

**PATERSON PUBLIC
SCHOOL**



**CENTENARY
CELEBRATIONS**

1875 - 1978

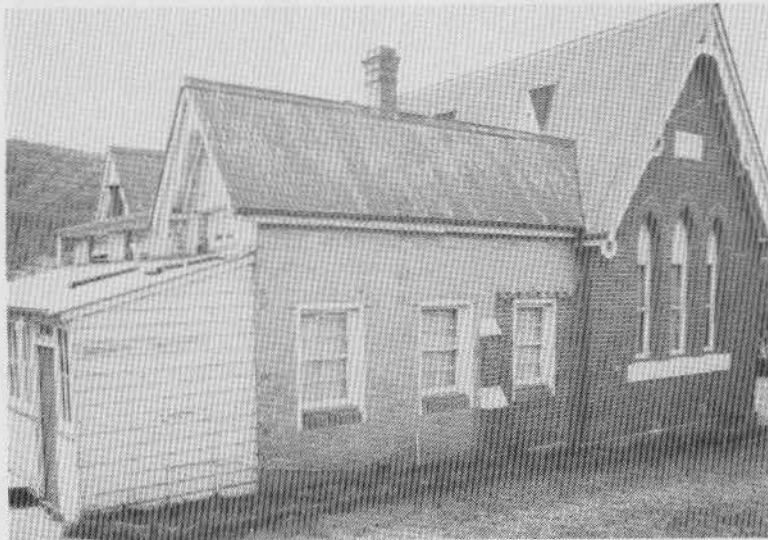
THE SCHOOL'S HISTORY

Education of children before the 1880's was more a matter of luck than compulsion. If the child's parents were wealthy enough, there would be a governess or a tutor employed, if not quite so well off, there were Church schools to attend, but for the working folk struggling to make a living and raise a family, formal education was a luxury that just could not be afforded. The Government of the day had commenced establishing a school system in 1848, but it was not until the 1870's that the Public Schools were well established, and a Bill passed in 1880 finally set up the Department of Education.

During 1865 moves were made to establish a National School at Paterson. Plans were drawn up for the building, and in 1866 a site for the school was purchased, but owing to the Board of National Education being short of funds, the plans were dropped, and nothing more was done about a school until 1874.

The closure of the Church School in 1874 led directly to the establishment of the Paterson Public School. A survey of the Educational needs of the district was made by an Inspector of the Council of Education, and he was advised by a local resident, Mr. William Corner Jnr., that there were 72 children ready to attend as soon as the school was established. A local Committee comprising Messrs. William Corner Snr., James Cann, Green Smith, William Keppie and William Corner Jnr. was elected to arrange the establishment of the school. The Oddfellows Society Hall was rented for nine shillings per week, and the application was granted on 15th February, 1875. However, delays occurred with the signing of the lease and obtaining furniture, and it was not until Monday, 19th April, 1875 that Mr. David Ritchie opened the Paterson Public School with an enrollment of 30 pupils, which by the end of the year had risen to 81 pupils.

This large number of pupils caused difficulties in teaching, and an extra teacher was needed. On 20th March, 1876, a pupil teacher, Miss Emily Sluman, was appointed and remained with the school for the next three years.



Paterson Public School as it had served the district since the additions were made in 1909 — Photo taken at the time the school was moved to its new building on Webbers Creek Road, Paterson.

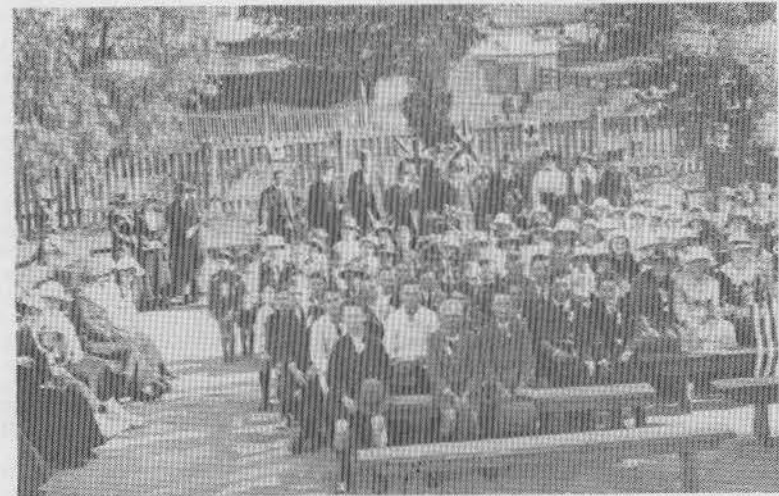
So many pupils and 2 teachers in the Hall was most inconvenient, and so the move began for the erection of a permanent school building. The choice of a suitable site was to prove difficult — seven sites were considered but some were too hilly, some had bad drainage, and in some cases the owners simply refused to sell. However, after lengthy negotiations, an elderly lady named Mrs. Broderick agreed to sell one and a half acres for £180 (one hundred and eighty pounds), and the land was finally purchased in October, 1876.

Plans for the school and the Headmasters Residence were drawn up, and tenders called for construction. Steven and William Stanbridge were awarded the contract for £1725 in June 1877. Building was slow and the work was not completed until October, 1878.

School had continued in the Oddfellows Hall, and not had an average attendance of 60 odd. Unfortunately, the first Headmaster, Mr. Ritchie, had become ill and although he had leave of absence, his health did not improve, so a new headmaster, Mr. Francis Phillips took possession of the new school and residence, and opened the school on 12th October, 1878. Improvements were made to the grounds in 1879, and in 1881 a weathershed was built.

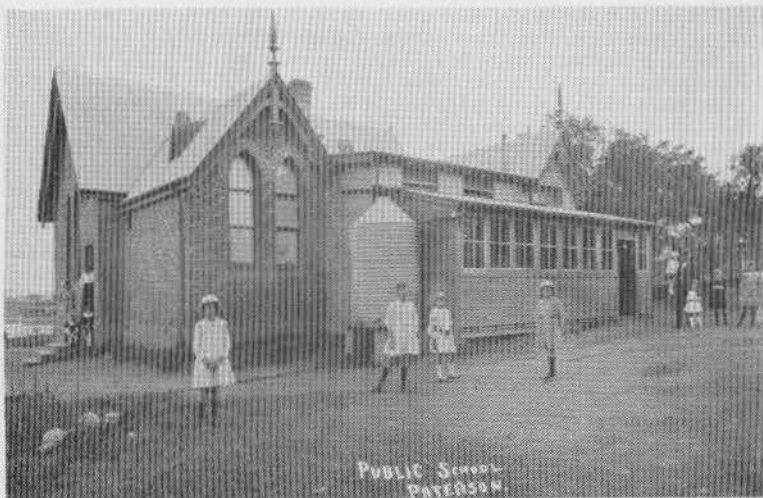
By 1880 enrolments had risen to 100 and in 1881 to 118, and residents began petitioning for additions to the building but this was rejected, as there seemed to be no prospects of population increases, however, extra desks were put into the room.

In 1881 Mr. Carl Schumacher came to the school, and stayed for 25 years. He was a hard-working and popular teacher, and was responsible for acquiring a library of 400 books. He was a devoted student of Natural History himself, and built up an exhibition on this subject that was the pride and joy of the school, and the envy of all.



Empire Day at the School in 1916.

The orderly routine of the school was disrupted in 1907 by the commencement of the Maitland-Dungog Section of the Northern Railway Line. The upheaval for the school was shattering for the new line was to cut the playground in half, and require the demolition of the Headmaster's Residence. Pupils and teachers once more returned to the Oddfellows Hall, where a portable building was erected for additional accommodation, and not far away, the site for the headmaster's new residence was purchased in 1908.



Paterson Public School, photographed soon after the additions were completed in 1909.

The headmaster at this time was a Mr. William Ross, who urged that an additional classroom was needed, along with major renovations to the school. There were now 92 children at the school and this fact, together with the changes in the type of education being given to the children, demanded more space. Mr. Ross could also foresee the problems which would arise in trying to cope with the children of the Railway workers in the town, so he requested another teacher. Eventually, Miss Gladys Broadfoot was appointed to the school. After long deliberation the Department finally decided to add the extra classroom. Mr. Partridge-Wall of Maitland was given the contract, and the new room was officially opened and occupied in July, 1909.

School Routine was disrupted several times during the building of the Railway Line, and the building had to be vacated while blasting was carried on. A portable building was erected on the recently purchased site, and from January to July 1909, school was conducted in this building and the Oddfellows Hall. After the school returned to the normal building, the shed remained and became the Manual Training Classroom. In March, 1910 the new residence for the headmaster was completed and Mr. Ross was able to move into his new home.

Once the railway line was completed school life went along quietly, and by late 1910, enrollments had declined again. By the 1920's repairs and renovations again became necessary, and the work was eventually completed in 1929.

An active Parents and Citizens Association had been formed and in 1932, they generously paid half of the cost of having the electricity installed in the headmaster's residence. At this time they also had a tennis court constructed in the school grounds.

A new site for a school was acquired in 1950, but twenty years were to elapse before the modern buildings that we know today were erected and occupied.

During its century of history the School has seen many changes in methods of education, many changes in student-teacher relationships, but its one vital role has not changed . . . that of turning out young men and women to take their place in the life of the nation, and in the process to make happy and meaningful lives for themselves.



Kim Hallinan



Tony Soper

SCHOOL CAPTAINS — 1978

MESSAGE FROM THE HON. M. A. MORRIS, M.P., MEMBER FOR MAITLAND

It is a wonderful privilege to be asked to contribute to the Centenary publication of the Paterson Public School and to thank you all for your friendship and kindness to me over the years.

Students at the Paterson School are indeed fortunate to attend one of the most historic, and also very distinguished schools in New South Wales.

Centenary celebrations are times of mixed feelings for those participating. This occasion will mean something different to each and every one of you. The sharing of memories is one of life's simplest, yet greatest treasures.

Your objectives at this fine school should be far wider than just to educate yourself in the technical sense — learning the three r's so to speak — but to equip yourself to become a fruitful member of society.

The present School at Paterson provides many contrasts with the original school built so long ago. The school today, is a source of justifiable pride to its teachers, its pupils — past and present — and to the parents who support it so well.

The Paterson school on the occasion of its centenary stands as a fine school by any standards, and it is my hope that those who gather to celebrate, will share a feeling of satisfaction in the progress which this school has made.

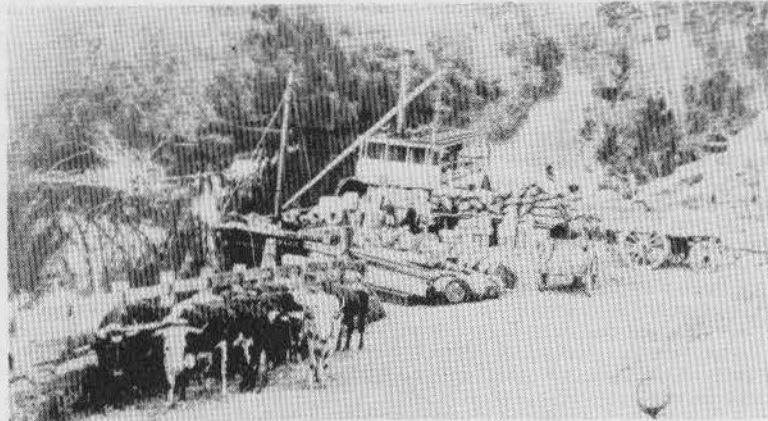
I wish to extend my appreciation and congratulations to the present staff, to the parents and friends, and to the wonderful pupils of this school.

PATERSON . . . YESTERDAY AND TODAY

The quiet little township that we know today is not at all like the busy place that Paterson was in the middle of last century. Paterson then was the centre of arrivals and departures of coaches for points north, the destination point for the river boats travelling up from Newcastle and Sydney, and the export and import centre for the district produce and everyday needs. This activity lasted into the early years of the 20th century but the coming of the age of rail transport and the motor vehicle spelt the end of Paterson's part in the busy world. Goods could travel faster and more cheaply by rail, and passengers were delivered to their destinations much more quickly, so Paterson's importance in the economy of the district was quickly diminished. While the rest of the world faces the rush and bustle of city and suburban life, Paterson is left to dream of a bygone era . . . of recently-arrived English gentlemen and their ladies who came to settle on land granted to them as recompense for time spent at the Battle of Waterloo and other Wars . . . of the convicts life with a not-so-gentle master when they were sent to work in opening up these newly granted acres . . . of the arrival of the stage coaches bringing passengers and mail and news of the outside world . . . of the excitement of the river boat's arrival . . . yes, there is much to dream about. Paterson today has an old-world charm that attracts many visitors throughout the year. Many come to browse through the old cemetery and perhaps look for the gravestone of an early ancestor, some to look at the fine old homes surviving from the past and some just to enjoy the quietness and peace of the rural surroundings.

Paterson's history commenced in 1801 when Lieut. William Paterson explored the Hunter River upstream from Newcastle. He followed the second arm of the river to what was named Paterson's Plains, and is now known as the Morpeth-Hinton area. The whole area was rich with Cedar trees, and the river was called Cedar Arm, but this was eventually changed to Paterson River. Convicts were soon sent to the area in groups and timber camps were set up, and in a short time large amounts of this much sought-after timber were being sent out of the district.

Between 1812 and 1818 eight farms were settled on the Paterson River, six by trusted convicts and 2 by free men. In 1818 Governor Macquarie visited these farms and was so impressed with the richness of the farmlands, that he allotted further farms to both convicts and free men, but it was not until 1821 that the first land grants were made. Others quickly followed, and the district progressed rapidly. The Cedar Camp became the village of Paterson, and on 20th March, 1885 it was proclaimed a township.



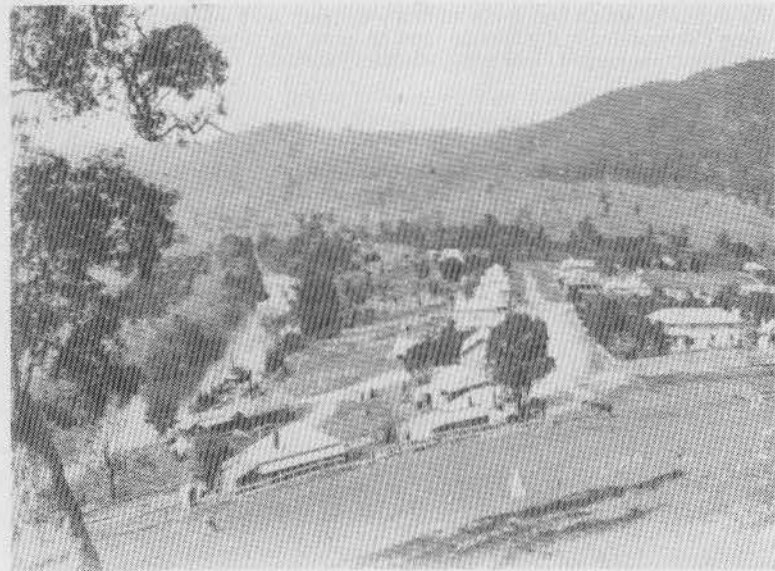
The Marie loading at Paterson Wharf.

The owners of the land grants built fine new homes on their properties, many of them replicas of the homes they had left behind in England. Some bore the names of the owners birthplace or family country seat, but some were named as reminders of the campaigns fought in the Peninsular Wars. Some were in a new colonial style of their own, and most of them still stand today, bringing a breath of past history to the landscape.

The rich river flats grew a great variety of crops, with wheat being one of the main products. Many mills were built along the rivers so much of the wheat was sent from the district as flour. Tobacco was another prosperous crop and a factory for processing the leaf was established at Paterson and Gresford. Corn, maize and other cereal crops flourished, as did oranges and grapes. Fine table wines were made from the grapes and found a ready market in the towns. Timber remained one of the exports from the district, and this in turn supported a timber mill and a ship building yard. Blacksmith shops were numerous, and there was also a coach repair shop.

The river remained the only means of communication with the outside world for many years, and Paterson developed into a busy river port. From here all the produce from Paterson and the country north was despatched to Newcastle and Sydney, and all supplies for these districts were unloaded on the riverside wharf. Passengers travelled from Newcastle and Sydney by the river ships, and continued their journeys north by coach, therefore, inns and hotels flourished in Paterson, and records show that six hotels provided bed and board for the travelling public.

Paterson was the centre for the administration of Justice, and the police officers stationed at the Police Barracks had a large and difficult area to cover by horseback. Prior to 1857 a wooden building served to house the Police Barracks and also try the lawbreakers, but the building of the Court House as we know it today was commenced then, and was completed a few years later. At first a visiting Judge came to administer justice, but later local Magistrates were appointed to hear most cases would be heard in the Maitland Courts, and now the Police Station is staffed by only one officer.



Paterson, about 1904.

Fortunately, the historic value of the court house building has been recognised by the National Trust, and it, along with all the other old buildings in the area have been noted in that Trust's lists of buildings to be preserved.

In 1973 the Paterson Preservation Society was formed and the Court House Building has now become the headquarters of that Society. A Museum has been opened, and members continue to work to build an historical record of Paterson with photographs, documents, and other records, as well as the items used in the everyday life of our pioneers.

St. Anne's Presbyterian Church was built by convict labour in 1842 and is still in use today, little changed from the time of its construction. St. Paul's Church of England building was commenced in 1839 when Paterson became a Parish, and was consecrated in 1845. The graveyard in the Church grounds hold the remains of many of the districts early pioneers, as well as telling the story of the terrible **infant mortality of these days.**

Over the years the produce of the district has changed as circumstances changed. Towards the end of last century, the dreaded rust disease killed out the wheat fields, but then at the turn of the century, the dairying industry was born and quickly gained popularity. For three-quarters of the present century our cultivated river flats have provided rich, creamy milk for the town and city dweller. The sleek beef cattle have grown fat on the natural hillside pastures building a reputation as one of the best beef areas of the state. The demand for the well-known Paterson River oranges has declined as newer varieties have made their appearance, but a few small orchards still supply the markets with these old favourites. The economy of the district is still changing and families are turning their land to other ventures to cope with modern day demands.

We hope you enjoy your visit to the Paterson **Centenary of Education.** Perhaps it is your first visit to the town, or a return after many years absence, whichever it is, we hope you will appreciate the peace and quietness of our small village, and the beauty of the surrounding district. Perhaps you would like to go down to Tucker Park by the river, and have a barbecue lunch under the shady green boughs of spring leaves, and listen for a ghostly ship's bell and a sailors shanty, or walk up Marquis Street, and view Paterson from the hillside, and imagine the coaches and horse-drawn vehicles from another age down there in the street.



Junior Red Cross members forming up for parade down King Street on Red Cross Day during First World War, 1914-18.

A TRIBUTE TO THE P. & C. ASSOCIATION

No record of the School History would be complete without paying tribute to the support given over the years by the P. & C. which catered for the "fun days" of school life . . . the 'basket' lunch for the Empire Day Picnic, the delicious suppers for the Prize-giving evenings and the Christmas parties, and on the more serious side, the provision of books for the school library and other items to help with education and study. As far back as 1932 we read of the P. & C. working to provide a tennis court for the school. Today, this role is carried out just as faithfully, with the provision of major items such as video-tape recorder, projectors and screen for films, tape recorders etc., enabling the children to have full use of the advantages offered in this age of technology.

The children's welfare is considered even further with the provision of a refrigerator, freezer, stove etc., so that the food sold to them on 'tuck shop day' is guaranteed fresh, tasty and just right for summer or winter conditions.

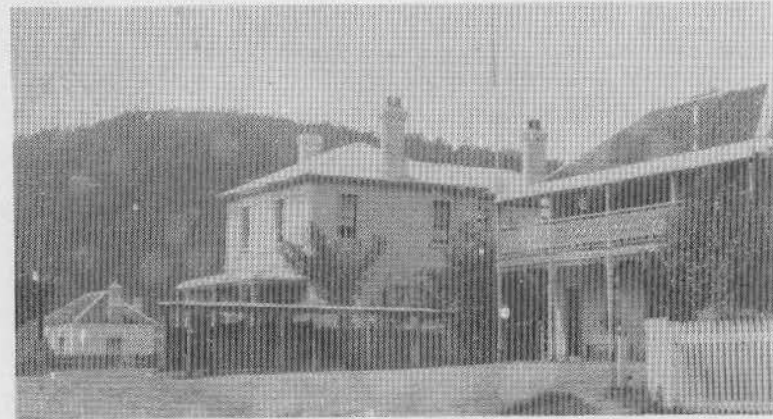
Over the years the parents and citizens of the district have given long and faithful service to the school, and today's generation of parents are equally as interested in their children's welfare, working to provide books and the many other items available to make use of modern methods of education.

OLD SCHOOL MEMORIES

Looking at the modern buildings which house school activities today, our minds must go back to the days before the old school was built in 1877.

In the very young days of the settlement of Paterson, there was neither Church nor School. However, in 1839 Paterson became a Parish, and the Rev. John Jennings Smith was appointed to look after the spiritual needs of the district. The Government had already allotted sites for the building of churches in the little township, but the Church of England authorities considered the allotted site so unsuitable, that land was purchased from Lieut. Frederick Bedwell, and it was here that St. Paul's Church was built. (Incidentally, the site originally allotted by the Government, and considered so unsuitable by the Church Authorities, is the spot where the headmaster's residence now stands). The land purchased from Lieut. Bedwell extended to the corner on which the C.B.C. Bank now stands, but in those early days Rev. Jennings Smith, had a small stone building erected, and started a school which provided for the education of some 60 pupils. Little remains to record the progress of this little school. However, a resident of Paterson, Mrs. Marie Foster has the diary of her Great Grandfather, Mr. George Brown, and he records his arrival in Paterson to take over the school in 1863. He remained here until 1847 when lack of pupils forced the closing of the school. The school building remained until 1892 When the Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney purchased the block of ground, and had the building demolished when work commenced on the building of the Bank as we know it today. The money obtained by the sale of the School went towards the building of the Parish Hall, completed in 1899.

It is recorded that another school 'for the sons of gentlemen' was available in Paterson in these early days, but the exact location of the school is in dispute. The school was run by Rev. Dr. Stirton, a well-known Presbyterian Minister of that time.



CENTRE — Paterson Post and Telegraph Office. RIGHT — Paterson Hotel.
LEFT — Paterson Church School, around 1870.

One of the best-known names around the Paterson district is that of the Tucker family, and that of John Tucker perhaps best of all. It was through John Tucker's generosity that Paterson gained one of its greatest assets . . . Tucker Park. Mr. Tucker was a life-long resident of the town, and loved Paterson dearly. John Diogades Tucker was born in 1852 and died in 1939, and during his 87 years of life he wrote much of life in Paterson. Whether he ever aspired to write more than newspaper articles, we don't know, but he left behind many articles that he had contributed to the Maitland Mercury. In these articles he recalled his boyhood in the district, and as he recalls these memories he tells us of his school days in the 1860's. Mr. Tucker writes of the journey he took each morning to the old school which stood at Tillimby. It was built of lath and plaster, it had originally been built to serve as a church, and was apparently used by several denominations, becoming known as the Ranters Church. Then for a short time it was used as a school. Mr. Tucker pinpoints its location as being not far from "Valentia", the present day home of Mr. J. A. Smith, but of course in those days, "Valentia" belonged to a former British Naval officer, Lieut. Frederick Bedwell. The house itself is not described, but Mr. Tucker has vivid memories of the beautiful gardens which surrounded the house. All kinds of English trees and flowering shrubs grew there and many of the flowers from the Bedwell's English garden flourished there in the Spring, and always the perfume of roses drifted on the early morning air, as young John Tucker made his way to school. A feature of the garden was a thick hedge of Bengal roses growing around the entire garden, always flowering and perfuming the air. A small area of the natural forest lining the river bank had been saved from the axe, and here a few great cedar trees still flourished, together with rosewood, and the gum trees, and these together with other natural vegetation made a beautiful private park for the Bedwell family.

At a later date Mr. Tucker attended a small school in Prince Street, Paterson. This building still stands today, next door to the Commercial Hotel, and named "Noumea" Mr. Tucker writes of the days he sat in the classroom, looking out into the street, where a very large gum tree grew almost in the middle of the street. One can only guess at the fascination this tree held for young boys and girls, for it was the home of a family of native bears (koalas as we know them) Mr. Tucker mentions that across the street from the school room, he could see an invalid lady who sat out in her chair each day. This lady was a Mrs. Clark, and she owned much of the land on which the township of Paterson was erected.

At one period a school for girls was conducted in Paterson, and this school, we believe, was held in the little stone cottage on the hill looking out over Paterson, just off the top of Prince Street.

It was not until the 1860's that moves were made by the townspeople to establish a National School in Paterson, and it was to be quite a few years before the children were to have the privilege of free education.



George Brown, Headmaster of Church School which was on present day site of C.B.C. Bank.

LIST OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS IN CHARGE

	Appointed
David Ritchie	2.4.1875
William Masters (relieving July 1877)	
Francis Phillips	5.7.1878
Carl Schumacher	12.5.1881
William Ross	8.1906
William Church	2.9.1912
John Vivian	19.2.1918
A. J. Dransfield	13.4.1921
John Mallett	17.12.1925
Charles O'Connor	18.10.1927
Alison Fairley	10.10.1944
William Clifton	6.12.1944
Lawrence Smith	2.2.1954
Ronald Hestelow	9.9.1958
Ian Wilson	30.1.1968
George Owen	2.2.1971
William Stewart	29.1.1974
R. R. Cook	31.1.1978

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Centenary Committee extends grateful thanks to the Department of Education for their help in supplying the historical record of the school's progress . . . to those who have supplied photographs and information . . . and to those donors listed hereunder. Their generosity has helped make this book possible.

Thank you all.

O.P.S.M., High Street, Maitland.
 Farmer's Hotel Vacy.
 John Sissian, Gresford.
 Hunter Valley Co-op Dairy Co. Ltd., Hexham.
 Marie's Flowers, Maitland.
 Steggle's Pty. Ltd., Beresfield.
 Latter Bros. Baker, Maitland.
 Stockers Sales and Service Pty. Ltd., Maitland.
 Hunter Valley Auctioneers, Weston.
 Alcan Australia Ltd., Kurri Kurri.
 S. & W. Miller Pty. Ltd., Maitland.
 Port Stephens Shire Council, Raymond Terrace.
 Dungog Shire Council, Dungog.
 Johnson's Pty. Ltd., Shoe Store, Maitland.
 Warren Barr, Gresford.
 Robnor Trading Co., (Mr. Juicy) Islington.
 Hunter Valley County Council, Maitland.
 J. Kirkwood & Co. Pty. Ltd., Maitland.
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 Courthouse Hotel, Paterson.
 H. H. Crouch, Garage, Paterson.
 Rural Bank, Maitland.
 Dr. W. Cook, Paterson.
 Dr. R. Sheather, Gresford.
 Greater Newcastle Permanent Building Society, Maitland.
 Maitland Mutual Building Society, Maitland.
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 McDonald Bros., Booksellers, Maitland.
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 Lorn Pharmacy, Lorn.
 Tubman's Pharmacy, Maitland.
 Hunter Valley Coaches, Raymond Terrace.
 Gresford Bowling Club, Gresford.

The Centenary Booklet was compiled by Mrs. Pauline Clements using information and photographs supplied by various interested persons too numerous to record and the Paterson Preservation Society. Please accept our sincere thanks.