

CANOWINDRA HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM INC.

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NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY/MARCH 2011

Dear members and future members,

Welcome to the 44th year of the Historical Society, which formed in September 1967 as an outcome of a History project at Canowindra Central School when secondary classes were on the primary school site. Much has been achieved in the years since to fulfil the dual aims of the Society: to research, record and create awareness of the history of the district and to establish a museum. To move with the times much more needs to be done.

Central NSW Museums Brochure. An updated brochure and website was launched at Molong Museum in November 2010 as part of the ongoing Sustainable Collections Project which is an initiative of Cabonne, Blayney and Orange Councils and supported by funding from Arts NSW. The website gives an overview of museums and historical reserves within the three shires and provides an opportunity for direct promotion of events as well as a link for use by other sites promoting tourism. It's worth a look, www.centralnswmuseums.com.au. Brochures are available at the Age of Fishes and Historical Museums in Canowindra and other Visitor Centres in the Shires.

Central West Drive Tour -Tracing Ben Hall is another jointly funded venture by Forbes, Cabonne and Weddin Shires, launched last year in time for the Forbes Ben Hall Festival during the October Long Weekend. A bus tour from Forbes did the first tour on Monday of the long weekend and lunched at Canowindra's *Royal Hotel*, which replaced the early *Canowindra Inn* held up in 1863 by Ben Hall's gang. That inn stood near the site of today's Canowindra Pharmacy. Brochures are available from both Canowindra Museums.

Moving Forward. The first general meeting for 2011 was held at 9.30 am on Friday 4 February at the museum in heat wave conditions so that all realised the need to create a more comfortable working space for volunteers and visitors and plans are already afoot to achieve this. In 2009-10 Historical Society members were very involved on the committee planning events to celebrate Canowindra 's Railway Centenary culminating in the successful Back to Canowindra Week. We are grateful to the Railway Centenary Committee for donating the balance of its profits to our Society at its wind up meeting. In 2011 the Society's focus will be to catch up on the mission of the museum: **to better maintain, document, display and interpret the collection and increase visitation.** Members have attended over the years several workshops of the Lachlan Chapter of Museums Association and The Power House to learn the theory. Now it is time to put it into practice.

Tuesday Action Groups: Volunteers have already begun work each Tuesday morning at the museum at 9 am. New computer and office equipment has been bought funded by a Volunteers Grant. Anne Vincent is the contact for anyone wishing to participate. The museum will also be open for passing visitors when volunteers are working on Tuesdays. On 4 February members of the Ayrton family called and we were able to assist them in their research on the well-known Canowindra branch.

Saturday Morning Opening: With the aim of attracting more visitors, it was decided to change the regular weekly opening of the museum from Sunday afternoons to Saturday mornings from 10 am to 12 noon. Audrey Farley has issued a new roster, which began on 5 February. She is also willing to open the museum by appointment at other times.

March Meeting: On Tuesday 1 March, a general meeting will follow the working groups at 11 am when further plans for the year will be made to dovetail with planned events in the community. Please note that, thanks to our treasurer, we now have an email address, and Anne will explain the working of this at the next meeting.

Cabonne Countrywide Village Festivities, Saturday and Sunday 19-20 March, is an initiative of the new Cabonne Tourism Advisory Committee. Canowindra Historical Museum has promised support by opening from 10 am to 4 pm both days of the weekend. Volunteers to help would be welcome. You can check the website regularly for the complete program of exciting events at www.cabonnecountrywide.com.au.

National Balloon Championships 9 -17 April 2011. Canowindra will host this prestigious competition, which is expected to attract about 30 balloons. With the balloons will come about 180 people, crews and officials, who will need to stay in Canowindra for the entire 10-day event. There will also be extra balloons and crews for the Canowindra Challenge together with sightseers and visitors. The challenge for Canowindra with the hosting of this national event will be accommodating the 180 Championship people, as well as those for the Challenge and spectators. Offers of accommodation or assistance will be welcomed and those who can help should contact Canowindra Visitors Centre 63441817, aof@colourcity.com or Jan Kerr, 63441819.

National Trust of Australia (NSW) has planned its 31st Heritage Festival from 2 to 17 April 2011. This year the theme is *Amazing Stories*. These dates coincide with the Ballooning Championships and although Canowindra Historical Society has not this year entered an event in the Trust's published program it is still possible to organise something on the theme during the Ballooning Week. Any ideas?

Hartley – Canowindra, 'Sister Cities'? A recent visit by Julia Andrews to Hartley has triggered a suggestion from Steven Ring, Manager of Hartley Historic Site, that Hartley and Canowindra might develop some sort of sister relationship to the mutual advantage of both. Hartley was the first town to develop after the building of the road over the Blue Mountains in 1815 and from there members of such early Hartley families as Collits, Grant and Finn expanded westward to Canowindra where they were among the earliest pioneers and where many descendants still live. The Hartley Advisory Committee has received major funding for a master plan for the revitalisation of Hartley. We await further contact as they envisage a trip to Canowindra in the near future to discuss the concept. An excursion to Hartley could be arranged similar to one the Society held in 1970 before staging in Canowindra the Musical, *Collits Inn*. Who remembers that and who was in it?

The AGM will be at the museum at 11 am on Tuesday 5 April. As I live in Orange and have held some office since 1967, I am not willing to be president again. A generational change is needed. Any nominations? I will continue to be involved, especially in recording Canowindra's history where there are projects to be completed, especially the book, *Canowindra, The Town The Railway Rebuilt*. After many terms as secretary, Jan Harrison is not seeking re-election but she has found a willing nominee to take that office. We welcome new members who would help achieve our goals of building on the achievements of the past and of planning a sustainable future.

Subscriptions: Enclosed with this newsletter is a subscription form for 2011. The annual membership is \$15 and \$25 for a family. You will notice that direct credit details have been provided on the membership renewal form. If using this payment method, please ensure that your name appears on the transaction description. We invite you to join as a sign of support for the continuing work of the Society.

Dorothy Balcomb with assistance from Anne Vincent.