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Two views of Wallaga Lake Bridge — under construction and under flood, c. 1894 to c. 1900. (see story page 15)
Images: From 'Negatives of Glass', courtesy Bermagui Historical Society, and National Library of Australia, nla.obj-1403341238-1

The Bodalla Estate
'Not to have seen Bodalla is not to have seen New South Wales.'

The Bodalla Estate, along with the Kameruka Estate near Candelo (see bit.ly/Recollections10-) and the Ayrdale Estate near Wolumla (see bit.ly/Recollections14), was one of three particularly historically-important, very extensive, dairying properties on the NSW South Coast.

It was owned by Thomas Sutcliffe Mort, an opportunistic and very successful Sydney businessman.

Mort was an auctioneer and a broker of wool, hides and tallow. In 1848, he extended his business dealings to financing pastoral properties in eastern Australia and, subsequently, was approached by John Hawdon, a squatter on a 12,998-acre 'Boat Alley' property on the southern side of the Tuross River.

Hawdon had secured a 14-year lease on the property in 1847 and had an option to purchase the land for £1 per acre. He needed the finance to do so.

Mort negotiated to take a half interest in the property, in a partnership with Hawdon. That deal was finalised and the land was purchased on 22nd January 1856. Eight days later the title to the land was transferred to Mort.

Within two months, 13,000 acres of land had been surveyed for subdivision into 32 blocks. These were put to auction (the auction being, naturally, conducted by Mort & Company!) as 'The Devonshire Estate'. The few blocks that sold realised between £6 and £10 per acre!

Unfortunately for Hawdon, not enough of the blocks sold and he found himself in financial trouble – which, by 1860, resulted in Mort becoming the unencumbered owner of Boat Alley (Bodalla).

Mort originally intended a 4,000 acre 'Comerang' portion of Bodalla to be his country retreat and he engaged noted Sydney architect Edmund Blacket (who designed Sydney's St Andrews Cathedral and the main Sydney University building) to design his 'Home Farm' residence. This included a central room capable of accommodating over 100 people where Church of England services were held on Sundays. These were celebrated by Thomas Mort himself whenever he was in residence at Bodalla. (The Catholics celebrated

All Saints Anglican Church, Bodalla. Thomas Mort was a prominent Anglican layman. He and his first wife, Theresa, chose the site and had plans drawn up by noted Sydney architect Edmund Blacket. Mort also ordered windows from England. When Mort died in 1878, Bodalla residents decided to erect a memorial window in the church so, at the family's request, Blacket enlarged his original plan for the church and included a rose window on the west end. The church was completed in 1901 and is a memorial to Thomas and Theresa.

mass in Comerang's Coach House.)

By 1861 Mort had, according to the Sydney Morning Herald (14.2.1861) decided '*all available land is to be converted, under the new arrangement, into one monster dairy farm*' so that he could supply fresh milk at a cheap price to Sydney. (He actually had a much broader vision: to make Australia the principal country from which Europeans – especially those in Britain and France - sourced their food.)

Back to the swinging

1960s
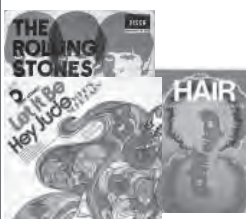
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So, as it was soon reported, *'a large yearly expenditure has been spent, and is still kept up, in clearing, fencing, road making, building and all things that are described as estate management. These are permanent investments on the property, and the money could not have been better spent …'* (*Sydney Mail & NSW Advertiser*, 13.2.1875)

Gangs of Chinese labourers were engaged to help clear the property and Mort was not afraid to import the most up-to-date labour-saving devices for his property from the United States and Europe. Where he was faced with an obstacle, he looked for solutions – for example, early on, developing refrigerated railway carriages to enable fresh milk to be transported from the Berrima-Moss Vale area to Sydney.

As might be expected, a wide range of agricultural activities were pursued - crops included maize and potatoes, and pigs were raised to supply ham and bacon, which was then sold through Mort's Bodalla Stores in Phillip Street in Sydney.

And Bodalla's milk, of course, was used to produce cheese and butter.

Cheese making was commenced at Comerang in the early 1860s. Local dairy farmers were already making cheese and sending it to Sydney; what Mort did was to hugely increase production and to ensure that Bodalla Cheddar Cheese was both of high quality and 'of unvarying character'. In achieving this, he transformed what had essentially been a local cottage industry into a large and efficient manufacturing enterprise, and created a well-respected 'Bodalla' brand for his cheese and other products.

By March 1864 Mort's Bodalla dairy was producing about one ton of cheese a week.

So, within a relatively short period, the Bodalla Estate had become '*The model dairy farm of New South Wales*' (*Australian Town & Country Journal*, 1.1.1876), '*one of the few showplaces of the industrial progress and enterprise of the Colony*' (*Sydney Mail & NSW Advertiser*, 26.6.1886) and it was being suggested that '*not to have seen Bodalla is not to have seen New South Wales.*' (*Sydney Mail & NSW Advertiser*, 13.2.1875)

By 1874 the Bodalla Estate was employing 230 people and a village had been created to supply the needs of their families. In the late 1870s/early 1880s the township moved to its current site, following extensive flooding of the area on several occasions in the 1860s and 1870s, and the re-routing of the main north-south road. With the exception of the school, every building in the town (including 52 cottages that had been erected) was Estate owned.

Unfortunately, Thomas Mort died of pneumonia on 9th May 1878.

The Bodalla Estate was valued at £600,000 at this time.

Whether Mort's dreams for Bodalla would have ever been fully realised is debatable. In particular, transport of the Estate's products to Sydney, and to the other potential markets he believed existed around the world, was a challenge because there was no nearby suitable port – an issue his successors tried to address, unsuccessfully, when they constructed a tramway from Bodalla to North

Narooma in 1883 or 1884 (see bit.ly/Recollections7).

Control of the Estate initially passed to trustees. Under their control, the dairy herd increased and production from the cheese factory rose to around 300 tons per year.

In 1887, following the passing of a special Act of Parliament, ownership of the Estate was transferred to the Bodalla Company Ltd which was wholly owned by the Mort family. For some years expansion of the Estate continued, improvements were made to the Estate, and the Bodalla brand products were imaginatively and aggressively promoted:

'*For Christmas 1892, the Estate produced the two largest cheeses ever made in Australia – one 4,000 lb, the other 3,000 lb, each containing £30 in half sovereigns … the following Christmas, the Estate made two even bigger cheeses for (Sydney grocer James) Kidman, each weighed about two tons and contained fifty £1 coupons. They were shipped to Sydney in the 'Trident' from Moruya. To maximise the promotional value, tenders were invited to transport the cheeses from the steamer in Sydney and cart them around the city and suburbs with 18-bullock teams. Kidman's shop windows had to be removed to get the cheese into the shop.*' (from '*Bodalla and the Morts*')

In 1893 the Bodalla Estate's best land was surveyed and then subdivided into 13 farms that were leased to tenant farmers for seven years. The company guaranteed to keep the cheese and butter factories open and to buy the tenants' produce at 'highly remunerative prices' – something they were unable to do, particularly because significant competition was now being experienced from Bega cheese. By 1900, most of the farms were again being worked by men receiving wages from Bodalla Estate.

During the first two decades of the 20th century the Bodalla Estate, under the management of Douglas Hutchinson, seemed to be resistant to change, did not keep up with changes in that were taking place in the dairy industry, preferred to pay dividends to the company shareholders rather than investing profits in upgrading infrastructure, and seemed oblivious to market changes (the Kameruka Estate, for example, was now producing Cheddar, Edam, Leicester, Derby, Stilton and other 'fancy cheeses'; the Bodalla Estate produced only Cheddar Cheese).

By June 1914 plans were afoot to sell the Estate, but these were put on hold when World War I commenced.

In 1923, by which time the Estate was in 'a deplorable state' and was being seriously impacted by drought, 15 parcels of land were offered for sale. A further 12 were offered for sale the next year. Not all sold – and the indications are that Bodalla Estate had dropped in total value over the years to less than £140,000. Over a few years from 1926, all the properties in the Bodalla township were sold – mostly to those already living or working in the town.

This was, as Laurelle Pacey concludes in '*Bodalla and the Morts*', '*the end of the famous Bodalla Estate under one ownership and the disintegration of a basically self-contained community*.'

(Postscript: Dissatisfaction with prices being paid by the Bodalla Company led to it ultimately being purchased by a newly formed, dairy farmer-owned Bodalla Co-operative Cheese Company. Cheese production ceased in 1951, with local milk then transported to a Streets Ice Cream facility in Moruya until that was closed in 1952. A new Bodalla Cheese factory opened in 1954 and operated until 1987, after which the local milk supplies were sent to the Bega Dairy Co-operative. The residual assets owned by the Bodalla Estate, including a 'Big Cheese' restaurant and tourist complex, were sold in late 1989.) Ⓡ

Sources: *Bodalla and the Morts* by Laurelle Pacey; *The Bodalla Estate from 1860 to 1989* by Helen Townend; Wikipedia; aussietowns. com.au; bodallavillage.com.au

T S Mort

Thomas Sutcliffe Mort has variously been described as an art gallery owner, auctioneer, coalmine owner, company director, copper mine owner and manager, dairy farmer, dairy products manufacturer, financier, grazier, horticulturalist, industrialist, investor, landowner, land speculator, manufacturer, philanthropist, wharfinger and wool broker.

He was born in Leicestershire, England, in 1816. He

arrived in Sydney in 1838 to take up employment as a clerk.

In September 1843 he became an auctioneer and initiated the first regular wool sales in Sydney. In the late 1840s he started auctioning livestock and pastoral properties. By 1850 he was the leading auctioneer in Sydney.

In 1855 he opened Mort's Dock in Balmain, Sydney's first major dry dock for repairing ships. This induced companies operating regular mail services to make Sydney the terminus for their steamers.

In 1866 the dry dock expanded to become an engineering works. In 1870, in an attempt to improve labour relations, Mort offered the employees of the dock and engineering works a half share in the enterprise – an unusual, if enterprising, move.

In 1856 he took an interest in a 12,998 acre parcel of land south of the Tuross River named 'Boat Alley' (which later became Bodalla). By 1860 he was sole proprietor of it. He initially planned to build a country residence on part of the land, but soon decided he would instead develop the property into a model of land utilisation that included a model rural settlement. Eventually Mort was to own 38,000 acres in the Moruya-Bodalla-Tilba area and the Bodalla Estate and its produce, particularly dairy products, became widely known and very highly regarded.

In February 1875 the *Sydney Mail & NSW Advertiser* suggested: '*One of the things best worth seeing at Bodalla is the good understanding subsisting between Mr Mort and his people. He is careful of their interests, and they reciprocate. He seems to be an adviser, doctor, friend and pastor – the feeling heart as well as the devising head. From the children upwards, everyone greets his approach, and it seems to be a grand day at Bodalla when the master comes.*'

Thomas Mort was especially interested in developing refrigeration for the transportation and preservation of

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milk and meat. His first refrigeration patent was taken out in 1861, the same year as he opened the first freezing works in the world at Darling Harbour in Sydney. This was later to become the giant NSW Fresh Food and Ice Company.

Among many other pursuits, Mort was one of the founders of the AMP Society and was a Director of the Sydney Railway Company which sought to construct the first public railway in Sydney.

Mort & Co, which had been established in 1843, became Goldsborough Mort & Co in 1888, then Elders Smith Goldsborough Mort Ltd in 1963.

Mort was a prominent Anglican layman. He donated the land on which St Mark's Church, Darling Point, was constructed and he contributed to the building of Sydney's St Andrew's Cathedral.

When he died in 1878, at the age of 61, Mort was described as '*the greatest benefactor the working class in this country ever had*'. The *Sydney Mail & NSW Advertiser* printed a full-page portrait of him in their 25th May 1878 edition '*for people to hang in their homes*', commenting '*we are confident that the portrait will be prized and treasured in many households which owe, or have owed, their comfort and content in no small degree to the manner in which the enterprise and patriotism of Mr Mort caused capital to circulate by the establishment or initiation of industries new to the colony*'.

A sculpture in Macquarie Place, Sydney, was erected his honour in 1883, paid for by public subscription. The Sydney suburb of Mortdale is named after him. ℝ

Sources: *Australian Dictionary of Biography*; State Library
  of NSW websites; Wikipedia

Mort's Dock, Sydney

Response to a Disaster

Fortuitously, a decision had been made to open an Emergency Operations Centre in Bega on Sunday 18th March 2018 by the time a bushfire (which started in the Reedy Swamp area near Tarraganda, east of Bega) was bearing down on Tathra.

It was not a minute too soon because, within a few hours, 500 Tathra residents would be streaming into an Evacuation Centre in Bega Showgrounds and another 200 would be seeking assistance at another temporary centre in the Bermagui Surf Lifesaving Club.

The decision to open the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) had been made, not because of the ferocity of the Tathra-Reedy Swamp fire (as it became known), but because of the prevailing conditions on the day. It was extremely hot, a howling west-north-westerly wind was blowing (gusting to over 70 kph), and Rural Fire Service resources were already stretched attending to 21 other fires in the Bega Valley, including one of major concern near Kerrisons Lane, Bega.

At that time, in mid-afternoon, no-one could foresee the devastation that was to result in Tathra. All that was known about the fire was that it was out of control, it was erratic, and it was moving at an unusually rapid speed towards the coast. (By the time the fire reached Tathra, having moved about 7km as the crow flies from where it started, it had developed a bushfire front of 1.5km. The available fire crews were also faced with dealing with numerous spot fires that were being ignited ahead of the main fire front. Eventually 1,250 hectares [3,100 acres] of land was burnt out.)

Establishing an EOC freed up Rural Fire Service resources. For example, police took responsibility for traffic control and prevention of theft in the affected area, and Evacuation Centres were able to be opened, enabling the RFS to concentrate on just one thing—fighting the fires. And it brought together a number of 'subject experts', each of whom has a particular responsibility during and following the emergency situation. The immediate and longer term challenges caused by the disaster could also then be properly addressed.

Plans for establishing and manning an EOC are well-established and, even though it was a Sunday afternoon, within a couple of hours the EOC was fully staffed and operating efficiently. It would remain open, 24 hours a day with staff rostered in shifts to manage fatigue, until the following Thursday. By that stage its focus had shifted from the short-term fire emergency to long-term recovery planning and to documenting the incident in case details were subsequently required at events such as Coroners' inquests.

Behind the scene, numerous individuals and community groups were suddenly called upon by EOC personnel to help. For example, the Local Land Services Veterinarian was contacted to attend to any injured or now-homeless pets and to attend to injured wildlife. She, in turn, requested assistance from the local Vet Hospital to help treat injured animals and to temporarily house pets.

Apart from evacuating residents, the most immediate need within the fire zone was the suppression of fires. Once the fire was extinguished, Council building inspectors, Public Works Department engineers, Environmental Protection Agency environmental offices and others were able to enter the area to assess the damage and ensure the area was made safe before residents and others could return.

That turned out to be a mammoth job. In all, 65 homes and 30 cabins or caravans were destroyed and another 39 houses were damaged. (398 other houses in Tathra were 'saved' or were unaffected by the fire and, almost miraculously considering the intensity and size of the fires, no lives were lost and few casualties were sustained by those who fled or fought the fires.)

Asbestos used in buildings erected before 1980 was a major concern. These buildings needed to be identified, access to them immediately restricted, and plans made and implemented to deal with the dangers posed by asbestos. Affected areas were 'encapsulated' (sprayed with a durable, waterproof membrane that 'locks in' the dangerous asbestos fibres) as a temporary measure. Ultimately the asbestos-affected material was removed and has been buried at an Eden Landfill site necessitating closure of the landfill site to other users for a period – the Eden site was chosen because Council's plans were to shortly cap the existing landfill so that it would not be disturbed in the future – and then transform the area into a recreation reserve.

To allow residents to return to the area as quickly as possible, the town was divided into 'zones' and, in turn, each of these was inspected, made safe, and then re-opened to residents. In many cases, the first re-entry to the area was by bus from the Bega Racecourse, where permits to re-enter the area were issued by police. Counsellors and other support personnel were organized to accompany these buses because, for many, the journey was likely to be very traumatic.

Evacuation Centres in Bega and Bermagui opened around 4.30 pm – just an hour after the main fire hit Tathra – and became the first point of call for those affected by the fires. (In most emergency circumstances only one area evacuation centre is established but, on this occasion, the speed and direction of the fire determined that a second one had to be opened to cater for the large number of people directed north to Bermagui when they found the fire prevented them from travelling to Bega.)

The NSW Department of Communities and Justice has a number of teams throughout the state on standby 24/7 to establish disaster Evacuation Centres whenever requested by senior local police officers or organisations such as the Rural Fire Service or the State Emergency Service. The Southern NSW districts Welfare Functional Area Co-ordinator (WelFAC) who received that request on the afternoon of March 18 was actually shopping in Warrawong (near Wollongong) at the time, but fortunately was able to rapidly contact a Deputy WelFAC living in Bega, enabling the Evacuation Centre at the Bega Showground to be immediately opened and for Evacuation Centre staff (mostly local Department of Communities and Justice staff,

who were soon to be joined by experienced Departmental staff from Sydney who were flown in to provide greatly-needed support) to be called in. A number of 'partner' agencies were also mobilised – the local Red Cross (who were responsible for registering evacuees and providing personal care), Anglicare (who provided personal care and material aid such as clothing), Seventh Day Adventists (who were responsible for finding accommodation, where necessary, for evacuees), the local Chaplaincy network, the Salvation Army (responsible for sourcing and providing or distributing food), and a number of other local groups. By 8:30 pm (at which time the fire was still out of control) the first comprehensive briefing was able to be provided by the RFS at the Bega Evacuation Centre – interestingly (and demonstrating how rapidly appropriate resources were brought into the area from elsewhere) by a senior officer from the Illawarra Rural Fire Service!

The Bermagui Evacuation Centre was established in the Surf Lifesaving Club building and, for its much shorter life, mostly relied on support provided by the Red Cross, members of the Bermagui Surf Lifesaving Club, and local residents.

The Tathra-Reedy Swamp Bushfire Timeline
March 18, 2018

12.28 pm - Bush fire initially reported in the Reedy Swamp area, near Tarraganda.

12.33 pm - Firefighting units are dispatched from the NSW Rural Fire Service

12.38 pm - A large smoke column from the fire is highly visible throughout the Bega Valley area.

12.44 pm - The first Rural Fire Service unit arrives at the scene of the fire.

12.54 pm - Firefighters report the fire is burning intensely and report Tathra as a possible future threat.

1.22 pm - The fire jumps Reedy Swamp Road and overruns firefighting units attempting to cut it off.

2.56 pm - The fire jumps the Bega River and begins its run towards Tathra.

3.00 pm - At least 20 separate fires are burning in the Bega Valley area.

3.22 pm - Houses along Thompsons Drive, west of Tathra, begin to be impacted by fire.

3.34 pm - The fire begins impacting the main Tathra township.

4.16 pm - Crews on the ground report at least 35 houses are alight.

4.27 pm - The fire reaches the beach after burning through the township and stops at the ocean.

5.29 pm - At least 50 houses are reported to be alight.

6.22 pm – Fire reported as still being out of control

8.30 pm – First briefing of affected residents at Bega Showgrounds

10.40 pm - At least 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres) are believed to have been burnt, with the fire yet to be brought under control.

March 19, 2018

Morning - Firefighters confirm the fire is under control, with at least 70 buildings destroyed

Afternoon - Firefighters confirm 69 houses, 30 cabins/caravans as well as numerous other buildings have been destroyed, with a further 39 damaged, and numerous people injured.

(Whilst Evacuation Centres are a first point of call for evacuees and then play an important role in providing information and help to evacuees, they generally are not intended to be a place where emergency accommodation is provided. Experience has shown that family and friends are, for the welfare of evacuees, the best providers of accommodation. Where this is not available, temporary commercial accommodation [for example in local motel rooms] is organized.)

Richard Linfoot, the Southern NSW WelFAC, has indicated that his strongest memory from being involved with these Bega and Bermagui Evacuation Centres was the amount of support and the depth of support the Centres and the evacuees received from the local community. He is certain that this provided immense benefit and reassurance to the many who, unfortunately, had been severely impacted by the fire.

The bushfire bears down on Tathra

Meanwhile, necessary longer-term structures and arrangements were being put into place. From Thursday 22nd March 2018 a Bushfire Recovery Centre was established in the Bega Valley Community Commemorative Centre which became both a meeting place for Tathra residents and a one-stop centre for them to deal with insurance companies,

Council, and numerous welfare services (the Bushfire Recovery Centre operated for 12 weeks; when it was closed a Recovery Support Service was established, with funding from the Office of Emergency Management and, longer term, two support case workers were employed through to the end of August 2019 to provide personal logistical and emotional support to those who had lost their homes); a Recovery Co-ordinator, Euan Ferguson, was appointed by the State Government through their Office of Emergency Management to ensure all available support was provided to manage the fire recovery efforts and to ensure that this was provided as quickly as possible; a Mayoral Relief Appeal was organized which ultimately raised and distributed over $1.5million; and the affected area was declared a disaster zone by the Australian Government, enabling affected residents and organisations to access Australian disaster relief funds.

Total long-term recovery from the fire will, of course, take years as people who were affected in any way establish their 'new normal'. Assistance is still being provided to many of those who were affected.

No brief overview of the response to a disaster, such as this, can ever be completely comprehensive and many small but significant details inevitably escape mention – like the fact that Council maintained normal services for the entire Shire whilst many of its staff were deployed elsewhere

The RFS briefing at the Bega Emergency Centre

(some for extended periods) dealing with the aftermath of the bushfire, which resulted in several specialist staff having to be temporarily recruited from other Councils and organisations to work in the Bega Shire; like having to manage the volume of spontaneous community donations that completely filled the Pambula School Hall and prompted an S.O.S. to Council to help move some of it elsewhere; like the (greatly appreciated) 'Thank You Firies' signs that rapidly appeared around Tathra; and the local Lions Clubs simply 'materialising' outside the Emergency Operations Centre on the morning after the fires to offer bacon and egg sandwiches to the many people on duty. ℝ

Henry Jefferson Bate – the Aboriginals' Friend

When Henry Jefferson Bate, one of the pioneer settlers in the Tilba area, died in 1892, King Merriman (the chief of the Wallaga Lake Aboriginals) 'clasped his hands over his head, tears streaming down from his eyes crying "Oh my poor old master, you've gone away, you've left me, my poor old master"'.

Henry was respected by the local Aboriginals. He respected the local Aboriginals.

It seems that when Henry moved to his Mountain View farm in Tilba Tilba in 1869 he employed local Aboriginals, including Merriman, to help clear his farm and then to work on the farm. Evidently '*he gave them a big steak, bread and stew as pay … and they cleared all the property.*'

Bate's move to Tilba coincided with moves by Aboriginals to regain some of the land they had lost to European settlers. Increasingly Aboriginals were being denied access to lands that had been used to gather food or that had cultural significance to them, and they were losing traditional camping areas. So, they sought land with a freehold title that would ensure they would have a secure future.

The government at the time supported these initiatives in the belief that this could help make Aboriginals self-sufficient. It was not their intention to deliberately segregate Aboriginals from the wider population.

In 1874 Crown Camping Reserves were created on the north-eastern shore of Wallaga Lake. Henry Bate and another neighbouring landholder, John Thomas Hobbs, may have helped facilitate this initiative. Several years later, two 18' whaleboats were provided to the Wallaga Aboriginals

by the government (one of which was to be skippered by Merriman).

In early 1880, Henry Bate approached the government, on behalf of Tilba Aboriginals, asking for more land to be provided to local Aboriginals. This resulted in 380 acres of Crown Land being 'reserved from sale for public purposes' which, a year later, was 'reserved from sale for the use of the Tilba Tilba tribe of aborigines' and Henry Bate, John Forster and John Dawson were appointed Reserve Trustees.

Much of this land is now the site of the Wallaga Lake Koori Village.

Henry Jefferson Bate is reputed to have told local Aboriginals at the time: '*You people can keep this land, it belongs to you. It's your home ground*,' indicating that he was one of Australia's earliest supporters of Aboriginal land rights.

In December 1886 an application was made to establish a Provisional School (an elementary school which was expected to cater for 15 to 25 attendees, usually staffed by an untrained teacher. Most Aboriginal schools at that time were Provisional Schools) on the Tilba Tilba Reserve. Again, Henry Bate instigated the move remarking '*the education of the young aborigines … heretofore has been totally neglected.*' A local landholder, James Reece, volunteered to become the teacher, and his offer was accepted.

The Education Department viewed this new school as 'an experiment' and the school teacher as 'a sort of head of settlement' who would 'encourage the men to build houses, to cultivate land etc.', and who would 'be called on more to

govern and influence the children than to simply teach them.'

At the Education Department's request, the Aborigines Protection Board provided rations and clothing to students who regularly attended school.

The school was successful, and James Reece proved to be both a capable schoolteacher and Reserve administrator. In fact, the school (and the rations that were available to those who attended) attracted more families to the Tilba Tilba Reserve, with, for example, rations being provided to nine adults in 1886 and to 14 adults just one year later. By 1891, the year before Henry Jefferson Bate died, there were 93 people from 12 families living in the Wallaga Lake Reserve (as it had been gazetted that year), with many (all but two of the families!) moving there from Gippsland, the Monaro and coastal areas well north of Wallaga Lake. ℝ

[A note on H.J. Bate: there have been three H.J. Bates – which often confuses unwary historians: Henry Jefferson Bate (1816–1892), Henry John Bate (1881–1967, who was often referred to as 'HJ'), and Henry Jefferson Percival Bate (1906–1984, commonly referred to as 'Jeff')]

Sources: Information from Harry Bate, Tilba; '*Tilba Times Revisited*' by Laurelle Pacey

Henry Jefferson Bate. Photograph by William Henry Corkhill, early 1890s. nla-obj-140307568

HISTORIES

The Timber Truss Bridge Book
edited by Lenore Coltheart and Amie Nicholas

The foreword to 'The Timber Truss Bridge Book' neatly encapsulates the importance of this book:

'The people of NSW have been fortunate, indeed, for nowhere else has the art of timber bridge building been taken as far and exercised as many times as here in this corner of the world.

which deserves to be recognised and remembered long into the future.'

This is an elegant, informative, well-researched and well-written book. It includes numerous fascinating photographs and illustrations. I was hoping it would be published in paper format (it deserves to be!) but, sadly, so far it has only
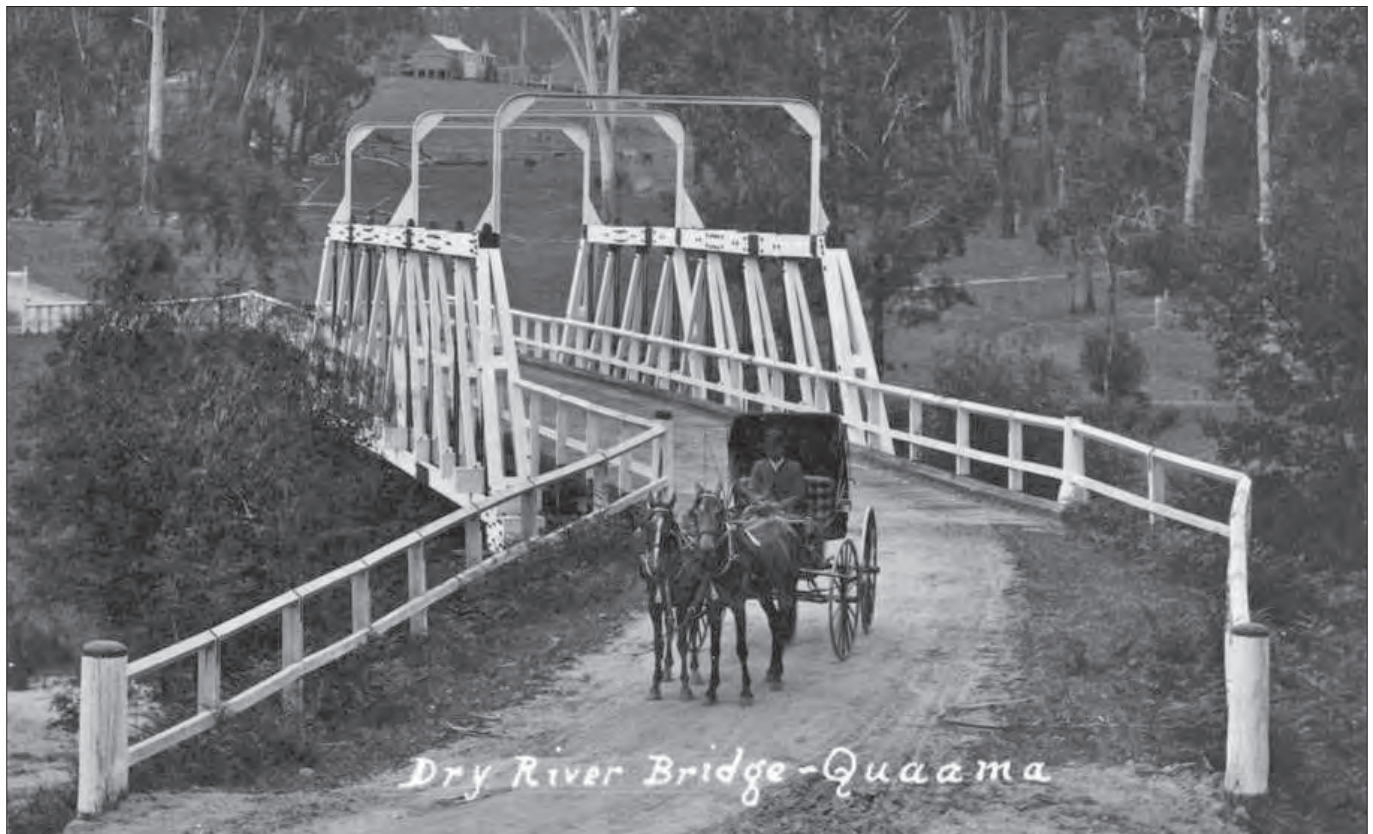
The 'most beautiful' 1894 Allan Truss Bridge over Dry River at Quaama

This was only possible because of Australia's unique ecology and flora providing hardwood timber of rare length, strength and durability. By designing and building timber bridges at a quarter of the cost of any alternative, the road engineers of NSW created the infrastructure that allowed the state to grow and evolve, without 'breaking the bank'…

Sadly, the timber truss bridges of NSW have become an anachronism on today's highways; they were never expected to carry vehicles weighing over forty tonnes and modern traffic is bigger, wider and faster than could have been imagined in the late nineteenth century.

Supplanted first by steel and then by concrete, timber bridges are becoming increasingly rare on the roads of NSW.

Roads and Maritime Services is the heir to a proud history of bridge design and building in NSW … this book sets out to tell the story of timber truss bridges of NSW, the people who designed them and the corner of the world that they helped to shape.

It is a grand story, melding tradition and science; talented individuals and nameless boffins; public servants and pioneers. Most of all, it is the story of a great achievement,

been published as a (free!!) e-book. [At a time when South Coast History Society is advocating that as many paper-format local history books as possible should be digitized and then made available 24/7 on line, it strikes me that it's a little incongruous that I'm wishing that this new e-book was now available in paper format! Nonetheless …]

'Over 400 timber truss road bridges were built in New South Wales between 1856 and 1936. Some of the 51 standing today will need to be replaced within the next 20 years, leaving less than 30 remaining into the future as rare and representative examples, a heritage of the State.'

'The Timber Truss Bridge Book' records [along with many other things] the history of the timber truss bridges of New South Wales so that everyone can recognize what each bridge represents.'

There were basically five distinct designs of timber truss bridges that were built – each named after a NSW Public Works Department Engineer (William Bennett, John McDonald, Percy Allan, Ernest de Burgh, and Harvey Dare), and each new design was a development on the previous timber truss bridge design. They were built in

Crankies Plain McDonald Truss Bridge near Bombala

preference to iron bridges because of the abundant supply of long lengths of suitable timber (at least until increasing exports of it severely diminished supplies available to NSW bridge-builders … which then led to another redesign of the bridge so that shorter lengths of available timber could be used) and because timber bridges were about one-third the cost of iron bridges, which was a particularly important consideration during a severe economic downturn in Australia in 1892–3.

The development in design of timber truss bridges also reflected bridge usage: over time they needed to be able to carry heavier loads, wider loads and more rapidly-moving loads (which caused greater movement of the bridge structure). And their designs were improved so they could be more easily repaired – something that became increasingly necessary as each timber truss bridge aged.

Two timber truss bridges survive near the South Coast – the New Buildings Dare Truss bridge over the Towamba River near Bombala that was built in 1921 to replace a bridge washed away in a 1919 flood, and a McDonald Truss bridge over the Coolumbooka River at Crankies Plain near Bombala that was built in 1892.

Others with interesting histories have, of course, long disappeared, including 'the fourth Allan Truss bridge, completed in 1894 over the Dry River at Quaama' that

included 'the most beautiful example of a modification to make up for the lack of sway braces [struts were usually included to strengthen or add rigidity to the structure against forces such as wind] and 'the second Allan Truss bridge, over Stoney Creek near Bega, also opened in 1894 (for which) three years later Allan had to provide a design for rather awkward cross girder extensions and metal sway braces.' [Lenore Coltheart, one of the Editors and Contributors to 'The Timber Truss Bridge Book', has indicated to us that, once she has completed some other research commitments, 'I'd love to write a travel guide showing locations of all the known timber truss bridges on the South Coast – there were a lot, the first we know of are Bennett's 1875 Bombala Bridge and his 1879 Candelo Bridge' – so although 'The Timber Truss Bridge Book' is a very comprehensive work, there is still a lot more of the story about them to be told. We hope that travel guide is produced some day.]

Meanwhile, (regrettably) the only way to enjoy this fabulous 'The Timber Truss Bridge Book' is to access it online and, P.S., congratulations to NSW Roads and Maritime

The Allan Timber Truss Bridge over the Murray River at Swan Hill, this is the oldest remaining timber truss lift bridge in NSW. Image State Library of Victoria, 10381/64608

Services for commissioning and producing this detailed work about this group of some of the state's most interesting, most important heritage assets. ℞

Find the book at:
https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/about/environment/protecting-heritage/timber-truss-bridge

...AND, TALKING OF BRIDGES:

The Wallaga Lake Bridge

(Please see photographs on front cover)

The Wallaga Lake Bridge was built in 1894 to provide easier access from Tilba to the port of Bermagui which, at the time, had a more regular (two northbound, two southbound services per week) and more reliable steamer service than the alternative port of Narooma.

Before the bridge was built, transport of goods to or from Bermagui depended upon whether Wallaga Lake was open to the sea. If it was open, goods had to be ferried across the water – a challenge that most carriers avoided (it involved unloading the dray on one side of the lake, ferrying the load across the lake, swimming the team of horses across the lake, and then reloading the dray) but one that a local widow, Emily Wintle, turned into a profitable business; however, whenever the lake was closed to the sea, a beach crossing could be made – but, because the sand was so deep and heavy, this normally required twice as many horses to drag half loads across the beach.

On coastal steamer days, an average of 20 drays and spring carts would make the crossing – so it is no surprise that the Tilba farmers and merchants were very eager for a bridge to be built across the lake.

The bridge is a multi-span beam bridge (the simplest form of bridge). It was designed by John A McDonald who was NSW's Chief Engineer for Bridges from 1889 to 1893. It has two beam spans of 30 feet and seven of 35 feet, so is

310 feet (94.5 metres) in total length. It cost £3,214 to build.

Its official opening was scheduled for March 19th 1894 but, because of bad weather, was postponed until the next day, and then until April 19th.

The bridge was frequently photographed in the years from around 1894 to 1900 by William H. Corkhill of Tilba (see

photographs on page 1). Later, in December 1909, he became 'caretaker' of the bridge (responsible for its maintenance) at a contracted fee of £6 per annum, a position he continued to hold well into the 1910s.

The local Wallaga Lake Aboriginals know the bridge as a reliable source of 'good tucker' – for both fish and oysters. It also became a popular playground – their kids jumping and diving from it into the lake … but it also had a legend associated with it that ensured those local Koori kids headed home before dark: for those who lingered near the bridge at night risked witnessing a coach and six horses, driven by a headless man, speed down the hill and around the bend near Akolele – at the north end of the bridge – straight into the water! Ⓡ

(The complete known collection of 974 photographs by William H. Corkhill is reproduced in *'Negatives of Glass'*. This has recently been republished and is available from the Bermagui Museum and Bermagui Visitor Information Centre. An interesting photograph of this bridge and a substantial guest house on the island at the southern end of the bridge [clearly visible in the photographs on page 1] is on display in the restaurant of the Bermagui County Club.)

The Sydney Harbour Bridge

One of your supporters (thanks, Sue!) has drawn our attention to a fascinating Australian Government film from the early 1930s about the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge – a time, as she points out, when 'everyone wore a hat … but no hard hats!' It's at http://www.youtube.com/embed/Jy5cZ-IO0Eg?feature=player_detailpage Ⓡ

Brogo Bridge and Bridge House Brogo

Three photos of Brogo River Bridge were published in Recollections 17 (available at bit.ly/Recollections17). I know these photos well because, for 25 years, I lived in Bridge House at the southern end of the Brogo Bridge.

The Bridge House, the bridge, and the highway are inextricably linked.

The first photo is of the timber truss bridge that was just upstream of the current bridge. Tenders were let for the construction of the bridge in 1883 (*Bega Standard*, 4 August 1883, p.2) and the bridge completed toward the end of 1884 (*Bega Standard*, 11 October 1884, p.2). The Bridge House

Prince's Highway—S.H. 1. Brogo River Bridge under construction.
(Note portion of old bridge on right.)

Photo: Dept of Main Roads, 1936

was completed at the same time as the bridge, built as the Brogo Hotel and licenced to sell alcohol to weary travellers. The Brogo Hotel offered five bedrooms for travellers. The Blanchards also provided breakfast to travellers who left Bega early, before dawn, on their way to Cobargo.

The road had previously followed a route up and over Thompsons Hill (behind Bridge House) but this road was extremely dangerous and, with construction of the new bridge and hotel, the road was diverted through the Brogo Pass, on a much safer level route, the current highway route.

The photo of the girls on the bridge was given to me to copy and return to the owner. This was an instance of someone who called in while going on their own 'memory trip'. As a result, I was able to copy this photo.

It is important to remember though that before the Princes Highway became a highway in 1925 and motor vehicles became more common after the First World War, roads were originally built as local roads between the towns and villages. When people wanted to travel longer distances, they went to the coast and took the steamer to Sydney. The steamer passenger service closed in 1928. Without any railway services Bega Valley residents were isolated from quick, convenient, comfortable travel options.

The wooden bridge served well until a massive flood in 1934. 488 mm of rain fell over 3 days in early January 1934. According to newspaper reports at the time, Mr Hayes the owner of the Bridge House went across the bridge to bring his cattle home, but large haystacks were pushed against the bridge decking by the force of the water. The bridge broke apart leaving the bridge in pieces on the riverbed (the top right photo). Many other bridges in the valley were damaged or destroyed in this particular flood.

The history of the building of the concrete bridge at Brogo is well covered in Bega Library's Monday Musings No 70 (https://www.facebook.com/begavalleyshirelibrary/posts/monday-memory-no-70new-bridge-over-brogo-river-after-1934-floodswe-drive-over-th/1673497136096074/). Photos of the building of the concrete bridge are also available on the State Library of NSW web site.

The concrete bridge was built significantly higher than the old wooden one. The bridge decking has, to our knowledge, not been under water in any of the floods since. I was told by a truck driver that in the February 1971 flood, water was in the dip at the northern end of the bridge – so this was a pretty big flood! — when 580 mm of rain fell over five days.

Fiona Firth

ISSUES

'Recollections' Now Available on 'Trove'

All issues of 'Recollections' are now available on 'Trove', the National Library of Australia's superb, modern on-line library that is freely available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks of the year.

(If you are unfamiliar with Trove, it's an extraordinarily powerful search engine developed by the National Library of Australia. You can search, for example, for historic newspaper coverage of absolutely any topic [enter 'Ned Kelly' and 150,000 items from newspapers from across Australia will instantly be identified and each can then be read] or for photographs relating to any subject [such as 'Wallaga Lake Bridge', which we've featured on this issue's front cover], or which public libraries anywhere in Australia holds copies of any book that you may be interested in. It's also very easy to use – simply Google 'Trove' (as in 'treasure trove'), click on whatever interests you, and follow the prompts.)

Our philosophy is that our history actually belongs to everybody so, as much as possible, it should be freely and readily available to everybody at any time. And access to it, with the technology available today, should not be restricted because some library or museum considers any history they hold to be 'our property', or by the opening hours or physical accessibility of museums or libraries.

Ideally, we'd like all of the thousands of South Coast histories currently held in museums and libraries (and even in private collections) to be digitized and uploaded to Trove, so they are readily and freely available to anyone at any time of the day. And, if we could find the funding, we'd immediately employ someone to start the (mammoth…but certainly extremely valuable) task of digitizing as many South Coast histories as possible and as quickly as possible.

We hope our recent initiative to provide 'Recollections' in electronic form to the National Library of Australia and the State Library of New South Wales will inspire all other local history societies and museums that publish a newsletter to do the same, and to also now upload all back copies of their journals (to do so, visit ned.gov.au). We are also hoping that 'Recollections' will become text searchable (in the same way that the newspapers are text searchable) at some future time.

The 1960s.

The 1960s was an unusually rich decade. Its music was different, memorable and particularly enjoyable; it was a time of unparalleled change, and those changes have had an enormous impact on our subsequent history. We're celebrating the music and history of that unforgettable decade on Wednesday 8th April in Merimbula and Thursday 9th April in Bega. Music from that era will be provided by well-known local musician Sam Stevenson and highlights from the history of the decade will be presented and illustrated by Dr Merv Bendle who was Senior Lecturer in History and Communications at James Cook University. Morning tea will also be provided. This is an event you will not want to miss and, for

those who lived through the entire decade—even if, perchance, you can't remember it all!—it's FREE. So please see page 3 for further details. Tickets are limited and advance reservations are ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL – preferably to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com (we will acknowledge your

booking), otherwise by phoning 0448 160 852. We particularly thank Bega Valley Shire Council and Bega Valley Historical Society for their valuable support for this event.

All Aboard! …
Join the South Coast's Magical History Tour
It's going to blow you away… yes, blow you away!

The South Coast is sitting on an unexploited goldmine.

The area's history.

And it's just waiting for someone who has a little imagination, a little drive, a little time, to uncover and to demonstrate the potential that's available…and to, simultaneously, deliver enormous benefits to the entire region.

Two things are uncontestable:

● Visitors to the area ARE interested in the area's history and ARE wanting to learn about that history during their visit.

Cultural tourism is the new 'in' thing in tourism: the United Nations Word Tourism Organisation recently estimated that more than 50% of tourists worldwide wish to experience a country's culture and heritage. In Australia that figure is even higher: figures from Victoria reveal that 63% of visitors to that state are cultural visitors, with 66% visiting museums or art galleries, and 65% interested in historical or heritage buildings.

And, locals are certainly no less interested in their own area's history and no less eager to learn more about it – as the hugely positive reactions from locals to South Coast History Society's '*Recollections*' magazine and to the South Coast History Society's *Bega Shire's Hidden Heritage* project vividly demonstrates.

● The South Coast has an extensive, particularly interesting, very colourful history. And a lot of evidence of that history remains. We're not like Sydney or Melbourne, for example, where so many traces of their histories have been swept away. Signs of our history are everywhere – it's just a matter of knowing where to look and, then, where to find the associated histories.

The recent *Bega Shire's Hidden Heritage* initiative dramatically illustrates this - 101 objects were identified and extensive dossiers of information compiled on each; we could easily have included 1,001 local objects on that list – each with a fascinating history, each with a fascinating story!

So the potential to develop and provide a much better, greatly enhanced 'history experience' on the NSW South Coast certainly exists.

I'd like the area to earn a reputation of locals being exceptionally proud of their history and, therefore, extraordinarily willing to widely share it.

So, what sorts of things are needed?

First, a thorough review of history's potential in the area needs to be undertaken, and a plan for the future developed. This will include setting some priorities for what can be achieved; it will include some estimates of likely costs of doing so and likely financial benefits that should flow to the area. How about it, Bega Valley and Eurobodalla Councils – could you initiate such a (joint) review and involve some of the local organisations most likely to benefit from more actively exploiting the area's history?

Then it should be a straightforward task to actively promote and publicise our local history. And there are numerous obvious ways to start doing this:

► A good start would be to erect some signage explaining features throughout our area. I'm appalled, for example, that there is not a single sign explaining the very interesting buildings and monuments along Bega's main street and side streets. So, currently, visitors to this town leave without any better understanding of the town's fascinating history. And erecting some engaging signage would provide visitors with a reason to explore the town – which might just lead to some of them also going into shops and spending some of their tourist dollars! These don't necessarily need to be huge signs –small signs displaying QR codes (with the information then immediately available electronically) would be better than nothing.

► Even better would be the provision of occasional walking tours (preferably free walking tours, as are provided in other cities and towns!) on which 'storytellers' could engage with those taking the tours while relating some of the many interesting tales about the town.

► Similarly, guided tours could be organized of local cemeteries where there are often an enormous number of available 'leads' (in the form of gravestones) to fabulous local history stories… And perhaps even extend this to places such as the Kameruka Estate and the historically interesting Bendethera Valley west-south-west of Moruya (accessible only by a dramatic Four Wheel drive).

► And, to complement guided tours, we could produce and make readily available brochures, Apps, etc., to enable people to take self-guided tours of local towns and local cemeteries.

► Self-driving tours, linking a number of areas, could be developed. One that seems obvious links the Tathra area to North Bega, via Kalaru, Jellat Jellat and Bega. This would pass an enormous number of historically important, interesting sites. This is a 'natural' for an App, but having details available in paper form (e.g. tourist brochures) and via the internet would be of additional benefit.

► 'Dress up' local towns with historic photographs and, preferably, some brief explanation of them. The power box in front of Merimbula Jewellers is a great example of what can be achieved. The area's museums have enormous libraries of historic photographs available – currently largely being underutilised.

► Similarly, all those empty shopfronts in South Coast towns could be made more interesting by installing temporary displays of historic photographs and of heritage objects that can, for example, be viewed in local museums. To maintain interest, these displays could be regularly rotated from shop to shop, town to town – and, by doing so, we'd be reinforcing the message that an enormous amount of local history can be discovered throughout the South Coast. (There are currently 13 empty shops in Carp Street Bega (+ 8 in nearby Sapphire Marketplace) – every one of these is a potential 'gallery' that could be featuring Bega's history. The story is exactly the same in Batemans Bay, in Merimbula, in . . .))

► Hotels rooms, motels rooms, holiday apartments present an enormous, currently untapped potential for sharing and promoting local history. Historic photographs and photographs of local heritage objects and sites, along with brief explanations of each, could be displayed in guest rooms (this is successfully done in Hobart's macq01 hotel – which was, interestingly, designed from the ground up to reflect and promote the area's history). Or, better still, hotels, motels, apartments could borrow interesting pieces, often currently not on display or 'lost' among other displays in local museums, from local museums and display these (again with brief explanations) in public areas of local hotels and motels (as is done, for example, in Nashville's 21c Museum Hotel).

► All local halls should also be dressed up with photographs and details about the history of their local area. The display in the Supper Room at the Wolumla Hall is a superb example of what can be achieved… as, on a grander scale, is the regularly-changing historic display arranged by the Merimbula-Imlay Historical Society in the RSL Club in Merimbula that includes both photographs and interesting local historical objects.

► Other similar opportunities exist that are not being fully exploited – such as ensuring our local history has a presence at all local Agricultural Shows, organizing history-related events as part of local Seniors Week activities.

► And other existing 'obvious opportunities' should be examined – e.g. issuing 'Recollections' on a monthly basis rather than (as at present) every second month and/or substantially increasing the print/email runs of each issue; enabling other history societies to more widely distribute their journals.

HISTORY | STEWART and D'ARCY Optometrists BEGA　　www.peterdarcy.com.au

91 Carp St BEGA　　Tel 02 64921999
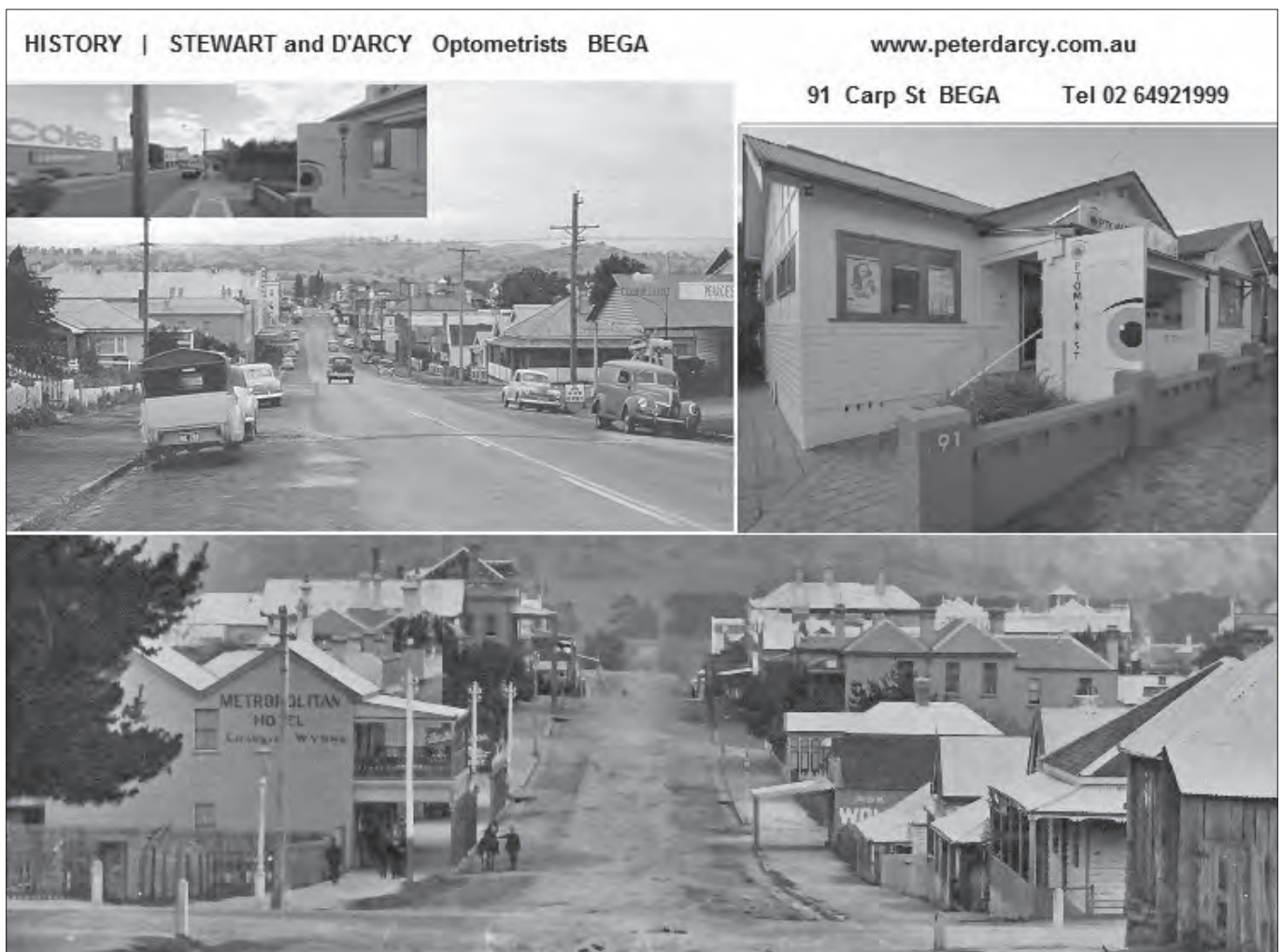
► Numerous cruise ships are now visiting Eden and Batemans Bay. We should ensure there is a South Coast history expert on board each ship, delivering talks to visitors about the fascinating and extensive history of the South Coast before the ship docks in Eden or Batemans Bay. This will make the visitors' short stays far more informative, far more rewarding. (The cost of this is minimal.)

► It would also be beneficial to have a 'face' to promote local history — someone who could visit schools, give talks to local service clubs and other community groups, establish a strong media presence, and help to uncover more of the fabulous stories throughout the community and too-often filed away in libraries and local museums. This should be a full-time position — history's equivalent of the art gallery curator employed by Bega Council — and, of course, should be an established historian.

► We must move towards storing and presenting past histories in a 21st century format, which means we should initiate a program to digitize as many of them as possible and then make these digitized histories available 24/7 via the internet.

Whilst South Coast History Society has successfully done a little of what could potentially be done to advance local history, unfortunately it does not currently have the resources to tackle the real challenges that still remain. Unless a very generous benefactor was suddenly to step forward (we can always live in hope!), the challenges must now be accepted by the community as a community challenge — recognising the enormous benefits that will flow to the community from properly exploiting our local history's 'hidden goldmine'.

Peter Lacey

We recently received a fabulous suggestion that we feature one gravestone from a local cemetery in each issue of 'Recollections', and present the story associated with those buried there. So, to start this series, here are the details of not one, but four graves in Cobargo Cemetery.

A Family's Unimaginable Grief

There are four identical grave memorials, side by side, surrounded by a decorative iron fence in Cobargo Cemetery. The headstones read:

In Memory of
GEORGE
BELOVED SON OF
WILLIAM AND JULIA LONSDALE
DIED 28th SEPTEMBER 1876
AGED 3 YEARS AND 6 MONTHS

In Memory of
ADA
BELOVED DAUGHTER OF
WILLIAM AND JULIA LONSDALE
DIED 8th SEPTEMBER 1876
AGED 11 YEARS

In Memory of
GABRIEL WILLIAM
BELOVED SON OF
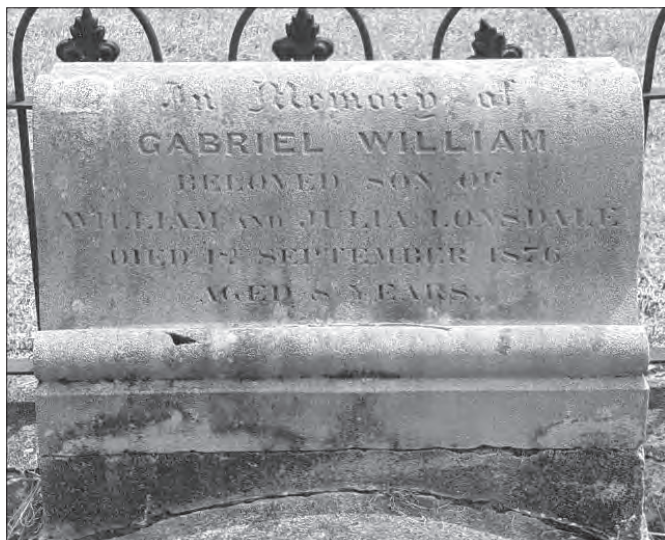WILLIAM AND JULIA LONSDALE
DIED 1st SEPTEMBER 1876
AGED 8 YEARS

In Memory of
ALICE MAUDE
BELOVED DAUGHTER OF
WILLIAM AND JULIA LONSDALE
DIED 15th SEPTEMBER 1876
AGED 6 YEARS
(Unfortunately this headstone has severely delaminated)

William and Julia were farmers on a property called 'Moatfield' at Wandella. They acquired this property in 1872 and moved there with their six children.

In September 1876 four of these six children died – victims of a Scarlet Fever epidemic that, in 1875–76 affected 80,000 people (mostly children) throughout Australia and resulted in 8,000 deaths. In NSW 1,500 non-Indigenous deaths were recorded (and 'there was also a high rate of death among the Indigenous population'). The south-east of NSW was not spared, as these reports in *The Manaro Mercury, and Cooma and Bombala Advertiser* illustrate:

SCARLET FEVER.
This epidemic is visiting the district of Manaro. On Sunday night or Monday morning, the eldest daughter of Mr. Henry Dawson, solicitor, died. The little one, who was about five years of age, was apparently well on going to bed that night, but about 12 o'clock she awoke delirious and in a high state of fever, the rash coming out all over her body. Soon after, she became discolored, dying in a few hours. (4.3.1876)

SCARLET FEVER.
This malignant epidemic in visiting the district of Cooma. The youngest daughter of the Reverend Mr. Druitt died at an early hour on Saturday morning, and her father wisely resolved to have her remains interred by noon the same day; we regret to hear that two other members of his family are also seriously ill. (1.4.1876)

Following Gabriel William's death, William and Julia Lonsdale's eldest son, Albert Edward, was sent to Sydney to live with Julia's sister. He survived the epidemic – possibly as a result of this decision by his parents. One-year-old Hartley also survived. Julia was later to give birth to another son [Rudolph] in 1877 and another daughter [Sarah Elizabeth] in 1880.
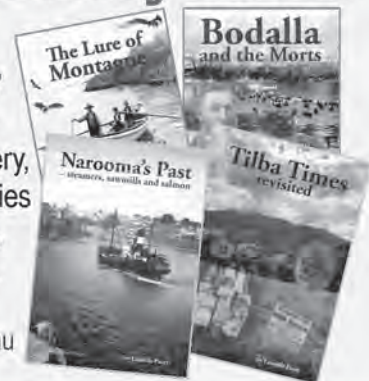
William was originally from Lancashire in England and Julia from County Kerry in Ireland. They were married in Nerrigundah in July 1862 at the Deep Creek Inn. William was then described as a 'gold miner'.

In the mid-1860s they moved to Cadgee (south-west of Bodalla on the Tuross River and downstream from Nerrigundah) where William purchased land which he farmed.

In their early days at Wandella, William was engaged in stripping and selling wattle bark, which was used in the tanning process. He later raised dairy cattle and pigs on the property before ultimately selling it to the O'Meara family and moving to Sydney. By that stage he had obviously become quite wealthy, purchasing around 30 houses in Glebe and Balmain.

'Moatfield' at Wandella is today called 'Windalone'. An old cream dairy on the property has recently been transformed into a farm-stay bed and breakfast. The proprietors, Gill and David Morgan, have gone to considerable trouble to research the history of the property and that of the Lonsdale family, and they are more than happy to share the details with their guests. As a further tribute to the four Lonsdale children who died as a result of the Scarlet Fever epidemic in 1876, they have also established a memorial garden to the children on the property.

Sources: Fiona Firth, Pat Raymond, Bev Holland, Wendy Simes, Gill Morgan; '*William and Sarah*' by Julia Banks in *The Journal of the Moruya and District Historical Society Inc*, June 1998; *Moruya Pioneer Directory*; Newspaper reports as indicated, accessed through the National Library of Australia's on-line search facility, *Trove*.

Your suggestions about gravestones in local cemeteries that have interesting stories attached to them will be VERY welcome – particularly if you can also provide any information relating to them. Send your suggestions to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com or call 0448 160 852.

Australian newspapers in 1875 and 1876 are full of Scarlet Fever 'treatments' from the 'experts'. Here are three of their recommended remedies:

DR. DAY'S SCARLET FEVER TREATMENT

Dr. Day gives notes of the treatment of fifty-one cases, some of them resident pupils in ladies' schools, and in all of them he records a 'good recovery', while in nearly all the infection was prevented from spreading to the other children, or persons in the house, the exceptions being cases where this treatment was not adopted at the outset. The treatment adopted by Dr. Day was simply having the whole surface of the body well rubbed over three times a day, with a mixture of ozonic ether [a solution of hydrogen peroxide and ethyl ether] and lard, in the proportion of one part of the ether to eight of lard ; this treatment being continued for about three weeks … In one or two cases where the throat was very sore he ordered, in addition, the use of a gargle of 2drm. of ozonic ether, mixed with 8oz. of water; but the use of the gargle was discontinued in a few days when the throat got well.

TREATMENT FOR SCARLET FEVER

Keep the head cool and the feet warm. Bathe the whole body in water of temperature of about 80 degrees at least four times a day. Wear the abdominal bandages constantly, and change them frequently; the number of times being regulated by the degree of fever. Sponge the body every time the bandages are changed. The bandages consist of a strip of stout calico or swan-down calico, about 8 in. or 9 in. wide, and long enough to go well round the body, wrung tightly out of cold or tepid water, and a similar strip of dry calico put over the wet one. Encourage the drinking of water. Keep the bowels free by the use of injections of tepid water if necessary. Give fresh air free access into the room. Should the throat be troublesome, apply very cold compress, frequently changed, and place ice in the mouth. If the throat is not very bad, the compress alone will be sufficient. The compress may be several folds of any soft cotton material, wrung out of very cold water. Diet to consist of oaten, wheaten, or maize meal, brown bread, vegetables, or fruit cooked or ripe. In drying the patient after the bath, have a sheet to wrap all round him, as it will prevent any chilly feeling, the result of which would be bad. When the patient is convalescent, give tepid baths morning and evening, till all the loose skin is removed. These directions were received by me from a practical hydropathic practitioner, and, in every case where I have seen them applied, the result has always been favourable.

TREATMENT OF SCARLET FEVER

[This] treatment I have found successful, more especially in the Protestant Orphan Asylum, of which I have been the honorary medical officer for nearly 23 years. Here I have had a large opportunity of employing the various modes of treatment recommended for most of the diseases incident to childhood. About eight years ago we were visited by scarlet fever in a severe form, and about 70 children in the asylum were attacked by it. There was, however, only one death. This year, up to the present time, 70 cases have occurred without a death, the largest number at one time being 19. The treatment pursued is to give an ipecacuanha [today, Ipecac] emetic directly the child shows the usual malaise preceding an attack of the disease. To sponge the body, night and morning, and to change the linen daily. I also administer the following medicine, for a child ten years old: chlorate of potash, 10 grains; carbonate of ammonia, Iron five to seven grains (according to the severity of the throat symptoms), Battley's *liq. cinchonae*, five drops in water every four hours. The throat to be frequently swabbed with strong Sulphuric acid, and a wet bandage applied round it. Strong beef tea, and port wine and water are given from the commencement, at frequent intervals. Occasionally, in some cases, a dose of calomel [mercury chloride] or grey powder [powder of mercury and chalk] with Dover's powder [Ipecac and opium] is given at bedtime. Tincture of iron is given to the convalescents, and an occasional dose of compound jalap powder [a laxative]. We have not had now or previously any cases of dropsy following the fever … Before peeling commences, the body is anointed with salad oil, but I believe a safer plan than this is to wash the body with a solution of sulphate of iron, which I believe destroys all risk of contagion … Disinfectants are (used) very freely … and all communication with the main building is absolutely forbidden … I feel convinced that the great secret of success … is to keep up the strength with proper food and stimulants almost from the very commencement.

[Penicillin is required to successfully treat Scarlet Fever – but that would not become available until seventy or eighty years later!]

HISTORIES

The Black-Allan Line
by John Trengove

Surveying the 'Black-Allan Line' (the straight border between Victoria and NSW from the source of the Murray River to the coast) in the early 1870s was a mammoth task. It's widely acknowledged that the surveyors involved did an exceptionally accurate job, considering the terrain they had to cross and the primitive equipment they had available at the time.

It's a shame, therefore, that its crossing of the Princes Highway south of Timbilica was messed up when road works were later undertaken in the area. According to this new e-book, 14 metres of roadway in that area, that is actually part of Victoria, effectively became part of NSW, and it's possible that NSW authorities are still maintaining that section of (Victorian) road!

The story of the Black-Allan Line was outlined in *Recollections 8* (available at bit.ly/Recollections8). There is also a file of information on it at bit.ly/begahh99. This book by historian John Trengove adds significantly to what has been written on the subject.

John's style of writing is engaging. His work is easy to read and, for a necessarily technical/serious subject, it is breezy and, at times, almost irreverent.

Of particular interest to me was the detail John provides about the boundary between NSW and Victoria that the Victorians originally wanted in 1840. It was not to be along the Murray River, but along the Murrumbidgee River and the Moruya River. By 1850 this suggested boundary line had been amended to leave the 'Monaroo' (which included the NSW South Coast as we know it today) as part of NSW.

This is the third book in a 'Links in the Chain' series about Australian surveying and surveyors. The first book examines the Victorian-South Australian border (which, like the Black-Allan Line area has some surprising 'kinks' in it), the second is about explorer and NSW Surveyor-General Sir Thomas Mitchell, and a fourth book – probably to be about ex-convict and prolific surveyor of the early Sydney area, James Meehan – is planned (John Meehan's story is fascinating, so I hope it is written).

'The Black-Allan Line' is available free from the author: johntwin2@bigpond.com.

Peter Lacey
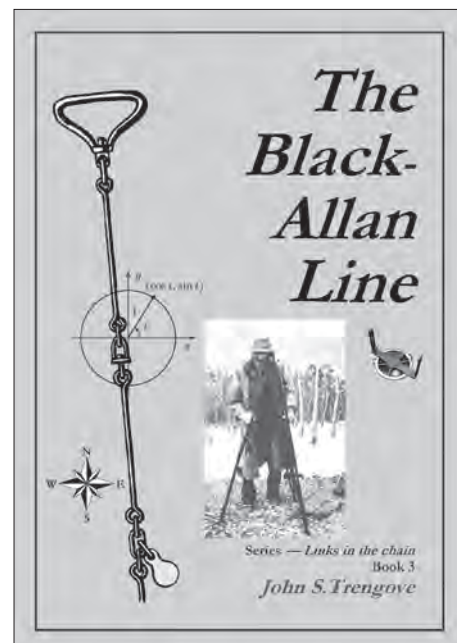
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