



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

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RARE PIECES OF NSW FIRE FIGHTING HISTORY AWARDED HERITAGE LISTING

Five rare items from Penrith's Museum of Fire – some dating back to the late 19th century – received official State Heritage listing today, Heritage Minister Robyn Parker said.

Ms Parker made the announcement of the gazettal of the superbly restored links to NSW's fire fighting history during a visit today to the Museum of Fire with the Member for Penrith Stuart Ayres.

Ms Parker said the listing offered recognition and protection for the items, pieces which played a significant role in the development of fire fighting techniques and technologies in NSW from the middle of the 19th century to the late 20th century.

"These tangible pieces of history, including a fire engine, ladders, canteen, switchboard and fleet of vehicles, offer a remarkable insight into the way in which NSW adapted to the new demands and challenges brought about by the growing and developing city of Sydney," Ms Parker said.

The State Heritage listed items are:

- 1869 Shand Mason 7-inch Manual Fire Engine
- 1898 Shand Mason Curricle Ladders
- 1942 Ford 21W Mobile Canteen
- Edward Smith Headquarters Switchboard
- Fire and Rescue Heritage Fleet.

"The Shand Mason Manual Fire Engine is a unique item dating from 1869 and was in operation both before and after the establishment of statutory fire control in NSW. It is one of only five such manually operated pumping appliances existing in Australia," Ms Parker said.

"The ladders are very rare being the first of only two sets of extendable Curricle Ladders to be imported by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and the longest used by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, the predecessor of the NSW Fire Brigade.

“Their wooden box-like framework was designed to increase the ladder’s weight bearing capacity and are the only 50 feet-long set of ladders used by the brigade. The ladders have an association with one of Sydney’s major early fires, the Anthony Hordern and Sons blaze of 1901.

“The mobile canteen has associations with WWII, in particular the Women’s Fire Auxiliary – a wartime initiative formed in response to the diminished male workforce. The canteen is rare in that it is one of only two motorised mobile canteens of its kind, vehicles from which refreshments for fire fighters were served.

“The Edward Smith Headquarters Switchboard is a beautifully-carved switchboard designed, constructed and wired by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade’s Principal Electrician, Edward Smith in the early years of the twentieth century.”

Mr Ayres said the Penrith community welcomed the official heritage listing of the five rare items.

“The Heritage Fleet, which spans an era from 1841 to the late 1990s, is a rich source of research into the development of fire fighting appliances over some 150 years and it is great news that the heritage listing is now official,” Mr Ayres said.

Mr Ayres said the five items were nominated by the Museum of Fire in Penrith on behalf of the owner of the items, Fire and Rescue NSW. All items are on display at the impressive Museum of Fire at 1 Museum Drive, Penrith.

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