

Hawkesbury Historical Society Newsletter

Newsletter of the Hawkesbury Historical Society Inc.

HAWKESBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Aim: Hawkesbury Historical Society aims to encourage & preserve the history of the Hawkesbury

Meetings: 4th Thursday, alternate months, 7.30pm-10pm
Hugh Williams Room at the Museum in Baker Street, Windsor

Open to: People interested in the preservation of the history of the Hawkesbury, new members welcome.

Patron: Ted Books

Office Bearers 2019/2020:

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Snr Vice President: Ted Brill

Jnr Vice President: Dick Gillard

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HHS Collection Committee: Carol Carruthers, Hawkesbury Regional Museum Director – Kath von Witt, Hawkesbury Regional Museum Manager and Curator – Rebecca Turnbull

Publications Committee: Jan Barkley-Jack, Jan Readford and Ellen Jordan

MEETINGS

Meetings cancelled for April and June 2020

Saturday 22nd August 2.00 pm

Thursday 22nd October 7.30 pm (AGM)

Hugh Williams Room
HAWKESBURY REGIONAL MUSEUM

Baker Street, Windsor

CONTENTS

- ♦ Joshua Jones – the first man to respond to the call from Ebenezer ...1
- ♦ George A Montgomery (1861 – 1900) A Fatality of the Boer War3
- ♦ Dr Helsham of Richmond5
- ♦ A Post Office for the Bull Ridge8
- ♦ Museum collection GOES LIVE ONLINE!12
- ♦ A QUIZ – How much do you know about Hawkesbury's earliest Placed of Worship14

Joshua Jones – the first man to respond to the call from Ebenezer

By Ted Brill

When Ebenezer Public School in Coromandel Road was destroyed by a bush fire in December 1901, schoolmaster Walter King arranged to lease the front two rooms of a settler's cottage in Sackville Road as temporary accommodation.

The photograph below was taken in January 2002, one hundred years later. There were two buildings. The one on the left consisted of four rooms divided by a central hallway; there was a verandah on the front. The building at the rear was the kitchen and laundry. Both buildings were originally clad with vertical slabs of ironbark.



It was the property of Joshua & Maria Jones and was rented by the Department of Public Instruction for £1 per week. When school resumed on 20th January 1902, Mr King enrolled 27 pupils; by the time a new school was ready for occupation six months later, there were 48 pupils.

Joshua & Maria Jones had a son, also called Joshua, who would have been 12 years old and a pupil when school was held in his family home

The year 1914 saw the commencement of World War 1 and on 1st September 1915 Joshua Jones, now a young man of 25 years of age, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). He was the first man from the Hawkesbury community of Ebenezer to do so.

From army records we know that Joshua Jones was 5 feet three inches tall (157.5cm), his eyes were brown and his hair dark brown. On the enlistment form his handwriting is neat, clear and consistent – no doubt he had achieved a good standard of literacy as a student of teacher Walter King.

He stated that he was 25 years of age and his occupation was a farmer. His father had died sometime before September 1915 as his mother Maria Jones was listed as his next-of-kin.

Pte Joshua Jones sailed on *HMAT Berrima* and disembarked at Suez.



HMAT Berrima was a passenger liner which served in the [Royal Australian Navy](#) during World War I as an [armed merchantman](#) and troop transport.

On 5th February 1916 he was admitted to hospital with mumps and later discharged.

As a member of 45 Battalion, Joshua Jones proceeded to join the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) on 2nd June 1916, travelling via the *Kinfauns Castle*, leaving Alexandria and disembarking at Marseilles on 8th June.

In early 1917 Maria Jones was to receive sad news –

‘Private J. W. Jones, 45th Battalion, was killed in action in France on 9th January 1917 and was buried in Bulls Road Military Cemetery, Flers, 8 miles East North East of Albert, France.’

Among the personal effects of Pte Joshua Jones that were later returned to the family was a prayer book, a brush, a knitted square, letters and two straps.

During the war times communities supported the war effort by preparing parcels to send to the troops. At Ebenezer they were particularly encouraged and supported by the Ebenezer schoolmaster Mr Ben Humphreys. Two parcels forwarded in 1918 included 18 pairs of socks, 3 pairs of mittens and 1 muffler made by Ebenezer Public School girls.

Once the war was over Mr Humphreys organised functions welcoming home returning soldiers.

On 24th May 1917 special Empire Day celebrations were held at the school and the late Joshua Jones was to receive a special mention.

The Windsor & Richmond Gazette reported:

‘On Thursday afternoon last the residents of Ebenezer turned out in full force to celebrate Empire Day, and also to do honour to those who had gone away from that part to do their "bit" with the Allies on the different war fronts.

The celebrations were held in the Public School and commenced about 3 p.m. Mr Humphreys, the worthy schoolmaster, was in charge of the ceremonies and in the opening, addressed the people. He said the object of the gathering was to unveil their honour board, containing the names of those brave lads who had left the district to fight for them. He made lengthy reference to the heroic deeds of our boys on different fronts, and then called on Mr. R. B. Walker, M.L.A., to address the audience and unveil the honour roll.

We cannot let this occasion pass, said Mr. Walker, without specially referring to the sacrifice made by Private Joshua W. Jones, the first lad to leave Ebenezer for the front, and who lost his life in the service of the country, and died as a true patriot, and a brave soldier on the battlefields of France.

To his widowed mother and bereaved relatives we offer our sincerest sympathy.’



Mr Ben Humphreys and pupils in the school playground c.1917

George A Montgomery (1881 – 1900)

A Fatality of the Boer War

By Carol Carruthers

The Dutch East India Company had established trading posts in South Africa from as early as the mid-1600s and these were settled by Dutch, German and French people, mostly farmers, fleeing from religious persecution. These farmers in turn persecuted the original inhabitants, enslaving and degrading them. In 1806 Britain established the Cape of Good Hope as a handy naval base and seaport for use on the way to Australia.

As the British power grew they came in conflict with the Boers. To cause further trouble was the discovery of diamonds and gold which led to a huge influx of miners hopeful of making their fortune. The Boers, outnumbered by the original inhabitants and foreigners flooding into their country, were determined to remain independent of Britain. By late 1899, Britain and the Boer republics were at war.

The Australian colonial governments offered to send troops to assist the British. It was preferred that the troops be experienced but was acceptable if they could ride and shoot, skills held by most Australian men.

There were just on 100 volunteers from the Hawkesbury of the 16,000 from Australia as a whole. Of this 100 Hawkesbury enlistees six were killed or died in South Africa. Trooper George Montgomery, Sergeant Edward Sullivan of Richmond and Trooper Thomas Mackay of North Richmond were killed in action but Trooper Charles Gosper of Windsor was drowned and Sergeant George Dickson of Windsor and Private Charles Mason of Kurrajong both died of enteric fever or what we now know as typhoid fever.

George, more familiarly called Archie, Montgomery was not born in the Hawkesbury but in Brisbane. When he was 11 years of age his father passed away and two years later his mother, Ellen, moved to Sydney and married James Blume (variously Bloome), a publican and hotel licensee in 1894 of the Printer's Arms Hotel in Liverpool Street, Sydney.

By 1900, and with a new half-brother, the family moved to Windsor where James Blume was the licensee of the Royal Hotel, which we now know as the Macquarie Arms.

As a young 18 year old Archie had enlisted to go to the Boer War as a trooper in the NSW Imperial Bushmen in A Company. Archie's occupation was that of a drover so he was a capable and experienced horseman. On the 27 October 1900 Archie was killed at Zeerust, South Africa. His actions were described in a letter from Sergeant Major Charles Duke from Richmond who was at Zeerust with Archie at the time, to Captain John Paine of the Windsor Half-Squadron:

"This brave lad, who was only 19 years, went outside the line of outposts one night with a view of making a capture of some Boers on his own account, with the result that at 8.30 next morning he was found shot through the breast, and died shortly afterwards."

Evidently such bold moves by Australian soldiers were not uncommon during the Boer War but whether Archie was ordered to go out that night or if it was his sheer youthful exuberance and lack of fear is unknown.

Archie was buried at Zeerust cemetery and his fellow troopers erected an inscribed cross at his resting place and Sergeant Major Duke also made a sketch of the scene so that his mother, Ellen Blume, could envisage her older son's grave and surroundings.

News of Archie's death was published in the local Windsor and Richmond Gazette.

Six weeks after the death of Archie the Gazette noted that at the Windsor licensing court permission was granted for James Blume to have a six month leave of absence so that he could have a holiday touring "the colonies" and that during his absence the business would be conducted by Mrs Blume. Poor woman would still have been very much in grieving mode but had to stand up and run the hotel and care for her six year old son whilst her husband travelled the country.

In November 1902 the unveiling took place of the monument in McQuade Park to the memory of the three soldiers from Windsor who had lost their lives in the Boer War. The marble obelisk was made and erected by George Robertson, a very skilled local monumental mason. Many dignitaries and nearly 1,000 people attended the unveiling.



Boer War Monument, Memorial Park, Windsor
Courtesy - NSW War Memorials Register

The State Premier, Sir John Slee, and his entourage of eight, travelled by train to Windsor and were met at the railway station by Captain John Paine, local Mayors, Members of State Parliament plus a group of Lancers, A Company of the 3rd Infantry Regiment, Windsor and the Windsor Town Band.

Women were not allowed to attend such services and though James Blume was part of the unveiling, Archie's mother, Ellen Blume, could not be present.

After the delivery of many long speeches and the unveiling of the memorial a group of over sixty people gathered at the Royal Hotel for a full meal which had been organised by Ellen Blume with the dining room "profusely decorated with flags and floral" arrangements.

It was certainly not a woman's world. Ellen was not allowed to attend her sons' memorial service but it was alright for her to stay at the hotel and prepare a meal for over 60 diners.

An Officer who had served with Archie, commented after his death that he was "a fine, brave lad, and his death was a sad blow to his comrades".



Queen's South Africa Medal on the left and King's South Africa Medal on the right.

Courtesy:
Carol Carruthers.

Sources:

- Boer War Monument, Windsor
- Trove: Government Gazette, Windsor & Richmond Gazette, Sydney Morning Herald
- Ancestry
- National Archives of Australia
- Murray, Lt Col. P L, *Official Records of the Australian Military Contingents in the War in South Africa.*
- McDougall, A K, *Australians at War*



George Archie Montgomery
Commemorated on the Boer War Monument,
Memorial Park, Windsor

Courtesy - NSW War Memorials Register

LEST WE FORGET



Dr Helsham of Richmond

By Michelle Nichols

Dr Helsham is credited with establishing the St John's Ambulance service in Richmond. The organisation formed in England during the 19th century following the principles of the Order of St John and had spread to Australia by 1883.

William Macdonald Helsham was born near Maryborough in Queensland in 1864, son of Douglas Helsham and Sarah Frances nee Yates. He travelled to England and trained at St Thomas' Hospital London and was awarded the diploma of Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians (LRCP) in 1887 and became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS) in 1888. He was registered by the Medical Board of NSW in 1888 and arrived in Richmond shortly after. He took over the practice of Dr Davidson who had moved to Bowral.¹

MEDICAL—RICHMOND.

Dr. W. M. Helsham

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF
SURGEONS, ENGLAND, AND
Licentiate of the Royal College of
Physicians, London,

HAS commenced the practice of his profes-
sion, and may be consulted daily at Mrs
JOCKEL'S, Windsor-street.

Windsor & Richmond Gazette 24 Nov 1888

In 1892, Helsham married Elizabeth Farquharson Stewart of Richmond at St Peter's Anglican Church Richmond. The following year, they welcomed their first child, a daughter Eileen Bessie Helsham.

The Hawkesbury Agricultural College was founded in 1891 on the outskirts of Richmond in the 1890s with residential courses focussing on agriculture, being taught. By 1892, Dr Helsham was listed as the Medical Officer for the newly formed Hawkesbury Agricultural College and was delivering "*a course of ambulance lectures for the benefit of the students*" to impart some knowledge of medical aid.² He was the Medical Officer at the College, between the years 1896-1910, and again in 1916-1928.



Dr Helsham was involved in the local Volunteer militia for many years, and was serving from the 1890s. He was transferred from Lieutenant to Captain in 1899. There were many of these groups all over Australia in various states and following Federation in 1901, many organisations formed national groups. The Australian Army Medical Corps formed in 1902 and a contingent was deployed to the Boer War. It formally combined all of the armed forces medical services throughout Australia. Prior to this, Helsham had been appointed in 1895 to the Medical Staff Corps.³

The local newspaper reported that Dr Helsham was "*conducting an ambulance class...in the School of Arts*" in Richmond in 1913. It consisted of "*five lessons, and only men are eligible.*"⁴

It was in mid-1913, that Richmond Ambulance Division appears to have been established with Dr Helsham as Superintendent, Mr W. Headford as Ambulance Officer, Minister Rev Milne and Secretary Ken Sly with eight members. Most of the men had participated in an earlier ambulance class conducted by Helsham.

(L to R) Temp Brigadier-General Charles Frederick
Cox, Major William MacDonald Helsham & Major William Glasgow, Egypt, 1915
Courtesy ~ State Library of Queensland

¹ The District. (1888, October 20). Windsor and Richmond Gazette, p. 6. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72558058>

² Richmond. (1892, August 20). Windsor and Richmond Gazette, p. 4. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article72544847>

³ NSW Government Gazette 16 August 1895: 5244. Web. 19 Apr 2020 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article220962580>

⁴ RICHMOND (1913, May 10). Windsor and Richmond Gazette, p. 4. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85849069>

War was declared on Germany by Great Britain and some of her allies in 1914. The nation quickly acted with men volunteering for the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), joined by doctors and nurses. The local Hawkesbury community volunteered quickly with many joining up within days of the announcement.

Dr William Macdonald Helsham, aged 50 from Richmond enlisted on August 20. Many of the students, staff and employees from Hawkesbury Agricultural College, followed his example including George McGillivray, the Assistant Dairy Instructor. Helsham was appointed as Major and was to oversee the First Division's Light Horse Field Ambulance Brigade and its formation. Over the next few days, a large number of students from the College, enlisted joining Helsham. They boarded the transport 'Southern' in September and headed to Melbourne, finally embarking in October.

There were over 30 HAC students or connected Hawkesburyites in the 1st Light Horse Field Ambulance, A Squadron, as well as Dr Piero Fiaschi the son of Dr Thomas Fiaschi from Tizzana Winery at Ebenezer and Helsham's younger brother, Charles.

Whilst at Gallipoli, Dr Helsham became unwell and was admitted to hospital. He suffered with a hydrocele cyst (in his testes) which was aggravated by the strain of his work and was eventually sent to Malta for treatment but invalided out. He returned home on the "Kanowna" in November 1915 and officially terminated on 18 February 1916.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

C03564

**The 1st LHFA newly arrived at Anzac; Major William Helsham is fifth from left facing the camera, sitting on the crate with peaked cap. Taken at "Walker's Gully" 5 August 1915.
Courtesy Australian War Memorial**

Many of the students who enlisted were fond of Helsham and letters sent to Mr Potts the principal, noted this. The soldiers were sorry to see Helsham go, and mentioned how well he treated them. Tom Rutherford wrote to Mr Potts that Helsham had, *"always been thoughtful for his men, and since landing here he has proved himself to be cool under fire, going about his duties in the face of almost overwhelming difficulties, coming through the whole bright and cheery. We fully recognise that we are losing an officer who can never be replaced, and Richmond may well be proud of her representative."*⁵

Following his return from the front, Helsham returned to Richmond and remained in the town for almost another decade. He was still involved with the Ambulance Division which expanded. Working in the community, they assisted and transported the sick injured and provided first aid at sports and other events in the town, and provided first aid training. Helsham continued with St John's Ambulance in Richmond until 1930, according to the Division's history. He was the Superintendent as well as the Divisional Surgeon, from 1913-1930. In 1928 he retired with his wife, to Narrabeen. He sold his practice to Dr. Steele. Helsham was highly regarded by the community and very concerned with the Richmond Hospital. He was also a keen sportsman, particularly interested in tennis and cricket.⁶

⁵ (1915, December 3). Windsor and Richmond Gazette, p. 7. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page8928451>; ANZHAC Hawkesbury Agricultural College and the Great War: Centenary of Silence edition 1919-2019 / Peter Lister p. 212.

⁶ PERSONAL (1928, March 9). Windsor and Richmond Gazette, p. 4. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85926290>

Mrs Helsham was remembered for her gallant efforts in fundraising for Soldiers Memorial Hall at the College after the war. The couple were given a fine farewell, attended by many dignitaries, at the Richmond School of Arts.

The couple acquired property on the corner of Goodwin Street and Pittwater Road at Narrabeen.

WELCOME TO MAJOR HELSHAM.

The people of Richmond and district turned out in large numbers on Thursday night of last week to welcome home Major Helsham, of the Army Medical Corps. Major Helsham, soon after the war started, decided it was his duty to enlist, and induced over 50 local boys to go with him.

He was met at the 7.15 p.m. train on Thursday by the Mayor (Ald. A. S. Klein) and Major Philip Charley, and taken to the School of Arts, followed by a procession.

The Mayor said he did not think Richmond ever saw such a gathering before to do honor to a soldier who had been doing his best duty at the front.

Major Charley said the first thought in his mind was a hearty welcome back to their friend, their comrade, and their hero. There was one thing about the Australian soldier of which all were proud—he never was heard to grumble. Every young fellow who has gone, or who intends to go, is a hero. Major Helsham was in command of a corps of non-combatants. No arms were carried by them. It was the Army Medical Corps that were brave men.

Principal Potts said many had felt the departure of the doctor, and none more so than the students of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College, of whom he took with him some of the best. Some, sad to say, were never to return. As principal, he had to express thanks to Major Helsham for his fatherly care for the lads who went to the front. The college had turned out something like 1,500 trained farmers. Their training was not only to till their farms, but to protect their homes, and of the number one-sixth of them were at the Dardanelles fighting for home and duty. The doctor gave the students a noble example in leading them. No less than 22 had met their fate.

Major Helsham rose, amid much cheering. "I feel," he said, "that if I never had any honor paid me before in my life, I have it now. I am only one of the crowd who have been out there. I am only one of a good lot who went from this district. If I had to go again, I would ask for everyone of them to come with me. I would not wish for a better lot. They were always willing to do their work. They were cheerful, light-hearted, and never failed. If I asked them to go into a ticklish place they went. Often I had to stop the work when it was too dangerous. I feel to-night that while you are honoring me you are honoring them as well. To any man who was going over—and lots would have to go yet—his tip was that they would never regret it, but would wonder why they did not go before. He had been 15 months away from home. Two months on Gallipoli, and that two months was worth all the rest. Never did he hear a man at Gallipoli say he was sorry he went. It is going to be a long war, and numbers will tell."

Windsor & Richmond Gazette 3 Dec 1915

WELSHAM		William Macdonald		Major		1st L.H.F.A.	
SCHEDULE		PURPORT		Regimental No.		Unit.	
Embkd. at Sydney per N.M.A.T. A.27 "Southern" 18/10/14							
22/9/15 Adm to Hosp. Gallipoli							
27/9/15 Adm Blue Sisters Hosp Malta Hydrocele (EF) MEF 11 -15							
20/10/15 Invalided to Australia Suez per "Kanowna" " " 1/5-16							
Sailed from Suez, per "Kanowna" 5/10/15. Arrived at Melbourne 22/11/15							
"Hydrocele"							
Appt. Terminated 18/2/16.							
CAG 38/16.							

Part of
Service
Record of Dr
W. M.
Helsham
Courtesy
National
Archives of
Australia

Military Forces of the Commonwealth.		G.M. Form A 22	
Application for a Commission in the		(Revised 1.5.15)	
No.	Particulars.		
1. Surname	HELSHAM		
Other names (in full)	WILLIAM MACDONALD		
2. Educational Qualifications	L.R.C.S. Surgeon		
3. Military Qualifications (previous Military Service, if any, to be stated)	G.G.M.C. No. 26 L.H.F.A.		
4. Present Civil Employment	General Practitioner		
5. Date of Birth and Age	March 15, 1864 50 Years 5 Months		
6. If a British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject	Yes		
7. Married or Single	Single		
8. Postal Address	Richmond N.S.W. Australia		
9. Next of Kin	Mrs. E. F. Helsham		
Date	19/8/14		
NOTE: Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces are required to attach a satisfactory certificate of moral character, or, if they are serving in the Permanent or Citizen Forces, to be recommended by their Commanding Officer. They are also to state on the back of this form the subjects in which they desire to be examined in Part II, and where exemptions are claimed for educational subjects, the authority for same is to be stated, and where necessary to be supported by certificate.			
MEDICAL CERTIFICATE			
In the cases of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces, Proceedings of Board, in accordance with the "Instructions for the Physical Examination of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Military Forces of the Commonwealth," will be substituted for this Certificate; such Board, however, will not be assembled until after the nomination of the Candidate to undergo examination has been approved by the Military Board of Administration.			
I, <u>Charles Russell Ross</u> do hereby certify the correctness of the following particulars respecting the above-named applicant. I further certify that the applicant is not ruptured, and is capable of bearing the fatigue incidents to the performance of military duty.			
Height	5' 11" 5/16	Weight	11 stone
Chest Measurement	35 1/2	Eyesight	normal
Signature of the Examining Medical Officer <u>W. Ross</u>			
RECOMMENDATION AND CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER			
Not required in the cases of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces.			
I recommend that the candidate above-named be appointed a <u>Major</u> in the Corps under my command, and I certify:—			
1. That such appointment will be within the authorized establishment and provision on the Estimates for the current year, or			
2. That such appointment, although not within the authorized establishment and provision on the Estimates for the current year, will be within the number of supernumerary officers permitted under C.M. Regulation 58.			
3. That the provisions of C.M. Reg. 60 have been fully complied with.			
4. That the provisions of U. T. Reg. 33 have been fully complied with.			
5. That the provisions of U. T. Reg. 119 have been fully complied with.			
On appointment the candidate will be posted to <u>1st L.H.F.A. A.I.E. Bde.</u> Squadron, Battery, or Coy., &c.			
Date	19.8.14	Commanding	A.M.C. 2nd. M.D. Reg. or Corps.
RECOMMENDATION OF DISTRICT COMMANDANT			
Recommended Candidate considered by <u>W. Ross</u>			
Date	20.8.14	Commanding	W. Ross
Commanding C.M. Force Military District			
* Sub-para. 1a to be struck out if (a) applies, and vice versa. * Sub-para. not applicable to be struck out.			
N.B.—Record of War Service (if any, to be shown on back of Form.			
Seniority of Candidates to be stated when two or more applications are forwarded on the same date.			

Helsham enjoyed approximately 20 years of retirement before passing away at Narrabeen in April 1948. Elizabeth lived until 1962. ■

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A Post Office for the Bull Ridge...

Part One

Cathy McHardy - March 2020

My interest in the history of East Kurrajong began when our family moved there from Wilberforce in January 1996. It was a great change for us all coming from the quarter acre suburban block onto what was a seemingly enormous fifteen acres. Talking to our neighbours and getting to know our new surroundings, we started to wonder about the history of this place which was east of Kurrajong. It was made up of a great variety of blocks with remnants of orchards and mixed farms large and small scattered along the ridge known as the Bull Ridge from Comleroy Road to Sackville.

Of course the best place to start was to talk to the older residents and ask them about the history of East Kurrajong. So we knocked on doors, introduced ourselves and hoped that these long term residents would be keen to reminisce about their lives and the history of the district. Most were only too pleased to chat and sometimes mentioned others who may have an interesting story to tell. We gradually became engrossed in the ups and downs of the district, filling in the oral narrative with details from official and other published sources such as newspaper reports.

So here is the first part of the story of the post office at East Kurrajong or should we say at the Bull Ridge!

Early in 1895, the energetic citizens of Bull Ridge (now known as East Kurrajong) having successfully petitioned the NSW government for the establishment of a public school, now turned their attention to the provision of a post office or at the very least a bi-weekly or tri-weekly mail service from either Windsor or Wilberforce.

The files for Bull Ridge and East Kurrajong Post Office held by the National Archives of Australia at the Chester Hill repository illuminate the story (1).

In February 1895, a petition supporting the establishment of the post office or mail service was circulated throughout the community, which gathered about three pages of signatures. The petition made several points in support of the request. It claimed that farmers could only be spared from their farms on Saturdays to collect their mail from Wilberforce or Windsor and that letters often remained at Freemans Reach Post Office for up to two weeks as the addressee did not know a letter was being held at that office.

The Postmaster-General's Department of New South Wales (PMG) requested the postmasters at Wilberforce and Freemans Reach to make enquiries as to the feasibility of the application and suggest an appropriate person to be appointed postmaster.

James Simpson of Freemans Reach stated that the Bull Ridge schoolmaster Bertie James was "the only person qualified to act who is centrally situated" and that the mail could feasibly come from Freemans Reach twice weekly with about 16 letters a week passing through that office for the residents of Bull Ridge. The appointment of the schoolmaster would be convenient for residents as the school was centrally located and the children could be utilised to carry the letters home with them from school. Wilberforce postmaster, M Buttsworth, claimed that he could make no suggestions as the residents were not personally known to him but that about 20 letters a week passed through the Wilberforce office addressed to Bull Ridge. In his opinion the establishment of a post office was justified.

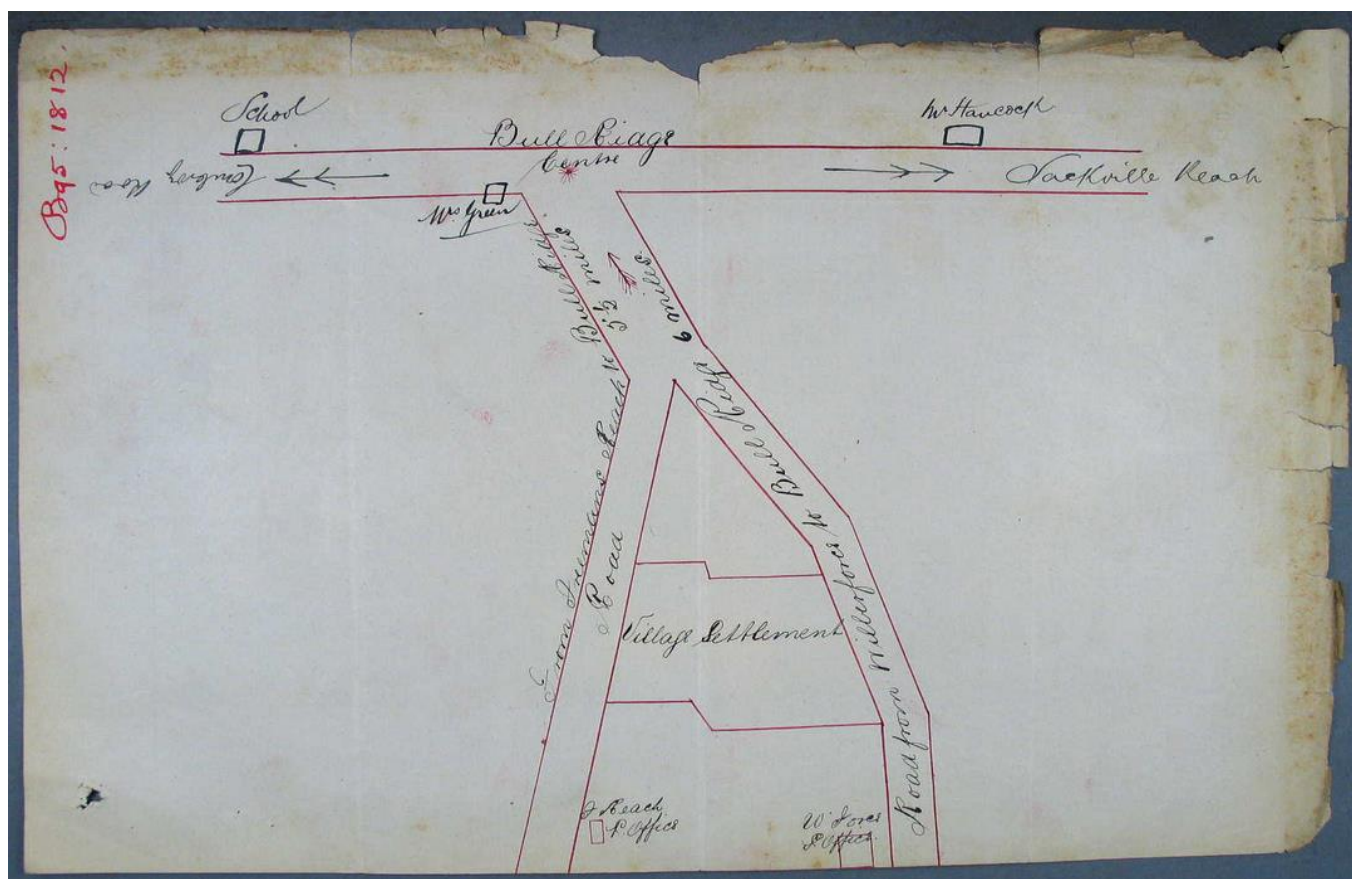
The schoolmaster Bertie James, however, would only consent to operating the post office if the opening days did not include Saturday, which he naturally considered to be his day off. At this point another possible candidate comes into the story. Farmer and orchardist Mr Henry Archer would agree under sufferance to operate the post office from his residence, but his farm was not centrally located. He stated that if it meant getting a post office at all, then he was prepared to undertake the role.

There was dissent amongst some sections of the community led by James Hancock and accordingly, in March 1895, another petition circulated, this time campaigning for the post office to be located at Hancock's house with Hancock as the postmaster. It claimed that there were eight or nine households at Buttsworth's Swamp, and ten households, the two and a half miles away near Mr Hancock's residence. Hancock's (at the 'new' Bull Ridge) was more centrally located than the school which was located at the 'old' Bull Ridge.

The petition incorrectly asserted that the settlement around the school had only come into existence since the facility was established and that the bulk of inhabitants resided in the area from the vicinity of Hancock's spreading in an easterly direction towards Sackville. After all, the school was not on the main road but situated on the road from the Comleroy to the Bull Ridge, whereas Hancock's was on the main road to Sackville. Hancock's property was located on portion 77, Parish of Meehan, County of Cook and still exists today on the western side of the Putty Road, East Kurrajong between East Kurrajong Road and Bull Ridge Road. It remains one of the few brick dwellings constructed on the Bull Ridge before the 1960s.

In 2020, we would surely be of the opinion that the role of teacher should be centred on the education of the children of Bull Ridge rather than administering the local mail service, however, this was not the reasoning used in the application. Rather, the teacher was a non-resident (travelling from Freemans Reach each day) who could not give the position the attention demanded by postal duties. In addition James was not prepared to be available on Saturdays or public holidays, and apart from school days, the office would be unattended and "left to the mercy of any night marauder".

Citizens usually signed such petitions in their own hand and perusing the signatures, some confident and well formed, others awkward and shaky, give an interesting insight into the literacy of the population at this time. It will also be noticed that many signed both petitions, leaving the reader wondering which side they were actually on or was it a case of supporting all in the hope that one of the applications was successful. Some even signed the same petition more than once!



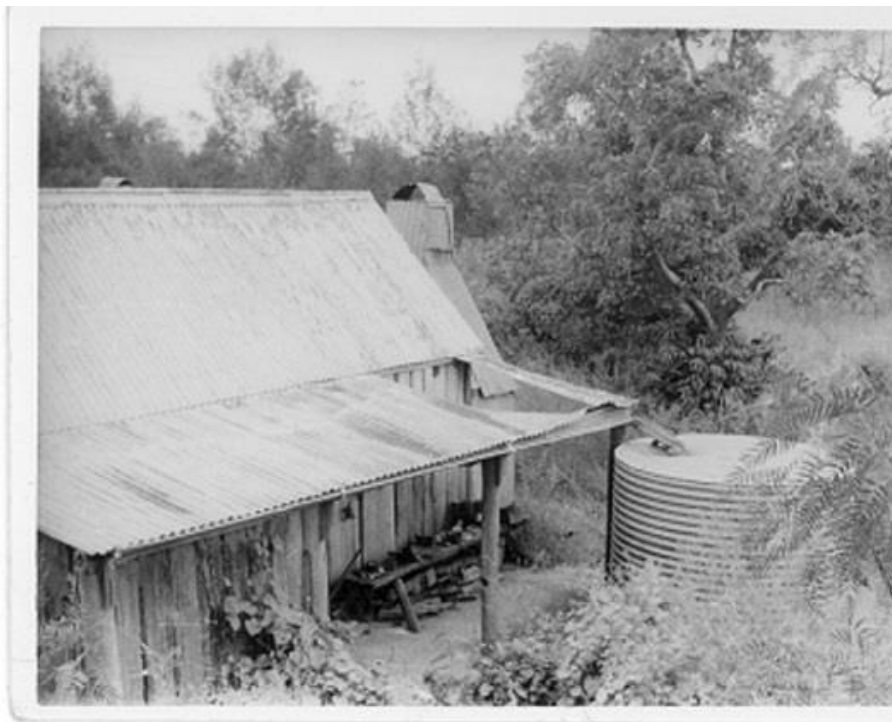
Sketch showing the relative positions of the school, Hancock's property and the centrally located Mrs Green's residence.
NLA Bull Ridge Post Office file retrieved 02/04/2020.

The PMG took an alternative view of the situation after weighing up the pros and cons and the relative distances to Bull Ridge from other localities already supplied with post offices. It was decided to avoid a potentially inflammatory situation by not offering Mr James nor Mr Hancock the position of postmaster.

Mrs Mary Ann Green (who incidentally had signed the petition in favour of Hancock) was approached by the department and she was pleased to accept the position of postmistress commencing duties in May of 1895 at the annual salary of £10. Her residence at Green's Corner on Bull Ridge Road (now East Kurrajong Road) was situated near the intersection with the roads from Freemans Reach and Wilberforce (now Old East Kurrajong Road).



The location of the first post office operated by Mrs Mary Green in 1895 was the flat roofed building at Green's home photographed in 1960. From the collection of the late Austin Buttsworth.



Green's home photographed in 1960. From the collection of the late Austin Buttsworth.

Tenders were called for the mail run from Freemans Reach Post Office to Bull Ridge and there were four applicants for the provision of this service: Benjamin Hibbert; John Brewer; Thomas Savage and J. D. Bullock. Thomas Savage, the obvious choice as he already carried the mail from Windsor to Freemans Reach, won the tender with a rate of £17-10-0.

Sadly, the newly established post office at Green's was not supported by the community and on 10 May 1895, the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* reported that since the commencement of service, the Bull Ridge Post Office had not carried any mail in either direction. This was not quite accurate but a report furnished to the Postmaster-General in June 1895 questioned the lack of success of the facility when so many including local member, William Morgan had petitioned for the establishment of the service. For the last week of May 1896, 8 letters and 18 newspapers were received and 13 letters were posted by the residents of the Bull Ridge. This was not enough business to warrant the existence of the post office in this locality.

Twelve months later the decision was made to close Bull Ridge Post Office due of the lack of patronage and because Freeman's Reach Post Office was only five miles away. It was noted that the salary paid to Mrs Green was £10 and Mr T.J. Savage was paid a portorage allowance of £13 per year to convey the mail between Freeman's Reach and Bull Ridge three times per week. Mail would leave Bull Ridge at 3.00pm every Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday. The total cost of the operation of the post office was £23 while the total revenue for the year was only £10, making a loss of £13 per year.

James Simpson, postmaster of Freemans Reach reported to the PMG that Bull Ridge was not supported by the whole community, many of whom prefer to travel to Wilberforce or Freemans Reach for mail services. The reason for the lack of community support will probably never be known but it may be surmised that the location did not satisfy either camp and so was only patronised by the non-aligned.

On 31 July 1896 mail despatching was discontinued from Freeman's Reach to Bull Ridge and mail continued to be despatched from Freemans Reach to Windsor daily at 2.30pm as had been the case before the establishment of the local post office.

The story is resumed within the file for East Kurrajong Post Office but there is a gap in the official records from July 1896 until 1910, so alternative sources need to be examined to fill in the intervening years. It seems incredulous that by 1898 the *Daily Telegraph* of 1 June should report that "the people of Bull Ridge are agitating for increased postal facilities. At present they have to journey to Freeman's Reach to transact postal business" (2).

There are a number of sources which point to the postal facilities having been re-established by 1901. In November 1900 the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* ran a NSW government advertisement calling again for tenders for the "conveyance of mails between Morgan and Freeman's Reach" (3). On another page in the same edition came the announcement that the post office "when it is opened should settle all doubts as to what the name is to be in future."

Then on 24 November the notice appeared stating that Mrs George Packer (Hannah) is to be the postmistress at Morgan. It will be noticed that Bull Ridge was referred to as 'Morgan' in the advertisement. For a couple of years debate and argument raged within the community to rename Bull Ridge as Morgan or Morgan Hill after the local member of NSW parliament at the time, William Morgan. This convoluted story I shall leave for another time.

The Bull Ridge Post Office was also listed as a polling place for the NSW state government elections held in July 1901 according to the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* of 29 June.

Hannah Packer continued to operate the post office until 1910 when the service was taken over by Arthur Edmund Case. And there we shall leave the story of the ups and downs of postal services on the Bull Ridge until next time...

References:

- (1) [National Archives of Australia Post Office files for Bull Ridge and East Kurrajong](https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=6850002)
<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=6850002>
<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=434665>
- (2) *Daily Telegraph*, 1 June 1898, p. 5. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/239562524>
- (3) *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 10 November 1900, p. 13. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85851820>
- (4) *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 10 Nov 1900, p. 6. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85851784>
- (5) *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 24 Nov 1900, p. 14. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85851592>
- (6) *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 29 June 1901, p. 12. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85853612>

ANSWERS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Not knowing where he would preach or sleep | 11. Roman Catholic |
| 2. Windsor Chapel, 1804 | 12. The Reverend Benjamin Carvosso |
| 3. St Matthew's Anglican, Windsor | 13. The Reverend Henry Stiles |
| 4. St Peter's Anglican, Richmond | 14. The Reverend Henry Fulton |
| 5. St Matthew's Anglican, Windsor | 15. St John's Anglican, Wilberforce |
| 6. Richmond | 16. Wesleyan, Richmond |
| 7. St Matthew's Anglican, Windsor | 17. Frederic C. Terry, 1853. |
| 8. St Andrew's Presbyterian [Uniting], Richmond | 18. George and Elizabeth Bowman |
| 9. In a parishioner's house | 19. St James Anglican, Pitt Town |
| 10. Ebenezer | 20. St Matthew's Roman Catholic, Windsor |
| | 21. Surgeon Thomas Arndell |

Museum collection GOES LIVE ONLINE!

Photographs, convict tools, historical records, clothing, military paraphernalia, farming equipment, household items, boat building tools and much more can now all be accessed remotely as the collection of the **Hawkesbury Regional Museum** is made live online!

This project has been made possible by a State Government grant through the State Library of NSW. The funds were used to upgrade the Hawkesbury Library Service catalogue system and to also integrate the Museum, Gallery and the Library's Hawkesbury Images catalogues into the same system.

Hawkesbury City Council is one of the first Local Governments in Australia to integrate its cultural collections so that people can search across all collections if they wish to.

For more than 18 months Museum staff have been working diligently behind the scenes documenting, photographing and digitising over 7,000 Museum objects for the online collection catalogues. The Mayor said:

"The ability for our community to access these unique and significant collections, which are housed and cared for at the Gallery and Museum, is needed now more than ever.

This is a fantastic opportunity for members of the public to engage with these collections now that the collection catalogue is available online for the public to access from home. Our collections can now reach a global audience".

Try searching the collections, including recently digitised items. You can browse the collections thematically, and read about fascinating objects in the catalogue. Not all collection items have been uploaded yet, and more are being added each day.

So come and visit us online!

How to access the collections online

Visit www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

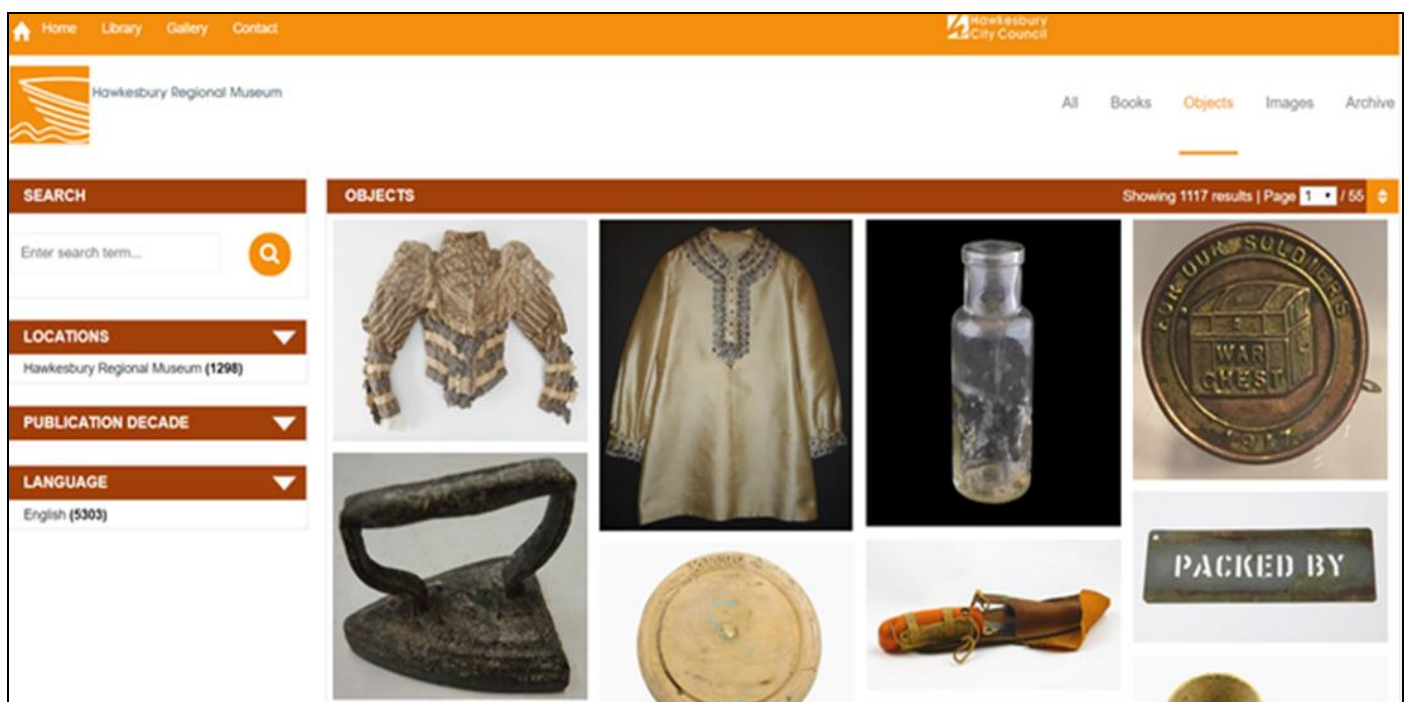
Then select the Museum www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/museum website.

Click on the 'Collection' Tab at the top of the webpage

Click on 'Search the collection'.

Enter your search in the search box and click enter!

For further details on the collections, exhibitions, updates and activities, follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/hawkesburygallery> or <https://www.facebook.com/hawkesburymuseum>



About the collection

The Hawkesbury Regional Museum houses the collection of the Hawkesbury Historical Society. Between 1956 and 2007, the Society collected more than 6,000 items of material culture. The collection has a rich and diverse range of historic artefacts which are of local, state and national significance.

Museum themes are based on the stories of the Hawkesbury River, Land and People. Collection highlights include: land grants and convict tools relating to the early colonial Governors; a 1870s original flood boat; items that belonged to the pioneering settler families of the Hawkesbury; and indigenous tools belonging to the Darug and Darkinjung people, the traditional owners and custodians who have cared for the land around the Hawkesbury for many thousands of years.

The collection includes historically important artefacts such as the celestial globe, which belonged to internationally-renowned astronomer John Tebbutt (depicted on our earlier, paper \$100 note), who lived his entire life in the Hawkesbury; a diary kept by a member of HMAS Hawkesbury during World War II; as well as the building level used in building Australia's oldest church at Ebenezer; not to mention items relating to the Flabbit, an 'animal' unique to the Hawkesbury region!

The archaeological collection includes objects discovered during excavations carried out at the Museum in 2006, as well as Windsor Military Barracks (1977) and the Queens Arms Inn (Rouse Hill, 1993).

Through generous donations, the Museum has continued to collect objects that tell the important and fascinating stories, both big and small, about the Hawkesbury region. The Museum aims to preserve, develop and communicate information relating to Hawkesbury's history for all to share.

Examples from the Collection...



Rebecca Turnbull,
Hawkesbury City Council's
Acting Gallery and
Museum Director
/Museum Curator,
will give a demonstration
at a future HHS meeting.

at Windsor
Height of all the Floods, which attained to a height
of 40 feet above the mean tidal level of the South Creek,
since 1854.

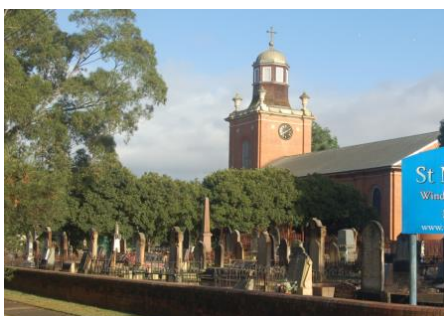
<i>Date of Maximum</i>	<i>Height above Mean Tidal Level</i>
1864. June 13.	48.0 feet.
1867. June 23.	63.2 "
1870. April 28.	45.0 "
1873. Feb 26-27.	44.6 "
1879. Sept 11.	43.3 "
1900. July 7.	46.2 "

John Tebbutt.

A QUIZ

How much do you know about Hawkesbury's earliest Places of Worship?

Jan Barkley-Jack



In October 1795 Samuel Marsden, a Colonial Chaplain announced:

"I am going to preach at the Hawkesbury settlement on Sunday next, twenty miles distant from Home..."

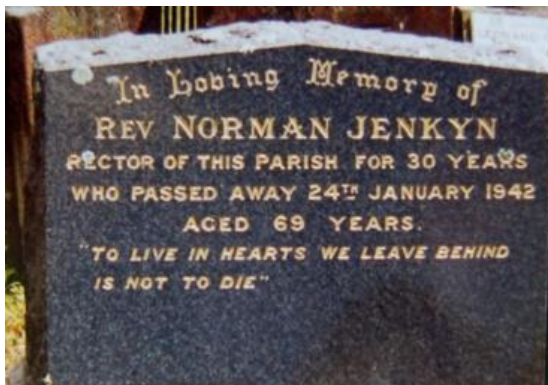
Marsden's wife Elizabeth, confided that:

"...preaching...[in certain conditions] often makes [Samuel] quite uneasy and puts him out of temper with the place and the people"

Q. 1: What put the Reverend Samuel Marsden 'out of temper' at Hawkesbury in 1795?



Q. 2: Which Hawkesbury chapel [and school house] was built on the site circled and when?



Q. 3: Which church did this clergyman serve?

The bright, warm sun shone down on the old town, a few children playing under the shade of one of the old trees, for which **Richmond** is famous ; down the road, along the Bottoms, a bullock team is slowly wending its way. The old church looks the abode of peace and the very gate of Heaven. **St. Peter's** has been, and is still, loved and revered by many who have worshipped within its walls ; many of her children have settled down in distant homes ; others, alas, have had their finer spiritual sensibilities blunted by a fearfully strenuous struggle for a living ; and almost imper-

W&R Gazette, 21 January 1911. William Freame

Q. 4: About which church were these words written?



Q. 5: In which church would you find these windows?



Q. 6: Which Hawkesbury Macquarie Schoolhouse/temporary chapel is this?

Q. 7: Where would you find this corner?



Q. 8: Which church has this entry?

In 1803 the early Catholic priest, Father James Dixon, visited the Hawkesbury to conduct the first Roman Catholic service.

Q. 9: Where was it held?



Q. 10: Which church is this?



Q. 11: Which denomination applied for and received this land for their church in 1821?

The Rev. Samuel Marsden gave a portion of the property he held in Windsor for a Wesleyan [Methodist] chapel. The foundation stone was laid by the Reverend S. Leigh, on 13th September 1818, and it was opened in 1820.

Q. 12: The Wesleyan chapel in Windsor was opened by which minister?

Q. 13: Which Anglican minister donated £2 to Caroline Chisholm's cause to help poor emigrants in November 1841?

One Hawkesbury clergyman was born in Ireland, arriving in NSW in 1800 and came to preach at the Hawkesbury in November that year. He was acting colonial chaplain whilst the Reverend Samuel Marsden was overseas in 1807-1809. He supported Governor Bligh and gave evidence for him in the court proceedings that followed Bligh's being deposed.

Q. 14: Who was he?



Q. 15: Where would you find these windows?



Q. 16: Which church did this used to be?



Q. 17 Who painted this scene showing St Peters, Richmond in its streetscape?



Q. 18: This couple donated the land for St Andrew's church at Richmond, who are they?



Q. 19: Which church is this?

Q. 20: Which church was built in 1840 from a bequest in 1836?

Q. 21: Before Ebenezer church was built, services were held under a tree or in the home of which parishioner?

ANSWERS - See - Page11

THANKS JAN – THIS IS A GREAT QUIZ