



The Old Courthouse Museum

# PASTIMES

Newsletter of the CLYDE RIVER AND  
BATEMANS BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

Issue 38 Jan/Feb 2019

## 2019 off to a Flying Start

Refreshed from our Christmas break, volunteers swung into action like a well-oiled machine, speaking of which ...



... after a spell of sunshine our all-weather access path to outdoor exhibits at the rear of the Courthouse is now complete!

Our sincere appreciation for the financial support we received from the community to top up the **Community Building Partnership grant** we received from the NSW Government for this inclusive access project.

**\*The second part of that project is currently underway – a brand**

**new front entrance ramp access.** This requires demolition and construction of a new design which will lead directly from the disability car park space to our Courthouse entrance. All visitors will benefit from the new approach, the original verandah style will be restored, and a garden is planned for the space freed by demolition of the old cement ramp. The work has been undertaken by **Batemans Bay Concreting**.

The original Benandarah red telephone box, and post box, have been relocated to the side of the former schoolhouse where they can be experienced more readily.

Within the limitations of a heritage listed building (in terms of layout and door widths) members are proud to have achieved the best possible outcome for those with mobility issues. Now we move on to better accommodate those with hearing and visual challenges.

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## CULTURAL 'SMOKO' FOR SENIORS WEEK 2019 featuring Uncle Les Simon courtesy of the Batemans Bay Local Aboriginal Land Council.



A full house for morning tea at the Museum, with guest storyteller Uncle Les Simon. After his welcome to country, Les spoke engagingly to the local Aboriginal use of plants for medicinal and food source purposes.

The society purchased plant examples from the Botanic Gardens, and gifted one to each of the participants, together with handouts on common Aboriginal plant uses, and recipes for 'pigface'.

As always, our morning tea team led by Sandra Smith and Lynda Thompson ensured no-one would need lunch. A happy experience for all concerned. Many thanks to Les for sharing his time and knowledge.

### BRIDGE ARTEFACTS

The Society has accepted a small number of iron and steel punt remnants which were located by the RMS and John Holland during riverbank clearance preparation for Nelligan bridge works.



The Bay Bridge demolition site is well underway. After meetings with the RMS, for the duration of construction, the Society has taken into care 3 commemorative plaques for Bob Davis and bridge builders, official Bridge Opening, and notice of the opening of the freeway.

We have also been asked to suggest ways in which the Bridges and their community significance might be commemorated. We welcome your ideas. Please contact Chris Ruzsala or Ewan

Morrison on 4472 1635 or via [secretary@oldcourthousemuseum.com](mailto:secretary@oldcourthousemuseum.com).

**TRIVIA :** What is the derivation of the derisory term 'Codswallop'? In the 19th and early 20th centuries beer was known colloquially as 'wallop', because of its alcohol content. In 1875 Hiram Codd invented a popular patent bottle and stopper used solely for fizzy non-alcoholic beverages, such as ginger beer. Not appreciated by beer drinkers, hence the term came to be applied more broadly to 'rubbish' something as 'a load of old codswallop'.



## AFTER HOURS 1890-1980 - New Exhibition

A major permanent exhibit is currently taking shape under the masterly building skills of Les, Bob and Bill. Yes, the back wall *is* bright orange. We are very excited about the concept which will flow from a preTV lounge through period costumed mannequins to a 'try on fashions' area, and finally a 'sit in and watch' homage to the Bay Picture Theatre.

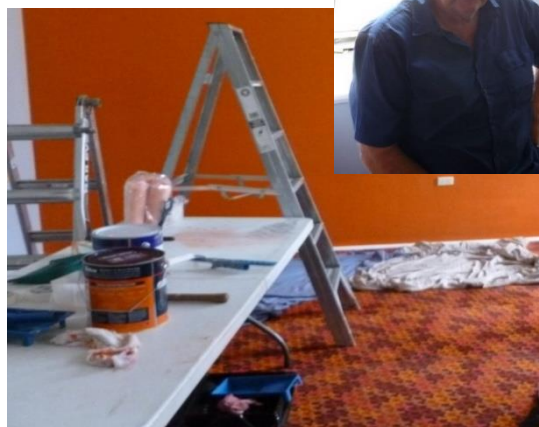


**Annetts' Picture Theatre  
Orient St, demolished 1982**

Along the way we reference how adults entertained themselves via radio/ theatre/ School of Arts activities/ sports clubs, etc. Residents have been very generous with their anecdotes and reminiscences which will be incorporated into the design.

This exhibit has called on the skills of many of our members from concept and design, to set construction, set dressing and costume selection, and the re-purposing /relocation of artefacts previously on display in this large space.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU!**



**The Bay's own 'CSI' Team [refurbishing mannequins]**



## RE-BRANDING THE OLD COURTHOUSE MUSEUM

Over the past four months, the Society has benefitted from the professional acumen of local business consultant Peter Cordina. Peter's generous donation of time and expertise working with our President, Vice President and Curator, encouraged us to re-visit the Society's Strategic Plan for 2019 and beyond. These plans are aspirational, not carved in stone, and are to be revisited on an annual basis. This has been a substantial project and members are indebted for the efforts made on their behalf to distil a vision into a practical action plan for a sustainable future.

*Currently in discussion are opportunities for security of land tenure, and expansion of both buildings and collection.* Key features which arose in review with our Museum Advisor, Lynn Collins, and contributing to the Strategic Plan conversation, are :

**\*Heritage** – we are proud of our building and its links to the Bay, however, to more accurately reflect the diversity of our collections we will move away from promoting a courthouse and police residence - which implies a specific type of collection. The new Trading name for informational literature and marketing will be **Batemans Bay Heritage Museum**. The Society's full incorporated name will remain unchanged. The change will take place in April.

**\*Logo** – the Society's original generic sketch of timber worker and Aboriginal figure, was replaced by an attractive photo of the building some 7 years ago. A new design was commissioned from Vistaprint this month and is currently open for comment by active membership. This will feature in all mediums of contact.

**\*Collection** – to differentiate our Museum from others in the region, ie volunteer run offering a generalised social history collection, in addition to local history *our* Museum will focus on reflecting its location (water with links to Tablelands); maritime and timber history; historic and contemporary coast related themes will be actively pursued.

**\*Fee Structure** – An average cup of coffee is now \$4. Our current entry fee of a recommended \$2 donation pp, has served us well in terms of bringing families in to the Museum and encouraging voluntary donations. However, rising operational costs, and cost of living generally, encouraged the Executive to review similar organisations and approve **a new fee structure will come into effect from Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April.**

**Adult entry fee \$5.00. Children under 12 free. Group *guided* visits \$7 pp. Morning or afternoon tea for small groups, \$8pp inc entry. Catering for large groups, fee on application.**

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## FUNDRAISING EFFORTS JAN-FEB 2019

(not entry)

Book Emporium	\$629
BBQs & Stall	\$373
Museum Activities	\$250
Donations	\$ 40
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$1290</u></b>



To our volunteers who turn up and turn their hand to anything that's needed. We couldn't do it without you – literally.

**Sat March 23<sup>rd</sup> NSW State Elections 'OUR SAUSAGE GETS THE VOTE'**

**The BBQ team and museum volunteers will be working hard, so support us before/after you vote at the Community Centre opposite the Museum.**



## Cook250 - COMMEMORATING THE SOUTH PACIFIC

### VOYAGES OF JAMES COOK

The Society has initiated two key projects to mark both Cook's naming of Batemans Bay, and to delve into the broader scientific impact of his voyages of exploration.

**\*We are beyond pleased to announce that we successfully approached the National Library for a purpose built panel /audio display drawn from its recent *Cook in the South Pacific* exhibition.** This has been gifted to us for a period of 3 years,

commencing June 2019. Specific south coast content will be added from January next year. The Library has been very generous in both curatorial time and exhibition design, and our Society is the first small museum to benefit in this manner.

\*We are in conversation with Batemans Bay Tourism and Business Chamber and partner Willinga Park, and approaching Federal Government, to promote a Cook250 commemorative acquisitive work as part of the **2020 *Sculpture on Clyde*** festival.

### ROUND THE MUSEUM

\*As Autumn beckons **insulation of the roof and floor** of our main buildings has been completed; we gratefully acknowledge the Museums and Galleries building improvement grant, over two stages.

\***Book Emporium** – continues to attract a healthy visitation and the generous donation of quality second hand books. With some judicious rearrangement in the Meeting Room, a proportion of which is dedicated to our second book sales area, Deb Hope has created a pleasant 'sit and browse' reading amenity, with talk of a hot drinks machine come winter!

\***Stall** - our BBQ and museum stall as part of the Community Centre's Growers and Craft market is coming to an end after a very useful 12 months in terms of fundraising and building awareness of our presence, particularly book sales. Grateful thanks to the team who have maintained our presence there, including Deb, Lynda, Fran, Joan, Sandra, and Chris/Jude/Judy on the BBQ.

### GRANT APPLICATIONS

Readers will appreciate that grants are a key source of project finance, for no matter how hard we work, we cannot fundraise enough to maintain the building and plan for future growth. That includes succession planning – even our current volunteers can't last forever!



#### \*Volunteer Training

**eHive** is a cloud based collection management system that has been recommended by museum consultants. It economically allows small museums to create an online gallery to share collection items worldwide, and from any platform. We will be applying for grant assistance to enable 6 volunteers to be upskilled in its various levels of application, workshop located at our museum.

**+++ Other societies will be invited to send a representative.**

**Please contact ASAP if interested. +++**

\* Rebranding our Museum will require **expanding our Web presence** and producing new promotional material. The society will be seeking a grant to assist us with this exciting step forward.

\* **Solar panels** were first installed around 9 years ago. Society's grown, costs gone up, the panels don't work as well. We are looking to replace them with advanced solar technology panels to help minimise bills and even make a dollar or two back into the grid. Council has just approved our proposed location of additional panels. We will apply for funding to assist with costs.



## WALAWAANI [DURGHA] 2019 IS THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

ESC is in the process of reviewing the Shire's signage, both informative and directional; now would be a good time to revisit and/or incorporate the original Aboriginal names in our landscape.

**'This Place' ABC Project** - Across Australia, places are known for their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names. But what do they mean? What's the 'back' story. From the name of a town or suburb; to a street or bridge; a creek or a bend in the river; mountain; landmark; outcrop; tree – place names are a starting point for sharing history and cultures. **'This Place' project** invites Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to create a short video about a place name, and the story behind it.

### **The Names the Land Remembers**

**Written by Faith Baisden**

I'm standing on a soft dune of milky white sand with my face to the wind that's blowing in over the ocean. It's a warm salty wind that carries the rolling song of the waves. I look down at the footprints following me up from the edge of the water, and this is always the moment when I feel the power of tens of thousands of years of history - just now as the water washes lazily up to sweep away my prints in the sand.

The sliding sheets of water have done this forever to the prints of my ancestors and I wonder how many of those footprints are captured in the memory of the sands below. The vision of sand and ocean in front of me is exactly the same picture as seen by the people who were here thousands of years ago shared. Every day swept new and forever recreated.

And I can't help wondering - who wouldn't want to feel this connection to such a timeless vision? Who wouldn't rejoice in being able to sound out its ancient name – Karangal - and know as you say it that you share a link in an unbroken chord of knowledge.

You come to stand beside me on the dune and ask what I'm thinking. Soon I'm telling you about the name that means satin wood, used for making boomerangs and the special times that people gathered here. The way the sky spoke of the seasons and the plants would help predict the weather.

Then you go quiet and you ask. *"How do you reckon your old ones felt when people started to call it Surfers Paradise?"*

*"Oh, they would have wondered why everyone kept calling it by the wrong name, but deep down they wouldn't have been really worried. They knew the name would never go."*

*"How could they be sure?"* you ask.

*"Well" I say, "It's just like this. If you picture the whole time of aboriginal history as the length of an old man crocodile, then the time since the big boats arrived is the size of bull ant on the end of the croc's tail. And no crocodile's going to die from a bull ant bite."*

So now you're asking more. *"Well what about the mountain over there, what's it called? And how about that river, why are there names for different parts of it?"* And I think, *"Yes it's time now we shared this knowledge. It's too beautiful to keep to ourselves."*

So I turn to you and say: *"Wahluwamgin jimbelong – You come along and listen up to the stories behind the real names of the country. The names the land remembers."*

*You're going to love them."*

## READ ALL ABOUT IT

You may have noticed around your area, a simple 'street library' built by residents re-purposing cupboards, etc. and placing them on the edge of their property. Like gardens that say 'help yourself' there's a good vibe social aspect; the pleasure of sharing a read helps build neighbourhood networks. *Borrow a book-donate a book.*



In 1976 it was semi-retirement to the south coast *and recognising a community need*, that led Wilfred Bromby to initiate a community lending library which became what is now Hanging Rock Library, Batemans Bay. TROVE extract *The Canberra Times* Dec 9th 1979.

# Library wins support



Mr Bromby with a plan of the proposed library at Hanging Rock.

**M**ANY of the people who become involved in the welfare of others at Batemans Bay are either semi-retired or making a complete change of occupation and location.

The semi-retired are those who retire officially but find themselves with renewed interests in their new surroundings and sometimes with increasing employment commitments.

One such is Wilfrid Bromby who went to Batemans Bay to retire but soon found himself "putting in a day or two a week" at the local Allen Curtis estate agency.

It wasn't long before he and his wife became actively involved in establishing a local lending library.

"Three years ago there was no library. We canvassed to see what sort of response we would get and at a public meeting 10 people were elected to a committee of management", he said.

They began with private donations of books and a generous contribution of about 4,000 books from the Canberra Library.

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They were also grateful to the Batemans Bay Rotary Club for its support to an unproven committee, shown by a donation of \$500.

The library premises, for the 6,000 or 7,000 volumes they now stock, is in the headquarters of the local swimming club. This necessitates housing the books on hinged shelf units that run on castors and close together like a box when not in use.

Making the shelves was just one more task for the voluntary committee.

The number of volumes available has grown so dramatically because the library is being put to the use for which it was set up.

For a fee of \$5 per adult, \$2 a pensioner, \$7.50 a family, \$3 a pensioner couple of \$1 a student — and these are once-only joining fees, not annual fees — plus a charge of 10c a book a fortnight, members are coming from permanent residents in the area and further away.

Who else was on that original  
Community Committee?



## **ABC'S THE OBJECT LESSON – Wednesdays 0920 on ABC south east radio with Simon Lauder**

**A regular series where museums in the ABC South East region select a significant object from their collection, sharing its story.** On February 20, *Society President Ewan Morrison*, regaled listeners with the history of one of our highly prized artefacts – the maritime trunk of Captain Robert Johnston, RN, European naval explorer of the Clyde River, naming it, and Snapper Island at the mouth of the River.

Born in Sydney in 1790, Robert Johnston was the second son of Lieutenant Colonel George Johnston, who was a central figure in the Rum Rebellion. Robert was educated in England, joined the Royal Navy and came out to Australia again where his father and obtained a significant amount of property around Sydney. Annandale, and Georges River, remain linked by name to his ancestry.

James Cook had earlier named Batemans Bay, and Governor Lachlan Macquarie sent Lt Johnston down the coast to investigate those landmarks named by Cook. He would have travelled with this type of trunk which has been linked directly to him by descendants.



As an artefact, this trunk is highly significant in terms of its links to the important role maritime travel played in colonial history, both as a mode of transport and as its owner played a part in the exploration of the south coast. Johnston's role will come into greater focus next year with the anniversary of Cook's original naming of the Bay. It was Johnston who revealed that it was not just a Bay, but the estuary to a river offering opportunities for the economic development between coast and tablelands.

## **MACKAY PRECINCT – proposed swimming pool and arts complex**

The Society has sent representatives to several key community engagement forums with the designers, organised by ESC. We have provided input into the 3 concept designs from the perspective of an arts organisation, and initiated conversation about opportunities to enable a platform for local heritage once final layout is approved and the finer detail is then open for discussion.

## **CENTENARY OF GOLF - Catalina Country Club and Golf Course**

The Society's volunteer researcher, Julia Hill, is working on a research plan to develop a range of historic material for inclusion in the **2020** celebrations for 100 years of golf on this site. Julia's work includes a review of the Club's Minute Books and obtaining a collection of oral histories. **If you can help Julia on this important project for the Society** – email [secretary@oldcourthousemuseum.com](mailto:secretary@oldcourthousemuseum.com).

## **DIARY DATES**

**8<sup>th</sup> March** International Women's' Day

**10<sup>th</sup> March** Member **Coach Outing** to Braidwood contact Lesley on 4472 1635 ASAP

**23<sup>rd</sup> March** NSW elections-Museum open and BBQ on offer- please support us.

**Contact us. We welcome your comments and suggestions for inclusion.**



Myf Thompson EDITOR