Civic Leaders:

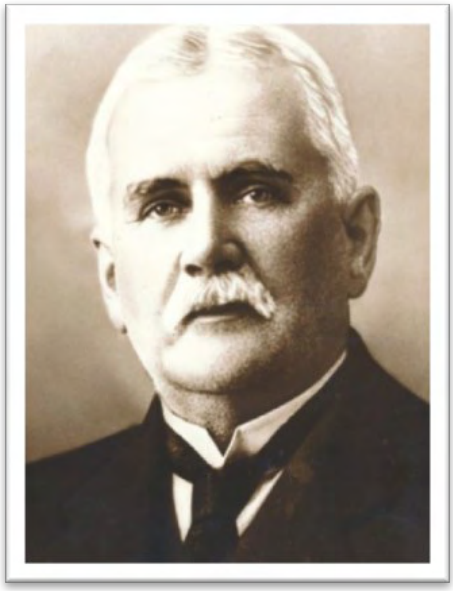
Port Macquarie Mayors

&

Hastings Shire Presidents

1887—1980

James McInherney-
First Mayor of Port Macquarie



Patrick O'Neill—
First President of the Hastings Shire

PORT MACQUARIE
HASTINGS

August 2015

Foreword

The office of Mayor in our system of local government in New South Wales is one that carries great responsibility. It also continues a tradition of service to our communities that has a long and rich history. Here in the Hastings district our earliest Council dates from 1887 with the formation of the Port Macquarie Municipal Council, to be closely followed by the formation of the Hastings Shire Council in 1906. Prior to this, civic work was promoted by Progress Associations whose members voluntarily gave of their time for the good of the district and their fellow settlers.

In 1980 the State Government initiated a series of local government reforms that saw the Port Macquarie and Hastings Councils amalgamated. To bring two proud organisations together under one civic banner understandably caused initial consternation within the respective local government areas. However, anyone visiting our region today would agree that we have developed into a vibrant, responsive and progressive Council that serves the population centres of Port Macquarie, Wauchope and the Camden Haven as well as the wonderful small villages that are scattered across our hinterland.

Many of our pioneering families have made significant contributions to local government in the Port Macquarie-Hastings area. In some instances both father and son have served terms as Aldermen, Councillors or even Mayors or Presidents. In recent years it has been pleasing to note the number of women who have sought public office and served with distinction on both of our earlier Councils and on the amalgamated Council.

I take great pride in being the Mayor of Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and while I look forward to working with our community to move us confidently into the future, I am always conscious of the great and valuable contributions made by the civic leaders of past Councils.

This work serves to acknowledge those contributions as well as to give faces to the many people who have served at the highest level in our local communities.

Peter Besseling

Mayor Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

August 2015

Preface

This publication aims to fill a void in the research material available regarding the history of local government in the Port Macquarie-Hastings area. Initially it was conceived as a record of the Mayors and Presidents of the respective local government areas of Port Macquarie and the Hastings Shire from the beginnings through to amalgamation in 1980. The scope of this work has been expanded from that initial brief to include a history of the development of local government in the two council areas as well as the history of the changing names of Council in the years after amalgamation.

Acknowledgments

This publication has been prepared by staff of the Port Macquarie-Hastings Library, in particular Jeff Stonehouse, Karen Rowan Hodges and Suzanne O'Brien, and proofread by Kath Millard. It has been researched using publicly available sources of information such as newspapers and online databases and therefore errors or omissions in the source data may have been inadvertently incorporated into this publication. Other sources have included research files within the Port Macquarie-Hastings Library and information supplied by community members. Any errors or omissions are unintentional and the Library has taken all due care to ensure the accuracy of the information contained herein by checking multiple sources when available. If any person would like to offer corrections or additional information they may contact the library.

Mayors of the Port Macquarie Municipal Council 1887 - 1980

Port Macquarie Council

1887-1980

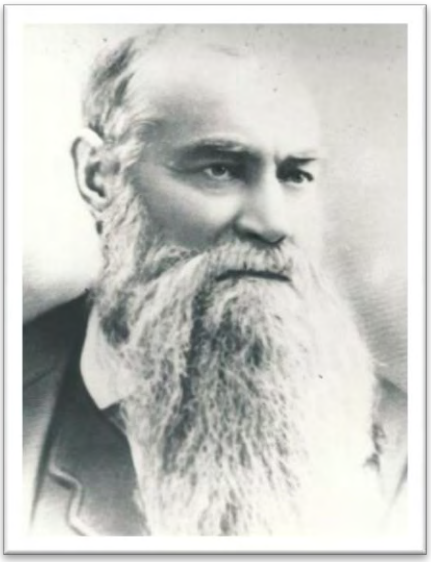
McInherney, J.	1887-1890
Hayward, F. V.	1890-1893, 1894-1897, 1899-1900, 1904-16 Jan 1906
Butler, J.	1893
Spence, W. J.	1898, 1899, 1902
Woodlands, R.	1901
Ayres, R. A.	1903
Bennett, G. E.	Mid Jan 1906 to Early April 1906
Rosenbaum, W.	Early April 1906-1909
Stewart, D.	1910-1915
Hill, J. H.	1916-1921
Denham, A. V. M.	1921-1923
Bransdon, J.	1924-1925
Elliot, A. C.	25 June 1925-1936
Mowle, E. A.	1936-1941
Orr, C. G.	1942-1944
Ryan, C. A.	1945-1947, 1949
Joscelyne, N. W. W.	1948
Crisp, A. L.	1950-1951, 1957-1960, 1962-1963, 1966
Brownlow, E. F.	June 1952-1954
Kennedy, D. S.	1955-1956, 1961, 1964-1965, 1971
Adams, C. C.	1967-1970, Oct 1971-1974
Matesich, N. F. H.	1974-1976
Stevenson, K.	Sept 1976-1978
Boardman, J.	1978-1980

MCINHERNEY, James

Born: 1842
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Butcher & grazier at Settlement Point
Married: Hannah Walters 19 June 1868 at St Thomas' Church of England, Port Macquarie
Children: 5
Date Mayor: 23 May1887-1890
Died: 27 May 1916
Location: Port Macquarie at his residence Settlement Farm
Age: 74 years
Notes: Justice of the Peace, served on the Judicial Bench, School of Arts committee member

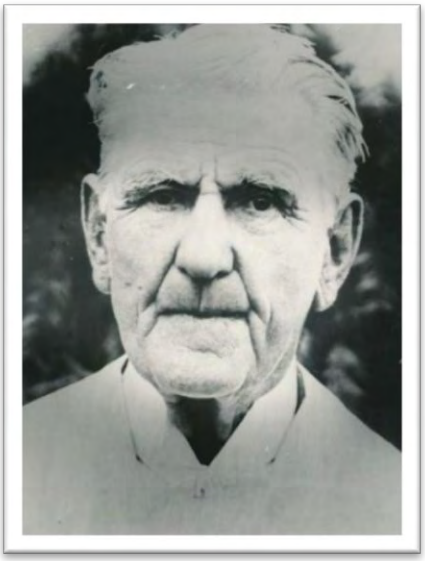
HAYWARD, Frederick Vivian

Born: 18 June 1854
Location: Port Macquarie
Christened: 16 July 1854 at St Thomas' Church of England, Port Macquarie
Occupation: Blacksmith, builder, miller, Freeholder, Agent
Married: Caroline Susannah Hyde in 1877 at Port Macquarie
Children: 12
Date Mayor: 1890-1893, 1894-1897, 1899-1900, 1904-1905, 1906
Died: 21 December 1932
Location: Port Macquarie in Horton Street
Age: 78 years
Notes: Member of the first Municipal Council of 1887. Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for affidavits, member of the Land Board, Coroner for Port Macquarie District. He and his wife built ‘Grantham’ their family home.



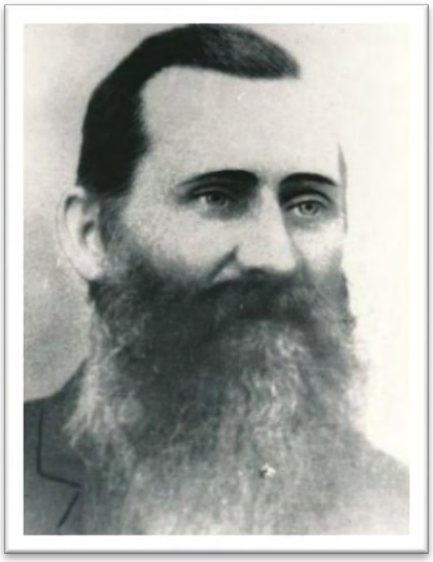
BUTLER, James

Born: 18 May 1828
Location: Hokianga, Bay of Islands, New Zealand
Occupation: Cabinet maker, mortician, auctioneer and horse breeder
Married: Ellen Blair in 1853 at St Andrews' Presbyterian Church, Port Macquarie
Children: 8
Date Mayor: 1893
Died:10 June 1910
Location: Port Macquarie
Age: 82 years
Notes: In 1869 he built his Port Macquarie home and called it "Coolenberg". Elected to the first Municipal Council in 1887.



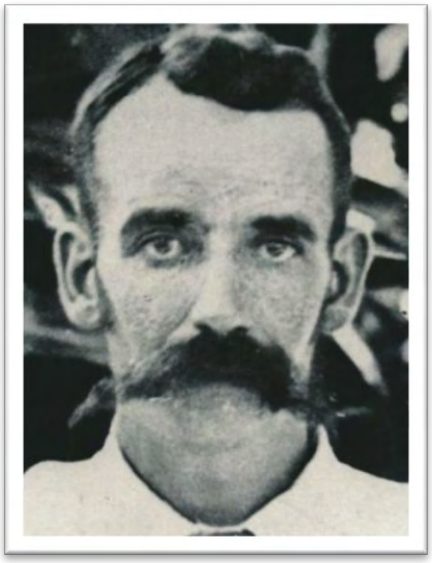
SPENCE, William Andrew

Born: 10 February 1852
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: General storekeeper, accountant, auctioneer and shipping agent
Married: (1) Elizabeth Mahoney 3 August 1872 at Port Macquarie
(2) Florence Agnes McDonald in February 1921 at Port Macquarie
Children: 8
Date Mayor: 1898 - Jan 1899**,** 1902
Died: 20 February 1937
Location: Port Macquarie at his residence in Hay Street
Age: 85 years
Notes: Elected to the first Municipal Council in 1887. Was a member of the Masonic Order.



WOODLANDS, Richard

Born: 6 June 1847
Location: Rollands Plains, N.S.W.
Christened: 17 January 1850 at St Thomas' Church of England, Port Macquarie
Occupation: Maize farmer at King Creek, later a storekeeper in west Port Macquarie
Married: Elizabeth Boltwood 31 August 1870 at Reedy Island, Hastings River
Children: 12
Date Mayor: 1901
Died: 9 October 1915
Location: Sydney, at his residence 20 Margaret Street Petersham
Age: 68 years
Notes: Principal advocate for tree planting in Port Macquarie. He was involved with the Agricultural Society, the Hospital and the School of Arts Progress Committee. Justice of the Peace. Local Methodist preacher and Superintendent of the Port Macquarie Sabbath School. He had a government contract to supply food to aboriginal people living nearby.

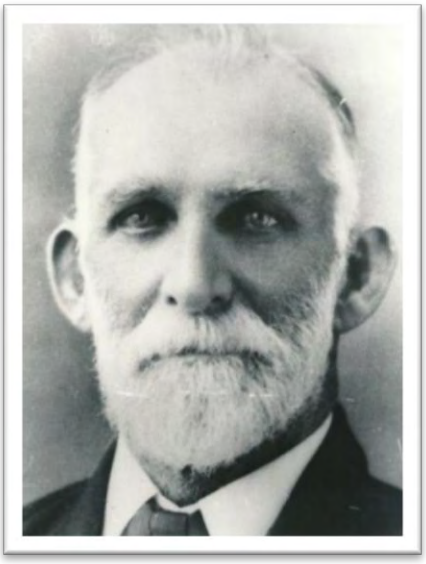


AYRES, Richard Arthur

Born: 1863
Location: Bridgewater, Somerset, England
Occupation: Chemist and dental surgeon
Married: Olivia Corinnia Foldi in 1893 at Petersham, Sydney
Children: 2 sons
Date Mayor: 1903
Died: 6 August 1915
Location: Liverpool, N.S.W. at his residence in Macquarie Street
Age: 52 years
Notes: Major advocate for the establishment of the District Hospital and general improvement of the historic cemetery. He promoted improvement of the town, the hospital and baths and the general appearance of Port Macquarie. After leaving Port Macquarie he worked as an alderman on the Liverpool Council and was President of the Liverpool Horticultural Society, and a member of the Masonic Order and rifle club.

BENNETT, George Evan

Born: 1865
Location: Macleay River
Occupation: Engineer and labourer
Married: Alice Noakes in 1884 at St Thomas Church of England, Port Macquarie
Children: 6
Date Mayor: 1906
Died: 5 January 1934
Location: Kendall
Age: 68 years
Notes: George was considered a good all-rounder in local government having held several positions on council**.** He stood in for the remaining two weeks of Mayor Hayward's term, after he resigned in Jan 1906. He was then elected Mayor. However in April he resigned the position, due to the requirements of the Public Service Board.

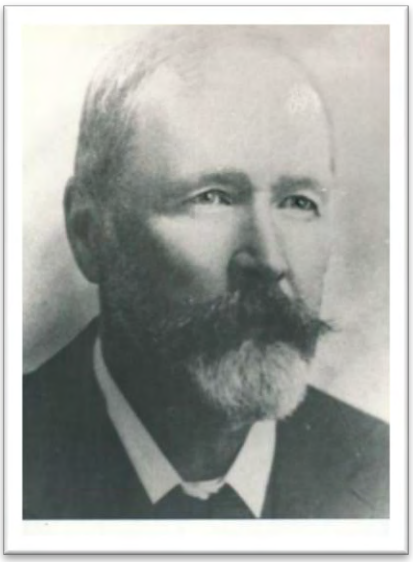


ROSENBAUM, William

Born: 1859
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Builder, joiner and contractor
Married: Alice Kate Farr in 1890 in Sydney
Children: 2
Date Mayor: 1906-1909
Died: 9 October 1934
Location: Port Macquarie at his residence in William Street
Age: 75 years
Notes: Member of Commonwealth Lodge, committee member of the local Grand United order of Odd Fellows and Masonic Order.

STEWART, Duncan

Born: 1863
Location: Wingham
Occupation: Shop owner of 'The Macquarie Store'
Married: never married
Date Mayor: 1910-1915
Died:1933
Location: Port Macquarie, in the hospital
Age: 69 years
Notes: President of Hastings District Hospital at time of death. Two wards 'the Duncan Stewart Memorial Wards', were built and opened in memory of Mr Stewart's 30 year commitment as a member, trustee and Chairman to the Hospital. He also served as Treasurer of the Port Macquarie Agricultural Society and was an active member of the Free Presbyterian Church and Masonic Order.



HILL, John Hooke

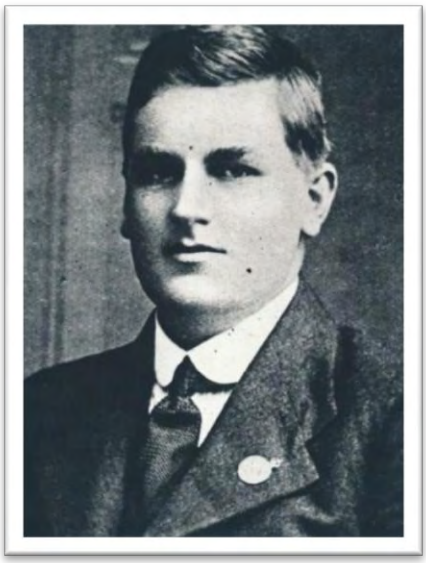
Born: 1858
Location: Dungog
Occupation: Cane grower and cattle farmer
Married: Amelia Isabella McIntosh Walker of Bundaberg in 1894 in Queensland.
Children: 3
Date President: 1910
Died: 2nd June 1927
Location: Sydney, at Claremore Hospital
Age: 68 years
Notes: Member of the first Hastings Shire Council. Also served as Mayor of Port Macquarie Municipal Council 1916-1921. As a young man he went to Queensland where he grew sugar for a number of years. The couple moved to Yarras, Upper Hastings, approximately 1985. Purchased "Arncliffe" in Port Macquarie and took up residence there in 1911. Was Vice-President and Hon. Treasurer of the Hastings District Hospital for many years. Was President of the Port Macquarie Parents & Citizens Association until 1926. Mrs Hill unveiled the Port Macquarie War memorial in 1921.After his death his body was conveyed by train to Wauchope and then to the Port Macquarie Presbyterian Church for the memorial service.

DENHAM, Albert Vivian Macquarie

Born: 1878
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Oyster farmer
Married: Sarah Jane Platt in 1907 at Taree
Children: 3
Date Mayor: Dec 1921-1923
Died: 7 July 1954
Location: Penshurst at his residence 3 Daisy Ave
Age: 75 or 76 [death notice states 74 years]
Notes: 1918 he served as Deputy Mayor of Port Macquarie. He was the secretary of the Port Macquarie Brass Band and a member of the Regatta Club. Was also a member of the Masonic Order and Master of the Port Macquarie Masonic Lodge1922-1923.

BRANSDON, John

Born: 1874
Location: near Wauchope
Occupation: Farmer, grazier and an auctioneer in partnership with P. J. O'Neil the first Hastings Shire President.
Married: Margaret Elizabeth Lyon in 1904 in Port Macquarie
Children: 5
Date Mayor: 1924-1925
Died: 21 October 1926
Location: Port Macquarie Hospital
Age: 52 years
Notes: Member of the Regatta Club and a Justice of the Peace.



ELLIOT, Alban Charles

Born: 7 June 1892
Location: Waterlooville, Hampshire, England
Occupation: Solicitor
Married: Fanny Compton Atherton 14 May 1919 at Chiddingfold, Surrey, England
Children: 2 sons & 2 daughters
Date Mayor: 25 June 1925-1936
Died: 3 August 1978
Location: Collaroy
Age: 86 years
Notes: During his time as Mayor roads were tarred and electric street lights installed, camping reserves were established and improvements made to the local golf links. He was a senior Cadet for five years. He served in the A.I.F in WW1 and was awarded the Military Cross for his role in the Battle of Polygon Wood. He was President of the R.S.L and Soldiers & Sailors Imperial League of Australia Sub-Branch, Secretary of the Golf club, Vice President of the Tennis Club and Football Club and a member of the local Cricket Team.

MOWLE, Ernest Aubrey

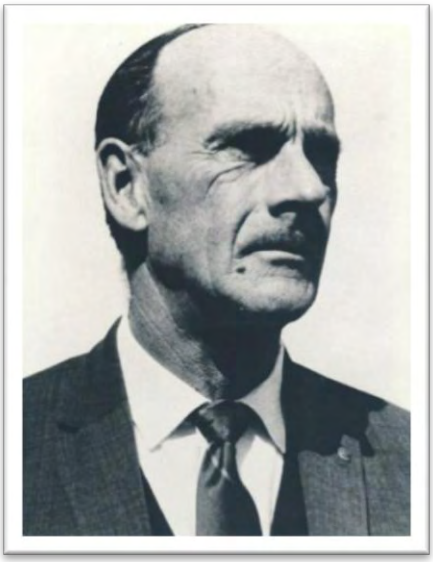
Born: 26 May1874
Location: Stanmore, Sydney
Occupation: Draughtsman with the Department of Lands
Married: Minnie Catherine Linley in 1923 in Sydney
Children: nil
Date Mayor: April 1936-1941
Died: 4 September 1956
Location: Port Macquarie
Age: 83 years
Notes: Established a Council electricity power station. He was an advocate for promoting Port Macquarie as a tourist destination and for preserving historic tombstones. He spent time collating the town's history and creating town maps. Mowle Street was named in his honour.

ORR, Charles George

Born: 1876
Location: Ipswich, Queensland
Occupation: Chemist, dentist and optician
Married: Mabel Woodlands in 1913 in Port Macquarie
Children: 1
Date Mayor: 1942-1944
Died: 6 April 1961
Location: Port Macquarie at hospital
Age: 85 years
Notes: Member of the hospital board, held various positions in the Methodist church, and during 1920-1921 he was Master of the Hastings Masonic Lodge. He was involved with the School of Arts and in promoting the availability of literature to the people of the Hastings before there were free public libraries

RYAN, Charlie Allan

Born: 1901
Location: Hay, N.S.W.
Occupation: Pharmacist, newsagent and land owner
Married: Freda Isabel Aynsley in 1932 in Sydney
Children: 1 son
Date Mayor: 1945-1947,1949
Died: 5 June 1966
Location: Killara, Sydney at his residence
Age: 65 years
Notes: Contributed to land developments in Port Macquarie by encouraging subdivision. Supported the idea of an improved water supply for the town of Port Macquarie, and organised working bees to clear land for an aerodrome. Founded radio 2KM at Kempsey and was an original member of the Oxley County Council in 1943, serving as Chairman 1948-1949. A member of the Hastings Masonic Lodge and held the position of Grand Master during 1941 and 1942.



JOSCELYNE, Noel William Walter 'Bill'

Born: 6 October 1911
Location: Goulburn
Occupation: Solicitor
Married: (1) Lucy Love Phillips in 1939 at Goulburn
(2) Mary Alice Esther "Molly" Phillips [*nee* Muras] 3 July 1971 at St Thomas' Church of England, Port Macquarie
Children: 4
Date Mayor: 1948
Died: 23 December 1999
Age: 88 years
Location: Port Macquarie at hospital
Notes: 'Bill' was married to 'Molly's sister and 'Molly' was married to 'Bill's' brother. They married each other after the deaths of their respective spouses. 'Bill' was responsible for a tree planting program in Port Macquarie and supporter of the Red Cross mobile blood donation unit. He was a founding member of Port Macquarie Bowling Club (1938), first treasurer of the Port Macquarie Rotary club (1948) and later President [1951].

CRISP, Alfred Leslie 'Les'

Born: 6 January 1899
Location: Tenterfield. N.S.W.
Occupation: Ironmonger and later owned a building supply business
Married: Elizabeth Pretoria Wilson in 1926 in Moree
Children: 1 son
Date Mayor: 1950-1951, 1957-1960, 1962-1963, 1966
Died: 16 November 1990
Location: Port Macquarie
Age: 91 years
Notes: MBE in 1970 for dedicated service to the Port Macquarie community. He was a WW1 veteran and an active member of the RSL, helping to acquire the nissen hut which was used as the first RSL Club in Port Macquarie. He was a founding member of the Rotary Club in 1948 and later President in 1965-1966. He had the honour of being the first person to officially drive on the Oxley Highway interchange, "The donut", in November 1990. At the time of his death he was the President of the 1914-1918 Diggers Association.

KENNEDY, Duncan Stewart

Born: 1910
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Labourer and carrier, also involved with real estate and land valuation
Married: Annie Mary Wilson in 1937 at Wingham
Children: 3 daughters
Date Mayor: 1955-1956, 1961, 1964-1965, 1971
Died: 14 July 2003
Location: Port Macquarie
Age: 93 years
Notes: Known by his middle name Stewart. He served on the Council from 1945 to 1977 as well as 27 years on the Oxley County Council, holding the position of Vice President for many of these years. He advocated upgrading the local water supply and road improvements, and was a member of the Historical Society. Kennedy Drive was named after his family who purchased land in that area in1922. They grew pineapples, bananas, grapes, paw-paws and other fruit which they sold at a market garden in Eastport.

BROWNLOW, Edmond Francis 'Ted'

Born: 1890
Location: Redfern, Sydney
Occupation: Storekeeper and gardener
Married: Gertrude Ivy May Cass in 1912 in Sydney
Children: 4 daughters
Date Mayor: June 1952-1954
Died: 27 January 1970
Location: Port Macquarie at hospital. At the time he was living at Pendle Hill N.S.W. and was visiting his daughter in Port Macquarie.
Age: 79 years
Notes: Opened Brownlow's General Grocery Store on the eastern side of Horton Street in the early 1930s. Active member of the Chamber of Progress. During his term in office an electricity supply was initiated and the aerodrome commenced.

ADAMS, Cyril Charles 'Mac'

Born: 22nd October 1900
Location: Wellington, New Zealand
Occupation: Carpenter & motel proprietor
Married: (1) Myra May Towner in 1931 in Sydney
(2) Marjorie Elsie Nicholson *nee* Forsyth (widow) on the 14th May,1970 at Chatswood
Children: 2
Date Mayor: 1967-1970, 1972-1974
Died: 1993
Location: Port Macquarie at St. Agnes Lodge
Age: 92 years
Notes: Arrived in Australia in 1927. Deputy Mayor of Randwick Council 1953-1958. In 1958 he 'discovered' Port Macquarie and built the town's first motel. He served as Mayor for 7 years and Deputy Mayor for 8 years. Awarded an MBE on the Queen's Birthday Honours list in 1974 for outstanding service to local government and for community services. In 1985 he was awarded an Australian Day OAM. Fundraiser for many organisations including the Randwick Police Boys Club, Maroubra Surf Life Saving Club, Bundaleer Nursing Home, Port Macquarie Senior Citizens Club, Port Macquarie Rowing Club, Lourdes Nursing Home, Q-Robin, Port Macquarie Sailing Club, Hastings Branch of Cancer Research Foundation, indoor stadium and Mac Adams Music Centre. Also prominent in the development of a free public library and the town band. He was a Member of the Motel Association and the Chamber of Progress and supported the Carnival of the Pines. He helped to develop Port Macquarie as a tourist destination and was involved with many local projects including the Civic Centre, the old council offices, library and the establishment of Fantasy Glades and the Porpoise Pool.

MATESICH, Norman Francis Henry 'Matty'

Born: 1923
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Boiler maker and service station proprietor
Married: Kathleen Clare Payne in 1947 at Port Macquarie
Children: 3
Date Mayor: 1974-1976
Died: 13 November 1999
Location: Port Macquarie
Age: 76 years
Notes: First Mayor of the amalgamated Hastings Council. Delegate for Oxley County Council for twenty years. Attended Ultimo Technical College in Sydney graduating as a boilermaker. On returning to Port Macquarie he assisted his father in a transport business, eventually taking it over. After selling the business he again took up his trade as the engineer at the Hastings District. Involved with the establishment of a TAFE College in Port Macquarie and the planning of the Port Macquarie water supply dam. Other community involvement included being patron of the Port Macquarie Surf Club, Tacking Point Surf Club and the Port Macquarie Swimming Club. He received an OAM in 1991 for his long service to the community.

STEVENSON, Keith Newby

Born: 15 July 1929
Location: South Australia (?)
Occupation: Area representative for Clark Brick, in police force, missionary**,** farmer and florist
Married: Ellen Meryl 'Nanette' Leembruggen in 1950 in Burwood N.S.W.
Children: 4 and 2 step children
Date Mayor: September 1976-1978
Died: 9 May 2009
Location: Hebburn Lodge, Calvary, Cessnock
Age: 79 years
Notes: His motto was "consultation not confrontation". During his term as Mayor the Oxley Highway was sealed and Short Street improved. He helped to establish the Community Service Organisation**.** He was interested in social welfare and held positions of Chairman of the local heart foundation, on the local land board and was an honorary probationary officer with the Adult Probation Service. He took leave of absence from Council on 24 July 1978 and resigned on 4 September 1978 prior to the Council meeting at which a new Mayor was to be elected.

BOARDMAN, James 'Jim'

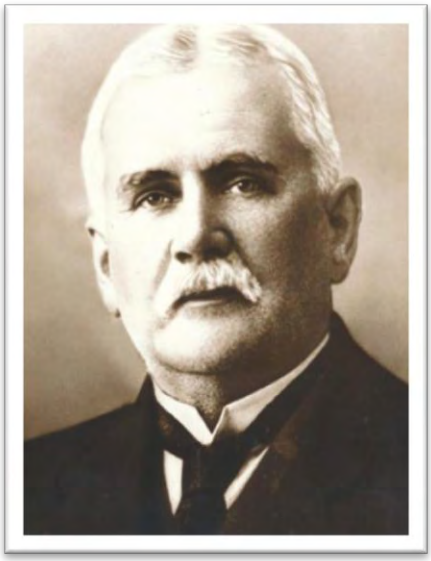
Born: 19 June 1919
Location: Peak Hill, N.S.W.
Occupation: Originally a farmer he was later an instrument fitter in the RAAF [WW2 service no.34557 occupation leading aircraftman] before moving into real estate after the war.
Married: (1) Eileen Elverer 'Peggy' O'Connor in Condobolin in 1940
(2) Helen Mary Chalinder Rowe in 1962 in Sydney
(3) Stella Victoria Mason (?) sometime after 1983
Children: 3 sons with second wife and 1 step child from 1st marriage and 2 stepchildren from 3rd marriage.
Date Mayor: 1978-1980
Died: 2 August 2009
Location: Not known
Age: 90 years
Notes: Worked in real estate before moving back to the land at Baradine near Coonabarabran. Later moved to Long Jetty on the Central Coast and back into real estate. Three years later he bought another Coonabarabran farm 'Yoggel'. In 1967, while in the process of selling the farm, he called in to Port Macquarie. He and his wife decided to settle Port and bought Mr Rose's Real Estate and a house in Regent Street. During his time as Mayor he focused on industrial development and advocated for a bridge over the Hastings River to link the North Shore community and eliminate the punts. He also focused on the relationship between council employees, the aldermen and the public. He built the 'Jim Boardman Centre' in Short Street Port Macquarie in late 1968.

Presidents of the Hastings Shire Council - 1906 to 1980

PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS

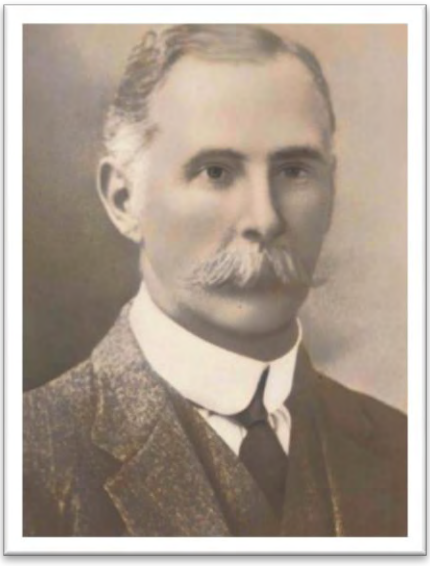
Hastings Shire Council
1906 - 1980

O'NEILL, P. J.	1906-07
GAMACK, J.	1908, 1911, 1927
LONGWORTH, R.	1909, 1920
HILL, J. H.	1910
HEALEY, J.	1912-13
ROSE, A. E.	1914, 1916, 1931, 1937
DOWNES, J.	1915, 1917, 1919, 1930, 1933, 1938
LINDSAY, W. C.	1918
WARLTERS, H. Snr	1921
WARRALL, J. J.	1922-25, 1934, 1940
SUTERS, E.	1926
BRECKENRIDGE, T. M.	1928
SECOMBE, P. H.	1929
BLYTHE, W. H.	1932
GAMACK, R. B.	1935, 1944
WALSH, R. B.	1936
ROSE, H. A.	1939, 1945-47
BRANSDON, H. S.	1941, 1948-1955, 1957-60
HOLLIS, H.	1942, 1956
PERROTT, C.	1943
WARLTERS, H. Jnr	1961-64
ANDREWS, J. R.	1965-1969
ABI-SAAB, J.	1970-77, 1978
STEINMETZ, J. J.	1977
POOLE, W.	1979-80



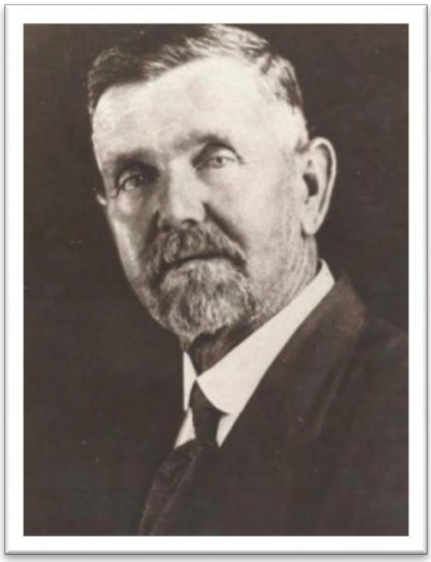
O'NEILL, Patrick Joseph

Born: 20 August 1857
Location: Brookfield, near Dungog, N.S.W.
Occupation: Butcher, auctioneer partnered with John Bransdon in 1908. Publican of Beechwood Hotel and West Kempsey Hotel
Married: Annie Mary Hough in 1886 at Tea Gardens
Children: 14
Date President: 18 December 1906-1907
Died: July 1947
Location: Raymond Terrace
Age: 89 years
Notes: First President of Hastings Council. Donated land in Beechwood in 1904 that the School of Arts was later built on in 1905. His grandson Jon O'Neill was a member of the last Hastings Shire Council in 1980. He was Mayor of Kempsey in 1919.



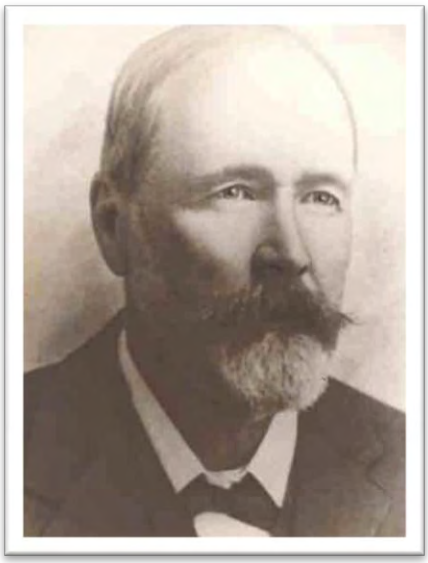
GAMACK, James

Born: 21 November 1865
Location: Clarefield, Upper Rollands Plains
Occupation: Involved in the timber industry and dairy farmer
Married: Mary Elizabeth Bransdon on 13 July 1897 at Port Macquarie
Children: 6
Date President: 1908, 1911, 1927
Died: 14 July 1946
Location: Kempsey, at 'Karoola' private hospital
Age: 80 years
Notes: Original member of the Port Macquarie Show Society, served as President on the Macleay Hospital Board. Laid the foundation stone for the Wauchope Clock Tower War Memorial in 1927.



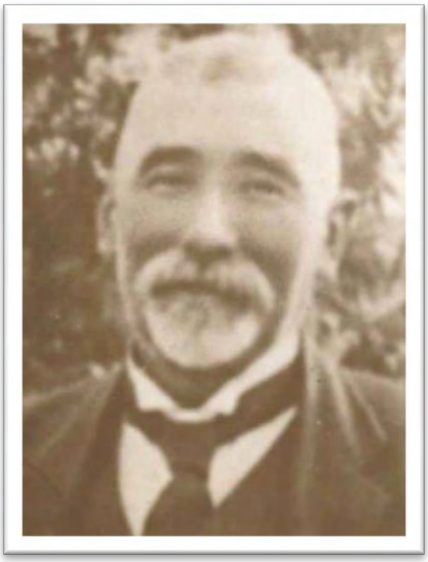
LONGWORTH, Robert

Born: 20 October 1860
Location: Ghinni Ghinni near Taree
Occupation: Farmer at Moorland, butcher, saw mill business owner, hotel keeper
Married: Florence Australia Davis on 16 January 1889 in Sydney
Children: 6 sons
Date President: 1909, 1920
Died: 27 May 1942
Location: Laurieton
Age: 81 years
Notes: Member of the first Hastings Shire Council. He was involved with the building of the Laurieton School of Arts and served as its President. Justice of the Peace, supporter of the Church of England and Member of the Masonic Lodge at Camden Haven.



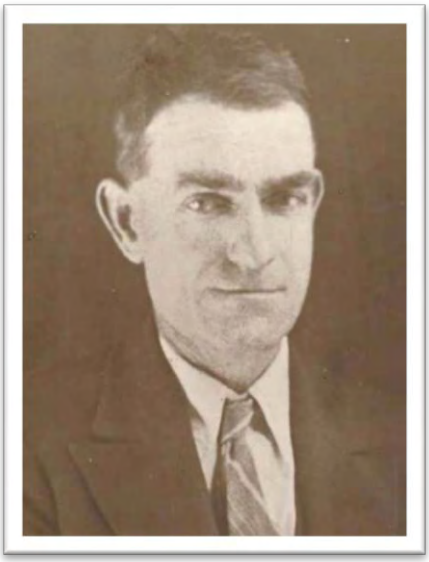
HILL, John Hooke

Born: 1858
Location: Dungog
Occupation: Cane grower and cattle farmer
Married: Amelia Isabella McIntosh Walker of Bundaberg in 1894 in Queensland.
Children: 3
Date President: 1910
Died: 2nd June 1927
Location: Sydney, at Claremore Hospital
Age: 68 years
Notes: Member of the first Hastings Shire Council. Also served as Mayor of Port Macquarie Municipal Council 1916-1921. As a young man he went to Queensland where he grew sugar for a number of years. The couple moved to Yarras, Upper Hastings, approximately 1985. Purchased "Arncliffe" in Port Macquarie and took up residence there in 1911. Was Vice-President and Hon. Treasurer of the Hastings District Hospital for many years. Was President of the Port Macquarie Parents & Citizens Association until 1926. Mrs Hill unveiled the Port Macquarie War memorial in 1921.After his death his body was conveyed by train to Wauchope and then to the Port Macquarie Presbyterian Church for the memorial service.



HEALEY, Jacob Decan

Born: 12 October 1859
Location: Fenns, Lincolnshire, England
Occupation: Builder, contractor and manager of a general store.
Married: Ada Ellen Butler [widow of Michael Scobie] in 1898 at Port Macquarie
Children: 2 step children
Date President: 1912-1913
Died: 27 January 1940
Location: Sydney
Age: 80 years
Notes: Advocate for primary producer rights. He served as a Director of the Pastoral Protection Board, Director of the Producers Distributing Society and Trustee of the Hastings District Agricultural and Horticultural Society**.** In earlier years he was the Director of the Hastings District Dairy Company. He laid the first foundation stone for the then Council Chambers which were opened during his term as Mayor. Built the Bank of NSW building in Port Macquarie.



ROSE, Albert Edward AE

Born: 14 December 1864
Location: Jones Island near Taree
Occupation: Farmer
Married: Matilda Eliza Waller on 16 June 1887 at Taree
Children: Three sons and four daughters
Date President: 1914, 1916, 1931, 1937
Died: 15 December 1950. Interred at Rookwood
Location: 29 Renown Ave. Punchbowl, N.S.W.
Age: 86
Notes: Elected to Hastings Shire Council in September 1908 and apart from a short time during WW1, remained a member until his retirement in 1941. He was a Justice of the Peace, District Coroner, foundation member of the Camden Haven Co-Operative Dairy Company. As well as Director. Involved with the erection of the School of Arts and public library at Kendall. He sold his property at Kendall about 18 months before his death. ‘Rose Crescent’' in Laurieton is named in his honour.

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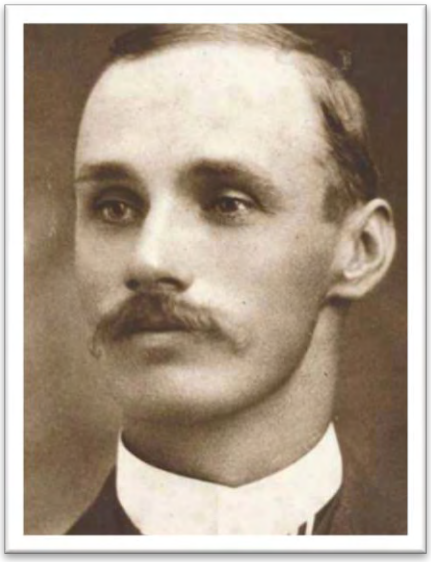
DOWNES, John Jnr ‘Jack’

Born: 1 December 1874
Location: Rawdon Island, Port Macquarie
Occupation: Grazier
Married: Sarah Athile Bogan in 1908. Marriage registered at Marrickville
N.B. middle name of wife varies on records. Athile on death registration and Ethel on birth registration. Ethile on electoral roll for 1930.
Children: No children of their own but reared the first born of his brother Patrick. [Ancestry.com]
Date President: 1915, 1917, 1919, 1930, 1933, 1938
Died: 6 December 1942
Location: Sydney at St Vincent’s Hospital
Age: 68 years
Notes: Advocated for the connection of water to the Hospital. Member of the first Hastings Shire Council, served as Chairman of the Finance Committee. He held the position of Director of the Hastings District Co-Operative Dairy Company. Telegraph Point and acted as Chairman for the board of Directors of this company. He was a Valuer for the Lands Department, Committee member on the Port Macquarie and Hastings District and Agricultural and Horticultural Society and the Hastings District Hospital. President of the A.L.P. ‘'John Downes Park’ in Port Macquarie was named in his honour. 'Dunbogan' was named after his wife Sarah Bogan's parents who lived in this area.



LINDSAY, William Campbell

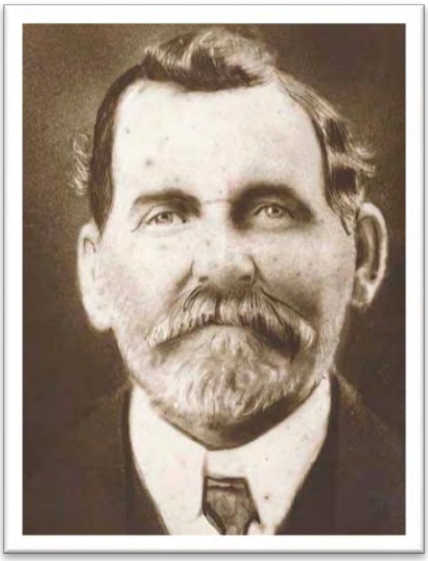
Born: 17 September 1870
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Farmer
Married: Ada Jane Newell (of Chatswood) in 1905 at Glebe, N.S.W.
Children: Three sons & two daughters
Date President: 1918
Died: 17 January 1937
Location: Wauchope at Wildfels Private Hospital Buried at the Cross Roads cemetery.
Age: 66 years
Notes: One of the first dairymen to commence operations on the Upper Hastings. He was a Director of the Upper Hastings Co-Operative Dairy Society Ltd., a member of the local Land Board and a member and committeeman of the Wauchope Pastoral, Agricultural & Horticultural Society (P.A. & H. Society). He served three terms (nine years) as a Councillor of Hastings Shire and was the Secretary of the Bush Nursing Association, Secretary of the Upper Hastings Progress Association and a Master of the local Masonic Order. He owned property at Ellenborough.

WARLTERS, Henry Snr.

Born: 11 May 1859
Location: Registered at Port Macquarie. He was from Ennis, near Wauchope
Occupation: Farmer at “Bronte”, Rollands Plains
Married: Edith Ann Dixon Andrews on 31 October 1898 at Port Macquarie
Children: Two sons & four daughters
Date President: 1921
Died: 25 July 1930
Location: Port Macquarie. Buried in General Cemetery
Age: 71
Notes: He held the positions of President of Port Macquarie and Hastings District Agricultural Society, Director of Hastings District Dairy Co-Operative. Port Macquarie and was a Justice of the Peace. He was also a district cricket player.

WARRALL, John James

Born: 1868
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Timber industry, butcher, farmer
Married: Emeline "Emily" McMaster Kennedy in 1897 at Newtown
Children: Four sons & one daughter.
Date President: 1922-1925, 1934, 1940
Died: 25 February 1943 at his Comboyne home.
Location: Port Macquarie
Buried at Comboyne Cemetery, Presbyterian section.
Age: 74 years
Notes: Was a Councillor for Hastings Council for 26 years. His father James was also a Councillor.



SUTERS, Edwin

Born: 5 August 1862
Location: Registered at Port Macquarie
Occupation: Farmer at Beechwood
Married: Cordelia Sinden Andrews on 22 March 1883 at Wesleyan Church, Wauchope N.S.W.
Children: Seven sons & four daughters, one child died in infancy
Date President: 1926
Died: 13 May 1947
Location: Wauchope
Age: 84
Notes: Was a trustee for the plantation and extension of the Beechwood Cemetery. President of the Wauchope Agricultural Society, and an active member of the Methodist Church. President of the Pastoral, Agricultural & Horticultural Society (P.A. & H. Society).

BRECKENRIDGE, Thomas Miles L

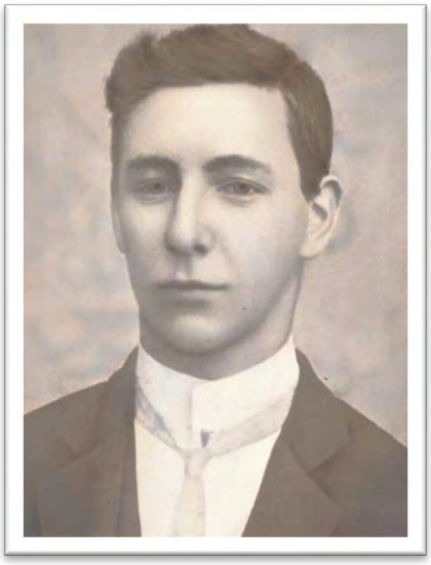
Born: 20 June 1885
Location: Failford near Forster
Occupation: Operated a general store and a sawmill at Kendall and was later an insurance representative
Married: Olive Rebecca Edwards in 1910 at Wollombi
Children: Three daughters
Date President: 1928
Died: 20th March 1952
Location: Pymble, N.S.W.
Age: 66
Notes: District representative of the A.M.P. Society in the Manning. Strong advocate for Kendall and the Comboyne. Also lived at formerly of Failford, Kendall and Taree.

SECOMBE, Patrick Henry Pat

Born: c1862-1863
Location: Ennis, near Wauchope
Occupation: Dairy farmer
Married: Cordelia Linden Andrews in 1885 at Port Macquarie
Children: 6
Date President: 1929
Died: 8 December 1953
Location: Ennis via Wauchope
Age: 90 or 91
Notes: Manager of the original butter factory at Cainstin's Park (overlooking the Rocks ferry at Wauchope) and later a director of the Port Macquarie facility which also managed the Hastings butter production for a time. He was director of the bacon factory at Wingham. He was on a subcommittee to clean up Wauchope cemetery. Active in immigration projects after the two world wars. Keen supporter of the agricultural and horticultural annual exhibition. He supported the Junior Farmers Movement, the P & C and the British and Foreign Bible Society as well as the Hastings District Hospital Committee in Port Macquarie.

BLYTHE, William Hastings

Born: 31 January 1880
Location: Ennis, near Wauchope
Occupation: Timber getter, farmer
Married: Sarah Mahala Eggert on 9 March 1904 at Wauchope.
Children: Five sons & two daughters
Date President: 1932
Died: 19 March, 1960
Location: At his home in Pappinbarra. Buried at the Crossroads Cemetery with his wife (d.1946)
Age: 80
Notes: Prominent in local affairs from a young age including community groups and various sporting teams. Farmed at "Mountain View" on the Upper Hastings then later at Pappinbarra. Spent 25 years on the Hastings Shire Council with one year as President, several years as Deputy President and many years as a member of the finance committee. He was also a delegate to the Central Rivers District Council of the Primary Producers Union for 34 years and a Justice of the Peace. "Blythe" Street in Wauchope was named after him.

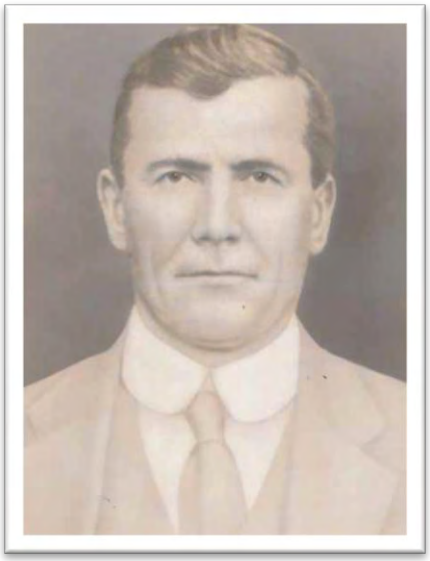


GAMACK, Radford Baird

Born: 1 May 1889
Location: Rollands Plains
Occupation: Farmer
Married: Cora Edna Veleta Reid on 24 August 1918 at Kempsey
Children: Nine
Date President: 1935, 1944
Died: 6 March 1979
Location: Kempsey at his residence.
Buried at east Kempsey Cemetery
Age: 89 years
Notes: He retired from council in 1950 and moved to Kempsey. He was a Member of Parliament for Raleigh (Country Party) 1953-1959. For many years was a keen show entrant and commentator. Director of Telegraph Point Co-operative Dairy Company and Macleay River Co-operative Dairying Company. Member of Port Macquarie Pastures Protection Board, Kempsey Ambulance Transport Board and President of Kempsey Show committee.

WALSH, Robert Barrie

Born: 19 March1888
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Plumber
Married: Nina Mary Williams on 15 January 1916 at Redfern
Children: Three daughters & two sons
Date President: 1936
Died: 2 October 1978
Location: Port Macquarie
Age: 90
Notes: On sub-committee to clean up Wauchope cemetery. On the Board of Trustees for the Wauchope School of Arts. Chairman of the tree planting committee of the Chamber of Commerce.

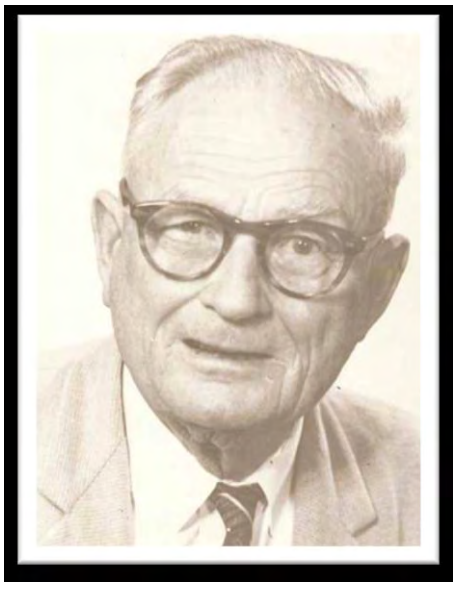


ROSE, Harold Austin Waller

Born: 29 April 1893
Location: Kendall, N.S.W.
Occupation: Businessman
Married: Eiffel Winifred Jarman in 1919 at Berry, N.S.W.
Children: Four daughters
Date President: 1939, 1945-1947
Died: 22 April 1977
Location: Wauchope. Buried at Wauchope General Cemetery
Age: 83
Notes: Justice of the Peace and Vice-President of Wauchope Chamber of Commerce

BRANSDON, Harrie Stewart

Born: 1894
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Farmer at Rollands Plains
Married: (1)Susannah W. Herbertin in 1915 at Port Macquarie
(2) Edna Jean Wilson at Ryde in 1944
(3) Dorothy Sophie Fowles in Ryde in 1954.
Children: 2
Date President: 1941, 1948-1955, 1957-1960. He refused nomination in December 1960 due to ill health.
Died: 10 April 1961
Location: Port Macquarie at hospital
Age: 66 years
Notes: First entered Council in 1931 and served for 29 consecutive years with 13 terms as President intermittently between 1941-1960. In 1957 he held the dual roles of Chairman of the Oxley County Council and Shire President.



HOLLIS George

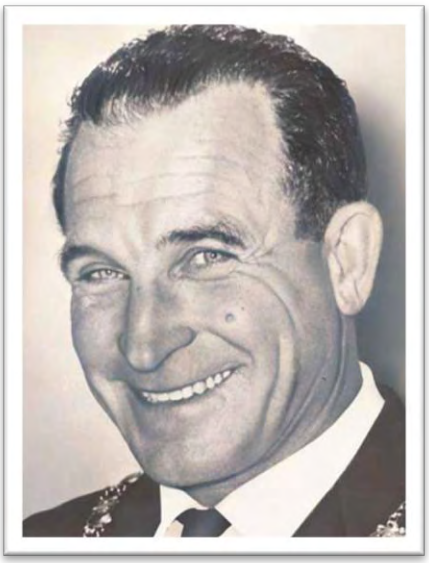
Born: 28 December 1876
Location: Port Macquarie
Occupation: Grazier and timber cutter
Married: Mary Ellen Murray in 1917 at Port Macquarie
Children: 4 sons
Date President: 1942, 1956
Died: 8 September 1964
Location: Wauchope
Age: 87 years
Notes: Served on the Hastings Shire Council for 22 years. President of the Long Flat Rodeo Association. Committee man of the Wauchope Pastoral, Agricultural & Horticultural Society (P.A. & H. Society). Member of the Dingo Board. For several years he was a member of the Oxley County Council and the Shires delegate on the Oxley Regional Council.

PERROTT, Claudius

Born: c1889
Location: Taree
Occupation: Teamster
Married: Mabel Gladys Bucton c1915 at Taree
Children: 3 sons
Date President: 1943
Died: 8 November 1975.
Location: Kendall. Buried at Kendall Cemetery
Age: 86
Notes: Was a Justice of the Peace. Delegate on the Oxley County Council - resigned 1949. His wife died 28 February 1931 aged 37.

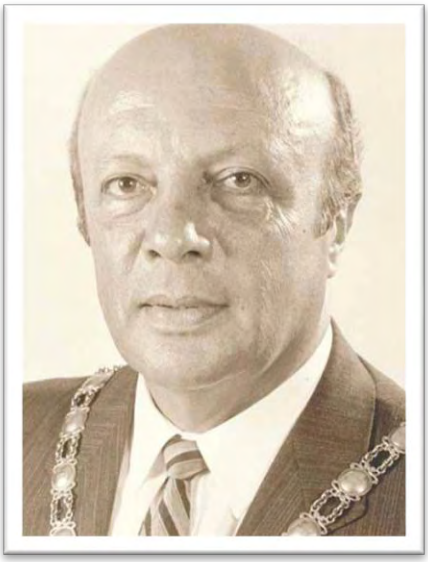
WARLTERS, Harry

Born: 1903
Location: ‘Bronte‘ Rollands Plains N.S.W.
Occupation: Farmer, then civic affairs.
Married: Rosellen Hendry Breckenridge in 1939 at Taree
Children: 1 daughter
Date President: 1961-1964
Died: 17 December 1973
Location: Sydney in hospital.
Private service at Northern Suburbs Crematorium.
Age: 69
Notes: Director of Hastings Co-operative at Wauchope and the Rural Co-Op Society at Port Macquarie. Elected to Hastings Shire Council in 1944 and represented ‘A’ Riding for 21 years before retiring on medical advice. In 1948 was appointed Shire delegate on Oxley County Council serving 15 years including seven as Chairman from 1950. Prominent in the development of the aerodrome, the golf links at Tacking Point and the Port Macquarie Hastings Tourist Authority. He had a strong involvement with various service clubs.



ANDREWS, Joseph Robert µJoe¶

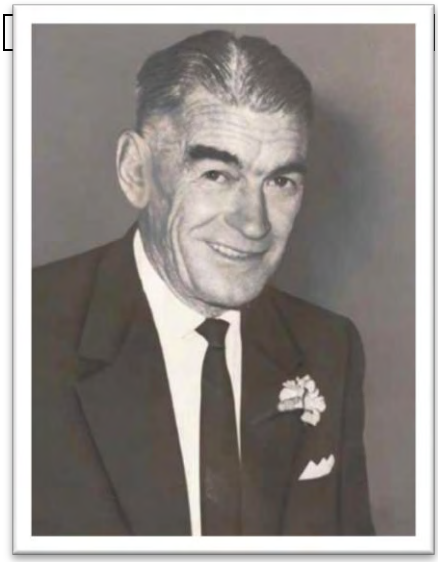
Born: 23 September 1918
Location: Wauchope
Occupation: Worked for the Department of Main Roads. Went into a partnership to established Wauchope Crane and Carrying Company for timber transportation.
Married: (1) Heather McDonald Pountney on the 24 August 1946 at Wauchope (died 18 April 1965)
(2) Mona Bird
Children: 2 daughters & 1 son; 2 step daughters from second Marriage
Date President: 1965-1970
Died: 11 September 1979
Location: Buried at Wauchope.
Age: 60 years
Notes: Served in A.I.F. during WW2 and was a POW in Changi Prison camp. Won NSW Titles in weightlifting. Deputy President of Hastings Shire for 3 years 1962-1964. Chairman of Wauchope Urban Committee 1956-1957. ALP candidate 1962, May 1965 and November 1965. Instrumental in the building of new premises for the Shire Civic Centre, Wauchope Library, Country Women's Association and Wauchope TAFE. 'Andrews Park' was named in his honour. He was a committee member of the Land Board and TAFE College and did voluntary work for the golf course and RSL which was acknowledged with life membership to both.



ABI-SAAB, John

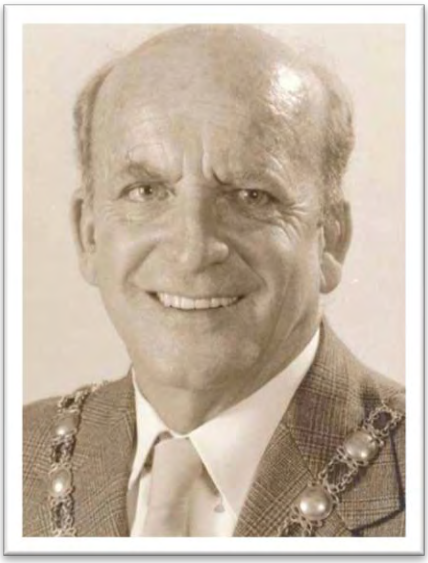
Born: 1932
Location: Lebanon
Occupation: Wauchope businessman. Early jobs included running a market stall at Paddy's markets, taxi driver, and grocery store owner.
Married: Noeline Elizabeth Dahdah in 1959 in Taree
Children: 3 daughters & 1 son
Date President: 1970-1977, 1978
Died: Still living as of March 2015
Location: -
Age: -
Notes: Served the longest unbroken period, seven years, as President. Board member of Oxley County Council, North Coast Regional Development Board and member of Apex and Hastings Shire Senior Citizens Home. Supporter of Youth Clubs, churches, charitable organisations and the Bonny Hills Surf Life Saving Club to which he donated a rescue boat and was made a patron of the club. He also supported industrial and rural development in the Hastings and advocated to save Wauchope District Memorial Hospital from closure. Was involved in the development of the Timbertown project. Also served as Mayor of Strathfield Council.

Postscript: John Abi-Saab passed away 6th January 2016 at Emmaus Nursing Home Port Macquarie. He left behind a wife, 4 daughters and one son.



STEINMETZ, John Joseph "Jacko"

Born: 20 July 1914
Location: Kendall N.S.W.
Occupation: Storekeeper
Married: Elaine Jessie Kelly in 1948 at Taree
Children: 1 son
Date President: 1977
Died: 21 January 1978
Location: Kendall at his home. Buried in Kendall Cemetery
Age: 63
Notes: Served on Council from 1969 to 1978 and on Oxley County Council from 1971 to 1974 and then 1976 to 1978. He was Deputy President of Hastings Shire from 1971 to 1977 and served the final three months of the triennial Local Government term to September 1977 as Shire President He declined nomination for a second term. He was elected to the Kendall Urban Committee in 1954 and was Chairman from 1958 to 1968. Served with the Australian army during WWII. President of the Camden Haven Pastoral, Agricultural & Horticultural Society (P. H. & A. Society). Had a love of horses and the land and was a keen show-goer. He later became a bookmaker and was Chairman of the Owners and Trainers Association. Was an active member of Laurieton Rotary Club and the R.S.L.



POOLE, William

Born: 6 April 1925
Location: Kendall
Occupation: Professional fisherman
Married: Marjorie Gwendoline Jones at the Laurieton Church of England. She was originally from Randwick, and her father owned the Dunbogan General Store.
Children: 2 daughters and 1 son
Date President: 1979-1980
Died: Still living as of March 2015
Location: -
Age: -
Notes: Gained his professional fishing licence at age 14 and retired at age 78. Last President of the Hastings Shire Council before amalgamation.

The Development of Local Government in the Hastings.

The Legislative Background

The first local councils in New South Wales were incorporated in 1842, with 29 District Councils established under the provisions of the Imperial Act of 1842, *An Act for the Government of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*.[1] At the same time Sydney was declared a city. From mid1843 individual councils, administered by a government-appointed warden, were established in most Police Districts.

Following the establishment of responsible government in NSW in 1856, under the *Municipalities Act, 1858*, local councils gained wider responsibilities. These included the provision of roads, bridges, ferries, wharves, cemeteries, water supply, sewerage, public hospitals, gardens and libraries. Revenue was to be obtained via rates and tolls and supplemented by loans. Voting rights were limited to ratepayers.

The *Municipalities Act, 1867* provided for the subdivision of municipalities into boroughs and districts, each with designated area and population qualifications. This Act consolidated all previous Acts and Amending Acts without altering their main features. With the *Local Government (Shires) Act, 1905* and *Local Government Extension Act, 1906* local government finally gained a compulsory, state-wide system of incorporation.

By 1908, 134 shires had been created, joining the 190 previously incorporated municipalities. Local authorities gained delegation of extensive powers in relation to works and services of a local character, as well as a greater measure of financial independence. The *Local Government Act, 1919* considerably extended these powers and functions. Minor legislative changes to the Act throughout the twentieth century have resulted in the last major review, being that of the *Local Government Act, 1993*. Local government entities now include shires, municipalities, and cities, with powers of shires and municipalities identical.

On June 7, 1887 the first meeting of the Port Macquarie Municipal Council was held following gazettal in March for a municipality to be formed. Thirteen candidates faced the electors for the six positions and James McInherney was chosen to be the first Mayor. The Hastings Shire was constituted in June 1906, and in November of that year the first shire elections were held with Patrick O'Neill becoming the first Shire President. The respective Councils served their local areas until 1980 when State government initiated amalgamations saw the establishment of the Hastings Municipal Council.

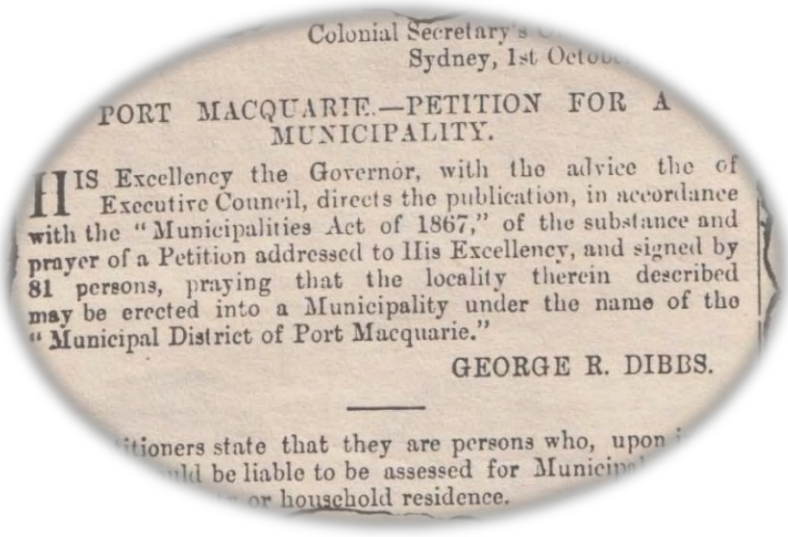
First European Settlement

In March 1821 Port Macquarie was established as a penal settlement for those convicts who had committed a secondary offence whilst in the colony. Governor Macquarie appointed Captain Francis Allman as Commandant with various military officers holding this position after him. By 1830 the area was officially opened up to free settlement with convict transportation ceasing two years later. In 1847 the military were withdrawn from Port Macquarie leaving the police in charge of local affairs until the formation of local Councils some years later.

Early History - Port Macquarie

The Port Macquarie community was one of the first to test the benefits promised by the *Municipalities Act of 1858*.[2] The Act provided for a permissive or voluntary system of incorporation where 50 householders of any urban or rural area could present a petition for incorporation. A petition in January 1859 carried 85 signatures favouring incorporation. At the time the town's population was listed as 984 residents. In April the same year a counter petition containing 120 signatures was lodged. The fears of those signing the counter petition were based on the assumption that the incorporation was premature and prejudicial to the interests of the community, that the municipal unit would never be able to raise sufficient money to meet even its administrative costs, whist the possibility of the plundering of the weak areas of the municipality by the strong had generated a very real concern.

The January 1859 petitioners stated they were "*desirous of availing themselves of the powers of municipal self-government and the endowment connect therewith under the Municipalities Act"*.[2a] They further stated that the population of the proposed municipality was 984 at the last census. Part of the wording of the petition stated *"The petitioners are desirous that the whole of the Police District of Macquarie should be comprised in one municipality , under the name of the Municipality of Macquarie or under some other appropriate name"* They asked the Governor General "*to take such steps as may appear to you necessary to proclaim the Police District of Macquarie a Municipality"*[2b]



Colonial Secretary's
Sydney, 1st Octo

PORT MACQUARIE.—PETITION FOR A MUNICIPALITY.

HIS Excellency the Governor, with the advice the of Executive Council, directs the publication, in accordance with the "Municipalities Act of 1867," of the substance and prayer of a Petition addressed to His Excellency, and signed by 81 persons, praying that the locality therein described may be erected into a Municipality under the name of the "Municipal District of Port Macquarie."

GEORGE R. DIBBS.

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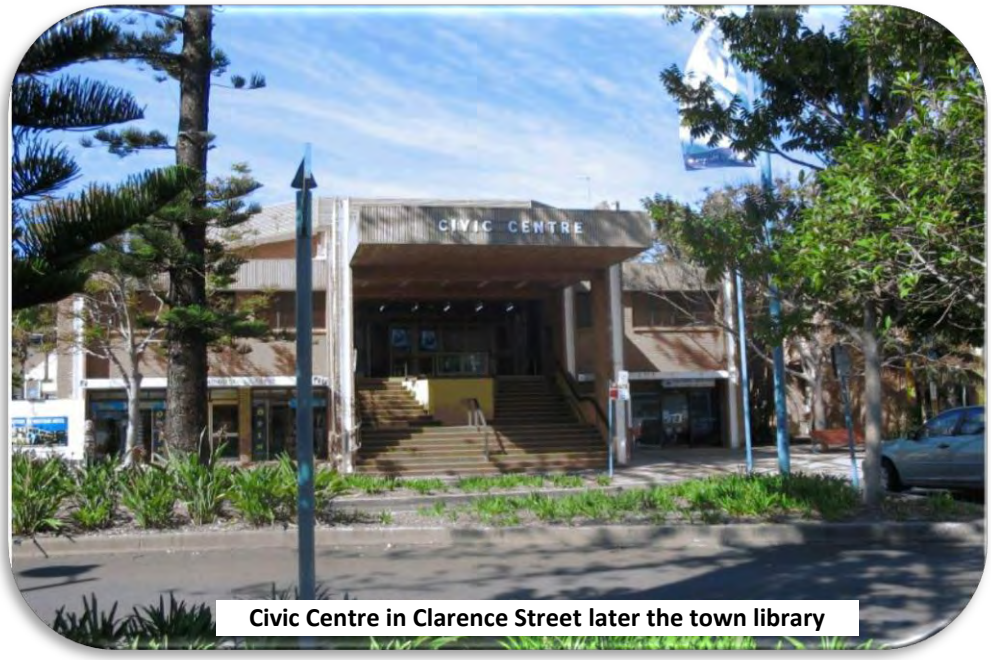
itioners state that they are persons who, upon
ld be liable to be assessed for Municip
or household residence.

The counter petition of April 1859 signed by 120 residents expressed unqualified dissent to the establishment of a Municipality. The reasons given included: that, notwithstanding the advantages of self-government in the administration of the district, the proposal was

On August 17th, 1887 Alderman Spence moved that application be made for that piece of land containing about one quarter of an acre, adjoining the land given to the School of Arts, for a building site for a municipal chambers. The following February Alderman Jennings moved that the Council accept the offer of the use of the School of Arts building. Alderman Hibbard seconded the motion.

On September 21st, 1891 the Mayor, Alderman Hayward, moved that Council erect a building for the purposes of a town hall at a cost not to exceed £250 on the Clarence Street site to enable better facilities for the carrying out of Council duties. The motion was seconded by Alderman Woodlands and carried unanimously.



Civic Centre in Clarence Street later the town library

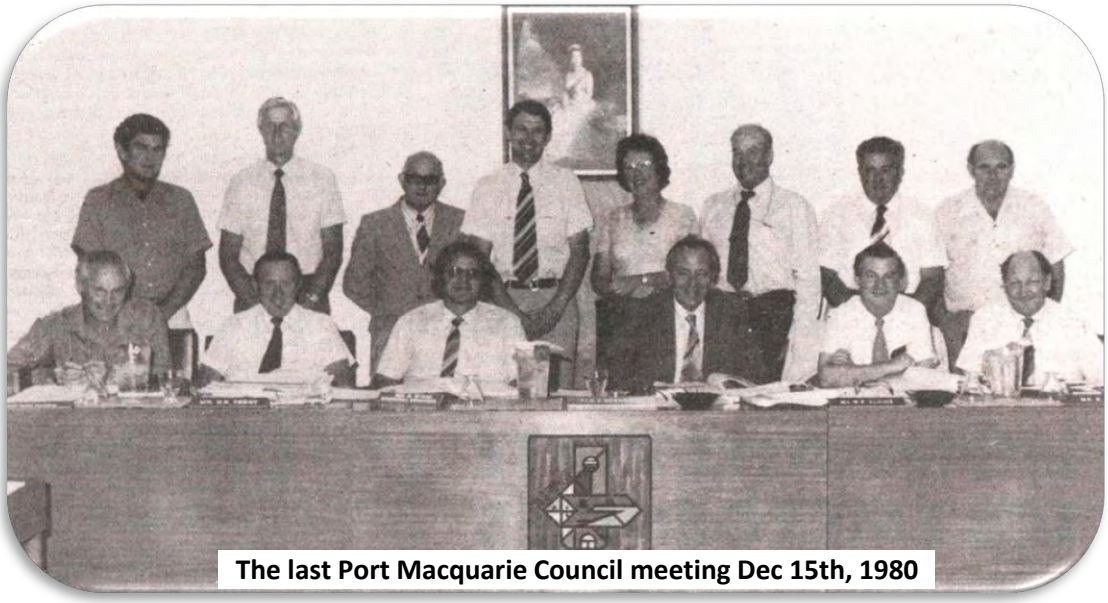
The Council Chambers was opened in 1892 and the building stood until demolition in 1972 when it became the site for the new public library. Four years earlier, in 1968, Council acquired a motel-restaurant complex in Hay Street which was converted into offices.

Over the years renovations took place at the chambers adding more offices to cater for the expanding needs of the Council. From the 1980s onwards a burgeoning population and the resultant increased demands on Council services, saw the need for a newer, more suitable administration centre to be found.

Burrawan Street Council Offices

This problem was heightened by the amalgamation of Port Macquarie Municipal Council with the Hastings Shire Council on January1st, 1981. The decision to construct a purpose built administration centre on land bounded by Lord and Burrawan Streets was seen as the best solution. The land was acquired from the Department of Lands for $374,000. While seemingly well away from the 'heart' of the town, this area quickly became a busy precinct with the Players Theatre, 'Mac' Adams Centre, Memorial swimming pool and, later, the new library in Grant Street all attracting many users to the area.

The architectural firm of Michael Davies and Associates was commissioned to design the building and construction was done by Skinner & Edwards of Batemans Bay. The total cost of the project, including construction, the car park and fit-out of the office complex was $4.52 million. The official opening of the new Council Chambers and Administration Centre took place on April 29th, 1991 and was attended by the Governor of New South Wales, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair. The new building became the third local government headquarters since the formation of the Port Macquarie Municipal Council in 1887. The then Mayor, Alderman Bob Woodlands, said at the time that Council was committed to maintaining offices in Wauchope and Laurieton.



The last Port Macquarie Council meeting Dec 15th, 1980

Back Row (left to right): Alderman J. Howard, J. Turner, C. Adams, P. King, C. Yeo, G. Brown, N. Matesich, K. Branch
Front Row (left to right): Pat Kirton (Chief Town Planner), Don Perry (Health & Building Surveyor), Steve Wood (Engineer), Mayor Jim Boardman, W. G. Alcock (Town Clerk), R. Bray (Deputy Town Clerk)

Early History - The Hastings

After the passing of the *Local Government (Shires) Act* in February 1906 temporary Councils comprising five members each were appointed by the Governor to all Shires. The Hastings Shire Council was formed on June 18th, 1906, when five temporary Councillors were appointed. The persons appointed were Thomas Jones Sr. of Comboyne, Robert Longworth of Laurieton, Patrick Joseph O'Neill of Beechwood, William Andrew Spence of Port Macquarie and Henry Warlters of Rollands Plains. Mr G .E. Bennett was appointed as temporary Shire Clerk.

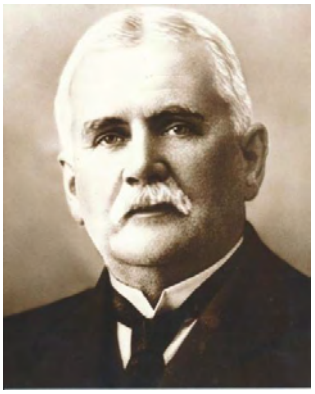
The first meeting of the temporary Council was held in the Port Macquarie Court House on June 13th ,1906. Mr W. A. Spence was elected Chairman and Mr G. F. Bennett was appointed temporary Clerk. The temporary Council resolved to hold future meetings at the Court House in Wauchope and continued to do so until the Shire Office was transferred to Grants Hall, Wauchope, on December18th, 1906.

The first Shire election was held on November 24th, 1906 with three candidates standing for two positions in each of the three Ridings. The candidates were:

Riding A - Robert McKay (80 votes), J. Downes Jnr. (65 votes), both elected, and H. Warlters (43 votes)

Riding B - P. J. O'Neill (116), J. H. Hill (115), both elected, and A. Muscio (74), John Gardner (20) and J. Healy (13)

Riding C - Robert Longworth (124), Thomas Toms (89), both elected, and A. G. Smith (84), A .E. Rose (46), T. Warlters (42), T. Jones (20), and H. E. Fage (6)



Councillor P.J. O'Neill

The final meeting of the temporary Council was held at the Court House in Wauchope on December 4th, 1906 after which the elective members of the new Shire Council met the retiring members and the temporary Council was disbanded. The new Council met immediately afterwards with the retiring Clerk, Mr Bennett, at the request of the meeting, receiving nominations for the position of president. Councillor P. J. O'Neill was elected as the first Shire President. He was re-elected President in February 1907 for the balance of the period until the first general Municipal and Shire elections were held throughout the State on February 1st, 1908.

House of Justice: The Old Courthouse building in Wauchope.

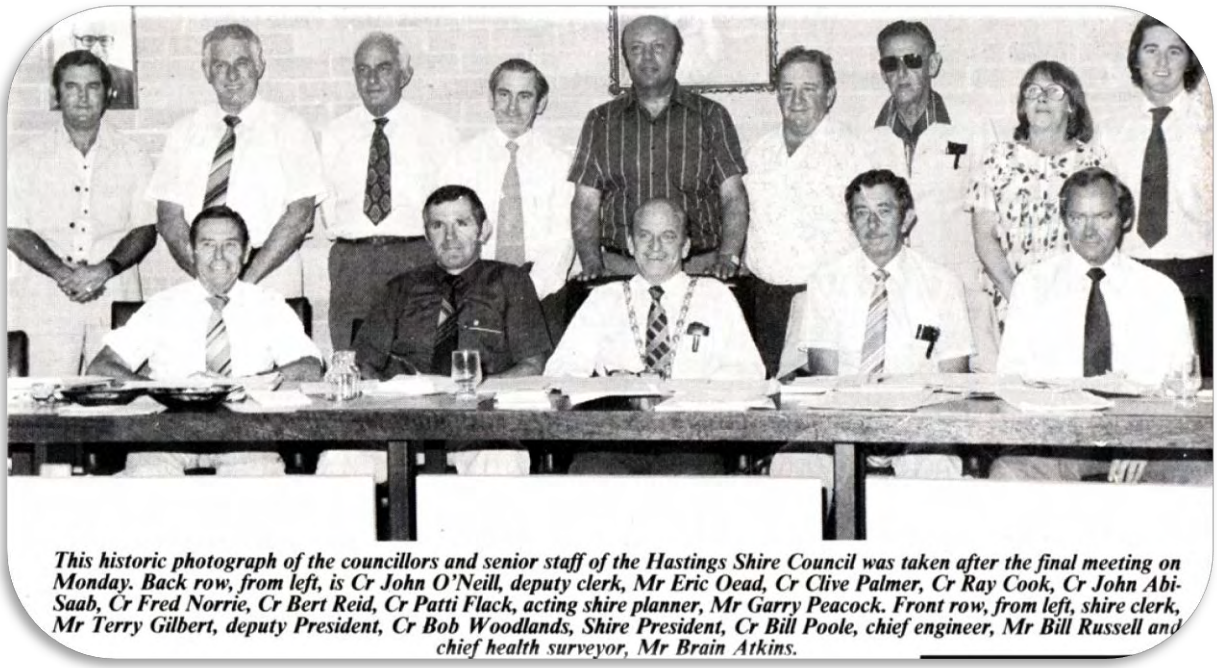
At that first meeting Messrs. Hill and Toms moved a motion to secure temporary offices for the next meeting, and also to advertise for a permanent building in Wauchope. The final tender was let to Bourne Bros. of Port Macquarie and Wauchope, and Mr. R Andrews. The contract for the new Shire Chambers was approved by Council at its meeting on August 20th, 1912. The building was designed in such a manner that should Local Government fail, the structure could be sold by Mr. Andrews as a residence.

On November 19th, 1912, the Council received a letter from the local Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. H.D. Morton, advising that a public holiday had been approved for November 26th, 1912, in order to suitably celebrate that day for the laying of the foundation stone by the President, Councillor Jacob Healey. The official opening took place on October 22nd, 1913, and the gold plated key used to open the Chambers was presented to Mrs Elizabeth Eggert, one of the oldest and most esteemed residents, who performed the official opening. [3]

Official opening of the Wauchope Shire Council Chambers 1913

Concept plan for new Civic Centre - Architects Rod & Hay of Newcastle

In 1968 the Hastings Shire Council resolved to construct a new civic centre to house its administration offices and town library to replace the now cramped and outdated buildings. Space was also to be allocated for a new baby health centre, Country Women's Association Rooms and Civil Defence headquarters. Occupation of the Administrative section was effected in August 1969.



This historic photograph of the councillors and senior staff of the Hastings Shire Council was taken after the final meeting on Monday. Back row, from left, is Cr John O'Neill, deputy clerk, Mr Eric Oead, Cr Clive Palmer, Cr Ray Cook, Cr John Abi-Saab, Cr Fred Norrie, Cr Bert Reid, Cr Patti Flack, acting shire planner, Mr Garry Peacock. Front row, from left, shire clerk, Mr Terry Gilbert, deputy President, Cr Bob Woodlands, Shire President, Cr Bill Poole, chief engineer, Mr Bill Russell and chief health surveyor, Mr Brain Atkins.

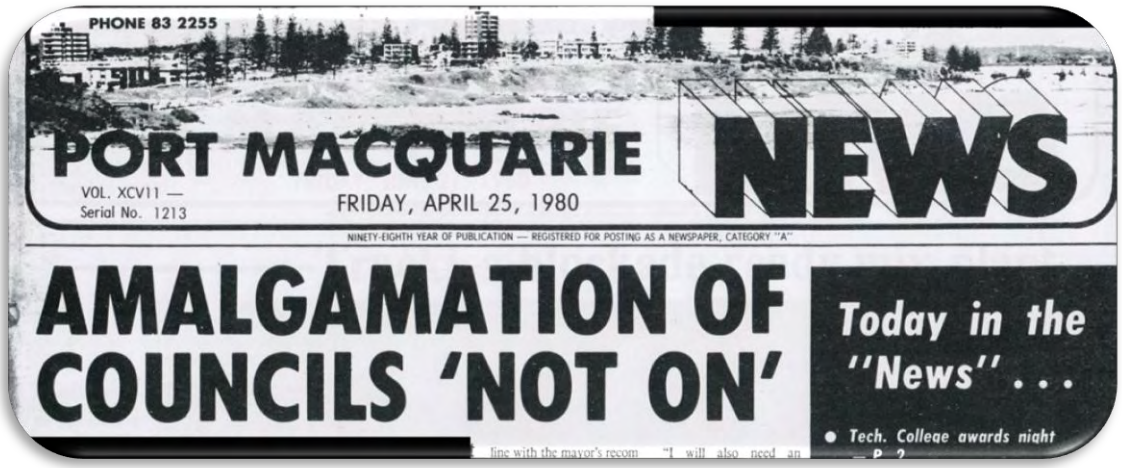
Final meeting of the Hastings Shire Council December 1980

Amalgamation

Throughout the history of Local Government in New South Wales, the question of how many municipal and shire councils should exist to efficiently and effectively deliver local administration and services to the population has been a constant and divisive issue. From a base in 1920 of 184 municipalities and 134 shires, the number of municipalities in 1972 had declined by 51.1% to 90 whilst the number of shires declined only marginally by 2.2% to 133.

The 1974 Barnett Committee Review of Local Government Areas [4] sought to create stronger economic local government entities through a substantial reduction in council numbers. The Report recommended the forced merging of the then 223 existing local government entities into 97 districts. Despite intense pressure and opposition, in April 1974 the government rejected the Barnett Report and its recommendations for compulsory amalgamation. In 1980, the Committee recommendations were the catalyst for amalgamation *by legislation*, of 38 councils into 17 entities, some of which were voluntary, after several references to the NSW Local Government Boundaries Commission. The Barnett Committee Report and its recommendations caused concern and protests across NSW, especially in rural areas.

Amongst the recommendations was one that caused great consternation in the Hastings valley: the proposed merger between the Port Macquarie Municipal Council and the Hastings Shire Council. Rumours of amalgamation circulated for the next few years after the release of the Barnett Report and on April 25th,1980 the Port Macquarie News carried the following headline:


PHONE 83 2255

PORT MACQUARIE NEWS

VOL. XCV11 — Serial No. 1213

FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1980

NINETY-EIGHTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION — REGISTERED FOR POSTING AS A NEWSPAPER, CATEGORY "A"

AMALGAMATION OF COUNCILS 'NOT ON'

Today in the "News" . . .

• Tech. College awards night

During a visit to Sydney early in 1980, the then Town Clerk of Port Macquarie Municipal Council, Mr Bill Alcock, was requested by the Mayor Alderman Jim Boardman, to seek clarification from the Minister for Local Government of the departments intentions with regard to amalgamations in the Hastings Valley. Mr Alcock was told that there were no plans - *at this stage* - to change the present local government set-up in the valley. Although the department did not dismiss the possibility of a future amalgamation of the two councils, it put paid to the supposition of a merger that year by advising the Town Clerk to proceed with normal arrangements for the triennial elections due in September. The department did say, however, that the government was currently examining new procedures for the

amalgamation of local government bodies and that future boundary changes may be effected under a different system to that which had been operating in recent years.

On June 27th 1980, only two months after proclaiming that amalgamation was not on, the Port Macquarie News announced on its front page that the amalgamation of the Port Macquarie Municipal Council and the Hastings Shire Council would take place from January 1st, 1981. The reaction from the Hastings Shire was quick and vocal.

Hastings Shire Gazette July 3, 1980

The news of the impending amalgamation was first heard by Shire Councillors on local radio on Thursday June 26th and no further news flowed down from the Department of Local Government. Shire President Councillor Bill Poole called a special meeting of members of the Council for the next morning. Forty councils in New South Wales were to be affected by the decision of the department.

The press release issued on Thursday came from the Acting Minister for Local Government Mr Pat Hills as the Minister, Mr Harry Jensen, was overseas. The decision to make the Cabinet plans public in the absence of Mr Jensen was taken by Mr Hills due to the rapidly approaching triennial Council elections, scheduled for September 20th. One of Hastings Council's concerns was the abolition of the Riding system (the Hastings Shire was divided into 3 ridings, A, B and C, with three representatives elected to each riding). Councillor Poole's worry was that without ridings the more densely populated Port Macquarie area would dominate the new Council.

Port Macquarie Municipal Council held a special meeting on Wednesday July 9th to discuss the issue and while the manner of the announcement was criticised, the amalgamation itself was considered inevitable. Mayor, Alderman Boardman, reminded the meeting that a petition compiled in 1977 found 97 per cent of municipal residents opposed amalgamation. He also noted that only Alderman Matesich was for the merger. Alderman Matesich said he was convinced the Hastings Valley would not achieve its full potential until it was controlled and functioning as a single unit.[5]. At the meeting a number of resolutions were made including to meet with the Hastings Shire Council at Wauchope on Thursday July17th to discuss the implications of the merger and how best to effect it: this to include the question of headquarters, how many representatives should make up the new Council and staffing arrangements. The meeting was rescheduled for August 7th as both parties had trouble finding a suitable date. However this meeting was again postponed to the August 14th as Hastings Shire Council was waiting for Port Macquarie Municipal Council to unequivocally express its opposition to the move.

Hastings Council chartered buses to take concerned residents to a protest meeting in Sydney but had to cancel as only 25 people registered their interest in attending, however

representatives of both Councils travelled to Sydney in a chartered aircraft. Those attending were: Alderman Boardman and Town Clerk, Mr Alcock, along with Councillor Poole. Councillor Bob Woodlands, Councillor Patti Flack, Councillor Ray Cook, Councillor Ray Palmer and Councillor John O'Neill.

Some of the representatives from the Hastings Shire and Port Macquarie arrive at the steps of Parliament House behind the Hastings Shire banner during the amalgamation protest in Sydney on Monday. Amongst the locals who marched from the Town Hall were, from right, Cr Bob Woodlands (holding banner), Cr Bill Poole, Cr John O'Neill, Mr F. A. 'Sonny" Poole and holding the other end of the banner, Miss Flack, daughter of Cr Patti Flack, who is partly obscured in the photograph. Third from left is Cr Ray Cook. Story Page 3.

Port Macquarie News Wednesday July 16, 1980

Despite the NSW governments direction to suspend the September 20 elections, the NSW Local Government Association and the NSW Shires Association urged affected Councils to proceed with plans to hold the elections as scheduled. At a Port Macquarie Municipal Council meeting on Monday August 25th Alderman Peter King successfully put forward a motion that, should the September 20th elections proceed, a referendum be held to allow residents to say *yes* or *no* to amalgamation. The NSW government put an end to this idea when it announced after a State cabinet meeting in Lithgow on September 2nd that the amalgamation legislation would be placed before parliament the following week with elections for the new amalgamated Council to be held on December 6th.

The Port Macquarie News of Friday September 5 carried the headline *'Councils Admit Defeat'*. Both the Port Macquarie Municipal Council and the Hastings Shire Council acknowledged that the fight against amalgamation had failed and that residents should prepare for the December 6th election.

After the final counts came in from the election the composition of the new Hastings Municipal Council was to be six alderman from Port Macquarie, four from the Wauchope area and one from the Camden Haven. The Port Macquarie candidates elected were

Alderman 'Mac' Adams, Mr. John Partridge, Alderman Norm Matesich, Mr. Tom Scott, Alderman John Turner and Alderman Cecily Yeo. Those elected from the Wauchope area were Councillor John Abi-Saab, Councillor Bob Woodlands, Mr. Ken Reed and Councillor Patti Flack. The Camden Haven candidate elected was Mr. Harry Yates of Laurieton. The votes were counted under the system of proportional representation.

The inaugural Hastings Municipal Council met on December 16th 1980 with Alderman Norm Matesich, a long-time proponent of amalgamation, elected Mayor and Councillor Bob Woodlands elected as Deputy Mayor.

The first Hastings Municipal Council 1980

Back Row (left to right): Tom Scott, John Abi-Saab, John Turner, C.C. 'Mac' Adams, Patti Flack, and the Mayor Alderman Norm Matesich
Front Row (left to right): Jack Partridge, Cecily Yeo, Bob Woodlands, Ken Reed, Harry Yates.

What's in a name?

Hastings Municipal Council
(1980-1993)

The name for the new amalgamated municipality, Hastings Municipal Council, was selected by the Local Government Department from a list of names submitted for consideration and decreed by an Act of Parliament in October 1980. This did not sit well with many on the Port Macquarie Municipal Council and at its meeting on the December 15 a recommendation was made to request the new Hastings Municipal Council consider the inclusion of the name Port Macquarie. This was deferred at the inaugural meeting on December 16th and again deferred when Council met for the first time in the new year. At this meeting the new Council was told by the Acting Town Clerk, Bill Alcock, that Port Macquarie Municipal Council had made representations to the Minister for Local Government, Mr Jensen, and presented him with a petition asking that he give consideration to changing the name of the combined area to City of Port Macquarie/Hastings.[6]

Mr Alcock said the Port Macquarie Council was of the view that the name "Port Macquarie" should be preserved because of its rich historical significance and because millions of dollars had been invested by the Port Macquarie Council and the State Government in the promotion of the area as the premier tourist resort of the State. The Council also did not understand why the new area had not been designated a city. In a letter tabled at the December 15th meeting of the Port Macquarie Municipal Council the Under Secretary of the Department of Local Government, Mr Pogson, said that the Minister would be prepared to favourably consider a change in name once the initial administrative adjustment period was over. The Mayor of Port Macquarie Municipal Council, Alderman Jim Boardman, said that he believed that the chances of having the name changed were slim. He further said that the name Hastings Municipality would give outsiders no idea of the existence of Port Macquarie in the area.[7]

The decision by Port Macquarie Council on Monday December 15th to refer the question to the incoming Council arose after Alderman Greg Brown reported that a petition that he had started and circulated objecting to the name of the new municipality, and calling for the inclusion of the name of Port Macquarie, and elevation to city status, had so far attracted 3,600 signatures in the Port Macquarie area.

Alderman Abi-Saab said that the Council should not move hastily on deciding on a name change and "should defer the matter further until we adjust our thinking".[8] Alderman Harry Yates said he could see the question continuing indefinitely and seconded an amendment by Alderman Jack Partridge that the name remain unchanged. Alderman 'Mac' Adams said he believed that the Council would come to see the value of the name Port Macquarie/Hastings. He noted that millions of dollars in tourist development had been spent around the name Port Macquarie. Alderman Patti Flack could not see why the decision on a name had to be postponed, while Alderman Bob Woodlands said he would like to ask a lot of questions as to

why the name should be changed. The Mayor, Alderman Norm Matesich, said he believed Alderman Abi-Saab's motion to defer the matter was right as there were more important matters to consider. He further noted that those who wanted the name Port Macquarie to be reinstated would be remain patient. Alderman Partridge's motion that the name remain unchanged was defeated and Alderman Abi-Saab's motion was supported.

Finally, at the Wauchope meeting of the Hastings Municipal Council on Monday February 11th 1981, it was determined that the name of the combined Council would remain as 'Hastings Municipal Council'. Mayor Norm Matesich told the meeting that he still believed that the name of the Council should incorporate Port Macquarie. Alderman Ken Reed said the name of Port Macquarie was an important feature of the area and that there may come a time when the name may be revived. The Council then supported a motion by Alderman John Turner that the name remain unchanged.

Moves to change the name did not end there however. A crowd of over 500 people attended a public rally in Wauchope in March 1988 and voted unanimously to seek a referendum to change the municipality to city status. Several Aldermen spoke to the crowd on whether the municipality should be renamed the City of Greater Port Macquarie. Most speakers were against the proposal with only Alderman Sandra Orvad and Alderman Peter Liddy speaking for it. Eventually a recommendation from Alderman Patti Flack was adopted which recommended that no action be taken by Hastings Council before the matter had been put to the voters at a referendum. [11]

The referendum was held in 1989 to coincide with a by-election to fill a vacancy on Council following the resignation of Alderman Hugh Veness. Two questions were put to the electors at the by-election. The first was on whether Council should push for city status and the second was on whether Council should request to "de-amalgamate" and revert to two regions. The result was *no* on both questions. The vote for city status was defeated by 13,738 to 9,145 votes, while on "de-amalgamation" the vote was much closer with a margin of only 789 votes (11,791 *no* to 11,002 *yes*). The majority of voters in the old Hastings Shire voted *yes*. The close result on the "de-amalgamation" question fuelled supporters of a split who vowed to continue their efforts to press the Minister for Local Government to reverse the merger of 1980. [12].

Hastings Council (1993-2005)

The *Local Government Act (1993)* brought major changes to the administration of local government in New South Wales. Under the new act the Mayor was given new responsibilities including general oversight of the performance of the General Manager as well as a raft of other administrative and regulatory powers. Councils' reporting and administrative functions were also modernized in line with current government practices and standards. A special Council meeting was held on the afternoon of Thursday July 1st 1993 to enable the Council to change certain aspects of its operations as required under the new Act. In a further change Aldermen of the Council were now to be called Councillors.

The other local implication of the passing of the *Local Government Act (1993)* was the change of name for the Hastings Municipal Council. The Act allowed for the words *municipal* and *shire* to be dropped, and from July 1st 1993 the Council was to be known as Hastings Municipal Council.

Chief Health & Building Surveyor Mr. Ron Le Pla single handedly applies a new name to the Council under the watchful eye of the Mayor Councillor Ray Cooper July 1993

The 1993 Act also required each Council in the State to review its name. At its meeting on Monday June 28th 1993 Council voted to write to the Governor asking for a name change to Port Macquarie Council. Opposition to this proposed change was swift from the residents and business people of the old Hastings Shire Council who claimed that it would further destroy the identity of the former Shire. The Hastings Shire Association was quoted in the Hastings Gazette of July 1st, 1993 as saying this would be ammunition for them to launch another submission for a split to the 12 year old amalgamated area. In June the Boundaries Commission released its report into possible boundary changes and dismissed a request by the Hastings Shire Association to split the Hastings Council area. This report was criticised by the Hastings Council General Manager Jon Magann for not definitively ruling out a split saying that many of Council's arguments against a split had not warranted a mention in the commission's findings.

Mayor Councillor Ray Cooper defended the name change request publicly in the press with a long letter outlining Council's views on the benefits of the name change. [11] These included giving geographical identity to the region - most people he said did not know where Hastings was but did know Port Macquarie, economic benefits would flow from greater recognition by business and government, tourism would prosper and the whole region would have its profile raised. Council submitted a 28 page report to the NSW Minister for Local Government, Mr Garry West, in support of a change of name and a request for city status. General Manager John Magann said that the report stressed the population growth trends of the area and its

regional facilities and services which set it apart from the surrounding areas. He further noted that it would be an appropriate time as it was the 175th year since the founding of the district. [12]

The question of city status and a name change were always issues that remained in the background as the amalgamated councils approached the end of their second decade as a unified body. The Acting Director General of the Department of Local Government, Mr Tim Rogers, in a letter to Council in July 1996 made clear that the Minister for Local Government, Mr Ernie Page, would not approve city status unless the matter was put to electors and a majority vote supporting the proposal was achieved. [13] Mr Rogers said that the only opportunity for Council to hold a referendum would be at a by-election or at the general election in three years time (1999). Any change of name would also be decided at the same referendum.

The wording of the referendum would have to be approved by the Minister and properly constructed cases for and against presented to voters. Council was advised by the General Manager John Magann that in framing the question Council would also need to identify a possible city name. Options would include the City of Port Macquarie, City of Hastings, or City of Port Macquarie-Hastings. Addressing Councillors at the meeting on Monday July 22nd 1996 Mr Wayne Twomey, representing the Camden Haven Chamber of Commerce, and Mr Barrie Bishton, representing Wauchope Chamber of Commerce, questioned the cost to Council of any future name change and also the benefits of city status to the Camden Haven and Wauchope districts which they described as "separate identities to Port Macquarie".[14] References were made to the 1989 referendum and the need to consider the previous wording in view of framing the wording for the next referendum.

At the Local Government Association's Coffs Harbour meeting in 1998 the Hastings Council moved a motion to have the Local Government Act changed to accommodate name changes for towns only. The Association moved to support this change and the LGA subsequently made representations to the Department of Local Government. However the Minister, Mr Ernie Page, said there would be no legislative changes made to the Act before the next State election as there would be insufficient sitting time in Parliament before the election to consider the change. One proposal considered by Council, should the city status idea be rejected, was to approach the Geographical Names Board to change the name under the *Geographical Names Act 1966*. It was pointed out by Cr Lisa Intemann that the Geographical Names Board could only process a change of name and not confer city status. Councillor Intemann asked her colleagues to "recognise the futility of the exercise" and, instead, simply adopt the name *City of Port Macquarie* for tourism and marketing purposes in the way that the Chamber of Commerce had done .[15]

No questions regarding city status or de-amalgamation were presented to voters at the September 1999 Council elections. However voters were asked to consider the questions of having a popularly elected Mayor, rather than one voted for by Councillors, and to reduce the number of Councillors from eleven to nine. Both referendum questions were passed. The name *Hastings Council* was to remain until 2005.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council (2005-)

Into the new millennium the question of what name should apply to the local government area was still being debated. The Council began a consultation process with the community on whether to add *Port Macquarie* to its name. The Greater Port Macquarie Tourism Association weighed into the discussion in April 2005 when it's members voted on a possible name change. Fifty-one people voted in support of the name *Port Macquarie Hastings Council* with just seven wanting to retain the name *Hastings Council*.[16] Fewer people supported the idea that the longer term goal should be to change the name to *Greater Port Macquarie Hastings Council*.

A random phone survey of 600 people was to a part of the consultation process with Councillor Rob Nardella telling the Chamber meeting that the name addition was all about better identifying the area. Micromex Research was engaged to carry out the community consultation which sought to measure the community's perceptions and opinions in relation to the current name, and to measure those perceptions in relation to changing that name to include *Port Macquarie*.[17]

printed locally employing locals

Port Macquarie News

Our 123rd year — Wednesday, June 1, 2005

TODAY 19° SHOWERS

Details Page 37

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Name games:

Council gives Port thumbs up

Aleyce takes on the world

Email editor.portnews@ruralpress.com

Luxury Location Lifestyle

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BROADWATER GARDENS Retirement Village

A new era of luxury awaits

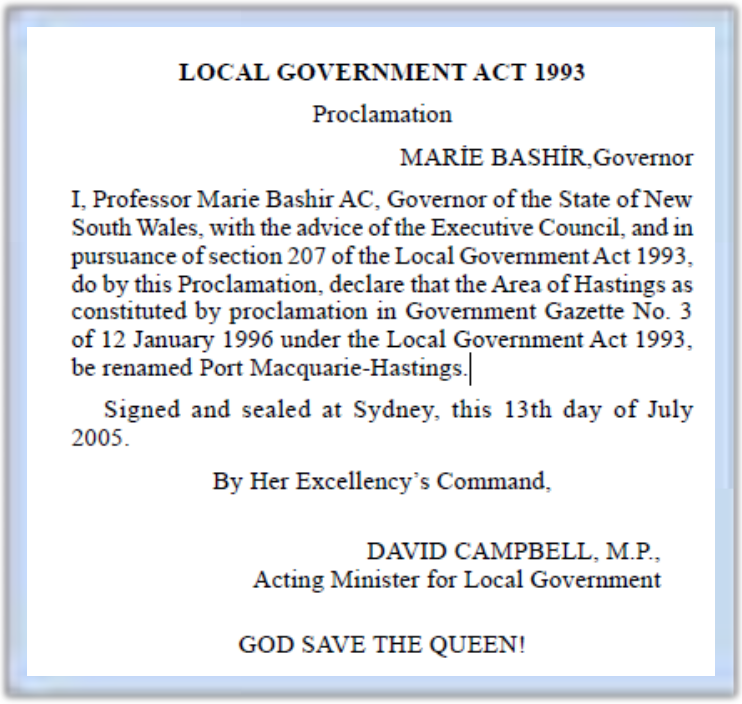
Display home open daily

The survey results, released in May 2005, found that people living in the south and to the west of Port Macquarie had different views on a name change to those residing in Port Macquarie. Some 68% of Port Macquarie people surveyed supported a name change to Port Macquarie-Hastings, while only 25% of people to the south and 16% of people to the west supported the idea. However overall, 56% of people surveyed believed *Port Macquarie-Hastings Council* would better promote and identify the region. [18] 1,000 submissions were also received by Council in response to the consultation process. Councillors Rob Nardella

and Adam Prussing were to put a motion to the Council meeting scheduled for Monday May 30th to add the words *Port Macquarie* to the Council's name so that it would become *Port Macquarie-Hastings Council*.

At that meeting Hastings Council voted to seek approval from the Minister for Local Government, Mr Tony Kelly, to add the words *Port Macquarie* to the Council name. Councillor Cameron Price expressed his opposition to the idea on the basis that a name change would redirect the focus away from the whole area onto just one part of the Hastings. He told the meeting "I acknowledge that according to the survey, more people supported the name change than opposed it. I am also aware a significant majority of people in the Camden Haven, Wauchope and hinterland opposed the name change".[19] Councillor Lisa Intemann successfully added to the recommendation the note that no further name changes could occur without a formal community vote. The Council agreed not to omit the name Hastings in everyday official use, and that stationery and signs would only be replaced using the new name after existing stocks were depleted.

Speaking in support of the proposed name change Councillor Rob Nardella said it was more of a name clarification. He said anyone searching for information on the area would require pre-knowledge of the Hastings to know where else to look i.e. to include Port Macquarie. Similarly if a business, whether tourism, education or investment, was researching Port Macquarie then it would exclude the wider Hastings area. Therefore a combined name that reflected all of the local government area would only enhance the district.[20] Councillor Nardella added that he was joined in support for the change by Mr. Ray Cooper, resident of Wauchope and a former Mayor, as well as the Wauchope Chamber of Commerce Vice-President Mr. Garrick Gabriel. Despite the Council vote a petition was circulated in Wauchope to oppose the change even though those signing considered it to be a waste of time.[21]



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993

Proclamation

MARIE BASHIR, Governor

I, Professor Marie Bashir AC, Governor of the State of New South Wales, with the advice of the Executive Council, and in pursuance of section 207 of the Local Government Act 1993, do by this Proclamation, declare that the Area of Hastings as constituted by proclamation in Government Gazette No. 3 of 12 January 1996 under the Local Government Act 1993, be renamed Port Macquarie-Hastings.

Signed and sealed at Sydney, this 13th day of July 2005.

By Her Excellency's Command,

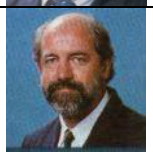
DAVID CAMPBELL, M.P.,
Acting Minister for Local Government

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

The NSW Government Gazette of Friday July 22nd, 2005 carried a proclamation from the Governor of New South Wales, Marie Bashir, declaring that the Local Government area of Hastings be renamed Port Macquarie-Hastings. It was now official.

Mayor Rob Drew said the Council had made its decision and it was a matter of going forward. Deputy Mayor Bob Sharpham welcomed the approval for the name, adding he believed the community was in favour of the move. He said that it would not affect the community's identity but the new name would eliminate confusion from outside the district.[22]

Mayors Since Amalgamation
(1980 -)

	Norm Matesich	**1981-1983**
	John Sterndale	**1983-1985**
	Bob Woodlands	**1985-1991**
	John Barrett	**1991-1992**
	Ray Cooper	**1992-1995**
	Frank Harrison	**1995-1998**
	**Wayne Richards**	**1998–2003**
	Rob Drew	**2003–2008*** ***Council was dismissed by the Minister for Local Government in 2008 and placed into administration**
	Dick Persson - Administrator **Garry Payne - Administrator** **Neil Porter - Administrator**	**Feb 2008 – Feb 2009** **Feb 2009 - April 2011** **May 2011 Sept 2012**
	Peter Besseling	**Sept 2012 -**

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