



## **Bundanoon History Group Inc.**

### **Presidents Report 2018 - 19**

It's a pleasure for me to present my Report , chronicling the past year of the Bundanoon History Group.

The highlights of 2018 were undoubtedly the Railway 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the Big Book Sale, but more on that later.

Each year our membership grows . ... our tops last year was 154 members. It's been really nice for me getting to know you all, as well as realising just how much goes on behind the scenes to run our History Group.

**I would now like to look back at the past year....** its been pretty busy...

...so lets take a journey and remind ourselves of the many things that happened.

In **March** we had a coach trip to Camden hosted by the Camden Historical Society and as with all our recent excursions, organised by Ralph and Pam. We visited the Camden Museum, St John's Church, Macarthur's Belgenny Farm (1804) and finally the wonderful Wivenhoe Benedictine Abbey where we raised the roof with our singing.

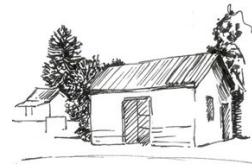
In **April** we scheduled the first public showing of Beryl's new film "*The History and Legend of Brigadoon*" - a film Beryl had been working on for some time. Unfortunately that day, the technical gremlins were against us and we had to abandon ship, not because of the sound of bagpipes but because of the high pitched noises coming out of the Hall sound system.

At our **May** meeting we invited representatives of groups in the village to join us and hear Andrew Killingsworth from Sydney Trains outlining their plans for refurbishing the Railway Station - in time for the 150<sup>th</sup> in August. .... We also persuaded Andrew to repaint The Old Goods Shed at the same time.

**June** was another open meeting with a general invitation to Bundanoon residents for tea and scones to raise money for Australia's Biggest Morning tea. It was well attended and we raised \$385 on the day and donated \$500 dollars to the Cancer Council. Our guest speaker was David Blair from the Geographical Names Board who told us about the meaning and background of some of our local names.

Also in June, we staged our popular Oral History Morning , choreographed by Marianne and Beryl and followed by a cuppa and a sandwich.

In **July** Robert Williams spoke to us about WW1 and we showed Beryl's film *The History of Brigadoon* - Fortunately the Hall's sound systems had been fixed and the film presented a wonderful insight into the early beginnings of Brigadoon.



Also in July we had our second outing of the year –to the Illawara region. First stop was the HARS museum to see historic aircraft, then the Nan Tien Buddhist Temple for lunch and a talk on Buddhism, and lastly the Breakwater Battery at Port Kembla. It was a great day out, ending on the waterfront at Port Kembla for a few glasses of wine and cheese – a standard component of all BHG trips.

Lastly, July was significant because we were awarded a \$5000 grant from the Council to roll out a Heritage Trail in the Bundanoon Conservation area.

**August** was a cracker of a month. We had a month long display of Bundanoon historical photographs at the Council Gallery in Moss Vale – we received a couple of rave reviews.

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> we hosted along with Sydney Trains around 160 kids from the school, to preview the refurbished Railway Station. It was great to see them arrive in groups with their teachers, and all so well behaved.

Then on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August we held the official 150<sup>th</sup> Centenary of the Railway coming to Bundanoon with the grand re-opening of the Railway Station. It was an enormous enterprise with several groups involved in the organisation... BCA, Marulan Historical Society, Sydney Trains, and WSC..... and so much happening that weekend.

We were on the front cover of the Railway History Magazine, Peter and Kerri had commissioned souvenir Railway bags; we erected a classy metal anniversary sign designed by Peter on the Railway Station, and Helen had designed a new set of displays for the Shed.

We were lucky on the day with the weather the Bundanoon community turned out in numbers to welcome our guests. The Vice Governor and his wife, our local State and Federal politicians, our local Mayor and Councillors, the CEO and senior executives from Sydney Trains (without whom it wouldn't have happened). Reg Wade and his mates parked their fabulous vintage motors outside, there were bagpipes, the Lions Sausage Sizzle, and Les Rundle's one man bushband. A highlight was Aunty Wendy Lotter who conducted the traditional Aboriginal Smoking ceremony. Symbolically powerful ..... and important to acknowledge the first peoples and original owners of the land.

Jim Longworth from the Railway Historical Society was our guest speaker the following day and gave an interesting talk about Bundanoon Station buildings.

Also in August we held our popular members' winter luncheon at the Bundanoon Guest House, organised by Jewel Hillier .... So August was definitely our busiest month ... phew.

Now on to **September** which turned out to be another month of firsts!



We raised the most finances ever at the Book Sale, and it was the first time we started our monthly meeting with a song. Bundanoon local Richard Officer set the scene for our guest speaker by singing his own composition about Bush Ranger Ben Hall. Richard was followed by Roger Bayley from Goulburn Historical Society who delighted us with a talk about Bush Rangers.

And I have already mentioned the Big Book Sale spearheaded by our sub-committee of Marianne Ward, Joy Brown, Neil Wright, Peter Goulding and their army of helpers. Then, to make sure we raised even more money ..... Kay Morgan came up with the brainchild of a raffle. Great prizes were donated and we raised an extra \$1336. Over the two days we smashed all records taking almost \$8000 and making a net profit of around \$7,000. This put a big smile on Treasurer Graham's face.

Well, after two hectic months, thankfully, **October** was a little more leisurely. Colin Reed gave an excellent talk about his recent book, *The History of Wingello*.

**November** was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ending of WW1 and as part of acknowledging this date, at earlier meetings, Ralph Clark, Robert Williams and Marianne Ward had given own their personal reflections leading up to the Armistice. Our guest speaker at the November meeting was Jennifer Milward from the Australian War Memorial who gave an emotive talk about the boy soldiers involved in the Great War. Then, on Armistice Day itself, we hosted for the village a free morning tea and film on *The Memorials of Australia*.... All arranged by Ralph.

At the end of the month we fitted in a tour of James Fairfax's old home, Retford Park and its paintings, which is now owned by the National Trust.

In **December**, Bruce McLaughlan gave an illustrated talk about their trip to Norway, followed by our traditional Christmas party lunch – once again catered for by the Lions Club. Elizabeth Cranny and her team did an amazing job, ably supported by our sub-committee of Jewel, Peter, Kerri and Di.

Now onto 2019. **January** and February are normally quiet months but not in the BHG! In January we had a coach trip to Canberra to the National Library for the Captain Cook exhibition, then onto the National Museum for lunch and the Rome exhibition. In **February** we hosted Dr Lea Day who told us more about the personalities involved, establishing Mittagong's Fitzroy Iron works back in the 1800's.

#### **Other activities:**

So that's the past year, chronologically.....month by month, but that's not all! There's still more to come..... hold on for Round 2 of our many other activities:

- Firstly, the management of the Archives by Helen and her team continues to be one of the backbones of the History Group. This includes looking



after our collection of Bundanoon pictures, fulfilling research queries, processing the orders for image copies.

- Then we have the opening of the Shed on Market Days and “high days”. This gives us a public profile and makes our collection more widely available. The new graphic displays designed by Helen have considerably raised the quality and interest of what we have to offer, plus Fred Angel’s regular Sunday appearance in the Shed is a real treasure. Fred continues to amaze us with his wonderful memory and stories of bygone days in Bundanoon.

In the background we have a team of volunteers to keep the Shed open. Peter Goulding manages the Shed maintenance; Neil Wright looks after the Shed de-humidifier; and Graham Morgan has Chief Rodent Officer duties.

Peter also continues his dialogue with Sydney trains who are taking ownership of the Shed from the Australian Rail Track Corporation. Part of that conversation is to transfer stuff from the storage at Moss Vale to one of the buildings on the Railway station.

- The regular posting of history and news on the website by Robert Seckington also increases our public profile, as does our monthly Newsletter, Then we have the Library (which Helen took over from Peter) which helps to keep us informed.
- We continue with the Oral History project, started in 2006 and until recently, very much driven by Marianne. Much has been accomplished this year in organising the many unique interviews for which we are the guardians. We have started digitising the records, backups are now held in Bundanoon and Mittagong; more members have been trained to conduct interviews; and we are investigating ways of automating transcriptions, as well as making interviews available online for more people to hear them.
- We also endeavour to reach out to the younger generation and the community at large:
  - Marianne, Pat and Helen went to the school to tell the kids what it was like growing up in Bundanoon in the old days, plus the school was involved in our Railway 150<sup>th</sup> day.
  - We hosted the U3A where a group of not quite so young visitors toured the Shed and Bundanoon
- Finally, advocacy has been another of our key community roles and we made representations to the Council on matters of Heritage concerning the historic Greason’s Abattoir and the Youth Hostel.



## **Acknowledgments:**

All of this illustrates what a busy lot we all are but more importantly, what's made it happen is all of you, the members.

Indeed, after I became President I was staggered by the number of people involved to keep the BHG running as a successful entity.

So, to finish off, I would like to acknowledge by name our many volunteers.

So, thank you Committee - Neil Wright as Vice President, Irene Brewster as Secretary, Treasurer Graham Morgan, Marianne Ward, Kerri Goulding, Jewel Hillier, Di Gray, Beryl Seckington, Helen Clark and Ralph Clark. You have been a supportive, hardworking and willing Committee, and we couldn't have done it without you.

Thanks also to Carol Gill for managing the duty rosters, Christine Cassin for opening the Shed; Graham Morgan for maintaining Membership Records and Public Officer duties; and Andrew Pardoe for maintaining the *JCG* index.

Thanks to Ralph Clark and Pam Davies for booking speakers, researching and organising amazing trips and fixing up the good weather.

Thanks to Peter Goulding (and Kerri in the background), Gil Wheaton and Helen Clark, Philip, for the Railway 150<sup>th</sup> sub committee plus Christine Janssen and the BCA for their support.

Thanks also to Peter who persuaded the Council and Pru Goward to donate funds to help cover the costs .

Thanks to Neil Wright, Marianne Ward, Joy Brown, Peter Goulding for the Big Book Sale and Kay Morgan for the Raffle.

Thanks to Helen and her archive team (Carol Cosgrove, Beryl Seckington, Ian Smith, Heather Turner and Jim Rooney), and Marianne and Ralph, for the Oral History team.

Thanks to Irene and Philip for support on the Newsletter and Robert for the web site. .... and finally, a big thanks to all who help at Meetings; Beryl and her understudies with the projector; John and Rosemary for setting up the Hall; and everyone who has made morning tea – long may this tradition continue.

I know there are many others who have contributed behind the scenes to make it the successful year that it was ..... too many to acknowledge today but I just want to say "Thank you to you all".

I have enjoyed serving as your president. It's been a great privilege, and I look forward to the coming year.

**David Brennen**

President

4 March 2019