



# Contact

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## **PRESIDENT'S AGM REPORT 2016**



*(This is a précis of the full report presented at the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> August)*

Last year when Marea announced that she was not going to stand for President, I agreed to nominate for the position. Marea and I had discussed how the transition and day-to-day management of everything would work with Marea's new role as Curator/Museum Manager. This has taken some time to resolve.

Sue Spence was instrumental in working with our Public Officer and Secretary Anne McCallum to draft, then finalise, the necessary minor changes to our Constitution. As you know, these were agreed to at the Special Meeting in June, but the managerial structure remains unchanged. Sue has also drawn up a detailed list of roles and responsibilities.

There are many people that I would like to thank for their help and input during my tenure. Marea, as Curator/Manager continues to roll up her sleeves in the day-to-day management of the museum; the backroom volunteers are the unsung workers who diligently apply themselves to their specific tasks; the members of the Executive and other committee members who have undertaken and performed their varied responsibilities; the catering ladies who are always around when food is required for special events; our Museum Guides who are the face of PYHS and the feedback we get in our Visitors' Book is a fantastic testament to you all.

The Old Kirk is now firmly cemented in the Lower Clarence Valley's consciousness as the cultural hub, thanks to the fabulous exhibitions we have been privileged to host. Robyn Tychsen's art was featured in September, and during one day of her exhibition we had 44 individual visitors through the museum which is something of a record.

Some of Graham Mackie's work was on display for part of October and November, and Vision4Change ran from 11<sup>th</sup> December until the end of January. In March and April, John Ibbotson's Lighthouse Photography was exhibited in conjunction with Light Up the Darkness, a local group raising awareness about mental health issues and services in the Lower Clarence.

Thanks to our generous benefactor, John Ibbotson, gallery lighting was installed in The Old Kirk in April. It is now fully operational and the Old Kirk is becoming recognised as the preferred venue for art exhibitions in the Lower Clarence.

With movie nights, yoga classes and retreats, weddings and other functions, The Old Kirk has been booked out almost solidly this past year. A big thanks to Margaret Lawrence for her competent management of its calendar.

The Clarence Valley Council's Australia Day Awards saw Marea bestowed with the honour of selection as Local Hero, a timely acknowledgement of the passion and dedication she has demonstrated towards PYHS and Yamba Museum. I was absolutely thrilled for Marea and her achievement.

The shed: well, it took Marea quite a long time and much fundraising to get the original storage shed built and it was completed around Christmas 2014. With another very generous donation from John Ibbotson, an extension has now been added which provides a lot more space both inside, and an outside area under cover. Thanks to Jeremy Moss who managed every aspect of construction from dealing with council to plumbing, concreting and more.

Jeremy also affixed our Remembrance Plaque to the rock in the garden at the front of the museum and with the assistance of the Men's Shed, constructed and installed the seating around the trees. His efforts are greatly appreciated.

Anne McCallum has been secretary for the past 15 years and now plans to retire. She has worked tirelessly for the Museum over this time and will be

sorely missed. I salute you Anne – you're a living legend!

So, we have had some successes and some set-backs this year but I hope you'll agree that the positives outweigh the negatives.

I wish the incoming President, executive and committee a successful 2016/17 and reiterate my thanks to everyone who has assisted to make the Port of Yamba Historical Society and Yamba Museum the icon it is today.

Thank you. I'll see you all around!  
Margot

## **AROUND THE MUSEUM - Marea Buist**

### **Every Museum needs a Shed!**

It's time to celebrate the completion of the shed extension and subsequent electrical work and plumbing. A number of people have been involved in seeing this work come to fruition. We held a BBQ at the shed prior to the AGM to thank our benefactor John Ibbotson, supervisor Jeremy Moss and also Tony Moran and Graham Young for their valuable assistance.

### **Alarm Bells**

A recent change in our security company has meant alterations to our alarm system but not without a lot of frustration and gnashing of teeth. If you hold a museum key, it is your responsibility to make sure you are familiar with the current procedure. Written instructions are next to the keypad in the library and in the Day Book notes for Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> July. Once you are familiar with the new routine, we trust that you will find the procedure simplified and reliable.

### **Roof Essentials**

While the roof of any building may be considered to be the most important part, it's also the least visited, and as a result, is often ignored until there is a problem. Unfortunately we do have a problem! You will recall that the written report from the Building Assessment early in February this year made recommendations regarding additional insulation. When obtaining quotes, an inspection of the Museum and Flinders Room roofs revealed excessive corrosion including several holes in the roof sheeting.

Obviously it is paramount that this matter is resolved immediately! Clearly, we can expect this to be a major project and a financial burden. Accordingly, a grant application has been submitted to Museums and Galleries NSW for the whole roof to be replaced and to include the additional insulation. Members will be kept informed of further action.

### **Backing up our History**

The Flinders Room is the heartbeat of the museum when it comes to research and documenting our history and collection. It is filled with members every week who work diligently at the computers doing data entry, scanning photographs and research. Therefore it is imperative that all this work is not lost through some unforeseen disaster. Thanks to the resourcefulness of Eris Flaus and Graham Young, additional steps have been taken through the IT SIG to ensure that an off site 'back up' will protect this important work.

## **"VISIONS OF THE CLARENCE VALLEY"**

**- Gary Whale**

I've long maintained that the Historical Society has 'the best little museum in the country'. Well, for the next few weeks it is hosting 'the best little exhibition in the valley' - Grafton Regional Gallery's *Visions of the Clarence Valley*. The Old Kirk is a marvellous venue for the art on display and the gallery lighting shows the works superbly.

The exhibition contains art of seventeen different Clarence artists working in a variety of media but with the common theme of our Clarence Valley. The exhibition was opened on 15<sup>th</sup> July with a warm 'Welcome to Country' from Rosie Vesper, one of the artists whose work is on show. Rosie was born in Norfolk



**Richie Williamson & Jude McBean**

Park opposite the Museum and so she said she felt 'very much at home'. This was followed by the official opening by Mayor Richie Williamson (a good friend of the Society). He acknowledged the Yaegl people on whose land the Museum sits, the Society for its foresight in organising the gift of the Old Kirk, the lighting, made possible by a generous gift from John Ibbotson, and the artists whose work is on display. He

said that the exhibition was a reflection of the Clarence Valley and that in it we see a reflection of ourselves.

Jude McBean, Director of Grafton Regional Gallery, spoke of her delight with the exhibition. Often in the past, she said, museums were reluctant to lend material but Yamba Museum, under the leadership of Marea Buist, had set the precedent for cooperation of which this exhibition is just one example.

“The Gallery’s regional collection helps preserve the history of the valley,” she said, “as in the case of Cass Samm’s ‘Tim the Bream’ which harks back to the first Tim the Bream fishing competition in 1958”. She might as easily have mentioned John Witzig’s iconic photography of Angourie Point, Ken Done’s ‘Burning the Cane’ or Robert Moore’s ‘The Clarence River Bridge, Grafton’.



*Courtesy of the  
Grafton Regional Gallery*

Other artists on display include Malcolm King, Frances Belle Parker, Graham Mackie, Henk Kaptein, John Millington, Rosie Vesper, Deborah Taylor and Geoff Crispin.



## CHAPTER CHATTER

It has been three years since a co-ordinators’ meeting was held in Sydney for the Museums Australia NSW Branch. Marea, members of the MA NSW Committee and other Chapter Co-ordinators participated in the planning day on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016 in Sydney. The focus of the discussion was on how to service the needs of the individual Chapters and what could be offered at a State Symposium to be held in September. A wonderful opportunity for all small regional museums to find out what others are doing. Date and venue to be confirmed.

## EDUCATION NEWS - Sue Spence

Marea Buist and I recently attended a teacher workshop at St James Primary School. The day began with an interesting interactive session with Professor Peter O'Connor from Auckland University, on using drama to teach a range of skills and perspectives. Along with the teachers we used 'freeze frame' tableaux to enact lines from a well known World War One poem, which was both fun and provided an insight into effective teaching for deep learning.

Before we left we provided a 'show and tell' of several World War One objects from the museum, which was very well received by teachers who had come from catholic schools in Grafton and Maclean, as well as St James. After we left, the teachers used the objects we had showcased to develop lesson plans. Both Marea and I feel this has further strengthened the relationship with St James School.

We have also boosted our ties with Palmers Island School by helping to plan the celebration of their 150<sup>th</sup> year anniversary later this year. Palmers Island Public School, established in 1866, pre-dates Yamba Public School and survived while other one-teacher schools in the region did not. It also survived river floods that forced the relocation of the school to its current site on Yamba Road.

PYHS members can support their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary efforts by: purchasing commemorative pavers (\$30); attending the formal dinner on 1<sup>st</sup> October; participating in the open day and fair at the school on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Please check the Facebook page: **Palmers Island Public School - Celebrating 150 years** or contact the school on 6646 0114 for further details.

## MATERIAL JOURNEYS - Helen Tyas Tunggal

This Exhibition of local private collections of traditional textiles is to be on display in the Old Kirk from Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August until Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September. It is honouring textile traditions from different cultures and expressing the evolution and diversity of global textiles.

The exhibition has come out of a local conversation about some of the extraordinarily beautiful fabrics collected from far and wide over many decades.

They are now either so loved that they are almost worn out or so precious and valued that they are carefully stored away rarely to see the light of day. Also recognized are the sacrifices and poverty of the many women who have produced these beautiful fabrics and all funds raised will go to support women's healing and well-being projects – one in Nepal, one in Bali and one in Yamba.



#### **NEPAL PROJECT**

Women's Collective in the remote village of Thapathali, village district of Nepaledanda, region of Bhojpur, Eastern Nepal.

#### **BALI PROJECT**

Bukit Women Weavers collective in Sawangan Village in South-eastern Bali.

#### **YAMBA PROJECT**

Clarence Valley Women Incorporated well-being project for disadvantaged women to be held in Yamba early next year.

'*Material Journeys*' will provide an opportunity to "air and share" more than a hundred selected pieces. It explores the journey of making the fabric, the journey of the fabric from its source to Yamba and the journey of the audience through the exhibition. As many of the exhibited pieces will be hung from bamboo poles, visitors are invited to touch as well as see the exquisite diversity.

During the exhibition contemporary dance maker, *Jade Dewi Tyas Tunggal*, will perform 'Materiality of Impermanence' - an intimate series of poetic dances translating dynamic pattern, pigment and fibre stories remembered in the tactile qualities of distinct materials displayed. Performance times -

- \* Friday 26 August: approximately 6.30pm, and 7.30pm
- \* Saturday 27 August: approximately 2.30pm, and 3.30pm
- \* Sunday 28 August: approximately 2.30pm, and 3.30pm

Entry is by paper note donation and will include "lucky door prizes" of hand-made fabric. All funds raised will go towards women's healing work and well-being projects.

## DIARY DATES - August

Wednesday 3rd	Yoga Retreat at 5.30pm
Thursday 4th	Yoga Retreat at 6.30am & 5.30pm
Friday 5th	Yoga Retreat at 6.30am & 5.30pm
Saturday 6th	Yoga Retreat at 8.30am
Friday 12th	BBQ at 12 noon & AGM at 2pm
Friday 19th	Committee Meeting at 2pm
Sunday 21st	'Visions of the Clarence Valley' closes
Tuesday 23rd	U3A Film Evening at 6pm
Friday 26th	'Material Journeys' Exhibition Official opening from 6pm

### ADVANCE NOTICE

History Council Event  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm

**Speaker is Rohan Howitt and his topic is** *"Australia's Southern Empire – How Antarctica was made Australian"*

**This is a free event and afternoon tea will be served at the conclusion of the presentation.**