

NEWSLETTER



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The Benalla Family Research Group
is a friendly, helpful and dedicated group of people who are striving to collate our local
history and maintain it for future generations.

Visitors are always made very welcome and the Research team are available to assist with
any enquiries on finding relatives and ancestors.

The group encourages and welcomes new
members, as the resources available are very valuable to a person seeking to learn more
about their family tree.

Our normal open days are Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 4 pm.
Please note we are not open on Saturdays except by appointment.

We will open at other times if necessary, by appointment.

Please contact us via the contact form on our Website ...

or email our Secretary or President

Wendy Webster - secretary@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org

Bill Willett – president@benallafamilyresearchgroup.org

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Hello Everyone,

Your last newsletter for 2019.

The newsletter is collated from information received from a variety of sources.

It will only be good reading if I have lots of information to share with you.

So, if you have a family history story you would like to share or some photos that would be of interest please let me know.

I would like to thank our members-

The Research team, Bill and Wendy W and Judi for their input this month.

I do hope you enjoy reading everything that is included.

You can contact me via my personal email address or leave articles at the group's room for me to collect.

Or you may write to me at 169 Webb Road, Goorambat 3725. If you prefer to call me my home number is 5763 3229.

Meredith

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello All,

Welcome to the December Newsletter.

Everything has been moving along nicely thanks to the efforts of those that have attended the rooms in the past three months.

Firstly, the calendars, taken over by Neil and Ray this year, have been selling like hotcakes. We are already up to 240 sold and there are still 4 weeks to go until the New Year when they will be used. Well done fellas. They are a big boost to the coffers of the group allowing us to purchase extras for the comfort of the members.

Secondly, the library has had some real attention from Judi, Cheryl Anne and Rosemary in the last couple of months. The old A3 folders are being downsized to make them more convenient to use, new books catalogued and old books re-numbered with their compactor position and placed in the correct position so that anyone can find them, IF they are replaced in the same position after being used by members in the rooms. It is therefore important that we all use the markers supplied on the front of each compactor to make sure they are replaced correctly and not undo all the good work done by the librarians. Topographical maps have been placed in the map drawer, next to the map cabinets.

Research has had a revival of late and the girls are busy again satisfying clients requests, in between continuing with their family history charts, and updating some of the research on buildings in Benalla.

Kelvin is continuing with the rates and is now working on 1926 rate books for the early Benalla Shire, while I continue to check and streamline the indices of the rates and the name index we have produced.

The "Day in the Gardens" was a successful turnout and thanks to those who manned the tables and sold calendars and raffle tickets. Raffle was won by Nancy Mobbs who took the quilt, Pamela O'Connor, Mary Millar and Wendy Webster, so all up the membership cleaned up the raffle in total.

We were invited to the unveiling of the Siva Singh memorial, complete with a Howship Photograph, on the Benalla foreshore on Saturday and recorded the ceremony and proceedings for posterity.

Some very exciting research has been uncovered by Barry O'Connor, who has written a book on a very significant Benalla personality, and is currently in negotiation with the Council and other participants to erect a memorial to this man. More to come on this in the near future.

Unfortunately, Wendy Webster's wonderful works on the Winton Cemetery didn't get up in the recent History Awards but continues to be upgraded and available to the group members.

I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at our breakup on December 18th, with a plate in hand to share at the group rooms, around 12.00 o'clock. Have a safe and happy Christmas. Cheers, Bill.

RESEARCH NEWS

Research on the “Boughyards” has now been completed for the Binnie family.

Research on Bernard Boles, an artist and art critic who was born in Benalla in 1912, was commissioned by La Trobe University Art Institute in early October. They were hoping to find descendants so that they could obtain copyright permission for his artwork. After extensive investigation, siblings, nieces and nephews were discovered, however no direct descendants were found. \$200 has been paid for this research.

Other research which has been requested include:

- Searching for the arrival in Australia of Arthur Jordan between 1925 – 1927
- Details about Constable Patrick Day, born in Ireland in 1833 and who died and was buried in Benalla Cemetery in 1900.
- The location of the farm of Alfred T Elliott in the Reef Hills area.

In late October a couple visited searching for information on Gabriel Church and family. They spent a day and a half in our rooms looking at books, family histories and maps and were very pleased with their discoveries.

We also had a visit from a father and son from Western Australia who are researching their Benalla Guppy ancestors living at “Moore Park” Goomalibee. They thoroughly enjoyed their time in our research room and loved Benalla. They plan to return in April next year.

Another visitor was looking for corroboration of the date of her birth. This was found in a notice in the Benalla Ensign in 1956.

The Thoona Cemetery records have been indexed and are available for searching on the research computer.

New folders have been started for “Farm Properties” and “Houses and Buildings of Benalla”. These are situated on top of the research filing cabinet. We have been donated a folder on “Morago” by one of the owners, Nicole Hald, and this has been added to the “Farm Properties” folder.

Photographs of “Somerset” and the Holden family of Upper Ryan’s Creek have been donated to us and have been placed in the Howship Collection under District Properties. A family history and tree, including these photos is being completed, and will be placed in the Family History section of the library.

Various rates have been done, including a house in Benson Street and one in Benalla Street, the Cameron property in Winton, and McCauley’s of Samaria.

LIBRARY NEWS

Instead of listing new books in the Library I thought that I would give our members an insight into some of our holdings other than Benalla.

As not all our ancestors are originally from Benalla and those who were born here often moved on. The following are the histories of Victorian towns or areas we have in our Library.

Alexandra, Almonds, Bairnsdale, Ballarat, Beechworth, Bellarine Shire, Bendigo, Berwick Shire, Boisdale, Bonnie Doon, Briagalong, Broadford, Brocken Creek, Buffalo Valley. Burwood, Caniambo, Cobram, Croydon, Devenish, Dimboola Shire, Doncaster, Dookie, Dunkeld, Dunolly, Edi, Essendon, Euroa, Geelong, Greta, Goorambat, Hamilton, Healesville, Heathcote, Katamatite, Kialla, Kilmore, Koo-Wee-Rup, Kyabram, Kyneton, Lake Rowan, Lilydale, Lima, Loddon Area, Longwood, Melbourne, Maindample, Mansfield Valley, Maryborough, Molesworth, Mordialloc, Mollyullah-Upper Ryans Creek, Moyhu, Myrtleford, Nathalia, Nunawading, Ocean Grove, Patho, Piggoreet, Queenscliff, Richmond, Rochester Shire, Rodney Shire, Ross Creek, Sale, Sandy Creek, Samaria Valley, Sebastopol, Seymour, Shepparton, South Melbourne, St James, Stanhope, Stawell, Swanpool, Swan Hill, Strathbogie, Sunshine, Traralgon, Templestowe, Terip-Ruffy, Tolmie, Tungamah, Upotipotpon, Violet Town, Wandiligong, Wangaratta, Warrnambool, Warracknabeal, Warrenbayne, Waverley, Wedderburn, Westmeadows, Wilby, Willowmavin, Winton, Wonnangatta Station, Yackandandah, Yea.

If you have any ancestors coming from any of the above areas, please come in and peruse or contact our Secretary.

Also donated to our group by Sheila Burnell was her collection of WW1 books in total 25 which now complement our large collection of Military books.

Sheila used these books to research for her book "Violet Town Avenue of Honour"

Judi Ryan
Librarian

CONDOLENCES

It is with sadness that I advise our members of the passing of Mrs Win Freemantle the mother of Kelvin on November 23rd.

Our Group Family wish to convey our sincere sympathy to Kelvin, his wife Bev and their two sons and all their extended family.

CAN YOU HELP?

The group members are always busy on their days in the rooms.

They are-

Indexing rate books

Cataloguing new resources

Researching people's family history

Designing Family History Charts

And we are always looking for people to help in the rooms with library duties and general indexing of books. We have the gear and the know-how; all we want is you.

Can you spare a day occasionally to help?

No task would be difficult to do, and you would be most welcome.

We can promise a cuppa, a friendly chat and something nice for morning or afternoon tea in our little kitchen.

MEETING DATES

For your information the committee usually meets on 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11.00am.

2020 Dates

February 19th

March 18th

April 15th

May 20th

June 17th

July 15th

August 19th

September 16th

October 21st

November 18th

If you wish to attend one of the monthly meetings please advise the President Bill Willett.

We are pleased that Cr Danny Claridge attends our meeting representing Benalla Rural City Council.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE ROOMS

Thank you to Kelvin Freemantle, Bill Willett, Ros Hunt and Jo Wise. The Rates have been completed up to 1924 and Kelvin is currently working on the 1926 years.

TAKING A BREAK OVER CHRISTMAS

Please be advised that the last day the group will have the rooms open for research is Wednesday December 18th.

A short meeting will be held on this day at 11 am. followed by a luncheon in the rooms where members will bring a plate of meat/salad to share.

It will give us all a chance to catch up, share lunch together and wish each other a Happy Christmas.

The rooms will be open again on January 14th 2020.

OUR WEBSITE

<http://www.benallafamilyresearchgroup.org/>

Some of the links on our website

<http://www.benallafamilyresearchgroup.org/publications>

<http://www.benallafamilyresearchgroup.org/libraryrecords>

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THE BENALLA ENSIGN & THE O'SHEA FAMILY

The Benalla Ensign first began publication in 1857 and was the first paper in the Benalla district. It was known as *The Benalla Ensign and Farmers' and Squatters' Journal* in 1868. This was superseded by the 'North Eastern Ensign' in April 1872 and was published under this title until February 1938 when it returned to the original name. The owners from 1887 to 1977 were the **O'Shea Family**.

John Guare O'Shea was born at Kilmore in 1858. When about sixteen years of age he commenced his apprenticeship in the printing trade in the "Kilmore Free Press" office and began his journalistic career under the guidance of a prominent Victorian journalist, the Hon. Thomas Hunt. Within four years he became editor of Hunt's paper and not long after, he moved to Tungamah where he was appointed editor of the 'Moira Independent'. Following this position, he took charge of the 'Booroondara Standard' for a short period and yet still unsettled, he made yet another change by transferring his energies to the "Despatch" at Wangaratta for about two years. It was there that he decided to purchase 'The North Eastern Ensign', which he ably conducted for close on 37 years, during which period he also purchased the "Woodend Star."

John married Mary Ann Mullins in South Melbourne in 1890. Mary was born in County Limerick, Ireland, and when a young woman she came to Australia on a trip with some friends and relatives. She returned to Ireland for a few years and then returned to Australia to make it her permanent home. Following her marriage to John she came to Benalla where she made her home and resided for over half a century. During the whole of that time she took a very personal interest in the publication of the 'Benalla Ensign', and, on the death of her husband twenty-six years prior to her own death she continued its publication with members of her family, namely John and Maie O'Shea.

John and Mary had six children, the first child born, John Guare O'Shea, was born in 1893 and only survived for three months. The following year in 1894 Eileen Guare O'Shea was born. She was a primary teacher at State School 31 and Benalla East.

Harold Guare O'Shea was born in 1897 and was richly endowed with much of the talent and ability of his gifted father. He was educated at St. Joseph's School, the High School, and later studied Law at the University of Melbourne. During his thirty years' association with the Customs Department in Melbourne, he was for many years attached to the Investigation Department in Melbourne.

In 1898 Kathleen Guare O'Shea was born. At the age of twenty-eight years Kathleen married Jack Green who worked in the Bank of Victoria.

In 1900 twins John (Jack) Guare O'Shea and Mary (Maie) Guare O'Shea were born.

The O'Shea family lived in Cecil Street; their home being known as 'Tara'. All the O'Shea siblings contributed to the newspaper in various ways, but it was the twins, Jack and Maie, who took control after their father's death in 1925. For over fifty years they were the disseminators of information to the community of Benalla and district.

When John jnr. O'Shea died in early 1977, Maie took on the roles of Editor and reporter for a short period of time until her retirement later in that same year. She enjoyed ten years of retirement prior to her death in 1987.

The Siva Singh memorial plaque was unveiled on November 23rd in front of a number of the Sikh community, many who had travelled some distances to attend.

Head Granthi Rajvinder Singh placed this special orange scarf around Cr Don Firth's neck.

Cr Firth was given the honour of unveiling the memorial stone and plaque.



Len Kenna speaking at the Siva Singh memorial event on the lawns at the Benalla Lake foreshore.

Please check out these website links of interest.

<http://www.benalla.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/News-Media-Publications/News-Announcements/Proposed-Memorial>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/victoria-commemorates-one-of-the-earliest-indian-hawkers-siva-singh>

<http://australianindianhistory.com/newsletter/>

<http://australianindianhistory.com/indian-migration-into-australia/>

<http://australianindianhistory.com/books/>

<https://www.facebook.com/australianindianhistory/>



Head Granthi Rajvinder Singh performs a blessing shortly after the memorial was unveiled



Crystal Jordan and Len Kenna visited our rooms in May 2017 as special guests at our AGM and gave us a wonderful presentation on the Australian Indian Historical Society that they are involved with.

Crystal and Len have written many books and have completed many hours of research on the history of Indian people.

REMEMBRANCE DAY AT TUNGAMAH

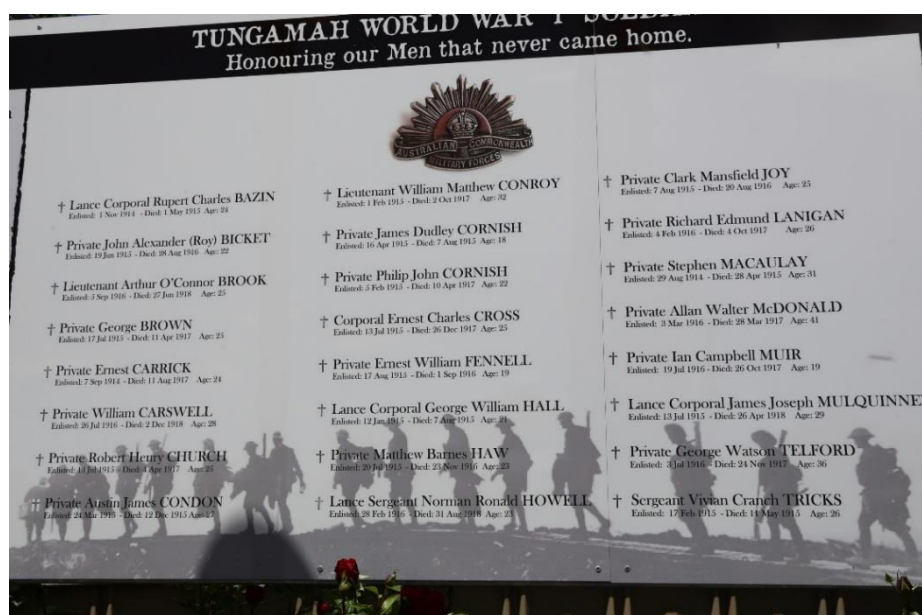


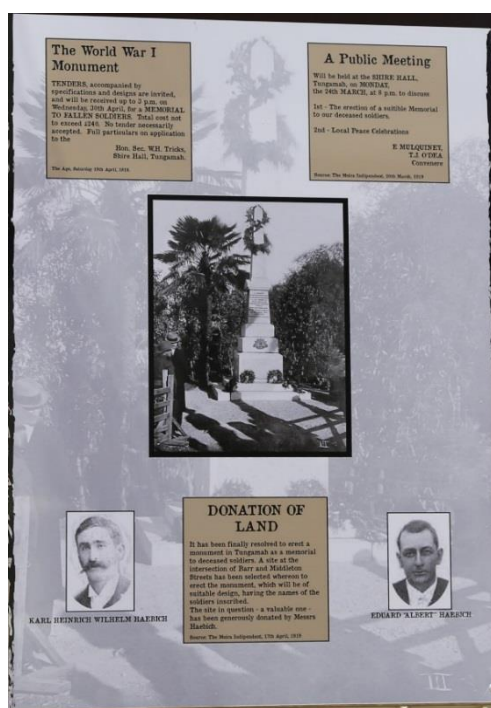
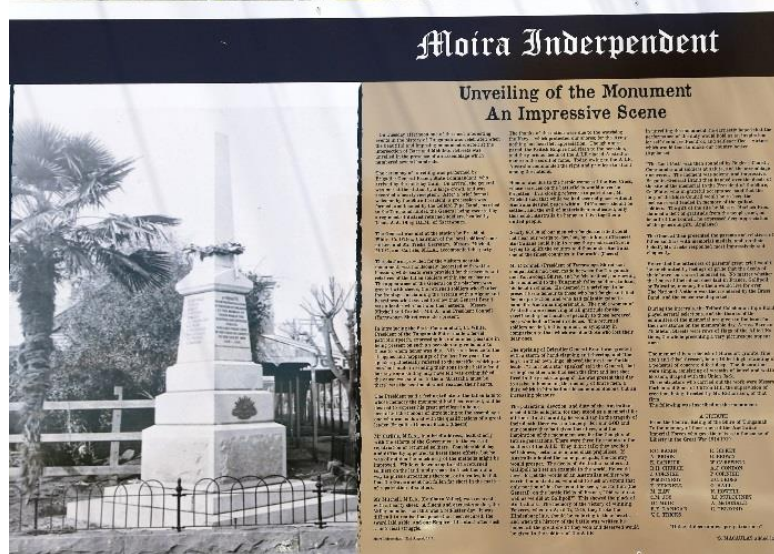
The Tungamah Cenotaph is situated on the corner of Barr and Middleton Streets.

The Tungamah community held a special Remembrance Day Service on Sunday November 10th. There was a Scottish Piper who led the parade of school children, young Army boys and the re-enactment soldiers to the Cenotaph where the commemoration service commenced.

There is now a wonderful mural behind the Cenotaph depicting some history and photographs from World War One.

Twenty-four local lads went to War and did not return. Their information and histories were researched. So many young men from a small community lost. Their names are now listed on one of the panels. Never to be forgotten for their sacrifice.



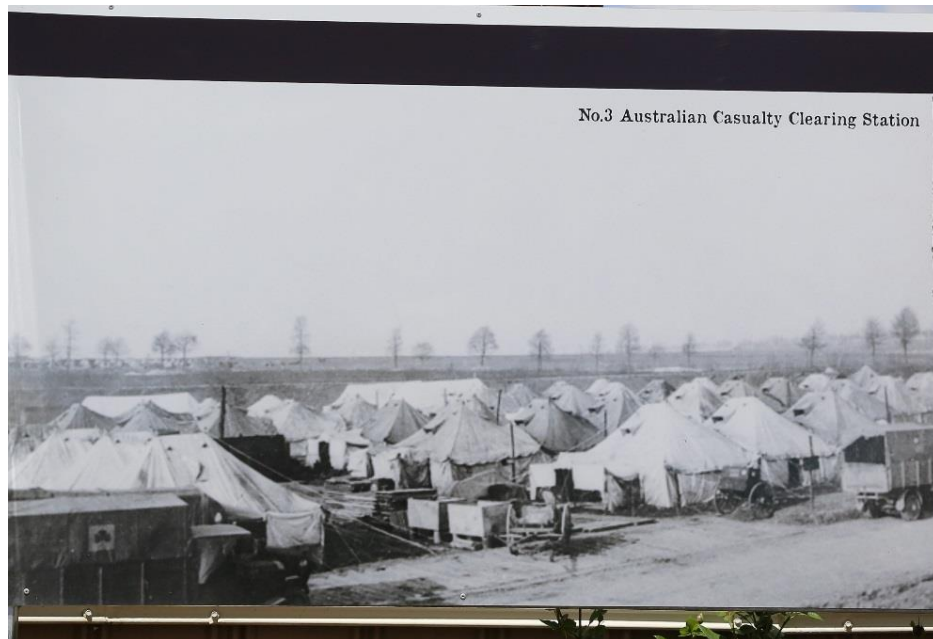


The community put on a great day for the families of those lost sons and for the local people who attended.

Wreaths were laid and all those present marvelled at the wonderful mural panels.

The Soldiers' Memorial Hall was open to the public. There are so many interesting and informative documents, newspaper articles, photographs, booklets and items from the past to view.

Upstairs behind the stage, morning tea was served. The community really put on a great spread.





Re-enactment soldiers added to the memorial unveiling in their WW1 uniforms.

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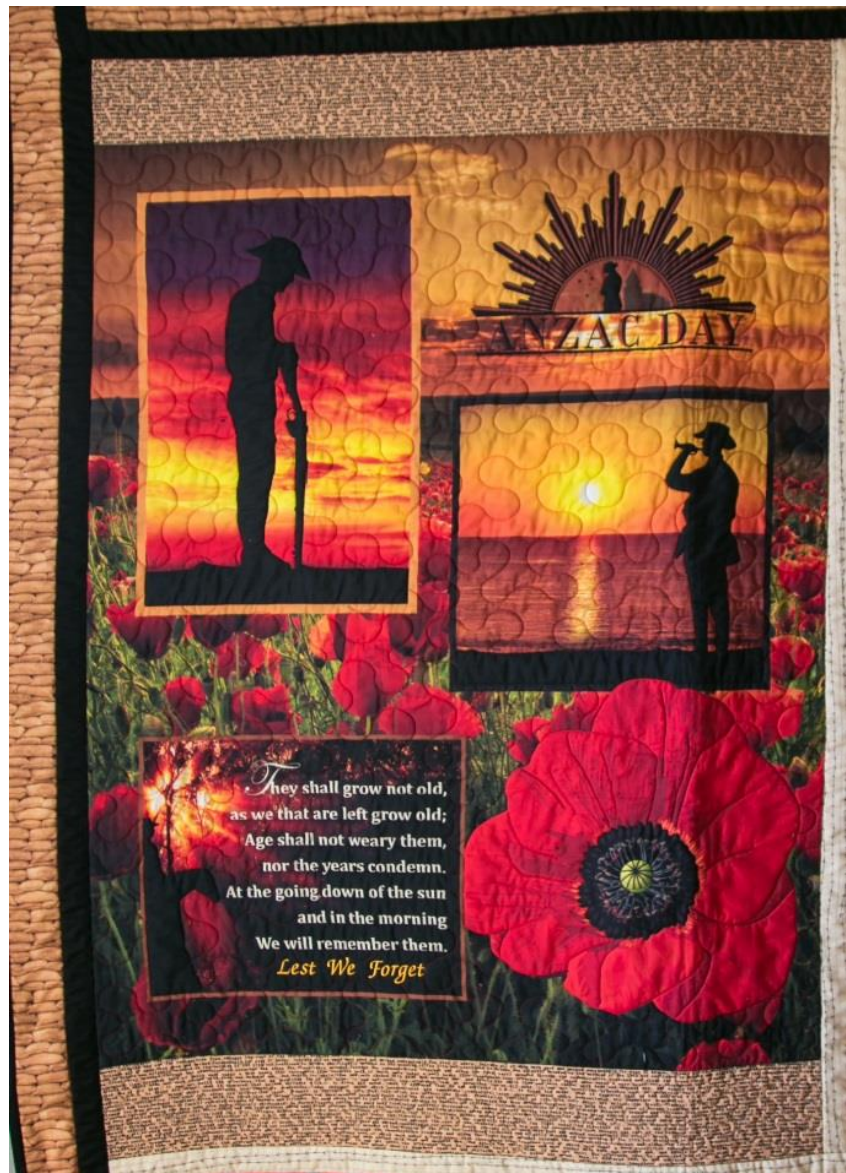
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This beautiful quilt was adorning the doorway leading visitors into the Soldiers' Memorial Hall at Tungamah.

I would encourage you to visit Tungamah, see the newly painted silo and pub fence, via the North East Silo Trail taking in Goorambat, Devenish and St James.

The silos are amazing and well worth the trip.



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2020 CALENDAR OLD BENALLA & DISTRICT



Front Cover



January



February



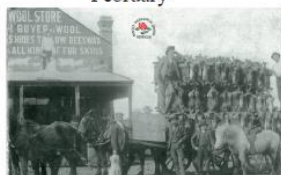
March



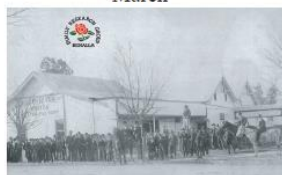
April



May



June



July



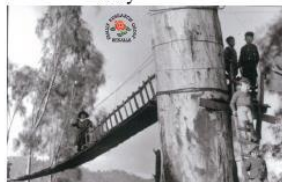
August



September



October



November



December

This calendar is a fundraising project of the Benalla Family Research Group Inc.
and can be purchased at the Benalla West Post Office,
Millers Department Store, Stuck On Stationery, the Pink Shop
& the Benalla Visitor Information Centre.

Cost \$10.

Each year our Group produces a quality calendar for the following year.
The calendars are very reasonably priced at just \$10.00 and are for purchase at our
rooms along with the following places-

- Millers Department Store- 85 Bridge Street East. 5762 2311
- Benalla Library- 2 Fawcner Drive, Benalla. 5762 2069
- Benalla Visitor Information Centre-14 Mair Street, Benalla. 5762 1749
- Pink Shop- 167 Bridge Street East, Benalla. 5762 2135
- Benalla West Post Office- 24a Bridge Street West. 5762 1243

We are very grateful to them for supporting the Group.

DISCLAIMER

The Group and Editor do not hold themselves responsible for statements or opinions expressed by authors of papers published in this newsletter.

The accuracy of offers, services or goods appearing here cannot be vouched for by the Group.

The Editor reserves the right to condense and edit articles to meet the approved size limit of our newsletter.

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