

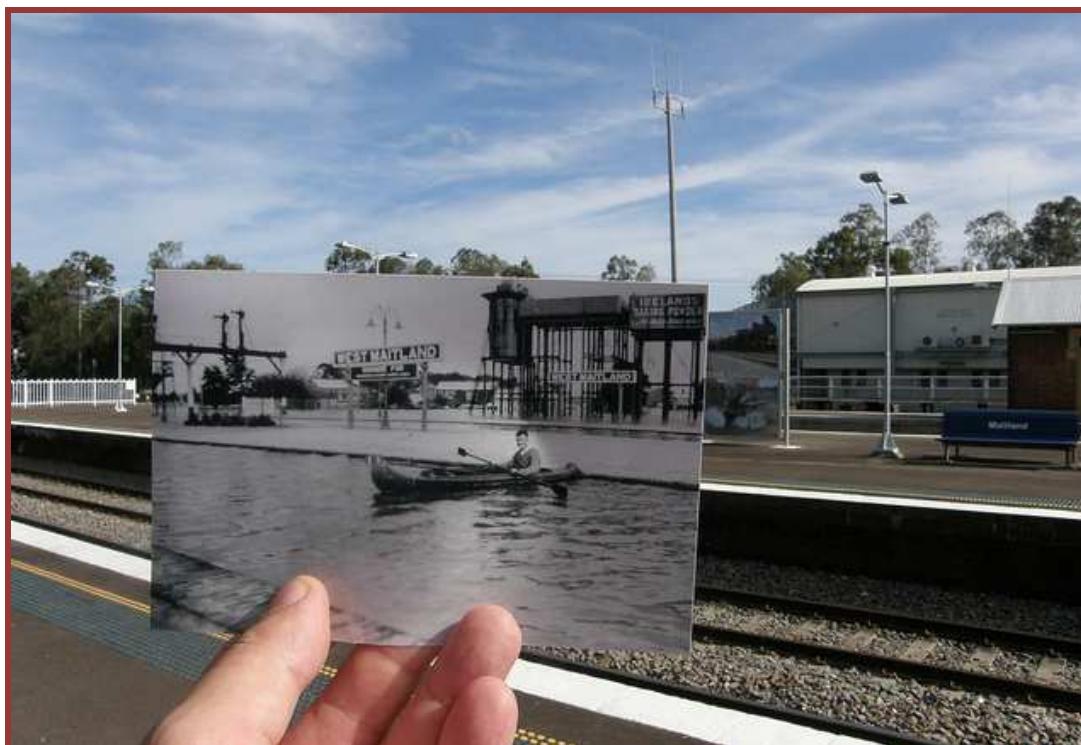
Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

Bulletin of

Maitland and District Historical Society Inc

(established March 1977)

Affiliated with Royal Australian Historical Society and
Museum and Galleries Hunter Chapter



Canoe at West Maitland Station

Volume 18, Number 2

May 2011

*The Aims of the Society are to
Discover, Record, Preserve, Advise on and Teach the History of Maitland and the District*

Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

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Website : <http://www.maitlandhistorical.org>

Meetings are held at 3 Cathedral Street Maitland (opposite Bishop's House)

Lecture meeting is held on the first Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7.00pm as a forum
for lectures, talks and presentations

Business meeting is held on the third Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7.00pm

Membership fees : \$15 (single) and \$20 (double / family),
payable 1st March of each year.

Patron: The Hon. Milton Morris AO

NSW Member for Maitland 1956-1980

NSW Minister for Transport 1965 - 1975

NSW Minister for Lands and Forests 1974-1975

NSW Minister for Decentralisation 1976

Current Office Bearers :

President : Ruth Trappel **Vice President :** Tom Skelding

Secretary : Lloyd Bevan **Treasurer :** Kevin Short

Bulletin Editor : Judy Nicholson **Consultant Editor :** Ruth Trappel

Bulletin contributions are being sought. Please contact the Society via email
maitlandhistorical@bigpond.com

Cover: Canoe at West Maitland Station

Image by Peter Smith and Maitland and District Historical Society.

Now and Then

The image of the Maitland Railway station on the cover of this Bulletin has been created by Historical Society member **Peter Smith**. Peter has been a significant contributor to the ABC Open “Now and Then” project, which captures local history through photos.

“Now and Then” is a local photography project with a twist - an old photo held in a new one to tell a story of past moments and how times have changed.

Peter’s grandfather, Sydney Smith, was the creator of many of the historical photographs, believed to be taken in the 1920s and 1930s, throughout both the Hunter region and other locations.

More of Peter’s “Now and Then” photographs can be viewed online via Flickr at the ABC Open Hunter’s photostream <http://www.flickr.com/photos/53349403@N07/>



Maitland Railway Station looked more like a canal as this unknown 36 class locomotive pulls into number 1 platform during floodtime. The building on the bridge above the train is no longer there.

Peter’s own Flickr photostream has 130 images including Maitland, East Maitland, Morpeth, Hexham and Newcastle. Peter provides the historical and current images, together with some brief notes about the history and place of the subject. It’s an interesting time capsule of places and events, visually linking views of the past with the present in a unique way. Some of the photos have been supplied by the Maitland and District Historical Society. Peter’s photostream can be viewed at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/54834780@N06/>

Maitland Railway Station

Maitland Railway Station was the focus for **Steamfest** on 9th & 10th of April, one of the activities in which the Maitland & District Historical Society has participated in recently.

The Society conducted guided history walks at the railway precinct and provided historical information to visitors.

The West Maitland Railway Station can be considered one of Maitland's most significant buildings. When the railway arrived in West Maitland in 1858 the city's status was reflected in the provision of a brick building. At that time, other centres like Sydney, Newcastle and Liverpool only had tin sheds. The West Maitland Station was officially opened on 28 July 1858 by the Governor-General, Sir William Denison. The *Maitland Mercury* (28 July 1858) reported that an estimated 4,000 people were present at the station precinct. The band of the 12th Regiment was in attendance as were numerous dignitaries from Sydney, Newcastle and Maitland.

Three ornamental arches were erected to celebrate the arrival of the first train.

This first West Maitland station was a simple single storey brick building located at the bottom of Elgin Street.



The 1858 West Maitland Railway Station, photographed in 1877

(Photo: State Records)

New Railway Station, 1880

Approval for the West Maitland current station building was received in 1878 and opened in 1880 and on the same day the old station closed permanently. The Commissioner erected the new West Maitland Station Building on high ground at the bottom of Church Street. Steps led down to the platform which was some three yards below. The design for West Maitland Station was prepared in the office of John Whitton, Engineer in Chief for the NSW Railways.



The 1880 West Maitland Railway Station at flood time. (Photo: Smith Collection)

The station building was made of brick with stone dressing on eighteen inch deep concrete foundations in the classical style of architecture. Special attention was paid to the comfort of the ladies by providing a special waiting room with access to refreshments and private access to the platform. In addition, there was a general waiting room, gentlemen's refreshment room, booking office, ticket office, parcel's office, a porters' room, telegraph office, and a station master's room. The flooring was made of 1.25 inch Oregon pine slabs, with the counters and other woodwork made of cedar. The brickwork was tuck pointed and the main portion of the roof of the building was covered with slate. The sandstone used was from the local Ravensfield quarry. The building supervisor was Mr H.J. Chinner and 22 men were employed in the construction.

On the station there was a double platform which was about 300 feet long and 14 feet wide.

In 1905 the line north from Maitland was duplicated and an island platform was added at West Maitland Station. The platforms were linked by a timber footbridge.

In 1913 the two 90kl water tanks were removed and replaced with two new ones.

A second island platform was added in 1914. A new luggage room was added at the Sydney end of Platform 1 in the same year, with the open shelter on Platforms 2 and 3 being replaced with a brick shelter. An out-of-goods shed was added to Platforms 4 and 5.

In 1915 the Elgin Street level crossing was closed to traffic and the present overhead bridge opened at Church Street. A metal pedestrian bridge was built adjacent to the road overpass with stairs leading down to the platforms. This replaced the wooden pedestrian footbridge which was demolished.

An information booklet covering the **Maitland Railway Precinct** and including surrounding buildings is available from the Historical Society at a cost of \$5.00.

President's Report

We have been very busy in the last 3 months.

We opened our new rooms at 3 Cathedral Street on Saturday 5th March. I would like to offer my congratulations and gratitude for all the work that the members their partners and friends had put into making this such a successful event. It was the hottest day of the year and over 41 degrees. Ourselves and our guests were glad to be able to get into the air conditioned rooms after the opening. The rooms are a credit to everyone who put so much time into setting up the displays and getting the meeting and research rooms so well fitted out. It is very rewarding to know that after so many years of not having a functioning Historical Society that we have now been able to accomplish this.

The rooms are now opened on Wednesday and Saturday from 10am -3.00pm and other times by arrangement. Our collection is expanding with more donations being offered, and for these we are most grateful.

We have a very willing group of historically minded members and volunteers who enjoy sharing their knowledge and experiences and our membership is growing as more people become aware of our activities.

Please note we are introducing a **lecture meeting** on the first Tuesday of each month, featuring a guest speaker and everyone is most welcome.

The Society's **business meeting** is held on the third Tuesday of each month from 5:30-7.00pm

Thank you all for your commitment.

Finally, it is with sadness that I note that **Mavis Newcombe** (Peter's mother) passed away recently. Mavis and Peter had been holding the Historical Society together for many, many years, in fact up until the new committee took over in March 2009. Our sympathy is extended to our member, Peter.

Regards

Ruth Trappel

Galtons: Maitland's modern emporium

Thanks to Historical Society member Frank Buckman for the following contribution from the 1939 edition of "The Galton Way". This issue included a history of the business, "Romance of commerce: the story of Galtons" which is reproduced on the following pages.

As locals will know, Galtons was a Maitland retail institution, being established in 1888 and finally closing in July 1986.

Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

Volume 3

West Maitland, N.S.W., May 1, 1939

No. 9

SOUVENIR NUMBER

GALTON WAY

Issued with the Compliments of Maitland's Modern Emporium



AS WE ARE TO-DAY.



ROMANCE OF COMMERCE THE STORY OF GALTONS

More than 60 years have passed since Mr. George Galton opened a store in Hunter-street, Newcastle, and it is 51 years since he opened a branch store in West Maitland in the year 1888. Mr. Galton began in a very small way. Just a few counters and a few employees constituted his store. His greatest assets, however, did not appear in the balance-sheet; they were youthful enthusiasm linked with high ideals and a determination that the quality of his goods should be at least equal to any others, and if possible better. This purpose involved knowledge of design, material and methods of merchandising, which have never ceased, and which will not terminate while the company maintains its present policy of constantly improving service to the public.

It will probably interest our readers to know that George Galton, Pty., Ltd., owes its origin to a young, rosy-cheeked boy of 16 being trained for a profession in the city of London and deciding that his future lay in the commercial world rather than in any other.

The late Mr. George Galton, founder of George Galton Pty., Ltd., and Governing Director of the firm until his death in the year 1930, was born in a suburb of London on January 8th, 1850, and after working his passage he arrived in Sydney in a small sailing ship named "The Jason" in the year 1866—16 years of age. For some years Mr. Galton was associated with several large retail stores in Sydney, where he commenced to gather his knowledge of retailing on the bottom rung of the ladder, and before he was 37 years of age, he had a very fine store in Hunter Street, Newcastle, together with a mercery branch shop in Hunter Street, opposite Potter and Company, the jewellers.

Mr. Galton went home to England in the year 1887 to see his mother and brothers, whom he had not seen for 25 years. On his return to Australia in the following year, he opened a store at what was then known as High Street Gates, near 1888. This building still stands. At this time Mr. Galton had no less than four stores, viz., High Street Gates, Newcastle, Mercery Branch Shop in Hunter Street, and a store at West Wallsend.

Mr. Galton resided with his wife and family in Newcastle and closed the store at High Street Gates in the year 1895, in order to give his full attention to the fast increasing trade of Newcastle.

Mr. Galton returned to West Maitland in the year 1896, and after disposing of his various businesses he commenced trading on what is now known as O'Brien's Corner. In order to do this he purchased the business of Bobby Campbell, a well-known grocer and produce merchant. Mr. Galton, however, did not do well on this site, and in 1899 he acquired the

premises occupied by Blair and Company, a firm which had been trading in wholesale and retail stationery for many years. This site proved an excellent one and is still occupied by the company at the present time. The price paid by Mr. Galton for this property was a particularly attractive figure, compared with present day land valuations.

The policy of Mr. Galton was to feed the business rather than fleece it, and following upon the peak years of 1902 and 1903, the business was incorporated as a limited liability company in the year 1909. Mr. Galton made his second and last trip to England in 1914, prior to the outbreak of the World War, and on this occasion was accompanied by his wife and two daughters. In all his business trans-

ton, Mr. Jim Wolstenholme, Junr., after spending four years with Woolworths as a trainee, visited the United States in May of last year, and upon his return in September entered the Galton Store as Assistant Manager. Towards the close of last year Mr. Willis severed his connection with the company in order to undertake another position, and since then the responsibilities of store supervision have been handled by Mr. Wolstenholme as General Manager and Mr. P. J. Flynn as Merchandise Manager.

The founder of the company could not, during the early years, imagine the growth and progress that were to follow the daily pursuit through the years of their aims and ideals. They would not for example have taken 20 years' lease for much larger premises when the second large extension of the premises became necessary in 1923, had they thought that in such a short time they would be occupying all available space in the building and be again looking for larger accommodation. Nor is it claimed that the vision of the founders was so clear that they never swerved from their original purpose of retailing to the public. The company at one stage of its experience undertook the manufacture of ladies' millinery and abandoned it a little later for the unusual reason that they were offered too much business! At another stage they carefully investigated the blind-making industry and carried on the manufacturing of blinds for several years. At another stage they carefully investigated tailoring, but decided against undertaking the actual making of suits on the premises.

And so Galtons "had its beginning." Insofar as its building had been faithful and true it will remain when its founders have passed on; so long as it follows the principles laid down in its building it will endure, for "truth is might and must prevail." To-day after 51 years in West Maitland the house of Galton looks out on a world beset with difficulty, confident that whatever the future may hold it can look into the past with satisfaction on much that has been achieved and on nothing of which it may be ashamed.



MR. GEO. GALTON, Sen.

actions, Mr. Galton was greatly assisted by the extraordinary businesslike characteristics of Mrs. George Galton who, upon the death of her husband in 1930, became Chairwoman of the company and held office until her death in 1936, leaving the two sons, Messrs. George and Walter Galton, as joint directors of the firm. The untimely death of Mr. Walter Galton several months later left the onus of management in the hands of Mr. George, who after conferring with other members of his family, decided to appoint a General Manager to the business. Mr. R. H. Willis, late of Woolworths, Ltd. Chain Stores Proprietors, received this appointment at the commencement of 1937, and came to the firm with wide experience in the operation of chain stores. A grandson of the late Mr. George Gal-

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Companion none is like
Unto the mind alone,
For many have been harmed by
speech,
Through thinking, few or none.

Historical Society Activities

We are endeavouring to highlight the presence of the Historical Society in as many activities as is possible and we heavily rely in our enthusiastic members for their support on these occasions.

- **Maitland Seniors Week** Expo at Maitland Town Hall on 21st March
information about the Society and exchanging information with participants
- **Fundraising** - a BBQ at Bunning's on 25th March was a successful fundraiser.
- **'Taste festival'** in the Heritage Mall 2nd and 3rd April - Heritage Walks
A new presentation format was adopted, where points are illustrated using appropriate archival photos. Walkers were interested in comparing the old photos to the current buildings and locations.
- **Steamfest** on 9th & 10th of April
The Society conducted guided history walks at the railway precinct and provided historical information to visitors.

2011 Diary Dates

June 2011

Tues 7th	Lecture meeting - 5.30 at the rooms
Tues 21st	Business meeting - 5.30 at the rooms
Thurs 23rd	Look Who's Talking , Local History <i>Had a little run mate?: tales of escape from Maitland Gaol</i>

July 2011

Tues 5th	Lecture meeting - 5.30 at the rooms
Tues 19th	Business meeting - 5.30 at the rooms

August 2011

Tues 2nd	Lecture meeting - 5.30 at the rooms
Sat/Sun 13th & 14th	Aroma Festival – Maitland Heritage Mall – <i>Displays and Walks</i>
Tues 16th	Business meeting - 5.30 at the rooms

Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

September 2011

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|---|---|
| 3rd – 11th | History Week
<i>Theme: "Eat History"</i> |
| Tues 6th | Lecture meeting - 5.30 at the rooms |
| Thurs 8th | Look Who's Talking , Local History
<i>Whatever happened to?</i> |
| Tues 20th | Business meeting - 5.30 at the rooms |

October 2011

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| Tues 4th | Lecture meeting - 5.30 at the rooms |
| Sat/Sun 15th & 16th | Maitland Muster and Rodeo.
<i>Maitland Heritage Mall</i> |
| Tues 18th | Business meeting - 5.30 at the rooms |
| Thurs 27th -Fri 28th 2 days pre conference activities | |
| Sat 29th - Sun 30th Royal Australian Historical Society Annual Conference
<i>at Maitland</i> | |

November 2011

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Tues 1st | Lecture meeting - 5.30 at the rooms |
| Tues 15th | Business meeting - 5.30 at the rooms |

December 2011

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Thurs 1st | Look Who's Talking , Local History
<i>Sex in the city</i> |
| Tues 6th | Lecture meeting - 5.30 at the rooms |
| Tues 20th | Business meeting - 5.30 at the rooms
Christmas gathering |



Victoria Bridge

Spanning Wallis Creek, Maitland