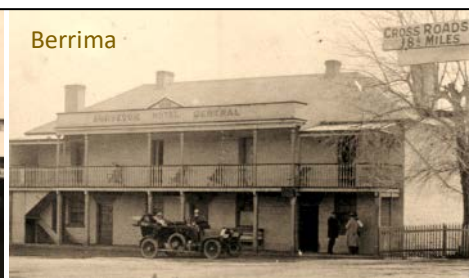




Bowral



Mittagong



Berrima



Moss Vale

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire,
Southern Highlands of NSW

ABN 29 362 616 937

NEWSLETTER

No 551 August 2022



From the President's Desk

Wingecarribee Shire Council Administrator, Mr Viv May recently announced on local radio that their grant application to the NSW Government for \$5 million to upgrade

the Mittagong Memorial Hall complex was unsuccessful. This is not surprising with the state of the finances and the priorities of the State Government battling natural disasters such as floods and Covid 19. The result of this development is that our existing tenancy will be unchanged for some considerable time. Council indicated that grant applications for this project will be ongoing.

Our speaker for the August general meeting will be Kerry Ross. Kerry is the Museum Coordinator at the Goulburn Mulwaree Council. Goulburn, a city in our adjacent local government area is steeped in history which should evolve into an interesting presentation. Kerry's profile can be read on page 3.

Also on page 3 is notification of an exhibition by Mittagong artist Annemarie Dalziel, titled *Imperial Stockings*. This exhibition has significant historical interest and evokes the cross-cultural connections between the Southern Highlands and the Scottish Highlands.

Successful sale of our surplus books has encouraged our Librarian, Carolyn to continue with de-cluttering our shelves – on page 4 is a new list of books for sale.

Our Society has entered our website in the Dorothy Fellows Website Award in the category: *Best website designed and administered by a society member*.

I think our website is exceptionally good and credit should go to Linda Emery for her design of the site.

In last month's newsletter we featured Dr Wise and the grandfather clock donated to our Society. A history of five doctors from the same Moss Vale practice was the subject of our July general meeting presentation. In this issue we continue the theme with Dr Gurney who has a public memorial erected in his honour at the entrance to the Bundanoon Recreation Reserve.

The family history group continues each month with a small but eager group researching their family histories and the associated facilities and procedures available. At our last meeting Philip Morton gave an interesting presentation on scanning and editing photographs, forms and documents.

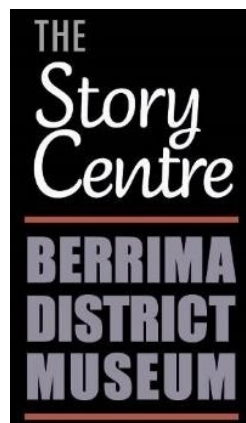
Sadly, I report that Bob Williams and Harlan Hall, both long associated with the Berrima District Museum, are seriously ill. Our thoughts go out to Gloria Williams and Lyn Hall at this most difficult time.

Ian Mackey

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS 2022

AUGUST 2022:	Thursday 25 August at 2:00pm
SPEAKER:	Kerry Ross, Goulburn Mulwaree Council on museum history
SEPTEMBER 2022:	Thursday 22 September at 2:00pm
SPEAKER:	Alex Bebin, Archaeologist, on the dig at Bong Bong Common
AFTERNOON TEA is served following the speaker	

The **Family History Interest Group** meets at the Mittagong Archives on the first Wednesday each month, at 1pm



Moore Memorable Musings



OPENING OUR'S

For the sake of this article, anyone over the age of 65 will be referred to as an OAP (older aged person).

Seeing as I belong to this group, as do most of our volunteers at the BDHS, we all will identify with this story.

Whilst shopping for my favourite food items I spied a pack of pre-sliced leg ham. What a great snack idea, with grilled cheese or pasta!

The plastic pack says "open here" in one corner. I must have spent a good 15 minutes fiddling with that unforgiving corner, trying to separate the soft plastic bit from the hard plastic bottom. 'Resealable' it also asserts, which is a load of codswallop because I'm still unable to *unseal* the little sucker.

Nothing that a sharp knife and a pair of scissors can't fix! Bingo! The ham is uncovered, never to be returned to its original annihilated packaging. And that's only the beginning.

On the back of the pack hidden in its world of fine printing, I look for the 'use-by' date. My high-powered triple lens reading glasses are no match for the super-fine print.

Nothing short of using a super-magnifier supported by flood lights was I able to read the microscopic writing. Which spelt out 'may contain almonds, macadamias, hazelnuts, pistachio nuts, oats, barley, sheep droppings, old tyres and every grain known to mankind'. I only wanted *ham*, not a 10-course degustation!

And just how many allergic people do we have in this country of ours?

While I'm on my soapbox, the same applies to any OAP attempting to cook a pasta dish.

After opening the plastic, 'easy opening,' packet, spilling half the contents over the kitchen floor, the trick is to find where it says 'cooking time'.

Out comes the magnifying and lighting equipment once more so I can read the magic but miniscule words: '8 minutes'.

What a feast we're having, two packs open and I've just missed the news!

Bruce Moore

BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM

The Story Centre

1a Market Place cnr Bryan St, Berrima

OPEN: FRIDAY to SUNDAY

10.00am to 3.00pm

throughout the year including school and public holiday periods.

Groups welcome at other times by arrangement. Ph John 0434 623 402

Museum: Phone 4877 1130 or email bdmuseum@bigpond.com

Managed and operated by members of our Society who volunteer their time and expertise.

Archives' opening hours

Monday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Tuesday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

BDHS Research Fee

The Society's fee for undertaking a general research request has now increased to \$40.



Official opening of the Dr Guy Gurney Memorial Gates at Bundanoon Gullies Reserve, Saturday 8 March 1958

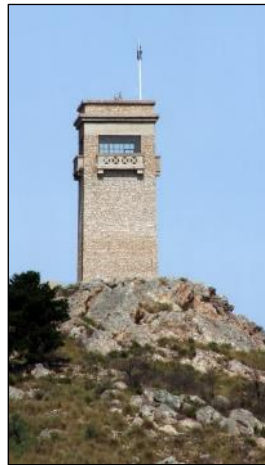
At left are Guy's father, widow and sons. The dignitaries include, at far right, Hon Tom Lewis, local member, who later became Minister for Lands and then Premier of NSW. The story of Guy Gurney is on pages 5-7.

August meeting speaker: Kerry Ross

Museums Coordinator, Goulburn Mulwaree Council
The talk: Goulburn Mulwaree Museums, 1843-2022

Kerry has a background in the Higher Education sector having worked at University of Wollongong for almost 20 years as Tutor, Research Assistant, Author, Academic Librarian and lastly Archives Manager for the university corporate and cultural collections. During this latter period Kerry worked to promote public access to the university archives through collection digitisation projects and a busy schedule of exhibitions to showcase the archive collections to local, regional and international visitors.

Since joining the Museums Team at Goulburn Mulwaree Council in May 2019, Kerry has curated the opening exhibition at Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum, managed grant funded projects and is currently working to implement the Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum Strategic Plan 2019-2022 and prepare for the next exhibition.



Constructed to honour the fighting men of WWI, the Rocky Hill monument houses a museum of the military

Kerry is supported in managing Council museums by three permanent staff members, a team of 6 casual museum attendants and more than 30 dedicated volunteers, some of whom have contributed their time for more than 20 years.

Kerry is looking forward to curating future exhibitions, building programming for students and the general public, opening an onsite public research centre and developing and implementing a digitisation plan with staff and volunteers to share this nationally significant collection with a broader online audience.

Invitation to Mittagong art exhibition

An exhibition by Mittagong artist Annemaree Dalziel, titled *Imperial Stockings* is showing at Fundamental Gallery, 11 Station Street Mittagong, 12 to 22 August, open daily from 10am - 5pm.

BDHS members are invited by the artist to attend the opening on Saturday 13 August, from 2 pm to 4 pm.

Annemaree is a Doctor of Creative Arts candidate at the University of Wollongong, and the exhibition is part of her doctoral research, rather than being commercially oriented.

In the exhibition she introduces seven pairs of beautiful hand-knitted long socks that incorporate texts and iconic images in their designs. These *Imperial Stockings* are both contemporary artworks and conversation catalysts evoking historical and cross-cultural connections between the Southern Highlands and the Scottish Highlanders.



The artist says that 'The *Imperial Stockings* chronicle a story of loss. The Highland Clearances displaced Gaelic-speaking Scots to Australia in the 19th century. Some settled in the Southern Highlands on land that – in a similar pattern – was acquired by the displacement of the Indigenous people living there'.

'While the story of the Clearances is only one of many such stories reverberating worldwide across time and space, it is one that opened my eyes and heart to how I came to be an Australian, and what it might take to truly belong here. In telling this story of cultural grief and trauma, I am inviting people to join me in asking, "What happened to all that grief?"'.

3rd lot sale of BDHS Library books

Our Librarian, Carolyn Dougherty, is continuing to cull books surplus to BDHS requirements, and below is a list of publications for sale with prices at a discount.

Most of the books listed in our past two newsletters were very quickly snapped up so please contact us without delay if you want to buy any of these books.

If you live locally, you may collect and pay for your selections at the archives during opening hours. Alternatively, phone 4872 2169 or email the Society at bdhsarchives@gmail.com and we will advise cost of postage and payment methods.

LIBRARY BOOKS FOR SALE – LIST THREE, JULY 2022

Books are ex library so will have labels on their covers

Bayley, William A. ***Picton-Mittagong Loop-Line Railway***. Paperback. Published 1974. \$8

Bow, J.M. (Ed.) ***As Cold Water to a Thirsty Soul. A Collection of Letters from James Payler and others at Woodhouse, England to William Wood and Ann (Payler) and family of "Rifle Farm" Bong Bong near Berrima***. Soft Cover. Published 1987. 6 copies. \$10

Bunt, John. ***Antarctic Memoirs***. Published 2006. Soft cover. \$7

Celebrating One Hundred Years: The Opening of the Wombeyan Caves Road and Tunnel, 29 Jan 1900. Paperback. \$5

Centenary of Australia's First Iron Smelting at Mittagong, New South Wales. Published 1948. Paperback. Some damage to cover. \$10

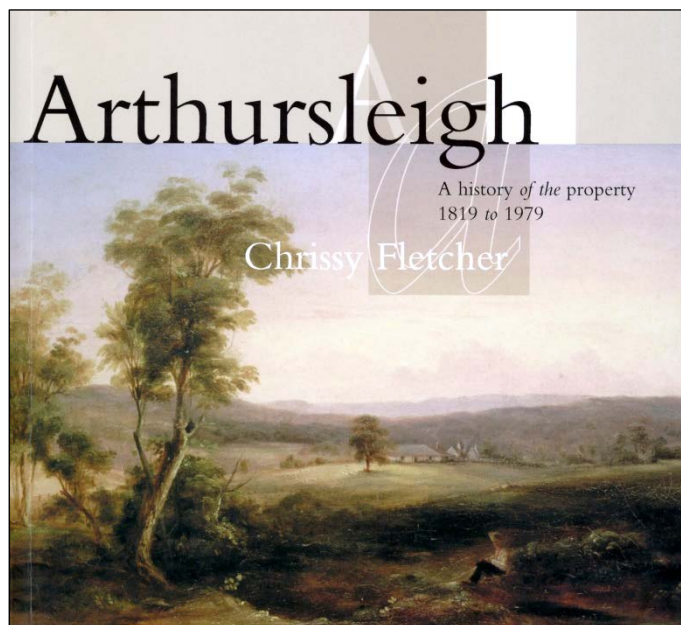
Chalker, Marie A. ***A Chapter in the History of Mittagong: The bush fire of 1939***. Soft cover. Published c1994. \$5

Cyclopedia of N.S.W. 1904. Free Part. This work published as a prospectus for the main publication. Soft cover. \$10

Day, Leah. ***Beautiful Bowral: A Pictorial Celebration***. Published 1997. Hard Cover. As new. 2 copies. \$10

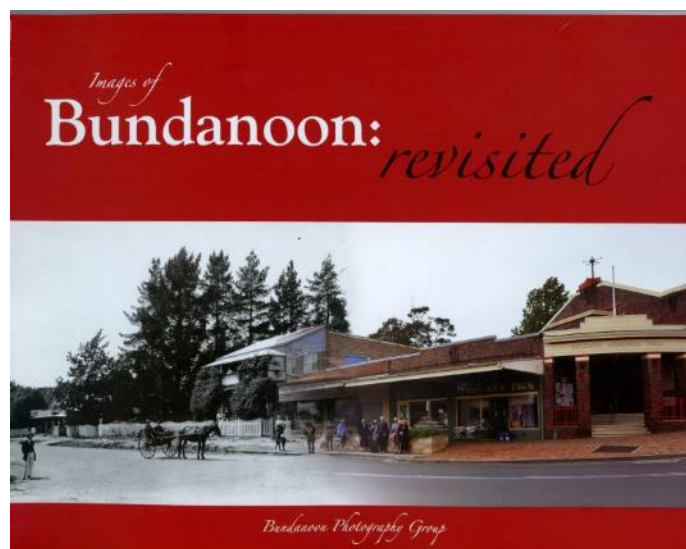
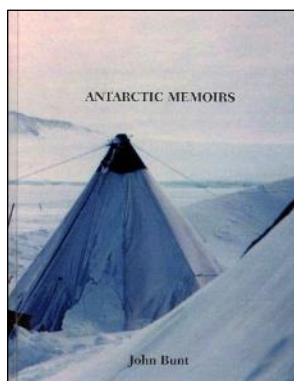
De Vries, Susanna. ***Blue Ribbons Bitter Bread: The life of Joice Nankivell Loch***. Published 2000. Excellent condition. Soft cover. \$7

Else-Mitchell, R. ***Early Industries in the Mittagong District***. Published 1981. \$5



Fletcher, Chrissy. ***Arthursleigh: A history of the property 1819 to 1979***. Published 2002. Soft cover. \$15

Henderson, Beryl (Ed.). ***Monuments and Memorials***. Soft cover. Published 1988. \$7



Images of Bundanoon: revisited. Published by the Bundanoon Photography Group 2014. As new. \$15

Kennedy, Priscilla. ***Portrait of Winifred West***. Hard copy. Published 1976. \$10

Lee, Claude N. ***A Place to Remember: Burraborang Valley, New South Wales***. Published 1957. Soft cover. \$5

Lhuede, Valerie. ***Yerranderie is my Dreaming***. Published 2007. Excellent condition. Softcover. \$35

McColgan, John. ***Southern Highlands Story***. Published 1995. Soft cover. \$5

Stanley Hughes, Thea. ***Arthur Phillip***. Softcover. Soft cover. \$5

Dr Guy Gurney Memorial Bundanoon

In last month's newsletter it was mentioned that a grandfather clock was recently donated to the BDHS.

Linda Emery noted that the clock had been presented in 1954 to Dr Allen Wise by the citizens of Moss Vale. It is now located in the foyer outside our upstairs meeting room at the Mittagong Archives/Research Centre as a public memorial that will be enhanced with a brief history and photographs of Dr Wise's life.

Linda also noted that two other doctors who served in the same practice, Dr Alcorn and Dr Gurney, have public memorials dedicated to them – the Alcorn Memorial Clock in Moss Vale and the Guy Gurney Memorial entrance gates at Morton National Park.

A history of each of these memorials will be provided in this newsletter, with Dr Gurney's memorial and his life being the feature this month.

Of the five doctors in the Moss Vale practice whom we spoke about at our July meeting – Drs Stevenson, Alcorn, Wise, Newton and Gurney – the only one locally born was Dr Gurney. His life was unfortunately cut short, an illness causing death at age 34, in 1953.

GUY STEPHEN GURNEY was born at Bowral in 1919, his father being Richard Victor GURNEY and his mother Ethel Grace STEPHENS.

Ethel, born at Bowral in 1896, was the third daughter of Alfred and Elizabeth Stephens. Their family history is well known to some of our members.

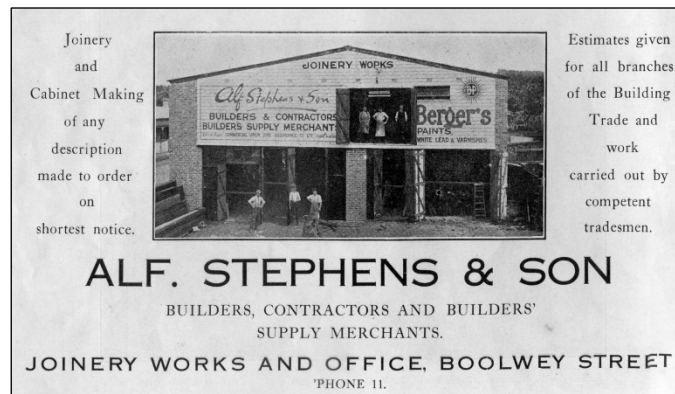
In brief, Alfred Stephens emigrated from Middlesex, England, coming to Bowral in 1885. His wife-to-be followed a year later. After working for two years to gain local building trade experience in Bowral, Alfred established in business, constructing numerous houses in Bowral.

By 1896 he had become an alderman on Bowral Municipal Council and by May that year completed the building of Bowral Court House. The following year he built the Superintendent's residence at Berrima Gaol. He was also a prominent member of the Methodist Church and was Noble Grand of the local lodge of Oddfellows.

In 1903 he was joined in business by his son, also Alfred, who was born in 1887 and attended Bowral Public School. Together they constructed many



prominent buildings, including the Empire Picture Theatre in Bowral. In 1917 Alf senior retired, handing the business over to Alf junior (then 30 years old) with provision for his younger brother Norris to come in when he turned 21. Alf senior moved to Manly with his wife and died there in 1924, aged 54 years.



Alf Stephens & Son grew to become a prominent local builder, contractor and supply merchant, with constructions including Ranalegh House, Robertson, Dormie House, Moss Vale and new District Hospital buildings at Bowral in 1933. The business also took on work further afield, in various parts of NSW and in Canberra where they constructed the Girl's Grammar School and 700 inner suburban houses during the 1930s and early 1940s.

Guy Gurney thus inherited strong connections to the well-respected local family of Alfred Stephens Senior, being his grandson, and being the nephew of his mother's brothers, Alfred Jnr and Norris.



Guy's father, known as Victor, while still a young man in 1912, opened a plumbing business in Bong Bong St, Bowral (pictured above) and then, in 1919, purchased land in Wingecarribee St on which he built a weatherboard office and workshop, and moved his plumbing business there. W D Platt joined him in a business partnership in 1924, and a considerable wholesale commodities distribution business was built up, known as Gurney & Platt. Victor's link with the Stephens family would no doubt have helped the business to thrive from the 1920s to the 1940s.

Victor withdrew from the business in 1955, but his family continued to hold shares in the company after its incorporation in 1966.



A new brick premises (above) was built in 1971 on the Wingecarribee St site, serving as a hardware store for trade and retail sales. In 1974 the Adams family purchased the Platt's shares in the Company. In 1976 the sales of materials and appliances was made a separate entity, under the name Bowral Trading Company (later renamed Jays Hardware), while the service side of the Company continued to trade for some time as Gurney & Platt Pty Ltd.

Richard Victor Gurney married Ethel Grace Stephens in 1918 at Manly and they then took up residence in Boolwey St, Bowral, raising Guy and a daughter Ruth (who when an adult married H S Nelson and moved to Inverell).



Three generations of Gurneys: from left Richard Victor, Guy and Henry; photo courtesy Peter Gurney, Guy's son

Guy attended Bowral Primary and High Schools and achieved high attainment in academic studies.

On 14 May 1937, as part of coronation celebrations in Bowral, a large crowd gathered for the ceremony of planting Red Pin Oaks in Station St between Bong Bong and Merrigang Sts. Children selected from schools in the district performed the plantings, the first tree being planted by Guy Gurney as Bowral High School representative. He would then have been in the senior class and most likely a prefect or captain.

Guy graduated in medicine from the University of Sydney in 1943, and after the usual probationary period of 12 months at the Coast Hospital, where he met his future wife, he enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps with the rank of Captain.

He saw service in the islands to the north of Australia but was taken seriously ill at Tarakan. Flown back to Australia he entered Concord military hospital for an immediate operation. Upon his discharge from the Army a year later, in 1944, he married Elsie Elisabeth Hellier at the Wesley Chapel, the principal of the College officiating at the ceremony.

Shortly after Guy and Elsie married, they moved to Bundanoon, he taking up as a medical practitioner and quickly establishing himself 'as the result of a quiet and pleasing personality' (quote from *The Southern Mail*, 1953). He served the entire community of the Shire's southern area, assisted in the Moss Vale practice of Doctors William Newton and Allen Wise, and did duty at the Berrima District Hospital in Bowral.



His wife Elsie, a trained nursing sister who served her probationary term and later as sister at the Coast Hospital, also became a popular figure in Bundanoon and the wider area. Elsie and Guy had three sons, Peter, Stephen and David.

Sadly, Dr Gurney passed away on 2 June 1953, having been ill for some time. He was aged 34 years and the youngest son, David, was just 12 months old. *The Moss Vale Post* of 5 June 1953 published a heart-felt obituary and an article about his funeral, from which the following is extracted:

"Although Dr Gurney's stay in Bundanoon was relatively short, he established for himself a wide popularity, and those foremost in advancing the interests of that centre testified to his eagerness to join in everything, when the limited time available enabled him to do so . . . Adding to the sorrow associated with the passing of such a young and promising medical figure are three young sons . . . When he realised that the end was not far off, Dr Gurney expressed a wish to be taken home to Bowral, so that he could be with his parents at the last." This was granted and he died seven days later.

Under the heading 'Masses of Wreaths', the paper noted that the "wealth of wreaths and floral tributes handed in by mourners and sympathisers to the funeral service in the Methodist Church, Bowral, yesterday morning was living testimony of the popularity of the late Dr Guy Gurney".

"Prominent amongst the congregation which was unable to gain entry to the church owing to the large assembly, were residents of Bundanoon where the late Doctor had practiced for the past few years. He endeared himself to the entire populace of Bundanoon . . . Already a suggestion has been made for a simple memorial in his honour."

Several months later, a Dr Gurney Memorial Fund was opened at Bundanoon and made available for contributions from other centres. The *Southern Mail* of 23 October 1953 advised that, to provide an opportunity for Bowral residents to contribute to the Dr Guy Gurney Memorial Fund, arrangements had been made for contributions to be received at Crago's Pharmacy, Bong Bong Street.

Similar collection points were opened in every town between Moss Vale and Tallong so that the whole district could contribute to some fitting tribute to Dr Gurney's memory. The actual form of the tribute was to be decided by public meetings in Bundanoon, but became a complex issue and it took several years for a solution to be agreed upon.

The *Moss Vale Post* of 28 February 1958 reported that at first the memorial was to take the form of a town clock, but a number of obstacles presented themselves, and the plans were reviewed. A happy thought came to the members of the Gullies Trust who were engaged on an expansion scheme in the Bundanoon Recreation Reserve, and a proposal that an entrance gateway be erected to take the form of a memorial was finally adopted.

GURNEY MEMORIAL UNVEILING AT BUNDANOON



See also the photograph on page 2

On Saturday afternoon, 8 March 1958, a memorial to the late Dr Guy Gurney in the form of two sandstone pillars at the entrance to the Bundanoon Recreation Reserve was unveiled by the NSW Minister for Lands, the Hon William McCulloch Gollan.

The *Moss Vale Post* reported him saying that the gentleman in whose memory this entrance has been erected must have been held in the highest regard by the citizens, as he surveyed the large gathering before unveiling the memorial. He later commented

that beforehand he had been taken for an inspection of the beautiful reserve and was very impressed, and hoped he would visit again.

The sandstone used came from a Bundanoon quarry and the work was carried out by Mr Frank Hayman of Bundanoon. Mr R Newton-Tabrett, Engineer to Wingecarribee Shire, was the honorary architect.

The President of the Trust controlling the Reserve, Mr Russell Barton, the President of Wingecarribee Shire Council, Cr H T Ellsmore, and Cr G Wood-Davies, in addressing the gathering, in turn paid tribute to the lovable, sterling qualities of the Doctor, who had never spared himself in the service of the sick and suffering. Members of Dr Gurney's family present were his widow and three sons, his sister and his parents. His father addressed the gathering, saying that he had some idea of the great regard the people had for his son when he received over 800 letters and cards after his death.

After the ceremony, the Trustees served afternoon tea at Gambell's Memorial Shelter in the Reserve.

The memorial pillars still adorn the entrance to the Bundanoon Gullies Recreation Reserve, located a short way from the town centre, down Constitution Hill. The Reserve is now part of Morton National Park, run by the National Parks & Wildlife Service.



The pillars are an enduring tribute to Dr Gurney and to those that brought the memorial into existence including the Gullies Trustees, the many local people who contributed financially, and the skill of the architect and stonemason.



compiled by Philip Morton, with contributions from Dennis McManus and Bud Townsing

Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc

PO Box 131 Mittagong NSW 2575 ☎ Telephone (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 a general collection.
- MUSEUM:** Market Place, Berrima. Tel: 02 4877 1130. Email: bdmuseum@bigpond.com
AT PRESENT, OPEN: 10.00am to 4.00pm, Fridays to Sundays.
This includes during school and public holiday periods.
- 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, Museums Australia Inc and NSW Association of Family History Societies.

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