



Double gate security vehicle entrance

Maitland Gaol

There was no escape!

The Gaol officially opened and took its first prisoners in December 1848.

Built of sandstone from Morpeth and Farley, it is considered to be the most intact country gaol in New South Wales with many of the original structures including cell blocks, toilets, awnings and artworks still in the original condition.

Maitland Gaol is the longest continuously operating correctional institution in Australia. After holding some of Australia's most hardened criminals, it closed on 29 January 1998 and any remaining inmates were transferred to other prisons. The closure of the complex was announced in 1996 as part of an upgrade to the state's prison system. It closed because security did not



Guards protective equipment



Weapons created by prisoners





Ground floor of Cell Block



Cell Block first floor, note security mesh over space





Solitary Cell



Iron Bed

meet community expectations, conditions were considered unsuitable and the cost of operating the antiquated facility was excessive.

Segregation, isolation and restriction to a bread and water diet have often been used in the prison system to discipline inmates.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, harsh forms of punishment including flogging with the cat-o-nine tails, isolation and gagging were utilised. Throughout the site's history troublesome inmates could be shanghaied and sent to Grafton which was renowned for its brutal regimen.

In the modern era, removal of privileges such as visits, buy ups, television, radios and art supplies were deemed effective ways of controlling the prison population.

Women were housed in Maitland Gaol on a permanent basis from its opening year

(1848) up until 1951, but during this time many women had to bring their children with them or had children whilst being housed in gaol.

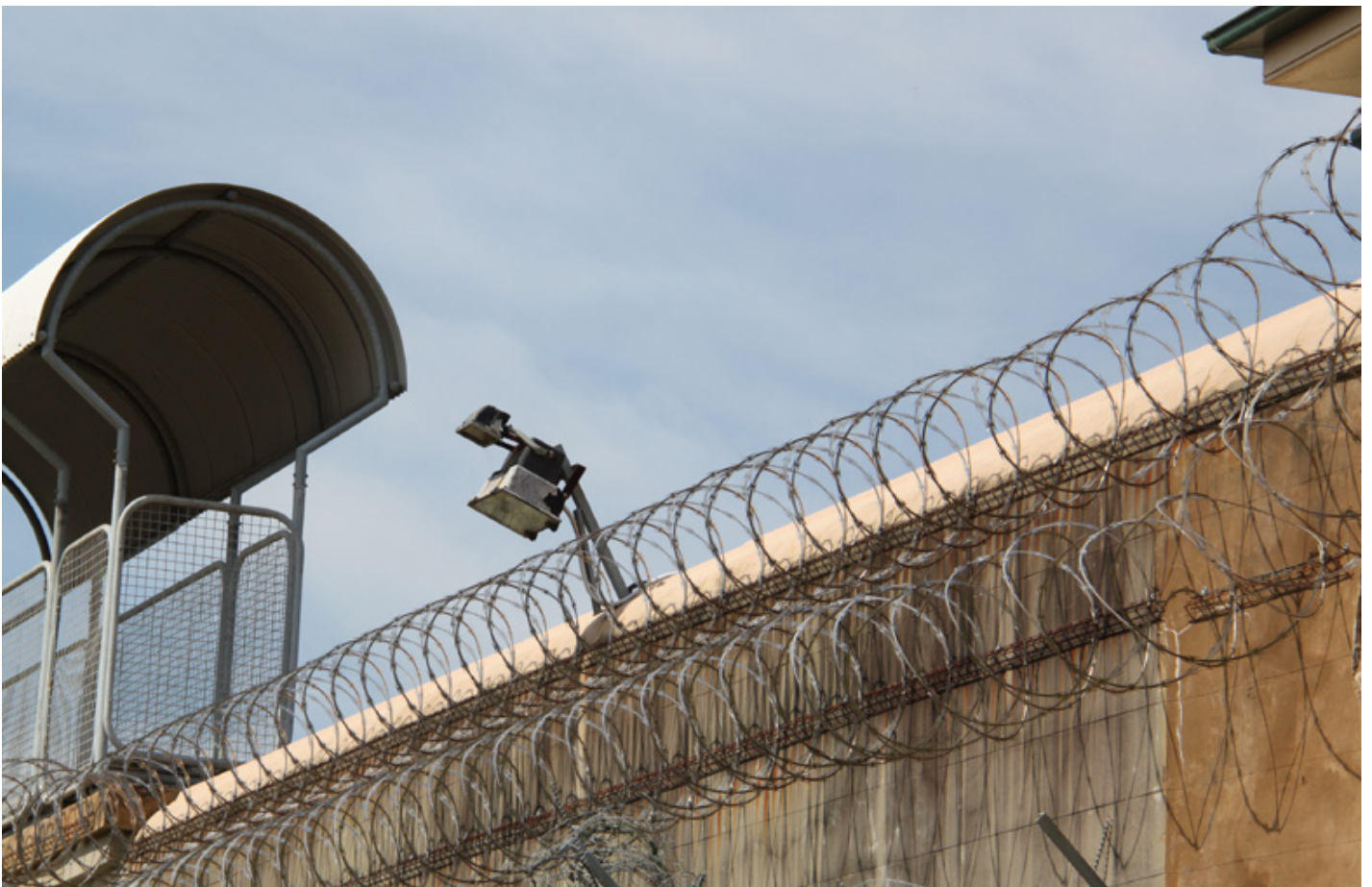
Conditions in the early years of the Gaol's operation were appalling, for both men and women, but especially for women and children. They were kept on the top landing of A Wing for many years to keep them separate from the male population. Overcrowding and unsanitary and unsafe conditions meant that sadly some children died inside the Gaol walls. Eventually women would be moved to C Wing after its construction; they also had their own day rooms and a female only hospital.

Immerse yourself in the history of Maitland Gaol and discover stories about all sorts of heroes and villains, discovering stories of all sorts of heroes and villains, from the English Pentonville Model of the original cell blocks





Parade ground, Gaol outer wall and Cell Block



Main outerwall, Guard walk, razor wire, Security TV





Exercise yard and open Toilet Block

to the modern Maximum Security 5 Wing and the many ancillary buildings scattered throughout the site.

Expert guides are regularly undertaking and updating research to give you the most informed tour of this 170 year old institution.

Parramatta & District Historical Society visited Maitland Gaol during a coach tour of the Hunter Valley.

Have a look at Maitland Gaol website www.maitlandgaol.com.au for more information about tours and events.



Maitland Gaol

Maitland Gaol
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