

BALLINA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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SHIFTING SANDS

There is a song about 'shifting sands', which is really just a metaphor for changes in our lives. I have noticed some interesting movements of sand around the estuary of North Creek and the Richmond River. If you go back to the old map in our second newsletter, you will see a number of shoals in both the river and the creek. The long shoal in the river, opposite the main town area, has been a constant presence at low tide for at least the last 80 or 90 years. It is no longer visible. There is also the reappearance of the shoal on the eastern side of Missingham Bridge. It is fascinating to compare the old map with how the entrance is settling after all the insurgence of water from the massive flood last year.



Photos of North Creek at low tide show the extent of the buildup of sand. This same area was once deep enough to have a wharf, for small boats and punts carrying stores across from East Ballina and then working their way up to Lennox Head. It was still deep enough, against the wall, in 1954 for my young sister to almost drown and have to be rescued.

AT THE MUSEUM

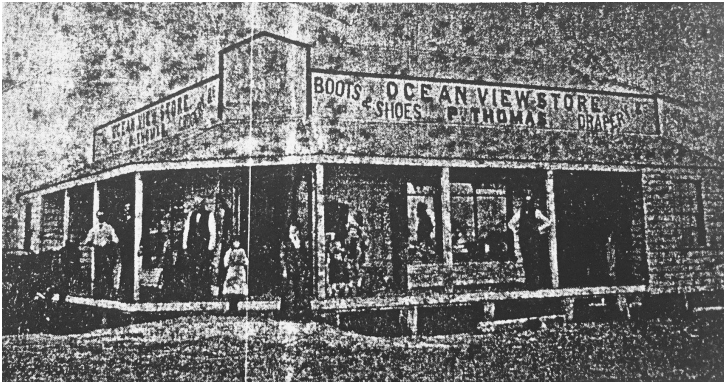
The Ballina Council's historic Mayoral Chair, which was constructed by Mr Rays of Bangalow circa. 1926, has moved to our museum. It is the focus of our latest display and is accompanied by six photos and information about Ballina Council. The chair is a replica of the Speakers chairs in both Westminster and Canberra. There are also lovely old framed photos of our first eight Mayors, the first being William Clement.

Recently, the museum was visited by Sue (photo left) and Joe Briggs from Woy Woy and we were delighted to find that William Clement was the Great, Great Grandfather of Sue. She has agreed to send information about her family line and that will be displayed in the Pioneer Section in the near future.



CORNER SHOPS

Ballina once boasted a number of small General Stores located in strategic positions around town. Most have now disappeared with one stalwart left in Bentinck Street providing daily papers and other essentials to help you start the day.



This shop (left), 'Ocean View' was located on the corner of Norton and Tamar Streets in a prime location for those travelling between North Creek and River Street.

Your eyes may be good enough to see that it sold boots and shoes and was a drapery as well. The shop was still there in 1925, see photo in the last newsletter, which also verifies the name of the store.

Norton Street Grocery

McCurdys, who were amongst Ballina's earliest settlers, opened this store in and serviced the neighbourhood for many years. At some time in the late 1940s the shop was purchased by Ray O'Neill who later became Mayor of Ballina. He served in this office from 1953 to 1961 and again from 1969 to 1971. During this time, he continued to run the store with his wife Nancy. In recent years, it became a spot for women's fashions and is now a residence. (Photo in Nov/Dec 2023 Newsletter)

Bentinck Street

Just around the corner in Bentinck Street is the other shop that is still standing and still operating. There have been many different owners over the years. These three children opposite, are Judith Bevan and her two brothers whose parents owned the shop through the forties, fifties and sixties. You can see that it was also able to serve petrol, and being located on the most direct road to East Ballina was an ideal spot to re-fuel.

Judith recalls, "*I know we moved there pretty well straight after the war and had a scarce petrol bowser. We had cars lined up to Norton St. one Christmas holiday. A neighbour poured petrol and I was a runner between the pump and the till with cash and change.*"



The bowser is no longer there, and the shop, called the One Stop Shop, is owned by Ashley Small. He purchased the business in 2019 from Gordon Semmens who had been there for about 20 years.

Kearney's Shop Grant Street

Patrick Kearney was the popular grocer who ran this corner shop which also provided a delivery service. When this wonderful old Model "A" Ford truck came trundling along the street, your groceries were delivered with a friendly smile and a cheery word.... a far cry from the online shop we can do now. The truck turned out to be even more attractive (see letter) than the groceries when Pat, as he was known, received a request.



This is Pat in his shop at a later time, the shelves packed with everything you might need.

Pat's son, also Patrick, has told me of helping with deliveries when he was quite young - even sitting in the idling truck which moved along the street as his Dad hurried from one house to the next with his boxes of goods.

A second story was added to the shop around 1973.

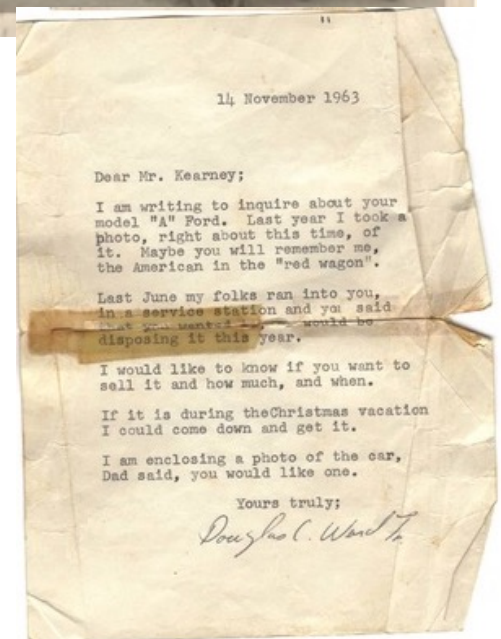
What! Use new material? Not likely! The National Bank in River Street had been demolished and that material was used to construct the addition to the shop. Recycling has been around for a very long time!

Having stood on the corner of Tamar Street for close to 80 years, this old shop has just been demolished. I wonder if those materials will be re-used.

Riv's Inn



Sitting on Beach Road, close to the Lighthouse, was Riv's Inn. Although there were not many houses in this area, the shop had a dual reason for being. It was the closest shop to Lighthouse Beach which was the main surfing beach and where surf carnivals were held. In summer, hundreds gathered there with sun, surf and salty air causing a great thirst to develop. Although the hill was quite steep, many made the trek for the pleasure of an ice cream or cold drink of Spencer's cordial, which was bottled in Ballina.



Hampton's Shop

After the second world war, Joe Hampton owned a grocery shop on the corner of Grant and Swift Streets and that building remains. Until recently, it was a very popular shop called 'Wonderbug' where a dressmaker could be found and alterations to garments could be achieved. Now it is accommodation in a prime position. Photo left.



Small Shop on the 'Five Ways' on Hill Street



Perched high on the ridge, with views of Shaws Bay from the back door, was the little Corner Shop that was actually on several corners. While it has been challenging, even for the clever Lynne, to find all the different owners, we know that around the 50s and maybe 60s, it was owned by Mrs Lollback. The block of land now holds a modern home.

The Tuckshop, corner of Martin and Crane Street

The small shop, which had been operating recently as a fabric store, was demolished quite recently. Through out the 40s, 50s and 60s and maybe a little longer, it was the tuckshop for all the students from both Ballina Public School and St Francis Xaviers. It was owned at different times by Newtons, Comptons and Galbraiths. Sadly, we have no photo, and we are hoping some of you may have one hidden away. The School of Arts was located on the southern corner of the intersection.

Corner of Kerr Street and Bentinck Street

The house that currently sits on this site now covers, but includes, the old shop. I am sending a big thank you to Dawn Pullen who remembers it well and was able to show me the spot. This is one for the website. Who has an old photo or remembers any owners. In the late forties or early fifties it may have been owned by someone called Asquith or something similar. It was still operating late in the last century as a shop that sold ice cream as well as other goods.

Highway Takeaway, Cherry Street

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KITCHEN**

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62 CHERRY STREET, BALLINA (On Pacific Highway) PHONE 86-2418



When Cherry Street was the Pacific Highway, it drew travellers around the corner from River Street and carried them north, to what is now known as Tamarind Drive.

This shop also served as the Ballina High School Tuckshop and was a popular spot to visit after school.

There was one more reason for its existence.

In the late 1880s and more than half the 1900s, the block bounded by Bentinck, Martin, Burnett and Cherry streets was the Ballina Sports ground and showground. Football matches, sports days, cycling races and many other events were held there and the closest place to find refreshment was the tuck shop. Now, of course, Burnett Street has been closed and the area with its splendid new stadium is both a school and community venue.

At one time the shop specialised in Asian Food which was also popular.

Ed. The border of the field along Bentinck Street which now has magnificent gumtrees, was once the site of several massive clumps of bamboo.



While this is not a corner shop, it is a great example of the old shops that ran along River Street.

The information in this newsletter is as accurate as we can make it and we would welcome any additional information, photographs or corrections, particularly if you provide a source. My thanks for this letter go to the ever-curious Lynne, Pat and Amanda Kearney, Brian Mullens and Diana. Any errors are mine,
AND
What a surprise to find that the ABC is currently running a program about corner shops.but not OUR corner shops!

Patricia Wilson - Editor