



# Braidwood & District Historical Society

PO Box 145 Braidwood NSW 2622

## Newsletter



Number 7 December 2017

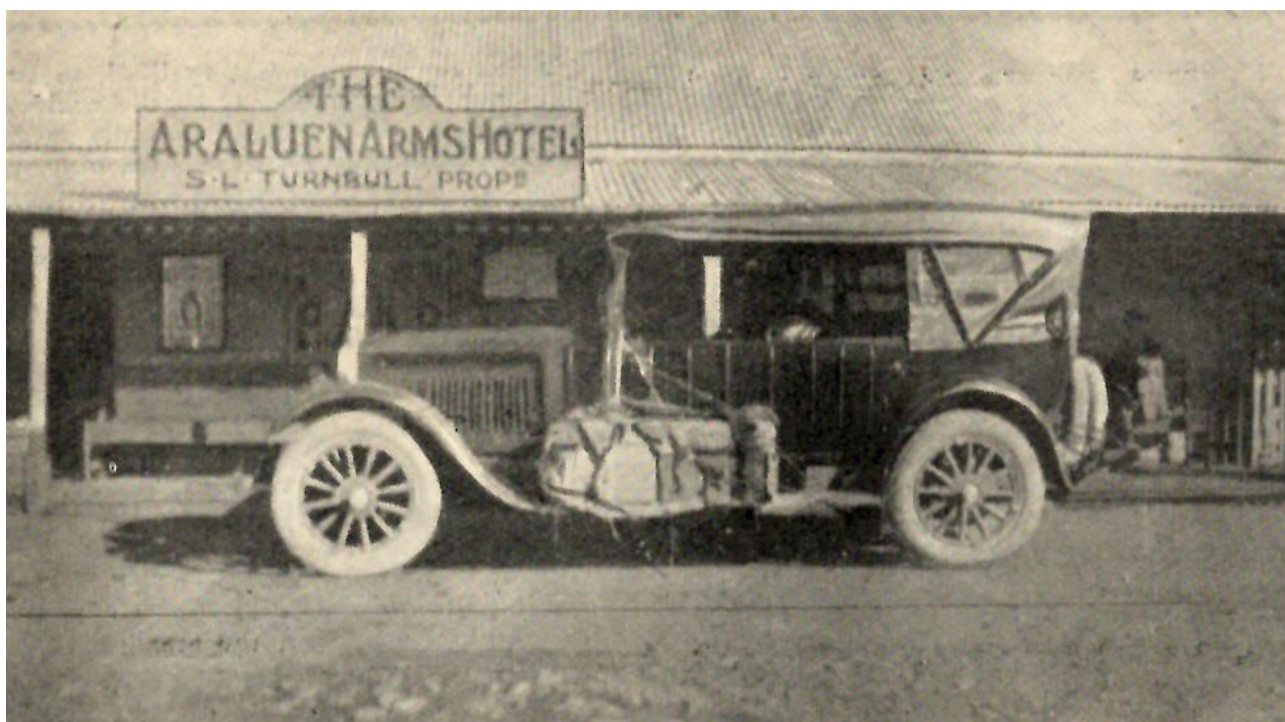
This newsletter is focusing on Araluen

### How Alley's Store became the Araluen Pub

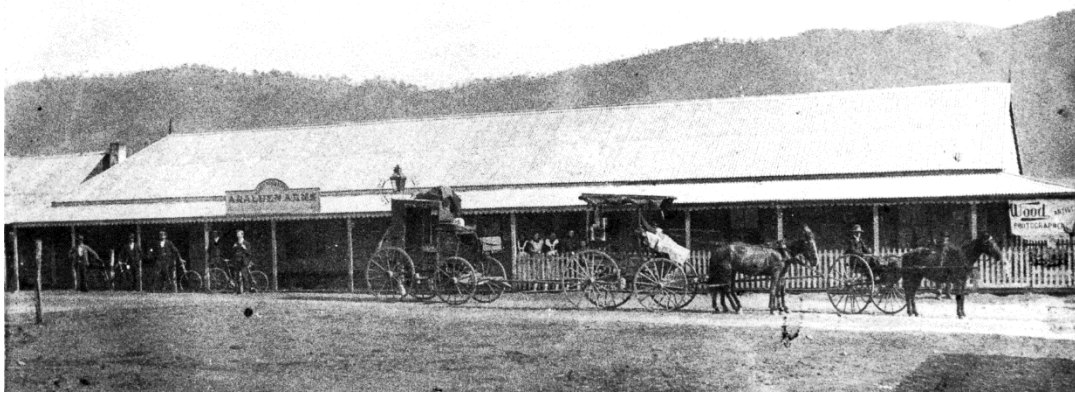
by Peter Smith

At the height of the gold rush in 1864 there were 48 licensed hotels in Araluen, but by 1927 the number had dwindled to just one. The Araluen Arms was located at Redbank opposite the laneway to the Court House. On 28<sup>th</sup> November 1927, under suspicious circumstances, it burnt down. Araluen faced being not just 'the pub with no beer' but worse 'the town with no pub'.

The lessee and licensee of The Araluen Arms was Syphrene (Si) Turnbull. The owners of the building were the Owens brothers from Sydney. When Turnbull's lease expired at the end of June 1927 the Owens brothers wanted Si out. They had negotiated with John (Jack) Collins, the mail contractor, to take over, but Si refused to go. The Owens issued a notice giving Si until 30 November to leave. On 28 November the building was completely destroyed by fire. Si had gone to Sydney, but his brother William (Billy) was there and raised the alarm.



The Araluen Arms Hotel. Photo from an advertisement in 'Back to Braidwood' souvenir booklet, 1925.



**The Araluen Arms had been in operation since 1863.**

Si returned in time for the Quarterly Session of the Licensing Court on Tuesday 5 December, where he applied to have the license transferred to premises known as Alley's Store. The owner of the destroyed hotel objected and argued that a garage and stable still standing on their site could serve as temporary premises and that Turnbull's lease had expired. But it appears Turnbull still had the license which he proposed to transfer and he won the day. The Presiding Magistrate granted a temporary license at Alley's Store for 12 months.

An inquest followed where the coroner found *"the premises were destroyed by fire, but how the fire occurred, whether by accident or otherwise, the evidence did not disclose."*

Three weeks later two cottages almost opposite the burnt hotel also owned by the Owens brothers burnt to the ground. The

Braidwood Dispatch commented *"Fires like troubles, apparently never come singly."*

In the following July the license was transferred from Turnbull to Jack Collins by agreement between the parties. In October Collins applied successfully to have the license transferred from the Araluen Arms to the present location now that the necessary improvements required under the Act had been completed. Ninety years later the Araluen Pub still operates out of Alley's Store.

Si and his wife, May and family moved to a dairy farm at Moruya. From 1942 to 1947 my family lived next door. As boy on school holidays I often stayed with Si and May. Si was a great story teller, but he never spoke to me about 'the red steer' going through The Araluen Arms Hotel.



**Alley's Perseverance Store c.1920.**

## Araluen Boer War Veteran



**David McMinn**

David was born 1868 at Golden Point Araluen, and died 12 Dec 1930 on the Tarago Road Bungendore when his motor lorry overturned. He was 60 years old.

This photo was taken about 1899 when he enlisted as a Trooper in the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Horse to go to the South African Boer War.

Issued with Service No. 1085, he was invalided back home on 6 August 1900. In 1901 he was listed as a miner at Araluen. On 12 Aug 1902 at Braidwood he married Maria Jane Donoghoe. She was born 28 October 1881 at Harolds Cross and died 8 August 1938 in Sydney. They had 11 children



**Maria Jane Donoghoe**

## Under the Coolibah Tree

by Gordon Forbes Young  
an extract

It was too far for me to go home for my holidays, so I spent them at Braidwood, Araluen and other not too distant towns, where relatives housed me. They were wonderful holidays amid wonderful country. One picture I recall often. The home I stayed in was built on a mountain top overlooking the Araluen Valley. Many mornings everything below us was hidden under a sheet of cloud which the rising sun turned into a lake – an expanse of pure white. In those days mining claims were being worked in the valley. About seven in the morning the boilers would be lighted to get up steam for the day's work. The hot air rising from those fires would dissipate the fog immediately above, and make holes in the ceiling.

While we watched from the mountain top, circular holes would appear, and patches of field and stretches of river came into view as though superhuman hands had simultaneously started to paint pictures at different spots on the mighty canvas spread below. As the hour advanced, these isolated pictures widened and expanded until they became masterpieces of colour and form, part of the design, painted as you watched, to remain there in the sunlight a complete picture.

At Bell's Creek my uncle had a country residence. He was magistrate for the Braidwood district. Around this home at Bell's Creek were numerous old alluvial diggings, and some gold was still being won there. And here, panning about in the creek, I struck my first little bits of gold – the beginning of my mining career.

Sometimes I stayed with a school friend, Torrington Blatchford, who lived in the same district, in 'Tor Cottage' Bells Creek, a house perched amidst lawns on a mountain top. Blatchford was going to be a geologist, and he did some field work among the marine fossils three thousand feet above sea level, and imparted some of that knowledge and a

lot of this interest to me. We would geologize down prospecting shafts, tunnels into hills, along outcropping quartz reefs, amongst the granites of the Murrumbidgee Gorge, where the great Burrinjuck Dam now submerges many of our pick marks and camp sites.



The Late Mr. T. BLATCHFORD.

Behind the home I stayed in, up the mountain, was the beginning of the forty mile channel taking water from the head of a creek and leading it along hillsides to fall on a water wheel – the power to drive a crude batter of eight stamps crushing gold bearing quartz. Often the water race crossed the gullies on top of trestles, and this fluming was made of big sheets of bark, their overlapping joints made watertight with clay mixed with fibre and cleverly fixed in position without nails. Even the trestles had little or no iron work, not even bolts, and though often fifty feet high stood up to the wind and rain, and the water flowed dependably and seldom was the batter hung up for want of power.

Torrington Blatchford became a mining geologist, based in Western Australia. In 1931 he explored the countryside where Harold Bell Lassiter claimed to have found gold near the Macdonald Ranges.

Gordon Forbes Young died in 1954 in Apollo Bay, Victoria, where he had been a farmer for most of his life.

## **William Jude Fisher of Salford**

by Brian Robert Bollard  
an extract

Never in his wildest dreams did William think he would spend the rest of his life on the other side of the world when on 1st May 1816 at Lancaster Quarter Sessions he was convicted of larceny and sentenced to 7 years transportation via the convict ship 'Sir William Bensley'. He was born in 1793 and became an Officer in the York Militia. He was 172cm tall, ruddy complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes.

On his arrival in Sydney he was forwarded to Bringelly and by 1822 he was a Constable in the Argyle district. A Petition of Mitigation of Sentence was received by Governor Macquarie and in October 1825 William was granted his Conditional Pardon.

On 24 June 1822 he married in Sydney, Frances Bollard, a young girl from Lidlington Bedfordshire who arrived with her mother and siblings on the 'Providence' on 7 January 1822. In 1825 they were living in Liverpool, and by 1828 they were living at Cobbity where William was employed as a clerk to Rowland Hassall. About 1840 William, Frances and their children Maria, Joshua, John, Sarah, Charlotte moved to Braidwood. Here, William became the Pound Keeper of the Braidwood lock up. His busy workload particularly included impounding lost or strayed livestock and advertising them for sale if not claimed. William Fisher died at Braidwood on 21 September 1843 age 50 years.

Five months later, Frances Fisher married Benjamin Walker on 13 February 1844. Benjamin was a sawyer in the Braidwood district. In October 1859 Benjamin found a gold nugget, entirely free of quartz, six inches by three inches and half an inch thick. It weighed 18 ounces and although greatly pressured, Benjamin refused to say where he found it. It was presumed to be found around Little River or the Tantulean Creek area. Ben also had a slightly smaller nugget and claimed to have one weighing four pounds,

but would not show it. The nuggets were sold to the Joint Stock Bank.

Benjamin and Frances continued to live in Braidwood, where on 2 July 1860, Frances died. Benjamin died in 1866 in Cooma. No further was ever mentioned of his imaginary gold nuggets.

## **Tales of Araluen**

by Will Carter  
written in 1938  
an extract

In 1853 gold was obtained at Deep Creek, but it was the sensational yields of 1858 and 1859 that caused the main rush. It was a wild scene. All hands were roughing it. Social distinctions were disregarded in the feverish haste to achieve a fortune. Rum was the chief liquid asset. Possession was nine points of the law, and maintained on the dictum of the datum-pegs, supported by bluff or bare knuckles.



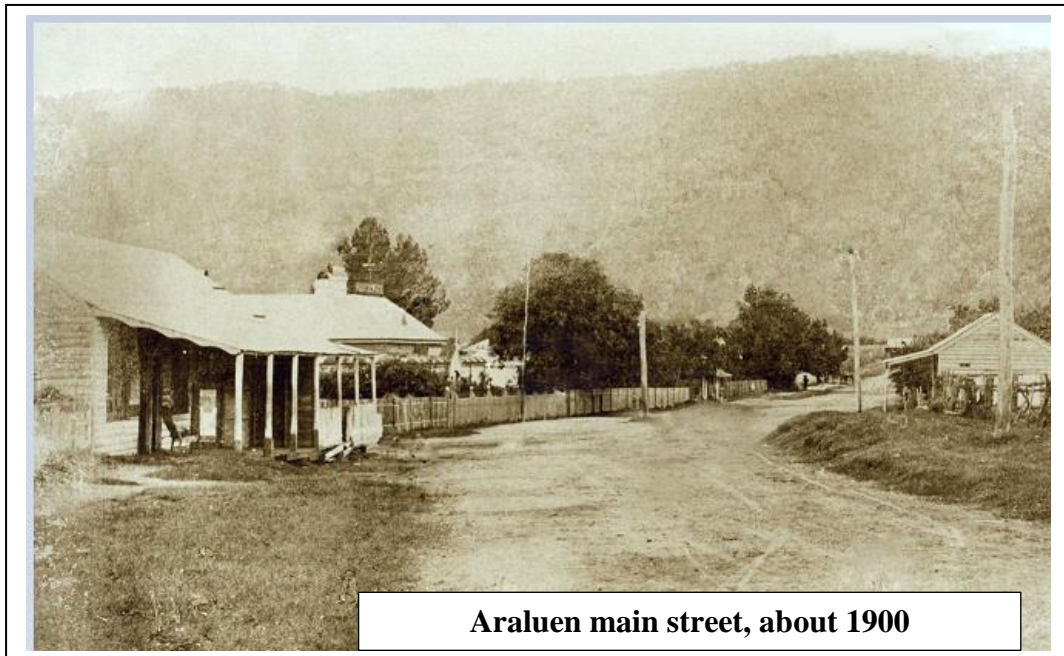
**Alexander Wardell who found gold at Araluen in 1851**

The descent from Araluen Mountain was a three mile scramble over rocks and stumps and brakes without a road. The only way they had of getting provisions down was by means of slides and ropes from Old Man Mountain and also from Sugarloaf Mountain. Vehicle traffic was out of the question. One day a consignment of butter broke loose and bolted down to the bank of a stream, where it sustained a severe gravel rash which soiled the golden pats. That incident gave Dirty Butter Creek its designation for ever.

When Ashton's Circus came, its enterprising proprietor looked down upon the Valley of Promise where gold was awaiting him. At last an enthusiastic publican offered him 50 pounds for a one night performance, Ashton managed to get the running of the ropes and slides and down went the big marquee, poles and other outfit by hook or by crook with little damage to the joy of the community and satisfaction of the proprietor.

Jimmy Marshall and his old mare Peggy at Deep Creek used to take up supplies of groceries and other provisions in two gin cases, carried in cornsack saddle bags on his old mare. He had a depot at Deep Creek, and no sooner did he arrive than he was surrounded by the diggers wives who quickly

celebrate his victory. Araluen made a gala day of it. Goodenough supplying lashings of rum and food. The bakers had a busy time, landing hundreds of loaves in cornsacks. A bucket each of pepper and salt was brought along, and at it the rorty diggers went, carving and eating. Later, when the rum began to work, some of the more reckless ones began shoving lumps of the burnt sacrifice at each other. Sergeant Murphy's white helmet being knocked off his head to the offence of his official dignity. Among hundreds of others present were Pat Welsh, Paddy O'Brien, John Currey, Dicky George, Harry Stone, Billy Greenwood, Jim Matheson, Dirty Butter Bill Smith, Mudmalong Smith, Ted McNamara, Davy Davis, Martin O'Sullivan the fiddler and Tommy Madigan with his flute.



bought his supplies.

Johnny Welsh had a claim at Long Flat. Coming home one evening with a half pint of gold, Thomas Forsyth's ram, which although lacking blood or breeding, fully compensated for in his bunting ability, struck Welsh amidships and was sent sprawling, gold and all, among the thistles. What he said to the ram is not recorded.

Johnny Goodenough and Arthur Alley went to law over a bullock. Johnny won the case and handed over the beast to the public, requesting that it should be roasted whole to

The racecourse was about half a mile from Redbank. From twenty to thirty bare knuckle fights would be seen at each meeting. If any urgent issues remained unsettled they were fought out next day at Redbank among the sweetbriars near Dirty Butter Creek, whose pellucid waters were crimsoned after each round with the gore of the constants. Among the prominent racing men were Frank Tuttlebury, Bill Hoskens, Johnny Madigan,

Billy McIntosh, and Jim Connors, Alby Atkinson, Joey George, Pimmy Putney were leading jockeys.



**Araluen Mountain road about 1925**

Most exciting events were the Saddle and Breeching Stakes, the Collar and Hames Mile etc in which heavy draughts employed at the mines competed for harness trophies. Backers wagered heavily as the cumbersome old sloggers thundered along, and it was good to see Old Mick McNaughton well primed with rum, wipe his right thumb on his tongue and yell "Let ye come on now! I'll back my horse for a tenner, or for fifty if ye want it".

At one time there were forty public houses at Araluen. Among the old time hosts were Tom Peace, James Costello, Billy Burke, William Atkins of the 'Pick and Shovel', and Phil Madigan of the 'Perseverance', who never would allow a pack of cards to enter his house and who graded a man's drinks down from a tumbler to a thimbleful and then said "Now you've had enough, get home to your wife".

## **Our Unidentified Mystery Photo**

Last month's photo was not identified

See if you can help with this one.



**Here are some clues.** The date is probably late 1870s to early 1880s judging by the dress. The woman is very well dressed and therefore you could assume she is in the fashion of the day. She is not wearing a crinoline, (1860 to early 1880s). There does not appear to be a bustle. Although there might be a slight bustle. The fashion for the bustle began in early 1870s and became exaggerated towards 1900.

**Any family resemblances here?**

**Any suggestions?**

**All thoughts welcome.**

## Volunteering at the Museum

- Braidwood & District Historical Society has recently restructured its volunteer management systems and are seeking people to fill a number of important positions.
- We are holding a series of open days for Friends of the Museum to launch this initiative.
- We have a wide variety of specific jobs available in our Exhibitions Department, Archives and Research, Collection Conservation as well as roles in Visitor Services and Events.

**Join us at the museum on the first Friday of each month to help out and learn about the many ways you can contribute.**

See our website at

**[www.braidwoodmuseum.org.au](http://www.braidwoodmuseum.org.au)**

**Museum Opening Hours**  
Friday-Sunday 11am-2pm

**Address:** 186 Wallace Street, Braidwood  
**Telephone:** 4842 2310  
**Admission:** \$5.00 adults \$1.00 children  
**Email:** [help@braidwoodmuseum.org.au](mailto:help@braidwoodmuseum.org.au)

## Volunteer's Christmas Lunch

Our annual thankyou to our wonderful volunteers will be held at the

**Reidsdale Old Cheese Factory on Saturday 9th December at 12pm.**

There will be a ploughman's lunch provided as well as good company.

Looking forward to having you join us.

We need to confirm our numbers by 1st December.

RSVP to

[peter.c.smith@skymesh.com.au](mailto:peter.c.smith@skymesh.com.au)

**And a Merry Christmas to all our members**

