



Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.

Newsletter

DATE 14th July, 2017

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WELCOME to all our members and any visitors we might have. As there was no guest speaker at last month's meeting Ian and Joan gave members a demonstration on how the Society's Facebook page worked, what you can gain from it, and how you can contribute to its success.

Presentation of the Bob Howard Award and Coolgardie Safe Awards for 2016: These were presented by Vicki Edmunds at the June meeting with Sue Forsyth winning the Bob Howard Award for her article "Remembering Herbert Hosking". A Highly Commended Award in this category went to Jo Adam for her article "A Walk Through My Childhood: One Family's War". This Award has been posted to Jo who now lives in Sydney and can no longer make the meetings.

The Coolgardie Safe Award went to Pauline Gibson for her article "My Favourite Ancestor who I admire most - My Mother, Amy Angus." Unfortunately, due to family commitments, Pauline was not at the June meeting but she was surprised and delighted to hear she had won the Coolgardie Safe Award. A Highly Commended Award in this category went to Judy Barham for her article "Annual Holidays at Grandma's".

Today's Guest Speaker: Vicki Wilson is our guest speaker today. Vicki will talk about her work as a Wigmaker, which members should find interesting and quite fascinating.

August meeting: Our next meeting will be held on **11th August 2017** in the small hall directly behind the Presbyterian Church, Macquarie Road, Springwood commencing at **10am** and finishing at around 12 noon.

Guest Speaker for August meeting: Currently there is no guest speaker for the August meeting but the committee is waiting on replies from various sources. Members will be advised by email once we have an acceptance of a guest speaker.

Committee Meeting: The committee met on the 23rd June, 2017 with the following matters discussed:

September Seminar: "Settling the Blue Mountains". The committee was still to find a 4th speaker for our seminar. On Jan Koperberg's recommendation it was agreed to contact Brian Fox to see if he was available and happy to be a speaker. An email has been sent to Brian and has accepted our invitation to speak. Brian who lives at Bathurst is a Blue Mountains Historian and a Cartographer. He will talk about the way maps were used historically giving an idea of where people settled and why.

Raffle: There is a raffle today which will be drawn at the August meeting. The raffle will consist of a nice wooden cheeseboard with knives stored inside and a pretty little Villeroy & Boch dish. Tickets for the raffle will be \$1. Both these items have been donated, a "thank you" to the donors.

Sale Table: Don't forget our sale table. Anything you would like to offer for sale, bring it along. Only one rule; if it doesn't sell, please take it home again.

Social Outing: There is still no date for the proposed social outing for a tour of the ABC premises.

The Explorers' Tree: As you know Rhonda, our erstwhile editor, is always looking for articles for this wonderful publication. At the June meeting Rhonda had prepared and handed out a sheet of ideas to help members get started with their stories - such as, brick walls finally knocked down; how this came about; new relationships formed, etc. If you weren't at the June meeting and would like a copy of the information or have a story ready for publication please email Rhonda at rwflowers@optusnet.com.au.

What's on - Upcoming events:

Woodford Academy Exhibition -

The Woodford Academy is very proud to present **'Ephemeral Threads'** a collaborative sensory and tactile exhibition by Academy 'Artist in Residence' floral artist **Edith Pass** & Blue Mountains photographer **Jennifer Leahy** for our upcoming open days on **Saturday 1, 15 July & 19 August**. Edith explores floral installation weavings that incorporate botanical and photographic materials while Jennifer's photography explores ideas of historical decay embellished with remnant traces of grandeur.

Museum Entry & Exhibition Adults \$6, Concession/Child \$4, Family \$15. Guided Tours \$2 pp.

Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society – Pansy Line Tour, Sat. 12th August 2017. Join them as they explore the remnants of the Richmond to Kurrajong Railway 1926-1952. Coaches depart from Richmond and the tour includes lunch in Kurrajong. Some walking would be involved. Bookings essential contact David 4567 7993 or www.kurrajonghistory.org.au. Cost: Adults \$35, Seniors \$30 children \$25.

Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah – Exhibition Art from the Birds: Nests & Bowers until Sun, 23rd July, Visitor Centre 9.30am-4.30pm.

1867 in the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury district:

1867 was an important time in the history of the Blue Mountains. This July marks 150 years since the opening of the railway between Penrith and Wentworth Falls. This historic event brought the community of the Blue Mountains together for it wasn't until the railways arrived that the community started to settle and develop.

In mid July 1867 the Blue Mountains railway line was handed over to the NSW government by its railway contractor William Watkins but not before much controversy over "colonial contracts", costings, a harrowing flood in the Nepean and a driver's death from a gunpowder explosion.

The Valley Heights Locomotive Heritage Depot Museum in partnership with the NSW Rail Museum will

1867 continued:

run celebratory events from Friday July 21 to Sunday July 23, with the museum open throughout the weekend.

On Saturday July 22 steam train shuttle rides from Penrith to Springwood and return plus heritage electric 'Red Rattler' train rides from Penrith to Blacktown and return. Then on Sunday July 23 steam train shuttle rides will run from Lawson to Katoomba and return. Tickets are on sale via the Transport Heritage NSW – "What's On" website or telephone **1300 115 599**. A range of community events will run in Lawson. To read more about this historic event visit

<http://www.infoblueMountains.net.au/locodepot/news-2017-06-07-150.shtml>.

This brings us to the next 150-year anniversary and that is the great flood that inundated the Hawkesbury area with a flow on effect to many other areas of New South Wales. In June 1867 disastrous floods overtook the low lying districts of Windsor, Richmond, Penrith, Maitland and elsewhere. The town of Windsor was almost totally submerged. Surprisingly the loss of life was minimal but the biggest tragedy was the drowning of the Eather family of two wives and ten children at Cornwallis. On 21st June 1867 the whole family, which consisted of two husbands, who were brothers, their wives and eleven children had climbed onto the roof of their house to escape the rising waters when the two men and one child, a boy, were swept away. By clinging to a tree these three managed to save themselves but unfortunately those left on the roof were eventually swept up by the rising waters and drowned.

Following this tragic the event a memorial sign was erected to this family at Cornwallis Road, off Greenway Crescent, Cornwallis, Windsor. **150 years on**, the Hawkesbury City Council commemorated this tragic event by hosting a dinner for the descendants of the Eather family and erecting a new memorial sign at Cornwallis Road, Windsor.

Another occurrence 150 years ago and with a connection to the Blue Mountains was the birth of our famous writer and bush poet, Henry Lawson on the 17th June 1867. While Henry was born at Grenfell NSW he lived for a time in Mt Victoria. In about 1880, his father, Niels Hertzberg (Peter) Larsen, won the contract to build Rylstone Railway Station so came to Mt Victoria as a builder in 1881. Henry followed to help him, aged 14. Peter built houses and the famous 'School in Montgomery St.' The headmaster and founder was Mr Reinits, who taught many subjects (with staff) to local pupils & boarders, up to University entry level. Henry was also a pupil there.

Interesting Websites: Family History Daily – 50 Free Genealogy Sites to Search visit - familyhistorydaily.com; **Discovering Links: 15 Free Links for Australian Genealogy and History:** lonetester.com