

Founded 1960

# BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER  
No 416 April 2010

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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

**APRIL MEETING:** Thursday 22 April 2010 at 7:30pm  
**VENUE:** Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong  
**GUEST SPEAKER:** Jim Galloway - "The Story of Early Medway"  
Jim will reminisce with overhead slides about growing up at Medway and tell the story of the coal mines  
**SUPPER:** To be served after the meeting - Members - please bring a plate or a donation.

**MAY MEETING:** Thursday 27 May 2010 at 7:30pm  
**VENUE:** Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong  
**GUEST SPEAKER:** TBA

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## DIARY DATES 2010

### APRIL

- 2 School holidays commence
- 8 Management Committee Meeting
- 20 School holidays conclude
- 22 Monthly General Meeting - Talk on *The Story of Early Medway* by Jim Galloway.

### MAY

- 13 Management Committee Meeting
- 27 Monthly General Meeting

### JUNE

- 10 Management Committee Meeting
- 24 Monthly General Meeting

## The story of early Medway

### Guest speaker Jim Galloway

Will give an illustrated presentation at the next Society General Meeting on 22 April



This 16 ton Baldwin locomotive, imported brand new in 1882, was used by the Berrima Coal Mining and Railway Company to transport coal from Medway to the main southern line junction at Austinmer (now Berrima Junction) near Moss Vale.

~~~~~  
Jim Galloway was about one year old when his family moved to Medway

(then known as Berrima West) in 1928. His father, who had migrated from Scotland in 1923, was working in Lithgow and was recruited by Cecil Hoskins (later Sir Cecil) to be part of a team to start a new coal mine to supply coal for the under-construction cement plant of Southern Portland Cement at New Berrima.

Jim has compiled his reminiscences of growing up in the fledgling mining town into a self-published book.

The book also contains a history of the coalmines at Medway that started back in 1867 and brings the reader up to the present day with the story of the mine that was started in 1926 by Southern Portland Cement and is still in action. It supplies coal exclusively to the New Berrima cement works, now known as Blue Circle Southern and owned by Boral.

Numerous photographs and illustrations in the book help the reader to visualise this fascinating personal history and to gain an insight into the workings of a coal mine and the transport of coal.

As guest speaker at the next general meeting, Jim will accompany his reminiscences with his usual humour and with a visual slideshow of photographs and images taken from his extensive collection.

Jim's talk will commence at 7:30 pm – be there!

## WANTED: YOUR SPARE USED TOWELS!

Sally Ross has installed new disaster bins at the Archives and the Museum. These need to be supplied with good quality used towels for emergency purposes. Please bring your contribution to the Archives or phone and we'll collect. Thanks.

## 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

## 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 |

## NEWSLETTER

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

## 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.

## Society Management Committee

### ◆ new member profile ◆



**Bruce Moore**

Bruce was born in Orange and raised in the shadow of the Werris Creek shunting sheds during WW2. The constant movement of troop trains and soldiers through the town instilled in him an innate sense of adventure.

His family moved to Sydney in 1947. He completed his education at Homebush High school and Sydney University. He was apprenticed to a pharmacist in Summer Hill and became qualified to legally 'poison the public' in 1961. His career gave him the opportunity to travel, as a relief pharmacist in country NSW and Queensland. At the age of 21, he became the dispenser onboard a passenger liner and then worked in England.

On his return to Australia, Bruce bought a pharmacy in North Sydney in 1965, where he met the love of his life, Chris. They married in 1970 and lived in the Lane Cove area until they realized the call of the bush was too strong, so they decided to leave Sydney.

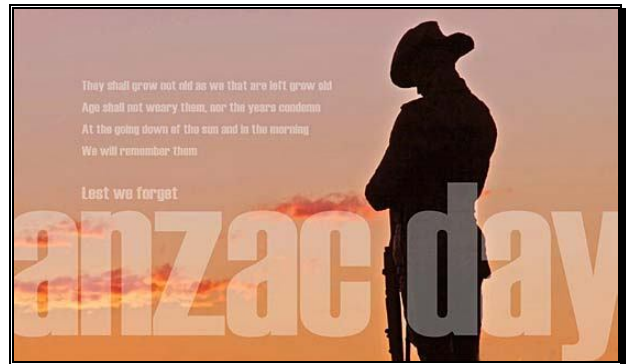
By 1982 they had 3 children under ten, one more on the way and living in Tamworth. There the children were given the opportunity to mature and play every sport and instrument known to mankind. As well, they helped their parents run a herb farm and build a mud brick home, co-incidentally in Moore Creek.

Leaving Tamworth was difficult, but after listening to 15 years of Country Music and ferrying the children back and forth to town, it made the shift to Canberra much easier. Bruce worked in different pharmacies while Chris taught art and exhibited her own work.

After nearly 15 years "trial run" in the nation's capital, Bruce and Chris decided to move back to their favourite place, the Southern Highlands, where they both have their roots. Chris' parents lived in Burradoo and are now at rest in Bong Bong cemetery. Bruce's great grandfather clambered

up the hill from Jamberoo in 1862 and selected land in Wildes Meadow. Both his grandfather and father were born on the farm. His immediate family is buried at Burrawang.

Bruce's interest in things historical began in the 1970s when his father accidentally tripped over his grandmother's headstone in Burrawang, this aroused a fascination with his family's story. Bruce is excited to be working with "like" people in the Historical Society. He became a member of the Management Committee in November 2009.



Over ninety years ago World War One came to an end. Whilst many men unfortunately lost their lives during this conflict, there were many gallant soldiers who did return home. Two men who did just that, alive but not untouched by their experiences were Private Walter Geoffrey Harris and Captain Frederick Oswald Aarons.

Although they were worlds apart, and may not have known one another, they shared some similarity. Both enrolled in the month of August 1914, set sail in October 1914, fought at Gallipoli, lived beyond ninety years, the later part of which was spent in the Southern Highlands, before passing away and being buried here in the Southern Highlands within eighteen months of one another.

### Private Walter Geoffrey Harris

Walter Geoffrey Harris was a 21-year-old clerk when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces on 19 August 1914. He was a Cadet at Pulteney Street School, and the son of Mrs Beatrice Emily Harris of Molesworth Street, Adelaide.

After being assigned as a Private to the 10th Infantry Battalion, he embarked on the ship *HMAT Ascanius* at Adelaide on the 20 October 1914 and set sail for Gallipoli.

In late September 1915 Walter contracted Pyrexia / Enteritis, and was transferred on the hospital ship *Dunluce Castle* to Malta. There he remained until late October when he was transferred on the *Braemar Castle* to Bristol.

In late August 1916 Walter was transferred to France, where in April 1917 he was reassigned to the pay corps and promoted to sergeant.

On the 12 October 1918 Walter embarked on the hospital ship *Prince George* at Harve, France, and returned to Australia. He was medically discharged on 23 February 1919, following 4½ years of service.

Walter Geoffrey Harris passed away at the age of ninety-two years. His obituary was printed in the *Southern Highland News* on Wednesday 1 May 1985, and gives an account of his life; and is reprinted below.

## Obituary

### WALTER GEOFFREY HARRIS

Walter Geoffrey (Geoff) Harris passed away on April 22, in his 92nd year.

A residence of Bowral for the last fifteen years, Mr Harris's long and interesting life came to an end at the nursing home where he had lived for some time.

A memorial service for Mr Harris was held at St Jude's Anglican Church on Anzac Eve, a fitting and appropriate time for one of Bowral's Gallipoli veterans.

The service was conducted by Rev Tidball, and Alf Holloway of the Bowral Sub Branch of the RSL recited the 'In Memoriam' and played a recording of the Last Post.

Geoff Harris and his second wife, Amelia (of the Bousfield Family) lived at Mount Road, where they settled soon after their marriage.

Avid gardeners both, they soon made a beautiful garden which was a real contribution to the beauty of Bowral.

One could always find them around the large garden, Amelia with her flowers and Geoff with his fine vegetable patch. For many years both were active members of both the Bowral and Highland Garden clubs.

A South Australian by birth, Geoff spent his boyhood days in the town of Gawler where his father was the local solicitor and barrister and Mayor for several years.

Educated at Pulteney Street school, Geoff joined the Adelaide Office of Dalgety and Co. Ltd. Where, with the exception of his wartime service, he spent all his working life until retirement.

He was promoted to the Company's Sydney office in 1935, when he took up residence in the Mosman area.

Within days of the outbreak of World War I, he and a friend at work joined the army together, and were numbers 235 and 236.

On his 21st birthday, October 6, 1914, Geoff and his friend sailed for Egypt as members of the original 10th Battalion.

In his Unit, he took part in the Gallipoli landing, being one of the first to get ashore and one of the few to survive.

Later he was wounded, went to England and then served as a pay sergeant in France, and was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal. All but 122 days of his four years 189 days were spent on overseas service.

On his return to Australia, Geoff Harris went back to Dalgety's rejoining them as manager of the Wine and Spirits Department.

Whisky drinkers who have learned to love White Horse Whisky have Geoff Harris to thank for it being sold in Australia

He included the new whisky in Dalgety's Wine and Spirits Department, and within six months sales had topped all other brands sold in South Australia.

Soon after his return to civilian life, Geoff married Kathleen Farnell, who died at a comparatively early age.

From this marriage he is survived by a son, Bob, now resident in Perth, and a daughter, Dorothy Hubbard of Adelaide, and six grandchildren and four great-

grandchildren.

Through his marriage to Amelia Bousfield, Geoff gained two stepsons, Harold of Mittagong and Ron of Perth, and a stepdaughter, Roma Gye of Albury.

Geoff had a wonderful father and son relationship with Harold Bousfield, which proved a great solace and help during his last months in the nursing home.

Until his retirement in 1959, Geoff Harris was manager of the Wines and Spirits Department of Dalgety's in Sydney, and was the only employee to be made a shareholder in the company.

One of his best friends was Jim Bancks, creator of Ginger Meggs, some of whose racing cartoons were among his treasured possessions.

On retirement from Dalgety's travel in England and Europe was enlivened with visits to a great number of the French vineyards.

Geoff Harris had a great interest in sport, and was a cricketer in his youth, a tennis player between the two Wars and a bowler in later years.

He was originally a member of the Warringah Bowling Club in Mosman, and latterly of the Bowral Bowling Club.

For almost fifty years he was a Freemason, being Past Master of Lodge Neutral Bay, now Lodge Alliance.

The Master of Lodge Alliance, Max Snodgrass, led the ceremonial of a Masonic funeral at Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens at Leppington, following the Bowral service.

He was NSW President of his Trade Association, the Wine and Spirit Merchants' Association, and the pinnacle of his business career was his election to the Association's Federal Presidency.

He had been a member of the A.J.C., Tattersall's Club (one of whose life memberships was bestowed on him), the Gallipoli Legion and other prominent Clubs and organisations.

On his 90th birthday in 1983, although not a completely fit man, Geoff Harris delighted everyone at his birthday lunch, with a wealth of stories and memories of his entire life and of the people he had met.

His memory was remarkably alert, and his wonderful knack of storytelling could have kept a diligent recorder busy for a very long time.

Among the many beautiful wreaths at the Bowral Cenotaph on Anzac Day were several in remembrance of Geoff.

"Lest We Forget".

## Captain Frederick Oswald Aarons

Frederick Oswald Aarons was a 26-year-old farmer when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces on 24 August 1914. The son of Mrs J. Aarons of Inglenook Station, Darling Downs, Queensland. At the time Frederick said he was living at Prince Albert Street, Mosman, and had served in the New Zealand Field Artillery for 2 years.

Frederick was born in Grafton, New South Wales on 12 January 1887. He went to New Zealand as a young man and played for the All Blacks achieving New Zealand's highest sporting honour as war broke out. It was here he



commenced his military service. He was on the Reserve but returned to Australia to enlist with the AIF. He never represented Australia in Rugby Union, however he did play for NSW.

After being assigned as a Bombardier to the Australian Field Artillery 12th Battery, he embarked on the *HMAT Argyllshire A8* at Sydney on the 18 October 1914 and set sail for Egypt. In March 1915 he was promoted to Sergeant, in October to Sergeant Major, and on 9 November 1915 to 2nd Lieutenant, as well as being transferred to the 2nd FAB and taken on strength from the 3rd Bty to the 6th Bty.

Frederick was wounded on the Gallipoli Peninsula on December 12, 1915 and was taken to the General Hospital at Alexandria. Four weeks later he was transferred to the No. 1 Australian General Hospital at Cairo, and soon found himself en route to Australia aboard hospital ship *Kanowna* for discharge.

By September 1916 Frederick's mother had moved to Apsley Station, Hay, NSW just as he was assigned to the Australian Field Artillery Brigade 120th Howitzer Battery, and was promoted to Captain.

On 3 October 1916 Frederick embarked on the *HMAT Aeneas A60* at Melbourne for Plymouth, England, and by mid January 1917 was heading to France. This appointment was short lived. Early August 1917 saw Frederick return to England in relation to his defective eye, and on October 31 he was returning to Australia, only to be struck off the strength two weeks later and his appointment terminated in February 1918.

After the war he became a journalist and as a European correspondent he spent quite some time in Germany. A highlight being of his coverage of the Berlin Olympics in 1936 when Hitler was establishing his Reich.

Frederick became involved with the League of Nations, was a founder of the Australian Institute of International Affairs and between the wars he travelled extensively.

A prolific letter writer although he was totally blind since the early 1950s, Captain Aarons would fire off letters to newspapers around Australia and across the seas if he felt moved by any topic and although fiercely loyal, he was surprisingly liberal in his outlook.

He was at once British to his bootlaces, proud of his Australian heritage and pleased with his French name.

Finally, he settled at Exeter but his home 'Field Place' a treasure trove of memorabilia, was destroyed by fire in January 1978.

Fresh from an island sea cruise and less than a week before his 97th birthday, Captain Aarons died in Wingecarribee Hospital after a short illness.

Married twice, he was predeceased by his second wife and after a service at All Saints, Sutton Forest he was buried with her in the church cemetery.

Following an interview with Captain Aarons, his military service was printed in the *Southern Highland News* on Wednesday 25 April 1984, and has been reprinted below.

## GALLIPOLI VETERAN WENT TWICE TO WAR

*Not many soldiers go to war twice, especially after surviving massive wounds but the late Capt. Fred Aarons did and then lived to be 97 years old.*

*Capt. Aarons, partially blinded in the last days on Gallipoli later became a Battery Commander in the Third Battalion for Ypres where he was again wounded not long before the Armistice, closing one chapter of his life in which he represented both Australia and New Zealand in Rugby Union and twice rose through the ranks to gain his commission on both sides of the Tasman.*

*For more than eighty years he was a larger than life figure, a man who as an original Anzac recalls the special memories today.*

*Capt. Aarons lived the latter part of his long and fruitful life at Exeter, making enduring friendships which spanned many generations.*

*Born on a Queensland cattle station in 1886, he went to New Zealand where he was a member of the 1912 All Blacks, having earlier represented Australia and NSW.*



*He joined the NZ Army, rising to temporary Captain in the Field Artillery by the time war broke out in 1914 but when he failed to get in the first draft, he returned to Australia and used every influential person he knew to get posted to the First Australian Division.*

*In an interview at Field Place, Exeter when he was ninety one, Capt. Aarons recalled many of the first 20,000 Australians were the*

*AMF, the 'Saturday afternoon soldiers' with senior NCO's who had seen service with the British Army in India.*

*He managed to get into the First Brigade of Artillery, the NSW Brigade, but not as a Captain.*

*"I was given the rank of Acting Bomadier. I wasn't a Captain any longer, I was a one-stripper-without the pay. And that's how I went away" he recalled in the interview.*

*Their RSM was Capt. Hector Stewart of the Scots Guards and in fact, over sixty men in the First Brigade had held commissioned rank, yet they went away as gunners or drivers, sailing from Sydney on the "Argyllshire" in October 1914, assembling at Albany, W.A. for the overseas convoy.*

*They were escorted by the cruiser 'Sydney' and heard the gunfire when she sank the German raider 'Emden' off Cocos.*

*Arriving in Egypt for Christmas, they trained for three months before shipment to Lemnos where they tried out landing horses and guns.*

*By then he was a Sergeant.*

*He mentioned on the trip from Australia they had between five and six hundred horses on board, which they exercised below decks on coir matting.*

*"They got so fat on the boat one of them had difficulty in getting out of their stalls" he recalled.*

*They left Lemnos at about midnight on April 24, 1915 on the 'Cardiganshire' and chugged north, reaching Gaba*

Tepe (afterwards called ANZAC) at barely daylight.

To take up the story in direct quotes from the interview "There was a slight error in geographical arrangements but it didn't affect things, we landed with the Third Brigade the first men to land in the half dark.

"But when we were ready to go in it was quite light and we were under a certain amount of shellfire from the Turkish batteries right over the Dardanelles, miles away.

"The day of the landing was a perfect day. Perfect. The sea was like a mirror".

He landed with General Sir Charles Rosenthal, recalling "there were a lot of bullets coming into the water as we went close."

He recalled going along the beach to find a suitable landing place for the horses and guns, hugging a small cliff which protected him from the overshoot.

Describing the landing, he said the horses were brought up from the hold one by one, slung around the midriff and lowered onto pontoons so they could be arranged correctly, lead, centre and wheel, with their drivers.

The pontoons were towed by steam launches manned by British midshipman, "bits of boys about 14 or 15, wonderful kids."

Describing the landing he said "Anyhow, I landed again. I jumped out, let down the front of the pontoon, grabbed the off-leader horse as we'd practiced, calmed the horses a bit to the new exercise and we landed the first two guns and teams in that way."

Another Brigade Major, observing the landing, co-opted the Captain to assist with his guns but in so doing he missed his boat back to the ship and was technically AWL, however "there was a short discussion between the officers and I was exonerated."

He told the interviewer "That was the landing. I've got my Gallipoli medals here, but that's the only thing I have left now because my MBE and my King George Medal and everything else went up in smoke when I had a fire in my house". Readers may recall 'Field Place' was gutted by fire about ten years ago.

He was commissioned soon after, received a grenade wound and went back to Alexandria, returning to Gallipoli with the Sixth Battery.

"Then I got my second pip and went back to that Foo job (directing fire from the front trenches) and was doing that right through the 'Silent Stunt' which fooled the Turks and enabled the evacuation to take place. They didn't fire a shot from our side for four days and the plan was when we'd gone, the Turks would think we were still there.

"And then in the last stunt I was Foo in front of our 18th Battalion which was a Sydney Battalion and many of the men were well known to me. I'd been to school with some of them.

"I was out in No Mans Land and the telephonist and a young Subaltern on his first experience from Queensland, name of Skene, a nice boy who's just had his commission a little while. I was directing a few shots from, I think, the Fourth Battery and I was intent on the job giving dimensions to the telephonist. A shell from a French 75, of which the Turks had a few landed in the shell hole and blew my right shoulder off, peppering me right over as well

as blinding my right eye.

"The others were killed and I crawled on my belly as best I could and collapsed at the step of our firing trenches. I was pulled over and taken by various stages to the Casualty Station on the beach and apparently in a terrible mess from dirt.

"I was lying there, a bit shaken but I could understand everything and I heard a doctor say you'd better wash him, he looks terrible. So a fellow came along with water and washed my face.

Then he said Gawd-struth, Fred. He was one of my closest friends, a Medical Officer known in the footballing days as Whisky Dawson.

Dr Dawson and another friend, Dr Snowy Clayton of Kogarah, also a footballing friend both worked on him.

"These sorts of meetings were commonplace" the captain recalled, adding "we were in a very small area. It was only about three quarters of a mile from the front trenches to the beach and about two and a half miles long. Into that were jammed 20,000 men, all from one state, you might say, so you were bound to meet up with someone."

The evacuation started two days later and Capt. Aarons spend Christmas in a British Military Hospital in Alexandria, commencing the long climb back to good health which was completed in Australia.

A shortage of experienced artillery officers, especially on the 4.5 Howitzers in use in France enabled him to avoid discharge, despite the loss of his eye.

"By the time the Batteries were trained and ready to go to England, I applied to go with them in command and the bloke at Headquarters said, Oh well if they'd stopped Nelson because he had only one eye, look what might have happened at Trafalgar, so I went to England with the Batteries.

He recalled the winter on the Somme with the snow frozen like cobblestones, but the worst was when the thaw started.

"That was the most horrible part of war to me, because we couldn't move. It was almost unbelievable. We couldn't use the horses and the difficulty was getting ammunition up to the guns, but the British Engineers built light railways and brought shells right to the guns."

He became a temporarily Major but it was never confirmed and another wound in the chest, plus a dose of gas at Ypres and he was evacuated, sent back to England and then to Australia for a month's leave.

"Well, I had just arrived in Australia when the Armistice was declared and so that was my service" he concluded the interview.

Capt Aarons, who died at Moss Vale early in January this year became many things in his later life, but always was a leader of men and ardent loyalist and totally devoted to the protection of veterans rights.

Totally blind for many years, he nevertheless enjoyed a full and active life, taking part in the Anzac Day march in Sydney every year, today being the first he has ever missed.

"Lest we forget."



## Oldbury painting auction happening soon !!!

Local artist Margaret Mapperson recently created *Oldbury*, a painting done in traditional illuminated manuscript style. Surrounded by images of the estate, the central feature is the Oldbury farmhouse.

Margaret and Bowral Artworks Gallery will auction the painting, with all proceeds to benefit the Society.

### Brief historical perspective

James Atkinson was one of the earliest and most respected European settlers. In 1821 he received land grants in Sutton Forest and took up residence the next year. He named his property Oldbury, for the small village in Kent, England. The English-style stone house he built in 1828 still stands as one of the district's most interesting early colonial houses.

### An exclusive preview event to launch auction

A silent auction of the artwork will be launched at the Bowral Artworks Gallery, 422 Bong Bong Street, with a wine and cheese event commencing at 5pm on **19 June, 2010**. Margaret, a member of our society, will speak about her painting and Linda Emery will present a visual history of the Oldbury estate.

An invitation list is being prepared; it will include local members of the society. Any members further away who are interested in being invited need to contact the society by end April on 4872 2169. Attendee numbers will be limited due to Gallery space constraints. After the launch the work will go on public display at the Gallery and bids accepted there until July 11. Personal details of bidders will be kept secret although bid amounts will be displayed.

### The artist

Margaret Mapperson is an award-winning professional fine artist, illustrator and designer. She has provided artworks for auction to various specialist groups such as the Breast Cancer Institute of NSW and the Animal Welfare League.

## The history of Medway coal mines

This article was printed in the *Southern Highland News* on 21/12/09.

Coal was first discovered in the local district in the 1820s at Black Bob's Creek near Berrima, during excavations for the first South Road. The Fitz Roy iron works sourced some coal from there, and for 10 years starting in 1867 from the Cataract mine which was situated beside a waterfall on Medway Rivulet, a subsidiary of the Wingecarribee River. In 1880 the Berrima Coal-Mining and Railway Company was formed by James John Atkinson, son of James Atkinson, owner of the local *Oldbury* and *Mereworth* properties.

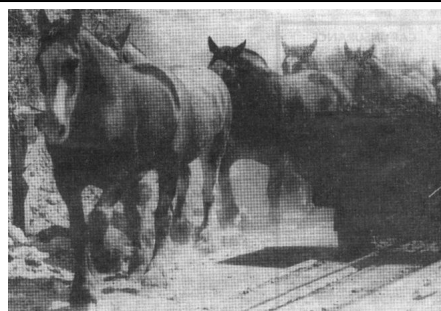
A private rail line was built from their Medway mine (known as Berrima Colliery) to a junction with the main Southern line near Moss Vale. This junction was first called Austinmer, then Bong Bong and later changed again to Berrima Junction.

The new line was mostly ballasted with small coal. It traversed open and slightly undulating country, but near its western terminus rougher terrain was encountered. The eastern half of this line is still in use today - it links the Cement Works at New Berrima to the main Southern line.

In September 1882 a saddle tank shunting type locomotive arrived from the USA, having been built for the colliery by the Baldwin Company. It weighed about 16 tons, had a 6 foot wheelbase and a boiler pressure of 120 lb/sq. inch.

About 40 miners worked the pit; facilities were primitive. Daily output averaged 80 to 100 tons. Most of this was supplied to the NSW Railways for steam locomotive use.

The company operated for eight years, but due to lower than expected income and the high cost of inefficient transport it was liquidated in 1886 and the mining equipment and the rail line fell into disrepair.



**PASSING OF AN ERA:** Pit ponies leave the Medway mine alongside a skip for the last time in April 1968.

### Stan Taylor's coal and cement vision

In 1924 the Medway Colliery and Railway Company was formed by local man Stan Taylor to extract coal at a new mine slightly to the south of the abandoned Berrima mine as part of his plan to establish a cement works.

The rail tracks to the abandoned mine site were relocated to the new No.2 mine. This mine eventually became part of the Berrima Colliery that is still in existence at Medway.

The original rail spur from Medway to Berrima Junction at Moss vale was rebuilt, mostly on the old 1881 railway right of way, using its crushed coal formation (still visible today). Half-way along this line Taylor strategically positioned his cement works at New Berrima. Various steam locomotives

were utilised to haul coal from the Medway railhead to the cement works and to bring crushed limestone from a quarry at South Marulan via the main Southern line, then onto the eastern half of the cement company line.

Steam locos on the limestone run were replaced in 1960 with electric diesels which continued until State Rail took over the haulage from Marulan.

At Medway the coalmine is situated half way down a steep cliff. Within the mine, pit ponies hauled coal from the coal face up to a clipping flat half a

mile from the mine entrance. The coal was then transported out on a rope skip-way and over the river by bridge, then up to the railhead.

The pit ponies were 17-hand draught horses. Stabled at the surface, they went down into the darkness of the mine each day, where they soon learnt their way around underground. They were finally retired in 1968, the last horses to be used in a NSW mine.

In 1968 modern mining machinery replaced some 60 men, 36 horses, and 300-plus 36 cwt capacity skips. Haulage of the coal by rail ceased not long after.

## DIARY DATES

|          |      |     |                                                    |                                   |
|----------|------|-----|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| THURSDAY | 8    | APR | Management Committee Meeting                       |                                   |
| THURSDAY | 22   | APR | Monthly General Meeting                            | 7:30 pm at the Historical Society |
|          | 2-19 | APR | School holidays                                    |                                   |
| THURSDAY | 13   | MAY | Management Committee Meeting                       |                                   |
| THURSDAY | 27   | MAY | Monthly General Meeting                            | 7:30 pm at the Historical Society |
| THURSDAY | 10   | JUN | Management Committee Meeting                       |                                   |
| THURSDAY | 24   | JUN | Monthly General Meeting - <b>Luncheon 12:00 pm</b> |                                   |

If undelivered return to:  
Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc  
PO Box 131  
MITTAGONG NSW 2575  
Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc  
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## THE BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL AND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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