

Founded 1960

# BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

INC.

NEWSLETTER  
No 406 May 2009

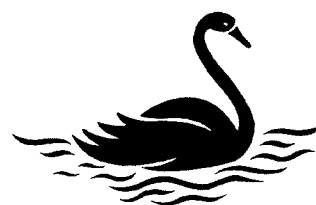
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**ARCHIVES :** Cnr Old Hume Highway and Bowral Road, MITTAGONG.

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. 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 \$5.00 – 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

**MAY MEETING:** Thursday, 28 May 2009 at 5:00pm  
**VENUE:** Society Research Centre, Bowral Road, Mittagong  
**GUEST SPEAKER:** Linda Emery and Max Rogers  
**TOPIC:** Slide show of historical photographs with commentary  
Max Rogers and Linda Emery will be presenting an interesting slide show of historical photographs and providing a commentary.  
**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS:** To be served after the meeting

**JUNE LUNCHEON MEETING:** Thursday, 25 June 2009 at 12:00 noon for 12:30 pm  
**VENUE:** Summerlees, Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest  
**COST:** \$20.00 per head  
**RSVP & PAYMENT:** ASAP no later than Tues 16 June 2009 on 4872 2169  
**GUEST SPEAKER:** Elizabeth Burness  
**TOPIC:** There's history in the bottom drawers, or Secret Women's Business

Inside this month ...

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And more ...



## EVENTS CALENDER 2009

### MAY

14 Management Committee Meeting  
28 Monthly General Meeting – Slide show by Linda Emery and Max Rogers on *Historical photographs*.

### JUNE

11 Management Committee Meeting  
25 Monthly General Meeting –  
**Luncheon** – Talk by Elizabeth Burness on *There's history in the bottom drawers*, or *Secret Women's Business*

### JULY

9 Management Committee Meeting  
11 School holidays commence  
23 Monthly General Meeting  
26 School holidays conclude

## MAY SPEAKERS

Linda Emery and Max Rogers will be giving a slide show presentation with commentary on historical photographs.

## JUNE LUNCHEON

Our June luncheon promises to be a special event this year. The owners of *Summerlees* at Sutton Forest have kindly agreed to allow us to use the recently renovated ballroom to hold our function. *Summerlees* is a wonderful property, built in about 1880 adjacent to *Hillview* and has been beautifully restored. Set in a lovely garden, the ballroom was a focus of social life in Sutton Forest. Our guest speaker will be Elizabeth Burness. She is Canberra based, a former Education Officer of 25 years, currently a relief teacher for a special needs high school and an accredited ACT Storyteller - a freelance presenter under the banner of 'History with a Difference'. Generations of women have contributed to our knowledge of history by using the humble bottom drawer of the ubiquitous chest of drawers for a variety of practical purposes. Elizabeth Burness explores these 'layers of history' which reflect

changing lifestyles for all family members. She does this in a lively and entertaining way which is sure to raise a smile whilst still being historically accurate, by a 'hands - on' sharing of her antique clothing and ephemera collection.

Written in poetry form, the talk, which takes an hour, plus time for handling of the 'bottom drawer' items, touches on some 'cheeky' layers of history, or 'herstory' - women's underwear, from an historical point of view - of course! Those who have heard Elizabeth speak will know what a treat we are in for.

**When:** Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**Time:** 12.00 for 12.30

**Where:** *Summerlees*, Illawarra Highway, Sutton Forest.

**Cost:** \$20 per person which includes a 3-course lunch

**Guest Speaker:** Elizabeth Burness – *There's history in the bottom drawers*, or *Secret Women's Business*.

**Bookings are essential and numbers will be limited, so if you would like to come, please book early by phoning the archives on 4872 2169. Payment as soon as possible, and no later than Tuesday 16 June.**

## CORRECTIONS

Captions accompanying some of the photographs of the German Internee Exhibition opening featured in the April newsletter were courtesy of Desmond Kennard, these are:

Page 4, Col 2, Line 1

Page 4, Col 2, Line 2

Page 5 Col 2; Line 3

Apologies to Desmond for the errors.

Sincere apologies to members for the type errors in the April newsletter, especially the meetings times incorrectly recorded as 7:30pm; the time should be 5:00pm.

## NEW MEMBERS

Mrs Estelle **Lowe**, Moss Vale  
Mrs **Fenton-Jones**, Berrima  
Ms Bronwyn **Sims**, Avoca  
Miss Dawn **South**, Wagga Wagga

Here's to a long and happy association.

## RESEARCH FEES

The research fee for non-members:

\$15.00 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

## NEWSLETTER

Newsletter Deadline is 1st of every month. It may be necessary to hold submissions after this date till the following month.

## EDITORS DESK

I recently received a letter from society member, David Kemmis, of Cowra, who writes regarding his article on the Fitzroy Iron Works, printed in our newsletter No. 403 February 2009 page 4. David writes:

*Almost needless to say, I was delighted to see in this month's Newsletter that you were able to make use of my contribution, and to have illustrated it so well with a most suitably-chosen, historic photograph of an early Lake Alexandra scene. I hope that the item was interesting, informative and enjoyable for its readers, as has been, for myself, the variety of articles prepared for our journal by members during the twenty-three years since I joined the Society early in 1986. My further hope is that more than usual of our number (who in total possess a wealth of personal experience, with perhaps many having extensive knowledge, long accumulated during their own lifetimes, of numerous events and often different activities both within and beyond the Southern Highlands) will thus be encouraged to write about these topics with the certainty that they are likely to be of much interest to at least some other members.*

*It would be obvious to the people who have read my letter accompanying the book extract that my competence in everyday written language is of a good standard. A long-retired teacher, especially of English, I would be pleased to assist, even at this distance, those who have experience and knowledge of the kind described in the previous paragraph, but are not confident at writing, whether in sentence construction, grammar, spelling, punctuation, paragraphing or other such skills. The help would be in the form of careful, sensitive and strictly confidential proof-reading, at no charge, but as a service to fellow-members. A completed draft (of which one or more copies should be retained at home) mailed to this address would need to be type-written with double-or triple-spaced lines for ease of and promptness in correction, as well as clarity of the letter when returned to the sender. From time to time over recent years I have done this for a Cowra district friend who enjoys researching and producing short histories (of front-line actions involving Australians during both World Wars), but who also recognises that he is not so able in the mechanics of writing.*

*Again, warm greetings to others and thanks to all our office-bearers, particularly yourself, as well as to those friends who assist you, for your combined efforts and diligence in the regular publication of the Newsletter, so vital to the life of our Berrima District Historical and Family History Society, next year to have its fiftieth birthday!*

D.C.R. Kemmis

Should any member wish to contact David regarding his kind offer to proofread drafts of their research or other, he may be contacted as follows:

"Smesto" 5209 Lachlan Valley Way, Cowra NSW 2794

## NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

*Carolyn Dougherty and Max Rogers*

Three new family histories have been received:

**The Cupitt Family from 1797** by *Yvonne Cupitt*. Ref. 01/189.

**William and Gwenda Jane Richards: A Look at their Life** by *Liz Broadhurst*. Ref. 01/186.

**From Felony to Freedom: A Family History of George Blatch and Charlotte Rogers** compiled by *Rayleen Blatch*. Ref. 01/188.

The following have also been added to the Reference Section for use in library only:

**Robert Hoddle - Pioneer Surveyor 1797-1881** by *Berres Hoddle Colville*. Ref. 04/69.

**Churches: Explore the symbols, learn the language and discover the history** by *Timothy Brittain-Catlin*. 2008. Ref. 09/49. Great reference for those interested in church architecture.

**Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes** by *Brim Andrews*. 2002. Ref. 09/50.

Locally, we have received a copy of a book compiled by ten-year-old Isabella Fisk, undertaken to gain a Guide challenge badge and being sold to raise money to enable local girls to attend a major guide event in Victoria, 2010. This is an amazing effort for one so young, and well worth reading for those interested in the local potato industry. Title of the book is **Robertson Potatoes have Eyes, but they have no Mouth, so let's give them a Voice**. Ref. 13/163.

In the non reference section and available for loan:

**John Glover and the Colonial Picturesque** by *David Hansen*. 2003. 24/88.

**Milk for the Metropolis: A Century of Co-operative Milk Supply in New South Wales** by *Jan Todd*. 1994. 20/146.

Three books by *Bill 'Swampy' Marsh*  
**Great Australian Shearing Stories**  
**Great Australian Droving Stories**  
**Great Australian Railway Stories**

held in the General Collection.

Happy reading!

# VALE WINIFRED BULLOT SMITH

Passed away 7 March 2009



## Win looks back on 46 years nursing

Source: *Highlands Post* Wednesday 12 February 1986 page 12

Nursing is certainly not easy work and quite often not pleasant work, but for Bowral's Win Smith it has provided 46 years of fulfilment and satisfaction.

Miss Win Smith retired from Bowral District Hospital last week after more than four decades of nursing.

She retired as the hospital's Deputy Director of Nursing.

When arranging the interview I pictured it taking place at Miss Smith's Burradoo home, while she was sitting back and enjoying the first days of her well-earned retirement.

Instead I managed to catch up with her for a brief talk at the hospital the day after she had to go down to Wollongong to attend a nursing meeting.

In short, Miss Smith is certainly not leaving the world of nursing behind her in her retirement and in fact is writing the history of the Bowral District Hospital for its centenary in 1989.

It all began for Win in 1939 when she started as a student nurse at the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital in Sydney.

She had been doing clerical work for a short time before starting but always knew that nursing was the field for her.

Looking back she says she doesn't really know why she wanted to be a nurse and it was certainly not a hereditary thing with most of her family involved with engineering.

When Win started nursing there was no penicillin and no antibiotics.

If a patient had pneumonia then they used aspirin and if a child needed blood during an operation then a donor was taken into the room next door and the blood ran straight into the child.

There was a lot more to nursing in those days than there is today.

Win recalled how she had to sweep floors, scrub walls and furniture and cook for the patients.

Regardless of the temperature the nurses always wore long sleeves with stiff cuffs, and you never did a round without your cap on.

But Win was certainly not complaining about the conditions in the early days but actually seemed amused at the memory.

From 1946 to 1973 Win stayed at Royal Alexandra. She admits she adores children and loves working with them.

"It is very rewarding working with children.

"They are really quite extraordinary the way they can accept illness and cope with surgery and disabilities.

"They really cope much better than adults- I've always liked children," she said.

However it goes even further than that. Win's greatest love is premature babies.

"The smaller they are the better they are.

"It is a real challenge and a real art to persuade them to hang onto that fragile hold they have on life," she said.

As much as you try not to get involved with patients it is sometimes impossible, according to Win.

"There is really no way you can avoid getting involved. You just have to realise they are someone else's children and will be going home.

During her years at the children's hospital Win saw many children die.

"You never get used to a child dying but you learn to live with it and you have to be able to give the family a lot of support.

"It does take a special sort of person to nurse terminally ill children and often you become very good friends with the families," she said.

Win worked for a time running the children's diet kitchen at the hospital and then in 1958 was placed in charge of nursing training.

She stayed in this position for the next 15 years and in that time saw many developments in the field.

"I think nursing has come a very long way and has a long way to go.

"The new courses are very exciting and very worthwhile, she said.

During those 15 years Win served as President of the Nurse Teachers Group and was the head examiner of mothercraft in NSW.

She helped set up the Illawarra School of Nursing in Wollongong in 1979 and is still very involved with this.

In 1973 she thought it time for a change and her love of horses bought her to Bowral.

However the district was not new to her. She had been coming down on weekend for more than 20 years before moving here.

She was appointed Deputy Director of Nursing in 1973 and was in charge of nurse education for Bowral and Bulli nurses.

When she made the move to Bowral she thought she was coming to a quiet country hospital.

"How wrong I was, I'd never worked so hard in my life," she laughed.

"I have never been bored for one day, there is just much change going on."

Win proudly points out that Bowral has a highly qualified staff and is a progressive hospital.

However nursing is certainly not her one and only interest.

Win is a member of the Berrima District Pony Club, a life member of the Bowral Show Society, on the council of the Berrima District Historical Society, a member of Zonta International and involved with the Moss Vale Show Society and the Dressage Association.

Looking back over the past 46 years Win says there are definitely no regrets.

"No regrets at all, I enjoyed the end of my career just as much as the beginning.

"I would definitely recommend nursing as a career as long as you have a feel for people.

"The sky's the limit now, there are so many areas you can go into and I'm only sorry I'm not young enough to do all the new course," she said.

And what does retirement hold?

"I grow the best weeds in the district at the moment but I will work on that.

"I also enjoy painting and I have recently got involved with Andalusian horses," she said.

It doesn't take long talking to this energetic woman to realise she could never be bored.

[Win was a member and volunteer in our Society for many years. When Win said she grows the best weeds in the district, she must have got my father onto rectifying that situation. It was about this time I often went with dad and helped mow her lawn, and entertain myself talking to her horses. I remember dad also gardened for Don and Ellie Nickels who lived next door on the east in Sunninghill Avenue, and Judith Green, who lived next door at the rear on the west. Judith is also a member of our society and a dear friend of Win. I have very fond memories of those days, and fond affection for Win who I regret has passed

away. She was indeed a beautiful person. Win is a sister to John and Beth and a sister-in-law of Faye and Wes. – Ed]

## WILDES MEADOW CHURCH



Located in our Parish is one of the most beautiful and small stone churches you would find anywhere in the country.

Situated on a hill overlooking the Wingecarribee reservoir and the other hills rolling into valleys of the Southern Tablelands.

This church is at Wildes Meadow, previously known as Myra Vale, and originally called Joe Wildes Meadow.

On the 20 March, 1866, a grant of two acres was given to the Methodist Church, on which to build a Church which was constructed from local stone and had its opening service in December 1874. A wonderful Centenary was celebrated in late November 1974.

Opposite the church is a small cemetery whose headstones date back to the same year of 1874, and the families who were at Wildes Meadow in the early days have their graves in this lovely little cemetery.



*Source: Parish Connexion, Uniting Church (for Moss Vale, Bundanoon, Robertson and Wildes Meadow), 9 June 1985.*

## SAD CLOSURE

*Source: Highlands Post, Wednesday 15 June 1983*

A thirty-year period of church support and mission outreach came to an end with the closure of the Wildes Meadow Uniting Church Women's Fellowship.

Mrs Brooks at the home of Mr and Mrs W M Hawkes convened the first meeting on July 30, 1953. Mrs Brooks was the wife of Rev. Brooks, Minister of the Robertson Circuit, who incidentally was blind.



Each succeeding minister's wife automatically and willingly became president of the Ladies Church Aid, as it was then called. Because the 109-year-old church is in an area previously called Myra Vale, the Wildes Meadow identification has also taken place within the same period.

In 1975 the Robertson Circuit could no longer support its own minister and the three churches faced a serious problem. Largely through the personal effort of Rev. Allan Kilpatrick, Robertson and Wildes Meadow were invited to join Moss Vale, while Kangaloon became part of Bowral.

A close relationship has existed between the three former sister organizations during the intervening years, and until this year worked together at combined fetes, missionary services and meetings.

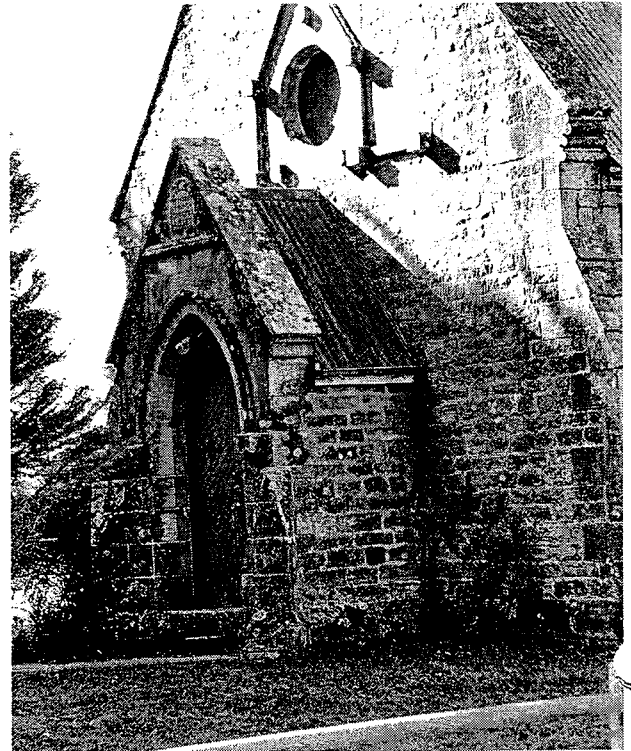
Wildes Meadow Women's Fellowship has never been particularly strong numerically, but they have raised a great deal of money through various functions such as garden and tennis parties, coffee mornings and combined fetes.

The main beneficiaries have been the Robertson and Wildes Meadow property trusts, Moss Vale Parish funds, Dalmar, Landra and Westwood, plus various smaller projects.

Following the return to Tonga of Rev. Sam and Mrs Judy Finau after their ministry at Robertson, we held several functions in support of their work and home in the islands.

The first secretary was Mrs Lillian Brown, whose husband Alex at one time served for three months as relieving

pastor at Robertson. They gave up farming at Avoca several years ago and returned to Sydney.



The position of secretary, for the last several years was very ably filled by Mrs Vera Ragg. Until her sudden death in December 1982, Mrs Ragg had been a tireless worker for our functions, always endearing herself to others by her friendly manner.



Her passing not only left a deep personal loss, but precipitated the closing of our Fellowship.

Although Mrs Ragg was an Anglican who actively supported her own church she worked just as hard for her husband's denomination.



Tribute must also be paid to our last treasurer, Mrs Ann Schofield, a niece of Mrs Ragg's and also an Anglican. Having married into a staunch Methodist family, Mrs Schofield too shared herself and her activities.

Another Anglican in our ecumenical membership was Mrs Edna Hawkes, who was responsible to a large extent for the formation of our organisation, and gave many years of devoted service before moving to Cambewarra.

It is always sad when a worthy organisation comes to an end through lack of members, by they must nevertheless conclude on a note of praise.

Praise to God for the faithfulness and friendship of the ministers and their wives, and for the devotion of members who have passes through our ranks, giving sacrificially of time and money to further the work of God.

Compiled by Mrs Elnor Bruem.

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*Photographs courtesy of Lavinia Ford.*

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## ENTERTAINERS JACKET



**ID Number:** REL33301.001

**Title:** Sequin and chiffon entertainer's jacket : Lorrae Desmond

**Maker:** Bermans & Nathans

**Place made:** Australia; United Kingdom: England, Greater London, London

**Date made:** c 1960

**Physical description:** Chiffon; Sequins; Taffeta; Entertainer's loose fitting over jacket fashioned from black chiffon patterned with machine embroidered black floral stripes, with a large black taffeta backed, semi-circular silver sequin and rhinestone collar. The design is in the form of a cape-like jacket with long open sleeves, open front, flowing tail and a low collar. The sequinned collar

covers the shoulders and upper back. The collar has been strengthened underneath with three flexible strips.

**Summary:** Jacket and matching scarf adapted from a full length sequin fish tail dress (made by Berman's & Nathan's of London) worn by entertainer Lorrae Desmond, during her March 1967 tour of Vietnam with the ABC Dance Band, where she performed from the back of a flat top semi trailer in an old stone quarry at Nui Dat, Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam for Australian and American troops. The show involved a number of costume changes and the original dress was worn during her opening numbers. This was the first of her five tours to Vietnam, the last being in November 1971, and due to the extreme discomfort she experienced performing in the Vietnam climate in such heavy nightclub garments, Desmond's appearances in later shows were marked by lighter, sheerer fabrics. Desmond retained the dress, but in the 1980s was asked to host an Australian television event (possibly the Logies) and turned the dress over to the studio dressmaker to modify it for current tastes. The dressmaker removed the sequined fishtail element of the dress, fashioned a chiffon jacket and matching scarf, added some of the sequins from the dress and discarded the rest, much to Desmond's chagrin.

Born Beryl Hunt on 2 October 1932 at Mittagong, NSW, Lorrae Desmond broke into entertainment at 16 as a singing cigarette girl, changed her name and moved to England where she was highly successful in cabaret, pantomime, radio and recording. She returned to Australia in the early 1960s, became Australia's first female Gold Logie winner (for the TV show 'The Lorrae Desmond Show'), continued to tour nationally and internationally before being asked by the Forces Advisory Committee on Entertainment to provide entertainment in Vietnam. Her show also toured Australian bases in Singapore, Malaya, New Guinea and Manus Island during the 1970s. She was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) 'for services to the Australian Entertainment Industry and the Welfare of Australian Forces serving overseas'.

*Source: Australian War Memorial [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au)*



Lorrae Desmond is a descendant of the Bunter family of Mittagong. Lorrae's mother Alice BUNTER, was the daughter of John BUNTER and Eiry Edna ROBERTS. Alice married Desmond Eric HUNT. And are all buried in

the Anglican portion of Welby General Cemetery.

## DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	14 MAY	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	28 MAY	Monthly General Meeting	5:00 pm at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	11 JUN	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	25 JUN	Monthly General Meeting - Luncheon	12:00 pm at <i>Summerlees</i> , Sutton Forest
THURSDAY	9 JUL	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	23 JUL	Monthly General Meeting	2:00 pm at the Historical Society
	13-24 JUL	School holidays	

*1-1-1994*

If undelivered return to:  
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BERRIMA DISTRICT  
 HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

## 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.

*Brewsters Coffee House*  
*Blue Circle Southern Cement*  
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*Hypercet Printing*  
*Mittagong Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry*  
*Springetts Arcade*