

Founded 1960

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER
No 453 August 2013

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ARCHIVES: Cnr Old Hume Highway and Bowral Road, MITTAGONG.

OPEN: Mondays, Tuesdays 10am-4pm and Saturdays 10am-1pm. Closed Public Holidays.
Library collection contains reference books, journals and newsletters of other societies.

MUSEUM : Market Place, BERRIMA. Tel: 02 4877 1130 Email: berrimamuseum@bigpond.com OPEN: Saturdays, Sundays, NSW Public and School Holidays (except Good Friday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day) 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

MEMBERSHIP: Any person wanting to join the Society may do so at any stage during the year by completing a form and paying the appropriate fee. Joining Fee \$10.00 - Single \$20.00 - Family \$33.00.

AFFILIATIONS: Royal Australian Historical Society, NSW Association of Family History Societies, Museums Australia Inc & Regional Chapter.

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

AUGUST MEETING: Thursday 22 August 2013 at 2pm
VENUE: Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong
GUEST SPEAKER: Leonie Knapman and Philip Morton
AFTERNOON TEA: To be served following the speaker - Members - please bring a plate or a donation.

SEPTEMBER MEETING: Thursday 26 September 2013 at 2pm
VENUE: Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong
GUEST SPEAKER: Desmond Kennard
 Museums of the Mulwaree Shire
AFTERNOON TEA: To be served following the speaker - Members - please bring a plate or a donation.

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And more ...



Mittagong history in talk and tour

Pictorial tour of historic Mittagong

At the next General Meeting on Thursday 22 August, Leonie Knapman and Philip Morton will present a pictorial tour of early Mittagong featuring a history of the locality where Fitzroy Inn, the Maltings and the milk factory sat beside the highway and the railway.



The history and function of the Maltings will be looked at along with the other establishments nearby and extending up to the Swimming Pool (pictured above).

During the presentation a new BDH&FHS publication will be introduced titled *Early Industries in the Berrima District*, an overview of colonial exploration, early settlement and industries in the district. The book outlines how the area developed as a major centre for dairying and horticulture, and how the discovery of coal, ore and stone led to several major industries. Visitors were attracted by the invigorating climate and scenic beauty spots. The varied fortunes of these endeavours make a fascinating historical study and an enjoyable read. The book contains a chapter on the Mittagong's Fitzroy Iron Works and describes when Mittagong was 'The Gateway to the South'.

September self-drive Mittagong historic tour

On Thursday 19 September the Society is conducting a self-drive tour that will cover three historic sites.

As parking will be at a premium at the first two sites, please make every effort to carpool. People can meet at the Archives to carpool at 9:15am on the day.

The tour will start at 9:30am sharp at Fitzroy Inn, Ferguson Cres, Mittagong. We will then proceed to Rowe's Hill Cemetery, Old South Road, Lower Mittagong. Here parking is limited but space is available nearby within the gates of the Marist Bros. on Old South Road opposite Bong Bong Road.

Last stop is the Marist Bros. monastery and winery. Proceed along the driveway through the vineyard to the top of the hill and to the carpark at the left of the buildings.

We will have a BYO picnic in the grounds prior to the tour and the Cellar Door will be open.

Cost is \$7. Please note that only 40 places will be available and booking is essential. To book, please call or email the Archives.

WSC Church and Cemetery tours

Sesquicentenary events in August

As part of Bowral and Moss Vale's Sesquicentenary celebrations, tours of local churches and cemeteries in the two towns will be conducted by Wingecarribee Shire Council during August. Several members of our Historical Society will serve as guides.

Many of the district's early pioneers and settlers, including members of the Throsby family, are buried in cemeteries throughout the Highlands. The day-long tours are a great way to learn about our local history and the families who have become synonymous with so many landmarks and locations in the Shire and who helped shape the identity of the towns and villages we know today.

The Bowral churches and cemetery tour will be held on Saturday 17 August and will include St Jude's Church, Uniting Church, Bowral Cemetery and St Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

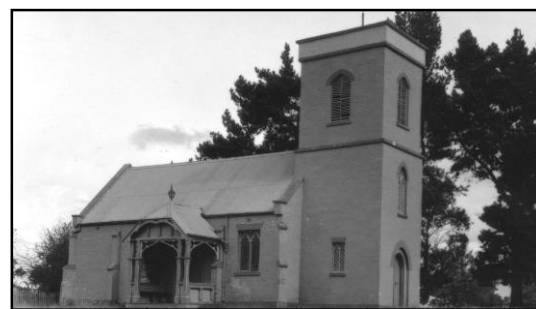
Local funeral director G Beavan Funerals will also be running an open weekend in conjunction with the Bowral tour on 17 and 18 August to allow the public to see the services they offer, including a look at their unique horse-drawn hearse.

The Moss Vale tour will be on Saturday 24 August and include St John's Anglican, Christ Church and Bong Bong Graveyard, St Paul's Catholic Church, Moss Vale Uniting Church and Moss Vale Cemetery.

The cost is \$25 per person for each tour day and includes a full day of church & cemetery tours with a knowledgeable guide and a provided lunch.



Bookings are essential and must be made before 14 August for the Bowral tour and before 21 August for the Moss Vale tour.



For more information and times, and to book a tour, contact Council's Customer Service Centre on (02) 4868 0888. For details on Sesquicentenary events visit www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/sesquicentenary-2013

Berrima District Museum news

*by Gil Wheaton, museum volunteer
and member of the Museum Sub-committee*

Vision impaired group visit museum

On Thursday 25 July thirteen members of the Central Vision Impaired Group accompanied by eight members of the Woonona Lions Club visited the Society's Museum at Berrima. Members of the Central Vision Impaired Group come from Wollongong or the surrounding districts and as the name implies have impaired vision though only their President Tony Sarkis is totally blind.

Outings for the Central Vision Impaired Group have included Watson's Bay for lunch, the Air Museum at Nowra, Fairground Follies at St Peters and ten pin bowling. The museum was fortunate to have been chosen as the destination for the July day out.

To make a visit to the museum for people with low vision interesting presents difficulties but Lyn Hall, assisted by three of the volunteers, rose to the challenge.



The twenty-one visitors were broken into four groups and each group allocated to one of the four museum volunteers that were stationed strategically around the museum. As the volunteers completed their description of the exhibits, the groups were interchanged with the other volunteers until each group had been addressed by each of the volunteers. In this way the visitors obtained an overview of a large number of exhibits.



Their visit lasted about an hour which is the average time for a visit by sighted persons.

At midday the group got back into their bus and headed off to a hotel in Berrima for lunch, seemingly well pleased with their time at our museum.



Cleaning and painting of the trolley from the Mt Gibraltar Trachyte Quarry

As foreshadowed in last month's newsletter the wire-brushing of the underside of the trolley has now been completed and the rust converter applied along with two coats of metal primer. Work will now be concentrated on getting the wheels into a state fit for priming. Although much work has been carried out on the wheels they are proving particularly difficult to clean owing to there being a rock hard residue on them of what seems to be grease and mineral dust.

Apart from the trolley coming from the Mt Gibraltar Trachyte Quarry little is known of its history. It is of welded construction which suggests it is not as old as originally thought. The wheels have the words "David Bros. Wollongong" embedded in them.

David Bros. was a foundry in Wollongong that closed around 1980. This is all that is known so if any member can provide any further details they will be gratefully received.

Condiment 'onion' set rediscovered

Museum volunteers Michele Woods and Lyn Hall who are well underway with photographing the museum's object collection, recently came across this interesting 1950s condiment set donated by Jan Alcock in 1987.

The set is marked underneath as "Made in Japan" but little else is known about its design and production.

For instance, was it after WW II and under American occupation that these objects were first produced in Japan?

If you can contribute any further information, please phone or email the museum.



Newspaper article found on Trove

The Bowral Free Press

Saturday, January 21, 1888

THROUGH THE BERRIMA DISTRICT (XXI)

(By Our Special Reporter)

Eridge Park

Robert Lucas Tooth's homestead, familiarly known by the name of Eridge Park, is in many respects perhaps the most interesting of the many beautiful homesteads in the Berrima district. It comprises a total area of 820 acres, which passed into the hands of their present owner about eight years ago. Since then there has been almost a lavish expenditure of money upon the ground, no expense having been spared in any direction. And the greater part of this has been sunk as it were out of sight, but nevertheless in permanent improvements. Time, perseverance, and capital have been devoted to a most extensive system of drainage and irrigation, and special attention has been wisely given to this most important work.

About three miles out of Bowral, on the banks of the Bong Bong River, where its natural facilities encourage scientific enterprise, the property, by reason of its surroundings, is exactly of that class which could be turned into a model park. And to do this seems to be the aim of its owner. The whole of the outlay upon the place has evidently been expended with the single purpose of producing the very best artistic effect, independently altogether of any consideration of a profit and loss account.

Therefore, the system of drainage and irrigation is interesting in a general way as showing the excellent effect that can be produced by these methods. There is, of course, a wide difference in laying out capital to produce a gentleman's park, and in laying it out as a foundation to produce an income. The former has been and still is the desire at Eridge Park; and to the majority of readers the arrangements and work there are interesting chiefly because of their completeness.



The residence is situated on a good elevation about a 1/4 mile from the Bong Bong River, which is the source of water supply for irrigation, domestic purposes, outhouses, &c. The highest elevation is distant about 40 chains from the river.

Midway between here and the river are two pumps - one worked by a windmill, and the other by a 6-horse power steam engine. On the top of the hill, above referred to as the highest elevation on the park, is an immense tank, in size about 85 x 60 feet, and 8 feet deep, bricked and cemented. There is also a 400 gallon square iron tank alongside. The windmill forces the water through a small pipe into the iron tank, and the overflow from thence runs into the large cemented reservoir. The steam engine pumps the water through a 6-inch pipe into the reservoir, and from here the water is laid on to all parts of the grounds, whence it flows by gravitation.

The supply for domestic purposes at the house is laid on from the small tank, as the large reservoir is used as a swimming bath by members of the family during summer. There is also a small boat placed upon it, in which the juveniles practice the art of sculling. The whole of the hill on which the reservoir stands is irrigated with underground pipes leading from the large reservoir, and by this means the whole of the surrounding ground, as well as the hill itself, is under complete control in all seasons, and can be watered at will. The reservoir is enclosed with a galvanised iron fence, adjoining which is a rustic building containing four dressing rooms for the use of bathers.

The residence is situated on another elevation distant about a thousand yards from the reservoir, and on a lower level, and between the two there is a gentle slope. A portion of this is enclosed as the grounds belonging to the house, and it has been laid out with ornamental trees, which, however, are yet too young to have produced ornamental effect. Around the residence about five acres are enclosed, which are laid out in flower beds, lawns, artificial lakes, tennis court, &c. On the lakes are some splendid specimens of white swan, which Mr. Tooth imported from England. It is only this season that the garden has been considerably enlarged, and it is therefore only assuming the grandeur it will eventually possess; but even now it contains a very large and excellent horticultural collection. In an aviary quietly nestled away in a secluded spot in the garden is an interesting pair of English blackbirds.

The residence commands a charming Australian view. Immediately in front the Bong Bong River winds its circuitous course heedless and uninterrupted along the low lying flats, and far away in the distance beyond are beautiful glimpses of bush scenery, the monotony of which is broken every here and there by the peaceful rural homes of farmers. No other summer residence in the whole of the Berrima district is more congenial, healthier, or more picturesque.

Exhibition of mining at Marulan

Marulan District Historical Society has advised that it is holding an exhibition of mining activities in the area at the Marulan Memorial Hall on 7 and 8 September.

For over 180 years the Marulan district has been the home to quarries, with over 40 different mines in that time and today eight quarries remain.

Australia's first marble quarry was opened at Brayton on Longreach property in the 1830s. A great variety of minerals were discovered in the district - mostly in small quantities. Gold, silver, kaolin, copper, iron ore and arsenic were mined at various times.

The Marulan Society will exhibit photos and a history of the various sites and stories of workers. All present day quarries have been asked to mount a display.

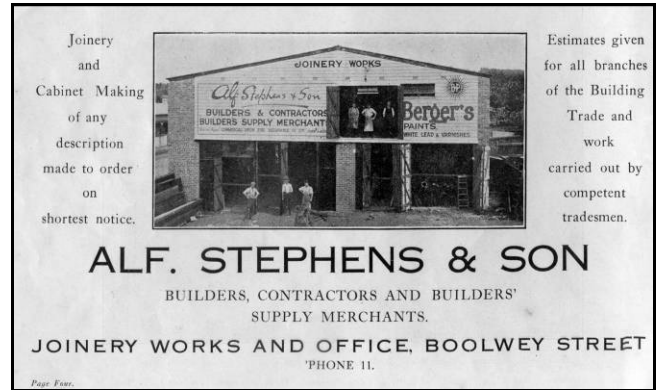
Admission by gold coin and food will be available. For more information contact Lorna Parr on 0428 774459.

New acquisition: Alf Stephen's toolbox

by Philip Morton

Alfred Stephens (senior) of Middlesex, England came to Bowral in 1885. His wife-to-be followed a year later. Alf was of nine brothers, all of whom were carpenters.

After working for two years to gain local building trade experience in Bowral, Alf established in business and was joined in 1903 by his son, also Alfred, who was born in 1887 and attended Bowral Public School.



Many building projects were undertaken by father and son locally and further afield. Both served periods as Mayor of Bowral and, under their guidance, Council accomplished much in the way of town development.

Alf (Jnr), a keen cricketer, had a concrete pitch laid at his Aitken Road home for the Bowral team to practise on, including Don Bradman before he left for Sydney.

Alf's daughter Joan married Ted Springett. Recently their sons, John and Tony, donated to the BDH&FHS a large solid timber toolbox containing many tools and implements, some dating back to the 1880s. This tool box was used by both Alf Stephens, father and son.

The Old Hume Highway self-guided tour

The NSW Government's Roads & Maritime Services (RMS), formerly the Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA) has recently published a self-guided tour book in conjunction with the Australian Government and the Royal Australian Historical Society.

The Old Hume Highway: History begins with a road - Routes, tours and turnoffs on the Old Hume Highway identifies a selection of sections of the former Hume Highway that offer an insight into the motoring experience of yesteryear, and are easily and safely accessible from the new highway. The guide leads the motorist through the interesting and historic towns along the way, highlighting items of historical interest.

Historical information on towns and localities along the route of the Old Hume Highway was provided by the RAHS and its local member affiliate societies.

Our Society took part in this project, contributing historical information and photographs to the RAHS that covered the sections of our district through which the highway passed. The text and photos provided by members Leonie Knapman, Ros Dale and Philip Morton appear in the sections of the book about the northern villages, Mittagong and Berrima.

In the tour book's Introduction it states that the Hume Highway is the most important in Australia, linking the nation's two largest state capitals. With the recent opening of the Holbrook Bypass, the route has completed its evolution from bullock track origins into a modern dual carriageway highway.

A copy of the self-guide tour book has been provided to us by the RAHS and is available in the library.

The toolbox is a shipping trunk with added sliding inner tool and saw-holder compartments. The 33 tools and implements include planes, saws, blades, files, squares, gauges, bobs, axes, chisels, bolts and pliers.



One implement that has puzzled our experts is a wooden-handled metal cutting blade with pointed spike, about 30cm in length (pictured below). If any reader can identify its use, we would appreciate hearing from you.



The toolbox will be displayed and the story featured at a General Meeting early next year.

A tribute to Ron Mumford

Linda Emery

It was with shock and great sadness that we learnt of the passing of Ron Mumford at his home in Bowral on 18th July. With his death, we have lost a loyal member, colleague, friend and confidante, whose commitment to the Society was boundless.

Ron joined the BDH&FHS in July 1991 and in 1992 was elected to the committee. For three years from 1995 to 1997, he served as President during which time he enthusiastically promoted the Society and its valuable work, resulting in increased community awareness and membership. It was largely through Ron's efforts and representations to Wingecarribee Shire Council in 1996 that we gained the comfortable and spacious premises we enjoy today at our Mittagong archives.

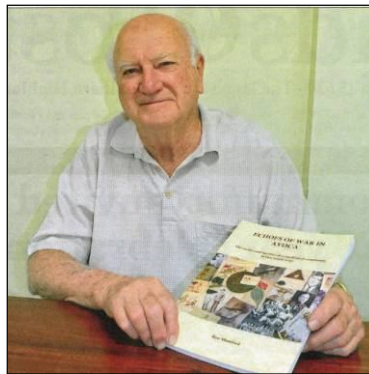
He was vitally involved in the successful application for a Centenary of Federation Grant in 1999 which allowed the Society's museum at Berrima to research and develop the German Internment Camp exhibition, and to publish Dr John Simons' book *Prisoners in Arcady*. These were his well-known achievements, but his greatest service to the Society was through his wise counsel over many years not just as a committee member but one who always put the interests of the BDH&FHS first.

This was the hallmark of Ron's service to the community at large, for it was not just our historical society that benefited from his membership. No matter what group or cause he served, he always put their best interests before his own.

The Heart Support Group at Bowral Hospital and the Avoca Hall Committee were two organisations to which he devoted himself, but perhaps his most important work was as a lay representative on the South West Sydney Area Ethics Committee. This was a role he took very seriously and during his time on the committee, he made a significant contribution, earning the respect of his professional colleagues.

Ron always said mischievously when asked about his background that he was a boilermaker who later sold frocks. Such self-deprecating humour was typical of this educated and intelligent man who read widely and had an insatiable curiosity about the world around him. He was a most selfless man, whose devotion to his wife Betty and his family was extraordinary.

I know I am not alone in saying that I will miss him terribly – even the long phone calls!



Avoca book reprint now available

Echoes through the Mist

First compiled and published by Avoca Bicentenary Committee to celebrate Australia's Bicentenary in 1988, and reprinted by the BDH&FHS in 1992, copies of this Avoca District history sold out a year ago.

Now available is a revised third edition published by the BDH&FHS with funds made available by the late Ron Mumford from sales of his book *Echoes of War in Avoca* that was published by the Society in 2011.

This new edition was retyped by Society volunteers including Peg Harvey and recompiled and edited by Philip Morton and Paul-Alan Johnson. The text was proofed and fact-checked by Ron and Betty Mumford. Although some minor amendments were made, the text remains faithful to the original version. Photographs have been enhanced by rescanning from originals where possible and some new images have replaced those used in the first two editions.

The original Introduction by Ron Mumford has been kept in the new edition and includes the following:

There is no doubt that the Wadi Wadi Aborigines in their travels across tribal lands found Avoca a good place to camp. Many local farmers can testify to that. The first white settlers in the area spread east from Berrima, after travelling from Sydney via Picton. In the late 1820s there were cattle and sheep grazing around Wingecarribee Swamp. Later on, settlers came up from the Illawarra area and settled around Robertson, Burrawang and Avoca.

It is claimed that Avoca gained its name from Thomas Seery who arrived in the 1860s and was reminded of "the lovely Vale of Avoca in Ireland." Avoca still retains the natural beauty and charm which the Aborigines and early pioneers found so appealing.



New edition available for \$20 from Archives, Museum or through our website

DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	8	AUG	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	22	AUG	Monthly General Meeting	2:00pm at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	12	SEP	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	26	SEP	Monthly General Meeting	2:00pm at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	10	OCT	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	24	OCT	Monthly General Meeting	2:00pm at the Historical Society

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