect on the history of Singleton, and the opportunities for our area into the future.

With less than a year until March 2020, we're encouraging all community groups, venues and businesses to start planning their own events for Back to Singleton 2020. And let us know at Council so we can include it in our event program and promotion, allowing people to plan a weekend and indeed, a year of commemorations in keeping with what is as fine a community as imagination can form.

*Cr Sue Moore*  
MAYOR OF SINGLETON



## THE STORY OF SINGLETON

The richness of the luxuriant plains of the middle reaches of the Hunter River have sustained Aboriginal societies for thousands of years, with evidence of artefacts at ancient campsites along creeks.

So too the promise of rich land fit for cultivation, along with an overland route between Wallis Plains and Windsor, captured the imagination of Governor Macquarie and a number of exploration parties that set out to cut through the precipitous rocky mountains.

After several attempts, an exploration party led by John Howe came upon the Hunter River at Whittingham on 15 March 1820, bestowing the name “St Patricks Plains” in honour of the forthcoming St Patricks Day two days' hence.

Howe reported back to Governor Macquarie that he had

travelled through “as fine a country as imagination can form”.

The exploration party included two Aboriginal guides, Myles and Mullaboy, as well as free settlers, convicts and volunteers, who set out from the Richmond/Hawkesbury area. One of the free settlers was Benjamin Singleton, whose land grant in the bend of the river would eventually become the township of Singleton.

The settlement thrived, with pioneers eager for land to pasture sheep and cattle, and businesses flourished on George Street. However, the area's Aboriginal inhabitants were dispossessed. Their descendants today still retain many of their traditions, and the wider community now recognises the traditional owners of the land past, present and future.



## BACK TO SINGLETON 2020

Back to Singleton 2020 is a whole-of-community commemoration focusing on the history of St Patricks Plains as well as what we love about living, working and playing in Singleton. Whether you're a long-time resident, a former resident or a frequent visitor, this is an opportunity to learn more about our area, come together to reflect on those who laid the foundations for our community and look forward to the opportunities of the Singleton of the future.

The Singleton Bicentennial Commemorations Working Group, representing all sectors of the community, has been formed to develop and oversee an appropriate and inclusive series of events to mark the occasion, in

keeping with the significance of our area to all cultures. **A tentative program includes, but may be subject to change:**

- Friday 13 March: Community street party – John Street
- Saturday 14 March: Community festival – Civic Precinct
- Saturday 14 March: Formal dinner – Civic Centre

The committee is also considering other events and commemorations, based on suggestions from the community, all throughout 2020.



## HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

If you're from a community organisation, sports club, run a business or venue or are just passionate about Singleton, you can hold your own event as part of the Back to Singleton 2020 program. It may be on the weekend of 13-15 March 2020, or at another time during the year. Or it may be an event you already hold. This is an invitation for you to join us in showcasing the vibrancy of our community and the pride we have in our history and our towns and villages.

Your event may focus on any historical era, century or decade related to the Aboriginal or European inhabitation of Singleton, or Australian history.

### Some suggestions:

- Host a regular competition or pre-season home game for your sports team on weekend 13-15 March 2020

- Bring old friends together at a school, workplace or family reunion
- Hold an open day at your organisation/business/industry to showcase the history and contribution of your operation to the Singleton local government area
- Put on a concert or performance
- Hold a special lunch or dinner showcasing local produce
- Get creative with an art exhibition
- Put pen to paper with a writing workshop
- Roll out the red carpet for a film festival
- Time travel with a historical display
- If you're a licensed venue, go back in time with an historical theme for your entertainment





# MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Singleton Council, acting through the Singleton Bicentennial Commemorative Working Party, is undertaking a substantial marketing and promotion campaign to highlight the Singleton bicentennial and program of events to encourage people to visit our area to be part of the occasion.

Hosting an event as part of the Back to Singleton 2020 program offers a range of benefits to your organisation or business through an anticipated increase in visitors to Singleton over the weekend of 13-15 March 2020, as well as inclusion in marketing and promotion activities at local, regional and metropolitan levels.

**The Back to Singleton 2020 marketing and promotion program includes but is not limited to:**

- Metropolitan and local print media advertising
- Radio campaign
- A targeted web presence at: [singleton.nsw.gov.au/backtosingleton2020](http://singleton.nsw.gov.au/backtosingleton2020)
- Social media (including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube via Singleton Council's channels and #backtosingleton2020 campaign)

- Event program (printed and digital)
- Back to Singleton 2020 Media Kit (to be distributed to local and metropolitan media across print, radio and free-to-air and subscriptionTV, highlighting news opportunities, interview talent and images)

**You will also have access to resources including:**

- Event Host Kit
- Posters and flyers
- Digital assets such as social media tiles
- "Proud to be part of Back to Singleton 2020" poster for display in your organisation/business
- Assistance from Council's Bicentenary Events Officer
- Assistance with news releases and other promotion for your event

In addition, by being part of the Back to Singleton 2020 event program, you will be kept informed with regular updates from the Singleton Bicentennial Commemorations Working Group and the first to know the details about everything that's happening as part of Back to Singleton 2020. You will also be invited to the Back to Singleton 2020 Event Program Launch later this year.

## EVENT ASSISTANCE

Depending on the size, scale and proposed location of your event, you may need to lodge an event application with Council. However, approval for small-scale events in private venues or as part of regular activities is generally not required. Council's Bicentennial Events Officer will work with you to provide all the information you need to help make your bicentennial event a great success.

## WHAT TO DO NEXT?

Submit an Expression of Interest form available at [singleton.nsw.gov.au/backtosingleton2020](http://singleton.nsw.gov.au/backtosingleton2020) for your event by **31 October 2019**.

**We'll need to know:**

- The Event Host details
- Detailed description of your event
- Date
- Location
- Contact information

**For more information, contact:**

**T 02 6578 7290**

**E [council@singleton.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@singleton.nsw.gov.au)**



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