



Contact

July 2017

Issue 6

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Hello Everyone

There is a lot of truth in the Proverb *"If you stop learning you will forget what you already know"*. We often think of learning as what we studied at school or university. However, with the world changing at a rapid pace, it is critical that we continue to learn to keep up to date with new developments. This is so true here at the museum.

Sustainability has been a catch word that has been around for a long time. Whilst everyone agrees that succession planning is the key to sustainability, there appears to be a huge gap between thought and action.

Regional museums like ours, compared with national and metropolitan museums, have more modest resources of both "staff" and finance. We carry a wider range of responsibilities, with less opportunity for training but possibly a greater need to keep abreast of best museum practice.

We take pride in our strong membership and the members who come in week after week "to work". They do an amazing job but what happens when they are not around? Who is going to know how to follow up a research request, manage the collection, curate an exhibition, or

learn our local history so we can inform a visiting group or school?

When I first became a member of the society, I literally knew nothing. It didn't take long to figure out that I needed to know more about museum practice. I talked with experienced people, attended workshops, and then accepted an internship at the National Maritime Museum and later at the Powerhouse Museum. I still felt as if I was just scratching the surface, so I completed a museum certificate. Since then I have continued to take every opportunity to attend numerous workshops, seminars and conferences. During which I have met some amazing people who have inspired me, and in addition, seeing and doing things that I could only once have imagined.

Only recently, I attended a practical workshop in Grafton "How to Curate Your Collection". Even the expertise of a Powerhouse staff member and I failed to inspire attendance from any of our members. Of course, there are perfectly good reasons and not being interested is just as valid as being too busy. But what of the museum's future! If we don't pass on our knowledge of museum practice now, our state of progress will be in decline. It's imperative that we take these learning opportunities to be assured of a smooth transition into the future.

Currently, the management committee is reviewing our Strategic Plan and sustainability will be one of the issues to be addressed. My personal experience is that the more I learned the more stimulating the work became and therefore more satisfying.

Please think about what you would like to learn, that is something new or perhaps be involved in another aspect of the museum. I am always available to discuss learning opportunities.

Until next month, Marea

REMINDER

AGM Friday 11th August at 2pm

To vote at the AGM you must be present
and a financial member

ANIMALS & US - Anne Dinham

Friday June 16th saw another significant event in the life of our museum, with the opening of the latest in-house exhibition, *Animals & Us*!



A mixed age crowd of over 70, including children, gathered to hear our special guest speaker, Chris Moran talk about his fascinating academic career as an animal geneticist. Chris wove together an interesting talk about areas of research involving animals and humans at a bio-medical level and challenged our thinking for the future.



A unique partnership between Squall & Anchor Tattoo Parlour and the museum brought not only a col-



ourful display of animal tattoos to the Old Kirk as part of the exhibition, but a younger crowd to



the opening, including numerous children.

In a room dominated by an amazing dragon, MC, Anne Dinham welcomed members and guests, including special guests Cr Deb Novak and Acting General Manager, Ashley Lindsay, from Clarence Valley Council and representatives from a number of community groups. Tattoo artist, Ben Ross, addressed the crowd about the prevalence of animals in tattoo designs, followed by our own President Marea Buist who outlined the genesis and themes of this exhibition. Marea paid particular tribute to the de-

sign skills of Susan Ong, organisational skills of Margaret Maher and Ann Scott and practical assistance of her husband, Bob. She thanked the numerous loaners who have contributed the wide variety of items that make this exhibition possible.



The delicious soups of Margaret Lawrence and Anne Dinham were enjoyed along with drinks and canapes served in the Old Kirk by a willing band of helpers. The exhibition which runs to the end of July was duly declared open by Chris and deemed off to a great start!

Fun Day

After early morning drizzle, the showers stopped just before the 11am scheduled start and streams of visitors – mainly young families - began to arrive.



The major draw card was Old McDonald's travelling farm. Youngsters had a ball hand feeding, brushing and patting the baby lambs, goats, alpacas, ducks and bantams. Stuffed animals swinging in hoops from the trees added to the atmos-

phere, and Robert Werry wandered the grounds with his hand lead baby alpaca. Yvonne and Keith Redman cooked up a storm on the BBQ and Sandy's Botero coffee van also helped keep the adults happy!





Children's animal craft activity in the Flinders room, supervised by Susan Howland, was very popular.

I was particularly thrilled to be able to bring my 3 year old grand-daughter Evi, who loved feeding the animals, eating her sausage sandwich and proudly took home her animal tracing! Unfortunately she also left her mark on Susan's swinging stuffed animal display, having paid the cuddly chimp a little too much loving attention – he swung low for the rest of the day! It was heart-

warming to see so many children and young parents enjoying the museum environs, reinforcing our place as a hub for the whole community – preserving the past while very much part of the present!

Special thanks to "Ibbo" for the Animals & Us photographs

NO NAMES, NO PACK DRILL

- Gary and Barbara Whale

After three weeks away it was good to return to the friendly, inviting atmosphere of our Museum. What was even better was to be reminded how relevant and accessible it is to our local community.

On our trip down south we called in to several museums and in all but one we were extremely disappointed. Discretion being the better part of valour, we won't name the museums but you may well guess them.

The first was on the Central Coast, a stone building known and advertised as "[Poet's] Cottage". Said poet only lived in the cottage for a year by the good grace of a friend, and all there is to see is a small bedroom with a few of his personal items. The rest of the cottage is furnished as a typical cottage of the late 19th century. Next to the cottage

is a building holding many exhibits, but many are not relevant to the area and those that are have no sense of narrative.

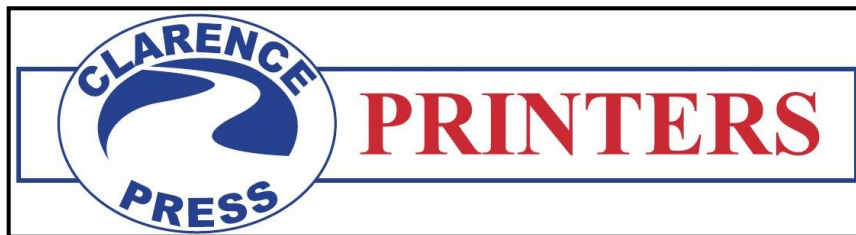
Next museum was in NSW's third largest city, and after a long walk to get there we found it was closed. The museum opens for a grand nine hours a week, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 12.00pm to 3.00pm, compared to Yamba's 24 hours. Not impressed!

The historic town of Beechworth is virtually an open-air museum and is certainly worth a visit - not just the Historic Precinct. The Chinese Burning Towers and graves in the local cemetery are of special interest. From there we went up into the High Country - Man from Snowy River territory - and visited a museum which "features" Jack Riley, purported to be the Man. While that was certainly interesting, the museum suffered from the same problems of local relevance and narrative. One exhibit was a camera belonging to Thomas Mitchell, a Changi ex-POW, Victorian parliamentarian and husband of Elyne Mitchell. (She was the daughter of Sir Harry Chauvel of Tabulam, famous for leading the cavalry charge at Beersheba, and she wrote the ever-popular "Silver Brumby" children's books.) While this had some local relevance, the other thirty cameras did not! They were there simply because they were old.

It was a pleasure, then, to call in to the museum at Berrima, not quite as big as our museum. It tells the story of the local district but sensibly focuses on its one real feature, the German Internment Camp from World War I. It was the only camp in Australia not to confine its internees to the camp perimeter. They kept themselves busy with all sorts of fitness routines including building boats to sail on the Wingecarribee River which they dammed to provide greater depth. Inside the gaol they built a theatre where they performed a play, a revue or a concert every two weeks, much to the delight of the locals. The museum has a great display including a short informative video with original WWI footage.

We finished our trip confirmed in our opinion that the Yamba Museum is one of the best little museums in the country because of its relevance and accessibility.

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM



This month we hear from Rick Angelo from Clarence Press

Clarence Press is proud to have been associated with the Port of Yamba Historical Society for somewhere around 15 years.

Clarence Press has been providing quality printing to the lower Clarence for around 50 years. Originally established in Maclean and moved to Yamba 21 years ago. Whatever your print requirements we are here to help, whether its something we can print, source from a trade supplier or just advise as to the best solution for your needs.

Feel free to call, email or drop in and talk to Rick.

MEMBER PROFILE - Susan Maxwell

My name is Susan Maxwell and I have a long-standing family history in the Clarence Valley.

I was born in Vaucluse in Sydney in 1955. I married Michael Maxwell in 1974 and a year later we moved to Marayong and had 3 children. In 1989 we relocated to Iluka as my relatives (my grandmother Annie Therese Rush), "RUSH" family on my mother's side, settled there in 1860. My mother, Nance Patricia McMahon, was educated at St Marys Grafton, coming down to Iluka on weekends and holidays. She married Alan Francis Williams from Sydney.

I spent much of my younger years at Iluka during holidays. Also, I am a descendant of the McMahon family. My grandfather, Norbert McMahon, from Cowper/Ulmarra, settled there in 1848. I lived in Iluka till June this year, but now it's time for a change and currently reside at Townsend.

REMINDERS

**Membership Fees \$10.00 per person
now due**

Payable by cash, cheque, or direct debit

Nominations for Committee invited

Contact Secretary Lesley or President Marea

DIARY DATES - July

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|-----------------------|--|
| Monday 3rd | Naidoc Week Flag Raising 10.30am |
| Tuesday 4th | Marketing SIG at 11am |
| Wednesday 12th | Strategic Planning Meeting at 10am Presentation by Guide Dogs NSW at 2.30pm followed by Afternoon Tea - all welcome |
| Friday 14th | Members Meeting at 2pm |
| Friday 21st | Committee Meeting at 1.30pm |
| Saturday 22nd | Book Launch "Clarence Valley Women Discover <u>Our</u> Way" 11am Morning Tea |
| Sunday 30th | Animals & Us Exhibition closes |