



THE PIONEER

RURAL & RESIDENTIAL
PROPERTY

Memories: Stroud to Karuah

This article is written from the memories of Richard Forrest who grew up at Allworth¹. He was 'brought up in the beautiful bush of the North Coast and all [of] its environs'. Forrest spoke fondly of the area, calling it 'God's Country'.

He wrote that 'the old wharf at Allworth was the main place for shipping the rails which built the north coast line to Brisbane', adding that 'these people lived hard, worked hard, [and were] men of great courage, [as well as] the women folk'.

He has many memories of Allworth. One notable memory is the mail run by Mr Allan Arnold. He used to run the mail in a sulky from Booral. Forrest remembers him arriving 'in front of the post office at Allworth at about the same time as the first plane to Brisbane'. Mr Arnold 'travelled past Allworth, heading for Brisbane and he would look up and say the Royal Mail is on time'.

The fun of New Year's Eve was not lost on Allworth. 'The younger element would all get a dish or kerosene tin and a stick and go to each house and bang loudly and long till each person gave us drinks light and hard, [as well as] Luvo Cakes² and biscuits. Then we would build a big fire near the river bank and sing the old year out and the New Year in'.

Lighting was so different in the days of Richard Forrest. He remembered, 'all we had was candles or lanterns or a lamp' and later had the 'Aladdin lamp which was very bright but no one would use them for a while as they seemed dangerous. But, mind you, if somebody in town had one they were classed as society'.

The memories of Karuah are interesting. In Forrest's day, Karuah was called Sawyer's Point. He remembered going down by 'boat or old launch to the Pictures or Dance'. The choices included 'a dance at Peachey's hall or Buck-shi-rams Hall. Old Bucksy would stand outside ringing a big bell telling all to come to his hall to dance'. The Aboriginals 'used to go there and Peachey's hall was for the white people'. Even though the dances were segregated, Forrest recalled that 'the Karuah People always mixed' with the Aboriginals. He



said that the Aboriginals 'always have had their own mission just across the swamp. King Billy and Queen Charlotte both resided there. Big Bill Ridgeway was a Prince of the Tribe. He was the greatest cricketer and Rugby League Player I have even (*sic*) seen. Also a Gentleman'.

And, kids, 'there was no such thing as Ice Cream in those days. Mrs Mewett made the ice cream in a wooden hand churn [which] was packed with ice'. It was yellow and made 'from custard powder [and cost] 3d for a whole plate of it'³.

If you have memories of the area that you would like to share, please contact me through R&R Property at Stroud or Bulahdelah. I would love to write about them.

*Thanks to Stroud District Historical Society for access to their files.
Sharon Burke © 2017*

¹The memories are located in a folder at Stroud District Historical Society titled "Pioneers. From Limeburners Creek, Allworth, Booral, and Karuah River areas etc. 1920s onwards'.

²Do you know what a Luvo Cake is? Please let us know if you do.

³3d is three shillings and is equivalent to three cents. This information was found on a page on the Curtin University web site, accessed on 4/3/17 at <http://john.curtin.edu.au/education/treasurebox/2013Money%20Matters%20-%20QUESTIONS.pdf>