



Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

# MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

June 2018

Cnr Myokum & Stuart Streets MULLUMBIMBY 2482

OPEN: TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS 10 AM – 12 PM

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

## ANOTHER MONSTER MONTH AT THE MUSEUM

If we thought March was busy, then May could only be described as HECTIC. Hereunder are some of the fun things that happened during the month.

### National Volunteers Week

The happy team of volunteers at the museum enjoyed lemon meringue pie and coffee to celebrate the occasion. The photo below was taken on the steps of the museum and features our hard working volunteers:



Back Row left to right: Tosharnie, Mitsuo, Brenda, Susan and Ken.

Front Row left to right: Rollie, Dave, Stephen and John.

We also acknowledge the contributions from regular volunteers Gordon, Barry, Robby, Peter, Chris, John, Lorrie and Genevieve who were absent from this photo.

### Ducted Air-Conditioning



**Mid May saw the much anticipated installation of ducted air conditioning throughout the Museum.**

The work was carried out by *Northernair Pty Ltd* thanks to a grant from the NSW Government.

These photos show the delivery and installation of the unit. The base under the outside unit was carefully prepared by Museum volunteers Dave and Rollie.



## Beautification Work

Ken Robertson and Museum volunteers landscaped the south east corner of the reserve. This area has traditionally been unkempt and overgrown in previous years and has required regular brush cutting.



Hard working volunteers Rollie, Tosharnee and Susan get down and dirty assisting Ken, laying down paper and protecting the new plantings with wood mulch.

Thanks to Ken for the great work he is doing cleaning up the weeds on the creek bank as well. Looking so good!

## Work Safety & Clean Up

Arrow Concrete Cutting did a great job removing the potential trip hazards from the slabs at the rear of the Shed. Oh dear! We didn't think to block off the gap at the bottom of the roller door!



At left: Volunteer Dave inspects the outcome of concrete grinding at the Shed. Below is one of the exhibits after thorough cleaning.



In action we see Museum volunteers Tosharnee, Susan and Brenda who, along with the boys, spent a morning cleaning up concrete dust that blew into the shed as an unavoidable result of the grinding work. Well done to all.

## Another wonderful school visit

Around 50 students from kindy and years three and four from St John's primary school in Mullum visited the Museum on May 31<sup>st</sup>. The whirlwind visit brought out the best in museum volunteers who continue to learn from the visits and improve their presentation of the many exhibits.



In the photo at left Susan speaks to the children about our Indigenous exhibits, and at right, Lorrie watches on as the children enjoy the Hippy exhibit.



Below: Brenda informs children of the difference between the old and the new in the domestic room.



Right: Dave admires the stencilling work of students, whilst in the background other students reciprocate by teaching Stephen how to tie his shoe laces.



## More Labels on Landmarks

### Byron Bay

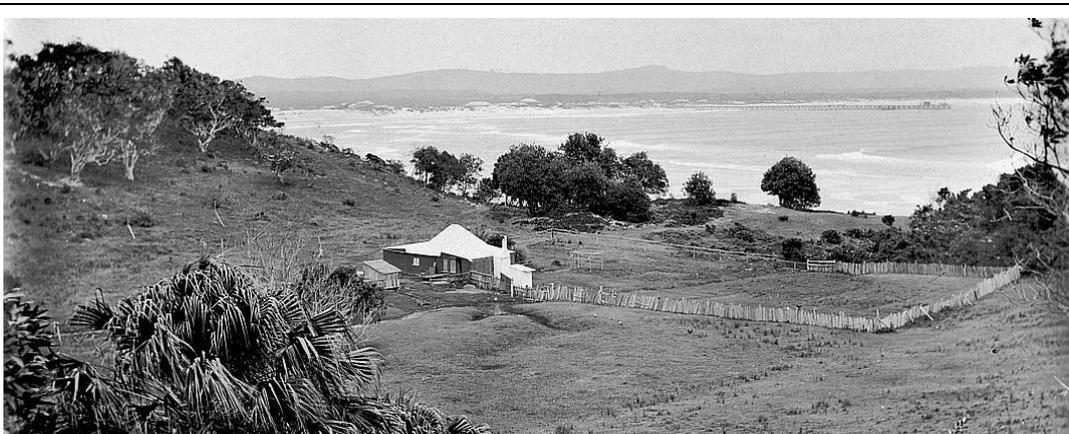
*PLACE NAMES of the TWEED, BRUNSWICK and UPPER RICHMOND REGIONS*, a booklet compiled by Richmond-Tweed Regional Library in 1984, reminds us that Captain Cook bestowed the name 'Byron' on the cape when he sailed past in his big 'marinday' in May 1770, honouring his friend Captain (later Admiral) John Byron, the grandfather of the wordsmith, the library adding that *The Bundjalung name for the area was Cavanbah, referring to the proximity of scrub...*, but *Another Bundjalung name for the area was Koramba, said to mean "quick flowing waters around the headland"*. (And 'Coramba' near Coffs Harbour is touted as *sight of the sea*.)

The locals watched the ominous vessel sail past from their 'garanbi' lookout, says **Dr Margaret Sharpe** in her *All Yugambah-Bundjalung Dictionary with Gramma, Texts, etc*, published as a CD May2013, but giving no definition other than to say it's a 'location name' for 'Cape Byron'. She also says *gabenbah* is a 'location name' for *Cavanbah*; *no meaning given; possibly 'place of scrub'*, but does not acknowledge Koramba, while **Archie Meston** said Cape Byron was 'Gurimmbie' (ref *Brisbane Courier* on 9Feb1924).

In the NSW State Library document, '*New South Wales place names, 1899-1903*', viewable at <https://transcripts.sl.nsw.gov.au/page/box-4-folder-3-new-south-wales-place-names-1899-1903-page-26>, **James Anderson, Henry French** and **Charles Jarrett** add that 'Currenbe' is '*that portion of Byron Bay near the point on account of the water channels or 'Curraby'...*, and 'curraby' is '*a gully*'. The website <http://arakwal.com.au/> is more specific, saying *Currenba is Palm Valley... located at The Pass... and means gully and refers to the natural water channels....* Finally, the *Science of Man* journal of 20Jun1908 gives *Currenby (bush with a kind of currant growing there), north-east division, Byron Bay*.

**Bernard Jarrett** in the *Northern Star* of 5Jan1938 said *Koranba, meaning "quick," is the name given to Byron Bay, because of the fast flowing water near Byron Headland. Although he will not vouch for the correct spelling of this word, he maintains that it has no connection with Cavanbah*. Phonetically close is **Thomas Hewitt's** record that *Cape Byron (local dialect) is Kar-ran-bay...* (See his word collection at the Mitchell Library site <https://transcripts.sl.nsw.gov.au/page/item-05-aboriginal-words-and-names-chiefly-upper-clarence-river-dialect-collected-thomas-27>.) Nor does the *Science of Man* Journal of 21Mar1903, viewable at the National Library site [nla.obj-525829330](https://nla.obj-525829330), pg 26, give a meaning to 'Cavanbah' (along with *Bellynudgle* and *Mobal*) under the list of words *Used at Cudgen, by the blacks who are called "Cudgingberry"*

The Arakwal website does not acknowledge 'Koramba', but is specific on 'Cavanbah', which refers to Byron Bay proper and means a '*meeting place*' for members of various dialect groups under the Bundjalung umbrella. 'Walgun', meaning 'shoulder', is a descriptive word for the Cape Byron Headland, a place of initiation for young males. (**Dr Sharpe** goes with 'walagan' for 'shoulder').



'Brook's Farm' at the 'The Pass' / 'Palm Valley', ~1910, now part of the Arakwal National Park. (The Arakwal say *The surviving midden and campsite at Palm Valley is the oldest of its type in the region, estimated to be approximately 1,500 years old.*)

The first use of the word 'Cavvanba' to label the Bay (and literary figures to label its streets) occurred in the Government Gazette of 19Dec1885 advising that 500 acres had been set aside for *A Village At Cavvanba...* and 2700 acres for the *Suburban Lands at Cavvanba*, mapped and named by Sydney-based surveyor **Fred Poate**. (Englishman Poate was on the 'Field Staff' in the Surveyor-General's Office,

presumably acting as a type of 'locum' in undertaking various short-duration jobs around the traps. He was probably the culprit who dedicated all the Bay's streets to the literati, aided or abetted by some anonymous clerk in the Surveyor-

General's Department, mistakenly assuming Captain Cook named the place after poet Byron.) The first local use of 'Cavanba' occurred in the *Northern Star* of 11Dec1886 reporting a meeting of the 'Byron Bay Progress Association', which wasn't happy with 'Cavanba' and successfully lobbied to have the place rebirthed as 'Byron Bay' in 1894.

Whether 'Cavvanbah', or some corruption thereof, was picked up locally by Poate is a mystery, but Ethnologist **Archie Meston** asserted in May1922 that *there was no Cape Byron tribe, as all that area belonged to the Brunswick River blacks, the "Minyahgo-walloh" tribe...*, although it's possibly just semantic confusion, he meaning the collective 'Minjungbal People' centred on the Brunswick and embracing Durungbil, Bumberin and Goodjinburra clans.

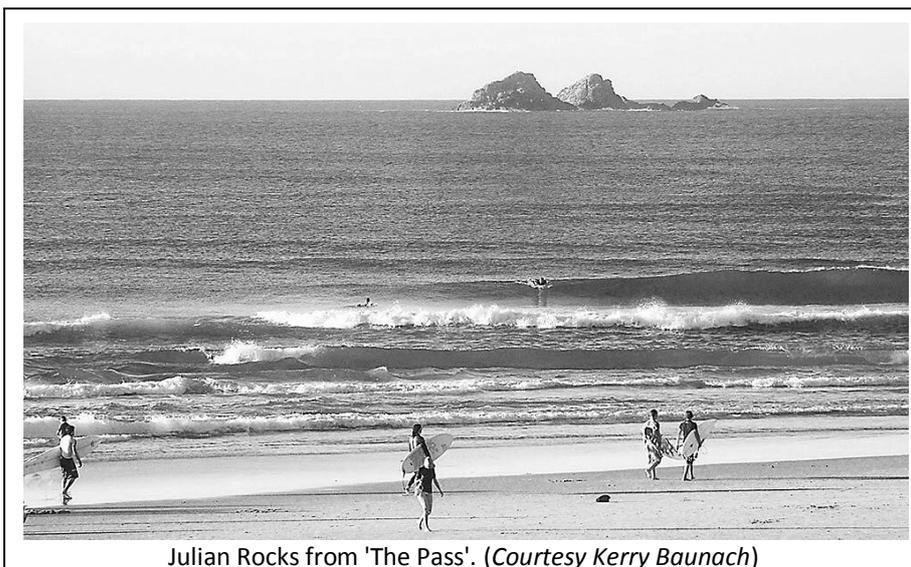
Nevertheless, it's now generally accepted that the bay was home to 'King Bobby' of Burrumbin, who died 1907, *a native of between Tathro Creek and Cape Byron...* and is buried alongside his father *near Tallow Beach....* His 50yr old son **Harry Bray** is now *the last of his tribe...* whose descendants call themselves the 'Arakwal Bumberlin people'.

## Belongil

This creek was labeled 'Boolloongal' in Feb1877 by Irishman **Dick Glascott** of Tintenbar, via *The Glascott Diaries; The Diaries and Account Books of Richard Donovan Glascott, A Timber-getter on the Richmond River in the 1860s and 1870s*, edited by **Marlene Lester**, Ballina 2001. It first appeared under the formalised spelling of 'Belongil' in the *Northern Star* of 18Mar1885, and concretised as such on the map of the "Parish of Byron" 28May1894. (Newspapers through the late 1800s also refer to it as "Quicksand Creek".) The name was defined by **French** and **Jarrett** as meaning "because of the inlet from the Sea", while the Richmond-Tweed Library has a slight variation with *said to mean "inlet of the sea"*, also asserting it is derived from 'bilang', meaning a 'She-oak' or 'Creek-oak', with the suffix "-gil" possibly meaning "class of tree". And further, that it can *also be found as Bilongil, Boolangel and Bylongil*. **Dr Sharpe** also endorses *bilanggil* as 'because of the inlet from the sea', but adds 'possible place of she-oaks'.

Surveyor **Thomas Rankin**, in his *Aboriginal Place names and other Words with their meanings, peculiar to the Richmond & Tweed Districts*, at <https://transcripts.sl.nsw.gov.au/page/box-4-folder-3-new-south-wales-place-names-1899-1903-page-91>, reckons 'Belongil' is 'Casino'?? (He was a Lismore-based District Surveyor 1889-1908 and *collected most of these names and words from Mr Francis McQuilty of Blakebrook near Lismore, who has more knowledge of the Blacks and their language and customs than any other man in the district.*) Similarly mysterious is the entry from the SoM of 21Jun1900 - *Billongil: A female aboriginal died there and was not buried.*

## Julian Rocks



Julian Rocks from 'The Pass'. (Courtesy Kerry Baunach)

More than likely they were named after the protagonists in Lord Byron's poem 'Don Juan'. (Just as all the streets of Byron Bay were named after literary figures, so some anonymous comedian carried on the theme with the rocks). But the first bloke to acknowledge the names was Alderman **James Barrie** of Lismore, pre-dating Poate in a letter to the *Brisbane Courier* on 30Apr1881 reporting on the proposed breakwater *from the cape to the Juan and Julia rocks...*, followed by the *Northern Star* on 2Jul1881 reporting on the great fishing to be had *near the celebrated Juan and Julia Rocks*. In 1883 **Commander Howard** made a detailed survey of the Bay, and his subsequent chart, not

published until 1894, was the first to formally delineate the 'Rocks' as 'Juan and Julia'. From about 1900 the contraction 'Julian Rocks' became more popular.

The Richmond-Tweed Library booklet says that an aboriginal legend has it that the rocks were placed there by *Nguthungulli, the all-seeing Creator*. Another legend concerns the creation myth of the Three Brothers, one finding his wife having an affair and throwing both into the sea, where they stand to this day as a lesson to all adulterers. Yet

another legend says they are the heads of two lovers who broke taboos and drowned there whilst being pursued by retributionists, both legends nicely following the *Don Juan* script.

And on 9Feb1924 **Archie Meston** told the *Brisbane Courier* that *Those isolated rocks, standing out on the beach, just beyond Currumbin, the blacks called "Gillama-beljin", the g hard, as in all my aboriginal words. On reaching Cape Byron, 45 miles farther south, the blacks there gave me the same word for the isolated rocks off the Cape, being the same dialect, equivalent to our word "orphans," and meaning rocks without any father or mother....* Conversely, **Thomas Hewitt**, proprietor of the *Northern Star* 1889-1915, said *Juan and Julia Rocks (local dialect) are Killa-mah-gan....* Finally, surveyor **Thomas Rankin** says the rocks were *Sulaama Billigen*, with no meaning given. (And spelt *Salaama Billigen* in *Science of Man* journal of 22Sep1900 - <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-525760471/view?>)

## Bangalow

Through the 1860s and 70s the cedar-getters transited along '*Cape Byron Creek*', but **Dick Glascott** implies there was no particular spot that could be deemed an embryo settlement, although there were numerous 'huts' dotted along its length. The only place he notes with a name is '*Bung Bung Crossing*'\* somewhere along the creek, perhaps Binna Burra at the intersection with Friday Hut Road. Nor does there appear to be any specific spot from where the cedar-getters launched their logs for their rafting journey to Bexhill (aka *Bullawai - Flame Tree*).

(\*Presumably 'rifle-birds' were plentiful at the crossing as *The aboriginals call the rifle-bird "bung-bung" (meaning shining or silky)...* said naturalist **A.J. Campbell** in a tour through the 'Big Scrub' in 1891. **John S. Ryan** in his 1963 pamphlet *Some Aboriginal Place-Names in the Richmond Tweed Area*, backs him up with *Bung Bung, the place where there are rifle birds in great numbers.*)

The Government Gazette of 8Jan1883 reserved 20 acres for a school site carved off the NE corner of **John McLeod's** selection, about a mile east of where the Railway Station was eventually built. But this had been reduced to 8 acres by the time '*Byron Creek Provisional School*' opened with 20 pupils on 20Oct1884. It became a Public School on 13Jul1888, at which time its address was given as '*Byron Creek, near Tintenbar*'. Growth had made the old building inadequate by 1891 and a new school in a more central location was erected on a 3 acre site carved off **Robert Campbell's** property, which was all very timely with the dramatic increase in pupils brought by the railway navvies camp. Rapid growth continued with the advent of the dairy industry, pupil enrolments reaching 79 by the turn of the century. Thereafter Bangalow was the byword for relentless growth, with enrollments peaking at 180 in 1925, the opening of the Catholic School in 1909 only causing a temporary blip in the inexorable advance to the bust preceding the Great Depression.

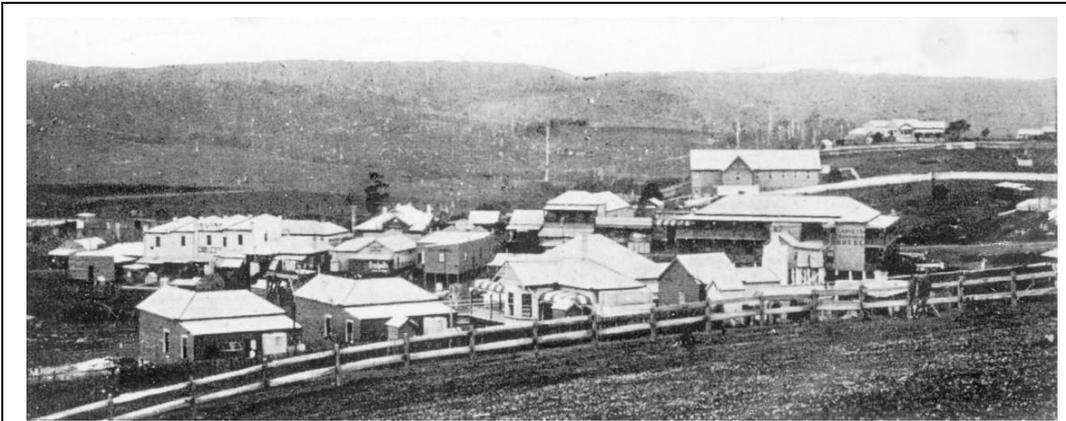
The site for the village was a given when selector **Robert Campbell** started carving off various bits from his 640 acre selection, including provision for a Catholic Church, School of Arts, Show Ground and Cemetery. His place was designated as the '*Byron Creek Post Office*' in Oct1884, while the '*Byron Creek Progress Association*' held its first meeting at his home on 14Jun1890.

Then along came the railway commissioners in Oct1893 calling for tenders for the '*Erection of Station Buildings at Binna Burra, Granuaile, Cavanba, Tiagara Grass, and Mullumbimby....*' A giant sign proclaiming the place 'Granuaile' was duly erected at the station (built on portion of Campbell's property) and probably due to lobbying by Catholic Irishman **J.P. Garvan** MLA, a bloke with big interests in the area. But Catholic Campbell (born Clarendetown, of Irish immigrant parents) had already introduced the name 'Granuaile' when he built the adjacent '*Granuaile Hotel, Byron Creek*', in 1892 to cater for 100s of thirsty navvies. Railway construction got underway in Mar1891 and very quickly over a 1000 navvies were being accommodated in 'canvas towns' that sprang up along the line. *Here and there along the route of the line stores have been "run up" by enterprising traders.... In some of these "centres of population" there may be 50 navvies, in others 100....*, said an SMH journalist on 6Jun1892. And one of those centres evolved into Bangalow.

On 11Sep1894 the Government Gazette decreed that '*On and from the 1st proximo, the Post Office at present known as "Byron Creek" will bear the designation of "Bangalow"*'. Judge **L.C. Furnell's** 1981 book '*Out of the Big Scrub; Bangalow*' speculates that the postal authorities changed the name because 'Byron' clashed with a post office already so named near Inverell, despite the existence of a place already branded 'Bangalow Creek' near Gosford. He added that the odds favour the mischievous **Miss K. Robinson** as the agitator who came up with the new name at a residents meeting, guessing that it was the abundant palms in the district that prompted her choice. Folklorist **John S. Ryan** of UNE agrees, reckoning that the place is named *from the variety of palms growing in the locality, Archontophoenix Cunninghamiana*.

[Another popular belief is that 'Bangalow' was derived from 'bangalla', meaning 'a low hill' in Wibadhabi dialect, as given at Appendix D pg 72 in *An Australian Language as spoken by the AWABAKAL; The People of AWABA or LAKE MACQUARIE...*, the same tome containing **Rev Livingstone's** treatise on the Minyangbal of Brunswick. (See <https://downloads.newcastle.edu.au/library/cultural%20collections/pdf/al1892whole.pdf>). The Geographical Names Board gives credence to this definition, quoting *Aboriginal place names and their meanings*, compiled by **A.W. Reed**, 1967. The *Science of Man Journal* of 21Mar1903, under 'List of native words by Brunswick blacks who call themselves "Ch-Long Kitty"', pg 25, says 'Bangalo Palm' is 'Pikapene', while **Dr Sharpe** says 'bangalow palm' is 'bigabihn', said to have given rise to the Tweed village of Piggabeen.]

On 13Oct1894 the railway department gave its imprimatur when it published an updated train schedule, nominating



**Bangalow 1910.** (Robert Campbell's second Granuaille Hotel at the top of Byron Street was opened 1898. St Kevin's Catholic Church, built on Campbell land in 1894, was relocated to the above site on Deacon Street in 1908. Foreground buildings are on Leslie Street, on the northern side of the railway line.)

'Bangalow' as the new name for the station between Byron Bay and Binna Burra. And on 8Dec94 the Catholics decided their church was now at 'Bangalow', while the *Bangalow Agricultural Society* held its first show on 10Mar1897 (and as with the school, was way ahead of Mullumbimby.)

Meanwhile, The Department of Public Instruction had joined the revolution with a bob each way, calling for tenders in Sep1895 for a

teacher's residence at '*Byron Creek Public School (Bangalow)*', finally and formally changing the name to '*Bangalow Public School*' in Nov1907. (And school attendance mirrored Bangalow's doldrums. The dairy industry suffered a long, lingering death, the average school attendance bottoming out at 71 in 1950. The banana boom gave a temporary lift, but there was no great turnaround until the mid 1970s.)

## Coorabell

Once again **Dick Glascott** of Tintenbar was the first to put a name to a place of plentiful cedar (or 'widgee') when he showed hospitality to a couple of fellow timber-getters *coming in from Corrible Creek...* in Oct1865. And over 7 days in Jul1874 he and partner **Alex Walls** built a hut somewhere along '*Corrible Creek*'. In 1900 cedar lovers **Henry French** and **Charlie Jarrett** told *The Anthropological Society of Australasia* that "*Currabal*" means "*The back of loins*", while the Richmond-Tweed Library says its *Derived from Bundjalung term 'Goorabil', or more correctly 'Goorangbil' meaning 'hoop pine trees'*. And **Dr Sharpe** says '*Coorobil*', meaning '*bladey grass*', is a possible place name in Gidjabal dialect. (It's generally accepted that 'Coorabel' was in Wiyabal Country, although the Minyangbal down on the flats seem to be the main source of labour for the cedar getters.)

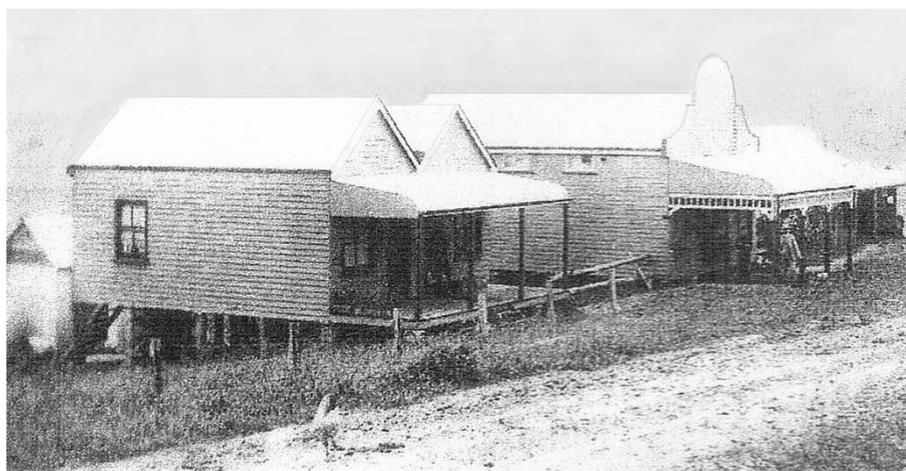
But Google prefers a *Bunjalung* word meaning "*home of the winds*", probably referring to the ex-village on the ridge line and not Glascott's creek that runs into Wilsons Creek along with its neighbour Opossum Creek.

The first reference to '*Coorabel Creek*' occurred in the *Northern Star* of 5Mar1887 advising that the place was now on the Presbyterian circuit of **Rev J. Brotchie** of the Tweed. And on 1Dec1888 *The residents and selectors of the Brunswick Road, between Bennie Creek and Possum Shoot, have just formed a Progress Association, to be called the Eureka and Coorabell Creek...*, with the first meeting held at the Eureka Hotel.

The school was opened Jan1891 on a two acre site on the flats at the base of Coorabell Ridge, the owner of which was prominent storekeeper **Edmund Williams**, who gave the Department of Public Instruction a free 10yr lease. (The original school site reserve had been cut in half by a 1889 deviation to the Brunswick Road). The school also catered for pupils from Myocum/Tyagarah until 1903 when two new schools were opened, the Myocumites finally winning their own school despite the bitter opposition of Williams, while the Coorabelles regained the ridge.

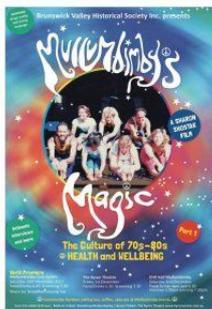
The axemen had cleared the way for the selectors by 1882, prominent **Thomas Temperley** acquiring most of the area now encompassing the Coorabell ridge area. By the mid 1880s the place had become a major staging post on the Lismore-Brunswick Road, so much so that Temperley erected a boarding house, and by 1907 the village could boast a general store, blacksmith, butcher, boarding house, Methodist church, school, and 'School of Arts' built on one of the 35 allotments created by entrepreneur Williams. By 1913 things were still going well when **Edmund Williams** became the driving force behind re-formation of the Coorabell Progress Association, despite the lack of interest in his subdivisions. All that remains is the school and the well-known 'Coorabell Hall' (rebuilt in 1920 on a new site owned by William's daughter **Ellen Simons**).

Peter Tsicalas



Coorabell Shops ~1907 (J.F. Ryder's General Store next PO with fancy facade)

### HIPPIE DVD UPDATE



To view the trailer for *Mullumbimbys Magic – The Culture of the 70s-80s Part 1 Health & Wellbeing* go to the website noted below. The DVD is also available from the shop on the website.

<http://www.mullumbimbymuseum.org.au/mullumbimbys-magic-the-culture-of-the-70s-80s/>

### OLD & GOLD 2018

Brunswick Valley Historical Society once again had a presence at this annual event in Brunswick Heads.



we had a slide show and photo display. We also had use of the stage this year so screened our DVDs.

Thanks to the members Susan, Rollie, Dave, Stephen, Gordon, and John for helping on the stall. It was very well supported by the public with the best sales to date. Always good to get our message out there and let people know where we are and what we do!

Our theme for this year was "The Changing Mouth of the Brunswick River" for which

## Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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

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### All members are invited to contribute to this newsletter

\*Please leave contributions to the newsletter with John, Tues or Fri 9am to 12 noon.

alternatively email to:

[bvhs84@yahoo.com.au](mailto:bvhs84@yahoo.com.au)

### NEXT MEETING

**Thursday 5 July 2018**

**2.00pm**

**See you there!**

\*Deadline for agenda items  
Wednesday 4 July 2018

### MUSEUM HOURS

**Tuesdays & Fridays**

**10am - 12pm**

**Market Saturdays 9am - 1pm**

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

