

## Durham Hall – Marsden Park and Schofields



### Durham Hall, Marsden Park c1906-1918

The location of Durham Hall has proved challenging to pinpoint. The hall, believed to have been built around 1906, was originally probably located near the churches which stood on the corners of Richmond Road and Grange Avenue at Marsden Park. The *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* (1 February 1896) refers to Mr W Wiggins of Grange Farm and on 5 March 1898, the newspaper refers to Mr W Wiggins of Blacktown Road. The Grange Farm subdivision ran either side along what is now known as Grange Avenue, from the Blacktown-Richmond Road to Carnarvon Road.

The *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* mentions a meeting at Wiggins' Hall on 17 November 1906 when three candidates running for positions on the first Blacktown Shire Council, H Saundercock (C Riding) and J J Pye and R H Lalor (A Riding) addressed a resident's meeting.

From 1907, the hall is generally referred to as Durham Hall.

The list of events below, which highlights the range of activities held at the hall, was compiled from the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* (see source list for article details).

Date	Event
23 February 1907	Mr Wiggins assaulted by Byron Cheadle during a ball held at the hall
25 May 1907	W Wiggins, described as the proprietor of the amusement hall at Marsden Park, states he intends for the dances held at the hall to be conducted in a proper manner.
1 Jun 1907	All night social held in the hall on Empire night (one also held on the previous Saturday night).
10 October 1908	Grand concert and tea meeting held at the hall to raise funds for a proposed new church. £8 5/- raised.
5 June 1909	Empire Day celebrations held at the hall.
1 July 1909	Durham Hall licensed under the "Theatres and Public Halls Act, 1908."

31 July 1909	Vocal and instrumental entertainment held to aid Reverend R H Pitt-Owen's new church (St John's Church of England). Tickets 1 shilling, children sixpence.
1 July 1909	Licensed
5 March 1910	Annual meeting of the Marsden Park Progress Association. Elected committee: Mr F A Hayward (President); Mr F W Taylor (Secretary) and Mr F Pigg (Treasurer)
16 April 1910	Special meeting of the Marsden Park Progress Association and Plumpton Progress Association to discussed proposed alterations to the Blacktown Shire riding boundaries. Elected committee: Mr F A Hayward (President); Mr F W Taylor (Vice President), and Mr C Grenshaw (Treasurer and assistant Secretary).
25 February 1911	Annual meeting of the Marsden Park Progress Association.
1 July 1911	Coronation picnic held at Durham Hall and grounds. The event marked the coronation of British King George V, which took place on 22 June 1911.
16 November 1911	Most successful dance held by Mr W Wiggins in Durham Hall, Marsden Park with almost 200 attending.
16 March 1912	A benefit social in aid of Mr A Binks held in Durham Hall.
10 May 1913	Mr Brinsley Hall MLA to address a meeting at Durham Hall on Friday 16 May. Marsden Park Sunday School picnic held on 26 April at the hall.
2 April 1915	Send off held on Saturday 20 March for Herbert James Rimmington, who was leaving for the front.
11 June 1915	Concert to raise funds for the newly formed Tennis Club held in the hall on 22 May.
15 October 1915	Send off held on Friday 1 October for F Carter, E Matthews, W M Morris and F Wiggins. Morris, Matthews and Wiggins were presented with a gold medal, while Carter chose to have a wrist watch.
30 June 1916	St John's Church of England Sabbath (Sunday) School annual picnic held at Durham Hall on 17 June. Entertainment included singing and Mr George G Kiss' cinematograph.
25 August 1916	Concert and dance in Durham Hall to raise funds for the Returned Soldiers' Fund. Mr George Kiss screened several pictures.
19 October 1917	A sale of work and entertainment in connection with St John's Church of England to be held in Durham Hall on 27 October.
30 November 1917	A welcome home held for Private Rex Matthews and Baker on 17 November. Private Matthews presented with a silver mounted pocket wallet and Private Baker with a silver cigarette case.
7 December 1917	A Dance held in the Durham Hall by members of the local tennis club on 27 October.

15 March 1918	Report that the building known as Durham Hall, at Marsden Park, is to be removed to Schofields.
24 May 1918	Mr W Wiggins has consented to move his hall from Marsden Park to Schofield for the use of the Schofield Progress Association.
21 June 1918	Mr W Wiggins, with members of the Schofield Progress Association, is re-erecting the old Durham Hall in St Albans Road.
20 September 1918	Durham Hall, Schofield licensed under the "Theatres and Public Halls Act, 1908."
31 January 1919	Concert held to raise funds for the Red Cross.
18 July 1919	Social promoted by Mrs W Wiggins in aid of the Riverstone and district permanent soldiers' memorial held. Over £7 raised.
8 August 1919	Social to be held on 9 August to raise funds for planting trees in St Albans Road, Schofields.
1919	Temporary school opened in Durham Hall. Around this time the hall was also used for St Peter's Church of England services.
12 September 1919	Welcome home for Private Alderton.
5 March 1920	Mr Bruce Walker, MLA, to speak at Durham Hall, 12 March at 4 pm.
5 May 1922	Farewell held at Durham Hall, for teacher Mr T Fletcher who has been transferred to Vineyard.
31 August 1923	21 <sup>st</sup> birthday celebrations for held for Albert Posselt.
26 October 1923	Durham Hall to be released from its tenancy as the local public school, and residents can look forward to the resumption of the successful socials so efficiently conducted by its popular proprietor, Mr W Wiggins.
30 November 1923	Schofield Cricket Club held a fundraising bazaar.
25 September 1929	Mr W Wiggins gives free use of Durham Hall for Church of England services
23 September 1929	Schofields School Bazaar held at Durham Hall to purchase a piano and sporting equipment raises £ 70.
1929	Hall and contents purchased by Church of England
30 March 1934	Social held at hell and prize giving ceremony for the Boomerang Vigoro Club.
1970	Destroyed by fire.

Thank you to Rosemary Phillis, Riverstone and District Historical Society and Les Tod OAM for their assistance in researching the history of Durham Hall.

The history of Durham Hall is incomplete. If you have any information on the hall (at either location) or any images, please contact [localhistory@blacktown.nsw.gov.au](mailto:localhistory@blacktown.nsw.gov.au)

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