



Bathurst District Historical Society Inc.

MEMBER'S NEWSLETTER

No 99 July – September 2014

Price \$3.00

Free to Members of the Society

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The last newsletter of the Society attracted more compliments than usual so thank you for that. We have had several days this week that proves winter has finally arrived, however the Society does not seem to slow up.

Many thanks to all the loyal volunteers who braved the cold to help Samantha at the Working Bee to get the Museum ready for the very successful Open Day, the latter being held on 10th May. (Right – Val Simmons.)



Al Hammond (below) and Spencer Harvey (right) worked miracles in the courtyard and it now looks great. They tidied up after the recent building works as well as giving the garden bed a good going over and wiping down all the chairs.



Beryl, Carol, John, Thelma, Valda and Val all pitched in inside and the whole place gleamed with furniture polish and glass cleaner! Nothing escaped their cleaning cloths –

all the books were taken down and the shelves wiped, all the skirting boards and window frames were given a coat of O'Cedar and all the furniture was dusted and polished and anything else

(including anyone who stood still for too long) was given a wipe over with a damp cloth!



(Left Val Godwin) During the Working Bee Monday the Society took delivery of a new exhibit - a wonderful 19th Century upright piano which came to Bathurst from England as a wedding present for one of the Mugridge's who lived in town and had a

timber mill at the time. A few larger objects had to be shuffled round to fit the new piano in and you may have noticed that some items have been removed from the floor but it all looks good now and the Committee is very pleased with the donation.

I attended the official opening of Heritage Week for 2014 which was held in the Walshaw Hall. It was opened by Hon. Paul Toole, M.P., Member for Bathurst and Minister for Local Government. Samantha Friend was also in attendance which was hosted by the Mayor Gary Rush and Bathurst Regional Council. There was a good crowd including a couple who were travelling through Bathurst from Byron Bay on their way to Melbourne. They had called at the Tourist Office and saw the program for Heritage Week and decided to stay for the two weeks instead of going on to Victoria. They came to our Society muster, the Museum Open Day and Old Government Cottage and all the other events elsewhere. They are coming back for 2015 they said.



A new temporary display is in place in the museum – Recent Acquisitions. The Society is very lucky to receive donated objects from members of the public and we think that they should be displayed for all to

see. This display will be in place until the next temporary display (probably one dealing with the Queen’s various visits to Bathurst) is put together. If you have any objects that would fit into that theme, please let Samantha Friend or myself know.

The society has copies of the new ‘Experience Heritage Bathurst’ walking tours brochures which have been developed by the National Trust Bathurst and the Bathurst 2036 Heritage Action Network. Brochures include “Walk Around Bathurst’s Machattie Park Heritage Area”, “Explore Bathurst’s Conservation Areas”, “Walk in Bathurst’s Keppel Street Heritage Area” and “Explore Bathurst’s Heritage Buildings”.



Volunteers have started on Old Government Cottage with working bees to tidy the inside ready for the opening of the Old Government Cottage Bicentennial Heritage Garden in late March 2015. This is part of the celebrations next year. Both the garden and inside the cottage have come a long way since the above photo was taken nine months ago. All collection items have been cleaned, descriptions and photos of each item have been completed so they can be recorded in our Mosaic collection software. Work has been started to open the cellar so it can be viewed by the public and the displays revamped in that room.



Roy Menzies’ tours of the Agricultural Research Station proved popular and the recent concern as to the future of this historic establishment discussed. There were over 80 on the tour I went on. There are still a large number of historic items on the site which the Society are keen to have remain in Bathurst. I was part of a delegation who met

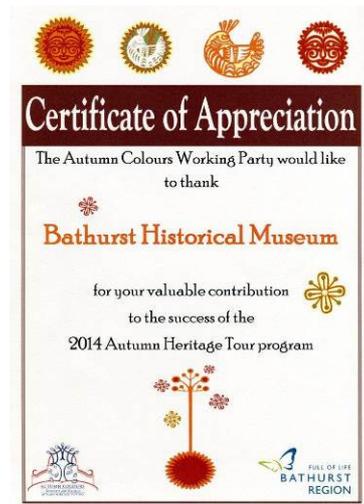
with Mark Burdack, Charles Sturt University Secretary, based in Orange to let SCU know that we support the retention of the historic buildings and the integrity of the contents. SCU are keen to see the site preserved as well.

Some may have already met Caitlin Knight from Charles Sturt University who is joining us over the next few months doing ‘work experience’ as part of her Bachelor of Arts course, specialising in History and English. Caitlin is hoping to work in a museum next year.

The covered walkway through the Courtyard has been completed and painted. We have been informed that there are plans for the Attorney General to do some more repairs in the next twelve months.

Samantha has been completing some wonderful work on the permanent display in the showcases round the walls. She has added to many displays and has done new captions for all the objects. So far there have been very positive comments from visitors. It is important to keep the Museum displays fresh and vital and to have interesting and entertaining exhibits.

The Society recently received a Certificate of Appreciation for our part in the Autumn Colours Festival for 2014 from the Autumn Colours Working Party and the Bathurst Regional Council. They were presented by Mayor Gary Rush and Councillors Morse and Hanger.



Alan McRae, President

REMINDER



**2014 – 2015 MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE
We have included a Membership Renewal form
with this newsletter.**

THE BATHURST LITERARY & MUSICAL SOCIETY



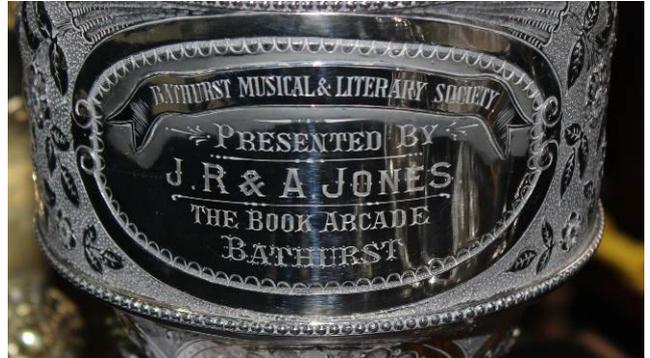
One interesting item in the Society's collection is a silver trophy which was presented by J.R. & A. Jones of "The Book Arcade" in Bathurst. In the 1890s and into the 1900s the Bathurst Musical & Literary Society held a number of competitions on an annual basis. They also organised numerous concerts throughout the year.

By 1899 the competitions in connection with the Musical and Literary Society (also known as an Association) were "fairly commenced". The reputation Bathurst has always held as one of the musical centres of the State was being fully maintained. Bathurst had been accused of being a 'Sleepy Hollow' but when the Bathurst people undertook any important venture they did it in earnest and there were no half measures. This had been particularly the case where music was concerned as prove by the successful large band contests and musical competitions which have been held in past years.

In the early days the public always assisted liberally in anything, which had, for its object, the advancement of the city. The gentlemen and ladies who undertook the management of these functions worked harmoniously, thus gaining the confidence and support of the citizens.

The Musical and Literary Association had an almost instant success. They got the idea from similar

movements in Newcastle, Sydney, Ballarat and elsewhere. After a successful 1899 competition a few gentlemen met and decided to enter upon an undertaking of much greater magnitude. They offered prizes amounting to between £400 and £500 with one of the trophies donated by the Jones' business.



Competitors from all parts of the State took part with events happening at the Show Ground and at the School of Arts.

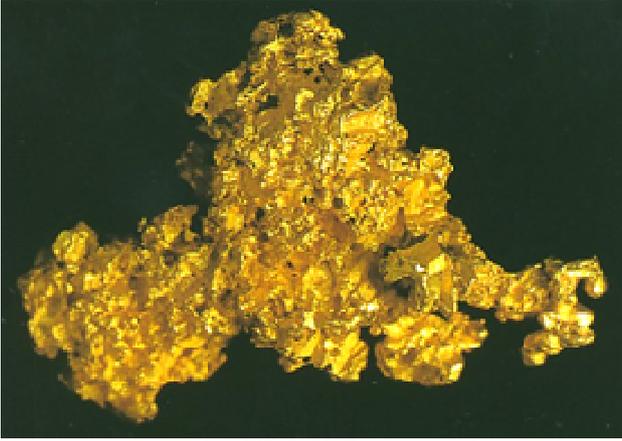
There was great interest in musical affairs in Bathurst and a successful Bathurst Eisteddfod took place in September 1899. A report in the Sydney Daily Telegraph stated: - "For many years this important centre (Bathurst) has enjoyed the reputation of an intelligent interest in music. The disposition for musical recreation has induced many thoroughly capable musicians to take up their residence here, and their presence has been an admirable incentive to the young people, who are learning and adopting the latest and most progressive ideas in music."

The newspaper went on to talk about the musical progress of Bathurst which by this time had its first orchestra and a Musical Society, the latter performing on different occasions 'Trial by Jury', 'The Bohemian Girl' and much later 'Pirates of Penzance', the latter under the direction of Mr. B. A. Thompson. Numerous high-class concerts were performed regularly, many in the School of Arts Theatre.

The paper stated at the time that the Anglican Cathedral, All Saints', possessed what is acknowledged as one of the finest church organs in the colony. The instrument was built by Foster and Andrews. Mr. T. H. Massey was the cathedral organist and gave concerts monthly. The Catholic Cathedral, S.S. Michael and John, possessed a fine two manual organ. The 25 voice choir under Mr. Dryden, the conductor, also gave choral performances.

The most flourishing musical bodies at the time were Bathurst's two brass bands. The Bathurst District Band, numbering between 25 and 30 members, had been in existence about 12 years. It was built up or re-organised from the late Military Band, which had

local rivers and streams.



Within a decade, as more gold was found throughout the district, the quantity and quality of shops had dramatically improved and the line of wagons bringing goods from Penrith or going towards Emu Ford and Sydney increased greatly.

WILLIAM MEARS
 IMPORTER OF BRITISH FOREIGN MANUFACTURES
 GROCER OILMAN, IRONMONGER, WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANT
 DRAPER MERCER, Hosiery, Ribbons, and GENERAL OUTFITTER
 COUNTRY STOREKEEPER, SQUATTERS, Settlers, &c. MELBOURNE & SYDNEY
 THE ONLY MELBOURNE HOUSE IN BATHURST
IMPERIAL WAREHOUSE.
THE GREAT SALE
 HAS COMMENCED AT
W. MEARS'S
 IMPERIAL WAREHOUSE.
THE WHOLE STOCK
MUST BE CLEARED OUT

William Mears owned the two storey brick Imperial Warehouse in lower William Street. By the 1870s he had a steady clientele and had twenty four staff on his books. He sold groceries, hardware, drapery, mercery, haberdashery and general outfitting, footwear, wines and spirits.

William regularly imported goods from foreign manufacturers for his store. He had placed an advertisement in the 1872 Postal Directory. With the discovery of new goldfields at Hill End in the early 1870s, Mr. Mears decided to open a store in that village.

On 2nd August, 1872, William Mears placed an advertisement in the local newspaper under

‘NOTICE’ – “All persons indebted to W. Mears’s Imperial Warehouse, Bathurst, are requested to pay their account without delay. All old outstanding accounts must be settled by the end of the month to save further trouble.”

William Mears had decided to sell up and vacate his premises in both Bathurst and Hill End. He intended to offer the buildings vacant for rent by 1st January, 1873. The advertisement asking that accounts be paid was still running in November.



Thomas Durack, who ran the Sportsmans Arms Hotel in Piper Street, was one of his customers. Mr. Mears sent regular parcels and packets out daily around the district. He could despatch parcels to Sofala via Mr. G. Spurway’s four-

horse coach which left Bathurst at 7.30am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Parcels needed to be left at Spurway’s Fruit Shop in William Street and cost one shilling each (above). William could also use Cobb & Co who sent their coach to Sofala on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.



The Imperial Warehouse (above) was also supplied with goods brought from Melbourne and William Mears advertised that he was the only “Melbourne House in Bathurst”. The business boasted eight carts and wagons operating at one time though I suspect most were bringing goods from train stations as the railway line edged its way towards Bathurst.

By the end of November in the Bathurst Free Press he was still advertising “The Great Sale” - The whole of his stock, including the large consignments, lately arrived per the “Duke of Sutherland”,

Mr. Stanford was also associated with the Wyagdon School which commenced early in 1873. Mr. Arthur Wood took the position as teacher but changed his mind when he arrived. Disappointed in his 'residence' he applied for a transfer immediately. Even Mr. Stanford, who had five school-age children, could not change his mind. The School Board however had a plan to keep him there – they asked him to refund his 'transfer allowance'. Mr. Wood then withdrew his resignation.

Three of John Stanford's children later became school teachers with the eldest, Susan Anne, sailing to England to further her education and on her return teaching in Sydney. Susan, normally called Alice, taught at Macquarie Plains and Guyong.

John Stanford became well known in the district as a capable and reliable builder. He died in 1886 with his wife living until 1919. One of John and Martha's daughters Eva Julia (born at Peel in 1871) married Alfred James Pollard at St Barnabas Church, South Bathurst on 1st July, 1896. Alfred Pollard was born at Epping, Essex in England.

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BATHURST CEMETARY VANDALISM

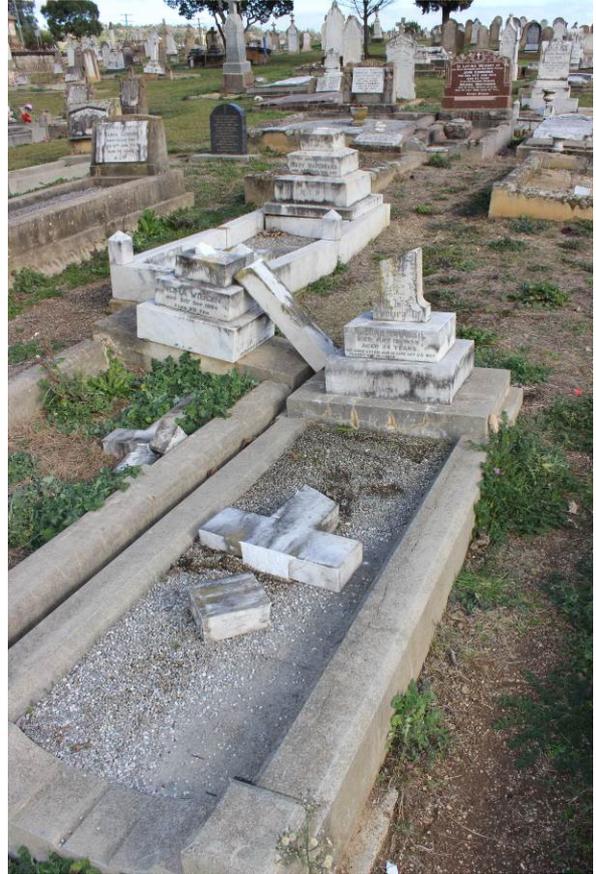
The news that Bathurst Cemetery had been vandalised shocked many members of the Bathurst District Historical Society as well as many others in Bathurst. The Family History Group of Bathurst had been working on restoring many of the graves at the cemetery for some time. Just under 70 graves were affected and when the damage was discovered the Bathurst Police were called in.



I inspected the damage to the graves on Monday morning of 30th June to be met with a barrage of photographers and TV crews there to see what had happened. It was hard to believe the amount of damage that had been done. It was obvious that it wasn't just one person walking through pushing graves over – it had to be more than one person. Simply there was too much damage, graves broken into numerous pieces. Damage wasn't in one line, it was everywhere.

By week's end Bathurst Police announced that they

had charged three teenagers with the damage done at the cemetery. They will come before the Children's Court and hopefully part of the punishment for the disrespect and damage will be to help restore some of the damage.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Museum and Archives:

East Wing, Bathurst Court House, Russell Street.
P.O. Box 237, Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 63308455 (Museum Open Hours)
Email: info@bathursthhistory.org.au

Annual Membership Subscription (due July 1st)
\$20 single and \$32 family
Corporate on request
Once only joining fee of \$25

Museum Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday
10am – 4pm. Sunday 11am-2pm

Archives Hours:

Tuesday 10.30am-12.30pm; 1.30-3.30pm
Subject to volunteers availability.

Old Government Cottage Hours:

Open each Sunday 12 noon to 4pm.

Information on the Society, as well as membership application forms, are available at the front desk during opening hours.

Alan McRae FAIHA Newsletter Editor