

ROYAL HOTEL
BOULDERCOMBE

CENTENARY
1897-1997

25TH TO 27TH APRIL 1997

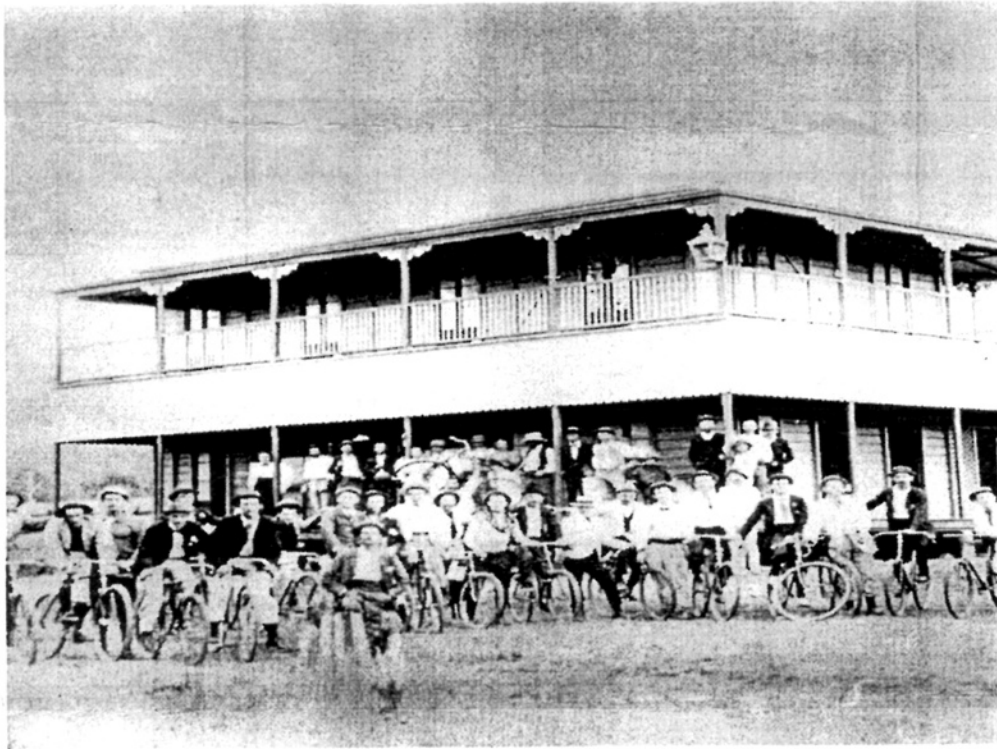


COMMEMORATIVE PUBLICATION COMPILED BY
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PROPRIETERS - ROYAL HOTEL - BOULDERCOMBE

ROYAL HOTEL, BOULDERCOMBE

LIST OF LICENSEE'S

Application was received from *Samuel Heiser* on 14th August, 1896 for a Publicans License for Royal Hotel, Crocodile (now known as Bouldercombe). On the 21st October, 1896 the application was granted and they were allowed 3 months for the erection of the premises. On the 5th March 1897, *Samuel Heiser* commenced trading as the **Royal Hotel, Crocodile** on the corner now known as Mt. Usher Road and Oleander Streets, Bouldercombe.



The First Known Photo Of The Royal Hotel Taken Around The Turn Of The Century

THE O'DWYER FAMILY AND BOULDERCOMBE

EXTRACT FROM "BACK TO BOULDERCOMBE 23RD SEPTEMBER 196% (ORIGINAL WORDS WRITTEN BY MR M O'DWYER INFORMATION KINDLY GIVEN TO US BY MR DEL FAULKNER

Today is the big day for the O'DWYER family, which has been associated with the BOULDERCOMBE District for four generations - it marks the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the family in Central Queensland.

On June 25th 1863, the sailing vessel *Beejapore* dropped anchor in Keppel Bay after a voyage of 91 days from England carrying immigrants seeking a new home, a new life in the then primitive and little known area of an infant colony.

The passengers included the O'DWYER family from Ireland, consisting of the Mother, three Sons and one Daughter, the Father having died during the voyage. With the other newcomers they were ferried up the Fitzroy River aboard *S.S. Queensland* to the town of Rockhampton, a two-year-old municipality and less than 10 years old as a shipping point, first for the Archer Brothers of Gracemere, and then for the Canoona gold rush.

The O'DWYER family secured a cottage on Depot Hill in the vicinity of the present Shell Company installations. The boys, then in their teens, secured employment in the locality. One of them, Timothy, had as his first job that of shepherding cows for the late Patrick Egan who at the time conducted a dairy on Depot Hill. There were no fences, making it necessary to keep constant watch on the herd.

The following year, in the big flood of 1864, the family with several other residents of Depot Hill took refuge in the town's first gaol, near the corner of South and Campbell Streets. The gaol had been recently completed and had not been used for the purpose intended.

Gold was discovered at Crocodile Creek, now known as Bouldercombe, in 1866, and the O'Dwyer family moved to Crocodile Creek and opened a dairy to provide supplies for the thousands of diggers who swarmed over the area. The best of the alluvial gold petered out in 1868. Most of the white population left the district and Chinese took their place.

Two of the O'Dwyer brothers, Timothy and Michael, secured bullock and horse teams and started carrying to inland pastoral properties from the head of the western railway line until Pine Hill 250 miles away from Rockhampton became the terminus in 1884.

The brothers disposed of their teams, married and returned to Bouldercombe to settle down on properties known as Donohill and Sunny Hill where they carried on dairying and farming for many years. Both reared large families.

A ready market for farm produce was found in Mount Morgan which had been discovered in 1882, and by 1886 had become a thriving township based on the enormous wealth in gold

contained in that mountain of ore. The O'Dwyers visited Mount Morgan weekly, travelling via Razorback.

Their only sister, Mary, married Fergus O'Byrne and they made their home on Laura Station, west of Cooktown. They travelled from Rockhampton to Laura overland. The blacks were numerous and troublesome on Laura, continually spearing the stock.

The *Beejapore*, which brought the O'Dwyer family to Queensland was the second vessel to arrive in Keppel Bay with assisted immigrants and paying passengers. It was the vessel's second voyage to Australia, having previously brought out 1000 passengers to Melbourne during the gold rush in Victoria. She sailed from Brisbane for Callao, and was lost, her disappearance becoming one of the mysteries of the sea.

HOW I REMEMBER BOULDERCOMBE

INFORMATION KINDLY WRITTEN BY SIR JOHN EGERTON

The sketch enclosed is how I remember Mt Usher. My Birth Certificate lists my birthplace as Mt Usher but it was changed to Bouldercombe after World War 1.

My Grandad (Swindells) was born at Dee River whilst Grandma (Christiansen Skanden) was born at Denmark and migrated to Stanwell in 1887, aged 3. There was a large Danish population in the Mt Morgan, Moongan, Mt Usher, Kabra, Gracemere and Stanwell areas.

Swindells owned the property opposite the Pub and I can remember the Pub on its original site. The Post Office and Home burned down somewhere around 1923 - 1925. Roy Swindells had the Pub and we lived there for a while. The Publicans before Roy were the Aldridge family and from memory, they had a daughter, Beryl, who became a Sugar Chemist.

Grandad delivered Meat to Mount Morgan via Struck Oil, he also bred Race Horses and Trotters the Brand ASZ Horizontal.

The Swindells family (Percy, Roy, Charlie, Marie and Ann) went to Mt Usher School.

School mates of mine were May and Casley Oats, Lily Bone, the Hinchliffe family, Percy, Alf (Perky), Fred (Bulla), Mickey, Jack, Anzac (Biddy) and Eddie. There were also the Carols, Dwyers and McEvoy's from Glengarry.

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During Roy's time as publican the show people used to come out after the Saturday show, George Sorlie (The Rajah) in particular. By the time I was 8, I knew all of the songs including the Charleston and Black Bottom as well.

A few pensioners Dan Coleman and Bill Beatty spring to mind. Bill Beatty had a numbered dart board and could play from the bar with me moving the men.

Norm Elle (more subsequently the Queensland Manager of Thomas Brown), Paddy Fitzgerald (the Queensland Boss of XXXX) and Mac Scott (the Manager of Walter Reids) were regulars.

Charlie Swindells had the first car in Bouldercombe, a T Model Ford and did both the mail run Rockhampton and picked up bread at Moonmera once a week and delivered in between. I remember Bella Crust and her Family who took half the order - that was teeming with Kangaroo rats.

Bouldercombe had it's own band, Robinson on Fiddle, Molly Huff on Accordion and Belle Tait on Piano, these were a few war widows in 1919.

My Dad, Jack Egerton was born at Oakey Creek and gravitated to Bouldercombe. I went to school a couple of times at Bouldercombe where the teacher was a Mr. Fenlon.

THE TOWN OF MOUNT MORGAN AND ORIGIN OF CROCODILE CREEK

The township of Mount Morgan is 38 kilometres west of Rockhampton. Mining began in 1882.

Europeans had been in the area since c. 1850's. A local stockman William McKinlay discovered that Ironside Mountain was gold bearing around 1870, but kept his discovery secret, hoping to sell his knowledge.

It is world renowned for being one of the richest single mountains of GOLD on earth. The town was named after three brothers Frederick, Edwin (Ned) and Thomas MORGAN who pegged out a gold mining lease at Ironstone Mountain (later named Mt. Morgan). The Morgans with some Rockhampton businessmen formed a six man partnership to mine the mountain.

A sister-in-law of one of the partners Thomas Sharrat HALL, Eliza (née ROWDEN) donated some of the Mt. Morgan fortune to a Trust Fund which helped establish the famous Walter and Eliza HALL Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne. She and Walter Russell HALL married in 1874 when he was 60 years of age (she was twenty nine at the time). He was a director of Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company after retirement from Cobb and Co. No children were born from the marriage.

In 1911 Mrs HALL decided to make a gift to her country of ONE MILLION POUNDS to be devoted to the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion in accordance with the tenets of the Church of England, and for general benefit to the community. A Trust was formed on 24 May 1912.

The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Research in pathology and medicine at the Royal Melbourne Hospital proved to be an important benefaction.

The gift by Mrs. Hall was the largest ever made by any woman in the British Empire.

Another partner in the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company, William Knox D'ARCY, made an incredible 6 million pounds from his mining shares by 1889. He went to London and amassed another fortune when he financed oil drilling in Persia (now Iran). The latter venture led to the formation of the world famous petroleum company B.P.

By 1878. a railway line had reached Mt. Morgan from Rockhampton. The railway line from Rockhampton to Mount Morgan had to traverse a gradient of 1:16:5 at the Razorback Range outside the town, consequently a special ABT rack locomotive (the first in Australia) was purchased and a special toothed rack rail was built between the two normal rails so that the trains could get extra traction going up and down the hill.

When the mine closed in 1981 it had produced 225,000 kilograms (8 million ounces) of gold, 50,000 kilograms of silver and 360,000 tonnes of copper in a 99 year period. Today the operations largely focus on extracted gold from the tailings. The result of all this activity, is that once a large mountain is now one of the largest artificial holes on earth - over 2.5 kilometres long and over 300 metres deep.

Nowadays, Mt. Morgan is a major tourist attraction with its relics rising and falling over the hills and valleys, and a history reaching back to the late 19th century.

The discovery of alluvial gold in Gabriel's Gully c. 1865. led to a gold rush . The area was known as CROCODILE DIGGINGS. The main creek known as CROCODILE GAVIAL which is a type of crocodile was the official name given to CROCODILE CREEK. By the end of 1866, it was estimated there were some 2,000 Europeans and 1,000 Chinese on the gold fields. In the early part of 1867 there were many riots between the Europeans and Chinese. Many of the gold diggers left the area, disappointed with returns.

By the end of the 1920's meaningful mining had ceased. In the early 1920's BOULDERCOMBE was used as a name for the whole area. According to the dictionary. 'COMBE' means a steep sided valley containing large boulders in the creek bed. BOULDERCOMBE, which succeeded CROCODILE CREEK, was aptly named.