



Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

MUSEUM

Cnr Stuart & Myocum Streets MULLUMBIMBY 2482

OPEN: FRIDAY 10 AM – 12 PM

MARKET DAY (3RD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH) 9 AM-1 PM

NEWSLETTER

Dec 2012/Jan 2013

MUSEUM NEWS

Special Reminders



No General Meeting in January.

No Newsletter in January.

Membership fees are now due for 2013

Adults \$15 each, Students \$5 each. Extra \$5 if you wish the newsletter to be posted to you.

Payment can be made by

(1) Cheque or postal order - Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

OR (2) Direct Deposit. BSB: 032583 A/c No. 201192.

Please include your name/s for identification.

Merry Christmas & **HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Museum holiday opening times

Please note: The museum will be closed after Friday 21st December 2012 and reopen Tuesday 8th January 2013. Nortec participants will man the doors Tuesdays to Thursdays from 8th January during the January school holiday period. Fridays will be manned from 11th January by BVHS members.

Special thank you to all who have helped with the museum this year. It has been a very productive year and your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Mullumbimby Music Festival

On the Saturday afternoon of the music festival the funtastic magic bus and its hostess, Mae Wilde, delivered about 40 people to their secret destination featuring a mystery guest artist. The museum was delighted to be the host for the duo Victoriana Gaye— great entertainers.



The magic bus and its occupants who did a quick tour through the museum then out to the back of the shed for the mystery act.



Mae Wilde, the mystery tour hostess, entertains the crowd



Vicki and Jeff enjoyed playing at the secret gig location

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

This newsletter is written by and
for the members of the BVHS

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Committee Members:
Sadie Mudge
Jennifer Elward
David Roupell
Market Co-ordinators:
Gordon Wright
Rusty Selvey
Newsletter team:
Susan Tsicalas & Work
Experience Participants
Public Officer: Susan Tsicalas

All members are invited to contribute to this newsletter

*Please leave material with Sarah or
Liz
Tues Wed Thur 10 am - 2 pm.
Or email to:
bvhs@tridentcommunications.com.au

NEXT MEETING
Thursday 7th February
2013 1.00 pm
See you there!

*Deadline for agenda items
Wednesday 6th February 2013.

MUSEUM HOURS
Friday 10am - 12pm
Market Saturday 9am - 1pm

BVHS Newsletter is produced
by NORTEC Work Experience
Participants and BVHS Inc.



December/January Quiz - Jumbled Cakes

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Nobbir | 5. Tulsnaa | 9. Malginton | 13. Maerc Sffup |
| 2. Geonsp | 6. Ocfefe | 10. Dees | 14. Rogane |
| 3. Etad | 7. Sinten | 11. Elbram | 15. Dunop |
| 4. Sairni | 8. Eahretf | 12. Hcrtsisam | |

Answers to November's Fruit & Vegetable Quiz

- | | | | |
|------------|-------------|----------------|------------|
| 1. Marrow | 5. Sage | 9. Chilli | 13. Swede |
| 2. Grape | 6. Currant | 10. Thyme | 14. Carrot |
| 3. Sprout | 7. Celery | 11. Strawberry | 15. Beet |
| 4. Lettuce | 8. Mushroom | 12. Orange | 16. Leek |

Claytons Depression

In Dec30 Arnold **Chew** stood down from the mayoralty to give Fred **Frost** a run, the fresh leadership team of Frost and **Starr** then getting off to a shaky start in the ensuing debate over the estimates for 1931. Deputy Alfred Starr, supported in his thrifty stance by Bill **Bryant**, who had just sold his cordial business to Alf's son Earl, *was opposed to any increase in the rate whatever. He did not see how the town could stand an extra burden. Everybody had their backs against the wall. People are receiving extra taxes from Municipal, State and Federal. The men laboring for Council and elsewhere have now got to find 1/- in the £ instead of 3d* (the new rate for the Unemployment Relief Tax, payable by anyone earning more than £2/wk). *The only way to save would be by reducing the staff.... The Mayor (Ald Frost) said he was not in favour of increases, but in view of the state of the overdraft Council must do something to reduce it.... Ald **Arnold** said... Values of land were coming down and so should the rates....* In the end they compromised with a decision to relieve the burden on the Municipality's 280 ratepayers by requesting the Minister to reduce the rate of repayment of the £18,000 hydro scheme loan by 1½d in the £, while increasing the rates to allow ½d to be set aside as a sinking fund against Council's overdraft.

They also applied for another Unemployment Relief Grant, but it arrived too late to brighten up Christmas for the layabouts, who probably weren't amongst the new record crowd enjoying the beach at Bruns. The £100 grant arrived in Jan31 and was ...*expended on water tables in the municipality, 10 men each week to be employed and the foreman (Charlie **Withers**) to have power to dismiss any man if he considers him to be inefficient....* At the same time Town Clerk **Inch** delivered the exciting news that there was still £300/18/6 in rates outstanding from 1929 and £428/15/2 from 1930, in addition to the recalcitrant electrical consumers owing £698/11/- from 1929 and £622/8/1 for 1930 (inclusive of installation and running costs.) Further cost cutting in Feb31 saw the sacking of Poundkeeper H.G. **Bayfield** and Impounding Officer J. **Gallen**.

Land values and the Unemployment Relief Tax were also subjects occupying the PPU, but in Feb31 the Central Executive advised no luck in lobbying Lang's Bolsheviks for a change in the basis for applying the tax, their argument ...*that the Unemployment Relief Tax should be based on current income instead of that for the previous year...* falling on deaf ears. President **Lee** said that the PPU was definitely opposed to any reduction in values of land.... *Speakers from the Tweed end nearly went mad at the suggestion and said that if any reduction in the values of land were made the banks would be closing on them immediately.... Mr **Cochrane** moved that the Union consider the approval of Norco financing the purchase of stock for approved suppliers.... Mr **Graham** said the Company already did it with cream runs....* But Mr Lee ...*reminded the meeting that Norco was not a registered money*

lender (and a week later, wearing his new second hat as Vice-President of the Tweed District Council, rejected the Mullum agenda item, mainly on the grounds that it would be a wasted effort as Norco was struggling to economise just like everyone else.)

In Mar31 Mr J.P. **Walker** accompanied by a car load of other men from Mullumbimby and district intends making the journey to Lismore this morning to be present at the meeting of protest against the iniquitous double edged Unemployment Relief Tax of the Lang Government. Seemingly the various public bodies in Mullumbimby are too lethargic to raise their voices in any protest. - Apart from the local branch of the PPU... - no public action has been taken.... If any portion of the money collected here were being expended in Mullumbimby things would not be so bad, but.... The present depression has exposed how utterly dependent the city is on the country and it is time every country town and village raised its voice in united protest against the financial doom it is being hurled towards. (Six hundred aggravated people attended the meeting convened by Mayor Ross of Lismore, an ex-Mullum storekeeper, brother-in-law of ex-Labor Mayor **Hollingworth** and initiator of the historic resolution to stir the State into petitioning the Governor to sack Lang's Laborites. In Apr31 Mayor **Frost** convened the Mullum meeting which approved the action and duly sent off the petition, despite 5 vocal Labor dissenters led by Catholics George and Ernest Hollis **Neath**.)

The Mullum PPU was also pursuing the Byron Shire Council ...regarding the (electrical) loan rate of ½d in the £ on UCV, which was still being imposed, although it was understood that the loan had been paid off. Byron Shire Council at its meeting last week, instructed the Clerk to inform the branch that owing to a big reduction in revenue, the Council was forced to levy the rate again this year. It was pointed out that the loan rate was levied for 10 years. That time had not yet elapsed and the revenue from this source for the year was earmarked for a reduction of the overdraft. (After much expended effort, lawyer's advice, a campaign urging civil disobedience, and a court case, they gave up and accepted the magistrate's ruling that the council was legally, if not morally, virtuous.) On behalf of the Huonbrook farmers, the PPU was also pressing the broke Council for £250 to complete the road work started under an earlier Unemployment Relief Grant, a job left half done when the money ran out. (The Shire had applied for a hand out of £2340 in Aug30, but only got £1500.)

In the meantime the swaggies were ...still making regular calls at the Police Station. In fact, nowadays Sergt **Biddle** has the greater part of his time taken up attending to them. Thirty arrived in a bunch yesterday evening (11Feb31) at about 5.30. During the last month something approaching two hundred and fifty people have collected the dole in Mullumbimby..., the majority probably transients seeking 'Track Rations.' At the same time the local unemployed probably made up the majority of those receiving charity: ...Many cases of distress are known to exist in town, and The Town Clerk (Mr C.S. **Inch**) will gladly accept gifts of left off clothing, etc., at the Council Chambers, which he will undertake to distribute to anyone making application for same.... 'Dole Fraud' was also on the increase, along with the sinners mispending their dole tickets on tobacco and such. By Jun31 Recipients of the dole at present in the Mullumbimby district (probably meaning the 'Police Patrol District'), comprise fifty, half of whom are travellers. The cost per week averages about £30. Last week it amounted to £34, but with the 25 percent increase (in the weekly ration pack), the cost will be in the vicinity of £40 odd.

(For comparison, Casino, which was on the verge of overtaking Lismore for the honour of hosting the biggest unemployment pool in the region, issued 2496 food coupons to 841 men during May31 at a cost of £1359. Unemployment there seems to have peaked in Sep31 with the issue of 3341 meal tickets, at which time there were guesstimated to be up to 1500 camped around town, two thirds under canvas at Carrington Park and the rest under bridges and various other digs, one third of whom were women and children. Lismore seems to have peaked in Jun31 with 1162 registered unemployed on the books, 85% of whom were locals, and in Jun33 was the first municipality outside Sydney to sign up for the work-for-the dole scheme.)

The diet improvement was accompanied by a Catch 22 when the Dept of Labour and Industry tightened the dole eligibility criteria in Jun31: Charitable assistance of any kind is to be taken into consideration by dole inspectors when assessing the fortnightly income of those applying for the dole.... Any person who is unemployed for more than 14 days, and has been registered at the State Labour Exchanges for at least seven days, is eligible to apply for relief. The question as to whether he can receive food relief will depend upon the circumstances of the case.... All applicants holding bank accounts including some on fixed deposits, are excluded from the issue of food relief. A person who is the registered owner of a motor car or cycle is not eligible..., and on and on. 'Permissible Income' was ...20/- for a single man, 40/- for a married man and wife with one child, 50/- for a married couple with two or three children....

Lang's weight watchers had increased the value of the weekly ration pack by 25%, from 4/9½d to 5/10d for a single

bloke, which now provided him with 3 loaves of bread, 4lbs of meat, 4ozs of tea, 1lb of sugar, 12ozs of jam, 1lb of condensed milk, ¾lb of butter, quarter bar of soap, and ½lb of Cheese, while a childless couple went from 7/6½d to 9/5d, giving them 4 loaves of bread, 4½lbs of meat, 6ozs of tea, 2lbs of sugar, 24ozs of jam, 1lb of condensed milk, ¾lb of butter, half a bar of soap, 3½ pints of milk, ½lb of cheese, 3lbs of potatoes, 1lb of onions, 1lb of prunes, and 1lb of oatmeal, with amounts increasing proportional to the number of children. And following the dairy lobbyists success in getting butter onto the ration scale, in Jul31 the BGF unselfishly proposed bananas as a worthy nutritional supplement, reasoning *...that, with 25,000 families on the dole, at least one dozen bananas per week would be consumed by each family. Each case holds approximately 25 dozen bananas, so that 1000 cases per week could be utilised....*

Accommodating the dole bludgers got attention from the PPU in Aug31 when Secretary Les **Lindsay** introduced the matter of housing the travelling unemployed. At present there was no shelter, only that on private property, and suggested the drill hall be utilised. At this time the Federal Dept of Works was advertising the place for lease, but the meeting decided to request Green MHR to intercede with the Dept of Defence. A week later Ald **Bryant**... was not in favour of the proposal, inasmuch as there were private houses all round the hall and school children were passing the place all day long. Ald **Chew** contended it would be an awful thing to object to giving the unemployed a little shelter. Where, he asked, could the unemployed camp in this town, if not at the drill hall?... Ald Bryant said he was in no way opposed to giving the unemployed shelter, but he did not consider the drill hall was a suitable site for such shelter. The discussion was dropped.... But at a meeting of the Agricultural Society in Sep31 after The president (J.A. **Walker**) reported that the buildings and fences at the Show Grounds were being damaged considerably by the unemployed camped there..., Mr Les Lindsay outlined what the PPU had already done in connection with having the Drill Hall made available.... It was pointed out that the big pavilion had been broken open and the electric light was being used by the campers. If the pavilion could be boarded up, it was felt that it would mean an ultimate saving to fences etc on the grounds, as they would then lose their attraction for the campers....

The Star never reported the outcome for either 5 star motel, but it seems the vandals decided to move on, as implied the following week when Mullumbimby was invaded on Tuesday afternoon (8Sep31). Fifteen young men, who had "jumped the rattler," at Byron Bay had their joy ride cut short at Mullumbimby when the goods train arrived here about half past five. They were ordered to alight. Reverses have evidently made them take everything philosophically - the good with the bad. As they were lined up before the Sergeant, thinking they were going to be arrested, and not really caring very much whether they were or not, one inquired good naturedly of the Sergeant, "what sort of a cook he had at the lock up' and another just as flippantly inquired, "whether the quarters were good." However, after being warned the travellers, who, with their swags strapped to their shoulders averred they were on their way to Queensland to look for work, were allowed to disperse. (Sgt **Biddle** wasn't so lenient a month later when he charged 5 blokes with 'jumping the rattler', but to his chagrin had to feed and water them for 2hrs after they elected to book into his lockup in lieu of paying the magistrate's 5/- fine.)



Mayor Fred and Mayoress Alice (nee Golden) Frost with Governor Game 24Sep1931.

[Mayor Frost was probably tempted to breach protocol and discuss the Mullum petition to sack Premier Lang and the Bolsheviks, which Sir Philip enacted on 13May32.]

Two weeks later Governor Game turned up to tell the Mullumites they were living in the land of milk and honey, and at the civic reception at the School of Arts reckoned *...it was much too fine a day to talk about "depression."* He did not think they suffered much from it up here. There was no REAL shortage of anything. It was just a question of distribution, and if we could not solve that we did not deserve to emerge from it..., was his contribution to the economic debate before heading off to the bowling green to play *...his first game of bowls since coming to Australia, and thoroughly enjoyed it.* Other than a pep talk to the school kids there appeared to be no great reason for the visit apart from introducing himself as the new standard bearer for the British Government.

By Peter Tsicalas