

TIMELINES

In fifteen minutes

Number 30

The Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Wednesday, 22 April 2026 at the Murwillumbah Golf Club from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm. All financial members of the society are welcome to attend. The business to be transacted at the AGM meeting will be:

- a) To confirm the minutes of the 2025 AGM;
- b) To receive the President's report;
- c) To receive the annual financial report; and
- d) To elect office bearers and committee members.

In addition there will be motions to amend the Constitution to change the dates of the Society's financial year and the date of future AGMs.

Further information, including nomination forms, account details for renewing memberships or joining the Society, and details about the motions to be put to the AGM, is available on request from the Secretary, email secretary@murwillumbahhistoricalsociety.org.au.

The committee meets

The regular meeting of the Society's committee was held on Monday, 16 March 2026.

At present, the Society has members at the Tony Clark Research Room at the Tweed Regional Museum from Tuesday through to Saturday. This is affected if there is a planned or unplanned absence; and being available for the six hours the Museum is open on these days is not always possible for the members undertaking these duties. The President asked the committee to think about ways and means of increasing the number of people who can help out with this work.

Research remains the main activity of the Society. While enquirers are not charged for the work researchers carry out, many are more than happy to show their gratitude by a donation – sometimes quite substantial – supporting the Society.

The President attended the Tweed Regional Museum Management Committee meeting on 4 March 2026. Readers may be interested that these meetings itemise additions to and removals from The Collection. Drop us a line and if you want to see a copy of these reports.

Our next meeting

The Society warmly welcomes new members. We usually meet on the third Monday of every month. Please note the variation for April 2026 below.

**Following the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 22 April 2026.
Venue: The Murwillumbah Golf Club.**

CONTACT US: Phone: (02) 6670 2273

At the Museum: Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm and Wednesday and Friday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

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

World War I trophy guns of the Tweed

In 1920, following World War I, the Australian government distributed war trophies. Towns with a population between 3000 and 10,000 received an artillery gun; towns between 300 (later 150) and 3000 a machine gun. The Australian War Memorial holds twenty-four war trophy allotment files for Tweed towns. Twelve towns accepted the government's offer: Burringbar, Crabbe's Creek, Cudgen, Cudgera, Dunbible, Fingal Point, Murwillumbah, Numinbah, Stokers Siding, Tweed Heads, Tyalgum, and Uki. Murwillumbah received an artillery gun; the rest a machine gun.



This process was not without its controversies. Tumbulgum was omitted from the first list of 'fifteen guns for the Tweed'. Tyalgum citizens were 'justly indignant at being overlooked in the matter of a war trophy' given the number of men who volunteered for the AIF and the town's social and economic progress. The local Federal MP, Walter Massy-Greene had to make representations on behalf of Tyalgum and Crabbes Creek for trophies. Another article reported the first despatch of a trophy. Uki was to receive 'a heavy machine gun, captured by the 9th Battalion, A.I.F., in the Australian advance east of Amiens in August, 1918, during the great final offensive on the Western Front'. Uki was subsequently offered a second gun, which it declined. Tyalgum must have accepted a second gun, because 'the returned soldiers under ex-Lieut. Frankham, marched up the hall, bearing the two guns. They were preceded by one of their number carrying the Union Jack and the Commonwealth Flag. The guns were duly placed in position, to the accompaniment of "Australia Will be There"'.

The Murwillumbah gun's installation has a chequered tale. It was accepted by the Municipal Council in May 1920. In November, the government was asking the trustees to specify where it was to be displayed. In April 1921, three months after its arrival, it was lying at the railway station, 'rusting on one side'. Then on the afternoon of ANZAC Day that year, thirty returned soldiers decided to drag the gun into the town. 'The procession was headed by the Town Band, playing "The Great Little Army". Arrived in Broadway, the "Masellaise" [sic] and the "National Anthem" were played, and three cheers given ... later the soldiers again attached themselves to the gun, and, preceded by the band, marched up and down Main Street, accompanied by an interested escort of children.' Town worthies deplored 'that no proper position had been made for the gun.' Its stay on Broadway was short-lived. The Council considered it a traffic hazard, and it was moved to Bell's Paddock, prior to its display on the Bridge Reserve after the removal of the band room at that site. There it (and a trench mortar) later flanked the new war memorial. The completed memorial on the Bridge Reserve (later Newell Park) was finally unveiled on ANZAC Day 1924.

The NSW Labor government's Education Minister Thomas Davies Mutch banned the display of war trophies at schools, a prohibition that was rescinded when Labor lost power in 1922. The Minister 'did not desire ... to foster the idea of war.' Others felt that 'the gun not only served as something by which we could remember the dead, but also as a reminder of the necessity of always being prepared'.

The fate of the trophy guns varied. In 1942 the army requested return of the machine guns for reconditioning. The Murwillumbah trophies remained until 1945, when the Council removed them, the gun because it was 'badly rusted and was a danger to the children who were continually climbing over it'. The photo accompanying this article is one of the few still to found of a trophy gun on the Tweed.

If you have any photos, the Society would be happy to borrow or receive them for preservation as part of the Tweed Regional Museum Collection.