

Bulletin of Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

(Established March 1977)

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



Dunmore House

Volume 19, Number 3

August 2012

*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.

Cover:

Dunmore House, circa 1830-1833

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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)

Patron: The Hon. Milton Morris AO

NSW Member for Maitland 1956-1980

NSW Minister for Transport 1965 - 1975

Current Office Bearers :

President : Kevin Parsons

Vice Presidents : Peter Smith, Keith Cockburn

Treasurer : Kevin Short

Secretary : Tom Skelding

Bulletin Editor : Judy Nicholson

Consultant Editor : Kevin Parsons

Bulletin contributions are being sought. Please contact the Society via email

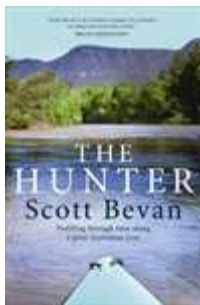
maitlandhistorical@gmail.com

While every care is taken in the compilation and editing of the information contained in this bulletin, Maitland and District Historical Society Inc. and its editors do not accept responsibility for the accuracy of this information.

Historical Society Activities

Sizzle those sausages!! The less-than-glamorous side of the Society is fund raising to continue with our activities, pay for our premises, promote the history of Maitland etc. 'Sausage sizzles' at Bunnings and Masters hardware stores provide much needed funds and as many volunteers as possible are required on such occasions. It's definitely a matter of more hands making it easier and teams can be rotated throughout the day rather than having a few members bearing all of the workload. Please take advantage of these opportunities to assist the Society. ☺

Special Event



Scott Bevan will be talking about his new book, "The Hunter", in Morpeth on 23 August. This event will be hosted by Maitland City Library together with the Maitland and District Historical Society.

More details available by contacting the Historical Society

maitlandhistorical@gmail.com or Library Judyn@maitland.nsw.gov.au

After navigating Russia, ABC journalist Scott Bevan decided to come home - via the river which ran through his childhood, the Hunter. In his curiously named kayak, Pulbah Raider, he sets out to paddle the river's length, from near the headwaters high in the Barrington Tops hundreds of kilometres to the Pacific Ocean at Newcastle. As he learns, the Hunter is not just a region, it's a place that has helped to shape the nation. The river has helped realise dreams and make fortunes, from mining to farming. And during floods, it has washed away livelihoods - and lives.

Printed from Harper-Collins web site: <http://www.harpercollins.com.au/>

Lecture Meetings



May - Guest speaker was Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP, member for Hunter, talking about subsidies.

Photo: Historical Society President Kevin Parsons (left), welcoming Mr. Fitzgibbon at the Maitland Historical Society rooms, Cathedral Street, Maitland.

Lecture Meetings

June - Society member and CMA Flood Education Volunteer, Peter Bogan.

Peter talked about Maitland floods starting from the earliest days of white settlement on the flood plains. Of particular and controversial interest was a discussion centred around the fallacies and facts concerning the difference in depths of the legendary 1820 flood and the 1955 flood.

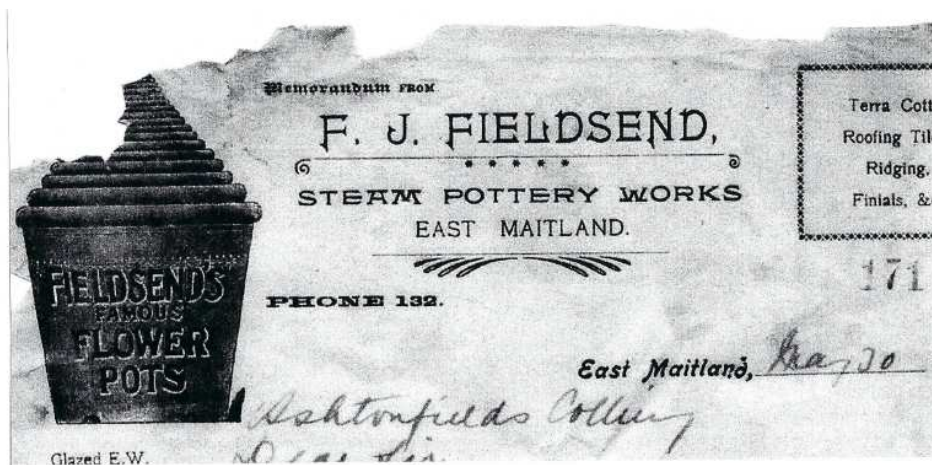
This discussion considered the 1955 flood level signs remaining in Maitland and some that have disappeared as well as an eye witness account of the 1820 flood published in an article in a 1857 edition of the Maitland Mercury. Of significance to the discussion was the location of the first two buildings in High Street, namely the huts of the convict settlers William O'Donnell and Mary Hunt, (Molly Morgan).

July - James Hills, Fieldsend Pottery

Tim described the pottery works process from digging the clay right through to the finished product, with a display of photographs and artefacts that brought the pottery business into our hands, some literally. James also provided information about the Fieldsend family. Thanks to James for answering our questions, such as what fuel was used to fire the kilns? How does the salt become a glaze? Who are these people in the photo? These houses?

Tim provided some information from the book *Out of the Closet: Maitland's Water Stories*. The connection between the pottery works and water? = water supply drainpipes.

In 1906 Frederick Fieldsend purchased Hillcoat's pottery works and introduced steam power. Amongst the main products were bricks and drainpipes. Shamrock Hill coal was used to fire the kilns. By 1921 production included collared agricultural pipes and roofing tiles. Fieldsend won contracts to supply sewerage pipes to the Hunter District Water Supply and Sewerage Board and Public Works Department.



Source: *Out of the Closet: Maitland's Water Stories*. Cynthia Hunter, Maitland City Heritage Group, 2006.

Poundkeeping in Early Lochinvar

by Lisa and Allan Thomas

Our interest in local poundkeeping was initiated through research into the history of our house in Lochinvar. Our property comprises Lots 60 through 63 of the 1840 sub-division of Lesslie Duguid's 1822 land grant. Lot 63, which had been known as Hickey's Purchase by 1858, had a different history from the other three until 1905. In that year Mary Jane Coleman, a widow from West Maitland, and Bridget Idstein, a widow from East Maitland, sold Lot 63 to Alfred Edward Brown, the owner of Lots 60 through 62. These women were two of the several children of Thomas and Mary Hickey, and had been jointly bequeathed Lot 63 in Thomas's will, made in 1859. It emerged that Thomas Hickey had been a poundkeeper in Lochinvar in the 1850s. So what was poundkeeping in the mid-1800s?

Although there were some previous regulations and several later amendments, in particular in 1840, 1845 and 1855, the essential Act which regulated the keeping of pounds in New South Wales dates from 1828. This Act authorised the establishment of public pounds in convenient places "for the purpose of impounding and receiving any horses bulls cows oxen sheep goats pigs or other cattle" which were loose or trespassing. The purpose of the Act was to discourage people from allowing their animals to roam free in the towns and villages of the colony, as well as to restore genuinely lost animals to their owners.

The Governor of New South Wales was authorised to appoint private individuals to keep these pounds. Although at this time there may have been some pounds which were located on Crown lands, it appears that a usual practice was for the appointed individuals to establish impounding areas on privately owned land.

Animals were normally delivered to a pound by the person who found them. After entry to a pound, specific charges were applied to the stock on a *per diem* basis, based on the type of animal impounded. In 1828 horses, goats and pigs were charged at one shilling; cattle were charged at sixpence; sheep were charged at twopence. Poundkeepers made their money from charges for the upkeep of impounded stock. Monies from fines which exceeded the *per diem* charges were to be forwarded to the Colonial Treasurer.

According to an Act of 1840, funds from the sale of unclaimed stock were to be distributed among several parties. First, poundkeepers were authorised to keep all lawful fees and charges owing to them. Second, the people who delivered the animals to the pound were to have any damages paid. Third, the people who owned the stock, if known, were to be paid. If their identities were unknown those funds were forwarded to the Colonial Treasurer, who could allocate them to Benevolent Societies for the poor.

Although it was not specifically so stated, poundkeepers had to be literate. They were required to keep a detailed book which recorded all stock which came to their pound along with the names of the people who delivered the stock, and all monies, and also to erect a sign outside the pound which listed all charges and penalties.

If the identity of the stock owner was known to the poundkeeper, and they also lived within ten miles distance, the owner was to be contacted personally. Otherwise a Justice of the Peace was to be notified, and a notice was also to be printed in the *Government Gazette* or other appropriate newspaper. Any damages which the stock had caused would be listed, and the notices could be reprinted. These associated costs were to be recouped from the stock owner.

Attempting a “poundbreach” in order to remove stock from a pound without paying the associated charges could be costly. A Justice of the Peace was authorised to assess treble damages to be paid through the sale of personal goods. The offender could be imprisoned until such charges were paid. Overall, poundkeepers worked closely with Justices of the Peace, who were able to enforce the provisions of the Act.

The keeper of a pound could also be punished for breaching the provisions of the Act. For example, a poundkeeper could be fined £1 if their ledger book was kept inaccurately. Failure to keep a legible sign incurred a fine of £1. If a poundkeeper were to refuse to accept an eligible animal into the pound they could be fined between £1 and £5.

Stock pounds were quickly established in Sydney, Parramatta, Windsor, Richmond, Campbelltown, Newcastle and Maitland. Other towns followed as warranted. The 1848 records show that Maitland then had three pounds, in Anvil Creek, East Maitland, and West Maitland. Thus Lochinvar as yet did not have its own poundkeeper, and responsibility for the area was presumably subsumed under West Maitland, whose poundkeeper was then T. Ledsam. In that year Ledsam returned £6/3/10 to the Colonial Treasury. All fifty-five New South Wales poundkeepers combined to return £451/16/10, the highest being £51/6/10 from one of the two men in Tamworth, and the lowest only £0/1/9 from Vanderville near Picton.

The Lochinvar situation had changed by 1850. The *Government Gazette* of 3 September 1850 recorded the following notice: “Impounded at the Lochinvar Pound, on the 14th day of August, 1850, from Hillsborough:- One bay colt, star, black points, long black mane and tail, on near shoulder W, 18 months old; damages 3d Will be sold 7th September, if not released. Thomas Doyle, Poundkeeper”. The 7 March 1851 *Government Gazette* had Thomas Doyle continuing in that role. 1851 must have been a busy time in Lochinvar. On 7 November Doyle advertised that he then had in his pound five horses and thirteen head of cattle.

The 1853 records show that in that year there were then two Lochinvar poundkeepers, identified as F. Paterson and Thomas Hickey. Paterson returned £12/0/4 and Hickey £46/16/2 to the Colonial Treasury. The number of New South Wales poundkeepers in 1853 had risen to seventy-five and they combined to return £3258/13/0 for the year to the Treasury. By 1856 Thomas Hickey had become the sole Lochinvar poundkeeper, but paid only £2/9/6 into the colonial coffers. The New South Wales returns overall, however, had risen to £4255/15/4, and the highest individual return was £439/11/1 from Deniliquin.

The *Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* (hereafter referred to as the *Maitland Mercury*) was now publishing the ordinary notices of impounding, while the annual colony wide returns were still being printed in the *Government Gazette*. This was in accordance with the Act of 1840 which recognised the difficulty of regional poundkeepers in contacting the Sydney printers.

Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

A 12 November 1859 notice in the *Maitland Mercury* stated: "At Lochinvar, from Windemere, on the 8th Nov., by Mrs. Nott- one bay horse, switch tail, star, three white feet, branded TB near shoulder, one red bullock, branded TB near ribs, near horn turned down – damages 6d each. Thomas Hickey."

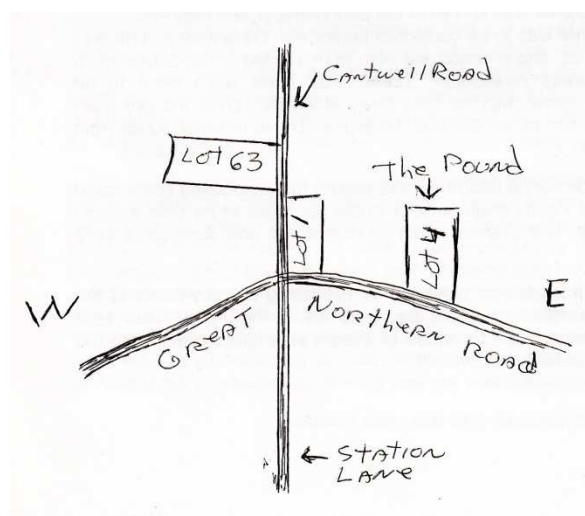
Thomas Hickey continued as the Lochinvar poundkeeper until his death by misadventure in Sydney in late July 1860 at the age of 49. One of his last published notices was in the *Maitland Mercury* on 5 June 1860: "Five pounds reward. Stolen or strayed, from Lochinvar on the 24th May, One black pony mare, small star, hog mane, switch tail, two hind fetlocks white, branded off shoulder F. The above reward will be paid, if stolen: or one pound, if strayed, on delivery to Thos. Hickey."

The role of Lochinvar poundkeeper remained in the Hickey family following his death. A notice from the *Maitland Mercury* on 21 August reported: "Poundkeeper Lochinvar. The Justices in Petty Sessions assembled at the Police Office, West Maitland, have this day, 10th August, 1860, appointed Mrs. Mary Hickey to be Poundkeeper at Lochinvar, in the district of Lochinvar, in the room of Thomas Hickey, deceased." At the time of her appointment Thomas' widow was 52.

Between 1860 and 1864 Mary was the Lochinvar poundkeeper. In 1862 Mary returned £13/4/11 to the Treasury. On 20 February 1864 the *Maitland Mercury* reported: "Impoundings. At Lochinvar, on the 16th January, 1864, from Windemere, by Mr. K. Nott; re-advertised: - One brown horse, long tail, near shoulder J over K, near thigh K; damages 5s. If not released, will be sold. M. T. Hickey."

Mary Hickey died at her home, Church Hill, Lochinvar, on 31 May, 1873, after a long illness.

Thomas Hickey's will of 1859 shows that he owned three unencumbered properties within the Lochinvar area, which included at least two houses, one of which had eight rooms and a detached kitchen. The properties were left to his six children, to be held in trust until they reached legal majority, with interim revenues to be paid to his wife. These three properties were Lot 63, Lot 1 and Lot 4. Lot 63, as noted, had been part of Lesslie Duguid's 1822 estate. The numbers of the other two reflect their original status as part of the Winder lands. Both lots were to the north of the Great Northern Road, onto which they faced. Lot 1, which is the location of the current Anglican church, had houses on it, one of which was likely Mary's home. Lot 4 is now part of Saint Joseph's Catholic school.



Although the location of the Hickey pound was not specified in the poundkeeping notices during Thomas and Mary's lives, its location can be positively identified by a *Maitland Mercury* notice of 21 October 1865: "Lochinvar Pound Yards. By Order of the Mortgagee. Town of Lochinvar. All that parcel of land situate at Lochinvar, Parish of Gosforth, County of Northumberland, one acre two roods (more or less), fronting the Great Northern Road one chain, nearly opposite the Catholic Chapel, and near the English Church; Together with all improvements thereon, comprising the Pound Yards, presently returning an excellent yearly rental, well-known as the property of Mr. John Hickey. Title – Apply to W. H. Mullen, Esq. Terms cash, or equal thereto."

Apparently a quick sale contract did not eventuate. A further *Maitland Mercury* notice stated: "Mr. Thomas Cadell has received instructions from the Mortgagee to sell [the pound yards] by auction, at Eckford's Family Hotel, West Maitland, on Monday, 30th October, 1865, at Twelve o'clock".

Lot 4 was therefore the Hickey pound. John was the eldest son of Thomas and Mary. Together with his brother Patrick Thomas, he had been left Lot 4 in their father's will. John married in 1857 and died in 1869. He seems to have had no interest in keeping up the family trade. By the time of the above notices Mary had given up poundkeeping. The Post Office Directory of 1872 shows that Joseph Hoskins was then the Lochinvar poundkeeper.

Further Issues

In 1862 in addition to Mary Hickey there was another female poundkeeper, Margaret Ryan in Morpeth. These two are the only women to have come to light who had been appointed poundkeepers in their own right in New South Wales during this period. It is unknown if Margaret Ryan had "inherited" this position from a husband or other family member.

In 1862 John Ledsam was the West Maitland poundkeeper. He was undoubtedly a relation, presumably the son, of T. Ledsam, the 1848 poundkeeper for that district. The examples of the Hickeys and the Ledsams, and possibly Margaret Ryan, indicate that the position of poundkeeper could be retained within families, and also that women were not barred from poundkeeping.

Thomas Doyle's identity beyond that of poundkeeper remains unresolved, as does that of F. Paterson and Joseph Hoskins. The locations of their pounds are likewise undetermined.

The Hickeys had been free, though assisted, settlers from Ireland. Thomas Hickey's eventual ownership of three village lots, which included houses, suggests that poundkeeping in an area like Lochinvar during the mid 1800s could have been a moderately lucrative occupation. Although the income from poundkeeping cannot be calculated directly from the monies forwarded to the Colonial Treasury, a reasonably busy pound could probably earn a keeper a living comparable to a skilled agricultural worker. In 1851 such farm workers could expect to earn between £38 and £42 per year. However, the income from a pound could be extremely variable month by month and year by year.

We are indebted to Judy Nicholson of the Maitland Public Library who accessed the records of the late Harry Boyle on our behalf. We are extremely grateful for the information provided by Paul Robinson of Armidale on the Hickey family.

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This summary of the colony returns for 1848 was found in Harry Boyle's files.

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STATEMENT of Sums paid by Poundkeepers into the Colonial Treasury from the 1st of January to the 31st of December, 1848, in conformity with the Act of Council 4th William IV, No. 3, and available for the purposes specified in the Act 9 Victoria, No. 7, dated the 16th October, 1845.

| NAME OF POUNDKEEPER. | SITUATION OF POUND. | POLICE DISTRICT. | AMOUNT. |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | | | £ s. d. |
| Maisey S | Sydney | Sydney | 1 10 7 |
| Ryan W | Concord | Concord | 5 7 7 |
| Walker J | Parramatta | Parramatta | 4 13 0 |
| Hatton J | Kissing Point | Kissing Point | 0 2 0 |
| Adams W | Prospect | Prospect | 0 4 8 |
| Lowlands R | Richmond | Richmond | 1 5 9 |
| Moore J | North Richmond | North Richmond | 2 0 3 |
| O'Brien D | Campbell Town | Campbell Town | 0 13 11 |
| Cahill E | Camden | Camden, &c. | 2 2 8 |
| Doyle E | Narrellan | Narrellan | 3 17 5 |
| Walker A | Pieton | Pieton | 1 1 0 |
| Carlton P | Burratorang | Burratorang | 7 15 4 |
| Gandry C | Vanderville | Vanderville | 0 1 9 |
| McCoy J | Hartley | Hartley | 5 9 5 |
| McDonald W | Binda | Binda | 38 6 10 |
| Rankin D | Taralga | Taralga | 25 11 11 |
| Bugden T | Old Collector | Goulburn | 1 1 10 |
| Sheridan J | Goulburn | Goulburn | 3 11 5 |
| Stevenson W | Goulburn | Goulburn | 3 9 0 |
| Marsden J | Bungonia | Bungonia | 11 7 3 |
| White J | Murrumbah | Berrima | 3 15 10 |
| Myers W | Yass | Yass | 3 18 6 |
| Wood James | Gunning | Gunning | 8 5 1 |
| Oliver W | Burrowa | Burrowa | 11 4 4 |
| Carr D | Braidwood | Braidwood | 13 5 6 |
| Green Thomas | Carcoar | Carcoar | 8 8 9 |
| Spink C | Canowindra | Canowindra | 4 6 2 |
| White J | Peppers Creek | Peppers Creek | 2 15 6 |
| Aldred R | O'Connell Plains | O'Connell Plains | 7 13 3 |
| Roberts J | Blackman's Swamp | Bathurst | 11 15 0 |
| Smith E | Bathurst | Bathurst | 1 16 6 |
| Wright J. J. | Kelso | Kelso | 4 5 11 |
| Yeo Roger | Anvil Creek | Anvil Creek | 10 11 0 |
| Trewren John | West Maitland | Maitland | 1 2 5 |
| Franks E | East Maitland | East Maitland | 4 4 3 |
| Ledsam T | St. Aubins | St. Aubins | 6 3 10 |
| Palmer J | Murrurundi | Murrurundi | 1 1 5 |
| Clark John | Jerry's Plains | Jerry's Plains | 9 10 0 |
| McIntosh A. S. F. | Red Post Hill | Red Post Hill | 14 7 10 |
| McKay A | Singleton | Singleton | 11 12 9 |
| Harpur J. J. | Merton | Merton | 1 18 7 |
| Tulloch J | Muswellbrook | Muswellbrook | 17 6 6 |
| Patterson J | Clarence Town | Clarence Town | 25 3 4 |
| Kibble G. A. F. | Gresford | Gresford | 7 16 0 |
| Maddy John | Cassilis | Cassilis | 6 15 1 |
| Miller J | Merriwa | Merriwa | 0 17 3 |
| Benedictson B | Seaham | Seaham | 4 3 5 |
| O'Brien C | Cooma | Cooma | 34 18 9 |
| Thompson C | Gundagai | Gundagai | 5 7 0 |
| Saward John | Tamworth | Tamworth | 0 17 6 |
| Wren H | Warralda | Warralda | 0 15 6 |
| Barron T. L. | Warralda | Warralda | 0 18 4 |
| Shepherd John | Warralda | Warralda | 51 6 10 |
| Hannaford J. K. | Warralda | Warralda | 30 13 3 |
| Anderson A | Warralda | Warralda | 3 2 1 |
| TOTAL | | | £ 451 16 10 |


Amounting in the whole to Four hundred and fifty-one pounds sixteen shillings and ten-pence.

C. D. RIDDELL.

Colonial Treasury, Sydney,
13th January, 1851.

Dunmore

The Historical Society has been included in discussions with regard to 'Dunmore' being added to the New South Wales heritage register. Member Ruth Trappel was interviewed by the ABC:



News Home Just In Local World Business Entertainment Sport The Drum Weather More

HOT TOPICS world-politics, unrest-conflict-and-war, federal-government, government-and-politics, law

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Heritage listing bid for historic Maitland home

Updated April 26, 2012 12:52:54

There are plans to put one of Maitland's oldest homes on the New South Wales Heritage Register.

The two story Dunmore House was built by convicts in Bolwarra Heights between 1830 and 1833.

It is considered a fine example of Australian Georgian architecture and predates Aberglasslyn House and Tocal Homestead by seven years.

Dunmore was the name of a town, which is now known as Largs.

The President of the Maitland and District Historical Society Ruth Trappel says in addition to being a workplace for convicts there was a labour force of migrants.

"Especially the Scottish immigrants, he bought out 10 ship loads I think," she said.

"There was a migrant movement so he did bring out a lot and of course it was a private town that he had at Dunmore."

Ms Trappel says in recent years the house has been restored to its former glory.

"It had become quite un-looked after until about 1999 but when the new owners took over they did a great deal of restoration work on it.

"It's right back to where it needs to be now.

"They've done the out-buildings and it's been completely redone."

Topics: [historians](#), [19th-century](#), [largs-2320](#), [maitland-2320](#)

First posted April 25, 2012 08:10:00


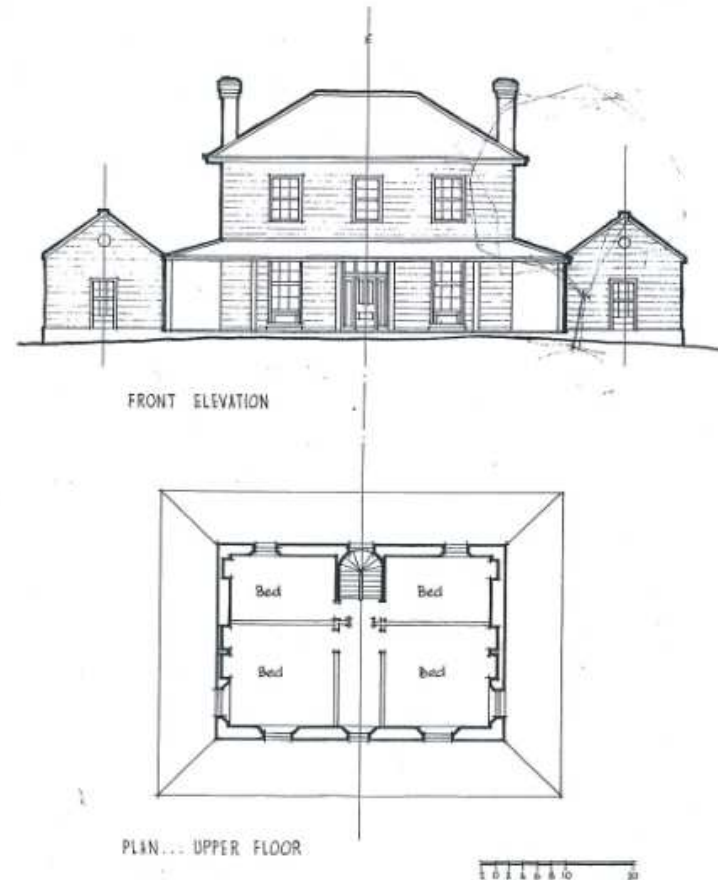
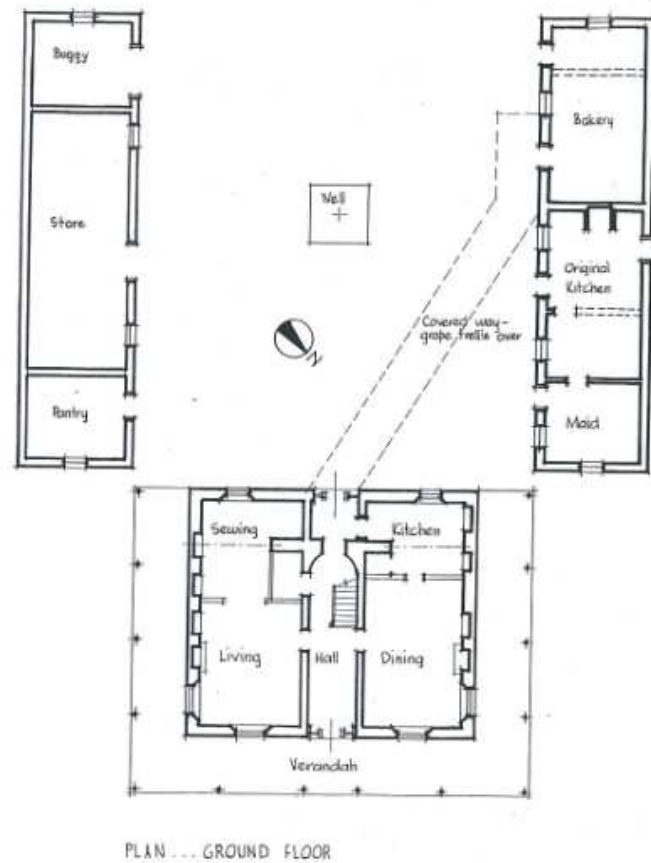


PHOTO: Push for historic Dunmore house to be heritage listed (Maitland City Council)

MAP: [Largs 2320](#)



'DUNMORE HOUSE'

L A R G S

N. S. W.

Measured September 1910... 154.

citywide

Historic Dunmore House

Georgian home has seen history unfold

By **Harry Boyle**
Hunter historian

DUNMORE House, one of the most historic

houses of the Hunter Valley situated on a prominent rise at the intersection of the Maitland, Largs and Woodville roads, has seen the unfolding of Hunter Valley history.

A grant to George Lang on April 20, 1822, it is

probable that George only saw it once when he came up and left a couple of convicts in charge and returned to Sydney. He then caught a fever and died.

George had arrived on the ship Brixton to Hobart in August, 1822, later pro-

ceeding on to Sydney in September. Applying for a grant he received one thousand acres in the Lower Hunter.

His father and mother, William and Mary, his brother Andrew, his sister Isabella came up and took over the grant. This did not meet with the approval of the government as George had not carried out any of the conditions of a grant. The Langs were determined and stayed and began to work the property which was called Dunmore after the maternal family name. It was 12 years before the matter was settled.

In 1828 they erected a windmill on the property and later a horse mill. William and Andrew were builders and erected the rear portion in 1830 and the main house in 1833. A monument to their profession is the fact that the building is in sound condition today.

In 1830, William Lang was off to Sydney. Unable to obtain a berth on the regular packet he took passage on a smaller vessel which during a gale



HISTORIAN: Harry Boyle

foundered on the way and William was drowned.

Andrew eventually became the owner, married Emily Caswell and under his management it became one of the most progressive estates in the Hunter. In 1838, the Scot highlanders were settled on the estate on clearing leases and developed the beautiful village of Largs. A vineyard was established under the management of a German named Smidt, to become famous in the wine industry.

Another business project was to establish a punt which was let at a fee per annum and the establishment of a mill which could

pearl barley – the only one in the colony. Andrew enlarged the property by purchasing a portion of Goulburn Grove. There was also a mill for making paper.

Andrew and his wife returned to England, the property eventually sold to Joseph Pearse in 1872. He sold to Arthur and Amy Warden in 1892. They sold to John Graham in 1910.

It had a railway station named after it to serve the once large estate. The Dunmore station name was changed to Mindaribba in 1912.

Dunmore House itself is rectangular in shape with two unattached wings at either side at the rear forming a courtyard. The fourth side is almost enclosed with a barn. The house is built of local stone. An open flagged verandah runs along three sides of the house from which opens rooms with no entry to the main house. The front door is one of the features of the house and opens into a wide hall paved with red tiles with a fancy border.

One large and one smaller room are on either side of the hall. One of these rooms, the dining room, witnessed the holding up of the family by the Jew Boy gang. One of the employees of the estate, William McLeod, made himself a hero by breaking one of the outlaw's arms with a pair of blacksmiths tongs.

Large French doors open onto the verandah. A fine staircase rises opposite the door to the bedrooms upstairs. Many tales circulated about the bricked up window but all are false. Being a Georgian house all has to be symmetrical and the unneeded window shape was added.

Dunmore had its own cemetery on the boundary of BelleMohr and the Langs private tomb is on the opposite side of the road from the house. The one mystery about Dunmore is the tenders called by architect William White for two large stone buildings and other work in 1874. Where are they?

Ghost' signs

Partial signs or faint, faded 'ghost' signs on old buildings can be intriguing – what does the sign say? What is the location? To what purposes has this building been put?

Historical Society members have identified a number of 'ghost signs' that will be reproduced in this Bulletin over future issues.

In this issue we are featuring a very faded sign on a building in High Street – *can anyone identify the exact location and what the business was? Hint: begins with 'M' -- If so, please provide comments by email to maitlandhistorical@gmail.com*

*Reminder: this is the Society's **new email address**.*



Walter Finlay O'Hearn

by Henry Armstrong



An article in Maitland Mercury back in November 2011 regarding Milton Morris prompted Maitland and District Historical Society Inc. member, **Henry Armstrong**, to consider Maitland's representation in the demanding field of political office:

We have home grown lads such as Milton Morris, Sir Allan Fairhall, Mr. A. Howarth and an almost unheard of Labor M.P., Mr. Walter Finlay O'Hearn, 1890-1950.

I worked in what was then a true "people's bank", the Commonwealth Bank, with one of his two sons, Robert, in the 1950s. Thus I was privileged to learn almost first hand of Mr. Walter O'Hearn's inspiring and successful battler against severe physical adversity to succeed in the fierce joust of state politics. Coming from a large family, he also had three sisters. Mr. O'Hearn helped out on the East Greta colliery (now Gillieston Heights).

In 1905, Mr. O'Hearn, then aged 15 years, suffered what surgeons call a 'catastrophic accident.' Young Walter was crushed by a mining skip, losing an arm and a leg. This was the age of using a hook for a missing arm and a fairly primitive wooden leg which required immense strength of will for the patient to achieve mobility.

Despite the dire handicaps Mr. O'Hearn resumed his education under the low beam of the farm's kerosene light. In time he became secretary of a small mining company at Louth Park, joined the Maitland Branch of the Labor Party in the best Irish Catholic tradition and through the dint of hard endeavour became member for Maitland in March 1920. He held this seat until 1932 before being defeated by Mr. Morris' predecessor, Mr. Arthur Howarth.

| Position | Start | End |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Member of the NSW Legislative Assembly | 20 Mar 1920 | 18 May 1932 |
| Member for Maitland | 20 Mar 1920 | 17 Feb 1922 |
| Member for Maitland | 25 Mar 1922 | 18 Apr 1925 |
| Member for Maitland | 30 May 1925 | 7 Sep 1927 |
| Member for Maitland | 8 Oct 1927 | 18 Sep 1930 |
| Member for Maitland | 25 Oct 1930 | 18 May 1932 |

He then became an alderman of Maitland Council and a director of Maitland Hospital. Mr. O'Hearn collapsed and died from a peptic ulcer, while walking from the hospital across the swamp bridge on 16th September 1950. Mr. O'Hearn's funeral was held at Campbells Hill cemetery.

Table copied from: <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/>

Maitland photographer creates window into the past

The photographs created by Historical Society member **Peter Smith** have been featured in several issues of this Bulletin and Pete's contributions to the ABC Open's *Now and Then* project are now on exhibition at the Museum of Sydney.

From the ABC web site <http://www.abc.net.au> :

At around the same as joining the historical society, ABC Open had approached the society about its *Now and Then* project, a re-photography project that creates a window in the past by combining an old image with a new one. At the time Mr Smith said it was just the project he had been looking for.

Mr Smith, better known to the online community as 'therealpetesmith', went on to create more than 130 *Now and Then* images for series 1. And in series 2 Pete Smith is proving again to be a prolific producer of historic images, mostly drawn from his personal family photos from across three generations.

Pete has already started on series 2 of the *Now and Then* project – images available on the web site <http://open.abc.net.au/projects/now-and-then-series-2-44un7gn/contributions/contributors/therealpetesmith>



Newcastle had David Jones and Maitland had Galtons, taken in 1963 by Athel D'ombrain we see a busy High Street in front of the well-known Department Store. Today the building houses a Bank and several shops. 'Then' photo is from the University of Newcastle's Cultural collections.

Diary Dates

August

Tuesday 7th Guest Speaker **John Whittaker** who will tell us about his family's involvement in the jewellery business. He will also bring with him a collection of early watches and other artefacts

18th & 19th Aroma Festival in the Mall - details to be advised

Tuesday 21st General Business Meeting 5.30 at the rooms

September

The Morpeth Museum will celebrate its 150 anniversary this month

Tuesday 4th Guest Speakers **Janis & Judy** – cataloguing the Society's collection. 5.30 at the rooms

Sat-Sun, 8th to 16th Saturday to Sunday - History Week – The theme for 2012 is Threads -

Tuesday 18th General Business Meeting 5.30 at the rooms

October

Tuesday 2nd Guest Speaker **Judy Nicholson** – researching the history of a house or property 5.30 at the rooms

Tuesday 16th General Business Meeting 5.30 at the rooms

November

Tuesday 6th Guest Speaker to be advised 5.30 at the rooms

Tuesday 20th General Business Meeting 5.30 at the rooms



Victoria Bridge
Spanning Wallis Creek, Maitland

Linking East and West Maitland
(1852-1896)

National Library of Australia,
J.R. Clarke 1857