

OFFICIALLY OPEN 115TH ANNUAL MACLEAN SHOW – 3RD MAY 2006.

President Show Society Don Cameron, members of your Committee.

Greetings and warm wishes from CVC and the citizens of our wonderful Clarence Valley.

This the third major event in rapid succession on or near this great Showground.

Follows the centenary celebrations iconic, heritage landmark McFarlane Bridge. What a fantastic event that was just 25 days ago!

And just 18 days ago we celebrated on this ground the 102nd Maclean Highland Gathering – another outstanding success for Maclean and district.

Today we celebrate the 115th Maclean Annual Show – an event that predates both the Bridge and the Highland Gathering.

All three of these events inform us about the extensive and very proud history of our local district.

The bridge is a magnificent example of the engineering and design skills of our forebears

The Highland Gathering is continuing evidence of Maclean's compelling Scottish tradition and of our strong cultural linkages to Scottish Ancestors.

This 115 year Maclean Show tradition demonstrates a continuing fine exposition of our agricultural expertise and acquired skills in pastoral, agricultural and horticultural industries over all these years.

Moves to initiate the Lower Clarence Agricultural and Pastoral Society commenced in October 1890, coincidentally the same year as the CV experienced its worst ever recorded flood. Fifty persons agreed to membership at that time.

In April 1891 the District Surveyor identified this magnificent site as Maclean Showground. It took another year before the Minister for Lands agreed to the insistent lobbying of John McFarlane MLA, after whom our heritage bridge is of course named.

After much planning and laborious volunteer work, the first Exhibition was held on the 5th and 6th May 1896 with over 3200 people attending – a remarkable result! The Society President Mr Sam McNaughton opened the Show and our John illustrious McFarlane MLA was also a speaker. 11 horses competed in the Show Jumping for a prize of 10 pounds!

John McFarlane opened the 1897 Show and again over 3000 people attended with gate takings of 119 pounds 10 shillings and the making of a small profit – clear evidence of the great popularity of the event all those years ago.

By 1921 the show income had rocketed to 863 pounds. The Jubilee Show was held in 1940 and was recorded as an outstanding success, even though World War 2 was raging.

My research reveals that in 1978 many still very familiar local identities were listed at Committee members and Stewards – including our Federal Member For Page Ian Causley who served on the Grounds, Fruit and Vegetables and Pavilion Committees.

It is important to highlight the contribution of the district's women to this historic Show event. The Lower Clarence Agricultural Society Ladies Auxiliary was formed in 1946 and performed a vital role until sadly it was disbanded at the turn of this century.

This and other insightful and valuable information about the history of this and other North Coast Shows is contained in the Helen Trustum 2003 book "Its Showtime" – a fascinating read. It contains great pictures of the personalities and show events over many years, even including one of a younger Ian Causley opening the 1985 show in his first year as a State parliamentarian.

Over many years wonderful enhancements have been provided to this Showground by the Show Society, the Rodeo Committee and many individual volunteers. The citizens of this district owe much to all those volunteers and we salute you all.

It is an honour to be able to represent all the citizens of our great Clarence Valley and to express, on Council's behalf, our gratitude and sincere appreciation to all those good people who have worked to provide additional amenities to this Showground in recent times. Well done to all those concerned.

As a direct descendent of the Mulvilles who settled here in 1862 it is a huge personal honour to have been asked by the Maclean Show Society to officially open this annual show. Times change and I speak with certainty when I suggest that never before has a Mayor of a single Clarence Valley local government authority opened a Maclean Show.

It is indeed a very high honour and pleasure to declare officially open the 115th Annual Maclean Show.

IAN TILEY
MAYOR