

A VERY SUCCESSFUL "STITCHES IN TIME" EXHIBITION

REPORT FROM EXHIBITION CURATOR HELEN MARSONET

Our exhibition held over 4th – 11th Sept. delighted all who attended and participated in it's setting up, (even though exhausting). With an extraordinary amount of help from members and friends we presented an exhibition which was described to me as being the best exhibition the Memorial Hall has ever seen. This is a slight exaggeration as how could we possibly know or remember every show that has ever been held during the past 78 years in this hall? But what it did show, was part of the district's history in a visual display which had not been contemplated before. For those of you who were not able to attend the opening night, after a "Welcome to Country" ceremony performed by Wiradjuri Elder, Lyn Syme, Mr. John Pocius who is the Regional Manager of Australian Red Cross, presented RDHS with a book "The Power of Humanity" 100 years of Aust. Red Cross which was most appropriate for us to add to our library. The money raised from the signatures on the quilt was given to Red Cross for distribution.

I was particularly happy to receive from our 6 local schools, and home school student and junior member of RDHS, Kodie Ward approx. 1.500 poppies. These poppies brightened up the displays considerably, especially the stage area. What a wonderful variety there were! Thanks so much to the principals and staff of the schools who took this on board. All of these schools visited the exhibition over the period of opening. Also the daily performance at 11:00 a.m., of the poem "The Last Parade" by Rylstone Public School student, Miah Currie.

Major researcher of the Military History of the 82 soldiers on the quilt was done for the most part by RDHS member Dan Hatton who also did the formatting of A3 sheets. I gave him a hard time asking if he could do the layout I wanted. Nothing was too much for him. The emails we sent back and forth – I apologized to his wife who I'm sure will be very glad the show is over. Well, for the time being as we're thinking of a book! There is still more research to be done. This resource would be a wonderful addition to our social history.

"Bruce" the horse, created a stir and played his part impeccably. Grateful thanks to Rylstone Pony Club who loaned him for the show. He even arrived in his own horse float! The local volunteer organizations who provided morning and afternoon teas on each day were very much appreciated. RDHS did 2 days and the coffee, tea, sugar etc. were donated to us by Sarah Gaffekin as she was unable to leave her shop to visit the exhibition and said this was her contribution. All the other volunteer organizations kept whatever their takings were for the day for themselves. They all said it was not important that they made a huge amount of money, (although that would have been good), it was the fact that they participated in this historical event. As one visitor said."It was an event of national importance". And I believe that to be true.

The exhibition was successful due in part to the excellent coverage we received in media, thanks for a major part to the efforts of Brent Barlow. I was interviewed on ABC radio. This worked as visitors told us they heard the interview while travelling in their cars and came especially from Dubbo and other areas. I cannot list all those people who helped here but hope you all saw your names on the researcher's list that was displayed. I do however especially thank, Shane Price, Chris Brieley, Larry O'Connor, Jack Pennell, Garry Ward, Tony Ward, Roger Heap, Nancy Kech, Helen Krestinsen (all of whom are not members of RDHS) Ric, Greg, Terry and Ed. These people did all the really hard stuff of putting up flags, bunting, sound and lighting, picking up items to be used in displays and hauling the 3 ton display case from the showground shed. This was a mammoth effort. Of course, I thank tremendously all the members who stepped forward to do everything else I asked of them. Without support from RDHS and committee, the whole event could not have taken place. So many people to thank. Marilyn and Max Mosher, Sue Pridmore, Gemma and Margot from the BVI wool shop, Bronwin Gradden,

Liz Burlington and members from Sydney, Michelle and Michael Oldfield. It gave me the greatest of pleasure to see all the research and my planning efforts be received so successfully. Thank you.