



THE



NEWSLETTER

NO. 105 DECEMBER 2016

**THE GYMPIE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.**

215 Brisbane Road, GYMPIE. QLD 4570

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**ELECTED OFFICERS**

at A.G.M. 3.8.16

**President:**

**Frank Lightfoot**

Tel: 54833965

**Secretary:**

**Ralph Richardson**

Tel: 54839418

Mob: 0408616709

**Treasurer/Editor:**

**Marilyn Soanes**

Tel: 54845211

**Senior Vice President:**

**Max Travis**

Tel: 54812157

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**Junior Vice President/**

**Historian:**

**Allan Blackman**

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**OTHER POSITIONS HELD:**

**Property Officer:**

**& Firearms Licensee**

**Ron Owen**

with **Assistant Jo Carson**

Mob. 0414015302

**Historian: Bennett Suthers**

Tel. 54823315

Mob. 0412434961

**Historian: Chris Kapernick**

Mob. 0439535139

**Museum Markets**

at the Duck Ponds (Lake Alford)

1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month

JANUARY dates: 1<sup>ST</sup>, 15<sup>TH</sup>, 29<sup>TH</sup>

(7 a.m.-12 noon)

Site Bookings to Museum Café 54 823995

Come along and browse the markets

for some bargains and catch up with friends!

The next performance of entertainment  
by the Gympie Museum Re-enactment Group  
will be 19<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2017 at 9.30 a.m.

→ **Steaming Day first Monday of each month**

**COMING EVENTS 2017:**

→ **Australia Day Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January**

\*

**Annual Steam Festival**

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September/ Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>/ Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October  
(Queen's Birthday)**

*THE GENERAL MEETING* will be held on **WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2017**  
at 7.00 p.m. upstairs of the Gold Room. Business includes: Work Projects

### History of the Dairy Factories in Gympie

1896 - Gympie & District Co-operative Dairy bought one acre opposite the railway station. Suspended operations in August 1899, only able to pay creditors 7/6 in £1.

September 1899 - A Brisbane Valley firm, Silverwood Dairy Factory Co. bought assets and operated until 1906. This firm too experienced financial difficulties.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1906, a meeting of farmers and citizens from Gympie and Widgee shire was held in G. F. Lister's store at Mt Pleasant and it was decided to form a co-operative.

The Silverwood factory, plant and "Golden Nugget" brand was bought for £2800 and Wide Bay Co-operative Dairy Co. Limited was incorporated on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1906. It began with 175 suppliers, supplying 12,784 lb cream in the first week. In 1924 the production in Gympie was 50 tons butter/week and 20 tons ice/week.

Farmers quickly realised the value of this co-operative, and a new industry began - cream carting. At first the carters had horse drawn vehicles over shocking country roads, but they proved a most important part of our economy, delivering cream to the factory, and on return trips carrying goods to the farmers. With the growth of the motor industry the carters changed to motor transport.

The Gympie factory building was opened 25<sup>th</sup> September 1925 at a cost of £66,000, and was paid for by 1931 and financed at 1/3 penny per pound of butter. It was believed to be the largest butter factory in the Southern Hemisphere and probably the world.

1953 Nestle's opened a milk-processing factory in Gympie, taking 460 gallons on the first day!

The days of separating on the farms, and the carting of cream by cream carriers were on the way out. After a time many farmers chose to send their milk to Nestle's, and this firm sent their giant milk tankers to the farms for the raw milk. This made the farmers work lighter, and gradually private cream carriers were redundant.

Casein was produced from 1962-1975 and milk powder production commenced in the mid 1970's and ceased three years later.

Butter production in Gympie ceased 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1978 with 45 cream supplies. Production in this year was down to 72 tons.

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1978 there was an amalgamation of suppliers from the following groups:-

Wide Bay Co-operative Dairy	114 milk, 30 cream suppliers
Gympie Milk Producers (Nestle's)	170 suppliers
Kenilworth Milk Producers (Kraft)	58 suppliers

In 1978 the milk production was 14,336,545 litres compared with the 1979 of 50,377,043 litres.

There was a brief history of cheese production commencing in 1978, called "Cooloola" and marketed under the Golden Nugget brand.

Since the amalgamation in 1978 most effort was concentrated on development of liquid milk products and expanding the market for these products.

In 1985 Wide Bay Dairy achieved first prize for their Big Dairy flavoured dairy drinks in the Australia Dairy Institute awards.

In 1986 Wide Bay Co-op Dairy amalgamated with Qld Farmers Co-op Assn., Booval.

## Dairy Factories (Cont.)...

### The old and the new...



**BUTTER FACTORY** - Designed and built by Messrs J Wildridge & Sinclair (Brisbane) Ltd. in 1925 for the Wide Bay Co-operative Dairy Association Ltd. Gympie.

The capacity 120 tons butter, and 80 tons ice per week when working one shift of 8 hours per day for 6 days only.

The Gympie butter factory of the Wide Bay Co-operative Dairy Association Ltd. has been putting up new records in butter production each month, but in the month of January, it broke the million pounds, with the actual quantity of butter manufactured being 1,057,426 lbs. Not only is this enormous quantity of butter a record for the factory, but it is a record for any factory in Australia, and probably the world.

## Dairying...

At first dairying was a home or cottage industry. Many settlers who took up land around the goldfield on small farms, kept a few milking cows for butter, milk and cream for their families, and sold the surplus. Migrant settlers from the British Isles and Europe brought their own butter making equipment.

**Many utensils that are on display in the Dairy Museum were used by our pioneer families.**

Cows were milked by hand in cowbails, and many of the animals wore a bell, as they could be hard to find in the timbered country.

Milk was stored in well-ventilated dairies in wide shallow tin dishes, and the cream was skimmed off with a perforated hand skimmer, into churns. Skimmed milk went to feed calves and pigs, providing a paying sideline as well as meat for the farmer himself.

Cream was stored in a cool place to be churned into butter. This was before the days of ice-chests or refrigeration, and farmers wives and families had to rise early to churn in the cool air before dawn. Churns can vary from the primitive splash type to glass. After the butter was washed and salted, it was pressed into moulds, tins or small barrels to be sold privately, stores or hotels.

## On the buses...



← An early model bus of Lewis & Sons Proprietors.

Saturday 10th December was the 60th anniversary celebrations of Polley Coaches.

The Queensland Omnibus & Coach Society Inc. drove up from Brisbane in an old restoration vehicle.

(Below) Joining in the celebrations was the Leyland Cub Bus from the Museum .



An interesting comparison was the Museum's historic bus with the newest addition to the Polley's bus fleet of a brand new, low floor, city bus.

## Australia Day....

Australia Day is supported by Gympie Regional Council and will start with the early morning breakfast 8 a.m. at Café at the Museum. With Museum Entry Fees applying, the morning activities will be a working stamper, gold panning and blacksmith shop in operation, also free miniature train rides and historic bus rides.

## School holidays...

Family fun once again with miniature train rides on Monday/Tuesday 11 a.m. / 1 p.m., and Thursday 11 a.m. (except 26/27/29 December, 2<sup>nd</sup> January).

## Markets...

Not only has summer arrived noticeably on the December market days, but a boisterous Santa invaded the market. His intention was in a positive way being there to hand out some lollies to the youngsters for Christmas.

A big thankyou to Santa for taking the time out from his busy schedule to call in !



(L-R) Vicky and Max

## Christmas Celebration...



Each year the Society has a Christmas Celebration as a way of thanking volunteers/members for their dedication and support during the year.

This year the celebration, held on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December had a slightly different arrangement, as the time was changed to a much cooler part of the afternoon being at 4.30. It was a delight to see a few other members attending who have not been able to attend previously due to other commitments.

Thankyou to my helpers. Ed.

. Bill called the lucky numbers for the Café Matisse, and Gloria Jean's Coffees Gift Certificates.

. Barbara read a poem by Lyn Bunkum 'Reality T.V.' for a bit of light humour.

Speeches were given by Frank, Ralph, and John.

👉 Allan Blackman and John Stark pictured.



The Café at the Museum served a more traditional two course meal, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Thankyou to Vicky and her team for setting the Christmas scene, and catering of a variety of meats, salads, scrumptious deserts.

## Christmas Celebration (Cont.)...

### Speech by the President

Once more we are gathered to say thank you to all our volunteers, members and contributors.

This year the steam festival was a success both as a display of functioning steam equipment and also for making a profit.

We have seen much effort go into upgrading the café and the start of the new entry building.

Vicky Dunford and her new team have brought big positive changes to the numbers of people coming to the café for food and drink. As a spin off more people are visiting the museum.

The numbers of people who work at the museum to fulfill Centrelink commitments has declined in the short term. We expect them to increase in the new year. Those of you who read Marilyn's Treasurer's reports will see an increase in the fees we are paid to cover the costs associated with hosting those people.

The Society thanks Gympie Regional Council for its support in the painting of the horse on the coach house wall.

Several members died in the past year and we have gained a few new ones.

It takes regular input from about 45 people to make this museum tick. We thank all of you.

In the past Ralph presented awards with humorous titles to our volunteers at this time. Sadly he has run low on insightful things to place on award certificates. It is therefore up to me to say thank you again to each of you. You are the people who built and operate this museum. The Historical Society wishes you safe passage through the silly season and may we continue to build on the work of those who went before us.

If anyone else wants to say something now is the time to speak up.

Frank Lightfoot  
President

### **The Dig Here Award**

was presented to Ralph by Frank.....  
recognising his contribution to the Society -  
for the unceasing and tireless efforts to unearth  
the rumoured location of Gympie's last  
undiscovered gold nugget east of the Café.  
In frustration the excavation has been capped!

## Café at the Museum...

Everyone deserves a treat sometime!!  
The Café at the Museum cater for the early morning breakfast  
at 7 a.m. on Saturday's and Sunday's!

## Museum News...

Welcome aboard to the new Society members Frank, Tanya and Barry.



MEMBERS and VOLUNTEERS  
have a healthy and safe 2017

Happy New Year!!

From the Committee Members -  
Frank, Max, Allan, Ralph & Marilyn



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