

BLACK DIAMOND DISTRICT HERITAGE CENTRE

(Bulli Railway Station)

On Saturday, 16 November, I attended the official opening of the Black Diamond District Heritage Centre, located in the old 1887 Bulli Railway Station. The occasion was marked by a colonial ball, with the SRA Brass Band in attendance along with assorted dignitaries.

The Centre is the result of the concerted efforts of a small committee of Bulli residents over the last 2 years - led by Ray Brown, Michael Roberts, Fay Haines and Eric Blain. Their aim was to preserve the buildings on the eastern side of the railway line from threatened destruction and restore them to their original condition. The results are exceptional, and without doubt this is the finest period railway station in Illawarra.

Externally, a traditional mustard and port wine colour scheme has been adopted, with large blue signage circa 1887 and landscaping of the surrounds by Ray Brown of Bulli (an Australian expert on grevillieas). Internally, the building has been stripped back to its original structure - involving the removal of much masonite and built-up coal dust and paint. Once again, a traditional paint scheme similar to the exterior has been applied.

On display within the Heritage Centre are photographs and postcards of the Bulli district, historical paintings by Alan Upton, plus two large exhibition cases (on loan from our own Museum) containing items such as samples of coal, digging tools, and original photographs of the Bulli mine disaster.

A visit to the Centre can be thoroughly recommended. For information contact Michael Roberts on 67 3675.

Michael Organ