

S P R I N G 2 0 1 4

the Memory Bank

Quarterly Newsletter of the Millthorpe & District Historical Society

The President Writes

Our present major project 'The Trevor Pascoe Pavilion' is coming along really well. The concrete tilt panels making up the western fireproof walls are in place, the concrete floor is down and the steelwork for the posts and trusses have been erected.

The Pea Viner has been moved to its permanent location and once displayed will be in a shed together with all the other pea growing machinery.

Plans are well under way for the interior of the pavilion. It is to feature Australian inventions that made a huge difference to agricultural, industrial and domestic life worldwide. We have eighteen such items and machines in various sections of the museum and these will be assembled in the one area with many other inventions featured with photos and written stories. Other areas of the pavilion will be taken up with the museum office, a work area for assembling various displays and another area to be used as a temporary exhibition space.

The aim is to have the building finished with an official opening on Saturday, 21st November 2015 coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the opening of the first museum building, The Good Templars Hall, which was opened by The Hon. Charles Cutler on 20th November 1965.

Peter Whiley
President



Feature Column



The Millthorpe Museum has in its care an important collection of Aboriginal artifacts. These items have been donated to the museum over many years. The collection on display constitutes only those Wiradjuri items that are permitted to be displayed.

In addition there is a considerable collection of Aboriginal objects in storage at the request of the Wiradjuri Elders as they are not Wiradjuri relics.

These objects will be displayed when space can be found to do so. At present they are available to view on request.

Research and Display – Aboriginal Heritage

In 2006 the Millthorpe and District Historical Society through member, Elaine Kaldy, took on as a project the recording and displaying of the museum's considerable collection of Aboriginal items.

After much research and with the assistance of Warren Summerville, the Australian Museum and the Power House Museum's Aboriginal Heritage Office and James Wilson Miller, Elaine created a comprehensive document that listed, photographed and described all the museum's Aboriginal objects.

On the advice of James Wilson Miller, Elaine then asked the advice of the Local Aboriginal Land Council as to the actual identification of the objects. This resulted in some five objects being identified as important ceremonial relics. Two items were identified as being 'Women's Business' with three being 'Men's Business' one of which was extremely important. A request was made by the Elders not to photograph these relics and that the relics be put away from view in covered boxes marked to indicate that women may only view the women's ceremonial relics and men only those that were ceremonial to men and that the relic that was used by Elders for extreme punishment be boxed separately. The museum through Elaine has continued to add to an Aboriginal Relics document by including Aboriginal objects that have been recently donated.



Grant and collaboration

In late 2007, Elaine approached the Museums and Galleries NSW to seek \$5,000 as grant funding for a planned display of the Aboriginal objects. This needed the Co-Operation of the Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council. After many meetings and discussions with James Williams and other Elders from Dubbo, the present Wiradjuri Dreaming display was planned and developed.



The final plans presented for funding to Museums and Galleries NSW was successful. The opening day on the 9th May 2009, was attended by important Wiradjuri Elder Aunty Eileen, the then State MP Mr G Martin, Mr Morgan a well known Aboriginal Didgeridoo Player and The Magic Ladies Aboriginal dance group along with an enthusiastic audience of some thirty people.

The Display

The display is formed of two punishment spears, a fishing spear and a long ceremonial spear. A time line banner tells the story of the local Wiradjuri people and their laws, along with early white settlement problems and government laws. One show case is devoted to boomerangs, stone axes, a woomera and trade implements. The other showcase is devoted to ceremonial items including ochre and stones such as Cherte, used to create implements involved in initiation of young men.



In addition there is also a selection of women's food gathering baskets such as coolamons, along with grinding stones used to grind seeds and other foods. Also featured are women's trade goods such as shell necklaces from the coastal areas as well as an interactive presentation. Two of the baskets were created using tradition grass weaving by a now Sorry Person and are a very important part of the collection on display (SORRY for Aboriginal's means the person has died and therefore their name is not spoken).

The final part of the Display is a very large original painting of water and the local Aboriginal totem a Tortoise, by well known Aboriginal Painter Nathan Peckworth. His painting was created in one day when Nathan was the museum's guest. At the end of the day he presented the painting to the museum.



THE SAMPLER

One of the more unusual items in our museum is a small, shriveled up item that appears to be an apple under glass. That is in fact what it is!

The apple, from 1850, was possibly one of the first picked from a tree on the property of William and Lucy Unwin, early pioneers of the Millthorpe district. It represents the beginning of apple production in the area.

The apple was allowed to dry on the tree, then picked and kept away from the air. It was retained by the family for many years before being donated to the museum in 1965.

An interesting aspect is that the seeds still rattle inside.

The Trevor Pascoe Pavilion

