

Cooneana Heritage Centre Newsletter



Published by
Ipswich Historical Society



Newsletter 6 – July 2026 (*Published Monthly*)

Meet a Member: Libby Coultas

Hi everyone, I'm Libby Coultas. I am born and bred in Ipswich, and I have been volunteering at the Ipswich Historical Society since August 1999.

I worked as an assistant nurse in the aged care industry for 23 years. I retired in February 2019.

Two friends became redundant from their workplaces in July 2019. These were Margaret Taylor and Carmel Crimean. Margaret, being the wife of Hugh Taylor, our President, suggested that we come and volunteer at the Ipswich Historical Society.

So, Carmel and I arrived in August and were given some tasks to do.

Our first task was to stock take an extensive collection of souvenir goods that the Society has inherited from the estate of Helene Hughes, who has bequeathed her home and most of her estate to the Society. She owned "The London Gift Shop" in Limestone Street for many years and had been a pharmacist.

It is a huge collection, and it has taken 3 volunteers 5 to 6 years to sort and catalogue her bequest, as being volunteers we do not work at it full time. It's been a very intensive and not so pleasant a task at times. Brigid McCarthy, Carmel Crimean and Janine Kirby have shouldered this huge task.

I have learnt to scan and record artifacts, photographs and documents that are part of our collection into a digital format so one day it will be available to the public to access.

What's Inside

Meet a Member.....	1
Book of the Month.....	2
IHS Opportunity.....	3
Claypave Pavers (Part 2)....	4
Blacksmith's Forge (Pt.5)...	5
Ipswich's Number Plates....	7
Building of the Month.....	9
Mystery Object.....	9
Horses to Horsepower.....	10
President's Report.....	11
Save the Date.....	11
Membership & Contact.....	12



Since purchasing a new laptop a couple of years ago, I became interested in creating printed information to give to our visitors and for our displays. People like to know the story behind our artifacts.



From an idea from our president Hugh Taylor, I created a program to engage children when they came to visit with their parents. They sometimes they tend to become bored, so to give them an interest in the museum, I created several booklets, called “Help Nea find some special things”, with photographs of articles found at our site. They are given a booklet and pencil to find and mark off what they find and hopefully learn about our history. The program’s “mascot” is “Nea” named after our resident possum.

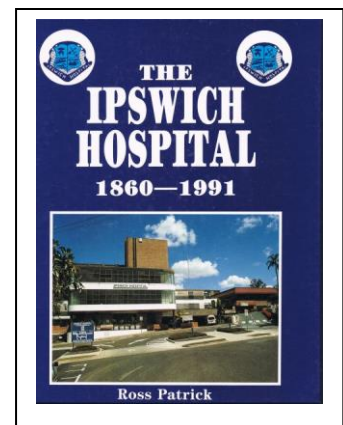
Cooneana is thought to be an indigenous word meaning “home of the ringtail possum”. Hence “Nea”. When the children have found all the articles in the booklet, they earn a pin made from a one cent piece in a presentation box which has a possum on it, if you remember it.

I make posters and flyers for our events and information sheets and maps for our school program and anything that is needed to promote our Society.

On our school program days, I am in the school room. {teacher}. On Open Days I have a table where children can come and do some collage/scrapbooking. Come and join me sometime

Book of the Month

<i>Title</i>	The Ipswich Hospital 1860-1991
<i>Author</i>	Ross Patrick
<i>Publisher</i>	Boolarong Publications
<i>Date of Publication</i>	1993
<i>Number of Pages</i>	224



This hardback book sets out to cover the broad sweep of Ipswich Hospital’s history from the very beginning in 1856 when the idea was first discussed that there should be a medical facility in Ipswich, through to hospital life the early 1990s.

The text is very lively, though the close spacing of the lines makes it somewhat challenging to read (an issue common with some other Boolarong publications). Patrick has researched his subject well, with material being suitable for casual interest as well as being a good sourcebook for more detailed academic study. The final chapter introduces a series of short vignettes that are highly entertaining and quirky. The book is out of print, but copies can be found for viewing in local libraries (not for loan). It is uncommon to find it in the second-hand book market.

An Ipswich Historical Society Opportunity!

Hi everyone, Sandi here. I have been responsible for a few different aspects of the Society for several years and have decided to take a year off for my health. I shall be away when the Annual General Meeting is held in October and won't be volunteering for any positions at that time. The Society will need others to take up what I have been doing.

In order for you to find out what is involved in the tasks I have been undertaking, I will put some details of one in each of the next few newsletters. I can give you more information if you are interested.

This month I will outline what needs to be done as **Events Coordinator** which includes **Publicity** by necessity.

1. In November, call a meeting to decide which events will be held in the following year – titles and dates with suggested improvements. Prices, food, drinks and furniture required should be considered at this time.
2. Invite participants to attend, for example the bush poets, stallholders and displays. I have created a spreadsheet with contact details of those people and organisations we have used before that you are welcome to use.
3. Record on the spreadsheet their responses and add any new participants.
4. Note if they require payment and have this approved by the Executive. Give the Grants Coordinator quotes and information to apply for a grant if necessary.
5. Put information about the event and a booking link onto the Society's website under Events [another month's article]. Give Brigid, or whoever is managing our Facebook page, information about it. Give Libby information to create posters and flyers.
6. Before the event, place information about it on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW). This will ensure it is picked up by Discover Ipswich and other Visitor Information Centres.
7. Place information on the River 94.9 website under Local/What's On by completing the form.
8. Contact reporters, radio stations and/or newspaper editors to publicise the event [another article to follow about this].
9. Request sufficient volunteers to support the event. I send out a list of tasks and ask people to put their names down for one. Also, it helps to provide a list of where the tables, chairs and marquees are needed.
10. For larger events, put together a map showing where stalls etc. should be set up for the event. Do a risk assessment. Send this with instructions about times and any other requirements to the participants. Create a program and print it to be handed out.
11. Create a survey tool for visitors to complete – examples available.
12. Pray for good weather and enjoy the day!

Sandi Jones

CLAYPAVE

Part Two: PAVERS

From our Curator of Bricks, Alister Cameron

Claypave produced a huge variety of pavers. They differed in colour, texture, thickness, size and style. Most would have been manufactured by the tunnel kilns, though the large format pavers were processed through the shuttle kiln.

Unfortunately, since Claypave closed, many are no longer available. Brickworks have moved to other products.



Standard Regal Paver



Bullnosed Regal Paver



Coper Paver



Channel Paver



Kerb



Finishing Edge



Paver for Visually Impaired



Gemini Paver



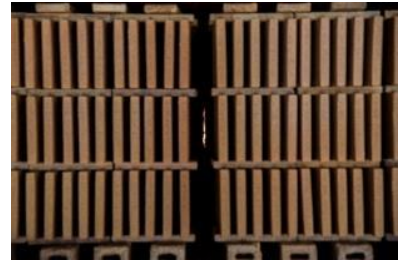
Stone (Arenite) Paver



Large Format Paver



Maxipave Paver



Large format stacked for kiln



Building housing the Shuttle Kiln



Promotional Paver

Cooneana's Blacksmith's Traveling Forge

(Part 5)



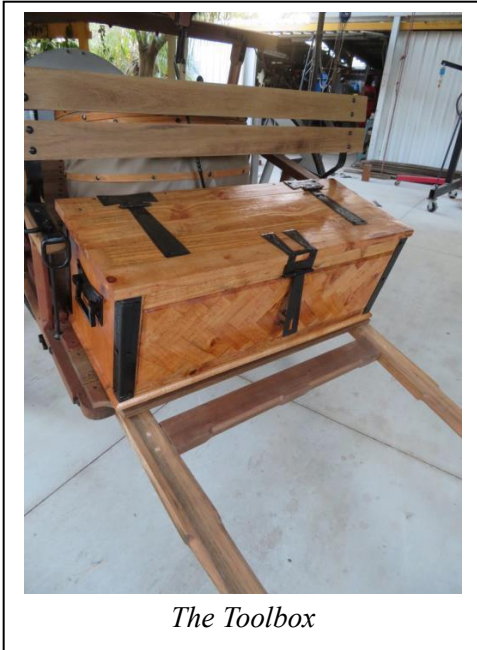
This is the Final Part in this series contributed by Ned Kelly

5 The Toolbox

Many years ago, I was fortunate to be offered a very old, dead Silky Oak tree. I had to saw it into manageable lengths of 8 feet or so and rip the logs with a chain saw into four large baulks of timber. It was stored inside, at the far end of my shed for over 25 years. The tree had been dead for 30 years before I milled it, so the timber is well seasoned to say the least. At my age of 69 I felt that I was running out of time to do something with the timber; it became the ideal choice to use for the toolbox.

Now this was going to be an enjoyable exercise where Carpentry and Blacksmithing come together for a special result! On 5th October 2019 I commenced work on the Toolbox. The first pieces to be sawn to dimension were the sides. On hand were two very thick shorter pieces that were perfect. Some joinery was required to obtain the required width; however, the overall thickness at 40mm is rather special especially in Silky Oak. The intervening years of storage had warped and damaged some of the timber baulks and along with odd incidents of white ant attack some inevitable wastage occurred. The front of the Toolbox was built using parquetry techniques similar to the top of the Bellows. Doing this allowed me to utilise a lot of the smaller pieces of timber I had on hand and thereby have less wastage.

I painted two coats of Estapol both inside and out to the toolbox on 14th/15th October. The beautiful grain and colouring was now fully highlighted. I spent two days blacksmithing hinges, a centre clasp and the two handles for each end of the toolbox. Another day spent



The Toolbox

pinning hinges and fabricating the handles and then finally nailing them all into place with those lovely blacksmith nails. Over 20 nails were required with a further 24 for the corner pieces. All made across the anvil. The toolbox has been solidly constructed to endure the rigors of a Blacksmith storage container. That usually means heavy hard stuff. In its completed state and empty the Toolbox weighs over 35kg. But let's face it, when full of tools it could weigh well over 100kg.

Final

By the end of November 2019, the Dray was complete with the exception of Blacksmithed brackets, rope rails, horse harness brackets and steel gussets for the shafts. I was unable to continue with these items as SEQ was in drought and a high to extreme fire danger existed. Therefore, I was reluctant to light my forge. One small window presented following an overnight storm. I did a day's forging and made the rope rails. They were fitted up and painted on December 4th, 2019.



The Dray was completed, fittingly, on 26th January 2020 - Australia Day. However, due to this being our first Covid Year, it wasn't delivered to Cooneana till 16th March 2020. After so much work, it was very satisfying to see a finished product that I am proud of!

Registration Plates of Queensland: The Ipswich Connection

I thought that some of you may be interested in the following newsletter article, which I wrote for the Number Plate Collectors Club (NPCC), of which I am a member. It outlines the very brief period when Ipswich had its own registration plates. (Contributed by Michael Pick, NPCC Member)

Early Plates in Ipswich

The very first motorised vehicles in Queensland appeared in 1900, and by 1905 the *Brisbane Traffic Act* for the first time stipulated that vehicle owners were to pay a tax of ten shillings (registration) on their vehicles. The *Act* covered all kinds of rules, including requirements to display a registration number (frequently painted directly onto the vehicle), metropolitan speed limits (8 miles per hour), the size of headlamps, and police abilities to seize vehicles in the control of ‘drunken persons’.

It is believed that the first motor car in Ipswich may have appeared in 1907: a Reo owned by Dr Roderick MacDonald, although there are other reports dating back as far as 1900 of Ipswich-based vehicles. By the end of 1907 there was a grand total of 132 vehicles (cars & motorcycles) in Queensland. By 1908, amongst other things, regulations were introduced to standardise the size, colours and display of registration numbers on vehicles throughout the state. Numbers were now of a standard size and colour, with each Police District responsible for registering vehicles within their area. As each district numbered registrations consecutively from #1, confusion reigned when vehicles drove into another district, as different vehicles and owners in Brisbane, Ipswich and Toowoomba, for example could all have been issued with #1, #2, #3, #6, #11 and so forth.



To alleviate this obvious duplication, in 1914 the *Traffic Act* was amended to require each district to use an initial identification letter in red before the serial. Each Police jurisdiction throughout the State received a unique alpha letter. In Ipswich, this was the letter E, as seen in the example above. This requirement was abolished when the more familiar State-wide Q-Plate system was introduced in 1921. Thus, alpha-prefixed registration plates were issued only during the period 1914 to 1921.

Discovered still attached to vehicle by a keen collector a few years ago, at least one example of an Ipswich-registered plate (*E39 – photo above*) has survived. It was at one time registered to a Cadillac owned by W.H. Hewlett of South Street. There may be other similar plates awaiting discovery.

In addition, photographic evidence is starting to come to light showing such plates on vehicles. A postcard in the author’s collection issued by the Scottish company *Valentines* shows a row of early taxis waiting outside the Ipswich Railway Station. The postcard is unfortunately undated, but its company data suggests that it dates from around 1914. One of the vehicles displays Ipswich registration E64 attached to the rear. The E is difficult to see in the full-scale image, but with magnification the E becomes reasonably clear. The records indicate that in 1919 this number was registered to a Buick owned by Richard Runge of Mortimer Street, Ipswich, although the vehicle in the photograph appears to be a 1915 Ford Model T vehicle, suggesting that Runge had replaced his Ford with the more upmarket Buick prior by 1919.

Another photographic example (also a Model T Ford) shows E122 at an unknown location, but possibly at Glamorganvale (photo next page). I know of no other images of these very early Ipswich plates (readers, look out for other examples, and please pass them on!)



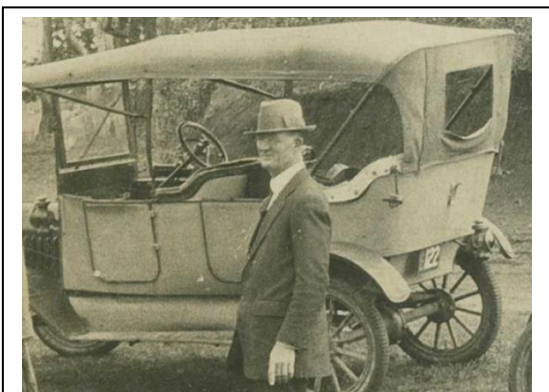
Ipswich Railway Station, Valentine & Sons Postcard, c.1915. Author's collection

Ipswich Plates in the Modern Era

Sometime before 2002, the Ipswich City Council (ICC) supported a series of ‘corporate plates’ with the prefix IPS, the then ICC logo and the slogan “Ipswich – It’s a Great Place!” As part of a promotion at the time, Council ran a competition to secure the first five (I think) plates in the series. I was fortunate enough to win IPS 03 – a set that I still have. I don’t know how many of these were issued, but there must not have been many as I have only seen IPS 11 on the road (that was many years ago). I assume that these are pretty rare nowadays.



Until very recently, I also owned the prestige plates IPSWCH, but I have more plates than cars, so this pair was sold and now has a new home (currently attached to an Audi e-tron GT). Some other variations exist, using the numerals for ‘one’ and ‘five’, and also with the city name spelled out in full. When you are out-and-about in the city, look out for these Ipswich-themed plates.



Ipswich Registration Plate E122

References

- Brisbane Courier* 30 May 1914 p.6 and 29 August 1917 p.3
- McDonough, R. (2015) *Queensland's Motoring Dawn* Boolarong Press
- Number Plate Collectors Club *Newsletters*: Jan 2002 p.20; Oct 2025 p.20
- Queensland Motor Annual and Diary* 1920
- State Library of Queensland, *Queensland Registration History* blog



Historical Building of the Month – *Art Deco home in Eastern Heights*



In 2009 *On the House Real Estate* described this property in glowing terms (what else would you expect from the real estate fraternity?), highlighting the panoramic views to the west, ornate plaster ceilings throughout the home and ‘dramatic Art Deco’ design frontage ‘at its best’.

Tucked away in a quiet corner of Eastern Heights, the property was

apparently designed by Master Builder Dick Beaumont during the 1940s after he returned from Europe. Clearly influenced by Italian architecture of the period, the home is said to have been constructed in 1941.

Although not considered one of the celebrated ‘Great Houses’ of Ipswich, it nevertheless has a quiet appeal, with outstanding twin projections, original terracotta roof and beautifully designed bay windows framed in timber with decorative inserts. Certainly, a house that demonstrates the wide variety of designs that Ipswich has to offer.

Mystery Object

What am I?

Try to guess without referring to online sources. A tough one, an ideal challenge for the technically-minded!



Last Month’s Object: A pair of *Paye & Baker silver-plated dripless spoons. Used for feeding invalids and infants.*

Dated c.1917.

Some websites suggest these were used to strain tea leaves.

Successful Horses to Horsepower Event



On Sunday 28 June Ipswich Historical Society hosted *Horses to Horsepower* at Cooneana Heritage Centre as part of the month-long Festival of Horsepower. Visitors were able to enjoy a range of events throughout the day, including bus rides, a magic show for the kids (and secretly for adults as well!), a cute animal farm and an interesting presentation on the history of local transportation by local author and historian Toni Risson. Displays of blacksmithing, vintage cars and motorcycles, spinning & weaving, genealogy and mining kept the visitors busy, and of course a highlight on site is a visit to the historic Cooneana Homestead itself.

The event was kindly assisted by the Ipswich City Council's Community Events Funding Program. Official proceedings were opened by Mayor Teresa Harding and Shayne Neumann MP. We appreciate their ongoing support for Ipswich Historical Society events.

By all accounts the day was a huge success, with around 370 visitors, lots of smiles and laughter, and plenty of opportunities to mingle, and no doubt swap interesting stories.





Save the Date in 2026

Box Flat Memorial Service – Friday 31 July at Swanbank Memorial 10am

Back to Limestone – Saturday 5 September at ICC Dandiiri Room 9am

Cooneana After Dark – Friday 11 September 6pm to 9pm

Cooneana Market – Saturday 17 October 9am - 1pm

Volunteers Thank You Evening – Friday 20 November

St Barbara's Day service –Friday 4 December at Limestone Park 10am

Highlights from the President’s Report – June 2026

The past month has as usual been quite busy and especially so with school visits even on rainy days!! We sincerely thank our Members, Volunteers, and associated Groups that continue to support this rewarding and important schedule in the education of these young students, their parents and Teachers. On behalf of the Executive, we can only congratulate and thank you all in this wonderful endeavour.

Despite the rough weather, at times, this past month we have seen the Challenge Education team continue to work in completing some pathways and improvements to the facilities here at Cooneana. The batch of students that have been on site here over the past few months

graduated recently. It was very pleasing to see so many of our members and volunteers attend their graduation and thank them for their efforts in improving facilities here at Cooneana.

Yesterday at Cooneana we held a further meeting of the joint Committee between the Royal Qld Historical Society and Ipswich Historical Society for further planning of the “Back to Limestone” conference planned to be held Saturday 5 September 2026 to celebrate 200 years of European settlement here in Limestone / Ipswich. The program is looking great, and I encourage you to keep this date in your calendars as it will explore extensive information on the history and development of the city we call home.

Earlier this month we had another successful QPSR, HBA, & Cooneana Heritage Centre visitor experience Saturday. Many thanks to all that help out with these events as from them we gain exposure to many visitors to our Centre that we would not normally see. The feedback we receive has always been complimentary to our centre and our helpers are able to have short breaks between waves of visitors. I urge you all to continue this great work as it is spreading the value in visitors attending our Centre. I believe that next weekend should be the next round of this tripartite arrangement in visitor experience to part of our Great City.

Importantly we sincerely thank all involved in the arranging, setting up, manning, and dismantling the Society Display at the 2026 Ipswich Show. It was a great effort by all involved over the 3 days of operations and we believe we had good exposure for the Centre.

Also last month, Saturday 30 May, our members hosted a “Mad Hatters Tea Party” and The Greatest Morning Tea. Another great event for the Centre and raised some well-deserved funds for Cancer research. Congrats and well Done to all involved.

Yours in History and Heritage

Hugh Taylor

President, Ipswich Historical Society inc.

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Membership: Please visit our website or contact one of our friendly volunteers for details

Contributions to the newsletter are most welcome. (due by 25th of each month)

Please contact the editor: cooneanaeditor@outlook.com