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June 2020

Nobody without a crystal ball could've predicted how 2020 would have turned out. The Covid-19 pandemic has been devastating for the entire globe. It has disrupted business at Australian Mutuals History but we've pressed on and we have some significant news to report from the last few months.

With the assistance of COBA we recently surveyed mutual banking and credit union CEOs and indeed the movement more broadly in order to gauge how important preserving the history of the movement is among the most interested cohort. Nearly 70% of survey respondents believe that preserving the movement's history and philosophy is important. Also, 82% of respondents indicated a willingness to support Australian Mutuals History financially. If this level of support is maintained we can continue to preserve your valuable history.

A little while ago we interviewed retiring Queensland Country Bank Chair, Bruno Cullen. Bruno has worked in the industry for 43 years and his story, which you can read below, is a most fascinating one. We also completed processing a collection of documents and digital photos donated to us by Steve Sampson, former CEO of WECU, on their behalf. On that note do not forget to be in touch with us should you or your customer owned banking organisation have any archival records, documents, photographs or films that you think should be preserved. Here is a link to [our](#)

[acquisition policy.](#)

Australian Credit Union Archives Trust - Expressions of Interest

The Trust is seeking expressions of interest from Directors and Management in the customer owned banking sector to be appointed as Trustees. The role of Trustee is an opportunity to contribute to the sector and champion the work of the Trust. The Trust directs and oversees the operations of the Archives (known as Australian Mutual History). It is intended to appoint three additional Trustees to join the current three Trustees. For more information email stepaheadjac@bigpond.com. **Expressions of interest close 19 June 2020.**

Documenting Covid-19

A number of Australian collecting institutions (such as the National Library and various State Libraries) have begun to collect material relating to the lived experience of Covid-19. AMH has also started a small digital collection of Covid-19 related resources (such as COBA special bulletins, web pages etc.) which illustrate how the mutual banking sector is responding to the pandemic and helping their customers. If you have any resources (digital or otherwise) that you think should be preserved we would love to hear from you.

COBA 150+ Years of Ingenuity

Australian Mutuals History was delighted to assist COBA in putting together their 150+ Years of Ingenuity campaign video. We provided COBA with digital photographs and video from our collection showing the industry at the forefront of change over the decades. The campaign tagline is "Innovating and caring for our customers is what we've always done. Always have. Always will. #CustomerOwnedBanking". See the video [here](#).

Best of the Blog

Interview with Bruno Cullen of Queensland Country Bank

Bruno Cullen has stepped down from his position as Chair of Queensland Country Bank after 43 years with the organisation. We recently had a chat with Bruno about everything from his youth in Mount Isa, his early years with Queensland Country Bank when it was known as Isa Mine Employees Credit Union, his nine years as Managing Director of the Brisbane Broncos NRL Club and his stint in the Queensland Country Chair which saw him oversee two important mergers and the change to a mutual bank. Read Bruno's full story [here](#).

Earlwood Credit Union 1954-1980

As part of our occasional series of credit union profiles we wrote a short history of Earlwood Credit Union. Earlwood is a suburb in Western Sydney with a long history and indeed, Earlwood Credit Union was part of the first generation of community credit unions in Australia, beginning in 1954. Below is a picture of NSW Premier Sir Eric Willis opening a new Earlwood Credit Union office in 1976. Read more [here](#).



Preserving the History of WECU

In mid March we completed processing a significant trove of hard and soft copy material detailing the history of WECU (Woolworths Employees' Credit Union). Retiring WECU CEO Steve Sampson made available to us a large selection of WECU annual reports, AGM minutes, newsletters and digital photographs. Read more [here](#).

Money from a hole in the wall ... what next!

The first cash dispensing machine installed in Australia was introduced in 1969. It was a Chubb-made ATM that appeared in Sydney in 1969. The machine only dispensed \$25 at a time and the bank card itself would be mailed back to the user after the bank had processed the withdrawal. So no choice in the amount dispensed and no multiple cash withdrawals. A more fully-fledged and functional ATM was introduced in Brisbane in 1977 by a credit union – the Queensland Teachers' Credit Union. Our blog found [here](#) includes a video demonstration of the 1969 ATM.

About the Credit Union of Tasmania ...

One of the well known financial mutuals of the Apple Isle was The Credit Union of Tasmania. In November 1969, employees of the Electrolytic Zinc Company in Risdon Tasmania formed the Risdon Credit Union Co-operative Society. It traded under the Risdon banner until 1979 when it became The Credit Union of Tasmania and it transferred engagements to Island State Credit Union in 1986 which is alas, no longer with us. Pictured below is the Credit Union of Tasmania office in the early 1980s. Read more [here](#).



What we can do for you...

- Provide advice about transferring records to us
- Provide details about records we hold on your credit union/mutual bank, or its predecessors
- Give information about the history of your credit union/mutual bank or the movement generally
- Provide access to records we hold

We are here to help ...

