

Founded 1960

# BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER  
No 454 September 2013

PO Box 131 Mittagong NSW 2575 Telephone / Fax 0248 722 169  
Website: [www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au)  
Email: [bdhsarchives@gmail.com](mailto:bdhsarchives@gmail.com)

ABN 29 362 616 937

<b>PATRON:</b>	<b>Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire:</b> Councillor Juliet Arkwright		
<b>President:</b>	Mr Bruce MOORE	4872 3762	<a href="mailto:actmoore@bigpond.net.au">actmoore@bigpond.net.au</a>
<b>Snr Vice President:</b>	Mrs Linda EMERY	4883 4271	<a href="mailto:lemery75@southernphone.com.au">lemery75@southernphone.com.au</a>
<b>Jnr Vice President:</b>	Mrs Leonie KNAPMAN	4871 1804	
<b>Hon Secretary:</b>	Mr Philip MORTON	4883 7862	<a href="mailto:flipmort@bigpond.com">flipmort@bigpond.com</a>
<b>Hon Treasurer:</b>	Mrs Patricia DORIS	4872 3313	
<b>Archivist:</b>	Mrs Linda EMERY	4883 4271	
<b>Curator - Museum:</b>	Mr Bob WILLIAMS	4889 4405	
<b>Editor:</b>	Ms Lavinia FORD	4869 4038	<a href="mailto:lavinias@dodo.com.au">lavinias@dodo.com.au</a>
<b>Research Officer:</b>	Mr Max ROGERS	4861 3526	<a href="mailto:robert.rogers2@bigpond.com">robert.rogers2@bigpond.com</a>



**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](mailto: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

**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.

**OCTOBER MEETING: Thursday 24 October 2013 at 2pm**

**VENUE:** Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong

**GUEST SPEAKER:** **Ros Dale**

**AFTERNOON TEA:** To be served following the speaker - Members - please bring a plate or a donation.

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And more ...



## Diary dates

### SEPTEMBER

- 1 Father's Day
- 12 Management Committee Meeting
- 19 Mittagong Tour
- 20 School holidays commence
- 26 General Monthly Meeting

### OCTOBER

- Tulip Time
- 1 **MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE**
- 8 School holidays conclude
- 10 Management Committee Meeting
- 24 General Monthly Meeting

### NOVEMBER

- Office Bearer Nominations due
- Notices of Motion due
- 14 Management Committee Meeting
- 28 **AGM & Monthly Meeting**

## From the President's Desk

*Bruce Moore*

Horses birthday, Wattle day, Tulip Festival, Floriade ... you get the picture. It's well and truly springtime in the Southern Highlands!

Flowers, blossoms and buds are bursting at the seams showing off their colours to the world. And who can blame them?

The increase in temperature after those unsettling westerly winds does of course herald spring. It leaves one feeling exhilarated, refreshed and lively after winter and definitely gives one a 'spring in the step' you could say.

The downside to the spring list is often hay fever, sinusitis, allergies ... but throwing the tissues to one side...

Celebrations in the Highlands continue. Last year saw the sesquicentenary of settlement in the Yarrowa Brush, which includes Robertson, Burrawang, Wildes Meadow, Avoca and Kangaloon.

Land-hungry first settlers from the Illawarra took up acreage in that particular area. Mostly these settlers were English and Irish migrants (my family included) who saw the opportunity of using the super rich

volcanic basalt soil on which to grow vegetables and graze dairy herds.

Today, there are still potatoes grown there to supply a hungry market.

This year Bowral and Moss Vale residents are celebrating their 150 years of township establishment. Throughout the year there have been mini-celebrations ranging from village walks to kite flying. Leighton Gardens is getting a major make over for the occasion.

At the end of September and into October, Tulip Time brings busloads of tourists to town to admire the display of flowers in Corbett Gardens.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> September the Heritage Steam Train arrives from Central Station allowing locals to dream and recount the old days of travel, before it returns later in the day.

Ah, the smell of a coal-fired engine emitting plumes of steam! It reminds me of my Aunty Lena.

At one time I applied for a job as a Historian.

I couldn't see any future in it!!

## Final Reminder Mittagong historic tour

On **Thursday 19 September** the Society is conducting a self-drive tour to three historic sites. People can meet at 9:15am on the day at the Archives to carpool.

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.

Here Society member Carol Nolan will relate stories of some of the people recorded on headstones.

Last stop is at the Marist Bros. monastery and winery. 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.**

## For the record...

Some of the details provided in the "Museum News" column in last month's newsletter regarding the quarry trolley were incorrect.

It was stated that the trolley being painted by Gil Wheaton came from a quarry at Mt Gibraltar. Situated outside the museum, this trolley actually is the chassis and wheels of a coal skip recovered from the western side of Mount Alexander during excavations for the Hume By-pass. In this vicinity anthracite coal mines were established, firstly to supply the Fitz Roy iron works in the 1870s via a steep tramway using horses, but soon abandoned as the coal was unsuitable. Mining took place again during the 1940s in the vicinity and the trolley would date from that time.



## Society membership

Membership renewals are due by October 1 and a renewal form is enclosed in this month's newsletter.

## Annual Reports

A reminder to Officers - it's almost that time again - annual reports for inclusion in the November newsletter will be due at the end of next month. Thank you.

## BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM

Market Place, Berrima  
Near the bridge

### OPENING HOURS

10 am - 4 pm.

Weekends, Public Holidays and  
NSW Public School Holidays.  
Closed Good Friday, Christmas Day  
and Boxing Day..

## September guest speaker

### Desmond Kennard

Desmond is Museum Advisor for Goulburn Mulwaree Council, with responsibility for four museums: St Clair Museum, Goulburn Roundhouse, Goulburn Historic Waterworks and Goulburn War Memorial Museum and Tower. He is also responsible for the museum activities of Marulan and District Historical Society.

His talk at our September meeting will focus on these museums situated in a neighbouring local Shire area.

Desmond is a specialist in the planning, development and management of universities and museums, and since 1973 he has held senior posts in several major Australian museums. He has extensive experience in concept development and strategy implementation for tourist attractions and museums, with responsibility for their revival and the creation of exhibitions.

He has also had a close association with several local government authorities including Wingecarribee Shire Council, Junee Shire Council, Towong Shire Council and the former Heidelberg Council in Victoria.

During his tenure in 1988 as Director of the Australian Bicentennial Exhibition, Desmond worked closely with the then Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, Federal and State Government Departments, and over 50 local government authorities, in every Australian State and Territory.

In a private capacity he has also served on several local government committees concerned with local development, including affordable housing and provision of community facilities.

In 2003 he was awarded the Centenary of Federation Medal in recognition of his contribution towards the organisation of a major tree-planting programme for the Southern Highlands of NSW, as a member of the Wingecarribee Shire Council Committee.



**Goulburn Historic Waterworks Museum**

## A look at Colo Vale street names

*Researched and compiled by Marie Chalker*

Street names are allocated by local Shire or Municipal councils. Requests for naming of streets may be submitted by any persons or organisations wishing to have particular streets or roadways known by particular names.

The names submitted must be of a significant nature, eg, historical, geographical, Aboriginal, botanical, or named after some event, building or persons who have performed some act of significance in the community, or an animal.

Once council has determined such a name it is advertised in the local press to see if any person in the community has any objections to the name being used. If there are any objections to the chosen name council then has to reconsider and go through the process again until it comes up with a name suitable for allotment. Also, duplication of street names in areas is to be avoided. Council then notifies the state Geographical Names Board of its decision, the board then has to examine the name for its suitability. Once the chosen name has been cleared by the Names Board it is notified in the Government Gazette.

As an example, following is an exercise on the names of the streets and roadways to be found in the village and locality of Colo Vale as shown in a plan held by Wingecarribee Shire Council.

**Colo Road:** from an Aboriginal word meaning Koala (native bear)<sup>1</sup>.

**Church Avenue:** named for St Paul's Church, situated on the Avenue close to the junction with Wattle St.

**Drapers Road:** situated in the locality of Colo Vale, it runs north from the end of Braemar Ave, Braemar, to the village of Colo Vale. It is named after Frederick Draper, a building contractor who built St Stephen's Anglican Church, Mittagong, in 1878<sup>2</sup>. In 1879/80 Draper held a publican's licence for the Commercial Hotel, Great South Road, Mittagong<sup>3</sup>. 1889 saw him elected as an alderman in the first council election held at Mittagong<sup>4</sup>.

**Wilson Drive:** another roadway in the Colo Vale locality, it runs north from the end of Church St to the village of Thirlmere, and is named after the earliest known European explorer to the Southern Highlands, John Wilson, who twice trekked through in 1798 with several companions.

Some streets and roadways were named by Patrick L C Shepherd. These are streets with the following botanical names: Azalea, Jasmine, Wattle, Daphne, Myrtle, Flora, Pine, Ivy, Rose, Acacia, Orchid, Beech, Bignonia, Banksia, Laurel, Elm, Telopea and Ash. As well, there is Lynwood Ave and Ferndale Road.

Of the above-listed 24 streets and roadways, 18 are botanical names, two are biographical, one is named for a building and one an Aboriginal name for a fauna specimen. The other two, Lynwood and Ferndale, could be either botanical or biological.

On the Parish Map of Colo, County of Camden, that shows the names and portions of the original land grantees, it may be seen that a Patrick Lindesay Crawford Shepherd took up a vast amount of land in the area.



Shepherd (hereinafter referred to as PLC) was a gentleman of high standing. He was born in Sydney in 1831, being the youngest child of Thomas and Jane Shepherd. Thomas Shepherd (1779-1835), was a native of Kembach, Fifeshire, Scotland, where his father (PLC's grandfather) had been for many years principal gardener for the Earls of Crawford and Lindesay. While a young man, Thomas Shepherd moved from his homeland and set up an extensive horticultural nursery in Hackney, England <sup>5</sup>.

Following in the Shepherd family tradition, PLC had a long association with the horticultural industry which his father Thomas had pioneered at Darlington in the colony of New South Wales in 1827. On his arrival in the colony Thomas received a land grant of 25 acres from Governor Darling to establish a nursery in order to supply the settlers of New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land 'at a cheap rate with all sorts of worked trees'.

Due to his prowess, within a short time the colony was in possession of a vast stock of fruit trees and vines. Thomas was also responsible for designing Hyde Park in Sydney. As well, he wrote several letters on the growth of the vine which were published in the *Sydney Gazette* and *Herald* newspapers. He delivered lectures at the Mechanics School of Arts, Sydney, on the Horticulture of New South Wales <sup>6</sup>.

In 1854 PLC joined other family members in the nursery business at Darlington in which he remained active for the following 25 years. Shepherd & Company was the largest horticultural nursery in the colony catering to both local and export markets <sup>7</sup>.

By 1869 PLC began showing interest in the Berrima District. In that year he purchased sections of land from J N Oxley's sub-division that forms the township of Bowral <sup>8</sup>. Within another 10 years PLC and family had moved their residence to Bowral. While there he served as one of the town's civic leaders.

A few years after establishing himself in Bowral, PLC turned his thoughts to the district's north, to the Parish of Colo, where a large amount of vacant Crown land suitable for settlement was available.

Taking advantage of this, PLC applied for and was granted portions of land to which he, his wife and family moved and set up. In all, he purchased 1,350 acres (approximately 545 hectares). Of this, 680 acres (274 hectares) has always been zoned agricultural (now known as Wensleydale) while the remaining 670 acres (270 hectares) were subdivided into the Village of Colo Vale and auctioned off by PLC and his family <sup>9</sup>.



#### Lands purchased by PLC Shepherd in the County of Camden, Parish of Colo

There are also several streets in central Bowral named for PLC, namely: Shepherd Street, Una Street (after PLC's wife), Woodbine Street, Rose Street, Banksia Street and Jasmine Street <sup>10</sup>.

#### References

1. A W Reed, *Aboriginal Words of Australia*, Kew, Reed Books, 1996, p.95
2. R Blaket, *Centenary of St Stephen's Church, Mittagong 1878-1978*, John Wheeler, 1978, p.4
3. A/ANSW, *Publicans' Licences, 1879/1880*
4. James Jervis, *A History of the Berrima District 1798-1973*, Library of Aust. History, 1986, p.90
5. Una Shepherd Price, *My Family of Shepherds*, Hong Kong, 1988, p.66
6. M/L, *Sydney Herald*, 10/9/1835, Obituary, The Late Thomas Shepherd
7. Charles F Maxwell, *Australia's Men of Mark 1788-1888*, V2, Series 4, Sydney, 1888, pp.75,76
8. OST, LTNSW, Book 118, No. 55
9. T/Ts, LTNSW, Records
10. Bowral Free Press, 27/11/1886 at BDH&FHS Archives.

## New BDHS publication promotes regional historical awareness

### *Early Industries in the Berrima District*

This concise publication outlines the Wingecarribee district's exploration, settlement and early industries.

Associate Professor Dr Ian Jack will launch the book at an informal function on Saturday 14 September at 3:00 for 3:30pm at the Society's museum in Berrima. Invitations have been sent to all local members of the Society - if anyone failed to receive an invite, you are still welcome to attend, but please phone acceptance to Patricia Doris on 4872 3313.

The book explains how the landscape and explorers' tracks shaped the district's patterns of settlement, traces the development of primary and secondary industries and highlights the significant role of tourism in the district's prosperity. Further, it explains how the various district names came about and changed.

#### **Originally a museum exhibition**

The idea for the book came about during 2009 when a group of volunteers commenced research for an 'Early Industries in the Berrima District' exhibition to be mounted at the Society's museum in Berrima.

Research was undertaken into the establishment and development of key local industries. This focused on primary industries, with an emphasis on dairying, the planting of orchards and the success of horticulture. Also covered was the growth of secondary industries, featuring the Fitz Roy iron works at Mittagong, the quarrying of marble, sandstone and Bowral trachyte, and the opening of numerous coal mines.

Funded by the Society and with some local industry sponsorships, a team of volunteers at the museum curated a major exhibition space. Story panels and a district map were prepared as large display boards. These were mounted and surrounded by cabinets displaying associated historic items, and installations were added including some utensils and equipment used in the dairy and quarry industries.

As centrepiece of the exhibition, a large scale-model of the Fitz Roy iron works was installed, painstakingly made by local Mittagong man George Thirkell.

The exhibition opened at the museum in November 2009 and has been further expanded. It continues to attract interest.

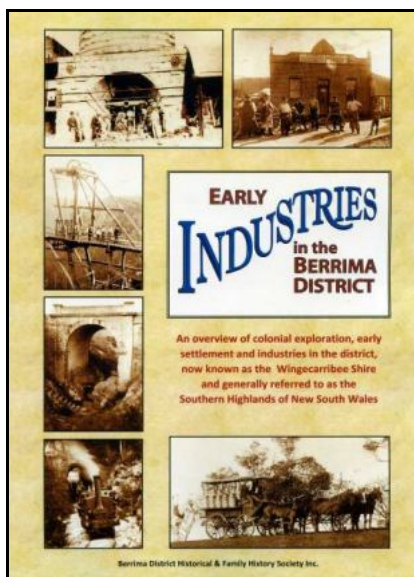
The Early Industries book was conceived as a way to present the exhibition's themes and subject matter and to expand further on some of the key industries, particularly tourism.

#### **A brief history of the Wingecarribee Shire**

The Early Industries exhibition and book both explain how European settlement commenced in the 1820s along an early South Road through Bong Bong and Sutton Forest. In the early 1830s the Great Southern Road was opened and became the main line of settlement with Berrima established as the district administrative centre and Mittagong thriving as an industrial town. When the railway was put through in the 1860s it in part followed the line of the earlier south road, bringing Bowral and Moss Vale into existence. Those centres and Mittagong grew and flourished while Berrima languished.

The district attracted visitors drawn by an invigorating climate, pleasant rural aspect and outstanding natural attractions easily accessible. It became known as the 'Sanatorium of the South' and guest houses from Mittagong to Bundanoon flourished. The varied fortunes of the district's early industries, many that required considerable human effort, ingenuity and financial investment, make a fascinating historical study and, hopefully, an enjoyable read.

Visitor feedback at the museum had revealed that people were confused by the district names: Why was it called the Berrima District? How does that name relate to the Wingecarribee Shire and to the area being known as the Southern Highlands of NSW? The book explains the names and how the district developed into the thriving centre it is today.



This publication was assisted by funds allocated to the RAHS by Arts NSW, and was compiled by Philip Morton with assistance from other BDHS members, including Lyn Hall, Jan Reid and Paul-Alan Johnson.

**Book now available from the Society at a cost of \$10.**



**Fitz Roy Ironworks Scale Model: George Thirkell's model was launched in 2009 at Berrima District Museum.**

## Belmore Falls: local natural wonder

The Belmore Falls area, now part of Morton National Park, was a known site on the pathways travelled by various Aboriginal groups including the Dharawal, Wodi Wodi and Gundungarra people.

The creek that feeds the falls from the top bears an Aboriginal name, *Wallagunda*, and plunges around 120 metres in several spectacular drops that merge lower down with falls fed by the Barrengarry Creek. Altogether the drop is about 330 metres to the valley floor; the combined waters flow into Kangaroo River.

The first recorded white visitors were guided there in 1870 by John Hanrahan, a pioneer of settlement in the Yarrawa Brush - the district where the villages of Robertson and Burrawang were established.

Hanrahan's party that forced its way through the thick brush from Robertson included Charles Moore, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Dr Reed of Sydney who named the falls after the then Governor, Sir Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, Earl of Belmore.

This Governor served from 1868 to 1872 and became a regular visitor to the local district after the southern railway opened in 1867 to Moss Vale. He leased Throsby Park homestead as a summer residence for his family and thus established the Highlands as a vice-regal destination.

The Belmore Falls was just a few miles north-east of Fitzroy Falls, another attraction that had already become popular with visitors and was named in the 1850s in honour of then Governor Fitzroy.

Its popularity prompted the progressive citizens of Robertson to draw attention to the falls that were on their doorstep. The natural significance of the site was recognised in 1883 by the decision to reserve it for 'Public Recreation and Preservation of Timber' with the official dedication of Barrengarry Park at Belmore Falls taking place in April 1887.

The first Trustees were W R Hindmarsh, G Schlaadt and R McEvilly.



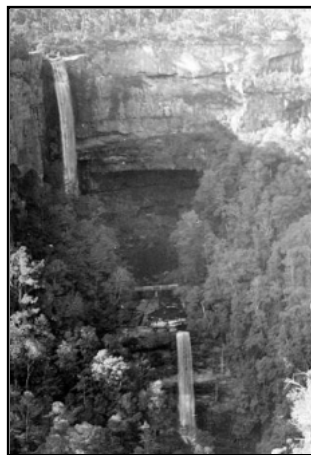
**SIGHTSEEING: Visitors at Belmore Falls, c1890s**

Two picnic weather-sheds and a horse yard were built and a road was cleared through from Robertson. Once the area became more accessible visitors started taking advantage of its facilities.

Being 550 metres above sea level, several lookouts were established. One is Hindmarsh's Lookout that provides views over Kangaroo Valley and township.

A Tourist Guide published in 1904 that featured Bowral and Moss Vale and surrounding attractions had entries on the various falls, including Belmore.

By that time another road to Belmore Falls had been opened from the west. The Guide stated that "a picturesque route called the Tourist Road connects Belmore with Fitzroy Falls. A charming feature of the drive is the arched avenue of trees bordering the road between Wilde's Meadow and the Lake".



"The height of the first fall is over 300 feet, but it requires two more bounds to reach the bottom of the valley. The falling of water through countless ages has excavated at the base of the first fall a basin of fine dimensions, which is filled with the purest and coldest water." A walking track was described that from the top descended past each fall to the valley floor.

A glowing description of Belmore Falls was provided in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 10 January 1912:

"The glories of the Fitzroy, Carrington, and Belmore Falls have frequently been described. But the writer doubts if justice has been done to them, especially to the Belmore Falls. Guidebooks tell of the third fall, and finger-posts in the fern-glades through which the track passes point the way to the third fall. There is no mention of the fourth fall. Possibly it has not yet been officially discovered. But it is there all the same, more beautiful and bewitching than any of the other three.

Imagine the Weeping Rock at Wentworth Falls extended to twice its width and you have some idea of what the fourth fall of the Belmore series is like."

In order to reach these lower falls, a solid foot-bridge was erected. Early photos show it crossing above water cascading from the base of the first fall but it was eventually washed away by floodwater and only its footings remain.

This amazingly beautiful setting sometimes has its sad side. In 1919 the *SMH* reported that: "The body of Constable Oscar McDonald, of Rugby, near Young, who drowned himself on the 21st, came to the surface in a waterhole at Belmore Falls, and was discovered on Saturday morning.

At the inquest a verdict of suicide while temporarily insane was returned. He was 36 years of age, and leaves a wife and seven children."

### **The primitive beauty of Belmore Falls**

One particularly vivid description titled 'The Primitive Beauty of Belmore Falls' (by CSH) appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 16 May 1931, and is reproduced in full here:

"Situated at the extreme northern end of the Kangaroo Valley, Belmore Falls drop over a series of sheer walls that must total a depth of 1000 feet. Seldom seen by the thousands who yearly visit the nearby Fitzroy Falls, they waste their beauty, peacefully isolated by a few miles of primitive Australian bush. To those who enjoy Australian scenery, their seclusion adds inestimably to the beautiful surroundings of the falls, which have no peer in this State.

Contrasting with the worn appearance of the Blue Mountain beauty spots, the vegetation grows in unspoilt luxuriance, betokening the richness of the soil and the moisture which is continuously in the air about the falls, even in comparatively dry weather. The panorama from the cliff tops embraces the whole of Kangaroo Valley, and bears some resemblance to the Burratorang Valley outlook; miles of rugged walls overshadowing the peaceful valley farms as they recede into the horizon.

The rough track which gives easy access to the foot of the first falls reaches the lower slopes through a luxuriance of fern growth, which intensifies as the moisture from the falls increases. Here every leaf drops moisture, and forces a growth which is only paralleled in a tropical forest. The contrast between this shaded and sheltered portion of the chasm and the sun-swept heights of the cliffs opposite is remarkable.



### **The foot-bridge at base of Belmore Falls' first drop**

The first fall is a sheer drop of about 300 feet into a rock-strewn pool of tortured water, which rushes down in a cascade of foam to the second fall across an immense body of rock.

From the foot of the second fall the water cascades again down a rocky defile, tearing over and round great, roughly-squared boulders for half a mile to reach the third fall. Here the water hurls itself over the rock-rim in a welter of foam 50 feet wide, to drop 100 feet below into another large pool, then descending steeply down a series of smaller falls to meet another fall, which is fed by a tributary stream. Thereafter, the increased volume of water reaches the Kangaroo River down a rough, rocky bed, through an impenetrable mass of trees, ferns, creepers, and huge stones. The exotic beauty and thickness of this vegetation forms a delightful contrast to the orthodox Australian bush above the cliffs."

The *Herald* reported again on Belmore Falls in September 1932, stating that it had become a favourite destination for hikers:

"More than 200 hikers journeyed by train to Robertson on Saturday, travelling via the recently opened Port Kembla-Moss Vale railway. On arrival at Robertson they were accommodated at the Hotel Ranelagh, and were entertained in the ballroom of the hotel on Saturday evening. Yesterday morning the party set out for Belmore Falls, about six miles distant, the weather, which had threatened to be bad, eventually proving to be ideal for such an outing. The falls, after recent heavy rain, were seen to advantage. The party returned to Sydney by special train."

Nowadays visitors at Belmore Falls are directed to various lookouts and walking tracks along a loop drive that spans the escarpment and to safety-fenced lookouts near the rim of the top falls.

A causeway on the road that winds through from Robertson or Wildes Meadow crosses the creek a short way back from the rim. Further upstream along the creek may be found a series of pools; one, where water cascades over stepped rocks, may be accessed by a remnant walking track.

Adjacent to the Falls and along the creeks are found shrubs such as Drumstick, Tea-tree and Persoonia together with swamp grasses, ferns and bryophytes. Boronia is abundant in the area; eucalypts such as mess-mate and scribbly gum, together with banksias and wattles, make up the forest canopy.

In 1969 the Barrangarry/Belmore Park Reserve was amalgamated into Morton National Park as part of that Park's progressive expansion under the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Belmore and Fitzroy Falls are beauty spots and key scenic attractions of the National Park that now encompasses large portions of Kangaroo Valley, the Shoalhaven Gorge and areas beyond to the south.

Access to Belmore Falls has been recently upgraded and is most worth a visit particularly now that spring is in the air.

*Article compiled by P Morton*

## DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	12	SEP	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	26	SEP	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	10	OCT	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	24	OCT	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	14	NOV	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	28	NOV	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society

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## THE BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL AND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

is proudly supported by the following organizations that encourage the work of our Society in collecting, preserving and maintaining the history of the Southern Highlands.

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