BERRIMA DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY Inc.

Founded 1960

Located in the Wingecarribee Shire,
Southern Highlands of NSW

NEWSLETTER

No 504 April 2018

From the President's Desk

Notice of a special general meeting is being sent to every member. This meeting will be held prior to our general meeting on Thursday 26 April 2018. The reason for this special meeting is because our Society is in the process of applying for enrolment on the Register of Cultural Organisations and the endorsement as a Deductible Gift Recipient.

To enable the ongoing development of our Society, especially our Museum at Berrima who have many projects in the pipeline, this endorsement will allow our Society to accept gifts of cash, property and in-kind professional services and issue a tax deductible receipt to the donor. The ability to offer this facility is crucial as any funding by way of Government Grant is usually only 50% of the project cost. Other steps in the process include the establishment of a trust to enable the setting up of a Public Fund, obtaining an ABN and opening a separate bank account for the receipt of all donations. In addition a statistical report must be submitted to the Department every six months.

On a lighter note I had the privilege of attending the unveiling of a plaque on Saturday 24 March to commemorate the granting of land to William Wood and seven other grantees in 1829. Royal Veteran Companies arrived in NSW in 1826 and recruits were offered an engagement of two years. An extra inducement was a free land grant if they remained in the Colony after discharge. These eight allotments of 80 acres each were located between what is now Eridge Park Road and the Wingecarribee River.

The plaque, which tells the story of these early farmers was unveiled by Mayor Ken Halstead and David Wood. It is located at the corner of Eridge Park Road and Moss Vale Road. The story on the plaque was compiled from research carried out by our Archivist Linda Emery in conjunction with David Wood, a descendant of William and a former Mayor of Bowral.

DID YOU KNOW! Police were summoned to a day-care centre where a three year old was resisting a rest.

Ian Mackey

MONTHLY MEETINGS

APRIL 2018:	**Thursday 26 April at 2:00pm**
SPEAKER:	**Terry Nunan**
TOPIC:	Accessing NSW Historical Land Records on the internet
MAY 2018:	**Thursday 24 May at 2:00pm**
SPEAKER:	Janet Black on Tallong's history

AFTERNOON TEA is served following each month's speaker.
Members please bring a plate or a donation.

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

THE Story Centre
BERRIMA DISTRICT MUSEUM
STORIES OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND OBJECTS FROM THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Senior Vice-President's Column

Confusing Acronyms

Since WW2 we have developed millions of abbreviations in our language, thanks mainly to the ADF, CMF, ATO and the AFP!

We can all remember the old initials APC given to several headache powders suggesting Aspirin, Phenacetin and Caffeine. Now superseded, Internet game players think of this now as meaning Armoured Personnel Carrier.

Your SIM card is known as a Subscriber Identity Module in your mobile. However a Qantas pilot will identify this as a Simulator.

Australians all know what POQ means but in Canada this means Protection des Oiseaux du Quebec, the French-Canadian bird lovers association.

An ATM we are all familiar with, but in texting terms it can mean At The Moment eg. "OMG I'm OK ATM LOL TKS." Confusing eh?

Which brings me to LOL. I used this as an end text with Lots of Love, but am now informed it means Laugh Out Loud. This I find impossible if texting.

Perhaps to a bartender the meaning could be Lemon Or Lime, or Lots Of Liquor or even Loss Of Legs but certainly not Loss Of Life or Little Old Ladies.

Growing up pre-decimally, we knew what LSD stood for. The Beatles popularised a new psychedelic drug with these initials. Rev-heads or rather car lovers know this as a Limited-Slip Differential, whereas medically speaking it translates as Lumpy Skin Disease.

DDT of course is a banned toxic insecticide, but in texting terms could spell out Drop Dead Twice or Don't Do That. Accountants recognise the acronym as Dividend Distribution Tax.

I'll try to get the ABC on my HMV; otherwise it's back to listening to a DVD or plugging in a USB.

How confusing! Well I'm OOH (Out Of Here) before RSI sets in and I'll need a MRI or even CPR.

Bruce Moore

A Notice to Members

A notice is being sent to all members about a special general meeting on 26 April to amend our Constitution.

Berrima District Museum

THE STORY CENTRE

Please note that the museum is now open at least 5 days a week

MUSEUM OPEN: 10am to 4pm

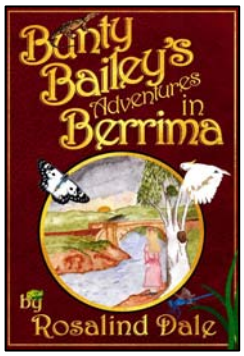
WEDNESDAY TO SUNDAY

and every day during NSW school holidays and on public holidays. Groups welcome at other times by arrangement. Ph John 4872 1660.

Family History Interest Group

The April FHIG meeting was a great afternoon of discussion and learning. Three new members were welcomed to the group and a demonstration of Rootschat forum was showed, followed by specific questions from members needing help and advice on family history problems, so we are moving on to become a really useful group to the Society. New members are most welcome. Our May meeting will be *trying hard* to work out Lands records. Contact Maxine on 4869 4958 for further information.

Book Launch at our Museum



The launch of "Bunty Bailey's Adventures in Berrima" a book written by our member Ros Dale will be held from 11am at the Museum on Sunday 29 April.

All are welcome to attend.

The book is a novel for children that explores life in 1849 experienced by Bunty, a girl aged 9 years. Her daily life and adventures highlight the difference between our Colonial beginnings and the present day. Everything we take for granted now was very different in 1849!

At the launch, there will be games and hands-on items for adults and children to experience. Ros will tell a story of Bunty and the Bushrangers. Please bring a rug to sit on during story time.

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

Artwork from our museum and archives collections was displayed during March at Wingecarribee Shire Foyer Gallery, Moss Vale. The exhibition of fine works received much acclaim. Pictured are WSC Cultural Officer Jenny Kena (second left) with members Philip Morton, Lyn Hall and Denise & Ian Mackey.

April Guest Speaker on Land Records

"Accessing NSW Historical Land Records on the Web" presented by Terry Nunan

This presentation is aimed at being both a discussion and a tutorial on how you can go about searching out your ancestor's land dealings, eg buying/selling a farm, mortgaging same etc, as well as discovering the vast amount of family history information that is often included in the early land contracts.

The vast array of millions of records relating to land transactions in NSW which took place during the 19th & 20th centuries are being progressively digitised and made available online via the NSW Land Registry Services website. This is saving both the amateur researcher and the professional legal clerk the need to spend hours and hours in the basement of the Land Titles Office in Sydney pouring over the original documents (as Terry has done for the past several years, one day a week).

Terry will follow a worked example through from picking a random contract (a mortgage) in his transcripts and progressively explaining how the records and (partial) indexes into them were structured and hence how to use the website to discover more information about the people, their land, the resolution (or failure) of their mortgages etc, and how to build a history of your ancestor's occupancy/ownership of a given piece of land.

ABOUT Wendy and Terry Nunan

The Nunan's have been active in Illawarra family history circles for over 30 years, producing numerous publications both for historical groups and for themselves.

Now full time local historians and authors in their retirement, they are part way through a series of major publications which document those buried or memorialised in the Catholic churchyard cemeteries of the Illawarra.

Terry is also researching and documenting historical land ownership in the Illawarra and down the coastal strip to Moruya. He is now undertaking detailed research into both Old System and Torrens Title ownership by the pioneering families appearing in their latest project – West Dapto Catholic Cemetery.

Vale former member David Burke

John David Burke OAM (known as David), formerly of James Milson Village North Sydney, Kiama, Burradoo, Mosman, Brisbane and Melbourne, passed away on March 17, 2018 at North Sydney in his 91st year. His funeral was held on Friday, 23 March.

David was a member of our Society from 1984 until 2012. He was a friend of our member Frank Mitchell and they regularly corresponded. Frank recalls that David was a local Burradoo 'identity', member of the Australian Railway Historical Society and contributor to their journal, as well as the author of a multitude of books. Locomotives were his particular interest.

David's earliest employment was in the dark, dusty, sooty and greasy engine sheds at Nth Melbourne soon after WW 2 had ended.

He is perhaps best known, however, for his attempt to rescue a steam train from oblivion by orchestrating the 'Goodbye Puffing Billy' special trips.

While a journalist on the Melbourne newspaper *The Sun* in 1954, he was looking for a topic for his column in the Young Sun, a children's page. A railway enthusiast suggested he write to the Victorian Railways and propose that Puffing Billy made one last trip before the whole line in the Dandenong Ranges was torn up.

With the blessing of the railway commissioners special trips from Upper Ferntree Gully to Belgrave were organised for 11 December 1954 with tickets being made available to Young Sun readers. On that day 30,000 people came to farewell the train and 2,500 had rides.

The success of the event led to a second day being organized and the continued success of these Farewell specials led to the formation of the Puffing Billy Preservation Society. Today the Puffing Billy Railway is a major tourist attraction operated by more than 900 dedicated volunteers.

The century-old steam train runs on its original mountain track from Belgrave to Gembrook in the Dandenong Ranges, 40kms east of Melbourne. It is a genuine relic of more leisurely days and one of David Burke's enduring legacies.

We extend our sympathies to David Burke's family.

The Mittagong Rocket

Linda Emery

Fifty years ago the Mittagong Moon Rocket landed in Winifred West Park. Most of us who grew up, or had children growing up, between the 1960s and 1980s would have memories of the local playground where metal monkey bars and swings, often along with brightly painted old tractors or trophy guns from two world wars vied for the attention of the adventurous youngster. But was there ever a more popular piece of playground equipment than the Rocket Ship climbing frame and slippery dip?

Mittagong was lucky to have its own Rocket Park much loved by locals and visitors alike. The Society recently received a donation of photographs and slides from Stuart Hawkins, son of former Mayor of Mittagong Shire, Len Hawkins. Among them were several photos of 'our' moon rocket taken on 23 November 1968 showing the bright red and silver rocket, accompanied by bikini-clad girls and a 'spaceman' (Peter Elliott), making its way along the Bowral Road on the back of Alf Ellis's low loader, ready for 'launching' in Winifred West Park.

The Mittagong Dahlia Festival Committee submitted the plans for the 10 metre high rocket which were approved by Mittagong Shire Council in June 1968.

Dunlop Steel Fabrications of Bowral were awarded the contract to build the structure at a cost of $705, paid for by Mittagong Bowling Club.

The story of the playground rocket ship in Australia goes back to the early 1960s when plans were acquired from the United States by Blue Mountains City Council engineer, John Yeaman. Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Blackheath, the first rocket slide in the country was made by Blackheath engineer and metal fabricator, Richard "Dick" West and erected in the Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park. Such was the popularity of the Rocket Slide that Dick went on to build another 37 of them for use in parks all around Australia.

The spread of space-inspired playground equipment was a by-product of the amazing era of the 'Space Race' of the 1950s and 60s between the USSR and the USA, when we were all enthralled by the wonders of space travel and in 1969, by the first moon landing. On both sides of the Iron Curtain, playground rocket ships and satellites were designed to foster children's excitement and curiosity about space.

By the 1990s playgrounds like the Rocket Park were falling out of favour, as Councils became increasingly conscious of safety concerns.

On the recommendation of the Shire Engineer, Mr Ken Halstead (now Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire), the Mittagong Moon Rocket was removed in 1993 amid concerns about its structural integrity. However, the tide seems to be turning, with a couple of rockets, suitably rebuilt to meet current safety standards, returning to public parks. Notably, Blackheath Rotary Club raised the funds to reinstate their rocket, removed more than 20 years ago. In partnership with Blue Mountains Council, the official 're-launch' took place on 25th March.

Where is the Mittagong Rocket now? If anyone knows what happened to it, please let us know.

Embroidered Sampler: its journey

Part 1 of 2 - compiled by Denise Mackey

As I gaze at this embroidered sampler, I marvel at its survival and amazing journey since 12 year old Fanny Norris carefully stitched the linen piece way back in 1829.

The sampler was one of the items displayed in the Society's recent artworks exhibition in the Wingecarribee Shire Council's Foyer Gallery.

Young girls were encouraged to work samplers to demonstrate their skill and accomplishments in needlework along with the belief such enterprise was a sign of virtue, achievement and industry. Fanny thread her needle with silk yarns to work the finely cross stitched pattern, a balanced geometric design including the alphabet, numbers, text and abstract pot plants, animals and trees. Intricate border patterns add interest and across the bottom she embroidered her name, age and date of completion.

Born in Chichester, Sussex the daughter of George and Frances Norris, Fanny married Edmund George Freeman (1822-1884) on 24 October 1842 at Saint Mary the Virgin Church of England in Dover. Her treasured embroidered sampler, by now probably framed, would probably have graced a wall in her marital home. It was during 1842/1843 Fanny and Edmund made the decision to emigrate to Australia, the land of opportunity to raise their family and prosper. Transportation had ceased and the Government assistance schemes was an encouraging inducement. By the time they were preparing for their departure Fanny had given birth to baby Emma.

Along with the required documents and luggage, Fanny packed her cherished embroidered sampler. After farewelling relatives and friends the family made their way to Deptford, London and it was in October 1843 Edmund, Fanny and 2 month old Emma boarded the 643 ton sailing ship "Neptune" ready for their adventure and exciting future in the antipodes.

"Neptune" picked up the remaining passengers in Cork, Ireland before departing on the 26 October 1843 under the command of William Ferris with 308 bounty immigrants on board bound for Sydney. Despite the many hazards and general discomfort of sea travel at the time accounts suggest the voyage was quite acceptable.

Because public money was involved in assisting immigrants to Australia the Government exercised control and supervision over shipping standards, carrying capacity, dietary requirements and general health care. Even so migrants were plagued with shipboard annoyances: unsanitary congestion, lack of privacy, squalid steerage accommodation, offensive odours, monotonous food and often chaotic mess arrangements. On the other hand, however, there was merriment, laughter, music and singing, probably books for reading, amusements and educational opportunities for the youngsters. Besides they were all on their way to a new life, a better life.

Irrespective of the type of voyage, after 108 days Port Jackson must have been a very welcome sight when "Neptune" arrived on 11 February 1844. There were 9 deaths - 4 adults and 5 children - an unfortunate hazard on such voyages. The ship was quarantined near Pinchgut for 3 days. Following the Immigration Board's visit, the vessel "hauled into Campbell's Wharf when persons wishing to hire servants can repair on board". The 22-year old Edmund was an agricultural labourer while Fanny was a house-servant and by 24 February all immigrants were engaged even though the colony was experiencing a financial depression.

The Freeman family farewelled their shipboard friends and disembarked onto the foreign soil of their new home. Did they gaze in wonderment at the magnificent harbour, at the forested foreshore dotted with the occasional house, at the steam ferry boat loaded with passengers, horses, livestock and goods busily plying between Dawes Point and the North Shore, at the picturesque Domain and the imposing Government House under construction?

Were they surprised to see the bustling city, the throng and noisy clatter of carts, cabs and vendors selling their wares, the many inns, the water carts, the botanical gardens, the windmills?

The family's stay in vibrant Sydney town may have been short-lived since it appears Edmund was engaged by Gilbert Elliott of Parramatta. All their luggage together with the embroidered sampler was loaded onto a cart destined for their first home at Parramatta. They were young, capable, adaptable and full of anticipation looking forward to this, the beginning of a bright and prosperous future.

A visit to Moss Vale Anglican Rectory

By Ros Dale, Archives volunteer

I was recently fortunate to be invited to visit this magnificent Federation style home. Situated down a long, winding, oak tree lined driveway, the two storey brick house sits well in the landscape. It is surrounded by more than five acres of well tendered gardens and ancient gum trees.

I was met by David and Ingaret Ward, the owners of the property for the last 30 years. In their time, they have improved the condition of both the house and the out buildings, taking care to restore to the original state and making few but essential changes to the plumbing and the addition of a laundry.

The house has a wide veranda on two sides which affords lovely views of the garden as well as being a place to relax in the heat of summer. A time capsule stone is embedded under the veranda. As the building was built in 1906, a centenary was celebrated in 2006 when more than 130 people visited and the time capsule was opened and added to. The original laying of the Foundation Stone and Fete are featured in great detail in an article written in *The Scrutineer* of Saturday, 24 February 1906.

St. Johns Church of England Rectory, Moss Vale, in early 20th century. Photo: David Baxter collection

Surrounding the front door are panels and fanlight of Art Nouveau style leadlight glass. This enhances the doorway and looks impressive. On entering the spacious hallway, one is aware of the generous proportions of the architecture by the high ceilings, the quality of the woodwork of the cedar staircase, doors and architraves. The elegant staircase has a large and beautiful leadlight panel on the landing halfway between the top and bottom floors which efficiently sheds light into the stairwell. This was given to the church by the architects of the building. The original pressed plaster ceilings are testimony to the style of the early twentieth century.

The rooms downstairs include a library, a dining room, a sitting room, all with carved wooden mantelpieces, the kitchen and original laundry which is now another part of the kitchen. The kitchen has a serving hatch between the kitchen and sitting room. The sink was returned to its original site by the current owners who also added a laundry and an enclosed entry area at the side of the house.

Upstairs, one bedroom has been re-purposed as a roomy bathroom with sympathetic fittings. There are four large bedrooms and an office, all with lovely outlooks and the reminders of open fires which are now replaced by unobtrusive modern heating.

Beside the grass tennis court, the tennis pavilion has been re-built from a derelict state. The garage and studio have been modernized and an external spa area has been added.

In regard to the history of this property: the building of a rectory was first discussed on 22 September 1896. The seven acre site was purchased for £80 from the Morrice estate (John Morrice of 'Browley', Moss Vale) and a building fund opened.

In 1905, during the incumbency of the Reverend A.C. Mosely, the rectory was built. It was said that Reverend Mosely did not want to live too close to the church, hence the location. The building was opened on 30 October 1906 by Archdeacon Langley.

Tennis parties were a familiar and popular entertainment between 1920 and 1950 after which the tennis court fell into disrepair.

Empire Day was popular with young parishioners and bonfires were lit. The building was still being used as a rectory in 1982.

The property was advertised for sale by the parish in August 1982 and January 1989.

It was a pleasure to see this grand old home, still serving a family and looking like the quotation I read at the Archives ". . . which has stood the test of time and earthquake".

The Church of England, Moss Vale

In January 1881 a subscription list to obtain funds to erect a church was opened, the foundation stone being laid on 24 May 1881, and the building opened on 24 December.

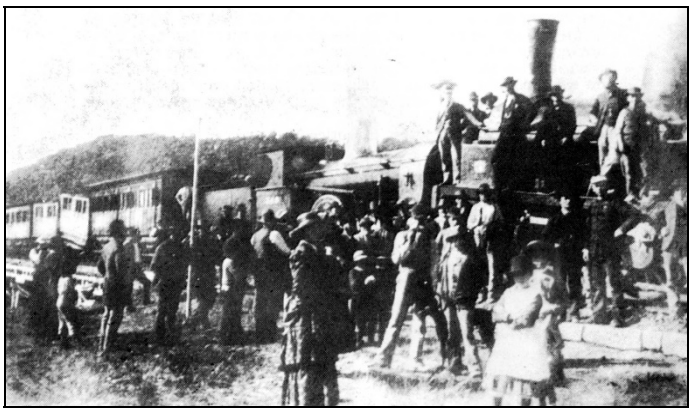
The foundation stone of an extension to the original St. John's Church, to be a memorial to the men who served in World War I, was laid on 18 June 1930 by the Governor, Sir Philip Game and the new building was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. Gerard D'Arcy Irvine on 29 October 1930.

Railway collision at Bowral in 1886

Part 2 of 2: A narrow escape from disaster

In 1886 a major railway catastrophe occurred just north of Bowral station. Fortunately no one was killed, although 16 people were injured. Around midday on Saturday 8 May 1886 a tourist train from Sydney collided with the engine of a goods train which was still on the main line. The *Bowral Free Press* and *Sydney Morning Herald* covered the story. Edited extracts continue here.

Assistance was forthcoming, and Doctors Newmarch and Jones were quickly in attendance. Mrs Hannaford and Miss Ada Ferguson, who were the most seriously injured passengers, were carried to Mr Farrow's residence, opposite the bridge, and there received medical aid.



The *Herald*'s report noted that, as the accident occurred right in the township, it was witnessed by many and caused great excitement. Both engines were considerably damaged. The tourist train's driver and fireman had coal knocked down on them and suffered minor injuries.

Two hours later a train arrived from Goulburn, with a Railways Inspector, engineer, a doctor, railway men and hydraulic lifts. A train also arrived from Picton. The work of clearing the line was completed by five o'clock. The scheduled passenger train from Goulburn, and that from Sydney, were delayed by less than an hour. Each approached the blockage, where passengers and goods were transhipped and the trains returned.

The *BFP* noted the following facts: "Before the tourist train was wired out from Mittagong, the signals were looked to, and it is positively asserted that they were set at danger. The goods train guard was immediately signalled to get into the loop line, and he was so doing when the tourist train appeared and came dashing along at considerable speed. From this it will be seen that the driver of the tourist train must have totally ignored the danger signal, and driven his engine past it; but even supposing the distant signal to have been down, he could have braked to avert the collision."

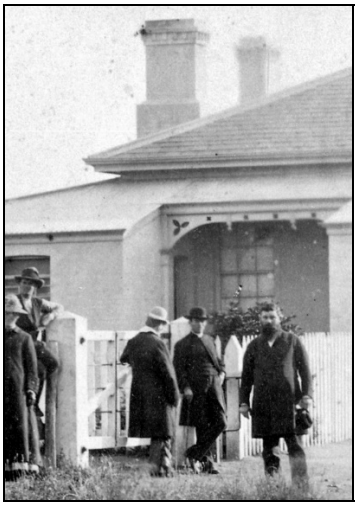
The driver's explanation on the day was that the outer signal was down, and the platform signal up. He also said that on seeing the danger he applied the brakes, but they were insufficient to stop the train.

The Railways Commissioner appointed four railway officials to investigate the cause of the accident. After an inquiry and examination of 16 witnesses, a report was published on 29 May.

It found that the statements of the tourist train driver and fireman were untruthful. The signals were at danger, and the collision was brought about by the driver's neglect. Had he kept a proper lookout, with so light a train, he could have prevented all serious consequences by the earlier use of the air brake. It praised the brakes for being as effective as they were, considering how late they were applied.

It also found that Station-master Bennett displayed a want of ordinary caution by not taking steps to stop the shunting before it was too late.

"But for this want of care, the gross neglect of the passenger train driver would not have been attended by such serious consequences."



SM Bennett (left) c1880

The board recommended dismissal for the driver and fireman, the penalty being severe because of their untruthfulness, and that the Bowral Station-master be reduced in rank for six months, with a proportionate loss of pay.

Despite the finding against him, Bennett continued to be held in high regard by Bowral residents, described by the Mayor as "ever obliging and helpful in his official capacity".

William McCourt, the local member, wrote a letter to the *Herald* regarding the inquiry report, stating that "the present system of officials being appointed to inquire into the delinquencies of officials is liable to the suspicion that even-handed justice may not be done."

The accident had one positive outcome in that a higher priority was given to calls for duplication of the entire southern line.

- 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 newsletters of other societies.

MUSEUM: Market Place, Berrima. Tel: 02 4877 1130. Email: bdmuseum@bigpond.com
OPEN**:** 10.00am to 4.00pm, Wednesdays to Sundays, and during school and public holidays.

Museum Committee: John Schweers (Manager), Harlan Hall (Project Manager), Lyn Hall (Graphics, Exhibitions), Sylvia Carless (Roster), Alan Hornsby, Harold Wall (Human Resources).

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, NSW Association of Family History Societies, Museums Australia Inc & Regional Chapter.

If undelivered return to:
Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc
PO Box 131
MITTAGONG NSW 2575
Berrima District Historical & Family History Society Inc
Newsletter
Print Post Approved
PP100001055

PRINT POST
100001055

POSTAGE PAID AUSTRALIA

BDH&FHS **PATRON**: Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire, Councillor Ken Halstead

President	Ian MACKEY
Snr Vice President	Bruce MOORE
Jnr Vice President	Linda EMERY
Hon Treasurer	Patricia Doris
Hon Secretary	Peg HARVEY
Archivist	Linda EMERY
Museum Manager	John SCHWEERS
Membership	Peg HARVEY
Newsletter Co-ordinator	Philip MORTON
Research Team	Carolyn DOUGHERTY, Janet BLACK and Frank MITCHELL
Conservation Team	Denise MACKEY, Roberta STOVE

Management Committee: President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and members Leonie Knapman, Denyse Barker, Philip Morton, Carolyn Dougherty, Denise Mackey, Jenny Frost, Ros Dale.