



NEWSLETTER
March 2025

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

Corporate Carelessness

Post WW2 the demand for Mullum's electricity went exponential, generating a new production record in 1946 followed by a further 20% increase in 1947. The Municipal Council, aka Mullumbimby Inc., and its Electrical Undertaking needed the wisdom of Solomon in selecting the winners from amongst the lobbyists competing for the next amp off the grid. But there were environmental costs in the zeal to maintain the momentum of the rollout, the *Mullumbimby Star* of 17May1947 reporting that a *Well known Mullumbimby landmark - the centuries-old teak tree at the foot of Everitt's Hill on the road to Brunswick Heads - has been felled by Mr Jack Garrard.*

The tree, which all residents of the district will have seen at one time, or another, had to be felled to enable electricity to be extended to Mr Edward Everitt's home....

Pioneers of the district have told Mr. Everitt they remember the tree in the early days when the country was heavily timbered.

At the butt, the girth of the tree is 24 feet... A rare orchid growing at the foot of the tree is almost as famous as the teak itself. Could the orchid be moved, its value has been estimated as high as £400.

Timber from the tree will be utilised by Mr. Garrard in his shop as butcher's chopping blocks. Some of it may later be used in the construction of a house for his son, Mr Roy Garrard.

Three months earlier a 'switching on' ceremony had occurred just down the highway at Tyagarah Hall. But electricity for Everitt's place likely came via Saddle Road, to where power had been extended as far as the home of the **Fred and Kate Borrowdale** by Dec1934. [Kate Borrowdale (1893-1943) of 'Lone Pine' was the daughter of prominent timber-getter '**Cudgery Jack' Johnson** of next door 'Cathona', whose 'Portion 103' was acquired by the Borrowdales in 1916. (See Cudgery Jack's story at [Johnson family Oct2019 Newsletter.](#)) In 1931 the Borrowdales also acquired the western part of **Harry Everitt's** 'Portion 72', west of what became the Pacific Highway, now Gulgan Road. The Borrowdale quarry supplied the 120,000m³ of rock for the Brunswick Heads Harbour Scheme and Breakwater 1959-61, at the same time Everitts Creek was drained by channels cut all the way to Simpsons Creek.]

Everitt's property was part of the original 640ac selection of surveyor **James Anderson**, whose base camp at 'Anderson's Hill' became the gathering point for selectors seeking an indication of where available land was to be found. In 1894 he subdivided his selection into portions 72,73,74 and 75, all taken up by Byron storekeeper **Harry Everitt** in 1904 when Anderson left the district. At some stage Harry sold portion 74 to Anglican minister, the **Rev Roger Williamson Wilson**, who had taken up residence by mid1907 upon retirement from his Walcha ministry. He played a part in lobbying for a pukka road from 'Anderson's Hill' to The Saddle, but left the district ~1910, eventually dying at Port Macquarie May1938, aged 88, in the meantime selling his 240ac farm to **Alexander Kedzlie** of Rous Mill in Jan1916.

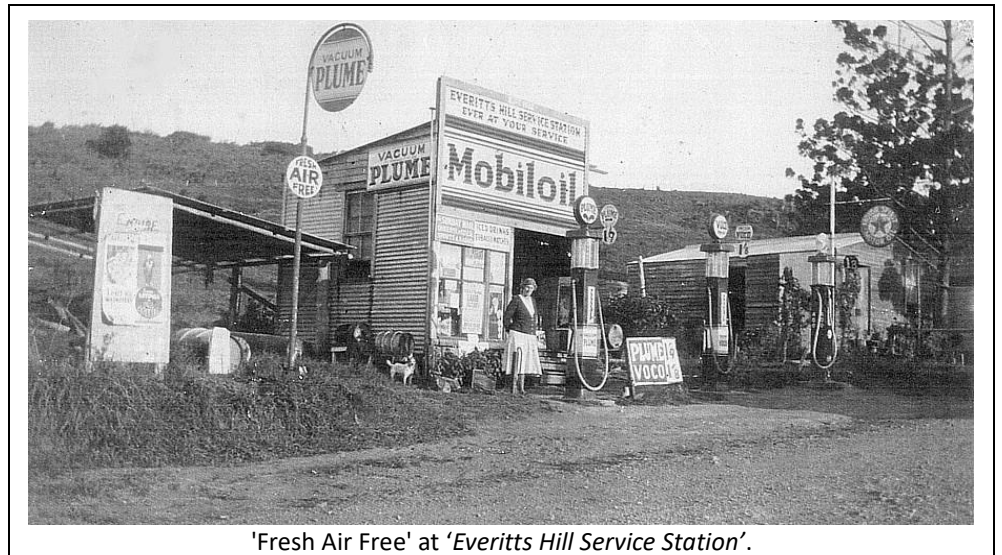
The 'Brunswick Road' from Lismore to Brunswick Heads through Anderson's Hill was completed in late 1886, superseding the beach route and the swim across the South Arm. And after the major deviation at Federal in ~1891 and the new route through Goonengerry, Montecollum and McAuley's Lane, the Saddle Road carried the name 'Brunswick Road', continuing to do so until the late 1930s when the track to Everitt's Hill came into greater use. (See Nov2024



'Everitt's Hill Filling Station'

Newsletter for the story of [The Brunswick Road](#).) Long before then however, McAuley's Lane was bypassed and Argyle Street began carrying the title 'Brunswick Road'.

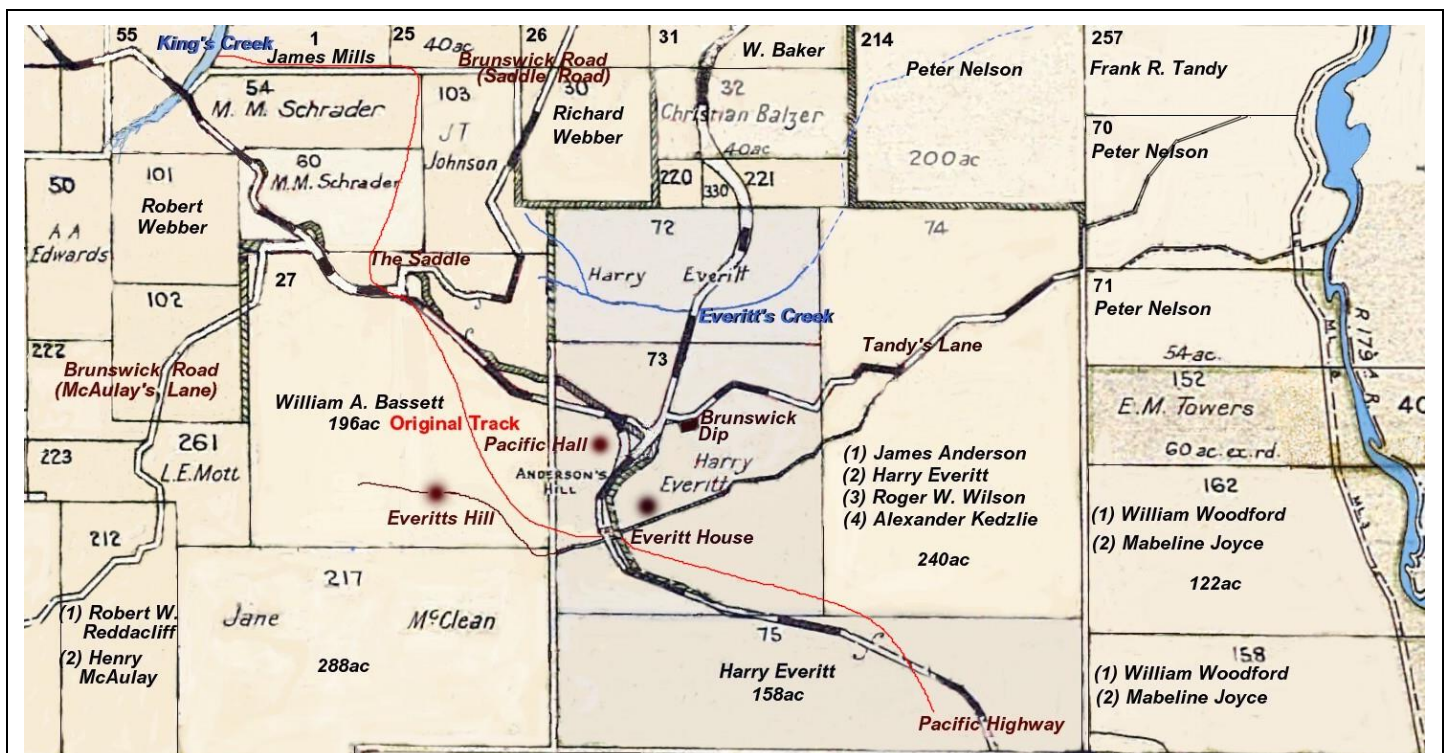
The Everitt's Hill commercial complex had its beginnings in 1932 with the erection of a 'filling station' at this pivotal location by the entrepreneurial **Mrs Maria Elsie Vera Mann** (nee Binnie), wife of sawmiller **Robert William Mann**, whose brother **David Edward Mann** established the sawmill on what is now 'Mann's Road' into Mullum's industrial estate. (David's daughter, **Mavis Vera Mann**, left BVHS a very generous bequest upon her death in Aug2018, helping us out of a financial hole during the Covid period.) Maria sold the service station to **John Francis Swift** of Coorabell/Montecollum in Feb1937 and moved into Queensland to make a new home at Loganholme.



'Fresh Air Free' at 'Everitts Hill Service Station'.

By Dec1938 18yr old **Allan Towers** was apparently manning the hand-pumped bowsers, if not managing the service station. (His parents, **Ernest** and **Adelaide**, nee **Kedzlie**, came from Rous Mill in 1914 to dairy farm at Anderson's Hill, taking up the original selection of **J.C.G. Haack**.) Allan enlisted Aug1941 and died 5mths later at the fall of Singapore, by which time the service station was in mothballs, mainly due petrol rationing, which remained in place until Feb1950.

The position thereafter is a bit vague, but it seems petrol could have been back on the menu at Everitt's Hill by at least Sep1953. It's understood that the site had remained in limbo until 1952 when banana grower **Tom McLean** turned up from Mullumbimby Creek, the Everitt's Hill location subsequently becoming known as 'Uncle Toms', gaining prominence through a famous pie which attracted connoisseurs from far and wide (although some conspiracy theorists see a bit of deception, giving more credit to Tom's marketing genius than his culinary skills, as the pies, at least initially, were supplied by a Mullum bakery before his wife **Vera** (nee **Morris**) became the pie maker. Whatever the circumstances, the 'Uncle Toms' brand was up and running by 22Sep1961 when the local rag recorded that a homeless bloke had been sprung stealing two pies 'from



Portion of Map of Parish of Brunswick, Edition 11, in use from 24Jun1959.

(And latest news is that Council has applied for a \$7.6m grant to reconstruct a roundabout at Uncle Toms, where the triangle of land had served the same purpose for many years. Ref *The Echo* 15Jan2025 at [saddle-road-and-future-traffic-a-closer-look](#))

a shop known as Uncle Tom's, Pacific Highway, Brunswick Heads'. In the 1960 Electoral Roll Tom is still listed as 'Everitts Hill, fruit grower'.)

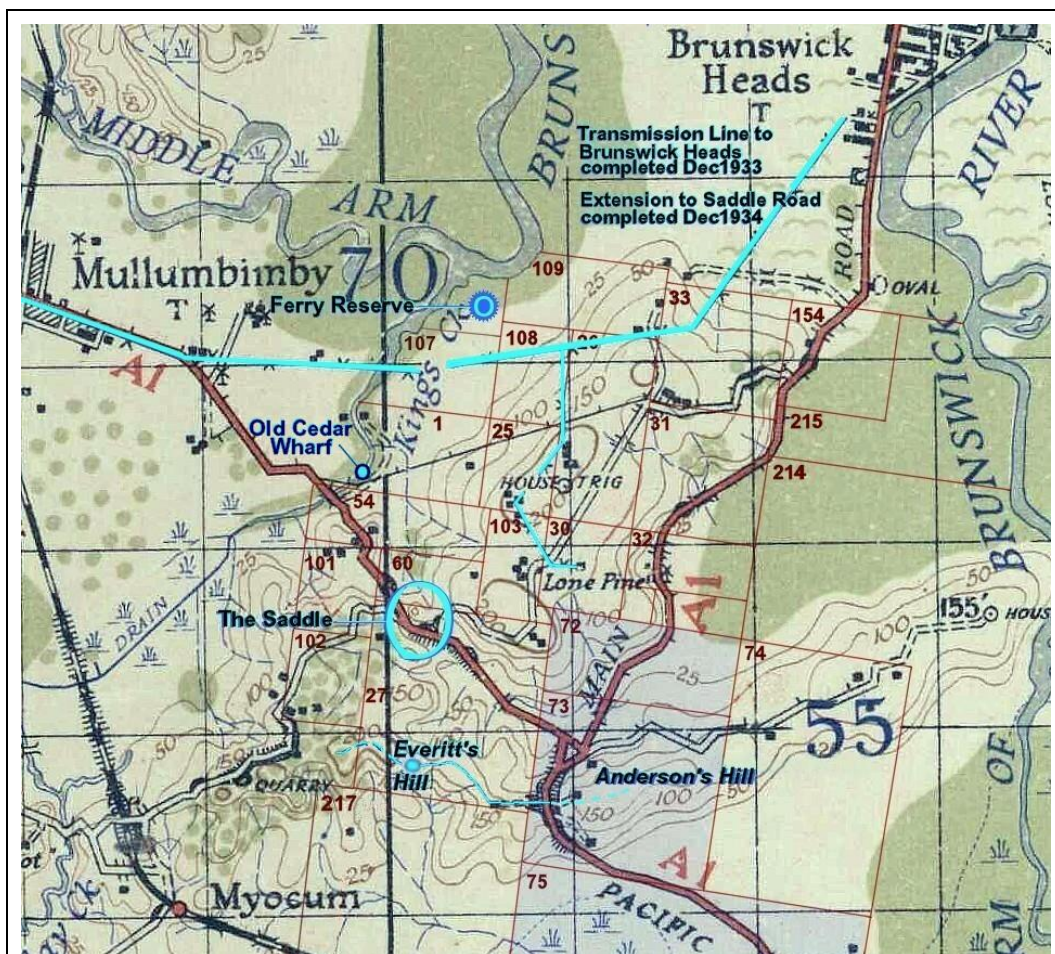
Helping make the 'Uncle Toms' site convenient for locals and travellers alike was the highway change brought about by an unemployment relief project started in mid 1939 on the 3 mile section from the Brunswick Heads bridge to Anderson's Hill. *The work is being done under rationed relief conditions and an average of about 120 men are being engaged each week. The total number of men taking part is about 260...* said the Mullumbimby Star 6Jun1939. By the end of 1939 bitumenising was underway and by early 1940 the Mullumites had a posh new road to Bruns.

It was a vast improvement on the experience of the Agricultural Reporter for *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, his description of the track recorded 3Oct1885 thus: 'After leaving Brunswick Head, I followed a cleared line for some distance, but eventually it became almost indistinct from the scrub which had grown up on every side. This track led me past Mr **Richard Webber's** farm (Portions 31,32,33), the owner of which was hard at work felling trees when I called on my way back. His cottage, situated on a hill, commands a fine view of the surrounding country. Riding up and down a steep hill, and with difficulty picking my way through the network of fallen timber and stones, **Mr Anderson's** house, situated on the slope of a rocky pinch, was reached. The owner, however, who is a surveyor, was not at home, so pushing on I reached the store and farm of **Henry French** ('Nubhoylum' at Tyagarah)....

Backtracking from Tyagarah the track ran through portions 75, 73, 27, 60, 54 and 25 to 'The Old Cedar Wharf' on 'Portion 1' of Kings Creek, where *The pride of place as regards picturesqueness of situation, extent of view, and grandeur of scenery undoubtedly belongs to the homestead of Mr James Mills. This gentleman selected 250 acres four years ago (portions 1,25,26,30,107) the holding including, together with a good proportion of flat, a very lofty hill. The summit and slopes having been cleared, Mr Mills built a neat residence, and viewed from here the scene is perhaps one of the loveliest that can be obtained from any dwelling in the colony....* (Portion 1 was 'alienated' by **Robert Marshal** in 1872.)

Improvements to the value of about £1400 have been effected by **Mr Mills...**, and although no return has yet been obtained for all this outlay this is confidently expected in the future, especially when the railway to the Tweed, which is surveyed, through the farm, will become an accomplished fact. Fronting the Government Wharf reserve (presumably 'The Old Cedar Wharf'), near the current Kings Creek bridge, and a mile or so from Mr Mill's residence, is Mr **Robert Webber's** selection of 80 acres, 10 or 12 of which is partially cleared (Portions 101 and 102)....

In Aug1900 came a bridge over King's Creek, followed by a road replacing the track from the railway station to the Saddle 12mths later, taking ~4mils off the old route through Myocum and McAulay's Lane. (But the track to Anderson's Hill, shortening the trip to Byron Bay by ~3miles, wasn't made into a rough road until 1910.)



Military Map 1942, overlaid with first selectors' portions. (Although the roads to Mullum and Bruns from Everitt's Hill are both designated as the Pacific Highway, the official route was through Mullum to Hainsville until formally diverted through Bruns in 1945, to the chagrin of Mullum café owners. ('Lone Pine' was the name of the Borrowdale property.)

Not shown on either map is the old Pacific Hall, scene of many grand galas in times past. It lived somewhere along 'the old

Brunswick Road until a posher road from the Saddle to the *'Byron Bay turnoff'* was constructed in 1924, at which time the hall was shifted to a point on the motor road to Brunswick Heads, at the Byron Bay turn-off. Many feet shuffled around the famous teak dance floor at the celebratory function MCed by **Ned Everitt** on 17Apr1924. Alas, the place was commandeered by the unemployed during the Great Depression and suffered some serious neglect. **Frank Tandy** of 'Eltonleigh', Anderson's Hill, organized its demolition in Aug1939 following further deterioration, and in Jul1947 the funds of the former Anderson's Hill Hall Committee were used to purchase a wireless for the Tyagarah School.

The Main Actors

The Greenies' poster boy, **Jack Alfred Garrard** (1900 Alstonville – 1974 Mullumbimby), was well qualified to administer the coup de grâce to the redundant Teak, as he was widely known and well remembered as a champion axeman..., says his entry in **Neta MacKinnon's** *'What They Did; Families of the Brunswick 1880-1950'*, published by BVHS 1998. In 1926 he helped prepare logs for the first Brunswick Heads wood chop carnival. In 1928 with a borrowed axe he won his first wood chop at Brunswick Heads. For nine years he and Clive McIntosh from Kyogle were undefeated in cross-cut saw events.... (By-the-by, in a random poll of appropriately aged Mullumites no-one could recall that unmissable 'landmark teak' at Everitts Hill.)

Jack was the son of **James Alfred Garrard** (1869 'Rose Hill', Richmond River – 1941 Leichardt) and **Margaret Anne Campbell** (1873 Taree – 1953 Dulwich Hill) who married 1894 Ballina and begat 7 children. And James was the son of **Henry Alfred Mortimer Garrard** (1839 Stoney Creek, Maitland – 1915 South Brisbane) and **Hannah Anne (Diana) Hollingworth** (1849-1931), sister of sawmiller **Joseph Nicholson Hollingworth** (1864 – 1919), Mullum's foundation mayor.

The family's Australian progenitor, **Henry Garrard** (1808 London – 1862 Lismore), landed 1838 and in 1847 acquired ~19,000ac Tunstall Station near Lismore. (Ref [James Alfred Garrard : Family tree by gaynor1 - Geneanet](#) and *The King Family of Sawmillers* at [Newsletter Fed2024](#) plus *Pillars of Earth; The story of Henry and Mary Garrard and Augustus Leicester*, by Margaret E. Trimbrell and Margaret C. McKenna), published by *Northern Star* 1985.)

James and **Margaret Garrard** initially sojourned at Tyagarah in the 1890s before moving into Mullum, thence a farm at Wilsons Creek followed by a property on Myocum Road near the Golf Course prior to final settlement in Station Street and employment at the Hollingworth Mill.

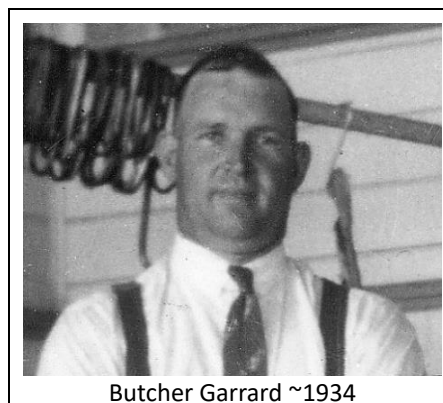
Their son **Jack Garrard** married (1) **Eileen Marion Matherson** (1897 Stroud - 1934 Sydney) 1923 Bellingen and begat 3 children, and (2) **Mabel Annie Pederson** (1906 Sydney-1982 Mullum), daughter of Fred Pederson of The Pocket, 1935 Mullumbimby. He started work as a 'basket boy' in a butcher shop whilst still attending school, taking up full time employment with the *Mullumbimby Co-Operative Butchering Company* in Dalley Street upon leaving school, aged 14, and eventually owning the business. As well as doing his civic duty as a Mullum alderman 1971-74, he also served as foundation president of the Main Arm branch of the BGF after diversifying into bananas.

Norma Garrard (nee Lee), wife of Jack's son **Roy** (1924 Mullum – 2003 Lismore), says the butcher's block from the late



Main Arm Football Team 1932

Back Row L to R: J. Gallen (Manager), W. Mills, L. Williams, A. McCowan, S. McGrath, W. McFadden, J. McFadden, S. James, **J. Garrard (Coach)**
 Middle: R. Martin, F. Lavender, G. Williams, N. Irving, J. McCowan, H. Gallen, H. Crandell, E. King.
 Front: R. Williams, J. Graydon, H. Nelson (Captain), J. Harkness, J. Gallen, R. Crandell.



Butcher Garrard ~1934



Pam Wiley of Mullum, winner of the prettiest ballerina frock at the Ambulance ball, at the School of Arts, receives her trophy from MC Ned Everitt May1953.

Teak was installed in **Jack Garrard's** butchery at Brunswick Heads, managed by **Roy** or **Con O'Brien**, while the bulk of the log was turned into floorboards at the Mann sawmill at Mullumbimby, now known as *'The Old Mill Timber Yard'*. (Jack Garrard had been running two butcher shops, one at Bruns and one in Dalley St., since at least 1940. Roy and Norma acquired the Bruns butchery in Dec1950. In 1977 they built a new shop on The Terrace, passing the business to son Bruce in 1995, the place now home to *The Footbridge Cafe*.)

Everitt

Continuing the segue away from electricity and environmentalism, the other main player in the saga, **Edward (Ned) Everitt** (1905 Byron Bay – 1989 Lennox Head), was the son of **Harry** (1861 Guildford, Victoria – 1941 Mullumbimby), the son of **James Everitt** (1820 London – 1895 Guilford) and **Sarah**, nee **Walters** (1828 London – 1902 Guildford). Harry arrived at Byron Bay about 1890 and carried on a bakery business at that centre, in addition to a branch store at *The Pocket, Billinudgel*. In the early days he travelled along the beach in a wagonette to supply the Brunswick District with its bread..., prior to dairy farming at Everitt's Hill from 1904. In 1893 Harry married **Anna Maria Catherine Higgins** (1872 Warwick - 1958 Lismore) at Byron Bay and begat 7 children, including the above Edward who married **Doris Mildred Flick** (1906 'Carabene', Ewingsdale – 26Jul1998 Concord, late of Lennox, buried Lismore) 1928 Ewingsdale).



Edward Everitt acquired Mrs Balmer's Cafe (far right of Muirhead Motors on the Dalley/Tincogan corner) in Feb1945, (but whether this included the attached 3-bedroom residence is unclear). The freehold was for sale in Feb1950 when Mrs Balmer with partner Mrs Finch reacquired the café from the Everitts and over the following years their *'Ideal Café'* changed hands a few times until destroyed by fire Dec1961. Morris's Fish and Chip caravan occupied the vacant site until the RSL erected its club.

The Everitts were also civic-minded citizens, Harry donating land for the Anderson's Hill Tennis Club and Edward MCing most of the functions at the Pacific Hall. Upon arrival of WW2 Edward was appointed as a *'Crop Gatherer and Destroyer'* at a meeting to prepare plans for a scorched earth policy in the event of a Japanese invasion. From that beginning he served almost every organisation in Mullum, starting as a committeeman with the Mullum P&C in 1942, the Byron District P&C and School of Arts in 1945 (and in that year made a run for aldermanic honours on the Municipal Council), became a warden at the Anglican Church and acquired a café in Dalley Street, probably run by his wife and family.

Into the 1950s Edward was president of the Byron Referee's Association, member of the Mullum Racing and Trotting Club, the Agricultural and Show Society, and Brunswick Bowling Club of which he served as president for 7yrs, all the while calling himself a dairy farmer of Everitt's Hill until he and Doris retired to Lennox Head in the mid1970s.

In the meantime the *'Mullumbimby Businessmen & Retailers' Association* and the new *"Brunswick Valley Development Committee"*... were becoming concerned that Mullum was rapidly declining into a basket case, although the optimistic *Advocate* editorialised in Mar1965 on *What Need for Pessimism? None! And that's despite a very small minority of local people who may whisper that "Mullumbimby - the Brunswick district - is finished"...*, contradicted by the Apexians who said *At present the economy of Mullumbimby seems depressed.... Once there is a decline in confidence in any economic system... there tends to be a snowball effect....* In Mid1965 Rotary came up with *Tuckett's Tomahawk - that's what they're calling the "Biggest Little Town in Australia" sign down at Uncle Tom's corner.... A sign was needed to tell passing people that a fine and very self-contained community was just three miles off the highway and well worth a look....*

Encouragement of visitors to town was also given a lift with a concomitant contract for a new £12,350 bridge over Kings Creek, which with new approaches coupled with a big road deviation



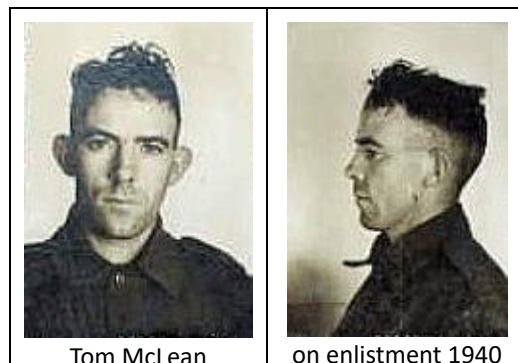
Tuckett's Tomahawk adjacent 'Uncle Toms' 1965. (Named for Chemist Stan Tuckett, president of Rotary)

brought the total job to over £38,000. The straightened road, cutting a half mile off the trip to Everitt's Hill, was completed in Jun1966 and the vertical cut near Saddle Road with Chincogan framed in the centre will provide a fitting gateway to "the biggest little town in Australia."

McLean

Conversely, business was booming down at the Everitt's Hill turnoff (aka 'Uncle Toms Corner') where **Tom McLean's** enterprise was continuing to expand. Salvationist Tom (1912 Dorrigo – 1963 Mullum, cremated Brisbane), was one of 11 children of Presbyterian **Duncan** (1871 Shoalhaven - 1947 Byron Bay) and **Ellen**, nee **Bettens** (1878 Qld – 1968 Brisbane, late of Main Arm), married 1902 Casino.

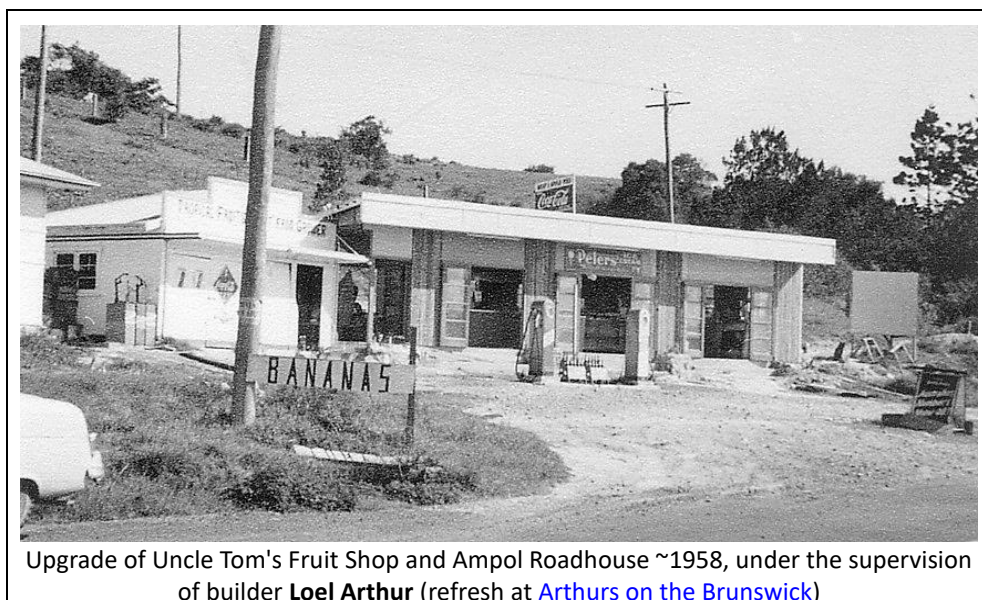
In 1940 Tom was living with his family at The Channon, claiming to be a 'motor driver' and orchardist when he signed up for a stint in the Middle East and New Guinea. Upon discharge he returned to The Channon with wife **Vera Annie** (nee **Morris**, possibly connected to the Morris Caravan Café in Mullum), thence banana growing at Main Arm and Mullumbimby Creek before establishing his enterprise at Everitt's Hill ~1952. Sometime along the way it's alleged he joined a brother in a bakery business at Murwillumbah, but at 'Uncle Toms' it was wife Vera who was the baker and pie maker.



Tom McLean

on enlistment 1940

But the pies were a later addition to his business, which started out in a packing shed / retail outlet on the Highway to handle the produce from his block on Tandy's Lane where he grew small crops. Apparently the shed was also big enough to house his family, the children attending Mullum Public School. And whether the properties were freehold or leased from **Ned Everitt** is a mystery. As the business grew Tom decided to add a tea room to the shed frontage, and after installation of a bakery introduced pies to the menu. This is probably the venture referred to by *The Advocate* in Aug1957, recording council approval to carry out £200 worth of shop additions, the roadhouse upgrade probably assisted by some arrangement with Ampol. *The Advocate's* second reference to the introduction of 'Uncle Tom's' to the world occurred in Jan1963 reporting the death of **Mr Thomas McLean** who, during the past eight years, became widely known throughout the State as "Uncle Tom," proprietor of a business known as "Uncle Tom's".... The business..., expanded rapidly to become one of the best known of its type in the North....`



Upgrade of Uncle Tom's Fruit Shop and Ampol Roadhouse ~1958, under the supervision of builder **Loel Arthur** (refresh at [Arthurs on the Brunswick](#))

His wife **Vera** continued the pie making until 1965 when she passed 'Uncle Toms' to **Lawrence William (Laurie) Neave** (1911 Bowraville – 1999 Alstonville), a master builder and ex-Clerk of Works (who designed the recently demolished Bruns Surf Clubhouse, opened Jan1969.) (Vera married widower **Ray Wilby** 1967 Parramatta and moved to Brisbane.) Coincidentally, in mid1967 the Uncle Toms commercial site expanded when **Fred Chalker** of the Department of Agriculture, well-known to local banana and avocado growers, gained approval for a nursery and retail sales outlet... adjoining the southern side of "Uncle Tom's" roadhouse.

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'Uncle Tom's Tea House' between house and shop, Sep1962, originally a shed selling 'Tropical Fruit Direct From Growers', but now housing the bakehouse. (Roadhouse has 2 Ampol Bowsers, supplying 'standard' and 'super'.)

The pies continued to be sold under the 'Uncle Toms' brand, even though **Laurie Neave** changed the recipe and added to the product range, the display cabinet allegedly even housing commercial pies from Bruns or Mullum bakeries from time to time in the periodic absence of a house baker. Laurie only seems to have lasted a couple of years and by the late 1960s it looks like **Bill Naoum**, son of a Macedonian Middle Pocket banana grower, was running the place with wife **Anna**.

A Naoum employee was **Gerry Cassis (Kassianos)**, son of an Ithacan banana grower of The Pocket, known to have been manning the petrol bowsers in mid1968. He and brother Greg subsequently brought the business, which they ran in conjunction with their mother through to the mid1970s. By 1972, when the hippies rolled into town, Mullum was again in the intensive care ward, and in early 1973, along with a range of complaints on Mullum's deterioration, was a comment about the *faded, paint-chipped sign* at Uncle Tom's pointing to the place. Nevertheless, while suffering a likely loss of local patronage, the Cassis brothers had the highway trade, the enterprise still viable when passed to the **Sheathers** ~1975. Now by-passed by the highway, 'Uncle Toms' continues to trot along, albeit repurposed, having gone through a number of hands and transformations [although baker **Dave Mott** (1970-2023) was a fixture from the late1980s, giving continuity and consistency to the variety of pies sold under the banner of 'Uncle Toms Famous Pies since 1933'. Dave was the great grandson of the prominent **Thomas Melville Mott** (1890-1960), featured in Neta MacKinnon's *What They Did.*]



Uncle Toms doesn't sell petrol anymore, but the faded hoarding on top of the old roadhouse still claims the place is home to 'Uncle Toms Famous Pies' (as at Feb2025.)

In Aug1981 the Shire Council rezoned land up the hill behind Uncle Toms to allow development of 20 lots as part of its strategy for urban and rural expansion. And across the road in 1988 a bicentennial 'Gateway Project' got underway, an initiative of Mullum's new alternate lifestylers. It provided a picnic area for lingering pie eaters, but rotted away through neglect and was replaced by a posher park in 2020. Ref

[Gateway to Mullumbimby](#) ; [mullumbimbys-gateway-us-scrubs-up-nicely](#) ; [BVHS Newsletter-November-2020.pdf](#)



CURRENT EXHIBITION

Our latest exhibition featuring some of the old instruments, phonograms, radios, record players, records, music sheets etc. in our collection.

2025 Memberships are now due

Thank you to the members who have been so prompt. Apologies that the bank BSB details were incorrect in last month's newsletter. Please note the correction.

Unfortunately the cost of postage has increased to \$1.50 for each Newsletter mail out.

So please let us know if you would prefer to receive it by email instead. Form below.

BRUNSWICK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc MEMBERSHIP 2025

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



Centenary Celebrations

On 25th March 1925 St. Martin's Memorial Church in Stuart St was officially dedicated. The museum and Stewart's Menswear window will feature photos etc of this historic event. We are delighted to celebrate this milestone with the Anglican community.



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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
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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:

Tues 11th Mar @ 10.30

**MUSEUM HOURS –
Tuesdays**

and Fridays 10.00-12.00

Market Saturdays 9.00 - 1.00

**MULLUMBIMBY COMMUNITY
MARKET (8.00am – 2.00pm)**

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

