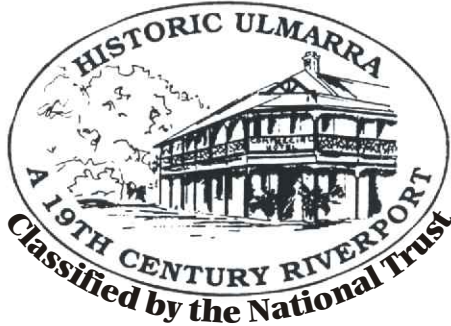


# ULMARRA

## HERITAGE WALK



A visit to Ulmarra is like stepping back in time as the village remains one of the finest examples of a 19th Century riverport in Australia. The entire village is classified by the National Trust.

Little wonder that this community is keen to develop the village as a town of living history with "crafty" businesses occupying the lovely old commercial centre.

The lattice work and colonial style of the Commercial Hotel attracts considerable comment as it nestles on the banks of the Clarence River. The hotel and village were used as the location for the T.V mini-series "Fields of Fire" - a story based on life in a 1929 Queensland sugar cane town. Scenes for the film 'The Picture Show Man' were also shot here.

Bailey Park, beside the hotel, is a good local fishing spot. Coach groups and travellers regularly use the park facilities, including disabled toilets, and enjoy the old photographs and information on a "Heritage Trails" board.

A walk down memory lane may be the best way to describe a wander through Ulmarra.

By the time you explore the art & crafts or antiques shops and enjoy refreshments at one of the local tearooms, coffee shops or hotel you will love the place and want to learn more of its history.

Thomas Small originally bought the land on which the town rests in 1857 for 87 pounds and fourteen shillings. The Small's had originally come to the area as cedar cutters.

The original township of Lower Ulmarra was situated about half a kilometre north of the present town and during the 1860's supported two hotels, three stores and a post and telegraph office. Nothing remains of that township today.

Farmers opened up the district and after clearing the valuable timber, planted maize and in 1856 introduced sugar cane. After initial successes with the crop the Belmore Sugar Mill opened in 1868.

The industry was then plagued with failure and misfortune and eventually the mill closed.

However, Ulmarra continued to prosper with the growth of the dairy industry. In the early 1900's Ulmarra was a bustling town boasting 4 blacksmiths, a killing factory and bacon works, general stores, hospital, two hotels, two schools and three permanent police men to maintain law and order.

Ulmarra wharf was a major pick up point for steam and sailing vessels serving Sydney markets. The town thrived but improved road systems and advancing technology eventually finished Ulmarra as a major river port.

At one time, 19 vehicular ferries crossed various sections of the Clarence River to link local communities. One of the area's two remaining vehicular ferries links Ulmarra to Southgate, on the western bank. This wide river crossing is a pleasant experience but is not suited to cars with caravans, or coaches.

While many new settlers are attracted by the town's quiet beauty, the commercial future of Ulmarra lies in it's past.

### EXPLORE ULMARRA

If you feel like taking an interesting heritage walk follow the map (on the reverse side) and enjoy these delightful features:

**1) THE OLD BUTTER FACTORY.** The original factory was opened in 1892 by the Lady Mayoress, Mrs Glissan, and was known as the 'Ulmarra Butter Factory.' Later the name was changed to 'Clarence River Dairy Company Ltd.' The present building was built in 1922. It still operated as a milk factory until the 1980's.

**2) ANGLICAN CHURCH & RECTORY.** The church which now stands on this site was opened in 1912, the foundation stone is still in place. The rectory would have been built about the same time.

**3)** This property was the site of the 'Belmore Sugar Mill', which did its first crush in 1870. The house (41 Pacific Highway) is called 'Belmore' and is now the home of Christina Jago. The house fronts the river, as this was the transport link in those days. It is not clear when the house was built, but it would appear to be C.1900. In later years it was bought by a doctor, and the small building at the highway entrance was used as the surgery. This home is beautiful, with wide verandahs and beautiful gardens.

**4) UNITING CHURCH.** This was previously known as the 'Methodist Church', and originally faced Small St., which later became the Pacific Highway. In the late 1930's the church was moved to face River Street.

**5) MASONIC HALL.** The Masonic Hall is a public hall with stage, supper room, kitchen and toilet block on the ground floor, with the lodge room upstairs.

On 10 October, 1889, 'The Ulmarra Lodge No 186' was consecrated and dedicated. The installation of the first master, Brother John Scott, followed. The lodge met at various places in Ulmarra until the move to this new hall on 1 October, 1906. The accepted tender for construction was three hundred & forty-five pounds from Mr George Campbell. The architect was Mr F W C Schaeffer and his fee was ten pounds.

Apart from being used by the Masonic Lodge, the hall has been used as a movie theatre with silent movies first, and then the movies with soundtracks brought around by the travelling 'Picture Show Man', Mr Penn.

The hall has recently been re-painted in heritage colours, and today's members are very active and show the same interest as their predecessors. Still in use, the building stands as a monument to the foresight of the early pioneers.

**6) POLICE RESIDENCE & COURT HOUSE.** The first sitting in the new Ulmarra Court House was in April, 1887. The buildings were built on land donated by Thomas Small Junior, and he is in the court records as being the first JP, and he may have been the first Magistrate.

**7) COMMERCIAL HOTEL.** The first Commercial Hotel was built in 1873 for Mr James Brown. The present building was constructed in 1906, after fire destroyed the original building. The kitchen area of the original hotel is still being used. The hotel offers icy cold beer, home cooked country kitchen meals, beer garden on the river bank, Pub TAB, Sky Channel and accommodation. The hotel with its colonial style and fine iron lacework featured in the movie 'The Picture Show Man' and more recently in the TV mini series 'Fields of Fire'. Phone (02) 6644 5305.

**8) 'SILVERWEIR' 17 River Street.** This is one of the oldest homes in the village of Ulmarra, having been built for Samuel Cohen (first Mayor) in 1872. He was also the first shop

owner in Ulmarra. The house dates possibly to c.1870. This home also faces the river with a large yard and imposing view. The house is complete with coach house, servant's quarters, cellar and a separate kitchen. Please note that it is a private residence.

**9) 27 RIVER STREET.** This home was built for Mr James Retallick, after his home in Coldstream Street was destroyed by fire along with his general store in 1906 (see No. 12). Council bought the house to be used as a residence for the Town Clerk of the Municipality of Ulmarra. This house has been faithfully maintained in original condition, and is now the home of former Shire Clerk Mr Royce Piper and his wife, Elsie.

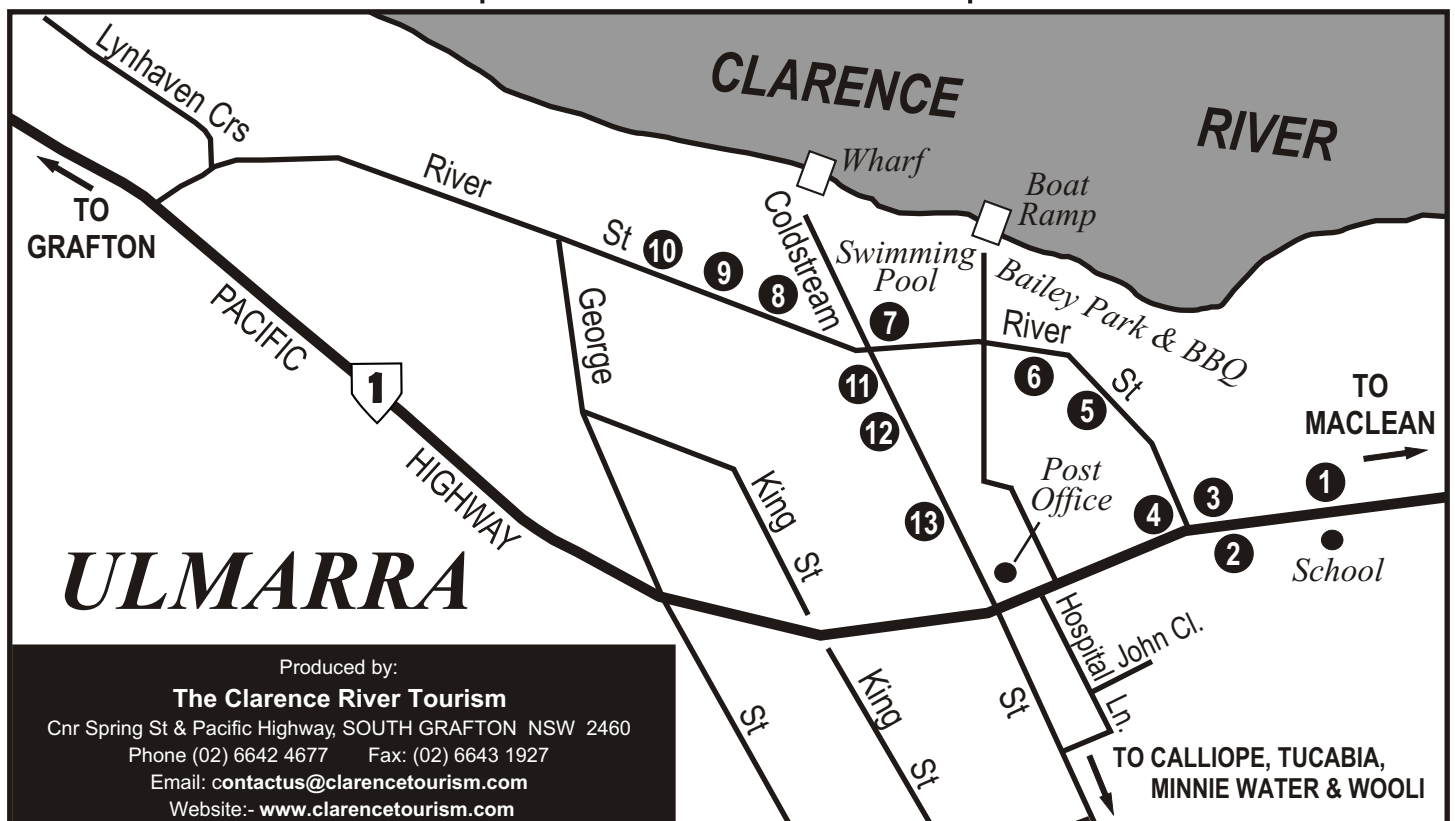
**10) CATHOLIC CHURCH, 35-37 RIVER STREET.** The church was built in 1912, and a convent school was situated behind the church on the riverbank. The house next door was built for either the nuns at the school or the parish priest. The house is in good condition, and is now the home of the Northam family.

**11) 3 COLDSTREAM STREET.** This is the original site of the 'Exchange Hotel' which was destroyed by the 1906 fire. The building now on the site was constructed in 1906, and the publican at that time was Mr M Brennan. It has now been converted into flats, and much of the original

pressed metal interior remains intact.

**12) COLDSTREAM GALLERY, 5 COLDSTREAM STREET.** Open Fri-Sun, 10.00am to 4.00pm. Phone (02) 6644 5757. This imposing building was originally known as Reginal "Atwill General Store" and was then sold to Ina Retallicks; their motto was 'All goods sold at Sydney prices.' The current building was constructed after a fire which destroyed the store, Retallick's residence and their bulk store. With a few changes of ownership the store operated until 1970's. In recent years it has seen life as part of Rob & Christina Jago's 'Ulmarra Galleries', Braitlings Antiques, and now is owned by Dorothy Scutt.

**13) ULMARRA FOLK ART COTTAGE** is located in Coldstream Street. This is one of the village's oldest buildings. It is not known for certain when the building was constructed, or for what purpose, although it may have been used in conjunction with the first Police Station which, in the early days, was nearby. At one stage the front verandah was used as the Doctors surgery, and it was also 'Lock's Boarding House' at one period in its life. Enjoy and be inspired. Opened by appointment. Phone (02) 6644 5464.



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