

MAITLAND &
HISTORICAL



DISTRICT
SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 333,
MAITLAND.

Vol. 3, No.2.

Sept., 1979.

Meetings:

Monthly meetings of the Society are held on the first Monday evening of each month at the East Maitland Primary School, commencing at 7.30 p.m. (Holidays excepted, when meetings will be held on second Monday.)

Officers 1979:

PRESIDENT

Roy Hamson

VICE PRESIDENT

Graham Dunlop

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Val Hamson (ph.301420)

TREASURER

Lionel Fredman

RECORDERS

Judith Hawke and

Mildred Pankhurst

Subscriptions:

Adults \$5, plus \$1 other family members.

Students \$1.

We have pleasure in continuing Ron Montague's research into Sherberras' memorial in St. James Church, Morpeth :

THE STORY BEHIND A MEMORIAL

A visitor to St. James Church, Morpeth, might see a marble tablet that bears the following inscription:

"To the Memory of Rinaldo Sherberras, Late Captain in H.M. 80th Reg. who fell in his 37th Year at Ferozeshah on the 21st December A.D. 1845 within the Sikh entrenchments having seized one of their standards; whilst stationed at Maitland he acted as justice of the peace and gained the confidence and esteem of the community. This tablet is erected by a few of his friends in this neighbourhood who lament his loss."

A more detailed account of this incident may be read from a plaque above the Sikh War Memorial in the Anglican Cathedral in the old Staffordshire town of Lichfield. The 80th was the Staffordshire country regiment and its battle record is a feature of that memorial. The inscription tells how on the afternoon of the 21st of December a party of Sikhs dressed in chain mail counter attacked. They were carrying three standards. The first was seized by Captain Sherberras of the 80th who was killed, as were Captain Best and Corporal Brown who also tried to capture the trophy. Then, Colour-Sergeant Kirkland of the grenadier company snatched it and although wounded retained it; he later was promoted to the rank of ensign for gallantry in the field.

Our visitor might reasonably ask why this officer, one of many who had been stationed in and around Maitland, had been singled out for special attention. It is not generally known that Rinald

Sherberras had more than simply a military association with Maitland or Morpeth. Sherberras (sometimes spelled SCHERBERRAS) was born into a noble Maltese family; one member still living represented his country at the coronation of King George VI. Captain Sherberras was barely five years old when Malta became a part of the British Empire in 1814 but being English educated and quite rich he was able to get a commission in the 80th Regiment while it was in Malta during the mid eighteen twenties. He went to England when the 80th returned to train and recruit and when the regiment moved to Australia by detachments he sailed, as a lieutenant, in charge of one of the parties.

The last detachment arrived at Sydney in 1837 and the regiment was again divided into small groups and posted to many distant parts of Australia. Stations included Norfolk Island, Tasmania and later, New Zealand. A small party was sent to East Maitland and Newcastle initially to guard convicts, but as transportation was phased out after 1840 many of the soldiers were employed in civil labour. Although Captain Day, of the 99th, was officially the senior officer in the district, Lieutenant Sherberras carried out most of his duties.

As a justice of the peace Sherberras served as the police magistrate at the old Morpeth Court House and during this time he fell in love with a young lady who lived nearby. This association could have brought about many personal problems because as an aristocratic Maltese, Sherberras would be a Roman Catholic, The young lady in question was Jane Platt the adopted daughter of E.C. Close, senior. As a retired lieutenant of the 48th Regiment, E.C. Close was regarded as a pillar of the Anglican Church and as virtual lord of the manor in and around Morpeth.

However, difficulties or not, Jane was married to Sherberras before the 80th sailed to India to take part in the first Sikh War. Although warned to prepare for service in India in late 1842, it was August of 1844 before the regiment was brought into the old George Street Barracks in Sydney to be made ready to embark. It was on the 12th of August that Jane accompanied by her young sister, Mary Anne, went on board the sailing ship "Royal Saxon". Sailing with them were nine officers and 290 non-commissioned officers and privates.

The remainder of the regiment sailed in the sailing ships "Briton", "Lloyd" and "Enmore"; all reached Calcutta safely except the "Briton" which was wrecked off the Andaman Islands. The survivors were marooned on an uninhabited island for fifty days before being rescued. The regiment was finally re-united at Agra and after a few months of recuperation was moved to the Punjab to stem the Sikh invasion.

Ferozeshah was a hard fought battle mostly hand to hand with no wounded being allowed to survive. The Sikh army under Lal Singh was 50,000 strong, trained by French officers and armed with modern muskets but its soldiers preferred to use their tulwars, the long sharp swords they could use to deadly effect. Casualties were heavy and many acts of bravery recorded on both sides. Jane Sherberras stayed in India long enough to receive the medal her husband had earned. She settled back in England with her sister and died in 1902 being well in her eighties. She did not re-marry.

SOURCES: A.P.Elkin - "Morpeth and I".
W.L. Vale. - "History of the South Stafford-
shire Regiment"
J.P.Jones - "History of the 80th Regiment".
Mitchell Library : Micro-film 3883 and 3884
W.O.4. series 17.

Grateful acknowledgements are due to Harry
Boyle for the useful information he supplied.

OUR SESQUI-CENTENARY

Sincere thanks to all members who worked towards the
success of this historic occasion.

The Book - A Town To Be Laid Out - Maitland 1829-1979 -
the first published effort by our Society, has been
well received, and sales very gratifying. Have you a
copy? Over 60 copies were sold at the Grossman House
Day. A very special thank you to Bob Panowitz who
has sold 40 books for us and to Don and Joy Sharpe who
sold 20 for us. Bob has the Morpeth Newsagency, and
Don and Joy the Service Station at Bolwarra Heights.
The profit they passed on to us of \$30.00 is greatly
appreciated.

The procession was a huge success and we were very
appropriately represented. Thanks to the effort of
Jan Blakemore who made all the arrangements,
and to Gordon Mudd for participating with his
horse-drawn cart. Three cheers for them!

All who attended the Official Ceremony in front of East Maitland Court House and the following unveiling of the Pioneer Memorial at Stockade Hill, will remember the day as a special event in the history of Maitland.

The Dinner was a tremendous success and the Ball, although not as well attended as expected, was a very enjoyable night.

Repertory's contribution was very appropriate. With a cast of over 23 players they presented Barbara Stellmarck's account of the Thunderbolt story entitled "Legend of the Losers". It attracted large and enthusiastic audiences.

Sunday 19th, the final day, was just as well planned. The Official Welcome by the Mayor to the near 100 Jewish people from Sydney and Newcastle who came to take part in the Re-Dedication of the Jewish Cemetery at Louth Park at which Rabbi Apple officiated.

Mr. John Mason, M.L.A., and a former Methodist Minister, was guest speaker at the Civic Church Service held at the Uniting Church, Sunday night.

Last but by no means least - the shop window displays. The effort by the storekeepers was in the true spirit of the occasion and are highly commended for the fine results. Also, the enthusiasm was evident as most were dressed in period costumes as well.

Two school competitions were run in conjunction with the celebrations. Our primary school project competition was both pleasing and dis-

appointing. Pleasing was the high standard of work received. Disappointing was that 20 schools were invited to participate and only two entries were received from other than East Maitland, which produced 50 entries. The winners, all pupils at East Maitland, received \$10.00 each. They were Chris Moy, Debbie Atkinson and Alison Prigg.

The Maitland Mercury Secondary School Essay Competition received very little support. St. Joseph's College at Lochinvar sent in some beautifully presented work, a delight to observe. The winners are : Senior Section, Jim Waddell of Maitland Boys' High - first; Warwick Berthold of Marist Bros. High - second. Junior Section, Jenny Little of St. Josephs - first; Catherine Tipper of Maitland Girls' High - second.

JUNE AND JULY MEETINGS

Guest Speakers:

At the June and July Meetings, members were informed and entertained by Stan Parkes, who spoke on the Surveyor, Hineage Finch, and his work in the building of the "Sydney to Newcastle road". This route was very important to the development of the Hunter.

Mr. Harold Bellamy gave an interesting talk on various types of clocks, which he brought to the September meeting.

"ALL AROUND THE TOWN"

We present a glimpse of former days, the functions of buildings then and now, and some that have gone forever. Also people, events of interest, etc. We hope this will become a permanent spot in our Bulletin. Members are requested to contribute small items.

All those Hotels - and there were almost too many to count last century. Some still are with us, names have been changed over the years, and others are just colourful history like :

The Angel Inn which was demolished in 1966 to make way for the Coles Supermarket had an interesting history which is hard to separate fact from fiction.

Licensed in 1827 it was not at that time situated there but lower down High Street in the vicinity of the Town Hall. The present site was never occupied by Molly Morgan (also known as Mary Hunt) who's life is a story of its own. Molly Morgan opened a Shanty to serve the thirst of the pioneer settlers and cedar getters, and obtained the license for the Angel Inn. An interesting story be it fact or fiction is the time the whaleboat drew into the landing stage and Molly shouted to the coxswain, "Have you brought any grog? I'm sold out."

"Sure I have, Mrs. Hunt. Two 15 gallon kegs of Sydney rum", he replied. "Do you think I'd be forgetting it, this hot weather?"

The original Angel Inn on this site was built some distance from the footpath and the mailcoaches for many years started for various destinations from there. They were replaced by the Cars which travelled to Clarence Town, Paterson and Gresford.

The license was transferred from Richard Hill to Joseph Croyle in 1865, 30 years after Molly's death, and was held by the Croyle family for many years. It was sold to Tooth & Co. in 1953. Joseph Croyle would not stock Australian beer, and customers had to have English beer or drink elsewhere.

Mr. & Mrs. H.S. Willard were the last hosts of the Angel Inn.

The Alma Hotel was named after the field of Alma in the battle of Crimea. The building still stands in High Street and is used as a Doctor's Surgery.

A three-storey building it has had some additions made to it over the years. The flood of 1893 swept away the attached corner fruit shop, this was later replaced with an addition which serves as the Waiting Room.

There was extensive stabling at the rear and a loose paddock of $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres. In 1866 it was licenced to J. Davidson, in 1884 to Catherine Gooley, 1886 to Thomas Joseph McDonald, 1895 to Martin McDonald, and 1896 to Frederick W. Still.

(Ref: Newcastle Local
History Library)

HELP WANTED! Can you assist these seekers with any information about the following :

Mr Terry Hicks,
66 Myrtle Street,
STANMORE. 2048

HICKS - John, William and Henry who were farmers at Narrowgut/Woodville area in the period 1876-1882.

Mrs Leone Scobie,
17 Loch Lomond Ave.,
FARMBOROUGH HTS. 2526.

DART - James (Builder) and wife, Mary (nee Westaway) and a son James born 1855, married Sarah McCue.

LEWIS - Maurice married Miriam AUDET at Maitland.

Mrs H.L. Williams,
2/71 Shirley Road,
WOLSTENCRAFT.

O'KEEFE - Patrick and son Maurice Patrick O'Keefe arrived in 1836 aged 16 yrs. Married at Maitland 1843 and was a storekeeper at Morpeth. Died in 1893. Maurice became a Solicitor, died at an early age leaving 4 daughters.

Mrs Jessie Guy,
39 Baragoola Street,
FAIRFIELD WEST. 2165.

WATTS - Aland married Ann Cavenah at Maitland Congregational Church 1854.
Children: Adelaide, Edwin, Aland, Anne and Cecelia.

Mrs Jessie M. Waldron,
"Borgara",
WALGETT. 2385.

KEATING - William of Morpeth. Wishes to establish any link to her ancestor John Keating whose son Isaac was born at Singleton in 1849.

LANCASTER - Isaac died 16/2/1888 aged 98. Buried at Broke.

Mr. Bob Hayes,
27 Einstein Street,
WINSTON HILLS. 2153.

HAYES - John. Born 1847,
baptised by Fr. Lynch at
W.M. Parents, John and
Anne (nee Duvane) resided
at Dunmore.

Mr. J.B. Parker,
Research Analyst,
Commercial Banking Co.
of Sydney Ltd.,
P.O. Box 2720,
SYDNEY.

DUGUID - Lesslie. First
Chief Executive Officer of
what is known as "C.B.C.
Bank". Of Scottish an-
cestry, believed to have
come directly from Aberdeen
to Sydney. Granted 2000
acres in 1822 on Hunter
River near Lochinvar.