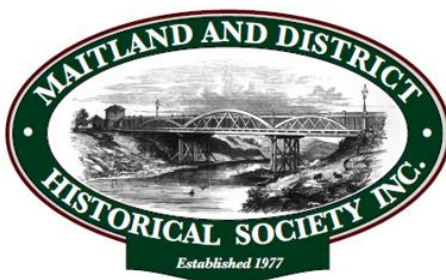


President:

Kevin Short OAM

Patron:

Dr Cameron Archer AM

Web: www.maitlandhistorical.org**Secretary:**

Steve Bone

AddressPO Box 333
MAITLAND NSW 2320**Phone:**

0468 438 990

Email: maitlandhistorical@gmail.com

ABN: 96 156 309 595

NEWSLETTER N^o 72

28th February 2025

We, as historians, are, or should be, conscious of the lesson's history teaches. I often despair at how little our so-called leaders have learned.

As I look back across my lifetime, now (sadly) at 75 years, my thought is that international politics are presently more precarious than they have been at any other time in that lifetime, including the *Bay of Pigs* incident, *Vietnam* and the *Cold War*.

At the end of WWI Germany was a basket case, The Kaiser had abdicated, a generation of young men were dead, and the allies had imposed severe restrictions as a result of the *Versailles Treaty*.

The Weimar Republic, officially known as the German Reich, was the German state from 1918 to 1933, during which it was a constitutional republic for the first time in history; hence it is also referred to, and unofficially proclaimed itself, as the German Republic. The Weimar Republic had a semi-presidential system with both a Chancellor and a President.

The Great Depression of October 1929 severely impacted Germany's tenuous recovery; high unemployment and subsequent social and political unrest led to the collapse of Chancellor Hermann Müller's grand coalition and saw the beginning of the presidential cabinets. From March 1930 onwards, President Paul von Hindenburg used emergency powers to back Chancellors Heinrich Brüning, Franz von Papen and General Kurt von Schleicher.

On 30 January 1933, Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler as Chancellor to head a coalition government; Hindenburg had hesitated to appoint Hitler in the failed election held a mere 3 months prior but felt he had no option with Hitler's NAZI Party holding the largest number of seats (288 of 648 or 44%) Von Papen, as Vice-Chancellor and Hindenburg's confidant, was to serve as the *éminence grise* who would keep Hitler under control; these intentions severely underestimated Hitler's political abilities. By the end of March 1933, the Reichstag Fire Decree and the Enabling Act of 1933 were used in the perceived state of emergency to effectively grant the new Chancellor broad power to act outside parliamentary control. Hitler promptly used these powers to thwart constitutional governance and suspend civil liberties, which brought about the swift collapse of democracy at the federal and state level, and the creation of a one-party dictatorship under his leadership.

President Hindenburg died on 2 August 1934, aged 87. Shortly after Hindenburg's death, Hitler announced that offices of the chancellor and the president were to be combined to create one position, the Führer and chancellor.

..... the deed was done !

I know I said I wouldn't, but Donald Trump just doesn't go away, does he? He, and his cohorts, believe they have the right to not only interfere in every international incident, but to dominate every international incident. I'm also not sure that outside the US itself, the remainder of the 'Western Alliance' can necessarily rely on the Yanks for support.

No two circumstances are ever exactly the same but there are some disturbing similarities between what happened in Germany and what appears to be happening in the US.

Article II, Section 1 of the US Constitution vests executive powers (to make Executive Orders) in the president, requiring that the president "*shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed.*"

The president is also the "Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States," as stated in Article II, Section 2. They go to War on his say so and his say so alone. Usually, he would consult with senior colleagues and military commanders but remember, this **IS** Donald Trump

The following is plagiarised directly from Sky News, yes, I repeat, Sky News

Donald Trump has purged top military figures in the Pentagon, including firing America's most senior commander.

He also pushed out five other admirals and generals in an unprecedented shake-up of US military leadership.

The Pentagon had been bracing for mass firings of civilian staff as well as a dramatic overhaul of its budget and a shift in military deployments.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General Charles 'CQ' Brown - America's highest-ranking general and only the second black general to serve as chairman - was fired with immediate effect.

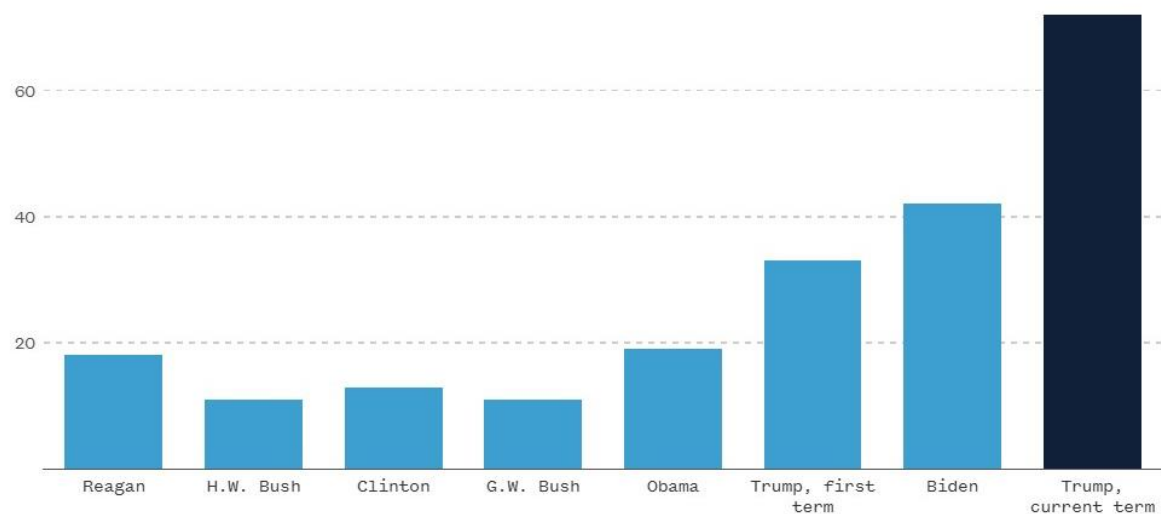
The president will also replace the head of the US Navy, a position held by Admiral Lisa Franchetti, the first woman to lead a military service, and the Air Force vice chief of staff, the Pentagon said.

He is also removing the judge advocates general for the Army, Navy and Air Force, critical positions that ensure enforcement of military justice.

There is nothing apolitical about Trump.

The president is further understood to have broad powers in areas such as control and operation of the federal government, federal agencies, and in foreign affairs.

Donald Trump has signed more Executive Orders in the first 10 days of his presidency than any recent president did in their first 100.



Notes: Data current through Feb. 20

Source: NBC News analysis of [Federal Register](#) data

Graphic: Joe Murphy / NBC News

Have I got your attention? If I haven't, I should have.

The similarities between what happened in Germany, whilst different, have many many parallels, disturbingly

I repeat, my thought is that international politics are presently more precarious than they have been at any other time in my lifetime.

~~~~~

Now I've got that off my chest, a few 'local' things.

Maitland Show has come and gone. My thought is that the organisers would be happy with the outcome; from a Historical Society viewpoint we had a steady stream of people looking at the expertly prepared 'Flood Pictures' by Treasurer Jennifer and helpers. We didn't exactly make a fortune in sales but that was never really the purpose.

Many thanks to those who helped.

On the score of the '55 Flood, Council launched a display last Saturday that is very commendable. The detail of the display was included in last month's Newsletter and is REALLY worth a look ...

There are also 'BIG' events coming up in April and again in June. More of those when we get a little closer to the date, suffice it to say that you need to keep the dates in your diaries ... We will participate directly in both and will need your help?

A MAITLAND CITY COUNCIL EVENT



12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April

### **The Annual General Meeting:**

Our March meeting is also our AGM. Obviously, our Society doesn't exist without people to run it.

When our constitution was rewritten a decade or so ago, restrictions were deliberately placed therein so that executive members shouldn't hold office beyond five (5) years. This was deliberate so that the Society is continually being renewed with new personalities and fresh ideas. Both Treasurer Jennifer and myself as president, were both nominated and elected *'from the floor'* last year as there was no one willing to take on either position. This year we are joined by secretary Steve who has also reached the 5 year peg.

Understanding that individuals might be reluctant to take an administrative role up front, what I'm proposing is that members accept the positions of Vice President, Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer with a view to 'stepping up' next year, spending 2025 learning the role.

Please, if you have any inclination to lead in this way, put your name forward. Jennifer, Steve and myself will welcome the opportunity to teach you.

The other BIG thing for the diaries is .....



More detail later.

and finally:

**Our next Speaker Evening is scheduled for**

**TUESDAY 4 MARCH 2025 at 5 30 pm.**

**Speaker: Peter Garnham**

**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF VENUE**

**at the Shed, at Garnham Grounds (Rally Grounds) Maitland. Enter the grounds near the southern approach of the Maitland Station road bridge.**

**Topic: His involvement with Steam Heritage**

**There is a \$5 charge, which also covers the cost of refreshments.**

**All welcome.**


\*\*\*\*\*

Until next time ...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "L. E. J.".

President



The image is a painting by Joseph-Sébastien Constantin titled 'Stuben interior with two men talking at table'. It depicts two men in a dimly lit room. On the left, a younger man with dark hair, wearing a light-colored shirt and a dark jacket, is gesturing with his right hand while speaking. On the right, an older man with white hair and glasses, wearing a blue jacket over a red shirt, is seated at a table and listening. The table has some papers and a small object on it. The background is dark and indistinct. Three speech bubbles are overlaid on the image: one from the younger man, one from the older man, and one from a third person (Marge) who is not visible in the painting. A watermark 'cameron\_reon\_binnie' is visible on the table.

**I'm having  
problems with  
my hearing.**

**Can you  
describe the  
symptoms?**

**Marge has blue  
hair and Homer  
is a fat guy.**

Joseph - Sébastien Constantin. Stuben interior with two men talking at table

One I ran across and liked:

One day my mother was out and my dad was 'in charge'. I was around 2½ and was recovering from an accident.

Someone had given me a 'tea set' as a get-well gift and it was my favourite toy.

Daddy was in the lounge room, engrossed in the evening news when I brought him a little cup of 'tea', which was of course just water.

After several cups and lots of praise for such yummy tea, Mum came home.

Dad made her wait in the lounge room to watch me bring him another cup, because it was *just the cutest thing!*

Mum waited and sure enough, I brought Dad another cup which she watched him drink.

Then Mum said (as only a mother would know ..) *Did it ever occur to you that there is only one place in the house where your daughter can reach the water?*

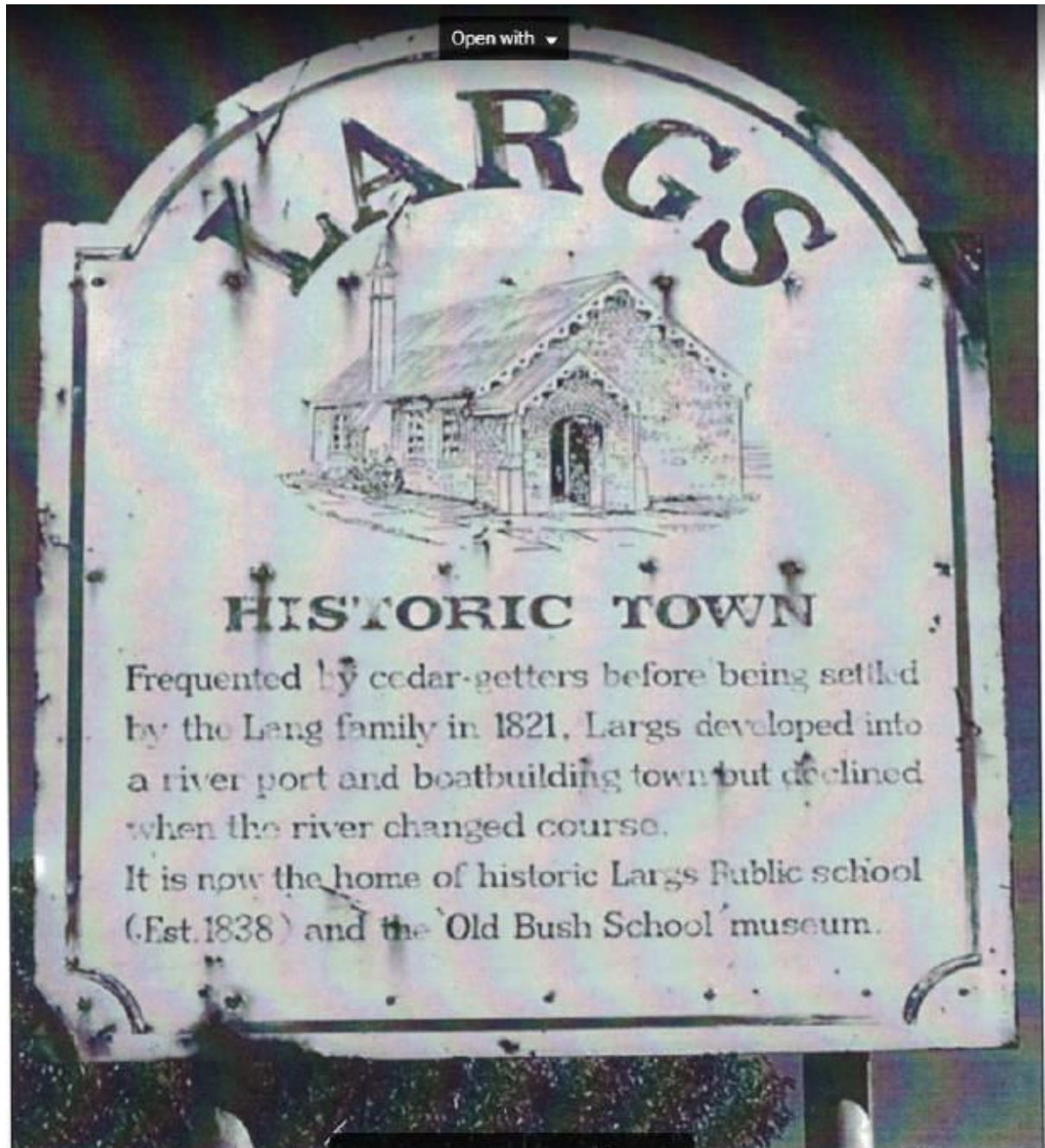
Someone broke into my house last night and stole a dozen eggs and left a saucepan of warm water

Police believe it was poachers ...

# Our Past: Historic Largs was built on land once owned by Colonial Architect Harris

By Chas Keys

June 18 2023



Present day Largs was built on the land that Standish Harris bought to add to his grant

Standish Lawrence Harris was an Irishman who emigrated to New South Wales in 1822. He came with an important document, a letter of introduction from Lord Bathurst,



the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, suggesting that he be granted land "in proportion to the means which he may possess".

Such letters from government figures in London were commonly used to gain access and favours from those who came voluntarily to NSW.

Harris was one of dozens of "men of substance" granted land in the Hunter Valley on which to establish farms. He was given 2000 acres at Phoenix Park, so-named by him after a park in Dublin, his home town.

The land should have been a path to personal success and wealth, but it was not to be.

His story has been told in Helen Russell's book *My Largs*, one of many fine works of local history about the Maitland area.

Harris' career in NSW was to say the least a chequered one. On arrival he presented himself (and his letter from Lord Bathurst) to Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane.

He was immediately made the Colonial Architect, replacing Francis Greenway who had fallen foul of the Colonial Engineer.

This position would have been an opportunity to impress Brisbane and others in the government, but Harris did just the opposite. He appears to have over-claimed for the work he did and was apparently less than honest in other ways as well. His services were soon terminated.

Nevertheless he was granted the land at Phoenix Park, and he purchased an additional 1114 acres adjoining it which he called Goulburn Grove.

On the higher part of this land the village of Largs was to take shape.

The grant came with a convict workforce, and between 1824 and 1829 a total of 30 men were assigned to him. They were labourers, ploughmen, stockmen, dairymen and house servants sentenced to either seven years transportation or life.

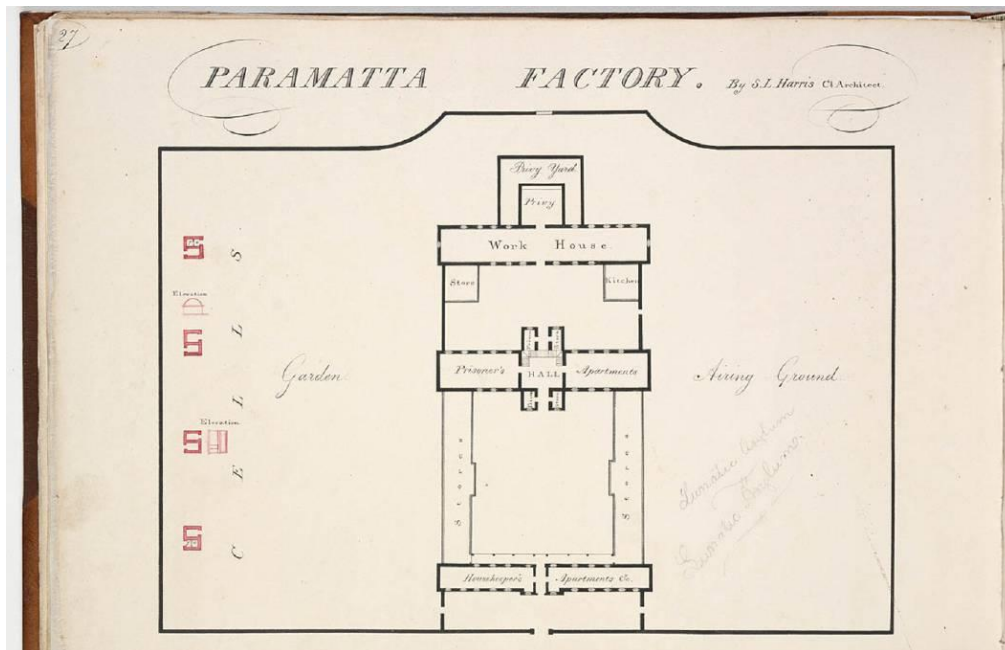
In the beginning the workers were fed via the government stores, the usual arrangement until their farms could feed them. The convicts cleared the land, completing the job begun earlier by cedar-cutting convicts from Newcastle. They then grubbed out stumps, planted and harvested crops and tended livestock.

Things did not go well for Harris. He was robbed by bushrangers in 1825 and 1829, and by 1832 he was in financial difficulty.

Appealing to the government for help did little good and mortgaging lots at Phoenix Park did not pull him out of trouble either.

Eventually he lost his land, convicts, livestock, crops and farm equipment, and in 1837 he was imprisoned as a debtor. In his own words, "I got into embarrassment and was in jail as a consequence."

He died in the Bent St Asylum, Newtown, in 1849, aged 71 and probably in poverty.



Part of a report prepared by Standish Lawrence Harris in his time as Colonial Architect

Harris may have been simply incompetent in business, perhaps over-committing himself at Phoenix Park and Goulburn Grove and in ventures elsewhere.

Some of the other grantees of the time, notably John Eales of Duckenfield, made substantial fortunes from their estates. Others went under during the depression of the 1840s, but Harris did not have this excuse. He had lost everything well before the depression.

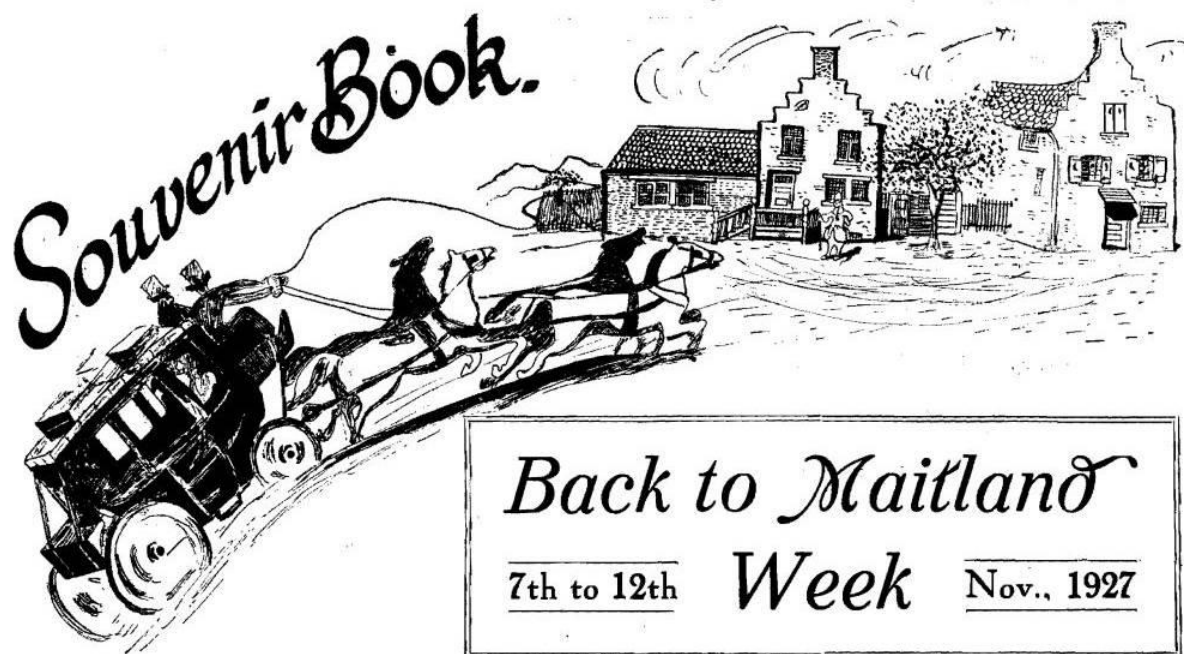
**MY SON ASKED ME,  
"WHERE DOES POO COME FROM?"**



**I was a little uncomfortable but gave him an honest explanation. He looked a little perplexed, and stared at me in stunned silence for a few seconds and asked, "And Tigger?"**

# Our history: Back to Maitland Week: popular book of 1927

By Chas Keys  
June 25 2023



The popular Back to Maitland Week booklet front cover.

'Old' Maitland, the Maitland of (say) the decades before the Second World War, was good at partying.

It recognised important occasions with parades, processions, marches and civic celebrations: these were held in conjunction with events like the birthday of Queen Victoria in 1897 and the visit by the Duke and Duchess of York in 1927.

Maitland welcomed and lauded the Coo-ee marchers of World War I as they strode down High Street en route to enlisting for battle, and its people turned out in numbers to celebrate the openings of the West Maitland railway station and the Belmore and Long bridges. The funeral corteges of prominent local people always drew big crowds.

Sometimes, Maitland sought to entice former residents, those who had left to build their lives in Sydney or elsewhere, to visit their old home town and revel in its glories, achievements and amenities.

It did this in November 1927 when the West Maitland Municipal Council hosted a 'Back to Maitland' Week.

| ACCOMMODATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>THE<br/><b>New Carrington Hotel</b><br/>HIGH STREET,<br/>WEST MAITLAND</p> <p>THE BEST OF ACCOMMODATION<br/>Public and Saloon Bars--Ladies'<br/>Parlor and Bottle Department.</p> <p>A SQUARE DEAL FOR A ROUND<br/>SHILLING AT—<br/>ALBERT CHAPMAN'S<br/>Phone 452.</p> | <p>DON'T HOPE FOR THE BEST,<br/>COME ALONG AND GET IT AT<br/>THE<br/><b>Angel Inn</b><br/>HIGH ST., WEST MAITLAND</p> <p>Moderate Tariff — — — Garages<br/>Established 1827—Re-built, 1927.<br/>JIM. McLERNON,<br/>Proprietor.<br/>Late of Tamworth &amp; Nelson's Bay</p> | <p><b>Currency Lass Hotel</b><br/>"A HOME FROM HOME"</p> <p>J. BOWER, Proprietor.<br/>Phone, Maitland 456.</p>         |
| <p><b>Volunteer Hotel</b><br/>(Right Opposite the Mercury)<br/>WEST MAITLAND</p> <p>FIRST-CLASS ACCOMMODATION<br/>GARAGES AVAILABLE</p> <p>W. GLENDENING,<br/>Proprietor.<br/>Phone, 237.</p>                                                                              | <p><b>Royal Hotel</b><br/>(Opposite Town Hall)<br/>WEST MAITLAND</p> <p>GOOD ACCOMMODATION—LOCK-UP<br/>GARAGES—EXCELLENT TABLE</p> <p>R. A. FLEMING,<br/>Proprietor.<br/>Late of Dunedoo<br/>Phone 562.</p>                                                                | <p><b>Imperial Hotel</b><br/>THE HOUSE OF SPORTS<br/>WEST MAITLAND</p> <p>BERT. SIMMONS, Proprietor<br/>Phone 115.</p> |

One of the ads for accommodation in the Back to Maitland Week booklet.

Designed to show Maitland off, this initiative was promoted by an 80-page souvenir book paid for largely by advertisements from the town's business houses. It featured descriptions of West Maitland and the delights it offered.

The advertisements ranged widely. They covered men's and women's clothing establishments, car sales and repairs, real estate agents, hotel accommodation, book, art and music stores, cafés, hairdressers, taxi proprietors and more. The major retail outlets of the time EP Cappers, Galtons, Hustlers and Poultons were prominently depicted.

Many events were encompassed by the week. There were special church services, displays by the Fire Brigades and the Ambulance, a civic reception, a grand procession down High Street, a speedway meeting, dances in the Town Hall and the Catholic Hall and a street market in Elgin St. There was also a 'Queen competition' contested by two young women, one from East Maitland and the other from the West. These events drew large crowds.

There were articles in the book about the newly-established Maitland Eisteddfod, the Chamber of Commerce, the Hunter River Agricultural and Horticultural Association ("the premier association of its kind in the state outside the Royal Agricultural Society") and about tennis, cricket and the football codes.

Photos of the town's imposing buildings were also included. The banks (the Australasian, the CBC, the Union, the Bank of NSW, the Australian Bank of Commerce and the Government Savings Bank) were depicted, as were the Maitland Mercury building, Maitland Hospital, West Maitland Court House, Walka Water Works, the Technical College and West Maitland Town Hall.

The publication was a creature of its time, so the royal family and the English aristocracy featured. There were photos of King George V, the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) and the Duke and Duchess of York who had visited Maitland the previous April, and the Governor General.