
Australia Day Award

On Wednesday, 26th January 2022 the members of our Society were honoured to receive the award shown opposite.

*From Muswellbrook Shire Council
2022*

*Australia Day Award
Muswellbrook Shire Local and Family History Society Inc*
Contribution to Heritage



It was my honour to accept this award on behalf of all the members of the Society. Special thanks must go to the dedicated hard working group who turn up constantly to continue to record and share the history of the Muswellbrook Shire.

Condolence

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Norma Fowler and family by the members of the Muswellbrook Society on the passing of her husband Bob Fowler. Norma was a long-time member of the Society before they moved away. She maintained an interest in the Society and what was taking place.

Congratulations



In 2019 Sarah Shelford who had spent her time helping the Society with record keeping and computer designed material, began a degree course at the University of New England. Even with the problems of Covid-19 she completed her course. She has spent some time working in the Muswellbrook Library. She has now been accepted to study for her Master of Museum and Heritage Studies at the Australian University in Canberra. Our members wish her every success.

Get Well Soon

Our best wishes are extended to our long time Life Member Bruce James who is in hospital at the moment after a fall. All the members wish you a speedy recovery and a return to good health.

The Society also wishes Carol Ray a speedy recovery after having a total hip replacement.

DETAILS ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Objectives:

- To collect, preserve and promote the social, cultural and physical history of Muswellbrook Shire, its environs and its people for future generations.
- to promote public access to our collections and research facilities, and
- to provide information, advice and assistance to individuals, community groups, organizations and businesses.

Meetings

The Society meets on the third Saturday of each month starting at 12.00 in the Society Room at the rear of the Muswellbrook Library. All members and visitors are welcome to attend the meeting.

Premises

The Society maintains its records in a section of Muswellbrook Library. You will find us at the rear of the Library. The Research Centre is open every Saturday from 9.30am to 1.00pm. The Research Centre may be opened at other times by appointment. Bus & tour groups are most welcome.

Annual Fees

Single \$25 Double \$35 Pensioner Single \$15 Pensioner Double \$25

The Hon Secretary may be contacted via the post office box or email mei2@bigpond.com The Society also has a web presence thanks to Darrin Khan and Lionel Ahearn at <http://www.mbkhistorical.org> and a research site at <http://research.mbkhistorical.org>

Technical Classes.

Opening of a Workshop at Muswellbrook.

On Saturday afternoon last a large number of people assembled on the grounds of the Superior Public School to witness the official opening of the building which has recently been erected there by the Rev. W. Marshall, with the object of establishing a carpentry class in our midst. A large number of children arrived early in the afternoon, and the boys enjoyed themselves by playing football. The adults arrived in twos and threes at frequent intervals and made their way to the model farm, which was closely inspected from end to end, and many expressions of surprise and delight were heard.



Muswellbrook Superior School and grounds shown in this photo cropped from Society photo D1439. The original held by St James Catholic Church dated 1921.

At 3.30, the time appointed for the official opening, the assemblage of adults in the building was very gratifying and, besides being thoroughly representative of the town and district, included the Ven. Archdeacon and Mrs. White, who are on a visit to the town.

It had been arranged that the member for the district should perform the opening ceremony, but during the morning the Rev. W. Marshall received a telegram from that gentleman, expressing his extreme regret that, owing to an accident, he would be unable to be present. The Mayor (Mr. E. C. Brecht) was then requested to declare the building open, and kindly consented; and on rising to do so he was greeted with applause.



Mayor E C Brecht

The Mayor said that, as the member for the district was unable to attend, he was very glad indeed to accede to the request of Mr. Marshall to open the building, because he thought that the movement which the rev. gentleman had initiated was one which deserved the support of residents of the town and district. (Applause);

The opening of technical classes in Muswellbrook would mark an epoch in the history of our public school which should have the sympathy and support of all who have the interests of our youth at heart.

Technical education had engaged a large amount of attention for many years past, and it embraced those branches of education which deal directly with the various arts and manufactures, and gives instruction in those matters which bear directly upon the principles by which raw products and material are by human effort made into articles of commerce.

In Muswellbrook it was intended first to start a carpentry class, which would be of great benefit to those who avail themselves of its advantages. For many years past in England and several European countries, the Governments have spent enormous sums of money in establishing schools for technical instruction, and it has been found that the knowledge imparted thereat has aided materially in establishing industries and commerce; and particularly, at a time like the present when competition is so keen, there must be a great demand for increased technical knowledge. The gratitude of parents and children was due to Mr. Marshall, whose untiring efforts had resulted in the building being erected and within a few weeks of being the scene of technical classes.

That gentleman had for a long time been moving in this matter, but he became tired of the dilatoriness of the department and had the building erected at his own expense; and it was to be hoped that the Government would repay him for the expense he had gone to. Had he not undertaken its erection, probably it would not have been decided to erect the building for many years yet. Three or four years ago the people of this town had reason to believe that technical classes would soon be established here, but for some reason the project then fell through. However, now that the building had been erected, it was hoped that parents would allow their children to be taught, and also that the children would take that interest in receiving instruction which they should take. (Hear, hear)

He said he could not allow this opportunity to pass without saying a few words concerning the model farm. This was the first occasion on which he had seen it, and he was sure that he and everyone else was highly delighted to see the quantity of vegetables that are growing there, more particularly so considering the severity of the season that we are passing through. In instituting this class of education Mr. Marshall had also defrayed the cost, but the public of Muswellbrook and residents of the district would not allow him to bear it, and they therefore refunded the amount to him. He also believed that if the Government failed to reimburse him for the expense, he had gone to in establishing the carpentry class, those who had assisted him before would do so again. In conclusion, he said that, besides being thankful to Mr. Marshall, parents and friends should not forget Mr. Miller, who had taken great interest in the work which the rev. gentleman initiated. He then declared the building open for the purposes of technical instruction, and asked other gentlemen to address the meeting.



Venerable Archdeacon White

The Ven. Archdeacon White said it was a source of great pleasure to him to be present and see so much that had been done in the way of technical education. It was a revelation to him when he walked through the garden and saw what had been done by watering and by the care of the children during the last few months. It was really marvellous and showed what children and others could do by a little industry and care and the proper use of water, one of the greatest of God's gifts. He had recently written a long letter to the press about irrigation and the conservation of water, which he believed was to be the salvation of this drought stricken country. God has ordered there shall be certain seasons of drought and certain seasons of plenty, and sends us rain so that we may provide for dry times. The lesson was to be learnt in sacred history, from the record of the seven years of plenty and then the seven years of famine in the land of Egypt; and if there had not been a Joseph in the land to save food during the years of plenty, what would have been the state of that country? There was great distress, and people had to go to Egypt to buy food.

With regard to the seasons, he believed they are the same now—there is a certain course ordered by Providence, which we must expect. The state of the model farm would teach people what may be done in time of drought; and he hoped the boys would learn that, when they grow up, by saving the water and using it properly they will have abundant return for their efforts. With regard to the building, he said he was very glad that Mr. Marshall had been successful at last, with the assistance of the boys, in having it erected. Instruction in carpentry would be of great service to the boys, for in time to come, when they have homes of their own, they can often be usefully employed. This would be a great saving from temptation, and prevent many young men from idling their time about street corners. He congratulated Mr. Marshall, on his success, and the boys on the splendid opportunity they had of being good carpenters by and by. He also congratulated the girls on the opportunity they had of being profitably employed in raising flowers and vegetables for there could be no more happy employment. They could not be carpenters, but they could be florists. As the Mayor had said, he did not think that the parents or their children would be satisfied until they saw that Mr. Marshall had been paid for the building. He hoped to see the boys and girls grow up good and useful men and women... (Applause.)

The Rev. W. H. Jones said that, as a comparative newcomer here, perhaps he could not speak with authority on matters concerning Muswellbrook, but he thought he could venture an opinion on matters respecting technical education. A good deal had been heard lately about technical education in this and other countries, and it has been said that if England is in any danger it is because she has not kept abreast of other nations in this direction. There seems to be an effort to remedy this defect, and we hear on all hands of the advances that have been made in technical education. It was pleasing to see the matter being energetically taken up here by Mr. Marshall, and he had heard words of appreciation expressed that one so old should take such an interest in young people. He did not know of any work more deserving of reward than that of correctly forming the minds and habits of those who are to be the men and women of the future. One good result of instruction in carpentry and gardening might be that it might discover some latent talent.

There is always room at the top, he said, but it is getting harder and harder to get there; everything is getting harder to achieve, and should be, because the advantages are greater; and those who come a few years hence will have still greater advantages. So we should all have one great object in life—to improve ourselves and leave the world better than we found it. (Applause.)

The Rev. W. Marshall said that the girls had not been forgotten, and it was hoped that when the next industrial exhibition is held they will have some nice flowers to show. The present system of State education he did not think was complete, and it should therefore be added to. It only seemed to aim at sending out good junior clerks; and many boys on leaving school cannot get into an office, but drift into bad company and finally amongst the unemployed, whereas if they knew a little about carpentering and gardening they could be well employed in other

ways. He knew several young men, well connected and well educated, who could not get situations suited to them. Children should be so educated that they can, if necessary, be of use on farms and stations. He believed that shortly dairy farming will be one of the most extensive and profitable occupations in the State, because if the Closer Settlement Act is well carried out numerous dairy farms will be established. With regard to the model farm, he had had all the money which he spent on it refunded by residents of the town. Mr. Miller had greatly assisted him with the farm, doing much good by precept and example. Both occupations, carpentering and gardening, will do much good for the young people. He read an article from the Review of Reviews, and quoted various instances, showing that the sons and daughters of great people-even of Royalty-are not allowed to be idle, but that many have been taught carpentry, gardening, modelling, and other useful occupations.

The rev, gentleman concluded by returning thanks to all who had given him encouragement in his efforts. Mr. Miller said that Mr. Marshall had an enrolment of more than 20 for his carpentry class but expected more; that Mr. R. T. Keys had promised to defray the water rates for twelve months; and that the Mayor had promised handsome prizes, to be competed for by those engaged on the model farm. He then proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Mayor for presiding at the meeting.

The Ven. Archdeacon White, in a few appropriate remarks, seconded, at the same time promising prizes.

The vote was carried by acclamation and suitably acknowledged.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the school children entertained the company by singing "Britannia" very nicely, and sixteen girls gave a creditable exhibition of dumb bell exercises in the open, under the direction of Miss M. Wallace. Light refreshments, which had been kindly provided by Mrs. Miller and other ladies, were then handed around to adults and children, and heartily partaken of by all, after which the gathering dispersed.

(The Muswellbrook Chronicle 4 June 1902)

Footnote

In January. 1902, the Minister agreed to establish a carpentry class at Muswellbrook. A room was erected by the Rev. W. Marshall on the Public School ground at his own expense, The Superintendent of Technical education inspected such room and found that it was well built and suitable for class purposes. It was approved that the sum of £43, expended by Mr. Marshall in its erection, be refunded to him (£40 for the room and £3 for three benches.)

On 9th July 1902, the Superintendent nominated Mr. Thomas G. Lang for the position of teacher, with the fees of the students as remuneration. Lang was appointed in the usual way. and the class was brought into operation.

On 6th February 1903, however, Mr. Lang reported that he did not intend re-opening the class on the first term of that year, inasmuch he did not expect more than five pupils would enrol. Mr Lang's resignation be accepted.

Mr. Marshall stated on 24th March last that both the carpentry class was at a stand still on account of the drought and scarcity of money in the district and asked at the same time that a small salary be paid to the instructor (Mr. Lang). This request was refused.

Death of Rev W Marshall September 1906 aged 82 years.



The Superior School in Lower William Street

MSL&FH Society photo D1230