



NEWSLETTER
February 2025

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

Signs of the Times

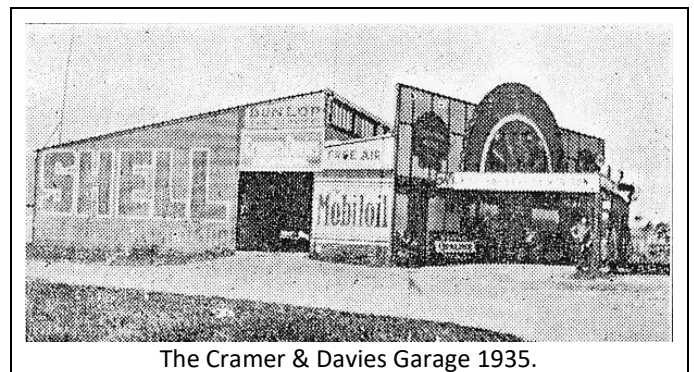
On 3Jan2025 the digital Echo reported [The New Look Carsburgs Unveiled](#) (if a hangover caused you to miss the hard copy on New Year's Day). This latest incarnation of the 'gasoline station' has been given a 'retro vibe' by new owner **Brenden Lawless**, in the wake of many contemporaneous makeovers over the years since **Ernest George Roberts Cramer** (1900 Redfern – 1983 Maryborough) claimed the spot for a garage and petrol station in 1930.

Ern Cramer came to town from Sydney in late 1926, perhaps attracted back through fond memories of his honeymoon at Brunswick Heads in Oct1923. He became foundation manager of *Hollingworths Pty Ltd* 's ... new up-to-date machine shop... catering for *All classes of work pertaining to motor cars...*, until branching out on his own. In 1930, with silent partners **William A. Back** and **George Mills**, he opened the 'Civil Service' garage on the Argyle/Prince corner block carved off the new 'Back Subdivision'. [Mills is a mystery, but an abbreviated Back/Finn story can be found at [Mullum Aliens](#).

And for the fleshed-out story of the machinations of the Hollingworth/Cramer/Back garage see the 90pg book *The Mullumbimby Sawmill*, compiled by **Nicholson Hollingworth** and published by BVHS 2013. The garage shed and freehold of the site were acquired by **Eric Davies** from **Mrs Back** (nee **Christina Hart** (1887-1970) in 1934.]

Ern was a civic-minded character and on his move to greener commercial pastures in Queensland in 1935 *The yeoman service which he had rendered the Municipality of Mullumbimby as bandmaster of the Rural School Band and his association with other organisations* (notably the fire brigade, School of Arts and P&C), *was suitably recognised on Thursday evening last* (21Feb1935) *when, together with his wife, he was tendered a farewell in the Memorial School of Arts...*, with Mayor Arnold presiding. President Lee of the P&C said "Mr Cramer was a man who saw his duty and did it,"....

In the meantime **Eric Goyme Davies** (1909 Shropshire, England – 1991 Deniliquin) had become a partner in 1932 and the business split, the retail 'service station' at the front sold to **James Riddle Muirhead** (1884 Newcastle – 1947 Mullumbimby) of Bangalow, while 'Cramer & Davies', *Automotive Engineers*, operated from the garage at the rear. Muirhead went about making additions and alterations, calling his venture 'Muirhead's Universal Service Station', until mid1938 when he sold back to **Eric Davies** and acquired the old **Torrens** garage on the corner of Dalley and Tincogan.



The Cramer & Davies Garage 1935.



Muirhead's Universal Service Station 1930s
(The giant 'Tyre' was painted by Ray Pullinger, probably commissioned by Entrepreneurial Davies. It became a Mullum and District landmark. See [Pullinger Story](#))



The Garage in 1960.
(Davies was agent for Bedford Buses and supplied this one to Percy Sheaffe (See [Sheaffe Bus Company](#))

With restoration of the businesses under one banner, **Eric Davies** started emphasising his enterprise's NRMA certification and along the way grew the company by acquisition of a General Motors dealership, adding a brick, plate-glassed showroom in late 1957 for displaying the latest Holdens, at which time he took up residence at Brunswick Heads, reigniting his interest in civic affairs.

In Apr1952, *After serving 12 years on the Municipal Council (1942-52) and three terms as mayor (1946-48), Ald E.G. Davies tendered his resignation to council..., as it was practically unavoidable owing to pressure of business. He had also planned a trip to England.... Mayor Smith spoke of the outstanding service both Ald Davies and his wife (Myocum girl Margaret Kirk) had given in the interests of the town and district....* In late1959 he was elected to represent 'E Riding' on Byron Shire Council and in mid1961 was elected president of the new *Mullumbimby and Brunswick District Chamber of Commerce.*

An interest in rice farming at Deniliquin saw his withdrawal from various local institutions in Dec1963, and at a farewell party at the Mullum Golf Club in Jan1964 *Many tributes to the citizenship of Mr and Mrs Eric Davies were paid by speakers.... The clubroom was crowded for the function by representatives of almost all district organisations.* He spent 13yrs at Deniliquin, where he served as Deputy Shire President, before returning to Ocean Shores and getting reinolved in local affairs, as well as rejoining his fellow travellers at the Mullum branch of the Country Party. In Jul1979 he was *awarded a Certificate of Merit for long and meritorious service to the Country Party...,* and again in Nov1980 when **Doug Anthony MHR** presented him with a 'Certificate of Appreciation' after 40yrs meritorious service to the local branch.



By-the-bye, another relatively recent project completed by **Brenden Lawless** was the makeover of the old ANZ Bank into *The Bany Bathhouse*, here seen open for lunch on Sunday 2Feb2025.

He took a leading role in the Mullum/Byron amalgamation machinations and in Feb1981 became a foundation member of the *Federation of Byron Shire Public Bodies* to stir the possum. He resigned as secretary of the FBSPB in Jan1983 and a few months later returned to Deniliquin, from where he continued to comment on Mullum/Byron affairs via letters-to-the editor of the local rags.

In the meantime **Eric Leon Fry** (1907 Scotland – 1981 Ocean Shores) had become either lessee or manager, if not proprietor, of the service station. Whatever the circumstances, the landmark was christened **Mel Hansen Motors** in 1974, but 2yrs later Mel had had enough and passed the place to mate **Tony Carsburg** who, over the following 49yrs, evolved into one of Mullum's greatest sponsors of local sports, charities and community organisations. See his Echo profiles at <https://issuu.com/echopublications/docs/byronecho3632> - Article 'End of an Era for Carsburg and his team' of 19Jan1922, and <https://www.echo.net.au/2018/01/holden-misleads-customers-dealership-changes/> - Article 'Holden misleads customers over dealership changes' of 17Jan2018.



Carsburg Showroom displaying the latest Holden Cruze 2015 (and unleaded at 145.9 cpl)



The new look Carsburgs 31Dec2024

And just down the road is another sign of the times

The Seventh Day Adventist Congregation was faced with some hard decisions following the floods of Feb/Mar2022. Ultimately it was decided that restoration wasn't cost effective, a far cry from 1961 when the place was opened with great fanfare and a boast that the congregation was *the largest of the denomination between Newcastle and Brisbane, and the second largest church at Mullumbimby....* (See [BVHS Newsletter-March-2022.](#))



The 'For Sale' signs appeared on the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Dec2024.

(For more photos see the real estate sites at [14-18-argyle-street-mullumbimby](#) and [Church 14-18 Argyle Street Mullumbimby](#))

It's yours for \$1,695,000. Meanwhile, the congregation has regrouped, at least temporarily, and now meets for services at 91 Main Arm Road, the site of the SDA school which closed its doors Dec2008 and is currently on the market.



East Mullumbimby 28Feb2022

(Still taken from James Sturch's Video at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGejeaB8E60>



The Adventist Carpark facing Argyle Street, Feb2022
(Courtesy 'Adventist Record')

More sign sighting around town



The Golf Club continues to live in hope that there's still a 5% chance of a gas bonanza beneath Garfield's fairways.



Keeping it simple in Mullumbimby (with the use of only one two-syllable word)



In Burringbar Street Santos continues to keep the locals abreast of environmental threats.



The RSL has also been into home renovation, with the introduction of the *Northside Café and Kids Playground* in front of the old squash courts, serendipitously on the site originally occupied by *Everitt's Café*. The *Liberty Fuel Station* next door is on the site of the *Evans & Farmer Motor Garage* opened in 1923*.



(Edward Everitt acquired Mrs Balmer's Café, far right, in Feb1945. The RSL acquired the property next door in 1946 and in 1949 started negotiations to acquire the whole block. In the meantime Morris's Fish and Chip caravan occupied the site.)

[***William Edward/Ewart Evans** and **Daniel Farmer** had turned up in town mid1919 to establish next coachbuilder **Charles Latter**, who occupied the building now housing *Mullumbimby Tyre Service*. In early1923 they moved into a shed on the corner of Dalley and Tincogan and established *Evans & Farmer Motor Garage* and around mid1923 went public with the formation of *Evans & Farmer Co Ltd*, selling £1 shares in lots of 25 to acquire the bankrupt store next door, update with new plant, install a petrol bowser, acquire the 'Overlander' car agency, build a showroom, and establish a car hire business. **H.B. Chisholm** was appointed Chairman and Messrs **H. Nelson, W.R. English, J. Sherry, W.C. Williams, J. Evans** and **A.H. Starr** as directors. **W.E. Evans** became secretary and manager. At the first half-yearly meeting in May1924 a loss of £35/6/7 and they decided to sell more shares. **Frank Tandy** was chairman in Mar1927 when they installed an additional petrol bowser. It seems the business was split around mid1928, **Edward Torrens** (1906-1975) taking over the garage and petrol station while *Evans & Farmer* retained the Overlander agency and hire business. **Edward Torrens** dubbed his business *The Pioneer Garage* and after installation of an additional bowser and a makeover in Mar1930 boasted that it was *the most complete on the North Coast*. Difficulties through the Depression seems to have caused *Evans & Farmer* to fade away and by the mid1930s Torrens had taken on a number of agencies (including Airzone Radios) to supplement income. In 1937 he took in the Ford Dealership through an arrangement with Trevan of Lismore, and in Jul1938 sold the whole shebang to **Jim Muirhead** and moved to Sydney.]



The rebranding of Brunswick Heads continues apace with removal of an old identifying trademark.

A once prominent fixture at The Heads, this 17 pounder Anti-Tank Gun had faithfully carried out its guard duties at the Brunswick Heads-Billinudgel RSL club rooms near the entrance to town over many years, but was recently pensioned off to Casino following a diagnosis of advanced rust. It was the last remaining gun in the Brunswick district, which once boasted four such 'war trophies' around the traps, the first was a German Machine Gun unveiled at the Billinudgel Hall on Empire Day 1921 by Miss Muriel Slogrove. A couple of weeks later Massy Greene MHR, holidaying at his Brunswick Heads weekender, unveiled another at Mullumbimby Creek School.

Vale Barry Hammond

18/1/1932 – 13/01/2025



Barry was a keen supporter of the historical society & museum and a member for many years. He donated many photographs, particularly of the Brunswick Heads Surf Club. He was also generous in donating a hairdressing chair and artefacts from his hair dressing business in Mullumbimby. He kindly directed other important artefacts to the museum from locals who were unsure what to do with them e.g. the [Kelly clock](#).

Barry helped to look after the grounds for a while until it became too much. We were saddened to hear of his medical problems in the last couple of years and his recent passing.

Our condolences to his wife, Heather & the family. We miss him and his wealth of local knowledge.

2025 Memberships are now due

Please note that unfortunately we have had to increase the cost of postage as it is \$1.50 for each mail out. Please let us know if you would prefer to receive it by email instead. Form below.

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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

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Jacqueline Smith

Heritage Representative

Chris Cooney

Susan Tsicalas

Newsletter: Members

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:

Tues 11th Feb @ 10.30

MUSEUM HOURS –

Tuesdays

and Fridays 10.00-12.00

Market Saturdays 9.00 - 1.00

MULLUMBIMBY COMMUNITY MARKET

Next Market- Saturday 15th Feb
mullumbimbycommunitymarket.com.au



BRUNSWICK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc

MEMBERSHIP 2025

Membership Fees	Payment Options	
Adults \$15 Concession \$10 Students \$5 Printed mailed copy of newsletter add \$10	Cheque payable to Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc PO Box 378 Mullumbimby 2482	Direct Deposit BSB: 032582 Westpac Account No: 201192 Reference: Your name
Name:..... Address:..... Email:..... Phone..... I wish to receive the newsletter by email/post/pick up at the museum		

Costumes from WAVE 2024 competition were on display throughout the museum during December & January.

Thanks to Shearwater Steiner School for the loan of the beautifully made and intricately designed costumes.

