

Founded 1960

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER
No 411 October 2009

PO Box 131 Mittagong NSW 2575 Telephone / Fax 0248 722 169

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ABN 29 362 616 937

PATRON: Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire Council: Councillor Duncan Gair
President: Mr Ken REID 4871 3391 reidken@bigpond.com
Snr Vice President: Miss Judith GREEN 4861 1926
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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

OCTOBER MEETING: Thursday, 22 October 2009 at 5:00pm

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

GUEST SPEAKER: Liz Walker

TOPIC: **Bundanoon History**
 Liz Walker is Archivist at the Bundanoon History Group.
 Liz will present an overview of Bundanoon history and then elaborate on the current activities of the history group, resources for study, and challenges for the future.
 See page 4 to read more about Liz.

SUPPER: To be served after the meeting - Members - please bring a plate or a donation

NOVEMBER AGM MEETING: Thursday, 26 November 2009 at 5:00pm

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And more ...



EVENTS CALENDER 2009

OCTOBER

- Tulip Time
- 1 **MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE**
- 2 School holidays commence
- 8 Management Committee Meeting
- 17 Hollands Family Picnic
- 19 School holidays conclude
- 22 Monthly General Meeting - Talk on *Bundanoon History* by Liz Walker

NOVEMBER

- 3 Office bearer nominations due
- 3 Notices of motion due
- 12 Management Committee Meeting
- 26 **Monthly & AGM Meeting**
- 27 **Christmas Dinner**

DECEMBER

- 8 **Archives close** at 4:00 pm for Christmas break.
- 10 Management Committee Meeting
- 18 School holidays commence
- 24 No General Monthly Meeting
- 28 Society Museum Open Daily 10:00 am - 4:00 pm until 26 January 2006.

NOMINATIONS PLEASE

In this month's Newsletter members will find a nomination form for next month's AGM. Please think about taking on a position, or perhaps being an understudy to someone. Forms must be returned to the Secretary by 3 November 2009.

ANNUAL REPORTS Due Now

A reminder to Officers - your annual reports for inclusion in the November newsletter are due **NOW**. Please email the Editor by **Tuesday 27 October**.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE NEWS

50th Anniversary Celebrations: Preparations to celebrate our 50th Anniversary are underway.

Books For Sale: We have added three publications to our publications for sale list. They are *Antarctic Memoirs* by John Bunt, which is a very interesting read. *Dairy of Berrima Internment Camp* by Edmond Samuels, which will be featured in the next newsletter (No. 412), and a book on Hill Top called *Waratahs to Wombats*.

Naming of a Shire Road: The Society received correspondence from Wingecarribee Shire Council regarding the proposed naming of a new public road; to which we raised no objection. It has been proposed that a new public road off Mount Road at Bowral be named *Knotts Lane*, the name having a historical connection to the Knott family who had land in that area.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr Chris & Mrs Anne **Donaldson**, Mittagong
Mr Michael **Ellsmore**, Eastwood
Ms Jamila **Kerr-Bell**, Hill Top

Here's to a long and happy association.

SHEATHER REUNION

The Sheather family are planning a reunion for the descendants of Stephen & Hannah SHEATHER in Taree, NSW on the 7th and 8th November 2009. Other families include: Albury, Fairall, Staples, Shoesmith, Betts, Minett, Allan and McKenzie.

Contact: www.sheatherfamily.com

RESEARCH FEES

Current research fees for non-members are:

\$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 late submissions after this date till the following month.



Christmas Function

Friday 27 November 2009

Our Christmas function this year will be held at the
Scottish Arms, Boardman Road, East Bowral from 6:30pm for 7:00pm.

Cost will be **\$35 per person**

Includes Tea, Coffee and Orange Juice

Bookings and Payment are essential by Tuesday 3 November 2009 to the
Archives 4872 2169

Could each person please bring a unisex gift to the value of \$5.00

There will be a Raffle and lucky door prizes.



We look forward to seeing you there!



MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

As the Financial Year of the Society ended on 30 September 2009, memberships not renewed by **30 November 2009** will lapse. A renewal form was enclosed in the September 2009 issue of the Newsletter. It would be appreciated if members could return this completed form with their payment to assist the Membership Secretary with her recording of renewals.

Thank you in anticipation of your prompt remittances and cooperation.

FAMILY \$33.00

SINGLE \$20.00

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

Contributed by Carol Nolan

The Scrutineer Saturday 2 June 1894 page 2 col 3

Rich Discovery.

The discovery is reported of a rich lode of copper pyrites on the Shoalhaven, near Bungonia. The lode is 8ft. wide, and assayed 16 per cent of metallic copper, 16dw. 8gr. of gold, and 7½oz. of silver per ton. The property is in the hands of a local syndicate. The discovery was made at a depth of 15ft.

The Scrutineer Saturday 2 June 1894 page 2 col 6

A nice nugget, weighing 6oz. has been found on Boogong Station near Cooma by a digger named Pollock.

Alluvial gold, with shallow sinking has been discovered on Macansh's station, Duck Creek, about 17 miles from Murrumburrah.

The Legislative Council has passed the third reading of the Mining on Private Lands Bill by 26 votes to 14.

An overseer at Shea's Creek reclamation works has been discharged by Mr. Lyne, on the ground that his wife kept a store.

The Scrutineer Wednesday 6 June 1894 page 2 col 2

New Gold Field.

A correspondent, writing from the Garrugula Gold Field, 14 or 15 miles from Murrumburrah and Harden Railway Stations, on the Southern line, reports that it is situated on Macansh Brothers' Station, and promises to become a large field. There were on Wednesday last 200 men on the ground, most of them being on gold. Our correspondent saw six dishes washed for a return of 4½dw. Some other prospects were washed for 19gr. to 21gr. to the dish. A coach now runs from Murrumburrah and Harden daily, carrying passengers, and is generally crowded. Macansh Brothers have opened a store at Garangula, and also supply meat and milk, so that there is no lack of provisions on the ground. A bakery is also being established. It is expected there will be 500 men on the ground within a week.

Guest Speaker at our October Meeting

Liz Walker, Archivist Bundanoon History Group

The history group was founded in March 1984 as the Bundanoon Research & Preservation Group, spearheaded by Norma Edmonds and Lucy Rocca.

It collected, organised and preserved a large archive of images and documents relating to the history and development of Bundanoon.

A comprehensive general history of Bundanoon was published in 1990 and subsequently a booklet on the many local guest houses was published and it has gone through two editions so far.

Currently the History Group has over 90 members.

The Group Archives are housed in The Old Goods Shed and holds more than 2000 images and over 5000 database entries.

Liz Walker became the Archivist of the Bundanoon History Group in December 2008.



She has resided in Bundanoon and been a member of the History Group since 2006, when she retired to Bundanoon with her sculptor husband Philip. They moved from Pymble on Sydney's North Shore.

Bundanoon had long been a special place for them as it was where they met in 1968 and where Liz's family had spent holidays since the 1930s.

Liz gained a BA degree with double major in history, predominantly English and European mediaeval history, and subsequently held positions as librarian, administrator and research assistant.

She cites her influential teachers to include Dr John Tillotson (ANU) and Professor Jill Roe (Macquarie) - discovering the story of ordinary people's lives, whether mediaeval or 20th century Australian.

A significant book that kindled her interest in Australian history was *Waterloo Creek* by Roger Milliss. Another major influence for Liz was doing her family histories, which include convicts, bounty immigrants and politicians.

Subject Matter of Talk

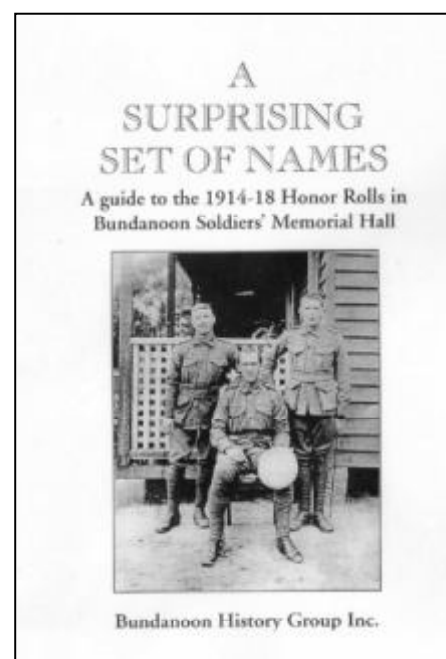
Liz will present an overview of Bundanoon history and then elaborate on

- Current activities of the History Group
- Resources for study, and
- Challenges for the future.

This talk should be of interest to Society members particularly as we have a bus trip to the Bundanoon area on the agenda for later in the year.

Liz Walker researched and published a small book about the 1914-18 Honour Rolls in the Bundanoon Soldiers' Memorial Hall. The book's cover is shown here. It is available for purchase from the History Group at the Old Goods Shed in Railway Ave., Bundanoon.

The Shed is open on the first and third Sundays of each month, the same Sundays that Bundanoon Markets are held. Maps detailing several walking tours of the town are also available and it's well worth taking the time to enjoy a leisurely stroll around the interesting highlights of Bundanoon.



A Tribute to Bonnie Pierce, OAM

Myra (Bonnie) Pierce recently passed away at the age of 93. Bonnie served for many years on the Museum Committee and was Curator for part of that time. She also held various positions in the Society including Treasurer for several years. She was President in 1995.

Her funeral was held on 26 August at St Jude's in Bowral and was well attended by Society members.

Born Myra MacKay on 24 June 1916, she grew up in Sydney. She became manager of the baby wear and wool section of Farmers department store in the city.

Myra later moved to Bowral and opened her own baby wear and wool shop in Bong Bong Street.

When in her fifties, Myra married and became Mrs Pierce. Ten years later her husband died, and Myra then devoted her energies to community work.

When the Berrima District Museum opened in its permanent premises in 1976, Bonnie (as she had become known) was there helping to make the building ready for the public.



At the museum in 1976. The cleaning team from L-R: Geoff Squires, Peg Charlesworth, Flo Green, Bonnie Pierce and Clarice Boyd. Photo: BDH&FHS

In 1994 the Queen's Birthday Honours List recognised the contribution that Bonnie made to the community. She was awarded a Medal in the General Division of the Order of Australia.

The *Southern Highland News* ran an article about the Queen's Honours awarded that year to Bonnie and to another local resident Neil Crichton. About Bonnie it said:

"A list of Bonnie's contributions to the community reads like a page from the Wingecarribee Services Directory - there are not too many community

organisations that haven't benefited from her help over the years.

"When the news of her award was made public in the press on Monday, Mrs Pierce was at her usual post as the curator of the museum and enjoyed a stream of well wishers popping in to congratulate her. 'I don't think I'm as good as they say though,' she said yesterday.

"Mrs Pierce said she felt she was receiving the recognition on behalf of the many people she has worked with in community organisations."

Her many roles in the community

At the time of her OAM award, Bonnie was both Roster Secretary for Bowral Meals on Wheels and the Curator of the Berrima District Museum.

Bonnie served as an Alderman with Bowral Municipal Council and was Treasurer of Bowral Country Women's Association. She was also a President of Bowral CWA, the Honorary Treasurer of Bowral Crafts Unlimited, President of the Charlton Boys Home, a member of the Wambinga Centre Committee, a member of the Bowral Baths Committee and a Councillor of St Jude's Parish.

A founding member of both the Tulip Time Committee and Harbison Homes, Bonnie was also a President of the YWCA as well as State Vice President for that organisation.

It is said of Bonnie that she was forthright in looking after those at a disadvantage in society and that she most definitely "fought for what she believed in".



Bonnie Pierce, OAM and Noel Crichton, MA two local residents in the 1994 Queen's Honours List. Photo: *Southern Highland News* 15 June 1994.

Down Memory Lane

Part two in a series of three articles

A collection of memories, people, times, and some tales as told to John McColgan

John is a historian who resided for many years in the Highlands and was an active member of our Society. He published several local history books and contributed many articles to this newsletter and to the local press. John is retired now and lives on the Central Coast.

The depression years in Mittagong

We talk of hard times today with the recession, and the unemployed, but compared to the Great Depression from 1929 to 1932, and the aftermath during the 1930s, it was a world apart from today's problems. The dole was a pittance or non-existent. Jobs were extremely hard to get.

Looking back, you realise that, as a child, you had no idea of the struggle your parents had to survive, feed their family, and clothe them. Children can have a happy childhood during a depression, because their innocence stops them from realising the enormity of the problem. Food is on the table, even though it is often made from the cheapest materials, by a mother who knows how to make a soup or stew, or currant dumplings to fill those hungry stomachs, and all made with a couple of handfuls of flour, home grown vegetables, and the cheapest cut of meat.

I remember as a child, a man coming to the back door at Melrose, with a swag on his back to ask if we had a pair of boots, and poor old Mum trying to tell him we didn't have any to spare.

I also remember myself trying to interrupt and tell him he could get boots at Bunters Shop, and my mum telling me to "shush" and go and play. Being a child, I had no idea he had worn-out boots and no money to buy any. I still cringe at my stupidity, with the memory of it.



An old swagman in 1901.
Photo from "Australia's Yesterdays"

My poor old mum still managed to help with a meal at the back door, a bit of tea and sugar, and some bread and dripping.



Toilets were all outdoor with weekly collections of sanitary pans. Sewerage was not built until 1939, some six years later.

The 1930s was a period when the vast majority of people had very little money, but people seemed to be more caring, and interested in each other's welfare. Neighbours often rallied to help someone who was sick, or care for their children.

In spite of hard times, they still knew how to laugh, sing, and make the best of it. The Community Singing held in the School of Arts Hall (now the Playhouse) every week, was always well attended. It could be because there were no social workers around to tell people how badly off they were, so they remained optimistic for the future.

Methods of food preservation

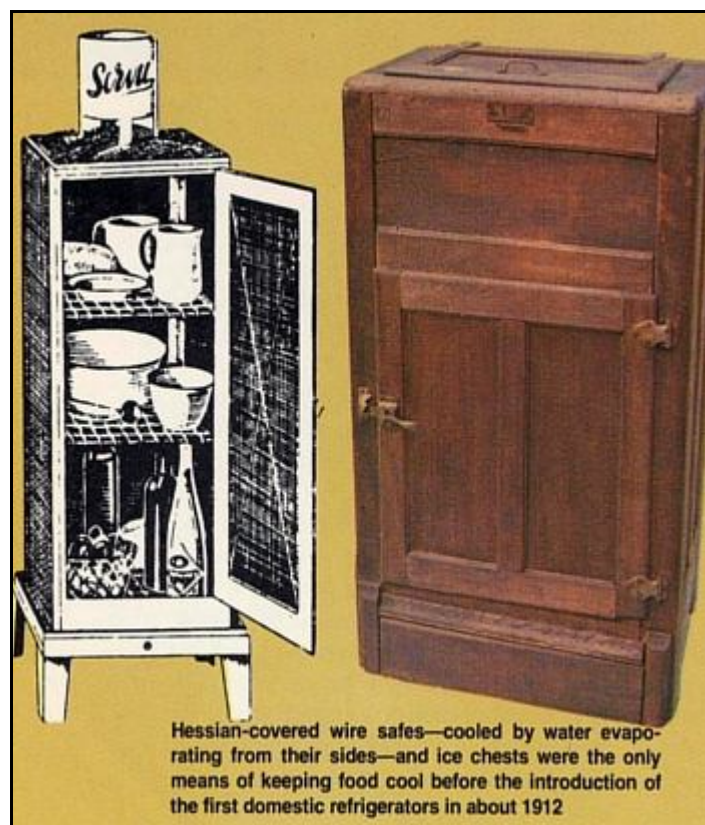
Methods of food preservation were many and varied, with much ingenuity.

The old drip safe was common in homes. This was built like a square cupboard with perforated zinc wire sides and door. The outside had hessian blinds which remained damp by soaking up water from a tank of water on top. With the air flow through the damp hessian carrying the coolness of the water evaporation, the contents were kept surprisingly cool.

The drip safe always stood with the four legs in tins or bowls of water to keep ants from getting to the food.

Another method was the ice box for taking a block of ice. There was a commercial one you could buy (if you had the money) but a good number of people had the home-made one. This was built by obtaining one large and one smaller wooden crate. Place about 3 ins. of sawdust in the bottom of the large one, then place the smaller crate inside. Fill the space around with more sawdust for insulation. A wooden lid with

two leather strap hinges, and presto!, an ice box where the block of ice is inside, and the food lasted as good as the commercial item.



The latter 1930s saw the development of home refrigeration when the Silent Knight refrigerator was developed, but a relatively small number of the public could afford them.

Of course the ice-man delivering his blocks of ice was always popular with kids asking him for any broken pieces to suck in hot weather.

In summertime, people enjoyed the cool of the evening with social chit-chat. Adults talked and gossiped over the front fence or on the front verandahs, and kids played outside until dark.

There was not much traffic noise because not many people owned motor transport. Women could talk to neighbours across the street quite easily. Courting couples walking on the footpath knew they would be the subject of discussion once they had passed, but it was rarely critical or mean.

Knowing their own children were listening could have had something to do with that.

On the other hand, it was a very efficient grapevine. News of someone ill, or dying, or in need of some support, became the common duty or concern of the whole neighbourhood.

It may seem odd by today's standards, but the Mittagong police road patrol was a motor bike and

sidecar, with the sergeant sitting in the sidecar like a statue of Buddha, while the police constable rode the motorbike.



Illustrations are from "Australia's Yesterdays" a pictorial history book published by Reader's Digest in 1974.

Because there was not much traffic there was not much motorised policing. It was mainly used as a form of transport when needed. The police still had a motorbike and sidecar right up to the 50s.

When we did live at Melrose, Mum earned extra money by renting a couple of rooms to boarders. There was a small built-in room on the side verandah and a large front room to spare for this purpose. Although the extra money was needed to survive, it meant a lot of extra work in cooking, cleaning, washing, making lunches and so on, on top of the normal work with a family.

To be continued in next issue . . .

DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	8	OCT	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	22	OCT	Monthly General Meeting	5:00 pm at the Historical Society
	2-18	OCT	School holidays	
THURSDAY	12	NOV	Management Committee Meeting	5:00 pm at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	26	NOV	Monthly General Meeting	5:30 pm at the Historical Society to
			Special General Meeting	
			discuss draft By-Laws	
			Annual General Meeting	6:15 pm at the Historical Society
FRIDAY	27	NOV	Christmas Dinner	6:30 pm at the Scottish Arms
TUESDAY	8	DEC	Archives close	4:00 pm for Christmas break.
THURSDAY	10	DEC	Management Committee Meeting	
SATURDAY	19	DEC	School holidays commence	

If undelivered return to:
 Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc
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 MITTAGONG NSW 2575
 Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc
 Newsletter
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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.

*Blue Circle Southern Cement
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 Home Hardware Mittagong
 Hypercet Printing
 Springetts Arcade*

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL AND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

2009 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Society will be held on **Thursday, 26 November 2009** in the Society's Archives, Mittagong at **6.15pm**.

The monthly General Meeting will commence at **5.00pm**, followed by a Special General Meeting at **5.30pm**

The following positions are to be appointed or re-appointed at the AGM:

Archivist, Research Officer, Tours Officer, Catering Officer, Museum Curator; Newsletter Editor; Librarian; Public Relations Officer; Property Officer, Speaker's Convenor, Minute Secretary, Membership Secretary and Conservation Co-ordinator. Members interested in being appointed to any of these positions should advise the Hon. Secretary in writing on the form below or similar.

Patrons to be appointed on recommendation from the Management Committee.

Appointment Form

I am willing to be appointed or re-appointed to the position of _____

(Mr. Mrs. Miss. Ms.) _____

Signature _____

Notices of Motion: Only business listed in the November issue of the Society's **Newsletter** published 14 days prior to the AGM will be transacted at the meeting. Members desiring to bring before the meeting any business must give advance notice. Movers and seconders of motions must be financial members of the Society.

Notice of Motion forms are available from the Hon. Secretary if required.

NOMINATIONS for OFFICE BEARERS, OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS, written interest in APPOINTED POSITIONS and NOTICES OF MOTION must be in the hands of the Honorary Secretary not later than FRIDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2009.

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Elections will be held for all offices in the Society. Nominations are required for the following:

Office bearers: *President; 2 Vice Presidents (1 of whom shall be Senior Vice President); Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.*

Other Committee Members: *Other members may be elected to make a maximum total of 12 for the Management Committee.*

A Public Officer, Auditor and a Museum Committee of not more than eight members shall also be elected at the AGM.

Nominations for Office bearers and other Committee Members should be made on the form below or similar. Nominees, nominators and seconders must be financial members of the Society and nominees must sign to indicate their willingness to serve.

Nomination Form

(Mr. Mrs. Miss. Ms.) _____

is nominated for the office of _____

Nominated by _____ Seconded by _____

I am willing to undertake the duties of _____

Signature of Nominee _____

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