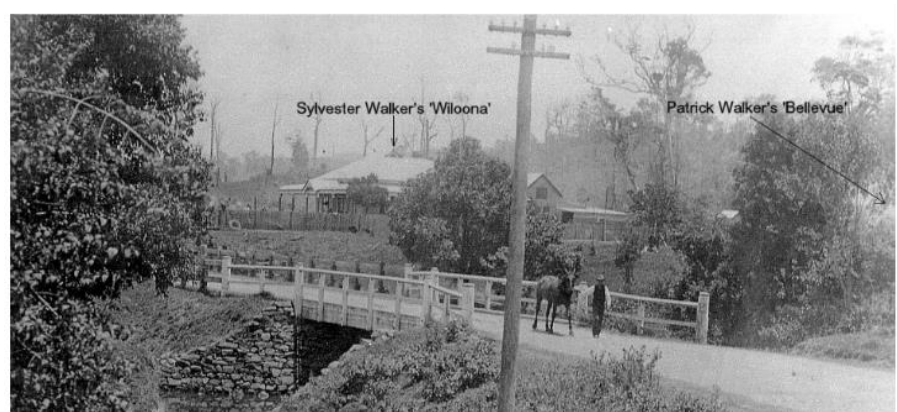
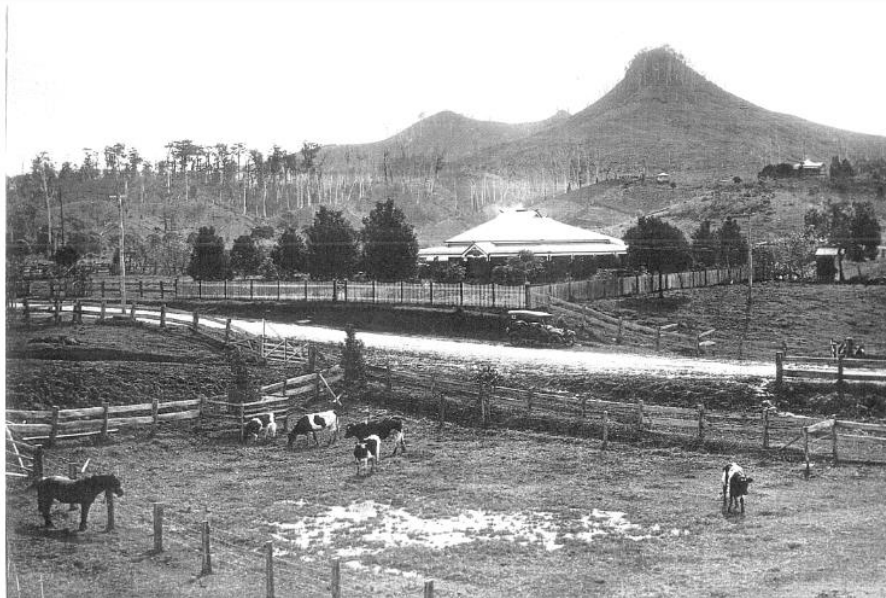


Heritage Referral

Bellevue 20 Coolamon Scenic Drive &

Wilooona 5 Main Arm Road, Mullumbimby



September 2021

Prepared by

CLARENCE HERITAGE

for Byron Shire Council

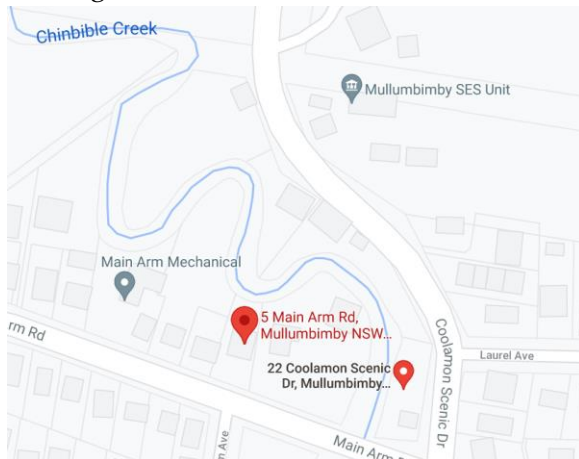
1. Background

The Brunswick Valley Historical Society (BVHS) has raised concerns to Byron Shire Council about the condition of two significant surviving early dwellings in Mullumbimby and highlighted the potential heritage significance of these early dwellings.

'Bellevue' 22 Coolamon Scenic Drive, Mullumbimby

'Wilooona' 5 Main Arm Road, Mullumbimby

A site visit was carried out from the public road by Nancy Tarlao BSC and Deborah Wray, Heritage Advisor to BSC in June 2021.



2. Heritage Status

The subject properties are not within the Mullumbimby Heritage Conservation Area or listed as heritage items under Byron Shire LEP 2014 and therefore have no heritage protection.

3. History

The following information was provided by Brunswick Valley Historical Society:

Early Selectors of Suburban Lots Mullumbimby

Patrick Walker acquired James Davidson's 80 ac block, portion 5, Parish of Mullumbimby in Mar 1908, with the subsequent addition of various adjacent lots within the suburban lands of the Village of Mullumbimby.

After building the new homestead 'Belmont', he passed the lot to son Billy ~1911 and allegedly retired to 'Bellevue' on Chinbible Creek, on the corner of Main Arm Road and Murwillumbah Road/Coolamon Scenic Drive.

He had acquired lots 201, 202, 281 and 122 ~1906. It is understood that 'Bellevue' was erected in 1908/09, shortly after he acquired the four lots totaling ~12ac near Davidson's bridge over Chinbible Creek. But there is a suspicion that 'Bellevue' was in fact pre-existing on lot 202 and moved to lot 122 after the 3 lots on the right bank of the creek were passed to son Sylvester, whose new home, 'Wilooona', was completed on lot 202 in May 1911.

'Bellevue' was likely erected by **Hector Thomas Blanch** (1866 Grafton – 1951 Nambour), who had been the first selector in 1903 when he turned up from Alstonville to open a coachbuilding and wheelwright business, later branching out as a builder, erecting the Billinudgel Anglican

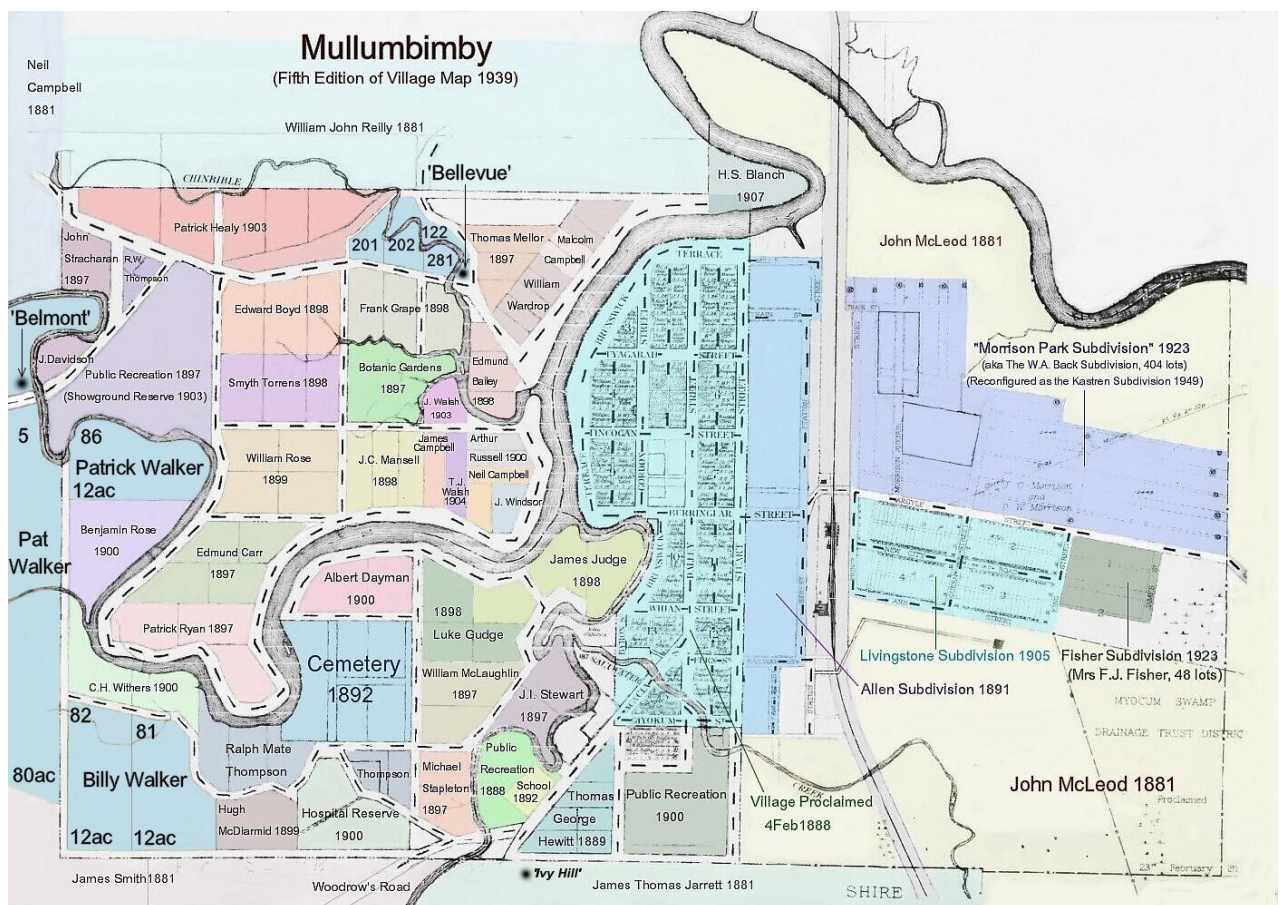
church in 1907 amongst other things. It's possible he moved and re-erected 'Bellevue' for **Patrick Walker** as part of the sale contract? (The sale was probably sometime in 1909 when Hector acquired 160 acres at Eudlo, near Nambour, to take advantage of *the more liberal land laws of the Sister State*. He was farewelled from Mullumbimby in Jan 1910 to start a new career as a farmer).

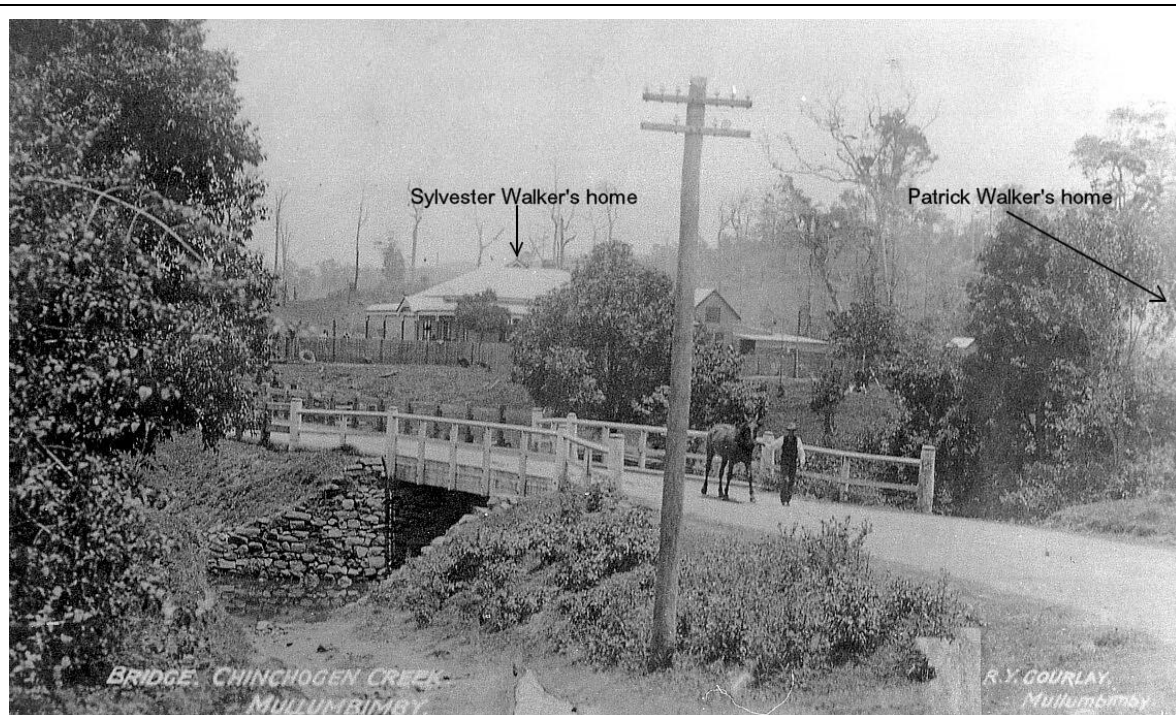
Patrick Walker's son Sylvester built a new home 'Wiloona' on the centre block in 1911. Sometime prior to his death, Patrick moved in with Sylvester, probably after the death of housekeeper Mrs North in 1936?)

Also in the property portfolio were 8 lots acquired in the Livingstone subdivision of 1905. He sold 6 of these lots 1911 and retained the 2 largest on Prince Street, near Ann Street.

In Jan 1918 he also acquired a building in Dalley Street that became the Municipal Council Chambers leased *at a rental of 8s per week* in Mar 1918 until the new edifice opened in Jun 1934. What is now known as 'Palm Avenue' opposite Sylvester's property was known as 'Walker Street' until Feb 1966.

It is known that in 1986 Miss Emily Hopf was the occupant of one of these ex-Walker houses. She died 10 Apr 2005, aged 97.





Davidson's Bridge on Main Arm Road over Chinbible Creek completed Jun1907.

Auctioneer Syl Walker's handsome new villa residence, on an admirable site..., is now in occupation by that gentleman (wef May1911). In the building are 7 rooms – two bedrooms, dining room, sitting room, kitchen, bath-room and pantry - all of large dimensions..., and another building which stood there has been removed and re-erected, probably erected by previous owner H.T. Blair who acquired lots 201 and 202 in 1903.



Bellevue looking very sad Apr2021

Source BVHS



'Bellevue' Apr2021



Bellevue Apr2021



Bellevue Apr2021

Source BVHS



Wiloona Apr2021



Wiloona Apr2021

Source BVHS.

2. Heritage Assessment Criteria.

There are seven criteria under which a place can be assessed in the context of State or Local heritage themes as outlined in the NSW Heritage Management System, Assessing Heritage Significance (NSW Heritage Office 2001). It will be considered to be of State or Local significance if it meets one or more of the following criteria.

Criterion a) Historical significance: *an item is important in the course, or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area.)*

Criterion b) Historical (Social /Associative) significance; *an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person or a group of persons of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

Criteria c) Aesthetic significance: *an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).*

Criteria d) Social significance; *an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

Criteria e) Research potential: *an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area). Significance under this criterion must have the potential to yield new or further substantial information.*

Criteria f) Rarity: *an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (for the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

Criteria g) Representativeness: *an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics or a class of NSW's (or local area's) Cultural or natural places or Cultural or natural environments.*

6. Assessment of Significance

Criterion a) Historical significance: *an item is important in the course, or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area.)*

Bellevue at 22 Coolamon Scenic Drive Mullumbimby c1908-9 and *Wilooona* at 5 Main Arm Rd, Mullumbimby c1911 both provide evidence of early settlement in Mullumbimby, as domestic dwellings built in the early part of the 20th Century. They illustrate the growth and development on the edge of the township during the early generations of the European settlement of Mullumbimby.

Criterion b Historical (Social /Associative) significance; *an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person or a group of persons of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

The dwellings hold associative significance with the Blanch and Walker families.

'Bellevue' at 22 Coolamon Scenic Drive, was likely erected by Hector Thomas Blanch(1866 Grafton – 1951 Nambour), who had been the first selector in 1903 when he turned up from Alstonville to open a coachbuilding and wheelwright business. It later became the residence of Patrick Walker (1845 Reidsdale – 1941 Mullumbimby) in 1908/09 . He was dubbed 'the grand old man' of Mullumbimby (lived to 97 years old) after a lifetime of distinguished service in Mullum and Billinudgel community affairs.

'Wilooona' at 5 Main Arm Road, was built in 1911 for Patrick's auctioneer son Sylvester Walker (21Mar1878 Copmanhurst – 15Feb1949 Mullumbimby), also prominent in community affairs, Sylvester being a former Alderman of the Mullumbimby Council. Both were strongly involved with the Mullumbimby Agricultural Society Patrick becoming a life member. Patrick Walker was also living at Wilooona when he died 1941 and Sylvester in 1949.

Criteria c) Aesthetic significance: *an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).*

Both dwellings demonstrate aesthetic significance for their historic scale, form and materials as examples of vernacular architecture of the area. It is noted that Bellevue has been modified by fibre cement cladding and changes to windows however these elements can be restored to original details.

Criteria d) Social significance; *an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

The property does not meet this criterion.

Criteria e) Research potential: *an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area). Significance under this criterion must have the potential to yield new or further substantial information.*

The property is not likely to yield information of a nature which would meet this criterion.

Criteria f) Rarity: *an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (for the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

The dwellings have a degree of rarity locally as part of a group of early residences on the edge of the township of Mullumbimby.

Criteria g) Representativeness: *an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics or a class of NSW's (or local area's) Cultural or natural places or Cultural or natural environments.*

The dwellings are representative of Federation era dwellings in terms of scale, roof form, joinery details and fabric.

Comparative Examples



Most heritage listed residences are located within the main township in the locality of Mullumbimby. Examples located outside of the township include;

- *Inverary* at 130 Main Arm Road Mullumbimby a significant earlier dwelling of the late 1800s, connected to a pioneering family of the district, the Campbells.(Item I143)
- *Ivy Hill* Coolamon Scenic Drive Mullumbimby C1910 .This early homestead 'Ivy Hill' was built around 1910 by pioneer farmer Hugh McD. Livingston.(Item I131)

Statement of Significance

Bellevue at 22 Coolamon Scenic Drive, and *Wilooona* at 5 Main Arm Road are evidence of the growth and development of Mullumbimby during the early part of the 1900s on the edge of the township, and hold social association with the Walker family who were prominent citizens and heavily involved in community and civic affairs and the Mullumbimby Agricultural Society. Aesthetically the houses demonstrate original form, architectural style and fabric of the Federation era.

Recommendation

Bellevue and Wilooona meet several heritage significance criteria and the future conservation of these dwellings is strongly supported. It is recommended that Council in consultation with the owner(s) should consider their inclusion on Schedule 5 of Byron LEP 2014.

Annual heritage grants are offered to assist owners with costs of maintenance.

References

1. The Icomos Burra Charter 2013.
2. NSW Heritage Office; Assessing-Heritage-Significance 2001.
3. Stubbs, Brett. Byron Shire Council Community-Based-Heritage-Study- Volume-2- Thematic-History November 2006.
4. Brunswick Valley Historical Society information.
5. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article193760802> Obituary of P. Walker 1941.
6. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article194569172> Obituary of S. A Walker 1949.

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