

A snippet of history.

“NEW ROAD, BALNARRING BEACH”

The story behind the photograph

Balnarring Beach is one of the oldest towns in the Balnarring district. The township on the coast was first gazetted almost 140 years ago, in 1886. The former Crown land was subdivided into a number of lots, some facing the beach front and some along the creek. As well, much of the coastal strip was reserved for public use. The small township was named Tulum and the sale of land was advertised in ‘The Argus’ (newspaper) with lots ranging from £15 (fifteen pounds) to £30. However, the land was slow to sell despite its ideal location, close to both a creek and the beach.

For good reason...

There was no road leading to the beach. The land surrounding Tulum belonged to the ‘Coolart’ estate. The new subdivision was effectively isolated with access only being along the coast at low tide or by sea. The nearest road was the coach road from Hastings to Flinders which passed through Balnarring and that was one and a half miles inland from the coast.

John Benn, the owner of Coolart, was approached by the Shire council and negotiations began for the sale of a strip of land from the coach road, south to Tulum. The road was eventually put through and in 1890 a single-lane wooden bridge was constructed across the creek to allow traffic into the foreshore area. The “new road” made it much easier for picnickers and holidaymakers to reach the beach. The lots began to sell slowly but until the 20th century Tulum was primarily an area for recreation.

Ilma Hackett

Balnarring & District Historical Society

