

NEWSLETTER

April – May - June 2011
Volume Twelve Number Two



SKETCHLEY COTTAGE

Linking yesterday with tomorrow

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

They Were Here Vol 1	\$ 35
They Were Here Vol 2	\$ 40
War Memorials of the Port Stephens Area	\$ 25
Raymond Terrace History & Heritage	\$ 25
Marriages from the Gloucester Examiner & Raymond Terrace Examiner 1894 – 1926	\$ 15
Clearing Out Sales Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter 1895 – 1930	\$ 15
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Raymond Terrace Pioneer Register	\$ 30
Cemetery Master Index	\$ 25
Landholders & Others	\$ 15
Raymond Terrace Pioneer Cemetery Obituary Books Vol 1 1893 – 1915	\$ 5
Vol 2 1916 – 1925	
Vol 3 1926 – 1930, 1951 & 1953	

Buy any two volumes of Obituaries for \$45 or all three publications for \$65. Purchased individually the Obituary Books cost \$25.

We also have available for sale a large selection of publications not produced by the Society but covering the local district among them are:

Seaham School of Arts	\$ 15
Short History of Raymond Terrace	\$ 5
Wades Corn Flour Mill 1878-1902	\$ 10

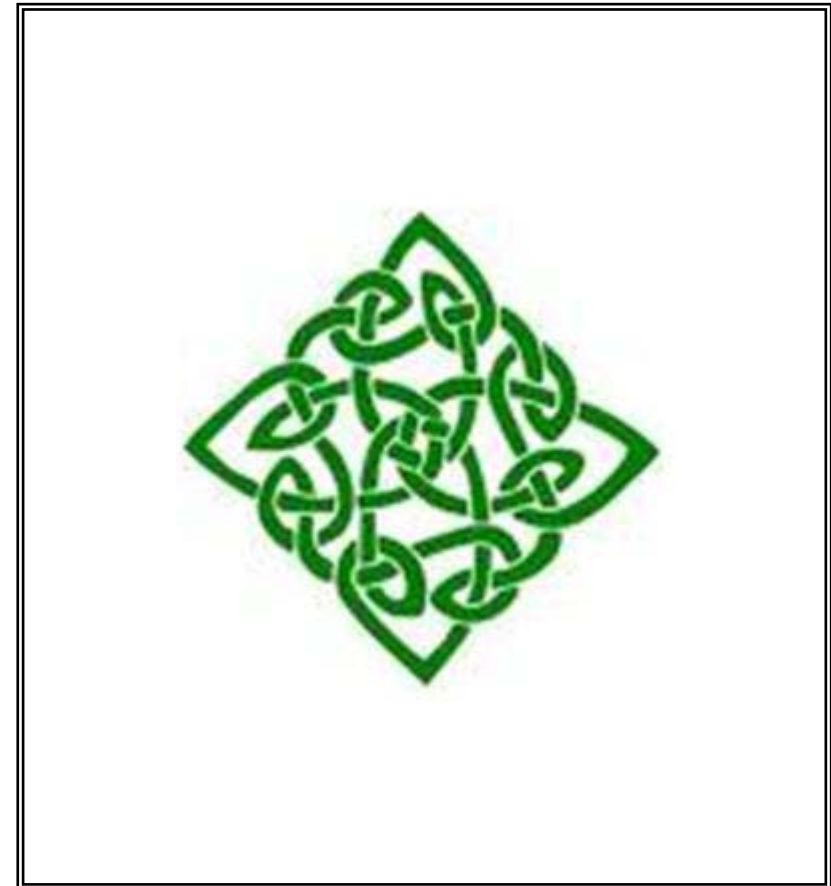
SKETCHLEY COTTAGE MUSEUM is located opposite Bettles Park, Raymond Terrace and is open to the public on Sundays 10am to 3pm other times by appointment. Bus groups are most welcome, please contact the Secretary to arrange a date and time.

The Society's **RESEARCH ROOMS** are located in the Port Stephens Library, cnr William & Port Stephens Streets, Raymond Terrace

Open Monday & Wednesday
9.30 am to 2 pm - other times by appointment

Membership of the Society is open to everyone with an interest in Local and Family History.

Joining Fee \$2.00 Concession \$15.00 Full Membership \$20.00
Family \$25.00 Monthly Meetings are held on the third Friday of the month at Senior Citizens Building, Raymond Terrace at 7.00 pm.



**RAYMOND TERRACE & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
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DATES FOR THE DIARY

June	6	Committee Meeting
	17	General Meeting
July	4	Committee Meeting
	15	General Meeting
	23	Christmas in July – Senior Citizens Building
August	1	Committee Meeting
	19	General Meeting
September	5	Committee Meeting
	16	General Meeting

LIBRARY NEWS

NEW ACQUISITIONS:

- “Jungle and Kunai –The Huon Peninsula 1943-44’ – (Royann Anson)
- “10.27 Newcastle Earthquake” (Jack Sullivan)
- “The Newcastle Experience- Earthquake” (Jack Sullivan)
- “From 12 Mile to Crystal Creek” (Moira Saunderson)
- “Early Days of Windsor” (Moira Saunderson)
- “History of Australia”(2nd Edition – RT Library)
- “Pugh’s Almanac and Queensland Directory1896-1900”(Moira Saunderson)
- “Newcastle Earthquake” (Jack Sullivan)
- “East Seaham Post Office1895-1915” (Mary Duncan)
- “Seaham Post Office” (Mary Duncan)

The following books were donated by Raymond Terrace Library:-

- “Front Stalls or Back – Newcastle Theatres”
- “A Short History of Tasmania”
- Ten books published by BHP Newcastle in 1999 featuring various divisions of the company
- “The Powermakers – the History of the Central Coast and Hunter Valley Power Generating Stations”
- “ Creer and Berkeley – Probity, Property and Partnership”
- “Most Perfectly Safe – Convict Shipwreck Disasters 1833-42”
- “Port Arthur Sketchbook”
- “Wrecks at Hell’s Gates”
- ‘Historic Tasmania Sketchbook”
- “The Decendants of Giovanni Balli (Tania Hackett)
- “ People, Property and Power” Plashett, Jerry’s Plains

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WILLIAM ARNOTT'S



From the "Newcastle Directory and Almanac 1880" published by the Herald and Advocate.

A man should look for what is, and not for what he thinks should be.
[Albert Einstein](#)

A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.
[Albert Einstein](#)

BITS and PIECES

- **The Community days being held** at the Cottage on the first Sunday of each month have been successful in bringing in a lot of new visitors. The atmosphere at these days has been very cordial and encouraging. The next one is on Sun 5th June – all are welcome. Come along and bring your friend and relatives for a barbeque lunch at a cost of \$5
- **A bus trip to Canberra has been planned for the weekend of 18-19 June** to see the Irish Exhibit at the National Museum, and to visit the War Memorial. There are still some seats available. Ring Trish Harris if you are interested in coming along.
- **Christmas in July event for this year is on Sat 23 July** and will be held at the Senior Citizens Building, beginning at 7.30pm. Please let a committee member know if you will be attending.
- **A trivia Night is planned for Sat 27 August**, so start putting together a team. It should be a fun night.
- **Thanks to Mike Fibbins for the research article that he has put together,** and made available for publication in the newsletter. The art work was done by his son, from a photo that Mike took of the Cottage. His knowledge and abilities is a great asset to the society. He has been able to attend the Cottage on a number of the tours, recently, and his knowledge of construction methods has been greatly appreciated by visitors to the Cottage.



Early Australian Houses: The Primitives.

Mike Fibbens

April 2011



Synopsis

This short paper investigates dwellings of the Australian Primitive style. The paper is based on my personal encounters with these as a property valuer over some forty years and is supported by a survey of the literature that I have gathered over time.

The Australian Primitive style embodied a flexible use of available materials, tools and skills and produced shelter extremely efficiently. These dwellings accompanied the settling of Australia by our early pioneers. In addition to reflecting the materials and building techniques of the age, these important heritage items are a window into our past. They demonstrate the living conditions and hardships endured by pioneers in their endeavours. Remaining primitive dwellings are a vital part of our heritage.

What is the relevance of primitive housing?

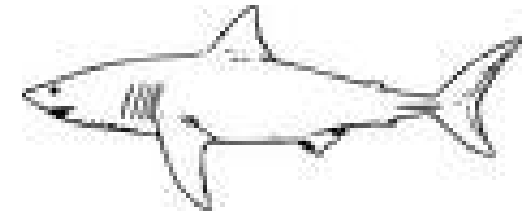
The primitive style refers to the houses built using local materials and basic hand tools during the settlement of Australia. On the arrival of Governor Phillip's party basic housing was built for both overseers and their convict charges (Boyd 1987 and Freeland 1988). This first housing was most certainly primitive. As our forbears spread out and settled the wider countryside this form of dwelling provided them with expedient shelter.

Smolicz and Watson Sharp (1983) point out that *early Australian grandiose homes have been both well preserved and documented*. Importantly, the majority of our early homes were by no means grandiose. Instead, Boyd and Connah (1988) indicate they were a rather quaint collection of modest cottages built from a variety of materials. The material of choice was that which was at hand, and materials ranged from native timber and bark through to brick and stone. Perhaps the most important feature of primitive dwelling construction was that it was opportunistic. It used materials that were readily at hand.

The Australian primitives provide very important evidence of the pioneering that took place as settlement spread out from Sydney and over the Blue Mountains (Smolicz and Watson Sharp) and these authors identify these early dwellings as significant *reminders of a robust past*.

From the Maitland Mercury 10 Dec 1867

BATHERS, BEWARE! During the prevalent hot and dusty weather, within sight of a beautiful river, who could resist a plunge into its cooling stream. Early and late may be seen numbers indulging in the luxury of a bath; but it behoves bathers to be very cautious, as at the present time the water of the river is quite salt, and sharks will find their way up the Hunter. On Saturday evening, while Mr. Holdstock was fishing, he succeeded in hooking what he thought a fine flathead; upon landing it, to his surprise it proved to be a blue shark, some four feet in length. The river at present abounds in. guard-fish, snapper, flathead, jew, eels, tailor, herrings, bream, and perch. Persons who are fond of angling, or deep-water fishing, would find rare sport by visiting Raymond Terrace.



QUOTES FROM MARTIN LUTHER KING JUNIOR

- A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defence than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.
- A riot is the language of the unheard.

Messrs. T. Lindsay, J. Barry, W. Chapman, Edward Ridder, and D O'sullivan succeeded alone in bringing off 153 souls, another crew of three-Thomas Doherty, Edward Rennix, and Hugh McPherson, also brought off a great number There were other boats out, who all did good service, but the above named crews worked one day and two nights without ceasing in the drenching rain and cutting wind , while these boats were engaged in so laudable a purpose, another crew, headed by Mr. T. Waugh, were going from place to place with provisions, and how welcome must this gentleman have been to the half famished people. While all these boats and men were engaged in rendering assistance to fellow-creatures in distress, and while guns of distress boomed from all quarters of the forest and plains, some of the best boats were engaged bringing pigs from a house on the Terrace to dryland, and another loading his boat with pumpkins that were floating down the river, while their owners, perhaps, were perishing on the top of a house. All postal communications are cut off, we are completely isolated. The flood is receding rapidly The City of Newcastle, steamer, brought our papers to-day, the first news we have had since last Wednesday.



If we want a love message to be heard, it has got to be sent out. To keep a lamp burning, we have to keep putting oil in it. [-Mother Teresa](#)

If you judge people, you have no time to love them. [-Mother Teresa](#)

Go not to the elves for counsel, for they will say both yes and no. [-J. R. R. Tolkien](#)

If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world. [J. R. R. Tolkien](#)

Those dwellings that remain provide an extremely valuable insight into the challenges faced by Australian pioneers and their responses to these. They document building techniques that were developed under extremely trying circumstances and show how early Australians lived. Probably, because of the great flexibility and utility afforded by the primitive dwelling it continued to be used for a considerable time and probably throughout the entire *Old Colonial and Victorian architectural periods* identified by [Apperly et al \(1989\)](#).

Notwithstanding their heritage value, these dwellings are now comparatively rare.

Primitive Dwellings and Pioneering.

The bush was settled with the aid of animal drawn transport (of course, some pioneers would not have had this luxury) and the hand tools of the day. All tools had to be capable of being transported by the available means, and construction techniques were profoundly influenced by the number of tools that could be carried into newly settled areas (Smolicz and Watson Sharp).

The typical tools of the pioneer family building in the bush are identified by Connah as: axe; mallet; wedges and a few iron spikes. The lack of a bulk supply of nails meant that construction methods often relied on techniques such as mortise and tenon joints and dowels (in lieu of nails). Construction techniques were also influenced by the available manpower (and often depended upon size and skills of the family).

Naturally, potential building material that occurred locally offered an expedient solution to construction needs. Boyd and Connah indicate primitive dwellings were built from:

1. Timber frame and bark
2. Pisé and adobe
3. Wattle & daub
4. Slab and Log cabin
5. Brick
6. Stone.

The most common type was probably the slab cottage because of the availability of materials, tools and available skills (Connah).

Bairstow (2003) provides an interesting case study on the establishment of primitive dwellings for the Australian Agricultural Company (AA Company) at their Carrington headquarters beginning in 1826. This identifies the importance of local material as an expedient accommodation solution and the resourcefulness of settlers in exploiting it.

In early 1826 Robert Dawson (the manager of the AA Company) is reported as setting the party to work gathering bark for sides and roofs of huts. Bairstow reports the adeptness of aborigines in gathering bark for dwellings at Carrington. The efforts of aborigines in obtaining the material were evidently considerably more fruitful than those of the Europeans!

By April 1826 slabs were reported as being split. Shortly thereafter it was reported that although bricks were being fired there was only one bricklayer available for construction (and he was occupied with other work).

The bark huts do not seem to have fared well and Dawson was forced to replace the temporary bark huts with ones of slab. Construction methods appear to have widened and by 1830 dwellings at Carrington were described as:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| a. brick; | b. brick with some pisé; |
| b. pisé' | c. slab |

Evidently accommodation types were allocated to personnel according to rank (see Bairstow at pI43).

Construction of the Primitive Dwelling.

The arrival of the Phillip party in 1788 was reasonably well documented and provides an interesting record of this form of construction.

The first settlers were confronted with the pressing need to construct basic shelter (Freeland and Boyd). The party had basic tools and these are summarised by Smolicz and Watson Sharp as: *hand saws; axes; augur; chisels; cant hook* and almost certainly the adze. With these assets and available labour (writers such as Boyd estimate there were no more than a dozen carpenters available) Phillip's party set about building some accommodation with locally available materials. The local materials were to provide something of a challenge to the settlers (and this is documented by both Boyd and Freeland).

There is little doubt that trees of the Sydney Basis would have provided quite a challenge to would be builders. Of these unknown trees, some would have been impossibly hard; while others would have been relatively easy to work but subject to rather dramatic shrinkage and splitting. This must have been a challenging time indeed! Boyd reports that the Australian timbers blunted tools rather quickly and that it was necessary to constantly rework cutting tools (and even to make new ones from scrap iron).

Splitting slabs would have been heavy work (a useful comparison is the long standing practice in the Hunter of splitting hardwood logs for fence posts). First trees had to be felled; then cut into slab lengths. The slabs would have been extracted by placing wedges at each end of the log and striking these with a heavy mallet. Splits were widened until the slab was free. Given the physical effort involved (and the complete absence of the modern tools used today), it is reasonable to hypothesize that the settlers soon learnt to identify the species that split well! Freeland notes that in these early days (because of the insufficiency of their tools) the settlers turned to cabbage tree palm logs for their building material (possibly wall and floor plates). These were soft enough to be pit sawn with the hand saws that were available at the time. The design of the primitive dwellings was plain. The dwelling was built in a rectangle. The roof was frequently of gable design (although some hip roofs were used). Cottages often comprised just two rooms. A roofed veranda usually ran along the front. Later additions could comprise a simple skillion addition, or the construction of another similar dwelling loosely attached to the original.

Construction techniques were basic. Freeland (at pp12 – 13) reports the method for building a wattle and daub dwelling, and his description is summarised as follows.

Corner posts six inches square were set out in a plan twelve by nine feet. The perimeter was filled with posts at three feet. Sawn top plates were fitted. Unsaun saplings were used for rafters (and braced). Wall construction was completed with saplings worked horizontally into the wall posts and a liberal coat of mud was applied. Roofs were thatched with reeds. These often had one door and two unglazed windows.

A similar building technique applied to slab dwellings. This used vertical slabs and is outlined by Freeland (another technique existed for horizontal slabs) as follows.

Square corner posts ten feet high were sunk about two feet into the ground. Top and bottom floor & wall plates were squared and grooved. Vertical wall slabs were inserted into the plate grooves and the roof frame fixed. The roof is reported as often being of bark.

News has just arrived that two vessels have been wrecked off Port Stephens heads.

On Saturday last the court house was opened for those in distress. Provisions have also been supplied to those who are left destitute by this sad calamity. I cannot as yet forward you any further reliable information of losses by this fearful visitation. Some assistance must be rendered, or many will never be able to keep that giant (hanger) from the door. The water is now receding, and the principal parts of the roads are becoming again passable.

June 26.

(.From a correspondent of the Herald)

June 25 -It is my painful duty to record a flood of a most disastrous character, in consequence of the late heavy rains-a flood greater than any we have had within the memory of the oldest inhabitant-a flood that has ruined our district, and has reduced to the extremest poverty the well-to-do farmers, who now are solely dependant on the charity of those whose good fortune was to be out of the flood. It would be impossible to give the most faint idea of the risk and narrow escapes of the gallant crews who went to the rescue of the sufferers, during the whole of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights, the flood had reached its highest on Monday 24th, when it was from nine inches to a foot higher than the Great Flood of 1857. Nearly the whole of Miller's Forest, Nelson's Plains, and the Williams is under water, horses, cattle and pigs destroyed, haystacks, sheds, and barns filled with produce swallowed up by the angry waters. The river for miles was covered with bales of hay, cobs of corn, and pumpkins. The whole of the lower streets of **Raymond** Terrace are inundated, and the inhabitants compelled to flee for their lives. The destruction of property is comparatively as great at the Terrace as other parts of the district. The debris washing against doors and windows of the houses destroyed them. The property of the poor people floating out was irrecoverably lost. Our townspeople have vied with each other in rendering assistance to the unfortunates. Every house was thrown open, and every hand held out to assist those in distress. The Junction Inn sheltered and fed some 100 people, The Racehorse, forty Mr Doherty, sixty, Mr. Russell, thirty, the Catholic school-house, the Court-house also, had its numbers, in fact, nearly every house (out the water) sheltered more or less. Among the numbers who exerted themselves to assist there are some that require especial notice. Dr Hector was most conspicuous in administering to the wants of those in distress; his house was thrown open for the reception of all, and by his example, day and night, stimulating others to exert themselves. Mr. H J. Bolding, our P M, procuring provisions - flour, tea, sugar, and meat, and caused them to be served out to all those in need. But our volunteer boat crews exceeded all the boat manned by

HUNTER VALLEY FLOODS

From The Maitland Mercury 29 June 1867

The valley of the Lower Hunter has again been submerged in water to an alarming extent. On Monday the water had risen eight inches above the great flood of 1857. On Thursday last the river commenced to rise, and on Friday it was over the land on Roslyn estate ; throughout Saturday and Sunday the water was continually rising. The whole of the houses on the river bank were on Saturday evening flooded. The Steamship Hotel and Post Office had about eight feet of water in them, and from this you may judge what a fearful state other parts of the town were in. Miller's Forest and Nelson's Plains were one sheet of water. I believe there was only one or two dry spots in these large flats of cultivation. It is as yet impossible to form any idea of the immense loss and damage done by this fearful body of water. John Delaney, of Millet's Forest, has lost 700 bushels of corn, besides a large stack of hay. A barn containing 150 bales of bay, besides farming implements, were swept away. Several other places are spoken of as being totally or partly gone, but as yet no reliable information can be obtained as to the losses sustained. A quantity of pumpkin, bay, corn etc, was visible floating down the strong current on Saturday and Sunday last. On Monday morning the water began to recede. A strong westerly wind was blowing during the day, which caused an immense quantity of articles to be blown ashore ; the place was strewn with pumpkins, driftwood, &c., and people could be seen in all directions gathering the same. A great number of dead fowl drifted ashore, the stench arising from the same in many places is abominable.

I am sorry to add to this melancholy record the loss of one life-that of a young lad named McFadyen. It seems from what I can learn that the boy lost his life in endeavouring to seek higher shelter. The body as yet has not been recovered. It is also reported that a man was drowned near Hexham ; also a young woman on Nelson's Plains ; those reports I believe to be unfounded.

The top of slabs could also be spiked or wired to the top plate (removing the necessity to cut a groove in the top plate).

Freeland notes that rooms were joisted at the ceiling and a bark layer provided a granary above the living quarters. The slab walls were usually grouted with mud or mud and cow dung to make them windproof.

Flooring was selected on the basis of availability of material. In the case of the slab dwelling described above, Freeland indicates sawn timber boards were used. The literature also identifies floors of earth and also of earth and lime (Boyd). Direct observation of primitive dwellings in the Bathurst district of NSW in 2000 indicates some primitive dwellings originally had earth floors. In one case the occupier's wife evidently complained over about fifty years of the need for a "proper" floor. A concrete floor was eventually installed, but a few months later she died. Within a short time termites spread through the softwood lining boards (a relatively late addition to the structure). The occupier (an old sheep farmer) said he rued the day he put that floor in.

Ceilings were often lined with calico (possibly some time after construction) to prevent debris and insects falling on occupants. Softwood lining boards were also a later addition to this style of primitive dwellings.

Other techniques available (and used where available labour and material dictated) included *Pisé* (earth rammed into wooden formwork) and Adobe (mud bricks) existed. A further technique comprised brick nogging (where the void between posts placed at about three feet was filled with brickwork). The brick nogging technique was exposed in the renovation of an early colonial cottage in Richmond NSW during the 1990's. This structure now provides the reception area of a modern motel.

It should be stated that construction techniques may not be limited to one single approach (especially where additions and renovations have taken place). In one primitive cottage inspected in 2000 the occupiers (the cottage was still lived in) reported they thought that the dwelling had originally been built of wattle and daub, but that one section appeared to be *pisé*. It is possible that one section was built before the other; however, to my knowledge no family records survive to clarify the issue.

Log cabin construction was evidently not popular because of the difficulty obtaining trees of uniform thickness (Connah). Stone was also used; however, it is possible that the wattle and daub and timber slab methods of construction produced a completed cottage in a very competitive time. It is probably because of this (and the need for immediate shelter) that timber framed dwellings predominated in early NSW settlement. Smolicz and Watson Sharp noted that by 1792 Sydney town had *700 comfortable huts exclusive of brick buildings*. It can be seen that dwellings thus constructed made use of the local material and the limited tools available. Iron spikes and wooden dowels sufficed for fixers (mass produced nails were not available). Boyd observes: *grass stones mud and tree trunks were put together in the best order that presented itself at the moment*. These techniques were truly adaptable! However, as settlement progressed they were supplanted by buildings of more solid construction where materials were available.

Both Freeland and Boyd emphasise the significant influence of the availability of materials. Freeland notes that in April 1788 clay was discovered in Sydney and brick making commenced. He reports that within a year of settlement buildings were being built in brick. Moreover, imported corrugated iron sheets, glass and manufactured nails began to arrive. Their arrival opened up new opportunities in dwelling construction.

But this did not signal the demise of the uniquely colonial building techniques. Because of their ease of construction and flexible use of available material, primitive dwellings continued to be built. They played an important role in the development of early Australia, and construction of these was repeated in each of the colonies during settlement (Boyd). In developing areas, the slab and wattle and daub dwellings persisted and continued for seventy years or more (Boyd at p17). Thus, this construction type was used through both the Old Colonial and Victorian periods (as identified by [Apperly et al](#)) in Australian architecture. The humble primitive dwelling retained its relevance in the development of rural Australia because it could be constructed from locally available materials with few tools by those with limited skills. However, the design and materials most frequently used in primitive dwellings have left the structures vulnerable.

The future for our historic primitive dwellings.

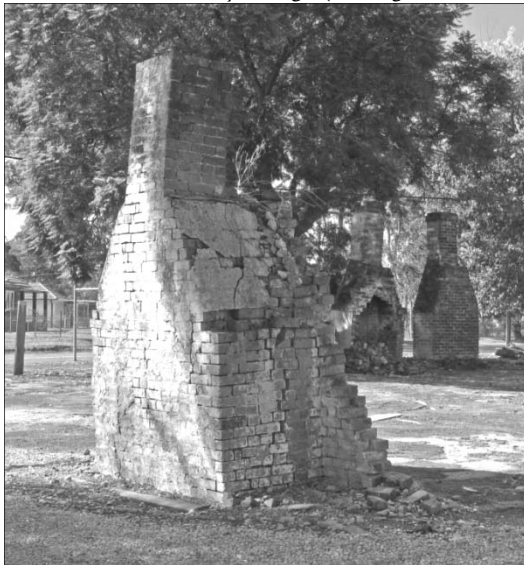
Even when relatively new these structures suffered damage (and even total loss) through fire (Boyd). Additionally, burying timber posts exposed them to both rot and termite attack. These are fragile structures!

Not surprisingly, primitive dwellings are declining in number. Take the example of a slab house portrayed in Smolicz and Watson Sharp (pp 20 – 21) which is a primitive dwelling at Agnes Banks built c 1820. The painting (1982) portrays a simple slab dwelling with massive brick fire place, and some use of brick nogging in the external walls and roof of corrugated iron. Although obviously very old, the structure appeared in fair condition. It still stood, but wasn't quite plumb.

I first became familiar with what I believe to be this cottage in 1988. In those days it was rather dilapidated, but in 1988 it still resembled the dwelling painted by Smolicz. Sadly, in spite of having heritage controls in NSW, it has fallen down. A photograph taken in April 2011 shows just a chimney remaining of the original primitive. Termites are reported as having played a role in the demise of the building, and it was also built on flood prone land. Whatever the cause of its demise it is now gone.

The problem with primitive dwellings is that they mainly ceased to provide functional living accommodation some years ago (although some are still lived in). Abandoned as houses the structures were often relegated to a secondary role as storage sheds. In the scheme of rural property values these probably added very little to the monetary value of holdings.

Remnants of slab dwelling at Agnes Banks – sole chimney (other chimneys reputedly belonged to a later house).



From the Maitland Mercury 13 Nov 1886

A quadrille party, in aid of the Catholic presbytery fund, was held on the evening of Tuesday, the 9th November, in the School of Arts, **Raymond** Terrace, and was undoubtedly a great success. It by far eclipsed anything of the kind ever held in this district, there being fully one hundred and forty couples present. Shortly after eight o'clock dancing commenced to the sweet strains of music so ably rendered by Messrs. Torpy, Reynolds, and Water- man, who played piano, violin, and cornet respectively, and were kept busily going till eleven o'clock, when a young brother and sister, named Mooney, who, I believe, hail from Branxton, gave the weary musicians time to have a rest by playing for several dances. The audience was delighted, with the music supplied by the young lady and the manner in which she handled her violin. Towards midnight the Rev. Father Foran, stepped upon the stage and thanked his friends from Newcastle, Maitland, and Morpeth, for the kindness they had shown him by attending that night in such large numbers. He also thanked those genuine ladies who so kindly assisted in pre-paring the tea. He then announced that tea was on the tables in the Temperance Hall and for the gentlemen to conduct their partners over and for them not to be disappointed as there was no banquet prepared only light tea. (Applause.) We then wended our way over to the Temperance Hall, only a very short distance from the School of Arts, where we found those who preceded us busily engaged and apparently well satisfied with the good things before them. The ladies who waited on the tables had a busy time of it, and I must say a great deal of patience, for from the time you went in you could hear nothing scarce1y but "Tea here, coffee there, one tea, two coffees," which were dealt out with admirable quickness and civility.. Tea at last being over they all returned to the hall,, and dancing was resumed as merry as ever, and was kept up till the sun was not far off putting in an appearance. The ladies wore mostly all very nicely attired, and I am not going to attempt to describe any of their wearing apparel, suffice to say they were all most attractive and hard to distinguish which was entitled to the premier position. Mr. J. Moy performed the duties of M.C., and under his watchful eye everything passed off quiet and respectable



REPORT ON MORNING OF HISTORY – by Lauren Young

On Thursday 14 April, Raymond Terrace Historical Society presented a Morning of History in the Senior Citizens Club to an appreciative audience, on the “Amazing Stories of the Twin Rivers”.

Vice President Boris welcomed everyone and gave a short talk on the program. Faye Clark gave an introductory talk on the Woromi People.. Boris told the interesting story of how the Woromi used the rivers for gathering food and how they made their fishing gear. They were very ingenious people with simple tools, and used boundaries with other tribes.

Peter Goldman from Raymond Terrace entertained us with poems he had written about people of the area.

Kay Bonami had us singing songs from the past.

Wayne Padfield told stories and showed slides of the riverboats on the Patterson and Hunter Rivers. It seems impossible to believe that boats as long as two semi-trailers could steam up and down our rivers with so much traffic in those times as today our rivers seem so lazy as to the hustle and bussel of bygone days.

Moira Saunderson told about the tragedies and lives lost on the rivers through drownings, because people could not swim. But a horse was found swimming down the river after a sulky and driver were lost in the Hunter River.

Kaye Newton’s stories of the floods in 1820, 1867 and 1890, and people in the audience remembering the 1955 flood and recent floods – how devastating and destructive the forces of water can be.

Time seemed to fly, but I’m sure that there must be more interesting tales of Raymond Terrace history to be learned, so, maybe soon, another morning like this one will come. Here’s hoping.

In fact, these dwellings are obsolete in a purely economic sense! Furthermore, many individuals in the marketplace view the existence of a primitive dwelling as an absolute peril. These structures are known to attract the interest of heritage people!

It is fair to generalise that heritage listing is viewed as a negative by many in the market. It matters not that this view is often based on ignorance. It is my experience that primitive dwellings are often fenced off and allowed to fall into disrepair. While some can be identified as being habitable (for example the pisé house at Bathurst) it would be fair to claim that many others are deteriorating or have disappeared entirely. When pisé and adobe dwellings lose their roof the structure deteriorates rapidly because of water damage. In some cases reasonable solid slab structures are allowed to deteriorate slowly (often out of sight under a mat of choko vines or lantana).

Primitive dwellings have a heritage value, and this is quite a different thing from monetary value (Fibbens 1996). While these structures now possess very little utility or monetary value on the open market, the preservation of remaining primitive dwellings would y a very significant conservation value (a value to society in general and a type of public value). While techniques exist for measuring these “public values” (see Sinden JA and Worrell AC 1979) it is profoundly difficult to measure (in monetary terms) the public benefit that is derived from the conservation of important heritage.

Because of their rarity and historic value, the preservation of primitive dwellings should have the highest priority.

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COURT NEWS

On passing the boat Harbour I was surprised to see such a number of boats in it, no less than eleven, and a large timber punt.

This, I think, is a good proof that such accommodation was required, several valuable boats having been run down and crushed against the wharf by steamers, previous to the formation of the boat harbour For this, as well as many other conveniences, I believe we have to thank our active member. However I there is still another accommodation highly necessary" viz; a waiting room on the Miller's Forest side of the punt. I think that this would be quite as just a charge upon public funds as a railway construction for a similar purpose; parties having to frequently to wait a considerable time in all weathers without shelter.

On Friday the 18th. inst., C R Middleton Esq, P.M and J.R. Fenwick, Esq., J P, were in attendance at the bench; there was no police business. A small debts court case, viz, Richardson v. Chaffe was set down for hearing, but owing to the defendant having left the district, the summons could not be served.

A stage carriage license was on the same day granted to John Richard Fitzgerald, to run a vehicle between Raymond Terrace and Hexham.Thursday, the 21st, will be the Queen's Birth Day. There will be a distribution of Government blankets to the aboriginals. A number of these unfortunates are now in this neighbourhood anxiously looking out for the day to arrive. It is a pity that the time for giving is not fixed at a period of at least one month sooner." Measures could be taken to prevent any imposition, i.e. by getting a second supply from other benches.

At the School of Arts to-night, the President (Mr. W Kent) occupied the chair, and readings were given by Messrs. Palmer, Field, Gilbert, and Kilgour. Messrs. Holdstock and Whaler each gave a recitation.

Raymond Terrace, May 22 1877

RAYMOND TERRACE.- FANCY DRESS BALL

A plain and fancy dress ball took place on Tuesday evening in the School of Arts under the auspices of the Raymond Terrace Football Club. By eight o'clock the town was quite astir with young ladies and gentle- men wending their way to the hall. Not having any time to spare in order to be pre- sent at the opening, we of course-it being a fancy ball-went in costume which we hastily donned, and arrived just as the MC called out the grand march, which was no misnomer for it. The hall was well

decorated with flags, and everything presented o gay appearance. The musical part of the performance was performed by those well known popular musicians, viz, Messrs. Noble and Tranter, who played piano and violin respectively. Mr. J. J. Moy performed the duties of M C, and under his supervision everything passed off admirably. There were a great many spectators on the stage, for whom the committee wisely reserved all seats, among whom we noticed our worthy Mayor and Mrs. Richardson, Dr. and Mrs. Harris, Dr.and Mrs. Allan, Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, Miss Hasslip, Miss Kearney, Miss Mayo and others, whom your correspondent is not familiar with. There were some really magnificent costumes worn by the ladies, which by far excelled anything ever seen here as yet. Miss Alice Neil took Nancy Lee and was very nice ; Miss Rogers from Newcastle, as Erin's Isle, was very handsomely dressed ; Miss Nally, as Marchioness, wore a very beautiful dress, maroon silk and cream lace ; Miss A. and T. McPherson, as High- land Lassie and Florian Shepherdess respectively, both of which looked admirably, and displayed great taste by the manner in which the costumes were got up ; Miss Phillips, a Jockey's Companion and a Gipsy ; Miss Threlfo as Red Riding Hood ; Miss Greaves as Grandma; Miss McNully as a Necromancer. As there were a great many other costumes present which we are not conversant with, we hope that those good ladies will forgive us for our neglect ; but we are of opinion that we have reported the most elaborate costumes. The honor of belle lay between Miss A. McPherson as a Highland lassie, Miss E Nally as a Marchioness, and Miss Rodgers as Erin's Isle; but we have to decide in favour of Miss McPherson, whose costume suited her admirably, as likewise did her fair competitors. There were also some beautiful evening dresses worn, among which was one worn by a charming young lady from the Junction, richly trimmed with ostrich feathers. The gentlemen were not far behind, as a fair number donned costumes-Mr. J. J. Moy, as an Irish gentlemen of the 16th century ; Mr. D. O'Grady, as Don Juan ; J. Hunt, as Bunt ; Mr. E. Hill, as a Spanish Chief ; Mr. A. Fenwick, as Don Caesar de Bazan ; Mr. R. Lavis, a man o' war man. There were a few jockeys and cricketers. At about midnight Mr. J. Kearney, on behalf of the club, in a short speech thanked the ladies and gentlemen for their attendance, and made special mention of those who were present in costume. The ladies he said were all admirably dressed, and he was sure the ball had far and away exceeded their greatest expectations, and then requested the gentlemen to convey their partners to the refreshment room, where refreshments were provided by Mr. Caterer Mitchell. We then wended our way to the Temperance Hall, partook of some refreshments and returned to the hall, and the ball was again sent rolling and got little rest till four o'clock, when we joined in singing God Save the Queen.

May 28, 1887.