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Newsletter



Opening hours: Every Sunday 10am – 2pm
Or by appointment.

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(Mudgeeraba Heritage Centre)

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Committee formed June 2001; Incorporated November 2001;
Dedication and official opening 9 October 2004

President's Patter

Vale Joan Rudd

On Tuesday 23rd September we said farewell to our past President and Patron, Joan Rudd. Joan was a foundation member of the Gold Coast Hinterland Heritage Museum and went on to become President in 2005. She enjoyed passing on her knowledge to our visitors and was always welcoming to everyone who came to the Museum.

Back in the early days of the Museum we sold Billy tea and scones at the Mudgeeraba Show to raise funds and Joan always made the scones. When schools visited, she would make damper for the children.

Joan also loved gardening and would potter around in the gardens at the Museum. It is because of her love for gardening that we are going to create a rose garden in her honour at the Museum.

Joan was descended from William Doug Duncan, one of the original cedar cutters of the hinterland.

Joan attended Nerang State School and would travel to school on the milk truck.

She also attended Mudgeeraba State School when the family moved there.

She was Miss Mudgeeraba and Miss Hinterland in the 1960s. She also worked in the Mudgeeraba General Store.

Joan married Jack Rudd in 1966, and they have 2 children and 6 grandchildren.

When the children went to Nerang State School they were both involved in the school P&C and the Nerang Arts Festival.

She modelled for community groups' fashion parades alongside her great friend the late Eileen McKenzie.

Joan was involved with the John Franklin Memorial Fellowship Trust since its inception in 1994. Alongside Jack she was involved in the Albert Battery / Albert Australia Day Foundation and Heritage Voice.

We will miss her knowledge and presence at the Museum.

Rest in Peace Joan.



Museum Happenings

Luggage trolley #11 originally from the Murwillumbah Railway Station. The donor purchased this from an antique store in Tugun in 2000.



Fairmont MT14 series section car.









Placing the Fairmont MT14 on to the rail tracks – building a cover for the Fairmont MT14 series section car. This is on loan from the Qld Rollingstock Preservation Group (QRPg).







KEROSENE – WHERE DID IT COME FROM

From 1813 – 1824, William Lawson was engaged in making a bypass road to avoid steep gradients in the Blue Mountains. This road followed a gully and Lawson reported finding a three-foot seam of 'coal'.

This was found to be kerosene shale: looks like coal but is much lighter in weight; black or dark green in colour; silky sheen and greasy to touch. It is made of bituminised mud or clay. In 1846, Dr Abraham Gesner patented a process by which 'illuminating' liquid was extracted from the shale. This 'illuminating' liquid was given the name 'Kerosene'.

John North located kerosene shale at Ruined Castle and in 1885, registered the Katoomba Coal and Shale Company Limited. This mine along with Glen Shale was later taken over by Australian Kerosene, Oil and Mineral Company but by 1895 both mines were being wound down and were eventually abandoned in 1903. Hartley Vale kerosene was marketed as Comet oil. In 1895 Mobil established their company as Vacuum Oil and in 1916 introduced their famous 'Plume' and 'Laurel' brands.

Laurel kerosene was advertised as Easiest light on the eye; Convenient for heating and cooking; invaluable for cleaning windows; adding to the washing; cleans coppers and porcelain; cleans mangles and prevents rotting; splendid scalp massage; removes dandruff; a few drops on sugar cures colds and sore throats; keeps ants off pantry shelves; placed on swamp surfaces prevents insects maturing.

Some of the benefits found by the pioneers include – empty cans were put to use and the boxes in which they were packed were an added bonus.

Laurel kerosene was packed in well made, polished boxes and far too valuable to use for firewood in a country where timber was becoming more and more scarce. The boxes were prized as the basic necessity for furnishing.

The empty kerosene can was put to many uses – nothing was wasted and many a child was sent for water with a kerosene can with a fencing wire handle. Cans were used for boiling the washing over the open fire. They were cut in half for use in the kitchen for water, storing supplies, etc.

Many enterprising pioneers used the boxes and cans to furnish their homes. A chest of drawers could be made from the cans and the handles made from cotton reels. The boxes could be made into seats, covered with material as well as shelves for storage. The pioneers called them 'Laurel' suites after the kerosene.

The kerosene provided fuel for the lamps – cleaner and better than the slush lamps [twists of raged dipped into tallow and lit] better for the busy housewife trying to sew for the family.

Kerosene also powered fridges taking the place of the Coolgardie safe. There were kerosene stoves, heaters and irons which made life much easier.

It was also used to make soap. It came in long bars and pieces were shaved off into the washing water. When the washing was done it was customary to put the children in the used water.

Charles Hope, Electrolux and Sir Edward Hallstrom were responsible for the invention of kerosene fridges which were a great improvement on the Coolgardie Safe. They were surprisingly efficient and brought to the children that added luxury of ice cream.

Kerosene was also used in the medicine chest and in many cases it was the medicine chest. They had little time for the doctors because of distance and cost so the woman had to apply what little knowledge they had. One magazine on the 1900s recommended Kerosene oil as a speedy cure for putrid sore throat. They were also told to rub kerosene oil on different parts of the body to cure appendicitis, quinsy and cholera.

Laurel kerosene advertised all the virtues of their produce – splendid scalp massage clears dandruff; a few drops on sugar for coughs and colds; use as a disinfectant; invaluable for cleaning windows; keeping ants off pantry shelves; clean coppers and porcelain; adding to washing water.

Kerosene is still recommended for putting in ponds and tanks to stop mosquitos breeding. It is still used for stoves and lamps and many country households will have a kerosene lamp ready for those inevitable power cuts

Management Committee 2024

Joan Rudd [Patron], Neil Sands [President], Anne Panitz [Secretary]. Sue Mills [Treasurer, Registrar, Newsletter] Jack Rudd, Brian Cox, George O'Brien, Lenore Crouch, Pam Sands, Peter Jones, Carol Jones, Warren Davis, Tom Cowper, Lloyd Mills, , Odette Dalton.

Meetings held 3rd Sunday of each month on site.

Our aim is to collect and preserve historical and heritage material illustrating the growth and development of the Hinterland Region of the Gold Coast from the original pioneering days until today. We plan to arrange and describe these materials and make them accessible to the general public on a regular basis as well as providing educational programs where possible to increase public awareness and appreciation of the Gold Coast Hinterland region's history and development. Members of the Management Committee have connections with pioneering families in the district.

"Friends of the Museum" is for anyone who shares our same interest in preserving the history of our region and is interested in assisting with the set-up and operation of the museum.

Further details on the 'Friends' and application form may be obtained from the secretary.

Diary Dates - subject to change without notice

JULY 2025

6 – Museum open 10am-2pm
9 – Anglicare
13 – Museum open 10am-2pm
15 – Benowa SS
16 – Benowa SS
17 – Benowa SS
20 – Museum open 10am-2pm
20 – Museum meeting 2pm
27 – Museum open
28 – Clover Hill SS
29 – Clover Hill SS

AUGUST 2025

3 – Museum open 10am-2pm
4 – Burleigh Heads SS
5 – Hillcrest College
7 – Hillcrest College
10 – Museum open 10am-2pm
11 – St Augustine
12 – St Vincents
14 – St Vincents
17 – Museum open 10am-2pm
17 – Museum AGM
21 – Gilston SS
24 – Museum open 10am-2pm

The Museum Committee would like to thank the Council of the City of Gold Coast for their continued support of the Museum through Whole of City Funding and rate reduction.