

**UPPER HUNTER MUSEUM of RURAL LIFE Inc
(& Aberdeen Local Studies Group)**

P.O. Box 140. Aberdeen, NSW, 2336.

**NEWSLETTER
March, 2017**

NSW Senior's Week Festival

Last Tuesday the UHMRL, with the financial assistance of the Upper Hunter Shire Council, helped local seniors celebrate the NSW Senior's Week Festival.

A very successful morning tea was held and our team of volunteers did themselves with an abundance of home cooking.

The morning tea was followed with the showing of the Australian comedy, "Sunstruck" starring Harry Secombe and an Australian cast including John Mellion and Dawn Lake.

Set in outback NSW, (actually just outside Parkes), the characters gave us all a good laugh and we were pleased to receive such positive feedback from all those who attended.

Thank you to all who supported the function.

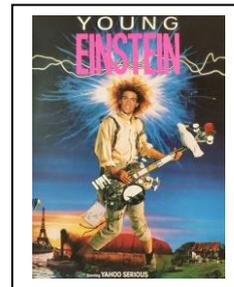
The annual membership of the UHMRL (\$25) and Associated Membership (\$5) are now due for 2017.

Next meeting UHMRL - **Wednesday, 29th March at 4.30 pm**
at the Aberdeen Library

New member & volunteers always welcome.
(The position of Treasurer is yet to be filled.)

The next scanning afternoon for the
Aberdeen Local Study Group
Friday, 31st March
2pm - 4.30pm at the Aberdeen Library.

Golden Oldies Luncheon & Movie
Tuesday, 11th April, 2017
" YOUNG EINSTEIN"



Comedy - DVD, Colour, 91 min, 1988, [PG]

Bookings: Daphne 65 438 356

The Local Study Group will participate in the **ABERDEEN QUILT AFFAIR** on Sunday, 30th April, by bringing together a display of vintage sewing & embroidery items.

Aberdeen Quilt Affair
Sunday 30th April 2017
10am - 3pm

Venues include: St Mark's Church & Hall - Aberdeen, Aberdeen RSL, Aberdeen Library & Rose Garden

- Markets in the Rose Garden
- Quilt sales • Fabric • Plants
- Cards • Baby Wear • Gifts

BBQ and refreshments by Men's Shed, morning tea provided by St Mark's Church Ladies at the Church Hall and Caffe Mobilita will be available

Entry: \$5.00 per person which allows entry to all venues

All enquiries:
T 02 6543 7770 E: libertylibb@hotmail.com
Facebook: Liberty Rose

Does anyone has any interesting items that they are willing to loan for the display ?
All items will be securely locked in the new glass display cabinet in the front room of the Library.

Upper Hunter Museum of Rural Life Inc. raising funds to establish a Museum and Cultural Centre in Aberdeen.
www.aberdeenmuseum.org.au Email: uhmrl@skymesh.com.au

Proudly supported by



ABERDEEN'S FITZGERALD BRIDGE

From the earliest days of the colony the only way along the North Road was to cross at the ford over the Hunter River near the boundary of the Segenhoe Estate.

Surveyor Rusden's map from 1838 shows that the ford was approximately where the bridge stands today. A gentle slope took the rider down to the rivers edge and then a short journey upstream to exit on the other side where the bank was not as steep.

The river ford was often in flood and considered to be a very dangerous crossing. Travellers were regularly isolated on separate sides of the river and teamsters were often forced to camp for days while awaiting the ford to become passable.

The current was frequently strong and a number of persons attempting to use the ford were drowned.

To ensure the regular passage of mail across the river a boat was moored in a haven constructed in the bank to ferry the mail across.

On March 14th, 1874, a public meeting was held at Aberdeen to form a committee to petition the Government to build a bridge.

Eventually two wooden low-level bridges were constructed over the Hunter River at Aberdeen in 1877 and 1887. Unfortunately misfortune befell both bridges and they were here for only a short time as they were unable to withstand the forces of the regular flood waters.

A second petition was prepared, asking this time for a high level bridge be erected but nothing happened.

Mr. Robert FitzGerald, Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Upper Hunter took up the matter and organised a new and more detailed petition which was signed by 800 residents.

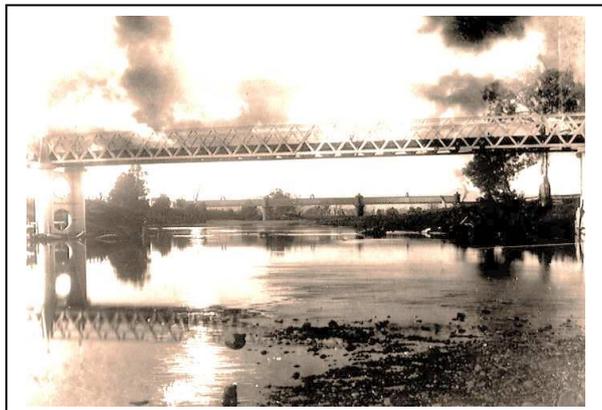
On September 15th, 1887, he presented the petition to the Minister in Charge of Roads and Bridges and a promise was made for the erection of a high-level bridge at Aberdeen.

Progress on the new bridge was slow but eventually on July 26th, 1893, the first high-level bridge over the Hunter River at Aberdeen was officially opened and named "The FitzGerald Bridge".

In the late 1920's the wooden planking on the bridge was replaced with concrete and lighting was installed on the bridge in the early 1930's.

After 125 years, the original metal lattice truss bridge still stands today. Although it is not in vehicular use, the original FitzGerald Bridge has heritage significance and has been retained for pedestrians and cyclists.

The following images are from the
Aberdeen Local Studies Group Collection.



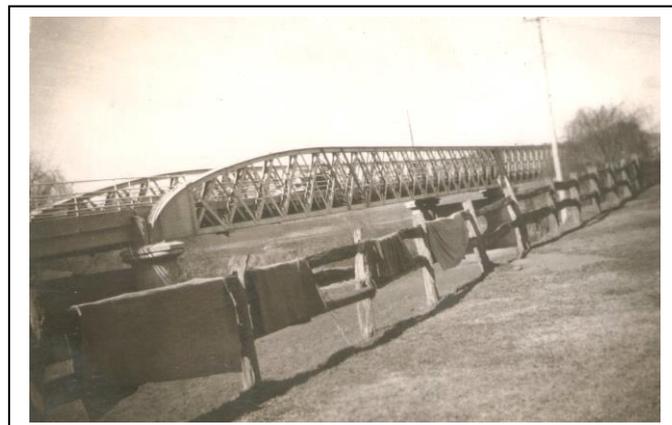
Probably the first photograph of the new bridge
taken by Joseph Check in 1893.



Early Post Card of the Aberdeen Bridge.



Post Card – circa 1915
Traffic Bridge over the Hunter River, Aberdeen .



Photograph from Kevin Taylor – 1948
Notice the blankets hanging over the fence.
Was someone sleeping under the bridge at night ?