

Nobelius Heritage Park & Emerald Museum

Newsletter No. 3

Autumn 2013

The summer of 2012/13 was most welcome after the wet winter and spring, however with the first three months of this year recording the second highest average temperatures on record, is it any wonder visitor numbers were up in the park and even included a wedding? The museum also benefited from increased numbers due to extended opening hours over the summer months. More and more walkers from Emerald Lake are taking advantage of the short stroll to take in both the Heritage Park and Museum and it makes you realise how lucky we are in Emerald. Autumn is an enchanting time of year, the season when the park looks its best and becomes the photographers dream. The many maple, ash, cedars, beech and birches in the park will provide a tapestry of colour and it should be on your list of things to see before they shed their leaves for winter.

On March 20th, the museum celebrated its 20th anniversary in the current building and was attended by over 70 people. The very successful



day included vintage cars and steam engines along with a local country singer. The museum building is located in Nobelius Heritage Park next to the Puffing Billy train line in Emerald and houses a vast array of exhibits depicting the history of Emerald

and district communities. Museum president and well known community figure Carey Williams was honoured at the celebration with the unveiling of the "Carey Williams Honour Roll". Cardinia Shire Mayor Brett Owen helped Mr Williams cut the anniversary cake and commented that the museum was "one of the Shire's most precious assets".

With the ever increasing amount of donations the museum has acquired over the last 20 years, storage space was at a premium and a decision was made by the committee to purchase a compactus - a shelving system that makes the most of limited space.



This has been made necessary not only for Emerald's storage needs but also to house the Cockatoo collection of historical documents and photos. Cockatoo History and Heritage group do not have a permanent home for their collection and it seemed only fitting that they should share our facilities until such time as they do.

YESTERYEAR

"My grandparents had one like that!" is a comment often heard in the museum and not just from locals. Where do visitors come from? Name a country and you will find an entry in the book, whether China, Japan, Sweden, Hong Kong or England.



Many overseas students who are full of curiosity about this country arrive on Puffing Billy and want to see more than the Lake Park. Once they find us, we try to answer their questions albeit with a lot of laughter and handshakes.

Tourists from all over Australia come looking for somewhere different on their travels. Despite the lack of publicity and poor signage, they find us. Others, whose parents grew up here, return to trace their old farms and homes. That is when the stories pour out, especially when our older residents are on duty and photos are brought from our files to show what was where.



Of course, it is not as simple as shown in tv shows where family histories are traced on demand, it all takes time and patience but along the way we all learn a lot and have fun.

There is a lack of information about women whose work was taken for granted, not photographed or recorded and can mostly be found in hearsay but, as in all aspects of work in the museum, we keep searching.

Like most small museums, Emerald is run by a small dedicated band of volunteers. These volunteers work endless hours behind the scenes to make sure the museum is kept interesting and a

joy for people to visit. Of course to ensure a comfortable building during the colder months and to protect the valuable exhibits, heating is very important and happens to be the museums biggest on-going expense.

Because of this the committee are looking at ways of reducing this cost including the option of solar power in the future.

Are visitors satisfied? well we certainly hope so and invite them to comment on their experience. Most say and write flattering comments but one little primary school girl was rather disappointed to find we have no dinosaur bones - you can't please everybody it seems.



WORKING BEES

Tentative dates for working bees this year are as follows:-

Sat April 27 - Mulch rosemary and lavenders, tidy museum area, (work on conifer garden?)

Sat July 27 - remove suckers, tree weed seedlings, ivy hunt, fertilize lavenders rosemary?, (conifer garden?)

Mon Oct 21 - weed rosemary, lavenders, museum surrounds tidy up, mulch young trees where replacement mulch needed.

SPECIAL THANKS

The Committee would like to express our thanks to the following people for their kind support during our 20th anniversary celebrations:

The Red Box Café for donating the beautiful cake, Paternoster Winery and Chestnut Hill Winery for their contributions,

Wendy Morris-Smith, Jenny Granieri and Georgia Smith for their generous support in the kitchen.

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