

# *Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.*

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## **Newsletter for May 2026**

The next meeting of the Society will be on **Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 5.30pm at the Royal Hotel** when the speaker will be **John Burrell**, who will reprise the talk given in 1969 by Harold Belfield, grandson of F.R. White of 'Booluminbah'. John acquired a copy of this speech from Sue Grace (Harry's niece) of Armidale and the talk will be -

### **Harry Belfield's Story of the White Family**

[Remember to place orders for meals prior to the meeting.]

**World War II Project:** This project, spearheaded by Peter Hoare is to document the participants from Armidale who served in World War II. For this, more personal information than military records is required. Many people will have stories to tell from family anecdotes and history, letters and memorabilia. It would be appreciated if Society members could make this project known and encourage friends and relatives to provide us with information they have in whatever form they prefer. It is hoped that the stories of the Armidale men and women will be recorded in a Book of Remembrance while we are recalling the end of hostilities over 80 years ago, as by the centenary, much of this oral history will be lost.

### **A Trip Down Memory Lane: ADHS Journal 18 (1975)**

#### **Letter to the Editor (Professor John Ryan) from author Patrick White.**

Thank you for your letter of May 6<sup>th</sup>1974. I'm afraid I can't be of any help as I have never been to New England except passing through in the train on my way to places farther north. My parents both came from the Upper Hunter, and I have paid two or three visits there, but very brief ones; I have never lived there.

We do have connections with Armidale of course; one of my great uncles built 'Bullamimba'(sic) and my father's eldest brother, 'Saumarez', but we never seemed to get together with the New England Whites. I think the Whites tend to be suspect to one another. As a small boy I can remember having lunch with my father at a so-called refreshment room at Sydney Show and my Uncle Frank of 'Saumarez' having lunch with his 2 daughters at the other end. I believe my father and uncle did acknowledge each other, but that was as far as it went – nothing much for the Armidale Historical Society. Today I can think of only one White I see more than accident, so I suppose I am carrying on the tradition. Sincerely, **Patrick White**

**Snippets of History: Joseph Scholes the 'elder'** and his son **Joseph Scholes, the 'younger'** played important roles in the early development of Armidale. In 1841 Joseph senior, (born in Oldham, Lancashire in 1810), his wife **Sarah (nee Ryland** born 1812 in Newton, Cheshire) and their three sons had a fairly miserable trip to Australia from their home in Manchester. The *Cadet* was poorly provisioned in terms of food and water and recorded 19 deaths including 17 children. On arrival the fates were still not kind as by the time Joseph and his new employer arrived in Singleton on their way to the Darling Downs, his employer revealed he would not be making arrangements for the family to follow them by steamboat as intended. Joseph, a saddler by trade, returned to Sydney, brought his family to Singleton and found employment in the area now known as Branxton. On board the ship, they had become friends with the **McCrossin** and **Pearson** families, who settled in the New England and in a time of drought in the Hunter Valley, the Scholes family moved north, spent some time in Glen Innes, then in 1847 came to the hamlet which would become Armidale. Joseph worked at *Gostwyck*, until in the mid-1850s he bought the **Crown Hotel** in Marsh St and received a small inheritance from an aunt in England. In 1857/8, with their surviving children of 7 boys and 2 girls, they bought the newly-built **New England Hotel** on the corner of Beardy and Dangar Streets. Here, as 'mine hosts', he and Sarah ran a successful business with the help of their older children. In 1863 Joseph and Sarah built a modest four-room cottage on 4 acres of land (Section 32 lots 1 and 24) on the east side of Marsh Street between Brown and Mann, overlooking the town and named it '**Newton Terrace**', (now 175 Marsh Street). Joseph and Sarah and the younger children moved from the hotel and the older boys took more of the load of running the hotel. Joseph bought and developed considerable real estate, owning and renting out numerous properties in Armidale. On retirement in the 1870s, they transferred the licence and the running of the hotel to Joseph 'the younger' and moved to a farm at Glencoe, near Glen Innes.

Sarah died in 1882 (aged 70) and Joseph in 1884 (aged 70). He bequeathed the hotel to Joseph junior (then 44) and his much younger brother **Edward** (26), who later became a Judge. The large and complicated estate provided inheritances, though not necessarily in equal proportions, to each son and to **Elizabeth**, who was widowed, but not his married daughter.

Meanwhile **Joseph 'the younger'** followed pastoral pursuits, owning '**Guyra**' and '**Oakwood**' stations, invested heavily in Armidale town real estate and married Mary Ellen Jones in 1863. In 1883, he built the imposing 2-storied home '**Soudan**' on the hilltop of Armidale's south hill and where they reared their nine children. He followed his father as a successful publican until ca.1891 and was an active member of the community; an Alderman on Council (1878/9), President and committee member of the Literary Institute and a staunch Anglican. His interests in the community were wide, he was a keen gardener, well-read (a fan of Charles Dickens' works), an ardent geologist and was frequently called on to relate his early memories of Armidale and New England. He died at 'Soudan' in 1926 (86) and his wife died in 1929.

The two significant homes remain to recall these hard-working and community-minded successful businessmen. The New England Hotel is still trading (2026) and underwent a total restructure in 1897 to be transformed into the two-story structure seen today.