

S U M M E R 2 0 1 4

Memory Bank

Quarterly Newsletter of the Millthorpe & District Historical Society

The President Writes

Nuts and Bolts of the Operation of our Museum



I thought it would be an interesting subject to give you an insight into the running of the museum and some of the committee members.

The committees co-ordinate the many facets of the museum, each committee tying in with what others are doing.

- Rosemarie Amos as Treasurer, does a great job on the financial side, collecting the entrance takings and banking them each week, recording attendances, organising photo orders etc. It is almost a full time job, particularly this year with the donations for the TPP.
- Jacki Irvine, as our Secretary, has a wonderful way with words, recording the minutes of all meetings, writing letters that get the message across to many and varied people and organisations with such finesse.
- Ruth Kingham & Joyce Pascoe have everything connected with the Craft cottage under control, which is a great asset to our museum complex.
- Joan Whiley heads a very willing committee doing a great job catering for the many visitors requesting Devonshire Teas, lunches etc.
- Peter Amos looks after the Maintenance & Projects Committee, with the many maintenance jobs like painting, repairs, updating displays and odd jobs handled with expertise.
- Hayley Lavers took over the Collections and Management Committee when Elaine Kaldy was forced to relinquish the position due to ill health. Hayley has to coordinate and catalogue all objects donated and organise the display of these objects.
- Oral History Elaine Kaldy and Ann Harrison have been busy interviewing many museum and community members, to build up an oral history of the town and district.
- Computer and Website is another of Hayley's hats and she does a fantastic job. The Museum Website is something every member should familiarise themselves with.
- Judy Hill and her committee organise the many school visits to the museum, giving the students a vivid experience of how life used to be in the early days of settlement in this area.
- Judy together with Sharon Tilston deserve a huge thanks for taking on one of the most unenviable tasks in the museum, organising the duty roster every month. Many thanks go to all the willing workers who put their names forward to do duty.
- Kelvin Smith and Robin Oates are our main seekers of donations, both cash and materials, going towards the many projects underway at the museum and of course our quarterly Memory Bank is wonderfully produced by the ever willing John Willing!!

Peter Whiley



The Education Committee

"Millthorpe students had a wonderful excursion to the Museum. All students were engaged in their activities and the volunteers provided thoughtful and age appropriate learning experiences."

B.Oldham Millthorpe Public School, Teacher.

"What a fabulous day...the children enjoyed the hands-on approach, exploring how people used to live!"

J.Johnston, Heritage Small Schools.

"Well organised and thought out activities engaged the children. The activities flowed well and Museum volunteers were patient and thoroughly prepared." E.Guthrie, Errowanbang PS.

"The hands-on activities were very engaging for our wide range of ages and abilities. Thank you!"

Borenore PS.

These are just a sample of the many very positive comments made by teachers following school visits to the Golden Memories Museum at Millthorpe.

School visits are organised by the Museum's Education Committee with the help of many of the regular volunteers who have a wealth of knowledge about the artefacts in the Museum. The Education Committee is mainly made up of retired teachers who are very keen to help schools use the wonderful resources of the Museum to teach children a love of discovering their history. The school excursions are tailored to meet the needs of each school in collaboration with the teachers. The age group of the students, topics being studied, any special needs of the children, and of course the availability of Museum volunteers on the day to run the various "hands-on" activities are all taken into consideration.

The Museum Education Committee is keen to foster an understanding and love of history in children through a variety of activities. With the "hands-on" approach, children are able to wash clothes with an old washboard, pump water with an old hand pump, phone up the old Millthorpe telephone exchange using old wind-up phones, sit in a sulky, watch the sparks fly from the blacksmith's anvil, try their hand at throwing a spear using a woomera, churn cream to make butter, discover how a cam shaft works on a model gold stamper, wind up the old Edison gramophone and dance to music from the 1920s amongst other things. There is also plenty to see such as the mock-up of an old kitchen, bedroom and parlour, Wiradjuri artefacts, traction engines, old harness, farm machinery that actually works when you push a button.....the list goes on and on!

Through discovering these precious old artefacts in the Museum, the children are able to compare and go some way to appreciating just how their great grandparents and ancestors may have lived. It is exciting to see the looks on the children's faces when they handle the old phones and compare them to their own mobile phones, or when they get down and dirty scrubbing washing and realise what difference electricity made to daily life! Hopefully these activities will spark curiosity in the children and encourage them to question and think about their lives today compared to the past and to life in other parts of the world today.

The Golden Memories Museum has a special focus on the history of rural life and with the opening of the new buildings later in 2015 there will be a focus on Australian inventions that greatly changed the way we live and work.



So far in 2014 we have had over 800 children visit the Museum on school visits from Blayney, Millthorpe, Heritage Schools, Calare, and St Mary's School, Orange, as well as education visits from Girl Guides, Vacation Care and tertiary students of Museum Studies.

The Education Committee tries to link in their school excursions with the National Curriculum and with the current studies at each school. For Lower Primary we offer a focus on "The way people used to Live and Changes in community." For middle primary the vast array of old Museum machines provides a great resource to look at "Simple Machines".

There are plenty of examples of wheels, axles, levers, gears, wedges, pulleys, inclined planes and screws to be easily seen and used.

For the Upper Primary years the Museum has catered for schools studying Wiradjuri culture, the effect of World War 1 on a small community, and "gold" with many artefacts from old ways of mining gold to the modern day Cadia mine, not forgetting, of course, the history of the role of our very own locals, Tom and Lister, in the discovery of the first payable gold deposit at Ophir!

We also have regular visits from All Saints High school Year 9 Geography group who visit Millthorpe to study factors that have changed a small rural community over time. The students are able to view the vast photographic collection of Millthorpe at the Museum and compare the uses of various buildings over a 100 year time span.

For High School agriculture students, the Museum can offer an incredible collection of home movies filmed in the 1950s around Millthorpe of farm activities such as pea and potato farming, and dam building, as well as the great collection in the Rural Technology Museum.



A minimal fee per child is charged with teachers and supervising adults free. All children are given a “free return voucher” to visit the Museum again with their family. Teachers intending to bring a class are encouraged to organise a visit prior to the class coming so that the Education Committee can tailor the excursion to meet their needs and provide any resources or activities to prepare the children for the visit. Teachers fill out an evaluation form after their visit which helps the Education Committee improve the service that it can offer.

As with all voluntary groups, the Education Committee has many plans for the future which have to be tempered by the limitations of time and volunteer numbers. We would like to be involved, in collaboration with local schools, in getting children to record a sort of “Who’s been living in my House?” for their own house! There may also be opportunities to use the wonderful resources of the Millthorpe Museum for children to produce their own historical videos, take part in “dress-up” re-enactments, create artworks.....

The Education Committee of the Millthorpe Museum is always looking for more volunteers to help with its programs. Please contact them through the Museum email or keep in touch via the Millthorpe Golden Memories Museum web page.

Judy Hill
Education Committee

Then and Now

Millthorpe’s Industrial Heritage

We sometimes, when meandering down our quiet streets with their rural outlook, forget that Millthorpe has quite an industrial heritage. As a railhead in the nineteenth century value adding on local products for sale not only to the immediate local area but for transport to Sydney and beyond impacted on employment and infrastructure.



Products such as “Waratah” flour from the enormous Great Western Flour Mill, butter, bacon and cream from the Millthorpe Butter and Bacon Co-operative, wagons and sulkies from Wenban Carriage works not to mention a jam factory, boot making factory and a number of blacksmiths made Millthorpe famous.

Alongside the factories were stonemasons, miners, fencing teams, bricklayers, carpenters, railway gangs and the many industries associated with the surrounding rural area. All these have left a legacy of buildings and industrial artifacts often just below the surface of our everyday lives.