

Foster and District Historical Society

Newsletter

January 2014

What's on

4 February – First meeting of 2014 and Cr Bob Newton, speaking on the streets of South Gippsland

4 March – Ron Strachan, speaking on the flags of Australia

1 April – Prof Kit Carson, speaking on the topic, 'Does size historically matter?'

6 May – Lyn Jamieson, speaking on the history of the olive industry in South Gippsland.

June – we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary.

The Foster and District Museum turns 40



We will be celebrating the 40th birthday of the Museum in June. Many past and present members of our community have contributed to this wonderful local attraction. Watch for forthcoming details of our celebrations!

Exhibitions

The Foster Films, Art, Music and Drama Association exhibition currently on display at the Foster Museum, titled *Sixty Years of Foster Theatre*, will close 28 February. The exhibition has received much interest in light of the celebrations surrounding the 60 years of FAMDA performance. Many thanks FAMDA for the exhibition, which we have been delighted to host.

A new exhibition is due to open on Saturday 10 March. This exhibition will feature a replica Foster kitchen and living room of the 1950s. We are looking for a number of items for inclusion in this exhibition. If you have any debutante or marriage photographs, toys or games from this period that you would be prepared to loan to the Society could you please contact Meg Rogers at litchfield@dcsi.net.au. The society would appreciate any contributions that you can provide to make this new exhibition a 'blockbuster'.

Local History Small Publication Award

Water Races and the Tin Mines of the Toora District by Coleen Bower won the Small publication award for 2013 from the Historical Society of Victoria. The citation for this award noted that this self-published book deals with the little known history of tin mining in the Toora district of South Gippsland. Bower meticulously traces the tin mining leases and tin mines using maps and reports drawn from the Public Records Office Victoria and government publications. Coleen's father was Toora bred and an early source of her interest in researching the district. The Foster Historical Society extends congratulations to Coleen, one of our members, for winning this prestigious award. It is carefully researched books like this that add so much to our understanding of our local area.

Museum Update

The Commonwealth Government has recently announced a **Community Heritage Grants** program. These grants up to \$10,000 will be made available to local historical or heritage groups for the conservation, development and exhibition of our cultural heritage in mid-June 2014 *Trust News Australia November 2013*. It is worthwhile considering historical projects in Foster that could be funded through such a program. We would welcome thoughts and ideas from members and the local community. Please forward your thoughts to the Society's Committee for consideration. Ideas can include interpretive signs, local historical building restoration eg. tower on Foster Hotel

In the November-January *Insite* magazine published by Museums Victoria an article highlighting environmental sustainability and calling for an integrated approach to environmental best practice. In managing the Foster museum, which is an accredited museum, we are reminded of our responsibility to ensure continued community relevance while reflecting and advancing the challenges and concerns of society.

An article in the *Royal Auto* in November last year on the reopening of the Marysville Historical Society museum following the devastating fires of 2009 recognised the **importance of historical museums** to the local area. Local museums encapsulate the culture and heritage of an area and serve as the community 'memory'. The article states that local museums are hugely important in preserving local values.

The Foster museum is an integral part of this community. The number of visitors to the museum over the holiday period has increased, perhaps in part due to the inclement weather, but certainly those who visit seem captivated by the collection. The Museum and Society have been represented at most community events such as the Foster Show since the museum's inception. **Membership of the Foster Historical Society** is robust however as running costs of the museum rise each year, for example electricity alone costs nearly \$10 a day, it is important that the Society continues its efforts to maintain and boost membership numbers. So if you have friends who may be interested in the history of our area please be sure to encourage them to join up and continue the interesting work of the Society particularly as we celebrate our 40th year.

A Recent Acquisition

Just before Christmas the Museum received a certificate related to a Foster resident. It is a world war one certificate from the Australian Imperial Forces for a lady named Elizabeth Condon. She served with the imperial Forces from July 1915 to November 1918 as a nurse and was disabled in the Great War. She was honourably discharged in June 1919. We believe that she had sailed with Australian forces on the troopship *HMAT Wiltshire* and was 45 years of age at the time. Daily salary for a nurse was the grand sum of seven shillings and sixpence. Her sister was a local resident, Mrs H. Rice. The certificate was found in rubbish as a house in Melbourne was being cleaned out. If you know any more details about the life of this lady we would love to hear from you



New Books



Dorothy Williams, a Historical Society member has recently published her fourth book, *Along the Ridge and Beyond*. This is a history of families who pioneered the O'Gradys Ridge area from the west side of the South Gippsland Highway (formerly Mirboo Road) taking in the area of McGleads Road, Gardiners Road and O'Gradys Road to Fish Creek Road at Hoddle and spanning the years from the 1880s to early 1950s. This book is available from the Museum or online at \$25.00. We thank her, most sincerely, for writing these books which add so much to our understanding of the settlement of Foster and district.

A new book by John Gilbert, *Combined to Win: Foster Cricket Club – Premiers 1970-71 Season* is the story of the Foster Cricket Club in its first and very successful season competing in the Stony Creek Cricket Association. It is a very reasonable \$12.00.



A Big Hole

Last year a hole appeared in the Foster car park opposite Pearl Park. A safety cordon has been erected around the hole. The hole provides a wonderful opportunity to regale visitors to the museum about an important piece of local history which relates to a model in the museum.

When the profitable Victory gold mine was closed in 1908, the shaft was 492 feet deep. It was plugged with stones and tailings and the shaft location, where the men in the photo are standing, was largely forgotten. With recent heavy rains the plug has slumped leaving a large hole in the car park and sparking memories of a bygone golden era.



Coal Creek

A Question of Honour

Korumburra voices, Coal Creek legacy



14,15,16 March

Court House, Coal Creek,
South Gippsland Hwy, Korumburra

Fri 14 March, 7.30 pm: \$20
*Show plus local award-winning
wine and cheese*

Sat 15 March, 6.00pm: \$50
*Show and Miners' dinner,
Pig and Whistle Café*
Show only, 7.30 pm: \$15

Sun 16 March, 2pm: \$25
Show and traditional afternoon tea

TICKETS :

03 5655 1811

or

www.coalcreekvillage.com.au

Bookings essential.
Walking required between sites

