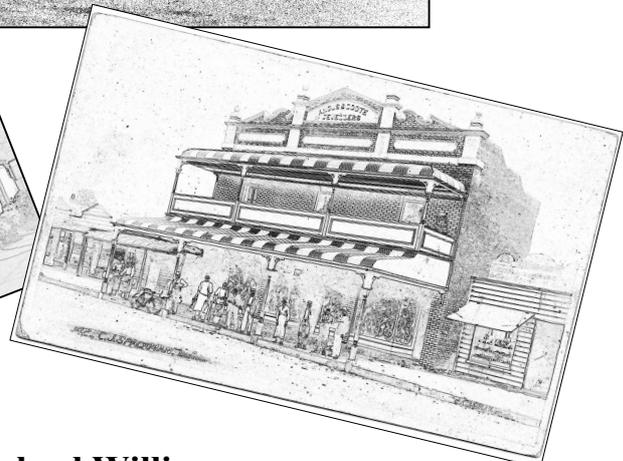
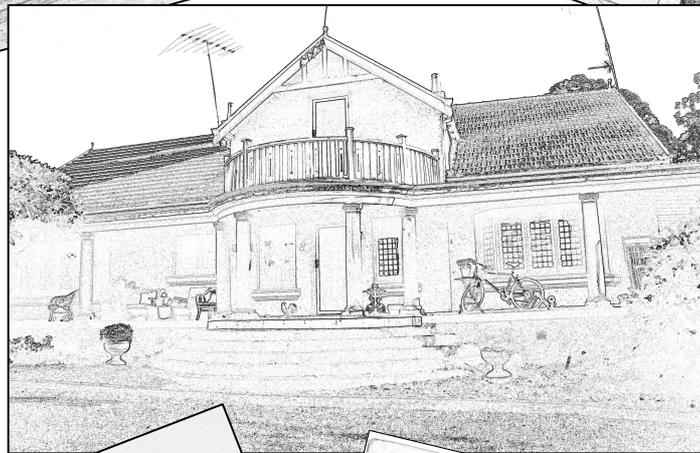
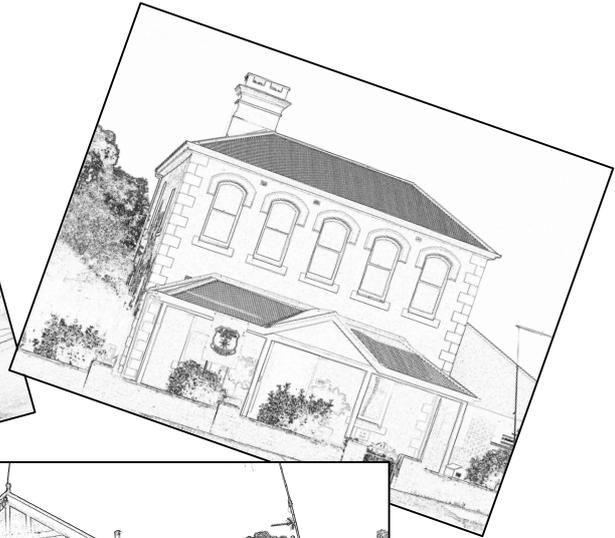


Ah, Dungog

A Brief Survey of its Charming Houses
&
Historic Buildings

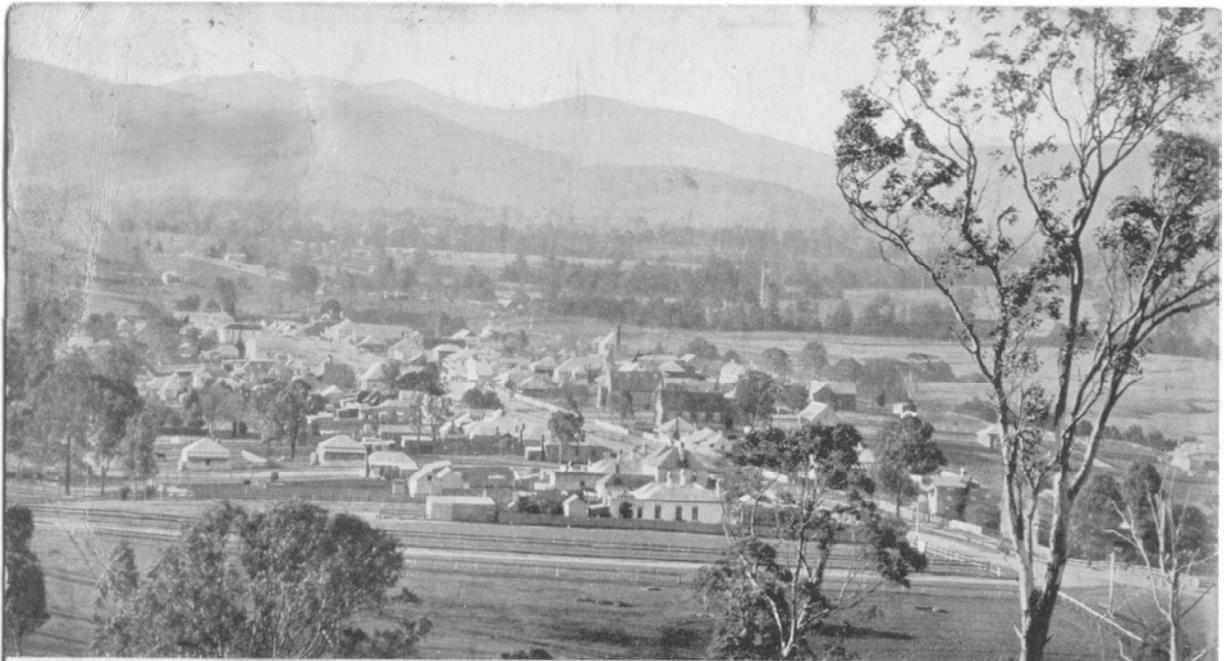


By Michael Williams

A publication of the Dungog Historical Society

Ah, Dungog

A brief survey of its charming houses
&
historic buildings



Dungog, N.S.W., looking North.

(G. Kelly, Photo., Dungog.)

*Ah, Dungog, dream of darling days,
'Tis better thou should'st be
A far-off thing to love and praise --
A boon from Heaven to me!*

Henry Kendall (1839-1882)

Ah, Dungog

A brief survey of its charming houses
and historic buildings

by

Michael Williams

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Dungog Historical Society

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Preface

This work, like any work of history, is a product of the combined efforts of many people. The origin of this project lay in research by the Dungog Historical Society for their historical plaques project, a project that has seen most of the commercial buildings and some others receive a bright blue plaque detailing their history. The members and resources of the Dungog Historical Society added further to this great start by contributing photos, information and much needed checking, editing and correcting.

Ah, Dungog is by necessity a selection only of the many beautiful and interesting houses and buildings of Dungog. While numerous equally beautiful properties have undoubtedly been left out, it is hoped that these will be included in future publications.

Despite all the help and support, all errors as usual are the author's, and as usual there will be omissions and mistakes – this is part of the historical process. Any suggestions, corrections or controversies are welcome, as are more photographs, documents or other information on the charming houses and historic buildings of Dungog. Finally, this work is presented without footnotes, however, a detailed listing of all references and sources can be obtained from the Dungog Historical Society on request.

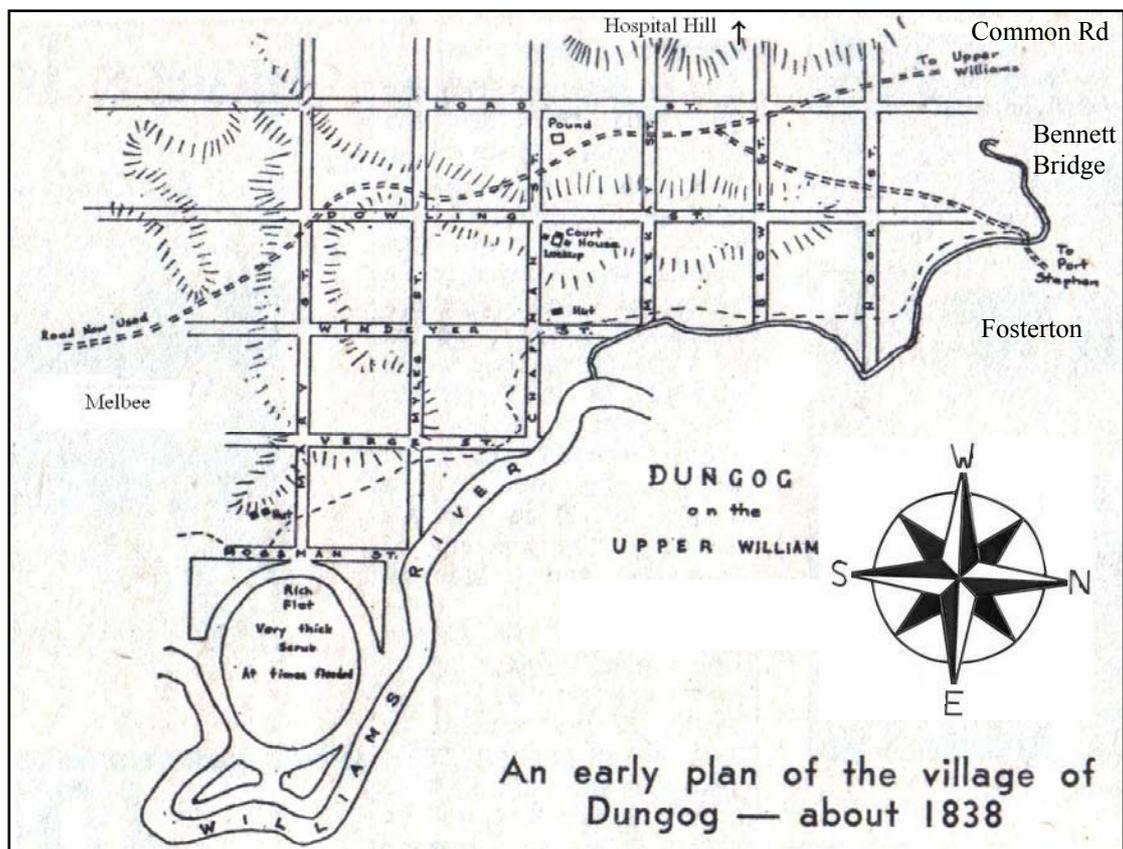
Please do not hesitate to contact the Dungog Historical Society at
105 Dowling Street or P.O. Box 3, Dungog.

The publishers of this book recognise that the land Dungog and its properties now rest upon was once that of the Gringai people, traditional custodians of the land for many generations.

Dungog Historical Society

The geography of Dungog

The village of Dungog is built on a series of gentle north-south ridges that rise as they range further away from a stretch of the Williams River just where it is joined by Myall Creek. The main street - Dowling Street - runs along the longest and flattest of these ridges. At the northern end of Dowling St, from Hooke St along to what is now the Bennett Bridge over Myall Creek, were the services and industrial businesses of the late 19th century – blacksmiths, tinsmiths, bootmakers, and coachbuilders. Heading south from Hooke St to Mackay St was, and still is, the main shopping and business area of the village, while south again are the schools and churches of the Mackay to Chapman St block. Lord St, to the west and parallel to Dowling St, was largely residential, and before WWI, Dungog between Lord St and Hospital Hill to the west, was largely bush with only occasional homes.



The main additional homes within this nineteenth century footprint of Dungog have either been those that have gradually filled in former horse paddocks, or houses that fight for a view along the ridge of Hospital Hill to the south-west. Dungog's other major housing growth in recent times has been to the north-west, towards the village common and along Common Rd, and south, beyond the end of Dowling St and across Mary St where, until a late 20th century housing development, was the farm land of Melbee estate. Finally, following the Williams River towards Fosterton, is to be found a string of houses that join the town with the first of the many estates and farm homes that are scattered about the beautiful landscape surrounding Dungog village.

A brief history of Dungog

Dungog's origins perhaps begin with timber cutters seeking cedar up the Williams River (then the River William). By 1825 Robert Dawson had named the Barrington area, while surveyor Thomas Florance named the Chichester River in 1827. Two years later George Boyle White explored the sources of the Allyn and Williams Rivers. Grants along the Williams followed to men such as Duncan Mackay, John Verge, James Dowling (later Chief Justice of NSW) and others, who, with their assigned convicts, began clearing land and building houses around a district that was by the early 1830s centred on a small settlement first known as Upper William. With a Court of Petty Sessions in 1833 and gazetted in 1838 as the village of Dungog (a local Gringai word), it had a court house, lockup and an increasing number of inns, shops and houses.

Perhaps the oldest building in Dungog is that known as Stephenson's Inn (211 Dowling St, p.21) from the 1840s. Possibly the oldest house is a small brick cottage (41 Lord St, p.67) built with its rear to Lord St, that once faced towards a now erased track. Lord St, as were Dowling, Mackay, Chapman, Hooke, Brown and Myles, were all named after landowners at the time surveyor Francis Rusden drew up his generous 1838 grid plan of Dungog's streets. The descendants of some of these, notably the Dowlings, Mackays and Hookes, still live in and around Dungog. Others, such as John Lord, went bankrupt or, as did Myles, sold out early and moved to Sydney.

Dungog village gradually grew from a mere 25 houses in the 1846 census (three of stone or brick). By 1854, four licenses for publicans were granted in Dungog: James Stephenson, Dungog Inn; Joseph Finch, Settlers' Arms; Joseph Robson, Trades' Arms; and Edward Tate, Durham Hotel. Two of these continue to operate today.

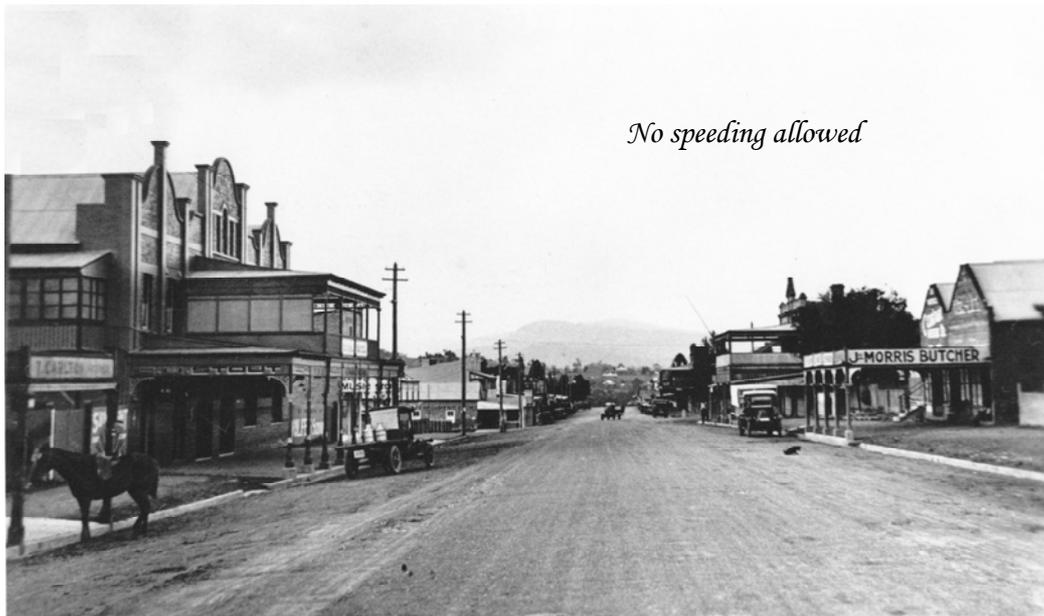
The plan and street pattern of 1838 gave Dungog generous sized lots that, over the years, have allowed people to build homes with ample space in between, as well as to enjoy cow and horse paddocks close by. Before the 1920s there was relatively little building beyond Lord St. John Wilson, born in Dungog in 1854, described the town as a 'sea of bush and scrub, with a house here and there', and with bullock teams and drays having 'to wend their way between stumps and saplings'. Even in 1892, at the opening of Dungog Cottage Hospital on Hospital Hill to the west, the trek up was largely through open countryside.

Boosted by the dairy industry, which began to develop in the 1890s, Dungog grew more rapidly, receiving a further boost with the arrival of the railway in 1911. Many of the finest houses and commercial buildings still to be seen here were built between the end of the nineteenth and the first two decades of the following century. Coolalie (206 Dowling St, p.28) and Coimbra (72 Dowling St, p.54), as well as the then Angus & Coote, now J A Rose building (146-148 Dowling St, p.39) and the Dark stores (184-190 Dowling St, p.36) all date from this period of expansion. All, as the *Dungog Chronicle* continuously proclaimed, were 'up to date', and as the *Dungog Chronicle* also pointed out, modern improvements such as the 'water service and electric light service has made Dungog a desirable place to live in'. The architects and builders used for these projects were locals; such as C H Button, Town Clerk and architect, or J A Hall, builder, as well as those from Maitland, such as architect J A Pender.

Expansion brought with it the problems of the big city and complaints were soon heard:

Motor traffic in the main street of Dungog has developed considerably of late, and it requires the attention of the local council to regulate same. At present cars dash about at a terrific speed to the danger of pedestrians, and a few days ago the writer witnessed three cars racing along Dowling Street at the rate of about 30 miles an hour, and they raised such a cloud of dust that it was impossible to see across the street. Not only is this practice dangerous, but the dust nuisance is becoming a serious matter with householders. We would suggest that Council adopt a speed limit for the main street. It would get over the trouble.

Dungog Chronicle, Friday 26th May 1916



No speeding allowed

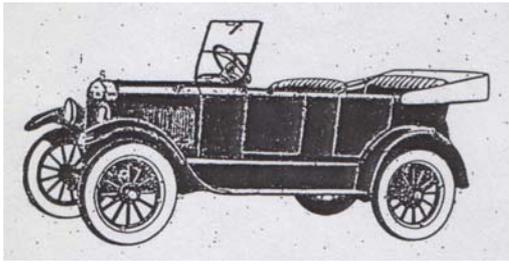
Around 1926, Dowling St was first fully curbed and the present alignment of the shop facades was established. Money and new businesses were entering the town at this time, perhaps as a result of the building of the Chichester Dam and the many workers it brought into the area. While things may have slowed a little thereafter, many new buildings and houses continued to be built in the following years. The Catholic community built a new place of worship in Brown St in 1933, replacing the church that had stood in Dowling St since 1870 (where the Tall Timbers Motel now stands). In 1935 the Bank of NSW replaced its old building on the corner of Dowling and Mackay Sts with one in the, then, very modern Georgian Revival Style.

The Second World War was just beginning when the *Dungog Chronicle* reported:

Recent weeks have seen a progressive building campaign in Dungog. Apart from the palatial new building for the Royal Hotel erected and furnished at a cost of some £20,000, and remodelling of the Court House Hotel and Bank Hotel, nine new residences have been completed within the past month.

In addition to these works, the Education Department is clearing and grading the playing grounds at the public school, and has erected an ornate brick fence along those grounds on the Dowling-street frontage, whilst the Municipal Council has had two chains of kerbing and guttering carried out in Mary-street.

Dungog Chronicle, 24th November 1939.



A Ford Tourer of 1927 advertised by
Davey & Olsen

Major impacts on Dungog since the 1950s have been the gradual decline of both the timber and dairy industries, which has resulted in the removal of many families and much income from the area. Additionally, improvements in roads and the rise in car ownership have put centres such as Maitland, Newcastle and even Sydney within easy reach and has led to the disappearance not only of blacksmiths, but also of shoe shops and clothing stores, from the commercial quarter of Dungog.

Since the 1950s, few new public buildings and shops have been erected but homes have continued to be built in weatherboard, brick, fibro or concrete; following the fashions of the time. While dairying has declined, the beef industry has remained, and although most timber is now locked up in national parks, many visitors come these days to enjoy the area's natural beauty. This trend has also meant that numerous older homes have been saved from deterioration by 'tree-changers', who have increasingly bought and renovated older homes in Dungog and its surrounding countryside.

In the Dungog of the 1980s you could still hear the sounds of the sawmill whistle and the clang of a blacksmith's hammer on his anvil. Since that time, Dungog has become perhaps a little quieter but it maintains nevertheless its charming mix of attractive commercial buildings and beautiful homes.

Building and design in Dungog

While undoubtedly a small town, within Dungog there is to be found a wide range of architectural styles. This is possibly due to the fact that many Dungog citizens have had sufficient money to build quite grand homes, combined with isolation from city trends and a reliance on a small number of skilled builders. The result is a surprising number of houses whose styles are difficult to find duplicated elsewhere and to which many of the standard architectural labels do not apply - which is not to say that many excellent examples of standard designs cannot also be found in Dungog.

Inside as well as out, Dungog's houses and commercial buildings show a combination of modern (or 'up to date' as the *Dungog Chronicle* had it), with more traditional design styles. Coimba (72 Dowling St, p.54), with its Federation Arts and Crafts exterior, Victorian drawing room, panelled hallway and silky oak Art Nouveau fire surrounds, is a fine example of such a mix. Another is Keba (116 Abelard St, p.72); its stucco exterior hides the fact that it is a house built entirely of concrete slabs, pre-cast and fitted together in tongue and groove fashion by a builder (possibly an engineer on the Chichester Dam) who worked with only an A-frame and a hand winch.

Dungog has few buildings remaining from its convict origins of the 1830s and 1840s, with a late Victorian boom providing much of the most impressive architecture today. The development of the dairy industry in the 1890s and the coming of the railway in 1911 fostered a long period of growth in Dungog that gradually provided sewerage, curb and guttering, and a renewal of the facades along its commercial strip.

Since the 1940s, change in Dungog has been more intermittent, with renovation and alteration more common than new commercial building. However, many new houses have been steadily added, from the modest to the grand, and at the end of the twentieth century two new subdivisions at either end of Dungog began the first major expansions outside the town area as it existed in the early nineteenth century.



Interest in the history of the buildings of Dungog is not new, with the *Dungog Chronicle* initiating a discussion as to which was the oldest building in town as early as 1925. At the time, the now vanished old Anglican Rectory across Myall Creek, known as “The Hermitage” and stated by the local paper to have been ‘originally built by Dr Ellar McKellar McKinley in the late 1830’s’ was considered the oldest. However sources based on local memory are often inaccurate, as with the *Chronicle*’s reference to the then still standing Auchentorlie as being built in the 1820s for Police Magistrate Cook, who did not arrive in the Colony of NSW until 1834 (just as Dr McKinley did not arrive in Dungog until 1840).

This book focuses on buildings still standing, and mostly on those in and around Dowling Street. But it should not be forgotten that businesses were once less concentrated, and references abound to enterprises such as Mrs Nash ‘Practical Dressmaker’ in Lord St (1919), bakers in Eloiza St (1933), a butcher in Mackay St (1889), private hospitals in Eloiza and Abelard Sts (1920s), Robson’s Boarding House in Brown St (1909), Redman’s grocery & produce store in Lord St (1905), Bacon’s cordial factory in Mackay St (1960s), and a tinsmith business in Chapman St (1912). Not to mention the Wallarobba Shire Office in Brown St (1913) and even a ‘veritable colony of Hindoos’ in Lord St (1902).

Overviews of the four commercial blocks

Hooke to Brown (east)

To go along Dowling Street's eastern side from Hooke to Brown is to go from Bank to Bank, from the two storey, combined bank and manager's residence built in 1884 for the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, to the Commonwealth Bank and residence erected in 1918, on what was then 'Oakley's Corner'. While the former retains its Victorian Free Classical elegance, the once charming verandah frontage of the latter has now been replaced by a more utilitarian brick facade.

Moving south from what is now an NAB branch is a house constructed about 1929 as a residence and surgery. Adjacent to this is a medical clinic that was originally the 'Protestant Hall' built in 1878, and a venue for Orangemen, the Salvation Army and other community gatherings. Renamed the 'Carrington Hall' in 1896 and renovated in 1910, in 1926 it became a grocery and butcher, and in the 1980s a Chinese restaurant. The neighbouring car yard was a tailor and a hardware and clothes shop, amongst others, and adjoining this is the Barrington Bakery, which has been a dress shop and dry cleaners. In the middle of the block was the site of one of Dungog's many hotels – Finches, then the Royal Exchange Hotel, before Skillen & Walker erected their general store in 1882. Fire meant a complete rebuild in 1896 leading to the present building, which had the Heatherbell Butter Factory behind it, later becoming the Market Royal and now the local IGA.

The modern IGA occupies the site of many previous grocery stores

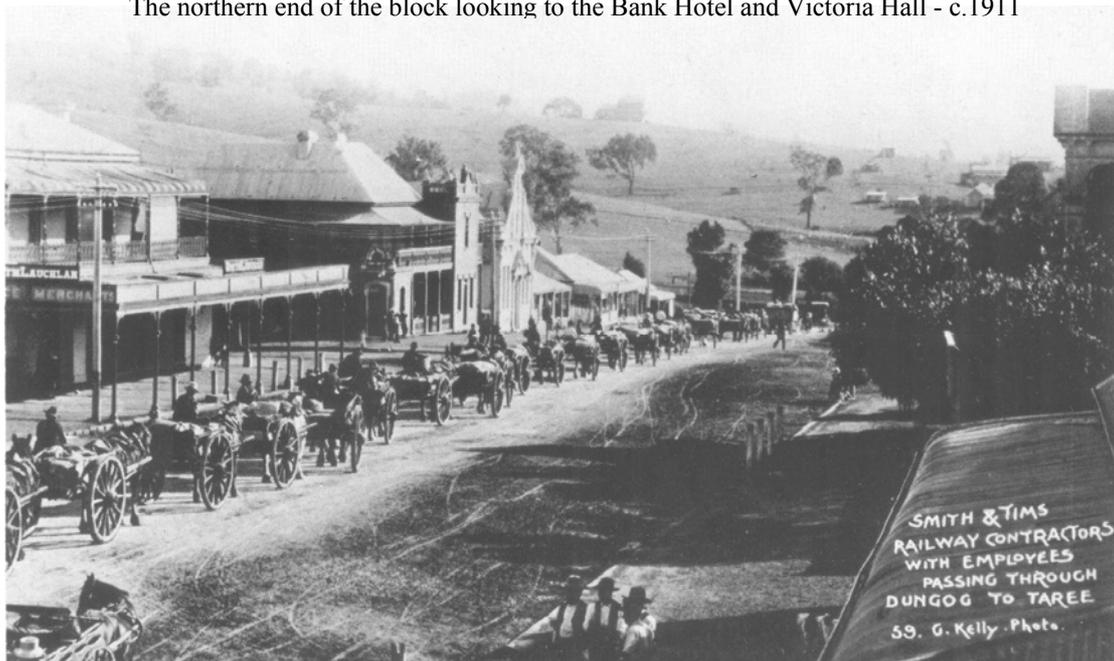


South of the IGA is an 1880s building famous as the Globe Cafe ('High Class Catering Conducted'), that included at one time a skating rink at the rear. Across the lane comes what is probably the oldest building in Dungog, where James Stephenson, a former convict, ran an inn. Next to this convict era building was another community hall, built in 1888 and appropriately named the Centennial Hall. Since then its uses have included being a funeral parlour, furniture maker and several cafes. R A Oakley, who ran a coach service between Dungog and the Clarence Town steamers, owned this and the lots to the corner. Finally, just before the Commonwealth Bank, is a 1926 shop and residence that has been the CWA base in Dungog since 1955.

Hooke to Brown (west)

On the western side of Dowling Street, between Hooke and Brown, are to be found numerous shops, ending in the juxtaposition of an elegant house and an administrative building built in the best functional/ugly style of the 1950s. Beginning at the northern end of the block is a Victorian Regency style two-storey building once known as 'Cheapside'. Adjacent, on what was Methodist Church land, is a Spanish Mission style structure built in 1935 next to where the first Wesleyan Chapel was erected in 1853. The present Methodist, now Uniting Church, was built in 1911, while a 1921 California Bungalow serves as the parsonage.

The northern end of the block looking to the Bank Hotel and Victoria Hall - c.1911



The lane that is now the entrance to the Alison Court units was the site of a blacksmith shop until the 1980s. Across this lane, the Coffee Bean Cafe is housed in a 1940 butcher's shop and across a second lane is a two storey building, with four bedroom residence above, built in a Late Victorian style in 1913. Grierson's Drapery operated here until the 1960s, afterwards housing Steven's Knitting Mill. A hardware store since the 1980s, the original facade was restored in 1997. Moving south again is Brighton Terrace, a row of four two-storey shop/residences divided by a ten foot archway. This Victorian Regency building originally featured an iron lace facade.

Just before the corner is Coolalie, or 'south wind', a charming Late Victorian two-storey home built in 1895 for the Darks, a prominent family of Dungog storekeepers. Erected on large grounds, its corner garden was sold to the Dungog Shire Council in the 1950s, allowing the unfortunate erection in 1956 of its extremely utilitarian administrative offices.

An example of the first street numbers issued by Council in the 1960s. Until then stores and others located themselves in reference to the Post Office or other well-known buildings.

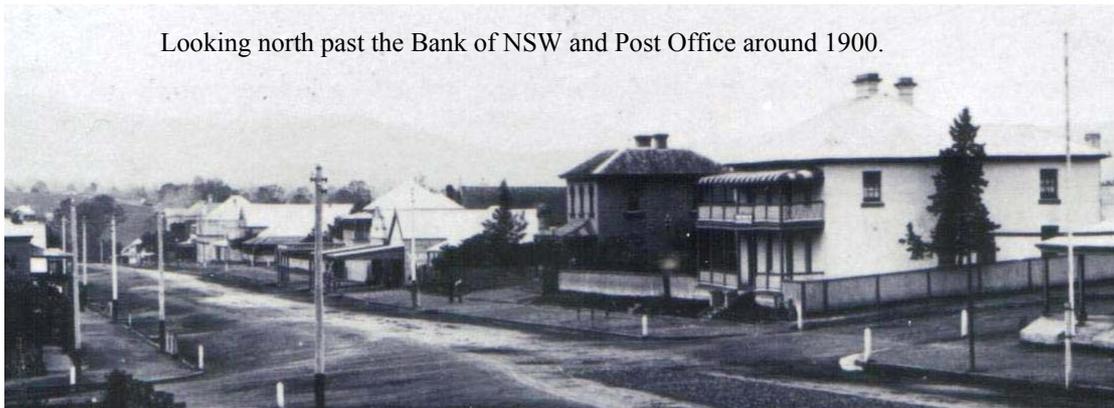


Brown to Mackay (east)

While the block between Brown and Mackay on the eastern side of Dowling Street looks relatively bare today, it once accommodated a range of buildings significant in Dungog's history. Beginning with what is now the site of the Dungog Visitors Information Centre on the corner of Brown St stood, between the 1880s and 1950s, the Catholic Presbytery. While several priests lived here, it was for many years the home of the much loved Father Michael Bourke, Parish Priest of Dungog for 50 years. Next door, where now stands the Tall Timbers Motel was, from 1870 to 1933, the first St Mary's Catholic Church.

Continuing the theme of the new replacing old is the Tall Timber's car park and a 1960s purpose built veterinary clinic, where was once a saddler and harness maker of the 1890s. At first a residence, and then a two-storey combined shop and residence, this site over the years also hosted a draper, bootmaker, barber and hardware shop. The neighbouring newsagent has in its turn replaced an 1880s timber building that was George Kelly's Photographic Studio, responsible for many of the images we now enjoy of Dungog's past, including many that illustrate this book. The building was also Mrs Kelly's Boarding House, the Butterfly Candy Shop and other businesses before being demolished early one morning in 1993. The Davey & Olsen car park was the site of Mac and Toot Lloyd's barber shop, described as one of 'the prettiest cottages in Dungog'.

Looking north past the Bank of NSW and Post Office around 1900.



It is only here, halfway down the block that a first piece of old Dungog remains in the form of a 1909 two-storey combined shop and residence, with colonnade and upstairs verandah. This grand building has been occupied by various business, but most continuously by chemists, one of whom in the 1920s installed the larger 'shop windows' that were an innovation at that time. Adjacent is the Dungog Post Office of 1880, still operating as a post office, though under licensed arrangements since 1996.

Continuing south is one of the two residences on this block, near where James Stuart of the James Theatre (p.43), once had his tinsmith shop. This is followed by two final commercial buildings, a former electrical showroom of the 1960s now a real estate agent, and a 1936 Georgian Revival style building erected by the Bank of NSW and now a solicitors' office. This long corner block was originally the site of at least three houses let out by a prominent local businesswoman, Mrs Eliza Dark. This large residence on the Mackay St corner was rented to the Bank of NSW in 1884 with Mrs Dark becoming their first Dungog customer.

Brown to Mackay (west)

In contrast to its eastern side, the western side of this Dowling Street block from Brown to Mackay is filled with commercial premises dating from all periods of Dungog's history. Most impressive are the former Dark family shops with dates displaying their gradual extension. Darks was the largest general store in Dungog, continuing until the 1970s, after which the buildings have been occupied by various businesses, with the final southern addition to the continuous facade added in 1997, over what was thought to have been a lane.

Most of the stores continuing south on this block were also built by the Dark family. The first housed a variety of businesses while the second was built as a butcher shop and remains one today. Next door to the butcher was W L Speirs' Jewellery and Clock Repair, now A Country Affair. One Dark family erected building has always been occupied by cafes, initially the Sunshine Sundae Shop, and later the Sunshine Cafe, it was owned by Tony & Jack Barbouttis, brothers from Castellorizo, Greece.



The former Angus & Coote building dominates this block

In the centre of the block, Davey & Olsen have been operating as motor mechanics in Dungog since 1919 and from the site of this former blacksmith's shop since 1920. Across the lane from Davey & Olsen's is a row of shops that once housed a saddler, as well as a bootmaker and hairdresser. But most imposing on this block is the former Angus & Coote, now J A Rose building, erected in 1911.

The block continues with a number of 1920s buildings that replaced wooden shops, including the home of the Central Refreshment Rooms and its marble soda fountain. Next is a range of professional offices built in 1923 on the site of the home of Joseph Abbott (who once owned all the southern end of this block), hence 'Abbott's Chambers'. Adjoining, is a 1922 built store that replaced a much older wooden store of W H Green, just as the solicitor's office replaced a series of wooden shops in 1922.

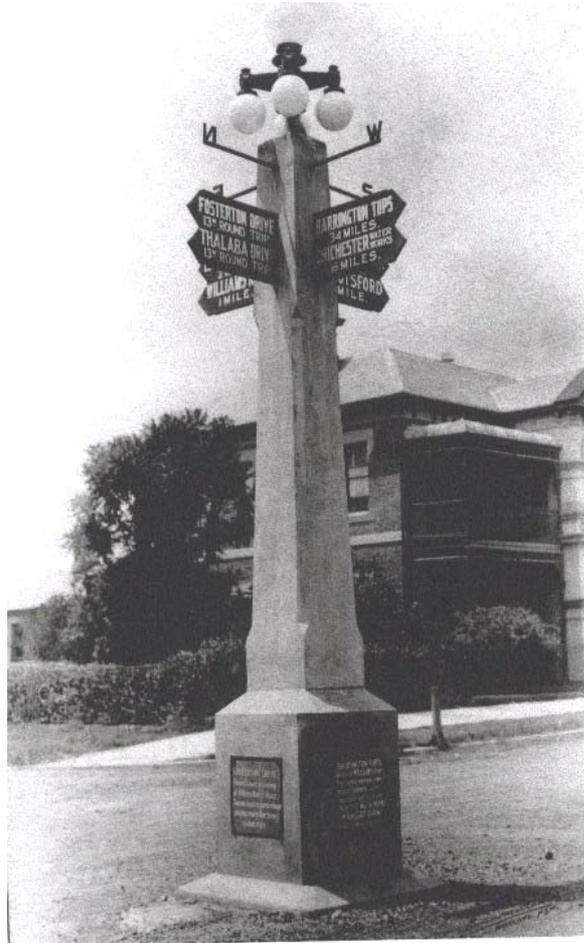
Squeezed in between two larger buildings is the narrow frontage of what was the Crystal Milk Bar, later the Little Busy Bee and now the Cafe Dungog. Adjoining this small cafe is the site of Peter and Thomas McWilliam's store and tobacco factory of in the 1850s, occupied by W H Green from 1896 to 1922; it was then Fry Bros furniture store and undertakers, and is now J G & E D Hawley's Funeral Directors.

The last shop on this block was an oyster saloon, selling fresh fish, confectionery, fruit and soft drinks before it became the Busy Bee Cafe, then a cake shop, and later a show room for Fry Bros furniture. In the 1980s, around the time the brick veneer was added, it became the offices of the *Dungog Chronicle*.

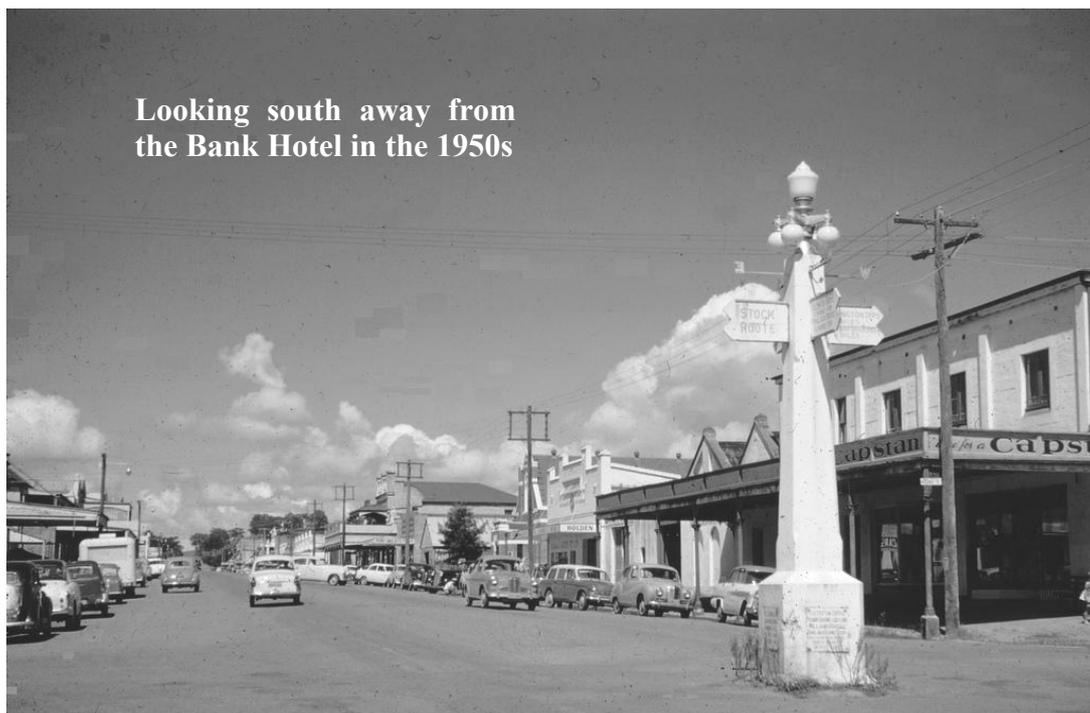
The Monument and the Bank Hotel

The Monument: This structure was erected by the Dungog Tourist League in 1927, to direct tourists to the new Barrington Guest House and Chichester Dam. After holding a 'best sketch' competition, money for its construction was donated by Mayor J A Jones (who was also President of the Dungog and Barrington Tops Tourist League). The ceremony of official handover took place at the Globe Cafe (see p.20). This site was also where Dungog's first lamp post was placed by the Acetylene Gas Company in 1904.

A figure of some controversy, a film entitled *On the Move* was even made about 'The Monument' in 2009 and shown at the Dungog Film Festival.



The Obelisk as it was originally



Looking south away from
the Bank Hotel in the 1950s

Bank Hotel (270 Dowling St): Originally the site of the house of Dungog storekeeper and mill owner John Walker, and built in 1876 by Boots Bros, the house included stables, a buggy shed, a 1700 gallon underground water tank, and a two storey turret. The house was converted in 1891 into a 27 room hotel when 20 rooms were added by local builder J A Hall, and opened in April 1892 as the Bank Hotel. Samuel Brady took over as licensee in 1895, changing the name to Brady's Bank Hotel. After the death of his father, Brady's son bought the goodwill of this hotel at auction in 1904 for £900. Sam Brady (junior) sold the hotel when he joined the AIF. He was killed at Gallipoli in 1915.

Bank Hotel, Dungog Sam Brady, Proprietor.

TARIFF:
4/- to 8/- per day
£1 to 35/- per week

ACCOMMODATION . FOR
30 VISITORS.

Special . Accommodation
for Commercial
Travellers.



Spacious and Commodious Hall (Victoria Hall) to seat 400 To Let at bedrock prices.

Bank Hotel before & after its 1914 rebuilding.

The Victoria Hall (see p.77) can be seen in the older picture.



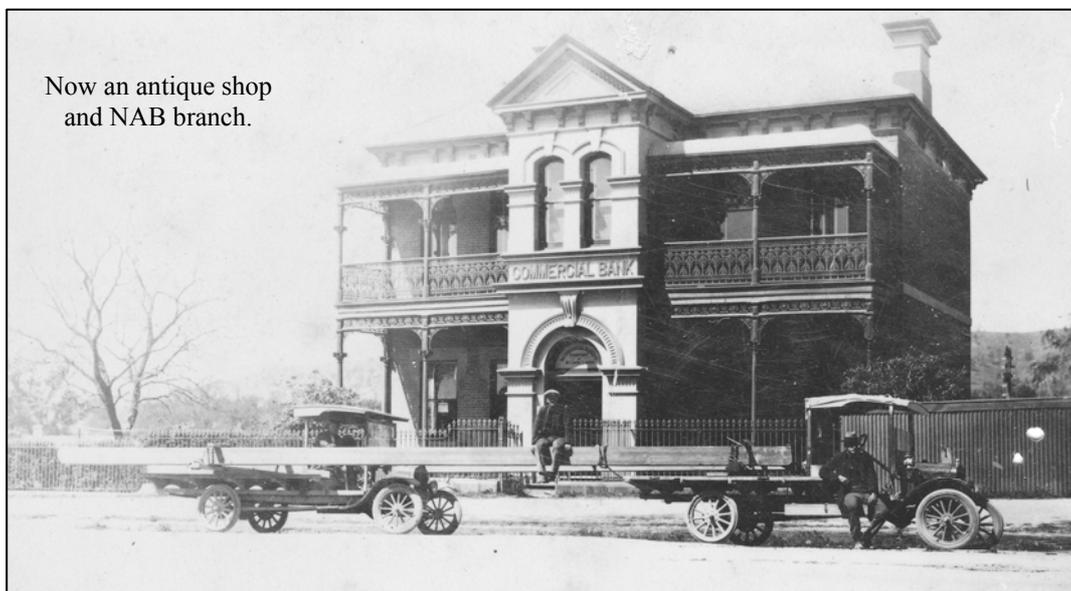
Australia's first Prime Minister Edmund Barton and member for Hunter, which included Dungog, addressed crowds from the balcony of this hotel on 15th March 1901. This was not the last time the hotel was used for such political purposes.

In 1914 the new proprietor, Mr Clerke, had the hotel completely rebuilt, doubling its size and extending the Victoria Hall at the same time. To the Victoria Hall an 'extra 25ft' was added as well as 'a first class supper room' in the basement. Regarding the hotel it was reported that: 'Electric light is installed throughout, and everything is beautifully fitted up'. By this time hotels were becoming tied to the major breweries and Tooth's was the dominant brewery in Dungog.

Dowling Street - Hooke Street to Brown Street (east side)

257 Dowling St: This Victorian Filigree building was erected as a combined bank and manager's residence of two stories for the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney in 1884. It was designed by J W Pender of Maitland and built by Henry Noad for £4,411, with bricks from Harry Fay's Melbee brickyard. Beginning in 1874, the Commercial Bank was the earliest in Dungog. The building is now privately owned while the successor of the Commercial Bank, the National Australia Bank, continues to lease the banking chamber.

A contemporary description declared that 'the strong room is a marvel of solidity and gloom' and that it had 'one of the largest underground tanks ever constructed in the district'. The residence was advanced in also having an upstairs internal bathroom. This led to problems in 1893, when the bank manager was nearly killed as he sat down to lunch. Leaking water caused an ornamental centrepiece in the ceiling beneath the bathroom to come crashing down, the manager's legs becoming trapped under his smashed dining table.



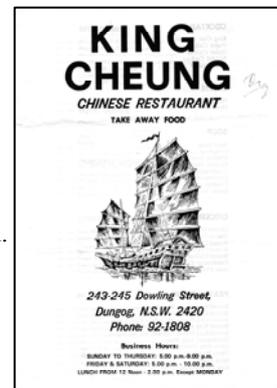
Overall, the design is a mixture of grandeur and restraint. The walls are built in triple brick, the facade is finished with fine tuckpointing, while inside, all window sashes and framework are in local cedar. Even the skirting boards are a study in calculated expense and display. The narrowest skirting is in the kitchen and other servant areas, with wider and more finished skirting in the bedrooms and other private areas. But the widest and grandest of skirting was laid down in the hallway, stairs and grand sitting room upstairs - areas visitors, including wealthy clients of the bank, would see.

The residence came with a small back room for a servant, left in unrendered brick as a matter of course. As the supply of servants disappeared, the open verandah was extended and built-in to provide a living area nearer to the kitchen, thus making the residence more convenient for the now servantless bank managers and their wives. The stables at the rear, also designed by Pender, included stableman's quarters with toilet. These were sold by the bank in the 1950s and have been converted into casual accommodation. Both the house and these stables feature funnel shaped air vents on their roofs - a mark of a Pender designed building.

243-245 Dowling St: The 'Protestant Hall' was built here by John Walker in 1878, and described as 50 ft x 26 ft with 16 ft from floor to ceiling, and as costing, including lighting, £500. The hall opened with an address by the Rev. J Ayling in November of that year. The opening included sports events at the racecourse, followed by a tea in the hall sat down to by 350 people. After this there was a public meeting attended by 500 people, at which various addresses were given, interspersed with musical interludes. With all the food left over from this Saturday festivity, people were invited to a free picnic the following Monday, with buggies supplied to ferry picnickers.



From Protestant Hall to Medical Centre – with scenes from the 'Pirates of Penzance' and a Chinese Restaurant in between.



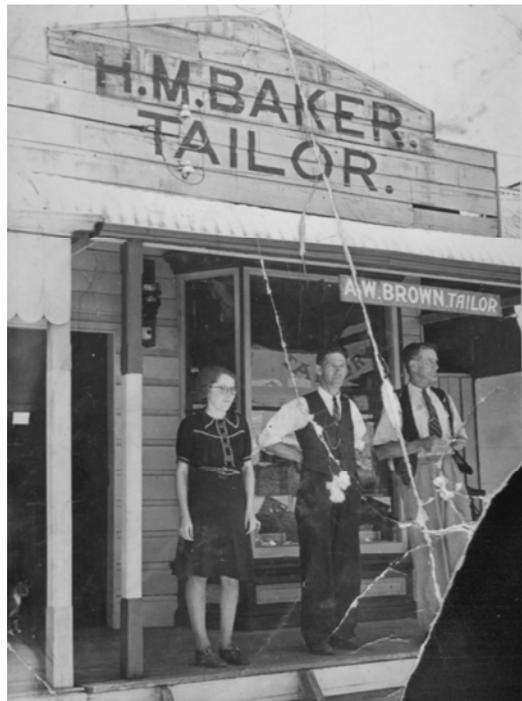
Although John Walker is credited as the owner, the hall was run by trustees who organised events such as a 'Sports and Highland gathering' in 1879 and a 'bazaar and fancy fair' in 1883, to help pay for the hall. A 'Protestant' hall had limitations, such as when temperance talks needed to find 'unsectarian ground' such as the local court house. The venue was used by Orangemen in 1885, as an Oddfellows Hall, and by the Salvation Army around 1892 when a complaint was made about Salvation Army drums disrupting the Wesleyan services across Dowling St (p.25).

Ed Piper purchased the building in 1896 and renamed it the Carrington Hall, in a move described as 'up to date'. In 1910, the hall was renovated when it became W O Skillen's Merchant & General Agent, with a new facade added in 1926. Later Talla Walla Tours, a Chinese Restaurant, and Barrington Tops Real Estate used this site. It is currently used as a medical centre.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

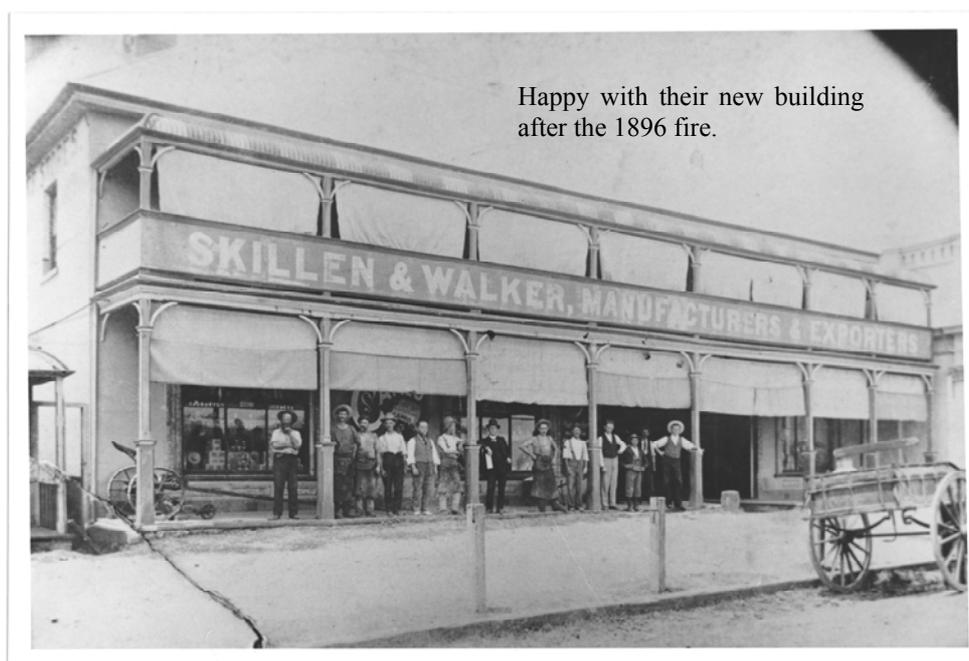
241 Dowling St: Turner's car yard was possibly the site of Hanna's store, who ran an early post office from here. The site also hosted M Hibbins, photographer, H M Baker, tailor, and Bill Kerr, dress shop.

Several houses existed at the back of this lot, which was also the site of Crolls sawmill in 1916 until the 1980s. It was from Crolls Mill that much of the laminated timber for the floor of Sydney Opera House Concert Hall was supplied in the 1960s.



221-223-229 Dowling St: Finches and then the Royal Exchange Hotel occupied this site, before Skillen & Walker took it over as a general store in 1882. Skillen and Walker renovated extensively in 1890, using local builder W Boots, and adding a 'massive cedar' counter and cedar staircase leading to an upstairs residence. The Masonic Lodge first met here before the building was destroyed by fire in 1895.

This fire led to one of many discussions in the town on the need for a fire brigade as well as to an interesting approach to the concept of insurance. The insurance companies of the unburnt buildings either side were asked to contribute to rebuilding on the grounds that the exertions of the Skillen & Walker employees and the public stopped the fire spreading to their buildings. It is unknown what the insurance companies thought of this logic.



The present building was erected in 1896, and contained a timber yard, blacksmith and wheelwright, with a large cellar of brick and concrete. In 1907, a number of fires were thought to have been deliberately lit but were extinguished before much damage was done. The Heatherbell Butter Factory was located at the rear soon after, with a deep well sunk. An ice factory and joinery, as well as a millinery and drapery section, completed the complex. As was general practice at the time, free deliveries were made to the surrounding district by the business. In the 1920s, a new facade was added that extended the frontage. W T Cummings converted part of the premises into the Market Royal in 1929, establishing what is thought to be the first 'cash and carry' store outside Sydney. This early effort at 'carry' involved measuring sugar, biscuits and other such goods into stamped brown paper bags for customers to select themselves. The attempt to impose 'cash' over credit was less successful. It is now Dungog's only supermarket, the local IGA.

The Cummings' Market Royal – 'Dungog's Pioneer Cash Store'.

Though others too may have attempted to impose cash only sales earlier.



Now the local IGA



~ Ah, Dungog ~

217-219 Dowling St: The early history of this 1880 building is unknown, but from 1920 it housed the Globe Cafe - 'High Class Catering Conducted' – which was begun by George Burrows, formerly of the Butter Factory. It was here in 1921 that the first neon sign was erected in Dungog, lighting up the word 'Globe' and under which 'youngsters' would play marbles. The Globe Cafe was a refreshment room and confectionery business, and also boasted a banquet hall for 140 people with a 'separate room for ladies' - used for wedding receptions, meetings, etc.

In 1923, 'a skating rink at the rear of the Globe Cafe' was opened. This was Dungog's second skating rink, the first in the nearby Centennial Hall having ceased to operate many years before. The rink had a 'beautiful smooth cement floor', 52 ft x 26 ft 6 ins, was 'illuminated by two 300 candle power petrol lights', and had 'an emergency canvas roof'. Ice-cream was available and a stand seating sixty people, with music 'supplied by Miss Byron (piano) and Mr B Carlton (side drums),' completed this Dungog entertainment venue.

In 1927, the Globe Cafe was taken over by Frank Harris, described as a 'one-armed Digger' who 'will now be a next door business neighbour to his brother-in-law, Mr Frank Robinson, another one-armed Digger'. Later part of this building was a TAB and it is now divided between the local computer centre and an aged care community organisation.



An Ice Cream
Soda, a cold drink
or an Ice Cream
will taste cooler and
better from our foun-
tain. Come in and
keep cool.

Globe Cafe
(FRANK HARRIS, Prop.)
Tel. 29 DUNGOG

Frank Robinson was also for
a time Mayor of Dungog.

Tennis! Tennis!

Robinson's
Tennis Stocks are Opening
All Well-known Rackets in Stock
AT
Reduced Prices

Spaulding's Kro-Bat 45/-
Spaulding's Gold Medal H. I. C. 65/-
Slazenger's Primoris 80/-
Also Spaulding's-Slazenger's and
Barnet-Glass Tennis Balls
At City Prices

F. H. Robinson
Sports Depot - - - Dungog



211 Dowling St: Possibly the oldest building in Dungog, here James Stephenson, transported in 1828 and originally assigned to the Australian Agricultural Company, was granted a license to sell fermented spirits in August 1840 and established an inn. The Stephenson or Dungog Inn of the 1850s to 1860s was often used as a meeting place to discuss such matters as raising money for a gift of plate for a retiring magistrate, auctions, and for holding coronial inquests.

Stephenson himself was more than an innkeeper as he also operated stock sale yards and built a wind powered flour mill that he later converted into a steam powered one.

Stephenson died in 1865 and ownership passed to Henry Guy Hooke who held a mortgage of £300 on the property. The building then passed to Samuel Redman in 1879, who ran it as a boarding house with a post office in the front room. The well known Dr McKinlay is said to have lived here in the years prior to his death, being taken care of by Mrs Hannah Redman. Mrs Redman operated the boarding house until September 1919, and the Redman family and descendents maintained ownership until 1984. The former inn was a solicitor's office in the 1980s and more recently a gallery and gift shop.

The Dungog Inn, later Redman's Boarding House



The Inn today



Samuel & Hannah Redman



Samuel (Pegleg) & Hannah Maria (Flaher) Redman c1850

~ Ah, Dungog ~

203-205 Dowling St: The Centennial Hall, built here in 1888 by R A Oakley, was described as a ‘wooden building 71 feet long by 31 feet wide, with an iron roof, is well ventilated, and lined and ceiled throughout with Baltic pine’, ‘with a tallow wood floor’, and that ‘there are no less than four places of exit from the hall in case of fire’. The Centennial Hall was used as a skating rink (one shilling plus 6 pence for skates, ladies & children free afternoons – skates 6d), and for entertainments such as a ‘Fancy Dress Skating Carnival’.



In 1891 the hall was the venue for *Esther* - a ‘popular Cantata’. And in 1892 Mr Oakley was the first to install gas lighting, which was a ‘vivid contrast’ to oil lamp lights, using a ‘25 light Alpha gasoline machine’. By 1926, however, the old hall had become an ‘eyesore’ and was extensively renovated, including the addition of a two bedroom residence at the back lined with ‘Wunderlich durabestos’ (a forerunner of James Hardie) for which the owner Mr Fleming was an agent. It was then used as a furniture shop and funeral parlour, later a hardware shop.

Mostly recently this site has been used by cafes. In 1983 Crazy Chairs opened here, then the Poets Table Cafe, and it is currently Chill Billies, featuring tables decorated by various local artists.

Table featuring Dungog history designed by Greg Danvers.



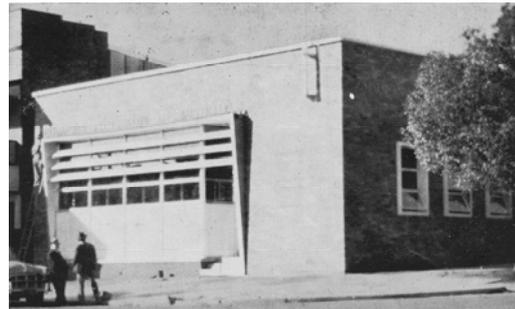
199-201 Dowling St: R A Oakley, who ran a coach service between Dungog and the Clarence Town steamers, had a cottage on this site. In 1926, A G Sudbury, who had once been manager of North Lauchlan's drapery and mercery section, before going into business for himself, built a new building here for Sudbury's Clothing and Shoe Shop. This had a three bedroom residence above and was 'furnished with oak throughout'. The *Dungog Chronicle* reported that: 'Two plateglass windows 6ft 6ins x 4ft 6ins are in the front, and X-ray lighting is employed for them'. [It has not been discovered what was meant by 'X-ray lighting'.]



The Country Women's Association (CWA), which first met in the Globe Cafe in 1929 (p.20), bought the building in 1955 at a time when men were required to guarantee the loan for the £8,000 purchase price plus £4,000 for renovations. It remains the CWA meeting room today.

195-197 Dowling St: This was the site of a cobbler's shop until the Commonwealth Bank erected a bank and residence in 1918, on what was then called 'Oakley's Corner'. As described in the *Dungog Chronicle*: 'Oakley's boot-shop had to be removed to allow building to go up and the shop was literally shoved down 100 feet'; a job said to have been done with rollers and a bullock team. This would have carried the cobbler's nearer to the end of Brown Street where, for many years, old Mr Oakley kept caged birds and animals such as an emu, in what was Dungog's only 'zoo'.

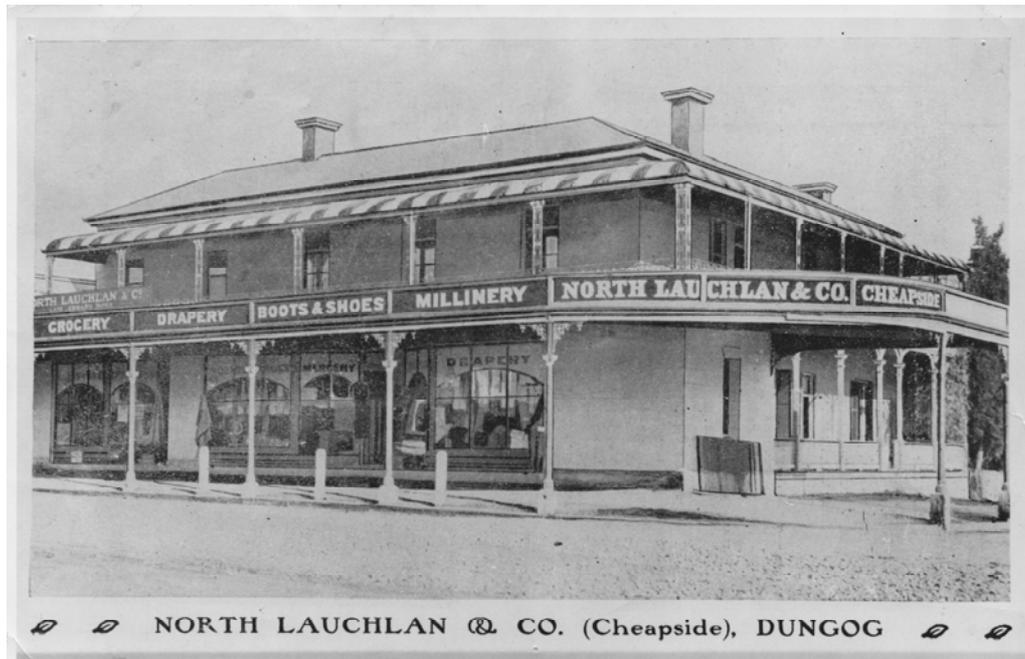
One of two contenders for the leading crime against good architecture and taste in Dungog (the other is directly opposite, see p.29), was committed when the verandah frontage was removed in the 1950s and replaced by a bland brick facade.



The Government Savings Bank now the Commonwealth Bank

Dowling Street - Hooke Street to Brown Street (west side)

262-266 Dowling St: Built in the Victorian Regency style, this two storey building was designed by J W Pender - also architect of the bank on the opposite side of Dowling St (p.16) - for John Wade in 1879, as a general store and residence. In 1900, additional single storey gables were added for a bakery and stables. Edward Piper operated here from 1890, when it was known as 'Cheapside', then North Lauchlan, and Scott's Draper & Mercer among others until 1963.



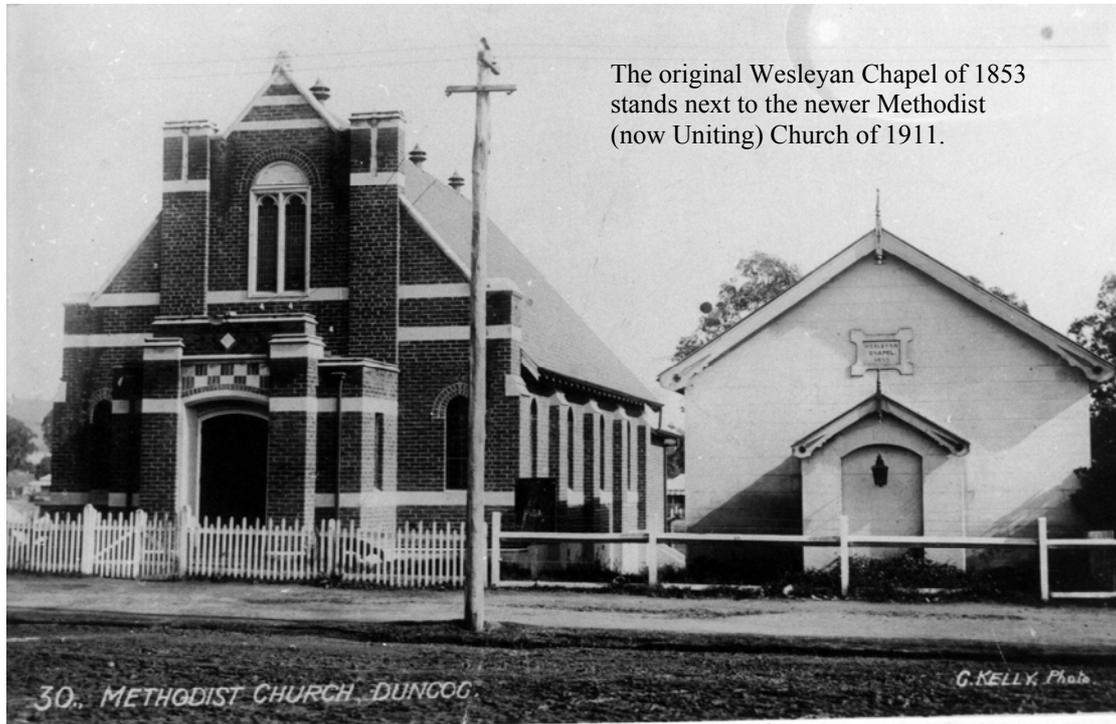
In 1901, it was one of the earliest stores to have gas lighting for its outside illumination, utilising the NSW Acetylene Gas Co. The CWA also operated rest rooms here until 1955 when they acquired their own rooms (p.23) further along Dowling St. As with many of Dungog's buildings, much of the iron lacework was removed over the years, but partially restored here when some of the original iron verandah columns were returned, along with two new made ones, in 1987.

248 Dowling St: Originally part of the Methodist Church lands, this Spanish Mission style structure built in 1935 replaced a large high peaked roofed cottage that was the Wesleyan parsonage. Owned by James Stuart, whose picture theatre in Brown St was also built in this style, Stuart established Acme Motors here and it has been in use as a garage ever since, becoming Young & Green, then Turners since 1992.



Despite the petrol pumps and motor cars, Dungog could still boast plenty of fertilizer on its streets.

246 Dowling St: The foundation stone for a 'neat and commodious brick chapel' was 'erected by the Wesleyan community' here in 1853 and officially opened the following year. The Rev. William Clarke, later President of the Methodist Conference, was a resident minister in 1857, and described as a 'zealous little Welshman'. Another minister of this church, the Rev. R W Vanderkiste, was famous for having become lost in the Allyn Ranges for six days in 1858, after which he wrote a book entitled 'Lost - but not for ever'.



The present Methodist Church was built in 1911 for £1,026, when a variety of newspapers and 'coins of the realm' were placed under the foundation stone. The old parsonage was replaced in 1921 when land was sold to help pay for the current California Bungalow, and a Sunday School Hall was built in 1927. The Methodist Church became the Uniting Church in a ceremony held in June 1977.



To the left of the Uniting Church, on what is now the entrance drive to Alison Court, was the blacksmith shop of Adrian (Ted) Scanes, which operated from 1909 until 1980, and was for long a popular loitering spot for locals.

Allen Shelton in Dungog for a load of supplies in front of Scanes - horse shoer and repairer of ploughshares.



234 Dowling St: Originally built in 1940 by J C Pickles of Newcastle for owners J and M Alison. It was a butcher shop run by A Jupp. The shop was considered one that 'would do credit to the best city butcheries'. Later it was Atkins Butchery, and continued as a butcher's shop until 1990. Since then it has primarily been used for cafes and is currently the Coffee Bean Cafe.

224-232 Dowling St: Designed in a Late Victorian style, this two-storey shop and four bedroom residence with 'steel ceilings and asbestos walls' and intact kerb side balcony, was designed by J Warren Scobie of Maitland and built by Amos Moore in 1913 for Mr E Grierson. Grierson's Drapery had moved from the opposite side of Dowling St to this site which was named Commerce House.



In 1920, Grierson built a single storey extension to house an expanded Mercery Department. 'The partition dividing Show Room and Mercery Department is of varnished redwood about 7ft high.' 'A feature which takes the eye of those interested in building construction is the reinforced concrete girder along the front of the shop which needs no steel support pillars as does the steel girder on the compartment alongside.'

Soon after the extensions were completed, a new milliner, Miss Waters, was brought from Melbourne to 'give customers the benefit of her expert experience and her knowledge of the latest fashion ideas'.

Attractive Specials
For the Christmas Holidays

*No need to
leave Dungog
to shop*

--- Wonderful Bargains in ---

E. Grierson, COMMERCE HOUSE,
Dungog

Noted for Sterling Values and Low Prices.

In 1926, as part of the celebrations for the visit of the Australian-made Preference League's Great White Train, Grierson's won a shop window display competition based on Akubra hats. The *Dungog Chronicle* reported:

The base was composed of green dyed sawdust, representing the countryside, and on it were horses, cattle and rabbits. Dungog station loomed large in the forefront, with the Great White Train drawing in. A road, in sawdust, led to the station and further back was the sign post, "33 miles to Barrington Tops". Gum trees grew in the fields and on their branches were Akubra hats, birds, etc. At the back was the map of Australia. The eighteen processes necessary to produce the Akubra hat were shown in the window.

Dungog Chronicle, 3rd September 1926

Grierson's was here until the 1960s, when such goods as 'Smart Lace Leghorns' and 'Jade Green Moufflin Straw' were available to the people of Dungog. The premises then became Payne & Hustlers Department Store, selling clothing and white goods, until closing in 1964. From 1966, after Council bought the building, Stevens Knitting Mill returned (see p.79) to Dungog until 1980, employing up to 50 women here. Since then the building has been a hardware store, with the original facade restored in 1997.



Part of a community effort to ensure local employment

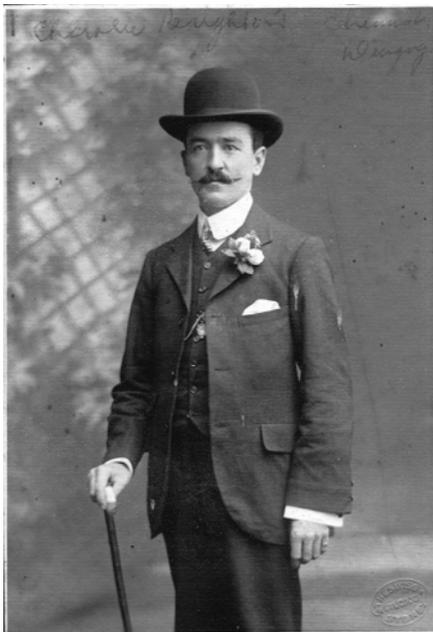
210-222 Dowling St: Originally the Skillen & Walker Terrace, this building consisted of a row of four two-storey combined shop and residences, divided by a ten foot arch that allowed access to the rear yards. Built in the Victorian Regency style for Skillen & Walker in 1895, it was designed by C H Button (also Town Clerk) and built by W Boots. From 1898 until 2000 one shop in this terrace was always occupied by a pharmacist, and Mary Josephine O'Reilly, the daughter of one of these pharmacists, J J O'Reilly, was the first Catholic female pharmacist in NSW (see picture, p.33).



The Skillen & Walker, later Brighton, Terrace

~ Ah, Dungog ~

In 1901, the new owner Charles Brighton, also a chemist, renamed the building Brighton Terrace. The small original windows were replaced with large display windows in 1926, and in 1935 the original iron lace facade was removed, much reducing the charm of the building.



The terrace today



What would the dapper Mr Charles Brighton say about the changes to his terrace?

206 Dowling St: Coolalie (south wind), was built in 1895 for prominent Dungog storekeeper Henry Charles Dark, by local architect/builder J A Hall. When built, it was described as 'the largest, best finished and most imposing' residence in the district and 'a credit to the town'. The house included kauri pine floors, a ruby coloured fan light embossed with 'Coolalie', six marble fireplaces, and an underground tank with a force pump to take water to the upstairs bathroom. The gardens were extensive and included a fernery and tennis court.



This grand Victorian Villa style residence is one of only a handful of two-storey houses in Dungog. With four bedrooms, a nursery upstairs and guest room downstairs, it was still only barely large enough for the Darks and their eight children.

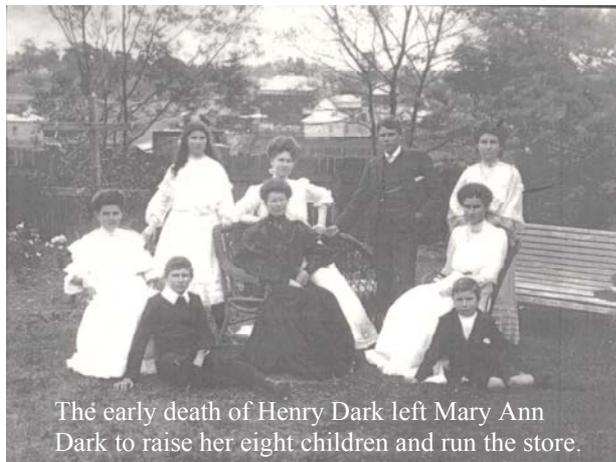
Coolalie in the 1940s just before its decline into a taxi depot.



As with all Dungog's grander homes, Coolalie has cedar joinery throughout, as well as special features such as alternating cedar and silky oak panelling on the bottom stair lining giving a two-tone effect. The grandest room is the formal front lounge with elaborate cornices and a beautifully tiled fireplace, complete with English country scenes. The back of the house had both a rarely used formal dining room featuring a wood panelled ceiling and cornices, and also a more frequently used 'breakfast room'. The kitchen, entered by the only arched doorway, featured a narrow staircase of its own, ending in a spiral, which led directly up into a small servant's room that was also across the corridor from the large nursery.

Soon after moving into their new home, Mr and Mrs Dark threw a party for some of the commercial travellers they regularly dealt with, only to have a large group of 'surprisers' turn up. As many as 70 people arrived, who in 'the time honoured custom' brought hampers of their own 'edibles'.

Built on a sloping site, at the back was a downstairs laundry with bath and ample space under the house for storage (the store dummies kept here were considered creepy by the children), and a large area where 'hobos' and 'Barnardos' children reputedly slept on occasions. The stairs leading up from the basement area were able to be closed off with a trap door.



James Stuart of the James Theatre bought the house 1948 and converted it into flats and it was at this time the corner gardens were sold to the local council. During its time as a subdivided house, the dining room became the waiting room for a local taxi service and the front lounge room was reputedly used to service car parts on occasions.

In 1995, the current owners of the restored Coolalie held a 100th birthday party to which they invited over 50 descendants of the Dark family.

200 Dowling St: This corner block was once the garden of Coolalie and is now occupied by one of the two prime offences against Dungog architecture (for the other see p.23) – the Dungog Shire Council offices.

Dungog Municipal Council originally met in the School of Arts, then for many years shared premises with the RSL Sub-branch in the Memorial Hall. In 1956 this council merged with Wallarobba Shire to form Dungog Shire Council and the result was this new building. The front section was originally designed as a showroom for electrical appliances and had larger windows.

A very functional design



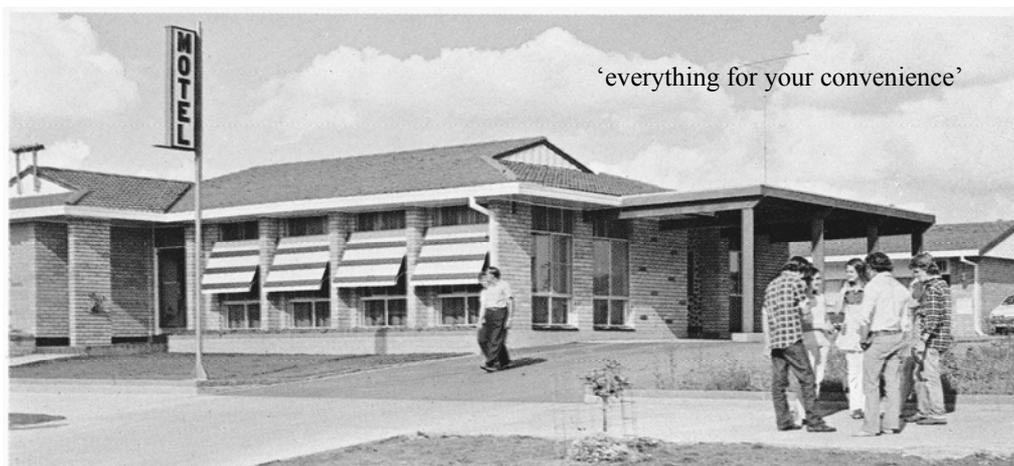
Dowling Street - Brown Street to Mackay Street (east side)



The original St Mary's Catholic Church and Presbytery were built in 1870. The Church was demolished in 1933 when a new St Mary's was built in Brown St.

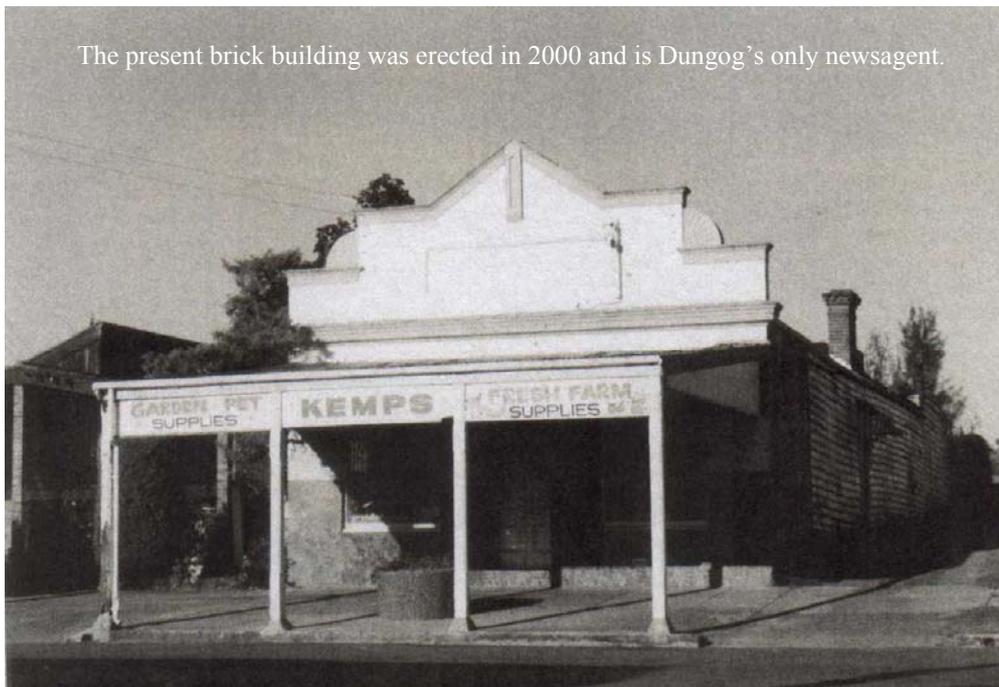
165 Dowling St: Dungog Visitors Information Centre stands on the site bought by James Mackay Reay for the Catholic Presbytery. The presbytery, funded in part by St Patrick's Day races held at Tabbil Creek, was built next door to St Mary's Church, and remained here until 1956. The house that was demolished to make way for this presbytery was given to its former tenant, George Muddle, to rebuild as a new home for himself at a time when Dungog rents were 2/6 a month.

163-161 Dowling St: The Tall Timbers Motel was constructed in 1971 on the site of the first St Mary's Church of 1870, which was demolished in 1933 when another St Mary's was erected up Brown St (see p.46). The first St Mary's was opened by the Bishop of Bathurst, with threatening rains and possible flooding keeping attendance low. Nevertheless, about 100 horsemen assembled between Clarence Town and Brookfield to escort the Bishop and other visiting prelates into Dungog. St John's of West Maitland also supplied an eight member choir for the occasion.



~ Ah, Dungog ~

143 Dowling St: In 1880 a timber cottage was erected here, with a brick facade added later, perhaps in 1889. This was the site of George Kelly's Photographic Studio, who began business in Dungog in 1888. It was also Emily Jane Kelly's boarding house, which was one of many boarding houses for people coming to town for shopping who needed to stay the night due to slower transportation and also the fact that many women would not have felt comfortable in a hotel. Mrs Kelly also operated a general shop here, selling toys, stationery, sweets and fruit. Later it was the Butterfly Candy Shop (complete with butterfly paintwork), which was opened in 1924 by G Burrows, when he moved from opposite the Post Office. This shop was taken over by L Hutchinson in 1926, selling Peter's Ice Cream for 3d and 6d. The premises continued to be owned by Mrs Tarran (nee Kelly), and operated as a greengrocer and later as Bob Kemp's nursery, until it was demolished in 1993.



The present brick building was erected in 2000 and is Dungog's only newsagent.

141 Dowling St: Davey & Olsen's car park was previously the site of Mac and Toot Lloyd's men's hairdressers, which occupied a cottage that when built was described as:

One of the prettiest cottages in Dungog is that recently erected in Dowling Street, for Miss Jennings, adjacent to Mr Stevens, chemist. It replaces an old brick structure which had been in the Jennings family for over half a century. It is of wood, with iron roof and brick foundation, and consists of 5 rooms, with gable front; two are 12ft x 14ft, two 12ft x 12ft; bath 7ft x 6ft; 10ft walls (ceilings); it is well ventilated, with fanlights over all doors. The ceiling is of corrugated iron, and the floors tongue and grooved tallow wood. The hard wood came from Lee and Shelton's sawmill, at Bandon Grove, and was of fine quality. The contractor was Mr Musgrave, who did the brick work, and the timber work was carried out by Mr Jack Redman. The cottage is an ornament to the town and a credit to the builders. It was completed in 6 weeks.

A typical *Dungog Chronicle* write-up on a new building in town.

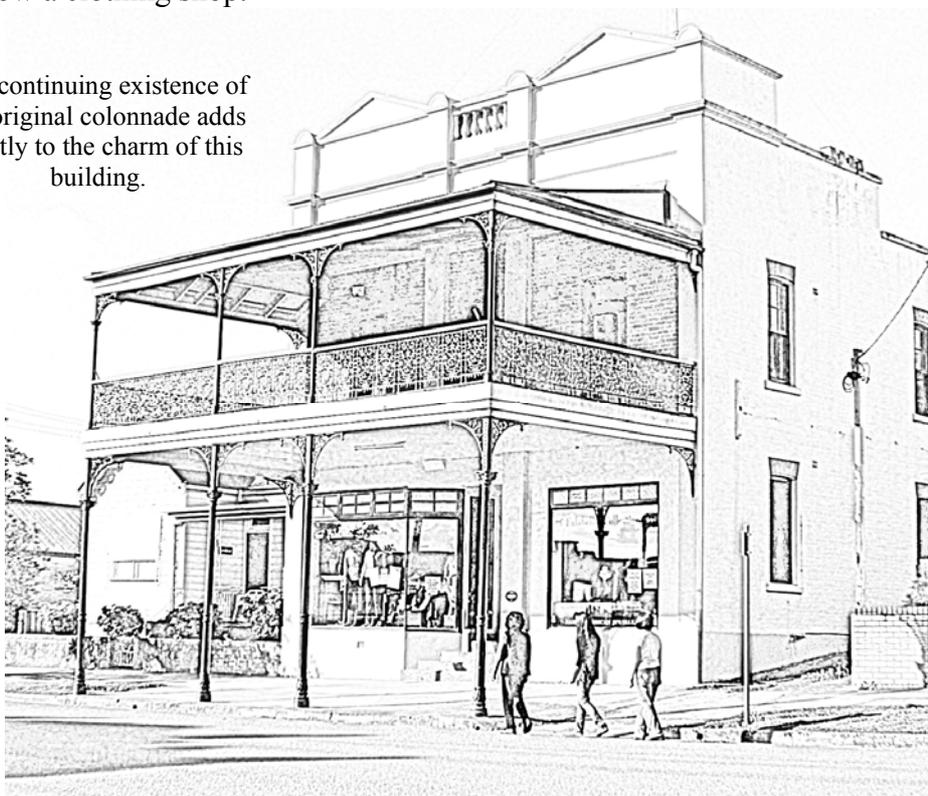
Dungog Chronicle, 28 April 1914

This cottage was for many years the home of well known Dungogite Harry Shelton, founder of Dungog's local bus company - Shelton's Bus Service.

137 Dowling St: This two storey combined shop and residence, with colonnade and upstairs verandah, was built in 1909 for local solicitor H E Elliott, by local builder Amos Moore. When newly opened it was described as ‘the principal building of the town’ and was occupied by various businesses, but most continuously by chemists. Still one of the ‘pleasing features’ of Dungog, is the ‘spacious balcony which spans the footpath, and provides a comfortable and cool lounge for the inmates’ evenings’.

In 1922, J T Williams, former Managing Director of Soul Pattinson in Newcastle, took over from Mr F Thornley as chemist, a move necessitated by a breakdown in his health. The following year this new chemist installed the larger ‘shop windows’ now to be seen, an innovation many others were also undertaking at the time. While the chemist continues as Williams Valley Pharmacy on the other side of Dowling St, this building has been occupied and shared at different times by a baker, dentist and florist and now a clothing shop.

The continuing existence of the original colonnade adds greatly to the charm of this building.



An advertisement by chemist J T Williams - a long time tenant.



Mary Josephine did not work here but trained with her father further up Dowling St at No.210 (p.27).

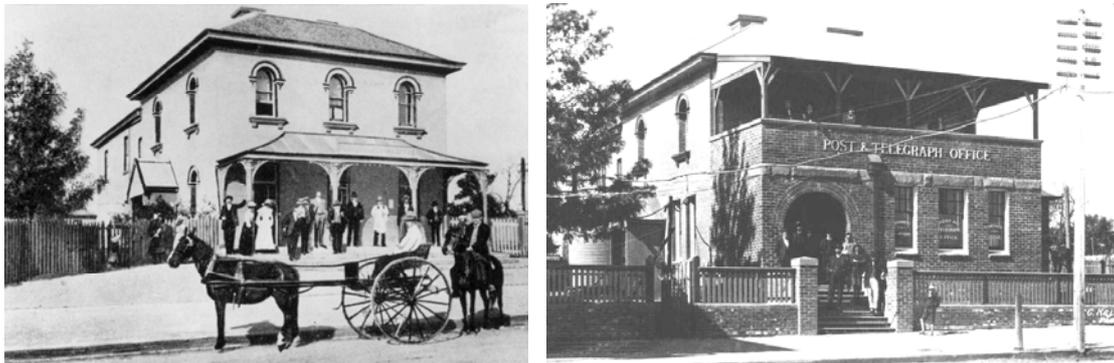


“Perhaps your heavy dullness and lassitude is due to liver trouble.”

~ Ah, Dungog ~

129 Dowling St: The first post office in Dungog began in 1835, receiving letters brought by steamer and horseback via Raymond Terrace and Maitland. The first three postmasters to handle Dungog's mail were all Clerks of the Bench, followed after 1840 by local storekeepers such as Thomas Hanna and Peter McWilliam. In 1862, Samuel Redman became postmaster at a fee of £25 a year, located in the former Dungog Inn, now 211 Dowling St (p.21).

By 1874 the newest means of communication had arrived in Dungog - the 'electric telegraph'. At first administered by the Railways, in 1875 the post and telegraph in Dungog were amalgamated under the former telegraph 'station master', Thomas Ryan. At this time some 300 letters were posted from Dungog each week, and 38 received, many of these the increasingly popular money order.



The changing face of the Dungog Post Office

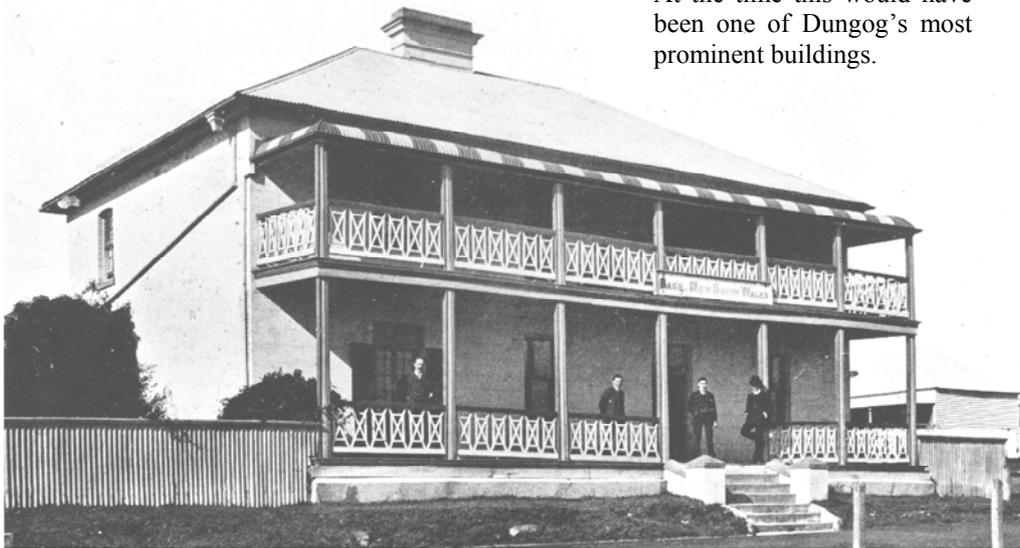


In 1877 land for the present post office was bought for £60 and £1,500 was set aside for construction of the new premises, including a three bedroom postmaster's residence. First occupied in July 1880, the new post office was immediately a major landmark within Dungog, with an impossible number of businesses advertising themselves in the days before street numbers as 'opposite the Post Office'. In 1889, the Postmaster-General allocated 10s per annum 'so that in future the public of Dungog will have the luxury of a light to enable them to get near the office on dark nights'. Service was through a window on the verandah and only in 1902 was a counter put in and the verandah enclosed to create the current service space.

In 1901 the NSW postal system became absorbed into the new Postmaster-General's Department. In 1909 the telephone was added, with service between 9 am and 8 pm only for its first 14 subscribers. The building still operates as a post office, though under license since 1996.

115 Dowling St: This was perhaps the site of Dungog's first general store, run by Peter Egan. Egan was declared bankrupt in 1859 and in July that year, Robert Mason was attempting to sell a number of properties reportedly 'on account of the proprietor's recent bereavement, and his intention of returning to Europe'. The advertisement described this corner allotment: 'on which is erected a substantial brick house, but not yet completed, containing a cellar and 16 rooms, originally designed for a first-rate hotel, and erected at a great expense'. Two years later Mason was still trying to sell, having in the meantime rented out various rooms with 'one of the rooms having recently been occupied as "The Dungog Reading Room" '. By 1884, the building on this corner had changed again (or perhaps was now finished), and was described as a 'Commodious two storied brick house, containing 12 rooms, Washhouse, Pantry, Large Underground Tank, Stable, Buggy-house, open shed, &c'.

At the time this would have been one of Dungog's most prominent buildings.



Mrs Eliza Dark, a prominent local business woman, rented part of this two storied building to the Commercial Bank of Sydney for 10 years until 1884, when they then built their own premises further along Dowling St (p.16). That same year, Mrs Dark was able to rent to another bank, the Bank of NSW this time, becoming this bank's first Dungog customer. The Bank of NSW bought the building in 1898 for £1,250 despite reported dry rot, carrying out extensive renovations in 1913 that added a more imposing vestibule entrance costing over £800.

It was the Bank of NSW that in 1936 erected the present Georgian Revival Style structure. This building is now used as solicitors' offices after the Westpac Bank replaced its branch with an agency in 1999.

Still a prominent building



Dowling Street - Brown Street to Mackay Street (west side)

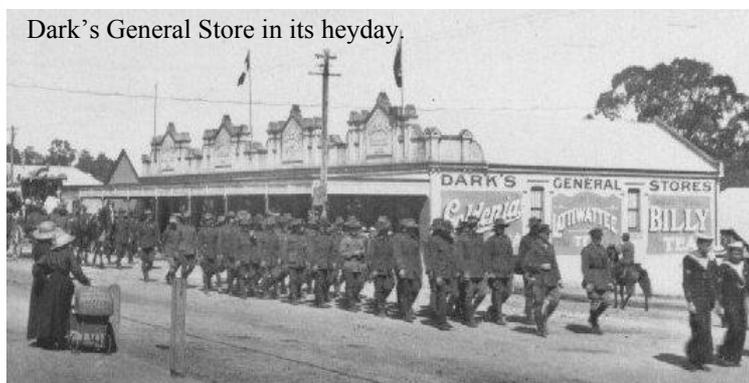
184-190 Dowling St: J A Wade operated the first store on this site. In 1877, Henry Charles Dark established his own store which he eventually called the 'Hall of Commerce'. This became the largest general store in Dungog, one that continued operating until the 1980s. After being extended in 1889, the old cottage building was pulled down and the first section of the present building, designed by C H Button, was erected in 1897.



Some people are under the impression that the edifice is too elaborate, but we are of the opinion it is not too good for a town of the growing importance of Dungog. ... rising up some 10 ft is a parapet wall above a massive cornice with pediments (having the owner's name and dates of establishment of business and re-erection of buildings in raised letters); pilasters are also put in to relieve the front, and the whole is finished with ornaments and mouldings complete.

Two flights of stairs connect the basement with the shop floor; these are finished in cedar with neat tailing around the well hole.

Dungog Chronicle, 21st May 1897



Dark's General Store in its heyday.
Henry and Mary Ann (nee Wade) Dark
– prosperous storekeepers

In 1919, an extension was made to the south and the whole shop interior renovated. At this time the added showroom was considered to be 'a popular attraction to the ladies of Dungog and district'. In 1924, the posts holding up the colonnade were replaced with a suspended awning.

After Henry's death in 1901, the business was continued by his widow, Mary Ann Dark, and expanded by their sons, George and Eric. Another addition was made in 1926, continuing the imposing facade. In the basement area under the store other businesses, including dressmaking by Amy Kennedy & Jean Peakhall, were conducted in the late 1930s. The premises have been occupied by various businesses since the 1980s, including Dillon's Real Estate since 1997, joined by the Mutual Building Society in 2009.

182-172 Dowling St: Originally all the stores in this row were built by the Dark family and generally rented out to other businesses. The first section along from Dark's proper was Dark's produce section, which opened onto what is thought to be a lane. After approximately 100 years on this site, the Dark family disposed of their interests. This part of the store was converted into the Williams Valley Pharmacy (No.182) by John Hughes in 1985, with the southern addition, in the same style, built in 1997 for Richard Jenkin.

The next two shops were both erected in 1933. The first (No.178), has been occupied by electrical retailers, real estate agents, a gift shop and accountants. Above the shop door can still be seen on the clock face the 'Deep Image' logo, an early AWA model TV. The second shop (No.176), was first occupied by Roy Shelton & V R Shearman butchers, opening to the enthusiastic description in the *Dungog Chronicle* as, 'one of the most up to date out-side of Sydney. In fact there are not many in the city that would surpass it'. It continues to serve as a butcher's shop today.



The shops in this series have kept many of their original features, including in some case similar businesses.

A clock dating from the time of AWA and 'Deep Image' TV's.

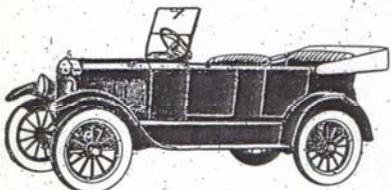


Adjacent to the butcher's at No.174, W L Speirs operated a jewellery and clock repair business until his death in 1937. His wife Mabel Alice Speirs then took over, followed by her son-in-law Artie Cox, on his return from the Second World War. He was followed by James Croll, then Fred Henneberry - a well-known boxer. The shop is now A Country Affair, supplying women's clothing, jewellery and gifts.

The final in this series of Dark family built shops (No.172), was constructed in 1927, and has always been occupied by cafes. The first was the Sunshine Sundae Shop, later the Sunshine Cafe. The first owners of this cafe were the Barbouttis Brothers, Tony and Jack, where 'American Sundaes will be dispensed'. Tony & Jack Barbouttis arrived from Castellorizo, Greece, by ship about 1922. The brothers conducted the Sunshine Cafe here, the Busy Bee Cafe further along Dowling St, and also had refreshment rooms at Dungog Railway Station for a time. When in 1938 the Barbouttis Bros sold their four operating cafes, two in Newcastle and two in Dungog, the Busy Bee was valued at £1,352 and the Sunshine Cafe at £1,228. These last premises are now occupied by the Country Grub Cafe & Takeaway. Tony Barbouttis maintained his 'Railway Refreshments' at Dungog Station until 1951.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

15-3-1927
DUNGOG CIRENICHIE.



A new high peak in
motor car value is
set by the Improved
Ford Touring Car.
Come and see it.

F.O.R. or F.O.B. Ford
Assembly Plant in each
State. **£155** Complete with Electric
Lighting and Starting
Equipment

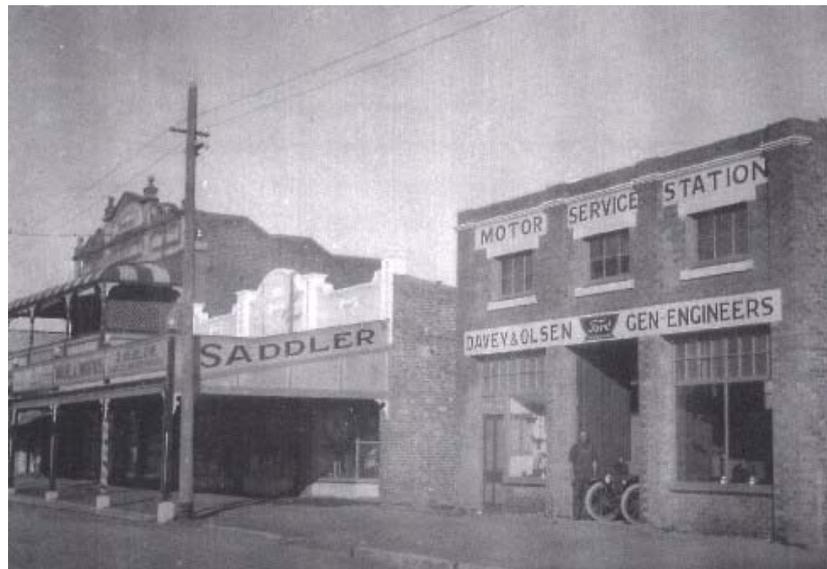
CHOICE OF COLORS: COBALT BLUE, IMPERIAL BUFF, EM-
PIRE GREY.

DAVEY & OLSEN
DUNGOG
LOCAL FORD DEALERS.

168-162 Dowling St: Originally a blacksmith's shop, it was one of the first to be converted to the servicing of the new motorcars. This was A L Murray's - 'Agent for Dodge Cars' - who was related to Gelignite Jack Murray of the Redex Trials. The building, which also housed the offices of the *Eastern Telegraph* upstairs, was destroyed by fire in 1920. It was the new building, rebuilt by the Darks, that was taken over by the then newly established motorcar mechanic partnership of Davey & Olsen. Oscar Olsen was described as experienced in working 'with the highest type of combustion engine, namely, the aeroplane'. Sid Davey had been a munitions maker in England during WWI and did the same from this shop during WWII. In 1924, Davey & Olsen installed a new 'Visible Full Sight Bowser Petrol Pump' - on display in their show room today.

This same car -
in Imperial Buff
- can be seen
inside the D&O
showroom today.

D&O's is the
second oldest Ford
dealership in
Australia.



156 - 154 Dowling St: The wooden buildings occupied by Mr S Bromley, small goods, and D M Blow, saddler, were destroyed by fire in August 1920. The rebuilt brick building was again occupied by Blow's saddler, as well as Dombkin's bootmaker. Many Dungogites may have seen their first TV here at Wades in the 1950s.

146-148 Dowling St: Built in 1911 for Angus & Coote, Jewellers and Assay Agents, this building was designed by A H Calpin and built by C J Spackman, with bricks coming from Tom Hancock's Melbee brickworks. At street level the building was divided into three shops, with a dining room and kitchen, while upstairs the residence consisted of four bedrooms, a bathroom and a sitting room. Soon after in 1913, A Carnell, the Angus & Coote manager, bought the rights and the building from Angus & Coote and continued the business in his own name. It was reported that Mr Carnell:

.... has a busy staff of assistants and workmen employed effecting repairs to stubborn timepieces or damaged jewellery, while the stock displayed in the show cases and the new plush lined window fittings (the latter themselves cost £25.00.0) is worthy of the notice and attention of anyone. The main room of the shop has a depth that enables a most effective display of stock to be made. In the left hand corner, built into the solid brick walls is a steel fireproof strongroom for the nightly protection of the valuables, while attached to the Wunderlich ceiling are acetylene lights.

Dungog Chronicle, 31st March 1911



Another George Kelly picture

Note the smaller shop on the right – the original Angus & Coote premises

The other two shops of this multiplex were occupied by the Railway Hairdressing Saloon of Edward Peter (Ted) Hutton of Hutton's Hone Razor Strop (see p.31), and Mr J McLaughlin, Tailor. Ted Hutton and his sons promoted their razor strop at shows around Australia before the increasing popularity of the safety razor eliminated its value.

By the end of the 1920s, the building had become the drapery and shoe store of W B Rose, then of his nephew J A Rose. In recent years two of the three shops were used as an antique store and are now all occupied by a clothing and gift store.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

140 Dowling St: The Central Refreshment Rooms, including its well-known marble soda fountain, were built by W J Robinson for G R Brown in 1923.

The Central Refreshment Rooms comprises a shop 18ft x 30, refreshment room 21 x 30, large kitchen, commodious pantry & a cellar. Two of the latest plate glass windows have been put in. They are on a par with the best in the State. Lead lights & metal fittings add to their attractiveness.

Beneath is the cellar where one of the latest hydraulic carbonating machines (automatic) is located. Soda is driven by pressure to the shop where a new marble fountain will be installed shortly.

Dungog Chronicle, 20th November 1923

The plate glass window was smashed by a run away car in 1925, and in 1938 it became the Central Fruit Palace when Carl Allen took over. It is now divided into two business premises.

130-134 Dowling St: A range of professional offices was built here in 1923, incorporating what was once the home of Joseph Abbott, by his son F C 'Dick' Abbott, hence 'Abbott's Chambers'. The occupants of the new Abbott's Chambers were Dr R C Traill; Mr J H Eldridge, dentist; Mr A W Frazer, accountant; Mr A R Gelling, agent; Messrs Berry & Poppleton, carriers; and Mr Dick Abbott, auctioneer.

Note the calf in the bottom left corner of the picture.



126-128 Dowling St: These premises were built in 1922 when an older store was replaced and extended for Walter Herbert Green. W H Green installed electric lights, and operated a general store and newsagency, as well as a Saturday fruit auction in a covered lane to the side known as the 'Dungog Auction Mart'.

The produce mart, the popular resort of local householders and enemies of HCL [high cost of living], has been an important feature of the improvements. It is now situated at the side of the store beneath a cover-way, 16 feet x 40 feet. Here the genial WHG wields the hammer on Saturday mornings at 10am and will sell you anything bar a 'pup'.

Dungog Chronicle, 5th May 1922

After W H Green's death in 1936, the newsagency was continued by his daughter, Eileen Green, while others continued to deal in groceries within the same premises. Newspaper deliveries were a regular feature of this business, interrupted during both World Wars by a shortage of youths to make the deliveries, compounded in 1942 by a shortage of tubes for bicycles.

124 Dowling St: A number of small wooden shops from the 1860s were replaced in 1922 by a single brick building for solicitors, Elliot & Waller, continuing today as Enright & Prentice.

122 Dowling St: Once the lane way access to a Chinese market garden, the building erected in 1920 was for the Crystal Milk Bar. Originally operated by Roy Bacon, after WWII it was run by the McDonald sisters for 40 years, later becoming the Little Busy Bee and now the Cafe Dungog.

120-116 Dowling St: Initially the site of Peter and Thomas McWilliam's store and tobacco factory of the 1850s, it was occupied by W H Green from 1896 to 1922.

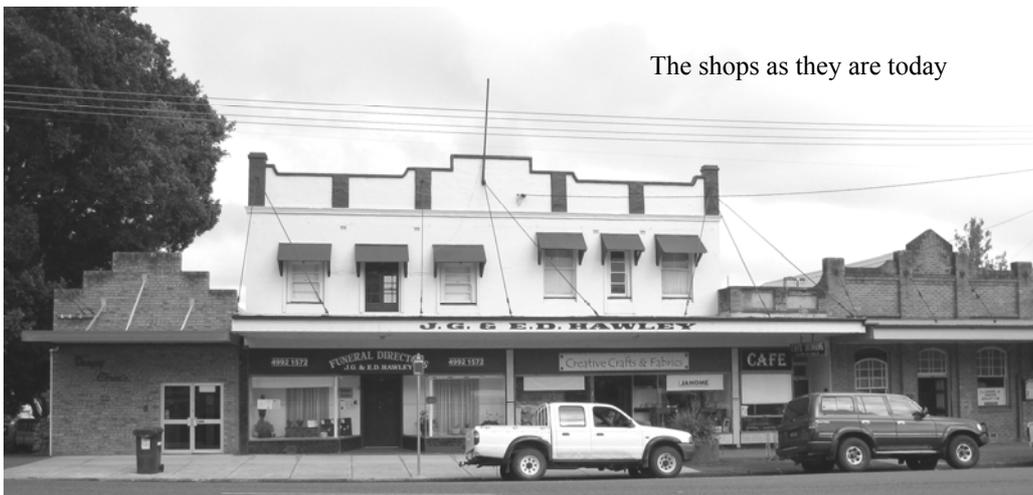


Peter McWilliam's store – he also built 23 Dowling St (see p.63)



Boot making was a very local enterprise at one time.

Part of the site was also used by boot makers, and from 1918 was occupied by what was known as Ross' old store. Around 1922, both stores were incorporated into an extension of McWilliam's original store, when Fry Bros established a furniture store and undertakers. This was taken over in 1969 by John and Elaine Hawley.



The shops as they are today

114 Dowling St: In 1909, John Bellos, who also had a saloon at Paterson, opened an oyster saloon here, selling fresh fish, confectionery, fruit and soft drinks, which he imaginatively named 'The Oyster Saloon'. Theo Polo made it into the Busy Bee Cafe, which was purchased by John Barbouttis in 1925 (p.37). It remained the Busy Bee until the 1950s, then a cake shop, and was later a show room for Fry Bros furniture. In 1982, it became the office of the *Dungog Chronicle*, when the brick veneer was added.

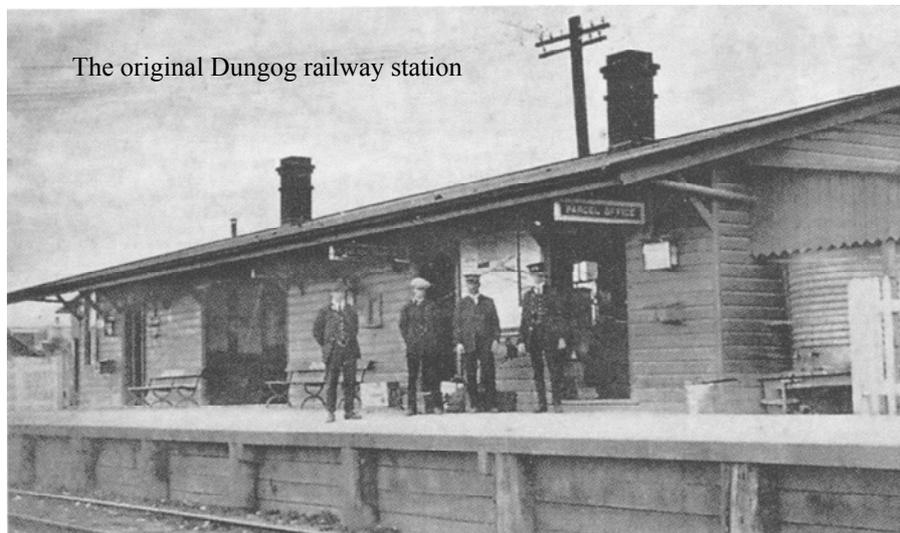
Brown Street – east to west

Dungog Railway Station (end of Brown St): NSW Rail Heritage considers -

Dungog railway station is a good and rare example of Functionalist architecture in a railway setting. Dungog station building reflects an attempt by NSW railways to modernise and economise during the interwar period resulting in station designs radically different to those previously constructed. Dungog displays fine decorative brickwork, well detailed parapets, strong horizontal planes and wide steel awnings, which make it aesthetically congruous and representative of the Functionalist design.

NSW Heritage Database

The Dungog station of 1911 was a series of wooden buildings and at the time it was considered that ‘a totally inadequate and unsightly edifice was dumped down to do duty as a station’. The location was also controversial, with the engineers originally planning to place it much further from town and even on the other side of the river! A public meeting and other protests saw the present highly convenient site agreed to.



The original Dungog railway station

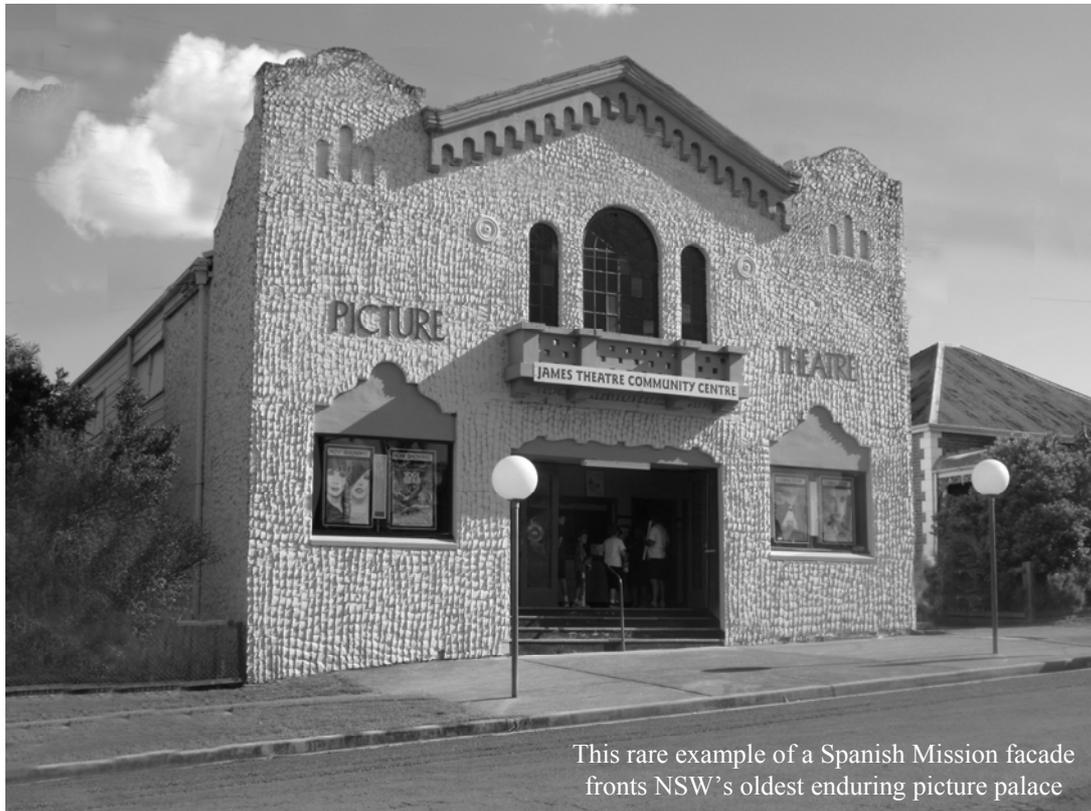
The original station, including a ladies’ room and lavatory, general waiting room, booking office, and parcels office, was extended in 1920. However, by 1945 this was seen as inadequate with the *Dungog Chronicle* declaring that: ‘The blue ribbon for the “Best Dam-fool Railway Joint in NSW” would easily be won by Dungog’. Soon after the main station received its current functionalist rebuild.

The modern functionalist station



James Theatre (6 Brown St):

In October 1912, the Dungog Electric Lighting Company announced it would hold a 'picture show' on 'Mr James Stuart's property, where a "stadium" is to be erected'. A roof was added in 1914, and in 1917 the picture rights of the Electric Lighting Company were bought by Stuart, who had a new picture palace constructed on this site. Along with places such as the Victoria Hall (p.77), Dungog had for a time a choice of cinematic venues.



This rare example of a Spanish Mission facade fronts NSW's oldest enduring picture palace

In January 1918 the new theatre's 'first night' was held. The screen was 22 ft by 15 ft, plus a stage 12 ft by 30 ft, with ventilation provided by a four foot opening right around the building. The 'machine is the highest priced on the market' and the local paper assured that there was no danger of fire. The report also stated that 'neither wet weather nor excessive heat will be a bugbear' and that new 'cushioned chairs' were expected. Seating for 1000 was possible, but 700 could be seated comfortably.

The proceeds of the official opening, organised by the Hands Across the "C" Club, and at which the new chairs, as well as a Scottish pipe band were present, were donated to the Dungog Cottage Hospital. 'The star film' that night was:

"The Bride of Hate" and it is an exciting and thrilling story of love and romance from end to end. A 1000 feet side-splitting and hair-raising farce, entitled "Her Circus Knight", will also be screened, together with other films, including "Stranded" (comedy), Pathe Gazette, and "Hearts and Shadows" (dramatic).

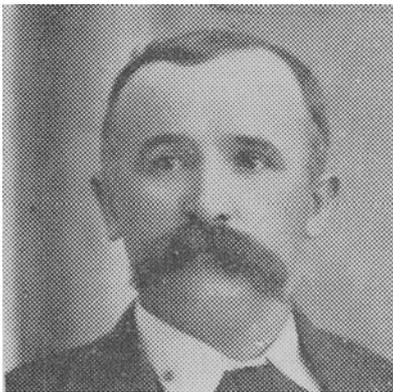
Eastern Telegraph, 15th February, 1918

The only sour note, apart from the racist *The Bride of Hate*, was the theft of the 'Picture Theatre Notice Board from Dowling and Brown Street' the following month.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

In 1930 came the talkies and the Spanish Mission style renovation by William David Jeater, architect, and Stevenson and Rigler, builders. This renovation was so extensive that its re-opening was described as of 'the new picture theatre'. Always a multifunction venue, the theatre opened not with a film but with a Diggers Ball at which the 'Mayoress, Mrs C T Abbott, in true Digger fashion cut the ribbon with a sword'.

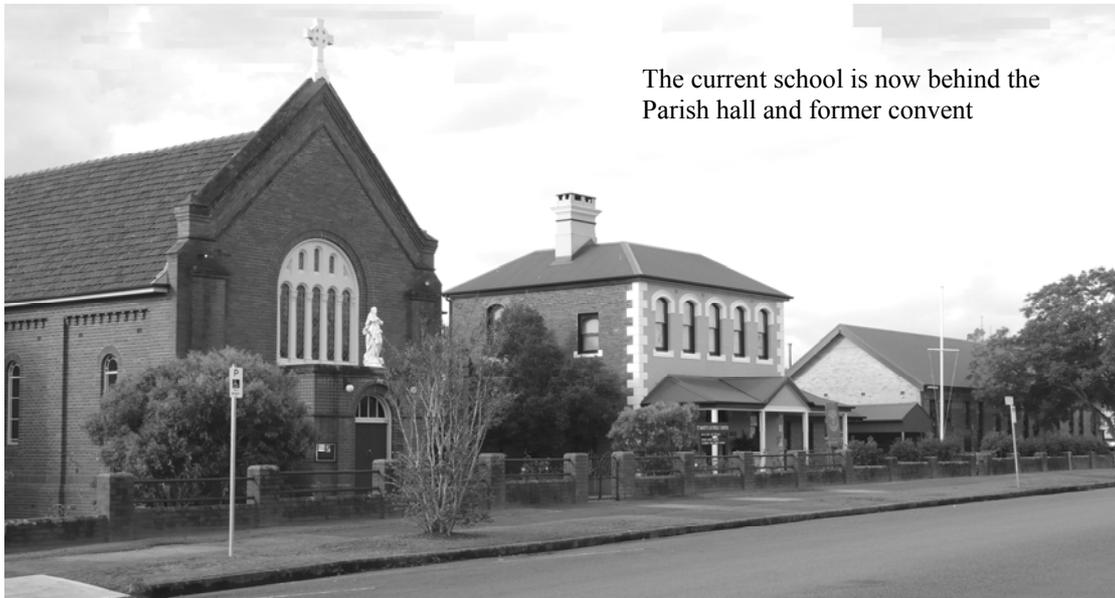
A perceived feature of the new talkies was that films would have 'selected English stars speaking faultless English', as well as newsreels 'especially made for the British Empire'. Whether this was true or not, record crowds were in attendance for the first night to see and hear a program that included the 'Talking British Triumph *Song of Soho*' as well as Mickey Mouse in *The Cactus Kid*.



The James Theatre was named after James Stuart, who founded and operated this combined picture house and community hall for 24 years. Now officially the James Theatre Community Centre and owned by Dungog Shire Council since the 1980s, it is the longest established cinema in NSW. Used for a variety of purposes, including regular movie sessions, it has also been since 2007 the home of the Dungog Film Festival.

Mr James Stuart – tinsmith turned picture show entrepreneur.

St Mary's Church, Convent, Parish Hall & School (Brown St):



The current school is now behind the Parish hall and former convent

The rapidly expanding Sisters of St Joseph, who began in the Hunter region with only four nuns at Lochinvar in 1883, established a school and convent in Dungog in 1888. With three nuns, aged from 22 to 27, they first occupied a house in Dowling St (possibly No. 42), and soon after, in 1889, opened a school in a room within this cottage.

Convent

The Convent of St Joseph was built by J A Hall on this site in 1891 and the nuns took up residence in early 1892. 'It contains eight rooms and a school room, with bath room, underground tank, &c.' There was a reception room with folding doors, a dining room, and upstairs were rooms described as a 'dormitory' and an 'oratory'. The original two-storey convent building was beautifully finished with decorative window arches, and panelled ceilings. The cedar joinery throughout was 'varnished, and the walls are plastered and polished. The floors are of kauri pine and the ceilings are painted'.



Later, the downstairs consisted of rooms used for music lessons and a chapel on either side of the front door. The chapel connected to a dining room through a set of floor-to-ceiling folding doors, which allowed these two rooms to be used as one large schoolroom. The only chimney was a double one for the music room and the kitchen at the rear. A narrow flight of stairs, dominated by a coloured glass window, led to the bedrooms, bathroom and community space. In 1939, just after the 50th anniversary of the nuns' arrival, a verandah was added to the front, this was later built-in to provide two more bedrooms. A wooden addition on the eastern side of the building also gave more schoolroom space, just as its replacement in brick gives extra office space today.

Any internal partitions that existed were done simply, often not reaching the ceiling and were perhaps undertaken by the nuns themselves, as for example, was the bathroom tiling. Since 2002, the convent, which had been empty for many years, has been used as offices for the school.

In 2007, the front verandah was removed and the original frontage restored.



~ Ah, Dungog ~

Parish Hall & School

The school and nuns moved to the new location in 1892 and had nearly 100 pupils, reputedly more than half non-Catholics. With numerous bazaars to raise funds, a separate school room, now the Parish Hall, was built in 1913 for £700.



This hall too was well made, with opening and closing metal vents, coloured glass window panes in a cross design, a lined ceiling and beautifully finished rafters. The school gradually gained its own buildings, with additions in 1923, 1952, 1976 and most recently 2006. The school currently has 86 pupils, a little down from its peak of 115 students in the 1970s.



St Mary's standard exterior belies its grander interior.

St Mary's Church

The first place of Catholic worship in Dungog was Sunville Chapel, built in 1840 on land provided by Joseph Fitzgerald after the local magistrate had refused Catholics the continued use of the court house. At the official opening of the first St Mary's Church of 1870 in Dowling St, where the Tall Timbers Motel (p.30) now stands, the Bishop emphasised the generosity of Protestants in the district towards its construction. This small church was replaced in 1933 with the present St Mary's Church in Brown St, closer to the school and convent. Unremarkable from the outside, the J P Gannon designed St Mary's has a beautifully curved wood panelled ceiling that suggests a dome and gives the interior a basilica-like impression. Beside the church is a small cairn of bricks from the original Sunville Chapel, and adjoining the church is the Presbytery, which replaced the Dowling St presbytery in 1956. Joseph Fitzgerald and his wife are commemorated in a stained glass window at the entrance end of the church.

The Settlers Arms Hotel (45 Brown St): Previously the Court House Hotel, and originally known as The Settlers' Arms before that again, has been trading in Dungog since the 1850s. While undoubtedly a place of much popular entertainment, an application for a 'bagatelle license' [an early form of billiards] was refused in 1863 on the grounds that a similar license had already proven to be 'a social pest' and would not 'improve the moral tone of our younger population'. A visitor in 1888 described the Settlers' Arms as 'a quaint but cosy inn' that 'reminds one much of the country hostelries in England'. Soon after this in 1892, a new owner, Mr Jos. Robson, renamed it the Court House Hotel and made extensive additions. These included 'a two storied edifice erected in front of the present buildings, containing 8 or 10 additional rooms, with bath room, balcony, verandah, etc'. In 1901, another owner, Mr M W McNamee, 'had a billiard table erected on his premises, which promises to be well patronised' and to which it seems moral objections were no longer raised.



👉 Special provision for Commercial Travellers 👈

Like many hotels, this one was often the site for auctions of both land and cattle. It was also here in 1889, while descending its steps, that the well known Dr McKinlay fell and struck his head, never to regain consciousness. In 1909, the hotel was the location of a daring robbery attempt when two young men stealthily entered the bedroom of the sleeping licensee, Mrs Jenkins, and made off with a box containing £400 worth of jewellery. However, when confronted on the stairs by a housemaid they dropped the box and escaped empty-handed.



~ Ah, Dungog ~

Dungog Memorial Hall (Cnr Brown & Lord St):

‘That a sub-branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia be formed in Dungog,’

Dungog RSL Sub-branch Minute Book No.1, April 10th 1919

After a public meeting held in May 1919, Dungog Municipal Council was approached with the suggestion ‘that a Memorial Town Hall in which a portion would be set apart for the use of our members’ be erected. This idea replaced an earlier plan to build a monument. By February the following year the Governor of NSW (the Prince of Wales had been suggested first), journeyed to Dungog to lay the foundation stone of the Soldier’s Memorial Hall. The opening itself was in August 1920, and in June 1921 Thomas Page, father of two boys killed in France, and Major Harold Woodman, DSO, the highest ranking of the many from Dungog who served in the Great War, jointly aid a memorial tablet.

Raising funds to pay for the Memorial Hall included events such as a ‘Euchre Party and Dance’ (at which over £11 was gathered after expenses), and an A.I.F. vs. Rest of Union football match. The newly formed group of returned soldiers dealt with many issues in its early years, including land for soldiers, job preferences and repatriation payments.



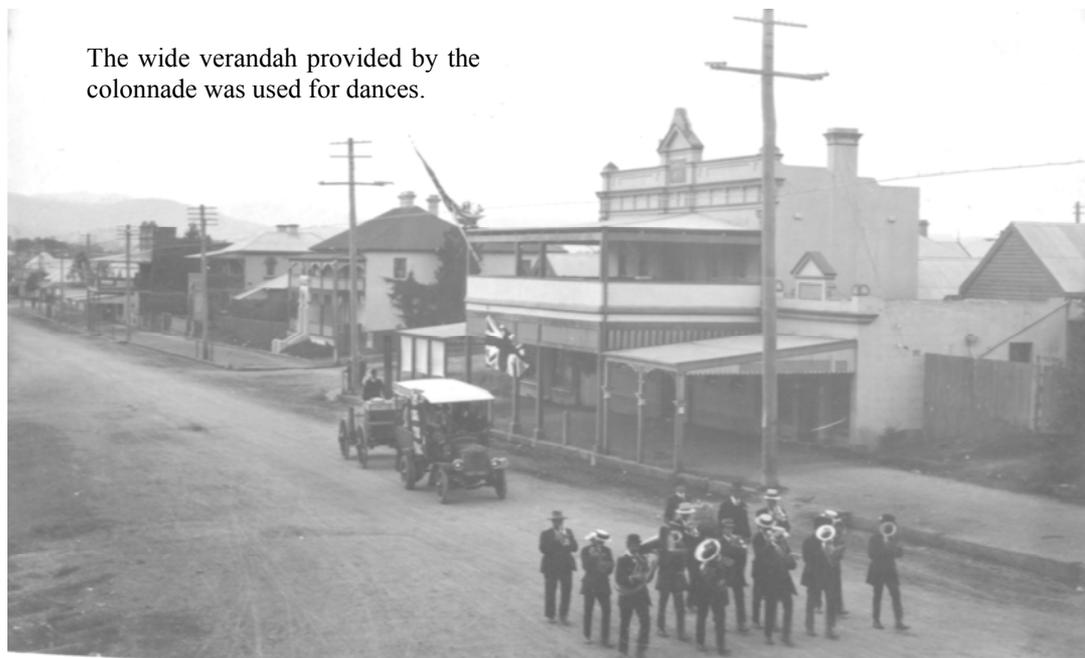
A member of council at the time felt that a Municipal Hall would get no support but that a Memorial Hall would. (The land had been set aside for a council chamber in 1906.)

When the Dungog Municipal Council agreed to share its offices with the new Soldier’s Club it was suggested that: ‘After a number of years the soldiers’ rooms would not be used and would revert to the public’. Instead, due to the influx of new members after yet another war, it was the Council that gave up the rooms. This occurred in the 1950s when Dungog Municipal and Wallarobba Shire Councils amalgamated into the Dungog Shire Council, and new offices were built on Dowling St, while the Returned Services League Sub-branch took over the entire Memorial Hall. In 1956, the Dungog Memorial RSL Club was formed and a liquor license obtained. The new style club, including poker machines, was able to expand the original Memorial Hall in 1966, 1978, and again in 1982 with a new auditorium and the Doug Walters Bar, and was most recently refurbished in 1999.

Intersection of Dowling Street & Mackay Street (south side)

109 Dowling St: This site and that adjoining it were perhaps the location of slab huts used at times as shelter by local Gringai people in the 1850s and 1860s. A baker's shop built in 1880 was the first commercial building on this site, burnt down in 1897 (along with the adjacent School of Arts) and rebuilt in 1899 as a billiard saloon. In 1901, this corner was described as having 'a substantially built dwelling and chemist shop containing drugs, household furniture and effects', and being 'used as a branch establishment by Messrs Wells Bros, of the Dental Hospital, Newcastle'. In 1904, Mrs T Casey opened an Oyster and Refreshment Saloon here, such Oyster Saloons being renowned as sources of after-hours beer. The present building has been used as a butcher's shop and is now a mower repair business.

105 Dowling St: The School of Arts operated on this site from the 1870s to the 1960s. During that period it housed a subscription lending library, and provided a venue for such organisations as Dungog Municipal and Wallarobba Shire Councils, the Agricultural Society and the Debating Society.



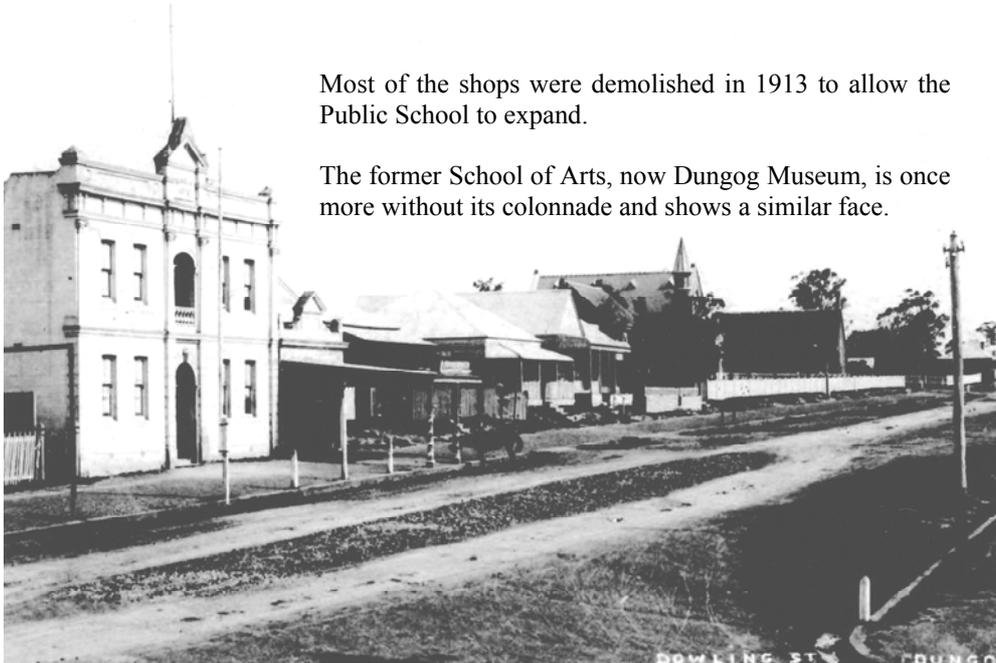
Schools of Arts were part of a general education movement of the late nineteenth century and became essential for any progressive town's image. Dungog's School of Arts was founded in 1872 and probably evolved from the Dungog Mutual Improvement Association that began in 1864 for 'mental culture and social recreation', with politics and religion to be avoided.

In 1876 a wooden School of Arts building was erected here, with athletics games on the racecourse the following year raising funds to add a ceiling to its roof. The building was used for balls and entertainments as well as debates and lectures. The present School of Arts building, in a Federation Free Classical style, was erected in 1898, replacing the wooden one that burned down in 1897 after the adjacent building caught fire. The books and furniture were saved, though lack of water prevented anything being done about the building itself.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

The former building had been complained of as unworthy of the fast growing Dungog, while the new building was described as a 'fitting building for this wealthy and progressive town'. Designed by Town Clerk and architect Mr C H Button, the new building cost £550 and features a decorative archway, with cedar stairs and joinery throughout. Inside were reading and meeting rooms, and later a billiard room (complete with spittoons). At the laying of the foundation stone a speaker warned that there 'were novels and novels'. The library continued as an important aspect of the institution, allowing town members a borrowing period of 14 days and country members 21 days.

A covered colonnade was erected in 1912 that once stretched out across the footpath before being removed in the 1950s. At first illuminated by an acetylene gas plant, electric lighting was installed in 1914. Balls and race meetings continued to raise funds throughout the 1920s and 30s, but by the 1950s the building had become vacant. In the 1960s, after a period of neglect, the building was restored. The two billiard tables were sold in 1967 for \$800 and many of the books distributed to other libraries. Taken over by the Dungog Historical Society in 1968, this former School of Arts building now houses the Dungog Museum.



Most of the shops were demolished in 1913 to allow the Public School to expand.

The former School of Arts, now Dungog Museum, is once more without its colonnade and shows a similar face.

103 Dowling St: This former shop, built around 1900 as 'Federal Furnishings Warehouse', has also been a School of Arts Cafe, a general store and a barber shop, and is now the local community centre.

Hairdressing and Billiard Saloon – Mr G Mason announces in our columns that he is opening the above business in the premises lately occupied by Mr S E Corrie. The Hairdressing Saloon is large and comfortable, and contains two up to date chairs and all the latest trade appurtenances. The billiard saloon is also very large and well lighted, and a new Heiron and Smith table is there for patrons.

Dungog Chronicle, 13th October 1916

This building is the only one left of a row of shops between the School of Arts and the Presbyterian Church demolished as the Public School expanded in 1913.

Kirrica (2 Mackay St): This late Victorian style house, replacing an earlier wooden dwelling, was built in 1897 for Emily Isabella Mackay, wife of John Kenneth Mackay, on land purchased for £260. Emily Isabella Mackay, who was worth over £52,000 on her death in 1919, possibly used the house as a 'town house' when away from the family property, Cangon. With original cedar joinery throughout, this is a single storey, three bedroom house, with what are possibly the original timber servant's quarters at the rear.



One of Dungog's many beautifully preserved houses.

This well constructed double-cavity brick home, with a rendered sandstone-look exterior, original iron lacework and stained glass front windows, opens to a wide arched hallway. The parlour room has original plasterwork, brass picture rails and a cast iron, tiled fireplace with marble mantelpiece. The dining room has an original black marble mantelpiece and a picture window with views of Coorei Hill to the east.

The Mackay family, like many landed families, would generally leave 'working property' to its male members, and rentable town houses to its females. The house remained with various Mackay family descendants, including the 102 year old Annie Doyle, until the 1980s.

+++++
+ **You are All Invited.** +
+ **COME AT ONCE** and see my **New Coats—Ladies' Coats** for the Winter. Come and
+ see them early, they will not be in stock long. +
+ **New Stylish Coats, Up-to-date and Useful,** without being extreme, I am
+ showing them in Tweeds, Plain Cloths, and some have revers and cuffs of contrasting color +
+ **The Prices are Low,** the value "**Special,**" 18s 6d, 19s 11d, 21s, 22s 6d, 24s 6d,
+ 32s 6d. +
+ **Ladies Walking Skirts.** +
+ A Big Variety **Fashionable Skirts,** (any size) in Dark Tweeds, Grey Tweeds, Navy
+ and Black Serges, Panama, Cheviots, Amazons, etc, **made expressly to My Order,**
+ the very latest styles, you **must** see them, the prices are so low: 5s 11d, 6s 11d, 9s 6d, 11s 9d,
+ 13s 6d, 15s 6d, 17s 11d. +
+ **W. R O S S,** Red Flag Stores, Dungog +
+ 'Phone 28 +
+++++

Dungog once boasted a great many stores catering to clothing needs that the ladies of Kirrica, among others, no doubt patronised.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

112 to 92 Dowling St: The blocks that stretch from this corner to the Royal Hotel were long used for travelling entertainment such as vaudeville, boxing and roller skating, especially during Dungog Show times. The house built on the corner, Shalom, is reputed to be the first fibro house built in Dungog. This house, with its lovely roof lines, now sits next to a shop built in 1960 that housed Dungog Rural Equipment. Later owned by Permewans, it was for a time the Community Information Centre and is now home to the Dungog Art Society. Ralph's Music Store at No.92-94, was built around 1926 on the site of a small wooden shop by 'W J Ralph, LAB of RAM and RCM, late solo violinist to Haymarket Theatres, Sydney'. The music store sold pianos and Ralph gave violin tuition at 10/6.

Since ceasing as a music store it has housed a number of businesses, such as a barber, a fish and chip shop, a dress shop and was most recently a doctors' surgery.

An agent for Palings advertisement can still just be seen on the building's north side.



80-86 Dowling St: The present Royal Hotel is the fourth building on this site to hold that name. The first, of timber and iron, was built about 1850 by Alexander Donaldson and was originally The Durham Hotel, then briefly The Globe Hotel and finally the Royal Hotel. This was replaced by a Georgian style brick building, possibly run for a time by John Titcume, and then in 1913, by a two-storey Federation one that was erected next to the old hotel, 'where the old sample room stands at present'.



Titcume's Home & the Durham (later Royal) Hotel



Royal Hotel on Dowling Street Dungog in 1885

This new Royal Hotel featured a 'Black and White parlor' in which the walls were 'covered with black and white paper and present a striking appearance'. Also part of the new arrangements was a 'B & W Club'. At one stage the hotel owner was also the owner of the Barrington Tops Guest House.



One of the many incarnations of this hotel and undoubtedly the best looking.



Jack Mcleod's Royal Hotel Dowling St. Dungog 1930

The Federation style hotel was demolished in 1939, by which time Toth's seems to have owned all the hotels in Dungog, and the present building was erected at a cost of £20,000 by that brewery.

The old Royal Hotel in Dungog is rapidly being removed to make way for the new and modern structure that is to mark a stepping stone in progress in this town. With the interior stripped of all fittings the walls are diminishing each day, and the demolition of the first floor is practically complete. The contractors, Messrs Field and Roach, expect to have the new building complete in five months.

Dungog Chronicle, 31st March 1939

These contractors used the material of the old hotel to build at least three cottages around Dungog, all now featuring similar brick porches. Meanwhile, patrons did not go dry (or elsewhere) during construction as a temporary bar was 'erected on the vacant frontage between the hotel & Ralph's music store'.

The latest of the many faces of the Royal Hotel (or 'Top Pub').



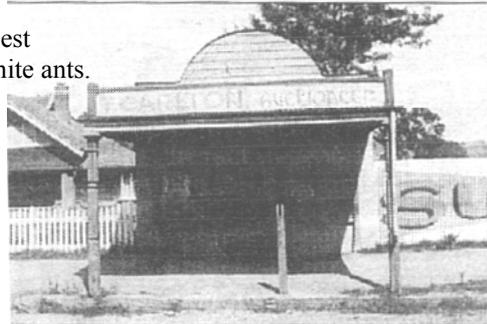
72 Dowling St: Formerly the site of the Presbyterian Manse, this property was bought by Tom Carlton for £510 in 1889. The present house was built by this auctioneer in 1917 on what is still a two acre block. Named Coimbra (not an Aboriginal word but the name of a Portuguese University town), it was built in what today is known as a Federation Arts and Crafts style, but at the time was described as ‘of the English bungalow type, which has become very popular in Sydney of late years’. It is set much further back from the street than usual, as the new house was built while the old was still standing, and perhaps also to distance itself from the neighbouring pub.

‘Mr J W Scobie of West Maitland was the architect, and Messrs Baker and Stonach of 43 Veda Street, Hamilton the builders. The house consists of seven rooms, kitchen, bathroom, pantry, larder and laundry, verandahs side and back.’ ‘The outside walls are lined with rusticated boards up to the window sill ...’ ‘The walls of the principal rooms are 11ft 6in high and the others 10 ft 6in. The main ceiling is lined with Wunderlich steeled ceiling, while the remainder are panelled with squares of beaver board, which is a Canadian manufacture, consisting of compressed wood fibre and pulp. This material is sanitary and heat resisting and is recommended by Mr Stonach for ceilings.’ ‘Fan lights are above every door and window.’ ‘The principal bedroom is 15 x 15 ft with a large recess bay which practically makes the room as big again. The bay is divided from the room by a grilled archway, finished in keeping with a grill at the end of the hall.’

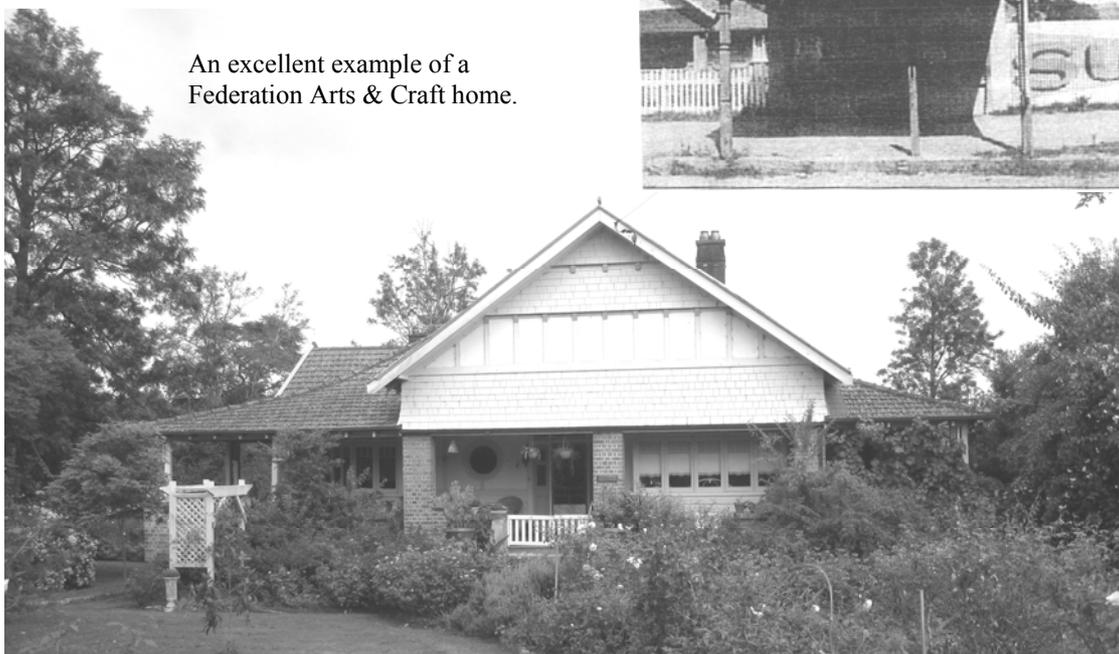
Dungog Chronicle, 21st September 1917

At his death in 1933, Thomas Carlton was considered one of the ‘best known auctioneers’ in NSW. His business office, from which reputedly the navvies that built the rail line to Dungog were paid, abutted the street edge of the block and was only demolished in 1980.

This street level office was an agent for a pest control company and also suffered from white ants.



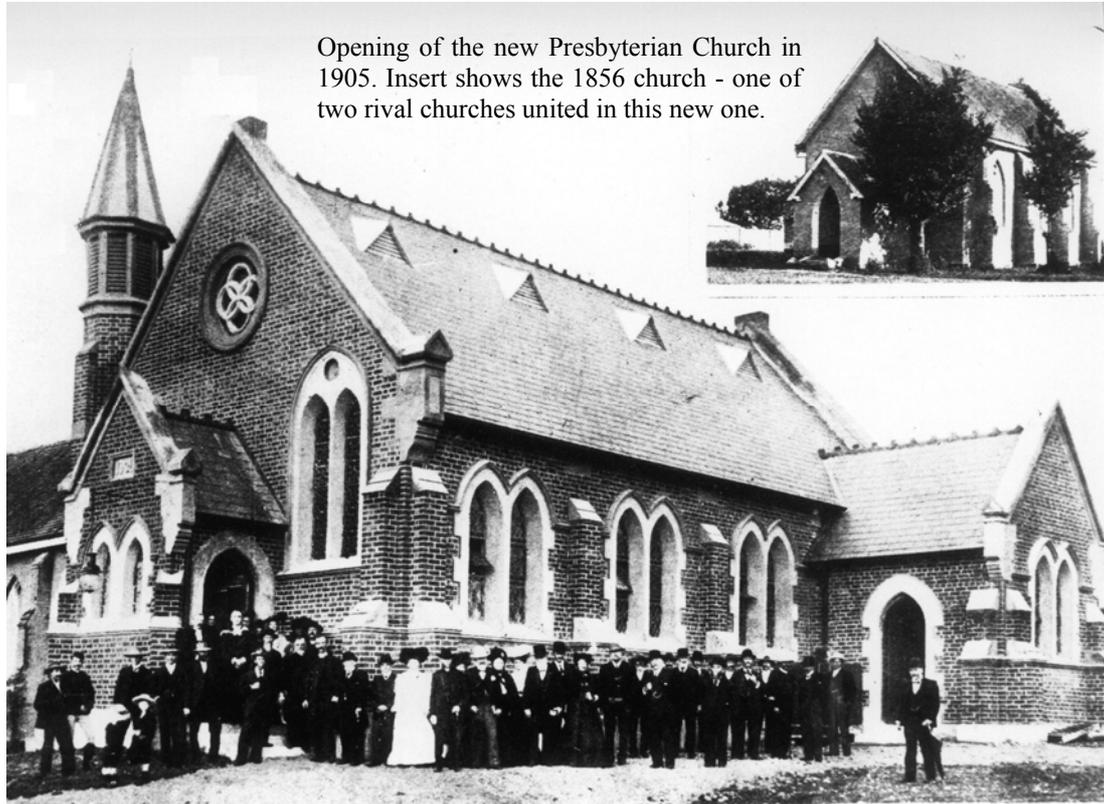
An excellent example of a Federation Arts & Craft home.



The house was in a run down condition by the 1990s when it was restored, which included replacing nearly all the termite damaged floors, to become the Kirralee Bed and Breakfast. Since 2006 it has been a private home once more.

Intersection of Dowling Street & Chapman Street

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church: The present church was built in 1904, replacing an earlier 1856 church demolished after serving a period as a church hall. The church is in a Victorian Free Gothic style and was designed by J W Scobie, with W H Noad the builder. The present hall was built as a 'Sunday School Hall' in 1913.



Originally two Presbyterian churches established themselves in Dungog, with both foundation stones laid in 1855. The one sited here represented the Established Church of Scotland and another, following on from the so called 'Disruption of 1843' when 450 Presbyterian Ministers in Scotland broke away, was 'to be called John Knox Church' of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (p.65). However at the time only one resident minister was available and by 1880 this long term difficulty saw the two church congregations merge into the present Presbyterian Church, a merger which preceded that in Scotland by 20 years. It was perhaps as a result of this expanded single congregation that a new manse was purchased (1889) further south along Dowling St (p.63), with land adjoining this new manse intended as the site of a new (neutral?) church. However this project did not eventuate and instead the new church was built next to the old one on this site in 1904.

In 1905, St Andrews secured a bell previously used by the Paterson Church, 16½ inches in diameter, and weighing over 1 cwt. In 1919, donations from 'some of the lady parishioners', meant the Church was 'enabled to purchase a Victor piano'. In 1924, tennis courts were opened next to the church. These courts were added to in 1938 when a tournament was held to help pay for them - play on Saturdays only of course! In that same year a new brick and iron fence was donated by G A Mackay, and the Manse was badly damaged by fire.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

Christ Church Anglican Church: In 1849, a meeting was held at Dungog Court House attended by the 'Lord Bishop of Newcastle', to organise the building of a new church in Dungog for the Church of England. At this meeting the proposed £450 cost of 'a beautiful Church, drawn by Mr Blackett' was subscribed or otherwise guaranteed. Originally the site of Dungog's first school, the church replaced a timber slab building erected in 1842. Built, as were all the buildings of the time, of locally made bricks, these bricks were of dubious legality as the clay was obtained from Crown Land at the nearby junction of the Williams River and Myall Creek. The brick maker appeared before court and only escaped punishment due to the support of local landowners, who seemingly felt they had the right to appropriate Crown clay.

Construction of the church was delayed when the gold rushes drew away many workers who preferred to try and strike it rich. Eventually the church was completed with the help of a loan from the Newcastle Diocese, with the original £450 price becoming £675 by 1861. Its wood shingle roof, the subject of many a working bee, was replaced in 1906. There is also a story that the original bell was broken as it was being put in place and that the present bell was the Anglican school bell.



Christ Church has benefited from many generous donations over the years, including its lovely organ.

Lit for many years, as all buildings and homes in the mid-nineteenth century were, by candles, a change was made to kerosene lanterns, then to carbide gas in 1906, and finally to electricity in 1917.

In 1916, local landowner Theo Hooke donated £1,000 to this church, including £500 to purchase an organ. In 1951, the Lych gate was erected as a War Memorial on the Dowling and Chapman St corner.

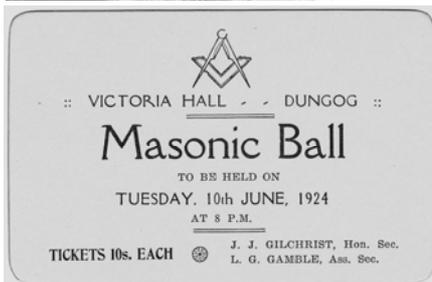


Masonic Hall (51 Dowling St): The Masonic Lodge Hiram No. 213 of the United Grand Lodge of NSW was first formed in 1894 by James Stuart, who would later begin Dungog's James Theatre (p.43), and William Bennett, who had already started Dungog's first newspaper (p.61). However, by 1899 this attempt had failed, and the charter was surrendered. A second attempt in 1905, this time by the local school teacher, proved more long lasting. The first meetings were either at Skillen & Walker's store or at the Carrington Hall (p.17), but soon after re-establishment, the foundation stone of a new temple was laid in 1908, and the following year the ceremonial room and a small outer room, 20 ft by 10 ft, were erected.

This first building was too small for the 'south' (Masonic for supper room) and refreshments were taken in the Church of England Hall (now the Op-Shop). By 1921, with membership at its peak due to dam construction, an extension was added to provide the required 'south'. At the same time a more elaborate porch, as well as a 'handsome fence in brick and iron, the first of its kind in Dungog', was erected.



The Masonic Lodge now the Anglican Church Hall



Masonic Balls, however, were held elsewhere.

Membership fees in 1906 were 3/6 a month or 1/9 for members living 14 miles or more distant; in 1923 the fees were 5/- or 2/6, but were lowered during the Depression. In 1941 enlisted men were free, and by 1952, the distance for non-locals had been extended to 30 miles. Hiram Lodge had become 'dry' in 1915 as part of the 'Follow the King' campaign of that year and remained so until the 1970s. In 1948 a kitchen was added and in 1953 the parquet floor. All the cedar furnishings of the Lodge were made by its members and until quite recently were always painted white.

Declining membership resulted in the last meeting of Lodge Hiram, Dungog in October 2006. Lodge Hiram merged with Lodge Hunter to create Lodge Hunter-Hiram of Raymond Terrace. The building now serves as the Anglican Church Hall.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

Dungog Public School (Chapman St): The National School of Dungog was one of the earliest in NSW, replacing a Presbyterian run school in 1851.

The records of the Department reveal that the land & school buildings were formally the property of the Presbyterian Church authorities, resumed by the Government at the request of the Church & were granted to the Board of National Education in 1851, & the school appears to have been opened as a National School in January of that year under the teachership of Mr Joseph Ross. The enrolment of pupils in 1851 was 48.

Dungog Chronicle, 29th October 1937

The school survived some false starts, including a time in a school building described as having a roof giving as much protection as a sieve, with the 60 pupils fearing a collapse at anytime; as well as a period operating in the Wesleyan Chapel. A new building was possible after the school committee raised some £323 to build on what was probably the site of the old court house, and after having the old cell blocks demolished. The new school building opened in February 1865 with a 'tea and dancing party' helping with furniture and fittings. By 1888, the now Public School had a staff of three and in 1889 it was classified a Superior Public School. Various additions were made, including a teacher's residence in 1893.

Shops along Dowling St were resumed in 1913 to extend the school grounds. Despite this growth, for secondary education some 106 students travelled each day or boarded in Maitland or Newcastle, while a further 15 in Dungog and another 11 in smaller district schools studied what were called 'leaflet' courses by correspondence. However, it was many years before agitation eventually saw the Dungog Central School operate from here in the 1950s, before Dungog High School was established at the northern end of Dungog in the 1960s.



One of the oldest schools in NSW, now much expanded.

This 1865 building is now the school library.

Now the school office

'The new residence of the Superior Public School, Dungog is now occupied by the headmaster, Mr Filshie.'

Dungog Chronicle,
5th September 1893.



Oddfellows Hall (Chapman St): Now the music room of Dungog Public School, this hall was built in 1893 as the Oddfellows Hall of the Grand United Order of Oddfellows or the G.U.O.O.F. The Oddfellows was a self-help organisation based on contributory insurance and were a predecessor of private health insurance. The Dungog Oddfellows Lodge was the 'Star of the Williams Lodge', although an earlier 'Good Samaritan Lodge' had opened in 1866. However, this first effort appears to have failed and was replaced in 1874 by the Star of the Williams.



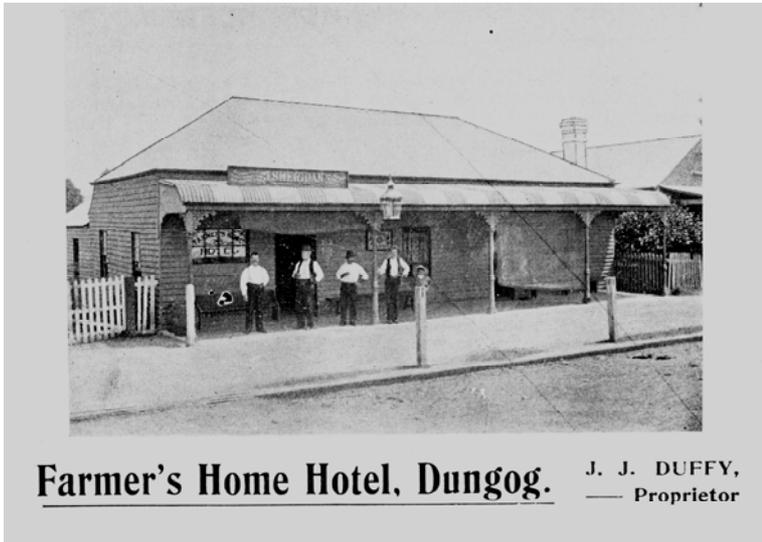
Oddfellows Hall –
now the Public
School music room

The Oddfellows Hall was built opposite the Public School and next to the Church of England, on a site that was to prove controversial. A few years later, when the Anglicans built their own hall behind the church they managed to encroach on Oddfellows land. The Oddfellows Hall now sits on Public School land, while the very similarly constructed Anglican Church Hall is the local Op-Shop, the Anglican Church having acquired the Masonic Hall on the other side of the church for its current hall (p.57).



Oddfellows
Band – such
bands were a
popular
entertainment
form

60 Dowling St (Cnr Chapman St): Possibly the site of Stephen Dark's store of the 1840s, this was the site of the Farmers Home Hotel, owned by John Alexander Sheridan of Enniskillen from about 1882 until his death in 1903. A weatherboard hotel, it had 3 parlours, a dining room, groom's and servant's rooms, 2 sitting rooms, and 7 bedrooms. In 1895, Mr J Sheridan completed 'a nice 4 roomed cottage adjoining his hotel, and a shop attached. He informs us the cottage will be used in connection with the hotel. It is a great improvement to this end of town, and is more presentable than the old building that stood at the corner so long'.



The slowness of travel necessitated more over night stays and therefore many small hotels and boarding houses such as this.

Farmer's Home Hotel, Dungog. J. J. DUFFY, Proprietor

Contractors are busy demolishing another very ancient landmark in Dungog, a cottage opposite the Presbyterian Church in Dowling Street. This old building dates back to the earliest years of Dungog, & was always familiarly known as "Sheridan's" hotel. For very many years it was the "Farmers Home" hotel under the management of the late Mr John Sheridan, & after his death it was carried on by his wife & later by the late Miss Lucy Tester, who after the closing of the hotel conducted it as a boarding house for a number of years. It has been unoccupied for a long time now and the local council has been urging its demolition. With it goes another link with the romantic past.

Dungog Chronicle, 27 August 1937

The current building on this site was erected by Dr J N Wilson in 1939, used afterwards by Dr Sisley, who created its once beautiful garden, then by Dr Papalkar until his departure in the 1980s. Like the building preceding it, it too has been 'unoccupied for a long time now', resulting in major fire damage in May 2011.



Built as a combined residence and surgery, this was the last of this style of medical practice in Dungog.

56 Dowling St: Home of the *Dungog Chronicle* from 1893 to 1983, Walter Bennett purchased the site in 1893 and here had the first electric generator in Dungog. The *Dungog Chronicle*, founded in 1888, remained in the Bennett family until 1978, the paper becoming part of Regional Publishers in 1985. Since 1983, this simple wooden building has been many things, including a pizza shop and is currently a white goods repair service.



52 Dowling St: Purpose built in 1912 as one of the many boarding houses of Dungog of this period:

“Glenreach”, as it is known, is built specially as a home to accommodate boarders, the bedrooms being cosy and comfortable, well furnished with single beds and other necessary adjuncts for ease and rest. The sitting room is splendidly furnished, while for the comfort of the sterner sex a cosy smoking room has been fitted up with card and writing tables, and plenty of easy chairs. The dining room is a spacious one capable of accommodating a large crowd of guests, while at the back is a piazza which could be utilised as a dance floor or a lounge on summer nights. The whole house is most comfortably fitted up as a home, and we are sure Miss Foreman will soon have all the available rooms occupied. The tariff is very moderate, and this fact, together with the announcement that this capable lady intends to keep an excellent table, should attract those in search of comfortable lodgings.

Dungog Chronicle, 30th August 1912

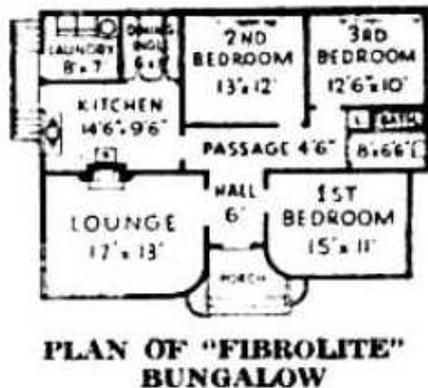
Advert

**High Class
Boarding House
“Glenreach”
Dowling Street, Dungog
Miss J Foreman
Proprietress
Conducted on lines of
Cleanliness**



The southern end of Dowling Street

31 Dowling St: A fine example of a 'Hardies Fibrolite' Bungalow.



29 Dowling St: Described by the *Dungog Chronicle* as a 'Gothic gable style' cottage, this house was built in 1906 for J K Mackay by the Maitland based contractor Pilgrim Bros, and designed by J Scobie. Like many Mackay-linked houses in Dungog, it was built for inheritance by a female member of the family.



The house is one of few in Dungog with two-stories and the only one with front steps giving access to the upper storey. The upper level consisted originally of three rooms (two bedrooms and a sitting room) and two verandahs (a front one and another at the rear directly off one of the bedrooms). Down a narrow set of stairs, the ground level is a mirror of the upper, with one bedroom, a dining room and a kitchen. A servant's area consisted of the kitchen and a large laundry/sleeping area with a separate entrance. It is also reported that the access from the kitchen to the main area of the house was by a service hatch rather than an ordinary door.

The ceilings are all of narrow wood panelling and all four fireplaces come off a single large chimney. Another interesting feature of the design are the windows, the upper and lower section of which each swing freely on a pivot bar to open and close. Described as 'patent window openers and in the front with cathedral lights', these windows are also made in eight panes of coloured glass which form a 'H' shape in the middle. Until 1943 the house was owned by Adelaide Anne Mackay (nee Hooke) and it has been suggested that the Hooke connection is responsible for the choice of the design of the window panes.

23 Dowling St: Originally built by storekeeper Peter McWilliam around 1870, it was later acquired by his partner, John Wade, after McWilliam was killed in a buggy accident. This house for many years would have been both one of the largest houses in Dungog and the only one at the southern end of Dowling St. It became the Presbyterian Manse in 1889 when the Church bought it for £1,200, using J W Pender of Maitland to undertake refurbishments. At that time the Presbyterians had only just reunited after their split and had also bought the land adjoining the Manse property, perhaps intending to place a new church at this end of Dowling St (see p.55). The house remained the Manse until 2006 when it became a private home once again.

Despite a fire in 1938 that destroyed the roof, the interior of this impressive house is surprisingly intact. Its wide doorways, rough planed floors and curved fanlights are all suggestive of Georgian architecture. The house was built wide along its Dowling St frontage, with a rear balcony that captures the views of Cooreei Hill, while being relatively narrow in depth. The wide entrance hall opens onto a number of small rooms on either side, with stairs that curve up to attic rooms. The most impressive feature of the entire house are the two large chimney stacks, off which six fireplaces each draw, four each on the main level and a further two each in the basement. This under level is designed with three arches and gives the impression of having been built with some kind of workshop in mind. Peter McWilliam was a tobacco manufacturer and had numerous business interests but the exact purpose of this area is now unclear. The original lathe and plaster finish of 1870 is still to be seen in parts of this lower level. Another feature here is a large pane glass window with a single pane designed to open separately.



The 1870's house before the 1938 fire

The rebuilt version



The 1938 fire destroyed the entire roof line, including two large brick gables and three small wooden ones. In addition, at the southern end of the building another gable extended over a side entrance, the door of which is now converted into a window, and its approach hall into a bathroom. The massive stone steps that once led up to this doorway are scattered around the property and perhaps parts of Dungog.

By the time of this conflagration Dungog finally had a fire brigade; its new building on Lord St opening in 1928. This fire brigade spent two hours battling the Manse fire of July 1938. After the fire, the Presbyterian Church spent some £1,190 restoring the Manse, partly because it was believed to be 'an excellent example of early colonial architecture, and had been considered well worth preserving'.

34 Dowling St: Described as a ‘brick cottage’ and built in 1910 by contractor Amos Moore, this house has Port Macquarie Beech timber floors – ‘a beautiful timber obtained from New Jerusalem’, 11 ft high ‘steel’ ceilings and fire places ‘of choice colonial marble’. First occupied by Mr Mackenzie, Shire Engineer, it was soon sold on to Dick Abbott for a ‘big figure’ – £800. In 1945, Abbott sold to Kyriakos (Jack) Barbouttis for the same sum. Barbouttis was a migrant from Greece who ran a number of cafes in town with his brother (p.37). In 1951, he sold to Allan Nash, the builder of Dungog’s first and only motel – Tall Timbers (p.30) – for £2,720.

The windows feature large panes of coloured glass and all internal woodwork is in cedar. Additionally, each of the four marble fireplaces is in differing patterns, mostly white marble with coloured inlay, though one is entirely of coloured marble. The centrally located dining room contains a wall-to-ceiling arch that also marks the edge of a small ‘passage nook’ with sloping roof.



In 1919 it was reported that the ‘residents living in the vicinity of Myles & Dowling Street have decided to erect at their own expense a [electric] street light – this will be the second street light in town...’

Dungog Chronicle, 20 June 1919

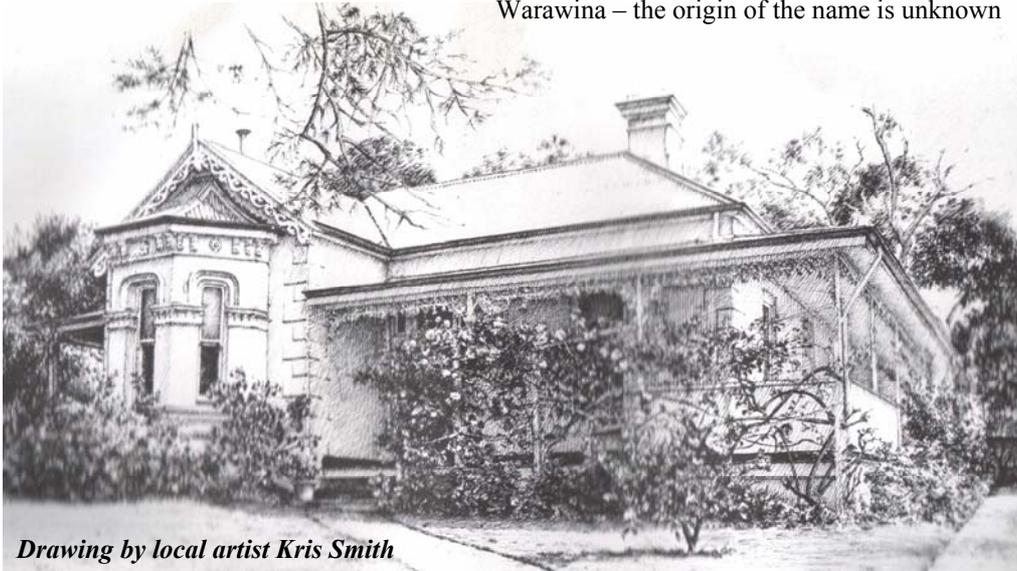
While the *Dungog Chronicle* write up made special mention of the ‘painter’ – ‘painting and decorating was done by Mr W Hope (late of Waring and Gillon, of London)’, it did not mention why his work was of special note. This is due to the beautifully coloured (orange and green) hand painting of the wide borders of the art nouveau styled steel ceilings in the front bedroom and entrance hall of this house.

28 Dowling St: J A Hall built this twin to 20 Dowling St (p.66) for H E Elliott, a local solicitor in 1892. Described as a ‘handsome villa residence’ ‘situated in Upper Dowling Street’, it has 6 rooms, including a drawing room, dining room, front bedroom, office, two smaller bed-rooms and a 5ft 4ins hall. It also had a ‘kitchen, pantry, bathroom, servant’s room, laundry and lobby at back’. As at No. 20 Dowling St, there were folding doors between the drawing and dining rooms, a feature both houses retain. The *Dungog Chronicle* account of the time continues:

‘inside is plastered, and the ceilings are beautifully decorated with cornices’, and there ‘is also a bay window in front with enriched cornices, and enriched panels and mouldings, whilst over the front door are patent fanlights of British plate embossed glass, with the name “Warawina” embossed in the centre piece. All joiners work is of cedar and varnished. The building is fitted with every modern convenience, being admirably designed, well finished, and reflects great credit on Mr Hall the architect and contractor’.

Dungog Chronicle, 22nd November 1892

Warawina – the origin of the name is unknown



Drawing by local artist Kris Smith

This house was built on land acquired by Patrick Conway, a former constable, for £5 12 shillings & 6 pence. In less than a year the land passed to storekeeper Peter Egan for £20, who in early 1856 divided the plot and sold half to a 'Body of Christians belonging to the Synod of Eastern Australia' for £35. This 'Body of Christians' was a secessionist group from the Established Church of Scotland who the previous year had laid the foundation stone for the 'John Knox Church', declaring their withdrawal as due to that Church's 'renunciation of the doctrine of Christ's sole and sovereign Headship'. At the time this church was built, the road to Clarence Town cut behind it to link with Lord St. The John Knox Church was used until the congregation re-merged with the 'Established Presbyterian Church' further up Dowling St in the 1880's (see p.55), and was after used by the Baptist Church until at least 1888.

Henry Ernest Elliott built the house, after acquiring two titles to the land, one from George Mackay, who was winding up the affairs of the Free Church, for £120, and the other from Mary Hicks, for £80. In 1933, Angus McDonald held a mortgage on the property for £500 under the terms of which Angus became a tenant 'at a weekly rent equitant to the interest'. H E Elliott died only a year later and Angus McDonald's loan was discharged by Lorna Elliott in 1935. In this same year Mrs E W Alison bought the house for £950, then Philip and Mary Atkin, who lived here until 1997.



An imprint of the John Knox Church can still be seen in the front lawn.



A rare picture of the internal decor of an Edwardian home

~ Ah, Dungog ~

20 Dowling St: This 1891 Victorian house is a twin to No. 28 Dowling St (p.64) and so also contains four bedrooms and a large sitting room/dining room divided by a folding door. The kitchen, bathroom and laundry are all attached to the rear section. Built with the needs of a doctor's surgery in mind, the path leads, unlike No. 28, not to the front door but to the side of the house. At the time of its completion a description reported that the 'whole is splendidly finished off, and reflects great credit upon the integrity and ability of the contractor'.

The lot this house was erected on was at one time owned by Ebenezer Vickery, 'Boot and Shoe Merchant' of the 'City of Sydney,' who held onto this lot for 30 years. By the time Ebenezer Vickery Esq. sold his Dungog lot to John Wade Esq. in 1887, he was the owner of numerous coal mines, an M.L.C., and was one of the wealthiest men in NSW - though still described on the land indenture as a 'Boot and Shoe Merchant'.



The promise of suitable housing to entice a doctor to a small town is a practice of long standing.

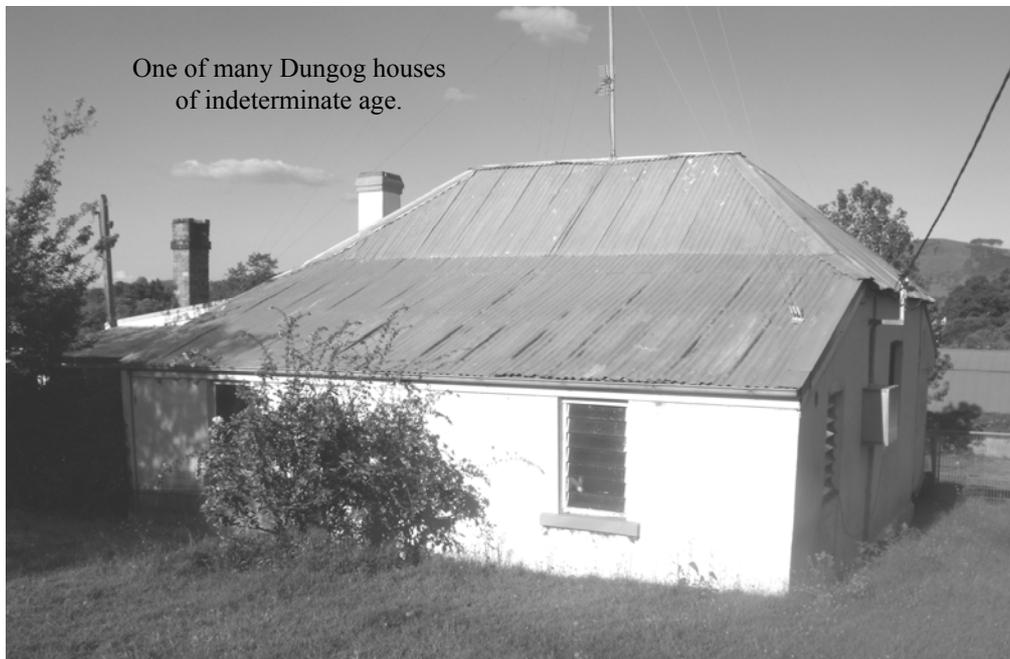
John Wade used J A Hall to build this large six room house for the use of Dr Arthur William McMath. Dr McMath took up residence in 1892 and purchased the property the following year for £900. After, Dr Sinclair Finlay lived here, followed by Dr C Stanzer Bowker, who had taken up residence by 1900 and was for a time Mayor of Dungog before he too departed in 1916.

The property passed to various local families, including the Mackays and the Crolls, and was often used as security on loans. This Keith Gilchrist, veterinary surgeon, did when he applied for a loan of £2,750 in the 1950s from the War Services Homes Division, to be repaid at a little over 3.5% interest per year. In 1976, the then manager of the Dungog Co-operative Dairy Co. bought the house for \$22,600. His family remains in possession today, making this family the longest continuous owners of the house and property, ahead even of the 30 years of Ebenezer Vickery, MLC and boot maker.

Old Lord Street homes

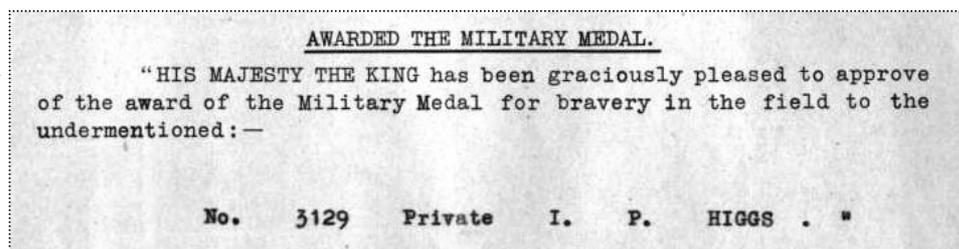
41 Lord St: One of the oldest houses in Dungog, this simple brick cottage was built with a separate kitchen and still has its wood shingle roof under the present iron one. Its hand made bricks have a diamond pattern frog, the house is still supported on wooden stumps, and the interior is plaster and lathe. An indication of its possible age is the fact that the house was built facing away from Lord St and towards a road that once cut from near the corner of Myles & Dowling St diagonally across to the top of Lord St to join the road to Clarence Town.

The original lot was one of many belonging to Peter Egan, though the first recorded owner of a house here (one of perhaps three similar houses in a row), was Dr Charles Pearson Higgs, originally from Birmingham, who died in 1890 after falling from his horse. His widow, Lucy Mary Higgs (nee Dumbrell), left with 11 children, ran a hospital for maternity cases (location uncertain), dying in 1922 aged 73.



One of Lucy's sons, Isacchar Pearson Higgs, a decorated member of the AIF in WWI, sold the property to Thomas Bacon in 1929 for £500. Thomas' brother Charles lived in the house across the street and both brothers were cared for in their old age by one of Charles' daughters, Jessie Eliza. The house then passed to Jessie, who boarded school teachers here, before passing it to her daughter, Pearl 'Dot' Bell. After Dot Bell moved to join her son in the Northern Territory, the house was purchased by an ambitious renovator in 2004. However these renovation plans did not work out and after a lengthy period on the market the cottage was bought in 2009 by another hopeful renovator.

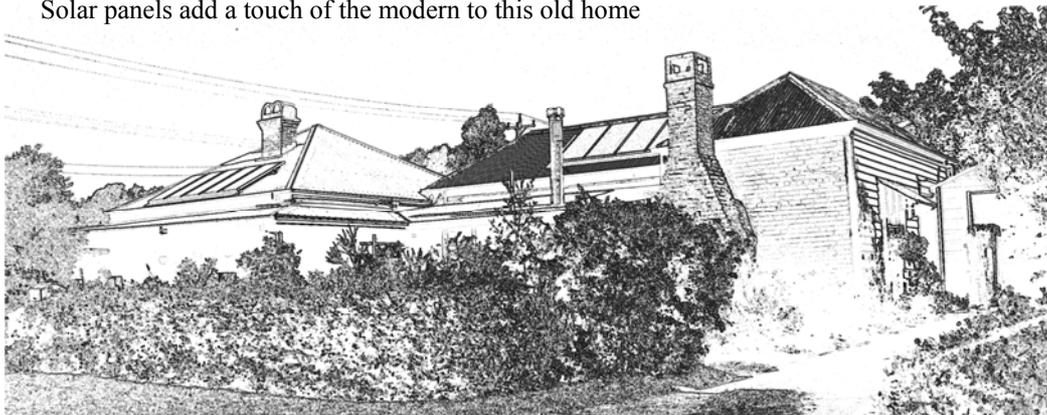
One of many
Dungog
residents to
serve well.



64 Lord St: The land for this house was proclaimed as Lot 24 in land sales at Dungog village in 1853. This was purchased by Hezekiah Gregory the following year, and he presumably built the first cottage here soon afterwards. In 1889, the land and cottage was acquired by Patrick Lysaght, an unlettered labourer, who very soon after sold it to John Sheridan, the publican of the Farmers' Home Hotel that stood on the corner of Chapman and Dowling Streets, one block up the hill (p.60). John Sheridan paid £440 of 'lawful British money' and within two years had conveyed ownership to his daughter Elizabeth Ida Johns for a token 10 shillings.

The original 1850s cottage, with its timber foundations, was a simple but well built four room affair in weatherboard, with over one foot wide (35cm) cedar planks making the internal partitions. The separate kitchen was located several metres away from the house, while the brick-lined well was sunk closer to the cottage. At some point the whole cottage was lined in wood. This may have been prior to major rebuilding that took place in the 1890s, when a long extension joined the kitchen to the main house. The rooms so created were still accessed by going outside the cottage, as was the kitchen. A verandah, wrapping around three sides of the house and built on river rocks, presumably acquired its cast iron supports at this time, just as a front room acquired a wooden fireplace surround painted to look like pink marble, and another room its pressed metal ceiling.

Solar panels add a touch of the modern to this old home



Elizabeth married Isaac Johns, a miner at the Wangat and Monkerai gold mines. Now living in a much enlarged dwelling, she had room to let the front room to at least one married couple. In 1944, Elizabeth conveyed the property to her daughter, Ida May Taylor, who was married to Thomas Taylor, milk vendor; 'in consideration of the natural love and affection' she had for her daughter for the same 'sum of Ten shillings'. The two legal documents transferring the property to Elizabeth and then on to her daughter differ only in that the first is handwritten and that of the 1950s typed.

After the war many changes occurred, including the sale of the horse paddock on the south side for £100 in 1949, and the installation of sewage pipes in 1951, which allowed an internal toilet to be built. The large corner block was further reduced in 1960 with the sale of another portion for £180. In 1980 the house was sold at auction for \$11,000 with a single bidder who planned to demolish the house but who instead sold it the same year for \$11,667.70 (the sale price plus solicitors fees). The new owner gradually renovated, work that included enclosing a passage so that the kitchen and dining rooms could be reached without going outside.

108 Lord St: This is possibly Dungog's oldest surviving example of the classic Australian building, the timber slab house. Consisting of a main building and separate kitchen, both with brick chimneys, the slabs (which vary from six to eight to ten inches wide) have all had their gaps covered with a thinner facing board. The date of the kitchen is possibly as early as the 1850s and that of the main house mid-1860s.

The house may have been built by a Mr Aldrich who was a Chemist in Dungog for many years. Built on wooden stumps, the house is surrounded by a verandah on three sides, and the walkway between the house and kitchen has been covered over but not fully enclosed. In the 1940s it was bought by members of the Redman family and was occupied by Millie Redman until 1986.



Preserving an old home can be a lifetime commitment.

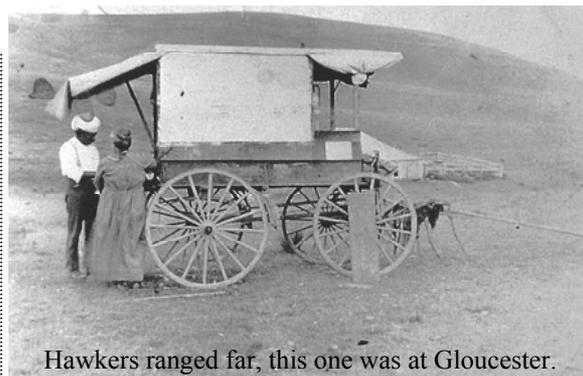
The property is one of Dungog's numerous long blocks that allowed the raising of a cow or two, along with an orange tree of course. A shed door is made of six gallon petrol tins of the B.I.O. Co Ltd (British Imperial Oil, established in Australia in 1905) that have been beaten flat. The door was once part of the Redman's beekeeping operation at Main Creek.

The current owners have made every effort to maintain the house in its original condition (white ants allowing), including erecting a separate building in compatible style behind the old house rather than extend or substantially change it. Even furniture that was in the house has been retained and, after stripping off layers of green and purple paint, been restored.

'It appears that the Indian Hawkers in this district are doing a big "biz". They are building a new place on their lot in Lord Street. When this is erected there will be a veritable colony of Hindoos.'

Dungog Chronicle, 23rd September 1902

But where on Lord St this 'colony' was is unknown.



Hawkers ranged far, this one was at Gloucester.

The hospitals

Dungog Hospital (Hospital Hill Rd): The cottage hospital was built in 1892 by Boots Bros for £849 with community funds at a time when the population of the town was 836 people. The hospital was intended to assist those who could not afford medical help and opened with a matron plus a visiting doctor, a men's ward of six beds, and a women's of four beds. The then Governor of NSW, the Earl of Jersey, laid the foundation stone. Community support provided the hospital with linen and food, and local doctors (to whom a direct phone line was installed in 1898), the medical requirements. Patients who could afford it were charged £1 a week and doctors received £1.11.6. In 1916, the doctors agreed to receive a reduction to £1 a week. At one point only married women were allowed to use the hospital for 'lying in'.

A ladies auxiliary generally raised funds, but in 1910 a Girls Patriotic Fund helped furnish the nurses' quarters, and in 1911, a bazaar provided a cot (though government grants, such as £900 for instruments, were also useful). In later years the opening of the new picture theatre and wood chopping competitions also raised funds for this community facility.

A report of 1909 stated there had been 90 cases, with 72 cured, 3 relieved, 2 unrelieved and 8 deaths. While in the 1930s, a diphtheria epidemic resulted in 60 cases at one time, with even tents used on the grounds, but only one death.



Despite the loss of local control, the tradition of community fundraising continues with such projects as the 1999 *Dungog Men at Work Calendar*, followed in 2000 by the *Women at Work Calendar*.

The original 1892 building has been much extended, including verandahs in 1914, a new operating theatre in 1915, and even a tennis court for nurses in 1953. In 1917, electricity replaced 'expensive' acetylene lighting and by 1935 one ward was air conditioned. Polio in the 1950s saw an 'iron lung' bought, again with community funds, and in 1958 a maternity ward replaced the private hospitals.

In 1929, the hospital came under the authority of the Hospitals Commission and in 1986 its Local Board was replaced with an Area Board. From a peak of 35 beds the hospital has been reduced to 15 beds.

Oomabah (63 Mary St): Another J A Hall designed and built building, this Victorian Rustic Gothic home was constructed in 1893 for J K Mackay. Sited on a hill, it enjoys excellent views on all sides. Built of brick and stone, it is a two-storey house with four bedrooms, three marble fireplaces, colonial (hoop) pine floors, and cedar woodwork throughout. The house has two staircases, one of which led directly from the kitchen to a small bedroom (in unrendered brick) directly above for a servant. The kitchen was originally accessed via an open verandah (now enclosed), off which a hand pump and well can still be seen. A brick stable was built at the back and two sets of double gates allowed visitors to drive in and out without turning their buggies.

The residence was first tenanted by J Waterhouse, inspector of schools for the district, but by 1906 it housed Durham College, a private boarding school that at one time had 30 boys in attendance. A combined L-shaped schoolroom, dining and dormitory building was erected in 1907, separate to but close by the main house. This building is constructed of wood panels throughout – walls, floors and ceilings. Henry Stewart Crowther, M.A., Oxon., (Late Exhibitioner of King's School, Canterbury, and of Keble College, Oxford; 4 years Senior Assistant Master at Bilton, Rugby, and 3½ years at Cumloden, Melbourne), and also one time manager of Thalaba Estate, was head of this school that prepared pupils for matriculation and other examinations.

In 1909, it was reported that Durham was the only college at the time in NSW that had its own horse troop. Many of those who attended and participated in this horse troop would have been of an age to also participate in the First World War, and obituaries of many killed in this war from as far as Gloucester mention attendance at Durham College.

One of several small private hospitals popular in the first half of the 20th century.

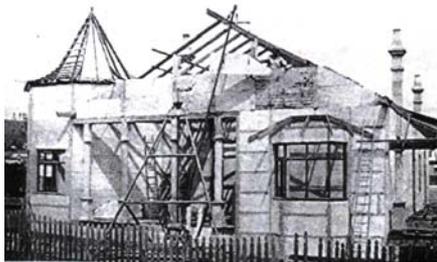


It is not certain when the school closed, but around 1923 the house was rented to the operators of a private maternity hospital. The name Oomabah became attached to the house when Dr Hales moved his Oomabah Private Hospital here from Abelard St. Dr Wilson continued this use as a maternity hospital until 1957, after which Dungog Hospital's maternity wing was the place to be born. Oomabah was therefore the birthplace of many Dungogites, including Doug Walters. For a short time in the 1970s Oomabah was owned by the Jehovah Witnesses and it is now a private residence lived in by a former Oomabah born baby, who has restored many of the original features of the house.

Keba (116 Abelard St): Built by Harold Eustace (then Major, later Lieutenant-Colonel) Woodman in the early 1920s. Woodman was a decorated veteran of Gallipoli and France, who afterwards worked as a district officer in New Guinea. He does not appear to have lived in this house, which from 1930 to the 1950s was a private hospital serviced by Dr Gilchrist. Since 1956 it has been a private residence.

Apart from its distinctive design, with its octagonal tower and gables, the most notable aspect of Keba is hidden from the casual observer, namely that the main fabric of the house is reinforced concrete slabs. In the 1920s, concrete was a building material much experimented with that allowed for a range of innovative techniques to be used. The building was perhaps undertaken by a friend of Woodman, possibly an engineer, who was working on the Chichester Dam at the time.

Amazingly, a full photographic record of the construction has been preserved in a parcel of photos hidden in the cellar of Keba and discovered in the 1960s by curious children. This construction involved reinforced concrete beams and pre-cast concrete slabs, with tongue & groove edges. These slabs are mostly four feet by two feet by 1½ inches thick and are reinforced with metal rods. The slabs appear to have been hoisted up using an A-frame and an old mangle as a winch. The external panels are stuccoed cement and the internal are 'white set' plaster.



One of Dungog's many hidden gems.



Internally the design is almost as unique as the construction method. Ceiling frames, doorways and skirting are all rosewood joinery. There is much fretwork, shelves above all doorways, picture rails in short sections, and fireplaces of brick, including one built in the round. The lounge and dining rooms are divided by a columned arch, the concrete pillars of which seemingly sit on wooden cupboards that are in fact concrete with wood panel veneer. The main part of the house has only two bedrooms, with two more bedrooms opening only onto the back verandah. On the end of the verandah is a second bathroom with a framed opening providing access between it and the bathroom - its purpose is unknown.

Built on a slope, the downstairs basement area is nearly as large as internal house floor area and includes a large concrete lined space dotted with more than a dozen columns. Even these basement columns are given a stylish finish. Also in the basement, which maintains a constant all year round temperature, can be seen imprints of newspapers from 1921, used when the concrete was poured.

The hill residences

Anglican Rectory (cnr Myles & Verge St): Built in 1912 on what is locally reputed to be the site of an Aboriginal burial ground, this rectory replaced one located to the north across Myall Creek that often left the Anglican minister flood bound.

The foundation stone for the new rectory was laid by the Right Rev the Lord Bishop of Newcastle in 1912. It was designed by Mr F G Castledon of Newcastle, and built by Mr E Moore for a tender of £1,350. Described as:

‘a most comfortable and commodious home’, its ‘bold shingle and gable end front’ was thought to ‘add a picturesque touch to its appearance’. ‘Located as it is on an eminence that commands a splendid view of the town on the west and the beautiful and alluring river bends on the east, it could not have been built in a finer spot.’ In addition: ‘The accommodation will be most commodious. A broad hall will open to a large dining room, while there will be 5 bedrooms and a study. A convenient kitchen and other necessary adjuncts in that department will complete the main building. The house will be fitted with all the most up-to-date conveniences of civilisation. Water from the town supply will be laid on, and an air-gas plant for lighting purposes will be installed.’

Dungog Chronicle, 2nd February 1912



The old Anglican Rectory to the north of town was rented for £50 a year when the new rectory was built.

Its splendid views of the town are now a little built out.

The writer of the *Dungog Chronicle* was correct in saying that the entrance is marked by a broad hall, however the hall is nearly as short as it is broad, featuring a large keyhole shaped arch and then an abrupt narrowing due to one of the bedrooms having been built into the hallway itself. The result is two narrow corridors, one going off towards the bedrooms and another continuing onto the kitchen. Other features of the house are its tuck pointed window arches, a mix of pressed metal and wooden ceilings, slate steps, and bay windows in the main bedroom and study.

In a pre-electrical age and without town gas it was possible to light your home with a carbide and water device that produced acetylene gas and the simplest of these were known as ‘air-gas’. Another indicator of a long passed self-sufficiency is a one cow dairy that in keeping with its ecclesiastical location features cross shaped ventilation holes. Also in keeping with the times, a small servant’s room is built on the rear verandah with no direct access to the main house. A phone was installed in 1924 and a year later the air-gas lighting was replaced by electricity. There was even water piped to the bathroom, a luxury that caused some comment at the time.

Violet Hill (11 Verge St): This is possibly the oldest two-storey house in Dungog, with a 'Violet Hill' mentioned as early as 1850. However, the existing house has been renovated and extended so many times that it is difficult to date the earliest parts of the house. The house still overlooks large paddocks that were part of Thomas Abbott's original estate along the Williams River opposite Abbott's Ford, a major crossing point before bridges. Thomas Abbott, arriving from Ettagh, Ireland in 1838, was the Chief Constable at Dungog for many years, given this position, reputedly, after having apprehended some bushrangers, though working for the law appears to have been a family tradition of the Abbotts. Thomas later lost this position when he clashed with a local magistrate. By this time Thomas Abbott had acquired a great deal of land, which his many sons added to in succeeding generations.

The present Violet Hill house (the origin of the name is unknown) has at least two distinct older sections joined and hidden by modern extensions. The oldest seeming portion, now a billiard room, is constructed of hand made bricks and has a large 'kitchen fireplace' at one end, suggesting that it was once a separate kitchen to the house. The southern end of the fully cement rendered house contains an older section featuring numerous low wide doorways that are mostly of cedar. Major renovations to this original house took place around 1913 and at least one further set of renovations and extensions in 1997.



The present much renovated Violet Hill house above contains this much older house within.



Upstairs some of the doors are made of pine planking and may originally have been simpler attic rooms enlarged and rebuilt. Downstairs is a large sitting room, once a dining room, divided by a wooden arch and containing a single relatively small fireplace. On three sides of the old section is a wide verandah, partially built-in upstairs but open downstairs. The hall running east-west through this old section has a lead lighted fanlight over the eastern door only, and was the original front entrance. The western door, on the side of the old kitchen, is the present front entrance.

The renovations of the late 20th century replaced servant's rooms and laundry with a modern kitchen and added a second larger staircase, as well a new section incorporating the original kitchen. The house remains the property of the Abbott family and is currently lived in by the widow of one of Thomas Abbott's great-grandchildren.

Red Roofs (2 Clarence Town Rd): This eclectic style house was built in the early 1920s by Eric Dark, of the prosperous Dark family for himself and his British bride, met while Eric was in England serving in the AIF during the First World War. Situated well back on a sloping property, this wide house is set on an east-west axis so that the main bedroom and two front sitting rooms, all with large lead light windows and window seats, face north. Running across the front and around each side of the house is a 14 columned verandah with a rounded portico positioned to the right of centre. All doors opening onto the verandah, including the front door, are bi-fold.

Inside, many of the rooms are designed with more than four walls, with a major feature of some also being a recessed niche in the ceilings created by a low hanging roof beam running parallel to the exterior walls. The many fireplace surrounds are in a simple wood design and all doors and architraves are of cedar. The dining room fireplace features a hole underneath it, into which cinders can be swept, with access under the house allowing ash to be removed later. A large hall mirror directly opposite the front door appears to be from the original design. All ceilings are of painted wood panelling. A large attic room, entered via a narrow staircase, allows access to the top of the portico and gives sweeping views over Dungog and the Barringtons. A small room off the back verandah may have been for a servant. This room has a large built in wooden cupboard and at one time was reputedly used by two 'Barnardos' girls.



Owned by Mrs Eric Dark and rented for a time by the Town Clerk, Francis W Aldis, it was bought in 1939 by the Croll family, the owners of Dungog Sawmills (commonly referred to as Croll's Mill, p.78). This family built a tennis court on the front lawn that was a popular venue for many in the town. In the 1980s and early 1990s, Red Roofs was owned by a local doctor and his family before its current owners, one of whom is a descendant of those who once worked for J Croll & Sons, took up residence.

~ Ah, Dungog ~

Court House (Lord St): Dungog Court House is the oldest still operating NSW court house outside Sydney. The site was originally a barracks for the mounted police, stationed in Dungog in 1838 to assist in capturing absconding convicts, particularly those from the Australian Agricultural Company across the ridge at Stroud. By 1849, the mounted police had left and the barracks converted, at a cost of £248.16s, into the new court house, containing a 23 ft by 16 ft court room. The previous 1836 built court house, which was probably on the site of what is now Dungog Public School, became the police district watch house until 1857, when a new watch house was erected next to this court house.

With a population of some 150 people and about 25 houses, this two storey brick building on its hill would have dominated the village of Dungog. Internally, all woodwork is of local cedar, including a long Magistrate's bench, originally designed for three Justices of the Peace to sit together. This new court house was a public building and all religious denominations used it (though not without some occasional difficulties, see p.46), before they built their own churches. The Catholic community was perhaps the last to use it for this purpose, as their own church was not opened until 1870.



Another much renovated building with an historic core.

By the 1860s the building was inadequate for the needs of a District Court with jury trials, and extensive renovations were completed by 1864 that added side wings to the building. It was reported that this 'fine structure is now rapidly advancing towards completion, and will from its commanding position, when finished, be an ornament to our township. The building is of brick, on massive stone foundations'. Other alterations have been made since this time without substantially altering the main features of the court house. Dungog Court House is still in use as a Local Court, meeting once a month, though many of the attached buildings are now used for other purposes.

Gone now

Victoria Hall: Next to the Bank Hotel (p.15) was the site of the Victoria Hall from 1896 until the 1970s. Designed by C H Button for owner John Walker, it was 88 ft x 35 ft with a stage, gallery, two cloak rooms and a ticket room. Scenery was painted by Mr De Vere and it was lighted with Rochester lamps (a superior design in kerosene lamps). Some of the first films shown in Dungog were presented here before the James Theatre was established in Brown St.

After ceasing regular use as a community venue, the building was the site of Stevens Knitting Mills after WWII. In the early 1970s an attempt was made by the Dungog Musical and Dramatic Society to save the building from demolition. However, despite being offered a lease of 10c a week for 5 years by Tooth & Co, there was insufficient money to restore the building to a useable condition. In 1972, the Victoria Hall was demolished and the site is now a hotel car park.



Victoria Hall – Dowling St
Like all Dungog venues it was a multi-purpose building and vegetable auctions were regularly held here also.



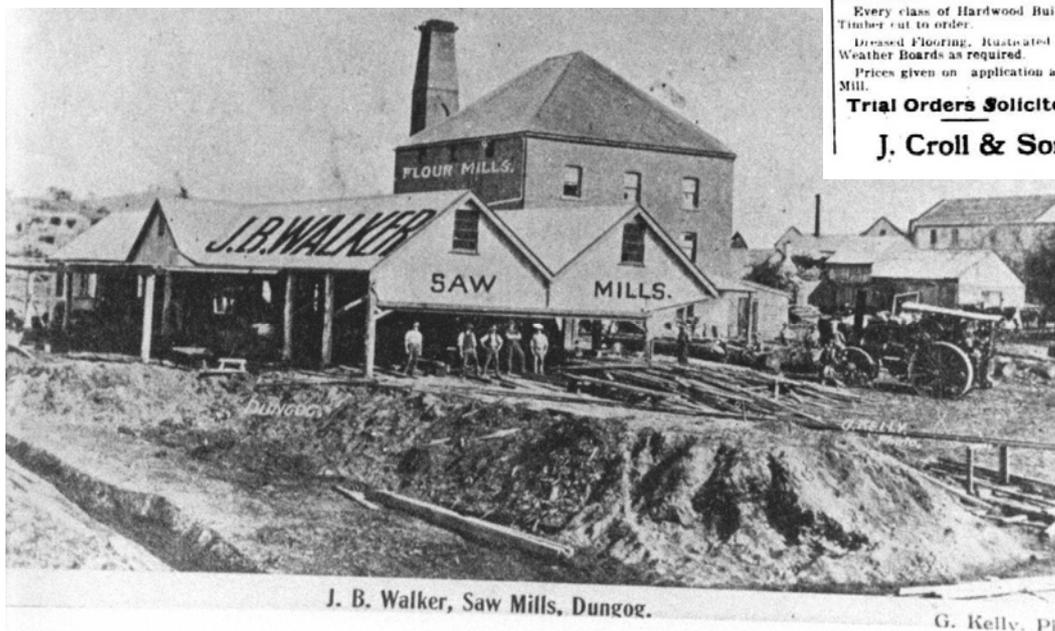
One of many balls held in the Victoria Hall – date unknown

~ Ah, Dungog ~

Walker's Mill & Croll's Mill: Mr John Walker established his timber mill in Dungog in 1891, though before that he also milled flour, adding timber as wheat production declined. The Walker Mill provided, among other material, 'colonial pine flooring boards' said to be resistant to white ants. The Croll's timber mill began operating in 1917 from this same site, which was now conveniently close to the new railway that had opened in 1911.

In 1947, the Croll's sawmills were the scene of a spectacular fire that destroyed everything. In 1962, in the year the mill converted to electricity, J Croll & Sons employed 44 men and 5 women, and paid out £50,000 a year in wages. With the construction of the Sydney Opera House the mill received an important contract to supply boxwood for the flooring of the Concert Hall. The mill's whistle was a familiar sound around town until its closure in 1987.

Built on the same site as the Walker Mill, Croll's was a major employer in Dungog for many years.



DUNGOG SAWMILLS.
J. Croll & Sons
BEG to announce that they have opened an up-to-date Sawmilling Plant near the Railway Station.
All orders promptly and punctually attended to.
Every class of Hardwood Building Timber cut to order.
Dressed Flooring, Rusticated and Weather Boards as required.
Prices given on application at the Mill.
Trial Orders Solicited
J. Croll & Sons.

Dungog Showground Grandstand:

This building, just completed promises to be a great boon to visitors to the annual show, affording as it will, sufficient shelter from either the burning rays of the sun or rain and commanding a view of the whole of the ground. It is constructed of hardwood with corrugated iron roof, is 50 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 25 feet high. The stand for the public faces north and is accessible by 2 staircases from the front, it has 7 rows of seats, 50 feet long and it is estimated to comfortably accommodate 300 people, whilst underneath space is left for 2 publicans booths, one at each end, with a refreshment booth in the centre. The building is a handsome and substantial structure, and has been well and faithfully put together by the contractors Messrs Boots Bros, Mr JA Hall was the architect.

Dungog Chronicle, 18th March 1890

Wade's Corn Flour Mill:



The only surviving picture of a once large mill that operated on the banks of the Williams River opposite the town of Dungog between 1878 and 1902.

On the Williams River, just at the north-east end of Dungog stood, from 1878 until 1902, a large industrial mill designed for making cornflour. The mill measured 120 ft by 40 ft, had three floors above and one below ground, and was built on hardwood piles with oiled weatherboard. It also had brick drying rooms, a 3,000 gallon tank that was 16 ft by 6 ft by 5 ft, a reservoir with filters, and was powered by a 24 hp steam engine imported from Scotland.

John Wade was a Dungog storekeeper who in 1866 had established a local corn mill. But the real value of corn came not from a simple grinding into corn meal but through a more complex refining that produced what was then called 'maizena' or what is today known as cornflour. A major boost to the local economy was made therefore when John Wade and local landowner Robert Alison invested £8,000 in what was considered a significant enterprise even on a colony level. Equipment and experienced people were imported and by June 1878, the Cooreei Corn Mill began operations, named after the hill just to the east of Dungog on the property of Robert Alison.

The mill's manager was Kenneth McDonald from Scotland and it employed from 8 to 16 men plus 40 to 45 packing girls. Advertising for Wade's Corn Four included the slogan – 'For Infants, Invalids, and Family Use'. Another local bonus was that the fish feeding on the mill waste downstream grew greatly in size, to the delight of local fishermen.

The mill closed its operations in Dungog in March 1902, when it reallocated to Sydney and continued production until it was destroyed by fire in 1922, Brown & Poulson having purchased it from John Wade for £50,000 in 1908.

Sources & acknowledgements

In addition to the contributions made by various members of the Dungog Historical Society, thanks are also due to the numerous property owners of Dungog who granted access to their homes and to information they had concerning their houses and the people who have lived in them. Great appreciation also goes to the many who kindly read early drafts, made helpful comments and suggestions, pointed out errors and inconsistencies and amended poor grammar. Too many to name, you know who you are and I hope that I have thanked you all individually and do so again now.

In terms of sources, Dungog has the immense advantage of having had since 1888 its own newspaper, the *Dungog Chronicle*. A paper that long had the practice of describing each new house or shop as it was built in town and which through the tireless efforts of one researcher in particular has been made accessible for this project.

Another valuable source for the history of homes has been title deeds and other legal documents that go with property, access to which was made possible by the generosity of current owners. Also of immense value in a town such as Dungog is oral history as a significant source of valuable information. And finally there is the wonder of the modern age – the Internet and resources such as Trove and Google that allow rapid searching of vast numbers of newspapers and other sources that contribute greatly to the history of Dungog.

All the above relates largely to the text, but a book such as this is nothing without the many attractive and interesting photos, old and new, that are spread throughout. Most of these have come from the collection of the Dungog Historical Society, often donated by generous locals. Others came from home owners themselves, from family albums or from photos passed on by previous owners.

Any suggestions, corrections or contributions to the text or images are very welcome. Please do not hesitate to contact the -



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