

THE MUSE

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MUDGEE FIELD DAYS



This year the Museum took the Packard Ambulance to the Field Days. The Packard is a 1934 model personal car which belonged to Sir Frederick McMaster of Dalkeith Station, Cassilis. In the war years he paid for the conversion, and it served as an ambulance until the late 1950's. It was then used by the Ambulance Auxiliary to transport their fund-raising goods around to functions. It was last registered in 1966, then it was donated to the Museum.

The ambulance attracted a lot of attention, people, particularly the men were very interested and were delighted to see it running.



Other items were the wooden washing machine and small mangle. The ladies could not believe how things have changed from the early years.



The items from the Mudgee Gaol were also of great interest as was the collection of items in the glass topped cabinet, showing some of the items on display at the Museum. We took a small board with Dead Man's Pennies and also had a group of photographs of World War I soldiers, and were able to point out two of the soldiers and their penny.

On Sunday some of the people who had visited the site came to see the Museum which we felt made our efforts worthwhile.

Some Early History of the Mudgee Road

contributed by Peter Johnson

Mudgee was gazetted as a town in 1838. A route for a road from Bowenfels to Mudgee was discovered in 1839 and traffic that had previously travelled across the Blue Mountains to Mudgee via Bathurst and the Turon Mountains began using the more direct route. In the next twenty years numerous alterations and improvements to the new route were made.

The gold rushes of the 1850's brought considerable increase in Mudgee's population and in traffic along the road. In 1861 notwithstanding a lot of money spent on it, the Mudgee road was described as "almost impassable", the amount of traffic as "exceedingly large" and its state presented a "serious drawback" to the prosperity of the district.



In 1867 the Cobb & Co. mail coach left Bowenfels at 4.30 am and reached Mudgee 17 hours later, averaging $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles per hour along the way. Horses were changed at stages varying from 6 to 13 miles. The coach journey was so punishing for passengers that a police inspector who took the trip was bedridden for several days afterwards.

He was the only one inside the coach and the driver had to make up for lost time, so the travelling inspector resembled “a parched pea on a hotplate” according to a newspaper correspondent.

In 1870 the western railway line was complete to Lithgow and passengers boarded the Mudjee mail coach there at 11.30 pm. It stopped at Barnaby’s Inn at Cherry Tree Hill for the night and travelled the rest of the way to Mudjee the next day. A traveler wrote that, “some portions of the road have been formed but those are few and far between”. After rain a reporter wrote, “How desperately bad it is even in fine weather and how infinitely worse in the rainy season”. Drays with teams of horses or bullocks took as much as 30-40 days on the journey. In the worst part of the road it took them 3 days to go one mile. Sometimes it took the mail coach 35 hours to get to Mudjee from Wallerawang.

In 1871 toll bars were erected at Stony Pinch, McCully’s Flat and the Dividing Range to help defray maintenance costs. Short sections of the road were metalled, but progress was slow as the road had to be remade before laying the metal. At the beginning of 1872 there was said to be considerable improvement and it now took 17 hours to travel the whole distance from Sydney to Mudjee (including the train trip to Wallerawang). But it didn’t take long for the road to deteriorate again. Later that year the satirical magazine Punch carried a cartoon with figures of people crippled from travelling the Mudjee road.

A report in mid 1873 said that in the previous 12 months the road had been “wonderfully improved”, but riding in Cobb & Co. coaches still involved “bruising, jolting and jarring”. A year later the road was described as “well macadamized for many miles”. Macadamizing was done by laying and compacting successive layers of broken stone. Inns and blacksmith shops were abundant along the road. There were 21 public houses between Wallerawang and Mudjee. Publican’s profits were diminished by the road’s improvements. In 1884 Cobb & Co.’s mail contract was cancelled on the Mudjee to Wallerawang route due to the completion of the Mudjee railway line. Transport of heavy goods and produce by rail took pressure off the road. The railway caused the closure of many inns, as lamented by Henry Lawson in his poem about the Cherry Tree Inn.

Source: “News from Mudjee: A Chronological History of Mudjee 1821-1921”, by Peter Johnson

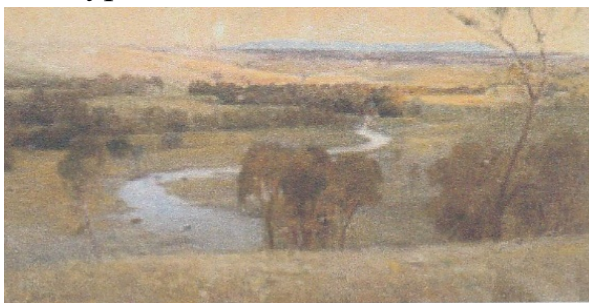
SIR ARTHUR STREETON



One of Australia's best known and most influential landscape painters, Arthur Streeton was a key member of the Heidelberg school of Australian impressionism – the first distinctively Australian School of painting. For many people, Streeton's paintings defined a unique image of this country. He spent much of the early 20th century in Europe and served as war artist during the First World War, but later returned to Australia, where he also worked as an art critic.

Streeton received little formal training in art beyond night classes at the National Gallery of Victoria school in Melbourne from 1882 to 1887, but his career developed after he met fellow artist Tom Roberts. Along with Frederick McCubbin, and later Charles Conder, he joined Roberts' camps at Box Hill and Heidelberg in Victoria. Painting in the open air, they worked on representing Australia's light, heat, space and distance. Streeton himself established an ongoing artists' camp in 1888 at Eaglemont on the outskirts of Melbourne.

In 1889 Streeton was a key contributor, with Roberts, McCubbin and others, to The 9 by 5 *impression exhibition* in Melbourne, which consisted of impressions of bush and city life rapidly painted on cigar box lids – including *The national game* 1889 and *A road to the ranges* 1889. Scorned by conservative critics, this ground-breaking show reinforced the group's claim that they were creating a new type of art in Australia.



'Still glides the stream, and shall for ever glide', 1890, Art Gallery of New South Wales

After the Art Gallery of New South Wales bought his painting *'Still glides the stream, and shall for ever glide'* 1890, Streeton moved to Sydney in the early 1890's where he painted views of the city, harbour and beaches and established an artists' camp in Mosman, producing works such as *From my camp (Sirius Cove)* 1896. In

search of more dramatic scenes, he travelled to the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury River. From 1890, his paintings became increasingly large and ambitious and his visions of the Australian bush became more powerful and lyrical. It was during this period that he painted perhaps his greatest evocation of the country's light, heat and dust - *Fire's on* 1891. His growing critical success culminated in a solo exhibition in Melbourne in 1896.

Streeton travelled to London via Cairo in 1897, where he lived for the next three decades, with frequent return visits to Australia. Enlisting in the Australian army medical corps, in 1915, he was appointed an official war artist in 1918. In paintings such as *Villers Bretonneux* 1918, he documented the Western Front, focusing on the devastated terrain rather than the drama of human suffering.

Returning to Victoria, Streeton won the Wynne Prize in 1928 with *Afternoon Light, Goulburn Valley*, and in 1929 became an art critic for the newspaper *The Argus* from 1919 to 1935. He married Ester Leonora Clench, a Canadian Violinist, in 1908. He was knighted in 1937 for services to the Arts. He died at his property in Olinda Victoria, in 1943 and is buried at Ferntree Gully Cemetery.

Streeton's works appear in many major Australian galleries and museums, including the National Gallery of Australia and state galleries and the Australian War Memorial. In September, 2015 Streeton's landscape *The Blue Pacific* 1890 became the first painting by an Australian artist, to hang in the permanent collection of the National Gallery, London. It sits alongside major impressionist works by Claude Monet and Edouard Manet.

SILVER IN AUSTRALIA

Contributed by Brian Hobson

This is a continuation of the article on Silver in our last addition of the "*Muse*". One of the first Australian Silversmiths was **Alexander Dick** who arrived from Scotland aboard the *Portland* in 1824 as a free settler and at first worked for a Mr. James Robertson but soon he established a business in Pitt Street, Sydney in April 1826. Alexander's story is well worth reading with its ups and downs. (Google). However. I will relate a story briefly, I know of as I remember it: -



The Juniper Cup
awarded at Paramatta Racing Club
Made by Alexander Dick 19th Century

“This may have been the 1930’s.....an old lady died in her apartment at one of Australia’s beach side suburbs. Not being able to locate a will, or any relatives, her estate was handled by the Public Trustee and an auction was held to dispose of her possessions. No one knew who this lady really was until after the auction, when it was discovered that she was a descendant of **John Oxley**, the great explorer and surveyor. At the auction, “lots” of bits-and-pieces were sold in boxes, some fetching as little

as One Pound Sterling (\$2.00) per box. Only after (or silently before) the auction did buyers realize that some of the cutlery and other pieces were made by Alexander Dick, and was very early Australian made Silver. (This “mistake” is typical of errors which can occur when inexperienced people take over what they know nothing about). When this error was discovered, panic almost broke out, and a hunt was established to try and track down this extremely rare and valuable Silver. Some pieces were recovered, but some people no doubt, made good profits from it.

Australian Silver is usually marked in some way, but has not the ‘HALLMARK’ system of Great Britain which has hallmarked Silver since the end of the 13th Century. More of that later.

More to come next issue.

EARLY MUDGEE IDENTITIES

ALLAN FITZGERALD CAMERON

(as recorded in the 1880’s)

Allan Cameron, of the Steam Cordial Factory, was born in Sydney in 1858 and twelve years later, in company of his father, proceeded to Mudgee and settled down. He had continuously lived there, with the exception of two years, in which the Gulgong Goldfields were visited and a short period spent in Sydney. The present concern was started in 1881 under the style of Cameron and Job. In 1885, however, our subject bought his partner’s interest in the firm and became the sole proprietor.

A variety of aerated waters and cordials were manufactured in the establishment. There is a large demand in the town and within a radius of 50

miles for the beverages made by Mr. Cameron. The weekly output was about 700 dozen, but with the present plant Mr. Cameron is capable of turning out 2,500 dozen per week.

Mr. Cameron makes no presentation to pose as a public man, but has, however, rendered great service in assisting in every philanthropic movement. He was married in Mudgee in 1886.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held on

Monday 21 August 2017.

The General Meeting will be held at 7.30 p.m.

followed by the AGM at 8.00 p.m.

in the

Meeting Room at the Museum

All welcome.

Light supper served afterwards.

COLONIAL FAIR

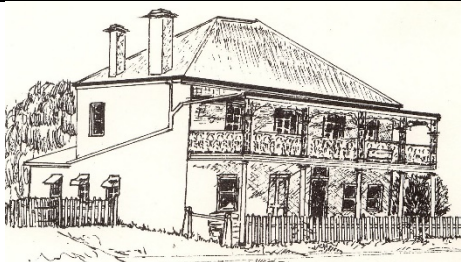
The date for the Colonial Fair will be

Saturday 23 September 2017.

The Lions Club have been approached about doing a barbeque and providing a Jumping Castle for the Children.

Donny Hobbs has been approached to bring his horse and sulky and do a talk.

There will also be Heritage Fire Trucks on display.



COLONIAL INN MUSEUM

126 Market Street, Mudgee
Headquarters of the
Mudgee Historical Society Inc

PO Box 217, Mudgee, NSW, 2850
Tel. 02.6372 7395

Opening Times

Mon. to Fri: 10am to 3pm
Sat: 10am to 5pm
Sun & Public Holidays: 10am to 2pm
Groups by appointment

Admission

Adults: \$6
Concession: \$5
Children: \$2

The Mudgee Historical Society meets on the **THIRD** Tuesday morning of every month, at the Colonial Inn Museum at 9.00 a.m.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership of the Mudgee Historical Society Inc. is due for renewal on the 1st July of each year.
Is your membership overdue?

Membership: \$15 Families \$20

NAME:

ADDRESS:

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TEL./EMAIL:

Return to: The Secretary, Mudgee Historical Society Inc., PO Box 217, Mudgee, NSW, 2850
