

South Coast History Society Inc.
Recollections
on-line
May 2020 Issue 20

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Cobargo, 1919. See page 3 for photograph of Cobargo a century later

What have they done to 'Recollections', Ma?

Times are challenging...and the result has been some quite unplanned, unforeseen changes to 'normality'.

'Recollections' issue 19 was printed and was about to be distributed when that became impossible. So, I now have (to my wife's annoyance!) 3,500 copies sitting in boxes on our lounge room floor. They'll be distributed some day, but who knows when! At least the great information they contain will not become 'stale'!

Those who have chosen to receive copies of 'Recollections'

by email have received electronic copies of issue 19...and we thank many of you who have helped us by alerting friends to this alternative method of receiving, and then being able to read, 'Recollections'.

It seems to us that there is little point in printing the next regular issue of 'Recollections' until after we are able to distribute issue 19 and we also have some guarantee that the next issue can also rapidly reach those who wish to read it in paper form. So...

**Inside
this
issue**

Fantastic Reads

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- We have suspended production of our normal 'Recollections'. The next scheduled issue (the June–July 2020 issue) is, therefore, unlikely to be produced.
- We know that many people really enjoy receiving and reading the information included in 'Recollections' and that many of them now have extra time that could be spent reading 'Recollections', so we will produce mini-issues **each month** (starting with this issue) and email copies to those on our email list. **You can greatly assist us by alerting your family and friends to this availability** – and anyone interested can email 'Send Recollections' to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com and we will add them to our 'Recollections' emailing list. To differentiate these mini-issues from normal issues, we will title them 'Recollections on-line'.
- We will print a STRICTLY LIMITED number of each issue of 'Recollections on-line', utilising a small print run (but significantly more expensive per copy), and post these to those who have paid for paper copies to be posted to them (that's \$20 per year) and, **on request**, to organisations (such as schools, libraries and museums) that have collected all back copies of 'Recollections'. Requests for the June issue of 'Recollections on-line' must be received by Monday May 18th.
- To cater to the thousands of others who normally receive paper copies of 'Recollections', we will attempt to reprint some of the articles that are to be included in

'Recollections on-line' in a future issue of 'Recollections', once production of 'Recollections' returns to normal. Meanwhile, we assure you that your continuing support of South Coast History Society's community-focused efforts is greatly appreciated. Please stay safe. Regards, **Peter Lacey** President, South Coast History Society Inc. 0448 160 852 southcoasthistory@yahoo.com

A reminder, while you are self-isolating at home, that all past issues of 'Recollections' are viewable on the internet at www.bit.ly/RecollectionsX where X is the issue number, except for issue 3 which is 3- and issue 10 which is 10- And extensive files of information on 101 interesting objects of historic or heritage significance in the Bega Shire are also available – the place to start is www.bit.ly/101objectsbooklet

Our 'Back to the Swinging 1960s' music and history presentations have, regrettably, been re-scheduled – tentatively to Wednesday 7th October at Club Sapphire in Merimbula, Thursday 8th October at the Bega Commemorative Civic Centre, and Thursday 15th October at the Bermagui Country Club. We'll confirm dates and times and advise of booking arrangements in 'Recollections' closer to the time.

Can We Call It 'Home'?

The story of the Wallaga Lake/Gulaga Aboriginal community

The February/March issue of 'Recollections' (available at bit.ly/Recollections18) included the story of Henry Jefferson Bate and his efforts to assist local Aboriginal communities. There is, of course, a whole lot more to be told of the history of local Indigenous-Non Indigenous relationships, much of it associated with Aboriginal dispossession of their traditional lands.

This is a little more of that story of the Wallaga Lake/Gulaga Aboriginal community.

THE MEANING OF LAND TO ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Non-Indigenous people and land-owners usually consider land as something they own, a commodity to be bought

and sold, an asset to make profit from, something to earn a living from, or they simply view it as 'home'. They 'develop' land, as if it was unfinished or raw.

To Aboriginal people, their relationship with land is quite different and much deeper.

Aboriginal people have a profound spiritual connection to land – but land, or 'country', is much more than just 'place'. Every rock, tree, river, hill, animal, human is 'country' – because all were formed of the same substance by their Ancestors (who still live on land, in the water and the sky). So, country 'owns' Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people 'own' (in the broadest possible sense of the word, as well as in broad geographic terms) country. And every aspect of

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Cobargo, New Year's Eve 2019

their life is connected to it; in effect, land is their mother, and it's their culture, their law and their spirituality.

Because of this belief, Aboriginals feel they have a basic responsibility to care for it.

They also do not look on themselves as custodians or caretakers (and, quite clearly, did not see themselves as custodians or caretakers in-waiting for someone else to come and take the land away!). They believe they are the owners of the land...and the occupiers...and the custodians...and the caretakers...and that land also defines their identity and provides each of them with their sense of belonging.

So, when the Europeans arrived, with their very different view of land usage and land ownership, local Aboriginals were confronted with cataclysmic change.

THE HISTORY OF BIAMANGA AND GULAGA ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Aboriginal association with the Bermagui-Bega area dates back 20,000 years, perhaps even longer.

South Coast Aboriginals' first significant contact with Europeans was with offshore whalers, sealers and with sailors travelling between Sydney and Van Diemen's Land and Sydney Town in the late 1700s. In December 1797 George Bass sailed up the Bega River to Jellat Jellat where he encountered friendly and hospitable natives who supplied him with fish and fresh water.

From around 1826, the first pastoral stations in the area were established – the settlers, ironically, being guided down from the Monaro plateau by Aboriginals!

At this time there were a number distinct Aboriginal 'clans' on the NSW South Coast (today, six separate Aboriginal Land Councils, each representing a different geographically-based group of Aboriginals operate between the Victorian border and Batemans Bay). Interaction (including some intermarriage) between these and Aboriginal groups in surrounding areas (e.g. living on the Monaro) is well documented by local settlers and visitors to the area...as was considerable violent conflict between these same Aboriginal groups, which was to last into the 1850s.

Very rapidly, during 1820s and 1830s, much of the rich land around Mumbulla and Guluga Mountains was taken from the Aboriginals by European settlers.

Aboriginals then became employees on pastoral properties and in the whaling industry at Twofold Bay, where Aboriginals provided most of the labour required.

For local history lovers

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By the 1840s, considerable numbers of Aboriginal men were working in the whaling industry during winter and early spring and were wattle barking or working on pastoral properties in late spring and early summer, herding cattle and sheep, keeping birds and animals from crops, and helping with harvesting and shearing. Aboriginal women were engaged as 'farm servants'.

From the 1840s, European settlement (and its accompanying dispossession of Aboriginal land) on the Southern Highlands and the Murray River areas meant that (in 1846, for example) *'the Murray blacks lately killed two Braidwood blacks, and drove the whole of them down to the sea coast, where they remain.'* This ultimately led, in 1872, to Mondalie (alias Jack Bond) and his son Alick making an official request that an Aboriginal reserve be gazetted in the Braidwood area: *'We have come to you to intercede for us in getting the government to do something for us. Araluen Billy, our king, is old and cannot live long; my wife Kitty*

and self are old, too. I have assisted the police for many years [Aboriginals were often employed as trackers in the area], and we want to get some land which we can call our own in reality, where we can settle down and the old people can call their home. Everyone objects to our hunting on his land, and we think the blacks are entitled to live in their own country.' (Their suggestion was rejected because it was considered the property they favoured was too close for safety to the property where Tommy Clarke, the bushrangers' father, lived. So Mondalie moved down to Moruya.)

From around this time there was pressure in New South Wales to establish and expand an Aboriginal reserve system to (as an 1882 report suggested) *'enable them to form homesteads, to cultivate grain, vegetables, fruit, etc, for their own support and comfort'*. (Between 1885 and 1894, the Aborigines Protection Board recommended that 85 reserves be established in NSW for the use of Aboriginals.)

In 1891 the Wallaga Lake Reserve (on the foothills of



Wedding at Wallaga Lake Reserve c 1900. Image: National Library of Australia, PIC TT855/nla.obj-140339887



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Gulaga Mountain, near Tilba) was established. As one researcher noted: *'It was run by a state appointed manager instead of missionaries. God may not have been in control, but its residents [91 of them, of whom 26 were full-blood Aboriginals] were fenced in' to an area of just 330 acres (and this was a large Aboriginal reserve compared to many others).*

In 1890 (three years after a Wallaga Lake Aboriginal School was established) 22 local Aboriginal children were attending school and it appears about 27 were not. It seems life on the Reserve in those early years was miserable: *Aboriginals who had moved to Wallaga from mission stations 'impressed those at Wallaga Lake that they would not get any return for their labour. This bred a spirit of dissatisfaction that cannot be dispelled...the aborigines will not work for shares of prospective profits; they are also too nomadic to stay and share such. The able bodied men are really the worst class to deal with. They will even desert a good paying employment after they have earned a little money, return to the settlement and gamble, then awaiting another job, will loiter about the place and eat the rations of others, old and young. Most of them can obtain employment at farm work...but no employer is sure of their services an hour together, for they will even leave off in the middle of haymaking, which a number of them take by contract...Improper use is made of the boats supplied by the Board. Europeans engage the aborigines to convey produce, heavy chests, timber, and such like in them, across the lake. They all know it is destruction to the boats, and the trifle they give for the conveyance barely pays wages*

for the work...If disease or rank immorality crops up, it is generally imported from the Mission at Lake Tyres, [near Lakes Entrance] Victoria...Now and then there are signs of drink, but it is chiefly when the natives have just arrived from the nearest townships. Gambling is still rampant...they will neglect employment, cooking, the sick, all for the cards; yet the Superintendent is powerless to stop it. Another evil is the camp dog nuisance. Not a man, woman or child is without at least one of these mongrels of the most mangy description. They eat up whatever scrap of food is left, drink out of the vessels the family drink from, and sleep on the same blankets.'

The population in the Wallaga Lake Reserve varied considerably (between 1891 and 1904 it fluctuated from 86 to 177) and, during the times when the Wallaga Lake settlement was attracting people to the area, numerous immigrants with no connectedness to Wallaga Lake were arriving from quite distant places including Jervis Bay, the Shoalhaven, Yass, Cootamundra, Gundagai and Gippsland.

So, right from the time it was established, whatever tribal homogeneity may have originally existed at the Wallaga Lake settlement was under severe threat.

A ban on speaking Aboriginal languages within the Station and the discouragement of all Aboriginal traditional culture or practices simply exacerbated the situation. (The death of local elder Merriman (Umbarra) in the 1850s had previously led to a substantial loss of local interest in Aboriginal culture, and this had certainly not helped slow the loss of 'Aboriginality' in the local Aboriginal community in the years before the Wallaga Lake Station was established.)

FEEDBACK

'The Australian Landscape'

It's heartening when we receive feedback indicating some people are reading 'Recollections', so thank you Paul for alerting us to a 44-page critique of the 20-page booklet 'The Australian Landscape' by Ryan et al (reviewed in the last issue of 'Recollections') that appeared in 1997 in Volume 5(2) the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney's journal 'Cunninghamia' (available via the internet).

The authors of this article, J.S. Benson and P.A. Redpath, question Ryan et al's main conclusion that *'to Aborigines fire was seen as necessary to clean up the country. They regarded unburnt forest or grassland as being neglected. Apparently for most, if not all groups, every part of grassland, savanna and eucalypt woodland of their territory would be burnt regularly, annually, or at least once every three or four years. It was seen as doing duty by their land.'* They cite a substantial amount of scientific evidence that does not support this conclusion and argue that many of the historical quotes included in 'The Australian Landscape' are selective, have been taken out of context, or have been misinterpreted.

They concede that Aboriginal fire-stick farming/cultural burning *may* have been practiced in open grassy woodland areas (including on the NSW South Coast) but suggest that there is little compelling evidence it was used in other landscapes with different types of vegetation or that it was a practice employed by Aboriginals widely or regularly throughout Australia. **R**

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Guboo Ted Thomas at Land Title Day for Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Community, 1985 Image: National Library of Australia, nla.obj-140407612-1

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Over the decades that followed, there are numerous reports of the continuing ever-moving nature of Wallaga Lake settlement's population: able bodied men of mixed descent became unwelcome in the community (this actually reflected government policy, which followed the passing of the 1909 Aborigines Protection Act which required the Station Manager to '*where possible restrain them from leaving the Station, frequenting public houses or otherwise spending their earnings*'); some families adopted a seasonal habit of moving to Twofold Bay between June-July and October-November to work in the whaling industry and then spending the off-season at Wallaga; others were in the habit of moving regularly between Eden, Wallaga Lake and Turlinjah (located between Bodalla and Moruya); opportunists 'played the system', moving to whichever Government reserve or station at any time offered the best rations and other resources, or had the least oppressive management, or provided the most stimulating employment opportunities...or simply was considered to offer the best entertainment or partners. As a result, many of the Government-assigned houses on the Wallaga Lake station were often left uninhabited for lengthy periods.

In 1913, Aboriginal people from Batemans Bay were moved to the station, creating a strain on existing accommodation and the settlement's water supply. And in the 1960s, the station was even used to re-house widows, deserted wives and other women from as far away as Moree, Coonabarabran and Taree!

The Second World War had the effect of raising the level of Aboriginal employment in NSW from 64% to 96.2% and

resulted in many Aboriginal stations becoming unstaffed reserves or being closed. In the 1960s Aboriginal children from station schools were gradually integrated into the public school system and station schools were closed (Wallaga Lake school was closed in 1964). Simultaneously station managers became welfare workers with wider district responsibilities (Wallaga Lake's station manager's position ceased to exist in 1969, and the Aboriginal residents then ran the station themselves through a committee).


In 1967 Aboriginal people received Australian citizenship. This subsequently led to the emergence of a lands rights movement.

Guboo 'Ted' Thomas, who had been born at and grew up on Wallaga Lake Station, and was by this time a Yuin elder, began campaigning for Aboriginal land rights in the early 1970s. In June 1978 he wrote to then NSW Premier, Neville Wran, pointing out that *'when white people first came to Australia, they took all the land, with dreadful consequences for our people... (and,) even though there was plenty of land for everyone, they took the lot.'* This was reflected locally: all of the land on which generations of Aboriginal people had lived had been taken from them, leaving them only the few acres of the Wallaga Lake Reserve, for which they did not even have title. The result, he suggested, was that *'we must always live in fear and insecurity, worrying if even the little we have will be taken away from us.'*

Guboo 'Ted' illustrated his argument by highlighting a section of land that had once been a part of the Wallaga Lake Reserve (the area that is now Akolele) which, in 1949,

'was taken away from us and given to white people for their holiday homes. This bit of land was very important to us because it contains one of our sacred burial grounds.'

His call for the local Aboriginal community to be given title to the Wallaga Lake Reserve excluded this area, (ironically!) *'as we do not wish to disturb these people'*, but he expressed concern that, with the white population increasing, Aboriginals could easily lose even more of their land in the future. His claim, therefore, asked that the title deeds to the remaining area of the reserve, as well as nearby Merriman Island and adjacent Crown Lands be handed over to the Yuin people in perpetuity.

His efforts succeeded. Title to the land was transferred to the Merrimans Local Aboriginal Council in 1984, with the Wallaga Lake community effectively becoming the first aboriginal community in New South Wales to receive title deeds to a small portion of their traditional lands. 

Sources: 'Biamanga and Gulaga: Aboriginal Cultural Association with Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks', Brian Egloff, Nicholas Peterson and Sue Weston; creativespitits.info; 'Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Station', State Records Authority of New South Wales; 'We and the Land are One', Bill Brown, ABC South East NSW; 'A Tale of Three Missions', Amanda Midlam.

(A somewhat bleak, more recent account of the Wallaga Lake Aboriginal community titled 'The Dispossessed' by 'white-fella' Bronwyn Adcock was published in the Griffith Review 32 in 2011. It is available at <https://www.griffithreview.com/articles/the-dispossessed/>)



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4 Husbands, 5 Pubs

When Eliza Hull died in February 1920, she asked that the body of her first husband be moved from the old Bega Cemetery (now the site of Bega High School and the Bega Police Station) and be reburied next to her in the new (current) Bega Cemetery. She also requested that a suitably impressive monument be erected above their graves.



So a polished granite obelisk was erected, its front side reading 'In Loving Memory of Eliza Hull. Died 16th February 1920. Age 70 years.' Another inscription on the adjacent south panel reads 'In Loving Memory of Alfred Hopkinson. Died 1st March 1885. Aged 50 years.' This monument is illustrated above.

Eliza was a well-known publican in Bega, Candelo and Wolumla. Briefly, this is her interesting life-history:

Eliza was born in Yorkshire in 1845 and educated at a local Quaker Friends School. This probably provided her with the background necessary to subsequently become a successful businesswomen.

In 1868 she married Alfred Hopkinson, a coal miner.

In 1881 Alfred and his brother, Joseph, migrated to

Australia and moved to the goldfields at Sunny Corner near Bathurst.

A year later Eliza joined Alfred in Sunny Corner. The couple ran a boarding house there.

In the late 1880s they, along with Joseph's two young daughters (their mother had died and Joseph had moved to Queensland), moved to Wolumla. They acquired the licence to the Wolumla Hotel (situated on the site of the current Wolumla Railway Junction Hotel). Their two nieces helped Eliza and Alfred manage the hotel.

In 1894 the family moved to Bega and acquired the Occidental Hotel (on the site of the present Grand Hotel). However, Alfred died eight months later. Eliza continued to run the hotel for another year until the Licencing Board decided there were too many hotels in Bega and revoked the licence. The business continued as the Temperance Hotel, serving tea and accommodating boarders.

Three months after Alfred's death, Eliza married James Wright Goward, a widower from Wolumla who had become the owner of the Occidental Hotel. They subsequently sold this hotel and bought the Club Hotel on the north-western corner of Carp and Church Streets.

In January 1900, James died and in 1902 Eliza sold the Club Hotel before 'retiring'. However, she soon returned to the hotel business by purchasing the Metropolitan



James Goward's grave in the Wolumla Cemetery.



Hotel in Bega (situated at what is now the Carp St exit to the Coles carpark).

Eliza remarried in 1907, wedding Edward Hamilton Wilson who had been married twice and was father to 12 children. At that time Eliza was aged 61, but claimed on wedding documents that she was 52!

Edward died in 1915. Two years later Eliza married for the fourth time – on this occasion stating that she was 46 years old!! Her husband, who was aged 43, was Thomas Hull. Together they purchased the Candelo Hotel.

Eliza died of uterine cancer in the Metropolitan Hotel in February 1920. Thomas inherited both the Metropolitan and Candelo Hotels, married Betsy Hyde who was the daughter of Eliza’s second husband James Goward, but died from ‘alcoholism’ just 4 years later. He is buried alongside Betsy and James Goward in the Wolumla Cemetery. **R**

Sources: ‘They Made This Valley Home’ by Sandra Florance and Diane Power; Much appreciated assistance from Pat Raymond of Pambula

We thank Sandra Florance for suggesting we include details of this memorial in ‘Recollections’. Your suggestions about other gravestones in local cemeteries that have interesting stories attached to them will be VERY welcome. Send your suggestions to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com or phone 0448 160 852

Left: Thomas and Betsy Hull’s grave in Wolumla Cemetery

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HISTORIES

Ellis Rowan: A life in pictures

by Christine Morton-Evans

National Library of Australia Publishing is issuing some very impressive books which often draw on resources in the National Library of Australia's extensive collections. A number of these publications have been reviewed in past issues of *'Recollections'* including Peter Spearritt's *'Where History Happened'* (see review at bit.ly/Recollections10-), Peter Monteith's *'Captured Lives'* (also at bit.ly/Recollections10-), Tim Fischer's *'Steam Australia'* (bit.ly/Recollections11) and Deborah Burrows' *'Nurses of Australia'* (bit.ly/Recollections12).

'Ellis Rowan: A Life in Pictures' is a recent addition to NLA Publishing's titles and, if this is possible, it is an even more impressive production than NLA Publishing's impressive previous titles.

Basically, this is a biography of Australian flora and fauna artist, Ellis Rowan, and a gallery of some of her thousands of paintings. Her life story is unusual and interesting. It has been well-written and is extremely easy to read. And the reproductions of her paintings are superb.

This is a book that, I am sure, many will enjoy reading. But, I'd suggest, it's also an ideal and inexpensive gift book – particularly when gifted to a female, to anyone interested in Australian flora, to anyone with an interest in Australian art, or to anyone who enjoys reading biographies.

Ellis Rowan (1848–1922) challenged herself to systematically produce paintings of all Australian wildflowers after a meeting with visiting English botanical artist Marianne North who was on a mission to paint a collection of the entire world's wildflowers. Rowan, of course, failed to achieve her aim, but her legacy is well over 1,000 significant works, 919 of which are now in the National Library's collection (*'these can be found today in all their pristine glory in the National Library of Australia in Canberra, lying in long drawers, covered in tissue paper. One of the Australian people's most prized assets'* !!), 125 of which are in the Queensland Museum's collection, and three of which were purchased by Queen Victoria.

She travelled extensively to seek out and then create watercolour records of Australian, New Zealand and New Guinea wildflowers, all of the time immaculately attired in typical Victorian female dress: long skirt, high-button boots and wide-brimmed hat.

She was obviously a talented artist, but her 'talents' were obviously not always appreciated by the art establishment at the time:

'The panel of 15 internationally respected art connoisseurs who had been brought together to judge the artworks [entered in the 1888 Centennial International Exhibition in Melbourne]

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The collage consists of three photographs. The top-left image shows a modern street scene with a Coles supermarket in the background and a blue building in the foreground. The top-right image shows the exterior of the Stewart and D'Arcy Optometrists building, a white structure with blue accents and a sign that reads 'STEWART and D'ARCY OPTOMETRISTS'. The bottom image is a historical black and white photograph of a street scene, featuring a large building with a sign that reads 'METROPOLITAN HOTEL' and 'CHARLES WYNNE'.

were so impressed with Ellis' work that they presented her with the First Order of Merit and the gold medal for her pictures in the Victorian Court, including Chrysanthemums, which they considered to be the best painting in the entire show.

When it came to handing out the silver medals, she topped the list with her painting Marguerites. Ellis had also been awarded a First Order of Merit for her collection of Queensland flora and a further First Order of Merit for the paintings of flowers exhibited in the New Zealand Court – a quite extraordinary accolade...

A storm of protest broke out in the male art establishment. They complained bitterly and vociferously about Ellis' medals...members of the old guard and new guard of the Victorian Artists' Society were finally united in a common cause. For von Guerard, Ashton, Buvelot, John Mather, Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton and the like, the idea of being beaten to a gold medal by a mere flower painter' was just too much to bear, so they decided to concoct a letter of dissent to the judges which, among other things, they claimed the decision was an insult to them, and the visiting foreign artists...the judges refused to alter their decision, considering the Victorian Artists' Society's attempts to injure Ellis Rowan's reputation as thoroughly unmanly.'

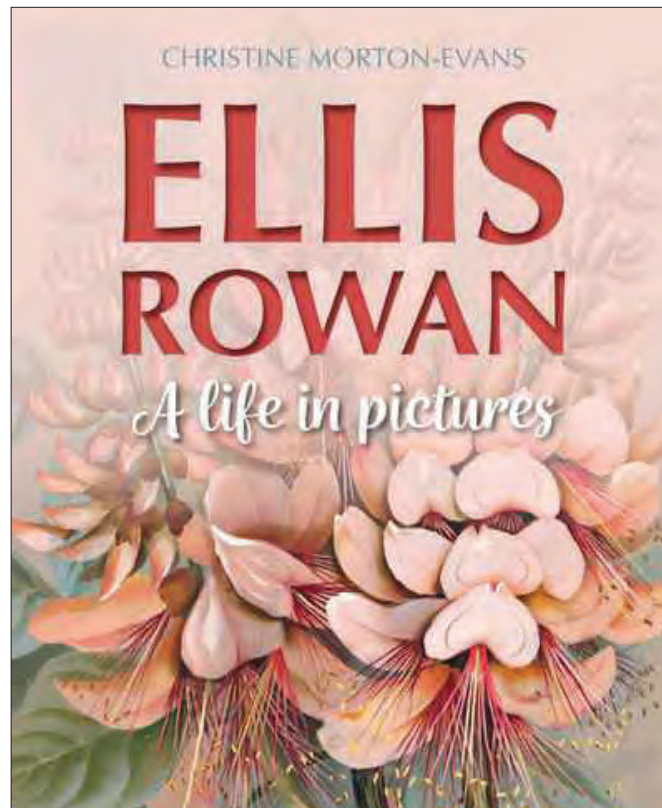
Later Rowan also became well-known in Australia (partly through self-promoting newspaper contributions submitted by 'our travelling reporter') as an 'intrepid lady explorer'.

She was not above using this reputation and feminine wile to help in her quest to expand her portfolio:

'Ellis slowly made her way south to Brisbane. During the journey back, she spotted from out of the train window a large cluster of yellow banksia, of a type unknown to her, growing by the side of the track. When the train stopped at the next station, she changed her plans and got off, asking the stationmaster if he would send someone to gather them for her, and offering to pay any costs involved... (but) nothing turned up. Ellis began asking some of the locals if they could help and each one said that they would...But still no plants arrived. Learning that the state premier, Digby Denham, was on a tour of the area, in desperation she decided to accost him and enlist his help...it must have been something of a surprise to be suddenly confronted by this small but determined woman. Like most men, the Premier quickly succumbed to her charms and promised to do what he could for her. Ellis returned to Brisbane, and within days a huge clump of the plant arrived in the foyer of her hotel, complete with roots and a vast quantity of soil.


The hotel management, as might be expected, was not greatly amused...the very next day another huge clump was delivered, followed by a third and then a fourth. The locals, in their own good time, had all come good on their promises...'

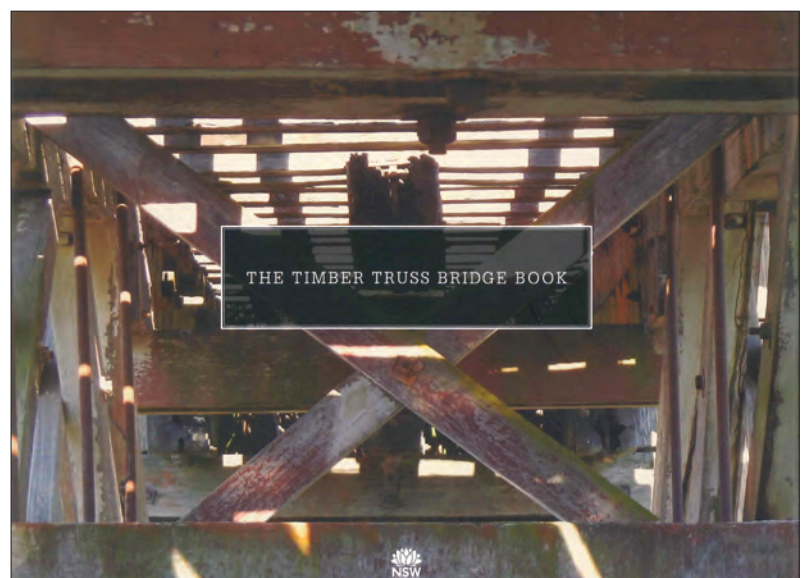
This superb book is available from around \$27.50. 



The Timber Truss Bridge Book

Yippee! 'The Timber Truss Bridge Book', reviewed in the February issue of 'Recollections' (available on-line at bit.ly/Recollections18), has finally been issued in a limited hard-copy print run. And it's a very much more impressive production than I had imagined it might be – a grand 31cm x 25.5cm (12¼" x 10¼"), lavishly illustrated, coffee table-style production – and, in retrospect, my original review of the book really does not do it justice.

It's available for an unbelievably low \$40, post-free, from the Library Shop at the State Library of NSW (<https://shop.sl.nsw.gov.au>). So, grab a copy while it's still available! 



Tomakin: The Undiscovered History

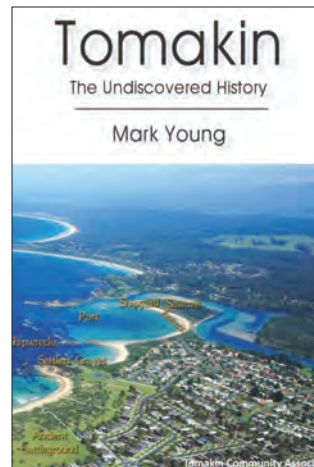
by Mark Young

In 2016 the Tomakin Community Association published 'Tomakin: The Undiscovered History' in an attempt to outline the development and history of Tomakin that had 'been largely sidelined other than in brief mentions across other publications'. The entire print run sold out, so a second print run was organized. This also sold out.

In a highly commendable initiative, the Tomakin Community Association has responded to continued interest in this book by digitising it and now making it available FREE on the internet. It's at www.bit.ly/38D4y6G (please note this is a case sensitive address).

This is quite a comprehensive history but it's enjoyable to read, as an initial explanation of the place name illustrates:

'Unofficial and tongue in cheek names, largely bestowed upon it by Canberra visitors have included "Dogpatch" after the Li'l Abner American comic strip series by Al Capp – In Capp's own words, Dogpatch was "an average stone-age community nestled in a bleak valley, between two cheap and uninteresting hills somewhere". The inhabitants were mostly lazy hillbillies, who usually wanted nothing to do with progress. It was also referred to as "Flypatch"; "the Village that Time Forgot" and "Sleepy old Tomakin". These descriptions belie the fact that Tomakin has a very long and important history, playing a major role both pre settlement and in the development and growth of the Eurobodalla, punching way above its weight compared to many of the better known settlements.' **R**



Reviews by Peter Lacey



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