

EAST MAITLAND 1833



East Maitland Heritage Walk

By 1823, several land grants had been made in the vicinity of Wallis Plains and in 1824 a regular boat service began operating between Newcastle and the lower Hunter districts. During this time, the beginnings of a town were being made at West Maitland. This site was generally unsuitable due to the periodic flooding of the Hunter River. After difficulties were experienced in obtaining land for the establishment of a town at Morpeth, Surveyor, G. B. White defined the limits of the government town subsequently known as East Maitland. Within the design of this town there was liberal provision for public buildings, churches, schools and public reserves.

The town was officially proclaimed in 1833.

During the middle of the nineteenth century, the three towns of East Maitland, West Maitland and Morpeth dominated the affairs of the Hunter Valley. They were respectively concerned with administrative and government functions, commercial activities and port and trade activities.

East Maitland was regularly and spaciouly laid out with imposing and solidly-constructed administrative and other government buildings. In comparison, West Maitland was dominated by shops and residences situated along narrow, unplanned streets near the river.

1. HEW Cottage

The Maitland Visitors' Information Centre ^{WAS} located in a historic building. Set in immaculate gardens in the park, the centre is a slab hut more than a century old and known as Hew Cottage. The hut was discovered under a weatherboard exterior that was about to be demolished. The Maitland City Council donated it to the Maitland and District Tourist Association, and it was re-erected by the Maitland Lions Club.

2. Fry Brother's Funeral Parlour

Corner William and Newcastle Street - 1930's modified building in strong neo-Grecian style.



3. Red Lion Inn



Built in 1857 as a Public House for Charles Wittaker. This two-storey Georgian building has a first floor balcony which is cantilevered over the street. It occupies the site of the Old Red Lion Inn and was the home of Samuel Clift for many years.

4. Eckford's Cottage (Matthew Talbot Hostel)

This 1845 home was formerly owned by the Eckford Family and is a fine example of the transitional period between Georgian and Victorian styles. The entry door has been altered, but the home has wooden pillars, French doors and 12 paned windows. The original home was built on this site in 1818 by John Eckford, who was one of the first settlers on Wallis Plains. He was the son of William Eckford, the first harbour pilot in Newcastle from 1812. The building is now a refuge, run by the Roman Catholic Church and known as Matthew Talbot Hostel.

5. Literary Institute

Built in 1859 by William Cains, a local contractor, and designed by Sydney architect, William Bluntfield. The East Maitland Council held its meetings in this building in the 1860's.



6. Cottage of Content Inn

This fine two-storey Victorian building was built in 1898 by Samuel Baily who transferred the publican's licence from the original Inn located within the same street. This licence had been granted to his father on 28 April, 1840. The premises were also used as East Maitland Council Chambers in later years.



7. Farmer Hotel and Stables



Mid Victorian Italianate three storey hotel with bevelled corner in stone work, bracketed eaves and slate roof. Single storey gabled roof stables at the rear.

8. Morpeth Branch Railway

The Morpeth area was granted to Lt. Close in 1821. The town was to witness the hustle and bustle of steamers plying the Hunter River trade between Morpeth and Sydney Town in the 1830's and 1840's. The railways from East Maitland to Morpeth opened in 1864 and was closed following floods in 1953.

Morpeth Branch Line - Additional Information

For a detailed description of the Railway Line and a timetable dating back to 2 August 1891, visit the platform and observe the information inside the noticeboard.

9. Maitland Gaol

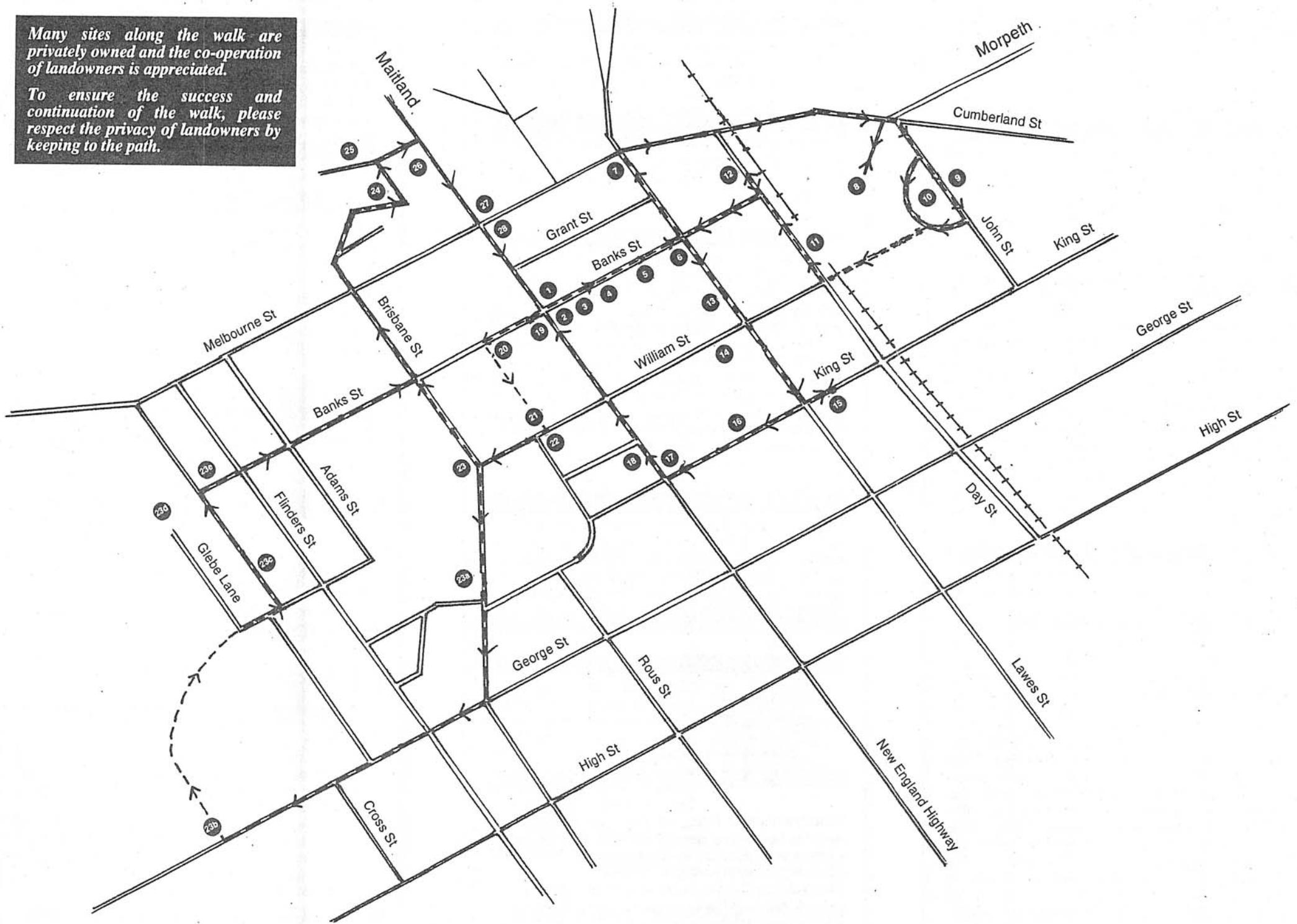
Maitland Gaol was proclaimed on 26 December, 1848. The original Maitland Gaol was a weatherboard lock-up with six adjoining cells which was in use in 1835, but soon proved inadequate. The sandstone building on the present site was designed by Colonial Architect Mortimer Lewis in 1844 and modelled on London's Pentville Prison. It is an unusual Australian Colonial work with a number of unique features, including an elaborate stairway system. The last execution was carried out at H.M. Gaol East Maitland on 20 May, 1897. Also, the State's last legal flogging was carried out here on 15 April 1905. A chap by the name of Henry Clark received 10 lashes.

The Gaol Museum was built in 1889 as the Police Barracks. This building accommodated mounted troopers until about 1920.



Many sites along the walk are privately owned and the co-operation of landowners is appreciated.

To ensure the success and continuation of the walk, please respect the privacy of landowners by keeping to the path.



10. East Maitland Court House



This building is East Maitland's third Court House. It was constructed from plans and specifications prepared by the

Colonial Architect, Alexander Dawson. Tenders were called on 8 June, 1859 and the neo-classic style building of brick and stone was completed in 1860. This structure consisted of the court room, the triple arched portico and the flanking wings. The dominant central portico is emphasised by its position on top of the hill and the design shows the influence of the celebrated architect Edmund Blackett. The first court house was located in the vicinity of Newcastle and Melbourne Streets in a building built by John Smith and leased as a court house from 27 October, 1833 until 1843.

11. Old Post Office at East Maitland

The need to provide a better postal service resulted in the opening of a Post Office at Maitland



on 1 September, 1829. Mr. Nathaniel Goldingham, Clerk to the Chamber of Magistrates, was postmaster and he conducted business in the Police Office. His remuneration for postal duties was 20% of the postage collected and was payable quarterly subject to the Governor's approval. This is the site of the second Post Office in East Maitland, the first being near the corner of Newcastle and Melbourne Streets. This building was erected in 1875-76 by Henry Noad, a local builder, from the Colonial Architect's plans. At that time the main business sector was in the vicinity of Melbourne Street and Newcastle Street, hence this building in Day Street.

12. Roseneath



This fine two-storey Inn was erected on cellar foundations and completed in 1845, when it opened as the Victoria Inn. It has two front doors with square fanlights. The windows are

12-paned and shuttered. A feature of the upper and lower verandahs is the finely turned balustrade. At the back is a semi-detached kitchen forming a courtyard with a well. It has large, handsome Victorian marble mantelpieces in the lower rooms. During Percy Clift's ownership, Roseneath was renowned for its rose garden.

13. Joss House

Colonial Georgian two-storey house with original massive doric timber columns to the verandahs, which were raised due to flood damage.



14. House in William Street



20 William Street. An intact typical Edwardian cottage, in Federation style with art nouveau decorative verandah details.

15. Goonoobah

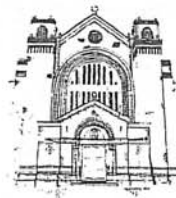
Built in about 1841 from sandstone blocks identical with the gaol, it was originally owned by George Furber. The building had at least 20 rooms, with a hall extending over the total length. George Furber had the Golden Fleece Inn in 1835 and The George and Dragon Inn in 1837.



16. King Street Cottages

Number 53 is an excellent example of a Georgian cottage and was originally owned by John Bede Polding, first Roman Catholic Archbishop of Sydney.

17. St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church



The foundation stone of the Roman Catholic Church was laid on 12 August, 1834 by Father Therry. The present Church, built on the same site, was erected in 1934.

18. Gallow's Creek

On the morning of November 30, 1830, "five men were hanged on Stockade Hill" and the blood of their misery flowed down Gallow's Creek. Father Therry erected the Roman Catholic Church opposite this creek in memory of those men.

19. Lands Office at East Maitland

This building was designed by Government Architect, W. L. Vernon and built by Thomas Henley of Balmain in 1895. The Lands Office was first opened for business on 1 January, 1885 in the adjoining hall which was once used as a denominational school, and leased from St. Peter's Church of England.



20. St. Peter's Parish Hall



This hall was erected after 1840 from materials used in the original school on Stockade Hill. The bricks are a rosy sandstock type and the structure originally had a shingle roof. The main hall has a very fine ceiling of cedar, worked in a herringbone pattern. It was from the school that the Reverend G. K. Rusden conducted church services until the first St. Peter's Church was completed.

21. St. Peter's Church

Standing in a commanding position, this elegant Victorian Church, built in a decorative Gothic style, was commenced in 1886. The walls, of white sandstone, were quarried two miles south-east of the Church. It has a slate roof supported on New Zealand hardwood frames. The floor is a tiled mosaic with columns of granite and caps of Melbourne blackstone basalt. The chancel was designed by Edmund Blackett in 1875 and Cyril Blackett completed the design of the church in 1885. The beautiful pulpit of marble and alabaster was imported from Italy by Jane Eckford. The first church consecrated by Bishop Broughton in 1843 was sited below the Rectory which was built in 1860. The famous Dr. Evatt, who became Chief Justice of NSW and Federal Opposition Leader, was a member of St. Peter's Choir as a boy.



22. View of Court House and War Memorial



The East Maitland Court House and War Memorial may be viewed from this location, taking note of the expansive avenue of trees along William Street.

23. Stockade Hill Heritage Park Bi-Centennial Project

At this point you may wish to walk the optional extension 23a-e on the map as described below. Alternatively proceed to Site 24 as detailed.

Optional Extension to Historic Sites of Significance

23a Stockade Hill

The first school house was erected in 1829 on Stockade Hill using convict labour. The building was also licensed for use as a church and became known as "The Chapel". A whipping stone stood only a few metres away from "The Chapel". This building served the pioneer community for the dual purpose until 1843, when the first St. Peters was consecrated.

23b The Glebe Burial Ground

This Church of England burial ground is the oldest cemetery in the Hunter Valley. The earliest identified burial was in 1828 and the cemetery remained in use until the turn of the century. Many district pioneers have found their resting place here, including Police Magistrate Denny Day, Samuel Clift and John Eckford, who lie side by side with soldier and convict, protestant and catholic. There remain many graves of outstanding historic value. The massive Clift vault, with its double chest tombs, was said to be the largest and most ornamental in the colony, outside Sydney. Many graves record the birthplaces of the deceased. Some stones have rhymes or carry warnings to those who read them.

23c Oldholme

A small building was erected on this site as a residence for Governor Macquarie during his visits to Wallis Plains in 1818 and 1821. It was then called Lachlan Cottage in honour of the Governor's son, born in Sydney in 1813. The site is shown as Government Cottage on the 1829 map of Maitland by Surveyor White. The present cottage was the fourth residence erected on the site and was used by the Maitland Police Magistrate, including Denny Day. Magistrate Day won fame for capturing those responsible for the Myall Creek Massacre in June, 1838 and the Jewboy Davis gang in December, 1840. Day also laid the foundation stone of the Maitland Gaol in February, 1844. Passing visitors were also accommodated, including Governor Gipps in 1839 and 1843 when it was grandly called, "Government House". The house was erected between 1835 and 1839 and is basically a two-room, Georgian Colonial brick cottage, with verandah, and an interesting fanlight and door mouldings. In 1843 part of the verandah was enclosed and a kitchen added.

23d Convict Garden

This is the site of the vegetable garden which was worked by convicts to provide the essential table food for the local administrators in the 1820's.

23e Original Police Barracks Site

This is the original site of the Barracks as shown on Surveyor White's plan in 1829, no doubt situated near the Governor's Cottage to supervise the convict gardens.

24. Caroline Chisholm's Cottage

This is all that remains of a Georgian Row, sited fronting Smith's Row which is now Mill Street. It was built by "Gentleman" Smith in 1840 of brick and undressed stone. Its shingled roof still remains beneath the galvanised iron. The ceilings are very low and the 12-paned windows are large by comparison with the height of the walls. The building became an immigrants' home in March, 1842, founded by Caroline Chisholm. In November 1842 it was decided to convert the building to a hospital, known as Maitland Benevolent Asylum, and it thus became the forerunner of Maitland Hospital.

25. Site of Les Darcy's Parents Home

Les Darcy the Champion Boxer (who died in the USA in 1917) built a home on this site for his parents from his fight winnings. His funeral, which passed this site in 1917, was arguably the largest ever held in the Hunter. Today he is commemorated by the naming of Maitland City By-pass in his honour "The Les Darcy Drive".

26 Smith's Flour Mill (Now Swan, Murray & Hain)



"Enterprise in Maitland - Notwithstanding the dullness of the times, we are glad to see our townsmen are not borne down by them, but are working away heartily, on the old proverb, 'God helps him who helps himself'. John Smith of

East Maitland is fitting up the large stone building near his house as a steam flour mill, and we hear he expects to commence working about 1st November". - Maitland Mercury, August 3, 1844.

This building is unusual because of the use of a stone second storey built over a timber ground floor.

27. Site of McLeod's Inn

McLeod's Inn was also called the Union Inn and the New Inn, and is shown on the first sketch plan of Maitland by Surveyor White in 1829. On August 17, 1829, the first Maitland Court was held there, under Justice Dowling. The Inn was sited at the junction of the tracks to the bustling unofficial town of West Maitland, Newcastle and the head of navigation at Morpeth.

28. Bank of Australasia (Fry's Furniture Store)

Two-storey Victorian Italianate building with slate hipped roof, doric columns flanking entrance doorway and ionic pilasters to the upper level. The building was designed by W. Pender and constructed in 1882 for the Bank of Australasia.



Acknowledgement

Maitland Tourism has undertaken the revision and expansion of the original East Maitland Town Walk prepared by the Department of Lands, Crown Lands Office.

Illustrations included on the East Maitland Heritage Walk have been prepared by Ms Amanda Jean, Heritage Architect and advisor to Maitland City Council.



Maitland Tourism is a Committee of Maitland City Council.

If you would like to suggest improvements to the walk or wish to enquire about other Heritage Walks in the Maitland area, please contact:

HEW Cottage
PO Box 220

MAITLAND NSW 2320

Phone: (049) 33 2611 Fax: (049) 33 3209