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The Buderim Show

In the first part of the twentieth century many small rural communities held an annual show. In the area around Buderim, shows were held in Palmwoods, Woombye and Nambour. They featured local produce and animals, cooking of various kinds, art and, of course, fruit, vegetables and flowers all judged for competition. More than that, district shows were an opportunity for the community to gather in one place and exchange news and ideas. Sometimes sports, athletic events and wood chopping would be held in conjunction. Buderim was no exception and the first Buderim Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Show was held on 3 June 1922 and annual shows became an important part of the community calendar until 1933. The first three shows were held under the auspices of the Buderim Progress Association, those from 1925 on were under the auspices of the Agricultural and Industrial Society. Both these groups appointed a Show Committee to organise and run the show. In 1926 the President was William Crosby and the secretary was Sam Anderson.

From as early as 1901, and most likely before that, there were numerous associations and societies in rural areas coordinating and promoting the produce of each area. On Buderim in the 1920s there was a Progress Association, a Fruit Growers and Local Producers Association and an Agricultural Horticultural and Industrial Society (A.H. and I. Society).

The first show was held on a Saturday only, but was such a success that two days, Friday and Saturday, were allocated for all following shows. Shows were usually held in May or June. There was an official luncheon at Birdwood Boarding House for the Committee and judges and often a concert followed by a dance on Saturday evening. One show was concluded with a concert by the Nambour Philharmonic Society.



Officials from 1923 gather for luncheon at 'Birdwood'. Note the dress standard and the fact that they are all male – even the dog.

The Governor, Sir Matthew Nathan, travelled by train and Tram and opened the Show. He was entertained at the official luncheon at 'Birdwood' and was given a tour of Buderim. He commented that the display of citrus was the best he had seen.

The venue for the first two shows was on land owned by George Burnett which was where the ginger factory was later built and where Woolworths now stands. There was a proposal that George

would donate six or seven acres to become a recreation ground and the permanent home of the Buderim Show in return for Crown Land elsewhere on Buderim, but this never eventuated. In 1924 the show moved permanently to the newly rebuilt School of Arts Hall and adjoining land.



The shows consisted of displays of fruit, vegetables and other produce. The list of categories is too long to include here, but a sample follows. Included was sugar cane and amongst

the fruit: citrus, pineapples, bananas, strawberries, custard apples and papaws. The vegetables category included: heaviest pumpkin, tomatoes, beans, peas, yams, ginger and peanuts. There was a category for the produce of a single farm and one for orange packing, one for adults and one for children which was very popular. Home industries included crafts and cooking such as: a plate of scones, cakes, jam, sponge roll and shortbread. Horticulture was popular with cut flowers, elkhorn fern, collection of roses to name a few. Household needle work and fine art were well patronised. All sections were fiercely contested with cash prizes for the winners. The Buderim Tram offered free transport of exhibits. There were visitors (including judges of displays) from Nambour, Palmwoods, Montville, and other centres.



There were foot races for the children and, on at least one occasion, Mr Dunning brought his troupe of boxers and had a tent on the grounds. At times throughout the year the Show Committee organised dances or concerts in the School of Arts as fund raisers for the Show.

In 1923 there was a competition to find a 'Queen' of the show. Miss Ivy Bell was named 'Pineapple Queen' and was installed after a short procession. Her 'Maids of Honour' were Ellen Crack and Wynnie Dyble. Ivy was the daughter of Buderim pioneer William Fawcett Bell junior and was later to marry William Chadwick a prominent Buderim citizen of the 1930s, 40s and 50s and band leader of later years. Ivy was well known as a music teacher in later life.

Pineapple Queen and attendants during the Queen Competition at the Buderim Show, 1923

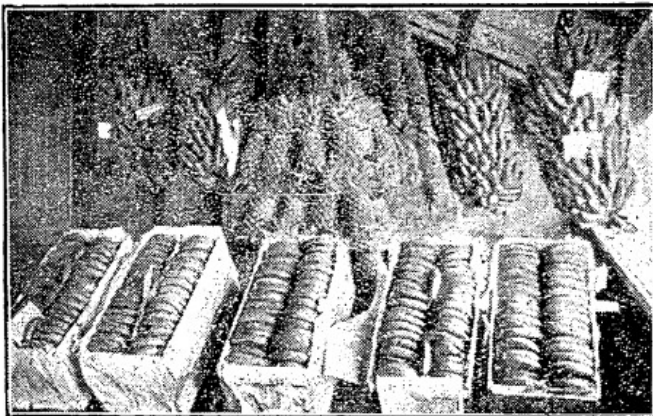


Miss Ivy Bell the 'Pineapple Queen' with her Maids of Honour Ellen Crack and Wynnie Dyble. Buderim Show 1923.

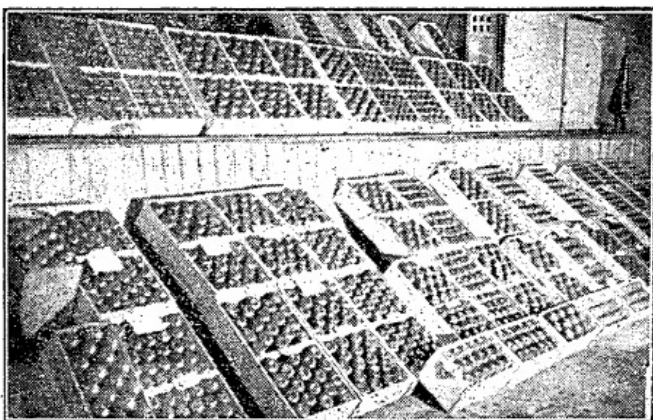
Mr James Lindsay was the first Show Society President and many prominent Buderim citizens were on the committees over the following years. Other presidents over the years included

William Crosby and Ernest Middleton. Sam Anderson was the Honorary Secretary for many years. Judges and visitors travelled from around the region, even from Brisbane, mostly via the Buderim Tram, and stayed at 'Birdwood' and other guest houses. The Show was opened by a local politician such as Frank Nicklin MLA.

Fruit Exhibits at Recent Buderim Show.



Bananas in bunch and cases with trophy of pineapples. These exhibits comprised fruit of first-class quality, which prompted the judges to commend the methods adopted by growers.



The Cased Citrus Display, which comprised fruit of most excellent quality, and again convincingly impressed patrons of the high production of Buderim as a fruit-producing area.

The Buderim show ran each year from 1922 to 1933. In 1933 the most recent event had apparently been quite successful with good crowds according to a newspaper report. However it had been a difficult year with poor rainfall and the citrus crop had not been as good as usual. Around the turn of the century and for 20 or so years later, citrus had been the dominant crop on Buderim. But by the mid 30s citrus growing had become more difficult due to the gall wasp and the fruit fly. But even allowing for this, there must have been other reasons for the decline of the local Buderim Show.

In February 1934 at the thirteenth annual meeting of the A. H. and I. Society a discussion took place on the advisability of holding a show that year. The members were divided in their opinion, and it was decided to call a public meeting for February 28 to decide whether or not a show would be held. This was finalised and the *Moreton Mail* of 9 May 1934 announced on page 5 that *At a public meeting held in the Buderim School of Arts the members of the Buderim A. H., and I. Society decided not to hold an annual show year.*

It remains unclear why this decision was taken. Perhaps the concept had just grown stale. With better roads, and motor vehicles now owned by many people, it was now possible to travel to larger shows such as Nambour which grew to become the largest show in the district. Even a trip to the Brisbane Exhibition was now feasible and many local areas including Buderim mounted exhibits of produce there.



Buderim Show Procession 1923.

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Acknowledgements

Photographs are from the Buderim Historical Society with the exception of that on the lower part of page 3 which is from the supplement to the *Queenslander*, July 1931.

Sources

The details in this story were virtually all taken from various newspapers of the time via 'Trove'. Most came from the *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser* (formerly known as the *Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*), the *Queenslander*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Brisbane Courier*.