



## Merewether Historical Society

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

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# The Chronicle

August 2023

**Meetings:** Next meeting will be held at Merewether Bowling Club Caldwell St on **Tuesday 8** August 10.30 for a 10.45 start. **Our Honorary Solicitor Nick Dan will attend to answer any questions regarding the Society's participation in the Committee established to restore the historic carriageway between Llewellyn and Caldwell Streets.** Please give some thought to this issue as this is the opportunity to allay any concerns you may have about our involvement.

Following the meeting Kevin will once again open the restaurant specifically for us.

**Life Membership:** The Inaugural Awards were made to Foundation Members who all worked extremely hard to get the Society up and running, and continued to actively serve until they could no longer do so. Recipients are Don Harris, Marj Roals, Jean Hodge, David Barrow, Dennis Hinchliffe and Laurie Graham all, apart from Dennis, were awarded posthumously.

**Birthdays in August** Alison Chapman, Pauline Boyce and Bernadette Maher wishing you, and all other August birthday members, a truly delightful special day.

**Guest Speaker** Jan Graham will talk on Dr Crosby

**Bus Trip 18 July** although numbers were down those who went to the Wyong Milk Factory thoroughly enjoyed the day out.



Morning tea could have been mistaken for lunch and many swore they would not be able to eat another thing – that is until they saw the wonderful meal provided by The Entrance Diggers Club.



The male passengers, in typical Aussie fashion, decided to forgo feminine companionship at lunch!



Our next trip is to Destiny Haven at Dungog and the cost is \$70. Further information to follow. Please let Denise on 0413892214, or Monica 0419496988 know if you are interested in joining us.

**23 to 26 October** a 4-day tour to Batemans Bay is being arranged. Minimum of 30 passengers is required for the trip to proceed and 23 have already signed up. So please contact friends and family who may be interested.



**Point to Ponder:** A man never knows how to say good bye; a woman never knows when to say it *Helen Rowland*

## THE BOGEY HOLE

[www.visitnsw.com/destinations/north-coast/newcastle-area/newcastle/attractions/bog](http://www.visitnsw.com/destinations/north-coast/newcastle-area/newcastle/attractions/bog) & [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogey\\_Hole](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogey_Hole)



The Bogey Hole was hand-hewn out of a wave-cut rock platform by convicts, for the personal use of Major James Morisset, in 1819. Whether this work represented the enlargement of a naturally occurring rock pool used by Aboriginal people is not known. It is located at the foot of Shepherd's Hill which in the 1820s was known as "sheep pasturage hill". It gets battered in heavy seas and local dare-devils often tempt fate by climbing the cliff and jumping into the Bogey Hole. It is only about 1.5 m. deep. Another local thrill is to grab the barrier chains on the seaward side of the baths in a moderate swell and hang on tight when a wave breaks over you.

As Morisset was the longest-serving Commandant of Newcastle, the pool was originally referred to as the 'Commandant's Baths'. The name 'Bogey Hole' came into regular usage sometime after, and is said to come from the Dharawal word meaning 'to bathe'.

The Bogey Hole is listed on the NSW State Heritage Register in recognition of its importance in the course of NSW's history. Potentially the place has national signi of Australia of a purpose-built ocean swimming pool.

In 1863, control of the Bogey Hole passed to Newcastle Borough Council for public use. The baths were enlarged by Council and catered mainly to male swimmers, with women being permitted only at set times. The Bogey Hole was originally much smaller than it is now and was substantially enlarged in 1884 to its present size.

The most significant changes to the original Bogey Hole rock pool were in 1884. The pool was enlarged to seven times its original size and deepened, an iron safety rail was constructed along the access track and two bridges, stairs and ledges cut into the rock

face. These works were undertaken by Newcastle City Council.

Men and women swam on different days and new dressing sheds and showers to use water piped 150 yards from a natural spring were built in 1893. Despite improvements, the rock pool was not considered safe or a respectable enough bathing site for the good citizens of Newcastle. "Newcastle Morning Herald" commented that the "Bogey Hole has become the aquatic hunting ground of the Newcastle larrikin".

The alternative was to swim at Newcomen Street Corporation Baths, which were public baths plagued by complaints about cleanliness. Opened in 1888, ongoing financial and hygiene problems resulted in the closure of the baths in 1906. The building was converted into an arcade in 1934, and parts of the original façade are still visible today.



There have been minor modifications to the Bogey Hole Baths over the years. These affected mainly the area above the baths, including post-war construction of the caretaker's cottage, removal of the original timber change sheds, removal of a timber picket fence, and alterations to access steps and ordinance fencing.

### 2023/24 Committee:

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

Darryl Boyce  
Hon. Solicitor:

Nicholas Dan

**Merewether Historical Society  
is proudly sponsored by:  
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