



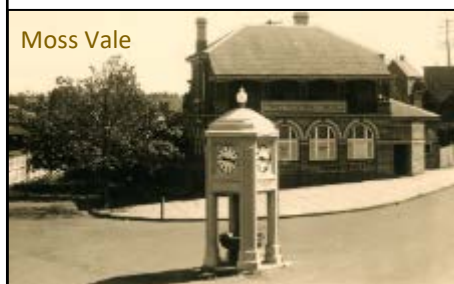
Bowral



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 556 February 2023



### From the President's Desk

A Happy New Year to all our members and welcome to our first newsletter for 2023. It is with increased enthusiasm that we enter this year with a much-reduced number of severe Covid cases.

I think it is now a matter of living with the virus, as my experience was mild flu-like symptoms and no ongoing after effects.

Our regular monthly general meetings resume on 23 February. Linda Emery will be our guest speaker and will be doing another of her "Captured in the Light" series, presenting some glass plate negatives donated to our Society. On page 3 Linda also gives an account of Garry Barnsley's Sutton Forest bookshop.

Our exhibition at the Berrima Museum, *Gardens and Landscapes of the Southern Highlands, Then and Now* will continue throughout the year but with a change to one module with the introduction of the renowned Berrima Bridge Nursery run by Claude Crowe and Family. This nursery was located only a short distance from our Museum and operated for many decades.

A very successful volunteer morning tea was held at the Berrima Museum on 19 January. It was a great opportunity to get together, air any problems and look

at ways to improve the Museum operation. The volunteers at the Museum are an enthusiastic group ably organised by Vanessa who manages the roster. Any member who can volunteer their time, even for a day or two per month, would be most welcome.

Australia Day celebrations were held in Berrima this year with a stop-start beginning when Council decided that the Naturalisation Ceremony would be held in the Council's Civic Centre. After protests from Berrima residents it was reinstated and a successful ceremony was held in the gaol precinct. The street parade was not held which was disappointing as it was a great attraction and brought thousands of people to Berrima. The number of people and stalls was way down on previous years. Our Berrima Museum was open to the public with free entry, and it is estimated that over 250 people passed through on the day. Let's hope they encourage their friends and family to come back to the Museum at another time.

This month on page 6 we list books introduced into our library during 2022 and to complete the newsletter a recap of recent BDHS publications for sale are listed. Some of our publications are currently out of print and are scheduled for review/reprint in the near future.

Ian Mackey

### GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS and EVENTS

<b>FEBRUARY 2023</b>	<b>Thursday 23 February at 2:00pm</b>
<b>SPEAKER</b>	Linda Emery with "Glass from the Past" showing photos from the recently donated Emil Hill glass-plate negative collection
<b>MARCH 2023</b>	<b>Thursday 23 March at 2:00pm</b>
<b>SPEAKER</b>	to be announced
	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b> 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



### OUR NEW-AGE PC POLICE

I've commented on this previously (viz. March 2018) around Commonwealth Games time, when

greeting volunteers were each handed an 88-page booklet on behaviour etiquette. It's fast becoming my favourite subject.

We've become far too serious and sensitive, uber-careful not to offend or embarrass any individual living on this planet. Who are these PC police? Do they have a life?

Perhaps they should get out more.

Here are some extreme examples for you to ponder:

We all know what a Christmas Tree is, either real or fake. Lots of US schools now only have a 'holiday tree' every Christmas.

Men have to be wary complimenting a girl's new dress or hairstyle these days. Saying "boy, you really look pretty in that dress!" could be interpreted as being sexist or flirting.

The phrase "long time, no see" was reportedly declared to be derogatory toward the Chinese race.

Teachers are told not to touch fallen children in playgrounds, as it can be deemed "sexual harassment".

A British student union tried to ban clapping and cheering because it was not inclusive to deaf people.

Expecting people to be on time was declared "culturally insensitive." (Will this enable retail staff to arrive at any hour?)

In Britain a Manhole is far too sexist and is now termed a "Maintenance Entrance".

A sexuality expert says parents should ask their baby's permission before changing their nappies. Derr! (What rock to these people live under?)

No more flippant terms such as 'blind Freddie', 'deaf as a post', 'mad as a cut snake', 'in like Flynn' etc.

We should feel sorry for the seven dwarves (all insensitive and hurtful titles), Snow White (kissed without permission), Cinderella (non-equality for women).

So as not to be deemed sexist or misogynist, a friend of mine called Guy Chapman may have to change his name to Person Person-Person.

How about we restore more of the larrikinism in our language! Humour, joking and leg-pulling are what Aussies are famous for.

I would go so far as to praise our wit and jesting as an antidote for today's noticeable morose mood in society.

So out with the Prozac, depressed souls and mental illness and in with a good belly laugh.

Disclaimer: this column does not necessarily reflect the view of the BDHS, but purely the quirky author's opinion.

**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](mailto: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.

### Request for content/suggestions

Each month in this newsletter, along with details of meetings and events, we feature aspects of local history. While the BDHS archives is a rich source of material, so too might be our members, from whom we would be happy to receive and print articles. Suggestions also welcome for content that you would like to see included.



**Vanessa Dalglish and John Schweers on duty at Berrima District Museum on Australia Day 2023, where free admission was taken advantage of by more than 250 people. See article on page 4.**

*Photo: Bud Townsing*

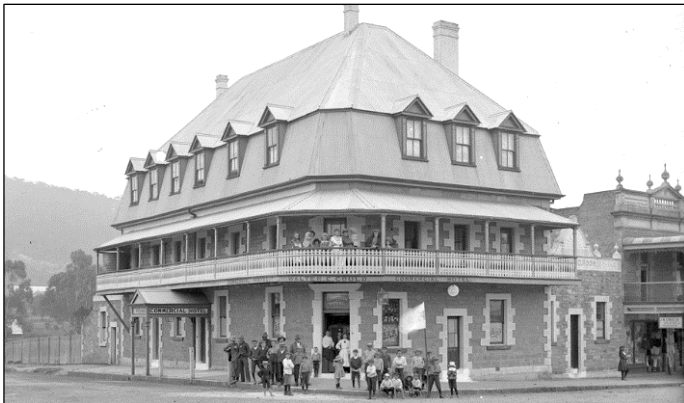


## February guest speaker Linda Emery

### “Glass from the Past”

The Society’s rich photographic collection received a boost recently when more than 100 glass-plate negatives, mostly of the Mittagong area between the early 1900s and the 1930s were donated to the society. The images had belonged to Emil Hill, who with his father Charles and brothers Harry and Jack ran a successful newspaper, *The Mittagong Star*, for 38 years. The collection passed to the late Norman Haydon whose family generously decided to lodge them with BDHS for safe keeping. They have been carefully cleaned, rehoused in archivally safe material and boxed. During the process, the negatives have been scanned and printed, revealing some unique images of exceptional quality.

At our February meeting, Linda Emery will present selected images from the collection with stories to go with them. For example from 1908, there are photos of the turning the first sod for the Mittagong Water Works by Arthur Tooth. A charming photo of the Commercial Hotel (now the Highlands Hotel) dates to about 1909 when Walter Gould was the licensee. Eager to be in the photo, more than 20 children posed on the footpath outside the bar. Several of the photos in the collection relate to Emil’s involvement as secretary of the Mittagong Swimming Club and the opening of the pool in 1930. A photo of the grave of notorious bushranger Johnnie Gilbert led to some interesting research on the origin of the headstone.



## The Barnsley’s Sutton Forest shop

### Booktown Book Shop

Many members will be familiar with the building on the corner of the Illawarra Highway and Exeter Road at Sutton Forest.



Built in 1895 as a butcher shop, it has remained in the Barnsley family ever since and is now home to a delightful book shop run by our long-time Society members Nerida and Garry Barnsley.

Garry was instrumental in establishing the Southern Highlands as the first Australian representative of the International Book Town movement more than twenty years ago and firmly believes in the need to keep small independent bookshops operating and viable. Nerida ran her iconic shop *A Little Piece of Scotland* from the building for many years and she and Garry have brought their flair and attention to detail to make the shop a joy to visit, building on a lifetime of collecting quality books. There are sections on art and architecture, aviation, trains and motor sport, needlecraft and fibre arts, history and biographies. And of course Nerida’s legendary shortbread is also available.

The shop is open on Saturday and Sunday from 10am and I am sure Garry and Nerida would love to show historical society members around.



**Garry and Nerida Barnsley** were speakers at our July 2019 general meeting, held in the Mittagong Playhouse, where props for an upcoming play suited both Garry’s talk about wartime and Nerida’s singing of “Lili Marleen” evoking mateship in war.  
*Photos: Bud Townsing*

## Plenty of action at the Museum

On Australia Day, 26 January 2023, our Berrima District Museum was open with free entry for all.

Vanessa Dalglish, on duty that day, estimates that over 250 people came through the Museum, most being locals! She and John Schweers stopped counting after about 160, at around 11:30am.



Vanessa reports that the Museum looked very inviting, thanks to the bunting out the front put up by the indefatigable John Schweers earlier in the week.

Many brochures and digital scratchies were handed out, so hopefully visitors and/or their guests will return to take advantage of the 2 for the price of 1 opportunity.

Vanessa passes on a special thanks to Ros Dale for marching up and down the main street of Berrima to drum up visitors, to Bud Townsing for coming and taking photos, and to Sylvia Carless for giving a few hours of her time, thus allowing John Schweers and her to grab some lunch. It was a most successful day from the Museum's perspective – here's hoping it will bear fruit in the future.

Harlan Hall won another Imagine award in 2022 courtesy of Museums & Galleries NSW, and it is now proudly displayed in reception. Congratulations to Harlan for his innovations.

## New *Gardens* module forthcoming

The Museum's current and very popular exhibition in the Williams Gallery, *Gardens and Landscapes of the Southern Highlands, Then & Now* was put together by Bud Townsing in conjunction with the Australian Garden History Society (AGHS) Southern Highlands Branch, and has been on display since April 2022.

The exhibition consists of ten digital screen displays along with glass-cabinet and wall-mounted displays. Featured are old and new local gardens, stories about early prominent lovers of the district's landscape, including Louisa Atkinson and Janet Cosh.

Curator Bud Townsing has since been working on the creation of a new module that will soon be added to the *Gardens* exhibition, featuring the story of Claude and Isobel Crowe and their Berrima Bridge Nursery, including that Claude designed landscape plans for more than 200 private gardens around the Southern Highlands from the 1940s to the 1980s.

The originals of these landscape plans are held in the Historic Houses Trust's Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collection, Sydney. Bud devoted great effort in tracking down the locations of sixty of these gardens, gleaned from the owners' surnames on the plan, and using early phonebooks kept at the BDHS archives to identify the addresses. He then went to the locations and photographed the gardens from the street. These he has assembled into a book with the matching design plan by Claude.

Some of these plans and photos will be featured in the new module along with stories about Berrima Bridge Nursery and the Crowe's achievements.

### Claude and Isobel Crowe

Claude Crowe was a passionate Nurseryman who developed his interest in plants while growing up in Albury. After arriving in Sydney, as a young employee of Anderson & Co he was sent to Berrima to work in Anderson's cold climate Nursery.

In 1943 Crow left Anderson & Co to establish his own Nursery in Jellore Street, Berrima, along with his new wife Isobel. For more than 50 years Crowe ran his nursery and advised on landscape design and plant selection throughout the Southern Highlands and the broader NSW countryside.

Claude and Isobel started their Jellore Street nursery on a two acre (0.8 hectare). Their first job was to clear it of blackberries and other weeds which was all done using hand tools. Cypress trees (*C. torulosa* & *C. macrocarpa* 'Aurea') were planted as windbreaks.



During the war, vegetable seed was grown in the nursery for the “Mother Seed” program and a “Turn Key” horticultural operation in the Pacific. Through a national company, the Government granted military exemption to those people with expertise to produce pure strains of vegetable seed. The harvested “mother seed” was stored in underground vaults for future replanting of crops should the Japanese invade Australia. The “Turn Key” operation involved a complete horticultural kit packed in wooden crates consisting of farming equipment for ploughing, tilling and sowing and manuals on the methods of planting and harvesting seed to be used in the Pacific War, to grow fresh food crops to feed the American Army.

The Crowes also produced and supplied a range of herbs for use as natural medicines in the war, being before the development of antibiotics.

After the war, an increasing range of cool climate trees and shrubs were propagated in the nurseries and sold throughout the State. Four glasshouses were used for propagation, which generally involved growing from seed, cuttings, budding and grafting.

An irrigation system was installed in 1946, using a small single cylinder engine. This was later superseded by a 6 HP three phase motor driving a 50mm centrifugal pump lifting 2700 litres of water an hour from the river, delivered through an underground fibro-cement and steel reticulation system installed by Claude using hand tools.

It was a very labour-intensive operation, with all weeding by hand, the only mechanisation being small rotary tillers. Herbicides were not used, and pesticide usage kept to a minimum. Natural predators and birds were encouraged to assist in pest control.

By 1960, the nursery had increased in size to 10 acres (4 ha) and consisted of the “Home Block” with the home and glasshouses, “The Corner” which became the public retail section and where a pump irrigation system was installed, and a separate open-ground growing area in Wingecarribee Street with its own electric pump and underground irrigation system.

With the addition of a property across the river, Berrima Bridge Nurseries grew to 23 acres (about 9 hectares). Claude built a bridge to enable a small



tractor and trailer to cross the river from the main property and this land was irrigated from the main

system on the home side of the river. The blocks on that side of the river were warmer and well drained.

In 1983, Isobel and Claude were joined in managing the nurseries by their son, Noel. A new 10 ha block was purchased at Robertson while new work sheds and facilities were constructed at both Robertson and Berrima and the business expanded to include a construction team to implement Noel’s designs.



Claude was awarded an Order of Australia (OAM) and passed away in 1999. The business closed in 2000 with Isobel remaining there until her passing in 2009.

**The above text is drawn from a history compiled in 2011 by Laurel Cheetham of the local AGHS, with the assistance of Noel Crowe.**

A Conservation Management Plan for the Berrima Bridge Nurseries site at 38 Jellore St Berrima was prepared by the Southern Highlands Branch of the AGHS in July 2014 and submitted to Wingecarribee Shire Council.

Chris and Charlotte Webb, local consultants, undertook research into the history of the nurseries and its owners, as well as recording the nursery as it then was. Their conclusion was that the Crowes and their Nursery had significantly influenced the landscape of the Southern Highlands.

The AGHS Branch suggested to Council that the property and particular structures (the glasshouses and cold frame) and the garden (specifically the camellia collection to the north of the residence) be listed as local heritage items. It also requested that the contribution made by Crowe to the landscape character of the Southern Highlands be recognised in appropriate Development Control Plans, and that the landscapes influenced by Crowe be identified as potential local heritage items in the Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan.

## New books in the BDHS library

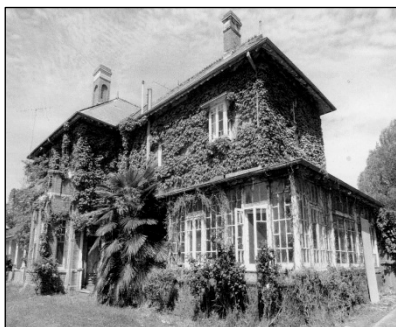
Here below is a list provided by Carolyn Dougherty, our Librarian, of the books added to the BDHS library during 2022.

*Photo Voice: Renewal & Resilience. Black summer fires in the Southern Highlands.* Published by The Southern Highlands Foundation. Library Shelf No. REF. 13/290.

*Retford Park Planning Proposal, Lot 22 DP 1163429 Old South Road, Bowral.* Council Agenda Wed., 13 Feb 2013. REF. 13/291.

*Howard Tractors* by Shane Djuric. Published 2017. REF. 20/186.

*Moldering Treasures of a Psychiatric Hospital: A photographic compilation of Kenmore* by Phillip Leighton-Daly. Published 2020. REF. 14/81.



*Moldering Treasures of a Psychiatric Hospital, Kenmore NSW Volume II* by Phillip Leighton-Daly. Published 2020. REF. 14/82.

*The First Fleeters: A comprehensive listing of convicts, marines, seamen, officers, wives, children and ships.* Edited by Paul G. Fidlon et al. Published 1981. REF. 07/94.

*The Second Fleet Convicts: A comprehensive listing of convicts who sailed in HMS Guardian, Lady Juliana, Neptune, Scarborough and Surprise.* Edited by R. J. Ryan. Published 1982. REF. 07/95.

*A Voyage from Plymouth to Melbourne in 1839. The Shipboard and Early Melbourne Diary of Jonathan Binns Were, C.M.G.* Published 1964. REF. 08/34.

*Australian Migrant Ships 1946 – 1977* by Peter Plowman. Published 2006. REF. 08/36.



*Settlers Under Sail* by Don Charlwood. Fourth Edition published 2002. REF. 08/35.

*History and Memories of the Woodlands Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade 1952-2022.* Published 2022. REF. 13/293.

*Irish Workhouse Orphan Emigration to Australia 1848-1850* by Perry McIntyre and Richard Reid. Published 2021. REF. 07/97.



*Free Passage: Convict Family Reunion in Australia 1788-1852* by Perry McIntyre. Published 2018. REF. 07/98.

*A Rum Story: The Adventures of Joseph Holt Thirteen Years in New South Wales (1800-12).* Joseph Holt. Edited by Peter O'Shaughnessy. Published 1988. REF. 07/96.

*Backhouse & Walker in Illawarra & Shoalhaven 1836.* Published by the Illawarra Historical Society, Edgar Beale Memorial Volume, 1991. REF. 27/80.

*Lost Glories: A Memorial to Forgotten Australian Buildings* by David Latta. Published 1986. REF. 23/82.

*Historic, Cultural Landscape Assessment for Wingecarribee Shire, N.S.W.* Landscan Pty. Ltd., and Assos. Prof. Ken Taylor. Published 1992. REF. 13/295.

*Records of Merchant Shipping and Seamen* by Kelvin Smith et al. Public Record Office Readers' Guide No. 20. Published 1998. REF. 08/37.

*Grasping the Horizon: John Jenkins and his Descendants* by Garry Moore. Published 2021. REF. 01/225.

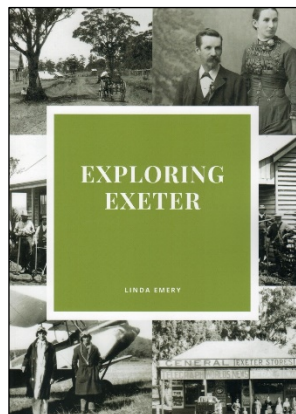
*The Medal Yearbook 2018.* Edited by John W. Mussell and the Editorial Team of Medal News. REF. 03/13-6.

*Bob's Book* (John Harold Robert Peck 1917 – 2008) by Martine Russell. Published 2022. REF. 01/226.



## Recap of Recent BDHS Publications

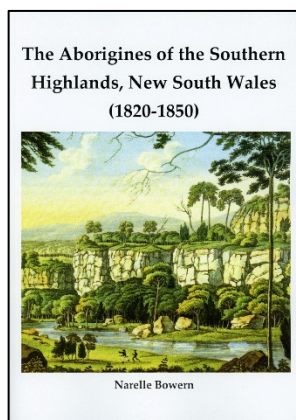
Our Society has numerous local history publications for sale including those published by the BDHS and selected books published by other authors/groups. The list of books continues to grow, and details of some recent additions are provided here.



### ***Exploring Exeter***

Author: Linda Emery  
New edition published 2020;  
A4 soft cover 83pp, black and white illustrated

An overview of the history and heritage of the village of Exeter that brings to life the people and events that shaped this 'typical English village on the Great Southern Line'. Illustrated with more than 100 historic photos.

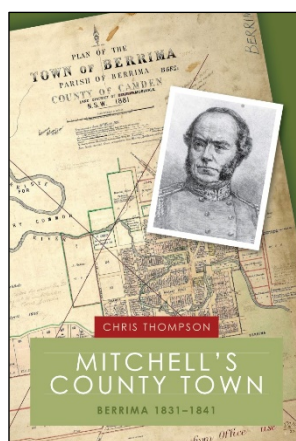


### ***The Aborigines of the Southern Highlands, NSW (1820-1850)***

Author: Narelle Bower  
Soft cover, 74pp, A4, illus.

In this publication on local Aboriginal People the author has compiled the limited information that is known from newspaper articles, official documents and

accounts written by the early European settlers. Her book adds to our knowledge of this 30-year period of local history. It answers questions such as what happened to the Bong Bong Tribe and was there really a massacre at Gingenbullen?



### ***Mitchell's County Town: Berrima 1831-1841***

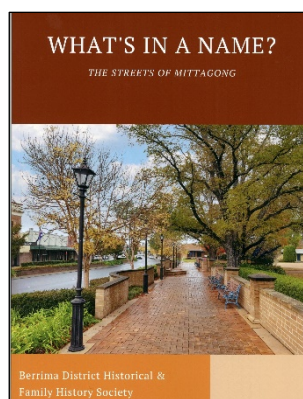
Author: Chris Thompson  
Soft cover, 192 pp, A4, illus.

Published by Chris Thompson who volunteers at Harper's Mansion in Berrima and is a member of the BDHS.

Berrima township, founded in May 1831, was to be the

main administrative centre south of Sydney, complete with gaol and courthouse and service hub

for travellers and local settlers. The book tells the story of the township's first ten years, and includes stories of ex-convicts, ex-military, first generation Australians and free immigrants who made it their home. For many, Berrima offered the opportunity of a better life than they had left behind.

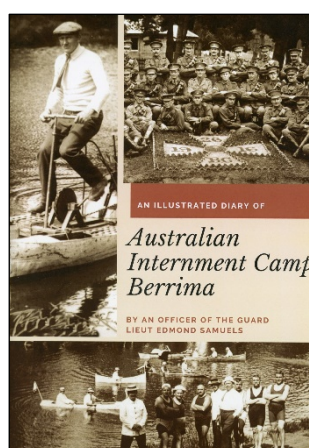


### ***What's In a Name: the Streets of Mittagong***

Published by the BDHS  
Soft cover, 52 pp A4, illus.

This booklet is the first in a series aimed at telling the story of 'the street where you live' and so foster a greater appreciation of our rich local history. It outlines

the origins of the street names of Mittagong, Balaclava, Willow Vale, Welby and Renwick. In early Southern Highlands' subdivisions, the developer traditionally chose the names often using considerable imagination and flair, and many such instances are detailed in the booklet.



### ***Australian Internment Camp Berrima***

Author: Lt. Edmond Samuels, Soft cover, 27pp includes photographs.

Booklet on the World War I German Internment Camp at Berrima, written by Lieut. Samuels, a member of the Berrima Guard.

Published in 1919 as "An Illustrated Diary of Australian Internment Camps" the original book was about three camps: Holsworthy near Liverpool, Trial Bay near Kempsey, and Berrima.

This booklet is a fourth reprint of the Berrima chapter from Samuel's book and has been provided with a new cover. It retains the Diary's original text and most of the photos, with some substitutes/additions.

### **BDHS publications currently out of print and scheduled for review/reprint in the near future:**

- *Life Behind the Bar*
- *Early Industries in the Berrima District*
- *Let's Visit historic Sites, and*
- *Let's Visit historic Villages (of the Berrima District)*
- *Prisoners in Arcady*

## 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](http://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](mailto:bdmuseum@bigpond.com)  
AT PRESENT, OPEN: 10.00am to 3.00pm, 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.

If undelivered return to:  
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### BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

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