



NEWSLETTER
June 2021

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

MUSEUM

17 Myokum Street MULLUMBIMBY 2482
OPEN: TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS 10 AM – 12 PM
MARKET DAYS (3RD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH) 9 AM-1 PM

LATEST NEWS

Sarah Newsome, who has been a big part of the museum for over 15 years, is taking an extended break. Her parents in Melbourne are not travelling well, so she is taking the opportunity to spend valuable time with them. We wish her and her parents well and hope they stay out of Covid's grasp.

I wish to introduce our new market manager, Jacqueline Smith, who gave Sarah a break for a few months a couple of years ago. Jacqui is being assisted by Frederick Theiss. We wish them both lots of success in growing the market. Thanks to Stephen and Frederick for filling in until we appointed the new management team.

The Legacy of James Davidson

James Davidson, a quiet achiever, was one of the *most highly respected residents of the Brunswick district...*, said the *Tweed Daily's* Davidson obituary on 21Aug1928. *By his death Mullumbimby loses one of the most lovable, and at the same time one of the most upright and honorable of her citizens. He was one of nature's gentlemen, and the grief of all sections of the community will be manifested at his death....* Two days later the *Mullumbimby Star* noted the *Passing of Mullumbimby's Great Benefactor...*, *who by his actions and mode of living set a high example for all to follow.... A man of the highest integrity and boundless charity....* Similar sentiments were expressed by the *Northern Star* and *Richmond River Express*.

Downstream the Davidsonian Standard remained one of the benchmarks for **Mayor Latter**, who in 1942 said Mayors **Hollingworth** and **Davidson** *both had a big influence on his life as a young man. He studied their lives and thought by emulating them he would be able to do something worthwhile....* In 1946 **Mayor Davies** said *He was endeavouring to the best of his ability to follow the footsteps of his predecessors, notably Mr J.N. Hollingworth... and Mr James Davidson..., while in 1949 George Mallam, in giving a potted history of Mullum upon formation of the Rotary Club, said *I don't think anyone did more for the town than Messrs Hollingworth, Reilly and Davidson....**

This well-bred exemplar of all that is desirable in a citizen was born 1860 Fyvie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, and was self-employed at age 12. He was 25 when he landed at Maryborough, where he spent 7yrs engaged in railway construction before taking up sub-contracting work on the Richmond-Tweed line. Mullum was blessed in 1894 when he desired to stay following completion of the local portion of the track, acquiring an 80ac farm adjacent to the Showground from where he almost immediately became involved in civic and cow affairs. And whilst calling himself a farmer, his day job was still



The Davidson Farm 1905. Became 'Belmont' in the hands of Patrick Walker 1908.

undertaking big civil engineering contracts around the traps, which, pre1900, included building Mullum's main streets (and some at the Bay), the Mullum-Federal Road, Binna Burra-Byron Road, the tricky Montecollum Road, the controversial 'Grindley's Corner' to Pipeclay Railway Siding in Myocum, as well as reconstruction of portion of the Byron-Murbah telegraph/telephone line. In Jan1897 he married **Agnes Cameron**, the sister of storekeeper **Allan Cameron** with whom he shared civic duties. Cameron and Davidson were elevated to respective president and auditor of the Mullum Progress

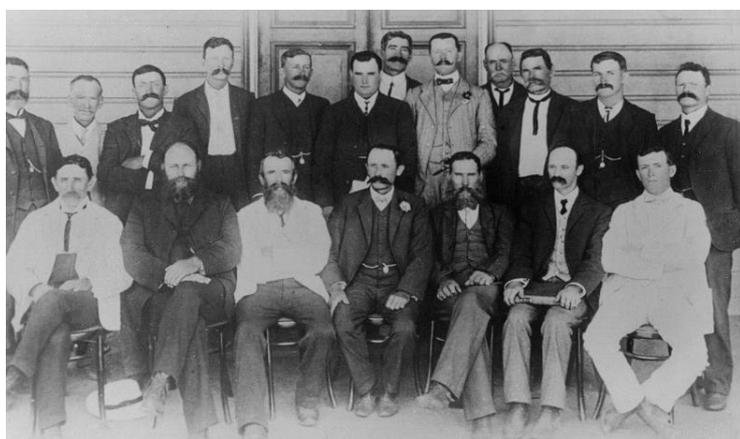
Association in Feb1899, at the same time Davidson became a foundation member of *The Brunswick River and District Dairymen's Association*, which in Jul1901 morphed into the *Mullumbimby Farmers' and Dairymen's Union*, of which he became foundation treasurer.

He was a foundation member and guarantor for the *Mullumbimby School of Arts*, remaining a paid-up member for the rest of his life. And as finance was his forte he was awarded the treasurer's job by at least Jan1898. In Jul1901 he and Norwegian **Peter Olson** (who had married **Margaret Cameron**) became *Trustees of Presbyterian Church Property belonging to the Congregation of Mullumbimby*. He was an Elder of the Presbyterian Church, along with Session Clerk **Allan Cameron**, when he was elected foundation treasurer of the *Mullumbimby Protestant Defence Association* in Feb1903. At the opening of the Presbyterian Church in Jun1903 he was singled out as the largest contributor (£127) to its construction. In Jul1903 he was appointed one of the trustees of the *Botanical Gardens Reserve* and in Jan1904 as one of the Trustees of the new *Showground Reserve*. In Mar1905 he became foundation treasurer of the *Mullumbimby Pastoral and Agricultural Society*, and over the next couple of years cleared the Showground site with a mixture of paid and voluntary labour. In Mar1911 he was elected President of the Society, serving in that position until Jun1925, thence Patron until his death.

In Mar1908 he sold his 80ac farm to **Patrick Walker** for an astonishing £32/ac, while commencing to build a new house on the 2ac lot he retained next to the Showground. He was still calling himself a farmer in Aug1908 when he nominated as one of the 14 candidates for aldermanic honours, at which time the *Star* reported that *Mr Davidson possesses town property and two farms in close proximity to the municipality...*

At a public meeting in May1906 he had been appointed to the sub-committee formed to report on the viability of incorporating Mullumbimby as a Municipality, and in Oct1906 added his name to the 127 others on the petition calling for same. He subsequently came in 4th with 91 votes in the Municipal popularity contest, ahead of brother-in-law **Allan Cameron** on 51. At the next election in 1911 he became Mayor after topping the poll with 101 votes in a field of 10 candidates. It was still a Labor-dominated Council in mid1912 when he came out of the closet as a member of the reformed *Mullumbimby Branch of the Liberal Association*, of which Cameron was secretary, while **Mrs Davidson** became a foundation member of the *Mullumbimby Ladies' Liberal League*.

When the war arrived he immediately formed a Mullum branch of the *Patriotic Fund*, of which he became President, followed by Presidency of the *Recruiting Association* and Presidency of the



Agricultural Society Committee 1907

Back Row L to R: P. Nelson JP, G. Pullinger, J. Davidson, J. Torrens, W.J. Staines, P.S. Poolman, R.R. Mallett, J. Withford JP, J. Donaghy, A. Sweaney, J.A. Walker, W.J. Tarlington.
Seated L to R: H.McD. Livingston, W.E. Smith, W.J. Reilly JP (Vice President), J. Parrish (President), T. Gibson (Vice President), C.E. Simpson JP (Secretary), R. Mate Thompson JP (Treasurer).



Municipal Aldermen 1908

Rear L to R: Thomas Torrens, William R. Baker (with Peter Nelson's body), James Davidson
Seated: William J. Reilly, Joseph N. Hollingworth, John I. Stewart.



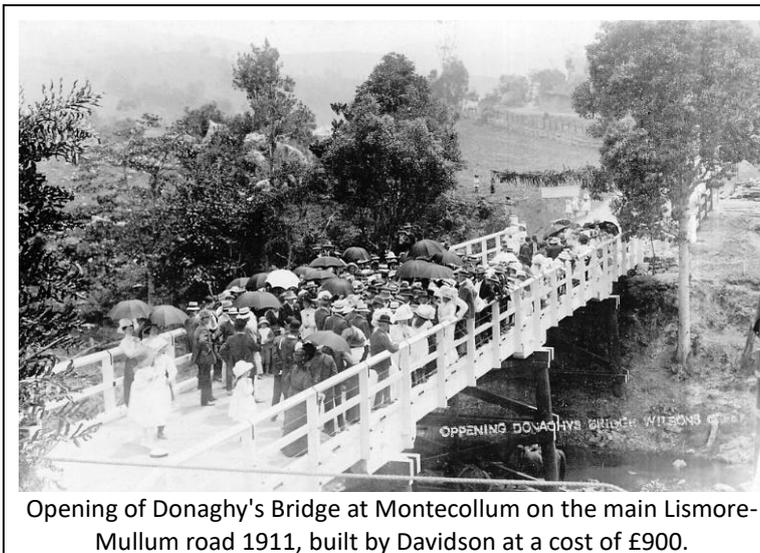
Getting to Main Arm got easier in Jun1907 after James Davidson bridged Chinbible Creek.

(The 7-room 'Wilooona' in the background, currently looking very sad, was built by auctioneer Syl Walker in 1911, across the creek from his father Patrick who in 1908/09 built the now derelict 'Bellevue'.

Soldier's Welfare Society, while **Mrs Davidson** formed the *Comfort Fund* followed by a branch of the *Red Cross Society*, thence Chairwoman of the *Returned Wounded Soldiers Fund* and membership of the *War Service Committee*. Then came diverting agitation for separation from NSW, **Mayor Davidson** becoming President of the *Mullumbimby Branch of the Separation League* in Jun1915. In Oct1916 he was elected to the executive committee rallying the pro-conscription vote in town and district.

Then in Feb1917 he resigned the Mayoralty due pressure of work, his major contract to date being the construction of drainage for the *Mooball and Crabbes' Creek Swamp Drainage Trust*, which had consumed his time and energy through 1915 and given him entrée to the world of big civil engineering projects further afield, notably in Queensland.

The Mullumites treated him to a Testimonial and presentation of a gold watch 1Jun1917 *for his services to the town and district as Mayor and President of Mullumbimby Agricultural Society.... The Mayor (Ald J.C. Morrison) presided. Mr and Mrs Davidson occupied seats on the platform on the right of the chairman, while representatives of the Council, Agricultural Society and Presbyterian Church were also seated on the platform. Proceedings opened with an overture by the Empire Picture Orchestra (Mrs R. Ireland, piano; Misses Milgate, violins), followed by songs by Mrs Harkness, Messrs Mallett, Macgregor, Davey....*

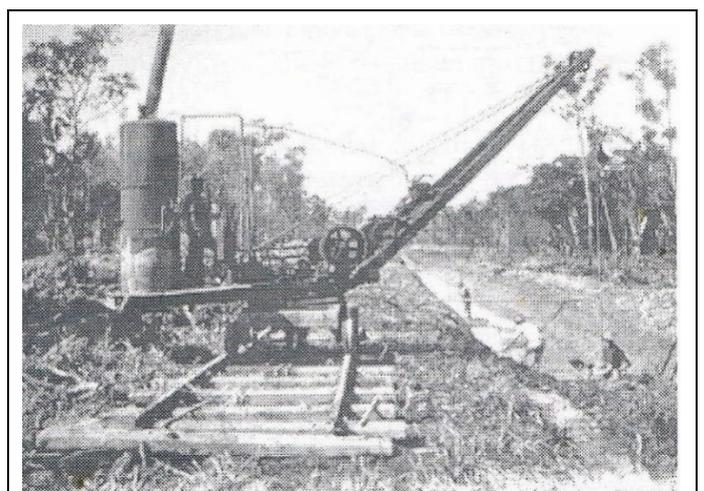


Mr J. Macgregor said... *The (Shire) Council had accepted Mr Davidson's tenders when they were a few pounds above the lowest, because the Engineer had said that Mr Davidson could be depended upon. All have seen Mr Davidson in the early life on the Council, when he spent days and days taking levels, and never asked for one penny for it. His wife was a worthy helpmate, and had interested herself in all social functions. The guest was an ideal citizen, and a man who kept things going like he did deserved recognition....*

Ald Bryant said *Mr Davidson had saved the ratepayers hundreds of pounds, and the work he had done would stand the test any Engineer could put it to. He hoped Mr Davidson would stand for alderman again and be returned at the top of the pole (sic)....*

Mr Shepherd (Mullum veterinarian) considered that £500 wouldn't repay Mr Davidson for what he had done in a public way. He had been working at 3am for the Agricultural Society, besides paying men 9s a day, and lending horses and drays for the Society. He had taken the levels for the racecourse free of charge....

Mr Davidson said... *What he had done for the district he considered it his duty; in fact, he considered it everyone's duty according to their ability to do all they could in assisting to push the place ahead.... It was a duty to help your district, and if all did a little the duties would be light.... Like himself, Mrs Davidson, who was presented with a wrist watch, did not do these things in view of any reward, but simply looked upon it*



In Apr1909 James Davidson won the first contract to create drains for the *Mooball and Crabbes Creek Swamp Drainage Trust* with a tender of £2428. In Jul1909 he won the contract for phase two with a bid of £5374, employing 25 men. And in May1915 scored the contract for extensions to the scheme with a bid of £3716.

as a duty... They would ever remember the Mullumbimby people, and the speaker said it was with regret that he had to retire from public affairs for a time, but he had to do it to look after his own affairs. In some future time he will be able to give his services again if they are needed.

In Apr1918 he sold up in Mullum to enjoy the seaside air at Brunswick Heads, but continued to undertake work with the Municipal Council, mainly on drainage schemes. He had a paid job to do Queen Street but prepared plans and specifications at his own expense for draining Burringbar, Dalley, Stuart, Whian and Gordon Streets. In Apr1919 he scored the contract to asphalt Mullum's footpaths, while the Shire Council employed him on aligning streets at Brunswick Heads, where he also contributed much free time to various projects.

Also in Apr1919 he was drafted onto the Executive Committee to plan and conduct the *Victory Celebrations*, and appointed to the Mullum sub-committee of the *Byron Shire Repatriation Committee*, while **Mrs Davidson** had energized the Red Cross to do something about the incapacitated, maimed, limbless and blind soldiers. Then he got talked into joining the board of the ill-fated *Mullumbimby Cooperative Butchering Company*. In Jan1923 he became chairman and noted that *year after year they showed nothing but loss...*, and pointed out that *there was no room in Mullumbimby for three butchers....* But the shareholders decided to carry on. He resigned the chairmanship in Aug1925, the *Mullum Star* saying *In Mr Davidson the company had lost a staunch supporter, and live co-operationist....* The retail side of the business was sold in Sep1925, the word 'Co-operative' dropped from the company name and replaced with 'Proprietary' in Jan26, and the indebted company wound up in Aug1926.

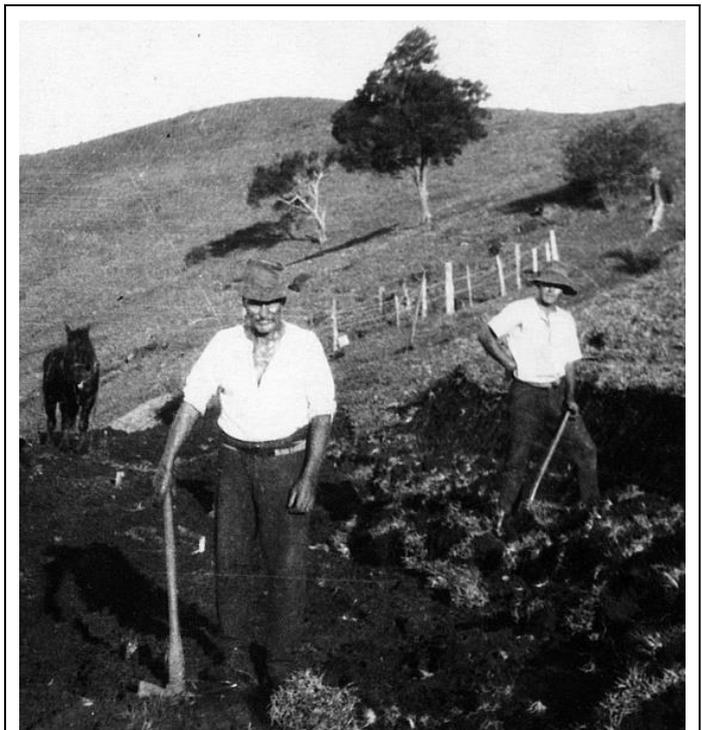
In late 1922 he became re-enthused over hydro power and took himself off to Dorrigo to look at its recently opened Undertaking. He met **William Corin** of the Public Works Department who told him *that exactly the same scheme can be successfully applied to Mullumbimby with power drawn from Wilson's Creek*. He returned in Nov1922 to sell this dream to the Mullumites who were preparing to vote in a referendum on the scheme, resulting in Council getting the green light to proceed. Ex-Department of Works Engineer Corin was then tasked with designing and costing a bespoke model for Mullum, exciting the Council with a favourable report delivered in Jun1923. Mayor **Morrison** and Town Clerk **Boxall** left immediately for Sydney to raise the money, the scheme finally getting underway in Jul1924 after Byron Shire came to the party. By May1925 costs had blown out and Davidson's £300 weir contract was paid out.

But, never having an idle moment, he then disappeared to Queensland to fulfill a major road contract, *including the*



Induction of Rev Robb, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Mullumbimby, 1920.

Standing L to R: James Davidson, Rev. Finalyson (Clunes), Rev. Hulme (Ballina), D. Blanch, Alex McGregor, Robert Argue, John McGregor. Seated L to R. Thomas Gibson, Rev McKillop (Lismore), Rev. Robb (Mullumbimby), Rev. Miller (Bangalow), Rev. Hart (Murwillumbah). (In Mar1936, at the 35th anniversary of Presbyterianism in Mullum, the Rev Hain declared that the late Mr Davidson collected the whole of the money expended (on the church), by his personal canvass of the big district on horseback, besides arranging the voluntary labour and timber hauling, cutting and clearing which was necessary....)



James Davidson, 'hands on' at the Power Station site 1925.

At the official 'switching on' ceremony on 6Mar1926 the Star gave a potted history of the scheme, saying *Two of the original men connected with the early history..., Messrs James Davidson and John C. Morrison, are unfortunately not in the district at present.... Mayor Davidson, was also keenly interested in both a lighting scheme and water for Mullumbimby..., and practical man that he was, decided to carry out investigations on his own account, and with level and staff proved the possibility of tunneling the hill at Laverty's gap, and carrying water down to Yankee Creek....*

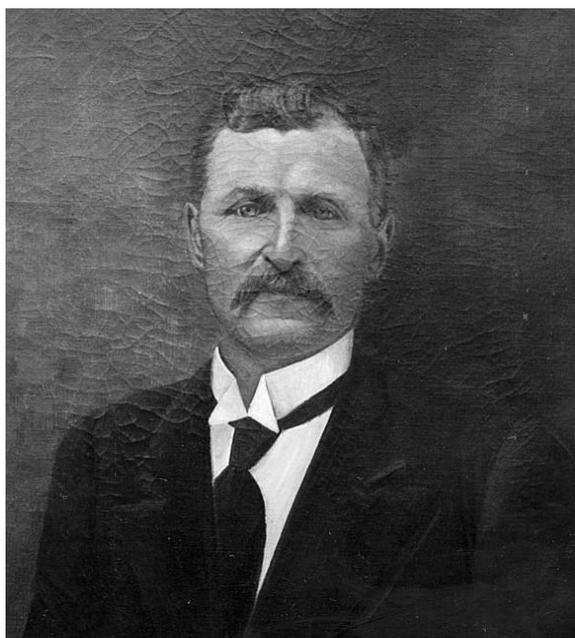
construction of portion of the road to Tambourine Mountains..., necessitating resignation from the Presidency of the Agricultural Society. On 18Jun1925 **Charles Shepherd** called for Life Membership for **Mr and Mrs Davidson**, noting that *few men would give the time, labor, or money to the cause, that Mr Davidson has done. I have known him in the good old days to work practically night and day, at a time too, when he had other urgent work on hand, supply his own horses, drays and men, to do cleaning up, filling in, and otherwise putting matters in order for an oncoming show. This he did year after year at his own expense....*

Although taking Christmas and Easter breaks, he wasn't back home permanently at Brunswick Heads until Aug1926. Thereafter he led a quiet life in semi-retirement until his death on 20Aug1928, aged 68, the Mullum Star reporting that *Hundreds of Friends are grieving over the loss of one of their dearest and best friends in the person of the late Mr James Davidson.... Mullumbimby's main streets, which have always been commented on so favourably by visitors, had their foundations so soundly laid by the late Mr Davidson.... Mullumbimby Agricultural Society was one of the chief objects of his beneficence..., and during his long association with it, supported it liberally, both with money and by personal labor and advice.... One of his last generous acts so characteristic of the man, was a substantial monetary gift to the Society in the early part of the year.... The late Mr Davidson was one of the earliest advocates of Hydro-electricity for Mullumbimby and strenuously fought for it during his connection with council.... He was prominently associated with the work of the Presbyterian Church, of which he was an elder, and his work during the war years was on the same unselfish plane that characterised all his deeds.... A member of the Masonic Craft, he was treasurer of Lodge Brunswick for a number of years, and was also a Past Master. In fact if columns of praise were printed, they would not recount the good works of the late James Davidson.... The funeral was one of the largest ever seen in the district. It was attended by many of the district's oldest residents.... The Tweed Daily added that *The whole of his work was done faithfully and well, even though it meant financial sacrifice, and that was his attitude in every walk of life..., while the Northern Star supplemented that his death removes an outstanding figure, who was always foremost in the advocacy of any movement for the advancement of the district....**



Portion of *Davidson's Wall*, Brunswick Heads, Boxing Day 1928.

In 1923 Byron Shire Council contracted James Davidson to build a retaining wall to save Brunswick Heads from being eroded away. The rock wall was ~500yds long, 7ft wide at the base, 18ins at the top with an average height of 5ft, reclaiming two thirds of an acre with the help of 10,000 cu yds of fill. He also constructed a log groyne on the opposite bank of the South Arm, necessitating huge scaffolding and cables 50ft above river level. As at Jan1924 the £3000 job was *One of the largest works yet undertaken in the shire..., and overrunning Davidson's tender of £2407.*



James Davidson.
1860 Fyvie, Aberdeenshire - 1928 Mullumbimby.

This portrait was presented to the Municipal Council by **Mrs Agnes Davidson** of Brunswick Heads in Dec1932. It hung on the wall of the Council Chambers until passed to BVHS in the 1980s.

[On 9Feb1922 the Mullum Star, under the heading *Local Philanthropist*, said *What would Mullumbimby do without Mrs Davidson? is a question that is asked whenever any public matter (with which women have to do) crops up.... All are unanimous on one point, and that is that Mrs Davidson should have charge. Nor is Mrs Davidson's reputation as an organiser confined to Mullumbimby..., having just raised £91/17/3 for the Lismore District Public Hospital.*

In Aug1929 she donated a complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica to the School of Arts Library.

She was born 1865 Portland, Victoria, and *After spending her girlhood days in Sydney, came to Mullumbimby via Maclean, where she resided with her brother, Mr Alan Cameron, a storekeeper.... Alan, born 1848 Kilmallie, Argyllshire, Scotland, came to Mullum 1894 and converted McGougan's pub into a store and shortly afterwards installed his sisters Agnes and Margaret as managers. Their mother Jean died 1903 Mullumaged 76.*

Agnes died Mullum 1941. She and James were *among the earliest pillars of the local Presbyterian Church....*]



Part of Davidson's Wall on Banner Park, Brunswick Heads, undergoing refurbishment May2021.

Most of the wall is still in good nick after 97/98yrs. (Refresh your memory on the Wall story, 'Reclamation of Recreation Reserves', at [70.-Newsletter-February-2018.pdf \(mullumbimbymuseum.org.au/newsletters\)](https://mullumbimbymuseum.org.au/newsletters))



Ditto the Terrace Park Wall

Peter Tsicalas



Black Sand Mining & Its Legacy

(3 part series by BVHS Committeeman Dr Mark Edwards)

Part 3

A History of Radioactive Waste in the Byron Bay and Mooball Areas

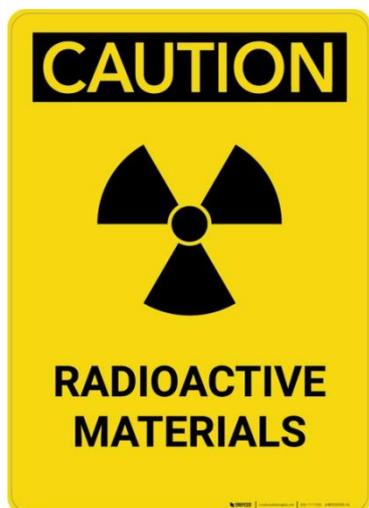
Byron Bay

One of the products of mineral sand mining is Monazite which contains, on average 7% radioactive Thorium. Although naturally occurring along beaches, once concentrated these radioactive materials are a potential health hazard ([Kemp, 2011](#)). When Monazite was considered as a viable source of Thorium (and useful for nuclear energy), the Commonwealth of Australia took control of the export of concentrates containing more than 0.5% Monazite. From March 1948 until September 1949, a scheme was instituted to buy Monazite produced in Australia with a 10% minimum concentration. Monazite (330 tonnes) was acquired by the Commonwealth government from scattered sites in Northern NSW, and was subsequently sold to France which extracted 20 tonnes of Thorium for the nuclear energy industry ([Trussel, 1982](#)).

For 41years, from 1934, a major mineral sand separation plant operated at Byron Bay. Operations ceased in Byron Bay in 1975, though leaving scattered piles of Monazite. During previous activity, workers had worn radiation monitor discs which were checked weekly. After closing operations, the warning signs on the piles of waste were subsequently removed. Some of Byron Bay land area is around sea level and, in some parts, a little below. Many properties, including the school,

church and hospital, used this landfill to raise their land height. Free land fill of process wastes (potentially toxic) was given out by council for many years. **Mr Fred Carr**, a former sand mining employee of 40 years was concerned about potential hazards. In 1980, he notified authorities about the previously dumped Monazite on the site of the new development of Pacific Vista. Eight months later, the Shire Council moved the Monazite to the local rubbish dump. At the close of this period, Byron Shire Council achieved successful auctions of their real estate interests in the area and the radioactivity scare was declared as a "storm in a teacup" (*Trussel, 1982*).

No other sites were checked at that time until the persisting **Mr Carr** tested sites around Byron Bay township with a Geiger Counter in November 1981. High readings of radioactivity were subsequently reported in the newspapers: *The Northern Star* (Jan 9, 1982); *Summerland Times* (Feb 1982) and *The Australian*. Dr A. Crawford, state director of the Public Health Service and the Radiological Advisory Council chairman aimed to check for potential hotspots and the possibility that underground water could also be contaminated (cited from committee meeting dated Dec 21, 1981) (*North Coast Advocate Vol 18 Jan 13, 1982*). As a result of these controversial reports, official testing began on Jan 13, 1982. Many requests for testing were also submitted by private residents. High levels of radioactivity in different areas of Byron Bay were reported, caused by spillage of material close to the site of the separation plant, and by use of its waste products to fill low lying blocks, and by the stock piling of some matter during WWII. The council had previously been forced to remove radioactive material dumped at the site of the Pacific Vista estate in 1980 (*The Advocate - Jan 13, 1982, Vol 18, no. 2*).



On Jan 15, work began to remove contaminated soil from the school and Woolworths sites and taken by council to the dump but residents protested against this limited action. Mining companies attacked "alarmist reports" saying radiation effects were only equivalent to having two chest x-rays per year. Several hundred cubic meters of soil was taken to the Council dump (*Trussel, 1982*). The state director of public health services, Dr Crawford said the radioactive soil in one hectare area near Massinger St, Paterson Lane and Kipling St, Byron Bay, would be removed or covered. Removed radioactive soil from various sites was taken to a disused quarry at Ewingsdale temporarily. A demountable classroom at Byron Public School was also to have been removed (*The Advocate - Jan 18, 1982, Vol 18, no. 3*). Twelve out of seventy five houses checked had recorded high readings which required some form of remedial action. Four officers from the State Radiological Advisory Council were to check all houses over a five day period. On Jan 21, Health Commission experts declared the area safe and proceeded to test the sites of all previous sand processing plants in the state.

In Chapter 3 of the preliminary report, investigations of various areas were given including: Pacific Vista stage 2, Woolworths site, public school, Massinger street development, Keemink development, recreation park near railway, Carlyle St recreation ground, various residences, public land, and public institutions. Subsequent to the earlier report, all soil with over 60 microrems/hour had been removed from the Byron Bay Public School area bounded by Massinger, Patterson, and Kipling. No remedial work was done on Carlyle St recreation ground and authorities said it was inadvisable for anyone to occupy Railway Park for any length of time. The highest levels of radiation were recorded in Marvell Street. Science officers checked houses on the following streets: Butler, Carlyle, Patterson, Massinger, Kipling, Shirley lane, Ruskin, Tennyson, Jonson, Kingsley, Lawson, Marvell, Banglow Rd., Pacific Vista stage One, and Sun Caravan Park (*The Advocate - April 14, 1982, Vol 18, no. 15*).

Government authorities said the entire area of Byron Bay township settled at that time had been checked. *The Advocate* newspaper reported that people were living on radiation levels ten times higher than the normal background level which is 0.1 millirems (100 microrems) per hour. In these cases, some sort of remedial action would need to be taken. Authorities deemed it entirely up to individual landholders to deal with properties declared "unfit for human occupation". At that time Dr Crawford advocated building rose gardens and rockeries atop backyard 'hot spots' but any dangerously contaminated (private) areas were to be excavated or buried (*Trussel, 1982*). The Hospital also had some excessive readings requiring action.

The general radioactivity report titled, "Radioactive Contamination in Byron Bay" by G. Gandy and P. Colgan was dated March 1982. Twelve properties were listed as needing remediation. One property had up to 3 mR/hr (milliroentgens per hour) where monazite was used as fill (*The Advocate - April 28, 1982, Vol 18, no. 17*).

The minister of health, Mr Brereton, received the report of 24 houses, Byron District hospital, three classrooms at Byron public school, a baby health centre, and segments of a playing field having radiation levels above international standards. The Radiological Council Advisory team checked 670 houses. *The Advocate* newspaper reported at this time that Associated Minerals Consolidated Ltd. (AMC) had a strong moral obligation to finance cleanup operations. Byron Shire

Council was to offset costs of removal by using its own workforce. AMC agreed to meet 50% of costs of work to begin on 100 contaminated properties in Tweed and Byron shires without delay (*Advocate - May 5, 1982, Vol 18, no. 18*).

Time passed and in 2019, radioactive soil again was needed to be removed from the Byron Bay Public School after testing showed higher-than-normal levels during upgrade works. (<https://www.echo.net.au/2019/03/radiation-found-soil-byron-bay-school/>)

Mooball

From 1942 to 1952 the separating plant of the company, Metal Recoveries, at Mooball Park Station (Mooball NSW), processed tonnes of Zircon and Rutile from nearby beaches, exported minerals by train and dumped 200 tonnes of radioactive monazite as tailings according to government records. In 1983, the NSW Government realised the radioactive content of tailings and managed a decontamination programme from the Queensland border to Taree, NSW (*Tweed's Sand Mining History, Tweed Daily News, 9 Jan 2016*).



Bernadette Kelly Park

Courtesy of Lesley Cargill & Tweed Daily News

A local medical practitioner was concerned with 30 cases of cancer arising from 30 dwellings on Tweed Valley Way. Also Mooball residents were fearful of gardening and the use of Bernadette Kelly Park - a former mining treatment facility. The GP believed a high rate of brain,

bone, blood and eye cancers, killing sufferers as young as teens, was still affecting people, and could have been caused by widespread use of radioactive sand as soil fill.

According to Mr Kelly, a Mooball resident, it was "common knowledge" tailings were used in sandpits, garden beds, house foundations, creek fills and drains. However, there have been multiple assurances from the Northern NSW Local Health District that thorium-rich tailings used as common soil fill under houses, in garden beds and creeks, were adequately cleaned-up in the 1980s, and there was insufficient evidence to trigger a formal cancer cluster investigation. (*Arylko, 24th May 2016, City lawyers investigate Mooball cancer cluster claims, Tweed Daily News*).

According to the *Tweed Daily News*, in a survey in 2010, "elevated radiation levels" were evident at the park, but they were considered by authorities to be "safe" because Mooball's council park did not have "regular occupancy by the same individual" (*Arylko, 22 Aug. 2015, Cancer cluster fears after more than 20 deaths, Tweed Daily News*).

REFERENCES

__Will Kemp, 2011, Land degradation and rehabilitation in coastal sand mining, <https://willkemp.net.au/envirosience/land-degradation-and-rehabilitation-in-coastal-sand-mining/>

__"Radioactive Rainbows" by Kent Trussel, in *Simply Living*, 1982; pages 85-89.

__Newspaper summaries (cited from Newspaper reports chronologically from January - May 1982)

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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

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Min. Secretary:

Sarah Newsome

Cor. Secretary: Susan Tsicalas

Treasurer: Susan Tsicalas

Committee Members:

Ann Burnett

Dr Mark Edwards

Roland Sjoberg

Shed Manager:

Roland Sjoberg

Market Manager:

Jacqueline Smith

Heritage Panel Representative

Chris Cooney

Newsletter:

Members

Public Officer: Susan Tsicalas.

All members are invited to contribute to this newsletter

Please email contributions for the newsletter to

bvhs84@yahoo.com.au

*Deadline for newsletter items
Friday 2nd July 2021

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 13th July 2021

@10.30am

MUSEUM HOURS –

Tuesdays and Fridays

10.00-12.00

Market Saturdays 9.00 - 1.00

MULLUMBIMBY

COMMUNITY MARKET

Next Market- Saturday 19 June

mullummarkets.com.au



South Golden Beach A History



Dr Dianne Bloomfield

A Southern Cross University history project conducted in partnership with the Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

New Addition to our Library

Thanks to member Dr Dianne Bloomfield for her generous donation of a copy of her book *South Golden Beach A History*.

In Di's words *she embarked on this project with limited experience of historical research but with a growing desire to know more of my own locality and its changing community, and to understand more fully my changing sense of self within this place....*

This work was undertaken with the support of Southern Cross University.... The project was designed to be undertaken with a community partner and the Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc ... has been wonderfully supportive....

This is a history of South Golden Beach which the Geographical Names Board designates "a coastal village located about 5km north of Brunswick Heads." Yet, beyond this low key geographical descriptor through delving into the details of the development and growth of this small NSW Northern Rivers beachside community, a fascinating, and at times contentious, even star-studded origin story is revealed. In fact across the past 60 years in this locality the paths of such luminaries as Pat Boone, Bob Carr, Rupert Hamer, Frank Nugan and Michael Hand have crossed, their actions with others in various ways contributing to the identity of South Golden Beach as it is today.

Di 's information from many sources gives us interesting and informative insights into South Golden Beach – a great asset to our library. It is available in our library and for purchase at the South Golden Beach Store.

TAKE NOTE

Meeting time – 2nd Tuesdays of each month at 10.30am

2021 Membership Subscription is now overdue!

To receive the newsletter membership payment is required. It's an extra \$5 for snail mail to help cover outrageous postage costs. Thanks.

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