

## **ARMIDALE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.**

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

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### **Newsletter for October 2025**

The last meeting for 2025 will be held on **Tuesday 21 October, 5.30pm at the Royal Hotel**. The topic for the meeting will be a presentation by **Alan Wilkinson, Julie Harm, David Betts and Judith Grieve** featuring the **Goldrush at Melrose (1889 – 1891)**, when Melrose, South East of Armidale became a bustling village of around 500 men, women and children.

Please order meals before the meeting.

**Journal 68: Will be available at the meeting.**

**November Excursion:** On **Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> November** the coach will leave Armidale Visitor Information Centre at 8.30am, taking us to **Guyra, Wandsworth, Green Valley Farm and Tingha**. **Graham Wilson** (Heritage Advisor to the former Guyra Council) will explain the important coach link between Guyra and Tingha and at Wandsworth **Megan James (nee McCrossin)** will tell the story of the McCrossins, their village store, the Half Way House Hotel, school, the War Memorial and we hope to visit the cemetery. **Green Valley Farm** will provide us with lunch and we can visit the Museum, Zoo, and playground at that unexpected venue. At Tingha we will visit the War Memorial, the cemetery and the Wing Hing Long Museum, which provides an insight into the contribution of the Chinese to the tin-mining village. The cost will be \$60 which includes the coach, lunch and entry fees.

Friends and relations are welcome to join in.

Bookings can be made at Dumaresq Chambers, by phone to 0431 223 701 or e-mail to [contact@adhs.org.au](mailto:contact@adhs.org.au).

**At Home and Abroad World War II Exhibition:** There was considerable interest expressed by the numerous visitors to the display. It is always a disappointment that school visits no longer include exhibitions such as this. Many thanks to Peter Hoare, Lyn Thompson and Sue Tanner. It is to be replaced by a major display of **Fashions from the 20<sup>th</sup> century**. **SOS –A tuxedo is needed for the exhibition. Contact Colane Simmons on 423665896**

**End of Year:** 'Dumaresq Chambers' close on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December until Monday 5 January, 2026. All are invited to a Christmas afternoon tea on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 2.30pm.

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

1965: No meeting

1975: Dr Kelvin L. Grose – The Life and Times of Lady Oxford

1985: Ms Cathy Pound – Miss Alethea Collis Tendall

1995: Linda Bedford – The Heritage Centre – Future Directions

2005: Peter Hutchinson – the Hutchinsons of Armidale

2015: Professor David Kent - The Western Front Diggers and the Making of a National Identity

### **Snippets of History: A Shepherd comes to 'Ollera'**

**George and John Everett**, brothers from **'Biddeston'** near Ludgershall, Wiltshire UK, settled at **'Ollera'** station near Guyra in 1838. Needing shepherds, they invited the **Canning family from Ludgershall** to migrate and work for them at **'Ollera'**. **John** (35), **Maria nee Dudman** (38), **Sarah** (11) and **William** (9) were met in Sydney by another brother, **Edwin Everett**, when they arrived on the sailing ship *SS Royal Consort* in December 1840. Maria would be the first and only white woman at **'Ollera'** until 1848. This isolated station became their home after a perilous fifteen-day journey by bullock dray which included the loss of a precious basket of clothes during a Hunter River crossing and John falling 16 feet from a tree on the Liverpool Plains, becoming unconscious, the incoherent, but recovering.

Maria was employed as a domestic servant and John as a shepherd. John met with considerable satisfaction for his work at the Head Station, but Maria was less popular with the Everett menfolk, being branded as a 'scold' and 'bad tempered'. After John's death in 1846, Maria was retained and later married **George Bryant**, a bullock driver. 21 year-old **Daniel Charles Hutton** had arrived from England in 1842 with sheep for **'Ollera'** and, with Maria's blessing, he and 16 year-old Sarah were married in 1846. When Maria died, aged 85, she was living with Sarah and Daniel at 'nearby **'Moredun'** station, close to the village of **Wandsworth (aka Limestone Creek)**. William Canning worked at **'Ollera'** and in the Wandsworth area until taking over the **'Half Way House'** hotel at **Wandsworth** in 1866. This was a stringybark slab hut, roofed with shingles and bark, built by **James Ryder** in his paddock close to the Armidale-Inverell road on the southern side of the (unbridged) **Limestone Creek**. He married **Jane Mitchell** from Wandsworth in 1861 and they had three sons and three daughters. In 1872 William became the licensee of the **'Court House'** hotel on the corner of Beardy and Faulkner Streets in Armidale until it was sold. It was part of the 14 year 'frozen' **Quinlin Estate** inherited by **George Quinlin** who sold it in 1880. It burned down in 1889 and the entire burnt-out area was purchased by **William Miller**. With money from his successful goldmining ventures at Hillgrove, Miller set about building the stately 'Imperial' hotel and associated shops. In the same year, **Miller's brother, James** offered **William Canning** the task of refurbishing and revitalizing James' run-down **'Royal' hotel in Peel Street Tamworth** and the Cannings were farewelled from Armidale. With the revamp of the 'Royal' completed, the Cannings took over the **'Terminus' hotel in Newcastle**, where again William and his wife were popular figures together with one of their sons, **James (J.T.)**, who also ran a newsagency. William died in 1894. In the 1920s there was a complete remodelling of the **Hamilton business area** and the 'Terminus' hotel became a motel and has later been converted to elegant apartments. The Canning name came back into tragic prominence in 1925 when J.T.'s 16 year-old son Jimmy was taken by a shark at Newcastle Beach. A plaque in his memory is displayed at the **Newcastle Surf Life Saving Club**.