

With the line almost completed it became obvious that as the railway station and buildings were being located to the south of the existing village, it would be advantageous for future development to be located near the station. Mr. Wedderburn sold the remainder of Portion 72 to Arthur Belson, a timber merchant, who subdivided it into town blocks and built amongst other things a grand home for himself called Cedrella. The route of the railway line also traversed Roseblade's Farm before reaching Yungaburra Station and along with part of Wood's property; sections of those farms were also subdivided into town blocks.

The line opened and the first train arrived at Yungaburra railway station on Tuesday 15th March 1910. The Hon. J.G. Appel (Home Secretary) officially opened the first section of the Tolga-Johnstone Line on 31st March 1910. Three special trains carried visitors from Atherton, however the day was wet and many of the planned festivities were spoiled.

The railway was pivotal in the development of the region. The 'Iron Horse' proved a faster and more reliable means of transport, particularly during the wet season when trails turned to quagmires and pack horses struggled to overcome the difficulties of terrain and weather. Yungaburra railway station closed 1st July 1964. The station and yards were located on what is now Maud Kehoe Park and Bruce Jones Park where the markets are conducted on the 4th Saturday of each month.

*"History isn't about dates and places and wars.  
It's about the people who fill the spaces between them."  
Jodi Picoult, The Storyteller.*



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The information contained herein has been compiled to the best of the researcher's knowledge up to the time of publication.

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## *Old Town Loop: A walking trail through Yungaburra's past*

Within the village are 19 sites listed on the Queensland Register of the National Trust of Australia



*Enjoy your walk through history*

## YUNGABURRA ~ A BRIEF HISTORY

**Yungaburra** (originally Allumbah Pocket), takes its name from the language of the Yidinji Aboriginal people. It is said to mean meeting place, a place of enquiring or questioning. Prior to European settlement the area around Yungaburra was inhabited by about 16 different Indigenous groups who met to trade, camp and conduct ceremonies. The traditional home country of the Dulguburra Yidinji Aboriginal clan encompasses land to the north-east of Yungaburra, i.e. Boar Pocket, Danbulla, Tinaroo and Kulara, while the traditional lands of the Ngadjonji people is in the Millaa Millaa-Malanda region.

Europeans flocked to the region following discoveries of gold and tin. The timber-getters followed, drawn by the seemingly endless bounty of beautiful and durable timbers. Many thousands of men were directly or indirectly involved in the getting, hauling and exporting of Tableland timbers. At one stage there were no fewer than 200 bullock and horse teams. Descendants of early timber-getters and settlers still live in the area. The most sought after timber was Red Cedar (*Toona ciliata*), but the forests also held Walnut, Queensland Maple, Silky Oak, Silkwood, Black Bean, Silver Ash, and Kauri Pine to name a few. The importance of timber to Yungaburra is reflected in its street names - Cedar, Maple, Pine, Fig, Ash, Bunya, Beech, Elm, Oak and Penda.

James Robson is credited with blazing a track over the Mulgrave Range from Cairns. Before then the way to the mineral fields was from Port Douglas through Atherton to Herberton. Cobb & Co coaches plied this route then known as the Mulligan Highway. Robson's Track was a much shorter route but initially was no more than a bridle path. Before the railway pushed

through from Cairns to the Tablelands it was used by horse and mule teams and pedestrian traffic. The packers carried supplies up and minerals down. The track was also known as 'The Cairns Road' and today part of the Gillies Highway is shadowed by the original track which ascends out of the Mulgrave River Valley then along the Atherton Spur to Boar Pocket.

In 1886, the same year it was decided to build a railway line between the coast and the Tablelands, Edward Baird Rankin surveyed land around Lake Eacham and Allumbah Pocket for a Village Homestead Settlement Scheme. The plan offered settlers 40-acre farm blocks with a home site set apart in a village. The scheme failed as settlers needed to live on the land they farmed. By 1890 settlers were moving into the Allumbah Pocket area under the Queensland government's Closer Settlement Act. At that time the only access to the village was via a bush track which turned south-east off Robson's Track. Today, the cemetery occupies the site of the original village.

In 1890 John Ignatius Stewart became the first permanent settler, then on April 10, 1891 John Musto Roseblade selected 4 portions totalling 153-acres. A requirement of taking up land was that selectors must clear and farm their land or forfeit it. The volcanic landscape and rainforest presented significant challenges. Settlers became involved in dairying and cropping, although at times the native animals seemed to harvest more of their crops than they did. Selectors continued to take up land at Allumbah Pocket and by 1907 the Walker Bros had opened a store and butchery, Estate H.S. Williams Ltd had built and were operating a store, butchery and a hotel and another store was built by Edward Lisha. In 1909 the Allumbah School opened.

The railway line reached Atherton in 1903 and in 1905 a meeting of settlers at Allumbah Pocket requested a branch line be constructed from Tolga to the village.

A proposal was also made to continue the line towards land being surveyed in the Johnstone River and Eacham districts.

The word pocket added to place names in the region came about because pockets or clearings in the rainforest had been created by the fires of the Indigenous people. The resultant clearings produced lush grass which provided feed for animals traversing the track as well as comfortable overnight resting places for travellers. Boar Pocket was near the top of the range, further west was Ball Pocket (later Kulara) and then Allumbah Pocket as it was called until 1890. Between 1890 and 1909 it was known simply as Allumbah.



In 1909 the Government reclaimed land for a railway branch line from Tolga and by July that year a 6-acre section of Portions 72 & 73 of George Wedderburn's farm was designated as the site for the railway station. The Wedderburn Farm had been purchased in 1900 from George O'Donnell who had selected it in 1899. The Railway Department decided Allumbah was too similar to Aloomba, a town near Gordonvale, so with a gazetted name change on 5 Nov 1909 Allumbah became Yungaburra.





This self-guided trail is approximately 3 km in length and has been designed for walking. It will take up to two hours to complete or you can join in or depart anywhere along the route. It is possible to drive sections of the route along public roadways. Please respect the rights of other road users. Please note sites numbered 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17 and 18 are private residences with no public access.

## HISTORIC SITES

\* Denotes listing on the Heritage Register of The National Trust of Australia (Queensland)

- 1 Railway Station & Yards** [See sign in Maud Kehoe Park] – Officially opened 15 March 1910, the railway, prior to the opening of the Gillies Highway in 1926, fostered the timber and dairying industries and was a lifeline for the settlers. The line closed 1 July 1964.
- 2 Timber Mill\*** - Built 1910 by Neville & Oswald Williamson then sold in 1916 with Tom Wensley holding a majority of shares. He renamed it Eacham Sawmills Ltd. The office fronts Eacham Road and is said to be built of Silky Oak. Cairns Plywoods (Rankine Bros) owned the mill for its last 20 years of operation. In December 1987 fire destroyed the main sawmill shed and in 2006 Cyclone Larry toppled the chimney stack. (Interpretative signs on site).
- 3 Site of the Estate H.S. Williams Ltd Emporium** - Built 1910 and now occupied by an arcade. The store sold clothing, groceries and hardware, ‘everything from a needle to an anchor’.
- 4 Yungaburra Butchery\*** – Built by Estate H S Williams Ltd in 1914 as a retail outlet for their abattoir located on the Atherton side of Peterson’s Creek. It has traded continuously as a butcher’s shop through wars, depressions, recessions and cyclones.



- 5 Garage and showroom** – Built 1922 and operated by Edward (Ned) Williams as Estate H.S. Williams Ltd Motor Department. Essex, Ford, Willys, De Soto, Dodge and Studebaker vehicles were sold and serviced here. A petrol bowser stood on the footpath until 1984.
- 6 Bakery** – 14 Eacham Road. Estate H S Williams Ltd built the first bakery premises in 1912. Tom Grainger became the village baker. His son, also Tom, purchased the bakery about 1943 and traded here until his death in 1948. The bakery and residence was destroyed by fire that same year when Frederick Haydon was the baker. New premises were built in 1950 and the building served as a bakery until the early 1980s.
- 7 St. Mark’s Anglican Church (previously St. Mark’s Church of England)\*** – Completed 28 June 1912 and by 28 Oct 1912 the Brotherhood of St. Barnabas (aka The Bush Brotherhood) reported to Synod that regular services were being held. In 1913 the church was consecrated and a bell-gable added in 1921.
- 8 The Gables** – Built c.1923 by Herbert (Bert) Hunter, a commercial traveller for various firms including wine and spirits merchants. He and wife Marjorie lived here until about 1937. Later it was the residence of the manager of the local Bank of NSW and became known as ‘The Bank House’.

- 9 Gillies Cottage\*** – 4 Oak Street - Built 1910 by David Alexander Gillies. He was a carpenter and the Returning Officer for the first election of the Eacham Shire Council held on 7 February 1911. The cottage was the official place for lodgement of nominations. David Gillies was the eldest brother of William Neil Gillies, an inaugural Councillor of Eacham Shire Council and later the Member for Eacham in Queensland Parliament (1912-1925).
- 10 St. Patrick’s Catholic Church\*** (previously Our Lady of Consolation) – Completed 1914, Fr. Patrick Bernard Doyle (born Ireland 1874) served the Yungaburra community 1913-1924. The church was renamed in his honour and the bell-tower dedicated to him. John Joseph (Jack) Kehoe, the first stationmaster of Yungaburra and Marion Maud (Maud) Williams of the Lake Eacham Hotel were the first couple married here 29 April 1914.
- 11 “Allumbah”\*** – 7 Mulgrave Road - Built c.1924 by the Williams family for their eldest sister, Frances Amelia (Millie) Wardle (nee Williams) following the death of her husband Arthur Henry Wardle in Brisbane in 1922. Millie lived here with her daughter Marion Bedelia Wardle until mid-1930s. [refer (14) re tank].
- 12 Golf Club House & Course**, 1 Mulgrave Rd – Club formed 18 February 1924 and officially opened 29th & 30th November 1924. The clubhouse was located near the first hole of the 9-hole course which ran beside Peterson’s Creek and as far as the township of Kulara (now beneath the waters of Lake Tinaroo). Following the club’s disbandment, the clubhouse became home to local school teacher Michael Frawley and his family. [Refer (13)].
- 13 Frawley’s Pool** – Named for Michael Frawley, a local school teacher who in the 1940s, along with other parents, created the pool and taught local children to swim. (Refer brochure Peterson Creek Walking Track).
- 14 Williams Weir, waterwheel & turbine** (Refer brochure Peterson Creek Walking Track). Louis Richard (Dick) Bass installed the Fitz-Burnham turbine in 1932. Water was pumped to a holding tank at (11) then piped to various premises owned by the Williams family. Residents along the pipeline also benefited. The 2012 restoration work at the site was done by Frank Bass, (son of Dick Bass) with the help of the Peterson Creek Landcare volunteers.
- 15 Police Station\*** – 6 Cedar Street - Yungaburra’s first permanent policeman, Constable Alan Pike first operated out of rented premises. In August 1913 a stable and feed room was built for troop horse, ‘Bench’. In 1914 (costing £724.10.00) E.J. Greening built a lockup which is now located at the local fire station. In 1929, £1070 was approved to build a police station. In 1938 the residence-cum-police station was altered and a side verandah added.
- 16 Court House\*** - 10 Cedar Street - In 1922 the original Allumbah School building (built 1909) was moved here to serve as the Court House & Petty Sessions Office. Office space was also provided for the Dairy Inspector, underlining the importance of dairying to the area. Unroofed by Cyclone Larry in 2006, it now serves as the police station.
- 17 ‘Old Kulara’\***, 12 Cedar St – Built in 1947 by Mr Alf Davis with materials from a WWII Army Hospital at Rocky Creek near Tolga. The property is still owned by his descendants.

- 18 Williams Lodge\*** – The site was bought by James Dunstan in 1911 then sold to the Williams family in 1915. It was home to Edward (Ned) Williams, wife Zilla and their 4 children. Ned died 1929 and Zilla a year later. His brother Fred with wife Erin and their 5 children moved in and raised Ned and Zilla’s children. During WWII many lonely soldiers found hospitality here and in return they added a deck with a sprung dance floor.
- 19 Post Office\*** – The first postal service operated out of the railway station, a common practice when mail travelled by train. In 1916 the Williams Bros built a post office behind the hotel fronting Cedar Street. Miss Stella McCloy was appointed postmistress. In October 1924 the current Post Office was built on land acquired by the Commonwealth and Leonard Craven appointed postmaster. In 1926 the original post office building was moved to (23).
- 20 Community Hall\*** (aka Williams Hall) – Built 1910 and moved from (29) in 1926. It was and still is a venue for dances, concerts, meetings, political rallies and weddings. From 1915 it was used by travelling ‘picture showmen’ and from 1928 for regular movie screenings. From 1954 Alfred and Alice King operated it as the Tivoli Theatre. After Mr King’s death in 1964 Mrs King continued operating the cinema until 1969.
- 21 Basalt rock Wall** – Built costing £75, it was required by the hotel’s insurers when the hall was used as a movie theatre. Early film projectors used carbon arc lamps which generated extreme heat and the associated risk of cellulose nitrate-based film igniting.

*The buildings (22-25) were built by the Williams Bros utilising materials from their disused premises, i.e. the Allumbah Pocket Hotel and the first Post Office. Over the years these buildings have served as shopfronts for numerous and various businesses as well as domestic residences. Up to WWII the land behind them was cultivated by the hotel’s Japanese gardeners to grow vegetables and fruits for the hotel.*

- 22 Sunshine Cafe/Tivoli Café\*** – 28A Cedar Street - Built 1923, Miss Stella McCloy established it as a cafe. In 1924 Mrs G Fischer took over and around 1930 Mr & Mrs Fred Davies were the proprietors. In 1935 it was known as the Tivoli Café and Mr Claude Murphy was the proprietor of both the cafe and picture theatre across the street.
- 23 Auctioneer’s Rooms\*** – 28B Cedar Street - Built 1926, the building (originally the first post office) was rented to Mr R. Linden a Licensed Auctioneer and Commission Agent by Mr P. McCloy who originally leased it from the Williams Bros.
- 24 Tailor’s Shop\*** – 32 Cedar Street - Built c.1925. It became home to the hotel’s handyman, Billy Madrid and his family. His workshop was in a shed behind the butcher’s shop.
- 25 Billiard Saloon, Hairdresser & SP Bookmaker\*** – 34 Cedar Street - Purpose-built in 1926 when planning for the hotel’s extension was underway. This business was originally located within the hotel.
- 26 Bank of New South Wales\*** – 36 Cedar Street - It was the first bank on the Tolga-Johnstone Railway Line. Mr Bill Gayford was in charge when it opened 16 Dec 1913. The purpose-built premises were leased from the Williams Bros. Mr Gayford returned in 1916 as branch manager, a position he held until 1922. The bank purchased the premises in 1921 and provided banking services until 1967 when the building was sold.



- 27 “Cedrella”\*** [from Cedrela, Latin for Cedar] – 20 Gillies Highway. Built 1912, it was home to Arthur (Archie) Belson, a local Commission Agent and Timber Merchant. It boasted a lawn tennis court and hosted lavish garden parties. Mr Belson then sold it to his son-in-law George Duffy. From 1958 it was home to Mr and Mrs King who operated the local Tivoli Theatre.
- 28 Lake Eacham Hotel\*** – Built 1910 by the Sydes Brothers (Cost: £2,000) for Estate H S Williams Ltd. Local timbers were used throughout with features of Silky Oak. The main staircase is Queensland Maple. It was completed and trading 5 October 1910. In 1926, on the original site of Williams Hall (29), an extension was added. The opening of the Gordonvale-Yungaburra Road substantially increased the tourist trade to the region. Maud Williams (later Mrs Jack Kehoe) managed the family hotel at Allumbah so assumed the same role here. From 1917 Jack Kehoe was the popular host. He died 2 January 1933. Mrs Kehoe was the driving force behind the success of the hotel for most of the 65 years it was owned and operated by the Williams family. [See interpretative sign in shelter shed in Maud Kehoe Park].
- 29 Site of Williams Hall** - Relocated to Cedar Street (20) in 1926 to make way for the hotel’s extension. It was the social hub of the district and a popular venue for dances, weddings, meetings and even roller-skating and boxing matches. Eacham Shire Council’s inaugural meeting on 22 February 1911 was held in the hall when it was located on this site.