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Photographing Buderim's History

by Helene Cronin and Bill Lavarack

In attempting to research the history of any town or region 100 years after the fact, old photographs are a vital tool. Daguerreotypes were developed as early as 1839 and the negative positive film strip dates back to 1889. There are a relatively few examples related to the township of Buderim before about 1900. The earliest examples which survive include the Dixon Fielding Sugar Mill about 1878, the blacksmith shop in about 1880, Campbell's Sugar Mill 1883, school children in about 1889 and Gustav Reibe in 1899. Unfortunately most of these early images come to us with scant or no details of the subject, the date or, in particular, the photographer.

In about 1915 many useful images start to appear in the record. This coincides with the start of the Palmwoods to Buderim Tram which, in turn, was the catalyst for the development of a small township. Many photographs taken after 1915 are available, showing what Buderim was like 100 or so years ago. Many of these images are useful for the background as much as for the actual intended subject of the shot. Thus the presence or absence of telegraph poles in Main Street or the presence of a motor vehicle or the style of clothing being worn, can help date old photographs. And in many cases we know who took the photograph, as most between 1915 and 1930 were taken by one or the other of Buderim's two prominent amateur photographers – James Arthur Dyble and Clarence Arthur Blakey.

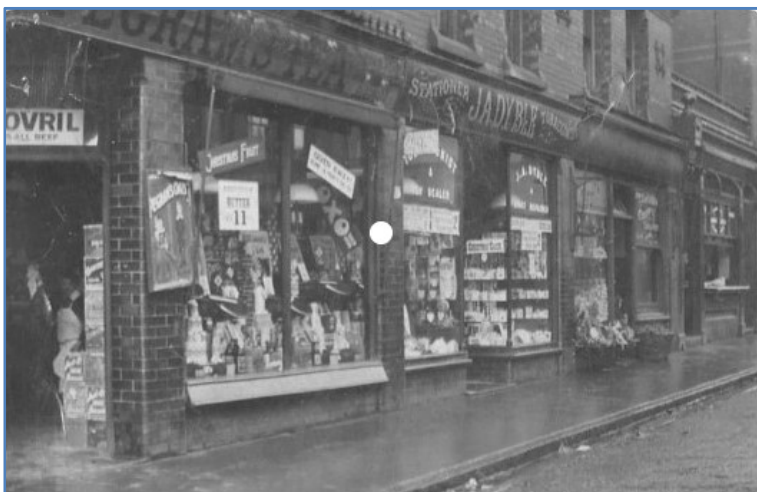
The idea of what separates an amateur from a professional, sparks many debates, and there are many ways of looking at it. By definition, an amateur is 'a person who engages in a pursuit or activity for pleasure rather than for financial benefit.' James Dyble and Clarence Blakey, Buderim's amateur photographers, arrived in Buderim around 1916. Clarence Blakey, initially an amateur, graduated to the professional ranks when he opened his Maroochydore studio in 1950. Both James and Clarence have left us a lasting legacy by photographing not only Buderim's history but also that of other parts of Sunshine Coast's history as well. Many images in the collections of these two have come with only the barest of details attached. However researchers have been able to identify dates and locations helping us to fill in some of the blanks. For example James's photos are distinguished by the dotted or dashed line in white ink under the heading. Interestingly in 1918 Clarence Blakey and James Arthur Dyble were joint secretaries of the Buderim School of Arts.

James Arthur DYBLE (1882 – 1965)

James was born in Knutsford, Lancashire, England on 27 October 1882 to Arthur Dyble and Mary (née) Ardern. Aged 17, James served with the UK Royal Navy as a stoker from 11 June 1900 to 6 May 1902. He married Mary Hannah Anderson (b. 1876) in Bucklow, England in April 1904 when he was 21. The Electoral Register records James living at 26 Window Lane, Garston, Liverpool, from 1909-1910. The England Census of 1911 has James aged 28, Mary 35 and Wynnie 2, also living in Garston. He was listed as a boot repairer and Mary had a shop selling boots and tobacco.



Dyble's shop at 26 Window Lane, Garston, Liverpool probably about 1908. Note the photographic postcards and photo frames on the left and the 'boot repairer' sign. Both these were to be continuing occupations of James. The Electoral Register records James as living at 26 Window Lane, Garston, Liverpool, in 1909-1910. The small girl on the left is probably Wynifred and the woman in the white dress her mother Mary Hannah Dyble. Below: Dyble's shop with their living area upstairs.



The England Census of 1911 has James aged 28, listed as a boot repairer, employing 2 staff. Mary 35 is described as having a shop selling books and tobacco'. Living with them was daughter Wynnie 2. James migrated to New South Wales on 29 August 1912, leaving Mary Hannah and daughter Wynifred to follow. On the 6th February 1913, Mary aged 37 and daughter Wynnie aged 5, embarked at London for Sydney on board the *Rangatira*.

The *Evening News* (Sydney), reported on the arrival of the steamer *Rangatira* on 21 March 1913.

The following was reported in the *Cobargo Chronicle*, on 31 October 1913. It documents some of the first known example of James's work as a photographer in Australia (see below). Obviously he was experienced in photography before arriving in Australia.

Visit of the Bishop of Goulburn - Parishioners of Tilba and Cobargo had the pleasure of a visit from the Bishop of Goulburn last week, the first tour in these parts he has undertaken since his return from England, whither he went on a health trip. His lordship seems to have benefited by the change of hemispheres. He was entertained by the Tilba people at a garden party in the beautiful rose garden at "Mountain View." Mr. Dyble secured several excellent group photos of his lordship and the Church officers.



This must be one of Dyble's earliest photographic images in Australia. It appeared in the *Sydney Mail* on 17 September 1913.

Photo: J. A. Dyble.

A Bush Beauty at Central Tilba.

The *Pugh's Almanac* and the *Queensland Directory* have James in Buderim in 1916. The Australian Electoral Roll (1919-1925) shows James as a farmhand, living in Buderim with wife Mary Hannah (home duties). They raised two children Wynifred and Hubert James. James volunteered for active service in the Great War but was rejected. Wynifred, much later played the organ at St Marks Church, Buderim. On Buderim it seems Mrs Dyble was generally known as 'Hannah'.

In 1919, Birdwood Boarding House, Buderim, was under the management of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Dyble. There is a photograph of Birdwood Boarding House (also known as 'Buderim House') taken by James Dyble on which the caption reads: "BUDERIM HOUSE" BOARDING EST. (W. WATT PROP.)'. William Watt built this boarding house which opened in July 1915, but he left for the War in August 1916, selling to H.S. Guy (see photos on page 5). James and Hannah Dyble arrived in Buderim in 1916 (or possibly 1915) so it is likely James's photo of 'Buderim Boarding House' which was taken while Watt was proprietor, marks one of his earliest Buderim photographs. It is more difficult to determine for how long a period he was photographing scenes and people on Buderim, but it was probably up to 1931.

The Buderim Boarding House Company employed James and Hannah Dyble as managers of Birdwood Boarding House during April to July 1919 at least, and possibly for a longer period.

The following was reported in the *Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser* on 11 April 1919, page 7:
BUDERIM VISITOR'S IMPRESSIONS - If any holiday maker or tourist wishes to go to a resort, to which, he will wish to go back again for another stay, let him or her go to Buderim. A pretty little township and settlement in Buderim, with everything most convenient, saw-mill, stores, school and unique in having no hotel. I believe if you wish for anything stronger than banana juice, you must walk five miles on to Maroochydore, and by then you will have earned what the song calls "a deep deep draught." Ample boarding accommodation for the present "Birdwood," under the able management of Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Dyble is perfect, rooms clean and airy, and cuisine excellent.

During (1922-1930) James worked at the Nonmus Sawmill in Buderim. The *Brisbane Courier*, 30 August 1922 reported:

A NARROW ESCAPE - While the plant was in operation at the local sawmill on Wednesday, the belt on the flywheel from the main shaft broke, and although full steam was on the piston it remained stationary. In the excitement of mending the broken belt the operation of turning off the steam was forgotten. When the belt was replaced J. Dyble gripped the flywheel to reach the right position to replace the belt, and the engine started at full speed. Dyble was carried round with the flywheel, and eventually was hurled to the ground some distance away with terrific force. He escaped, however, with a severe shaking and several bruises about the body.



In 1924 James became Buderim's local boot maker and also worked for the Nonmus sawmill at the same time. At this time he was also busy as an amateur photographer, providing some very fine pictures of life on Buderim and of the fountains, cascades and waterfalls, which adorn and beautify Buderim. Many of his photos appeared in the *Queenslander* and the *Brisbane Courier* during the 1920s. A collection of Buderim photos taken by James are held by the Sunshine Coast Library, and in the Henry William Mobsby collection at the Fryer Library.

In April 1930 James had another accident while working at the sawmill. See right.¹

Accident.—While at the local sawmill, Mr. J. A. Dyble accidentally caught his left hand in a circular saw, which severed one finger and severely damaged several others. He was taken to the Nambour Hospital.

This could have been a contributing factor in the decision to leave Buderim which the family took in 1931, moving to Bundamba.

The Australian Electoral Roll of 1936–1943 shows Hannah and James living at Redbank, Brisbane. James - boot repairer. Hannah - storekeeper. In 1949-58 James was living at 46 Cribb Parade, Cribb Island, Sandgate, Queensland.

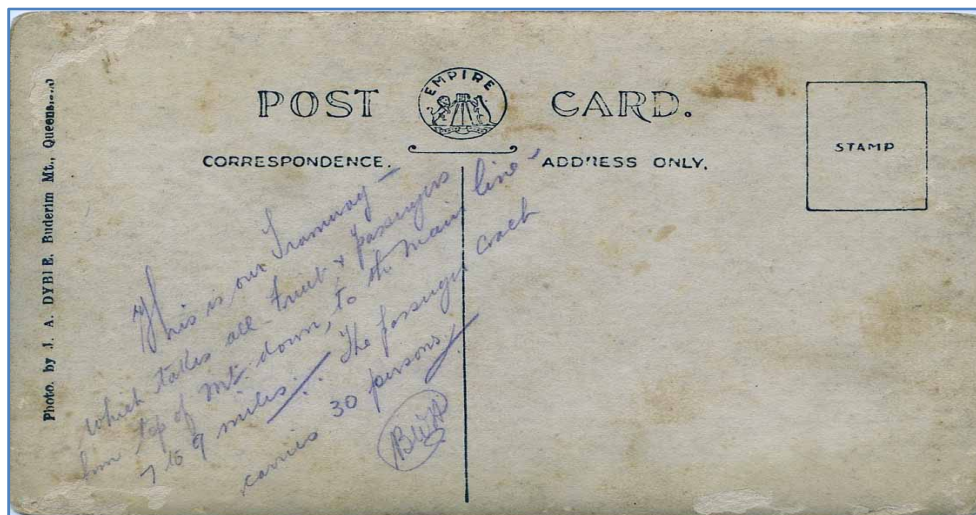
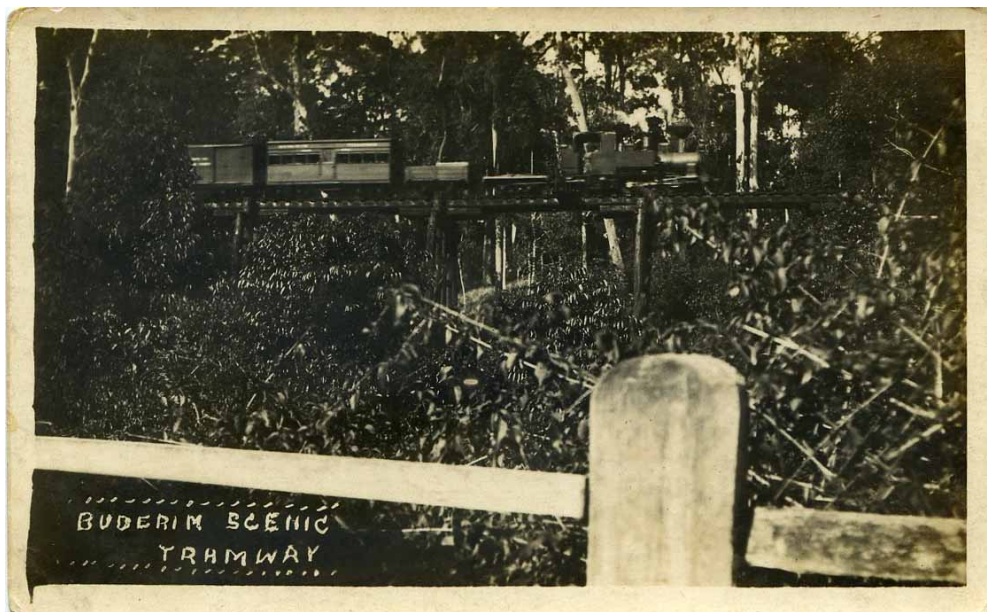
Deaths: - Mary Hannah Dyble late of Station Road, Redbank died on 5 September 1944, James Arthur Dyble died on 20 April 1958 at Sandgate.

¹ The *Brisbane Courier*, 1 April, 1930, page 21.

A selection of photographs by James Dyble

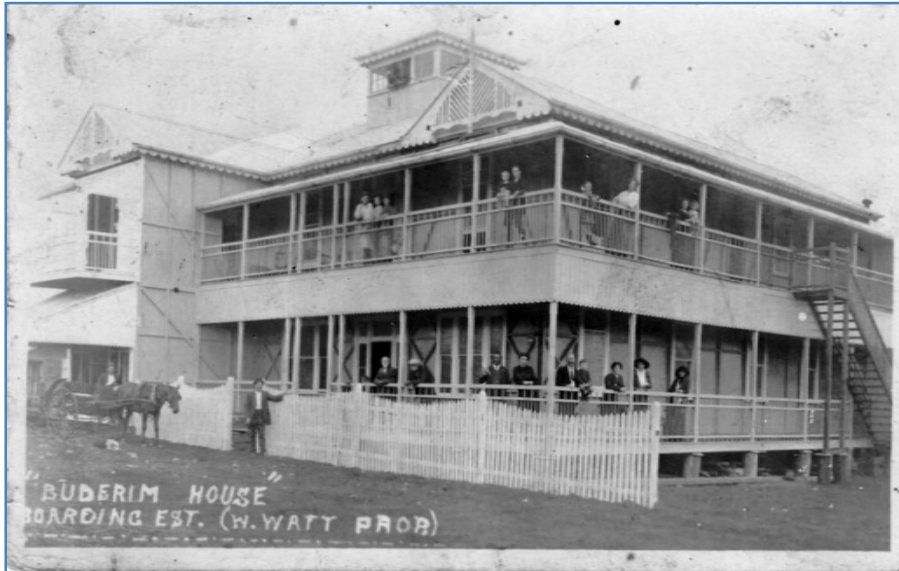
James Dyble turned many of his photos into post cards. 'Real photo post cards, exploded in popularity when the No. 3A Folding Pocket Kodak camera, which created postcard-sized negatives, came out in 1903. Real photo post cards are printed directly on photographic paper using photographic processes. This allowed amateur photographers take images and have them printed on postcard stock. Starting in 1913 and well into the 1930s, post cards featuring a white border became commonplace. Typically, multiple postcards were printed in rows on a large sheet of paper, which had to be trimmed around the edges of each postcard — a job that required a great deal of precision. The white borders were introduced to give some margin of error to the process, thus making them less expensive to produce. Both Dyble and Blakey produced many post cards for sale.

A James Dyble post card – front and reverse



Above images: this post card has James Dyble's name printed along the margin of the reverse (Photo by J.A. DYBLE. Buderim Mt., Queensland).

It is from Bernard William Haydock and the reverse reads: *This is our Tramway – which takes all fruit and passengers from the top of Mt. down to the main line – 7 to 9 miles. The passenger coach carries 30 passengers.*



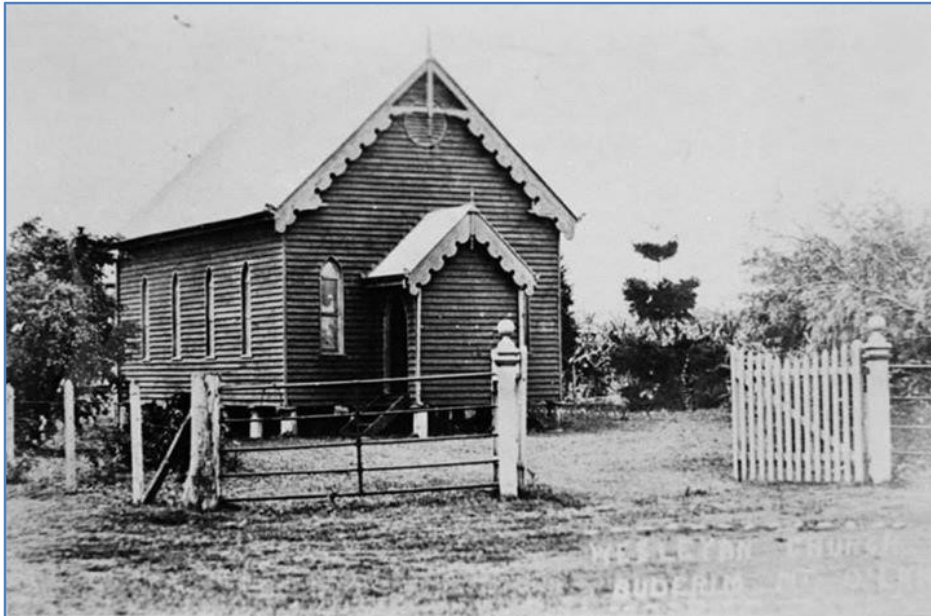
'Buderim House' boarding establishment about 1916 W. Watt proprietor. (Also known as 'Birdwood Boarding House'), situated in what is now Gloucester Rd.



'Birdwood' about 1918 H.S. Guy proprietor



View of Buderim railway station with cattle and lumber, Buderim, c 1920.



Buderim Wesleyan Church built in 1907.





View looking north.



Clarence Arthur BLAKEY (1899-1966).

Clarence (Clarrie) Blakey was born on 8 June 1899 in Irvinebank, Queensland, the only son of Arthur and Annie Margaret Blakey (née Joy). Clarence's father, Arthur Blakey was born on 7 February 1876 at Bradford, West Yorkshire, England to Esther BARRACLOUGH and John William BLAKEY. Arthur lost his parents when aged about one and was brought up by his grandparents. He came to Australia (date unknown) and worked as a clerk at the Irvinebank Mining Company in North Queensland where he later became their accountant and auditor.

The *North Queensland Register* of 28 November 1898, records the marriage on 9 November 1898, of Arthur BLAKEY and Annie Margaret JOY at Girofla Mine west of Mareeba by the Rev. David Fletcher. Arthur was a good athlete, winning sprint events until he was handicapped out of contention. Miss Annie Joy was the 'Belle of the ball' in one of the sports meetings at Girofla in March 1898. Maybe this is where they met.

Aged 15 Clarence received a medal for the best essay on the '*The Irvinebank Company's Battery and Smelters.*' Mr. Reid presented the medal donated by him to the boy scholar compiling the best essay on that topic. Masters C. Blakey and S. Ramage secured an equal percentage of marks. In consideration of each of the successful boy's essay being so well put together and descriptive. Mr. Reid decided to award each a similar medal. This was done amidst great cheering.

Clarence had a State School Education to scholarship standard and spent two and a half years at Brisbane Grammar School 1914-1916. In about 1916, the family moved to Buderim, where they purchased a fruit farm. In 1923, Clarence's father, Arthur, became the Secretary of the Buderim Mountain Fruit Growers and local Producers Association.

Clarence played an active role in community and sporting organizations including the Buderim Tennis Club and the Mooloolaba Surf Lifesaving Club. In February 1926 Clarence was on lifesaving patrol at Mooloolaba when Buderim identity Lionel Burnett found himself in trouble in rough surf. The *Nambour Chronicle* gave a lively account of the incident:¹

While a happy band of bathers were besporting themselves in the silvery breakers, they were given a thrill when it was observed that one of them, Mr Lionel Burnett, a well known local resident of the district was being carried out to sea by a strong current. The alarm was raised immediately and the lifesaving patrol under the command of Mr Percy Jakeman, sprang into action. Mr Clarence Blakey demonstrated the value of the life saving reel and practical training in the very able manner in which he swam out, through a very rough sea, to the rescue. Meanwhile, Mr Burnett, although himself a good swimmer, found it impossible to swim against the current and fortunately kept cool and floated until Mr Blakey reached him with the line. He was then 350 yards out. On being brought ashore Mr Burnett was found to be little the worse for his experience.



Clarence in his life-saving days.

Clarence developed an interest in photography while working in Ernest Middleton's store. In 1920 he won two prizes for his photography at the Gympie Show, making this his fourth win, the previous successes being at Woombye and Nambour. The *Nambour Chronicle*, of 4 April 1924, reported:

¹ *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 5 March, 1926, page 10, MOOLOOLABA.

PHOTOGRAPHER - Mr. Clarence Blakey has taken several prizes, and is best known by the name of Camera Obscura. It is not safe to meet him unless you are wearing your best smile, and Sunday face, for you are sure to be snapped.

This photograph taken on the wreck of the SS *Dicky* at Caloundra won a prize for Clarence Blakey in 'The *Daily Mail* Photographic Competitions'. The image is from a cutting from the *Daily Mail*, 31 December, 1924.

Clarence received much credit for his work which he displayed in the Camera Clubs Exhibition. As a result he received a letter from a Melbourne firm asking for the sole right to purchase one of his photos viz 'The Subway at Central Railway Station' to be used for advertising purposes.

The Electoral Roll of 1925 records Clarence living at *Yekalba*, on Buderim Mountain and working as a store assistant. In 1926, he was employed as the Manager at Ernest Middleton's Palmwoods Central Cash Stores that Middleton had purchased from Mr. G. Gall in June 1926.

In 1928 Buderim held a farewell evening in the School of Arts to bid farewell to Clarence who was leaving for Java, where he had taken up a position on the rubber estate of Tjondong, near Garoet. His many friends in the district presented him with a handsome shaving outfit in memory of his long sojourn at Buderim.

Public Farewell. A public farewell was tendered to Mr. C. A. Blakey on November 15. The large hall of the School of Arts building was filled with friends who wished to say good-bye to their guest. The evening was spent in dancing and card games. Mrs. W. H. Doe's Orchestra supplied dance music. During the evening Mr. G. B. Nonmus presented Mr. Blakey with a handsome suit case from the local residents. Mr. P. Jakeman also presented Mr. Blakey with a gold-mounted fountain pen, from the members of the Mooloolaba Life Saving Club. Other speakers were Captain G. Burrows, Messrs. A. Parker and E. Middleton. Mr. Blakey suitably responded.¹

Clarence travelled to Java with close friend Charles Robert Nelson (see right) known as 'Bob', also of Buderim.

The *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser* reported on 11 January 1929, that Mr. Clarence Blakey has written to his parents at Buderim of the many incidents on his journey, the letter dated 25/11/1928 on board SS *Nieuw Zeeland*. (Extract follows):

On Sunday morning 12/6, I was up at six to see the boat arrive alongside picturesque Makassar. As soon as we arrived in port native boys were swimming round the boat calling for money in their own tongue and would dive for it when thrown. After breakfast we went ashore and as we were carrying cameras, we had to explain we were coming back to the boat. About 10 o'clock we took the ladies back to the boat, and then Fleming and I went to the Orange Hotel and ordered drinks on the balcony in the open. The people were sitting around at tables in easy cane chairs smoking and drinking. They drink light beers, and I have not seen



FIGURE STUDY (Third Prize).—"The Lookout," by Mr. C. A. Blakey, Buderim Mt.



¹ The *Brisbane Courier*, 20 November 1928, page 25, BUDERIM.

any the worse for wear. We then visited the Harmonie Club, and had 100 up at billiards, and got back to the boat at 11 p.m. Monday morning broke very cool and clear, the rain having completely cleared off. After breakfast I went ashore on my own to get some pictures illustrating local colour. I walked for about two hours and took three films all over the town. It was a beautiful day.

After two years on a rubber estate, Clarence and Robert cabled their parents at Buderim advising that they would be returning to Buderim in September 1930.

On 11 April 1933, Clarence married Olga Frederica Goldstine of Buderim at St. Mark's Church, Buderim (see opposite). Robert Nelson was best man.

Olga aged 13, had departed London on board the SS *Baradine* on 1/9/1927 with her father, Samuel John Goldstine who settled on Buderim. He was Romanian by birth and was naturalised in England in January 1915. He was a widower at the time.

The Australian Electoral roll of 1935 – 1937 records Clarence back living at *Yekalba*, Buderim Mountain and working as a shop assistant. In 1937, Clarence sold his Buderim property in Gloucester Road to Mrs. Gordon, and purchased a house and land from Mr. D. H. Mitchell at Maroochydore.

In 1941 Clarence and Olga had a son, Robert Keith Blakey, (b. 13/1/1941, d. 24/09/1988)

Clarence's photographic work included portraits, but was mostly confined to landscapes and local scenes printed in post card form. Many of his photographs were subsequently reproduced in newspapers, local publications and books issued by the Queensland Government Tourist Office.

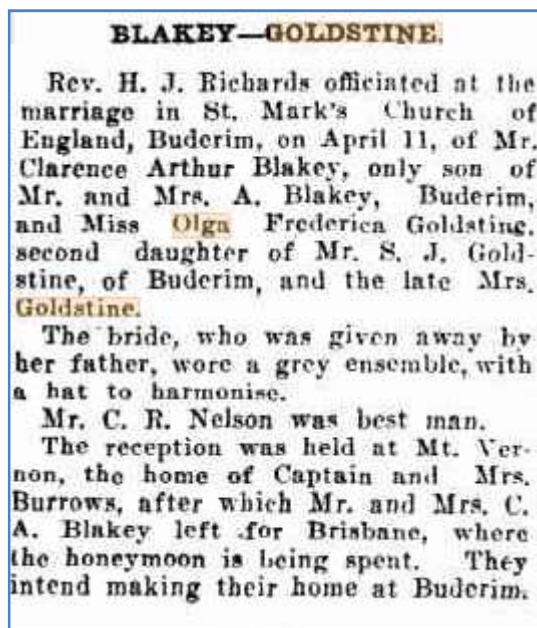
Clarence Blakey's photograph taken on enlisting in the RAAF in 1942.

Clarence joined the Volunteer Defence Corps part time in July 1941 to June 1942. He was described as '5 feet 11 inches tall, brown hair and grey eyes'. On 16 September 1942, age 43, he enlisted with the RAAF attached to No.1 Photographic Reconnaissance Unit, Darwin. On joining his description read : 'Trade, Photographer, Character: Very good.'

He requested a discharge on 21 July 1944, on compassionate grounds to look after his wife, who was in very poor health. This was granted.

The *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser* 2 June 1950, reported C. A. Blakey had applied to the Maroochy Council for a building permit for a studio and dark room in Duporth Avenue, Maroochydore. This request was granted.

Blakey's Studio offered a 'same-day' developing and printing service for local and visiting camera enthusiasts



Clarence Blakey, photographer, in his studio at Maroochydore, ca 1955. Sunshine Coast Libraries Reference No. M864489

C. A. BLAKEY
PHOTOGRAPHER
Developing and Printing.
Same-Day Service.
All Classes of Photographic
Work.



In 25 July 1941, page 14, the *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser* carried the following story:

C. A. BLAKEY

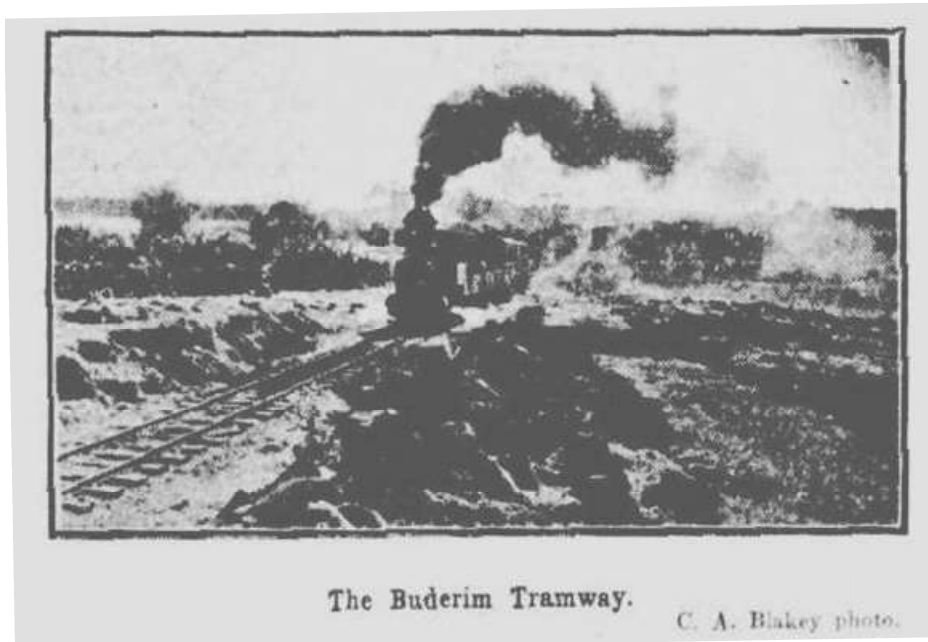
Professional Photographer.

People of Maroochydore and district visitors have come to know that at Mr. C. A. Blakey's studios they will find the highest class of work in all that pertains to modern photography. Mr. Blakey has the ability to make a photograph look thoroughly natural; he has a true artistic sense and is a master of photographic technique. Although he does lifelike portrait studies of all kinds, his work is confined mostly to landscapes and local scenes printed in post card form and sold all over the Maroochy district. The series comprises literally dozens of views, making a complete pictorial record of places of interest to both residents and tourists. He started photography first of all as a hobby, and after much interesting study and encouraging success, found that there was a ready local market for all he could produce. A lot of his work has since been reproduced in local publications and books issued by the Queensland Government Tourist Office. It is interesting to recall that during the visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester to this district some years ago, Mr. Blakey took a number of photos of the duke and his entourage in local settings. Another important branch of his work is the printing and developing of films for local and visiting camera enthusiasts. As an experienced professional photographer, he is able to fully appreciate their difficulties, to give them valuable hints, and produce prints for them which are of professional standard. Well known for over 20 years in Buderim, he came to Maroochydore approximately four years ago. His extensive travels in North Queensland, Java and the Islands have afforded him an enviable opportunity of becoming fully acquainted with these romantic lands and their peoples. No gift is more acceptable than a photograph, whether it be of a place or a person dear to the one who receives it, and there is nothing whose value increases more as it grows old. A visit to Mr. Blakey's studios, then, will well repay anybody.

Clarence Blakey died on 26 March 1966.

A selection of photographs by Clarence Blakey

Many Blakey photographs appeared in Brisbane newspapers. Clarence Blakey's images are not always as easy to identify as those by James Dyble. Several of those shown below were published in newspapers with the caption clearly identifying the image as being a 'C.A. Blakey photo.' For example see the images below. He also produced post cards with local scenes.



The photograph above was published in the *Daily Mail* 22 September in 1924, but without the attribution to Blakey. The same image was also published *Brisbane Courier* 7 December 1926, page 7 with the caption clearly showing that the image was taken by Clarence Blakey (see above for the *Brisbane Courier* image and below for the original much better image).





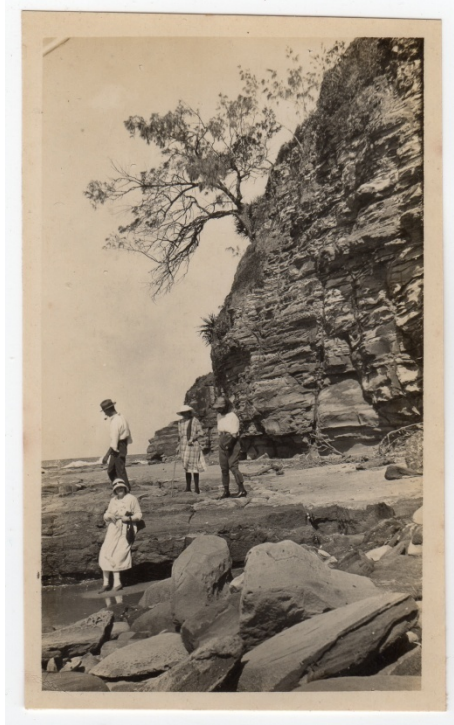
A Clarence Blakey photograph of the fledgling Mooloolaba Surf Life Saving Club in 1924. It is identified as being taken by C.A. Blakey by the caption which was attached originally. This photo with the caption appeared in the *Brisbane Courier* on 10 March 1924.



South from Point Cartwright by Clarence Blakey. This image and the four monochrome images on page 15 along with the top image on page 17, are from a collection of Blakey photographs originally held by Bob Nelson.



Muriel and Sybil Vise. Muriel was to marry Bob Nelson, a close friend of Clarence Blakey.



Point Cartwright



An example of Clarence Blakey's studio work. Beverley Bell and Margaret Milne photographed in their Buderim Fancy Dress Ball costumes in Clarence's Maroochydore studio in 1950. Clarence added the colour by hand.

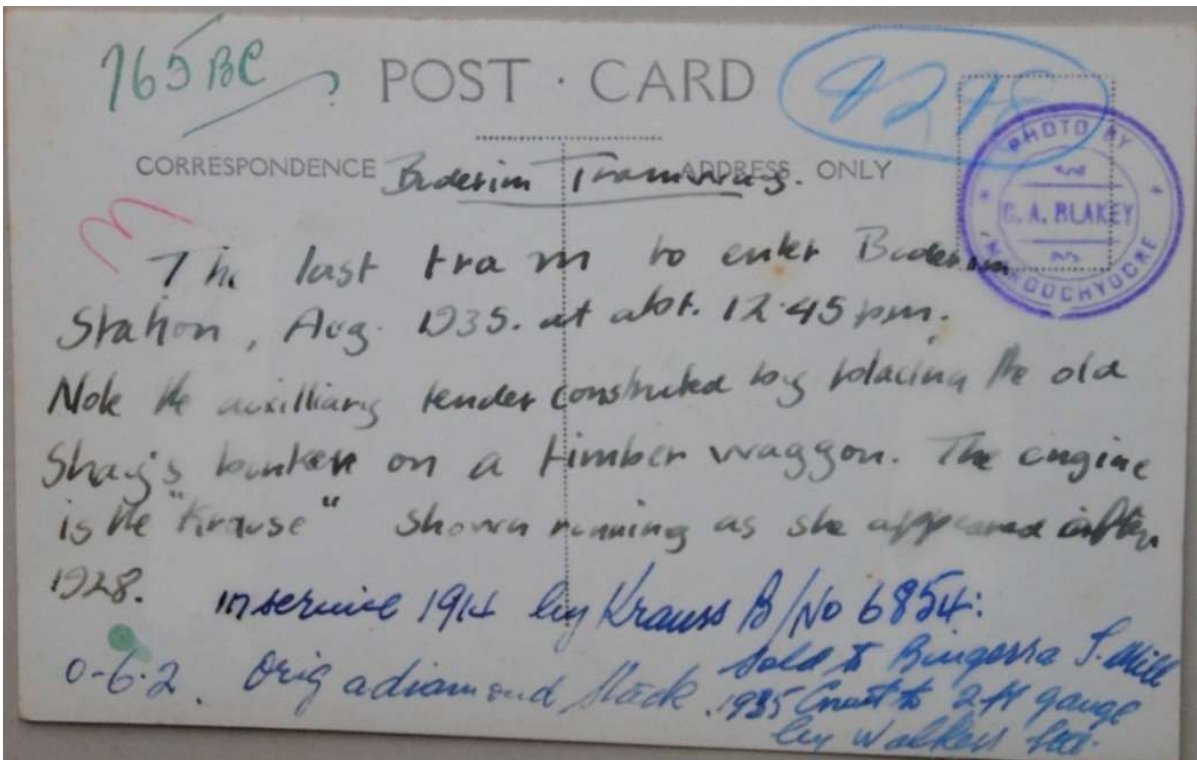
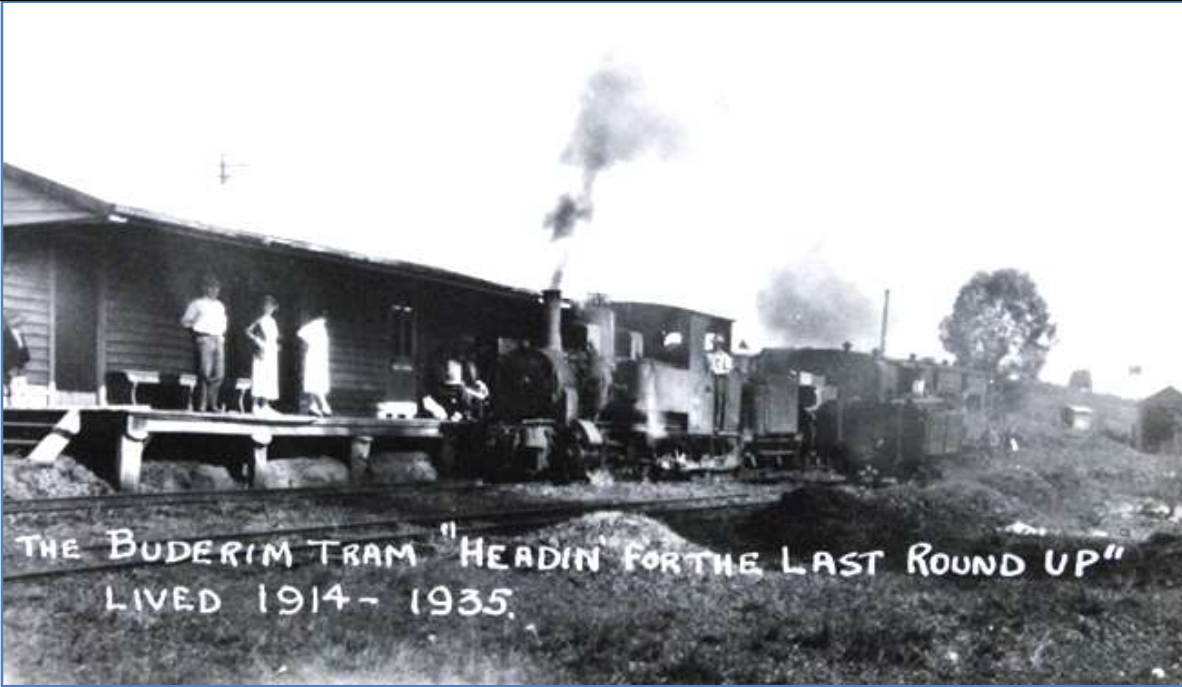


Pineapple patch Buderim 1920.



Mooloolah River

Below: Front and reverse of a post card with Clarence Blakey's stamp. The inscription in Clarence's hand reads: 'Buderim Tramway. The last tram to enter Buderim Aug. 1935 at about 12:45 pm. Note the auxillary tender constructed by placing the old Shay's bunker on a timber wagon. The engine is the 'Krause' shown running as she appeared after 1928'. The stamp reads 'PHOTO BY C.A. BLAKEY MAROOCHYDORE'. State Library of NSW in the Ray Field transport collection.





Nelson's residence, Buderim. Clarence was friendly with the Nelson family and Robert Nelson was best man at his wedding. The house named 'Trafalgar' still stands on Buderim.



Mandarins being picked and packed on Nelson's orchard, Buderim, ca 1925

Picking mandarins at Messrs. Nelson Bros.' orchard on Buderim Mountain. Over 2000 cases were obtained from about 5 acres.

—U. A. Blakey photo.

Blakey's original caption reads: 'Picking manderins at Messrs Nelson Bros.' orchard on Buderim Mountain. Over 2000 cases were obtained from about 5 acres.'

'C.A. Blakey photo.' From the *Brisbane Courier*, 6 September, 1924.

Acknowledgements

Most of the photographs are from the Buderim Historical Society collection and from the Buderim to Palmwoods Heritage Tramway Collection.

The colour photograph on page 13 is courtesy of Beverley Lavarack (née Bell).

Other references are given throughout the text.