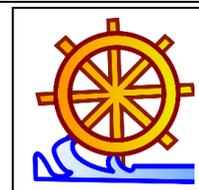




HELM



Heritage of East Lake Macquarie

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JANUARY 2020

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A CENTURY AGO: 1920-2020

1920 witnessed a time of great change after WWI.

Jan 07 Australia's first Prime Minister, Sir Edmund Barton died, marking the end of an era.

Jan 22 Melbourne saw farmers form the Australian Country Party.

Feb 04 The NSW branch of the National Roads Association was born and became the NRMA.

March In Warnambool, Vic., the Fletcher Jones tailoring company was established.

Aug 10 The official opening of the Princes Highway at Warragul, Victorian section from Melbourne.

Oct 19 The Princes Highway section from Sydney was opened at Bulli. Named in honour of visit by Prince of Wales.

Oct 30 Sydney : The Communist Party of Australia was formed.

Nov 16 Qantas (Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services) was registered in Winton, Qld.

Dec 03 The first successful flight from Melbourne to Perth occurred.

Two Swansea locals, John Martin and Kevin Meaker, from The Village have created a very interesting display of Swansea's Main Street in 1920 through the handcrafted model and paintings on display at Swansea Library in the Launchpad. Their work was greatly assisted by George and Noelene Boyd's research and compilation of original photos; and by the Swansea Men's Shed construction and arrangement of the display platform items. This impressive presentation of our town's heritage will be on display until May 2020; at times when the library is open.



Next door to the library is the SEEN exhibition centre. - Until January 26 showing a travelling exhibit by the Maritime Museum which has toured Australia since 2018. Display panels feature shipwrecks of national, regional and local importance. Australia has over 11,000 shipwrecks, about one for every 3 km. Also featured are 5 shipwrecks that have occurred in our local area; including the Scotch Queen and rescuer watch. Open daily 10am to 3pm.



1920 events 1
Ships 1920 2
Main Street 3-4

Share in our heritage at the beautifully restored St Peter's Chapel (1884); and enjoy some refreshments at ARTea's Garden and Gallery, Josephson St. Calendars depicting our town in the past are available at the chapel. Chapel open, Fridays 10 am – 2pm; ARTea's open Wed – Sun 10am -2pm.



first national | Andrew McGrath

Kindly supporting the community – including Caves Beach Surf Life Saving Club; this edition of HELM newsletter.

**SWANSEA PLAZA ARCADE
NEAR COLES – Ph: 4972 1066
CHECK OUT THEIR FACEBOOK**

SHIPS AND SEAFARING.

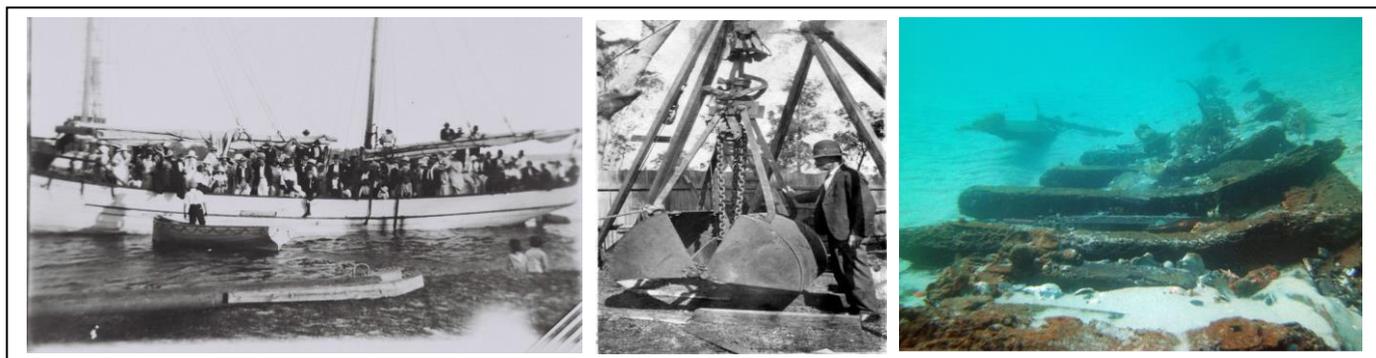
The first glimpse of a name for **SWANSEA** came from the captains of small trading vessels plying between Cooranbong and Sydney with cargoes of timber, shingles and shells. Using the extremity of the peninsula as a navigational reference they gave it the name of "Pelican Point", due to the enormous flocks of birds that congregated there. This name continued until 1887; the new name was proposed by Robert Talbot, postmaster, as he felt the area reminded him of Swansea, the port in Wales. **150 YEARS AGO**, in 1870 William Boyd, who operated a ferry service and refreshment room near where the Bridge now spans the channel, applied for a liquor licence for his establishment, "The Pelican Point Hotel". As there was no bridge at the time, his ferry service offered a punt crossing the channel, for passengers and their possessions; and goods; while the horses swam behind; refreshments available at Swansea. Intending passengers on the North side had to ring a bell.

100 YEARS AGO, on January 15, 2020, an inquest was held into the loss of seven lives, including five returned WWI soldiers, caused by the foundering of the motor launch, the **SCOTCH QUEEN** on Swansea Bar on Sunday **December 21, 1919**. The ill-fated fishing party of ten men mostly from Broadmeadow and Hamilton, left Cockle Creek about ten o'clock. They decided against going outside when they observed conditions were not favourable. Although they tried to turn back, the launch was swamped on



the dangerous Swansea bar when the engine stopped, by a roller capsizing it. Only three men were to survive the Swansea disaster. The Coroner ruled the deaths were due to accidental drowning. He recommended that the system whereby the telephone used by the pilot at the Heads was cut off from Swansea on Sundays and redirected to Newcastle needed to be reviewed; and direct communication with Swansea every day and night was vital. (The pilot was not only cut from phoning Swansea on Sundays but also after 6pm week days and 1pm on Saturdays.) The time delay for assistance from Newcastle was too long. On this occasion the pilot's son sped 3 kms on his horse to raise the alarm with James Boyd at Swansea, who launched a boat to assist the rescue. The Coroner also recommended that the two local boating parties who rescued survivors were worthy of commendations; as was one of the survivors. Amongst the rescuers were James L. Boyd, son Ernie Boyd, and William Evans. The name plate for the launch and planking were picked up on Bar Beach, December 29th.

100 YEARS AGO, the **BLUE GUM** was built by James Lewis Boyd at Black Ned's Bay. As with all Boyd's vessels, she was built with an Ironbark keel and stem, and planked with Blue Gum, from which she received her name. The Blue Gum was built to carry coal from the Golden Egg Colliery, Belmont (Shaggy) in the vicinity of the now Skiffy Club (Belmont 16s) to the Sanitarium products factory at Cooranbong (makers of Weetbix); then to transport the finished product to Sydney. Modifications had to be made. Masts were lowered to pass under the Dora Creek rail bridge. James invented the grab bucket to automatically open and close to unload coal. The grab was built at Crittendell's Blacksmith's shop in Swansea. The advantage of using the grab was that coal which was tipped directly into the vessels hold had previously been manually unloaded by shoveling into baskets which were then raised from the hold by the shore crane. This was not only time consuming but quite arduous. When the later part of the contract failed to materialise, the Blue Gum was sold. In her day, she was also seen to carry passengers to the Wangi Sailing Regatta. By the late 1930s she was at the end of her economic life and needed repairs. She was finally laid up and retired in the back channel at Coon Island. *Source: G & N Boyd; LMCC*

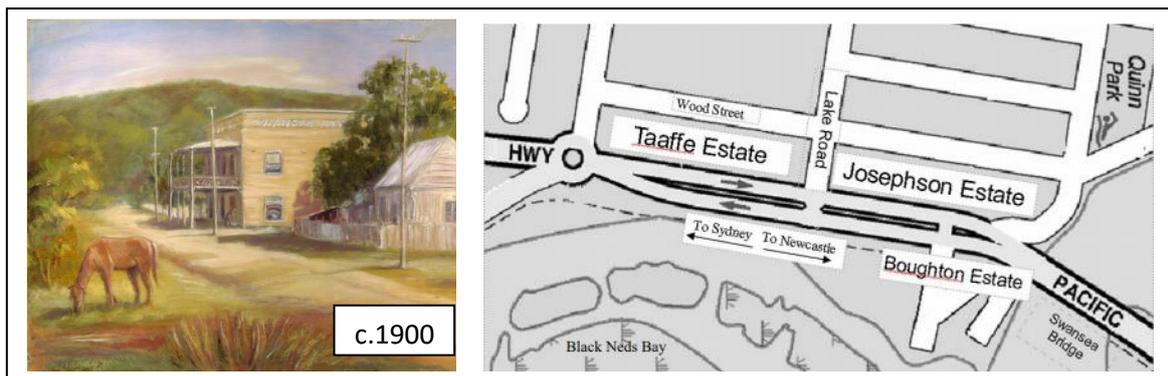


LIFE IN THE 1920s

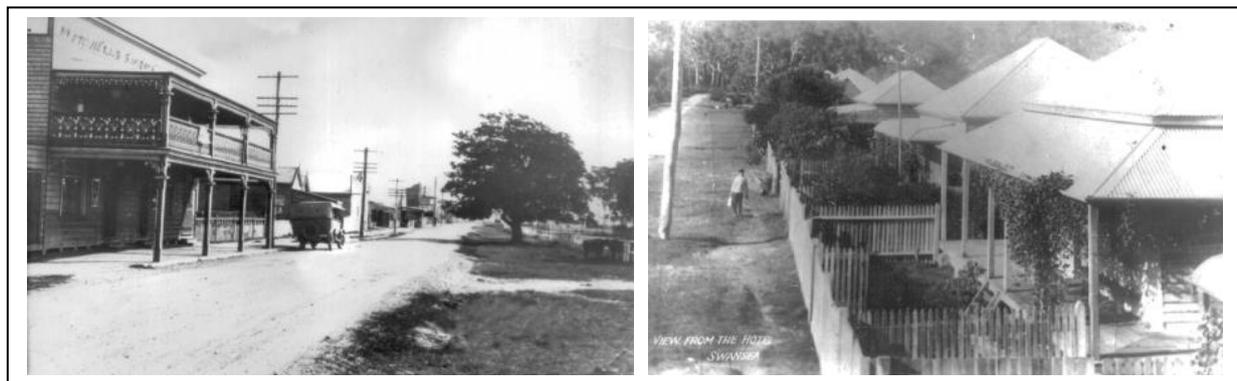
After the war, there was great optimism, progress and prosperity. Many returned soldiers received special loans to build houses on suburban blocks. Silent movies were popular, - people watched, while music was played on a piano in the theatre. Ironically, a film was released in June 1920, called “The Breaking of the Drought”, which also featured bushfires. The first “talkies” were not shown until December 1928. There were some 1250 picture theatres in Aust, employing 20,000 people. This was the Jazz era. Women had greater freedom as can be seen in the fashions, short hair, smoking, dancing and greater access to jobs and education. They were sometimes called “flappers”. In the kitchen, American products like Life Savers and Kellogg’s corn flakes became available in 1921. An Australia chemist developed Vegemite in 1923 to compete with British Marmite; and in 1928, Aeroplane Jelly was launched. 1928 also witnessed the first swimsuit made by Speedo. New inventions such as radios and cars became popular. In 1923 radio station 2SB Sydney transmitted a concert under the sealed set system. Radios were set to one wave-length and only one station. You had to buy a licence to receive their broadcasts. 1925, Ford began assembling cars in Geelong using imported engines. General Motors set up an assembly plant in Melbourne, 1926. By 1928, 500,000 cars were registered for Australia’s population of 5 million. New road rules and speed limits were introduced to try to curb the death toll of 1,000. *My Place ABCTV*

A GLIMPSE OF SWANSEA’S MAIN STREET

The Boyd and Taaffe families are considered to be Swansea’s first permanent European Settlers in the 1850s. In 1883 John Taaffe received Title Deed to 42 acres after Conditional purchase – bounded by Main St and to the south of Lake Rd. Two acres were sold off to Robert Talbot, who began to build a general store as he expected transfer of the Post Office from Catherine Hill Bay. Talbot’s borders were Swansea Hotel, Lake Rd, and Wood St. This area was to become the development centre of Swansea. North of Lake Rd was the Josephson Estate.



1920 marked the beginning of the era of modern development for Swansea.



1. **Swansea Hotel** 1920s, looking north with cows grazing in the park opposite. Horses were still the common form of transport. Taaffe was the first of a number of licensees of the hotel, with approval granted in 1880. The Hotel was later acquired by Tooth & Co. in 1922 from Castlemaine Brewery and the Wood Brothers who went into liquidation. Francis E. Mitchell was the licensee at the time. After his death in 1927, the licence was transferred to his wife, Annie, who continued as the Publican until 1956. Just to the north of the hotel, Robert Talbot built a post office in 1879 (transferring from Catherine Hill Bay) and a general store. Next, on the very corner of Lake Rd and Main St, was the Swansea Picture Hall. 2. Looking south from the Hotel balcony – cottages were owned by Baxter, Outram, Murray, Colquhoun, Taaffe, Moy and Train.



1. On the corner of Lake Rd and the Main St, (where Raine and Horne are now) stood **Swansea Picture Hall**, operated by George Brockwell and John Fry. Previously pictures were shown by Bert Phelan in smaller premises rented from James L. Boyd. In 1922 Thomas Dobinson, made additions to the building, leased it, and bought it in 1925. 2. Looking east down Lake Rd towards Main St. In the early 1920s people were to witness Ned Barden's Bullock team conveying the former Town Wharf shed into Lake Road. (The wharf shed had been situated near the bridge, near where the jetty is today opposite the Paris Apartments.) On the right, the picture show can be seen; on the opposite corner, Dick Lewis's General store. 3. Dan Cain's bullock team in front of **Lewis's General Store** and residence on the corner of Lake Road and Main St, setting off for a picnic to Caves Beach 1920s.



1. Just up from the corner was **Boon's mixed business, post office and paper shop**. 2. **Payne's General Store** was established in 1924. 3. In 1883 Frederica Josephson donated one acre of the Josephson estate to the **Church of England. St. Peters** was built and dedicated on Easter Sunday 1884 by Rev. Pearson. The first wedding was a double ceremony on 15th September 1884. This site is now occupied by the Caltex Service Station, with the church moved back from Main St. It is now St Peters Chapel located behind ARTea's garden and Gallery; and adjacent to the modern St Peters Church which was built on Josephson St.



1. "The Enterprise" – a charabanc built by Crittendell out the front of his **Blacksmiths Shop** (now The Mandarin site). In the building to the left, Joseph Charlton established a **Cake Shop with a Billiard Saloon** at the rear in 1922. This was where Eddie Charlton, World Champion Snooker player, learned his trade as a boy; **Jones butcher shop** on the right. 2. In 1925 Andrew Croft moved his **Bakery** from leased premises at the southern end of town to land he purchased closer to the bridge. 3. The **second Bridge** was in operation in 1920. *Source: G & N Boyd*

Disclaimer

: Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this newsletter, however, the accuracy of statements or opinions expressed in articles cannot be guaranteed.

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WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR IDEAS FOR MORE HERITAGE STORIES!!!