

COMMISSARIAT STORE 1829

RHSQ

Royal Historical Society of Queensland

THE RHSQ

Bulletin

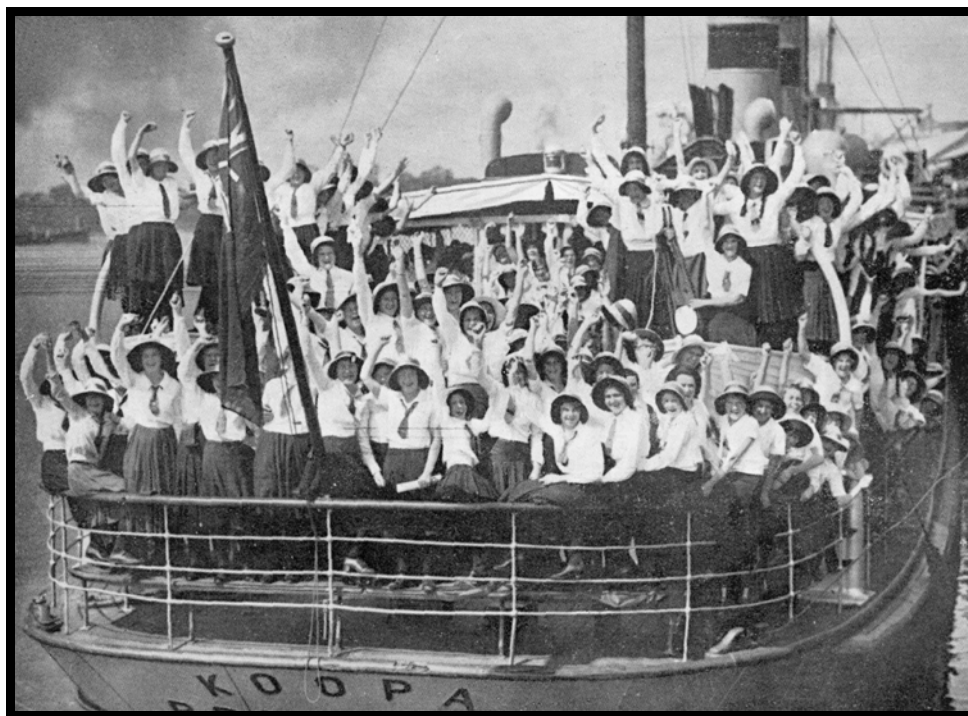
JUNE 2009 No. 731

The newsletter of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland

Patron: Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO, Governor of Queensland

President: Denver Beanland

Website: www.queenslandhistory.org.au



PICTURE: RHSQ P50078

The photograph above shows the *SS Koopa* leaving Redcliffe for Brisbane on 7 October 1932 with girls from Brisbane Girls' Grammar School aboard. The original photograph appeared in the *Brisbane Girls' Grammar School Magazine* on 8 December 1932.

President's Report June 2009

This year with falling revenue and increasing costs your Society has been forced to increase membership fees and reduce expenditure in several areas. As a consequence the Council has reluctantly decided to increase individual membership fees by \$10 to \$60 per annum and to increase the other membership fees accordingly.

As part of this budgetary review your Council is concerned at the continued rising costs of the monthly *Bulletin*. Although many of you have assisted by receiving your *Bulletin* via email the costs are still far too high for the production and distribution of this publication. We seek the further assistance of those who still receive it by post to consider receiving it by email. If you are prepared to make the change, please advise the Society. We thank all those members who currently receive the *Bulletin* on the Internet.

Membership fees as you are aware cover the costs of our flagship *Queensland History Journal*, the *Bulletin*, insurance, part wages and other outgoings. Even with the stringent new arrangements we will only just be able to meet expenditures. Hence from 10 June our Wednesday lunchtime and Thursday evening lectures that have been free in the past will incur, for

a trial period, a fee of \$5 per person. This is to cover the cost of sandwiches, which we have previously supplied for a gold coin at the discretion of the attendee.

Our manager and curator of the Commissariat Store Museum, Allan Bell will retire at the end of August. Over the next couple of months your council will be seeking a replacement. This is the only paid position in the Society. Allan has made a tremendous contribution to the Society during his time as manager and curator and we wish him well.

We are indebted to our volunteers who make possible the operations of the Commissariat Store Museum, exhibitions, library and research services and your Society's many other activities. Thanks to their activities and the work that has been ongoing the Society has received a significant boost to its profile in recent times.

Special thanks to the Queensland State Archives for sponsoring the Queensland Day Dinner. Emeritus Professor Kay Saunders will deliver our prestigious Clem Lack Oration after our Annual General Meeting this year. We look forward to your support on this major occasion.

Denver Beanland
President

Country News

Queensland History News

(Collected by Ruth Kerr from personal Queensland contacts, Affiliated Societies and Newspapers)

Atherton - Atherton Art Society has handed over the first 32 years of its historical records to the Tablelands Regional Shire Library at Atherton. The scrapbooks and records date back to 1967. The group first met at the Old Post Office Gallery. (*Tablelander* 10 March 2009 p.10)

Barcaldine - The Tree of Knowledge Memorial was opened by the Premier, Anna Bligh MP, on 2 May 2009. Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (QPIF) scientific assistant, John Oostenbrink, produced clones from the Tree of Knowledge at QPIF's Salisbury Research Centre. One clone was presented to the Premier. The others together with a 'sucker' are growing in the grounds of the Australian Workers' Heritage Centre at Barcaldine.

Peter and Sheila Forrest's book, *Bush Battleground*, commissioned by the Barcaldine Regional Council to research the 1891 Shearers' Strike, was launched on 2 May to coincide with the opening of the Memorial constructed by McNab engineering. One of the outcomes of their research has been highlighted before the launch. That was that, 'the ghost gum outside Barcaldine's railway station was never the venue for strike meetings and that the Australian Labor Party was founded years after the strike ended.' The Forrests said that they felt lonely when their research debunked the myths about the tree and the formation of the Labor Party, which is spelt out in detail on the Australian Labor Party website. Peter and Sheila Forrest said that, they 'felt vindicated when their story as told in *Bush Battleground* was supported by former politician and historian Manfred Cross.' The *North Queensland Register* further quotes: 'Mr. Manfred Cross said he was quite satisfied that what the Forrests put down on paper on the basis of evidence is quite accurate. He [Manfred Cross] said that former Queensland president and party historian, the late Denis Murphy, used to describe the Tree of Knowledge as 'the Barcaldine Myth'. Mr. Forrest said research showed that the ALP was a synthesis of many things that happened in various places. But no one place, not even the Tree of Knowledge, can exclusively claim the honour of being the birthplace of Australia's most enduring party.' The Australian Labor Party was formally established, uniting various Labor Federations, in Melbourne on 8 May 1901. ('Tree of Knowledge Birthplace bombshell' by Peter Murphy, *North Queensland Register* 30 April 2009 p.5 including photo)

Caboombah between Esk and Somerset Dam - The *Caboombah* Homestead, heritage listed building and headquarters of the Brisbane Valley Historical Society, between Esk and Somerset Dam, burnt down at 6.20 pm on Monday night 11 May 2009. It was built in 1890 by Henry Plantagenet Somerset. The telegraph message indicating the height of the 1893 flood in the Brisbane River was sent from there by Somerset to the Brisbane GPO. (It was not read). The Society had a collection of furniture and museum artifacts and records. They had opened the historical site to the public for inspection since 1989. Surrounding historic buildings survived.

A neighbour saw the flames at 6.20pm and called the Queensland Fire & Rescue Service who attended from Esk and Toogoolawah. The caretaker had tried to put out the flames with a garden hose but was overcome by smoke and heat. (Source: ABC Radio News Brisbane 7 am & 7 pm TV News on 12 May 2009; *Kilcoy Sentinel* 14 May 2009 p.1 including photo)

Charters Towers - A miner's cottage has been restored in Charters Towers and is now a tourist attraction along with an

associated shed containing mining artifacts and a working gold battery. Mr Alan Silverwood restored the cottage in 1992. School children visit the cottage and battery as part of their local history course. (*North Queensland Register* Special Feature May 2009 p.34)

Cooktown - In 1950 the population of Cooktown was 400. There were only 56 rateable properties and 50 others were owned by Council. Many buildings destroyed in the 1949 cyclone were not rebuilt. The *Great Northern* Hotel was not demolished until 1956. In 1958 there were three hotels, four general stores, two cafes, a baker, a chemist and a hardware store. Cattle were being shipped through Cooktown. Farmers produced peanuts, citrus, pineapples and tobacco. Mulligan Highway was declared in 1950 but was only a graded track through the bush. Hayles boat carrying passengers, freight and perishables visited weekly, arriving on Tuesday nights. The *Elsanna* loaded timber from the sawmill several times a year but this ceased when the mill closed in 1958. The Department of Civil Aviation generated electricity at the airport using equipment leftover from the war. It supplied the hospital. A town powerhouse was built in 1955 to supply 60 premises. Horses and cattle still roamed the streets. A request was made to Council in 1954 for a street light at the corner of Banks and Flinders Streets as 'wild pigs made it dangerous at night.' The Shire Council was replaced by a government administrator as there was an insufficient rates base to support a Council. (*Cooktown Local News* 18 March 2009 p.16 including photo)

Gympie - A set of leg irons was unearthed in Gympie in March 1959 by a Public Works Department employee while digging a trench at the rear of the police station. The Queensland Museum expressed an interest in receiving them and they were handed over for their collection. (*Gympie Times* 26 March 2009 p.8 - '50 Years Ago' column)

Gympie - Cooloola Region Development Board will operate the Gympie Woodworks Museum from 11 May 2009 following the handover from the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries. All the artifacts are back on site and the Gympie Regional Council is negotiating with the State government to acquire the land as freehold. \$150,000 has been allocated by Council to run the museum and an Information Centre at the Woodworks Museum. (*Gympie Times* 18 April 2009 pp.1 and 3)

O.K. - north west of Chillagoe - The photograph on the front page of the *Northern Sun* for January to March 2009 shows a traction engine hauling a wagon loaded with bags of copper ore for the copper smelters. The copper deposit was discovered in September 1901. Camels of Abdul Wade's Bourke Carrying Company were initially utilised by the O.K. Copper Mines Development Syndicate NL company to haul ore and concentrate. Ten traction engines were purchased soon after and hauled the concentrate the 80 km to the railhead at Mungana. The smelter site at O.K. with brick chimney, slag dump and traction engine are on the State Heritage Register. (*Northern Sun*, January to March 2009, vol.24 no.85, p.1; and *Chillagoe: a town with a sense of adventure in the Mareeba Shire* by GK Bolton and Ruth S. Kerr (Cairns, GK Bolton, 1998 p.32)

Stanthorpe - Mr Bernard Garth is restoring old projection equipment from the Arcadia Cinema which operated for around 60 years in Stanthorpe. He has collected original equipment from the theatre and is seeking lamp houses. He is also collecting advertisements and photographs. Contact: miniher@yahoo.com.au or Phone: 07 4683 6370. (*Stanthorpe Border Post* 31 March 2009 p.7 including photo)

Wallangarra - The 'Downs Dasher' C17 locomotive was organised to operate between Warwick and Wallangarra on 4

April with 100 passengers. The railway station heritage centre was planned to be open and a roast lunch supplied. The station will be reopened to the public after a 12 months closure. Brendan Cusack and Lynne Schenck of the Jennings Hotel, a few hundred metres away in New South Wales, will open the Wallangarra railway station on the first Saturday of the month. The Southern Downs Steam Railway plan to run the 'Downs Dasher' to Wallangarra on the first Sunday of the month from June or July 2009 to coincide with the Border Market. (Stanthorpe *Border Post* 31 March 2009 p.8 including photo)

Moreton Bay - The Mayor of the Moreton Bay Regional Council officially opened a new downstairs segment of Woodford's Library and Community Hall building on 18 May that houses a Museum of the Woodford Historical Society and a display area for the town's art group. The Mayor, Alan Sutherland, said that it was often the case that when a Council literally 'put a roof' over an organisation, they then flourished. The modern building houses several impressive photographic and other displays as a reminder how the township looked in past times and depicting some of the people who have lived and worked there. Later this year on 6 December, a celebration will be held in conjunction with the Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society to commemorate the centenary of the opening of the Caboolture - Woodford branch railway [which closed in 1964]. The Museum Society operates a one-time sugar cane railway locomotive on a short passenger service in the town each first and third Sunday monthly.

Research Report

This last month we have been without our usual complement of researchers – one is overseas, another on holiday, another with other commitments and I have been speaking to a group of School Archivists on the use of school archives in researching local and community history. In the process of preparing for this talk I discovered that the Welsby Library holds 120 school histories, many of which celebrate the school's centenary and nearly all have important and valuable information on their local area. With this depleted staff we have nevertheless been busy attending to requests for information. This month requests have included Dr Simpson and the Pettigrew Diaries; Woodford; FE Lord; George Breakenridge and the cutter *Fanny*; Queensport Aquarium; Yungaba Hostel; Boonah Military Hospital; Olive May Patterson and Thomas Toye; and the Chirnside family of Vindex Station near Winton. Lyndsay Smith has provided photos on the Bowen Harbour Board building and Canon Hill Abattoirs as well as some documents on FE Lord. During the last month we have gratefully received some transcriptions of letters written by a miner at Mt Rainbow near Gladstone that described his journey to Australia and his life on the mine field. They are very evocative of the period and an important addition to the collection.

Jean Stewart
Honorary Research Officer

Speakers for June

Geoffrey Swan is a former Inspector of schools in Special Education and a Churchill Fellow. He has contributed to the RHSQ Journal, his latest article, Sir Fred (1900 - 1969) and Dr Eleanor (1902 - 1962) Schonell was published in November 2006.

Manfred is well known to members of the Society and is a frequent and entertaining presenter at the monthly lectures.

PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION

CONFERENCE
3-4 SEPTEMBER 2009

To be held at: The Marquee Hotel, 103 George Street,
Brisbane. The main theme being:

**Journeys through Queensland history: landscape, place
and society**

For more information contact the Association at
www.qldhistorians.org.au

New members

Lynda Young	Westlake
David Maxwell	Kingsville, Vic.
Peter Fenton	Indooroopilly

Queensland State Archives 2009 Exhibition Touring Itinerary

at

Brisbane Square Library

266 George St. Brisbane Phone 07 3403 8888

Tuesday 2 June – Saturday 27 June

at

Biloela Library

Cnr Melton and Grevillea Sts Biloela

Phone 07 4992 9500

Saturday 13 June – Friday 3 July

at

Gympie Art Gallery

39 Nash St Gympie

Phone 07 5481 0733

Tuesday 30 June – Sunday 26 July

The Royal Historical Society Queensland and

The Brisbane History group

present

A History Conference on Separation

entitled

' Queensland 1859'

at

The RHSQ Headquarters, Commissariat store, 115 William
Street, Brisbane

on

Saturday, 8 August at 9.00am.

Further details in the next Bulletin

Royal Historical Society of Qld
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Important Functions and Events

CALENDAR

June 2009

Saturday 6 June 7.00 pm **Queensland Day Dinner**
Tuesday 9 June 10.30 am **Exhibition floor talk**
Wednesday 10 June 12.30 pm **Schools in the Northern District
 1859, Geoffrey Swan**
Tuesday 16 June **Bulletin Deadline**
Thursday 18 June 6.00 pm **The Postal service at the dawn of
 Queensland, Manfred Cross**

July 2009

Wednesday 8 July 12.30 pm **TBA**
Wednesday 15 July **Bulletin deadline**
Thursday 16 July 6.30 pm **TBA**

RHSQ Infobox

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The Society is represented on the National Trust of Queensland and the Board of Trustees of Newstead House
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Bulletin articles only:

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Subscriptions (with GST):

Ordinary Member	\$60.00
Partner of Member	\$20.00
Junior Member (18)	\$10.00
Full-time Student (25)	\$25.00
Affiliated Society	\$45.00
Libraries Subscription	\$60.00
Corporate/Institutions	\$75.00
Life membership – purchased after 10 years	\$1,000.00

