



## NEWSLETTER

June 2012

**Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.**

# MUSEUM

Cnr Stuart & Myocum Streets MULLUMBIMBY 2482

OPEN: FRIDAY 10 AM – 2 PM

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

## MUSEUM NEWS

### OLD & GOLD FESTIVAL AT BRUNSWICK

Our stall is in the Memorial Hall during the festival on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June. Members please come and drop in for a while, chat and help. Your assistance would be much appreciated.

### BVHS SIGN AT MUSEUM PARK

Thanks to John Scarborough, whose patience, hard work and organisation has ensured that our BVHS sign at the park has been restored and successfully re-erected. Looks fantastic. A great job!

### MARKET HAPPENINGS

The May market Trash & Treasure Stall was a roaring success so a big thank you to those donations which gave the stall a fresh and interesting appearance. Please keep assorted items coming to maintain the interest.

Our June Market will be promoted locally and interstate with the following ad. The Model T club will be using our facilities in the afternoon to hold their meeting.

**COME SEE  
30  
MODEL T  
FORDS**  
**Mullumbimby  
Community Markets  
June 16th 8.00 -10.00 am  
@ cnr. Stuart & Myocum Streets**



### MEETING TIMES

Please note NEW meeting times as of July  
will be:

Monthly Meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month @ 1.00pm  
Acquisition Meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month 1.00pm  
Members are welcome at both.

**Please note date of A.G.M. – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2012**

### COMMITTEE NEWS

The committee has reviewed and updated our strategic plan.

Almost complete is a review and update of our orientation manual. Any suggestions for items to include in this would be welcome.  
Both documents are available for perusal.

### STOREROOM

Our storeroom, after being gutted, has been relined and insulated so now it is well protected from the weather and outside beasties. Next steps are to vent it, paint it, install inert shelving and fill it. Nearly there!

### SCHOOL VISITS

Thanks to Lorrie's efforts we have been getting a lot of enquiries from local schools for visits. We are asking if there are any members who may like to come and talk to small school groups about how your childhood was spent e.g. school days, food, shelter, clothing, games, etc.

## Lest We Forget - Lesson Two

The Colonial Catholic Condons generally kept a low profile during the war debates until the end of 1916 when Conscription was raised as the best option for keeping the cannon fodder production line running at full capacity, a subject introduced by Anglican Scotsman **George Cameron** in Jan16 ...*At present there is a clamour for Conscription of Men and, in some places, for a Conscription of Money. The majority are in favor of Conscription of Men and only a small minority in favor of the Conscription of Money.... But there are far higher considerations to be taken into account than the value of the investment, it is everyone's duty to contribute to assist in waging the greatest war which the world has ever seen, and which our Empire is threatened, and moreover, it is not a war of aggression on the part of the British Empire....* At a recent census it was found that Mullum had 427 men of military age, meaning a quota of 23 was available to form new battalions and 8 for monthly reinforcements to replace the dead and dying.

At the same time he was a little aggravated in reporting that only six turned up (he and Chairman Ald W.J. **Reilly** and Messrs P. **Nelson**, P.G. **Whittall**, A. **Robertson**, R.G. **Dalrymple**) at a meeting of ...*The War Committee (which) was established for the purpose of helping the Federal Government in finding ways to finish the war and also of looking after wounded soldiers.... An informal discussion took place on various matters including a celebration of some kind on Anzac day to raise funds for the wounded soldiers, but the meeting felt that it could do nothing till the public showed more interest in the matter. What the ---- has Mullumbimby to do with wounded soldiers and their dependants! Didn't it appoint a Committee to look after them? At another meeting 2wks later (3Feb16) his liver had settled down a bit: At the last meeting of the War Service Committee the idea (of celebrating Anzac/Gallipoli Day) was mooted.... Anything to celebrate such a day at present is not needed - the event is too fresh on the minds of people. But the day could be used for the collecting of funds and using it as a recruiting agency....*

Another meeting at the Council Chambers on 13Apr16 had a better attendance, Aldermen **Davidson**, **Gourlay**, **Reilly** and **Bryant**, and Messrs P. **Nelson**, W.R. **Mackay**, F.C. **Taylor**, J. **Macgregor**, H.J. **Holt**, H.L. **O'Neill**, W. **Richards**, E.C. **Uptin** and George himself (who was subsequently elected secretary) deciding to hold a united service ...*in the School of Arts with a procession to that place.... Lawyer O'Neill said the boys had fought together without any religious distinction and he thought the celebration could be carried out in the same way....* The following week George editorialised that ...*So far back as February 3, this paper asked that Anzac day be commemorated..., by looking after the men, the wives, and the children.... He wanted practical money raising functions for the Returned Wounded Soldiers Fund (chaired by Mayoress **Davidson** with Miss Chrissie **Nelson** as secretary) in addition to the parades and religious services. The arrangement so far for Mullumbimby is a united religious service in the School of Arts at 1p.m., with a procession headed by the Brass band to the place of meeting. The united service seems to us a misnomer.... The men who landed did not study religions in their order of landing and it is to be pitied that those who stayed at home, and did not do one tap for the glory that has been accorded to the feat by all, should now brake on the proper and only means at sight to give due honour to occasion....* On Anzac Day there was no sign of Irishman Fr R.H. Williams, the Bangalow-based Catholic Parish Priest, leaving the Revs H.J. **Velvin** (Anglican), Rev **Walker** (Meth), Rev D. **McLennan** (Presby) and Adj T. **Tindall** of the Salvos to deliver the homilies.



Recruiting Rally at the Post Office ~1915

*to show spleen and spite, but if it does the work that is intended, the editor will bear the lot in a joyful spirit. Two days later H.O. **Tuckerman** organised a function at Wilson's Creek hall to raise funds for Ted Holloway.*

On 8Jun16 George was back on the conscription track with *The gentle Art of Coaxing. This week shirkers and others have had the forceful view of the need of recruits placed before them by Sergts Donald and Galli. Mostly their efforts*

*Three weeks later George got carried away at the welcome home for Privates Harry A. **Clark** (sans foot) and W. Lowther (Ted) **Holloway** (sans leg) at the council chambers. ...They got all the eulogistic remarks that was possible to make and then a Hun by the name of George **Cameron**, mentioned that there was something further to do and that was to see that the future of the men who returned was looked after properly..., but was drowned out by the caterwalling of others that the subject should not be mentioned..., and finished by the Sergeant of Police moving "that the meeting be now dissolved," and it was accordingly. ...for a public meeting to be bull-dozed in this fashion is beyond the limits.... This article may be thought*

have been wasted.... In almost every case the so-called shirker has signified his willingness to enlist "when conscription comes." ...In speeches made by the two above mentioned sergeants, practical compulsion was preached: the young ladies were told in almost plain terms not to dance with unmarried men who had not volunteered; they were also told that if they married one they "would be looked on as the most miserable creatures God ever created," ...If this is not compulsion it is so near it that you cannot tell the difference.... cajoling and coaxing and threatening men with ostracism, the sending of white feathers, and all the rest of the dampnoolery would never have been needed, the term "shirker" or "cold-footer" would never have been heard, and Australia would have got its men without any fuss... if only we had official compulsion.

Two weeks later it was advised that *Sergt. Fletcher, the new recruiting sergeant, has opened in his office in the Council Chamber and may be consulted there by aspiring recruits. The Sergeant means to put some life in the movement.* And indeed he did. A month later ...*Recruiting Sergt Fletcher says there are 161 men eligible for recruiting still in the district. His figures are as follows:- Municipality of Mullumbimby 61, Crabbe's Creek 4, Billinudgel 41, Brunswick Heads 5, Main Arm 22, Tyagarah 9, Wilson's Creek 7, Myocum 8, Coorabell Creek 2 and Cooper's Creek 2 - total 161. The returns are not complete owing to the casual labor that comes and goes and this applies especially to Crabbe's Creek....*

On 29Jun16 the War Council Committee met at the Council Chambers, but *There was only a small attendance of members, presided over by the Mayor.... Following words from Rev **Velvin** in favour of conscription (some families had given of their best while others had not even touched the question with their little finger).... Mr **Whittall** then moved the following motion which had been sent in by Rev **McLennan**: This Committee of the War Council hereby places on record its appreciation..., and its admiration of the splendid response of many young men of this town and district to the call of the Commonwealth and Empire. The meager response, however, recently made, makes it evident that the present system of recruiting is quite inadequate to meet the pressing need of the country and Empire in this time of struggle, and the conviction is pressed upon us that the time has come for the Government to adopt a measure of Universal Service that will make it imperative upon those who are shirking their just and urgent duty.... Carried and forwarded to Massy Greene MHR. At the same time George updated his 'Roll of Honor - List of District Men Helping Civilisation' showing a growth to 191 names, inclusive of 10 wounded, 10 invalided home and 11 dead.*

In early Sep16, the hypotheticality of conscription became reality when the Mullum citizens learnt that *The "Billy Hughes" boom has burst with a dull and deadly report. All his fine phrases and eloquent perorations are now amongst the limbo of dead, useless and forgotten things.... The Prime Minister whimped-out in favour of letting the mob decide the conscription issue rather than introduce legislation and ...The least that can be said is that William Morris Hughes... is a shirker.* Over the next few weeks George preached the conscription gospel, sniping from the moral high ground and never letting a word of the anti-conscription argument pass his trigger finger. (And informing all that the Roll of Honor had now grown to 206 names, inclusive of 13 dead.)

*In early Oct16 A meeting was held on Saturday in the School of Arts to make arrangements for the running of the coming referendum in favour of conscription.... The attendance was very small. J.W. **Banner** moved That those present form themselves into a committee to organise this district for the purpose of securing an overwhelming expression of the popular will.... Voluntaryism had been proved a failure and now there was nothing left but Conscription for those who did not see their duty otherwise.... Labor had raised the cry that Hindoos would take their place if they left for the fight.... White Australia was still their motto.... The*

*motion was seconded by Rev **Velvin**, who said that if Conscription was not passed Australia was not a place for a white man or a free man to live in. P.G. **Whittall** and Rev **McLennan** also supported the motion.... It was unthinkable that Conscription would not be passed.... Mr **Chawner** said ...There was talk of Australians paying Indians and Russians to fight for them - that talk was disgraceful.... The following were elected as an executive Committee: Revs **Velvin**, **McLennan**, **Walker**, and Messrs **J.W. Banner**, **W.R. Baker**, **Chawner**, **Gibson**, **Argue**, **Cochrane**, **Thorne**, **Keys**, **Whittall**, **Reilly** and **J. Davidson**.... The following speakers were appointed for the various centres:- **W.A. Sheaffe** (Federal), **Thorne and Keys** (Brunswick Heads); **Banner and Chawner** (Billinudgel); **Revs Walker**,*



Recruiting Rally at the Post Office ~1915

## Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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

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### 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](mailto:bvhs@tridentcommunications.com.au)

### NEXT MEETING

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012  
9.00 am See you there!**

\*Deadline for agenda items  
Thursday 14th June 2012.

**MUSEUM HOURS**  
**Friday 10am - 2pm**  
**Market Saturday 9am - 1pm**

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



*Velvin, McLennan, and Messrs Baker, Whittall, Halliday, Crossman (Mullumbimby), and Cochrane (Myocum).* The mayor was also drafted to form a branch of the Citizens' War Chest Society by B. Velvin, R.R. Mallett, Charles Watts, R.G. Dalrymple, H.J. Velvin, John Ward, M.G. Ellis, J.A. O'Connor, Mrs J. King, Annie Mulrone, A.B. Armbruster.

Two weeks later Massy Greene MHR turned up to deliver a pro-conscription epistle to the Mullumites, claiming ...*Another point to be insisted on was that the nation that had the greatest number of men at the finish was the nation that would dictate terms. Australia, up to the present, had not made much national sacrifice...,* arguing ...*that those who voted against conscription are likely to cause more deaths if by any chance their policy was adopted.... Mr J. Macgregor moved that the meeting pledge itself to support the proposals...* and Editor Cameron declared it *One of the best meetings ever.* A few days later Perry MLA preached from the balcony of the School of Arts, saying *he was there that night because he deemed it to be his duty and that there should be no mistake as to his intentions. The question that was before them was not conscription or anti-conscription, but Honor or Dishonor....*

While all this was going on the compulsory registration of all males between the ages of 21 and 35 was enacted, ~80 Mullumites presenting themselves at Byron on 14Oct16 to fill out attestation papers, get weighed, medically examined and put in claims for exemption. Two weeks later the Exemption Court sat and heard 29 cases, granting immunity to 4 and giving the remainder temporary exemptions of a week to six weeks to get affairs in order. George printed all their names and their mickey mouse excuses.

He published the referendum results on 2Nov16, showing the subdivision of Mullum within the Federal Electorate of Richmond had voted 65% Yes to conscription, placing it 5th in the 16 subdivision hierarchy after Kyogle (78%), Byron (77%), Ballina (73%) and Alstonville (71%). Richmond, the only country electorate to say Yea, ran counter to the rest of NSW, which turned down conscription with a vote of 57% No. George gave no breakdown of individual booths, but extrapolating from the trend of the Byron subdivision where the population centres at the Bay and Bangalow recorded 80% and 79% respt., while Tyagarah, Ewingsdale and Possum Creek registered 63%, 56% and 54% respt., its a fair assumption that the Mullum townies were more in favour of conscription than the surrounding farmers.

Belatedly, George acknowledged the existence of a bunch of bludgers preaching a different doctrine. *Last Thursday evening an anti-Conscription meeting was held from the verandah of Nelson's Buildings. Mr J.D. Condon was chairman and introduced the speaker, Mr M.C. O'Halloran, to a good crowd. There is now no benefit to go over the arguments that were used in asking his hearers to answer "No," and none will be given. The crowd was well behaved, although the interjections were numerous, and often very much to the point.... Long after the meeting, however, there were little crowds all over the street holding meetings on their own. The police were there in force and when an argument got heated the official word cooled the heads.* (Catholic Irishman O'Halloran was President of the Lismore branch of the Political Labor League, ex-Vice President of the Farmers and Settlers Association, founder of the United Irish League and proprietor of *The Northern People*, the left-leaning competitor of the right-leaning *Northern Star*. After the referendum he was beaten up and had his office trashed by the democratic Lismoreans, who had voted 60% Yes. Unintimidated, he ran against Liberal Nesbitt MLA for the seat of Lismore in 1917.)

by Peter Tsicalas