

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.

Cover: The image of the West Maitland Technical College, now the Maitland Regional Art Gallery, is from the *Maitland Mercury* 6 August 1910

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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 : \$20 (single) and \$30 (double / family)

Patrons: The Hon. Milton Morris AO
NSW Member for Maitland 1956-1980
NSW Minister for Transport 1965 – 1975
The Most Reverend Bill Wright, Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle

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Bulletin contributions are being sought. Please contact the Society via email
maitlandhistorical@gmail.com

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The Historical Society Christmas Picnic

This year's Christmas picnic will be held at "Holbeach", Allan and Lisa Thomas' 1840 house at 7 Cantwell Road, Lochinvar on Sunday 4 December, starting at 4 pm. Although you may wish to bring along some nibbles (and perhaps a folding chair), food and soft drinks will be provided. Also, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, which is just across the lane, will be opened for anyone who would like to see its 19th century interior. For more information ring 49 307309.

Gibson Simplex Stoves

In the first half of the 20th century many Maitland area homes had an Australian-made Gibson Simplex wood burning stove. Gibson Simplex stoves were a popular display at the 1907 Maitland Show (*Maitland Mercury* 12 April 1907). A 1907 advertisement stated "Gibson's Famous Simplex Cooking Stoves. Burn wood or coal. Prices from £2 10s each." (*Newcastle Morning Herald and Miner's Advocate* 25 September 1907). By 1918 the company was advertising "GIBSON'S Famous Simplex Stoves. Unsurpassed for – Durability Simplicity Economy and Cooking Qualities. Over 16,000 in use and every one a success --- Every Stove Guaranteed. --- Address Foundry and Office Church Street West. Showrooms 300 Hunter Street West" (*Northern Times* 21 February 1918). There was also an on-going market for used Gibson Simplex stoves (*Newcastle Herald and Miner's Advocate* 26 October 1929), which continues today.



The above photographs were taken by Allan Thomas of a Gibson Simplex which had been in the kitchen of "Holbeach" for many years and is now in a garden courtyard.

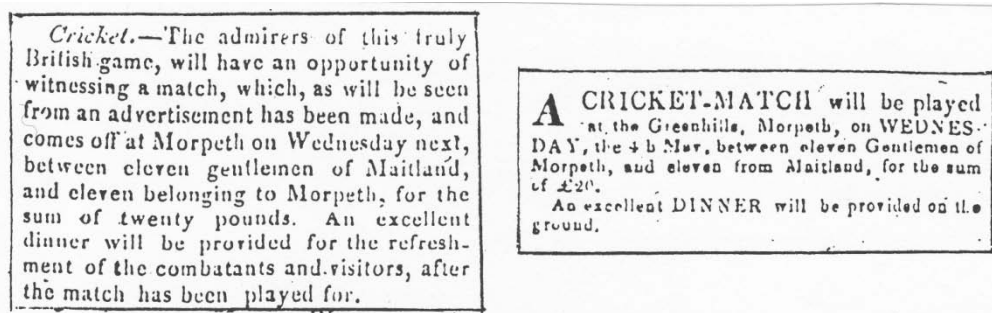
Did your family ever cook on a Gibson Simplex stove? Have *you* ever cooked on a Simplex? Were they indeed unsurpassed for cooking qualities? The Society would love to hear about it.

Early Cricketing Days in Maitland

by Lindsay Wood OAM

Maitland has the distinction of being “one of the earliest country towns” outside of Sydney to organise cricket - an aspect recognised by A.G. (“Johnnie”) Moyes in his history of *Australian Cricket*.

The earliest recorded cricket matches in the area go back to the 1840’s. One of the first appears in the *Hunter River Gazette* edition of 30th April 1842 where there was the following report and advertisement of a challenge match to be played at Morpeth between “eleven gentlemen of Morpeth, and eleven from Maitland, for the sum of £20”:



This match in 1842 was fairly typical of the early cricket matches played in the district. Usually a challenge was issued through the local newspaper and the match would be played for a wager (a straight out sum of money as in this case or quite often with the losing side having “to shout” the other side to dinner at the local hotel).

Another early account of local cricket appears in an issue of *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* of 16th March 1844. A reporter noted that “some admirers of this noble game have lately been playing occasionally in the afternoons in the open space near Mr.Honeysett’s windmill, West Maitland” and indicated that they were about to form a club.

The reporter’s prediction about the formation of a club in the near future proved to be correct. On 22nd January 1845 a meeting was held at Henry Reeves’ Albion Inn in High Street and the Maitland Cricket Club was formed - the first known cricket club in Maitland.

A prime mover in the formation of the Maitland Cricket Club was Thomas Honeysett who is sometimes referred to as the “Father of Maitland Cricket”. He had migrated to Australia in 1839 on the *Lady Raffles* with his wife, Eliza, and four children and in November 1843 opened up a flour mill in Elgin Street, West Maitland. The ground behind Honeysett’s mill, which became known as “Windmill Hill” was the site where the earliest recorded cricket matches in Maitland were played. Honeysett himself was a keen cricketer who developed quite a reputation for his bowling, being equally skilled at both the underarm and round-arm style.

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A fortnight after the formation of the Maitland Club a match was played on Wednesday, 5th February 1845, between teams selected from members of the Club, one led by Honeysett and the other by James Holdstock (another early cricket enthusiast who later in the year was to open an inn called the "Cricketers' Arms").

This was the first cricket match in Maitland to be recorded with scores and *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser* reported that "the ground being in full view from High Street and at a moderate distance from it, numbers of people were attracted to witness the playing".

For the record, Holdstock's side with 97 runs defeated Honeysett's side by 10 runs or "notches" (a term derived from an early method of scoring where notches were cut into a stick). The respective captains top-scored for their sides with "Mr.Holdstock" making 38 and "Mr.Honeysett" 49. According to the local reporter "Mr.Holdstock's side was principally indebted for the victory gained to the activity of Mr.Crumpton at long stop".

Growing in confidence and reckoning that they "need not fear meeting any Club in NSW", the Maitland Club issued a challenge to the Victoria Club, one of the leading Clubs in Sydney. The Victoria Club was unable to accept the challenge but passed it on to Sydney's oldest cricket Club, the Australian, which took up the offer.

Accompanied by a number of supporters, the local team left Morpeth by the paddlewheel steamer *Rose*, bound for Sydney. The match - the first between a Sydney Club and the northern portion of the colony - was played on 19th May 1845 on the old Hyde Park racecourse on a rain affected wicket. The Australian Club scored 107 and 120 in their two innings to the Maitland Club's 44 and 19, thereby winning the match by 164 "notches". The Maitland visitors had difficulty in coping with the "fine bowling" of T. Rowley and R. Still who took 10 and 9 wickets respectively.

Undaunted by their defeat, the Maitland Club invited the Australian Club to a return match in Maitland. In a two day match played on 16th and 17th June 1845 at Windmill Hill, the Australian Club again showed their superiority to win by an innings and 13 "notches". The visitors also once again collected on the wager - two pounds per batsman!

The 1850's saw the formation of several new cricket clubs in West Maitland, East Maitland and Morpeth. Among these were the Australian, the Marylebone, the Northern, the Northumberland, and Maitland United Clubs. Most of the outlying districts, such as Hinton, Woodville and Lochinvar, were also able to muster a cricket team to play against one another and against some of the town clubs.

The club that really put Maitland cricket "on the map" was the Albion Club that was formed on 7th March 1866 following a public meeting held in Mr. T. Brown's Exchange Hotel in West Maitland. At first the Club leased Nicholson's racecourse in Maitland Park for six months of each year as their home ground but three years later bought land on Christian's Flat on the present site of Maitland Showground.

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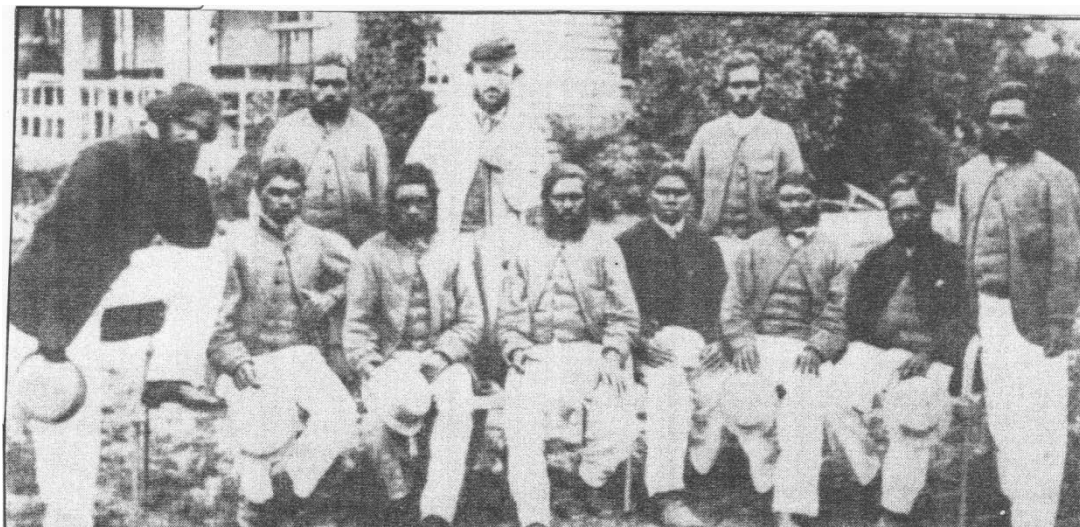
There the Club developed a ground and turf wicket that were to earn the praise of many visiting teams, including international ones, and to become widely regarded as “being unsurpassed in the colony outside of Sydney”. Much of the credit for the standard of the ground was due to a far-sighted decision of the Albion Club President, Percy Waddy, to appoint a full time curator and groundsman. Two of those appointed during the following years were Alf Giles and Sam Cosstick, both of whom earned a high reputation for their ground and wicket preparation.

The Albion Club was a very exclusive and affluent Club that vetted its membership closely and included a number of the town’s “silvertails” (bank managers, solicitors and business owners). The Club was run along the lines of an English county cricket club and members enjoyed facilities such as practice ground staff bowlers and private lockers that would be the envy of many club cricketers today.

During the thirty-nine years of the Club’s existence the Club included many fine players (George Gilbert, George and James Moore, Wally McGlinchey and Bob Lindsay to name a few) that were to help make it the premier club for many seasons and to give the names of Albion C.C. and Maitland cricket a reputation far beyond local boundaries.

The Albion Club in its heyday hosted a number of matches against visiting Sydney Clubs and against touring teams. The Warwick, Victoria, Albert and Sydney University Clubs were among some of the leading Sydney clubs to play matches on the Albion ground, usually over the public holiday periods at Christmas and at Easter.

In 1867 the Albion Club hosted a visit by the first aboriginal team to tour England. After the end of this match the Aborigines entertained the crowd with a display of their athletic skills and agility by taking part in a series of contests that included running backwards, standing high jump, spear and boomerang throwing and warding off with their shields cricket balls thrown at close range.



Aboriginal Cricket Team that played in Maitland - 1868

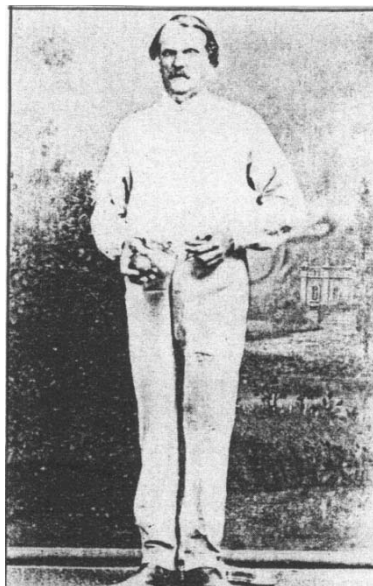
Back row: Tarpot T W Wills Mullagh Front row: King Cole (leg on chair) Dick-a-Dick Jellico Peter Red Cap Harry Rose Bullocky Cuzens

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Ten years later the Albion Club hosted a visit by David Gregory's Australian team that was playing a series of "warm-up" matches prior to their historic tour of England in 1878 - the first by an Australian Test team. In this match Fred Spofforth ("The Demon Bowler") took 27 wickets (12 in the first innings and 15 in the second) against a Northern team that included 22 players. In addition during the 1880's the Albion Club hosted three visits by touring English teams - the first by Alfred Shaw's XI (1881-82); the second by Hon. Ivo Bligh's XI (1882-83); and the third by Alfred Shaw's and Arthur Shrewsbury's XI (1884-85).

One local cricket identity to make a name for himself in the second half of the 19th century was George Moore. Born in Bedfordshire in 1820 he emigrated to Australia in 1852 with his brother, James, and came to West Maitland where he set up business as a confectionery manufacturer. In cricket historian Jack Pollard's words he was to become "one of Australian cricket's most memorable characters". He played for a combined NSW and Victorian 22 against H.H. Stephenson's first touring English XI (1861-62); for NSW teams against G.Parr's XI (1863-64) and W.G. Grace's XI (1873-74); and for NSW in three inter-colonial matches against Victoria.

George had started his first class cricket career rather late - when he played against W.G. Grace's team he was 52 years 325 days old, so that according to Pollard, he still "remains mainland Australia oldest active first class cricketer". He continued to play with the Pearl Club in Maitland until 1895 when he was 75.



George Moore at age 55.

George Moore's grandson was Charlie Macartney, one of Australia's best Test batsmen. In his autobiography Charlie attributed some of his cricketing skill to his grandfather: "One of my earliest recollections is of my grandfather bowling at me with green apples from his orchard when I was five years old. He fashioned a bat for me of cedar wood ... and with this I did my best to beat off the apples."

Before the formation of an Association in 1894 local Maitland clubs arranged their own program of matches for a season. This schedule was often very extensive with some clubs

reporting more than 20 matches in a season and some of these being played as late as June. Matches would be played by invitation against one another - by 1890 there were "about 14 clubs in the immediate vicinity of Maitland" so there was plenty of opportunity to select a suitable opponent. Apart from matches against local clubs, fixtures were also arranged by some clubs against teams from Sydney, Newcastle, Dungog, Singleton, Cessnock, Upper Hunter and even the northern New England region.

One has to admire the enthusiasm of these early Maitland cricketers. They were prepared to travel considerable distances under difficult conditions for their game of cricket. The "roads" that they followed on foot, on horseback and in a variety of horse-drawn vehicles were often little more than bush tracks.

The grounds that they played on were frequently rough paddocks with long grass where fieldsmen had to dodge cow pats when chasing the ball and where "lost ball" came into play. Wickets that were under-prepared or not prepared at all must have been real "horror-stretches" for batsmen - no wonder that scores were generally low and that any batsman who got to double figures was rated a hero.

Yet these difficulties and hardships did not deter these early cricketers - they were of little concern when measured against the fellowship of the match and the love of the game.

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JAMES PRITCHARD (1829-1911)

Researched by Val Rudkin

James Pritchard was one of Maitland's 'Men of Enterprise.' His contribution to Maitland as a skilled builder and his participation in public matters held him in high esteem.

The Maitland Daily Mercury reported the death of James Pritchard on Saturday 12 August 1911. "The death occurred to-day of Mr. James Pritchard, a very old and much esteemed resident, who passed away about noon at the residence of his daughter, Mrs. Morrison, Lee-street, after a long illness, at the advanced age of 82."

The report stated that James Pritchard had been born on 8 April, 1829 at Marylebone, Middlesex, England. His father was a carpenter and joiner and young James began his career in his father's employ. Australia beckoned and on 30 September 1854 he left England aboard the ship "Queen of England" arriving at Sydney on January 9, 1855. The ship was then placed in quarantine until January 19. He began work in the Colony at Parramatta. At some time in 1855 he married Zillah Snelgrove, a young lady who had very recently arrived in the Colony on the ship "Blenheim." Zillah was 24 years old.

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The “Queen of England” a ship of 876 tons departed from England on 30 Sept 1854 and arrived at Sydney on 29 Dec 1854 (a passage of 90 days). (It is possible that James Pritchard stayed on board between 29 December and 9 January, until moved to quarantine.) She carried 142 male and 112 female passengers plus 63 male and 58 female children under 14 years. One adult male and one male child died on the voyage. [Details from “The Ships List - Ships to Australia and New Zealand 1854-1856” online.]

The “Blenheim” departed on 31 March 1855 and arrived 5 July 1855 having been at sea for 96 days. She carried 124 male and 95 female passengers plus 52 male and 34 female children under 14 years. Two male children died on the voyage. [Details obtained from “The Ships List” as above.]

The *Mercury* report also stated that James Pritchard was involved with the 8 hours working day movement in Sydney and was a member of the first committee. This movement was very unpopular and in time he resigned his position and moved to West Maitland. He found employment with James Wolstenholme an established builder in Maitland and remained in his employment until he felt the time was right to establish his own enterprise.

The newspaper gives a glowing report of this gentleman’s participation in the community and business sector of Maitland during his life, stating that among his many achievements he had been an alderman of West Maitland for 9 years and had served as Mayor for the 1882-1883 year.

James and Zillah had eleven children with seven surviving to adulthood.
Henry was born at Glebe, all other births were recorded at Maitland.

1856 (2069) or (2232)	Henry Thomas	death recorded at Murrurundi 1935
1857 (8218)	James S	death recorded at Drummoyne 1923
1859 (8779)	Frederick C	death recorded at Petersham 1940
1860 (8534)	Alfred	death recorded at Dulwich Hill 1937 (aged 76 yrs)
1862 (9115)	Walter	died 1863 at Maitland (infancy)
1863 (9575)	Jane	died 1864 at Maitland (infancy)
1864 (10598)	Zillah	death of Zillah Morrison at Hamilton 1935
1866 (10535)	Elizabeth	resided in New Zealand/ married to G. Ambrose
1869 (13296)	Emily J	resided in New Zealand married to Mr Ballinger
1871 (12470)	Walter Maitland	died 1873 at Maitland (infancy)
1873 (13017)	Florence	died 1875 at Maitland (infancy)

The death of Zillah Pritchard was published in the *Mercury* on Saturday 20 May 1893.

DEATH. - At her residence Carrington Street, Horse Shoe Bend, West Maitland on May

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16, 1893, Zilla, beloved wife of James Pritchard aged 63 years.

Her death registration 8814/1893 did not give the names of her parents.

An "In Memoriam" was placed in the *Mercury* for the anniversary of her death by her loving children.

Pauline Pritchard whose husband is a descendant of James and Zillah provided the names of their parents. Zillah was the daughter of Henry James Snelgrove and Jane Eadley of Lambeth, England. James was the son of Thomas William Pritchard and Mary Podmore.

The *Maitland Daily Mercury* on Saturday 12 August 1911 published the Funeral Notices for James Pritchard who died earlier that day. The family notice inviting the friends of Messrs. Henry, James and Frederick Pritchard and Mrs. J. Morrison to his funeral the following day. Another notice was from the Brethren of the Manchester Unity G.U.O. of Oddfellows Loyal Good Design Lodge, of which he was a brother.

James Pritchard was interred in the Church of England Cemetery at Campbell's Hill, Maitland. The Maitland City Council Burial Register shows his date of death as 12 August 1911 and buried on 13 August in Section B4, plot 53. It does not show a burial for his wife Zillah Pritchard who died in 1893, but does show that he was buried with his infant children Walter and Jane who died in 1863 and 1864. Another interesting item that emerged from the Burial Register is that a Thomas Pritchard is also buried in B4 plot 53 and is possibly James' father. The death registration gave James' parents names as Thomas and Mary.

Thomas Pritchard died on 18 July 1870 aged 67 and his death notice published in the *Mercury* stated he was from Ledbury, Herefordshire, England.

James Pritchard was a builder of good renown in Maitland. He is credited with the construction of a number of fine buildings which still grace the streets, among which are the Commercial Bank, Bishop's House, and Maitland Superior Public School.

The *Mercury* in a detailed report on the new bank building published on Thursday 27 September 1888 states "The work of the contractor, which, as is stated above, has occupied about two years, was carried out by Mr. James Pritchard, in a conspicuously energetic and intelligent manner, and to the entire satisfaction of the architects. Every portion of the work has been faithfully and skillfully executed, and Mr. Pritchard has done both Maitland and himself credit by his performance of the contract. The joiners' work is especially fine, and could be surpassed nowhere for finish and general excellence. The cost of the building is upwards of £20,000."



Photo from the Picture Maitland Collection of Maitland City Library and dated c. 1900

Standing proudly on High Street, the former Commercial Banking Company of Sydney is a fitting monument to the craftsman's expertise. The front facade of stone from the quarries at Pyrmont is a fine example of the stonemason's craft and artistic abilities. The building is now known as "Mansfield House" named in honour of the architects, Mansfield Brothers, of Sydney.

Without doubt, one of the finest residential buildings erected in West Maitland in the 19th Century is the home of the Bishop of Maitland and Newcastle, the Most Rev. Bill Wright. This stately home looks as good today as it did when completed by James Pritchard and stands as a reminder of the pride in workmanship of that era.

The Laying and Blessing of the Foundation Stone was reported in the *Mercury* on 17 April 1883. Mr. J. W. Pender was the architect and the tender of Mr. James Pritchard for the execution of the work was accepted.

In February 1884, the *Mercury* reported under the heading "Dr. Murray's New Episcopal Residence," that a number of ladies and gentlemen had assembled the previous evening at the residence of Dr. Murray, Bishop of Maitland, to take part in a social entertainment, at the invitation of his lordship.

The floors were raised above the reach of floods, being a foot higher than the adjacent cathedral.

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Photo by Val Rudkin taken from the steps of the Historical Society (2015)

The Maitland and District Historical Society Inc. has a number of publications for sale at the rooms at 3 Cathedral Street Maitland. For details of the publications for sale, or to purchase, please visit the rooms during open hours Wednesday and Saturday between 10 AM and 3 PM. Alternatively, contact the Society on 0438 623 299 or email maitlandhistorical@gmail.com.
