

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

MAY 2016

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

Grand Old Goulburn



Riversdale Homestead and grounds



Another happy and relaxing day with members of The Oaks Historical Society!

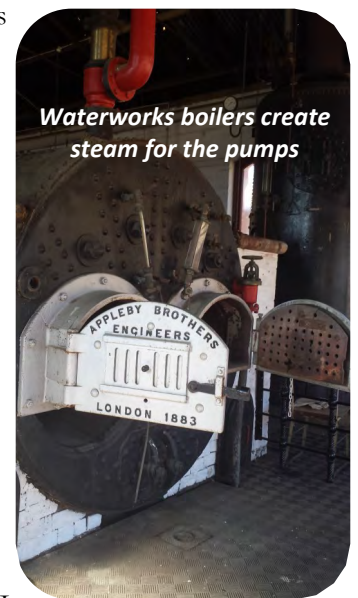
Our day began with a visit to the Goulburn Waterworks where a magnificent steam engine was on display, an exhibition where engineering meets art. Built in 1883 to pump water from the Wollondilly River to supply the township of Goulburn, this is the only existing waterworks in the state as others were broken up and sold for scrap after WW2.

The engine is housed in its original pump house but over the years wings were built in the same style on either side. It is of a warm saffron-red brick and civic authorities at that time saw the merits of good design in public structures, even a humble pump-house outside the town.

After lunch Riversdale Homestead was on the agenda. This was fascinating, made more so by the commentary of our guide Dawn who had everything we needed to know at her fingertips. It is the spot where Governor Macquarie, in 1820, proclaimed the site of a new town that he called Goulburn. Riversdale has been a family home for many years but began life as a coaching inn in the 1830s. The tap room with its cedar bar is still intact as is its cellar and is designed to be quite separate from the living quarters. Possibly these rooms would have been the accommodation part of the inn. Over time the property has been a police barracks and school but The National Trust, that owns the property, now interprets Riversdale with its fine colonial furniture and artefacts as a colonial homestead on ten acres. Since 1873 it has been the home of several generations of the Twynam family.

The stables, outbuildings and garden are outstanding. The latter comprises four and a half acres of sprawling flower beds, lawns and trees, some very old such as the medlar, which was planted in 1840. Riversdale was hard to leave. It was so peaceful as we sat, chatting and relaxing under the trees on a warm, sunny autumn day.

Continued inside.....



President's Annual Report



Trish Hill



Well, it's that time for another AGM already and what a year we've had!! With The opening of two exhibitions, 'Boys from Burraborang' in November, 'Her War' and the launch of *Red Poppies and the White Waratah* in March, we've certainly been busy. This year has seen increased popularity in our Schools program and we are booked solidly through to September.

Visitation on weekends seems to have increased as well. Our success is because of the dedication and support of our hard working volunteers and I would like to congratulate everyone and thank you all for your efforts throughout the year. Our volunteers have such varied roles within the museum includ-

ing the school groups, weekend roster, book and newsletter production, curators, bus group morning teas, kitchen and maintenance team and some of them never cross paths however you are our best asset and you make it all possible. Thanks to June Hickey who does a remarkable job with our website, we are now receiving enquiries via the website including bookings and orders. I would like to thank our local media for their assistance in promoting the museum to the broader public, always important but crucial for our events. Thanks also to Wollondilly Shire Council, Pam and David Campbell, our Patrons, Richard Booth and Philip Costa and our club and corporate sponsors. The Oaks Historical Society team strive to preserve and promote Wollondilly's history for the benefit of everyone. We will be including the \$10.00 newsletter postage fee into this coming year's membership to offset our costs but you can receive it free by email.

See you all at the AGM on Monday, 2 May. ■

Display Officers Annual Report



Doreen Lyon

From the first discussions and ideas to celebrate the centenary of the First World War to the recent results, this has been a remarkable achievement for a small regional museum! Although we may not always have agreed on every aspect of the planning process, we have managed to work through the issues and the projects have been as a result of team negotiations. I hope we can keep these strengths of our museum because our future success will depend on team work and being open to ideas. It is essential to come forward with new ideas and work out processes to bring them to life and exciting things can happen when a variety of ideas are explored. Look at the beautiful glass display cabinet in the



Drill Hall; this is as a result of people working together on a Big Idea! Even small projects work better with differing views and the museum is all the more interesting as small displays pop up in different places. The *Her War* display resulted from workshopping ideas to include women in the process of understanding the Great War's effect locally and achieved the beautiful book by Betty 'Red Poppies and the White Waratah; heroines of the

Great War in Wollondilly as well as the chance to showcase some of our collection.

I am often accused of thinking up new projects and not letting people recover and rest. I see ideas and projects for us in many places as I travel around museums and galleries and on the Internet and only come up with ones when there is an opportunity for funding, like with the ANZAC funding, because

all our big projects need funding. The challenge is to fit the project to the funding, because funding providers have agendas which they want us to

follow. It is not very often that we call the shots! I would like to see more people involved in finding grant or sponsorship opportunities that we can fit our projects into. It would be good to have a few projects in mind that we can bring forward when there is an opportunity. I have a few I would like to attempt:

- To co-ordinate the coal mining exhibitions into one by using some of the items in the old display and installing them in the new area. This will open up the main building to provide more displays and also make it easier for the education group to explain to the children how mining was done.
- To extend the Yerranderie exhibition using new material
- To include a display on the Aboriginal history
- To enclose some of the Machinery Shed in new cabinets which we can build ourselves. (There is a grant available)
- To replace the Barnardos display with a new display (and finish repaint all the cabinets from blue to lavender!)

If we want to keep our museum as a destination for local groups and tourists, we need to offer changes to our displays, and I am always happy to discuss any ideas our members and the public may have. We have an interesting collection of objects and archives which can yield a variety of ideas. ■



Family History & Local Archives Research Annual Report

Sue Davis



FAMILY HISTORY AND RESEARCH

Enquiries over the last year have come from a variety of sources such as day visitors, bookings, return visitors and an increasing number from emails or enquiries via our website as more people become familiar in using the internet. Researchers have not only been grateful for the information we provide but the volunteers who assist have also improved their knowledge of the area and the people who once lived in the community. We are always pleased to exchange information with researchers that ultimately enhances our collection.

From May 2015 to April 2016 we have supported 48 formal research enquiries.

Thank you to volunteers who have assisted over the last year, including Vivian Allen, Betty Villy and Ray Gill.

Tina Crocker who has helped during our duty days together; and our President Trish who remains a very versatile volunteer.

LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

The Wollondilly Local History Archives continue to be used regularly and have proved vital resources in such areas as research when organising displays, high school and university students completing assignments. I have started trialling typing the cards using the computer to try and make the process a little faster. Thank you to Pam who has been helping locate topics of interest in local newspapers. A new addition has been interviews with retired miners which provide an interesting insight into the mining industry. ■

Curator's Annual Report

Jim Whyte (Allen Seymour & Trish Hill)



Last year we entered 268 separate items into *Mosaic*. Some were stock that was already in storage but not listed, as with some maps and newspaper cuttings we found. This year another 49 items have been added making a total of 4,581 items listed into the *Mosaic* program.

We have almost finished an audit of our stock, relocating misplaced items to their original location. In the early days a good number of donations arrived from different sources, some of which did not have numbers or the donor's name attached but we are sorting them out with this audit. Also we endeavour to photograph those that have no photo. The audit so far has shown that 36 items are "missing".

Some improvements have been made to "Collection acknowledgement Form 2" and "Object Identification Form 3." These are not always being completed when we receive them; there are six different processes we have to implement before a donation is completed plus the provenance to be entered. To help with this there is a shortcut to "Form 2 and Form 3" on the *Mosaic* computer. We could put a shortcut (Form 2&3) on the office computer if this would help.

De-accessioning of surplus stock is still hard to implement as there are always reasons not to.

I met with James Allen recently (Muriel Allen's son) who donated Sid Allen's RAF (British) Air Force uniform Jacket, with cap and beret. He served with the "Pathfinders" on Lancaster Bombers as a wireless operator completing 48 missions



over Europe during WW2. I have asked James if he can find more history of Sid's life and during the war years. Not many bomber crews survived that number of missions.

This year we are looking at ways to improve Store Room 1. The room is not really adequate so we need to make it more efficient and user friendly.

On a different note I would like to thank Kevin and "The Boys" for their help within the Centre, for without them the place would not look as well cared for, our visitors often comment on the presentation of the Centre. We do appreciate the effort you all put in, thank you. ■

Family History & Local Archive Research



Sue Davis

Trish, Betty and I travelled to the *Kiama Family, Local and Social History Expo* held on Saturday, 16 April. We were among 35 stall holders all interested in the one theme! The expo was very well organised and exhibitors provided a good variety within the theme of Family, Local and Social history. Participants also had the opportunity to attend talks given by invited specialists in the related fields such as – Ben Mercer from Ancestry spoke on “*Discovering Identity with Ancestry and DNA*”; Carole Riley from Heritage Genealogy explained, “*How to Find Your Ancestors in NSW Land and Property Information Online*”; Gail Davis from State Records entertained listeners with “*Pandora’s Box: Lifting the Lid on the Weird and Wonderful in the State Archives*”; and Allan Murrin from Joy Murrin Family History Services, informed the audience

about “*LDS Catalogue on Family Search: An Overlooked Resource*”.

Recent topics of researchers at our centre have been:

- Ellen and William Davis from the Bargo/Tahmoor area.
- Couridjah
- Felix O’Hare (convict)
- George Davidson
- Yerranderie School before 1947
- Henry Martin Glendinning, shale miner.

If anyone has any information that might help then please contact me at tohs1988@bigpond.net.au

Enjoy your research journey. ■

Acquisitions Corner



Allen Seymour

There is a wide variety of items this month. From Pacita Alexander we have a ladies dress that belonged to Dorothy Moore. Also from Pacita is a copy of *The Grazier’s Annual* for 1938, a 1904 typewriter instructor, and *Routledge’s Ballroom Companion*. There is also an invoice book from the Burratorang Co-operative Society. From Muriel Allen comes a WWII RAF jacket, hat and beret. This belonged to her husband Sydney George Allen, who served in Bomber Command during WWII.

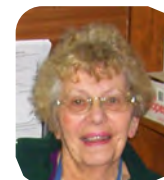


He completed some 45 missions, which was quite outstanding. A tour of duty I believe was 30 missions and the casualty rate was very high in Bomber Command. There is also a Camden Park butter box, with the initials JC branded on it.



We have also received Ian Welsh’s diaries from his coal truck driving career. They are from 1971 through to the time he retired a few years ago and detail virtually every load he carried, providing a unique insight into the life of a driver. ■

Marketing Report



Louisa Singleman

Bus Tours

April was busy at the beginning of the month but as usual it was rather quiet towards the end as it was school holidays and grandparents are in demand. However, we had groups from Gregory Hills, the Central Coast, Camden, Baptist Care and Health Wise seniors.

Thanks once again to our regular helpers and to Pam Stephenson for helping out with the Meals on wheels group from Camden.

Marketing Report

**IlluminARTE in Picton town Centre
Saturday 7th May - 2 noon to 9pm**

Once again we are having a stall at this event which is considerably bigger than last year. Our stall will be in the vicinity of the Visitor Information Centre on the corner of Argyle Street and Menangle Street.

I have compiled a roster of two hour slots from 11am to 9pm so if you could give a hand contact me on 4680 8358 to let me know what time you can come. I still need some able bodied men to assist in erecting the gazebo at 11am. ■

Library Annual Report



Vivian Allen



This year has been a learning experience for me since taking over the Librarian's position from Pacita. With Pacita's capable assistance I have managed to catalogue the small number of books that have been added to our Library in the past 12 months.

Some interesting and valuable additions to our local history collection are *Wollondilly's Fallen*, the men of Wollondilly who gave their lives in the Great war,

produced by Picton and District Historical and Family History Society and *The Cemetery at St. Paul's Anglican Church Cobbitty*, by John Burge, Janice Johnson and Joy Thorn. A new edition of Sydney Bellingham's 1899 classic, *Ten Years with the Palette, Shot Gun and Rifle*, edited by Jim Smith, is a record of Bellingham's life in the Blue Mountains with descriptions of the scenery and wildlife. A 1945 edition of *Cullenbenbong* by Bernard O'Reilly was donated and this will replace the photocopied version that we had on our shelves.

Although we do not have the facilities for members to borrow books all are welcome to use the Library at the Museum for reading and research. ■

Photograph Collection Annual Report



Pamela McVey

As a new volunteer stepping into my new job of recording the historic photos it has been for me a mammoth job of not only deciphering the various families and years and who belongs where I have also learnt to use the computer. Vivian has been my god send and can fix all my mistakes and seems to know almost immediately what I have done wrong. As a volunteer I have learnt so much more of The

Oaks and surrounding Wollondilly area through these photos and can now record, describe and scan the photos. I have met many wonderful, enthusiastic and interesting people here who are also volunteers. To anyone who would like to become a volunteer at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre and Museum you will find it a rewarding exercise. ■

REPORT ON TOURISM MEETING

WITH DAVID SOO & WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

by Doreen Lyon

I travelled in with Blair Briggs and we were met by John Troughton. The IT students were waiting for us and each table had the name of the tourist attraction they were working with. The WOLLONDILLY HERITAGE CENTRE table had 5 students; three from last year's group and two new ones. They were expecting Trish!!!

I was then subjected to more questions about our museum; core business, structure, opening hours, exhibitions, collections, IT capacity, expectations, problems etc. Then I had a long conversation with their tutor, Anna, after which it became clearer what this is all about! Anna teaches Information Technology and is very aware of the limitations for her students of the lack of interaction with the general public and with the business in which they may find employment. Their instruction is all computer based so they are not really ready for the wider workforce when they graduate. To address this Anna and the university have engaged David Soo of Australian Tourism Solutions (ATS) to broker meetings between the students and the sector.

We were involved because our tourism organisation WTAI asked ATS for advice and they selected potential partners, Mowbray Park, Thirlmere Rowing Club (a Picton restaurant) and us. After our involvement last year, we each received

solutions and ideas from the students as to how we could use IT to extend our businesses. In our case social media was seen as a key improvement to our reach and to drive customers to our website. Sue has picked this idea up and has started our own Facebook page which has increased our profile and the web page is receiving more traffic.

Anna is now asking us to use the third year students to address any ideas we may have of using IT solutions. The students themselves are very aware of our limited archival storage capacity and asked us to think of a way in which this could be helped by IT. Perhaps a strategy could be introduced which we could use to attract grant funding?

The team will come up with a presentation which they will give to us on a USB so we can show it to our members. Depending on the outcomes, we are then asked to get in touch with the team who will design an appropriate program for us.

Blair Briggs is working on a program of soil and water testing to create a data base which he can use to drought proof his farm and improve the water quality and water capacity! We need to talk further about this!

And David Soo wished to be remembered to Trish!..... ■

Grand Old Goulburn *continued from front page*

These bus tours began a few years back with the aim of raising money for the building fund. I think about \$800 or so has been banked so far. It kicked off with a trip over the Razorback looking at the original Great South Road. Ron Davies has been our guide on two tours visiting Abbotsford and cruising around Picton. Longer trips have been to Mt Kembla and Berrima museums and to the Female Factory and Old Government House at Parramatta.

Our visits are not only enjoyable but emphasize the importance of preserving our history – so much of which has been destroyed – but also our contributions to these institutions helps with this preservation.

There are lots of suggestions for future tours. These include: Elizabeth Farm, Rouse Hill, Australiana Village at Wilberforce, St Mary's Museum, Goulburn again, St Mary's Towers and Joadja, to name a few. Suggestions are welcome.

I think our winter tour in June or July will be to Appin and somewhere else in that area. Hopefully a member of Appin Historical Society will help out as a guide. During the waratah flowering time Mt Tomah in spring has been suggested and around April next year will be Joadja. Numbers are now

limited as seats have been removed from the community bus to make way for a wheelchair lift. The maximum number we can take is 18.

Keep on coming for a great day out. *Betty*



Marketing Annual Report



Louisa Singleman

Bus Tours

Over the past twelve months we have had just on 60 bus tours come to the Wollondilly Heritage Centre making a total of 1,470 visitors to enjoy a taste of local history as well as partake of the delicious scones and slices.

Making these bus tours so successful requires such a lot of hard work from taking the initial enquiries, making the bookings, confirming the numbers, organising the volunteers, ordering the scones and making changes, cooking slices, setting up the tables, preparing the morning tea, meeting our guests, giving an informative talk, showing the DVD on the Burratorang Valley and answering many questions while escorting visitors around the centre and of course expertly peeling apples.

Our volunteers over the last twelve months have given their time and expertise to making the bus tours such an asset to the centre. Your assistance has been greatly appreciated. I wish to personally thank Maureen Whyte, our booking officer, with the help of Jim, have over many years taken bookings, made return phone calls and given lengthy explanations to prospective visitors. Maureen has displayed a great deal of patience and people skills in her role as booking officer. Maureen and Jim are retiring from this position and they will be sorely missed. Thank you both for all your hard work.

Trish and Sue will be taking over the role as joint booking officers and with our updated web site hopefully we will attract more enquiries over the coming years. I wish Trish and Sue good luck and I look forward to many emails.

Marketing Report

2015 -2016 has been an interesting year in regards to marketing. There have been many local newspaper articles printed over the twelve months to advertise our meetings and exhibitions which have certainly drawn a large crowd. Also it is pleasing to see some articles in the IN4mer magazine.

Australia Day, the Thirlmere Steam Festival, Warragamba Craft Fair and IlluminARTE have all assisted in spreading the good word.

The Wollondilly Shire Council Economic Development Team have organised some successful seminars to encourage business to seek ways of promoting their products. One of the most interesting events was held at Trainworks Thirlmere.

Electronic marketing is playing a large part in marketing with informative web site, Facebook and other social media. There is a large audience out there still to be tapped so remember word-of-mouth is our biggest marketing tool. ■

200 YEARS AGO

by Doreen Lyon

Last Friday we went to the opening of **'With Secrecy & Despatch'** and art exhibition at the Campbelltown Art Gallery which featured four Australian Aboriginal artist and four Canadian First Peoples Artists. They were all representing the history of the Aboriginal people in their own countries and their treatment during colonisation. It is a very moving exhibition and well worth attending.

On Sunday Ben and I attended a ceremony to mark the 200th Anniversary of the massacre of men, women and children of the Dharawal People on April 16th 1816. This ceremony has been enacted annually for twenty five years and is organised by Sister Kerry and the Wyanga Myamly Reconciliation Group from Campbelltown. It usually attracts between 200-300 people but this year marked 200 years and it was estimated to have one thousand people. Celebrities included the Governor of NSW, General David Hurley, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Leslie Williams MP and Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Lynda Burney MP plus Col Markham, Regional Ambassador for Reconciliation NSW and the mayors of all three local Councils. Uncle Ivan Wellington was Master of Ceremonies and joined Fran Bodkin in a welcome to country in Dharawal language. Glenda Chalker told the story of her connections to Dharawal country and her experience in reading Governor Macquarie's instructions to his soldiers as they engaged with the remaining Dharawal people in Cataract

Gorge. (Glenda was recently featured on ABC Radio National *Life Matters* with presenter Ellen Fanning in the State Library as they read the documents). Gavin Andrews told the story in the context of what was happening in the colony at that time. Students from John Therry Catholic College presented their beautiful art work made especially for this anniversary. It consists of fourteen flat bollards in the shape of figures to represent the fourteen people killed in 1816. Each bollard tells part of the story.

After the speeches from the celebrities, the dancers entertained with traditional performances by the Doyle brothers, Matthew and Glen with Freda and the Wirid Jiribin Dance Group and Koomurri Dancers—all of whom were excellent (some of the dancers were still in kindergarten!). The Campbelltown Gondwana Indigenous Children's Choir sang an elegy to the Dharawal people and the Catholic Bishop of Wollongong Diocese gave the final prayer and blessing. ■



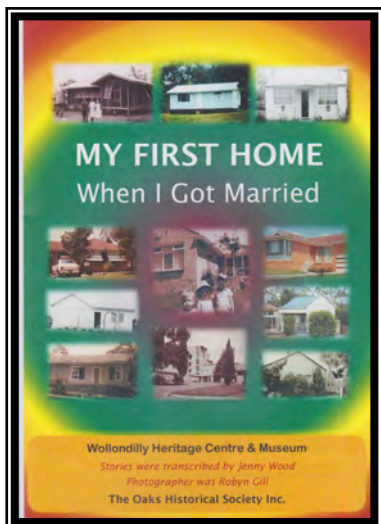
Two of the 14 bollards painted by John Therry students



Boys from Koomurri Dancers (above) and the girls from the Wirridjiribin dance group (below)



Our Seniors Week event at the Centre on 4 April



The theme this year was My Most Memorable Job or Mode of Transport

A small but passionate group turned out to tell their stories and meet up again over light refreshments served by our catering team lead by June Ingleson.

A quote from last year's book *My First Home When I Got Married*, page 7 Acknowledgements "... Our photographer, Robyn Gill took some very rewarding images. These images are archived for use in our newsletter and next year's book. Wollondilly Heritage Centre volunteers assisted in different areas throughout the day by welcoming visitors at the front door, catering for lunch, scanning photographs, setting out tables and chairs, erecting gazebos, general cleaning and administrative duties. The historical society members are our most valuable resource and we are very proud of every one of them—an extra-ordinary team under the guidance of a focussed committee..."



A great group of friends attend this event every year. Thank you to Mayor Simon Landow and Wollondilly Council for your support

Textile Art & Mixed Media Exhibition by
Macarthur Textile Network supported by the Campbelltown Arts Centre

TEXTILES ... TIME FOR A CHANGE

Wednesday 11th to Sunday 22nd May 2016
10am – 4pm daily

Campbelltown Arts Centre
1 Gallery Rd. Campbelltown NSW

Enjoy light refreshments in the Arts Centre Café overlooking the Gallery's beautiful Japanese Gardens

For further information macarthurtextilenetwork@gmail.com



Woman's Mirror April , 1959



Volunteer Weekend Roster

MAY 2016	
Sat, 30 Apr	Doreen & Ben
Sunday, 1 May	Allen & Debbie
Saturday, 7	WORKING BEE
Sunday, 8	Trish & Kevin
Saturday, 14	Bob & Vivian
Sunday, 15	Robyn & Ray
Saturday, 21	Jan & Jenny
Sunday, 22	Ben & Doreen
Saturday, 28	Colleen & June
Sunday, 29	Louisa & Doreen

Supper Roster



May AGM	Louisa & Marie
June	Doreen & Ben
July	Maureen & Jim
August	Aileen & Pam
September	Shirley & Trish
October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	Please bring a plate

UPCOMING GUEST SPEAKERS

MAY—Annual General Meeting

JUNE— Lynette Keanelly

JULY—John Graveur poultry judge

Note with membership payment from member Lynne Greenwood

....I just love the newsletter—not just history but tears and heartbreak as well as humour, I recall my late mother Joy Pudrey, speaking of Dr Crookston. Thank you everybody.

News & Info

Book launch of **GANDANGUURRA** **The Language of the Mountain People**

By Jim Barrett

Guest speaker Michael Jackson will launch the book



Saturday 14th May at 3pm

Joy Anderson Hall,

Mid Mountains Community Centre
9 New Street, Lawson

Enquiries 4739 1005

cctrhonda@bigpond.com

Photo: Jim Barrett



Goodbye Grandad



A bit of Oz bush culture

Poor old grandad's passed away, cut off in his prime,
He never had a day off crook—gone well before his time.
We found him in the dunny, collapsed there on the seat,
A startled look upon his face, his trousers around his feet.
The doctor said his heart was good—fit as any trout,
The Constable he had his say, 'foul play' was not ruled out.
There were theories at the inquest of snakebite without trace,
Of redbacks quietly creeping and death from outer space,
No-one had a clue at all—the judge was in some doubt,
When Dad was called to have his say as to how it came about.
'I reckon I can clear it up', said dad with trembling breath,
'You see it's quite a story—but it could explain his death'.
'This here exploration mob had been looking at our soil,
And they reckoned that our farm was just the place for oil.
So they came & put a bore down & said they'd do some trials,
They drilled a hole as deep as hell, they said about three miles.
Well, they never found a trace of oil & off they went, post haste,
And I couldn't see a hole like that go to flaming' waste.
So I moved the dunny over it—real smart move I thought,
I'd never have to dig again—I'd never be caught short'.
The day I moved the dunny, it looked a proper sight,
But I didn't dream poor grandad would pass away that night.
No I reckon what has happened—poor grandad didn't know,
The dunny was re-located when that night he'd had to go.
And you'll probably be wondering how poor grandad did his dash
Well, he always used to hold his breath....
Until he heard the splash!!!!

MONTHLY MEETINGS: The Oaks Historical Society Inc. holds its meetings on the first Monday of each month (except January) at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre, 43 Edward Street, The Oaks starting at 7.00pm. **The next meetings are on 6 June & 4 July 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 at the Centre.

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY TO ALL OF OUR MOTHERS

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2016 /17 ARE NOW DUE

Newsletter via
Email is
FREE

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

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

