

*The editor acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as traditional custodians of the continent of Australia and its Islands and therefore recognises members of the Gamilaraay Nation as traditional custodians of country on which our home town of Manilla stands.*

## MANILLA & DISTRICT TIMELINE 1800s-1901

- 1818
- Exploration party led by John OXLEY crosses the Peel River (then known as Calala), 30km south-east of Manilla. Oxley's Anchor, placed near Hallsville beside the road to Tamworth, marks the vicinity.
- 1823
- Exploration party led by Allan CUNNINGHAM names a passage over the Liverpool Range onto the Liverpool Plains "Pandora Pass". He crosses the Namoi River (then known as Mularindi), continues north and finds the Gwydir River.
- 1827
- Exploration party led by Allan CUNNINGHAM passes through district on way north.
- 1828
- Exploration party led by Thomas MITCHELL traverses the Namoi River.
  - SQUATTER Otto BALDWIN takes up land west of the Namoi River and forms Dinnawirindi Station, said to amount to around 200,000 acres in the 1850s.
- 1829
- BOUNDARY LIMITS are drawn to restrict settlement and grazing;
  - The COLONY (New South Wales) is divided into 19 COUNTIES within Boundary Limits. Policing the boundary proves impossible and the limits are soon breached for running cattle.
- 1832
- NORTHERN DISTRICT LAND within Boundary
- Limits taken up by prospective farmers;
- CATTLE RUNS set up with shepherds (future boundary riders) left in charge of stock.
  - Some RUNS become STATIONS with substantial dwellings and outbuildings; Government report of the time shows as many settlers, cattle & sheep outside Boundary Limits as were inside;
  - SQUATTERS are ordered to pay 10 pounds per/year to squat on Government land;
  - BALDWIN family takes up land, 6 miles below junction of Manilla & Namoi rivers, on part of the area then called DINNAWIRINDI, now the town of Manilla;
  - Mr WHITE secures grazing rights of land on Namoi river upstream from the Peel river and establishes a cattle run.
- 1837
- Richard ROUSE of Windsor sets up 32,000 acres of land for a cattle run, called MANILLA STATION;
  - PASTURAGE LICENCES become compulsory;
  - Otto BALDWIN applies for a licence for DINNAWIRINDI Station; licence held conjointly by Otto Baldwin and son Harvest;
  - Overseer Joseph GREENHATCH, holds post on Dinnawirindi to the east of the Baldwin homestead.
  - WHITE surrenders his pasturage licence to Wm. SIMMS-BELL who establishes KEYPET Station (later renamed Keepit).
- 1838
- Major NUNN is sent north by Colonial Administrator SNODGRASS, to quell alleged problems with ABORIGINAL inhabitants;
  - Major NUNN arrives at the Joseph Greenhatch
- outpost of Dinnawirindi Station 40km n/w of Tamworth with 23 mounted police;
- Local tribe of GAMILARAAY people is ambushed by Nunn's party at the Namoi River and scatters into bush. A number are rounded up and marched back to Greenhatch.
- 1839
- SQUATTER LICENCES introduced Gov. Gipps;
  - Edward MAYNE is appointed COMMISSIONER of POLICE for Liverpool Plains, is stationed at Murrurundi;
  - The PRINGLE Family take up land around today's Somerton and Bective and name the station SUMMER HILL.
- 1840
- POLICE BASE established at SOMERTON (then known as Goora) with 10 white officers and several "black-trackers";
  - FIRST CONVICT SETTLEMENT in northern area established on hill half mile downstream from present Somerton bridge;
  - SUMMER HILL STATION later renamed Somerton, is worked by convict labour;
  - TEAMSTERS & CARRIERS ferry goods from the Hunter district through to northern goldfield settlements & cattle stations via tracks following the local Namoi and Manilla Rivers.
- 1845
- Crown land occupancy laws enlarged by Gov. Gipps.

1851

- TEAMSTERS' CAMPSITES regularly set up along the southern bank of the Namoi due to high river level; halts carriers passing north from Maitland;
- George VENESS, former English printer working in Barraba for storekeeper W. McKid, selects land at the junction of the Manilla & Namoi Rivers.

1853

- John RIDEOUT builds a boarding house on the north side of the Namoi R., between Rowan and Manilla Sts. Sold to Davis, later acquired by Connor;
- George VENESS arrives with wife Sarah and son John, to set up home & business at Junction; Establishes a garden, orchard and fenced cow-yard on ground now bounded by Manilla, Strafford and Arthur Streets;

1854

- FIRST GENERAL STORE & INN established by George Veness above the known track on the eastern bank of the Namoi River at its junction with the Manilla River. Veness leads the way to town settlement, acts as first Postmaster.

1856

- FIRST POST OFFICE established in Veness' store Market Street. Town receives official name of MANILLA, nominated by acting Post-master George Veness; mail delivered on horseback until c. 1874.
- 3 VENESS brothers, Charles, Stephen and Daniel arrive to take up positions and further community development in Manilla and other districts. Daniel remains in Manilla.

1857

- First PUBLIC OFFICER & POUND-KEEPER Daniel VENESS. Holds position for 40 years;
- 1st POUND set up above eastern bank Namoi river.
- NEWCASTLE - MAITLAND Railway line completed;

- RAIL line from MAITLAND - TAMWORTH is begun.

1859

- Thomas CONNER takes over Ridout's Accommodation house until 1865, when bought by Robert Davies;
- JOHN GILL extends his Maitland - Tamworth Mail Coach Run through to Warialda

1860

- NSW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL instructs Lands Office Tamworth and Gvt. Surveyor Charles FLIDE to lay out the town of Manilla.;
- The "AUSTRALIAN ARMS" Inn is built by Thomas CONNOR at North Manilla, northern side of Namoi river to the west of iron bridge.

1861

- "AUSTRALIAN ARMS" Inn is advertised for sale without outcome;
- HOTEL established at TARPOLY by Mrs HAYDON;
- First SALE of town lands at NORTH MANILLA; Arthur Dewhurst conducts initial survey of town of Manilla

1862

- MARKET GARDEN & ORCHARD established by George HARRINGTON on ground bordered by Court, Manilla and Rowan Streets until 1890;

1863

- POLICE DEPOT established eastern side of the first road from Tamworth north of Greenhatch Creek, (Rushes Creek Road), a slab building with bark roof, horse yards and resting paddocks. In operation to 1875;
- ROAD from TAMWORTH surveyed by Arthur DEWHURST - Tamworth to MOORE Creek, then to Deadhorse Gully, near Norris' Inn south of Manilla settlement;
- DEWHURST moves on to survey the town of

NARRABRI;

- Detailed SURVEY of NAMOI River - Narrabri to Manilla, conducted by Arthur DEWHURST;

1864

- SURVEY of MANILLA TOWN carried out by Arthur DEWHURST, naming streets after his family, his chain-man, his home town and himself;
- Surveyor DEWHURST selects land at Halls Creek;
- MAJOR FLOOD sweeps away Veness' store at the junction;
- FITZGERALD's house on the west bank of the Manilla River above the Junction, is swept away, drowning four;
- Indigenous families vacate the junction area in advance of the flood;
- 1st DINNAWIRINDI Station homestead washed away;
- The AUSTRALIAN ARMS Inn at north Manilla inundated by floodwaters;
- 2 bodies found 300m downstream are buried above the eastern bank of the Namoi by Dewhurst, Veness and others;
- TOWN POUND relocated to land s/w corner Court & Arthur Streets, later site of 2<sup>nd</sup> Public School.
- George VENESS builds second store on sth-east corner Market and Namoi Streets

1865

- The AUSTRALIAN ARMS Inn is advertised for sale in Maitland Mercury. No sale.
- White population of Manilla numbers 50

1867

- DAVID BEYNON is first to select land on the Manilla River;
- DURHAM COURT renamed from Dinnawirindi. Homestead built for Otto Baldwin on northern side of Namoi replaces house lost in 1864 flood;
- WILLIAM HILL purchases the AUSTRALIAN ARMS Inn;

## 1868

- THOMAS BOWMAN, teamster, selects 1,280 acres at Upper Manilla;
- TARPOLY MAIL COACH STABLES established on Barraba Rd Upper Manilla;
- R. COULTON, John BYRNES, Edward HILL & W. ILIFFE, settlers, select land at Manilla for cultivation.

## 1869

- D.A. Beynon, John Donnelly, Edmund Annis-Brown, J W. Short, Donald McDonald, and John Wheeler also selected land within ten miles (16km) of Manilla, between 1868 and 1872;
- Wm. HILL buys Robert DAVIES' Nth Manilla Accommodation house.

## 1870

- JOHN & GEORGE NIXON, teamsters, select land in UPPER MANILLA Valley;
- "OAKHAMPTON" established by John NIXON
- "The PINES" established by George NIXON;
- Teamster JOHN COOTE Snr., becomes fourth to select in UPPER MANILLA Valley;
- First Government SUB-DIVISION Sale of Manilla town lands (southern side).

## c.1870s

- JUNCTION HOTEL. Single story timber building, s/w cnr. Manilla & Strafford sts. builder, Coulton. Research shows a public meeting took place at "The Junction Hotel" in c.1875 to discuss the need for a rail service. [Green2004.]

## 1873

- Government Tenders posted for CONVEYANCE of MAILS between Tamworth and towns northwest;
- Surveyor GEORGE DOWE selects land at Milliwindi, Keepit area.
- John FITZGERALD establishes "HUNTSGROVE" in Keepit district;
- Thomas BOWMAN selects 1,280 acres on Namoi

River and calls it "NORTH CUERINDI";

- John WHEELER selects land at Long Flat, North Manilla. Becomes one of district's first wheat growers;
- PRIVATE SCHOOL established corner Rowan & Strafford Sts..

## 1874

- JOHN GILL's MAIL COACH run from Tamworth through Manilla to Warialda taken up by renowned driver GEORGE WILKINSON;
- FIRST WHEAT grown in Manilla district for commercial purposes and sold to mill at Tamworth;
- KEEPIT & UPPER MANILLA SCHOOL buildings constructed for full-time classes;
- BELL family sells "KEEPIT" to the Blaxland Family. Renamed "KEEPIT";
- GEORGE COULTON establishes "ARLINGTON" on Manilla Road Sth;
- UPPER MANILLA SCHOOL building constructed;
- SCHOOL LESSONS conducted in 1st Methodist church, western side Rowan street between Strafford & Market streets;
- DURHAM COURT finds fame as THOROUGHbred Racehorse and SHORTHORN Cattle Stud.
- Warialda MAIL COACH held up between Barraba and Manilla by 4 armed men.

## 1875

- POLICEMAN'S LODGE with lockup constructed by T.J. Bowen, Court Street between Manilla and Namoi Streets, the first building constructed on large s/w corner block which would later also accommodate Manilla Court House and Police buildings;
- CRICKET matches played on the flat at North Manilla;
- J.T. FLYNN purchases the "AUSTRALIAN ARMS" Inn, North Manilla from William Hill;
- CHARLES NORRIS constructs the timber "CARRIER'S ARMS INN" at KLORI (Norris' Inn) on old Tamworth Road.

## 1876

- First COURT of PETTY SESSIONS held at Manilla;
- M.C. MACKENZIE establishes a store in Market Street at nth-west corner Namoi & Market Streets, diagonally opposite Veness' 2nd Store;
- First Public SCHOOL TEACHER, Mr. MARSHALL 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

- Non-denominational UNION CHURCH is built at corner of Manilla & Barraba Streets North Manilla, by brothers P. & J. Mc Gauley;
- PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSES established 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.

## 1878

- TELEGRAPH LINE completed to Manilla;
- 1st RESIDENT POSTMASTER Edward Done appointed, timber premises eastern side Manilla street;
- UNION CHURCH Trustees appointed.
- Unsuccessful BRIDGED CAUSEWAY constructed below Rowan Street on Namoi River. Dubbed Bennett's Folly after the politician who ordered it.

## 1879

- FIRST BRICK SCHOOL built for 50 pupils with teacher's residence at North Manilla. Operates until c.1898, when foot crossing of the traffic bridge becomes too dangerous. Classes transferred

to the Mechanics Institute Hall for 2 years, until opening of the new school in Court Street 1900.

1880

- SELECTION of LAND around Manilla, Halls Creek, Upper Manilla and Namoi River, changes Manilla from a cattle station area to CLOSER SETTLEMENT of smaller properties;
- WHEAT & WOOL become chief industries;
- Petition for building of HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE over the NAMOI River at Manilla sent to Government;
- MANILLA CRICKET CLUB formed by J.T. Flynn.

1881

- MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS is met by Manilla deputation at Flynn's "Australian Arms" Inn, requesting go-ahead on traffic bridge.

1882

- JUNCTION HOTEL licence granted to Stephen Veness s/w corner, Manilla Street. Single storey building constructed by builder Coulton during 1870s;
- SUPPLY TENDER let in England for steelwork required for construction of Manilla traffic bridge.

1883

- BUILDING TENDERS called by NSW Government for building of bridge over Namoi River at Manilla;
- CEMETERY GROUND assigned north east of Manilla on Namoi River Road;
- EDUCATION DISTRICT 79 set up by Education Council, comprising the schools of Manilla, Barraba, Tarpoly, Upper Manilla, Keepit & Milliwindi.
- UPPER MANILLA School building replaced.

1884

- BRIDGE FOUNDATIONS site pegged out by Government Surveyor LAWRENSON;
- G.H. ROYCE & Co. begins construction of iron bridge across Namoi River - designer John MACDONALD;

- ROYCE'S HOUSE constructed in Manilla Street. Likely builder T.J. Bowen, who came to assist Royce.

1885

- TOWN of MANILLA proclaimed;
- PASTURAGE HOLDINGS established by Government;
- LAND AMENDMENT ACT makes land selection easier and results in influx of free selection in Manilla District;
- LARGE LEASES coming up for renewal create a rush for selection;
- UPPER MANILLA POSTAL Service and Store established, Mary-Ann NIXON Post-mistress;
- Timber SCHOOL of ARTS opens in Manilla Street.

1886

- COURT HOUSE built by T.J. BOWEN, s/w corner Court & Manilla Streets;
- NAMOI RIVER BRIDGE work completed, linking North and South Manilla.

1889

- METHODIST Church built by T.J. Bowen in Rowan Street behind School of Arts;
- ROMAN CATHOLIC Church built at Upper Manilla;
- MAJOR DROUGHT turns Namoi and Manilla Rivers to gravel beds;
- POST OFFICE of brick, under construction n/w cnr. Manilla & Strafford Streets, Thomas Bowen builder;
- First SUBDIVISION of Durham Court Station;
- TAMWORTH to MANILLA RAILWAY LEAGUE is formed at a meeting at the Caledonian Hotel, Tamworth.

1890

- COMMERCIAL BANKING Co. of Sydney opens next door to Royce's House Manilla (south side);
- POST OFFICE opens nth-west cnr Manilla & Strafford streets. T.J. Bowen builder.

1891

- ROYAL HOTEL single story constructed for M.C.Mackenzie by T.J.Bowen cnr Stafford & Manilla Streets. Oliphant 1st Licencee. 2nd storey added 1900s.

1892

- MANILLA RACING CLUB races held at Durham Court RACE TRACK until 1922.

1893

- RAILWAY SURVEY, Tamworth to Manilla;
- KEEPIT STATION taken over by Dalgety & Co. - comprises 33,000 acres, runs 15,000 sheep & 1,000 head cattle.
- CHURCH of ENGLAND Church built by Bowen and opened at sth-west corner Strafford & Namoi Streets on land donated by William Hill.

1894

- CATHOLIC CHURCH built by T. J. Bowen and opened at south-east corner Court and Rowan Streets facing west;
- HARRINGTON'S GARDEN and ORCHARD ceases operation.

1895

- MANILLA PROGRESS ASSOCIATION formed;
- JOHN COOTE Jnr. establishes imported DEVON Cattle & LINCOLN Sheep Stud.

1896

- KEEPIT Site PROPOSAL for an irrigation scheme on the Namoi River put forward after first search for a possible site;

1898

- Public demands RELOCATION of PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSES to Mechanics Institute Hall due to danger to children walking across traffic bridge. Classes held there for 2 years.

## 1899

- The MANILLA EXPRESS first published January 14. 1st printery at sth-east cnr. Manilla & Court Streets;
- T.J. TRELOAR paid £350 (pounds) for land on the northeast corner of Manilla & Court Streets.
- FFLOUR MILL established by CLARK & CROCKER, northern end of Market Street, south side of Namoi river;
- FARMER'S & SETTLER'S Association, Manilla Branch formed;
- TOBACCO grown for commercial production - several growers and 2 large pumping plants on Manilla River;
- First PASSENGER TRAIN from Manilla carries 35 to Tamworth Show;
- HOTEL LICENCE applications are made for establishment of a further 3 Hotels in Manilla, one at the Railway Station, one in vicinity of Court House and the third at corner Market & Manilla Streets, the last 2 being granted.

## Court Sts.

## 1901

- INCORPORATION of TOWN of MANILLA as a Municipality approved by Governor of NSW;
- SEVERE DROUGHT. Major stock losses;
- FIRST MUNICIPAL COUNCIL elected;
- IRRIGATION PLANTS installed on Manilla River properties enables production of vegetables, tobacco and the establishment of dairies;
- MANILLA to BARRABA RAILWAY BILL passes through Parliament;
- Official PUBLIC SCHOOL OPENING set for January cancelled due to Queen Victoria's death. Local opening celebration held March 9, 1901;
- Drought builds.

## Author's note:

This TIMELINE is a progressive listing, subject to regular review and change, as more accurate information surrounding events comes to light.

Next review due May 2022. Please check back for current editions.

## Sources:

National Library of Australia Newspaper & Govt. Gazette listings;  
 "The Transformation of Manellae" (A. R. Macleod, 1949);  
 "The Chronological History of Tamworth" (Lyall Green & Warren Newman, 2004)

Di Nichol

Jan. 2022

## 1900

- Draft PETITION asks Governor of NSW to declare Manilla a MUNICIPALITY;
- GRAIN SHED built at Manilla railway, Farmers and Settlers Assn. to pay annual lease;
- 1st Public School at North Manilla formally closes;
- New school for 200 pupils built cnr. Court & Arthur Streets, formerly Town Pound site;
- MANILLA TOWN POUND formed, bandmaster J. Simpson (Chemist);
- IMPERIAL HOTEL constructed by Bowen, cnr . Manilla & Market Streets for G.M.Oliphant;
- COURT HOUSE HOTEL constructed by T.J. Bowen, Manilla Street south near Court street;
- UPPER MANILLA BRIDGE built over Manilla River.
- SCHOOL of ARTS replaced with larger brick hall, built by Bowen, title changed to MECHANICS' INSTITUTE. Additional small timber hall built on southern side.
- T.J. TRELOAR contracts T.J. Bowen to construct speculative shop premises on n/e corner Manilla &