



**ENTRANCE TO
KILLALEA BEACH
AREA**
FOR FISHING AND PICNICS
FEEES CARS 4! PER DAY
NO CAMPING

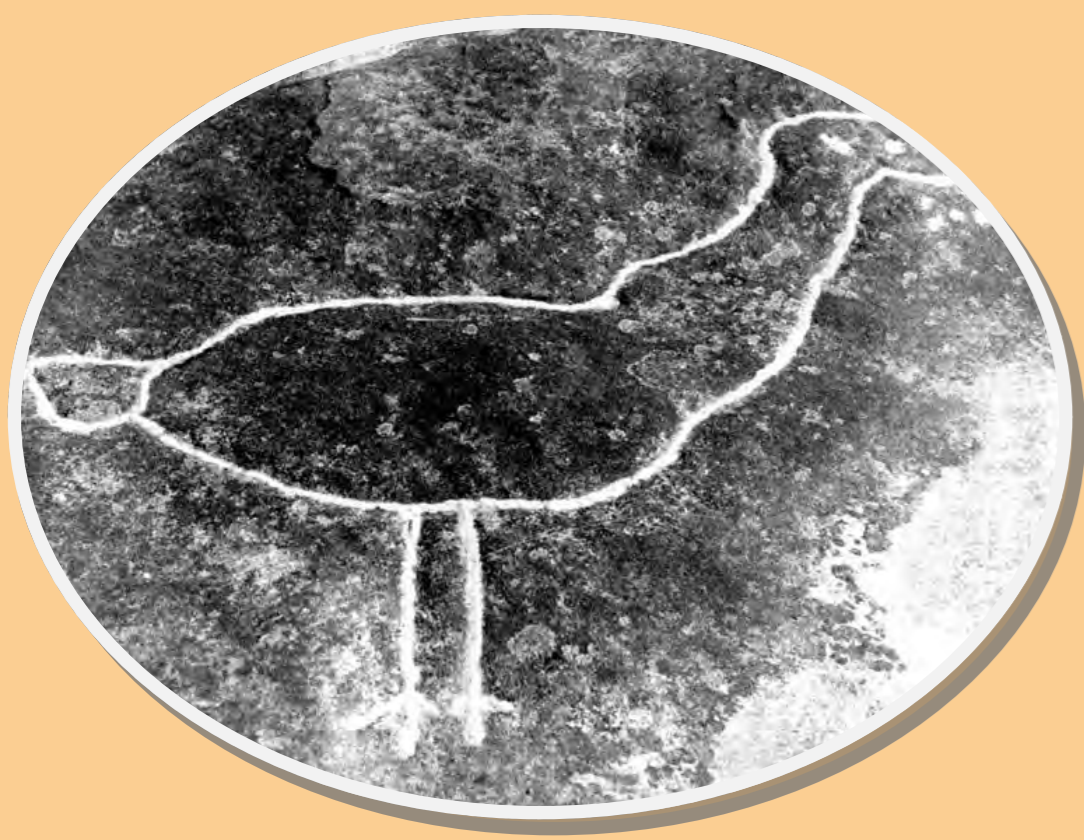
The Farm

Killalea State Park





Aboriginal Cultural Heritage



1.

Aboriginal people have lived in Shellharbour for at least 17000 years. To put that in some perspective, the Great Pyramid at Giza was built about 4500 years ago.

It's not hard to see why for thousands of years the land at Killalea has been special to generations of Aboriginal people. The land was a paradise that provided plenty of food, fresh water and beautiful spots to camp.

Berries, leaves, tubers, flowers, seeds, nectar, birds, fish, shellfish and animals ensured Aboriginal people living in the area did not go hungry. Plant and animal fat was used to make medicine and poultices.

The Minnamurra River was harvested for fish and shellfish. The surrounding swampland and lagoon were home to a wide range of birds. Coastal areas and hinterland forests provided important food sources like wallabies, possums and wild honey.

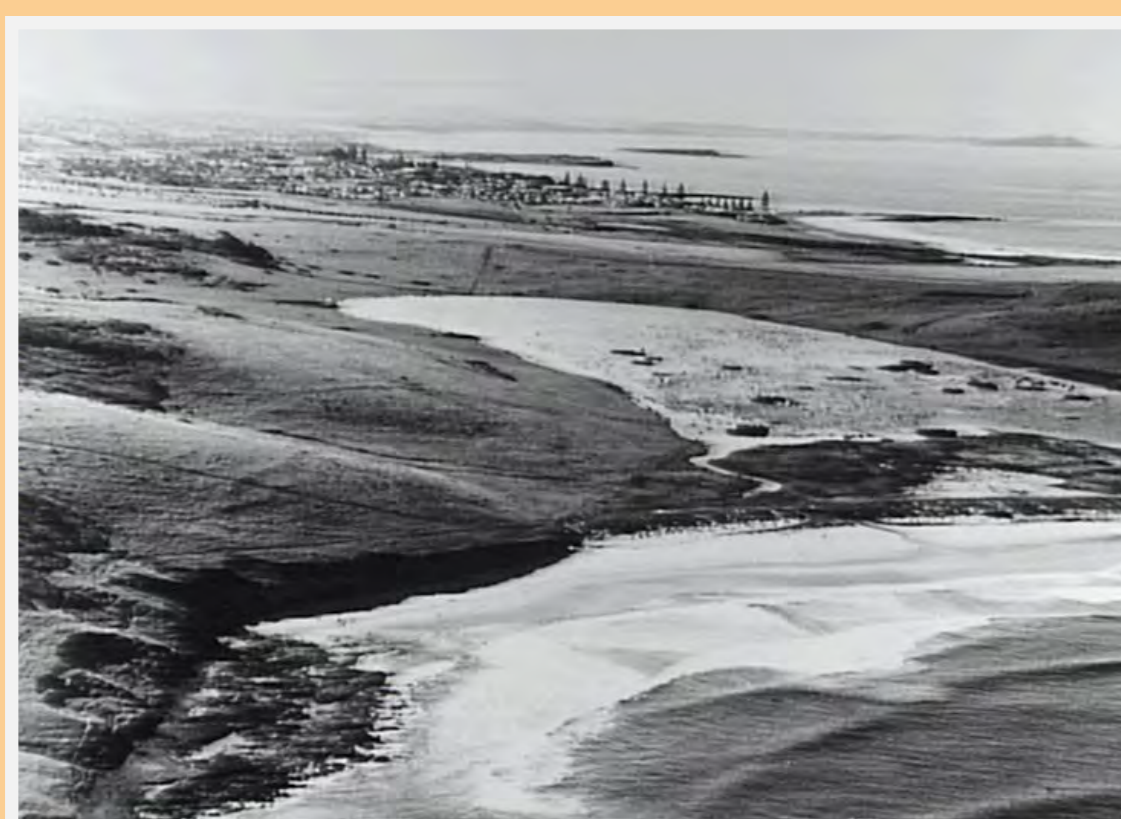
Trees provided timber and resin for making spears, woomeras, boomerangs, axes and canoes. Baskets, string, nets and toys were made from leaves, bark and stems. Leaf fronds and bark were used to make temporary shelters.



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Moreton Bay figs were important to Aboriginal people; protected by their huge canopies and root systems, women sheltered beneath them during meetings, social gatherings and special ceremonies. Figs also provided fruit for the people.

Smoking ceremonies were performed for healing and cleansing, to prepare the land at a campsite and to communicate with neighbouring groups.

Killalea State Park includes many sites of special and sacred significance to Aboriginal people including camp sites, women's sites, artefact scatter sites and middens.

The early 20th century saw the resettlement and forced relocation of some Aboriginal people in the Shellharbour area resulting in their removal from land which was sacred to them and which had been their home for many thousands of years.

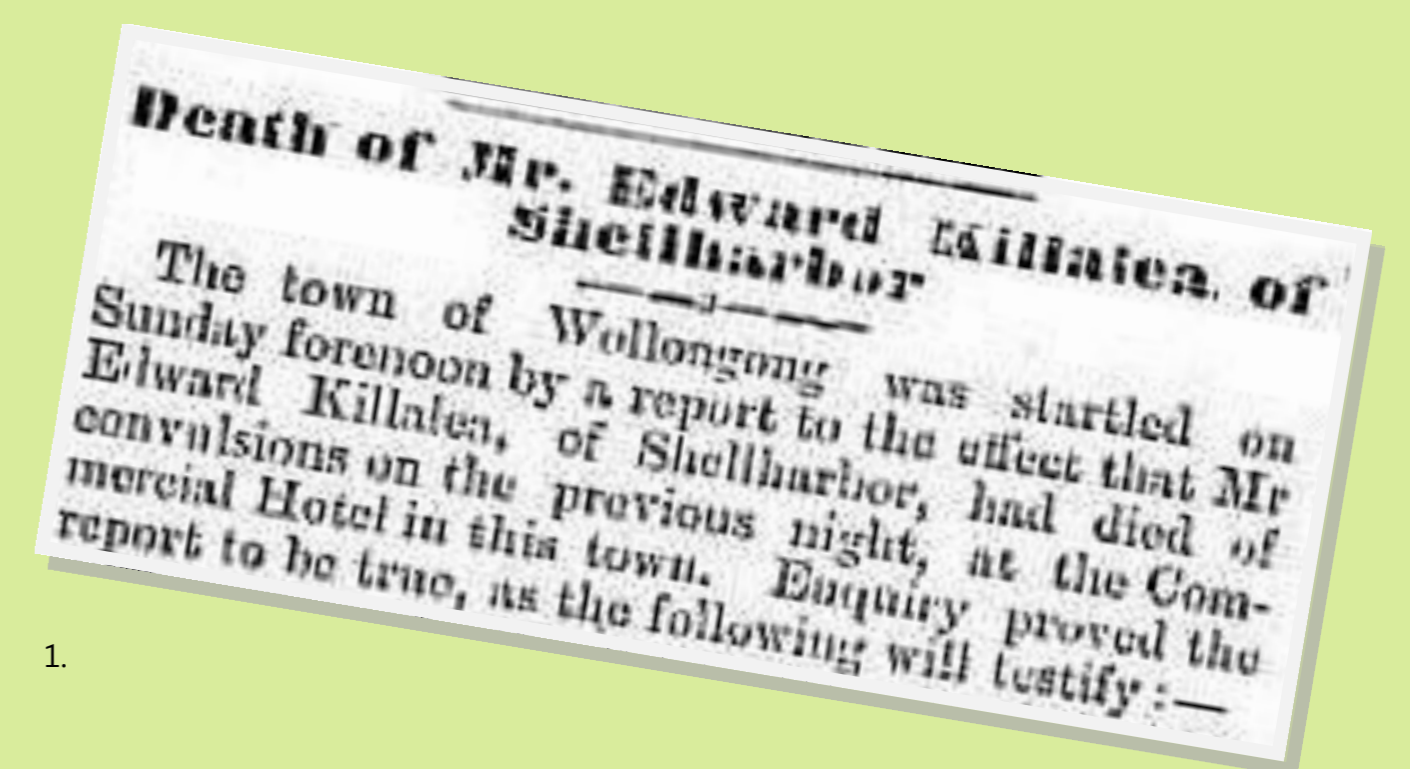
Today, Killalea State Park works with the local Aboriginal community to protect cultural heritage sites and ensure their survival for future generations.



6.



The Killaleas



In 1836 in Galway, Ireland, Edward Killalea became involved in a brawl in which two men died. He was sentenced to transportation for the term of his natural life. He was about 19 years old.

After receiving his ticket of leave, he married Maria Campbell (also known as Maria Molright/Rolright). It is believed Maria was the adopted daughter of James Campbell who farmed the area we associate with Myimbarr wetlands in Shellharbour today. Edward and Maria made their home on a leasehold at 'Killalea' which was then part of the Bassett-Darley estate. They lived in a slab hut down near the beach and went on to have 12 children.

Edward served as an Alderman on Shellharbour Municipal Council and was on the committee to form the Shellharbour Steam Navigation Company.

In 1868 Edward became involved in gold mining at Killalea Beach after discovering alluvial gold in the sand. He partnered with Thomas Henry who had recently returned from the New Zealand goldfields. The mining wasn't a great success and wound up shortly after it started. In 1872 Thomas A Reddall tried to get it going once more but later that same year at the Commercial Hotel in Wollongong, after enduring several seizures, Edward Killalea died. The coroner and jury found,

'that deceased, Edward Killalea, came to his death by strychnine, taken by him whilst labouring under the effects of excessive drinking'.

A bottle marked 'Poison' was found in his pocket.

An article in the Kiama Independent stated,

'The late Mr. Killalea, an old resident of Shellharbour an Alderman of the borough, the father of a large family of seven sons and five daughters, very generally, indeed we may say universally, respected for the kindness of his disposition and integrity of character'.

In the 1930's Edward and Maria's son Patrick (then in his 70's) was visiting the area and went for a walk along the beach that was once his boyhood home. On the beach he met 15 year old John McNevin Fraser whose family farmed the land. The Fraser's lived at 'Seaview' farm near where the current kiosk is today. John took Patrick up to meet his parents and after this meeting the Fraser family renamed their farm 'Killalea' in honour of the Killalea family who had farmed the land before them.

Years later James Killalea, grandson of Edward and Maria, recalled that when his grandmother lived with them in her later years, she told stories of 'the little people' who would come down the chimney. James and his brothers and sisters were then too scared to go to sleep. He remembered her talking about their old farmhouse near the beach and making butter and bread which the family sold along with milk.

In 1997 descendants of Edward Killalea placed a plaque on the site of the family's slab home in his memory. Members of the Killalea family from across the globe met at Killalea State Park in 2014 to unveil a plaque dedicated to Leanne Kellalea (correct spelling) who was instrumental in saving the park from development and researching the Killalea family's history.



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The Buckley's



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In 1901 and 1905 James Buckley and his brother Daniel purchased the land we know as Killalea from Emily Savage.

James farmed the northern end of the park and lived at 'Seaview' farm, where the Fraser family later lived. James built a pit sawn house in the early 1900's for his family, and in 1912 'Seaview' farmhouse was extended.

James served as an Alderman on Shellharbour Municipal Council and was Mayor for three years. He married Maude Raftery and they had seven children.

Daniel Buckley farmed the southern end of Killalea State Park, near where the camping ground is today. He was 19 when he arrived in Australia from Ireland. He farmed at Shellharbour for many years and was also an Alderman on the council from 1868-1871. His wife Elizabeth (nee Murphy) died when she was young and Daniel raised their five children on his own.

It is assumed Daniel also built a house for his family near today's camping ground. Remains of the house site, garden remnants, dairy footings and those of the outbuildings are all that remain today.

In later years this farm was named 'Lamarra' and then 'Watsonia'. The road into Watsonia was built by Charlie Graham and Jack Byrne about 1915. The original road and fence posts are still visible today.



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The Buckley brothers eventually ended up in Queensland and their land at Killalea was leased for a time.

The Fraser family moved to James Buckley's original property in the 1920's and farmed 'Seaview', later renamed 'Killalea', until the late 1950s - early 1960s.

The NRMA purchased Daniel Buckley's original property in 1926 and opened up a camping ground for its members. The property with farmhouse was named 'Lamarra' at the time of purchase and the NRMA renamed it 'Watsonia'.

The NRMA leased the site to many families including the King's, Condon's and the Mason's. It is assumed these families lived in Daniel Buckley's old home in between the fig trees at the site.

The NRMA campground only lasted twelve months as the sand flies were so bad people could not bear them.



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The Frasers



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Alexander Fraser and his wife Helen Munro arrived in Australia from Scotland in 1839 and came to work at the Macquarie Valley on a clearing lease as part of the John Dunmore Lang emigration scheme.

The Fraser family became renowned dairymen and contributed much to the progress of dairying in Shellharbour. Alexander's son John Fraser was elected as one of the directors of the Albion Park Butter Factory. John and his wife Marion (nee McGill) farmed at 'Brushgrove Farm', Calderwood, for many years. John was held in high esteem by the local community who built a monument to his memory at Croome General Cemetery which was unveiled by Archibald Campbell MP in June 1903.

John and Marion's son Hector Fraser carried on farming at 'Brushgrove', eventually moving to 'Seaview' farm at Killalea in the 1923. Hector, his wife Hilda (nee Dunster) and their three boys Darcy, William (Bill) and John continued dairying on the farm. The dairy herd was relocated to the new farm which Hilda later renamed 'Killalea' after a chance meeting with Patrick Killalea the son Edward and Maria Killalea who farmed the area from the 1860's.

Hector and Hilda's son John McNevin Fraser was two years old when the family moved to Killalea. He went to Shellharbour Public School and then Wollongong High School. He studied accountancy after school and worked as a clerk with the Dairy Farmers Milk Cooperative. In 1940 John went to war serving as a Sergeant in the Signal Corps at New Guinea and Borneo. When he returned home he went to Hawkesbury Agricultural College for two years and continued the farming tradition at Killalea after his father Hector's death in 1948.

John McNevin Fraser married Joan (nee Smith) in 1951 and they had two children Peter and Christine. The family farm had a milking herd of about 60 and another 30 dry stock.

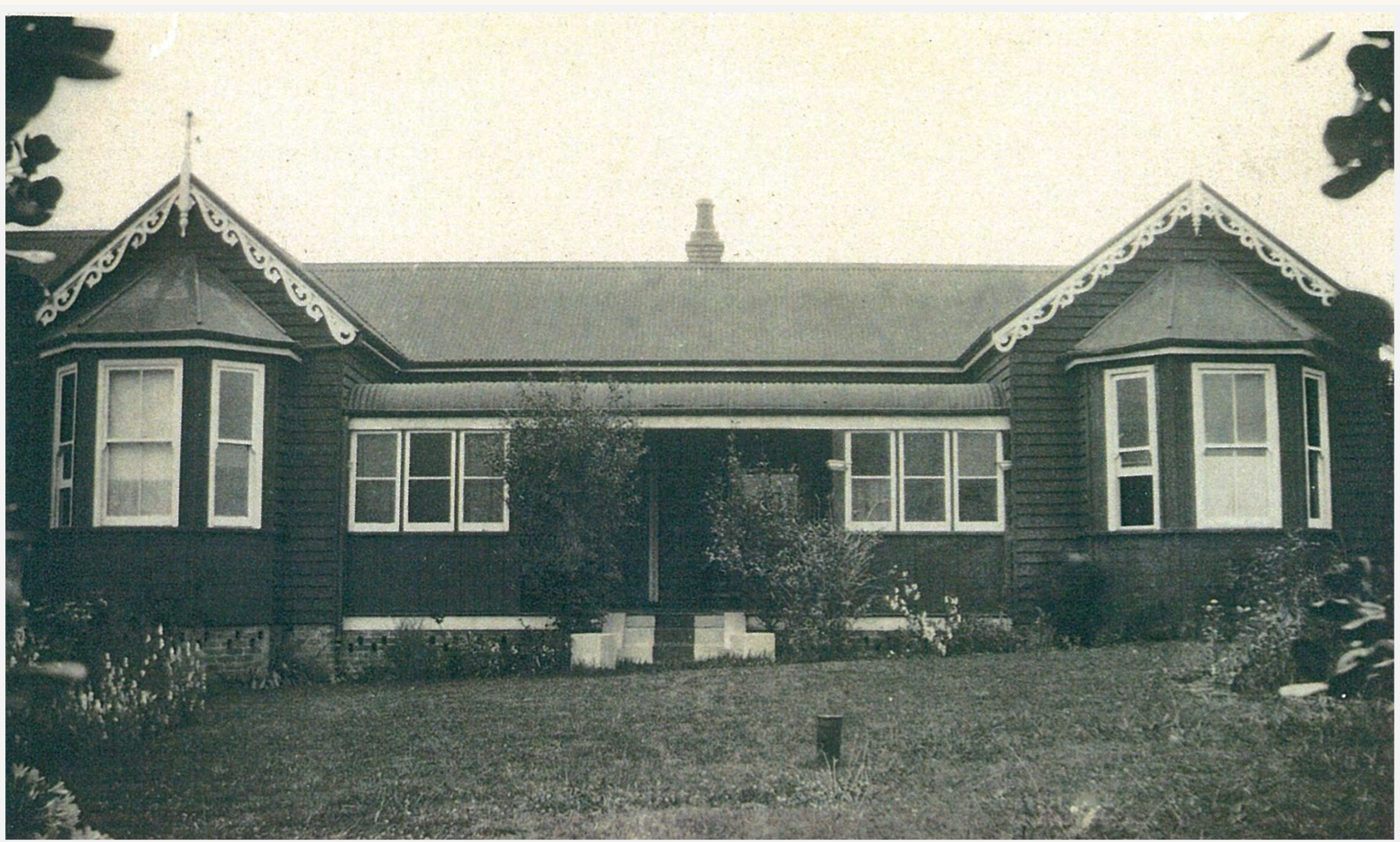
In 1956 'Killalea' farm was sold to Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) on the condition John would manage the land and live at 'Killalea' house. ICI planned to build an explosives plant at the site and closed the land to the public. The plant never took off.

In 1958 the beautiful 'Killalea' homestead was destroyed by fire. The Fraser's left Killalea; a very difficult thing for them to do. John couldn't bring himself to return until more than 20 years later in 1986.

In the 1960's ICI padlocked the gate along Buckley's Road and began charging people 40 cents to get in. Mr Fraser didn't think this was fair and wrote to the Town Clerk to tell him so.

From 1995-2001 John McNevin Fraser served as a member of the Killalea Park Trust.

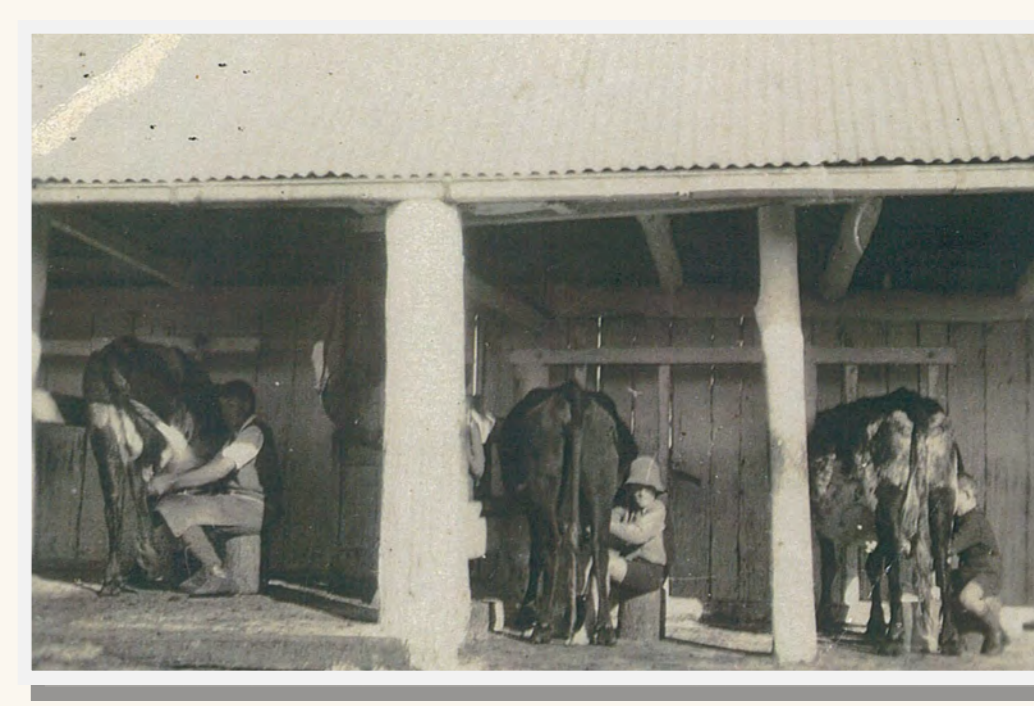
The land at Killalea was handed to National Parks and Wildlife Service when the government bought the land about 1984. Concrete slabs of the dairy, feed shed, cattle troughs, an old well and remains of the garden are all that are left of 'Killalea' farm today.



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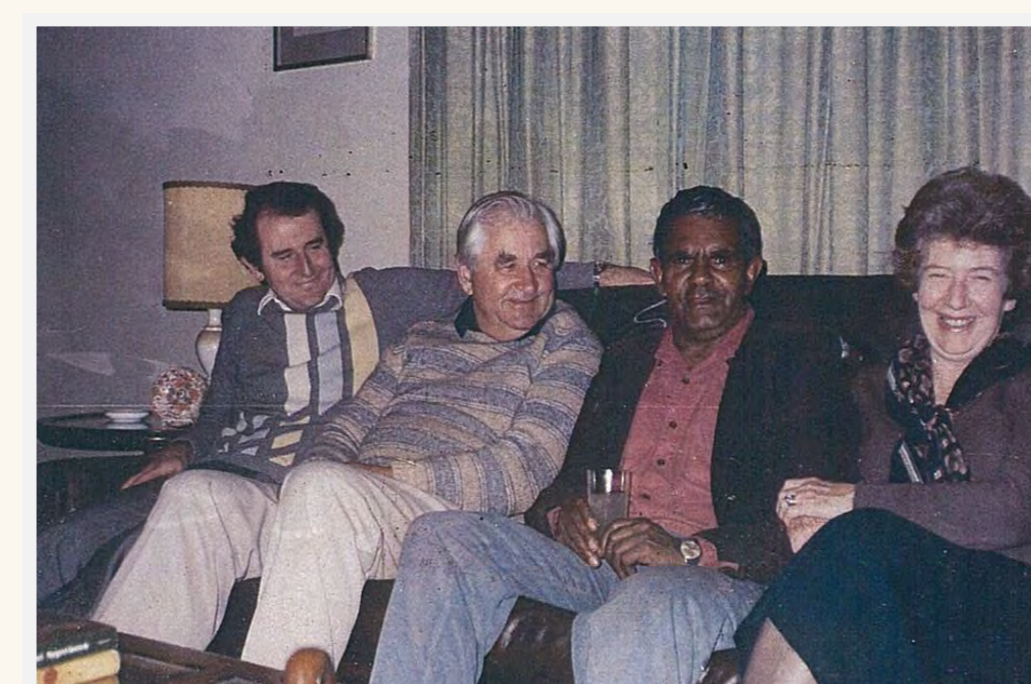
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The Park Today



1.

Killalea State Park covers 260 hectares and includes pristine beaches, a lagoon, estuary, wetlands, mangroves, and littoral rainforest. The park contains at least three rare and endangered species and is home to hundreds of seabirds during the breeding season. Diverse species of fish, birds, frogs and reptiles live in and around the lagoon.

Killalea beaches are renowned for their famous surf breaks and in 2009, 'The Farm' and 'Mystics' were declared a National Surfing Reserve.

Staff and volunteers at Killalea State Park work to clear the park of weeds and vermin, regenerate native bushland, conduct conservation surveys and develop education and training initiatives to ensure the preservation and sustainability of the landscape for future generations.



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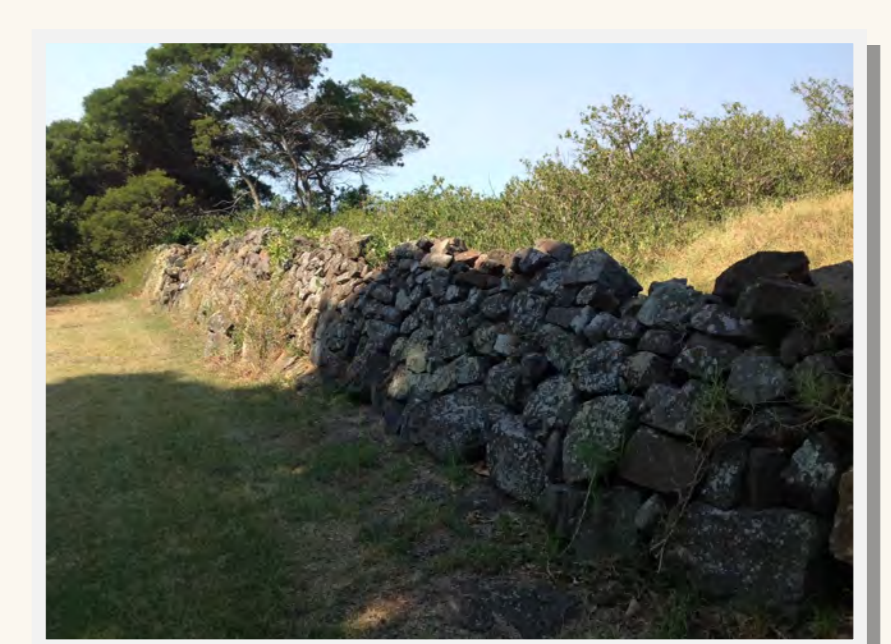
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Acknowledgements

This exhibition was developed by **Tongarra Museum, Shellharbour City Council.**

- Fraser, John McNevin and the Fraser family 2014.
- Killalea-Hore, Terry, 2014. <http://members.speedweb.com.au/thore/genealogy/index.htm>
- Killalea. A European History of Killalea State Recreation Area, Southern Skills Training Company Inc, 1996.
- Killalea State Park, 2014.
- Tongarra Heritage Society Inc, 2014.
- Tongarra Museum, Russell Street, Albion Park 2014. <http://www.shellharbour.nsw.gov.au/default.aspx?WebPage=243>
- Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries <http://photosku.com.au/Shellharbour/>

And many thanks to the Shellharbour community who have generously shared so much of their history with us over many years.

Title panel

- Killalea Beach 'The Farm' c.1950s, Fraser family collection.
- Killalea entrance sign, c.1950s, Tongarra Museum collection.
- Stone wall at Killalea State Park 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

- Rock carving Illawarra region, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- Aboriginal camp at Bass Point c.1890, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- Water warming hole Illawarra region, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- Killalea Beach and lagoon 1987, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- Edward Killalea plaque, Terry Killalea-Hore collection.
- Maria Killalea with son Patrick, Terry Killalea-Hore collection.
- Aboriginal Scarred Tree, Killalea State Park 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.

The Killalea's

- Death notice Edward Killalea, Illawarra Mercury 20 August 1872.
- Shellharbour Municipal Alderman c.1870, Edward Killalea Street from right, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- Site of plaque dedicated to Edward Killalea, Terry Killalea-Hore collection.
- Edward Killalea plaque, Terry Killalea-Hore collection.
- Maria Killalea with son Patrick, Terry Killalea-Hore collection.

The Buckley's

- Shellharbour from 'Killalea' (formerly 'Seaview') 1917, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- 'Seaview' farm c.1930, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- Killalea lagoon c.1960, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.
- Minnamurra River 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.
- Steps of 'Watsonia' farm dairy buildings 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.
- Shellharbour Municipal Alderman 1909, James Buckley second row centre, Shellharbour Images, Shellharbour City Libraries.

The Fraser's

- Hector Fraser c.1930, Fraser family collection.
- Hilda Fraser at 'Killalea' farm c.1930, Fraser family collection.
- 'Killalea' (formerly 'Seaview') homestead c.1930, Fraser family collection.
- John McNevin Fraser with children Christine and Peter on the tractor at 'Killalea' farm c.1950s, Fraser family collection.
- Hand Milling at 'Killalea' farm—Bill and John Fraser with workman George Lucas c.1920s, Fraser family collection.
- Feed shed at 'Killalea' c.1930, Fraser family collection.
- Looking towards the Feed Shed c.1910, Fraser family collection.
- Peter, John and Joan Fraser with Vincent Sullivan, Vincent Sullivan came to work at 'Killalea' farm for the Fraser's as a young boy. He was one of the Student Generation.
- Christine and Peter Fraser at the rear of 'Killalea' homestead c.1950s, Fraser family collection.

The Park Today

- Fig tree near lagoon 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.
- Entrance sign 2014, Terry Killalea-Hore collection.
- Killalea coastline 2014, Terry Killalea-Hore collection.
- Lagoon and old fence line 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.
- Broken bottles found in stone walls 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.
- Stone wall near Fraser's picnic area 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.
- Ducks near the lagoon 2014, Tongarra Museum collection.