

## *Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.*

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### **Newsletter for September 2021**

With the end of the current lockdown, it is now possible for us to hold a **September meeting**. However, with the 4 square metre rule, we need to hold it in larger premises and the meeting will be held on **Tuesday, 21 September at 5.30pm at the Imperial Hotel** where the Covid conditions can be met and members may wish to have a meal after the meeting. The **Annual General meeting** will held, followed by a General meeting at which former Duval High School teacher and Principal, **Alice Cairns will give a talk of her Recollections of Duval High School**.

Armidale High School (1928 – 2008) was complemented by the addition of Duval High school in 1974. Duval held an important place in Armidale and in the lives of countless hundreds of students for 34 years while it served the district and northern zone of Armidale and a healthy situation of competition and co-operation between the two secondary schools developed. Following the opening of the combined single Armidale Secondary College on the original Armidale High School site in 2021, the Duval campus has been abandoned and the buildings are becoming derelict. Former staff and students must be acutely aware of the loss of a once proud institution and its history as an integral part of the Armidale community is at risk of being lost.

**Covid 19:** Should there be any change in Covid 19 regulations that would affect the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September it may be necessary to postpone the meeting, but at this stage that seems unlikely. Dumaresq Chambers will reopen on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> September and volunteers and visitors will be back in business. We look forward to our masked community coming back to the centre where we have exhibitions on the theme of West Armidale.

**A Trip Down Memory Lane:** Topics for September meetings each decade.

**1961:** Dr Russell Ward and Mr K.K. McNab - The First Generation of Native Born Australians

**1971:** A/Prof A.T. Yarwood – Samuel Marsden and the Problem of Writing the Biography of a Cleric

**1981:** A/Prof J.S. Ryan – The Most Unlikely New Englanders – the Two Harry Freames

**1991:** Janis Wilton – Unpack Your Memories

**2001:** John S. Ryan – History of Wright College, University of New England, 1956-1996 and the Participation of the Wright Family in its Life

**2011:** Lucas Rologas – The Rologas Family in Armidale

**Snippets of History:** Unheralded as **Australia's National Flag Day**, September 3rd was the 120th commemoration of the first time the Australian flag was publicly flown. To mark the Federation of the Australian states on 1st January 1901, the Prime Minister **The Right Honourable Sir Edmund Barton** instigated a competition to design an Australian flag for the new Commonwealth of Australia. There were five winners, all submitting similar designs and they shared the prize money of 200 pounds (50 pounds of which had been donated by Havelock Tobacco!). The winners, chosen from 32,823 entries, were **Ivor Evans**, fourteen years of age, from Melbourne, **Leslie Hawkins**, a teenage apprentice optician from Sydney, **Egbert Nuttall**, a Melbourne architect, **Ann Dorrington**, artist from Perth and **William Stevens**, a ship's officer from New Zealand. The flag was flown from the Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne which was the site of the first Parliament. Ivor indicated that his Southern Cross also referred to Dante's four moral values of Justice, Prudence, Temperance and Fortitude. A previous competition run by the *Melbourne Herald* had specified that their design must feature the Union Jack and the Southern Cross and those entries were included in the Commonwealth competition. One unsuccessful entry apparently had a variety of native animals playing cricket! In 1903 **King Edward VII** approved a change from six to seven points on the Commonwealth Star, to represent the 'six states and the Territory of New Guinea and any other subsequent territories'.

The Federation ceremony held on New Years Day 1901 in Centennial Park, Sydney, was described by 12-year-old **Harold Perrott** in a letter to his mother. To his younger sister he wrote '...I only wish we had you with us yesterday. You can't imagine how lovely it was, you ask Mother to give you the letter I wrote to her and then you can read all about it.'

'Dear Mother, ...I have been to see the procession, it was something beautiful. I will try and give you a very good idea of it. We went over to the seats about seven and got to them just about half past eight. The procession did not go by until just about 11 o'clock. First of all came the mounted police and I saw Mr Garvin at their lead then came miners, shearers and ever so many other people. The car with Canada and Australia at her feet was lovely. There was a lot of gentlemen came in carriages. Mr Reid and Mr Barton were there. All the soldiers looked beautiful especially the Scotch, the Indians were very nice also. The people cheered the Governor very much. More than half the people in Sydney had not got seats and every tree in the Park was black with them and they had to send soldiers to try and make a way for the procession to go through but even then the people would not go back and the soldiers got very angry and backed their horses into them and one woman fainted and then some men caught the horse by the legs that the soldier was riding and threw it over but he was not hurt. And one of the soldiers used their sword to drive them back at last. At night we went around the town to see the lights the post office was beautiful and I think that every shop had V.R. on it for the Queen you know and it was all in little lights. We did not get home until half past eleven.

I remain your Loving son, Haroldston Perrott'