

## MANILLA & DISTRICT TIMELINE 1818-1900

- 1818** John Oxley & party of 15 crosses Calala (Peel River), 30km south-east of Manilla. Oxley's Anchor placed near Hallsville, marks the vicinity;
- 1823** Allan Cunningham names 'Pandora Pass' over the Liverpool Range onto Liverpool Plains, crosses Muleurindi (Namoi River) and locates Gwydir River to the north;
- 1826** Baldwin family [Singleton] are first to come north of Pandora Pass;
- Squatter Edwin Baldwin, brother of Otto sets up on "Warrah" (now Quirindi & District);
- 1827** Allan Cunningham & party passes through district on way north;
- 1828** Thomas Mitchell & party traverses the Namoi River;
- Otto Baldwin squats on the Namoi river 6 miles downstream from its junction with the Manilla river.
- 1829** The Colony (New South Wales) is divided into 19 Counties within Boundary Limits drawn to restrict settlement and grazing. Policing the boundary proves impossible; limits are soon breached for running cattle etc. with many settlers, cattle & sheep outside Boundary Limits.
- 1831 Henry Dangar of the Australian Agricultural Co. arrives at to look over Warrah, that section of the Company's land grant & finds squatter Edwin Baldwin there;
- 1832** Northern district land continues to be taken up by squatters;
- Several Cattle runs are set up with shepherds (later boundary riders) in charge of stock. Some runs become stations with substantial dwellings and outbuildings;
  - Richard Rouse of Windsor sets up the 32,000 acres of land for cattle run, Manilla Station c.1837;
  - Squatters are ordered to pay 10 pounds per/year to squat on Government land;
  - Mr White secures grazing rights of land on Namoi river upstream from the Peel river and establishes a cattle run.
- 1835** Charles Hall, Stock Superintendent of Calala Station for the Australian Agricultural company, secures Moore Creek Station from Attunga to Bendemeer as far east as the Namoi river.
- 1837** Pasturage licences become compulsory;
- Otto Baldwin [brother of Edwin] obtains licence for Dinawirindi Station, jointly held with his father Harvest;
  - Overseer Joseph Greenhatch, holds post on Dinawirindi to the east of the homestead;
  - White surrenders his pasturage licence to Wm. Sims-Bell who establishes Keypet Station (later renamed Keepit);
  - Fitzgerald occupies Huntsgrove, Gunnembene on area later covered by Keepit dam waters.
- 1838** Major Nunn arrives at Joseph Greenhatch's outpost of Dinawirindi Station 40km n/w of Tamworth with 23 mounted police to quell alleged problems with Aboriginal people;
- Local tribe of Kamilaroi/Gamilaraay people is ambushed by Nunn's party at the Namoi River. *[See Trove listing below for more detail in a 1904 article concerning this and other such incidents]*  
<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/127419526>
- 1839** Edward Mayne appointed Commissioner of Police for Liverpool Plains & stationed at Murrurundi;
- Pringle Family take up land [Summer Hill station] - later Somerton and Bective.
- 1840** Police Base established at Somerton (then known as Goora) with 10 white officers and several "black-trackers";
- Summer Hill Station, later renamed Somerton, is worked by convict labour;
  - First convict settlement in northern area established at Somerton;
  - Teamsters & Carriers ferry goods from the Hunter district through to northern goldfield settlements & cattle stations via tracks following the local Namoi and Manilla Rivers. Teams are often delayed at "The Junction" by high water in the Namoi;
- 1843** Mathew Hall establishes cattle stations at the eastern end of Dinawirindi at Hall's Creek and the Upper Namoi River.
- 1847** The Manilla River is shown as Manellae on Maps.
- 1851** High water in the Namoi River regularly halts passage of Teamsters travelling north from Maitland with supplies. Campsites are set up along the southern bank;
- George Veness, former printer (Eng. arr.1849), working in Barraba for McKid's store, selects land at the junction of the Manilla & Namoi Rivers.

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- 1853** John Rideout builds boarding house on the northern side of the Namoi River, [between Rowan and Manilla Streets]; sold to Davis, acquired by Thomas Connor prior to 1860s;
- George Veness arrives at 'The Junction' of the Rivers with wife and son; builds slab hut (western end of Market St);
- 1854** Veness establishes the town's first general store and inn along the known transport track on the eastern bank of the Namoi River at its junction with the Manilla River. Veness leads the way to town settlement and is acknowledged as founder.
- 1856** First Post Office established;
- Town receives official name of Manilla, nominated by first Post-master G. Veness;
  - Tenders called by Colonial Secretary for weekly mail run from & to Tamworth-Manilla-Barraba-Bingara;
  - Veness' brothers, Charles, Stephen and Daniel arrive to take up positions and further community development in Manilla and other districts.
- 1857** Daniel Veness becomes first Public Officer & Pound-keeper and holds position for 40 years;
- Town Pound first set up on land adjacent to Namoi River on eastern bank of Namoi;
  - Newcastle to Maitland Railway line completed;
  - Rail line from Maitland to Tamworth is begun.
- 1860** NSW Executive Council instructs Lands Office Tamworth (Gvt. Surveyor Charles Flide) to lay out the town of Manilla;
- George Harrington establishes a market garden and orchard on land at sth-east corner Manilla and Court Sts.;
  - Surveyor Arthur Dewhurst surveys area from Moore Creek to Deadhorse Gully, (south of Manilla settlement);
  - Hundreds of wild horses roam the hills of Halls Creek and Baldwin Mountain; shooters are engaged to thin the numbers;
  - Brumby skins are worth 5-12 shillings each.
- 1861** Free selection legislation is passed, resulting in large numbers of land seekers moving into the northern and western districts and a continuous line of Teamsters are engaged in the carrying business.
- 1863** Arthur Dewhurst conducts survey of Namoi River from Narrabri to Manilla;
- Hotel established at Tarpoly by Mrs Haydon;
  - First sale of town lands at North Manilla;
  - Thomas Connor builds the Australian Arms Inn on the northern side of the Namoi river, west of today's bridge crossing.
- 1864** Population numbers 12;
- Major flood sweeps away Veness' store and other buildings on the river;
  - Charles Baldwin's homestead on Dinnawirindi Station south side of river is washed away;
  - The Australian Arms Inn at north Manilla is inundated by floodwaters;
  - Fitzgerald's house on the west bank of the Manilla River above the Junction, is swept away, drowning four. Bodies of 2 found 300m downstream are buried above the eastern bank of the Namoi by Dewhurst, Veness and others;
  - Arthur Dewhurst maps out Manilla streets and names them after his family, his chain-man, his home town and himself;
  - Dewhurst selects land towards Halls Creek;
  - Mail Coach run Tamworth to Manilla commenced by Wilkinson and Bowden;
  - Bell family sells "Keepit" (renamed from Keypet) to the Blaxland Family;
  - "Arlington" on Manilla Road Sth. established by George Coulton;
- 1865** The Australian Arms Inn advertised for sale in the Maitland Mercury;
- Government Gazette reports major local stations' cattle carrying capacity: Dinawirindi (1,600); Manilla (1,150); Talcumba (800); "Longford" (3,000); Attunga (1,250);
  - sheep grazing capacity: Keypet 10,000 sheep, Mundowey 1,800, Retreat 7,500 and Menedebri 10,000.;
  - Bushranger Fred Ward (Thunderbolt) makes his appearance in the district, stealing 2 horses from "Lloyd's Station";
- 1867** – David Beynon is first to select land on the Manilla River;
- Otto Baldwin replaces Dinnawirindi house lost in 1864 with large home on northern side of Namoi River. Renames it Durham Court;
  - Wm. Hill purchases the Australian Arms Inn from Thomas Connor;
  - Captain Thunderbolt holds up Veness' Inn.
- 1868** Teamster Thomas Bowman selects 1280 acres at Upper Manilla;
- Tarpoly Mail Coach Stables established on Barraba Rd. Upper Manilla.

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- 1869** – Land selected at Manilla by settlers Hill, Coulton, Byrnes and Iliffe for cultivation.
- 1870** – Teamsters John & George Nixon select land in Upper Manilla Valley;
- John Nixon establishes “Oakhampton” & George Nixon “The Pines” at Upper Manilla;
  - Teamster John Coote Snr, becomes fourth to select in Upper Manilla Valley;
  - First Government sub-division sale of Manilla town lands (southern side).
- 1872** Mail Coach run to Manilla commenced by Wilkinson and Bowden;
- Bell family sells “Keepit” (renamed from Keypet) to the Blaxland Family;
  - George Coulton establishes “Arlington” on Manilla Road Sth;
  - Keepit & Upper Manilla School buildings constructed;
- 1873** High river levels at Manilla disrupt transportation of goods along route north to Queensland;
- A public meeting is held at Flynn’s Hotel, North Manilla. Decision is made to petition government for a high level bridge across the Namoi;
  - Surveyor George Dowe selects land at Milliwindi, Keepit area. He steadily increased his holding to the area resumed by NSW Govt. for Keepit Dam;
  - Thomas Bowman selects 1280 acres on Namoi River (‘North Ceurindi’);
  - John Wheeler selects land at Long Flat. Becomes one of the district’s first wheat growers;
  - First wheat grown in Manilla district for commercial purposes and sold to mill at Tamworth;
  - Private School established corner Rowan & Strafford Sts. by ? Miss Paterson
- 1874** Police Depot established on Rushes Creek Road, eastern side at Greenhatch Creek, a slab building with bark roof, horse yards and resting paddocks;
- The road from Tamworth to Manilla follows Greenhatch Creek from near Norris’ Inn;
  - Durham Court Station becomes famed as thoroughbred Shorthorn Stud.
- 1875** Policeman’s lodge with lockup constructed by T.J. Bowen in Court Street between Manilla and Namoi Streets, the first building constructed on a large corner block, which would later accommodate Court House (1885), Clerk of Petty Sessions Office, Police Station and residence for Officer in Charge of Police (1909), Lockup & Lockup Keeper’s Residence, Police Stables and other buildings;
- Charles Norris constructs the timber Carrier’s Arms Inn at Klori (Norris’ Inn) on the Tamworth - Manilla Road;
  - Public meeting held at either the “Manilla Hotel” likely [S. Veness’ or G.Veness’] in c.1875 to discuss the need for a rail service;
  - Wm. Hill sells North Manilla Hotel to John Flynn; takes up land (“Caermarthen Station”);
- 1876** First Court of Petty Sessions held at Manilla;
- M.C. Mackenzie establishes a store in Market Street at sth-east corner Namoi & Market Streets, diagonally opposite Veness’ Store;
  - First Public School teacher appointed;
  - 339½ acres of Crown land west of Manilla is purchased for £1 per acre at Auction by Charles Baldwin of Durham Court;
  - ‘The Tamworth News’ is critical of Govt. practice of raising ready money through auction of land rather than making it available to selectors;
  - Several acres within the surveyed town boundary at North Manilla are sold at £8 per acre.
- 1877** Public School classes begin in Union Church building in North Manilla;
- A Court of Enquiry under the Lands Amendment Act of 1876 is held at Veness’ Inn.
  - £1,450 is allocated to the Roads Dept to clear and form the road from Dead Horse Gully south of Manilla to Attunga Hill;
  - Trees and stumps are removed from Attunga Springs to Greenhatch Creek and the way made trafficable following action by Charles Norris to fence off the unmarked road.
- 1878** Telegraph line completed to Manilla;
- Edward Done appointed Manilla’s first resident Post-master;
  - Bridged causeway construction on Namoi River below Rowan Street is completed in January and washed away by heavy rain in March; Dubbed ‘Bennett’s Folly’, after the politician who commissioned it;
  - Colonial Secretary Henry Cohen, receives deputation from Manilla residents to demand the bridging of the Namoi river;
- 1879** First brick school built for 50 pupils with teacher’s residence at North Manilla.

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- 1880** Selection of land around Manilla, Halls Creek, Upper Manilla and Namoi River, changes Manilla from a cattle station area to a closer settlement;
- Wheat and wool become chief industries;
  - Petition sent to Government requests building of high-level bridge over the Namoi River at Manilla.
- 1882** Junction Hotel licence granted to Stephen Veness after many years of hotel operation;
- 1883** Tenders called by NSW Government for building of bridge over Namoi River at Manilla;
- Cemetery area assigned north east of Manilla on Namoi River Road;
  - Education Council sets up Education District 79, comprising the schools of Manilla, Barraba, Tarpoly, Upper Manilla, Keepit & Milliwindi.
  - Upper Manilla School building replaced.
- 1884** Government Surveyor Lawrenson pegs out site for bridge foundations.
- GH Royce & Co begins construction on iron bridge across Namoi River.
  - Royce's House constructed in Manilla Street. Builder likely T.J.Bowen.
- 1885** Manilla proclaimed a Town;
- Government establishes Pasturage Holdings;
  - Land Amendment Act makes land selection easier and results in influx of free selectors in Manilla District;
  - Large leases coming up for renewal create a rush for selection;
  - Upper Manilla Postal Service and Store established;
  - Mary-Ann Nixon appointed Upper Manilla Post-mistress;
  - Timber School of Arts opens in Manilla Street.
- 1886** Brick Court House built by Thomas Bowen;
- Namoi River Bridge work completed, linking North and South Manilla.
- 1888** Public meeting at the Junction Hotel decides to establish a flour mill;
- 1889** Methodist Church built in Rowan Street;
- Roman Catholic Church built at Upper Manilla;
  - Drought turns Namoi and Manilla Rivers to gravel beds;
  - Brick Post Office under construction cnr. Manilla & Strafford Streets;
  - First subdivision of Durham Court Station;
  - Tamworth to Manilla Railway League is formed at a meeting at the Caledonian Hotel in Tamworth in November.
- 1890** Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney opens next door to Royce's House (south side);
- Post Office opens nth-west cnr Manilla & Strafford Streets. Operations moved from timber premises opposite.
- 1891** Single story Royal Hotel constructed for M.C.Mackenzie by T.J.Bowen cnr. Stafford & Manilla Streets;
- G. M.Oliphant 1st Royal Hotel Licencee;
- 1893** Survey of railway from Tamworth to Manilla;
- Bank crash results in closure of Commercial Bank of Sydney's Manilla Branch. Remains so for several years;
  - Lack of finance halts flour mill project;
  - Keepit Station taken over by Dalgety & Co. Comprises 33,000 acres, runs 15,000 sheep & 1000 head cattle. Later exchanged for station at Walgett;
  - Church of England Church built and opened at sth-west corner Strafford & Namoi Streets on land donated by William Hill.
- 1894** Catholic Church opened at south-east corner Court and Rowan Streets;
- Harrington's garden/orchard (N/E Manilla & Court Sts) ceases operation;
  - 4431 acres (1793 hectares) yields 2,366 tonnes of wheat for sale.
- 1895** Manilla Progress Association formed;
- John Coote Jnr establishes imported Devon Cattle & Lincoln Sheep Stud.
- 1896** First search for a possible site for an irrigation scheme on the Namoi River and a proposal put forward for a site at Keepit.
- 1897** Tenders are called for the supply of 73,000 sleepers for Tamworth-Manilla railway;
- 1898** Railway earthworks completed between Tamworth & Manilla
- Public School closed when crossing the traffic bridge becomes too dangerous for children;
  - School Classes transferred to the Mechanics Institute Hall until opening of the new school in Court Street in 1901.

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- 1899** Manilla Express first published January 14. 1st printery sth-east cnr.  
Manilla & Court Streets;
- Railway completed from Tamworth to Manilla;
  - Rural settlement increases;
  - Flour Mill established by Clark & Crocker, Arthur St. near south bank of Namoi;
  - Wheat industry and town prosperity booms; Building and land values increase;
  - District wheat harvest yields 125,000 bags;
  - Stripper harvesters introduced, adding to reaper & binder method;
  - Manilla branch of Farmer's and Settlers Association formed;
  - Tobacco grown for commercial production - several growers and 2 large pumping plants on Manilla River;
  - First passenger train carries 35 to Tamworth Show;
  - Applications made for establishment of a further 3 Hotels in Manilla, one at the Railway Station, one in vicinity of Court House and a third at Market & Manilla Street corner, the last 2 being granted.
- 1900** Draft petition asks Governor of NSW to declare Manilla a Municipality;
- Grain shed built at Manilla railway. Farmers & Settlers pay annual lease;
  - First Public School at North Manilla formally closes after 21 years;
  - New school for 200 pupils built s/w cnr. Court & Arthur Streets;
  - Town Band formed;
  - Imperial Hotel constructed n/w cnr Manilla & Market Streets for G.M. Oliphant;
  - Court House Hotel constructed Manilla Street south;
  - Timber bridge built over Manilla River at Upper Manilla;
  - Timber School of Arts replaced with larger hall of brick, title changed to Mechanics Institute. Additional small hall built.