



**THE JOURNAL OF
PATERSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
INCORPORATED**

MUSEUM NEWS



Photo: Bill Anderson collection

AN OLD TIMER – MARQUIS STREET, PATERSON.

THE ROLE OF A LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We are now as a community beginning to realize the folly of destroying, wilfully or by sheer neglect, things of the past, that older and less self-conscious communities would cherish and lovingly preserve.

However, if we keep these links with the past they must be kept attractive and not covered with advertising signs or other unsightly structures.

The sources of history are not just the written material, which has survived the ravages of time but museums, graveyards, the landscape and buildings which can tell us much that we want to know about the way of life and the faith of those who came before us.

The Role of a Local Historical Society –
Annual Convention – Port Stephens, March 2004.

THE AIM OF THE PATERSON COURT HOUSE MUSEUM
IS TO HOLD ITEMS IN TRUST
FOR THE PATERSON COMMUNITY
THE HUNTER VALLEY AND AUSTRALIA

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Affiliated with:

Royal Australian Historical Society

Museums Australia – Hunter Chapter

PATERSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. EXECUTIVE 2004

AFFILIATED with Royal Australian Historical Society Inc. and Museums Australia Inc.

PRESIDENT: Cameron Archer

SECRETARY: Pauline Clements

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Mr. M Morris OA

Mr. R Baldwin MP

Mr. J Price MP

Mr. S Lowe AM

Mr. G Semken

Mr. A Fairhall

MEETINGS PHSI meets the first Thursday of each month – 7.30 pm. – at the Paterson Court House Museum (Recess December/January)

MEMBERSHIP FEES: Annual subscriptions due February each year. \$5. single \$10. family.



NAPOLEON – PATERSON RIVER WILLOW CONNECTION

Barry Chapman

Napoleon's Tomb was returned to Paris from the island of St Helena in 1840

Alas, poor Bony!

Lies under some willows

On an island very stormy

Surrounded by billows

(St Helen's grave visitors book 1836-7)

Napoleon & Wellington – Roberts – 2002

When the coffin was opened after nineteen years, the Abbe Coquereau, who sprinkled the holy water, saw that:

The whole body seemed to be covered with a light foam; it was as if we were looking at it through a diaphanous cloud. The head was unmistakable, a pillow raised it slightly; we could distinguish his broad forehead and his eyes, the sockets of which were outlined beneath the eyelids, still fringed with a few lashes; his cheeks were swollen; only his nose had suffered; his mouth, which was half-open, revealed three remarkably white teeth; on his chin the traces of his beard were perfectly clear; his two hands in particular seemed to belong to someone who still breathed, they were so fresh in tone and colouring...his nails had grown after death; they were long and white. One of his boots had come unsewn and showed four dull-white toes.

The 'light foam' was adipocere, a greyish waxy substance produced by the decomposition of soft tissue in corpses exposed to moisture.

Someone else who was present Charles Philpotts, an East India Company cadet returning from Benares on sick leave, also noted that the leather of Napoleon's boots *had parted from the toes, exposing the feet*' Since the coffin had been partly broken in the process of being opened, *one or two of us broke off portions and carried them away, no one forbidding.*

Napoleon's remains were taken up the Seine and carried to Les Invalides in a snow-storm. Nearly one million Frenchmen and 150,000 soldiers lined the streets to watch the funeral procession.

FOOTNOTE – "adipocere" – a greyish fatty or soapy substance generated in dead bodies subject to moisture. Oxford Dictionary – Second Ed. – 1996

(Also see Museum News Vol 10 #2 – April 2003 showing Cameron Archer's photo of NAPOLEON'S TOMB and WILLOWS at Les Invalides, Paris.)



ROTARY CLUB OF PATERSON will use sketches from the society's town walk in their revised letterhead.

President Cameron and curator Val have combined their historical research talents to produce "Colonial Silo Mysteries" published as No. 6 in the "ALL ABOUT TOCAL" series.

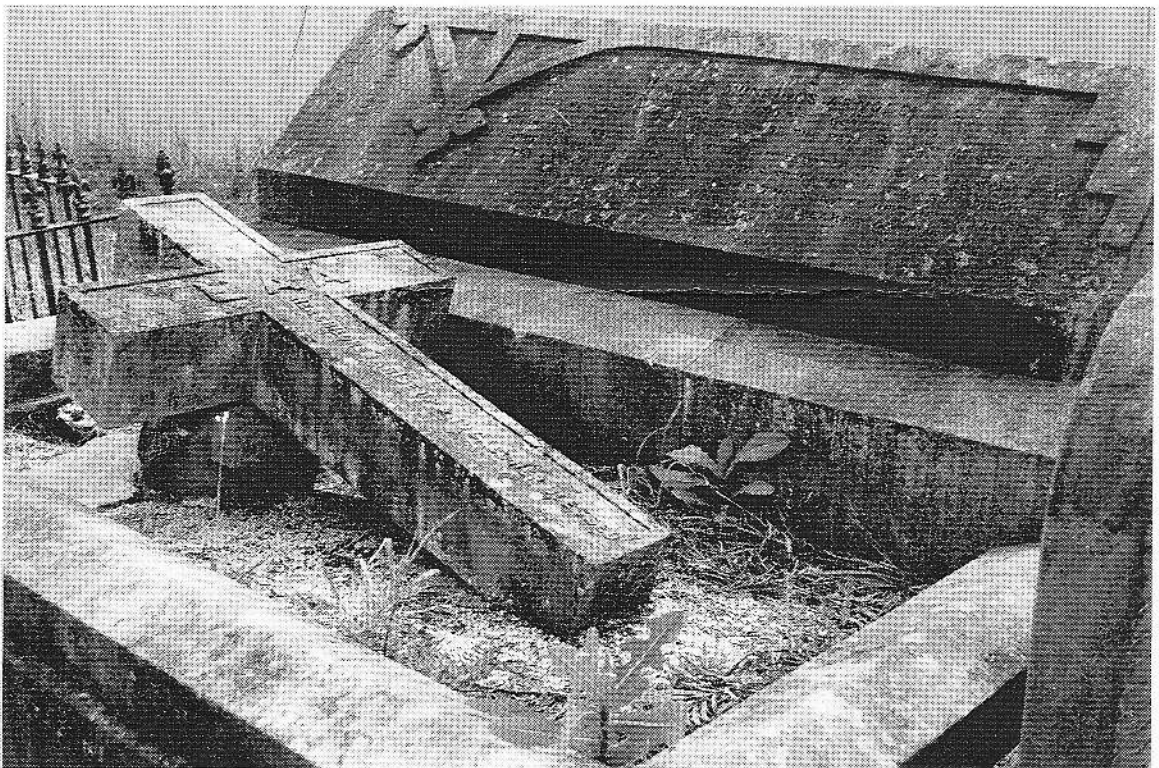
PATERSON FLOODS – Pam Sivyer

When Peter and I moved to Paterson in 1994 I was keen to learn about the district and promptly joined the local historical society. We were fortunate to purchase a small acreage in town with an extensive river frontage of 1½ km. and so we became PATERSON RIVER WATCHERS. I was then appointed FLOOD RECORDER for the society. A copy of the society's flood file, Flood Mitigation Records and innumerable Maitland Mercury articles from Jack Sullivan have given me an appreciation of the influence the river has on the town and district.

Perhaps the most disastrous flood was in 1875 – the flood which devastated the Commercial Road business area.

The Honourable William Munnings Arnold was drowned when his boat overturned whilst attempting to collect pumpkins from flood waters. The *Maitland Mercury* graphically describes his funeral day.

Death by drowning of the Honorable W. M. Arnold; his loss will not be merely our loss, but his loss will be felt throughout the whole colony—he can be ill spared at the present juncture of political affairs. It is needless for me to reiterate what Mr. Arnold has done for the colony, both by his vote and voice, in the Parliament of his country, during the last twenty years; but his voice pleading for the people's rights and the welfare of the colony, will no more be heard within the walls of the House of Assembly; he is now laid low in the dust, and there are but few amongst us but mourn for his untimely end. His funeral took place on Thursday morning. It was a simple and unostentatious as it could possibly be. It was the desire of his friends that the funeral should be strictly private. The mortal remains of the lamented gentleman were conveyed from Stradbroke House to the Paterson punt by boats, in which were his two sons, and two or three friends. Here the remains were landed, and thence to the Church of England cemetery, he was carried on the shoulders of some of his late constituents, and after the burial service had been read, he was lowered by them into the silent tomb. And though simple and unostentatious as it appeared, it was in every respect the burial of one befitting the high and honourable position which he has so long held. He was truly buried amidst the regret and sorrow of all. About fifty of the electors of this constituency met the body at the punt, and joined in the procession to the burial ground.



Arnold's Grave – St Paul's Anglican churchyard

Photo: Pauline Clements

THE BAKEHOUSE, PATERSON —Cameron Archer

The Bakehouse situated on Gresford Road overlooking St Ann’s Presbyterian Church served Paterson for many years. One of the earliest town bakers remembered was Charlie Bridger who was also a stalwart of the Oddfellows. Sandstone steps leading to the bakehouse which was behind the baker’s residence were used by those procuring bread and can still be found on the embankment in front of the residence.

In 1987 Eric Zaska and partner purchased the block, which by then had only the residence, bakehouse and large water supply well intact. (Other outbuildings shown on old photos had been demolished and those remaining could only be termed as “ruins”) Eric has restored the bakehouse and is working on the residence.

The bakehouse ceased operations in the early 1960s.

Paterson Bakers — Keppie Diaries - Bill Keppie

1915 Charlie Bridger

1927 July – Wright Bros

1929 Sept. – C Arthur

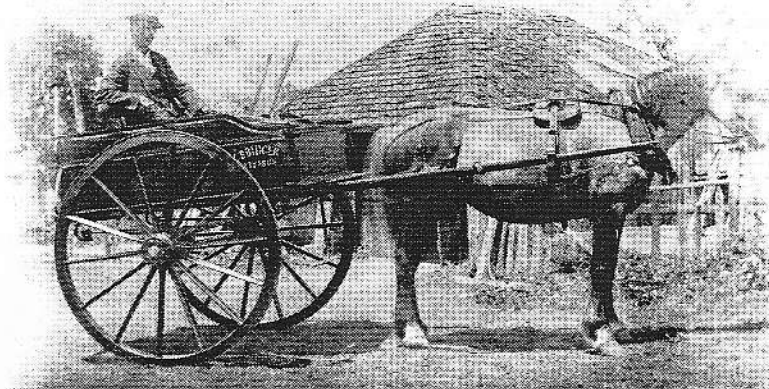
1930 Dec – I James

c1933 Charlie O’Connor (Schoolmaster Paterson school was owner). Mid 1940s sons managed the business

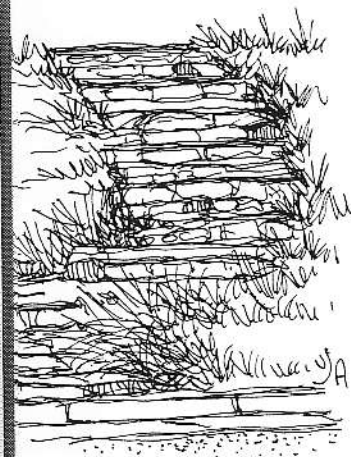
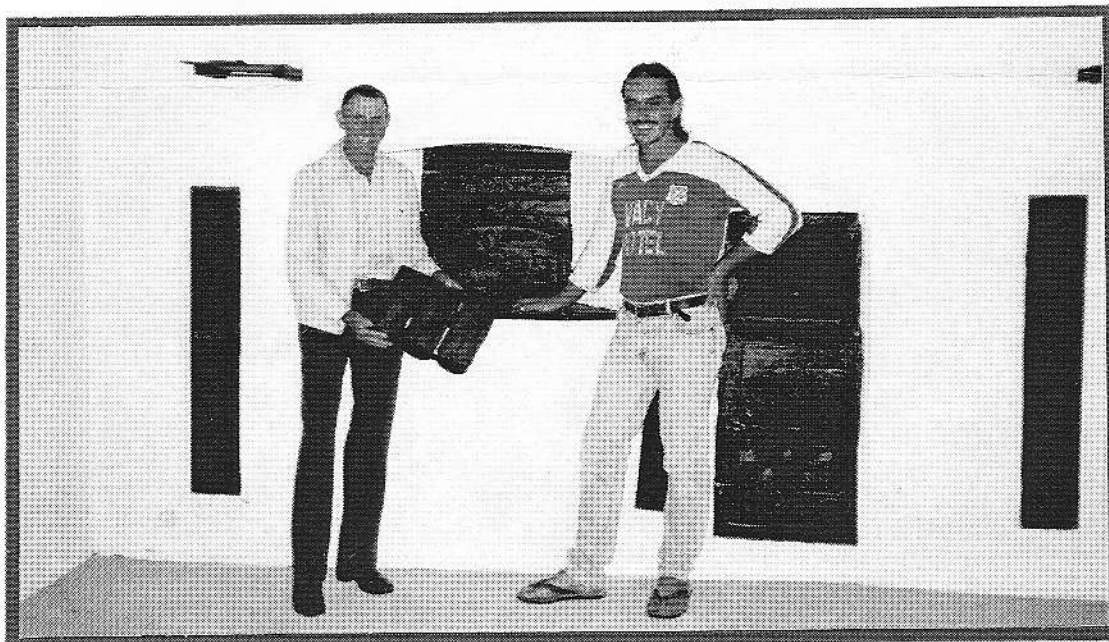
sons – Des O’Connor – Baker - Bill O’Connor – Delivery

late 1940s - Clarrie Hutchins

(Bill Keppie worked for Charlie O’Connor)



Charlie Bridger – PHS Collection



Steps to Bakehouse

Bill Keppie & Eric Zaska in the restored bakehouse – 1992

Photo: Bill Anderson

PATFIELD FAMILY REUNION

A recent visit to Tocal, the Museum and Paterson by the Patfield family renewed old contacts for a family well associated with this District.

THE RIVER BOATS - Una M Patfield (Recorded 1975)

Captain Herbert Patfield gained his masters certificate in Sydney 28th October 1895. He was skipper of several river boats. The *Anna Maria*, *Waraneen*, *Marie* and *Allyn River*. When the North Coast Railway line was being constructed, the *Anna Maria* carried structural steel for the Paterson Railway bridge. Whilst unloading, a steel girder fell through the decking and she sank. She was salvaged by Mr Peter Callan, a ship builder at Stockton.

The *Marie* was a favourite boat of Captain Patfield. He gave me a painting of her just after his son Eric and I were married.

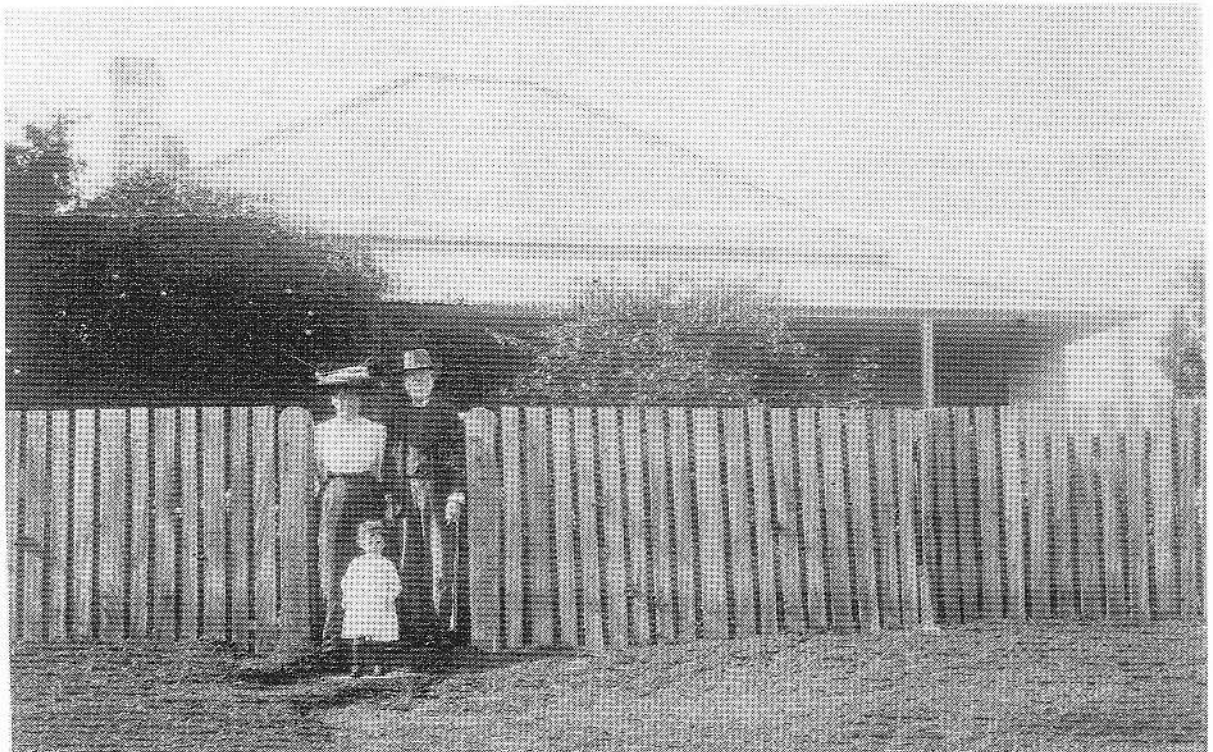
The *Marie* would leave Paterson early Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and return from Newcastle Tuesday Thursday and Saturday afternoons.

The *Marie* carried a crew of six men, the Captain, Herbert Patfield, the engineer David Loger, and four other crew – Wal Martin, Geoff McInnis, Steve Patfield and George Garnham.

The *Marie* was originally a ketch, trading on the New South Wales coast line. She was made long and converted to a Steam boat, and the bowsprit had been sawn off. It remained like this until in the early hours of one morning, returning from Newcastle, David Todd who was captain at the time, fell asleep at the wheel, and the *Marie* rammed some steamers at John Browns Hexham. David Todd had relieved Herbert Patfield who was on holidays. The *Marie* completed the trip to Paterson and returned to Newcastle and had a new stem fitted. The bowsprit was done away with.

The *Marie* used to run picnic trips to Raymond Terrace commanded by Herbert Patfield.

After the railway bridge was completed and steam engines commenced to cross the bridge, above the Paterson wharf, the *Marie* loaded with hay caught fire, and burnt to the water line. Peter Callan salvaged the *Marie* repaired her and sold her to the Harbour and Lighterage Department of the Sydney Ferries, and used her to take garbage out to sea and dump it. After the *Marie*, a haphazard service was carried out to Paterson, with the *Anna Maria* and twin screw steamer *Waraneen*, Herbert Patfield being captain. At this time Eric Coombs went as deck hand and fireman, working with Captain H Patfield and engineer David Loger.



Samuel & Sarah Patfield in front of their cottage in Paterson c1900

Photo: Elaine Fairhall – Paterson.

A new steamer the *SS Allyn River* was built to replace the *Marie* on the Paterson River service. At about this time the First World War started and Eric Coombs enlisted.

As soon as Captain H Patfield saw the *Allyn River* he said “She is too tall to go under the Paterson Road Bridge.” However the *Allyn River* was sent on her first trip to Paterson from Newcastle, commanded by Herbert Patfield. A careful approach was made to the bridge – the *Allyn River* was too tall and had to turn around and go back to Newcastle to get her funnel and mast lopped.

Captain H Patfield ran excursions to Clarence Town with the *Allyn River*. Thomas Hickey writes that he went on an excursion on the *Allyn River* late in 1915.

The *Allyn River* at this time was a regular steamer on the Paterson trade. She was of later design, but was not a popular steamer on the Paterson River – too awkward to handle in the narrow stream.

During World War I the *Allyn River* was transferred to the Port Stephens trade, and the remaining steamers were the *Anna Maria*, *Warraneen* and *Wyalong*. The service started to decline. It was maintained until about the early twenties then for a few years as trips were required.

Samuel Patfield a brother of Herbert was captain of the *Marie* before Herbert took over. The other captains were John Byron and George Garnham.

Tom Hickey writes that his late father, Tom Hickey senior, a farmer near Largs, used to work with Herbert Patfield in the *Marie* in his early days as a deck hand. His father had great respect for him, and Tom Hickey junior always remembers an account his father gave of Herbert Patfield’s character. On the river was a gentleman farmer, who used to address everyone in an abrupt manner by their surname only. This got on Herb’s nerves. He said “He must think we are serfs Tom? One morning the *Marie* called at the gentleman’s farm and as usual he said “80 bales of hay Patfield”. In reply Herb said, “Very well, we’ll take them and by the way I have been christened Herbert”. The farmer said with a sarcastic retort “Perhaps you might prefer captain?” “That suits me” said Herb “In future address me as captain”

Eric Coombs writes, Captain Patfield used to go ashore at his home the south side of Paterson and trust him to take the *Anna Maria* to the Paterson Wharf.

The early days stern paddle steamers *The Stanley* and *Burwood* used to go to Paterson for sawn timber for Armstrong & Royce at Carrington, and a screw steamer the *Buller* owned by Mr Callan of Stockton, made regular trips to what is now known as Tucker Park, and load poles for Newcastle.

Captain Patfield retired in 1918 and moved to his farm at Woodville, and was there on the farm helped by his son Eric until 1927 when the farm was sold.

Eric Coombs returned from the war in 1919 and secured his ships masters certificate and was captain of the Newcastle Ferries for 19 years. He was captain of the *SS Kurnell* in 1932 when the Hinton Wharf collapsed under the weight of the crowd of passengers being landed. The *Kurnell* was a large steamer, licensed to carry 1100 passengers.

Many thanks to Thomas Hickey of Putney and Eric Coombs of The Entrance for helping me to compile the story of The River Boats.

Una M Patfield – 1975 – Daughter-in-law of Captain H Patfield

PS Eric Coombs writes that his grandfather had a steam boat and he, Eric, went as Captain, and did picnic trips to Paterson on the *SS Nelson*, and then running cream for the Raymond Terrace Butter factory (now at Hexham). He did three trips each week to Paterson, and three trips each week to Clarence Town.

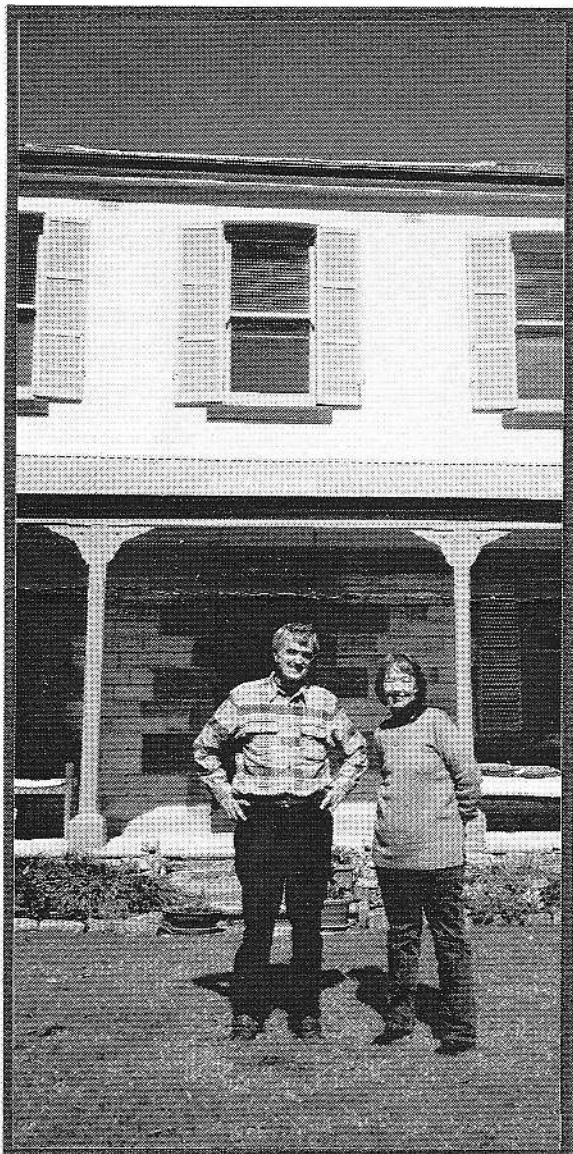
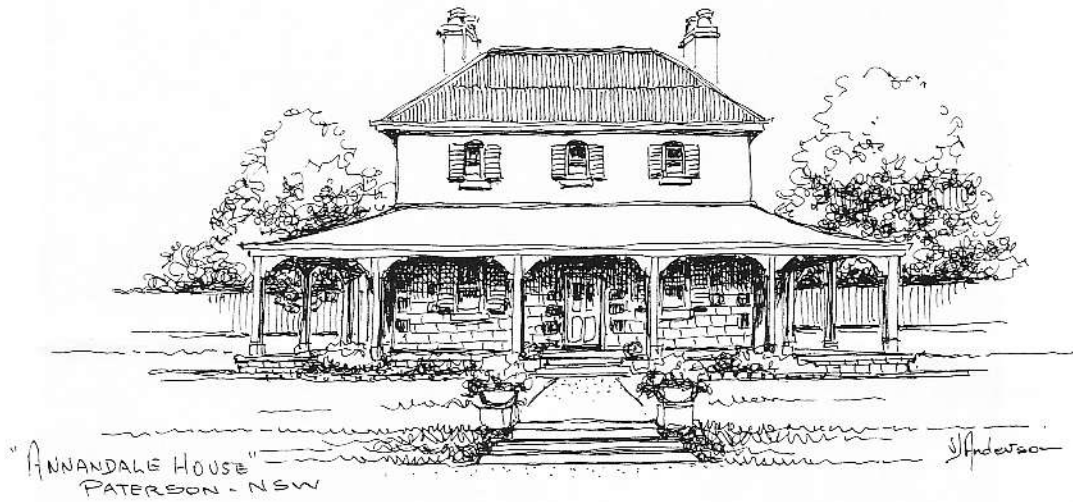
Eric Coombs now over 80 years writes “I think I can claim to be the last man to have taken steamers to Paterson and Clarence Town.”



PATFIELD REUNION — An elderly aunt always used washing blue knobs for bee stings. A slab hut near the river (close to a hotel?) with a roof of flattened kerosene tins was remembered.

“ANNANDALE HOUSE” 2003 SALE

“ANNANDALE HOUSE” was placed on the real estate market and sold late in 2003. Following many years of challenges during their exquisite renovation of “Annandale House”, society members, Gaye and Robert have moved on. Devotees of Australian history, their ownership and dedication returned this weary 1839 colonial residence to be once again a significant gem of Hunter Valley history.



Photos: Bill Anderson

CONGRATULATIONS HARRY BOYLE OAM
3 MAY 2004 —85 YEARS



Photo:
Bill Anderson

In 1993, in an endeavour to document the history of the district, Paterson Historical Society launched a special programme, an Annual Heritage Address, to be given each year at the time of Heritage Week, which usually falls in April. The guest who would be invited to deliver the Address each year would also be asked to allow his or her paper to be published by the Society in the form of a monograph.

The Society was delighted when its long-time supporter and noted regional historian Harry Boyle OAM accepted the invitation to deliver the first Heritage Address in April 1993. The subject of Harry's choice was William Munnings Arnold, an early settler on the Paterson River, and his property Stradbroke, the homestead allotment of which is one of the most historic farms in the Hunter Valley. This 60 acre block was among the first land cultivated by Europeans, as early as the second decade of the nineteenth century.

Harry Boyle is well-known and well-loved by the members of this Society, and many other Hunter Valley historical groups. There are few who have not benefited from the breadth and quality of his knowledge of regional history, and his generosity in sharing his expertise with others. The respect in which Harry is held by Paterson Historical Society was recognised in 1993 by conferring on him a Life Membership Award.

Extract from INTRODUCTION to "William Munnings Arnold – 1819-1875" Cynthia Hunter – January 1994.

PRIDE OF THE BOYNE,
LOYAL-ORANGE LODGE, No. 130,
PATERSON.

THE MONTHLY MEETING of this Lodge will be held at the Oddfellows' Hall, on FRIDAY EVENING, the 17th September, at Eight p.m. Business of importance.
STEPHEN STANBRIDGE,
Secretary.

Maitland Mercury 18 September 1880

Paterson Lodges – 1880
Harry Boyle OAM

I. O. G. T., PATERSON.
JOSEPH MALIN'S LODGE will CELEBRATE their FIRST ANNIVERSARY, by a TEA and SOIREE, on THURSDAY, 23rd inst. Tea on the tables in the School of Arts at 6 p.m.; Soirée in Oddfellows' Hall; commence at 8 p.m. A varied programme, in which several distinguished amateurs are expected to take part.—Tickets: Tea and Soirée, 1s. 6d.; Soirée (only), 1s.; Children, half price.

Maitland Mercury 11 September 1880