

The Berry & District Historical Society Inc

www.berryhistory.org.au

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The Shoalhaven Chronograph with Berry Newsletter

February - March 2020

In this issue:

- Dates for your Diary
- Annual General Meeting
- Invitation
- A Generous Donation
- Positions Vacant
- RAHS Goulburn Regional Seminar
- Books for Sale
- Articles Wanted for the Next Issue

Dates for your Diary

16 th March	10.30am -3pm	RAHS Goulburn Regional Seminar
22 nd March	1.00pm	Open House and Afternoon Tea - Gerringong

Annual General Meeting

The Berry & District Historical Society Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday 14th November at 2.00pm.

Elections were held for committee members and office holders. The results are:

President - Christine Currey

Vice President - Nancy Bevan

Treasurer - Hilary Brickhill

Secretary - Gail Paton

Committee Members:

Ros Pollard

Sue Davidson

Margaret Cullity

Brad Sewell

Chris Mansell

Life Members

Four life members were nominated and were approved. They are:

Jenny Clapham

Hazel King

Peter Knevitt

Trish Knevitt

You will find a copy of the President's Annual Report and the Treasurer's Report at the end of this newsletter.

Copies of our Constitution and our Strategic Plan can be found on our website by clicking:

berryhistory.org.au > About the Museum > Documents

Invitation

The Gerringong & District Historical Society would like to extend an invitation to members of the Berry & District Historical Society to join us for an

Open House and afternoon tea at the
Gerringong Railway Stationmaster's Cottage
on Sunday 22nd March from 1pm

The renovated cottage, facing Belinda Street near the Railway Station entrance is now owned by a Sydney couple who are members of our Society, and the Architect will be on hand to conduct a few tours during the afternoon.

The building of the new Museum/Library is progressing well, although the School of Arts will be the second stage and is just a shell at the moment. The Library framework is looking impressive at the back, and the builders are confident that the finish date is still June 2020!

A Generous Donation

Each year the Berry & District Garden Club holds a Garden Festival in October, with proceeds going to support local community groups.

And once again, the Berry & District Garden Club has made a generous donation to The Berry & District Historical Society.

The donation this year will be used toward resurfacing the floor of the garage in the grounds of the Museum. This will allow that space to be used for storage.

We would like to express our appreciation for the ongoing support we receive from the Berry & District Garden Club. The Club has enabled us to make many improvements to our Museum through their donations.



Presentation night. Christine Currey and Hilary Brickhill were there to accept the donation on behalf of the B&DHS

Positions Vacant

Volunteers

Visitors to our Museum often leave comments telling us how much they have enjoyed the experience. Behind the scenes, there is a team of volunteers making that experience the best we can. It is very rewarding work, but we need helpers. Let's see if you can put your skills to work to keep our Museum working.

Roster

We urgently need more volunteers for the Roster. Please contact Ros Pollard on 4464 1261 / 0417 641 261 or email her rpollard@rmb213.com

If you can't commit to a regular slot would you be prepared to go on a standby list? OR... Please consider taking over the role of Co-ordinator.

Roster Co-ordinator

The Roster Co-ordinator prepares the Roster for two months in advance. The Roster Co-ordinator is not required to do shifts.

Ros Pollard currently is the Co-ordinator and we are looking for a member to take over the position starting with the roster for April/May 2020. Ros has templates and will provide training.

Other jobs

There are many other tasks that need to be done, as well.

If you can help, please let us know. You can even learn new skills, if you'd like. Even a small amount of your time will help. All you need is a willingness to participate.

There are so many areas where your help would be valued. Here are just a few:

- Research
- Computer skills
- Planning displays and exhibitions
- Catering events
- Museum tours
- Curating
- Gardening
- Maintenance
- Conservation
- Collections
- Cataloging
- Publicity and marketing

RAHS Goulburn Regional Seminar

The RAHS, in conjunction with Goulburn Our Living History Festival and NSW State Archives & Records, is planning to host a Regional Seminar in Goulburn NSW on Monday March 16, 10.30am-3.00pm. So save the date and book ahead! Tickets can be purchased online at <https://www.rahs.org.au/event/> or by calling (02) 9247 8001.

We need a minimum of 25 pre-bookings for this event to proceed. Ticket price is \$20 and includes a guided tour of the Riversdale Homestead (considered by the National Trust NSW as a 'fine example of a Colonial Georgian home'), as well as a morning tea and lunch.

The event will feature talks from RAHS President Christine Yeats, NSW State Archives Emily Hanna, and Local Studies Officer of the Goulburn-Mulwaree Library Fran O'Flynn. It will appeal to anyone who wishes to learn more about historical records relating to their home and property, as well as how to use the new Historical Land Records Viewer (a free online database with access to land records from as early as 1792).

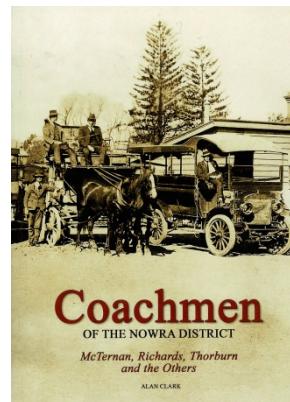
Books for Sale

Coachmen of the Nowra District - *McTernan, Richards and Others*

There were no Cobb & Co services along the South Coast. This book provides a very good history of service in the Nowra District. It includes photos from the 1890s and stories about the coach drivers.

Author: Clark, Alan

No. of Pages: 77



Art & Soul of Kangaroo Valley



An artistic and culinary journey through Australia's most beautiful valley. A lovely collection of stories about residents of Kangaroo Valley including dairy farmers, artists, print makers, organic teas, writers, painter and sculptor, olive grower, chef, and gardener. Includes photos and recipes.

Author: Leddy, Carl

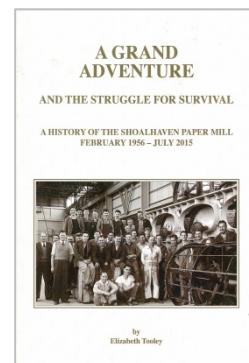
No. of Pages: 157

A Grand Adventure and the Struggle for Survival - *A History of the Shoalhaven Paper Mill February 1956 – July 2015*

This book marks the 40th Anniversary of fine paper production at the Shoalhaven Paper Mill. Includes many photos documenting this history.

Author: Tooley, Elizabeth

No. of Pages: 211



Articles for the Next Issue

If you have any interesting stories about the Berry region or its history that you would like to share, please forward them to the editor for inclusion in our next issue.

Email: berrymuseum@bigpond.com

The Berry & District Historical Society Office Holders

President	Christine Currey	Committee	Ros Pollard	Sue Davidson
Vice President	Nancy Bevan		Margaret Cullity	Brad Sewell
Secretary	Gail Paton		Chris Mansell	
Treasurer	Hilary Brickhill			

Berry and District Historical Society Annual Report 2019

The role of the Berry and District Historical Society is to manage and operate the Berry Museum, to provide history research and information as well as history based activities to our community and to its visitors. We also have a commitment to maintain a watching brief over heritage matters in the town and its district.

We would not be able to do these things without the help of the Society's Management Committee, our volunteers, members and all those supporters in the Berry community who provide us with financial and practical assistance. From the outset I would like to thank all the groups and individuals who enable us to achieve the kinds of things I will report on today.

You will be aware that this Annual General Meeting is being held in November, much later in the year than has been the case in the past. This has occurred partly because in our new constitution adopted last year we have changed our financial reporting arrangements from a financial year ending in April to the conventional end of June financial year. In addition we have delayed setting a date because the President has not been available for the past three months to chair the meeting.

This year I will again describe our achievements in the areas of:

- Museum Management and Planning
- Collection Management
- Membership and Volunteer Development
- Education and Community Liaison
- Research
- Improvement and Maintenance of Building and Grounds
- Heritage Preservation

These are our areas of strategic priority for the next four years as presented in our Strategic Plan. These priorities provide us with a good framework for describing the things we have been working on during the past year.

Our Treasurer will report on the area of funding and financial management in her report.

But first the salient statistics. Our visitor numbers for last year were, for adults, **9766** and for children, **2033** All up we welcomed **11799** visitors 2017-18.

The numbers for June 2018 to June 2019 are adults **8963** and children **1965** totalling for this reporting year **10,928**. This is a drop of 871 but our reporting year from June to June is two months shorter than last year so we are more or less maintaining visitor numbers.

Museum Management and Planning.

The Museum Management Committee has focussed on the implementation of the **Strategic Plan for 2018-2023**. This plan along with our revised Constitution was adopted last year and both documents will soon be posted on our website. We will also post our Collection Management Policy and Plan.

We finalised a new 5 year lease with Shoalhaven City Council, unfortunately under the terms of this lease we now must pay rent, not an excessive amount but this represents an additional claim on our limited financial resources.

With this in view we again undertook some fund raising activities, a Christmas in July event and participation in the Uniting Church fete. Our Treasurer will give more details in her annual financial report.

We are continuing meetings with our regional museums consultant Margo Jolley who is advising us on practical ways to achieve our Strategic Priorities. We have met with Margo 3 times this year.

Collection Management

As we reported last year the management of our collection has become one of our strategic priorities because a number of new members working in the display and research teams are finding it difficult to locate documents and objects, as do some of our older and more experienced workers. This has occurred because as improvements to our building and display capacity have been achieved during the past five years things have been moved around and become hard to find.

We have by no means achieved this priority but some progress has been made. Our secretary Gail Paton has set up lists of room Monitors to undertake review and refreshment of each of our display spaces. This will provide us with a structure for managing the process of reviewing our collection and updating our accessioning. As well it will assist in refreshing our displays and improving our labelling practices.

We are also working on a policy for object donations to the museum to ensure that we treat people who donate objects to the museum appropriately as well as to enable us to keep our collection relevant and manageable.

Work has commenced on improvement of our accessioning and filing systems, Ros Pollard is pursuing the issue of software and has applied for a CREATE NSW grant to purchase a dedicated computer for accessioning purposes. We will not know if we have been successful until December.

Margaret Ogle and Jenny Clapham engaged the Men's Shed to build some shelving for the storage of our family history files in the preservation boxes purchased with a Museums and Galleries grant from 2017. They are currently refiling our family history papers.

At present the Museum collection is maintained, recorded and kept up to date by Margaret Ogle, Ros Pollard, and Julia Woinarwski.

Membership and volunteer development

The membership systems of the Society are managed by our Secretary Gail Paton. For the past year Gail has been doing the work of the Society Secretary as well as Membership Secretary.

Our membership stands at **46, 25** of whom are desk volunteers.

Our members are a dedicated band of people who mount displays, organise the roster and staff the Museum during opening hours, manage the building, organise meetings and

functions, respond to research requests and assist visiting researchers, prepare publications, publish the *Chronograph* and prepare articles for the *Town Crier*, manage the collection and undertake the various tasks of the Management Committee.

The desk volunteers continue to be a mainstay of our museum operations and are ably coordinated by Ros Pollard. Margaret Ogle also helps provide training and advice to our desk volunteers. This year Christine Pretty has also prepared an information leaflet for new members and has conducted one induction session for new members this year. The induction involves a guided walk through the museum, the obligatory cup of tea and discussion with the new members about which areas they are interested in working in.

Hazel King and Annette Frohling have organised four members meetings at the Museum since July 2018. These meetings involve a talk on a relevant topic such as the history of one teacher schools in the district which was delivered by two guest speakers Edith Faulks and Karen Fowler or the now defunct Berry Golf Course delivered by Nancy Bevan and one by June Robson on the Race Course. These talks are followed by a short briefing from one of the Committee members about the projects being undertaken by members.

This year the Committee agreed to fund two of our members to attend an oral history workshop at Berrima.

Community Education and Liaison

One of our most important community education activities is the mounting of displays. This year we have hosted an impressive display by the Berry Spinners and Weavers and following on from last year we will host another travelling display from the Maritime Museum called *Submerged*. This will be assembled in a few weeks and will be our summer holiday display.

A new addition to our permanent collection is the dendrochronological sample from the famous 'bum tree'. Our local archaeologist Kelvin Officer arranged for the sample to be sent to the Australian National University for analysis. The notes from this analysis will form part of our curatorial advice on the sample. The tree was somewhere between 334 and 388 years old when it was unceremoniously felled. It probably started life at the time of the English Civil War. The sample is displayed in the Industries Room on a specially built stand organised by our maintenance hero Keith Houston who collaborated closely with people from the Berry Landcare group.

Collaboration with other Berry community organisations is essential to the effectiveness of the Historical Society. We have continued to work in partnership with and receive support from community groups, such as the Berry Forum, Berry Alliance, the Chamber of Commerce, the Red Cross, the Men's Shed, the Show Society and the Garden Club.

The Garden Club provided us with a grant which is, as usual, most helpful and we have been invited to receive another cheque for 2019. We have worked with the Show Society and Show ground management on various heritage preservation issues not to forget our annual participation in the show itself.

The Berry Alliance provides the Museum with publicity and the opportunity to publish information about issues of historical interest in its *Town Crier*. This year our members have provided articles on issues and sites of historic interest for every issue of the *Crier*. This effort has been overseen by one of our dedicated Committee members, Annette Frohling.

We also work with other history organisations such as the Southern Highlands and Illawarra Chapter of Museums Australia and the Shoalhaven Family and Cultural History Fair. This year we ran a book stall at the Shoalhaven Heritage Fair at Pyree. We also participate in the Shoalhaven Museums and Galleries Breakfast Program.

The establishment of the Berry Forum as the lead Community Consultative Body for Berry has provided the Historical Society with a means for progressing our ideas and needs. Our members have assisted the Forum in its efforts to ensure heritage sensitive development on the northern perimeter of the town.

Part of our educational responsibilities as a local historical society is the distribution and marketing of our publications and those of our colleagues in nearby historical societies. Margaret Ogle has continued to support this effort during the past year.

The publication of the research efforts of our members is something we have not done much of in recent years but this certainly changed in 2018-19. It has been the year of the book launch.

One of our very longstanding members and researchers, June Robson, has written a history of the Berry General Cemetery called *Grave Misconceptions*. It provides some most interesting insights into changing attitudes to and practices around death, the management of mortal remains and the politics around the ownership of the Cemetery itself.

We received a grant late last year from the NSW Government through the CREATE NSW program and the Royal Australian Historical Society which enabled us to publish this book. We launched the book in July.

We also received funding through the same program to publish a history of the dairying families of Upper Brogers Creek written by another of our members, Heather Foster. The book is called *Up in the Hills Farming Days in Upper Brogers Creek* and will be launched in a few days by our Mayor Amanda Findlay.

The Society, in conjunction with one of our members, Margaret Ogle also funded the publication of a work by Shoalhaven's prolific local historian Robyn Florance, *A Most Munificent Bequest* is a comprehensive history of the David Berry Hospital. This was launched in mid October by Robert Crawford of the *South Coast Register*, with many former nurses in attendance.

In mid October we supported the launch by Fiona Phillips, the Federal member for Gilmore and a Strong family descendant, of a book by one of our Sydney members, Gillian Shadwick, on the history of the Strong, Boyd and Clarke families, *Family, Farms and Faith*.

Under the editorship of Christine Pretty we have published four excellent editions of the *Chronograph* during the past year.

Trish Knevitt, often with help from Annette Frohling, has continued to run tours of the Museum and the historical sites of the local area for outside visitors as well as for seniors groups and school children from local schools and pre-schools.

Annette also arranged for the Museum to participate in the Pink Up campaign in aid of Breast cancer research.

Research

We undertake research at the Berry Museum for several reasons: to support the work of our display team, to produce books on local history for publication thus expanding our knowledge of local history, to fulfil requests from visitors and community members for family history information and to support projects from business and community organisations.

We have completed 10 research requests in the 12 month period between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

The interest in family history continues to be one of the main drivers of the research requests we receive. Our research management system has been coordinated by Christine Yeo with help from our team of researchers and Peter Knevitt who helped with the email requests.

Unfortunately our research coordinator has needed to withdraw from her role as has Peter Knevitt, this has meant that we now lack capacity to meet the demand for family history research and we have been forced to take the painful decision to redirect requests from us to the Shoalhaven Family History Society at Pyree.

Improvement and maintenance of Building and Grounds

One of our most important collaborations is with Shoalhaven City Council who, as the building owner, assists us in maintaining the Museum through its grants program. Using these Council grants funds and the assistance of one of our volunteers Michael Steinmetz, we completed the upgrade of our security system this year.

The Garden Club grant for 2017 enabled us to finally install stone seats in the garden. These seats are made from the heritage roof stones from the Museum building.

The refurbishment of the laundry and two small rooms at the rear of the building has been an ongoing project for several years. With the help of Keith Houston this project has been completed.

We now have three beautifully painted display spaces with shelves and cabinets for the display of our collection of tools and domestic objects the refurbished back rooms so that visitors can actually see the items on display. Keith has also replaced the screens on these doors and new locks have been installed.

Keith Houston has also repaired the front picket fence and done some temporary repairs to the car port structure over the agricultural machinery in the back yard. This was in danger of actually collapsing. As well he has arranged the clean out of the garage, done some structural repairs to the building and commenced negotiations with Shoalhaven City Council for the replacement of the garage floor so that it becomes a reliable storage space for items we need to keep for displays

A new cabinet has been made to store our keys in a less chaotic fashion.

The installation of the NBN has been arranged by our tenacious Treasurer Hilary Brickhill, it has not happened yet but it will.

The Committee has approved the following maintenance priorities for 2020:

- resurfacing of garage floor and set up of garage as new storage area
- repair of back verandah
- refurbishment of bathroom
- repair of iron gates in driveway
- rationalisation of electrical circuitry.

Heritage Preservation

One of the key roles of local historical societies is as guardians of the heritage of the locality.

The Society has worked with people from show ground management on the issue of the placement of the restored John Hay memorial and also on the restoration of the stone plaque on the old Council Chambers building.

One of our enthusiastic heritage defenders, Catherine Barlow made a presentation to the Berry Forum on the meaning of heritage listing for our town. Catherine also participated in an Architects Seminar organised by the Chamber of Commerce last November on the significance of Berry heritage.

Some of our members have formed a Heritage Protection Subcommittee which has worked with Trains NSW. The group has succeeded in persuading Trains NSW to undertake a heritage refreshment of the Berry Station and to undertake the planning for the future of the Station Masters Residence.

This group has also contributed to Council's Heritage listing process for historic buildings within the town.

In concluding, I would like to thank again all those who have kept the Museum functioning and enabled us to achieve the very significant level of activity I have described. I believe that we have made good progress in the past year and made improvements across the range of our activities.

In particular I would like to acknowledge the work of the four people we are about to propose as life members.

Over the years Peter Knevitt has managed our computer systems and in particular the flow of email messages. As well he has made a significant contribution to our effort to meet research requests. Aside from this though he has been most willing to step up and help in all sorts of practical ways when help is needed. Peter has also served on the Committee on a number of occasions. Trish Knevitt has been a longstanding contributor to our displays as well as the organiser of museum visits and the Kid's Quiz, she too is always in evidence helping at functions and in a myriad of other ways.

In the past Hazel King has been our Secretary and President. She is a committed local history educator and organiser of various talks, lectures and excursions. Hazel has been the coordinator of the museum garden for many years. She too is one of those members who is always on hand when help is needed.

Jenny Clapham also has been a museum mainstay for many years, she has been Treasurer, Secretary and President of the Society. In these roles she provided leadership in heritage

preservation and as well she organised many improvements to the building, making it the presentable local museum it is today.

Before I close I would like to suggest that in the coming year we give some thought to ways we might better represent the history of the presence of the first people who lived in our district.

The Dharawal speaking people inhabited the Berry district long before the arrival of European settlers, they played a significant role in the history of white settlement and the growth of the area and were ultimately displaced by these processes of settlement.

At present we have a slightly understated display about the traditional way of life of the local Indigenous people. While we have had some discussion about how this might be improved we have given little attention to the lives and participation of indigenous people in the history of Berry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. If our Museum is to reflect current moves in our nation to more properly acknowledge and respect our first peoples we really need to review our treatment of this aspect of the history of the Berry district so that it is more inclusive.

Chris Currey

President B&DHS

14 November 2019

BERRY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

I have tabled the Profit and Loss Statement for the Berry & District Historical Society Inc. We had a solid financial year in 2018/19 and you will notice that our Income exceeds our Expenses by \$798. Our total Asset Accounts stand at \$21,134.71 (of which \$10,000.00 is in a Term Deposit).

Our financial year for 2018/2019 was in fact 15 months long. We decided that we needed to align the financial year with the membership year to avoid confusion.

Some of our bigger outlays were the construction and installation of the stone seats in the back yard, assisted by a generous Garden Club donation, the purchase of Preservation Materials for archiving (with the assistance of a grant from RAHS), and some upgrading of our security system in preparation for installation of the NBN. (The NBN has yet to arrive at the Museum. I have a regular warm and fuzzy phone calls about every two weeks to various Telstra /NBN operatives in which I am told that our case manager has not yet been appointed, but that he will become available and will call me within a fortnight/ next week/ within two days/when the moon is in the seventh house and Jupiter aligns with Mars.)

We have as I mentioned received some generous donations and grants, most specifically the Garden Club donation, the RAHS grant and a grant from the Shoalhaven City Council.

I need to add briefly that there has been a great deal of activity on our accounts since the beginning of this new financial year on 1 July.

Since we realised early this year that our society is becoming more and more 'cashless', asking for coins or notes to be put into a donation box has sometimes been a problem, so we began to look into the use of a 'Tap' machine to encourage donations. At the time research suggested that the costs might outstrip the advantages. However it has become clear in the last few months that things are changing rapidly and it is worth another look, so it is possible that our cashless donation system might become a reality soon.

Our financial position has been greatly enhanced by a very generous donation from the Berry Hotel after their Christmas in July event. We have also had some solid book sales for the books we have published (Grave Misconceptions by June Robson and A Munificent Bequest by Robyn Florance). This is pleasing because we have some big outlays: we have bought a new computer for accessioning, and we plan to upgrade the garage at the back of the Museum for desperately needed storage. I expect that we will continue to enjoy a comfortable financial position through the 2019/2020 financial year.

Hilary Brickhill

Treasurer, Berry & District Historical Society



The Royal Australian Historical Society in conjunction with Goulburn Our Living History Festival and NSW State Archives & Records present

GOULBURN REGIONAL SEMINAR

Researching the History of Your House

Monday 16th March 2020 – 10.30am to 3.00pm

at

**Riversdale Homestead,
2 Twynam Drive, Goulburn**

**‘Land Title Research and the new
Historic Land Records Viewer’**

‘House History using NSW State Archives’

‘Getting to Know your Local Resources’

Cost - \$20 (includes lunch & tour of Riversdale Homestead and gardens)

Call History House: (02) 9247 8001 or email: history@rahs.org.au

For online bookings and more information visit: www.rahs.org.au/events



Program

Monday 16 March 2020

Time	Speaker	Topic
10.30	Welcome – Christine Yeats, President of the Royal Australian Historical Society	
10.40	Christine Yeats RAHS President	<i>Land title research and the new HLRV website</i> “Residential genealogy” links people and places throughout history, encompassing the genealogy of a particular house or research to find out where a person lived. Christine Yeats will discuss search strategies using the new Historical Land Records Viewer (HLRV) website to help you “hear your house talk”.
12.00	Lunch	
12.45	Fran O’Flynn Local Studies Officer, Goulburn-Mulwaree Library	<i>House & Garden Tour of Riversdale</i> ‘Standing in its original paddock and outbuildings, Riversdale is a fine example of a Colonial Georgian home surrounded by splendid gardens’ (National Trust, NSW).
1.15	Emily Hanna NSW State Archives	<i>House history using the NSW State Archives</i> Researching the history of your house and property can be confusing but very rewarding. Emily Hanna of NSW State Archives will be speaking about records in the State Archives Collection that can help you undertake historical house and property research.
2.15	Fran O’Flynn Local Studies Officer, Goulburn-Mulwaree Library	<i>Getting to know your local resources</i> Fran O’Flynn, Local Studies Officer, Goulburn-Mulwaree Library, will provide a session on the local resources you can use to research the history of your house.
2.45	Q and A Session	

About the RAHS Regional Seminar Program and Grants Program

The RAHS 2020 regional seminar program is supported by grant funding from Create NSW. The goal of the program is to develop historical expertise in the community that will help support history and heritage projects. The RAHS also administers the Cultural Grants Program, a Create NSW devolved funding program that assists historical research and publication of local, community and regional history projects.

To learn more about regional seminars, grants, RAHS membership and how we can support your history projects, see our website www.rahs.org.au or contact us on (02) 9247 8001.