



Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

MUSEUM

17 Myokum Street MULLUMBIMBY 2482

Email: admin@mullumbimbymuseum.org.au Phone: 02 6684 4367

OPEN: TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS 10 AM – 12 PM

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

NEWSLETTER

February 2022

Please note:

2022 Membership now due!

BRUNSWICK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. MUSEUM RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP 2022

Membership Fees	Payment Options	
Adults \$15 Concession \$10 Students \$5 Printed mailed copy of Newsletters add \$5 extra	<i>Cheque/postal order payable</i> Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc PO Box 3678 Mullumbimby 2482	<i>Direct Deposit</i> Bank: Westpac BSB: 032 583 A/c No 201191 Reference: Your name

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone No. Mobile:

I wish to receive the newsletter by: email / post/ pick up at the museum

MYSTERY DONATION

Last year two large framed portraits were left on the front porch while the museum was unattended. On the reverse of each was written *Great grandfather Thomas Wright, Great grandmother Martha Wright*. No notes or donor information were left with the portraits. Can anyone flesh out the family history and help make a Brunswick connection? Any clues would be very much appreciated.



UPDATE

The work participation scheme through NORTEC ended in early January after a 6mths run. Many thanks to Dr Fred Theiss for taking on the task of supervising the program. To date we have received no advice on what future schemes will be available.

Allan Cameron and the Maclean Incubator

Maclean, which now boasts that it is the most Scottish town in Australia, supplied most of the early actors on the Mullumbimby stage, as well as the support cast of selectors in the surrounding parishes of Brunswick, Billinudgel and Mullumbimby. Bringing up the rear of this interconnected group was Scotsman **Allan Cameron** who completed his 'civics' apprenticeship with an uncle '**A. Cameron**' at Maclean before his semi-permanent settlement in Mullum in 1894. He had already paid a visit in 1888 when he picked up 3 lots bounded by Brunswick Terrace and Gordon and Tyagarah Streets, supplemented with the acquisition of 2 lots in Dalley Street in 1895, placing him amongst the largest land owners in town.

He was born 1848 Kilmallie, Argyllshire, and landed at Portland, Victoria, in Nov1851 with his parents, **Angus** (1815 Kilmallie – 1875 Casterton, Vic) and **Jean** (1827 Fort William, Lochaber – 1903 Mullumbimby), and infant sister **Mary** (1850 Kilmallie – 1927 Casterton). Another 6 children were born at Portland before the family moved to Casterton in 1866, viz **Margaret Jane** (1855 Portland – 1929 Brunswick Heads), **Christina** (1855-1858 Portland), **Jane** (1857- 1884 Murtoa, Vic), **James** (1860-1866 Portland), **Christina** (1860 - 1941 Melbourne), **Agnes** (1865 - 1941 Mullum). Angus's mother, **Margaret Cameron**, the wife of **Sgt Allan/Ewen Cameron** of Fort William, died 1867 Sandford, Vic., aged 91.

Sometime after the death of Angus most of the family moved to Sydney, thence Maclean to live with their Cameron uncle, although Allan may have been here earlier if that be he listed as a storeman of Rocky Mouth in Greville's 1872 PO Directory, along with storekeeper **Alexander Cameron**, the most likely fit for uncle 'A. Cameron'. Alex was born 1819 Morven, Argyllshire, the son of Samuel, and spent 3yrs on a sugar plantation on Trinidad, West Indies, 7yrs on plantations in Louisiana, USA, and 3yrs prospecting for gold at Ballarat before being talked into settling on the Lower Clarence by **Donald McAulay**. He opened a store at Ulmarra in 1858 and 4yrs later married **Helen Meston**, the sister of **Archie Meston**, a significant figure on the Brunswick as a contributor to both Indigenous and Colonial history.

Around the time of his marriage Alexander opened a branch store at a place named 'Rocky Mouth' (sometimes Rockymouth, officially rebirthed as Maclean 1885) and in 1864 moved there permanently to claim the place as his personal fiefdom, subsequently being dubbed '*...the recognised "king" of the Lower Clarence.*' By 13Dec1870 the *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* was able to say that at Rocky Mouth... *are to be found the very best buildings on the whole of the Lower Clarence, foremost amongst which stands the new store of Mr Alexander Cameron...*, known as the *Post Office Store*, which also houses the Post and Telegraph office *presided over by Mr M'Naughton....* **Samuel Macnaughtan**, born 1842 Oban, Argyllshire, the son of Ewen/Hugh and Mary, was another of Alex's nephews who rolled up at Ulmarra in 1863 to become his uncle's store manager and later his sole beneficiary.

On 7May1872 the highly esteemed Alexander was treated to a *Dinner and Presentation... for the unusual kindness shown by him to very many of the farmers, settlers and others on the Lower Clarence, as well as for the upright and honorable manner in which he has conducted all his business transactions in every branch of commerce....* And on 4Jun1881 was given a *bon voyage* party, chaired by **Donald Shearer** (later of Myocum), prior to a quest for a geographical cure for his failing health. Many speakers re-iterated that *Mr Cameron had done more for the Lower Clarence than any man was aware of... It was to him that the district was indebted....*

Alex died 9Oct1881 London, *a fine specimen of the sturdy enterprising indomitable Scotchman, who, place them where you will, they soon better themselves, and all around them....* **Mr Cameron** took a lively interest in the well-being of the Presbyterian Church of NSW. He was instrumental in sending home £100 to bring out a minister.... That obituary also mentions he was childless and lists his only local relatives as his niece Elizabeth (**Mrs John Wye Weeks** of Maclean) and nephews **Sam** and **John Macnaughtan** (the latter a farmer on Harwood Island and formerly the branch manager of Cameron & Co's Harwood store), but no mention of **Allan Cameron** and family.

Sam Macnaughtan inherited the entire estate and built on it, such that at the time of his death on 5Jul1906 his obituary was able to record that *He was a very wealthy man and a bachelor..., and One of the best known residents of the Clarence... who took an active interest in public affairs and was at one time Mayor of Maclean.... The deceased was a staunch member of the Presbyterian Church, and a liberal supporter of it... and one of the most genial and kind-hearted men....* (His property portfolio included the square mile farm at Shark Creek sold to later Mullum identity **Patrick Walker** in 1895.)

His nephew **John Cameron** was sole executor and beneficiary. John, born 1879 London, the son of expatriate Scotsman Dr John Cameron, was left an orphan at age 10 and sponsored out by Uncle Sam in 1891. He also had the midas touch and upon his death 6Apr1923 left an estate of £62,367, most of which was held in trust for his son Alexander, aged 5. John was *one of Maclean's most prominent and most respected citizens... who was elected Mayor of Maclean for several*

terms.... He was a leading member of the Presbyterian Church, in which he filled the position of elder..., and taught Sunday School.

On 4May1932 the *Northern Star* published an *Early History of Maclean*, recording that *One old established business at Maclean, just gone into liquidation, has made fortunes for three generations. It was founded by the late Mr Alexander Cameron...*, who was not only financier, providore, and friend, but was postmaster, magistrate, solicitor, and adviser. Every trouble that beset the early settlers had his sympathetic ear, and his cheque book and long-credit ledger system were at the disposal of every honest settler. He had no time for the ill-doer, or the man who would not keep his word. He was shrewd and as time went on and land values began to soar, crops increased in volume and price, he became comparatively wealthy and eventually owned most of the property in the township of Maclean.

Whether it was due to the influence he wielded over his fellow countryman, or mere coincidence, was never made clear, but the fact remained that the Lower Clarence was composed easily of 80 per cent of Highland-Scotch.... (And in Jun1886 the Presbyterians catered for two congregations with the opening of the *Presbyterian Church of NSW* to complement the existing *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia*. See [R.S.Ward - PCEA History corr Oct 14](#) for enlightenment, and pg168 for 'Brunswick River' goings on.)

Much of the estate since has been sold, and an only son of the late Mr John Cameron, who is still a minor, will inherit the residue of the estate on attaining his majority.

Thus the town of Maclean, of which a considerable portion was held by the Cameron estate, is now mostly divided amongst the community.

And Maclean now boasts that *Alexander and Cameron Streets and Macnaughtan Place* are named for the influential Cameron family, although the original spelling for the latter has changed...

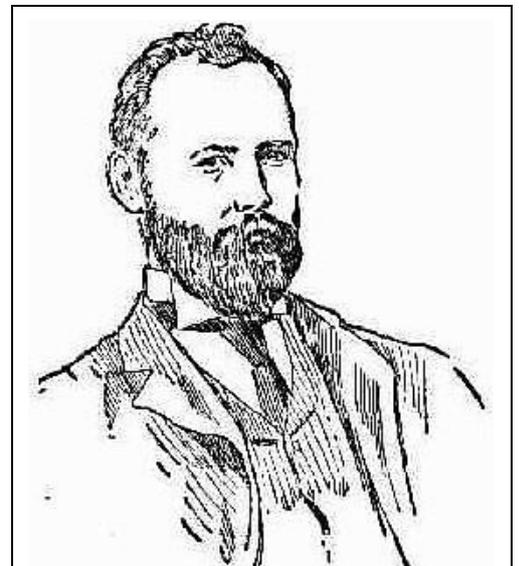
All of which brings us back to **Allan Cameron**. In 1882 he was managing the *Criterion Store* on behalf of *S. Macnaughton & Co*, while Sam was headquartered at the *Post Office Store*. By 1883 he was secretary of the *Rocky Mouth Presbyterian Congregation of NSW*, of which **Sam Macnaughtan** was treasurer. He was also secretary of the *Manse Building Committee* and treasurer of the *Lower Clarence Hospital Committee*, of which **Dr James B. Crabbe** was Chairman (see Crabbe story at <https://www.mullumbimbymuseum.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/92.-Newsletter-February-2020.pdf>.)

In Aug1884 Allan supplemented his day job with an auctioneer's license. He was also vice-president of the *Lower Clarence Turf Club*, of which **W.R. Baker** was secretary, and in Jan1886 was elected president of the *Mechanic's Institute of Maclean*, of which Baker was a trustee. (He and Baker were also trustees of 'Maclean Park'. See Baker story at [106.-Newsletter-May-2021.pdf](#) (mullumbimbymuseum.org.au)). At this time Cameron's profile had been given a big boost following his nomination as a Protectionist candidate for the seat of Clarence at the 1885 election.

He missed out at that election, but tried again in 1887, although ultimately withdrawing and throwing his weight behind Protectionist **John McFarlane**. In 1889 he became a foundation member of the *Lower Clarence Progress Association*, at which time he started a new career as a travelling salesman, taking over the Northern Rivers patch on behalf of the Sydney merchant firm of *Petersen Boesen & Co*. This gave him access to a wider audience and name recognition when he had another go at a parliamentary career, standing as a Protectionist in the Richmond Electorate at the election of 17Jul1894. Sometime prior to his political escapades he had established a second commercial base at Willoughby in Sydney.

Mullumbimby

He again missed out on a political seat, but maintained the momentum of his career change to include a geographical shift from Maclean to Mullum. He turned up in late 1894 when Mullum was also in the process of change, **Joe Yates** having moved to Byron Bay after passing his Railway Hotel to **Donald McGougan**, whose original pub in Tincogan Street was now up for grabs. Cameron apparently intended to build a store on his Brunswick Terrace lot near the punt, but opted instead to give McGougan's ex-Mullumbimby Hotel a makeover, turning the ground floor into a wholesale general store and



Allan Cameron (as depicted in the Daily Telegraph of 13Jul1894).

The caption said he *was for some years engaged in a store at Maclean.... Lately he has been in the service of Messrs Petersen and Boesen...*, but *This position he relinquished to contest the election. Amongst the liberal things he believes in are penny postage throughout the colony, and womanhood suffrage. The Scotsmen of the electorate, who have marked the decadence of the country from the fewness of the Caledonians in our Parliaments, are working enthusiastically to place Mr Cameron at the head of the poll.*

upstairs into a residence, installing his two sisters, Agnes and Margaret, to run the place while he returned to Willoughby to resume his career as a buyer and travelling salesman.

He hit the ground running upon return to Mullum in Feb1895, attending a public meeting that saw him elected as secretary and treasurer of the resurrected Mullumbimby Progress Association, with **Matthew Chisler** (ex-Ulmarra) as president and **Hugh Livingstone** (ex-Maclean) as vice-president. (Entrepreneurial Scotsman **Hugh McDiarmid Livingstone** had erected Mullum's first general store on the corner of Tincogan and Gordon in Dec1891. In Nov1893 a bullock team managed to deliver the whole shebang to a site in Station Street, a couple of lots from McGougan's future corner site. Revisit the Livingstone story at 108.-Newsletter-July-2021.pdf (mullumbimbymuseum.org.au)



McGougan's Mullumbimby Hotel
(Built from logs supplied by W.G. Law (ex-Ulmarra and Lawrence) and pit-sawn by James Watterson (ex-Clarence) and Allan McFarlane (?) from a sawpit in Tincogan St.)

In this controversial period, when there were two moribund Progress Associations attempting to represent the district (the original Brunswick-based one upset at the new Mullum-based upstart), *those who are opposed to an amalgamation rolled up and declared that the previous meeting was illegal...*, so at another meeting in Apr1895 *The election of office-bearers was as follows;- President, **Mr Allan Cameron**; vice-Presidents, **Mr H.M. Livingstone** and **Mr P. Olson**; Secretary, **Mr S.G. Woodrow**; Treasurer, **Mr W.J. Riley**...* Thereafter the Brunswick Prog Assoc faded away, but controversy continued to plague the Mullum Association for sometime.

A few days after his elevation to president 47yr old **Allan Cameron** returned to the Clarence and married 28yr old **Jessie Ogilvie Fraser**, the daughter of William, the senior partner in the prominent sawmilling and engineering firm of *Fraser & Co* at Grafton. (And at Mullum in Jan1897 his 32yr old sister **Agnes Cameron** married 37yr old Presbyterian Scotsman **James Davidson**. In Feb1899 44yr old **Margaret Jean Cameron** married 45yr old Presbyterian Norwegian **Peter Olson**.)

In Feb1899 he was returned to the Prog Assoc's presidential seat, but in Nov1899 passed the chair and his store to ex-Maclean storekeeper **John Moorhead** and returned to Willoughby, where he became foundation vice-president of the *Willoughby Progress Association* in Oct1900. All the while his main day job appears to be still that of the commercial traveller.

He served as an alderman representing the Chatswood East Ward on the Willoughby Municipal Council from Feb1901, sharing the bench with his ex-Maclean mate, **Ald Dr Crabbe**. He didn't contest the election of Feb1904, as by then he had been attracted back to booming Mullum, its prosperity evident upon return for his mother's funeral on 4Aug1903. On 23Sep03 the *Tweed and Brunswick Advocate* speculated that he had returned to drum up support for another run at parliament, but it turned out he was organising the building of a new store on one of his Dalley Street blocks, opened as the *Post Office Store* in Feb1904, at which time he was back on the committee of the Progress Association, and reclaimed the president's seat by Jan1905.

In Mar1905 he was elected foundation President of the *Mullumbimby Agricultural Society*; in Jul1905 voted to the committee of the *School of Arts*; and in Sep1905 elected as President of the *Mullumbimby Brass Band Association*, by which time he had become Mullum's chief meeter and greeter, chairing almost every function for visiting VIPs.



School of Arts Committee 1905
Standing Rear L to R: F.A. Row, J.C. Morrison, H.R. Anstey, James Davidson, Peter Nelson (Librarian), H.T. Southwood, Allan Cameron
Seated: W.W. Jauncey (Secretary), J.N. Hollingworth (Pres), W.J. Reilly (Vice Pres), H.W. Weigall (Treasurer)

The *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* recorded on 29Nov1905 that *Glimpses of the ocean may be seen from the carriages as the train skims along some saltwater flats in the direction of the Brunswick.... There is fair settlement along the line, and judging from the recent nature of the clearing, selectors have not long been dwellers in this locality. The first place of note is Mullumbimby, which has progressed marvellously since the railway has been opened.... Many of the settlers are ex-Clarence, and are, we are told, doing well. Clarence people are frequently met.... Mr Allan Cameron (formerly of Maclean) is one of the leading spirits of Mullumbimby....* [For a more detailed story of 'The Maclean Invasion' see Early-Settlement-of-Tyagarah-and-Ewingsdale.pdf (mullumbimbymuseum.org.au) . Amongst the identifiable locals who attended the 'Back to Maclean Celebrations' of May1924 were A.H. Starr, F. Frost, W.R. Baker, J. Sherry, P. Walker snr, J. Walker and J. Bridger.]



Dalley Street ~1907.
(Cameron's Post Office Store on site of current RSL Club.)



Dalley Street ~1910
(Cameron's Building went up in flames 1Mar1924, leaving tenated storekeeper W.H. Haas without a home and livelihood.)

In May1906 the first public meeting took place to discuss self-government for Mullum. Cameron was all for it, but argued against **W.R. Baker's** fantasy of a municipality incorporating Brunswick Heads and connected by electric trams. (The final boundary, embracing an area within a mile radius of the Post Office, captured 265 eligible voters for the prospective roll, comprising 172 property owners and 93 renters, 180 of whom subsequently voted). He was drafted by **John Morrison** and **James Davidson** to stand in the Council elections of 12Sep1908, but ultimately came 10th out of the 14 contesting candidates, behind Davidson, Morrison and Baker. In the meantime he had been elected president of the School of Arts with Davidson as his vice-president.

He returned to the presidency of the Progress Association in Jan1911 and in Feb1912 became foundation vice-president of the *Presbyterian Debating and Mutual Improvement Society*, by which time he was an Elder and *Session Clerk* of the Presbyterian Church. In Oct1912 he was foundation joint secretary (with **Robert Argue**) of the *Mullumbimby*

Branch of the Liberal Association..., to be ready to combat the socialistic influences of to-day when the right time comes....

He died 23Feb1913, the Mullum Star eulogising that *he was a man of rugged personality, outspoken and fearless in all he undertook, and held in the greatest esteem. He took a prominent part in public affairs, and being a fluent speaker and a man of great intelligence, his pronouncements carried much weight. The sad news came as a great shock to the whole community..., as his robust appearance and vitality seemed to indicate that he had many years of life to run.... He was also a man of sterling character and great intellectual power..., strong of mind... and a great churchman....Mrs J.C. Morrison presided at the organ, and played "The Death March."*

The deceased gentleman was a prominent Freemason, though not a member of the Lodge.... A touching mark of respect was shown deceased as the funeral cortege passed the Public School. The Union Jack was flying half-mast, and the children under the teachers formed up inside the ground and stood with bowed heads till the cortege passed.

Mr Cameron was the second honorary magistrate in seniority in the district, and frequently took his seat on the Bench. In public matters he always took a prominent part, and particularly in inception of the Agricultural Society, the Municipal Council and the local Progress Association.... He was President of the Parents' and Citizens' Association.... Mr Cameron was also an ex-President of the School of Arts, a trustee of North Head reserve at the Brunswick, and local secretary in

connection with the London College of Music. In fact he was a most useful citizen....

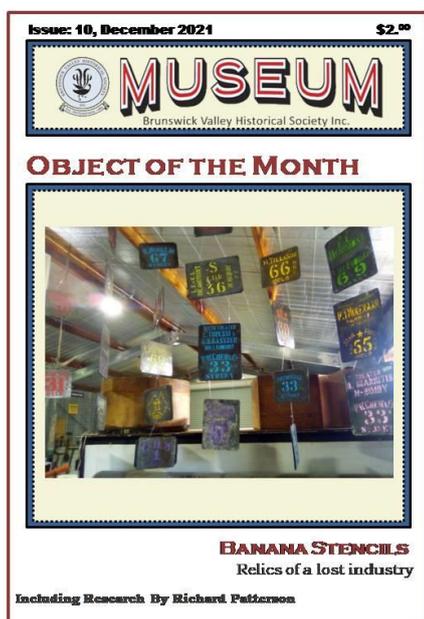
Mrs Jessie Cameron sold the business, but not the freehold, in Jan1914 and 5yrs later moved to the family residence at Chatswood with 16yr old son Allan. She died at Chatswood 6Jul1941, 2mths after Agnes Davidson of Brunswick Heads died in Lismore and 1mth before Agnes's sister Christina Warbreck, who had lived for many years at Brunswick Heads, died in Melbourne. Margaret Olson died 1929 Brunswick Heads. Peter Tsicalas

OBJECT OF THE MONTH

Courtesy of Dr Frederick Theiss \$2 a copy

December Market

Features bananas in the Brunswick Valley, the history of stencils (which are displayed in the shed) & info on the banana plant.



January Market

Covers Frank's early life, his honours & awards, time at the museum & in the community. The focus is abstracts of the books he published.



THE VISITOR WHO CAME TO STAY



When we opened up after the Christmas/New Year break, one of our local fauna decided to drop in for a visit. However, trying to get it to leave when locking up proved very difficult as it seemed to be able to find inaccessible places very easily.

After a couple of weeks it finally revealed itself and Roland artfully managed to trick him into a box. A very thin water dragon was then returned to his natural habitat beside the creek.

Both the water dragon and museum members were pleased to see it out of the museum.

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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

17 Myokum St, Mullumbimby
P.O. Box 378 Mullumbimby 2482
02 6684 4367

admin@mullumbimbymuseum.org.au
www.mullumbimbymuseum.org.au

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/MullumbimbyMuseum

Patron: Basil Cameron
President: Stephen Hall
Vice President:

Dr Mark Edwards

Min. Secretary:

Lindy McCollum

Cor. Secretary: Susan Tsicalas

Treasurer: Susan Tsicalas

Committee Members:

Ann Burnett

Dr Frederick Theiss

Roland Sjoberg

Shed Manager:

Roland Sjoberg

Market Manager:

Jacqueline Smith

Heritage Panel Representative

Chris Cooney

Newsletter: Members

WFD Supervisor:

Dr Frederick Theiss

Public Officer: S. Tsicalas.

All members are invited to contribute to this newsletter

Please email contributions for the newsletter to

admin@mullumbimbymuseum.org.au

*Deadline for newsletter items
LAST FRIDAY of the month

NEXT MEETING

**Tuesday 8th February
@10.30am**

**MUSEUM HOURS – Tuesdays
and Fridays 10.00-12.00
Market Saturdays 9.00 - 1.00**

**MULLUMBIMBY COMMUNITY
MARKET**

Next Market- Saturday Feb
19th

mullumbimbycommunitymarket.com.au

