

TIMELINES

In fifteen minutes

Number 13

The Tweed Regional Museum celebrates 20 years

In 2004 the Murwillumbah Historical Society, the Tweed Heads Historical Society, and the Uki and South Arm Historical Society signed a Memorandum of Understanding that acknowledged their initiative in the genesis of the Museum. The Tweed Shire Council undertook to support of the work of the three Societies. If the Societies had not raised the issue of creating a Museum, the facility, the staff that manage it, and most importantly the people who are responsible for creating the exhibits that delight and inform visitors, would not be here today. 2024 marks the twentieth anniversary of the opening of the doors of the Tweed Regional Museum.

In celebration, the Museum is the venue for a free Street Party on Saturday 31 August 2024 at 12:00 pm (noon) to 7:00 pm.

Remember, if you are a local, take the time at least twice a year to see the latest exhibit and support the work of the Museum staff and your local historical society. Encourage family and friends who come from outside the district to put aside time to visit an important place that preserves our cultural heritage.

The President's report...

June to July 2024

Thanks to Ian Batten issues of the *Parnassian*, the magazine of Murwillumbah High School, have come in thick and fast. Some have been donated but others not. These are being scanned, so that they are all available for research. This has already paid off as a gentleman came in looking for any information about his father. We have found a small gold mine in issues of the *Parnassian*.

C J Knight's *Early History of the Tweed* is being transcribed. The two exercise books in which he wrote his history in longhand have been scanned. There is a lot of interesting detail in his work. This work has been requested by the museum and will benefit all researchers.

Matt Tillett, the new owner of the Court House Hotel, wants to create a 'history wall' in the hotel. He was impressed with what the Society had to show him. We will be seeing more of him as he works out what he wants.

The most recent of the *Tales of Our Times* indexes have been checked and sorted. These should be more user friendly now.

Finally, the President would like to thank those of our visitors who donate generously for the research provided by the Society.

Our Next Meeting

The Society warmly welcomes new members. We meet on the third Monday of every month.

**1:00 pm on Monday, 19 August 2024, at the Society's Tony Clark Research Room
at the Tweed Regional Museum.**

CONTACT US: Phone: (02) 6670 2273

Web: <http://www.murwillumbahhistoricalsociety.org.au/>

FB: <http://www.facebook.com/murwillumbahhistory>

Email: editor@murwillumbahhistoricalsociety.org.au

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

History in a Box

Newbrae Private Hospital revisited



Two houses used as a hospital up to 1923-1924, named Newbrae Private Hospital. One used for maternity and the other for general. Owned by Alice Maude Newby and Ethel Bray. Situated in Mooball Street, Murwillumbah.

Tweed Regional Museum Collection, Item 6115 [donated by Mrs Elizabeth A Vincent (née Smith), Lavina Ethel *Bray* Smith's daughter].

Newbrae Private Hospital was the joint undertaking of Alice Maud Newby and Lavina Ethel Bray, ATNA (Australian, later Australasian Trained Nurses Association) trained nurses. The hospital comprised two buildings - a general wing and an obstetrics wing. It was opened as a hospital in 1914 and operated until 1938. Sunnyside Private Hospital may have captured the historical attention of locals - "I was a Sunnyside baby" – but Newbrae also brought its share of children into the world.

Along with Sunnyside, Newbrae is also an example of the enterprising spirit of women in the Tweed Valley during the first half of the twentieth century. Newby and Bray

were not just accredited nurses, but also canny businesswomen. Their first advertisements indicate that they had experience in managing a hospital, as their 'former address' was opposite Skinner's wharf. In 1914 and 1917 the title of the land on which the two Hospital buildings were constructed on Mooball Street, Newtown, was transferred to the women separately. Newby owned Lots 1 and 2 Deposited Plan 7239, transferred to her by Mary Ellen Burke on 28 October 1913; and Bray (as Ethel Lavinia) owned Lots 3 and 4, the transfer from Patrick Prendergast dated 16 April 1917 (with Mary Ellen Burke being the original owner). In 1920 Bray (named as both Ethel Lawrence and Ethel Lavinia on the marriage certificate) married William Hardy Matthew Smith, a member of the Smith family of auctioneers. Sadly, he died in 1925. This appears to have been a turning point in the direct management of the hospital by the two women. Both title deeds mentioned above record the leasing of the land (and presumably the premises) to Eleanor Mary Connolly and Veronica Edna Joseph as tenants in common on 15 October 1925. These leases 'expired by the effluxion of time', as recorded on 17 January 1936. New leases with Ruby Alice Powell were dated 16 December 1936, and their surrender was dated 8 March 1939. The transfer of both titles to the land to Henry Rupert Salmon, a retired butcher, were dated 24 February 1939. Newby's land passed to Nellie Thompson, the wife of fireman Archie Thompson, as recorded on 21 June 1939; and Smith's (i.e., Bray's) to Henry Rupert Salmon, an auctioneer, recorded on the same date, who in 1947 passed the title to Lionel Joseph Montague, a forestry labourer from Kyogle. The last matron was May Elvina Greer, who 'relinquished the business in 1938'. The furniture was sold on 25 May, and lessors sought for the buildings as a boarding house or rooms to let in November and December 1938. While Newby and Bray moved away to Sydney, both appear to have continued nursing, their names appearing in the New South Wales 'Register of Nurses'. Newby's last listing is in the 1929 'Register', at Riley-grove, Alpha-street, Willoughby; Smith's (As Lavinia Ethel) in 1933 at 86 (from 1929 'Kintore') Macquarie-street, Roseville.

Sadly, primary sources about the hospital's day to day operations are scarce. The first record of a birth at Newbrae was that of Mr and Mrs C P Charles' daughter Rosalie in 1915. The death of Margaret Brown in 1921 was the subject of a 'Return Thanks' by E H Brown and son to 'Nurse Baker, and other nurses of Newbrae hospital for their good attention'. An earlier death, in 1920, was identified by an 'In Memoriam' for Isabell Campbell Attewell inserted in the Tweed Daily by her husband and family in 1921. In 1925, and again in 1934, the hospital was painted 'inside and outside' before the signing of the leases mentioned above.

.P.S. Lavinia Bray was not related to the Brays of Kynnumboon. Her father, David Thomas Bray was a drover and later grazier, who was involved in a bribery scandal in Sydney in 1937.