

# TIMELINES

In fifteen minutes

Number 8

## Keeping You Up-to-Date – It's 2024!

The Murwillumbah Historical Society's February meeting was a corker! There were nine people in the room, including two new members in search of a job. The president, Beverley Fairly was in full flight, with suggestions for the coming year, so we can be sure there will be a positive outcome in this respect.

### The Committee

Recapitulating. The Society's committee is Beverley Fairley (President); Max Boyd (Vice President); Belinda Neilson (Treasurer, *pro tem*); Pauline Hibbard (Membership); Joan Cuthel (Research); David Taylor (IT); Betty Hamill (Social); Ian Batten (Committee Member); and Māris Bruzgulis (Secretary and *Timelines* Editor). Max and Belinda were absent, but the two new members in the room were Natasha Green and Henry James. Bev is set on raising the profile of the Society, and Natasha and Henry can be sure that they will be busy in helping achieve this goal.

### In the Digisphere

Ian Batten has begun posting on the 'Murwillumbah Matters' Facebook page, making the Society's name known in the digisphere. He awards free memberships of the Society to readers of his posts who solve the challenges he sets. Success has rewarded Karen Chilcott and Vicki Jenkins.

### New Members

Since the last committee meeting in November 2023, six new members have joined the Society – in addition to Natasha and Henry, and Karen and Sandy, we welcome Sandy Joseph and Franc Krasna.

## Social Activities

### The End of 2023 ...

At daybreak on 24 November the Christmas cruise and lunch lost the cruise segment. Sadly, a malfunction on board the *Spirit of Wollumbin* made it impossible for us to take our trip up the river. Most of the twenty-four people booked for the cruise still chose to have lunch at The Chinderah Tavern. The noisier atmosphere meant that the sharing of personal histories evolved in a more informal way over lunch. A good lead-up to Christmas.

### ... and the Beginning of 2024

'A Tiny Taste of Tyalgum' festival organisers asked if our Society would have a presence in the renowned Tyalgum Hall during their festival. Betty Hamill, Bev Fairlie, Ian Batten, and Māris Bruzgulis, and were in a good position to greet people hiding from the heat. Interest was shown in the settlers, and the lay of the land in early days. Māris provided maps where people could find where they live now. We sold some *History of Tyalgum and District* and *Pioneering and Historic Families of the Tyalgum District* books, as well as copies of *Under the Pinnacle*. We were also entertained by local poets. Who could ask for more?

## Our Next Meeting

**1:00 pm on Monday, 18 March 2024, at the Society's Tony Clarke Research Room at the Tweed Regional Museum.**

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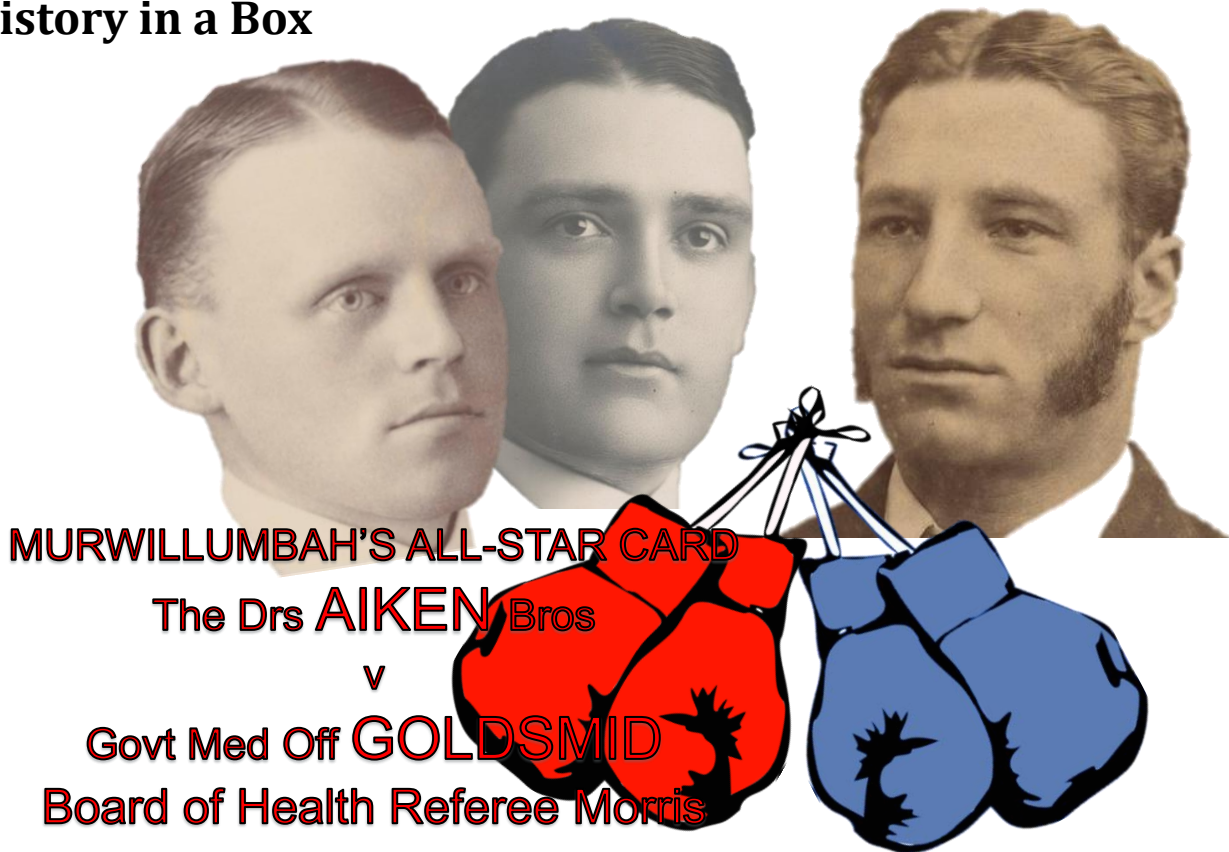
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## History in a Box



From left to right: the brothers, Drs David and James Aiken, and Dr Joseph Albert Goldsmid.

Source: Museums of History NSW, NRS-9873-1-[2/749]-R3229, Photograph of David Aiken doctor [date on photograph 15 May 1913]; NRS-9873-1-[2/753A]-R3462, Photograph of James Aiken doctor [no date]; and NRS-9873-1-[2/719]-[242], Photograph of Joseph Albert Goldsmid doctor, 12-06-1895. [Editor's note: James Aiken was registered as a medical practitioner in New South Wales on 14 October 1914.]

The next *Timelines* has bit of a medical motif. This month's historical event catches a moment of dissonance among doctors that began with some sparring and ended with an inquiry conducted by Dr Morris, a representative of the Department of Health and the Board of Health.

On 26 September 1925 Donald Law sustained a compound fracture of the leg when a telephone pole fell on him. The *Tweed Daily* reported that he was taken to Dr David Aiken's surgery, x-rayed, and then admitted to Tweed District Hospital. What was not stated at the time was that Law was employed by the Commonwealth of Australia. The Postmaster's General Department had telephoned Dr Joseph Albert Goldsmid, the Government Medical Officer, and requested him to examine Law and report on his injury. Goldsmid arranged to do this when Law was admitted to the Hospital. When the Matron telephoned Goldsmid to tell him Law had been admitted, she initially did not mention that he was in the care of Aiken (which she acknowledged was her mistake).

The first to arrive at the Hospital was David Aiken with his brother James, who was to administer the anaesthetic while the injury was treated. Goldsmid arrived five minutes after the anaesthetic was started. This is when, in the words of the *Daily*, 'a serious disturbance' occurred. Goldsmid requested, 'quite formally', to examine the patient. For their part, the Aikens 'maintain[ed] that Dr. Goldsmid's manner was domineering, insolent and arrogant.' A 'scene persisted for 5-10 minutes'. Among the issues James Aiken raised in his written complaint was that Goldsmid did not wash his hands (it also was established during the inquiry that neither of the Aikens had washed their hands before the operation). David Aiken for his part argued that Goldsmid should have had the patient's permission personally or through him to examine the injury (the inquiry's report noted that the patient was anaesthetised, and the 'scene' could have been avoided if Aiken had given his permission at once). David Aiken finally told Goldsmid that Law was his patient, agreed to Goldsmid's looking at the injured limb, after which Goldsmid withdrew.

Morris' report provides reasons for the 'disturbance'. The professional relations between the parties were already strained; and 'Dr. James Aiken (the anaesthetist) had precipitated the argument and the scene'.

You can read the full report, and the machinations that preceded the holding of the inquiry, and the way the report was finally published, in the *Tweed Daily*. The report was finally published at Goldsmid's instigation on 7 January 1926. Drop us a line and we'll give you the references.