



## HAYDON HALL, 66 MAYNE STREET, MURRURUNDI

### A SHORT HISTORY — AS RECALLED BY THE CURRENT OWNERS.

Haydon Hall was the original Commercial Bank of Sydney.

2022 is the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the railways, Dooleys Store and the Commercial Bank of Sydney. The Commercial Bank was originally located next to the Royal Hotel in Murrurundi. It was moved to 66 Mayne Street in 1937, and operated through to 1997. In the meantime they changed from the Commercial Bank of Sydney to the National Australia Bank.

When this town was first sub-divided, Murrurundi township started on the other side of the Pages River and went north. The land on which Haydon Hall is situated was owned by Thomas Haydon. Because land was so expensive at the time, he then subdivided and made a private town - Haydonton.

The two towns sat side by side until 1918, Haydonton and Murrurundi, separated by the Pages River. There were two railway stations and two post offices. The railway station on the Murrurundi side was called Temple Court, so called because the district court judge used to live in Murrurundi and would wander up to the railway line, hail a train that would take him to court — so eventually a station was built there. And they called it Temple Court after the station in London where all the judges court their trains. The station eventually disappeared due to age, wear and tear, white ants, etc. But Murrurundi station remained.

It was originally called Depot 18. When the railways arrived this area controlled the south and eventually through the tunnel to the north, when the line went through five years later. Depot 18 was 12 lines wide, had a 40-foot turntable to turn the trains, and they had shunting trains that would push trains over the range and bring them back. Today they only are used to bring coal trains back through the range.

It took five years for engineers to work out how to build a tunnel through the range. Unfortunately, the built tunnel had a hump in the middle.

When steam trains travelled through, the guard and the fireman would set full steam ahead, then get out and get down into the cow catcher so they could get air as they went over the top of the range. Once over the middle hump in the tunnel they they would climb back into the engine and apply the brakes.

Similarly, when the passenger train was going through, the guard would race through the carriage shouting 'Close the windows, close the windows!' because the carriage would fill up with soot. There are recorded histories where once the train went over the range but didn't stop at Ardglenn to pick up its stick. The guard raced through to the engine to find the driver and the coal man unconscious at the front of the train.

The town was basically a transport town. Because the line stopped here for five years, the banks flourished, because all produce was brought into Murrurundi, then transported on.

The reason the current owners named this Haydon Hall was after Thomas Haydon. The first block of land that Haydon sold was across the road, and that was to Eliza and Benjamin Hall, the parents of Ben Hall the Bushranger - who was born there and lived there until he was thirteen years of age.

### **The Gallery and the Bistro.**

We classify ourselves as Sydney escapees. We moved up here at the end of 2007. In 2008, we started operating the commercial kitchen. For quite a few years we were listed in the Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide, which was amazing considering we only opened Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday for lunch, and we weren't licensed!

The menu changed every month, and people would come and ask, 'What happened to so-and-so dish?' And we would respond, "That was last month's menu!" We became known for our food, and our gallery was used to promote local and regional artists — and was very successful.

The gallery was also available for hire for private functions. We've often had functions in there — birthday celebrations, pre wedding family dinners, meetings, conferences, etc.

The bank chamber is four bricks thick, the back section is three bricks, and upstairs is two bricks thick, and all the walls are brick. There are no timber walls.

April, 2022.