

# *Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.*

'Dumaresq Chambers', Corner Faulkner St and Cinders Lane, Armidale

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## **Newsletter for March 2024**

The next meeting of the Society will be on **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 5.30pm** at the  
**ROYAL HOTEL, corner of Marsh and Beardy Streets.**

### **'Revisiting New England'**

The speakers will be from the 'mapping group' who have been working on the project to establish the exact boundaries of the original New England runs. (see over)

If those wishing to stay on for dinner could place their meal orders prior to the meeting, it will facilitate the provision of meals arriving together at 7pm.

**Journal 66:** After numerous unexpected delays in production, Journal 66 will be **available at the March meeting.** It provides a record of proceedings from January 2022 to June 2022. The next Journal (67), which we hope to have available later this year, will cover July 2022 to June 2023 and bring our journals into line with the proceedings of each financial year thereafter.

**Dumaresq Chambers:** Additional material continues to be made available to us and includes a recent collection of photographs and information from James Cannon's days of delivering mail in the early 1900s between Armidale and Hillgrove and Bundarra in the early days of motoring. Our photographic collection continues to grow under the care of David Betts and is indexed for ready access to the collection.

**Armidale Family History Group Annual Seminar:** Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April with guest speakers Heather Garnsey and Martin Killion at NOVA 122 Faulkner Street. Further details from Dianne (02) 67714681.

**Trip Down Memory Lane:** Topics for March meetings each decade.

**1964:** Mr L. Gilbert – An Investigation of Australian Flora, 1788-1810

**1974:** Mrs Jean Woolmington – The Aboriginal Problem is Not New

**1984:** Dr John Atchison – The Australian Agricultural Company – Twentieth Century Operations and other Matters

**1994:** David Stammer – 'Gladdiswoode' – Miss Cooper's School

**2004:** John Hamel – Part 2, Past Businesses and Buildings of Armidale

**2014:** Marilyn Pigeon - Challenge and Change – 150 years of Gardens in New England

### **'Revisiting New England' Dumaresq Chambers Monday Group**

For a few hours each Monday for the last three years, a number of persons who frequent Dumaresq Chambers on a Monday, have, in a relaxed and fun-filled way, pooled resources, knowledge and experience to look afresh at the first phase of colonisation, dispossession and settlement of the New England Tablelands. This is seen as something long overdue and providing a foundation for any number of tasks now and into the future. The project has sketched into 22 of the 100,000 topographical maps series, the boundaries of squatting runs as described in the *Government Gazette* for 1848. These maps have been photographed and collated so as to be useful in many contexts.

This talk and presentation will describe how Owen Croft's life-long and close, detailed familiarity with the landscape from Niangala to Nowendoc to Tenterfield-Stanthorpe and towards Inverell has been combined with Gordon Smith's adept use of technology and allied resources to achieve a pleasing and useful outcome. The essential response buttressing this project is a massive register compiled by Louise Brennan with her skilled use of Trove and other sources. John Atchison will introduce the topic and provide the background to the project and Owen, Louise and Gordon will talk on their role and work. Spin-offs from the work include a re-examination of the Great Northern Road from Carlyles Gully beyond Uralla, north to Llangothin. Focus will be on the Chiswick to Armidale and thence to Guyra section.

This is not a technical presentation, but one which will be of interest to all members for a variety of reasons. Come in your thousands!

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**A Snippet of History:** From ADHS Journal 1, 1961, R.B. Walker writes of

#### **'A Forgotten Founder'**

On 11th January 1878 there appeared the following remarkable announcement in the *Armidale Express*: **UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ARMIDALE (Non Sectarian)**

The above **COLLEGE** will be opened on 1<sup>st</sup> February prox., by **Dr SPOONER, D.D. D.C.L.**, (Magdalen College, Oxford), F.A.S., F.R.A.S., London. Assisted by a Really Efficient Staff of Professors and Tutors – Resident and Visiting.

The Highest References (including the principal gentleman of Armidale).

FOR CIRCULARS AND FULL PARTICULARS ADDRESS REV DR. SPOONER, Walcha, Armidale.

'For the expenditure of 3/2d the reverend gentleman procured a permanent niche in our history and himself created no small mystery. Who was this harbinger of things to come and what was the context of his grand conceptions?

In all likelihood Spooner must be identified with one of the same name born at Worcester about 1831 and entered Magdalen Hall, Oxford, in 1850, being a student of civil law in 1855. In substituting Magdalen College for Magdalen Hall the good doctor seems to have suffered a lapse of memory. Nor is there any record of his having graduated at Oxford and it may be suspected that his degrees were of foreign origin. Some German foundations were offering the D.D. (without knowledge of Latin) at 40 pounds, but cleverly undercut by American L.L.D. and D.D. degrees for 17 guineas.'

(There are even more revelations in the complete article)