

Queensland Energy Museum Inc.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

22 December 1999 to 30 June 2000

CONTENTS

- **IN JUST A SHORT TIME – ACTION SINCE INCORPORATION**
- **FINANCIAL REPORTS**
- **AUDITOR’S REPORT**
- **OFFICE-BEARERS, STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & SPONSORS**

SECRETARY: 150 CHARLOTTE STREET

GPO BOX 1461
BRISBANE QLD 4001

PHONE: **3407 4480**
FAX: 3407 4221

DIRECTOR: BOWEN BRIDGE ROAD

(SAME POSTAL ADDRESS
AS SECRETARY)

PHONE: **3854 1266**
FAX: 3854 1861

IN JUST A SHORT TIME – ACTION SINCE INCORPORATION

The first Annual Report of Queensland Energy Museum Inc. (QEM) is a landmark in more than one way. Firstly, it celebrates the commitment of the founder members to the preservation of Queensland's electrical heritage. Secondly, it heralds the beginning of the collection and preservation of the history of all types of energy generation, transmission, distribution and use in Queensland. Admittedly, it will be a mammoth task to encompass the diversity of the energy industry and its related activities. However, the progress shown from 22 December 1999 to 30 June 2000 stands testimony to the capacity of the Management Committee, staff and volunteers to work consistently towards their Mission and future goals.

The last ten days of 1999 were milestones for the former Electricity Industry Historical Trust (EIHT). A grant was awarded to EIHT by Arts Queensland to tour its exhibition, *Electric Memories*, to west and central Queensland in 2000/2001. In addition, the Trust became QEM Inc. The year 2000 dawned with a new name, a touring exhibition to manage and the prospect of an exciting future ahead. Therefore, it is appropriate that this report begins with the progress of the travelling exhibition, *Electric Memories*, which has been and still is a great success for QEM. The report will continue with a brief overview of QEM's highlights and the initial results of its membership drive from March to June.

ELECTRIC MEMORIES

The exhibition was originally constructed as a travelling exhibition for the purpose of taking EIHT and its Collection to the people. The reason for this foresight was the absence of a building to call our own. Unfortunately, this is one of the points that remained the same regardless of the challenges and changes we have faced. Therefore, the original philosophy of a Collection we could take to the people rather than the people coming to the Collection continued into our strategic planning for the future of QEM.

During 1999 *Electric Memories* visited a number of local museums and libraries between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. At each venue the exhibition with its accompanying oral history display was pleasantly received. However, the first major public event incorporating the exhibition was in Cairns on 14 January 2000. It was also the first major event for QEM and was intended to correspond with the 75th anniversary of electricity in the town. Cairns Historical Museum celebrated with a month of displays of historical objects, newspaper articles and photographs related to the event. Over 100 people, including the Mayor of Cairns, attended the Opening Ceremony of the celebrations. *Electric Memories* was officially welcomed by the Honourable Mr. Tony McGrady, Minister for Mines and Energy and Mr Keith De Lacy, Chairman of Ergon Energy. Mr. McGrady was very interested in the exhibition and has been supportive of our aims and plans for the future. He has taken an active interest in the progress of QEM. In early February the *Electric Memories* exhibition returned to Brisbane to begin its tour of west and central Queensland later that month.

THE TOUR – FEBRUARY TO JUNE 2000

The Cobb and Coach Co Museum at Toowoomba was the venue for the exhibition in February.

The Opening Day was attended by almost 100 ex-employees of the Toowoomba Electric Light and Power Company (TELCO). It was a very interesting day with many of the people offering their assistance with QEM's oral history program. Some offered photographs, and most could give information that was useful to the interpretation of the development of the electricity industry.

Following Toowoomba the next venue for the exhibition was in Surat, then it went to Quilpie, Tambo and Blackall. The tour will continue through central Queensland before returning to Brisbane in February 2001. The remainder of the tour will be a subject for the next annual report. The response to the exhibition was understandably stronger in the more populated Cairns and Toowoomba areas than in the outback regions. However, there were some pleasing results from the small communities. In June school students visited the exhibition when it was in Surat. As a result of the school information packs produced by QEM to complement the exhibition, electronic mail was received from the students concerning the use of electricity in their homes and in the school.

A NEW EXHIBITION

In January 2000 research into the history of New Farm Powerhouse continued. This included a program of discussions with former employees of the powerhouse. The ex-employees gladly offered their assistance in formulating the correct text to accompany the chosen photographs for an exhibition, which was to be named *New Farm Powerhouse Memories*.

The exhibition opened at the Brisbane Powerhouse Centre for Live Arts in May 2000, extending the capabilities of QEM to 'take the museum to the people'. In conjunction with the New Farm oral history project, QEM formed a co-operative venture with Arterial, a community arts group.

QEM is providing Arterial with oral history recordings, a selection of which will be incorporated into Arterial's sound and vision spectacular for the 2001 Federation celebrations at the Powerhouse.

INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS HERITAGE PANEL & ELECTRICAL PANEL VISIT

The above group of around 45 people expressed their interest in visiting the museum in June to view its historical artefacts. With the assistance of the volunteers and the two part-time members of staff, the Director was able to offer an interesting evening to the group. There were a number of authoritative speakers including Brian Becconsall of Powerlink and Jim Simmers. Following the talks, the visitors were given a guided tour concentrating on specific objects of interest, then wandered at their leisure to view the remainder of the objects, photographs and documents on display.

SPREADING THE WORD

QEM were approached by Channel 7 in June to present material for a section on 'The Great South East' program, which is screened each Sunday. It is significant that it was the television program presenters who contacted QEM. It meant that QEM was beginning to become known for its historical collection. The television crew attended the QEM site at Herston on two occasions to film volunteers and staff renovating some of the objects.

In addition to Channel 7, New Zealand's Transpower, an electricity corporation based at Christchurch, asked for advice from QEM to establish an historical group of their own. An employee in New Zealand had read an article written by the Director in the Australasian Power and Transmission Journal concerning Edward Barton. The Director has written a series of articles for the Journal. Covering the period of this report, articles were published in the February, April and June issues.

The Director also gave talks at workshops and meetings in Landsborough, Tewantin and Toowoomba on a variety of topics including the importance of collecting and preserving oral history.

A member of the Advance Energy Heritage Committee heard about QEM's oral history project and also asked for advice concerning a project they were planning. QEM received a copy of the oral history tapes in May.

There were many more contacts made by other people during the first six months of QEM. Exhibitions, publications, staff attendance at seminars and conferences, and general networking at every opportunity all help to promote QEM.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE

As a new organisation, the Operational Support Sub-Committee has only met once in this initial period since QEM's incorporation. The main topics for discussion were the wording of the new Collection Policy to incorporate the energy industry and the proposed new Strategic Plan. Members of the sub-committee work well together discussing ideas related to the stated aims and objectives of QEM. The value of such a committee cannot be underestimated.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

QEM operates the Queensland Museum Historical Database for digitally recording details concerning its Collection. At the end of June there were 5 registers, which record and number objects, photographs, documents, films & videos, and oral history recordings. Around 2,000 objects and 4,000 photographs have been recorded. Information concerning the Collection is now more accessible to members and the general public for research purposes. The document, film & video, and oral history registers will develop during the year 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001.

INITIAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Due to the amount of work involved in the alterations created by the incorporation document, change of title and the introduction of an ABN and GST, the membership drive was delayed until February. The Director sent out the first membership information packages to Energy Corporations that month and a series of meetings began soon afterwards. Up to June 2000, there has been a positive response and three-year commitment to QEM from the founders of its originating Trust – Energex, Ergon and Powerlink. Additionally, there has been a favourable response from the generating corporations Tarong Power, CS Energy and Stanwell Corporation. The position at 30 June was that discussions were continuing with all three generators and the Queensland Power Trading Corporation (QPTC). Although there was no specific drive for General Members up to June 2000, memberships are being sought as we become known.

To conclude, the Director wishes to express her appreciation to the Management Committee, Secretary, Operational Support Sub-Committee, staff and volunteers for their support and assistance during the year and looks forward to the continuing development and success of Queensland Energy Museum Inc.

Dr J King
DIRECTOR

Mr J Petriwskyj
PRESIDENT

OFFICE-BEARERS, STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & SPONSORS to 30 June 2000

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President Mr. Jurij Petriwskyj
Vice-President Mr. Gordon Jardine (Powerlink)
Treasurer Mr. Terry Sherman
Member Mr. Joe Abercrombie (ENERGEX)
Member Mr. Chris Hazzard (ERGON)

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr. Jan King (Convenor)
Dr Brian Crozier
Mr John Ower
Mr. Terry Sherman
Mr. George Nicol-Smith (Secretary)

STAFF

Director Dr. Jan King
Secretary Mr. George Nicol-Smith
Museum Assistant Mr. Eric Andrews
Museum Database Support Mr. Steven Lippis

VOLUNTEERS

Morris Friend
Greg Grant
Roy Hood
John Hutt
David McConnell
Kevin McNeill
Jim Simmers
Paul Suffolk

SPONSOR

Arts Queensland (for the *Electric Memories* tour)

MEMBERSHIP at 30 June 2000

Energy Organisation Members	3
General Members	8