



The Old Courthouse Museum

PASTIMES

Newsletter of the

Clyde River and Batemans Bay Historical Society Inc.

Issue 19 - Jul/Aug 2015

STOP PRESS!!! STOP PRESS!!! STOP PRESS!!!

MUSEUM OPEN DAY – SUNDAY 18TH. OCTOBER



The Museum opens its doors and grounds to the public for a family fun-day (10.00 – 3.00pm) on Sunday 18th. October. We have received a **massive** response from other Community Groups, wishing to be part of our special day. See inside for more details, including a request for assistance on the day.

MUSEUM INVITED TO ATTEND ‘HORSE POWER’ RALLY IN MORUYA – 26/27 SEPTEMBER

The Moruya Antique Tractor and Machinery Association (MATAMA) and the local ‘Heavy Horse’ Society are hosting the 2015 ‘Horse Power’ Vintage Machinery Rally, at the Moruya Agricultural Showground over the weekend of 26/27th. September 2015. MATAMA has invited the Museum to display related agricultural artefacts from its collection. The Museum has gratefully accepted the invitation and we are now looking for interested volunteers to assist with set-up/dismantling of the displays and/or operations on the day/s. The event runs from 9.00am – 5.00pm on the Saturday and 9.00am – 2.00pm on the Sunday. Please advise any member of the Committee if you would like to be part of this big Shire-wide community event. Refreshments will be available and admission is free. **Check:** [2015 Horse-Power Rally - Moruya Antique Tractor & Machinery Association. Inc.](http://www.moruyahorsepower.com.au)

STOP PRESS!! STOP PRESS!! STOP PRESS!!

TWO NEW LIFE MEMBERS ANNOUNCED AT AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the Community Centre on Saturday, 1st. August 2015. Subsequent to the formalities, life memberships were awarded to two of our long serving members: Alick Trounson and Rex Ingram. The photo below shows a very proud duo, displaying their certificates. This was followed by a lunch, with all food contributed and cooked by the members present.



See inside for a report (+pics) from the AGM.

CRAFT CREATION DAY – 30TH. SEPTEMBER 2015

The Museum will host a ‘Craft Creation Day’ on Wednesday, 30/09/2015. Members and guests will be able to learn new skills in handcraft design and creation. The event will run from 10.00am – 4.00pm in the main Meeting Room.

FEATURED ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE OF PASTIMES

Even great explorers can sometimes get it wrong: Editor Chris Ruzsala looks at one of the lesser known events surrounding early exploration of the east coast of Australia, by George Bass and Matthew Flinders.

Even great explorers can sometimes get it wrong

The Surgeon, George Bass (1771- after 1803 – pictured below left) explored the east coast of Australia with Matthew Flinders (1774 – 1814 – pictured bottom right), the first man to circumnavigate the mainland of what was to become Australia. They travelled more than 18,000 kilometres together, along the coastline and confirmed that Tasmania was an island.



Soon after they arrived in Australia in 1795 on *HMS Reliance*, Bass and Flinders sailed south from Sydney on the *Tom Thumb*. They entered Botany Bay, exploring the upper reaches of the Georges River, looking for land suitable for human settlement – this led to the establishment of *Banks Town*.

Subsequently, in 1797, Bass left Sydney in a whaleboat, without Flinders, sailing south as far as Western Point, near what is now known as Port Philip Bay. The log of George Bass's expedition records that this experienced coastal navigator entered and explored Batemans Bay - during the afternoon of the day before he reached it?! Hence these unusual comments in Bass's log:

“Batemans Bay falls far short of that respectable figure it makes on the charts. For its depth back is not more than a mile and its length a mile and three fourths or two miles.”

Bass entered these observations against the date Thursday 14 December 1797; however, on Friday 15 December, Bass recorded that he sailed with a sea breeze at ENE and:

“At noon our latitude was 35° 43', two or three small islands close under the shore bore west.”

Reference to today's charts shows that the line of latitude 35° 43' south, passes through the North Head of Batemans Bay. i.e. it seems that Bass had, at this point, reached the bay he thought he had described the previous day. The two or three small islands almost certainly were the outcrops later to become known as Three Islet Reef.

With reasonable visibility, these outcrops would have clearly stood out against distant mountain ranges. The Toll Gate Islands, in the centre of the bay's entrance, would have loomed to the southwest, enormous and bleak. The inlet was twice the width and five times the depth westward of the modest bight he had explored the previous day. Secondly, the inlet, despite being misplaced by Bass, was to become important for its navigable estuary, firstly as a major port for coastal shipping, then as a centre for recreation, including fishing boats, water skiers and passenger ferries.

Named Batemans Bay on 22 April 1770 by James Cook, Cook later recorded it as:

“An open bay in which were three or four small islands bore NW by W at a distance of five or six leagues. This bay seemed to afford but little shelter from the sea winds and yet it is the only place where there appeared a probability of finding anchorage upon the coast.”



He named the bay in honour of Nathaniel Bateman, captain of Lord Coleville's ship *the Northumberland*, at the time when Cook was serving on her as Master.

In 1916, it was established by R.H. Cambage, that the bay entered and explored by Bass was the open indentation between Point Upright and Wasp Head, into which Durras sea lake drains. Point Upright is noted in Cook's log, and was named by him for its perpendicular cliffs. Durras Inlet's only island is Wasp Island, lying to the north-east of Wasp Head.

More than twenty years after Bass's mistake, the Clyde was named and navigated by Lieutenant Robert Johnston and Alexander Berry, on board the cutter *Schnapper*. Although Australian born, Johnston was educated in Scotland, and may have been inspired by the river Clyde in Glasgow.

In summarizing these events, it could be said that Cook discovered Batemans Bay, Bass mislaid it, and then Johnson and Berry paved the way for trade into the Clyde River. Now coastal steamships are a memory, and the new era is of recreational boating; however, the peaceful waters, jagged coastline and the Clyde Mountain remain largely unspoiled.

As a footnote, in 1803, George Bass disappeared after he sailed into the Pacific Ocean with a cargo that he wanted to sell in South America. Some historians hold the view that he was captured by the Spanish and forced to work in the silver mines of Peru.

(This article is a summary of notes made by the late Dennis Moore, local explorer and tour operator. The full text of the story can be accessed on www.southcoast.com.au)

===== End of 'Even great explorers can sometimes get it wrong' =====

What's been happening at the Old Courthouse Museum?

GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION SUBMITTED FOR PROPOSED NEW WORKSHOP

In early August, the Grants Sub-Committee (Ray Mooney, Ewan Morrison and Myf Thompson) submitted an application to the funding authority which allocates grants to each electorate within the NSW State Government. Known as the 'Community Building Partnership' (CBP) program, it is designed to fund the building and improvement of local community facilities. Our local MP Andrew Constance (Bega Valley) uses his discretion to make these awards annually. This year, Bega Valley has been allocated up to \$300,000 to fund community building projects.



Using his superior contacts and inside knowledge (?!), member Les Smith (Maintenance Supervisor) obtained estimates to enable the Grants team to put together a funding application for approximately \$28,000, to cover the cost of materials, construction and fit-out of a new workshop. This will be located by the rear entrance to the Museum grounds, between the Book Emporium (BE) and one side of the meeting room. The gardening tool shed will be moved away, while the existing work shop will become a temporary display area. The structure housing the BE (old Telstra Comms shed) will become an extension to the new workshop, while the books will be re-housed in the

main meeting room (new BE). The overall intention is to isolate all external workshop activities from the areas accessible to Museum visitors, in order to improve the 'visitor experience'.

Now it is a waiting game, as all applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application, either successful or unsuccessful, via email **by January 2016**. Unfortunately, there are no second chances under the CBP program.

So.... 'Can the Museum build it? Yes, we can!!!'



REVIEW OF LOCAL CEMETERIES UNDERWAY

Members Diane Hantas and Ray Mooney have been working with local churches on processes to identify and document the people buried in the old Catholic and Anglican cemeteries on Bent Street. The Catholic Church is proceeding with a survey of the church boundaries at the cemetery and a draft Plan of Management has been developed by Ray and Diane for care of the site. This Plan of Management could be applied to other cemeteries in our area. The next step is to clarify whether the local Council or the church is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the site.

LOCAL GEOLOGY TO BE A FOCUS OF PROPOSED NEW MUSEUM DISPLAY AND WEBSITE PAGE

Museum President Ewan Morrison and Curator Myf Thompson have been meeting with retired Geologist Doug Finlayson, with the intention of developing an interactive display of local geological structures and supporting text, complemented by a dedicated 'Local Geology' page on the Museum's website. Content for the web Page is being developed now and should be completed by year-end 2015. The structure, content and location of a physical display, is still being discussed and will be dependent on the Museum's ability to obtain suitable rock samples and authoritative textual documentation.

MUCKING ABOUT ON THE RIVER – with Dolphins!!!!



Member Terry McDonough has shared some spectacular photos with us, after spending time on the Clyde River recently, as part of her voluntary work for Sailability. Sailability provides opportunities for disabled individuals to learn basic sailing skills. On this sunny day, the sailors were treated to a playful display from a pod of dolphins, which had 'popped into the Bay' for a spot of 'R & R'.

LADIES GROUP MAKE IMPACT AT THE SOLDIERS CLUB



Member Vicki Quin re-visited some memories, by providing these photos from a Handcraft Stall event held at the Soldiers Club in 2013. Seen here with Vicki are members Jan Fazakerley and Robyn Ingram. As always, the Stall Group put on a terrific display, while tempting customers away from other stalls, many of them small businesses.

NEWS FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Saturday 1st. August 2015



A good turnout of members at the Community Centre joined in the formalities (and a few informalities!!) of the Society's Annual General Meeting. Following reports by the President (Ewan Morrison), Treasurer (Sandra Smith) and Curator (read by Ewan in Myf Thompson's absence), proceedings moved on to the election of Officers for the 2015-2016 Society year. Lead by our impartial Returning Officer (Michael Thompson), the following appointments were made:

- Patron: Edna Veitch;
- President: Ewan Morrison;
- Vice President: Nerrida Castle;
- Secretary: Mary Maidment;
- Assistant Secretary: Rhonda Cooper;
- Treasurer: Sandra Smith;
- Curatorial Committee: Myf Thompson + 2 others (tba); and
- General Committee members: Les Smith, Chris Ruzala, and Ray Mooney.



The commencement of a new Museum year was celebrated with a 'Bring a plate' lunch, plus some fine sausage and onion sizzles, cooked by members Alick Trounson and Les Smith. On top of all this, members Rex Ingram and Alick Trounson (photo above right) were awarded life memberships of the Society.

MUSEUM 'OPEN DAY' - Sunday 18th. October – CALL FOR MEMBERS TO ASSIST ON THE DAY

Planning for this year's Open Day on Sunday 18th. October has been underway for several weeks now. The response from invitations sent out to various local Community Groups has been extremely positive. In fact, as at 1st. August, we have received acceptances from eleven (11) Groups. In order for us to 'deliver on the day', I have summarized below what tasks need to be achieved and possible resources required, over the weekend:



Friday 16th. October - Collect Marquee from IMB Moruya branch.

17-18th. October: Set-up on Sat. morning (10 – 1pm approx.) & Sun. morning (from 8.00am):

- Erect gazebos;
- Place Site Maps in key locations, to assist visitors and community groups;
- Barbecue – buy stock and chop onions;
- Set-up PA system;
- Set-up tables and chairs for our stalls – BBQ, White Elephant, Handcraft goods, Devonshire Teas, Kiddies Corner, Book Emporium (outside section); and
- Make chairs, tables and electrical power leads available to invited community groups – Moruya Antique Tractor & Machinery Association, Woodies, Garden Club, Caledonian Society, Canine Club, Ukulele Orchestra, Spinners and Weavers, Red Cross, Sailability, Fire and Police Services. **NOTE:** Some of the groups will bring chairs, tables & a gazebo.

Volunteers (wearing Museum IDs) requested for specific roles (from 10.00am – 3.00pm, right through or in shifts): **NOTE:** All teams selling goods will be provided with a float and cashbox:

- Sausage Sizzle – cook and drinks service (1/2);
- Book Emporium (1);
- Museum Guides (2);
- General assistance outside and support for invited Community Groups (2/3);
- White Elephant Stall (1/2);
- Handcraft Stall (2/3);
- Devonshire Teas (2/3); and
- Kiddies Corner (1/2).



Monday 19th. October:

- Marquee to be returned to IMB Moruya branch.

Can you please indicate your willingness to assist with set-up and/or operations on the day, by advising any member of the Organising Committee – Chris Ruszala, Myf Thompson and Mary Maidment. Many thanks in anticipation of your assistance.

WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS AT THE MUSEUM OF APPLIED ARTS & SCIENCES



**Museum of
Applied Arts
& Sciences**



The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), incorporating the 'Powerhouse' Museum, Sydney Observatory and the Discovery Centre, provides support and training to regional NSW collecting organisations. **The Old Courthouse Museum** would support expressions of interest from any member who would be interested in attending the following workshop in 2016:

How to conserve your collection workshop:

- Introductory conservation workshops are designed for regional collecting organisations that maintain a community-owned collection accessible to the public. Workshops are partially subsidised by MAAS. A fee applies and application is through a competitive process. They are delivered by a MAAS conservator at **a regional location**. For further information, see the [Workshop selection criteria and application form](#). Applications are due by **5.00pm, 9th September 2015**.

Regional Stakeholder Forum: 13 November 2015

The Regional Stakeholder Forum will be held on Friday 13 November from 9am – 4pm at the Powerhouse Museum. Partners this year are Museums & Galleries NSW and, for the first time, Regional Arts NSW. Highlights of the Forum will include discussions on:

- Regional museums and tourism;
- Crowd funding and fundraising for small regional museums;
- Arts activating museums;
- Kim Biggs on the role of a regional consultant; and
- NSW Regional Arts Fellow Vic McEwan on his regional art projects.

The Old Courthouse Museum would be keen to see one/two of our members attend this event. More details will be released soon.

For more information on either of these events, members should contact Myf Thompson (Curatorial Committee member).

FACEBOOK 'FRIEND' SHARES UNIQUE PICTURE OF EARLY STAGES OF BAY BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION



A local resident, John Evans has sent this extraordinary photograph to the Museum's Facebook Page. Showing early construction of the Batemans Bay Bridge from the south side, the Punt is shown to the left, performing its vital role for the local community. Just behind the Punt, you can see Old Punt Road weaving its way down to the ramp on the north side. Just to the right of the ramp and obscured by the enormous steel framework of the bridge, the building on the foreshore is probably 'Korners Store'. Many thanks, John.

Key dates to note:

- 27/8/15 – Ladies Stall at the 'Old Lolly Shop' in the Village Centre;
- 29/8/15 – Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings;
- 26-27/9/15: 'Horse Power' Vintage Machinery Rally at Moruya Showground;
- 18/10/15: Annual Museum 'Open Day'.

Chris Ruzsala – Editor

Can YOU:

- Build things
- Make things
- Restore things
- Research things
- Talk about things.

Or do you just have an interest in our towns, our history and our cemeteries? Drop us a line at: general@oldcourthousemuseum.com