



## Merewether Historical Society

*"A society aimed at recording memories of the past for the benefit of the next generation."*

Telephone: 0412 925 918

Email: [secretary@merewetherhistorical.com](mailto:secretary@merewetherhistorical.com)

Website: [www.merewetherhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.merewetherhistoricalsociety.com)

# The Chronicle

March 2025

**Meetings:** Next meeting will be at the Merewether Bowling Club Caldwell St, on **Tuesday 11 March, 2025, 10.30** for a 10.45 start. Please try not to arrive too early as the Club doesn't actually open until 10.30. All are invited to join us for lunch at the end of the meeting.

**Guest Speaker:** Phillip Palmer on Courage to Care, a non-profit organisation which inspires people to stand up against all forms of discrimination, prejudice, bullying and harassment

**Birthdays in March:** Many happy returns to Pamela Boyd and Rosemary Richards and other members who are celebrating. Flower and Birthstone are the Daffodil and Aquamarine.



**Bus Trips;** March 18 home made morning tea at Stockton before a tour of the new Marine rescue Centre then lunch at The Bank Hotel Maitland and a visit to Flower Power Nursery. \$70

### Myths and Facts about Newcastle

[Newcastle: myths and facts | Jetstar](#) Peta Murray 2021

For many years Newcastle had an unenviable reputation as a dirty industrial town. Now however, the secret is out and more and more people are discovering its "glorious beaches, thriving arts scene and the Hunter Valley wine region". Our scenic harbour city is full of surprises – and myths to be debunked!

*Myth 1:* Local sand is exported to Hawaiian beaches.

Newcastle has plenty of golden grains to share but tales of sand being shipped over to replenish the shores of Waikiki are just that. We have "six beaches situated a few minutes' drive from the CBD and Stockton Bight to the north, home of the largest shifting sand dunes in the Southern Hemisphere."



*Myth 2:* Newcastle is still in the shadow of smokestacks

Once known as "Steel City", Newcastle is no longer home to industrial giant BHP and has seen many initiatives to clean up our act: a Community Greening program, tough emission controls placed on local industry to improve air quality and with former "industrial zones such as the Honeysuckle Precinct converted into harbourside apartments, restaurants and bars."



*Myth 3:* It's a small town

BUT Newcastle is "the second-largest city in New South Wales behind capital Sydney, and Newcastle ranks as the seventh largest metropolis in the nation, making it bigger than Canberra, Darwin and Hobart."



**Myth 4:** Pasha Bulker was Newcastle's first shipwreck

"When the 40,000-tonne Danish-operated bulk carrier lobbed up on Nobbys Beach at the height of 2007's destructive east coast low, it was not the first ship to come unstuck" During the past 2 centuries over 200 vessels have been wrecked around our Harbour entrance.

**Myth 5:** It was Cold Chisel on stage during the infamous 1979 riot

"One of the largest riots in Australian history took place in Newcastle on the night of 19 September 1979 over the closure of a popular pub, the Star Hotel..... this event was later immortalised in song by Cold Chisel on their 1980 album *East* but Chisel never played a gig there. The band performing on the night of the riot was local group, Heroes."



**Myth 6:** Newcastle is too light on attractions "The Newcastle area lays claim to some of the state's most enviable beaches as well as Lake Macquarie, Australia's largest coastal saltwater lake and the world-renowned Hunter Valley wine region. Newcastle also hosts major sporting events such as Surfest, the largest surf competition in the Southern Hemisphere, and also offers numerous theatrical and musical shows.



**Myth 7:** It has always been called Newcastle "The Awabakal and Worimi peoples are acknowledged as the traditional custodians of Newcastle, and the earliest Indigenous reference to the naming of the area is Muloobinba, meaning "place of the edible sea fern". European settlers and convicts arrived at the turn of the 18th century to dig coal mines and a convict camp called King's Town

was established. The area was named Newcastle after Newcastle upon Tyne, in 1804."

**Finally 4** interesting facts about Newcastle that are true

- Newcastle is home to more artists than any other city in Australia.
- The city also claims the most art galleries per capita. Newcastle Art Gallery says it houses one of "Australia's most substantial public art collections" outside the major capital cities.
- The past decade has seen an artist-led inner-city regeneration campaign (Renew Newcastle), converting empty buildings into studios for emerging young talent.
- The University of Newcastle is a world class educational institute. It has a proud record of offering enabling programs and an outstanding record in Indigenous higher education, along with a myriad of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

#### **Merewether/Glebe Tram Line**

Originally called the Merewether line, the name was changed to Glebe when the line to Merewether Beach was completed. It was opened on 19 April 1894. It was electrified in 1924 with the first electric service running on 2 November 1924. The line closed on 26 February 1950. 75 years ago! How many of our members can remember riding this tram?

**Point to Ponder:** If we laugh a lot, when we get older our wrinkles will all be in the right places Anonymous



#### **2024/25 Committee:**

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Vice President:	Dennis Hinchliffe
Secretary:	Sue Kenny
Asst Secretary:	Denise Wright
Treasurer:	Greg Struck
Asst Treasurer:	Monica Jordon
Committee	Iain Kelso Alison Chapman Jan Welsman Judy Henry Darryl Boyce Chris Marshall
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