

NEWSLETTER

October - November - December 2012
Volume Thirteen Number Four



SKETCHLEY COTTAGE

Linking yesterday with tomorrow

RAYMOND TERRACE & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
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Old building called the 'Old Barn' at the rear of the Junction Inn, has gun slits for shooting at aborigines and convicts, 1940.

This photo is from the Athel D'Ombra collection held by [Cultural Collections](#) at the University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia – printed with permission.

BITS and PIECES.....

- Research Rooms are closing from 12th December 2012 and reopening on 7th January 2013.
- Moira Saunderson has released a new book - 'Echoes of War' and is priced at \$35 plus \$11 postage if needed. It contains Boer and World War One letters from the RT Examiner from the boys to their families back home, plus the newspapers own reports. Also contained in the book is a short history of each soldier and additional history information.
- The Historical Society is selling tea towels, for \$10 each, and society pens for \$3.50 ea. They make a great Christmas present. They are available from the Research Room at the Library, or contact any Committee member to make a purchase.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

February 15 AGM and General Meeting

SUNDAY COTTAGE ROSTER: FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

NOV: Glenys & Peter

DEC: David & Judy

JAN: Moira & Boris

FEB: Helen & Bernadette

MAR: Laraine & Laurel

APR: Glenys & Peter

MAY: David & Judy

NEWS from the RAHS

History Events

- The **Blue Mountains Crossings Bicentenary** workshop "**Blue Mountains Crossings 1813-1815**" is held at the Mid-Mountains Community Centre in Lawson on **Thursday 29 November**. For more information or bookings please contact Kerrin O'Grady: crossings@bmcc.nsw.gov.au.
- Digital deluge: **The Australian Society of Archivists Inc** is holding a two day workshop in **Sydney on 29-30 November 2012** to explore how archivists can fundamentally reassess their methods and determine what can be done to create a stable archival record of the 21st century. Full program details for the event will be available via www.recordkeepingroundtable.org and www.archivists.org.au.
- On **Tuesday 4 December**, the **Australian Society for the History of Engineering and Technology** (ASHET) celebrates their final event for 2012 with a guided tour of the Parramatta River by ferry followed by lunch at Parramatta. Meet at Circular Quay at 9:30 a.m., departing for Parramatta at 9:52 a.m. For bookings contact Ian Arthur on 9958 8397 or email sec@ashet.org.au.
- On **Thursday 6 December**, the Joint Committee for the Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Battle for Crete and Greek Campaign is holding a **Symposium in honour of the 70th Anniversary of the Greek and Crete Campaigns** at **State Parliament of NSW** Theatre, Macquarie Street. Refreshments will be provided. Bookings essential: 0438 007 560. Click [here](#) for more details.

Upcoming events at **National Museum Australia**:

- **Museum Workshop: An exhibition demonstrating the art, science and craft of**

the conservator. From 25 October 2012 to 28 January 2013. Free. For more information click [here](#).

- **Door to Store: Caring for your collection:** On **Friday 16 November**, 12.30 -1.30, the NMA's conservation team will be holding a practical demonstration on how to care for the special medals, trophies and silverware that you have at home. Free entrance. Booking essential: email nma@gov.com.au or phone (02) 6208 5021 (business hours). Click [here](#) for further information
- **A night at the museum:** On **Friday 23 November**, 5-8 pm, you get the chance to experience the museum after hours! Entrance free. Bookings: www.nma.gov.au/nightmuseum or phone (02) 6208 5021 (business hours)
- **Commerce was a woman:** On **Tuesday 27 November**, 12:30 -1:30, **Catherine Bishop** talks about the fact that women in the 19th century were working as small businesswomen or as employees and formed a vital part of Sydney's economy. Free. Venue: Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, Mitchell Theatre. Click [here](#) for full details.

History News

- **Unlocking Newcastle's forgotten past: University of Newcastle** researchers have developed an innovative app for smart phones and tablets that can transport people back to 19th Century Newcastle at the flick of a finger. For more information, photos and video-clips click [here](#).
- Event Registration for the **National Trust Heritage Festival 2013** has opened! Registrations close on **26 November 2012**. To register your event please click [here](#). For further information please email Eloise Hairman on ehairman@nationaltrust.com.au.

EXERT FROM *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*

18 Jan 1879 -The season up to the present has been all that could possibly be desired, both by farmers and gardeners; alternate showers and sunshine having produced the very best results both as regards the crops that have been already gathered, and those now coming on.

REGATTA.—A meeting was held at Mr. Morgan's Junction Inn, on Saturday night, 11th instant, to organize committee for the purpose of making arrangements to get up a regatta at Raymond Terrace on St. Patrick's Day, 17th March. The meeting was well attended, and from the interest shown by those present we are inclined to think that the undertaking will be a decided success. Officers were chosen, and gentlemen appointed to canvas the district for subscriptions, whose efforts we trust will be well responded to. The next meeting will be held in Mr. Malley's Hotel on Saturday night, 18th inst., to which we would invite all those who wish to take part in the matter.—After the meeting, a match was made between Martin Jordan, of Dempsey Island, and James Ford, of Cockadingo. The race to be rowed over the usual regatta course at Raymond Terrace, on the day of regatta, between 11 and quarter-past 11 o'clock a.m., using the same boats as Priddle and Green pulled in some time ago. This match has been long pending, but before this no satisfactory arrangements had been made. The first deposit of £5 has been put in the hands of the stakeholder, and the articles drawn up and signed, so that unless one of the parties forfeit, this long talked of race will take place at last.

THE CARDINE OPERATIC AND BALLAD COMPANY -This company of artists gave one of their entertainments here, in the School of Arts, last evening (Wednesday, 14th) which was very fairly patronized ; but would, no doubt, have been much more successful in regards an audience, had it taken place either in the Temperance Hall, or the Court House.

30 April, 1863 -GUN ACCIDENT.-An inquest was held before Mr. Shaw, coroner, at the residence of Mr. William McGregor, Nelson's Plains, on Saturday last, on the body of his son, Donald McGregor, aged nineteen, who had died the previous evening from a gun-shot wound received on Easter Monday. From the dying declaration of the deceased, and also that of Mrs. Gratton, in whose employ he was, it appeared that they were, on Easter Monday, in the yard milking, when a boy named Joe Yates, who had been out shooting, passed near where deceased was. The two boys, being near neighbours, entered into conversation. On Yates being asked by deceased to assist in driving some cows into bail, he laid his gun down, and drove the cows in. After the milking was finished, Mrs. Gratton and deceased took in two pails of milk each, Yates following with his gun, with the muzzle pointed in direction of deceased. When within a few yards of the house the gun went off, lodging the whole contents in the lower portion of the body in the region of the loins. The poor fellow was immediately taken into the house and the boy Yates dispatched by Mr. Gratton to the parents of deceased and for medical assistance. He was attended by Drs. Street and Bolton, and lingered until death terminated his sufferings. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, with a reprimand to Yates for carrying a gun, the lock of which was defective, with such carelessness.

April 14,1884. -On Wednesday, 9th, in the Temperance Hall, Captain William Jackson Barry gave one of his popular and entertaining lectures on his "Tour round the World," or "Up and Down," as his book has it. This visit of the captain had more than ordinary interest in it. His chairman, Mr. Fenwick senior, was a boy with him in Sydney, when Captain Barry's claim to fame lay in his steeplechase riding, and his exploits on Beeswing at Petersham, Homebush, and elsewhere. Nothing could have exceeded the kindness and cordiality of Mr. Fenwick on introducing the lecturer; he knew the captain in those days of fifty years ago, when he, Captain Barry, was better known to the old residents as "Spider" and "Nobbie." What invested the visit of Captain Barry with additional and singular interest was, that five or six, half-century-ago residents, farmers, &c, turned up, and who knew him well after so many years. A most enjoyable evening was spent, and after a good house and a thoroughly appreciative audience, he was urgently desired to appear again on Tuesday, 15th inst., which will be to-night. Mr. Otto, his host, and his old new friends, are resolved on securing a large attendance in the large commodious Sheffield Hall.

6 October 1874 -Our local public school, which for many years has existed only as "non-vested," has at length become "vested" in the Council of Education, and a new and commodious school building, including teacher's residence, at a cost of over £370, is being rapidly put up. As neither school furniture nor fencing the school grounds are included in the foregoing sum, the total cost will be much more when everything has been completed.

The old flour mill is being transformed into a saw mill; consequently the new grist will consist of timber logs. Success to the new industry, it will at least help to relieve our monotony. May it prove profitable to the enterprising owner.

Our Mechanics' School of Arts has (like its brethren in other parts of the land) almost sunk into oblivion. There have been no meetings of its members for a long time past, and it is simply a circulating library, with less than a dozen members

A project is just now spoken of, which, if carried out, may have the effect of stirring up its members to more activity, and adding new names to the roll.

The project is a grand distribution of prizes on the principles of the Arts Union, the proceeds to be equally divided between, and given for the benefit of, the Public School and Mechanics' School of Arts.

March 1859 - A four-oared boat race, starting from the Terrace, round a boat off Kinross, back round a boat off the Junction the Hunter and Williams rivers, twice over, for £10 a side, came off this day between the "Flower of Eagleton," built by McPherson or the Williams, and the "Uncle Tom", built by Barnett of Sydney, Uncle Tom pulled by the Phelps, and Flower of Eagleton by the Buchanan. It was evident from the first that the Flower was in full bloom, and passed the boat moored off the Williams 15 seconds in advance, and on coming up the second time Uncle Tom turned round and pulled for his cabin, leaving the Flower triumphant.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY RAYMOND TERRACE

A NIGHT to remember, A NIGHT to celebrate, was Saturday November 24, when the OLDIES of Raymond Terrace got together to wish our town a HAPPY 175th BIRTHDAY.

Representatives from our early pioneer families such as The PEPPERS, The BLANCH, The WINDEYERS, The RICHARDSONS, The BROWNS, The MEREDITHS, The ELKINS, The SANDEMANS, The SKETCHLEYS, The EDSTEINS, The GIGGINS, The WATTUS', The COX, The McPHIES, and many more, all sat down together to chat, to eat, to drink and to share their family stories of old.

Photos and Memories from Raymond Terrace's earliest days, 1830's plus, were displayed around the walls of the lovely new Senior Citizens' Hall in Boomerang Park. There was music and handshakes and cuddles and bush poetry, the NIGHT had it all, even a BOOK LAUNCH occurred with the attendance of the author Mrs MOIRA SAUNDERSON presenting her book 'ECHOES OF WAR-Boer & W.W.1 Letters' to the Raymond Terrace Historical Society. The Raymond Terrace Historical Society hosted this 175th BIRTHDAY TOWN PARTY, and it was a well-done team effort.

by Laraine Brown.

DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS SOLDIER?

This photo was found in a box of mementoes passed down to Heather Yates by her Grandmother, Catherine Gulliver. Catherine was the foster mother of Sam Robinson, Martin Nissen and William (Billy) Atkins from Millers Forest. The photograph is signed simply "Yours sincerely Bert". We believe Burt may be Bertie Leonard KING also a Millers Forest boy.

We would love to reunite this soldier with his family. If you recognise this soldier and can identify him we would love to hear from you. Please contact Yvonne Fletcher on 49828165 or John Gillam on 49301630.



SEAHAM'S HERITAGE

Seaham is a small community some 15 km north of Raymond Terrace. Whilst currently enjoying resurgence, its population is still well short of the number pre 1920.

Centred on high ground immediately adjacent to the Williams River, the first land grants in the area were issued in the early 1820's. The river was the key to the settlement pattern of the district and remained the major transport link for several generations.

The domination of river transport was only reduced by the construction of the Main Northern Railway just prior to World War 1. The route of the line through Paterson began a period of slow decline for Seaham and other Williams River towns. Seaham, nonetheless, remained the focus of a small farming community.

In January 1959 a major fire swept through from the west destroying many buildings including a number with considerable architectural and historical significance.

Amongst the buildings to escape the fire was the School of Arts. Of timber (weatherboard) construction, the original building was constructed in 1902 by Charles H. Boots and Sons of Raymond Terrace. The site had been designated for "Public Buildings" (Town plan of 1838 near the centre of the original township. Later maps show the site as specified for a Mechanic's Institute (Grant issued 1st February 1929).



As was common practice throughout rural Australia at the time, the original core structure received a number of skillion-roofed additions. Very soon after completion of the original structure a small "library" was constructed on the north-eastern corner with a balancing "ante-room" on the south-eastern corner.

The School of Arts was used extensively by the ladies of the "Knitting Circle" and other community groups to raise funds to support local volunteers in the First World War. Around this time the body of the hall was extended to the west and the stage moved to increase the hall's seating (and dancing) capacity. After the war (1919), memorial gates were constructed in front of the building and an existing picket fence was replaced with a brick and pipe fence.

In the early twenties, the "ante-room" on the southern side of the hall was extended to provide a supper-room and kitchen. For more than a generation, "Seaham hall" was the venue for every imaginable community and family function. However, a declining population made it increasingly difficult to raise sufficient funds and community effort to maintain the building. It was left to a hard-working core of people from local families of long-standing to maintain the required community spirit. Whilst the population stabilised at a low level, the School of Arts was maintained through the 1950's and 60's by the work of perhaps a dozen families.

The late seventies saw a changing situation. Once again Seaham's population is growing and there is renewed interest in local history and community identity. In May 1979 Seaham and District Community Association was formed and a "Nostalgia Day"¹ in March 1980 saw more than 180 people visit the School of Arts to trade memories and note records.

The Carmichael Connection

One of the tragedies of the 1939 fire was the destruction of "Porphyry" the home constructed over 100 years earlier by the Reverend Henry Carmichael, one of the founders of public education in N.S.W.

Henry Carmichael was a Presbyterian clergyman brought out from Scotland by the Rev. John Dunmore Lang to staff the Australian College which was opened in Sydney in 1831. Carmichael soon quarrelled with Lang and left the College. After a brief period conducting a private school in Sydney he built "Porphyry" and opened the Williams River Grammar School or Seaham Lyceum.

Earlier, in March 1833 Carmichael had founded, at Governor Burke's instigation, the Sydney Mechanics' Institute or Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts for the purpose of:

"... diffusion of scientific and other useful knowledge as extensively as possible throughout the colony of New South Wales."

This was the first attempt at adult education in Australia. The Sydney Mechanics' Institute became the model for similar efforts else-where and School of Arts became focal points for education and community activities throughout the colony.

Henry Carmichael made further contributions to education, the early wine industry and community affairs generally from his base at Seaham. He died at sea on a voyage to London in 1862 at the age of 66 years. A memorial inscription is to be found on the family headstone in Seaham cemetery.

Descendants of Henry Carmichael remain active members of the Seaham community, but with the loss of "Porphyry" in 1939 there is little tangible evidence of the major contributions he made to both the Seaham community and the Australian nation. Restoration of Seaham School of Arts perhaps gives us the opportunity to preserve an appropriate memorial to a colourful and significant pioneer.

The value of the Seaham building is all the greater for the loss of many similar halls as rural communities have declined in the face of industrialization of the Hunter Valley.

The Restoration/Extension Project

In an attempt to serve existing and anticipated community needs and at the same time preserve the historical and architectural significance of the building, the Seaham community and Port Stephens Shire Council are co-operating, working to plans prepared by Maitland architect Ian Pender. Funds allocated by Council are being augmented by community fund raising and voluntary work for the project.

Spend a pleasant Sunday afternoon at Seaham; visit the School of Arts and other places of historical interest and assist the grass-roots efforts being made by a small community to take care of its heritage.

From <http://www.seaham.ps.education.nsw.gov.au/history.htm>

QUOTES: Those who lose dreaming are lost – Australian Aboriginal proverb

It's like the axe that's had two new blades and three new handles but otherwise is just as it was when grandfather bought it – Australian proverb

The law locks up the man who steals the goose from the common, but leaves the greater criminal loose who steals the common from the goose – convict saying

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
Soldiers & Memorials of Seaham	\$ 25
Raymond Terrace Pioneer Register	\$ 30
Cemetery Master Index	\$ 25
Landholders & Others	\$ 15
Raymond Terrace Pioneer Cemetery	\$ 5
Obituary Books Vol 1 1893 – 1915	
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.

'Echoes of War' by Moira Saunderson	\$35
Bushranger book	\$10.
The Worimi by Boris Sokoloff	\$10

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

All prices exclude postage

SKETCHLEY COTTAGE MUSEUM is located opposite Bettles Park, Raymond Terrace and is open to the public by appointment. Bus groups are most welcome, please contact the Secretary by email or ring Sketchley Cottage on 49871036 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.