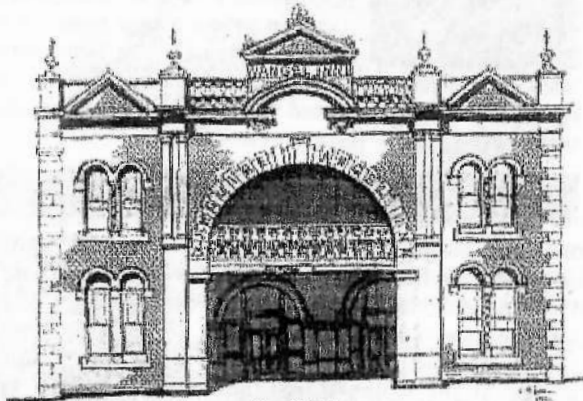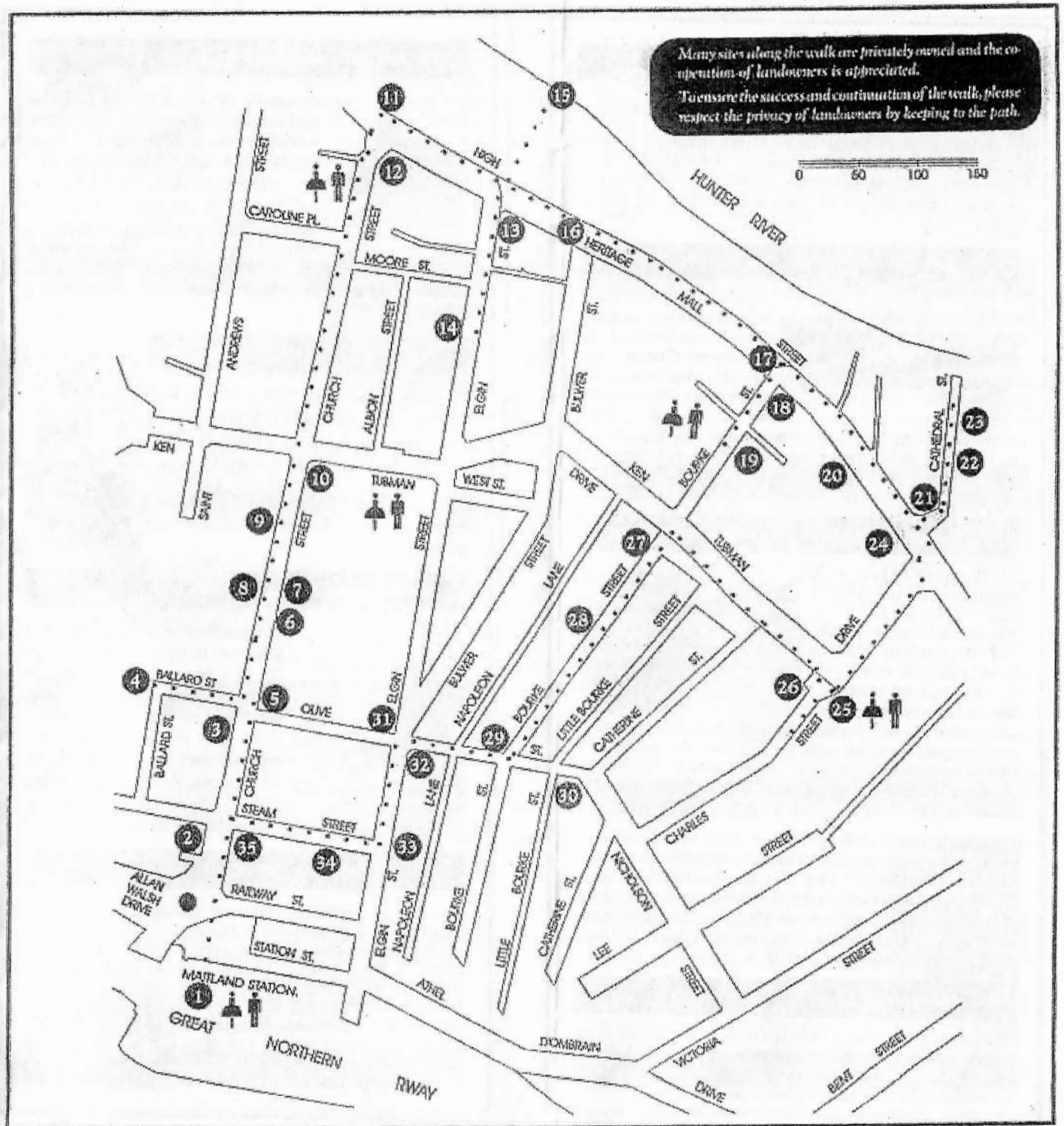# MAITLAND 1835

"Angel Inn"
First licensed as a shanty in 1827 when owned by Molly Morgan.

Maitland Heritage Walk
(Central Precinct)

The area of West Maitland (now known as Maitland) had been settled by farmers from the early 1800's and was continuing to grow steadily. River traffic, in small craft, was possible from Morpeth to West Maitland, a distance of 25 miles by water or 3 miles by land, but Wallis Creek impeded the flow of land traffic and it was not bridged until 1827. The river crossing at Wallis Creek became a gateway to the interior and the inns, shops and services formed a High Street serving travellers and local settlers. The area was subject to flooding, but had access to trade and fresh water, which the government town of East Maitland lacked.

Unlike East Maitland, which was surveyed and planned in some detail before being proclaimed, West Maitland was a private town. It was consequently unplanned and surveying only occurred as land owners subdivided their holdings for sale. The development of the unformed track into the principal street was not foreseen, hence the narrowness that gives High Street so much of its character.

By 1835 the town of West Maitland had developed to such an extent that it was officially recognised and proclaimed, there being then two towns of East and West Maitland, divided by Wallis Creek. The two towns, together with Morpeth, amalgamated and the City of Maitland was proclaimed on 7th December, 1945, the town becoming known as Maitland in the early 1950's.

1. Railway Station

In 1853 a public meeting in Sydney formed the Hunter River Railway Co. The railway was built, reaching East Maitland in 1857 and West Maitland (now Maitland) in 1858. The main railway station buildings date from the 1880's and exhibit the classic Italianate style of the railways of the period.

2. Grand Junction Hotel

This imposing two storey Hotel, built in 1916, is the best example of the Federation Free Classical architectural style in Maitland with a high standard of workmanship. It sits in a landmark position with its strong historical links to the railway. Note the flamboyant adaption of Classical themes to arches, keystones, bayed verandahs and pediments.

3. "Sherbourne" 80 Church Street

'Sherbourne', is a Victorian Italianate brick and stucco two storey residence. Built for the businessman W. G. Lipscomb Esq., it is a good example of the style, with filigree verandah and fine detail plasterwork in the window surrounds, eaves and brackets.

4. "The Hermitage" 16 Ballard Street

This Victorian filigree brick two storey house is one of the very few houses in the central Maitland precinct retaining a curtilage which reflects the larger estates of the 19th Century. With a traditional garden setting, the house has a two storey bullnose verandah of 5 bays with cast iron verandah posts and lace balustrades and valance. It was occupied by the manager of the East Greta Coal Mine, and since 1926 by the Scobie family.

5. Maitland Public School Church Street

Built in 1899/1900 this two storey brick building exhibits Federation Gothic public architecture. The building was designed to house the Girls department of 420 students in four rooms, 2 on each floor. By this time, Maitland Public School had reached 800 pupils. It later housed Domestic Science. Continuous modifications and additions to the school buildings have been undertaken since that time.

6. Grossmann House & 7. Brough House

These two Victorian Regency gentleman's residences, built in the late 1860's, were designed as mirror images of one another. They are two storeyed with set back wings. Cast iron lace adorns the upper balustrades and columns, with slender Doric columns to the ground floor. The houses were built for business partners Samuel Owen (Brough House, named for his wife) and Isaac Beckett (Grossmann House, named after the first Principal of the Girls High School which occupied the building from 1890-1913).

Brough House is now owned by the National Trust and occupied by the Maitland City Art Gallery while Grossmann House is owned and operated by the National Trust as a museum, being decorated and furnished to the period. Both are open for inspection at advertised times.

8. St. Mary's Rectory

This building was commenced in July 1880 following a competition won by Mr. Geo. Browne of West Maitland. The building, contracted to cost £1441, was to be completed in 7 months. The architecture is Victorian Italianate style with cast iron columns, balustrade and frieze. The grounds provide an important landscape value of mature trees. The house is a rare example of its type in central Maitland, set in spacious grounds.

9. St. Mary's Church

St. Mary's Church was opened in 1867, with the foundation stone laid on 7th September 1860. The stone spire is a magnificent landmark in the town and surrounding area and the building is one of the finest examples of High Victorian Style Gothic architecture. The building was designed by the celebrated architect Edmund Blackett and has excellent stone tracery windows and detailing, exhibiting craftsmanship of the highest order.

10. Former Synagogue

A simple Victorian Romanesque building constructed in 1879. Designed by renowned local architect, John W. Pender, the building was the first country Jewish Synagogue in Australia, ceasing as a place of worship in 1898. It subsequently served as a co-educational school until 1928, a meeting hall and is now, after restoration, used as a Credit Union office and shopfront.

11. Jakemans Pharmacy & Northern End of High Street

A stroll into this shop will take the walker back in time to the early 1900's with its carefully preserved 1920's shop fittings and the shop front with its stained glass panels.

From the outside of this store, look back up High Street noting the imposing facades of the stores lining the street. Buildings to especially note are the cream and red brick Presbyterian Glebe Property Trustees terrace dwellings and shops, and Burden & Ribee's store (473 High Street).

12. Blackboy Statue

The Blackboy hitching post has stood in High Street since 1886. It was brought to Maitland by the American firm of Friend & Co and was bought by Mr A. D. McDonald who fixed it in front of his shop in 1892, it remaining there to this day.
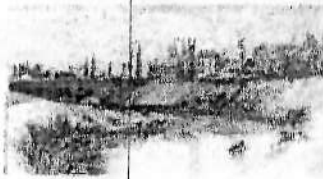
13. ANZ Bank (Bank of Australasia) 437 High Street

Built in 1869 for the Bank of Australasia and opened on 1st January 1870, this was the third bank to be constructed in High Street. The design of this building has been acclaimed as one of the few colonial examples of Byzantine architecture and is significant for the skilful use of the curve and upper floor verandah to establish the landmark status of the building. It has been substantially altered but still exhibits this status.

14. Shops 18-22 Elgin Street

This group of shops give an excellent example of a group of Victorian filigree style commercial buildings. They are now used as offices. Each shop is different with 18 being two storey with a verandah out to the kerb, bullnose roof and timber posts, 20 also two storey, set at the property alignment with cast iron posts and balustrade and 22 being a single storey in eclectic style.

15. Hunter River

Take time to wander over to the Hunter River, accessed from the arcade between the "Colonial Centre" and OPSM, and view the meandering river which has had such an important role in the history of Maitland's development. Also from this vantage point can be seen the replacement Belmore Bridge, built after the disastrous 1955 flood and opened in 1964, and the village of Lorn on the opposite side of the river.

16. Heritage Mall - High Street Commercial Area

The Heritage Mall in the main commercial centre of Maitland was constructed as a Bicentennial Project in 1988 and has initiated a major revitalisation of this highly historic part of Maitland. Innumerable building styles are represented and the buildings often have their history inscribed on the upper floors above the awning line. The area is best viewed by walking down the centre of the Mall. Most of the commercial heart of Maitland is on land originally granted to Molly Morgan.

Some buildings of particular note include: The shop on the corner of High and Bulwer Streets, originally Edmonds Storm Watchmaker (1889-1901) and later Charles Willis' "Treasure Corner", now Mather's Shoes; Fry Bros. Undertakers and Cabinet Makers (395 High Street); Hunter Mall, a modern commercial building on the site of the Angel Inn, originally owned by Molly Morgan; and A. Anthony's (360 High Street).

17. Mosaic Map

At the end of the Heritage Mall is a map, laid in mosaic in the pavement, which represents the township of West Maitland and the Hunter River. It also provides an insight into the buildings and businesses which were operating in circa 1840.

18. Post Office High Street

Originally designed by the Colonial Architect James Barnet, the first stage was constructed in 1881, the clock installed two years later. In 1900 additions were made to the High Street side. The building is an excellent example of Victorian Italianate design of stucco on brick and is characteristic of Barnet's work. The two storey arcaded facade with tower exploits its corner site which is enhanced by the now wide footpath area in front of the building.

19. Grand Central Hotel Bourke Street

Constructed in the late 1800's, this 3 storey hotel in Victorian filigree style is one of few still functioning hotels in the Maitland CBD. It is an excellent example of the Victorian style with rich decoration in cast iron balconies and mouldings in stucco, balustraded parapets, raised quoins and quoining to lower windows.

20. Dimmocks & Adjacent Buildings

Thomas Dimmock bought the old printery of Henry Thomas about 1878. His success was such that within 6 years he was able to move to this site, build new premises and to extend these until the 1920's when the business had a statewide reputation for excellence. All the buildings within this area of High Street exhibit the style and grandeur of the late 1800's and early 1900's commercial architecture.

21. St. John's Pro Cathedral

A Federation Classical style building of brick and render with an elaborately detailed facade. It was built in 1922 as the Catholic Hall and was converted in 1933 into the Pro Cathedral. The building was badly damaged in the 1989 Newcastle earthquake and was closed. It is now proposed to reinstate it as a hall.

22. Bishop's Residence Cathedral Street

Built in 1883, it was designed by John W. Pender and built by James Pritchard. Like St. Mary's Rectory built some 3 years earlier, this is a rare example of a Victorian Italianate large residence in central Maitland. The two storey residence features a slate roof, brick with stucco quoins and two storey, assymetrically placed bay windows with cast iron verandahs.

23. Former St. John's Cathedral

Built as the original St. John's Church, and opened in 1846, this building is in Gothic style of stone with shallow buttresses and a square tower marked with carved finials. It was probably to the design of the Colonial Architect, Mortimer W. Lewis. The building has been substantially modified. It became the Cathedral in 1866 until the Pro Cathedral was brought into service in 1933. It was reopened as a Parish Hall in 1952. Following earthquake damage to the Pro Cathedral in 1989, it was reinstated to its previous worship use.
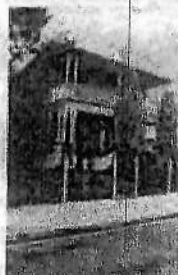
24. Methodist Church (Uniting)

Now the Uniting Church, this building was designed by John Wright, the foundation stone having been laid on 5th January, 1858 with the first services being held on 13th January, 1859. It is a Victorian Gothic style building in painted brick with stone tracery windows and caps to the buttresses. The primitive austere Gothic style befits the Methodist philosophy of the 19th Century.

25. Cinema Complex - Site of Gas Works

This site, now the Cinema Complex, was the previous site of the Maitland Gas Works. A gas works operated on this site from 1860 when Mr. John W. Tuck commenced the first public utility service of its type in the town. The foundation stone of the Maitland Gaslight Co. is set in an exterior wall of the Cinema Complex.

This is an ideal location to have a short break with cafe facilities available in the Cinema Complex.

26. 32 Charles Street

This two storey house in Federation Free Style is an excellent example of early 20th Century housing and is rare in the Maitland area. The building exhibits paired timber posts to the verandah, on brick piers, and elegant timber detailing with elaborate ground floor window heads and excellent brickwork detailing to the chimney all exhibiting high quality workmanship.

27. "Clarine" 28 Bourke Street

This home is believed to have been built before 1878 and was owned by J. D. Prentice, a partner in Wolfe & Prentice Ironmongers. Additions were made to the home in 1885 & 1892. In the early 20th century, the house was used as a private maternity hospital by Nurse Sawyer. It is a rare example of a Victorian timber cottage with elaborate timber trim on the verandah valances, hoods to the windows and ashlar pattern weatherboards.

28. Bourke Street

This street exhibits an exceptional collection of residences from Georgian, Victorian, Gothic to the Vernacular styles. Many of the residences were either built by or occupied by important townspeople including politicians, businessmen, merchants and the church. The street's name comes from the subdivision of land in 1850 being known then as "Bourkes paddock".

29. "Elmslea" 60 Bourke Street

Believed to have been built in 1850/51 when owned by Rev'd Samuel Wilkinson, this Georgian building of rendered brick is of a style which is relatively rare, being a low single storey cottage, well proportioned and relatively intact. In 1864, it was sold to Thomas William Tucker, an early proprietor of the "Mercury". Modifications were made around 1910.

30. Timber Settlers Cottage Little Bourke Street

Believed to have been constructed in the 1840's, this cottage is an extremely rare example representing the pioneer period of settlement in Maitland giving an insight into the lifestyle and housing type of the settlers. It exhibits some original features including the rear lean to ancillary rooms, original boarding and six pane sash double hung window under the verandah. A number of modifications have been made to the building.

31. Maitland Public School Elgin Street

Maitland Public School grounds are situated between Church Street and Elgin Street. On the Elgin Street frontage is the original school building dating from 1873 when Henry Parkes (later Sir Henry) laid the foundation stone on 5th August. It is a single storey, stripped Gothic style school building which was opened in May 1874 with 470 enrolments.

32. "Somerset" 71 Elgin Street

This single storey house is another well proportioned example of the Victorian filigree style. It exhibits elegant slender verandah posts and lace valance wrapping around the north and south elevations and attractive roof form.

33. "St. Elmo" 87 Elgin Street

This residence is a further example of the Victorian Italianate style but is a relatively restrained example when compared to St. Mary's Rectory and the Bishop's Residence. Constructed in brick with stone quoins and stucco detailing it exhibits the cast iron columns and balustrades typical of this style. It is interesting in that the front is actually an 1881 addition, designed by J. W. Pender, to a pre 1860's house.

34. Markets Site

A Farmers Union was set up in the late 1880's to avoid commission tax on the selling of produce by middlemen. The site was known then as The Union. Auctioneers Swan, Murray and Hain carried on sales following the demise of the Union and in 1910 Frank Kennedy established as an auctioneer and wholesale fruit and vegetable merchant in Steam Street, next to Swan, Murray and Hain. The site became known in relatively recent times as Kennedy's Markets, the business closing in 1982.

35. 17 Steam Street

This residence was formerly a station master's cottage. It is a Victorian Classical building of the 1880's with a rear service wing which can be viewed from Church Street. The ground floor has a bull nosed verandah with cast iron columns. It exhibits a somewhat austere use of classical devices which relates to "official" residential architecture.

References and Historical Information

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