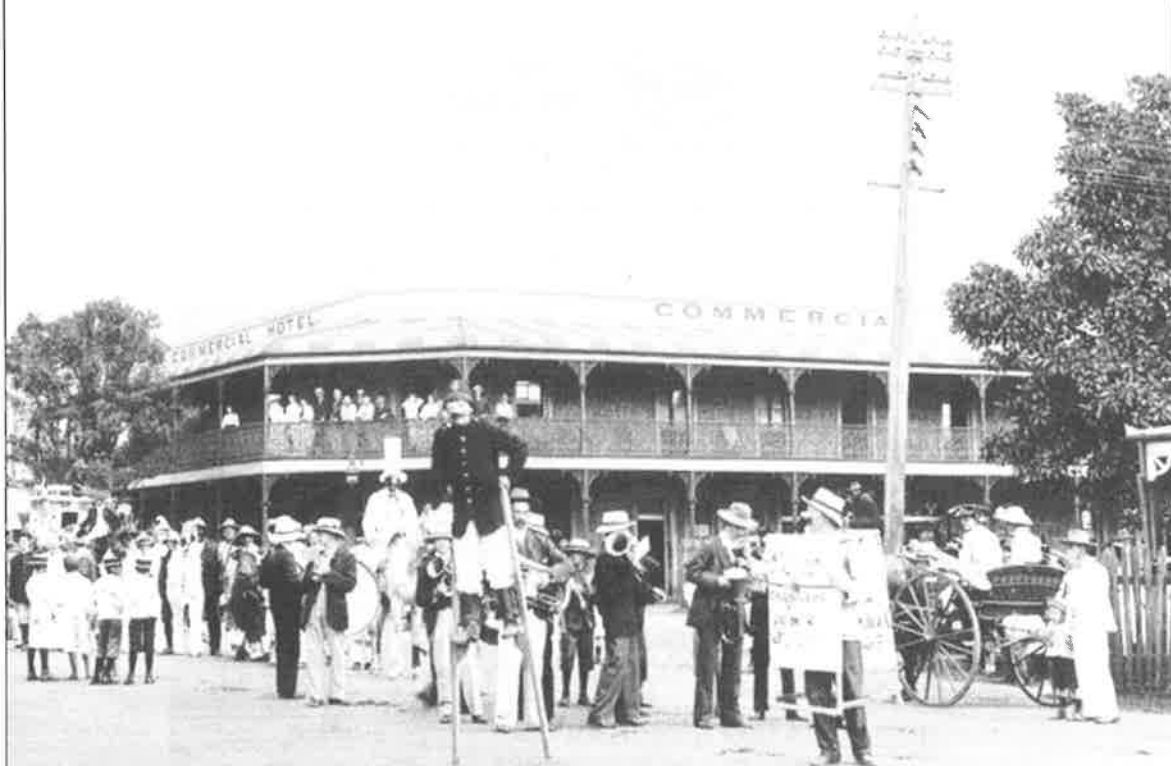


THEMATIC HISTORY OF Richmond Valley Local Government Area



BRETT J. STUBBS

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Richmond Valley
Local Government Area



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Foreword

IN FEBRUARY 2000, Casino Council and the surrounding Richmond River Shire Council were amalgamated to form the Richmond Valley Council. This voluntary union recognised not only the social, economic and historical connections between both local government areas, but also underscored the historical importance of the Richmond River in linking the communities.

Whilst a number of local histories have been published over the years, none have specifically covered our newly created Richmond Valley Council area. Brett Stubbs in his *Thematic History of Richmond Valley Local Government Area* has achieved a notable 'first'.

In accepting the brief to produce a thematic history, Dr Stubbs has undertaken considerable research to successfully meet the challenge of transferring/converting local chronological events into themes covering the whole Local Government Area.

The eight chosen themes correspond to the State Heritage Inventory criteria and this format is consistent with Jane Gardiner's *Richmond Valley Council Community Based Heritage Study* (2007) also commissioned by Council. The two works complement each other, and it is recommended that they be read in conjunction.

On behalf of Richmond Valley Council, I congratulate Brett Stubbs on his thematic history. His work is a welcome addition to our understanding of, and respect for our heritage. Additionally, Brett's publication is proving to be a valuable reference document in the compilation of the Richmond Valley Council Local Environment Plan.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charlie Cox". There is a small star symbol at the end of the signature.

Charlie Cox OAM
MAYOR
RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL

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Preface

THIS 'THEMATIC HISTORY' of the Richmond Valley Local Government Area was prepared to support a community-based heritage study of that area commissioned by Richmond Valley Council, supported by the New South Wales Heritage Office, and carried out from 2004 until 2007 by Jane Gardiner, heritage consultant and the project co-ordinator, and myself, the project historian.

The main purpose of the thematic history is to support the process of identifying items of heritage significance, and making recommendations for their future management and promotion; it is not, therefore, an end in itself. By identifying and explaining the main themes in the history of the area under study, the thematic history provides context for the heritage study, helping to find and describe the remaining evidence of the area's history which best illustrates its key themes, events and processes, and helping to explain the significance of potential heritage items.

This thematic history is fundamentally based on documentary research, but that was strongly complemented by extensive field-work and numerous site inspections. The resulting work is, of necessity, focussed on places and sites, rather than people and social groups. It is therefore not a 'social' history of the Richmond Valley Area, nor is it comprehensive in its scope, but it is thought to contain sufficient interesting and new material to merit its being made available by publication to a wider audience than those for whom it was originally prepared. Moreover, as no single general work of history is available for the whole of the Richmond Valley LGA, publication of the thematic history fills a gap in the historiography of that area.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Where possible and appropriate, good use has been made in the preparation of this work of secondary historical sources such as works of local history dealing with various parts of the Area (e.g. particular towns) and with various historical themes (e.g. sugar cane farming and dairying). Notable among these works are Daley's *Men and a River* (1966), Ryan's *Casino: From Crossing Place to Municipality, 1840-1980* (1980), Smith's *Sweet Beginnings* (1991), Ryan's *Norco 100* (1995), and *Wings at War* (Haughton-James *et al.*, 2004). These sources have been supplemented, and often verified, by the use of a wide range of primary sources, in particular local newspapers such as the *Clarence and Richmond Examiner* (Grafton), *Richmond River Express* (Casino), *Casino and Kyogle Courier* (Casino), *Kyogle Examiner* (Kyogle), *Richmond River Herald* (Coraki), and *Northern Star* (Lismore). A bibliography of works consulted and cited appears at the end of this book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As the name 'community-based heritage study' implies, the Richmond Valley community was actively involved during the course of the study in nominating and

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researching items for listing, and ultimately for protection. Community members were also involved in the preparation of the thematic history by assisting with the identification of relevant historical themes, and by providing input in various ways to the content of the document, including by supplying information and illustrations. Many individuals contributed in many ways, but I especially acknowledge the assistance of the following (in no significant order): Robyn Howell (Lismore), Joan Newman, Norma Anderson, Bill Bartier, Peter Gunthorpe and Eric Rankin (Casino), Joan Roots (Woodburn), Keith Cole (Rappville), Robert Lane (Mallanganee), and Dr Richard Gates (Evans Head). In addition, Tony McAteer of Richmond Valley Council in Casino ably and enthusiastically facilitated the conduct of the study.

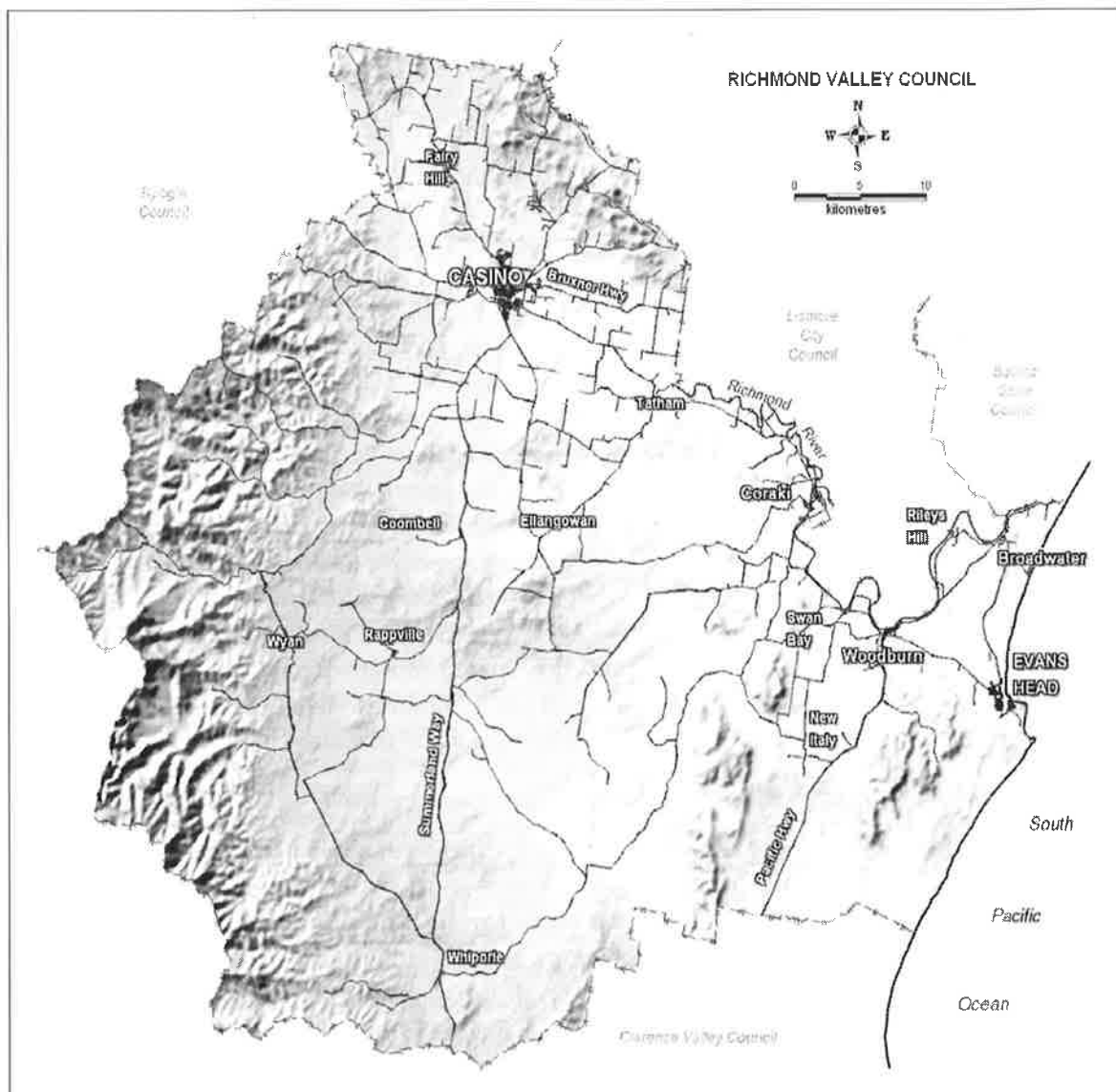


Figure 1: Map showing the boundaries of the Richmond Valley Local Government Area, main urban areas, and some other places referred to in this report

This Thematic History was prepared as part of a community-based heritage study of the Richmond Valley Local Government Area, commissioned by the Richmond Valley Council, and supported by the New South Wales Heritage Office. Its original purpose was to aid the process of identifying items of heritage significance, and making recommendations for their future management and promotion. Beyond that, it contains much material of general interest, so it is now being made available in a new form to a wider audience.



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