

Haunting history

The Bulli Family Hotel opened on September 8, 1889, as an example of the Federation filigree style of architecture according to historian Anne Wood.

George Croft was the first owner and it was from his plans that architect William Kenwood prepared the design.

The hotel was very grand for its day, with 28 bedrooms, an assembly room, dining room, billiard room, parlours and bar, Ms Wood said. Electric bells connected the upper and lower floors and the water supply

came from underground wells.

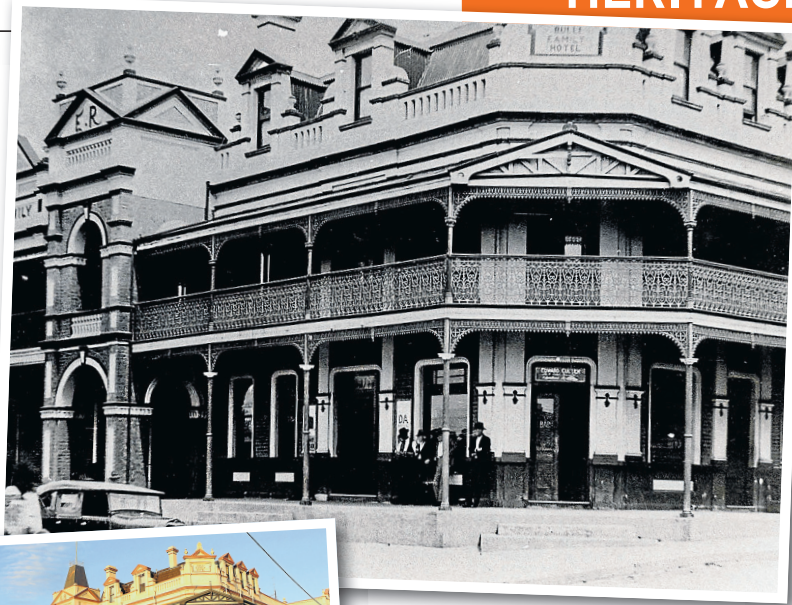
The hotel underwent a major revamp in the 1970s and was classified by the National Trust in 1976.

It also has a reputation for being haunted. In 1887, two years before the pub opened, the old bar was used as a mortuary for the 81 men killed in the Bulli mine disaster.

Former licensee Ted Cullen, who hung himself in the bathroom in 1930 following a fight with his wife, is also believed to be still walking the floors.

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An early photo of the Bulli Family Hotel (above) and as it is today (left).

Violent life at home

There were numerous cases of brutal domestic violence in the 1800s, writes MICHELLE HOCTOR.

WHILE WOMEN HAD FEW LEGAL RIGHTS in a marriage, they were protected by the law when it came to domestic violence.

Shocking cases of brutality were often recorded, the husbands later punished with lengthy jail terms.

In 1873, Patrick Moran, of Orange, violently assaulted his wife Rose with a broom handle, leaving her with wounds about the head which exposed her skull.

Mrs Moran told the court she was working in the yard when her husband arrived home drunk.

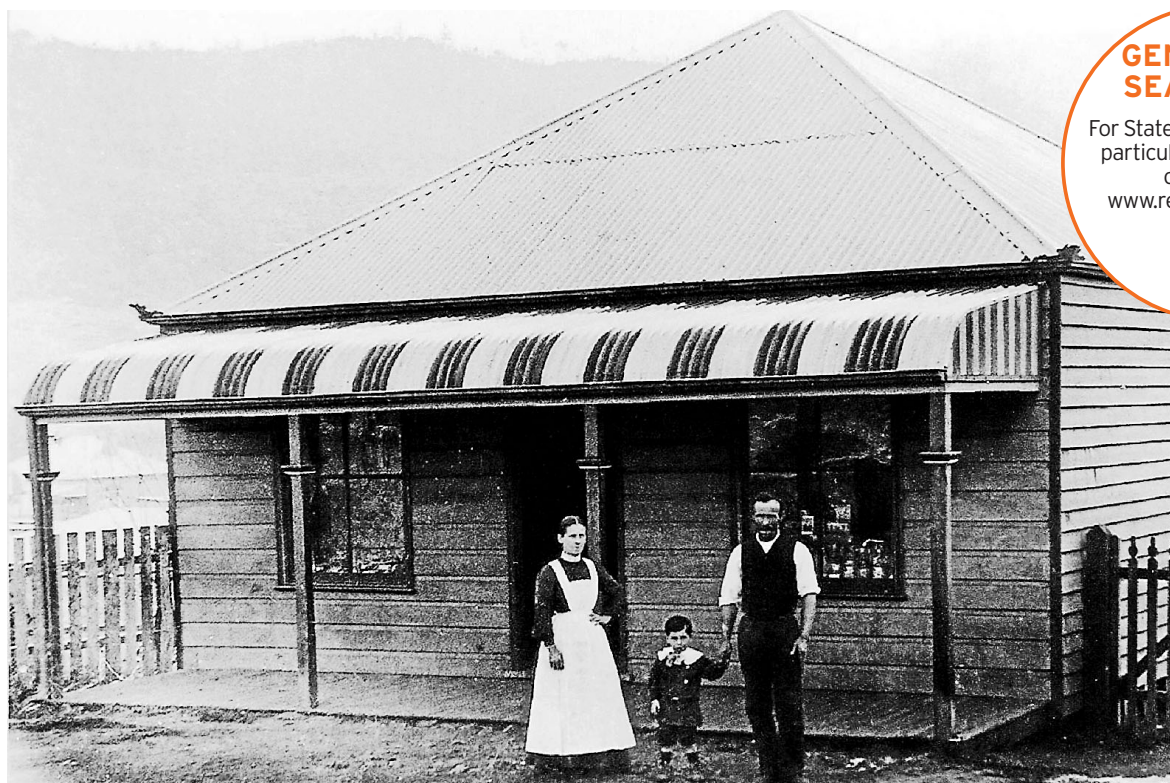
"It was not long after I entered the house before he struck me, first with his fist. The first blow knocked me down and rendered me insensible. I did not recollect anything after that until I was brought to the hospital," she said.

Moran, who was well known "as a violent and treacherous man when in drink", was sentenced to five years hard labour.

In February 1874, Emma Johnston committed suicide by taking a large quantity of painkillers after being incited by her husband.

The couple's daughter told an inquest her mother had endured a violent marriage, largely due to her father's drinking.

On the day of Mrs Johnston's death she wrote him a letter, asking him to take care of the children. She then ingested a bottle of painkillers in a pitiful cry for help. Rather



GENEALOGY SEARCH TIP

For State archives relating to particular professions and occupations: www.records.nsw.gov.au.



A family at Balgownie at the turn of the last century. Life was not all domestic bliss for colonials. Picture: From the collections of the Wollongong City Library and the Illawarra Historical Society.

than come to her aid, her husband encouraged her to drink a further two bottles to finish her off.

On this evidence, he was committed to trial for manslaughter, although the outcome was not published.

In January 1875, residents of Brookstown, Newcastle, were startled by the sounds of piercing shrieks coming from a hut belonging to Henry Hamilton, a 30-year-old

brick maker, and his wife Catherine.

Police arrived to find Mrs Hamilton lying on the floor, "utterly nude", and her husband standing over her with the head of a tomahawk in his hand.

"The poor woman was literally weltering in a pool of her own blood," the *Mercury* said, having suffered deep gashes to the forehead.

The same month, James Hyndman of

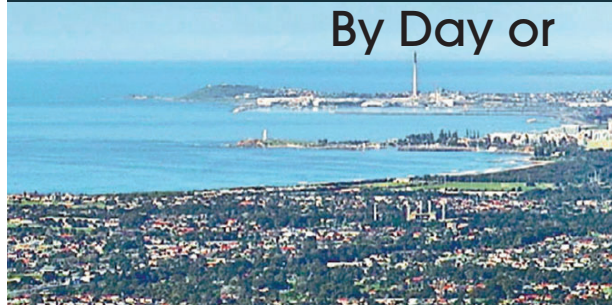
Ballarat was charged with beating and kicking his wife "in a fiendish manner" after tying her legs together with his belt.

It was not the first time. In 1871, Hyndman faced court on a similar offence but was discharged after his wife refused to give evidence against him.

An article published following the case said that wife beating was "pretty general all over the colonies". ■

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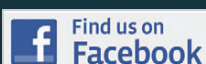
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