

The Oaks Historical Society Inc

Est. May 1979

The Oaks Historical Society Inc.
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Newsletter

OCTOBER 2015

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

② “The little pit entry was on a hillside above Meiers’ shop with a road leading up to it from the main mountain road. The mines all closed, apart from maintenance crews for three weeks holidays on the Friday before Xmas day. Gizzy was in charge of both Fox mines during one Xmas break when he was summoned to the little pit a woman driver with small children in the car has lost her way somewhere on the road from Camden, driven down the mountain up the hill and into the little pit. She had driven into the travelling road, the little pit had a seam height of only 3’6” to 4 feet but the travelling road floor had been brushed, ie some couple of feet of stone removed to make the height about 6 feet but the roof was supported by timber baulks so the effective height was less than 6 feet. She had driven in some 500-600 yards until the car became jammed between the roof and the floor. Somehow she and the children managed to walk out in the dark to the surface and surprise a couple of people! Gizzy recovered the somewhat battered car and soothed a very distressed lady.”

Extract from Bill Chalmers Memoirs of Bill (Gizzy) Parkins.



① Top: Tom Smith related this story to Doreen Lyon on 9 August 2015 after reading Ron Mill’s Yerranderie Scroll story which Tom advised was incorrect

Photo: Nattai Village looking north in the 70s (John Oates)

Three Accounts of the Lady Who Drove into the Wollondilly Mine

① Tom Smith lived at Nattai near the mine entrances and was only a young lad when the incident happened..... His sister Betty told him the story of when she encountered a lady and two young boys wandering in the vicinity of the mine entrance. Betty asked the lady if she was lost and she said she had driven her car into a tunnel and the car had stopped. She did not know why it had stopped but they got out and walked out of the tunnel. She could not remember which tunnel she had driven into – Old Wollondilly, Nattai Bulli or Wollondilly Extended! Betty went to find her father, Ted Smith and he went to report it to the Mine Under Manager. At this stage no-one really believed the story of a car in the entrance to a coal mine, but Ted took his sons Alan and Tom and Bobby and Johnny Tanner to search for it. They found it in the entrance to Old Wollondilly Mine. It had apparently run out of petrol. The lady explained that she had been driving to Melbourne from Sydney and taken a wrong turn into Burrarorang Valley and driven into what she took to be a road tunnel, not realising it was the entrance to a coal mine

③ MAMA IN THE COAL, COAL MINE

A woman driving from Sydney to Melbourne with her two young sons came to a sudden halt — half a mile inside a coal mine.

The woman drove into the Burrarorang Valley after missing the turn at Camden.

mountain road and into the mine entrance—which she thought was a tunnel. First doubts came when the car hit a roof prop.

The woman drove into the mine about 12.30 a.m. She did not find her way out again until 6 a.m.

She told her story to two astounded mine employees, Mr. J. Oates and Mr. E. A. Smith.

Pushed car

They went into the mine and pushed the car back into the open.

Mr. Oates, of Nattai River, drove the car back to a Sydney suburb.

Mr. Oates and Mr. Smith said the woman and her sons were lucky the car did not dislodge the mine

Mr. Oates said the woman and her sons escaped injury.

But the woman was “very upset.”

Daily Telegraph
Tuesday 8 January
1963

③ Newspaper clipping provided by John Oates

President's Report

by Trish Hill



With the advent of spring there's certainly been an improvement in the temperature most days, but still a way to go inside at the Centre!!! Our garden looks great particularly the azaleas in our entry and anyone lucky enough to have wisteria just wants to prolong that stunning mauve cascade a little longer.

Bus groups have been a bit quieter but still plenty to do with our WWI display 'The Boys from Burratorang And Beyond' now beginning to take shape for the opening on Sunday November 8th. One hundred years on our Burratorang Boys and their horses will have their stories to commemorate their service and sacrifices.

A group of volunteers attended a photo scanning work-

shop at Camden Museum on Saturday where Paul Taylder (Xigrafix Media) guided us through a step by step process to achieve the optimum scan for archiving and reproducing photographs.

I was surprised to see a story I submitted to the Inside History magazine. It was published in the *One Picture ... 1,000 Memories* section (it is reproduced in this newsletter).

And a reminder our Christmas party this year is the second Saturday in December, the 12th, the theme will be outdoor games of yesteryear. Who will dress up for this? Also we have been advised that the former mining town of Joadja will be open on Sunday, 11 October. ■

Exhibitions Report

by Doreen Lyon



Boys from Burratorang in WWI

The new exhibition is well underway now and the cases are beginning to be filled with objects from our collection and loans from local collections. It is always a pleasure to dig deeper into our objects, find more about their histories and make them ready for display. Just polishing medals and buttons is rewarding! Ben and Robyn have been meticulous in their presentation; the military saddle loaned by Bob and Vivian Allen looks splendid and the diorama of Anzac Cove made in 1972 by Malcolm O'Leary, a student from Camden High for a school Anzac project, has now been given a place in history!



Joe Roberts

Os Pippen

Bartley Chesham

We also have three framed Illustrated Addresses for Joseph Barrington Roberts, Oswald Pippen and Bartley Chesham to feature. Their individual stories have yielded some unexpected results and we are grateful to their descendants for their help. Check the stories out when you visit the exhibition. Of course it will be impossible to feature all the people which Ray, Trish and Maria have discovered, but we are working on ways in which all will be recognised in some way. Planning for the exhibition opening is almost completed and we should have a memorable day! The outside events are in the capable hands of Louisa and Colleen; the catering is being organised by June and Maureen, while Trish and Sue will coordinate the events in the Drill Hall. More about the Agenda nearer the time.

National Museum, Canberra



Mask made from turtle shell sewn together with fibre string, 1855 Murray Islands #Oc1855,1220.169

I would like to draw your attention to a very significant exhibition which opens in the National Museum in November. It is a collaboration between the British Museum, the National Museum of Australia, the Australian National University and 27 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities around the nation. Titled **Encounters**, the exhibition is drawn from the Aboriginal collection in the British Museum. Dr Ian Coates, head of the National Museums Collecting Unit, researched the collection as

part of a curatorial staff exchange. The objects had been donated from when Australia was first being explored, but many had not been related to the histories of the communities from where they were taken. This research now links the objects to the people who made them or used them and are of great value to those people today. There are 3,500 objects in the British Museum collection. The 150 objects which have been selected to make the journey to Australia have been chosen as they represent the diversity of Aboriginal communities as well as their links to Colonial history and also for their robustness to travel. The curators at the National Museum are displaying them together with contemporary material from the communities and filmed encounters with the people today to show that their culture is still strong today.

Doreen Lyon

Family History & Local Archive Research

by Sue Davis Family Historian/Archivist



What's New on Line from

Inside History magazine July—August 2015

free resources are

AIATSIS—Indigenous language map of Australia (now zoomable) and the site is: aiatsis.gov.au

ARCHIVES NEW ZEALAND

40,000 digitised images of Antarctica History and the site is: antarctica.recollect.co.nz

ARMY BARRACKS OF IRELAND

Map of army barracks of 18th century Ireland (updated) and the site is: 18c.ucd.ie/map

DEFENCE FORCES IRELAND MILITARY ARCHIVES

Ireland Army Census Search (taken on 12 November 1922) and the site is: census.militaryarchives.ie

DUBLIN CITY LIBRARIES

Dublin Electoral Lists 1938 to 1964 and the site is: databases.dublincity.ie

FAMILY SEARCH

- London Electoral Registers 1847-1913
- NSW Census 1828; 1891 (fragment)
- Tasmania Civil Registration of Births 1899-1912
- Tasmania Correspondence Concerning the Nomination, Arrival and Settlement of Migrants, 1920-1943
- Tasmania *Government Gazette*, 1833-1925
- Victoria Assisted Immigrant Arrivals at Victorian Ports 1839-1871
- Warwickshire Parish Registers 1535-1984

And the site is: familysearch.org

And Trove is always an excellent source of information and the site is: trove.nla.gov.au

Happy searching!

Sue Davis

email: davii@bigpond.net.au

Marketing Report

by Louisa Singleman



September Bus Tours

September has been a fairly busy month with six bus tours visiting the centre. Groups came from Maroubra, Bligh Park Seven Hills and South Penrith. Fortunately all our volunteers are back on deck and their help is greatly appreciated. A big welcome to Noeline who has kindly offered to help and to Pam who turns up to help even when she is not rostered on.

Marketing Report

I attended a breakfast organised by the Wollondilly Shire Council held at Vaby's Restaurant in Picton. The guest speaker, Steve Atherton, was very interesting and spoke about the value of networking with like-minded organisations. He also advocated trying something new as a means of attracting new customers. In all, it was a worthwhile experience and it is hopeful that we can incorporate some of his ideas in the future. ■

Acquisitions Report

by Allen Seymour



This month we have some material which has been in our collection for a while but was in among the Boer War material. It is from the Roberts family of Glenmore, who ran a flour mill there. One of Elsie Roberts sons, J B Roberts had enlisted during World War One and among the items is a number of letters from him to his sister Elsie Marden at Werombi. There was also a Field Service post-

card which was a standard item issued by the army. On one side you wrote the name and address on the other you signed and dated it and crossed out the parts that weren't relevant. On this one the bits that are not crossed out are: "I am quite well" and "letter follows at first opportunity". The date is November 30th 1916 and signed J B Roberts. ■

Robert Ditton's marriage to Mary Ann Stevens

Story written by Trish Hill and submitted to the *INSIDE HISTORY* magazine earlier this year

What is believed to be the only wedding photo of my paternal grandparents, Mary Ann Stevens to Robert Ernest Ditton on the 1st June 1904.

The photo is of the Bride and Groom with the bride's parents and siblings and Mary is displaying a wedding band on her hand resting on husband Robert's shoulder.

Robert (b 1881) and Mary (b1885) were married on 1st June 1904 at St Johns Church of England in Camden and in total they had 12 children. My father being the first born in March of 1906. He had 2 brothers and nine sisters, the last seven births being all girls.

Mary Ann Stevens was the eldest daughter of James & Sarah (Haynes) Stevens and Robert Ernest Ditton was the 5th child of Robert & Martha (Jenkins) Ditton, families of early settlers in the district,

both families teamsters and carriers, carting silver and wool from Yerranderie and Burragorang. My grandfather grew up assisting his teamster father, later farmer and labourer, often taking on any available work. My grandmother, all of 4'11", must have been very busy raising 12 children, but was equally capable with either a fourteen shotgun or a lump of 3x2 to handle whatever farm emergency that cropped up and was an inspiration to all of us grandchildren who witnessed some of these events. She loved to knit and crochet and was never idle always having several projects underway.

Robert and Mary took their family to Burragorang in the early 1920's when after the death of Mary's father James, pictured (intestate), problems arose with the future of the property. This was eventually resolved and the family,



*Back Row left to right: George and Albert Stevens, brothers of the Bride
Centre Row: Bride & Groom Mary Ann (Stevens) and Robert Ernest Ditton, the bride's parents Hannah & James Stevens with sibling Eddie Stevens standing beside his mother, siblings, Janie and Herb Stevens
Front Row: siblings seated on the ground Fred, Lillian and Lewis Stevens.*

now complete with 12 children, returned to the Oakdale property c1929.

Robert suffered ill health and passed away in 1948. Sometime after, Mary moved into a new cottage a few miles closer to the village centre and passed away in 1981 at the age of 96.

My father served in WW2 when in 1944, he met and married my mother while stationed at Wollongong. I was born in the 1950's, a child of farmers and orchardists still on the family property. Life was pretty busy, particularly in the December-March period when fruit was harvested. My grandmother was the only grandparent I knew. I spent a lot of time with her, she passed on lots of stories from her past and instilled in me a love of all things history. ■

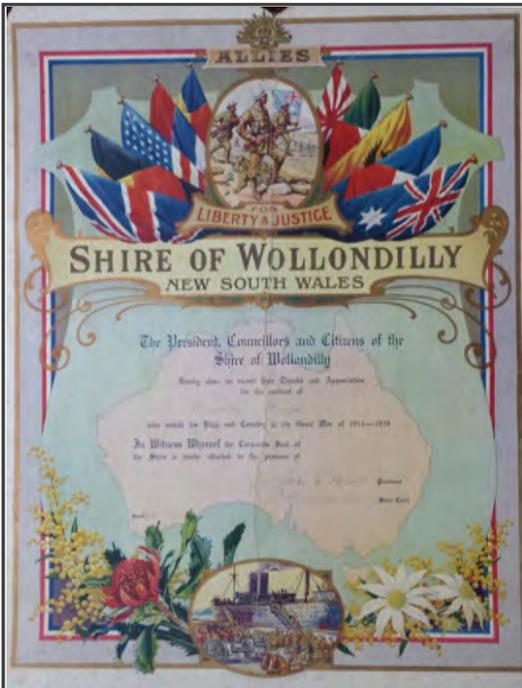


SALTED PEANUT FINGERS

125 gms margarine
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup coconut
1 cup SR flour
1 small packet salted peanuts

Place all ingredients in a bowl and add melted margarine. Mix well. Press into a 23cm square tin and bake in a moderate oven for 15 minutes. When cold ice with chocolate icing.

Thank you June for this recipe from our original Country Collection Slices & No Bakes cookbook.



Above: Illuminated address presented by the President, Councillors and Citizens of the Shire of Wollondilly to Bartley Horace Chesham at the end of WWI 1914-1919

Sunday, 8th November 2015 Exhibition Invitation

The opening of our exhibition *Boys From Burratorang & Beyond in WWI* will be from 11am on Sunday, 8 November.

Council representatives, society members, guests and visitors are invited to come along and hear local stories and view this wonderful WWI memorabilia in our new purpose built display feature.

We are especially pleased to have Light Horse re-enactment representatives, WWI ambulance, Veteran Legends with hospital tents of the era and displays by local history societies.

Visitors will be entertained with songs by Picton Harmony singers, readings from diary extracts and poetry read by school students. Entry is free and refreshments are available with a gold coin donation if you want a sausage sandwich.

Look forward to seeing lots of our members there. Ed.



Bartley Chesham's War record

Story by Trish Hill

Bartley Horace Chesham was born in 1895, the second child to Thomas and Jessie and his birth was registered at Richmond.

Records indicate the births of the first 5 children were registered

at Richmond and St Marys but the next birth in 1905 was registered in Camden indicating they were by then living at Mt Hunter.

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 service number is 6063.

His physical description was five feet five and a half inches, 158lbs, medium complexion, brown eyes and dark brown hair and on completion of documents was assigned to the Dubbo Depot Battalion, Dubbo.

25 October 1916 he embarked from Sydney on the 'Ascanius' disembarking at Devonport on 28/12/1916.

At the end of February 1917, service records indicate he was proceeding to France per the SS *Golden Eagle* arriving in

March. On the 2nd he marched out to their unit and joined the 20th Battalion in the field the following day.

On the 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.'

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.

In the 'Camden News of May 27th, 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. The beneficiary of which was a person who had been seriously incapacitated through wounds or sickness 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 here at The Oaks on 20th February, 1950 and is interred at Glenmore Cemetery. ■

Mr & Mrs Windsor at Central Station 1954



ROYAL HISTORIC MILESTONE

Longest reigning monarch

Queen Elizabeth II 'never aspired' to be Britain's longest reigning monarch but she keeps on going as good as ever. 89 year old Queen Elizabeth the Sec-

ond has ruled 63 years and 233 days (at time of printing). The record was previously held by her great-great grandmother Queen Victoria (20 June 1837 to 22 January 1901). When The Queen visits Australia, she speaks and acts as Queen of Australia, and not as Queen of the United Kingdom. As a constitutional monarch, The Queen acts entirely on the advice of Australian Government Ministers who are responsible to Parliament. The Queen is represented in Australia at the federal level by a Governor-General. He or she is appointed by The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister of Australia and is completely independent of the British Government.

At the state level The Queen is represented by the Governors of each state who are appointed on the advice of each state Premier. The Queen's Royal style and title in Australia is Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God Queen of Australia and Her other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth.

At her Coronation on 2 June 1953, The Queen swore an oath to govern the peoples of Australia and her other realms "according to their respective laws and customs." The Queen holds a number of titles in the Australian Armed Forces, and has attended many events to honour their service in world conflicts.

UNITED KINGDOM

On 1 January 1801 the Kingdom of Great Britain united with the Kingdom of Ireland to become the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, later becoming the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland following the independence of the Republic of Ireland.

A BIT OF TRIVIA

During a royal tour of Australia in 1954, the Queen and Prince Philip appeared to have a royal row on one of their rest days, with Her Highness launching a tennis shoe at the Prince as he stormed out of their chalet in the Yarra ranges in Victoria. ■

Advertisement from Woman's Mirror 1 April 1959

**Doctors Prove Palmolive can bring YOU...
a lovelier complexion
in 14 days!**

You too CAN LOOK FOR THESE COMPLEXION IMPROVEMENTS IN 14 DAYS

- ♥ Fresher, brighter complexion!
- ♥ Less oiliness!
- ♥ Added softness and smoothness!
- ♥ Fewer, tiny blemishes—and incipient blackheads!
- ♥ Complexion clearer, more radiant!

Not just a promise but a proved plan!

THIS IS ALL YOU DO!

Wash your face with Palmolive soap. Then for 60 seconds massage your clean face with Palmolive's soft lovely lather. Rinse! Do this twice a day for 14 days. This cleansing massage will bring your skin Palmolive's beautifying and lasting effect.

REGULAR & ECONOMY BATH SIZE

Monarchs Name	Duration of Reign
Queen Elizabeth II	63 years, 233 days
Victoria	63 years, 216 days
George III	59 years, 96 days
George V	25 years, 259 days
George VI	25 years, 57 days
George IV	10 years, 148 days
Edward VII	9 years, 104 days
William IV	6 years, 359 days
Edward VIII	326 days only

Volunteer Weekend Roster

News & Info

OCTOBER	
Saturday, 3	Jim & Maureen
Sunday, 4	Sue & Tina
Monday, 5	Bob & Vivian
Saturday, 10	WORKING BEE
Sunday, 11	Trish & Kevin
Saturday, 17	Ben & Doreen
Sunday, 18	Allen & Ian
Saturday, 24	Jan & Jenny
Sunday, 25	Maria & Betty
Saturday, 31st	Colleen & June
Sunday, 1st Nov	Ray & Robyn



2015 Suppers Roster

October	Vivian & Pat
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	All to bring a plate

SEARCH FOR PHOTOGRAPH

Doreen Lyon is looking for an image of **Reginald JESSOP**, particularly in uniform. He was at the biblical city of Beersheba

THE OAKS CHRISTMAS EVENT

Saturday, 5th December

The Oaks Christmas event will be held on Saturday, 5th from 4pm to 9pm at the Dudley Chesham Oval, The Oaks. The Oaks Historical Society is having a stall so if you could spare an hour or two to help it would be greatly appreciated.



Contact Louisa Singleman on 4680 8358 if you can help.

Update on the Kangaroo March

The route through Wollondilly

COLO VALE—Tues, 6th October—Mittagong to Colo Vale. BBQ at the Colo Vale Community Hall then north through the cutting (the old railway line) to overnight stop at Hill Top.

HILLTOP—Tues, 6th October— Day # 32, camp near school. There are plans to use a safe route to Balmoral by way of the old disused railway track.

BALMORAL—Wed, 7th October Day #33—morning tea in Balmoral.

BUXTON—lunch in Buxton.

COURIDJAH— afternoon tea.

THIRLMERE—Camp overnight and next day, Camden bound.

PICTON—Thursday 8th October— morning tea.

CAMDEN—Friday, 9th October— second last night on the road staying near the town then south east through Camden Park Estate and across to Menangle Park.

GUEST SPEAKERS

OCTOBER—Mick Pearsall, Camden LAC
NOVEMBER—Ron Davis talking about the community nursery

MISSING MAGAZINES

INSIDE HISTORY Issue Nos. 26, 27 & 28 are missing from their box. Sue Davis asks members to please place a post it note on the box when borrowing thank you.

KIAMA DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY EXPO—16th April 2016

THE PAST IS HISTORY
THE FUTURE IS A MYSTERY
AND TODAY IS A GIFT....
THE PRESENT

A wave and a quote from our old mate, blacksmith Ray Lincoln

Ray is recovering from a stroke which occurred while caravanning near Charleville, Queensland. This headstrong man is doing very well after spending 8 weeks in Toowoomba Hospital and 4 weeks in Camden Hospital. He has had some weekend home visits impressing all with his quick recovery and is expected to go home this week to all the jobs he has lined up.

- Jenny Wood and Ray's cousin Larry Wood visited him on 27th 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, 43 Edward Street, The Oaks starting at 7.00pm. **Upcoming meetings will be held on 2 November & 7 December 2015.** 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 the Minutes are available at the Heritage Centre.