

# The Patrick Plains Gazette

*Newsletter of the Family History Society Singleton Inc*

Volume 36- Number 1- April 2019



**35 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE IN SINGLETON – NSW**

**“LEST WE FORGET”**



# FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY SINGLETON Inc

**GENERAL MEETING:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday each month at 11.30am. Please confirm.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in February at 3pm.

**LIBRARY:** Ground floor Mechanics Institute 74 George Street, Singleton 2330  
Open Mondays 6 pm to 8 pm; Wednesdays 12 noon to 3 pm; Saturdays 1 pm to 4 pm.  
Closed Public Holidays and for a period in December & January.

Use of Library facilities is free to members. Non members \$5-00 per visit

**MEMBERSHIP:** Dues commence 1<sup>st</sup> February each year \$30 Single \$35 per family.

**POSTAL ADDRESS:** PO Box 422, Singleton NSW. 2330

**RESEARCH ENQUIRIES:** Non members \$20 per letter of enquiry plus costs. Out of town members up to 3 free enquiries per year.

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** [famhissocsinginc@yahoo.com.au](mailto:famhissocsinginc@yahoo.com.au) **WEB ADDRESS:** [www.fhssi.com](http://www.fhssi.com)

**ALL RESEARCH ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY  
AND SHOULD INCLUDE THE DUE FEE AND A4 STAMPED SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.**

----- OFFICE BEARERS-----

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**The Patrick Plains Gazette:** Contact Editor Di Sneddon 0456822453

----- PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE -----

**Singleton District Pioneer Register** \$30 including postage 128 pages, 1,000 individual entries with Index and contributors Index.

**Volume 1.** Broke, Bulga, Doyle's Creek, Glenridding, Howes Valley, Jerry's Plains, Mount Thorley, Putty, Warkworth, Wylie's Flat. \$20 each plus \$5.50 postage per copy.

**Volume 2.** Whittingham, Anglican 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. \$20 plus postage \$5.50 per copy.

**Volume 3.** Queen Street Catholic Cemetery including the Sisters of Mercy Cemetery, Catholic Columbarium and the Old Methodist Cemetery [now Uniting].  
\$20 plus \$5.50 postage per copy.

**Volume 4.** Sedgfield Cemetery. Updated version. \$20 plus \$5.50 postage per copy.

**Volume 5.** Branxton and some graves without headstones for the Singleton & Branxton Districts.  
\$20 plus \$5.50 postage per copy.

**First Edition Cemetery Inscription Books are available on request.**

**Volumes 1, 3 and 4** covering Sedgfield, Old Methodist, St Clements Camberwell, Clifford Private, Sydenham Private, Gowrie Private, Carrowbrook Roll of Honour, Spottiswood, Mount Pleasant, Reedy Creek, Glendon Brook, Burdekin Park Cenotaph, Bungaraby (Howes Valley), Noisy Point (Howes Valley), Carrowbrook, Belford, Glendon, Busby Private (Belford), Goorangoola, Queens Street Catholic, All Saints Cremation Plaques Singleton, Dangar Mausoleum All Saints Church Singleton.  
\$20 each plus \$5.50 postage per copy.

**The Graveyard & Its Stories:** Camberwell District NSW, St Clements Burial Ground. By Carol Garvie. (Camberwell Cemetery Only) \$30.00, plus \$5.50 postage per copy.

**The Caledonian Hotel Singleton;** The first hundred odd years by Martin King.  
\$35.00 plus \$5.50 postage per copy

Information used to produce articles for the Gazette may have been contributed by our members, correspondents and consolidated by the author's own research. We sincerely thank these contributors and regret that space does not permit us to include all their names. Where space allows sources will be published but may otherwise be available.

**WHILST ALL EFFORTS ARE MADE THE SOCIETY TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY OR THE AUTHENTICITY OF ARTICLES PRINTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.**

Front Cover Mechanics' Institute Singleton, Built 1866. Woodblock c1880.

Woodblock Donated to the 74 George Street Management Committee by the Robinson Family Collection

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## DUTY LIBRARIANS NEEDED

**We need assistance for the 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays and Saturdays.**

**These days do not occur often, but we would appreciate someone to cover these days.**

**Contact 65722235**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### **President's Report AGM 2019**

Here we are with another year added to our Society's record and 2019 well on its way. I am happy to report the Society remains in good stead. Additionally, we have gained financial assistance from Singleton Council and a commitment of an annual contribution; I thank Singleton Council for acknowledging our value. Other good news to report is we have acquired another room and when renovated the extra room will be a tremendous bonus to us. I thank the Mechanics Institute 74 George Street Management Committee for seeing the benefit we could gain from this additional space. At present we are hopeful of a successful grant application for a Digital Camera and Multiple Sheet Scanner which will also be very well utilised by the Society.

The achievements of the past year can be attributed to our dedicated volunteers who continue to contribute time and effort to progressing the Society's endeavours and maintaining our reputation as a helpful, friendly society despite 2018 presenting many of us with unanticipated personal hurdles.

The Society continues to give good service to members and visitors; this would not be possible if it were not for the commitment of John Tindale, Pauline McLoughlin, Dot Clayworth, Miriam Knight, Di Gee, George Standen, Eden Flak, Jim Papworth; these people were the Committee, the Researchers, Duty Librarians, and Newsletter Committee. I thank Michael Heffernan for assisting us with technology; it is very pleasing to finally have our own web page. I will also flag the need for an additional ex-offio position of Website Co-Ordinator.

We again opened on Anzac Day for members of the community to view our Military records and I would like to thank George Standen and Miriam Knight for their assistance on this occasion.

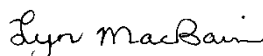
It is sad to say goodbye to any member, but it is particularly sad to say a goodbye to George Standen who due to ill health has moved closer to family. Always helpful; he was an obliging backup for duty days when others couldn't make it. I personally will miss his local and military knowledge, his assistance with brick walls and his quirky sense of humour. He will be sadly missed but I do hope he will visit us from time to time and others take the opportunity to catch up with him when they can.

Like many Family History, Historical Societies and other organisations we have challenges confronting us; one of the greatest to stay relevant in an internet and social network era. This is where our new website will be of benefit. We all need to get the message out there that no amount of internet researching can compare with primary records and at the source research.

Throughout the year we have gained several new members and hope their experience with us is ongoing. I encourage all members to do what they can for the Society; there is always something you can do even if you don't live in the area; it takes but a small effort from all to secure the Society into the future.

In closing I take the opportunity to wholeheartedly thank each and every one of you personally for your support and friendship and look forward to a great year ahead.

Thank you.



Lyn MacBain

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ruth Beh, Phil Merrick and Neil Wallace

We welcome you and wish you every success in your research endeavours.

## CONGRATULATIONS IN ORDER

Member Peggy Moore was announced Singleton's Citizen of the Year 2019. Peg's contribution to Netball is phenomenal; along with other interests Peg is President of the Singleton Historical Society.

Young Achiever of the Year was Byron Fletcher. Our sincere congratulations to you both.

## 1919

On the Throne: King George V and Queen Mary

Prime Minister: Billy Hughes

Gov. General: Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson

Premier NSW: William Holman KCMG

Governor of New South Wales: Sir Walter Davidson

President of the Patrick Plains Shire Council Shire: William George Roberts

Mayor of the Singleton Municipal Council: David McDougall

Population of Australia: 5,193,104.

Vital Statistics for Singleton & District Quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 1919

Total Births 55: 30 males & 25 females. Deaths 20: 12 males 5 females. Marriages 5.



King George V, Queen Mary of Teck, Prime Minister. Billy Hughes, Gov.Gen.Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson, Premier NSW William Holman, Governor of New South Wales – Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair KCB, MVO)

## FROM THE SINGLETON ARGUS APRIL 1919: INOCULATIONS: 'The Spanish Flu'

Sat 19 Apr 1919 / Page 3 /

### **PNEUMONIC INFLUENZA**

#### **INOCULATION DEPOTS AT COUNTRY CENTRES**

RESIDENTS in outlying localities are requested to note that FREE INOCULATION DEPOTS will be opened at the undermentioned places on the dates and at the hours stated respectively, viz.:-

**WEDNESDAY, 23rd APRIL—**  
GLENDON (Hall), 3.30 to 4 p.m.  
BELFORD (School), 4.30 to 5 p.m.  
WARKWORTH (School), 3 to 3.30 p.m.  
JERRY'S PLAINS (School), 4 to 4.30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, 25th APRIL—**  
MITCHELL'S FLAT (Post Office), 3 to 3.30 p.m.  
ELDERSLIE (School), 4 to 4.30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, 26th APRIL—**  
DULGA (School), 10 to 10.30 a.m.  
HOWE'S VALLEY (M'Taggart's), 2 to 2.30 p.m.

The Depots will be opened again for SECOND INOCULATIONS at the same places on the corresponding days and hours of the following week. Those desiring inoculation are requested to note dates, as no further notice will be published.

J. M'LACHLAN,  
Shire Clerk.

Sat 12 Apr 1919 / Page 5 /

### **MUNICIPALITY OF SINGLETON**

#### **FREE INOCULATION DEPOT**

THE FREE PUBLIC INOCULATION DEPOT at the Council Chambers will be opened on TUESDAY NEXT, 15th Inst, and following Tuesdays, from 3 to 5 o'clock p.m.

After the first opening Primary inoculations only will be taken between 3 and 4 o'clock, and Secondary inoculations from 4 to 5 p.m.

As the Depot will not be continued for an indefinite period, persons desirous of being treated are advised to apply early.

The Inhalation Chamber is now in operation daily (Saturdays excepted) from 9.15 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturdays 9.15 a.m. to 12 noon.

E. W. FAWCETT,  
Town Clerk.

### **THE PANDEMIC 'The Spanish Flu' 1919**

Singleton prepared for the outbreak of the 'Spanish Flu' as it is generally known. Emerging in Europe at the end of the World War 1, the pandemic reached Australia early in 1919. It had swept around the world, killing between 50 to 100 million people. The first wave in NSW occurred mid March to late May, resulting in about 31 per cent of total deaths. The second wave peaked in June and July and was more virulent than the first; producing a higher mortality rate. In a period of six months in 1919, more than 15,000 Australians died from the influenza and possibly as many as two million were infected. In NSW, more than 52 per cent of all deaths occurred in people aged between 20 and 39 years.

Singleton's first known fatality of the epidemic was Charles Bruderlin of Albert Street in June 1919. He was 56 years old. The husband of Emily nee Tripp, father of Gertrude, Gladys Elizabeth reg. reverse, Charles Oscar, Florence Mary reg. reverse, Clarice Annie, Alma Genevieve and Emily Joyce. The son of Gustave and Isabella Bruderlin nee MacBeath. Charles was buried Queen Street Cemetery.

**WELCOME TO SOLDIERS  
TROOPER HARRIS AND CORPORAL  
HORNE.**

A large gathering assembled at the railway station on Friday evening to greet Trooper W. L. Harris, 1st Light Horse, on his return from the campaign in Palestine. Trooper Harris is a son of Mrs M. Harris, of Big Ridge, and is the third of three brothers who have returned from active service. He enlisted some three years ago, and has taken part in many of the important battles in the East, being wounded at Gaza.

The Town Band was in attendance at the station, and played "Home, Sweet Home," as the returned soldier, accompanied by his mother and brothers, the Mayor, and members of the reception committee came to the verandah in front of the station. Corporal Bert. Horne, who was for some months a prisoner in Germany, and who recently arrived home unexpectedly, was invited to participate in the welcome.

In a few cordial words the Mayor welcomed the two soldiers on behalf of the town, paying tribute to the fine service they had rendered to the Empire, and congratulating them on their return. Corporal Horne, he said, had been a prisoner in the hands of the Germans, and they could well understand his feelings on being home again. Trooper Harris had been attached to the Camel Corps, so they would realise that he had his full share of "ups and downs." It was a fine thing for him to reach home on the night of Anzac Day, a day that would be remembered for ever. Our boys had fought to help make Australia free, and he had much pleasure in giving Trooper Harris and Corporal Horne a very hearty welcome on their return from war.

Trooper Harris returned his sincere thanks for his reception, and said he hoped to find all his old friends as "O.K." as he was.

Corporal Horne said he had been home about a fortnight, and had now fallen in for this welcome, for which he heartily thanked them. It was a great pleasure for him to be back again with the people he knew, and it was worth all the troubles he had gone through to come back to the finest country in the world.

Cheers were given for the returned men and the Band, and the gathering dispersed, Trooper Harris leaving for his home with his relatives.

In 1919 Veterans were returning home, many carrying the torments of war with them. Families, friends and community welcomed them home. Songs of the day were played amongst them 'When the Boys Come Marching Home' and 'There's No Place Like Home'. Imagine how it would have felt to arrive home in time for the first ANZAC Day after the Armistice as Trooper Harris and Corporal Horne did on April 25th and finding no public commemoration on the day in Singleton; the day was however commemorated by Church services at the St. Andrews Presbyterian, the Methodist Church and All Saints' Church.

[See SA Article p.7]

**Trooper William Leslie Harris** [1893-1981], SerN.1017 Aust. Light Horse, Enlisted 1.2.1916, Discharged 19.4.1919. He was the son of Edward [1859-1933] & Maria Harris nee Stewart [1864-1939]. Two more of their fourteen children served; sons Edward 1892-1965 and Roy 1891-1973. The family were living at Big Ridge at the time. William married Ivy Irene Wood [1900-1940]; they had three boys, Robert, Allan & Kevin.

**Corporal Bertram [Bert] Ernest Horne** [1894-1967], SerN.4518 54<sup>th</sup> BN., Enlisted 27.7.1915, Returned to Aust. 5.4.1919 Discharged 5.5.1919. He was the son of John Thomas Horne [1897-1927] & Priscilla Vick Pearce [1861-1929]. Bert was declared missing in August 1916 but was official declared a POW on 18.4.1917 and was held at German camp 'Lager Dulmen'[sic] and was returned to England on 22.11.1918. Imagine Bert's family's relief when they received a postcard in October 1918 informing them he had arrived in Holland on August 8<sup>th</sup> and he was on his way home. Bert' birth and marriage registration can be found under Ernest Bertram Horne. He was one of ten children, younger brother Athol would serve in WW II. Bert married Phyllis Alvine Clarke [1895-1969] in 1919.

Scs:The Singleton Argus Tuesday 29 April 1919, page 2

# **WHAT HAPPENED TO MARY HUGHES GARBUTT NEE OSBORN?**

## **My Great-Great-Great-Great Aunt**

Mary Hughes Osborn was born 2 Aug 1847 at St Andrew Holborn, London the 11th child and second youngest of Henry David Osborn and Sarah Ann Farlow. The Osborns' were a well to do family. Henry David was a horse merchant; they had three servants, a cook, a housemaid and a nurse. In 1851 they lived at 12 Grays Inn Terrace, St Andrews, Holborn, Middlesex, England. Henry David's father died in 1855 and left an inheritance for his children and grandchildren to claim.

It was thought that Henry David and his family had migrated to Australia before the death of his father, but this has not been verified as Sarah Ann was living in Uxbridge, Middlesex when she died in 1861. Henry David does not seem to be around when she died.

There was an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald in 1859, placed by an old friend of David's asking him to contact him, so it is considered a good chance that he did come to Australia. It is known that Mary's siblings William Farlow, Frederick Stuart, Ellen, Emily Augusta all came to Australia at different times.

Mary came after 1861 as the England Census 1861 has her living with Ellen, Emily, Agnes and Louisa (the illegitimate child of Emily) at Uxbridge, Middlesex. There have been various notices in Australian papers and London Gazette throughout the years for the whereabouts of the children of Henry David Osborn as they had not claimed their inheritance right up until 1938.

William Farlow Osborn is my direct ancestor; he was my Great Great Grandfather and Mary Hughes Osborn's older brother. He was a school teacher but ended up joining the Mounted Police in 1863. He lived and worked in Maitland and surrounding areas. There is evidence that suggests William was in contact with Frederick but not Ellen, Emily or Mary. Mary Hughes Osborn married James Garbutt 19 Jul 1866 at the Wesleyan Parsonage, West Maitland. It is interesting to note that Mary was living in the Maitland area at the same time as her brother William. It was noted also that consent was needed for Mary as there was no parent or guardian in the colony to give consent; why did her brother not give his consent? Maybe he did not approve of James Garbutt. Ellen who was admitted to an Asylum in Victoria in 1879 died there in 1918. Emily migrated to New Zealand and then to America; this would possibly explain why they did not hear about their inheritance.

James Garbutt was the son of John Garbutt (convict) and Sarah Ann Ward. Sarah Ann was the sister of Frederick Ward better known as 'Thunderbolt'. James was tried in 1856 for horse stealing along with Fred Ward and was sent to Cockatoo Island. Mary and James had two girls; Alice born in 1867 and Minnie born in 1869 who were both born in the Singleton area.

By 1874 it was reported Mary Hughes Garbutt had run away with another man and James was in Maitland Goal. This is where the trail ends for Mary. The Newspaper article of the time reported the two girls as aged 9 and 7 years [actually 7 and 5 years old] were left to live on the streets of Singleton and were consequently arrested and charged with vagrancy. They were sent to Biloela Industrial School on Cockatoo Island with a recommendation that they be sent to the Randwick Children's Home; this recommendation was never enacted. Research on Biloela reveals it was a very nasty place! .

In 1880 Minnie was recorded in the Biloela Records as being indentured to John Horff/Korff/Korft Esquire at Forrest Lodge; she had been there six years and served two indenture periods and was doing well. A John Korff Esquire died in 1870 he was living at Orchard Lodge Hereford Road, Glebe so it is suspected that it is his son John Thomas Gordon Korff who indentured Minnie. Forest Lodge is near the Glebe area in Sydney.

Minnie is next recorded as giving birth to Ernest William Garbutt in February 1888 at the Sydney Benevolent Society. This poor child died at Forest Lodge 1891 and Minnie advertises her thanks to the people of Forest Lodge for assisting her to bury her son. Minnie died four years later at the age of 26 years.

Alice was recorded as absconding in 1882. A year later she married Charles McClenaghan/MacClenaghan later McClenahan on October 13<sup>th</sup> 1883 in Sydney. She gave birth to six children; naming one of her daughters Minnie. Alice died March 25<sup>th</sup> 1950 at Marrickville.

James Garbutt their father had spent his life in and out of goal for various offences including exposing himself, indecent assault and vagrancy. In 1894 he was sent to Bathurst Goal for 4 years for intent to carnally know a young girl. Some would concede his daughters were better off. James died in Mudgee in 1906.

What ever happened to Alice and Minnie's mother Mary Hughes Garbutt nee Osborn? We may never know! Did she really run off with someone; was their foul play, did she really leave her girls to the streets? One thing for sure is how very different Alice and Minnie's life would have been if their mother was in it and they had known about their inheritance.

My Osborn Line. GGGGP Henry Osborn & Elizabeth Murphy; GGGGP: Henry David Osborn & Sarah Ann Farlow, GGGP: William Farlow Osborn & Mary Ann Murphy, GGP: Mary Ann Elizabeth Osborn, & Arthur Ernest Bryant, GP: Leila Winifred Bryant & Arthur Albert Woods, my parents Patrick John Woods & Hazel Seldon Bendle.

©Written by Denise Gallaher Member FHSSInc with the assistance of Lyn MacBain.

**ANZAC DAY**  
**COMMEMORATION SERVICES**  
Despite the glorious and honoured memories of Anzac Day (April 25), there were no public celebrations in Singleton this year, prudence dictating that, in the present circumstances, gatherings of a carnival nature were best dispensed with. A brave display of hunting was made in honour of the occasion, but apart from that there was nothing else to mark the great anniversary. Much interest, therefore, centred on the commemoration services in the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches on Sunday, and there were large congregations at each. The familiar khaki was to be seen among the worshippers, and the many instances where mourning was worn bore testimony to the sad toll that war has taken of the gallant lads from this district. The various services were in the highest degree impressive, and the preachers had a theme which might well inspire to eloquence. The church parade at St. Andrew's was of special interest, and at both churches the music was a prominent feature of the service, the hymns, anthems, etc., being all chosen with appropriateness for such a historic commemoration. There were few hearts that were unmoved as the sad but glorious memories of Anzac were recalled, and the great and noble lessons to be learned from the lives of the heroes of that campaign were forcefully and feelingly dealt with by the clergymen. In other times, when the shadow of pestilence has lifted from the people, there can well be Anzac Day celebrations of another character, but just now it would seem that these church services were the most fitting means by which to do honour to the survivors, and to show reverence to the memory of our glorious dead.

The Singleton Argus Tuesday 29 Apr 1919

### Home Sweet Home

Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,  
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;  
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,  
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.  
Home, home, sweet, sweet home!  
There's no place like home, oh, there's no place like home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain;  
Oh, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!  
The birds singing gayly, that come at my call --  
Give me them -- and the peace of mind, dearer than all!  
Home, home, sweet, sweet home!  
There's no place like home, oh, there's no place like home!

Gaze on the moon as I tread the drear wild,  
And feel that my mother now thinks of her child,  
As she looks on that moon from our own cottage door  
Thro' the woodbine, whose fragrance shall cheer me no  
more. Home, home, sweet, sweet home!  
There's no place like home, oh, there's no place like home!

How sweet 'tis to sit 'neath a fond father's smile,  
And the caress of a mother to soothe and beguile!  
Let others delight mid new pleasures to roam,  
But give me, oh, give me, the pleasures of home.  
Home, home, sweet, sweet home!  
There's no place like home, oh, there's no place like home!

To thee I'll return, overburdened with care;  
The heart's dearest solace will smile on me there;  
No more from that cottage again will I roam;  
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.  
Home, home, sweet, sweet, home!  
There's no place like home, oh, there's no place like home!

Written in 1822 by John Howard Payne [1791-1852]

# SINGLETON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

## PLANS RECOVERED AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

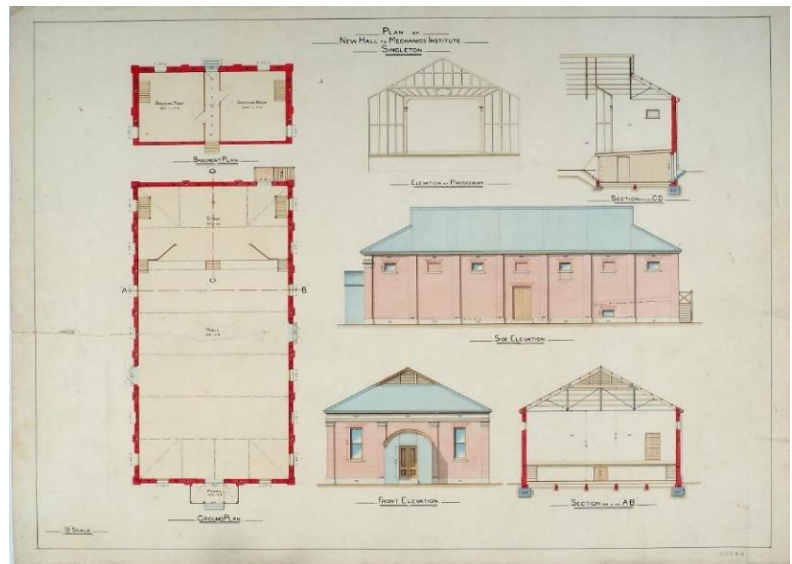
John Wiltshire Pender, architect of the 1866 Singleton Mechanics' Institute building 74 George Street Singleton, was born in 1833 on the Isle of Mull, Scotland and immigrated with his family in 1855. He came to the Maitland area around 1857. He was a designer, sketcher, architect and builder. It is known he studied with Fortescue Hitchins in 1861. He set up his own practice in 1863. Over the next forty odd years John W. Pender produced plans for some of the most renowned homes and buildings in the Hunter and New England areas. He married Jane Baker in 1865 and added twelve children to the Pender clan. Whilst he had at times other business partners; his longest partnership was with Thomas W. Silk during the period of 1889 to 1905. After J. W. Wiltshire's death in 1917 his son Walter Harold [1885-1944] continued the business and then grandson Ian Walter [1923-1988]. After Ian's death in 1988 the company as it was known closed its doors and was later purchased by Paul Thelander.

In May 2000, the Pender Archives were established when the Pender Family gifted 2,562 individual architectural projects to the University of Newcastle. The University of Newcastle's Archives, Rare Books & Special Collections Unit in the Auchmuty Library set about the huge task of correlating and preserving the articles. The collection is recognised as *'the archive of the longest surviving architectural firm in the English speaking world'*.

My interest in the Mechanics' Institute developed into a passion and I have collected all sorts of information which hopefully will make it in to a book one day. One thing which eluded me was the J. W. Pender plans so you can imagine my delight when the Pender Archives was established. I had previously tried to discover if any items relating to the Mechanics' Institute building existed but after so many attempts and too few success points; it became a case of an occasional 'look & see'. After the announcement that the University were the custodians of this immense collection my early phone calls and visits to the University failed to give any conclusive answers as to whether there was or wasn't any existing papers or plans on our building and due to the enormity of the archive and the costly methodical conservation process of these documents; some of which were so very fragile, it would possibly be a long time before it was completed. The Pender Archives list was updated periodically, and I browsed.

The restoration of the Grand Hall in the Mechanics' Institute set me off once again checking to see if the conservation work of the Pender Archives revealed anything new and I got the exciting news that *yes* there were plans of Mechanics' Institute, but they were still undergoing preservation process.

These plans turned out to be the Mechanics' Hall built in 1889; it was still exciting news but not what I was looking for. The Mechanics' Hall building is now the Singleton Police Citizen's Youth Club [PCYC] and is directly behind the Institute building.



The Grand Hall restoration work was revealed to all, with Governor of New South Wales Professor Marie Bashir guest of honour on September 13<sup>th</sup> 2003. Things went quiet again but every now and then I would check the Pender Archives, but there were no new revelations. However, when the Building became the focus of the 2019 Singleton Library's Heritage Festival program, the plans were in my mind once again. This prompted a call to the University Library and with the help of their wonderful Library staff I was able to identify some possibilities from the Catalogue. On a whim and a prayer, I made contact with Gianni Di Gravio, Newcastle University's Archivist, who bless him, went through the catalogue with me and we identified one or two possibilities he would look at, and then all I could wait for Gianni's reply.

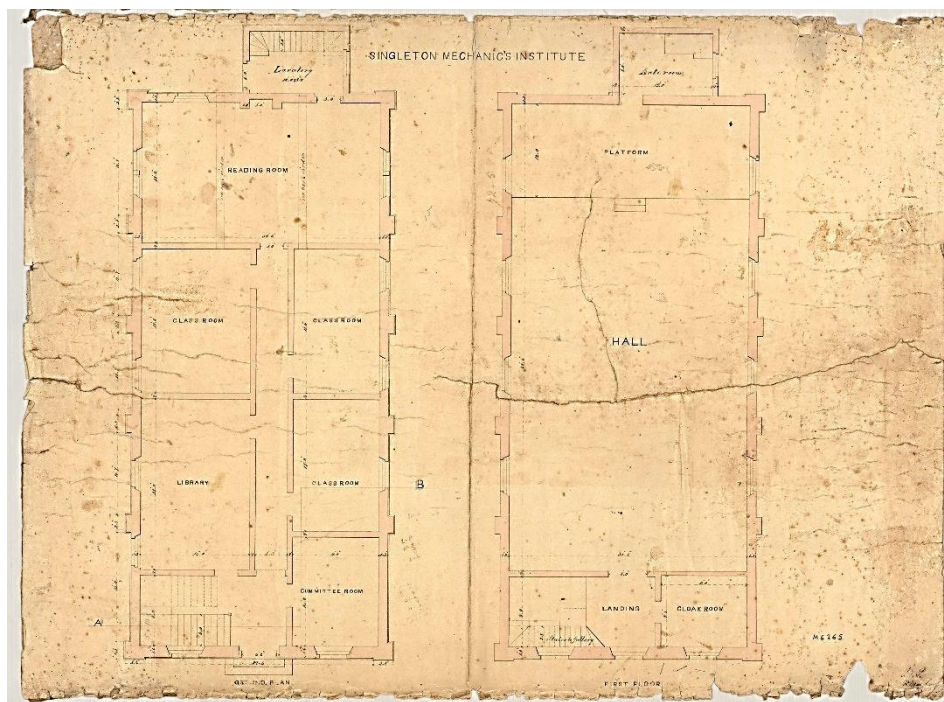
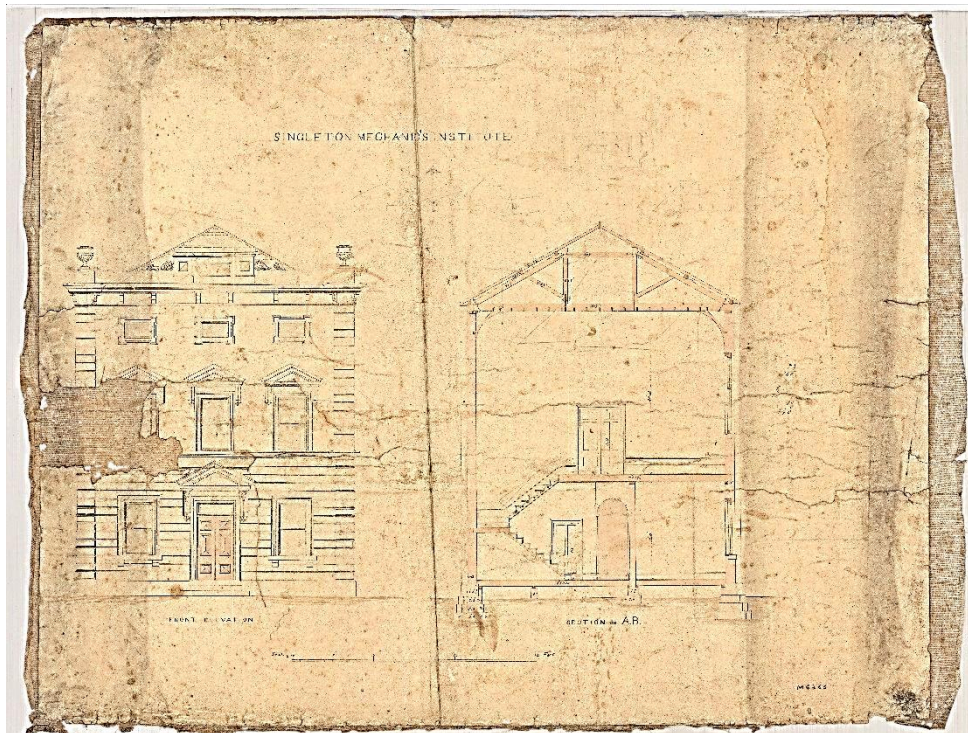


Perhaps the angels were on my side this time; you can imagine my absolute delight a couple of days later Gionni's reply came revealing that one of the possibilities M6265 were J. W. Pender's plans for the Mechanics' Institute Building. Gionni digitised the plans and on viewing the plans, I cannot ascertain the date they were drawn as there are several different features that need further research but none the less J. W. Pender's initials are there in the right hand corner. I cannot thank the Newcastle University Library staff enough. On behalf of the staff Gionni expressed, "It makes us very happy to have made you and the people of Singleton happy".

As I was asked to be a guest speaker at the Singleton Library's Heritage Festival event on April 24<sup>th</sup> it was decided we could reveal the plans at the end of the presentation. The Library has printed the plans and they will be part of the Library's display until the event closes. The facsimile plans will then be housed in the Mechanics' Institute Building along with those of the Mechanics' Hall. Researching doesn't stop when you find the proverbial needle in the haystack; it just begins again and who knows what can be found as research continues on this integral piece of our local history. Written & Compiled by Lyn MacBain ADLFAH.

You too can see the plans close up as they are now posted on the web.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/uon/40573168563/> <https://www.flickr.com/photos/uon/32596698567>.



## **SINGLETON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE: A 153 YEARS OF HISTORY**

The Singleton Mechanics' Institute building is home to Family History Society Singleton Inc., what better home for this organisation given its grand history; a history spanning one hundred and fifty-three years. Exciting news this month (see earlier story in this newsletter) is the information received from Newcastle University Library that they did indeed, as suspected, hold architectural plans of the George Street building.

With the building being highlighted in the Singleton's Australian Heritage Festival program, it was felt timely to reflect on this building and the Institute itself which has served many purposes over the years – oh, if only these walls could talk.

Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts were generally established to provide adult education to the working class. Along with literacy and numeracy there was a focus on technical skills. With the belief that there was a benefit in having more knowledgeable and skilled workers, these Institutes were often supported financially and by the membership of philanthropists and local business men.

The Institutes offered education, libraries, lectures, and entertainment and as often discussed 'an alternative pastime for idle hands, drinking or gambling'. The first known Mechanics' Institute was established in Edinburgh Scotland in 1821 as the School of Arts of Edinburgh. Australia's first Mechanics' Institute is acknowledged to have been established in 1827 in Hobart. With a shortage of skilled craftsmen these Institutes provided a means to improve skills needed for the growing colony and developing Nation. They can be compared similarly to Technical Colleges of today.

Founded in 1839 the Mechanics' Institute did not fully evolve until 1845, when a meeting at Walter Rotten's Forbes Hotel ascertained 'that the pulse of the town and neighbourhood was in favour of a Mechanics Institute being established'. Under the Presidency of Helenus Scott and known as the Patrick Plains Mechanics' Institute, membership grew to fifty-eight; twelve lectures were given, and the library contained two hundred and sixteen books by the end of its first year.

Despite an encouraging start, the Mechanics' Institute during periods of the late 1840s and 1850s lapsed into almost disuse and came close to being declared defunct several times, but on each occasion was saved by renewed enthusiasm. The Singleton School of Arts experienced a similar fate, and for both to survive amalgamation seemed the only answer. They amalgamated in August 1863, under the name of Singleton Mechanics Institute and attention turned to constructing a building for the organisation. In 1865, James Moore, a prominent businessman, donated the block of land on which the Mechanics' Institute building now stands.

Architect Thomas Rowe, founder of the Institute of Architects in NSW, drew the first plans for the building. Rowe's Gothic style was not appreciated by the Committee, and later plans were prepared 'gratuitously' by John Wiltshire Pender. J. W. Pender was a prolific architect; examples of his work are throughout the Hunter Valley and New England; with the larger concentration in the Maitland area.

A bazaar, a raffle and a Government grant raised eight hundred and ten pounds (£810); about half of the estimated cost for the building. The building contract was awarded to Thomas Cooper of Maitland. A gift of 'quality stone' not required for the new Railway Bridge over the Hunter River at Singleton was donated for the foundations by Mr. Goddard. On August 26, 1866, in the presence of Sir John Young, Governor in Chief and Captain General of the Australian Colonies, Miss Clara Moore, daughter of Alderman James Moore laid the foundation stone.

When the Honourable Henry Parkes officially opened the building to a tumultuous applause on July 8, 1867, he made comment that the building was "both beauty of design, economy of cost, and economy of space for a substantial construction, for its convenience, and was unequalled to any other in the colony that he was acquainted with".

At the 1869 half yearly meeting, glowing reports were received on ballroom, books, the reading room, lectures, debates, Mr. J. L. Brown's elocution lessons and the acquisition of Sir John Young's portrait. The library continued to grow and until the Institute's demise, its collection of books formed the foundation library in Singleton. The Grand Hall proved an excellent venue for concerts, lectures and balls, many of the functions were fundraisers for various projects, such as the South Singleton Park Fund. Balls were co-ordinated with evenings of the full moon, aiding not only the candlelight in the Grand Hall, but also patrons making their way home.

By the mid 1880s, the Committee recognised a lack of space at the Mechanics' Institute was becoming a problem for the Committee. In 1889, a mortgage was sought for the erection of a building that would become the Mechanics' Hall (it is now the PCYC). J. W. Pender designed the new building; whether Pender received payment for this or again donated his work is not known. Arthur Caswell Robinson received one thousand five hundred and thirteen pounds (£1513) to build the Mechanics' Hall. It opened in August 1890; the Hall was twice as large as the Grand Hall and included a stage and dressing rooms. It became Singleton's roller-skating rink and a venue for dramatic shows whilst the Grand Hall continued to hold concerts, balls and lectures.

On March 5, 1906 the Patrick Plains Shire Council was constituted by proclamation and whilst the first meeting was held in the Court House on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1906 all meetings thereafter were held Mechanics Institute until the Patrick Plains Shire Council Chambers were built in July 1911. This building is sited opposite the Mechanics Institute on the corner of George and Macquarie streets.

The Mechanics' Hall became the first venue for motion pictures in Singleton in 1910. Use of both the Mechanics' Institute and the Mechanics' Hall declined as other picture theatres, larger halls, and educational facilities started popping up throughout Singleton Shire. The Grand Hall was a Billiard Room at this time and while functions continued, the number of patrons utilising the facilities began to drop, thereby affecting the income of the Institute.

Membership numbers continued to be a problem so when the Returned Soldiers Club sought accommodation, the Institute Committee suggested amalgamation; this did not eventuate but an agreement to rent rooms at the Mechanics' Institute alleviated some of the financial burden. By 1928, the Institute was in an unsound financial position and through pressure and agreement the newly named Returned Soldiers and Sailors League became joint custodians. The depression years however took a further toll on the finances and other rooms were leased.

In 1937, the Reading Room was converted to a Club Room for the League. Further problems arose in 1938 when the Mechanics' Institute could not find three members for the joint Committee as per joint custodial agreement. At this point, the League was requested to take over the building and the debts. It was early 1939 and after due consideration, they declined. The building was then offered to the Singleton Municipal Council who also graciously declined. With no recourse the Committee moved to inform the Minister of Education, Dr. A. S. Bowman the trustee, and the mortgagee J. W. B. Waterhouse that the affairs of the Mechanics' Institute could not be carried on without further loss and that the Mechanics Institute would cease to operate and close the doors on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1939.

So came the end of the Mechanics' Institute as an organization after a century of service to the Community. Both the Institute and Hall were separated and auctioned. In 1941 the Institute building was sold to Singleton Municipal council for two thousand pounds (£2000).

In 1975, the Municipality and Shire Councils amalgamated to become the Singleton Shire Council and the building continued as the premises of the Singleton Municipal Council until 1981 after council resolved to build the current administration building and Civic Centre.

So ended another era for the Institute. The building continued to be a records store until the it was handed to the Community in 1984. Essentially, the building was returned to its original function; a learning centre. It was also known as the Singleton Community Activity Centre for some years. The Community formed the '74 George Street management Committee' for the care of the Mechanics Institute and it is still in operation today.

The Committee were instrumental in facilitating the restoration of the Grand Hall and Gallery. The restoration project started in 2000 and after twenty five years, hidden behind false ceilings and partitions the Grand Hall and Gallery were revealed. This was achieved by Council funding, grants and 'Work for the Dole' and donations plus voluntary hours by the Committee and Users. The stages of the renovations took some time to complete. In 2003 the then Governor of New South Wales, Professor Marie Bashir AC reopened the restored Grand Hall and Gallery.

Today, the Singleton Mechanics' Institute is under the care of the 74 George Street Management Committee and accommodates not only the Family History Society Singleton Inc. but also Singleton Quilters, Singleton Potters, Singleton Artists Group, Singleton Textile Artists, Singleton Theatrical Society, Singleton Tidy Towns and other casual users and is a hive of activity bringing the Mechanics Institute full circle.

*©This article is based on the research and knowledge compiled by Lyn MacBain ADLFAH.  
Due to space issues, images have been omitted.*

# Back Page Bits

## PAULINE'S PONDERINGS

*“As a child I just love my Chocolate Easter Eggs; we were only allowed them Easter Sunday; Easter was a pretty austere occasion for us. Our eggs were nearly always in an egg cup or a mug. I never wondered where they came from then but found this information on the Cadbury’s site.”*

Early Easter eggs were hen or duck eggs decorated at home in bright colours with vegetable dye and charcoal. Orthodox Christians and many cultures continue to dye Easter eggs, often decorating them with flowers.

The 17th and 18th centuries saw the manufacture of egg-shaped toys, which were given to children at Easter. The Victorians had cardboard, 'plush' and satin covered eggs filled with Easter gifts and chocolates. The ultimate egg-shaped Easter gifts must have been the fabulous jewelled creations of Carl Fabergé made during the 19th century for the Russian Czar and Czarina, now precious museum pieces.

Chocolate Easter eggs were first made in Europe in the early 19th century, with France and Germany taking the lead in this new artistic confectionery. Some early eggs were solid, as the technique for mass-producing moulded chocolate had not been devised. The production of the first hollow chocolate eggs must have been painstaking, as the moulds were lined with paste chocolate; one at a time.

John Cadbury made his first 'French eating Chocolate' in 1842 but it was not until 1875 that the first Cadbury Easter Eggs were made. Progress in the chocolate Easter egg market was slow until a method was found for making the chocolate flow into the mould. “Thank You Mr. Cadbury’s”



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## BY GOSH ! BY GEE! BY GEORGE! Some Punography

I tried to catch the fog but I mist.  
Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.  
I read a book about anti gravity, I can't put it down.  
I stayed up all night to see where the sun went; then it dawned on me.

They told me I had type A blood, but it was Type O.

Broken pencils are pointless

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**Next Issue:** August 2019 Articles by June 30<sup>th</sup> please.

## MIRIAM'S FIND

### Where Did That Saying Come From?

## Bob's Your Uncle

Like many common expressions, the exact origins of *Bob's your uncle* (used to express the ease with which a task can be achieved) aren't certain. The most popular theory is that it relates to an act of nepotism in the late 1880s. Political commentators were surprised when the young and inexperienced Arthur Balfour (later Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) was appointed to a number of posts, including the prestigious role as Chief Secretary for Ireland. Balfour's uncle was Robert Cecil (Lord Salisbury) - then himself the Prime Minister. The theory runs that if Bob (short for 'Robert') is your uncle, then anything goes, and you can have what you want.

However, although this theory is beguiling, most linguists today think that the idiom relates to an earlier slang expression 'all is bob', meaning that everything is fine.

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The *Singleton Argus* January 18 1919 p3. Advertisement

When the Boys Come Marching Home  
Words by William Jerome ; music by Seymour Furth.



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