

INTRODUCTION

Celebrating Ipswich 150

An anniversary is usually a time for reflection as well as celebration. Whether it is for an individual, an organisation or a whole community, the attainment of a significant milestone has the power to make people pause and consider both their past and their future.

For community anniversaries, the process of looking back often includes collecting and recording history.

In 1910, Ipswich celebrated its Jubilee - its 50th anniversary as a municipality. During this year, a private publisher issued a book “under the auspices of the Ipswich City Council” which combined history, reminiscences and a survey of current industry and business.

For the 100th anniversary in 1960, Leslie E. Slaughter produced a general history for Ipswich City Council titled *Ipswich Municipal Centenary*.

For the 150th anniversary in 2010, a publication was again considered. Planning began in 2001 when the Ipswich Heritage Consultative Committee suggested that Council commission a series of academically-researched reports covering various topics or time periods in the history of Ipswich.

Council supported the recommendation and offered an annual scholarship to assist a postgraduate or honours student connected with the University of Queensland Ipswich Campus. The first scholarship was awarded In January 2002.

The collection of six reports is now being published and will also be available through the Council’s website – one of many activities and events which celebrate Ipswich 150 in 2010.

The report topics are diverse and reflect the richness of Ipswich history.

The first recipient Andrew Blythe produced *A retailing history of the Ipswich CBD from the mid-1970s to 2003*. This was a time of great change in Ipswich and the report analyses the introduction of supermarkets, the impact of the destruction by fire of Reids (formerly Cribb & Foote), the redevelopment of the city centre, the negative effects of the recession of the 1990s, and the early debate surrounding the Riverlink development.

Sarah Davey chose as her subject *Depictions of Women in the History of Ipswich*. The report presents a theoretical background, then examines and interprets a selection of images from the on-line archive “Picture Ipswich” and three Ipswich publications. It concludes that “a patriarchal stereotype of women is shown throughout history and is evident in present photographic records”.

In the 1970s and 80s, before the emergence of Gympie or Tamworth, Ipswich was *The Country Music Capital of Queensland*. Rosie Adsett’s research follows the early initiatives which included setting up a country music venue “Dusty’s” and the establishment of annual awards. The report then analyses the reasons for the eventual decline in local involvement which allowed the initiative to pass to other places.

Toni Risson’s report *Aphrodite and the Mixed Grill – Gender and Ethnic Relations in Ipswich’s Greek Cafes from 1900 to 2005* has already created considerable interest. It was published as a book and was the subject of newspaper and television interviews. The report studies an aspect of Australian life which is often taken for granted – the prevalence of cafes run by Greek families. The research included oral history interviews.

Erin Coster’s report is titled *A Tributary But a Highway – the significance of the Bremer River during the Settlement and Development of Ipswich 1823-1900*. This

report examines the role of the Bremer River in the development of south-east Queensland. It also situates the Bremer within the colonial landscape by examining broader settlement and development patterns, offering explanations of how and why the Bremer was significant and related to wider development trends.

Annette Sharp's report *Sketches of the Dining Hall: 'Working Lives' of the North Ipswich Railway Workshops* examines the cultural value of the Dining Hall at Ipswich Railway Workshops. The building, constructed in 1911, was used to provide meals for workers but also had an important social role in the daily routine of the Workshops. As part of the research, oral history interviews were conducted with former Workshops employees and catering staff.

The collection of reports, with its detailed examination of a range of subjects, makes an important contribution to the study of Ipswich history.