

YOUR FREE COPY

SOUTH COAST HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

RECOLLECTIONS

ISSUE 58 - AUGUST - OCTOBER 2026

... Where history is the hero!



HOW **MOGO** GOT IT'S ~~MOJO~~ **ZOO!** | PAGE 3

FANTASTIC
READS

Win a \$100 Book Voucher.....page 3
How Mogo got its Zoo.....page 3
Moruya in The Depression.....page 5
Town Histories: Bombo to Yalwal ...page 9

Surveyor Spencer Bransby.....page 26
The Nowra Bridge.....page 27
Your Feedback.....page 30
The Convict & the Compass.....page 33

Welcome to *Issue 58*

Collect

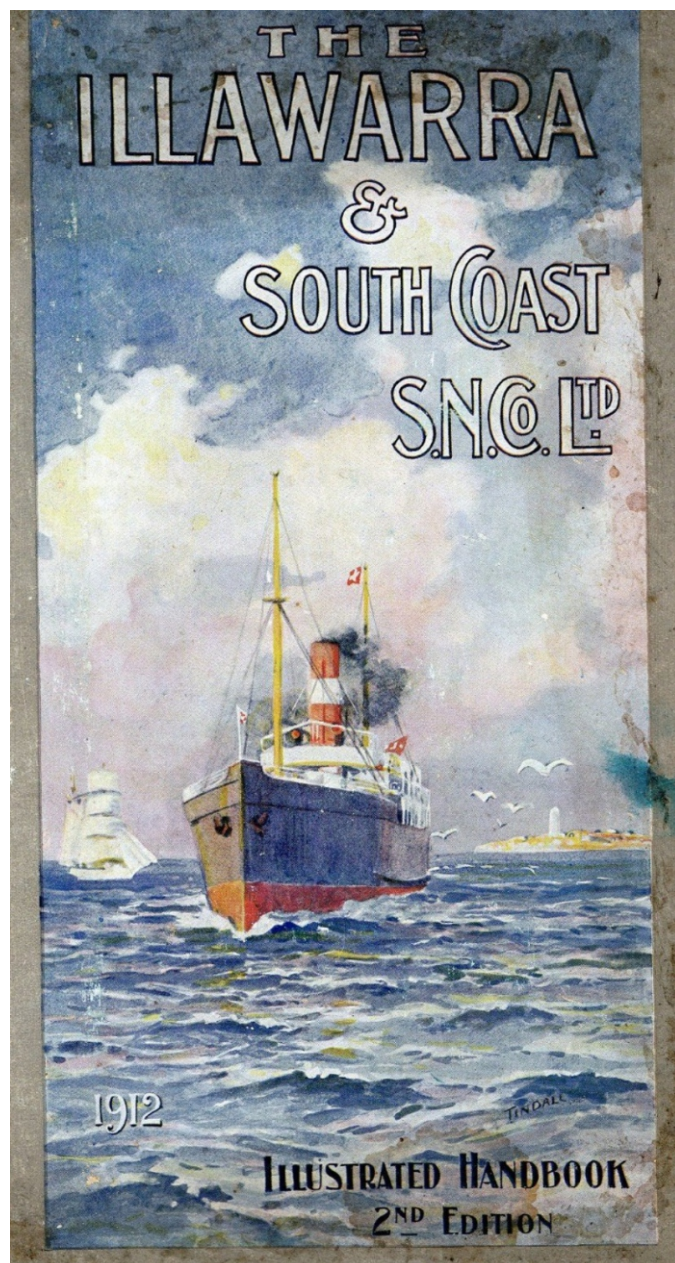
RECOLLECTIONS

Printed copies of Recollections are available from:

Eden: Eden Newsagency, Eden Antiques, Eden Library, Eden Sports & Recreation Club, Coachman Motel, Eden Fish & Chips, Eden Medical Practice. **Pambula:** Soluna Library-Café, Oaklands Restaurant, Pambula Village Milk Bar. **Merimbula:** Merimbula RSL, Merimbula Old School Museum, Merimbula Visitors Centre, Merimbula Office Choice, Audica, Picture Show Man, Tween Waters Caravan Park. **Tura Beach:** Tura Beach Bakery, Tura Marrang Library. **Millingandi:** Acacia Ponds. **Candelo:** Candelo Service Station, Candelo General Store. **Bega:** Bega Library, Ryan Pauline Barber, Bega Cheese Heritage Centre, Bega Office Choice, Bega Indoor Marketplace, Bega Pioneers' Museum, Bega & Cobargo Veterinary Practice, Dr Michael Holland MP's Office, Bega Irrigation, Bearing & Motor Supplies. **Tathra:** Tathra Supermarket. **Quaama:** Quaama General Store. **Cobargo:** Well Thumbed Books, Cobargo Co-op. **Bermagui:** Bermagui Library, Lake Road Pantry, Strangers in Paradise, Bermagui Medical Centre. **Central Tilba:** Tilba Post Office. **Narooma:** Narooma New & Used, Narooma Library, Montague Vets, Narooma Icecreamery, B.W.S., Narooma Barber, Lighthouse Medical Centre. **Dalmeny:** IGA Dalmeny. **Bodalla:** Tyrrells Store, Bodalla Central. **Tuross:** Tuross Head Country Club, Tuross Head Motel, Tuross Lakeside Caravan Park, East Dolphin Beach Caravan Park, Tuross Boatshed. **Moruya:** Moruya Library, Moruya Museum, Moruya French Hotbread, Moruya Icecreamery, Moruya Barber Shop, Sage Farmers Market, Smilee White Dental. **Broulee:** Banksia Village. **Batehaven:** Batehaven Barber. **Batemans Bay:** Batemans Bay Library, Batemans Bay Soldiers Club, Batemans Bay Heritage Museum, A.J.'s Hotbake, Ambers Café, The Boatshed, Miller Street Hair & Beauty. **Nelligen:** Nelligen Café. **Surfside:** Surfside Store. **Ulladulla:** Ulladulla Library, Go Vita. **Milton:** Shop Three Gallery, Milton Library. **St Georges Basin:** St Georges Basin Medical Centre, St Georges Basin Post Office. **Sanctuary Point:** Sanctuary Point Library, Bay & Basin Newsagency. **Vincentia:** Cignall, Vincentia Bay Medical, Vincentia Dental Care. **Huskisson:** Friendly Grocer, Capital Chemist, Smile On Vincentia Dentist, Collingwood Beach Medical Centre. **Greenwell Point:** The Point Gallery & Craft. **Nowra:** Nowra Library, Sturgiss' Newsagency, Heritage Medical, Hands on Hand Therapy. **North Nowra:** North Nowra Medical Practices. **Gerringong:** Gerringong Library. **Kiama:** Kiama Library.

If you know of other South Coast outlets willing to distribute Recollections, please let us know 0448 160 852.

To have copies emailed to you, simply email 'Send Recollections' to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com



Readers obviously appreciated our mini histories of towns along the South Coast that were included in Recollections some time ago. It has been suggested we reprint some of this previous information as a 'tour' down the entire South Coast, and that we also 'fill the gaps' with information about other towns...including some that no longer exist.

We are more than happy to oblige.

We're doing this in the form of a Supplement in this and the next three or four issues of Recollections. And we've added information from an Illustrated Handbook issued by the Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company in 1912 that describes what a visitor to the South Coast could expect back then. You'll discover some things have changed dramatically, others have not.

Please enjoy your tour! **Read more on page 9.**

Cover Image: Sally Padey, the founder of Mogo Zoo, with Kinwah, a Sumatran tiger born with a defective hip, who she hand-raised at the zoo.

Check out our
WEBSITE



HAPPY BIRTHDAY
10
YEAR
ANNIVERSARY



WIN A \$100
BOOK VOUCHER
FROM YOUR FAVOURITE BOOKSTORE

To celebrate our 10th birthday, the South Coast History Society is giving you 10 chances to win a \$100 gift voucher from your favourite bookstore.

To enter, simply email 'Happy Birthday' to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com

Enter today – 3 winners will be drawn on August 20th, the remaining 7 winners on September 25th.

MOGO ZOO

was to have a
Taxidermy Museum.

Instead, it got a (*world-class*)

COVER STORY

The intention was for Mogo to have a taxidermy museum. Instead, it got a zoo – a zoo that developed into an internationally-acclaimed zoo and a major tourist attraction.

This story begins with Sally Padey, a New Zealander, and her husband Bill, an experienced taxidermist. After travelling around Australia for several years, the couple eventually decided to settle down in Mogo (Bill's parents lived in nearby Tomakin) and set up a taxidermy business and a taxidermy museum. So, they purchased a 65-acre marshy paddock at the head of the Tomago River.

But a trip to Canberra then changed those plans. Sally – who from a very young age had been attracted to animals, and whose early ambition was to become an Olympic Equestrian – fell in love with African servals (small cats, native to Africa) and decided she and Bill should establish a zoo.

That's not an easy process. They started by undertaking work experience at Taronga Zoo Sydney (being the first work experience people at Taronga Zoo to admit that their ambition was to open their own zoo), undertook training in the husbandry and management of carnivores and primates, and then spent two years attempting to comply with complex regulations and a sometimes inflexible bureaucracy. Eventually they were granted an Exhibited Animal Licence that permitted them to purchase and house a small number of exotic animals (animals that were not domesticated or native to Australia) initially for a period of 18 months.

On 26th December 1989 'Somerset Wildlife Sanctuary' was opened. In 1992, 'the zoo at Mogo', as it had become known, was renamed 'Mogo Zoo.'

The zoo's core focus was/is to collect and facilitate the breeding of species threatened with extinction. Sally Padey explains 'We specialise in endangered species. We don't specialise in natives. We've got a couple of kangaroos but,

in the beginning, there were so many native parks in Australia and so many people doing really good things for native animals, that I thought exotic species were what really needed to be helped.'

Many unwanted animals from other collections were taken into care at Mogo Zoo. Among its extraordinary collection are, or have been, white lions, Sumatran tigers, snow leopards, western lowland gorillas, golden lion tamarins, red pandas, southern white rhinos, silvery gibbons, Bolivian squirrel monkeys, cheetahs, cotton-top tamarins, Nepalese red pandas, ring-tailed lemurs, oriental small-clawed otters, siamangs...and, of course, African servals!

Mogo Zoo is much more than a zoo where people come to gawp through bars at caged animals. All the enclosures are large and animal friendly. There is a large 'African savannah' area, and most of the smaller primates are located on islands.

The zoo's successful breeding program has earned it international respect, and has become an integral part of worldwide efforts to manage endangered species. For example, it is one of a small number of zoos around the world participating in a Global Species Management Plan aimed at increasing the population of the critically endangered Sumatran Tiger.

The zoo has become a major South Coast tourist attraction, resulting in facilities such as a café and gift shop being provided to enhance the experience for visitors. Recently, overnight dinner, bed and breakfast 'camping adventures' within the zoo have been added to the options available to visitors.

In November 2019, Sally Padey – feeling she was in need of retirement after many years of running the zoo – sold Mogo Zoo to Elanor Investments which owned Featherdale Wildlife Park in Doonside, Sydney. It was then rebranded Mogo Wildlife Park.

Barely a month later, the zoo experienced its greatest-



ever threat: the devastating 2019-2020 bushfires that destroyed most of nearby Mogo village.

The zoo's dedicated staff remained at the zoo and fought the fire. The leopards, tigers, lions and great apes had been put into their night pens, which were fitted with sprinkler systems, while the giraffes and zebra were let out to roam on paddocks that had been soaked with water and which the zoo staff patrolled to extinguish spot fires.

The zoo director's home (which previously had been Sally Padey's home), in the middle of the zoo, also became the temporary refuge for red pandas and small monkeys.

The zoo was able to reopen two months after the fire with the-then NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian lauding it as a 'story of absolute resilience, survival and hope'. And a lion cub, born in the immediate aftermath of the fires, was - appropriately - named Phoenix.

ezyprint

DISPLAY BANNERS

BUSINESS CARDS

POSTERS

INVOICE BOOKS

FLYERS

COLOUR COPYING

A-FRAMES

DESIGN SERVICE

POSTCARDS

JUST A FEW
OF OUR
SERVICES



AND SO MUCH MORE!

sales@printmadeezy.com.au

(02) 4476 1824

Australia was severely affected by the Great Depression of the 1930s, experiencing years of high unemployment which soared to a record high of around 30% in 1932, poverty, low profits (the price of Australia's main exports of wheat and wool fell by 50%), deflation, and plunging incomes. Long dole queues, shanty towns and destitute men roaming the country in search of work became commonplace.

It's always interesting to learn how international or national events, such as the Great Depression, impact local communities. This summary of the effect of the Great Depression on the Moruya community was first published in the *Journal of the Moruya & District Historical Society Inc.* in December 2013. We thank the Society for permitting us to include this (edited) interesting contribution in this issue of *Recollections*.

Moruya During the Depression Years

by Martha Gray



Vulcan Street Moruya in 1934

There was plenty of food, though very little ready money, and what surplus each family had was readily shared with friends, neighbours and those in need.

Awareness of the Depression crept up on this insular community slowly. People were aware that a serious economic crisis was pending, and some moved to more stable jobs such as teaching in preparation, but otherwise the warnings had little effect.

Moruya's one newspaper, *The Examiner*, contained a certain amount of Australian and wider-world news concerning the effects of the Depression elsewhere. But, the people of the town seemed to gain more information about what was

From its earliest days, the small settlement of Moruya was a self-supporting, insular community.

Throughout the town's history it had periods of rapid expansion that would cause vast temporary changes to the economic, social and demographic composition of the town, but following each of these the town quickly returned to its basic structure. The strong family ties within the town and the relative isolation of the people from the rest of Australia for many years had succeeded in creating a town that was unique in structure.

When the Great Depression of the 1930's hit Australia, Moruya with its unique composition remained unaffected. Life in the town carried on as usual, and only strangers passing through gave some allusion to what the rest of the world was experiencing.

By the end of the Depression in the late 1930s Moruya had changed very little. The town had no large or significant industries that, elsewhere, were hard hit, and so Moruya's everyday life just continued on, its residents unaffected and perhaps left wondering what all the fuss had been about.

The community saw none of the starvation or deprivation that the rest of Australia was to live with for ten years.

happening elsewhere from those who had relatives in Sydney, or from those that had moved away from the district to work and had kept in contact with their relatives.

To some extent, the Depression years were a time of growth for Moruya as many new organisations were formed by its residents.

Many of these new organisations were associated with the Catholic Church. The Moruya Branch of the Knights of the Southern Cross, for example, was formed in 1933 with eight original members, and its Charter was presented to the branch in 1933: *A national fund has been created to enable donations to State, National or International charities. State welfare funds are established to assist distressed members and their families.*

It can only be assumed that this organisation spent considerable time throughout the Depression providing assistance to those unemployed families that moved into the area looking for food and work.

The first conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society was held in 1933. Assistance was given to the Seamen's Refuge, various orphanages around the area and local cases of hardship. The Society functioned only until the outbreak

of World War II in 1939, when its help was no longer needed in the town.

For those men that were not involved with the Knights of the Southern Cross, the Freemasons lodge was open to them. The Moruya branch had been founded in 1879 and many of the members worked for the granite quarry on the north bank of the river. The lodge was very well off - reflecting the condition of the town - and it was regarded during the Depression years as the most affluent lodge along the south coast. Membership did drop off once the quarry closed in 1931, but that had little effect on the life of the lodge.

Moruya was still very much governed by the strong Catholic influence that Moruya had experienced from its earliest years, and the Catholic Church remained a very important institution in the life of the town.

Throughout the Depression, the Catholic school included a secondary school. This school was registered to State requirements to Intermediate Standard. The school also provided a boarding school to those students who lived too far from Moruya to be able to travel in each day, or who did not live on a bus route. Otherwise, for those wishing to continue with their education, the nearest school was in Goulburn.



He was called 'Why Worry'

Local unemployment appeared to be virtually non-existent during the Depression years. The majority of locals were employed on one of the 36 farms surrounding the town. The only unemployed were the drifters who came from Sydney or other major towns. They had heard that Moruya was well off, and they came in the hope of finding work to supply their families with money...or at least their own stomachs with food. These swaggies 'humping their bluey' were always polite as they came up to farms to ask



"Be The Light Of Christ"

Part of local history since 2001

388 Pambula Beach Road, Pambula Beach

***Lumen Christi Catholic College caters for
Kindergarten to Year 12 students
across the entire Bega Valley!***



**For further information please contact
our Enrolment Officer on (02) 6495 8888
or email lccc@cg.catholic.edu.au**

for work. As most of the farmers used their own families for labour, work was rarely available to swaggies, but they were never sent away without a meal and extra food.

Those who remember the Depression years all emphasised that the local families made a point of giving away any extra fruit, vegetables, or meat that they may have had. If the farmers did need extra hands for certain jobs, there were men available to do the work and, as there was no award wage for farming hands, the farmers only had to pay what they could afford - and this was eagerly accepted by the men!

Relief work for the unemployed was available throughout the area. The Shire Council had been allocated funds by the government to be able to offer this work. The work was rostered out amongst the men. Some work was done on the local roads around the district, with a pay rate of approximately eight shillings per day. Other work was done in the forests in the hinterland of the town. The men would camp out for two to three days per week clearing the forest, then they would return to town to collect the dole. The money they earned was often sent back to their families. Many of these men stayed in the district for two to three years during the Depression because they were guaranteed at least some work.

Other relief work in town included the clearing up of the cemetery - tidying up the graves and digging drainage along the roadside. These men would work six days a week, for eight hours a day, earning a well-earned 48 shillings per week. One crew would complete their week's work, and then the next would start.



Photograph of a dole queue at Circular Quay in 1931. After receiving a dole ticket, these men had to walk to Central Railway Station to collect their rations.

The main Moruya breakwater was also built during the Depression using the granite from the quarry that had supplied the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The men would work for a fortnight on the breakwater, then the next crew would take over. They would have a fortnight off and collect the dole, then they would go back to working on the wall. As the dole was paid in food coupons, the men had to earn money if they were to be able to send anything home.

Gold mining was also available to those not engaged on relief work. There were several doctors and teachers in Araluen over the Depression years mining for gold. For this they were paid 30 shillings per week by the government.

Those receiving dole coupons in Moruya had to line up outside the courthouse each week to get them. They then would go across the road to Emmott's store where their rations were served out. The men were given coupons for the bare essentials of tea, sugar and flour and several other goods. There was no allowance made for alcohol, and there may have been a small tobacco allowance. These men supplemented their rations by catching fish, trapping rabbits and local birdlife. Many locals remember these men coming round to their homes with any surplus they had caught, selling them for a small amount of cash.

Another major public works project was the installation of electricity within the town with the Moruya Electric Light Supply Company switching on electric light throughout the town in 1931.

For this farming community, life was relatively very good. The sense of community was very strong and each family helped those around them. Every family had their own house cow and therefore had plenty of milk, cream and butter. So, when swaggies came looking for work and food they were always guaranteed a drink of milk. Most of the town's families also kept their own fowls, so eggs were also in plentiful supply.

Farmers also grew all their own vegetables and any extra was shared with those who needed it. Most of the farms had their own orchards growing a multitude of different varieties of fruit. And, local fruit was plentiful and free from disease. In paddock corners, where the ploughs couldn't reach, a fruit tree would often have been planted with its crop freely available for anyone walking past. Women spent much of their time preserving fruit into jams and stewed fruit. And, of course, home-made fruit tarts, with custard or cream, were regular desserts.

The role of the women in the home was very important in holding the community together. It was up to them to keep their families well fed, and what was much harder, to keep them well-clothed. Clothing coupons seemed to be just as hard to get in Moruya as anywhere else. Everyone had only a couple of changes of clothing, and the weekends were spent sponging and pressing them. Mothers spent much of their time remaking hand-me-downs from their older relatives who lived in the district. Jumpers were unpicked and reknitted for smaller members of the family. The calico bags that flour came in were popular to make little girls bloomers, and for lining little boys' trousers. Shoes were worn until the soles were worn through, then cardboard was used until they could afford to be sent to the boot maker to have them either partly resoled or reheeled. Socks were redarned until only the darn was left. So, it was quite a challenge for a mother to keep her family dressed with a certain degree of smartness and attractiveness.

Women were also ingenious keeping their homes looking smart at a minimum of cost. Household goods such as linen were in short supply and expensive, so threadbare towels were made into washers and hand towels. What was left of the calico bags after making the children's clothes was used to make tea towels.

Diet during the Depression years was plain but plentiful. Bread and potatoes were cheap and were two of the staples of a local's diet. Any stale bread was either toasted, or made into bread and butter pudding, or soaked and put into the fowl feed. Any type of meat fat was saved and used to make dripping for bread.

The women of Moruya, like their counterparts elsewhere wasted nothing. The fat from cooking was clarified and made into washing soap. The fat was mixed with water, resin and caustic soda. This was usually boiled in a tin in the backyard, because it tended to make a mess when the soda was added, then was poured into moulds and left to set. Though this soap was much too harsh and coarse to use as toilet soap, it made excellent washing soap. Citronella was often added to the mixture to make it smell better.

Other economising occurred in the area of household furniture. Kerosene cases were very popular because they made good shelves if stacked, and could be easily turned into washing-up basins or everyday buckets. And there was a continuous supply of these tins, so when they rusted out they could be easily replaced. Butter boxes were a little

osgood civil resource engineering

OCRe

water WASTEWATER STORMWATER
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING design
MANAGEMENT CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

po box 181 p 02 6494 0239
bermagui nsw 2546 m 0408 361 612



"We're on the Susso now, we can't afford a cow. We pay no rent, we live in a tent. We're on the Susso now."

harder to get, but they were sought-after because they were made from pine which was nice and smooth. They could be made into attractive seats which could be used to store boot polish and other things. Both the kerosene tins and the butter boxes only needed a small amount of material for covering, and with a little imagination, be turned into quite attractive furnishings.

The Country Women's Association was an important social institution and a source of community support for the women of Moruya. Many of the women had to travel a considerable distance to get to meetings, but they regarded that as worthwhile. The CWA played a very important part in getting the women together to help each other with ideas, and more importantly, friendship. It was a platform to share ideas on homely things such as craft and cooking, and how to economise, and to ensure everyone in the group was comfortable.

The Moruya CWA branch was formed in 1932 'to assist with local schemes.' The Bodalla Branch was formed in August 1930 and throughout the Depression it made considerable donations of money, linen and equipment to the Moruya Hospital. At the meeting on 4th September 1930, a motion was passed that Bodalla branch make itself responsible for an annual donation of £5. On the 6th November they decided to increase that to £6 per annum. For these women it was very important to make sure that each one was looked after if in need of hospital care, and that it was their responsibility to ensure that the Hospital had the facilities and equipment to provide this care. Other motions were moved to forward parcels of clean old linen to the hospital. Also in the minutes were references to helping 'families in distress, by paying their hospital bills, and providing clothing for the children and mother.'

Another very important social institution within the town was the Red Cross. Members in the group consisted mainly of the wives of bank manager, land owners, teachers and elderly spinsters all those in the town whose husbands had full time jobs, or lived off investments. The wife of the Commonwealth Bank Manager was the treasurer. Money was raised through card parties in the homes of the members, or dances at the Mechanics Institute where a coin admission was collected at the door. Good used clothing was collected by the group and either repaired or made over and was then given along with baby

clothing and cooked meals to needy families. The group also provided transport to the hospital and doctor to these needy people.

A very important part of town life was its social life. One favourite was the picture theatre, known as the Amusu Theatre. A.H. Preddey installed talkie equipment in 1931, and the whole theatre was reconditioned in 1934. Another popular entertainment with the youth of the town was roller skating which was held in the theatre on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday nights.

There were many other social activities that the town as a whole participated in - hospital balls to raise funds for the hospital, dances and euchre parties, and concerts. Local concerts mainly used local talent unless a 'polished' visitor from the 'big smoke' could be persuaded to sing or play. And amateur dramatics were performed.

Popular daytime activities included tennis, cricket and football matches, swimming, surfing, riding and walking. The Moruya Surf Club was formed during the Depression years and still is quite a strong club.

So, Moruya during the Depression years was a comfortable and, in some ways, an exciting place to be. It was a town that in cultural terms prospered throughout the Depression years. It was a town composed of people that relied on each other, that helped those in need, and was protected from the outside world. Due to the heritage passed onto the townspeople from their forebears, Moruya had a unique structure that enabled it to cope and ignore world crises such as the Depression.

World War II was later to have more effect on the town than did the Depression.

YOU CAN HELP

We're looking for a couple of volunteers:

Someone to deliver Recollections to outlets that distribute it in the Nowra-Kiama area. It just requires two or three hours of your time every three months.

We'd like to include a series on South Coast historians in Recollections, so are seeking someone who doesn't mind chatting with some interesting local historians and who can then write up their stories.

Interested? Call 0448 160 852

A HISTORY TOUR

of the South Coast

Before we embark on our 'tour' of the South Coast, looking at the histories of individual towns and villages, it's worth pointing out that there are many things in our history that are common to the entire coastal area – be it in Kiama, be it in Kiah, or be it anywhere in between:

First, the geography of the area has been the single-most important determinant of the area's history.

All along the coast, the area is hemmed in by the sea to one side and a very steep escarpment to mountains on the other side. That sea has been both a blessing and a curse. Getting up or down the escarpment has always been a challenge – particularly to the early explorers and settlers, and remains something of a major challenge even today. Then, to add to the difficulties of accessing the South Coast, there are numerous major rivers running from the base of the escarpment to the sea that have had to be crossed – the Minnamurra River, the Shoalhaven, the Clyde, the Tuross, the Moruya, the Bega, the Towamba to name just a few, along with the Wagonga Inlet near present-day Narooma and Merimbula Lake.

On the positive side, the coastal plains are relatively flat and very fertile. They have lent themselves to the grazing of cattle and, most particularly, to dairying – which ultimately explains why the South Coast is a major cheese-producing area. Why cheese and not, say, fresh milk or butter? Simply because there have been, and there still are, challenges in getting milk, butter or cheese to major markets such as Sydney from the South Coast, and cheese keeps better and is easier to transport than are either fresh milk or butter. In times past, significant quantities of fresh milk were transported from the Bega Valley to Canberra, and there were quite a few butter factories on the South Coast – but these have largely disappeared.

The other thing about the geography of the South Coast was it was immediately attractive to the early settlers. Much of the land had been subject to traditional burning by Aboriginal peoples, so it was well-grassed and relatively clear. There was also an abundance of clean, fresh water, and there was abundant, good timber which the early settlers could use when building their own houses or for fencing...or even which they could cut and send to Sydney, providing them with something of an income. And, in general, the climate of the South Coast was and is pleasing. So, who would not want to come down to the South Coast to live and to work?

Before European settlers came down to this attractive stretch of land, there were originally three major 'nation groups' of Aboriginals living along the South Coast – the Thalawal to the north, then the Yuin, and then the Bidwell to the south. Their interactions with the early explorers and settlers were mostly amicable – the South Coast certainly did not experience any of the so-called 'Frontier Wars', or large-scale massacres of Aboriginals, that occurred in other parts of Australia. And there were many, many examples of Aboriginal peoples on the South Coast working with, or

for, the early explorers and settlers – the whaling industry, especially on Twofold Bay near Eden, for example, was able to be developed because the local Aboriginals were willing to share their knowledge of traditional whaling and to work for the European whalers.

The early settlers, however brought diseases such as smallpox, chickenpox, typhoid, measles and syphilis that wiped out probably half of the local Aboriginal population...and then, from about the 1860s, Aboriginal settlements were established that effectively segregated many of the local Aboriginals from the white settlers.

Europeans actually started moving into the South Coast area from about the 1820s – at first to the areas closest to Sydney, a decade or so later to the areas further down the coast. Those who came first were most commonly timber-getters, and specifically those cutting cedar in the area where it grew, north of Ulladulla. They were opportunists – not settlers.

Those who did come to settle either simply helped themselves to land, or rented it, or purchased it from the government. They wanted to build houses, put in fences, have nearby towns developed and so forth, so there then followed a period of frantic exploration and surveying of the area (see details in *Recollections* 56 and 57 at www.southcoasthistory.org.au).

One almost unique feature of land settlement on the South Coast was that four major 'estates' were developed by a few settlers who had acquired very large parcels of land. These estates included self-contained villages basically catering to the needs of workers on these estates, because back then the nearest town was some distance away from the estate and was, therefore, not easily reachable. These large estates were the Coolangatta Estate, north of the Shoalhaven River developed by Alexander Berry, the Bodalla Estate developed by T.S. Mort, the Kameruka Estate near Candelo which was developed by Lucas Lucas-Tooth (of Tooths Brewery fame), and the Ayrdale Estate near Wolumla which was developed by a gentleman by the name of John Marshall Black.

Another very historically-significant man also acquired huge parcels of land – 2½ million acres of it, mainly throughout southern NSW. This was Benjamin Boyd who (before he ultimately went bankrupt) attempted to build Boydtown on the shore of Twofold Bay, which he envisaged would become the major town to be established between Sydney and Melbourne.

It took a very long time for an even half-decent road system to be developed on the South Coast and for bridges to be constructed over the many major rivers along the coast. For example, there wasn't a bridge across the Clyde River at Batemans Bay until as recently as late 1956 – so about 135 years after the first settlers moved to the area, and 97 years after the township of Batemans Bay had been surveyed. Travel by sea, or transport of goods by sea, was the practical, viable alternative – actually the only practical, viable alternative.

From the first days of European settlement, ships were regularly visiting the South Coast. In its heyday – the late 19th century and the early 20th century – there were hundreds and hundreds of them operating all up and down the coast. First, they were sailing ships, later steam ships, later again diesel-powered ships. Many of them were owned and operated by local businesses – local timber millers had their own ships that transported their timber to Sydney; there were fleets of ships that took enormous quantities of blue metal from Kiama for use on the railways that were then being extended throughout the state; the company that built the Sydney Harbour Bridge and cut granite from Moruya to use in the project had its own fleet of three little ships that shuttled between Moruya and Sydney.

And from 1858 until just after World War II, the Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company ran regular, scheduled services to numerous locations from Sydney down along the South Coast to Eden and beyond. It mainly operated to transport cargos – including live pigs, which earned it the nickname of the Pig and Whistle Line, which was said might wait an hour for a pig, but would never wait one minute for a passenger. But, at least until 1928 when one of its ships – the *Merimbula* - ran aground near Jervis Bay, it also provided a regular passenger service along the South Coast.

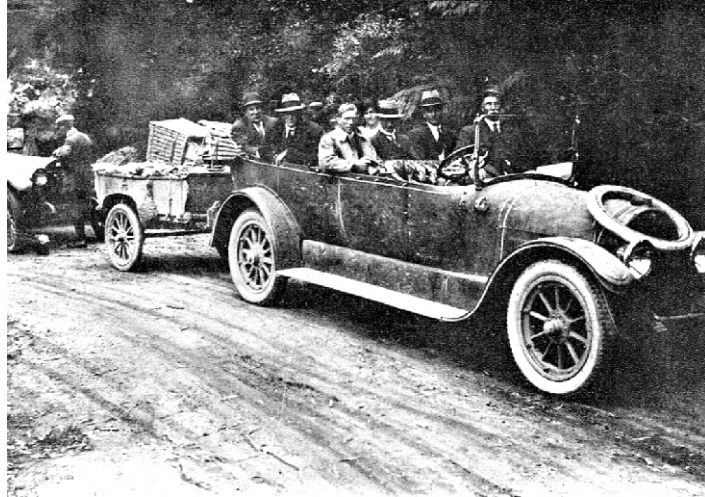
It has been said that 'where there are ships there will be shipwrecks', and this is certainly true of the South Coast. Details of 200 South Coast shipwrecks are at www.southcoasthistory.org.au

The government attempted to reduce the number of shipwrecks on the coast by installing what they called a 'Highway of Lights' – lighthouses all up and down the coast. The stories about these lighthouses and their lighthouse keepers are pretty much the same, no matter where they were located on the coast – and, again, are at www.southcoasthistory.org.au.

The industries that developed, the other activities that occurred on the South Coast were also very much the same all along the coast. Dairying was once - still is – a major industry all up and down the coast...timber getting, fishing, gold mining, and - more recently – tourism have also been major industries that existed all up and down the coast.

The advent of the motor vehicle has had a profound impact on the South Coast and its history. First, it spelled the end of shipping to the South Coast. Then more cars and trucks coming to the area necessitated the building of bridges across rivers and creeks, and a major upgrading of roads to the area – the construction of the highway up Mt Ousley near Wollongong in World War II and the sealing of the Princes Highway all the way from Sydney to the Victorian border (which, effectively then meant that the highway was sealed all the way along the coast from Sydney to Melbourne) which finally was completed in 1976, are probably the two most important upgrades that have occurred.

And the advent of motor vehicles also meant that many smaller towns dotted all along the highways – which had often developed simply because they were the distance from the next town up or down the coast that conveniently could be reached by a horse or horses pulling a coach – either diminished in importance or disappeared altogether. Motor vehicles and better roads have made the South Coast much more accessible and that's attracted both tourists and



permanent residents. As an indication of the growth that has occurred over time, in 1961 the Eurobodalla Shire had a permanent population of just 6,500. 20 years later (1981) that 6,500 had grown to 16,500. 20 years later again (2001) that 16,500 had doubled to become 33,000. And, today, that permanent population of Eurobodalla is over 40,000. Perhaps more dramatic, though, is the rise in tourism – figures from a couple of years ago indicated that 879,000 people overnighted in the Eurobodalla and another 590,000 visited the Eurobodalla as day visitors. And that's a story that is mirrored all up and down the coast – tourism has emerged as a very major industry for the South Coast.

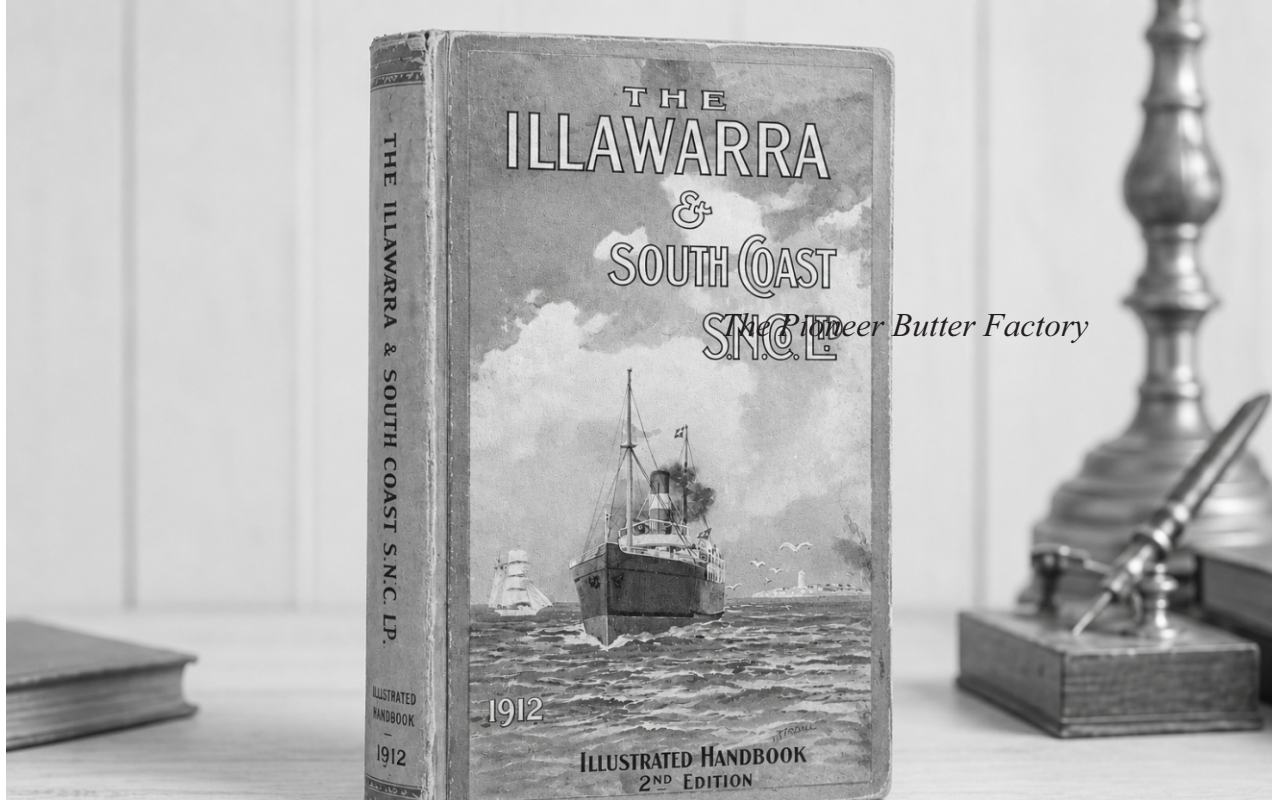
Another feature common to all of the South Coast is that it has suffered greatly from regular natural disasters and other calamities. Major floods and bushfires are a regular way of life. The coast has been, and can expect in the future to be, severely impacted by one of them, or even both of them, every 10 to 20 years.

The two World Wars also had a devastating impact on local populations. World War I drained the South Coast of many of its young men, which is evident from looking at any of the war memorials in any of the towns along the coast. World War II similarly took away many of the local men and a few women, but also presented the real threat to South Coast residents of Japanese invasion. This was highlighted by two things – first, significant Japanese submarine activity all up and down the South Coast, which actually resulted in seven vessels being sunk, and also by detailed plans that were made to evacuate the whole South Coast population in the event of an invasion actually occurring.

World War II was also indirectly responsible for the delay in building the first bridge over the Clyde River at Batemans Bay, which was not completed until late 1956, because of a post-war shortage of necessary building materials.

And, finally, three major economic depressions – in the 1840s, 1890s and 1930s – also had significant impacts on the development of the entire South Coast. The 1840s depression, for example, effectively put paid to Benjamin Boyd's ambitious plans to develop Boydtown as a major port and town on Twofold Bay and it also stymied plans to develop what was described as a 'great southern township' called St Vincent on the northern shore of the Clyde River. And the 1930s depression ended plans to develop another major area, St Vincent's City on the shores of Jervis Bay that, among other things, was to include a rail connection to Canberra.

And, so to our histories of the South Coast's towns and villages:



How the ISCSN Co's *Illustrated Handbook* described the South Coast

The Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company (ISCSN Co.) issued an *'Illustrated Handbook: a guide for the tourist and holiday maker'* in 1905 and again in 1912. It was a key promotional tool for the ISCSN Co., and highlighted South Coast tourist attractions, coastal scenery, and the company's steamer routes. It was compiled by a Mr. W. Lorck who was well-known at the time for producing illustrated guidebooks and travel handbooks (for example, in 1909 he edited *Victoria Illustrated: an illustrated trip through some of the most important and picturesque towns, with short articles touching upon the industries of the state of Victoria*).

The ISCSN Co's *Illustrated Handbook* provides a valuable insight into the early days of tourism on the South Coast, often (quaintly) describing 'attractions' and popular activities that have now long disappeared. Its text and illustrations (which in the 1905 edition took up 62 pages) was supplemented by 82 pages of advertisements, mostly from South Coast businesses. Its descriptions of the South Coast's 'attractions' often included glowing endorsements of these supportive businesses – which, because of space constraints, we have edited out of the following, taken from the 1912 edition of the *Illustrated Handbook*:

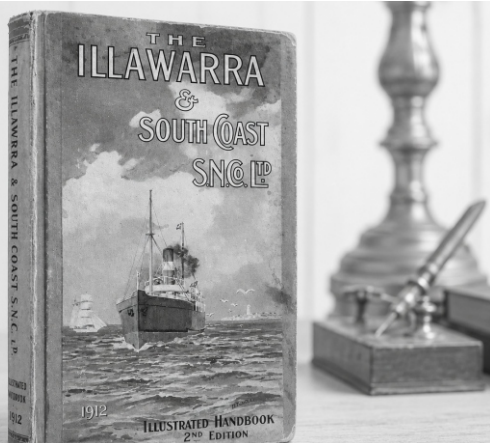
Book Excerpt

A trip from Sydney to Eden may safely be recommended as one of the most enjoyable in New South Wales. Perhaps the quickest route would be from Sydney direct to Eden by the Illawarra and South Coast S.N. Co's fine liner, "Merimbula," returning in easy stages by motor car. But, as Sydney is often the starting point for tourists preferring a motor trip to a sea voyage, we propose to give an outline of places of interest en route.

There are few more beautiful districts in the whole of Australia than that extending from Sydney to the Victorian border. Most of the choicest scenery lies along the coastline, and the traveller passes a continuous series of magnificent panoramas of ocean and

rugged cliffs, for which it would be hard to find a parallel. The whole of the beautiful Illawarra district has earned for itself the title of "The Garden of New South Wales", and rightly so in its marvellous wealth of vegetation. Its eastern boundary is fringed with golden beaches and foam-crested rollers, and on its western boundary is a sheltering wall of mountains, round whose spurs wind excellent roads for motor and carriage, which for the most part lie close by the margin of the sea. Ideal nooks for holiday-makers are to be found in the various watering-places of this favoured district.

Almost every few miles, if one should feel so inclined, one can turn off the broad highway, and, running down to one or other of the innumerable surf beaches, indulge in that most healthful and fascinating sport of shooting the breakers.



KIAMA

About three miles south of Shellharbour the road runs for some considerable distance on the banks of the beautiful Minnamurra River. This fine broad stream affords a succession of lovely views of mountain woods, and the grand expanse of its gliding waters, which are crossed by an imposing bridge. Passing the extensive stone quarries we reach Kiama. Kiama lies seventy-one miles south of Sydney, and has many interesting features to offer the tourist. The natural advantages of the town are so manifestly apparent that it is surprising to find this lovely seaside resort, the Brighton of Australia, so little known.

On the small promontory running out of town is the famous Blowhole, an extensive subterranean channel in the volcanic rocks. In rough weather the sea thunders through this funnel and is dashed up in a huge cloud of spray to an extraordinary height. The Cathedral Rocks, amongst the many interesting rock formations of this district, are worth a visit. The Minnamurra Falls, Saddleback, and other spots of interest may be reached by pleasant drives along good roads, and should not be omitted from the itinerary of tourists visiting Kiama. Standing on the summit of Saddleback, which towers some 2000 feet above sea-level, a glorious panoramic view may be obtained of all the seaboard from Bulli and Wollongong with its mountain peaks on the north, to the Shoalhaven River, Nowra, and Jervis Bay beyond, southwards.

Free Municipal baths for ladies and gentlemen are situated within a minute or two from the heart of the town, and several sandy beaches offer safe and enjoyable surf-bathing.

A considerable trade is done between Kiama and Sydney in butter, and large quantities of milk are also sent from here to the metropolis.

In addition to the dairying industry, which, of course, is the most prominent and lucrative of the district, stone quarries are worked in Kiama by the State Government, the crushed blue metal being shipped from this port, giving employment to a large number of men.

BOMBO

In 1838 a farmer, James Holt, bought 320 hectares of land at Kiama. Columns of basalt rock were discovered on his land in the area that became known as the Bombo Headland Quarry.

Quarrying commenced in the 1880s. Some of the basalt was used in the construction of local buildings (the old Kiama primary school [now part of the Sebel], the Anglican Christ Church, and the Kiama Courthouse are surviving examples) but most was crushed to become blue metal. This was used on the tram and train lines that were then being built across the state. In the early years, 70-80 men were employed in the quarry to 'hand dress' the stone ready prior to transport.



Bombo Headland Quarry in the 1880s.

The Boneyard, Bombo



By 1887, steam crushing machines and equipment were introduced to crush the stone.

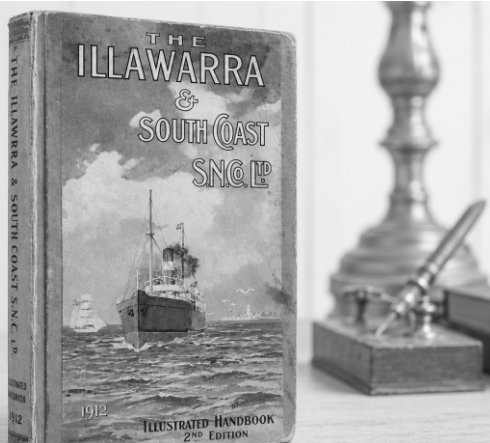
In 1883, a large jetty was built on the northern side of the headland, now known as the Boneyard, to move the mined blue metal to Sydney. The jetty was quite exposed, so was not always a reliable port for the loading of ships. It operated into the 1890s.

The railway from Sydney was extended to Bombo (then known as North Kiama) in 1887, and a side-track was constructed into the Bombo Quarry. In 1890 the Railways Commissioners bought the quarry which they owned until the mid-1920s.

The Bombo Quarry was closed during the Depression years, but re-opened between 1937 and 1941, and again from 1944 to 1954.

The quarry at Bombo was the site of a serious accident on 7th May 1888, when an explosive charge detonated prematurely and a mass of rock fell on men working below. Four were killed and several severely injured.

The local Aboriginal word for thunder was 'bumbo', and the area was originally given that name. A local minister of religion, asserting that the name sounded too rude, successfully had the u replaced by an o. Geologically the quarry area is important because its rocks provide evidence of what is known as the Kiama Magnetic Reversal – a giant flip in the Earth's magnetic field about 260 million years ago.



JAMBEROO

One of the prettiest drives on the coast is that from Kiama to Jamberoo, nestling in a lovely fertile valley, with a soil that is unsurpassed in any portion of the State. The erstwhile Terragong Swamp, with an area of about 700 acres, is now a laughing picture of rich pastures, prosperous farms and splendid dairy cattle. Mr. T. Fredericks, the Mayor of the town at the time of writing, predicted great things for this wonderful district which Nature has endowed with a lavish hand.

GERRINGONG

Taking our leave of Kiama regretfully, we proceed still further south towards Berry and Nowra. The road is wonderfully picturesque, and affords one of the most superb panoramic views in Australia, if not in the world. Some half-a-dozen miles south the road runs through Gerringong, which is situated on the edge of the ocean, and is prolific in places of interest to the tourist. The beaches, with their bathing and fishing, afford the foremost attraction, but Mount Pleasant, Omega Hills, Rose Valley, Mount Curry, and the Crooked River, are equally enchanting in their charm of serene beauty and majestic loveliness.

BERRY

Between Kiama and Nowra lies Berry, named after the late David Berry, who practically owned the whole countryside. The estate is called "Coolangatta" and comprises some 70,000 acres of the finest country, on which the famous herds of Illawarra cattle are raised.

The town is beautifully laid out and boasts over 1,000 inhabitants.

The steamers of the Illawarra and South Coast S.N. Co. maintain a regular service to the port, the vessels coming up the Broughton Creek to a wharf.

KANGAROO VALLEY

Kangaroo Valley is a pretty little township, sheltered by picturesque mountains. It is frequently selected by tourists passing between Moss Vale and Nowra as a "half-way house."... Fine sport can be had...

KIAMA

Kiama is probably best known for its Blow Hole – created by sea erosion along the line of a fracture in the surrounding Latite, a rock deposited by volcanic eruptions.

In December 1797 George Bass entered the bay that is now Kiama Harbour on his voyage exploring the NSW South Coast. The noise created by the Kiama Blow Hole attracted his attention and he recorded:

The earth for a considerable distance round in the form approaching a circle seemed to have given way; it was now a green slope. Towards the centre was a deep ragged hole of about 25 to 30 feet in diameter and on one side of it the sea washed in through a subterraneous passage, with a most tremendous noise.

It was not long after this (probably by around 1810) that considerable numbers of timber-getters were attracted to the area, primarily to cut the valued cedar that grew in profusion along the valleys in the area. Kiama's main beach, Black Beach, became the 'port' where the timber was loaded onto ships bound for Sydney. By the 1820s, 90% of the cedar arriving in Sydney was coming from the Kiama area.

The local Aboriginals proved to be very troublesome in the early days, so in 1826 a detachment of the 40th Regiment was stationed in the district for a time to protect the white population.

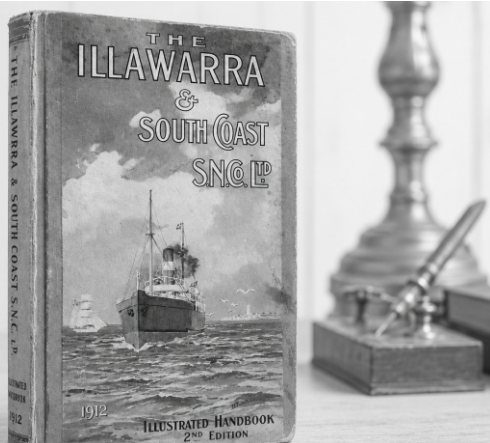
It is likely that Kiama's first permanent European resident in the area, David Smith, was one of those cedar-cutters. He settled in what later became Kiama in 1821, and he built a permanent house in 1832. In 1837 this became Kiama's first tavern, the Gum Tree Inn.

A survey of the Kiama area was undertaken in 1819 by Assistant Surveyor-General James Meehan. John Oxley, the NSW Surveyor-General at the time, also explored the area, noted the fertile soils in the area, and named it 'Kiarami' (from an Aboriginal word, Kiarama or Kiarmai, meaning 'place where the sea makes a noise'). The land around the harbour was reserved by 1826 and surveys laying out the town were conducted in 1830 and 1831.

From the 1840s, Kiama developed as the shipping and service centre for the local area.

When convict labour ceased to be available, Kiama became a major centre of 'chain migration' in Australia (chain migration is the social process whereby immigrants from one area follow others from that same area to a particular destination; 'sponsored immigration' is one form of it) with significant numbers of assisted migrants coming from Northern Ireland to settle on 'clearing leases' (immigrants were let about 20 acres from large estates for five years rent free and given free food during the first few months. Generally these settlers lived in small huts). Half the marriages performed in the Kiama Anglican Church over a one hundred-year period had Northern Irish Protestant ancestry, reflecting this period of 'chain migration'.

A public jetty was built in the bay at Kiama in 1849, and was extended when steamer traffic began to arrive in 1852.



NOWRA

Nowra lies on the south bank of the Shoalhaven River, and both up and down its course from the town the scenery is magnificent. On the upper reaches particularly the scenery is wildly romantic, the Shoalhaven Gorges being remarkable for their rugged grandeur, the river in places flowing 1,500 feet below the cliffs which tower above it. The town of Nowra itself is quiet but thriving, being the depot for the South Coast business lying beyond the railway, which at present terminates on the northern side of the river at Bomaderry, about two miles from Nowra. A fine iron bridge spans the Shoalhaven River, providing for vehicular traffic between the two places. In the near future, it is expected the railway will be carried into Nowra, and south as far as Jervis Bay, where the Commonwealth Naval College is, at the time of writing, under construction.

Within a short distance of the town the Nowra Creek forms one of the tributaries of the 'Shoalhaven' and here most beautiful scenery of river and mountain, with their tropical vegetation and delicate, exquisite ferns, meets the eye of the enchanted beholder. The creek can be crossed via the pretty suspension bridge.

There are many delightful drives to be had round Nowra, the one to the top of the Cambewarra Mountain eclipsing all others. The view to be obtained on a clear day from the Lookout is one of indescribable grandeur and impressive magnificence.

The Illawarra and South Coast S.N. Co. has made arrangements to run a special car service between Bateman's Bay and Moruya for the convenience of steamer passengers which, it is expected, will meet with the approval of all intending visitors to these parts.

Tourists desirous of a river excursion can obtain rowing and sailing boats or motor launches from 'The Grotto', situated on the northern shore of the Shoalhaven River, adjoining the bridge.

The Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company maintains a regular bi-weekly service of steamers to Nowra and Captain's Point.



The 'Kiama' loading blue metal from the staithes at Robertson Basin, early 20th century.

Image: Powerhouse Museum 85/1284-394

In 1853 locals set up the Kiama Steam Navigation Company and two years later the company's 104-ton wooden paddlewheel steamer, the "Kiama", began regular journeys to Sydney. From this time onwards (weather permitting) Kiama was served by a steamer twice a week.

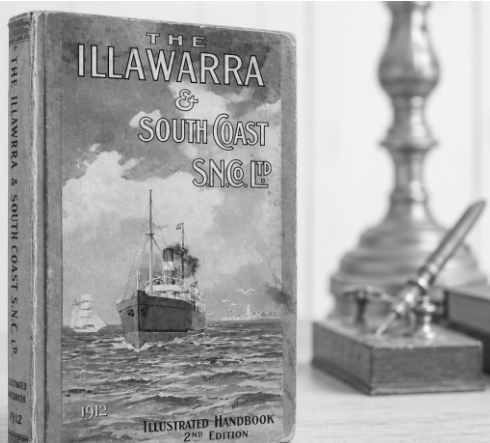
It was soon obvious that Kiama was in need of better harbour facilities, so lobbying began in 1864 seeking the construction of a shipping basin. That construction didn't start for another 7 years and it took until 1876 for work to be completed on Robertson Basin (named after Sir John Robertson, the Premier of NSW, who had supported the project). The adjacent Kiama Pilot's Cottage was finished in 1881 (now the museum) and the Kiama Lighthouse in 1887.



Construction of Robertson Basin made it attractive for large Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Company vessels to use the port, greatly improving accessibility to the area.

The opening of Robertson Basin turned out to be well-timed for Kiama. The growth of railways and roadways throughout NSW and tramways in Sydney triggered an enormous demand for blue metal. And Kiama was well positioned to supply it from the abundant basalt outcrops around the town.

The basalt from the Kiama area was first used in the building of walls of public buildings in Kiama and Sydney. But the supply of crushed basalt – blue metal (much of which was initially hand crushed) – was to become the town's greatest export.



GREENWELL POINT

This is the spot for sportsmen, fishing, both in the rivers and the sea, being of the best.

The Crookhaven Hotel is delightfully situated in its own grounds of 80 acres at the junction of, and overlooking, the Shoalhaven and Crookhaven Rivers. The Crookhaven Hotel has in its own grounds most picturesque golf links of nine holes, the fairway running along the bank of Shoalhaven River, and combines flat and hill play. It is acclaimed one of the best natural courses out of Sydney. The links are open to visitors to the hotel free of charge.

There is good river and ocean fishing all year round, and arrangements can be made for parties to be taken to the schnapper grounds per motor launch. For river fishing and visiting surrounding places of interest, good cedar boats are available. The shooting round about is good – the district is a natural feeding ground for gillbirds and is also noted for its ducks when in season. There are two beautiful beaches: on one dressing-sheds and life-lines will be found for surfers...a glassed-in motor launch is sent to meet visitors at the Bomaderry Railway Station.

KIAMA CONTINUED

Kiama's first quarry (now the site of the town's aquatic centre) was established in 1855. Others were opened shortly afterwards.

Up to 30 dray loads a day of crushed stone from the quarries were taken to a fleet of small ships in Robertson Basin. This created an unacceptable amount of dust and continual damage to the surface of the main street, Terralong Street. So, in 1881, it was decided to build a 3' 6" gauge steam tramway down Terralong Street from the quarries to the jetty. Two staithes for loading the stone were erected at Robertson Basin and steam locomotives were imported. However, the tramway did not work effectively and was abandoned.

By 1883 the export of blue metal from Kiama reached 400 tons a day. At times six ships were waiting offshore to load their cargoes. Not all of these arrived at their destinations safely, with at least 11 of these so-called 'stone fleet' coming to grief between Kiama and Sydney. A memorial on Black Beach records the details of one of

these, the *SS Bombo*, which capsized and sank outside Port Kembla harbour in a huge gale after departing Kiama for Sydney on 24th February 1949. Twelve of the fourteen crew lost their lives.

The dust menace in town remained, however, until the tramway idea was later revived. A 2' gauge tramway was built along Terralong Street in 1914 by the Public Works Department and operated until 1941. The blue metal industry was to remain the major employer in the district until the 1960s by which time most of Kiama's quarries had closed.

The railway transformed Kiama in other ways. It made the town more accessible – both to day visitors from Sydney and to holiday makers. So, tourism then became an important part of the town's economy. Upgrades to the Princes Highway and the widespread use of motor cars have since made the town an even more popular tourist destination.

Kiama's easy accessibility has resulted in the town becoming a dormitory suburb of Wollongong, with the town expanding from the 1960s from its compact central area into 'suburbs' such as Kiama Heights, Kiama Downs and Gainsborough.

Much of Kiama's early character has been preserved. Dates on heritage buildings reflect Kiama's growth peak in the 1880s, and rows of modest miners' cottages from No. 24 to No. 44 Collins Street are reminders of the town's important mining history.

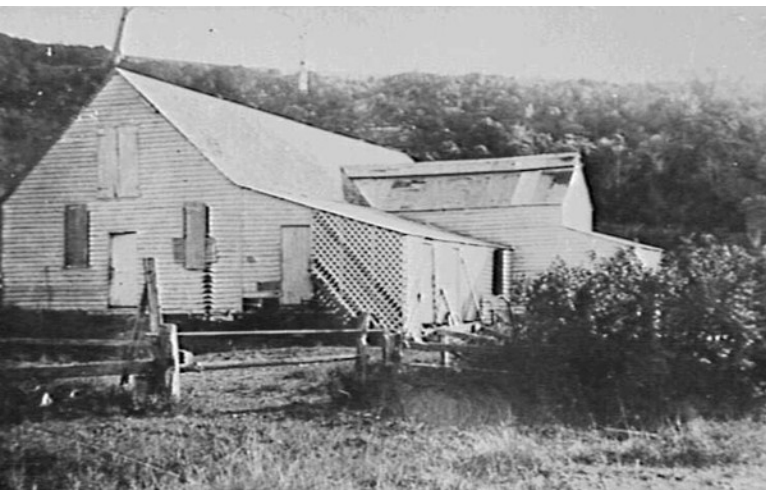
JAMBEROO

Cedar-cutters were the first Europeans to visit the Jamberoo Valley, arriving as early as 1810. The first pioneer settler was a William Davis who received a land grant in 1821. He was followed shortly thereafter by a John Ritchie and a John Cullen.

Michael Hyam, who had acquired property by the late 1830s, laid out the private village of Jamberoo in 1841. The Main South Coast Road (now Jamberoo Road) ran along the northern boundary of his village. At the western end of the town, parcels of land were given to the Protestant Churches; the Presbyterian church and the Methodist Church (now Uniting Church) are still sited on the original lots, the Anglican Church has been moved but the Anglican cemetery still occupies the original site.

Jamberoo (which is an Aboriginal word meaning track) became the first thriving town in the area because it was at the junction of roads from Sydney to Nowra and from the Southern Highlands to the South Coast. Hyam built a hotel (The Harp Inn), stores, blacksmith shop, tannery and boot makers, and a racecourse. (He ultimately sold his property to a Robert Owen in 1846, who divided the estate into 10-40 acres lots.)

In 1838, Woodstock flour and timber mills were built on the bank of the nearby Minnamurra River, creating another village. Woodstock Village later grew to include a brewery and two hotels, piggery, cooperage and bacon factory, and had over 80 residents. The mills, however, experienced a series of financial problems and were ultimately demolished in 1873, leaving no trace of the Woodstock mills or village.



The Pioneer Butter Factory

By the late 1800s the Jamberoo Valley had become a major butter producing area, supporting four butter factories. Factory Lane is a reminder of the location of one. In 1884 the Pioneer Butter Factory, was established in the Jamberoo Valley. It is credited with having been the first co-operative butter factory in Australia, the first Australian factory to use a cream separator (cream separators transformed processing in the dairy industry) and the first Australian factory to successfully ship butter to Great Britain.

From the 1860s to the 1890s, the Australian Illawarra Shorthorn cattle breed (a mix of milking Shorthorn, Ayrshire, and Devon cattle that resulted in a hardy dairy breed) was developed around Jamberoo.

Jamberoo village declined once the main road south from Sydney changed when a road bridge was constructed over the Minnamurra River in 1872 (it was replaced with another in 1890) and the railway extension to Kiama in 1888 bypassed the village.

Today, Jamberoo Action Park is a well-known local attraction. It was opened in October 1980 as Jamberoo Recreation Park on a dairy farm that had become unsustainable as a dairy. Originally it featured grass skiing (and in 1983 hosted the World Grass Skiing Championships) but later moved its major focus to adventure-based and water-based rides.

GERRINGONG

The original inhabitants of the Gerringong area were Aboriginal people of the Dharawal language group, and the name Gerringong is believed to mean 'fearful place' or 'place of peril'. The Aboriginals were moved from the land following the arrival of cedar cutters in the 1810s and then through settlement by farmers (predominantly dairy farmers) from the 1820s.

Surveyor-General John Oxley and Assistant Surveyor-General James Meehan led two separate expeditions through the Gerringong area in late 1819. Oxley's report of good soil in the area heightened the interest in agricultural settlement of the district.

The first land grant in the Gerringong district was made in 1821 to a William Smith who obtained 600 acres – much of it swamp – at Omega, inland from Werri Beach and now on the northern outskirts of Gerringong.

He on-sold it to a Scottish immigrant, Robert Miller, in 1835 who named the property Renfrew Park (after Renfrewshire near Glasgow in Scotland). He immediately set to work on what was considered an impossible task, draining and clearing the swamp lands on his property, ultimately transforming it into some of the area's richest pasture lands.

Land to the north of Smith's holding, up to Mt Pleasant, was granted to Lieut. Thomas Campbell and was named 'Omega Retreat'; land to the west of Smith's holding was acquired by Michael Hindmarsh and was named 'Alne Bank'; most of the land to the south of Gerringong was part of Alexander Berry's Coolangatta Estate.

Campbell's land was transferred to his brother-in-law, James Gray. Gray had 'clearing lease' arrangements with 20 tenants (they were required to clear the land for farming within 5 years). Berry had a similar arrangement with many of his tenants.

In 1824, 600 acres were reserved by Governor Brisbane for Gerringong township. By 1829 it had a post office. In 1854 a town plan for Gerringong was approved and the Governor proclaimed it a village.

In the late 1860s and early 1870s locals started pushing for the construction of a jetty at Gerringong's Boat Harbour, the area that originally had been used by cedar getters to ship logs to Sydney and which later became the shipping hub for local produce. (A store was erected there to cater for the needs of shipping in the 1850s.)

In 1880, a 200 foot-long jetty was constructed, but it proved to be too short to allow coastal ships to berth. So, it was extended by 200 feet, and subsequently by another 100 feet, in the mid-1880s. But, it was to have a short life: it was extensively damaged in a storm in 1891, was rebuilt, only to be damaged again in 1892. Then the South Coast railway line reached Gerringong in 1893 – effectively ending shipping services to the area and making the jetty redundant. Around 1901 much of the jetty was removed and used as bridge material. The last remnants of the jetty were washed away in 1904.

Meanwhile, in 1859 the Municipality of Kiama, incorporating the Gerringong area, was established. Almost immediately Gerringong locals expressed dissatisfaction about how local money was being spent and started lobbying for the establishment of a separate Gerringong municipality. They ultimately were successful and Gerringong Municipal Council was incorporated in 1871. (Gerringong Council and Kiama Council re-amalgamated in 1954!)

In 1872 a significant portion of Gerringong township was destroyed by a bushfire. This the *Sydney Morning Herald's* report of it: ***'dwelling houses, shops, and other buildings, constituting a large proportion of the Village of Gerringong, have been completely destroyed and several families left for the time houseless...the conflagration took its rise from fires which had been kindled in the native timber, the flames being carried from point to point by the violent wind which prevailed during the night of Monday - a wind so violent and continuous...Among the buildings which have been completely destroyed, we may mention the Lanterrick Hotel, Mr Joseph Perkins's store, the Church of England Certified Denominational School, and the teacher's residence adjoining.'***



A Gerringong Co-Operative Dairy Society was established in 1888, to give local dairy farmers greater bargaining power by combining their milk production. The co-op initially operated from a timber building and moved to a brick building near the railway station in 1908, where a siding made it feasible to transport milk to Sydney by train. It was to be the oldest continually operating dairy co-operative in Australia until its closure in 2007.

Many of Gerringong's historic landmarks are identified in a small pamphlet, *'Heritage Walks of Kiama & District'*, available free from local libraries and Visitor Information Centres.

GERROA

Gerroa is at the northern end of Seven Mile Beach. It was the home of the Wadi Wadi Aboriginal tribe that spoke the Dharawal language.

In 1833 William Bland was granted 917 acres of land that included the prominent Black Head point. In February 1842 another 2,500 acres called 'Burke's Farm' was granted to Alexander Berry. It became part of his Coolangatta Estate. Later that same year James McBrien surveyed the land surrounding 'Long Nose Point' (now Black Head Point) on the instructions of Governor Brisbane.

By the 1860s, the northern end of Seven Mile Beach had become a popular horse racing venue. At low tide, the sand was hard and the beach was usually flat. Later car and motor cycle races were held in the same area and, in the 1920s and 1930s Seven Mile Beach became known as the 'Gerringong Speedway'.

In May 1925 the *Daily Telegraph* reported that the Royal Automobile Club of Australia had held its inaugural beach motor racing event at Gerringong. However, 'It was by no means an auspicious beginning, as the rain had made conditions anything but pleasant...many a car became bogged in the sand on the way to the racing track, while the roads leading down to the beach were so treacherous that at least 20 cars had to be abandoned for the night on the hillside.'

Several months later, the Gerringong Council 'took exception' to the Royal Automobile Club holding contests on the beach on a Sunday. 'In view of the council's resolution not to permit Sunday racing, the club is to be advised to arrange such fixtures for Saturdays.'

When the *Daily Guardian* offered a £50 trophy for the first person in Australia to break 100 mph over a mile, Don Harkness (an automotive designer, driver and engineer) built a new car powered by a Hispano Suiza aircraft engine and set the record of 108 mph (170 km/h) at Gerringong Speedway on 7th October 1925. An estimated 2,000 people cheered him along.

On 11th January 1933, Charles Kingsford Smith took off from Seven Mile Beach on the first commercial flight to New Zealand. His journey in the *Southern Cross* took 14 hours 10 minutes to reach New Plymouth in New Zealand. Although he departed at 2.50 am, several hundred visitors and local residents turned out to witness the start of this historic flight.

Kingsford Smith returned to Seven Mile Beach in November 1933 to give joy flights (and raise money). In April 1934 he again visited the beach...but on an emergency landing!

In mid-1933 a Post Office was opened in Gerroa and the name of the locality and town was changed from Crooked River to Gerroa, a derivation of the Aboriginal word 'Jerrawa' meaning 'the place of many birds'.

In 1935 parts of 'Burke's Farm' was subdivided into town blocks. The local Council supported this by constructing roads, bridges and camping facilities in the surrounding area. Then, in 1941, James Emery's adjoining 'Riversleigh' farm was developed into town blocks.

The town then developed into a popular residential and tourist destination. Interestingly, the Jesuits built a retreat at Gerroa in 1957 and, for a period, a number of other Christian organisations also had retreat facilities in the town.

Seven Mile Beach and adjacent lands were gazetted as a National Park in 1971.

Today the town remains a popular destination for holiday makers and retirees.

Seven Mile Beach, Gerroa, January 1933.



THE COOLANGATTA ESTATE

In June 1822, Alexander Berry and his business partner Edward Wollstonecraft obtained a grant of 10,000 acres and were assigned 100 convicts by the NSW Government. They settled on the northern shore of the Shoalhaven River (and to quote Berry) ***at the foot of a hill called by the natives 'Collungatta'***. 'Collungatta' was the Aboriginal word for 'fine view'.

Official European settlement of the NSW South Coast had begun.

The initial grant on the north side of the river rapidly expanded to the south through purchases of grants given to other settlers. By 1863 their property had expanded to more than 40,000 acres.

A self-supporting village was rapidly established at Coolangatta. A combination of convict and free labour was used to drain the swamps, grow tobacco, potatoes, maize, barley and wheat and to rear pigs and cattle, with the latter providing milk, cheese and hides. The Estate also bred thoroughbred horses that were exported to India.

Mills and workshops were established with tradesmen engaged in cask-making, building, leather treatment and, later, the production of condensed milk and gelatine. Shipbuilding was also commenced at an early point, with the first vessel being launched in 1824.

In order to provide shipping access to the Estate, Alexander Berry engaged Hamilton Hume and three convict labourers to cut a 209-yard canal linking the Shoalhaven River (which was often closed at its mouth) to the Crookhaven River. It was completed in just twelve days and was the first canal constructed in Australia.

Edward Wollstonecraft died in 1832, so Berry subsequently invited his three brothers, John, William and David and two sisters to come from Scotland to live at the settlement.

Convict transportation to NSW ended in 1840 and with it free labour. Berry's experience of tenant-farming in Scotland led, in the 1850s, to his introducing an arrangement called 'clearing leases' with new settlers. Under this scheme, tenants were given five years' rent-free to clear and fence an area assigned to them, before they then became the usual rent-paying tenants. This arrangement effectively enabled Berry to develop the Coolangatta Estate and for the township of Broughton Creek (now Berry) to be established.

By 1868 the population of Coolangatta Estate had reached 300 and the area surrounding the Estate was declared a municipality, much to Alexander Berry's disgust. So, he then refused to pay rates on his Coolangatta Estate to the new Shoalhaven Municipality, arguing that his property should not form part of the local government area. Subsequent actions in the NSW Supreme Court and to the Privy Council backed Berry's stance.

In 1873 Alexander Berry died and the Estate passed to his younger brother David. It was David who nurtured the development of the township of Broughton Creek.

David died in 1889 at the age of 94. The following year Broughton Creek village was renamed Berry in honour of Alexander and David's contributions to the area.

Upon David's death, the Coolangatta Estate passed to his cousin, Sir John Hay.

Many improvements to the Coolangatta Estate were

undertaken during John Hay's management and additional land was developed. This resulted, in 1900, in the removal of the last Aboriginal people who had been living at the northern foot of Coolangatta Mountain and their relocation to a newly-established Roseby Park Aboriginal Reserve at Orient Point on the southern side of the Crookhaven River. Health problems in the Coolangatta Aboriginal camp are recorded as the official reason given for their removal.

Sir John died in 1909 and the Estate passed to his half-brother Alexander. He died in 1941 and his son, Alexander Berry Hay, inherited the property.

Under the ownership of Berry Hay, the Estate was not maintained and it severely suffered from neglect. In 1946 the Coolangatta homestead caught fire and was destroyed. Then, in 1947, Berry Hay's second wife sold much of the property to a local farmer, Colin Bishop.

In 1971, in the face of significant advice to the contrary, Colin Bishop began major work to restore the old convict-built buildings at Coolangatta. The original historic village, surrounded by vineyards, is now a major South Coast tourist destination.

SHOALHAVEN HEADS

The Dharawal and Wodi-Wodi Aboriginal peoples were the original inhabitants of the land that is now the site of the village of Shoalhaven Heads.

In 1797 George Bass visited the area on a voyage south from Sydney and named the shallow mouth of the Crookhaven River 'Shoals Haven'. The Shoalhaven River, and Shoalhaven Heads, ultimately derived their names from that.

Alexander Berry's Coolangatta Estate, established in 1822, included the area now known as Shoalhaven Heads. It is likely estate workers visited the area to fish and for seaside recreation.

From about 1830 the current site of Shoalhaven Heads was known as 'Jerry Bailey', a corruption of the original Aboriginal name for the place, Djerrabalay. The name of the village was officially changed to Shoalhaven Heads in 1955.

In 1918 a 50-acre recreation reserve was proclaimed, but it was not until the 1930s that a settlement started to form. After World War II the popularity of the village increased.

Shoalhaven Heads has several links to the Coolangatta Estate. A number of its roads are named after those associated with the settlement of Coolangatta, and the original library at Coolangatta Estate was moved to Shoalhaven Heads to be repurposed as the core of St Peter's Church of England.

BROUGHTON VILLAGE

According to a history of Gerringong, compiled by the Municipal Town Clerk and reproduced in the *Kiama Independent* of 16th May 1951. *'In 1856 the Government decided to form a small township off the western boundary of the Berry Estate...The subdivision provided for forty 2½ acre blocks and 12 twenty-five acre blocks, the new*

township being named Broughton Village. The sale was held in Kiama in 1857, Mr. W. Elliott purchasing 5 lots and Mr. W. Tomlins purchasing seven. The dreams of a township in this locality never eventuated and with the exception of two churches, a school and farm residences and dairies, no other buildings were ever erected... Broughton Village, although never a township, was an important centre for community activities, the School acting as headquarters for a Debating Society...In the 1870's Broughton Village had an active Mutual Improvement Society, its activities including debating and instructive and educational lectures. In more recent years the Gerringong Literary Institute, Junior Farmer's Movement, Foxground-Broughton Village Agricultural Bureau have continued in efforts to improve both the material and cultural growth of district citizens.'

BERRY

The town that is now known as Berry was originally part of Alexander Berry's 10,000-acre Coolangatta Estate.

It was first settled by cedar timber-getters who camped there in 1825, and it then developed into a private town, becoming a centre for sawmilling and dairying.

Originally it was known as Broughton Creek after an Aboriginal who introduced Alexander Berry to the area.

Broughton Creek, itself, is a tributary of the Shoalhaven River and was navigable as far as the south-east boundary of the town. Early travellers to the area were, therefore, able to reach the town from the steamship service to Nowra.

The town developed on high, less flood-prone ground. By 1866 it had a population of 300.

In 1873 Alexander Berry died and his brother David Berry became the owner of Coolangatta Estate, which by then had expanded to an area of 40,000-acres. David Berry proposed the town's rectangular grid of streets, and encouraged the growth of the town by establishing an Agricultural Showground and giving land to four religious denominations (Catholic, Church of England, Methodist and Presbyterian) so churches could be erected on the four corners of the town.

In 1890, after the death of David Berry (by which time Coolangatta Estate had expanded to cover 60,000-acres), the name of the town was changed from Broughton Creek to Berry. Many of the town's streets are named to commemorate members of Queen Victoria's family, and in 1972, a scheme was introduced to plant every street in the town with different trees or shrubs to transform Berry into the 'Town of Trees'.

CAMBWARRA VILLAGE

The original inhabitants of the Cambewarra area were the Dharawal people and the name 'Cumbewarra' or 'Cambewarra' is believed to be derived from their word meaning 'mountain of fire', possible reflecting the frequent cloud that shrouded Cambewarra Mountain.

There was an abundance of cedar in the area and it was cut from 1812. Cedar getting continued to be big business throughout the 1830s and 1840s.

There were settlers in the surrounding area from at least the 1830s. A Charles Staples then owned a 1,280-acre property called 'Cumbewarra Farm'. However, ownership of it passed to Alexander Berry in 1840.

The first settlers in the town, which was then called 'Good Dog', were Alexander Bice and his wife. They arrived in 1851. By 1855 there were 43 voters (property owners, so males) in Good Dog. A private school operated from the mid-1850s and in June 1859 Cambewarra School opened with an enrolment of 48 pupils. (A West Cambewarra School opened in July 1879. It closed in August 1927.) The Post Office opened in 1866 and a School of Arts was established in 1879. It operated with varying success well into the 20th century.

The area became dairying country. A private cheese factory opened in 1889. The Cambewarra and Meroo Dairy Company was established in 1899 and functioned until 1906. Another factory, the Foley Brothers factory, operated until 1912 after which most of the cream from the district was taken to the Nowra Co-operative Dairy Company that had been established in 1901.

Berry's vast Coolangatta Estate extended as far west as Cambewarra Village, with Berry owning several town allotments in the south-eastern section of the town. These properties were auctioned off in 1892.

Cambewarra Village was at its peak in the latter years of the 19th century after a water supply was connected in 1893. It included three hotels (one of which had the sales yards at its rear), the post office, general stores, a bakery, a butcher, a tinsmith, a blacksmith, a bootmaker, a tannery (at one stage there were three tanneries in the area), a saddlery, a soap factory, a solicitor, and a brickworks. The town also supported the School of Arts, a cricket ground, a racecourse and a rifle range.

Originally the town was connected by road to the Bangalee Wharf on the Shoalhaven River, giving it access to shipping and markets. However, from the early 20th century, motor transport became important and this was accompanied by a rise in tourism to the area. A lookout was opened on Cambewarra Mountain in 1910 (those on early coaching parties to the lookout were forced to walk the final section of the road because it was too steep for the horses) and later tea rooms and a kiosk were built at the lookout.

The route of the main highway south (the Princes Highway) and the railway to the east, however, bypassed Cambewarra. That, along with its proximity to Bomaderry and Nowra, ultimately led to the decline of local industries and a shrinking of the village.

In March 1906 a Cambewarra Shire Council was incorporated. It functioned until 1948 when it, along with a number of other small nearby Councils, was merged into the Shoalhaven Shire Council.

BOMADERRY

Bomaderry, on the north side of the Shoalhaven River, became part of Alexander Berry's Shoalhaven Estates after he had built a road to it in 1858 from his Coolangatta Estate. The township was formally established in 1882. Its name comes from an Aboriginal word for "fighting ground" or "running water".

After the death of its then-owner, David Berry, in 1889, the Shoalhaven Estate was divided up, and in 1892 hundreds of blocks of land were offered for sale. These were to the west of the railway line from Kiama – an extension of the railway line from Sydney to Kiama - that opened in 1893. The opening of the railway line spurred Bomaderry's growth, attracting several significant businesses.

In 1900, Denham Bros. built a bacon and ham factory. A condensed milk factory opened in 1901, originally near the railway station before later being moved to the bank of the Shoalhaven River near Bolong Road. And, in 1912, the Nowra Co-op Dairy Company established a milk depot at Bomaderry.

More recently, a £10-million paper mill was opened at Bomaderry in the 1950s. It produced security-grade paper used in documents such as passports and birth certificates. It operated until August 2015, by which time it was unable to compete with cheaper imported papers. Its land and buildings were sold to the Manildra Group that operated nearby.

In the early 1970s, Manildra became a major employer in Bomaderry, establishing a starch plant and a glucose plant to extract starch and gluten from flour. In 1991 it commenced ethanol production at Shoalhaven Starches. Manildra built a railway siding from near the Bomaderry railway station to its works to streamline transportation of its products.

The town also housed a Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home. This was established in 1908 by the United Aborigines Mission, one of the largest Christian-based missions in Australia, to provide a place for Aboriginal orphans and others in need of care who were under the age of 10. (Once the children reached the age of 10, they were returned to the care of the Aborigines Protection (Welfare) Board and were often sent into domestic service.) It was the first home to be established for Aboriginal children in NSW and became the longest-running Aboriginal Children's Home in NSW. Up to 47 children were housed in dormitories or cottages at the home. The Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home closed in 1988.

TERARA

Terara was the original settlement on the southern shores of the Shoalhaven River, before a number of major floods caused its residents to move slightly west to higher ground – to the area that developed into the township of Nowra.

The fertile floodplains of the Shoalhaven River had obvious attractions to early settlers. In 1824 a French tea trader and merchant, Prosper De Mestre, was promised a 1,200-acre land grant on the southern shore of the Shoalhaven River by Governor Thomas Brisbane. However, he did not receive the grant until 1836 when he was finally given it by Governor Richard Bourke. He named the property 'Terrara' that subsequently became 'Terara'. (It is believed 'Terrara' was an Aboriginal word meaning 'place of shrubs'.)

A substantial township was then developed and became the commercial centre for the district. A wharf (Adams Wharf) was built on the river and a bank, several large general stores, hotels, a School of Arts, an iron foundry,

flour mill, school, post and telegraph office, town hall and churches were erected.

De Mestre himself had been a very successful businessman (he was one of the early directors of the Bank of New South Wales), but like many other South Coast pioneers (most notably Benjamin Boyd) he was bankrupted in the early 1840s following the onset of a severe economic depression. He was forced to sell his many properties in Sydney and relocated to Terara, where he died in September 1844.

From 1860 to 1870 Terara was impacted by a number of severe floods.

In February 1860 a flood carried 54 dwellings and shops and 21 barns downstream. Potato, wheat and barley crops were completely destroyed and 387 head of cattle, 22 horses and 601 pigs were drowned. The *Illawarra Mercury* (21.2.1860) reported:

'...Commencing at Burrier above the navigable part of the river the water suddenly rose 120 feet, and rushed a perfect avalanche, as if the pent up waters of an inland sea, for years accumulating, burst its barrier banks, and poured down directed by the avenging hand of an angry God, upon the district, devoted to destruction, sweeping all before it...

I now come to the great, the awful, and most appalling scene of wild desolation, irrecoverable wreck, loss of life, and annihilation of houses and property - Terara Township. It would appear as if the avenging fury and power of the flood were reserved for the special destruction of this locality. Truly, it is a melancholy and soul-harrowing sight, to look abroad upon the spots where goodly dwellings once stood, and happy, too confident families, once dwelt - living in peace and comfort, the creation of their own industry, and smiling in contentment and feelings of independence.

The following houses, with all the furniture and property, have been destroyed, the greater number washed wholly away:- The Commercial Bank, cash and bills saved through the great exertion of the manager, Mr. Whittingham, and at



much risk; Mr. Holmes' dwelling-house and goods much injured in the Terara Store; the steamer store burst open, and turned round, front on to the river, it is a complete wreck; the bank manager's house washed away; Widow Mallock, and store, washed away, body not yet found; Griffiths' house, built on sleepers, raised on blocks two feet, washed away.

Here a heartrending scene occurred. Mr. Griffiths took his aged mother on his back, made four attempts to carry her to the Royal Victoria Hotel, and each time was driven back by the eddy formed by the water rushing against it; at length, going with the flood, he swam and waded, still carrying his mother, until he reached Terara Steam Mill exhausted, he laid his mother down, and, as he did so, she died. Nothing but the great moral power of his filial love and high sense of duty could, with God's help, have given him the physical strength and courage to breast the raging torrent as he did for so long a distance, and throughout so great and so protracted a struggle. May God reward him for his labour of love, even though that labour was lost.'
(And so on...)

Another major flood followed in July, but that was nothing compared to one in early April 1870:

'It is my painful duty to record the visitation of a most ominous flood to our district. We ought to be very thankful that no human life was sacrificed, considering the rapid rise of the sweeping river, or that no dwellings were hurled down mind the giant fury of the destructive element. The great flood of 1860, which will never be forgotten for the lamentation and woe it left through our district, was a warning of terror to everyone, and had the salutary effect which experience taught of necessitating the farmers on our river to erect their dwellings on elevated ground...

Terrara House,
now a venue for weddings and other events



The accounts from Terara are the same as usual - the submerging of that unfortunate township, and the water level in the houses at various depths, from a few inches to a few feet. There are many houses erected here on high blocks, which, of course, rendered them safe from the flood, but, had the rain continued twenty-four hours longer, who can tell what would have been the result. It is madness in people remaining on such low, unsafe localities when they have elevated grounds above floods to fly to... The Company's storm wharf at Terara was swept away; a new wharf has been erected for the accommodation of the shippers. Strange to say one of the stone blocks was moved away from under the Company's store, and several of the ironbark sleepers for the new Government wharf lying handy thereto were shifted several yards. This will show the force of the current in this port, which was fearful...'

Moving the main commercial centre for the district to higher ground at Nowra then became inevitable.

De Mestre's Terara estate was purchased by a Mr. Hugh Mackenzie in 1886. He built the (surviving) 23 room mansion between 1900 and 1904, using sandstone that was quarried several miles upstream and floated down the river on barges from Flat Rock. Then, in 1926, it was sold to Michael Hyam who operated the estate as a dairy farm.

NUMBAA

Numbaa is now a farming area but was once the site of a reasonably substantial village.

It was part of the large 1822 land grant to Alexander Berry and Edward Wollstonecraft that straddled the Shoalhaven River. Because the soils on the south side of the river were more fertile it immediately became a farming area for corn, potatoes and wheat... with Alexander Berry building a substantial grannery/flour mill in 1830 in nearby Pyree before it was realised that wheat developed rust and was, therefore, an unsuitable crop. Dairying then became a substantial pursuit.

A large dairy was developed by Alexander Berry at Jindyandy, close to Upper Numbaa. This was strategically placed three miles from the river bank to reduce risks from flooding.

A Jindyandy Butter Factory operated from 1889 to 1902. From 1912 to 1927 the Fresh Food and Ice Company used the old butter factory to receive milk that it then shipped to the Sydney market. (At one stage a steamship service operated four times a week, connecting Numbaa with Sydney.) After 1927 cream from dairies in the area was taken to the Nowra Co-operative.

The first farm south of the Shoalhaven was at Numbaa. Numbaa also housed the first Presbyterian church in the Nowra district (initially one built of cabbage tree tops, which was replaced in 1855 by a large iron church) and Numbaa was the site of the district's first post office. A punt at Numbaa across the Shoalhaven River was installed in 1858. By 1866 Numbaa had a population of around 200. A public school operated in Numbaa from 1883 to 1953. The township also included other churches, a hotel, a courthouse, a bakery, a ballroom, quite a number of cottages, a cemetery, and a race track.

In 1868 the Municipality of Numbaa was incorporated. It seems to have amalgamated with, or been taken over by, another municipality by the early 20th century, a July 1931 newspaper reporting *'Perhaps the oldest building, certainly the most historic connection with the early days, of this district was demolished last week, at Numbaa. It comprised the old courthouse, gaol, library and council chambers, and in later days, in the time of the late Mr. Edward Pritchard, did service as a blacksmith shop for the proprietor, Mr. Geo. Coulthart, who was the village smithy there for quite a number of years...In the early days it was regarded as one of the most pretentious structures established under Government dictation for the object of maintaining law and order, and providing good local government in every sense of the word.'*

On 30th March 1892 Berry's Numbaa estates, which then *'consisted of between 5000 and 6000 acres, apportioned into some 108 farms from 20 to 200 acres'* were sold at auction.

Numbaa township declined (and eventually disappeared) as Terara, and later Nowra, grew.

PYREE

Pyree means 'a place of box trees' in the language of the local Jerinja Aboriginal people.

In 1852 it was leased to Alexander Aberdeen when it was known as "Swamp Paddock". From about 1867 it became known as 'Pyree' and officially received that name in 1910.

In 1860 a public school was opened. A new brick building replaced it in 1877 and that school operated until 1976.

A Post Office opened in Pyree in May 1869.

In 1830 convicts built a 3-storey grain mill at nearby Jindyandy. Today it is heritage listed and is one of the oldest convict-built buildings south of Sydney.

From as early as 1889 the building became a butter factory. It was the Shoalhaven's first, and at that time NSW's largest. It closed in 1902. The building became derelict until it was restored by a local builder, John Smith, in the late 1980s.

The Pyree area boasts a significant number of surviving heritage-listed sites, underlining the historical importance of the area. Among these is the Pyree School of Arts & Literary Institute that was built by the local community in 1894 on land donated by John Hay, the then-owner of the Berry Estate. During that first year, 1894, debates, concerts, and dances were held and a piano was purchased. The following year a library was added. In fact, the local community became so active that it was once said 'Pyree could put on a concert within 24 hours' notice'. The front room of the building was used by the South Shoalhaven Municipal Council as their chambers between 1936 and 1948.

GREENWELL POINT

Greenwell Point was developed and thrived as the principal port for the Coolangatta Estate and then for the wider Shoalhaven area.

It was named after an Aboriginal doctor, 'Greenwell', who was well-known for being able to treat snakebites and toothache.

Some histories suggest that the area originally belonged to a retired naval surgeon, Dr William Elyard, who swapped it in 1829 with Alexander Berry of the Coolangatta Estate for land at Brundee (between Nowra and Pyree). Elyard certainly owned Orchard Farm at Brundee (also known as Berrellan, which explains the name of one street in Greenwell Point) from 1838 to 1850; and Berry constructed a wharf using convict labour at Greenwell Point in August 1829.

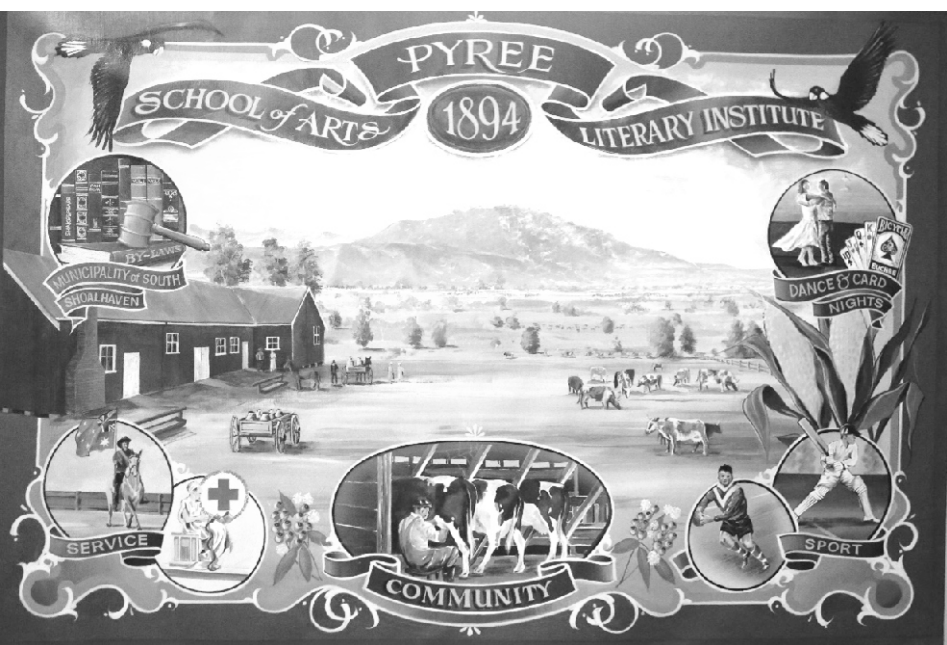
It seems the first settlement at Greenwell Point occurred around 1835.

Greenwell Point was an ideal location for ships to berth and load. It was just up from the mouth of the Crookhaven River, so provided some shelter for shipping from the open sea and, with the construction of Berry's Canal linking the Shoalhaven and Crookhaven Rivers, it served the small vessels that worked both rivers. The wharf at Greenwell Point was to become the Shoalhaven River's main wharf.

Alexander Berry not only built the wharf, but provided mooring chains across the shipping channel that would be picked up by dropping the ship's anchor as a vessel approached the wharf (an anchor that was at the seaward end of this braking chain is preserved in Anzac Park). He also provided a ketch, the *Gimboli*, that transported produce from his tenants' farms to the wharf, and constructed the road linking Numbaa to Greenwell Point.

Over time, buildings such as storehouses were constructed near the wharf. And in June 1865 Thomas Mann, who surveyed Nowra township, surveyed the road from Nowra to Greenwell Point. In 1866 a steamer service was operating on the Shoalhaven River from Greenwell Point to Terara.

At around this time, the Greenwell Point area had a population of about 50 and was exhibiting signs of permanency. In 1870 the Greenwell Point Public School was opened with an enrolment of 20 children (it closed



Goodnight Island and Greenwell Point

in 1939 because of low enrolments, but reopened in 1954), and in 1879 the Greenwell Point Post Office was opened.

By 1872 the southern arm of the Crookhaven River had been opened to large steamers and within a year Greenwell Point had become the fourth busiest port in the state after Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle. So, that same year, local boatmen erected a light tower at the nearby entrance to the Crookhaven River to make shipping safer. It utilised a brass lantern that was hoisted up to a cross piece on a ship's mast. It was replaced by a timber lighthouse in 1882 that functioned until 1904 when the 7-metre brick Crookhaven Lighthouse was built.

In 1879, a public wharf was built at Greenwell Point. In 1885 Numbaa Municipal Council took over the wharf and leased it to the Berry Estate. This wharf was to cater to ships up to 80-metres in length.

In 1883 a businessman, George Haiser (after whom Haiser Road, Shoalhaven Heads, is named), started collecting and then farming oysters. These he shipped to Sydney, Melbourne and Western Australia. His oyster business employed up to 30 men.

George Haiser was also an early leaseholder of Goodnight Island in the Crookhaven River, opposite Greenwell Point (it was named after an Aboriginal, Charley Goodnight, who is recorded as having received several blankets in the late 1830s and early 1840s), where he erected a house. This was later converted into the 'Goodnight Island Guest House', a very early example of a tourist Guest House being located on an island setting. 'The Guesthouse accommodated 46 guests and included a ballroom, lounge room, pianola, wireless etc. Other amenities consisted of a 9-hole golf course and putting green, 2 tennis courts, swimming baths (25 x 30 yards), a large launch for fishing and picnic parties.' Haiser is also remembered because he 'took a most lively interest in the welfare of the aborigines, and was ever ready with sympathy of a tangible kind, and worked zealously to better their conditions, alike in his private capacity and as a member of the Roseby Park Aborigines' Board of Control'.

The road to Greenwell Point was not sealed until 1950 and the town did not receive a water supply until 1957, although electricity had been connected in 1941.

In 1980 the public wharf at Greenwell Point was replaced by a fisherman's wharf. Today, Greenwell Point is a popular tourist destination, known for its fishing and oyster farming.



KANGAROO VALLEY

Surveyor-explorer George Evans was the first European to sight the Kangaroo Valley in 1812 on travels north from his exploration of Jervis Bay. He reportedly claimed that the valley offered a view that 'no painter could beautify.'

European settlement of the Kangaroo Valley began when Richard Brooks, a cattleman, took cattle into the valley in 1817 from the Berrima-Sutton Forest area of the Southern Highlands. Then, in 1820, he took up a land grant in the valley. Cedar-getting also commenced around this time, with the Kangaroo Valley becoming renowned for its red cedar.

In 1818 another explorer, Charles Throsby, was commissioned to find a route from the Southern Highlands to Jervis Bay. With the help of local Aboriginals he did so, probably following a line close to today's Cambewarra Road. In 1821 he returned to the Valley and noted that Brooks had cattle in the area near today's Hampden Bridge.

The area was surveyed by Robert Hoddle in 1831.

By the mid-1840s, a number of dairy farmers had moved to the Valley, specialising in the production of butter. Their earliest exports from the Valley were taken by mules to Wollongong and were then shipped to Sydney.

Local farming reached a peak in the 1870s (by the end of that decade there were probably 1,400 people living in the Valley, slightly more than are doing so today), so it was decided to construct a two-span timber truss bridge across the Kangaroo River. This survived until being washed away a few days after the opening, in August 1898, of the impressive Hampden Bridge (the second most-photographed bridge in NSW, after the Sydney Harbour Bridge) with its four sandstone towers that bear a resemblance to an English castle.

The Valley has changed very little in the past 130-or-so years. Tourism, though, has probably now surpassed agriculture as the Valley's primary source of income.



Hampden Bridge



1930s

NOWRA

The explorer Charles Throsby is credited with having recorded the local Aboriginal name for the Shoalhaven area in 1818 – 'Nou-woo-ro', meaning 'black cockatoo'. This subsequently was adapted to become the name of the principal local town, Nowra.

Initially, Terrara was the centre of settlement on the southern shores of the Shoalhaven River. However, two major floods in 1870 resulted in Terrara being abandoned in preference for settlement at the 'Village of Nowra', which was located on higher ground. From there, Nowra's position as the area's principal town was reinforced:

Nowra township site had been gazetted in 1852 after it was surveyed by Thomas Mann. (The municipality was incorporated in 1871.)

Then, in 1866, a public ferry that linked the east side of Bomaderry Creek (on the north side of the Shoalhaven River) to Ferry Lane (on the south side of the River) started – a service that was (even though a more expensive service) more convenient than a service that had been established by Alexander Berry which connected the eastern side of Broughton Creek (on the northern side of the Shoalhaven River) to Numbaa (on the southern side of the River, downstream from Terrara). (That ferry crossing, of course, made total sense to Berry's interests, because his focus was on developing the township of Broughton Creek, later to be renamed Berry!)

Then the Nowra road bridge opened in 1881. This is a structurally-interesting wrought iron 'Whipple Truss' bridge that was prefabricated in America. At its opening it was suggested 'it is intended to be used at present for ordinary traffic, but may ultimately be appropriated for the purposes of railway traffic also', although its narrow 20-foot wide carriageway made this impossible.

Between 1881 and 1891 the population of Nowra virtually doubled to 1,705.

Then, in 1893, the railway link was completed between Kiama and Bomaderry. (The government surveyed a route and allocated Crown land to extend the railway as far as Jervis Bay. Somewhat optimistically, a street in Nowra was named Station Street in anticipation of this railway extension.)

By that time, Nowra was exhibiting all the signs of permanency: in 1861 a post office service was commenced

(the post office building being erected in 1883); it had a newspaper, the 'Shoalhaven Telegraph', which was published from 1879; the present courthouse was opened in 1897; the Nowra police station in 1900 (converted to a museum in 1980); the first factory of the Nowra Co-operative Dairy Company opened in 1902; gas lights were installed in the town in 1902; coal gas became available in Nowra in 1905; electricity was introduced in 1927 (after Bomaderry!).

A rock barrier on the Shoalhaven River initially prevented ships from sailing right up to Nowra.



This was blasted away in 1904, thereby making the town more accessible.

During World War I, one of the ten 'snowball' recruiting marches that took place in NSW started in Nowra. It departed from Nowra on November 30th 1915 and basically headed up the coast, ending on 17th December



1915 at the Domain in Sydney. The marchers became known as the Waratahs, and around 120 volunteers were recruited from the march. During World War II Nowra became a military town with up to 1,500 personnel stationed at RAAF Nowra (now HMAS Albatross; the facility was transferred by the RAAF to the Royal Australian Navy in August 1947) from July 1941, and with ships and submarines from the British Pacific Fleet passing through Jervis Bay in 1945. RAAF Nowra provided torpedo attack training to Allied forces in the South Pacific, utilising a torpedo dropping range in Jervis Bay and a bombing range on the Beecroft Peninsula (the northern peninsula to Jervis Bay). A Base Torpedo Unit (hence BTU Road) was also established at RAAF Nowra where

torpedos were serviced and maintained.

In the 1960s and 1970s the central business district in Nowra changed dramatically, with the demolition of many of the older-style wooden buildings.

In 1980 a new road bridge (which now carries southbound traffic) was built across the Shoalhaven River and in 1983 the main road south was re-routed to by-pass the centre of the town. A second road bridge (now carrying northbound traffic) was opened in February 2023.



YALWAL

Yalwal was a mining town that grew from the discovery of silver in the area in 1849 and gold in 1852.

Sluicing operations began in 1870 but were disrupted by the great flood of 1871 that resulted in the occupation and development of Nowra township. In 1872 open cut gold mining operations were begun at The Pinnacle after the main reef was discovered.

Gold mining operations continued at Yalwal for about thirty years, with some extremely rich patches of ore-bearing rock being extracted from mines such as The Pinnacle, The Caledonian, The Pioneer, and The Homeward Bound. However, mostly low-grade deposits were encountered in the area, but because the extraction and treatment of the gold-bearing ores from Yalwal was undertaken at a lower cost than in any other part of the State, mining remained a profitable undertaking.

During the 1890s the township had three stores, a cemetery, a bank, a hotel and a School of Arts.

Commercial mining at Yalwal effectively ended during the First World War. Major pieces of equipment and some of the houses were then dismantled and sold off. Bushfires in 1939 destroyed most of the village that remained. Construction of the Danjera Dam, as part of the Shoalhaven water supply, in 1964 finally ended the township's existence.

Today, there is a picnic area at Danjera Dam, Yalwal. Some mine shafts and other diggings, the graveyard (the oldest grave dated 1854) and a five-head stamping battery can still be seen.



Yalwal,
1902

The Homeward
Bound mine
at Yalwal



*We will continue the journey south in the next issue of **Recollections**.
Simply email 'Send Recollections' to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com
to ensure you receive a copy.*

Surveyor Spencer Bransby

(c1816 – 1874)

The following notice appeared in the *Government Gazette* in September 1858:

Department of Land and Public Works,

Sydney 2nd September, 1858,

SURVEYOR OF THE SECOND CLASS.

HIS Excellency the Governor General, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to appoint Mr. Spencer L. Bransby, to be a Surveyor of the Second Class in the Department of the Surveyor General.

JOHN ROBERTSON.

Bransby's appointment was obviously welcomed. This from the *Goulburn Herald* on September 18th 1858: *The last number of the Goulburn Herald noticed the appointment of Spencer L. Bransby, Esq., as Government Surveyor and a Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district of Monaro. From the estimation in which this gentleman is held, I am certain it is an announcement which will give general satisfaction.*

Prior to this, Bransby had obviously been working in the Bega area. A history of Bega (in the *Bega District News* of 16th June 1941) recorded that *During March 1857, Mr. Licensed Surveyor Spencer Bransby reported to the Surveyor-General that "the inhabitants of Bega requiring a general cemetery have requested me to apply on their behalf for eight acres to be laid out in the usual manner in allotment 5 of section 46, bounded on the east by Auckland Street, on the north by Upper Street (now the site of the Bega High School and the recently-vacated Police Station)...The ground is very suitable for the purpose, being on a rise, clear and good digging, with easy access." The cemetery site, as desired, was measured in April, 1857, in allotments for each denomination, and was dedicated on 16th July, 1863.*

That same year, he built the Family Hotel building (now the Bega Pioneers' Museum building) on the corner of Auckland and Bega Streets.

In 1871 Spencer Bransby was one of the signatories to a petition from residents of Bega, asking that the town be incorporated '*because the town and suburbs of Bega are almost impassable, and little or no expenditure has been made by the Government to remedy the evil; and because they consider that the only means of keeping pace with other towns is by local taxation, and obtaining a fair share of the Government endowment for necessary local works.*'

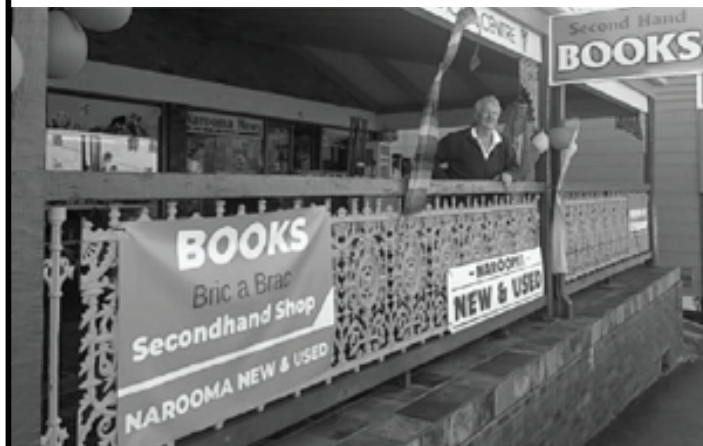
Bransby died at Coxon's Hotel, Moruya on October 23rd 1874. This is how the *Monaro Mercury* (4th November 1874) recorded his passing: *Intelligence was received by telegram from Moruya that Mr. Bransby died there last week...The late Mr. Bransby may be said to have nursed our young township, and many of the best farms about Bega, land now worth extravagant rates, depend for their boundary line on the old track of Surveyor Bransby's chain. The deceased was a native of Ipswich, England, and was educated as a Surveyor, and came to this colony nearly a quarter of a century ago, He came to Bega under engagement with the Messrs. Manning twenty years since, at the time they purchased the Walker's station properties*

[these included the land that was to become the Kameruka Estate]. After completing his engagement with the Mannings, Mr. Bransby assisted Mr. Drake, the then District Surveyor, for some time, and was afterwards appointed to the office. The township of Bega was then laid out on the north side of the river, but Mr. Bransby seeing that the main trade must come from this side, laid out the present township and named its streets. He at one time owned considerable properties in and about the town, but soured by family troubles and the loss of an only son, he gave way to intemperate habits, and his properties one by one were lost to him. He was recently employed in some surveys on the Bodalla Estate, and his health, which had been for some time failing, seems to have given way just as his work was completed and he expired on Friday last in the 58th year of his age.

WHY DO PEOPLE COME TO NAROOMA JUST TO VISIT NAROOMA NEW & USED?

They have discovered a veritable 'Aladdin's Cave' absolutely overflowing with valuable hidden treasures and bargains – pre-loved and brand new.

Choose from thousands of books, thousands of CDs and records, imaginative gifts, homewares, objets d'art, knick-knacks and odds & ends.



WE BUY...SWAP...AND SELL

124 Wagonga St, Narooma - ☎ 4476 1107

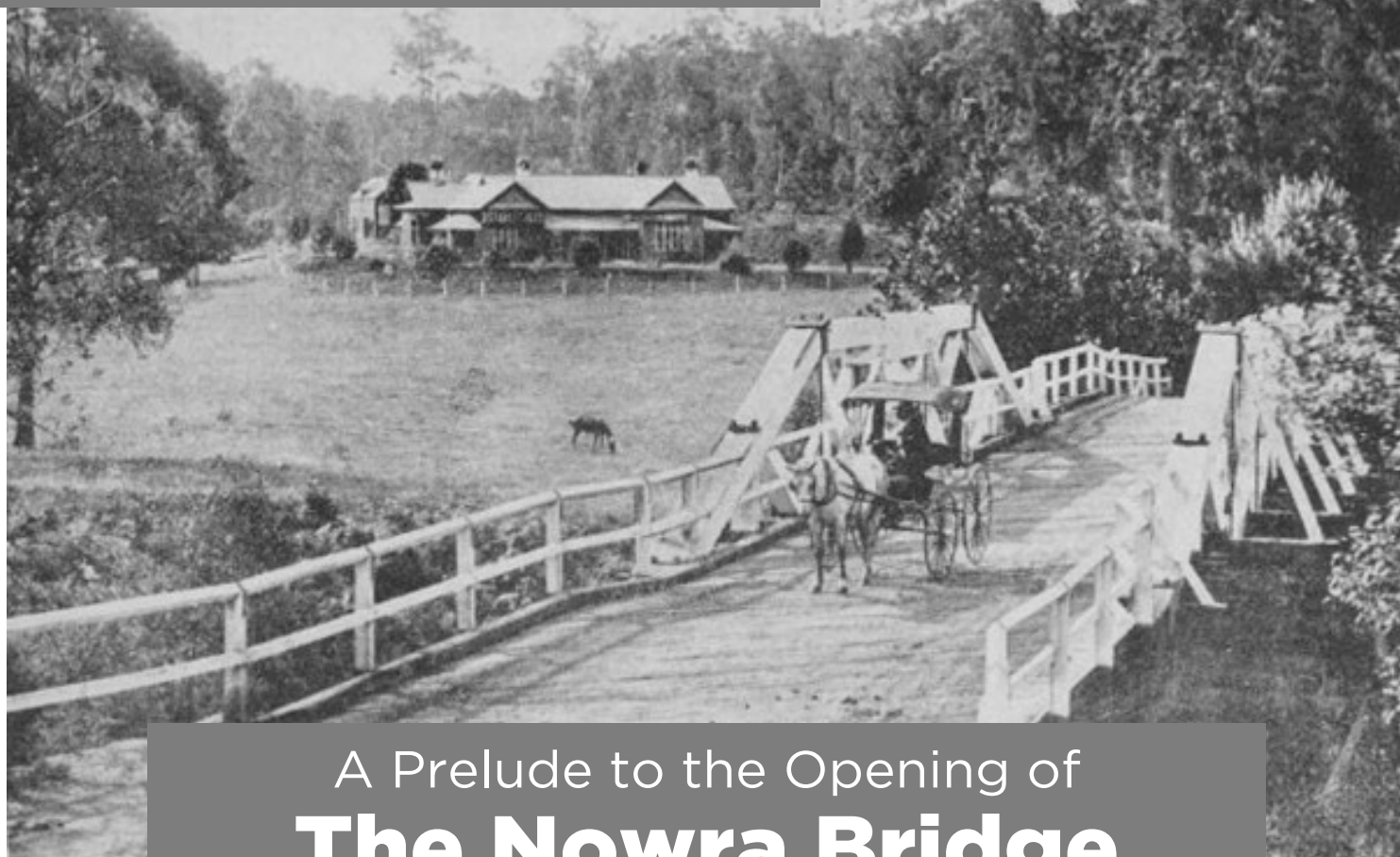
sugar bush creative

DESIGN | MOTION GRAPHICS | WEBSITES

0473 246 568

maryanne@sugarbushcreative.com.au

www.sugarbushcreative.com.au



A Prelude to the Opening of **The Nowra Bridge**

This is a photograph, taken in 1903, of what appears to be an unremarkable timber truss bridge.

The bridge actually spans Bomaderry Creek which, then, was just 100 metres north of the Shoalhaven River. The house in the background is 'Lynburn', and it's still there.

On August 1st 1881 *'At half past eleven the discharge of a round of shots in the cutting a short distance north of the Bunberra Bridge announced the arrival of the Minister for Works (the Hon. John Lackey, who had travelled down from Moss Vale that morning on Mr Thompson's mail coach)... As the party approached, the flags were dipped in honour of the Minister. The bridge was tastefully and liberally decorated with flags and two wreathes of Burrawang fronds, interwoven with flowers. From the main truss on the west side was suspended the bottle of champagne, and here Mr Lackey halted, and in a few appropriate words christened the structure 'The Bunberra Bridge' amid the ringing cheers of the assemblage.'* (*The Telegraph and Shoalhaven Advertiser*, 4th August 1881)

Timber truss bridges, such as this, were not uncommon at the time. Several hundred of them were built to provide crossings of creeks and rivers throughout the state. The ready availability of hardwoods, such as ironbark, made them an attractive, cheap and easy option, and the enormous costs of the imported wrought iron railway bridges at Menangle, Penrith, and Goulburn almost bankrupted the fragile economy of New South Wales. So only metal bridges that had essential technical merits were then permitted to be constructed in the state.

What made Bunberra Bridge special, and why it was

officially christened that day, was that it provided the access to the recently completed 'Nowra Bridge' – a totally different, very much grander structure.

Providing a bridge that crossed the Shoalhaven River clearly was a necessity if Nowra and the area to its south was ever to develop. The engineering challenges at that time, though, were significant.

YOUR ONE-STOP SOUTH COAST **HISTORY SHOP** WHERE EVERYTHING IS FREE

We're open 24/7. 365 days of the year - so visit us anytime!

You'll discover hundreds and hundreds of fascinating, intriguing South Coast history stories - the histories of South Coast town and villages, stories about the South Coast pioneers and outstanding South Coast women, details about South Coast Industries, interesting South Coast buildings, shipping and lighthouses (and, of course, the inevitable shipwrecks!), all about roads and bridges, fires and floods... and much, much more!

And copies of every issue of 'Recollections' (all 58 of them) are also available.

www.southcoasthistory.org.au

Now helping you hear, still helping you save

Audiology now available at Bega

Visit your local Audiology Professional
Laurena Chai. They'll take the time to
understand your individual needs and tailor
solutions to fit your lifestyle and help you
save on latest technology hearing aids.

Specsavers Bega
Bega Village
(Near Woolworths)
6492 5000

specsavers.com.au/hearing



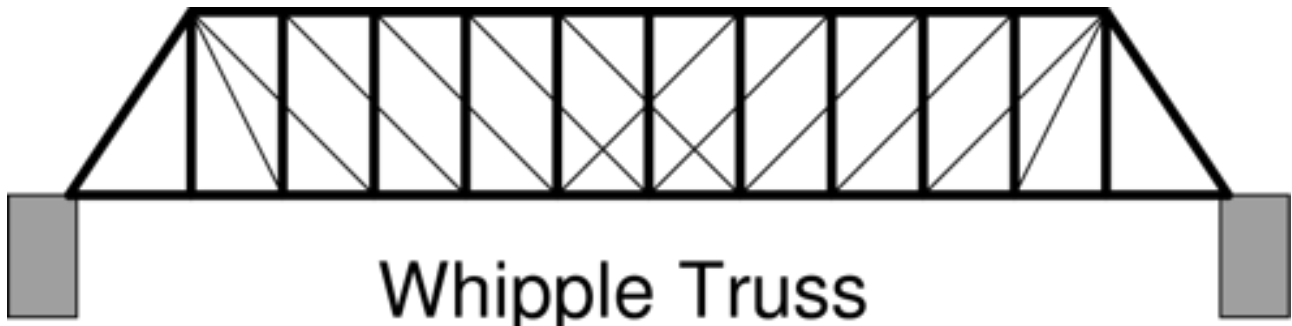
Specsavers

In 1876 planning for the construction of a timber bridge over the Shoalhaven River had begun. It's not known why these plans were eventually abandoned, but a timber truss bridge would have made river navigation very difficult because of the large number of piers that would have to have been erected across the river.

The ultimate solution was to purchase a 1,100-foot long, pre-fabricated, cast-iron 'Whipple Truss Bridge' from the United States. This had a number of advantages – it was cheaper than alternative bridges, it could be erected quickly, it had spans that could reach up to 300-feet and (because its tension members [the diagonal braces on each side of the bridge above the roadway] cross two or more bays of the bridge [these bays being defined by the vertical members]) it was able to support greater weights than alternative bridges. The cost was £28,368.

The specifications for the bridge were for it to be able to be both a road bridge and a railway bridge, with the specifications even including reference to NSW railways locomotives having a weight of up to 38½ tons. Whether it was seriously considered that this bridge would ever serve as a railway bridge is debatable; it certainly was built in the 'age of rail' and before motor vehicles appeared, but there were no firm plans at the time to extend the railway south of Bomaderry and, as it transpired (see below), the bridge piers may not have been sufficiently strong to support substantial rail traffic.

The purchase of this American bridge was controversial. NSW then was still a British colony, and railway technology had been pioneered by the British, so the use of American designs was seen as both a break from tradition and unpatriotic. But pragmatism won the day – the alternative British-designed bridge was tendered to cost



Diagonals are under tension. They cross the neighboring vertical

£35,758 and was only capable of supporting a lesser load.

Before construction of the bridge commenced, *'one span of the Nowra Bridge was exhibited at the Sydney Exhibition in competition with a span of the Iron Cove bridge built by an English firm, and the judges with a commendable regard for the feelings of the exhibitors awarded the bridges equal honours.'*

It took just 20 months to construct the bridge. 9½ months were spent building the nine piers on which the bridge was to sit, and then it took just 4 months to assemble the superstructure.

There were problems with the piers. Caissons (metallic hollow outer shells, which were later filled with concrete) were screwed down into 'stiff black clay' at the bottom of the river (so, not all hit bedrock) with one pier subsequently dropping three foot eight inches after it had been installed, obviously necessitating rectification. (Three others also dropped from between three inches and seven inches.)

Returning, however, to the opening of the bridge. Having officially opened and christened Bunberra Bridge, *'Tho procession then, headed by the band, proceeded to the large bridge over the Shoalhaven. At this point the crowd was so numerous that it was difficult for the police to open a passage for the party to get to the bridge. (All businesses in Nowra, with the exception of hotels, had closed for the day, schools were closed, and three steamers bought residents from communities downstream of the bridge so that they could attend the opening.)...Mr. Lackey then named it 'The Nowra Bridge' in the usual way by breaking a bottle of Champagne on the second post of the eastern side. The procession then marched over the bridge.'* Thompson's mail coach had the honour of being the first vehicle to cross the bridge after it was declared open.

Within a couple of years, the local newspaper was reporting *'reckless persons riding over the bridge at such a pace as to create alarm and danger to orderly people whose business leads them over the bridge' and 'the careless driving of herds of cattle across the bridge'*. There was some discussion about introducing a toll on the bridge

'because a man or two would always be in attendance...checking the furious riding of the racing mono-maniacs' and/or restricting the hours when cattle could be driven across the bridge.

Eventually, in 1937, a pedestrian footbridge was added along the eastern side of the Nowra Bridge. Within months, however, the Council was debating what action should be taken to deal with the cyclists and cattle that were using this newly-installed pedestrian crossing!

The Bunberra Bridge has long gone, its site now covered by the approaches to the Nowra Bridge.

The Whipple Truss Nowra Bridge was closed to traffic in February 2023 and, because *'it is a remarkable example of a pin-jointed Whipple truss bridge, showcasing its intricate engineering and architectural design, its sturdy construction and charming aesthetics'*, it is being preserved. The footbridge that was added in 1937 has been removed and the bridge itself is being repurposed as a pedestrian and cyclist's bridge.

The bridge took 20-months in total to build – its refurbishing/repurposing however is taking a great deal longer, with the expected re-opening date currently late-2027!



Building The Bridge I



Building The Bridge II

Jervis Bay

We received an interesting note from Lieutenant Commander J David Jones RAN Retd, who had been museum manager at HMAS Creswell, about the 'correct' pronunciation of Jervis Bay (see article in *Recollections* 57).

He suggests 'Jurvis' or 'Jarvis' - neither is wrong or right!

The real issue in this long running debate is not about spelling and not about 'correct' pronunciation but is one about accent.

Pronunciation, simply, is the way in which a word is spoken, and it is interesting that the Geographical Names Board, when asked, did not offer a 'correct' pronunciation for Jervis Bay, but deemed that it should be determined 'by popular usage'.

'Popular usage' is a very loose determination. What is popular in one social, cultural or geographical context is very often different in another. We generally call these differences 'accents' rather than 'wrong' pronunciations. Accents are a way of speaking, typical of a particular group of people.

So maybe we are debating pronunciation when we should be accepting different accents. To illustrate, we don't say to a New Zealander that they are 'wrong', even though they say 'bist men' when Australians would say 'best man'

- they are just different!

One such context, highlighted by the article, is within the Royal Australian Navy where Jervis is normally sounded as Jarvis. This is not 'wrong'. Admiral Jervis was known in his time by the sailors as 'old Jarvy', recorded in good faith, in writing, as they interpreted the sound they heard.

HMAS Jervis Bay, mentioned in the article, was named after *HMS Jervis Bay*, an Australian passenger liner requisitioned and armed by the Royal Navy in WWII. The ship was captained by Captain Fogarty Fegen RN, who coincidentally had previously been posted as the executive officer of the RAN College at Jervis Bay. Fegan received a posthumous VC for his sacrificial protection of an Atlantic convoy attacked by the German battleship *Admiral Sheer*. So, for good historical reasons and Naval convention, the RAN holds to its 'Jarvis' tradition.

A noted Naval Historian suggests that a good compromise would be to use the pirate accent 'Juarrvis' half-way between Jar and Jer!

And P.S. The picture at the bottom of page 13 is not HMAS Creswell (sic. misspelled should be one s). It is the RAN College site in the early 40s when it was the home of the RAAF rehabilitation Unit and other private guest houses. The College returned from Victoria in 1958 and was then commissioned as HMAS Creswell.



BATTERIES
for deep cycle,
car - truck - tractor
and motor cycle



Battery Testing and Fitting available
12/24v Alternators, Starter Motors, etc.

*Sourcing items for the home auto electrician with access to quality
12/24-volt engine consumables, e.g. alternators / starter motors / batteries
and more at highly competitive prices*

Just Asking

One *Recollections* reader recently observed 'your book reviews are, in general, positive' and asked 'why don't you include unfavourable reviews...or aren't there any woeful histories?'

The short answer is that book reviews are included in *Recollections* in the hope that some readers will find them interesting, and might even be motivated to then go out and buy the book. And, frankly, there are enough interesting histories available that we don't need to allocate (valuable) space to crap.

I actually choose not to review more books than I select to review. In recent months, as an example, these discards have included *Riots* by Fiona Skyring (about riots that occurred in Australia after World War I that involved returned soldiers) and *Code of Silence* by Diana Thorp (about women who worked behind the scenes in World War II intercepting and decoding radio messages).

The main reason books are 'discarded' from being reviewed is that I find them boring and, therefore, would not recommend that others read (or try to read) them. The stories they are attempting to tell may be very worthwhile, or the messages they are attempting to impart may be interesting...but, all too often, there is really not too much

substantial content in these 'discarded' books, and that little content is simply rehashed repetitively. Often, having waded through a book (or even abandoned it part way through!), I've concluded that 'the contents of the book could have been condensed to a single page or a single chapter'.

The worst offenders are books that started life as PhD theses. To which I'd say, a PhD thesis, however good, does not automatically morph into an interesting, readable book aimed at the 'general book-buying market'. (Having said that, there have been some fabulous Australian history books that started life as a PhD thesis, but these have been the exceptions.) The book-trade reality, unfortunately, is that publishers need to regularly issue new titles and that 'new' (exciting, previously undiscovered) Australian history is increasingly hard to find, so desperate publishers view all PhD history theses as potentially valuable sources of material for future book releases.

So, to survive the cut and be reviewed in *Recollections* requires a book to be Australian history-related, to be a recent release, and to be adjudged (subjectively!) to be an interesting history...and for us to become aware of its availability.

Peter Lacey

...and then I came across this very negative review of a 'Yass Municipal Centenary History' book that appeared in the Canberra Times on 27th September 1974:

A SAD STORY ABOUT YASS

YASS MUNICIPAL CENTENARY HISTORY. By W. A. Bayley. Yass Municipal Council. 128 pp.
Reviewer: GEORGE DICK.

EXTRAORDINARY standards of workmanship characterise this attempt at the presentation of a local history.

Occasionally, even august treatises, put out by reputable publishers contain the odd typographical error. But this publication is peppered with glaring mistakes; misspelt words like expcncc, interpid, scarce, intension, ramsacked, Ausrtalian, Hamitlon and Yas.

There are far too many other anomalies, inconsistencies, omissions and inaccuracies for this booklet to be taken seriously by historians and scholars.

They must have reservations about the accuracy of the historical content when they peruse the List of Contents. Not only does it contain more spelling errors, but 15 per cent of the chapter outlines vary from those printed at the head of the relevant chapters. They must pause when they note that one chapter purports to deal with the years up to 1992. And they could not help noticing that at least one photograph is quite obviously not what its caption proclaims it to be.

As to style, the writing is stodgy and graceless. It completely lacks that sparkle and verve which often transforms accounts of the mundane into interesting narratives.

Events of the past are rattled off in lifeless prose. Data are crammed into solid informational blocks that are as interesting and illuminating as the pages of a telephone directory.

Events are just baldly listed: few are put in any sort of perspective; few of them appear to have been of social significance. No aspect of consequence has been treated in depth.

Many sentences are of such poor construction that their meaning is obscure.

A SAD STORY ABOUT YASS

EXTRAORDINARY standards of workmanship characterise this attempt at the presentation of a local history.

Occasionally, even august treatises put out by reputable publishers contain the odd typographical error. But this publication is peppered with glaring mistakes; misspelt words like expcncc, interpid, scarce, intension, ramsacked, Ausrtalian, Hamitlon and Yas.

There are far too many other anomalies, inconsistencies, omissions and inaccuracies for this booklet to be taken seriously by historians and scholars.

They must have reservations about the accuracy of the historical content when they peruse the List of Contents. Not only does it contain more spelling errors, but 15 per cent of the chapter outlines vary from those printed at the head of the relevant chapters. They must pause when they note that one chapter purports to deal with the years up to 1992. And they could not help noticing that at least one photograph is quite obviously not what its caption proclaims it to be.

As to style, the writing is stodgy and graceless. It completely lacks that sparkle and verve which often transforms accounts of the mundane into interesting narratives.

Events of the past are rattled off in lifeless prose. Data are crammed into solid informational blocks that are as interesting and illuminating as the pages of a telephone directory. Events are just baldly listed: few are put in any sort of perspective; few of them appear to have been of social significance. No aspect of consequence has been treated in depth.

Many sentences are of such poor construction that their meaning is obscure. Comments are used so infrequently that even a third reading of the text can still leave one baffled. Some sentences are completely mystifying.

YASS MUNICIPAL CENTENARY HISTORY. By W. A. Bayley. Yass Municipal Council. 128 pp.

Reviewer:

GEORGE DICK.

Take this one: "Home had 557 acres which Hardy's land Thomas Meethan, explorer and surveyor had 640 acres".

And what can one make of the assertion that "It was found necessary to buy gold"? Or of the statement that "the road to the south stretches northward"?

With patience and perseverance, it is possible to solve such puzzles — and there are many of them. But readers should not be called on to undertake mental exercises to compensate for deficiencies in textual clarity.

Not do readers expect to have their intelligence insulted. Certainly not by being told that annual races were held year by year; that Yass was landlocked right from the start; that gold exports were provided to escort gold; that photographers came to Yass for the purpose of taking photographs; or that Humre had no children and there were thus no descendants.

There is no index. There is no bibliography. There are no footnotes or lists of references. A mere handful of sources are cited in the text. These turn out to be news items in the contemporary Press.

Determined efforts were made to discover something in this incredible publication deserving praise or favourable comment of some sort. Page after page was perused. No fault could be found with what are known as the "end papers".

They are both blank.

Commas are used so infrequently that even a third reading of the text can still leave one baffled. Some sentences are completely mystifying. Take this one: "Hume had 957 acres which Hardy's land Thomas Meehan, explorer and surveyor had 640 acres".

And what can one make of the assertion that "It was found necessary banks in Goulburn buying gold"? Or of the statement that "the road to the south stretches northward"?

With patience and perseverance, it is possible to solve such puzzles — and there are many of them. But readers should not be called on to undertake mental exercises to compensate for deficiencies in textual clarity.

Nor do readers expect to have their intelligence insulted. Certainly not by being told that annual races were held year by year; that Yass was landlocked right from the start; that gold escorts were provided to escort gold; that photographers came to Yass for the purpose of taking photographs; or that Hume had no children and there were thus no descendants.

There is no index.

There is no bibliography.

There are no footnotes or lists of references.

A mere handful of sources are cited in the text. These turn out to be news items in the contemporary Press.

Determined efforts were made to discover something in this incredible publication deserving praise or favourable comment of some sort. Page after page was perused. No fault could be found with what are known as the "end papers". They are both blank.

(If this book was so unreadable, I would not have reviewed it; I simply would have 'discarded' the book from being potentially reviewed. But why it came to be published with so many simple, fundamental errors intrigues me — especially as the author, W.A. Bayley, is well-known and quite respected as a historian [he also compiled histories on Albury, Bega, Broulee, Bulli, Campbelltown, Condobolin, the Crookwell district, the Eurobodalla, Jamberoo, the Shoalhaven, for example] and presumably Yass Municipal Council had intended the book to be a significant, lasting celebration from the Council's centenary. So, we asked Yass & District Historical Society about it. They didn't know anything more about the circumstances of its publication, agreed that as a *publication* it does have shortcomings, but indicated that as a history it does have merit. And, no better, more recent history of Yass has since been produced.)

WE ARE DIFFERENT

We are a history society... not a historical society. We don't collect objects.. we don't run a museum. We don't have a library.. we have very limited research facilities. Our interest is the fascinating history of the entire South Coast - so we don't focus on just one small local area. Our aim is to reach absolutely anyone, anywhere, interested in South Coast history - not just a small number of paid-up members of our society. And WE TELL TALES - yes, all the interesting stories about the NSW South Coast - exactly what our South Coast communities want to hear and read.

SOUTH COAST HISTORY SOCIETY INC **YOUR HISTORY SOCIETY**

For membership, enquiries, donations, etc please contact us southcoasthistory@yahoo.com
or 0448 160 852

Why YOU must support **SOUTH COAST HISTORY SOCIETY**

There is **enormous** demand for what we are doing...and that demand is ever-increasing! *History of the NSW South Coast and South Coast Shipwrecks* booklets, for maintaining our website that is now receiving hundreds of thousands of hits. We're a community-based, volunteer, not-for-profit organisation...with virtually no overheads (we don't have a museum or library - so donations don't go to paying rates, electricity charges, building maintenance costs, etc.) But, we receive absolutely no government or Council support - so, to continue meeting the demands from our community, we must somehow raise the necessary money to cover costs. And this year that will be something like \$40,000! We are now asking YOU (along with all our other readers of this issue of *Recollections*) to help. Sadly, without your help, greatly-valued services provided by the South Coast History Society will simply have to be cut.

Please leave a donation for us where you collected this *Recollections*.
Or, better still, direct credit our account: 802-124 100112005 (but PLEASE then also tell us YOU have done so)
OR send your cheque to South Coast History Society, 90 Whitby Wilson Road, Quaama NSW 2550 OR phone 0448 160 852 with your Visa or MasterCard details.

The Convict and the Compass:

The Untold Story of James Meehan

by Peter Bradley

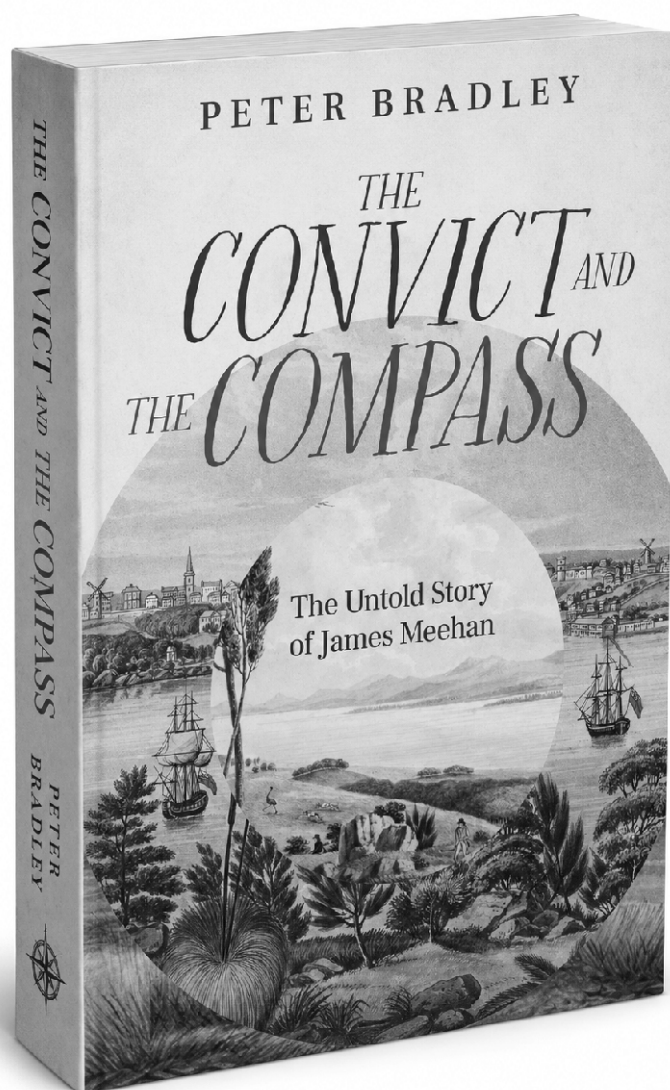
The *Convict and the Compass* is a fabulous history – a well-written, detailed, obviously exhaustively-researched tome (600 pages!) about a remarkable man who significantly impacted the development of New South Wales.

We briefly mentioned James Meehan and his links to the NSW South Coast in *Recollections* 56 (accessible at www.southcoasthistory.org.au), as one of the early Colonial surveyors who we collectively described as 'The South Coast's Unsung Heroes'. Peter Bradley's assessment of the man is, however, very much more detailed:

The achievements of James Meehan in the early nineteenth century as a surveyor and explorer in Australia have been largely overlooked, with the feats of explorers such as John Oxley, Hamilton Hume and William Hovell taking the limelight. Despite this, Meehan made an important contribution to the development of the early colonies in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land.

Meehan arrived on the shores of Australia as a twenty-six-year-old Irish convict. Through talent and diligence, he rose to become deputy surveyor general and acting surveyor general of the young colony, working for five governors from 1800 to 1822. Under John Hunter, Philip Gidley King, William Bligh, Lachlan Macquarie and Thomas Brisbane, Meehan was instrumental not only in mapping the Sydney environs and planning the town's layout, but in early expeditions to the Hunter Valley, Port Phillip Bay and King Island, as well as the first land surveys of Van Diemen's Land including selecting the site for the future town of Hobart. Under Governor Macquarie, he was appointed deputy surveyor general and superintendent of roads, bridges and streets, with his other accomplishments included the naming of Dee Why, his efforts to find a route between Picton and Jervis Bay, and his discovery of Lake Bathurst and the Goulburn Plains.

On many occasions, Meehan was despatched to explore and report back on the suitability of new areas for settlement, providing insights into the land's suitability to sustain farming, the type and quality of the soil, the number and species of trees, and the presence of minerals such as limestone, gold or coal. He also marked out areas for streets, government buildings and churches, and measured approved land grants for free settlers, civil and military officers, and ex-convicts. Meehan claimed in 1821 that he had measured every land grant since 1803, a total of over 2300 grants, and he was instrumental in identifying potential roadways and navigable rivers in the growing colony.



Reviewed by Peter Lacey

As an emancipated convict, Meehan was also a settler and family man, who farmed on the land granted by the governor in reward for his service, and played a prominent role – especially for an Irish Catholic – in the social life of the young colony, including in the establishment of St Marys Church in Sydney, Australia's first Roman Catholic place of worship.

The Convict and the Compass is the end-result of seven years of research and writing (Bradley commenting 'I worked on it nearly every day') that followed on from his Father having compiled the family tree in the 1980s – which revealed that Peter Bradley's grandmother was the daughter on one of Meehan's great granddaughters. So, what obviously became an extended 'labour of love' for Peter was born from that family connection to surveyor James Meehan.

Bradley had an immense amount of detailed source material available to use. For example, most of Meehan's 187-or-thereabouts Field Books have survived, as has much of his correspondence.

And much of that detail has ended up in Bradley's book – a great thing for a comprehensive history but, for a casual reader, there is at times an overload of detail. This passage

Study Close to Home

UOW REGIONAL CAMPUSES

ON YOUR DOORSTEP

Gain access to all of the services and advantages for which the University of Wollongong is renowned, without leaving the South Coast. Our local connections will give you opportunities right here in Bega and Batemans Bay.

COURSES ON OFFER

- Bachelor degrees in Arts (History; English Literatures; Indigenous Studies; Sociology; Community, Culture & Environment)
- Bachelor of Business & Bachelor of Commerce
- Bachelor of Nursing
- Master of Teaching (Primary and Secondary)
- University Access Program

Find out more

bbay.uow.edu.au/study

bega.uow.edu.au/study



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA



is just one example:

On 5th October [1821] Meehan was at Liverpool measuring 400 acres of glebe land for the chaplain of Liverpool, Reverend Robert Cartwright. The next day he measured 400 acres of glebe land and an additional 400 acres for the chaplain of Campbelltown, Reverend Thomas Reddall.

Meehan then moved to Bargo to check on the progress of [recently appointed assistant surveyors] Dangar and Harper. Over the next few days, he checked the positioning of some of the farms in relation to farms in Appin, using the Donnelly farm at Appin and Broughton's new 800-acre Lachlan Hills Farm at Bargo as points of reference.

Meehan then measured twenty grants at East Bargo, which included 600 acres for emancipist farmer Charles Tompson, who named his farm Alfred's Retreat. Other grants included 100 acres for emancipist stonemason William Bradbury, 300 acres for Principal Overseer of Government Stock Thomas Arkell, and thirty acres for James Vaughan.

That detail, though, does give a vivid picture of the life of Colonial surveyors – the challenges they faced, the hardships they had to endure, the demands made of them (quite unreasonable at times!)...and of their considerable achievements.

The thing I particularly liked about this book (which, undoubtedly, contributed to its length) was that it also documented what else was happening in and around the colony at the time. So, Meehan's life was given context, and the important history of early Sydney that so impacted his work and life was explained.

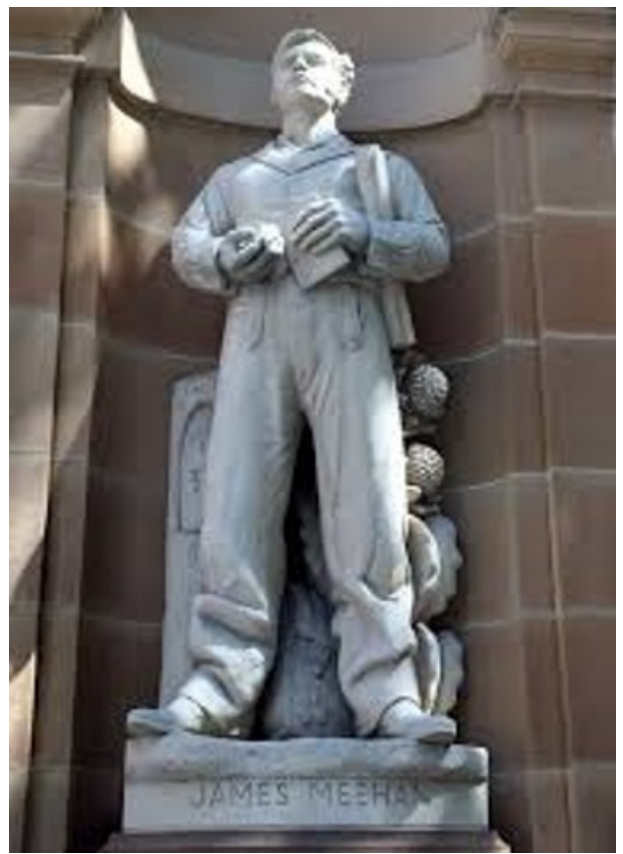
a

Perhaps the book's single greatest revelation to me (and I admit I am no expert on Australian Colonial history) was that in 1819 a court in England, in *Bullock v Dodd*, ruled that all pardons granted by the governors of New South Wales (including the one to James Meehan) were invalid unless the convict's name was inserted in a general pardon under the Great Seal of England, either by the king or from an act of parliament. As this condition had not been executed by any of the governors of New South Wales, all pardons issued by them [and Governor Macquarie, alone, had issued 353 absolute pardons and 1,164 conditional pardons up until this date] were therefore invalid and the affected people were still regarded as convicts. Their subsequent acts of receiving land by grant or purchase, holding or conveying of property, suing or giving evidence in court were deemed illegal. (The effect of this court ruling was ultimately overturned when the *NSW Act*, which also established the Supreme Court of NSW, was passed in 1823.)

One comes away from reading this biography/history with a great deal of admiration for James Meehan – an Irish/Catholic convict transported to Australia for his political activism in the Irish rebellion of 1798 and who, as a result, was never fully accepted into Sydney society by

the influential 'exclusives' (free settlers), but who contributed an unbelievable amount to the development of Sydney, New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land and who rightfully should have been appointed Surveyor-General of NSW (a position denied to him simply because of superior lobbying by surveyor John Oxley's influential friends in England), and who never received any of a pension of £100 per year that had been promised to him on his retirement. It's fitting, therefore, that in 2010 Meehan was given some well-overdue official recognition when his statue was added to the outside of the grand Victorian-era Lands Department building in Sydney – he, thereby, becoming the only explorer or politician so honoured in more than a century.

*The statue of James Meehan on
Sydney's Lands Department building*



All previous issues of **RECOLLECTIONS** are at
www.southcoasthistory.org.au

As are details of 101 Bega Shire Hidden Heritage items, details of 200 South Coast shipwrecks, and hundreds of other fascinating stories.

MERIMBULA OLD SCHOOL MUSEUM



You'll discover our fascinating multifaceted collection is well-worth the visit.
Open Sundays and Thursdays 1.30pm to 4pm.
Group tours welcome by appointment Ph. 0493 616 048

When Stairs Become a Challenge...

the practical solution is a **Compact Lift** from
South Coast Lifts



Our Compact Home Lifts are:

- ✓ Stylish with Quality Components
- ✓ Advanced Safety features
- ✓ Affordable
- ✓ A better alternative than a stairlift
- ✓ Much cheaper than the cost of moving house
- ✓ Compact
- ✓ Energy efficient
- ✓ Add value to your property
- ✓ Quick to install
- ✓ Whisper quiet
- ✓ Elegance – smaller lift 1-2 person, 170 kg
- ✓ Elegance Plus – Larger lift 1-2 person comfortably or 1 Person and wheelchair, 220 kg
- ✓ See Compact Home Lifts brochure on web site or South Coast Lifts can mail a brochure and standard costing to your home for your convenience

Call today for a Brochure or an obligation-free Assessment & Quote

(02) 4476 7977

<http://www.southcoastlifts.com.au>

(Member of Lift Engineering Society of Australia)

"We bought a Compact Home Lift because it has allowed us to stay in our home. It was a far cheaper solution when compared with the cost of moving house" — George, 66

"We looked at buying a stairlift but made the right decision choosing a Compact Home Lift. It has exceeded all our expectations" — Pippa, 56