

# 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

JUNE 2018

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

## Poor Old Bob Ditton's Daughter

*The following poem was found inside an old tobacco tin, the paper folded many times over, the property of Patricia Hill, great niece of Mabel Ditton (Egan) of Oakdale and Burragarang. Written before her marriage in 1914.*

I met her on the Wollondilly,  
A darling girl I thought her  
And ere I left I swore I'd win  
Poor Old Bob Ditton's daughter.

I milked her father's cows a month,  
I brought in the wood and water.  
I mended all the broken fences  
Before I won the daughter.

I listened to her father's yarns,  
I did just what I oughter  
And what you have to do to win  
Poor old Bob Ditton's daughter.

I broke my pipe and burned my twist  
And washed my mouth with water.  
I had a shave before I kissed  
Poor old Bob Ditton's daughter.

Then rising on the frosty morn  
I brought the cows for Mabie  
And when I milked a bucketful  
I took it to the dairy.

I poured the milk into a dish  
While Mabel held the strainer.  
I summoned heart to speak my wish  
And oh! Her blush grew plainer!

I told her I would leave the place,  
I said that I would miss her.  
At first she turned away her face  
And then she let me kiss her.

I put the bucket to the ground  
And in my arms I caught her.  
I'd give the world to hold again  
Poor old Bob Ditton's daughter.

*Written by Davy Nolan with the help  
of Frank Gaudry. Davy, Frank and Ted  
Egan were mates.*

*Mabel Ditton married Ted Egan.*

*Mabel is pictured at home at Egans  
Road Oakdale in July 1947.*



*About the family—Mabel Ada EGAN (nee Ditton) was born on the 30 June 1877, the third daughter of Robert & Martha DITTON. Sister to Mary Jane, Martha Beatrice, Mercyla Emmeline and Robert Ernest DITTON. Mabel married Edward (Ted) Michael EGAN on 28 February 1914 and she died 20 March 1964.*

*Left: David & Mercyla Nolan*

The poem can be found in *Women's Voices—Stories from the archives of the Wollondilly Heritage Centre, The Oaks* for \$10



# President's Annual Report

Trish Hill



Wow, what a month! We seem to have done so much this last month and we're just beginning. Our AGM last month saw only a few changes with Bev Batros stepping into the role of

second Vice President. We also celebrated our 30th anniversary of the heritage centre. Thanks to our patron Richard Booth for conducting the election of officers and drawing our anniversary raffle, announcing the winner Allen Seymour.



18 volunteers completed our two day St Johns First Aid training course admirably. Our volunteers first had to register and obtain a student number and Debbie helped us through the process. Dan, our instructor, guided us through the course giving us the knowledge and confidence to successfully treat common injuries and possibly save a life as well as the basic training to use the

more complicated defibrillator. All 18 of us are now better prepared to handle any emergency that may arise. The training was funded through the Museums & Galleries Skills Development Program.

The kitchen was gutted at the conclusion of the school group Thursday last. A brave group of volunteers stripped the cupboards, wall and finally the floor tiles, finishing with the clean up on Saturday. Thanks to all who worked hard in difficult and dusty conditions and to those who missed out on a call in, don't worry there's more to come. The new kitchen installation looks wonderful and will be a pleasure to work in.



Last Friday the smaller Bennett Wagon wheels arrived from the wheelwright at Nobby Forge in Queensland. Thanks to the Mackie family for delivering them. Looking great, they are certainly a welcome addition and will make moving the wagon easier when the building extension work commences. The architect is finalising details required for the construction certificate and then we can commence the building.

Our next community bus tour is to Mulgoa on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August and will include a visit to St Thomas Church/cemetery, James Broadbent's Cottage, maybe one other though yet to confirm and Settlers for lunch. Booking sheet is on the front counter. ■



# Family History & Local Archive Research Corner

Sue Davis

A Research Tip that is important to follow is *always be prepared to cross-check information, especially stories that have been handed down*. This might mean you will need to check with *Births, Deaths and Marriages* for legal records of family members. Sometimes a search through TROVE can assist in finding newspaper articles of family members. Whatever you find you need to use at least three different sources to try and authenticate your information.

This month we have had some new and interesting requests from researchers. They include:

- Information about the von Frankenberg property of 190 Burragorang Road, The Oaks.
- James Morgan who married Catherine Barton in 1848 in the Burragorang Valley.

If you have any information that might help us, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sue Davis, Local Archives and Family History. 0414703204

*Camden News advertisement dated 18 September 1952 for the clearance sale of the Frederick von Frankenberg estate following his death.*

*His probate application was advertised in the Camden News on 13 April 1950.*

**C A M D E N .**

**CLEARANCE SALE**

OF DAIRY HERD, DAIRY AND FARMING PLANT AND SUPPLIES, on the farm, "Spring Hills," Oaks Road, Camden, on **Saturday, September 27, AT 1.30 P.M.**

**Wm. Inglis & Son Pty. Ltd.**

have received instructions from The Exors of the Estate of the late F. E. Von Frankenberg to sell by auction:—

30 Milkers.  
25 Springing Cows and Helpers.  
35 Heifers, 1-2 years.  
10 Poddies.

National Library of Australia





## Schoolies Report

Our Schoolies' Team has a very busy year ahead of them with all of Term 2 filled and most of Term 3. It could be 20 weeks in a row!

Some of our schools are coming a long way with Beverly Hills and Warrawong coming this term, as well as closer schools like Camden South and The Oaks.

We have a great group of volunteers who visit regularly each Thursday. Pam McVey and Kevin Wintle explain about the poultry industry and get the kids to try apple picking and grading. John Hanger and Trevor Ditton have one of the favourite activities with children undertaking washing as it was in the olden days. Glenis Pride leads the school activities with children trying slate pens and pencils, as well as pen and

ink sometimes. Shirley Carlon and Eileen O'Brien teach the children about things like the hip bath and making butter. John Mainwaring is responsible for explaining about mining while the children with Pam Stephenson paint boomerangs with an Aboriginal story. To complete the group Jacquie Finley keeps us all organised with her time keeping. We have a small group of reserves but if you think this sounds like fun we would be happy to add you to the reserve list. It is quite easy to learn a role and would help ease the load.

One of our longest serving volunteers Shirley Carlon and husband Joe celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in the next week and our team congratulates them on this great milestone. ■



## Acquisitions Report

Allen Seymour

It's been a very busy month with lots of items coming in. As a result of the Mayday opening with the miners we received an Oakdale No.3 Shaft sign from Kevin Austin, and from Wendy Austin a number of DVD's she produced on coal trucks, Burratorang Valley, Oakdale heroes, Mines & Miners and Nattai Bulli. They also gave us a number of old Parish maps that belonged to Bruce.

We also received a book that was produced in 1913 for the centenary of the crossing of the Blue Mountains and a Jenolan Caves guide book. There were also some wine lists from Gledswood, and some Campbelltown Show programs and a copy of the DP plans for Belimbla Park, as well as a folding Kodak Brownie camera that was used in Burratorang Valley in the 1940's.

On the military side of things, there was a WW2 widow/mothers badge. These were only issued to the wife/mother of a serviceman who was killed. We also received a bugle and a slouch hat. The age of these is unclear, but we believe they are post WW1.



Many older members may remember Eddie Gall, who was a founder member. Ed and his wife Lyn are moving and allowed us to go through their personal collection, and the items we received are:

- A small horse collar, which is the perfect size for our pit pony. It needs a bit of work, but look for it on the pony in the near future.
- A bundle of letters from Malcolm Dunn to Miss Ruth R. Dunn at Picton and some postcards.
- Some parish maps for Terni, Murruin, Speedwell, The Peaks, Merlin and Colong, all in the County of Westmoreland, covering a large portion of the valley.
- An unusual steel fence post, believed to be a forerunner to

the star post, it is twisted so it can be screwed in, with holes for the wire

- A coffee grinder, enamel coffee pot, and a full 1/2 lb jar of Bushells coffee
- A tin of peptic ulcer tablets
- An iconic Bex powders box
- A tin of John Oakey & Son knife polish
- A tin of snuff
- A very unusual sugar bowl complete with a miniature scoop
- Some men's sock garters
- A number of irons, including a Mrs Potts iron with handle (ours is missing the handle), a No.5 flat iron, a charcoal iron, a kerosene iron and a gas iron with a hose to connect it to the gas supply. We'll have to do some re-arranging in the cottage so we can display more of our irons.
- A Dietz 'Fitzall' sulky lamp with a bracket to slip it on to the sulky, and a magnifying lens in front of the light.
- A paper log roller. What's a paper log roller you ask? You mix paper and water, put it into this and roll it into a solid log. When dry you burn it on the fire. An early way of recycling.
- A large one metre high doll, about 50 years old which can be used as a child mannequin.
- Some blacksmith tongs and a bootmakers boot last
- A balance scale made in Sydney and used for weighing 120lb bags of coal
- Lastly we also got Eddie's miners helmet, complete with light, battery and ear muffs

Thanks to Eddie and Lyn and everyone else who have donated items to us. ■



# Exhibitions Development

Doreen Lyon

### MUSINGS:

I am looking forward to meeting Paul Irish on Monday when he brings his acclaimed display **Where They Travelled** to our museum for one month. This has been constructed together with the Royal Australian Historical Society and has already travelled in museums around Sydney before heading back to where it all began – at La Perouse. I hope to see as many of you as can come to see it. This is the first time we have hosted a travelling exhibition but I hope it won't be the last.

I have been working with **Sandra Pires of Why Documentaries** to support her in her application for funding to bring her **Yesterday Stories** project to Wollondilly. Sandra has been collecting stories from people in and around Wollongong to create an APP which can be shared. She is branching out to Wingecarribee and the Blue Mountains and Wollondilly to record more stories along a series of themes: **Migrant, Indigenous, Colonial, Military, Industrial Sites and Landmarks**. Ben and I were invited to view the first collection of stories at Mount Kembla Community Hall which was launched by the National Trust. Many of the families featured were there and it was fun to see their reaction when they saw their stories on screen. The project is being created at the Wollongong University Campus with 'Accelerate'. Sandra's idea is to create 3-5 minute videos which can be accessed by travellers. For example, in Wollongong if the interest is in industrial stories, you can listen to coal miners and their story can be continued when you get to Wollondilly when we record our stories; the same with the rest of the themes. We have worked with Sandra before on our Barnardo exhibition and know she has passion and commitment so I hope we can do so again.

Last week I had a visit from Jennifer Lamb, Director of the **Leider Theatre in Goulburn** who has written a play around the story of Gurangatch and Mirragan. This is the creation story of the forming of the Burratorang Valley by the epic battle between the serpent Gurangatch and the tiger cat Mirragan. Their battle created the rivers in the valley. I asked Kazan Brown to help with this project and also another project regarding the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the visit from Governor

Macquarie to our area.

On Friday we shared **Sorry Day** with the Campbelltown Council and Tharawal Medical centre at Airds in the Mount Annan Botanic Gardens. There were many sad stories from FACS, Link-up, and others but the saddest was from Mary Stacy who bravely shared her own story as one of the stolen generation and how this has affected her whole life. I saw many people wiping away tears when she spoke. A highlight of the event was the dancing by very enthusiastic pre-schoolers who performed their traditional dances like professionals!



Photo courtesy of Macarthur Advertiser

At the **Wollondilly Tourist Association** meeting last week, plans were made for the next Tourism After Five which will be held in June at the new Picton Visitor Centre in the Shire Hall. The reception will be held in the gallery which will also feature local works from local artists. A discussion was begun to create a Garden and Arts Trail next year by partnering local artists and artisans with local open gardens. The Rotary Open Garden Trail is held annually and this is an opportunity to add to the experience by including the arts. Louisa also outlined her ideas for local bus tours and she had produced some excellent research for this idea which will be discussed at the next meeting. ■

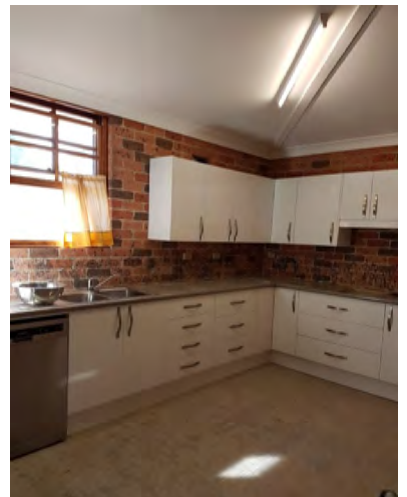
## Images of our kitchen during our busy month



Kitchen reno on Friday — thanks to all our dedicated volunteers who worked so hard on this daunting project. The image on

the right is foggy due to all the dust kicked up by the jack hammer.

Before and after. The kitchen is almost complete with a lot of work achieved in a short time by Cameron Pellow. Right: Tuesday, at time of printing.





# Jack Debert

*From the Scrolls of Yerranderie-Burraborang, Scroll No.110 9th Series*

Jack Debert was a pilot in World War I in England, then he came to Australia via South Africa, arriving in Australia in the 1920s, he lived for a time at Bathurst. He became an endurance runner, a hockey player and in 1927 with Myles Dunphy, founded the Sydney Bushwalker's Club, and with this club roamed all over the Southern Blue Mountains.

He was a keen bird watcher and a compulsive writer of letters. He is featured in Harry Savage's *Kowmung Diary* of 1930 as the leader of a party of five young prospectors. Harry was one of them.

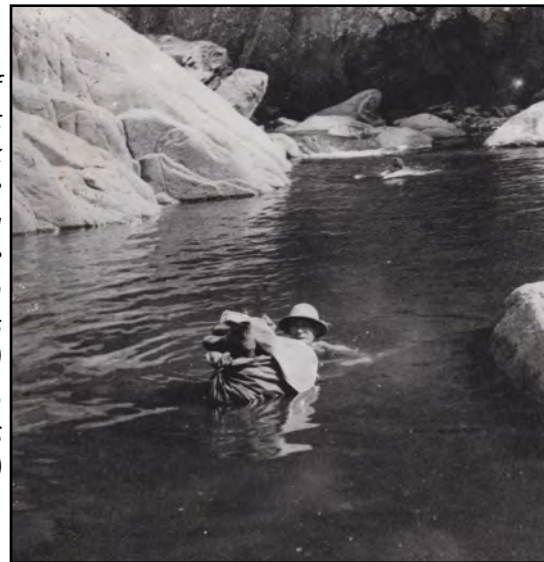
He purchased a small farm from Foster on the Wollondilly River, not far from the bridge in Burraborang Valley, He called the farm *Golden Cliffs* and here he kept bees.

He was a driving force in the establishment of a cheese factory in the Valley. He was working on his correspondence in regard to the cheese factory one very dark and stormy day when a car pulled up. The driver, Alan Rigby, asked that Jack help in getting his friend Myles Dunphy, who was very sick, out of the rising Kowmung River.

He was also a great reader of books and was interested in going to the pictures. He was an usher at a Sydney theatre for a time. He was also with the RAAF in World War II.

Returning to "civvies" he and his wife purchased a property near Orchard Hills, and Jack worked on the Penrith paper. Later they moved to Forster where they were in partnership with the local newspaper for a while. When Jack retired he was a driving force in the local tourist industry promotion. ■

*PHOTO of Jack Debert in full pack crossing the Kowmung River (note his boots on top of his pack)*  
*(Photo from TOHS collection)*



*From Scrolls of Yerranderie-Burraborang, Scroll No.53 4th Series No. LXI*

## Paid in Full

By Len Giblin

Most of the Valley folk prided themselves on their honesty. Most of them felt duty bound to return favour for favour. I recall the time we were discussing various people and their honesty and the name of Joe Feld came up.

Perhaps it would not be out of place if I said that Joe Feld was the Valley financier. Anyone having money troubles could "touch" Joe for a few quid. I doubt if ever he expected to get it back. I remember buying a pony from Joe on terms. The pony was for sale for 8 pounds, a small deposit and the balance to be paid in rabbit skins at the ruling market price.

I paid the deposit and over the next year or two would drop in and leave a few rabbit skins when I was visiting the Upper Valley.

I met Joe in Camden one day and asked him how much I owed him. "Eleven shillings," said Joe. He had an infallible memory and never recorded anything. "Well, here's the eleven shillings," said I. "Thanks a lot," said Joe, patting me on the back, "you are the first bloke ever to pay me back in full, come in an have drink with me." Which brings me back to the tale I started to tell.

It seems my mate was journeying with a friend to Yerranderie and in so doing had to pass Joe's place. When they came in view of Joe's place, he remarked that Joe owed him a few bob for rabbit skins, as he did not have any spare cash when

he left them. In went the chap to collect. In half an hour he returned. "Well, how did you get on?", said my mate. "Fine, I'm 38 bob better off. He remembered the skins alright."

My mate, a little puzzled, asked how long ago had it been since he left the skins with Joe.

"About 14 years ago, I guess. It was before I left for the war." I wondered if Joe would remember. He did. ■

Joe Feld on his farm on Wollondilly in his Orange Grove





## NEW EXHIBITION AT THE WOLLONDILLY HERITAGE CENTRE AND MUSEUM

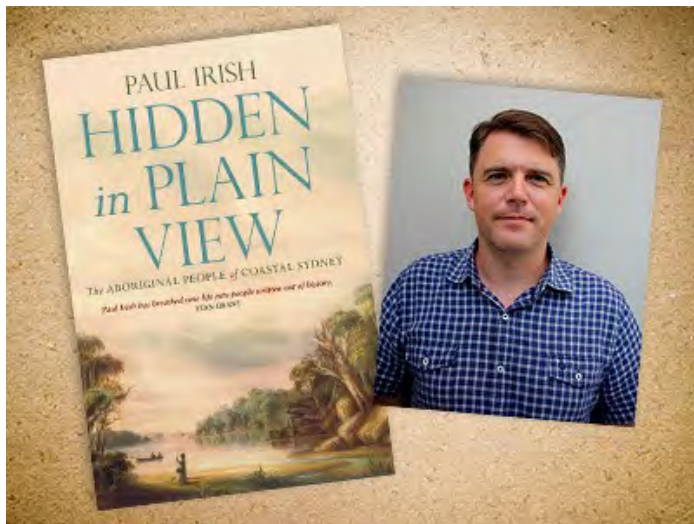
43 Edward Street, The Oaks NSW

*Where They Travelled* opens on June 4<sup>th</sup> with a guest presentation by author Paul Irish at 7.30pm.

Paul's book *Hidden in Plain View* is the pre-cursor to the exhibition and explores the lives of some of the local Aboriginal people. What happened to Sydney's indigenous people between the devastating impact of white settlement and increased government intervention a century later? They may have been ignored in colonial narratives but maintained a strong bond with the coast and its resources and tried to live on their own terms.

Paul Irish is an archaeologist and historian who has spent the past fifteen years working with local Aboriginal people on projects about Sydney's Aboriginal archaeology and history. He has worked on the presentation of Aboriginal history at Sydney Living Museums, and has also contributed to the Dictionary of Sydney and the City of Sydney Barani website.

The exhibition traces the lives of William Darrell, Thomas Tamara, Bidy Giles, Johnny & Lizzie Malone, Emma Timbery, Kate Foot, Frank Foster, William Rowley and Ellen Anderson together with contextual stories and their legacies on a series of 16 banners.



For more information contact Doreen Lyon [dlyon1@bigpond.com](mailto:dlyon1@bigpond.com)

Left—Queen Emma Timbery and below Ellen Anderson



## On-site First Aid Course



First aid instructor Dan with 18 members in the Drill Hall on 15 & 16 May. Willing students assisting each other to learn new skills and save lives.

# Reminders, News & Info

## WEEKEND ROSTER

JUNE	
<b>Vivian &amp; Bob</b>	<b>Saturday, 2</b>
Kevin & Trish	Sunday, 3
<b>Phil &amp; Laurette</b>	<b>Saturday, 9</b>
Bev & David	Sunday, 10
<b>Jim &amp; Kay</b>	<b>Monday, 11</b>
<b>WORKING BEE</b>	<b>Saturday, 16</b>
Sue & Paul	Sunday, 17
<b>Colleen &amp; John</b>	<b>Saturday, 23</b>
Kevin & Trish	Sunday, 24
<b>Louisa &amp; Doreen</b>	<b>Saturday, 30</b>
Ben & Doreen	Sunday, 1st July

## MONTHLY SUPPER ROSTER

June	Doreen & Ben
July	Colleen & Bev
August	Debbie & Pam
September	Shirley & Trish
October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	Please bring a plate

## GUEST SPEAKER

**JUNE — *This is Where They Travelled: Historical Aboriginal Lives in Sydney*** exhibition created by Dr Paul Irish and researchers from the La Perouse Aboriginal community.



**Mothers' & Widows' Badge** was issued to the mother or widow of a member of the RAN, AIF, RAAF or merchant navy killed in action or died of wounds or from other causes whilst on service or as a result of such service.

Additional stars were added in the case of the death of more than one child. Donated by Nancy Grimston, nee Chapman of The Oaks.

## MULGOA—OUR NEXT BUS TRIP

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**

Visit St Thomas Church and cemetery

James Broadbent's Cottage

Settlers for lunch— Booking sheet is on the front counter

## Membership Fee Reminder

\$10 for single or \$18 for a family. Add \$10 postage if you would like a hardcopy of the newsletter to read, otherwise please provide your email address for a colour version on your computer.

## Bushman's Billy Tea

Float one gum leaf in your 1/4 gallon billy can of boiling water prior to adding tea leaves. Makes a delicious Australian cup of bush tea. Don't forget to swing the billy around in a circle at arms length about 3 times.

## Pumpkin Scones

Ingredients—1/2 cup white sugar, 1 tblsp butter, 1 fresh egg, 3 cups SR flour, 1 1/2 cups cooked and mashed pumpkin and milk as required

Method—Cream the butter and sugar then add cooked pumpkin, egg and flour. If mixture is too thick then add milk as required. Knead lightly on a flour dusted surface and cut with floured scone cutter or knife. Place on un-greased tray and bake in very hot oven 210C for 10-15 minutes.

## LIFE & WORK

Those who CAN—DO

Those who CAN'T—WATCH

Few things, I find, give quite as much pleasure as WATCHING at work, people who KNOW what they are DOING.

Carpenters, bricklayers, a person knitting, mechanics all directing parts into place etc.

It is not merely a matter of SKILL.

Behind the manual DEXTERITY, there is a mind which knows the potentials of the material or part on which the hands are working and the ends which it can be fashioned or directed.

It is not, however, simply of MANIPULATION, for as well, there is a LOVE for the WORK and a kind of JOY in the FINISHED PRODUCE, already in the mind's eye, but realisable only through LABOUR and SKILL.

It is these people who get SATISFACTION with their LIFE and WORK.

—Anonymous

**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 St. The Oaks starting at 7.00pm. Upcoming meetings are the 2 July & 6 August 2018. Patrons are Luke Johnson and 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 the minutes are available.

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

