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**JOHN'S BLOG:** 31 JANUARY 2014

Stunning accommodation for the Roaring 20s Festival

It's 4ish and I've just arrived at my accommodation in Katoomba for the opening weekend of the three-week [Roaring 20s and All That Jazz Festival](#), which is set to light up the Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon until 23 February.

And what accommodation it is! [The Gatsby](#) absolutely encapsulates the 1920s, when everything seemed bright and night with a world that had somehow emerged from The Great War and was yet to taste The Great Depression.

My hat is off to Lorraine Allinson, who has done such a wonderful job putting the place together and incorporating such magnificent mementoes of the era.

Anyway, no time to say much more this evening. Time to get ready for dinner just up the road at Darley's, the signature restaurant at Lillianfels with the rest of the press gang, Lillianfels gm Ralf Gruegger and local PRs for the festival, Ellen Hill and Michelle Grima-Leura-Li (sorry, just made the hyphenated bit up).

I'll have plenty more to report over the next couple of days, including more about this stunning accommodation, the charleston world-record attempt tomorrow morning in The Mall at Leura, and the Roaring 20s Ball tomorrow night in Katoomba's Camington Hotel.

— John Rozental

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[Roaring 20s and All That Jazz Festival](#)

[The Gatsby](#)  
314a Katoomba Street, Katoomba  
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JOHN'S BLOG: 04 FEBRUARY 2014

Leura puts on the perfect day for a charleston record

The same day last year it was so cold and windy in Leura that the flappers only took off their overcoats long enough to set a Guinness World Record for the greatest number of costumed people dancing the charleston.

Last Saturday was a complete contrast — warm, sunny, bright and still — as the crowd of locals and visitors milled along The Mall, inspecting vintage cars, dropping into cafés for a morning fix or just psyching themselves up for five minutes of kicking up their heels while trying to better the record of 276 set last year.

And break it they did, even without my help. I think 319 registered participants was the final figure, more than enough to raise the bar a few notches. Among them was ABC *Collectors* presenter Claudia Chan Shaw, a self-confessed 1920s fashion tragic.





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Festival ambassador Charlotte Smith, owner of the [Darrell Collection of International Vintage Couture](#), was on hand to help Claudia give out the various prizes for dress and dancing.

It was an inspiring start to the [2014 Roaring 20s and All That Jazz Festival](#) which runs in the Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon until 23 February.

As was the inaugural Long Lunch in Leura, with more than 150 sitting under a stretched-out marquee and The Mall's grassy median strip. The hamper boxes were simply brimming with locally sourced delights — antipasto with locally grown vegetables from Leura's [Princess Pantry](#); cold cuts of slow-roasted meats from the ovens of [Vesta](#) at Blackheath; fresh tossed salads from Wentworth Falls' restaurant [Nineteen23](#); cheese and fruit from [The Carrington Cellars and Deli](#); and a wickedly indulgent dessert from Josephan's Fine Chocolates in Leura.

Then it's back to [The Gatsby](#) for some brief R&R before being picked up by my charming hosts, Lorraine and Roger Allanson, to attend the The Great Art Deco Ball in Katoomba's spectacular and very historic [Carrington Hotel](#).

I'm told we form quite an impressive trio as we enter the Carrington's lounge bar. Roger and I reckon it's because we'd make such fine Chicago stand-over men, but Lorraine cuts us down to size: "You're both just lucky to have been with me." Touché.

And it really is a grand venue, with superb entertainment provided by a local legend, [Greg Poppleton and his Bakelite Broadcasters](#). A wow of a night.

— John Rozentals



Recognising excellence in dress and dance ... TV presenter Claudia Chan Shaw and festival ambassador Charlotte Smith congratulate award winners after the Charleston Challenge.







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Looking the part ... my hosts at The Gatsby, Roger and Lorraine Allanson.



No, it's not The Great Art Deco Ball, but it is Greg Poppleton and his Bakelite Broadcaster on stage at The Carrington. And yes, the clock does always say it's 9pm. Or is that 9am? What do you mean it's time to go home?



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Lorraine Allanson in the lounge/dining room of The Gatsby ... very much a heart-and-soul project.

**JOHN'S BLOG:** 04 FEBRUARY 2014

The 1920s and all that ... bidding a very, very fond farewell to The Gatsby







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It's early-ish Sunday morning and I'm about to draw stumps on a wonderful couple of days in Katoomba and Leura for the 2014 Roaring 20s and All That Jazz Festival.

I'm feeling a trifle seedy from the previous night's overindulgence at The Great Art Deco Ball, but I can't resist the fresh eggs, bacon and tomatoes in the fridge at The Gatsby, the Katoomba Street B&B that's been my home for two nights, and the smell of them frying quickly revives me.

The delicious breakfast provisions — I'd been asked before check-in what sort of milk and bread I preferred — are just a few of the personal touches provided by Lorraine Allanson, who, in conjunction with her husband Roger, bought the premises about four years ago, put heart, soul and obviously a fair bit cash into the project, and now runs The Gatsby as part of her Mountain Whispers Luxury Accommodation group.

Lorraine describes her other three properties — Varena, Strawberry Patch and Leura Rose, all in the adjoining town of Leura — as being more sedately Edwardian in character, and she clearly feels she was let off the leash a bit to decorate The Gatsby in the bold, striking tones of the later Art Deco period.

The Gatsby has three double bedrooms — two in the main house, a third plus sofa bed in the separate self-contained cottage — and would make an ideal location for a group getaway in the mountains, though there's obviously some negotiating to be done about who gets prime access to the bathroom with the double spa.

It's a very special, charming place which I'm truly sad to leave, and a sensational choice during the Roaring 20s festivities, which this year run in the Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon until 23 February. Just make sure to remember your personalised code for the security system!

— John Rozentals

## DETAILS

[The Gatsby](#)  
314a Katoomba Street, Katoomba  
Phone Lorraine Allanson 0430 496 755

[Blue Mountains, Lithgow & Oberon Tourism](#)

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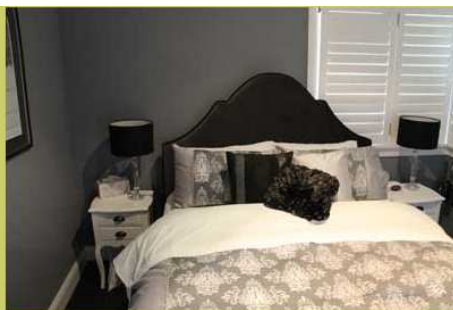
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