

The Oaks Historical Society Inc

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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

NOVEMBER 2025

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

BURRAGORANG WEDDING AND A BLUE MOUNTAINS HONEYMOON

On Saturday 15th March 1947 a wedding of much local interest was celebrated at St Paulinus Central Burraborang when Joan Daley daughter of Stella and Frank Daley of Central Burraborang married Jack Gaudry, son of Rosie and Roland Gaudry of Yerranderie.

The ceremony was performed by the Rev Fitzpatrick, before a congregation of relatives and friends who filed into the historic stone church.

The bride, who entered the church on the arm of her father, made a charming figure in a gown of ivory satin fashioned with a sweetheart neckline and mid length veil. Her embroidered tulle veil was held in place with a coronet of blossom and she carried a bouquet.

Miss Mary Quig, cousin of the bride attended as bridesmaid wearing a crepe gown with matching gloves and a floral headpiece, and carried a bouquet of flowers. The groom was attended by friend Johnny (Giovanni) Poli. Pictured in the wedding photo left to right Frank & Stella Daley, Mary Quig (Ferguson), the bride and groom, Rosie & Roland Gaudry with Johnny Poli behind the bride.

Following the ceremony, a reception was held in the Daley home where Stella and Frank received guests for the 'wedding breakfast'.

The couple left later for their honeymoon, the bride travelling in a tailored suit with matching accessories. They were driven to their destination by the best

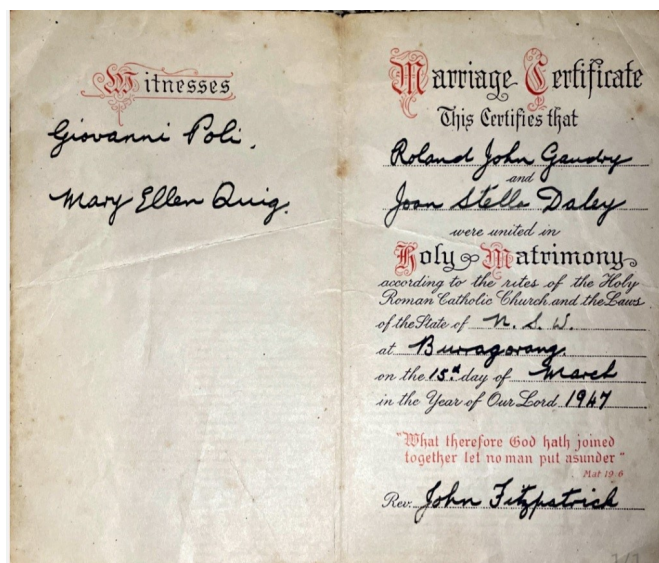
man, Johnny Poli to the Sans Souci Guesthouse in Blue Mountains where they spent a short holiday. In 1947 Sans Souci guesthouse was delightfully situated among mountain gardens, offering splendid views and known for its fine hospitality and restful surroundings. Joan and Jack sent a lettercard (depicted on page 4) home to his parents at Yerranderie saying they were enjoying themselves and visiting the tourist spots of their surrounds. With many guesthouses during that

era both The Blue Mountains and Burraborang Valley were popular holiday and tourist destinations for broader Sydney. In fact many visitors to the Museum have reflected on memories created during their stay in Burraborang Valley. It seems Jack was a bit of a writer and on returning home from their honeymoon and from 'Box 40, Roadside Mail Upper Burraborang' an extract of a letter he wrote to a friend.... "Stella & Frank put on a very nice breakfast for

us. We had a nuptial mass and about 25 guests. Of course the bride was about twenty minutes late and I was starting to think about going for my bloody life but thought I've got this far I'll stick it out...."

The family of Joan and Jack attended the October Burraborang Reunion and donated a number of items to our collection including Joan's wedding gown, wedding photographs and documents all of which have combined to tell the story surrounding Joan and Jack's wedding and give an insight into their honeymoon

location in the Blue Mountains. *Continued page 4.....*





President's Report

Trish Hill

The month of October proved to be a busy one for us with several annual reunions and bookings including one group of 60 for morning tea followed by another more relaxed event on the same day. Our working bee is always the last Saturday of the month with anyone welcome to attend and last weekend we had about 16 volunteers working at various tasks. Our garden beds were topped up with a ute load of mulch



generously donated by Keith Polsen from CPE. That didn't quite complete the beds so hopefully we can repeat the process next working bee. Our avid gardeners were busy weeding, pruning and putting some larger pot bound shrubs into the ground and they are great multi taskers as you can see Sonya is on the job. As always we do morning tea and lunch prep where we all get to take a break and socialise. Thanks to you all for a tremendous effort! Last week a group of us completed CPR training to refresh skills. We also have some new additions to our shop area if you are looking for a special something come and check us out. ■

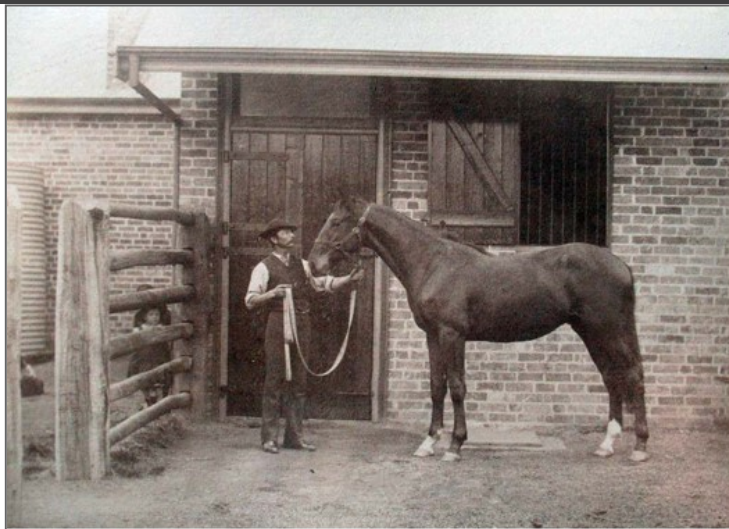


Family History & Local Archive Report

Sue Davis

Recently some members of the research team were invited to the heritage property of Wilton Park Stud. We were joined by some members of the Picton and District Historical and Family History Society. The current owners are concerned about the future of the property and were very generous in showing us around the heritage buildings that are a fine representation of the equine industry in times past.

A Heritage Curtilage Assessment of Wilton Park Stud describes the property as... 'a large portion of the West Wilton Precinct between 1892 and 1926, was the presence of one of the best-known horse breeding operations in NSW, the Wilton Park Stud, established by Samuel Hordern (1849-1909) and subsequently by his son Anthony (1889-1970). By the late 1880s Samuel Hordern was the sole owner of the powerful Anthony Hordern & Sons business empire, which had more than 200 horse drawn delivery carts in regular use and up to 500 horses in their stables. In 1892 he purchased a large parcel of land (1,952 acres), defined in part by various



arms of the Nepean River, and created a large-scale breeding area to supply cart horses for the extensive Anthony Hordern's distribution network, carriage horses for the NSW gentry and most importantly, the highest possible quality thoroughbred horses and breeding stock for the NSW racing industry.'

Pictured left, (date unknown but perhaps early 1900s) is one



of the stallion stables erected to keep the stallions in top condition and well away from the mares! Below are some of the buildings today, that if they could speak would tell wonderful stories of horse breeding long ago and in descending order they are the Mares stables, the Carriage house and bottom is a view of Internal roofing of the round house.

Our local history archives include more research, written by the late

Betty Villy, for those who would like to find out more of the history of this fine property ■



Sue Davis, Local Archives and Family History. Phone 0414703204.

tohs1988@bigpond.net.au or via our website www.wollondillymuseum.org.au ■

Happy researching !



Marketing Officers

Vicki Madeley & Team

If you follow us on the Socials you will have seen how busy we have been at the Heritage Centre. Further on in the newsletter on page 5 are some pics of the month at the museum.

There have been large bus groups, reunions and plenty of visitors coming through the doors on the weekend. The volunteers have worked especially hard making it all happen from serving over 60 people on one day beautiful Devonshire teas to the Drill Hall presentation on all things History.

Our shop has been very successful lately with the new lines selling well as well as the old favourites. Our apple peelers sold out last Sunday as the Penrith RSL Travellers enjoyed Trish's demonstration of the apple peeler they bought them all! The Honey has almost sold out as well and will be replenished when the beekeepers Bob and Greg get to the fullest hive and we bottle up more of the Wollondilly/Macarthur

Honey.

Ben has added some of his beautifully hand made wooden boxes to our shop for sale don't miss out as they are limited and there are only a few left. We have some beautiful candles in tea cups, thanks Sonya for organising these. and some Australian timber craft, tableware and earrings. soon to be added to the range of gifts. The Register in the shop is getting set up with pictures and descriptions of each item for sale and as you can imagine it all takes time so it won't be long and it will be up and running.

Some of our volunteers also completed their CPR update so that there are members across all rosters who have up to date qualifications to make our organisation as safe as can be ■

Vicki, Vanessa and Jeff.



Schoolies Report

Bev Batros

As indicated last month our Schools' Program is looking at an uncertain future. The new HSIE Syllabus is being trialed now and will be mandatory in 2027. Whilst the focus is very much still on learning about the past, the teaching content has now changed for Year 1 and 2, who are currently the largest group visiting us. Their content will now focus on the ancient past, so they will be studying Egypt, China, Rome and Greece. We were advised earlier in the year by one of our regular schools that they were unlikely to visit us again because of the change to the syllabus. Most schools plan their excursions to fit in with the HSIE unit they are studying.

After extensive study of the syllabus we have worked out that the best area, and possibly the only one, that we can fit in with is Kindergarten. Their content involves comparing features of daily life that



have changed over time. This ideally fits in with our program. Last week we met to review all our activities and make adjustments to some areas to ensure they fitted in with the new syllabus content.

It is now our intention to target the Kindergarten audience, as this is not a group we have traditionally had attending. Our volunteers will take our new information sheet to over 50 schools on staff development days at the end of January 2026.

We do have two schools booked in for next year, under the old program, so it is possible that we will still get some visits, but it is uncertain, especially in 2027 when the syllabus is fully implemented ■



Acquisitions Report

Allen Seymour

At present we are looking at what is in the collection on the Vietnam war for a display in the drill hall. There are quite a few items so we're working out what can actually be used. We're also reviewing the WW2 items and there may be some changes there to fit in the Vietnam items.

Scanning of the ALP family negatives is continuing. I've just finished about 100 that cover the 1959 Wattle Blossom festival at

Bargo. With Picton Bowling Club in the news lately, there are also some of the members there taken in around 1959. There are some of the Masons too and coming up there are some of the ANZAC Day parades. A couple of small things waiting to be processed that I'll mention next month ■

The Daily Telegraph of Sunday 31st May 1942

HONEYMOON COUPLES CROWD MOUNTAIN GUEST HOUSES

Katoomba guest houses are enjoying an out-of-season boom, attributed by managers to honeymooning servicemen and their brides.

Principal guest-houses report that honeymooners are arriving by every train.

Sans Souci guest-house manager Lin Rumble said yesterday: "Usually at this time of the year business is beginning to get quiet, but my house is still full."

"Many of the extra guests are servicemen and their brides."

"Five honeymoon couples arrived on the 1.30 a.m. train one day last week."

Carrington Hotel manager Mr. Prince: "Normally we have special rooms for honeymooners and provide extra services. Now there are too many of them to make distinctions."

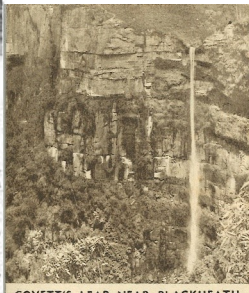
Homesdale guest-house manager: "There are 20 honeymoon couples staying here, and more are coming every day."

Bombardier and Mrs. George Walker, on honeymoon in Katoomba, said: "We've been for long walks, had a trip

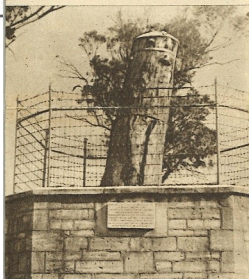
to Jenolan Caves, and danced every night."

"It's been a bit cold, but the past five days have been the best we've ever spent."

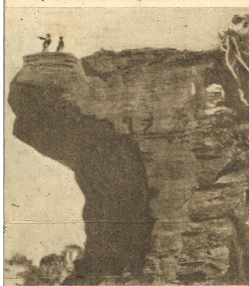
Sergeant and Mrs. John Lester Smith, on a three days' honeymoon: "It's been great, but we want another honeymoon in summer."



GOVETT'S LEAP NEAR BLACKHEATH.



Explorer's Rock near Medlow Bath.



THE VICTORIA PASS LOOKOUT.



THE BLUFF LOOKOUT, GLENBROOK.

Katoomba.
3 Wednesday.

Dear Mum, Dad & Shirley,
Just a few lines to say Joan and myself are quite okay and enjoying ourselves.

We went to Echo Point on Sunday afternoon. It is very nice out there. We went to church in the morning and a dance in the night.

On Monday we went to Jenolan Caves. It is lovely trip out there and the caves are very nice. We went through the old Hartley gaol. I would like you all to have a trip there especially Dad.

Yesterday we had a look at Katoomba's shops and ate all day. It has been lovely weather but today is misty. Well this is all the news until we get back sometime next week. Lots of love Jack & Joan.

for Mum XXX XXXXX



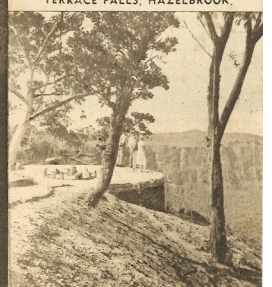
ORPHAN'S ROCK, KATOOMBA.



Mist, Jamieson and Burragorang Valleys.



TERRACE FALLS, HAZELBROOK.



HONEYMOON POINT, ON CLIFF DRIVE



The newspaper article highlights the popularity of the Blue Mountains and From the lettercard it seems Joan and Jack had a busy time during their stay at Katoomba. Pictured above, they are on the steps of the Daley home leaving for their honeymoon

AN OVERVIEW OF OCTOBER AT THE MUSEUM



LEST WE FORGET

BARTLEY HORACE CHESHAM # 6063: 1895-1950



Bartley was born in 1895, the second child to Thomas and Jessie Chesham. Bart enlisted on 13th June 1916 at 21 years of age, listing his father Thomas as next of kin and his address as Mt Hunter, via Camden, occupation dairy farmer. His physical description was five feet five and a half inches, 158lbs, medium complexion, brown eyes and dark brown hair and he was assigned to the Dubbo Depot Battalion, Dubbo. On October 25, 1916 he embarked from Sydney on the *Ascanius* disembarking at Devonport on December 28, 1916.

At the end of February 1917, he was sent to France per the SS *Golden Eagle* arriving in March. He joined the 20th Battalion and on 2nd May he was wounded in action suffering shrapnel wounds to the right leg and a fractured thigh and was admitted to a casualty clearing station and from there transferred eventually to Boulogne where he embarked for England. He was admitted to the Military Hospital at Devonport on the 19th May with 'shell wounds to the right leg, severe.'

It was later revealed that he lay in a muddy shell hole for three days and nights surviving on iron rations. Then, struggling under the cover of darkness, he made a sling for his leg. By supporting the sling on his shoulder he made it to the Australian trenches. On reaching hospital he was advised to have the leg amputated but refused. The leg eventually responded to treatment even though it was a dangerous case.

Sister Bowen wrote to Bart's family at home informing them he had been seriously wounded but reassuring them that he was 'awfully cheerful & blows a bugle to make us as he says-'go at the double- when he wants anything'. He was returned to Australia on the hospital ship *Beltana* from England in October of 1917. In 1919 Bart married his sweetheart Stella Wheeler whom he had left behind when he enlisted, having promised each other to be married when Bart returned home. On 27th May, 1920, The Camden branch of The Voluntary Workers Association met to consider a proposal to build a cottage on an allotment of land in Broughton Street Camden. They wanted the beneficiary to be a person who had been seriously incapacitated as a direct result of active service at the war. Three applications were received for this and the chairman appealed to Dr West for his opinion and the Doctor confirmed that '*Mr Bartley Chesham was the most deserving of consideration and assistance in every sense of the word*'. In December of the same year, an official ceremony was held to mark the opening of the cottage called '*Bullecourt*' and it was handed over to Bartley Chesham. Bart passed away at The Oaks on 20th February, 1950 and is interred at Glenmore Cemetery ■

Editors note- Bart and Stella went on to raise a family of 3 sons and a daughter most of whom were prominent in our community and the Cottage (Bullecourt) still stands in Broughton Street, Camden and is a commercial premises.

PHILLIP JAMES SMITH # 3454 1890-1918



Phillip was born on the family farm and went to the local Cox's River school.

Phillip enlisted at Wentworth Falls on 22 November 1916. His next of kin was given as his father James Smith of St. Elmo, Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls. He was 26 years and 8 months old. He sailed on the *Anchises* on January 24th 1917 and spent most of the time on the ship in hospital with measles.

After training in England Phillip joined the 35th Battalion and spent some time sick in the field hospital. He had three weeks leave in England and re-joined his unit in April 10th 1918 and spent a short time in hospital affected by gas. He was back at the front for the Allied attack on the German-held Hindenburg Line which claimed so many lives. Phillip was killed at Accroche Wood near Hamel, a strategic battle on the Somme on 10th August 1918.



Phillip Smith on right. Note bullet hole in photo on left of unknown



His father James was sent his effects consisting of 1 disc, 1 wallet, 1 YMCA wallet, 1 notebook plus cards and photos.

One photo shows Phillip with his hand on his father's shoulder and family and friends. It also has evidence of a bullet hole on the left. This bullet also pierced other photos and birthday cards he had kept in his wallet ■

WEEKEND ROSTER

NOVEMBER

Margaret & Sue	Saturday, 1
Kevin & Noelene	Sunday, 2
Doreen & Ben	Saturday, 8
Sue & Judy	Sunday, 9
Tony & Kevin	Saturday, 15
Vicki & Linda	Sunday, 16
Kaye & Jim	Saturday, 22
Margaret & Pam	Sunday, 23
Working Bee –Helen & Tony	Saturday 29
Bev & David	Sunday 30

SUPPER

ROSTER



November

Bring a plate

Volunteer Documenting Thirlmere Cemetery

In 2024, Council staff came across volunteer, Ken Day who was at Thirlmere Cemetery photographing headstones. Staff discovered he is a volunteer with the international website Find A Grave. He explained he was using his spare time to visit local cemeteries, photographing in sections the various headstones and uploading to the site. One challenge he had was finding the precise grave location/plot. Ken has regularly been in contact with Council to confirm plot locations. Currently on Find a Grave website it shows 2240 grave locations identified for Thirlmere Cemetery, almost all with photos. These include Columbarium Walls, Memorial Trees and unmarked plots. The links also include a link to Google Maps with GPS coordinates ■

Reminders, News & Info



General Meeting

Monday, 3rd November 2025 at 7pm

Our Guest Speaker

Sonya Male presenting her 'Cultural & Ecological Investigation of St Matthews Anglican Church'

Meeting followed by supper/ All welcome

BLOOM: Wollondilly Garden Expo & Plant Fair

Sunday 9 November, from 8am–2pm at Picton Botanic Gardens.

Get those gardens ready and get involved with community voting! Details on entry requirements and voting can be found on Council's website 🖱️

<https://www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au/home/whats-on/bloom-wollondilly-garden-expo-and-plant-fair>



BLOOM
WOLLONDILLY GARDEN EXPO & PLANT FAIR

FIND OUT MORE

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. The next meeting is our General Meeting on November 3rd 2025 followed by the December 1st meeting. Our patrons are Judith Hannan MP and Ben Taylor CEO, WSC. 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

