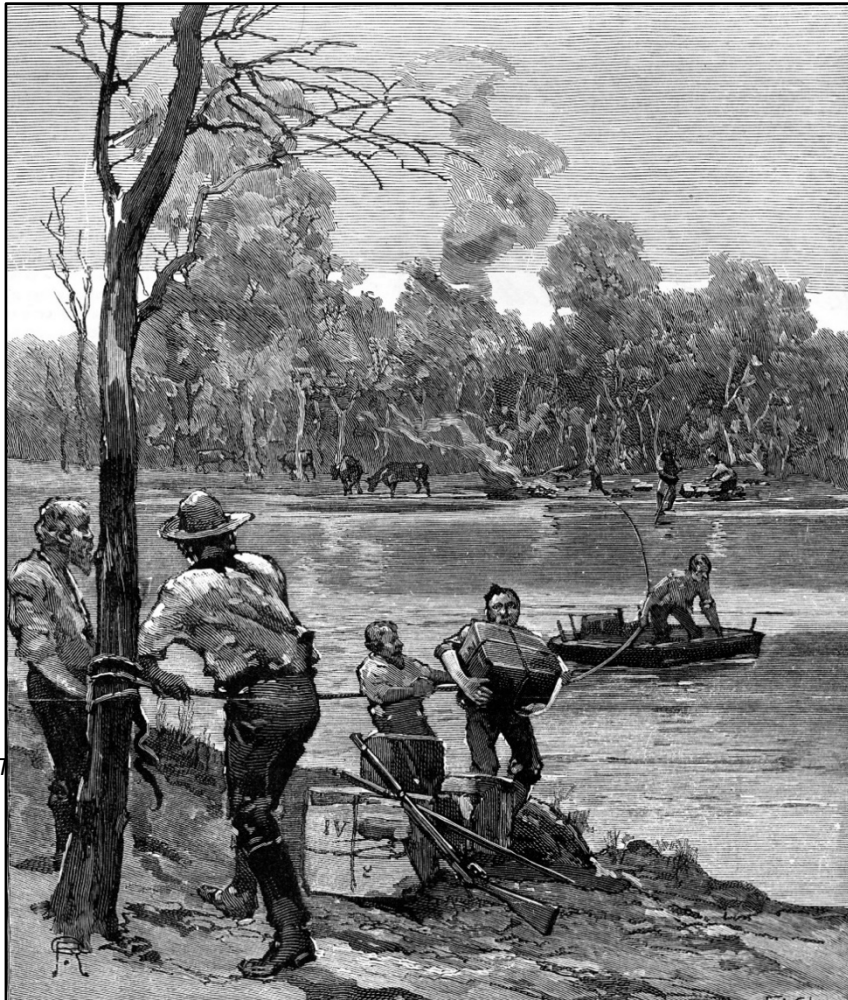


Event Souvenir  
Commemorating Oxley Plains Naming  
by Hume and Hovell in 1824

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 2.00pm



*Hume, Hovell and party crossing the Murray River in 1824/25*

**Hume and Hovell Bicentenary Plaque Unveiling**

Oxley Residents Association decided to commemorate this historically significant milestone with a bronze plaque to be located on a granite pedestal in the Oxley Memorial Park. The granite pedestal is significant, in that it was recovered from the 150-year-old Oxley Shire Hall in a renovation project 22 years ago.

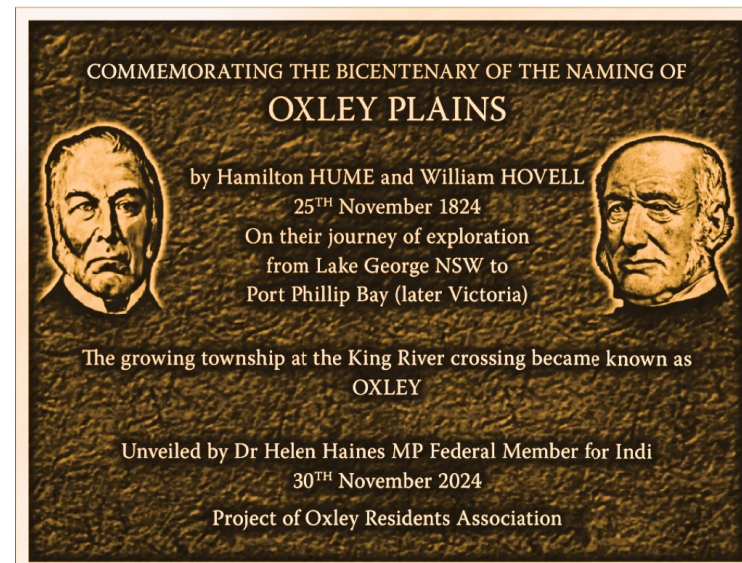
**Introduction and Welcome – Jamie Boatwood, Oxley Residents Association**

**Unveiling Ceremony - 2.00pm Dr Helen Haines MP, Member for Indi.**

**Cutting of the Bicentenary Birthday cake – Graeme Vincent, lifetime Oxley resident.**

Worthy of note, that local newspapers in 1924 reveal that the Federal Member for Indi at that time took part in various Hume and Hovell centenary events at that time. He was Robert Cook, an Oxley resident.

At the time of the centenary of the 1824 Hume and Hovell journey in 1924, there were numerous community commemoration ceremonies conducted along the route the explorers took, with cairns or plaques unveiled to mark the centenary. These cairns/plaques number around 40 and are still to be found from Hume Reservoir and through Northeast Victoria to Lara near Port Phillip Bay. The nearest memorials to Oxley are Everton, Murrumgee, Whorouly, Meadow Creek (Edi), Moyhu (Angleside) and Hansonville (plaque).



## The Naming of 'Oxley Plains' in 1824

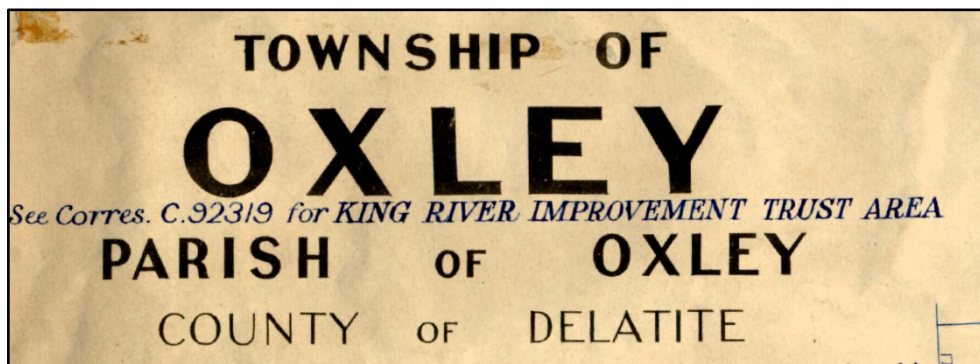
The Rural City of Wangaratta township signs at both Snow Road entrances to Oxley have an inscription on the base of the sign 'Named by Hume & Hovell 1824'.

Hume and Hovell led an overland expedition of discovery to find new grazing land for the colony of NSW, south of what was to become the Murray River. The journey was from Lake George NSW to Port Phillip Bay. They named landscape features that they encountered throughout the expedition. The naming of 'Oxley Plains' is recorded as the 25th of November 1824, as they viewed the plains from a vantage point in the vicinity of today's Henley Ridge. The plains were named for **John Oxley**, explorer and NSW Surveyor General at the time. An edition of the Wangaratta Chronicle newspaper on 27 October 1915 claimed that "the naming of Oxley Plains by Hume and Hovell...was the first named inland district in all of Victoria"



*John Oxley 1784-1828  
Explorer NSW Surveyor Gen.*

Ultimately, a settlement developed on the King River crossing, which became known as Oxley. The growing township of Oxley was surveyed and gazetted as a township in 1863.



## Hamilton Hume and William Hovells Journey of Exploration

In 1824 the then NSW Governor, Thomas Brisbane, commissioned an expedition destined for Western Port Bay to seek additional grazing land for the growing Colony of New South Wales.

Chosen to lead the expedition were:

Hamilton Hume, 26 years old, who was Australian born and possessed excellent bush skills. These skills were enhanced from his significant interaction and exploration experience with Indigenous Australians, as a young man.

William Hovell, 37 years old, an English sea captain, with navigation and record keeping skills. Their journey began on 17th October 1824, from Lake George (now known as Gunning). They reached Port Phillip Bay on 16th December 1824 and returned to Lake George, 16 weeks later on 18th January 1825.

The exploration party consisted of eight people, Hume and his three men, Claude Bossowa, Henry Angel, and James Fitzpatrick, Hovell and his three men, Thomas Boyd, William Bollard, and Thomas Smith.

With two wagons, five bullocks and three horses, they carried sufficient supplies for four months, including flour, pork, sugar, tea, tobacco, soap, salt and coffee. The journey was financed primarily by Hume and Hovell themselves, with supplies provided by Governor Brisbane. Hume and Hovell sold personal property and equipment to raise funds for the expedition.

The prevailing impression among the European colonists at the time was that the area to be explored was an impenetrable wilderness. Hume and Hovell expedition found grassy woodlands, which had been managed and populated by the Indigenous Australians for millennia.

They were able to document their route and assure other colonists that the lush grasslands which they had travelled would be suitable for grazing sheep and cattle.

In commemorating this, the bicentenary of Hume and Hovell 1824/25 expedition we recall a highly important journey of exploration which took place 200 years ago and proved formative in the establishment of the Colony of Port Philip in 1836 and ultimately, the State of Victoria in 1851

*We acknowledge that this land was already occupied by the Indigenous Australians*

## JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY TO PORT PHILLIP, NEW SOUTH WALES

BY MESSRS. W. H. HOVELL, AND HAMILTON HUME IN 1824 and 1825

abridged journey excerpts\*

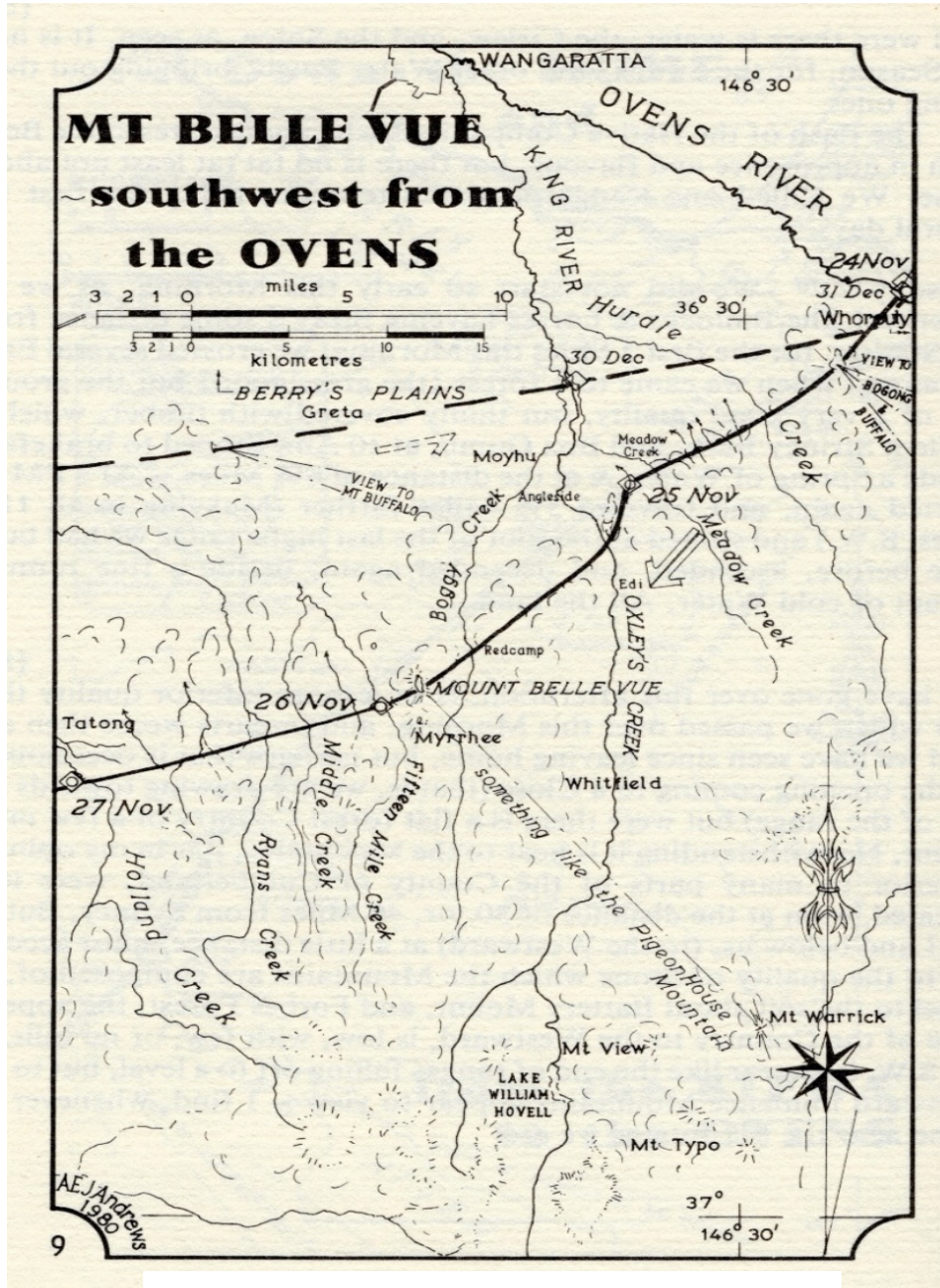
**Wednesday, November 24** ...the river comes from the eastern chain of mountains, and very probably joins the Hume (**Murray River**), though perhaps at a considerable distance to the westward. They name this river the "**Ovens**," after the deceased Major Ovens...

**Thursday, November 25.** Little difficulty was experienced in crossing the "Ovens," the water being so low, that it was found fordable in several places. The ford at which they passed was only three feet deep, and the bottom pebbly, so that although there was a considerable current, they were enabled to cross with the cattle laden... Four miles and a half from the "Ovens" they reach the summits of a range (**Kneebone's Gap**), whence they obtain a view of that river, coming from East by North, and evidently deriving its waters, from part of the "Alpine Chain." One of these snowcapped mountains...which from its shape, they name "**Mount Buffalo**...at the distance of about eight or ten miles, some plains also are observed, situate most probably on the banks of the "Ovens" these they designate "**Oxley's Plains**" after the late Mr. Oxley, Surveyor General of the Territory. All the country in their line of route to-day, had been burned, and a little to the Westward of this line, the grass was still blazing to a considerable height...the natives evidently numerous.

**Friday, November 26**...the land immediately under this range is good, the grass excellent, the trees consist of a fine description of the gum and a species of manna tree. Having advanced about a mile and a half, they arrive on the banks of a fine creek...this small stream, which they designated "**Oxley's Creek (King River)**," comes from the southward, and most probably, though at a considerable distance, joins the **Ovens** (river).'

\* Dr W Bland's consolidation of Hovells Journal and addition Journey facts - 1831

Note: Victoria was separated from NSW in 1851



'Oxley Plains' portion of the Hume and Hovell journey

## The Naming legacy of Hamilton Hume, William Hovell and John Joseph Oxley.

- **Naming legacy – Hume and Hovell**

- Hume Freeway
- Hume Region, Victorian State government administrative District
- City of Hume, Victoria
- Greater Hume Shire NSW
- Federal Electorate of Hume
- Humevale Victoria
- Canberra suburb of Hume
- Lake William Hovell
- Hume and Hovell Postage stamp 1976 (explorer series)
- Hume and Hovell one pound banknote 1953 – 1966 (until advent decimal currency)

- **Naming legacy - Victoria - John Oxley**

- Oxley Plains – Hovell's journal November 1824
- Oxley Roads Board district - established 1862 (forerunner to Shire)
- Shire of Oxley – established 1865 until 1994



- Parish of Oxley
- Township of Oxley - established 1863
- Oxley Plains Road, Oxley Victoria
- Oxley Reserve – established 1889
- Australian postage stamp 1976

## Hume and Hovells view the Australian Alps 1824



The Australian Alps as seen by Hume and Hovell on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 1824 painting by George Edwards Peacock.

“ ‘At the end of seven miles a prospect came in view the most magnificent. This was an immensely high mountain covered nearly one-fourth of the way down with snow, and the sun shining upon it gave it a most brilliant appearance. It was surrounded by other irregularly formed mountains, but they did not appear to have any snow upon them on the north side, nor were they so high as the former. The supposed distance is about fifteen or twenty miles. From E.S.E. to S.W. was one continuous range of the highest mountains I have seen in any part of the colony’.

*William Hovell, 8 November 1824, Journal, Safe 1 / 32d*