

Queensland Energy Museum Inc.

EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007

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YEAR EIGHT - July 2006 - June 2007

OUR VISION

We are a group of people enabling the community to experience past, present and future energy technologies and their impact on people's lives.

The Management Committee's main focus in 2006/2007 has continued to revolve around the possibility of a new home for Queensland Energy Museum. For the Director, it has been an active year in the museum with new additions to the collection and the website, and the reorganization of static displays.

New Displays

Edison Street Tubes

A new display cabinet was designed to house the Edison Street Tubes. The cabinet is complete with shelving and subdued lighting to enhance the nineteenth century street tubes. The story of the original purchasing and laying of the tubes in William Street, Brisbane, and the eventual discovery and excavation of selected lengths of the tubes has been recorded on professionally-constructed panels, which are positioned either side of the new cabinet.

Light Box Display

Twelve A2 slim light boxes were purchased during the year. It will be possible to transport the light boxes to other venues as a complete touring exhibition or a few light boxes can be added to QEM's existing touring exhibitions. When not at other venues, the light boxes will add some visual interest to the inside of the museum. The positive aspect of using these slim light boxes is that the internal sheets can be changed at any time.

Longreach Joint Display

Unfortunately, the planned joint display under the Sister Museum Agreement between QEM and Longreach Shire Powerhouse Museum was cancelled due to copyright issues concerning the use of 1970s photographs of survey camps and construction gangs. However, the issues should soon be resolved and the display should go ahead in 2008.

Virtual Exhibitions

Another stage of the *Queensland Energy Image Gallery* was launched and four Virtual Exhibitions were added to the website during the year. The Virtual Exhibitions were as follows:

At the Flick of a Switch, which told the story of daily life before a reticulated supply of electricity was available to people in the Longreach area. The history of Longreach Powerhouse was also part of this exhibition.

Early Electrical Displays at the Ekka. This virtual exhibition was added in plenty of time for the people searching the internet for information on the annual Ekka show in Brisbane. By using the word 'Ekka', the QEM website appeared in the search results.

Gympie Floods, 1950s

A series of images showing the extent of the flooding and the problems associated with restoring electricity supply to the area.

Switch-On Ceremony for Tin Can Bay

This included some excellent photographs of the Switch-On Ceremony and the people gathering to witness the event.

Additions to the Collection

Redding Collection

The energy-related items included in the large private collection, which was gathered by Mr. Rex Redding of Maleny over many years, were assessed by Mr. Jim Simmers and Mr. Terry Sherman in view of including the items in QEM's Historical Collection. Following the assessment, the items thought to be of educational value were purchased for a total of \$20,000. The sum of \$15,000 was paid to Mr. Redding in 2006/7. The remainder will be paid in the 2007/8 financial year.

The items were picked up from Maleny and delivered to the museum site by Energex, who generously donated the driver's services and the vehicle with appropriate lifting gear. Prior to the delivery of the items, the existing static displays inside the museum were changed and a new storage area was put aside for the objects taken off display. Once the Redding items had been delivered, the job of sorting the items into related groups for display was undertaken by Mr. Terry Sherman.

The majority of the items are copies of early generators. These items will not be accessioned in keeping with museum standards and best practice. The items will be added to QEM's 'E' Register, which denotes educational and research items. The remaining items, particularly the original lighting units will be accessioned into QEM's Historical Database in keeping with museum standards and best practice, when these items are documented and provenance and significance has been assessed. Mr. Rex Redding has agreed to assist with this task, which is essential to ensure the integrity of any item in museum collections.

When the research and significance assessments have been completed for the new additions to the collection, interpretive panels will be added to the static display in the museum. In 2007/8, it is planned that a 'Virtual Exhibition' will be launched on QEM's website, which will include any research material uncovered.

Ergon Energy (Rockhampton) Items

The Rockhampton Ergon Energy office sent 13 boxes of photographs, documents, newspaper articles and books to the Herston site. There are about 3,000 photographs, with around 2,000 already having some information attached to them. The remaining photographs do not have attached information. The books, newspaper articles and other documents are valuable for Queensland's social and industrial history. All the items have been boxed in archival storage files and satchels. Gradually, the items are being accessioned. The photographs will be sorted and assessed before digitizing takes place.

Swanbank Power Station Items

Jim Simmers and David Cole assessed the objects remaining at the Swanbank A Power Station prior to its demolition. There were few items of relevance left. Five items were thought to be worth keeping: a potentiometer, a boiler alarm annunciator, a boiler furnace draft gauge, a high pressure turbine blade and a low pressure turbine blade.

Cyclone Larry

DVDs and newspaper articles were donated to QEM from Ian Moller in Powerlink. These items are excellent for research purposes.

Allgas Items

Quite a lot of gas-related objects were delivered to the Herston site. To date, no-one from the former Allgas has visited the museum to explain what the objects are and what purpose they served. David Payne, a former Allgas employee has offered to assist with the task, which we are planning to complete in 2007-8. Currently, the objects are in storage and have not been accessioned into the Collection.

Visits to the Museum

There were a number of visits from groups and individuals to the museum site this year. The most important being the Minister for Mines and Energy Geoff Wilson's visit in June. The Minister was met by members of the Management Committee and shown around the displays. The plans for the development of the Windsor site was explained and discussed. The Minister did not have time to stay for morning tea due to pressing appointments.

The Energex CEO, Mr. Terry Effeney did a familiarization tour of the museum in May with a few Energex representatives. Although he knew about the museum's existence, he had not visited the site previously. Other visitors to the museum during the year included staff from the Ergon Energy Records Department in Rockhampton and the Institution of Engineers Heritage Panel.

Planning for a New Energy Trail

Plans for a new Memories of Energy Trail (MET), which will meander through the Brisbane Valley has continued throughout the year. Since the Brisbane Valley Heritage Trails (BVHT) established a joint Memories of Energy Group (MEG), which includes the shires within the Brisbane Valley area from Nanango to Fernvale and Laidley, the Director attends the monthly BVHT meetings when time allows. These meetings are also a way of networking, keeping up-to-date with the heritage and tourism activities that happen within the Brisbane Valley and spreading the word about QEM, its Collection and services.

Oral History

In August, the Director spent a day in Townsville interviewing five men, who had worked in Queensland's power stations for many years, including those at Palm Island, Townsville, Hughenden, Julia Creek and Charters Towers. They told some interesting stories. The day was arranged by the Director after receiving a call from Lyall Fraser about the Townsville Power Station and a group of power station men he knew. Following this, Ergon Energy kindly offered the group the use of one of its rooms and provided morning tea. It is planned to meet with them again in the hope that they can identify some people and power station images.

September was the Director's annual leave month. She visited her family in South Wales, UK and also spent some time in Scotland. The use of oral history in museum displays is particularly interesting and the Director made a point of visiting industrial and rural museums, science and technology centres in Wales and a Scottish Hydro-power Visitor Interpretive Centre. After talking to many people, museum staff and visitors and taking copious notes and photographs, the result was a 17,000-word document *The Use of Oral History in Industrial Museums in Wales and Scotland*. The document is useful to compare strategies overseas with

those in similar Australian museums and the Director is currently working on this project in her own time. When QEM eventually has a place to call its own, and when regional sites become a viable alternative, the oral history presentation ideas can become reality.

Touring Exhibitions

A number of QEM's touring exhibitions were erected at venues in Brisbane, Cooloola Shire and the South Burnett. The photographic exhibition *Powerful Images* appeared at the Kingaroy Bicentennial Museum in November and December.

The combined *Shocking Stories*, which included the four exhibitions *Electric Memories*, *Do You Remember*, *Powerful Images* and *Powering the 40s* was launched at Cooloola Shire Art Gallery in January until the end of February 2007. The Director added three small displays to localize the content of the exhibition. One display concentrated on the 1950s floods in Gympie and the efforts of the electricity industry to restore power to the town and surrounding area. The second display highlighted the Switch-On Ceremony at Tin Can Bay. The third display provided information and photographs related to the co-generation scheme between Ergon Energy and Suncoast Gold Macadamias in Gympie.

Communities appreciate the addition of local content in the form of small displays. In turn, the local content enhances QEM's touring exhibitions and provides the potential for community interaction.

Towards the end of the exhibition, the Cooloola Shire Art Gallery Manager advertised and provided morning tea for a QEM Memories of Energy Group network meeting. The tea was attended by some of the local people from Gympie and a few contact details were collected for possible oral history projects in the future.

Electric Memories was erected at Customs House in Brisbane in May 2007. Integral Energy requested the exhibition for its corporate launch. Another request was received in the same month from the Electrical Communications Association, formerly known as the Electrical Contractors Association, for its 70th anniversary. The event was held in the Hilton Ballroom. The exhibition *Do You Remember* was accompanied by some historical objects and documents for the celebratory evening.

Museum Standards Programme

The Director was asked to be one of the Peer Reviewers for a Museums Standards pilot programme, which is being jointly conducted in Queensland and the Northern Rivers area of New South Wales. The programme is a partnership between Museums and Galleries New South Wales (MGNSW) and Museums and Galleries Services Queensland MGSQ. The Director was the Peer Reviewer for the Queensland Ambulance Museum in Wynnam and the Abbey Museum in Caboolture in 2005/6. The museums that the Director is currently reviewing for the 2006/7 programme are the Cairns Historical Museum and the Musgrave Settlers Museum in Gordonvale. The Museum Standards Programme is providing valuable internal self-assessment for QEM's operation and management.

Significance Assessment

The Director began a Significance Assessment of the whole QEM Collection, which includes the objects, documents, photographs and oral history archive. In addition, various Significance Statements have been drafted by QEM volunteers Kevin Hesse and Jim Simmers

relating to groups of objects in the collection. Kevin Hesse did the assessment of the high voltage equipment and Jim Simmers did the meter collection.

Consultancy Revenue for QEM: The Significance Assessment for the Southern Cross Collection, Highfields Pioneer Village

Highfields Pioneer Village was successful in their application for a grant to undertake a significance assessment of the Southern Cross equipment in their collection. The Director was approached to do the assessment and a collection management workshop for the volunteers. The final report for contained around 50 photographs. The Workshop for the volunteers at the Pioneer Village on Collection Management regarding the Southern Cross Collection was presented one Saturday in March. The project earned QEM income of around \$4,500.

Regional Sites

Chinchilla

In October, the Director was informed that Chinchilla Shire Council was successful with a recent Expression of Interest to the State Government for a new community centre, which could also include an energy component. The plan has not been finalized and the original idea might well change over time. However, if an energy-related theme does happen, there is a possibility that QEM can be involved with the displays, or with regular touring exhibitions to the new venue. It is an opportunity for QEM to have a regional space and a place to be known while contributing value to a regional community. Chinchilla will become part of another QEM Energy Trail in the future.

Nanango

Nanango Shire Council received a grant of around \$400,000 to develop a Nanango Shire Energy Precinct. Some of the grant will be used to establish an 'energy museum' in the old Tarong Coal building, which is situated opposite the current Nanango Visitor Information Centre. The Butter Factory engines had been removed from the original site. The council built an extension on the rear of the Tarong Coal building and the engines were relocated by June 2007. When the site is developed further, it is expected that QEM will be able to have a display and/or regular touring exhibitions at the site. Nanango is part of QEM's first Energy Trail in the South Burnett and QEM maintain strong links with the council. Therefore, the proposed Energy Precinct is an exciting opportunity for QEM to partner Nanango, assist with displays in the 'energy museum' and to have a regional access point.

Dalby

There has been no further development with the Dalby Town Council and the Ergon Energy site.

Seminar Papers and Publications

The Director presented a paper for the Brisbane History Group's Energy Seminar in June 2007. The paper was titled *Promoting Electricity in Brisbane, 1920s to 1950s*. Jim Simmers, Doug Mercer and Brian King also presented papers and mentioned QEM's archive for source material. The papers should be published in the Journal of the Brisbane History Group in late 2007.

A regular historical article, written by the Director, now appears in the Ergon Energy's *eConnect* magazine.

Windsor Archive

The Director, the Energex representative on the Management Committee, Mr. Richard Raymond and Keith Metcalfe, Records Manager for Energex met at the Windsor Archive in April. The aim of the meeting was to assess the extent of the documents pertaining to Energex and which would not be transferred to QEM in the future. The documentation belonging to Energex would be systematically assessed by a member of staff from the Energex Records Department at some time during the year.

It was agreed that general items such as Annual Reports, books, newspaper articles, media releases, all of which came from the former SEQEB Technical Library could be transferred to QEM using the standard Museum Donation Forms. It is understood that the older items, such as the Barton and White and City Electric Light Company items will remain the property of Energex. However, the items will be cared for by QEM.

Given that QEM will remain the carer for the older documents, the Director requested a quote from a qualified paper conservator at Queensland Museum for a preservation survey to be conducted and a two-day practical workshop for simple in-house conservation work. The quote for the preservation survey, report and policy guidelines, and the quote for the workshops were received later in the same month as the meeting with Energex. The survey will cost \$3,000 and the workshops \$1,500. The survey will be undertaken in November 2007 and the workshops in May 2008.

QEM Technical Committee

Jim Simmers, a member of QEM's Technical Support Sub-Committee, has completed the registration of the meters, which Energex donated to QEM. There are more than 200 items ranging through a variety of power station meters and domestic meters. It was a massive task and has taken Jim about two days a month for around five years. Some of the meters that were not accessioned or were de-accessioned in keeping with QEM's Collection Policy, are still to be disposed of. When disposal has been finalised and an Object File on the meters completed, QEM will have an excellent collection of different makes and types of industrial and domestic meters, many with relevant accompanying literature, researched information and historical photographs.

As part of the Technical Support Committee responsibilities, Jim and David Cole selected a few items from Swanbank A for QEM's collection. Jim has also answered a number of technical queries from callers during the year and assessed historical objects when photographs have been sent to QEM.

In Conclusion

The President and the Director take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our members and volunteers for their continued support. Without their help, QEM would not be able to operate and uphold our Vision. We will continue to ensure that Queensland's energy heritage is preserved for future generations and are committed to improving access to our collection.

Dr J King
Director

Mr J Petriwskyj
President

OFFICE-BEARERS, STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & SPONSORS to 30 June 2007

PATRON

Mr Neil Galwey, OAM

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President Mr Jurij Petriwskyj
Treasurer Mr George Nicol-Smith
Vice President Mr Peter Brennan (Ergon Energy)
Member Mr Peter Dunn (Powerlink)
Member Mr Richard Raymond (ENERGEX)

STAFF

Director Dr Jan King
Museum Officer Mr Steven Lippis

Secretarial Duties Ms Elizabeth Collins (Ergon Energy)

VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTION

NAME	VOLUNTEERING HOURS
Eric Andrews	93 hours at Windsor 26 hours at Herston
Jim Simmers	122 hours at Herston
Greg Grant	4 full days moving items and assists with practical tasks when required
Roy Hood	N/A Assists when required and does external research
Kevin Hesse	N/A Assists with Significance Statements, high voltage items

<u>2006</u> MEMBERSHIP at 30 June	<u>2007</u>
14 Community Members	
1 Corporate Members	1
3 Energy Organisation Members	3
12 General Members	
1 Patron	1
<hr/> 31 TOTAL	<hr/>