



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Call to solve mystery of 140-year-old piano

Marion Council is calling on the community to help solve the mystery of a 140-year-old piano thought to have belonged to the family of South Australia's first Police Commissioner Major Thomas O'Halloran.

The German made piano has been donated to Council by two sisters whose father told them he had been given the instrument by a family who acquired it from the O'Halloran estate.

Staff from the Marion Heritage and Research Centre have been working to confirm the history of the piano since it was donated in September, said coordinator Danielle Trewartha.

"We ask people to contact us with any information to help solve the mystery of the piano, which could be an important piece of local history," Ms Trewartha said.

"The piano dates back to 1870, making it an important artefact that can be traced back to the earliest days of South Australian settlement."

The piano is now on display at the Cove Civic Centre where it will be played at a special Christmas charity performance for the Smith Family on Wednesday, December 16.

Toni and Jo Eitzen uncovered the piano, which they had played as children in the early 1960s, when clearing out their home in Onkaparinga Hills.

"The piano was given to my father by our next door neighbour who told him it came from the O'Halloran family home of Lizard Lodge," Toni, 64, said.

"We decided to donate the piano, which is in good condition, to Marion Council so it could be enjoyed by other people."

The instrument has been identified as a pianoforte which was made in the early 1870s and was popularly used for sing-alongs at family gatherings.

Major O'Halloran died in 1870, after which his estate was inherited by his son. The piano is thought to have come from a sale of items from Lizard Lodge, which were advertised in the South Australian Advertiser in 1878 and included reference to '1 splendid piano'.

Marion Council's Citizen of the Year David Jarman will play the piano at the Cove Civic Centre, 1 Ragamuffin Drive, Hallett Cove, on Wednesday, December 16 from 9.30am to 10.30am.

Contact: Craig Clarke, Unit Manager Communications, City of Marion, 0434 600 637



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The piano will be displayed at the Cove Civic Centre until January 31, after which Council will look for a venue to display it permanently.

The Marion Heritage Research Centre is at 245 Sturt Rd, Sturt and can be contacted on 7420 6455.

Note: A copy of the advert from the South Australian Advertiser of 1878 is available.

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