

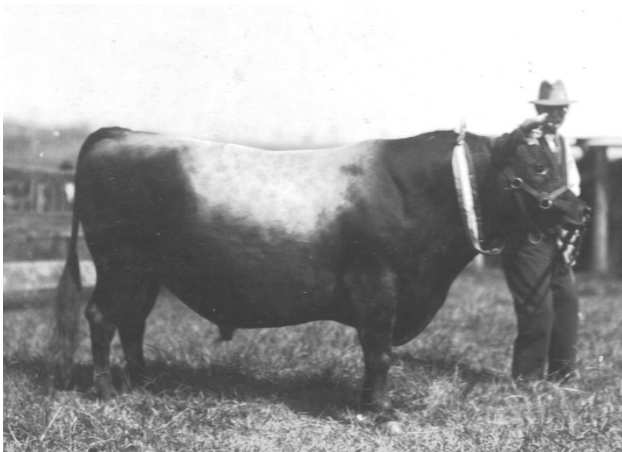
Memories of Moruya Show

by Shirley Jurmann

Yes, I'm talking about the MORUYA Show, not the Eurobodalla Show.

The Agricultural and Pastoral Society was first formed in 1869. Soon the Show became an event eagerly looked forward to by children and adults alike. In 1890 an area on the river bank near where the Bowling Green and Tennis Courts now are, was set aside for a showground. The Show soon outgrew the land available there and the showground was relocated to its present site in Moruya Park.

My family has been associated with the Moruya Show for at least a century. My grandfather Sid Louttit won prizes for his cattle and horses.



*Sid Louttit and his prize bull about 1920.
Photo Shirley Jurmann Collection.*

My grandmother May Louttit won prizes for cooking and flowers. In their youth my aunt Minnie Louttit and my father Roly Louttit won prizes for riding in ring events. Dad's room at "Braemar" was decorated with his many ribbons.



*Roly Louttit Moruya Show about 1930.
Photo Bill and Ruth Louttit Collection.*

Abe Louttit was made a Life Member of the Show in the 1950s along with Mrs Moffatt, Ilma Walter, Leila Campbell nee Luck and Pat Donnelly.



*Sy Turnbull presents Life Membership medals.
Photo Shirley Jurmann Collection.*

My first visit to the Show was made at a very early age. Note how everybody got dressed up in those days. Ladies always wore a hat. I wore my best hand-knitted layette!



*Marie Louttit and baby Shirley.
Photo Shirley Jurmann Collection.*

When I was a child THE SHOW was one of the major events of the year. We had a holiday from school on the Friday. My parents were keen exhibitors. Dad had prize chooks and grew many and varied vegetables and flowers. Mum exhibited cooking and fancy work. In the weeks leading up to the show special chooks would be brought inside and frequently handled to get them used to being examined at the show. In the garden precious flowers would be shielded from the sun and rain by an umbrella. In the days before the show Mum would be busy with her cooking. Sponge cakes, fruit cakes, rainbow cakes, caramel cakes, sultana cakes would appear. Dad would be occupied washing and grooming his chooks. White ones were given a blue rinse to make them "whiter than white"!



*Shirley and Bill ready for the show about 1947.
Photo Shirley Jurmann Collection.*

The first morning of the show was hectic. All the exhibits were given the last minute tweaking. I was occupied too. I belonged to the Junior Farmers which had a special section. I entered in things like saucer posy (a saucer of damp sand with flowers and leaves arranged to make it look like a posy), plate garden (a large plate filled with damp sand and twigs, small flowers, bits of mirrors for ponds, model houses etc. arranged to resemble a garden), flower arrangements. When all the things were ready it would be into the car and off to put in our entries. Leila Campbell was the chief stewardess in the main pavilion. She did not put up with any nonsense from anyone. Entries in, it was home while the judging took place. I usually had a new dress for the show made by my mother. One year it looked as though the new dress would not eventuate. When we got home I sighed, wishing I had the new dress. Mum said, "Let's look in the cupboard and see what we've got." She found a pretty piece of fabric with a small floral print. She went to work and in a few hours produced a new dress. It was not well finished off on the inside but looked great on the outside and that's what counted!

Then it was back in the afternoon to check out what prizes had been won. Mum, Dad and I would rush to our individual sections to see the results. There would

be joy or disappointment. Then we would go to see Mum's results. She usually won many prizes. One time we were standing near her prize iced sponge cake. Mum's icing was passionfruit. An old man was not impressed with the judge's choice! "Look at that cake", he said. "It looks like a dirty great magpie shat all over it!" We learnt later that his wife's cake got



*Gordon Warren's
prize Australorp.
Bill and Ruth
Louttit Collection.*

second! The cakes were on display in cages with wire netting around them. At the end of the show people would be dying to buy the prize winning cakes. Mum was always happy to get rid of them. After two days in the open with people breathing all over them they were stale. Next it would be on to the chook pavilion to check out Dad's results. His

failures would be likely to end up as next Sunday's dinner! We didn't stay long in this pavilion as the smell was horrible.

The side shows and rides were more basic than nowadays. There was usually a merry-go-round, a stall selling fairy floss, freshly made as you watched, no pre-packaged gaudy stuff, little celluloid dolls with tulle skirts on sticks, a boxing tent where young men were encouraged into the ring with some pretty tough customers. There were no show-bags. I remember going to the Sydney Show one year and being very impressed with these.

A must was a visit to have afternoon tea in the supper room. Generous plates of sandwiches and homemade cakes were served. The cakes were great but the sandwiches were often ham with hot English mustard or chicken minced with the filling which tasted strongly of thyme. Neither of these was appealing to children. The men preferred the bar which sold mainly beer.



*Isabel Parbery, Shirley Louttit, Joan Lavis in
front of grandstand, Moruya Show about 1955.
Photo Shirley Jurmann Collection.*

My friends and I spent a lot of time in the grandstand watching the ring events. My cousin had a crush on one of the young male riders so we had to watch every event he was in! Later my brother and his friends were in a lot of these events.

Some of our favourites to watch in the ring were Neale Lavis and his brother Garth, Ruth Emery, Colin Rogers, Carmel and Madge Cochrane, Rose Davidge and Cath Carden. Neale went on to represent Australia in the 1960 Rome Olympics. He won a silver medal in his individual event on "Mirrabooka" and the Australian team won a gold in a Three Day Equestrian event. Mirrabooka Ave up beside the Air Raid Tavern in Moruya is named after Neale's horse.



Neale Lavis on "Mirrabooka", Ruth Emery, Colin Rogers, Carmel Cochrane 1959 Show.

Photo Bill and Ruth Louttit Collection.



Madge Cochrane on "Spider" and Carmel Cochrane on "Sirocco" 1959.



Ruth Emery on "Mirrabooka" and Cath Carden on "Bura Buda" 1959.



Bill Louttit on "Jedda" 1959 Show.

Photo Bill and Ruth Louttit Collection.



Warren Williams of Bega winning the High Jump 1959 Show. Note the height of that jump! The dashing young man in white with black boots is a teenage Brian Clarke of Moruya.

Photo Bill and Ruth Louttit Collection.

A few years ago I visited the Show with some grandchildren after about a fifty year gap. There were some disappointments. I couldn't believe how the pavilions and supper room had shrunk from what I remembered them! There were not nearly the number of exhibits. I have returned several times since and there seems to be a renewed interest developing. This is most probably due to the enthusiasm of the committee members. I was pleased to see a section for children. There was even a prize for a garden in a baking dish – not quite the old plate garden but close. The quilt section and photography section were most impressive at the 2014 show.