

TIMELINES

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Welcome

Welcome to the December 2019-January 2020 edition of *Timelines*, the newsletter of the Murwillumbah Historical Society, our last edition for the 2010s and first for the 2020s. We hope you will enjoy this bumper edition.

This edition continues our recent focus on medical and public health issues with two articles by Maris Bruzgulis. These cover the early years of what was then the Tweed District Hospital - which evolved into the facility we know today as the Murwillumbah District Hospital. Maris details local impressions of the new hospital opened in Murwillumbah in August 1939, just a few days before the beginning of the Second World War.

Maris' second story highlights how - as is often the case - Murwillumbah's early medical services interfaced with people at the difficult margins of society.

Di Millar contributes an interesting piece on a famous local building— *Lisangar*—which is indelibly associated with the district's pioneering Twohill family.

Finally, we are pleased to provide a very interesting sample of photos from the 1950s. These include several images of the 1954 Murwillumbah Flood taken by one of the district's

prominent local identities - Doug Anthony— just a few years before he succeeded his father as Member for the Federal seat of Richmond.

Tweed District Hospital - Sunday, 27 August 1939

Eighty years have passed since the opening of the new Tweed District Hospital on Sunday, 27 August 1939. One writer in the early 2000s judged that the hospital has become the "contemporary cathedral and palace" of the Tweed—and his description resonates with that written in the *Tweed Daily* on 28 August 1939:

Towering 50 feet [15 metres] into the air, [the Hospital] is the biggest structure yet raised in the Tweed district, and it is most fitting that such an edifice should be a temple of healing and dedicated to the service of humanity, as well as being a striking monument to the progress of Murwillumbah and its adjacent centres.



WE WANT TO COPY YOUR OLD PHOTOS!

If you have come into possession of any old family or historic photos, please lend them to us to copy! Please contact the museum on (02) 6670 2493 by email at trm@tweed.nsw.gov.au



[Insert 33442 MUS2009.4; Murwillumbah Hospital collection of photographs and documents.]



Murray Views for some unknown reason preferred the back of the Tweed District Hospital to act as the tourist drawcard – not its far more Art Deco-like north facade or the porch of the main entrance. [michaelcastick.com - <https://www.ebay.com.au/itm/Murwillumbah-Tweed-District->

The *Tweed Daily* lavished considerable attention on the pleasing aesthetic of the hospital's design:

The wall decorations are Nile green in color, white opaque glass is used for the windows; At the northern and southern ends of the building on each floor are the utility blocks, fitted with Roman baths, conveniences and alarm signals. Creamy tiles surround the baths, and are also used on the walls. The [operating] theatre is done in Nile green and also has a terrazzo floor. The color scheme throughout is restful to the eyes, while at the same time helping to infuse cheerfulness into the atmosphere.

Varying shades of cream predominate, but colors of deeper hues, are found in various parts of the building; [and] as most of the floors are of concrete, they have been covered with tentest, a cellulose felt made from a by-product of cane [fittingly enough for the Tweed district!], and then covered with a linoleum of marble mottle design, which on the ground floor has a green base, on the second floor a brown base and on the third floor a lighter shade of brown.

While the *Tweed Daily*'s report gives the impression that the look of the Hospital carried much weight, aesthetics did not trump utility.

The newspaper was impressed that “[a]dvanced ideas in many branches have been applied to its erection and appointment. It has been liberally endowed with costly facilities, embracing all phases of the activities of a country hospital”.

These facilities included: “the principal telephone switchboard, which, in addition to being in direct communication with the exchange, provides inter-communication with every part of the institution, the Secretary's offices and the Committee Room”.

There was also “a battery of four steam cookers, each of which may be used for a different purpose, although all are operated on the same principle. The system is worked on a 5lb. pressure, and is practically foolproof. The services in the laundry are among the most modern available, and every possible labor-saving device has been provided”.

These devices included “a large rotary washing machine, which is operated by electricity” and a “hydro-extractor [that] replaces the usual method of wringing”. The “alarm system is the last word in efficiency, with lights over the patient's bed, outside the door of the room or ward and at the nurses' call board and an intermittent buzzer that continues until disconnected by the nurse at the bedside of the caller”. But the *pièce de résistance* was the lift:

The automatic lift, running from the basement to the top storey, is one of the few in the country districts of the State. The elevator car [could] comfortably hold a bed or two stretchers, [and attendants. Access can be obtained from any floor.

The new hospital was designed to be the pre-eminent site for the delivery of modern medical care. There was therefore a natural emphasis on the design of the operating theatre. It was air-conditioned, and:

all foul air is withdrawn and replaced by fresh on the sucker-and-blower principle. Artificial lighting is provided by two special non-glare suspended electric shades, giving a brilliant illumination. For operations, a shadowless light unit will be used, and this has been specially wired to provide an emergency system of lighting in the event of the failure of

the general electricity supply during an operation. The emergency unit is operated from a set of storage batteries, and will work on 12 volts DC. The batteries are housed in an alcove cupboard, just outside the theatre door, and the switch-over system is automatic.

The triumph of anaesthetics and antisepsis was evident in the provision of an anaesthetic room, with terrazzo flooring and ample cupboard space” and a “battery of three hand basins, fitted with knee-action control of hot and cold sterile water”.

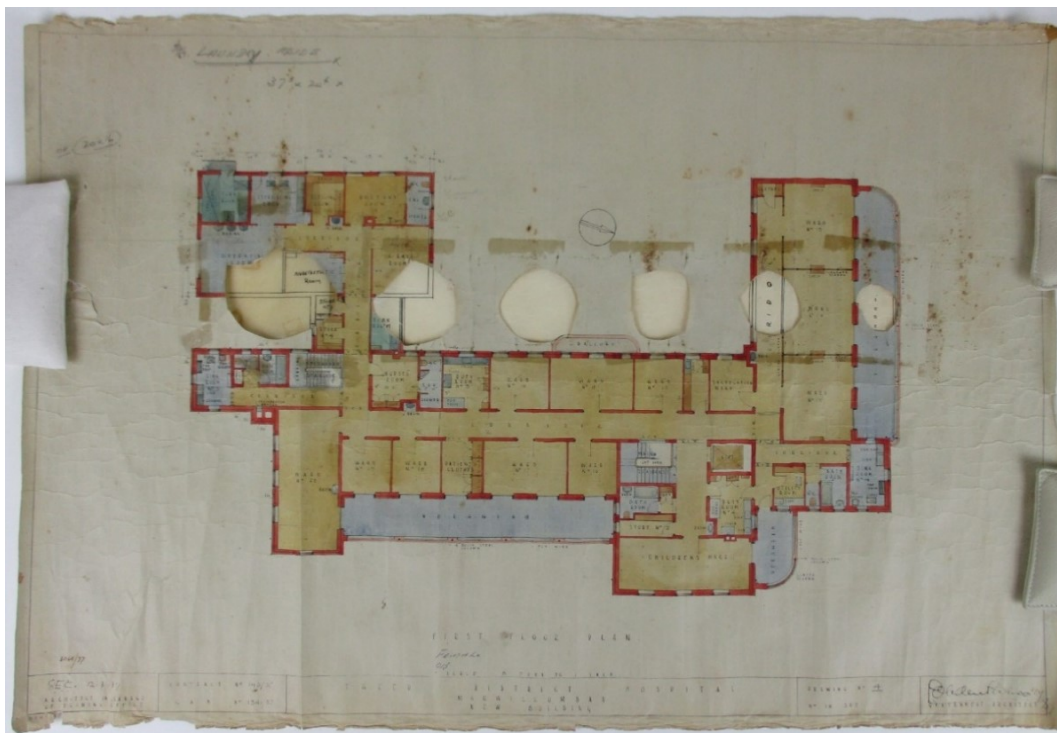
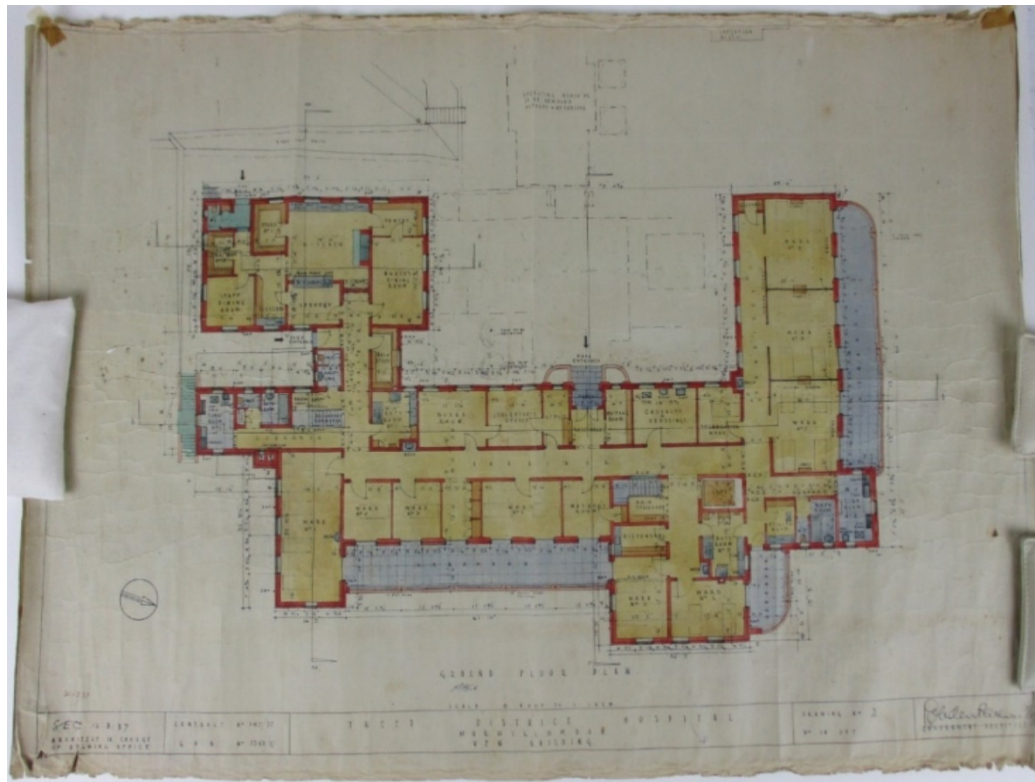


The operating theatre. One of the ‘two special non-glare suspended electric shades’ can be seen at the top of the photo. [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000238.]

The *Tweed Daily* was silent about the specific illnesses and diseases that were to be treated at the new hospital. The paper had, however, a very clear view of how the Hospital would help its patients recover their health. “The Hospital's construction accords with the latest trend in hospital architecture, which eliminates austerity and allows the therapeutic value of sunlight and fresh air to be utilised to the best advantage”.

The public ward was divided into three sections: “this is a new feature in hospital layout, and permits the segregation of patients of similar ages and with identical ailments. The partitioning of the ward in this manner also has many other advantages” - although the paper did not specify them. The new hospital also housed intermediate and private wards, and “the appointments of each are the same in principle”. More importantly, as far as the Hospital's role was concerned, was that “most of the wards and rooms open out on to the balconies, which could be correctly termed sun

The hospital was originally planned to be a two storey building. A third storey was later added to the Tweed Distric Hospital opened in 1939. The floor plans of the ground and first storeys show the original scope of the building.



[Tweed Regional Museum – 42781]

porches. The curative value of the reaction of beautiful surroundings on patients is acknowledged by experts". If the *Tweed Daily's* description is to be taken at face value, a stay in hospital was nigh on a holiday – as for some patients it possibly was.

The balconies of the Tweed Hospital command a majestic view of the valley, with its varied scenery, changing colors and river reflecting the clear, blue sky on a sunny day. All the balconies and verandahs, as well as the numerous windows, are screened to prevent the entry of insects.

These balconies, which flank the northern and eastern sides of the building, can be flooded with the sun's rays, bringing their health-giving properties. The window doors leading to the balconies are in three sections, two of which can be raised to a sufficient height to allow of the transfer of beds to the porches.

For some patients, hospitalisation did not even have to stop the daily grind: "Three of the private wards, one on each floor, have been equipped with a wall plug for the provision of a telephone at a slight extra cost. The service ... enables a businessman to communicate with his premises, and maintain contact with his affairs" during his convalescence. It is comforting to think that the demand for instantaneous communications technology has been unceasing through the ages and is not confined to the early twenty-first century.

Yet, again, the best was left for last. The "roof of any building is generally its most uninteresting part, but not so with that of the new hospital". The roof was not simply waterproof, for a "sweeping view can be obtained from the roof, which will be used in warm weather for convalescents. Parapets and iron railings have been constructed as a protection, and, even while reclining, a patient may view the majestic panorama and drink in the beauty of the Tweed".



[Insert 43026 Old and New sections of Tweed District Hospital during construction in 1938-39.]

Originally designed with only two storeys, by the time the Hospital's foundation stone was laid on Thursday, 21 October 1937, a third was being planned. This floor was to include the maternity unit. It was completed and "ready to receive the first patient" in July 1939, even before the official opening.

A public ward of eight beds has been provided, and adjoining this are two annexes—the labour room and the delivery room. Sterilisers and other necessary equipment and services have been installed. Associated with the maternity section are the nursery and a special room for babies born prematurely.

A previous *Tweed Daily* article had described the Hospital's appearance, reinforcing the impression that for the *Daily's* journalists aesthetics and utility were inseparable: "The nursery has been equipped to accommodate 14 babies, the bassinets being finished in the same color as all other equipment — gold lacquer. The airy wards and nursery present a very attractive appearance."

The opening of the new Hospital provided an opportunity to reflect on its history and laud the district's general progress. There were articles in the *Tweed Daily* on the development of the Hospital, on the Hospital Board (previously the Hospital Committee), its Presidents, Secretaries and the Matrons of the Hospital, and even "[t]he evolution of the hospital" - all seeking to inform and educate its readers, as well as providing a broader

context for local developments.

Even *The Telegraph* in Brisbane noted the opening of the Hospital. The wider world, however, had more pressing concerns that were rapidly overshadowing what was a local red-letter day. On Monday, 4 September 1939, the fanfare for this modern Hospital was drowned out by the tocsins of war. The *Tweed Daily*'s page five headline read "Germany our enemy".

The following photos illustrate very clearly the transition from the old to the new Tweed District Hospital.

THE FORERUNNER—THE OLD TWEED DISTRICT COTTAGE HOSPITAL



Tweed District Hospital - old buildings - south end of the Main Block. [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000242.]



Tweed District Hospital - old buildings - front of the Main Block. The left hand side was the original building, with the right hand side a later extension. [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000243.]



Tweed District Hospital - old buildings - Isolation Block, one of the first additional buildings erected following the completion of the original Hospital in 1904. [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000247.]



Tweed District Hospital - old buildings - rear of the Main Block. [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000244.]



Tweed District Hospital - old buildings - front of the Domestic Block. [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000245.]

With the coming of the new Hospital, the old had to give way by degrees. The old Tweed Cottage/District Hospital buildings were either demolished or re-purposed.

**THE (THEN) NEW
TWEED DISTRICT HOSPITAL —
ALMOST AS WE KNOW IT TODAY**



The main entrance to the Hospital. '[T]he northern elevation and the theatre and kitchen block form a hollow-square entrance area'. The old Tweed Cottage Hospital is visible in the bottom left hand corner. (Point of view – east and north.) [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000235.]



The porch of the main entrance. (Point of view – east and south.) [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000237.]



Another view of the main entrance. Again the old Tweed Cottage Hospital is visible in the bottom left hand corner. (Point of view – north east.) [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000236.]



The northern face of the new Hospital. Behind it can be seen the old Tweed Cottage Hospital. (Point of view – south west.) [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000234.]

(This series continues on the next page.)



The northern eastern corner of the new Hospital. (Point of view – south west.) [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000241.]



The new nurses' quarters were completed in 1941. This photo shows northern face of the nurses' quarters. (Point of view – south.) [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000239.]

THE TWEED COTTAGE HOSPITAL AND LOCAL SOCIAL ISSUES

The opening of the new hospital in 1939 was clearly a major milestone in the development of modern medical services in the Tweed. However, hospitals and other major physical facilities are not simply bricks and mortar, but ultimately embody wider social relationships and structures. The history of medical services in the Tweed reflect some of the difficulties that Australian society has faced in its broader evolution. Some of this history continues to make for troubling reflections today.

The policy of segregation of Indigenous and South Sea Islander peoples was canvassed as early as 1906:

At a meeting of the Tweed Cottage Hospital committee last week, at Murwillumbah, a special committee was appointed to investigate the matter of increased accommodation at the hospital. This action has arisen from the necessity of having to put a kanaka in a ward with white patients.

Admittedly, the Hospital Committee was sorely vexed by its dealings with marginalised people in general:

At a meeting of the Tweed Cottage Hospital Committee it was decided to bring the matter of admission of alcoholic patients under the notice of the conference to be held in Sydney in September. It was stated that an alcoholic patient recently kept all the inmates from sleeping on the night of his admission.

In 1919 a man who 'had recently been worrying over the death of his brother' died in a police cell at Murwillumbah. The Coroner's verdict was that death was 'from injuries caused by knocking his head against the walls of the cell while in an insane condition due to heavy drinking'.

In giving the verdict the Coroner said he would add that there was no

doubt in his mind that the treatment given in the case under review was nothing short of a public scandal. The hospital staff had done all in their power for the patient but it was no place for this class of patient to be sent to.

To have sent him down to the ordinary lock-up, there to be placed in a hard-walled cell was a harsh thing to do to a man in his condition. He did not blame the police for this; they had no other place to put him nor had the hospital. It was, however, high time that the public insisted that such cases be treated in a proper and humane way. He could not express himself, as he would wish about the callous manner in which the man had been treated because of this neglect of proper facilities.

The article also reported that “[a]part from cuffs the Matron knew of no other appliances at the hospital for restraining such cases” and the deceased “had been violent in the hospital and the Matron had, the wardsman deposed, said the hospital was no place for such a case; he should be at the police station”.



Tweed District Hospital - old buildings – the Aboriginal Block. [NSW State Archives, 4346_a020_a020000248.j6

LISNAGAR - embodying early Tweed history

At 1.20 a.m. on Friday, November 11, 1921 Mr Edward Twohill died at his residence, known as Lisnagar, after earlier suffering a stroke. He was survived by his wife Ellen, whom he had married in Murwillumbah in 1890, and his nine surviving children (one had died in infancy).

Who was Edward Twohill and why is his old family home today such an important link to early history on the Tweed?

According to Twohill family history records, Edward Twohill was born in Castlelyons, County Cork, Ireland on June 6, 1856, fourth youngest of the 14 children of Edward Twohill and his wife Ellen nee O'Keefe.

His older brother John, born in 1840, had arrived in Australia at the age of 19 and following his travels around several states he decided it was time to settle down. John Twohill married Mary Agnes Kennedy in the NSW town of Taree in 1873. When the opportunity came, he bought a property in NSW on the Macleay River where he raised his family and resided until his death in 1920.

In 1883 Edward Twohill left Ireland and set sail for Australia where his brother John acted as his sponsor. Upon his arrival, Edward worked on John's farm for a time before travelling to Sydney where he sought work.

John Twohill liked to relate the story regarding the inexperienced Edward being left to tend a herd of cattle on the Macleay River. Unfortunately for Edward, the job went wrong when he stampeded the cattle into the bush and was promptly sacked for his blunder.

Later John wrote a letter home to the family regarding Edward's progress since his arrival in Australia and made the prediction that Edward “would no doubt go to the dogs.”

John was to be proven wrong as Edward became a Tweed pioneer who was loved and respected by his local community until his demise. Three days after Edward's death an obituary entitled Late Mr E Twohill – Passing of Pioneer appeared in the *Tweed Daily* which stated in part:

“The late Mr Twohill came out from Ireland in 1883 and carried out farming operations with his brother John on the Macleay River. After about three years he went to Sydney and was with the firm of John Bridge and Co. for two years. He then proceeded to the Tweed as a road contractor for the Government, which he continued for two years. Being a man of remarkable energy, he was not satisfied with an ordinary day's work, but during the period he was road making he found time to grow corn. He grew 58 acres each year, which enabled him afterwards to solely depend upon farming. At that time, he was also interested in stock dealing.

The deceased was a splendid farmer and was noted for being one of the best maize growers on the Tweed. In those days the corn was taken down river in punts to meet the boats. He then rented “Lisnagar”, formerly the property of Samuel William Gray, a member of parliament in the days of Sir John Robertson and Sir Henry Parkes. Twenty years later he purchased this property, together with other holdings throughout the district, some of which he later disposed of.”

In a book written by a granddaughter of Edward's brother John, a part of the newspaper's obituary was changed to “In those days the corn was taken down river in punts to meet the boats. He then bought the block of land, where he built “Lisnagar”, the block was formerly the property of Samuel William Gray.”

Edward Twohill arrived on the Tweed around 1888 and in 1890 married Ellen Neylan in Murwillumbah. Perhaps he did initially lease the land containing the old Gray homestead in order to earn an income

before purchasing the property and building Lisnagar. According to Twohill family information, Lisnagar was constructed in 1902 so where did the expanding Twohill family live until then?

While Lisnagar is of historical importance, so too is the site on which the home was built. Samuel Gray, the original owner of the land, and his brother-in-law Joshua Bray were trailblazers on the Tweed in every sense.

Samuel William Gray was born in Armagh, County Armagh, Ireland in 1823 and at the age of 12 he arrived in the colony of New South Wales where he lived on his father's Omega Estate at Kiama. He was first elected to the NSW Parliament in 1859 in the seat of Kiama.

Samuel journeyed to the Tweed River region in 1862 to take advantage of the new land act introduced by the NSW Premier, John Robertson, in 1861. The Robertson Land Act, as it came to be known, allowed for the free selection of crown lands. Samuel was the successful bidder at auction for the lease of the Wollumbin run and suggested to his brother-in-law Joshua Bray (Samuel married Mary Bray in Sydney in 1862) that he should join him there as his partner.

Samuel Gray resigned his parliamentary seat in 1864 in order to pioneer the Tweed River as a sugar grower and joined Joshua who, according to Bray family records, had arrived on the Tweed in 1863. The brothers-in-law set about establishing their homes on the banks of the north arm of the Tweed River with Samuel naming his homestead Coolamon (the land now occupied by Lisnagar).

According to Bray family history, Samuel Gray brought his home up river from the settlement at Terranora (originally Taranora cedar camp) roughly situated where Dry Dock is today. A little further along the waterway Joshua built his homestead on his estate which he named Kynnumboon (where it remains today).

During the 1860s Kynnumboon developed into the upriver centre of the Tweed. Joshua

Bray and Samuel Gray cut a bridle track, known as Gray's track, between Kynnumboon and Casino and soon after a mail service commenced. Following the widening of the road for vehicular traffic, Cobb and Co introduced a bi-weekly mail service between the Tweed and Nerang. Kynnumboon was now on the direct mail route between the Richmond and Nerang Valleys.

In 1868 the *NSW Government Gazette* published a notice stating that on August 1, 1868 the post office known as Wollumbin would be designated as Kynnumboon.

Much of the land on the has been taken up in the largest areas allowed by law, and therefore a large area of ground is occupied by a comparatively small population; but it is credible to the energy and intelligence of that comparatively small population that so hard an amount of hard work has been done in so small a time. It appears to be a common saying that the Grays and the Brays have got "all the land" and that there is none left worth having."

The reporter travelled along the Tweed River to pay a visit to the two men and wrote:

"Here, ten miles above the junction (junction of the north arm and main arm of the Tweed River), is Mr S W Gray's station of Wollumbin or Kynnumboon, on the Coolamon Plains now all but engrossed by foxtail grass. Mr Gray purchased this station some nine years ago, and has, I was informed, become entitled to select 900 acres of land by virtue of improvements made during this time of draining, clearing and track-making.

The post office is a quarter mile higher up on the same bank, and is under the superintendence of Mr Bray, his partner; and from these two gentlemen I met with that kindness, hospitality and attention for which they and the inhabitants of the Tweed River are generally now known."

Samuel Gray returned to Kiama due to his father's ill health and was re-elected to parliament in 1874 as the Member for Illawarra.

In 1876 travelling reporter's article entitled "A Trip to the Tweed" included a detailed account of a boat trip "along a creek that was a north arm of the Tweed River." In part the reporter wrote; "Smoothly gliding backwards out of the creek we pull up towards the residence of Mr Gray MLA snugly reposing midst the garden of flowers and fruit trees which line the banks of the gentle stream. He was a great man on the Tweed was Mr Gray of Kynnumboon. He lives 'away down south', where he has extensive property at Kiama and is a partner of Gray and Bray of Kynnumboon. He is what is called in Ireland an absentee. His buildings are now occupied by the post and telegraph offices of the district. At the back of the residence of Mr Joshua Bray J P is Kynnumboon Plains, a sort of oasis in the broad scrubland."

The reporter also observed that "the finest bamboo that I have ever seen in Australia is growing at Mr Bray's at Kynnumboon". The garden aspect and homestead effect with the dark green waving bamboo, along with some very fine oranges, lemons and other citrus at Mr Brays, was described by the reporter as a thing of beauty.

Such articles written by early travelling reporters were popular with the general public who had an insatiable curiosity about how settlers lived in other remote regions of the country. These early Tweed River newspaper articles -- while not always completely accurate - offered an interesting glimpse into land development on the Tweed and the importance of the pioneering work of settlers such as Samuel Gray and Joshua Bray.

The bamboo at Kynnumboon was, in time, cut down. However, the bamboo planted by Samuel Gray at his Coolamon homestead now flourishes out of control in the grounds of Lisnagar. Samuel Gray once again resigned his parliamentary seat in 1880 but stood in 1882 for the seat of Richmond which he held until his retirement in 1885.

Samuel William Gray had experienced poor health for some time. On Friday, April 19, 1889 he died in Sydney having earlier suffered a stroke.

In November 1889 the will of Samuel William Gray of Edgecliff Road, Sydney was approved by the Supreme Court, Brisbane at £24, 700. Samuel's brother-in-law Joshua Bray and his widow Mary Gray were two of the three executors of the will.

In December 1915 Joshua Bray suffered a "paralytic stroke" at his Kynumboon home and remained in frail health until his death at his residence on the night of Thursday 20th February 1918.

Joshua Bray left an estate valued at £67, 615, of which £51, 932 was represented in property. the Supreme Court, Brisbane at £24, 700. Samuel's brother-in-law Joshua Bray and his widow Mary Gray were two of the three executors of the will. In December 1915 Joshua Bray suffered a "paralytic stroke" at his Kynumboon home and remained in frail health until his death at his residence on the night of Thursday 20th February 1918.

Joshua Bray left an estate valued at £67, 615, of which £51, 932 was represented in property. He left his late residence, Kynumboon, to his widow Rosalie and his son Edward Llewellyn Bray for their respective lives and afterwards for Edward's children. Joshua directed that the property not be sold until the youngest child had reached 21 years of age. Provision was made for his other sons and daughters with the residue of the estate left in trust for them.

Kynumboon homestead remains in the Bray family to this day.

During his lifetime Joshua Bray's impact on the Tweed was substantial. Born in Appin, NSW on September 3rd, 1838 Joshua Bray was only 17 when he went into partnership in a Tumut cattle station with his brothers. Following the sale of his Tumut property, Joshua Bray made his way to the Tweed in June 1863 becoming the first man to drive stock from the Richmond through the tracks over the ranges to his newly acquired property.

On May 18, 1865 Joshua Bray married Rosalie Gertrude Nixon, second daughter of Englishman George Russell Nixon. Rosalie's brothers Frank and Edward had arrived in the colony to look for land for their father and had taken up a selection on Brungle Creek on the Tumut Plains after it was opened for selection in 1861. The following year

their parents, three brothers and three sisters arrived, and a bark and slab roofed home was built there for the family. Joshua and Rosalie Bray had 14 children, 11 of whom were still living at the time of their father's death.

Joshua, like his brother-in-law Samuel Gray, had large private business interests particularly in land, cattle and timber. However, from the time of his arrival on the Tweed Joshua Bray figured largely in its affairs filling practically all the public offices then available.

At various times Joshua held the position of Postmaster (the post office at Wollumbin was established on November 1, 1866); District Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages at Tweed River; Police Magistrate (appointed November 27, 1865); Coroner; Crown Land Agent; Gold Mining Warden; and Guardian of Minors as well as other public titles. Joshua also celebrated marriages. With the arrival of additional settlers to the Tweed, Joshua Bray subdivided his Kynumboon Estate into farms which he leased to numerous settlers.

With the deaths of Samuel Gray, Joshua Bray and Edward Twohill, an important era on the Tweed passed as well. By the 1920s, the hard challenges and uncertainties of life that the early colonists had to face had abated somewhat. Lisnagar, however, grandly remained as a symbol of their struggle, drive and optimism.

After Edward Twohill's death in 1921 his widow Ellen resided at Lisnagar until her death on February 18, 1939. Edward and Ellen's unmarried children remained living in the family home. As changes were not allowed to be made in their father's home, Lisnagar remained untouched from that earlier time when the whole family resided there. The only additions made inside were a shower and toilet.

With the passing of time Kevin, the youngest of the ten Twohill children, became the last surviving child. In the 1990s Kevin gave help and support to his nephew Terry Twohill, the present owner of Lisnagar, to restore the dilapidated homestead. By 1996 the project was nearing completion and Terry promoted Lisnagar as a time capsule. Tours of the home were commenced, and catered lunches were provided for groups of six and upwards in order to help raise extra revenue for further renovations.



Lisnagar today: Author's photo

An information pamphlet on Lisnagar acquired on a visit there in 2002 reads as follows;

“Lisnagar” was built for Edward Twohill by two local tradesmen, Thomas Hoyle and Alfred Modini in 1902. Edward was born in Castlelyons (Ireland) the youngest of ten brothers in a family of fourteen. Edward emigrated to Australia when nineteen and died in 1921.

He married Ellen Neylan (who was born in Dungog NSW) and they had 10 children, six boys and four girls, all now deceased.”

“Lisnagar” is named after a castle at County Cork Ireland (built in the 11th century).

“Lisnagar” at Kynnumboon does not resemble the castle at all. It was built in the Queensland style with single skin walls (the exterior wall timber goes the full length of the two storeys) the timber being cedar and the floors teak.

The wrought iron surrounding the house is very heavy and an individual piece approximately 520mm (1’8.5”) by 840mm

(2’9) weighs 14kgs. The interior furniture is made of several timbers, but mostly hoop pine. All are of antique value.”

In days gone by Cobb and Co used to have a hotel at the back of “Lisnagar”. This was a stopping place before going to Murwillumbah and then on to Lismore.”

The Australian Heritage Commission has placed “Lisnagar” on its list of historic buildings. The famous stand of bamboo along side of “Lisnagar” is approximately 150 years old.”

However, some of this information appears to be in doubt.

A business notice appearing in the *Tweed Daily* in November 1937 under the heading Alf Modini, Builder and Contractor, Murwillumbah is as follows.

Mr Modini began contracting on the Tweed thirty-three years ago and has been engaged in this line of business ever since.

A few of his business achievements include Churches, Schools and Convents at Uki and Tweed Heads, the Tweed Shire Council Chambers, The Australian Hotel, and private residences for Messrs G Skinner and R C Kirby.”

Mr Modini seemed quite precise with his timeframe, so was Lisnagar built some years later?

Thomas Hoyle was an architect and according to his obituary published in the *Tweed Daily* in November 1917 “came to the Tweed 16 years ago” and “was responsible for designing many fine business premises and private dwellings both in Murwillumbah and Tweed Heads.”

Mr Hoyle may quite possibly be responsible for drawing up the plans for Lisnagar, but he would not have physically worked on the project.

According to Bray family history, at the time of Lisnagar's construction Joshua Bray asked Edward Twohill not to cut down the valuable trees in the area but instead use more common trees that were still suitable for the job. This is said to have caused some friction between the two men.

While Cobb and Co stopped at Kynnumboon there have been no records found to support the story that a hotel was once established there.

A major contributor to the wealth of Bray family history was Henry Granville Bray (1869-1950), the son of James Bray, Joshua Bray's brother. Regarding Joshua Bray's arrival on the Tweed he wrote:

There was already a small settlement of sawyers at Terranora at the mouth of the river.

They were engaged in cedar getting in the upper reaches. The logs were floated down to the Heads, where schooners called occasionally with supplies and to take away the cedar.

A six-roomed house had been erected at the Heads for a public house, but Samuel Gray had bought it and had it towed up the river and re-erected on the banks of the North Arm, on the edge of the Walumban Plain.

He had also engaged one of the sawyers, Patrick Smith, with his wife as housekeeper. Though it was rough and unfinished, there was a roof for Joshua at his journey's end."

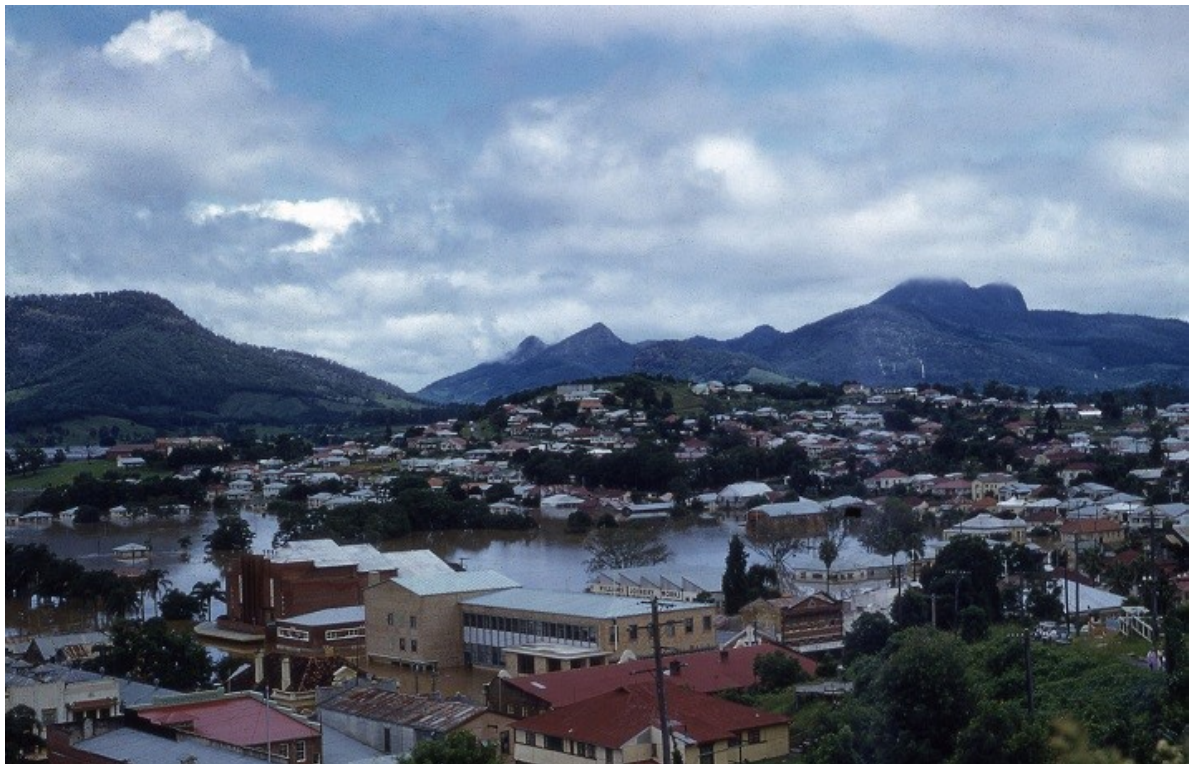
In *Men and a River* by L T Daley, mention is made that Samuel Gray put up the money for the construction of a public house at Terranora and engaged local boat builder Peter Scott, to build it.

Unravelling the history of Kynnumboon and the origins of Lisnagar is a continuing story - it is likely that there is still more information waiting to be discovered.

THE 1954 MURWILLUMBAH FLOOD — PICTURES THAT TELL A THOUSAND WORDS

In photos that present a stark contrast to today's catastrophic bush-fires, J D Anthony captured the impact of the 1954 flood in some stunning images, that convey the cheerfulness and curiosity of the town's people. All photos © J D Anthony







ABOUT THE SOCIETY: Formed on 16 March 1959, the Society's aim is to research, preserve and promote the rich and unique history of our town of Murwillumbah and its surrounds in the picturesque Tweed River Valley of far northern New South Wales. The Society operates out of our Research Centre in the Tweed Regional Museum's historic Murwillumbah facility. The Society is proudly supported by the Tweed Regional Museum, a community facility of Tweed Shire Council.

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C/- Tweed Regional Museum, 2 Queensland Rd, Murwillumbah NSW 2484 or PO Box 373, Murwillumbah NSW 2484



ABOUT THE MUSEUM: The Tweed Regional Museum is a Tweed Shire Council community facility, established in 2004, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Tweed Shire Council and the Murwillumbah, Tweed Heads and Uki and South Arm Historical Societies. It is one museum that operates across three branch locations; Murwillumbah, Tweed Heads and Uki, and in association with these three local Historical Societies. The three locations connect the Tweed Shire from the coast to the mountains, providing a unique journey into the history, people and places of the majestic Tweed Valley.

For information about the Tweed Regional Museum please visit: <http://museum.tweed.nsw.gov.au/> or phone on (02) 6670 2493.