

Media Release

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Grand old lady stands proud.

The G. Filmer Grandstand at the Cootamundra Turf Club, stands proudly overseeing the racecourse reserve since its construction in 1911 and is steeped in history. The grandstand and its setting within the reserve is historically associated with the boom of Cootamundra in the late 1800's to early 1900's which began with the arrival of the railway in 1877. The original grandstand was destroyed by fire in 1904.

The Turf club committees back then were as dedicated to the site as the present group. References in the Sydney Morning Herald on the 10 February 1893 mention a successful race meeting and the grandstand.

“(extract SMH 10th Feb 1893) The annual reunion of the Cootamundra Turf Club was continued and concluded to-day, when there was a large attendance, and the weather was favourable, though hot. The meeting was un-doubtedly the most successful in the history of the club. The saddling paddock was crowded with a representative assemblage, and in the betting market business was very brisk. The Town Plate created intense excitement, as it brought a splendid race, the field racing together all the way. Though the club gave liberal prizes, it is estimated a profit of 400 pounds will be made from the meeting. Further extensions to the grand stand and other extra accommodation proved necessary.”

Time and tide had taken its toll on the grand old lady and over time she fell into disrepair, many a meeting has been held to discuss her future and thousands of dollars spent in ensuring she will serve the community and racing fraternity for many generations to come.

In 2015 after years of being closed for public use due to safety concerns the current committee were able to commit their own funds to undertake works to the stand to enable spectators to enjoy the grandstand for the 2015 Cootamundra Cup Race Day.

In 2016 the Cootamundra Turf Club were successful in their application for a \$50,000 grant through the Stronger Communities Fund to subsidise a project to refurbish the stand and ensure its structural integrity whilst also improving its design and fittings in line with the historical features. The Stronger Communities Fund is a NSW State Government initiative and administered by Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council.

The improvements have ensured the grandstand complies with today's safety standards for spectators.

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council administrator Stephen Sykes and Member for Cootamundra Katrina Hodgkinson MP both inspected the site recently and were very impressed with the restoration works that have been completed so far.

“This club has undertaken numerous projects over the last three years, with new facilities and

additions. The grandstand project is outstanding,” Mr Sykes said.

Member for Cootamundra Katrina Hodgkinson MP said she was pleased to be able to help the Turf club committee with funding assistance from State Government.

“There have been a lot of improvements at the racecourse over the last few years which can only enhance the experience for all who use the grounds. The grandstand and its historical significance is so important for the future of the club and the race course reserve,” Katrina said.

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Photo and caption:

Pictured visiting the G Filmer Grandstand at the Cootamundra Turf Club is Member for Cootamundra Katrina Hodgkinson MP and Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council administrator Stephen Sykes.



Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
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