

MAITLAND AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 333

MAITLAND.

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November, 1978.

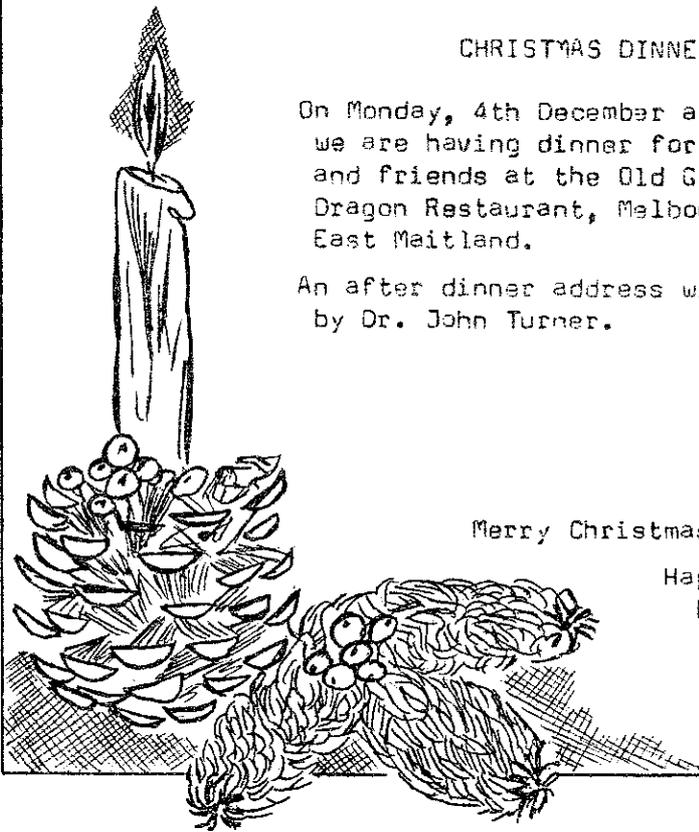
CHRISTMAS DINNER

On Monday, 4th December at 7.30 p.m.
we are having dinner for members
and friends at the Old George and
Dragon Restaurant, Melbourne St.,
East Maitland.

An after dinner address will be given
by Dr. John Turner.

Merry Christmas and a

Happy
New
Year.



Menu

Entree:

Fresh Prawn Cocktail	\$ 2.50
Crepes Reine Marie (Savoury Chicken Pancake)	\$ 2.00

Main Course:

Rack of Lamb	\$ 4.00
Beef Wellington (Fillet Beef on Puff Pastry)	\$ 4.00
Chicken Paprika	\$ 4.00
Baked Whole Snapper	\$ 5.00

All served with fresh vegetables & salad bowls.

Sweets:

A variety served from a trolley, \$1 a selection.

Coffee and mints included.

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Please indicate your choice when booking.

Bookings: Please contact, Barry Alsop - Ph. 301646
Lyn Dolan 334104
Val Hamson 301420

BEFORE 28th November.

George & Dragon

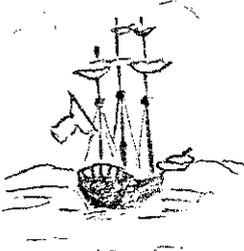
EARLY HISTORY

George Furber purchased allotment 2 in section 15A on the road to Green Hills (Melbourne St), where he built a brick inn which was licensed on 20th June 1837 under the sign of the George & Dragon. The annual licence for this inn was renewed to George Furber in 1838-39. On 10th August 1839 George Furber, innkeeper, mortgaged the George & Dragon to John Earles of Berry Park for £700.

William Benjamin Johnson Green was licensed to keep the George & Dragon on 19th April 1842 and he renewed this licence until 1848.

The George & Dragon Inn at East Maitland was advertised to be sold at auction at a sheriff's sale at Sydney on 7th August 1844. The George & Dragon was described as brick built.

The George & Dragon is the oldest hotel in all Maitland. The Queens Arms has been licensed under that name since 1838 but is an entirely different building on the same site.



The history of Oakhampton is extremely vague. Lack of records, deaths of old people, time and floods have all contributed to make the history of Oakhampton mostly unknown to us in this modern age. Therefore in several parts, information and/or dates, are lacking, but a general picture is obtainable.

Oakhampton has its origins back in the year of 1822 when one thousand acres was given as a grant to William B. Wilkinson who named the property Okhampton Park Estate. The name and spelling came from Devonshire, England. Later it was respelt - Oakhampton.

Wilkinson sold his land to Captain Robert Lethbridge, who occupied his acquisition about 1823. His house (possibly a slab hut, replaced at a later date by a more durable stone and slate dwelling) was constructed on the summit of the highest hill in Oakhampton, from where he could see all of his domain, as well as, a clear view of the fast-growing township of West Maitland.

The house standing on that same hill today, is the oldest in Oakhampton, but even so, it is not possible now to determine whether it is the original house or not. A woman who resided there for several years, told me of once finding several large stones which were all that remained of the original dwelling. On investigating the matter myself, I found that two bricks of obvious age were all that remained. Speculation is all that is possible on this certain incident.

In 1833 Lethbridge still resided at his abode. Reputed to be one of the best houses on the Hunter River in those times, it was built partly of stone and had a slate roof. The house on Oakhampton Hill fits this description exactly, except for the fact that it is not really large or excelling in grandeur.

The one thousand acres comprising Oakhampton was sub-divided about 1840 into 81 lots, each consisting of about twelve acres. Owing to the natural boundary formed by the Hunter River as well as Walka Lagoon, these lots were of various differing shapes and sizes. It was when these blocks were made available that such names as Logan, Willard, Scobie and Young appeared in Oakhampton. These men and their families were the pioneers

of Oakhampton. They settled on their farms and tilled the rich soil to earn their living. No doubt they lived in simple slab huts before they constructed their solid stone or timber houses. Only one slab hut remains in Oakhampton today, and information I've gathered indicates that it was built by Houston Mitchell, but once again it is impossible to determine exactly. From where this slab hut is standing it is possible to locate the site of a more imposing residence, built of stone and slate. Still standing nearby is an ancient brick and slate dairy and a barn of comparable age. In what would have been the back yard of this house, there is a small stone drinking trough! The slab hut is now used as a shed, and contains some remains of the bigger house; two fireplaces of immense dimensions and several stained glass windows also of similar proportions.

In 1849, the Methodist Church purchased some land for burial purposes for the sum of £40. Many people from Oakhampton as well as East and West Maitland and Morpeth were laid to rest there. Vaults are present, but they have been filled in by floods. One vault was excavated recently, and the brickwork of the stairway and interior was of extreme age. Many fine headstones are in this Wesleyan Cemetery, forgotten by most people, will be appreciated once again, when the restoration work is completed.

The population soared from 1850 to 1880, and it was about this time that Oakhampton's reputation of being a beautiful area started. The district was given the nick name of "The Garden Suburb".

In 1877 the people of Oakhampton banded together to obtain a provisional school. This meant that a least fifteen children would attend and no more than twenty-five, enough to warrant a public school. The parents paid for the furniture, and provided a building. The provisional school was first built on the corner of Lot 14. When it was washed away in a flood a building higher up was then used. Part of the house was remodelled for use as a classroom and the rest was provided for the resident teacher. In 1879 the school became a public school and the Department of Education took over control of the financial aspects of the school.

The school consists of two sections, the classroom and the connected teacher's residence, including a bathroom and a kitchen in the rear of the house. The school is built with brick on stone foundations. The original slate roof has been replaced with galvanised iron.

On June 26, 1877 William Clarke a distinguished British Civil Engineer, arrived in Australia to examine the problem of providing for, an efficient water supply for Maitland and Newcastle. Clarke examined several proposed sites for the future pumping station and discarded them for several reasons. He finally selected a site at Oakhampton. The intake was to be at Dickson's Falls (Oakhampton), the pumping station was to be erected on a site known locally as "Scobies Garden and Vineyard" at an estimated cost of £170,000.

After various forms of political changes and upheavels, the station was finally completed and on January, 1st, 1887 Newcastle's population cheered as the slightly discoloured water from Walka arrived for the first time.

Walka Water Works consisted of an ornate brick structure, housing the pumps and boilers, a much smaller structure in the river from where the water was taken, a huge settling tank, six filter beds, a clear water tank, and a huge lagoon with a stone wall and specially mixed clay covering the bottom.

Also adjacent to the station but further uphill, was located five cottages for the use of the workers at Walka and their families. A huge stone house for the Resident Engineer, all six of these houses were built of stone and slate.

The main structure is built of pink and cream bricks and the walls are four feet thick. The slate roof has been replaced with more modern galvanised iron. The pumphouse was extended and slightly altered around the turn of the century. Despite this, the Victorian architecture still shows its elegance and finery.

... to be continued.

By Warwick Berthold

Year 10

Maitland Marist Brothers.

Miss Elsie Henston, retired Principal of Petersham Intermediate Girls' High School, wrote of these "glories of the past" thus:-

Reminiscences of Maitland Girls' High School from 1898 - 1900

The school consisted of from 50 to 60 girls, many of whom were "paying pupils," admitted on the results of a simple entrance examination, and who paid two guineas a term. Others were admitted on results of a competitive examination (English, History, Arithmetic, French, Dictation), held twice yearly. About 20 were admitted each year. The "Scholars" received all text books free, the "Bursars" a monetary allowance as well, to assist in payment of board at certain recommended homes. These girls came from places as far north as Glenn Innes.

As the girls from Newcastle, East Maitland and Morpeth arrived by train about 8.00 a.m., and the Singleton girls at 8.10 a.m., School began at 8.30. Lunch recess was 30 minutes and School ended at 2 p.m., to enable girls to catch the only available trains for home. Classes were taught in the "new" room, and the back room of the residence.

The members of the staff were: Mistress, Miss J. Grossmann, beloved and revered by all of us; Miss Muir (Mrs. Redshaw) who was succeeded by the much-loved Miss Emily Cruise; and Miss Elizabeth Mitchell. Visiting teachers were Professor King for Music, Mr. Hollings for Drawing, and Miss Julia White for Needlework.

About three times yearly we had "Drill" conducted by Major Mulholland. This consisted mainly of marching round and round the verandah - the daring ones dropping off the end of the verandah one by one, and retiring to the stables until the business ended.

There was no attempt at making a playground - the grounds were nearly always knee deep in grass. Lunch was partaken on the verandah - though a certain select group patronised an old fowlhouse, sitting on the perches. Another favourite haunt was an old stable behind the new room. There was no organised sport nor time to play if there had been, but there always seemed to be a gaiety and friendliness never forgotten by those who were

fortunate to share in its life.

Miss Grossmann lived in the residence with her mother and sister. This, I am sure, helped to stamp the School more thoroughly with her spirit and influence.

It was during these years that the School first adopted a hat band - navy with two pale blue stripes, and a gold shield with the motto "Labor Omnia Vincit". This was worn on a flat sailor hat.

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SOCIETY NEWS

The conducted walks of lower High Street and Bourke Street, guided by Graham Dunlop were well received by both groups which exceeded 80 persons.

The visit to Windermere was thoroughly enjoyed by all. They open every Sunday for Inspections and Afternoon Tea.

Our Raffle of the Val Anderson painting of "Umbercollie Homestead" was won by Mr. R. Hill of Morpeth. We now have a new Raffle of 6 bottles of selected wines, kindly donated by Tyrrells Vineyards of Pokolbin, and it will be drawn on 18th December, 1978.

Members who have attended meetings have enjoyed listening guest speakers, Mr. Boris Sokoloff (on Aborigines and their customs) and Mr. Jack Sullivan (Hunter Valley History on slides).

Special thanks to Nellie Bligh for supplying and arranging the display in our Society's rooms at Maitland Antique Gallery. Without her effort, the rooms would still be empty. As this will soon have to be replaced, old and interesting items are required for loan to make up the new display.

East Maitland Progress Association has called a meeting on Monday, 20th November to consider celebrations for the 150th Anniversary of the Plan for the Township of Maitland drawn up by George Boyle White in 1829 and which became officially named East Maitland. In view of this taking place, our Society will be asked to assist with information and relics of the past. If you can help, please contact either Roy Hamson (301420) Ron Stewart (334233) or Harry Kearsley (337537).

... Does anyone know if celebrations were held in 1929? ...

Please Note: As the Christmas Dinner at The Old George and Dragon Restaurant has been arranged, there will not be a general meeting for December.

The first general meeting for 1979 will be at East Maitland Primary School on 5th February at 7.30 p.m.

There are some outstanding subscriptions for 1978. Have you paid yours?

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