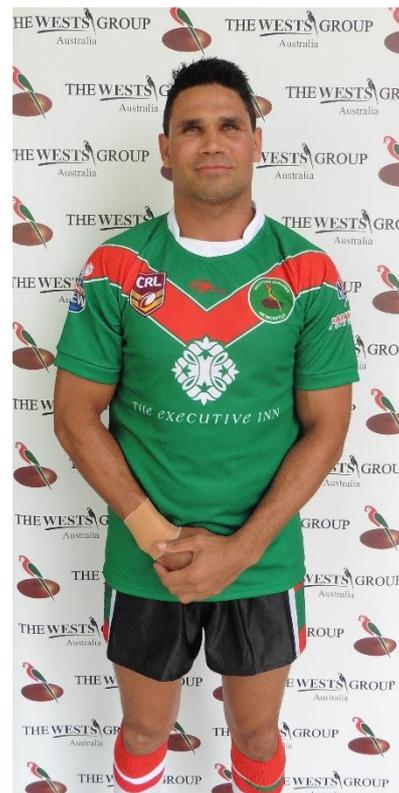




In 2016 former West First Grade player, and Life Member, Steve Storrie (pictured) was appointed First Grade Coach, Gary Thorogood continued on as Reserve Grade Coach, Brett Pennell came from Under 19's to be Open Grade Coach, and Dean Maher was appointed as Under 19 Coach... however, during the season Russell Petrie took over from Dean Maher. When the dust settled on 2016...we saw nearly a mirror image of 2015. First Grade were beaten by South in the Final, Reserve Grade were just beaten by Lakes in the Grand Final, Minor premiers Open Grade were beaten by Lakes in the Final, and Under 19's (unfortunately) did not win a game. With an ounce or two of luck West could have recorded a couple of Grand Final wins, but it was not to be. New players to the club included former West Juniors Jacob Ling (Ipswich Jets), Brad Tighe (pictured) and Chad Redman (both from the Gold Coast Titans). Tim Holman (Bathurst) and Sam Keenan (South



Newcastle). Sam is the son of Guy Keenan who came to West from Young, and was a prop in the winning 1984 First Grade side. The "Most Outstanding Players" in each grade were Jake Finn (First Grade), Luke Single (Reserve Grade), Jack Yates (Open Grade) and James Wilson (Under 19's). Life Membership was obtained by Clint Davies (over 120 grade games), and Merv Hunter (10 years service as a Club Official). This was certainly a "bitter sweet" moment as Merv passed away mid season following a short illness. In appreciation of his efforts Merv was also awarded the "Clubman of the Year" award at Presentation Night. So what is in store in 2017? At the time of writing things will be different, as there will be 4 games each week – First Grade, Reserve Grade, Under 19's and...and... Womens Tag. So, as usual, West look forward to another good season in 2017.

AWord/West/Website/A4 Folder – From the Beginning/ 2016

Round	Opponent	First	Reserves	Opens	Under 19's
1	Central (h)	Won 8 - 4	Won 34 - 0	20 all draw	Lost 17 - 16
2	Macquarie (h)	Won 24 - 18	Won 32 - 6	Won 22 - 16	Lost 28 - 18
3	Maitland (a)	Won 22 - 12	Lost 14 - 6	Lost 30 - 12	Lost 36 - 12
4	South (h)	Won 32 - 4	Won 36 - 0	Won 44 - 12	Lost 22 - 10
5	Kurri (a)	Won 36 - 32	Lost 22 - 14	Won 26 - 18	Lost 32 - 22
6	Cessnock (a)	Lost 34 - 24	Won 16 - 6	Lost 44 - 18	Lost 38 - 6
7	Lakes (h)	Lost 24 - 16	Lost 10 - 8	Won 26 - 16	Lost 64 - 4
8	Central (a)	Won 28 - 18	Won 30 - 0	Won 30 - 12	Lost 42 - 6
9	Macquarie (a)	Lost 34 - 6	Won 34 - 26	12 all draw	Lost 38 - 10
10	South (a)	Lost 30 - 20	Won 44 - 18	Won 14 - 12	Lost 36 - 10
11	Maitland (h)	Won 42 - 16	Won 20 - 10	Won 30 - 8	Lost 40 - 0
12	South (a)	16 all draw	Lost 16 - 12	Lost 32 - 4	Lost 30 - 14
13	Cessnock (h)	Won 30 - 16	Won 26 - 6	Won 28 - 18	Lost 78 - 0
14	Kurri (h)	Won 52 - 12	Won 44 - 12	Won 36 - 20	Lost 30 - 12
15	Cessnock (h)	Won 12 - 8	Won 48 - 0	Won 40 - 4	Lost 30 - 16
16	Lakes (a)	Won 32 - 30	Lost 32 - 12	Lost 22 - 6	Forfeited
Qual Semi	South	Lost 23 - 16	Won 38 - 20		
Minor Semi	Lakes	Won 26 - 18			
Major Semi	Lakes		Won 18 - 14 ET		
	Kurri			Lost 14 - 12	
Final	South	Lost 42 - 22			
	Lakes			Lost 16 - 14	
GRAND FINAL	Lakes		Lost 22 - 20		

Luke Poolman and Clint Davies



At the time of writing nothing defines the West club more than Luke Poolman and Clint Davies.

As at October 2016, Luke has played 182 grade games West, and Clint 131 grade games for West.

Clint is now 27, and he has played for West since just before his 5th birthday. He played Under 7's for 3 years, and has played for West ever since. He started as a half back, but over the years has moved around a bit and now plays in the centres or in the second row. By playing his 120th game this year Clint earned Life Membership of the football club.

Luke is already a Life Member of the football club. He currently sits 2nd on the list of 'Most Games in Reserve Grade' and 'Most Tries in Reserve Grade'. Luke started playing with West in Under 10's and we now find him as a "rampaging" winger.

Both players have won numerous lower grade Grand Finals with West, although both would be disappointed to have lost the 2015 and 2016 Reserve Grade Grand Finals to Lakes.

One thousand seven hundred and fifty one players have played for West since 1951. It is not possible to find any other 2 players who have played over 300 games between them....with only 2 (to Luke) being in First Grade.

What great clubmen - what great blokes - what great mates- simply the best - Luke Poolman and Clint Davies

Harker Oval is ... there for all to view...

... and, one day recently ... quite out of the “blue”...

... along came Kate ... and along came Sue...



We all love Harker Oval. Harker Oval is the most picturesque village rugby league ground in Newcastle.....and it does have a history....and the latest chapter was added today...yep today 8 July 2016.

We have known that Dr Alfred Edward Harker served the community of Lambton for 46 years, and for much of this time he was the medical officer for the Western Suburbs Rosellas. In this role he tended injured players on game day, and during the week, on a voluntary basis. He was

very much part of the Rosellas culture and history until his death in 1954. Later in 1954, in honour of Dr Harker, New Lambton Oval was renamed the “Alfred Harker Memorial Ground” (Harker Oval to us)***and that was the story.....***and then ***along came Kate....and along came Sue.....*** Today the granddaughters of Dr Harker made a first visit to Harker Oval in over 60 years...and updated the “Harker” story for us.



So here goes... Dr Harker and his wife Ada (nee Talbot), had two children....Kathleen and Frank. The family lived in 61 Howe St Lambton, with the house doubling as the Doctors Surgery. (The house looks magnificent now, so one can only imagine how impressive it would have been in the 1940’s).



Kathleen married Bill Gunther, who was a dermatologist in Newcastle. Indeed, the 1946 team photo opposite shows Dr Harker to the right of team captain, Col Maxwell, and his son-in-law, Dr Bill Gunther, to the left of the team captain. (Kathleen died in 1972)

Son Frank Harker, returned from the 2nd World War, and married Nancy Jagger, who came from South Australia. After marrying, Frank and Nancy shifted to Victor Harbour in South Australia where both Kate and Sue were born. After 5 years in Victor Harbour, Frank, his wife, and his 2 young

girls accepted a “Soldiers Settlement” parcel of land on Kangaroo Island. Frank was happy enough...the 2 young girls were happy enough...but it was a “bit too quiet” for Nancy. So Frank, Nancy and the 2 young girls, shifted to the property “Wahroonga” near Kalangadoo, which is near Mount Gambier. Everyone was happy, and the 2 young girls loved their time at “Wahroonga”. (Frank died in 1989)

Now the 2 “young” girls, Dr Harker’s granddaughters, made the trip to Harker Oval to relive a bit of family history. Kate Harris (nee Harker) came from Adelaide, and Sue Isakhan (nee Harker) came from Melbourne. Although the Harker name has



gone from this line of the family, the Harker gene lives on with 3 great grandchildren (two to Sue, and one to Kate) ... and 5 great great grandchildren (4 boys to Sue and a girl to Kate) of Alfred and Ada Harker.

The photos are of Sue Isakhan (left) and Kate Harris (right) on their visit to Harker Oval. Thanks ladies for making the time to relive some of your past, and thanks for making the time to update some of our history.

Below is a picture of the Alfred Harker Memorial Outer Ground entrance as it was in 1954...and there are articles on Frank Harker and Dr Alfred Harker overleaf, including a 1954 Obituary to Dr Harker.



And then ...

..... along came Jann

Jann Rose (nee Simpson), lived, as a young girl, at 17 Cromwell Street, New Lambton. This house is on the corner of Cromwell Street and Victoria Street. When her parents, Alan and Fanny Simpson inherited the property from Fanny's parents, they knocked down the house, and built a new house, with the aid of local builder Bill Cowan. When the property was purchased in 1953, in the back yard, facing Victoria Street, was a wooden "shop" ...known to Jann as the "surgery". This "surgery" was rented to ... yep you guessed it... Dr Alfred Harker. The plaque that Jann holds was displayed on the front of the "surgery". After Dr Harker's death, the "surgery" had many tenants – it was a storeroom for Bali artifacts, it was a bootmakers shop, it was occupied for many years by "Festo Hydraulics", it then was a Barbers shop and then local podiatrist, Cathy Weiss, occupied the "surgery". Alan Simpson died in 1982, but Fanny Simpson lived in the house well into her 90's before passing away in 2015. As the deceased estate was prepared for sale, Jann found the old plaque and decided to hand it into West Leagues Club...thinking it would add meaning to "Harker Oval".



By coincidence this was the very same weekend that the granddaughters of Dr Harker were in Newcastle, and although Sue had returned to



Melbourne, the plaque was proudly shown to Kate on the Monday. Dr Harker's family generously offered for us to retain the plaque. The plaque has been restored, and is currently "owned" by the New Lambton Ovals Board who are liaising with Newcastle Council as to where the plaque can be affixed to the "Harker Memorial" at Harker Oval. To some degree this "fitted in" with what Dr Harker's granddaughters knew. When they were very young they could just remember the house at

61 Howe Street, Lambton...but on subsequent visits to Newcastle they remember Dr Alfred and Ada Harker living at 60 Curzon Road New Lambton (pictured below). So the assumption is made that Dr Harker shifted from his house and surgery in Howe Street, Lambton....to a house in Curzon Road...and a surgery in Victoria Street New Lambton (in the grounds of the house at 17 Cromwell Street, New Lambton.)

And so that is the story...and it is logical, makes sense, and has been confirmed one way or another by Kate, Sue or Jann.

However, I just want to "toss into the air" the first couple of lines from the first of two "Dr Harker" obituaries on the next page ...

.. *"The sad news of the passing of Dr A E Harker of "Yothanee", 29 Howe Street Lambton, was received with profound regret...."*

This contradicts the article above in that it suggests that, prior to his death, Dr Harker did not live at 60 Curzon Road, New Lambton, he lived at 29 Howe Street, Lambton....yep 29 not 61.



Just shows You can't believe everything written in the paper..... (or can you?)

Doctor A. E. Harker

The sad news of the passing of Doctor A. E. Harker of "Yothanee," 29 Howe Street, Lambton, was received with profound regret by a large circle of friends and benefactors. None more sincerely regretted his demise than the Sisters of Mercy of the Mater Hospital where he was an Honorary member and also a Consultant Surgeon for nearly thirty-three years. Even as a young Doctor, he was most interested in the Hospital and gave generously of his precious time to Lecturing and Examining the Student Nurses.

Among his fellow Doctors he was looked up to as the soul of honour and a skilful Surgeon and Physician. No less was he revered than by the unfortunate and aged of the district for his generous spirit of charity. All through the Second War period

he visited them and did much to improve the conditions of the unemployed. Even after his health had somewhat declined, he continued to visit the Hospital.



Doctor was particularly fond of children and on his rounds in their wards an unmistakable air of merriment always prevailed while Doctor Harker was about.

The Sisters unite their expression of sympathy with a large circle of friends to Mrs. Harker, his daughter and son in the great loss they have sustained.



Obituary Dr Alfred Harker A Family Doctor for 46 Years

Leo Butler Newcastle Morning Herald 11 December 1954

When young Dr Harker rode out on his rounds at Lambton 46 years ago, there were many a solemn head shaken at his youth, his 26 summers accentuated by the then fashionable straw hat.

The anxiety of young married women was not relieved at all when the dignified, somewhat taciturn, young man appeared at their door swinging a fashionable cane.

His brilliant scholastic career at Melbourne University meant, perhaps, little to them and to the miners of the large area in which he worked – but they were impressed when the floods came.

They were impressed when Dr Harker rode his horse, in the darkness of a stormy night, through flood waters three and four feet deep, to attend a confinement at a distant place. And, in the days of home confinements, these trips on horseback through the dark bush night to some distant home, were not unusual. But Dr Harker had to be there. They were his patients.

Since those early days when he brought medical aid on horseback to a scattered population of miners, Dr Harker became a legend in the minds of the people of what amounts to most of the western half of Newcastle.

After his death at the age of 69 earlier this year, the people whom he tendered for 46 hard working years and many of whom he brought into the world (he did 200 confinements a year in his heyday) decided to erect a memorial to him. This will take the form of a clock and clock tower in Alfred Harker Memorial Park, formerly, New Lambton Sports Ground.

Wherever you go in the area bounded by Wallsend, Sandgate, Waratah, Lambton, Jesmond and new Lambton Dr Harker is remembered with respect and affection. Yet he was not a chatterbox, a pleasant idler not remarkable for conversations on the social arts which make men's company sought. But he was a Family Doctor in the old tradition. He was a man of the highest principles, very dignified yet full of kindness, particularly to children and the old folks, a man with an immense capacity for work, a doctor who puts his patients before everything else – money, recreation or rest.

Some indication of an unusual position he occupied among what may be called his people over 46 years is given in a story from a football match.

At this match at New Lambton, a player was hurt and those in charge called for a doctor in the crowd. The very excited crowd had been roaring advice and abuse to both sides during this incident but it happened that Dr Harker was in the crowd. He responded to the call and, says Mr R Ford (an organizer of the Harker memorial) "as soon as he started over the field, the crowd fell into silence. It was an example of the great respect in which everyone held him".

Dr Harker had one of the biggest practices in Newcastle in his time, but he was remarkable for the speed with which he handled patients.

"There'd be a crowd waiting for him – but they would go in one door, and out the other. In fact, if Dr Harker asked a patient to sit down, that patient really got the wind up. He'd know he really was sick" This speedy turnover of patients every day was not evidence of slap-dash methods but was due to his uncanny diagnostic skill. "He was a keen observer of signs and symptoms" says one Newcastle Surgeon, "and he could often get a good idea of observing a patient's gait what was wrong with him, of course, he had seen so many cases, he took great delight in watching the surgical process of all the resident staff, who were privileged to be allotted to his beds, and he exercised a profound influence over surgical dexterity".

Dr Harker was renowned as a teacher in Newcastle, having a gift for lucidity. One of his maxims was: "watch the patient, not the clock".

To young surgeons, he would say, “use your head wisely – your hands more wisely”.

Great words of praise from him for a young surgeon: “he can use his hands”.

Forty-six years is a long time especially for a Doctor to practice in one place, and at that time Dr Harker, as a personality, as a loyal (rather than entertaining) friend, as a helper and Doctor for all, became a sort of beloved patriarch of Lambton.

What sort of man was he? Physically he was of medium height, and very strongly built, he loved to be outdoors on his rounds; he had no care for what he called “office work”.

He was dignified, he carried an old world politeness always, extending it to the rich and poor alike. He loved his profession. He lived for his patients.

Many are the stories in Lambton, New Lambton, Wallsend and Jesmond, of Doctor Harker’s disdain for fees.

“What about the bill Doctor?” the relatives of some sick man would ask. “We’ll talk about the bill when he gets better”, Doctor Harker would hedge. Often that bill was never “talked about”.

Behind his back, he was called “Teddy”, but few would be familiar with him to his face. This was not because he was distant. The fact was he was too busy for small talk, and was naturally reserved man unless the topic of conversation was one that influenced him.

He was a great student all his days, and it was common practice for him to sit up studying learned medical journals till midnight to prepare himself for surgery on the following day. The day started at 6 am whatever time he went to bed.

Parties, recreation generally, held small importance for “Teddy” for a sick call came. He just left.

The early days of his practice saw him change from horse to the horse and sulky. Later a small run-about yellow car proclaimed the passage of the Family Doctor through the streets of his area.

Those were the days, too, of the horse-ambulance and often Dr Harker would take a sick person to hospital in his own car, returning later to complete his rounds.

He was an obstetrician of repute, he cared for ear, nose and throat, for eyes, he even extracted teeth. He did everything.

And, then, he cared not only for the body, but for the soul.

One instance of this lies in a story of how he brought peace to a feuding family. The husband had fallen out with his wife (his second wife) because, like the stepmothers in the stories, he loved his own daughter better than his step-daughter. He went to Dr Harker for advice, and the doctor, seeing the problems, unobtrusively brought about a better situation which reunited the family permanently.

When he was 50, the doctor took a rare holiday. It was not exactly a restful one, but the sort the doctor liked. He took a post-graduate course at Melbourne University.

He was always the same – honourable, energetic, kind, yet a little remote, utterly devoted to his people.

“There’s no doubt about it”, said a well-known Newcastle surgeon, “but that Teddy worked himself to death. With Teddy, the patient always came first”.

And that’s why they are building a memorial to him today.

These photos of Dr Alfred and Ada Harker are taken in the front yard of their house at 61 Howe Street Lambton



FLEW BOMBERS IN BURMA

Lambton Airman Home

Flying Officer F. K. Harker, son of Dr. and Mrs. A. E. Harker, of Lambton, returned home yesterday after 2½ years' active service abroad.

Winner of the Distinguished Flying Cross, Flying Officer Harker has been serving with an R.A.F. Liberator Squadron in India. He made many night raids on enemy targets in Burma.

On one occasion he was over Rangoon, about 900 miles from his base, when one of the four engines of the Liberator cut out. The machine dropped its bomb load on a subsidiary target as it made for home. It crossed the Bay of Bengal on three engines. The machine reached its base but, according to Flying Officer Harker, the fun started properly when it was going in to

land.

The flaps and landing wheels were down, he said, when another engine cut out. That caused the machine to swing away from the flare path into the darkness out of control. Rapidly losing height, the Liberator swung in a circle. Those on board



FLYING OFFICER HARKER.

could do nothing about it. The machine had dropped to 150 feet of the ground when the pilot got control again, made a circuit of the aerodrome and landed safely. Flying Officer Harker's work on that occasion won for him a "Command Mention."

He has been on night bombing missions to Mandalay, Rangoon, Moulmein, Prome and other places. His machine encountered flak over these places, but was not damaged.

Flying Officer Harker was enthusiastic about the mixed bomber squadrons. R.A.F., R.A.A.F., Canadian, and New Zealand flying men were a great combination, he said. They could not be beaten. While abroad he met Flying Officer Coulin, of Hamilton. He was well. Coulin has been flying Wellingtons and Liberators.

Born at Lambton, Flying Officer Harker was educated at Scott's College, Sydney, and the Hawkesbury Agricultural College. Before the war



VALE : Merv Hunter

2016 Clubman of the Year

2016 - Life Membership - Western Suburbs RLFC

(Merv passed away midway through the 2016 season following a short illness)