

FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC

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1) Fire at Yarloop destroys Railway Workshops and Museum



Fig 1: locomotive; Fig 2: shelf of wooden patterns

On the night of Thursday 7 January 2016 a ferocious bushfire all but destroyed the town of Yarloop some 130 kilometers south of Perth. Two elderly residents died and 128 houses were destroyed, as were the heritage listed Yarloop workshops and steam museum.

The Heritage Council has described the Yarloop Workshops as ‘the most intact example of an early privately-owned 20th century railway workshop in Australia’.

The Millars Timber Company opened workshops in Yarloop in 1901 to service their many mills and steam locomotives. Over the years the capabilities of the workshops grew as did the complex of jarrah weatherboard and corrugated iron buildings. At

their peak over one hundred tradesmen were employed. Between them, there was little they couldn't do or make.

Saw doctors sharpened the saws, blacksmiths made all the tools, boilermakers made the boilers needed for the stationary steam engines and for the steam locomotives, coppersmiths made the tubing for all these engines, pattern makers made all the wooden patterns needed for moulding machine parts, saddlers did all the leather work for the log-hauling Clydesdale teams, carpenters made the bodies of the rail wagons, vans and carriages, wheelwrights made the giant whim wheels for which the blacksmiths made the tyres.

It was said that there was no machine or machine part that the machinists could not make. The workshops took on engineering jobs for private industry. They even made artillery shells in the 1914-18 war.

The workshops operated until they were damaged by cyclone Alby in 1978. Volunteers repaired the buildings and turned them into a timber industry heritage centre, preserving the machinery and offices as if all the workers had just knocked off. Leather-bound volumes of company records remained in a vault. Other volunteers added to its attractions by lovingly restoring old steam engines and creating a live steam museum.

The photographs accompanying the article were taken during a Royal Western Australian Historical Society excursion to the workshops and steam museum in August 2011. A small photograph published in the *West Australian* on 11 January shows the restored steam locomotive 176 standing in open space, covered in sheets of fallen corrugated iron. What else, if anything, has survived?

Further information about disaster preparedness:
<http://www.history.org.au/Documents/beprepared.pdf>

(Source: edited letter, Steve Errington (RWAHS Vice-President), letter originally published in HCWA e-Bulletin)

2) Burke, Wills, King and Yandruwandha National Heritage Place on National Heritage List



Fig 3: Dig Tree, Burke and Wills Expedition Sites

The extraordinary story of the ill-fated Burke and Wills expedition – and the crucial role of the Yandruwandha Aboriginal people who tried to help them – has been

formally recognised as a defining moment in Australia's history.

The Australian Government inscribed the Burke, Wills, King and Yandruwandha National Heritage Place on the National Heritage List on Friday 22nd January 2016.

To mark the occasion, descendants of William Wills and the Yandruwandha people met for the first time ever. They were joined by representatives of the Royal Society of Victoria, which commissioned the expedition with the aim of 'unlocking the mysteries of the arid interior'. The Royal Historical Society of Queensland was appointed trustee of the Dig Tree Reserve in 1964.

The expedition left Royal Park in August 1860. Over the ensuing 13 months, seven men – including Robert O'Hara Burke and William Wills - lost their lives. Another expedition member, John King, was saved when the Yandruwandha adopted him as a member of their clan and taught him their methods of food-gathering and shelter.

The National Heritage listing comprises five important sites along the banks of the Cooper Creek, near Innamincka, that represent the key events of the Burke and Wills Expedition.

"I am delighted the Burke, Wills, King and Yandruwandha National Heritage Place has been included on the National Heritage List," Minister Hunt said. "The Burke and Wills expedition is one of Australia's best known stories of early European exploration of the inland and is embedded in our national story."

One of the sites listed is the Dig Tree, where expedition members buried supplies and left markings and messages for each other. It is remembered in popular culture for the arrival of Burke and Wills from their trek to the Gulf just hours after their comrades, who had waited for them for four months, had given up hope and left. Failure to update the markings at the Dig Tree when Burke and Wills returned to Cooper Creek was perhaps the most tragic in a series of mistakes for the expedition.

"The listing of the Fort Wills site, Burke's Tree, Wills' site, Howitt's site and King's site represent the sad end to the expedition and also the relief and joy of finding the sole survivor of the journey to the Gulf – John King," Minister Hunt said. "The listing also reflects how the survival of John King was only possible with the support and care of the local Yandruwandha people, who provided food, care and companionship to King while he waited to be found. Their role in the story was significant at the time and continues to be an important part of Australia's cultural history."

The Burke, Wills, King and Yandruwandha National Heritage Place is the 104th place included in the National Heritage List.

For more information visit:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/burke-wills-king-yandruwandha>

(Source: <https://www.environment.gov.au/minister/hunt/2016/mr20160122.html>)

3) New grants and activities at Circular Head Heritage Centre, Tasmania



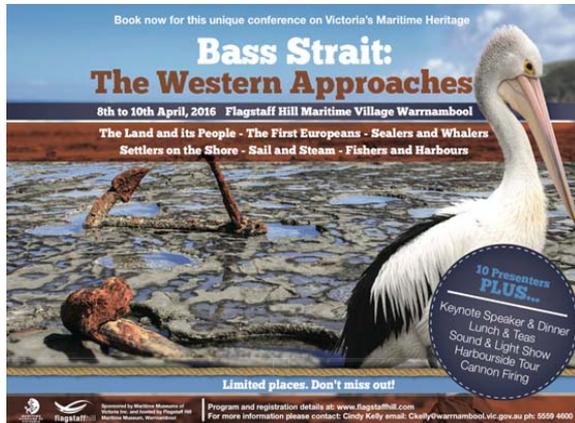
Fig 4: Circular Head Heritage Centre's Emma Seymour and Elayne Blake, in the Women of Circular Head Exhibition.

The Circular Head Heritage Centre in Smithton, Tasmania had an excellent year in 2015. The catalyst for that was obtaining a government grant of \$4000. This enabled the Historical Society to employ an enthusiastic Museum Officer, Emma Seymour from Queensland.

This encouraged local Smithton district residents to volunteer at the Heritage Centre enabling it to open for more hours per week. One of the volunteers, Elayne Blake, manager of a restaurant being refurbished in Stanley, has undertaken extensive research on the museum and library collection. The Circular Head Council then granted the Heritage Centre another \$4000. This has enabled much more research to be done on the collection and to mount new exhibitions. Historical Society member, Mrs Nance Force wrote to the *Burnie Advocate* newspaper promoting the Centre commending its achievements in 2015. There is now a very positive relationship between the Circular Head Councillors and the Historical Society and the community. (Contact Details: PO Box 341, Smithton Tas 7330; email: duckriver@bigpond.com)

(Source: Dr Ruth S. Kerr, Brisbane & FAHS Immediate Past President – Personal visit and communication with the Smithton Historical Society member, Mrs Nance Force – January 2016)

4) Victoria's Maritime Heritage Conference - Bass Strait: The Western Approaches



Hosted by the Victorian Maritime Museums Network, the conference will focus on the history and heritage of Bass Strait.

8th - 10th April, 2016 Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village Warrnambool.
The Land and its People – The First Europeans – Sealers and Whalers – Settlers on the Shore – Sail and Steam – Fishers and Harbours.

Fig 5: Bass Strait: The Western Approaches conference flyer

For more information contact Cindy Kelly on 03 5559 4600; email Ckelly@warrnambool.vic.gov.au. Conference brochure and registration at <http://www.flagstaffhill.com/about-us/location/Exhibitions/maritime-museum/>

(Source: <http://www.flagstaffhill.com/about-us/location/Exhibitions/maritime-museum/>)

5) History is Hot! – RAHS Evening Event



RAHS Evening Event – History is Hot: University of NSW postgraduate students present their research.

The 'History is Hot' series is an opportunity for RAHS members and friends to hear about recent research findings in Australian history and how they impact our understanding and interpretation of the past.

Fig 6: Kensington NSW C. 1937 (RAHS/ADASTRA Aerial Survey Collection)

You are invited to join University of New South Wales postgraduate students who will discuss their research projects. Speakers include Antje Kühnast, Anthea Compton, Jess Parr, Kate Colgan and Katharine Jacka.
Date and Time: Wednesday 17 February @ 5.30pm – 7.30pm
Venue: History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney
Cost: FREE

Book online: <http://tinyurl.com/hexo3ml>
Email: history@rahs.org.au
Phone: (02) 9247 8001

(Source: <http://www.rahs.org.au/history-is-hot/>)

6) Conference: Stories of Stephens, Annerley



Fig 7: State Library Queensland, Vehicles on the road at Annerley, ca. 1935

A history conference is being held on Saturday 27 February 2016 at the Marymac Community Centre 616 Ipswich Road, Annerley (adjacent to Our Lady's College)

Papers will be presented on the history of the Stephens Area, local Aboriginal history, tramway history, Junction Park and Annerley history, the history of Fairfield and of eminent pioneering families of the locality. There will also be papers to assist researchers on family history and local house studies.

Over ten distinguished speakers have been engaged to present papers.

Registration begins at 8.30 am and the conference commences at 9am.
Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be provided. Cost \$40pp

It will be a great day and you are all welcome. An invitation is extended to guests to bring and display any memorabilia and photographs.

RSVP: Stephen Sheaffe: 041 777 0176 (stephen@sheaffe.com); Bill Elliott: 041 771 3200 (billelliott@optusnet.com.au)

For further information <https://annerleystephenshistory.org/calendar/latest-events-2/stories-of-stephens-conference/>

7) Grants now open up to \$5,000 – Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewals

Grant applications for Round 29 of the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal's (FRRR) Small Grants for Small Communities are now open and close 24 March 2016. Guidelines are available <http://www.frrr.org.au/grants/small-grants-for-rural-communities-round29>. Grants up to \$5,000 are available for projects and activities that offer clear public benefit for communities, with populations of 10,000 or less, living in small rural and remote locations in Australia, contributing to their development in social and community welfare, economic, environmental, health and education or cultural areas.

Applications are invited from not-for-profit, incorporated community organisations. Further information (including the announcement of recipients of grants in the previous Round 28) is available http://www.frrr.org.au/cb_pages/news/SmallGrantsR28Announced.php or freecall 1800 170 020 or email info@frrr.org.au

Applications close on 24 March 2016.

(Source: <http://www.frrr.org.au/>)

8) Grants open shortly up to \$15,000 – Community Heritage Grant

The Australian Government's Community Heritage Grant (CHG) program provides grants up to \$15,000 for projects including significance assessments of collections; preservation needs assessments of collections; conservation activities and collection management; and training workshops. The grants are provided to assist with the preservation of locally owned, but nationally significant collections of materials that are publicly accessible including artefacts, letters, diaries, maps, photographs, and audio visual material.

The next grant round will open on 7 March 2016. For more information go to the National Library of Australia's [website](#)

(Source: <http://www.nla.gov.au/awards-and-grants/chg>)