



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 571 June 2024



From the President's Desk

Peg Harvey, one of our longest serving volunteers, sadly passed away recently. She has been a member for over a quarter of a century and served on the Management Committee in a variety of roles. Only failing health drove Peg to step back from her triple roles of Secretary, Membership Secretary and Minute Secretary a few months ago. Thank you Peg for your commitment to our Society for so long. See a tribute to her on page 3.

We had a pair of surprise visitors at our May General Meeting here in the Archives. Maureen and Ben Dolle of the Chalker/Charker Society came along to present us with a cheque for \$564. A generous gesture from a fellow historical society with connections to our area and which has unfortunately felt unable to continue.

We are in the early days of a project to digitise the newsletters of Southern Portland Cement from 1959 to 1984 which are a valuable source for local history as the company was a major employer in the district. Using this donation to partially fund the project is particularly relevant as those records include evidence that eleven Chalkers were employed at the Cement Works between 1945 and the 1990s. For more about the Chalker/Charker Society see page 5.

Each of the guest speakers who headline our monthly gatherings entertain with their own style when sharing their chosen topic.

'A Triangle of Care in Colonial NSW' was the modest title of Heather Garnsey's presentation which exposed us to heart-rending stories of so many people who had survived the hardships of a long sea voyage only to step ashore and face destitution without support of family or State. Heather's description of the work of three Sydney asylums filled the room with emotive stories of deserted wives and abandoned children turning to the Benevolent Asylum as their only alternative to starvation. Life in Sydney during the 19th century for countless young women facing giving birth alone, abandoned ex-convicts and the elderly, was no better than the life they had been taken from.

Powerful in its delivery and without judgement, Heather's offering left us to form our own opinions on how society has valued the vulnerable and the lonely in its midst. A photo of Heather being thanked by Robyne McKinnon is shown on page 2.

Our Mid-Year lunch is on 27 June, with guest speaker Dr Carol Liston's topic being 'Convict Women'. More detail about her talk is provided on page 2.

Stuart Handley

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS and EVENTS

JUNE 2024

Thursday 27 June at 12:00 for 12:30pm

Our Mid-Year Luncheon at Dormie House, Moss Vale

JULY 2024

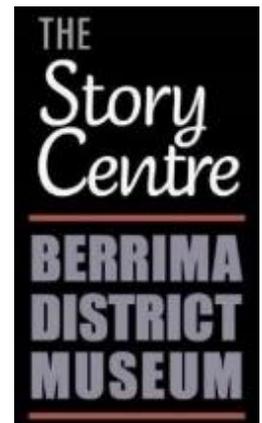
Thursday 25 July at 2:00pm

Charlotte Atkinson and her new statue at Berrima

Speaker: Author Belinda Murrell, a descendant of Charlotte

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



FABRICATIONS

This seems a long time ago. I met Fred Behr at school, a funny joker who always had us in stitches, never biased and I thought a com-pleat person. Ironically, just before sitting for the Weaving Certificate, he suddenly weft school and bolted. Shot through.

Ever since I've been dyeing to meet him again. I believe he married a materialistic girl called Chenille Taylor who came from a little town in Scotland called Paisley. They had two children, two girls called Polly and Esther. Sew far, sew good.

I finally collared Chenille and Fred, who was not a patch on his former self. We had a good yarn, but I couldn't pin him down to find out about his unseamly behaviour. He did his best to embellish his story, but all he did was skirt around the subject. I cottoned on very quickly that this was a familiar pattern of his, bobbin' and weaving his way with words.

I didn't cut corners by stating, 'darn it, Fred, where the blazers did you get to? I thought we were a hand-picked pair, tailor-made for each other? We got on sew well. What happened?'

'I figured I was never in the loop at school. I felt hemmed in. A teacher called Terry Towerling accused me of being a muslin. That was the worsted thing that happened to me that year. Panic loomed so I zipped off.'

'Sew, where did you go?' I asked.

'I got a job in a men's store to learn the ropes. They were fleecing their customers. I lent out some black and white fabric to a nun. The boss said that's OK but don't make a habit of it.'

He looked for a job that twill suit him. Fred was in charge of appropriately dressing wax mannequins with wool in a museum.

He read that in China, there was a museum of their rich and famous all made out of silk.

I guess you could call them Fabric-Asians!

Bruce Moore

BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM

1a Marketplace cnr Bryan St, Berrima

OPEN: FRIDAY to SUNDAY

10.00am to 3.00pm

throughout the year including school and public holiday periods. Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day.

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

Membership Details

Please note that all membership enquiries and changes of address details should be addressed to:

The Membership Secretary
c/- the Society's postal address
or email: bdhsarchives@gmail.com



Seen here on left at our May General Meeting is Maureen Dolle, Treasurer of the Chalker/Charker Society, giving their cheque to Stuart Handley, and on right is member Robyne McKinnon thanking speaker Heather Garnsey for her informative history presentation at the meeting. *More detail on page 1*

Mid-Year Luncheon speaker

Carol Liston AO is an Australian historian and academic researcher specialising in the history of colonial NSW from 1788 to 1860.



Until recently she was associate professor of history at Western Sydney University.

In her *Convict Women* talk at our Dormie House luncheon, she will share her research into female convicts, including that while many were guilty of theft, pick pocketing, burglary, highway robbery, receiving and possession of forged bank notes, most never resorted to prostitution either before or after transportation, even though such a myth has long endured.

They were canny survivors, who lived on their wits and were often entrepreneurs running profitable schemes before they were caught and charged.

(Booking details for the luncheon are on page 3.)



Vale Margaret 'Peg' Harvey

Our long-standing member Peg Harvey passed away on 10 May after a long period of illness. Peg was well-known to many of us, having contributed for 27 years in a variety of the Society's administrative roles as well as working on important research projects that included cataloguing and indexing.

Born Margaret Alison Northmore, 'Peg' grew up at Maitland and was employed as a secretary at Richmond Air Force Base where she met Colin Robert Harvey, and they married in 1953. After living in Queensland for a time, they moved to the Southern Highlands in the 1970s, where they became owners/operators of an appliance store in Bong Bong St, Bowral until the early 1990s. They also worked as caretakers at Eling Forest Winery and as well Peg worked at the Moss Vale Toyota dealership.

In 1997 Peg answered an advertisement she saw in the local paper which stated that the BDHS was looking for volunteers. Peg and Colin joined the Society in July 1997 and Peg was a regular 'Tuesday' volunteer from then on.

Peg was appointed to the BDHS Management Committee in 1998, acted as Minute Secretary for two years, and then served on the Committee from 2001 right through to early 2024, when illness prevented her from attending.

From 2002-2005 Peg was Treasurer of the Society during which time she managed the affairs of the organisation with great skill. She was Public Officer from 2008 to 2023, and from November 2017 she was the BDHS Secretary, which in our Society is a busy and important role. Peg was meticulous in ensuring that the Society met all of its statutory obligations. She also served as Membership Secretary, maintaining the database of our members.

Peg was awarded Life Membership of our Society in 2017 and is seen below at Bowral Golf Club receiving the certificate from Dr Carol Liston, RAHS President, with President Bruce Moore looking on.



Peg Harvey had a special interest in Bowral & District Hospital where she was a stalwart of the Hospital Auxiliary. At our archives Peg worked for many years alongside a former Matron, the late Nancy Reynolds, who was also a long-term member of the Society. As well, Peg volunteered at Meals on Wheels.

Peg worked tirelessly in our Mittagong Archives throughout her 27-year membership of the Society. She undertook a variety of tasks with enthusiasm, including indexing, data entry and the maintenance of our entries for the Ryerson Index.

As well as working in the archives, Peg has also been a regular and valued volunteer at our museum at Berrima since she became a member of the Society.



In November 2021 Peg was awarded a Certificate of Achievement by the Royal Australian Historical Society, announced during its annual conference. The award was presented to Peg by President Ian Mackey (shown above) at our AGM in November 2021.

Peg will be greatly missed.

Mid-Year Luncheon on 27 June

Dormie House, the 1930s guesthouse, restaurant and bar overlooking Moss Vale Golf Course, is this year's venue for our annual mid-year luncheon on Thursday 27 June. The cost is \$55 per head. There will be a two-course meal of main and dessert along with the usual attractions including door prize and raffle.

Members and their guests are most welcome. The response has been good, but the more the merrier! So, if you wish to attend, please let us know before 19 June to add you to the attendance list and either pay directly at the Mittagong archives or make direct payment to account: BSB 633 000 (Bendigo Bank), Acct 200107100 with your initial and surname as ref.

Associate Professor Dr Carol Liston will be the guest speaker with a presentation on *Convict Women*.

Books recently added to our Library

Librarian Carolyn Dougherty has provided this list of books acquired by our library since last year and expresses her thanks to our Family History Group members who have donated a number of the books.

Guidelines for Cemetery Conservation Published by the National Trust. Second Edition 2009. Library Shelf No. REF 10/78.

Aboriginal Women's Heritage: Nepean. Published by the Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW) 2007. REF 12/42.

Southern Highlands Life: People, Gardens, Homes, Town Walks, Day Trips. A Highlife Magazine Publication. Published 2013. REF 13/301.

History of Captain Francis Allman Commander 48th Regiment of Foot 1780-1860. Produced by Carolyn Morrow, Personalised Ancestry Research, for the Allman family. Published 2023. REF 01/229.

Freemasons and Community: A history of Kangaroo Island Freemasons and Island Lodge from 1908 to 2002 by Alan J. Jacobs. Published 2023. REF 20/187.

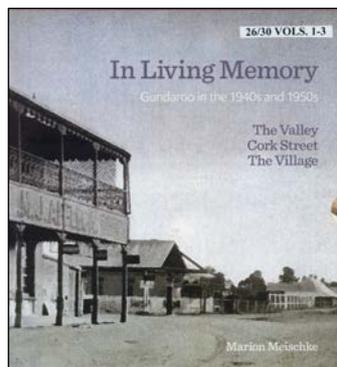
Foreign Lands: A History and Genealogy of the Merriman and Margules Families in Australia by Diana MacQuillan. Published 1994. REF 01/230.

Fandango: A Biography of Ann Carr-Boyd, AM., by Kerry Anderson. Published 2023. REF 24/127.

Celebrating 150 years: Mittagong Public School Sesqui-Centenary 1865-2015. Published 2015. REF 11/62.

The Tolpuddle Martyrs by Joyce Marlow. Published 1971. REF 07/99.

In Living Memory: Gundaroo in the 1940s and 1950s. 3 Volumes: Vol. 1 - The Valley; Vol. 2 - Cork Street; Vol. 3 - The Village.
Author: Marion Meischke. Published 2019. REF 26/30.

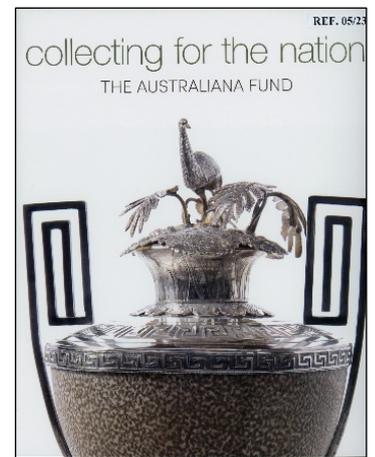


Bibury 1892-1992
compiled by Ian Bruce McMartin. Published 1993. REF 13/303.

Tickner: History of Edward Tickner 1789-1864 & Sarah Towner 1784-1860 compiled by Max Laidley. Published 1994. REF 01/231

Collecting for the Nation: The Australiana Fund. Published by the Australiana Fund and New South Publishing in 2017. REF 05/23.

Australia, My Love: From Prisoner of War to Order of Australia. An Autobiography by Rick Pisaturo. Published in 2010. REF 13/309.



Southern Highland Nashos: We also served. Published by Southern Highlands Sub-Branch, National Servicemen's Association of Australia (NSW Branch). Compiled by Ray McCann with Bud Townsing. Published 2023. REF 35/81.

The Highland Clearances by John Prebble. First published in 1963. REF 03/03-28.

A History of the Prospecting and Development of Coal Mining in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Part 1 - South from Mount Keira; Part 2 - North from Mount Keira.
Edited by R.A. Cairns et al. Published 2010. REF 27/82.

Gallipoli 1915 by Richard Reid. Published in 2002. REF 35/82.

Macquarie's Five Towns by Olaf Ruhen, with photos by Bruce Adams. Published in 1970. REF 24/83.

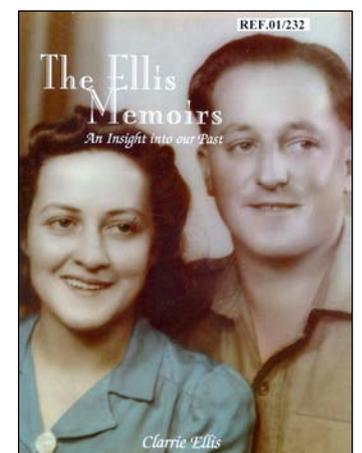
Historic Buildings of Australia: 1. Published by Australian Council of National Trusts in 1977. REF 23/84.

The Tolpuddle Martyrs by Joyce Marlow. First published 1971. Library copy available to borrow at GEN. COLL./MAR.

A Life Well Lived: Dr Henry Leighton Jones by David Baxter. Published 2019. REF 13/311

The Voyage of their Life by Diane Armstrong. Published 2001. GEN. COLL./ARM.

The Ellis Memoirs - An Insight into our Past by Clarrie Ellis. Published 2002. REF 01/232.



Chalker/Charker Society of Australia

The Chalker/Charker Society has just recently ceased operation. It was established at Sydney in 1988.

According to its official website, this family society mainly consisted of descendants of William Charker, also known as Chalker, who at the age of 25 years was convicted at Surrey – Lent Assizes of burglary in 1801 and sentenced to seven years transportation. He sailed on the *Coromandel*, leaving England in February 1802. The ship made record time, getting to Port Jackson in 121 days.

Once settled in the colony, in 1803 William received permission to marry an ex-convict, Mary Kearns, to whom he had been assigned. Mary had been convicted of theft in Dublin in 1792 and arrived in Sydney on 17 September 1793, on the *Sugar Cane*. She completed her sentence and was then granted 65 acres of land in the Hawkesbury area, then known as Green Hills, now Windsor. However, the two became legally separated after just 5 years of marriage. No children were born of this union.

In 1808, William met and formed a lifetime liaison with Elizabeth Shackle (sometimes spelt Sheckle) soon after she arrived on the *Speke*. Elizabeth had been transported to Australia for 7 years, after being convicted of theft at Bridport Somerset, in 1808. Her young son, Daniel, accompanied her on the journey.

The website lists the objectives of the Chalker/Charker Society as being three-fold:

- To establish, preserve and maintain the history of William Charker/Chalker and his descendants in Australia;
- To promote relationships between the said descendants; and
- To arrange meetings, function and activities for the promotion of these objectives.

A nominated member of each branch of William and Elizabeth's family, who was known as the Line Representative, was available to assist those seeking information about their family tree, particularly within the given line and to disseminate information about the Society. Membership was open to any person interested in furthering the Society's objectives, even if not actual descendants.

Four meetings of the Society were held each year. The venues for these meetings varied as three of the meetings were held at the homes of members in Sydney, with the fourth meeting being the AGM, which was usually held in Mittagong.



William and Elizabeth had eight children before he died at the age of 48 years in 1823. Elizabeth had one more child after Williams's death. Her son, Frederick, was born in 1825. The family were:

Daniel	b 1806 married Jane Welch/ Welsh/ Walsh
Edward	b 1809 married Mary McGlynn
William James	b 1810 married Eleanor Anderson
Maria	b 1811 married Charles York
Joseph Henry	b 1813 married Eleanor Kelly
John	b c1815 married (1) Priscilla Plowman, (2) Sarah Houghton
James	b c1817 married Sarah Welch/ Welsh/ Walsh
Mary Anne	b 1818 married (1) Robert Walker, (2) Thomas McGlynn, (3) James Williams
George	b 1821 married Mary Greenwood

William was known both as a Charker and a Chalker. He used and signed his name Charker for all official documents, but others frequently used the name Chalker. Most of his descendants used the Chalker name but the family of his son William James still generally use the name Charker.

In *A History of the Berrima District*, James Jervis states that "probably the earliest settler at Mittagong was William Charker (or Chalker) who received a permit to graze cattle on the Mittagong Range in May 1821. Charker had been Principal Overseer of Government Stock and lived at Camden".

Jervis further notes that William had accompanied Meehan south in April 1820 to explore the country along the Wollondilly to see if suitable grazing land was available for some of the Government's tame cattle. He received an order for 200 acres in January 1823 for his services as Principal Overseer. He took up this land at [Lower] Mittagong where his stock had been de-pasturing since 1821 but died in February 1823. After his death his widow, who apparently remarried, applied for the grant to be measured. The deed was issued to Elizabeth Sheckell and appears as Portion 35, Parish of Mittagong.

Compiled by Philip Morton

Law infrastructure in Eastern District

A history of local law infrastructure and organisation covering Berrima, Mittagong, Moss Vale and Bowral was provided in our February and March 2024 issues, based on a series compiled in 2017 by members Philip Morton and Marg Muntz. That series also included a history of police stations at Bundanoon, Robertson and Burrawang.

Bundanoon's police station history was provided in our May newsletter. A history of police and legal infrastructure in the district's east at Robertson and Burrawang follows here, after a brief summary of the earlier history.

By 1839 Berrima was the administrative and judicial centre for the Southern Highlands, an impressive court house and gaol dominating the town. The police at Berrima were responsible for the entire district, consisting then of scattered rural settlements along the Southern Road (now Old Hume Highway) from the Bargo Brush to Paddy's River, with villages at Braemar, Nattai, and along the Old South Road including at Sutton Forest and Berrima.

Settlement intensified from the late 1860s. The *Robertson Land Act* of 1862 enabled the taking up of uncleared land including on the district's eastern side in the dense Yarrawa Brush. Pioneers, many from the Illawarra and Kiama coastal regions, took up land in what became the Robertson, Burrawang and Kangaloon localities. The thick 'jungle' was cleared to grow vegetables and raise herds on the rich, fertile land. Sawmills and butter factories were established, and dairying soon became a major industry.

With the opening of the southern railway through the district from 1867, new townships sprung up around stations at Mittagong, Bowral, Moss Vale and Bundanoon. As these new towns developed, so did their need for law and order, still then based at Berrima. Due to the poor state of local roads, it was difficult for people to attend court there and the mounted police struggled to regularly patrol the far-flung districts.

Courts and police stations were progressively opened at Mittagong, Robertson, Moss Vale and Bowral, with Burrawang and Bundanoon gaining police stations only. This early infrastructure would, with many additions and changes, provide the framework for modern community policing in Wingecarribee Shire.

Mittagong was the first township after Berrima to obtain a watch-house, built in 1868, and a Court of Petty Sessions opened in 1882.

A substantial police and court precinct was erected at Moss Vale in 1880 fronting the railway station and a police station was provided at Bowral in 1882 where a court house opened in 1896.

At Robertson, a police station opened in 1881, with a strength of one constable (mounted), and Petty Sessions commenced in 1888. A late-Victorian style Court House with residence was built in 1891 and a rear paddock was notified as a police reserve in 1900.

The precinct still serves as a police station. It is described on the NSW Heritage Register as follows:

The Robertson Police Station & Official Residence is a painted brick building with a hipped corrugated iron roof and a front verandah. This building was originally designed for use as a Courthouse by the Government Architect, WL Vernon and built in 1891.

The Robertson Police Station and Official Residence is an attractive late Victorian building, originally constructed for use as a Court House, with associated residence. The building contributes to the overall character of the township. This building is also important for its links to the presence of the police service in the local area since the late 19th century.



Robertson Police building, 1960s

Burrawang

The story of a police station at Burrawang is a rather brief, but interesting enough, tale.

As stated already, after the *Robertson Land Act* of 1861 allowed free selection of Crown lands before survey, pioneers took up in the Yarrawa Brush on the district's eastern side. Road access was difficult until Macquarie Pass opened in 1898, linking Moss Vale and the Illawarra.

Robertson, at the head of the Pass, then developed as the main town on the district's eastern side.

Prior to that, some use was made of a bridle track to Kiama surveyed in the 1830s by Robert Huddle. From the 1860s a dray-road, called Old Cedar Mountain Road, extended between Moss Vale and Nowra via Kangaroo Valley. Goods were carried on packhorses and a mail coach ran once a week.

Numerous selections were cleared to the south of Wingecarribee Swamp, where the private village of Burrawang took shape, accessed by Old Cedar Road. In 1867 it had a post office, licensed inn and general store. It became the initial hub of the eastern area.

William Barrett arrived at Burrawang from Sydney in the early 1870s and purchased 50 acres which he subdivided into town blocks. As well as being an auctioneer, with his brother Leonard he established a steam-powered flour mill and a sawmill that employed 20 hands.

By 1880 Burrawang also had several churches, three hotels, a school, blacksmith and saddlery. The prosperous community sought its own police station, the nearest then being at Moss Vale. William Barrett championed the cause. A letter written by him was tabled in the NSW Legislative Assembly by the local member, J Garrett, in April 1879. It began:

"A Society has lately been established at Burrawang for the purpose of advancing the interests of the district, termed the 'Burrawang Farmers' Club', which is composed of the leading men of Burrawang, Wilde's Meadow, Robertson and Kangaloon".

Barrett conveyed the Club's insistence that a constable be obtained in order to preserve the peace and morality of Burrawang. "There is not a village in NSW where a constable is more required, as the language which is daily made use of by scores of people in the streets is most demoralising to children living in close proximity which, together with drinking and fighting, is more than can be tolerated by respectable inhabitants".

He further stated that "as the population is weekly increasing and fresh business being opened, the place is daily becoming more rowdy". The many Burrawang cases tried at Moss Vale Court House indicated that indeed the village was neither quiet nor orderly. He concluded that "such conduct would be speedily ended" by the appointment of a constable.

In 1882 the area's prosperity enticed the English, Scottish & Australian Bank to open at Burrawang in substantial brick premises it built.

Despite the Burrawang Vigilance Committee's ongoing appeals for a constable, the Government still considered it unnecessary. It did, however, appoint William Barrett as a Justice of the Peace.

A police station was finally approved in 1894, by which time Barrett had left the district. A room was leased in a shop owned by the Gardiner family. It had a strength of one constable (mounted). The first, Thomas Armstrong, served for several years and married a Miss Grice of Wilde's Meadow.

In 1903 the Government purchased land in Barrett St, Burrawang. A large weather-board house on the site was converted into police station and residence, with a stable built at the rear for the police horse.

Burrawang's one-man station was closed in 1920. The Government decided that the locality would be supervised from Robertson, which had become the more prominent town, where a police station and court house had opened in 1891.

Today Burrawang flourishes as one of the Shire's finest rural villages.



EARLY SETTLERS: Burrawang's Gardiner family, c1880. Their shop housed the police station from 1894 to 1903.



The house that served as Burrawang's police station and residence from 1903 to 1920.

Compiled by Philip Morton

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:** Marketplace, 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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