



Blue Mountains Family History Society Inc.

Newsletter

DATE 10th March, 2017

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WELCOME to all our members and any visitors we might have. The February meeting got off to a good start with our first guest speaker for the year, Jo Henwood, giving a very interesting talk. Our speaker today is John Howells from the Lancer Museum at Parramatta and we can look forward to another interesting talk. One of our member took up John's offer of a look up of an ancestor who had been in the Boar War, the Light Horse WWI or the First Armoured Regiment WWII as mentioned in the February Newsletter and was happy to receive information on the medals awarded for the Boar War.

April Meeting: As mentioned at the February meeting our April meeting falls on Good Friday. As the committee was unable to find a suitable venue for the April meeting it was unanimously agreed by the committee meeting that there would be **no April meeting**.

May Meeting: The next meeting of the Society will be held in the small hall of the Presbyterian Church at 10 am on Friday 12th May 2017. Our guest speaker at that meeting will be Trish Skehan, some members will remember Trish has been a guest speaker on a couple of occasions.

Committee Meeting: The committee met on the 24th February 2017 and the following was discussed.

2017 Seminar: Ideas were discussed at the committee meeting concerning our proposed seminar on **Saturday, 9th September 2017**. As the large Presbyterian Hall is no longer available to the Society, Colin has made a tentative booking to hire the hall at Baptist Church, Macquarie Road, Springwood. Some members may remember that this venue has been used before and it has proved most satisfactory as regards the size of the hall and the kitchen provided.

The topic proposed is "**Settling the Blue Mountains**" and we will be looking at finding speakers on topics such as "Rail in the Mountains", "Early day in Mountain villages", etc.

Colin will be writing to a number of suggested speakers for the seminar these being:

Kate O'Neill - Significant families of the Mountains;

Ken Goodlet - Woodford Academy Historian;

John Low - Travelling to Wonderland: pre-motor era coach services to Jenolan Caves;

Doug Knowles - early settlement when the railways came through;

Philip Hammon - shale mining in the Blue Mountains and early settlement in the Megalong Valley; and

State Records - re settling the Blue Mountains.

Any of our members who have any other ideas on what topics would be suitable for this seminar or with regard to entertainment please see any of the committee members, all ideas are worth considering.

The cost will remain the same as our 2015 seminar, **\$40** and includes morning tea and lunch.

New Books for the Library: It was decided the Society would purchase the following books for our Library collection:

Prospect and Sherwood Pioneer Register Pre 1927;

Parish Registers Vol.2 1903-1936 – St Stephen's Church, Kurrajong; and

Pioneers and Settlers of the Police District of Kiama prior to 1920, Vol 2.

Street Stall: As mentioned in the last Newsletter the Society held a street stall in the grounds of the Presbyterian Church on **Saturday, 18th February, 2017**. It was quite satisfactory from two points, one that we managed to sell a lot of the items we had in our storage facility with the exception of a number of books and two, the Society made a grand total of **\$187.00** which we would not otherwise have had.

Thank you to those members who gave up their time and helped on the morning.

Sale Table: A reminder to bring any unwanted items to our meeting for the sale table. Some of the better quality items not sold at the street stall will also appear on the sale table.

Raffles: It was decided that the Society would hold a raffle every two months commencing in March. There is a small raffle today, tickets 50 cents, drawn at the May meeting.

Member's fees reminder: Membership fees are now due. Fees for single membership - \$30.00; \$40.00 per couple plus \$7.50 for postage of The Explorers' Tree if required. Membership of the Society lapses on the 31st March which means that non-members will be unable to borrow any of the magazines on display at our meetings.

The Explorers' Tree: The first edition of The Explorers' Tree for 2017 will be available at today's meeting. Rhonda is still in need of articles for the next edition of The Explorers' Tree. As Rhonda will not be at the next couple of meetings could you please email your articles to her at rwflowers@optusnet.com.au.

What's on - Upcoming events:

***Glenbrook & District Historical Society walk** - Glenbrook Lagoon Precinct - the first water supply for the 1867 railway **Saturday, March 11th 2017**.

Saturday, 25th March 2017, Walk - The Descent to the West, Mt York. For information contact Doug Knowles 4751 3275.

***Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum, Sunday, 12th March 2017**, Open Day, Seniors Festival.

***Woodford Academy, Saturday 11th March 2017, 10am-4pm** an "Early Harvest Festival" featuring live music, seasonal food, children's games, a variety of stalls. Guests are also invited to bring along excess garden produce to add to the local produce stall.

There will also be talks held in the Grand Dining Room at 11am David King, 12.30pm Ken Goodlet and 2pm Anne Elliot.

***Woodford Academy Open Day, Saturday 18th March, 2017 at 1pm** a talk by Kate O'Neill on Mrs Shiels "the Proprietress."

As next Friday, 17th March 2017 is St Patrick's Day perhaps this is a good time to write a little about the Irish arriving in Australia.

Either of two sailors on Lieutenant James Cook's bark HMS Endeavour, Joshua Childs of Dublin or Timothy Rearden of Cork, would have been the first Irish people to see Botany Bay in 1770.

Following Captain Cook's voyage came the convict transports in 1788 with an estimated 10 per cent of those first European settlers having some Irish connection among them.

The most useful Irishman among the first Sydneysiders was Surgeon-General John White whose medical skills came to the fore with the arrival of hundreds of seriously ill and dying convicts arriving on the Second and Third Fleets. There are other achievements attributed to John White.

With the arrival of the first convict ship to sail direct from Ireland in 1791, Sydney has received a constant stream of Irish immigrants and settlers. Until the late 1830s these were primarily but not exclusively men and women from every county in Ireland transported for crimes ranging from rebellion and high treason to petty theft. Between 1788 and 1840 of the 30,231 transported Irish convicts 24,710 were men and 5,521 were women. Many were assigned as servants to the interior and the remaining 50 per cent remained in Sydney and the surrounding hinterland.

One Irish convict, Mary McCarroll transported in 1814 married an English Convict George Marshall who became a successful clothier and blanket maker. On her death in 1838 she was described as "one of the oldest settlers in the colony and who was greatly esteemed for her industrious and amiable disposition", while another convict, Mary Grady transported in 1806 aged 18, broke into a house stealing 'cash and notes' was sentenced to death and hanged in public.

The convict rebellion at Castle Hill in 1804 gained notoriety when Irish patriots transported for their part in the "Great Rebellion" of 1788 in Ireland took up arms again with the intention of stealing a ship and fleeing the colony. Nine rebels were hanged, some received brutal floggings and others were sent to the mines at Coal River (Newcastle).

In 1832 Sir Richard Bourke became Australia's first Irish Governor. During his five years in office Governor Bourke left a legacy which affected all forms of Sydney life. He introduced the Church Act ensuring equal treatment of religious denominations wanting government assistance; he introduced reforms in the legal and educational systems and had a significant influence on the shift of immigration from convicts to free "government assisted" immigrants. This and more information can be found on the Dictionary of Sydney, dictionaryofsydney.org

Web blog: The Family Ancestry Detective, an Australian based blog helpful and interesting to other genealogy enthusiasts:
<http://familyancestrydetective.com/>

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