

CANOWINDRA HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM INC. (CHS&M)
PO BOX 76, CANOWINDRA 2804

NEWSLETTER – January 2017

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Wishing a satisfying, healthy, and fulfilling New Year to all our members and supporters. We've now well and truly dipped our toes into 2017, and I hope it is going well for you.

Membership Renewal. I invite all members to renew membership for 2017 : seniors \$15, adult \$20, family \$30. Payment may be made by cheque (to our PO box), or by direct deposit : BSB 082 500, a/c 509583181 - please give your name as the "reference". Members receiving this newsletter by email, no further information required. Members receiving this newsletter by post will also be receiving a copy of the membership renewal form, which you are invited to complete and return. If you now have an email address which you can give us, this would be much appreciated.

If you are not yet a member but are interested in the work of the Historical Society, you would be very welcome to join, and a membership form is attached. There are many reasons people join the Historical Society, but the main reason is a desire to support the preservation of our local history and historical artefacts. Some are more interested in the stories of our town's and district's past, including the family histories of our forebears, others are more interested in the artefacts and objects that tell our family, agricultural, and business stories – the sort of objects in our Museum. There is no requirement or expectation that members will attend meetings or actively work on projects. Some of our members of course do this, and we always welcome members who have the time and interest to attend meetings and thus actively contribute to the decisions that have to be made. Other members prefer to be involved in specific projects only, such as the preservation and display of Museum objects (eg historic dresses, agricultural machinery, sporting memorabilia, our written or photographic archives, and so much more). Some enjoy being Museum Guides, and we help you "learn the ropes" of this great community service. If you would like to join with us in any of this work, or just simply as a supporter, we would very much welcome you.

50th Anniversary. This year we will celebrate our 50th anniversary, a momentous milestone. We will begin planning for this at our first meeting for the year, Tuesday 7th February, 10am, at the (air-conditioned!!) Museum. It would be great to have a really good roll-up for that meeting, to begin setting up a number of sub-committees to plan the year ahead. If you can't attend, but would like to help in some way, please just let me know. We will need as much support as we can muster to spread the load and make this year one we can all really enjoy.

Looking back at 2016.

- We supported Mim Loomes in the very successful launch of her booklet "Nyrang Creek Revisited". Sales have been "through the roof", and Mim has already had to organise a reprint. Mim has also very generously given to the Museum all her collected archival material on Nyrang Creek - a goldmine for future researchers.
- In similar vein, Michael Lindsay donated to the Museum an extraordinary collection of archival material relating to his property "Leitrum" and adjacent properties. Michael went to great lengths in the organisation and presentation of these materials. Future researchers will reap the full benefits of this amazing collection, as further local histories are written.
- The unfinished work on a masterplan for the Museum was completed, and members were very satisfied with the concepts agreed on with local architect Dylan Gower. Discussions with Cabonne

Council have begun on a DA for the Masterplan, and our hope is that we can complete stage 1, roofing between the 2 outside machinery sheds, before the 50th anniversary main celebration.

- Work continued on the preservation and storage of our valuable textiles collection. We have wedding dresses going back to the 1880s, and many, many other items. You can view some of these dresses online on the Australian Dress Register, and other items online on eHive (a Museums website).
- “History in the Club” event in July, commemorating the centenary of the Battle of Fromelles : the first occasion in which Australian troops were involved on the Western Front, and to this day the greatest loss of Australian lives in any 24 hour period. The stories of 7 local men were central to this presentation.
- Our major fund-raising events, the Fashion Parade and the street stall (held over 2 days), were very successful – not just financially, but as community events engendering much good will.
- Orange Regional Museum opened. We have loaned items relating to the railway history of Canowindra.
- We are beginning a process of discussion around some form of integrated “Canowindra Museums Precinct”, incorporating the Age of Fishes Museum, Historical Museum, Railway Master’s Cottage, and Canowindra Railway yards. Early days yet, as we explore ways of working more closely together.
- We still feel the sad loss of life members Berna Wright (also one of our patrons), and Pat Burnheim. Between them Berna and Pat represented nearly 90 years of Historical Society experience, and the permanent record of this resides particularly in many of our publications, Berna as author, and Pat as proofreader. On behalf of all our members, I extend again our deep sympathies to their families.

Local Histories. Several publications are at various stages of preparation, all (hopefully) to be published this year

- A history of Moorbel. In final stages of editing and proofing. Tentative launch date is Saturday 25 March, at Moorbel Hall. Details to be confirmed.
- Re-printing of the “Pioneer Register”, following major revisions. One of our core publications.
- A history of the railway coming to Canowindra, and its effects on the subsequent rapid development of the town.
- Self-guided historical walk of Gaskill St. For the tourist market.
- A “book of books” : an annotated listing of all books, pamphlets, monographs published by the Historical Society over its 50 years.

Bi-centenary Celebration. This year marks the 200th anniversary of the detailed exploration of this area by the explorer Oxley. Historian John Whitehead has agreed to be our guest for the occasion, and will be presenting a talk on Saturday 29 April, at the Services Club. Following this, there will be an excursion to Soldiers’ Flat, and then to “Eurimbla” property, which is the most likely site of the Depot from where the exploration of the Lachlan began. We will advertise this event widely, and please put the date into your calendars now!

It’s clear that another busy and engaging year lies ahead, with plenty of scope for members to be as involved as you wish. The calendar is starting to look like this :

- March launch of Moorbel book. Sat 25th
- April Oxley bicentenary. Sat 29th
- May Street stall, and Fashion Parade
- August / September 50th anniversary celebrations
- October Royal Australian Historical Society annual conference, Cowra, Sat 28 and Sun 29th

I hope you are able to be a part of some or all of these “big” events this year. Please consider coming to our first meeting for the year, on Tuesday 7 February, as we plan in more detail for the year ahead. I would also like to invite you to our AGM on the first Tuesday in March, the 7th, as we put together the team to steer the ship this year.

Thank you very much for your continuing support of your local Historical Society and Museum, and our work together in preserving and explaining our heritage.

Ross Cleary (President)