

CHRONOGRAPH

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE.
BERRY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



Notes from our President Margaret Cullity

Happy New Year!

I hope you all enjoyed our Christmas drinks. We welcomed nearly 60 guests at the function and to the opening of our Wedding and Linen Exhibition. A great success! We were very lucky on the night to not have any rain. Thank you to all the contributors for our supper. Delicious.

The first quarter has been quite busy. We have purchased our new photographic equipment and had a demonstration by our consultant photographer, Jules Boag. This setup will assist with our digitisation program. We would love you to be involved. Anyone with an interest in photography, please get in touch.

Work has continued in our Industry Room and Military Room, updating the displays. And if you haven't seen the new Linen Room set up yet, please come along! The Wedding exhibition is continuing to draw and to entrance visitors. We are seeking a grant for restoration and preservation of some of the gems of the show.

Discussions and inspections are progressing with our plans to replace the lighting throughout the Museum. We are hoping that project will commence soon.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your families a very Happy Easter break.

Cheers to all,

Margaret

FROM OUR COLLECTIONS

Literacy is Power *The Hanlon Family Writing Slope*

The laptop of its day, this portable writing desk allowed the writer freedom to move around. Perfect for use next to an open fire or beneath a shady tree in one's garden, its lower compartments tidily held ink, paper and pens.



This late nineteenth-century example belonged to Alexander (1837-1915) and Ann Hanlon (nee Boyd) (1839-1929). Both migrants from Donegal, Ireland, they married in 1864 at Broughton Vale (later named Berry). Two years later, they established a dairy farm at Woodhill, a fertile area in the mountains between Berry and nearby Kangaroo Valley.

In the nineteenth century, literacy was not a given among migrant populations in rural areas of Australia. For occupations like housemaids, labourers, farmers or shepherds, being able to read and write was not necessary for survival.

However, to rise into the upper or governing class, being literate was essential. Though Alexander and Ann were both from farming families, they came to the colony as literate migrants – a skill which put them in good stead.



Both the Hanlons and the Boyds became well known families in the region because of their involvement in local government and the Methodist Church. Between 1871 and 1900, both last names were regularly listed in the local press alongside members of Council (i.e. returning officer, auditor, and alderman), with Alexander even becoming mayor.

Many letters, detailing the Hanlon family's life-events, hopes, and worries, were composed on this portable desk before travelling to eager readers across land and sea.

Megan Cardamon



WELCOME FUNDS RAISED

Under Steve Fellows' directorship a dedicated team of supporters is bringing in regular contributions. Sausage Sizzles earn about \$2000 each outing. We will man a stand again in April. The fund raising group is planning a big *Christmas in July* Event. Great effort



BIG CROWD ENJOYED OUR CHRISTMAS FUNCTION



Photo: Richard Wiseman

A happy assembly of about 60 members and guests enjoyed our Christmas function last December. They braved the prospect of rain, but were rewarded with a delicious afternoon tea and great company. A bonus was the opportunity to see the Wedding and Linen Exhibition.

Margaret expressed her thanks to all volunteers for the enormous assistance and hours of work they put in during the year. The Society and Museum had a good year with lots of achievements and progress.

Christmas celebrations will continue in July with a function at the Berry School of Arts. More details to come.

Notes from Committee meetings

Soon the eastern side garden will be redesigned and landscaped according to heritage principles. SCC is involved and when approved, Colleen Murray will supervise planting. We have received a generous contribution from the Berry Garden Club's annual Gardens Festival as well as a much appreciated donation, essentially from plant sales, from the Club's Berry Beautification Fund.

Sandra Berner and Margaret C. headed a team spruiking membership and our publications at the February Berry Show. The satisfying response ensures that the stall will be repeated next year.

Many thanks to Robert Halley, who has stepped back from maintenance at the museum. We have appreciated his cleaning skills over several years.

Horizon Bank has gifted us \$5000. This is a brilliant contribution to our coffers. It will be immediately put to our lighting upgrade. The Council will fund the remainder of the costs. Approval for the work is now a given.

Our application for the renovation of the old bathroom area was not successful. We are now soliciting quotes to see if we can finance the initial removal of the plumbing ourselves. We badly need the room for storage.

As a trial engagement, a professional graphic designer will redesign the Schools display board in the hallway.
&

The Military Room is to be improved with two new box frames to house the Broughton Lodge paraphernalia.

We are watching the *Voice to David Berry*, which is advocating the retention of the hospital as a health facility. Our Heritage Sub Committee is also monitoring the Berry Hotel situation and the Development Control Plan (DCP) for Berry. We thank Catherine Barlow & Judith Ball.

Sandra Berner is seeking quotes for the conservation of several wedding dresses displayed in our Linen and Wedding Exhibition. We will have a dust cover made for the Wilson dress, now on display.



FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH DISCOVERS UNKNOWN FACTS

Last year the Museum was contacted by Tina and Santo A. who live in Belfield, Sydney.

Their neighbour was an old lady, Maud Dorothy Summers (née Crozier). Berry folk will recognise that name.

Tina used to often visit Maud, who was very proud of her brother Roy Stanley Crozier, who served in WWI, and of her uncle Montague Broughton Crozier who went to the Boer War. Their large framed photos and Roy's Discharge Certificate were hung in pride of place in her house.

When Maud passed away Tina was horrified to find the three items thrown out on the footpath for rubbish collection, and decided to rescue them. She then contacted the Berry Museum to see if we would like to add them to our collection.

Tina and Santo made a special trip to Berry for the handover, and the documents are now safe with the Museum. By providing new background information about the mens' service and the Crozier family, Sandra Berner was able to thank the A's for the contribution. What great neighbours.

← Boer War uniform and objects
in our Military Room



NOAH FLOOD BOAT RESTORATION GATHERS PACE

The Museum is the guardian of one of the two, 7.31m flood boats commissioned in 1889... NOAH and SHOALHAVEN. David Berry had his boat builder, John Hawken, construct them on the Coolangatta Estate, following several bad local floods, as a gesture to the community.

Shoalhaven Council has restored SHOALHAVEN with a replacement, secure display place pending. The 1971 open air pavilion in Moorehouse Park, south of the river, was demolished as part of the construction process for the new bridge.

NOAH historically became the responsibility of the Berry Municipal Council. The museum has housed NOAH since 1985. This important, rare craft was restored in 1970, but needs urgent care as it is exposed to the elements and is deteriorating. It also needs a cradle, as well as permanent weather protection.

Peter Whitton is tirelessly progressing the project for us and has now determined the restoration expenses and the steps involved. He is also in discussion with the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum regarding a grant application to MMAPSS, the Australian National Maritime Museum. Initially, we will seek a contribution to the cost of a cradle, oars, rudder and rowlocks. Good luck to Peter's team.



NOAH HV000538 Flood Boat, 1889 on transport trolley.

NEW LIGHTING NOW APPROVED - costs in hand and bulb-ready

The Society and Museum are very thrilled that finally the lighting throughout the building is to be replaced with custom fittings

The old fluorescents were suitable for the bank in its day, but now the building houses a museum. Our collections require greater spotlighting capabilities and specific functions for each room and display



The fluorescents will be replaced with LEDs - much safer, cheaper to run, and with a kinder light.

We are very fortunate to have received a \$5000 grant from the Horizon Bank. This money will be put towards the cost of the new lighting.

Peter Herald of Shoalhaven Council has worked closely with our heritage architects and representatives to devise an acceptable replacement lighting plan for the building. This scheme has now been approved by Council and we await a starting date. There should be no interruptions to the public as the work can be carried out on the days we are not open.

Shoalhaven
City Council

Horizon Bank

**JERVIS BAY
MARITIME
MUSEUM
& GALLERY**



The JBMM is kindly assisting the Museum with a grant application to the Australian National Maritime Museum to restore our NOAH Flood Boat. We are very appreciative of this help in getting the application worthy of consideration, in particular the description of the restoration project, its aims and methods, and of the benefits to the Shoalhaven.

There is a possibility of receiving \$15,000, which could be put initially towards the cost of a steel boat cradle, oars, rudder and four bronze rowlocks. The cradle is required by the shipwrights before the boat can be safely moved. Local contractors are being used wherever possible. The Men's Shed is preparing cedar timber for the Sydney oar maker, who will also make the rudder.

The remainder of the work would require subsequent grants over a three year period. If we are successful it will mean that the NOAH Flood Boat can be permanently displayed on our premises and restored to last another century and more. Good luck to the Application Team.

Make a visit to Huskisson and wander around the JBMM campus. Exhibitions, art, a shop, refreshments and, of course, the Lady Denham ferry.





FROM OUR COLLECTIONS

A group of cast iron cooking pots and kitchen objects.

Scratch, Scratch, Squeak Alice Conway's School Slate and Pencil from Berry

Imagine the scratchy, squeaky sound this slate pencil made against this slate when five-year-old Alice Conway began practicing her writing on it in 1894 in Berry. Amplify that sound, according to the number of children in her school, all writing at different paces and rhythms, and we hear the uncomfortable noise of a typical nineteenth century classroom.

The day little Alice started at the St Joseph's Convent School, Berry – 14 May 1894 – her name, the date and the school's letters 'S.J.C.S.B', were roughly incised on the slate's wooden frame. Operating since 1884 in St Patrick's Church on Albert Street, the school was run by the Sisters of St Joseph from 1891, who were accommodated in a convent in an adjacent timber cottage, opened by Mother Mary McKillop (1842-1909).

In an age when classroom supplies were limited, and paper was expensive, young children were provided with pencils and slates to learn to write and do arithmetic. They were inexpensive and could be wiped clean for the next lesson, with a damp cloth, but many children used spit and their sleeves instead.

Alice Mary Conway (1889-c1946), who first scratched letters onto this slate, was born in Berry in 1889. She was the second eldest of nine siblings who lived at North Street, with their parents Daniel and Helena Conway (née Kinneally).

So who was 'Ruby', whose name and the year 1919 is inscribed on the other side of the slate's frame? After Alice had finished with the slate, it was passed on to the next generation to scratch and squeak on – Alice's seven-year-old niece, Ruby Blanche Helena Conway (1912-1994).



Fiona Starr - Storyplace

**The Museum's collections include two albums of local plants, pressed in the 1880s.
Two researchers* have made a recent, important research discovery about them.**



All evidence now points compellingly to Wilhelm (William) Bäuerlen as the compiler of the albums, and away from John Stewart (who owned the albums). Bäuerlen is a fascinating figure from Australian history who is now best known for his skilful, prolific, and geographically widespread botanical collecting. To have an album of his in our collection is impressive, and previously unknown to us. The researchers are appealing for more copies

Wide research in other places has not located any of Bäuerlen's pressed plant albums, though it's likely that several residents across the Shoalhaven, Sth Highlands and Illawarra would have obtained a copy in the 1880s. Berry and district residents are well located to help. By mid-1886, if not earlier, Cambewarra was Bäuerlen's home base, though his address is not yet known. He used the Post Office as his mailing address. 1883 to 1886 and 1888 are likely years to find mention of Bäuerlen in the Shoalhaven and the surrounding areas.



Think about the historical materials that you may have at home and talk to friends and family about what they have, especially to anyone with a family history in the area dating back to the 1880s.

We seek pressed plant albums similar to Stewart's – see photographs in the Australian Geographic article or visit the Berry Museum where the fern album is displayed, alongside photographs of the album of flowering plants.

Family documents like diaries or listings of boarders from the 1880s may also help. Look out for mention of a William Bäuerlen or anyone with a similar name – his name was often misspelt. Writing about an unnamed scientist could even prove useful, even if not botanical in the topic – Bäuerlen also gave lectures on electricity across the district.

* Jane Johnston and Dr Kevin Mills.

* See a full article published in the Australian Geographic magazine on the topic. Here's a link.

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/science-environment/2023/11/join-the-hunt-for-bauerlens-long-lost-legendary-ferns/>

Top photo is of a page in the album donated to the museum by owner, John Stewart. Photographer: Phil Bragg.

The species name *Asplenium flaccidum* is still current today. The other is now named *Asplenium flabellifolium*.

Photos of detail are by Jane Johnston

↑ Detail of a specimen labelled *Aspidium hispidum*, known today as *Lastreopsis hispida*. Only one specimen collection has been recorded on the South Coast. That was by Bäuerlen in 1884

➡ Detail of a specimen labelled *Aspidium acuminatum*, known today as *Lastreopsis acuminata*.



If you have news to share, please be in touch with the museum or the researchers via the project email of SeekingWB@gmail.com

New Members add interest and experience



The Executive has ratified new members to our membership. We warmly welcome the following people. Most have now received their orientation and will soon start contributing to our operation and administration.

**JOHN JESTON; PAUL CROPPER;
BOB CROKER; MEGAN PIKETT;
STEPHEN BUZACOTT; KERRNA SWORDS**

We encourage new members to quickly take advantage of our mentoring programs to learn about the Society, and the Museum and collections.

By assisting in activities, one quickly finds friends amongst colleagues and enjoyment in hosting visitors. Let us know of your experience and how you might contribute.

POSITIONS VACANT. PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING

HOSTS: We are seeking helpers to host on the front desk on weekends. One x two hour shift is all that is generally allocated.

RESEARCHERS: Individuals with a sharp mind and a bent to ferret can augment our Family History and Research team.

MUSEUM CLEANER: Know a fastidious individual prepared to get their hands dirty for a few hours per fortnight?

GARDEN HELPERS: With our side garden about to be landscaped, we need a contingent for monthly maintenance.

TOUR COORDINATOR & HOSTS: Groups require special attention and hosting. These are usually out-of-hours but bring in generous donations. Fun and rewarding.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR: We are looking for a savvy person to monitor postings to our Facebook and Insta platforms. We have guidelines and protocols in place that need to be followed by those persons authorised to submit posts.

DATES

TO NOTE

**B&DHS Event
Christmas in July.
SofA 20 July 2014
Details TBA.**

National Trust Australian Heritage Festival

Thursday 18 April -
Sunday 19 May 2024.
Information from NT NSW.

Know Your 2023/2024 Committee

President
Margaret Cullity

Vice President
Janet Hanson

Secretary
Gail Paton

Treasurer
Hilary Brickhill

Committee Members

*Sandra Berner
Sue Davidson
Frank Howarth
Kay Jarrett*

**Visit:
SATURDAY &
SUNDAY
11am - 3pm**

**?????Easter &
School Hols:
MONDAYS and
FRIDAYS also.**

**Address &
email contacts?**



**B&DHS acknowledges the
leaders past, present and
emerging of the Wodi
Wodi, the Wandandian
and the Yuin of the South
Coast.**

**We recognise the
ongoing custodians of the
lands and waterways
where we work and live.**

**We celebrate Aboriginal
and/or Torres Strait
Islander peoples' unique
family and spiritual
relationship to Country
and acknowledge the
significance of their
cultures in Australia.**

Check out:

**[https://
storyplace.org.au/](https://storyplace.org.au/)**

This is a great site with masses of interesting stories about items in the collections of museums and galleries all over the State.

The Berry Museum is slowly digitising our collection and items will be added to Storyplace as we can.

Contributors & Photography



The Chronograph is published four times annually.

Contributions and ideas are always welcomed.

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Email:
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B&DHS is a not-for-profit organisation depending on membership and donations. Throughout the year we host numerous exhibitions and events. You too can become involved hosting visits, researching family history, maintaining our library, recording photos, digitising the collection, or preparing exhibits. You will enjoy it and derive satisfaction from your efforts. We'd appreciate your help. Details can be found on our website.