

Peach Trees Gazette

Peachester History Committee Inc. Newsletter
Number 185 ~ January / February 2023

NEWS AND COMING EVENTS

MONDAY work days at the Heritage Centre started on 16th January, continuing each week from 9.00am to lunchtime or later as needed. Other members and new volunteers are always welcome to join us.

SUNDAY 5th FEBRUARY: PHC meeting at Peachester Hall from 11.00am, lunch to share as usual.

Theme: Wood chopping – stories of the sport and local axe men past and present. Guest speakers: Gerald Youles and Bruce Winkel. Bring along memorabilia for display.

SUNDAY 26th FEBRUARY: Heritage Centre regular open day, from 10.00 to 2.00pm.

SUNDAY 5th MARCH: PHC meeting, from 11.00 at the Peachester Hall. Details next *Gazette*.

SATURDAY 11th MARCH: CWA Markets at the hall from 8.00 to 12noon, PHC running the canteen.

FRIDAY 17th MARCH: Film Evening with Irish theme to celebrate St Patrick's Day. Main feature "The Quiet Man," set in Ireland and starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara (1952), with newsreels and cartoon. Dinner tickets adults \$15.00, children \$5.00. More info next *Gazette*.

Welcome to 2023, and we hope you can join us at a meeting or activity soon.

Helen (54949557), Jocelyn (54390895)

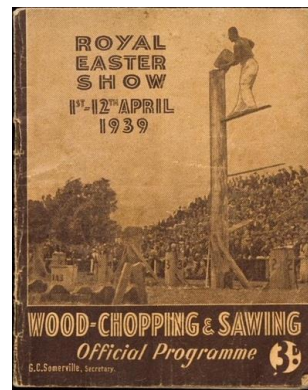
AXEMEN IN COMPETITION

Australian Woodchopping History

It has been said that the sport we now know as woodchopping originated as the result of a bet between two men in a bar in Ulverstone, Tasmania in 1870. Jack Biggs from Warragul, Victoria and Joseph Smith from Ulverstone, had a wager for £25 to see who could fell a tree the fastest.

Many of the axemen of today still work within the timber industry, which is of course no longer reliant on manpower for harvesting. As the years have passed the sport has developed into a much more sophisticated affair which includes Underhand Chopping, Standing Block Chopping, Tree-felling, Single and Double-handed Sawing and Axe Throwing.

The sport today is conducted in various forms (all very similar) in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, Wales, Ireland, England, and Spain. Australian axemen have a formidable reputation for being the best in the world at cutting hardwood.



Woodchops at the shows

The Woodchop and Sawing Competition at the Brisbane Exhibition is a show highlight and has been running for over 100 years. With more than \$100,000 in prizes up for grabs, it attracts axemen and women from as far as New Zealand and across Australia – some are even fourth generation.

The display of woodchopping photographs and memorabilia at Peachester Heritage Centre represents some of the top axemen from this area. Many others participated in this sport at local shows and sports days.

Using an axe to fall timber and cut scrub was so much part of daily work for many bush workers in the Beerwah, Peachester, Woodford and Maleny areas, that competition chopping was a natural progression. The sport is mentioned in newspaper reports from these districts as early as the 1890s, and remains popular to this day.

References

Brisbane Ekka website & Australian Woodchopping group on Flickr



Photo above: October 2019, opening of Peachester Heritage Centre, L-R Wally Breton, Gerald Youles, Bruce Winkel, Cameron Hermansen, Brian Winkel.

Left: Les Tagg, Nev Anning and Bob Breton in Sydney to compete at the Royal Easter Show 1940 – a favourite photo!

OTTO FAMILY HISTORY PROJECT

From Marlene Menzie

A few of my cousins and I recently visited Peachester with a wonderfully warm welcome from a number of Peachester residents. Thank you for making our day very enjoyable.

Our great-grandparents, Gottlob Friedrich & Auguste Ernestine Otto, settled in Peachester with the first known family venture being selection of Portion 37V (160 acres) in 1887 by their son, Heinrich Paul Otto, who paid the annual rent of threepence per acre. He was granted a Lease which he transferred to his brother, Ernest Bruno (my grandfather). Bruno then transferred the Lease to his mother, Auguste Ernestine, who eventually obtain freehold title to the 160 acres with a purchase price of fifteen shillings per acre.

Auguste Ernestine made a Will in 1918 leaving the house and five acres to her daughter, Eugenie Smith (nee Otto), and a life interest in the balance to her son, Hugo Ernest. Unlike his siblings, Hugo spent much of his life in Peachester. His mother-in-law, Martha Rogers, was Peachester's first Postmistress.

Hugo built a new Peachester Post Office in about 1935 when the exchange was moved from the previous Grigor Mill location. His wife, Martha (Maud), was then Postmistress having taken over from her mother.

The original 160 acres was subdivided and it seems that the "Five Acres" eventually passed to Eugenie's nephew, Brent Otto, the son of Hugo.

Portion 36V (another 160 acres) was selected by Gottlob Friedrich Otto and his son, Ernest Bruno, gained freehold title to Lot 242 in Cross Street.


We are on a fascinating journey as we delve into the history of the Otto Family and have created a website to hopefully preserve the information and photos we have collected along the way. Anyone who is interested is welcome to visit the website

<https://ottopeachester.weebly.com/>.




Top: Otto family descendants at the Heritage Centre, 22 January 2023; above: Otto family in front of the new Post Office, c 1935.

COMBINED SCHOOLS REUNION





ROLL CALL

for past and present
students, teachers and families from

<p style="font-size: 0.8em; color: red; margin: 0;">Woodford Lions Sausage Sizzle Coffee, Tea, Drinks</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Banana Settlement</td><td>Mt Mee</td></tr> <tr><td>Bellthorpe</td><td>Neurum</td></tr> <tr><td>Bellthorpe West</td><td>Peachester</td></tr> <tr><td>Bracalba</td><td>St Mary's</td></tr> <tr><td>Commissioner's Flat</td><td>Stanmore</td></tr> <tr><td>Crohamburst</td><td>Stoney Creek</td></tr> <tr><td>Dahmongah</td><td>Villeneuve</td></tr> <tr><td>Delaney's Creek</td><td>West Vale</td></tr> <tr><td>Durundur</td><td>Winya</td></tr> <tr><td>Kalangara</td><td>Woodford</td></tr> <tr><td>Mt Delaney</td><td></td></tr> </table>	Banana Settlement	Mt Mee	Bellthorpe	Neurum	Bellthorpe West	Peachester	Bracalba	St Mary's	Commissioner's Flat	Stanmore	Crohamburst	Stoney Creek	Dahmongah	Villeneuve	Delaney's Creek	West Vale	Durundur	Winya	Kalangara	Woodford	Mt Delaney		 <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; font-size: 0.8em; color: red; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Would you like to organise your own class reunion on the day? Let us know and we can set a space up for you</p> </div>
Banana Settlement	Mt Mee																							
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Enquiries 0429899115
Bookings www.trybooking.com/BWQGL
Bring along your school memorabilia





All Small Schools Reunion

20th May 10am-4pm Woodford Community Hall



DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: Saturday 20th May.

If you have a connection with any of the schools listed here (many now closed), come along to this combined reunion and catch up with old friends! Woodford Historical Society members are hosting this event, and PHC is helping to gather photos, stories and memorabilia, especially for Crohamburst, Commissioner's Flat and Peachester Schools.

We can all help by passing on the invitation to anyone who may be interested. And if you would like to organise your own class reunion, please contact Donna, phone 0429899115.

Following are some items from the PHC collection.

PIONEERS AT PEACHESTER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

On Friday 4th May Peachester State School combined their Arbor Day with Jubilee celebrations. The assemblage was welcomed at 11 a.m. by the chairman, Mr. J. Walker, after which the head teacher (Mr. Leggett) gave an address on Arbor Day and its significance. Two trees were then planted, one by the oldest pupil Robert Morrison, and the other by the youngest pupil, Rodney Smith.

Mr. Inigo Jones gave a very interesting address on Peachester fifty years ago. He explained how the district was first named 'Peach Trees' and was later changed to the present name, which still contains the letters of the original name. Mr. G. F. Nicklin M.L.A., presented the new Australian Flag to the school, which was unfurled and saluted.

A number of pioneer residents were entertained at luncheon. The tables were daintily arranged by the ladies of the parents'

association. Toasts were honoured and speeches were made by Mr. Nicklin M.L.A. and Councillor D. B. Simpson. Mr. Inigo Jones responded on behalf of the pioneers. The main feature of the table was a cake made in the form of the letter 'J,' appropriately iced and decorated, and bearing fifty golden candles. It was made and presented by Mrs. Heidemann, and cut by the oldest resident, Mrs. Shuttlewood, to the singing of 'They are Jolly Good Fellows.'

The children partook of a basket lunch. Mr. D. MacDonald M.L.A. addressed the children on Jubilee and presented them with booklets and cards to commemorate the occasion.

Pioneer members present were Messrs Inigo Jones, W. Hedges, W. Walker, W. Verietz, E. Page, R. Denny; Mesdames Shuttlewood, E. Grigor, E. Fisher, G. Page and E. Duhs.

The Nambour Chronicle, 18 May 1951, p. 12



COUNTRY HALLS

Sally Joyce shared this item to the Peachester Community Forum Facebook page last year, with the intro:

"Here are some beautiful words about a small hall in the Northern Rivers, and good reason to treasure all that the Peachester Hall has given and still gives to the Peachester community. I am grateful for all the memories that Peachester Hall has given."



The reflection was written by by Mandy Nolan, and apparently it has been shared around the Facebook world. Pall Daley shared it on Facebook page "Kyogle (the friendly town & villages)," and Sally sent it on from there.

To Hall and Back

There is something magical about a country hall. These small wooden buildings dot the landscape. They have a frugal modesty and an old-fashioned generosity. If they had names, they'd be called Thelma or Rose or Alan.

They're a pungent olfactory mix of last week's wedding enmeshed with yesterday's committee meeting. Curry and jatz. Tea and beer. Tears and laughter. They are the site of weddings and birthdays, of local club meetings. A jam night. Poetry fundraisers for some kid's school camp. A cabaret spectacular for a local lady with breast cancer. And the place her friends came to mourn her with quiet conversations over tea and cake. It's where people meet for cards. Or a cooking class. Or yoga. Or pregnancy support group. Men's shed. AA.

It's a space for gathering when that gathering can't take place at your home. Halls are for people who don't have grand homes. They're for us. The ordinary folk who don't have the money to whack up a marquis in their backyard. Who can't have more than 10 people for dinner because they just don't have the chairs. Or the room. Or the cups. Country Halls are a space that belong to everyone. Like a community garden for events.

I love being given the key to a hall. Opening it and standing in the empty space. Knowing that in a few hours I will create something remarkable, there will be laughter and conversation and applause and people, then at 11pm when I stack the last chair it's gone. The place is empty. Ready for the next user to make their own. Every time I use a hall I feel like a hermit crab, finding an uninhabited shell, scrambling inside, then abandoning it in the night. It's so transitory. Halls are the definition of Liminal. They are all about the space in between. They stand quietly, wondering what will happen next.

Wooden floors swept clean. Chairs stacked. Kitchens wiped over. Toilet bins emptied. Over 35 years as a comedian, I've performed thousands of gigs. Nothing quite measures up to the country hall. And nothing is quite as humbling.



Jubilee medal presented to children in 1951, Peachester School building and students in 1947, the school in 1953 – you may recognise some familiar faces in this photograph!

Recently I wanted to do some fundraisers for flood impacted communities. I rang the number for the Corndale Hall and was told 'It got washed off its stumps love. It's down the bottom of the paddock now.'

I felt for the community who have gathered there. Who have got drunk and danced and had angry meetings and well attended sausage sizzles. I performed some of my favourite comedy sets at the Corndale Hall. It's like losing your heart. Every community needs its hall. During the floods it was our halls — our empty spaces that became places of sanctuary.

Halls are about community. But they are also about rules. They have rules written in biro blue tacked to the fridge. Usually in the sloping cursive of a committee President who has since retired. A woman with a severe expression but a generous heart. Her photo is in black and white under the Lifetime Members sign. Her name is Edna and she loved rules. They made her feel peaceful. The rules are everything in this Spartan shared space. The hall must be returned how it is found. That is how we get to enjoy the shared resource of a community space. (If only Corndale Hall could have been returned. Would make all the Ednas happy.)

Edna's dead, but the rules live on. And because of that the hall continues. Doors open. Magic happens. Doors shut. Ready for next time.

In a world powered by the capitalist ethos, about flashy bars, giant venues and event centres, there's an unpretentious sensibility that you can only get in a country hall. And everyone is welcome.

Just make sure you wash your cups.

UNEXPECTED TREASURES

It is remarkable how often people contact us because they have a family connection with Peachester, and they have something which they feel we may appreciate for the Heritage Centre.

We have to be cautious about accepting objects because of space restrictions, but we love to acquire photos and documents; and a few significant smaller items have made their way into the collection. Sometimes these offers result in the discovery of unexpected treasures!

This week we had a visit from brothers James and Robert Lloyd, mainly to discuss donating a painting by Inigo Jones, but they also told us of their family's link to the district, and this did reveal some treasures. (Photo p. 5: Robert [left] and James with the painting.)

Their father Victor was a member of the 2/1st Machine Gun Company which was camped around Peachester during World War Two, with headquarters at the hall. In a roundabout way Victor got to know Inigo Jones; and when Victor and his wife Mary were married, Inigo gave them this painting of the Jones home at Crohamhurst as a wedding present.

When Inigo died in November 1954, Victor and Mary attended his funeral at St Andrew's Church and the Peachester Cemetery. We already had in our collection several paper cuttings which include the church photo (below), but we have never had a copy of the original photograph. And here it is — we were able to scan a good print of that photo, plus the one of Inigo's grave at the cemetery. Mary Lloyd is the lady in the foreground at the church.

After the war, Victor and other members of the 2/1st Machine Gun Company continued their connection with Peachester, coming for many years to present a shield at Peachester School awards ceremonies. The other photo shows Victor making a presentation to a local student. (We believe the child to be Tom Forsyth, which would date the photo to the mid-1990s).

SCC HISTORIANS IN RESIDENCE



Share your stories

Do you have a story about local farming practices or the community's involvement with the WWII war effort?

Meet with our Historians in Residence at a community day

- 15 February, 9.30am at Bankfoot House and 1.30pm at Nambour Heritage Library. Dr Tony Brady is researching early local farming practices and markets.
- 23 February, 9.30am at Landsborough Museum and 1.30pm at Nambour Heritage Library. Brian Rough is researching activities on the Sunshine Coast during WWII.

Bookings essential

To find out more or to book your one-on-one session with a historian, visit heritage.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au or call Cultural Heritage Services on 5420 8600.

heritage.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
07 5420 8600

Sunshine Coast COUNCIL

HERITAGE





THE 1% AGE GROUP

(This item was shared from the Internet by a couple of our readers. It seems to originate from America, but definitely gives us something to think about. Most of our members would be in this group!)

This special group was born between 1930 & 1946 = 16 years. In 2022, the age range is between 76 & 92.

Interesting facts: You are the smallest group of children born since the early 1900s.

You are the last generation, climbing out of the depression, who can remember the winds of war and the impact of a world at war that rattled the structure of our daily lives for years.

You are the last to remember ration books for everything from gas to sugar to shoes to stoves. You saw the 'boys' home from the war build their little houses that they were so happy with.

You are the last generation who spent childhood without television; instead, you "imagined" what you heard on the radio and you read library books.

With no TV until the 1950s, you spent your childhood playing outside. Many kids walked to school.

There was no city playground for kids. You organized neighborhood cricket and football games on vacant lots. You rode your bike everywhere.

The lack of television in your early years meant that you had little real understanding of what the world was like.

On Saturday mornings and afternoons, the movies gave you newsreels sandwiched in between westerns and cartoons.

Telephones were one to a house, often shared (party lines), and hung on the wall in the kitchen (no cares about privacy).

Typewriters were driven by pounding fingers, throwing the carriage, and changing the ribbon. The words 'INTERNET' and 'GOOGLE' did not exist.

The Government gave returning Veterans the means to get an education and spurred colleges to grow.

Your parents were suddenly free from the confines of the depression and the war, and they threw themselves into exploring opportunities they had never imagined. You weren't neglected, but you weren't today's all-consuming family focus. They were glad you played by yourselves until the street lights came on.

You came of age in the '50s and '60s. You are the last generation to experience an interlude when there were no threats to our homeland. Only your generation can remember both a time of great war and a time when our world was secure and full of bright promise and plenty.

You grew up at the best possible time, a time when the world was getting better... and you can feel privileged to have "lived in the best of times!"

CAN YOU RELATE?

Whatever new year's resolution you may have decided upon, how is it going now?

New year new resolution



MEMBERSHIPS & NEW BANK DETAILS

PHC membership fees for 2023 are due now, and can be paid to our Treasurer Elaine at meetings. The annual fee is \$2.00, and people often prefer to pay for multiple years.

Elaine keeps a spreadsheet showing where we are all up to, so check with her if you are not sure.

For people who wish to give a donation (not necessary, but many people do, all gratefully received), cheques should be made out to "Peachester History Committee Inc."

If for any reason you wish to pay something by bank transfer, please note that we changed banks last year.

CURRENT BANK DETAILS

Bank: BOQ, Beerwah
 BSB: 124-183
 Account name: Peachester History Committee Inc
 Account number: 23299651

PHC OUT AND ABOUT

Photos in order: December meeting, celebrating 80th birthdays, and our festive Christmas table; Slim with the famous Holden; putting up the hall Christmas lights; Hall function to thank volunteers; the community Christmas barbecue; and Christmas and New Year greetings from PHC and the Heritage Centre!

