

Founded 1960

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER
No 470 March 2015

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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: bdmuseum@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 \$10.00 - Single \$25.00 - Family \$35.00.

AFFILIATIONS:

Royal Australian Historical Society, NSW Association of Family History Societies, Museums Australia Inc & Regional Chapter.

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

MARCH MEETING: Thursday 26 March 2015 at 2pm
VENUE: Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong

GUEST SPEAKER: Linda Emery and Max Rogers
Captured in the Light
Another presentation in the series *Captured in the Light* by Linda and Max: the stories behind some of the interesting photographs recently added to the BDHS collection.

AFTERNOON TEA: To be served following the speaker - Members - please bring a plate or a donation.

Inside this month ...

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And more ...

APRIL MEETING: Thursday 23 April 2015 at 2pm
VENUE: Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong



Diary dates

MARCH

- 12 Management Committee Meeting
- 26 General Monthly Meeting

APRIL

- 2 School holidays commence
- 3 Good Friday
- 6 Easter Monday
- 9 Management Committee Meeting
- 12 Throsby Park open day
- 21 School holidays conclude
- 23 General Monthly Meeting

MAY

- 10 Mother's Day
- 14 Management Committee Meeting
- 28 General Monthly Meeting

Barber 200th anniversary

Colonial history remembered

On 8 February, the 200th Wedding Anniversary of George & Isabella Barber was given an impressive mention at St John's Church in Parramatta, at the start of Sunday service. Their many descendants in attendance were invited to view the entry in the Wedding Register.

George Barber was born in 1875, the only child of George Barber and Jane Rumman. After George's father died at sea in 1800, his mother married Charles Throsby, Navy Surgeon, in December 1801 and the following year the couple sailed to Sydney.

George completed his education in England and embarked for Sydney in 1812 on the Emu. This vessel was captured by Americans, with whom England was at war, and for a time George was held prisoner. He eventually returned to England and embarked again for Sydney, arriving in July 1814. He joined his mother and step-father at their Glenfield property near Appin.

George married Isabella Hume, the only sister of explorer Hamilton Hume, at St John's Parramatta on 6 February, 1815. He was 19 years of age and she 17.

In 1821 George received a grant of 300 acres in the Tallong-Marulan district. He considerably extended his landholdings and built a fine residence Glenrock, where they raised thirteen

children. In 1844 George died by drowning in the Wollondilly River. Isabella died in 1855 and is buried in the Barber vault in the Old Marulan cemetery.



Historic Glenrock in the 1930s

Throsby Park open day

On Sunday 12 April, Sydney Living Museums will open Throsby Park to the public for tours of the main House and the Cottage. Entry will be by booked timed tour only.

Each tour is 90 minutes, starting at the Cottage with a walk up the driveway to the main House and an exploration of the outbuildings, so there will be a fair bit of walking. Tour times: 11am, 12:30pm, 2pm and 3:30pm. For more info contact Sydney Living Museums on 8239 2306 or visit their website.

From the Editor's desk

The Southern Mail Friday 29 May 1953 page 7
Mittagong Council
MONDAY, 18th MAY

Kangaloon P.C.A. wrote that at a meeting it had been decided to request Council to alter the names of certain lanes in the Kangaloon area. The proposed new names had been accepted as suitable, after considerable discussion. Cr. Alcorn said he was at the meeting and many names were suggested before those proposed were decided upon. The existing names with the proposed new names following in parenthesis' submitted by the Association, were as follow:- Fahey's Lane (Kia-ora) ; Store Lane (Hawthorne) ; Chase's Lane (Sugarloaf) ; J. A. Will's Lane (Widgeewa) ; Ford's Lane (Trig Station) ; Norman's Lane (to be named after the creek crossing it). The names were approved and the Shire-Clerk was instructed to take the necessary action to have the existing names altered.

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 John on 4872 1660.

Research fees

Research fees for non-members:

\$20.00 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.

Membership details

Please note that all membership enquiries and changes of address details should be addressed to the Membership Secretary, c/- the Society's postal address or email to bdhsarchives@gmail.com

Newsletter deadline

Newsletter Deadline is **25th** of every month. It may be necessary to hold submissions after this date till the following month.

Max and Linda at March meeting

Captured in the Light

Thursday 26 March at 2:00pm

Be informed and entertained at the March meeting by another in this very popular series. Max Rogers and Linda Emery will present a slideshow of photos from the BDHS collection. Hear the stories of local history evoked from their selection of images.

Government supports museum

Recently the Member for Goulburn Ms Pru Goward presented a grant of \$5000 to our Society. Provided through the NSW Government Community Building Partnership Program, the grant is for improvement of facilities at the Museum in Berrima as part of the exhibition gallery space expansion. Specifically it helps towards the new disabled toilet amenity.



Pru Goward presents grant to members at museum

The museum is open every day while *A Camera on Gallipoli*, the Australian War Memorial travelling exhibition, continues its run until 22 March.

Our Anzac Centenary exhibition 'The Southern Highlands 1200' commences in the new gallery at the museum in April. This exhibition will focus on the 1200 Southern Highlands' men and women who served overseas during World War 1 and will feature many of their stories.

Gait family gathering Moss Vale

On Saturday 30 May, at Moss Vale Golf Club, a reunion dinner is being held for the descendants of William and Bridget Gait, married at St John's Parramatta in March 1818. An open invitation is extended to descendants, including the Larkin, Morris, Griffith, Riley, Webb and Hollands families.

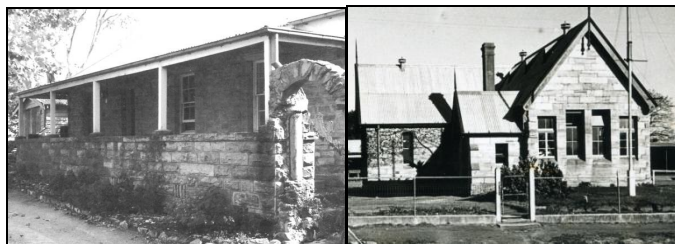
More information: Jannette Cameron 02 6922 4575

Leisurely historic Mittagong tour

To be held on Friday 27 March, 2015

This tour, conducted by our member Ros Dale, will showcase two of Mittagong's outstanding buildings in the historic New Sheffield precinct that stretches from the old town centre to Lake Alexandra.

First is Leslie Cottage, on the corner of Queen and Albert Streets. Owner Ms Lisa Delahunt will show us through this lovely residence built in 1879.



Then we cross over to the iconic Old Public School (now Mittagong Library) where we will learn about the building itself and its various uses since 1878.

We will then partake of a sumptuous morning tea in the library grounds (weather permitting).

We will meet at Leslie Cottage at 9:55am. Cost of the tour is \$5.00 per person. Please book and pay early at the Archives to ensure a place on this tour. Phone 4872 2169.

For those wishing to see more of this historic area of Mittagong, after morning tea Ros Dale and Philip Morton will conduct a walk/drive tour around nearby streets, pointing out historic landmarks, including:

1. Houses dating from the 1860s along Pioneer St between Albert and Edward Sts and in Edward Lane.
2. Residence at 10 Queen St. This stone cottage belonged to George Dawson of Dawson Bros store. It is notable for its cast iron lace work, and for its flagstones.
3. Methodist Church (1865). The foundation stone was laid by the chairman of the Fitzroy Iron Works Company. In 1977 it became the Uniting Church.
4. St Paul's Presbyterian Church (1885). This stone church with bell tower was erected in 1885, primarily for the Scottish families who worked at Joadja Creek.
5. St Joseph's Convent (1927) ceased taking boarders and closed in 1972, becoming Sunshine Lodge, a home for the intellectually disabled that closed in 2012.
6. St Michael's Catholic Church that opened in 1889. It is built of brick with an iron roof containing gabled openings and dormer vents; the roof was later replaced with tiles.

Berrima river walk: new signage

Featuring story of WWI German internees

After many years of planning, historic interpretation signs are now in place along the Wingecarribee River walking path in the recreation reserve at Berrima.

Nineteen illustrated panels explain the story of the Austrian and German internees who made use of the area during World War I. The signage was officially opened on 1 March 2015. This date is significant as it was a century earlier, on 1 March 1915, that the first internees arrived in Berrima. A brief overview of their story follows here.

The internees

After a period of disuse, the dilapidated historic gaol at Berrima became an internment camp for hundreds of German and Austrian men. The majority were captains, officers and engineers of merchant ships and some were inhabitants of German colonies in south-east Asia. They were later joined by officers and men captured from SMS Emden.

Confined to their barracks between dusk and dawn, internees were allowed out by day provided they remained within a two-mile radius. They began organising themselves to make the best of their stay, constructing rustic huts along the banks of the river with jetties and moorings for the small craft they built or purchased for leisure boating and to celebrate special holiday festivities with regattas.



Their daytime activities ranged from swimming and boating to gymnastics and other sports as well as vegetable gardening, woodcarving and language classes. Music became an important part of their lives and the orchestra formed within the camp performed for their fellow internees and for local residents. In a makeshift theatre the thespians among the prisoners produced both dramatic and comic plays.

One of the first important structures the internees built was Hansa Bridge, a high-level wooden footbridge across the Wingecarribee River.

It was used to gain quick access to the sports field and the three tennis courts they also had constructed.



Initially, the internee huts built along the river banks were of simple brushwood but, later on, substantial cabins and elaborate villas appeared. Models of warships, submarines, sailing ships and even a floating Zeppelin were made from available materials. Parades of these, together with water sports, formed the basis of spectacular aquatic carnivals to celebrate significant events such as birthdays of the Kaiser and Crown Prince.

The extensive gardens of the internees produced a wide variety of fruit and vegetables. These not only went to the internees' kitchens, but were also eagerly purchased by the villagers. The gardens set the seal on the respect and friendly acceptance most villagers had come to feel towards their compulsory 'guests'.

While some of the internees had wife and children who came to live in the village, and others had friends visiting from Sydney and elsewhere, the fame of the bridge, the huts, villas and gardens, as well as the spectacular water carnivals, spread far afield and brought many additional visitors to see the wonders for themselves.

The internees, in fact, by their works gave Berrima its first incarnation as a tourist attraction. After war ended, the internees were repatriated to Germany in August 1919 and were very agreeably remembered by the majority of Berrima folk for their contributions to the daily life and economy of the village.

After the departure of the internees

However their existence at Berrima soon faded from local memory and the remnants of their structures gradually disappeared. After their departure, Berrima found another means of attracting tourism - by the 1930s the empty gaol was operating as a heritage attraction. Sightseers were taken on conducted tours and told stories of the 'horror' days in the mid 1800s when prisoners were ill-treated and of bushrangers who spent time in the gaol. The Army took over the gaol for ammunition storage during World War II, however a major explosion in 1942 destroyed most of the interior buildings. It was rebuilt and opened in 1949 as the Berrima Training Centre prison.

Until the 1970s, the existence of the internment camp at Berrima had completely faded from local memory as their structures had long disappeared. The river where they had roamed changed in the 1920s when a

weir, constructed upstream for the Cement Works, reduced the river's flow and its exposed banks became infested with willows and weeds.

Revival of interest

In 1978, during a noxious weed inspection, a 17-foot dugout canoe was discovered buried in a sand bank. Historical Society members realised it had belonged to the German internees and it was removed to our museum in Market Square, Berrima. This discovery revived interest in the German internee period.

Significantly, the interest of local man, Dr John Simons, was stimulated. He had retired from a career as scientist and broadcaster and moved back to the area that he had known as a child. As a lad in the early 1930s, he had frequented the swimming hole on the Wingecarribee River at Berrima, unaware it had also been enjoyed by the internees.



In 1992 Dr Simons became our Society's archivist. To further investigate the internees' period, he conducted archaeological inspections to locate the sites of the river bridge, sports complex, pavilions and huts. He undertook extensive research into the story and this resulted in *Prisoners in Arcady* a comprehensive work published by the Historical Society in 1999.

During the 1990s it was proposed that the river stretch and banks be cleared and interpretative signage erected. A committee formed by Dennis Brown of the National Trust initiated action to restore the river, its banks and general appearance of the Crown Land area for about 2000 metres downstream from the gaol. A team of volunteers was organized and the willows and other exotic species were cleared and both banks replanted with native trees, shrubs and grasses. Subsequently Wingecarribee Shire Council employed teams to carry on this work.

A comprehensive exhibition of the internees' story, based on the *Prisoners in Arcady* book, was opened at the Berrima District Museum in February 2009 by Mr Hans Gnodtke, Consul-General of the Federal Republic of Germany. Dr Simons was in attendance at the occasion but passed away soon after.

His inspiration lived on in others and the site was eventually listed in January 2011 on the NSW State Heritage Register. The listing includes the land area along the river where the internees roamed and all associated artefacts, photographs and memoirs.



The project to erect signage along the walk path was brought to completion through the efforts of citizens of Berrima and the Southern Highlands community; these include those pictured above: (from left) Katrina Harvey, Diana Taylor, Colin Gelling and Lyn Hall.

The signage walk is dedicated to Dr John Simons and Dennis Brown and to the memory of Berrima man Alan Terrell who contributed much to make it a reality.

The new signage walk

The new signage along the Wingecarribee River walk commences in the Berrima recreation reserve off Oxley Street at an Introduction Panel. From there, 19 panels are spread along the 1.8 km walk through Crown Land that extends around the river bend at Nobbys and beyond. Three signs acknowledge that the walk is on Gundungurra land. At the locations of huts and other sites, photo images and descriptions are provided on the panels. These locations were surveyed in 1999 by Dr Simons, based on period photos, memoirs and a 1918 hand-drawn map.

The panels include information on the Hansa Bridge - it was 102 metres long and 4 to 5 metres above river level. Other structures highlighted include Frieda, a small villa built from more than 10,000 clay-filled jam and milk tins, and Castle by the Sea, a sturdy villa built by prisoners from SMS Emden.

Discover more of this fascinating local heritage story by taking the walk.

The main Introduction Panel acknowledges *Prisoners in Arcady*, the book by Dr John Simons, as the source of the information and the photos as being courtesy of the BDH&FHS. The support of the National Trust, NSW Trade & Investment (Crown Lands) Department and Wingecarribee Shire Council is acknowledged, and of donors including Berrima Townlife Group and Friends of Berrima Court House.

Society member Lyn Hall created the artwork design and graphics for all the walk signage panels and is heartily congratulated for her great artistic skill.

Walk Information. Length: 1.8 kms; Time: allow one hour return; Surface: reasonably level but unsealed, uneven, slippery in wet conditions.

Compiled by P Morton

Mittagong: Gateway to the South

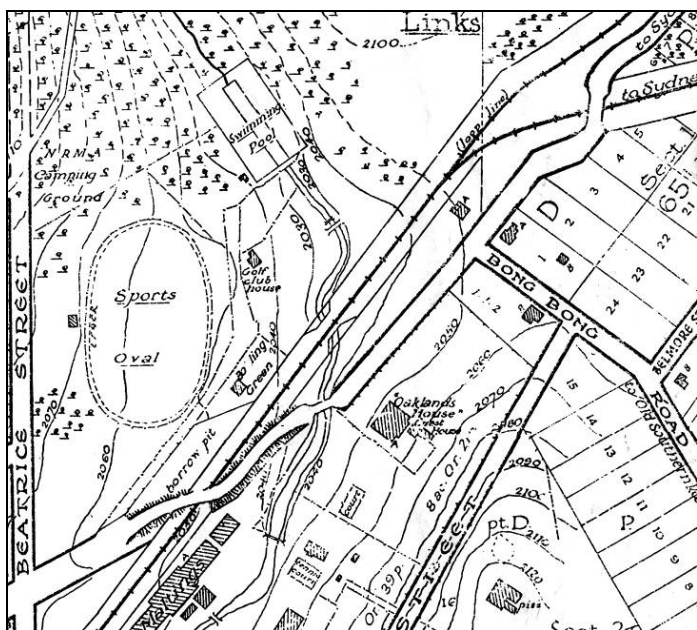
Part 2: Northern road bridges became dangerous

When the railway came through in 1867, a level crossing was installed on the northern outskirts of Mittagong near Oaklands Boys School, formerly the Fitzroy Inn. The single-track Southern Railway line from Picton proceeded through Hill Top and Colo Vale, approaching Mittagong from a westerly direction through Braemar. To reach the station on the eastern side of town, it had to cross the Great Southern Road near Oaklands School.

This configuration changed in 1919 when the Picton to Mittagong section of the Southern Railway was replaced with a more direct duplicated line. The deviation's route followed the line of the Southern Road from Picton to Bargo and on to Yerrinbool, then passed through two tunnels to emerge at Aylmerton for an easterly approach into Mittagong.

The earlier line was kept in use for local train services and became known as the Loop Line. The new main line, on its approach, had to cross to the western side of the Southern Road to then merge with the older line. The merged line then had to cross back over the road again to proceed into Mittagong. So that road traffic would not be impeded, the Railways built two over-bridges in 1917 for the Southern Road.

The first, located near the former Fergusons Nursery, was known as Drabbles, being the name of a Mittagong alderman who owned land nearby. From there, a 500-metre stretch of road proceeded past the Bong Bong Road turn-off and the Oaklands School, to reach the other bridge at the former level-crossing site near the Maltings, a barley processing centre which had opened in 1898.



This second bridge took road traffic back over the rail line to proceed into Mittagong. A track off to the west led to a Sports Oval, Baths and, from the 1930s, Golf

and Bowling Clubs. Despite Council's objections, the over-bridges were built at right angles to the rail line (as were all railway bridges at the time) with sharp approaches and exits. As expected, this stretch became problematic when traffic increased on the Great Southern Road, the main Sydney-Canberra-Melbourne link renamed the Hume Highway in 1928.

From the 1920s, local residents raised concerns about the increasing number of accidents occurring at the hazardous two bridges. Appeals for a solution intensified and reports of incidents and deaths appeared on a regular basis in the Southern Mail and the Sydney Morning Herald. It was not until 1963, however, that a by-pass of the dangerous section did eventually open. An overview of this long drawn-out period, with selected newspaper reports, follows:

Southern Mail February 1930: "Another serious accident has been added to the list of nearly a score which have occurred at the Maltings Bridge. Jack Maher, of Randwick, while riding a motor bike at high speed over the bridge on Sunday afternoon, collided with the fence, suffering a fractured left collar bone and head injuries. He was conveyed to the District Hospital and is now progressing favourably. But for the new wire fence which has been substituted for a stiff fence, he would most probably have been killed."

Sydney Morning Herald January 1931: "A motor car driven by Michael Carren, of Goulburn, crashed through Maltings bridge and fell 30 feet. Carren received head injuries and is suffering badly from shock. Mrs Pass, of Marsden Street, Goulburn was severely injured internally. While Matron Roberts and Nurse Simmons, both of Bayview Mental Hospital in Tempe, are suffering from shock and extensive bodily injuries. Mrs Pass's six weeks' old infant was uninjured. All were passengers in the car. During the past 6 months more than 30 accidents have occurred at this bridge."

Southern Mail October 1931: "Mittagong Council is still urging the Main Roads Board to cut out the dangerous piece of road at the Maltings bridge." This report continued that a survey undertaken for Council proposed a deviation to leave the main road in front of the Maltings and, keeping to the western side of the railway, skirt right around the Sports Ground and Golf Links for about half a mile, and rejoin the main road beyond the over-bridge to the north. Besides cutting out the two bridges, it was suggested this would give a better grade and a more direct route.

The Main Roads Board could not get government funding, however, and its suggestion in the late 1930s that a deviation pass directly through Golf Links and Bowling Club land aroused local concerns and the matter dragged on.

TO BE CONTINUED - compiled by P Morton with assistance from Marie Chalker

From the Moss Vale Post

First Lorry Driver 24 May 1935

Councillor Missingham made it clear at the last shire meeting, when challenged by the president, that he had not been associated all his life solely with bullock teams as units in the sawmilling business.

Council was discussing the repair of the D Riding roller, and the engineer had explained how difficult it would be to prepare specifications of the work unless the engine was dismantled. Cr Missingham, the Robertson councillor, offered some helpful advice which was not accepted seriously, and the president asked whether the observation was backed by experience.

Cr Missingham retorted with the fact that he held the first motor driver's license in the district and that was acquired by him back in 1912. The president: "The first I knew that you knew anything about a car was when one upset when you were in it" (laughter).

Cr Missingham: "I was sitting in the back of that one" (renewed laughter).

Circus Thrill: Attacked by Leopard 19 April 1938

Two small boys of Mittagong had narrow escapes from serious injury on Monday afternoon last when attacked by a leopard with Perry Brothers' Circus.

The circus was showing at Railway Pde, Mittagong, and a number of Mittagong lads were watching the unpacking operations of the circus staff. As one small boy passed a cage, a claw shot out and dragged him to the side of the bars. His mate commenced a tug-of-war with the animal and eventually succeeded in freeing the scared lad, but not before injuries had been sustained by both. A remarkable feature of the accident was that Superintendent Crossley of the Berrima District Ambulance was passing at the time of the accident, and saw the leopard attack the boy. He stopped immediately and attended to the wounds.

Peter Walton, aged 10 years, was treated for a lacerated wound to a finger. Don Marks, aged 7, who was the lad first grabbed by the animal, was treated for a lacerated wound to the top of the head. His jumper was very badly torn and gave evidence of the nearness he came to serious injury. The boys, who received a bigger thrill than they expected from the circus, were allowed to go home.

Bundanoon Girl: Acts as Postman 27 January 1942

Miss Dulcie Morris, daughter of Mr and Mrs G Morris, of Bundanoon, is doing her share to assist in the war effort and is deputising for the postman at Bundanoon who has joined the AIF.

A legacy from the ex-postman is Peter the horse, says the Sunday Telegraph, which she rides 10 miles daily on her round. "Peter does all the work. He stops at every letter-box in town," said Miss Morris. "But he's thoroughly spoilt. He stops longest outside houses where he is fed sugar lumps and apples."

Miss Morris is one of a family of eight. She used to help with the milk delivery. Now her duties start with mail sorting at 7 am, and she finishes her round about noon. "It's the friendliest job I know," she said. "You share in the excitement when mothers get letters from their soldier sons. You become unofficial messenger, delivering messages and parcels from one end of the town to the other. I'll be sorry to give it up when the men come back from the war."

Rush on Shopping: Business is Brisk 12 May 1942

Enquiries throughout the district reveal that there was a mild rush on business houses on Saturday morning and yesterday, consequent upon the announcement of the rationing of clothes and articles of linen. The rush was more conspicuous in Bowral than in other towns, although Moss Vale business men report that their staffs were kept closely occupied on Saturday. The scare seemed to have diminished yesterday.

Until the necessary coupons are issued to individuals, the onus will be on the business houses to maintain their turnover within a limit of 75 per cent of the output for a previous specified period. It is not expected that the coupons will be available until sometime in July.

Taken for Bushrangers 27 October 1942

The following item, reproduced from the pages of the Kiama Independent, of 7 January 1869, will be read with interest by descendants of some of the men whose names are recorded:

"A party of Wingecarribee settlers, formerly Illawarra men, had the opportunity last Saturday of doing his Excellency Lord Belmore a little service. About dark on that day the party, consisting of Messrs J Brown, M Gay, A Alcorn and A Johnson, observed a carriage driving at a rapid rate along a by-road where the appearance of such an equipage would not have been expected. Knowing that the carriage must speedily reach a bad place in the road, our friends followed it, and presently found that the driver, Lord Belmore himself, had found it necessary to pull up in a hollow where an ugly piece of boggy ground presented itself in their front. The orderly heard the approach of the men behind him, and appearing to recollect that there might be bushrangers in the neighbourhood, drew a pistol from his holster and warned them to stand off. This apprehension was, however, soon removed, and the party, which also included the Countess, was assisted across the bad piece of road, the horses having been taken out of the carriage and a separate crossing affected."

Compiled by Carol Nolan

DIARY DATES

THURSDAY	12 MAR	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	26 MAR	Monthly General Meeting	2:00pm at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	9 APR	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	23 APR	Monthly General Meeting	2:00pm at the Historical Society
THURSDAY	14 MAY	Management Committee Meeting	
THURSDAY	28 MAY	Monthly General Meeting	2:00pm 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.

*Southern Highland News
Springetts Arcade*