

Founded 1960

# BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER  
No 429 June 2011

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

OPEN: Mondays, Tuesdays 10am-4pm and Saturdays 10am-1pm. Closed Public Holidays.  
Library collection contains reference books, journals and newsletters of other societies.

**MUSEUM:** Market Place, BERRIMA. Tel: 02 4877 1130 Email: [berrimamuseum@bigpond.com](mailto:berrimamuseum@bigpond.com) 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

**JUNE LUNCHEON:** (No General Meeting) Thursday 23 June 2011 at 12:00pm

**VENUE:** Prince Albert Inn, Braemar  
Arrive 12:00 noon for seating by 12:30 pm

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Marie Chalker

There has been a change to the previously advertised speaker. Linda Emery will introduce researcher Marie Chalker followed by a tour of the inn.

**JULY MEETING:** Thursday 28 July 2011 at 2:00pm

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

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Suzanne Voytas

A presentation by Suzanne Voytas based on her book about the voyage to NSW of the female convict ship 'Elizabeth' and the feisty women it transported.

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And more ...



## Diary Dates

### JUNE

- 9 Management Committee Meeting  
23 Luncheon Prince Albert Inn - Talk  
by **Marie Chalker**

### JULY

- 1 - 18 School holidays  
14 Management Committee Meeting  
28 Monthly General Meeting - Talk  
by *Suzanne Voytas* on the  
convict ship *Elizabeth*

### AUGUST

- 11 Management Committee Meeting  
25 Monthly General Meeting - Talk  
by *Geoff Goodfellow*

## From the President

**Ken Reid**

Senior Vice President

As President Leonie is on a short leave-of-absence, I am "sitting at her desk".

It is a great pleasure to announce that Bob and Gloria Williams were made Life Members of our Society at the Special Meeting on 26 May. I am sure Members join me in congratulating both Bob and Gloria and thanking them for the volunteer effort they have put into the Society over many years. Well deserved!

Amendments to our By-Laws, as proposed by the Management Committee, were accepted at the May 26 Special Meeting. The minor changes involved brought us into line with the Model Constitution (formerly Model Rules), which came into operation in July 2010. Copies of the revised By-Laws are available from the Archives or Museum.

A free Workshop conducted by Dr Lesley Muir for the RAHS on Land Title searches was held at the Archives on Saturday 28 May. Those attending were BDH&FHS members together with others interested in researching this valuable resource using modern technology. Morning Tea was enjoyed during the morning.

It was very pleasing to have one of our Management Committee members, Bruce Moore, offer to fill the vacant positions of Speaker's Coordinator and Tours Coordinator at

a recent Management Committee meeting. Thanks Bruce! Bruce already has several ideas for tours as the weather becomes warmer.

Members will benefit from the efforts of Ian and Denise Mackey who undertook the construction of a special storage unit for our collection of rate books which ensures better preservation, storage and ease of access to this important research tool. Thank you Denise and Ian for this very useful addition to the amenities at the Archives.

In conjunction with National Volunteers Week, we nominated Lyn Hall and Max Rogers to receive Certificates of Appreciation for their sterling contributions to various aspects of the Society. Both nominations were accepted and awarded at a function arranged by Volunteering Wingecarribee. Again on behalf of members I thank Lyn and Max for their efforts.

At the last Management Committee meeting it was agreed that we would look at the design, layout and content of our newsletter and that members would be asked to let us have their comments or ideas so that these may be taken into consideration when decisions are made. Please write or email your suggestions to the Secretary, before the end of June.

The Society recently conducted a successful book stall at the MarketPlace Mittagong in the week prior to Mothers' Day. Sales of publications totaled \$212.00 and a raffle raised \$206.00. Thank you to the volunteers who helped on the stall and special thanks to President Leonie for making all the arrangements and setting-up the stall.

We were once again represented at the ANZAC Day services and wreaths were laid at services in the Shire by various members. Thank you to Jan Alcock for making the wreaths and Peg Harvey for preparing the cards.

## New Member

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

**Mrs Kathy Barnsley**

Here's to a long and happy association.

## June Lunch Menu

Prince Albert Inn June luncheon menu

### Main Course

1. **Mittagong tunnel mushroom risotto with truffle oil**  
or
2. **Guinness Pie**

### Dessert

1. **Almond torte with orange creme and chocolate ice cream**  
or
2. **Panacotta with poached peaches and strawberries**

**Bowls of salad and jugs of orange juice will be on tables; bar service available.**

Please advise any special dietary needs with your booking and payment.

## Watch this space

Stay tuned to this space for the official word as we look forward to a day out by train to the "Enemy at Home" exhibition and a talk at the Museum of Sydney, followed by the Police and Justice Museum nearby. Mark in your diary **Wednesday 20 July 2011**. Times are yet to be announced.

## 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

## History of Empire Cinema, Bowral

by *Lyn Hall*

From silent film through the early days of sound in 1930s, the advent of colour in the 40s, Cinemascope in the 1950s, the innovations in the bio-box with safety film, xenon lamps to the latest digital projection of films via computer, the romance of the silver screen continues to hold a special place.

In July 1909 the original Bowral Picture Theatre was in operation. Initially films were shown at the Bowral School of Arts. Hamilton Roy Painter was 19 years old when he first opened the theatre.

Residents soon embraced this new form of entertainment with fervour. The Painter family realised that there was a demand for a purpose-built theatre so they became involved in the Empire Cinema project.

Opened on 15 September 1915, Roy made the Empire the entertainment centre of the district. On evenings when pictures weren't screened, the folding wooden seats were packed away and the flat floor was used as a roller skating rink.

With his love of theatre he organised live and travelling shows to perform at the theatre.

The auditorium held 946 people and two uniformed usherettes showed patrons to their seats. Movies were screened Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 8pm and on Saturdays there was a 2pm matinee as well as the 8pm screening. Through the 40s and 50s the program would be divided into two parts with an interval before the feature film. The first part was a series of cartoons, shorts, newsreels and serials.

At interval lollies and ice creams would be bought into the auditorium contained in trays suspended by a strap that went around the seller's neck.

**Want more?** Then why not roll up to our Berrima District Museum for a viewing of the amazing Empire Cinema history display that is now showing in the Edwin Klein Room, part of the Early Industries exhibition. Tickets \$5 (members free).



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# NOW SHOWING

## AT YOUR MUSEUM

# THE EMPIRE CINEMA EXHIBITION



**SOCIETY MEMBERS ARE CORDIALLY  
INVITED TO ATTEND THE OFFICIAL  
OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION BY**

## JAN KENNY A.C.S.

Inducted into the  
Australian Cinematographers Society Hall of Fame  
-2004-

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**On Sunday 26 June 2011 at 3pm  
Berrima District Museum  
Market Place, Berrima**

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**RSVP: Wednesday 22 June  
Bob Williams PH 4889 4405  
Lyn Hall PH 4862 4293**

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**CELEBRATING THE LONGEST RUNNING  
COMMERCIAL CINEMA IN AUSTRALIA**

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## Researching Maps and Land Titles on the Web RAHS Workshop

by *Melinda Cupitt*

The workshop, designed for Community and Family Historians wanting to know more about using the internet for researching land, was held in the upstairs meeting room at the Archives on Saturday 28 May.

The resources of the NSW Land and Property Management Authority were presented to us by Dr Lesley Muir. This most informative session included a slide show with step-by-step worked examples on using these resources.

Topics covered included history of land titles system in New South Wales, with the focus on Torrens title. Boundaries and ownership, Parish, Town and Valuer-General maps and 1880's NSW property plans were all included in the presentation.

Anyone wishing to obtain a copy of the slide-show should contact the Archives.



Photos by Philip Morton

## New Life Members: Bob & Gloria

Congratulations to Bob and Gloria Williams on being made Life Members of our Society on 26 May.



Life Member Awards were presented to Bob and Gloria by Acting President Ken Reid at a special meeting held prior to the May General Meeting. At the meeting, Committee member Ron Mumford spoke, highlighting the various roles Bob and Gloria have carried out for the Society since the early 1990s and he went on to praise their tireless efforts in operating, managing and improving the museum.

Photos: (top) Desmond Kennard, (above) Lyn Hall

## Recent acquisition at the museum

This hand-painted plate is now amongst the many other fascinating acquisitions at the museum in Berrima.



*Eastern Yellow Robins*

Originally owned by Rosalind Badgery, it came to the museum as part of the private collection she donated.

An inscription on the back reads: "To Miss Badgery, In Appreciation, Illawarra Bird Observers' Club. Oct 1983. 'One good tern deserves another'."

## National Volunteer Week 2011

In response to a request from the office of the Federal Member for Throsby, Stephen Jones MP, the Society nominated two of our volunteers to be included in the Federal Government initiative to recognise volunteers' contribution to the community.

Each nominated volunteer was to be presented with a Certificate of Appreciation at a special function.

The two nominated were Lyn Hall, volunteer guide and Exhibition Curator at the museum, and Max Rogers, Research Officer at the Archives.

The presentation evening was held at the premises of Volunteering Wingecarribee (Volwing) in Moss Vale at which over 20 nominees attended and were presented with their awards by Stephen Jones MP.

### Lyn Hall

Lyn has been a Society member and volunteer at the museum in Berrima since 1999. She is a regular guide on the museum roster, rearranges and refreshes exhibits and serves on the sub-committee responsible for museum management.

Lyn worked with Dr. Simons to create the 'Prisoners in Arcady', exhibition; she curated the museum's Early Industries exhibition and has recently added the history of the Bowral Empire Cinema.

### Max Rogers

Max joined the Society in 1994. His newspaper experience and life-long interest in history saw him quickly become the librarian and research officer.

Max diligently works long hours on enquiries received now also via the internet from all over Australia and the world.

Max devotes himself to maintaining and expanding the Society's historical archive and library. He is constantly delving into these archives and those further afield, to supply information to those who contact the Society with requests for a family link or for historical data or for some obscure, vague piece of information. Max has a long trail of grateful and satisfied enquirers.



*Photos courtesy of Volwing*

## Mother's Day raffle and book stall

Prior to Mother's Day, the Society held a book stall and raffle at Mittagong Marketplace. The winning ticket in the raffle went to Dorothea Gould of Bong Bong Road, Mittagong.

Dorothea was overjoyed with the basket load of various fancy items, and we wish her all the best.

Thanks to those who helped out, it was a most successful two days, both for the money raised and for spreading the word about the Society's activities.



Volunteers Ron Mumford and Bruce Moore entice the owners of Toshi's restaurant to buy some raffle tickets.

*Photo: Philip Morton*

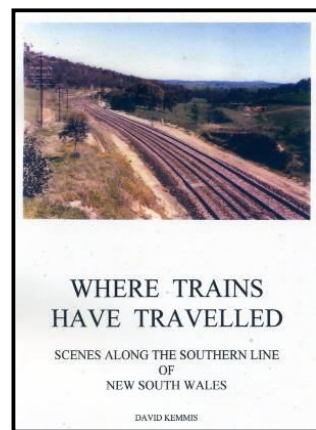
## Rare opportunity for train spotters

**A limited edition of "Where Trains Have Travelled" by David Kemmis, a must-have for anyone with a love for railway history, is available for sale at the Archives.**

The book is illustrated with a multitude of photographs, some from earlier times, along with many more recent colourful images, taken by Mr Kemmis, that illustrate the brief histories he provides of the many ruins and outstanding features of the lines still in existence.

Overall, the book portrays a fascination with abandoned railroads, chiefly the ruins of their cuttings and embankments, along and near the route of the Main Southern Railway through the Southern Highlands and South-Western Slopes of NSW.

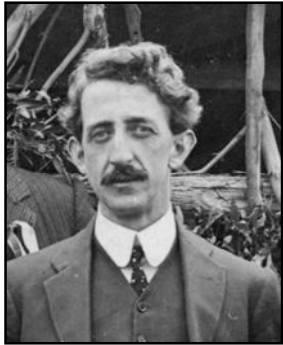
**This limited edition collector's item is for sale for \$100.**





## Bandmaster George Vincent, a local man who gained international fame

*This article, compiled by Philip Morton, was first published in the Southern Highland News in January this year*



**George Ernest Vincent (1874-1932)** became deeply involved in the district's life as musician, music teacher and prolific composer, and as a townsman of the first rank.

As a boy he visited the district with his father, also called George, from whom he learnt how to play brass instruments.

George Vincent senior travelled to Bowral from Sydney almost every week between 1883 and 1886. He was Bandmaster of the Bowral Brass Band, taking practice at night and returning to the city the following day.

A local press report told of a concert held in the Temperance Hall, Bowral during 1883 when young George was nine: "The most pleasing feature of the entertainment was the performance of Miss and Master Vincent, two little children. The former acted as accompanist, while the latter's performance on the cornet was marvellous. They appear, however, to the best advantage when playing in company with their father."

George was 12 years old when his father died in mid-1886 in Sydney. He studied music privately and four years later moved with his widowed mother and siblings to Mittagong.

Devoted as he was to music and being one of the founders and first president of Mittagong Eisteddford Society, yet George found time to associate with many public movements in the town of his adoption. He was President of Mittagong School of Arts for many years, and choirmaster at St Stephen's Church of England. He was also Bandmaster of Mittagong Band before being appointed to Bowral.

At age 21 in 1896, George received official notification from Trinity College, London that he had been appointed to the position of Associate of Music at that College, which was the highest musical honour obtainable in Australia at that time. He also obtained honours in Counterpoint and Harmony and passed all the diploma examinations, including the matriculation.

These results were more remarkable for being achieved without formal musical instruction since the age of eleven, when his father died.

A new brass band, the Bowral Association Band, was established in Bowral by the Young Men's

Association in 1894, and George Vincent was appointed Bandmaster, a position he held until 1932.

From 1908 George also served as organist and choirmaster at St Jude's Church of England in Bowral until his death in 1932.

George was a most prolific composer of all types of musical works. Amongst those he produced were the well-known Easter anthem 'In the End of the Sabbath'; many part-songs, including 'Sweetest Love I do not go'; patriotic songs, such as 'The Soldier's

Many young men regularly practised their instruments under Vincent's guidance and performed proudly in the local town bands, as the following pictures show.



Bowral Band in 1896 with Bandmaster George Vincent (standing far left)



Moss Vale Band at the Moss Vale Show grandstand, in the early 1900s. George Vincent is centre front.



Bowral Band at Farm Homes Mittagong, 1908

Last Message'; dance tunes, of which the lilting mazurkas, 'Myee' and 'Ilma' were popular favourites; canticles, madrigals, ballads, and a mass of other material which at the time of his death had not been arranged for publication.

A notable success in 1901 was his winning of The Sydney Mail contest for the best musical setting of Will H Ogilvie's well-known poem 'Hearts of Gold'.

### **George's fame extended beyond Australia**

On the eve of the departure of the first battle cruiser Australia from Portsmouth Harbour in Britain, his song 'The Star Crossed Flag of Australia' was played by the ship's band. The song was later adopted by the authorities for the Commonwealth Naval Forces and used by cadets as their marching song during a visit to America.

George helped establish the Bowral Choral Society in the 1920s and built the choir to a high standard, often stepping in as conductor. As a patient and painstaking teacher, he was particularly successful with his pianoforte pupils, many of whom qualified with distinction.

A former pupil described his fund of musical anecdote as inexhaustible, and he had a nimble wit which could imbue the driest musical point with living, pulsing interest.

Described as a modest and humble man, George's life held two devouring passions – love for his mother and young relatives left without a father's care, and his love for music.

### **One of the largest funerals seen in the district**

George's health declined and he died in Sydney on 6 March, 1932, at the age of 58. He was deeply mourned and his funeral was one of the largest ever seen in the district.

Almost a whole page of *The Southern Mail* was devoted to the 'Noted Musician and Useful Citizen', including a life history and a moving description of the funeral service and burial. Some extracts follow.

"The funeral was one of the largest ever seen in the district. The two towns in which he had laboured united in paying homage to his memory and reverent crowds lined the streets as the solemn cortege, headed by the combined Mittagong and Bowral Bands, passed on its way to Rowe's Hill Cemetery.

The moving strains of the 'Dead March in Saul' added to the profound solemnity of the occasion.

St Jude's Church was filled by a congregation assembled to pay their last respects to one who had been a familiar figure for nearly a quarter of a century. The choral service was sung by a large choir with Mr Geoff Beavan at the organ.

The funeral cortege passed through the main streets of Bowral and Mittagong to the cemetery at Lower Mittagong where the remains were reverently laid to rest. The town bands played as a voluntary Mr Vincent's fine arrangement of 'The Supreme Sacrifice' and his favourite hymn 'Lead Kindly Light'.

When returning from the funeral, the bands, following Mr Vincent's own custom, played his favourite march, 'Invercargil'. This had been his way of expressing the belief that the dead should not be mourned as those without hope."

At the funeral service in St Jude's, the Rector, Rev T H Distin Morgan, pronounced a touching eulogium that included the following:

"We are gathered here to pay our tribute of affectionate regard to George Ernest Vincent who for 24 years has so faithfully and devotedly served as choirmaster and organist in this church he so much loved. Despite a somewhat frail physique, he was, during that long period, never absent either from services or choir practice except for a Sunday during vacation time.

In the world of music he in his quiet, unassuming way, was nevertheless a composer whose works will live on. Anzac memorial services will still sing 'The Supreme Sacrifice' at their annual commemorations. His setting of 'Excelsior' for male voices has been the chosen part-song for Eisteddfods not only in Australia, but in other parts of the world.

Yet he was not an easy man to know, mainly because of his humility and modesty, but he nevertheless, by those very virtues, inspired in his pupils and in his many friends a very deep and lasting affection. We may learn much as we ponder over the simple humility and inspiring goodness of a man who was a devoted son, a loyal citizen, and a very dear and faithful friend."

It was also reported in *The Southern Mail* that the Mittagong School of Arts Committee noted with appreciation the valuable services rendered by the late Mr Vincent, one of its foundation members. He had worked hard to make the institution free of debt.

The Bowral Choral Society paid tribute, noting the many occasions on which he gave assistance, particularly during the preparation of the "Haymakers". The Society owed him a debt of gratitude for the pleasure of performing his compositions, particularly his arrangement of 'The Last Rose of Summer' and his 'Excelsior' for male choir.

*The Southern Mail* reported that, amongst many floral tributes, the beautiful wreath from the Bowral Association Band was worked in the band colours.

George Vincent's fame lives on in the music he composed and arranged. Our Archives is fortunate to hold several of his original handwritten scores.

## DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	9 JUN	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	23 JUN	June Luncheon	12:00 pm at the Prince Albert Inn
SUNDAY	26 JUN	Empire Cinema exhibition opening	3:00 pm at Berrima District Museum
THURSDAY	14 JUL	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	28 JUL	Monthly General Meeting	2:00 pm at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	11 AUG	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	25 AUG	Monthly General Meeting	2:00 pm at the Historical Society

If undelivered return to:  
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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.

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