

Port Macquarie Museum  
22 Clarence Street,  
Port Macquarie NSW 2444

Phone: (02) 6583 1108

Web: [portmuseum.org.au](http://portmuseum.org.au)

Email: [portmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:portmuseum@gmail.com)

PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.



Vol 12 Issue 2    March 2024    ISSN 2208-0295

## *President's Report*

When we were unsuccessful in obtaining a large grant to undertake the very detailed planning and design work that we had hoped would be the next step in our long-term transformation project, we realised we basically had to start again. In the meantime, having an engineer's report on our heritage building prompted us to seek to develop an over-arching strategy for managing the future of the heritage building that would also inform our future plans for the whole site (see the article to the right).

While the possibility of a major transformation project seemed real, we put off any major maintenance work on the post-1960 buildings (why spend money on something that we intend to demolish?). However, now that the transformation is deferred indefinitely, we have turned our attention to maintenance issues with the post-1960 buildings, as we need to keep our collections safe and secure, and have a safe and secure environment for our volunteers and visitors.

A preliminary list of works that need to be addressed has been drawn up, and will be discussed this month by the Facilities Planning & Management Sub-Committee, which will make recommendations to the Management Committee. Much of the work that needs to be done can only be done by professional tradespeople, and so will incur expenditure, some of it significant.

Our funds are somewhat limited, so the first task of the Management Committee will be to determine priorities. Some works will also involve closure of parts of the Museum from time to time, which would probably affect our income stream. Of course, where possible, grant funding will be sought, but our experience is that, for this sort of work (resulting largely from normal wear and tear), grant funding is quite scarce. We'll keep you informed.

Clive

## *Conservation Management Strategy*

We have recently secured funding to complete a Conservation Management Strategy for our State significant Store building. We will also be contributing our own funds to this very important project.

The project will include developing a Conservation Management Strategy that considers maintenance issues, access, flood and functionality analysis and opportunities for change. It will also establish a Works strategy for the Store building - establishing priorities, exploring options for access, connections and future development integration, developing costs and preparing concept drawings for discussion.

Until this happens and remediation works are identified and carried out (and funded), the upper level of the Store building will remain closed to the public. Making the upper level safe again is going to be a long term proposition. The timing for this project is still being worked through with the project consultants.

This project is supported by the NSW Government and The Copland Foundation.



Heritage NSW



Museum front desk and volunteers, June 2000  
Remember what the foyer looked like then?

## 'The Nellies'

Congratulations to Tony Dawson who has just had another article 'The Nellies' published in Placenames Australia, the newsletter of the Australian National Placenames Survey - March 2024 edition. The well researched and engaging paper explores, as the title suggests, 'The Nellies'. High above the Lansdowne Valley are three ancient volcanic plugs (who knew!) that bear the names Big Nellie, Little Nellie and Flat Nellie. The plugs were formed some 16–17 million years ago, and it is Tony's investigation of 'The Nellies', and how they were named that captures one's attention and imagination. You can access the article here [https://www.anps.org.au/upload/March\\_2024.pdf](https://www.anps.org.au/upload/March_2024.pdf). We highly recommend reading it.

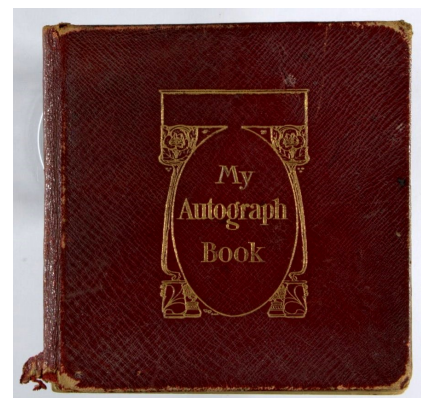
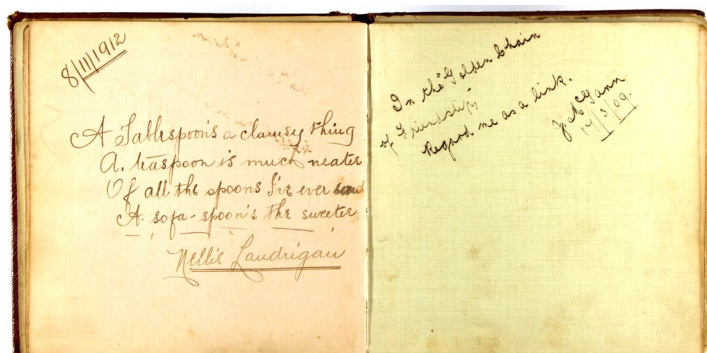
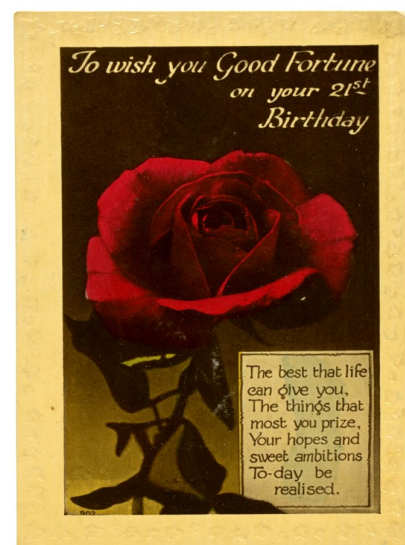
After reading the article and searching for 'Nellies' in our recently digitised collections, we came up with the following two objects.

One is a birthday postcard featuring a hand coloured photograph of a single red rose with printed verse and inscribed on the reverse 'To Dear Dot, wishing you a very Happy Birthday from Nellie/ also a Merry Xmas & a Happy New Year, lots of love Nellie'. The card was sent to Dorothy Mae Hyde, nee Herring 1923-2011 in 1943 on her 21st birthday. Who Nellie is remains a mystery. Refer: <https://ehive.com/collections/3977/objects/1207456/postcard-to-wish-you-good-fortune-on-your-21st-birthday>

The other item is a page from Isabella Florence Wade's autograph book. With a somewhat risqué verse written by Nellie Laudrigan in 1912. The verse reads; 'A Tablespoon's [sic.] a clumsy thing, A teaspoon is much neater, Of all the spoons I've ever used, A sofa-spoon's the sweeter'. Refer: <https://ehive.com/collections/3977/objects/743732/autograph-book-isabella-florence-wade>



Big Nellie and Little Nellie from Hannavale - Photograph by Tony Dawson



## *Displays Update*

You may have noticed that the Botanical display is gradually being emptied to make way for the new exhibition 'Conflicts and Creativity'. This exhibition will showcase war memorabilia from our collection created for and during conflicts under two sub-themes:

1. Items created by enlistees and in POW and Internment camps - Trench art items, Prisoner of War crafted items, Sweetheart items, etc., and
2. Domestic arts and crafts - World War 1 embroidered postcards and souvenirs, patriotic domestic arts and crafts, etc.

Installation will begin during March. This exhibition is being supported by a grant from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, through the Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grants Program.

You may not have noticed that our displayed firearms are undergoing some much needed cleaning and preservation work, thanks to our new Firearms Permit Holder, Gerry Bridge. Thanks Gerry!



Right: Gerry Bridge undertakes cleaning of some of our firearms collection

## *Textile Artists Visit*

Port Macquarie U3A textile artists visited on 19 February seeking inspiration for their next series of artworks. It was interesting to see them explore particular objects in detail and in many cases, change their minds about the objects that interested them most. The plan is to present an exhibition of their works together with the collection objects that inspired them in 2025. Spoiler alert - some of the objects that sparked their interest most were not textiles!



## Digitisation Hub Milestone

The Mid North Coast Regional Digitisation Hub has at last reached its major milestone of 1,000 items digitised and publicly accessible on eHive.

This means we can now acquit the Creative Capital Minor Works establishment grant and roll the task of collection digitisation into routine collection management activities at Port Macquarie Museum. We will also continue to support our 6 partner museums with the ongoing process of cataloguing and digitising their collections, and over time extend support and access to the Digitisation Hub and loan equipment to other museums and collecting organisations across the Mid North Coast. This has been a very large project for us and the largest grant we have received in our organisation's history. There have been many people working with us on this project at the partner museums.

We acknowledge the amazing support we received from consultant Andrew Long, who set up the equipment, digitisation and training processes. He delivered most of the training and even made our Hub window shades! We also acknowledge the support of consultant Liam Worth who came into the project towards the end to provide further photography support and training.

Thanks too to Lynda Warlters (digitisation processing) and Sue Trotter (cataloguing) who have supported Debbie Sommers over the past several months. The 1,000 items were contributed as follows: Bellingen - 67, Camden Haven - 41, Dorrigo - 32, Great Lakes — 53, Kempsey - 37, Port Macquarie - 662 and Wingham - 108.

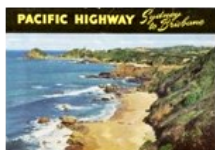
The Mid North Coast Regional Digitisation Hub is proudly funded by the NSW Government through the Creative Capital Minor Works Program.

Proudly funded by



You can view the Hub's eHive entries at: <https://ehive.com/communities/1220/mnc-regional-digitisation-hub>. Many more items have been digitised and will be added to the page as they are catalogued on eHive.

### MNC Regional Digitisation Hub



**Established** 10 Nov 2023

The Mid North Coast Regional Digitisation Hub was established in 2023 with funding from the NSW Government's Creative Capital Minor Works Program.

Based at Port Macquarie Museum, the Mid North Coast Regional Digitisation Hub supports museums and collecting institutions across the Mid North Coast region of NSW to digitise their collections to sector standards and share collection items and their stories online.

# NSW Seniors Festival— Open Sesame

The NSW Seniors Festival takes place from 11 to 24 March 2024. This year's theme is **'Reach Beyond!'**. We will be offering our usual free entry for all Seniors from Monday 11 to Saturday 23 March, and are encouraging Seniors to step inside and discover the many treasures on exhibit in our Museum.

**Open Sesame** means all seniors will be given free admission to our museum and free access to our exhibitions during the Festival dates, except for Sundays when we are closed.

Please extend the invitation to senior family members and friends.



## Diary Dates

**March 11-24**  
NSW Seniors Festival  
Free Museum entry for all Seniors

**April 18 to May 19**  
NSW Heritage Festival  
Further details next month



## Acknowledgement of Country

Port Macquarie Museum acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live and work, the Birpai people, and recognises their continuing connection to Country. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all First Australians.

## Our Achievements



2021 National Trust Heritage Awards - Highly Commended (Tourists Paradise)



2022 IMAGInE Awards – Highly Commended (New Journeys Broad Horizons)

## Our Supporters



Australian Government



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL



PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS

Supported by the



NSW GOVERNMENT



**Museums & Galleries of NSW**

**arts** MID NORTH COAST



Forestry Corporation



**Contributors this Month:**

Clive Smith  
Debbie Sommers

**Compiled by:**  
Anne Oud