

Founded 1960

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER
No 472 May 2015

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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: bdmuseum@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 \$25.00 - Family \$35.00.

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

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

MAY MEETING: Thursday 28 May 2015 at 2pm

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

GUEST SPEAKER: Philip Yeo
Reclaiming a Heritage site
Philip Yeo will give an illustrated talk on the recent history of Bong Bong Common

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

JUNE MEETING: Thursday 25 June 2015 at 12 noon

VENUE: Jack High Bistro, Bowling Club, Shepherd Street, Bowral

GUEST SPEAKER: Dr Penny Olsen

Inside this month ...

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And more ...



Diary dates

MAY

- 10 Mother's Day
- 14 Management Committee Meeting
- 28 General Monthly Meeting

JUNE

- 8 Queens Birthday Holiday
 - 11 Management Committee Meeting
 - 25 General Monthly Meeting
- LUNCHEON**
- 26 School holidays commence

June luncheon

This year our June luncheon is on Thursday 25 June, to be held at:

Jack High Bistro
Bowral Bowling Club

Two courses will be served, main and dessert, as alternate drops.

We are pleased to advise that our speaker will be Dr Penny Olsen.

Dr Olsen is a research scientist and natural history writer based at the Australian National University and author of many publications including the recent *Cayley & Son*, a magnificent book on the life and works of bird artists Neville Henry Cayley and his son Neville William.

Neville Cayley lived at Bowral from 1888 to 1890. Both father and son have left a significant portfolio of paintings, many in collections at the National Library of Australia.



Dr Olsen's book on the Cayley's has been praised by historians, as well as art and book lovers.

Dr Olsen will give an illustrated talk about her work and publications.

Cost is \$30.00pp. Please book and pay at the Archives. Members and their friends are encouraged to come along and enjoy a great day.

From the President's desk

Phew! It's all over ... the Museum's Gallery and the Southern Highlands 1200 exhibition has now been launched plus the Centenary of the Gallipoli landings. With due respect, I think we all feel that we've now been there and done that!

The Museum's big day (18th) went off without a hitch. The RSL Commemorative Children's Choir, 2 light horsemen, member Angela Williamson, the soloist, was superb. The only thing missing was a jumping castle, dancing girls and a Roulette flying past.

Speeches were succinct, relevant and entertaining.

Our Patron, Mayor Gair, mentioned a few key players but I'm sorry to say some of our committee members were omitted. Without their support, of course, the day couldn't happen.

So I would like to include and thank:

Management Committee Members

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Robyn Arrowsmith | Caroline Hutton |
| Denise Barker | Leonie Knapman |
| Ros Dale | Bruce Moore |
| Patricia Doris | Philip Morton |
| Linda Emery | Max Rogers |
| Peg Harvey | John Schweers |

Museum sub-committee Members

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Sylvia Carless | Chris Moore |
| Judith Green | John Schweers |
| Harlan Hall | Harold Wall |
| Lyn Hall | Michele Woods |

Lavinia Ford, our Newsletter editor does a great job as well.

All of these volunteers deserve mentioning in our dispatches because they've known to endure harassment from John, Harlan and myself during the building's infancy. This includes unknown costs, unscheduled meetings, construction hiccups leading up to the final fine-tuning of the opening.

Not to mention a new standard of sandwich making was set by Caroline and her team.

I have to admit that trying to get 19 individual volunteers coaxed to agree on an end result is rather like herding cats in a thunderstorm, but we finally succeeded!

Perhaps some of our belligerent Councillors should take heed?!

Pru Goward said it all by referring to Linda Emery showing her patient expertise in history and research as one of the district's "Living Treasures". She put Harlan Hall, our tenacious resident project manager on hold and after her speech, finally got back to him by aptly dubbing him the "money whisperer".

At the finish of her eloquent and entertaining speech, the Museum's new Gallery and exhibition were declared officially open.

After a week of recovery, Anzac Day came upon us. Many of our members laid wreaths in the major towns. (As seen in a following article) Encouraging and emotional speeches were delivered by some of our community's youngest members. This was a tribute to the youth of today, also honouring the actions of the youth of 100 years ago.

One quote from one of our very young, with respect, asked what she knew about Anzac Day.....

'Well there was this bloke and his donkey who went a long way away, he jumped off a boat with some of his friends and had a fight with some Turkeys'.

Priceless!

The Story Centre BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM Market Place, Berrima Near the bridge

Please note that the museum is now open for at least 5 days every week, and not just on weekends and daily through school holidays as previously.

OPENING HOURS

10 am - 4 pm

WEDNESDAY to SUNDAY

and every day during NSW School Holidays and NSW Public Holidays.

Closed Good Friday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Groups also welcome at other times by arrangement. Please telephone John on 4872 1660.

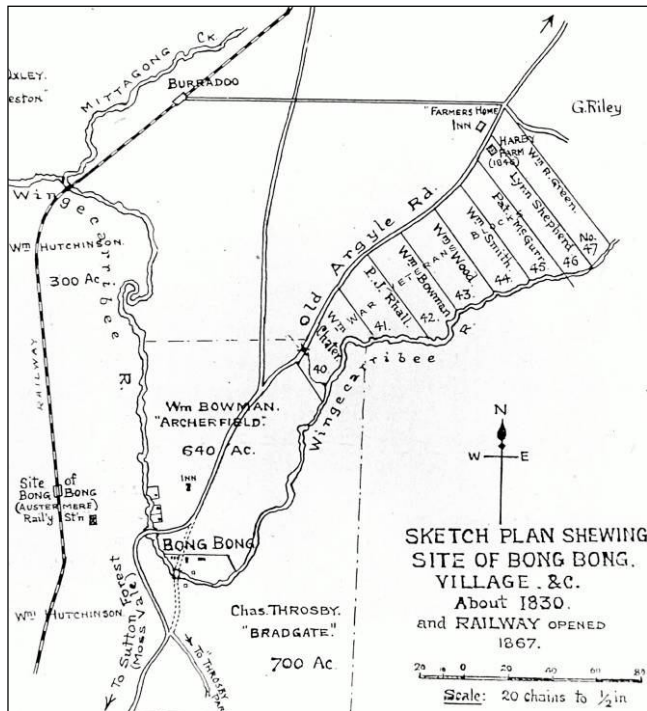
May guest speaker

Phil Yeo

Reclaiming a Heritage Site

The very recent history of the
Bong Bong Common 1981 - 2015

Chairperson of the Bong Bong Common Management Committee, Phil Yeo will give an illustrated talk about the Common including its establishment, acquisition and studies undertaken, and its future directions for preservation and presentation to the community.



Phil Yeo served with Wingecarribee Shire Council for 24 years. In his first period (15 years), he was elected in December 1980 to the newly amalgamated Wingecarribee Shire Council and served continuously as a councillor from 1981 until Sept 1995.

He worked to extend the Council's role beyond roads, rates and rubbish to include community development especially in the social and cultural fields.

In his second period (9 years), he was:

- Re-elected to the Council in September 1999
- Deputy Mayor 1999 to 2000
- Mayor from September 2000 to March 2004.

He retired from Council at the elections of 2008.

During the period 2000-2008 he became Council's representative on the Bong Bong Common Management Committee. After September 2008 he became a community member of the Bong Bong Common Management Committee. He has served as Secretary of the Committee and since August 2012 has been its Chairperson.

Come along on Thursday 28 May at 2:00pm

Poppy seed index: help sought

Poppy Seed from Villers Bretonneux, France



In January 1920, the director of the Botanic Gardens in Sydney, Joseph Henry Maiden, received a parcel from France, sent to him by Ettie Rout, Secretary of the New Zealand Volunteer Sisters. It contained poppy seed gathered in the Somme Valley

by the school children of Villers Bretonneux and came with a request that the seed be distributed to the relatives of Australian and New Zealand soldiers who had fallen fighting on the battlefields. The children wished to convey their deepest gratitude and loving sympathy to the families of those who had given their lives for France so far from their native land.

Joseph Maiden sent a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald* writing "that I shall be very pleased indeed to send a tiny packet to the relatives of New South Wales soldiers in accordance with this lady's wishes". The letter was reprinted in a number of regional newspapers and written requests from all over the state began to flood in. The original supply of seed was soon exhausted, prompting Maiden to obtain a further shipment of seed gathered at the end of the following season, both from France and the area around Ypres in Belgium.

Joseph Maiden was a meticulous man, with a methodical mind and working habits. He kept registers of seeds and plants coming in and out of the Botanic Gardens, and it is from these registers that we have been able to extract the names of all those people who applied for and received poppy seeds to plant in their gardens in memory of their loved ones.

Our volunteers have indexed all the names recorded in the Seed Registers and have begun the task of identifying the soldiers in whose name the families applied for poppy seed. The index is on our website as a word-searchable PDF document.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The index lists the names and suburb or township recorded in the Botanic Gardens Seed Register. Our aim is to identify as many of those listed as possible and, where we can obtain addresses, ask the current owners or occupants of these houses to again plant red poppies in the garden. Descendants may also wish to plant poppies in their current gardens in remembrance of their relatives and in recognition of the sentiment of the children of Villers Bretonneux who first collected the seed almost a century ago.

If you can assist in identifying any of those listed, then please complete the contact form on the BDH&FHS website so we can include these details in the index.

- Linda Emery

Anzac centenary exhibition open

The Southern Highlands 1200

Stories of men and women of the Berrima district in World War One

At our Berrima District Museum, the Williams Gallery and new exhibition were officially opened by Ms Pru Goward, the state member for Goulburn, on 18 April.

In attendance were a large number of members of the Society and of the local community, and visitors from further afield, including descendants of the local 1200 men and women who served in WWI.



At the front of the museum a large marquee had been erected to provide cover for the official proceedings and the plentiful seating within it was fully utilised by attendees; also many others stood around the edges, happy with the good view this provided.



The RSL Rural Commemorative Youth Choir with their choir mistress Ms O J Rushton warmed up the crowd with some entertaining songs relevant to the period including "Pack up your Troubles in your old Kit Bag". Also a poignant poem written in 1915 during the Kangaroo March recruitment drive was recited.

Society President Bruce Moore opened proceedings by acknowledging the district's traditional owners and welcomed honoured guests. The National Anthem was then sung by all. The President, stating that the exhibition could not have come to fruition without the vision and drive of Harlan Hall and the many years of research by Linda Emery, called on both to speak.

Harlan began by acknowledging the late Ken Reid, a past President of the Society, and how together they had considered possibilities in 2010 for a project to capitalise on available grant funding. This led to the launch in 2012 at the Empire Cinema in Bowral of the

Southern Highlands 1200 project. It had now become a reality, housed in a new exhibition gallery and this, Harlan said, was due to the efforts of many people.

He gave special mention to Lucy Bannyan, exhibition designer, his wife Lyn Hall for her graphic design contributions, and Michele Woods and Linda Emery for their meticulous research and gathering of display objects. Also mentioned were Phil Langley and Bruce Stokes for undertaking the building of the gallery and the 65 tradesmen who assisted. Harlan gave a special mention to Sylvia Carless and John Schweers who both helped keep the museum running throughout the upheaval of the many changes.

Linda Emery began her address by expressing the strong emotional attachment she felt for the 1200 men and women, and their families and descendants, several of whom had generously shared memories and memorabilia. The SH1200 exhibition, Linda said, was not about war as such but about people, those who contributed here and overseas. The stories of 24 of these had been chosen for the exhibition.



Linda Emery



Harlan Hall

After a most poignant song written in 1917, 'She who gives her Son', was beautifully rendered by local woman Angela Williamson, Bruce Moore introduced Cr Duncan Gair, the mayor of Wingecarribee Shire.

On behalf of Council, Cr Gair accepted the gallery as a gift to the community. He pointed out that, as the district had a small population at the time of WWI, the loss of 237 who didn't return from the war would have been tragic. Cr Gair then congratulated all involved with the new exhibition and, holding up a copy of the Society newsletter, he read off the names of those in executive positions and paid tribute to their efforts.

Bruce Moore then introduced Pru Goward, the local Member for Goulburn, as representative of the NSW Government and, in particular, of the Minister for Arts. Ms Goward addressed the gathering, noting that this well-timed new exhibition surely reflected the vibrant community that would have existed in the country in 1915. What were the qualities, she pondered, which enabled a young nation at that time to raise a fit and healthy volunteer army? Australia then was rich and confident, being the second wealthiest country in the world. The most notable virtues that stand out from our participation in that war are fortitude, resilience and courage. It is these virtues that made the nation.

Ms Goward paid tribute to Harlan's assiduous pursuit of financial support for the exhibition project and to Linda Emery's research expertise, describing her as one of the district's treasures. Ms Goward then declared that it was her "great and deep honour to open this extraordinary exhibition".

Bruce Moore wrapped up the proceedings by inviting everyone present to inspect the new exhibition and to partake of refreshments at the museum's 'verandah cafe'. The excellent fare was provided by a team of our volunteers and greatly appreciated.



Photos by Bud Townsing and Jodie Torrington

The SH1200 Exhibition, many years in the making, has involved thousands of volunteer hours, 11 major grants, 65 local building companies and suppliers, and many generous donations from the Southern Highlands community. It takes pride of place in our new Williams Gallery, completed in late 2014.

A digital tour of the exhibition is available on digital devices by typing into your browser address bar (not your search engine bar): www.thestorycentre.com.au

From the SH1200 exhibition main introduction panel:

The men and women of the Southern Highlands were quick to answer the call to arms at the outbreak of war on 4 August 1914. When HMAT *Berrima* sailed to take part in operations against German New Guinea two weeks later, several Southern Highlanders were among the 1500 members of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force.

At war's end, 1200 men and women from the district had served as soldiers, sailors, airmen and nurses, 237 of them never to return. The agony felt in the community between 1914 and 1918, where no-one was untouched, was repeated time and again throughout the country. On Anzac Day Australians reflect on what that day means to us but at a local level the very real and human stories of Southern Highlands' soldiers seem more immediate and still touch us with their poignancy.

The SH1200 exhibition at the museum is open 5 days each week, from Wednesday to Sunday



Anzac Day commemorations

LEST WE FORGET

This year being the centenary of the Gallipoli landing, the usual Anzac Day commemoration services locally were observed by a larger than normal gathering of people. Our Society was represented at services at each of the district's main centres. Bob Williams laid a wreath at the dawn service in Berrima, and at mid-morning services a sheaf of flowers was laid by David Baxter in Moss Vale, by Bruce Moore (President) in Bowral and by Leonie Knapman in Mittagong.

David Baxter also attended the Berrima dawn service and described it as an amazing experience with so many families there. The most poignant moment for him was listening to a Frensham girl who played the Last Post and Reveille, note perfect. As she started, about three Kookaburras began their morning laugh followed by Magpie warbles and a distant dog bark, and at that moment David thought "how bloody good it is to be an Australian".

After the Berrima dawn service, approximately 150 of the attendees went to our Berrima District Museum and were provided tea, coffee and Anzac biscuits.



Extra colour was provided at Mittagong on Anzac Day with a cover of 800 crocheted and knitted red poppies which adorned the Cenotaph. This was an initiative of Mittagong CWA, of which our member Carol Nolan is craft officer. She encouraged several of our members to get out their knitting needles. Their contributions were added to those of many others who assisted the CWA craft group to make 'something special' for this Anzac centenary commemoration. The cover is now in the safe-keeping of the Mittagong RSL Club.

above:
David Baxter



right:
Bruce & Chris
Moore

below:
Leonie Knapman



The Old Hume Highway and Bowral Rd intersection in Mittagong, where the memorial clock tower and cenotaph is located, was closed to traffic on Anzac Day for both the dawn and mid-morning parades and services. It attracted a large gathering of local people including veterans, families, pupils from Mittagong's schools and members of the armed forces. Tributes were paid to all those who served their country in war.

Photos: D Baxter, B Moore, P Morton, M Rogers, D Barker

Mittagong: Gateway to the south

Part 4. Mittagong's original bowling green made way for new road in 1960s.

Appeals commenced in the 1920s for replacement of a dangerous stretch of Hume Highway on Mittagong's northern outskirts. Until the 1950s, progress was slow as the NSW Main Roads Department had no funding available and its proposed deviation through bowling club and golf course land aroused local concern. An overview of this saga continues here.

Sydney Morning Herald February 1947: "A farmer of Colo Vale, Robert Wilson, 56, was killed at Maltings Bridge when his utility truck collided with a lorry. His wife, Mildred, 55, received a fractured right wrist, chest and chin injuries and severe shock. Wilson received chest and internal injuries, and died almost immediately. The lorry driver, of Moss Vale, was not injured. Maltings bridge, on the Hume Highway, has been the scene of many accidents."

In considering the removal of the Bowling Club for a road deviation, Mittagong Council moved in 1952 that a bowling green could be constructed at Alexandra Square and submitted cost estimates to the Main Roads Department. Yet still the Department advised that the proposed deviation to cut out Drabbles and the Maltings Bridges had been deferred through lack of funds. At the Department's request, Mittagong Council carried out a Hume Highway traffic survey covering 24 hours from 7am on 24 November 1952 with 2,700 vehicles passing the control point.

Mittagong Council was requested in July 1954 to have a public telephone box placed near the entrance to Mittagong Sports Ground. Local residents were continually being awakened early in the morning by persons who wanted to ring for a doctor or the ambulance as the result of accidents on the Maltings bridge. The phone could also be used in connection with footballers injured while playing on the oval. It was decided to support the application by an approach to the PMG's Department.

In January 1956, *The Four Mails* announced that a new site had been selected for the Mittagong Bowling Green. "Several years ago the Department of Main Roads drew up plans to make a deviation of the Hume Highway north of Mittagong to do away with Drabbles and the Maltings bridges. The proposed road will go through a portion of Mittagong golf links and through the bowling green. No action was taken for a long period of years, but the Department is now anxious to proceed when funds are available."

The Department offered Mittagong Council an amount of approximately 3,000 pounds compensation as the Council owned the property on which the Bowling Club stood. Representatives of the Club had previously proposed a new site for greens and a clubhouse on land owned by Frensham School, but

Council's preference for a part of Alexandra Square won the day, as compensation could only be obtained if a new bowling club was built on Council land.



The Mittagong Bowling & Recreation Club and Green at Alexandra Square opened in February 1960. The *Mittagong Star* reported that the club ladies excelled themselves in providing an excellent lunch and tea in the afternoon. The evening social was well attended and everyone enjoyed the floor show and dancing.

By the late 1950s the Main Roads Department had finally gained government funding and preparations began for building a deviation along the northern approach into Mittagong to by-pass the Drabbles and Maltings bridges. Work commenced and, as the new road would be located on the western side of the railway line, bridges over that line were not required. It was necessary, however, to cross the Loop Line, still in operation, that approached Mittagong from a westerly angle. A raised, curved section of road was built to bridge it. The Loop Line continued to provide a shuttle service between Mittagong and Picton until the 1980s.

In June 1963 the new section came into service, forming part of the Hume Highway's single-lane north and single-lane south road. The new line of road meant that the Mittagong recreation complex had a wider frontage to the highway, so new entrances were provided to the Sports Oval, Caravan Park, Baths and Golf Links. The surrounding area was landscaped and subsequently Council provided Mittagong Golf Club with extra land on its western border to expand the links into an 18-hole course.

The Highway's Mittagong entry/exit was widened into the present dual-carriageway in the 1990s as part of the Freeway By-pass project. The old stretch between the bridges is still in existence as a local road. It is accessible off the main Old Hume Highway and is worth a visit for a nostalgic reminder of by-gone days.

- compiled by P Morton

DIARY DATES

| | | | | |
|----------|----|-----|------------------------------|--|
| THURSDAY | 14 | MAY | Management Committee Meeting | |
| THURSDAY | 28 | MAY | Monthly General Meeting | 2:00pm at the Historical Society |
| THURSDAY | 11 | JUN | Management Committee Meeting | |
| THURSDAY | 25 | JUN | Monthly General Meeting | 12:00 noon at Jack High Bistro Bowral Bowling Club |
| THURSDAY | 9 | JUL | Management Committee Meeting | |
| THURSDAY | 23 | JUL | Monthly General Meeting | 2:00pm 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.

*Southern Highland News
Springetts Arcade*