



NEWSLETTER No 558 April 2023

BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960 Located in the Wingecarribee Shire, Southern Highlands of NSW

ABN 29362616937



From the President's Desk

Our arrival at the Avoca Public School Sesquicentenary Celebrations on Saturday 25 March was greeted by a typical "highlands mist". The actual anniversary was last year but was

postponed due to heavy rain. Our Society set up a table in the Avoca Hall where a selection of books for sale were displayed. It was a very successful day with 16 books sold and one new member gained.

At our March General Meeting we held a "Show and Tell" where seven members presented interesting items of historical significance. Dawn Glase presented two items, one a first edition copy (1842) of Lady Sale's Journal belonging to Dawn's 3 x great-grandmother, and a cake slice with a connection back to Dawn's Second Fleet ancestor. Ross Pollock showed us an early NSW transport map dated 1912. John Schweers brought from the Museum a Thornton Rickard camera which used glass plate negatives. Carolyn Dougherty had an early travel map of NSW and WW1 diary owned by her great uncle. Jenny Burman told the story behind a mantle clock. Linda Emery exhibited her beautiful gold carriage clock and Bud Townsing set a poser for the audience when he displayed a metal bolt found on a dive off the coast of Western Australia suggesting that it could date back to the sinking of the

Batavia. On page 2 the controversy has been resolved with further investigation by Frank Mitchell and Bud.

On page 3 is a profile of our guest speaker for the April general meeting, Dr Jeff Kildea, who will relate the story of how he wrote and published his family history while under covid lockdown in 2021.

The information posters on the Moss Vale doctors have now been framed and hung by Denise Mackey and are located either side of the donated Grandfather clock which was presented to Dr Alan Glendenning Wise on his retirement in 1954. See photo on page 3.

A new Gardens of the Southern Highlands module at the Berrima Museum has been curated and launched by Bud Townsing. This module traces the loves of Claude and Isobel Crowe who owned Berrima Bridge Nurseries for over 50 years from 1943. This Nursery at one point surrounded the area where our museum now stands and on both sides of the Wingecarribee River. A more detailed history of the Crowes appeared in our February newsletter.

Part 2 of the early governance of the Berrima District continues on pages 4 & 5. On pages 6 & 7, is a history by Philip Morton of the Fresh Food & Ice Company's butter factory at Mittagong, this being the first part of a major series on the local dairying industry.

Ian Mackey

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	GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS and EVENTS	Stora
APRIL 2023	Thursday 27 April at 2:00pm	Swry
Speaker	Dr Jeff Kildea on writing and publishing family history	Centre
MAY 2023	Thursday 25 May at 2:00pm	DEDDING
Speaker	Ian Mackey, our President, on a history of Sydney Harbour Bridge	BERKIM!
	AFTERNOON TEA is served following the speaker	DISTRIC
The Fa	mily History Interest Group meets at the Mittagong Archives on the first Wednesday each month, at 1pm	MUSEUN

Moore Memorable Musings



ON THE BUSES

At seven years of age, my first impression of a Sydney Leyland green and yellow double-decker bus was from the top

verandah of my grandfather's shop in Croydon. I had grown up in the shadow of the Werris Creek shunting sheds, this was an impressive and awesome sight for a country kid.

The Croydon bus struggled up the hill, pouring out plumes of smoke, the conductor hanging on for grim death before it swung into Edwin Street and out of sight. The familiar smell of diesel fumes lingered and never left.

We later moved to the tree-lined garden suburb of Strathfield and I was instructed to catch the bus to school. There were no anxious mothers driving 4WD Range Rovers dropping off kids in 1947. My mother never learnt to drive!



I caught the 480 bus by myself along Homebush Road and the jovially buxom conductress said, 'where are we off to, Luvvie?' 'Homebush Primary School,' I repeated by rote, from memory.

'This bus goes to Central, you need the one across the road. Here, let me take you over the road, cause here she comes now.'

With that, this friendly lady and the bus waited until the 480 arrived, travelling in the opposite direction.

'Take him to Strathfield and put him on the 414 to Homebush,' she directed the driver.

From then on, I sat riveted to my seat, directly behind the driver until we reached our destination.

I thought we'd never get there, stopping at every blade of grass and the driver helped any old ladies on and off. Finally arriving at the school, I went up the steps and was greeted by another lady wondering, 'what are you doing here, Laddie? This is the girl's school!' She kindly took me across the playground past the invisible boundary to where the boys were already in class. The headmaster then guided this lost waif to a designated class, where I had no idea what the teacher was talking about. I thought it was a foreign language!

So when the play-lunch bell rang, I thought school was over. I went home! I've never forgotten my first solo experience on a bus and the kind generosity of the crew manning it.

Bruce Moore

NOTICE OF CHANGE TO BDHS BANKING DETAILS

The BDCU Alliance Bank has recently changed its name and banking details to Community Bank BDCU

BSB: 633000 (Bendigo Bank) Account No: 200107100

The above account details should be used for direct depositing funds into the Society's account.

Controversy re an Historic Bolt

Bud Townsing showed the old bolt (see below) at the March *Show & Tell* meeting. He had gained possession of it in 1968 whilst living in Perth WA.

A neighbour there had been involved in discovery and exploration of Dutch wrecks along the coast in 1963.

This metal bolt came from him with the story it was from the *Batavia*, the Dutch ship blown off-course in 1629 on its way to the then Dutch East Indies, and which floundered off the West Australian coast.

The claim that the bolt came from the *Batavia* was questioned by some at the meeting, including our researcher Frank Mitchell, who adamantly stated that it appeared to be of too recent a design and was much too clean, with the nut still able to be turned, to be from the *Batavia* wreck and thus making it 394 years old.

Subsequent research and advice from a maritime archaeologist reveal that there were no such bolts on the *Batavia*. It is more likely that it came from a ship that sunk in 1877.

Bud is now reconciled to the fact that the bolt may have come from some other wreck along the WA coast, and Frank is resting on his laurels.



Bud Townsing shows his bolt at our March *Show and Tell* with **Denise Mackey**, who conducted the event with Ian Mackey. *See story above*.

April General Meeting speaker

Our general meeting speaker on Thursday 27 April is an expert on the writing/publishing of family history.

Dr Jeff Kildea was one of the speakers at St Clements Retreat, Galong, in November 2022 where 100 Irish History enthusiasts attended the *Return to Tipperary* conference. Jeff's talk was very well received, and he has agreed to present it again at our April meeting.

Leaving Home: Stories of My Emigrant Ancestors

Jeff: After more than forty years of researching my family history, I spent the quiet months of the 2021 Covid lockdown turning that research into a book which I have now published.



The result is both a tribute to my ancestors who left home to come to Australia and a legacy that will preserve their memory among their descendants. In this talk I will describe how I went about the task of writing up my family's history and will pass on some tips and tricks I learned in the process.

Jeff Kildea is an historian, lecturer and author with a PhD in history from the University of NSW, and an honorary professor in Irish Studies in the UNSW School of Humanities & Languages.

He has written books and articles and presented papers in Australia and overseas on early 20thcentury Irish-Australian history. His books include *Tearing the Fabric: Sectarianism in Australia 1910-1925* (2002), *Anzacs and Ireland* (2007), *Wartime Australians: Billy Hughes* (2008), *Hugh Mahon: Patriot, Pressman, Politician Vol 1 1857-1901 (2017) and Vol 2 1901-1931*, and *Leaving Home: Stories of my Emigrant Ancestors* (2021).

He is director of the Irish Anzacs Project and in 2014 recorded podcasts on the Irish at Gallipoli for release during the Gallipoli centenary year. Also, he has posted to YouTube a series of video talks under the title *Croppies Downunder* that tell some of the stories of the Irish in Australia.

For more than 30 years Jeff practised as a barrister from 5 Wentworth Chambers in Sydney and was an Acting Commissioner of the Land and Environment Court from 2013 to 2018. He is also the editor of Land & Environment Court Law & Practice NSW and a contributing author to Planning & Development Service NSW and Environmental Responsibilities Law published by Thomson Reuters.

History on show at Archives, Museum

Those who attended our March General Meeting in the upstairs room at our Mittagong Research Centre were the first to view the display of four framed history panels mounted in the foyer on either side of the Grandfather Clock. The clock was presented by Moss Vale citizens to Dr Allen Glendenning Wise who practised in the district from 1934 until 1954.



In mid-2022 the clock was donated to the BDHS by Dr Wise's granddaughters. Two of the doctors who were in the same practice, Dr Alcorn and Dr Gurney, have long had public memorials dedicated to them: the Alcorn Memorial Clock in Moss Vale (erected in 1938) and the Guy Gurney Memorial pillars at the Gullies Reserve, Bundanoon (erected in 1958).

Now Dr Wise also has a memorial in a public place, our upstairs foyer. It is given context by the history panels featuring all three doctors of the Moss Vale practice, designed by Philip Morton and most artfully framed by Conservation Team leader Denise Mackey.



Amongst the *Show & Tell* offerings at our March meeting was this Thornton-Pickard Imperial folding field camera, early 1900s, recently donated to the Museum. John Schweers demonstrated how the concertina could be triple extended and glass-plate negatives inserted, several of which come with the unit, only the original tripod stand being missing.

The Local District's Early Governance

Provided in last month's issue was a history of the Berrima District Council that existed from 1843 to 1858, taken from *Early Local Government in the Berrima District* a 1986 booklet by the late BDHS member, Joe Ford. In it, Joe also dealt with the incorporation in 1886 of the Municipality of Bowral.

A V 'Jack' Parry, an inaugural member of the BDHS in 1960, also had a keen interest in early governance. He served as Bowral Deputy Town Clerk from 1946 and Town Clerk from 1968 before retiring in 1973. His many interests included local and general history, music, writing and journalism. A series of five articles by him on Bowral Council's origins was published in *The Southern Mail* from 10 November 1950.

Drawn mostly from Parry's work, a history of Bowral Municipal Council follows here. Most readers will be aware that on 1 January 1981 this Council ceased to exist when the current, district wide Wingecarribee Shire Council was established by the amalgamation of Bowral Municipal, Mittagong Shire and the former Moss Vale/Wingecarribee Shire Councils.

Parry began his series, titled 'The Municipality of Bowral' by saying that: "It may be of interest not only to aspirants to civic office, but also their supporters, to set out the circumstances of Bowral's elevation to municipal status and certain earlier events, and also to recapitulate how matters of import to the town and its inhabitants were regulated prior to that redletter day in local history." He then continues:

"So far as Bowral was concerned, the organisation which looked after local affairs before incorporation of the area as a municipality, and the consequent creation of a council, was one which was termed the 'Bowral Vigilance Committee' . . . since the first Bowral newspaper did not see the light of day until July 1883, the date of formation of the committee, which according to reports from 1883 onwards did quite a lot of good work, is not at present known."

Notes by BDHS Editor: such vigilance committees existed in various NSW towns from around 1880, not as 'vigilante' groups, but as committees elected by residents to look after general progress and welfare.

Also, regarding date of formation, it seems Parry was unaware that the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on 3 November 1883 that a Vigilance Committee deputation of McCourt MLA, Mitchell MLA, and Messrs H M Oxley, J G Morris and W Charker visited the Postmaster-General in Sydney with a petition requesting that a post and telegraph office be erected at Bowral. They then visited the Minister for Justice to present a petition for the establishment of a Court of Petty Sessions in the town, and also called upon the Colonial Secretary to request that a piece of land be purchased for a recreation ground at Bowral. All three petitions were subsequently agreed to.

It is also worth noting that Sydney's *Evening News* reported in September 1884 that, at upcoming Bowral Vigilance Committee elections, all unmarried females who were householders/leaseholders would be allowed to vote.

Parry: "At any rate the first reference to incipient ideas that it might be a good idea to have Bowral created a municipality, seems to have hit the local news stands in 1884, when a meeting of the Vigilance Committee was reported, whereat Mr W J Osborne moved 'that steps be taken for the incorporation of Bowral'. Discussion waxed and waned pro and con the proposal, and when the motion was eventually put, a show of hands revealed a decisive defeat, only mover and seconder voting affirmatively."

"A word or two about Mr Osborne may not be out of place. When he came to Bowral about 1880, he was a life assurance company representative, liked the place and settled here. He seems to have had numerous changes of livelihood, and, in 1883, was engaged in the building trade, whilst he is credited with having been first to move to establish the Berrima District Agricultural Society; more than likely, he was similarly prominent in forming the Vigilance Committee, since one of the earliest newspaper reports mentioned him as secretary. At any rate, as will be seen, he ultimately became a man of some consequence in the town's public affairs and entitled to his own particular niche in local history."

"We may imagine that Osborne, and his associates of like opinions, didn't take their defeat as meaning the end of the project, and we might even assume that back in those distant days guite a lot of talk, argument, cajolery and who knows what went on, for, barely six months later, the suggestion cropped up again. This time the Bowral Free Press reported, on 9 August 1884, that Mr W Beer had moved at a Vigilance Committee meeting, 'That a public meeting be held on Monday evening, 25 August 1884, to discuss the matter of the establishment of the Municipality in Bowral'. At a subsequent meeting Mr J G Morris was appointed president, Mr J Loseby vice-president, and the perennial Mr W J Osborne, secretary. The Committee of three apparently got down to work reasonably energetically. The object of the Committee was the general advancement of the town and district and was to consist of 13 members."

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Editor: In a Bowral Free Press article of 26 July 1884 some of the more general matters dealt with by the Vigilance committee are presented, including that: a letter was received from the Works Department advising that Mr Neich's 12 acres had been accepted for a recreation ground. A letter was read from the Department that the matter of unequal expenditure on the roads was being considered. The chairman read petitions drawn up by the secretary concerning the want of accommodation at the Bowral Railway Station and at the Bowral Public School. The question of a pound came up. It was urged that it would not pay to erect yards especially for the purpose, and Mr Morris offered his saleyards if a person could be got to undertake the duties of pound-keeper. Mr Beer gave notice that at the next meeting he would move in the matter of steps being taken to have a municipality established in Bowral.

In his history series, Parry noted that during the first six months of 1885 "we may assume that there was quite a lot of canvassing and preparatory work going on, for by Saturday, 8 August 1885, the *Free Press* was able to tell its readers that Mr J L Campbell had, on the previous Sunday night, forwarded a petition signed by some 140 householders and leaseholders, praying for the incorporation of Bowral, to the Colonial Secretary. There must have been some highpressure work once the momentous decision had been reached, since all the signatures were secured on the previous Friday and Saturday, and of all the people approached, only two had refused to sign."

It goes without saying that town rivalry would have played a role, possibly a major one, in this urgency at Bowral for incorporation. After all, Moss Vale was the local district's railway hub and by the mid-1880s was a fast growing town with Vice-regal connections.

In the third part of his history series, published in *The Southern Mail* on 24 November 1950, Parry describes

The Municipality of Bowral - First Election and Council

"Along, at last, came the eagerly awaited day of the first municipal election, the poll taking place in one of the small rooms at Bowral School of Arts. The electoral officers were Mr R Morris, of course, as Returning Officer, with Mr W J Osborne as Poll Clerk and Mr H Pember as Scrutineer. Little excitement was evident during the day, according to the chronicler of more than 64 years ago, but some 70 people had gathered by the time the poll closed at 2pm and gradually the number grew to about 100."

"The election appears to have been conducted in an atmosphere such as might well be emulated by present day candidates, at least in the political sphere, for 'the utmost good humour prevailed, there not being the slightest sign of contention or ill-feeling shown . . . two days later, on 10 April 1886, the whole Council fore-gathered at the School of Arts to elect the first Mayor. This ceremony was conducted by ballot, under the control of the Returning Officer."

The two nominees were Alderman J G Morris (nominated by Ald J J Campbell), and Ald J L Campbell (by Ald J Loseby), and the voting resulted in a win for Ald J L Campbell by five votes to three, whereupon the Returning Officer declared Campbell elected."

"The latter, in expressing thanks for his election, commented that it was a 'very great honour to him because he was the youngest man among them' and added that not only would he be the first Mayor of Bowral, but also the first in the Berrima district."



The Late John Lang Campbell, First Mayor of Bowral

In the remaining

two parts of his history series, Parry briefly recorded the then-known facts regarding the nine men who constituted the first Council. In pride of place was John G Morris, who headed the poll, but was not elected mayor, although he did later serve in that capacity prior to his early death in 1991.

A history of John G Morris appeared in the BDHS newsletters #521-523 (October-December 2019), and that of Walter J Osborne, Bowral's first Town Clerk, in #532 (October 2020).

Plans for Bowral Town Hall were prepared in early 1889, the money to build it borrowed from Robert

Loseby, and the building in Bendooley Street was opened in January 1890 (the BDHS Image Library photo shown here is dated c1890). compiled by

Philip Morton



Local Dairy Industry and TS Mort's FF&I

In last month's issue, a selection of photographs from the recently donated Norman Haydon collection of over 100 images were shown and described. These were taken by an early 20th century camera using glass-plate negatives, many being of high quality.

One of the images was this one below at Mittagong, showing the Maltings (at back) and butter factory (foreground), taken in the early 1900s.



The buildings are iconic representations of two highly successful local industries which, along with the earlier Fitzroy Ironworks, enabled Mittagong to grow and prosper. Histories have been provided in this newsletter of the Maltings (2013) and of the Fitzroy Ironworks (2015), and now a major series on the local dairy industry begins here and will continue monthly.

Developments in the 1860s

In the district's early days of European settlement, on many farms dairy herds provided milk for the family and nearby villagers, with the excess used for making butter. After the passing of the Land Acts in 1861, the densely forested Yarrawa Brush area around Robertson was opened up by free settlers. Besides raising crops and vegetables, they undertook some dairying. Their butter, after being washed and salted, was packed in brine barrels or kegs to be carried on the backs of packhorses down to Kiama for shipment to Sydney. Gross contamination was inevitable and exacerbated by hot weather so, in general, the product quality was very poor.

Two further developments in the 1860s turned the district's small dairying ventures into a major industry. The first was the opening of the southern railway from Sydney in 1867, which provided a faster mode of transport than shipment by road.

The other was refrigeration. In the 1860s Thomas Sutcliffe Mort, a prominent Sydney auctioneer who had prospered in wool sales, financed experiments to design and produce refrigeration machinery suitable for use in ships, trains and cold-storage depots. He realised that preserving perishable goods with ice opened many opportunities for transporting food, especially meat. He also looked for ways to preserve milk by refrigeration. He had long thought that the enormous death rate amongst Sydney infants was largely brought about by the consumption of impure and poisonous milk. From philanthropic rather than profit-seeking motives, he sought ways to supply Sydney with pure and unadulterated fresh milk from a country district. When milk was chilled or frozen, however, the cream separated. It was not until a simple agitator was used to blend milk in large vats during chilling that he could proceed.

Mort established the Fresh Food & Ice Company with a depot at Darling Harbour in Sydney and chose the Berrima District as the most suitable area to supply milk for city tables. An overview of developments is provided by the following newspaper extracts culled from Trove (with thanks to researcher Rusheen Craig who recently provided us with an FF&I compilation).

The Fresh Food and Ice Company, Mittagong depot *Goulburn Herald*, 12 Nov 1881

The Fresh Food and Ice Company have commenced building a depot on the Sydney side of Mittagong, on a portion of Mr Southey's land. Mr Ford is the contractor, and the cost will it is said, exceed £2000. The building is of stone 70 x 30, a portion of which will be set apart as a cooling-room. Besides sending large quantities of milk to Sydney, it is intended to use the surplus milk in summertime in making butter, cheese, &c. Mr Ruane, we believe, will have permanent charge of the establishment, opposite which the government intend putting in a siding.

Country Depot - Mittagong

Evening News (Sydney), 30 Jun 1884

Six hundred gallons of fresh milk are sent daily from Bowral station to the Fresh Food and Ice Co., in Sydney, and about an equal quantity from other parts of this district, at a cost of 11d per gallon.

The Mittagong Creamery

Australasian (Melbourne), 1 May 1886

The Mittagong Creamery was established about four years ago by the Sydney Fresh Food & Ice Company. It was the first factory in which centrifugal cream separators were employed in NSW, and the results have been so satisfactory that the apparatus is being extensively introduced into all the dairying districts in the colony. After the successful establishment of the Mittagong factory some of the employees of the company lectured in the Illawarra district upon the advantages of the new system, with the result that the Pioneer Factory was commenced at Kiama. Other factories have also been started, and altogether the introduction of centrifugal cream separators has infused vigor into the dairying industry of the colony.

Mittagong, 80 miles from Sydney on the Southern railway line, is centrally situated in regard to the most distant section of the most distant dairying districts in the direction. Immediately around Mittagong the grazing capabilities of the country are limited, the region being a hilly, timbered one, with poor pastures. There is better country, however, a few miles to the northward, around Picton, and at Bowral and Moss Vale, 8 and 12 miles to the south, the hilly country opens out into an open, undulating tableland of fairly good soil, with medium pastures lightly timbered. From Moss Vale the milk comes to the factory by rail, and from Bowral and the country around Mittagong for a distance of 10 or 12 miles carts bring in the supply from the farms.

The Mittagong Creamery is a large two storey stone building close to the railway station, with a railway siding running alongside of the establishment. It is divided into two large rooms on the ground floor, in which the manufacturing processes are carried on. The upper floor is used for storing purposes. In one room there are three Danish separators, two large cheese tubs, and the cheese presses, while in other are the churn, butter-worker, cream cans, scales, &c. The milk is received in the latter apartment, weighed, tested, tried by the lactometer, and samples are put into tubes for the cream test. After passing these tests, the can of milk is elevated by block and tackle, and poured into a large receiving tank, from which it flows in an open tin spout to a supply tank above the separators in the next room. From the 400-gallon supply tank it runs into the separators through strainers and regulating taps.

From the separators it comes out in the shape of milk and cream. The cream flows into ten-gallon cream cans, and the skim-milk into the large cheese tubs. The skim-milk is then made into cheese at once, and the cream is removed to the churning-room, where it remains two days to mature.

At the rear of the building there is a seven-horse power engine which is quite sufficient to drive the three separators, the churn, and the butter worker, besides supplying steam for heating the cream tubs.

From the revolving churn, the butter is taken and put upon the butter worker. This is a large circular table 6ft. in diameter, which revolves under corrugated wooden rollers, and upon which the butter is washed and salted without being touched by hand. The butter is next packed into earthenware jars each holding about 40 pounds, and these jars are placed in refrigerating cars, and sent to the company's cold rooms in Sydney. Jars are preferred to barrels as less likely to strain or injure the butter, especially in the case of keeping it for a long time in the cold room.

The skim-milk runs directly from the separators into two large cheese tubs. One contains 400 gallons, and the other 600. They are of the ordinary factory kind, and they are heated by steam. The buttermilk from the churn is put into the cheese tubs to improve the quality of the skim-milk cheese, and when the churn is not working new milk is added at the rate of 50 gallons to the 1,000 of skim milk. When cheese is being made it is also the custom to work the separators so as to leave a little cream in the milk.

Pigs are fed upon the whey, and sometimes upon skim-milk. Whether it is more profitable to feed pigs with the skim milk or make it into cheese depends upon the markets, and the advantage of the system is that milk can all be turned to the most profitable.

FF&I's Growth Evening News (Sydney), 22 Dec 1890

The Fresh Food and Ice Co are now carrying on a business which in extent rivals any similar enterprise Australia, and in some respects, the world. The trade comprises meat freezing, milk, cream, ice, butter, fish, game, and poultry, and is carried on at Darling Harbor, Dapto, Omega, Mittagong and Lithgow.

The above is not quite correct regarding Mittagong, as in 1887 FF&I ceased butter making at Mittagong, establishing the butter separating process at Darling Harbour but it did, however, continue to receive milk daily from the local district, although by then it was also receiving from the south coast and elsewhere.

The Berrima District Company, a newly formed local farmers' cooperative, acquired the Mittagong creamery from FF&I in 1895, also taking over a butter factory at Robertson and converting both into central butter factories. At end 30 June 1901, the Mittagong

factory treated 1,143,209 lbs cream for 514,444 lbs (230 tons) of butter, showing



an advance of 65 per cent over the preceding year. To cope with the vastly increasing output, additions were made to plant and premises.

Compiled by Philip Morton to be continued

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MUSEUM:	Market Place, Berrima. Tel: 02 4877 1130. Email: 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.
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