



RHSQ

The Royal Historical Society of Queensland

THE RHSQ

Bulletin

79 years of continuous publication

MAY 2021 No. 862

The newsletter of The Royal Historical Society of Queensland

Patron: His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC,

Governor of Queensland

President: Dr Denver Beanland AM

Website: www.queenslandhistory.org

THE FORMER KINGAROY COUNCIL CHAMBERS



Qld Heritage Photo

The first council chambers building in Kingaroy was built of timber in 1913. The building pictured was a replacement opened by the Minister for Agriculture and Stock, Frank Bulcock on 1 December 1938. In 1979 a new council chambers building was built. See story page 3.

President's Report

May and June will be busy months for the RHSQ commencing with the Wednesday lecture on 12 May 2021 at 12.30 pm at the Commissariat Store entitled 'Why Did the Seven Fly on the Stinson That Day?' presented by Philip Castle.

Many know the amazing story of the Stinson crash on 19 February 1937 on the Lamington Plateau. However, not many know the stories behind the seven people who took the flight and why they were so keen to take off even with a threatening severe weather pattern (cyclonic) off the coast. Philip Castle, an historian, has looked closely at the cause of the crash and the motives for those who boarded the fateful flight. These range from the co-pilot having a hot date, to an ill mining magnate just wanting to go home to bed, an English cricket tragic desperate to go to a Bradman test, a dubious money laundry runner to the Randwick races, and a US businessman who wanted to celebrate his birthday with his family. The talk will also include the most likely sequence which led to the crash and the heroism of the initial three survivors and their rescuers.

Philip Castle is a retired print journalist who has three degrees; history and political science, journalism and a research masters on PTSD and journalists. He has over 40 years in the media and most recently was a journalism lecturer at QUT. He regularly gives talks on a range of historical topics including many on Australia's military conflicts and their impact on our nation.

Please go to the RHSQ website under 'Events' for bookings and further details of this and other events.

The Burke and Wills Conference celebrating the 200th anniversary of the birth in Ireland of Robert O'Hara Burke' will be held at the Commissariat Store, 115 William Street, City, on 29 May 2021 commencing at 9.30 am concluding at 1 pm. This will be a half day conference with registration commencing at 9.00 am.

The first speaker will be David Phoenix, President of the Burke and Wills Society who will speak on THE DIG TREE DILEMMA. Archival evidence indicates that the coolabah tree currently known as Burke and Wills' "Dig Tree" on Cooper Creek was not the tree carved to mark the buried stores left for Burke's party on their return from the Gulf of Carpentaria. Nevertheless, the tree has become iconic and it is seen to epitomise the tragedy of the expedition. This paper proposes that a nearby, less impressive coolabah, is the real "Dig Tree" and analyses the possible implications for heritage interpretation and values.

The other five speakers are: David Dodd, Professor John Pearn, Philip Castle, Aaron Patterson and Jim McCourt who will provide new material on a range of issues flowing from this tragic journey across the continent.

Booking and further information is available on the RHSQ website under 'Events'.

Members are also reminded of the Queensland Day Dinner to be held on Saturday 5 June this year as the 6 June is a Sunday. The Governor of Queensland, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC the Patron of the Society will be the guest speaker. He will be accompanied by Mrs Kaye de Jersey. Further information is available on the RHSQ website under 'Events'.

Meanwhile, the Cook conference in Cooktown on 19 June is shaping up to be an overwhelming success.

The Dig Tree conservation project involving the Dig Tree Visitor Experience Redesign Project and other work was opened on Saturday 27 March as planned, but with a difference. On early Tuesday 23 March major rainfall occurred at the headwaters of the Paroo and Bulloo Rivers which cut the roads from Charleville to Thargomindah, while the Dig Tree Road itself was closed because of the wet weather. Although the RHSQ tour party may have been able to get to Thargomindah, we could have been marooned there for days. Therefore, a majority of participants decided to fly to Charleville and undertake the opening as planned but at Charleville, with the co-operation of the Murweh Shire Council. The President of the Society would MC the ceremony from the Shire Chambers in Charleville via 'Zoom' with the Mayor of Bulloo Shire Council in Thargomindah performing the opening as planned. This occurred on time at 12 noon. The RHSQ wishes to thank the co-operation of the Murweh Shire Council in Charleville to enable this to occur. Meanwhile, the function on the Friday night 'Burke and Wills: Back under the Stars' was cancelled as was the trip to the Dig Tree itself. However, those that travelled to Charleville, I believe, enjoyed themselves. The RHSQ is looking forward to planning another journey to the Dig Tree Reserve.

The Surveyor's Conference originally scheduled for 18 September has now been moved to 16 October. Also, the next newsletter will contain more details on the 'Book Fair' on 14 for members and 15 August for the general public. Anyone who can assist on Thursdays, (the day the volunteers meet) in preparation for the Fair or on the day should contact the manager of the RHSQ.

Finally, next March will the centenary of the abolition of the Upper House of the Queensland

Parliament. The RHSQ is holding a joint conference with the Queensland Parliamentary Library at Parliament House on the issue and seeks expression of interests from anyone interested in giving a paper. If you are interested, please advise with your name, email, and telephone number with the title of your paper and details of the work that you have done on the subject.

Denver Beanland
President

Queensland Report

(Collected by Ruth Kerr from personal Queensland contacts, Affiliated Societies, Newspapers and Department of Environment and Heritage Protection official notifications)

Kingaroy – The former Kingaroy Shire Council Chambers in Haly Street, Kingaroy are now utilised for the Kingaroy Art Gallery. The first council chambers were timber and were built in 1913. In September 1937 the Kingaroy Shire Council resolved to construct a new building. The old chambers were moved to face the street directly behind. The new council chambers building incorporated Art Deco and Moderne design features of geometrical motifs, decorative vertical banding and streamlining. The building was opened by the Minister for Agriculture and Stock, Frank Bulcock on 1 December 1938, the same day that he opened the Kingaroy peanut silos. The new chambers were a single storey building of brick and concrete. Silky oak timber was used extensively throughout the building for fittings, doors and furniture. The ceilings have ornate plaster work. Leadlight windows incorporating the shire's logo were included in the main elevation. The building has a craftsman constructed boardroom at the rear. The room was panelled in silky oak and has parquet floors of tulip and rose gum timber. In 1979 a new council chambers were built. (*Burnett Today*, 8 April 2021, p. 15 including)

Kuranda – The Cairns – Kuranda scenic rail trip popularising the history and natural landscape of the Cairns Range Railway for tourists resumed on 3 April 2021 following repairs to a locomotive in Brisbane. (WIN Cairns TV, 1 April 2021)

Details are as follows:

Effective Saturday 3 April 2021, Kuranda Scenic Railway will return to our usual timetable, operating two daily return services between Cairns and Kuranda.

Departing Cairns: 8.30am & 9.30am*

Departing Freshwater: 8.55am & 9.55am*

Departing Kuranda: 2.00pm & 3.30pm*

* Gold Class service available.

The train has returned to 100% capacity onboard, operating in compliance with the Queensland Government Rail Tourism COVID safe requirements. Customers must remain in their allocated ticketed seats throughout the journey aboard Kuranda Scenic Railway. Please note customer contact information will be collected for contact tracing purposes. This famous railway winds its way on a journey from Cairns to Kuranda, the village in the rainforest, with Freshwater situated along the line with views of the surrounding mountains. Rising from sea level to 327 metres, the journey to Kuranda passes spectacular waterfalls and into the stunning Barron Gorge. The journey includes an English commentary and all passengers receive a commentary companion which includes information on the history of the railways construction, a trip map and a map of Kuranda. Upon reaching the village of Kuranda a rich assortment of interesting attractions and unique shopping experiences awaits you.

Murgon – A vintage Chevrolet has been travelling around Australia as the Australian Bible Van since 1927 and went to the Murgon Show on 20 March and Gayndah Show on 10 April. It operated for Christian mission purposes until 1961 – Colin Ferguson (following the initial gift by a Christian businessman) until the early 1940s and Phil Moss in North Queensland 1946-1961. Moss bought a new van and the old one was used by a Townsville Christian group. In 1992 a Redcliffe group obtained the van to restore it as a memorial to Australian Bush Missionaries. The restored van has been taken to school functions, markets and rural agricultural shows. (*Burnett Today*, 8 April 2021, p. 12 including two photographs)



Bob Riley Photo

The Australian Bible Van

Roma – A photograph of a visit of the Methodist Bush Mission to Roma in the late nineteenth century was featured in the Toowoomba *Chronicle* on 27 March 2021 on page 20.

Woodford – Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society was successful in obtaining a Community Benefit Gambling Fund grant to extend their workshop housing historic locomotives. (ANGRMS AGM Announcement, 20 March 2021)



Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Photo

An ANGRMS locomotive and carriages

ABOUT ANGRMS

The Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society (ANGRMS) was formed in January, 1971 when a group of railway enthusiasts met to discuss the possibility of preserving a representative collection of locomotives and rolling stock used on the Queensland sugar mill tramways. The Society was incorporated under the Companies Act of Queensland as a Non-Profit Company, Limited by Guarantee, in September 1972.

Since 1971, the Society has acquired an irreplaceable collection of two-foot gauge steam, diesel and petrol locomotives and rollingstock, including a variety of line cars. Most were collected from Queensland and northern New South Wales although examples within the collection originated from England and France. It is a wide ranging collection of the equipment, which played a vital role in the development of the State of Queensland.

It has always been the Society's aim to display and operate this equipment. The Society has also purchased workshop equipment and track materials and established the "Durundur Railway" at Woodford, Queensland (Just 25 kms from Caboolture). Here, an operating heritage railway has been established and a static museum is to be set up for the purpose of displaying this fine collection of unique, interesting and historic narrow gauge locomotives and ancillary equipment for the benefit of future generations.

The Society's collection of locomotives will continue to grow slowly over the years as we continue to obtain early diesel locomotives which are now being phased out. We would particularly like to acquire a Drewry 0-6-0DM and an example each of a Clyde and ComEng 0-6-0DM. The situation regarding the locomotives will change from time to time as the restoration of one is completed and another is commenced.

Library and Research Report

It has been a relatively quiet month for research requests. Bushwalking Queensland seeks information on early explorers, such as Alan Cunningham who discovered Cunningham's Gap, to develop a series of walking trails to commemorate the 200th anniversary of these explorations in 2023; military history of a soldier who served in Unit 37/52 Battalion; the Breakfast Creek Hotel and the history of waterside workers in the area around 1976; 1890s house *Hillcrest*, Montague Rd., South Brisbane; manuscripts written by Eliza-Ann Dart; history of Gallipoli (Enoggera) Barracks; and a photograph of Benjamin Postle who died in 1888. The Library has been offered a new publication, *Farnsfield to Rainworth Journey of a Lifetime*, by Philip H. Marsh, an account of the life and achievements of Sir Augustus Gregory, noted explorer and Queensland's first Surveyor-General and Commissioner of Crown Lands.

With more and more newspapers becoming available online at the National Library of Australia's Trove facility, our attention has turned to assessing the Library's extensive collection of newspaper cutting books, currently around 110. They date from the early 1900s and mostly reflect the interests of the individual who compiled them. One example is the collection of noted Brisbane artist Percy Hobday. Thomas Welsby's 29 cutting books are indexed and entries noted in the Library catalogue. Others have been indexed according to the title of a newspaper article but not noted in the catalogue, while many have had the newspaper source and date removed. In these instances, they have no value for research purposes. At the same time, each cutting book is a unique entity, reflecting the interests of the collector and that particular time in our history.

It has been brought to our attention that an article <https://queenslandhistory.org/2018/08/from-the-archives-ravenswood/> suggests that Ravenswood's Railway Hotel is no longer open. In the final paragraph, "Today only the 'Imperial Hotel'" should read "Today the 'Imperial Hotel'".

Apologies to the Simmonds family for the incorrect spelling of 'Simmonds' in our acknowledgment of the late Ian Simmonds' donation of his book collection to the Society's Library.

Kay Cohen
Library & Research Co-ordinator

The Beenleigh Historical Village and Museum

This Village is an open-air museum at Main Street, Beenleigh, City of Logan. It preserves twenty buildings from Beenleigh's past which contain many collections related to the history of this district. There is also a dedicated Museum Building.

Address: 205 Main St, Beenleigh QLD 4207 : Hours: 9.00 am to 3.00 pm
Phone: (07) 3382 0608

Call for Papers and Speakers

During the coming year the Society is embarking upon and undertaking a comprehensive and interesting lecture program in order to further enhance the objects of the Society in the dissemination and appreciation of Queensland history to members and the public, and to greater involve members in the camaraderie of the Society by conducting such activities in a convivial social atmosphere.

In order to assist in such an undertaking, it is necessary for the Society to increase its ready pool of suitable and willing speakers, and hence this call for the nomination of speakers and topics that you as a member would appreciate being discussed.

Should you be willing to personally present a paper or talk or if you would like to nominate a prospective speaker, please email info@queenslandhistory.org.au with the following information:

Name:

Email:

Phone no.:

Suggested speaker:

Email:

Phone no.:

Suggested topic:

Michael Halliday
Program Committee Chair

<u>IMPORTANT EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS</u> <u>MAY</u>	<u>NEW MEMBERS</u>
<p>Wednesday 12 May, Talk 12.30 pm, ‘Why Did the Seven Fly on the Stinson That Day?’ presented by Philip Castle.</p> <p>Thursday 13 May, Council Meeting.</p> <p>Saturday 15 May, <i>Bulletin</i> deadline.</p> <p>Saturday 29 May, 9.00 am, Burke and Wills Conference</p>	<p>Elizabeth Gonzo</p> <p>Carole Brackin</p> <p>Paul Hutchison</p> <p>Ryan Story</p> <p>Ellie Gunton</p> <p>Biggenden Historical Society</p> <p>Caboolture South</p> <p>Ipswich</p> <p>Canberra</p> <p>Stapylton</p> <p>Forest Lake</p>

Contact Details	<i>Bulletin</i> Articles Only	Subscriptions
Manager: Sophie West	Editor: Dr Graeme Nicholson	Ordinary Member: \$ 66.00
ABN: 34 217 251 028	A/Editor: Gloria Nicholson	Partner of Member: \$ 22.00
Phone: 07 3221 4198	Phone: 07 3221 4198	Junior Member (U18): \$ 11.00
Fax: 07 3221 4698	Fax: 07 3221 4698	Full-time Student (U25): \$ 33.00
email: info@queenslandhistory.org.au	email: info@queenslandhistory.org.au	Affiliated Society: \$ 55.00
website: www.queenslandhistory.org	The Society acknowledges financial assistance from: Commonwealth Government Heritage Grants; Qld Government Gambling Community Benefit Fund; Lord Mayor Adrian Shrinner, The Lord Mayor’s Suburban Initiative Fund; Brisbane City Council; Our Honorary Auditor, Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd.	Libraries: \$ 66.00
Address: 115 William Street, Brisbane Postal: The Royal Historical Society of Queensland, PO Box 12057, Brisbane, George Street, 4003		Corporate/Institutions: \$ 275.00
		Life Membership - Purchased after 10 Years as a Member \$ 5,500.00