

# ❖ TOM AND OLIVE WOLLEY ❖

## BACKGROUND

In 1910, nineteen-year-old Englishman, Tom Wolley took a job caring for horses consigned to Australia with the ultimate destination Mt Stanley, near the headwaters of the Brisbane River. Tom was quickly drawn to rural Australia and was soon working as a stockman at Kinbombi. He subsequently drew a settler's block, 'Weavehurst', but returned to England when the world seemed headed for war. He fought for his mother country in World War I and, for the rest of his life, suffered from the debilitating injuries he received. His health demanded that he live in a climate more gentle than Mother England's.



Australia was already in his blood so in 1928, with his young English wife Olive (nee Beech) and their two small children, they emigrated - their destination a dairy farm on the Atherton Tableland. Several years later, the family moved to Karara near Warwick. Their daughter, Sheila Hancock, recalls her parents as part of that wonderful generation of survivors who maintained a determined spirit despite the depression and who, with little money, somehow managed to make ends meet. Over time, life improved for the Wolley family and Buderim became a favourite holiday destination. In the mid 1950s, they sold their holding at Karara to make their 'retirement' dreams on Buderim a reality.

## LIFE ON BUDERIM

The Wolleys purchased land on the corner of Lindsay Road and Tulip Lane where Tom hoped to grow pawpaws but soon discovered that the block was too small for commercial production. They subsequently purchased 'Little Croft' in Horseshoe Bend. The gently sloping vibrant gardens and the extensive views from the Blackall Range to Point Cartwright (there were fewer trees to block views in those days) appealed to Olive and she loved her new home. Social life on Buderim was also a rich blessing for Tom and Olive after years spent in the harsh Queensland bush with limited opportunities for social interaction. Christmas especially was a time of endless parties and social functions. Sheila Hancock recalls one resident in particular who would hoist his flag, signalling an instant invitation to come for drinks.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

With Sybel and Harold Whittle, Stan Warry and others, the Wolleys worked hard to establish Headland Golf Club, particularly the landscaping. Tom was also very involved in the development of the Foote Sanctuary. Olive, who was a beautiful sewer, was instrumental in helping establish Craft Cottage with Zelma Dyson, Mary Merson, Merle Walker and others. From a tiny shack, and with much hard work and fund-raising, the Cottage grew to be the hive of industry we know today.

Tom and Olive remained tireless community workers throughout their lives. To them, Buderim represented everything that made a community special. They loved anything to do with community involvement and gained great pleasure from working alongside others as part of a team, building a social structure that would carry their beloved community into the future. Around 1967, the Wolleys moved to 'Corner Cottage' behind The Boolarong at Alexandra Headland.

Olive passed away in 1974 and Tom in 1990.

*Donor: Sheila Hancock*