

The History
of . . .

POMONA
COORAN
KIN KIN
COOTHARABA
SKYRING'S CREEK

I wish to thank all who helped in any way by supplying information for this History of the District. Their willing co-operation is sincerely appreciated.

Ruth E. Page.

Proceeds from this publication will go to Pomona State School Parents and Citizens Association Funds.

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In its original state a large part of the country surrounding Pomona, Kin Kin, Cooran and Cootharaba contained some of the best hardwood forests that existed in Queensland, mainly because of high rainfall and good quality soil.

Harvesting the virgin timber stands established a flourishing timber industry in the locality which contributed largely to the early economy of this region.

The climatic conditions were also favourable for dairying, so, as the timber was cleared from the area, the land was taken over for use as dairy farms.

The earliest inhabitants of this area were aborigines belonging to the Kabi Tribe.

In 1831, a convict named David Bracewell absconded from the Moreton Bay Settlement and travelled to the Cootharaba Region where he became friendly with the aboriginal warrior "Eumundi". He returned to Moreton Bay in 1837, but two years later left the Settlement again and returned to this region. He was probably the first white man to set foot in this area.

The aborigines called the flat country beside the lake "Cootharaba", which was the name for their "Nulla-nulla". The scrubs were full of a timber called Spearwood or Waddywood which was very heavy and hard and was, therefore, suitable for making their weapons.

The best known of the aborigines in this district was Tommy, King of Noosa, Weyba and Cootharaba. He was a fine example of the Australian aborigine before he was given alcohol by the white people. He did a great deal of work, road-making, rafting logs etc., at Coolloothin Creek in the early days, and could hold his own with the white timber cutters in felling the big Kauri Trees. In the end alcohol defeated him and he was taken to Barambah Mission Station where he passed away in 1912.

On 26th September, 1860, Lieutenant Bligh took up 16,000 acres of land, reaching at one part to a place called Point Elandra (or Illandra) on Lake Cootharaba. He named his selection "Carcoora", and it is thought that this name was also given to the mountain near Pomona, and the spelling has been changed to "Cooroora". In October 1860 William Hay took up another large area of land nearby and called it "Cootharaba". Neither of these selections was ever surveyed.

In 1865 the timber trade on the Noosa River was pioneered by a group of men named Ebenezer Thom, Scott and John Kinmond, but very little is known of their activities except that they also had interests in the timber trade in the Maroochy District. In 1866 the cutters began falling timber in the Kin Kin District. The name Kin Kin or "King King" as it was originally called by the aborigines, refers to a species of small black

ant which was very prevalent in that area.

About 1869-70 McGhie, Luya, Goodchap and Woodburn, some miners from Gympie, spent a considerable amount of money in starting a sawmill at Elandra Point on Lake Cootharaba - later known as Mill Point. The sawn timber from this mill was loaded on to pontoons and towed down the river by the flat bottomed paddle wheel steamers "Black Swan" and "Elandra" to Colloy on the north bank of the Noosa River opposite Munna Point. From here it was loaded on to the S.S. "Culgoa" and taken to South Brisbane. The Culgoa, which made three trips to Brisbane every fortnight and carried 35,000 feet of timber on each trip was wrecked in 1891. At this time, over 150 men were employed as timber cutters in the dense scrub areas of Cootharaba and Kin Kin.

The following description of the Elandra Point Sawmill was written by Governor Normanby in 1872:- "On entering the works, we found the machinery covered by a shed 120 feet long by 33 feet wide, containing circular saws and travelling benches of the latest make and largest capacity, and a vertical saw frame capable of taking logs 4 feet 6 inches in diameter, one of the finest in the colony, the iron work weighing over 20 tons; to this is attached ingenious machinery by which logs of the largest size can be drawn directly out of the water and up on to a platform level with the vertical saw, thus saving time and labour considerably.

The machinery is driven by a 25 horsepower engine supplied by two boilers 20 feet and 13 feet 6 inches in diameter respectively. At the rear are Blacksmiths' and Carpenters' Shops, and every appliance for executing repairs and requirements rendered necessary by its long distance from any other means of assistance. To the rear of the mill we found a regular township of workmen's houses and others directly and indirectly connected with the establishment, a good store, well supplied, and a butcher's shop, and there seemed to be nothing wanting to complete the comfort of all connected with the establishment".

In one of the worst disasters in the history of this district five men were fatally injured when a boiler exploded in McGhie, Luya & Co's sawmill on 29th July, 1873. The men had been warming themselves before the boiler at 8.30 a.m. on a chilly winter morning when they noticed the boiler plate begin to bulge. They did not get clear before the explosion wrecked the boiler room.

There were approximately sixty families living near the mill till it closed in 1892. During the latter years, Mr. Tedford, who was the first butcher in Tewantin, supplied the sawmill settlement at Cootharaba with two bullocks each week. Rump Steak was 2½d. per lb. in those days.

When the mill closed down the Provisional School which was owned by the milling company also closed. The teacher was Mrs. Winnet, who was the wife of the engineer. All the requisites belonging to the school were forwarded to the State School at Tewantin. After the 1893 flood, Cootharaba began to go backwards and things became very quiet.

In the next era of the timber industry at Lake Cootharaba, logs were poled down to Tewantin and loaded into cargo boats with aid of donkey engines and winches. The tedious work of guiding the logs with poles from the lake to the wharf occupied a fortnight. Mr. Ross was the first man, with the help of an aborigine, George Barth, to raft logs from Lake Cootharaba down with the tides and the use of a pole. Their boat was carried down on the raft and a tent was used in wet weather.

The bay on the lake past Boreen Point was known as Hatch's Bight and it was here that the mill logs were assembled in the water, in preparation for rafting to Tewantin.

Later motor boats were used to speed up the work. Mr. Alec Gibson recalls many a trip through the lakes and down the river in the motorboat "Dawn" towing as many as 200 logs, twelve abreast, secured by chains. The motor boat took from daylight till dusk to complete the journey. The logs were mainly Kauri, Hoop Pine and Beech from the scrubs at Kin Kin.

During 1871, one of Tewantin's original pioneers, Mr. George Frederick St. John Carter selected property on Cooloothin Creek, about 12 miles from Tewantin. The name 'Cooloothin' is taken from Kabi dialect - Kululu (cypress pine) thin (to swim) and refers to the early rafting of cypress pine logs in this creek.

At that time there were very few settlers in the area, the earliest being Messrs. Dibley and Galloway on Cooloothin Creek, Messrs. Chas Dun, Lucien Poindestie and H. Blakesley on Cootharaba, Messrs Luya and Russell on No. 1 selection on Kin Kin and Chas Hopf also on Kin Kin. These men were growing Sugar cane and tobacco.

Boreen Point was taken up by F.G. Goodchap, one of the firm of McGhie, Luya, and Goodchap. At that time, if the owner could not live on the property he would put a bailiff there to run the place. The first one on Mr. Goodchap's selection was a man called Jim Breen and so Boreen Point received its name.

After securing his Cooloothin Creek property, Mr. Carter went to Ipswich to buy a team of bullocks with which to haul logs. His partner in Sydney had, in the meantime, made arrangements with the owner of a schooner to come up for a load of logs, but when Mr. Carter inspected the mouth of the Noosa

River, he found that it was impossible for any vessel drawing over six feet to come into the river. Mr. Carter had to break off his arrangements with the owner of the schooner and try to sell his timber elsewhere.

A Mr. William Pettigrew with whom he had dealt before, came to his aid with an old stern paddle wheel steamer called the "Gneering". The ship entered the river successfully, but became stuck on the bar going out and several logs had to be thrown overboard before she could leave. However, she took the rest to Brisbane safely. This was the first cargo of Kauri logs that went to Brisbane from this area.

Some of the logs thrown overboard came back up the river on the flood tide and Mr. Carter gave them to Mr. Richardson, who split them into palings and built the first little hut that did duty as a Post Office in Tewantin and the first hotel.

In those days there was only one mail a week and the outlying settlers at Cootharaba and Cooloothin Creek would take it in turns to ride to Tewantin for the mail. It was necessary to travel to Gympie for any medical attention or to do banking business etc.

In 1874 the Carter's first son, Charles, was born in Gympie and spent his early years at Cooloothin Creek. Later the family moved to Tewantin where a school had just been opened and young Charles was one of the first pupils.

While the rail link from Gympie to Cooran was being built in 1889, the St. John Carter family returned to their Cooloothin Creek selection for a brief period.

It was about this time that Charles and his brother George discovered an outcrop of coal in one of the gullies near their home. Their father and Mr. Goodchap of Cootharaba paid Tom Bull and J. Brewer to sink a shaft to about 30 feet where a good seam of coal about 6 feet in depth was found.

In November 1868 the Cobb and Co. route from Brisbane to the Gympie Goldfields and on to Maryborough was established by veteran driver, Hiram Barnes. Two vehicles were used, one going north and the other south. It was a difficult journey, particularly after rain, and two alternative routes were used, one for dry weather and one for wet. The wet one ran through Tewantin, along the Six Mile Creek, past Cooran and on to Gympie, a distance of 134 miles. The dry weather one ran through Tuckekoi and Traveston cattle station and measured 116 miles. The journey from Brisbane to Maryborough took three days.

The coaches in Mr. Carter's early days had to travel over roughly made bush roads. The first change of coach horses from Tewantin was at the "Five Mile Stable" and Jackson's hotel where refreshments were available, then the "Nine Mile"

(Ringtail) and afterwards on to the "Halfway House and Stable" (later named Cooran). This was originally owned by Mr. Casey and later by Mr. W. Martin whose son, Dan Martin, owned a carrying team carting goods from Tewantin to Gympie. This team was the pride of the district and consisted of six lovely grey horses.

The name Cooran was adapted from "Guran" meaning "tall" and referring to the local trees.

The discovery of gold at Gympie by James Nash in 1867 ultimately resulted in the construction of the railway line from Brisbane through to Gympie. Prior to this, a line of coaches owned by McCallum and Murdock linked Gympie with Landsborough via Kybong and Tuchekoi, and it was not until the section of railway line from Gympie to Cooran was opened in June 1889, that a line of coaches ran from Cooran to Yandina, which was still the "missing link".

In those days a considerable amount of traffic was sea-born to Tewantin and then taken by road to Cooran and on by rail to Gympie.

Cooran at that time was a terminal station with an elaborate turn-table for reversing locomotives and also had a pumping apparatus to provide water for the engines.

When the first section of the railway was completed to Cooran, Mr. Martin built the Cooran Hotel (next to the present Post Office) and the coaches and carrying teams operated between there and Tewantin. This building was burnt down about five years ago.

Other Cobb & Co. coaches worked between Yandina and Cooran until the final railway link between these two towns was completed in July 1891.

When the line from Gympie to Cooran was opened, the Pinbarren Valley scrub lands were open for selection, the price of land being 2/6d. per acre. Cooran became a very busy station to which huge logs were hauled and placed on rail trucks for transport to the timber mills at Gympie and Maryborough. At this time, timber was drawn by bullock teams over the site of what is now Pomona to the old Tewantin road, thence to Cooran, an added distance of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The growth of Cooran and Pomona was in the first instance considerably influenced by settlement on land to the west of Mt. Cooroora. On 21st July, 1890, the first school in this area, locally known as the Bellbird Flat School, was opened at Cooran close to the Six Mile Creek. Some of the pupils who attended this school are still living in the district - Mrs. E. Lindsay, Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Beal Snr., of Pomona, Mrs. E. Hinds of Cooroy, Mrs. K. Kenny of Cooran, Mr. F. Blanckensee of Tewantin, and Mrs. Nugent Snr., now residing in Brisbane. A new building

was later erected on the present school site at Cooran

During the 1893 flood many of the settlers had a very hard time and some deserted their selections which later on were taken up again by others wishing to settle in the district. Many of these ultimately became successful farmers.

Very little in the way of settlement was accomplished until 1893 when the Group Act was passed and the "Protestant Unity Group" was settled on land at Skyring's Creek. The Government of the day set aside 3,000 acres to be jointly farmed by the 26 members and their families, the government providing food and tools. This group continued as a communistic settlement for 2 years, then having realized that all men do not contribute equally in labour to such a venture, the group broke up and the members again became individualists, the land being divided amongst them.

Shortly afterwards more settlers arrived and they found that it would be necessary to have a more convenient access to the railway than was afforded by Cooran. A deputation to the railway commissioner resulted in a siding being established at which trains could be stopped by a signal. The local residents desired that it should be named "Cooroora Siding" in honour of the picturesque mountain which towers to the west of the town, but the railway and postal authorities both objected because the first syllable of the word was identical with that of Cooran, the next station to the north and Cooroy, the next station to the south and this would lead to confusion. The naming was left to the railway department which adopted the name of Pinbarren Siding.

The next move was in the direction of opening a school and a meeting was held at Mr. J. Ronald's home in 1896. Mr. H. Armitage Snr. was appointed provisional secretary and at once placed himself in communication with the Education Department. The result was that a schoolroom costing £100, half of which had to be raised by local subscription, was erected. This was opened on 31st August 1897 with an enrolment of 25 pupils and with Miss M. Hensley as the first head teacher.

The building was a wooden structure, 26 ft by 14 ft and according to the first inventory possessed four desks, two forms and one blackboard. The school was named the Pinbarren Provisional School. The original 25 scholars and the additional 10 enrolled before the end of the year, many of whom walked regularly four or five miles along bullock tracks to attend, had happy times in the dense growth of the unfenced playground. A favourite game was "Fox and Hounds" and the foxes invariably led the hounds up Cooroora Mountain, the return being arranged to coincide with dismissal time. Cricket was played by boys and girls in the tracks between where the E.S. & A. Bank and Mr. K. Muir's shop now stand.

The pupils and parents looked forward to the visits of old Mr. Beasley of the British Bible Society. His magic lantern shows drew large crowds that came from near and far by horse, sulky, dray or by walking. As a special treat, and for a small monetary consideration, they were allowed to listen to a few recordings on his phonograph.

Another regular visitor was Holy Joe, the tinker; who camped on the site of the old manual training building and plied his trade in the growing settlement. Many bullock teams passed by hauling their loads of huge pine, beech and cedar logs to the railway siding. At this time timber-getting, sleeper-cutting, and fruit growing were the main industries and the population was steadily increasing.

In January 1898 a school was also built near the Six Mile Creek at Kareewa to cater for children in the Cootharaba region. This was named the Cooroora State School and in 1911 the name was changed to Kareewa State School. In 1933 a new building was erected near the junction of the two roads leading to Boreen Point and the name was then changed to Boreen Junction State School. This was finally closed on 31st May 1947 and the pupils were conveyed to Pomona School by bus. The building was later shifted and became one of the Pomona School Rooms.

In 1904 a number of farmers from the northern rivers of New South Wales inspected the Kin Kin scrub lands and as a result the "Richmond Settlers" (locally known as the Risley Group) was formed, and the first really systematic falling of the scrub was undertaken by men who understood the technique of putting scrub land under grass for dairying purposes. The land was balloted for at the Land Office in Gympie on 18th April, 1905. Each member of the group was allowed to select only one farm, but many bought up other selections that earlier-day settlers had taken up for cane growing. The "Richmond Settlers" were the pioneers of the dairying industry in the Kin Kin district and they taught the local settlers how to fall scrub and clear the land at a reasonable cost. Prior to their advent, trees were fallen one by one, whereas the new settlers scarfed a number and then fell a large tree into the scarfed ones, causing the lot to fall as a result of the impetus given by the large, completely fallen tree. Also the method of falling from a springboard some two or three lifts up made chopping much easier. The new settlers rapidly converted Kin Kin into one of the finest dairying districts on the near North Coast. In 1905 the Pinbarren Creek School was opened to cater for the children in the area.

During the same year, the Queensland Group selected land to the west and south-west of the original Pretestant Unity Group and another large tract of scrub land was converted into pasture land for dairy stock - The Skyring's Creek area. The Skyring Brothers had selected land in the Tuckekoi area in the 1860's.

In 1869 Daniel Skyring selected several blocks in that parish, his homestead being at Bellwood on Skyring's Creek. Descendants of the Skydings are still farming in the district.

The population was steadily increasing and as a result, the first assistant teacher was appointed to the school in 1906.

In the same year the Pinbarren Progress Association was invited to submit a new name for the centre and the name "Pomona" was recommended and accepted. It may be asked why "Pomona" was suggested. Many orangeries existed in the district and were flourishing at the time and it appeared that ultimately fruit growing would be one of the principal industries. According to mythology the Goddess Pomona was the presiding diety over orchards and fruit, so it was considered to be a suitable name. Accordingly the official name of the school was changed to Pomona Provisional School in July 1905.

In 1907 a move was made to establish a State School to supersede the Provisional school and although the alteration was made in 1908, it was not till March 1909 that the new building was opened. The older building was removed to become part of the teacher's residence. In 1908 Mr. G. Dan became head teacher, a position which he held for 33 years until he retired in 1941. Under his efficient guidance the school played its part well in the growing community.

The Township of Pomona was now launched. The first industry was timber-getting and for a time it was a busy one, giving employment to about 300 men. A little sugar cane was grown, but it never flourished. Low prices for cane and the very bad roads soon discouraged all who tried to grow it.

In those days there was no Noosa Shire Council and the Widgee Divisional Board in whose division we were, was tacitly opposed if not hostile to the new settlement. Then the unexpected happened. A few settlers from New South Wales began to find their way here and were directed to Pinbarren and Kin Kin. With their experience of dairying and pasture land they quickly perceived the great potentialities of the district. Among the pioneers of the dairying industry in this district may be mentioned Messrs. Turnbull, Riskey, Sorensen, Hansen and R.W. Graham. When reports of the Noosa Country reached the Northern Rivers, the rate of settlement rapidly increased and the value of suitable land rose sharply. A proprietary company, Silverwood, acquired a butter making plant and installed it at the site of the present Wide Bay Company factory in Gympie for the express purpose of encouraging dairy farming in surrounding districts.

In 1904, a road was constructed across the Kin Kin range and development quickly followed. Kin Kin became known all over Australia for its fine timbers, particularly the gigantic Kauri Pines. One of these, known locally as the "Bell Tree"

had a girth measurement of 25 feet and the butt log, measuring approximately 75 feet, contained 27,000 super feet of timber. Teams of 18 to 24 bullocks were used to draw logs of comparable size on the conventional timber waggon to Cooran, a most difficult and often dangerous task. Much of this excellent timber was used in house construction. John Turnbull built his of cedar, whilst other homes still remaining were built from pit-sawn beech, kauri and other suitable local timbers. Mr. Carl Sorensen's cream was the first from this district to be sent by rail from Cooran to the Silverwood factory in Gympie. The work of transporting the cream by horse to Cooran was a test of endurance for both man and beast, even though flat sided cream cans, designed for easy carrying on a pack saddle were used. Mrs. E.M. Page and her brother, Mr. C. Davis of Pomona also recall having transported cream in this manner from Cootharaba to Pomona to be railed to Gympie.

Transport difficulties were relieved when Jim Chapman, son of a Pinbarren Pioneer, commenced the first cream carrying business from Kin Kin to Cooran using a waggon drawn by two horses. Later he owned three five-horse waggons. Cream was brought in from surrounding farms and left at a depot. Frank Bowman used to test and weigh the cream which was then put into bigger cans and taken to Cooran for railing to Gympie.

The Pomona Progress Association drew the attention of the Lands Department to the fact that large areas of land, of at least as good quality as that of Kin Kin, existed on the western side of the railway line near Pomona. This was admitted but it was pointed out that the whole of the land on the western side of the line as far south as Cooroy had been permanently reserved as a source of timber supply for the Gympie mines. The association reminded the Lands Department that this difficulty had been surmounted in the case of the Protestant Unity Group, and after a lengthy correspondence the land was thrown open for selection.

Now commenced a struggle on the part of the settlers to obtain roads to the railway.

The most important and beneficial movement in the history of the Noosa district was the secession from the Widgee division and the creation of the Noosa Shire Council. Before this was achieved roads can hardly be said to have existed, other than those leading from Cooran and Cooroy respectively to Tewantin.

The first attempt to form a separate shire was made in 1898 and the second in 1902 but both proved unsuccessful. In early 1909 the final and successful effort was put forth. The large influx of new settlers, the very large increase of rateable property and above all the vigour and the earnest action of the movers, brought about the change.

Very little opposition was offered by the Widgee Shire Council and it was only after securing the official establish-

ment of the Noosa Shire that the fight of the occasion began. This was between the three principal towns in the area - Cooroy, Cooran and Pomona, for the honour of being the headquarters and containing the hall and office of the new shire. The matter was finally decided after taking a referendum of the ratepayers by order of the Home Secretary, Mr. Appel, in favour of Pomona.

On 22nd April 1910, nine councillors were elected and Mr. E.A. Edwards became shire clerk, a position which he held for 38 years until his retirement in 1948. He was succeeded by Mr. Alec Dan who still occupies the position.

During this period (1908-1910) new schools were being established to cater for the growing population. Kin Kin Junction State School was opened on 26th May, 1909, Cootharaba Lake School on 23rd August, 1909, Federal State School on 14th February 1910 and Wahpunga State School on 15th August 1910. Ringtail School was opened in May 1912 and Kin Kin State School on 18th October 1916.

The new Noosa Shire Council borrowed two loans of £20,000 each and began to open up the district roads with such plant as was available at this time. In 1914 it was decided to purchase a road grader which was drawn by a team of bullocks. This was the first grader to be used in this part of Queensland. Subsequently a progressive policy of mechanised road machinery was adopted, with great advantage to the district as it resulted in the speedy formation of numerous roads which, until this time, were mere bullock tracks.

World War I (1914-1918) saw practically all the available manpower drained from the district and had it not been for the wisdom of the council in acquiring road graders, there would have been very little progress in road construction for many years.

Another important event in the life of the district was the formation of the Noosa A.H. & I. Society. Mr. E. Von Blanckensee convened a meeting for 9th October 1909, at Pomona, of those desirous of assisting in the formation of a Society. Mr. J.W. Napier was elected president, Messrs. R.W. Graham and F. O'Rourke vice-presidents, Mr. W.A. Ransome Treasurer and Mr. F.J. Conroy secretary. Mr. Von Blanckensee donated teak from his farm for the floor of the show pavilion. The first show was held in 1910 and except for the war years, shows have been staged annually ever since. The original pavilion was demolished by fire in 1954 and the present one was completed in time for the next year's show.

The late Mr. R. W. Graham who was very active in local organisations, came to the district in July 1905 from Federal, between the Richmond and Brunswick Rivers in Northern New South Wales. He was responsible for the settlement on Skyring's Creek known as the Federal Group. He acted as secretary when approaching the government for the land which that excellent

band of settlers acquired. He also purchased another property about two miles from Pomona on the eastern side of the railway line. In May 1906, he commenced sending cream to the Silverwood factory at Gympie and consequently was the first dairyman to send cream from Pomona Station. On the proposal to start a district co-operative factory, Mr. Graham took a prominent part and with Messrs. H. Armitage and G. Horsman went to Nambour for the preliminary meetings. He was appointed chairman of the Provisional Board of Directors of the Caboolture Co-operative Company and for many years retained his seat on the Board. The Pomona branch of the butter factory commenced operating in 1919.

Another citizen who took a prominent part in local affairs was the late Mr. J.W. Napier. In 1905 he left the Northern Rivers district where he had been connected with the New South Wales Education Department and obtained a large property, five miles from Pomona, overlooking the Cootharaba Lakes and the Pacific Ocean. This was known as the "Willow Grove Dairy Estate" and contained 1,000 acres of scrub land ranging from hills to flats and reaching into the big Kin Kin scrubs. His homestead was a beautiful structure containing 13 rooms with a wide veranda all round and a look-out balcony on the roof. Unfortunately this building was burnt down in a bush fire in 1937.

As an active worker in public life, Mr. Napier was a member of the first Noosa Shire Council and of Caboolture Co-operative Association directorate and was also a pioneer member of the Noosa A.H. & I. Society. He died in Gympie in 1945.

A bursary provided by a Trust fund of \$1,000 was created by the late Mrs. Napier as a memorial to her husband. It is awarded annually to a student from the Pomona and District Schools who continues with secondary education at Pomona High School.

At the turn of the century, many businesses were established in the growing community. In 1899 the first butchering business in Pomona was opened by Messrs. Crank and Banks and in 1901 Messrs. H. & H.V. Hatch established the first general store. Also, there were Mr. G. Doughty's bakery, Messrs Sanderson & Sons blacksmithing, wheel-wrighting and coach works and Mr. J. Neilsen's cordial factory. The first hotel was built and opened in 1905 by Mr. C.J. Walters and the second was built in 1911 by Mr. H. Bushnell and opened by Mr. F. Callaghan before the building was completed. A newspaper called the "Noosa Advocate" was published in Pomona by Mr. McKinnon from 1909 till some time in the 1930's.

The E.S. & A. Bank was established in Pomona in 1909 and moved to its present premises in 1936. An agency of this branch was opened in Cooran in 1916 and closed in June 1968. The Kin Kin E.S. & A. Bank was opened in 1918 and converted to an agency of the Pomona branch in 1955 finally being closed in June 1968.

In 1910 the Commercial Bank established branches at Pomona and Cooran with an agency at Kin Kin. Some years later the Pomona branch closed and Pomona became an agency of the Cooran branch, which also closed during World War II. Pomona branch reopened in November 1950 in a building in Factory Street, shifted to premises on the corner of Reserve Street and Memorial Avenue in 1961 and again closed on September 30, 1970.

Any resume of the early days of Pomona would be incomplete without mention of Mrs. Kelleher, who, for many years administered the railway station, post office, telegraph and telephone services in the town until 1910, when she and her husband took up farming near the foot of Mt. Cooroora.

It is noteworthy that during the period of the First World War a serious attempt was made to produce much needed teapots, jugs, etc. from the excellent local Kaolin (Clay). Some of the Langley ware turned by the Pomona potters was exhibited at Wembley in London and was awarded a certificate of Honour and a medal. The company endeavoured to establish the industry in the shire but were unable to compete with imported pottery and closed down and went into liquidation soon after the importation of overseas ware again commenced.

Some of the earliest businesses to be established in Kin Kin were Mr. Harry Slade's Store, William Rohan's hotel, J.W. Shepperson's butchery, P.J. Preston's bakery (formerly baker at Cooran) Joe Allen's blacksmith's shop, Gallen and Shepperson's auctioneering business and Andrew Doyle's sawmill. The School of Arts was built in 1911 and the Kin Kin Butter Factory which was established in 1912, continued to operate till 1937.

One of the chief industries in the Cooran, Pinbarren and Kin Kin districts, besides dairying and timber, was banana growing. This fruit was grown extensively and for many years this was one of the chief banana growing districts in Queensland. The industry attracted many Hindus, Swiss, Russians, Finns, Danes and Swedes to the district. When "Bunchy Top" greatly affected production these people had to seek employment elsewhere.

After World War II pineapples were grown extensively for some time and in later years bean growing has provided much employment in this area. Progressive farming methods such as crop rotation, water conservation, irrigation, improved pastures aerial fertilising of crops and the application of modern dairy farming technology, are being applied in an endeavour to improve the quality of production.

The history of the Post Office in the area dates back to 1890 when Cooran received its mail via two routes:- (a) from Gympie by rail and (b) from Caboolture as follows - Caboolture post office to Mooloolah post office, thence to Arrobat Creek, Remingtons, Cobb's Camp, Yandina to Cooran, a distance of 70 miles.

Gympie was the post town for Cooran from 1890-1911 and during this period Cooran was an unofficial Post Office, the railway official acting also as postmaster. In 1912 Cooran became a semi-official post office and Gympie was no longer its post town.

At Pomona, post office facilities were also provided at the railway station for many years, then the first post office building was erected on the corner of Reserve Street and Memorial Avenue where the E.S. & A. Bank now stands. When the present post office was opened in 1936 the old building was sold and erected elsewhere in town as a residence.

For many years Kin Kin's post office was conducted in a room at the side of Martin's store, then in 1954 a separate post office building was erected in its present position.

Police protection at Cooran dates back to 1890 when Constable Bevan was stationed there. Apparently this was only a temporary station as it closed shortly afterwards and Cooran was then covered by police from Monkland, Gympie, and later policed by Constable R. Burge who was stationed at Cooroy.

In 1916 Inspector Toohey wrote to the Commissioner of Police stating that he considered a police station should be established at Cooran as the district was developing at that time and all offenders had to be taken to Gympie. Consequently in October 1917 a block of land was purchased and two years later the new police station was erected. Constable Geise was placed in charge on 4th December, 1919 and this station continued to operate till 28th February 1965.

As far back as 4th February 1910, representation was made by the manager of the Commercial Bank for police protection at Pomona, but he was informed that Pomona would be visited twice weekly by police from Gympie and Nambour alternately. In November 1926 Inspector J. Mann recommended that police be stationed at Pomona. In the police gazette dated 3rd September 1927 applications were called to fill the vacancy at the new station at Pomona and the notice also stated that quarters available consisted of a house with four rooms, a kitchen and bathroom. The station was opened on 3rd November, 1927 and Constable H.E. Brown took control. It appears that Constable Brown occupied an office in the School of Arts building whilst waiting for the residence to be completed. New buildings were erected on the police reserve and completed in August 1934.

After the opening of the police station at Pomona the Department of Justice decided to establish a Court of Petty Sessions within the Noosa Shire and after careful consideration Pomona was selected as the centre for this project. On 2nd January 1928 Constable H.E. Brown was appointed to act as

Clerk of Petty Sessions at Pomona. For these duties he was granted an allowance of £20 annually. As there was no space at the police station suitable for a courtroom, a room at the School of Arts was rented for this purpose at 7/6d. per week.

The present Court House was erected in 1935 at the cost of £524.

Precise dates concerning the establishment of the Ambulance Service in the Pomona district are unfortunately not available as many old records cannot be found. However a banking account called "The Pomona Ambulance Brigade Account" was opened at the E.S. & A. Bank on 10th October, 1912 and from that time on it is believed that an ambulance service operated. The centre was founded as a Q.A.T.B. centre in 1917 with Mr. William Rookwood as its first superintendent. At this time, the centre operated as a sub-centre of Brisbane but in February 1919 it was granted self-governing status.

A hand-litter and a sulky were used as a means of transport during the early activities of the centre. The Ambulance Shelter Shed as it was commonly known, was located on the eastern side of the present Pomona railway yards near the entrance gate, while the Superintendent's residence was in Ambulance Street.

After Mr. Rookwood's death in 1920 he was succeeded by Mr. W.G. Nash and in June 1921 the Shelter Shed was shifted to Ambulance Street adjacent to the Superintendent's residence. In June 1922 the Centre was able to dispense with the sulky for in that month the committee took delivery of the first motor vehicle owned by the Centre, a Dodge Car.

When Mr. Nash was transferred to Murgon in 1939 he was succeeded by Mr. J. Dempsey and during his term of office the ambulance buildings were shifted to the present site in Reserve Street, being officially opened on 17th March, 1951. When Mr. Dempsey passed away in 1962, our present Superintendent, Mr. J. M. Carroll, was transferred from Thursday Island to fill the vacancy.

As far as can be ascertained the first church in the district was an Inter-denominational one which was built about the turn of the century. It was made of slabs and was situated in thick bush close to Mr. V. Depper's present home in Rectory Street. This building was burnt down about 1911.

In 1910 Mr. F. Albrecht donated land at Skyring's Creek (close to where the Pomona road joins the highway) to build a Gospel Hall where worshippers of every denomination were welcome. Mr. Eugene Von Blanckensee was the preacher and many evangelists also called and conducted services. This building was shifted to Cooroy in 1942.

In 1908 two Methodist Sunday Schools were opened - one at Pinbarren Creek and the other at Cootharaba. The Cooran Methodist Church was opened on 23rd June, 1912 and services

were commenced at Skyring's Creek in 1913 by a minister from Gympie. The Kin Kin Junction Methodist Church was opened in 1916 with Rev. T. Taylor as first minister and Mrs. Haylock as organist, and travelling ministers would also visit the district to hold services.

Methodist services in Pomona were first held in the Inter-denominational church, then in the hall, until the opening service of the present church was conducted in March 1921, the first minister being Rev. Grayson. The church pulpit was made and donated by Messrs H.W. Page and Scope and the seats by Mr. D. McConnell and by 1922 the church was free of debt. The first lights used were two benzine lanterns and later carbide lights were installed. In 1925 the Kareewa church was shifted and erected as a hall at the back of the Pomona church. Electric lights were installed by the Ladies' Guild in 1942.

Some notes from the records of the guild make interesting reading:- "The 1925 bazaar was held in Houghton's paddock next to the church and after this function £3 was passed for the cartage of the hall from Kareewa. A further request was made for £21 for the erection of the hall in Pomona. Community singing evenings were held to raise funds - Gents 1/- Ladies 6d. In 1931 Peters ice cream was purchased for sale at the bazaar. Previously all ice cream had been made in a churn which the guild had purchased in 1920 and which they hired to the ambulance, Church of England and show committees for 2/6d. per day. In 1936 the guild catered for its first Wedding at 3/- per head."

St. Matthew's Catholic Church is the oldest in the parish having been built in 1907 while Cooran was still part of the Gympie parish. In 1921 St. Mary's Church was opened in Kin Kin and St. Patrick's Church, Pomona, nestling at the foot of Mt. Cooroora, was officially opened on 26th March, 1922 while Father A. Wright was Parish Priest of Nambour.

When the Pomona Parish was established in 1949 with Father B.R. Landener as first Parish Priest, considerable development had already taken place, particularly in the Pomona centre. The Presentation Sisters had opened a school and by 30th November 1947 the fine new school building had been completed. Father Landener secured the present convent and had it erected where it now stands.

The first Anglican church to be erected in the district was St. Matthew's at Cooran which was dedicated on 30th September 1913 by the Most Reverend St. Clair Donaldson, Archbishop of Brisbane. On 26th August, 1923 the dedication of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Pomona by the Most Reverend Gerald Sharp, Archbishop of Brisbane, took place. St. Luke's Church, Kin Kin was also dedicated by Archbishop Sharp on 19th November, 1926.

For many years, Presbyterian services were held in the

Methodist Church until 1952, when the Pomona Presbyterian church was erected. The bell which was presented to the church originally belonged to the Inter-denominational church which was mentioned earlier.

The Jehovah's Witnesses also hold regular Meetings in the C.W.A. room at Pomona.

Sawmilling was a major industry in the shire employing a large number of men as mill hands, timber getters and bullock teamsters. One of the first mills in Pomona was located on the bank of the creek behind the present Majestic Service Station and was a sleeper mill owned and operated by Mr. Ted Saunders. Another early mill was run by Mr. Bushnell, while Mr. C. Houghton's saw and planing mill was located at Kareewa.

In 1916, the Richmond River Timber Co. shifted its saw-mill from Rosewood and re-erected it in Pomona on the corner of Mill and Factory Streets where Page's Timber yards are now situated. Mr. F. Straker Snr. was manager and Mr. Proctor was the engine driver. The engine was steam driven, being a twin cylinder railway engine. The mill cut both soft and hard woods and also dressed timber on a planing machine..

In October 1918 Mr. Straker bought the Cooran mill from George Renshaw and Charles Loseby, and Mr. Percy Duncan then became manager of the Richmond River mill in Pomona.

In 1924 Mr. Percy Duncan took over the construction and management of the Richmond River Co's mill at Ringtail and his brother Mr. Alf. Duncan, became manager of the Pomona mill, a position which he held till 1934 when he and Mr. Eric Page started the Kin Kin Sawmilling Co. supplying timber to Wilson and Harts in Maryborough. This Kin Kin mill was burnt out in early 1938.

About 1922 Mr. Bill Gilliland went into partnership with Mr. Straker at Cooran and later they acquired another mill at Eumundi. Some time afterwards they split up, Mr. Straker retaining the Cooran mill and Mr. Gilliland the Eumundi mill.

Henderson's mill, situated at the foot of the Cootharaba Range on property now owned by Mr. F. Bird, was one of the largest hardwood mills in Queensland. At one time 12 bullock teams were hauling logs to this mill. It was opened in 1923 but was forced to close during the depression in the early 1930's and was burnt out in the big Cootharaba fire in 1937.

Mr. Tom Davis' timber and case mill at Bellwood, Cootharaba, was also destroyed in this fire. He and Mr. Phil Bradow then erected another hardwood and case mill at Como near Kin Kin which was in operation until recently.

The Cootharaba Timber Co. mill was owned by the Cutmore Bros., Arthur Hemsall, Harvey Petersen, Alf Hansen and George Warriner. When it closed, the equipment was acquired by Mr. Henderson.

Mr. A.J. Bull's mill on Cooloothin Creek road in the early 1920's cut both softwoods and hardwoods.

Another mill owned and operated by Mr. Harold Hempsall and his son Lionel is still in operation at Kin Kin.

Mr. Tom Burchill's mill was on the Ringtail road near the Nine Mile and the Houghton Bros operated a case and timber mill at Kareewa for many years.

A casemill on Railway Parade, Pomona was first owned by Mr. T. Spinaze and later by Mr. E. Ford.

At Cootharaba a mill was started by Mr. D. Kildey Snr and Mr. O'Connor, and this is still operated by Kildey Bros.

The mill on Hill Street Pomona, was also built by Mr. O'Connor and is now owned by Mr. Harold Bazzo.

Two factories in the district which have provided much employment over the years are the furniture factory in Pomona and the joinery works at Cooran.

Mr. Herb Page, who had learnt cabinet-making in Bundaberg came to Boreen Point in the early 1900's. He would ride on horseback, carrying his tools, to the home of anyone wanting furniture and would stay till he had manufactured it. He and his father also erected a number of small cottages at Boreen Point which they let to people on holidays. In 1916 he purchased a Model T Utility (the first in the district) and started a mail run between Pomona and Boreen Point.

In 1919, he, with his wife and family, shifted to Pomona where he started a small furniture factory and also became an agent for Ford Cars. Both these businesses continued to grow and after World War II his son, George, took over the furniture business and his son, Bob, the garage. The furniture factory has continued to expand over the years, and now employs 24 men, while the garage provides work for 15.

In March 1932, during the depression, Mr. Mervyn Alfredson, became unemployed and returned to his parents' home at Cooran railway station. He then had to wait three months to secure a position in Brisbane, but, in the meantime, the local people engaged him to make articles of furniture and joinery. Trade increased to such an extent that he procured a piece of land opposite the railway residence in Cooran and early in 1934 the first part of the factory was built. It has been continuously enlarged over the years until today the floor space equals $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre. As the years went by machinery and plant were increased to produce joinery, pre-cut houses etc., until now it is recognised as one of the biggest plants of its kind in Queensland. Up till the present time, almost 700 houses have been supplied or built, including the Weipa Mission Buildings on Cape York peninsula. Over 90 homes have been built within a 30 mile radius of Cooran. At present, there are 15 employees on the staff.

The formation of the C.W.A. in this district was due to the keen interest of Mrs. J.W. Napier who guided the branches in each centre through their early stages. The first was the "Willow Grove" branch which met at the home of Mrs. Napier at Cootharaba and later the Kareewa branch was formed. Kin Kin C.W.A. held its inaugural meeting on 11th December 1925 with Mrs. McDougall as its first president and in 1926 the Cooran branch was launched. Skyring's Creek C.W.A., which was formed in May 1927, disbanded in 1934 when the members transferred to Pomona branch which had commenced in 1928.

The Kareewa, Skyring's Creek and Pomona branches held a combined meeting in Pomona on 23rd November 1929 to discuss the building of a Rest Room at the Pomona Memorial School of Arts. After several meetings and much fundraising work, this became a reality on 27th November 1931 when the rest room was officially opened by Mrs. A.P.W. Tregear, vice-president of the Southern division. At the same time Hon. R.M. King opened additions to the Memorial Hall. The Hall was built in 1919 in memory of the soldiers who lost their lives in World War I, and over the years many additions and improvements have been made. The new C.W.A. rest room near the railway station was officially opened in March 1964.

According to a 1932 Noosa Advocate the members of the Cooroora Golf Club built a 9 hole course on Mr. J. Grant's property at Pinbarren to cater for the local players.

Another entry in the same paper advertises an 8 piece silky oak bedroom suite made of solid timber with a large sideboard for £12.10s., a silky oak writing bureau for £3 and a kitchen cabinet with lead-light doors for £4.

Still another 1932 news item states:- "Yoyo - latest London craze. With much practice the yoyo can be made to perform figures of eight, catherine wheels or waddle along the floor like a duck", so the yoyo is not a recent invention.

Several lodges cater for the men of the district. The Cooroora Masonic lodge was opened in Pomona in 1913 with Mr. E.P. Saunders as the first Worshipful Master, the Cooran Masonic lodge started in 1923 and the Kin Kin Masonic lodge in 1928. On 23rd August 1953 the Order of Buffaloes lodge commenced in Pomona.

A private hospital was opened in Pomona in the late 1920's and except for brief periods continued to function till 1952. In Cooran a private hospital was conducted by Matron Myrtle Napier during the 1930's and at the same time a doctor also had a practice there.

During the night before the Pomona show in 1939, a fire swept through the shopping centre completely destroying all buildings in Memorial Avenue except the hotel. These were gradually re-built but in 1942 a number of shops in

Reserve Street were demolished by another fire leaving only the E.S. & A. Bank standing on the corner. Several other shops have been burnt out over the years.

At the beginning of 1936 a very important milestone in the Pomona School's history was reached. An energetic committee had been working for some time to have a Rural Department added to the school and their efforts were successful. Late in 1935 the two buildings were officially opened and at the commencement of the new year the first vocational classes commenced under the tuition of Miss Maltman, Miss Payne and Mr. G. Lawrie.

Late in 1941 a commencement was made with a large forestry plot near Pinbarren Mountain and in subsequent years this plot was continued. It is known as the Pomona District School Memorial Forestry Plot and, dedicated in 1946 by the then Minister for Education, the Hon. T. Williams, was probably the first of its kind in Australia.

Over the years most of the one teacher schools in the district were closed and the pupils transported by bus to the larger centres. Cooloothin Creek School was closed in 1934, Pinbarren in 1939, Cootharaba and Ringtail in 1943, and Boreen Junction in 1947 and buses conveyed these children to Pomona State School. Wahpunga was closed in 1967 and the pupils were taken to Kin Kin School.

Under the control of Mr. Horne the Pomona School continued to grow and in 1944 a movement to add a Secondary Department was made. The Education Department was quick to recognise the claims of a community which was each year losing its most promising youth to centres where secondary education was available, and the new section was opened in 1945 with 21 sub-junior students.

In 1946 it was felt that the development of the school had reached such a stage that the small official School Committee was no longer adequate, so a strong Parents and Citizens Association was formed.

In 1935 an attempt was made by the Noosa Shire Council to interest the C.E.L. Co. (Now the S.E.A.) in supplying electricity to all areas between Brisbane and Gympie. Negotiations with the C.E.L. Co. and the Government were carried on until finally in 1939 an order-in-council was issued giving the C.E.L. Co. authority to supply electric light and power to these areas. The work of establishing the necessary transmission lines and the reticulation of the town areas was seriously hampered by World War II, but the provision of light and power to Pomona was finally established in October 1941. Electricity was supplied to Cooran in April 1946, Kin Kin in January 1948, Boreen Point township in December 1964 and Cootharaba in January 1965.

The local fire brigade was formed in 1946 with five trailer pumps which were supplied by the government. In 1952 a Ford Thames vehicle was obtained and built into a fire engine and this was in use till 1960. It was then sent to Kin Kin and two Willys Jeeps were purchased and converted into fire engines for the Pomona brigade. When the present fire engine was put into operation in May 1964, One Willys engine was sent to Cooroy and the other to Tewantin.

The tennis courts in the Pomona showgrounds were completed in 1951 and the Bowling Green was officially opened in November of the same year. In 1959 lights were installed at the tennis courts and night tennis has proved a popular sport during the warmer months of the year.

Mt. Cooroora, about half a mile from Pomona, was the scene several years ago of one of the strangest races yet held. The race, from the Railway Hotel in the centre of the town (since removed) to the top of Mt. Cooroora, 1,439 feet high, and back, was first held in 1959. The idea of holding such a race followed the effort of a local railway porter, Bruce Samuels, who ran the course on 22nd March 1958 to settle a bet that it couldn't be done in less than an hour. His time was 40 minutes. The feat was reported in several Sydney papers under various headlines, one of which was - "Big gamblers win thousands on Mountain Climb". The actual "Killing" was about £100.

On 2nd June 1959, the first organised race was held. Professional runners and climbers entered the event and, but for a fall descending the mountain, Bruce Samuels would certainly have won. His time was 31 minutes 52 seconds and he was beaten by only a few seconds. The following year the winning time was 29 minutes 44 seconds and this time still stands as the record. There was a checkpoint on the top of the mountain where contestants were handed specially marked envelopes to signify that the summit had been reached.

At a public meeting on 8th June 1960, it was decided to reform a Scout group in Pomona and for this purpose the Kybong School building was purchased to be used as a Scout Hut. The grounds were cleared and the building was moved to its present site in 1961, and at the first annual meeting it was reported that 60 scouts and cubs were attending each week. The official opening of the den by his Excellency, Sir Henry Abel Smith, was held on 5th January, 1963.

The inaugural meeting of the Pomona and District Kindergarden was held on 10th August 1960 and due to the dedicated work of the committee and directoresses, the

children in the three to five age group have received valuable training over the years.

Another milestone in the history of the district was reached when a dam was constructed on the Elix Mile Creek and water was reticulated to Pomona in September 1966 and to Cooran in January 1967.

The Forestry manager's residence was shifted to Pomona in 1969 and a fine new office building erected alongside. A number of men have been employed in this area for many years, replanting trees for use by future generations.

The year 1970 has seen the new manual training and home science building erected on the Ellis Estate site in Pomona, together with a new sports oval. Further honours were won for the High School in September by Elizabeth Olsen, Helen Alcorn and Bill Brown, who were successful in winning the Queensland final of the "It's Academic" programme which was conducted by Channel 7 in Brisbane. They each received \$500 prize money from the Commonwealth Bank and a gold Schaeffer pen and pencil set, while the school received \$500, a tape recorder and library books. The installation of boom gates at the railway crossing in the centre of the town has also proved to be of great benefit to the motorists.

And, what of the future? The present trend shows a switch from dairying to beef cattle, big mining companies have been testing the coal seams in the district - but whatever changes are made, may we always remember the pioneers who worked so hard in developing this beautiful district.