



Bowral



Mittagong



Berrima



Moss Vale

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire,
Southern Highlands of NSW

NEWSLETTER

No 490 December 2016

From the President's Desk

Many thanks to all you dedicated members who have honoured me as your President once again for my final year of office.

The teams on both committees have been duly elected at the AGM, which was efficiently conducted by returning officer, Warren Musgrave. We look well equipped for 2017 with a mixture of fresh, enthusiastic faces combined with many experienced souls.

Our cherished treasurer, Patricia Doris has handed over the Society's reins to Ian Mackey after four testing years for her. She did an outstanding job and lived through the vicissitudes associated with two committees, grant applications, donations, volunteers insurance and juggling bookwork for the major extension to the Museum in 2014.

On behalf of the Society I thank you, Patricia. I know at present we're searching desperately for another position for you in the Archives. We won't let you go that easily!

Our annual Christmas party luncheon was held on Friday 2nd Dec. at the Bowral Bowling Club. Everyone present enjoyed the tasty buffet. This function heralded our



**Bruce Moore,
President**

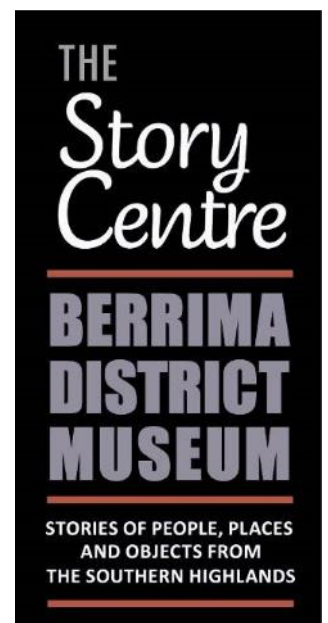
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GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

DECEMBER MEETING: Thursday 22 December
NO MEETING

JANUARY MEETING: Thursday 26 January
NO MEETING

FEBRUARY MEETING: Thursday 23 February at 2pm
VENUE: Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building,
Bowral Road, Mittagong
GUEST SPEAKER: Linda Emery and Max Rogers
"Captured in the Light"



From the President

Continued from front page

break-up on Tuesday 13th Dec. when we can actually send Max home for a good sleep.

The Archives will again open on 9th January 2017.

The Museum will be open during the holidays.

“Having fun at a Historical Society?” This is what my children often ask me. I reply, “of course. Historians actually don’t take themselves too seriously. History, yes.”

I hear from The Indiana Historical Society in the U.S. who are currently celebrating its 200th year of Statehood.

Indiana calls itself the *Hoosier State*, the name is said to have originated from either drunken brawls on the frontier when someone yells “whose ear?” after picking up a detached organ from the barroom floor.

Another possibility is when itinerant migrant settlers knock on a cabin door, the residents sing out “who’s-a-here?”

Whatever the cause, it has stuck and to celebrate, the members are interviewed on live video, chewing while trying to digest a red-hot chilli pepper.

See...you don’t have to be mad to work at a Historical Society, but it sure helps!

Now we get out the old Christmas card list. We always receive one from my Aunt Lena, which invariably reads: ‘Merry Christmas from Aunt Lena’. I feel like returning the card by changing the *from* to a *to*!

Likewise the 5-page epistle that arrives describing in detail the family’s bowel movements over the last twelve months.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy Christmas and we look forward to meeting up again in the New Year.

A Christmas wish:

‘Dear Santa, please give me a slim body and a fat bank account and don’t mix them up like you did last year.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Just a reminder that renewals are now due. Please remember to mail or email renewal form when paying by bank transfer.

Secretary Report on AGM

Thanks to member Warren Musgrave for serving as Returning Officer at our recent Annual General Meeting and conducting proceedings according to our Constitution.

As a result of nominations submitted for office bearers, all 2016 incumbents have been re-elected for 2017 except Patricia Doris. Having served as our Treasurer for four years, she decided not to continue in that role. Long-time member and archives volunteer Ian Mackey accepted nomination for the Treasurer role and was elected.

Nominations were received for Denise Mackey and Jenny Frost to be elected members of the 2017 Management Committee. They were duly elected.

Holders of appointed positions remain as for 2016 with the addition of Denise Mackey to join Roberta Stove as a member of the Conservation Team.

All BDHS office bearers, management committee and museum committee members and key position holders are listed on the newsletter’s back page.

Berrima District Museum

THE STORY CENTRE

Please note that the museum is now open at least 5 days a week

MUSEUM OPEN: 10am to 4pm

WEDNESDAY TO SUNDAY

and every day during NSW school holidays and on public holidays.

Closed on Christmas and Boxing Day.

Groups welcome at other times by arrangement. Phone John 4872 1660.

Archives opening hours

Monday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Tuesday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

PLEASE NOTE that from Wednesday 14 December the Mittagong Research Centre/Archives will be closed for the Christmas summer holiday break and will reopen on Monday 9 January.

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.



Wingecarribee Shire Mayor Clr Ken Halstead at our 2016 AGM with President Bruce Moore. The mayor has accepted the role of Patron of our Society, traditionally offered to each newly elected mayor.

Our Museum: The Story Centre

As museum manager John Schweers reported in his annual report published in last month's newsletter, it has been another successful year in the operation of the Society's Museum/Story Centre at Berrima.

Over 3600 paying adults plus children and members have visited so far this year. This has generated a small surplus after expenses. The museum continues to be operated by a dedicated team of volunteers who give their time to fulfil the tasks and duties required.



Attractive new signage has recently been installed in the museum grounds with support anchors for 'open' banners, which volunteers place out at the start of each day of opening. This eye-catching signage is in keeping with those at other businesses, galleries and heritage attractions in the Berrima precinct.

Except for Christmas and Boxing Day, the museum will be open every day during the NSW school holiday period until the end of January 2017. This is an excellent opportunity to bring along family and visitors or to encourage those you know to visit.



Even if you have visited before, there will be new objects to view in the recent arrivals cabinet, which is regularly updated. Objects seen in the photo above include a 1915 telescope, iron works commemorative pins, tie, a bank book cover and money box.

Children are made most welcome and provided with activities and games to help them feel at home and learn about the objects on display.

There are other linked activities the whole family can enjoy while at Berrima. A "Walking Guide to Historic Berrima" is available at the museum (or it may be downloaded from the Southern Highlands Welcome Centre website). This map is a guide to the historic buildings and locations found within the old town area surrounding the Gaol and Court House, with a sketch and brief description of the history of each place.

Also there is the Berrima River Walk signage which marks the outdoor sites used by the Germans as told in the museum's 'Prisoners in Arcady' exhibition.



German Internment Camp 1915-1919

On the walk you will learn about the structures built by German merchant seamen along the Wingecarribee River while interned at Berrima Gaol for four years during WWI. This signed walk guides you along the river bank, displays photographs of various huts and leads you to where the amazing regattas were held.

An appeal to local members of our Society: please consider volunteering for duty at the museum if you don't already do so. There are gaps in the duty roster due recently to several long-time volunteers having to step down. Your support will be greatly appreciated.



Visitors to the museum are made welcome by volunteers. Pictured here are Graham O'Reilly and Connie Binks.

IF YOU have not recently visited the Museum, now is the time to come and see what all the fuss is about.

Experience our stories and our history

The Story Centre Berrima District Museum
Open 10am-4pm WED to SUN
and every day of NSW school holidays

Mittagong and three Irish sisters

There were many Irish families who came to Australia as assisted migrants between 1850 and 1900, due to ongoing religious conflict. Some of these settled in the Southern Highlands.

Three Irish sisters, Elizabeth, Margaret and Kathleen Graham, separately took up local residence from the 1880s. The inter-woven lives of the sisters and their families provide a glimpse into the district's history.

Their parents, John & Kathleen Graham, came from Castleblayney in County Monaghan, on the Irish side of the Northern Ireland border. Married around 1840 they raised a family of ten children and by 1870 had emigrated with most of the family to Sydney.

The first of the sisters to come to the Highlands was Catherine (or Kate), the youngest. She arrived at Mittagong in 1885 to take up duty as "ophthalmia nurse" and then as senior matron at a Cottage Home. Catherine married John Smith at Ryde in 1891 but was always known locally as Nurse Graham.

A *Bowral Free Press* article in 1886 describes the Cottage Homes for State Children, recently opened at Mittagong, as being clean and well conducted. Miss Graham is mentioned as being a nurse.



For 21 years Kate Smith nee Graham was Matron-in-Charge at No 3 Cottage Home, situated at the corner of present-day Lyell St and Old Hume Highway.

Her next oldest sister Margaret had married Walter Tyrrell in 1883. They had three children in Sydney. A fourth, Ella, was born at Bowral in 1894 after the family moved to Mittagong where Walter bought a property and established a dairy farm. He named it 'Derrycreevy' for a bridge at Castleblayney, his wife's Irish home. The property was near the Cottage Home, so the two sisters were neighbours.

Fire destroyed the Cottage Home in February 1906. According to *BFP* reports on the fire and subsequent inquiry, Kate Graham was awakened at 2.30am on the night of the fire by the calls of Eva Penson, an inmate. Through a hole in the kitchen ceiling she saw a fire burning furiously out of reach in the loft. With the help of Eva she got all the children, some crippled, out safely.

By the time Walter and Margaret Tyrrell were aroused and came over, the back part of the building was well alight. It was impossible to save the building, but some furniture was rescued from the front room. Kate told the inquiry that she had no idea how the fire originated. The Coroner's verdict was that matron appeared to have done her duty, the evidence failed to disclose the origin of the fire, and an open verdict was returned.

The eldest sister of our trio, Elizabeth, was born in 1855. She married John McFarlane in 1875. He was an engineer by trade, born in Northern Ireland, and 15 years older than her. They lived at Rozelle, raising ten boys and one girl. In September 1905 John was killed in a tragic accident at Balmain. While assisting in the moving of a boiler at an iron yard, he was caught and severely injured by a crane which gave way. He was highly respected in the Balmain community and a member of the Orange Order Lodge.

The Sydney *Watchman* observed that the funeral left his home "headed by about 100 members of the Orange and Black Institutions, and a contingent of his old company of the submarine engineers".

Elizabeth was aged 50 when widowed and the Lodge would have offered assistance. Her younger sons Robert, Sydney and Blayney were aged 11, 9 and 6 respectively. She had a daughter Elizabeth (16), another son William (18), and six older sons, some married. She would have been comfortably placed, however, with the inheritance of her husband's estate.

Within a few years of widowhood, Elizabeth also moved to the Southern Highlands. In August 1909 she is mentioned in the *Wollondilly Press* Council Notices drawing attention to a culvert in front of her property at Braemar. Most likely she was leasing this property, as no purchase details exist.

What brought her to Mittagong? Perhaps she came initially to help her sister Kate after the fire destroyed the Cottage Home or perhaps she desired to raise her young sons in the more healthy country.

In 1908 her sister's dairyman husband Walter Tyrrell was elected to Mittagong Municipal Council. Mayor John Mealing with Walter and the other councillors oversaw the construction of a new waterworks which would supply the rapidly expanding town and its various industries, including butter and milk factories, the Maltings and the Farm Home (Renwick).

Elizabeth came with her youngest sons, Blayney and Sydney and the next oldest, Robert, accompanied them for a time. Her one daughter Elizabeth remained in Sydney as did the six older sons, most of whom were married by then.

The property Elizabeth purchased in 1917 consisted of 128-acres which fronted the Great Southern Road, just north of Braemar. Behind the property was the Great Southern Railway. It was near the public school located at the corner of Colo Vale Road.

This school served residents at Braemar, Colo Vale and the surrounding rural area.

Elizabeth named her property 'Ravensdale', after a village in Louth, Ireland, which was the birthplace of her deceased husband. On the property was an old stone cottage facing the road and a near-derelict, weatherboard house.

By this time, near the end of World War I, Elizabeth had four older sons in the fighting forces. At least two served overseas and all survived. Her youngest son Blayne had returned to Sydney in 1914 and joined the armed services although under-age. He served in some training capacity and remained until 1920.

The *Southern Mail* reported in October 1917 that a record crowd assembled at Colo Vale School to show sympathy for bereaved locals and to participate in the unveiling of an honour roll. It was the widow Elizabeth McFarlane who performed the unveiling ceremony, an indication that she had become an integral part of the local community.



Throughout the war years it was her son Sydney (Sid) who stayed with her at Ravensdale where they would have kept poultry and other farm animals, and grown fruit and vegetables. Sid worked as an apprentice at Blatch sawmill near Colo Vale and became proficient as a builder. By 1920 he had supervised the erection of a large brick residence at Ravensdale.



Sid McFarlane (front centre) at Ravensdale, which he built, with Blayne at left and four older brothers, early 1920s.

A cousin of the McFarlane sons was Ella Graham Tyrrell, younger daughter of Margaret and Walter.

She married locally in June 1920 and the district paper reported that: "St Stephen's Church of England, Mittagong, was the scene of a quiet but very pretty wedding, when Oswald Hines, younger son of Mr and Mrs Hiram Hines, of 'Amblecote', Bowral, was married to Ella Graham (Kittie) Tyrrell, younger daughter of Mr & Mrs Walter Tyrrell, of 'Derrycreevy,' Mittagong".



"The bride's linen and cutlery, along with a cheque for 20 pounds, were the gift of her aunt, Nurse Kate Graham. Among the many presents was a handsome silver tea pot, the gift of the staff and pupils at the Mittagong Superior Public School."

Kate Smith nee Graham appears not to have had children. Little has been found about her after the fire destroyed the Cottage Home except that she erected 'Grahamville' a residence at Mittagong in 1915. She died there in 1931. Her funeral took place at Fitzroy Cemetery, where she was laid beside her husband.



Margaret and Walter Tyrrell (pictured above at work in the dairy) celebrated their golden wedding in 1933 and they received congratulations from Mittagong Council where Walter had served as an alderman.

Margaret died in 1950, aged 90, the longest surviving of the three sisters. Her *Southern Mail* obituary stated that she had resided in Mittagong for more than 50 years and raised five children. Her husband had predeceased her by nine years. She was laid to rest in Rowe's Hill Cemetery, Lower Mittagong. Four grandsons, Neil Boyd and Hiram, Bernard and Frank Hines, acted as pallbearers.

To be continued. Compiled by Philip Morton with thanks to Marg Muntz for research and to Judith O'Shea, daughter of Kittie Tyrrell, for family information and photos.

First teacher Bowral Public School

The BDHS archives holds a considerable amount of biographical and historical information on families and individuals who lived locally, going back to the early days of settlement. It often happens that, when doing their family history, people living elsewhere find early family connections to our district and so make contact with our Archivist or Research Officer.

We make our information available to enquirers and sometimes they add material to our collection. One such recent instance is the family research supplied by Denise and Irving Warren of Riverview, Sydney about an ancestor. A summary follows here.

At Bowral in 1861 a school was established and taught by John Miller in a bark skillion attached to a hut occupied by Adam Windsor. It was situated at the northeast corner of Bong Bong and Boolwey Streets. A survey had been completed in 1859 with Rev James Hassall telling JN Oxley that a reserve for a church, parsonage, schoolhouse and a glebe of 43 acres had to be made. In August 1861 a visit to the southern district by Bishop Barker saw him lay the foundation stone for the building intended as a church and school in Bowral.

JN Oxley planned the structure and local residents erected it with money being subscribed by them. In late 1863 the school was operational with the first teacher being John Elkin who resigned and became an Anglican Minister in 1867. The school, known as Wingecarribee, was controlled by the Denominational Board. In 1864 enrolment was 111 with many pupils belonging to the men who worked on the construction of the railway. The building was thus overcrowded as it only sat 80 pupils. In 1865 the enrolment dropped to 68 pupils on the roll.

Rev Hassall initiated a move to convert the denominational school to a public school after the resignation of Elkin. The Rev Hassall wanted John W Warren of Cobbitty as the teacher but Warren would not accept unless the school was conveyed to the Council of Education. The Council agreed, the Denominational Board was paid 100 pounds, and Warren appointed teacher in 1868. A teacher's residence was built in October 1869 at a cost of 349 pounds.

John Westlake Warren was a son of William Warren and Mary Westlake, born at Teignmouth, Devon, England in 1828. The Warrens were a well-known family in the area, being respected as salt merchants and seafarers. John Westlake followed the family tradition as a seafarer and received his official Mate's Certificate in January 1829. Eventually he arrived in Sydney where he married Elizabeth Collins in June 1855 at St Mary's Church, Balmain.

He then became a school teacher at Cobbitty and, as noted above, was appointed as the first teacher at Bowral Public School in 1868.

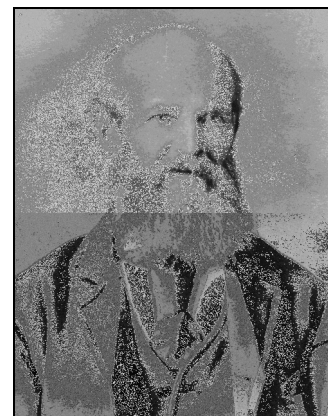
The Teignmouth and Shaldon Museum in Devon, in response to enquiries from Denise and Irving Warren, provided them with early family information, including an article from the *Exeter Flying Post* of 30/08/1838 about one of John Westlake's brothers. It reads:

"By arrivals from Newfoundland, accounts have been received of the loss of the *Sicilian*, belonging to Mr M Warren of Teignmouth, with a cargo of salt and tea. She left St John's, Newfoundland on 22 June, for the Labradors, and on the 28th, about 8 miles from the coast, she struck on an iceberg and began to fill. The crew and passengers were providentially saved by jumping into a small boat and on the ice. The vessel went down in less than ten minutes from the time she struck, and but very few articles were saved by the crew or passengers, some of whom were almost in a state of nudity.

Twelve men took possession of a boat and rowed for the land, leaving nine men, Mr M Warren, junior (son of the owner), two women and two children on the iceberg, where they were rescued by the schooner *Abeona*. Captain Williams, bound to Saint Domingo, who, seeing their signal of distress, bore down, and had the satisfaction of saving fourteen human beings from a watery grave, for it was supposed the iceberg would not hold together an hour longer, from the severe blow it encountered from the ship. The vessel and cargo were insured, but the cost to the owner will be considerable, having a larger quantity of stores on board for the fishing season."



This photo has long been in the BDHS Image Library and it is captioned "First church Bowral 22/10/1863" which is the date the building opened, but it is unclear whether the photo was actually taken on that date or later. If later, the teacher may be John Warren.



Elizabeth and John Warren in old age.
Photo courtesy of Denise and Irving Warren.

- compiled by P Morton

From the newspapers

THE GOOD CHEESE

Goulburn Evening Penny Post Friday 8 April 1932 page 5

CHEESE FACTORY ROBERTSON PROPOSAL

An important meeting of farmers to discuss a proposal for the erection of a cheese factory at Robertson was held on Tuesday night last and was addressed by Mr. A.T.R. Brown, chief dairy Instructor.

An interesting discussion took place and a motion that further consideration be deferred was finally agreed to.

A detailed report of the deliberations of the meeting, together with an interesting address by Mr. Brown, will appear in next Tuesday's issue.

The Southern Mail Tuesday 4 February 1936 page 3

Mr. A. L. Eason, who has been appointed manager of the new Cheese Factory at Robertson, to be opened on Saturday next, comes to his task with high credentials. He learnt the art of cheesemaking in New Zealand factories, famed for the excellence of their product. In this State, he was manager of the Tilba Tilba Cheese Factory for some years and came to Robertson from the Bowthorne Butter Factory. His confidence in the future of the Robertson factory is shown by his giving up a good position to take up his new duties.

Goulburn Evening Penny Post Friday 17 January 1936 page 1

ROBERTSON NEW CHEESE FACTORY

The desires of a large number of dairy farmers will shortly be realised with the completion of the cheese factory to serve the Robertson end of the district.

The project was strongly condemned by a section, but the sponsors were undeterred by the criticism and their enterprise will shortly be rewarded.

It is expected that the factory will be ready to commence operations before the end of the month, and the newly-appointed manager, Mr. L. Eason, of Bowthorne, is already on the job supervising the interior mechanical appointments. With an unquenchable supply of the best water in the State, which is so necessary for cheese production, the promoters are sanguine that the venture will prove a success.

The Sydney Monitor and Commercial Advertiser Wednesday 26 December 1838 page 3

THE MITTAGONG ESTATE, late the Property of T. D. Rowe, Esq., containing about Two Thousand Acres, with a handsome and commodious Cottage, fit for the reception of a genteel family. Also a detached Cottage and Windmill in full work. For particulars apply to Mrs. Rowe, on the Premises.

Bowral Free Press and Mittagong, Burrawang and Kangaloon Advocate, Saturday 8 December 1883 p2

A Government diamond drill is now at work at **Frog Island**, a mile and a half from Colo Vale, in search of coal on behalf of Dr. Mackenzie and others, and a second drill was expected to set to work by the end of this week for the same purpose on behalf of Frazer Martin and Co.

Bowral Free Press and Mittagong, Burrawang and Kangaloon Advocate, Saturday 8 December 1883 p 2

It is reported that Messrs. Cox and Tate sold by private contract, Tattersall's Hotel, Moss Vale, for £2,800 cash, to Mr. John Cullen.

Bowral Free Press and Mittagong, Burrawang and Kangaloon Advocate, Saturday 8 December 1883 p2

The Mittagong Coal Mining Company struck a splendid seam of coal on Thursday last ; one so rich in its depth and character as to warrant the greatest efforts on the Company's part in getting the coal to the surface ready for the market.

The Scrutineer and Berrima District Press, Wednesday 17 May 1893 page 2

The Primate in the District.

The Primate arrived at Bowral on Wednesday last from Kangaroo Valley, having been met at Fitzroy Falls by several parishioners. In the afternoon the Rev. D'Arcy Irvine gave a garden party at S. Simon and Jude's parsonage, which has been greatly improved, as also the lawn and garden. The ladies provided and attended at the tables, the grounds being prettily laid out. The Primate, who was staying at the parsonage, was introduced to a number of parishioners. On Thursday the Primate preached morning and evening in connection with Ascension Day. In the afternoon he consecrated the Church of England portion of the new general cemetery. He was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Ben. M. Osborne, of Hopewood, on this day.

AT BERRIMA.

On Friday the Primate consecrated the church at High Range which is situated about ten miles from Berrima. The church was opened nearly two years ago and is administered to by the incumbent of Berrima (Rev. G. Shepherd) who conducted service there every other Sunday. The usual service upon such occasions was read and hymns sung, and a short address delivered by the Bishop. The church is named after St. Thomas. ...

South Coast Times and Wollongong Argus, Friday 12 December 1930 page 32

BOWRAL.

Mr. A. N. Burton (Burton of Bowral) tells "The Mail" that despite the prevailing depression real estate in the Bowral district has not been adversely affected to any great extent. Enquiry for property has been fair during the past six months and particularly good during the past two months. Sales during the period under review include a property in Bong Bong Street sold at auction; a residence in Woodbine Street the well-known property Ronda with 3 acres of ground, Fitzroy Farm, Mittagong with 90 acres. Negotiations are pending for several large properties and the prospects for the immediate future are quite good.

The Southern Mail Friday 7 December 1951 page 8

Bartholomew Rush kept a hotel which is now "The Poplars," Braemar, and the little settlement there was first called "Rush's Platform." Between the hotel and the platform was a racecourse. In later years the late Judge Coffey built a country home which later became "Resthaven" at Braemar.

Compiled by Lavinia Ford

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

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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: 10.00am to 4.00pm, Wednesdays to Sundays, and during school and public holidays.
Museum Committee: John Schweers (Manager, Tour Bookings), Harlan Hall (Project Manager),
Lyn Hall (Graphics, Exhibitions), Sylvia Carless (Roster), Harold Wall (Human Resources).
- 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.

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Management Committee: President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Museum Manager, Research Officer, plus members Peg Harvey (Minute Secretary), Denyse Barker, Denise Mackey and Jenny Frost