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## HERITAGE SERVICES INFORMATION SHEET NUMBER 20

### ARMIDALE TO ROLLINGSTONE: FROM LAND SELECTION TO TOWNSHIP



The area known today as Rollingstone was part of the original Armidale holdings, which was first leased to Adam Mossman and Edward George Clerk in 1883. The lease comprised coastal land which extended from Bluewater Creek through Ollera Creek and was bounded by other Hinchinbrook pastoral holdings.

Under the Government's land selection acts, lessees were required to stock land for grazing and farming within a nine month period.

Mossman and Clerk failed to stock the land so the lease was forfeited. Armidale then passed to Edward Fanning. Part of Armidale was resumed for closer settlement into eight parcels of agricultural land and reduced in area.

By 1895, Armidale had been broken up further as settlers became less involved in pastoralism and more in agriculture. The name Armidale persisted as the name for the area.





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The first inn/hotel was built by the Tealby brothers on portion 511 and by 1906 Vivian and Hubert Tealby were issued with a licence to operate the hotel. The hotel was a stop on the coach route between Townsville and Ingham. Here travellers could rest and mail and supplies were offloaded for people living in the area. Apart from the Armidale Hotel, there was a general store and even a race track in front of the hotel. Chinese market gardens provided fresh vegetables and tobacco and other produce was grown in the area.

The first section of the rail line from Townsville to Kurukan (Leichhardt Creek) opened in April 1914 and a year later, the Rollingstone Railway Station and refreshment rooms services the local area. In 1915 it became evident that a school was needed in the area. Isabella Fitzpatrick called a meeting of residents and they resolved to lobby the government

for a school to be built on land which she had given to the community.

John and Isabella Fitzpatrick had bought the Armidale Hotel in 1914. They continued to operate the hotel and store until 1921 when they moved to their new hotel adjacent to the railway line in Tealby Street. In 1928, a dance hall and open air theatre were built by the Fitzpatricks from the remains of buildings from the Armidale township area. In 1959, the original Rollingstone Hotel burnt down and a temporary one was built until the present hotel on the Bruce Highway was constructed and opened for business in 1962.

### Acknowledgements:

- Bianka Vidonja Balanzategui, *Thirty-three miles to Rollingstone: A short history of Rollingstone and Balgal*, Thuringowa City Council, Thuringowa Central, 2003

