



THE PIONEER

THE BUDERIM HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

April - May 2025

Notes from the President

PATRON

Lorrell Jamieson

PRESIDENT:

Kevin Briggs 0488 021 894

SECRETARY:

Margaret Thursby 0421 832 855

TREASURER:

Margaret Welshe 0414 452 722

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Ruth Ormerod 5326 1740

Geoff Baker 0435 068 241

MEMBERSHIP:

Steve Ormerod 0412 392 488

DIARY DATES

BHS Stall at Lions' Easter Fair -
Saturday 19 April 7.00am –
2.00pm at BWMCA Hall

ANZAC Day Friday 25 April
Pioneer Cottage open 10.00am –
1.00pm

BCC Happy Hour – Will not be
held in April. Will be next held
on 13 June 2025.

There is a tremendous workload that is currently being carried out by the volunteers that form Buderim Historical Society, which I will report on below, but first I have to report that we are losing one of our stalwarts.

Doug Benckendorff has submitted his resignation from the Management Committee, which was sadly accepted in February. Doug's family circumstances have changed, with his wife being in care in Brisbane and as a result Doug is in the process of packing his lifelong possessions and moving to the city to be near his wife and extended family. We wish Doug well with the packing and his move to the city and as you all know he will be sadly missed at BHS by members and friends. Doug is a true community pillar, having been heavily involved in supporting a number of Buderim organisations. We shall miss Doug as a knowledgeable door guide and a team leader with our maintenance group. We wish Doug and his wife, Lika, well for their future in the "big smoke".

Lyn Nichols has also resigned from the Management Committee but will continue to lead our wonderful gardening team in maintaining the gardens.

As you are aware, the Sunshine Coast area was put on watch with the arrival and eventual crossing of Cyclone Alfred on 8 March. Our Disaster

Preparedness Plan was enacted to alleviate possible loss or damage to our collection. I thank Janet Baker for the meticulous way that she painstakingly removed and systematically recorded each of the items that were stored for safe keeping during the emergency period. I also thank Ruth who assisted Janet where needed. Some of the less precious items were not removed but were placed in safe areas within the Cottage away from high shelves that would have had the capacity to cause breakages. Of course, once the threat passed, the collection was cleaned and rightfully returned to the Cottage. At the end of the process Janet and Ruth met to evaluate the process and the effectiveness of our current Disaster Preparedness Plan.

Despite Cyclone Alfred, daily visitor numbers appear to be on the increase, which is very pleasing and helps to promote our presence in the local community. In March we had a group of eighty-one students from Buddina State School. They visited over two days, Monday and Thursday and were accompanied by a supportive team of teachers and volunteer parents. I thank the ten volunteer guides who made the visit possible by allowing the children to walk through the Cottage in smaller rotating groups. Given the limited space in the Cottage this concept of visiting is far more successful rather than bringing larger groups through each of the areas visited.



Eager Year 1 students preparing for their visit!

A group of eight from Glasshouse Mountains Probus recently enjoyed a wonderful visit to Pioneer Cottage. Many thanks to Ruth and Pam Wood for providing a high-quality morning tea in very pleasant surroundings on the veranda of the cottage. The Probus group displayed a keen interest in the history talk that was presented while enjoying their scones. Their visit was further enhanced when they were given the opportunity to wander through and explore the displays on show. A very pleasant morning was had by all including the BHS volunteers who ensured the smooth running of the visit.

On Saturday 22 March I was fortunate to have the Bellflower Retirement Village Garden Club visit. I thank Marg Thursby for taking a call on Friday and advising the caller that we were open the next day. As a result, we had sixteen visitors arrive at the Cottage by minibus. Their visit lasted approximately one hour, and I gave them a brief introductory talk about the Burnett family and of course Sybil Vise's generous donation to the Buderim community. One of the visiting group had been a former student of Sybil at Nambour High School. The group departed from the cottage having had a fulfilling time.

Our calendar of events continues to be filled with activities and the Lions' Easter Fair will be the next event that involves consideration. The fair will be conducted on Easter Saturday, 19 April. The Social Marketing group have been busily organizing the raffle, stall items and rosters for the day. I thank all the volunteers who have offered to cook and make donations to the stall. I thank Bev Thacker for donating plants to the gardening group and for the repotting that she has done for the sale of plants. It is great to see a wide range of members lending a hand where they can.

Planning is ongoing for a temporary display opening for ANZAC week that will focus on the wartime experiences of Dorothea Burnett and her Unit, the 2/5th Australian General Hospital. The display will highlight the wonderful work that was undertaken by Dorothea in her contribution to the war effort and her contribution in the repatriation system following the war. Primary research is being undertaken by Belinda Mayall and members contributing include Janet Baker, Pat Wood, Margaret Thursby and Steve Ormerod. The Cottage will be open on ANZAC Day between 10.00am and 1.00pm. We hope you will drop by to view the display.

The Buderim Garden Club's "Open Garden" weekend and the Sunshine Coast "Open House" will fall on the same weekend in October and after discussions with John Lyon, we have found a way to enable Pioneer Cottage and the gardens to be open for both events.

The BHS Management Committee has agreed to have a BHS representative at the BWMCA monthly affiliates meeting, through Marg Thursby or myself. Our attendance will ensure that we are fully informed of the BWMCA activities that may directly affect our daily business at BHS.

Mr Steve Budden, President of the BWMCA, recently brought to the site another licensed plumber and roofing contractor to view the Cottage roof. This process has been very long and drawn out, however, we are certainly much closer to a new roof than we were twelve months ago. We have been notified that the results about our application for funding from the Gambling Commission will be announced at the end of April. I have also had a meeting with Dougal Pitt from the BWMCA, who is charged with applying for external grants to help fund their various maintenance projects, which includes the reroofing of Pioneer Cottage.

We are delighted that BWMCA volunteers from the Old Post Office have accepted an invitation to attend an orientation to Pioneer Cottage, to be held on 10 April. The volunteers play a vital role in steering visitors to Buderim in our direction, so we thought it would help to give them an understanding of what is available at Pioneer Cottage. Thanks to Ruth for working with the BWMCA to make this happen.

James Abernethy and Claudia Little from the Sunshine Coast Council's Heritage Department recently met with us for an update on current projects. The Council is in the process of putting together a display themed on "ball" sports. We are working with James to enable sporting objects from our collection to be included in the display. Chris Peckham is a local film maker who has been engaged by the Council to produce a short historical documentary for the display. He has done filming at Pioneer Cottage, including an interview with me giving the context for a tennis competition between the Buderim and Nambour Lawn Tennis Associations, held in early 1904.

Garden Update

The maintenance of the gardens surrounding the Historic Cottage and Sybil Vise House over the last 12 months has required on average about 10 - 12 hours per week of volunteer work. Regular pruning, weeding, mulching and watering is required to sustain the gardens. The gardens are an integral part of Pioneer Cottage and their ascetic appeal enhances our visitors' experience.

This summer has been a challenge, with the heat and (until March) the absence of good soaking rain making for trying conditions. We are looking to have a garden working bee during the cooler months to help in preparing the garden for participation in the Buderim Garden Club's display in October – more details to come for members who would like to help.

Interpretation Plan for Pioneer Cottage

Work continues to utilise the funding BHS has received from the Sunshine Coast Council to implement Project 1 of the Interpretation Plan for Pioneer Cottage.

Work on implementing the first part of the Interpretation Plan for Pioneer Cottage is continuing, with the working group finalising the display furniture to be purchased and getting the text for the interpretation display panels finalised to go the graphic designer.

Athol Lubbe has begun work on dating and expanding the description of selected objects in the collection, focusing initially on where we have multiple items of the same kind, such as our collection of five sewing machines. Athol has been researching their manufacturing dates so that we can focus on displaying the ones that are representative of the late 19th/early 20th century period that we are trying to represent in the house museum rooms. Accurate information about the items for display will facilitate decisions about the displays in each room and enable us to give an extended description of significant items.

National Library of Australia Community Heritage Grant

Work continues to utilise the cultural heritage grant from the National Library of Australia to assist with implementation of the Preservation Needs Assessment for the BHS collection. Melanie Fihelly, the Conservator engaged with this grant, attended a third session in February 2025, focused on an inspection of the displays in Pioneer Cottage and the storerooms in Vise House. Nine BHS members participated in this session.

Melanie's inspection focused on risks to the collection from light, dust and humidity. For example, she used a 1000 lux torch in the bedroom to inspect wooden furniture, metal bed frames and suitcases on display and was able to locate mould and dust and insect detritus accumulation not otherwise visible, eg, where additional items were stored under beds and behind the wardrobe. She also advised on the repositioning of some items to minimise exposure to direct light and temperature fluctuations.

The next session is on 3 April, with the focus on finishing the inspection of both the cottage and Vise House store rooms. Specific objects will also be selected for subsequent mentoring sessions; the inspection process so far has identified 11 objects that could be the subject of a specific mentoring session, for example, cleaning and preserving the double bed metal frame.

Work also has begun on implementing Melanie's cleaning recommendations, including::

- Removing some stored items from the Cottage and attending to cleaning where a problem was identified,
- Reviewing the contents and reorganising some areas of the Store Rooms in Vise House to remove dust traps and create additional space, and
- Commencing a deep clean of the Slab Hut and its collection of objects, led by Gail MacDonald.

Cogill Family Gathering

Descendants of Dan Cogill and his wife Elizabeth (nee Walker) gathered at Diddillibah Hall on 15 March 2025. BHS members John and Lyn Nichols played a key role in organising the gathering, John being a descendant of Dan and Elizabeth.

John had asked if it was possible to have the Bingeye breastplate on display at the gathering and Geoff Baker volunteered to accompany the breastplate for the afternoon. Geoff also compiled a summary of the history of the breastplate, including why Dan's name is on it, based on Dr Elaine Brown's account in her PhD thesis on William Pettigrew. This summary is now displayed with the breastplate in the Museum Room at Pioneer Cottage.

The breastplate attracted much interest from participants at the Cogill family gathering.

John and other family members have put together a wonderful archive on Dan and Elizabeth and their descendants, who are scattered far and wide but also still have a strong presence on the Sunshine Coast.

Congratulations to John and Lyn – it takes a lot of work to organise a gathering like this, but such events play a vital role in passing on family stories and keeping descendants in contact with each other.

Snippet from the past – Buderim's future population

Our Buderim predecessors might be surprised at how many people live here today, but a letter to the editor (below) published in the Brisbane Courier on 18 September 1917 suggests that some residents back then were thinking very big about Buderim's future population – a place able to accommodate 100,000! Peak school time along Main St must have been very different in 1917!

"Progress" writes: Sir, - Any person who visits Buderim Mountain speaks of it as a most charming locality. But one and all say 'what a pity it is so sparsely populated.' With an average rainfall of nearly 60 inches, soil which will grow anything, and specially adapted for poultry raising, it does seem a pity more settlers do not choose this district. Certainly it has gone forward of late years, but nothing like it deserves. Such ideal surroundings suggest the district as capable of maintaining 100,000 settlers. This may seem absurd, but only a few acres are required for a living, and it has permanent rainfall. Gloriously situated for health purposes, frowning down as it were on its pretty headlands, Alexandra Heads and Mooloolah, it does seem strange it is not one of the chosen spots by the Government for closer settlement.

BHS Promotion



Janet Baker prepared and set up an excellent display in the Old Post Office window between 10-21 March

Easter Fair Request

As mentioned in Kevin's report, BHS will be having a stall at the Lions' Easter Fair on Saturday 19 April from 8.00am -2.00pm. If you are able to contribute baked goods, Easter treats or donate towards our raffle, that would be appreciated. Contributions for the raffle can be dropped off at the Pioneer Cottage desk between 11.00am and 3.00pm Monday – Saturday until Thursday 17 April.

Baked goods for the stall will be packed and labelled by our volunteers from 2.00pm on Good Friday 18 April, so can be dropped off then, or at a time arranged with Ruth Ormerod (0412 554 262). A list of ingredients for the labels can be forwarded to Ruth via email (rutho@melbpc.org.au).

