

## Celebrating 60 years.

In the last two issues of the Bulletin members and volunteers have been reminded of the Society's forthcoming celebrations of the Illawarra Historical Society's 60 years of service to history and heritage in Illawarra.

The Illawarra Historical Society was formed on 5 December 1944 during the time everyone's thoughts were on the efforts of those gallant servicemen fighting the Japanese Imperial Forces in the Pacific. Some of you may recall the darkest days of WWII, when someone close to you was away fighting for our freedom. In the meantime a group of young professional men were brave enough to consider that Wollongong was ready for an historical society.

A well attended Public Meeting at the Wollongong Town Hall was held on 5 December, 1944 at which a number of speakers spoke about the need and how to form an historical society. A provisional committee was formed to draw up a suitable constitution. The first general meeting was held on the 1 February 1945 electing a committee for the newly formed Illawarra Historical Society. The following week on 8 February the first members meeting was held.

The society members during the early years worked hard collecting artefacts and historical information. Although there was no home base for our organisation all material was stored in the members homes or places of work. For almost 22 years this practice continued until the effort by Edgar Beale and others paid off. Edgar Beale negotiated from 1963 to 1966 to have the State and Local Governments turn the old Post Office in Market Street into a historical site to be set up as a museum.

We are fortunate and thankful for all those pioneers of our Society. We must not only recognise the Foundation Members who have passed away over the years, but also two surviving Foundation Members who were instrumental in the founding of our esteemed organisation.

Mr Tom Maguire, a solicitor in Wollongong at that time, has retired today and lives in the Bowral area. The business he operated so many years ago is still a practising firm in Wollongong known as Maguire and McInerney. He was one person elected to the provisional committee and an integral part of those who drew up the constitution for the organisation.

Dr Robert Taylor, veterinary surgeon, lives today in the Harden area. His practice was located in Keira Street, Wollongong, and a veterinary hospital is still there today. Dr Taylor was the person responsible for organising discussions with Alderman J J Kelly, Mayor of Wollongong, and Charles Price Conigrave, General Secretary and Fellow of the Royal Australian Historical Society in forming an historical society. Dr Taylor was elected to the committee as the first research officer in 1945. He left Wollongong in the late 1960s to settle in Harden where he continued practising as a veterinarian. In 1970 he was one of the founding members of the Harden-Murrumburrah Historical Society, in which he is still actively involved.

Celebrations for the 60th anniversary will commence with the Lord Mayor Alex Darling inviting all Society members and Museum volunteers to a Lord Mayoral reception on 2 December at the Council building in Burelli Street, Wollongong. During this event a book titled "*Illawarra Historical Society Inc. 60th Anniversary Commemorative Issue*" will be launched and will be available to our members.

In the evening at approx 6-30 pm an informal get-together will be held in the courtyard of the Museum where our members and volunteers will enjoy a nostalgic night. Everyone is most welcome. A light supper will be provided. Members are reminded that Thursday 2 December is the 38th Anniversary of the establishment of the Museum.

Sunday 5 December, being the society's 60th Anniversary, Wollongong City Brass band will perform for us at Market Square between 1-30 to 2-30pm. This event is organised by Wollongong City Council in conjunction with the Society. There will be extensive advertising in

local newspapers as we would like to share this event with the residents of Wollongong. On that day the Museum will be open from 1 to 4pm and admission will be free. We would like as many people as possible to come and join us in celebrating the Illawarra Historical Society's 60th and the Illawarra Museum's 38th anniversaries to see the work the Museum Curator Joyce McCarthy and volunteers have accomplished to give visitors a glimpse of our past.

Since its inception 60 years ago the drive of the members and volunteers of the Illawarra Historical Society and Illawarra Museum have not waned, whether managing the society, documenting historical articles, collecting or exhibiting artefacts.

If I do not have the opportunity to catch up with you during our celebrations I would like on behalf of the Society and Museum take this opportunity to wish all our members and volunteers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Carol Herben.  
Hon. President.