



NEWSLETTER  
September 2016

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

# MUSEUM

Cnr Myokum & Stuart Streets MULLUMBIMBY 2482

OPEN: FRIDAY 10 AM – 12 PM

MARKET DAY (3RD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH) 9 AM-1 PM

## The First Whitefellas on the Brunswick

The first newspaper story of whitefellas disturbing the tranquillity of the yet to be named Brunswick River was published by *The Australian* on Friday 11Jan1828, via a report by Captain Barkus who had been tasked with searching for a wreck reported by *some men who had been runaways from Moreton Bay....*

*"In the schooner Alligator I searched the coast between the Solitary Isles (around Korff's Harbour) and Cape Byron.... I landed with a whale boat near the north side of the entrance of a large river, about thirty miles to the southward of Cape Byron.... We observed a great number of natives on the opposite bank of the river. They appeared very shy, not attempting to come near us.... After experiencing some hassles with relaunching the boat We consulted and determined upon returning to Moreton Bay overland....*

*After travelling about twenty miles, at 9pm halted, spent a very unpleasant night from incessant rain throughout. At five o'clock the following morning recommenced our journey. At one PM fell in with a party of the natives, who seemed not to be amicably inclined towards us, and to prevent any hostility, we felt disposed to part with several articles of wearing apparel. After travelling fifteen miles north of Cape Byron we fell in with another river, the mouth of which was about twenty-five yards across, the water apparently deep, with a very rapid tide. The bar outside was about forty yards from the beach. In tracing the banks of it about five miles in a W.S.W direction, we effected a passage over by following an angular sand bank, wading breast deep in the water. Upon reaching the opposite bank, we cut through the bush, to avoid the natives, who we suspected were inclined to disburthen us further of clothing. They dogged us, however; what they wanted in number making up by stratagem, and by that means succeeded in depriving some of the seamen of their hats and other articles, which were immediately divided in shares amongst them, and hung round their heads....*

*After accompanying us for full three hours hard toiling over soft hot sandy beach, they dropped off entirely. We continued our journey until eight PM, halting until two o'clock the following morning, when we set forward, and during the day crossed four lagoons, with outlets into the sea. At four PM we stopped about four miles south of the Tweed River to refresh, as also to avoid the numerous body of natives that frequent that quarter.... The natives' huts were very numerous in this quarter. I suppose they were sufficient to hold a body of three hundred men. There will be no need of any comment upon the river, as it has been already surveyed for some considerable distance up. At two AM recommenced our journey from Point danger.... (John Oxley named the Tweed in Oct1823.)*

On the 5Sep1828 the *Sydney Gazette* advised that *On Tuesday last His Majesty's ship Rainbow, the Hon Captain Rous, returned from a cruise Northward. Captain Rous succeeded in discovering two rivers, to one of which he gave the name of Richmond, and the other Clarence. The Richmond is at lat. 28° 54'S. 153° 33'E. The Clarence is in the latitude and longitude of Point Danger....* Henry Rous was on his way back to England by 7Nov1828 when *The Australian* published an extract of his report prepared for the *Australian Quarterly Journal* acknowledging that he'd cocked it up by renaming Oxley's Tweed as the Clarence, and that the Richmond had already been accurately located on Matthew Flinders' chart. (The 'real' Clarence continued to be known as 'Big River' for many years, even after the Governor decreed the change in Nov1839. And for the newspaper reading public the 'Black Rock River' remained the main alias of the 'Richmond' until 1841 when the SMH set the latter in concrete.)

Henry Rous's abstract also records that there's *Another river about eight miles NW from Cape Byron, running in a WNW direction, with a narrow and deep channel, a rocky bar at the entrance, and a shallow north and south arm....*

And on the subsequent map this Barkus/convict discovery is simply delineated with a squiggle annotated as '*a small river*', although it's understood that Henry later bestowed the name 'Brunswick' upon the anonymous wiggly waterway.

Almost a year later the Gazette gave a brief repeat of the Rous voyage, with the comment that *it (is) remarkable they (Tweed and Richmond) were not previously discovered*. A week later William Barkus was prompted to provide an update of his adventure, published by the *Sydney Gazette* on 22Aug1829: *We have been favoured with the following abstract of a journal by Captain Barkus, late of HM colonial schooner Alligator, while in search of a wreck, in the month of September, 1827....* (And on 27Mar1830 again reminded its readers that *Captain Barkus was the first who discovered the Rivers between Soletarre Isles and the River Tweed....* Historian N.C. Hewitt of the *Northern Star* claims Captain Barkus also discovered the 'real' Clarence, but concedes convict Richard Craig may have beaten him to it.)

*"On the 5th September, about noon, while beating along shore to the southward, observed from the mast-head a river of some apparent magnitude..., so I went ashore and had a look. I could perceive no signs of the wreck, so proceeded to take a view of the river, which lay about lat. 28° 57' south, long. 153° 30' east (which is Patch's Beach, 10km south west of the Richmond entrance at 28° 52', 153° 35'). A number of the natives appearing on the opposite shore, their gestures exhibiting no sign of a friendly reception, we began to retrace our steps towards the beach..., but the sea was too rough to launch our boat so we came to a speedy determination of hauling our boat up beyond the reach of the sea, and returning to Moreton Bay, where she remained when Honourable Captain Rous, in HMS Rainbow, visited that quarter. Having given publicity in a former publication of the manner in which we were received by the natives, I shall confine myself to the situations and appearances of the rivers we crossed on our way to that settlement. In the lat. 28° 28' south, and long. 153° 33' east (about the old Yelgun/Billinudgel Creek outlet at Fern Beach, but probably means the Bruns entrance at 28° 32' and 153° 33'), we fell upon one, the entrance of which was about 25 yards across, apparently deep water, with a very rapid tide. This river I would deem of little service from the barrier presenting itself without the entrance extending north and south of the same, about forty yards off shore. We travelled up the south bank, and succeeded in wading across at half ebb, following a sand bank in a serpentine direction. Between this and the river Tweed, we fell in with several lagoons, two with outlets to the sea, the waters of which were all brackish, from which I would surmise they were connected with the adjoining rivers. After crossing the Tweed in lat. 28° 15' south, and long. 153° 29' east (about Stott's Island. Mouth of Tweed is 28° 10' and 153° 33'), we fell on with another river..., which we crossed and met Captain Logan on 8Sep1827. Thus in four days we travelled 140 miles, for the most part amidst incessant rain.... The situations of the Rivers, as above described, are given by an estimate distance from the remarkable head-lands of Cape Byron and Point danger.*

It seems the cognoscenti were *au fait* with name 'Brunswick' by the time Robert Dixon turned up for his adventurous survey in July 1840, but the first time the wider public got to see this name in print was via the SMH on Tuesday 31Jul1849, advising of the departure of the *Midas* with 'sundries' for the 'Brunswick'.

**The above article is published with thanks to Peter Tscicalas. All members are encouraged to submit articles for the newsletter, anecdotal or factual (appropriately referenced), that may be of interest to other members of the Society.**



Congratulations to the **Mullumbimby Drill Hall** Committee for a very successful centenary celebration on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August. May the hall continue to have many more productive years.

Local centenarian, Elva Julien, had the honour of cutting the ribbon.



# Volunteer Profile

## DAVID (DAVE) SHARONOWITZ

Escaping the turmoil in Eastern Europe during the late 1920s, Dave's Grandfather landed in South Africa with the surname *Saranowitz*. Without papers however, the name entered on his passport was interpreted by officials to reflect the verbal pronunciation. This resulted in Dave's father's passport bearing the name *Sharonowitz*. Dave's father decided to informally shorten it to *Sharon* and Dave went through all his school years as David Sharon. Very confusing!

After qualifying in computer science, Dave ran a software house in Cape Town and migrated to Sydney in 1990. He lived in Bondi and Coogee and worked at Westpac in Research and Development (IT). He came to Mullum in 2000 and ran a CAD design and rapid prototyping service bureau.

Dave's lot in life is to collect tools, old and new and to try to fix/make anything. His current project is to create a replica 1920 strip cedar canoe that was used to navigate from the Gorge (Clarence River) to Iluka. He is actively seeking assistance from, interested locals. The latest 3D scanning systems will be used to create an exact copy of the canoe.



**Dave pictured above with the 1920s strip cedar canoe he is seeking assistance to replicate. He may be contacted at the museum from 9am to 12noon on Mondays and Fridays**



As well as devoting time volunteering in a practical way to restoring artefacts at the museum shed, Dave is a familiar face at the Mullum markets where he displays his hobby wares for sale.

The photo at left by market photographer Ken Robertson is a great snapshot of Dave's amazing collection of timber boxes, lamps and other items, displaying his many examples linked to beautiful local timbers.

Dave is valued by his peers as a colourful, knowledgeable and amusing member of the museum's volunteer team.

### REMINDERS

**Next Market:** Saturday 17 September 2016. Museum open 9-1.

**Acquisition Meeting:** Thursday 15 September 2.00pm



### DAD

A dad is someone who walks in front of you when you need footsteps to follow....

Behind you when you need encouragement....  
And beside you when you need a friend.

R. Duvall

## LOCAL NAMES

Further to the description of 'Mullumbimby' in the August Newsletter, is this definition from the NSW State Library document, 'New South Wales place names, 1899-1903', held in Box 4, Folder 3, pages 24-27, and viewable at <http://transcripts.sl.nsw.gov.au/page/368877/view> :

**Mooloobinby** = "a name given a small ridge (Dorans Hill)" and

**Mullumbimby** = "A small round hill from which Township takes its name"

The first definition was supplied to The Anthropological Society of Australasia, which is indebted to Mr James Anderson and Mr. H. French of Mullumbimby for the following information..., which includes List obtained from Mr Charles Jarrett of Cumbalum near Tintenbar, signed Jas Anderson 21st April 1900.

James Anderson was the surveyor who apparently based himself at his 1882 selection, 'Andersons Hill' ('Uncle Toms'), as he mapped out the local area through to ~1890 when he was posted to Lismore.

His neighbour Henry French selected the 608 acre property Nubhoigum ("Dense Lawyer Scrub") at Tyagarah in 1882.

Tyagarah (Targurah = "A stopping place or camping ground") was the name of surveyor Joseph Bede Kelly's selection at the base of Possum Shoot with a mile frontage to Kennedy's Lane.

The second definition was supplied to the Anthropological Society on 2Sep1899 by First Constable Boyd of Mullum, who amplified that Nubhoigum = "To hold on, cling so called from the dense growths of lawyer canes". He also said Chincogan = "Low behind high in front, a name given to a rather remarkable looking mountain at Mullumbimby"?, whereas Anderson/French/Jarrett said 'Thuncogin' = "a prominent park and mountain North running".

Const Boyd did 6yrs penance at Mullum before resigning to join the Forestry Dept in 1901 after rejecting a posting to Lismore.

Further definitions can be found in the essay "The Meaning in Mullumbimby" at our own website at <http://mullumbimbymuseum.org.au/The%20Meaning%20in%20Mullumbimby.pdf>



## Tall Tale or True?

### Milking the Iron Cow

Mike Richards in his 1979 booklet North Coast Run related an amusing anecdote which used to be told by Mr Fred Reading, a pioneer director of Norco, of the early days of the old Byron Creek (Bangalow) butter factory before the Babcock tester was introduced in the nineties. Suppliers were then paid simply so much per gallon for their milk and one farmer, who was suspected of "milking the iron cow", came along one day with milk in which the startled observers saw bullfrogs swimming! Explaining the phenomenon, the farmer said that it had been a hot night and to keep the milk cool, he had placed it in a little creek beside his farm. "That is all right this time", he was told, "but next time it would be better when you put the can in the creek to keep the lid on."

## Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

This newsletter is written by and for the members of the BVHS Inc

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Market Managers:  
Kim Pedersen  
Sarah Newsome  
Newsletter team:  
John Davis & Work  
Experience Participants  
Public Officer: Susan Tsicalas  
**All members are invited  
to contribute to this  
newsletter**

\*Please leave material with Sarah or Liz  
Tues Wed Thur 10 am - 2 pm.  
Or email to:  
bvhs@tridentcommunications.com.au

**NEXT MEETING  
Thursday 6th  
October 2016 at 2.00pm  
See you there!**

\*Deadline for agenda items  
Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> Oct 2016

**MUSEUM HOURS**  
Friday 10am - 12pm  
Market Saturday 9am - 1pm

BVHS Newsletter is produced by NORTEC Work Experience Participants and BVHS Inc.

