

# 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



## Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

### Newsletter

March 2019

# A GLIMPSE AT EARLY LOCAL TRANSPORT

The first road to Burragarang ran from Picton to Mount Burragarang to descend into the Nattai Gorge roughly 6 miles (9.6km) above its junction with Wollondilly. It was probably the road that Barrallier used on his first 1802 expedition into the Burragarang. The Reverend James S. Hassall mentions the following trip through Burragarang Valley to the Wombeyan Caves "Starting from Camden we passed The Oaks district and entered Burragarang, descending the mountain at what was called 'The Pass' (at Nattai). This place was somewhat improved since I had gone down with my father (The Reverend Thomas Hassall) about eight years before (approx. 1836). On that occasion we had to let the horses down partly with a rope to prevent their

falling over a precipice alongside us three or four feet off and I too had to submit to be lowered by rope.

A different later track was used by valley residents in 1840 several years before it was surveyed. It also led to a precipice known as 'The Jump Up'. The spot was supposedly so named because there was rough ledge which only bullocks (and Bushrangers) could jump up. Horses, cart and goods of all kinds had to be lowered down. It was used by the Yerranderie Silver Ore teams and one wonders how the bullock and horse teams and later lorries could manage the steep incline though the road was well constructed."

*An extract from 'The History of Burragarang Valley from the Records' by Sonja den Hertog.*

*Pictured* -The largest team which has ever left this district, laden with wool, from the flocks of Messrs. Michael Reilly and Ed. Carlon, Mr. Ditton in charge, has passed through the Valley. Mr. Ditton brought his cargo safely to Camden. Mr. Purcell of Upper Burragarang was most fortunate in taking an excellent photograph of the bullock team with its large stack of first class wool.

The health of the district is most satisfactory. An extract from Trove/The Camden News/16th Dec. 1897/Burragarang News.



Foreground Robert Ernest Ditton with his father Robert at the rear.



# President's Report

Trish Hill

This past month the building frames have been added to the slabs and now the progress is quite visible. The slabs are currently being added to the walls of the Blacksmith facility which is quite exciting for the boys and if the work continues at this rate will be at lock up stage before too long.

We have had some bus groups in and they have not been inconvenienced to date and the schools groups are about to commence. Schools have secured bookings much earlier this year than ever before according to Bev, it may be that they have seen our Schoolies promotional video.

There is a new roster in effect and I would like to thank all of our volunteers for giving of their time to facilitate this. We are in need of some additional volunteers to fill some gaps both on the weekend roster days and with our meeting supper roster so if you think it is something you might like to do please let us know or come along and spend a few hours to see if it is to your liking.

We have a stall at Thirlmere Festival of Steam on Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> and if you have an hour to spare to help out I'm sure Louisa would be thrilled.

Betty has another volunteers bus tour scheduled for April and you can find all the details on the back page.

Our best wishes to Pacita who has been unwell, our best wishes for a speedy recovery. ■



Photos show the progress of the main building extension and the Blacksmith facility



# Family History & Local Archive Research Corner

Sue Davis



Our local history and family history enquiries can come from many different sources. Recently we had one through *Facebook Messenger* from Andrew who is a military memorabilia collector from Koo Wee Rup historical society in rural Victoria. Andrew had seen our write up about Frederick Toovey, 19th battalion, we had for Remembrance Day last year. Andrew had purchased

some of his collection on eBay and discovered he had some cards that Fred had sent home to his family when he was on overseas service in World War I. Andrew was so taken with the story that he thought we should have the cards and has now sent them to us. A picture of one is attached to this report! We are so grateful for Andrew's donation and the cards are welcome additions to our collection. As promised last month, here are some more ideas to help you with your Family History research...

**6. Interview a family member:** We all make promises to ourselves that, one day, we'll interview family members and rec-

ord their trip down memory lane. Make 2019 the year you do that. And you don't need a lot of tech – taking a video on your smartphone will do the trick. There's loads of free editing software out there if you want to get a bit more creative.

Just make sure you save everything and create a back up file as well.

**7. Write that book:** Perhaps you've already recorded your interviews, and want to write the history of your family. Set a daily word goal – promise yourself that you'll write 500 words a day. Don't edit yourself – just write. Before you know it you'll have crafted a chapter, then another one. It doesn't matter if you never publish it or even show anyone, at least you'll have written up all that research.

**8. Help others with their family history:** Update your family tree on Ancestry so that the details are current for other researchers. Or make a promise to visit one local cemetery a month and spend an afternoon uploading photographs of the gravestones to [Find A Grave](#). As someone who is currently researching cemeteries in the UK, I can tell you that taking images of old gravestones and uploading them is something that a lot of genealogists appreciate! (*Reference to Cassie Mercer*)

Enjoy your family history journey ■



## Schoolies Report

Bev Batros

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The Schools' Program has started with our usual training morning and organisation run by Sue Davis, covering topics such as a volunteer's role, teaching ideas, procedures and risk assessment. We took a few minutes to revise first aid procedures for the events that may affect us.

As usual we are welcoming back our regular team of ten who are there every week. They are Pam Stephenson, Shirley Carlson, Pam McVey, Kevin Wintle, John Hickey, Glenis Pride, John Mainwaring, Trevor Ditton, John Hangar and Jacquie Finley. We are also lucky to have reliable reserves this year in Margaret Battam, Bronwyn Hayter, Kadrienne Ireland and Julie

Littler. Reserves allow our regular volunteers to take any days they need to.

2019 has begun at a gallop with 7 schools booked in for Term 1, the most we have ever had! They include Picton High Year 7, Camden, St Peters and Wollondilly Anglican. At this point there is only 1 week left in Term 2 and we have bookings in August and it is only February! Many of our schools this year are new to the Centre so it looks like the year will be chock a block! It will be interesting to ask them if our new video on the web site had any influence ■



## Acquisitions Report

Allen Seymour

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There is a steady trickle of items coming in, some of these may be used in the new Blacksmith display. These include a one leg blacksmith vice, a wedge hammer, nipper pliers, a blacksmiths hammer, and a water bottle. Some of these came from the blacksmith's shop at Nattai-Bulli mine, courtesy of John Hyland. We have also obtained two hinges that came off an old building on Ray's farm on Montpellier Drive in the 1970's. The building was believed to have been around 120 years old then, and in a very poor state. There is also an Australian made Willow galvanized rain gauge. Just about every farmer had one of these



and they were in common use for many years.

A different type of item is an 1890 edition of the Hymnal companion to the book of Common Prayer. We have also received some WW1 postcards that were sent from Fred Toovey in France to his family at Toonali Farm in Burratorang Valley. These were bought from the internet by a collector in Victoria, and when doing research came across us and decided to donate them to us. We are very grateful as they are a worthwhile addition to our collection ■



## Marketing & Bus Visits

Louisa Singleman

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**February Bus Tours** — February was off to a great start with four bus tours visiting our wonderful museum. Firstly a group of 20 came from Ingleburn View Club followed closely by a group from Mosman. Towards the middle of the month we were visited by the Nepean Probus Club and on the 26th we hosted Gregory Hills Probus. Thank you to all our volunteers who give their time to host the bus tours, your help is very much appreciated.

### Thirlmere Festival of Steam—Sunday 3rd March

There will be many new attractions at this year's Steam Festival especially for those interested in steam engines both stationary and moveable. As usual we are having a stall so if anyone is available for an hour or two Betty and I would be grateful. You should be able to find us as we are usually in The Oaks Road in the vicinity of Thirlmere Post Office.

### International Women's Day—Community Links, Friday 8th March at Harper Street Tahmoor.

International Women's Day will be celebrated at Community Links with artwork on display by the Wollondilly Art Group, pampering and Psychic Readings and other interesting information. There will also be a gourmet BBQ breakfast. It is hopeful we will have a stall to advertise our museum ■

**THE WOOLLAMS.**  
**JOSEPH WOOLLAMS JUNIOR AND THE BEGINNING OF**  
**A BURRAGORANG VALLEY FAMILY**      *By Marie Larnach*

Joseph Woollams (junior) was born to parents Joseph Woollams senior and his wife Mary Bryant.

Joseph junior was born about 1840 in Rickmansworth, England. Rickmansworth is a small town in south-west Hertfordshire, England, situated approximately 20 miles (32 km) northwest of central London.

Sometime after 1840 and before 1847 Mary Woollams (nee Bryant) has died as Joseph senior remarries in 1847 to Charlotte Sewell.

Charlotte Sewell was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1808 or 1809 in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, England. According to Charlotte's obituary, she died in 1901 in her 92<sup>nd</sup> year, making her birth year 1809.

According to the 1851 Census for Hertfordshire, Watford, Rickmansworth we find the following information on the Woollams family. Living at 72 Church, Street, Rickmansworth is:-

Joseph Woollams, head of the household, married and aged 46 years. His occupation is recorded as a baker and birthplace was in Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire.

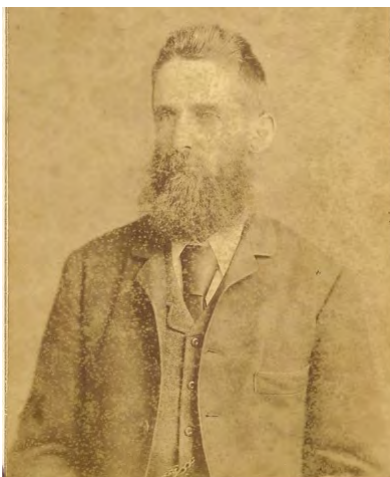
Charlotte Woollams, his wife is aged 39 years and birth place given as Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. (the census taken in 1851 states Charlotte's age as 39 which makes her birth year 1812).

The children of Joseph and Charlotte are listed as:-

- Joseph Woollams, a son aged 10 years and he is a baker's boy, born in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire.
- Charles Woollams, a son aged 2 years, also born in Rickmansworth.
- Sarah Woollams, daughter, aged 6 months, also born in Rickmansworth.

A year after the 1851 census was taken in England, Joseph and Charlotte and their three children leave England and journey to Australia, in particular, South Australia. The Woollams family travelled to South Australia as Government passengers.

The following information was found on the Adelaide State Archives Office, Shipping List. Joseph, Charlotte and their family arrived in Port Adelaide, South Australia on 13<sup>th</sup>



*Joseph Woollams junior*

August, 1852 on the vessel "Gloucester". The "Gloucester" sailed from Plymouth on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1852. The captain of the ship was Captain J Marshall.

There had been one baby born during the voyage to Australia and the deaths of twenty three people were recorded. Causes of death were; fourteen from measles, three from scarlatina (scarlet fever),

one from inflammation of the lungs, and five from other causes.

The Woollams' family settled in Adelaide upon their arrival and a month later Charlotte gave birth to another son, George Woollams on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1852.

Tragically, Charlotte was to lose her husband Joseph, and their new born son within days of each other. The baby, George Woollams died on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1852 and Joseph Woollams senior died two days later on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1852 from typhoid fever.

Charlotte had no husband and a young daughter and son to provide for as well as her step son, Joseph junior. Joseph junior would have been aged about 12 years by this time. He had been working as a baker's boy a few years early, so he may have been able to earn some money for the family. How Charlotte survived is not know, but she made her way from Adelaide to Bathurst, NSW. Charlotte had a brother, Joseph Sewell living in the Bathurst area.

Joseph Sewell had been sent to Australia as a convict, arriving in 1817. He was transported for seven years on a "violent suspicion of felony in stealing on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1816." By the 1850s, Joseph Sewell was a large land owner and well established in the locality of Rockley, near Bathurst. A creek near his home was named Sewell's Creek, after Joseph Sewell.

*Sewell's Creek*

*Joseph Sewell was transported for seven years, on suspicion of stealing in 1816. He purchased 984 acres of leasehold land after he obtained his ticket of leave. The property was called Claremont but is now called Thane.*

*During the gold mining days on Sewell's Creek about 200 miners lived there and the Sewell family ran a store beside their home. Joining the store was a butcher shop which is still standing.*

Charlotte Woollams (nee Sewell) arrived in Bathurst by 1854 as she is recorded as being married in that year, under the name Charlotte Sewell to John T Richardson. They were married in the Presbyterian Church at Bathurst. Why Charlotte is recorded as marrying under her maiden name is unknown. So within a few years of losing her husband and baby son, Charlotte and the remaining Woollams children have moved to the Bathurst area of NSW.

It is not known, but it is safe to assume that Joseph junior travelled with his step mother to Bathurst and resided in the area. Joseph may have lived with his "uncle" Joseph Sewell as in later years some of the Sewell cousins travelled to the Burragorang Valley and visited the Woollams' family.

A member of the Sewell family, in particular the grandson of Joseph Sewell, Paul Ernest Sewell married in St. Paulinus' Church, Burragorang, on Monday, April 27, 1908 to Miss Ada Catherine Carlon, of Burragorang.

## Joseph Woollams Junior and the Beginning of a Burragorang Family Continued ...

Paul Ernest Sewell was from Mt. David, a small town in the Rockley/Bathurst area. Ada Carlon was a descendant of Patrick Carlon, and the daughter of John Bede Carlon and Elizabeth Rose Murphy of Burragorang Valley.

Paul Sewell may have been visiting his Woollams' relatives at one time and met his future wife? Paul and Ada were to have a large family and settled at Yerranderie.

Another indication that the two families kept in contact can be found when the daughter of Charles Woollams, Joseph's step brother, was living at one time with the daughter of Joseph Sewell.

Zora Brown (nee Woollams), Charles' daughter, was residing with her great aunt Mary Isobel Langford (nee Sewell) during WW1. Zora's husband, Robert Brown was serving in the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Field Ambulance and he died from wounds received in action on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1917 while serving in France.

Joseph Woollams Junior left the Bathurst area as by the late 1860s he was residing in the Yass area. In March, 1868 a marriage is registered at Yass for Joseph Woollams and Elizabeth Ellen Maxwell, known to the family as Ellen.

Elizabeth Ellen Maxwell was born about 1840, the daughter of Thomas Maxwell and Elizabeth Osborne. Both her parents were Irish convicts.

Thomas Maxwell was born in Roscommon, County Mayo, Ireland in about 1793. He was transported to Australia in 1823 for seven years on the "Isabella". Thomas' crime was recorded as a "counterfeiter of money". He was aged 30 when he arrived and occupation was a shearer.

In 1831 Elizabeth Osborn arrived from Monaghan in Ireland on the convict vessel "Palambam". Her crime was stealing yarn and she was sentenced to seven years transportation. Elizabeth was aged 22 when she arrived; she was single and a house maid.

Twin boys, William James Maxwell and John Joseph Maxwell were born to the couple in 1832. It wasn't until 1839 that Thomas and Elizabeth married in Burragorang Valley. Sadly in 1843, a few years after they married, Thomas drowned in the



Former farm of the Woollams family in Burragorang Valley

Wollondilly River in Burragorang Valley.

Between the years 1868 and 1883 nine children were born to Joseph and Ellen Woollams in the Mackie Creek area of Adelong, NSW.

By late 1890 Joseph, Ellen and their family had left the Adelong area to take up farming in the Burragorang Valley, as reported in The Gundagai Times and Tumut, Adelong and Murrumbidgee District Advertiser dated 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1890.

### Adelong News.

*Mr. Joseph Woollams, a farmer who has resided in this district for over 25 years, left here on Thursday last with his family for the vicinity of Picton, where he has taken a selection.*

*Mr. Woollams is one of those steady, straightforward, practical men we can ill afford to lose. He departs with the good will of the whole community.*

Joseph and Ellen's children travelled to the Burragorang Valley except for their eldest son, William Thomas Woollams. William married in 1891 to Annie White and they settled in the Harden area.

Joseph was aged 71 years when died in 1909 and Elizabeth Ellen Woollams (nee Maxwell) died on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1913 ■

Part 2, the children of Joseph and Ellen Woollams continues in the next edition of the newsletter.

**Continued next month..**



## TRUCKIES REUNION

**Saturday, 11th May 2019— Family Day/BBQ**

**Doors open at 10am**

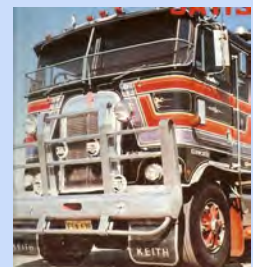
Open to anyone involved in the transportation of Burragorang Coal—owner drivers, subbies, company drivers, mechanics, loader drivers, supervisors etc.

Entry fee is \$3 ■ BBQ \$5 (sausage or steak sandwich/drink).

Alcoholic beverages are not available however participants are welcome to provide their own drinks. Contact Ian Welsh on 0403 823 934 or Wollondilly Museum –Trish 0432 689034

See our website for more information

<http://www.wollondillymuseum.org.au/>



# St Marks Church Yard

Last Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, St Mark's at Picton held a ceremony to showcase the restoration of most of the 48 gravesites damaged and swept away in the June floods two years back. It has been a monumental job and representatives from the organisations who helped the committee with work or money were thanked and shown the completed work.

It was also an introduction to the new Apps program instituted by the Rev Ben Boardman to give visitors some idea of the historical significance of this heritage cemetery. There are 12 profiles, chosen for the interest they generated which was a difficult task considering the many interesting people buried at St Mark's. I was asked by Ben to research and write these after the successful tours of four historic cemeteries last year by our members during History Week. There are some 850 people buried here and many are in unmarked graves. All have a story to tell that covers not only the history of white settlement in Picton but of Australia too.

The first burial at St Mark's was in 1856 but the following profile is that of James Crispe who has the honour of having the first headstone.

"James Crispe came to the colony, a free man, in 1823 and bought the Myrtle Creek Inn (now Tahmoor House and still standing) in 1835 and became known '... for his courtly bow and polite but sometime grandiose welcome.' He took great pride in the inn and the extensive gardens with a summer-house 'which were a wonder with visitors and radiant in green and many colours.' Governors Bourke and later Gipps both stayed at the inn.

James Crispe was also a brave man who had several encounters with bushrangers. On the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> March 1843 two local constables were having breakfast at the inn when Mr and Mrs Barber of Glenrock came with news of being stopped on the road by two armed bushrangers. The constables and

Crispe saddled horses and followed the path the bushrangers had taken. Crispe rode ahead and was soon confronted by the armed bushrangers and told to dismount. Crispe asked one man to hold the horse's bridle and as he dismounted grabbed the bushranger around the neck, holding him and taking his gun which he pointed at the other bushranger. The constables then rushed up and arrested the men.

The economic depression of the 1840s saw James Crispe



made bankrupt and the mortgagee took possession of the Myrtle Creek Inn. Crispe later took up the licence of the George Inn in Picton. He died in 1858.

His headstone is of an early gabled design, roses symbolise his English origins and the crown is a symbol of sovereignty and the Glory of God. Nearby are burial sites of several of his grandchildren, infants of his daughter Kate. She and her husband Joseph are buried elsewhere in St Mark's."

The information for this entry was sourced from 'TAHMOOR – it has no definite name' by Marlane Fairfax. For more details on James Crispe and Tahmoor House, read and enjoy the seven pages that Marlane has researched and written ■

By Betty Villy



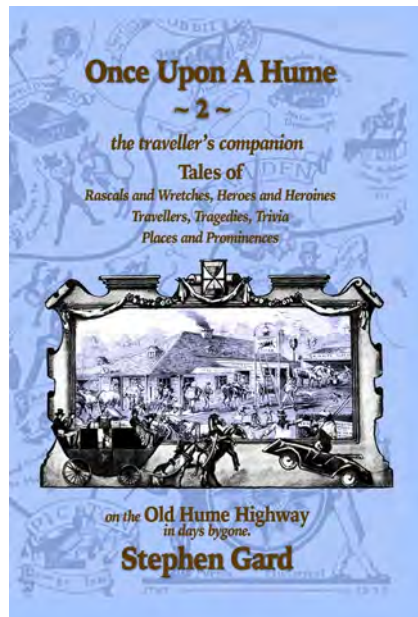
The tree symbolises the fragility of life and this memorial, with its lopped upper branches, truly shows how fragile the lives of Douglas Mary Horton and her son Claude Ramsay Stafford were. The Ivy coils entwining the trunk represent hope and immortality.



Reverend Ben Boardman and Lyn Davey launch the audio tour at St Marks Cemetery, allowing visitors to hear the stories of people buried there. Picture Simon Bennett. Source Facebook; St Marks Anglican Church Picton.

# Reminders, News & Info

WEEKEND ROSTER	
MARCH	
.Doreen & Ben	Saturday, 2
Kaye & Jim	Sunday, 3
Pacita & John	Saturday, 9
Vivian & Bob	Sunday, 10
Sue & Helen	Saturday, 16
Maria & Betty	Sunday, 17
Jenny & Pam	Saturday, 23
Vivian & Bob	Sunday, 24
<b>Working Bee</b> Laurette & Phil	<b>March, 30</b>
Trish & Kevin	March, 31



## MARCH MEETING

Date: 4th | Time: 7.00pm

Guest speaker—Stephen Gard

Topic—'Once Upon a Hume 2'

His second stories of the Hume

## MEMORIES & LANDSCAPE

### PLANNING DAY FOR HISTORY WEEK EVENT

You are all invited to a History Week planning day on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 in the View Room of the Wollondilly library. History Week is the annual state wide celebration of history organised by the History Council of New South Wales, this year the event is 31st August-8th September. This is a great opportunity for all the historical and family history societies in this great Wollondilly Shire to get together and talk about a possible joint venture. The theme of the week is 'Memories and Landscape', so planning around this theme will be something everyone would be able to contribute to. The morning will be spent brainstorming the theme and coming up with creative ways to showcase your photo, objects and recordings. The afternoon will be spent bringing it all together so there is a shared vision of the theme with actions leading up to the week.

MONTHLY SUPPER ROSTER	
March	Please bring a plate
April	Jan & Sue
May AGM	Louisa & Marie
June	Doreen & Ben
July	Colleen & Bev
August	Debbie & Pam
September	Shirley & Trish
October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	Please bring a plate

## RILEY FAMILY REUNION WOLLONDILLY HERITAGE CENTRE

Saturday, 13th April 2019

Families—Karkoe, O'Brien, Shephard, Hilton, Grimston, Green.

Bring along photos, stories etc

Contact Kazan Brown for further details.

kazanbrown@gmail.com

Desperately seeking volunteers to help out and join our meeting supper roster team. If you think you can help please let us know.

### Volunteers Community Bus Tour

Our next bus tour is to Australiana Village at Wilberforce.

Date- Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Time - bus will leave centre 9.am

Cost – \$15.00 pp + optional group lunch at \$12.00.



Please add your name to the list at the front counter where you can also view the menu.



### HER WAR FABRICS EXHIBITION JOURNEY

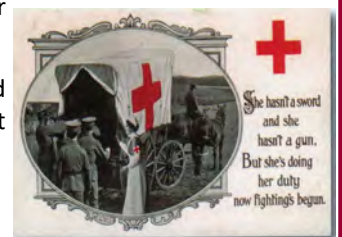
Currently the exhibition is at the Campbelltown Library

March / April - Ingleburn Library,

April 15 - 19 - Michael Watts window , Camden

May, June , July - Concord Wear Historical Society

August - Embroiderers Guild ( Quilt NSW will be downstairs at the same time)



**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. Next meeting is Monday 4th March and Monday 1st April 2019. Our 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**

