

ORDINARY MEETING	9
21 FEBRUARY 2024	

CAIRNS & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC. RESOURCE AND PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

79/5/43 | #7316086

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Approves entering into a three-year Resource and Performance Agreement with Cairns & District Family History Society Inc. to support their annual production of *Shadows from the Past* to the value of \$12,500 (ex GST) per annum.
2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to the above agreement.

INTERESTED PARTIES:

President/Secretary - Pat Clark

Vice President - Karen Lowrey

Treasurer - Margaret Culloty

Committee Members: Shirley Arrowsmith, Rosemary Holroyd, Alison Newman, Joan Taylor

Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Cairns & District Family History Society Inc. (CDFHS) was established in 1989 as a not-for-profit incorporated association to promote family history and genealogical research in Cairns and surrounding districts. The Society's main aims are to:

- Promote the recording, indexing and preservation of genealogically oriented records by suitable means.
- Conduct genealogy educational courses and hold social gatherings, meetings, lectures, and research workshops to promote and encourage the advancement of genealogical work in the community.

Shadows from the Past, an annual program of dramatised walks in Queensland's heritage-listed McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery, is also produced by CDFHS. Since 2016, Council has provided financial support for the production, and also ticketing services through Ticketlink up until 2022.

The Society's three-year Resource & Performance Agreement with Council will expire on 30 June 2024, and officers recommend that Council enter into another three-year agreement commencing from 1 July 2024 and ending 30 June 2027 to the value of \$12,500

(ex GST) per annum. The \$500 per year increase is due to an increase in associated production costs.

It is also proposed that Council allow CDFHS to keep the event's ticket revenue in order to improve the long-term viability of their initiatives supporting other heritage sites as well as projects and activities presented to the community.

BACKGROUND:

Since 2014, the Cairns & District Family History Society's *Shadows from the Past* program of dramatised walks through the historic McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery has been a highlight on the Cairns calendar. The Society created the program to aid in the revitalisation and promotion of this key Queensland heritage-listed asset, and it has proven to be an incredibly popular event, with every season being fully booked.

Each year the Society works with a professional writer and director to develop the stories of a selection of pioneers buried in the cemetery. These stories are crafted from research held by the Society, transformed by the writer and director, and brought to life by an ensemble of professional and aspiring local actors. For information on the outcome of the 2023 season, please see Attachment 1 of this report.

COMMENT:

Connecting people and communities to the region's diverse history and cultures through engagement and participatory experiences is a key priority of Council's *Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022*. The CDFHS has been instrumental in helping to achieve this ambition, and their commitment to preserving and promoting the region's shared heritage to new audiences is to be commended.

OPTIONS:

Option 1:

That Council:

1. Approves entering a three-year Resource and Performance Agreement with Cairns & District Family History Society Inc. to support their annual production of *Shadows from the Past* to the value of \$12,500 (ex GST) per annum.
2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to the above agreement.

Option 2:

That Council does not support the recommendations and adopts an alternate course of action.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

It is proposed that the allocated funds totalling \$37,500 be distributed through the following budget allocations:

Year	Existing Budget Allocation	Amount (excl GST)
2024/2025	R&P Non-Grant Stream	\$12,500
2025/2026	R&P Non-Grant Stream	\$12,500
2026/2027	R&P Non-Grant Stream	\$12,500

It is important to note that Council entered into a freehold lease with the Cairns and District Family History Society Inc. (lessee) at 271 Gatton St Westcourt on 1 October 2018, which will expire on 30 September 2028. The lessee is responsible for all outgoings such as rates, water, power (all utilities), sewerage and is also responsible for all maintenance and repair of the premises. This lease agreement sits outside of the Resource & Performance Agreement.

Community and Cultural Heritage:

The proposed new funding agreement to provide cash support to CDFHS is aligned to the cultural, heritage and community development aspirations of Council's Strategy for Culture and the Arts 2022 as outlined below:

Priority 3.1 Programming, Promotion and Audience Development:

Strategy 3.1.1: Align Council's flagship venues to produce an annual performing and visual arts program that provides entertainment and cultural experiences as good as any Australian capital city and promote Cairns as an international creative powerhouse.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

Corporate Plan 2021-26 Community & Culture Strategic Objectives:

- Promote Cairns as the arts and cultural capital of Northern Australia.
- Support diverse sport, cultural and community groups that contribute to wellbeing.

Policy:

The Cairns and District Family History Society Inc. has been assessed as a Community Organisation and therefore falls under the remit of the Resource and Performance section of Council's Community Grants Policy.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Report on the outcomes of the 2023 *Shadows from the Past* production at the McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery.



Stephen Foster
Executive Manager Creative Life



Destry Puia
Director Lifestyle & Community

Attachment 1 – Report on the outcomes of the 2023 *Shadows from the Past* production at the McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery.



Shadows from the Past 2023

Report
for
Cairns Regional Council
Cultural Services

Submitted by
Cairns & District Family
History Society Inc.

Shadows from the Past 2023 McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery

Content

- Director
- Collaboration
- Preparation
- Selection of Pioneers for Story Telling
- Writing of Stories
- Pioneers and Performers
- Ticketing
- Advertising
- Financial Report
- The Cemetery
- Security
- Outcome

Our Director



Rachel Terry directed again this year. Rachel has been a professional actress and director for over twenty years. She graduated from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in acting and has spent the last two decades treading the boards and appearing on the screen in commercials, television and film.

In 2016 Rachel commenced her own theatre company Box Jelly Theatre Co. which tours primary schools throughout FNQ, she also produces an annual Christmas show for the community.

Preparation

- Obtained permission from Cairns Regional Council Cultural Services to conduct these walks
- Risk Assessment - SEE attached
- Safety talk is given to actors, volunteers, and audience before commencement of each performance
- McLeod and Grove Street gates are manned during each performance and volunteers have 2-way radios as well as a mobile phone with them
- Each member of the audience is provided with a torch
- Volunteers accompany the audience to guide them safely through the walk

Selection of Pioneers and Performers

10 Pioneers were selected this year to tell their story of the early pioneering days of Cairns and District. Supporting our story tellers was flautist Zeta Betts-Colefax. This year we included a 'love story' of the 2 pioneers and their 2 marriages and being buried in separate sections of the cemetery.



George and Norah Fox-Brown – Portrayed by Sarah Speller & Paul Hynes

Photo by Alex Pirez



Flautist – Zara Betts-Colefax

Photo by Alex Pirez



William Graham – Story by his wife - Portrayed by Heidi Ganley

Photo by Alex Pirez



Benjamin Nelson – Story by his wife - Portrayed by Brianna Torison

Photo by Alex Pirez



Charlotte “Granny” Hayes – Portrayed by Liz Christensen

Photo by Alex Pirez



Amy Jennings – Portrayed by Claire Denzin

Photo by Alex Pirez



William Ryan – Portrayed by Dean Powell

Photo by Alex Pirez



Thomas Latrielle – Portrayed by Paul Carey

Photo by Alex Pirez



Alex Corbett – Portrayed by Fin George-Newman

Photo by Alex Pirez



Rev. Joseph Tear Tack – Portrayed by Tom Leaver

Photo by Alex Pirez

Stories

This year the actors wrote their monologues from the research that Cairns Family History gave them, and Rachel Terry then added the dramatization.

Performances

We had 2 performances each night on 28th & 29th July and 4th & 5th August. Again, all performances fully booked, as they have been for the past 10 years .

Ticketing

All 400 ticket sales were through Trybooking.com with an additional 31 to allow a class from Trinity Bay High School attend. This gave a net profit for Cairns Family History this year of \$7365.30.

Advertising

As always, since the change to Cairns Post, this is always difficult.

- Cairns Family History Society
 - home page - advertising and Events Calendar
 - Facebook
- Cairns Libraries
- Members and Supporters social media
- ABC Far North
- Cairns Community Radio

Financial Report

The funding from Cairns Regional Council of \$12000 was fully expended on Director fees, actor recognition, photos and minor expenses

The Cemetery

This, as always, was beautifully cleaned, and our thanks go to Cairns Regional Council

Security

No issues were reported this year

Outcome

Well, this was our 10th year and final year of support from Cairns Regional Council's R&P Agreement and an extremely successful one, even through the threat of rain. There were no cancellations of tickets and over all the performances only 4 no-shows.

We sent out a survey a week after the last performance this year, to all those who booked tickets., in all 110. We only asked 5 simple questions and we have had an outstanding return of 36 replies.

To our question "Do you want to see Shadows Continue" that has been a resounding

"Yes". To the question "Is there anything you would like to share about our event"

This is just a few of the replies –

"I thoroughly enjoyed this event. I live in Atherton and came down especially to see this. I have been to a similar thing in Herberton and really enjoyed that, so I was very keen to come to Shadows. I would definitely come again. The actors were excellent and I found the whole event very interesting. I absolutely love history, especially people's history. Thank you for a wonderful evening!"

"It is a wonderful event which gives an insight into Cairns history in a very innovative and entertaining way. It is always professional done. And seems to go from strength to strength. It is a credit to all involved in presenting this event"

"I found out from a friend who had gone previously, and heard an interview about it on the radio. This was my first tour. Yes Absolutely I loved it and have already recommend it to others for next year. Well done to the organisers and the actors. Brilliant."

There has not been one negative reply, and this gives us heart to try to continue with "Shadows".

Cairns Family History thank Cairns Regional Council Cultural Services for their support especially for the last 4 years and we are in hope that there may be a possibility for that to continue to allow our story telling of these amazing Pioneers who 'reside' in this beautiful place, McLeod Street Pioneer Cemetery.