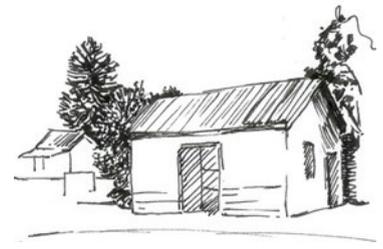


# Bundanoon History Group

## Monthly Newsletter

May 2019



### From the Committee

Hello everyone. As our President David Brennen is currently enjoying a holiday in France and Vice President Don Gray is away, I'm filling in for them and will run the June General Meeting. Before the meeting we will have our traditional Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and as guest speaker we welcome Luke Macdonald, Community relations coordinator, NSW Cancer Council Southern area. Thank you to all who have assisted with this special occasion.

The last month has been a busy time for all of us. Our excursions to Parramatta in June and the South Coast in September have both been organised with the help of Dianne and Don Gray, and Pam Davies.

At our last meeting, National Parks & Wildlife ranger Chris Kayser and I talked about the "Then and Now" for Morton National Park. After the meeting about 20 members attended a sausage sizzle at Echo Point in the Park. We thank the Lions Club for assisting with the barbeque.

Our Mothers' Day Raffle was drawn on 12 May. BHG member Annette Wade was the thrilled winner and a worthwhile \$1560 was banked. Graham and Kay Morgan extend their thanks to everyone who helped with running the raffle.

Best wishes, Ralph Clark



At Echo Point lookout after BBQ in Morton NP

Photo: Dianne Gray

### Coming Events

**Thursday June 20:** Parramatta River excursion. The coach will leave from outside the Old Goods Shed at 8.00am for Parramatta, where we will have morning tea at historic Hambledon Cottage, the second Macarthur property, followed by a talk and guided tour of the house. After lunch we board the Rivercat ferry for a leisurely cruise along the river to the City, seeing sites of historic interest among the amazing development which has occurred over past decades, before rejoining the coach for the trip home.

The all-inclusive cost is \$55; please bring your Opal card if you have one. Bookings to Graham Morgan please (*see contact details below*).

**Monday July 1:** BHG general meeting. Guest speaker Janet Black, on Tallong history.

**Friday July 12:** Oral History Morning Tea. 10am at Soldiers' Memorial Hall. All welcome, gold coin donation appreciated.

**Monday August 5:** BHG general meeting. Guest speaker Andrew Killingsworth, Sydney Trains.

**Monday September 2:** BHG general meeting. Speaker Helen Clark, on the Evolution of the Woodside Estate, Bundanoon.

### Tuesday - Thursday September 10-12: OUR BIG TOUR FOR THE YEAR

We will travel by way of Kangaroo Valley and Nowra, then through Milton, Ulladulla, Batemans Bay and Moruya to Narooma, where we stay for two nights.

On day two we spend time in Tilba Tilba and Central Tilba, before driving along the coast through Bermagui; Tathra, where we will see the damage caused by the 2018 fires; Merimbula; and Eden, where we will inspect the Whaling museum. The return leg will be through Pambula, Bega and Cobargo. The trip home on day three will be through Braidwood, with some interesting stops on the way.

The \$495 cost includes travel, accommodation, all meals, our traditional "happy hours" and admissions to historic homes and other places of interest.

Bookings to Treasurer Graham Morgan. A deposit of \$100 per person should accompany your booking to [morgan\\_gt1@yahoo.com.au](mailto:morgan_gt1@yahoo.com.au) or 4883 7714, or P.O. Box 180, Bundanoon.

**President:** David Brennen

**Vice President:** Don Gray

**Secretary:** Irene Brewster

**Treasurer:** Graham Morgan

**Committee:** Helen Clark, Ralph Clark, Dianne Gray, Kerri Goulding, Jewel Hillier, Beryl Seckington

**BHG Bank details:** BSB: 641 800 Account: 17104781 Ref: (your name or reference) **Website:** [www.bundanoonhistory.org.au](http://www.bundanoonhistory.org.au)

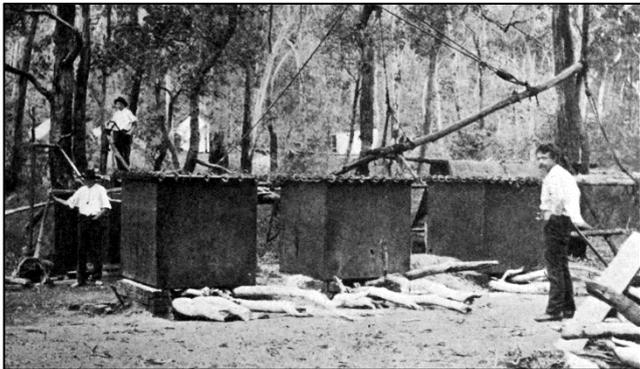
## Eucalyptus Oil (Part 2)

Philip Morton

### Eucalyptus oil a major local export by 1920s

As outlined in last month's article, the first colonial settlers in NSW were amazed by the efficaciousness of oil from the leaves of the native Eucalyptus tree and a distilling industry soon developed. It was found that a rare, high-yielding species *Eucalyptus Smithii* grew abundantly in the Southern Highlands.

By the early 1890s first-class oil was being produced locally in numerous distilleries at Hill Top, Mittagong and Wingello. The *Scrutineer* of 23 May 1894 reported that: "Mr Langshaw's eucalyptus factory at Wingello, which has been idle during the past two months, will commence operations and a large quantity of eucalyptus oil will be manufactured for the colonial and foreign markets."



Eucalyptus still at Wingello, c 1900

The *Bowral Free Press* of 26 November 1898 advised that: "The Australian Eucalyptus Oil Company is under the management of Mr Easson, brother to the chief at Joadja. He is a resident of Bowral, but the works are at Moss Vale, a large estate having been secured for the gathering of leaves; some six men are now engaged in felling and collecting, and the works are capable of indefinite extension."

The paper also outlined the distilling process and the product. "The leaf and fine twigs of the eucalyptus yield a volatile oil, which has a good commercial value both in a crude and refined state. Each variety of gum tree has an oil distinctive to itself, but the difference is chiefly perceptible in a laboratory, so slight is it."

"The usual procedure in an oil distillery is to fell the trees both small and great, and collect the tender twigs and leaves. These are finely chopped and placed with water in a closed boiler. The steam and vapour come away and are condensed in a coiled copper tube immersed in cold water. This first distillate is allowed to settle in a vessel with numerous taps, so all the floating oil is drawn off,

whilst the mixed residue of water and oil is collected in other vessels until enough is accumulated for redistillation. The crude oil is purchased by the wholesale druggists and through them finds its way in a refined state into all the chemist shops. It is purchased wholesale on analysis."

In April 1899 the *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* advised that Mr R T Baker, Curator of Sydney Technological Museum, had visited the eucalyptus oil stills of Wingello and Bundanoon. In conjunction with Mr H G Smith, the museum's chemist, Baker had done much to bring before the world the value of eucalyptus oil bearing trees of NSW. The above report makes it clear that the Southern Highlands ranked highly in regard to eucalyptus oil production and from it we learn that a still had opened here at Bundanoon. Over following years more were set up locally, including one at Bowral in 1903.

By the 1920s, eucalyptus oil was a major Australian export. Back in 1852 Joseph Bosisto, an emigrant pharmacist from England, had been encouraged by Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, the government botanist of Victoria, to begin commercial production of the oil. He obtained high-quality oil from a mallee-type tree that only grew near Bendigo in Victoria and at West Wyalong in NSW.

The Bosisto Company continued to expand, establishing a eucalyptus factory in the Southern Highlands at Mandemar in 1925. Other local manufacturers included William Quigg who distilled a special eucalyptus oil called Germinoll at his Paddy's River property, with sole manufacturing rights from Fauldings. A factory operated at Macdonald's Flat in the Joadja Creek area and oil was produced on the Mereworth property near Berrima from 1935 for export to Japan.

Australia dominated the world eucalyptus oil market for 80 years from the 1860s to the mid-1940s. Its market share then declined, and production in the local district ceased.

Australia wide, after World War II labour costs rose and the strong demand for wheat meant that drastic destruction of stands of high quality eucalyptus species occurred. Wheat growing was viewed as more profitable than eucalyptus oil production. Australian oil could not compete with Spanish eucalyptus oil on international markets.

Recently this downward trend has reversed, at least for medicinal purposes. Today, for air vaporisers, body and household cleaning, many people wouldn't be without a bottle of the 'dinkum oil'.