



Merewether Historical Society

"A society aimed at recording memories of the past for the benefit of the next generation."

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The Chronicle

November 2022

Meetings: Next meeting is **Tuesday 08 November at 10.30** for morning tea. Meeting begins at **10.45**, venue is Merewether Bowling Club Caldwell St. Lunch will be available following the meeting for members to socialise and enjoy a delicious, cheap meal.

Guest Speaker: Charles Martin on Early Newcastle

Birthday Wishes to Shirley Thomas, Jan Welsman, Geoff Wright, Denise Wright, Sue Kenny and all other Novemberites.

Bus Trip 36 members and friends visited Grossman House, 71 Church St Maitland, in October and everyone enjoyed a thoroughly enjoyable day. The House and furnishings are perfectly maintained by a dedicated group of volunteers, in the period in which it was built. It was extremely interesting to hear its history and be transported back to the mid to late 19th Century. Heritage-listed it is a former residence, became Maitland Girls' High School and now houses a museum Australia. It was built from 1860 to 1862 by Isaac Beckett and Samuel Owen and now owned by the National Trust of Australia.

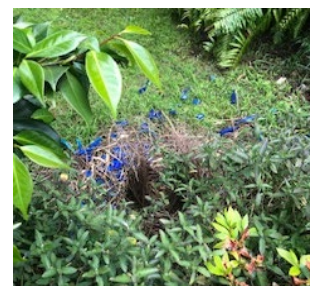


Grossman House has magnificent gardens and the Rose Garden was established by Wilga Abrahams in 1973. ([Wikipedia](#)) Her son Stephen still cares for the heritage roses. The garden remains largely unaltered since it was established. Wilga did not want to replicate roses entirely from the 1870, when

Grossmann House was built, but selected heritage species which would flower over a long period. Different families of roses were selected, including species from China which are better suited to Australian conditions than are European varieties.

Over 60% of the original plantings have survived over 30 years. Today there are 33 varieties of which 27 date from the 1973 plantings.

The following species in the garden were developed around 1870-71. "Zepherine Drouhin" (1868) is a climbing pink rose that is thornless and good for training over archways, "Paul Neyron" (1869) is nicknamed "the cabbage rose" and "Louise Odier", highly fragrant, is said to be used in the French perfume "Joy". "Aimee Vibert" (1828), another of the climbers planted in 1973, was one of the first roses in the colony, brought in originally for the Macarthurs' garden. In 2013 the Hunter Valley Rose Society offered to help look after the Grossmann House rose garden.



Everyone was curious about a low growing bush with vivid blue 'flowers' until we got close enough to see it properly. It was actually a bower bird's nest decorated with pieces of blue plastic and other materials BUT only one particular shade of blue! Very discerning bird indeed.



A wonderful old tree, planted at the turn of the century would provide children with hours of fun, exploring its roots and climbing its branches. Oh to be young again.



All in all, Grossman House, its furnishings and its garden – and not to mention the wonderful morning tea, home made by volunteers, are definitely worth another, longer, visit. A side trip was made on the way home to Donarch’s at Tenambit, the photos below tell it all!!



A huge selection of exquisite chocolates, which I have on good authority, tasted as good as they looked.

PLEASE KEEP THESE DATES

MHS Proposed functions for 2023.
Destinations may alter but the dates are definite!
16 March Dobell House
16 May To be determined
18 July Christmas Shop, Central Coast
17 October Scone Horse Stud

Halloween Should we be celebrating Halloween in Australia? Various activities have been held on a small scale in the past but this occasion is becoming more popular across the country. Halloween, originated from the ancient Celtic harvest festival known as Samhain and is also known as All Hallows’ Eve among the Christian community. Australia has a strong history of adopting all sorts of rituals from other countries and cultures, so why should Halloween be any different to St. Patricks Day which celebrates the patron saint of Ireland, and is wildly celebrated across the nation, or Valentine’s Day, a day associated with all things love. Halloween appears to have caught on in Australia, and cynics should turn their criticisms towards the commercialisation rather than the grassroots ritual. Looking past the commercialisation of Halloween, you will find a holiday that brings people and communities together.

There are many Halloween symbols - black cats, bats and spiders, ghosts, skeletons, witches and wizards. Pumpkins, graveyards, cobwebs, haunted houses and the colours green, orange, grey and black are also associated with Halloween. No doubt we will have many visits from appropriately – or not-costumed children seeking ‘treats’ Dentists must love the tradition.

Point to Ponder: I finally had 8 hours sleep --
- and it only took 3 weeks! (With thanks to Geoff Wright)

2022 Committee:

- President: Geoff Wright
- Vice President: Dennis Hinchliffe
- Secretary: Sue Kenny
- Asst Secretary: Denise Wright
- Treasurer: Greg Struck
- Asst Treasurer: Monica Jordon
- Committee: Alison Chapman
Iain Kelso
Jan Welsman
Judy Henry
- Hon. Solicitor: Nicholas Dan

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