

Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.

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

PO Box 692, Armidale, NSW, 2350

website: adhs.org.au

e-mail: contact@adhs.org.au

President: Judith Grieve OAM 6775 1205, 0431223701

Vice Presidents : Graham Wilson OAM, Sue Tanner, Wayne Hoppe

Secretary: Julie Harm 0414885324

Newsletter Editor: Judith Grieve

Treasurer: John Burrell 0438187848

Newsletter for April 2025

The next monthly meeting of the Society will be held at the **Royal Hotel on Tuesday 15th April at 5.30pm.**

The speaker will be **Caroline Chapman**, and her talk, based on documents held at the University of New England Regional Archives and Heritage Centre is titled -

Dr Ellen Kent Hughes OBE - Letters from Armidale

"Kentie" as she was widely known, served Armidale for over forty years. She was a legend in her time and has provided a valuable history of those years in Armidale through correspondence with her son.

A reminder to place dinner orders prior to the meeting.

ANZAC Day 25/4/2025: One hundred and ten years since the landing at Gallipoli, the tradition of holding commemorative services throughout Australia to remember all who have served to keep this country safe continues in every town, village and monument site. 'Lest We Forget'.

World War II 80th Anniversary: Volunteers are needed to research Armidale men and women who served in WWII. Contact Peter Hoare at our centre on Thursdays.

Tingcombe Lane: Council has created an attractive new setting for the plaque and rose garden commemorating the 1863 commencement of Responsible Government. Another pleasing council project has started which will replace the suspension bridge at Albion Park leading to the former entrance to the swimming baths. It has become necessary to replace the War Memorial fountain in Central Park.

A Trip Down Memory Lane: Topics for April meetings each decade.

1965: Excursion to Walcha

1975: Dr L.A. Gilbert – The New England Heritage Resource Centre

1985: Mrs Jean Mitchell – The Cohen Manuscript

1995: David Curtis – Native Flora before White Settlement

2005: Harold Heffernan - The History of WWII Tank Traps at Ebor

2015: Dr Nathan Wise - Human/Animal Relationships in the AIF in WWI

Snippets of History: Extracts from *City of Armidale Diamond Jubilee Souvenir 1923, Early History and Settlement*. 'Following the early settlement in the Sydney, Hawkesbury and Hunter River districts the more adventurous spirits, maybe together with incoming British colonists, sought new pastures, wider afield. They were (in law) bounded by an imaginary line, '**The Limit of Settlement**' and nominally guarded by a few 'Border Police', but this did not deter them and gradually the 'Squatter', as he was then called in derision, forced his way north and arrived in what is now known as the Armidale District about 1834. On May 31st 1839, **George James Macdonald** was appointed Commissioner of Crown Lands for the New England District and the first faint glimmering of the dawn of Armidale's existence was ushered in. The Commissioner's staff, according to the official returns of 1843, consisted of eleven men, seven of whom were mounted constables, selected from the soldier convicts. The sparseness of settlement on the tableland may be noted from the scattered 'runs' or 'stations' as on **Captain H.G. Hamilton's** sketch map – the first authentic evidence of land occupancy in this district in the year 1839. 'Armidale' is not indicated – the settlement probably only becoming known as such in the early forties.

About four years after the arrival of the Commissioner and his constabulary, the settlement comprised ninety-three persons, some of whom occupied small areas along the right bank of Dumaresq Creek, while others established themselves on an old cattle camp, over which a track had been formed, running from Beardy Plains on the north and north-west to the pastoral homesteads on the east. Along this **Beardy Plains track**, now called **Beardy Street**, dwelling houses, along with business houses attached, began to be erected and with its stores, workshops and offices etc., this rudimentary township of Armidale soon became the commercial centre of the district.

The settlers on the creek frontage, commencing on the east of Hamilton's plan are: **R. Taylor**, **Patrick Kennedy** (cultivation), **John Donnelly** (cultivation), **George Martin** (cultivation), **R. Kirkwood** (steam Mill), **R.G. Martin** (inn and cultivation), **J. Trim** (store at creek crossing), **Redman** (cultivation), **Mather** (store), **Allingham** (inn and cultivation), **J. Butler** (cultivation), **A. O'Dell** (cultivation) and **Mosman** on the south.

On Beardy Road or Street are the names **Doran**, **McKay**, **Milligan**, **Mather**, **Bracken**, **Abdy**, and **Duffity** (?sic). In Rusden Street, **Tyson** (?sic), **Moore**, **Tierney** and **Berry** had residences.

Undoubtedly the location of the Commissioner's original buildings gave Armidale its legacy of narrow streets. The streets are not directed to the cardinal points, as is usual in such surveys, the reason for this divergence being the adoption, for survey purposes, of the azimuth of the Beardy Plains track (now Beardy Street), which had already largely been built upon. This grouping of buildings decided the course of the street, as a petition from the residents that the survey should follow the buildings instead of being directed to the cardinal points, was granted'.

Does this destroy the urban myth of the objection to Galloway's original grid system passing through too many pubs?