

Founded 1960

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER

No 473 June 2015

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire,
Southern Highlands of NSW

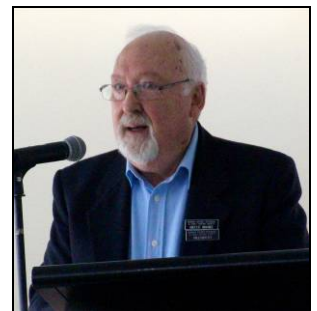
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From the President's Desk

So it's farewell to the very merrie month of May. Here's a bit of trivia:

Did you know that every 1st May (Friday this year) every year, never falls on the same day as any other 1st of the month? May was a pretty special month. Amongst other festivities, it was a month to celebrate May Day, Mothers Day, Whisky Day and Volunteers week.

There was a Walk Safely to School Day, which is a big thing these days as well as a Sorry Day. Whatever happened to our good old Empire Day? We celebrated Queen Victoria's birthday on 24th May, and schools had half a day's holiday to boot. Cracker night? Extinguished forever? It didn't even go out with a bang! I know . . . OH&S, over-protective parents and dangerous Chinese fireworks etc. I remember marching down to the local theatre joyously singing all those old British patriotic songs out of tune, watching a scratchy black & white war movie, swearing allegiance to King & Country.



Bruce Moore

Continued on page 2

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

JUNE LUNCHEON: Thursday 25 June at 12:00 for 12:30pm
VENUE: Jack High Bistro, Bowral Bowling Club
GUEST SPEAKER: Dr Penny Olsen from Australian National University

JULY MEETING: Thursday 23 July at 2:00pm
VENUE: Society Research Centre,
Old Council Chambers Building,
Bowral Road, Mittagong
GUEST SPEAKER: Leonie Knapman
Leonie will give a slideshow presentation on
the limestone quarries at Marulan
AFTERNOON TEA: To be served following the speaker.
Members please bring a plate or a donation.

THE
Story
Centre

**BERRIMA
DISTRICT
MUSEUM**

STORIES OF PEOPLE, PLACES
AND OBJECTS FROM
THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Museum news on page 5

From the President

Continued from front page

Afterwards, we couldn't wait for the sun to go down and light up the local bonfire in the park. Our parents would supervise us so that the Catherine wheels were nailed firmly on to the fence post and rockets pointed skywards in sand-filled milk bottles, pointed away from young eyes.

Sometimes if there were any penny bangers left, we'd be inclined to drop one into cranky old Mrs Musgrave's letterbox on the way home. Then run for our lives, tossing throw-downs on the way.

Enough reminiscing for now.

On Sunday 24th May this year we celebrated three significant events in Mittagong.

These were to do with the 150 years anniversary of the sesqui-centenary of the Fitz Roy Iron Works' blast furnace, the first Public School and the laying of the Methodist (now Uniting) Church's foundation stone. More details are provided on following pages.

Two Irish blokes heading towards a celebration on 1st May saw a sign ahead:

"MAY DAY FESTIVAL---LEFT".

So they turned around and went home.

Berrima District Museum

THE STORY CENTRE

Please note that the museum is now open at least 5 days a week

MUSEUM OPEN: 10am to 4pm

WEDNESDAY TO SUNDAY

and every day during NSW school holidays and on public holidays.

Groups welcome at other times by arrangement. Please phone John on 4872 1660.

Archives Opening Hours

Monday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Tuesday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Archives Book Sale



WHEN: Saturday 27 June.

WHERE: In the ground floor foyer at our Research Centre in the Old Council Chambers (Playhouse) building, cnr Bowral Road and Old Hume Highway, Mittagong.

Open from 9:30am till 2:00pm.

A wide variety of pre-loved books will be available, many donated from the private collections of some of our members and include general, local and Australian history topics.

These books are mostly in as-new condition. There will also be books on military history, reference books and lots of hard-back and soft-cover fiction.

Members please note:

We are still accepting donations of books. If you wish to donate, please do so as soon as possible. Thank you.

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

Research Fees

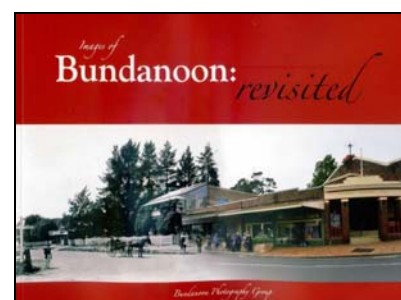
Research fees for non-members:

\$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.

New Publications

Several new books have recently been added to our 'publications for sale' list and may be purchased at Archives, museum or via website.



Images of Bundanoon Revisited

Published by Bundanoon Photography Group

Soft cover, 85 pp A4, colour illustrated. Cost \$30.

This book provides a selection of modern photos alongside matching images of some of Bundanoon's best-known early photos, including those of the Nicholas family, Emily Rundle and Lillian Tooth and also images by Martin Moore of Exeter and S R Beer of Bowral.

The expertise and enthusiasm of the Photography Group members is evident in this impressive book.



80 Years and More of the Mountain Railway

Published by Robertson Heritage Railway Station Inc.

Soft cover, 64 pp A5, colour illustrated. Cost \$20

Compiled by Ian Wallace, this new book is a revision of **75 Years of the Mountain Railway** published by the group in 2007. It presents the history of the Unanderra to Moss Vale railway line and its operation, and also of the Robertson Railway station over more than 80 years (1932-2014). It includes chapters on the early history of Robertson and the features of the line. A great read for railway buffs!

Invite to Attend our June Luncheon

This year our June luncheon is on Thursday 25 June, commencing at 12:00 for 12:30pm, to be held at:

Jack High Bistro Bowral Bowling Club

There will be two courses served as alternate drops:

MAIN

Pan fried Chicken Supreme, crushed chat potato, seasonal vegetable or salad, sauce chasseur

Lamb Rump, roast sea salt potato, seasonal vegetable or salad, redcurrant sauce

DESSERT

Lemon Curd Tart Warm Apple Pie.

As well as partaking of good food and companionship in the bistro, those attending will be able to listen to a fascinating illustrated talk by Dr Penny Olsen.

Dr Penny Olsen is a celebrated ornithologist and natural history author based at the Australian National University. She will speak about her work, particularly her recent publication 'Cayley & Son', a magnificently produced study of the well-known bird artists Neville Henry Cayley and his son Neville William Cayley who once lived in Bowral.

The father was nomadic by nature, often impecunious and had a reputation for hard drinking. Nevertheless he was a highly talented artist. His son, described as buoyant and often outspoken, was also a keen artist. Both have left significant portfolios of ornithological paintings, many now in National Library of Australia collections.

Dr Olsen's book on the life and art of the Cayley's has been widely praised by those with an interest in birds, Australian ornithology history, and natural history art.



View over Bowral

Neville Henry lived on Mount Gibraltar at Bowral from 1888 to 1890. Although better known as a painter of birds, he painted in oils the view from his house which overlooked the town. In 1890 the painting was raffled and won by JL Campbell of the Grand Hotel.

Cost for lunch is \$30.00pp. Please book and pay at the Archives soon as seating is limited. Members and their friends are encouraged to attend.

Mittagong Uniting Church's 150th

The Mittagong congregation of the Uniting Church in Australia were joined on 24 May by a large gathering of people for special celebrations. Attendees included several Society members who are also members of the congregation as well as numerous other members of our Society including President Bruce.

A special service of Thanksgiving was conducted for the 150th anniversary, to the date, of the laying of the foundation stone of the then Wesleyan Church. The 150th anniversary of the establishment of the first non-vested (public) school was also acknowledged for it was there at the church that the school was located for 13 years before moving to a purpose-built school building, now the town library.

To mark the historic day, there was also a re-reading of speeches which originally took place on 24 May 1865, and a dedication was offered by Dennis Horton of a Lone Pine seedling obtained from the Australian War Memorial. An afternoon tea of delicious home-made fare was heartily enjoyed.



Co-ordinator Marilyn Horton with Dr Leah Day

The Mittagong Uniting church in Albert St was built in 1865 on land donated to the Wesleyans by the Fitz Roy Iron Works Company. It is one of 12 sites with historic connections to the Iron Works which form a new Heritage Circuit. Signage is now mounted at the front of the church building. This Heritage Circuit was also launched on 24 May (see article on page 7).



Mayor Duncan Gair at the church's heritage sign

Photos: Uniting Church congregation members

Archives Report May 2015

Linda Emery, Archivist

Our open days at the archives are busier than ever, with many researchers visiting, as well as numerous email and telephone enquiries. We also have many volunteers undertaking research into a variety of interesting projects. This was highlighted at a recent meeting of archives volunteers on 6th May:

Max Rogers General research

Denyse Barker Photo scanning, Pic Lib cataloguing

Peg Harvey

- Scanning of last part of hospital photo collection
- Updating of Ryerson Index - entering of contemporary death and funeral notices from S H News
- Adding new entries onto local newspaper index. The Index is now in Filemaker Pro as searchable entries

Peg + Claire Lansley

Scanning photos from Parry Collection

Carol Nolan/Carolyn Dougherty

- Obituaries on those interred at Rowe's Hill;
- St Stephens and St Judes Church Burial registers;
- Transcribing Janet Cosh's Sutton Forest records

Linda Berry Local electoral rolls

Patricia Doris/Anne Downey

Scans of photos in biography files now completed

Alan Barker Expert advice re identifying vehicles

Janet Black C-Files, ongoing Tallong research

Margaret Muntz Genealogy and poppy Index

Marie Chalker

Parish of Mittagong book almost ready to publish

Leonie Knapman

Cement works research incl Medway and Berrima Colliery;
Local history of floods, fires and disasters

Shylie Brown Rate books Index + K Herring Land
Titles are ongoing tasks

Frank Nevill Digitising of photos

Robyn Arrowsmith Keen to share her research experience

Philip Morton compilations to SH News, newsletter

Ian & Denise Mackey

Cataloguing, plus Ian as 'Mr Fixit' & Denise in Conservation

Bruce Moore (President)

The 'lost' villages of Burrawang and Wildes Meadow

Carolyn Dougherty

'History of Willow Vale' book - almost ready to publish

Sandy McKenzie Street names project ongoing

Sandy & Pippa Helped finish newspaper index

Narelle Bown Moss Vale street names ready to publish

Roberta Stove Storage audit + conservation tasks

This list is just a part of what goes on at the archives in addition to the general running of the Society.



Linda at computer with Peg demonstrating a new piece of archives equipment to Bruce, Claire, Patricia and Lorraine

We have several new archives volunteers including Margaret Muntz who has a wealth of experience in family history research, and Lorraine Moore who is keen to take on research projects. They both also volunteer at the museum. Sadly, Pippa Robertson, one of our lovely Monday volunteers has had to leave due to other commitments, but we are hoping she will be able to return next year. She has been a terrific help during her time with us, working on newspaper indexing and transcribing original manuscripts. Thank you Pippa for all you have done for us.

Our index to the Poppy Seed Registers of the Sydney Botanic Gardens is now complete and online on our website as a searchable PDF file. A number of volunteers are now tracing the names of the WWI soldiers in whose name their relatives received seed from the gardens. We also have a feedback form on the website which allows anyone to email us with information about the names on the index. I have also put details on Facebook, and the RAHS will be publicising it through their e-newsletter and on their Facebook page.

Our Image Library on the website is also now growing quickly, with over 1500 images catalogued, uploaded and searchable on Trove, and this is set to increase markedly over the next month as we have catalogued a great many images now ready for uploading. A big thank you to the cataloguers who have doggedly worked at this ongoing task.

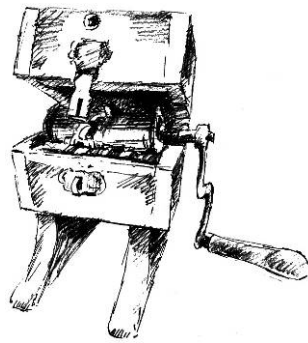


In appreciation of services rendered - volunteers enjoying the annual end of year Archives lunch in 2014

Museum News and Activities

Finding ways to keep visiting younger children busy and interested is one of the delightful challenges that keeps the museum team seeking new ideas.

The latest project is based on an idea brought back by member Carolyn Hutton from a museum in Wales. Museum volunteer Chris Moore is sketching some of the museum objects currently on display which would be mysterious to modern day children. The final result will be a new quiz sheet.



One of the more remarkable, and rather alarming, items is a mincer made of wood with metal blades and lined with lead. Described as "a small mincer to aid digestion", one wonders about long term effects! It was manufactured by A Lyon, Finsbury, London, who won two medals at the Paris Exhibition in 1855.

Included in the new children's quiz sheet is an iron dating from the 1930s with a round supply tank run on petrol. It was made by Brant Bros Ltd Sydney. When you see some of these items you can only reflect that progress is a wonderful thing.

The content of several photo albums which are either on display in the Southern Highlands 1200 exhibition cases or have been stored digitally is currently being prepared for uploading to the museum's web address www.storycentre.com.au.



The aim is to have scans of these photos available on the screens and iPads in the Williams Gallery with a short caption or story and for people to be able to look at them at home online if they go to the website.

Now completed is the Frank Moses photo collection comprising some 130 extraordinary photos that were taken while he was in Egypt, France and Belgium.

The images include life in Egypt at the time, what it was like on the battlefields and poignant shots of a number of locations before and after air-strikes. Also completed is the Don Pope collection from his time in Jerusalem, Jordan and in the battle fields. Candid shots of nurses and patients at the Burradoo Convalescent Hospital will soon be uploaded. This collection from the beautiful, well preserved album includes the opening of the Hospital and some of the day to day activities of the nurses. It is on display in the Klein room but, to see all the photographs, enter www.storycentre.com.au into your internet browser.

Berrima River Walk a great success. The museum was delighted to have the 'Wombats', a walking group from Sydney that has been in existence since 1988, visit recently. The group had done the Wingecarribee River walk and viewed the signs featuring images of the German merchant seamen's constructions made while they were interned at Berrima in WWI. The story still surprises visitors. The walk is a 'healthy' way to introduce people to a small part of Berrima's history.

Typewriter a hit with under 14s. A Royal typewriter from the 1930s was chosen to exhibit in the museum as it is a substantial model able to take much heavy pounding from younger visitors who just love this ancient object with all its keys to press. While on a trip to Melbourne, member Eric Savage took it there for an overhaul by typewriter repair man Tom Koster and it was brought back by our president Bruce Moore and wife Chris.



Museum hosted Council Heritage Awards. On 8 May the Williams Gallery was the venue for this year's Wingecarribee Shire Council's Heritage Awards. The biennial awards recognise and celebrate projects, events or people which contribute positively to our understanding and appreciation of the heritage and history of the Southern Highlands. Around 40 people, keen to learn if their project was amongst those selected for an award, were treated to afternoon tea.



The screens and iPads in the Williams Gallery

Salute to Bowral Heritage Building

A landmark building in central Bowral opened as banking premises in 1892 on the corner of Bong Bong and Wingecarribee Sts. The site was purchased in August 1890 by the English, Scottish and Australian (ES&A) Bank. It paid 1000 pounds to tanner Henry Pain for the property. Buildings were demolished, the existing site cleared and tan pit filled in.

To house the ES&A branch, an elegant two-storey brick building was erected with 38ft frontage to Bong Bong St and a depth of 191ft along Wingecarribee St. It had a downstairs banking chamber and strong room and a manager's residence upstairs. The branch opened, with R A Dobbin as manager, in May 1892. The first deposit was received from the Grand Hotel.

The opening of the ES&A branch added to the other banking services then available in Bowral. An agency of the Government Savings Bank of NSW had opened at Bowral Post Office in September 1883 and in March 1884 the Commercial Banking Co of Sydney moved from temporary premises into a striking and handsome new building located at the corner of Bong Bong and Merrigang Sts.

In 1886 Bowral was proclaimed a municipality and, along with banking and postal services, had three churches, two hotels, two newspapers and several general stores. After the railway opened in 1868, the local town population of around 600 grew to almost 1,000 every summer due to the influx of 'metropolitan gentry' who made the train journey from Sydney to be revived by Bowral's healthy highland climate.

In early 1900 the ES&A's Bowral branch closed, transferring to Moss Vale. In September 1912, the Government Savings Bank (GSB) of NSW purchased the former ES&A building from Mr F R Macpherson for £1800. So far it has not been established what purposes the building served between 1900 and 1912 or who Macpherson was. We would appreciate hearing from anyone who can provide information.

In November 1912, after renovations were done, the GSB of NSW commenced branch operations in the building with Harold P Parish as inaugural manager.



By 1916, with the nation embroiled in World War One, the GSB branch in Bowral conducted 2,165 accounts and had six agencies attached.

On 14 December 1931 the Government Savings Bank of NSW was absorbed by the Commonwealth Savings Bank through merger. The Commonwealth Bank of Australia had been established by an Act of Parliament in 1911. Over following years it became a nation-wide bank through mergers with state banks and also traded through post offices. The Post Office was the Bank's outlet in Bowral until the 1931 merger.

On the day after the merger, the former ES&A/GSB landmark building that had first opened as a bank in 1892 became a local branch of the Commonwealth Savings Bank. During World War Two, this branch became heavily involved in Government fund-raising activities, as well as acting as local agent for the meat and clothing rationing authorities. Several male staff members left to join-up and female officers took their places for the war's duration.

By 1955, with growth in branch business, space had become inadequate. To provide room for additional counters and working area, in 1958 the southern wall of the banking chamber was extended over the existing tradesman's entrance. During 1971, because of complaints from managers concerning heavy traffic noise and the unsatisfactory state of the residence, a new manager's residence was purchased in another part of town. The upstairs ex-residence was then used for staff amenities and storage space.

Branch business continued to grow. Major alterations were made to the existing premises in 1974 and five shops added at the rear fronting Wingecarribee St made available for lease. Care was taken to retain the heritage building's facade that blended in so well with the character of Bowral. In 1990, as space once again became inadequate, two of the adjoining leased shops were absorbed back into the banking chamber.

Up to the present time, many locals have conducted their banking in this centrally located building. It no longer houses a Commonwealth Bank branch, which has been relocated elsewhere in town. Whatever use is found for this heritage building, its familiar facade is an integral part of Bowral's unique streetscape.



Compiled by P Morton

Fitz Roy Ironworks Heritage Circuit

The launch on Sunday, 24 May 2015

A partnership between Wingecarribee Shire Council, Dr Leah Day and sponsors Woolworths has created a new Fitz Roy Iron Works heritage circuit at Mittagong.

A printed brochure is available with map, directions and historical descriptions of twelve heritage sites. These are arranged as a self-guided walk which commences at the archaeological site in Highlands Marketplace basement car-park. From there the walk progresses to the other sites, all having a connection with the Iron Works. At each of these sites an information plaque has been mounted with text and images to portray the heritage significance.



The circuit was launched at the site of the Iron Works historic cairn (erected in 1948) at Ironmines Oval. The launch date was significant as it commemorated the lighting of Australia's first hot-air blast furnace on that day, at that location, 150 years earlier. Among those attending were Jai Rowell, Member for Wollondilly, Duncan Gair, Wingecarribee Shire Mayor, and Group Manager of Woolworths, Lisa Ingram.

Each gave a short speech after Dr Leah Day outlined the background of the historic project. Dr Ian Jack, representing the Royal Australian Historical Society, gave a brief address and Sister Marie Hughes, a direct descendant of Enoch Hughes who supervised the construction of the blast furnace, also spoke.

A new commemorative panel at the cairn site was unveiled by Dr Day and the mayor.

Address by Dr Ian Jack on behalf of the Royal Australian Historical Society (extracts):

This month of May 2015 is the 150th anniversary of the opening of Australia's first hot-air blast furnace and this is the right site on which to celebrate this technological milestone.

Away back in 1948 the RAHS was the prime mover in erecting a cairn to commemorate the Catalan forge where the first Mittagong iron was smelted in 1848. The local Chamber of Commerce was already by 1947 planning a Centenary Iron Week, the Royal arranged sponsorship from Broken Hill Proprietary, the greatest of the iron firms in post-war Australia, and the Royal then contracted Loveridge and Hudson

to build the memorial, using trachyte from their great quarry at Mount Gibraltar.

What is not generally known is that the Royal did not intend the monument to be erected on this site at all. There was, after all, nothing industrial up here in 1848. The whole fledgling ironworks of 1848, including the Catalan forge, was situated down where Woolworth's huge complex has been built, and although the excavation and interpretation of that foundation Fitz Roy site did not happen until 2005, my predecessors at the Royal seventy years ago were well aware of the location of the 1848 works. But instead the local committee decided to erect the monument to 1848 here on the site of the 1860s blast furnaces. The wording on the plaque, which the Royal had supplied, was expanded, also at the last minute, by 40%, so the total cost of the cairn increased to over \$10,000 in modern money. I know all this because the Royal has still got in its archives the amended invoice from Loveridge and Hudson.

But I do not wish to give any impression that the Royal was lukewarm in its support for Mittagong's Iron Week in 1948. Far from it. The President of the Royal came to the opening ceremony at Mittagong on 2 October 1948 and delivered a fine speech on the significance of iron in nineteenth-century Australia to an audience of 3,000. I wish that an historical event could attract an audience of such proportions today.

The Presidents of Nattai Shire and Wingecarribee Shire, along with the assistant manager of BHP, made their speeches, and finally the NSW Governor, Lieutenant General Northcott, was able to remove the flag which concealed the tablet on the cairn.

67 years on, the RAHS is no less committed to the historical significance of Mittagong iron. During our conference held last year in Mittagong, I led a well-attended tour of the dramatic industrial footings revealed by the archaeological excavations of 2005. We at the Royal are gratified at the enthusiasm continuing to be displayed by Wingecarribee Shire Council and the local community, we wish you well with your Fitz Roy Heritage Circuit and we rejoice in the 150th anniversary of the hot-air blast furnace.



Dr Leah Day, Sr Marie Hughes, Mac Cott, Dr Ian Jack, Linda Emery and Jan Barkley-Jack after the circuit launch

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

PO Box 131 Mittagong NSW 2575 ☎ Telephone / Fax (02) 4872 2169

email: bdhsarchives@gmail.com ☎ web: www.berrimadistricthistoricalsociety.org.au

- 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: 10.00am to 4.00pm, Wednesdays to Sundays, and during school and public holidays.
Museum Committee: John Schweers (Manager, Tour Bookings), Harlan Hall (Project Manager),
Lyn Hall (Graphics, Exhibitions), Sylvia Carless (Roster), Chris Moore (Artist, Children's programs),
Judith Green (Procedures), Michele Woods (Exhibition content), Harold Wall (Human Resources).
- 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.

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- PATRON:** Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire: Councillor Duncan Gair
- President:** Mr Bruce MOORE 4872 3762 actmoore@bigpond.net.au
- Snr Vice President:** Mrs Linda EMERY 4883 4271 lemery75@southernphone.com.au
- Jnr Vice President:** Mrs Leonie KNAPMAN 4871 1804
- Hon Secretary:** Mr Philip MORTON 4883 7862 flipmort@bigpond.com
- Hon Treasurer:** Mrs Patricia DORIS 4872 3313
- Archivist:** Mrs Linda EMERY 4883 4271
- Museum Manager:** Mr John SCHWEERS 4872 1660 schweers@hn.ozemail.com.au
- Membership:** Mrs Peg HARVEY 4861 4521
- Newsletter Editor:** Ms Lavinia FORD 4869 4038 laviniachurch@dodo.com.au
- Research Officer:** Mr Max ROGERS 4861 3526 robert.rogers2@bigpond.com

Management Committee: President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Museum Manager, Research Officer,
plus members Peg Harvey (Minute Secretary), Carolyn Hutton, Denyse Barker, Robyn Arrowsmith and Ros Dale

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