

OUR SHIRE OUR STORIES

'Our Shire, Our stories: a Celebration of Heritage in the Coolamon Shire' is a collaborative project, aiming to unveil the personal stories and recollections that truly define the history of community and place.

The project began with extensive consultation with the six towns and villages that make up the Coolamon Shire. The respective community committees from each town was tasked with identifying both interviewees and interviewees to participate. Eight volunteers were then provided training to conduct interviews in their communities.

An astounding thirty-two interviews took place in kitchens, living rooms and dining tables across the Shire. The result of these interviews was a truly personal recollection of what it means to be a part of a community. The stories that were unveiled reveal a history that is not told in books.

Like many rural communities, the Coolamon Shire is shaped largely by its residents and their stories. Reflecting on the history and heritage of our community allows us to appreciate and celebrate the past, and the experiences and memories that create our community. There is a resounding fear of losing vital parts of community heritage and history as time goes by and stories are no longer told. By mapping our heritage and past with an oral history project we widen the scope, we bring history into, and out of the community. Regardless of age, status, gender, culture, each individual story or experience of a time allows us to create a sense of belonging.



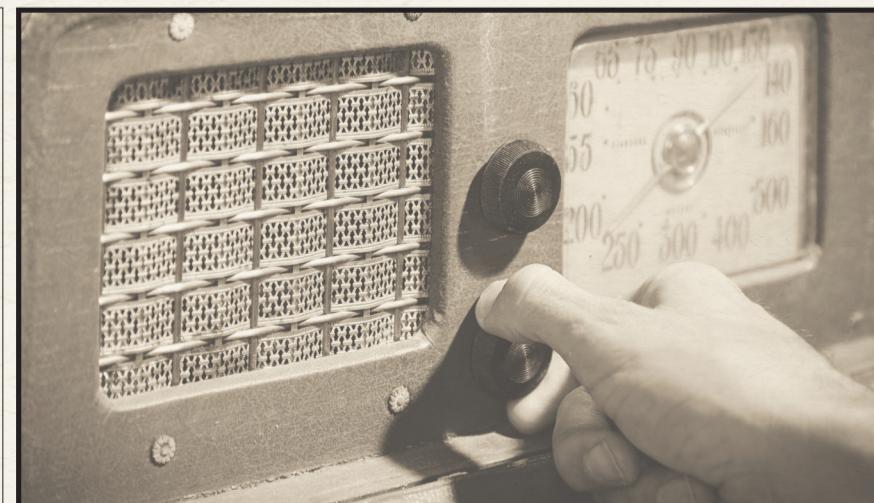
WHY RADIO AND NEWSPAPER?

During the evening of 23 November 1923 people across Sydney gathered eagerly in their homes around pieces of wondrous new technology to hear the first radio broadcast in Australia.

Australia's nationhood coincided with the beginning of the radio age, and radio has always played a central role in our history and social life. We took to the new invention immediately and enthusiastically, and it soon became an inextricable part of Australian life. Also, because of the vast distances involved,

it provided a lifeline for rural and regional Australia, and an invaluable link to Europe and the rest of the world

This exhibition aims to pay homage to forms of communication from the past. It is hoped that as you move the dials on the radios and turn the pages of the newspaper you are taken back to a time when news and stories were shared among the community by a wireless on a mantle and printed press.



ON THIS
RADIO YOU
WILL HEAR...

ARDLETHAN TIN MINING.

featuring the voices and stories of John Stewart, John O'Brien and Neville Caldwell. These recordings unveil personal recollections and memories of the tin mining industry in Ardlethan

POWERING HOME LIFE.

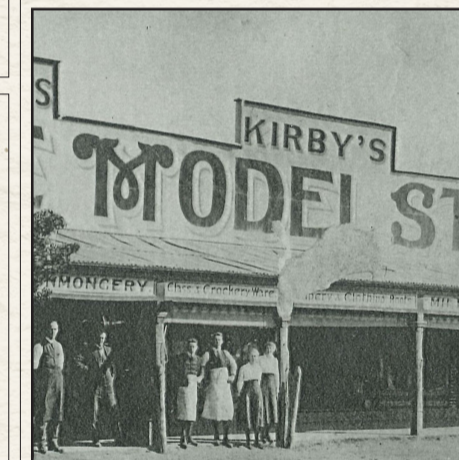
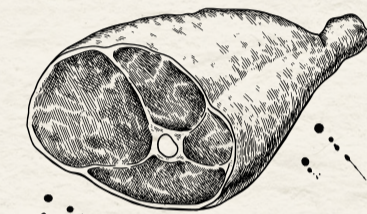
featuring the voices and stories of Eileen Gaynor, Vera Davies and John O'Brien. These recordings give insight into home and domestic life in Ardlethan, including the introduction of electricity.



"Well, the shops in Ardlethan. Ernie Frost had a shop. Kirby's had a shop. Jack McDougal and Neil Quinane used to have the groceries. Those days, when the shop was wanting to shut, they would leave everybody's groceries outside. No nobody touched them."
- William 'Nobby' Clark

"I can remember originally, every morning we'd wake up to the "thump thump thump" of the stampers as they separated the tin"
- John O'Brien

LOOK OUT
QUALITY
STORE'S
PHENOMENAL
STOCKTAKING
SALE



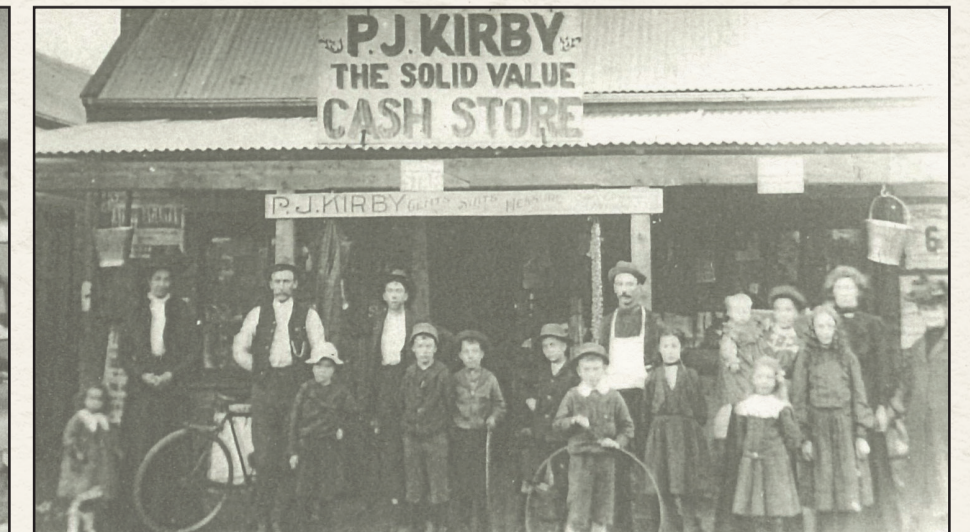
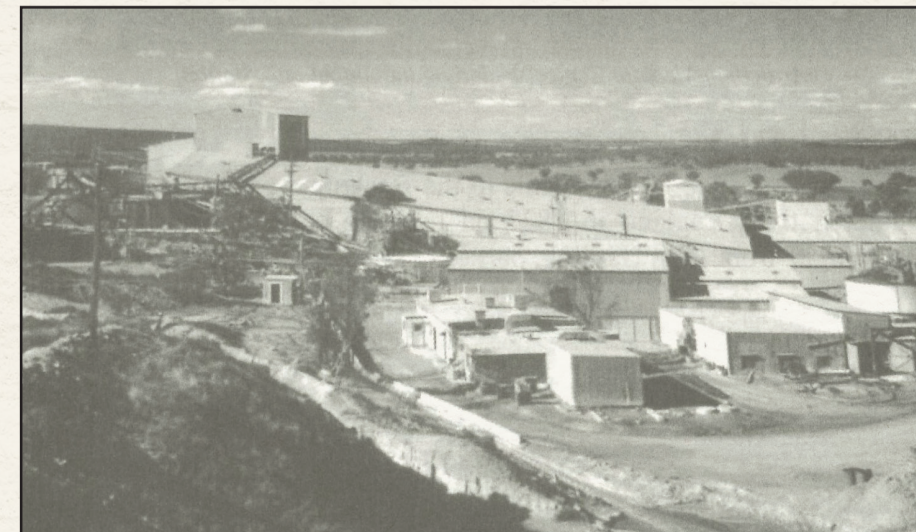
"We used to have three or four stores there, grocery stores, to get anything you want."
- John Wood

"In my lifetime I've seen Ardlethan change from a tin mining town, to farming town, to a very industrious tin mining town and then settle back to what we have now. Which is a service area, a service area for the farmers around and an education area for a lot of children"
- John O'Brien

R. TILTMAN
BUILDER & CONTRACTOR

Available for all lines of work

"And the main thing (that makes this area unique) is the farming. Wheat, sheep, barley, canola and all that. The main thing about the Ardlethan area, I think, it's all about Agriculture."
- John Wood



ON THIS RADIO YOU WILL HEAR...

FARMING THROUGH THE YEARS.

featuring the voices and stories of Lindsey Smith, Noel 'Buster' Fairman, George Cox, Jim Gardner and Errol Foster. These recollections share an insight to the importance of farming to the Beckom district.

GROWING UP IN BECKOM.

featuring the voices and stories of Lindsey Smith, Noel 'Buster' Fairman, Jim Gardner and Errol Foster. This recording shares fond and personal memories of growing up in the Beckom community.

N. MUTTON AN CO.,

Auctioneers,
Stock, Station and General Commission
Agents.



S. HOLLAND

GANMAIN

It is truly a wonderful investment.

SOLE AGENT

Matong to Old Junee.

"I would say happened in the early 50s, the late 40s. The horses went by the wayside and tractors come into the area. Some of the old tractors we first started to use, one Dad had was a WD 40 which used to start on petrol with a crank handle and then change over to diesel as it got warm, it had a habit of the motor bloating.

You had to run up alongside, grab a spanner and shove it back to petrol. It's a wonder it didn't kill someone!"
- Jim Gardner

CONSTRUCTING THE BECKOM HALL

"So we organised a group which wasn't very hard in Beckom and people come in from everywhere. We always had a work group there. And we tore the old floor up, put a new one down. And then the Hall Committee decided that was too good a floor without a supper room and all the rest of it.

So Henry Aitkin and I got together and started to do a few plans and put it to them and everyone agreed. So we went around, or the executives went around to organise financing and I've got to say the whole of the Beckom area and put a heck of a lot of effort into that.

There were big working bees, out at Henry's to build this steel construction. And then we had chaps from all around Beckom in there putting the walls up and building the floor. And it finished up quite a good job. Still standing!"

-Stan Maslin



L. M REDGRAVE PIONEER STORES

We wish to THANK our Customers for their generous support during the past year. We hope that by attention to every detail of our business and the requirements of the community, we will merit a continuance of such support.

CROCKER & REID.

General Produce Merchants
Coolamon.

WE HAVE FOR SALE:

- ◇ OATS ◇ SUGAR
- ◇ CHAFF BAGS ◇ OILS
- ◇ SEWING TWINE ◇ GREASE
- ◇ SUGAR ◇ FRUITS
- ◇ PRESERVATIVES

FOR BEST PRICES Sheppard Harvey & Compnay

Wheat & Barley Seed

DAVIES PATENT FASTNER

H. Davies

Propertier

LOCKHART N.S.WALES

"Counsellor Henry Aitken. He was a good mate of mine... he came to town and he said "is there anything wrong around the place?" and one bloke said "Yeah, when are you going to fix that big hole over there near the railway line when you come into town?" And he said "oh that's not too bad is it?" "Bad? I'll be buggered, there was a mini minor buzzing around in the bottom the other day!!" So the hole got fixed!!"
- Errol Foster

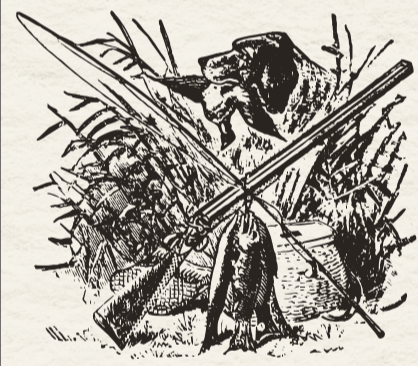
ON THIS RADIO YOU WILL HEAR...

COOLAMON MEMORIES.

Featuring the stories and voices of Barrie Holden, Colin Patterson and Barbara Carmichael. A personal insight to living and working in Coolamon.

WAR YEARS IN THE SHIRE.

Featuring the stories and voices of Val Brill, John Stewart, Pat Quinn, Laura Evans and Dan McIntyre. This recording provides a glimpse into life in the shire during the War years.



COOLAMON CO-OPERATIVE.

General Merchandise,
All your Stock, Station and General Needs.



A. J. ADAMS CONTRACTOR

Available for all lines of work



S. R.K. SLOAN.

DINKUM SUMMER CASH SALE
SATURDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY.

WE HAVE FOR SALE:

- ◇ OATS ◇ SUGAR
- ◇ CHAFF BAGS ◇ OILS
- ◇ SEWING TWINE ◇ GREASE
- ◇ SUGAR ◇ FRUITS
- ◇ PRESERVATIVES



SCHUTE
BELL
& CO

IMPORTANT

Clearing Sale.
Millar and Farms, enquire by Mail

"I started at Coolamon co-op in 1950...And so things were totally different, you know, behind the counter, writing the orders, taking the orders and cushioning the cash across to the office in the little spring cart thing. Groceries were extremely cheap in those days' comparison what they are today. A five or six-pound quid order was a big order. Three or four pound one was normal."
-Colin Patterson



Samuel and Elizabeth Stinson .. were the first white settlers at North Coolamon so it must must've been very hard and they grew the first wheat in 1857. They ploughed up five acres of ground with a forked sapling pulled by a bullock. Then they scattered the weed by hand from a big dish. And when it grew they cut it with a scythe and then thrashed it with frail.
- Barb Carmichael



The most popular drink of the season. Refreshing and invigorating. Try a glass. 5c. For sale at Bengel's.



SEND US YOUR ORDER

TO-DAY!

Your Winter wants should be supplied by your local store, or, if not, by an order from Andrew Mather & Co. 100, Market Street, Sydney. The price in every case is the lowest obtainable with Good Quality and prompt delivery.

WE PAY FREIGHT RIGHT TO YOUR DOOR
and guarantee perfect satisfaction. Free and frank estimates. The largest and best in Australia, and we have thousands of satisfied customers. Are you one? If so, mail your order today.



ANDREW MATHER & CO.

"The Canzna theatre was going to back in the late 50s. Oh well, during the 1950s and 1940's through to, I think it was the early 1960s', when it burned down but we used to go to the pictures there. So, they had a picture theatre and they used to have the balls there too and that's where I made my Debut at the Canzna theatre."
- Barb Carmichael

ON THIS RADIO YOU WILL HEAR...

HAY STACKS.

featuring the voices and stories of Barrie Logan and Bernadette Milne. These recollections share the history of the sheaf hay industry in Ganmain.

TOWN HALL DANCES.

featuring the stories and voices of Val Brill and Bernie Quinn. This recording provides beautiful memories of balls, dancing and socialising in the shire.



“When we were kids. Ganmain had two butcher shops and three grocery stores and two hotels and three cafes”
-Kevin Corbett



“Well, the shops in Ardlethan. Ernie Frost had a shop. Kirby’s had a shop. Jack McDougal and Neil Quinane used to have the groceries. Those days, when the shop was wanting to shut, they would leave everybody’s groceries outside. No nobody touched them.”
- William ‘Nobby’ Clark



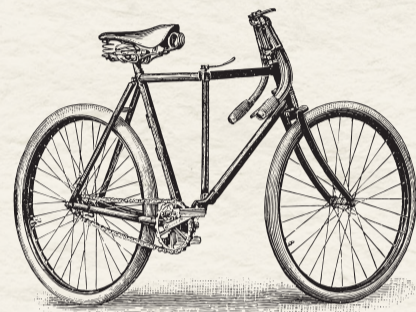
CAMERON & CO

General Produce Merchants
Ganmain.

COME ON DOWN AND SAY HELLO TO OUR FRIENDLY STAFF

LOOK OUT! QUALITY BICYCLES STORE

PHENOMENAL STOCKTAKING SALE



“We had our wedding reception in the Red Cross rooms years ago. They used to have flower shows there. I can remember the Church of England having flower shows there when I wasn’t all that old and being there and helped the old ladies, well I thought they were old ladies in those days!
We must have had 100 or so at the wedding and they fitted them in there.”

-Ann Cameron

N. MUTTON & CO

Auctioniers, SYDNEY.

Quality Stock and Station Agents.

N. MUTTON & CO

Auctioniers, SYDNEY.

Quality Stock and Station Agents.

“A sheaf hay stack would be 17 or 18 yards long and about eight yards wide and they would build the wall. They had to stack the hay in and it butts out all the way but they would weave it sort of in, so that it wouldn’t slide out. So you had to bind it together as you stacked it up. You’d get up about oh, 14 foot, oh no, probably 17 foot in the wall and then you’d put what they call the eave row on. That’s just like the eaves on a house, they would stick out past the wall and from there they built the roof which should probably go up for about another, oh, five or six yards in height. So it just looked like a giant house out in the middle of a paddock sort of thing.”
- Barrie Logan

ON THIS RADIO YOU WILL HEAR...

WHEAT AND SHEEP.

Featuring the voices and stories of Eric ‘Porridge’ McKelvie, Dan McIntyre and Brian McKelvie. These stories share the rich agricultural history of Marrar.



YORK STREET

featuring the stories and voices of Bob Hodge, Eric McKelvie and John Seymour OAM. This vivid retelling of the main street of Marrar in the past.

“I think I’ll say one my life highlights was being asked to represent Marrar in the 1956 Olympic Games.”

The editor of the Junee Southern Cross Mr. Len Bennett asked would I represent Marrar. And then there were some also from Coolamon I think there was a few other ones too. Noel Armstrong and a few others from Marrar ran. They were connected with another athletic club somewhere else. Anyway, one of the hardest things was two or three days before the race, we had a practice run in Junee.

We had to run a mile in six minutes. And we had to carry this big iron bar and it was a lot heavier than what the Olympic torch was I think people were very tired after that.

And anyway it was quite easy then when we had the run the mile. The run was between Junee and Wagga and It was a little uphill.

There was an army truck in front of us telling us how fast to go. We just had to run along and it turned out quite good. And then we received a medal which I’m very proud to still have. Regarding carrying the Olympic torch these days it’s much easier. People are not running as far, we had to run the mile in six minutes which was quite a long way to do.”

- Leo Pattison

R. TILTMAN BUILDER & CONTRACTOR

Available for all lines of work

FUNDRAISING IN MARRAR

“Somebody came up with the idea that there was to be a wheelbarrow race from Wagga to Leeton sponsored by the Letona Fruit Company or whatever they were.

And it was with a big cement wheelbarrow with a 50-pound box of Letona products in it. So it was a big barrow anyway somebody at Marrar got the bright idea and put three teams in. For our training we went out to Clive Willis’s one day and we ran up the road with a wheelbarrow and back again and that was all the training we did.”

- Bob Hodge

“All those little businesses like the butcher shop, the bakers shop and the cafe, they all made livings for families and then added greatly to the community and kept families going.”
- Eric “Porridge” McKelvie



One 1oz jar of **VEGEMITE**
What delicious SANDWICHES!
with every JAR OF VEGEMITE PURCHASED
—made with VEGEMITE
THERE IS ONLY ONE VEGEMITE
Must be made in Australia. Support Australian Industry!
A VEGEMITE SANDWICH: VEGEMITE, Butter, Cheese, Tomato, Onion, Pickles, Lettuce, Cress, on Wholemeal Bread.
A VEGEMITE SANDWICH: VEGEMITE, Ham, Cheese, Tomato, Onion, Pickles, Lettuce, Cress, on Wholemeal Bread.
A VEGEMITE SANDWICH: VEGEMITE, Bacon, Cheese, Tomato, Onion, Pickles, Lettuce, Cress, on Wholemeal Bread.
VEGEMITE

DAVID SCOTT,
ARTIST PHOTOGRAPHER,
By Appointment to H.R.H. the
DUKE OF EDINBURGH.
Prize Medalist at the Sydney Exhibitions of 1872, 1873,
1874, 1877.
The Work done at this Establishment includes life-sized
Photography executed in the autotype or permanent process.
ADDRESS—140, PITT-STREET, SYDNEY, opposite
Mort’s Passage.

“A PERFECT FOOD—as Wholesome as It is Delicious.”
WALTER BAKER & CO.’S
BREAKFAST COCOA
“Has stood the test of more than 100 years’ use among all
Gentlemen and the quality and purity which is unexcelled.”
—The London Convention, 1883.
Cocoa less than ONE CENT a Cup.
Trade-Mark on Every Package.
WALTER BAKER & CO. LTD.,
Established 1780. DORCHESTER, MASS.

Men’s Working Shirts,
MOLESKINS,
Ready o Made Suits,
CHEAP AND GOOD
SHIERLAW & CO.

S. G. SIMMONDS
Waterview St, Ganmain.

- ◇ MAGAZINES ◇ POSTERS
- ◇ FASHION BOOKS ◇ STYLED BY MAGAZINES
- ◇ LATEST MUSIC ◇ FASHION LOOK BOOKS
- ◇ NOVELS

WHEAT GROWERS
MEETING TO BE HELD.
Thursday, 24th
MAIN STREET OF MARRAR.
7:00 PM

Matong

A celebration of heritage in the Coolamon Shire

ON THIS RADIO YOU WILL HEAR...

HEART OF THE COMMUNITY.

Featuring stories from Helen Hatty. Hear a truly personal retelling of the importance of the Matong Public School and other community groups.

MATONG IN THE FORTIES.

featuring stories from Laura Evans. Recollections of days gone by and changes for the Matong community.

BENJAMIN AND COMPANY.

IS. D. BENJAMIN, MANAGER)

THE ONLY RECOGNISED AUCTIONEERS, STOCK, PROPERTY, BUSINESS, ESTATE, INSURANCE AND GENERAL COMMISSION AGENTS, HOTEL BROKERS.

WOOL BUYERS FOR EXPORT. LIBERAL CASH ADVANCES.

Auction Sales of Stock and Property Conducted in any part of the State. Our 23 years experience enables us to give Hotel and Land Seekers reliable and up-to-date information.

Motor Car for Convenience of buyers.

WRITE FOR OUR LISTS.

BREAD! YOU WANT THE BEST! GET IT FROM W.G.GILLARD THE MARRAR BAKERY

LINDEY WALKER CO-OPERATIVE WHEAT CO.

Grain Agents and Experts.

Mark lane Sydney

“ The school has always been the focal point. And I suppose we’ve been fortunate because we live a bit isolated from a town and children travel by buses from the farms on or near the river, they’ve come in and stayed. So we have been fortunate that the school has especially grown.”
- Helen Hatty

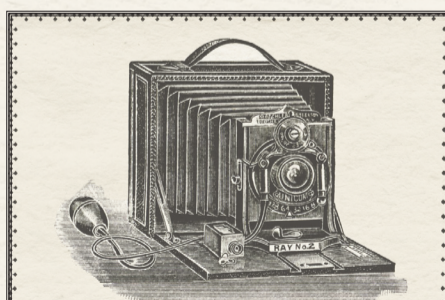


MATONG BUSH PICNIC

“ The Bush Picnic...up in the street, and it all started from a bet at the hotel. That somebody being able to run so far in such as distance or something.

And so they used to have this foot race one for the man and one for the women and they had all sorts of activities. They had Sheaf tossing, and throwing the rolling pin the furthest, egg and spoon races and lots of those sort of activities but just a lot more for adults to attract more people, barbecues and things became very big again. We even had for a while a Bush Picnic Ball then at the hall, would that be on the Friday night. And you know it brought people from all over the place would come to that. People would come from Sydney and everywhere. So it was a really good activity for a number of years

- Helen Hatty



Nothing more suitable for a HOLIDAY GIFT than a

RAY Camera

They have stood the test of time.

15 styles from \$2.50 up.

We guarantee every camera. Our handsomely illustrated catalogue free.

MUTSCHLER, ROBERTSON & CO.,

“It was a very busy little Main Street. Because there was a post office and there was another shop R.A Smith, who was an agent for machinery parts. Little cafe and of course the big general store...And then a little bit further along that was actually a boarding house and also a butcher shop.

There’s no electricity in Matong at this time of course. And they had to get ice out from Narrandera in very large blocks on the train. And it was packed in sawdust and wrapped in hessian. And they used to get it three times a week from the cordial factory in Narrandera. Of course is go down further the hotel which was always the main building of Matong.”

- Laura Evans

Pears' SOAP

The Purest best for the skin & most economical in use

PEARS SOAPMAKERS BY APPOINTMENT TO H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.

WRITE FOR OUR LISTS.

“We had interclub sports here and the Ganmain Coolamon and Grong Grong, they used to come to but it was in two groups. Ashbridge, Kamandi and all them, they had their own schools then. And they would be in the junior competition and we were in the senior. But the juniors would beat us sometimes. Matong school had them sports for about 10 or 15 years I reckon.”
- John Doherty

Coolamon - Ganmain Farmers Review

A celebration of heritage in the Coolamon Shire

Coolamon Shire Council wish to thank the following interviewees for taking part in this project. Ann Cameron, Barb Carmichael, Barrie Holden, Barrie Logan, Bernadette Milne, Bernie Quinn, Bob Hodge, Brian McKelvie, Colin Patterson, Dan McIntyre, Eileen Gaynor, Eric 'Porridge' McKelvie, Errol Foster, George Cox, Helen Hatty, James Gardner, John Doherty, John O'Brien, John Seymour, John Stewart, John Wood, Kevin Corbett, Laura Evans, Leo Patterson, Lindsey Smith, Neville Caldwell, Noel 'Buster' Fairman, Pat Quinn, Stan Maslin, Val Brill, Vera Davies and William 'Nobby' Clark

Coolamon Shire Council wish to thank the following interviewers for their invaluable contribution to this project.

Bernadette Bodel, Carolyn Cox, Clare Munro, Deb Reisinger, Jim Slater, Joanne Langtry, Karen Wood and Vicki Langtry.

This project was made possible by the New South Wales Government Office of Environment and Heritage, Community Heritage Projects Steam

Photo Credits - Various sources were used while collating photos for this project, including the Coolamon Shire Council archives, photos provided by participants in the project and the following publications; A History of Marrar and District, Ardlethan and District Centenary, Coolamon 1881 - 2006, Starting Points: Beginning a Heritage Study of the Coolamon Shire, History of Ganmain and District and The Farmer's Home Hotel, Matong: 1899-2008.

OUR SHIRE, OUR STORIES

A CELEBRATION OF HERITAGE IN THE COOLAMON SHIRE

