

The Oaks Historical Society Inc

Est. May 1979

The Oaks Historical Society Inc.
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Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2017

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

Reflecting on our heritage for History Week

THE OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER NO.4—MAY 1987



Vivian Allen, Coral Daley, Alice Martin, Muriel Allen, Sylvia Dawes

Social Committee Report by Linda Hall *

HERITAGE WEEK

Our stall held in Macquarie Street, Sydney proved to be a success with \$501.00 being taken on the day. We had an attractive assortment of preserves, apple pies and cakes which were very popular with the crowd. Thank you to everyone involved in the cooking and manning of the stall and to Ben and Vivian for providing transport. Also extra thanks to Marie and Rod for the donation of apples. The Burratorang Valley films shown at the April meeting were very popular and we had a good attendance of former valley residents and their descendants. The films brought back a lot of happy memories as they recognised relatives and friends. A delicious supper was enjoyed by all.

MARY McKILLOP RETIREMENT VILLAGE

A country fair will be held in the Catholic Church ground on Saturday, 9th May. The society will assist in the *fund raising by holding a Devonshire Tea stall and if anyone is interested in cooking scones or helping on the stall would they please contact the social committee. *Fund raising to build the heritage centre and museum in Edward Street in 1988.

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 23rd "Back to Burratorang Costume Ball" will be held in The Oaks Community Hall. Tickets \$30 double are available from The Oaks Pharmacy or phone 571224.

June 1st Mr K Andrews from the Aboriginal Land Council will speak on the history of the Gundungooras.

August We have been approached to hold a stall at Enfield in August so please if you can assist with donations of cakes or preserves contact the social committee. Exact date to be announced.

Continued on page 6...



Coral,
*Linda (Hall) and Audrey



Mel, Elaine, Coral, Bob, Viv, Coral Muriel & Mert



Join us on Sunday, 10th September—1960s Pop music at our Magpie Milk Bar

President: Trish Hill 0432 689034 ■ Editor: Jenny Wood ■ Museum Bookings: Trish Hill or Sue 0414 703204



President's Annual Report

Trish Hill

The Society extends heartfelt sympathy to the family of Muriel Allen, for their recent sad loss.

Muriel was a long term volunteer member and Treasurer of The Oaks Historical Society. On Saturday, 9th September there is a luncheon at the museum to celebrate her life. It commences at 1pm following a service at St Matthews.



Muriel Allen

September is a busy month for us. To celebrate History Week here at the museum we are featuring a couple of events. On Saturday 2nd September at 2pm, guest speaker, Dr Marc Rerceretnam is talking about **Cycling Clubs in Australia** (a free event) and on Sunday 10th we have a fun day with our own pop up cafe, **60s Music at the Magpie Café** with milkshakes supplied by Fairley's Country Valley. We are encouraging visitors to dress up and bring along their favourite vinyls from the sixties.

We have been in discussion with Camden Historical Society to determine a site for the Bennett Wagon from their collection. The wagon was placed adjacent to 'Macaria' in John Street in 1977, opposite Camden Museum and Library, and has for some time, been with Macarthur Anglican School undergoing major restoration. The school have concluded their part and with work still to be done, the wagon needs to be housed in a convenient location to facilitate further resto-

ration. We have decided to bring it into our museum to continue the project.

Our school room now has a teacher in residence. Our mannequin, Mrs Martin, was created after viewing the school room at the Wollongong Museum where "their" teacher was an effective addition.

And to Maureen Whyte who is in hospital, our very best wishes.

Welcome to new member, Michelle Cornell.

I would like to thank Dan Parry, Michael Haynes and Mark Seymour for various jobs they have recently undertaken which ultimately makes life easier for all of us in the museum. Thanks boys! ■



Family History & Local Archive Research Corner

Sue Davis

In October, The Oaks Preschool (situated in William Street) is to celebrate 40 years since it opened. If you have any knowledge of the early days of The Oaks Preschool then please share it with them or share it with us so we can also build our local history file.

During the Family History Month of August we had several researchers looking for more details of their family. It is wonderful to be able to connect people with their ancestors who once lived in our area. Recently we welcomed Kay Trigg who is researching the Mulley, Thorn and Halliday families. Kay was so impressed that she joined the society so that she can continue to find out more information.

Completing a family tree is only the start of a family history journey when you discover WHO is part of your extended family. The real connection comes when you learn of the stories of WHERE your ancestors lived; WHAT they did for a

living; WHY they chose to live where they settled; WHEN they attended schools, got married etc.; and of HOW they were involved with the community through sport, service or other social connections. Some of this information can be found on Trove, the free online service of the National Library of Australia: trove.nla.gov.au



Trove contains digitised Australian newspapers from 1803 to 1954; the *Australian Women's Weekly* to 1982;

journals, articles and data sets; books; pictures; photos, objects; music, sound and video; maps; diaries, letters, archives; archived websites (1996-now); and more!

You can also find out more during a visit to the Wollondilly Heritage Centre and Museum or email us on tohs1988@bigpond.net.au for assistance! ■



Acquisitions Corner

Allen Seymour

We have a steady stream of items coming in, and among these are:

- ◆ A set of prints of Australian Prime Ministers, from Alfred Deakin to Gough Whitlam.
- ◆ An instruction sheet for a miner's safety lamp.
- ◆ The sign from the Estonian church at Thirlmere.

- ◆ A jointer plane used by a cooper. This is huge (about five feet long) and our thanks goes to Colleen and Mick Haynes for organising this.
- ◆ A *Land* newspaper from 1986 which is a reprint of a 1913 paper. (Some great car ads in this one)
- ◆ One of our early cook books, *A Country Collection* with a foreword by Coral Daley.

We also found a Yerranderie teaspoon in the drill hall kitchen and also located a 1950 Camden Show Schedule. This is very interesting as it has a lot of ads for local businesses, and provides a great insight into the town. ■



Bus Visits

Louisa Singleman

August Bus Tours

August has been quite a busy month with six bus groups visiting our museum. Once again Campbelltown City Council have hosted a group of Japanese students to our shores and they had a very pleasant day exploring the local history.

They were joined by the Razorback Crankhandlers and the

Berrima Car Club.

During the middle of the month the Little Bay Retirement Village and Macarthur Disability Group arrived and later in the month John Paul Village came from Heathcote. Finally Five Dock Veteran Car Club, a group of 60, enjoyed a beautiful sunny day at the Museum.

Many thanks to our volunteers who work so hard to make our visitors so welcome. If you would like to join our happy band of volunteers give me a ring on 46 808 358

No Marketing Report this month. ■



Display Officer's Report

Doreen Lyon

There is a new display to celebrate the history of cycling which will complement the History Week presentation by Dr Marc Rerceretnum on September 2nd. We searched our collection and discovered a treasure trove of objects which we received from Philip Preddy, son of the late Jim Preddy, who was a well-known local advocate of cycling and won several events in his youth. His trophies and assorted memorabilia of the Thirlmere & District Cycle Club, which he started, are on display. We also have some excellent photos of the early days of cycling in Camden and Picton and Yerranderie.

Following on from my research into the Nattai-Bulli Lodge banner, Ben and I spent a morning going through photos in the May Day Committee collection in Wollongong University archives. We confined the search to photos, but there were eight boxes of minutes, correspondence etc should anyone want to write a history of the May Day celebrations. Our banner features the words **"United we stand, Divided we fall"** and these words also feature in other banners from 1938 together with **"Workers of the World Unite, You have nothing to lose but your chains"**.

These banners represent the IWW, (Industrial Workers of the World) and this was confirmed by Mr Fred Moore, who has been heavily involved in the Trade Union movement and the Miner's Federation, and was a key figure in campaigning for worker's rights in Australia, as well as agitating for Aboriginal rights. Fred Moore served as chairman of the May Day Committee for over twenty years, and has been bestowed life-member status of the Miners Federation and the Miners'

Women's Auxiliary (the only man alive of very few to be made an honorary member of this movement in history). The South Coast Trade Union Centre, "Fred Moore House" has been named for him. We met Fred at Fred Moore House and he showed us their collection of mining memorabilia and talked to us about May Day marches and union activities. Fred's memory is amazing! He has 95 years of memories to share and should be recognised as a National Treasure!

A book in our library, **50th anniversary of Nattai Bulli Mine** by Melvin J Smith in 1982, we see a photo of the banner taken in the 1950s and know that it represents the efforts made by the Nattai-Bulli Lodge in working to achieve a fair go for their members with the help of the IWW. I will create a time line of the mine to illustrate their achievements, especially in the efforts to provide safety in working conditions. ■



Ben & Doreen with Fred



May Day March Wollongong Showground 1950's Nattai-Bulli Lodge, Holding banner—Jim Cook, Silas (Ted) Turner. Back— Perc Bromfield, 'Pop' Gould, Ray Cook, Pat Cook, Vic Burns, Fred Grimston. Front—Alf Riley, Ern Toovey.

Agriculture in The Oaks 1897 - Part 5

Courtesy of Trove. This is fifth of a series of six articles on agriculture in The Oaks. It appeared in the Camden News on Thursday 27th May, 1897. The author is not named.

Sourced by Allen Seymour.

Agriculture In The Oaks (Part 5)

To the north of Mr. McEvoy's farm lies the small compact holding occupied by Mr. J. Guerin, the homestead being situated just round the sweep of the hill. To the west there is the primeval bush, which, save for the Oakdale road, extends unbrokenly to Burragorang, on the north the valley road bounds the farm, and the Werriberri flats terminate its eastern frontage.

On these flats The Oaks folks gather themselves on gala days. There they hold their races, and have their sports, and their foot-racing, and sit under the shade of the gum trees, and indulge in the mild dissipation of lemonade ad libitum. Here there was cultivation in the early days, and in an elbow of the creek, where sweet briars now cluster, a garden graced the banks of the gloomy watercourse, and the tobacco plant flourished in green luxuriance, and excellent, aromatic home cured leaf cheered the pioneer's lonely leisure.

Butter-making is the chief business on this little farm, and a tiny white-washed building attests the vigilance of the authorities in the administration of an Act which presses harshly on the dairying industry. The little corn grown has felt the full force of this year's drought, but a paddock of four acres, devoted exclusively to the growth of oaten hay, well cultivated and highly manured, fully repays the care bestowed upon it.

This year's crop came in at a time when hay was in great demand, when the district depended upon importations from outside, and famine prices ruled for fodder. The result of sensible and intense culture, thus applied to a plot of four acres, was an aggregate yield of ten tons of the finest oaten hay.



Bagging wheat at Cawdor

Personally, Mr. Guerin is an intelligent man of good physique, and a son of the soil. People such as Guerin and his devoted wife constitute, of all others, the class which has the deepest affection for the soil from which it has sprung. Their patriotism is heartfelt and unaffected. The ragged bush and brown uplands recall the sacred associations of their childhood, the very gum trees, to whose outlandishness the stranger is unable to reconcile himself, lend a necessary feature to the homelike beauty of their landscape.

They are happier here than elsewhere, and it were wisdom to encourage into permanence this deep-seated reverence for the soil. And when adverse times come, and nature withholds the plenitude of her gifts, when their cattle perish, and the sources of livelihood disappear, it becomes the duty of high-souled ministers of state to assist them by offering them every description of employment at their disposal, and in all cases where the question of public employment is concerned, to see that the settler takes precedent of the tramp.

(To be continued)

RABAUL PRESENTATION

At our last meeting Allen Seymour spoke about a recent visit to Rabaul with his brother George. Rabaul is in Papua New Guinea on the island of New Britain. Their father went there in 1946 with the army, their mother flew up there in 1947 and they were married the same day.

Rabaul has a deep harbour which is an old volcano and it is ringed by a number of volcanos. Eruptions occurred in 1878 and 1937. The last eruption was in 1993 and this destroyed a large portion of the town. The population before the 1993 eruption was 17000, population now is below 4000.

Rabaul was originally controlled by the Germans and was the site of Australia's first military action in World War 1. In World War 2 it was invaded by the Japanese and then heavily bombed by the Americans. There are lots of tunnels around the town dug by the Japanese. Transport is by mini buses and trucks and utes that carry people in the rear.

Thank you Allen for our "stroll" through Rabaul and surrounding villages via your photographs. It's a world away from our way of life but close in proximity to Australia. ■

Rotolactor

The Camden Park Estate

In 1950, Camden Park confirmed it was no mere relic of a grand historical past, but the farm of the future. The Rotolactor was the ultimate in modern milking machinery. It was developed in New Jersey, U.S.A. and [the concept] brought to Australia by Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Macarthur-Onslow. The plans were drawn locally and the foundation stone laid in 1950. The building was finished in September 1952.

It was in effect a multi-cow rotary automatic milking machine 18.3 metres in diameter. Its whole circumference was enclosed with glass windows to give natural light, which was supplemented by artificial fluorescent tube lighting for early mornings and winter afternoons. The mechanism consisted of a circular platform mounted on 20, 30.48 cm roller bearing steel which rotated anti-clockwise on 2, 13.6 kg circular rails resting on concrete walls 1.8 metres above the floor.

Normally with the 50 bails operating the rate was 300-375 cows an hour with ten operators. Each cow was stripped of milk in 5 to 7 minutes. The 900 yard cows were mainly fed with concentrates and roughage from the irrigated acres of the Cowpasture Flats bordering the river. Each cow gave an average of 12.5 litres of 4.3 butterfat milk. Menangle became the chief receiving depot.

Pigs were raised on skim milk from the butter factory which until 1947 produced the Estate's own "Laurel" brand butter. During its heyday the rotolactor was a popular tourist attraction. It ceased operation in 1972.

In addition, six model dairies each with its own herd of from 90 to 140 cows, were spread around the slopes of the central and eastern hills of the valley. No. 2, known as the Home Farm is on the north east of the property.

The other activities of the Estate varied from poultry farming and fruit growing to running the general store for Menangle Village. Menangle is no longer a private village, the store is now in private hands, and the orchard is no longer in operation. ■

The rotolactor was an Australian icon. In the 1950s and 1960s up to 2,000 visitors a week saw it in action at Menangle. Overall, about three million people visited it.

There was a milk bar at the rotolactor also operated by Camden Park. It served milkshakes and ice creams to visitors and was extremely popular. The rotolactor closed around 1977 but reopened a few years later. It finally closed about 1983. There was only one rotolactor in Australia but there are many rotary dairies. The rotolactor was the forerunner to them and decades ahead of its time.



Volunteer guide Steve at our recent visit to Belgenny Farm showing the detailed scale model of the rotolactor



CYCLING COMMUNITIES: BICYCLE CLUBS IN AUSTRALIA

SPEAKER: Dr Marc Rerceretnam HOST: The Oaks Historical Society

The formation of bicycle clubs in Australia closely reflects the costs of purchasing a bicycle. In the 1860s it was largely a pastime for the rich and affluent, but by the 1890s it widened to include the middle classes and by the turn of the twentieth century, opportunities opened up for the first time to the working classes. By the 1960s and especially in the 1970s, bicycle users turned away from the low tech bicycle towards the now affordable automobile. However by the 1990s and 2000s the bicycle acquired new meanings, practicalities and charm of bicycles were discovered yet again by new affluent professional classes. Join Dr Marc Rerceretnam for an exploration of bicycle clubs in Australia.

Proudly presented as part of the History Council of NSW's Speaker Connect program for History Week 2017, supported by Create NSW.

WHEN: **Saturday 2 September, 2:00pm** at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

GENERAL MEETING 6TH APRIL 1987 MINUTES

On this night, for Heritage Week the Society showed two films for the general public.

1. A Wedding in the Valley—loaned by Mr Frank Quigg and filmed in the valley in 1921.
2. The Flooding of the Valley—our own copy of the 1955 newsreel film from the State Archives.

There were many guest for this interesting evening and many reminiscences over coffee later. The general meeting was moved to the following Monday at Jim Whytes.

Executive / General Meeting 13th April 1987

Attendance: Messrs. Daley, Moore, Lyon, Boardman, Larnach, Whyte and Mrs Hall, Allen, Whyte and Lyon.

Apologies: Eddy Gall, Sonia Den Hertog and the Treasurer Muriel Allen.

Correspondence: Letters from 1. Geological Mining Museum, 2. Heritage Council, 3. Volunteers for Conservation, 4. R.A.H.S. Newsletter and Journal, 5. Invitation to attend N.S.W. Military Society Lecture.

Business Arising: Kevin Anderson from the Aboriginal Land Council will be guest speaker in June.

General Business:

Mr Whyte reported that a letter had been sent to Council in response to their request that the Society send them all invoices for the Heritage Centre. We asked that they honour their former agreement.

A quote was received from Fairfield printers for \$588.00 to print 8,000 copies of old photographs of the Burratorang Valley—ie. 7c per card. This quote was agreed to and Mr Lyon was asked to apply for a sample card. Several members reported requests had been made from local shops for "A Short History of The Oaks". It was originally intended not to republish these as a new book is currently being written. However in view of the demand it was decided to have 500 reprinted.

Bi-Centennial Celebrations: It was suggested that our celebrations be held during Heritage Week next year. This idea will be put forward to the Bi-Centennial Authority branch by Mr Daley and Mr Whyte.

Flag: Mr Lyon to approach our local member for an Australian flag for the Heritage Centre.

Social Committee: The next meeting of the Social committee will be held at the home of Muriel Allen on 27.4.87.

THE OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 30 APRIL 1987

Balance b/forward			\$1406.80
INCOME			
	Books and cards	2435.42	
	Membership fees	227.50	
	May ball	1190.00	
	Raffles	181.40	
	Badges	20.00	
	Grant & Donations	919.00	
	Fund raising	2055.46	
	Term Deposit interest	1188.39	
	Release of Term Deposit	1000.00	
		<u>2000.00</u>	<u>11217.17</u>
			12623.97
EXPENDITURE			
	Newsletter	300.34	
	May Ball	765.58	
	Research exp.	212.93	
	Insurance	440.00	
	Pre School donation	82.00	
	Xmas Party exp.	254.88	
	Badges	95.00	
	Organisation membership	198.00	
	Rent—Land	20.00	
	Stationary	226.69	
	Tape Rec. Case	69.45	
	Films	236.00	
	Bus hire	50.00	
	Secretarial exp.	105.00	
	Soc. Sect. Exp.	94.00	
	Museum Expenses	5950.00	
	Bank Charges	<u>17.59</u>	<u>9118.31</u>
BALANCE AS AT 30TH APRIL, 1987			\$3505.66

Colonial Ball at The Oaks Community Hall in May 1988



Above: Maureen
& Jim with family



Doreen & Ben

Reminders, News & Info

WEEKEND ROSTER

SEPTEMBER	
Saturday, 2	Louisa & Doreen
Sunday, 3	Robyn & Ray
Saturday, 9	WORKING BEE
Sunday, 10	Bob & Vivian
Saturday, 16	Pacita & Kathy
Sunday, 17	Sue & Paul
Saturday, 23	Colleen & John
Sunday, 24	Ben & Doreen
Saturday, 30	Phil & Laurette
Sunday, 1st Oct	Bev & David

MONTHLY SUPPER ROSTER

September	Shirley & Trish
October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	All bring a plate

GUEST SPEAKERS

4 September—Christine Yeats
(Royal Agricultural Historical Soc.)
on the book *Shady Acres* by the late
Lesley Muir

2nd October—Lorraine Neate
(Illawarra Historical Society) Misbehav-
iours by early Illawarra residents from
her publication, *Scandal, Slander and
Interfering with our Neighbours*

6th November—Robyn Collier
*Paintings from Burratorang—The Lost
Valley*

ELIZABETH FARM & BRISSINGTON HOUSE

WEDNESDAY, 11 OCTOBER

The bus leaves the centre at 8.30am for Parramatta
Visit Brissington House and Elizabeth Farm
Cost is \$22.00 which includes a picnic lunch

GRANDPARENTS' DAY

SUNDAY, 29 OCTOBER

Activities from 10am to 12.30pm
FREE ENTRY—BBQ AVAILABLE

Bring your family and try life like it was in the 'good old days'.
Experience cream beating, apple grading, washing using a board and
mangle, a one-teacher classroom and much more

RILEY FAMILY REUNION

**WEEKEND OF 16TH MARCH 2018 AT
YERRANDERIE**

Friday 16th—Arrive. Accommodation is available either in guesthouse or
camping

Sat. 17th— camp fire night
Official welcome to country and smoking by Uncle Greg
Simms. Tours through the day.
Official dinner

Sun, 18th— Departure

Related family's— Karkoes, O'Brien, Shepards, Hiltons, Grimstons,
Greens and many more

Bring along photos, stories etc to be copied and placed in a book and
distributed to family around Christmas. Please contact Kazan Brown for
further details. kazanbrown@gmail.com



Beautiful day for a drive

The museum was visited by the Veteran Car Club of Five Dock on Saturday,
26 August as part of their spring rally over the weekend in Wollondilly. Sixty
visitors enjoyed morning tea and a tour of the centre while proudly displaying
their vehicles. ►



**HISTORY WEEK
2-10 SEPTEMBER**

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 4 September & 2 October 2017. 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.

Sunday 10th September

Join us in remembering pop music of the 1960s while having some of our café food

- Listen to 60s music
- Dress up in 60s gear—novelty prizes for best dressed
- Bring your favourite vinyls to share or just enjoy ours!
- Chat about your photos and memories of Picton
- Have a milkshake (supplied by Fairley's Dairy)

POP!
MUSIC & MILKSHAKES

11am to 4pm
Single entry \$3
or family of 4 = \$7

tohs1988@bigpond.net.au
www.wollondillymuseum.org
 Enquiries phone 0432 689 034

1960s Pop music at the Magpie Milk Bar

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum 43 Edward St. The Oaks

Hosted by The Oaks Historical Society

If undelivered, please return to:-
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