

# The Oaks Historical Society Inc

Est. May 1979

The Oaks Historical Society Inc.  
43 Edward St The Oaks 2570  
(PO Box 6016) T: (02) 4657 1796  
E: tohs1988@bigpond.net.au  
www.wollondillymuseum.org.au



Newsletter

AUGUST 2016

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

## THE MANY NAMES OF TAHMOOR

Source: *Back Then... The postal services that created Tahmoor* by Marlane Fairfax — 3 June 2016

This year marks 100 years since the official naming of Tahmoor. Before 1916, the area was generally known as 'Myrtle Creek' or 'Bargo' and for a short time 'Courdeaux'. Some of the other names around that time were West Bargo, Wonga Park and Bronzewing Park.

Such was the case in 1892 when residents petitioned, via the Thirlmere Progress Association, for a "receiving office to be established"..... "at the junction of the Main Southern Road with the Thirlmere and Potholes Road."

The railway line was yet to be built through Tahmoor and the road to Thirlmere was via what is now Bronzewing Street,

and Potholes Road is now Rockford Road.

After much ado, 23 years later, on July 28, 1916 the Postmaster General was advised that the Chief Railway Commissioner suggests Tahmoor as a suitable name as it is the aboriginal name for bronzewing pigeon. Sam [Emmett] was not happy with this decision and wrote to the inspector submitting a list of residents names, "who are all decidedly opposed to the Commissioners aboriginal name and decided that the office should be called Bronzewing Park."

Those names were Bradbury, Teale, Robson, Clinch, Whitfield, Stewart, Drummond, Peasley, Johnstone, Moore, Hicks, Deitrich, Crockford, Carter, Earl, Tanner, Tickle, Hewitt, Crooks and Harding.

A number of the names are known to be Bargo residents and whether or not Sam actually spoke to these people and they in fact objected to the name Tahmoor, was open to conjecture.

The inspector no doubt, felt that the matter had gone on too long and advised the Senior inspector on August 12 that in view of the objection by the railway authorities to the name Bronzewing Park, he saw no reason why Tahmoor should not be adopted.

Accordingly it was approved for the post office on August 18 1916. Emmett was appointed postmaster at an allowance of £12 per annum and started his official duties on September 1, 1916. ■

*Sam Emmett's "Branxholme" post office and house southern road or later Hume Highway from sale poster 7 April 1917 (above)*

*Van Dragt's camping ground on the northern end of Tahmoor just over Myrtle Creek on right 1940s to 1960s.*



# President's Report

Trish Hill



Just for a moment there last week I thought spring was in the air but then reality struck and we were again plunged back into the depths of winter with a month or two to go yet.

This month we were able to be of assistance to some travelers from Victoria who came to the museum looking for the final resting place of their ancestor and any information or photographs we could supply as they had very little and knew no other family members. The family was Donohoe and as it turned out their ancestor Helena/Ellen was buried with other family members at St Aloysius cemetery.

Thanks to our great index system, the excellent work done by Noel Collison with the books of cemetery records and some good old fashioned local knowledge, they departed with quite a lot of information. We were able to direct them to the family property and also put them in touch with extended family members who had known these ancestors.



Installation of the Castrol Globe is moving along now with the concrete pad down and the stand in the powder coating process. We are looking for further information about the original globe that stood atop Razorback and photos of the era including perhaps scenery/paddocks and the Anthony Hornern's tree. *(photo is a small display replica)*

On 8<sup>th</sup> October the Museum is hosting a reunion for the miners, drivers, families and all involved with the Clutha Cup. During the 1970's the Clutha Cup was a round robin event with football teams from each mine, transport or service department vying for the coveted 'Cup'. Everyone welcome.

A reminder that the Council fundraising family event, **Big Day In**, will take place on Sunday, 31 July starting at 10am at TABCORP Park, Menangle Park. ■

## Do you know the location of these photographs?

Photo A



Photo C

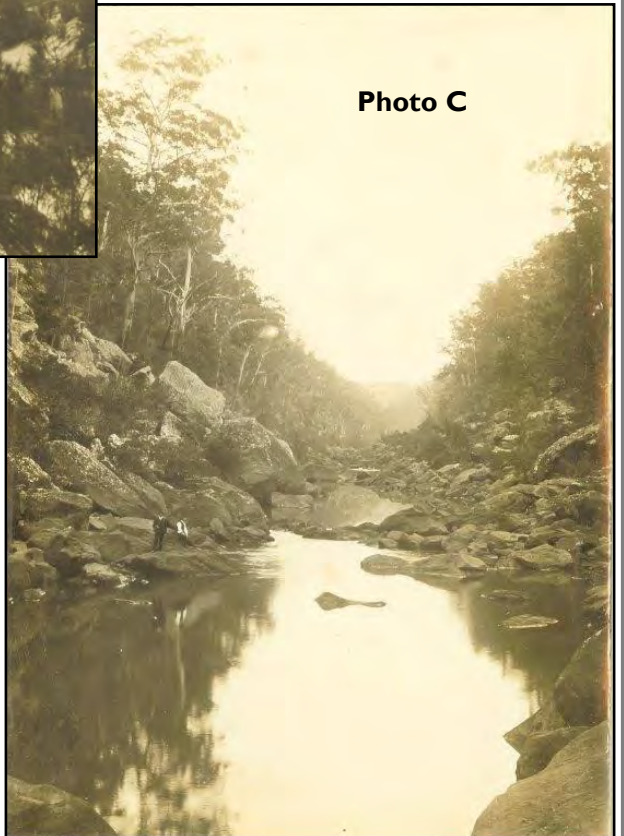
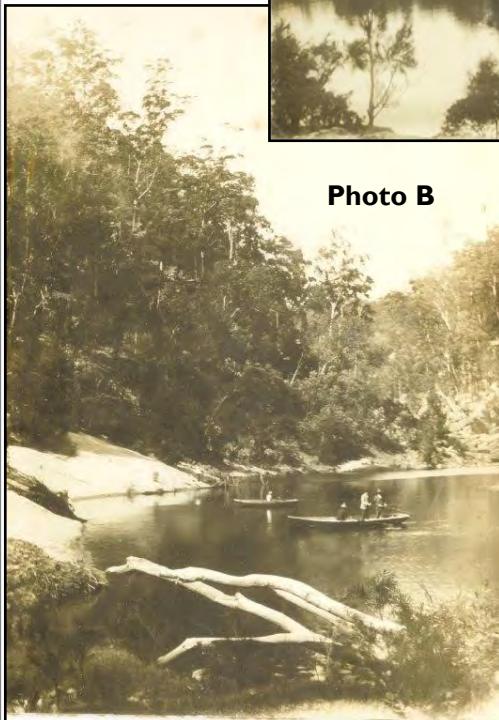


Photo B



Three photos were found in the supper room of The Oaks Community Hall. They were framed in a collection of local scenes hanging on the wall

# Family History & Local Archive Research



**Sue Davis**

This is a final reminder for those wanting to attend the NSW and ACT Association of Family History Societies State Conference to be held at Camden Civic Centre from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September.

There is free access on Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> but a fee applies to attend the conference on Saturday and Sunday.

For more information visit the website:

[www.cowpasturesandbeyond.org.au](http://www.cowpasturesandbeyond.org.au)

Recent requests for research at our centre have been:

- Information on the horse drawn mail coach drivers from Picton to Yerranderie in the 1900-1920 period, possibly employed by Charles and Arthur Butler (request from Lester Lovell)
- Helena Donohoe (1883-1973)
- Duguid, Watson, Lockett and Lavercombe families.

If anyone has any information that might help then please contact me at [tohs1988@bigpond.net.au](mailto:tohs1988@bigpond.net.au) ■

*Enjoy your research journey.*

## Marketing Report



**Louisa Singleman**

### July Bus Tours

As usual during the school holidays bus tours were rather bleak but picked up in the third week of July. To make the weekends more exciting for those on duty we had two car club visits the museum so that made the day slip away quite quickly. Thanks to Allen and Debbie and Colleen and June who helped on these two days. We also had groups from Wattle Grove, Pendle Hill and Macarthur/Wollondilly as well.

Welcome to Jan Noakes who gave a very interesting talk to a group of visitors. Welcome aboard Jan!

### Marketing

September is poking its head around the corner so the Centenary of the naming of Tahmoor will soon be upon us. Keep Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September free for this event to be held in the grounds of Tahmoor Public School. We are having a stall and Doreen has kindly offered to put up a display so we are looking for helpers.

There is a meeting at the New Café in Larkin St. Tahmoor next Wednesday evening from 5.30pm-7pm to discuss the progress of this event. Finger food will be served. If you wish to attend email Bob Clayton on [rcla1919@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rcla1919@bigpond.net.au) ■

## Acquisitions Corner



**Allen Seymour**

A few items this month provided by our President Trish:

- Pre 1966 lottery ticket forms,
- NSW Ambulance service receipts,
- a national service ballot notification,
- electoral enrolment forms,
- Australian Coal & Shale Federation membership card for 1977,
- A summary of the NSW bushfires act.

From Viv and Bob Allen was some history of the Museum with an invitation to the launch of our book, 'A History of The Oaks From The Records' in 1987. There are also copies of some cards that were available in the Museum's early days with scenes of The Oaks on them drawn by Doreen Lyon. A young girl also presented us with a pair of glasses believed to be over 100 years old.

The Dowle collection negatives are all listed on a spreadsheet. We're now working on getting some of negatives scanned in. They show lots of people, but some are not in the correct boxes and it is difficult to identify them.

The Castrol Globe is proceeding, with the concrete slab in place. The stand has been sandblasted and is being powder-coated, and will be installed shortly. Thanks to the Razorback Crankhandlers Car Club, Colleen Haynes and Frank Mackie for all the work involved. ■



The card is a drawing of The Heritage by Doreen Lyon

Invitation to the launch of Sonja den Hertog's book



# SYDNEY (SYD) GEORGE ALLEN'S MILITARY SERVICE IN WWII

*Syd married TOHS member Muriel Allen— Information supplied by Craig Allen*

Syd was born in Sydney, NSW on 13 August 1923. He was initially home schooled and then attended school in Hurstville and Manly.

On 1 September 1939 Germany invaded Poland. Two days later Great Britain declared war on Germany when its ultimatum for Germany to withdraw from Poland expired. Soon after the Australian Prime Minister Robert Gordon Menzies announced that Australia was also at war with Germany. Syd was 16 years and one month old.

## **Syd's Enlistment in the RAAF**

Just after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday Syd enrolled in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Reserve on 18 August 1941. Then on 31 January 1942, aged 18 years and 5 months he was able to enlist in the Citizen Air Force Permanent Forces (the RAAF) and was given service number 420508. Syd's enlistment form gave his occupation as "Salesman (Soft Goods)" [he had been working for haberdashers Paterson, Laing and Bruce at 2 Wynyard Square, Sydney] and his marital status was single. Syd was living at home with his parents in Wakefield Street, North Manly at the time he joined the RAAF.

Syd's RAAF enlistment form states that he was already a member of the military having joined the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion Australian Imperial Forces (Army) for 12 months as a private. He was passed as medically fit and posted to No. 2 ITS (Initial Training School) then posted to 2ET Bradfield Park at Lindfield, Sydney on 23 May 1942. After initial training at Bradfield Park Syd was 'mustered' as a WOP/AG (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner (WOAG) No. 26 Aircrew Course (G) where he passed in 1942.

## **Training in Canada**

Syd joined a group of trainee airmen on a ship bound for training in Canada leaving Australia on 2 July 1942 and arriving in Canada on 7 August 1942. He was one of some 10,000 Australians who did part of their air force training in Canada. Syd would not return to Australia until 19 October 1945 – 26½ months later.

As author Hank Nelson put it at a **2003 Australian War Memorial History Conference**:

*"The white dominions – Canada, Australia, and New Zealand – would provide their sons and train them, and Britain would supply the airfields and aircraft and send them to war". This was the 'Empire Air Training Scheme' which was devised within weeks of the start of the war and accepted before the end of 1939 and which provided the basis for the mass training of many thousands of aircrew. As the scheme got under way in 1940, new courses were called up each month to enter Initial Training Schools. By May 1942, just over 9,500 Australians were under instruction in the scheme.*

In Canada Syd did training with the Royal Canadian Air Force at No. 2 W/S (Wireless School) at Calgary, Alberta in February-March 1943 qualifying as a Wireless Operator (including Morse Code) and then did his Air Gunnery training at No. 2 B&G (Bombing and Gunnery) School at Mossbank, Saskatchewan in March-April 1943. On 3 April 1943 he received his Air Gunner's Badge. On 1 May 1943 Syd began flying at No. 32 OTU at Patricia Bay on Vancouver Island, on the west coast of Canada.

While training in Canada Syd trained on a variety of aircraft including Anson, Hampden, Bolingbroke, Norseman and Fort II aircraft.

## **United Kingdom Service**

Syd sailed from Canada via convoy on 13 September 1943 disembarking six days later in the United Kingdom joining the British Bomber Command. He did not go straight into combat but spent many more months training with various crews in cross country flying, fighter affiliation, formation flying, air to air gunnery, bombing and other exercises. These training exercises were done with 32 OTU then 1661 CW using Anson, Oxford, Hampden, Wellington and Stirling aircraft.

Syd was posted to 1661 Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU) from 9 March to 27 April 1944 at Winthorpe in Nottinghamshire and flew Stirling III heavy bombers.

## **630 Squadron**

He was then appointed to an operational squadron (630 Squadron of the Royal Air Force (RAF) for his first tour which began on 20 May 1944 (16 days before D-Day and the Allied invasion of Europe) He completed this tour with a total of 173:15 hours on 4 January 1945. As was the norm, the RAF bombed at night while the United States Army Air Force undertook daylight bombing. (Note: Most Australians flying in combat in the UK flew with RAAF squadrons). This Squadron flew out of East Kirby and then Coningsby. He flew 10 missions with 630 Squadron.

## **83 Squadron**

Syd then commenced with 83 Squadron (with the same flying crew) an elite Pathfinder Squadron (part of the specialised 'PFF' Pathfinder Force) that was also based at Coningsby, Lincolnshire. The PFF was a specialised operational group that was designed to make the British night bombing of German targets more accurate by flying ahead of the main bomber force and using secret operational, navigational and target identification techniques to illuminate areas to be bombed. Syd flew with 83 Squadron from 3 August 1944 until 17 April 1945 completing this tour with a total of 36 missions. He flew 36 missions with 83 Squadron.

Syd flew a total of 852 hours and 45 minutes during the war (consisting of both training and combat hours). He flew a total of 46 combat missions over enemy held territory.



*Top left: George Gregory, Syd Allen and Bill Hallam  
Bottom left: Jim Russell, Doug Gamble, Frank Burn*

## Sydney George Allen's Military Service in WWII Cont'd ...

### The Crew

Syd flew Lancaster Mark III heavy bombers with both squadrons. He flew with a regular crew in both squadrons and they remained friends for life. These close personal relations are not really surprising as they lived, trained, flew in combat and socialised together. Many air crews consisted of members from different parts of the Commonwealth. Syd's experience was a little different as he served in an all British squadron as the lone Australian with a crew from different parts of England and Scotland. However, while there may have been differences in upbringing and even accents his crew shared the experience of battle and were a brotherhood. The other six crew members were:

Doug Gamble, Pilot (from Leicester, UK) – Flying Officer

Frank Burn, Bomb Aimer (Glasgow)

Jim Duthie, Flight Engineer (Aberdeen area)

Jim Russell, Rear Gunner (Newcastle upon Tyne)

George Gregory, Mid Upper Gunner (Castleford, Yorkshire)

William Hallam, Navigator (Houghton-le-Spring, County Durham)

These crew members ranged in age from 20 years up to Frank Burn who was the 'old man' at 35 years of age.

### Coming Home

Sydney left the UK on 23 September 1945 and arrived back in Sydney on 19 October 1945. He was discharged from the RAAF on 11 December 1945 and received his 'Certificate of Service and Discharge' on 9 January 1946 – nearly four years after he had enlisted.

### Promotions & Decorations

Syd was awarded the rank of Sergeant on 7 April 1943, the rank of Flight Sergeant on 7 October 1943 while at 17 OTU and became a Warrant Officer on 7 October 1944 while serving with 83 Squadron RAF.



Muriel McKinnon, Sydney and his mother Gladys



Lancaster Bomber Mark III

He was promoted to the rank of Flying Officer on 12 June 1945 while still with 83 Squadron.

Sydney was awarded the following decorations:

1939-45 Star

France and Germany Star

Defence Medal

Pathfinder Force Badge

Active Service Badge

As the crew's navigator Bill Hallam stated in 2003, "Doug [Gamble] and Syd were the only ones at the end of the war to be commissioned [as officers] but this did not make any difference to attitudes or relationships among us. Doug and I were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and Frank [Burn] the Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM) at the end of the war".

### The Cost

Australia lost a total of 27,073 killed and 23,477 wounded from enemy action during World War 2. Some 10,000 Australians served with Bomber Command. Out of a total of 125,000 aircrew in Bomber Command 55,573 were killed (or 44.6%) including 3,486 (or 7%) Australians. A further 650 Australians died in aircraft training accidents in Britain. A further bleak statistic was that of 20% of all Australian service personnel killed in action in all theatres of war during World War II were in Bomber Command.

"While fewer than two per cent of all Australians who enlisted in the Second World War fought in Bomber Command, they accounted for almost 20 per cent of all deaths in combat," he said.

"That was the highest casualty rate anywhere in our forces that fought in World War II."

While the arrangement was for a 'tour' of thirty operations the cumulative losses over a tour meant that death was more likely than survival. These high casualty rates meant each bomber crew flew an average of just 16 missions.

### Postscript

Fellow crewman Bill Hallam also stated, "I think we were a good crew, efficient and blended well together. We came through and luckily didn't have too much trouble with enemy opposition, apart from a couple of fighter attacks and flak damage". ■



Muriel and Syd married in Sydney in 1948.

Syd's Air Force uniform, consisting of jacket and cap, were recent donations by the Allen family and photos appeared in the May edition of the newsletter in Acquisitions Corner.



# Champion birds attend meeting



Young champion bantams and poultry reference books

Our guest speaker last month was John Graveur, a resident of The Oaks for 40 years. A St. Greg's college graduate, John kept us fascinated with stories about the interesting places and people he has met through his beloved poultry, then produced two young champion Light Sussex bantams, (*see photos top right*). We passed around thick albums containing prize certificates and champion ribbons.

John has competed at the Royal Easter Show since 1974 when he was 12 and last year was named in nine poultry categories. He has won more than 100 championships at the Sydney Royal Easter Show including the sought-after, *Grand Champion Bird of Show*, in 2013. John is a breeder, exhibitor and a judge who travels all over Australia but prefers to judge local shows within a day's travel of home now. John has found some interesting information while researching Australian poultry origins in our area. A noteworthy piece of history is that the first show was held in Picton in 1885 when Picton and Camden shires combined to hold an agricultural show in Picton. The following year Camden had their own country show which lasted for over a 125 years. He has ap-

peared on many TV shows including Simon Townsend's *Wonder World* in 1983 and other television shows and radio including *Better Homes and Gardens* and magazines such as the *Australian Womens Weekly*.

An interesting point, John said chicken rustling is a fact. So look after your livestock and pets, you never know who may want your precious animals.

John worked at Wollondilly Shire Council when as a young man, he specialised in property statistics and ratings. With his property knowledge, when he left Council, he naturally went into real estate, self employed, handling property valuations and auctioneering. As we know, Council's biggest asset is their long term staff and much local knowledge is lost when these valued employees leave Council. John promotes Wollondilly while using his knowledge of property ownership, breeding grand champion birds and judging country shows all over Australia and New Zealand.

As a proud breeder of perfect poultry, John's enthusiasm on the night was amusing and compelling. Ed. ■

## Tahmoor is turning 100 and you are invited

This year will mark the centenary of the naming of Tahmoor and the Tahmoor Chamber of Commerce is hosting a week of celebrations in September. A centenary walk would be a highlight of the celebrations. A permanent walkway on the footpath opposite the Tahmoor shops will have metal plaques marking significant happenings in Tahmoor's first 100 years.

**The chamber will also host a party to be held in Tahmoor Public School on Saturday, September 3.**

The party will have a nostalgic theme and will include street and food stalls, family amusements, entertainment, live broadcasts and prizes.

The chamber is also organising an historic photo exhibition which will display hundreds of historical photographs showing Tahmoor as it has evolved through the century. This will run throughout the week

of the centenary. Wollondilly Council has offered to set up and print a history of Tahmoor book to mark the centenary.

The chamber are working with local historian Marlane Fairfax, the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum and Frank Baker who is the custodian of the largest photographic collection of historical Tahmoor photographs. **The Oaks Historical Society intend to set up a school related display in the old school residence.**

A one-off vintage style newspaper, the *Tahmoor Times*, will be published and distributed throughout the shire. The newspaper will be used to advertise the event and will be used as a program for the celebrations. It can also be kept as a souvenir.

Local businesses will be encouraged to dress up their front windows to resemble 1916. [www.tahmoorchamberofcommerce.com.au/](http://www.tahmoorchamberofcommerce.com.au/)

# Volunteer Weekend Roster

AUGUST 2016	
Sat, 6	Sue & Tina
Sunday, 7	Doreen & Ben
Saturday, 13	<b>WORKING BEE</b>
Sunday, 14	Ray & Robyn
Saturday, 20	Pacita & Kathy
Sunday, 21	Maria & Betty
Saturday, 27	Phil & Laurette
Sunday, 28	Trish & Kevin

## Supper Roster



August	Aileen & Pam S
September	Shirley & Trish
October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	Please bring a plate

## UPCOMING GUEST SPEAKERS

AUGUST 1 — From our collection  
 SEPTEMBER 5—Julie Wrigley Camden Historical Soc. Chinese market gardens  
 OCTOBER 3—Marlane Fairfax and Tahmoor's centenary

## NOTE TO MEMBERS

*Council have replaced the padlock on the main gate at the museum.*

*It is now connected to a chain and should be hooked in such a way that the padlock will not drag on the ground.*

*(The gate's wheel needs to have its weight on the ground otherwise the gate will sag)*

## I AM THE RIVER

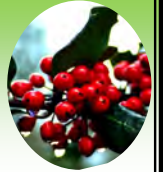
The river flows from the mountains to the sea.

I am the river and the river is me.

# News & Info

## TOHS CHRISTMAS PARTY 2016

Mark Your Calendar  
 Saturday, 10th December at 6pm



## CALTEX GLOBE PHOTO APPEAL

The Museum is looking for any photographs taken of Razorback's two icons back in the 50s and 60s—mainly the Caltex globe and the Anthony Horden's tree.

We are currently installing a replica half size Caltex globe and its stand, so any photographs and memories would assist our display.

Contact either Trish on 0432 689 034 or email the museum on [tohs1988@bigpond.net.au](mailto:tohs1988@bigpond.net.au)



**NEW DATE & VENUE FOR WOLLONDILLY'S BIG DAY IN**  
**TABCORP**  
**Menangle Park**  
**Early bird tickets are \$10**

**Sunday 31 July starting at 10am**

A family event with music, rides, market stalls, custom car show and the community create the much needed energy to boost the spirits of all.

Musicians Shannan Noll and Alfie Arcuri and other talented musicians will entertain the crowds. Help get Picton residents back on their feet. All proceeds go to supporting individuals affected by the Wollondilly storm event.

## TAHMOOR IS TURNING 100

Saturday, 3 September 2016  
 at Tahmoor Primary School



## GRANDPARENTS DAY

Sunday, 30 October 2016  
 at the museum

**MONTHLY MEETINGS:** The Oaks Historical Society Inc. holds its meetings on the first Monday of each month (except January) at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum, 43 Edward Street, The Oaks starting at 7.00pm. Upcoming meetings are 5 September and 3 October 2016. Our patrons are Mr. Philip Costa and Mr. Richard Booth. The Oaks Historical Society Inc. takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the articles, papers or reviews that appear in this newsletter. The statements made or opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The Oaks Historical Society Inc. Copies of minutes are available.

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2016 /17  
ARE NOW DUE

\$10 for single \$18 for family  
Plus \$10 postage for newsletter

Newsletter via  
Email is  
FREE

**REMINDER**

If undelivered, please return to:-  
**The Oaks Historical Society Inc.**  
**P O Box 6016 The Oaks NSW 2570**

