



NEWSLETTER  
February 2014

Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc.

# MUSEUM

Cnr Myokum & Stuart Streets MULLUMBIMBY 2482

OPEN: FRIDAY 10 AM – 12 PM

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

## MUSEUM NEWS

In 2014 come in and say



and check out your museum.

### REMINDERS

**Membership fees are due for 2014. Thanks to those who have renewed.**



Please see the form attached.

**Monthly meeting** – 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month at **3.00pm**

**Acquisition meeting** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at **3.00pm** *Please note the time changes.*

### 2013 SUCCESSES

1. BVHS Inc received a Museums & Galleries NSW Small VIM Grant to have the large Byron Shire Map hanging in the hallway assessed and repaired by a paper conservator in Brisbane.
2. Peter Tsicalas's 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> books sold out over Christmas requiring reprints. They are now in stock if you are after a copy.

### MULLUMBIMBY COMMUNITY MARKET UPDATE

Our market manager of last year, Rusty Selvey, has had to step down from the market manager position as his business demands more of his time and he was reluctant to carry on when he couldn't give our market the full attention it required.

Luckily, new managers have stepped up to the plate and Kim Pedersen who was in training is now joined by Sarah Newsome and together they will make a great team batting for us.

Please give them and BVHS Inc support by visiting the market. It will be 25 years old in June. We are planning a special market to celebrate the fine work carried out by past members and managers to get us to this point.

### SPRING CLEAN

Over a period we have acquired quite a few items that are not relevant to our collection, but as we already hold good examples of them, or they are beyond our repair skills, we have decided it's time to have a clean out. We tried a stall at the market with some success but now have opened both Ebay and Paypal accounts so that we can have exposure to a wider audience. So far we have sold 3 items. Big thanks to Sean for assessing, monitoring on Ebay and sending them to their new owners.



## Death of the School of Arts

At a committee meeting in Mar50 President Hedley **Hungerford** said that *the town has outgrown the existing building... given that, in the last five years, the population had grown from 1400 to 2,100 and 115 new dwellings had gone up. District population had also increased greatly...*, and to cope with it all he was able to report 3mths later that *With the relaxation of building controls, the prospect of an early start on vital improvements and extensions of the Mullumbimby School of Arts is bright....* The extensions will increase seating capacity from 450 to 720 and *With the additional floor space it should then be possible to introduce cabaret-style social functions, which would be a welcome change to the present style with everyone seated rather stiffly around the walls or standing at the doorways....*

At the AGM in Jul50 Treasurer Len **Bourne** reported assets of £7511/16/8 and no liabilities other than £50 owed to the Bank on NSW..., while Mr **Hungerford** said that *the improvement in the financial position during the year had not been brought about by appeals for public support, but as a result of dances and other functions held by the committee....* And now with the lifting of building restrictions, *the incoming committee would be in a position to submit plans to the Council and instruct the architect (Mr F.J. Board) to call tenders....*

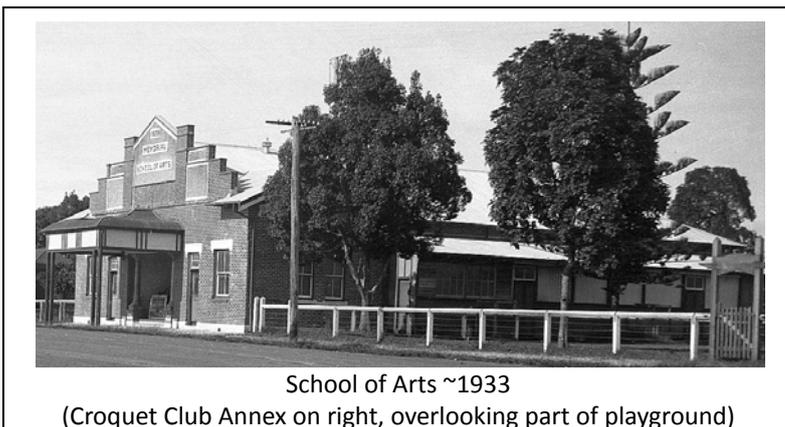
Further good news was a profit of £32, against a loss of £21 the previous year..., and the best money spinner continued to be the weekly dances, while revenue from renting the hall came in at £213. Only £11 was expended on new books, which was considerably less than in 1949. On the other hand, subscriptions for the year just passed, £52/11/3, was the lowest figure for 10 years..., and presented a puzzling new paradigm given the big population gain and increasing prosperity. Fred **Uren**, ex-Headmaster of Byron Bay Public School and the new owner of Ward's Emporium, advocated throwing open a free library service to the whole population, rather than simply catering for the current passive membership of 85.

*Election of officers resulted: Committee, Messrs J.C. Cummings, A. Snow, T.A. Young, E. Everitt, C. Lindsay, R.J. Lindsay, F.R. Harkness, J.A. Bower, L.J. Bourne, K.C. Richardson, H. Hungerford, F. Uren; President, Mr H. Hungerford; vice-presidents, Messrs K.C. Richardson, F. Uren; secretary, Mr A. Snow; treasurer, Mr L.J. Bourne....* A few months later they learnt that even though the weekly dances continued to make a profit, attendance was falling off, while boppers were crowding out the Byron Bay venues, particularly the bacchanals at the Seabreeze Cabaret, aided and abetted by Sheaffe's bus service.

On 6Jan51 Hedley **Hungerford** said that *Members of my Committee are coming to the conclusion that no one is interested in the proposed extension to and alterations to the School of Arts building, and that the public support given to the institution is so poor that we will not be warranted in proceeding any further with the proposed improvements.... During the past year the dances have not been patronised. Very little revenue has been raised and it now looks as if the revenue from dances can be discounted. This leaves only the revenue from letting of the hall, which is only about sufficient to cover normal running costs....*

*In view of this, the committee has now to consider very seriously whether it will be justified in borrowing money which there is no certainty it will be able to repay.... If the proposed work was carried out the town would have a hall..., second to none of its kind on the Coast.... It is proposed to start the weekly dances in the new year and see whether any better support is given. If not, the dances will be discontinued and the committee will abandon all ideas of proceeding with the extensions....*

*At a meeting of the School of Arts committee last night (5Feb51) it was decided to defer indefinitely the proposal to build additions on the existing structure.... The committee decided that the Friday night dances should be continued for one month, and if greater support was not given to these functions, they will be discontinued..., while 46yr old Ted **Everitt** conducted a poll to find which of the various orchestras in the district captivates the interest of the people who attend the weekly Friday night dances.*



In Jun51 President **Hungerford** again reported that *the institution's regular dances were being poorly patronised. The change to fortnightly non-stop dances had not proved attractive. The meetings agreed to temporarily abandon the functions and review the matter at the end of the ball season....* And at the AGM 6wks later he reported that *Revenue from dances dropped from £426 to £207... and the income from membership subscriptions was only £65, so the extensions are on the indefinitely postponed list, but recommended that the building reserve fund be continued....*

At the AGM in Aug52 Treasurer **Bourne** blamed the financial deterioration on *the increase in the librarian's fees and additional lighting and insurance costs...*, and advised that the £2326 invested in savings certificates and loan bonds may be called upon in the coming year for badly needed maintenance, including the removal of the front awning posts as per Council directive. (The new cantilever arrangement was completed in Jul53 at a cost of £392). Library expenditure, including £70 on the acquisition new books, exceeded income by £72. J.A. **Bower**, who had conducted weekly euchre tournaments for eight years, was singled out in the general thanks to the helpers. And at the elections the only change was banker Dave **Owens** replacing transferred banker Ken **Richardson** as vice-president.

In Nov52 they wrote to Council proposing a free municipal library scheme as *They were anxious to provide the people*

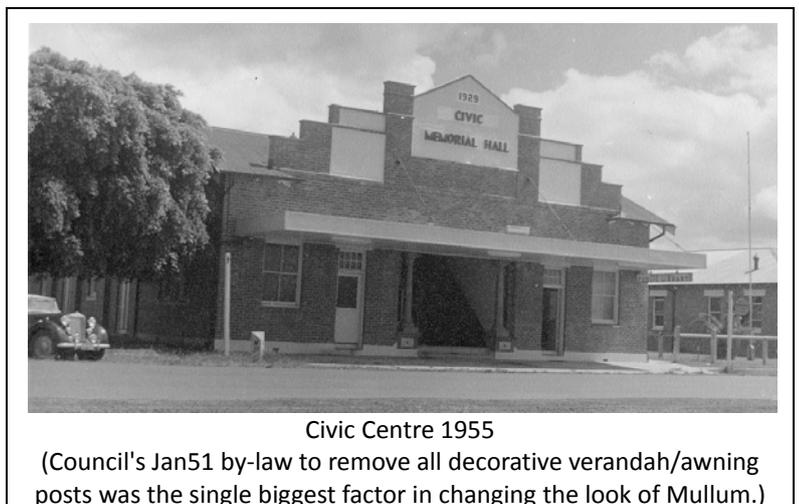
of the district with a better service and better books. Council reacted 6mths later and arranged the visit of the secretary of the Library Board of NSW, who explained that the State Government would subsidise a free library £ for £ to a maximum of £150, but the council would be required to contribute the extent of ¼d in the £ ucv or 1/- per head of population, whichever was the greater.... But despite the hearty endorsements from a few prominent personalities the aldermen were indecisive.

At a meeting in May53 the Committeemen felt that public interest in the institution had been lost and that as the committee was unable to replenish the library with new books the change would be a wise one..., forcing the Council in Aug53 to agreed to take over the School of Arts hall as from January 1, 1954. The council will take the necessary steps to establish a free library using the facilities of the present School of Arts library. The move is being made at the request of the present School of Arts Committee which had advised that it was uneconomical to carry on the institution under the present conditions....

Mayor **Smith** said he was sorry to see the present situation come about, but "It is due to the apathy of the general public.... I appreciate the offer of the present committee to act for council in the management of the building."... The Mayor said he would like to see the name "School of Arts" eliminated. He suggested that when it became the council's property the name should be changed to Memorial Civic Hall....

In Jul53 Hedley **Hungerford** informed the public that For sometime past the committee has realised that it is impossible to maintain the library satisfactorily under the existing conditions (of no income).... I might mention that, owing to the rising costs and lack of public support... we decided not to proceed with the extensions to the hall and supper room.... Very little interest has been evinced in the affairs of the institution by the public of Mullumbimby and District generally and for a long time now just a handful of men have been left to carry on as best they could, and this lack of public interest and support has been very disheartening.... Generally speaking, the annual meeting has in the past only been attended by Committeemen.... If the same thing happens again this year, it will mean that the subscribers and public generally do not have any interest at all.... The AGM on 27Jul53 approved the library plan and re-elected the same committee, but the report made no mention of how many fronted.

After a discussion which at times became heated, Mullumbimby Municipal Council on Tuesday night (3Nov53), directed the town clerk, Mr L.J. **Bourne**, to take the necessary steps to bring the Public Library Act into operation in Mullumbimby. The only dissident from the motion, Ald E. **Neath**, asked that his vote be placed on record.... Council was in receipt of a letter from the Memorial School of Arts Committee in which it advised that the librarian, Mrs C. **Ainsworth**, had tendered her resignation.... A special committee comprising the Mayor, Ald W.E. **Smith**, and Aids **Walsh** and **Sheaffe** was appointed to control the changeover... to a free public library wef 1Jan54 when a subsidy will be made available by the State Library Board....



In Dec53 the School of Arts Committee disbanded and reformed as a temporary 'advisory committee', deciding that all money in its working account be used for the purchase of new books, while the Council decided to demolish the caretaker's cottage (Mrs **Ainsworth's** digs) and incorporate the site into the public park and send a council employee, Miss **McDonald**, off to Sydney to do a Librarian's course. By Mar54 all books in the new 'Civic Centre' Library had been thoroughly checked and 800 or 900 which were held to be of no further use were destroyed. A large number of other volumes were under repair.... More than 2000 books have been catalogued and placed on the shelves.... It is hoped that a further £200 worth of books supplied by the State Library Board will arrive in time for the opening....

The opening of the free Municipal library in the former Mullumbimby School of Arts was a big step forward for the district, speakers claimed when the opening function was performed by Mr H. **Hungerford** on Tuesday night (23Mar54).... As a mark of appreciation for his work during his 18 years as president of the School of Arts Committee, the Mayor, Ald W.E. **Smith**, presented Mr Hungerford with a book entitled "The Viking of Van Diemen's Land," written by Frank Clune and P.R. Stephensen..., a new best-seller hot off the press.

## Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

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

Cnr Myokum & Stuart Sts  
Mullumbimby  
P.O. Box 378 Mullumbimby 2482  
**02 6684 4367**  
bvhs84@yahoo.com.au  
[www.mullumbimbymuseum.org.au](http://www.mullumbimbymuseum.org.au)  
Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/MullumbimbyMuseum](http://www.facebook.com/MullumbimbyMuseum)

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Sarah Newsome  
Committee Members:  
Sadie Mudge  
Jennifer Elward  
David Roupell

Market Managers::  
Kim Pedersen  
Sarah Newsome

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 6th February 2014 1.00 pm**  
**See you there!**

\*Deadline for agenda items  
Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

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

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



Mr **Hungerford** said that of 3000 books in the School of Arts library (at the time of the decision to hand the place to the Council), 700 had been destroyed and many others had been sold. The committee had also handed over the School of Arts hall to the council control after struggling for many years to raise funds for its extension....

Mayor **Smith** said the School of Arts had proved an uneconomic institution for a number of years and the town had been fortunate to have a body of men to carry it on despite the difficulties.... Parents and Citizens' Association President, Mr F.M. **Uren**, said he believed the library would serve a great need in the Municipality... and expressed the hope that Byron Shire would come into the scheme.... [On 8Jun54 A plan to link 'A' and 'E' Ridings of Byron Shire with the Mullumbimby Free Library scheme was proposed by Cr R. **James** (of 'A' Riding - Mullum district) at Tuesday's meeting of the (Byron) council..., supported by Cr **Mott** of 'E' Riding (Bruns district), but Clerk **Brownell** said such splitting of the shire would be contrary to the provisions of the Local Govt Act.]

In Oct54 the new Advisory Committee held its first meeting with Hedley **Hungerford** as Chairman and Arthur **Snow** as Secretary. Statistics presented revealed a library membership of 310 adults, 268 juniors and 38 Shire subscribers, and 2772 books on the shelves. *Book issues since March: Adult non-fiction 1863, fiction 4196, junior non-fiction 436, fiction 3095, easy 1365. Sub-committees were elected as follows: Library, Messrs D. **Owens**, C. **Cummings** and T. **Young**; Hall, Messrs H. **Eakin**, H. **Banner** and C. **Lindsay**....* They recommended that Council purchase metal lettering (11" high) reading "Civic Memorial Hall" for £47/15/-, and acquire 100 new steel-framed padded seats at a cost £350.

In Nov54 the Council announced that *Civic centre buildings planned by Mullumbimby Municipal Council may cost up to £15,000. The buildings... are designed to include extensions to the Municipal Free Library and the Civic Hall supper room, a new electricity showroom and a colonnade connecting the showroom and the library. The council also envisages a longer range programme aimed at enlarging and providing a new front for the Civic hall.... The council has about £2000 in hand from the former School of Arts Committee reserve fund....*  
Peter Tsicalas



**BRUNSWICK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.**  
**MUSEUM**

PO Box 378 MULLUMBIMBY NSW 2482  
Email: [bvhs84@yahoo.com.au](mailto:bvhs84@yahoo.com.au) Phone: 6684 4367

### RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP 2014

ANNUAL FEES	PAYMENT OPTIONS	
Adults \$15 Students \$5 Printed mailed copy of newsletter \$5 p.a.	<i>Cheque/postal order payable to:</i> Brunswick Valley Historical Society Inc	<i>Direct deposit</i> BSB: 032 583 Account No.: 201192 Reference: Your name/s

Please indicate how you wish to receive a newsletter:

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