The
South Coast's
FREE History
Magazine

More fascinating South Coast history!

Bemboka Race Course, 1914. For more photographs from Bemboka's past, see pages 10 and 11.

The First Word

We need your help – because the more we discover about the history of the NSW South Coast, the more we realise how little we really know about it. And we're not alone!

Some absolutely amazing local history stories have been told by speakers at the two seminars we have organised this year and at the launch functions for the past couple of issues of *Recollections*, (I, and the audience, particularly liked the story that Robert Whiter told at the launch of the October edition of *Recollections* – which we've included on page 20 of this issue) but these represent but a tiny fraction of the total number that are available…and they deserve to be shared more widely. Hopefully, over time, *Recollections* and the South Coast History Society's website will facilitate this.

We are also discovering some exceptionally good websites focusing on, or incidentally including, information about the history of the South Coast. Our aim is to compile a list of these and share that list on our website and perhaps in *Recollections* (the suggestion has been made that we initiate a regular website review, in the same way that we are currently reviewing history books). So please, email us details of any or all South Coast history-related websites you have discovered (to southcoasthistory@yahoo.com) so we can start to compile (and share) that list.

Similarly, we'd like to compile a list of sources of South Coast-related photographs. Perhaps the question we are asked most frequently is 'where can I find an old photograph of …?' and having a more comprehensive list of possible sources will, at least, be one step in the right direction. We're aware that most local museums hold libraries of photographs, but in some cases these are still to be catalogued and, in almost every case, any current catalogue is not readily and easily accessible (for example, on their websites) to the general public. This is a very basic service we'd like to see every museum introduce soon. So, again, please email us details about where we can find historic South Coast photographs…and, whenever possible, encourage those who have collections of photographs to make a catalogue of them publicly accessible.

Peter Lacey

Lest We Forget

One hundred years ago, Australians were consumed with grief. Their young men were being killed, or had been killed, in huge numbers on the World War I battlefields around Gallipoli and the Western Front.

Eventually over 60,000 Australians were to lose their lives – and three or four times that number were to be injured.

The grief was combined with anger – at the losses themselves, at government policy not to repatriate the bodies of those who had died to Australia where a family burial could then be arranged, and because it was simply logistically impossible for family members to travel to Turkey, Belgium or France to mourn at the graves of loved ones.

But that grief, that anger was tempered by immense pride, intense patriotism – those men had gone off to fight for God, for Country, for Empire – and communities were immensely proud they had volunteered to do so.

The most visible legacy of World War I today are the war memorials dotted all around the country. Almost every country town has one, as do many suburbs in the cities. And every one of these war memorials has a story to tell – or a number of stories.

By the time Australia suffered its first casualties in the Great War in 1915 there was nothing new about erecting war memorials. War Memorials had been around for three or four thousand years. And in Australia, war memorials had already been erected to honour those who fought in the Sedan and Boer Wars.

Bega has a Boer War memorial in the park next to the swimming pool, which was unveiled in 1905 (with 1,500 people in attendance).

Local pride and patriotism during World War I rapidly led to the compilation of Rolls of Honor – not just acknowledging those who were killed, but honouring those who chose to join the armed services. And this is something almost unique to Australia because in Britain and New Zealand, as examples, World War I memorials typically only record the names of those who lost their lives. (The World War I Memorial in Kameruka Estate, near Candelo, illustrates this. Kameruka Estate was very much an 'English village' at the time, and the memorial there, located just

The Waler Memorial at Tamworth, NSW.

down from the Church, records only the names of Estate workers (and their English bosses) who were killed in World War I.)

Rolls of Honor sprang up everywhere – in local newspapers, in schools, in Churches, on public buildings. They were not always deemed to be appropriate. The Roll of Honor produced by the Candelo Methodist Church in late September 1916 was greeted by this observation in the town's local newspaper, the *Southern Record and Advertiser*: '*The local Methodist Church was filled at last Sunday night's service when a Roll of Honor was unveiled as a tribute to the men who have enlisted from the Methodist churches of the circuit, with the addition of others in whom the local Church had special interest…It was a matter for regret that the memorial on view did not represent the wishes of the generous donor, Mrs. Rogers, nor the plans of the Church officers. Those to whom the work was entrusted failed to accomplish what was intended, and instead of a substantial memorial worthy of a permanent place in the Church, and a tribute to the men whose names it would perpetuate, a flimsy bit of lithographic work in a frame was opened up, to the keen disappointment of everybody.*' (This Roll of Honor is now in the Bega Pioneers' Museum's collection.)

As World War I progressed, thoughts turned to more permanent, more appropriate memorials and – perhaps predictably – the government stepped in by banning the erection of war memorials until the end of the War.

Whilst this might have been a practical move, in some ways it was quite insensitive. Those who had lost a husband or son needed, and were looking for, somewhere physical to grieve having been denied the usual grave site, and deferral of the erection of permanent memorials in Australia simply prolonged or added to the grief felt by many families.

And then, after the War, when communities finally expected they would be able to erect an appropriate memorial, the government again stepped in with a whole slew of regulations and restrictions. For example, the NSW Government set up a War Memorials Advisory Board which suggested only seven types of memorials should be erected:

1. An Arch over a public place;
2. A Gateway to a public park;
3. A Central Road Garden, with a pillar or other feature on which to record the names of soldiers;
4. A Memorial Avenue, with a tree for each soldier from the district;
5. An Obelisk in stone;
6. A Column in stone;
7. A Fountain.

(This presented a very limited range of options. For example, it excluded the erection of statues and erection of practical memorial halls or schools. Ironically, the schoolchildren of Victoria were simultaneously raising money to rebuild the destroyed primary school in the French town of Villers-Bretonneux, which still has a sign in every classroom reading 'Do Not Forget Australia.')

The War Memorials Advisory Board was given statutory

The Braidwood District Soldiers Memorial.

authority under the Local Government Act to approve the design and site of monuments erected in any public place.

The residents of Bermagui obtained pledges to erect a memorial, but the War Memorials Advisory Board deemed that the amount was four times more than they (the Board) considered appropriate should be spent on the town's memorial.

The Board's determination that its seven alternatives, if 'well designed, will be a better memorial than a poorly-executed, expressionless statue,' effectively discouraged the erections of statues – and particularly so any that may have incorporated mass-produced representations of servicemen. So in NSW there are only about half the number of war memorial statues that there are in Victoria, where there was not the equivalent of a War Memorials Advisory Board. The result is that many of NSW's local War Memorials are little more than an unartistic, architecturally unimaginative plaque attached to a stone or brick base.[1]

One exception to the norm – which, ironically, today is often used by filmmakers to 'typify' Australian war memorials in rural towns – is the life-size statue of a soldier standing
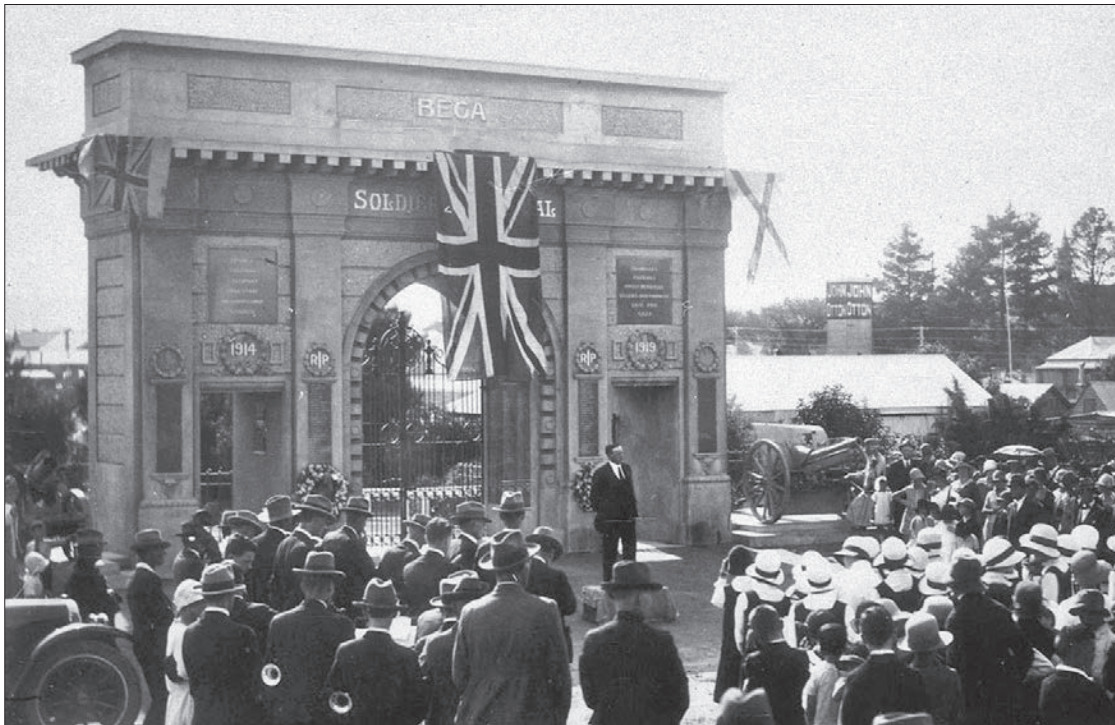
at ease on an intersection of the main highway through Braidwood. It was built, despite the official warnings about 'poorly designed statues' and was designed by an Italian artist. When unveiled on 5th June 1922, the *Queanbeyan-Canberra Advocate* correspondent heaped praise upon it: '*It is unquestionably a very fine piece of sculptural art and harmonises perfectly.*' Local political identities attended the ceremony and delivered addresses, quite happily ignoring the dictate from the War Memorial Advisory Committee that commemorative statues not be erected.

It must be noted that by the time legislation was passed

the Menin Gate.

One entirely appropriate, touching aspect about this particular war memorial, however, was that it was formally unveiled by the widows of the local men who lost their lives in World War I.

In addition to the War Memorial Advisory Committee there was another government body, a War Trophies Commission, that allocated 'war trophies' (things like captured German guns) for display as part of, or alongside, Australian war memorials. The Bega Memorial is flanked by two of these trophies.

In the case of Bermagui – which had been denied permission to build its memorial – it was allocated one light and one heavy machine gun, both captured by the 2nd Battalion, which were dispatched by steamer from Melbourne in October 1920 but then simply disappeared – so have never been a feature of that town's memorial (which, in any case, was not erected until 1974!)

The Opening of the Bega Soldiers Memorial in 1920. Photograph: State Library of NSW File FL1717672.

Not every town immediately erected a war memorial. The War and associated topics such as conscription was quite a divisive subject in Moruya, for example, during the First World War years, and – despite some efforts in Moruya to have a memorial erected – it didn't happen. The town seemingly was quite war weary and ultimately disinterest prevailed when efforts were made to erect a permanent memorial to those who had enlisted and to those who lost their lives.

In some towns there was considerable opposition to erecting a memorial, the argument usually being that money that was to be spent on a public memorial could be better directed elsewhere. The poem by 'Hellfire Jack,' reprinted in the August edition of *Recollections*, suggesting '*They'll rect a blinking monument – will that help the sojers' need? Will he admire ther monument when he's starving fer a feed?,*' objecting to the building of the substantial war memorial on Goulburn's Rocky Hill, is but one example of such opposition.

The original intent of war memorials, to honour those who served, was often overtaken by rivalry between towns – and even rivalry between committees that were responsible for the erection of these war memorials – as each strove to

in late 1919 to establish this War Memorial Advisory Committee, many NSW towns had already started erecting their war memorials (the Central Tilba memorial being one of these which, because it was an 'obelisk in stone,' would have complied with the War Memorials Advisory Board's stipulations; it was unveiled on 12th December 1919), and others quite simply went ahead with their plans without consulting the Committee…and, whatever the Committee's rules and regulations may have been, there are some quite imaginative, very elaborate war memorials scattered around the state.

Bega has one of these impressive war memorials. It conformed to the Committee's guidelines in two respects in that it was 'an arch over a public place' and a 'gateway to a public park.' It has often been suggested it was modelled on the Menin Gate memorial in Belgium – and, indeed the State Government Register of War Memorials in NSW indicates 'the (Bega) gates are a replication of the Belgium Menin Gates' (sic – there is only one Menin Gate!) – but this is incorrect, because the Bega Memorial Gate was actually erected some years before the Menin Gate and, if anything, its design is based on the Arch of Constantine in Rome, not

outdo the other with a bigger, better, more expensive, or more elaborate monument. At the opening of the Bega War

The Sphinx at Turramurra.

Memorial, the mayor of Bega proudly described it as '*the finest of its kind in the State,*' before gratuitously adding that '*it is also indirectly a memorial to the committee which made it possible and to the man who built it.*'

Because war memorials were erected by local volunteer committees, the names they display (and even the spelling of some names, and decisions on whether to include the rank of those servicemen whose names are included) varies considerably from town to town. And, with the passing of time, it is now not always easy identifying the individuals whose names were recorded on local memorials – although considerable efforts have been made to do so recently, with interest in local war memorials having been rekindled by centenary of First World War commemorations.

Serviceman and women for World War II and subsequent conflicts have often been remembered by the simple expedient of adding additional plaques to World War I memorials…or local RSL Sub-branches (often aided by funding from the Australian Department of Veterans Affairs) have, over the years, decided to erect new war memorials in various locations throughout the country. Memorials in Narooma (adjacent to the Narooma Club) and Merimbula (on the foreshore, just up from the Visitors Centre) are example of these.

Dotted around the country are some particularly interesting memorials. For example, in Tamworth the Waler Memorial commemorates Australian Troopers and their great horses, with the sculpture depicting an Australian Trooper saying farewell to his Waler. (Of the 121,000 Australian horses sent overseas in World War I only one returned, a gelding Sandy belonging to Major General Sir

William Bridges who was killed at Gallipoli. The remaining horses were either killed in action, sold to other armies, or shot by a Trooper's mate, rather than be abandoned.)

In Canberra, an Aboriginal Servicemen's Memorial Plaque is situated about 10 minutes' walk from the Australian War Memorial – quite insignificant in size and stature compared to the Australian War Memorial! (Over 1,000 indigenous Australians served in the Australian Army in World War I when they were simply considered, along with all other servicemen, as 'Australians' or 'British citizens'.)

A Sphinx and two Pyramids Memorial in Turramurra, Sydney, was hewn from local sandstone by Private WT Shirley (who was gassed on the World War I Western Front), whilst a resident of the nearby Lady Davidson Rehabilitation Hospital, between 1926 and 1928. The sphinx is a 1/8th size representation of the Great Sphinx at Gaza in Egypt and is a memorial to his fallen A.I.F. comrades.

And perhaps the most unusual of them all is one that certainly does not comply with the War Memorials Advisory Board guidelines:
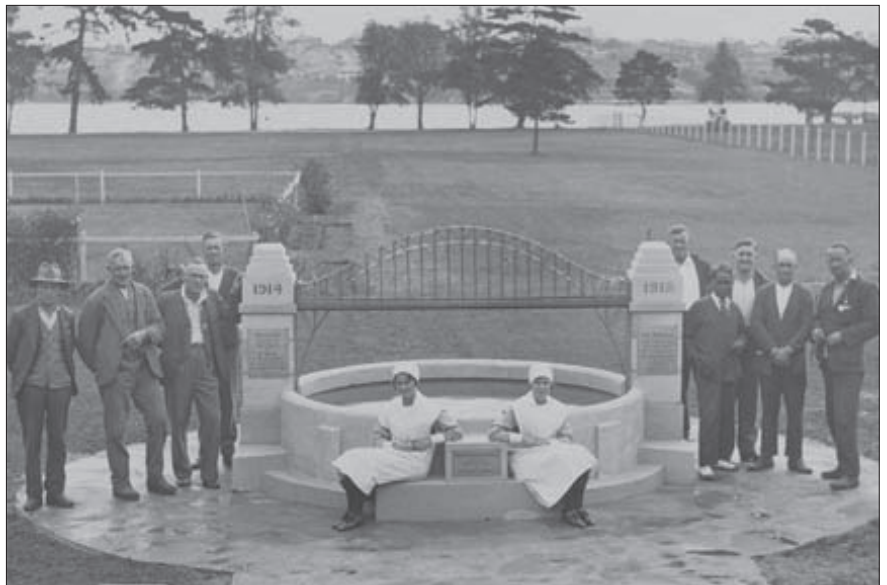
This is a World War I Memorial in Callan Park, Lilyfield, Sydney unveiled in August 1931.

1   The War Memorial Advisory Board required local committees to 'test the suitability of any design' submitted and to ask artists to produce 'a plaster or clay model' for approval. Section 511 of the Local Government Act 1919 additionally provided that 'monuments shall not be erected in public places or public reserves unless and until the design and situation thereof shall have been approved by the Minister,' which led this Committee to (frustratingly) slowly, bureaucratically assess 'the artistic merits of the design and the suitableness of the site' before approval of any memorial would be granted. ℝ

Speakers at the launch of the October issue of Recollections were asked to share one of their favourite local history stories with the audience. This was the story told by Robert B. Whiter of Eden and author of When the Chips are Down (a recently-published history of the sleeper cutting industry in the area between Eden and Orbost).

The Lead Flasings

Richard Bromby Whiter was born on 29th December 1884 at Cowes, Isle of Wight, England.

At the age of 10 years he was sent to the Naval College at Greenwich to prepare for a career in the Royal Navy. In his early twenties, and four years before the Titanic disaster, Richard and his wife of a few weeks travelled to Australia on the maiden voyage of the passenger steamer Waratah.

The couple with a growing family moved to various locations in Victoria until, at the end of 1926, they lost most of their possessions in a street fire at Stanhope, Victoria, whilst they were absent for a few days camping.

Richard was proving to be a very energetic man, but the failure of his insurance company to properly compensate for the loss of his grocery and hardware business was seriously affecting his health. So the family, with all the camping gear, moved to Lakes Entrance early in 1927 where Richard purchased nine acres upon which he established Australia's very first camping park offering full amenities.

In 1936, looking for a venue to establish a second holiday park, Richard purchased the Boydtown property upon which stood the ruins of the Seahorse Inn and the remains of other buildings from the 1840s Benjamin Boyd empire.

Work began in earnest to restore the old Inn, but roof flashings were missing and water had penetrated the building causing untold damage to the structure. However, repairs went ahead, only to be interrupted a few years later by the Second World War.

With his sons absent and supplies severely restricted, Richard and his son-in-law worked as carpenters constructing buildings for a radar installation at Mallacoota Aerodrome and at Gabo Island

In 1955 the restored Seahorse Inn and its camping park was leased to Chapman & Miles, as Richard's sons Allan and Arthur were now in demand building homes in Eden.

It became important to the sons to help their Dad relax and enjoy retirement, so they built him a caravan at their joinery shop in Eden, and Richard eventually set off to visit his sister in Western Australia.

Richard's naval background had provided him with a lifelong love of all things rope and canvas. Soon after arrival at Geraldton in Western Australia, Richard made enquiries about having some of his ropes tanned. He was directed to travel north seeking a fisherman, who would surely oblige, providing that Richard took along a couple of old tyres for fuel, as timber was scarce at that location.

Eventually, with Richard's ropes in the tanning pot and the tyres burning away merrily underneath, the two men sat down for a yarn.

"Where do you hail from old timer?" asked the fisherman.

"I have travelled over from Eden in New South Wales," Richard replied.

"Good Gawd! I fished there for years," the fisherman responded. "We had hell's own trouble getting lead for our nets over east. And I remember we once rowed across the bay there, and climbed onto the roof of a derelict old hotel to pull lead out from under the roof slates!!"

"Fancy that, Brother" retorted Richard, "YOU'RE the mongrel I have been looking for all these years!!!" ℝ

Above: Removing Welsh slate from the roof at the front of the Seahorse Inn. Below: After removal of weather-damaged roof framing.

This is taken from a talk delivered at *Our History, Our Heritage Day* in Merimbula in September.
It was prepared by Peter Lacey and Kevin Tetley, consulting numerous local histories that too-often cite different dates, or contain differing versions of some of the events that are mentioned. It is suggested that dates, in particular, should occasionally (or often) be treated as 'circa.' We would welcome information that clarifies or corrects any inaccuracies, and further similar information relating to travelling to and from the Moruya and Batemans Bay areas.

Trains and Planes and Automobiles
Boats and Bridges, Buses and Bullocks

When the first European settlers moved into the Bega Valley there were no plans for how the area should be developed. The country was 'beyond the limits of location for settlers', as defined by Governor Darling in 1824, and landholders simply took whatever attractive, useful land was available. Certainly no thought was given to where towns should be located, how they could be connected, how they could be serviced – they just emerged—somewhere.

And not always at the most logical location. Bega, which was near a possible crossing of the Bega River, was originally sited on the northern side of the river and, sadly for Bega, had no nearby, easily accessible port—let alone any road or rail link to any port. That lack of a port was later to become a serious challenge for those living in the Bega area.

Just getting to the South Coast was a real challenge. There is a good, natural port at Jervis Bay which has never been developed, and Twofold Bay has provided a reasonable anchorage but has barely been developed. In between there were 'possibilities' (depending on the weather, prevailing winds, tides, etc) such as at Moruya/in the Moruya River area, at Narooma, Bermagui, Tathra and Merimbula.

Brogo Bridge, c. 1900. Photograph: W.H. Corkhill, National Library of Australia TT705.

The area is also surrounded by a rough, steep escarpment that presented (and still presents) real challenges when attempting to travel down it or trying to get up it – and that's even before having to face the challenge of crossing numerous major rivers along the coast including the Shoalhaven, the Clyde at Batemans Bay, the Moruya River, the Tuross River, the Brogo River, the Bega River and Merimbula Lake.

If the area was to ever really prosper, the challenges of getting here and more particularly of getting produce from the area to the major markets of Sydney and Melbourne had to be addressed.

The earliest European settlers found – or were shown – Aboriginal walking tracks, and some of the earliest access to the area was along these. W D Tarlinton, the first settler in the Cobargo area in 1828 and subsequent squatters in the area north of Bega, followed these tracks down from Braidwood to Wandella to Cobargo and brought their cattle in along these tracks.

In contrast, the first settlers in the area south of Bega did not arrive overland but travelled by ship to Eden and then walked north towards Bega from there. The Imlays, for example, landed from the sea at Twofold Bay in 1834, and soon extended their holdings north from there, rapidly constructing stockyards at Wolumla.

The Imlay Brothers were to become the first to export live cattle from the region by shipping them from Cattle Bay on Twofold Bay to both Hobart Town and later the new settlement at Adelaide. Soon after, Alexander Weatherhead wrote about taking a herd of cattle from the Bodalla region overland to South Australia.

When 'roads' were eventually built to the coast from the Monaro – by Big Jack Heydon (his road basically being the same as today's Big Jack Mountain Road from Cathcart down to Rocky Hall and the Towamba Valley to Eden) for the Imlays, and by James Kervin (who followed a route from Wyndman to Lochiel to Pambula) in 1845 – they pretty much followed well-established Aboriginal trails.

Roads down from the Monaro were of such importance that an advert was placed in the Sydney Morning Herald on 2nd January 1845 reading: "To the Settlers of Monaroo: the undersigned begs to inform the public that he has completed a line of road from Monaroo to Eden by way of Pambula. Signed, James Kervin."

What this advertisement perhaps underlines is that establishing adequate transport connections to and from the South Coast was vitally important not just for those living on the South Coast, but for those living on the Monaro.

In the earliest days, overland transport to and from and around the south coast was, of course, by packhorse.

In 1846 the first wheeled vehicle arrived in the area:

"(It) was a cumbrous affair owned by the Walkers of Kameruka, a vehicle with wheels like a modern 4-ton wagon, in which a journey from Kameruka (to Eden) was possible with the help of strong horses in 48 hours."

Earlier, in 1839, John Rixon from Cathcart had brought a dray down Tantawanglo Mountain as far as Candelo. This was reported, along with a sketch of the route taken by Lands Commissioner Ryrie in his 1st June 1840 report: "*A dray with 6 bullocks in it, and nearly half a Ton weight upon it, was taken down into the Bika country along this track, about six months ago by Mr. John Rixon (superintendent of*

Mr. Taylor's establishment)" 'Bika' was at that time an early name used to describe 'Bega' country.

Alexander Weatherhead also bought a dray down Araluen Mountain to the Moruya area – it had to be dismantled and lowered by ropes down a rockface – such were the challenges of getting here.

The early pastoralists in the 1830s and the 1840s, such as the Imlays of Eden and those at Kameruka ran their own cutters, or organized their own shipping, to and from the nearest possible coastal inlet to bring in supplies and to ship out their produce. The Moon family who arrived/settled in the Bega area are known to have come ashore and landed sheep at Moon Bay (now the clothing optional beach north of Tathra). Kianinny Bay (just south of Tathra) was another inlet that was similarly used. Tathra itself was first used as a port in 1858, and a small wharf was erected there is 1860 – the same year that a wharf was built in Twofold Bay.

Merimbula became the private port of the Twofold Bay Pastoral Association and it was to have been the destination of the "Caesar" with its German immigrants in 1855; but on-board sickness forced an earlier landfall at Twofold Bay where we still have Quarantine Bay, so named as a result.

The first real road in the area was constructed in the late 1850s by the enterprising Daniel Gowing, linking Bega to Tathra (where Gowing also constructed a shed near to where the steamers called) and on to Bournda to Merimbula. These early roads were, of course, primarily built to get cattle and produce to wharves for shipping to the major market in Sydney and were pretty rough. But they were also used for transport of passengers, with the first Bega to Merimbula passenger service being a fortnightly service that commenced in 1858.

Work on this road through Bournda to Merimbula was curtailed in 1860 following the discovery of gold at Kiandra. The contractor simply found it impossible to get labour as men flocked to the new goldfield.

There is a wonderful story, related by Kevin Tetley, about the first Manager of the Bank of NSW in Bega who arrived in Merimbula by steamer in 1870 with the new branch's cash. The roads and transport, as they then were, meant he was unable to reach Bega that same day, so he buried the cash on the beach at Merimbula overnight, before retrieving it the next morning and resuming his journey to Bega.

Around this same time the first wharves in Merimbula, Tathra, Eden and Bermagui were erected, and the Illawarra Steam Navigation Company commenced its service to the area with the SS Mimosa. Their shipping service was to continue for almost a century – until 1954 by which time the road connection with Sydney was well-established (or, as explained below, was thought to be well-established) and demand for the last major product that depended upon shipping, railway sleepers (which up till then were shipped from several towns along the South Coast), had virtually disappeared.

The passenger service to the South Coast by sea, however, had ceased about 25 years earlier in 1927, when the

'Merimbula' ran aground on Beecroft Head inside Jervis Bay. By that time the ISN Company found it could not compete with the faster, more comfortable passenger services to Sydney by road or by road and rail. But cargo, including live pigs, continued to be carried until the company finally ceased operations in early 1954.

One has to have admiration – or perhaps pity – for passengers who travelled on the coastal ships and steamers. The graphic description of a trip on the SS Merimbula by Bermagui schoolgirl Bertha Keating, in the October issue of *Recollections*, vividly illustrates this.

Those sea conditions that Bertha Keating describes, of course, often dictated where one landed and how one landed. If seas were calm, there was no problem. However, if a sea was running but the ship could still pull alongside the wharf, bobbing up and down like cork, passengers might be taken off the ship by being hoisted up to the wharf in a

Mogareeka Ferry.

basket. And if the sea was particularly bad, the ship simply turned back to sea and proceeded to the next port – so, for example, if the steamer couldn't stop at Tathra's north-facing wharf, it would simply proceed to Merimbula's south-facing wharf—and a mad scramble of wharfies, would-be passengers and freight would race down the coast in the hope of meeting the ship.

Oh, the joys of travel by sea!

The ISN also had an 'interesting' record of wrecks and accidents, including the loss of the Mynora in 1864, the Coolangatta which was wrecked but refloated in 1873 (only to be broken up around 1880), Blackwall in 1876 (subsequently salvaged and then broken up), John Penn in 1879, the Monaro in 1879, the Kameruka in 1897, Bega in 1908, Tilba in 1912, Duorby in 1923 (caught fire and later scuttled), Benandra in 1924, Bodalla in 1924 and the Merimbula in 1928.

Up until the 1950s (when the ISN Company's shipping service ceased) – and perhaps even beyond that – the road down the coast (the Princes Highway) was unsealed in long sections and there were challenges crossing the major rivers.

The road to the south was given its grand name, the Princes Highway, to mark the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1920. In the early days it took a week to travel from Bega to Nowra. By the 1920s one could travel the same distance in daylight hours in one day – with the road winding inland

around the west of the Wagonga inlet near Narooma, up the Clyde River to a crossing at Nelligan and inland around Burrill Lake.

Balmain Bros. Bus. Photograph: Victorian Railways Photographic Collection, VPRS 12903/P1.

The river crossings, of course, were a challenge. The Tuross and Moruya Rivers were bridged in 1876, the Bega River a couple of years later, and the Shoalhaven River Bridge was opened to traffic three years after that, in 1881. (The Shoalhaven River Bridge was originally planned to be a railway bridge; its conversion to a road bridge immediately killing any prospect of the railway to Bomaderry ever proceeding any further south.) A Bridge at Narooma, however, was not built until 1931 and, most importantly, the Bridge at Batemans Bay over the Clyde River was not opened until 1956 – by which stage delays of an hour or more were regularly being experienced crossing the river by ferry, a service which, incidentally, was first put in place 85 years earlier.

The building of a bridge didn't always completely solve the problems of travelling on the South Coast. The August issue of *Recollections* included a photograph of a collapsed bridge over the Tuross River. This collapse was actually a major catastrophe because it occurred just after the ISN steamer service to the South Coast had ceased, and it was shortly before the Batemans Bay Bridge was opened – so to get to the South Coast one had little option than to experience lengthy delays at Batemans Bay, then no bridge at Bodalla, which necessitated the bulldozing of a temporary road over a very long distance inland over Comerang Mountain before – several weeks after the bridge collapsed – a temporary bailey bridge was erected over the Tuross River.

Road/rail passengers travelling from the railhead at Bomaderry on the Pioneer Bus were ferried across the Tuross River at that time in two rowing boats.

Another disastrous break in the Princes Highway occurred in 1934, a year of 6 major floods, when a long timber bridge at the north end of Brogo Pass was swept away, leaving no crossing of the Brogo River. A Flying Fox was hurriedly erected to allow farmers to get their cream over the river, before a temporary crossing was opened.

Yet another major bridge loss was with the Mogareeka

Bridge north of Bermagui in February 1971. Only opened in 1959 this bridge, named the Handcock Bridge, was the victim of the all-time record flood in the Bega River. Other bridges in Candelo township, at Bimbaya, at Kameruka and elsewhere were lost in this same flood.

The alternative to the coast road with its rivers and unreliable river crossings, or – while it had still been an option – travelling by boat, was to travel up the mountains to the Monaro or up the mountains to the area around Braidwood and Canberra. But this was not particularly easy.

As noted earlier, a track had been followed from Braidwood to Cobargo as early as 1828. And a bridle track was opened soon thereafter linking what is now Cathcart with the coast. This was superseded by a road up Big Jack Mountain which was constructed about 12 years later.

These early tracks, these early roads, were pretty rudimentary. The Big Jack Mountain road included two very steep passes – known as 'Purgatory' and 'Cowbail' – where bullockies would often 'double bank' (or use more than one team of bullocks to pull the dray or wagon) or use block and tackle to help get their loads up or down. And when travelling downhill, a commonly-used braking system for horse drawn wagons was to cut saplings (or larger trees) and drag them behind the wagons during the steep descent.

It would have been rare to see just one bullock team tackle the steep Big Jack Mountain Road alone. The number of bogs, the number of accidents forced bullockies to work in small convoys so that they could help one another when needed.

BEMBOKA IN FOCUS
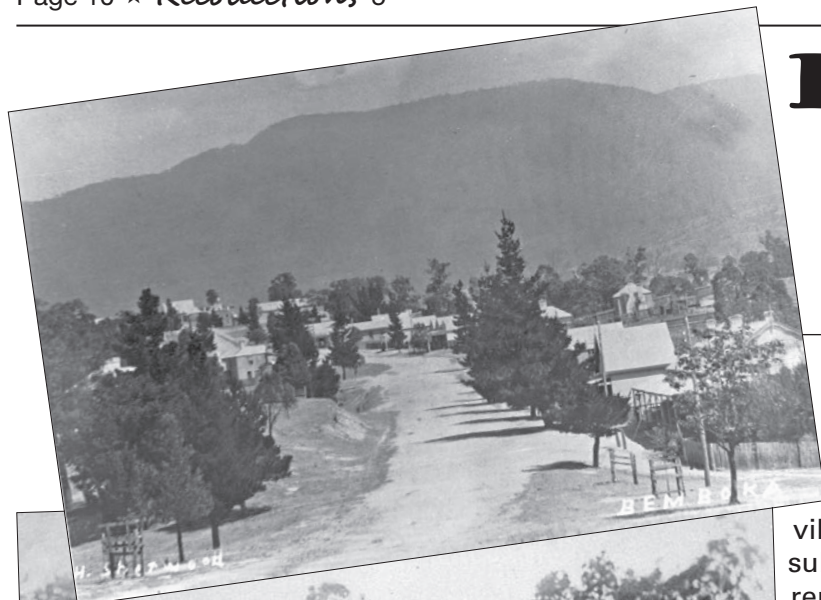
The first European settlers in the Bemboka area were squatters grazing sheep and cattle on crown land. The first purchases of land by selectors occurred in 1862.

Settlement occurred in two adjacent villages – Colombo, and the private subdivision of Lyttleton. The two towns remained relatively isolated until the bridle trail on Brown Mountain, which was used to carry post was upgraded in 1888 or 1889 to take vehicles, providing an effective means of descent from the Monaro to the coastal plain. Colombo was regazetted as Bemboka in 1894, and Lyttleton was incorporated into the village in 1923.

From 1904 to 1911, the town had its own weekly newspaper, the Bemboka Advocate. It was also the location of the former Mumbulla Shire administration offices from 1906 until the Bega Valley Shire was formed in 1981.

The town economy is based on dairying. In the late 1890s there were six known butter and cheese factories in the area. These were superseded by cooperatives, with the Bemboka Co-operative Factory at the east end of town remaining in business until 1980. During the 1980s and 1990s, the old cheese factory building was used by Bemboka Handmade Paper Pty Ltd to make quality handmade paper that was marketed worldwide.

Bemboka is notable for retaining most

Anticlockwise from top left:
1. Bemboka.
2. Bemboka Crossing, Bemboka. c. 1890.
3. Brown Mountain Cutting Opening.
4. The Brown Mountain.
5. Bemboka.
6. Bemboka Post Office, August 1951. Photo: National Archives of Australia Barcode 3037968.
7. Bemboka Public School, 1949.
8. Community Function, presumably at Bemboka school.
9. Bemboka Co-operative Butter Factory, 1976. Photo: National Archives of Australia, Barcode 11790890.
10. Brown Mountain, 1911.

of its older timber buildings. These include the stores which once lined the main street, some of which are now used as private homes. The original Bemboka Pie Shop, built in 1930, still operates as a bakery and pie shop.

In the surrounding state forests, woodchipping and logging was a major industry until the late 1980s, when activism by conservationists resulted in the reservation of 15,300 hectares as Bemboka National Park. In 1997, this area was merged into the South East Forests National Park.

For a small community, the people of Bemboka have a history of working together to achieve big things. From 1956–1967, the village ran its own weekly picture show in the School of Arts Hall, using the school's 16mm projector, to raise money to build the current Bemboka Memorial Hall. During the 1970s, the village raised funds through housie nights, catering and grants to build a swimming pool in the town. A more recent, popular community initiative was the Bemboka Banquet. In 2012, 150 guests were served a four-course dinner that offered five entrees, five main courses, five desserts and five cheeses, with 90 per cent of the ingredients sourced from within 10 km of Bemboka. **R**

Photos courtesy James Murray and Bemboka Lions Club, State Library of NSW and National Archives of Australia.

And please don't imagine that the Big Jack Mountain, or later the Tantewangelo and Brown Mountain Roads, or other roads further up the coast, were travelled by just a few teamsters. There were actually hundreds of them operating from the 1850s until well after the end of World War I.

A more direct route, however, was wanted further to the north, to link Bega with Nimmitybelle – and at one stage a £100 reward was offered to the first resident of Nimmitybelle who constructed a road down The Brown Mountain. It is uncertain whether that reward was ever paid.

In the mid-1800s a 'Postman's Track' was forged up The Brown Mountain, enabling a weekly pack-horse mail service to operate between Nimmitybelle and Kameruka. In 1888 or 1889 a mail road, considered a masterpiece of engineering at the time, was built over the Brown Mountain and mails (previously transported by sea or along the coastal 'road') were diverted to Cooma via Brown Mountain. In those horse coaching days, changes of horses were made at Bemboka and at Big Bog at the top of the Mountain, and the journey from Bega to Cooma took 12 to 18 hours.

One description of this Brown Mountain road (by Henry Lucas in 'Cooma Country') indicates the road was '*subject to frequent landslides following rain. Nothwithstanding this, coaches using the road travelled by night and as the frequent watercourses were un-bridged, a journey by coach was a hazardous undertaking. Apart from the rugged road conditions, the kerosene headlights were not at all efficient and a heavy strain was imposed on drivers, horses and to a lesser extent, on passengers.*'

The advent of the car revolutionized things, with Balmain Bros introducing a reliable, regular passenger and mail service between Bega and Cooma in 1909, in the process putting a business established a year or two earlier by Peterson and Djerstrup out of business.

This would have remained a pretty daunting journey because the road up the Brown Mountain remained in horrendous condition at least until the late 1950s and the 'coach' that Balmain Brothers used was actually an open-top car, which from World War I days was superseded by an open top bus. So in winter it was probably a very cold journey for the passengers and the driver.

But Balmain Brothers' car at least was faster, leaving Bega at 9.30 am and passing the horse-drawn coach that had left Bega the previous evening somewhere along the road between Nimmitybelle and Cooma.

As an aside, W. H. 'Billy' Balmain, the principal of Balmain Bros was a strong agitator for better roads right up until his death in the early 1960s. He was a major promoter of tourism to this region and he recognized that the area would never progress until the roads were improved.

It must be emphasised that the main reason for roads being constructed and later upgraded, and the main reason why there was a shipping service to the area, was the area's need to transport goods from the South Coast to the major markets of Sydney and Melbourne – not to provide a means for people to travel.

The sheep graziers on the Monaro needed to get their wool to market. There were a number of flour mills in Bega, Merimbula, Jellat and elsewhere. There was a major Munns Maizena Works in Merimbula producing corn flour, which sourced much of its corn from the Jellat flats and from around Bega. There were butter and cheese factories everywhere. Cattle and pigs and their produce needed to reach a market. The gathering of wattle bark for tanneries was a major industry, as was the cutting and transport to Sydney of timber and railway sleepers.

And, in fact, the major reason why the Brown Mountain road was ultimately put into a reasonable condition in the late 1950s or early 1960s was agricultural. The Bega Co-operative had been awarded the contract to supply milk to Canberra and, quite simply, a suitable road was needed if those in Canberra were to be able to pour milk on their breakfast cornflakes.

Sydney–Bega Adastra Airways DH83 Fox Moth, c. 1930s. Photograph: National Library of Australia, PIC 3394/588.

In the 1950s there was a strong movement within Mumbulla Shire Council to build a new road linking Cooma via Yowrie to the Princes Highway at Cobargo, and on to Bermagui. This was seen as a real alternative to the hazards of travel via the Brown Mountain, but the proposal seems to have fallen on deaf ears at government level.

Another transport proposal that fell on deaf government ears was an enthusiastic local push in the 1880s and 1890s, and again in the 1920s for the construction of a railway line from Bombala to the coast, and for an Eden to Bega railway link – the proponents of these schemes being fully convinced that they would significantly assist the long-term economic development of the area, providing much better transport links than could road transport. Those lines were never built, although planning did progress to the stage that their routes were surveyed.

Finally a brief mention of air travel.

The Bega Valley has had three main airstrips – initially, from around 1932, there was one on the hillside on the Bega side of the Jellat flats from which Adastra Airways operated a twice-weekly service to Sydney using a three-seat Fox Moth aircraft. The airstrip then moved around 1937 to a strip at Frogs Hollow and Adastra Airways (and later Butler Air) continued to operate their regular services from there. And finally in 1959 the area's airstrip was moved to Merimbula. This was a really big deal because the new Merimbula airport was capable of handling 'big' aircraft such as the good old DC3. ®

Wolumla's Yellow Pinch Ghost

by Edward Athelstan 'Bon' Wrightson

Wolumla is a small town situated on the Far South Coast of N.S.W. It has an aboriginal name meaning "Water Hole". It is an historical township, although practically a ghost town now. It thrived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Gold mining and wattle bark for tanning purposes were the two main industries. Latterly it is principally dairy farming.

The town boasted of having six pubs and several boarding houses in the prosperous days, to cope with the influx of many miners, together with their families, who came seeking work in the gold mines. All goods and passengers to and from Sydney in those days were transported by large steamers, calling at several coastal ports *en route* – finally terminating at Eden, which is situated on Twofold Bay. Wool, butter and many other commodities were carried by teamsters from as far away as Cooma in the Snowy Mountains, Bombala and Nimmitabel, via Candelo and Wolumla to the seaport of Merimbula. All kinds of goods for business people, as well as personal belongings for residents, kegs of beer, rum and spirits for hotels, were carried on the return trip.

These teamsters drove their horse and bullock teams through the township of Wolumla, enroute to their destination; they rested their horses and bullocks for the night on a property named "Yellow Pinch" on the outskirts of this town. Some of the drivers of these teams indulged in a drinking spree throughout the night. Besides tapping the beer kegs, many of them were heavy rum drinkers and would tap the kegs of rum.

At daybreak, while rounding up the bullocks and horses, many of them would see Wolumla's Yellow Pinch Ghost. Although not as well-known as many other ghosts, this was a black ghost and could only be seen in daylight, mainly just after daybreak, other ghosts throughout the world being white. The aboriginals living on this property claimed that one of their number was murdered there many years ago – consequently this black ghost used to appear every morning, just at daybreak.

Several of us youngsters, a little on the curious side, visited this spot on occasions, but were eluded by the ghost. On bellowing "Were you murdered by someone", to our astonishment a voice would reply 'Yessssss'. It transpired that this voice that said 'Yessssss' was two trees growing together on the very spot where the murder took place, and when the wind was blowing they would make a grinding noise, which sounded like the word 'Yessssss.' Consequently, we couldn't get back home quick enough and report what we had heard.

The local Chinese gardener named Lammy was driving his horse and cart along the road early one morning on his vegetable run and to his surprise spotted the ghost. He turned back and was galloping his horse and cart through the township yelling out at the top of his voice 'I saw the ghost!' The residents heard the commotion and tried to console him, as Lammy was a favourite with everybody, but it was

too much for the Chinaman. The following week he sold out and returned to China (pigtails and all). The Chinese people are very superstitious, especially where ghosts are concerned, and Lammy, not taking any more risks, couldn't catch a boat fast enough for his home country.

In the year 1928 the local School Master, Mr. Jack Mulholland, who was visiting his neighbour's place next door, was shot while walking through his friends' front gate on his return home – they were courteously seeing him safely out the front gate. As he struck a match to light his cigarette, someone blew his head off with a shotgun. Although all available police from the surrounding towns were called to try and locate the murderer, he was never caught. It is still one of the State's unsolved crimes.

Many local residents were suspected and questioned, but the evidence wasn't enough for a conviction. Everyone who lived in the township was spellbound and shocked at the atrocity, this schoolteacher being very popular with the majority of residents. As soon as the word of his murder was broadcast around the district, everyone was saying "I wonder will there be another ghost" but Wolumla's Yellow Pinch Ghost is still in existence and can be seen to this day.

The town's only bushranger, by the name of Tom Jones, thought out a brainy idea. He built a house on top of a very high tree, not far from where the ghost appears, the reason being that no policeman or prospective captors would go within cooee of his hideout. He used the ghost as his protection. This bushranger never bailed up anyone for money or valuables, he only pinched goods that were edible. When captured he had thousands of tins of foodstuffs stacked away in the house on the tree.

The story is told that the ghost paid him a visit one morning, and Tom was so surprised and shocked he immediately went to the local police station and gave himself up to the policeman on duty. The locals suggested the ghost should be given Royal honours for the part he played in the capture of the bushranger!

In the later part of the last century [i.e. the 19th century] the State elections were being held and several would-be politicians were offering their services for the position. One spruiker and orator of no mean ability made many promises to the electors if returned as their member for the Far South Coast of New South Wales (incidentally he beat all his opponents by a large majority, and became their representative in Parliament for a number of years). One of the promises made by him was the continuation of the railway service from Cooma on the Snowy Mountains and Nowra on the coast. Both these railway lines were to junction at Wolumla and continue to Eden, via Merimbula and Pambula townships.

Sign from the Wolumla Railway Junction Hotel as illustrated in Recollections No. 2 where there is more information on the railway proposal.

A local resident seized the opportunity and built a pub naming it the "Railway Junction Hotel"! This hotel is the only one left in Wolumla and is still in business, but was purchased by Toohey's brewery some years ago. The old premises were pulled down and a new hotel erected on the same site, renamed the "Wolumla Hotel". The politician maintained that the new railway would be paid for in a very short space of time, attracting thousands of tourists and sightseers to the district to get a glimpse of the ghost, which was very much in the headlines at the time. The residents are still waiting for the railway to be completed from both Cooma and Nowra, just one of the thousands of promises made by Parliamentarians which never eventuate! ℝ

Pinched from *Tales of the Far South Coast* (edited by Claire Lupton, 1982) and drawn to our attention by Jim Kemp of Bega

Trivia

Test your knowledge of history with this fun Trivia Quiz which, this month, is inspired by a booklet 'Who's Buried Where' which was originally compiled by people from Westminster Abbey, and brought to our attention by Dr. Peter Alexander of Bega.

The questions are, simply, where are the following famous/infamous people buried? The answers are on page 17.

a. Henry VIII
b. Macbeth
c. Napoleon I
d. Napoleon's horse, Jaffa
e. Alice in Wonderland
f. Lady Godiva
g. (The dog) Churchyard Grim
h. Jack the Ripper

i. W A Mozart
j. Lord Kitchener (the face of the World War I 'Your Country Needs You' poster illustrated at right.)
k. Robin Falcon Scott
l. Joan of Arc
m. Robin Hood
n. John Fuller

BOOK REVIEW

The Rag Tag Fleet
by Ian W. Shaw

Buna is a coastal village in New Guinea at the northern end of the Kokoda Track. It (along with nearby Gona and Sanananda) was the site of a bloody battle waged by Australians and Americans against the entrenched Japanese from November 1942 to January 1943, coinciding with the more-famous Battle of Guadalcanal. In these battles the Japanese suffered their first major losses of World War II as they pushed southwards, and both battles were the first in a series of successful Allied actions that gradually pushed the Japanese military forces back across the Pacific to the Philippines.

'*The Rag Tag Fleet*' is the extraordinary story of the boats and the men who transported supplies, munitions and troops from Port Moresby and Milne Bay (on the very eastern tip of New Guinea) to Buna before and during the 'Battle of the Beaches,' as the Buna/Gona/Sanananda actions are collectively known.

Without the supply line that they provided, the Battle of Buna could never have been initiated and without them the battle would never have resulted in victory for the Australians and the Americans.

I had intended to review an entirely different Australian history in this issue of *Recollections* – but, half-way through that book, I gave up reading it. It was simply too boring, so instead started reading '*The Rag Tag Fleet*'.

What a contrast this proved to be. '*The Rag Tag Fleet*' is a well-written yarn about a fascinating World War II challenge.

It involved ships and men from the NSW South Coast and, coincidentally, the recent release of this book has coincided with a modest Rag Tag Fleet exhibition at the Eden Killer Whale Museum which concentrates on six locals who had crewed vessels in the Rag Tag Fleet..

The story starts with a couple of well-connected American brothers suggesting to President Franklin D. Roosevelt that small ships, such as trawlers, could play a vital supply role in the Pacific and South-Seas areas. The brothers end up being commissioned, one as a captain the other as a first lieutenant, in the American Army and being tasked with assembling a fleet of craft and crews to operate in northern New Guinea waters.

The ships and their crews were recruited from around Australia and even from New Zealand, with significant numbers being located at Greenwell Point near Nowra and at Eden. Many of the craft were local fishing vessels and the crew were local fishermen. After undergoing modifications in Sydney, the ships were sailed to northern Queensland where they picked up supplies before proceeding to Port Moresby, Milne Bay and on to the war zones near Buna.

These ships – officially the Small Ships Supply Command, then the Small Ships Section of the Water Branch of the US Army's Transportation Service and ultimately the Small Ships Division of the Transportation Service of the US Army Forces in Australia - became known as 'The Rag Tag Fleet'

whose job was '*to deliver ammunition, medical supplies and perishable food to outlying bases that could not be reached by deep draught ships, and to assist in tactical operations when required.*'

Their crews were contracted by the US Army for six-month deployments which included possible service in New Guinea waters.

No other vessels were available at the time, so their role in ferrying supplies to front-line troops became crucial to the Australian and American assaults on the Japanese. Continual delivery runs to as close to the front-line as possible were necessary – even when this led to deadly strafing from Japanese Zero fighters and Val dive-bombers.

Many vessels in The Rag Tag Fleet were sunk or forced onto coral reefs as a result of enemy action and many of their crew were killed. But, as author Ian W. Shaw reveals, others were lost simply because Australian airforce and naval forces were not aware that these Australian small ships, with Australian crews, were operating in the area ferrying troops and necessary supplies to front-line positions and, on their return journeys, were transporting sick and wounded soldiers back to base hospitals.

'*The Rag Tag Fleet*' includes some almost-surreal stories - For example, to acquire a small ship: '*Their method was simple and effective but was not appreciated by shipowners.*'

A Marine (sic) sergeant simply walked up the gangway, accompanied by a private armed with an American flag. The Ship's flag was hauled down (often against the captain's protest), and the Stars and Stripes raised in its place. The sergeant then informed the captain that his ship was now the property of the US Army and he was not to do anything without their approval. He would proceed on his way leaving an armed sentry on the gangway to see that his orders were obeyed.'

Then to crew it: 'Finding themselves suddenly without boats, the three fishermen discussed employment opportunities with the Small Ships team. The next day, all three signed contracts with the US Army's Small Ship's Section.'

And arm it: 'One of the contacts they had developed in the military bureaucracy that had sprung up in Melbourne told them of two goods carriages loaded with American machine guns, both .30 and .50 calibre, which were packed in boxes stacked high in carriages, now in a rail yard not far from the centre of Melbourne. The machine guns had originally been intended for US forces in the Philippines, but had been diverted to Melbourne where consideration had been given to sending them to Australian forces based in Singapore. The fall of the 'impregnable fortress' on 15 February 1942 had made that plan irrelevant and the current thinking was that they would be sent up to Darwin and placed in storage there until they were needed.

The Small Ships' personnel believed they had a greater need for them in the here and now, as they could be mounted on the ships they were to acquire and thereby provide at least a rudimentary defence for those ships. A set of official-looking orders were drawn up, and a copy of those orders placed in the consignment box attached to the railway wagons, snuck in late at night and after a few drinks. The next morning, in their officers' uniforms, Sheridan Fahnestock and Laddie Reday showed another set of orders to the guard at the rail yard gate, checked with him that they matched the orders on the freight cars and then organised for the machine guns to be forwarded to the Small Ships' own freight storage area.'

For some of those ships to then experience some extraordinary luck: 'At almost exactly midday, a single Japanese aircraft flew over the harbour at a height of around 5000 metres. Far below, three Small Ships were anchored towards the head of the harbour with a space of perhaps fifty metres between them. The ships were the Kurimarau, Kooraka and Muliama, and they were caught by surprise in the open. The aircraft dropped a single bomb as a sighter and followed up with a string of five bombs.

One bomb fell short of the first ship. The second between the first and second ships in line, the next between the second and third, with the last two landing beyond the third ship. When the water had splashed back down and the smoke had cleared, not one of the three ships had been damaged and no one aboard any of them had been injured. The only obvious result was that a group of Filipino sailors, rudely awakened by the explosions and convinced that a full-scale air raid was on the way, had jumped down into a tethered dinghy, rowed to the nearest shore and taken off into the jungle. It took a lot of convincing to get them back on their boat.'

The work performed by the crews of The Rag Tag Fleet was arduous and exceptionally risky. It is, therefore, not surprising that it became increasingly difficult to find replacements for those who were killed, injured or succumbed to malaria, dengue fever, scrub typhus, amoebic dysentery or other severe tropical illnesses. The solution came in the form of a four- or five-week training program, run by the Small Ships Section of the US Army with the blessing of the Australian government, for fifteen- and sixteen-year-old boys who wanted to become sailors aboard the Small Ships. In all 163 boys graduated from this Apprentice Seamen's School at Walsh Bay in Sydney before they sailed or were flown to New Guinea to serve on vessels operating there.

At the end of the war, many who served on these Australian Small Ships transporting Australian troops and supplies wanted to join the RSL. Incredibly, they were denied membership being told (incorrectly, because they had never joined the American Army) that they 'had chosen to serve in a foreign armed service rather than their own.' This was bitterly resented by many of those who served on these Small Ships. Similarly, Australian and Imperial campaign medals were denied to them, although these were awarded to Australian merchant seamen who served on foreign vessels during the war, until finally in November 2006 Dr Mike Kelly, then the Minister for Defence Support, announced that this policy was to be reversed – by which date, of course, many of those who might have become entitled to official recognition were already dead.

'The Rag Tag Fleet' is a lucid account of the challenges and problems of establishing and maintaining the supply line for the Battle of the Beaches, so will be of particular interest to military historians. But it should also be read by everyone with any interest in NSW South Coast history because of the pivotal role that vessels and crew from this area played in this significant battle. ℝ

The Rag Tag Fleet is published by Hachette Australia, and in paperback is priced from around $25.50.
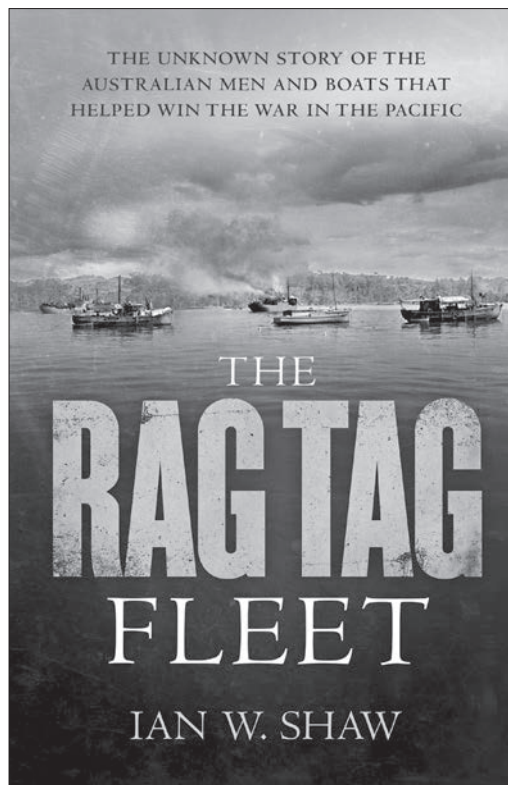
Trivia Answers

a. St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. At his request, he was buried alongside the 3rd of his six wives, Jane Seymour.

b. The Isle of Iona, Scotland, alongside 47 other Scottish kings.

c. Originally buried on the island of St Helena, he is now buried in Les Invalides, Paris.

d. Napoleon rode Jaffa at the Battle of Waterloo. Jaffa is buried in Glassenbury Manor, Cranbrook, Kent and is commemorated with a stone pillar.

e. Lewis Carroll wrote Alice in Wonderland for Alice Liddell (later Mrs Reginald Hargreaves) who is buried in the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Lyndhurst, Hampshire.

f. The Benedictine Monastery, Coventry.

g. Churchyard Grim is buried on the north side of every ancient churchyard – to protect the dead from the devil.

h. Jack the Ripper was never definitively identified. It's possible he was Walter Porriott, a convicted killer and conman, who is buried in Toowong Cemetery in Brisbane, or it's possible he was Dr. Francis J. Tumuelty who lived in London during the time of the famed murders, and moved to Rochester, New York when he was starting to be investigated, and is now buried.

i. Mozart was buried in St Marx Cemetery, Vienna, possibly in a common grave with 20 paupers. However, in the early twentieth century, the Salzburg Mozarteum was presented with a rather morbid gift: Mozart's skull. It is alleged that a gravedigger rescued the skull during the 're-organization' of the composer's grave.

j. Kitchener was lost at sea just after the famous Battle of Jutland in June 1916. He was on board HMS Hampshire which was sailing to Russia when it probably struck a mine laid by a German submarine. Heavy loss of life resulted, including that of Kitchener and his staff.

k. Perhaps somewhere in the Antarctic. The bodies of British naval captain Robert Falcon Scott and four of his companions were discovered in November 1912, one member of the search party writing: 'We never moved them. We took the bamboos of the tent away and the tent itself covered them. Over them we built the cairn.' The cairn of snow has not been seen for more than 100 years. It would have since been buried in snow and would have drifted, or still be drifting, slowly towards the Ross Sea. At some time the bodies of Scott and his companions will drift out to sea in an iceberg.

l. Joan of Arc was burned at the stake in 1431. Her body was burned a second time, to ensure all her remains had been thoroughly reduced to ashes, and these were then thrown into the River Seine.

m. Robin Hood is generally thought to be buried in Kirklees Priory, originally a Cistercian nunnery, in West Yorkshire. There are various stories about his death, the oldest and longest enduring one

being that he was in the care of a Prioress while ill or perhaps simply old. Perhaps she bled Robin, an accepted healing technique of the age, but deliberately bled out too much from him, causing his death by blood loss. Another version has the weakened Robin stabbed by the Prioress's lover. The dying outlaw then was supposed to have fired an arrow from the window – its landing place was to be his grave. Tradition says that his wishes were carried out by the faithful Little John. A 1569 chronicle by Richard Grafton records that after Robin Hood's death, 'the prioresse of the same

Left: One of 'Mad Jack' Fuller's follies; this one is the *Sugar Loaf*.

place caused him to be buried by the highway-side, where he had used to rob and spoyle those that passed that way. And upon his grave the sayde prioresse did lay a very fayre stone, wherein the names of Robert Hood, William of Goldesborough,

and others were graven'. He goes on to say, 'And at eyther ende of the sayde tombe was erected a crosse of stone, which is to be seen there at this present'.

n. You don't know of John Fuller? 'Mad Jack' Fuller, as he was widely known, or 'Honest John' Fuller, as he called himself, was a British philanthropist and quintessential British eccentric. He was a large man, living life to the full. He never married but enjoyed supporting good causes and assumed the role of local philanthropist – he paid for the first lifeboat at Eastbourne, and towards the building of

Another of Mad Jack's follies, this one is the *Brightling Needle*.

the Belle Tout Lighthouse on the cliffs at nearby Beachy Head. During his life he arranged and paid for a number of follies and other structures in and around Brightling in East Sussex. These included the 65 foot high Brightling Needle (built on the second-highest point in Sussex which may have been built to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo in 1815), a temple within the grounds of Brightling Park (presumably intended to add a 'classic' perspective to the landscape as seen from the family home), the 'Sugar Loaf' (a conical spire which gets its name from the way in which sugar was supplied at the time – in cones called loaves. Supposedly Mad Jack bet a friend, during a visit to London, that he could see the spire of the church in the nearby village of Dallington from his home at Brightling. On returning home he discovered that the spire was not visible, being blocked by a hill, so quickly had the Sugar Loaf – whose shape closely resembles that of the spire – built on a ridge of hills between his home and the village), an observatory (he was inspired by a German friend who was an astronomer), and a 35 foot high tower to commemorate restoration work which he was undertaking on Bodiam Castle in Kent. His most bizarre folly, however, was his own pyramid-shape tomb in Brightling churchyard. It was said that he was buried inside the tomb sitting at a table, complete with bottle of wine at hand and wearing a top hat. Broken glass was strewn across the floor to stop the Devil's footsteps! And whoever said history was dull? ℝ

How pleasing to see that the historic 1925 Narooma School of Arts Soldiers Memorial Hall (now the *Narooma Kinema*) has been restored to its former glory.

3 Engaging Books on Migrant Integration
by Dalmeny Author Raja Arasa Ratnam

The 2-way cultural and social changes wrought when post-war immigrants arrived in Australia are examined in these three fascinating books. They are based on the author's experiences, both as a settler and as Director of Policy, over nine years, in the then Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Raja Arasa Ratnam's knowledge and experience encompasses ethnic affairs & multiculturalism, citizenship & national identity, refugees & humanitarian entry, and settlement assistance. His writing has been praised as both insightful and provocative. Although the books were written for the general public, senior academics in diverse disciplines have endorsed them.

The books are easy to read. They present a positive image of Australia. They are available as e-books at amazon.com and its international affiliates at around US$3 each.
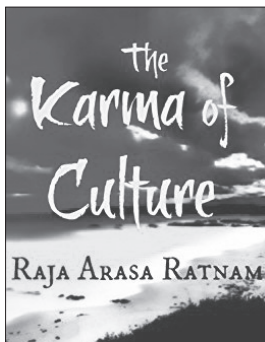

THE KARMA OF CULTURE
"Here is available, perhaps for the first time, an insightful 'take' on Australian society written by an 'insider' who, paradoxically, is an 'outsider' as well" — Emeritus Professor of Sociology John Western.

HIDDEN FOOTPRINTS OF UNITY
"I find the concepts in 'Hidden Footprints of Unity' most appealing, coming as they do from an agile mind which has managed to embrace cultures usually seen as competitive, or even enemies. This book should prove a precious contribution to mutual understanding" — James Murray, Religious Affairs Editor, 'The Australian'
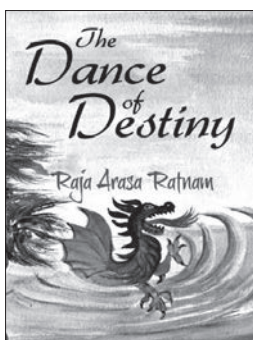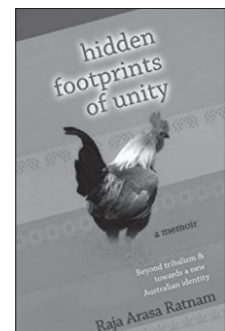
THE DANCE OF DESTINY
"The witty, bittersweet reminiscences of a man travelling between cultures, observing and questioning systems and beliefs around him. This intriguing saga, packed with information on Tamil-Indian-Malay customs, offers a cosmic world view with a twist." — Dr Anne-Smith, President , Multi-Cultural Writers' Association of Australia.

Available as e-books at amazon.com at around US$3.00 each

Benjamin Boyd – Blackbirder
by Emeritus Professor Clive Moore, The University of Queensland

Benjamin Boyd (1801–1851) was a rich entrepreneur and adventurer who arrived in New South Wales in 1842 and proceeded to buy up 381,000 acres of pastoral land in New South Wales. He died on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in 1851.

Boyd had already used Aboriginal, Maori and Pacific Islands labourers in his whaling industry ventures, and, worried about not having sufficient labour for his pastoral properties, he decided to experiment with bringing in a Pacific Islanders workforce, without waiting for government permission.

In 1847 he brought the first 65 Islanders to Australia from Lifu in the Loyalty Islands (now part of New Caledonia) and from Tanna and Aneityum in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu). They landed at Eden where his whaling venture was based. The clerk of the local bench of magistrates described them this way: "none of the natives could speak English, and all were naked." "[T]hey all crowded around us looking at us with the utmost surprize, and feeling at the Texture of our clothes…they seemed wild and restless." (Diamond 1988, 128-129).

Benjamin Boyd. State Library of Victoria, H38849/448

They had all put their mark on contracts that bound them to work for five years and to be paid 26 shillings a year, plus rations of 10 lbs of meat a week, and two pairs of trousers, two shirts and a kilmarnock cap. Although onwards from the 1840s Loyalty Islanders were great travellers on ships throughout the southwest Pacific, clearly they had no idea of what they were doing in Australia, and the local magistrate refused to counter-sign the documents.

Regardless, some of Boyd's employees began to take the party inland on foot. Some of them bolted and made their way back to Eden. The first one died on 2 May and as winter approached more became ill. Sixteen Lifu Islanders refused to work and began to try to walk back to Lifu along the coast. Some managed to reach Sydney and seven or eight entered a shop from the rear and began to help themselves to food.

Those that remained at work were shepherds on far-off Boyd stations on the Edward and Murray Rivers. Boyd refused to admit that the trail shipment was a failure, sending for more Islanders.

By this time colonial society was beginning to realise what he had done and was feeling uneasy. The Legislative Council amended the Masters and Servants Act to ban importation of "the Natives of any Savage or uncivilized tribe inhabiting any Island or Country in the Pacific". When Boyd's next group of 54 men and 3 women arrived in Sydney on 17 October, they could not be indentured and, once Boyd found this out, he refused to take any further responsibility.

The same conditions also applied to Boyd's Islander labourers from the first trip and they left the stations and set off to walk to Sydney to find alternative work and to find a way home to the islands. The foreman tried to stop them but the local magistrate ruled that no one had the right to detain them.

Their progress from the Riverina was followed by the press as they began their long march to Sydney. The press described them as cannibals on their way to eat Boyd, and the issue as depicted in the media was extremely racist.

The whole matter was raised again in the Legislative Council and Boyd showed no remorse or sense of responsibility. Boyd justified himself with reference to the African slave trade and there was much discussion in the colony about the issue of introducing slaves from the Pacific Islands.

The recruiters were accused of kidnapping, a charge which they denied. The Islanders remained around Sydney harbour, begging for transport back to their islands. Some of them found alternative work in Sydney and dropped out of the record. Most of the others finally embarked on a French ship returning to the islands, although it is unlikely that many of them ever reached their home islands.

For his part, Boyd overextended himself financially and went bankrupt. He left Australia for California and then the Pacific Islands on his luxury yacht The Wanderer. In the process of claiming to set up a colony he went ashore on Guadalcanal and was killed. Ⓡ

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