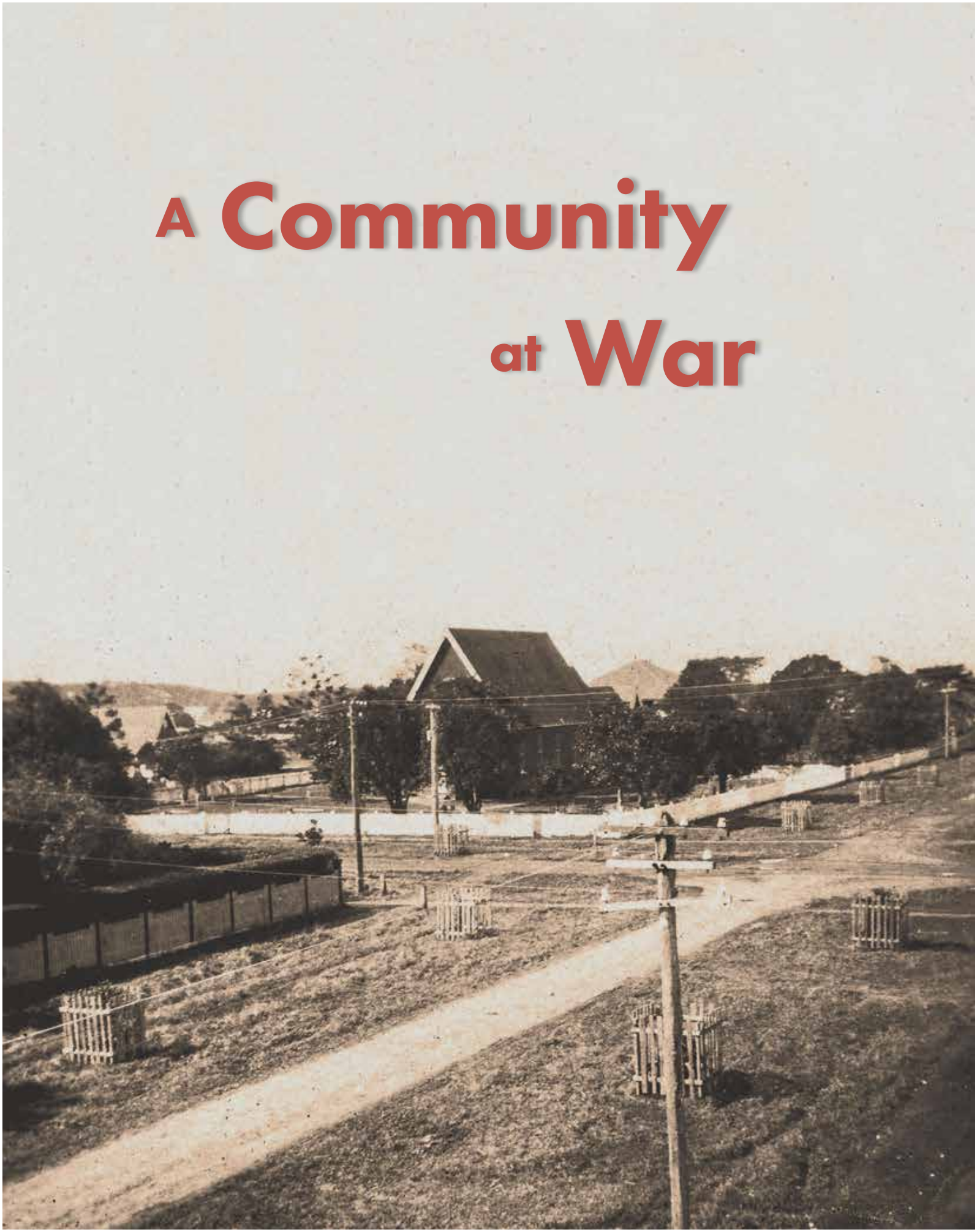
A Community at War



Acknowledgments:

A Community at War has been produced by Ballina Shire Council and prepared with the valued assistance of various families, and community organisations, in the Ballina Shire and beyond. Special thanks is given to the families who have helped compile the book's stories, provided information, images, documents and objects; Gwen Fell and family, Nancy Walke and other members of the Kapeen family, Allan and Lenore Philp and family, Dorothy Thompson, Delia Gibbon, Vic and Joan Bryce, Tim and Lorna Dorey and family, Daphne Noble, Elsie Johnston, Jean Vidler and Fred Braid.

The following organisations have also contributed material that has assisted tremendously in collating the publication, Alstonville Plateau Historical Society, Richmond River Historical Society, Lennox Head Heritage Committee, Blackwall Historical Society and Wardell Red Cross.

Acknowledgment is also given to the National Archives of Australia for the use of online service records; and the National Library of Australia and the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, for the contribution of key images from national collections held by these organisations.

Oral history interviews and archive research has been undertaken and written up by professional historian Kate Gahan.

Exhibition catalogue for *A Community at War: Wartime Stories from Ballina Shire,* held at the Northern Rivers Community Gallery, Ballina, 9 April – 4 May 2014.

Aboriginal readers are warned that this publication contains the names of Aboriginal people who have passed away.

First published April 2014.

ballina
shire council

Contents:

Issued by Authority of THE DEFENCE DEPARTMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH. —— S.T. LEIGH & Co., Ltd. LITHOGRAPHIC PRINTERS, SYDNEY.

Wartime Stories from Ballina Shire

Introduction

A Community at War chronicles a sample of wartime stories from the Ballina Shire. Its publication marks the beginning of the centenary of WWI but the stories it includes broadens the focus to include WWII experiences. It includes stories of local men who went to war. It also considers the less well documented impact of war on the 'home front', felt by local families and communities. It draws on family memories through oral histories, and local and national archives, to place personal stories of wartime in the broader context of WWI and WWII.

When war broke in 1914, and 1939, the current day Ballina Shire was divided into two Council areas – Ballina Municipality and Tintenbar Shire Council. Both Councils responded enthusiastically to supporting the war effort and acknowledging the various roles performed by residents during, and after, both wars.

Among other responses to the war effort, both Councils heeded calls to ration goods, give donations to organisations formed to support the war-effort, commission and support the dedication of honour rolls and other memorials across the shires. During WWI, the Tintenbar Shire Council made a gold badge it inscribed and awarded to returned servicemen resident within its shire area. While Ballina Muncipal Council awarded its residents who served in the Great War a Certificate of Appreciation.

This collection of stories complements a small number of other publications documenting wartime Ballina Shire. Many stories and perspectives still remain untold to date. Stories of wartime and its community impact are an important part of our community's collective heritage and help us to understand the significance of many memorial buildings, other structures, artefacts, photographs and documents present in our towns and villages and conserved by community organisations and individuals.

Left: WWI enlistment poster: A Call from the Dardanelles. Coo-ee Won't You Come? Enlist Now. Produced by the Commonwealth Department of Defence in 1915, this poster was one of many produced during the war to entice young men to sign up. *Courtesy National Library of Australia, PIC Poster P8.*

World War I — 1914-1918

Commencing in August 1914, World War I, otherwise known as the Great War, was spurred by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne by Serbian Nationalists. Underpinning this act was existing historic imperial tensions and interests throughout Europe that culminated in the event escalating into a global war, with various countries entering the battle based on agreed political alliances. For Australia and Australians it came to be understood as a war between Britain and Germany, Australia's historic political ties to England drawing it into the conflict also.

In 1914 the population of Ballina, Alstonville and Wardell was 4562, 2520 and 1798 people respectively. Socially, by far, the shire had a majority European population engaged in commercial dairying, sugar production, timber and other mixed farming. Shopkeepers, hoteliers and other businesses operated in each of these centres, economically supporting their immediate urban and outlying populations. Relative to today, these centres were small and many residents were familiar with most people they lived in close proximity to. Though socially, residents tended to pre-dominantly mix according to religious and class backgrounds, as well as extended family groupings.

Aboriginal people living in the shire, mostly belonging to Bundjalung language groups, were socially and economically marginalised, with most families living between government controlled reserve areas, including at Cabbage Tree Island, or in other accommodations often associated with casual employment situations. Aboriginal people and families maintained strong kinship ties and cultural traditions to support each other.

On the whole, Ballina Shire residents are noted to have held strong loyalties to Britain and its interests, given its population was largely drawn from throughout the UK. Empire Day and the Queen's Birthday were prominent days of celebration for many in the community. During the conscription referenda held in 1916 and 1917 Ballina voters pledged a majority of yes votes, though at the national level conscription was defeated. Proportionately in both referenda, the majority yes vote was approximately two thirds of the vote, with many dissenting voters likely coming from the Irish Catholic community, in line with some of its key Church leaders. Irish names are also less evident on WWI honour rolls from these years, with many exercising a conscientious objection to the war due to the raw history of British dominion over the Irish people, culture and land in Ireland.

WWI stories in this volume give insights into the personalities of the men, including Aboriginal men, who went to war and their motivation for going, the circumstances of their death in battle and the impact of this on family that survived them. The roles performed by many women in the well-recognised Red Cross organisation, as well as the less well-known Girls' Patriotic Leagues are also examined. Stories also consider some of the ways war and its impact on the community was commemorated and memorialised, as well its cessation celebrated with the end of fighting on 11 November, 1918.

Background: The Australian War Records Section's store at Milwall Docks, UK, housing a collection of captured German artillery and machine guns. Items such as these were distributed in Australia as trophy guns following the end of WWI. *Courtesy Australian War Memorial, Canberra, D00780.*

Above: Australian and British soldiers inspect a cache of wartime tropies at the Australian Corp headquarters, Bertangles, France, on 12 August, 1918. The guns were captured by the Australian Corps along the Somme on 8 August, 1918. One of the guns captured on 8 August, a FK-16 German Field Gun, was gifted to Ballina Municipal Council as a trophy of war in October 1921. *Courtesy Australian War Memorial, Canberra, E035085.*

Portrait of a young Moses Gray taken at Fegan Studios in Brisbane before leaving for Cairo — 1915. *Courtesy Gwen Fell, Alstonville.*

Moses Gray

A Journey from Alstonville to Cairo 1916

Moses Gray was twenty four years of age when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). Along with nine other Alstonville 'boys', he was given a public farewell at the Agricultural Hall in Alstonville in September 1915. Following his farewell, he trained at the Enoggera Barracks in Brisbane before embarking for Cairo in January 1916.

Moses was raised on a dairy farm known as *Waratah* just east of Alstonville, a property his father purchased after migrating from the south coast of NSW in the late 1890s. He was duly noted to be a 'dairy hand' upon his enlistment papers. It is supposed, like many other young men, that Moses was inspired to go to war by the strong patriotic sentiment that pervaded the community at this time. Though he did not speak much about war upon his return in 1919, throughout his life he proudly displayed wartime memorabilia in the hallway of the *Waratah* homestead he purchased from his parents after the war. He also observed Anzac Day and became President of the Alstonville RSL during WWII, among other civic commitments. Perhaps too he sought consul from his brother Eric who also went to the war.

From the time Moses left Brisbane, and until his return in 1919, he kept a diary, chronicling his war journey. He also wrote letters home to his parents John and Janetta, his cousin Maggie Johnston and others. Indeed he was a prolific writer during the war and extracts from letters home were also published in local newspapers including the *Northern Star*, giving account of his day-to-day life. Letters to family were no doubt welcomed, a tangible link to Moses that that brought a momentary allay to the inevitable fear that he may not return?

While at war Moses was wounded several times, he spent time in hospitals in France and Belgium to recover from his injuries. Towards the end of his service he travelled to England and Scotland before returning home and to civilian life. On his return he married, raised a family of five daughters and was active in community and civic life in Alstonville – particularly its protestant and rural institutions including the Masonic Lodge, Presbyterian Church and the Alstonville Agricultural Society.

Moses' diary and letters are an engaging account of his wartime experiences. Among these writings are many curious snippets – observances of the exotic in foreign places, country life in France and other Alstonville men he met in these far off places. The following is the first letter he sent home to his family at *Waratah* from Heliopolis on the outskirts of Cairo. It gives account of his departure from Brisbane, the journey via Colombo (present day Sri Lanka) the Suez Canal and then to Cairo where he remained for several months before he was called up to fight in France and Belgium throughout 1916 and 1917. Among the battles he fought is the well-known Battle of the Somme.

We embarked by the *SS Kyarra* at Pikenbar on January 3rd and got away late in the afternoon amid shouts and cheers. We glided smoothly down the river as it was getting dark, had tea, got an issue of blankets, and picked our places on the deck to sleep. Several of us got up on the boat deck and we were suddenly awakened in the morning by a shower of rain, so we had to "get out and get under". Next morning quiet a number of us were not able to face the table. It is hard to tell what's in a man till he gets sea sick.

At daybreak I watched the coast closely, as we were nearing Cape Byron. Here one of our privates known as Lynch, jumped

Returning to Alstonville after WWI Moses Gray married Emma Bryce in 1924. Together Moses and Emma raised a family of five daughters and lived the rest of thier lives at *Waratah*. *Courtesy Gwen Fell, Alstonville.*

overboard, and in a few minutes was seen no more (must have done what Jonah did); a life boat was lowered quickly by the sailors, and a search for an hour was made but all in vain and he was marked absent without leave.

An hour or so from Byron Bay brought me near my home again, which I could see with glasses from the ship, opposite the mouth of the Richmond, but was not long before we were further away than ever.

As we got near Wilsons Promontory we saw a flock of sea gulls soaring round some object and as we came nearer found it to be a whale, which showed itself plainly above the water. We saw a number of others, but they were a good distance off.

It was very rough for 24 hours coming through the Great Bight, but we enjoyed it, as we had our sea legs in good order, but I pitied the few that did not take their boots off, as the deck was so smooth and the ship was rolling terribly. Here Pte. Pender fell down one of the canvas ventilators and hurt his spine, and he is now crippled for life. He was put off at Fremantle, and a subscription list was sent round in aid of him, and about £100 was raised.

We got into Fremantle about 10 a.m. on Friday 14th January, and were allowed ashore for a few hours, but quite a number did not turn up till next morning. In each port we were anchored away from the wharf. Here a supply of coal and fresh water was got. We got away from Fremantle next day about 12 o'clock.

After we left Fremantle we saw no more land for 12 days. Sports were held several afternoons each week for prizes, and boxing gloves were kept pretty busy. It is splendid exercise.

We got into Colombo on 27th January, about 7 p.m. It was a pretty sight to see so many lights about the harbor after seeing nothing but the briney for such a long time. However, we got little' sleep that night, as the niggers were yap-yap all night, some of them were loading coal while, others were selling fruit and coconuts to the boys, and they were all over the ship like ants round a honey pot.

It is very interesting to see hundreds of these niggers running after us, each trying to sell some little article carried in their hand. The rickshaws are very plentiful here and the niggers travel with them as fast as a horse trotting. Most of the loads here are drawn by bullocks, generally one or two, and they have reins passed through their nose to drive them, silver knobs on their horns, and beads around their necks.

We left Colombo at midnight on 28th January, and the next morning the deck was black with coal dust, but it was soon cleared off when the hose got to work. On Monday, 7th February we got into the Red Sea, and passed several large rocks called 'Hell's Gates'. Here we passed several transports, taking wounded soldiers back to Australia, and said to be captured German ships. We got to Suez, Saturday, 12th February (where we were told was the end of our voyage) but we got word to go on to Alexandria.

At Suez we stayed for a day, and about six other transports were here waiting here for orders. Here a hundred or so bags of sand were put up on the bridge of each transport as protection against the snipers along the canal. It is very picturesque at the mouth of the canal. We moved away through the canal at 9.30 a.m. on 13th February, all hands were on deck to salute the battleships as we passed.

The limited speed through the canal is four miles per hour, it is about 100 yards wide running into three lakes, and pelicans, are swimming about in these lakes by the dozen. We were cautioned about throwing anything into the water going through the canal – penalty £100 or six months imprisonment. The banks of the canal are filled with guns and trenches, and as we passed, the "Tommies" would call out to us, "Are you down-hearted?" No! "Well you soon will be."

French embroided postcards sent home by Moses Gray to his cousin Maggie Johnston — 1916. *Courtesy Gwen Fell, Alstonville.*

It took about 16 hours to come through the canal. When we got into Port Said it was very pretty to see so many ships and cruisers neatly lined up. One that was anchored about a chain from us had 28 large guns. Here the Arabs are very busy in rowing boats, selling silks, feathers, and all sorts of fancy stuff, also fruit. They throw a rope up to us with a basket on the end, and will never give anything, till they get the money first.

We left Port Said at 8 p.m. on Thursday, 17 February, two shots being fired at breakfast time next morning from our four-inch gun, not at a submarine, but at a barrel which was thrown overboard about half a mile away. Port Said is the quickest coaling place in the world, it is loaded in baskets by the Arabs, carried on the back of their necks [on] planks, closely followed by each other singing and shouting all the while. Here we also saw several sea-planes go out morning and evening in search of the enemy.

An hour or so before we got to the harbor we could see the town of Alexandria along the coast. We arrived there about 3 p.m. on 18th February. Several big guns are placed at the mouth of the harbor. Here we saw about a dozen Red Cross ships, they look very pretty when lighted up at night. We pulled up against the wharf about 11 o'clock next day (Saturday). Niggers are here by the hundreds grabbing all old clothes and boots and shoes thrown away. They are a very ragged class. It took us about seven hours to reach Cairo by train.

On Sunday we had church parade at 9.30 a.m. and then were dismissed for the day. We went into Cairo by tram in about three quarters of an hour. The tram service is very up-to-date, far before Brisbane. I met Willie Cooke and Sergt. Fredericks, they are looking O.K. Also a number of Alstonville lads, Willie King, C. and R. Eggins, A. Crawford, O. R. Miller, H. Elvery, Geo. Cooke (Gerringong) Armond Gray. N. and Vic. Black, J. Knight, J. Burns, and Alf. Duncan (Warwick). I have not met Alby or Fred Green yet. It is hard to find anyone without the correct address.

In the evening we went to the Zoological Gardens, which are much better than those in Sydney. Reggie took a few snaps with his camera. On Monday morning we fell in for our first parade, and were told the rules of camp. Then we were put on in line picket duty for three days, in case of riot in town, which often occurs amongst the natives. Having a full pack and 200 rounds of ammunition, it is a bit solid after being so long on the boat. The drill is very sharp here, more so than in camp in Enoggera, but leave is more, if not on duty.

There is nothing but sand here and it is terrible when the wind blows. Aeroplanes are seen flying round each day over the town and camp, as many as four can be seen at times, and at a distance they appear to be like eagle hawks soaring around.

Last Sunday Willie King, Reg Miller and I went to see the Pyramids, and hundreds from each camp visit theses every Sunday. The pyramids are said to be 470 feet high and anyone who climbs to the top in half a [sic] hour does well, the general time being forty minutes. We stepped 300 paces one side of the foundation. It is said to have taken twenty years to lay the foundations and twenty years to complete, with one million men employed, the men being changed every three months.

When I was on top, I noticed the name Wallace Moorish No 445, whether he came from Alstonville I do not know. First of all we had to take off our boots and there is a guide with a lighted candle to show us through, which costs a piastrie. It is very dark inside, and even dangerous without light. We saw an old coffin of granite, and with side pieces about six inches thick, and a holy well 150 feet deep.

The 14thth/9th Battalion has just arrived from Exhibition Grounds, Brisbane, among whom I knew was Willie Sneath [also from Alstonville].

Portrait of Henry Elvery before travelling to Egypt — 1915. *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

HENRY ELVERY

'Killed in Action'

From Tuckombil, near Alstonville, Henry Elvery was twenty five years of age when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in 1915. The third child of Henry (Snr) and Alice Elvery nee Bartrim, he was raised on the family's dairy farm *Willowbank,* selected by his father in 1882.

Like many other Australian soldiers, Henry travelled to Egypt in 1916 for military training before seeing battle in France that same year. Shortly after his arrival in France he was killed by German forces during the Battle of Pozieres. War not only ended Henry's short life but an ambition to commercialise a milking machine he invented before he went to war. Henry's story emphasises the tremendous loss war thrust on families and communities - particularly the loss of young people and their future potential.

The Elverys established their farm at the time the dairy industry had begun to develop and burgeon in the district and are noted to have achieved success on it. In the mid-1880s a milk 'Separating Station' was established on their property and was known as the Willowbank Factory. The Willowbank Factory established as the industry was increasingly mechanised and commercialised. Milk was still primarily used domestically and to feed livestock, rather than sold at market. Separated cream, however, was used to make butter and cheese to sell.

At school Henry had a reputation for 'trying to get to the bottom of things'. After leaving school he undertook an engineering apprenticeship in Sydney. Using these skills and his knowledge of dairying he designed and patented a milking machine called the 'Elvery Milking Machine'. The machine was exhibited at the Lismore Show in 1912. It was considered 'quite efficient' but at the time Henry 'lacked the necessary expertise and capital to put it on the market.' Wartime also intervened the further development of his milking machine invention.

Soon after enlisting Henry trained at the Enoggera Barracks in Brisbane. He was then appointed to the 15th Infantry Battalion. In November 1915 he left Sydney for Egypt, where he underwent further military training at the Tel-el Kebir training camp, 110 kilometres north east of Cairo. While at camp in Egypt he met up with fellow Alstonville soldier Moses Gray, in Cairo.

On 1 June, 1916, he left from the port of Alexandria (Egypt), on the *Transylvania* for France, arriving in Marseilles on 8 June. His battalion moved to Marseilles to assist other British troops fight German forces then occupying France.

His arrival in France just preceded the beginning of the well-known Battle of the Somme, and following the Germans taking control of the town of Verdun. It was during the Battle of the Somme that the smaller Battle of Pozieres took place and where Henry was killed by German forces. As the official WWI historian C. E. W Bean wrote of the Pozieres Battle:

On the 7th of August orders were given for the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade to launch a night attack on 8th August the first of a series of advances along the summit of the ridge towards Moquet Farm. The attack of the 15th Battalion succeeded. The trench which it was assaulting was two hundred yards distant and had for ten days been the German front line. It had been defended with wire, but this had been sufficiently cut.

Left: War historians suggest many young men enlisted during WWI to have an overseas adventure. On a postcard image sent home to his family Henry Elvery is pictured riding a camel in Eqypt. This scene vastly contrasted with the rolling dairy country he knew at Tuckombil. *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

The 15th advanced in three waves, all four companies in line adopting the tactics already practiced by the 4th Brigade in the back area. In spite of the barrage they were met, as they started, by heavy fire...

Henry's military papers at first record he was 'Missing in Action', as his body was not recovered following 'the over-running of a 15th Battalion trench' by the German forces.

Statements made after the battle by fellow and surviving soldiers conflicted, reporting that he was taken prisoner, another that he 'in the second line German trenches, saw him dead, shot through the head'. An official enquiry in 1917 concluded he had been 'Killed in Action', his body was never recovered.

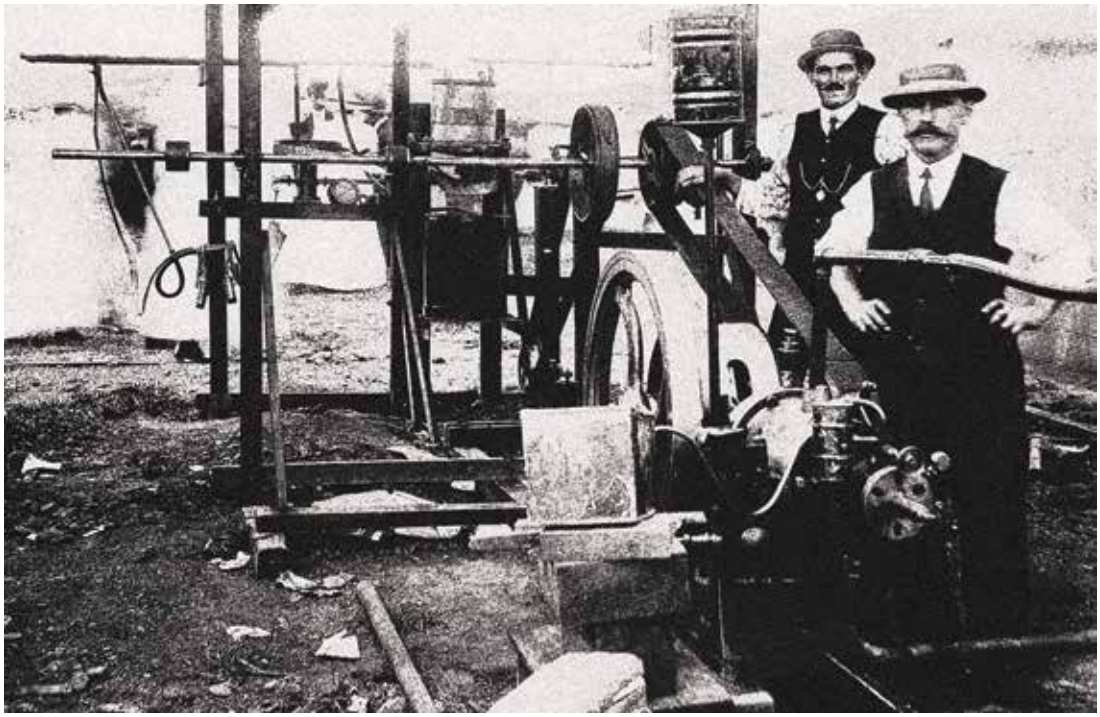
Henry's war service record, like many others, includes the correspondence from his father writing to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the end of his son's life, to recover his belongings or locate his 'last resting place'. His father's touching correspondence also notes:

... when my son left home he had in his possession a small pocket bible. He cut the faces out of the photos of the members of our family and pasted them in the bible & it was his intention to carry this about his person while he was on active service, so that if the body was found without the disc, the bible would in all probability be found in his pocket.

The Battle of Pozieres is recorded to have been costly on both sides; it was also particularly costly for Australians as they made up the majority of 'British forces' involved.

Only eleven of Henry's Platoon of thirty survived, and he was one of 23, 000 men who lost their lives at Pozieres. C. E. W. Bean would also record that Pozieres 'is more densely sown with Australian sacrifice than any other place on earth.'

Right: Henry Elvery (back) pictured at the 1912 Lismore Show with his milking machine invention. WWI was to take his life and his ambition to commercialise this technology. *Courtesy Gordon Elvery.*



Looking across the Richmond River to Cabbage Tree Island at the school room (left) and Manager's house (right), c. 1910s. Teddie Capeen was born and raised on the Island before going to war. *Courtesy Richmond River Historical Society.*

Teddie Capeen

'I am a returned soldier and fought for my country...'

Born at Cabbage Tree Island in 1897, Edward, or 'Teddie', Capeen was the son of Jack and Charlotte Capeen. Teddie was one of a handful of Bundjalung men who enlisted in WWI, but one of over 400 Aboriginal men from across the nation to serve. Teddie's war service took him to England, France and Belgium, where he fought his last battle at Polygon Wood.

Generally it is understood that while at war Aboriginal men were well-treated by fellow soldiers – their comrades and equals in the face of combat. Upon their return however they found discrimination and prejudice still tormented their day-to-day lives despite having fought for the nation and Empire. Teddie Capeen's story is no exception. Teddie is the ancestor of families who today spell thier name with a 'K' — Kapeen. It is not certain when, and why, the spelling was changed.

Given Commonwealth and State governments of the WWI era endorsed a policy of segregating Aboriginal people from 'white' society, Aboriginal men were at first disallowed from enlisting in the armed forces. As the war continued, and more recruits were needed, Aboriginal men were increasingly accepted.

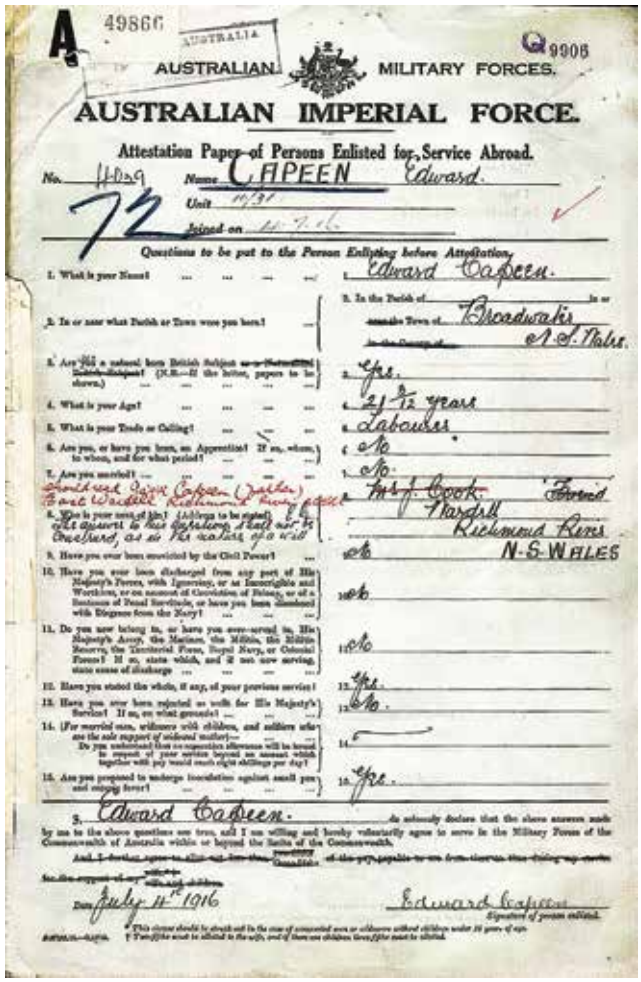
By October 1917, when recruits were harder to find and one conscription referendum had already been lost, restrictions were cautiously eased. A new Military Order stated: "Half-castes may be enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force provided that the examining Medical Officers are satisfied that one of the parents is of European origin."

A tall man, of six foot and one inch, Teddie's military record indicates he was twenty one years of age when he 'signed up'. Interestingly, Teddie had joined the AIF before its changed position on Aborignal men enlisting was officially declared. Before his enlistment, Teddie worked as a labourer, including cutting cane for European farmers around Wardell. The Capeens were one of a number of families to independently establish on Cabbage Tree Island in the late nineteenth century to work their own family farms. Between working their own land and seasonal employment with European farmers, the Capeens and other families sustained their immediate community on the Island.

After enlisting in Lismore in July 1916 Teddie received a 'farewell smoke concert and presentation' in the Victoria Hall in Wardell. Fellow soldier, H. Brown was farewelled the same evening, the function organised by the War Service Committee. Chairman of the local Recruiting Association, Mr J. Ford, complimented the men on their 'patriotic action' and presented them with a 'pocket wallet, hoping they would always be able to have them well-filled'. The evening concluded with the singing of the National Anthem.

Following his farewell Teddie proceeded to Brisbane for military training before embarking on the *Boonah* for Plymouth, (England), arriving there in January 1917. He then spent several months at the training camp at Hurdcott near the village of Favont in Salisbury.

On April 25th he 'proceeded overseas' to France with the 31st AIF Battalion, which was first stationed at the Etaples base camp before partaking in combat in France and Belgium. It is noted that Etaples was *a particularly notorious camp for those on their way to the front. Under atrocious conditions, both raw recruits and battle-weary veterans were subjected to intensive training in gas warfare and bayonet drill,*



AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 11029 Name CAPEEN Edward.

Unit 19th

Joined on 11.7.16

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? Edward Capeen.
2. In the Parish of Broadwalk in or near the Town of N.S. Wales.
3. In or near what Parish or Town were you born?
4. Are you a natural born British Subject? Yes.
5. What is your Age? 21 12 years
6. What is your Trade or Calling? Labourer
7. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, whom, to whom, and for what period? No
8. Are you married? No.
9. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) Mrs J. Cook Friend Stargill Richmond River N.S. Wales
10. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? No
11. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incorrigible and Worthless, or on account of Conviction, or Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? No
12. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge No
13. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? Yes.
14. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? No.
15. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mother)— Do you understand that no separation allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with pay would reach eight shillings per day? —
16. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enteric fever? Yes.

I, Edward Capeen. do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

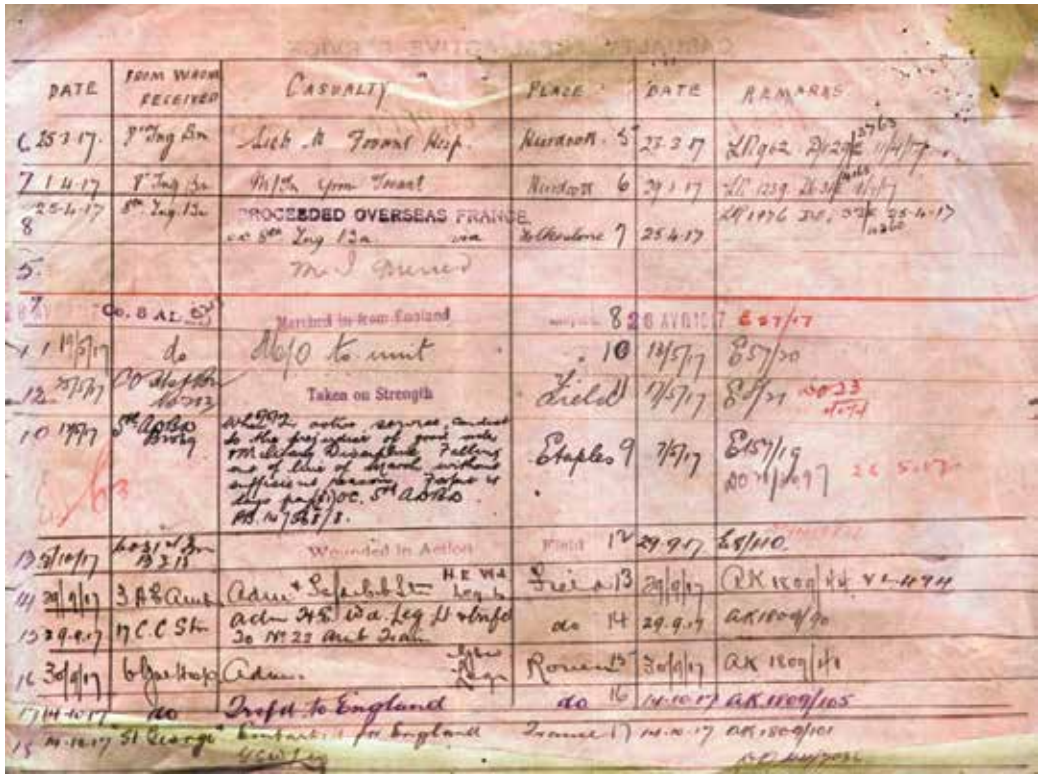
And I further agree to allot not less than [illegible] of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Dated July 11th 1916

Edward Capeen
Signature of person enlisted.

Above: The Tintenbar Shire's WWI gold war service medal, awarded to Returned Servicemen living in the Tintenbar Shire.

Left and below: Extracts from Teddie Capeen's war service record. *Courtesy National Library of Australia, Canberra.*



and long sessions of marching at the double across the dunes.

Five months later, while fighting at Polygon Wood, Teddie was 'wounded in action'. From the 'field' he was sent to hospital in Rouen (Normandy, France), then to Reading War Hospital and the Dartford Auxiliary Hospital in England. Teddie had sustained a wound to his left leg which saw him returned to Australia after more than twelve months away. During this time he spent almost seven months in France and Belgium going to and from base camps and the 'field'.

With his discharge from the Army issued at Sydney in early July 1918 Teddie returned to Wardell to receive a 'welcome home'. Again the celebrations were held in the Victoria Hall at Wardell and by the War Service Committee. Private G. Law was welcomed home the same evening.

The Hall was crowded and dancing and cards were indulged in. Mrs McKillop, Miss Lumley and Miss McGrath supplied the music and Mr J. Sadler had charge of the floor. During the evening Ptes Law and Capeen were presented with the Tintenbar Shire gold medals, inscribed, ... Ptes Law and Capeen suitably responded. Songs were rendered by Messrs. Sadler, Davis and Miss Esgate.

There is little in Teddie's military record to indicate why he went to war or how he responded to his wartime experience. Like other men of Anglo Celtic backgrounds, did he go out of patriotism? Or, was his motivation the 'good pay' and 'adventure' of overseas? Was he seeking to prove his equality with European men to demonstrate the argument for equal treatment in Australian society long voiced by Aboriginal people?

Until recent decades Aboriginal people were denied many civil rights enjoyed by other non-Aboriginal citizens during and before WWI. This included the right to drink alcohol and in many cases enter a hotel. The act of being free to enjoy a drink and without moral judgement has long been a bastion, or symbol, at the heart of Australian masculinity and mateship. Soldiers on leave in Europe during WWI would enjoy this tradition, including Aboriginal men, who were away from the punitive restrictions concerning the consumption of alcohol by Aboriginal people back at home.

In 1927 when Teddie entered the *Exchange Hotel* in Kyogle to have a drink with his nephew George Capeen, who was also a returned WWI soldier, he was charged with 'purchas'[ing] intoxicating liquor for consumption.' Teddie defended the charge in court arguing his entitlement based on his lifestyle of self-reliance. He also argued, 'I am a returned soldier with three years' service. When I came back from the war I thought I was entitled to have a drink in a bar with the next white man.'

Aboriginal men on their return from war were also generally denied Soldier Settlement entitlements – blocks of land issued to returned service men in recognition for the sacrifices they made by going to war.

Out of the hundreds of Aboriginal men who served during WWI, only two examples of Aboriginal men receiving soldier settlement blocks is known. This includes Teddie's nephew George Capeen. The grant made to George Capeen, however, was a 'family farm block' on Cabbage Tree Island, land which was already utilised by families living there and had been officially allocated many years earlier by the NSW Aborigines Protection Board in recognition of their early farming success.

Under the administration of the Aborigines Protection Board, established in 1883, a dual policy of segregating Aboriginal families from white society and encouraging their self-reliance by adopting European work practices and lifestyle was pursued. In later years these family farms were taken back by the Aborigines Welfare Board with the state's policy changing its emphasis from segregation to assimilation into the 1940s.

David de Venney Hunter

A 'Captain of the Soul'

During WWI the Australian Army 'struggled to ensure sufficient numbers of chaplains' to support those at war. Established in 1913 the Chaplain's Department was unlike other imperial chaplaincy corps in that it was a multi-denominational service, embracing the four main Christian denominations prevalent in Australian society during this era.

Arriving at Ballina in 1914, David de Venney Hunter 'was scarcely more than settled' at the Methodist church when war broke. With 'characteristic energy' he joined the Australian Army's Chaplain Department in 1916. Hunter witnessed the Methodist circuit of Ballina 'emptied of young men', his status as a British subject may have also urged his decision to go off to war at forty years of age. Perhaps more so, however, was a motivation to give religious and moral leadership to the young men and women who were off serving at war, as was the role of a wartime chaplain.

Like regular soldiers, Hunter performed some of his work on the frontline. Unlike them, however, he did not carry a weapon, nor did he receive any military training.

Hunter's war service took him to England, France and Belgium. Disembarking from Sydney, in August 1916, he arrived in Plymouth in early October. In January 1917 he was sent to France, arriving at Calais, where he was posted to the 14th Infantry and 55th Battalion fighting in Belgium, after having served at the 1st Dermatological Hospital, at Bulford, in the UK. Hunter's service record indicates he remained in Belgium for several months, taking short periods of leave during this time in England and Paris.

Hunter's war portrait shows a striking, middle aged man. Lists of the belongings he took to war are documented in his war service record. Not surprisingly among them, was a bible, crucifix, hymn book and prayer book.

He also took with him *'Games "Halma", Dominos, Dice, Snakes and Ladders, Draughts, Ludo & Race Game'. With cold European winters in mind, he also carried '2 Flannel Undershirts', '1 White Sweater', '1 Cardigan Jacket', '1 Balaclava' and '1 Pr. Mittens'.* In his 'leather cabin trunk' were writing materials, a metal stand for Communion Glasses' and '1 Tunic'. Most curious of all is '1 Gramophone' and '1 Leather Case of Gramophone Records'.

These things, among others, were to become strong symbols of grief felt by his wife, Marion in the years after receiving the sad news of his death on the front line.

On the 28th September 1917 when the 55th Battalion had consolidated after the successful attack on POLYGON WOOD [Belgium], Chaplain Hunter paid a visit to the front line positions, and was returning in the company of Chaplain Grenville of the 6th Bn [sic] through GLENCORSE WOOD [sic] where he was killed by a shell bursting at their feet.

His body was carried out to the dressing station at CLAPHAM JUNCTION HOOGE near YPRES. Later transport was sent by the unit to bring his body to the rear, but no trace could be found of it. A Division Burial Party was working in the vicinity, but they had no record of having buried Chaplain Hunter. Further search was made but with no success.

Over several years of correspondence with the Defence Department following the war, Marion Hunter had her husband's personal effects returned to her.

Left: A striking portrait of wartime Chaplain David de Vennery Hunter before going to war. Hunter was appointed to the Ballina Methodist Circuit in 1914. *Courtesy Lenore Philp, Ballina.*

WWI Wardell Red Cross group in front of Mayley House in Richmond Street, Wardell. *Courtesy Wardell Red Cross.*

Womens' Organisations and the war effort

The work of the Red Cross and Girls' Patriotic Leagues

A number of women's organisations operated across both the Ballina Municipal and Tintenbar Shire areas during WWI. Indeed, it was during the Great War that the Red Cross established. In almost every village in the shire a branch of the Red Cross operated during World War I. In each of these small communities women joined together to raise money for the war effort by holding social events. Local Red Cross organisations also prepared comfort parcels and the knitting of scarves and socks for 'the men' at war. Women's role in undertaking these tasks was tremendously significant and provided very practical assistance to soldiers and others during war time.

In November 1916 the *Northern Star* reported on the Ballina Red Cross:

The workers of the Red Cross have been very busy of late. On the last packing day the packers dispatched the following goods to Warwick Buildings from Ballina: - 3 pairs pyjamas, 7 shirts, 25 pairs socks and 6 towels. From Teven – 12 sheets, 12 pairs pyjamas, 8 writing pads, 6 pillow slips, 9 washers, 1 bundle old linen, 1 pkt. Envelopes; from North Creek – 8 pairs pyjamas, 5 flannel shirts, 5 sheets, 1 pr mittens, 10 pairs socks, 1 T bandage, 1 pillow slip, 1 scarf, 1 washer, old linen.

Similarly, when Mrs Gladys Owen O.B.E. visited the Alstonville Red Cross in 1918 she noted the very useful contribution made by the Red Cross in sending socks to soldiers on the frontline, recuperating in hospital, as well to 'interned German[s]'.

'...the society sends socks to all the hospitals. They had been asked by the doctors for socks, pyjamas etc. for the Germans at concentration camps.' Adding, 'it was a rule of the society that they were neutral', accounting for socks being received by the enemy from the Red Cross.

The Wardell Red Cross, which formed in 1914, also had a Junior Red Cross arm which organised events for young people to raise funds toward the war effort. In 1919 it held a meeting to 'make final arrangements re [sic] the juvenile ball on Wednesday, May 7'. That same year the Red Cross organised a special Anzac Day 'basket picnic' where 'the flag collection for the honour roll brought in over £3. The children sang patriotic songs.'

Girl's Patriotic Leagues also functioned during WWI at Alstonville, Ballina and Tintenbar. Members of these groups were usually young unmarried women, their role was a social one and the work they did toward the war effort assisted practically, not only by raising funds but morale in the community. For instance, the Girls' Patriotic Leagues operating at Alstonville and Ballina assisted other community groups in farewelling and welcoming soldiers off to, and home from, war. Farewells are known to have been extremely sad occasions, though well attended.

Homecomings could also be sad occasions for members of the community who witnessed the return of soldiers from other families when theirs' was grieving a loss. Other events hosted by the Girls' Patriotic Leagues that were more joyous included a number of types of events. At Ballina, in 1916, 'it was decided that the members of the Soldiers' Aid would join

Connie Elvery (right) from Tuckombil joined the Red Cross after her brother Henry signed up. She eventually moved to Brisbane during WWI and continued her service in the Red Cross for its duration. *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

The Alstonville Girls' Patriotic Club welcomes the NSW Governor to Alstonville in 1918. The Girls' Patriotic Club assisted and held social events to raise money for the war effort and patriotic morale in the community. *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

with the Girl's Patriotic League and hold a gift evening on April 25th (Anzac Day), when the result of the sock competition now running will be announced and the competition socks exhibited.'

In 1919, at Ballina also, the Girls' Patriotic Club voted that 'every assistance be rendered the [returned] soldiers on their sports day'. This day was referred to as the Soldiers' Peace Sports Celebrations, in acknowledgment of the Armistice of November 1918, but preceding the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919 which formally ended hostilities between Britain and Germany. The day included a 'Monster procession' that 'leaves the Creamery [Norco] at 10.30am'. This procession appears to have pre-dated the formal beginning of Anzac Day Marches in Ballina.

For the Soldiers' Peace Sports 'the secretaries' of the Ballina Girls' Patriotic League '*were authorised to procure suitable prizes. ... It was also decided on the motion of Miss Elliot, seconded by Miss Brooker, that a cake stall be held on 23rd. inst., proceeds to augment the medals fund.'*

Also, in 1918 the Alstonville Girls' Patriotic Club assisted Empire Day celebrations at the Alstonville Public School. The day was celebrated *with the usual fervour and patriotic sentiment. The proceedings opened at the Public School, where the children were drawn up and the flag, hoisted by Master Cyril Daley and saluted, after which the children sang the National Anthem and rounds of cheer were given for the King.*

The day also included the singing of patriotic songs, names on the honour roll were recited and long speeches given on the bravery of soldiers and the importance of the Empire and loyalty to it.

The Alstonville Girls' Patriotic Club was 'praised for its fine work' along with the Red Cross and War Chest Society. The spokesperson also hoped that 'next year the grand old flag would be flying in peace over the Empire.'

The following month the NSW Governor visited Alstonville and received a special welcome from the Girls' Patriotic Club. As representative of the King and Empire he was given a popular reception in the Agricultural Hall. *The function was very largely attended, the whole district being represented to honour the popular King's representative and his wife and party. Over the entrance was the word "Welcome" and at the hall the party passed through a guard of honour composed of members of the Alstonville Girls' Patriotic Club in their khaki and white uniform with hats decorated with the Governor's colours.*

Peacetime celebrations in the community were also organised by the Girls' Patriotic Leagues. At Tintenbar in 1919 a 'Peace Ball' was held in the School of Arts. 'The League made considerable preparations for this function, and had the hall very nicely decorated with flags and greenery. The front of the stage was draped with the Union Jack and Australian flags, the centre flag bearing the words "Tintenbar Girls' League", and on the left the words "Peace 1919".

Such events during this era were brought to life with live musical performances of singing, bands and other solo performances. Among these performers were young women who were members of the Leagues. At the Tintenbar Peace Ball in 1919:

'Miss E McNiff' accompanied a number of other musicians on the piano. '*Dancing to the delightful music was kept merrily going until midnight, when dainties of many kinds were partaken of...'. Miss Madge Murray danced the Irish Jig, which was much appreciated by those present. Those who played the extras were Misses Bertha Chillcott and Irene Archinal (piano)...'.*

The evening ended in the 'small hours of the morning, when all wended their way home through the rain.'

'Disarming the vanquished and giving spoils to the victors'

The story of trophy guns

Wartime historian Ken Inglis has argued, the distribution of trophy guns by the British after WWI 'belonged to an age old tradition of disarming the vanquished and giving spoils to the victors'. In keeping with this tradition thousands of weapons captured by Australian units were distributed, through local councils, to 'every locality that wanted one' following the Great War. The offer of trophy guns was, however, met with differing responses across localities and council areas, as Inglis explains.

The allocation of trophies was accompanied by two strikingly different controversies, as some councils complained that they were being insulted by the offer of a mere machine gun when their municipality warranted at least a mortar, and others refused to accept objects which had been instruments of war and would remain forever its symbols, emitting a message of militarism to a world in a hard won and precarious state of peace.

The type of trophy guns allocated was dependent on the size of the community requesting them. Records from the Australian War Memorial show that the Ballina Municipal Council was favourable to the offer of a trophy gun, reflecting the small community it was and the effect of war on most in the community given its close knit nature.

In correspondence to the Minister of Trade and Customs in May 1920 the Town Clerk advised: 'Ballina will be entitled on the basis as set out, having a population of 3000 to 10000, to 1 Gun'. Though first offered a machine gun, Ballina received a German field gun and a machine gun, despite its entitlement to a single trophy as set out in the conditions for the allocation of trophy guns.

The guns were received by the Council in October 1921. The field gun known as a FK-17 was captured by the 33rd AIF Battalion at Accroche Wood, at the Western Front, France, on 8 August, 1918. The second gun, a trench mortar, was captured by the 41st AIF Battalion but it is not documented where this occurred.

A ceremony was held to place the guns at Clement Park, where 'traditional' Anzac Day celebrations were held in Ballina until after WWII. At the invitation of Mayor E. R. Mobbs the visiting Brigadier-General Cox, accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Board and Major C E Taylor from Lismore, officiated at the ceremony held in early December 1921.

Reflecting the tradition of capturing trophy guns, a strong British patriotism was expressed by Mayor Mobbs and Brigadier Cox. Despite a poor public attendance at the event, the Mayor stated that the people of Ballina 'were very grateful for the self-sacrifice of the officers and men of the army. Today they were enjoying peace through their work.'

Cox told those gathered that the guns 'would serve to remind them of what the lads fought for...'. He also appealed to 'young men to be ever ready for the fray' and to 'drill' into children 'the true patriotism of the Empire'. The ceremony concluded with an official dinner for those in the officiating party at Webster's Australian Hotel in River Street.

Other communities throughout the (current day) Ballina Shire were also recipients of WWI trophy guns. These trophy guns were usually small machine guns, hung in local halls and in association with honour rolls that were also popular in commemorating and honouring those who served at war.

Local communities also celebrated their trophy gun gifts. The unveiling of a machine gun at the Meerschaum Vale Hall in December 1921 was well attended. 'The hall was nicely decorated with flags and ferns'. 'The evening was spent in song and dance.' Returned serviceman Cecil Lumley from Wardell chaired the evening. Proceeds from the occasion went to the Alstonville School of Arts Reading Room for returned servicemen.

A German machine given was allocated to the Newrybar community in March 1921. The 'local trustees' took charge of the gun, placing it in the School of Arts under the honour roll. A machine gun also presented to the community at Teven revealed more than anticipated as it was 'found to contain a live cartridge'. It was removed by a Mr Hitchcock who 'had a knowledge of the weapon'.

The Uralba community was also granted a machine gun and it was to be hung on the wall of a 'tin shed' planned for near the Lynwood Methodist Church. A park seat and camphor laurel trees were also part of the 'improvements' planned to accommodate the trophy gun.

Interestingly, a different perspective on trophy guns was expressed at North Creek, though the proposed locating of these influenced this view. Dorothy Thompson (nee Gibbon) who grew up in Lennox Head during the WWII years, recalled that, 'I was told that my grandfather wanted one of the trophy guns to be kept at the North Creek School but no one thought that was very appropriate.'

What happened to the shire's trophy guns and what might their disappearance tell us about changing attitudes to remembering wartime over the decades? After being removed from Clement Park, and given a lick of paint, Ballina's field gun was later located adjacent the old Ballina Council Chambers in Cherry Street. From here the field gun was buried at the Ballina tip after a significant deterioration in its condition, resulting in a wheel falling off.

Broadly it is understood that the disappearance or removal of trophy guns from public places was common in other localities in the decade of, and following, WWII. Some localities, however, continue to display and conserve their trophy guns. In some communities also WWI trophy guns were recycled during WWII.

For others, with a decline in community allegiance to Britain, and British patriotism, prevalent in the broader Australian society during the WWI and WWII eras, the appeal of trophy guns waned, manifesting in a declining interest in retaining trophy guns in post-WWII decades. It seems this underlined the fate of Ballina's field gun, and perhaps the machine guns once present in other communities throughout the shire.

World War II — 1939-1945

On 3 September 1939, following Germany's invasion of Poland, Australia's Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced to the Australian public that it was his 'melancholy duty' to inform the nation that 'we are at war'. Again Australians joined the war to help its key ally Britain fight Germany, as political ties with Britain, and British patriotism, persisted. With Japan joining forces with the countries opposing Britain the war was brought closer to home as Japan began to attack British and western European territories in the Asia Pacific region from December 1941. Consequently, both the 'Hun' and the 'Japs' were at the centre of Australians' wartime fears, though the fear of the Japanese was to predominate once knowledge of its attack on Sydney Harbour became known.

In 1939 Ballina, Alstonville and Wardell remained small and rural towns, though with some population growth. In each of these urban centres commerce was still dominated by local business interests. Primary production across the Ballina Municipal and Tintenbar Shire areas remained dairy, sugar cane, timber and other mixed farming focused. Families of Anglo Celtic backgrounds were smaller than the generation before, but they remained close knit, familiar with other families in their immediate neighbourhoods and pious. The Italian prisoners of war who worked for a number of local farmers during the latter WWII years were to add a new, but small, cultural dimension to several rural localities.

Having gained greater acceptance in the Australian military, on the whole, the Aboriginal population continued to be marginalised and subject to government controls in their daily lives. The Aborigines Welfare Board, replacing the Aborigines Protection Board in 1939, sought to assimilate Aboriginal people through greater interventions than before, including through the use of Exception Certificates that 'rewarded' Aboriginal people for adopting 'white' cultural practices.

WWII again drained the community of its young men. Women were relied upon to play a different kind of role than they did during the previous war. They were strongly encouraged to work in paid employment vacated by men at war, though their important roles in raising war funds and making soldier comforts did not wane. With conscription introduced after Japan entered the war, womens' role in performing paid work was even more critical. Rationing of consumer goods was introduced, a well-remembered wartime impact in the Ballina Shire. Other local WWII memories, revealed through the following oral histories, include day-to-day life on the home front, childhood memories of wartime, war's shared traumas within families and the emotions stemming from its aftermath with the Japanese surrender in August 1945.

Background: WWII training camp in New Guinea. *Courtesy Delia Gibbon, Lennox Head.*

Left: WWII saw American sevicemen come to Ballina, as pictured here boarding one of Turner's buses at Shelly Beach. *Courtesy Ballina Shire Council.*

Right: Allan Philp, a WWII Returned Serviceman, pictured at Lighthouse Beach on leave during the war. *Courtesy Allan Philp, Ballina.*

Below: Ken Gibbon of Lennox Head (left) and fellow soldiers during WWII training. *Courtesy Delia Gibbon, Lennox Head.*

Allan Philp

In Uncle Albert's footsteps

Allan is a fourth generation resident of the Ballina Shire and a World War II veteran. Allan served in New Guinea as a master craftsman based at the Eleventh Advanced Workshops 'twenty one miles from' Port Moresby. His war service work included building infrastructure and making repairs to equipment and machinery used during the war. Two of Allan's brothers and a sister also served during WWII. Allan's decision to go to war was inspired by the portrait of his uncle Albert that prominently hung in his family home throughout his childhood. Allan would later learn that Albert 'died of wounds' inflicted while fighting at the Somme, France, in 1918. Albert was also awarded a Military Medal.

Allan's story tells of the family memories of Uncle Albert's bravery that spurred him to go to war, as well the childhood memories of Anzac Day celebrations held in Ballina following the Great War. It also sheds light on the little considered facet of the importance of war time tradesmen and their contribution to the war effort.

Left: The portrait of Allan's Uncle Albert that hung in the family home at the corner of Greenhalgh and Brunswick Streets, Ballina. The power of Albert's portrait and stories of his wartime bravery inspired Allan's decision to enlist during WWII. *Courtesy Allan Philp, Ballina.*

I am Allan Victor Philp, I was born in 1923 in a house on the corner of Greenhalgh and Brunswick Streets where my three brothers and three sisters were also born. My brothers were Eric, Jack and Jim, my sisters Lorna Marjorie and Megan. My dad built the house in which we were born. First of all it was only a boat shed, but he turned it into a house when he got married.

'Doc' Yeates was our doctor and he was the only doctor in Ballina. Mum had a nurse who helped her with the children and she used to arrive in a horse and sulky. We would have a lot of fun with this horse and sulky, put the sulky on one side of the fence and the horse on the other while she was attending to mum.

My dad was born at Empire Vale. His dad had a cane and cattle farm there, he went broke on that so he moved to Moree for a while to work on the railway line and building bridges. He then came back to Ballina and started working at Bagot's Mill. My dad worked there too.

My mum, she was just there, she was wonderful. Her family was from Lismore. Those days we had our own cow and our own chooks, we got wood to use in the fuel stove and the open fire place in the lounge room. Mum was the rule over all us kids. My job was to cut the fire wood to size to fit the stove and to see that it was in supply all the time. When we really got modern we got a chip heater for the bath. That was a real step forward in comfort.

I went to school at Ballina Public School. I was a dunce except for doing wood work. I left school at twelve years old and also worked at Bagot's Mill. It suited me just fine. I worked alongside dad, his father had taught him a lot about wood machinery. In his early years, like twenty or twenty-two, he was made foreman because he was the only one here who really knew the machinery and this was before the First World War. It was Bagot's Spoke Mill then.

Ninety seven per cent of spokes in WWI gun carriages were made here at Ballina out of Iron Bark. Bagots brought all of their machinery from an engineering place in Ohio. When the war finished dad got in touch with them to find out what machinery they'd need to make handles. He did this all for Bagot's Mill because they had confidence in him with the machinery. So they went into making handles. They became the biggest handle factory in the southern hemisphere. There were so many types of handles to make - peel handles

Above: Looking toward Port Moresby from the Eleventh Advanced Workshops where Allan Philp was stationed in New Guinea during WWII. The Red Cross symbol can be seen on the left side hill. This location was known as 'hospital hill' .

Below: Layout of the Eleventh Advanced Workshops during WWII. *Courtesy Allan Philp, Ballina.*

for bakers, axe handles, broom handles, shovel handles, hoe handles. All different sizes.

Home life and war

While the war was on all the cars, there weren't many, they all had to have their lights covered and all the houses had to have blinds to stop the light from showing at night. We used to have air raid practices in the street. The Fire Brigade would sound the raid. We would go to the old Digger's Hall, there were ladies there to nurse you. They had bandages and all that sort of thing. There were fellahs also that helped who had been in the First World War.

On Anzac Day there were still Light Horse fellahs in the parade. All these fellahs on the horses. Then you'd go in the Anzac Day March and you'd march from Teddie Henderson's picture show around to Clement Park. The band would be around there and then they'd have tent pegging by the fellahs on horseback with their swords out, they would pick up a stick off the ground. When you were a little boy and you'd seen all that happen, well it must do something to you.

I joined the Army because of my Uncle Albert

I joined the Army because of my Uncle Albert. I was just blown away by what a fella he must have been. His photo hung on our living room wall all my childhood. Because of that photo on the wall I wanted to be in the Army. I wanted the experience. Whether I thought about protecting Australia or not? You don't know those things.

I also read letters that Uncle Albert wrote to mum from the war. I was a boy when I read them. I remember sitting on the verandah in my bedroom. When he said that nobody would be coming home I don't know whether it altered me or not.

Joining up wasn't easy, there was a hitch. I was in a protected industry and dad really needed me at Bagot's Mill. I couldn't join the AIF until I was twenty one. I went to the Masonic Hall in 1941 with a lot of other young fellows and we were examined, health wise, and all these other fellows they went into the Army. Some in the militia.

I eventually talked mum and dad into letting me join the militia. I went to Casino and joined in a carriage at the Railway Station. I was knocked back first because I was in a protected industry. I then joined in Lismore and went to Sydney where they took all my particulars. I had just turned nineteen. June 1942.

I first lived at the Sydney showground, in a horse pen, for about three months and then I was sent to Bathurst to do Army training. 'Rookie courses' they used to call them. I was there for quite a while. I joined the Army Band. I had played in the Ballina Band when I was twelve. Dad was a Band Master. Eric my brother played and Marjorie, my sister, played the trombone.

At Bathurst after I had done three rookie courses and they didn't seem to know what to do with me because I was a wood machinist. Then I joined the AIF. Mum and dad didn't know. I had got a friend I knew in Lismore, and a friend in the Band at Bathurst, to sign my mother and father's name and I got in the AIF.

So I went from Bathurst to Brisbane and then to Charter's Towers where I was classed as a wood machinist. They didn't know what to call us. I was with a group of Victorians. They used to call us the specialists. I then went to New Guinea on the *Duntroon* and was housed at Murray Barracks, the next thing I was sent to the Eleventh Advanced Workshops. It was 21 miles out of Moresby. I did a trade test there and passed the test as a craftsman. And so I spent the rest of the war with that unit.

Left: Allan and Lenore Philp in front of Allan's family home in Ballina. After the war happy times returned and Allan met Lenore 'at the dances', a popular pastime that returned to full swing for young people in the post-war era. Allan and Lenore were married in 1949. *Courtesy Allan and Lenore Philp, Ballina.*

Everyone knew that Allan Philp had made the eight seater.

The Eleventh Advanced Workshops was made up of two hundred and eighty fellahs. They were all Victorian, except one from Queensland and me from NSW. They were all top tradesmen from every trade that you could imagine. Even making glasses or doing your teeth. One fellah he was a blacksmith and he started off building a furnace and making all his own tools.

I was in a workshop that had jointers, bandsaws, circular saws and all that sort of equipment. If there was any building to do you did the building. I don't know how many toilets I made. I built a real special one when I went back to Murray Barracks where we waited for about five months to get away from New Guinea. It was an eight seater. Everyone knew that Allan Philp had made the eight seater.

We had all sorts of duties. You had to get the timber out of the forests. We had a team of about twelve natives to lift the logs onto the truck. We repaired guns and tanks, everything that was required for the army.

Coming home

I came home on the *Day Stara*, it was a cruiser. Real flash, it was owned by the yanks. Well, coming into the Brisbane River there's balconies all the way along and there's all of these people waving at you. You'd pull up at the wharf and there is a band playing, and all these people on the wharf. I was with a fellow, he slept alongside me, he had a girlfriend and she knew he might be on that boat. I spotted her first and I called out to him.

I got to a café, first thing you wanted to have was a bit of steak, how you were looked after and what you ordered, you certainly got it and more. But the war hadn't actually ended yet.

I was still in Brisbane when the war ended, in a workshop at Salisbury. The celebrations went on for two or three weeks after, every night. It was big. You could hear the noise going on in town. I never went back to camp that night, and all the next day.

I went to Sydney and got discharged. Eric, my brother, had just come back from the Middle East. I stayed with him a couple of nights. Eric was a fighter pilot and he was in the Middle East, he was in the Battle of Monte Cassino. Twenty two thousand people killed. He married an English nurse in the Middle East so eventually went back to England to live. My other brother Jackie joined the Navy just after the war. My sister Megan had joined the land Army when she was 17 years old, she went up to the Daintree, she witnessed bombing up there.

The war had ended when I met Lenore

The war had ended when I met Lenore. We met at Kewpie Harris' Dance Band. We went dancing at the Ballina *Waterfront* and at the *Riviera* in Lismore. Can't remember just which one we met at. We married in 1949, my brother Eric was best man.

I came back to work at Bagot's. While I was away dad didn't teach anybody the planeing machines. He saved my job for me and I went straight back to the job. I got my first week's wages at a labourer's wage. I cried, it broke my heart, as I had been a master craftsman in the Army.

The Gibbon sisters, Delia and Dorothy at the Fitness Camp Lennox Head just following WWII. During wartime an Australian Army camp was based near the Fitness Camp for military training. *Courtesy Dorothy Thompson, Lennox Head.*

DOROTHY THOMPSON

A wartime childhood

For Dorothy Thompson (nee Gibbon) the Second World War intervened an isolated, and in many ways idyllic, childhood at Lennox Head. Having established his family on the edge of Lake Ainsworth, Dorothy's father worked many local jobs, and her mother raised nine children. The family's livelihood was supported by the surrounding natural environment, including wild game and fish caught in the 'swamp' and the sea. Raising domestic animals and growing vegetables also helped to support the family.

Few other families lived at Lennox Head during the 1930s. This meant, as children, Dorothy and her siblings roamed freely between their home, the heath, Lake Ainsworth and the beach. When war broke daily life went on in much the same manner as it had throughout the 1930s, but it altered Dorothy's thoughts as a child and some of the goings on around her. Fear of a Japanese invasion, the establishment of an Army training camp at the Lake, the strange debris washed up from passing vessels and the return of her brother from war are among the memories of her wartime childhood.

I was born in 1931 at the Ballina Hospital and taken home to live by Lake Ainsworth. My mother had ten children, she lost one, a twin to my brother at seven days old. Previous to my birth my mum and dad lived on a farm at Fig Tree Hill. This farm was first settled by my dad's father Robert Gibbon. During the Depression years my dad lost the farm, he was then able to build at Lennox, right on the edge of the Lake. He was able to get a ninety-nine year lease, the house he first established remained there while we all grew up.

My mother grew up at Bungawalbyn, she started nursing at Coraki. She was very religious, she always sang religious songs. She use to play the organ at church. The minister also came out from Ballina in a horse and sulky and they would pray together.

My father was a big man, my pants were made out of his shirt sleeves. My research found that he came to the district when he was nine years old to join my grandfather, who was already living here.

My grandfather was involved in dredging the canal that was created to transport the cane from North Creek into the main arm of the river. He also worked on the ferries. I didn't get to know my grandparents as I was the second youngest in the family.

When dad moved to the Lake he worked doing all sorts of jobs for local farmers, he repaired wind mills, built dairy bails, he did all sorts of things. He worked at the slipway in Ballina, he worked at the Zircon works at the top of the beach, he used to walk up there on Monday morning and back home on Friday night.

There was lots of happiness before the war at our place

From home to the lake we had one track and there was a track through the bush to the beach. Pacific Parade was just two sandy tracks and the same across to our place, which later became Ross Street. Besides Byron Street these were the only 'main roads', other tracks were just single cattle tracks.

We always had house cows that were housed at the Lake at night and they were kept in another paddock during the day. We also had a pig down by the water. We had fowls and honey bees as well. Dad always had a garden. We had a hard life, I never got my first pair of shoes until I was twelve. Our house was pretty shabby but no matter who came they were always invited in for a cup of tea.

Left: Dorothy's brother, Ken Gibbon, pictured at Lennox Head with two jewfish during wartime. Growing up the Gibbon siblings fished and gathered other wild foods to supplement the household vegetable garden. During WWII Ken first joined the Army but later served in the Navy. He returned to Lennox Head after the war, but something had changed in him. *Courtesy Dorothy Thomspson, Lennox Head.*

Despite the difficulties dad faced getting work we were as happy as you could get. We used to wander the bush. Our bath tub was the Lake. We did things I would never dream of doing now, such as walking through the swamp to pick Christmas Bells. We caught eels in the lake to feed our fowls, that's all that seemed to be in the Lake at the time. In later years the tortoises appeared.

We went fishing. Our first fishing lines were the left over lines from the holiday makers. We would collect up the line at low tide after the fishermen left and wrap it around glass bottles and go off fishing.

We owned the beach in the winter, nobody came to the beach in the winter. If I wanted to know where my older siblings were there was only the beach to go to, or the Lake. If they weren't at the Lake we, my brother and younger sister, would go over to the beach and follow the footprints. We had several different places we went onto the beach as the sand dunes were so high. There were a few other families sprinkling around. By 1942 there were about forty three residents.

We weren't allowed to talk but no one stopped us from listening

We went to school at North Creek. We walked to school and back every day. During the war years I can recall the L-shaped air raid shelters that were built at the school and I recall getting in to them, they were about a metre deep. We had a couple of them. We also did lots of knitting for the soldiers. I tried to knit a pair of socks. I don't know if I ever finished them or not.

I didn't really learn much about the war at school though. I learnt more from my dad than I did at school. Though we didn't really talk a lot at the dinner table, not like today, I would learn about it by overhearing conversations, when he was talking to others. I was a terrific listener.

We had a path down to the Lake from the house. Somehow I got word that there were Japanese submarines out in the ocean. I thought that the enemy would come over into the Lake and come up our garden path. Right inside the door where the path ended was my bed and I always thought they would come in and get me. I was dead scared of them. I used to get into my bed and cover my head over with a blanket.

I can't stand the drone of a lonely plane now, because that is what it was like during the war. I remember one time when planes went over it was like a swarm of bees or mosquitos, there just seemed to be hundreds of them. We realised there was war on. We realised that too because we had to blacken, or put something over our windows at night. We didn't fear as much during the day.

Mum and I were sitting under the mulberry tree at one stage, just outside our back door early one evening and we saw a plane go into the sea. My mother had a son in the Air Force, that would have been devastating for her, but I was too unaware at that stage to realise what she might be feeling. Later on, one of the parachutes washed up onto the beach and it had the name Lovejoy on it. A raft also floated down into the channel, I didn't see it but my brothers were talking about that. My mum had two boys in the war. She had one son from a previous marriage, my half brother James Heiman, and my oldest brother Ken was in the Navy. That was

A group of Army 'boys', from Melbourne, pictured at Lennox Head where they had training camp during WWII. During their time at Lennox Head the Army boys swelled numbers at the local dances and forged friendships with some of the local girls, including Dorothy's older sister Delia. *Courtesy Delia Gibbon, Lennox Head.*

pretty hard on her. She was very afraid for her sons.

I remember the Army camp at Lake Ainsworth, three Battalions were there. My brother who was three years older than me he used to spend a lot of time over there with them. I think that's where he learnt to play cards and so on. In those years too we held dances at Mrs Mc's hall every month, decorated with the cycad leaves from out opposite our farm at Fig Tree Hill. The Army boys attended the dances much to the delight of the local girls. I was too young at this time, but my sister wasn't. One of the boys used to come and visit my sister. He came to the door one day and I said to my sister "What's he here for?" She said "he wants me to wash and iron his shirt".

When my brother came home on leave he'd go and shoot ducks for our food, we lived on fish and wild ducks at the time. The rabbits didn't come till after the war. He went in to the swamp one day, the mosquitos were bad and covered both his arms, but he had to wait for the ducks to line up to make sure we had enough for a meal. When he went back from leave he went to hospital with Dengue Fever. He always thought he got it from here even though they say it wasn't here in those days.

I remember a farmer who used to come and bury his black market petrol in the heath, because the sand was easy to dig holes there. I remember hearing my dad talk about that, petrol was rationed during the war. My dad was also a local warden at one stage and I remember he was asked to go out and see what the flashing lights were out on the hill. Things used to also wash up from boats passing. One day a tin of dehydrated cabbage washed up on the beach, we weren't supposed to keep them but we did. I really liked the cabbage but my siblings didn't. One day I also picked up a hand grenade box on the beach, I brought it home and painted it up green and put my fancy work in it.

We didn't really celebrate the end of the war. Celebrations were not really part of our home life, we couldn't afford celebrations. Dad had small needs, he smoked a bit of tobacco and had a bit of chocolate on the wireless shelf.

I remember my brother Ken coming home from the war though, he had met a girl at Albion Park and they got married. He built his home at Lennox and spent most of his time fishing at night and carrying gravel from the beach, or shell from the middens, for the Council. He was the first licensed fisherman in Lennox. He built up his business over the years after the war.

When Ken came home from the war he was absolutely changed. Five years in the forces did terrible things to him. He was in the Army for one year when he got his call up for the Navy, and so left his Army mates to go off to New Guinea without him.

When he went away he was jovial and happy and always singing around the house. I can still hear him singing *Rocking Alone in Your Old Rocking Chair*, or *Dan Murphy's Door*, or whatever it was. He was the happiest big brother. When he came home he was different. It was like he was two different people sometimes. Something would happen and he would snap. That went on forever, until he died.

Delia Gibbon pictured with American serviceman Phillip Roberts. During WWII Phil was stationed at Ballina with the American Navy while its vessel was repaired at the Ballina Slipway. During the few months spent in Ballina Delia Gibbon became friends with Phil and after he left they exchanged letters for the duration of the war. His letters brought disturbing news. *Courtesy Delia Gibbon, Lennox Head.*

DELIA GIBBON

The war opened my eyes

During WWII Delia Gibbon went to western New South Wales to begin work as a 'sub-teacher'. However, her mother's illness soon brought her back to care for her younger siblings. She returned to her family home on the edge of Lake Ainsworth. Like her sister Dorothy's childhood recollections of wartime Lennox Head, Delia recalls the strong fear the war brought to the community.

For Delia, wartime also brought friendships with a group of 'Melbourne boys' who trained at the Army camp located at the Lake. Their presence buoyed numbers at the local dances held in aid of the war effort. When the Melbourne boys left for New Guinea a group of American Navy personnel arrived in Ballina to have their boats repaired at White's slipway. They stayed for several months and also frequented local dances. After their departure, Delia exchanged letters with one of these men throughout the war. His letters opened Delia's eyes to the war overseas and told her of its predicted end.

I was born on the 31st July 1922, six months before Lennox Head was sub-divided. My dad was Sydney Gibbon, he was very interested in local affairs. I had three brothers and two sisters, as well as step siblings. I was the oldest girl in the family. I grew up out at the family farm on Fig Tree Hill. It was all clear then, there were no trees, it was all farm land.

As children my brothers took me bird nesting, we gathered the bird's eggs, we'd blow them out and then we would prepare them in a box. They took me nesting because I was smaller, and lighter, they would send me out along the small limbs of trees. We later joined the Gould's Bird Lovers Group and that was the end of that.

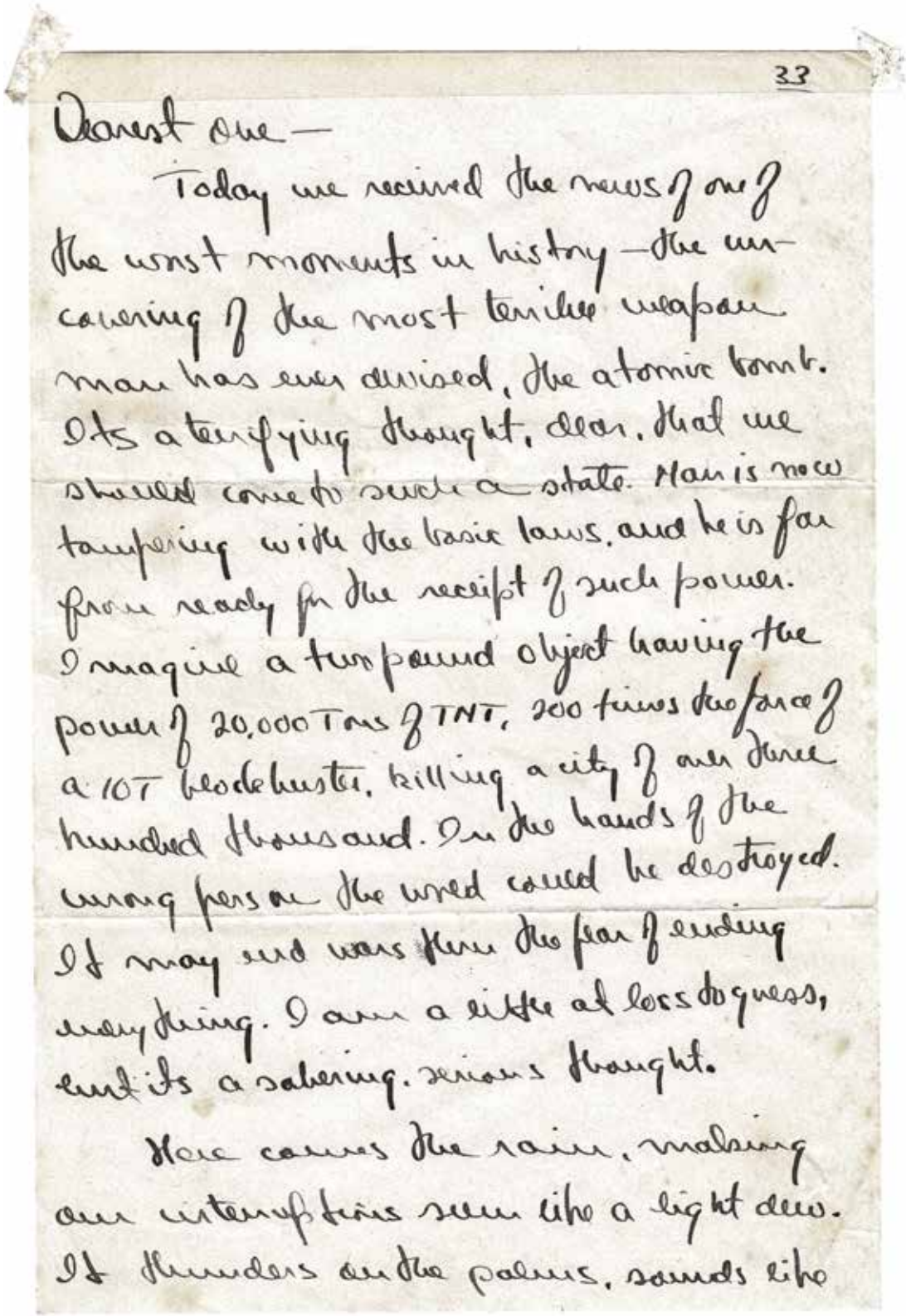
We also sold beach worms and Christmas Bells we picked in the heath to people who owned the holiday cottages. We did anything to get food, we went fishing and collected oysters. My brothers would shoot wild ducks.

I went to the North Creek School. Usually we walked or rode the horse. They were good days, then the war came and made things very hard. Food became scarce and we had clothing coupons. We would go to the shops in Ballina to spend our coupons. There was only a few shops – there was Garretts, Pickerings and Sharpes, the grocery shop.

I was in my late teens at the beginning of the war

I was in my late teens when I went to work at Tullan Tulla near North Star at the beginning of the war years. I stayed with, and became school teacher for, a family out there. I went with them to Warialda to make cakes and socks to send off in parcels for the soldiers. Then my mother took ill and I had to come home and look after my family. That was the finish of my opportunity to be a school teacher, I dearly wanted to be a school teacher.

When the war was on it was very, very frightening. We had local wardens to see that we did what we were supposed to do. Dad was a warden. Our windows had to be covered up with blankets so no light could be seen, we were afraid that there were Japanese airplanes about. In Ballina



33

Dearest One—

Today we received the news of one of the worst moments in history—the uncovering of the most terrible weapon man has ever devised, the atomic bomb. Its a terrifying thought, dear, that we should come to such a state. Man is now tampering with the basic laws, and he is far from ready for the receipt of such power. Imagine a two pound object having the power of 20,000 Tons of TNT, 200 times the force of a 10T blockbuster, killing a city of one three hundred thousand. In the hands of the wrong person the world could be destroyed. It may end wars. Here the fear of ending anything. I am a little at loss to guess, but its a sobering, serious thought.

Here comes the rain, making our interruptions seem like a light dew. It thunders on the palms, sounds like

Letter from American Serviceman Phillip Roberts to Delia Gibbon, 1945. Phil wrote to Delia from the islands north of New Guinea throughout the war. The letter pictured told Delia of the development of the atomic bomb. *Courtesy Delia Gibbon, Lennox Head.*

Dearest one —

Today we have received the news of one of the worst moments in history - the uncovering of the most terrible weapon man has ever devised, the atomic bomb...

the police were the wardens during the war and dad used to work with them.

The war took a lot of our local boys. Some volunteered and some were called up. There was some kind of stigma to being called up, it was seen as being much better if you volunteered.

There were dreadful stories we used to hear about the Japanese and what they did to the boys. My brothers would tell us stories and we could see the effect the war had on our brother Ken. We really knew there was a war on and it felt close with aeroplanes flying over us and the sinking of the *Wollongbar* just down the coast.

The boys would all come down to the dances at Mrs Mc's Hall

During the war, a group of boys from Melbourne came to town. There were four groups of them camped at the Lake. From the beginning of the Lake down to the fitness camp. Then they had the rifle range further down. They had a couple of extras, called donahs, they were on motorbikes and they did the running of messages. Those boys all went to New Guinea. We established friendships with them and got to know them. We have never heard a word since from any of them.

We used to run dances in those days. It cost a shilling to go in, the boys from Melbourne went to the dances with us, they boosted the revenue quite a bit. There was one fellow there, dada, he was an elderly man and he used to make the boys behave themselves and look after us. So it was a good time. We used to have dances about once a month, in the hall on the beach front, it was called Mrs Mack's Hall, and the boys would all come down.

We formed a committee to organise the dances. The orchestra used to cost 30 shillings, and the hire of the hall ten shillings, so we didn't make a lot from the dances. But the money we did make a lot of it went into the war effort, as they called it. Over time we also managed to buy a block of land for an ambulance station, we never got it though.

After the Melbourne boys went to New Guinea the yanks came to town — to Ballina — and they also used to come to the dances at Lennox Head. They came to Ballina to have repairs made to their boats. We also used to go the dances at the *Waterfront* in Ballina and in Lismore at the *Riviera* with the boys. They would take us to the dances in their utility. We were dance crazy in those days.

I wrote to one of them, he was my sort. I learnt about the war from his letters he wrote to me from the islands north of New Guinea. That's how I knew the war was about to end. That's how I learnt about the atomic bomb, Phil wrote to me and told me about it. When I read it, it frightened me, I thought "oh my God what are they doing?" The news of the bomb knocked the stuffing out of us. We knew it was going to be something horrible and it was. At the end of the war, I never heard from Phil again.

War Jobs for Householders: Wanted at Once, Pots and Pans for Planes: Ask your local Council to Collect Them: During WWII households were constantly urged to help the war effort. This WWII poster promotes the collection and recycling of aluminium pots and pans for use in the maintainence and manufacture of war planes. *Courtesy National Library of Australia, PIC LOC Poster Drawer 212.*

Vic and Joan Bryce

On the 'home front'

Vic and Joan Bryce have lived and farmed at Dalwood all their married life. They also operated a transport business established by Vic's uncle and father before the war. Vic grew up on the same property. Joan was raised on family farms at Marom Creek and Knockrow. Their childhood spanned the war years.

Vic and Joan's childhood memories recall their day-to-day life experiences during wartime - the harshness of daily life, its routines, the loss and trauma that war brought. Recollections are also of 'home front' efforts made by both men and women, in their small rural neighbourhood, to support the war effort and each other. The elation and joy spurred by the war's end also looms large in their memories.

Vic

I was born at Alstonville, eighty one years ago, on the eighth of the eighth, thirty two. I started school in Alstonville, when I was old enough to ride a bike I went to Rous School. I used to stay with my grandmother, my mother's mother, in Alstonville and go to school from there. I only had to walk down the street. I had two brothers and a sister.

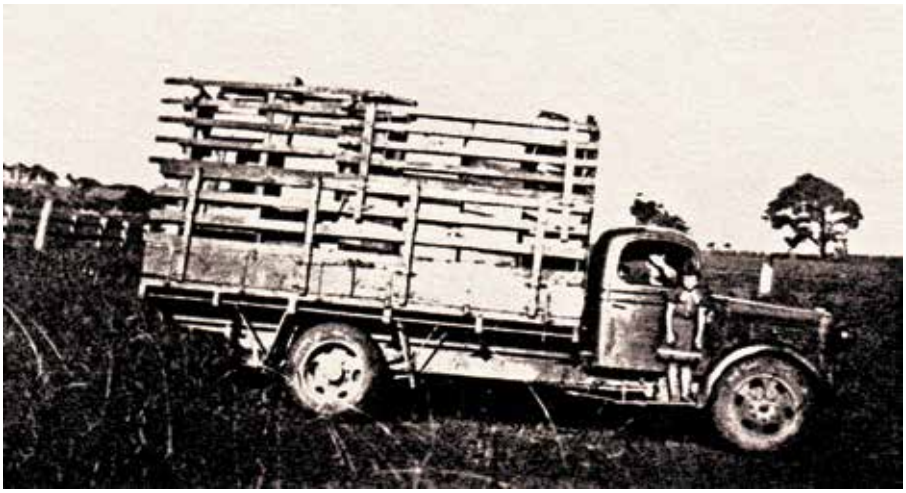
My mother grew up at Lynwood, her family was Methodist. She was a Crawford. Her family's place had two houses on it, then my grandfather moved onto the corner of Uralba and Wardell Road, he gave a piece of that property to the Methodist Church to build a little church there. I spent a lot of time with grandfather, my mother's father, he was a dairy farmer. My parents were married in the Lynwood church built on the land he gave, so my mother only had to go across the paddock to get married.

My great grandfather on my dad's side came from Scotland, first to the South Coast [of NSW]. My grandfather and all his brothers later moved up this way. My father, Herbie Bryce, was born at Wollongbar, in a house where the bypass now goes. He later worked property out Pearces Creek then they moved back to Wollongbar. When my parents moved out here to Dalwood, they brought a hundred odd acres. Dad's brother, Ern, lived next door and they both dairyed.

I was two when my father took on his brother's truck. My Uncle Ern, he started off carting pigs off the farm with a ute, then he got a bigger truck. Dad then took it on and gradually built it up, carting cattle, pigs and calves for everybody.

My mother was driving trucks too through the war years, because the chap that used to help dad drive was called up into the Army. Dad was called up too. They took everybody that was fit but dad's health wasn't that crash hot, I think it was his eyesight more than anything.

My mother was also in the Red Cross for years. She was in it when it first started. She had more to do with it during the war years than after. She used to go to the Red Cross meetings up here at Lynwood, in the hall there, I think she held some of the positions in it at one stage. She used to have to read the minutes. When they closed Lynwood she used to go down to Wardell to attend meetings. She knitted socks and all sorts of things, to try and keep the men warm. I can remember her packing parcels to send to them.



Left: A cherished photo of Vic Bryce's 'mum' driving a Bedford truck during the war years. Vic's sister Elva is standing on the truck's running board. Women stepped into many roles usually performed by men during wartime given their absence throughout the community. *Courtesy Vic Bryce, Dalwood.*

Above: Alstonville Junior Red Cross cap. *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

Below: Alstonville Red Cross 'invalid's cup' c. WWII. Cups such as this were used to assist the convalesence of soldiers after they returned from the war. *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

When my mum was driving the trucks my sister Elva and I used to cook tea, we'd come home from school and cook the tea. We would have tea cooked when mum and dad came home, do the washing up when we finished. Dad would go back outside to get the trucks ready for the next day. They had about three or four trucks during the war years.

During the war everything was blacked out of a night. We had shellite lights. We cooked with a wood stove. We also had poor teachers because they sent a lot of the good teachers to the war. As kids we knew the war wasn't good.

Joan

My family were from down south. Mum's father and mother came from the Shetland Islands off Scotland. Dad's mother was from Ireland. Dad used to say, "You're as Irish as the pigs of Dublin". She was a Walsh. Dad's father came from England, funny little old fellah, he was good to me. He was retired and he had a bit of land and a house cow and chooks, he'd send his eggs to the Egg Board. We'd watch him packing eggs, but the other grandchildren would get in there and disturb him.

I was born at Urbenville, I came in a hurry. My family moved to Marom Creek when I was two. Up Graham's Road, it wasn't Graham's Road then of course. Dad planned that road because you had to go through four properties to where we were. Then we moved to Dunoon before living at Knockrow, that's where I learnt the war had finished. Mr Doyle, the teacher there, he used to get the *Northern Star* every morning because the wireless wasn't working and you couldn't get parts for it. Anyway, we get down to school, Norman and I, my brother, and we're thinking "what's happening with the kids?" they were jumping around the paddock, all excited. "The war's finished!" they were saying. I said, "Well, we can go home can't we?" Mr Doyle first got us inside to do something then he let us go home. Mr Doyle taught us a lot about the war. He used to read the newspaper to us. We learnt about all the cruelty that was going on. He told us about the prisoners of war and how they starved them. Some of the poor soldiers, the boys that had gone from Knockrow, they were never the same men when they came back. They were affected too much by the trauma. I knew one fellow who turned against God because of the inhumanity of it. He saw too much brutality, that's what he kept saying, he'd say it to my dad.

Dad's brother was in the First World War and he also came back a harsh man. He had his horse shot from under him. Dad used to say, "It's a terrible thing war". They didn't take my dad in the Army because he had one foot that rolled over and you can't march too well with that. They said go home and keep producing food.

We sent food parcels to the soldiers, through the Red Cross, we came to the conclusion that the poor fellahs didn't get fed. My mum would make donations through the Knockrow Red Cross, we took tinned food and gave it to Mrs Jackson, they got that parcelled up and sent away. There was a lot of that done.

We didn't have that much food because they rationed everything. You had to have tickets to go and get things at the grocery shops. It was pretty hard going, they rationed the butter that much, so we were trying to make butter and it didn't turn out too well. Dad used to grow a lot of beetroot and mum would boil it up and put vinegar on it. Dry bread and vinegar was a lot of our lunch during that time.

War time was harsh. We had to make sure we got to bed before dark as everything had to be blacked out. Mum used to have an old lantern, she put paper on the outside of it so she only had half the light, so she used to say to us "don't fall over on your way to bed."

Left: Red Cross urn, used on the railway throughout the region to provide cups of tea for the 'troop trains' taking men to and from camp. Members of the Red Cross would travel on, and meet, the trains, as well issue bags of personal items to soldiers. *Courtesy Red Cross — Northern Region.*

Tim and Lorna Dorey

Farming and wartime

Farming production was considered an important essential service during the war. As a result many farmers were discouraged from enlisting so they could continue to produce food for the war effort and domestic consumption. Though Tim's oldest brother enlisted for war, Tim was instructed to remain at home and work his farm.

In 1941 Tim married Lorna Spencer. Together they spent the rest of the war years working their farm at Boundary Creek growing bananas. It was a time remembered for its shortages and night time blackouts, and the absence of young men in the community. Tim also joined the local Volunteer Defence Corp (VDC), formed to help defend the community in the event of a Japanese invasion of the 'home front'.

Tim

Left: Despite the war life at home went on, but families and communities were instructed to support the war-effort. From a farming family, Tim was urged to stay at home but one of his brothers went off to war. Tim married Lorna not long after WWII began in 1941. They farmed their property at Boundary Creek producing bananas for domestic consumption. *Courtesy Lorna and Tim Dorey, Boundary Creek.*

My dad, was from Dorset, England, he came out in 1910 and he worked at the Wollongbar Experimental Farm, he was teaching the Dr Barnardo boys how to farm – milk cows, fence and all that sort of stuff. He was from a farming background. My mother followed him out from England after he got the job at Wollongbar.

He was at Wollongbar for several years and then he went on to a farm at Teven. From there he went to Uralba. I was born at Teven. My mum was a cheese maker by trade and when they were living at the Wollongbar farm the cheese maker there got drunk and couldn't make the cheese so the manager got her to come in make the cheese, she had the job from that time on at the Wollongbar farm.

I had two brothers, I was the youngest. The middle one he enlisted. He was in the Middle East and New Guinea, he came home alright. The older brother and I we couldn't go, we were told we had to work on the farm.

I grew bananas out at Boundary Creek, we had about sixty or seventy acres of bananas to work. I was the first to grow bananas on flat country. When I started growing them there, they said I was mad. I used to take the prizes at the show everywhere for bananas. We were also milking seventy or eighty cows.

During the war the training planes at Evans Head used to fly over here real low. All the time. In the VDC we had to train every Saturd'y. Now and again we had to have two weeks camping. It was our job to fight the Japs if they landed here at home. We had our own rifles and ammunition. We used to do live hand grenade throwing. We had to have uniforms.

The Captain of the Brigade was the school headmaster, Richards was his name. We used to train at the hall at Empire Vale. We went elsewhere when we had rifle practice. We had about thirty or forty in the group. All local men, farmers.

We also had masks for our headlights on the vehicles, you put it over the headlight and it had a couple of slits through. We were told the Japs were going to land around here. So we thought about building a dug-out in the sand hills and hiding, all that sort of stuff. The nearest we got to it was when the Japs sunk the *Nimbin*, just

out here. My neighbour, who always grew early pumpkins, when he harvested them I used to help him cart them out and bag them. He had forty something bags on the *Nimbin*, the first pumpkins for the Sydney market and they went down. He lost the lot!

Lorna

I was born in MacLean on the 18th January 1920. Thirteen months later we came over here with my family. I lived with my family at Empire Vale until I was married at twenty one in 1941, just after the war began. My granny, my father's mother, she was a Law. My dad brought Josh Ellis' farm - a cane farm.

My father's father, my Grandad, was going to England to his sick mother, they went by boat in those days. Grandma, she was pregnant at the time, he got smallpox on the boat and he never came back, she died at forty two, she lost twins. She died from a broken heart after losing her twins, left a little one fifteen months old.

In all, there was seven boys and four girls in the family left without a mother and father, so Aunty Annie, she was twenty one, she took the girls and my dad, he was nineteen, took the youngest boys and reared them, kept them together. When dad married my mum they still lived with us and everyone thought they were our brothers. Two of my dad's older brothers, Uncle Ernest and Uncle Fred, went to the First World War, they were in the Light Horse. I wasn't born then but heard about them going to the war.

I met Tim at a dance at the Wardell hall. Maybe it was a ball, I'm not sure. I was about nineteen. It is a long time ago, a lot of things have happened since then.

We married during the war years. Weddings were always held in the middle of the week then. So we were married on a Wednesday at 7.00 pm. We had supper after. My two sisters were attendants and my brother and Tim's brother were also attendants.

After we were married we went to live at Boundary Creek. My Dad gave us twenty acres. It was rugged, and the ticks! All we had was a brush hook and a mattock.

Life during the war wasn't much good. When the planes were coming over they nearly took the roof off our house. Ray was a little fellah, he wasn't four, he'd play down under the house and when the planes would come right over the poor little fellah would come up, thump, thump, thump his head on every step, he was terrified. My cousin Johnny was killed in Borneo. Some of the boys at Broadwater were with him, they said he was in a bad way.

Of a night time, when we lived out at Boundary Creek, Jack White, he lived where McDonald's used to live, he was the warden. He had to come around every night to see that there was no lights shining. Everyone had to have their lights and windows covered. We only had candles and the old Tilly light. We had no electricity or telephone.

Dad and Tim were in the VDC, Volunteer Defence Corp. They were in that for months. My mother was in the Red Cross, the Empire Vale Branch, she was a staunch worker. She made so many socks, sending parcels. She had many certificates and things for her work. She worked with the Ellis' and Robins', yes there was quiet a lot of them. They did a lot of work. My Dad also grew a lot of small crops, potatoes and all that.

Life was quiet. We saw the baker, Bill Harrison, and our groceries, they'd come take orders and bring our groceries. We didn't go anywhere because we had no way to go. We had petrol rations. Paddy Walsh was our butcher, Fred Whitford delivered it. Otherwise it was pretty quiet, there was nobody around. Everybody, the boys had gone to war.

Left: For many families WWII brought back memories and emotions felt during the Great War. The story of Lorna's uncle, Ernest Spencer of Empire Vale and his WWI service in the Light Horse, was passed down the family through the WWII years. Lorna continues to tell his story today. *Courtesy Lorna Dorey, Boundary Creek.*

Elsie Crawford (right), with her sister Vera (left) and friend Thora Bailey all dolled up and striding through Hyde Park, Sydney, 1939. *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

Elsie Johnston

'It was a different life altogether'

Born during the Great War, Elsie Johnston grew up in a tight knit family at Uralba. Throughout the 1920s Elsie went to school with her sisters and cousins who lived next door – 'the Blanch girls'.

By the time World War II broke she was a young woman living at home and working on the family's orchard and dairy property. Her mother's experience of World War I saw her encourage Elsie, her sisters and others in the community to do their bit for the war by re-forming the Lynwood Branch of the Red Cross. These women, with the help of local men, spent the war years raising money by holding local social events. They also knitted socks and scarves for soldiers, with supplies and knitting patterns provided by the Red Cross headquarters. That many local boys went to the war meant their efforts seemed all the more worthwhile. Other wartime events also impacted Elsie's extended family; these events, however, were not known to them until after the war had ended.

There was a dentist in Ballina named Allan Smith, his sister was a midwife, he turned part of his house into a place where women could go and have their babies. My mother went there and so that's where I was born during World War I, on the 30th of November 1915. My father had a property at Uralba, he was the second youngest in the Foreman Crawford family, that's where I grew up. We had both a dairy farm and an orchard. I was the eldest in the family, then my sister Vera. I had another sister named Muriel, she was born in 1923 when I was eight years old. Then another sister, Evelyn; and then my brother John, the baby of the family. John was no good to us, as some of the other girls had older brothers who would escort us to outings at night, but we didn't have an older brother to help us in that way – but my father was pretty good at it.

I learnt a lot of things at home and so when I started school I was nearly seven. I went to the Rous Public School, I walked to school with some older cousins until I was capable of riding a pony. Because I had learnt a good bit at home they put me up three classes in one year! I didn't start school earlier as I was too young to be riding a horse.

In later years I then rode to school with an older cousin, Jessie Blanch. My father had bought me a bigger horse and she rode in the saddle, I sat on the rump of the horse on a pad that clipped onto the saddle. Jessie's father, Uncle Ed, was my mother's brother. He brought six or seven acres from my father, so they lived next door. We always had a lot to do with each other. During World War II she became prisoner of war.

After school I stayed home and helped my mother, sometimes she also employed someone to help her, when her health wasn't the best. I also helped dad sometimes in the orchard. He had a share family to do the milking. It seems funny I grew up on a dairy farm but never learnt to milk! Many years later I did but I still wasn't a champion at it.


HELP
Souter
William Brooks & Co Ltd Litho Sydney

Left: WWI Red Cross nurse recruitment poster by Australian artist David Souter. Souter designed various Australian WWI posters. The Red Cross formed in Australia eight days after the commencement of WWI, remaining active to the present day. The work of Red Cross branches at home, such as the Lynwood branch, during WWI and WWII complemented the work of the Red Cross overseas and closer to the war.

We got the Red Cross going when we heard there was a war on

At the beginning of the war I was still living at home and during this time a lot of us worked in the Red Cross. We had a branch called Lynwood. I was nineteen or twenty when I started with the Red Cross. I remember when Mr Menzies, the Prime Minister at the time, made the announcement, and I can still hear him say over our battery operated wireless, "It is my melancholy duty to inform you that we are at war". I also remember my mother responding, "Oh we'll have to have the Red Cross going". So there was a meeting called to find out how you go about it. We had to get the constitution of the Red Cross and all the business stuff that you had to do. There had been a Rous Mill Red Cross in the previous war, but that was nothing to do with ours.

We had a meeting to decide who'd be president and who'd be vice President and Secretary, all that. Alice Blanch, my cousin, she was the first President of the Lynwood branch. She was older than Jessie, and by that time Jessie had enlisted in the war services and was overseas. She enlisted from Brisbane where she had trained to be a nurse. She was a particularly good nurse and so she thought she could be of use. The hospital people that knew her didn't want her to go. She said, "Well if you won't release me I'll resign". Anyway, she got her wish. As it turns out she had a pretty bad time.

I was the first Secretary and Maggie Dee was the Treasurer. We were all members and for those who were married their husbands were members too, but they didn't come to meetings because they were busy with other things, they would help us with the heavy work though. All together there was twenty or thirty of us.

We did a lot of catering for clearing sales on farms to raise money. The men used to borrow tables with folding legs and they would transport them out to a farm. Bryce's at Dalwood had a carrying business and trucks, they did a lot of the transporting for our catering. They also had a big tent and would erect the tent and the rest of us, mainly the women, would have made fillings for the sandwiches and ordered the bread. We would go out early and make the sandwiches, prepare everything we could before they were ready for their meal. They could have as many cups of tea as they wanted for no extra charge! All the profits that were made went to the Red Cross.

We also held little functions. One time we had a walk through our property at Uralba, as we had macadamia nuts growing. When the flowers are on they are very pretty. They would hang down, some of them are pink, and some creamy white, and they smell a bit like honey suckle. So we called it a 'blossom walk', they paid a bit of money, walked through, had a look and smelt these things. Sometimes too down at Uralba, there was a hall down there, they'd have a bit of a party, a dance, or hold a concert.

We also did a lot of knitting. Mostly we did our knitting at home. We didn't have time to do it at our meetings as we had other things to tend to. Letters to write and different other things. The Red Cross headquarters would send us a lot of khaki coloured wool, it wasn't very pretty. I knitted things, but I wasn't as good a knitter as some of the others. We were given a certain amount of wool and the measurements for scarves by the Red Cross. The soldiers had scarves for when it was cold and they had to be a certain length and a certain width. Some of the ladies, because they didn't have quiet enough wool to make the right number of scarves, they'd do them a bit too short. Well that was no good because they needed to be a certain length to do the job properly, so sometimes Alice Blanch and I would get together with some of the others and undo them and then re-do them. We didn't publicise that.

Elsie's childhood companion and cousin Jessie Blanch in her WWII nurse's uniform. Of her POW experience following the war Jessie said: 'There was no way I was going to be beaten. There was no way the Japanese soldiers were going to get the better of me.' *Courtesy Alstonville Plateau Historical Society.*

During the war, and sometimes after the war everything you bought, you had to have a coupon and line up for, even for petrol. So we did a good bit of walking in those years, don't suppose it hurt us. We were still suffering from the effects of it even after it had ended, shortages continued.

We knew a lot of the boys that went off to war and we were always keen to hear the news about the war. You'd wonder if it was ever going to finish, especially when something happened near Coffs Harbour where a ship was sunk – the *Wollongbar* – this brought the war very near to our part of the world. We all just wished it was over.

I married my husband, Cyril, during the war

I was married in April 1941. I think if we had known that the war would continue we might not have got married at that time. But all the arrangements had been made, it was all sort of in the process. Cyril's mother, and his sisters, they'd made their place vacant for us so we just had to sort of go on with it. We got married in the Alstonville Methodist church. By that time we were coming more to Alstonville for things. When we were married we lived on the property called *Rossmore,* it was a dairy located on the Teven Road, that's when I learnt to milk cows.

I remember when it was announced that the war was over. I was walking across the paddocks from where we were living then at Rossmore. I was going down to the showground, someone was giving lessons in dressmaking there. I hear someone say "the war's over", I kept on going as I didn't know whether they'd be going on with the sewing or not. I continued on to find out they were still having the lesson. Then there was a lot of noise up in the Main Street, there were people yahooing and making funny noises. I made my way up there, I could see many people and one of them was the bank manager's wife riding a bike and pulling some kind of contraption behind it, down the street making a noise, that was her way of celebrating that the war was finished! I don't know what I did then – I think everybody did a few silly things.

When Jessie came back from the war she was skin and bone. At first we didn't know she was being held in the camp, we found out after the war. The Red Cross used to try and send medicines and food and other things to the prisoner of war camps. We later learnt that, in the walls of the place, where they were imprisoned there were knots in the timber and they could poke these out and see through it. Sometimes they saw a truck, or other vehicle come, that had the Red Cross symbol on it and they knew there was something in it that was supposed to come to them, but they never got it. But they said just seeing it gave them a bit of a boost as they knew they weren't forgotten by the ones at home. They knew that's where it had come from even though they didn't get those things.

They also didn't know the war had ended, nobody told them. But they guessed that something must have happened because the Japs started being a bit generous. While Jessie was away her father died, she didn't know that either. All sorts of things had happened to people and families that she knew nothing about. When she did get home she had to stay in hospital until she looked a bit better, the officials didn't want the prisoners to look so bad when they saw their families and relations again.

There was an organisation here formed to welcome soldiers home, Jessie got a welcome home. It must have been a strange thing for those who were prisoners of war to come back to a normal way of life. Jessie lived to be in her eighties. She got married after she was discharged from the Army, she married on her 40th birthday. Looking back on it all, it was a different life altogether.

A 'Box Brownie' image taken of George Braid (Jnr), George Braid (Snr) and Arthur Braid taken at the Fire Station in Crane Street, Ballina, the day Arthur enlisted in the Army — 1940. *Courtesy Jean Vidler, Ballina.*

Arthur Braid visting the 'Tiger Balm Gardens' during his war service in Singapore and before his capture by the Japanese in 1942. *Courtesy Jean Vidler, Ballina.*

Jean Vidler

My 'loving brother' Arthur and the Changi parachute

Jean Vidler was born and raised in Ballina. Her family lived for a time at the Ballina Fire Station, as her father, George Braid, was the Station Master. Three of Jean's brothers enlisted and went off to war from Ballina. One brother, Arthur, was captured by the Japanese and held in the Changi Prisoner of War Camp in Singapore from May 1942 to the end of the war in 1945.

On Arthur's return to Ballina, at the end of the war, he gave Jean a number of war souvenirs as momentos of his war service. These items remain strong reminders of the love and loss associated with the Braid family's wartime experience.

On 9 July, 1940, my brother Arthur Braid enlisted in the Army here at Ballina. Before going to war, Arthur was employed making butter boxes at the Norco factory located on the riverfront. My dad worked at the Norco factory as well. Ballina was a small place then and many of the men either worked at the butter factory [Norco], or at Bagot's Mill. Arthur was nicknamed 'pipi Braid', as he also sold pipis and fish to Ballina residents, work he began as a school boy and then later supplemented his work at Norco.

By mid-September Arthur left Sydney on board the famous *Queen Mary* for Malaya, he was a private in the 20th AIF Battalion. I had two other brothers who also served during WWII. Fred, who was a signal-man, served in Middle East and New Guinea after the war. George went to New Guinea in the Infantry and was based at Bougainville. They were among so many young men went to war, the town was emptied.

Arthur was sent to Changi

During Arthur's service in Malaya he was captured by the Japanese before the fall of Singapore in 1942. Following capture, he was then sent to the Changi Prisoner of War Camp, he remained there until the war's end.

When Arthur returned to Australia he brought with him a silk parachute that had been used to deliver medical supplies into the camp by the Australian Red Cross. Arthur obtained the parachute during an extended stay in hospital at Changi with encephalitis. When he came home he gave the parachute to me as a souvenir of his time at war and of Changi. I have treasured the parachute and a number of other items he used while at war. These items include his Army issue brown mirror and a tortoise shell comb.

When we got word that the war had ended everyone went down to the main street, River Street. Where Cummings' now is an outdoor dance floor was built there during the war, it was built for the young people. Concerts and dances were held there, I think it was to maintain morale in the town while the war was on. Dances were held there during the war to raise funds for the war effort. When the war ended that's where everyone went. Chillcott's dance band played all night!

When we heard the war was over many of the boys hadn't arrived home yet, they had to be formally discharged before they could come home and many still had time to serve. When my parents got word my brother was coming home they arranged to travel to Sydney to meet him. They had to travel from Ballina to Casino to get the train to Central Station. When they got to

Jean's smocked silk night dress made from the Changi POW Camp's Red Cross parachute. For Jean the nightdress represents very personal memories of war, her brother Arthur's war service, Changi POW Camp, grief and love. It also demonstrates the resourcefulness that was part of daily life during the war and after, due to the rationing of most goods. *Courtesy Jean Vidler, Ballina.*

Casino my mother was so sick, she was anxious about Arthur coming home. My mother didn't make the trip to Sydney. She got off the train and father brought her back to Ballina by taxi before taking the same taxi back to Grafton to meet up with the train again. It was an anxious time for my parents. Arthur was the first POW to return to Ballina, as a result it was arranged that the Ballina Band would for him when he returned. They arrived at the bus station a day early, so the band never got to play for him after all. The Mayor met him at the bus the next day.

Things were scarce

Most things were still scarce in the years just after the war. We were OK for butter as dad used to bring that home from Norco. Tea, and tobacco for the men were very scarce, and you could only buy so much of these at a time. Even material was scare until the beginning of the 1950s. When I made my debut I made my frock out of an old mosquito net my mother gave me. There were often not enough coupons to go around.

Soon after Arthur gave me the parachute from Changi I became engaged to a Lismore boy, Don Thompson. I met him at the *Waterfront* dance hall at Shaws Bay. In preparation for marrying Don, I smocked a nightdress from the silk parachute Arthur gave me to add to my trousseau. I used the parachute to make the nightdress as supplies were still scarce. I did this with Arthur's blessing.

Prior to our wedding Don received a serious football injury playing for Marist Brothers and as a result of these injuries he died. I never got to wear the nightdress.

Right: Extract from the *Northern Star* reporting Arthur Braid's homecoming after his release from the Changi POW Camp in Singapore.

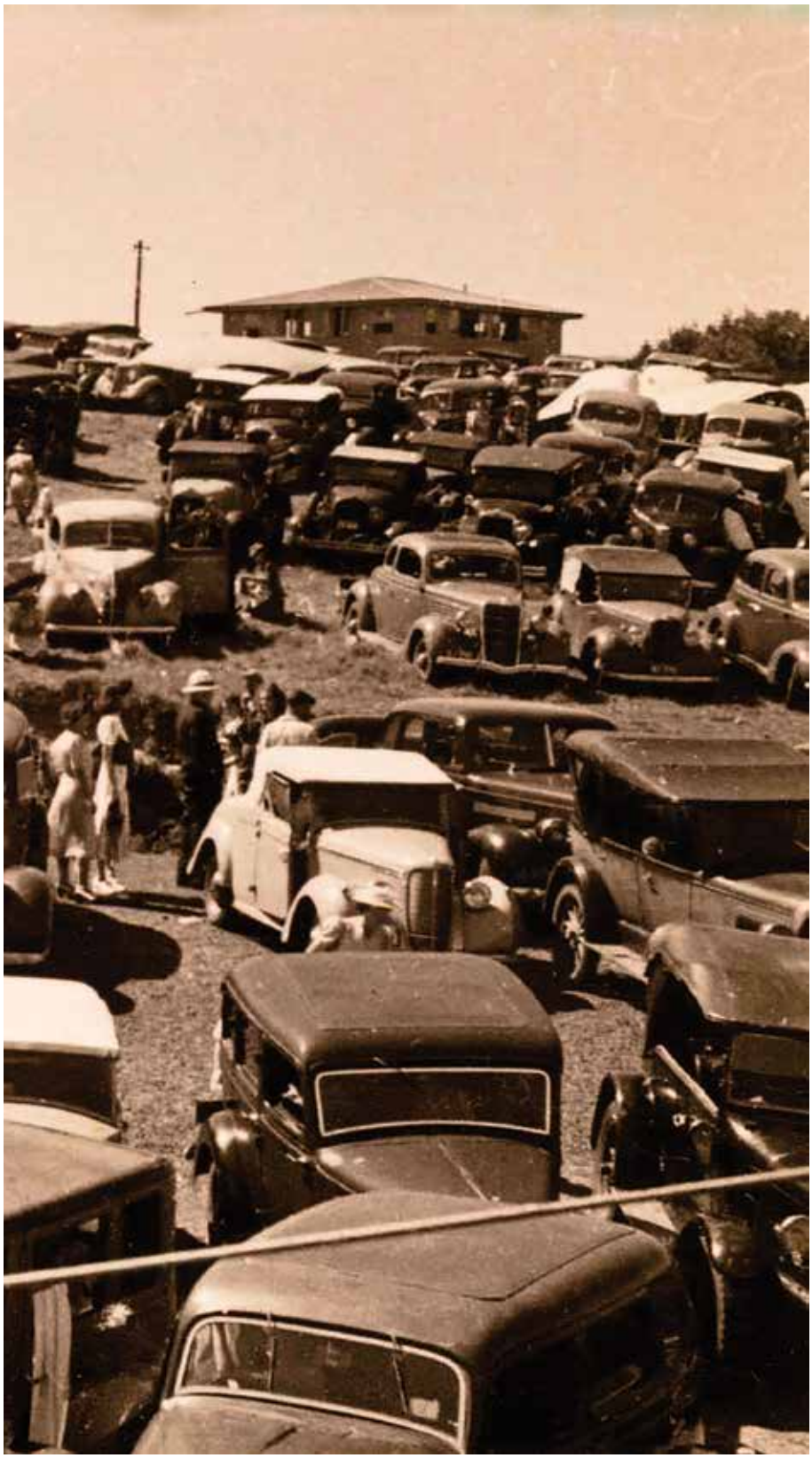
BALLINA WELCOME TO Ex-P.O.W.

BALLINA, Wednesday — Pte. Arthur Braid, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Braid, of Ballina, and a former prisoner of war since the fall of Singapore, was quietly welcomed home this afternoon by the Mayor (Ald. D. R. Clark) and a number of friends.

In view of the hardships Pte. Braid had experienced he looked well and was elated to be back in his native town.

Northern Star, Thursday 11 October, 1945.

Below: The Braid family and friends gather to welcome home Arthur in 1945, Burnett Street, Ballina. From right: Fred Braid, Mona Marstella, Arthur Braid, Jean Braid, Caroline Braid, (child's name is unknown), Colin Marstella, Fred Marstella and George Braid Snr. (seated). *Courtesy Jean Vidler, Ballina.*



Ballina — Wednesday

The news of the surrender of Japan was received at Ballina with the wildest demonstrations of joy, and in an incredibly short time River Street was a mass of happy, laughing, shouting people.

Northern Star, Monday 13 August, 1945.

Cars and buses packed 'Lighthouse Hill' when a record crowd gathered at Lighthouse Beach on 9 December 1945 for the 2LM Victory Picnic. A 'variety concert, surf display, sand garden competition, treasure hunt and sports for the children, band music and community singing' was had as part of the celebration. *Courtesy Ballina Shire Council.*

Select sources:

Introduction: For examples of other local publications see, Ian Kirkland, *Flying the Flag: Alstonville During WWII*, Dragonwick Publishing, 2013; Ian Kirkland, *Blanchie: Australia's Inspirational World War II Nurse*, Dragon wick Publishing, 2012; John Barnes, *So I fear Nothing: The Story of Paddy Bugden,* Dragonwick Publishing, 2011.

WWI – 1914-1919: www.awm.gov.au/atwar/ww1/ ; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I ; Glen Hall, *The Port of Richmond River: Ballina 1840s to 1980s*, Northern Star Print, Lismore 1983, 7-8; 'Local [Population] Statistics', [1910-1919], *Northern Star*, Monday 16 June, 1919.

Moses Gray – A Journey from Alstonville to Cairo 1916: *Pers. Comm.* Gwen Fell and family; NAA: B2455 GRAY MC; 'Send off to Recruits', *Northern Star,* Thursday 2 September 1915; 'From the Front', *Northern Star,* Wednesday 3 May 1916.

Henry Elvery – Killed in Action: Alstonville Plateau Historical Society Henry Elvery File; NAA: B2455 ELVERY HP, Foreman Crawford, *Duck Creek Mountain - Now Alstonville*, Northern Star Print, 1983.

Teddie Capeen – I am a returned soldier and fought for my Country: *Pers. Comm.* Nancy Walke and family; Richmond River Historical Society File: Aborigines in the Armed Services, NAA: B2455 CAPEEN E; 'Presentation at Wardell', Northern Star, Monday 7 August, 1916,; 'Welcome Home at Wardell', *Northern Star*, Wednesday 24 July, 1918; 'Welcome to Private E Capeen', *Northern Star,* Wednesday 17 July, 1918; 'Edward Capeen's Quandary', *The Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser*, Tuesday 18 January, 1927; H. I., Lockton, (ed.)., *Wardell School and District Centenary, 1867-1967*, Ballina, Summerland Printers, 1967; Ballina Shire Council, *Wardell Community Based Heritage Study,* Ballina Shire Council, February 2004.

David de Venney Hunter – A 'Captain of the Soul': Michael Gladwin, ''Captains of the Soul': The Historical Context of Australian Army Chaplaincy, 1913–2013', *Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal,* Summer edition, December 2013; NAA: B2455 HUNTER D DEV CHAPLAIN; *Our Heritage: A Short History of the Ballina Uniting Church*, n.d., n.p.

Womens' organisations and the war effort – The Red Cross and Girls' Patriotic League: 'District News – Tintenbar, Northern Star, Advertisement for Soldier's Peace Celebrations, Northern Star, Tuesday 26 August, 1919; 'Ballina News – Girls' Patriotic League', *Northern Star,* Thursday 7 Augusts, 1919; 'District News – Wardell', *Northern Star,* Thursday 1 May 1919; ' At Alstonville', *Northern Star*, Wednesday 27 March, 1918; 'Ballina Red Cross', *Northern Star,* Friday 24 November, 1916; 'Ballina Soldier's Aid Society', *Northern Star*, Friday 31 March, 1916; Thursday 24 July, 1919; Alstonville Plateau Historical Society, *Milestones and Memories: Alstonville District,* Dragonwick Publishing, 2007. *Pers. Comm*. Kerrie Gray.

Disarming the vanquished and giving spoils to the victors – The story of trophy guns: K.S Inglis, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, Melbourne University Press, 2nd Edition, 1999; Ballina Shire Council Trophy Guns File; Centenary Committee, *Lennox Head Public School Centenary, 1882-1982*, Northern Star Print, Lismore, 1982, 44-45; Cliff Murray, *Across Three Bridges*, Northern Star Print, 1983.

WWII – 1939-1945: www.awm.gov.au/atwar/ww2/ ; Gavin Long, *The Six Years War: Australia in the 1939–45 war*, Australian War Memorial and the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1973; David Horner (Ed.), T*he Battles that Shaped Australia,* Allen and Unwin, 1994; K. Fry, 'Soldier Settlement and the Australian Agrarian Myth after the First World War', *Labour History*, No. 48, May 1985, 29-43.

Allan Philp – In Uncle Albert's footsteps: Oral history interview Kate Gahan and Allan Philp 2013.

Dorothy Thompson – A wartime childhood: Oral history interview Kate Gahan and Dorothy Thompson 2013.

Vic and Joan Bryce – On the 'home front': Oral history interview Kate Gahan and Vic and Joan Bryce 2013.

Tim and Lorna Dorey – Farming and wartime: Oral history interview Kate Gahan and Tim and Lorna Dorey 2013.

Elsie Johnston – It was a different life altogether: Oral history interview Kate Gahan and Tim and Lorna Dorey 2014.

Jean Vidler – My loving brother Arthur and the Changi parachute: *Pers Comm* Jean Vidler 2014, 'Ballina Welcome to Ex-POW', Northern Star, Thursday 11 October, 1945.

pp 62-63: 'Enthusiastic Crowds Celebrated Until Early Hours', *Northern Star*, Monday 13 August, 1945; 'How the District Centres Celebrated', *Northern Star,* Thursday 16 August, 1945; '2LM "Victory" Picnic at Ballina Beach', *Northern Star*, Wednesday 28 November, 1945.