







BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire, Southern Highlands of NSW

NEWSLETTER

No 488 October 2016

From the President's Desk

I've been delaying making an appointment to our dentist...a gentle giant who lays you back, makes you feel comfortable and asks, "now if you feel any pain, let me know immediately, and I'll stop".

Remarkably, I haven't felt anything, ever, under his care.

However, it must be the fear of anticipated pain that keeps me away from that surgery. I've been known to cross the road before I pass the place, in fear that someone will jump out, drag me inside and calculatingly tie me to a chair.

It all began in the sleepy town of Werris Creek during the war, where a semi-retired dentist had taken refuge from war-torn Rose Bay.

Werris Creek was so quiet that the only excitement for the day was to wait for the 1st division Brisbane Limited express to stop and temporarily eject a thousand Queensland bound army troops alighting for a cuppa. We often stood on the overhead bridge to look for any recognizable faces that may be on board. Sad stuff eh?



Bruce Moore, President

Continued on page 2

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

OCTOBER MEETING: Thursday 27 October at 2:00pm

VENUE: Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers

Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong

TOPIC: Archives Roadshow

An 'Archives Roadshow' – members invited to bring along interesting objects for a "Show and Tell"

afternoon

NOVEMBER MEETING: Thursday 24 November at 2:00pm

VENUE: Society Research Centre, Old Council Chambers

Building, Bowral Road, Mittagong

GUEST SPEAKER: AGM and General Meeting

AFTERNOON TEA: To be served following the speaker. Members please

bring a plate or a donation.



From the President

Continued from front page

During that pre-fluoride era I needed urgent dental treatment and was dragged kicking and screaming to the dentist. The chair was raised somewhere near the ceiling as this man with ape-like arms hovered over my mouth.

"Which tooth, Sonny?"
"At whaaa" I attempted to reply without biting off any of his fingers.

As the crane was lowered into my mouth with a jackhammer attached, the whirring began, slowly then faster, intermittently stopping for lunch, pain, washing, spitting, fresh cotton wool and more pain.

This instrument of torture was called a foot-operated pedal drill. My dentophobia began that day, exacerbated by the assistant saying, "not that one Mr. Blenkinsopp, the one next to it!" My faith in dentists was at an all time low.

As they say in the circus: 'done without the aid of a safety net!' which translated into dental terms means no anaesthetic! Ouch!

Now brace yourselves for this one.

I think Mr. Blenkinsopp made such a good impression on the townsfolk of Werris Creek, he got a little *Plaque!*

Would you consider . . .

As we all know Australia Post has significantly increased their postal charges and, as we have a sizable membership, the cost for postage each month is guite substantial.

Therefore it would help immensely if you would agree to receive the newsletter by email.

We thank the numerous members who have already responded to this appeal. For those of you who prefer receiving the newsletter by post, we assure you the printed version will continue to be issued.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Just a reminder that renewals are now due. Please remember to mail or email renewal form when paying by bank transfer.

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. Phone John 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

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

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

Nominations & appointments

For the attention of BDH&FHS Office Bearers, Other Committee Members, Appointed Position Holders and any prospective nominees:

Nomination and Appointment Forms are available from the Secretary.

These forms are to be lodged with the Secretary by Tues, 15 November for consideration at our Annual General Meeting on 24 November, 2016.

Position holders are reminded that a report on each area of responsibility is required for the November newsletter. Please submit to the Secretary by end of October.

RAHS conference 2016

The 2016 Royal Australian Historical Society's Conference will be held at Centro CBD, Wollongong on 22 and 23 October 2016. This year's theme is "Times Are A-Changing - History and Innovation".

The digital revolution is impacting how we research and produce history. There is also an increasing appetite for local and community history that connects people to their identity and place. History plays a critical role in advocacy campaigns to ensure that these places remain part of our cultural landscape in this era of widespread urban development. How historical societies engage with these developments is critical to ensure their continued relevancy in 21st century Australia.

Grace Karskens, Associate Professor of History, School of Humanities and Languages, University of NSW, will deliver the Lesley Muir Address.

The conference sessions will include:

Session B - Reinventing Wollongong, the ideal place to explore ideas of change and innovation. First inhabited by the Dharwal people, the arrival of Europeans saw it gradually change into an industrial city. The decline of manufacturing industries meant Wollongong needed to diversify and re-invent itself to ensure it remained a vibrant city.

Session E: The Role of Historical Organisations in Changing Times

Given the changes in technology and its impact on history, it is timely that RAHS President Associate Professor Carol Liston examines the role of historical societies. How does the work of historical societies help the community? Suzette Meade will examine the role of history in advocacy and protecting places that have cultural meaning to us.

Session F: Audiences are A-Changing

In the final session of the conference, speakers will discuss the process of how they turned research on people and their places into a format that promoted their work to new audiences and highlighted how legacies from the past impact our present. One of these speakers is Leonie Knapman with the topic "Joadja: breathing life into an historic town".

More detail is on the RAHS website or available from the BDHS Secretary.

General meeting 27 October

'Archives Roadshow' Show and Tell

Members are invited to come along and enjoy the showing of objects and, if they so wish, to bring any interesting objects they may like to show and tell.

Linda Emery will host the session and no doubt she will have some fascinating items to show which have found their way into the Archives.



Even old shoes may have a story worth telling!

Hill Top/Balmoral tour 30 October

The Society is hosting a bus tour to the villages of Hill Top and Balmoral and the Big Hill railway cutting on Sunday 30 October.

The bus will depart at 9:30am from the Archives and return at around 3:30pm. Morning tea and a country-style lunch will be provided. The tour cost is \$20.

Places are limited and filling fast, so we suggest you book and pay as soon as possible. Bookings may be made in person, by phone or email to the Archives.

After a tour of Hill Top's historic sites, morning tea will be served in the park. We then proceed to the Big Hill Cutting, for a spectacular walk along a section of the original rail line through the 78 feet high cutting.

There will then be a stop by the roadside at the bridge over the Big Hill Cutting to view the large monument sculpture erected in 1980. Next we visit the third Balmoral school, built in 1893, which today is part of a private residence. We will be shown the classrooms in the interior of the structure where much of the original layout remains.

The tour then heads to Balmoral Village Hall for lunch and to meet with a group of local residents who will provide some anecdotes of the area's history and of the sculptor, the late Joe Enfield, and his wife, who are held in high regard by the Balmoral community.

After lunch we will visit an historic homestead in the area, the details of which are still being negotiated.

Berrima Museum: the Story Centre

The museum continues to be well attended by visitors and tour groups. Average attendance has been 330 visitors per month over the last twelve months.

Despite inclement weather during the recent school vacation, good numbers of visitors still made it to the museum, some perhaps initially just seeking refuge and then being fascinated by the exhibitions.

When you next visit the museum you will see a small display featuring a model of a 1956 F600 car-carrier transporter truck. This model is an exact replica of the carrier built by Neil Scott of Deniliquin NSW who in the 1950s owned and operated a transport company.

He used the car carrier to deliver new Holden sedans from Dandenong in Melbourne to dealers throughout NSW and Victoria. During the 1950s car carriers were rare; new cars were mostly driven straight from the factory to dealers. Cars driven to country areas were often damaged by stone chips and had miles run up on the speedo.

Neil made it known that his transporter guaranteed no miles would be clocked on the speedo of Holden cars prior to their sale by dealers in country areas.

The car-carrier model now on display at the museum is one of a limited edition made by Armco Models. It was donated by John Pisani of Mittagong.



Neil Scott's car transporter at Deniliquin in the 1950s.



The donated model on display in the Klein Room, Berrima District Museum.

Miss Nellie Brenan, Arrenkamp Pt.2

Arrenkamp, an exclusive residence and farm estate on 240 acres located off Centennial Road, Bowral, was purchased around 1903 by Miss Nellie C Brenan.

Nellie was one of the daughters of a Sydney barrister and well-connected socially. She lived at Arrenkamp with Arthur Read, who was manager, and his wife Gertrude. They gradually built the property up into an exclusive boarding house with fine gardens, orchard, animals and a working farm. It was much sought after as a retreat from hectic city life. A private 9-hole golf course with sand greens opened west of the railway line on land near Arrenkamp in 1906, adding to the attraction.

Nellie Brenan had to be tough to survive. She placed the following notice in the Wollondilly Press in April 1908: "Caution. Anyone trespassing in my paddocks will be prosecuted. The boys who have been in frequently with their dogs lately, and are well known to myself and my manager, are specially warned that no apology will be taken, and their dogs will be shot for chasing my sheep." She could also express gratitude. The paper published the following from her in December 1909. "To the editor: recent bush fire at Arrenkamp. As many of the helpers at the fire were unknown to me, I am inserting this letter of thanks on the chance of them seeing it. I feel sure but for their efforts the poultry and pig yards would have been destroyed. I wish I could do more than thank them all. Hoping the New Year will be full of sunshine and happiness for them is the sincere wish of Nellie C Brenan, Arrenkamp."



There were regular advertisements for Arrenkamp in Sydney papers throughout the years of WW I, such as: "Bowral - Good vacancies at Arrenkamp. Plenty of hot and cold water, cream, milk, poultry and eggs; all vegetables grown on the farm, own sheep; weather perfect; near golf links."

The spelling of the property's name began to appear as Arrankamp, rather than the original Arrenkamp. Both continued in use with Arrankamp prevailing and from 1923 it was the only spelling. Was this perhaps due to sensitivity of its German origins?

A reflection of the years of WWI was later provided in a *Smith's Weekly* article about Nellie. "Beyond the daffodil paddock, nearer the creek, is a small, white railed enclosure - Miss Brenan's own war memorial. It was here, years ago, that the sons of Mr Justice Rich and Mr Justice Ferguson spent their holidays before the war, camped on the creekside. They entertained Miss Brenan to tea sometimes, and she still lives to tell the tale. But they enlisted, so forget-me-not and rosemary grow there today among wild bush plants."

By 1920 Miss Brenan was at the pinnacle of success. She was joined by her older brother Justin and sister Mary (Mrs Lamb), both from Sydney, who purchased homes in Bowral.

Nellie had a way of retaining the best staff and farm workers. In 1920 the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on a fresh record for pigs: "All previous prices were eclipsed at yesterday's Homebush Bay yard pig sales". The price paid for Nellie's Berkshire Backfatter pig, sold at auction, set a record for Australia.

In 1923 Nellie Brenan placed a 'for sale' notice in the *SMH*. This offered 23 splendid lots of from 1 to 4 acres each, fronting Centennial, Boronia, Myosotis or Alfred Streets. As well, the Arrankamp residence, goodwill and furniture were offered for sale. It appears Nellie was contemplating leaving town as she had become embroiled in difficulties with some townspeople and a controversy raged over the Bowral Rifle Club using her land. Yet she stayed and, having sold off some subdivided land, continued to operate the boarding house, the farm, and attend to her garden.

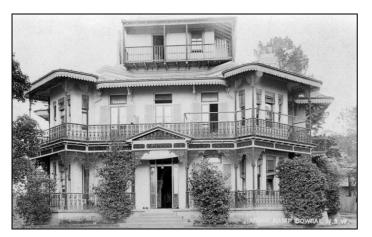
Arrankamp's famed flowers and farm

A report in the *Southern Mail* during October 1924 stated that "there was a fine display of the Queen of Flowers at Moss Vale Flower Show, and none finer than those of Miss Brenan. The Southern Highlands has reason to be proud of its roses if there are many collections to equal those of Arrankamp." By this time the resourceful Nellie Brenan was aged in her sixties. Her garden produced exquisite flowers for some of Sydney's leading flower shops and for local flower shows, weddings and other special occasions.

In January 1926 the Near and Far column in the *SMH* reported that a successful gymkhana, organised by Clive Ogilvy, was held in the grounds of Arrankamp. The majority of the events were arranged for children, and attracted a large number of entries. Miss Brenan provided picnic tea for the visitors. Later that year the paper advised that the CWA had arranged for the veterinary officer testing Miss Brenan's herd to meet those desiring further information as to the tuberculin testing of cattle and to explain the Government's offer to test herds supplying milk for public consumption.

Mr Hutcheson, the veterinary officer doing the work, afterwards expressed himself as more than satisfied with the healthiness of the Arrankamp herd, which he considered one of the best he had tested.

During 1928 building extensions were undertaken at Arrankamp, most probably an addition on the roof of the guesthouse to provide extra accommodation with a fine view. In 1929 Miss Brenan offered for sale a further "four splendid home sites, from 1 to 3 acres, adjoining the Craigieburn and Arrankamp boarding establishments". This sale reduced her holdings to some 170 acres.



Extra rooms added on Arrankamp's roof around 1930.

An article entitled 'Life work of a devoted gardener' appeared in the *Southern Mail* in November 1930. It commenced by saying that "hidden away behind the outbuildings at Arrankamp, Bowral, is one of the most beautiful gardens in this district, which means that it is one of the most beautiful in the Commonwealth. It is a monument to the courage and energy of a devoted lover of Nature, Miss N C Brenan."

Smith's Weekly published an appreciation of her life in 1934. It began by stating that "for over 30 years Miss Brenan has lived at Arrankamp. She went there in the rich years of her life. Today she is over seventy years, though strangers would not suspect it, and even life-long friends of hers, such as the Horderns, the Fergusons, and the Gordons, have to remind themselves constantly that the white-haired lady who has planted a garden there, tells the truth when she tells her age. She made a reputation for herself as a business woman and as the best guardian of the young generation during its school holidays that society mothers have yet discovered."

Miss Brenan continued to be featured regularly in the local *Southern Mail* newspaper:

6 July 1937: "An eloquent testimony to the character of the late Clement McDonald was a beautiful wreath sent by Miss Brenan, of Arrankamp, and her staff. Mr McDonald had worked in Miss Brenan's garden loyally and conscientiously for fourteen years and his loss is felt keenly."

10 September 1937: "A pretty wedding was held at St Simon and St Jude's Church of England, Bowral, on Saturday evening last, when Ruby May, only daughter of Mr and Mrs W Speer, of Wynnstay, Bowral, was married to Colin Maxwell Cooper, of Bowral and Canberra.

The flowers decorating the church and reception rooms came from Miss Brenan's lovely garden at Arrankamp, and the beautiful bouquets carried by the bride were the gift of Mrs Reid of Arrankamp."

2 Feb 1940: "The recent tennis tourney and dance, organised by Mrs R K Ling and Mr H Springett Jr, respectively, realised the sum of 57 pounds for the Red Cross. Miss Patricia Grant helped swell the funds by holding a juvenile tennis tournament at Arrankamp through the courtesy of Miss Brenan. The persons mentioned deserve every praise for their efforts which the Red Cross greatly appreciated."

From the 1930s Miss Brenan was caught up in moves by Bowral Council to extend the nearby golf links. She offered the Arrankamp Estate for sale in 1940 as a going concern. The guesthouse was described as consisting of a lounge and dining room (seating 50) and 25 bedrooms, plus staff quarters, garages and tennis court.

No buyer took up the offer and Nellie continued there until her death in 1945.

The Southern Mail paid tribute to her in an obituary: "Miss Nellie C Brenan, of Arrankamp, Bowral, passed away on Saturday at the advanced age of 84. She was one of the most highly esteemed members of our community, her good deeds endearing her to all, and especially to young people, to whom she devoted so much of her life. She was a lover of all that is beautiful in Nature, and her garden at Arrankamp for nearly half a century was one of the beauty spots of the district, made even more beautiful by the presence there of the greatlady who loved to share its glories. Flowers from her garden went regularly to St Jude's and to most of the local institutions. Her passing will be mourned in widely separated homes by friends in all classes of society."

From the 1930s the Arrankamp Estate was being considered by Bowral Council as part of a possible site for a municipal golf course. The matter became complex with other sites also being considered and the nearby Craigeburn estate also making proposals. After Nellie's death in 1945, Bowral Council bought the Arrankamp property and for a time it continued to operate as a guesthouse, advertised along with the adjoining golf course. In 1948 Arrankamp's bungalow cottage became the clubhouse for the newly formed Bowral Country Club after it extended its holdings to include the Arrankamp estate. During the 1950s the guesthouse building was demolished.

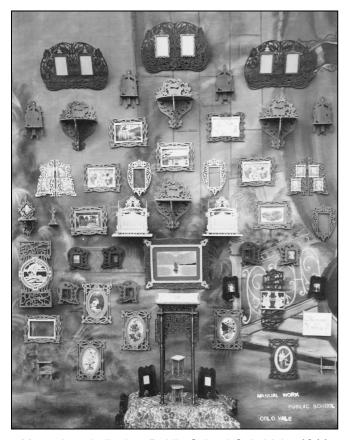


Arrankamp became a golf course.Compiled by P Morton

Colo Vale Public School in 1911

Last month we featured the story of a bundle of family photographs belonging to Colin McFarlane who had lived at Ravensdale, a residence and property on the Old Hume Highway at Aylmerton. Colin allowed our member Tim McCartney to borrow the photos for us to scan and add to the BDHS photographic collection.

Most of the photos are from the 1930s and 1940s, but some were older, including the one shown below from 1911. It is a large photo in a fine cardboard frame.



Manual work display, Public School Colo Vale, 1911

Some background to the relevance of this photo was found in the *Robertson Advocate* of 29 August 1911. Some extracts from the paper's report follow here.

The new school at Colo Vale

"The new school which has been erected at Colo Vale was opened on Friday last by Mr McLelland, Deputy Chief Inspector. Mr McLelland spoke at some length and gave some practical advice as to the training of pupils, pointing out that while some attention should be given to school studies, still greater attention should be paid to the cultivation of character.

He advocated openness and fearlessness on the part of the boys and gentleness on the part of the girls. He spoke in very high terms of the head teacher (Miss McClurg). The Reverend E Heffernan of Mittagong then gave a short address. He drew attention to the beautiful decorations on the walls and the display of manual work - the outcome of the efforts of the pupils - which he said spoke of refinement.

Miss McClurg then presented Mr McLelland with a gold key and he formally declared the school opened. Songs and recitations were afterwards rendered by the pupils, bringing the proceedings to a conclusion. The school has been substantially built, and special attention has been paid to having it well lighted."

The Society's historical records reveal that the school opened in 1882 as Chalkerville Provisional School on Old South Road. It was raised to public school status and in 1885 a new weatherboard classroom was built on a nearby site, but enrolments soon fell. In 1894 the school building was moved by dray and horses to a 2-acre site at the corner of Colo Vale Road and Great Southern Road, a more central location from which to serve the residents of Chalkerville, Colo Vale and Braemar. It was renamed Colo Vale Public School.

As only minor repairs were made to the building over following years, by 1910 it was at risk of collapse in a strong wind. The Schools Inspector recommended a new building for 50 children. He reasoned that the projected diversion of the Picton-Mittagong section of the Southern Railway would bring a large number of workers and their families to the area. In June 1911 a new weatherboard school was opened, with a 25 by 22 feet classroom and an 8-feet wide verandah. The old schoolroom was repaired and continued in use.

In 1930 the school was renamed as Aylmerton Public School. In 1985, to make way for the Hume Freeway by-pass, it was relocated to Wattle St, Colo Vale and the name changed back to Colo Vale Public School.



The new school house of 1911 with older building at rear.



Pupils at the time the new school was built. Framed copies of this photo appeared amongst the featured manual work on the wall at the opening in 1911.

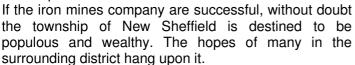
From the newspapers

Goulburn Herald and Chronicle Wednesday 18 October 1865 page 2

BERRIMA.

The alterations and additions to the gaol are progressing under the superintendence of Mr. Peattie, the government inspector. They are of an extensive kind, involving an outlay of some thousands of pounds. At the Fitzroy Iron Works, preparations are being made for the speedy erection of puddling furnaces and rolling

mills for the manufacture of Several iron. private residences business and houses are in course of erection, and the place which two years ago was desolate looking, now wears a busy and thriving aspect. An eligible site for the erection of an Anglican Church has been secured, and it is reported that the erection of a Roman Catholic Church is contemplated.



Sydney Mail Saturday 3 February 1866 page 7 NEW SHEFFIELD.

New Sheffield is the name given to the township in which the Fitzroy Iron Works are situated. Lofty ranges of hills, which are thickly wooded, and supposed to contain rich mineral deposits, rear their heads on either side, and the approaches from Picton and Berrima are very pleasant,

especially at this season of the year. The climate is, probably, one of the most healthy in New South Wales, hot winds and sudden changes being less prevalent than in most other districts. During the past few months its importance has daily increased, and whereas a short time ago the great bulk of its buildings were the old style of slab, bark, or corrugated iron edifices, Buch as were to be seen on the diggings ten or twelve years ago, we can now

boast of at least two respectable hotels, several commodious, substantially-erected stores, a handsome Wesleyan church (capable of holding about 300 persons), and some neat weatherboard cottages. There are no Government buildings (the post-office being at Watson's Hotel, Nattai), and but few private residences of a pretentious character. But scarcely a week elapses without one or more structures being either commenced or finished, and it is the opinion of those who are acquainted with the district that, should the mines succeed, New Sheffield will ultimately become the workshop of the colony, I can confidently share that opinion, but it is a matter for all reasonable doubt whether the mines ever will

come up to the expectations which have been formed of them.

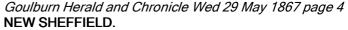
On Thursday, an accident occurred to a man named Hood whilst working in the tunnel of the coal mine whence the Iron Company obtain their fuel. His back was severely hurt; but I am happy to say that, under the skilful treatment of Dr. Kinnear, he is rapidly approaching convalescence, The want of a hospital, I am afraid, will be very much felt here if the population increases so rapidly during the next twelve months as it has during the last.

We were visited by heavy showers of rain yesterday, and for miles round the waterholes have been filled, the creeks set flowing, the ground soaked, and grass is shooting up in

every direction. The weather is now intensely cold. It is the intention of the Iron Company, I believe, to erect two more furnaces and larger offices, and to construct a branch line of railway to join the works with the Great Southern Railway, just above the spot where it is conjectured the station will be erected. The line will be about a quarter of a mile in extent.

Our Sabbath-school now numbers nearly eighty children; the average

attendance being about sixty-five, and the number of teachers twelve. Saturday, January 20th.



This township presented quite a gay appearance on the forty-eighth anniversary of our most beloved Queen Victoria; long may she reign. Most of the business houses were closed till towards evening, when they opened to allow the juvenile part of the population to purchase fireworks, and a great many adults also joined in the display of fireworls quite as much as the juveniles. The

weather was rather cold, which prevented a great many from coming out who would have done so if the weather had not been so rough. The chief point of attraction was a cricket match that came off at Berrima between eleven players of that place and the same number from Spring Hill. Berrima won by six wickets to spare. There were also a great many visitors inspecting the now crushingmachine of Messrs. Larkin and Wakeford, which is workling at, the Gibraltar Mountain, breaking stone for the now extension between Moss

Vale and the township of Nattai. In the evening there was a grand illumination all over the town-rockets, squibs, Roman-candles and Chinese crackers were in great demand. At Draper's, Hosking's, Barrett's, and Terry's were fireworks to be seen and heard; in fact everyone appeared to enjoy themselves. There was also a great deal of fun caused by two men running with a tar-barrel all in flames up-and down the principal street of New Sheffield. Great praise is due to Mr. Wilson for the way in which he brought this interesting piece of amusement forward. So ended the 24th May, 1867.

Compiled by Lavinia Ford



Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

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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@bigpond.com 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), 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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Management Committee: President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Museum Manager, Research Officer, plus members Peg Harvey (Minute Secretary), Denyse Barker and Robyn Arrowsmith