

MAITLAND AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bulletin No. 4

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At our October meeting, Audrey Tonkin read extracts from Charles Boydell's diary which threw an interesting light on the way in which the important events of the early 19th century were viewed by a gentleman of the day, and which proved that Mr. Boydell had a wry sense of humour.

The subject of the Glebe cemetery was pursued. You will by now have seen the excellent article in the Maitland Mercury but you may not know that our letter of 7th September to Council has not yet been put on the Council business paper, much less been answered, in spite of the fact that copies were sent to Aldermen Unicomb and Stewart, both patrons of the Society.

The difference between removal, preservation and restoration should be considered. The objects of the Society are to discover, record, preserve, advise on and teach the history of Maitland and district. To approve the removal of headstones to another place does not come within our constitution; to work for the preservation of the cemetery, including not only headstones but also quite a number of vaults, does. The campaign continues.

Mrs. Nan Wood has rung me to ensure that the Society knows of the old Jewish cemetery in Louth Park Road. She also mentioned that the former Synagogue in Church Street was later used as a private school which she attended until the age of ten. (I remember it as a hall used for private parties and wedding receptions.) Mrs. Wood also referred to a grammar school which was conducted in "Owlpen" at Farley at one time.

Laddie Pilgrim also told me of a private kindergarten run by Mary Blair in Roxburgh Street, Lorn, which he attended from 1904 to 1906, and that Miss Blair is now Mrs. Reynolds, aged about 92.

Education is an aspect of our history which is not fully covered by the Department of Education's official documents. My great-great-grandmother Elliott taught 11 children in her home. The living room in the homestead at "Hillsborough", a room of generous proportions, used to be referred to as the schoolroom. Would each member please write down details of his or her schooling - when, where, run by whom, teachers' names, architecture, furniture, teaching materials, writing materials, subjects taught, games played, etc. - and bring them to the next meeting, or send them to Val Hamson at Mindaribba.

I hope to interest an erudite gentleman of my acquaintance in the history of the Jewish community in Maitland. Members who are pursuing a variety of avenues might add to their own store of knowledge - for instance, someone delving into land grants might notice an obviously Jewish name; another interested in transport might find that some of the larger carriages in Maitland belonged to the members of the community; we already know that some of the more palatial residences in town were built for or owned by them; my own interest in the legal profession in the Hunter Valley leads me to wonder whether local legal firms were employed or whether Sydney firms acted; and so on. The jig-saws all interlock.

As promised earlier, here is a taste of Val Hamson's list of suggestions for research:-

Aborigines	Arts
Advertising	Astronomy
Agriculture and farming	
Apprenticeships	Bakers
Archaeology	Banks (which Judith Smith has already
Architecture	successfully pursued)

On last enquiry, Miss Eily Fry was still in hospital following a fall. Our treasurer, Lyn Dolan, has also been on the sick list and, by the look of it, her house has been falling to bits without her; when I called, it was being propped up by ladders. (Wise girl, Lyn!) It will be good to have both of them back on deck.

Our next meeting will again be at East Maitland Primary School, at 8 p.m. on Monday, 7th November. We will try to tape-record the whole meeting, so as not to lose those pearls of wisdom which every member seems to be delighted to drop verbally, but not to put on paper. I want to speed up the formal parts of the meeting and hasten to the interesting bits at the end, so be warned, all those who enjoy dragging red herrings across the trail. To the point, please, and as concisely as possible. Your chance will come later.

June Vile

Bulletin editor

Those members who already have a draft constitution might like to cut out the following clauses, the first two as altered before approval of the constitution and the last as amended at our October meeting, and paste them in. New members who have no copy may obtain one at the November meeting.

5. The annual general meeting shall be held in March each year. At least ten (10) days notice of such meeting shall be given to each member in writing to his last-known address but accidental omission to give notice to any member shall not invalidate the meeting. Ordinary general meetings shall be held monthly or as determined by the Committee or the President.

6. (a) At the annual general meeting a Committee comprising the following shall be elected from amongst financial members:-

President, etc.

6. (g). An auditor who shall not be a member of the Committee shall be elected annually.