



Bowral



Mittagong



Berrima



Moss Vale

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire,
Southern Highlands of NSW

ABN 29 362 616 937

NEWSLETTER

No 528 June 2020



From the President's Desk

As we slowly awaken from our COVID-19 induced slumber, green shoots are appearing with restrictions on movement and gatherings being lifted at an ever-increasing rate. Our Society is also emerging from the mist although we are still not open to the public at either the Archives or Berrima Museum. Some volunteers are returning to duty and are observing all the social distancing protocols.

The Berrima Museum is taking advantage of the enforced shutdown to carry out renovations to the original galleries. Electrical and carpentry work have been completed and painting is in progress. When we eventually reopen to the public it will look fresh and inviting.

There will be no general meeting of the Society for the month of June. We will advise next newsletter what we are doing in July. As you may be aware our Society turns 60 years old in July and we are hoping to celebrate this occasion if possible.

Recently we had the sad passing of two of our active members, Trevor Bensley and Maureen Townsing. We wish to extend sincere condolences to both families.

I first met Trevor Bensley in 1988 when Denise and I, together with a group of adventurers, were about to commence the Bi-Centennial Walk from Katoomba to Mittagong, a distance of 150 km along tracks through the Burratorang and Nattai Valleys. Trevor was one of the support crew who trucked in relief provisions to

Yerranderie, about mid-way on the walk. His keen enthusiasm and organisation skills will always be remembered. We have spoken on many occasions since on all things bushwalking, the environment and the many choices we have locally to follow that pursuit.

Maureen Townsing recently passed away and will be sadly missed at our various meetings as will be her high-quality research into many things historical. See inside for a feature about her work with the Society.

Last month we featured the Spanish Flu pandemic of 100 years ago and I wondered what else happened 100 years ago that still had a current local connection today. In *The Southern Mail* of June 1920 there appeared an advertisement for B. Haille Paine Solicitors. This practice was established 140 years ago by Charles Gale in 1879 who was later joined by Bennington Haille Paine.

In 1927 Bennington Paine was joined by his son Haille Hands Paine. In keeping with family tradition his grandson Haille Scott Smith became a partner in 1954 until his retirement in 2000. Peter Fleming joined the firm in 1969 and became principal in 2000. Peter's daughter and son-in-law also worked in the practice until several years ago. Although currently under new ownership, the practice continues in Bowral today after 140 continuous years.

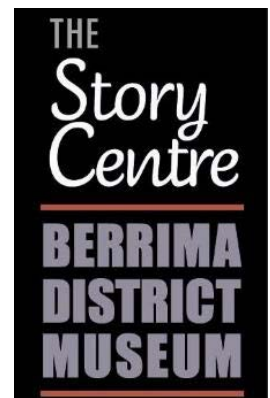
Ian Mackey

ALL GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS POSTPONED TILL FURTHER NOTICE

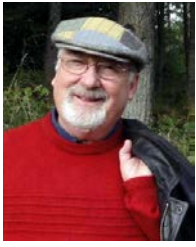
JUNE 2020: Thursday 25 June NO GENERAL MEETING

JULY 2020: Thursday 23 July – a 60th Anniversary lunch if conditions allow, details to be provided in the July newsletter

We will advise when the **Family History Interest Group** can meet again.



Moore Memorable Musings



COVID KITCHEN COOKING

A typical day in dormancy.

Shaved, hair washed, teeth cleaned,

deodorised, powdered and smelling like a rose.

All in preparation for the big day. It's my turn in the kitchen!

I attempt to jump into the same trackies I wore yesterday.

"No way, you may see someone you know," my bride remarked. "They're letting us out more these days," she added.

"It sounds like we're in a leper colony. Anyway I'll make something special for you, my sweet. I'm all over it!"

*

With a couple of spare hours up my sleeve, what else to do but turn on the tele!

These days I find the most exciting shows are on the cooking channel.

Not only do we take an exotic trip to some far-flung place you've never heard of, but the host chef usually ends up cooking a meal that not only looks alluring but is also to die for.

Australophile Rick Stein is seen on a Greek fishing lugger in the sparkling Mediterranean hauling in abalone and other rare shellfish.

Later he joins the locals eating wonderful mouth-watering seafood being washed down with a glass of Santorini white wine. Yum.

Meanwhile excitement is mounting at home when I feel like trying one of Kylie Kwong's Asian specials.

What can possibly go wrong?

Virtually visiting a couple of Hong Kong's top restaurants and watching her favourite Asian chefs do their thing, I've settled for the chooks feet and noodle soup.

But wait, where would I find a spare pair of chicken feet in the Southern Highlands?

In that case maybe I'll go for the squid and blue swimmer crab in black bean sauce.

Or maybe I won't.

Let's settle for prawn dumplings . . . but first the dumpling flour. Blast! That means a trip to Chatswood to find all of these ingredients.

No, hang the expense, I'll open a can of those organic, gluten free, biodynamic baked beans.

Bruce Moore

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: bdhsarchives@gmail.com

Archives' opening hours

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

Research Fees

Research fees for non-members:
\$30.00 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.

Berrima District Museum

THE STORY CENTRE

1a Market Place cnr Bryan St,
Berrima 2577

OPEN WEDNESDAY TO SUNDAY
10.00am to 4.00pm throughout the year. This includes during school and public holiday periods. Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Groups welcome at other times by arrangement. Ph: Lyn 02 4862 1626 or John 0434 623 402.

Museum: Phone 4877 1130 or email bdmuseum@bigpond.com

Managed and operated by members of our Society who volunteer their time and expertise.

PLEASE NOTE

Our Museum at Berrima and the Mittagong Archives/Research Centre remain closed to the public for the remainder of this month.

Anyone with a question, a research inquiry, or who wishes to obtain local or family history information, or order photos from our Image Library (viewable via our website) may do so by emailing the Society.

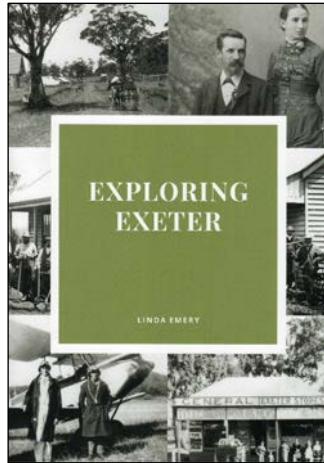


Those were the days! Happy, smiling faces at Dormie House, Moss Vale during our Christmas lunch in December 2013. Pictured, from left, are Patricia Doris, Chris Moore, Maureen Townsing and Peter Doris. The late Maureen's contributions to the Society are featured on pages 4 and 5.

Exploring Exeter book updated

After being out of print for several years, Linda Emery has updated and reprinted *Exploring Exeter*, a short history of the village and its built environment.

The new edition includes a number of new photographs that have come to light since the book was first published in 1998. Available from the archives, the museum and in our online shop for \$20 plus postage.



Pickard (whose business takes centre stage in the photos). The local press described the event in detail bringing the scene to life. "Entering the main street, it could be seen that preparations had been made on a most elaborate scale, for it was a variety of colours, the result of the many streamers of bunting that stretched from one side of the thoroughfare to the other, and the many flags floating on the breeze".

The procession was led by Bowral Association Band, followed by the local cadets, the Red Cross nurses from Burradoo Convalescent Home, boy scouts, the members of the March to Freedom and finally, the local school children. The marchers passed through a guard of honour into the Empire Theatre where afternoon tea was served, followed in the evening by a reception and dance – and of course the recruiting speeches. Ten recruits put their hands up to enlist, but how many of them were accepted into the army is unknown.

By the time the Marches to Freedom finished, the war was coming to an end and it is unlikely any of the recruits were sent overseas.

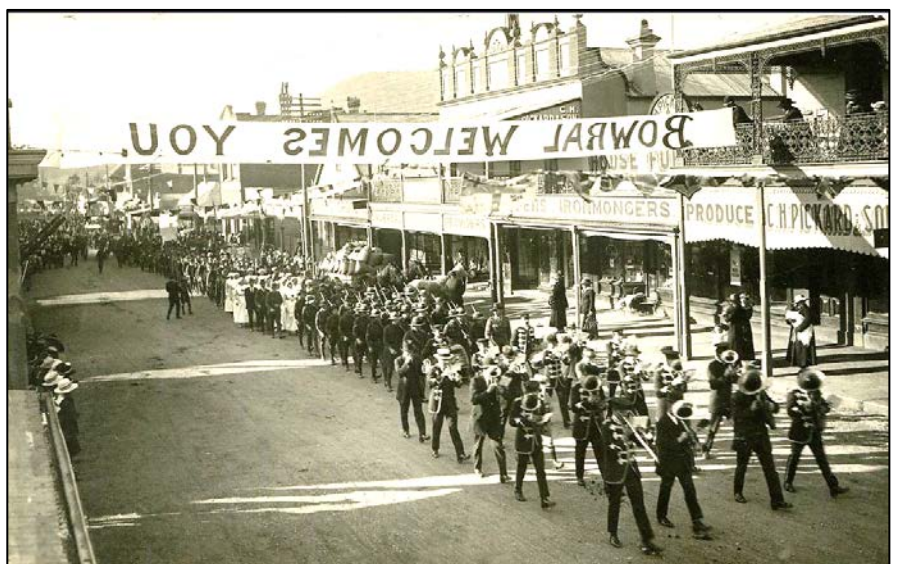
Linda Emery

The March to Freedom in 1918

Two new photos have just come in to the archives that relate to one of the lesser-known World War I recruitment marches. Many members will be familiar with the famous Coo-ee March and the Kangaroo March which came through the Southern Highlands in 1915. Other marches followed in NSW during 1915 and 1916 such the Waratahs, Wallabies, Dungarees, Men from Snowy River, Kurrajongs, Kookaburras, Central West Boomerangs and North Coast Boomerangs.

In 1918 as the war was drawing to a climax, the NSW State Recruitment Committee arranged five route marches in country areas starting on 24 July, one of which, the Southern March started in Tocumwal and followed a circuitous route to Camden, calling at Moss Vale, Bowral and Mittagong. Unlike most of the earlier marches the group, which comprised of recruiting staff, a group of soldiers from the Liverpool camp and a band, travelled by train between the major centres.

The Southern Highlands put on a warm welcome, as can be seen from the photographs of the parade down Bong Bong Street. The marchers arrived from Moss Vale on the 3.15 train and were greeted by the Mayor, Alderman



Our ever-growing research material

A tribute to the late Maureen Townsing

The BDHS collection of local historical and family history material continually grows, with information added to the archive by our research team as they investigate queries. Other researchers including some of our members also contribute the material found by them that relates to local history.

Since 2012, members Maureen and Bud Townsing have often spent time delving into research material at the archives, have regularly attended our general meetings, and generously provided the BDHS with the fruits of their various research projects.

It is noted with sadness that Maureen Elizabeth Townsing (nee Eccleston) passed away peacefully on 22 May after a short illness, aged 75 years.



Maureen grew up in the Thirlmere/Buxton area and married Ronald (Bud) Townsing in 1967. She was described in the *SM Herald's* death notice as a person of many interests, including historic houses, town planning, history, gardening, book collecting and her adored pets. She had been active in many causes and leaves a legacy of achievements. A service was held at Thirlmere Cemetery on 28 May. Family members attended the ceremony along with friends and associates, including several members of our Society.

Maureen's most recent contribution to the BDHS was an article about Bowral Children's Library at St Jude's Church of England, published in our newsletter of August 2019, and available to read on our website.

Maureen and Bud also compiled several Photobooks:

Travelling Photographers: early Bundanoon, Southern Highlands and NSW Photographers – Sarah Nicholas, William Augustus Nicholas, George Henry Nicholas and Clara Louise Nicholas (May 2015)

Martin Moore: Exeter Photographer (October 2015)

A Brief History of Church & Edward Sts, Bowral (June 2016)

A Brief History of St Jude St and part of Bowral St, Bowral (2017)

A Brief History of Alf Stephens and Sons (February 2020)

A copy of each of these Photobooks, in large-format and high-quality print, were donated to the Society and are available for reference at the archives.

Some specific details about two of Maureen and Bud's research contributions follow here.

1. Bowral Children's Library at St Jude's

Summary of Maureen's 2019 text: The township of Bowral had a Reading Room Society, and a purpose-built reading room from the 1870's, later known as the School of Arts. In 1945 after discussion with the School of Arts Committee, the Council decided to convert the institution to a Municipal Library.

Bowral Municipal Library opened on 16 September 1947. The Library catered primarily for adult readers, with a small selection of books for "youth". Council provided no children's service, as a library service operated by voluntary workers existed at St Judes.

Maureen noted that many Bowral residents fondly recall the Children's Library in the church grounds. Many more remember the making of the film "*Ginger Meggs*", and to have been "*in it*" is a source of pride.

In September 2019 the BDHS received a response from a newsletter reader who enjoyed Maureen's article and provided some extra information, which we passed on to Maureen, who was most grateful.

From Mrs Gail Fleming, 191 Merrigang St, Bowral:

"Hello, I have been reading the BDHS magazine which I think is a great idea! I have information which I found out researching my grandmother and the Library which was at the back of St Judes Church and next door to my grandparents' house.

I found in the *Southern Mail* archives that my grandmother, Mrs Thelma Amelia Whatman, the wife of J C Whatman, my grandfather, suggested that the building near the parish hall and primary school be renovated and painted and would be exclusively used for the library. Also that the library would be taken over and conducted by workers from all Protestant Churches.

The library was officially opened by Mrs T. Harbison on 13 October, 1945. I remember Miss Shaw being at the Library. I used to borrow books from the library such as Enid Blyton books and my younger brother did also. This would have been in the 1960s.

My grandparents lived in Edward Street, Bowral. I also remember the tennis courts at the back of the Library. My grandparents house is still standing with different owners in it. The old cemetery is there at the back of the Church too. I hope this is helpful."

2. Our Alfred Stephens research material updated

At the BDHS General Meeting in April 2014 there was a showing and discussion of the toolbox and tools, some dating from the 1890s, that had belonged to the two Alfred Stephens (father and son) who had lived and worked in Bowral.

Donated to the BDHS by brothers John and Tony Springett, direct descendants of the Stephens family, the large, solid-timber toolbox (a shipping trunk) contains 33 tools and implements including planes, saws, blades, files, squares, gauges, axes, chisels, bolts and pliers. A brief overview of the life in Bowral of Alfred Stephens and sons was also provided at the meeting by Philip Morton. This was subsequently published as a series of articles in the Monday history column of the *Southern Highland News* and a copy added to the Stephens biography file at the archives.

In 2019 Maureen and Bud Townsing found that the details provided in the series about the arrival in NSW of Alfred Stephens Snr were erroneous. They had developed a keen interest in the history of the Stephens family after perusing the toolbox and the BDHS archive files, and undertook further research. This culminated in them producing the Photobook showcasing the two Alfs and their contributions.

During their research the Townsings found that, according to shipping indents, two different persons, both named Alfred Stephens, had emigrated in 1886.

One, listed as a joiner aged 15, arrived at Sydney on the *Aberdeen* in April 1886 from Lancashire with his mother and five brothers. It was this Alfred that the 2014 series stated had come to Bowral, but this was found by the Townsings to be erroneous. The other Alfred Stephens, aged 22 and a carpenter, is included on the 1886 passenger list for the *Garonne*, which arrived on 11 January. On the same ship were listed Charles Stephens, aged 20, also a carpenter (presumably Alfred's brother) and George E Marston, aged 30, a clerk.

Elizabeth Riley, aged 24, a domestic servant, Baptist, from Surrey, is listed on another ship, the *Parthia*. It arrived on 13 January, two days after the *Garonne*.

These listings were found to fit with documented information, as outlined below, to confirm that the *Garonne* passenger was indeed our Alfred.

An obituary for Alfred Stephens Snr was provided in *The Methodist* journal of 1 March 1924, shortly after he passed away at Manly, following a brief illness.

It noted that he was born at Brixton, England, in 1863, but had spent his early life in Teddington, Middlesex, where he became a member of the Rye Lane (Peckham) Baptist Church. "It was in the same church that he met the lady who became his wife. After coming to Sydney in 1886, he settled in Bowral where, in the absence of a Baptist Church, he joined the Methodists, of which denomination he continued to be a member."

A letter written by Alf Stephens Jnr to local historian Jack Parry in 1963 included the information that Alfred Snr came out to Australia from Teddington, England. He had grown up there with eight brothers, who all became carpenters, and one sister, their father carrying out building works. Alf also noted that his father "became engaged to Elizabeth Riley before leaving England and she followed him; later they were married in Bowral. He came direct to Bowral with fellow passenger Mr Marston and his wife".

After arriving at Bowral with George Marston, who later opened a boot, shoe and clothing store in the town, Alfred took up work as a carpenter. Alfred and Elizabeth were married at Bowral on 1 May 1886 by the Rev Debenham of St Jude's Church of England. The ceremony was held in a private house.

From then on, the history is well known. By the early 1890s Alfred had built a family home in Elm St,

Bowral, naming it Teddington after his childhood home in England. Elizabeth and Alfred Stephens raised six children, Alfred Jnr (1887) being their first.

In 1895 Alfred Snr built the Bowral Court House and in 1903 erected four railway stations on the NSW Western Line, assisted by his 16-year old son, Alfred, thereafter known as Alf, who had just finished school. They then took up many lucrative building contracts both locally and in other districts.

Alfred Snr became inaugural president of the Berrima District Cricket Association in 1911, the secretary being George Bradman who worked as a carpenter for Alfred and whose son Don would commence his cricket career in Bowral. Alfred Snr died in 1924, aged 61. He had provided the district with many prominent buildings and passed on his building skills and the firm to his two sons.

During 1939, Alf Stephens & Sons built many houses in Canberra as well as undertaking considerable work locally, employing around 200 men, with all joinery work being done at the Bowral workshop.

Alf Stephens Jnr died in 1973, aged 86 years.



Alfred Stephens Snr

Review of our Society's past decade

Continued from last issue

The BDHS celebrates its 60th anniversary this year in July. In 2010 the Society published its "Celebrating 50 Years" book, providing an overview of our history and a review of developments per decade from 1960 to 2010. Over the past several months, we have provided in the newsletter a review of events in the decade just gone, 2010 to 2019, in 3-year segments. The final segment, for 2017 to 2019, follows here.

REVIEW OF YEARS 2017 to 2019

The Australia Day Grand Parade through Berrima in 2017 had the usual array of classic automobiles along with community and social groups, including a colourful assembly of our members in period dress.



On 1 February 2017, our Research Officer, Robert Maxwell 'Max' Rogers, passed away at Bowral and District Hospital. Max had joined the Society in 1995, took on the role of librarian and became Research Officer in 1999. Throughout his years as a volunteer he donated countless books and other publications to our research library. Max had moved to the Southern Highlands after retiring from his career as a linotype compositor and then photo-typesetter using computerised systems at the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He is fondly remembered by many as being humble, caring, reserved, loyal, tenacious and generous.



At our February 2017 meeting, an overview of the National Library's TROVE website was presented by Jenny Higgins, from the Australian Dictionary of Biography, and Frank Mitchell, a member of our Society. Their presentation included an overview of TROVE, a focus on online Australian historic newspapers, search techniques and approaches, and a proposal to form a members' Trove Users Group.

During April our Society exhibited photographs and paintings from the archive collection at the Foyer Gallery, Wingecarribee Shire Council Civic Centre, Moss Vale. The exhibition illustrated the local district's history and heritage, with the images portraying people, places and activities from earlier periods and capturing everyday life as it once was in various town and rural localities. The display was selected by Denise Mackey, assisted by Ros Dale.

An exhibition of bonnets was displayed from April at Berrima District Museum, having been assembled by members of the Southern Highlands Chapter of the Fellowship of First Fleeters.

They and their friends created the bonnets, stitched with love, in honour of convict women with descendants in the Southern Highlands of NSW. Pictured below are Bev Schweers and Gwen Herbert.



Items of local historical significance held at Throsby Park House were donated to our Society in 2016 by Sydney Living Museums (formerly known as Historic Houses Trust) for ongoing preservation.

In August 2017 a display was installed at Berrima museum showcasing a variety of these historic items, including a woman's summer dress, an infant's nightdress and christening gown, and a French porcelain doll.

At the AGM in November 2017, Ian Mackey was elected President of the Society. With a hard-to-beat local pedigree and a wealth of relevant experience, Ian soon proved his worth at the helm. He continues in the role today, and has earned the respect of the management committee and of members generally.

An archive's Research Team was formed in late 2017 to coordinate the research required to respond to the many inquiries that our Society receives by email, post, phone and from personal visits to the archives at Mittagong or to our museum at Berrima.

The team continues today, still consisting of Carolyn Dougherty, Janet Black and Frank Mitchell, under the guidance of archivist Linda Emery.

2018

In our February 2018 newsletter it was noted that, at the Berrima museum, a surprise morning tea had been held for museum manager John Schweers, to celebrate his 80th birthday. In attendance were many museum volunteers and Management Committee members, along with John's wife Bev and a daughter and grandson. A cake was shared.



An exhibition of artwork selected from our Archives and Museum was presented during March 2018 in the Foyer Gallery at the Wingecarribee Shire Council Chambers, Moss Vale. Titled "Our Creative Past", on display were embroideries, drawings, watercolour and oil paintings, photographs, and hand-written illuminated addresses and certificates. Some of the pieces were from the early 1800s.



The exhibition received much acclaim. Seen here in front of the display are WSC Cultural Officer, Jenny Kena (second left) with BDHS members Philip Morton, Lyn Hall, and Denise and Ian Mackey.

2019

On 16 February the official opening of the Berrima District Museum's Digital Gallery and the exhibition, "A Butcher, A Baker, A Bunch of Makers" was held. Harlan Hall had devised the original concept eight years previously. The first major project was the construction of the Williams Gallery, a building

extension on the western side of the Museum. There were about 180 people in attendance at the opening ceremony including official guests, sponsors, donors, State government and local Council representatives, Society members and volunteers.



Kristie Phelan, who designed and produced the exhibition in conjunction with Harlan Hall and the Museum volunteers, was the MC for the afternoon.

At our 2019 June luncheon, held at Bowral Golf Club, Nick Rheinberger of ABC Illawarra entertained members and guests with a fascinating talk, display of musical instruments, and a poem.

On Sunday 8 September a plaque was installed by the Society in the graveyard at All Saints Church, Sutton Forest, unveiled and blessed by the Rector, Reverend Jeremy Tonks. The plaque marked the graves of six local victims of John Lynch, the notorious murderer executed at Berrima in 1842. A group of our members joined with representatives of the All Saints congregation to witness the ceremony.

In November 2019 Museums & Galleries of NSW announced the winners of the 2019 IMAGinE awards. Recognising innovation and excellence in museums, galleries and cultural centres across NSW, the awards acknowledge outstanding achievement.



Berrima District Museum won an award for its exhibition celebrating Southern Highlands artisans, *A Butcher A Baker A bunch of Makers*. Pictured above at the awards ceremony are, from back left, Ray Christison (M&G), Kristie Phelan, Don Harwin MLC and Harlan Hall (seated).

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

PO Box 131 Mittagong NSW 2575 ☎ Telephone (02) 4872 2169

email: bdhsarchives@gmail.com ☎ web: www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au

- 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 a general collection.
- MUSEUM:** Market Place, Berrima. Tel: 02 4877 1130. Email: bdmuseum@bigpond.com
OPEN: 10.00am to 4.00pm, Wednesdays to Sundays throughout the year. This includes during school and public holiday periods.
- 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, Museums Australia Inc and NSW Association of Family History Societies.

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BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

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Jnr Vice President	Jenny FROST	Membership	Peg HARVEY
Hon Treasurer	Patricia DORIS	Newsletter Co-ordinator	Philip MORTON
Hon Secretary	Peg HARVEY	Conservation Team	Denise MACKEY
Research Team	Carolyn DOUGHERTY, Janet BLACK and Frank MITCHELL		

Management Committee: President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and members Bruce Moore, Leonie Knapman, Denyse Barker, Philip Morton, Carolyn Dougherty, Ros Dale and Kerry Bunker.

Museum Sub-Committee: Harlan Hall (Project Manager), Lyn Hall (Graphics, Exhibitions), Sylvia Carless (Roster), Harold Wall (Human Resources) and John Schweers.

PATRON: Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire, Councillor Duncan Gair