

LISMORE STREETS

Have you ever wondered about the names of our streets? In this issue we will look at WILLIAM & OMAN Streets in Lismore. They are so named for William OMAN (c1827-1911), one of the original pioneers of the district. Let us put a face to the name.



William OMAN c1927-1911
JRO_0393

His obituary in the Lismore Advertiser 23-2-1911 tells part of his story:

“One of the oldest residents of Lismore, in the person of Mr. Wm. Oman, passed away at half-past four on Monday afternoon, at the ripe age of 83 years. Mr. Oman was a native of Wick, Caithness-shire, in the

extreme north of Scotland. He landed at Geelong in 1855. It was a curious coincidence that he sailed in the ship ‘The Bee’, and the man for whom he did his first work in Victoria was named Honey. Mr Oman soon found his way, like many others at that period, to the goldfields and opened a hay and corn store at Browns near Scarsdale. He was one of the first members of the borough council, and one of his performances in the cricket field is still spoken of at Scarsdale. In 1865 he married Miss Jane Swan, of Ballarat, and leaving Browns, selected land near Lismore (east of Buchholz Rd). Here he engaged in pastoral pursuits, and by dint of industry and shrewd business enterprise accumulated considerable landed property (in and around Lismore). Six years ago he took his five sons into partnership, when part of the land was brought under cultivation with the same success that had attended the grazing operations. Mr Oman was highly respected by all who knew him and for many years took an active interest in the welfare of the district in which he made his home. He was always ready to lend a helping hand in deserving cases and his advice was much valued by a wide circle of acquaintances.....Mr. D.S.Oman, MLA is the eldest son and other members of the family are Messrs William, John, James, and Gardner Oman (sons), Mesdames Jas. (Isabella) Seymour, H. (Jane) Stone and the Misses Margaret, Lily and Jessie Oman (daughters). One other child died in infancy 36 years ago.

The funeral took place on Wednesday morning with the cortege leaving his late residence for the Lismore cemetery.....”



OMAN family standing in front of their home in WILLIAM Street c1913. Built c1879 by William OMAN. When the phone was connected it became known by the phone number, No 8. It is actually 67 William Street. JRO_0200.

William Oman built a woolshed and stables behind No 8 and for a number of years outlying farmers used to bring their sheep to be shorn in this ‘depot’ shed. It is reported that 30,000 sheep were shorn in the shed.



Woolshed and stables at No 8. JRO_0211. OMAN Street, Lismore.

Lismore Progress Association minutes 30-10-1911, some months after William OMAN’S death reveal...

“The President said that names had not been given to some of the township streets. Even an important street in front of the hall [original Mechanics’ Hall built c1880 and removed in the 1990’s] had no name. On the motion of Messrs Taylor and Dunne, it was decided to ask the Hampdenshire Council to have the street named “William Street”, in memory of the late Mr Wm Oman, whose residence was built fronting this street many years ago.”

Many descendants of William OMAN are now spread far and wide. The History Group are indeed honoured to hold papers and material gathered by William OMAN’s grandson, J. R. OMAN 1913-1982, our esteemed local historian who wrote “Brown’s Water Holes – History of Lismore 1840-1980” and compiled “Lismore Presbyterian Church 1864-1964”. He had great foresight.

See over to read a wonderful poem written by Alma Charles, ‘Tribute to No. 8’. No doubt Alma collaborated with Jim Oman in the preparation of this work.

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