

Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

Bulletin of Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

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



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*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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Location: 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

Meetings are held at the Society's rooms, 3 Cathedral Street Maitland

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 : Ruth Trappel

Vice Presidents : Peter Smith, Keith Cockburn

Treasurer : Kevin Short

Secretary : Tom Skelding

Bulletin Editor : Judy Nicholson

Consultant Editor : Ruth Trappel

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

maitlandhistorical@gmail.com

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William Thomas Mitchell (1807-1877) and the house he named San Souci

William Mitchell and wife Jane resided at Napoleon Cottage in 1859. It is stated on The Free Settler or Felon website that the occupant of this cottage was Emanuel Hungerford in January 1854. The cottage contained seven rooms, kitchen with patent cooker; stables; cellar etc. and was being advertised to be let.

1859 marked a change in the life of W. T. Mitchell. He retired from business having sold his cabinet manufactory and undertaking business to William Bussell. In that same year he was appointed a magistrate and further developed his business interests as an agent acting for private sales and for various matters related to persons who lived a distance from Maitland. When Napoleon Cottage was offered to be let in 1859 it was stated that it was the residence of W. T. Mitchell and that occupancy would be available on or before January 1861. This appears to be forward planning and also the exact date it would be available was not known. What is known, is that W. T. Mitchell was undertaking the building of his grand house in Regent Street, "Sans Souci."

"Sans Souci" (translated means 'carefree') was erected on portion of the 100 acres granted to Frederick Augustus Hely. Hely was for many years the Principal Superintendent of Convicts of the colony and did not reside on his 100 acres, instead leasing the land to others. He received a second and much larger grant on the Brisbane Water and named his property "Wyoming." Hely died in 1836 aged 42 and his 100 acres at Maitland was offered for sale in 1855 as 75 building and garden allotments which extended from Government Road to Fishery Creek and near the Long Bridge. 54 of the allotments had one chain frontage to Green Street (Regent Street) by five chains in depth and several were corner lots. All the lots averaged about 2 1/2 acres each with the exception of one which was nearly 9 1/2 acres. The land was offered by Order of the Trustees and Executrix of the late F. A. Hely, Esq.

Mitchell's house "Sans Souci" is an elegant building. Of two storeys it has symmetry in appearance both sides being the same. It is not known who designed the building, it may have been Mitchell himself or perhaps the architect, William White who was residing in Maitland at this time. The Mitchell's resided at "Sans Souci" for seven years before offering the house for sale. Advertised in the *Mercury* on January 2, 1868 for sale by auction, the house and grounds occupying about 1 1/4 acres of land as the owner, W. T. Mitchell, Esq., was intending to visit Europe.

The house was described as replete with every convenience suitable for a large and respectable family. The garden stocked with the best selected fruit trees; a large quantity of grape vines, in full bearing. A flower garden that couldn't be excelled in the district. A large brick tank, capable of holding 12,000 gallons with pump attached; together with a well and pump.

When again advertised in 1871 the house was described as 'commodious, well finished and executed in the modern Gothic style, containing about ten rooms, each story 12 feet high, marble chimney pieces in three of the rooms, a balcony at the rear across the whole length of the building, with French lights and casements opening out thereon. The entrance occupied the whole space in front of 132 feet, with iron palisading and stone piers inserted in a base-course or parapet of Sydney granite. A detached kitchen, servant's room and laundry with cellar underneath. A slated roof, stable, coach-house and store-house.

The description given in the sale notices provides an insight into the house in 1870. The position of the cellar under the detached section and not under the main building would be difficult to establish today without the newspaper notices. That additional building has long since been demolished and the cellar filled in.

At right: "Sans Souci" from the rear. The kitchen building is visible. The picture was taken from the large Pictorial Map of West Maitland N.S.W and its leading commercial buildings, 1878; an engraving held by the Grossman House Collection of the National Trust. As this is an artist's impression the detail may not be accurate.



The number of sale notices for "Sans Souci" implies that it was difficult to sell. The house was occupied by the Rev. Geo. Hurst who paid £200 per annum rental. When advertised in March 1871 for private sale, he was in residence, but possession could be given in early April.

The Mitchells were now residing at "Concord" which stood on the corner of Church and Steam Streets, Maitland. This house was sold by Wolfe and Badgery in April 1875 for £725. The Mitchell's also sold some of their furniture, oil paintings, a superior pianoforte, an elegant English Phaeton and harness to march with other vehicles and sundry items.

Two years later, on 14 April 1877, William Thomas Mitchell died. A short obituary was printed in the *Mercury* on April 17. It was stated that he had recently met some pecuniary reverses, which may explain the downsizing of his residences. It also said that he was charitable with his purse and was altogether a worthy and reputable citizen. After his death Jane disposed of some of her household furniture at an auction held at the residence in Bulwer Street. She must have moved again as her death occurred on 11 March 1890 at her residence in Free Church Street.

No record of sale for "Sans Souci" was found during the life of William Thomas Mitchell or his wife, Jane. It is unclear what actually happened in this regard. Whilst the house did not sell it remained occupied. H. S. Badgery and family moved in after the Rev. Geo. Hurst and remained until the end of 1875. The next resident was W. H. Williams and family who remained until 1877. The house was then occupied by J. N. Bruncker and family until they removed to "Maudville" near Oakhampton in 1881.

Although there is no proof of "Sans Souci" being sold from Val Rudkin's searches of The Maitland Mercury, it does appear that Robert Hyndes, the Mayor of Maitland from 1885 to 1887 probably purchased the property for his family. The Hyndes were in residence at the time of Robert Hyndes death in January, 1887. His wife and his son Theo, both died at "Sans Souci." The house was offered for sale by Ida Hyndes, the daughter of Robert Hyndes, after she had announced her engagement in 1907.

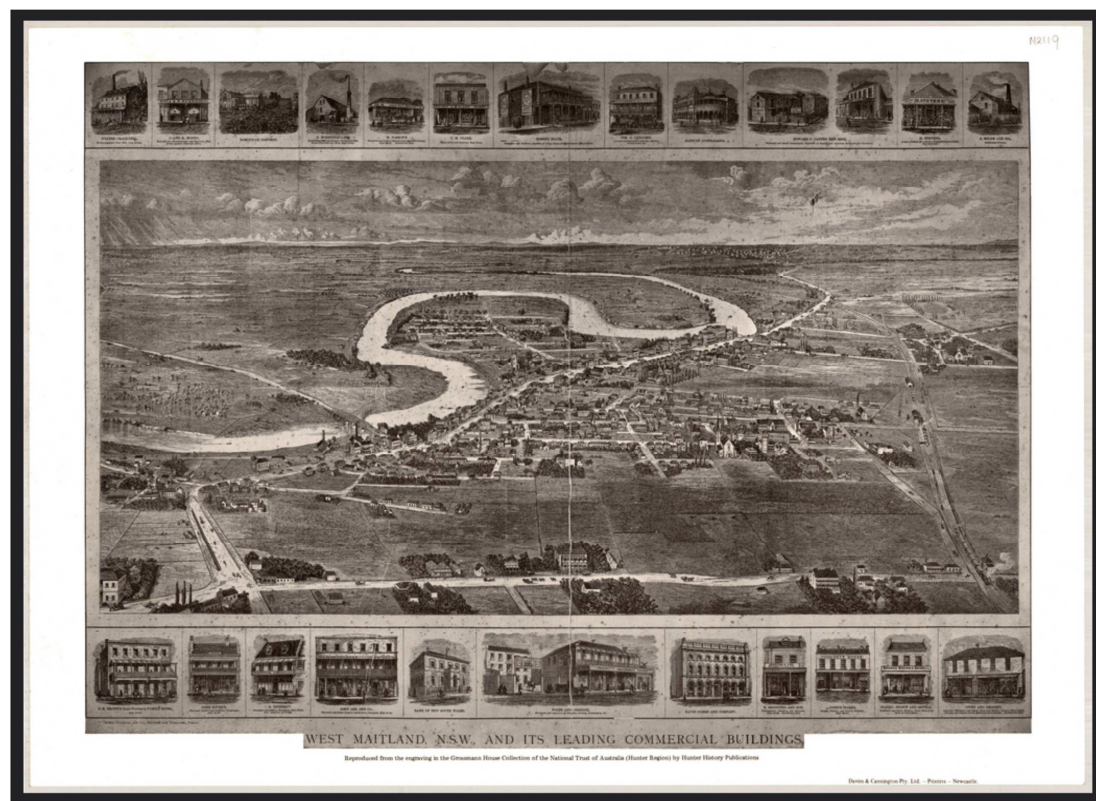
Again no actual record of the sale of the house was found in the *Mercury*. Ida Hyndes sold her furniture and effects and the house was passed in at auction at £1400. The house had been repaired and painted in recent years under the direction of Thomas W. Silk, architect. The mystery continued. In 1907 a mention was made in the *Mercury* of a man named J. O'Donnell in connection with the house. This was found to be John Sylvester O'Donnell who was well known as an exceptionally good judge of horses. He was a buyer for the Indian Army and other overseas clients. He lived in Regent Street, but his residence was "Tyrconnell." An old newspaper clipping in Maitland Historical Society's collection clarified that it was the house previously known at "Sans Souci." J. S. O'Donnell died in 1932. Mrs. O'Donnell sold "Tyrconnell" in 1934 and took over the License of the Imperial Hotel in Maitland.

“Tyrconnell” : Anyone familiar with “The Annals of the Four Masters” will know that it is part of Ireland’s history. In an article printed in *The Catholic Press*, 22 May 1930, under the subheading *Who were the Four Masters?* this helps to explain why J. S. O’Donnell gave this name to his home. “Michael O’Clery (Clerigh), the principal compiler of the “Annals,” was born at Kilbarron, near Ballyshannon, in the County Donegal in the year 1580. He was descended from a learned family, who had been for centuries hereditary historians to the O’Donnells, princes of Tyrconnell.” The full story is available on the Trove website, but there is no doubt that Maitland folk once had a prince in their midst, John O’Donnell of Tyrconnell.

The house with the two names, “Sans Souci” and “Tyrconnell” was purchased by Henry Eric Leonard Ivins who had immigrated to Australia from Wales and settled in Western Australia before the Second World War. He joined the Australian Army and served in WW2 rising to the rank of Captain. It is believed he earned the honorary rank of Major from the British Army. Henry Ivins gave the house its third name of “Clive Lodge” which it still bears today. “Clive Lodge” was the name of his father’s home in Wales. Major Ivins died in November 1975.

William Thomas Mitchell may not have been painted in vivid colours, yet he accomplished and contributed much in his lifetime. His name is on the burial list for Maitland where he was laid to rest in the Roman Catholic portion of Campbells Hill Cemetery. Maitland still has some of his heritage in bricks and mortar, the most magnificent being the big house in Regent Street. This house will always be recognised in Maitland’s history as “Sans Souci,” the name it was originally given by William Thomas Mitchell, the man who built it in 1860.

Please remember that “Clive Lodge” is a private residence.



1. The magnificent view of West Maitland and It’s Leading Commercial Buildings of 1878. Thus wonderful picture comes from the Cultural Collections of The University of Newcastle. “Sans Souci” had panoramic views of Maitland and surrounds.



2.
“Sans Souci” c. 1874 when
the residence of H. S.
Badgery. Photo attributed to
A. Curtis.



3.
“Clive Lodge” side view. The angle of the
photo diminishes the overall size of the
house.

Photos by Val Rudkin taken with kind
permission of the owners.



4.
The 1860's masonry work is superb. Only minor
changes are apparent.

Article by **Val Rudkin**, Maitland & District Historical Society member

The Horseshoe Bend Medal of World War 1

The Horseshoe Bend is a unique area of Maitland, so named because it lay within the horseshoe shape bend of the Hunter River and had, possibly, the first subdivision of our city when in the early 1840's James King divided up his grant. *

Over the years the Bend people grew into a very tight knit community with strong family and friendship ties, a self-reliant group and very protective of their own. This was never shown better than in how the Bend people acknowledged the sacrifices of their men when they returned from the horrors of WW1. They formed a Welcome Home Committee and each returned soldier was presented with an especially commissioned gold medal with a horseshoe in the centre.

I had known of these medals for some time but thanks to the recent article in the Maitland Mercury (Alan Hardie's "WW1 Memorabilia Wanted", 5th August 2014) I was privileged and honoured to hold one of these historic WW1 medals in my hand, a medal given by the people of Horseshoe Bend to a soldier of the 34th Battalion, "Maitland's Own", who had fought on the battle fields of the Western Front.

When *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* moved its office to the corner of High and Hunter streets in 1857 it became part of the Bend, employed many of its people and reported all its news. So the Mercury files give a great description of that iconic medal and the stories that go with it.

THE PRESENTATIONS

"Before the medals were presented, Mr. C. J. Mannall (chairman) said the Horseshoe Bend Welcome Home Committee had been giving a welcome home to all the Horseshoe Bend heroes who had returned, and these welcomes would never be forgotten. He thought it a pity that similar welcome homes had not been given to other soldiers of the Maitland area. But the Horseshoe Bend Committee decided that the returned men should have something given to them to commemorate the heroic part they had played in the war and decided to present each man with a gold medal. These medals were very unique. Each had a horseshoe in the centre with the monogram of the recipient, the name of the returned soldier to whom it was presented, and an inscription stating by whom and what it was presented for and each was surmounted by a crown, and attached by a green ribbon to a gold pin for the purpose of attaching to the coat." *The Maitland Daily Mercury, Tuesday 30 July 1918, page 6.*

(The Horseshoe Bend Honour Roll lists a H. and L.A. Mannall K.I.A.)

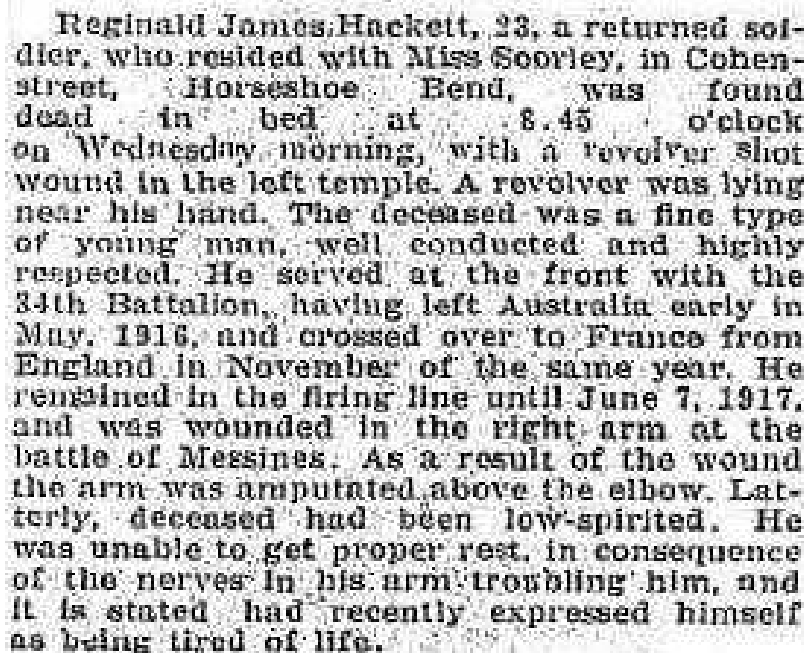
One of the recipients of the medal was Pte. Reginald James Hackett, 34th Battalion, who had his right arm amputated above the elbow after being wounded at Messines, June 7 1917. Less than two months after being awarded the medal he shot himself in the left temple with a revolver. He resided with Miss Soorley in Cohen Street Horseshoe Bend.

A medal to Major (Dr.) J. J. Hollywood, living in the "extended area" of H.S.B.

A medal to Nurse Dorothy Feneley and the H.S.B. Committee “were honoured and had the privilege of welcoming home one of their brave nurses.” A very important historical record of WW1. *The Maitland Daily Mercury*, Wednesday 26 March 1919, page 7.

Kath, wife of cousin Terry O’Brien, of Paxton, found mention of this medal in Di Morrissey’s book “The Valley” where there is reference to a newspaper cutting of 1919. From clues given that cutting is probably of an item “Returned Men Welcomed” in *The Maitland Daily Mercury*, Friday, 5 September 1919, page 6. Does Di Morrissey have a H.S.B. medal?

It is not known how many medals were commissioned but the Roll of Honour from the Horseshoe Bend Infants school lists the names of sixty four men, thirteen K.I.A, leaving fifty one to return home. (*Horseshoe Bend, Maitland*. Cynthia Hunter, Maitland City Council, 2000)



Reginald James Hackett, 23, a returned soldier, who resided with Miss Scorley, in Cohen-street, Horseshoe Bend, was found dead in bed at 8.45 o'clock on Wednesday morning, with a revolver shot wound in the left temple. A revolver was lying near his hand. The deceased was a fine type of young man, well conducted and highly respected. He served at the front with the 34th Battalion, having left Australia early in May, 1916, and crossed over to France from England in November of the same year. He remained in the firing line until June 7, 1917, and was wounded in the right arm at the battle of Messines. As a result of the wound the arm was amputated above the elbow. Latterly, deceased had been low-spirited. He was unable to get proper rest, in consequence of the nerves in his arm troubling him, and it is stated had recently expressed himself as being tired of life.

The Maitland Weekly Mercury Saturday 21 September 1918, page 4

*King named his three streets Plaistowe, after a prominent local solicitor, Russell, after Bourn Russell, a former pirate, then a store keeper, and later elected to the first Legislative Assembly for NSW representing the Maitland area (Northumberland), and the third after Phillip Cohen another prominent and great citizen of early West Maitland.

Peter Bogan (born in H.S.B.)

Misses Hall School for Young Ladies, Aberglasslyn House



The following background details regarding iconic Aberglasslyn House (information sourced from the Department of Environment and Heritage), provide an objective view of the property, however its roles as hosting a school for young ladies may not be well known.

The land was purchased by George Hobler for 5,000 pounds in July 1836.

The same year the architect Henry Robertson advertised for tenders for building a house on the estate. Construction did not commence until 1840 when Hobler recorded in his diary laying the foundation stone. Before Hobler could finish the house, he had fallen prey to the financial depression of the early 1840s which devastated the colony. Hobler stopped work on the house in 1842, filed his 'Insolvent Schedule' and was declared bankrupt. Hobler had completed the entrance hall, stair hall, drawing room and breakfast room. The rest of the house was left unfinished.

Hobler stayed on until 1845 although the estate was sold in 1843. In 1846 William Nicholson leased the estate and he bought it in 1853. He made the remainder of the house habitable at this time. This work appears to have been completed by **1858 when the house was leased to Walter Hall and his sisters as a boarding school.**¹

The department of Environment and Heritage website refers to a boarding school operating in 1858, but the school in fact operated between June 1855 and December 1857.

Education

Aberglasslyn House (known also as Hobler's Mansion), near West Maitland.

THE MISSESS HALL will be prepared to receive a limited number of YOUNG LADIES as resident Pupils on and after the Twelfth of July next.

The course of instruction will comprise as well essential as polite education. The domestic arrangements will be under the management of Mrs. Hall.

Comment upon the healthfulness of position and complete suitability of the premises, is considered to be unnecessary, as Aberglasslyn House and grounds are well known.

¹ <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageltemDetails.aspx?ID=5045377>

Maitland and District Historical Society Inc.

Terms and references may be had by application to Messrs. Curry, Watchmakers, or Mr. Robert Blair, Bookseller, West Maitland ; and to Mr. Bishop, Bookseller, East Maitland.

Maitland Mercury, 7 July 1855

In November 1855 the Misses Hall “continue to receive a limited number of young ladies to board and educate, at the...delightful residence.” *Maitland Mercury 17 November 1855*

To Governesses

WANTED, after the Christmas vacation, a FRENCH LADY, as resident Governess. She must speak her own language with purity, and be proficient in music.

Apply, stating terms and references to
MISS HALL, Aberglasslyn House

West Maitland, Dec. 4, 1855.

Advertisements are also placed in the *Empire* newspaper, noting that “the French and German languages are taught by a lady, a native of the continent, who resides at the house.”

The Empire 11 January 1856

A French lady was still required as a resident governess in June 1856: “She must be a proficient in music, and if possessing a knowledge of German would be preferred.”

A similar advertisement also appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* from August through to September 1856 and a similar notice appeared in the *Maitland Mercury* to December 1856.

In January of 1857, the Misses Hall were relocating to Walli House:

EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT FOR YOUNG LADIES

Walli House, Victoria Bridge, West Maitland.

Conducted by the Misses HALL (late of Aberglasslyn)

School RE-OPENS on Monday, 2nd February, 1857.

And of course Walli House is a different story...



Victoria Bridge

Spanning Wallis Creek, Maitland

Linking East and West Maitland (1852-1896)

Early Home Crafts

The Maitland Historical Society's collections comprise a range of items, including a number of **textiles** such as garments, table ware and household linen.

In the nineteenth century every young girl and many boys were taught hand sewing at home. Schools taught the basic stitches – back, running, chain, cross, buttonhole, darning etc. Beautiful 'embroidery samplers' were created and are still found today.



[Sampler courtesy of Adele Cockburn]

Up to the 1920s most undergarments were made of white cotton, as were ladies' dresses, shirts, baby clothes and bonnets.

Crocheted edgings and embroidered panels were used on the garments. These crafts were also on table cloths, doyleys, sheets and pillow shams.

The embroidery technique of smocking was useful to shape the cylindrical shirt called the 'smock.' The top was smocked across the chest and at the wrists. Originally smocks were worn by the working men, shepherds and ploughmen farmers. More recently smocking features on children's and babies' clothes



Here is a picture of the finished coat. The accompanying article tells you how to knit it.

Maitland Mercury 9 Sept 1933

Home knitting to produce garments was common, however items such as floor mats, bedcovers, cushions, even dishcloths made from wool or other yarns were also created using knitting needles. Knitting patterns were commonplace, even being produced by magazines and newspapers, including the Maitland Mercury.

Quilts were made to provide warmth from articles of worn clothing, the good parts being cut out and used for patchwork. Quilting is formed by a layer of wadding sandwiched between two layers of fabric. The top layer is sewn with attractive stitch patterns or patchwork.



Embroidery, Historical Society collection

Annual General Meeting - exciting career opportunities!

Message from the President.

Our Annual General Meeting is rapidly approaching and the coming year has already shown that we will have greater calls on our skills and knowledge coupled with our pending relocation to new premises, I believe that a strong, robust and enthusiastic Committee would greatly assist the Society in establishing a sound foundation for the future.

With this in mind I would strongly urge all members to consider their willingness and ability to act for the greater benefit of the Society when nominating someone or accepting nomination to Committee positions for 2015.

Keith Cockburn

Diary Dates 2015

Rooms open each Wednesday and Saturday, 10am to 3pm

February

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Thursday 12th | Visit from Gold Coast Probus Club, High Street Walk |
| Tuesday 24 th | Guest speaker: Chas Keys - Floods in Maitland – impact of floods |
| Wednesday 25 th | <i>Newsfront</i> – a screening of the classic 1979 Australian film which includes Maitland 1955 flood footage. Presented by Maitland City Library and the National Film and Sound Archive – Reading Cinema – free event
More Information:
http://www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/Library/events/lwthistory2015/newsfront |

March

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Tuesday 3rd | Guest speaker: Chas Keys - Floods in Maitland – experiences of evacuation |
| Tuesday 17 th | Annual General Meeting 5.30 |
| Saturday 28 th | Bunnings BBQ - Society fund raiser. Are you able to spare some time as a helper? Shifts 7-10am, 10-1, 1-4pm. Please ring Kevin 49324292 |
| Friday 20 th | Cynthia Hunter Collection launch, Maitland City Library. More information:
http://www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/Library/events/lwthistory2015/cynthiahunter |

April

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Tuesday 7rd | Guest speaker: Ken Stone, author of “Aurora Borealis to Botany Bay”, a biography of Edward Parry, head of the Australian Agricultural Company. |
| Sat. 18th & Sun. 19 th | Steamfest |