



## President's Report

Greetings,

It has been another hectic month for the committee as we try to have as much information as possible before our meeting on Monday 7 August.

It has been implied that some members feel that the decisions we must make have been called for on short notice. However that is not the case. Our Strategic Plan carried out and adopted in 2020 highlighted the decisions that we must make to move forward including whether we are to focus on a museum or an archive, the need to find a new home for the archival collection and how we increase our membership. The search for archival accommodation has been pursued over the years but with the society's extremely limited financial capacity and lack of suitable ground level premises we were unable to achieve this.

The grant funding for the installation of solar panels at the museum was purposely pursued (with three grant applications!) to reduce electricity accounts in the event that the archives had to move to the museum.

None of us could have foreseen the effect the pandemic would have on the society as well as our own lives. Our sudden removal from the Soldiers Memorial Hall in February brought to the fore our urgent need for a new home for the archives. In some ways the timing also worked for us, as it occurred during an electoral campaign and both candidates worked for our benefit. But now we only have eleven months till we must vacate the former ambulance station. For the future of the society the relocation of the archives must be carried out in an affordable manner without harnessing the society to a debt it cannot afford.

Crucial to any plans we make is the commitment of members and that includes taking on committee roles and subsequent sub-committees.

Our thanks go to Mayor Alan McGrath who has continued his efforts on our behalf to find alternative accommodation for our archives and to our local

member Wendy Tuckerman will be visiting us on 9 August.

It was a pleasure to have the Braidwood and District Historical Society committee visit the archives and museum on Saturday 1 July. (See p2). It was valuable for the exchange of information and ideas we shared over morning tea and lunch hosted by Paul and Annette Briggs.

We were saddened to hear of the recent passing of member Alan Stewart who was a valued volunteer at our museum for a number of years. We send our sincere sympathy to his wife Anne and family. (See p2)

This and subsequent *Yandoo* newsletters will be available on our website [www.yassarchives/activities](http://www.yassarchives/activities).

I hope to see you at Monday's meeting.

*Cheryl Mongan*  
President

## August Meeting

It has been pleasing to have already received a number of written responses to our discussion paper that was circulated recently, including several very comprehensive replies. The meeting will focus on resolving the operations of the museum and archives. Please join us at 2pm on Monday 7 August at the Uniting Church Hall for this important meeting.

## Membership Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on 1 September.

Please note the following. Members will be communicated wherever possible by email and receive digital copies of newsletters and *Boongaroon*.

If you require a hard copy of *Boongaroon* mailed twice yearly please add a further \$10 to your subscription.

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- ◆ **Monday 7 August**  
**Monthly meeting**  
**Uniting Church Hall 2pm**  
**Discussion on future of YDHS**
- ◆ **Monday 4 September**  
**Monthly meeting**  
**Uniting Church Hall 2pm**  
**Speaker to be advised**
- ◆ **Monday 9 October**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Uniting Church Hall 2pm**  
**Speaker Dr Cameron Archer**



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OUR SOCIETY VALUES THE SUPPORT OF

**yass valley council**

the country the people

**Museums  
& Galleries  
of NSW**



**Australian Government  
Department of Industry, Science,  
Energy and Resources.**



ALAN STEWART WAS A VALUED VOLUNTEER AT OUR MUSEUM FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS.  
[CHERYL MONGAN]



BRAIDWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT PETER SMITH AND COMMITTEE RECENTLY VISITED OUR MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES.



IDENTIFYING PHOTOGRAPHS IS NEW MEMBER SHIRLEY PETTY.  
[VIVIAN BUGDEN]



MAUREEN GRIEVES IS ASSISTING IN IDENTIFYING PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE ARCHIVAL COLLECTION  
[VIVIAN BUGDEN]

## Vale—Alan Stewart

Yass and District Historical Society has recently lost one of the stalwarts of our group but most particularly one of our museum guiding team. Alan Stewart died recently after increasingly poor health. He had been a regular at our museum since joining the society in April 2017 until his poor health forced him to withdraw from guiding at our museum.

Alan was always a keen and enthusiastic person and guide. He clearly enjoyed history and the museum. His energy and interest in history also extended to the Yass Railway Museum. He was always good with our visitors who appreciated his enthusiasm and friendliness. Alan was always willing to help out, and was one who would often fill vacancies in the roster at short notice.

He had a keen interest in sport especially cricket and the pony club movement which he spoke of at one of our meetings and the trophies and memorabilia he had in his collection. His involvement in Pony Club began in 1949, in what was then Southern Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe] where his family lived on a farm. Both he and his sister were introduced to Polo crosse before the family left Southern Rhodesia in 1958.

In 1986 Alan and his family moved to Murrumbateman from Sydney and he and his daughter joined the Murrumbateman Pony Club. As an adult rider he competed around the district and continued to do so until 1999 but still continued his association with the club.

In 2012 Alan was awarded Life Membership *'in recognition of the many years of contribution and outstanding service to the Murrumbateman Pony Club'*. (For further details of his involvement in Club see *Boongaroon* October 2017 pp29-37). Alan participated in numerous activities. And had a strong belief in the value of sporting, service, educational and cultural groups and the major role they play in cementing communities together.

Alan's smiling face and enthusiasm will be missed by many in our Society, but most particularly by our museum guides and visitors who will miss his energetic and positive contribution to our museum over the years.

*Susan O'Leary and Adrian Cameron.*

## Braidwood Committee Visit

Braidwood Historical Society President Peter Smith and his fellow committee members arrived at our archives on the very cold morning of 1 July.

Introductions were made over morning tea before they had an up close look at our archives. Included are comments from his letter of thanks *'You inspired us with your organisation, cataloguing and recording. Your archives are very comprehensive and well organised. Since our tour we have had numerous discussions about our way forward following your example.'*

A delicious luncheon at the home of Paul and Annette Briggs was a further opportunity to discuss a variety of subjects before making our way to the museum where the committee took time to look at our displays especially *Movers and Shakers* and the Shearsby exhibition. Peter wrote *'Our museum, displays and exhibitions are quite different, but you tell your story well and we learned from your structure.'*

Peter said that they will look forward to welcoming us once their museum redevelopment is completed.

## Museum

As part of the discussion on the future of the museum the committee has been seeking quotes for various works that might be undertaken should the archives be relocated there.

At a time when tradesmen have so much work it has been a challenge to do this but we are persevering. Anyone who has had recent dealings with builders and other trades will know how difficult it can be.

It has been decided that the museum will not reopen on the October long weekend to facilitate the reorganisation and de-accessioning of objects in the collection that are not in accord with our Collection Policy. This will mean better storage for the objects and greater accessibility for volunteers. Our *Movers and Shakers* exhibition will move online in the near future.

## New members

We are very pleased to extend a warm welcome to two new members Natalie Skinner and Mike Cusack who joined us this month. We hope that they will enjoy their association with the Society.



## July Meeting

For long term members of the society Dr Jeff Brownrigg is no stranger having supported our events, seminars and meetings for thirty years. He can always be counted on to deliver an interesting and enlightening account of a vast array of subjects and the same can be said of his presentation *Spirits of Old Canberra and Elsewhere: Hauntings and History*.

He delved into the history behind hauntings and circumstances that have led to reports of ghostly sightings across many cultures. From a personal perspective he heard of ghostly tales from his grandmother, childhood adventures in the local cemetery and during his time at the University of York (UK) where porters only worked in pairs and of ghostly legions of Roman soldiers marching along roads now buried waist high.

Jeff, a non-believer in ghosts, related his own encounter with a crowd of sepia coloured men clad in early twentieth century garb, complete with bowler hats, blocking the main corridor of the National Film and Sound Archives. As it turned out others had also experienced strange and inexplicable events in the archive that once was Canberra's morgue before it became the Institute of Anatomy housing the remains of countless humans and even a horse—Phar Lap.

The staff witnessed mystifying events where equipment was moved around or thrown to the floor and alarms repeatedly set off for no apparent reason. Visitors to the building, including children encountered unexplained figures. Even a dog refused to cross a particular part of the floor during a night time visit. These experiences in the archive, plus ghostly happenings in Old Parliament House and the Australian War Memorial in Canberra led Jeff and several others to conduct a series of night tours of the buildings with participants experiencing a range of sensations.

Closer to home Jeff went on to mention the apparition of a nun on the balcony of Mount Carmel Convent during a YDHS function and the stories, sounds and smells that have been reported from Galong.

Jeff has written of his experiences in a new publication *Heaven, Earth and Canberra; Shakespeare and the Ghosts of Australia's National Film and Sound Archive*.

## Archives

Archives Co-ordinator Maureen Collins is extremely pleased to have archives volunteers working two days a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays and getting on with some great projects that continue to add to our knowledge of local history and the people who made it.

Our latest recruits Corrine Chalmers and Lilian Coulton have joined us on Thursdays and are working on a backlog of tasks that are important to clear as soon as possible. Sheree Bamforth, Maureen Grieves and Shirley Petty are part of the Tuesday team involved with indexing records and identifying photographs in the collection.

Recently added to our indexed collection are records related to the Pastures Protection Board, which includes records of brands for livestock, maps of stock routes, eradication of rabbits, maps of properties affected by bushfires and much more. A fascinating source of information for anyone interested in the agricultural history of the district.

Wilma Tanswell and Maureen Collins attend to research enquiries while Rosalie Bush maintains our newspaper indexes and Vivian Bugden continues to work on the minute books of the Yass Soldiers Club. Our library has been reorganised by Judith Davidson and Vivian Bugden especially important after the move from the Soldiers Memorial Hall and before we must move again. A number of surplus history books from the collection and donated books will be sold and the funds used to bolster the society's finances.

## Library Week

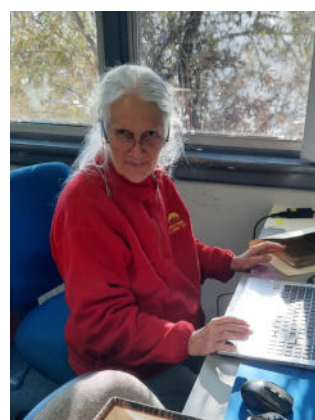
President Cheryl Mongan conducted a session at the local library on Wednesday 2 August as part of the Library Week program during National Family History Month. Titled *Three Essentials for Family Historians* it gave practical tips to take attendees beyond the basic birth, death and marriage certificates. To fully appreciate the people who made you we can learn far more—how they lived, their successes and even failures by using libraries, online resources and a frequently overlooked invaluable resource—the local archives. These resources can reveal astonishing stories of individuals and families and can explain where certain family talents and traits came from. Practical research tips and shortfalls of some popular family history websites were included in the session.



DR JEFF BROWNRIGG RELATED HISTORY AND HAUNTINGS PEPPERED WITH PERSONAL EXPERIENCES. [CHERYL MONGAN]



ARCHIVES VOLUNTEER SHEREE BAMFORTH IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON TRANSCRIBING THE MURRUMBATEMAN SCHOOL REGISTER. [JUDITH DAVIDSON]



EX— NATIONAL ARCHIVES STAFFER LILIAN COULTON IS ONE OF OUR NEWER ARCHIVES VOLUNTEERS. [CHERYL MONGAN]



MEMBER CORRINE CHALMERS HAS VOLUNTEERED TO INDEX THE RECORD CARDS OF THE RUBBER CONTROL BOARD.. [CHERYL MONGAN]

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 Museum: 247A Comur Street, Yass  
 GPS -34.846457, 148.914576  
 Archives: former ambulance station  
 88 Meehan Street, Yass  
 GPS -34.84183, 148.91211  
 Phone: 0413 312 081 (President)  
 0450 338 379 (Vice Pres)  
 6226 2132 (Vice Pres)  
 (Secretary)  
 E-mail: [info@yasshistory.org.au](mailto:info@yasshistory.org.au)

## Find us on the web

[www.yasshistory.org.au](http://www.yasshistory.org.au)

## Benefits of Membership

Benefits of membership include informative speakers at our meetings, digital copies of our journal *Boongaroon* and newsletters, talks, trips, access to archival information and museum entrance plus reduced rates for selected activities such as seminars, our conferences, trips and events.

### *We are still need books!*

Further donations of pre-loved family and local history are always welcome. The sale of these books generate much needed income for the society. During July we had donations from Jenny Brooks and Aedeon Cremin. Bring your books to meetings or call Cheryl Mongan 0413 312 081 to arrange for collection.

#### PATRON

Marion McCarthy

#### ELECTED OFFICE BEARERS

President: Cheryl Mongan  
 Vice President: Judith Davidson  
 Nola Bindon  
 Secretary: Vacant  
 Treasurer: Tanya Cullen  
 Publicity Officer: Vacant



Museum Coordinator: Vacant  
 Archives Coordinator: Maureen Collins  
 Public Officer: Rosalie Bush



Yass & District Historical Society Inc is affiliated with the Museums Australia & Royal Australian Historical Society



ANOTHER ARCHIVAL TREASURE! CERTIFICATE GIVEN BY THE NSW PREMIER TO VOLUNTEERS WHO MANNED THE WHARVES DURING THE STRIKE OF 1917. MORE THAN TWENTY LOCAL MEN VOLUNTEERED TO LEAVE THEIR OWN BUSINESSES AND JOBS TO COVER THE LABOUR SHORTAGE.

[YDHS INC]

## Boongaroon

Compiling an interesting edition of our journal is almost always a challenge. While our focus is on local history we must not lose sight of the fact that it does tie into the bigger picture of national and even global history. Immigration, punishment, wars, pandemics, natural disasters, politics, depressions, adverse weather conditions and a host of other factors occurring elsewhere can have significant impacts on our local history. If you have a story to tell we would like to hear from you.

We welcome stories, articles, book reviews and other items of interest (up to 2,500 words) for publication. Longer articles will be considered but may be published in two parts. *Boongaroon* is posted or a digital copy emailed to all members according to their preference. Articles for the next issue are required by the end of August but if you have a work in progress please contact Cheryl Mongan 0413 312 081 email [boongaroon@yasshistory.org.au](mailto:boongaroon@yasshistory.org.au)

**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**  
 To assist the committee and spread the administrative work of the society we still need a secretary and publicity officer.  
 Can you help?

## Diary Dates

### August 2023

Tues 1	Archives 2-5pm
Wed 2	Library talk 2pm
Mon 7	Monthly Meeting 2pm
Tues 8	Archives 2-5pm
Tues 15	Archives 2-5pm
Tues 22	Archives 2-5pm
Tues 29	Archives 2-5pm

### September 2023

Mon 4	Monthly Meeting 2pm
Tues 5	Archives 2-5pm
Tues 12	Archives 2-5pm
Tues 19	Archives 2-5pm
Tues 26	Archives 2-5pm

## Coming Up—book sale

We have gathered quite a collection of pre-loved history and family history publications. A full list will be emailed to members shortly ahead of the list being placed on our website. Keep an eye out for some bargains.

## Legacy Centenary



## Articles for Yass Valley Times

We are still looking for members to write short articles for inclusion in our local newspaper the *Yass Valley Times*. Amongst our members area are a number of teachers and history buffs who might consider writing an article or two. The articles need not be long 400-500 words are ideal and suitable images for most topics are held in our archives. If you can assist we would appreciate an email to [yassarchives@gmail.com](mailto:yassarchives@gmail.com).