

EXPLORE

The Charles Sturt Memorial Museum Trust Inc.

CHARLES STURT MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2020

ISSUE NO. 33

Welcome to our mid year newsletter. It has been a challenging four months since the impact of Covid -19 on Australia. The museum has been closed since 16 March with our last tour held on 15 March. It was a very successful morning with forty people from the WEA attending. Unfortunately all our scheduled tours after that date had to be cancelled, even Sturt's Anniversary Birthday celebrations.

We re-opened the Museum on Sunday 5 July, having submitted our Covid 19 Plan to the State Government and undertaken the necessary steps to ensure social distancing and hand sanitizing requirements. A guide to the Grange has been printed to allow for self guided tours of the Grange so as to maintain the 1.5m social distancing rule. We welcomed sixteen visitors, a good number for our Sunday open days. That number allows us to chat to visitors, answer questions, give them guidance as to exploring the precinct and provide assistance to young students. Visitors always compliment on their museum experience and the presentation of the museum.

During the closure, the Central Expedition display was removed from Gallery One to ensure social distancing rules allowed for eight person entry. Display cabinets have been rearranged and new interpretive labels for artefacts installed.

The Trust has been provided with a grant of \$8,800 from the History Trust of South Australia to employ Denise Schumann & Associates to develop a new Exhibition Plan to upgrade the Gallery Wing. The Gallery Wing was first developed by Denise Schumann in 2003-2004. Given more recent developments in exhibition design, and in consultation with the History Trust of South Australia, it was decided that an upgrade was necessary. The Plan will provide the Trust with the opportunity to develop the space in a staged manner to ensure grant funding can be secured. We thank the **History Trust of South Australia** for providing this essential funding.



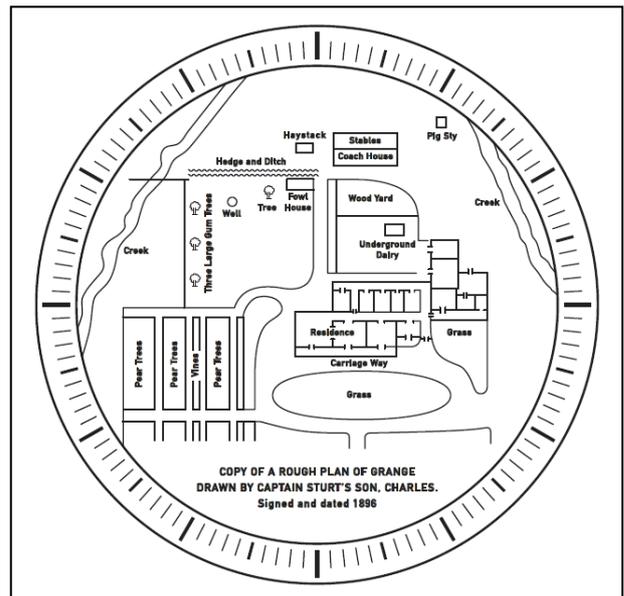
We also thank the **City of Charles Sturt** for a \$4,800 grant from Historical Society Funding to continue the Heritage Garden Project and to reprint Arthur Jeeves OAM booklet, *Captain Sturt and Captain Barker – Brothers in Arms, In Life and Death*.

The Trust also appreciates a generous \$1,500 donation by **Dr Liz Burge** for the purchase of seven café tables and two umbrella tables. These will be a feature in the garden for morning teas and celebratory events.

In January 2020 the Trust was granted \$4,917 by the **History Trust of South Australia** to interpret Captain Sturt's garden at Grange. It was discovered that George McLeay had installed a sundial with a sand stone plinth at his Brownlow Hill N.S.W. garden in the 1840s. Given Sturt's predilection to follow his good friend's example of home and garden, the Trust decided to adapt Charles Sheppey's Sturt 1896 sketch of the garden plan as a sundial. It will allow visitors to see the layout of the Captain Sturt's garden C1847. It will be placed at the end of the garden pathway as pictured.



Sturt was an avid horticulturalist. At Grange he was able to gratify his passion for gardening declaring his one enjoyment was wandering over his garden with his two beautiful boys Napier and Charles.



His passion can be formally dated to 1836 when asked to serve on the first Committee of Superintendance of the Australian Museum and Botanic Gardens in Sydney. On arrival in Adelaide he joined the committee of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society and later as a Vice President of the South Australia Agricultural Society.

Always eager to plant a variety of specimens, he imported plants from Loddige's in London - fine fuchsias, laurel, chestnut and white roses while from Wallick in Calcutta, he ordered pineapples, bananas, arrowroot, sugar-cane and indigo seeds and cuttings. From his old friend George McLeay at Brownlow Hill, Camden N.S.W. he requested pine seeds, seeds of Cupressus callitris, the white cedar and the loquat. McLeay supplied couch for Sturt's lawns.

Records show that his orchard comprised of 4,000 trees of Pears, Oranges, Lemons, Apples, Peaches, Brown Turkey Fig, Vines, while the garden featured, Oleander, Heliotrope, Artichokes, Black wattle, Asters, Blue Hardenbergia, White Hardenbergia, Cosmos, Poppy, Sturt Desert Rose and Sturt Desert Pea. These plants are a feature of the new Heritage Garden.

At present our Vice President, Paul Hilbig is preparing a submission to the Department of Environment for a National Heritage Listing for Depot Glen. The Grange does not comply with the criteria but we hope to create a link between Depot Glen and the Grange. The Depot Glen submission will highlight the importance of Sturt's Central Expedition which was a critical turning point for the cultural history of Australia as it dispelled the theory of an inland sea and revealed for the first time the desolate landscape, the intense heat, the serious lack of water in central Australia

The Wangkumara and Malyangapa people had traversed the area for over 25,000 years but they knew the land and its sources of food and water. For explorers like Sturt, the area was a huge unknown. His expedition hampered further by the teams of bullocks and drays, horses and 300 head of sheep (meat on the hoof) which all required huge amounts of water to survive. Sturt spent almost 6 months at Depot Glen reliant on the secure and abundant water supply of Preservation Creek. Depot Glen became a staging point for his continued exploration northwards and eventual achievement of being the first European to reach within 240 kms of the centre of Australia. At the site is a large stone cairn built by Sturt's men in 1845 and nearby is the lonely grave of James Poole, Sturt's second-in-command, who died of scurvy and was buried under a Grevillea tree.



Sturt's Cairn on Mount Poole

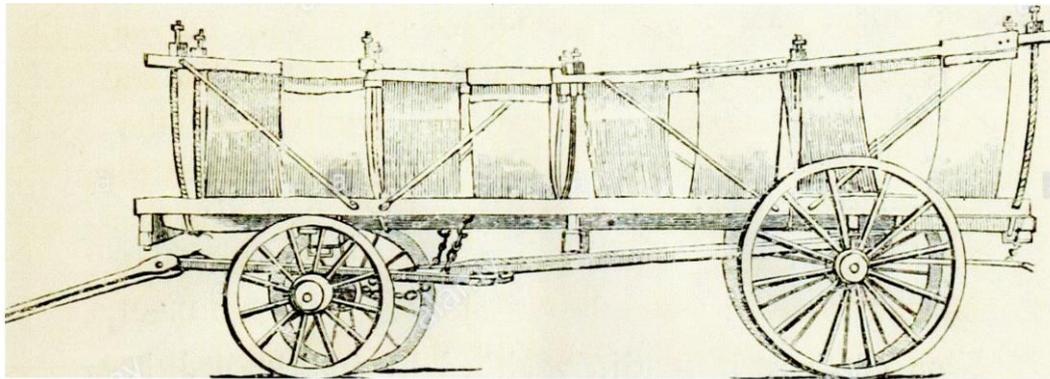


James Poole's gravesite under the Grevillea tree

Continuing with the theme of the Central Expedition, an enquiry was received from a gentleman in New South Wales who has carved models of Sturt's Central Expedition party – men, bullocks, horses, wagons and sheep (he stopped at 150). In his final stages of carving, he requested details about the type of boat carriage that was used by Sturt. There are no details as to the type of boat carriage used other than it was placed on a wagon pulled by bullocks. S.T. Gill's paintings show the upsided whale boat on a wagon with two wheels. The top image, a portion of the departure down King William Street and an image from Victoria Square looking across to Flinders Street. The boat can be seen in the right hand corner. The enquirer hopes to display it at Milparinka Heritage and Tourism Centre as part of the *Sturt's Steps tourism project*.



While researching possible boat carriages, I came upon a description of a boat-carriage for two boats, built for Major Mitchell's second expedition into western New South Wales in 1835. Description: "Two light whale boats were built by Mr. Eager of the dock-yard at Sydney and wood was cut for the felloes of wheels which would be required for a boat-carriage and carts, and it was laid up to season in the lumberyard at Paramatta. In completing the equipment for the journey, in the following year, at the same place, I was much indebted to the zealous assistance of Mr. Simpson, of the department of roads. The boat-carriage was constructed according to a model, made by my friend Mr. Dunlop, Kings Astronomer at Parramatta, and the plan of it will be easily understood by the accompanying figure. One boat was made to fit within the other, the thwarts of the larger or outer one, being taken out. The double boat, thus formed, was suspended on belts of canvass, which supported it buoyant and clear of the frame work. Those parts of the canvass of the carriage, most liable to friction, were guarded with sheepskin and greased hide. The smaller boat was suspended within the larger, also on canvass, so as to swing clear of the outer boats sides; and the whole was covered by a tarpaulin, thrown over a ridge poll. Besides Mr. Richard Cunningham, who was attached to the expedition as botanist, Mr. Larmer, a very young assistant surveyor, was appointed to accompany me; the services of the other officers of the department being required for duties within the settled districts."



If you visit Tibooburra in New South Wales you will find a whaleboat upended on poles. Part of the Silver City Sculpture Project and titled *Myth and Mirage* 1999 the artwork was created by Adelaide sculpture Anthony Hamilton to represent the despair and abandonment felt by Sturt on his realisation that an inland sea did not exist. Tourist information details that Hamilton had the replica commissioned as part of the project.



Trust records indicate that a whaleboat used by the Outward Bound group in 1968 for a re-enactment of the River Murray Expedition found a resting place at the Naval Yards at Port Adelaide. In 1975 the boat was offered to the Trust for the purposes of display but after some consideration the offer was declined. It was displayed for a time in the A.N.Z. Bank in King William Street possibly in 1994 for the 150 years anniversary of Sturt's Departure and believed to have been transported to Tibooburra for exhibition.

The Board of Trustees would like to acknowledge and thank our private benefactors for their financial support over past years.

Heather Sturt Haaga and Paul Haaga \$20,000 US

Merle Weston \$8,250

Dr Liz Burge \$ 3,100

Dr Robert Edwards \$2,900

Joyce Crocker OAM \$1,000

Hon. Dean Brown AO \$500

Lions Club West Lakes Seaton \$300

Rotary Club Charles Sturt Grange \$250

Mary Starck \$200

Rosemary De Meyrick \$200

Glenda Couch-Keen \$100



Heather Sturt-Haaga and her husband Paul Galarneux Haaga Jnr of California USA have been our generous benefactors for many years, donating over \$20,000 to the Trust to assist in our work to memorialise the achievements of Captain Charles Sturt and conserve his home and collection.

Heather is a renowned plein air artist, primarily landscapes and still life. Her paintings are in collections throughout the U.S.A. She studied Arts at Vassar College and opted for a career in advertising and marketing, only devoting herself to painting at the age of 43 years.

Heather has spent more than 25 years of experience in non profit board leadership, starting with the Crescenta-Canada Family YMCA in 1986 where she was elected the first female Board Chair. Since then she has served on ten boards and committees. She is the trustee of Princeton Theological Seminary and a member of the Advisory Council for Princeton

University Art Museum as well as her alma mater, Vassar College. She was recently elected Chair of the Board of Directors for African Wildlife Foundation, an organisation that works together with the people of Africa to ensure the conservation of wildlife and wild lands of Africa.

Paul is the retired Chairman of the Board of Capital Research and Management Company but was formerly a Partner in the law firm of Dechert Price & Rhoads in Washington DC and Senior Attorney for the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Heather and Paul are both very supportive of the arts and were lead donors for the construction of an art gallery at the Descanso Gardens, La Canada, California, contributing \$2.1 million. The Sturt Haaga Gallery opened in 2011 and was created by the restoration of Mr Boddy's, (the former owner) original garage, located near the entrance to the historic Boddy House in the southeast corner of his property.



The Trust is extremely grateful for their continued support.