

# The Oaks Historical Society Inc

Est. May 1979

The Oaks Historical Society Inc.  
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Newsletter

October 2019

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

## BURRAGORANG RACES

The Valley held the annual Eight Hour race meeting on Saturday, 5th inst., and it proves a great success. Although at times the weather looked threatening, it did not interfere with the attendance. Racegoers and visitors came from as far away as Sydney, Penrith, Luddenham, Appin, Mittagong, Picton and Moss Vale. The energetic secretary and live wire president, with their willing assistants, carried out their duties like clockwork. No complaints from anyone and the course was in good order and some good finishes took place. The men from across the Jordan were there and although hit hard by the punters in some races took it with a smile. Mr Frank Quig carried off one of the main races with his horse Billwood, much to the delight of the local sports. The publicans booth was well stocked with good cheer and although well patronised there was no sign of drunkenness on the ground. A well arranged luncheon booth and a cake stall did a good trade. Mr Johns as usual was most capable with the loud speaker and gave a good account of each race from start to finish. Friends, the Oaks sports were there in force and helped make the day successful. A dance in the Central Hall at night was well attended and the large and orderly crowd thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Gwen Jenkins band supplied good music. During the night, Mr Ted Quig's two daughters, ages eight and ten years gave an exhibition of tap dancing and with a sweet little song by the younger one, received rounds of applause. —An extract from *Trove/Camden News-10th Oct 1946*.



A recent addition to our collection and donated by Laurel Darmody, engraved..

**Burraborang Races  
1941  
Gambler  
Nuggett Toovey**

Pictured left Jim Ditton, Nuggett Toovey & Ted Ditton

### BURRAGORANG RACES.

The result of the Burraborang races conducted on the 12th inst. by the Burraborang Defence League, were as follows:—

Burraborang Cup, 5 furlongs:—

F. Toovey's Gamble .... 1  
T. Firmstone's Skip .... 2  
F. Gardiner's gelding .... 3

Four hack races, 3 furlongs.—W. Sulle won two, and S. Wintle and W. Donohtoe one each.

100 yards hndcp. silver cup.—A. Dale, Ladies' 80 yards.—Miss Joyce Holohan.

Throwing at wicket.—W. Britton. Tug of war.—Farmers v Miners, won by farmers. From *Trove 24th April 1941*



Burraborang Racecourse c1950

Riders-Joe Carlon & Bertie Norris



Horse racing events in Burraborang were reported as early as the 1860's and continued until the Valley was closed. It and other sporting activities were largely social events for the broader district. Ed.



# President's Report

Trish Hill

Another month has flown by, wasn't it great to see some much needed rain and I hope there is much more to come .

The History Week 'Memory & Landscape Exhibition' hosted by Wollondilly Council was a successful event. The launch at the Library was well attended and visitors took the opportunity to visit the exhibition throughout the following week .

Now our building work is complete we are hosting an afternoon tea on Friday, November 22nd at 1pm to officially open our extension and thank our supporters.

Mid month, the Mayor, Matt Deeth visited to present our Community Grants funding cheque and certificate. The funding has enabled us to have additional work stations for our research-



ers and visitors at the Centre. Mayor Deeth was also able to take a look at our Blacksmith facility and view the water trough loaned by Council and delivered only days before his visit. Thanks Wollondilly Council for your valued support.

Betty has been busy organising another community bus tour for our volunteers, this time to Rouse Hill house and details can be found on the back page.

We have Saturday 14th December for our volunteers Christmas party and hope to see you all there.

On behalf of all of us, I would like to wish Doreen the very best Happy 80th Birthday ■



# Family History & Local Archive Research Corner

Sue Davis

History Week, at the beginning of the month, was exciting for all. It was wonderful to work with the Wollondilly Council, Gail Dunn from the library, Appin Historical Society, Picton and District Historical Society and other history partners. I hope you will soon look up the new website launched at the History Week opening to find out the history of your street at <https://naming.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au/> It is still a work in progress but if you look up John Street, The Oaks, you will see how it can look. (If you have received this newsletter online you should be able to press on the coloured words then 'control' and click to take you to the website).



Our conservation team has been formed and we have started cleaning the glass negatives of the *Roy Dowle Collection*. We are about half way through and we have seen some very interesting pictures that will be great to see when they are printed. Thank you to all involved. Here are some of our team and the materials we are using ■



Happy researching!  
Sue Davis, Local Archives and Family History. Phone 0414703204.

Photos show our conservation team hard at work cleaning the glass slides



## Acquisitions Report

Allen Seymour

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This month it's been a bit busier. One of the great items we've received is a trophy that was won by Nugget Toovey at the 1941 Burraborang Races on a horse called Gambler. This terrific piece of memorabilia will be going straight on-to display. Another notable item we've received is a stone water trough which has been at Picton for many years. It is on loan to us from Wollondilly Shire Council and has been located in the Blacksmith's shed.

David Campbell has given us a horse-drawn plough. This is in much better condition than the ones we already have and has been located in the Machinery building. The Oaks Rural Fire Service has given us some of their old uniforms including overalls and jackets, fluoro vests and boots. These

are a couple of generations old and still have Bushfire Brigade on them. Frank Mackie has given us a block & tackle which has gone into the blacksmith's shed. Other items include a Gem scone tray and a tartlet tray from the 1940's.

During our moving we have found a book of photographs that was presented to Dr Parry at Picton. We had been searching for this as it was not in the designated Mosaic location, however it is now. It contains some great old black and white photos of Picton and surrounds and they have been copied so they can be put into the photograph register. Another item we located is a wood burnt picture by Paul Mills of Ernie Sharp's hut at Mt Werong. This is one of a number of similar items that we have done by Paul ■



## Marketing & Bus Visits

Louisa Singleman

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### September Bus Tour Report

During September we had three bus groups visit our Museum. One group came from the Aminya Retirement Village another group from the Picton Knitting & Crochet Group and finally a group who took advantage of our wheelchair friendly venue. Thanks once again to our volunteers for assisting with the bus groups.

### Marketing.

In an effort to increase the number of bus tours I have sent out information to 50 retirement villages and am now in the process of sending information to the many Country Women's Associations via email. If you have any ideas on how to market our wonderful museum I am all ears.

Give me a call on 0408 669287.

**Picton Show-Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> October** at Victoria Park Menangle St. Picton

Once again we are having a stall at the Picton Show on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October. We are inside the newly renovated hall. If you can come along and spend an hour or two on the stall that would be greatly appreciated. The stall will be set up at 10am.

### Bargo Public School 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Bargo Public School is celebrating its 150th anniversary with a Fete and Car show on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October from 10am – 4pm at 245 Great Southern Rd Bargo ■



## Schoolies Report

Bev Batros

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Reserve volunteers are very much needed for our 2020 Schools' Program, which occurs on most Thursdays from March until November, running from 9 until 1pm. No experience is necessary and you don't need to be a teacher. Most of our volunteers aren't. You would be working with small groups of children aged 6 to 10 years. As a reserve you would be contacted if one of our permanent volunteers were to be absent. Sometimes you might get a month's notice and sometimes it might be a day or two. If you have something on and can't come, that is fine.

New volunteers begin with an experienced team member as a "help out" extra but can progress to a teaching role if

they wish. We have information sheets available to assist you when talking, but can add your own stories if you like.

You may want to be a reserve for a particular position or activity if that volunteer is absent. The activities are washing as it was a long time ago, mining, indigenous art, poultry farming, orchards, cottage life and early schools.

Our next school is on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October so if you are interested come along about 10am to get the feel of how the program runs and see if it would suit you. Give me a ring on 0409913679 if you are interested ■



# Exhibitions Development

Doreen Lyon

The History Week project is now over and I can get back into my life! On reflection it was pretty successful considering it was a new concept and planning for it had to be done in response to people and their personal issues in a very short time frame with no funds!!

The original aim for this project was to encourage the co-operation of the local historical societies, individuals with similar interests and Wollondilly Council in a project which would highlight the collections and stories of local villages, streets and people and include oral testimonies and a school project. After a one day 'blue sky' planning day, we came up with;

1. an online interactive data base of street names
2. an exhibition of historic subdivision maps and early photos
3. digital recordings of memories from local elders
4. a school project where students were asked to fill in a project form about their street
5. a project displaying sponsored banners in selected villages to advertise the project
6. an official launch in the View Room at the Library



Gail Dunn with Theodolite loaned by Brian & Pam McVey

There were a few problems on the way but the results were all positive and we have worked well together to achieve our objective. We held a de-brief on Friday and Gail Dunn

expressed admiration for the quality of the exhibition and for the dedication of the volunteers involved and would be keen to be part of any future ideas for similar collaborative projects to promote local history and heritage. She mentioned that the model we created of Council and local Historical Societies works well and is only limited by the capacity of funding and staff available ■



The launch with Cr. Judy Hannan, Mayor Matthew Deeth, Surveyor general Narelle Underwood, Cr. Michael Banasik and Data



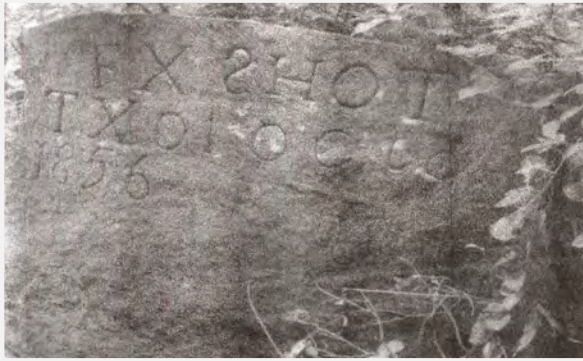
Above: Louisa volunteering (above) with The Oaks Display and



Part of the photo display by Appin Historical Society



# Death at Cox's Rock



On a cliff above Flaggy Creek gully, near Glenmore, west of Camden, almost hidden by lantana and creepers, is a mysterious slab of rock. A cryptic inscription in capital letters says:

FX SHOT  
TX 01 OCTO  
1856

The 'S' in 'SHOT' is back to front, and at the first sight the words and numbers might almost be hieroglyphics. What is the tragic story behind this stone memorial?

This area was then on Brownlow Hill, a property belonging to George Macleay. George was the son of Alexander Macleay, the Colonial Secretary who acquired the land by purchasing a grant to farm near Cobbitty and by 1834 had built the graceful which is still there today. George married Barbara Innes and they lived at Brownlow Hill till 1859, when they left Australia and went to England.

They were friends of the rich merchant, Severin Kanute Salting of the large firm of Flower, Salting and Co., in Sydney. Born in Denmark, Salting and his wife came to Australia in 1834, prospered and had two sons. On 10th October 1856 the older son George, aged twenty-one came to Brownlow Hill for a visit. At the time George was studying Arts at the University of Sydney, having been a student at Eton, while the Salting family lived in England.

According to the Sydney Morning Herald, 20 October 1856, 'George Salting rode to the farm of a person named John Cox, a tenant residing on the estate, for the purpose of wallaby shooting.' Mr Cox had often accompanied visitors to Brownlow Hill on hunting expeditions, and this time he brought with him his two sons, the older one having been hunting with his father before. Mr Cox, Mr Salting and the older boy all had guns.

They would have scrambled through thick bush, about five kilometres south west of the Brown Hill homestead, over huge moss covered rocks, along what was then called Stoney Creek, with gum trees and casuarinas towering above, to arrive at the site. Evidently John Cox placed everybody in what he considered safe positions, in such a way as to make it possible for someone to shoot whatever game appeared. About ten o'clock, after having waited for an hour and a half, Mr Salting thought he saw something start up, and levelled his piece, but did not fire. Becoming more assured from appearances that a wallaby was starting, he fired. But, most unhappily, he shot the elder boy, Frederick, who died on the spot. It appears the two boys, who had been in a sitting posture, had risen up to look over the rock, to see if any game was at hand. Mr Salting mistook the grey hats for game.

Local legend says that the hats the boys were wearing were made of wallaby fur which caused the fatal mistake. According to the Herald. The father of the boy and the young Mr Salting, 'a young gentleman of great promise' were 'equally inconsolable'.

About six kilometres away, in the graveyard of the Cawdor Uniting church (formerly Methodist) there is an impressive gravestone. Made of stone in the obelisk style, it towers above its neighbours, in a large plot fenced by iron railings. An anchor and rope carved above, and a poignant poem clearly inscribed in gold:

*All you that come my grave  
to see*

*Prepare yourselves to fol-  
low me*

*Prepare yourselves make  
no delay*

*For I in haste was called  
away.*



He was indeed. For the inscription says 'Sacred to the memory of Frederick Cox, who departed this life October the 10th 1856, aged 14 years'. Frederick shares this gravestone with his brother Michael Cox, who died in 1854 aged four teen months, his sister Christiana, who also died in 1856, aged ten months, and Charles Walter Cox, where the date is hard to decipher, but is probably 1867. It is such an impressive gravestone it seems likely that the Saltings bought it for the grieving parents John and Christiana Cox.

I think it must have been John Cox, the inconsolable father, who etched the letters in stone, with the curious mistakes of the backward 'S', and the inverted date for 10 October. John Cox is referred to in records of his children's birth and baptism as not only a farmer at Brownlow Hill, but also a blacksmith—perhaps illiterate.

Now it is easy to see the translation of the stone in the bush as:

Frederick Cox shot

10 October 1856.

However there is still no explanation I have been able to find the TX. X = Cox but who was 'T'?

Information on the Salting family is not difficult to find but the Cox's family's history is not so easy to trace. The Salting connection with Brownlow Hill was close, as Severin Salting briefly owned it but never lived there. He installed Jeremiah Downes, who managed the property since 1858, as his agent. Mr Downes bought it himself in 1875, and his descendants are farming there now.

The Salting Family returned to England in 1858. George Salting, who with his brother William inherited a fortune when his father died in 1865, became famous as a collector of works of art and Chinese pottery. He left major bequests to the Victoria and Albert Museum when he died in 1909 aged seventy four.

It is now 145 years since the sad little procession of would-be hunters must have carried the boy back to his home. Rich Etonian and farmer's son are both long gone, but the wallabies remain, bounding through the scrub past Cox's Rock.

by Pacita Alexander and published in the District Reporter, 5th October, 2001.

# ROUSE HILL HOUSE AND FARM

Our next community bus tour for our volunteers will take us to Rouse Hill House and Farm and this is an introduction to what we may expect on our visit.

The Rouse Hill House property was home to six generations of the Rouse and Terry families and preserves the evidence of over 150 years of their domestic life and as far as possible, the collection is maintained in the condition it was in when members of the



Wales (now Sydney Living Museums) in 1986 and the process of preserving the collection unchanged, was adopted. That meant objects remain in the same location in which they were placed by the family, while ensuring that it doesn't deteriorate further.

Richard Rouse was born in Oxfordshire, England in 1774. He arrived in Sydney in December 1801 as a free settler with his wife, Elizabeth Adams, and their two young children.



Rouse and Terry families last lived there. Rouse Hill House is a large two storey Georgian House set on top of a ridge which falls away gradually to all cardinal points. The house is oriented to the northeast, midway between Parramatta & Windsor. The house has a separate two storey brick service wing, offices forming an arcad-

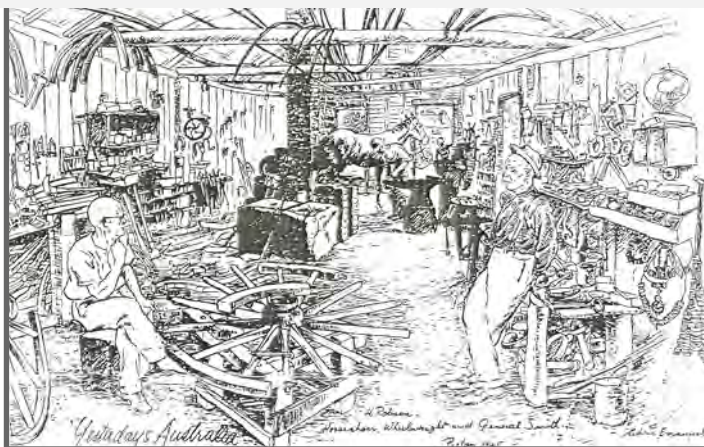
In March 1802 Governor Philip Gidley King granted Rouse 40 hectares (100 acres) and he established on a farm at North Richmond on the Hawkesbury River. In July 1805 he was appointed superintendent of lumberyard at Parramatta. On 14 January 1810 he was appointed superintendent of carpenters by Governor Macquarie and in October 1814 was appointed auctioneer at Parramatta. He superintended the construction of many buildings, tollhouses and turnpikes in the vicinity of Parramatta, Windsor and Liverpool, including the renovation of Old Government House, Parramatta, in 1815 and the erection of the Parramatta Hospital in 1818.

ed courtyard, 22 rooms, staircase hall, service stair and two cellar rooms. The house has a fine stone-flagged stair hall with cantilevered timber stair. The doors are all six panelled with some architraves and panelled jamb linings. The main house is built of sandstone with a slate roof, timber floors (kitchen, scullery, staircase, hall, arcade and verandah are flagged) and oak grained hardwood joinery. The property and its significant collection came to the Historic Houses Trust of New South

On 8 October 1816 Rouse was granted 180 hectares (450 acres) near the site of the Castle Hill convict rebellion; at the suggestion of Macquarie the grant was named Rouse Hill. The actual possession of the land had taken place a few years previously, as the *Sydney Gazette* had first mentioned Rouse Hill on 27 November 1813, and the homestead was begun soon afterwards. Elizabeth Rouse died in December 1849 and Richard Rouse died on 10 May 1852. He was buried in a vault at St Peter's Church, Richmond ■

## YESTERDAY'S AUSTRALIA BY CEDRIC EMANUEL

H. Robson—Horseshoer, Wheelwright and General Smith - Picton 1945



Pictured right - Mayor Deeth with the same trough depicted in Cedric Emanuel's 1945 sketch

Information compiled by Betty Villy



Harry Robson, blacksmith and wheelwright, sits on the left while Bill Barnes, his stepson, is with the horse. Bill Hoff, a carter with draught horses, stands to the side.

There was a blacksmith's shop in Menangle Street Picton for some 80 years until resumed by the Wollondilly Council's Electricity Department in 1947. Today the Council Chambers occupies this site.

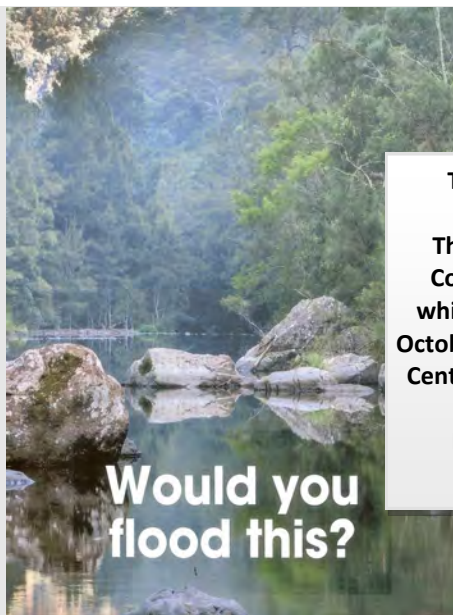
Harry Robson gave the shop to his stepson Bill Barnes, a returned soldier, who worked in Menangle Street until moving to a shed behind his home in Campbell Street. He closed down shortly after and with the exception of a few pieces of equipment being saved as souvenirs, the rest was melted as scrap metal. One item that was saved was the hand-cut cooling trough in the centre of the picture. Wollondilly Shire Council has kindly lent this trough to Wollondilly Heritage Centre to display in this replica blacksmith's shop.

# Reminders, News & Info

## WEEKEND ROSTER

### OCTOBER

Laurette & Phil	Saturday, 5
<b>Marlane &amp; Cheryl</b>	<b>Sunday, 6</b>
Debbie & Allen	Monday, 7
Trish & Kevin	Saturday, 12
<b>Sue &amp; Paul</b>	<b>Sunday, 13</b>
Debbie & Allen	Saturday, 19
<b>Vivian &amp; Bob</b>	<b>Sunday, 20</b>
Pam & Louisa (Working Bee)	Saturday, 26
<b>Bev &amp; David</b>	<b>Sunday, 27</b>



### OCTOBER MEETING

Viewing of the Give A Dam DVD

The NSW Government wants to raise Warragamba Dam by 14 metres  
The Oaks Historical Society is showing a Colong Foundation DVD "GIVE A DAM" which highlights the issues on Monday 7th October at 8.00pm in the Wollondilly Heritage Centre Museum on Edward Street, The Oaks  
All welcome! Free event!  
More information from 0432689034

## MONTHLY SUPPER ROSTER

October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	Please bring a plate

### Betty's Best Tours

**Volunteers Community Bus Tour to Rouse Hill House and Farm Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November**



Cost is \$22 pp and BYO lunch. We will be providing morning tea etc. on arrival. Please note -Booking form on front counter—booking & payment must be finalised by Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October.



Volunteers Christmas Party  
SATURDAY 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER  
Please bring a sweet or a salad



We have a good selection of local history publications available in our shop. They are great for gifts or stocking fillers for Christmas.

**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 7th October 2019 followed by Monday 4th November 2019. Our patrons are Richard Booth and Judith Hannan. 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**

