



Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER
July 2018

Cnr Myokum & Stuart Streets MULLUMBIMBY 2482
OPEN: TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS 10 AM - 12 PM
MARKET DAYS (3RD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH) 9 AM - 11 AM

Ruth Fox. We will miss you.

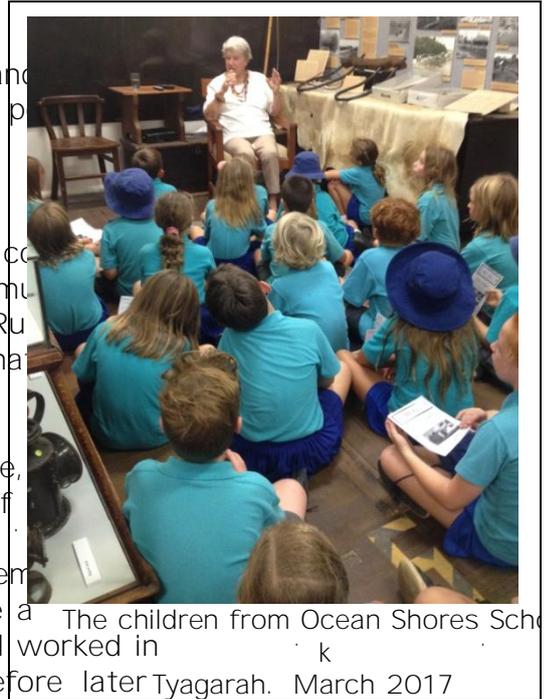
I have an absolute love of the district

... said Ruth Fox in conversation in 2016. Humble, intelligent and community minded, Ruth was a community worker, writer, poet, journalist, widely travelled and a recognized icon.

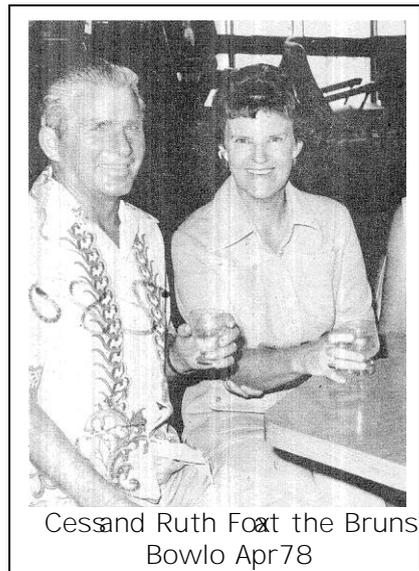
at the Mullumbimby Museum where she was a volunteer and committee member for over a decade, and her love for that same community has been for the benefit and privilege of the Brunswick Valley. Ruth has now moved away recently leaving with us a legacy of events that will resonate and impact on us forever.

She was born Margaret Ruth Walker in Woolloowin, Brisbane, August 1925. Her father Ernest arrived in Australia as part of the

grandparents. Ruth had two younger siblings, Keith and Rosemary. Her mother worked as a manager/secretary and was the first to be a Pitman shorthand writer. Ruth also excelled academically and worked in the office of Gordon and Gotch, a wholesale bookseller before working in the media.



The children from Ocean Shores School at the Mullumbimby Museum. Ruth Fox is speaking to them. March 2017



Cess and Ruth Fox at the Brunswick Heads Bowlo Apr 78

Shemet her husband Cecil Reginald Fox (Cess) a member of the 2nd Machine Gun Battalion A.I.F. when they collided roller skating. Cess, a veteran of the Pacific campaign was in Deception Bay training for the war in the Pacific. 1945.

They lived in Brisbane where Ruth gave birth in 1946, to Peter John who died a few hours after birth and in 1948 to Rosemary Anne. The family lived on the Tweed working in dairy as well as the Tamworth region for a while. Ruth worked as a health insurance salesman until they moved back to the Tweed upon taking up a farming lease at Stokers Siding. In 1954, Ruth gave birth to Ian. In 1957 they bought their own farm and relocated. This move was monumental. Cows, tractors, milking machinery, the household, all and everything, located after milking. They settled here in the Brunswick Valley.

Ruth raised the two children, Rosemary and Ian, around which her life increasingly she became involved in the community. She began with the Tyagarah Church and even Brunswick Heads outdoor concerts for the Surf Club. She was involved in the flower shows where she read songs. Her involvement also extended into working in the local media from Lismore to Grafton to become a correspondent with the Northern Star Lismore. She also did the weekly feature page for the Tweed Daily News, worked on the Mullumbimby Advocate and was correspondent for Grafton ABC for over fourteen



CWA ladies doing their bit at Heritage Park Oct85
 (L to R: Ruth Fox, Phyl Richardson, Phyl Batt, Phyl Carter, Joan Graham, Pearl McPaul, Gwen Stanford, Gwen Kingsford)

Her contribution to our lives in the Brunswick Valley is her quiet achievement. Ruth was involved in LandCare and environmental issues. She co-

Humanitarian Program. She was a former member of the Tweed Byron Reforestation President of Tweed Byron Flora and Fauna Conservation Society, helped establish the Heritage Park at Mullumbimby and led publicity culminated in the declaration of the Border National Park and the Broken Head Nature Reserve. Ruth hosted overseas guests as part of the Tweed Valley Friendship Force, served as secretary of Brunswick Heads Fish and Chips Committee, a member of the Brunswick Valley Uniting Church.

schools with University of New England and leading the study classes for the CWA Country of Study Mullumbimby branch at conferences. Ruth was also the convenor with Brunswick/Byron U3A

@ Ruth was awarded the Positive Aging Award. Simon Richardson, Mayor of Mullumbimby.

Her dedication to the community was also reflected in her work. Ruth won state cultural awards for poetry and essay writing and continued to do public poetry readings. In 2016, Ruth recorded her poems for the Museum archives, a playful and thoughtful observation of the Community Gardens at Mullumbimby.

Ruth was also one of the great intrepid travellers. Specialising in geography at school, Ruth had wanderlust and an ambition to travel. From Israel to Alaska, Kenya to the Middle East, she travelled, observed and absorbed the positive experiences. From New Guinea and Borneo, she sailed the Amazon, the Yukon, the Irrawaddy.



@ Ruth 2014 Positive Aging Award
 Courtesy Byron Shire Echo

When speaking about her travels, her excitement was palpable and on coming home to the Brunswick Valley she continued her work to help even more. When asked what she could contribute in so many ways to the community, her response was a humble one...

...I love people...I have an absolute love of the

Ruth Fox loved the district. And Brunswick Valley is a better place because of her.

In conversation with Ruth about travel and home she said:

...coming into Mullumbimby

Speaking with Ruth Fox was an absolute honour and on behalf of the Brunswick Valley Historical Society Ruth will always live on.

Ruth is survived by her son Ian, her daughter and four grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Cess Fox died in 1996 and daughter Rosemary Anne in 2007.

ThankstoGenevieve Bar

The Way It Was

Fifteen-year-old Alton Richmond MacLeod came to Mullumbimby from Lismore in Jan 1903 to complete coachbuilding apprenticeship. Alton Edward (Ted) Latter but 3yrs later decided to switch to a journalistic career joining the staff of the newly founded Mullumbimby Star. He left Mullum in May 1907 and after various adventures became proprietor and editor of the Mullumbimby Express Jan 1919. On 23 Sep 1924 he was gripped by nostalgia, waxes enthusiastic, and recalls the Brunswick as he knew, in his history still of the anxious Norfolks.

Yes! of all the wonderous beauty spots endowed by nature the Brunswick Heads was one of the most famous years ago, before the hand of man wrought havoc among the wild grandeur of the tropical jungle, which covered the gently sloping hills right down to the water's edge. The editor of this paper remembers many afloat on the expansive stretches of water just inside the Heads, where all manner of the fish tribe was to be seen, where oysters could be picked from their rocky beds without any trouble. Here and there piled up on the shore lay the iron ribs of a small cargo vessel that had come to grief on the treacherous bar endeavouring to carry its load of rich red cedar which grows very prolifically on the adjacent hills. Entering the main course of the river, magnificent views could be obtained of the famous 'big scrub' in all its magnitude. Giant trees of a peculiar to tropical life grew in profusion, these were laced together with dense masses of lawyer vines. tree ferns and bangalow palms raised their stately leaves wherever opportunity offered, the former, in some favoured feeding trees of teeming swarms of flocks of birds. The ground was alive with bird and animal life, among former being such rare and brilliant plumed species as the lyre bird, the rifle bird, and the satin bird, the numerous varieties of pigeons, including wonga and the large green pigeon patches of forest near the river perched snugly on the highest branches was the ever to be remembered the black and white target he presented and how hard it was to resist the temptation of a shot and hear the complaint of a very human like.

The old Tweed road wound its way down the mountain side and crossed the river per medium of an old bridge two miles from the Heads. The ancient ferryman was a character who lived the life of a hermit. A great dog and cat fancier, and kept scores of these animals, feeding them on fish. He was of a musical nature, during the evening would send forth his vocal abilities over the broadwaters of the river, to be accompanied in the tonisofa by his footed pets. For a confusion of weird noises as aboriginal corroboree but not worth the hard row against the heavy tide to hear. But those days have gone. The axe has left its mark once the scrubby trees and paddy melons reigned supreme now "Strawberry" roams knee deep in paspalum. has followed in the axes' wake, and the ever attractive fishing grounds and safe bathing resorts allure visitors annually from all parts of both NSW and Queensland, despite the fact that the magnificence of the wild beauty has gone forever. The writer has visited practically every seaside resort on the eastern coast of NSW. Brunswick wins by a street. No wonder the Government has made it a place of interest.

[Regarding the magnificence of the wild natural beauty 1891 ornithologist Archibald James Campbell visited the Brunswick and recorded that the river is lined with mangroves, where black swans are following its course seaward. There are a few fine banksia trees in front of the houses, where birds are quarrelling, while behind, from thicker timber, arises the musical interludes of birds, and where I detect the low whistling calls of the cuckoo. I watched a brood of three young grey plovers.

8 that Sir Dudley De Chair has been impressed with the natural beauties of the little spot that he has decided to record in his distinguished visitor's book at the "Ocean View" Hotel. He also approved at the Hotel. I can recall any other during the tour... And a guest of prominent residence, Walter Massey Greene MHR in 1917, Governor General Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson sang high praises of Brunswick Heads. Not to forget Prime Minister Billy Hughes, another Massey Greene guest in 1922. Unfortunately, this is the operative ferryman Bill Hunter who was forced into retirement in 1909 becoming a resident of the Old Men's Asylum at Parramatta 2yrs later aged 80. By 1906, when Byron Shire Council took command, he had been operating the ferry for 15yrs, the Council employing him on a wage of £60/yr. Upon retirement his old shack was demolished and a new six room mansion erected for his replacement (Thomas Alleh).

Mr Macleod turned up when Brunswick Heads was on the road, the place having spent many years in the doldrums after being eclipsed by Mullumbimby with the advent of the train in 1894. Ocean View Hotel went into mothballs in 1897 until resurrected as a boarding house by Robert Smith. The Court House Hotel in Fingal

Street was purchased by W.J. Reilly in 1899 and moved to his block opposite the School of Arts in Mullum. The School of Arts was carted off in 1898 to fulfil the same function at Billinudgel. And the school had a long sabbatical in 1896 until reopened in 1903.



The "punt" about to dock at south bank in 1918 (says a recently donated photo with a precise date). In 1916 592 motor cars used the thing, crossing one at a time. Car queues eventually forced the Shire Council into mechanisation while the page was eliminated entirely with a bridge in 1934. But the bulk of the traffic continued to travel via Mullumbimby until the Pacific Highway was cut through Brunswick Heads in 1946.

Brunswick was becoming the favourite playground for Lismoreite weekenders. It was serviced by diesel powered boat launch Edith from Mullum. The obituary for W.J. Reilly when he purchased the Signal Station in Mullum.

By 6 Feb 1906 the township comprises an hotel, well managed by Mr Carrivale.



Farrugia Cottage 'Sea View' next to Ocean View Hotel, Mullumbimby St., 1922

[The Maltese Farrugia family turned up in 1899 to become store keepers, boat builders and ferry operators until going into deep sea fishing business in 1918. In 1912 they sold 'Sea View' to a Bangalow resident for £500-\$60,000, which was the same price paid for it in 1916. It was destroyed in a fire in 1917, rebuilt and named by Joeheys Ltd from Albert Weigall late of Lismore, for £2000-\$69,000 in 1954.

The NSW census of Mar 1901 had listed only one identifiable householders at Brunswick Heads William Hunte operating 'McCurdy's Wharf Ferry' on 'the old Tweed road' Arthur Houghton operating the privatised ferry from the village to the North Head where he had resided at the time of the 1891 census. J.S. Boyd occupying the police quarters, and James Reddacliffe and Gerard Wheat pottering about the place in 1902. Wheat relicensed the Ocean View and the Reddacliffs reopened their boarding house. By Christmas 1903

itself as a 'health resort' the 'old Bruns' was finally written.

boarding houses, kept by Mrs Gibson and Mr J. Reddacliff, a brick public school, small store, and a number of residences. Mr Currie runs a coach daily to meet the trains at Mullumbimby, and in the absence of a postal receiving office generously brings down and takes to Mullumbimby mail matter for all residents.

Michael Currie became licensee of the Ocean View in late 1905, shortly after which his brother-in-law, William Webster of the Australian Hotel Ballina, bought the freehold for a serious £1500. In late 1908 Webster acquired the next door property of Auctioneer Dunn of

Lismore and began construction of a new two-storey accommodation block at the same time Gerard Wheat started building a new room boarding house, by which time Thomas Logan of Murbah was plying between Bruns and Mullumbimby with the 15-seat SS *Brunswick* (y k " £1500 in 1905 buys the equivalent to ~\$1000 in 2018.)



'Sea View' started up 1915.

(Antonio Farrugia at a/may have looked down in wonder at the auction of Lester Phillips

Mullumbimby sold for a record \$1,390,000, and observe on 10 Mar 2015 two record \$1,023,000, the first flat in Bruns to crack the magic millid



Ocean View Hotel and accommodation block 1930 (under licensee Nesbitt [In 1922 James Cavilbf later Surfers Paradise fame, bought the place from the family for Toohays Ltd chopped out the remaining old landmark figtree, demolished the two timber buildings and erected a brick edifice at a cost of £14,500 (~\$1,207,000 in 2018 dollars). In 1990 Cornell 4.1 mill). In Feb 2013 tycoon David Gyngell spent \$5.25 million to acquire a half share from St

Recorded for posterity by less investor Peter Tsicalas

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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

Cnr Myokum & Stuart Sts
Mullumbimby
P.O. Box 378 Mullumbimby 2482
02 6684 4367
bvhs84@yahoo.com.au
www.mullumbimbymuseum.org.au
Facebook:
www.facebook.com/MullumbimbyMuseum

Patrons: Frank Mills OAM
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Newsletter team:
John Davis & Work
Experience participants
Public Officer: Susan Tsicalas

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

NEXT MEETING
Thursday 2 Aug 2018
2.00pm
See you there!

*Deadline for agenda items
Wednesday 1st August 2018

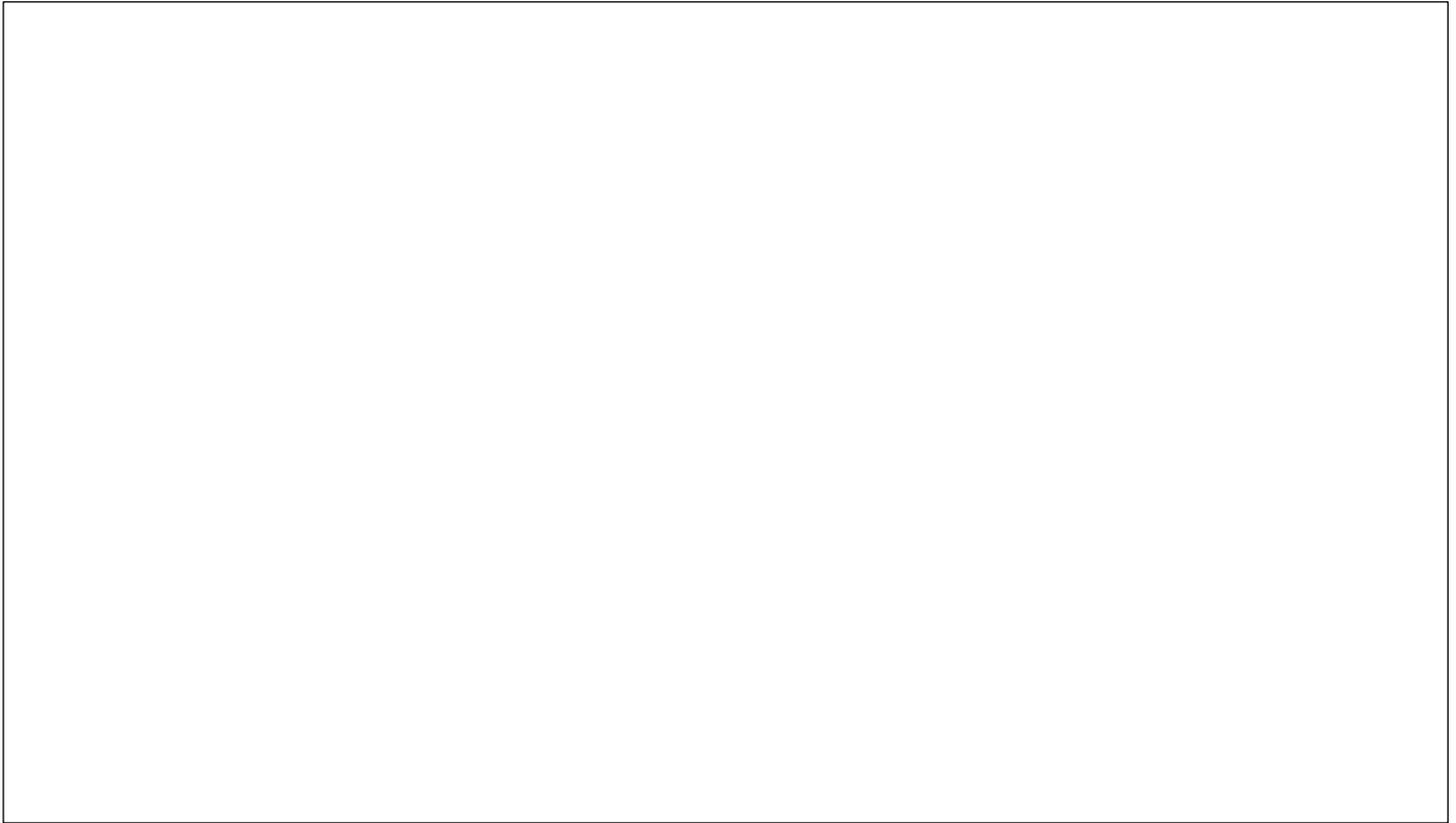
MUSEUM HOURS
Tuesdays & Fridays
10am - 12pm
Market Saturdays 9am - 1pm

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



Official launch of ducted reverse cycle air-conditioning

We were delighted to welcome Tamara Smith, our local Member of Parliament for the Ballina Electorate on Thursday morning 5th July. Tamara facilitated the grant we received through the Community Building Partners Program for the installation of the air conditioning. Morning tea was enjoyed by members, Nortec participants and visitors at which we thanked Tamara for her assistance in supporting the grant. We were interested to discover grandparents who lived and worked in Mullumbidgee.



Tamara with BVHS crew, Nortec crew and certainly a step up from the old heating methods as modelled by S
Photo courtesy Ken Robertson

Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School Visit

On Tuesday 3rd July, 57 excited Year 1 students accompanied by a plethora of parents and teachers visited the museum to explore how things have changed. Activities included matching old domestic items with new - phones, writing in the school desks, discovering the use of finding what certain items in the shed were for such as branding irons, milk cans etc. An energetic morning was enjoyed by all our volunteers who did a great job answering questions.



Left: Stephen discussing windmills with the group

Right: Susan talking about the old post office building