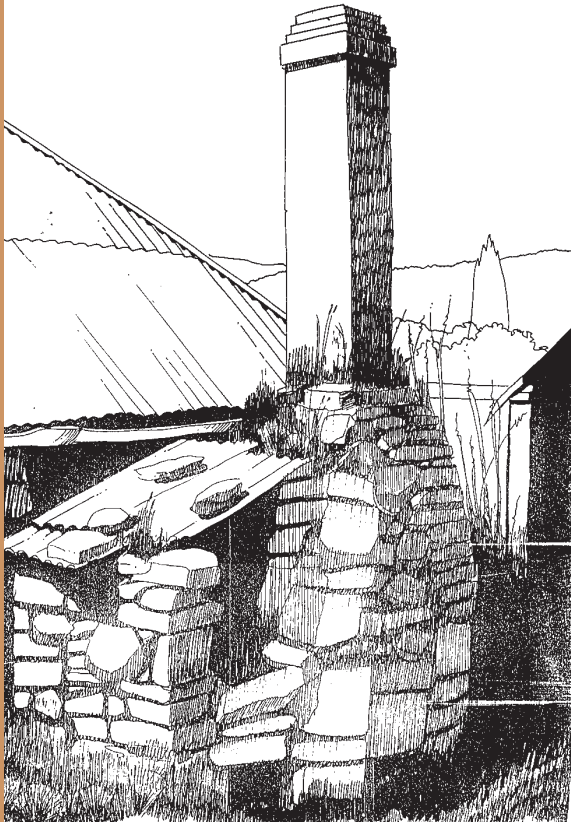


London Bridge



Walking Track



London Bridge Walking Track

This 2 hour circuit walk takes you from the London Bridge woolshed and shearers quarters, across London Bridge Arch and along Burra Creek to the homestead. The return trip is via the fire trail.

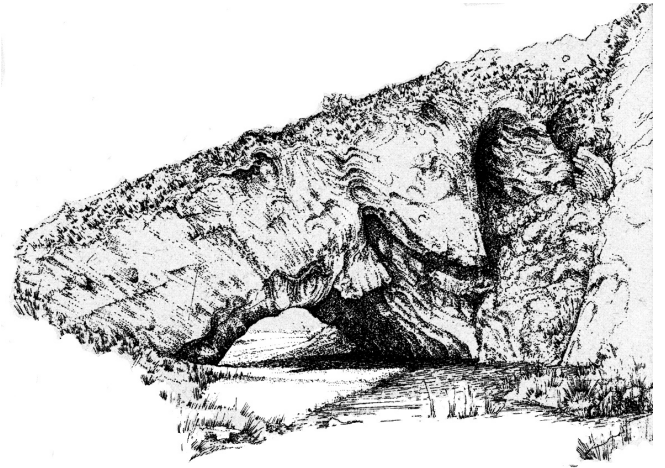
The homestead is protected by a security fence but is clearly visible from outside the fence. Many of the out-buildings, including the remains of the original woolshed are outside the fence and may be explored at any time. Open days are held regularly to inspect the homestead. Contact the Ranger Station for details.

London Bridge Arch

The limestone of London Bridge Arch began to form when sediment and coral remains were deposited on an ocean floor 420 million years ago. It was then subjected to intense

pressure. Over time the ocean receded and erosion shaped the landscape. The arch was formed by water slowly leaching through the limestone, enlarging cracks until a passage became big enough for Burra Creek to pass through. It reached its present size about 20,000 years ago.

The arch was first recorded by Europeans in 1823 when explorer Captain Mark Currie was directed to the arch by an Aboriginal guide. Currie described it as 'a natural bridge of one perfect Saxon arch, under which the water passed.'



London Bridge Arch

The First People in the Burra Valley

Long before Captain Mark Currie's journey of exploration, this valley was occupied by Walgalu and Ngarigo speaking Aboriginal people who maintained a hunting and gathering lifestyle in this region for thousands of years. Heritage sites including Aboriginal camps containing stone artefacts and the remnants of fires have been covered by sediments or have been disturbed by floods.

Extinct Animals

Remains of locally extinct native rats, mice and small marsupials have been found around the arch. These animals may have become extinct in the mid 1800s when European settlers cleared and farmed the surrounding land.

Along Burra Creek

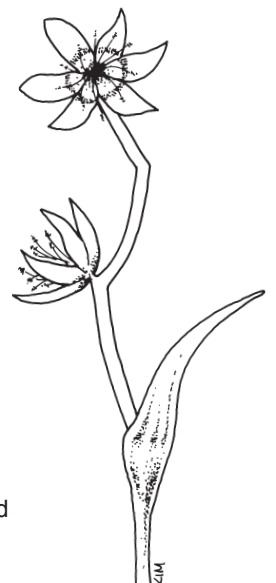
Europeans first settled in this area about 1834 when the habitat was grassy woodland. The trees were ringbarked to create more pasture while others were cut down for building and firewood.

The most common tree species remaining is Apple Box. Settlers found that its interwoven grain made it difficult to split and hard to burn. Some of the small native plants which formed the understorey in the original woodland can still be seen here including Prickly Moses Wattle and Early Nancy which carpets the ground in early spring.

As you walk down the track you may see Eastern Grey Kangaroos resting in the shade of the trees. They move out into the grasslands to graze in the late afternoon.

Many species of birds can be seen at Googong Foreshores. A bright green and yellow flash is likely to be the Eastern Rosella. It has a very distinctive chatter

Early Nancy



Googong



Australian Kestrel

In 1928, it was sold to the Douglas family with whom it remained until the Commonwealth resumed most of the property in 1973, to protect the catchment of the dam.

The significance of the diversity of this site and the rural setting of the area are recognised by the listing of the homestead on the Register of the National Estate and its classification by the National Trust of Australia.

A Fragile Heritage—Please protect this area:

- Do not rock climb on the arch or enter the caves—they are extremely fragile and take thousands of years to recover.
- Keep to the tracks and protect this special environment.
- Googong Foreshores is a wildlife refuge so please leave your pets at home.
- Take your rubbish home—there are no bins.
- Use the toilets provided at the car parks.
- Swimming and camping are not permitted.

Location

Googong Foreshores is located 10 kilometres south of Queanbeyan, NSW. The London Bridge area is a further 10 kilometres south. The area is managed by ACT Parks, Conservation and Lands for water catchment, recreation and as a wildlife refuge.

when feeding and a loud screech when alarmed. The Australian Kestrels, are commonly seen hovering with rapid wing beats and their tail fanned, looking for prey such as young rabbits and small birds.

Since the 1980s, ACT Parks, Conservation and Lands, with the help of community groups including the Friends of Googong Park Care group have been planting trees in much of this area. Species such as Red Box and Yellow Box have been planted to increase the mix of species.

Work is also undertaken to control the spread of Willow, Hawthorn, Poplars and Briar Roses, all of which were introduced to this area. However, the area around London Bridge Homestead is managed to maintain its rural context and while the spread of exotic regrowth is controlled, the older exotic trees remain to allow visitors to appreciate the area for its rural history and landscape.

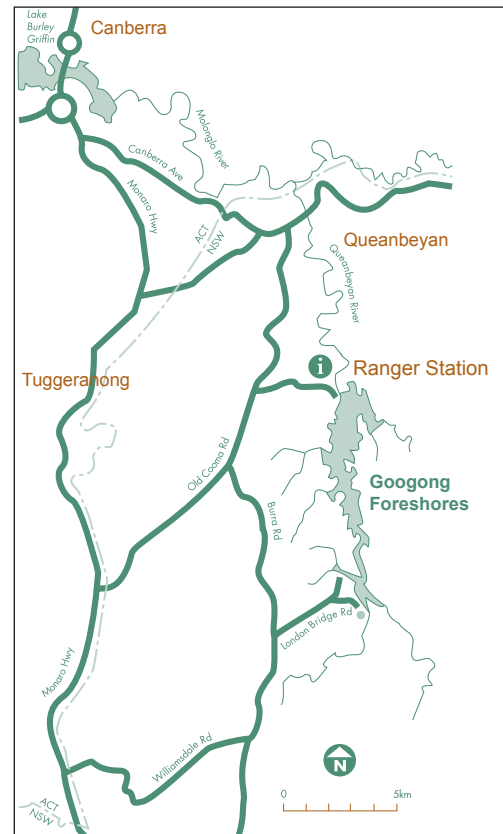
The London Bridge Property

In 1857, John McNamara, an Irishman from County Clare, paid 30 pounds for 30 acres of land in the Burra Valley. ‘London Bridge’ became one of the first properties in the area.

As you look at the collection of buildings which make up this homestead, you can see at least five architectural styles and different uses of building materials. The styles and construction varied according to the costs of materials and labour. Corrugated iron and weatherboard replaced stone and pisé as mass produced materials became available with the arrival of the railway at Queanbeyan.

The first construction, the stone cottage, was built in about 1860 from stone quarried from a nearby hill. Additional buildings were constructed over the years in response to the needs of a growing family—John and his wife had thirteen children although not all of the children lived at the homestead all the time.

The McNamara family owned the London Bridge property until 1920. During the later years of this ownership, it was leased to James Moore until the property was purchased by the Noone brothers in 1921. By that time the estate had been extended to 9000 acres.



Further information
 Ranger Station (northern end of Googong Foreshores)
 Ph: (02) 6207 2779
 Enquiries: Phone Canberra Connect on 13 22 81
 Website: www.tams.act.gov.au

