



Braidwood & District Historical Society

PO Box 145 Braidwood NSW 2622

Newsletter

Number 13 June 2019

Society Annual Dinner 2019

The dinner will be held at the **National Theatre**, 100 Wallace Street Braidwood on **Saturday 24th August**. The function will commence at **6.30pm**, followed by dinner at **7.00pm**. This function is **BYO** drinks.

Our President, Peter Smith, will be our speaker. His presentation will be on "**Braidwood's Almost Forgotten Tracks.**"

It will be an illuminating account of the history of the many bridle tracks and pack tracks that served Braidwood and the goldfields.

"But it's not just about tracks, it's about people, explorers, adventurers, bushrangers, police, pioneers and settlers who depended on these tracks not only for commerce but for their survival."

The presentation will include snippets of recorded interviews with now deceased pioneers, photographs, maps and modern day video of a recent ride. Finally, how a locally based group, Access for All, lobbied and won concessions from the NSW Government so that the tracks are available to horse riders now and will remain for future generations.

Further details will be sent later.

John Higgins and the Braidwood Map

This event is still to come. John, for health reasons, cannot come until the weather warms, nearer to Christmas. We will keep you informed of the date as soon as it is arranged.

1918-1919 Flu Epidemic 100 years ago

In Newsletter No. 9, I wrote on the epidemic. Further to that, people attended public inhalation chambers (Braidwood had one), where they inhaled zinc sulphate which was hoped to be effective. The spray was believed to be antiseptic, but it was ineffective against the influenza virus, and is now considered to have done more harm than good by damaging throat and lung tissue.



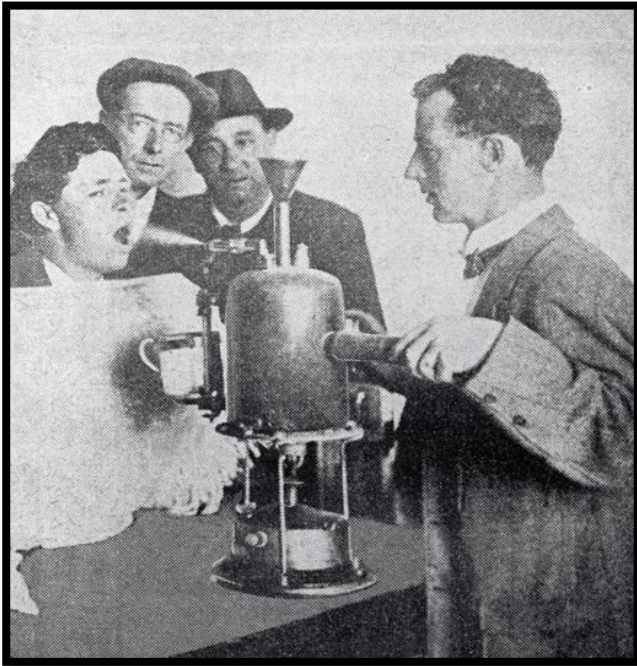
Pressure vessel with spray nozzle for inhalation of zinc sulphate.

The vessel was heated by a primus stove beneath it. A mug holding the zinc sulphate solution was held in the clip mounting at the side, and a tubular sighting glass for monitoring the level of liquid in the vessel would also have been mounted at the side.

Overall: 300mm (width), 333mm (height), 550mm (length), 300mm (diameter)

It was decided to erect an inhalation chamber on the footpath fronting Ryrie Park, immediately opposite the Council Chambers. In this chamber a spray will be at work continuously. All passengers by the cars will be asked to make use of this, while it will be also available for any townspeople who may desire to make use of it.

8 April 1919 Braidwood Dispatch



The Inhalation Chamber was later publicly offered for sale. Does anyone have a device like this?

The museum would be very interested.

News from a Chilly Braidwood Museum

Our funding application for heating has been unsuccessful, but we will try again when a suitable grant presents itself.

We have had a successful grant application to the Braidwood Community Bank for funding for a new computer and the establishment of

the new reading room. Gordon Waters has offered to set it up for us.

The Conservation Management Plan grant from QPRC has now been completed. This plan will allow us to prioritise identified maintenance issues in the museum and to apply for further grants to fulfil the recommendations acknowledged by QPRC.

Story of the Long Paddock

The stock route system began to develop in the 1830s, for the movement of livestock from farms to markets or railheads. Today, cattle are walked about 20-30km a day, stopping at a Travelling Stock Reserves (TSR) roughly every 10km. There are more than 6,500 TSRs on Crown Land in NSW, covering approximately two million hectares.

Braidwood's Back Creek travelling stock reserve, 40 hectares bordering the Shoalhaven River, was one of the most precious blocks of land on the Southern Tablelands because the Rural Lands Protection Board had protected it through grazing, weed and pest control.

But it could not cope when, as 1979 began, extraordinarily hot conditions prevailed over southern Australia. Between 1979 and 1983 almost all of eastern Australia was affected by major drought. In some places such as the South Coast and Monaro, the drought was almost continuous, and for farmers, it was taking its toll. Cartage costs for fodder or water are a heavy burden and farm income does not pick up the moment it rains.

The O'Connell family from Stony Creek, Braidwood decided that to maintain their considerable herd of cattle, the only choice was to use the Long Paddock. Jack O'Connell with sons David and Jim had been on the road since being forced off their drought stricken

pastures in October 1980. By March 1981, they were ready to send their cattle to market.

They were coming home, and having reached Gundagai, faced the difficulty of bringing the herd across the long and old Prince Alfred Bridge.

The Prince Alfred Bridge was built in 1866. It is a wrought iron truss and timber beam bridge. A side ramp was built on the western side leading down to ground level. The bridge was the first major crossing spanning the Murumbidgee River. It was 922mtrs long,

6.4mtrs wide and it formed part of the Hume Highway until it was replaced by the Sheahan Bridge built in 1976.

On the morning of 30th March 1981, many of the populace of Gundagai came out to assist the manoeuvring of 1,017 cattle across an already safety threatened bridge. But the cattle were “spooked” by the crowd of spectators at the northern end of the bridge and they turned back across the viaduct, wobbling the ancient wooden railings and took themselves down the pump station ramp into John Middleton Drive. From there they were driven across Morley’s



The Prince Alfred Bridge Gundagai 1981 showing the O’Connell cattle herd.

Photo taken by Bob Maynard printed in the Gundagai Independent Newspaper

(Courtesy of Cindy Smith of Gundagai Library)

Creek and via Sheridan Lane to the Gundagai saleyards. They were offered at a special Gundagai cattle sale the following day.

The O'Connell family were full of praise for the help they had received from the Gundagai people during their time in their district in their vain endeavour to keep their herd together.

Jack O'Connell, grandson of Michael Nowlan O'Connell who ran the Traveller's Home Inn at Stony Creek died in February 1990. His son David died in April 2019.



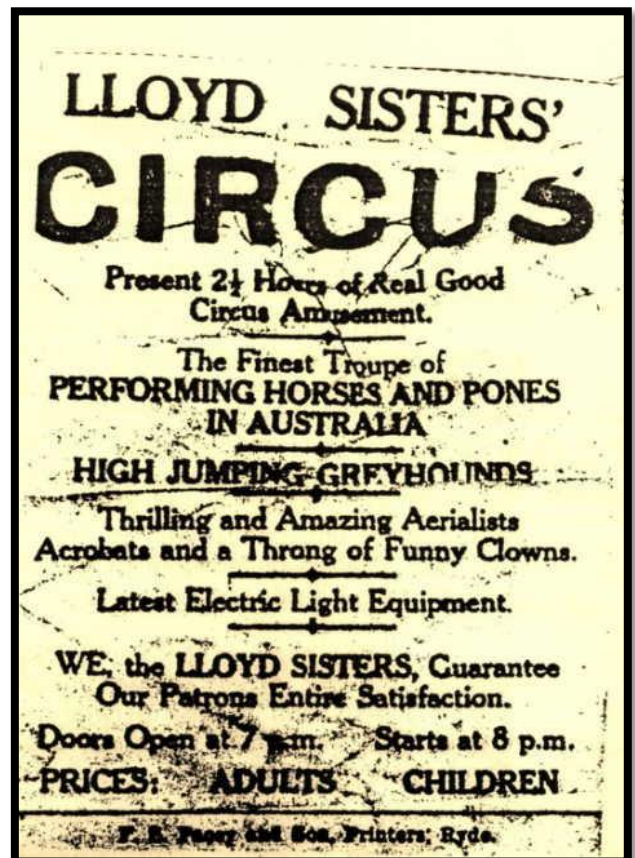
The late Jack O'Connell, holding the sign of the 'Traveller's Home', dating back to the days of his grandfather, Michael Nowlan O'Connell. The hotel stood nearby. The land remains with the O'Connell family.

Photo courtesy of Peter Smith, taken 1983.

Roll Up Roll Up for the Big Top Lloyd's Circus Comes to Braidwood

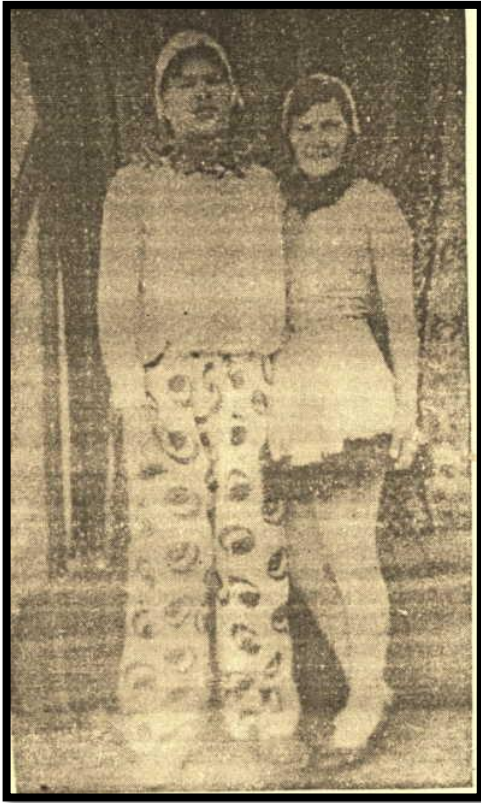
In the 1860's, Ashtons, Burtons, and Wirths Circuses were the established names. But there were many minor circuses travelling the country, mainly acrobatic, and with large numbers of horses. The first 30 years of the 20th century brought an increase in small family circuses around the country. With the improvement in the quality and number of roads connecting country towns, transporting large equipment and menageries became viable. As WW1 ended, a more vibrant and happier country was ready to at last enjoy itself.

It is little known that Sole Bros Circus was founded by William Alfred Sole born in Braidwood 27th September 1869. He married Elizabeth Jane Perry in 1891 Queensland. Elizabeth was the daughter of Charles Henry Perry who founded Perry's Circus. In June 1923 at Blayney, Charles and William were killed in a gas explosion just before the show began.



One circus that regularly visited Braidwood and country towns was the Lloyd Sisters Circus. Formerly known as Lloyds Circus when run by Frederick Lloyd, he later took a back seat as the ringmaster and left the performing to his daughters, Daisy, Dorothy, Alma and Eugenie.

will introduce Little Ernie, the youngest child to ever walk a wire rope. Dare-devil Kalma rides his bicycle across the silver thread. The aerial work of the sensational Datalma Sisters is beautiful and death-defying. There are also 60 head of beautifully trained horses, ponies, donkeys and dogs."



Michael Ashton & Little Alma

Lloyds Grand New Circus first played to Braidwood audiences on 16th November 1917 when they set up on a plot of land opposite the Recreation Ground. They also played at Jembaicumbene and Majors Creek.

Their advertising promoted *"the special engagement of Miss Eugene, who performs her running jump-up on the horse's back from the ground without the aid of a springboard. Another great Mexican rider is Miss Dorothy, whose handling of four spirited thoroughbreds is a revelation in horsemanship. As a child contortionist Little Alma excels greatly and Miss Lloyd's work on the trapeze is most finished and artistic. The Kalmas are world-beaters on the wire. They*

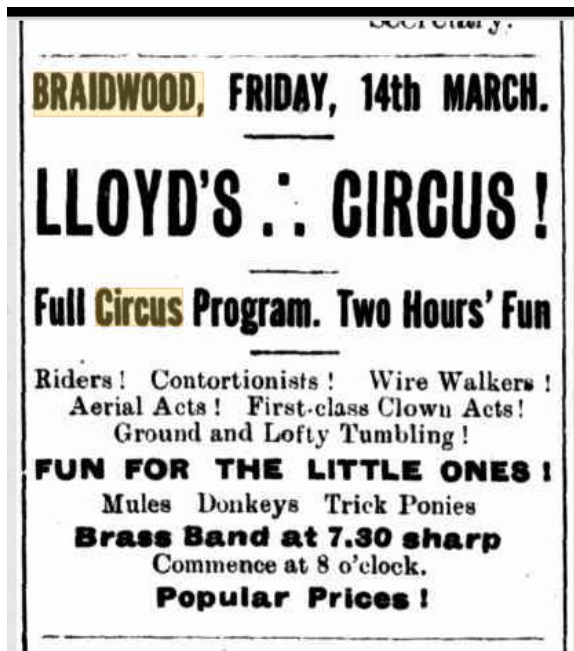


Emily Eugenie and Florence Victoria (Dorothy)

In March 1922 they were in Burrowa featuring the whirlwind club juggling of the Kelroy Trio, but by April 1922 they were back in Braidwood. This time they introduced *"the Roman Ring display by Alma and Bill."* They returned again in May 1924 with Miss Lloyd claiming to be the only lady circus rider in the Commonwealth who could leap from the ground to the back of a cantering horse.

In June 1922 they played at Girral near Wyalong. Unfortunately, Miss Dorothy fell from her horse which subsequently fell onto her leg, smashing her ankle. It was found necessary to amputate her foot. She later

wore a prosthetic and still performed on horseback.



Braidwood Review 11 March 1919

Playing in Camden in June 1924, they featured Miss Marcella juggling knives, clubs etc. on the back of a fast moving horse, Maynardo the 'wizard on the wire with his absurd drunken antics in mid-air', the Mad Musician and Paster and the Human Pup. Younger members of the audience were encouraged to ride a bucking donkey.

The Riverina was toured in 1925, covering Wagga, Corowa, Gundagai, Tumut and they featured La Vato the juggler. The newspaper reported that the humour was good, "but much of it was decidedly blue. The circus might be better patronised if it was felt that a family could attend without its children hearing more than was good for them and a young man could take his girl feeling sure that she would not be made to blush". In December 1925 they were in Healesville VIC.

They were not fazed by distance, travelling to Yackandandah, Healesville, Gilgandra and Mullumbimby in 1927 with the Dalma tumblers, Ernie and Co on the rings.



Lloyds Circus

George Auger 8'7" tall, Princess Wee Wee 29" tall, three legged Frank Lentini, Harold Lloyd 5'9" tall.

February 1928 found them in Bulli and were billed as Lance Skuthorpe and Lloyds Circus. Lance was a horse breaker, buckjumper, showman and professional athlete. He was an extraordinary rider and in 1900 accepted the challenge to repeat Adam Lindsay Gordon's leap on horseback near Mount Gambier, with success. He was billed as being "born in the saddle and since being able to walk has been roping, breaking and handling notorious outlaws and wild horses." He offered £1000 to anyone who could successfully ride his mighty horse, 'Firefly'.

Lloyd's Circus returned to Braidwood on 17th July 1928. It presented a new principal act by the Allegro Bros, recently arrived from America. They also featured their favourite boxing horses, Tunney and Dempsey. Miss Eugene had joined the re-formed Sole Bros Circus by 1929, and by 1931, Lennon's, Lloyd Sisters and Bud Bros Circus had combined. Maynardo's acrobatic act (William and Daisy) joined Holden's Circus in Queensland.

By the 1930's, the circus world was feeling the effects of the great depression. Lloyd Sisters went to Queensland and did children's shows on station 4BC with clowns, dogs, ponies and children in the studio.

The Lloyd family has been very difficult to find. However, finally, the mystery is solved. The founder, Frederick Lloyd was born Frederick James Hobbs in Bathurst in 1856. His grandparents were convicts. The surname Lloyd does not appear anywhere in his family. He married Emily Clare Perkins in 1892 at Patterson. Their children were Harold, Daisy Helen who married William Maynard (played Maynardo the clown and was grandson to Perry's Circus founder), Emily Eugenie, Florence Victoria (called Miss Dorothy) and Alma (married Vincent Golden (Mickie) Ashton, son of Frederick Ashton of Ashton's Circus). Traditionally circus families are very tight and it has been very common to marry into other circus families. Some circuses folded, and a generation later reformed, such as Perry's, Sole's and Eroni's. Rising transport costs, insurance premiums, licence fees and red tape have hit operators hard, but family circuses are no disappearing act. Today, there are about 14 shows travelling the back roads from Darwin to Hobart, more than at any time since the 1950s.



William Maynard and Daisy Helen

Museum Opening Hours

Friday-Sunday 11am-2pm

Address: 186 Wallace Street, Braidwood

Telephone: 4842 2310

Admission: by donation

Email: help@braidwoodmuseum.org.au