

Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.

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Newsletter for July 2020

On Tuesday, 21 July we will have a 1.30pm meeting at 'Middle Farm'!

Our meeting room is not large enough to have a meeting which complies with the 4 square metres per person and 1.5 metre social distancing conditions. BUT.....

Julia and Phillip Rose who are in the process of selling '**Middle Farm**', the property originally belonging to the Blencowe family have invited us to hear the history, and see the original house and sheds on our normal meeting date on site at **1.30pm Tuesday, 21 July**. This is a great opportunity, but will be **Weather and Covid19 Permitting**. There will be around 20 chairs available, rug up and bring your own mug for a cuppa. There is ample parking and anyone who requires transport will need to contact Judith at 67751205, while anyone who can offer transport please let me know on that number.

Directions: Grafton Rd 8kms to Middle Farm Rd on left. Follow 2.96kms to Middle Farm.

Dumaresq Chambers: The process of signing in, hand sanitising and social distancing is not proving too taxing and we are pleased to have volunteers, visitors and information, questions and research projects. We are delighted to have received many new donations and would be equally delighted for members to come in their own time and assist in organising our collections. Our regular volunteers are doing a great job - John Acheson (Mon), Alan Wilkinson (Thurs) and Peter Hoare (Friday) have offered full days. Sue Tanner and Judith Grieve (Tues), and Ruth Thomas and Denise Towns with Lyn Brennan (Wed) are on the roster for 10-1 or 1-4. Alan and Brian Hardaker are sorting and indexing the maps which accompanied John Ryan's incredibly generous donation of a map cabinet and its contents. Sue Tanner is sorting photographs and has set up really informative exhibition of '**Let there be Light**' which follows the theme of Collane Simmons and Nancy Bruyn's great collections of exhibits in the next room (carbide lamps, clay pipes torches, light bulbs, lamps.....). Please come to see these displays. Denise, Lyn, Sue and Judith are accessioning the many books. **We could all do with a hand if you have any time to offer.**

A Trip Down Memory Lane: Topics of July Meetings each decade.

1960 Miss I. McBride – Problems in Field Archaeology in Australia

1970 Dr B. Mitchell – Teachers and Politics in New South Wales

1980 Mr P. Wright – The New England National Park

1990 Dr C. Liston – Sarah Wentworth, Wife of William Charles Wentworth

2000 R. Curtis The Curtis Family in Armidale

2010 J. Belshaw An Exploration of New England's Aboriginal Languages

Snippets of History: A member recalled a family named Downs living 'out west' with four sons and a daughter. The boys were Robert, Benjamin and Sidney but at school they became Bob Downs, Ben(d) Downs, and Sid Downs. And the only daughter? Ida Downs. This prompted recollections of other odd names – Sean Lamb, Miles West and Hugh Main. (I'm glad that I avoided Will Grieve!)

Beardy Street research continues to provide headaches and triumphs. It was, and still is a very restless business community with many changes. A recent photograph of the handsome **Hardaker's Building**, Beardy Street has been identified as a victim of the K-Mart complex on the north side of the Dangar/Jessie Street block. It was completed in 1903 and leased to **George Benjamin Hardaker** (b. 1878). George, until this move, had a grocery business on the opposite side of the same block, next to the AMP. The new building (AE 24/10/1903) took the place of a photographic studio run by **Andrew Cunningham**, which **J.J. Henry** purchased 'at a substantial figure' and employed builder Richard Moffatt and architect William Lee. The showroom was extensive, 30 by 36 feet, with a pressed metal Wunderlich ceiling, opening off the street through a tiled entrance flanked by 'large 14 by 12 foot plate glass windows' and above one is **BOVRIL BOVRIL BOVRIL**. Gas fittings were installed throughout. **QUALITY STORES. HARDAKERS.** on the outside verandah and **G. HARDAKER** graces the centre of the parapet above the first storey residence. Two bay windows of the residence separate three arches of a central upstairs verandah.

In January 1904 George applied for a liquor licence to sell wine by the single bottle. Despite the proximity of 'three hotels and two establishments licensed to sell wine and spirits and fifteen public houses in Armidale', his application was successful. This was on the grounds supplied by solicitor **Mr Weaver**, that, 'if any woman required a little wine in the house, she was forced to buy two gallons at the wine and spirit stores (which in most cases was a prohibitive quantity), or to "breast the bar" at one of the hotels, or send a youngster.'

In 1906 George sold his Uralla grocery business to **R. Roberts and A. Crapp** and continued to trade successfully in Armidale while his wife Alice set up elegant Tea Rooms in the new shop. In 1910 George's father **David**, a bootmaker advertised his business opposite the AMP. Building. In January 1910 **F.J. Murphy** moved into George Hardaker's old premises next to the AMP. In 1918 George abandoned the grocery business and later joined the staff of MLC Insurance to become District Inspector based at Inverell where he died aged 68 in 1946.

Meanwhile, the Hardaker Building space appears to have been used as Auction Rooms, the tea rooms were leased to the Returned Soldiers Club, and the liquor licence transferred to McKenzie and Searle. The **Capitol Theatre** (now Bing Lee) was built beside Hardakers, and was first called the **Theatre Royal**, so when **W.A. Nott**, timber merchant leased Hardaker's, in 1926, it was known as the '**Royal Building**'. At the end of 1928, **Arthur Edmonds**, who had a Furniture Parlour in Faulkner Street opposite the Literary Institute, expanded into the Hardaker building, where he traded until 1948 when **A.H. Edmonds and Son** wound up their business. At this time a County Council was formed and occupied the building until moving to the corner of Rusden and Allingham in 1970 after the building was sold (1969) and the K-Mart development resulted in the demolition of Hardaker's Building.



There are Many Teas, even as there are many
Trees in the Forest!

Even, again, as there is one Finer than the rest,
so is there **ONE TEA** which Leads the Pro-
cession of Teas that are sold in this country.

KUMBO TEA

IS the Tea of Teas, the Choicest Ceylon Grown, and the Tea that suits the Australian
palate. One Cup of KUMBO TEA has more virtue in it than two of any other brand,
and one pound of KUMBO will go farther than a pound of another kind in consequence.
KUMBO TEA is PURE CEYLON, and is guaranteed perfect by the Kumbo Tea-
Company. It is picked under British supervision, and is packed under the guarantee
of their name.

On Sale by the Sole Agent in this District,

G. Hardaker,

BEARDY STREET, ARMIDALE.

DE 28/3/1905

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Across Australia by Train 1920 - John Burrell

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Indian Pacific train connecting Sydney and Perth. The journey takes about three days in air-conditioned luxury. 100 years ago, it was possible to cross the continent, but the trip was vastly different.

The timetable below shows how you could plan your itinerary from Armidale to Perth. There were some interesting features:

- A passenger would have to change trains seven times: Sydney, Albury, Melbourne, Adelaide, Terowie (outback South Australia), Port Augusta and Kalgoorlie.
 - Five of these changes were due to the different rail gauges used. This was the greatest factor preventing the modernisation of Australian railways.
 - Just buying tickets would have been a major exercise. There was little cooperation between states and the postal service was terribly slow.
 - As the journey took nearly six days, a first-class ticket was essential so you could purchase a sleeper for some of the time.
 - No air-conditioning, no onboard buffets, smoke and soot from the steam engines, limited toilet facilities ... the joys of travel.
 - 19 hours waiting time! That is nearly a whole day sitting around in waiting rooms. At least in Sydney there was an opportunity to go shopping.
- One wonders how you would look and feel after six days travelling!

For the return trip, the alternative would be to take the P&O mail steamer from Fremantle to Sydney. A cosy cabin, regular meals, no changing and only one train trip back to Armidale.

Terminal or Changing Station	Time	Day	Journey Time (Hours, Minutes)	Waiting Time (Hours, Minutes)	Distance (km)	Average Speed (km/h)
Brisbane dep.	8.05 am	Monday	9 h, 50 m	22 m	359.6	36.6
Wallangarra arr.	5.55 pm	Monday				
Wallangarra dep.	6.17 pm	Monday	17 h, 8 m	8 h, 0 m	800.5	46.7
ARMIDALE Sydney arr.	12.00 pm 11.25 am	MONDAY Tuesday				
Sydney dep.	7.25 pm	Tuesday	11 h, 58 m	24 m	646.3	54.0
Albury arr.	7.23 am	Tuesday				
Albury dep.	7.47 am	Wednesday	5 h, 4 m	3 h, 39 m	306.6	60.5
Melbourne arr.	12.51 pm	Wednesday				
Melbourne dep.	4.30 pm	Wednesday	17 h, 55 m	50 m	777.4	43.4
Adelaide arr.	9.55 am	THURSDAY Wednesday				
Adelaide dep.	10.45 am	Thursday	4 h, 55 m	30 m	225.0	45.8
Terowie arr.	3.40 pm	Thursday				
Terowie dep.	4.10 pm	Thursday	5 h, 55 m	35 m	192.0	32.5
Port Augusta arr.	10.05 pm	Thursday				
Port Augusta dep.	10.40 pm	Thursday	37 h, 13 m	5 h, 2 m	1691.9	45.5
Kalgoorlie arr.	10.23 am	Saturday				
Kalgoorlie dep.	3.25 pm	Saturday	15 h, 27 m	5 h, 2 m	600.6	38.9
Perth arr.	6.52 am	Sunday				
Total			125 h, 25 m	19 h, 22 m	5599.9	44.6

Source: Knibbs, GH, *Official year book of the Commonwealth of Australia*, No. 13–1920, p. 653.