

Talking History events 2026

Local Studies,
Cessnock Library



Exhibition: Cessnock's children, July 2026. Photographer: Laurel Rudd

MARCH

The Spirit of Cessnock: stories of strength (exhibition)

1 – 31 March

Cessnock Library foyer

Exhibition launch and curator talk: 11.00am, Saturday 7 March.

Cessnock has a resilient heart and this exhibition showcases the stories of individuals and groups who have proved that. Discover powerful stories of courage and community cohesion, which are part of our region's DNA. Their stories inspire a collective vision for our future.

Celebrating Cessnock's hidden herstories (International Women's Day event)

1.00pm – 3.00pm

Thursday, 5 March

Cessnock Library

We don't have to look outside our own backyard to find amazing women, doing wonderful work. So why don't we know more about them? Hear the inspiring stories of hidden, local heroines at this annual Library event. Gold coin donation to Jodie's Place, our local women's refuge.

Kurri Kurri Hotel: a history chat (Seniors Festival event)

10.30am – 12.30pm

Monday 2 March

Meet at Kurri Kurri Hotel

The Kurri Kurri Hotel is an architecturally impressive building. At its opening in 1904 it was described as 'one of the handsomest hotels north of Sydney'. But what hidden stories are behind its beautiful façade? Come and find out!

Denman Hotel/Quirkz in the Hunter: a history chat (Seniors Festival event)

10.30am – 12.30pm

Monday 9 March

Meet at Denman Hotel/Quirkz in the Hunter

When the Denman Hotel opened 1912, it was controversial. But, why? And what happened to its former second floor? Come and find the answers, as well as hearing other fascinating tales, including how the hotel was re-born as a live music venue.

APRIL

Exploring Greta (history walk)

10.00am – 12.00pm

Saturday, 18 April

Join us for a walk around Greta to hear about its open-air cinema, many hotels and even its secret gardens. The walk will conclude with a tour of Greta Museum. This walk is easy, but you must be able to walk without restriction. Bookings are essential and you will need to sign a waiver to participate. Full details on booking.

MAY

Exploring Aberdare Cemetery (history walk)

10.00am – 12.00pm

Saturday, 2 May

Walking in a cemetery gives us all the chance to reflect on our life and mortality. But what about stories that lie buried there? This walk is easy, but you must be able to walk without restriction. Bookings are essential and you will need to sign a waiver to participate. Full details on booking.

Echoes of elegance: a talk about and display of vintage clothing

10.00am – 12.30am

Thursday, 21 May

Cessnock Library

The Australian Museum of Clothing and Textile Inc. at Maitland is Australia's only dedicated clothing museum. Its collection includes clothing, hats, shoes and ties from the 1820s to the present day. Curators from the Museum will be telling us about their extraordinary collection and showing precious pieces.

JUNE

Exploring Ellalong (history walk)

10.00am – 12.00pm

Saturday, 13 June

The town of Ellalong is overlooked by beautiful mountains. Once the home of cedar cutters and coal miners it is now a Hunter Valley haven. Come and hear its many stories! This walk is easy, but you must be able to walk without restriction. Bookings are essential and you will need to sign a waiver to participate. Full details on booking.

JULY

Cessnock's children: Laurel Rudd's photography (exhibition)

1 – 31 July

Cessnock Library foyer

In the 1960s Laurel Rudd, accompanied by her naturopath husband Phillip, ran a photography studio in Cumberland Street, Cessnock. A large archive of her work has been donated to the Library and this exhibition explores some of the wonderful images it contains, which focus on local children.

AUGUST

Immigration records: explore this resource (Family History month event)

10.00am – 12.30pm

Monday, 10 August

The European history of Australia is an immigrant history, so these records are vital for family history research. Come and explore what is available and how to get the most out of them. This is a joint event presented by Local Studies, Cessnock Library and the Cessnock Family History Group (Monday).

SEPTEMBER

Vincent Street: a living history (History Week exhibition)

1 – 30 September

Cessnock Library foyer

Cessnock locals walk down Vincent Street, our main shopping strip, regularly. But did you ever think that a street - itself – could have its own history? Vincent Street has seen drama, triumph, celebrations and tragedy acted out publicly on its footpaths. This exhibition explores these; it's a love letter to one of our oldest streets.

OCTOBER

Exploring Kurri Kurri (history walk)

10.00am – 12.00pm

Saturday, 10 October

Kurri Kurri was settled in 1904 and went on to prosper, having its own newspaper and (briefly) its own Council. Hear these and other stories on this walk around town. This walk is easy, but you must be able to walk without restriction. Bookings are essential and you will need to sign a waiver to participate. Full details on booking.

NOVEMBER

Treasures from the Local Studies collection

10.00am – 12.30pm

Thursday, 12 November

Join us for a Devonshire morning tea and to view special items from the Local Studies collection, as chosen by the Local Studies Librarian. You will be astounded at what hidden gems are in our collection!

Do you want to come to these free Talking History events?

Bookings are essential for all events. By booking in you assure your place. All bookings are done via Eventbrite, an online booking system, on the Library website:

<https://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/libraries/Home>

At the Library home page choose 'What's On', 'Adults', then scroll down, choose your event and follow the steps. You will receive a confirmation email with your tickets. No computer? No problem! The Librarians will help you with your booking.

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