

THE BLACKWALL BUGLE

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1914 1918 Wardell & District Honour Roll A Tribute to All Who Served Their Country

ALLEN W	ATTEWELL S*	BAILEY W	BAKER F	BARLOW C	BARROW G C*	BARTLETT A	BARTLETT R*
BARTLETT W R*	BARTRIM E	BARTRIM G	BEGGS L*	BEGGS R	BENSON A	BENSON G	BENSON S
BENSON W	BIGGS H W	BLAIR M	BLANCH R*	BOURKE T W	BROANDER J F	BROWN J	BROWN J S
BROWN S	BROWN T	BURNS A	CAFFREY E	CALDWELL W J	CAMPBELL J*	CAMPBELL W*	CAPEEN E
CAROLAN A	CARTER	COLEBROOK					KAPEEN
COOPER N J		CUMISKEY					
		DUNCAN A					
		ELDER J H					
		FREEMAN F					
		HENDLEY C					
		HOLLINGW					
		JOYCE W					
		KAPEEN G					
		KIRKHAM H					
		LOVETT T C					
		MCDONALD					
		MCKENZIE J					
		MALLON H					
		MOSS W D*					
		CONNOR					
		PAYNE L R*					
		REID H J					
		RODON					
		GLEIGH					
		EN G					
		KS S					
		THOMAS E					
		TYLER E					
		WILCOX F					



Percy Hampden Lumley, above, died of wounds in Palestine aged 22 years. He is buried in Jerusalem.



Some of the young men from Wardell preparing to go off to war. Back row Harry Stamp, unknown, Angus McDonald and Len Beggs. Front row - Len Payne, Arthur Payne and Tommy Johnson. Charlie Slattery didn't go. Harry Stamp, Len Beggs and Len Payne were killed in action.



Wardell mates, Frederick Harold Jones on the left with Arthur Bartlett. FH Jones was killed at Gallipoli. Arthur came home but the war claimed his brothers Roy and William.

Australia gained independence from Britain in 1901 and only thirteen years later it was at war in support of the Empire against the German occupation of Europe and the middle east. This year marks the centenary of the ANZAC invasion of Gallipoli. More than two hundred and twenty young men from this small rural community volunteered to serve the nation on the other side of the world. Many of them never returned and those who did, were never the same. Back home the wives and daughters of the absent men had to take on a number of traditionally male roles. World War I changed the world including the Wardell district.

Our new Honour Roll forms the backdrop to this page. It was designed by the Blackwall Historical Society and unveiled by the Hon Kevin Hogan, Federal member for Page.

The Wardell & District War Memorial



As the centenary of ANZAC Day approached, someone accidentally demolished the old brick cenotaph. The Wardell & District Progress Association swung into action and, with the help of Kevin Hogan MP, acquired a grant to replace the damaged cenotaph.

John and Wendy Stead suggested a more substantial memorial was needed. John and Pat Carney approached Holcim Teven Quarry who generously donated a suitable granite rock that was transported by Peter Moore and erected by Les Eggins. John Stead then organised a new bronze plaque to honour all those men and women of the Wardell District who served their country in times of conflict. The Hall Committee arranged with Ballina Shire Council for a new flagpole to be erected. The hall grounds are maintained by volunteer Warren Barnes.

The hall itself was once called the Victoria Hall and situated where the Wardell Hotel now stands. It was pulled down and rebuilt on its present site about 1925. It was later refurbished as a memorial hall to honour those who served in World

War 1. During World War 2 it was a training base for the VDC or Volunteer Defence Corps.

The hall was blown off its foundations by a cyclone in early 1950. During the reconstruction, the Diggers Room and the room now occupied by the Blackwall Historical Society were added.

But there was never a memorial honour board in the hall. The Blackwall Historical Society under the guidance of Margaret Kennedy and Lorraine Judge and with research by the late Barbara van Bekkum, has produced a fine new World War 1 honour board. The board is accompanied by framed photos and details of some of the many local diggers who went to war.



The Dedication Ceremony - 29 May 2015

The ceremony was conducted under the direction of Vietnam Veteran Mr Ray Collyer AFSM. The dedication was by Rev Graeme Davis CSM. Peter Dencher coordinated the music and public sound system to perfection. The Wardell Branch of the Australian Red Cross, in its 100th year, made sure no one went hungry.

The contributions of the Wardell Public School, the Empire Vale Public School and Cabbage Tree Island School students were very much appreciated by the crowd.

The unveiling of the Memorial Plaque and the Honour Board was by The Federal Member for Page, the Hon Kevin Hogan MP. The Mayor of Ballina Shire, Councillor David Wright, laid a wreath for us all.



Cabbage Tree Island Students Welcome to Country.



The Wardell Branch of the Australian Red Cross always ready to serve.



The Hon Kevin Hogan, MP addresses the large gathering.

The Biggest Morning Tea

The Wardell Knit n' Knat this year again hosted the 'Biggest Morning Tea' to raise funds for research, early detection, prevention, and treatment of cancer. Their efforts will help save lives. Their dedication was made worthwhile by the strong support of the residents of the Wardell district.

The Knit n' Knat meet at the hall every Thursday morning, in a warm and friendly atmosphere, to knit and crochet blankets and garments for the needy. For the 'Biggest Morning Tea', Shirley, Lorna, Ivy, Jeanette, Theresa, Dina, Rhonda and Judy produced some delicious goodies for the table. They were ably supported by Marion and by Phil and Ann from the BP servo who donated some delightful sandwiches.

The President of the Knit n' Knat group, Sue Steel, was away on compassionate leave but the meeting welcomed the guest speakers, Victoria Hopkins and Daphne Riley, who are both cancer survivors. Daphne was in the midst of a chemotherapy course and chose not to speak but she was made most welcome - although she won a lion's share of the raffle prizes!

Wardell resident Victoria Hopkins made us all aware how precious life is. She spoke with courage about the severe surgery she has undergone and how it has all been so worthwhile because 'she wouldn't be dead for quids'. "There is so much to do and see and feel and share." Victoria is a very positive person who has taken on responsibilities within our community and derives great pleasure from helping others.



Guest Speaker Victoria Hopkins



The Biggest Morning Tea 2015

Pimlico News

Telephone 6683 4384

The May meeting of the Pimlico Ladies Charitable Organisation attracted visitors from surrounding districts with the proceeds of the afternoon going to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. We have supported the service for many years and we were given a very interesting and informative talk about all aspects of their operations. The stall did a brisk business and sold many items donated by PLCO members.

The June afternoon will benefit the Ballina District Hospital. My now adult children Barry and Leigh were born there and I spent eighteen happy years working in that hospital, so I have a warm personal affection for the place.

In April, 95 mm of rain fell compared with 236 mm in April last year. The farmers have now completed the harvesting of their soybean crops and are ploughing the trash into the ground to benefit their next planting of sugar cane.

Betty Fernance.

WARDELL AND DISTRICT PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2015

The past year has been an eventful year for our Progress Association with its involvement in the Wardell bypass issue. The Association organized a meeting with Bob Higgins from the Roads & Maritime Services, which was attended by more than 120 people. There was a similar attendance when a "Meet the Candidates" forum was held before the State elections.

Many thanks must go to Kerry and Paola for their correspondence with Parliamentarians and the RMS personnel and for keeping residents informed. It is to be hoped that the whole issue will be resolved by July and the bypass will be completed by 2020.

Unfortunately due to the bypass, much of our time was not spent on grass roots issues. We must spend more time and effort this year to convince Ballina Shire Council that it is not satisfactory to have our town divided in such a way that disabled people and children cannot pass safely from one side of the village to the other. It is necessary that all Councillors be aware of this problem, not just the C. Ward Councillors. This coming year, footpaths in Carlisle and Byron Streets must be completed as part of our streetscape program.

One highlight of our year was to see our Public Officer, history keeper and Blackwall Bugle editor, Mike Rushby, awarded Senior Citizen of the Year in the Ballina Shire Australia Day awards.

The work of John Stead, President of the Hall Committee, has contributed to many successful projects. John's submission to the NSW Government resulted in a grant of \$23k to improve our toilet facilities. John was also instrumental in organizing the new War Memorial for the town.

Our Treasurer, Russell, is another great asset to our village. Russell organized the lights and with the assistance of others, set up our "Lite the Hall" event, which again was well received. Russell is also the President of the Wardell's School P&C and is always available to assist in the town's activities.

It is also appropriate to thank Sue Wardrobe for her help throughout the year. Sue is always willing to lend a hand with publicity, collecting funds, making donations and other activities. She assisted with collecting monies for our river cruise, which again was a success. The river cruise is an event that should be continued.

To our Mayor and Councillors, thanks for your support throughout 2014. The Hall Grant of \$15k will be used wisely. We really hope that this year more attention will be given to our village and I'm sure that you are all aware that not much has happened out this way for some time, whilst there have been many other projects happening within the Shire.

To Kerry, who took on the role of secretary when I said that there would not be much to do, I apologize. With the bypass and a couple of other issues, Kerry has been very busy keeping everyone informed and making new contacts. It is great to see new arrivals like John and Kerry get involved and add so much to the town when many of the locals are complacent. Again Kerry thanks for your professional contribution.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the members who come regularly to our meetings. Our membership has increased greatly and this should provide us with greater ideas as to what this town needs in the future.

Patrick Carney *President*
Wardell Progress Association Inc

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Call Today 1300 875 895

Wardell-Ballina Return

Our drivers and bus attendants are trained in assisting clients with mobility impairments, including assisting clients with wheelie walkers. The bus is also a wheelchair accessible vehicle if required.

For details please telephone the above number or go on line and view <http://community-transport.org.au>

The bus runs from Cabbage Tree Island to the Wardell Post Office and the bus shelter, then to Ballina Fair and Tamar Street Transit Centre, Monday to Friday twice daily return.

Leaving Wardell 9.15 am and 12.30 pm

Leaving Ballina 11.30 am and 2.20 pm

Details from the above telephone number.

TBBCT is a not for profit organisation. Although we receive funding to provide transport services, it does not cover all our costs. In order to continue to provide a quality service to the community, we ask our clients to make a contribution towards the cost of their transport. Trips are subsidised however, and it is our priority to keep our service affordable to everyone. Carers travel with their loved one free of charge on all of our services.



A Journey Back to find the Future

Narelle Clark was born at Collins Creek, Kyogle in 1942. Her father's dairy farm was just two kilometres south of the one-teacher Collins Creek Public School where a few new houses have since been built and the old dairy bales have long gone. Narelle would walk to school every school day whether it was raining or shining. She loved it. She has very happy memories of her first years at school where Mr Stan Carey was her teacher. But then her father Jack Clark bought a cream run in the Wardell area of Ballina Shire and so Narelle moved on with her family to Wardell after four years at school. Her father's business prospered. He bought more cream runs and he built up a successful transport company based in Cedar Street opposite the Police Station. Narelle completed her schooling at Wardell and Ballina but she felt homesick for her first school and for the green hills of Collins Creek. As a young woman, she met and fell in love with Harry Law, the son of a dairy farmer, who drove trucks for her father. They married and raised a family at Lumleys Lane.

For a while they had to live in a caravan on Harry's farm, then they borrowed money from the bank and bought the old Masonic Lodge Hall at Broadwater which was being demolished. Harry took seven truckloads to cart it to Lumleys Lane. They bought another four thousand bricks from the old Kyogle Butter Factory, added seven blackbutt logs cut on the property and built a fine house surrounded by magnificent trees.

Narelle Law and her husband Harry were leaders in the Wardell community and for many years Harry was the President of the hall committee and organizer of the annual cane festivals. They were successful farmers who worked extremely hard to turn rough bush cattle country into top class cane land.

Charles and Barbara Law had come from England and settled in the Harwood area. Then Harry's Grandparents, Harriet and James Law, came here - swimming their horses across the Richmond River at Laws Point. They named their property 'Stonehenge' for all the rocks they had to pull out of the soil before they could farm the land. Then, years later, the Roads & Maritime Services took the farms to make way for the new Pacific Highway. The stress they have had in the past few years appears to have taken a toll on their health - mentally and physically. Serious illness struck the family. For many years Narelle kept promising herself that she would one day return to Collins Creek and rekindle those early days. However, work and family, medical treatment and the conflict with the authorities over losing their home, their livelihood and their farming heritage to a highway, kept interfering.

Narelle and Harry's grandchildren are the fifth generation of Laws to be born on the farm but they have all had to move out and start again - this time at Dalwood. They had to build a new house and new sheds and begin a different form of farming all over. They took with them 40 cubic metres of rock from Lumleys Lane to build a gateway to their new farm which they have also named 'Stonehenge.' Finally, on 25 March this year, with her husband and the 'Bugle', Narelle made a pilgrimage to her first school where she began her education in 1948.

Narelle was warmly welcomed by the school staff and parents. There seemed to be young happy children everywhere. Her classroom looked just the same. The schoolhouse and the deep-trench dunny had gone. So too had the camphor laurel trees and the horse yard where students used to leave their horses during class. The atmosphere of the school was warm and friendly like it used to be - a safe haven for any child. For Narelle it was a return to where life outside the family first began.



Narelle Law, on the left, by the steps to the entrance of her old school that she first attended 67 years ago. With her is Collins Creek School staff member Alana Bennett from Green Pigeon.

In her childhood there had been the trauma of moving home and leaving her school. Then the new Pacific Highway forced them from their land and heritage. Whilst that was going on, the dreaded cancer struck and it took a lot of energy, prayer and medication to defeat. So this journey back in time was, for Narelle, a pilgrimage that will help her and her family along the road ahead.



Harry and Narelle Law on the verandah of the house they built at Lumleys Lane. They were packing up to leave for ever and took with them the farm's official sign from 1890 - "J. Law & Son. Registered Dairymen."



Wardell warriors. Vietnam veterans and good mates at the Ballina ANZAC Day parade.
Rowley Comin, Ray Collyer, Don Gibson and John Collyer. *Photo contributed.*

“I’ve had a Fortunate Life”

Susan Healy Felsch

speaks with Mike Rushby

“I was born at the Tweed District Hospital in Murwillumbah. My mother was an O’Keefe from the farming family at Burringbar. My father was a Healy from Mullumbimby and I was born Susan Healy. My nanna Healy was the first white baby born in the Brunswick area. Her father was an Irish cedar cutter and her mother was German. They were married in Sydney. He was in the Royal Marines which he had joined to enable him to see more of the world. He came to Australia a couple of times. He liked what he saw and jumped ship in Sydney. There he met and married my great grandmother. They then headed north in the 1870s and selected and won a balloted 40 acre block in the Parish of Billinudgel near Mullumbimby. That is well documented in the book “The Brunswick – Another River” by Jim Brokenshire.

“My great grandfather was on the first Council at Mullumbimby and was instrumental in the building up of that area. He was probably a bit of a ‘greeny’. He said we would probably regret one day that we cut down the big scrub. My great grandparents had 17 children and my grandmother was the second born. My mother’s family is still on the family farm ‘Avondale’ at Mooball near Burringbar. They were great farming people and have been on that farm for about 114 years. I am very proud of my ancestors who were wonderful people and were always community-connected.

“My mother worked at home on the farm. She was one of seven children – six girls and one boy. My father came from a family of 10 – 2 girls and 8 boys. He had Clydesdale draught horses and was a contract worker for the sand-mining business before the days of draglines and big Caterpillar excavators. He would go to work each morning up the beach from New Brighton, where they were mining, towards Wooyung with a big slide pulled by the horses. We would work with him as kids. We had a 20-acre paddock where Golden Beach is now at Ocean Shores, New Brighton. That’s where we kept the horses and ran some cows. Our mother used to sell the milk at sixpence a pint because the shops didn’t sell milk in those days. That was our mother’s income. We also grew vegetables there and small crops.



Sue on her balcony at home in Wardell. 2015

“We were pretty well self-sufficient. We thought we owned that beach. When kids came there on holidays, if we liked them we let them on the beach. If we didn’t like them we would say, “This is our beach and you can’t go on it!” It was a beautiful childhood. I have two sisters and a brother. My older sister now lives at Banora Point with her husband. My brother lives at Tamworth with his wife and my younger sister lives at Grafton with her husband.

“We started school at Burringbar. We rode pushbikes from New Brighton to Billinudgel and there we would catch the train to St Bridget’s School at Burringbar. At the end of my third class we went to Mullumbimby School. During my school years I worked at a little shop at New Brighton at weekends and holidays and sometimes after school. The shop is still there. The people who owned the shop used to call me their foster daughter.

“As soon as I finished school, I worked at the Commercial Bank of Australia at Murwillumbah. I had two years there and then I went nursing at St Vincent’s in Lismore. That was a wonderful time and I made wonderful friends. I loved every day of my nursing. There was never a day that I wanted to leave.

“I went to St Vincent’s in 1962 and finished in August 1966. Then I started at the Mater in Brisbane on 1st October 66 and finished there twelve months later. That was where I did my midwifery. During my training at St Vincent’s my mother died suddenly. She was only 50 and she had cerebral haemorrhage. That was a terrible

time for me and the Nuns at the hospital were so absolutely wonderful. When I went to the Mater, I think I was homesick for Lismore and my family. I rang the matron in Lismore and she said, “Just come down here on your days off.” I did that quite often. They were great and they are still my friends.

“I met Wal when I was at St Vincent’s. One of my friends at St Vincent’s had a brother Michael Slattery. Wal, who later became my husband, was a friend of his. I went with him to a ball at St Vincent’s. We were friends then but didn’t get serious until after I had finished my midwifery and I was working in Grafton. At that time I was career minded and I didn’t want to settle down. In Grafton I worked in the operating theatre during the week and on Sundays I worked in a ward reserved for anyone who had had a caesarean section. When Wal and I got engaged I was in Grafton but I then came back to St Vincent’s for six months and worked as the night supervisor. We got married Christmas 1968. Then for the 1969 slack season of the sugar cane we went to Sydney. I worked at St Margaret’s Hospital in Sydney as the theatre nurse for six months and then we came back here for the cane season. I then worked at Ballina Hospital for six months. While I was there, one of the nuns from St Vincent’s came and asked me to come back and work for them. I did that.

"I went back to St Vincent's in January 1970 and worked there until I was pregnant with Jacinta at the end of 1971. I did a bit of relief work at Bangalow then I went to Coraki for about three months. Wal and I were living then in an old rented house at Carr's Lane, Keith Hall. I used to stay at Coraki and come home on my days off. One of the domestic ladies up there would bring me breakfast in bed every morning so that I wouldn't get sick! I was on the casual staff.

"Then I gave birth to our daughter Jacinta and Wal and I decided we would buy land at Carlisle Street, Wardell and build a house. We bought the land off Ross and Ness Cullen who owned the hotel in Wardell. They had bought a large block of land off Noel Wilson. They subdivided it into three blocks and we bought one of them. So that began our association with Wardell.

"I went back to work at St Vincent's working casual until the kids started school and by 1981 or 82, when I was working full time on the surgical ward, I became the specialist in infection control. I stayed there until the end of 1986. I had a bit of an accident one morning going to work. Fortunately I wasn't hurt and the car was not damaged but the car spun around facing back home. So I thought I would come home. There was an advertisement for staff at Ballina Hospital as they were starting up operating theatre work there. They had always done a little but they were starting up a regular list there. I applied and I was successful. I did three days a week on their operating days and I also did infection control. In 1990, a Nursing Unit Manager position became available. I applied and was successful. That position covered the surgical area, the midwifery area, theatre and emergency departments so I managed those areas. I also did infection control. I had to wear many hats in a small hospital. It was a very busy time at the hospital and at the same time we were very busy in Wardell. Rugby league was very big then. Wal did the training and I ran the little canteen and did the shopping for it.

"Wal was a Tug Master who drove the tugs that hauled the cane from the derricks to the Broadwater Sugar Mill. He loved that work. They often did 17-hour shifts. Their normal shifts were 12 hours but if someone were 'off', the one who had the shift before would work on for an extra 6 hours and the one following would start 6 hours early. Sometimes there would be very rough weather but he loved the

the work and he knew that river like the back of his hand.

"During the last year of river transport, Michael Slattery was his deckhand. It was a wet and stormy night in September and they were up at Walshs Lane. The deckhand used to have to jump across the punts and throw a rope over the post to pull the boat up to stop. Wal noticed that the boat didn't pull up. He yelled out at Michael, "What's going on?" Michael didn't answer so Wal shut the motor down but he still couldn't hear him. He didn't answer. He just wasn't there. Wal radioed back to the Mill. Staff from the mill came down and searched but they couldn't find Michael. Steve Flatley brought Wal home. Wal was devastated. They continued the search for Michael and three days later his body floated up at the back of the sugar mill at Broadwater. So he had floated from Walshs Lane to Broadwater. The autopsy indicated that he must have fallen and bumped his head and was knocked out and drowned. Wal said Michael was always so careful and he never had a beer before he went to work. He was always conscious of doing the right thing and safety. It must have just been that on that wet night he slipped and that was it. It was pretty awful and that was the last year of tugboat operations. So it ended on a very sad note.

"In the slack Wal would go to Sydney and work on the Sydney harbour ferries. He would drive the ferries from Circular Key to McMahon's Point and other places. He loved that! On Sundays, some of the bookmakers would hire a ferry with Wal as skipper and go down to the Heads following the sailing boats and betting on them. I would go with Wal for the day.

"Sister Larelle had kids in need of care at the Mercy Centre at that time and we thought a fair would be a good fund-raising mechanism to raise money to buy things to help care for the kids. We got the fête going and then it became a community thing.

"My son Luke played first grade rugby league football for St George and he went to England to play in the Super League. After three years he returned home, played for St George for another year then retired from professional football and moved to Forster about 2004. He is married with three children. He did an advanced diploma in business at Taree and topped that region in advanced business management.

"One of my Dad's brothers played for St George and Wal was a very keen follower of rugby league. He played for Ballina Seagulls. Luke's interest in rugby league came from Wardell. Bruce and Lyn Holt started up Rugby League in Wardell with all age groups from under 8 to senior. We had a lot of young people and a lot of committed people. Our Aboriginal community was integral to our success. I ran the canteen for about 150 players and supporters each week with the tireless help of Fay Dayley.

"My daughter Jacinta had done three years Business Accounting at Southern Cross University in Lismore. She then attended North Sydney Catholic University to study nursing and on graduation was awarded the St Vincent's Hospital Sydney award for Academic Excellence. She and her husband were in Cairns when Wal died and they came back here to be closer to me. Jacinta was with the Flying Doctor Service and would be away three or four days and nights at a time doing clinics in remote areas. Her husband, Lincoln, worked for an engineering firm in Cairns but his work involved fly in and fly out activities because he was seconded to different places.

"I got a job as a volunteer Specialist Nurse at the Sydney Olympic Games. I was a nurse at Halls Creek and that was a wonderful time. I took my twelve months long service leave and I saw where they wanted nurses in the Kimberly and different parts of the Territory, Western New South Wales and Queensland. My boss asked if I liked remote area work and I said, "I love it!" So I just went out there working as a Nurse Practitioner. I was in Halls Creek in '96, Goodooga in 98, at Warialda in '99, Bingara in 2000, Alice Springs in 2001 and I worked in Broome and Badoglio.

"I love the Aboriginal people. I find them very interesting. I met a lot of 'salt-of-the-earth' people out west. Some of them spoke very little English but we had no trouble communicating. I can't stand pretentiousness. I must say,

"I have had a fortunate life."

Sue Felsch

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