



THE



NEWSLETTER

NO. 86 MAY 2015

THE GYMPIE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

215 Brisbane Road, GYMPIE. QLD 4570

Postal Address: P.O. Box 626, GYMPIE. QLD 4570

ELECTED OFFICERS

at A.G.M. 13.8.14

President/Historian:

Bennett Suthers

Tel: 54823315

Mob: 0412434961

Secretary:

Ralph Richardson

Tel: 54839418

Mob: 0408616709

Treasurer/Editor:

Marilyn Soanes

Tel: 54845211

Senior Vice President:

Frank Lightfoot

Tel: 54833965

**Junior Vice President/
Historian:**

Allan Blackman

Tel: 54828828

Mob: 0428332291

OTHER POSITIONS HELD:

Property Officer:

& Firearms Licensee

Ron Owen

with Assistant Jo Carson

Publicity Officer:

Max Travis

Tel: 54812157

Mob. 0414015302

Museum Markets

1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of each month

JUNE dates: 7TH, 21ST

(7 a.m.-12 noon)

Site Bookings - Museum Café 54 823995

Entertainment by the Gympie Museum

Re-enactment Group will be on the

3rd Sunday of each month

Undercover seating, and lots of laughs!

(next performance 21ST JUNE 10 a.m)

2015 EVENT

STEAM FESTIVAL 3rd/4th/5th October

THE GENERAL MEETING will be held on

WEDNESDAY, 3RD JUNE 2015

at 7.00 p.m. upstairs of the Gold Room.

Business includes: Budget 2015/6

FOR YOUR REPLY PLEASE.

INVITATION TO MEMBERS/VOLUNTEERS

for a **FREE MORNING TEA** at 9.30 a.m.

On **SATURDAY 6TH JUNE** at the Gold Museum Café

To **CELEBRATE 45 years** since the Official Opening

of the Gympie Gold Mining & Historical Museum

followed by a few words, and concluding with the firing of the canon by the

Gympie Museum Re-enactment Group

Bookings Essential - R.S.V.P. Phone 54823995 by 1.6.15

Tornado in Gympie...

In the year of 1932 on Thursday morning just before 8 o'clock on 22nd September was a day Gympie residents would remember for sometime the terrifying experience of a roaring Tornado.

This ferocity lasted less than a quarter of an hour and left unbelievable destruction and desolation in its track. Many residents were paralysed with fear, and the damage was estimated at between £9,000 and £10,000. There was a belief initially it was a heavy thunderstorm, and a cyclonic disturbance, but due to its unusual course and its peculiar suction effect on the properties affected, definitely proved it was a tornado.

Seven tents in which bridge construction workers were camped, were stripped and carried sky high, and with them many of the personal belongings of the men. Railwaymen, told of a boy named John Neill, of Keefton, who while running from the station towards the Monkland School, was caught in the great whirlwind and lifted in the air. He then lay on the ground until the fury of the disturbance had passed.



The roof and upper woodwork of one wing of the Monkland State School were blown away, as well as the school master's office on the side of the building blown from its supports, resting on the ground.

Telegraph poles nearby were broken off and wires were strewn about in confusion. Fences were blown down, broken branches, splintered timber, and uprooted trees added to the chaotic scene. A boy, David Jamie, who was on horseback in the vicinity of the Scottish mine, when the storm was approaching, raced to take shelter at Mr Runge's house. He did not reach it, however, and jumped from his horse and held on to a post rail until the storm had passed. The violence of the wind ripped a flap from an old saddle on the horses' back.

A number of people had various injuries, and animals in paddocks did not escape the tremendous fury, and many houses were demolished, including the wrecked Monkland Catholic Church.



(Above) The Station Master's Residence at Monkland and the Mount Pleasant Hotel.

The Gympie Tornado display in the Cottage shows the trail of destruction with photos of several buildings, and a street map of Gympie reveals the path of the Tornado.

Gympie Stock Exchange...

When GOLD was king by W E Mulholland

Info. from Sundowner Mar.1977

Every working day, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., a man stood on the low verandah and vigorously rang a large brass bell. The sound echoed through the narrow main street and nearby areas - the Stock Exchange was about to open for business.

The Gympie Stock Exchange, established in 1884, was one of the few exchanges outside the capital cities.

After 1893 the Stock Exchange was moved to the old Australian Joint Stock Bank building in upper Mary Street.

Since the discovery of gold in 1867, some brokers had been operating individually, but an uncertain telegraph service and distance from larger exchanges often caused confusion and frustration.

At peak production, soon after the turn of the century, up to 70 mining companies were listed and almost 30 brokers operated.

Thousands of pounds changed hands daily as the fortunes of mines fluctuated.

Each evening the exchange and the road outside were thronged with men, once several thousand, all eagerly discussing the day's developments and all hoping to make the rise that in many cases never came.

Gold mining was always uncertain and every mine had a limited life. Larger mines were public companies with, in most cases, small share capital as the cost of establishing was not great and no permanent buildings were required.

Mining companies rarely built up reserves in cash. In most cases all profits were paid out as dividends as quickly as possible. But in some mines it was the custom, when working in rich formations, to put aside some of the specimen quartz to be added to the crushings in leaner times.

In one instance directors discovered that their chairman, without their knowledge, had all the reserves of quartz put through the crushing batteries. He sold his shares for a high price and departed for fresher fields.

The Exchange continued to function for almost 40 years closing in 1923 when the gold field was exhausted.

The remaining brokers sold the assets and made a final distribution of the proceeds.

Each broker retained an official Stock Exchange seat and one of these fully restored, is preserved in the Gympie Historical Museum.

This rather ornate cast iron seat with padded leather back, armrests and folding base (pictured right) is on display in the Tank. It was made by A. Sargeant & Co, Engineers, Brisbane, and donated to the Museum by a relative of the sharebroker Sydney Shepherd.

A local Solicitor, Mr Frederick Sykes, purchased the premises and set up offices in the front of the building, which had been the Stock Exchange Club. The Stock Exchange, a wooden building at the rear, was sold to Mr Ferguson in Cooroy and transported intact to a site near the Cooroy Railway Station. His son - Mr Alan Ferguson, conducts his business in the building and the stock exchange boards still hang on the wall.



Three generations of the Sykes family, solicitors, have occupied the Gympie building and take pride in preserving it in excellent condition. Mr Rod Sykes of Sykes, Neilson & Co is a grandson of the founder.

Presently the building is now occupied by the legal firm, Neilson, Stanton & Parkinson.

Exhibits...

This story that follows was written by Beth Hamilton,
and sheds a light on the creation of our resident family members.

1992 Bob and I (Beth) bought an 100 year old cottage in 1992 which we turned into a craft shop called "Nuggets."

I then created my family to welcome the tourists.

Each one is sculptured from lycra over a wire frame taking six weeks to make.

Orge - Large Miner When he wasn't panning for gold he sat out the front and waved to the tourists and welcomed them in.

Grandma Mary Mary spent most of her time behind a spinning wheel I purchased from the lady who lived in the cottage before we became the proud owners.

Grandma Ethel Ethel spent her days at her 1929 sewing machine.



Small Grandma and Grandpa (pictured)
were made by Beth to enter in a craft show.

Grandma won First Prize in the Soft Toys, Other Soft Craft, Craft Section of the 1994 Queensland Ex-Service Literary Arts, Craft and Photography Competition, and Grandpa won Third Prize.

At a later date these two characters were donated to the Museum, and are currently being displayed in the Tank.



Markets...

On Sunday 17th May...

After having an enjoyable performance by the Gympie Museum Re-enactment members, the Gympie Ukulele group entertained market patrons with a medley of the old fashioned favourites such as Down by the Riverside which was a real toe tapper.



June Event...

On Queensland Day 6th June!

INVITATION to Members/Volunteers and your partner

The Society is providing a free morning tea at the Gold Museum Café 9.30 a.m. to celebrate 45 years since the official opening of the Gympie Gold Mining & Historical Museum.

Time is getting closer, and a reply would be appreciated
if you are attending by 1.6.15 (Ph. 54823995).

Activities at the Museum on long weekend of 6th/7th/8th June are:

Gold panning, Steam powered gold mining equipment, participation of the Gympie Museum Re-enactment group with a black powder shoot-out, re-enactment of gold robbery, canons fired. Light horse military museum, emergency vehicles, trucks etc and much more to see for hours of browsing.

Museum News...



The International Fire Truck is in readiness for a change of scenery. Organised by Gympie Fire & Rescue Service, this historic vehicle was an added attraction at the Gympie Show.



Lots of puff and steam with the steam boiler powering the amalgamating table in the Stamper Shed.

Volunteers...

Established in 1989, National Volunteers Week is the largest celebration of volunteers and volunteerism in Australia, and is in its' 27th year, being from 11th to 15th May 2015, with the theme 'Give Happy, Live Happy'.

On behalf of the Society, **I would like to thank all the Museum volunteers** for contributing their time and effort. Museum Volunteers have made an immense impact in making the Gympie Gold Mining & Historical Museum one of the most outstanding tourist attractions of Gympie.

Ed



(Left) Jo is presently rehangng the freshly washed curtains in the Cottage. This is one of a few tasks undertaken by her, other chores include cleaning/dusting and cooking much appreciated weekly treats for the volunteers.



(Right) Luda is checking out the operation of the Tamworth Kangaroo Minute Butter Churn in the Dairy Museum. The wooden handle is in need of replacement, which is now being taken care of.

Museum News (Cont.)...

- * Tuesday 5th May.....The latest addition to the complex, the Davey-paxman boiler was fired up which in turn activated the head stampers into motion - this was a most significant day in history, something that had not happened in decades.
- * Several visitors took the opportunity at half price entry fees that applied on Mother's Day to browse the Museum at their leisure.
- * During May there have been numerous tour groups. Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea have been catered for by the Gold Museum Café when required, while the tour guides provided ample information on Gympie's history for visitors to absorb.
- * On Wednesday 20th May, the dairy museum was a hive of activity becoming a learning lesson on how to make butter operating the Tamworth Kangaroo Minute Butter Churn with the necessary ingredient supplied by the school attending. Grades one and two of Gympie East State School descended on the Museum with a group of 23 students/teachers hosted by Tour Guides Allan and Luda, who gave these youngsters an exciting day of experiences to tell their parents about when they went home, which also would be when they visited the Cooran Lock-up.
- * Toilet holders have been installed in the toilets to combat the disappearance of toilet rolls.
- * A new sign has been erected at the Fifth Light Horse building, many thanks to the members of the Gympie troop.
- * Fitting sheeting for amalgamating trays below the stampers is in place.
- * Much has been achieved with replacing decking and other maintenance on the gantry, and will be continuing for some months.
- * The four corner exhibit areas in the communications building are being constructed with cupboard space on the lowermost section. After lining under the floorboards, so dirt/dust won't fall onto machinery in the workshop below, the floor sanding will then commence.



An excavator carried out site preparation initially, which can be seen in front of the Hospital Boilers. The insert pictured in the foreground is for the footing of the ruston engine formwork for the cavity inside footing to accommodate the engine sump flywheel and alternator. The engine is yet to be transported from Tozer Park.

(When I first set eyes on this construction, I thought this resembled the shape of a boat complete with oars probably to be used in flood time, and would need to be named!
Ed.)

- * A restored rammutt three head stamper in very good condition has been recently purchased, transported in two trailers to the Museum, and unloaded in the Stamper Shed to be set up in the future. Thankyou to Allan Blackman for the photos



Get Well Wishes to any Volunteers/Members who have not been feeling 100% lately.

Plans for the Steam Festival 3rd /4th/5th October

The boiler will remain in steam for the 3 days. Saturday 3rd and Monday 5th will be the main two days, also expected to run on Sunday 4th afternoon after the Markets. At this stage Saturday afternoon will be the official re commissioning of the stamper battery.

Local Event...

Have you readers an interest in all types of collectables - if so, visit the

Arms & Collectables Fair being held on 13th/14th June,

at the "The Pavilion" Gympie Showground, Exhibition Road, Southside, Gympie.

The Gympie Post Office Postmaster...

The first postmaster, E.H. Booth, took up duty in 1867 on a salary of £12 (\$24) per annum. As business increased, he was then paid £150 (\$300) on 15th February 1868.

Also on 9th July 1867 the Post Office at Gympie was accorded official status and placed under the care of Mr. J. Baird, who was paid the comparatively large salary of £150 (\$300) a year. The raising of this office from an allowance office to official status was one of the most rapid in the history of the colony.

At that time, Gympie was a boom town and the postal service grew in proportion. Mr Baird had two Clerical Assistants and a Letter Carrier under his control. In 1869 he received an increase to £300 (\$600) per annum in his salary. He remained in this position until 1976, and he also had his private quarters in this building as well.

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