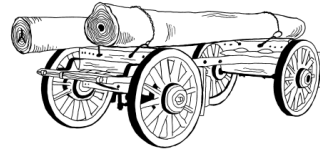


LANDSBOROUGH & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc



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7 July 2021

Ms Emma Thomas
CEO
Sunshine Coast Council
Locked Bay 72
SUNSHINE COAST MAIL CENTRE QLD 4560

Email: CEOOffice@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms Thomas

The Landsborough and District Historical Society Inc is writing to inform you that it is no longer capable of operating the Landsborough & District Historical Museum.

Over the past five years the Society has been struggling with a number of issues. These issues include:

- the lack of dedicated and committed volunteers
- an ageing volunteer base that lacks many of the skills required to operate an effective museum
- a lack of commitment and enthusiasm by volunteers to go beyond the administration of the museum (ie. legal and financial obligations)
- a lack of willingness by the majority of volunteers to attend training essential to effectively operate the museum and care for the collection
- a lack of professionalism by some volunteers
- a "burnt out" Management Committee

These issues have contributed to a situation whereby only the essential legal and financial obligations are undertaken to ensure the museum can remain open to the public. Any projects that have been undertaken over the past five years have been completed by a dedicated few, or not at all.

The members of the current Management Committee have been in the role for over eight years, and are "burnt out". A Management Committee is a legal requirement for the Society's Rules of Incorporation, and the current committee is not prepared to undertake these roles for another term. The Management Committee is elected each September at the Society's Annual General Meeting.

The Committee has had increasing concerns over the future of the Museum and succession planning over the last few years, culminating in a letter to Council's Cultural Heritage Services team (30 July 2020, attached), with a request for a paid role at the Museum. Cultural Heritage provided a response (19 August 2020, attached) and offered to explore options with the committee, supported by an independent facilitator and industry experts. Subsequently, a series of workshops were held in October, November, and December of 2020 (Summary paper version 3, attached), with an additional informal meeting in February 2021. Throughout this period, we have been working with council officers to find a way forward, and agreed to continue to investigate a governance framework for a partnership model.

At the May General Meeting of the Society a majority of members voted (16 for and 2 against) to donate the Museum's collection to the Sunshine Coast Council to manage on behalf of the community.

The Museum's collection is historically significant for its representation of the wider story of the Sunshine Coast and Queensland. With research and interpretation significance in the areas of exploration and the development of primary, secondary and tertiary industries; development of local government, transport and communication; and soldier settlement and coastal development (detailed information is available in the Landsborough Museum Collection Significance Assessment Report 2018).

The 1924 Landsborough Shire Council Chambers building itself is state heritage listed (Queensland Heritage Register 601915), and has historical, aesthetic and social significance. A recent Conservation Management Plan (2019) provides a framework for managing this significant building.

The condition of the collection as a whole is good to fair, with a more detailed assessment of the collection to come through the Preservation Needs Assessment Report (2021, to be finalised). However, a professional approach to improving display facilities, conservation, storage and documentation of the collection, would increase the customer experience, provide greater access to the public, and importantly ensure the continued preservation of the collection into the future.

As part of this change process, the Society would relinquish the lease on the building, review and change its constitution (Rules of Incorporation) to reflect its primary role as a research focused association, and through its volunteers and members support the Council in the continued operation of the museum. The Society anticipates that the process can be ratified by the Society's members at its next Annual General Meeting in September 2021.

The Society formally requests that the Council, on behalf of the community, take over the operation of the Landsborough Museum and the care and development of the collection.

Yours faithfully

Management Committee
Landsborough & District Historical Society Inc
Tim Venter (President)
Brian McConnell (Vice-President)
Janelle Rossow (Secretary)
Stephen Philp (Treasurer)

CC:

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