

Basic Detail Report



00030716

Title

Dapto Leagues Beach's Bistro coaster

Date

1990s

Medium

Ink on cardboard

Dimensions

Overall: 91 x 91 mm

Name

Coaster

History

William Beach (1850-1935) was revered as a national sporting hero, winning the sculling Championship of the World for Australia seven times between 1884 and 1887. Racing both at home and abroad Beach proudly carried the hopes of the colony, inspiring nationalist sentiment long before Federation. His victories were celebrated by everyone, from civic receptions and poetry to the very popular Beach's Champion Oarsman's Polka and mass produced souvenir beer mugs. Living well into his eighties, he grew to become the 'grand old man' of the sculling world. Born in England, William Beach migrated with his family in 1853 to a south coast township near Lake Illawarra, New South Wales. He lived in Dapto all his life, becoming a blacksmith and a keen waterman. Winning a series of local regattas and small purses Beach gradually began to earn a great deal of money and respect from the feverish followers of professional sculling, eventually acquiring a sponsor, publican Mr John Deeble of the Bells Inn near the Domain in Sydney. His rise culminated in the long awaited showdown for the Championship of the World against famed Canadian sculler Edward Hanlan for £1000 a side on the 16 August 1884 on the Parramatta River. Beach won this race and remained undefeated for the rest of his career. Dapto Leagues Club was formed in the south coast town of Dapto almost 50 years ago. As a mark of respect towards Dapto's most famous citizen William Beach, the Club named their self-serve restaurant 'Beach's Bistro' after him. They also commemorated him by printing merchandise material such as beer coasters with images of Beach. Almost 120 years after he became a national sporting hero Bill Beach is still remembered fondly in the town where he lived and died.