

NEWSLETTER
November 2023

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

MUSEUM

17 Myokum Street MULLUMBIMBY 2482

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OPEN: TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS 10 AM – 12 PM

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

The Pullinger Legacy

The Municipality and Shire nuptials of 1980 marked the start of a trend that saw a dwindling number of councillors and staff with Mullum roots, the concomitant loss of corporate memory leaving the unhappy couple vulnerable to misguided cultural cleansing decisions. In Sep1986 the Shire's Government-appointed Administrator, **Ray Rawson**, released his final report, which ordered *abolition of traditional departments, replacing them with a management structure designed to increase efficiency...*, to be run by a 'General Manager'. And to fill this new position came 37yr old **Barry F. Pullinger** (wef 1Jan1987), his appointment welcomed by the older residents of Mullum and district familiar with his family background (albeit still more comfortable dealing with a 'Town Clerk' and 'Clerk of Works').

Barry's grandfather **Raymond George Foreman Pullinger** (1888 Burwood – 1957 Mullumbimby) and great grandfather **George Pullinger** (1856 Guildford, Surry – 1935 Faulconbridge) bequeathed a substantial architectural legacy to Mullum. Their story is told by Barry's aunt, **June Jones**, in her memoir, *The Pullinger Connection with The Town of Mullumbimby*, resting on the BVHS bookshelf since 1992. The Pullinger progenitors, **George** and **Ellen Maude**, landed in Sydney in 1884 with their daughter **Ella Maud** and over the years developed a series of nursery businesses until settling on a 70ac block at North Richmond around 1892 and establishing a citrus orchard. At the same time George was expanding his business as a landscape architect, one of his major jobs being design and construction of the gardens surrounding a mansion being built at Kurrajong Heights for **Philip Charley**, one of the founders of *Broken Hill Pty Co Ltd*. George subsequently branched out into building design and a year or so after Ella's 1903 marriage to **Henry Lee** at the family property, 'Killara', he accepted a construction supervisor's job for a suite of shops at Mullumbimby. And finding Mullum congenial he decided to put down roots.

In 1906 he won the job of project manager for construction of the new Bank of NSW building on the corner of Burringbar and Stuart Streets (designed by eminent architect **John Kirkpatrick** and built by contractor **Samuel Box**, both of Sydney). Following the bank's opening in Jan1907 he began undertaking a host of design and outfitting jobs in and around town, the first appears to be supplying and fitting acetylene lighting for the Presbyterian Church in mid1907. By the end of that year he had hung out a shingle advertising 'George Pullinger, Architect and Consulting Engineer, Chincogan Street (sic), Mullumbimby (Just below School of Arts)'. Then followed many commissions for new buildings or alterations and additions to existing ones, including further afield at Bangalow where he won the contract for design of the school and Catholic Convent. The *Mullumbimby Star* thought he brought a refreshing change to the town's built environment, commenting



Post Office 1908

(A post office was established in the Station Master's Office in Apr1898, thence in a Torren's Building in Dalley Street in Apr1904 and finally on the current site in Nov1907). Builder G.E. Moore won the job with a tender of £725.



Post and Telegraph Office 1914-1918

In Sep1913 Pullinger & Son won the contract for 'erection and completion of additions and alterations' to the building with a tender of £371.

on 4Jul1907 that *Mr Latter's cottage in Dalley Street... is a good addition to our progressive town... and reflects great credit on the contractor, **Mr S. Box**.... The plans were entrusted to **Mr George Pullinger**, architect, and he has given us quite a new style of architecture for Mullumbimby, which is very pleasing to the eye as well as a utility house....* (The Star was so impressed that in 1911 it awarded George the contract for its new office in Stuart St.)

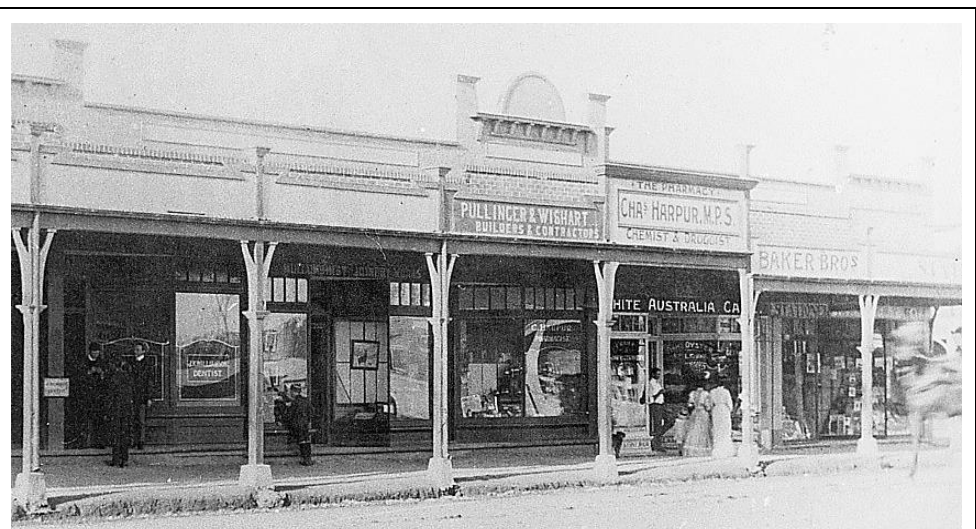
He was also active with the Agricultural Society, School of Arts, Chamber of Commerce and Progress Association. At a meeting of the last in 1909 **Mr Pullinger** drew the attention of the Association to the action of the Council in regard to the town's beauty spots – the cutting down of the trees in Stewart Park and on part of the foreshores. He objected to everything in the district being turned over to the goddess "cow," and finished up by saying that if these beauty spots were not reserved the Association should call an indignation meeting and try to stop the spoilation.... He was a foundation member of the Mullumbimby Horticultural Society in Feb1928, his interest in things floral, as well as the town's streetscape and the shaping of it, remaining an obsession for most of his life.

[In 1922, during the many long debates over a War Memorial, the Aldermen decided to place a German Machine Gun in the triangle of land opposite **W.A. Back's** place at the intersection of Dalley, Fern and Acacia Streets, which W.A. had recently landscaped at his own expense, incorporating a rockery, gardens and seating designed by architect **George Pullinger**, who lived across from W.A. Downstream in 1929, George addressed a Chamber of Commerce meeting and wept over *a little three cornered paddock adjoining the Drill Hall, which, since it had been fenced and beautified with trees, had had cows turned onto it.... It was impossible to beautify a town, said Mr Pullinger, while horses and cattle were allowed on the streets.... The Council did not ever seem to care whether the town was down or up, for as soon as any reasonable request was made, it was turned down by the same few men. He wanted the people to see that those men were not returned.... Mr Ward said it took him back eighteen years when a number of trees had been planted, and were allowed to grow up and beautify the town, and then for various reasons had been chopped down....* (Similarly, in Aug1929 Members of the Mullumbimby Croquet Club are very disconsolate over the destruction being wrought to their grounds by cattle that are straying on the streets... after they'd gone to all the trouble and expense to plant palms and shrubs.)

At another of the interminable War Memorial discussions **George** had also proposed *that an avenue of teak trees, 46 chains long, be planted from the railway gates to the municipal boundary... and the triangular piece of land near the Railway Hotel be fenced off, and planted with trees and lawn... and the gun mounted in the enclosure to point towards the avenue – the avenue to be known as "Anzac Avenue."* (The Tweed Daily report of this Public Meeting in Jun1922 credits son **Ray Pullinger** with the suggestion?) [See [127.-Newsletter-April-2023.pdf](#) (mullumbimbymuseum.org.au) for the War Memorial story.] After 'Anzac Avenue' was abandoned a Band Rotunda was proposed in Jul1923, for which George had



Portion of Sixth Edition Lands Office Map of Mullumbimby. In 1911 George Pullinger erected his own house on Lot 5, Section 13, now 131 Dalley St. The lane running from Whian St to Acacia St (now Jubilee Ave) became known as 'Pullinger's Lane'. Wife Ellen sold the place to Caroline Fisher for £400 in Sep1936. (Last sold for \$340,000 Sep2003.) (Notes on current BVHS site refer to reserves for a 'Public Pound'. Changed to 'Reserve for Public Recreation' May1976.)



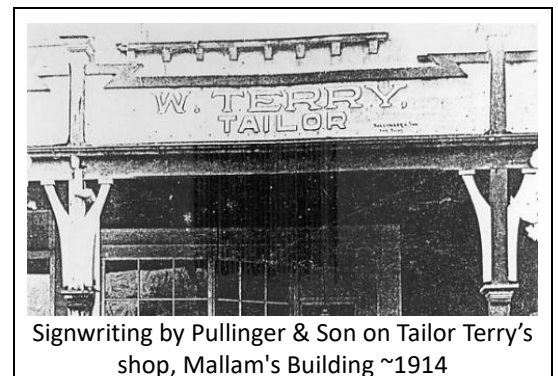
Mallam's Building 1912 (opened 1909)
(L to R: Maxwell Tailor, Williamson Dentist, Pullinger & Wishart Builders & Contractors, Chemist Harpur, Baker Bros White Australia Café, Gourlay's Stationers Hall.)

offered to prepare the plan and specifications, and supervise the erection free of charge... in the 'Municipal Park'. And when that was abandoned the Chamber of Commerce resolved at a meeting in Dec1925 to raise funds for a granite obelisk at the Burringbar-Stuart intersection, for which George again offered to furnish plans and supervise erection....]

Other non-building exploits included taking on membership of the Mullumbimby Branch of the *National Defence League* in 1908 and the following year becoming foundation secretary and treasurer of the Mullum Branch of the *Federal Liberal League*. In 1908 he was also appointed the Municipality's Assistant Valuer, and by at least 1913 senior valuer.

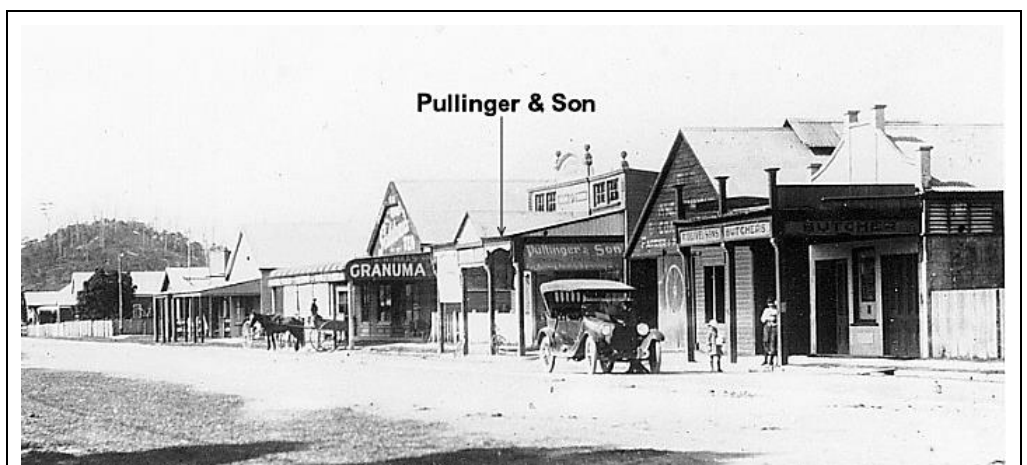
In mid1910 he went into partnership with the mysterious **Andrew Wishart**, advertising as *Pullinger and Wishart, Mullumbimby Joinery Works, Architects, Builders, Painters and Decorators, Plumbers, Gasfitters, and General Contractors; Plans Prepared and Estimates Supplies; Shop Fittings and Cabinet Making – Glass Cut to Any Size; Art Picture Framing....* One of their biggest jobs was the contract for all the joinery work in the new Nelson Building, for which they employed 8 to 10 men. As well as general cottage building, they also built George's own home at the southern end of Dalley Street. Here he indulged his love of gardening, building a glasshouse and growing a huge variety of exotic plants (and displaying his prize dahlias in the shop window).

By then his son **Ray** had completed his 'painter and decorator' apprenticeship in Sydney and joined the firm, taking 10 days for the bike ride to Mullum accompanied by his cousin **Cecil Foreman**. Wishart disappeared to Sydney in Feb1912 and the business became *Pullinger and Son. Architects, Builders, Contractors, Painters and Decorators...*, still with an office in Burringbar Street. Also in town by then was Ray's sister, **Ella Maud Lee**, who became acquainted with the entrepreneurial **Albert William (Alf) Parcel**, born 1881 Sydney to American Thomas Henry Parcel. Alf seems to have turned up in Mullum around the same time as the Pullingers and over the following years became a sports promoter and the agent for various stuff, the main one being Morrissey's famous Snake Oil (see [Snake Tales – Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc \(mullumbimbymuseum.org.au\)](http://mullumbimbymuseum.org.au)), while doing his day job as a hairdresser and billiard saloon proprietor in Burringbar Street, where in 1911 *Pullinger & Wishart* designed a new building to house the *Parcel Billiard saloon*. Alf and Ella left town in 1919 and the following year married in a Methodist ceremony at Drummoyne.



Signwriting by Pullinger & Son on Tailor Terry's shop, Mallam's Building ~1914

George and Ray continued with a heavy schedule, including building at New Brighton whilst undertaking simultaneous alteration and addition jobs in Mullum, giving work to many tradesmen. At the same time Ray was making a name for himself as an artist, often called upon to 'illuminate' certificates presented to VIP visitors and locals at farewell functions. (In Sep1931 *The Illuminated Address, the work of Mr Ray Pullinger, presented to Sir Philip Game... was greatly admired by his excellency, who requested to meet the artist....*) As early as 1908 he got wide publicity for artistically painting the proscenium of the local School of Arts. The work, which is a credit to the artist, was a gratuitous donation, the committee of the institution finding the materials.... Over the following years he got rave reviews for his decorations for major functions, the *Masonic Dinner Ball* of Aug1923 attracting the comment that *It can be said without hesitation that not even Sydney's cleverest decorative artist could have evolved a scheme to excel it....*

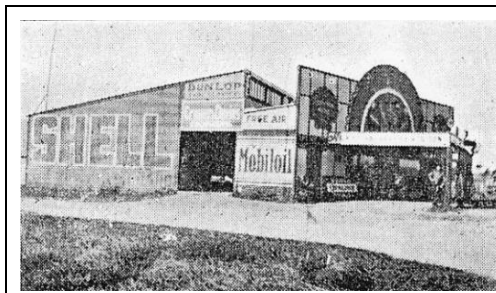


Dalley St., looking north towards intersection with Tincogan, ~1925.

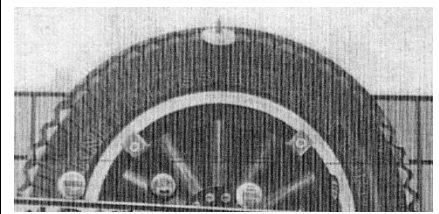
In 1919 Pullinger & Son relocated to the Withford Buildings in Dalley, then demolished two of the shops and built a new home for Mr and Mrs Withford. In Feb1935 they became tenants of Milton Flint, proprietor of the Mullum Star, upon his purchase of the Withford properties. After some remodeling they removed into the portion of the building adjacent to Mrs Gray's Boarding House.... The premises will be known as the "Star" Buildings....

[Horse and cart in front of Haas store. Car in front of Alex Olive's butchery.]

His daughter, **June Jones**, says *His hand-painted sign of a huge motor tyre above Eric Davies' garage... attracted the attention of travellers in the area. It brought him the offer of more lucrative work in the city....* June adds that, *In 1916 Ray married the girl next door, **Doris Leeson** (in a Presbyterian ceremony). They built their home in Stuart Street, calling it "The Ranch"..., where twins Jack and June were born in 1917, then Bill arrived on the last day of 1919 and Geoffrey (father of the above Barry) in 1922....*



Ernest Cramer built the garage on the corner of Prince and Argyle streets in 1930.



In 1934 Cramer passed the place to his partner Eric Davies who is believed to have commissioned the 'Tyre', which became a Mullum landmark.)

In 1919 they won the contract for the design of the Empire Theatre, the place featuring in Ray's life for many years thereafter. Says June, *Ray operated the machine showing the first movies in town at the old School of Arts, which burnt down in May 1926. The Empire Theatre – which was the town's venue for social functions – then became the local picture show. When "talkies" arrived, Ray learnt the new technology and remained the operator for thirty years. During the 1920s he won a wide reputation for his designs for the North Coast exhibits at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and the Brisbane Exhibition, June commenting that Seventeen times out of twenty-four the North Coast won the trophy at the Sydney Royal....*



The Empire Theatre, cnr Dalley and Burringbar, 1921. In Jul 1919 Charlie Simpson chose Pullinger & Son as designers and project managers, supervising local builder *Peter Pezet & Son*. The place was extended by ~20ft in 1926/27, seemingly with *Pullinger & Son* as designers and "*Wallace and Murray*" as builders. It was demolished in 1992.

[Hollywood's 'Should a Husband Forgive?' was released in Aust 1921. (Husband challenges wife's lover to a duel and....)]

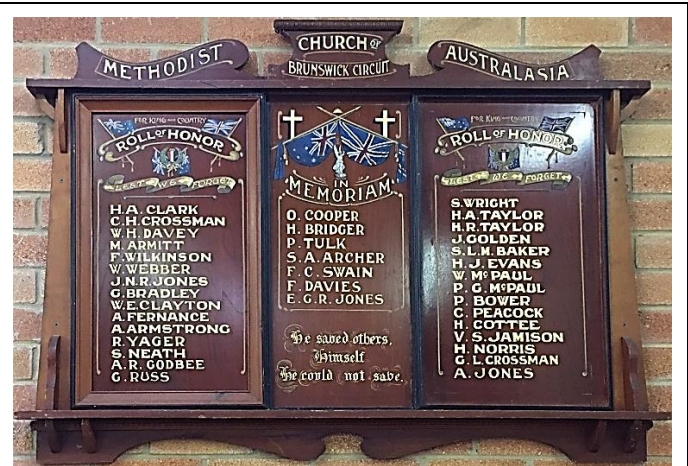
By the late 1920s **George Pullinger** had semi-retired and handed his drawing board to **Ray**. He died Mar 1935 as a result of a traffic accident while he and **Ellen** were taking a prolonged holiday with daughter **Ella** at Faulconbridge. *Considerable grief was felt throughout the district on Monday last when it became known that (79yr old) Mr George Pullinger had passed away....* During his 30yrs in Mullum he took an active interest in the welfare of the town and district. He was associated with every public movement for the betterment of the social and civic life of the community and was untiring in his efforts to place Mullumbimby among the foremost towns on the North Coast.... For several years deceased, with his son Ray, carried on the business of architects and contractors.... The layout and design of the various buildings on the showground are the work of the late Mr Pullinger. His demise removes from our midst a personality which had contributed largely towards the welfare and general development of the district....

His death occurred 3wks after Ray had moved *Pullinger and Son* into its new office in the Flint Building. Ray took on the architect's role and through to the end of the year designed and supervised the construction of at least four cottages, the Catholic church at Billinudgel and various remodelling jobs (including Miss Nelson's *Central Café*). By this time Jack and Bill were working with Ray and the shingle changed to *Pullinger & Sons*.

In Mar 1937 his mother **Ellen** ('**Tuppy**') died at the home of her grand-daughter, **Mrs Ellen Blair**, at Coogee. She was a very well-known identity of Mullumbimby..., who resided here until four years ago, when Mrs Pullinger's health took them to Sydney.... She will be remembered by her unusually large circle of friends for her kindly, loving disposition, and many on reading this will remember with a smile and a sigh the hospitable welcome extended to them by the kindly Mistress of old "Te Aro"..., which in those days was the scene of many happy gatherings....

Ray's wife **Doris** (1892 Woodburn – May 1940 Mullum) was *Widely known and respected throughout the town and district... and one of the most popular members of the local community....* She was always a willing and liberal supporter of any worthy cause..., and the universal respect she enjoyed from all sections of the community being, indeed, a distinction that is enjoyed by only a chosen few....

Ray himself departed from his home in Stuart Street 22Oct1957 aged 69. He was *One of Mullumbimby's best-known identities.... The late Mr Pullinger, a painter and decorator, left examples of his work on many Mullumbimby buildings. He was the designer of the North Coast and tablelands Sydney Royal Show exhibit for a number of years until ill-health curtailed his activities....*



Left. Honour Board unveiled at St Clement's CofE Church, Billinudgel, Sep1919, which is being hung in the sanctuary of the church, is of polished cedar, ... and made by Mr Pullinger of Mullumbimby, who very ably carried out the design and considers the board one of the finest he has made.... It now hangs in St Martin's Church, Mullumbimby.

Right. Honour Board unveiled at Mullumbimby Methodist Church Aug1919, which is erected over the pulpit, is handsome and extremely artistic, and was the work of Messrs Pullinger and Son, Mullumbimby. A most tasteful scheme of decoration was carried out, consisting of flags, ferns and greenery, and there were also a number of wreaths in honor of the boys who had "Gone West".

Two other Honour Boards unveiled at St John's CofE Church, Mullumbimby, Feb1916, are of polished oak, and Mr Ray Pullinger had it most tastefully decorated with the tri-color.... The writing on both was the work of Mr Ray Pullinger, and his work reflects great credit unto himself.... Whether the Board unveiled in the new St Martin's Memorial Church in Mar1925 was a Pullinger product is a mystery. There is no designer/artist/maker nominated for the elaborate Presbyterian Honour Board first unveiled Oct1916 and updated at some stage, but it has a Pullinger 'feel' about it.

Ray Pullinger also did all the lettering and decoration on the Honour Board unveiled in the Ewingsdale Hall Jun1921.

Trying to figure out how many buildings in and around Mullum were the work of Pullinger & Son is all too hard. But guesstimating from a random walk through Trove indicates they must have left their stamp on at least 50, inclusive of 'alterations and additions'. Ditto the extent of Ray's decorative and signwriting work.

CURRENTLY SHOWING IN THE MUSEUM

WAVE (Wearable Arts Vision in Education) is a major annual event in Shearwater School's and the Mullumbimby community's performing arts calendar. Showcasing wearable artworks entered by designers and students from around Australia in a highly professional, choreographed production.

It is an amazing opportunity for our community and beyond to showcase their talent as wearable arts designers. It is much more than mere fashion; wearable artworks are manifestations of the maker's inner world of imagination.

Wave started in 2000 as a grassroots festival and over the years many local artists and entertainment industry professionals have given their time to help develop this show for it to become what it is today.

2023 will mark the 24th year of Wearable Arts at Shearwater. The wearable arts design competition is independently judged each year and the competition winner's prizes are sponsored by local businesses.

WAVE has around 200 student performers, musicians, models and stage tech crew. The production allows each one of our students to contribute in a way that is engaging and teaches them to work in teams, build passions, work creatively and learn skills for the future. It is held over four nights in early November each year.

The museum is currently showing some of the costumes from past WAVE performances and after this year's event will host the winning costumes so that you can get close and personal to view the intricate & imaginative work that has gone into them. Thanks to Stewart's Menswear window for also featuring WAVE paraphernalia.

Following are some of the costumes in the museum.

See advertisement for this year's WAVE on P. 8. On from 1st-4th November at Shearwater Auditorium



Top left: Cloak made from dyed tea bags.

Right: Mermaid from cans

Outfit: Made with seat belts

Far right:: Recycled plastic bags

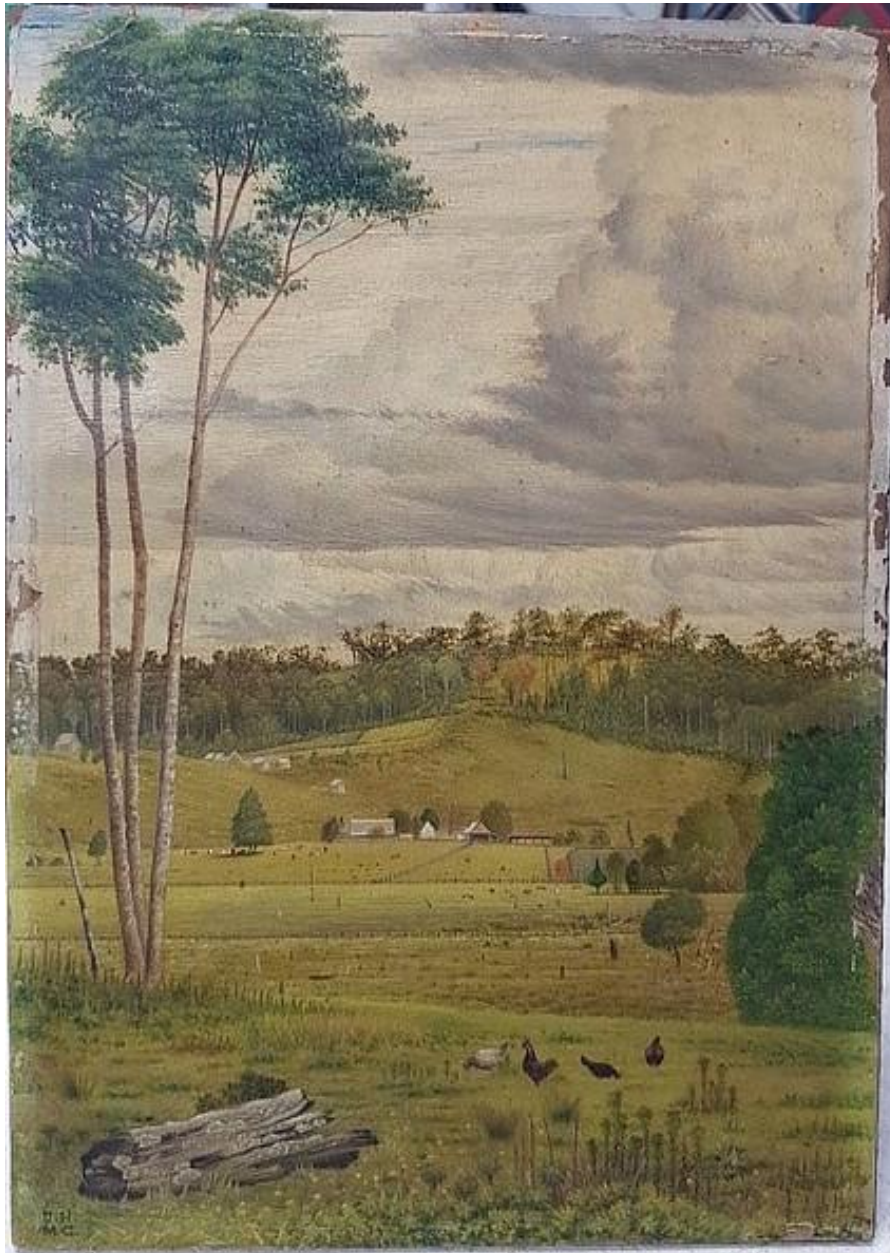


Some of the sculptures that were displayed in and around the Museum



The Ingenuity Sculpture Fest we hosted was very successful, attracting many visitors over the week to view the sculptures and discovering a wonderful museum as a bonus. The opening night with the brilliant jazz band, bar and food was a special treat. Thanks to Creative Mullumbimby and Chamber of Commerce for making it all happen.

Earliest Depiction of Myocum



*'Myocum Hill, 1885', provisionally attributed to Charles Hutchinson McGregor.
Courtesy Ray Grindley (who is currently having the painting restored.)
[McGregor's obituary says he was a talented artist..., and he has left many excellent samples of penmanship portraits and land and seascapes..., but this painting is the only known extant example of his work.]*

Thanks to **Ray Grindley**, we now have a depiction of Myocum that predates any known photographs of the district (assuming veracity in the painting's title).

Ray's ancestor, **Edward Grindley** (1846 Shropshire, England – 1933 Granville, NSW), was amongst the first Myocum selectors, along with neighbours Henry Tyler and John McGregor, lending his name to 'Grindley's Corner' at the intersection of Dingo Lane and Myocum Road.

The painting is signed C.H.M.G., almost certainly **Charles Hutchinson**

McGregor (1861 Scotland – 1943 Mullum) who lived on Montecollum Road (portion 95 of 50ac, Parish of Brunswick), originally selected by his illustrious brother John McGregor.

The painting's foreground flats are on the 240ac selection of **Henry Tyler** (1830 Maine, USA – 1905 Myocum, NSW), viewed from a spot on or near what is now Myocum Ridge Road. (see maps at [85-Newsletter-June-2019.pdf](https://mullumbimbymuseum.org.au/85-Newsletter-June-2019.pdf) (mullumbimbymuseum.org.au) and [Pioneering-Days-on-The-Brunswick.pdf](https://mullumbimbymuseum.org.au/Pioneering-Days-on-The-Brunswick.pdf) (mullumbimbymuseum.org.au))

The spur at left, running up *Myocum Hill* to the Coorabell Ridge, carried the original 'Brunswick Road', the main track from Lismore to Brunswick. The cluster of tents/huts above the Tyler homestead was a camping reserve for bullockies and travellers known as 'Myockum Grass' (portion 249, later a McGregor/Tulloch possession).

The Mullumbimby Agricultural Show 2023

The theme for this year's show is 'History' in honour of the Historical Society's 40th birthday. The displays in the pavilion will focus on history, so come and check it out. Our theme will be 'Show Balls and Dinners' with emphasis on beautiful frocks that could have been worn at these events. Show queen candidates were presented at these major social gatherings, but they are now a thing of the past - a very apt topic for 'History'

The Show is on Friday 9th and Saturday 10th November at the Mullumbimby Showgrounds with heaps of entertainment for all.



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Shearwater
 WAVE 2023

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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 email contributions for the newsletter to

admin@mullumbimbymuseum.org.au

*Deadline for newsletter items
 LAST FRIDAY of the month

NEXT MEETING:

14th November @ 10.30

**MUSEUM HOURS – Tuesdays
 and Fridays 10.00-12.00**

Market Saturdays 9.00 - 1.00

**MULLUMBIMBY COMMUNITY
 MARKET**

Next Market- Saturday Nov 18

mullumbimbymuseummarket.com.au

