

community leaders, in particular Phillip Wright and Thomas Forster, a College of the University of Sydney commenced teaching in 1938, becoming the fully-fledged University of New England in 1954.

Present-day New England is so very different from its beginnings nearly two centuries ago. Not changed, however, is the spirit of its people, its forward-thinking approach to progressive development and its pride in what has been achieved.

Historical Highlights, 1835 to present day

- 1835** Saumarez Station established.
- 1839** George Macdonald arrived.
- 1842** First horse race meeting held.
- 1844** First Court House established.
- 1847** John Galloway's grid-patterned street plan approved.
- 1856** *Armidale Express* first published on 5 April.
- 1863** Gaol established on hill where Old Teachers' College now stands.
- 1872** First service in new Catholic Cathedral.
- 1875** St Peter's Anglican Cathedral consecrated.
- 1880** Post Office building completed.
- 1883** Railway from south reached Armidale.



Armidale railway station circa 1890.

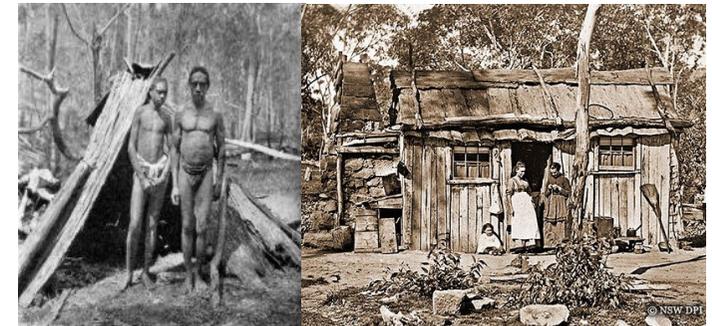
- 1885** Armidale proclaimed a city on 20 March.
- 1888** "Boooloominbah" homestead (Horbury Hunt, architect) completed for F R White.



Early single-storey Saumarez.

- 1888** "Saumarez" homestead built (second storey added 1906).
- 1894** The Armidale School opened.
- 1895** New England Girls' School established.
- 1922** Electricity switched on. Hillgrove had hydro-electricity from 1892! To this point Armidale was powered by gas.
- 1928** Armidale Teachers' College commenced teaching (details in separate brochure).
- 1938** New England University College opened in "Boooloominbah" as a College of the University of Sydney.
Presbyterian Ladies' College opened, replacing Hilton Girls' School.
- 1954** University of New England became autonomous.
- 1967** New England New State Movement defeated at referendum.
- 1968** Malpas Dam officially opened.
- 1970** Queen Elizabeth visited (Queen Elizabeth Drive commemorates).
- 1983** New England Regional Art Museum opened.
- 1988** Armidale Visitor Information Centre and Coach Station opened.
Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place opened
- 1994** Aboriginal Magistrate, Pat O'Shane, elected Chancellor of University of New England.
- 2011** Armidale first city in Australia to be connected to the National Broadband Network.
- 2014** New Court House completed.
- 2016** Armidale Regional Council (incorporating Guyra Shire) inaugurated.

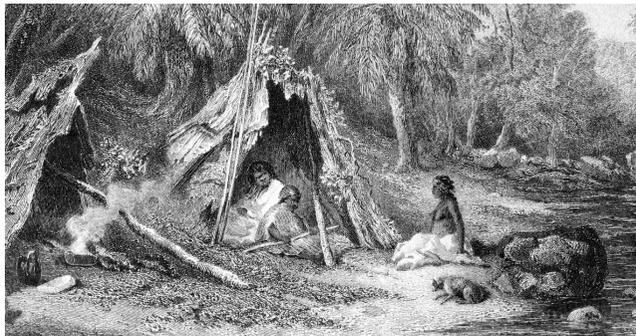
The Founding of Armidale



The Future Together



The first inhabitants of central New England were the Anaiwan, an aboriginal tribe which was necessarily somewhat nomadic. They were hunter-gatherers, surviving on the meats of native animals and fish supplemented with local fruits, plants and honey. Their territory was bounded in the east by the coastal Daingatti and Kumbainggiri tribes; to the west were the Kamilaroi. Other tribes occupied country to the south and north.



Survival was not always easy. Seasonal and climatic factors were often not conducive to a plentiful supply of food. The Anaiwan moved regularly from the high country to the valleys and even further after negotiating with their neighbours. John Oxley, the first white explorer in the region, recorded in 1818 that the aborigines he met were short-statured and of poor physique.

Such were the people who lay exposed to European conquest.

Dispossession

John Oxley, the European discoverer of New England, traversed the "high country" with some difficulty in 1818. Oxley's report encouraged interest from his countrymen and, from 1832, several pioneer stockmen drove their sheep northwards to Walcha and shortly after to *Gostwyck*, near Uralla. The Dangars became major landowners south of the present-day Armidale and elsewhere throughout New England.

Around Armidale and to the north the brothers Dumaresq took up ("squatted" on) the grassy, but by no means treeless plains.



Postage stamp celebrating John Oxley's explorations.



Henry Dangar.

Others such as John Duval at Tilbuster offered their services as guides to intending squatters heading north. Legend has it that he and his mate, Chandler, became known as "the Beardies" due to their unshaven appearances.

Settlement

In March 1839, the government in Sydney proclaimed the Pastoral District of New England. To regularize this, a Commissioner of Crown Lands, George Macdonald, arrived and set up his base camp beside the creek near the centre of his intended settlement of Armidale, so named in honour of his ancestral home of Armadale in the Isle of Skye.

The Pastoralists

Some squatters paid the land taxes demanded per Commissioner Macdonald, most did not. On this basis, among the first legitimate pastoralists were Henry Dangar of *Gostwyck*, Henry and William Dumaresq of *Saumarez* and *Tilbuster* respectively, and Matthew Marsh of *Salisbury Plains* and *Boorolong*. Many others struggled through the lean years of the 1840s, frustrated at failing to acquire the expected high profits that would enable them to return to the "old country".



Matthew H Marsh.

Over time quite a few commodious country homes were built, exemplified by *Saumarez*, *Palmerston* (now Petersons Guesthouse), *Gostwyck* and *Salisbury Court*, the first two now open to the public and, somewhat later, *Boooloominbah* on the hill at the present-day University of New England. As the land was settled and developed, and profits returned to the pastoral industry, other notable individuals appeared and many of these contributed greatly to the development of New England.

The Miners

Early traces of gold near Moonbi and Rocky River were dismissed as unworthy even up to 1851. Suddenly, in 1852, the Windeyer brothers washed payable gold at Rocky River near Uralla and the rush began. It was not until 1856 that a rich deep lead was discovered at Mount Jones. The resulting goldfield gave the New England, particularly Uralla, a major economic boost. Later goldfields at



Mining operations at Rocky River.

Hillgrove, Tia, Puddledock and Timbarra added to the riches, especially so when tin and other metals, and gemstones, were found.

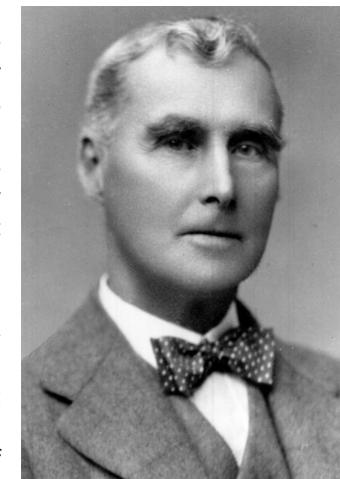
The Educators

The first school in New England was established in Armidale by the Anglican Church in 1847, starting a tradition of church-sponsored schools which continues into present times. As Armidale developed its focus on education, moves to extend studies beyond high school level were greatly invigorated in 1920 with the election of David Drummond as local State member and his appointment as Minister for Education. Garnering support from his electorate he finally achieved the establishment of the Armidale Teachers' College in 1928.

Encouraged by this achievement, it was then proposed that a university be the next step forward. With the generous contributions of



David Drummond.



Thomas R Forster.



Phillip A Wright.