



Hon Tony Kelly MLC
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Minister for Infrastructure
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MEDIA RELEASE

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EXTENDING FREE PUBLIC ACCESS TO HISTORICAL RECORDS

The State's oldest and most important land records, dating back to the founding of the colony of NSW, are now available for free public viewing.

Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly, announced today, this has been made possible through an initiative between the Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA), State Records Authority of NSW and State Library of NSW.

"Researchers and family historians can now access historical land title records online via public terminals in the State Records Authority at The Rocks and Kingswood, and State Library reading rooms," the Minister said.

"For the first time, historical title-related records such as the Old Form Torrens Title Register will be available to view electronically in colour, at no charge, outside of the LPMA.

"This initiative is particularly significant when you think how far we have come from the first surveys of Sydney and the type of insights historical land title records can reveal.

"It is hard to imagine what it would have been like to survey and map the early colony of NSW. Not only were the surveyors used to Europe, where every corner had been explored, they also had to deal with distances which must have seemed inconceivable in a landscape which was completely alien. It was to them, quite literally, a blank canvas.

"Thanks to the work of these pioneering surveyors, who used primitive equipment, NSW was explored, surveyed and land title records were created.

"Now, not only has technology changed the way land is surveyed and mapped, it is helping to open up historical land records to the public.

"Records like maps and titles can provide a wealth of information about local history and the family history of the occupation of a house or property, and today this information is now accessible with a few clicks of a mouse button."

NSW State Librarian and Chief Executive, Regina Sutton, said she was thrilled to be providing seven-day a week access to this new resource via 38 computer terminals in the library's reading rooms.

"People will be able to discover the changing landscape of their community and unearth the mystery around original land owners, local landmarks and even property names," Ms Sutton said.

Director of State Records NSW, Alan Ventress, said today's announcement provides an exciting future for researchers and family historians.

"This brings together complementary collections to better illuminate the history of NSW," Mr Ventress said.