

Something about the area....

Michael Christian Daly's family came from city of Gympie.

Gympie is located in south eastern Queensland, Australia, and is approximately 160 kilometres north of the state capital, Brisbane. It lies on the Mary River.

Originally settled for grazing purposes, in 1867 the area became prominent when James Nash discovered gold. At the time Queensland was suffering from a severe economic depression and the discovery probably saved the colony from bankruptcy. Gold mining still plays a role in the area's fortunes, along with agriculture (dairy predominantly), timber and tourism.

Gympie's name derives from an Aboriginal name for a particular tree. The tree has large, round leaves that have similar properties to stinging nettles. The translation for Gympie is roughly "devil".



The Mary Valley is the colloquial name given to the section of the Mary River from Gympie upstream to Kenilworth including the community of **Imbil**. The Mary Valley is part of the hinterland of the Cooloola and Sunshine Coasts.

Imbil is in the Widgee, Shire Council. The Shire takes its name from the Aboriginal word "Widgee" meaning "westerly winds". The land was a wilderness and its aboriginal owners fought bitterly to keep white intruders out. Blood flowed on both sides before an uneasy truce was reached. After which came the prospectors, then the timber cutters and later the speculators.

In 1914, Michael Chistian Daly's father, M E Daly, bought a block on land in the township of Imbil. This is described in the article below.

Imbil grew out of a strong timber industry and still boasts one of the few remaining hoop forests in Australia. The lake is the centre of many leisure activities in the valley.

Imbil is perched on the banks of Yabba Creek and you can camp on the water at the Island Reach. Today, visitors to the town can experience the historic wonder of the Imbil Museum, or enjoy a picnic on the village green where the historic Timberman's Walk weaves between age-old jacaranda trees.

Below is an extract from WINDS OF CHANGE - One hundred years in Widgee Shire by Ian PEDLEY, printed by the Gympie Times in 1979. A copy was provided to me by my father, Michael Christian Daly in the early 1980's as a result of his genealogical researches.



courtesy J. Spence

Kandanga Rugby League team, circa 1919. Back row, from left: Harry, Eborah B. Smeacher, Mr. Smith, Ted Egan, Sid Stephens, James Carlson, Walter Ward. Middle row: Duffly Burne, George Everett, Jack Spence, Martin Higgins, Bill Love, August Carson. Front row: Harry Currie, Ernie Ward.

The theatre was later bought by Percy Perrott.

Kandanga quickly became a centre of sports such as rugby league, cricket and tennis. During the 1930s there was a nine-hole golf course on Mr. Stephen's property outside Kandanga but it fell into decline after the war and closed.

Imbil township began at nearly the same time as Kandanga. It had its origins in the sale of Imbil station on March 17, 1914 when about 300 buyers converged on the homestead for the auction. A special train brought about 100 Gympie residents on the new Mary Valley line to Kandanga. There a fleet of motor vehicles, four-in-hands and other horse-drawn conveyances took them on to Imbil. Ninety-three township allotments were offered first by auctioneer Mr. G. H. Mackay. All were sold. Mostly quarter-acre blocks they brought an average £30/13/6 each with the top price of £141.

The buyers, among them a number of Mary Valley farmers and Gympie investors, were: D. Mulcahy, Walter Webb, S. M. McKinley, J. Gierkes, A. H. Shears, J. W. Albritz, J. Didcot, M. E. Daly, F. B. Sykes, F. Elworthy, J.

J. Ryan, W. Dautil, C. J. Dougherty, A. H. Lowe, M. Higgins, W. H. Shambler, A. T. Hawkins, J. F. O'Farrell jr., M. Wickers, J. Tregonning, G. R. Sly, E. Coop, W. Meddleton, T. W. Mitchell, G. F. Mathias, A. L. Walker, James Doyle, Andrew Doyle, F. Power, Chippindall and Viles, H. Mills, W. Smerdon jr., C. J. Mitchell, M. Moynihan, J. Carey, J. Hughes, L. J. Thomas, W. H. Durham and Mrs. Mays.

When the farm blocks were put up for auction all of the land near Bergin's Pocket land was passed in. Thirteen other blocks were sold, the buyers being Mr. William Oakes from Isis who paid £933/15/- for over 125 acres on Bollier, Mr. R. Hill of Gympie £1,109/5/- for 153 acres on Sandy Creek, F. Chippindall £738 for 123 acres on Yabba Creek, W. J. Maslin of Childers £1,014/10/- for 143 acres on Coonoon Gibber, Samuel Craig of Murrurumba £734 for 91 acres at Deeria (Deerier) and £220/17/6 for 23 acres near Imbil Station, John Doyle of Kandanga £802/10/- for 107 acres at Deeria, Alick Andrews of Tweed River £1,891/2/6 for 233 acres at Deeria and W. Denning of Tweed River £173/5/- for 19 acres near Imbil Station.

Other buyers shortly after the auction pushed the total purchase price of the old station to well over £20,000. They included the Meyer brothers from Eel Creek who bought 88 acres on Imbil Island, G. A. Meyer of Bollier 98 acres on the Island, T. L. Rodwell of Bollier 80 acres on the Island, M. Wecker of Yeulba 83 acres on the Island and another 33 acres adjacent, Andrew Doyle of Kandanga 121 acres at Deeria and A. H. Boardman of Tweed River 133 acres at Deeria. Most of the blocks on the flat had portions of high land as well—a legacy from the 1893 flood which swamped the Bollier plains and swept away many head of stock.

Within two years of the Imbil sale, 25 buildings had been erected there. They included a sawmill, public hall, a branch of the Royal Bank, a blacksmith's shop, two general stores and a school. The hall was built on land which had been donated by Elworthy and Mellor. With the local settlers providing the timber and their labour the final cost was only £95/18/7.

The Imbil blacksmith was Phil Wallader, the town's sole smithy for the best part of half a century. He set up his forge across the road from a bank and had a favourite saying: "The bank's in front of me, not behind me. That's why I never prospered."

The first stores were Moynihan's and Gilroy's, while other early shopkeepers included butchers Roy and Edward Gomersall and saddler Art Girdler, whose hand-made saddles were renowned throughout Queensland. From early on there was a boarding house run by George Whittington who worked by day as an engine driver. The house had three bedrooms for paying guests and two more in a shed outside. Visitors who arrived too late for a bed had to shake down on the verandah.

Imbil's hotel was built in 1917 by Jim Larney. He did not enjoy a publican's life, however, and quickly sold out. The hotel has changed hands several times since. Two of its early licensees were Moss Reeves and Bidy