



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 560 June 2023



From the President's Desk

Welcome to our June newsletter. I am sure you will find it interesting reading. On Tuesday 6 June Frank Mitchell, John Schweers and myself attended the opening of a model railway constructed

within the roof space of a new Clarendon exhibition home. Our Society provided original photographs and the model railway features iconic local infrastructure. It has been superbly modelled by the Guildford Model Railway Group. Situated on the Old Hume Highway at Braemar, the model and exhibition home are open to the public.

Places for our June lunch at the Exeter Village Hall on Thursday 22 June are filling fast. If you would still like to attend, please contact the Archives, reserve your seat and pay your money. We are trialling a new luncheon format which involves our committee volunteers organising the lunch under the direction of Linda Emery. It is more affordable and cost effective. As it is our first full scale luncheon, we would welcome your feedback (no pun intended). Please see Bruce Moore's column for Moore on this matter.

Carolyn Dougherty has arranged a visit to The Mill at Moss Vale. Built in 1849 as a flour mill, it served other

purposes including as a convalescent hospital during World War 1. It was part of the Throsby Estate and is located on the eastern outskirts of Moss Vale on the Illawarra Highway. Details are provided on page 2.

On page 3 our Archivist, Linda Emery announces the completion of a 6-year volunteer project highlighting the skill, dedication and ability of our volunteers.

The first print run of 200 books in our series *What's in a Name, the Streets of Moss Vale, Sutton Forest, Berrima and New Berrima* has sold out. We again have ample stock, a second printing having been received.

A reprint of Shylie Brown's book *Life Behind the Bar* is now underway, the first batch recently selling out. Details on page 4.

On page 5, Philip Morton provides a brief history of Belmore Falls, named after the 4th Earl of Belmore in 1870. This article dovetails with the subject of our June Lunch guest speaker Dr Richard Reid who will be exploring the life of Sir Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, 4th Earl of Belmore, the Governor of New South Wales between 1868 and 1872.

On pages 6 & 7, our dairying industry history continues, with Part 3 describing events up to the late 1890s.

Ian Mackey

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS and EVENTS

JUNE 2023

Thursday 22 June at 12:00 for 12:30pm

June Lunch at Exeter Village Hall with speaker Dr Richard Reid

JULY 2023

Thursday 27 July at 2:00pm

Speaker

Martyn Killion, Chief Operating Officer, Museums of History NSW, with a talk on using the MHNSW website for archives research

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



FOOD IDIOMS

Without realising it, a lot of our everyday expressions are food related. Yum!

Try this for a taster:

While looking for a second-hand car to surprise the bride who's the apple of my eye, this salesman, cool as a cucumber sold me one in a flash. 'Cheap as chips,' he went on, 'these are selling like hot cakes.'

Later I discovered he sold me a lemon. He was a bad egg, that bloke. However I suppose he had to make a crust if he is the main breadwinner.

I had a lot on my plate at the time, thinking to myself, 'this is a fine kettle of fish!' Beating myself up, I was in a pickle, just realising I fell for buying a dud from a person who was rotten to the core and not my cuppa tea.

So I decided to step up to the plate and spill the beans to my bride. We chewed the fat a while and as understanding wives go, she said, 'at least you didn't put all your eggs in the one basket. The car is just small potatoes. We can sell it on for peanuts!'

'Let's go bananas and dine out for dinner and perhaps a movie, there's one called "Fried Green Tomatoes,"' she exclaimed.

No doubt about it, my bride is the salt of the earth.

We found a very crowded restaurant and they packed us in like sardines. However, I buttered up the waiter who found us a quieter table outside. 'You'll be warm as toast here,' he remarked. 'Now can I get you something that will stick to your ribs?' On presenting the main course he quipped, 'now you can eat your heart out.' The waiter was certainly worth his salt as he suggested a nice dessert. We both have a sweet tooth and we both reckoned we could have our cake and eat it too.

Let me tell you ... the proof of the pudding certainly was in the eating!

Bruce Moore

BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM

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.

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.

Tour to 'The Mill' at Moss Vale

Members are invited to join in with our self-drive tour for a visit to The Mill at Moss Vale on Thursday 20 July, from 10:30am to 1:00pm.

Morning tea will be provided on site. Bookings are essential, so please contact the archives.

Owners of The Mill, antique dealers Jacki and Mike Brooks, have invited members of the Society to a tour of their historic home and grounds. The couple have owned and cared for the house since 1992 and are passionate about retaining and sharing the history of their residence.

Built c1847 by Charles Throsby, The Mill was originally a flour mill then later a boiling down establishment. By 1879 The Mill was occupied by Captain and Mrs William Bridges and their family. Their son Major General Sir William Throsby Bridges spent his childhood at The Mill, later going on to found Duntroon Military College and to command the Australian Imperial Force until his death at Gallipoli.

From 1916 until 1922 The Mill was lent to the Red Cross by Mr Frank Throsby for use as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers.



Belmore Falls was named in 1870 after Sir Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, 4th Earl of Belmore, Governor of NSW 1868-1872. See stories pages 3 & 5.



Our June Luncheon at Exeter Hall

The BDHS annual June Luncheon is to be held this year at Exeter Village Hall on Thursday 22 June. Lunch will be a buffet of home-style food prepared by Linda Emery and her team, and the CWA ladies will operate the kitchen, serve and clean up. Tea and coffee will be provided, BYO wine if you so desire.

The cost is \$35 per head. More than 40 persons have already booked, so if you haven't yet and do wish to attend, please contact the archives immediately. Funds may be paid into the BDHS account, see p 2.

Exeter Village Hall is a charming heritage listed 1902 building that was restored in 2002 and recently upgraded with additions at the rear.



Dr Richard Reid is guest speaker at the lunch, with a history of Lord Belmore, a governor of colonial NSW who hailed from a leading Irish aristocratic family. Dr Reid states that, as NSW governor, Belmore was once dismissed as one who 'had nothing in particular to do and did it with discretion' and asks was this a fair assessment of what the Belmores brought to the role of 'first family' in the developing colony? Dr Reid will reveal a more involved, complex and fascinating story of this Irishman of Empire, his family and their contribution to the life of mid-19th century NSW.



Dr Richard E Reid is a retired historian living in Canberra. During a 41-year career in Australia he was, at various times, a high school English/History teacher, an Australian War Memorial Secondary Education Officer, an ANU Ph.D. student, an Australian War Memorial Historian, an Australian Senate Research Officer, the Senior historian in the Commemorative Branch of the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs and a Senior Curator at the National Museum. He has written and presented widely on the topics of Australians at war, the Irish in Australia (especially Irish 19th century immigration) and various themes in Australian local history. But Richard regards his greatest achievement, for which he is only minimally responsible, to have been born in Portrush, County Antrim, Ireland although he has never regretted his sensible decision to leave that country for New South Wales in 1972.

Linda Emery's Archives Report

The best news from the archives is that the digitisation of our huge collection of biography files has been completed. Six years ago, volunteers began the project to both safeguard the contents of the files and to make them available to researchers as PDF files. Led by Diane McAllery and ably assisted by Denyce Welch and Jenny Frost, they have sorted, ordered and scanned more than 3,500 files. Marg Muntz also worked on the project before she moved to Canberra.

We can all sleep more soundly knowing that if disaster were to strike the archives, copies of the invaluable information collected by the Society over more than 50 years is stored on the cloud and backed up to several drives. Just this week we were able to provide information to researchers from the Oxley family file that was not available anywhere else, something that they had been searching for for years. Congratulations and hearty thanks to all involved in the project.

We recently received a donation of a photograph album with about 40 portraits all taken in Cornwall, England. As is often the case they had no names and as the album did not relate to our area, we contacted the Museum of Cornish Life in Helston, where many of the photos were taken, to see if they were interested in having it. They preferred to have digital images, so Denyse Barker has now scanned the photos which will be sent to the museum. The hope is that they may be able to identify the family who compiled the album, a slim chance but stranger things have happened.

Our latest publication, *What's in a Name, the Streets of Moss Vale, Sutton Forest, Berrima and New Berrima*, researched by society members, has been selling like hot cakes, so much so that we sold out after only a few weeks and had to have a reprint. Archives volunteers are currently working on the third in the *What's in a Name series – the Streets of Bowral and Burradoo* – but this will not be out for a while as it is a much larger research project.

THE STREETS OF MOSS VALE, SUTTON FOREST, BERRIMA AND NEW BERRIMA. Copies are now available for those wishing to purchase, at \$15.

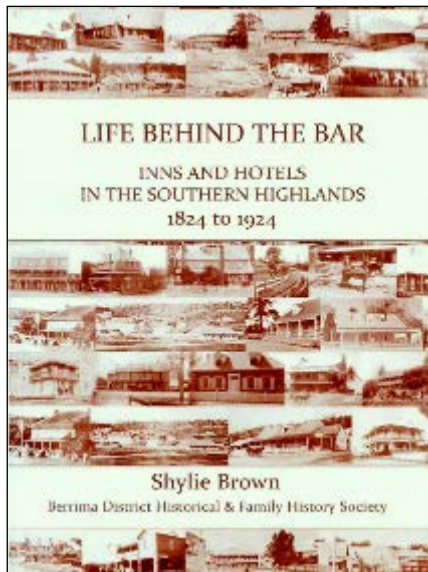
The 60-page, A4 booklet is well illustrated with many black & white photographs.



Life Behind the Bar – a reprint

In 2014 the BDHS published *Life Behind the Bar: Inns and Hotels in the Southern Highlands 1824-1924*.

The book, researched and written by our member Shylie Brown, provides a comprehensive listing and description on more than 450 local inn and hotel licensees and their families who operated the establishments, being in excess of 86 locations, that existed between 1824 and 1924 within the Southern Highlands and neighbouring localities. The book also outlines the chequered early history of the colony's taverns and inns.



The earliest inns in the district followed the old South Road, before Berrima was surveyed in the 1830s on a new line for the Great Southern Road. The book includes location maps of the inns, starting at the northern point, the Traveller's Inn Tahmoor, following the Great Southern Road (renamed Hume Highway in 1928) through to Marulan in the south, and also includes establishments along the Illawarra Highway that passes through the district from east to west, and winding up at the Imperial Hotel, Bowral.

As well as details on all the licensees, the book also provides an index of licences as an Appendix.

The publication was assisted by funds allocated to the Royal Australian Historical Society by Arts NSW. In November 2014 the RAHS President, Associate Professor Carol Liston, launched the book at Berrima District Museum during a function held there in the Williams Gallery.

The BDHS Management Committee hosted this function, it being the first use of the spacious new exhibition gallery, on a Friday evening to welcome delegates attending the RAHS's 2014 State History Conference held that weekend at Mittagong.

It was a fortuitously timed occasion for the launch of Shylie's *Life Behind the Bar* book, which Professor Liston fulsomely praised as a comprehensive listing of early district inn and hotel owners.

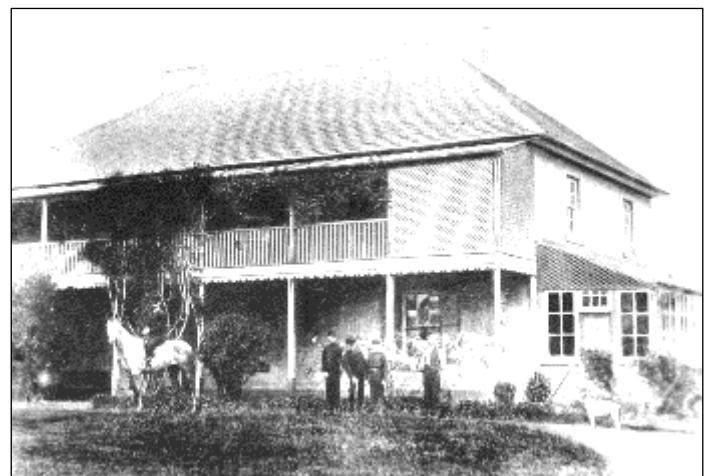
Prior to its publication, Shylie had spent more than six years undertaking the research. This was after she had moved to the Southern Highlands, joined our Society and, at the suggestion of Linda Emery, took on the project. Prior to that, Shylie had completed a course in Local and Australian history at the University of New England in 1995 and, as a member of the Parramatta Historical Society, pursued an active interest in local history and in particular the conservation of heritage buildings.



Linda Emery, Shylie Brown and Carol Liston at the launch

The *Life Behind the Bar* publication proved to be very popular with those interested in our local history and the book sold well. It also attracted attention from people far and wide who had family connections to the licensees or to the establishments.

The book has been out of print since the end of 2022. A reprint of this unique research has been given the go-ahead as part of our commitment to the on-going dissemination of local history. The new edition will be available shortly. In the light of new information that has become available, Shylie Brown has made some minor updates to text and listings. Photographs have been enhanced in the new edition.



The former Royal Oak Inn when it was a Preparatory School for Boys c1898, now known as the Briars.

compiled by Philip Morton

Belmore Falls, an historical overview

Belmore Falls was named after the then Governor of NSW, Sir Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry, 4th Earl of Belmore, in 1870. Located just 6.5 km south of Robertson, the spectacular waterfall was a known site on the path travelled by the Dharawal, Wodi Wodi and Gundungurra peoples between the coast and highlands, and since 1969 has been part of the extensive Morton National Park.

The first recorded white visitors were guided there through thick rainforest in 1870 by John Hanrahan, a pioneer of the Yarrawa Brush where Burrawang, Kangaloon and Robertson were the main villages. His party included Charles Moore, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, and Dr Reed of Sydney.

It was Dr Reed who named the falls after Lord Belmore, Governor of NSW from 1868 to 1872. With the Great Southern Railway having opened in 1867 to Moss Vale, Lord Belmore had become a regular visitor to the district and leased Throsby Park homestead as a summer residence for his family. This laid the foundation for the later acquiring of *Hillview* at Sutton Forest as a vice-regal residence and for the district to become an elite holiday destination.

The Belmore Falls locality was just a few miles north-east of Fitzroy Falls that had already become popular with visitors and had been named in the 1850s in honour of then Governor Fitz Roy. Its popularity had prompted Robertson citizens to draw attention to the Falls nearer their village.

The natural significance of Belmore Falls became recognised in 1883 by the decision to reserve it for 'Public Recreation and Preservation of Timber' with the official dedication of Barrengarry Park at Belmore Falls taking place in April 1887. The first Trustees were W Hindmarsh, G Schlaadt and R McEvelly. Two picnic weather-sheds and a horse yard were built, and a road cleared through from Robertson.



Visitors at Belmore Falls, c1890

Once the area was more accessible, visitors started taking advantage of its facilities. The site being 550m above sea level, several lookouts were established, including Hindmarsh's Lookout with views across Kangaroo Valley and township.

A Tourist Guide of 1904 that featured Bowral, Moss Vale and surrounding attractions had entries on the various waterfalls, including Belmore. By that time another road to Belmore Falls had been opened from the west. The Guide stated that "a picturesque route called the Tourist Road connects Belmore with Fitzroy Falls. A charming feature of the drive is the arched avenue of trees bordering the road between Wilde's Meadow and the Lake".

At Belmore Falls "the height of the first fall is over 300 feet, but it requires two more considerable bounds to reach the bottom of the valley. The falling of water throughout countless ages has excavated at the base of the first fall a basin of fine dimensions, which is filled with the purest and coldest water."

A walking track was described that from the top lookout descended past each fall to the valley floor. In order to reach the lower falls, a footbridge was erected, crossing above the water cascading from the base of the first fall. It was eventually to be washed away but the footings remain.



Some sources claim the entire drop to be 130 metres, others more than 300 metres. The worldwaterfalldatabase.com website suggests its height is about 160 metres, split between two main tiers. The larger upper tier drops about 100-110 metres, fed by Wallagunda Creek with the lower fall by Barrengarry Creek, and the combined waters flow into the Kangaroo River at the valley floor.

Nowadays visitors at Belmore Falls are directed to various lookouts and walking tracks along a loop drive that spans the escarpment and to safety-fenced lookouts near the rim of the top falls. Further upstream along the creek may be found a series of pools; one, where water cascades over stepped rocks, may be accessed by a remnant walking track.

Adjacent to the Falls and along the creeks are found shrubs such as Drumstick, Tea-tree and Persoonia together with swamp grasses, ferns and bryophytes. Boronia is abundant in the area; eucalypts such as messmate and scribbly gum, together with banksias and wattles, make up the forest canopy.

Our dairying industry history, Part 3

A history of local dairying continues here, with some material drawn from the collection provided to the BDHS by well-respected member the late Joe Ford.

As noted in previous articles, Sydney businessman Thomas Mort introduced mechanical refrigeration in 1875 to transport and store perishable food and this revolutionised the dairy industry, along with the new cream separator and butter-making machinery.

Mort established the Fresh Food & Ice Company (FF&I) with a cold-storage depot at Darling Harbour and chose the Southern Highlands as the first country area to supply fresh milk to Sydney. From October 1876, milk was consigned from Bowral on specially built insulated railway trucks fitted with ice hatches.

After Mort's death in 1878 the local dairying trade continued to prosper with milk going daily from Bowral and Moss Vale stations. Milk was also supplied to a butter factory that FF&I opened in 1882 at Mittagong equipped with a new Danish separator. Farmers at a distance from the railway were unable to supply fresh milk due to the poor condition of local roads, so continued to send their butter to Sydney.

Illawarra and Shoalhaven farmers also supplied Sydney with dairy butter, it having gone by coastal steamship from early days. City commission agents took 5 percent and often made more by manipulating the market. These farmers decided to cut out the middlemen by establishing a co-operative similar to ones formed in Europe that were owned jointly by the producers who would receive the profits and exercise some control of the market.

The South Coast & West Camden Co-operative was formed in October 1880, with inaugural members including farmers around Picton and some in the Berrima district.

In *Illawarra Co-operatives: the First One Hundred Years* (2014) researchers Donaldson and Southall state that the farmers 'by the instinct of self-preservation' created Australia's first successful attempt at co-operative marketing. Once the Co-op opened its own selling floors in Sussex St, Sydney and established a city depot, its members withdrew their consignments from 'the system' that included FF&I and sent all farm produce, including bacon, eggs, butter and cheese, to the fledgling co-operative.

In 1887 the South Coast railway opened to Kiama, providing a direct, rapid link to Sydney and coastal farmers were soon railing their produce daily. Faced with the increased competition, FF&I in Sydney was

quick to adapt, encouraging Kiama farmers to supply it with fresh milk. As a consequence, the Berrima district suppliers soon faced setbacks, with FF&I threatening to discontinue the milk train and reducing prices from 8 to 6 pence per gallon. As well, FF&I expanded its butter processing facilities and installed the latest separator equipment at Darling Harbour, with the intention of gradually phasing out production at Mittagong.

At this time Mittagong townspeople were involved in an ongoing dispute with FF&I about the unsuitable location of the piggery linked with its milk business at the butter factory. In November 1887 the *Bowral Free Press* reported that the issue was resolved "by the purchase of 53 acres at a considerable distance from any dwelling, although embracing some of the favourite bathing holes and prettiest spots on the Nattai Creek." FF&I assured the public that no pollution would occur.

The above story reveals that FF&I had not, as stated in part one of this series, totally ceased production at the Mittagong factory by the end of 1887 but continued at a reduced capacity to around 1890. This is confirmed by a *Bowral Free Press* report in January 1893 stating that, after a lapse of several years, the machinery in FF&I's old premises at Mittagong had started work again, under the management of the Mittagong Dairy Company, a new co-operative entity that leased the premises and updated equipment.

FF&I did at first continue to rail milk from Bowral after 1887, building a loading depot near the station and the milk trains continued to run. The expected price was received until January 1889, when FF&I suddenly ceased taking the local farmers' milk.

Angry milk suppliers at Bowral were informed by the FF&I manager, Mr Locke, that alterations in the running of the trains compelled it to discontinue taking their milk, as most of it was sour when it arrived in Sydney. The Illawarra line was better, with coastal milk brought into Sydney at an early hour, without 'sours'. He said, however, the company still wished to deal with the Bowral suppliers if possible.

Although feeling unfairly treated, they agreed to continue the supply but were not satisfied with the price offered. When another Sydney company then promised better prices and conditions, FF&I matched the offer. It kept its Bowral depot in operation and Sydney continued to receive local milk.

Butter making on the farm had undergone a major change in 1884 with the opening at Kiama of the Pioneer Co-operative Dairy Produce Factory Co Ltd, Australia's first co-operative factory. The success of

the co-operative marketing arm had spurred farmers to apply co-operation to production and, with cream separators installed, to achieve better returns for their butter. Although the private sector fought back, the movement took off and many such factories soon existed, including at Berry, Kangaroo Valley and Barrengarry, and along the Southern Railway at Cobbity, Camden, Picton, Mittagong and Bowral.

Numerous factories also opened on the district's east side: the 'Beehive' between Wildes Meadow and Robertson (1887); at Robertson (1888); at Kangaloon and the 'Emu' at Wildes Meadow (1889); the 'Waratah' at West Kangaloon (1890); 'Roberton Park' at Glenquarry (1891); at Manchester Square near Moss Vale (1891); and at Pheasant Ground (1892).



Local butter factories: The Emu at Wildes Meadow (top) and the Waratah at West Kangaloon (now Kangaloon)

Farmers carted their whole milk in cans to these factories and, after separation, the skimmed milk was taken back to feed pigs, calves and fowls.

An extract from a talk given by Wes Morrow, son of a West Kangaloon school teacher, published in the *Southern Mail* in 1950, provides some local insight:

"Then came the Co-operative Dairy Factories which were scattered throughout the district . . . and, at one stage, two at Kangaloon. By that time the milk was drawn by horse wagon to meet the railway. The roads were in an awful state, the carts sometimes bogging up to the shafts in wet weather. Later on, one man put in a separator and caused a terrible

uproar among the farmers, but they soon found he was getting his cream away much more easily, and they all soon had separators. For many years a major part of the Kangaloon butter was sold to Anthony Horder's Ltd."

At Bowral, the Wingecarribee butter factory opened on the Oxley family property in 1892, with cheese making taking place from about 1902.

Dissatisfied with how the Sydney market dealt with them, in 1891 local farmers formed a marketing co-operative with their own selling floor in Sydney. On the previous page is a reference to a January 1893 *Bowral Free Press* report about this new co-operative taking over FF&I's butter factory, and continuing that the Mittagong Dairy Company co-operative "has leased the premises in question for a term, and the old separators, which are now out of date, have been replaced by a new one with the latest improvements, and everything is again in good going order."

One day in January 1893 this new separator put through 187½ gallons of milk in 35 minutes, which pleased the farmers no end. At first the co-operative was sending its cream to FF&I's depot in Sydney, where it was made into butter, but it was the local company's ambition to make its own bulk butter.

The co-operative Mittagong Dairy Company was renamed the Berrima District Farm & Dairy Company in 1895 and it also took over the butter factory at Robertson,

where Arthur Pritchett was manager (at left in picture), converting both premises into central butter factories to achieve much greater efficiency than the smaller, scattered ones had ever done. These carried on for a while as feeders to the larger premises, but all then closed.



A history of local dairying continues next month: butter making becomes a major industry in the early 20th century; co-operative factories are established at Bowral and Moss Vale; and bulk fresh milk continues to be processed for local and city consumption.

Compiled by Philip Morton to be continued

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 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.

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