

Cooneana Heritage Centre Newsletter



Published by
Ipswich Historical Society



Newsletter 2 – March 2026 (*Published Monthly*)

Cooneana's Blacksmith Travelling Forge

(Part One)



In the Great War of 1914 to 1918, blacksmiths and farriers were indispensable in sustaining and maintaining the war machine. They, along with soldiers, generals, miners and medics paid a terrible price. It is against this background that the

blacksmiths at Cooneana have taken an opportunity to remember this sacrifice. In 2016, 100 years on, we were involved in smithing a number of large Flanders Poppies, which were sent to Belgium and now form part of new memorial at Ypres.

There were over 3,000 blacksmiths and farriers involved in the First World War, as well as eight million horses: not that many survived.

Horses aged three to twelve years old were trained as rapidly as possible by soldiers called 'Roughriders'. When they were ready the horses were formed into squadrons and sent to the Western Front. However, the majority of the horses were not used on the battlefield. In 1918 just over 75,000 were allocated to the cavalry, while nearly 450,000 horses and mules were used to lug supplies around. Another 90,000 were charged with carrying guns and heavy artillery, and over 100,000 were horses that were ridden around the front lines, carrying food and ammunition to soldiers and bearing the wounded across the trenches to hospitals.

What's Inside

Blacksmith's Forge.....	1
Historical Motorcycles.....	3
SWFAI.....	4
Tree of the Month.....	4
Qld Heritage Experience....	5
Building of the Month.....	6
Save the Date.....	6
Sandstock Bricks.....	7
What am I?.....	8
Book of the Month.....	8
Historical Cooneana.....	9
Out and About.....	10
Membership & Contact....	10

In 1918 the British army alone had almost 500,000 horses distributing 34,000 tons of meat and 45,000 tons of bread each month. Since the animals themselves also needed feeding and watering they would also distribute some 16,000 tons of forage. The food ration for a horse was 20 lbs of grain a day. This was nearly 25% less than what a horse would usually be fed. Finding enough food for the horses and mules was a constant problem. The horses were always hungry and were often seen trying to eat wagon wheels. When grain was in short supply, the horses and mules had to be fed on sawdust cake.

Traveling Forge

A traveling forge, when combined with a limber, comprised Drays or Wagons specifically designed and constructed as blacksmith shops on wheels to carry the essential equipment necessary for blacksmiths and farriers to both shoe horses and repair wagons and artillery equipment. The Traveling Forge came into prominence in the American Civil War for both U.S. and Confederate armies, as well as Western European armies during WW1. The Traveling Forge was frequently also referred to in the official records simply as a 'Forge' and sometimes referred to by Civil War buffs as a 'Battery Forge'.

Overview

An American Civil War-era traveling forge contained 1,200 pounds (540 kg) of tools, coal and supplies. These tools and supplies included a bellows attached to a fireplace, a 4-inch-wide (100 mm) vice, 100-pound (45 kg) anvil, a box containing 250 pounds (110 kg) of coal, 200 pounds (91 kg) of horse shoes, 4-foot-long (1.2 m) bundled bars of iron, and on the limber was a box containing the smith's hand tools. A battery wagon accompanied each traveling forge carrying additional blacksmith, wheelwright, and carriage repair supplies. American Civil War-era traveling forge wagons evolved from crude blacksmith carts used during the American Revolutionary War as well as from equipment used in Europe during the 1840s. British traveling forges were documented in an Aide-Memoire to the Military Sciences volume 1 by Royal Engineers, British Service, 1845, Col. G.G. Lewis, senior editor.

British traveling forges likely had canvas covers as indicated by the number and spacing of wood arches above the bellows, and what appears to be cord anchor points on the sides of the bellows house. A canvas cover would have been logical as protection of the bellows from the weather, and in accordance with the standard practice of covering wagons at that time. This canvas cover evolved into the wooden cover of the U.S. version of the traveling forge.

A traveling forge is a complete, mobile blacksmith shop stocked with tools, fuel, metal bars and equipment of the trade. Military forges were built to exact specifications that changed as technology advanced. (*Continued Next Edition*)



Hello All

The month of March is looking full of activities, below is a list of the activities that the club is involved with during March 2026.

Sunday 1st March is the monthly road ride (9am departure) meet at the Cooneana front gates from 8:30 for a catch up before stands up at 9am.

The ride will meet up with the campers from Goomburra for lunch at the Aratula Hotel.

Wednesday 4th March is the monthly meeting held at the club house within Cooneana. Meeting starts at 7:30 pm and will be followed by the AGM. I will be on holiday travelling south, with Lars Gerlup holding the chair for the meeting and AGM. I have informed the committee members that I will be more than happy to continue if nominated.

Monthly rides

Dirt rides every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month

Departing locations change each ride. Contact our secretary to be placed on the mailing list for each ride.

Road rides every 2nd, and 4th Tuesday of the month, meeting at the front entry gates at Cooneana. Meet from 8:30 for stands up at 9:00.

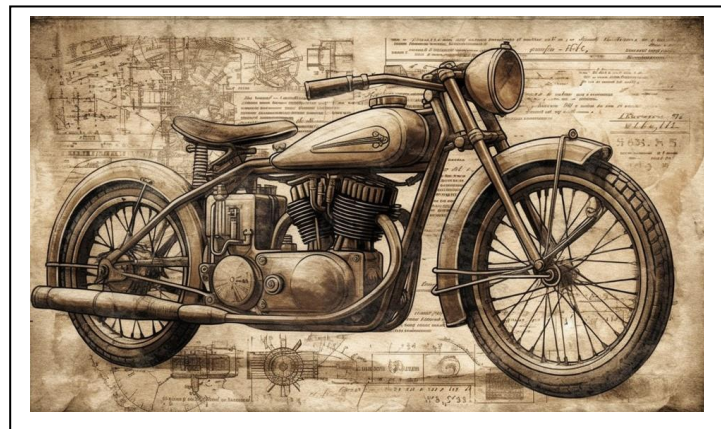
Breakfast Ride

The breakfast ride will be Sunday the 29th (last Sunday of the month) at the Harrisville Bakery (Queen Street, Harrisville) 08:30h start.

Tool box workshop and coffee held at the Ipswich club house each Thursday (except school visits) with Errol working on the Honda 350 project. Meet at 9:00am Ipswich area club house Cooneana.

Glen Oliver

Chairman Ipswich HMCCQ





Spinners Weavers Fibre Artisans of Ipswich Inc

Our first display of the year is 'Framed'. Members have brought in a variety of skilled works that delight the eye. On until the end of February.



From March will be 'Black and White'. Members are being challenged to make a new work in keeping with the title.



SWFAI meet at Brighton House at Cooneana Heritage Centre. Mon, Thu, Sat, 9am-2pm.
Mon evenings 6pm-9pm

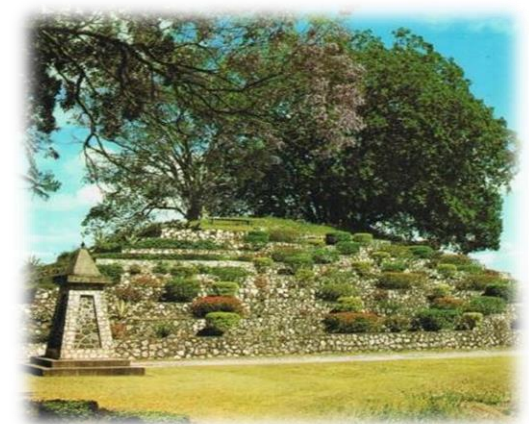
Contact- Tracy Underwood, 0429191936 - secretaryswfai@gmail.com

Facebook- Friends of Spinners, Weavers,
Fibre Artisans of Ipswich

Terrific Tree of the Month

White Figs (*Ficus Virens*)
Queen Victoria Parade, Ipswich

The well-known pair of fig trees that stand on a knoll adjacent to IGGS are listed on the State Heritage register and form part of the much-beloved Queen's Park. It is estimated that the trees are about 200 years old.



According to the memorial that stands nearby, the explorer and botanist Allan Cunningham 'camped under these fig trees in the year 1828'. Cunningham was to camp on the site for five days and was to subsequently discover the first route to the Darling Downs region.

A year earlier Captain Patrick Logan sent an overseer and a group of five convicts to the area to begin the process of quarrying limestone for building purposes in Brisbane. This settlement, known originally as *Limestone* for obvious reasons, became the city that we now know as Ipswich

(Photo: Postcard, Editor's Collection)

The Queensland Heritage Experience 2026

Overview

In 2026, the Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway (QPSR), the Heritage Bus Association (HBA), and the Ipswich Historical Society (IHSi) will collaborate to deliver a series of combined Heritage Experiences. These events are mostly scheduled for the second Saturday of each month, running from March to November, except for October.

Experience Details

Participants will commence their Heritage Experience at Swanbank Railway Station. From there, they will have the option to take a QPSR train to Bundamba or ride a HBA bus to the Cooneana Heritage Centre. Guests on the buses will receive a copy of the Cooneana brochure, enabling them to tailor their visit according to their interests. Upon arrival at Cooneana, guests will be treated to light refreshments to start their visit. Following their initial exploration and using their own transport from Swanbank Station, guests will have the opportunity to further enjoy the attractions at Cooneana on the same day, with last entry permitted at 13:30.

The buses will transport guests from Cooneana to Bundamba Station to catch the train back to Swanbank, collect groups arriving at Bundamba by train and bring them to Cooneana. Subsequently, those groups will be transported by bus back to Swanbank Railway Station. The Heritage Experiences will continue throughout the day, concluding at around 14:30. Each experience is expected to last approximately two hours.

Booking and Arrangements

Bookings for the Heritage Experience will be managed via the QPSR website - <https://www.qpsr.org/>. Financial arrangements will be established to ensure each participating organisation receives appropriate allocation.

2026 Heritage Experience Dates

The planned dates for the Heritage Experiences are Saturdays as follows:

14 March	11 July
11 April	8 August
2 May	4 September
13 June	14 November

Please note that these dates are subject to the availability of train engines, tracks and overall event viability.

Sandi Jones

Historical Building of the Month

Medical Superintendent's Residence, Ipswich Hospital



Located within the grounds of Ipswich Hospital (corner Nicholas & Court Streets), this attractive two-storey residence was built in 1941 for Dr David Trumpy, as part of his remuneration package. Trumpy had previously lived in a hospital-provided residence located at the bottom of the hill where building works are currently in progress (where the maternity ward once stood before being demolished).

This residence was designed by Douglas Roberts, an architect who conceived a number of other buildings on the hospital campus, and who is recognised by both the State Government and Brisbane City Council for the creation of a number of other properties of significant heritage value.

Remarkably, the building remains substantially unaltered since construction, and it has been well maintained, though it is currently unoccupied.

Stylistically, the design is what is known as Functionalist, a style rarely (if at all) seen in Ipswich. Interesting features include two porthole windows, a complex tiled roof design, internal timber staircase, hardwood floors and an original outdoor patio area.

Located in a prominent position on Denmark Hill, it is in good company with other nearby character houses. Within a few steps, the visitor can see houses dating from the 1860s through to 1930s, making this corner of central Ipswich one of the most valuable historical precincts in the city.

The building and grounds are currently being assessed by both the Ipswich City Council and State Government for potential listing on respective Heritage Registers.

Save the Date in 2026

The Queensland Heritage Experience Saturday 14 March

Bush Poets Breakfast - Saturday 21 March 9am – 12 noon

Ipswich Show - Friday 15 to Sunday 17 May at the Showgrounds

Biggest Morning Tea - Saturday 30 May at Cooneana 11am – 1pm

Horses to Horsepower – Sunday 28 June at Cooneana 9am to 2pm

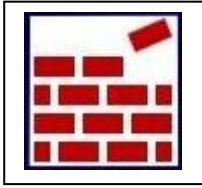
Box Flat Memorial Service – 10am Friday 31 July at Swanbank Memorial

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 – 10am Friday 4 December at Limestone Park



Sandstock Bricks

Around Ipswich you may have come across bricks that look something like the one below. They have a grainy texture and rough frog (indentation).



These are sandstock bricks, referring to the sand that was placed in the moulds to stop the bricks sticking. The second picture is the type of mould used. In this case the image is from The Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.

The way these bricks were made is described in an article from the *Qld Times* in 1884. I have summarized the process as follows:

1. Clay is dug.
2. The clay is tempered by being well mixed, turned and soaked (approx. 24 hours). By then the clay is firm and good, ready for moulding.
3. A large piece is placed on a wooden table.
4. A portion is severed off and flopped into an oblong wooden frame, which has been previously sanded. At the bottom of the frame, and fastened to the table, is a projecting, bevelled, piece of wood which causes an indentation (frog).
5. The surface of the mould is scraped to remove superfluous clay and make the brick even.
6. The brick is allowed to fall gently out of the mould, on to a small board on a side-less wheelbarrow.
7. When the load is full, it is wheeled to the drying ground and eventually arranged in 'hacks'. These are covered with straw to protect them from the weather. This takes a few days in fine weather.
8. Openings are left between the bricks for ventilation and they are built up in such a way that fires can be made underneath them. When the fuel has been thoroughly ignited the openings are plastered up; leaving provision for plentiful draught.
9. After about 40 hours the kiln has been sufficiently burnt; and after cooling, the bricks are available for sale.

Bricks were made this way until brick press technology took over in the late 1800s.

Mystery Object

What am I?

Try to guess without referring to online sources.



Last Month's Objects:

Object 1: This object is a Roman, or Gallo-Roman, dodecahedron, a mysterious artifact from the 2nd to 3rd century AD. Its purpose remains unknown to archaeologists and historians.

Object 2: This object is a very early Broom Holder, c.1837.

Book of the Month

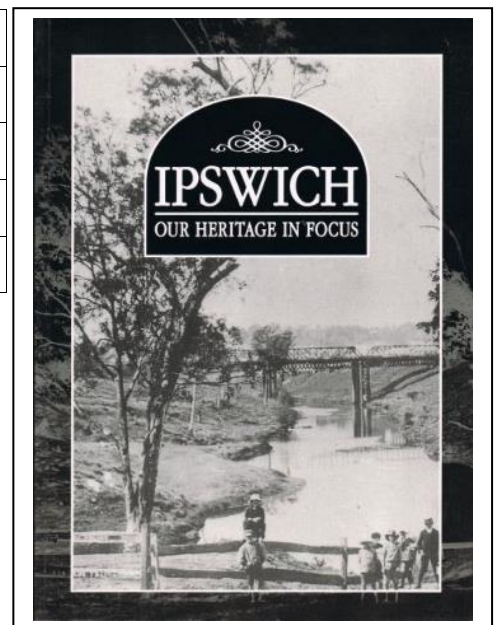
<i>Title</i>	Ipswich: Our Heritage in Focus
<i>Author</i>	Carolyn Nolan (editor)
<i>Publisher</i>	State Library of Queensland Foundation
<i>Date of Publication</i>	1994
<i>Number of Pages</i>	104

One of a series of similar titles published by the State Library Foundation to highlight some of the interesting regional photographic history held by the John Oxley Library.

This is a lovely photographic record of Ipswich's past, with almost 100 early black & white images of the town. Minimal text. The earliest photos date from the 1860s.

Later images include hotels, schools and religious institutions, as well as prominent homes, businesses and various views of the city.

Currently out of print but may be available from time to time from online sellers.



Historical Cooneana



Out and About at Cooneana



Contact Us - Ipswich Historical Society

Email: ipswichhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Phone: 07 3282 0358 (open days only)

Website: www.ipswichhistoricalsociety.com

Address: 1041 Redbank Plains Road, New Chum, QLD 4303

Opening Hours: Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays 10.00am-2.00pm

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