

S P R I N G 2 0 1 5

the Memory Bank

Quarterly Newsletter of the Millthorpe & District Historical Society

The President Writes

Spring is almost with us, and the opening of the Trevor Pascoe Pavilion is fast approaching. This is planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Good Templars Hall, the first building of the Golden Memories Museum. From humble beginnings we can now proudly boast a total of nine buildings, all uniquely different housing a wonderful collection of Millthorpe memorabilia, covering many aspects of life in the 1800s and early 1900s. All this would not have been possible without the foresight, hard work and commitment of many former and current members over the past 50 years. We can also be justly proud that "The Millthorpe and District Historical Society" own and operate the whole complex, which is now complete, as there is no room for anymore buildings!! We are looking forward to Dick Smith coming to officially open the new building on the 28th November. It should be a fun day, with free admission to all buildings, BBQ lunch, morning and afternoon teas, and much more. I thank the members of the Golden Memories Museum for electing me President as we celebrate 50 years of the museum, and look forward to the future as we continue to honour our pioneering ancestors.



Save the Date!

28th November 2015

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF
TREVOR PASCOE PAVILION**

The history and development of our Museum

Formation of Historical Society

In 1964 the Millthorpe & District Historical Society was formed at a special meeting of the Millthorpe Progress Association. The first premises were leased in Hockey's Chemist in Park Street. The plan was then to find or build new premises. The new society adopted as its motto 'Linking The Past With The Future'.

Opening of the old Good Templars Hall

In 1965 the Good Templars Hall was purchased by the Historical Society for 750 pounds from the Methodist Church. On the 20th November 1965, following extensive working bees, the museum was opened by Charles Cutler MLA.

Closure & Purchase of the Convent School

On the 30th November 1970 the Roman Catholic Convent School closed. It was purchased by the Historical Society in 1970 and converted into the Pioneers Gallery exhibiting many portraits of the early pioneers of the district who arrived from various parts of the world in the 1850s.

Blacksmith's shop erected

In 1977 the blacksmith's shop was built from donated material and volunteer labour mainly by Joe Van der Stock. It has proved of great interest over the years with school groups, bus tours and special days.



From Methodist Church Hall to Machinery Shed

The old Methodist Church Hall behind the Good Templars Hall was reputed to come from Cobar. Over the years it decayed and the site was developed firstly by the Davis Brothers who added the skillions on either side and used it as a potato grading and storage shed. The Historical Society purchased the site in 1995 converting it into the Museum of Agricultural Progress and Rural Technology and later into the Museum of Rural Technology. The wonderful collection housed in this large space includes some twenty historic farm machines from the collection gathered from around NSW that were exhibited at the Australian National Field Days in 1968 and later put in storage at the Orange Agricultural College. In addition to this collection the building houses the Land's rural photographic collection and many local pieces from around the Millthorpe area.



The Jacoba Craft Cottage

The Bluestone Cottage was erected by Joe Van der Stock and Gerald Luckie in 1982 from bluestone curb and guttering around Millthorpe. The building was initially used as a craft shop and meeting room but became too small for meetings and now houses the Craft Cottage.



The Spring Grove Pavillion

The Spring Grove Pavilion was opened by Garry West, NSW Minister for Tourism, on the 6th of March 1990. Constructed to display the museum's ever increasing collection of rural machinery it has become the focus of display of the Clayton and Shuttleworth Traction Engine.



The Good Templars Hall



Built in 1881 with funds collected by Misses Emily Richards and Isabella Webb. Isabella was the eldest daughter of William Webb, headmaster of the newly opened Public School. The ladies collected the money from Bathurst, Orange and all places in between.

Millthorpe residents formed a branch of a flourishing temperance society known as “The Good Templars”. The building was used for over 30 years as the main public building in Millthorpe. In the 1920s the “Good Templars Lodge” failed to function and the overseeing was done by a board of trustees. Finally Isabella Webb (now Arkins) was the last surviving trustee and the building fell into disrepair.

The head office of the Good Templars instituted court proceedings to take ownership of the hall in 1928. Mrs Arkins as trustee objected saying the hall should revert to the people of Millthorpe. Mrs Arkins attended court for the first time in her life and the judge ruled in her favour.

Coo-ee visit –90 years ago

The photo to the right shows an eager crowd of school children waiting under the verandah of the store in Millthorpe on October the 30th 1915, waiting for the Coo-ee marchers to arrive. They did eventually arrive at 5 o'clock after a long march from Orange. They camped in Haye's shed in Elliot Street and were served 236 chops for breakfast the next day by the people of Millthorpe.

(From our correspondent)

The Coo-ees arrived here about 5 pm on Monday after their long march from Orange. From before three o'clock crowds of people were to be seen wending their way along the Orange road to meet the recruits. Every manner of vehicle was in requisition, and those who were unable to a trap contended (sic) themselves with walking.

The procession entered the town headed by the Millthorpe brass band and after the Gilgandra men came a long line of vehicles from the different parts of the district. Everybody and their dogs turned out to welcome the lads, and if Kitchener himself had been the guest, the enthusiasm could not have been greater.

On arrival at Frape's Hall the travellers were entertained at a sumptuous dinner. The tables were tastefully decorated by the ladies committee and fairly creaked under the weight of the good things; in fact one creaked to such an extent that it came down altogether.

During the evening, the usual speeches were delivered and several vocal and instrumental pieces rendered after which the Coo-ees adjourned to their camp to sleep the sleep of the just. They left on Tuesday morning for Blayney.



Readers are advised that a re-enactment of the Coo-ee march is coming through Millthorpe on the 28th of October 2015.