

Founded 1960

# BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER  
No 465 September 2014

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ABN 29 362 616 937

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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](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 25 September 2014 at 2pm**

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

**GUEST SPEAKER: Bernadette Mahony**  
Bernadette will be speaking on the history of Kangaloon.

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

**OCTOBER MEETING: Thursday 23 October 2014 at 2pm**

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

**GUEST SPEAKER: Dennis McManus**

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

Inside this month ...

Diary Dates	2
Book - Life Behind the Bar	3
Bundanoon 150 Years	4
Berrima Bridge Nurseries	5
Ironbark to Concrete Poles	6
Wild's or Wilde's Meadow	7

And more ...



## Diary dates

### SEPTEMBER

- 7 Father's Day
- 11 Management Committee Meeting
- 20 School holidays commence
- 25 General Monthly Meeting

### OCTOBER

- Tulip Time
- 6 **MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE**
- 6 School holidays conclude
- 9 Management Committee Meeting
- 23 General Monthly Meeting

### NOVEMBER

- Office Bearer Nominations due
- Notices of Motion due
- 13 Management Committee Meeting
- 27 **AGM & Monthly Meeting**

## Membership fee increase

The Management Committee has decided that the Society's annual Membership Fee needs to rise. It is to increase from \$20 to \$25 for a single membership and from \$33 to \$35 for a family membership and will apply from our Financial Year starting on 1 October 2014.

The increase is due to rising costs and it is hoped that members will understand that the new fee is moderate in comparison to similar community organisations and other historical societies.

## From the President's Desk

*Bruce Moore*

What a hectic time we've had at the Museum and Archives lately.

There has been a last minute adjustment to a new book, which is about to be published and launched next month (see article). A new compactor is being delivered to make room for yet more storage. Max is running so fast he's a blur and like any specialist, one has to make an appointment to see him months in advance! Well, almost.

Our Museum and Management committee meetings are held early each month. The agenda discussed varies greatly from buying archival materials, new computers to how much it will cost for our Christmas lunch.

The extension is at lock-up stage and getting its final coats, inside and out this week.

I did a quick change from Chairman to painter as the Museum extension took delivery of hundreds of cladding timber boards that needed an undercoat to preserve them. Harlan Hall was our overseer closely advised by our two volunteer builders. As a team, the four of us worked very efficiently, when painting like demons we were doing about half a mile to the gallon. In today's language that's about one litre per kilometre. Or on the Richter Scale: 4 rollers per afternoon.

We had a successful talk last Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> by speleologist and historian John Wylie who gave us an insight on the chronicle and development of the Wombeyan Caves. Thanks, John.

Although last month was wet, wild and windy both the Archives and Museum recorded above average figures. I suggest that was due to the attractive ladies who greet customers with a pleasant smile.

One lady complained that she's been trying to contact us by phone for days. "I've rung and rung 0900 1530 and nobody will answer!" She spoke curtly.

"That's our opening hours, madam" I replied.

## Membership details

Please note that all membership enquiries and changes of address details should be addressed to the Membership Secretary, c/- the Society's postal address or email to [bdhsarchives@gmail.com](mailto:bdhsarchives@gmail.com)

## Newsletter

Newsletter Deadline is **25th** of every month. It may be necessary to hold submissions after this date till the following month.

## Research fees

Research fees for non-members:  
\$20.00 per hour or part thereof for telephone and postal enquiries.

\$5.00 per hour or part thereof for enquirers who attend the archives and carry out their own research.

## Archives opening hours

Opening hours are as follows:

Monday	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Tuesday	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Saturday	10:00 am - 1:00 pm

## 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.

Groups also welcome at other times by arrangement. Please telephone Bob or Gloria on 4889 4405.



Harlan Hall accepts from Mark Pepping the recent Wingecarribee Shire Community Assistance Grant awarded to the museum

## Bernadette Mahoney: Sept speaker

### KANGALOON FOOTPRINTS

At the general meeting on 25 September, our speaker will be Bernadette Mahony

The subject of her talk is Kangaloon - its settlement in the 1860s after the passing of the Robertson Land Act and the struggle of the pioneers to clear land that until then had been considered impenetrable forest. Because the land was arable a thriving dairy industry eventually became established. Bernadette will also outline the growth of the schools, churches, shops and businesses in Kangaloon, West Kangaloon and the smaller settlements of Mt Murray and Box Vale, as well as share some interesting, sad and amusing tales of life in Kangaloon in the past 150 years.

Bernadette and her husband Michael moved 35 years ago to Kangaloon and raised their four sons there. She has always had an interest in history, both family history and local history, and since retiring from teaching has had the time to devote to pursuing these interests.

She had many conversations in her early Kangaloon years with neighbour, Jim Brenning, whose grandparents had been amongst the first settlers at Kangaloon. His stories planted a seed of interest to find out more and over the years she collected articles, stories and photos of the district.

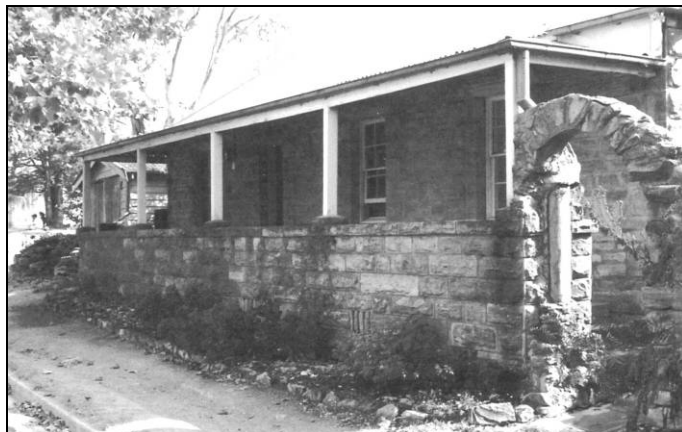
She also obtained valuable information from Trove and when the opportunity to celebrate Kangaloon's history presented itself in 2013 she accepted the invitation of the Kangaloon Hall committee to put together a book using what she had collected over the years. She also interviewed many residents whose stories add a personal perspective to life in Kangaloon. Others assisted her with photos and their family histories. The result was *Kangaloon Footprints* a 400-page book launched at the Kangaloon Hall's Centenary celebrations in November last year.



## Spring walking tour of Mittagong

Wednesday 15 October 2014

This tour takes a short walk around historic places in Mittagong. We will meet at 9:55am at Leslie Cottage, corner of Queen and Albert Streets. Owner Ms Lisa Delahunt will show us this lovely cottage built in 1879.



Following that we will walk next door to the old Public School (now Mittagong Library). After looking at the Library, we will walk around to the main street to visit the Mittagong Hotel and Lion Rampant Hotel where Society member and researcher Shylie Brown will tell us about the history of these fine watering holes. This will take us up to lunchtime, when we will walk down to the park at Lake Alexandra Reserve.

The Ladies Auxilliary of State Emergency Services have kindly offered to provide lunch to tour members which includes sandwiches, slices, tea & coffee at the park in the undercover area.

The cost of lunch and tour is \$15 per person. Please pay and book early at the Archives to ensure a place on this tour. Phone 4872 2169

## Book launch: *Life Behind the Bar*

Friday 26 October at Berrima District Museum

The Society is pleased to announce to members that its latest book "Life Behind the Bar: Inns and Hotels in the Southern Highlands, 1824-1924" will be launched on Friday 26 October at our museum in Berrima.

This book, researched and written by member Shylie Brown, will be launched by Associate Professor Carol Liston, Royal Australian Historical Society President.

**This launch will be the highlight of a Pre-Conference function our Society is hosting to welcome delegates to the RAHS Annual State Conference being held that weekend at Mittagong RSL with a theme of 'Moving History'. The launch event will commence at 5:30pm.**

## Bundanoon celebrating 150 years

Next year - 2015 - is when several 150<sup>th</sup> anniversaries will be celebrated in the Wingecarribee Shire district.

In the July newsletter, notice was provided of events being held in Mittagong next year to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of proceedings connected to the Fitz Roy Iron Works, including the commencement of Mittagong Public School and Methodist Church.

2015 is also the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of Wombeyan Caves Reserve, and events to mark that milestone are being planned by the National Parks & Wildlife Service, caretakers of the Reserve.

As well, Bundanoon is celebrating 2015 as the 150<sup>th</sup> year of it becoming a village community. An outline of the history of this milestone is presented here.

\* \* \*

A fledgling community took shape in the mid-1860s at a locality known as Barren Ground that would grow into the village of Bundanoon. This was in anticipation of the line of the Great Southern Railway passing through the area. Another significant factor was the Robertson Land Act of 1861 that allowed for the conditional purchase of unreserved Crown Land on easy terms of repayment.

Commencing in 1863, the Southern Railway was progressively built through from Picton to Goulburn. By the end of 1867 stations were open at Mittagong, Bowral and Sutton Forest (later renamed Moss Vale).

The construction of the line was divided into seven contracts. Larkin & Wakeford undertook the first five and completed earthworks, bridges, tunnels and laid the permanent way (rails). They were slowed down by the building of Mount Gibraltar tunnel and the Wingecarribee River viaduct, so another firm was sought to construct the earthworks for the sixth contract, being from Badgerys Siding (later renamed Exeter) to near Barbers Creek (now Tallong).

The earthworks contract was awarded to Forster & Roberts in January 1864 and work commenced in May 1865 when the route was finally decided. It took a year to complete and the permanent way was then laid by Larkin & Wakeford. The line opened for traffic to Marulan in August 1868.

With the commencement of earthworks in 1865 tent camps were set up along the way for labourers and their families. A major service camp was established at Barren Ground, a heavily timbered area about eight miles down the line with the nearest established settlements being Sutton Forest and Berrima.

A small number of settlers took up land at Barren Ground, attracted by the prospect of doing well on the unpromising, rugged land because of its proximity to the railway.

In January 1863 the *Goulburn Herald* provided this report from Sutton Forest: "The surveyors connected with the railway are making great progress. A trench has been extended along the centre of the line, from Picton as far as Mr Badgery's hill (Exeter), as a guide to the navvies, who are expected here in two months. Another party of surveyors, engaged in marking out a continuation of the line, has reached here from Goulburn."

"Free selection is still making great head-way. The land round here will in a very short time be all taken up. A rush has been made to a place called Barren Ground, distant about eight miles from Sutton Forest. As the name seems to imply, the land, with very little exception, is of very inferior description; but in spite of it, 15 or 16 allotments have already been marked out by Surveyor Campbell, who has had no little trouble in satisfying the demands of the selectors."

Early selectors included Samuel Tooth, Walter Grice and Charles Jordan. At Barren Ground, 40 acres were taken up in December 1863 by Tooth, a railway ganger temporarily based at Bargo, to establish a home for his wife Emily and their four young children. In his spare time he gradually cleared a few acres, built a slab house and had two milking cows.

In March 1865 Emily gave birth to their fifth child, Reuben, at the new house. They would go on to have another nine children and the family played a major role in shaping Bundanoon.

Barren Ground is now a part of Bundanoon along Penrose Road. It was a short distance east of this locality that a rail siding and loop crossing were installed in 1867 and named Jordans Crossing when the railway opened in 1868.

In 1873 a small station building was erected there and renamed Bundanoon in 1881. This name was also adopted for the surrounding village, soon flourishing with industries and as a holiday destination.

*To be continued in next issue*



**The Barren Ground locality in late 1860s**

*- compiled by P Morton from BDHS and Bundanoon History Group archives material*



## Berrima Bridge Nurseries site plan

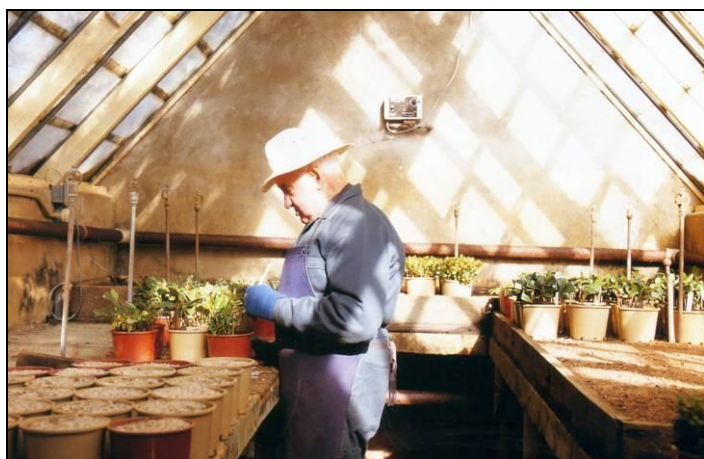
The Society recently received a letter, printed report and DVD from Jennifer Carroll, Chair of the Australian Garden History Society's Southern Highlands Branch.

The provided report is a Conservation Management Plan for the site of the Berrima Bridge Nurseries at 38 Jellore Street, Berrima. This Plan includes historical research by consultants Chris and Charlotte Webb as well as documenting the nursery of today. Field sketchbooks, diaries, invoices, correspondence and landscape plans in the Caroline Simpson Library assisted them to conclude that the Crowes and their Nursery had significantly influenced the landscape of the Southern Highlands.

The Branch has made a submission to Wingecarribee Council for the property and particular structures (the glasshouses and cold frame) and the garden (specifically the camellia collection to the north of the residence), to be listed as local heritage items under Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan 2010. It has also requested that the contribution made by Crowe to the landscape character of the Southern Highlands be recognised in appropriate Development Control Plans, and that the landscapes influenced by Crowe be identified as potential local heritage items in the Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan.

The new owners of the property have indicated their intention to respect the property and plantings, and are working to improve the health of plant material. Camellias from the collection have gone to Camellia Ark, Camden Park, Experiment Farm Cottage at Parramatta, Harpers Mansion and Retford Park.

The local branch of the Garden History Society hopes that others will take on the research tasks identified in the Report to provide a better understanding of the influence of Claude Crowe on the landscapes of the Southern Highlands. These include investigating the gardens he prepared designs for and compiling a list of plants used in his designs and available from the Nursery. This may be work that members of our Society are interested in helping with.



## Extracts from the Conservation Management Plan

The cool climate gardens of the Southern Highlands landscape are unique and much valued by residents and visitors. Much of the plant material that is mature and highly visible today was grown locally at nurseries which have now closed. The most significant nursery in terms of its influence on the landscape was the Berrima Bridge Nursery at Berrima, owned and operated for over 50 years by Claude and Isobel Crowe.

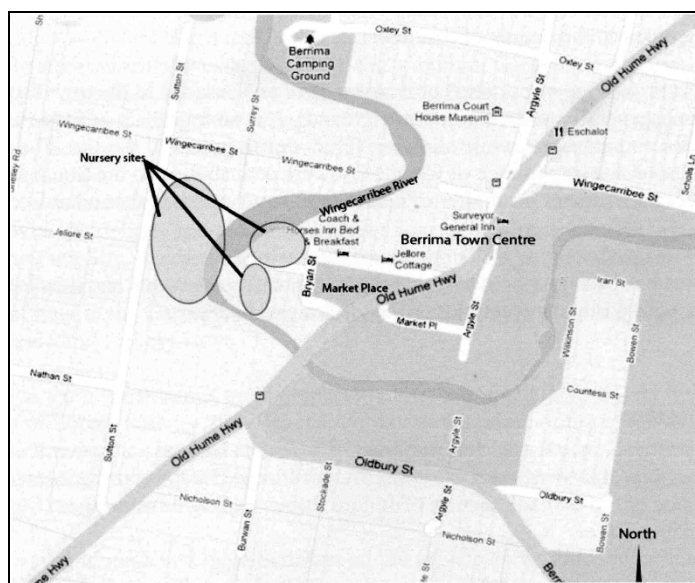
Claude Crowe was a passionate Nurseryman who developed his interest in plants while growing up in Albury. After arriving in Sydney as a young employee of Anderson & Co he was sent to Berrima to work in Anderson's cold climate nursery.

In 1943 Crowe left Anderson & Co to establish his own Nursery in Jellore Street, Berrima, along with his new wife Isobel. For more than 50 years Crowe ran his nursery and advised on landscape design and plant selection throughout the Southern Highlands and the broader NSW countryside.

Today the Nursery Site at 38 Jellore Street Berrima remains intact. The buildings have begun to fall into disrepair and the garden has become overgrown with weeds, particularly environmental weeds. However the important Camellia collection, put together by Crowe from his time working at Camden Park, is in good health.

Crowe left behind a legacy of plants, garden design and an influence on the broad character of the cultivated landscape of the Southern Highlands. When Crowe retired his son, Noel, took over the management of the nursery, expanded it to land at Robertson for open ground stock, and set up retail premises in the centre of Berrima.

Berrima Bridge Nurseries finally closed in 2003.



*Berrima Bridge Nurseries sites at Berrima (above) and Claude Crowe at work in his glasshouse (left).*

## From ironbark to concrete poles

Several media outlets in the Southern Highlands have reported recently on concerns with the installation of concrete power poles by the local energy provider.

It is reported that the provider has agreed to improve road safety issues and visual amenity surrounding such concrete poles, particularly those installed on Exeter Road as part of the Moss Vale to Exeter electricity upgrade. Guard rails will be installed around a number of poles and one pole moved that is too close to the road verge. However it appears that concerns raised by Exeter Village Association about the placement of two large concrete poles in the village centre will not be addressed.

With this in mind, it is relevant to reproduce a letter written to the Society last year by Terry Rannard, a local resident of many years standing. He is a regular reader of our weekly history column in the *Southern Highland News* and was prompted to write after reading an article about the switching on of electricity in Bundanoon and Exeter.

In that article it was told how, with the support of local member Mark Morton MLA, the Wingecarribee Shire Council decided upon a scheme to connect the Shire's resort areas of Bundanoon and Exeter to the electricity grid. The following year the *Moss Vale Post* reported that "on 30 August 1929, Mark Morton MLA pressed down a controlling lever switch and the towns of Bundanoon and Exeter banished hurricane lamps and tallow candles to the limbo of forgotten things".

The current was taken in bulk from the Public Works Department at a point on the Port Kembla line near the boundary of Moss Vale Municipality. Mark Morton said he hoped the residents of Bundanoon and Exeter would appreciate the benefits, boons and blessings which would follow the availability of light and power.

For Terry Rannard, this story brought to mind the high voltage power line that presently supplies the Ringwood Zone Substation at Exeter and reminded him of some anecdotal history of this once critically important piece of infrastructure. He wrote as follows:

I worked for the former Berrima County Council, and I remember some of the older employees saying that the line was built in 1929 by the Department of Works. This has proven to be factual. It was also said that at the time, early 1970s, most of the hardwood poles were the original Ironbark species. What is noteworthy is that these electricity poles are currently being replaced with concrete poles, by the current electricity supply authority. That makes these poles 85 years old, many still standing!

I was 'on call' for this area after hours for some years, and I recall being called out by a resident along the route of this line in the mid-1970s, who stated that he thought something had happened near his property, as

he had lost supply, and there was a grass fire. I was on the job within about 30 seconds, I'm sure!

I arrived before Police or Ambulance and found that a car driven by a well-known local resident had collided with one of these Ironbark poles, causing the top metre or so to whip and break off, causing the 33kV line to be brought to ground level. I was alone, and immediately radioed my home, to request a linesman to come to the site (which ultimately happened).

In the meantime, Police and Ambulance had arrived, and were reliant upon me clearing the area of hazard, to allow them to carry out their responsibilities. The driver was deceased, and thrown from the car, and I needed to step over/around the body to enable me to make the area safe. I hope you find this of interest.



**Railway Ave, Bundanoon after a snowfall showing telegraph (left) and electricity poles (right)**



**Electricity power pole on Barrengarry mountain road**



**Electricity poles provide a back-drop to local cyclists**

- article compiled by P Morton



## Wild's or Wilde's Meadow ?

Robertson Mail, Friday 15 February 1929

*Selected by Lavinia Ford from Trove*

**Was it named after a Great Pioneer?** Have we all been doing dishonor to a great pioneer in spelling Wildes Meadow with an "e"? The *Milton Times* thinks so and gives some good reasons. Here they are:

Wild's Meadow was named after the explorer Joseph Wild, but the name as it was is not good enough for the community to-day. Old hands remember a local ditty, probably composed by the late Mr C A Moule, of Burrawang, in which frequent reference was made to "Joe Wild's Meadow".

Since those days Wild's Meadow, as it was then known, has taken on a bit more side or something. For a few years it smiled and prospered under the fetching cognomen of Myra Vale. Then it had a kind of relapse, or something else, and ever since it has rejoiced as Wilde's Meadow.

Joseph Wild was mixed up with Charles Throsby's exploration from Bong Bong early in the 19th century. There is not the least doubt that Wild's Meadow, properly so called, was named after him.

Throsby, whose property everyone knows near Moss Vale, was for many years the Vice-Regal country residence. Governor Macquarie, on his visit to Lake George, in 1820, shortly after its discovery, stayed at Throsby's place on the way. Subsequently he wrote: "Mr Throsby not having yet given any particular name or designation to his new estate in this fine country, I have, with his own consent named it 'Throsby Park', a designation particularly suitable and appropriate to his beautiful park like grounds." Throsby Park it still is.

But this story is about Joe Wild: On 26th March, 1818, Throsby started his return journey from Caarne, or Southern Marulan. By evening they had reached a creek called Yarranghaa, now Yarrunga Creek, the head water of Fitzroy Falls. On 30th March they were at Parronrah, now known as Kangaroo Valley. Throsby mentions that he sent Josh Wild to examine part of the country thereabouts "twelve months since".



Joe Wild and Charles Throsby jnr are said to be the two figures in Conrad Martens' Fitzroy Falls painting of 1836

In due course they reached Jervis Bay and on 5th April Throsby "with Wild and young Mr Grimes" climbed a hill and got a fine view of St. George's Basin. Throsby wrote of the natives hereabout:

"Just after dark Wild and myself being on the beach observed two young men bring our spears, etc, from the opposite side of the creek and put them in the bush. We removed a short distance nearer water. Several of the native women went away this evening, a very suspicious circumstance; kept watch all night." So Joe Wild was generally about when anything was doing.

In a letter dated August 29, 1820, S Hall writing to Throsby reported that Joseph Wild had discovered Lake George and when you look through Throsby's records you will find that Wild was always handy. When Throsby went to Bathurst in 1819 from the Wingecarribee, Wild was with him and it is recorded that the party halted at Burnmaring, "Wild being ill".

It was on 14th April, 1820, that Surveyor Meehan with a survey party of five others, commenced a journey "from Joseph Wild's hut", which was on the south side of the Wingecarribee River, "very near where the present Bong Bong Bridge is situated". He was accompanied also by Mr Chalker and Joseph Wild. Wild also accompanied the eminent botanist Robert Brown in his botanical researches in NSW and Tasmania between 1802 and 1805.

When Governor Macquarie set out to visit Lake George, Throsby wrote to him on 1st October, 1820, stating that he had sent a party "to join Wild at the road party" to make preparations for the trip. On 18th October the Vice-Regal party, which included Major Antill, Lieut Macquarie, Mr Meehan (Deputy Surveyor General) and Charles Throsby arrived at Throsby's place. "I met here with Joseph Wild", Macquarie wrote, "one of the first settlers I sent with Mr Throsby to the new country, and who has the immediate direction of the party employed in constructing the road towards Bathurst through this country".

And later on they crossed the Cookbundoon River twice within half a mile. It took them two hours to climb the mountain with the baggage carts, and down the other side. "I named this ascent and descent 'Wild's Pass'" Macquarie wrote, "after Joseph Wild, the overseer of the party". Practically every exploring expedition within that part of the country in those days was accompanied by Wild. Official records are full of his name, and the late Mr R H Cambage collected an amazing amount of information about those stirring adventures. Wild died in 1847, aged 88, and was buried in the cemetery at Bong Bong Church.

The foregoing facts are from a paper Cambage read before the Royal Historical Society in 1921.

Any community ought to feel proud to be called after Wild – just plain Wild without any frills.

## DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	11	SEP	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	25	SEP	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	9	OCT	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	23	OCT	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	13	NOV	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	27	NOV	Monthly General Meeting	<b>2:00pm</b> at the Historical Society

If undelivered return to:  
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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.

*Springetts Arcade*