

History of

By Ernie Cox.



The Awabakal people are a group of indigenous people of Lake Macquarie.
“Old Jacky’s tribe” lived near Belmont Lagoon.

Belmont to Swansea

N.S.W.

1.

Lake Macquarie History.

Awabakals: the first people of Rathmines.



The bark from this tree at west end of the playground would have been used for a child's canoe.

We have many reminders here at Rathmines of the presence of the Awabakal people. Local Awabakal people have told us that Rathmines was a gathering place for the clans. It was ideal because it offered a beautiful flat area with plenty of food from the land and the lake to support a gathering. There is a very large midden on Styles Point which shows occupation over a lot of years. There are three scarred trees in the playground (and others in the area).

The monument erected on private property on an island in Belmont Lagoon by BHP commemorates the Awabakal People. It outlines the Awabakal myth explaining the creation of Belmont Lagoon from the tears of Pontoe-Boong, the spirit man of Yellana the moon.

Awabakal (also Awabagal) is an Australian Aboriginal language that was spoken around Lake Macquarie and Newcastle in New South Wales. The name is derived from Awaba, which was the native name of the lake. The territory of the Awabakal covered the area between the Hunter River and Tuggerah Lakes including Lake Macquarie.

Belmont Lagoon - Aboriginal Heritage.

Belmont Lagoon.

Belmont Lagoon is a place of great culture and spiritual significance to the people known today as the Awabakal. It was the site of a major annual corroboree and the location of one of the region's most beautiful traditional stories - 'When the Moon Cried and Formed Belmont Lagoon'.

The Awabakal belief that the moon is a man called Pontoe-Boong and the sun is a woman named Punned was instrumental in maintaining a graphic tale of the sky hero's journeys across the heavens. A long time ago the moon man Pontoe-Boong became increasingly jealous of the sun woman Punned. Pontoe-Boong grew sick and tired of having to make his long journey across the sky always in darkness, his discontent heightened by the fact that it was only on rare occasions that the mortal Aboriginal people could look into the night sky and see the fullness of his shining face. In comparison, Punnal the sun's glowing face, was open to the world's admiration every day (except when yura the cloud spirit was making rain). Pontoe-Boong saddened by this withdrew into total darkness. Deep in meditation he began to cry and his tears began to fall day after day, and at length formed a large lagoon. Next time he came close to the earth, the sad lonely moon man called out to the wise men amongst the Aboriginal people on the Redhead hills: "Don't be afraid; I've come to bring joy!" Pontoe-Boong saw his reflection in the glistening water of the lagoon; it was huge and silver in the lagoon of his tears."Ha", he cried, "now the people will be able to see me whenever they like." He was overjoyed and at peace. Pontoe-Boong at once now happy, returned to the sky, but he never forgot his people of the lagoon. When he passed their way he shone his brightness, lighting the area almost like day. At these times the Awabakal clans would gather and hold a corroboree at the lagoon to honour Pontoe-Boong, the moon man. This place would always remain sacred in their hearts until the earth and sky were one again. The realities of this story could relate to the local Aboriginal people having witnessed an eclipse and a large-scale meteor shower!

3.



Biraban (1819 - 1846)

Biraban was born at Bahtahnah (Belmont). His name meant Eaglehawk. He was taken as a child to act as a servant to an officer at the military barracks in Sydney. It was here he was given the name Johnny McGill and learnt to speak English fluently.

He was taken to Port Macquarie in 1821 where he became a tracker of escaped convicts for Francis Allman when the new penal settlement was established.

He returned to Lake Macquarie where he was recognised as a leader of the Awabakal people. He had been initiated through 14 different ceremonies and had a great deal of influence with his tribe. He was a very intelligent man who tried to keep good relations between his people and the settlers.

He quickly became firm friends with Rev Threlkeld when he became his assistant. Threlkeld instructed Biraban in Christianity and Biraban instructed Threlkeld in Awabakal language and tribal customs.

They worked together every day until they had written down the Awabakal language and translated St Luke's Gospel. Governor Darling honoured Biraban at the annual Aboriginal conference at Parramatta in 1830 by giving him a brass plate with "Barabahn, or MacGil, Chief of the Tribe at Bartabah, on Lake Macquarie the Tribe at Bartabah; a Reward for his assistance in reducing his Native Tongue to a written Language".

Biraban also helped Threlkeld to interpret for fellow Aborigines in court. Judges Burton and Willis were impressed with his ability, but he could not be sworn in his own right.

4.

“Decisions of the Superior Courts of New South Wales, 1788-1899”. Macquarie University : Mr Threlkeld acting as interpreter for Awabakals on trial & speaking on their behalf.

A lot of people could not understand why he continued to be loyal to his tribal customs while embracing Christianity.

Threlkeld described Biraban as ‘a very valiant athletic man’. The United States explorers Backhouse and Walker said that he was ‘about the middle size, of a dark-chocolate colour, with fine glossy black hair and whiskers, a good forehead, eyes not deeply set, a nose that might be described as aquiline, although depressed and broad at the base’. In 1842 Leichhardt described him as a noble savage.

Threlkeld described Biraban’s wife, Patty, as ‘pleasing in her person’, ‘kind and affectionate in her disposition’ and shrewd and intelligent. They showed how happy they were together by ‘reciprocally rouging each other’s cheek with pigment of their own preparing, and imparting fairness to their sable skin on the neck and forehead with the purest pipeclay, until their countenances beamed with rapturous delight at each other’s charms’. Patty died before Biraban.

Biraban often disappeared to get rum in Newcastle, but always returned. He tried to protect the settlers and asked Governor Gipps when he considered forming an Aboriginal Police Corps if he could “Make me the head of them, and not a bushranger shall escape my tribe”.

Biraban died soon after the mission closed in 1842. Threlkeld recorded a generous tribute in his introduction to *A Key to the Structure of the Aboriginal Language* (1850).

He was undoubtedly an outstanding Aboriginal of his time, trying to assimilate himself into European culture while keeping his tribal identity.

5.

Queen Margaret.



Queen Margaret was the Last “Full-blooded” member of the Awabakal tribe that lived around the shores of Lake Macquarie.

The western Lake Macquarie town of Awaba gets most of the name, for example.

Margaret was born 1830 and married Ned. They moved to the Hargraves property "Norahville" in about 1857-1860 shortly after it had been built.

It must have been Edward Hammond

Hargraves's warped sense of humour causing

him to give the pair anglicised surnames of Ned and Margaret White.

They had two children in their time at Norahville named Buckaun and Ellen, and they were baptised in the drawing room of Norahville.

Whether that was voluntarily or not, we'll never know.

Rev Frederick Augustus Hely travelled to the property to carry out the baptisms, and writes of it in his diaries.

Buckaun was a good horse rider, hence the name, he died as a result of an accident, her daughter grew up and married, contact was lost with her. Cricket and shooting, were the most popular sporting activities.

Queen Margaret's sister Li lived alone at Swansea Heads.

F A Hely founded the Wyoming Property, and may have even walked to Hargraves's place.

He did sometimes ride a horse, but he wasn't fond of it.

Margaret learned to sew during these times and developed a reputation for being a remarkable seamstress.

In the mid to late 1870's, they moved off Norahville for some reason and went to live up at the area just to the south of Swansea.

Old Ned died in 1877, and Margaret in 1894 after a stay in Royal Newcastle Hospital. She's buried in Sandgate Cemetery.

The little lagoon in Swansea on the east of the highway and north of Northcote Avenue is known as Black Ned's Bay in Ned's "honour".

A little bay in Lake Macquarie bounded by Galgabba Point (on the other side of the highway to Black Ned's Bay) was named Margaret's Bay in 2000 in Margaret's "honour".

Belmont History.

Name Origin:

Belmont Farm was established in the early 1860's. The name possibly came from Belmont in the Shetland Islands, birth place of Thomas Williamson, the third settler of the district. Williamson had a guest house called "Belmont" which was the starting point of development. As well as being a business man, Mr Williamson was very practical. On his property were the first post office, store, farm, a provisional school. The room used for school, during the week became the church on Sunday, tourist accomodation was also available, and a public wharf. His property was the business centre and gathering place for the village. Mr Williamson came from the Shetland Isles. He remained an active participant in Belmont's growth until his death.

First Nations History.

Campsites have been identified around Belmont Lagoon where wild fowl were plentiful. Rev.Lancelot Threlkeld chose Belmont for his mission because of the numbers of Aborigines who gathered there and because of the abundance of food for them. In a return to the government in 1828 he reported that "Old Jacky's tribe" lived near the mission.

European History.

Early Land Grants.

On 29 January 1825 a grant of 10,000 acres was made to London Missionary Society supporting Rev. L. Threlkeld and his Mission to the Lake Macquarie Aborigines. The mission struggled along for about three years. Funds were curtailed, and closed in 1829 and the land reverted to the Crown. Threlkeld moved his family to Toronto. His farm was where the Toronto Hotel now stands. In 1850 a large number of Chinese lived in Belmont-Pelican area to fish the lake. Gold had brought the Chinese to Australia, but it ran out, they had to look elsewhere for income. One group had a large market garden; the other a fishing and canning business. Both of these business ventures did very well.

1850, the Chinese fishing business flourished in Belmont. The Chinese fished the channel. Two groups worked the fishing business. The fish were sold in Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne and china. Also exported to China were shark fins and abalone. They handled 50 tons of fish a year.

7.

Their community comprised small cottages and sheds. The sheds were for cleaning, curing and packing the fish. Methods used to cure were salting, bring, and the sun. By 1870, only 20 Chinese were left. In 1860, all fishermen were licensed, eighty men were involved in trawling.

The Parker Brothers, started fishing in 1870 and their families have continually fished the lake ever since. Mr “Darkey” Johnson was another early fisherman. He was the uncle of Perc Haslam.

In 1861 surveyor D.M. Maitland was instructed to survey the area from Belmont to Croudace Bay and divide it into portions in connection with the new Crown Lands’ Alienation Act of 1861. All portions are in the Parish of Kahibah.

1862: Portion 32A: 187 acres, Maurice Marks: north of Maude St. and east of Gerald St. Named Marksville.

1863: Portion 31A: 185 acres, Matthew Cobbin: east of Pacific Highway from Maude St, north nearly as far as Wommara Ave. Cobbin selected his land from the mission site. He supplemented his farm income with a carrying business. He had 12 children to support.

1866: Portion 60: Thomas Williamson and Robert Kirkaldy: from Maude St to Gen St. They built “Belmont House” as a guest house and later opened the Belmont Hotel. Williamson lived at Belmont while Kirkaldy was a Newcastle publican.

1870: John Anderson: Anderson’s Hill: “Bellevue” guest house. Portion 33A, 181 acres, G.A. Lloyd (Threlkeld’s son-in-law): Ross Street to Lewers Street area.

Early Subdivisions:

In 1868 a total of 40 acres of small lots was offered for sale at 6 pounds per acre in the Belmont locality. It is doubtful whether these blocks were all sold at the time.

In August 1871 pioneer timber man David Cumming offered portions of land for sale in the area.

8.

The village of Belmont developed steadily during the mid-1870's. The main part of Williamson's estate was auctioned in 1909 and became the central business district. The earliest D.P (9457) was declared on 26/6/1918 and encompassed Macquarie, Maude, and Gen Streets and was part of Portion 60. Lloyd's Portion 33 passed to the Bank of NSW, which sold it to Robert D. Lewers, Sydney Manager of the Bank of London. His intention was to mine, as some coal had been taken from a tunnel in a gully there in 1908 but when the railway reached Belmont in 1916, he decided to subdivide instead. The first auction was held in 1919 and two others followed, all being successful due to the lake views. This area was known as Lewers Estate for many years.

Early European Settlers:

The first settlers were Rev. L.E. Threlkeld. His servants and family. In 1825 Threlkeld established the "Bahtabah" mission station. It's site is thought to have been near what is now Victoria St or Ada St, Belmont, or possibly at Lewers Estate at the north end of Belmont Bay. The mission moved to Toronto in 1829.

Mr George Lloyd, a land developer had taken over a large portion of the old mission land. This area became known as the "Lewers Estate". Mr Lloyd married one of Threlkeld's daughters. The ketch, "the Turtle", now makes it's appearance in Belmont. On board are Thomas Boyd and Captain Taff. Both these men are seafarers but decide to try their hands at farming. Captain Taff's land was at Point Woolstonecroft. The captain and Mr Boyd married sisters, their name was freeman, possibly from a freeman's Waterhole family.

Captain Taff owned the first butcher shop opened in Swansea, he also had business interests in transport in the district.

The following are the people listed at the mission in the 1828 Census:

Rev. L.E. Threlkeld: missionary.

Charles Adams, bullock driver (convict)

Michael Barry, shepherd

Thomas Chester, cook (convict)

9.

Michael Dwyer, carpenter (convict)

John McKar, plough man (convict)

John Ryan, (convict)

James Silk, stockman (convict)

Elizabeth Smith, housemaid (convict)

Maurice Marks (from Bristol in England) and Matthew Cobbin (from Elm in Cambridgeshire, England) settled in the district with their families in the early 1860's. Marks (1861), Cobbin (1863).

Marks selected land on the old mission site. His farm was where the High School now stands. After a time, Mr Marks persuaded his three brothers to join him. Their names were Charles, Henry and John.

Mrs Mary Marks was quite a woman. Besides having rearing her 13 children, she helped out on the farm, baked her own bread and did all the family's sewing, plus taking in outside sewing from the Chinese market gardeners. She thought nothing of walking down to the water's edge with the baby on her hip and the other small children and jumping into a boat, rowing about a mile to give Mr Marks his lunch.

Maurice Marks enhanced his finances with fishing. Mr Charles Marks took up farming on 88 acres at Belmont.

Mr Henry Marks also a farmer, introduced a coach service between Newcastle and Belmont House (Williamson's Hotel) in 1869 - the single fare was three and sixpence for the 16 mile journey. This enterprise failed due to the bad roads. Marks Point was named in 1826 after the Marks family, Henry had a wonderful crop of oranges and pineapples at Marks Point in 1876, just before harvesting fruit fly wiped the lot out.

They were followed by two immigrant farmers from the Shetland Islands. Thomas Williamson (1864) and John Anderson (1864).

Early Industries:

Many acres of forest covered the hilly land near Belmont, and by 1871 a timber industry had developed. In 1872 a saw mill was opened close to the lake's edge near Cardiff Point. In 1873 a ship was being built at the saw mill. Between 1862 and 1870 three different companies began coal mining operations to the north of Belmont Bay near Cardiff Point, each failed after a short time. Belmont Colliery, also known as Northern No.2, operated in a gully to the north of Lewers Estate behind the present hospital and Beltop Colliery was nearby. Belmont Colliery opened in 1925 and was bought by R.W. Miller in the 1960's. When the mine closed circa 1980 the washery was still used for several years.

Roberston and Fletcher's "Shaggy" mine was on the waterfront east of Cardiff Point. It opened circa 1906 and coal was transported by water using the ships "White Bay" (later wrecked on Stockton Beach), "Warraneen", "Tuncurry" and "Seagull". The "Platypus" was a barge which towed up Dora Creek to take slack coal to the Sanitarium factory. Shaggy caught fire and was closed in 1955. It was known as the Golden Egg for years as it kept working during the lockout of 1929 because it supplied the hospitals.

Belmont Extended was also on the waterfront between Shaggy and Cardiff Point.

Bryants was situated in the bush behind the Floraville road, past the gravel quarry and it's site is still clearly visible.

Cornelius Moynahan began ship building in 1868 with his brother Patrick near the present Yacht Club slip. There were a number of farmers in the Belmont district during it's early period. These farms included orchards, vineyards, banana plantations and dairies.

George Clouten commenced a fishing trade at Belmont in 1874. He supplied Newcastle and Sydney. David Cumming was a pioneer timberman.

Boat Builders:

Mr Boyd built a ketch, named her “Progress”, she was a 30 ton vessel. This was the start of a fleet of similar craft which he built. These small boats were in big demand as they could cross the bar at the heads with reasonable safety. Cargoes carried were cedar, coal, shingles, fire-wood, shells. The “Edith May” and the “Frolic” were names of three of his boats. Weather permitting this fleet had ample work backwards and forwards to Sydney. Boyd’s shipping depot was at Swansea Heads. Thomas Boyd was the first pilot to be appointed when Swansea Pilot Station was opened. He also continued with his boat-building business. Mr Boyd was building trawlers, small fishing craft, when World War 11 broke out, he made landing barges for the army. After the war Mr Boyd returned to the building of fishing and pleasure craft. He died in 1951.

Another boat builder of note was Mr Humphries of 18ft. Skiff fame. In 1930 he was designing and building light and stable surf rescue boats. His boats won many titles. In 1945 they were in world wide use. In 1957 his boats won more races than any other designers. Then 16ft Skiffs came on the scene, Mr Humphries was the grandson of Thomas Boyd. The boat building yards were at Black Ned’s Bay because of the plentiful supply of trees in that area.

Brothers Bill and Phillip Forbes were the next participants in the boat building boom that Belmont experienced in the 1800’s. Forbes brothers built larger vessels around the 100 ton mark to carry coal from Swansea to Sydney. At this time the Government had many proposals put before it to blast an opening through the Bar to allow larger vessels into the Lake to load coal. These proposals came from parties with commercial interest in coal and shipping. These plans came to nothing, fortunately for the later generations of Lake Macquarie. We would not have had our beautiful lake as we know it today: It would have been another Newcastle Harbour.

Mr William Woodward set up his boat building business, he was able to boast that his establishment had a steam-powered saw. Imagine the time and labour saver that machine would have been at a time when everything had to be done by hand. This boat yard built a large barge to be used to cross Swansea Heads. They also built a 250 ton boat named the “Belmore” which unfortunately was wrecked on her maiden voyage when she hit the Manning River bar.

John Darling Colliery, owned by B.H.P., began operations in 1925. Northern Stoneware Pipe Pty Ltd opened their terracotta pipe plant in 1937 using clay from the Swansea area and closed in 1979.

Early Transport:

Initially boats were introduced on the lake for the purpose of transporting goods, mainly timber and coal. Later, passenger services were introduced. In 1869 there had been a bi-weekly passenger coach to Newcastle. In 1875 Belmont was the ferry terminus for people travelling from Cooranbong to Newcastle. In that year daily passenger service operated from Belmont to Newcastle. By 1937 there was a government bus service to Newcastle. Belmont bus depot opened in 1953.

Railway:

The Railway line went to Redhead in 1894, It was extended from Redhead to Belmont in 1916. It was opened to traffic on the 23 December 1916. It is said that 9,000 people came to Belmont on Boxing Day in 1916 by train, a wonderful day was had by all. The last passenger train to Belmont ran on 22 March 1971.

First Post Office:

Opened at Belmont on 1 September 1877, in premises owned by Thomas Williamson, who also held the appointment of postmaster until his death in 1880. Mail was brought twice weekly on horseback. Belmont North post office was opened 1 February 1951. Belmont South post office was opened 12 January 1959, and closed 29 November 1969.

First School:

A private school was opened at Thomas Williamson's premises in 1873. The children were taught by a governess named Mary Aspinall. The first Provisional School opened from February 1874, until it became a Public School on June 1880. It's first teacher was John Anderson, a pioneer farmer from the Shetland Islands.

In the early days Swansea South was known as Gulgabba. In 1877 residents petitioned that the area be known as Swansea. This was possibly due to the number of Welsh people residing in the area. The first school was built at Gulgabba in 1870, The teacher's name was Mr Bligh.

Belmont High acted as a Junior High from January 1953 until December 1955. It has had High School status since January 1956. Belmont North Public School opened September 1953.

Organisations:

Belmont Urban Area was proclaimed on 17 October 1930. Some form of local government came to Belmont in 1932 when the first meeting of the newly elected Belmont Urban Committee was held in the home of Mr. H.E. Richards. Mr. Richards was one of five men elected by the ratepayers of Belmont at the local government triennial elections held in December 1931. The others were Messrs Cullen, Heery, Austin and Abbott. Belmont Sailing Club was founded in 1929. Lake Macquarie Yacht Club was founded in 1929.

Population:

1884 estimated up to 120 persons; 1911, 58 Homes and 237 persons; 1921, 98 Homes and 475 persons: 1933, 470 Homes and 1940 persons; 1947, 1292 Homes and 4840 persons.

Town:

First Newspaper: "The Belmont Monthly" was published on 3 October 1925 by Eric W. Cobbin.

First Church: An interdenominational church was erected in 1874 or early the next year in Mr Williamson's paddock. It was occupied alternatively by the Revs. Dobson and Bain with a congregation of about 30 persons.

First Hotel:

Thomas Williamson's accommodation house became a licensed hotel in 1876. The Gunyah Hotel is built on the old mission site.

Thomas Williamson was granted a colonial vine licence in December 1876. Temperance organisations were strong in Belmont a hundred years ago, one such lodge was called "Lilly of the Lake".

Another hotel called “Bellview” was built by Mr Anderson, he also had other business interests. He entered the stage-coach business thinking this would help to bring tourist trade to his hotel. An advertisement in a Newcastle paper in 1830 read: “Anderson’s Hotel keeper of Belmont. A fantastic Watering Hole. Beautiful ocean views, change of air. Coach three times a week, fare five shillings, roads not so good” (that was understatement), Like Mr Williamson, Mr Anderson also came from the Shetland Isles.

Since Belmont comprises private subdivisions of freehold land it has never been classified a town or village. Belmont Hospital, a subsidiary of Royal Newcastle Hospital, opened in 1968.

Pulbah Island:

Pulbah Island was decided on for the site of an unusual business venture in 1920, two men decided it was an ideal spot for a rabbit farm - it failed.

Collieries:

Belmont Colliery began as Belmont No1 Colliery before the turn of century. Coal out-cropped to the surface almost at the Lake’s edge. Fassifern seam meant good steaming coal. This colliery was also known and “Golden Egg”. There was a fire in 1948 and a channel was dug from the lake to allow water to enter the workings.

Belmont No 2 Colliery was established behind the garbage tip, In 1964 came the Beltop mine end of Hill Street. This holed into No 2 pit and in this way the workings became extended.

Belmont No 3 pit, known as “Shaggy” was developed on the Great Northern Seam near Valentine - thus Belmont North began. The name changed to Northern No 2 when it was acquired by Millers in 1964.

Water Supply:

1929.

Sewerage:

1939.

Streets in Belmont:

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| . Ada Street | . Agden Close | . Albert Street |
| . Alick Street | . Anchor Close | . Anderson Place |
| . Apex Street | . Aylward Street | . Bellevue Road |
| . Belmont Crescent | . Belstone Avenue | . Bluebell Street |
| . Brandt Close | . Brooks Parade | . Brushtail Place |
| . Burma Lane | . Capri Close | . Church Street |
| . Clay Place | . Clift Street | . Cobbin Parade |
| . Croudace Bay Road | . Crown Street | . Daniel Street |
| . Dean Street | . Dobson Lane | . Edgar Street |
| . Elm Street | . Ernest Street | . Evans Street |
| . Gen Street | . Genoa Close | . George Street |
| . Gerald Street | . Glover Street | . Gibson Street |
| . Green Point Drive | . Greenwood Avenue | . Haig Street |
| . Hall Street | . Halyard Way | . Helm Place |
| . Henry Street | . Herbert Street | . Heron Place |
| . High Street | . Hill Street | . Hitchcock Avenue |
| . Jacky Close | . Jean Street | . Jib Street |
| . Kyneton Street | . Lee Ann Crescent | . Lewers Street |
| . Livingston Street | . Macquarie Drive | . Macquarie Street |
| . Marks Street | . Mary Avenue | . Matelot Place |
| . Maude street | . May Street | . Memorial Place |
| . Meridian Close | . Merleview Street | . Mistletoe Cove |

- . Monash Street
- . Nerang Place
- . Oriole Court
- . Pacific Highway
- . Pearce Avenue
- . Pebble Beach Court
- . Pottery Close
- . Railway Parade
- . Redman Street
- . Redrose Avenue
- . Ringtail close
- . Robb street
- . Roe Street
- . Ross Street
- . Sabot close
- . Seafarer Close
- . Sharp Street
- . Singleton Street
- . Spinnaker Ridge Way
- . Stanley Street
- . Sugarglider Court
- . Sullivan Lane
- . The Capstan
- . The Hatch
- . The Maindeck
- . The Mainsail
- . The Parade
- . The Shores Way
- . Thomas Street
- . Threlkeld's Pioneer Road
- . Topgallant Way
- . Tudor Street
- . Turner Street
- . Victoria Street
- . View Street
- . Vista Parade
- . Wagtail Way
- . Walter Street
- . Whipbird Way

Maurice Marks 1837 - 1924

Belmonts First Settler.



Maurice Marks was born in Bristol England on 8th of January 1837. Maurice is an important Lake Macquarie historical figure because of his family's early settlement of the land at Belmont and Marks Point.

At the age of twenty-three Maurice, unhappy with his future prospects in England, headed to America. However after spending only a short time in New York he soon returned to Britain. Once home, Maurice almost immediately determined to set off to Australia, this decision being met with displeasure from his family.

After making the 100-day journey to Australia on the American ship "S Curling". Maurice arrived in Melbourne on the 11th June 1860 after not finding much interest in Melbourne Maurice set off again on a small ketch to Sydney.

Arriving in Botany Bay, Maurice soon found work carting firewood, however he was drawn to Newcastle through the promise of more work

opportunities. After travelling to Newcastle and finding no paid employment, Maurice worked at the old Customs House for food only. Eventually though, Maurice found a job working at either the Hamilton Pit or a Borehole Colliery.

It was while working at the pit that Maurice met a Mr. G.A. Lloyd, who invited him to join a syndicate aimed at mining coal in Belmont. It was through this relationship that Maurice was first introduced to the area. After roughly six months of working with Lloyd Maurice left the syndicate and on 20 May 1862 applied for the purchase of land at Belmont.

Although Maurice was in possession of few assets, the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1861 made it possible to purchase and then pay off the land for a reasonable price. Maurice purchased Portion 32A of the land surveyed by D.M Maitland and he became the very first selector in the area. Calling his land, Marksville. Maurice owned 187 1/2 acres. It was this large amount of land and possibly enthusiasm for the country that drew all three of his brothers, Charles, Henry and John to Australia.

N.M Clout states in his book. "*Child of Bahtahbah*", that just before his death in 1924 Maurice is said to have claimed that he was instrumental in influencing over 100 people to move from England to Australia.

In August 1864 two years after purchasing the land Maurice married Mary Jane Richards. There is not much information available on Mary Jane other than the fact she worked as a housemaid and as described by Daphne Laughlin, upon marrying Maurice, was taken to her new home which she described as a shack. After the land purchase Maurice still had a small interest in mining. However this later fell to the wayside as he dedicated his time to cultivating his land.

Maurice established an orchard, cut and conveying timber to the local sawmill in Mill Creek and dealt in fish caught from surrounding waters. Over the years Maurice worked very hard for little profit with most of his money going to pay off the land selection debt.

In 1881 a basic Methodist church was built on a small amount of land given to the church by Maurice. During this time and until 1924 Maurice

worked as a unordained lay preacher looking after the welfare of the church and entertaining visiting Methodist congregants.

After the arrival of his brothers from England they slowly bought the land around his original purchase. After each brother established himself on the land and after each married, the Marks clan slowly built in numbers. Sadly, on the 24th November 1924, Maurice died at the age of 87 years.

Six years later his wife Mary Ann Marks died on 28th July 1930. The pair had nine children a number of whom survived and continued to live on and cultivate the land.

As one of the very first settlers in Belmont area Maurice Marks is a very influential figure within the history of Lake Macquarie, Marks Oval is a remnant of his original holdings and Marks Point is named for the Marks family orchard established there by his brother Charles.

DELIGHTFUL Belmont LAKE MACQUARIE

WATERSIDE & MAIN ROAD FRONTAGE BLOCKS



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 LICENSED SURVEYOR
 SYDNEY

ALL DIMENSIONS & AREAS SUBJECT TO DEPOSITOR PLAN.

21.

Swansea Bridge: 1881



Prior to the bridge, most channel crossings were made in William Boyd's flat-bottomed punt., In 1881 a bridge was built, originally for a railway carrying stone for the channel's northern retaining wall. It was replaced by a single lane, timber decked bridge in 1909. The present northbound bridge opened in 1955 with the fourth bridge providing the additional two southbound lanes in 1989.

1960's



Sunk in the shallow water of Swansea Channel is a mystery vessel. It sits about 100 metres off the beach not far from Swansea RSL and is encrusted with various forms of sponges, corals and marine life.

22.

Belmont Kindy and Infant schools.

1902 Belmont's First Public School.



Cnr Victoria street and Pacific Highway Belmont.



1950's.

Belmont Kindy and Infants on left, Primary on the right.

1977. The rooms on the left were kindy rooms and the rooms on the right were Infants first and second class.

Wayne Parkes.

1977 My wife was Kindy teacher.

Ian Barrett.

Mrs Woodhall taught me in first class at Belmont Infants.

Miss Hazelwood was Kindergarten Mistress at Belmont School.

Marie Richardson.

I went there and we called it Kindergarten, then Infants 1st and 2nd class, then the girls went to Livingston Street for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th. It was not the 50 cent school then or round house, they came later.

Amy Wanless.

My dad was born in 1942 in Belmont and went to school there, he moved away when he married my mum in 1966.

Brad Winter.

Kindergarten and Infant School at Victoria street then 3rd class at Livingston Street round house in 1966.

Ted Gore.

I was born in 1941 and went to Kindergarten at 4 years old (Miss Lambourne) 1st Class at 5, second Class at 6, then Primary from 7 to 11 years of age, then Belmont Junior High school at 11 years of age.

Marilyn Edwards.

I went to kindergarten there and Mrs. White was my teacher.

Toni Krzanic.

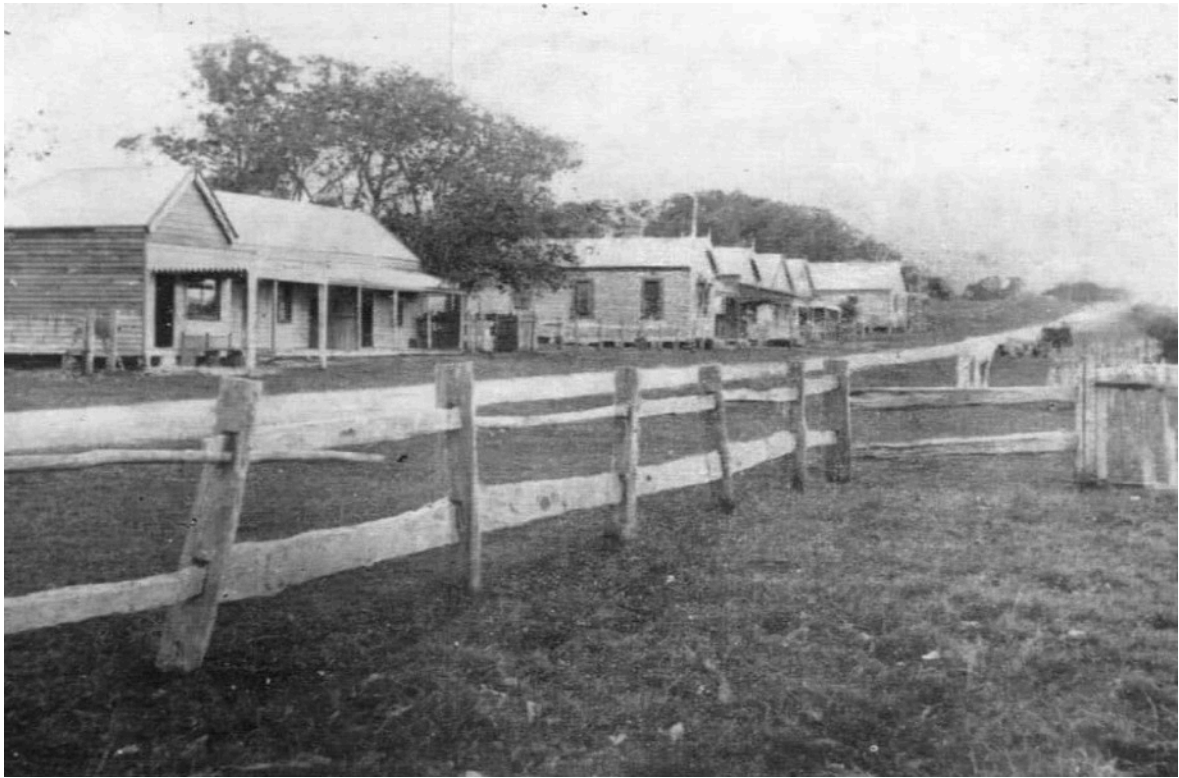
I started at Infants School in 1976.

Kindergarten - Mrs Holt.

Year 1. Mrs Gollege. - Year 2. Mrs Marsh (Principal)

Then made the transition to the "50 cent" school.

24.



1906. Main Street Belmont



1920's. Main Street Belmont.



1920's R.S. Abbott PO Store and Commonwealth Bank Agency.
Ernest Street Belmont.

26.

Belmont Baths.

Belmont folk take a nostalgic recalling of experiences long past and gone.

Marilyn Barrett .

“My father Eric McLean helped to build the baths during a work for the dole scheme in 1940’s”.

Steve Griffin.

We used to dare each other to ride our push bikes right around the baths, we had a few fall in on the narrow side.



Debra Lynne Sneezby.

It was the life of the waterfront, the shops made heaps back then especially on ice creams and the fish N chips shop loved it. Wrapped in the newspaper back then. It brought so many tourists and money to Belmont, at Easter time there. Whole families there at night either pawning with dolphin torch and hand net or catching mullet. I was lucky and learned to drive first before trying the springboard. Never felt comfortable with it.

Johnno Weimer.

They were the days, I could of been one of those kids playing there in the photo, I spent so much time down there swimming, fishing, pawning or just being naughty lol.



Elaine Whan.

The moment we got home from school from September to March we would head down to the baths from Herbert Street and be there till around 5pm. I can still remember the first time I plucked up enough courage to dive off the springboard, I tried several times but never had the courage to dive off them.

Richard Siddle.

My brother Phil and I swam at the Belmont Baths all the time, we were both taught to swim there by our dad. One day while laying in the shallows I had a large octopus latch onto my arm and promptly made his way to my head, try as I might I couldn't get the octopus to let go of me as he had a full eight leg grip around my neck. The bugger actually bit the nape of my neck during this struggle and I still bear the scare where he took a chunk of my skin. I ran screaming from the water where some good samaritan removed the octopus and took me up to the ambulance station. I had sucker marks on my neck for days after and it was a few weeks before I ventured back into the water.

Cassi Farrell.

I swam for years there, no lice got me with the summer storms that happened on the waterfront, I can't see how lice survived. Now Tuggerah Lakes was full of lice. The increase in seaweed really harmed the sandy swimming areas along the lake shore after 1960. Restricted the daily flushing out in the shallow waters too. The extra seaweed seemed to attract "sea lice" that can get trapped under swimming costumes. I have taken kids swimming at Belmont Baths back in the early 1970's and there were several occasions when they came out of the water itching from head to toe.

Sonia Craig.

There was quite a few things happen, I remember the day two boys went spear fishing in the baths and one of the boys got speared in the calves by his mate, he got out of the water with the spear poking through, the ambulance arrives and all us kids were standing around staring. I used to sit on our verandah and watch people pawning some nights, it was very pretty especially when the prawns were on. Many a person used to jump when something hit their feet, very funny, me and my brothers used to go pawning at night and bring them home and mum would cook them, they weren't huge but boy they were fresh out of the water and tasty.



1960's

29.



1950's



1959 School Carnival at the Baths.



Tony Patrick.

Two old guys from Belmont used to take out excess weed and cart it home for their gardens, one was an old fella from Redress Avenue who put it in his tomato growing greenhouse. They kept it clean for years. Council only took the job over after they got too old. Mr Lamkin was one of those old fella's. They kept it clean for the kids to swim there, In days gone by the baths were taken care of, sand from Redhead Beach was put on the foreshore and into the water. Council workers dragged forks through the swimming area and removed the shells and the weed creating a sandy bottom along the whole foreshore. It's back to it's natural state now because the LMCC only touch above the waterline.

The commercial fishermen years ago trolled the lake with their nets, they scraped the razor fish from the bottom and they aren't operating in the lake and the razor fish have multiplied. Blame licensing. That's also why more sharks are there. More bait fish, more sharks chasing them. Simplest explanation..

31.

Gunyah Hotel over the years

1924. Belmont Hotel



1926. Gunyah Hotel.



Neil Strang. My father drank in the saloon bar, he was a professional (teacher); my grandfather drank in the public bar, he was a coal miner. The women sat out in the car.

32.



1930. Heading north from Belmont South past Gunyah.



1939. "T Model Fords" parked outside the Gunyah Hotel.

33.



1959. Gunyah Hotel



2018. Gunyah on the corner Ada Street and Pacific Highway Belmont

MELVIC THEATRE BELMONT.

First Melvic 1928 -1938 ** Second Melvic 1939 - 1964.

Melvic Theatre. 1928-1938 was built where Jo Saba's Menswear shop was in later years. Almost opposite where the Melvic is today.



The first Melvic was constructed on a cow paddock on the eastern side of the Pacific highway, it opened with "The Last Command". Since there was not a road to Valentine patrons would row to Belmont Jetty then walk to the theatre.

It had a proscenium arch that patrons entered to watch silent films, accompanied by a pianist as

a form of escape from the Depression and seated approximately 800 patrons. After an extra row was added tall people had to avoid hitting their heads on the ceiling in the last row, the price for the front row was therefore high since it was the only clear view.

35.

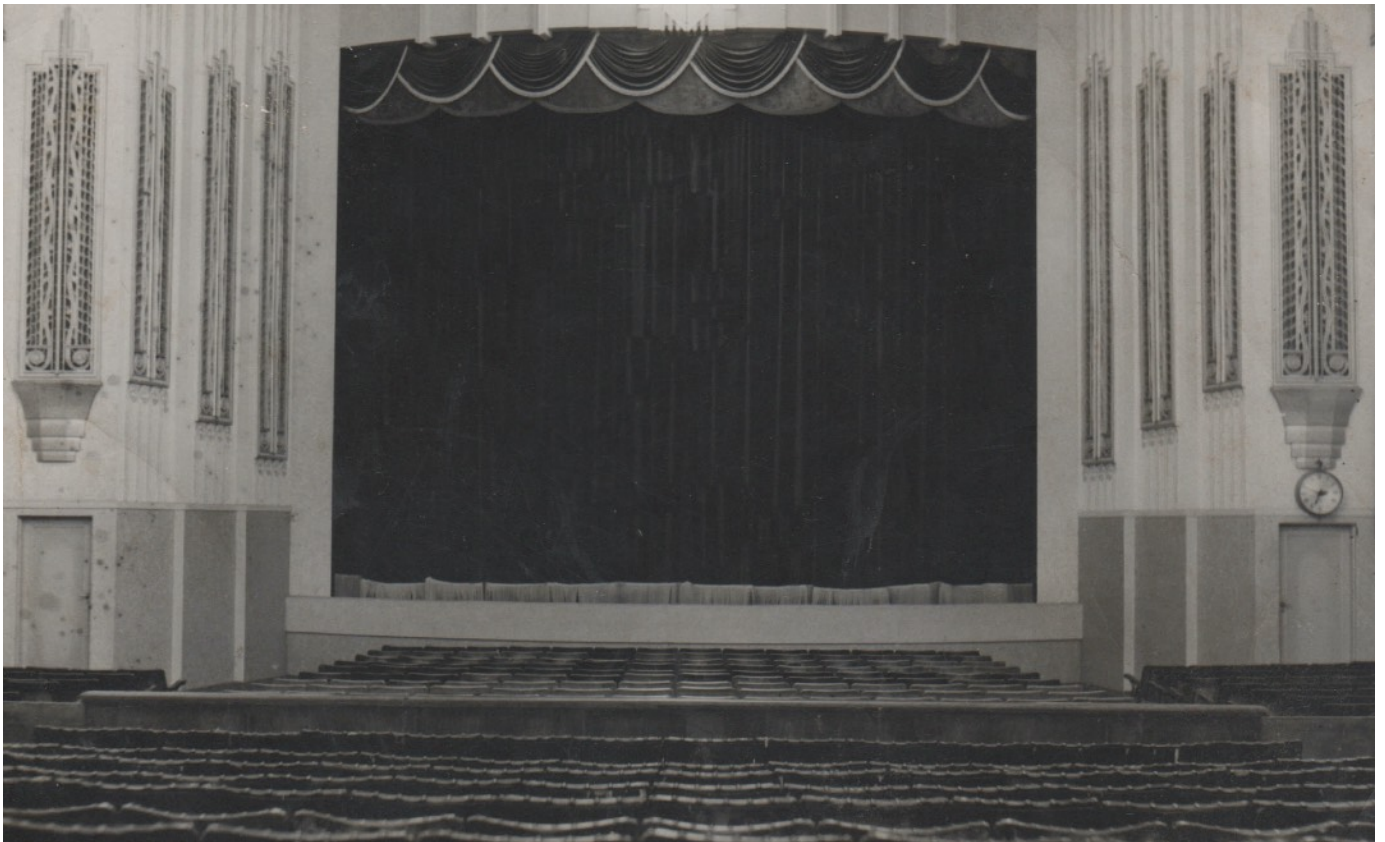
The second Melvic was opened on the 21 December 1939 on the corner of Macquarie Street and the Pacific Highway, it was built in sixteen weeks from the ground up with decoration done by hand. A good atmosphere was encouraged in the large foyer by a pianist, the upstairs foyer was supplied with flowers by Eric and Ettie Smith and was considered to be the most beautiful in the Newcastle region. The second Melvic was widely recognised as “One of the finest examples of suburban theatre in NSW outside of Sydney.



Melvic's Foyer, note the beautiful flower arrangements.



1939 - 1964 Second Melvic with milk bar on the right.



Melvic's Main Stage

Bill Payne recognised that they had “exclusive entertainment rights” with the Melvic Theatre, There were not any hotels open after 6pm and television or clubs did not exist in Australia. People had permanent bookings on Saturday nights where you sat depended on your age or preferences, younger people sat downstairs where seats were cheaper, while upstairs was quieter with better viewing. “Belmont youth” would visit the milk bar and roll Jaffas down the aisles. This was a tradition for Baby Boomers who could afford to treat lollies as toys. The milk bar also sold fresh fruit juices, hand-dipped chocolate ice-creams and more James Henderson brand sweets (Minties and Fantails).

The Golden Age of Hollywood coincided with the suburban theatre boom. “Gone with The Wind” made more money than BHP did in a year. Bill Payne would advertise the Melvic by dropping leaflets from his

light aircraft, there was a special advertisement for the "Melbourne Cup" footage which he collected from Sydney, unfortunately one year the wind changed and the leaflets ended up floating in the lake.

The second Melvic was successful for 25 years and many concerts for charities were held there, for example, The "Cripple Children Home" benefited. (Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate on 9th June 1954).

The introduction of television in 1956 had attendance for suburban theatres fall dramatically, The Melvic's last film was "PT 109", about President Kennedy's wartime exploits on 31/12/1964.

Mr Bill Payne brought the movies to Belmont

MR Bill Payne, owner of Belmont's first movie theatre, The Melvic, has died.

Mr Payne died on Tuesday at Toronto Private Hospital of suspected septicaemia.

His son, Mr John Payne, said his father's health had been failing since February this year, and he was admitted to hospital last month after suffering a stroke at home.

The 85-year-old theatre owner was born at Catherine Hill Bay and spent his adult life in Belmont.

He built the Melvic Theatre with his partner, Mr Rex Sanderson, in 1928 where the Commonwealth Bank now stands.


The Melvic was rebuilt in 1939 to cope with the public's fascination for the 'talkies', with the new 1100-seat cinema opening on the corner of the Pacific Highway and Macquarie St.

The Melvic closed in 1964 and was converted into a shopping centre.

Mr Payne also originally owned the Metro Drive-In site at Gateshead, as well as much of the Jewellstown subdivision area, which he sold in the 80s.

Mr John Payne said his father

OBITUARY



Mr Bill Payne

'never retired' as he was involved with the running of the Melvic shopping centre and was a supporter of Belmont Meals on Wheels and the Swansea Belmont Life Saving Club.

Mr Payne's wife, Madge, died in 1983. He is survived by sons John and Leonard.

A funeral service will be held at 10am tomorrow at St Luke's Uniting Church, Naria Rd, Belmont.

38.

The first Melvic was demolished and the second Melvic building now exists as shops and offices at Belmont.



1960's Melvic Birds Eye.



2018. Melvic as it is today.

39.

Belmont South.

Belmont South is located between Belmont and Marks Point along a narrow strip of land on which the lake is located to the west and the ocean to the east. Belmont Golf Course is at the south of the suburb and takes up a large proportion of land which backs on to Blacksmith's Nature Reserve. Belmont Lagoon and cold Tea Creek form another water border.

The post office was opened on 12th January 1959 and closed on 29th November 1969. No schools have been listed in this suburb.

Belmont Cemetery serving the east lake community from Belmont North to Swansea is a prominent feature of the suburb.

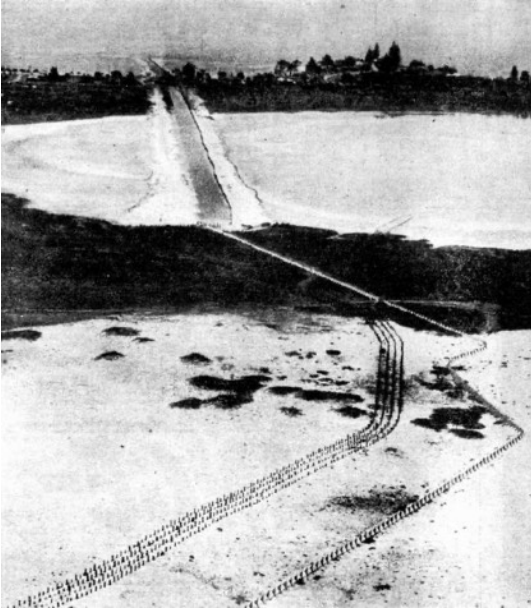


1940's View of Belmont South.

40.

Belmont Lagoon.

1942.



1942. Belmont Lagoon in WW.2, Nine Mile Beach in foreground. It was called "The Southern Defence Line". Tank traps were there until removed by Sand Mining in the 60's. Nine Mile Beach in the foreground, Belmont Lagoon in the middle and Lake Macquarie in the background. Tank traps during WW.2 to stop Japanese Advance towards the steelworks in Newcastle. Left side Northbound lane at Cold Tea Creek two tank traps are still there.



1970. Belmont Lagoon Arial View.

41.



Arial view of the lake and the lagoon on left.



1982. Sinking head frame for John Darling Colliery N04 shaft Belmont Lagoon May 1982.

Anti Tank Ditch 1942 .

The Belmont Anti-Tank Ditch was an anti-tank trench constructed in 1942 as part of the southern perimeter defensive system of the Port of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, as part of Fortress Newcastle during World War II. The anti-tank ditch was located 12 kilometres south of Newcastle, south of the town of Belmont.

Belmont Anti-Tank Ditch (Cold Tea Creek).

At the time it was anticipated that the Imperial Japanese Army may attempt a beach landing between Belmont and Swansea Channel along Nine Mile Beach. Barbed wire fencing and machine gun emplacements were constructed along the entire length of Nine Mile Beach.

The anti tank ditch was constructed where the sand spit peninsular is only about one kilometre in width and is partially taken up by Belmont Lagoon which is a large marshy lagoon which is connected to Lake Macquarie by Cold Tea Creek.

Cold Tea Creek was dredged and straightened and the creek formed the anti tank ditch, which was designed to prevent enemy tanks proceeding north to Newcastle. Anti-tank defences included two interlocking rows of concrete tetrahedrons tank traps or Dragons Teeth were located on the southern bank of the ditch to obstruct the movement of tanks.

Twenty seven acres of dense scrubland to the immediate south of the ditch was cleared to deny cover to enemy forces and pile driven vertical timber posts or Dumble Tank Stops were located every five feet along the northern bank of the ditch to form a vertical barrier to any tanks that gained access to the ditch. The concrete tetrahedrons and vertical timber posts extended in straight lines from within Lake Macquarie to the sea. Belmont Anti-Tank Ditch Dumble Tank Stops.

A temporary bridge over the anti tank ditch was built of timber. In the event of attack it could be collapsed quickly into the ditch by the withdrawal of five bolts. Many of the pile driven vertical timber posts or Dumble Tank Stops are still visible; however are slowly succumbing to the elements. Two concrete tetrahedrons have been relocated to the Ken Lambkin Reserve to form a memorial, and sit on the southern bank of the creek mouth.

The 8th Garrison and 32 Brigade of the Australian Army were responsible for the defence from Adamstown, Dudley, Redhead to Blacksmiths of the southern perimeter defensive system of the Port of Newcastle.

43.



1930's. Cars parked along highway near Cold Tea Creek Bridge.



Cold Tea Creek (Anti Tank Ditch)



Reminence of Timber Dumble
Tank Stops in creek.

44.



Arial view of Cold Tea creek and lagoon today.

Nurse Dick's Private Hospital.

1923

There is a house in George Street Belmont that many Lake Macquarie residents, both past and present, may claim as being their original place of birth. It is an unassuming house, still standing strong as a testament to the many years gone by. Now a private residence, in it's hey day it



was Nurse Dick's Private Hospital, also known as Roslyn Private Hospital, and it is here that over 5000 babies took their first breath of life, some as early as 1923.

Nurse Margaret Chalmers Dick was born in Joadja Creek, New South Wales in 1895 to Scottish born parents Thomas and Jane Gibson Dick. She was one of seven children who moved from Joadja Creek to Dudley, before settling at Belmont around the year 1922. Nurse Dick originally spent six years undertaking pre-study Psychiatry at the Callan Park Centre in Sydney before partaking in an Intensive Study Course at the Crown Street Women's Hospital in Sydney, at the cost of £100.

After graduating with honours, Nurse Dick was rewarded by her parents in the form of a residential block of flats in George Street, Belmont.

It was during this time that a population growth was occurring and the demand for maternity accommodation in the local area was high. To meet the needs of this growing population, Nurse Dick set about converting her newly acquired George Street flats into a private maternity hospital. Thus, the establishment of 'Nurse Dick's Private Hospital' also known as 'Roslyn Private Hospital' came about. This was to be the first private hospital for the Belmont area. It is unknown why Nurse Dick's Private Hospital was later called Roslyn Private Hospital but it would appear that the name change began in the late 1930s.

As was the norm back in those days, for someone to be known in the community and to publicise their skills and experiences, a person may decide to advertise their services in the local newspaper. A public notice promoting the services of Nurse Dick's Private Hospital was found to be printed in the 'Newcastle Morning Herald and the Miner's Advocate dated Saturday 15th September 1923.

Belmont folk reminisce:

Meryl Williams.

I was born at Nurse Dick's in 1947, my brother Alan Wallace was also born at Nurse Dick's and we went to Belmont High School. I worked for many years in Belmont at Silkman's Butchers in Herbert street and at Coles Belmont.

Lesley Norris.

I was born at Nurse Dick's in 1951 and I'll always be a Belmont girl.

Arthur Thomson.

On 9th August 1945 after staying with nanna and pop Tolfree in Tudor street for two days. I went to Nurse Dick's where mum had given birth to my brother Lawrence, nanna and I walked all the way from Tudor Street to Nurse Dick's and back.

My dad was a POW in Thailand and I was born at Nurse Dick's in 1952.

Yvonne Sievers.

I was born at Nurse Dick's on 22nd April 1945 and my sister Lorraine February 1947 and my youngest brother Les was September 1949... maiden name was Campbell. We lived on Brooks Parade until I was 16 and moved to Pelican. I will always be a Belmont child and could not have had a better childhood. We are very lucky.

47.



Nurse Dick's Private Hospital in early days.



2018. Nurse Dick's now private residents .

48.

History Belmont Train Station.

Opened. 1 December 1892 - **Closed.** on 19 December 1991.



Belmont Station in early years.



1930. Historical photograph of buses to Marks Point and Swansea are waiting for passengers.

49.



1950's View of the old Railway coal loader or Gantry.



1960's. Belmont's Railway Gantry.

50.



1954. Engine 3079 waiting at Belmont Station on 4th August 1954 to take passengers to Newcastle.



1960's. Passenger train at Belmont Station heading for Newcastle.
Note: The VW parked at station.

51.

Belmont Train at station in 60's



1971. Disused Belmont Railway line.

'Ghost' telephone rings on

Has Belmont Railway Station, closed since April last year, a ghost telephone?

Residents living nearby and children who play in its deserted precincts would like to know an answer to their question: Why should this phone still ring day and night?

Some youngsters said the "spooky" phone did not frighten them, but they were puzzled.

The station and immediate environs presents a completely derelict appearance.

Paint is peeling from buildings, windows are smashed, the perway is overgrown by weeds and tall grass.

Except for the birds, insects, occasional rabbit and children, the place is deserted.

On Monday morning, children playing near the rust-covered railway line heard the phone ring long and loudly in the morning.

Questioned, they said it was not the first time they had heard it.

Residents supported them, saying its shrill tones could often be heard in the quiet of night as well as during the day.

One man said: "I suppose there are people still not aware that the station has been closed for more than a year."

A youth living just across the road from the station said people still went to the station to catch a train.

It was only when they saw the neglect they realised something was wrong.

"Country visitors holidaying around the Lake in vacation time often call in at the station for a ride in the train to town, only to be disappointed," he said.

He said that while the grass growth near the platform was wild the foliage about 200 yards farther on was like a jungle.

A small bridge near this point was also in a dangerous condition.

He said residents kept a close watch on developments, and since the closure had seen only two visits by a man on a small rail motor.

Residents confirmed that there had been rumours of land development in the area. They said people had visited the land near the station and had spoken about the possibility of waterfront sites for building.

One man said estate agents were constantly "eyeing the place over," but inquiries could not elicit any definite information.

He said that so far the buildings had not suffered much vandalism, apart from the broken windows.

The reason was probably

that people still wanted the service back.

For some unaccountable reason, one main door had been left unlocked for more than a week. It was now firmly secured by a huge padlock.

Meanwhile, Belmont Rail Action Committee "has not given up the ghost" in its efforts to have the line restored and even extended.

The Secretary (Mr G. Fraser) said meetings were being held at regular intervals with the Minister for Transport (Mr Morris) for information concerning New Redhead Estate and Coal Co Ltd.

"There is still much information to be made available about this railway," he said.

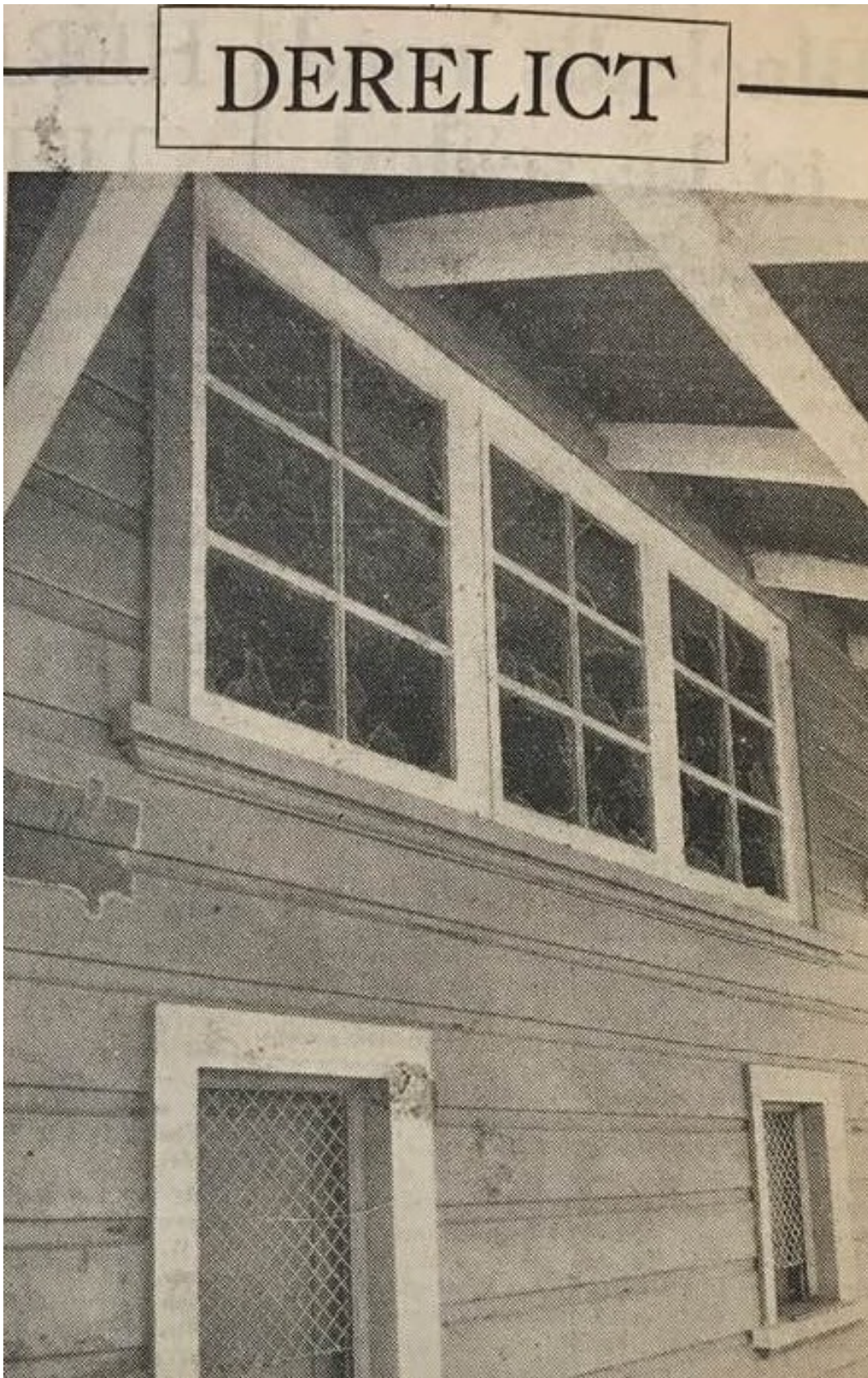
"The committee is continuing its investigations into matters related to the company's activities.

"In this regard, Mr Morris hopes to furnish a reply to recent queries. He advised only a few days ago his inquiries were taking longer than expected."



1971. Paper clipping: Belmont Derelict Railway Station.

53.



1971. Belmont Railway Station.

54.



1550's Belmont South (Tent City)



1958. The tourists will arrive from all parts of NSW to view the scenic wonders of the popular area. Their caravans and tents will add a touch of carnival to the colourful waterline.

Every day and practically every night the cool, clear lake unfolds infinite variety. Early morning air is filled with the "stutter" of launches and the splash of oars taking fishermen to reap a wealth of crabs and fish from the lake depths.

By mid-morning small children, who most of the year wear only scanty costumes, are laughing and splashing in the lake shallows.

Then, in the afternoon, as breezes fleck the blue waters with white. Schoolboys launch their dinghies and row boats.

Their small sails, tiny against the big spinnakers of the colourful yachts, skim around the lake till just before sunset.

The sails turn pink against the red and blue sky as the sun sinks behind timbered hills. And then, if the signs are right, hundreds of Belmont people prepare their carbide lamps. Soon the bright white flames of the lamps sparkle against the darkened waters as search for red prawns starts.

And the dark brings Belmont's hotels and club to life.

Locals and visitors have a choice of two colourful, modern hotels and in the golf, bowling, yacht and sports clubs, members rub shoulders with people from many parts of Australia.

Many visitors go a few miles from town to a new drive-in theatre.

Tourist experts say Belmont's location between the lake and sea adds to it's appeal.

"Tent Town"

The town sits on the lakeside while the yellow sands of nine-mile beach are only 500 yards away. Protected natural flora adds deep reds and blues, yellows and greens to the surrounding hills and slopes.

The big annual influx of tourists will reach it's peak shortly before Christmas when miners establish their own "tent town" on the Belmont waterfront. But even before then, thousands of motorists will spend weekends with their families on the well-grassed foreshores. To the miners and thousands of other people throughout NSW, Belmont is a summer playground.

56.



1950's. Children enjoying the hire canoes at Belmont South.



1950's. Families enjoying Belmont South at the lake.

Belmonts first Ambulance Station.

1942. Belmont's first Ambulance Station on the corner of the Pacific Highway and Maude Street Belmont was officially opened in 1942. An ambulance substation was established in Belmont operating from temporary premises in 1939. The current Belmont Ambulance Station in Herbert Street was opened in February 1971.

Belmont Ambulance officers since 1939 have travelled the equivalent of 24 times around the world in the treatment of the sick and injured.

In the 18 years they have attended 7313 accident victims, 35,600 medical and transport cases and 8000 minor injuries at the station. And in doing so they have driven a total of 632,448 miles. Belmont Ambulance service is a branch of the Newcastle District service.



1942.

58.

Lake Macquarie.



1940's. Wangi Queen at the Lake



1945. Families at the Lake.

59.



1945. View 16's Brooks Parade and Baths.



1949. Belmont flood from Brooks Parade.

BELMONT POST OFFICE FIRE:

1953. Melvic and Post Office before fire.



BELMONT BLAZE: Two shops and P.O. Occupants escape.

Fanned by a strong westerly wind a fire which broke out at Belmont last night destroyed two shops and the Post Office. The premises destroyed were those of Gearing's store and Sinda's barber shop. The Melvic Theatre also was menaced but was saved by a volunteer brigade. A party of Newcastle motorists gave the alarm and roused the occupants of the residential portion of the store who escaped in their night attire. The three buildings which were of wooden construction were soon a raging furnace but the contents of the Post Office were removed to safety.

Telephonic communications however had been severed and it was impossible to summon a fire brigade; but a motorist hurried to Charlestown where he summoned the Hamilton brigade. Volunteers were still at work when the brigade arrived. A narrow laneway acted as a fire break and prevented the spread of the flames

61.



1950's. Long time residents Lyna and Harry "Tock" Turnbull lived in Glover Street Belmont in the 50's, They were a very large friendly family, sadly them and their home are gone.

Lake Macquarie Yacht Club.

Ada Street, Belmont.



Photo 1940's. The club was founded in 1929 to cater for skiffs over 16 feet and combine both cruising and racing activities in it's calendar of events.

62.



1950



View of Yacht club from the hill.

63.



1950's Yacht Club.



64.



1963. Flood Ada Street.



2018. Aerial view. Yacht Club and Gonyah Hotel.

Marks Point.

Is a suburb of the City of Lake Macquarie in New South Wales, it's located 23 kilometres (14 miles) from Newcastle's central business district and forming a small peninsula extending into the eastern side of Lake Macquarie. The Aboriginal people, the Awabakal were the first people in this area.

Name Origin:

Named after Charles Marks who had an orchard there and is one of the oldest suburbs in the Lake Macquarie area.

European History

Early Land Grants:

Portion 29 (Kahibah Parish) of 33 acres granted to Henry Marks on 17/6/1876. Portion 68 of 39 acres granted to Henry Marks on 9/1/1882. Henry sold his land to his brother Charles in 1885.

Early Subdivisions:

D.P.5201, declared on 15/12/1902 comprised large lots along the western end of Marks Point Road. D.P.5755, declared on 14/10/1909, comprised smaller lots on the southern side of Marks Point Road. Marks Point was a popular site and land sold well.

Early European Settlers:

Henry and Charles were brothers of Maurice Marks, an early settler in Belmont. Henry bought the land at the Point and he and Charles went into partnership in an orchard. In 1885 he sold this to Charles, who lived on at Marks Point until he died.

Early Industries:

The Marks brothers' orchard grew oranges and pineapples. In the 1920's there were still market gardens run by Chinese residents near the present Marks Point School. Charlie Hollis operated a slipway and

marine business in Edith Street from 1954 to 1980, when it became Marks Point Marina.

Early Transport:

By water or by sandy dray tracks to Newcastle or Swansea.

First Point Office:

Opened as a non-official post office on 1 January 1927. Prior to this date it operated as a receiving office.

First School:

Three primary schools now serve the educational needs of the children living in the Marks Point, Pelican and Blacksmiths area. Pelican Flat Public School Karog St Pelican; Blacksmiths Public School Amaroo St Blacksmiths; Marks Point Public School Findon St Marks Point.

"In the 1930's there were very few children of school age living in the Pelican, Blacksmiths and Marks Point areas, those children that were eligible for school, either went to Swansea or Belmont. But as the three townships slowly expanded it could be seen that in years to come these three towns would one day link up, it was apparent at least that one school was needed to ease the burden of the influx of children to the Belmont and Swansea Schools, and it had to be built in a central position to serve the three townships. So after much discussion and earnest consideration it was decided it would be situated in a picturesque bushland setting at the corner of Pacific Highway and Soldiers Road (Eastern side of Highway). The school was built to cater for the children in the Marks Point, Pelican and Blacksmiths area. Established in 1938 it was first named Marks Point Public School, Mr Austin Hayes being the first Principal. The school would have its name changed from Marks Point Public School to Pelican Flats Public School on the 7/9/1950.

In 1954 saw the opening of yet another school, this time at Marks Point, where the children would enroll from Pelican Flats School as the children did for the Blacksmiths School. This school would serve the needs of the Marks Point and Belmont South area. The school would remain in use on the Highway site until September 1955, when the

school children would be transferred to the present day site at Pelican where the new school was built, it would still keep its name of Pelican Flats Public School. With the development of more housing blocks in the Blacksmiths and Pelican areas resulted in an increase in enrolments at the school. Blacksmiths Community Hall was utilised to cater for the influx of new pupils. These extra classes at the hall would be part of Pelican School, until early 1962 when enrolments would take place for the new school at Blacksmiths. The pupils attending the Blacksmiths Community Hall in 1962 would be part of Blacksmiths Public School until the completion of their new school when they would be transferred on the 11/9/62. Mr L Smith was the first Principal of Blacksmiths School, working from the Community Hall closely followed by Mr L Lovelock who would work from the Hall also and then transferred to the new Blacksmiths School.

Water Supply:

1947.

Streets in Marks Point

- [Ashley Street](#)
- [Cygnet Street](#)
- [Davis Street](#)
- [Delando Crescent](#)
- [Docker Street](#)
- [Edith Street](#)
- [Emily Street](#)
- [Findon Street](#)
- [Haddon Crescent](#)
- [Harlow Street](#)
- [Jobson Lane](#)
- [Marks Parade](#)
- [Marks Point Road](#)
- [Naru Crescent](#)
- [Naru Street](#)
- [Pacific Highway](#)
- [Reid Street](#)
- [Sandcastle Lane](#)
- [Shannon Street](#)
- [Swan Street](#)
- [Village Bay Close](#)

68.



1949. 18th June. Marks Point flood - shop and Post Office.



2018. Beautiful Marks Point Lake Macquarie.



1950. Arial view Belmont.



Marie Richardson.

1950's. *This was the Presbyterian Church on the Pacific Highway opposite the Belmont Public School which is where the Tech is now. I was actually married there.*



**Just a little bit of extra history .
Tom Jacks on Pacific Highway at Windale.**

Margaret Wasiak.

“Tom Jack was my maternal Great Grandfather. His daughter Violet Isobel Jack was my Grandmother. Tom Jack was also known as 'The Fruit King' for his chain of Fruit shops in Newcastle.”



Joan Hobbs.

That was a beautiful place I remember the white horse and the aeroplane. I only viewed it all from the old green double decker bus.

Loretta Badham.

I used to want that white stone horse statue that used to be there, I used to eye it off every day on my way past to High School in Newcastle in the 1950- 1952 period.

71.

1950's. Belmont Tennis Courts
in Glover Street Belmont,
Was maintained by Jack Davis.



1953. Lake Macquarie.

1953. Main Street
Belmont looking South.





1950's. Percy Gibson in his garage up on the Main Highway Belmont.

Gibson's Auto Electrical now Gibbo's has been in Belmont since 1945. It is a successfully run business today. Sadly Percy has passed away a few years ago.

An old customer tells of Percy's funny side.

*My father went to get his car rego check there about 50 years ago. One of the headlights wouldn't work and Percy was fiddling with it and taking a long time. Dad needed the rego done straight away and said "Don't worry about it". He went somewhere else and got the check done and headlight fixed. A couple of weeks later he went back to Percy for wiring issues and Percy asked about his headlight problem. Dad said "It was a miracle, I switched on the lights and the broken one worked". Old Percy said, **It must be a miracle, the globe is still sitting over there on the bench.**"*

73.



1953. Shops in the main street Belmont.



1958. The Store and Butchery opposite the Melvic Theatre.

Belmont Primary School.

(Victoria Street.)



The old school looked like this..K1 and 2 was down in Walter Street and there was a class room on the south side, the one facing the highway had two rooms and it burnt down years ago and they built a new one room one, 4th class has burnt down now, so its gone.. Buildings 6th and 5th were Primary School Classes. Up in the top corner of Victoria and the highway, that used to be the first Belmont Public School. (Photo supplied by Garry Pockett)

Lesley Fenn Athanassiou.

I went to Belmont Primary School from 1953 to 1956. My teachers were 3rd class, Mrs Hagan, 4th class was Mrs Anderson, 5th class was Mrs Woodhall and 6th class was Miss McAlpine the principal. I loved my days there except for the warm milk, I used to take flavouring in a little jar to make it more palatable.

Jan Grigg.

I went to Belmont Primary from 1963 to 1966, my name was janis Crane.

75.



This was Belmont Primary, (photo taken in 1984) Below is the same Primary School in 2018, now old and derelict.



Toilet block is the red brick building on the right, next to that was the school bell on a wooden pole. We used to assemble outside the class rooms for roll call, down the back of the grounds next to Walter Street there used to be another shed where we used to be given bottle milk, wasn't very nice as most of the time it was warm.

76.



Photo 1986. Primary School Headmaster Mr Clem Hill.



The two Morton Bay Fig trees in the school grounds up near the highway were planted by pioneer Williamson , they are still there today.

Belmont High School.

Belmont High started as a Junior High School from January 1953 to December 1955. And a High from January 1956.



1953. Construction of High School.



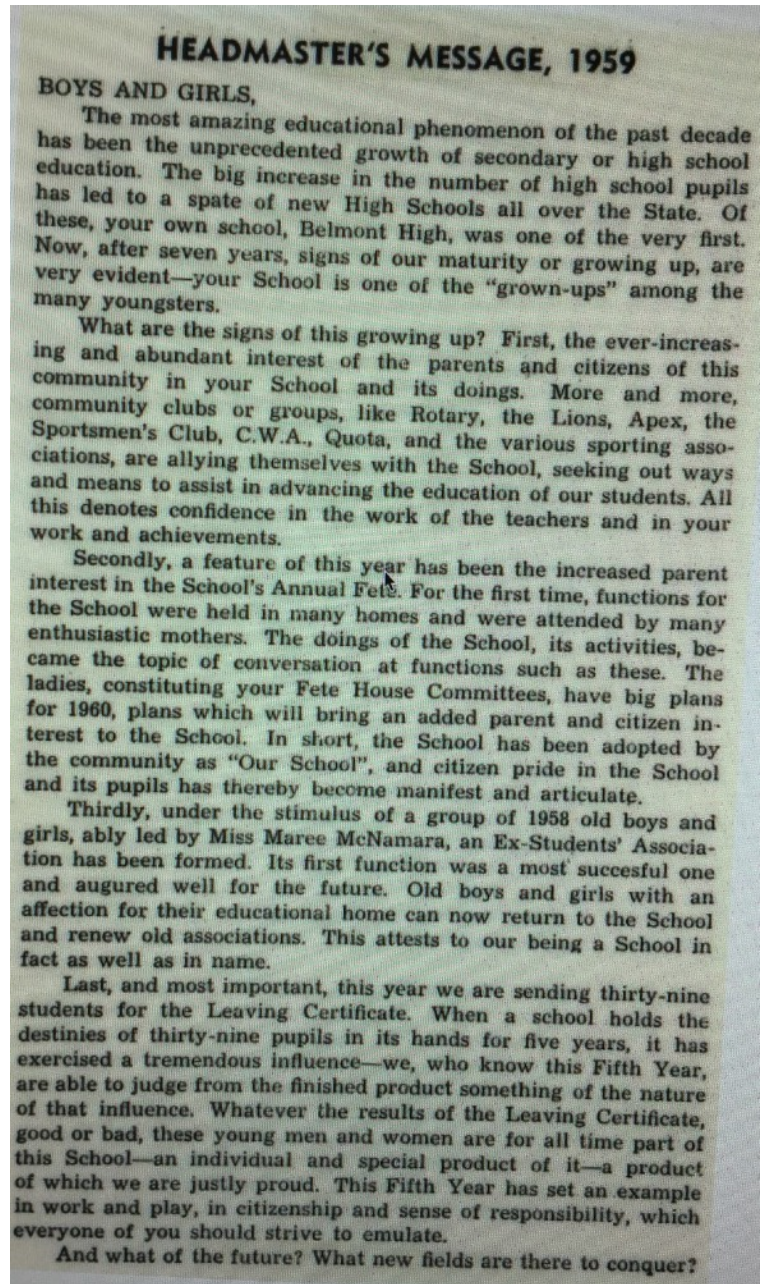
78.



Belmont High was constructed on a cow paddock.



1959. Mr S. Schofield.
First Principal.



1959 Headmaster's first message.

80.



1950.



1958.

1950's School Song.

Life's a game, a contest too,
 A glorious venture beckoning you,
 The challenge take with all your might,
 Be this your guide and this your light.
 To strive your best your utmost do,
 Quantum Potero Quantum Potero

When on the field you play the game,
 To win or lose it's all the same,
 All honour to the school you've bought,
 Play the game as you've been taught.
 So strive your best your utmost do,
 Quantum Potero Quantum Potero

All lessons too with zest you've learnt,
 From teachers praise and blame you've earned
 Rewards, success, you've often sought,
 But always with you was this thought.
 To strive your best, your utmost do,
 Quantum Potero Quantum Potero

School days are o'er, you'll leave this Home,
 To face life's battle as you roam,
 The better armed to play the part,
 Enshrine this message in your heart.
 Oh, strive your best, your utmost do,
 Quantum Potero Quantum Potero



1960 School Lockers.



1960's.



1969. School Entrance and grounds.



1969. Arial view Belmont High School.

Belmont Sportsmans Club

The Belmont Sportsmans Club was formed in 1955. Driven by local police detective Pat Cahill (president of Lakes United Rugby League Football Club), a group of interested locals including Seale Barton (president of the Belmont Cricket Club), and Les Miller (president Belmont Baseball Club) met and decided to advertise a meeting about forming a sporting club to local sporting bodies.

The meeting was held under the wooden grandstand at the Belmont Sportsground on October 14, 1955, but was poorly attended. A further public meeting was held on November 18. This meeting saw the



establishment of a new sporting club named the Belmont Sportsmans Club. A further meeting on 27 November saw a decision to purchase and relocate Benyon's Shop from the main street of Belmont to act as the clubhouse. The shop was moved into placed on December 22 1955.

Mrs Benyon in her shop before it was purchase and re-located for the Belmont Sportsmans Club.



It opened as the Belmont Sportsmans Club in Feb 1956 after refurbishment by volunteers. The club didn't have a liquor licence then but did have four poker machines.

The official opening on September 29 1956 was attended by the day's football, surf lifesaving, boxing and cricketing celebrities.

Belmont Sportsmans Club

As a result of a consultation between Mr. Pat Cahill (President of Lakes United Football Club), the late Mr. Les Uittler (President Belmont Baseball Club) and Mr. S. Barton (President Belmont District Cricket Club) an advertisement was circulated through the Swansea-Belmont area convening a meeting of local sporting bodies to co-operate in the formation of a Sportsmans' Club. This meeting was held on 18th November, 1955.

Little did the few enthusiasts who gathered at that meeting realise how this new club was to grow.

It still could not have started except for the help given by the then President of the Urban Area, Mr. Leo Ruane, who was far-sighted enough to foresee that this club could take over the care and maintenance of the Bel-

mont Sports Ground, and so save the Belmont ratepayers a considerable amount.

actually on the three ovals themselves:

1956 —	£1321.
1957 —	£2231.
1958 —	£1623.
1959 —	£5,500.
1960 —	£6,200.

Besides this two groundsmen are permanently employed.

The Sportsmans' Club have given the people of Belmont a playing area equal to any in N.S.W. at no cost to the ratepayers.

The building programme during these years has been extensive. By the end of this year it will include:

Clubhouse —	£42,000.
Dressing Rooms, No. 2 Oval,	£3,527.
Curator's Cottage —	£1,200.
Maintenance Plant and Equipment	—£3,484.

Another feature of the club activi-

The whole area can be watered by spear point pumping system at a very small cost.

The next major step is the construction of a large grand stand with sufficient room underneath for a properly equipped gymnasium and club rooms for a youth or junior sportsmans' club.

We claim that our club is unique. It certainly sells the same type of goods and operates the same type of machines as others, but the profits are spent on care and maintenance of the Sports Ground. This is a public utility.

Long may it remain a credit to its members and the public of Belmont.



• BELMONT SPORTSMANS CLUB.

ties is the fostering of junior sport on the grounds. Large sums of money have been spent in this regard and a lot more will be spent in the future.

All of this could only have been achieved by the loyal support of our members who see their money being spent on public playing areas (which any one can use) instead of private club amenities as is the case in most clubs.

This is a progressive club and will not rest here. Already the New South Wales Cricket Association has consented to have its Colts team play here on 5th November this year.

It is quite likely that International football, cricket and baseball will be played on this ground within the next few years as these grounds have an advantage over others in the district.

Under the able direction and untiring leadership of Mr. Pat Cahill, President since inception, plus the willingness of the members (at this stage 90 — and now 700) to help with various jobs such as digging drains, serving in the bar, etc., was the real reason this club got away to a good start.

Since then Belmont Sportsmans' Club has spent the following amounts

The club began to experience financial difficulties in 2015 and closed after 63 years of operation on February 5 2018. The foundational clubs Belmont Cricket Club, Lakes United Rugby League Football Club and Belmont Baseball Club had remained associated with the Belmont Sportsmans Club throughout this period. They had been joined by subsidiary clubs from sports including darts, golf, indoor bowls, lawn bowls, netball, snooker, soccer, table tennis, tennis and many others over the years.

Many members of the local community were heartbroken by the club's closure. The club had been an important source of community fundraising for sporting bodies, as well as funding for grounds maintenance and improvements. It remains a much-missed local institution. Many locals have fond memories of spending time at the Sportie.

Memories:

Ian Barrett.

As a young boy growing up in Glover Street watching the club being built not knowing one day I would work there as well as playing baseball and cricket for Belmont Its a disgrace that those handling the purse strings were aloud to walk away Scott free to continue their careers when they should be in jail.

Sandra Lawson.

I use to go there when it was the old club, only small in those days, they ruined it when they did the Reno and made it bigger.

Melissa Burkitt.

So very sad I remember that place well mum used to take me to bingo in the auditorium great club in its day.

Vicki Walker.

That's so sad to see It was my favourite Belmont club and had many great times there.

Des Isenhood.

It's a disgrace that it was allowed to be run into financial ruin by greedy individuals !!!

Desley j McLennan.

I had my 18th there many good times in the 80's and some of the 90".

Elizabeth Krisenthal.

I have a lot of memories from this place, sad to see it now.

Lorraine McEwan-McKenzie.

They are building two three story buildings with underground car parking for over 55s living. Around 130 units.

Jean Herden.

I can't believe the Sporty club is no more, had many good times there over the years, it was such a friendly club.

Karen Patrick.

I had my wedding reception there in 1975. And spent many nights there. Sad that we had to make room for change.

FAREWELL TO THE BELMONT SPORTIES

In life, as in cricket, change is inevitable. As we bid farewell to the structure that was the Belmont Sportie's Club, a wave of nostalgia and fond memories wash over us.

From the after-match drinks to the spirited team talks, the Sportie's Club was the heart and sole of Belmont District Cricket Club. It witnessed our triumphs and consoled us in defeat. It's where life members were born and where the spirit of the Whips came alive.

As we watch it come down at today's training, we take a moment to reminisce about the laughter, camaraderie, and the spirit that the Sportie's Club instilled in all of us. It's not just a building; it's a repository of our shared history and cherished moments.

While we say goodbye to the physical structure, we embrace the winds of change. For just as we can't stop progress, we also can't stop progress of our great club. The traditions and values that were formed in this building will continue to grow as we move forward.

Thank you to all the past board members, patrons, players and families.

[#belmontsportiesclub](https://www.instagram.com/belmontsportiesclub).

87.



1993. Belmont Sportie Club.



2018. Sportie Club.





2018. Arial view Sportie Club, Bowling Greens and Sporty Fields.

Demolition of Belmont Sportie Club.



89.



90.



1955. Tom Paul's Macquarie Meats, Herbert Street Belmont.



1956. Arial View Belmont and Glover Street Belmont.

91.

Belmont Hotel.



1957. Belmont Hotel.

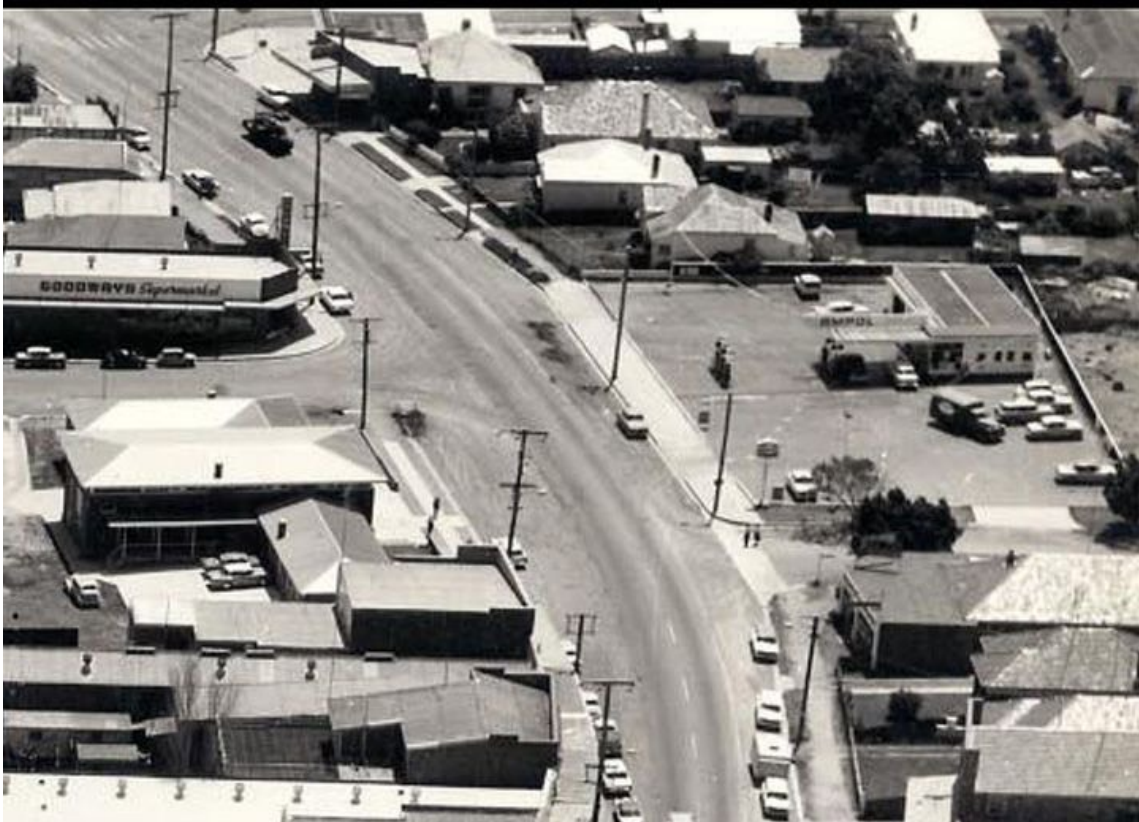
Ian Barrett.

"I remember 20 cents a schooner, 15 cents a middy, how times have changed".

92.



2018. Belmont Hotel.



1956. Aerial View Ampol Service station on Corner Glover Street and Pacific Highway Belmont.

Elaine Whan.

I remember the Ampol well, I lived in Herbert street, it was owned by Albert Paul.

Johnno Weimer.

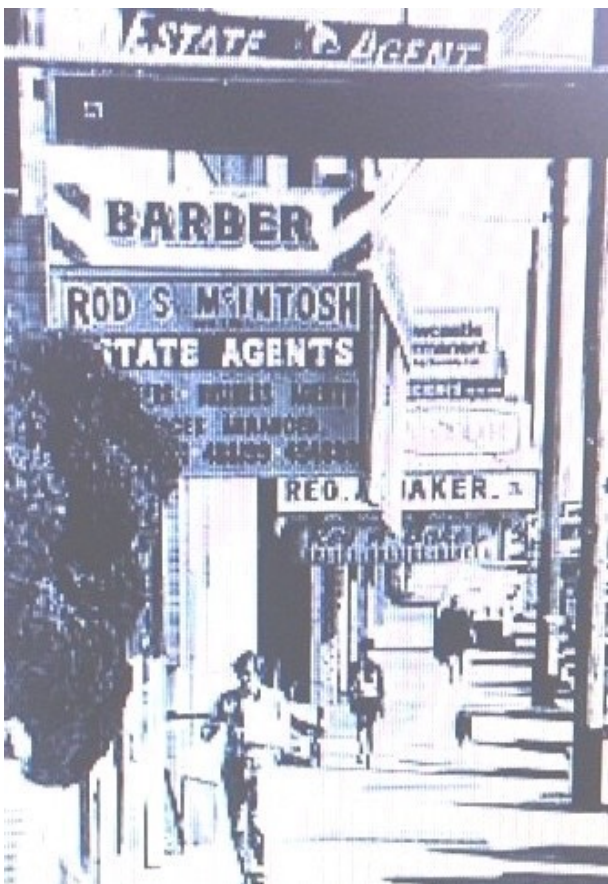
Albert Paul used to train me at rugby league at Belmont primary school, I went to school with his son Stephen.

Rum Runner.

Ampol was run by Albert Paul and Peter Hopgood and just behind it in Glover street was Fred Fisher's shoe repairs.



1956. McEwan's Pipe Band marching down main street of Belmont.



1956. Rod. S. MacIntosh Real Estate and Reg. A. Bakers Store.

Speedway at Cahill Oval.

1955.



BELMONT (NSW)

1955 - BELMONT SPEEDWAY

The Belmont Speedway was located at Cahill Oval (within Belmont Park) in the 1950's.

They had a heavy board safety fence around the oval with the speedway track around the perimeter, The football / cricket field was still in the centre, Jq's, Speedcars, Solos and sidecars all raced at the venue.

The first race meeting was held on the 4th of December 1955.

1957 - BELMONT SPEEDWAY CLOSES

In 1957 the speedway track around the main ground was removed and by 1959 a complete reconstruction of Cahill Oval was carried out, Under the guidance of Keith Nancarrow, 30cm of coal ash, topped with 12cm of Maitland loam and seeded with South African couch grass, The playing surface became in all opinion the equal to the Sydney Cricket Ground.

At the same time the spear point watering system was installed.



4th December 1955

Troy Barrett.

Some of the track still exists it runs around the back of Cahill oval were everyone parks. The grand stand was burnt down and was replaced with the concrete structure years later..SPEEDWAY CAHILL OVAL.

96.

1955. Belmont Speedway December 1955.

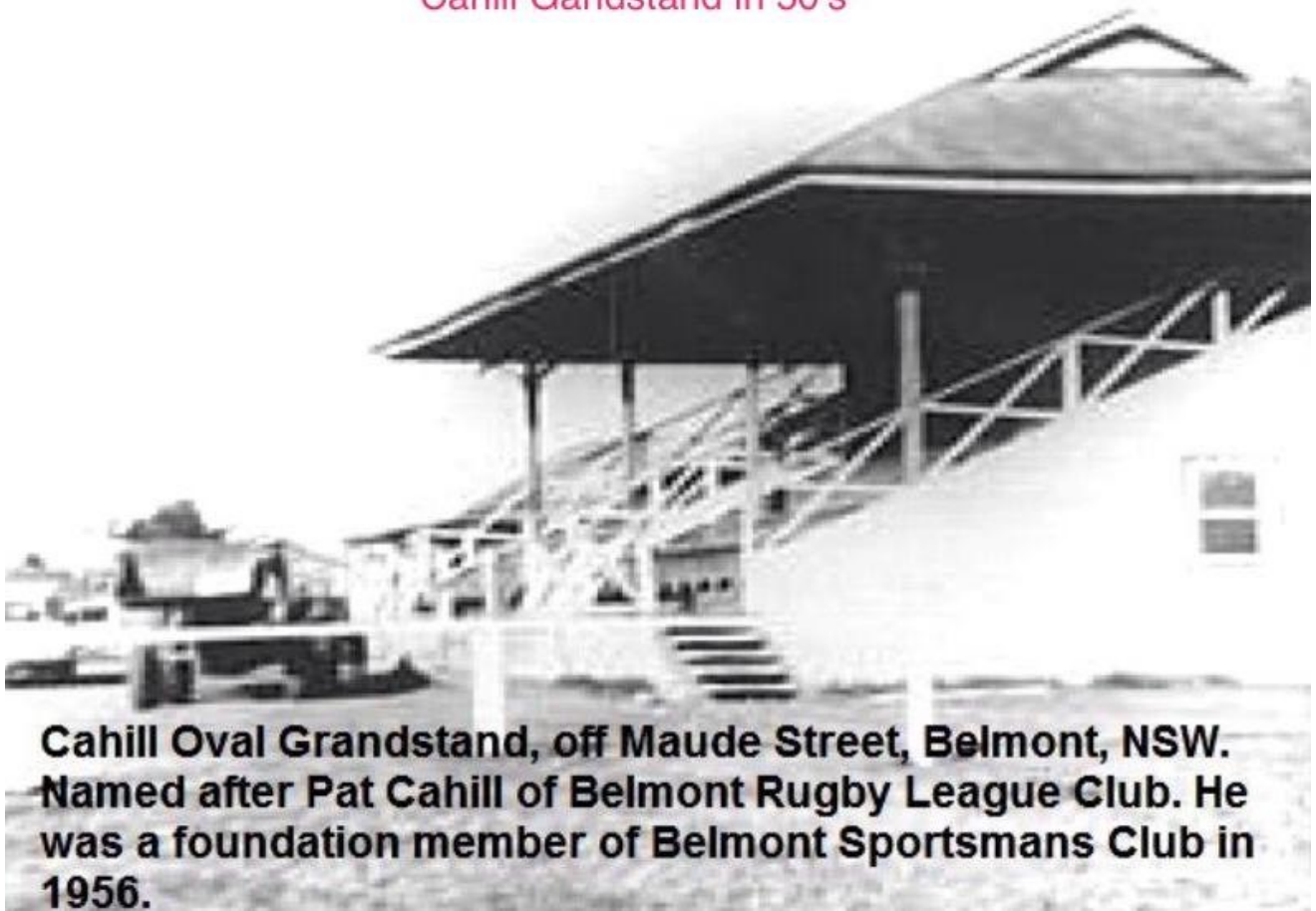


1955. The late Jim Rippon racing at Cahill Speedway.

97.



Cahill Gandstand in 50's



Cahill Oval Grandstand, off Maude Street, Belmont, NSW. Named after Pat Cahill of Belmont Rugby League Club. He was a foundation member of Belmont Sportsmans Club in 1956.

Ernie Cox.

Sometimes I would look through the old dressing rooms under the stand to see what was there, the only thing I found was an old cricket bat handle, it wasn't hard to get in as the doors to the dressing shed wasn't locked most of the time.

When they were developing the outer grounds where you parked, they dumped tonnes of dirt and I used to play there a lot.

Just adding a little story of mine.

At the side of Cahill field many years ago before the field was completed there used to be a line of trees, one particular time I remember a shaggy camped under one of the trees with his swag asleep. A few hours later he was gone and I noticed he had dropped a few sixpences and three-pence's out of his pocket's on the ground.

Cahill Stand and Oval.



Original wooden grandstand flanked by the caretakers cottage, canteen and ticket box.



2018. Cahill Stand and Oval, Ready for Lakes United game.

100.



1957. Belmont Bowling Club.



2018. Belmont Bowling Club closed

101.



1957. Belmont Library, no longer replaced by High Rise.



2018. This is the old Belmont Library site Gen Street.
"You can't stop progress"



1958. Belmont Main Street.

1959 May See Start Of Belmont Hospital

N.S. 11-11-1958.

The NSW Hospitals Commission is planning a 300-bed hospital for Belmont.

Belmont Hospital Committee members are confident a start on the urgently needed medical service will be made early next year. The opening will climax

more than 15 years of agitation by Belmont people.

President of the committee (Mr. W. B. Gardiner) said today: "Ten years ago the Hospitals Commission decided that a hospital was needed at Belmont.

"However, difficulty in securing a site satisfactory to the Commission balked action.

would be made next year.

Mr. Gardiner said: "A hospital is Belmont's most pressing need.

"At present Royal Newcastle Hospital contains the only general and maternity hospitalisation available to the rapidly growing town.

"The Belmont Hospital will serve the fast-growing Catherine Hill Bay, Swansea, Warner's Bay, Dudley and Red-head areas as well as the whole of Belmont.

TOO COSTLY

"Our first site was that of the present Belmont High School.

"The committee agreed to forgo this land on the understanding that a hospital would be built at the Violet Town turnoff.

"However, compensation required to owners of coal leases under the area made it uneconomical.

"Now it is planned to build at Croudace Bay Rd."

Mr. Gardiner said the committee anticipated that a grant for a start on the hospital

300 BEDS

"The position is so serious in our area now that we warn all visiting motorists and tourists to take the utmost care.

"We suggested to the Commission that it might start with a 100-bed hospital but we were told that the cost would be little higher for 300 beds.

"We tell them that we have outstanding lake attractions but no hospital to care for them if they strike trouble."

1958. Paper clipping. Belmont Hospital

They Are All Seeking Festival Title
**One of these five girls
 could be chosen 'Queen'**



Margaret Hunt (22), nominated by Lake Macquarie Yacht Club.



Robyn Hoy (18), nominated by Fidelle.



Ann Watson, Lions Club's representative.

Gold Coast
NS. 11. 11. 1958

For Winner

At least five attractive girls will seek the Miss Belmont crown during this year's annual festival at Belmont.

Belmont service clubs and business houses have nominated the girls.

They will appear before a panel of judges during the festival and the winner will be crowned on Saturday night, Nov. 22.

The judges will select the finalists on speech, deportment, dress-sense, figure and personality.

The five girls already nominated are Wendy Wright, Pacific Highway, Belmont, Margaret Hunt, Belmont, Barbara Morton, Belmont, Anne Watson, Belmont, Robyn Hoy, Caley Cres., South Belmont.

Their sponsors have each paid an entry fee which will be added to the festival funds.

The winner of the competition will receive a trip to the



Barbara Morton (18), Apex Club candidate.



Teachers' College student, Wendy Wright.

Gold Coast, with air travel and accommodation paid. The festival committee has also arranged attractive prizes for second and third place-getters.

At least 40 other girls are

expected to enter a Miss Lake Macquarie quest in conjunction with the festival.

The quest is open to all girls living in the Lake Macquarie Shire area.

The Miss Belmont compe-

tition is restricted to Belmont girls.

The Miss Lake Macquarie quest will carry prizemoney of £60. Some of the girls will also make a TV appearance.

REGISTER OF ADMISSION (A)

OF

1959 Public School

AT

Belmont

DIRECTIONS TO TEACHERS.

1. The names of the pupils should be written in full—the boys on the left page, and the girls on the right page.
2. The Register Numbers must read consecutively from the first page to the end of the book. No pupil's name is to be re-entered or re-written except under the circumstances mentioned below.
3. In noting the religious denominations of pupils, the following abbreviations may be adopted, viz. :—

Church of England	E.C.
Roman Catholic	R.C.
Presbyterian	Pres.
Methodist	Meth.

 and similar abbreviations for other denominations.
4. When a child is classified, put the date opposite his name in the column denoting his class or division. Thus 1/12 denotes the first month of 1912, or January, 1912. In the same manner, should a child be promoted to a higher class or division, the date of transfer must be similarly registered.
5. When a teacher has reasonable grounds for believing that a pupil has left the school, the date of leaving should be recorded in the proper column.

1959. Belmont Public School "Register of Admission."



1960's. Aerial View of The old Belmont Jetty.



1960's. Belmont Bus heading for Catherine Hill Bay followed by Double Decker Bus.

Memories of “Aspley’s Timber Yard”.

Aspley’s Timber Yard and they had Reid’s Hardware Store where Fricker’s was.

Warwick Reid can provide a comprehensive history as his family became the long time proprietor’s of the hardware division of the business originally owned by Aspley’s
Would have to be Aspley’s Timber yard.

Meryl Williams.

Reid’s Hardware was at the front of the timber yard, it was owned by Jim Aspley’s Sister and there was a laneway beside the hardware store leading into the timber yard. Next time your in the Main Street of Belmont if you look up at the building next to the Newsagent, you will see ASPLEY COURT on the building. Old Jim Aspley owned a lot of

shops and the flats above in the Main Street mainly between George Street and Macquarie Street. Also where Coles car park is now that was also owned by Aspley's as that was where he stacked most of his timber. The Dentist and Denture Clinic alongside Coles in Edgar Street he also owned about three houses there. The brick house on the corner of Macquarie and Singleton Streets, I think it's a skin clinic now, well that is where the Aspley family lived. Jim also owned the land that Woolworths Car Park is in, this was behind the family home.



1960's. V.J. Sailing on the lake.



1960's. This would have been an Anzac Day, early 1960's maybe 1964, some of the children were playing the recorder which in those days was made of wood not plastic. The Blue Jean Cafe I think was closed by the late 1960's, the Anzac Day March from the Gunyah Hotel to the RSL opposite Belmont Hotel and singing God Save the Queen. It was very exciting to March on the highway. The route changed around 1985 - 1986?



1960's. Hire Canoe's at the lake.

1950's. In the years following the Second World War, as a result of the influx of British migrants, a quick solution for housing was needed. This was resolved by the quick installation of Nissen Huts in an area of Belmont North known locally as "**Pommy Town**", comprising a few streets to the east of Old Belmont Road. They were oddly-shaped tin houses, Covered in corrugated iron, the pre-fabricated semi-cylindrical buildings look like a half-buried tin can on its side.



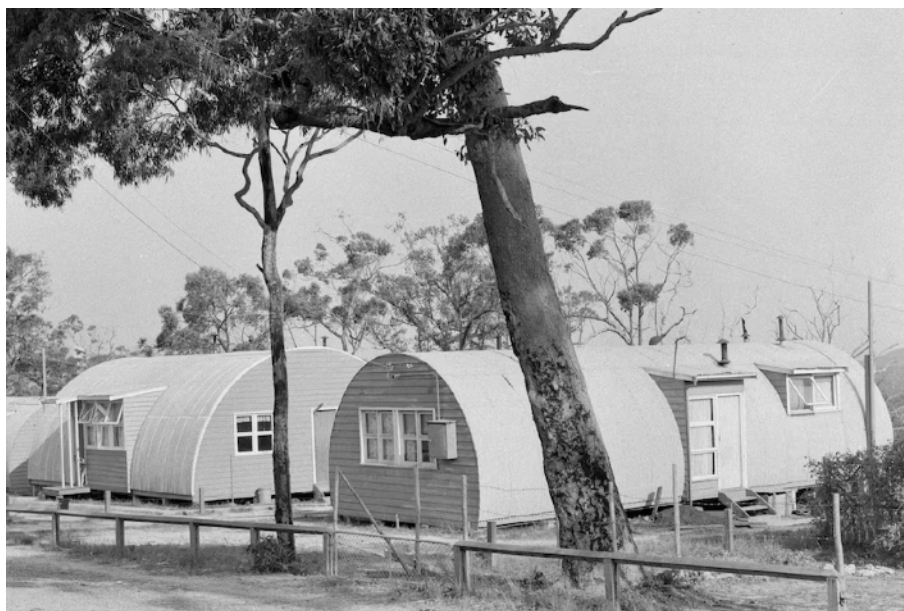
Invented in World War I. by Britain's Major Peter Norman Nissen of the 29th Field Company Royal Engineers the Nissen huts were originally designed for storage and to house soldiers.

Life in 'Pommy Town'

Ms Callen grew up in one of 50 Nissen huts built in Belmont North during the 1950s.

"We called them tin cans or half houses. I never remember them being referred to as Nissen huts," Darlene Callen said.

The huts had no insulation and became incredibly cold in winter and hot in summer.



A Nissen hut on Somerset Street in Belmont North.

Nissen huts were typically 4.8 metres or 7.3 metres wide, with many variations in length.

"It was a really good neighbourhood," Ms Callen said.

"You'd play with the kids next door and the kids down the street, and you'd just all run around like crazy". "We definitely didn't have aircon," Ms Callen said.

"Luckily ours always got a nice breeze, but it did get very cold."

Each hut had a slightly different configuration inside, but Ms Callen says the majority had the same basic fit-out.

"They had bedrooms at the front, the lounge room dining area running through the middle section, another bedroom at the back and the laundry and bathroom at the back."

Ms Callen remembers her childhood fondly and loved the family home.

"People who lived in the square brick houses always wanted to come to Pommy Town, because it was fun. There was always stuff happening," she said.

"I used to make up stories and say that the house goes underneath and it's completely round."

Ms Callen also remembers being teased by children from other suburbs for living in a Nissen hut.

"They'd go, ***“You live in a tin can or a sardine can. You must be poor’***," she said.

"As far as I remember, we weren't poor. We were just normal."

Ms Callen says, when she lived in Belmont North, every house on her street was a Nissen hut but just 23 remained today.



1960's. On the lake.

111.



1960's. Sailing on the lake.

112.



Brooks Parade.



113.



Belmont Main Street heading North.



1962. Lake Macquarie Yacht Club flood.

114.



(More Trivia)

1962. Premier Hotel situated at the Nine-Ways
Broadmeadow's Newcastle.



1963. Arial View Belmont.

115.



1963. Brooks Parade Lake Macquarie.



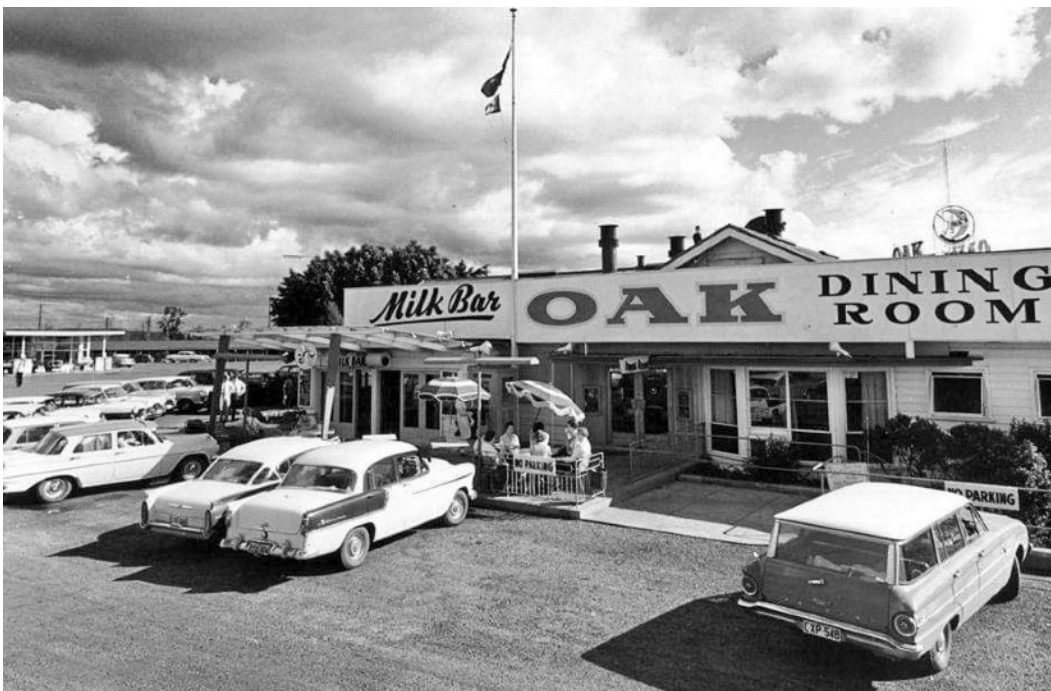
1964. Pacific Highway Belmont, on the right is the Squash Courts.

116.

(More Trivia)



1964. The “Red Rocket” as some called it at Belmont South heading North.



1967. The Oak Factory at Hexham.

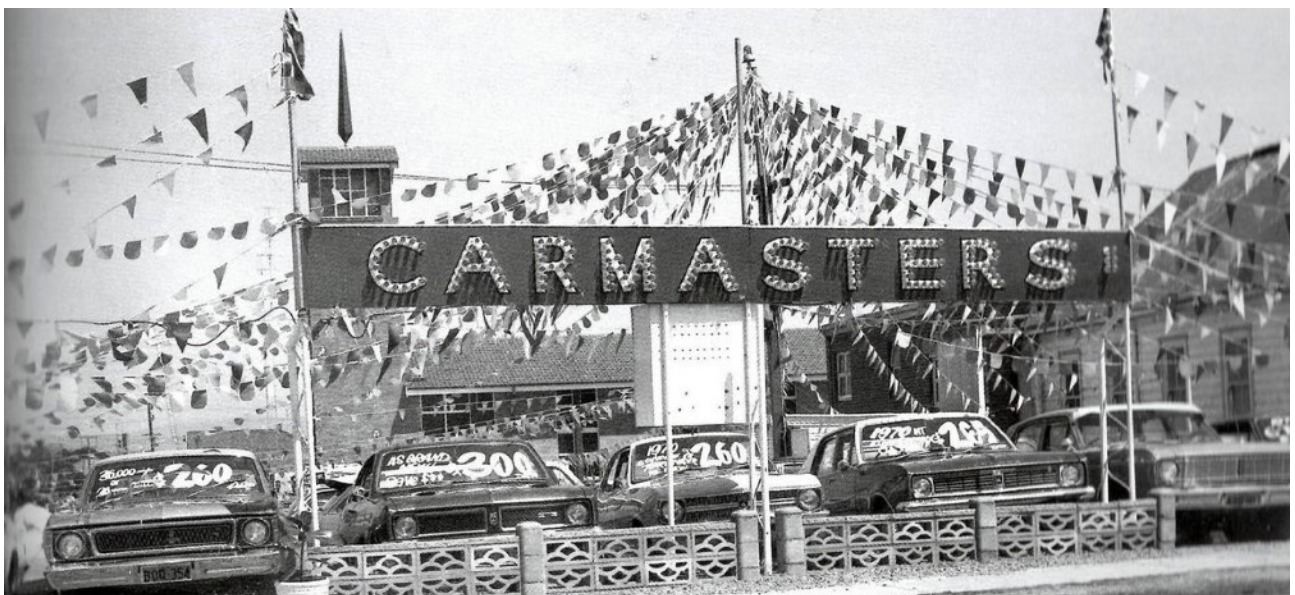
Barbara Royes.

“Dad would always stop at Freeman’s Waterhole and sometimes the Oak Factory at Hexham. Quality and taste never changed.”

117.



1968. Maude Street Belmont. No church or Shell servo then, the Ambulance Station is in the background.



1968. Carmasters Car Yard on corner of Pacific Highway and Maude Street Belmont.

Aeropelican Airport.

Established 23 October 1968.



The late Dalkeith Hilder (1911-1976)

Was an energetic, determined individual. From difficult and humble beginnings, Keith (Dalkeith) established and sold a number of successful businesses and when he passed away at the age of sixty-four, he owned and operated one of Australia's most successful commuter airlines, AeroPelican.

With both parents deceased, Keith ran away from an orphanage to live with his grandmother in Grenfell. His formal

education began at seven years and at this young age, Keith started selling newspapers to help his grandmother financially. Keith left high school aged fourteen. In 1939, at the age of twenty eight, the NSW Legislative Assembly appointed Keith to a position as a teacher of oxy-acetylene and electric arc welding with the Technical Education Branch, Department of Public Instruction. In the same year he gained his aircraft engineers licence.

Keith Hilder was a keen aviator and in the 1940's he established Newcastle's first aerial photography business. Keith's technical abilities were evidenced through his design and construction of a low cost single seat monoplane. Unlike other "home-built" planes his aircraft conformed to existing regulations and as a result passed airworthiness testing and inspection by the Civil Aviation Authority. The closure of the Broadmeadow airfield by the Department of Aviation and the decision by the Newcastle Aero Club to relocate to the Rutherford airfield, led Keith to consider building an airfield closer to Newcastle. In 1959 he acquired miner's rights and a twenty five year lease over twenty seven acres of scrub and swampy land at Pelican, located between Belmont South and

Swansea. With the use of a manual grader and dynamite the land was drained, cleared and filled with thousands of tons of fill from local coal mines.

By February 1968, Aeropelican Airport had been cleared of bushland to provide clear approaches, was tarsealed, had a night flare installed and contained a fully operational control tower. For a short time, the first Sydney service out of Belmont airport was operated in conjunction with the Illawarra Flying School PTY LTD but this did not last long. Mr Hilder preferred to supply his own pilots and aircraft so the Aeropelican service began to charter regular flights between Pelican and Sydney. It took until 1971 for Mr Hilder to obtain a full charter licence for his air services. It was on July 1st 1971 that Aeropelican became a genuine passenger commuter service

Aeropelican Airline was established on 23 October 1968 and started operations on 1 July 1971.



An old Tiger Moth was the first plane to land on the new airfield. Keith Hilder then acquired a Cessna 402 VH-MWE and later on a second Cessna 402 VH-MWF. From the granting of a charter and aerial licence in 1962, he battled the Department of Civil Aviation for permission to provide general aviation operations. A break through came with the granting of a special licence to operate a scheduled service between AeroPelican and Sydney in 1967. It took a further four years of battling bureaucratic processes to obtain a full charter licence for AeroPelican in June 1971.

During the early design phases of the airport, several options were put forward to expand the airport by adding extra runways to cater for larger aircraft and to increase passenger capabilities. In January 1968, a proposal was announced for possibility of having larger runways constructed. This proposal was “bitterly” opposed by local resident groups who claimed it would subtract form the leisurely nature of the area, was too close to schools and would impinge on housing close by.

In 1980, the airline was sold to Masling Airlines, a company associated with the now non-operational Ansett Australia. On the 20th June, 2003, the airline entered into a commercial agreement with Regional Express (REX) Airlines. Aeropelican commenced Sydney services from the northern Williamtown airport on March 1, 2004 and discontinued services from Belmont Airport in March 2005.

Since its construction the 15-hectare airport site has changed ownership several times and is currently owned by a private consortium that plans to use it for charter operations, skydiving and adventure flights.

The airport at Pelican is located between the Lake Macquarie suburbs of Belmont and Swansea and is approximately 15 km south of Newcastle, New South Wales. It sits on a narrow peninsula between the Pacific Highway and a shallow tidal inlet that forms the entrance to Lake Macquarie.

The Airline and Airport was initially leased and developed by Mr Keith Hilder, an aviation enthusiast, who initially decided to use it for a flying school and Air Charter. Mr Hilder found that developing an airport was not easy. For numerous years he applied for the Flying School and Air Charter service but it wasn't until 1962 that he was granted the licence by the then Department of Civil Aviation on July 25 that year. Soon after this Mr Hilder felt the Lake Macquarie region needed a better air service then the one being offered by a major airline out of the R.A.A.F base at Williamtown, North of Newcastle. Mr Hilder promoted his ideas of introducing a local charter passenger service with authorities from 1962 and it was not until 1967 that an exemption was finally granted thus giving the green light for a passenger service.

121.

Early Aerial Photo of Pelican Airport.



122.



123.



124.

John Darling Colliery, Belmont North..



1928. John Darling Colliery, Belmont, Lake Macquarie, NSW. No.2 shaft (upcast) with temporary Headframe.



125.



1971.



Stephen Brown. “Miner retired.”

“I still have my mining safety glasses, good for mowing. I often think about my times underground, miss the blokes but not the harsh conditions, the reason i walk with a limp now is years spent in knee deep mud and on uneven surfaces. I have a hearing aid thanks to many years coal mining when there was no hearing protection.”

Blacksmith's Beach.



2009. **Move over Hollywood**

Hugh Jackman, who played Wolverine in the X-Men film franchise, was back on home soil in 2009 to film his blockbuster, X-Men Origins: Wolverine.

Blacksmiths Beach was transformed into a World War II battlefield, recreating the D-Day landing at Normandy. More than 100 extras featured as they fought their way through smoke and sand, putting Lake Macquarie up on the big screen.

127.



2020. Grannies pool, located near Blacksmiths Beach in the city's east is the perfect spot for little ones to splash around.



It also has an accessible pathway, so prams and wheelchairs can travel down easily.

FUN FACT: The name of the pool comes from its history with parents and grandparents teaching their kids to swim.

Lake Macquarie Herald
22/4/1976

Plaque honour for Belmont doctor

A plaque honouring the late Dr Patrick William Gallagher was unveiled in Belmont last week.

Dr Gallagher was well known in the Belmont area for almost 30 years before his death in 1963.

He was associated with Nurse Dick's George St Hospital and was most recognised for his midwifery work.

The George St Hospital was the first one in Belmont and continued to operate until the present one was built in 1960.

It has now returned to

its original use as a block of flats.

Dr Gallagher's wife, Margaret, said: "I think it is very considerate of the people involved to dedicate the plaque to my husband."

The Gallagher's have three children, Patricia and Peter, who are both pharmacists, and Terry who is a gynaecologist.

The plaque is set into a drinking fountain outside Belmont Library.

It was donated by the Belmont Advisory Committee and unveiled by the wife of Cr Lenaghan.

129.

Belmont Bus Depot.



1970's. Belmont bus depot in early 70's.



Belmont depot recently celebrated it's 70th birthday. Today it's home to about 70 of the bus fleet, including the 6 On Demand buses.

130.



1970's. Belmont bus heading back to the Depot.



131.

Arial Views of Belmont.

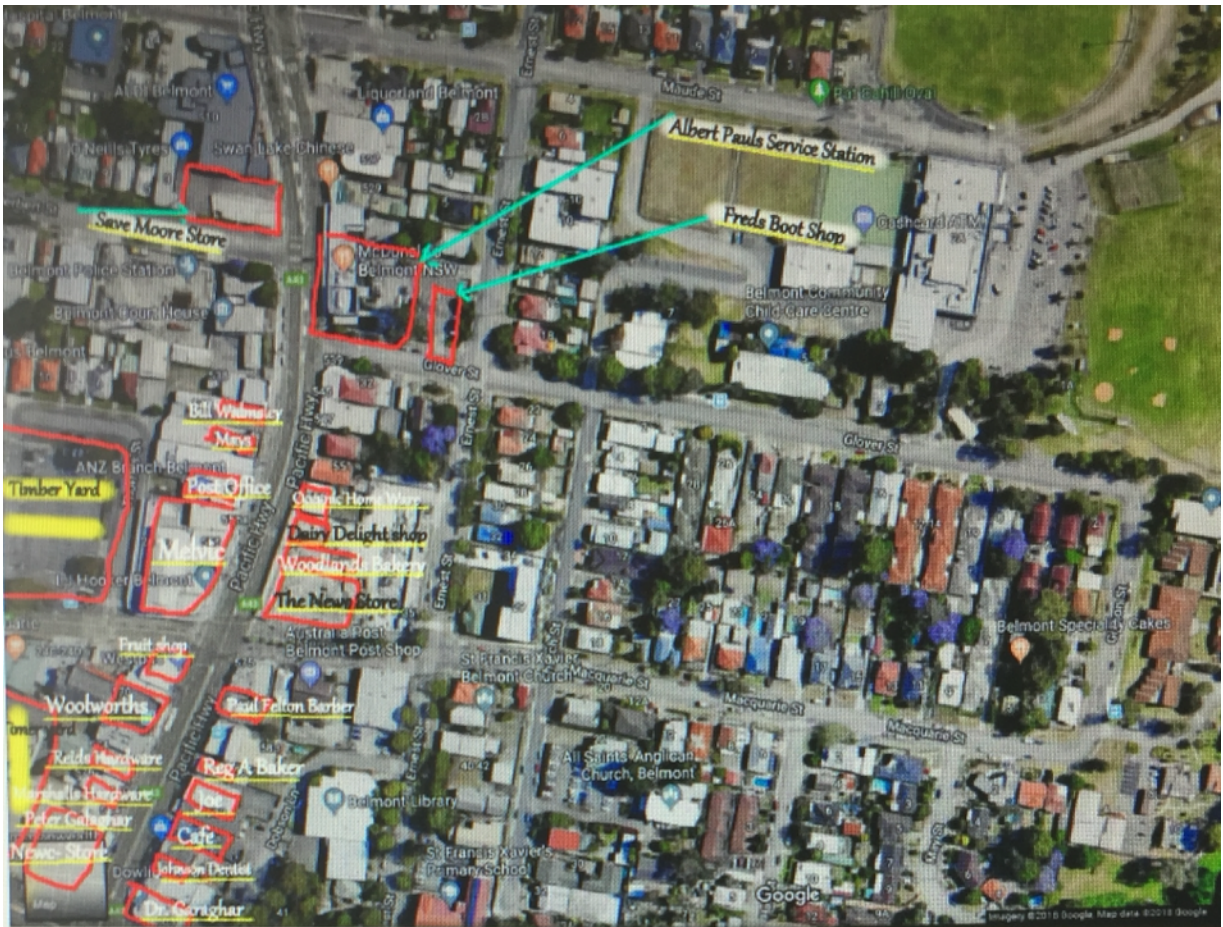
1974.



Early Belmont. Birds Eye View looking down on Melvic Theatre, corner of Pacific Highway and Macquarie Streets.



Belmont in the 60's, (Photo's supplied by Garry Pockett.)



134.



1970's. Demolition of Belmont Pipe Works.

135.



1980. Wangi Queen Ferry docked at Belmont Jetty.



1984. Me (The Author Ernie Cox) and my son Nicholas at Miller's Baseball Field.
The white house directly behind me with open door was number 10, Ian Barrett's parents house. Note the white timber boundary fence.Heading up Glover Street takes you to the Main Highway Belmont.

136.



1990. Belmont flood, Maude Street looking up to the Main Highway.



1995. Arial view Belmont Ovals.

137.



1996. Belmont's (50c) Public School Fire
In Livingstone Street Belmont North.



138.



2007. King Tide at Belmont Jetty.



Telstra Exchange Pacific Highway Belmont.

139.



2015. Aftermath of Belmont's Baths after Super Storm.



2018 Photo. Back in the 50's Mr Moore was the Bootmaker his shop is behind St. Vinnies.

It was relocated when they widened the Main Street.

2018 Photo. Back in the 40's this used to be Dr Thorpe's Surgery, the entrance used to be on the RHS of the building. Now the Hunter District Water Board.



140.



These were the Resident's of Glover Street back in the forties. By 2018 progress came to our street and almost all the houses have been replaced with flats and Units.



2018. Arial view Sporty Club, Bowling Green and Playing Fields.

141.



2018. The start of the “Fernleigh Track”. It was originally the Belmont Railway Station before it closed. The track is from Belmont to Adamstown, now used as a Cycling and Walking Track. It is approximately 15km long.

142.

Belmont Baths. Lake Macquarie Belmont.



2018. Plans for Belmont Baths.

Baths Construction works



Filling the baths with beach sand.

143.



2018. New Belmont Baths.



144.



145.

“ For those of you who had the privilege of knowing George Nymeyer many years ago and do not know this man’s history, here is a little about a great and humble man who looked after our VW’s back then.”



A tribute to a wonderful man who was a great Volkswagen mechanic and was totally committed to his customers. George’s garage is still trading at same location it was when George was alive, it is now run by his Son Hendrik under the name of “Nymeyer Automotive at 328 Pacific Highway Belmont North.



George was the VW man and was an inspirational person, a man of action and conviction, he did great things in the war and was a member of the Dutch Resistance. Little known fact is that George hid many Jews and saved their lives during WW.2 and was recognised with an award many years later.

One of his business colleague's said..."George hated working on anything other than VW's, he would always ring me to repair other brands of vehicles, we always had a beer together under the garage at his home at Christmas time.

My parents next door neighbour and his brothers knew George in Holland during the occupation of Holland by Germany and told me many stories of this sad time in history. I always got my hackles up when people referred to George as German George!

You may notice on George's headstone a hand holding a spanner, that pretty well sums up George perfectly.

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The Author.

I was born at Nurse Dick's Hospital, George Street Belmont in 1946 and growing up in Belmont I grew to love the town and it's people who are wonderful and amazing folk, as a boy I was no different to any other boy in the Neighbourhood playing and discovering all that Belmont had to offer us kids, and as I got older I spent a lot of time with my surfboard surfing the many beautiful beaches we had. My favourite was Blacksmith's, probably because it was only 8k from home and I was able to ride my pushbike there. As I got older I bought a 1956 VW which made it a lot easier to get around. I had some wonderful friends who I met at the Tennis Courts in Glover Street just across the road from our house.

There are 4 special friends of mine who I still keep in contact with from time to time as they will always be my friends. They are Garry Pockett, Merv Reid, Stephen "Chunk" Brown and last but not least Ian Barrett...

Merv Reid was great mates with my late brother Norm and you wouldn't meet a nicer gentleman, Ian Barrett lived just a few doors down from my parents home in Glover Street Belmont and we were Neighbourhood mates, Ian was heavily involved in Baseball at Belmont. Garry Pockett and I went to School together, Garry owned a Panel Beating shop at Gateshead. Stephen Brown lived just a few streets away from me in Kyneton Street just across the road from my Aunty's place and worked at John Darling Colliery.

I left Belmont when I got married at age 21years and never returned except to visit my parents from time to time. I had 5 brothers sadly my parents and 4 of my brothers have gone but I still have a younger brother left who lives at Toronto on the other side of the lake.

I now live in Brisbane and have two wonderful grown up children (now Adults) I retired in 2008 from Aus Post and have been a Runner for over 30 years. Because of the love I have for Belmont to Swansea, I decided to write this book and share my thoughts on a place I call home.

"You can take the boy out of Belmont..But you can't take Belmont out of the boy.".....

Ernie Cox.

