

castle hill heritage park fact sheet

On 4th March, 2004, exactly 200 years after the Castle Hill Rebellion, the Governor of NSW, Marie Bashir AC officially opened Castle Hill Heritage Park at Heritage Park Drive, Castle Hill.

With its 20 hectares of rolling landscaped hills and remnant Blue Gum forest, Heritage Park is a great location for family picnicking, walking and learning about the birthplace of Castle Hill and nature.

History

A quick history of the Government Farm land:

- On 8 July 1801, Governor King declared that a new Government Farm be created north of the Toongabbie settlement
- By May 1803, 474 convicts mostly of Irish descent had cleared 300 acres of land – the beginning of Castle Hill (at its peak the convicts had cleared 700 acres)
- Throughout 1803 a two storey, stone barracks was built to store the grain and convicts
- March, 4th 1804 the Castle Hill Rebellion commenced with the burning of a hut – this rebellion ended in the Australian Battle of Vinegar Hill nearby at Rouse Hill on 5th March
- In 1811, the stone barracks was converted to a "Lunatic Asylum" which closed in 1826
- The sandstone barracks was then converted to a Church and the nearby superintendent's cottage used as a school, the first in the district
- By 1866, the stone barracks had been demolished and the stone used for the parsonage at Castle Hill (still located at corner Old Northern and Parsonage Roads)
- During the period 1870 to 1960, the land was used for orcharding and other small farm holdings including turkeys, mushrooms, sheep and horses
- In 1997 – 2001, Baulkham Hills Shire Council received title to 19.29 hectares of former Government Farm land

Discovering the archaeology

Council has undertaken an archaeological search for the site's past which has culminated in the recent unearthing of the foundations of the convict barracks and a kitchen block.

For more information on the archaeology of the park, see the fact sheet – Heritage Park Archaeology.

