

LIMESTONE HILL EXCURSION

Limestone Hill is the site of the original convict settlement called 'Limestone'. Explorer Allan Cunningham visited the area several times. There is still a hummock of limestone on the knoll and a path from the knoll leads to a point overlooking the Bremer River.

The nearby historic house 'Claremont' was built in 1856-1857 and interesting houses of other eras are in nearby streets.

This excursion could take a whole day or half a day.

Possible Activities

Imaginative writing about convicts or explorers.

- Learn to identify limestone and talk about its use. Look at the different forms in the wall in Milford Street.
- Find out how wealthy people lived in the early days of Ipswich.
- Pretend you are Allan Cunningham and climb either Cunningham's Knoll or the Lion's Lookout. Identify Cunningham's Gap in the distance and think about why explorers needed to find a path over the mountains.
- Learn to identify a few trees such as *Araucaria cunninghamii* (hoop pine) named after Allan Cunningham and the Bunya Pine which was the centre of aboriginal feasts and corroborees.
- Talk about the importance of parks in a city. Make a collection of leaves of different shapes (don't pull them off trees, there will always be some lying underneath).
- Talk about the 1930s Depression when many of the limestone walls and terraces were built.
- Walk around the streets near the park and look for ways in which the older houses differ from modern houses.
- Older students: read Tom Shapcott's poem, which mentions hoop pines (in the collection *Shabbytown Calendar*, published by UQP).
- For geography: discuss why Ipswich started and how the physical factors such as being at the head of navigation affected development.

INNER CITY EXCURSION

The historic inner-city area is a suitable area for walking. There are Heritage Trails available, which give information about the buildings.

Ipswich Art Gallery (formerly Global Arts Link) is in this area and often has special activities for schools in conjunction with exhibitions.

The adjacent piazza area of d'Arcy Doyle Place provides a good area for children to sit for a rest and/or a discussion.



This is a half-day excursion, which could be combined with other activities.

Possible Activities

- Imagine that you are John Murphy, the first Mayor of Ipswich suddenly carried to modern Ipswich by time travel. What would surprise you most about what you see?
- Look at new buildings and old buildings. What main differences are there?
- Pick out what types of business would NOT have been here 100 years ago. What types of business MIGHT have been here 100 years ago? (e.g. the newsagency, even if the things it is selling were a little bit different 100 years ago).
- Make up a story or a poem about the children playing in the fountain in d'Arcy Doyle Place.
- Visit Ipswich Art Gallery.
- Make a painting or drawing in d'Arcy Doyle Place. Find out who d'Arcy Doyle is.

INDUSTRIAL EXCURSIONS

1. Guided tour of Swanbank Power Station or Wivenhoe Power Station.
2. Steam train rides at Swanbank.
3. Visit the Aberdare coal seam outcrop in Jones Street, Blackstone.

HOUSING EXCURSIONS

1. Gooloowan is open to the public on a limited basis by arrangement phone (07) 3281 3886.
2. Most churches will allow a visit provided a service is not taking place.
3. There are several walk/drive Heritage Trails, which give details of the history and construction of the buildings.

Focus children's observation of the houses they see.

For older students, discussion of housing types should be carried out in class before the excursion.

TEACHERS NOTES ON CLAREMONT



Claremont was built in 1856-1857 for John Panton and his wife Isabella.

John Panton was born in Scotland but came to Australia with his family in 1818. His father George Panton became Postmaster in New South Wales, but died in 1829.

Young John started a business in Sydney with his sister's husband John Betts. John also became a magistrate and was elected to Parliament in New South Wales.

John Panton married Isabella North in Sydney and in 1851, the couple moved to Moreton Bay. We don't know why they decided to move, but we do know that the Panton family had visited Moreton Bay and that John had already bought land here. They probably thought the area had a good future.

John started a business in Ipswich selling just about everything, from rice and prunes to shoes and shirts and sheepskins. At first he and Isabella lived in part of their shop building in Brisbane Street.

Then in 1855, they built a store on Limestone Hill, then built their house Claremont nearby. There was a wharf on the riverbank where paddle steamers could tie up to unload cargo.

The story about a tunnel from the house to the river is unlikely to be true. It is a great distance and such a tunnel would have been almost impossible to dig in those days, especially if it went through Limestone rock. John Panton is said to have decided on the design of the house himself, although a firm of architects Wakeling and Casey helped during the construction. The builder was Alfred Lewis.

The house is like the ones that John Panton would have been used to in Sydney. It is technically called 'colonial Georgian'. The curved verandah roof is typical of this style. The sandstone is likely to have come from Woogaroo Quarry on the riverbank at Goodna. The roof was slate, probably imported from Wales. There was a stable at the rear of the house with rooms above.

Panton experienced financial problems in 1863 and sold Claremont to George and Jane Thorn. By 1863, George Thorn had become quite an important man. He had been elected to the first Parliament in Queensland and he owned large properties in the country including Normanby near Warrill View.

George died in 1876, only a short time before his son, also called George, became Premier of Queensland. A photo of the hunt club meeting at Claremont was taken about 1890 while George Thorn Junior was living at Claremont.

Early in the 20th century, the Wilson family bought Claremont and there are several photos of the family on the front lawn and of family weddings.

The Preddy family was the next owner, and during World War II when there was a housing shortage, Claremont was divided up into flats.

It became a school then was bought by the National Trust of Queensland. Its first public open day was in 1982.

Notes on Life at Claremont in the Early Days

The Pantons and Thorns were relatively wealthy. They advertised for servants including a cook and housemaids, and probably also employed gardeners, laundress and perhaps a groom for the horses. We know the Wilsons employed a laundress and a housemaid/cook.

The Pantons used candles and oil lamps for light; the Thorns and Wilsons used gas.

There used to be two kitchens, the current one plus another behind it, which may have been more of a scullery although it also had a stove.

There would have been a great deal of cooking and housework: the Pantons had 10 surviving children (plus one who died as a baby) and the Thorns had eight children.

John Panton liked gadgets; the house had magic lanterns, an ice-making machine and a sewing machine.

We know that life for the Wilson children was fairly formal and we would imagine that the same applied to the Pantons and Thorns.

The poinciana in the grounds was planted in 1920; the Chinese elms are older. The palms at the front steps were planted in the 1930s. The olive tree was planted in the 1980s.

The main entry used to be from Thorn Street and there was a circular driveway on the western side, with a drive leading off this to the stables. There were hoop pines near the drive and the circular section was edged with a hedge.

The railway line was built through the grounds in 1875.

There has always been a road between Claremont and the river.

The original soldiers' cottage of convict days was approximately on the site of No 2 Thorn Street. The convict limekiln was nearby, on the edge of the current railway embankment.

Let's Talk About Claremont

Did a rich family or a poor family own Claremont? Why do you think so?

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What servants might have been employed at Claremont?

What are the outer walls of Claremont made of?

None of these things were invented when John and Isabella Panton lived at Claremont. What would they have used instead?

- Electric light
- Refrigerator
- Motor car
- Typewriter
- Electric washing machine
- Telephone
- Shower

- Electric heater
- Lawn mower
- Television

If you are on a site visit look around the grounds at the back of the house and see if you can find evidence that part of the house has been demolished.

Look at the ceiling of the main bedroom. Why do you think it is like this?

Was the main roof always corrugated iron? If not, what was it?

Draw the shape of the verandah roof.