

Wednesday 28 November 2012

BRUSH FARM HOUSE A NEW 'HUB OF LEARNING'

The signing of a four year licence between City of Ryde (CoR) and Macquarie Community College (MCC) will formalise a partnership to use and promote Brush Farm House as a community learning hub.

City of Ryde General Manager, John Neish, said: "This arrangement adds a new chapter to the story of Brush Farm House by strengthen its civic importance after two centuries of service to the community and increasing public access to the historic building.

"This is also the first instance where a tenant has agreed to take on a greater share of responsibility for a community building based on their capacity to do so."

The new licence, which covers about 50% of the property, ensures that MCC as the anchor tenant will manage the historic property, including maintenance, on behalf of the Council.

The College will also promote venue hire for business meetings, community celebrations and gatherings.

Dr June Heinrich, CEO of Macquarie Community College, said: "The venue is a perfect opportunity for the College to strengthen its community ties in the area and to offer both leisure and lifestyle subjects as well as nationally accredited training courses for local residents and businesses in the area."

The licence ensures that Council, as the owners of the property, retains use of the professional gallery space for ten weeks a year, providing a subsidised venue for local artists. Recent exhibitions have included the Korean Photography Society and Secret Life of Objects.

Macquarie Community College is the third largest community college in the Sydney metropolitan area. The College is committed to meeting the diverse needs of the local community, through Nationally Accredited Training, opening up pathways to employment, career advancement and career change.

The new campus at Brush Farm House will offer vocational education, leisure and lifestyle and activities for community interest. For course details go to www.macquarie.nsw.edu.au

Brush Farm House is one of Australia's oldest colonial homes and the City of Ryde's most important historic building. Built in 1810 by explorer Gregory Blaxland, the elegant two-storey mansion was reopened to the public in 2007 after a meticulous \$3.3 million restoration by Council7.

Existing tenants, the Brush Farm Historical Society and the Department of Corrective Services, currently utilise the remaining half of the property.