



Reminiscences on A History of Spencer: The Inn of the Damned



Edge's House in Mangrove Creek, photo courtesy Gosford Library

The house of Bill Edge on Mangrove Creek became infamous as the location of the Australian B grade horror film 'The Inn of the Damned'.



Publicity for the film described the site:

'Marginalized in a deserted road in the isolated Australian forest, there is a horrible godforsaken inn'.¹

Ric Comensoli who lived at Mangrove Mangrove recalled how even before the production of Inn of the Damned film, the house was rumored to be a haunted house.² According to the local stories Bill Edge's son met a sudden and accidental death. When out on a hunting trip with a friend he was accidentally shot. As it took a day or so to get him to hospital he died of gangrene and his ghost was rumored to remain a presence at the house.

Film release poster for Inn of the Damned

Edge's house was previously used an inn. Originally owned by Mr and Mrs Gardiner it served as 'Gardiner's Guest House' a stopping place for travelling salesmen when the road was the main highway from Sydney to the Central Coast. The road would have likely followed an old Aboriginal walking track. In use up until 1930, the track

¹ Press release for film 'Inn of the Damned', 1975, produced by Terry Bourke and Rod Hay. At the time 'Inn of the Damned' was one of the most expensive films made in Australia.

² Bottomley, Bill, and Ken West. The Way It Was: Talking About the Past on the Mountain. Warrimbirra Workshop, 2001.



goes from Ten Mile Hollow (12 mile Hollow), up Dubbo Gully to Mangrove Mountain, then down Bumble Hill up through Yarramalong, Dooralong and then onto Cooranbong.

Subsequent owners were Mr Beatty, then the family of Rossitor and Bill Edge who was Hugh Woodbury's grandfather. The final owner of the property was Alan Mooney before the council resumed the site in the 1970's in preparation for the building of the Upper Mangrove Creek dam. Backpackers and travelers used to pass through and stay overnight in the house. Vandals burnt it down in 1979 by and all that's now left is some old fencing, the remains of a small tin hut, and a wild spider plant indicating a former garden.

More contemporary visitors have sought out the house site for a different sort of investigation – using GPS coordinates people have come to find the Geocache treasures of GroovyChook hidden at the site <http://www.teamwolfie.com/2009/01/inn-of-the-damned/>.

Thanks to Phil Woodbury and Brad Maisey.