



THE



NEWSLETTER

NO. 94 JANUARY 2016

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

213 Brisbane Road, GYMPIE. QLD 4570

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**ELECTED OFFICERS**

**at A.G.M. 5.8.15**

**President:**

**Frank Lightfoot**

Tel: 54833965

**Secretary:**

**Ralph Richardson**

Tel: 54839418

Mob: 0408616709

**Treasurer/Editor:**

**Marilyn Soanes**

Tel: 54845211

**Senior Vice President/  
Historian:**

**Bennett Suthers**

Tel: 54823315

Mob: 0412263189

**Junior Vice President/  
Historian:**

**Allan Blackman**

Tel: 54828828

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**OTHER POSITIONS HELD:**

**Property Officer:**

**& Firearms Licensee**

**Ron Owen**

with Assistant Jo Carson

**Publicity Officer:**

**Max Travis**

Tel: 54812157

# Museum Markets

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

FEBRUARY dates: 7<sup>TH</sup>, 21<sup>ST</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 21<sup>ST</sup> February 2016

## 2016 EVENTS:

**Australia Day - 26<sup>th</sup> January**

**Steaming Day - 2nd May**

**Steam Festival - 1st/2nd/3rd October**

*THE GENERAL MEETING* will be held on **WEDNESDAY 3rd FEBRUARY 2016**  
at 7.00 p.m. upstairs of the Gold Room. Business includes: Work Projects

## Gympie and Surrounds...

\* In Brisbane they're called Queen Street farmers; in Sydney it's Pitt Street; in Melbourne it's Collins Street, and in Gympie they were known as the Mary Street farmers. These were the gentlemen farmers—politicians, businessmen, editors, mining secretaries and professional men—who worked by day in Gympie and returned at night to their showpiece farms on the other side of the Mary River. To give them their dues, they were far more involved in the land than most of their modern day, big city counterparts.

\* In the early days of the war an incident known as the “great stampede” took place, at the Showgrounds where the Light Horse Cavalry had set up camp. As water had been laid on specially for horses, a two-inch main taken across the river by the Army—the first water to Southside. One day a rogue grey horse kicked a bit too accurately and the string of horses took off around the ground. Other horses broke free and joined the mad rush, their flaying halters whipping them into a frenzy. Soon there were between 80 and 100 horses careering wildly, with the leaders smashing through a fence and the herd thundered out on to the road heading pell mell down Ramsey Road. As the herd split up, some of the horses suffered frightful injuries as they skidded on the tarseal and crashed heavily to the ground. When it was all over about 10 horses had to be destroyed.

\* A Chinese gardener, old Harry returned home to find his garden plundered. One of his prize watermelons was gone, the culprit leaving the shape of a bare footprint behind. Harry measured off a piece of straw against the footprint, then did the rounds of the local children to see whose foot fitted, but the daughter of a local sharefarmer was not discovered.

\* The worst flood for two decades hit in January 1890. Gympie's mines were badly damaged, and many of the deep mines were interconnected, to assist drainage and ventilation. Water entered the lower mines also filling those mines whose entrances were high above flood level. It was months before many of the mines were pumped dry. To prevent such a recurrence a system of spring-loaded steel flood gates was devised to cover the opening of any mines likely to be affected by flood. The flood of 1893 was the grandfather of them all peaking at a record 83 feet 6 inches in Gympie on February 4 and once more entering the mines.

\* In 1908 a major bridge across the Mary-Bell's Bridge at O'Leary's Crossing was opened on May 28, by the Minister of Lands, Mr J. T. Bell, and was followed by a banquet at the site. Most of the financial help came from the Kilkivan Shire. Before the bridge was built, the only way across the river was by ford or, in flood time, by ferry.

\* For many years the mullock heaps from Gympie and Widgee mines provided the favourite road building material. It was cheap and accessible and the blue metal made one of the best road beds.

\* In 1900 the Mullalys (on the farm named Rose Vale) were the largest suppliers of the Gympie Butter Factory with 800 lb. Of cream per week. About 60 years later the Mullaly land was used to grow corn for a quantity trial under government supervision. The yield of 114 bushels to the acre set a Queensland record at the time.

\* The Jones brothers from Widgee station were of South American extraction, but could have been straight out of the American wild west. A lasting reputation was left by the Jones boys, in particular with the Glastonbury hotel that carried the scars of many of their deeds. Such a time was when they rode their horses straight into the bar and shot their initials in the ceiling. Sometimes they didn't bother with glasses, instead they shot the top off a bottle and drank straight from the broken neck.

\* Some of the publicans were characters, too, like Larry Hogan about whom many tales are told. Larry had a bad leg—the legacy of a cranking mishap with his old Model T Ford—and also was very deaf. One day he was transporting a group of forestry workers in his truck when it stopped. Larry got out and cranked, and cranked, and cranked until one of the forestry men took pity and told him he had started the engine several minutes before.

Info. is from Winds of Change by Ian Pedley.

and is a very informative publication of one hundred years in the Widgee Shire.

If you readers get an opportunity to acquire this book, it is well worth reading.

## Calico Cloth...

Calico cloth is a plain woven textile made from unbleached and half-processed cotton, and is less coarse than denim. It may still contain parts of the cotton husk thus giving it a 'seeded' look.

It has an unfinished appearance and was originally discovered and coined by the British during their reign and influence in India (during the 11<sup>th</sup> Century). It is a simple and cheap quality of cotton; however, it is one of the oldest material forms in India. The word 'Calico' comes from Calicut, which was a European term for the Indian city Kozhikode.

Uniqueness in style - perhaps the most interesting use of this fabric is when fashion designers use it for creating 'toiles' or dummies of their latest projects. They use the calico cloth as a rough canvas for their experiments since it helps them save money over buying expensive material, and is a sturdy fabric for all kinds of embroidery.

It is also utilized for home décor items and arts and crafts. Being versatile it can be used in a wide range of products – skirts, dresses, to a backdrop canvas for painting, and used to make accessories - tea towels, sturdy bags, lamp shades, quilts with patchwork, bed spreads, pillowcases, duvets, curtains and even earrings..

Since it is an unfinished version of cotton, Calico can be an easy and fuss-free fabric to maintain. Regular hand or machine wash would be the ideal way to keep it clean and sturdy.

The most common color combinations for Calico are orange-red, black-cream, and the usual prints found on Calico cloth are of floral motifs and designs. A flower-printed Calico shirt can brighten up the look, while, at the same time, maintaining a casual appeal.

Back in the 17th and 18th century, clothes made out of Calico fabric were considered a sign of nobility.

Calico, as a fabric for the more fashionable, may not be of great popularity or significance since it does not come across as an item of luxury. However, it is a fabric that we cannot disregard due to its sturdy and flexible appeal. Rough wear-and-tear would not ruin this fabric.

## Relocation of Exhibit...



Relocation to outside the Stamper Shed

### **Improved Grinding and Amalgamating Pan**

- Makers are Forwood Down & Co. Ltd at Adelaide. This cast iron piece of mining machinery is Australian made in the early 1900's, and was used in the extraction of gold from ore. As seen in the photo it stands on four legs, underneath there are two circular cogs which turn the spindle that is held in place by the yoke that drives the grinding shaft attached to the round bowl. Outside is a cross shaft which has two wheels that are the clutch and drive pulley assembly. On the opposite side is the outlet for extraction of gold. Attached to the yoke are metal shaped blades that grind the ore inside the bowl.

## Gold Room Display...



**Model Stamper** - One of the best exhibits at the Museum is this wonderful one sixth scale motor-driven working model of a ten head stamper battery and amalgamating table, built by Bill Runge. It stands about 800mm high, and produces a realistic sonic and visual demonstration of these noisy machines in action.

Within a year of James Nash finding gold in Gympie there were several stamper batteries at work crushing the gold bearing quartz from the reefs.

By the turn of the century there were hundreds of them throughout the town, pounding away 24 hours a day 6 days a week.

A real 100-year old stamper is at the museum about 5 metres high and 5 metres long.

**Steam Winding Engine** - Early miners used a windlass or horse driven whim to raise ore and convey miners and equipment. As mine depths increased steam power was needed.

This working model of the museums 1899 steam-winding engine was built by Jim McKenna to operate on compressed air. The model is complete with poppet head frame and cage. Walkers made the original in 1899 in Maryborough Queensland.

Exhibits of mining methods, related photographs, and samples of gold in quartz leads the mind back to the gold mining days, along with an assortment of other mining related equipment such as the Assaying Cupels, Tin Ingots, and the intriguing Timekeeper Clock from the Smithfield Mine and the Timekeeper Cabinet from the Scottish Gympie Mine.

## Museum News...

### Work in Progress

\* Rearrangement has been carried out on two rooms in the Cottage to incorporate the medical section which includes differentiate displays of a Doctors Surgery, Hospital room, Medical store section, Infant Ward, and an Operating room. Thankyou to Jo for making new curtains, keeping in with the theme of this newly painted room. Suitable signage will progressively be placed.

\* Replacing floorboards, and cleaning and painting ironwork of the Railway Signal Tower.

\* Preparation work has commenced for upgrading the Café entrance by removing garden shrubs on the fenceline.

\* The last two bays under the House will soon be requiring boxing for cementing.

Work Planned - Picket panelling under the Church,

Museum Cafe -The Service Contract for the Museum Café will change hands on 26<sup>th</sup> February, the new contractor being Vicky Dunford. Existing signage will be replaced with the new name of Café at the Museum. All the best is wished to the Ollier family in their new venture.

**Thankyou** once again to the member of Heritage Bank Community Grant for your contribution to the Society.

**Thankyou** to Ralph and Frank who submit the Applications for Grants, this is no easy task.

**Get Well Wishes** to any Members/Volunteers who have had a health problem lately.



(Left) Recently acquired by the museum is this ratchet wheel type wooden Warrego brand wool press, manufactured in Brisbane in the 1930s, and donated by Nick & Tilana Qually. It was left on a property, and used as a press when sheep were farmed (12 years), then used for demonstrations.

(Right) Unloading and positioning the Ruston Engine into the base. Thankyou to Allan Blackman for the photos

**Snakes.... Alive or Dead!** Most people are aware there are snakes in our presence, but rarely are seen. While walking from the Stamper Shed toward the Brian Fox Walkway beside the Blacksmith Shop, I noticed a striped tail of something unusual that I was about to step on, and came to an abrupt halt. This tail was protruding from the rock in area of a garden bed, but I couldn't see the whole body of this creature. Something in my head was telling me, this is not a lizard and be careful. I called to a volunteer nearby to keep watch until I could return with a snake catcher. Three eagerly and curious volunteers came to the scene, and one person who obviously knew what he was doing, gingerly pulled out the rest of the body.

To everyone's amazement it was a dead almost two metres in length carpet snake, whose fate will never be known. There is a theory however, because of its broken back, it may have been run over by a vehicle/trailer and then crawled injured to the location where it was found. This reptile was taken away to be buried somewhere in the Museum grounds, and may it rest in peace!

Ed.

Preparations for Australia Day



**Celebrating AUSTRALIA DAY IN A TRUE BLUE AUSSIE WAY -**

Full price Entry Fees applied on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016 . Starting the day was the Aussie Breakfast, followed by the Flag Raising ceremony and firing the canon by the Gympie Museum Re-enactment Group , Demonstrations of Museum historic machinery in operation incl. the Davey-Paxman Boiler and the shaker tables, Display of Historic cars, Visitors viewed artistic creations in the Cooloola Pottery Group building, and Miniature train rides. The Leyland Cub Bus ride into Mary Street was fantastic and enjoyed by all!

- THANKYOU** to: \*
- \* The Gold Museum Café staff for the catering
  - \* Olivia for creating the theme in the Café with the merchandise
  - \* All the Volunteers for your preparation and your dedication
  - \* Gympie Regional Council for the support contribution

Photos below of privately owned exhibits from Chris and Ralph created much interest, and were an added attraction on the day.



## Gympie Museum Re-enactment Group...



***THE***



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215 Brisbane Road, GYMPIE QLD 4570  
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