

Busby's Bore

location The bore runs between Centennial Park and Hyde Park South in Sydney, New South Wales.

owner Water Board

the plaques

types **National Engineering Landmark and Information Plaques**

location Over the shaft in the Army Museum, Victoria Barracks.

When Busby's Bore was completed in 1837, it had the capacity to supply Sydney's population of 20,000 people with up to 1.5 million litres of water each day from the Lachlan Swamp. It was Sydney's sole source of water until 1858.

plaque text

Busby's Bore

This tunnel or "bore", cut mostly through sandstone, carried fresh water 3.5km from the Lachlan Swamps (Centennial Park) to Hyde Park. It was planned and supervised by John Busby, Government Mineral Surveyor, and constructed by convict labour 1827–37. It superseded the Tank Stream and alone provided Sydney and departing ships with an unflinching water supply until 1886.

Busby's Bore was the first engineered water scheme in Australia.

Dedicated by The Institution of Engineers, Australia, Water Board, the Centennial Park Trust, April, 1988.



John Busby (1765–1857)

Busby was born in 1765 at Alnwick, Northumberland, England. He gained extensive experience in the coal industry and as a mineral surveyor and engineer in England, Scotland and Ireland, and worked on the Caledonian Canal. In 1824 he arrived in Sydney to take up the position of Mineral Surveyor and Civil Engineer for the Colony. He spent the next two years developing the Newcastle coalfield.

By 1826 Sydney's need for a new clean supply of water was becoming desperate and Busby devised and commenced a scheme to bring water by tunnel from Lachlan Swamp (Centennial Park) to the racecourse in the town centre, now Hyde Park. The work was undertaken by convicts to which the slow progress was attributed. It was finally completed in 1837. Busby then retired to a farm on the Hunter River and died there in 1857.

