



**NUMBER 159**

# THE MUSE

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**MAY 2010**

## SICK LIST

Fay Wells, editor of *The Muse*, is on the sick list, so President John has temporarily assumed the task. We wish Fay a speedy recovery from her broken ankle. Our best wishes and thoughts also to members Ian and Shirley Mills and Liz Pratt.

## 2010: MACQUARIE BI-CENTENARY YEAR

The year 2010 will feature many celebrations commemorating the bi-centenary of the commencement of the governorship of Lachlan Macquarie in New South Wales.



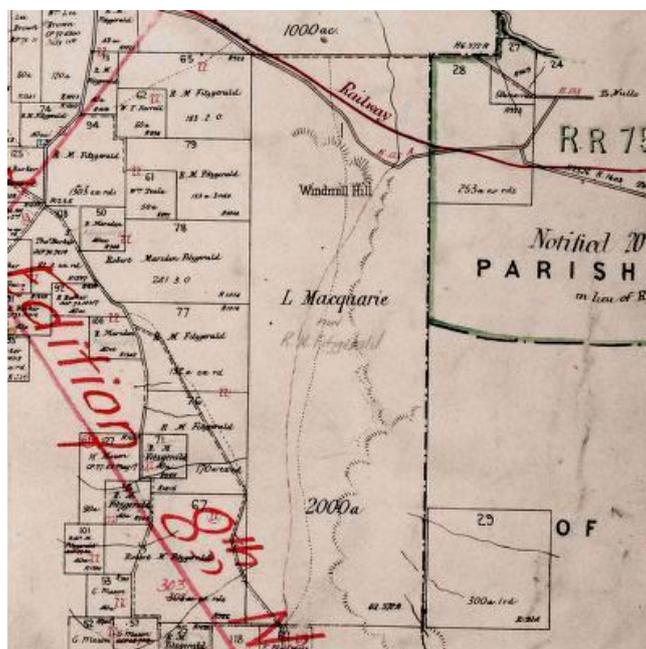
**Governor Lachlan Macquarie**

On Thursday April 22nd 2011, at the invitation of the Gulgong-Mudgee-Rylstone branch of the National Trust of Australia (NSW), Mitchell Library Emeritus Librarian Elizabeth Ellis presented a fascinating lecture in Mudgee on the life of Lachlan Macquarie. Macquarie's contributions to the transformation of New South Wales from a convict colony to a free colony were considerable and his legacy remains strong today, particularly in the form of buildings eg. St Matthew's Church at Windsor, the Hyde Park Barracks. He was undoubtedly badly treated towards the end of his reign and targeted mercilessly in the notorious Bigge Report. His vision for the colony was unfortunately not shared by his opponents in the colony nor by a penny-pinching administration in England.

The Macquarie name is present throughout New South Wales: Macquarie and Elizabeth Streets in Sydney, Mrs Macquarie's Chair in the Domain, the Lachlan and Macquarie Rivers in regional New South Wales.

Governor Macquarie visited Bathurst in 1815, soon after the first road over the Blue Mountains was completed under the direction of William Cox, ancestor of the Mudgee pioneer Cox family; his governorship ended in the same year in which Europeans penetrated to the Mudgee district.

However, a link with the Macquarie family exists in the Rylstone district where wealthy emancipist Richard Fitzgerald, much favoured by Macquarie, had been a pioneer. Once the Macquaries returned to England, Richard acted as agent in the colony for Mrs Elizabeth Macquarie, widow of Governor Lachlan Macquarie, and in 1835 helped to obtain a grant of 2000 acres for her and her son adjoining his own grant at Dabee which had been promised to her in 1823 by Governor Bourke. This grant, Portion 1 of the Parish of Rylstone in the County of Roxburgh, is known as Windmill Hill and was registered in 1837 in the name of her son, Lachlan Macquarie junior. Windmill Hill, directly south of the Dabee homestead portion, was ultimately acquired by the Fitzgeralds, ancestors of the Evans family; it remains part of Dabee today. Dabee is now owned by Gary and Susan Rothwell who have refurbished the magnificent sandstone homestead which dates from the late 1840s and mid 1920s.



The Macquarie grant, long part of Dabee



Dabee homestead, Rylstone, in 2009

Thanks to Hugh Bateman and the staff of the Mudgee Property Shop for making their auction room available for this lecture. Thanks also to Elizabeth Ellis for her generosity in presenting her Macquarie lecture which she had recently presented to the Australian Club in Sydney. Elizabeth had presented a lecture in Mudgee last year on Charles Darwin in the Central West of New South Wales, interestingly in the magnificent St John the Baptist Anglican Church in Mudgee, the proceeds of which benefited the Mudgee Historical Society Inc.

### **REVAMPED WEBSITE**

Thanks to a lot of hard work from Chris Murphy of Mudgee, the Mudgee Historical Society Inc launched a website some four years ago. President John has been working on an extensive overhaul of the website which is long overdue. A much expanded website, which will incorporate numerous aspects of the Society's activities and events at the Museum, will be online soon. Why don't you check out:

<http://www.mudgeemuseum.com>.

### **E-MAIL VERSION OF *THE MUSE***

If you would prefer to receive an e-mail version of your membership newsletter *THE MUSE*, please indicate by sending an email to: [enquiries@mudgeemuseum.com](mailto:enquiries@mudgeemuseum.com), clearly listing your name and preferred email address. This will save considerably on postage and handling and you will receive a coloured and crisper version of *THE MUSE*. This alternative is in line with the Society's moves to capitalize from and maximize the use of technology.

### **WINDMILL**

Some time ago the Society acquired an age and rare Fortescue windmill which the Tuesday working bee 'boys' restored and erected with the much-appreciated assistance of Mudgee Crane Hire. A Council DA was required for erection and Councillors Percy Thompson and John Webb dipped into their discretionary funds to reimburse the Society for the DA costs – their generosity is much appreciated. The windmill is now located in between the meeting room block and the big shed and neatly fills in what was previously a 'no man's land'.



**Windmill and pump (2010)**

## **VOLUNTEER'S GRANT 2010**

Every year the Federal Government provides funding for grants to non-profit volunteer community organizations such as ours to purchase a wide range of items which will benefit its members. Previously, through this grants program, our Society has been able to obtain a photocopier and two digital picture frames and a digital camera. President John has just submitted an application under the 2010 program for a laptop computer which could be used anywhere in the museum site or off site.

## **ADDITIONAL SHED FINANCE APPLICATION**

Last year the Society was unsuccessful in applying for Federal grant assistance to construct a much-needed shed for storage at the rear of the Museum site. The Society has dedicated funds towards this project, estimated to cost circa \$20,000 and has recently submitted a formal application to the Mid-Western Regional Council for assistance with funding.

## **GARAGE SALE**

In early March the Society held a garage sale of specifically-donated items which raised circa \$800. Please support the next garage sale to be held in October, as these have become a lucrative form of fundraising for the Society.

## **TAMWORTH VISIT**

Earlier this year a coach visit to Mudgee was arranged with the Tamworth Historical Society. The itinerary includes a visit to the Colonial Inn Museum, morning tea and a guided town tour with President John who has also arranged a visit to the Cox family's historic Burrundulla homestead on the outskirts of Mudgee. Details to follow in the next issue.

## **150 YEARS CELEBRATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2010 the Mid-Western Regional Council staged a celebration of 150 years of the establishment of local government in the area. 1860 saw the establishment of both the Municipality of Mudgee and the Municipality of Cudgegong which amongst the earliest non-metropolitan local government areas in the state. Through a series of amalgamations over the years these two entities were merged into what is now the Mid-Western Regional Council.

Celebrations included an official ceremony in front of the Mudgee Library, formerly the Mudgee Town Hall, with a 'welcome to country' speech by a Wiradjuri representative and a speech by Mayor Percy Thompson and a narration by President John which put the celebrations in context. A display of horse-drawn and motor vehicles from 1860 through to the present was staged in Market Street between Church and Perry Streets which was closed for the morning. A highlight was former Mayor of Mudgee Andy Pirie (mayor in the late 1950s) singing a traditional Mudgee song 'Down by the Cudgegong'. Thanks to Ed de Long of Mid-Western Regional Council for organizing the celebrations.

## **SCHOOL VISITS**

Local district schools continue to use the Colonial Inn Museum as an educational experience. Classes from Mudgee High School and St Matthew's have visited so far, with Ilford School expected on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May. It is always pleasing to welcome students to the Museum and show them how people used to live in the 'olden days' (even if that includes things that many of us can remember only too well!)

## **CUDGEGONG VALLEY MUSEUMS GROUP INC**

In the early 2000s the Mudgee Historical Society Inc was instrumental in forming this group which operated informally for several years before being incorporated a few years ago. Its aim is to promote friendly cooperation between the museums in the Mid-Western Regional Council local government area, to exchange ideas and information, and to foster regional tourism by a 'museum heritage trail' by means of a group brochure.

Election of office bearers for 2010 – 2011 will take place at the AGM to be held at the Colonial Inn Museum on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at 11am.

## **MUDGEE SMALL FARM FIELD DAYS**

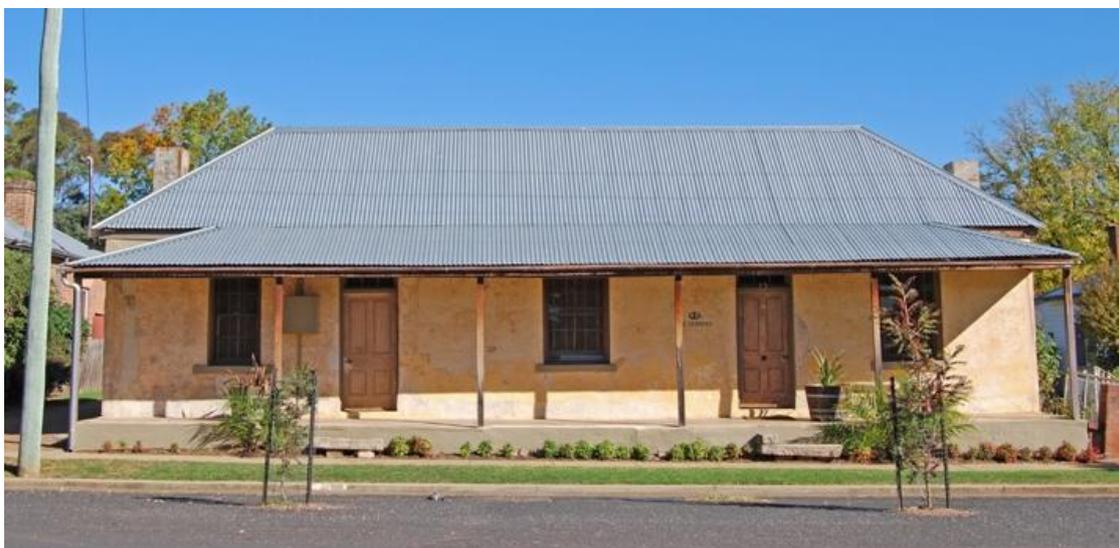
For several years our Society has staged exhibits at the Mudgee Small Farm Field Days which will be held at the AREC site in July. Each year we like to stage a different thematic display and our displays which have always attracted interest from 'locals' and 'foreigners' alike. A beekeeping theme is proposed for 2010 – Mudgee has long been a noted centre of excellence for honey.

## **MUDGEE COIN, NOTE & STAMP CLUB**

This organization was formed in 2009 and has recently begun holding monthly meetings in the Colonial Inn Museum meeting room. The Mudgee Historical Society Inc welcomes use of its facilities by such community groups. Society members Ed and Liz Pratt are respectively President and Secretary of the Club.

## **THE AUSTRALIAN TANNERY**

The building at 48 Lawson Street, known as the Tannery Cottage, is a significant building in the industrial history of Mudgee. Few buildings remain from the pre-railway era (1884) of Mudgee's industrial history, although it is not thought that the building itself was used for purposes other than residential. The structure has remained largely intact, and is highly demonstrative of early to mid-Victorian colonial building techniques. The building also has considerable local significance as a rare example of accommodation for industrial workers in mid nineteenth century Mudgee. Similar workers' cottages were provided at Crossing's mill and brewery in Mortimer Street, originally adjoining Settler's Store to the west and all long demolished.



48 Lawson Street, Mudgee (2010)



Australian Tannery (1870s)

### The Site

48 Lawson Street contains an early Victorian cottage, facing east in Lawson Street directly on the footpath alignment. is situated on a portion of Allotment 18 of Section 28 of Mudgee township. Section 28, as originally subdivided, consisted of 20 allotments, each of 2 roods in dimension. Allotments 1 – 4 faced Gladstone Street and were square-shaped, as were Allotments 11 – 14, which faced Denison Street; Allotments 5 – 10, facing Lewis Street and Allotments 15 – 20, facing Lawson Street, were rectangular in shape, with a narrow street frontage of 1 chain (66 feet) and a depth of 330 feet. The rear or western portion of Allotment 18 has been subdivided and developed, and is accessed via a new road from Gladstone Street.

### Ownership History

All the allotments in Section 28 were sold at auction on 22 April 1856 and fetched a wide range of prices. Allotment 18 was purchased by James Dixon Little for £8/10/-.

A saddler by trade, James Dixon Little was operating the Australian Tannery on the rear of the site by 1858, when he advertised in the *Mudgee Newspaper*. His retail premises were in Market Street, on the site adjoining what is now the Westpac Bank. The rear of his premises, now known as Cobblestone Court, were most likely built by Little or his successor, James Christian, also a saddler. It is believed that the Lawson Street cottage, present on a street alignment map of Mudgee drawn in 1862, was built by Little in the late 1850s or early 1860s as accommodation for workers at the tannery.

James Dixon Little married firstly at St Matthew's, Windsor, Ann Lamrock, by whom he had two children: James (1857) and Sarah (1859), both of whom were born in Mudgee. The fate of Ann Dixon is not known, but in Mudgee in 1861 Little married Fanny Palmer. In 1861 he sold the Australian Tannery to Alfred Emanuel Thomas. Little later became licensee of Tattersall's Hotel (now the Lawson Park Hotel). An official of foot running, a popular sport in Mudgee in the mid C19th, Little was also embroiled in a notorious court case in which he disputed the ownership of a pastoral run. The case involved the best legal counsels on both sides, although the precise outcome is not known. Little is listed in a directory as residing in Lawson Street, Mudgee, in 1875, but he is no longer listed in 1886-1887.

Alfred Emanuel Thomas was born in 1836 at Ayrton, Weston, near West Maitland, the second child and eldest son of Theophilus Thomas, dairy farmer, and Martha, nee Smyth, who married in Maitland in 1834. As Theophilus is not listed in the 1828 Census it is presumed that he arrived in the colony some time after 1828. Martha, born in 1815, was the daughter of William Smyth, arrived per *Brothers* in 1825 with his wife, Martha, nee Goff, and six children. Both William and his wife were listed in the 1828 Census as indented servants of the Australian Agricultural Company at Port Stephens. Alfred Emanuel was educated in West Maitland where he also learnt the trade of bootmaking, and after indifferent success in trade on the goldfields he settled in Mudgee in 1859.

He soon established a profitable business, opening up a boot factory in Gladstone Street East in conjunction with the tannery, where he turned out 70-90 hides weekly. Subsequently, he opened The Boot Palace in Church Street, Mudgee, which was ultimately managed by his eldest son, Henry. Thomas' footwear was renowned and in demand throughout the west and north-west of New South Wales, and at its height the combined businesses employed thirty to forty people. The tannery closed in 1900, and the factory closed circa 1915; the retail outlet was last located in Market Street, adjacent to the site of the Westpac Bank.

In 1873 Alfred Emanuel Thomas purchased the house on the adjoining Allotment 17, to the south of the tannery site, from the estate of Sarah Blackman, widow of Mudgee pioneer William Blackman. The purchase of this house as his own residence enabled Thomas to supervise the operations of the adjacent tannery.

In 1862 in Mudgee Alfred Emanuel had married Lydia, a daughter of Henry Strickland and Jane, nee Beatty. Alfred Emanuel and Lydia had nine children: Henry, Martha, Helen, Alfred, George, Fanny, Sydney, Ada and Winifred. Fanny, Martha and Sydney died in infancy; tragically, Lydia died in 1881 when Winifred was only a few months old. In 1883 Alfred Emanuel married Charlotte Oxley, born in West Maitland in 1832, daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Oxley; however, there was no issue from this marriage. In 1895 Alfred Emanuel purchased the adjacent Allotment 16, where he established an extensive and now mature garden. Alfred Emanuel was a member of the Oddfellows' Lodge, a Vice-President of the Mechanics Institute, and a Trustee of three Mudgee Building Societies. Alfred Emanuel died in 1918, aged eighty-two, and in 1923 the house, known as Winifred Cottage, was sold by Henry Thomas, executor of his father's estate, to two of his sisters, Ada Thomas and Helen Flanagan. Shortly afterwards, in 1924, the house was sold to Ann McWhirter, wife of retired grazier, Walter McWhirter. The house was subsequently owned by the Kennedy family for many years, followed by Phillip and Gina Hardin.

The tannery cottage has had many owners since the Thomas family. In the early 2000s the building was renovated for use as short-term self-contained accommodation.