



Contact

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Hello Everyone

Here we are approaching the end of another year. I feel that this one has passed so quickly that we have barely had time to catch our breath. But before the year is over there are exciting things happening on Friday 9th December. Diary dates have details of the events.

This will be our final Members' meeting for the year, and will include the book launch of John McNamara's second book, *Yamba – The Next Thirty Years 1885-1915*. While many writers liken the process of writing a book, to giving birth, I have tested this analogy and, for the most part, agree. Just like childbirth, this book has been brought into the world amidst pain, and exhaustion mainly for those of us who have watched and waited over several years for it to be born. Documenting Yamba's history has been John's passion since he joined the Society 13 years ago. In this, his latest project, John provides a glimpse into a period of expansion of basic services and the evolution of civic and cultural aspects of Yamba, from legal disputes to a notorious murder mystery.

Pat Cox, a descendant of Edward Albert Cox, a very civic-minded resident during this era, will be launching the book.

From one John to another, John Ibbotson's exhibition *Sea Sand and Birds* will open in the evening and will go through to the end of January. Even if you, like myself may not concur with many of Ibbo's thoughts on certain subjects, you would have to agree that he has captured the heart of Brooms Head Beach with a surreal quality that will forever change the way you look at a beach.



Each of his photographs combines the physical elements of sea, sand and birds into this all-inclusive exhibition and book. Although nature defines our beaches, John's imagination exploits many of the three-dimensional patterns in the sand to create astonishing images.

We are hoping to see the replacement of our roof before the end of 2016. Thanks to many of you and with support from the community, our roof appeal now stands at \$25,031.20. A special mention of Graham Mackie's generosity during his exhibition with the gold coin entry on the opening night and all the raffle monies going to this cause. We still must meet our target and have some fundraising ideas for next year.

Now it is time to take a short break. The museum is closed from Friday 23rd December and reopens on Tuesday 3rd January, 2017.

As this year ends, let us look back with pride in what we have accomplished. We are well positioned to make significant progress in the New Year. I wish you and your family a safe and happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you again in 2017.

Until next year, Marea

MILVA LEE 1923-2016 - Gary Whale

Long time members of the Historical Society will be saddened to learn that a past member of many years standing, Milva Lee, died in her sleep at Berry on Monday 21st November, aged 93.

Milva was a stalwart of the Port of Yamba Historical Society since 1992 and fiercely proud of “The Society”, especially if somebody referred to it as simply “The Museum”. She was one half of a double act with her husband Stuart Lee, a former Research Officer for the Society. For every publication of Stuart’s (including *Riverboats of the Clarence* and *Yamba Yesterday*), Milva was beside him typing, proofreading and offering constructive advice.



After Stuart died in 2004, Milva and their daughter Karen revised and updated *Yamba Yesterday* which was published in 2006. Milva was for many years the Secretary (if memory serves me correctly) of The English Association whose aim was to promote a better knowledge and appreciation of English

language and literature in the community and to provide opportunities of co-operation between teachers of English at all levels.

Milva was just as tireless when she joined the Committee of the Lower Clarence Music Club which brought guest artists such as David Helfgott, Georg Pedersen, Rachel Valler and Asmira Woodward-Page to subscription concerts in Maclean. You did well if you could get through the door without having bought a raffle ticket from Milva!

PYHS members extend to Milva’s children Robert, Lynette and Karen and their families our sympathy and an assurance that she, like Stuart, will be long and fondly remembered.



YAMBA YEARS - John McNamara

People and events from Clarence and Richmond Examiner, December 1916 compiled from microfilms held at Yamba Museum.

Yamba News

The war in Europe was affecting life in Yamba. The Yamba Surf Life saving Brigade has a minimum of members as most had enlisted. Club secretary, Harold Till of Maclean, was appointed Beach inspector at Yamba Beach by Harwood Shire Council.

The Nuisance Inspector at Harwood Shire Council, John A Thompson, recommended no action be taken against the person who interfered with the well at Yamba Beach by bathing in it but since expressed regret for his action. Thompson announced his resignation as he had purchased the Yamba Refreshment Rooms at NW corner of Wooli and Yamba Streets. Replacement was Mr S O'Keefe.

The Yamba Sanitary contractor, Alfred Towell, asked for an increase in wages of £1 per month during the busy holiday season.

50 couples attended a farewell at School of Arts for oyster farmer, George Barclay (one of many local enlistees) who had enlisted. Music by Mrs W Craig, Misses C Redman and L Carr with items by Miss Tuckey, Mr Craig and Miss M Drury. Mr Alexander McLachlan, headmaster at Yamba Public School, presented him with a wristlet watch. George had been connected with all branches of sport at Yamba, including rowing & tennis.

Corporal Alexander Ross McQueen returned home from Gallipoli and was welcomed at a public gathering at King's Creek, Lawrence, on the 29th. *(Alex was wounded during the Gallipoli campaign. His war diary was reproduced in the Port of Yamba Historical Society publication "There is NO GLORY in WAR".)*

MEMBER PROFILE - Lesley Pickering



We arrived in Yamba three years ago – myself, my husband Chris Moran, three dogs and far too much furniture. We decided to bolt from Sydney where we'd lived and worked for 40 years, leaving four grownup children and friends, and retire to a coastal town. We knew a little about Yamba and its surrounds from holiday visits, as my brother and his wife have lived here for 25 years, and my parents moved here for the last 17 years of their long lives.

My career was spent in education, working at various levels within the NSW public system, specialising in ESL education - English as a Second Language. I began as a high school teacher, and become a regional consultant, training officer, then senior policy officer at head office. These positions required me to work across many sections of the education department, such as all curriculum areas, staffing, recruitment, fee-paying overseas students. My jobs involved allocating ESL staffing, co-managing 3 budgets, developing school-based projects, writing materials, retraining teachers and doing bureaucratic tasks. As well, I would write and advise on syllabuses K-12 and HSC exams for the NSW Board of Studies. It was politically demanding, pressured and I loved it all.

So, I took my time settling in to a regular routine of dog walking on Pippi beach, meeting locals through their puppies, coffee in town, starting embroidery classes, swimming laps and travelling with Chris as he tidied up some of his professional commitments. I would glance at the museum building as we drove past on our way to Pippi beach most mornings, planning to venture in one day and volunteer for a front door job.

Perhaps it was early spring, or museum happenings in the media, more so than my deep interest in all kinds of Aussie and world history, that enticed me this past September to plunge into the role of Secretary. I intend that the Flinders Room will not be my sole domain, as I certainly need input from members on our local history. I smile about my decision

to be part of the exuberance of the PYHS year-cycle and hope I can enrich how we present the narratives of our history.

OUR HIDDEN TREASURE

Did you know that we have a Hidden Treasure in our midst?

Yes, our very own President, Marea Buist.



We were already very proud when she was named the Clarence Valley Council Local Hero at the Australia Day awards.

Recently she was added to the Rural Women's Hidden Treasure Honour Roll. This is an annual initiative of the Department of Primary Industries' Rural Women's Network, which recognises the outstanding efforts of women volunteers in NSW.

A morning tea was held for Marea by Clarence Valley Women Inc on Saturday, 26th November.

Congratulations Marea on an honour very well deserved.

THE ENGINE ROOM

In the final instalment we highlight two more of our valued and hard-working volunteers - Colleen Bylos, who has joined us recently and Ann Scott who has been part of the Engine Room since 2012.

Colleen Bylos - "I have two projects that I am currently working on. One is updating and correcting the Accession Register to make sure it matches the Mosaic database and the other is going through the Electoral Rolls and extracting information, such as where people lived and their occupations."

Ann Scott has undertaken a variety of tasks that include:

- * Reorganise the “blue folders” in the File Room.
- * Label photographs for the photographic collection albums.
- * Input the monthly visitor numbers into spreadsheets.
- * Collate, summarise and produce graphs for yearly visitor numbers.
- * Assistant Editor for the monthly newsletter.
- * Scan photographs from the “Review” newspaper 1994-2001 into digital format.
- * Collate the register for ‘exhibition loan objects’.
- * Collate the register for ‘donated objects’ to the museum.
- * Assist with exhibition openings and tour groups as required.
- * Administrative tasks as required.
- * Museum Guide on the 4th and 5th Sunday of the month.

I enjoy my contribution to the operation and growth of our Museum and the friendships made in the ‘Engine Room’.

BREAKING NEWS

**PYHS has been successful in obtaining an
Arts NSW Regional Capital Grant for
\$10,000. A wonderful Christmas present!!**



DIARY DATES - December

Tuesday 6th U3A Christmas Party at 5pm

Friday 9th Members' Meeting at 2pm

Launch of John McNamara's book
"Yamba - The Next Thirty Years 1885 - 1915"
at 2.30pm

Christmas drinks at 3pm

Opening of "Sea Sand and Birds" Exhibition
by John Ibbotson at 6pm

AUSTRALIA DAY

26th January 2017

Flag Raising Ceremony 9am at the Museum



The Editors would like to thank the members who have contributed articles for our newsletter. We need and appreciate your support.

We wish all our members a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Margaret and Ann