



THE PIONEER

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Life in "The Monkerai" - by Archie Stott



Opening of the 'Loch Lomond' Gold Mine - 1907

For as long as I can remember "Monkerai" as a place on the map, has always been referred to as "The Monkerai". I have never been able to ascertain the reason for this, but to this day you will still hear this reference to the area. (note: Bob Abbott told us that it was called "Monkerai" as it was the Aboriginal word for corroboree ground- Peter and Lynda Scaife.)

As for the naming of the district, by what I was told by Mrs James Titcume; she as a child and also a young woman could remember the blacks going up the road to the corroboree grounds.

The Monkerai at one time was a gold mining area. Some mine names were 'The Eclipse', 'Loch Lomond' (pictured above), and 'Blunderstone'. In those days the commonwealth government paid the miners so much per foot (of tunnel) to mine for gold.

We were well catered for in my early times with services. Firstly Howard Bignall used to come three times a week with bread that he baked at Stratford. I well remember the time-loaves with all the crispy crust on it and it tasted altogether different to the bread you get today. Also you could keep it for a week without it going stale. When milk started to be sent to the factories

daily the bakers in Dungog got on the bandwagon and that was the demise of Bignall's. He was a man with a walrus moustache and had two sons, Joe and Jack who took over the business in later years.

Meat was supplied by two butchers from Wards River, Ginger Tull who had a Ford Panel van, and Ken Dargaville in a Chevrolet ute with covered top on it. Ginger had the meat already weighed and you took it or left it. He also had a bush with him to chase the flies away before he shut the door. They each used to come once a week.

For groceries, they would come around one or two days before delivery and collect orders, and then deliver them to the door. Milk would also be delivered

from Stroud Road and Dungog.

Then there was Arthur Hazelwood from Gloucester in a Dodge Panel van loaded to the top with clothing and haberdashery in ports. He would come about every month to six weeks, and proceed down to Stroud Road and then back to the head of the Gloucester River. He owned the shop in Gloucester.

You would then have the itinerant hawker who used to come around, they were mostly Indians. You very seldom saw them.

People have asked me on several occasions about shops on Monkerai. I have no recollection of any of the old hands saying that there were shops on Monkerai, except the butchers shop that was owned by Jim Titcume, this being in the time of the goldmines when there were supposed to be over five hundred people living in the area.

*An excerpt from - "Monkerai as I remember it"
by Archie Stott (1995)*

*Kindly supplied to R & R Property
by Peter & Lynda Scaife of Monkerai.*