

THE Cedar Log

Issue No 169 – September 2026

Ballina Family History Society Inc.

Ballina | New South Wales | Australia



The Committee of Management 2026-2027

(L to R) Judith Cosgrove, Secretary; Jann Rowe, Assistant Editor and Committee Member; Ross Glover, Committee Member; Vicki Evans, President; Ann Emery, Vice President; Jill McCann, Library Officer and Committee Member; Jan Ousby, Membership Secretary and Welfare Officer; Deb Warren, Editor, The Cedar Log, and Treasurer.

ISSN 0817-0185

ISSN 2203-0255

Free to Members

43rd Year of Publication

\$4 for Non-Members

We acknowledge the Nyangbul people of the Bundjalung nation as the traditional custodians of the land and rivers where this journal is produced. We pay respect to their elders past and present and honour their culture, history and tradition of storytelling.

Ballina Family History Society Incorporated.

(Incorporated in New South Wales)

Location: Marie Hart Library, 6 Regatta Avenue, Ballina, NSW Australia

Website: Under construction

Mobile: 0402 385 681

All correspondence to be forwarded to:

Secretary

Ballina Family History Society Inc.

PO Box 817

BALLINA NSW 2478

Or email: secretaryrtfhs1@yahoo.com

Patron: Martyn Killion, BA, Grad. Dip App. Science (Information), Dip FHS

Honorary Fellowships: Suzanne Warmerdam, Frank Harvey, Carol Brown, Robyn Hilan, Kerrie Alexander.

President: Vicki Evans

presidentrtfhs@gmail.com

Vice President: Ann Emery

Secretary: Judith Cosgrove

secretaryrtfhs1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Deb Warren

Library Officer: Jill McCann

Journal Editor: Deb Warren

editorcedarlog@gmail.com

Assistant Editor: Jann Rowe

Public Officer: Judith Cosgrove

Publicity Officer: Vacant

Web Manager: Geoff Rosten

Membership Secretary: Jan Ousby

Social Events: Kerry Walker

Social Media: Cheryl Gibbes

IT Coordinator: Vacant

Research Officer: Vacant

Committee: Ross Glover, Jill McCann, Jan Ousby, Jann Rowe

Societies exchanging e-journals please contact:

Email: richmondttweedfhs@yahoo.com.au

The Marie Hart Library: Opening hours: 10am to 4pm Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Closed first Saturday of the month 1pm – 4 pm and public holidays.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Features

What I have learned about my ancestors from cemeteries | Jill McCann.. 11

Headstones and what we can learn from them | Ross Glover 16

A gold rush story | Dawn Lotty 21

Tragedy strikes again on the Tweed Heads Bar | Jan Ousby..... 27

Society

Editorial | Deb Warren 4

Society Name Change..... 4

Don Howell..... 4

President’s Annual Report | Vicki Evans 5

Museums NSW: Collections on Tour 10

2026 Writing Competition..... 14

New Members..... 15

Book Review: Tangled Lives | Jann Rowe 15

Christmas in July..... 24

RTFHS Open Day..... 32

Duty Roster 32

Heritage brought to life..... 32

Gleanings from the Journals..... 33

News from the Marie Hart Library..... 34

Scottish Research Interest Group 34

National Library Podcast..... 34

Social Club 35

November meeting 35

Bunnings Fundraising BBQ 35

Christmas Raffle..... 35

Society and Journal Details..... 36

Monthly Speakers..... 37

I am delighted to welcome Jann **Rowe** as assistant editor for The Cedar Log. Jann brings a wealth of knowledge from her professional background and, now that she has been appointed to the committee, will be a valuable asset to the society. Jann will also be taking on our Gleanings from Journals articles for the foreseeable future. On a personal note, Jann and I were pleased to discover we have ancestors in common, harking back to the early days on the Macleay River. You never know who you will find you are related to!

This issue features our annual President's Report as well as articles from members on topics covered at our general meetings this year. We also include photos from our very successful Christmas in July luncheon. Due to space limitations, we are making the Auditor's Report and Treasurer's Report available by email on request. Email the editor if you would like a copy sent. Printed copies are also available at the Marie Hart Library.

A change we have introduced from this edition is to distribute ejournals by email to **all** members. This ejournal contains extra content as we are not limited by printing costs. Distribution of printed journals will continue as normal. Should you wish to discontinue receiving a paper copy, let the editor know.

Society Name Change – The Ballina Family History Society Inc.

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 1 August and members were asked to vote on a resolution to change the name of the society. The proposed name was The Ballina Family History Society and the resolution was passed with the required majority in favour.

Don Howell

After years of doing a sterling job of maintaining the society's ejournal collection, Don has decided that it is time to pass on this important task. Don has also been invaluable to the Cedar Log team for producing mailing labels and emailing the ejournal to members. Our sincere thanks go to Don for his valuable work over many years.



The past year has been busy, productive, and encouraging for the society. The Committee of Management has focused on keeping our society welcoming, relevant and financially sound, while continuing to improve the services and support we offer to members.

Committee of Management

The committee has endeavoured to guide the society with care, always mindful of the need to remain viable, meet members' needs and attract new members. In addition to our monthly meetings, we held dedicated planning meetings in November and January. The member survey has been especially helpful in shaping our priorities, presentations, and new initiatives.

I sincerely thank my fellow committee members for their commitment, teamwork, and good humour. Like all our volunteers, they give generously of their time and skills, often far beyond what is visible at meetings.

- Ann **Emery**, our vice president, has brought careful thinking, attention to detail and practical support, including alongside Trevor in the organisation of the Bunnings barbeques.
- Judy **Cosgrove** has again done an outstanding job as secretary, regularly taking on a diverse range of tasks, including offering kindness and support to members. She is completing her third year in the role.
- Bonnie **Bennett** has served faithfully as treasurer for twelve years and is now stepping down from the committee. We thank Bonnie warmly for her dedication and commitment.
- Carmel **Crosby** completed five years as editor of *The Cedar Log* before resigning earlier this year. She continues to write articles for the *Ballina Wave* and liaise with Bunnings to organise our barbeques and rosters.
- Jan **Ousby**, as membership secretary and welfare officer, has carefully managed the membership database, welcomed new members, and stayed connected with members facing tough times.

- Jill **McCann** has contributed valuable experience and insight as a committee member and library officer. She has also organised and run training for new duty officers.
- Ross **Glover**, in his first year on the committee, has provided welcome practical support, including helping to maintain our computers.
- Deb Warren, our newest committee member, has taken on the role of Editor of *The Cedar Log*, led the PowerPoint course, helped with the beginners' research course, and regularly assists as a duty officer. She has recently been joined by Jann Rowe as assistant editor.

The society is also strongly supported by many members who work quietly behind the scenes. Their contributions make a real difference and help share the workload.

Thanks to our Volunteers

- Don Howell has recently resigned after about ten years as ejournal coordinator. We are deeply grateful for his dedicated service. We are also pleased that new member Sally **Donnelly** has agreed to take on this role.
- Robyn **Hilan** has continued to support the society as auditor and has provided valuable guidance to the committee.
- Liz **Marshall** has managed our Facebook page, welcomed members at the sign-on desk, and served for five years on the editorial team.
- Dawn **Lotty** has continued to create attractive, eye-catching, and informative bulletins to promote our monthly meetings.
- Richard **Goss** has been a stalwart in setting up for meetings, with Ross Glover and Trevor Emery now helping to carry this work forward.
- Joy **Conlon** coordinates our afternoon teas and roster, supported by many generous volunteers.
- Our duty officers keep the research room open and welcoming, and our Bunnings barbeque volunteers make these vital fundraising days possible.
- Allan **Ridgewell** continues to organise the published journals we purchase for members' research.
- Leigh **Wilson** once again kindly agreed to function as returning officer for the Annual General Meeting

Our Priorities This Year

This year the committee has focused on four main priorities:

- meeting members' research needs.
- building collegiality, friendship, and support.
- raising our profile and growing membership; and
- maintaining financial viability

Meeting Members' Research Needs

Our monthly meetings have continued to provide practical help, inspiration, and opportunities for members to share their knowledge. I am especially encouraged by increased attendance and the number of first-time presenters.

This year's presentations covered a wide range of engaging topics, including TROVE, *Early Colonial Women and Landholding*; *Breaking Down Brick Walls*; *Ballina Pioneer Cemetery*; *Myths, Legends and Family Secrets*; *Accidents, Near Misses and Survival stories*; *Women in Wartime*; *Creative Ancestors*; *Tombstones and Cemeteries*, and *Research Tips, Tricks and Techniques*.

We also recognised exceptional service in 2025 by awarding honorary fellowships to Robyn Hilan in August and Kerrie **Alexander** in November, acknowledging the significant contribution both have made to the society.

Training has been another important focus. We have offered PowerPoint training, duty officer training and refresher sessions, and a monthly beginners' course for new researchers or members wanting a refresher. The new Scottish Research Interest Group is already helping members learn and work together, and a request for more groups may see others established in the year ahead, such as an Irish Research Interest Group.

To support members' research, we purchased a new Brother printer and upgraded our Ancestry subscription so members can access a wider range of records, including British newspapers and Fold3 Military Records.

The Marie Hart Library remains a valuable resource. The Library Committee has continued to purchase and receive books, completed a successful stocktake, and reviewed CDs, removing those that can no longer be accessed. We have also written to additional societies to explore reciprocal research rights for our members.

Building Collegiality and Friendship

Family history societies are communities, and ours works best when we share a common purpose, and act with respect, friendship, and good humour. This year we have continued to strengthen those connections through social activities, excursions, and a more welcoming research space.

Our excursions are developing well, with a visit to the Ballina and District Museum, participation in a Ballina Pioneer Cemetery visit with the North Coast Chapter of the Fellowship of the First Fleet, and a planned visit to the Evans Head Heritage Aviation Museum on 23 August. With support for event organisation now increasing, we look forward to more outings.

The Social Club continues to meet on the Wednesday after our monthly meetings, currently at the Henry Rous Hotel. It has been lovely to see warmth and friendship growing among those who attend, and to see members chatting and laughing during our afternoon tea breaks.

Our *Christmas in July* lunch at the Westower Tavern was another happy occasion, with twenty-nine members attending. Thank you to Jan Ousby for organising the event and for the Christmas quiz, which added plenty of fun and friendly competition.

We have also worked to make the research room in the Marie Hart Library more inviting. The research room has been tidied, a lounge area has been created, and tea and coffee facilities are now available for members researching or on duty. We are still awaiting the council's decision about installing a sink.

Raising Our Profile and Building Membership

To remain strong, our society needs to be visible and welcoming to new members. We have continued to promote the society in a range of ways.

Our open day at the research room gave members and visitors the chance to meet, explore the room and learn more about our resources. We also promoted the society at the Ballina Expo in late 2025 and will take part in the Lennox Head Community Expo later this month.

Our Paradise FM Radio promotion team — Jill McCann, Ann Emery, and Jan **Aitkin** — continues to do a wonderful job sharing who we are and what we offer. Carmel Crosby's research articles in the *Ballina Wave* also help raise our profile.

We are running the writing competition again this year and have added a primary school students' section. While last year's response was modest,

we believe the competition has good potential to grow and to introduce more people to family history.

After our website was hacked, the committee sought Kate Alexander's help to build a new, safer site. Kate has worked extensively on it, and we look forward to it launching soon.

Talks delivered to community organisations also help promote the society. Ross Glover recently presented his talk on Augustus **Pugin** to the Ballina VIEW Club, and I have been invited to present my talk on Florence Fuller to the Ballina U3A Art Appreciation Class.

We have also been invited to host one of the Museums of History NSW's Collections on Tour, titled *Outlaws, Mavericks and Rogues: 19th-Century Law and Order*, which will provide another valuable opportunity to connect with the wider community.

Maintaining Financial Viability

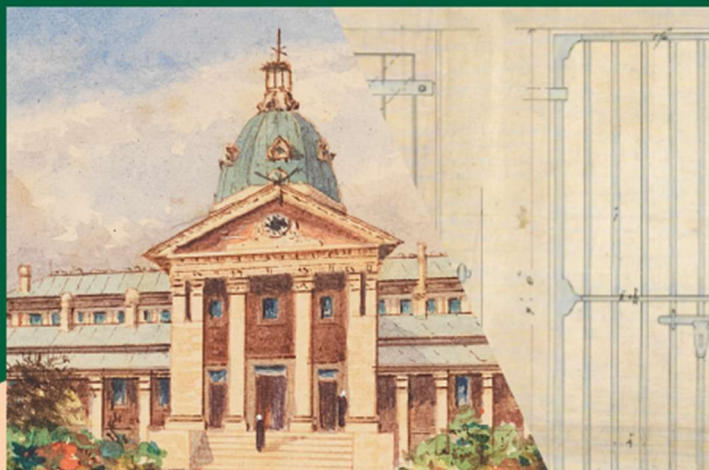
Family history societies continue to face competition from online research platforms such as Ancestry, and, more recently, artificial intelligence tools. For that reason, we have kept a close eye on our finances and are grateful for the advice and experience of our auditor.

The Bunnings barbeques remain a vital fundraiser. They help offset reduced income from membership fees, due to the above factors, and allow us to plan for future expenses, including equipment such as new computers.

Growing our membership remains an important part of our financial health, as does ensuring our fees reflect current costs. This year we increased photocopying charges and the fees for non-members using our research facilities or research officer services, as these had remained unchanged for many years.

Closing Thanks

In closing, I thank every member who has contributed to the society this year — whether by serving on the committee, volunteering in the research room, presenting a talk, helping at a barbeque, preparing afternoon tea, welcoming visitors or simply encouraging another member. Your generosity is what keeps our society active, friendly, and worthwhile. Thank you for your support over the past year. I look forward to seeing the society continue to grow, support family historians, and share the stories that connect us.



Ballina Courthouse, 1886. Coll. 4000, Dubbo East, 1870. State Archives Collection, MHSWA: NS-20455-1-2-2; NS-4335-4; Pam 649; PC165/042

Outlaws, Mavericks and Rogues: 19th-Century Law and Order

Featuring stories of dangerous bushrangers and shocking bigamists, this fascinating presentation will draw on original material from the NSW State Archives Collection to explore scandalous and criminal tales from your locality through records of the systems of government that sought to impose control on the growing colony.

Join us for a unique opportunity to view historical records and gain insights from Museums of History NSW archivists.

Hosted by Richmond-Tweed Family History Society
Wednesday 4 November, 10.30am–12pm

Ballina Players Theatre
24 Swift Street, Ballina
Free event, register via email: secretaryrtfhs1@yahoo.com



What I have learned about my ancestors from cemeteries.

Lesson One: at the cemetery – read the inscription.

We visited the Pioneer Cemetery in North Lismore looking for the grave of my husband's great grandfather, Charles William McCann.

We knew that Charles had drowned at Eureka while attempting to cross the Wilson River during a flood. We also knew that his widow, Esther, had been pregnant with her fifth child and that after the child was born, she had married Charles' brother, John Beale McCann.

Charles' headstone (below) told us something about how the family might have felt about this.



Inscription:

Charles McCann

*Drowned in Wilson Creek,
April 16, 1889, aged 50
years*

*Leaving his mother, sisters
and brothers to mourn his
loss*

(Unreadable verse)

*Erected by his loving
mother.*

Where is Esther? The mystery was compounded when we found the marriage certificate of Esther and John Beale McCann. They were married in the minister's house in Casino (a long way from Eureka) and she gave her name as Esther **Johnson** and her status as single. The witnesses were not people who were known to them.

Lesson Two: who is buried nearby?

We visited the beautiful little cemetery at Alphadale, between Wollongbar and Lismore.

We came here looking for the graves of Paul's grandparents – Charles John and Alma Florence McCann.

We found them surrounded by members of the extended family.

Here were Esther and John Beale McCann, restored to the bosom of the family. Here also were Esther's father, John Johnson; two of Esther and Charles William's daughters; Lavina **Lofts** and Mary Ellen **Barrow**, and the child of another daughter (also Esther) – Eric Gordon **Clough**.

Here too was the only child of Esther and John Beale to survive to adulthood – Catherine Agnes **Boyce**, with her husband Percy Boyce. Their daughter Eunice May (known as Sally) **Crockett**, and their son, John Kevin Boyce, are also there.

As a result of finding this cluster of family graves, we have purchased a plot here for ourselves. Our theory is that at least for a couple of generations after us, our descendants will visit and will see us in the context of this wider family.

Lesson Three: follow clues from other sources – in this case, newspapers via Trove.

The story of Joseph **Whitten's** estrangement was well known in my family. He was my great grandfather's brother, and they had come to Australia from Ireland with two other brothers and a sister in the 1860s. They first lived in the Maitland area and then my great grandfather and two of his brothers moved to the area around Wallabadah and Quirindi, where they all had grazing properties.

Joseph became the innkeeper at Chain of Ponds (near what is now the Liddell Power station). He sold alcohol and then he married a Catholic. The brothers disapproved – they were all strict Methodists.

What happened to them?

I found a death notice for Joseph and Mary's 16-year-old daughter Matilda, known as Barney:

OBITUARY. — It becomes my painful duty to have to announce the death of Miss Matilda Whitten, which took place at her mother's residence, Liddell, at four o'clock on Wednesday afternoon last. The deceased, had been suffering from consumption for some short time past, of which complaint she succumbed. Everything was done in the form of medical attendance and kind nursing to arrest the terrible insidious malady, but all in vain. The deceased young lady was scarcely seventeen years of age, hence we have "another rose nipped in the bud." The deepest sympathy is felt for the afflicted mother and relatives in their sad bereavement. The

remains will be conveyed by train to-morrow to Singleton, and buried in the Church of England cemetery at that place.

Maitland Daily Mercury Saturday 22 February 1896, page 4

At the Whittingham Anglican Cemetery, NSW, we found a fenced group of graves. In the centre is the grave of Joseph, died 9 June 1895, aged fifty-six; Percival Ernest, died 1890, aged six and Matilda (Barney), who died aged sixteen. The grave to the left is that of William Liddell Whitten, who died aged only thirty. He had three sons – Percy, who died aged two while Halwyn Richard (Dick) and Liddell Joseph (Dell) lived into their fifties.



Graves of the Whitten family, Whittingham Cemetery.

On the right is the grave of Joseph's second son, Edward Whitten. It reads, "In loving memory of my beloved husband Edward Whitten, died 15 June 1904 aged 30 years". He had been married three months.

The small plaque in front of the central grave is a memorial to Mary, Joseph's wife. It's not clear

if she is buried here. It says, "In loving memory of my dear mother, Mary, wife of the above, died 16 June 1906. Erected by her loving daughter Minnie".

Minnie was the youngest of the ten children of Joseph and Mary – she and her brothers John (1869-1914) and Henry (1878-1938) were the only children to live past the age of forty.

Finding these graves and reading the ages of those who died has given credence to the family story that Joseph and his siblings left Ireland because of the scourge of tuberculosis. Sadly, it seems that Joseph brought it with him.

Lesson Four: the humanity behind the grave.

As family historians we go searching for these monuments, but we need to remember that behind all of the graves is a person who loved and was loved, and who died.

This is the headstone of my grandfather's first wife, who died in childbirth aged twenty-two, less than a year after they were married.



The pain and anguish caused by her death is clear from the inscription:

*My dearest Annie has left me
And gone to realms above
My heart seems torn within me
Still I know that God is Love
She left me in the bloom of youth
When her course seemed just begun
In grief and pain I try to say
My God, thy will be done*

2026 WRITING COMPETITION

The BFHS is having a writing competition. There are two sections. The topics are:

For adults: **“An ancestor I would like to have met”**

For primary school children: **“My ancestor”**

The competition is open to society members as well as non-members.

- Independent judges will be used, and the identity of the writers will be unknown to them. Prizes are \$100 for children and \$200 for adults.
- The completed work should be up to 1500 words for adults and 800 words for children.
- Photos (captioned and source acknowledged) and illustrations are encouraged.
- Copyright will remain the property of the author, but *The Cedar Log* requests first choice to publish any of the entries received.
- Your name, email and phone number should be on a separate cover page for your entry.
- Entries should be submitted in Microsoft Word format by email to secretaryrtfhs1@yahoo.com before 2 November 2026.



NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following members who have joined our society:

 Colin and Gwenda Andrews

 Pam Dubber

 Mo Dickson

We hope you enjoy your research journey with us.

BOOK REVIEW

Jann Rowe – Member 1079

Tangled Lives: Love and Loss in Port Macquarie Penal Settlement.

Have you ever bought a book about your local area and found not one name associated with your family even though they are within date of the period covered? It is often hit and miss based on member's interests or research resources available to volunteer groups. Occasionally a broader and more helpful approach is taken as with Trial Bay, a penal settlement near Port Macquarie in a recent book.

Port Macquarie and District Family History Society Inc. has published this book as part of their Forget - Me -Not Project. A member, Trysha Hanly and others have identified 344 female convicts who came to the Port Macquarie penal settlement in the early 1800s and are documenting their lives to bring their stories to life for new generations.

Tangled Lives brings to light some of these stories, and those of the men who walked beside them. The authors have drawn from official and other public records to tell tales of love, courage and resilience because their lives mattered.

Can I recommend you buy and read this book? It contains some heartbreaking stories about women still misrepresented and misunderstood in the historical records and even in modern history books. The website has the contents page accessible so you can check out if your ancestor is mentioned. Even if they are not, it is well worth a few Sunday afternoons at this time of year on the lounge with your feet up and a cup of tea beside you.

Purchase for \$25 from <https://www.pmdfhs.org.au/publications.html>

HEADSTONES AND WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THEM

Ross Glover – Member 1046

If you've ever wandered around a graveyard or cemetery (and I'm sure you have), you may have noticed there are repeated motifs and decorations on the headstones. In Christian sites you'll see the cross in many forms; symbolising the belief of the deceased in Christianity and Christ, who died



A Christian cross (left), Star of David and Menorah (above). Star and Crescent(below) by John C Hamer (cropped image) Wikimedia Commons CC BY 2.0.

on a cross.

If you find the Star of David or the Menorah (a seven-branched candlestick) you'll be at the grave of a person of the Jewish faith. And, of course, the Star and Crescent is a person of the Muslim faith.



Around Ballina, you'll be much more likely to find symbolism reflecting a person's christian faith and belief in an afterlife.

Angel: Flying angels can symbolize rebirth while a praying angel is thought to be watching over the deceased.



Hand with finger pointing up: This Christian symbol supposedly points the way to heaven.

Cherub: Cherubs can represent innocence, virtue, and purity and are commonly seen on children's headstones.



Bunch of grapes or grapevine: Grapes/a grapevine can represent the transformation of the wine supposed to happen during Communion and so the transformation of the body of the deceased into a soul and its acceptance into heaven.

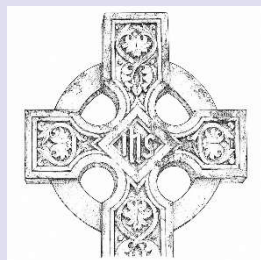
Book: This symbol represents the Bible. On this gravestone there is the book, grapevine, a rose, and a lily. The rose may symbolise love and

remembrance. The lily may be for virtue and goodness. This may be how those remaining saw their parents.

Flame: A flame represents the eternal life of the soul.

Harp: This is a Christian symbol and is intended as a tribute to God.

If you see a headstone with the intertwined letters IHS, this is a Christogram —a monogram and symbol representing the name of Jesus Christ. It is an abbreviation of the first three letters of the Greek word for Jesus, *IΗΣΟΥΣ* (Iota, Eta, Sigma)



This is a sketch of a beautifully carved Celtic cross, with the letters IHS inscribed on it, found in East Ballina cemetery (left).

The Celtic cross is a cross with circle that emerged in Ireland and Britain in the Early Middle Ages. Often associated with the Catholic Church, it is used by many Welsh, Scots, and Irish as an indication of their ethnic heritage

Animal Symbols for Gravestones

Bird: A bird can represent immortality or everlasting life. A dove can also represent the soul ascending to Heaven



Butterfly: A butterfly can represent an abbreviated life and is more commonly seen on a younger person's headstone.



On this headstone the cross is broken off the top, which also symbolises a life cut short. This is the same for a pillar which is broken. It may look like it has decayed but it could have been made that way to symbolise a life cut short. It could also represent the loss of a family patriarch or matriarch. You'd have to look at the information on the headstone to determine which it is.

Lamb: A lamb is used to represent virtue or purity and is commonly seen on children's headstones.

Lion: A lion represents bravery.

Botanical Symbols

Acorns/oak leaves - can indicate strong influence and authority; lily - virtue and innocence; morning glory - a new beginning; rosebud - an abbreviated life; wreath - greatness or devoutness; fruit - everlasting abundance; poppy - everlasting rest; ivy - everlasting life or companionship; rosemary - keeping the deceased in your memory; weeping willow - bereavement.

Architectural and Decorative Headstone Motifs

Headstones aren't limited to one shape. They can be carved into architectural marvels like a mausoleum or obelisk or can feature images of them. Some of the more prevalent decorative tombstone motifs include:



Draperies: can mean many things including sadness, grief, and the transition from life to death.

Urn: means the end of life. This sculpture (above right) illustrates both.



Anchor: An anchor can represent anticipation, hope, or optimism. It can also be more prosaic and indicate the deceased was a sailor. This is shown on Captain Easton's headstone (left) in East Ballina Cemetery. He was the first pilot for Ballina, appointed to ensure safe passage over the treacherous bar for boats.

You can also see the ship's wheel; another indication of his calling.



Coat of Arms: A coat of arms connects to the deceased's ancestral history. This is an example found in East Ballina Cemetery (right).

Skull, with or without bones: This reminds those who are left behind that death comes to all, therefore, live a good life. This is not seen so much on modern headstones but was a common motif in times past. Here's an example from St Matthew's Church, Stretton, UK. The crossed spears indicate the deceased was a Dragoon (mounted infantry soldier).

*Keith Williamson
(cropped image) CC BY-*



Interlocked Compass and Square: A compass and set square indicates the deceased was a Freemason. Here we have the Masonic symbol enclosed in a wreath. Again, from East Ballina Cemetery.

Signs of war service

This signifies the deceased was a member of the AIF (Army).

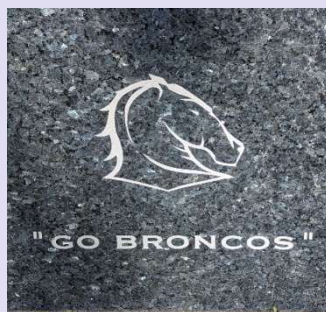


These indicate navy and air force personnel.



Then there are the fun ones.

Can you work out what these people were interested in?



This is just an overview of some of the symbols you may see in a graveyard or cemetery. Next time you're in one looking for the genealogical information available, take note of this other information about those interred there.

(Unless otherwise attributed all images are the property of Ross Glover)

(Editor's note: some photos have been converted to sketches using AI for better clarity when printed).

References

1. Gilbert, Lionel: A Grave Look at History: Glimpses at a Vanishing Form of Folk Art. John Ferguson, Sydney, 1980.
2. Cooper, Megan: 90 Common Headstone Symbols and What They Mean. Love to Know. Updated 12/09/2024.
<https://www.lovetoknow.com/life/grief-loss/headstone-symbolism>
3. Hartley, Patricia: Grave Marker Symbols Explained. Family History Daily.
<https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-resources/grave-marker-symbols/>

A GOLD RUSH STORY

Dawn Lotty – Member 924

In March 1851 Edward **Hargraves** wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald* (*SMH*) exaggerating and falsely claiming he was the first man to find rich gold fields at Summer Hill Creek, an area soon to be called Ophir, near Orange. The *SMH* did not publish the news until May 1851.

By the end of May, hundreds of diggers were at the gold fields of Ophir. They walked off their jobs and travelled, ill-prepared for the freezing weather, lack of food and disease.

Initially Wiradjuri people and Chinese gold-seekers kept the miners in housing materials, food, and medicine. To add to the miners' woes the alluvial gold, or gold found in sand, gravel, and other surface material, soon ran out. At this stage miners left, moving on to the next gold field, their optimism spent and their pockets empty.

Sofala was established by the end of June and by the end of 1851 it had 10,000 diggers. Alluvial gold was also discovered at Hill End in 1851.



William Jackson, his wife Mary Ann and three of their children outside the store at Hawkins Hill, Hill End, abt 1868

In 1858 William **Jackson** aged twenty-six and his wife Mary Ann aged fifteen took over the management of a store at Hawkins Hill at Hill End on the gold fields.

William was born to Charles and Maria Jackson who owned several businesses in

Parramatta and Campbelltown and Mary Ann was born in the Parramatta Female Factory to Sarah **Slack** and William **Ralph**, a tailor also in Parramatta. William is the first of Mary Ann's three husbands.

All told seven children were born while they lived at Hill End. The store provided all the typical household goods and clothing. It also provided a coffee room and, half hidden by William's head, is a sign for beer. The store must have been the centre of the community.

They both held a miner's licence and Mary Ann, in particular, never lost her love of gold prospecting. William died on 5 December 1871 of emphysema and bronchitis and was buried the next day at Tambaroora Cemetery. Sadly, I cannot find William's grave.

Hill End was at the height of its most productive gold rush period between 1871 and 1874 with the discovery of Bernhardt **Holtermann's** nugget the 'Star of Hope' at Hawkins Hill. Hill End's main street now held every type of shop you can imagine, and the population had reached eight thousand people.



Henry Small

I have not been able to determine the fate of the shop, but Mary Ann returned to live with her mother, Sarah, at Camden the same year. Poor William was barely in the ground when in 1872 Mary Ann, now aged twenty-eight, left her seven children with her mother and set off to the Ophir gold fields with Henry **Small**, aged twenty-one.

Henry came from a pioneering dairying family at Camden and transported goods to the various gold field sites that included Ophir, Turon, Sofala, and Spring Creek and is listed on the records as a teamster using horses rather than bullocks. I do not know if Mary Ann knew Henry from the gold fields or from Camden.

They settled at Ophir living in a tent and within one year their first child Henry was born in 1873 followed by Jesse in 1874 and Margaret in 1877.

The railway reached Bathurst in April 1876 and Orange in April 1877. This must have had a profound impact on Henry's business. He and Mary Ann finally married in Orange in 1878 and moved back to Camden just before the birth of my grandmother Annie, followed by three more children, for a total of fourteen children in the household.

Over the years the lure of the gold fields - even though they were seriously in decline - regularly drew the family on camping holidays.

On a trip to Brandy Creek just south of Orange in 1885 Alfred, the youngest son of William and Mary Ann, now aged fourteen, took the opportunity when his mother and Henry were away from their tent, to load Henry's rifle and point it at a Chinese gentleman named Ah Sun and pulled the trigger. Ah Sun was killed instantly. Alfred's brothers William and Henry each provided him with an alibi.

It took the police five years before they broke down the alibis and as Alfred explained at his trial in Bathurst Court: *'The Chinaman was walking in front of me; and I fired at him just for fun. I did not think I would hit him.'* Alfred was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to three years' imprisonment at Berrima Goal.

The family never again returned to the gold fields.



Alfred Jackson

Sources

1. 'The Gold Discovery,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 May 1851, n.p.
2. 'Turon Diggings,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 June 1851, n.p.
3. 'Hill End,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 February 2004, n.p.
4. New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Birth Register, Marriage Register.
5. New South Wales, Museums of History, *'The Gold Rush,'* accessed 19 July 2026.
6. Hill End and Tambaroora Gathering Group
7. Camden Area Family History Society
8. 'Bathurst Circuit Court,' *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, 28 April 1891, p.3
9. Wikipedia, *'Australian Gold Rushes,'* accessed 19 July 2026
10. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, *'Hill End Historic Site,'* accessed 19 July 2026
11. Ancestry www.ancestry.com
12. State Library of New South Wales, The Holtermann Photographic Collection, accessed 19 July 2026.



Christmas in July



A festive crowd gathered at the Westower Tavern on the 18th to celebrate Christmas in July. The day was very successful with lovely food, tasteful decorations and, of course, excellent conversation. The Christmas quiz was won by Ross Glover, Joy Conlon, Cheryl Gibbes and Terry Doherty. Special thanks go to Jan Ousby for organising the day and adding her own Christmas-y touches.

*Above: Vicki Evans and Jan Ousby;
Below: Lorraine Dillon and Deb Warren; Joy
Morhaus*





**Top: Gail Knowland, Jacqui Baskerville; Terry Doherty, Rachel Wright
Centre: Cheryl Gibbes, Joy Conlon; Rachel Kristina, Val Dunn
Below: Tanya Binning and Janelle Mesner; Ross Glover, Ann and Trevor Emery**



**Right Gail Knowland and
Jacqui Baskerville**



**Below: John and Shirley
McAnelly**



**Left: Judy Cosgrove and Sally
Donnelly
Above: Bonnie Bennett**



ACCIDENTS, NEAR MISSES AND SURVIVAL

Tragedy Strikes Again at the Tweed Heads Bar

Jan Ousby – Member 447

Sidney Thomas **Badham** (1871-1914) was my step great-uncle, and he had quite a checkered life.

Sidney was born on 14 August 1871 in Madras, British India, to parents Charles Adrian and Margaret Laura Badham. He was the third of four sons of Charles and Laura. Sidney was baptised when he was one year old, on the 14 August 1872 in Rayahmundy, also in Madras.

Charles was an accountant in India, born in England and Margaret, known as Laura, was born in India. The family returned to England sometime between 1872 and 1875, as their fourth son, Harold was born there in 1875. I was unable to find any further English records apart from the baptism of Harold in London. Charles once again returned to India and by about 1890 Laura and their sons migrated to Australia, residing at St. Peters in Sydney.

Little is known about Sidney's life before his marriage to Frances Louise **Avey**, 28, a spinster from Narrabri. on 14 December 1904, at St. Peter's Church of England Church in St. Peters, Sydney. The marriage certificate states Sidney, 33, was a bachelor living with his mother and stepfather at Park Road, St. Peters. Laura was married by then to my great-grandfather, Robert Hill **Reeves** and his occupation was a commercial traveller. He was also born in Madras.

After Sidney and Laura's marriage they moved to the North Coast of New South Wales, residing at Maclean, then Coraki. They had four daughters: Hazel Clarence, born in 1906 in Maclean; Gwendoline Louise, born 1908, also in Maclean; Marie Laura, born 1910 in Coraki and Doris Avey, born 1912, after they moved to Brisbane.

The Richmond River Herald, 17 November 1911 advertised:

Sale of House Contents S. T. Badham

Mr. W. McLean advertises a clearance sale of the furniture & effects of Mr Badham's well-appointed home in Coraki. Mr Badham is leaving to reside in Qld & everything is for right out sale.

The family moved to Brisbane, Queensland and in 1912 were living at Kangaroo Point in Brisbane, according to the Queensland Electoral Roll.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 15 August 1912 advertised:

S.T. Badham & Co. Ltd. has been registered with a capital of 4,000 in pound shares, of which 1,250 are issued as fully paid up. The objects are to acquire the business of sawmill proprietors & timber merchants now carried on by S.T. Badham, J.E. Hodge & G.L. de Hayr as S.T. Badham & Co. The registered office is at Moonembah.

Moonembah is near Coraki. So, it seems, even though Sidney had moved to Brisbane and was working as a commercial traveller, he still had ties with the Coraki area.

In 1913 the Queensland Electoral Roll lists Sidney and Frances living at Vulture Street, South Brisbane and his occupation as mill proprietor.

The next record I found was of Sidney's tragic death. There were many reports in newspapers in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria of this tragedy, as it was such sensational news. I have summarised one such article, published in *The Telegraph* (Brisbane) 13 July 1914, below.

Awful tragedy at Tweed Heads.

One of the most sensational and tragic occurrences ever associated with the Tweed Heads bar occurred Friday afternoon at dusk on 10 July 1914, when, returning from its maiden trip, the new 40-foot motorboat, the "Carrara,"

owned by Mr. **McAdon**, was swamped by a freak wave when attempting to cross the bar.

The sea was calm when they left in the morning and they had a pleasant day of fishing.



Just outside of the Tweed Heads bar there are splendid schnapper grounds and fishing parties ventured across the bar in winter when the sea was calm.

There were thirteen men aboard, including the experienced Captain Tom **Low**e. Six men managed to swim ashore under very difficult conditions. The other seven men drowned. A tugboat attempted to go out but was unable to get over the bar as it was too rough. Another report in 1914 stated that the Tweed River Bar is recognised as one of the worst along the coast of NSW. It varies considerably and coastal steamer trade is now very restricted. Cargo on the North Coast Steam & Navigation Co.'s steamers & smaller trades can only be insured at a prohibitive rate. The Carrara was uninsured.

The towns of Tweed Heads and Coolangatta were in a state of mourning over the catastrophe, and the locals were shocked that the dreaded Tweed Heads bar had claimed another seven lives, adding to its already lengthy death toll.

Of the seven men who drowned only three bodies were recovered the next day, even though an extensive search was carried out.

According to a story in *The Telegraph* (Brisbane), Sidney's body was never recovered. The next morning half a waistcoat and a portion of a shirt were found washed up on the beach. In the pocket of the vest were a pair of pince-nez (glasses), unbroken, and some papers, identified as belonging to Sidney. It was believed that a shark had torn the clothing from his body.

Sidney was only a Queenslander in the sense that he represented Queensland firms, including **Brabant** and Co., wine and spirits merchants. His home had been in Coraki, but he intended to make Brisbane his headquarters as he travelled from the Clarence Valley through to Nanango. Did Sidney intend to stay in Brisbane permanently or to return to Coraki in the future as he still had interests in a sawmill?

I was unable to find a death registration for Sidney in either the NSW or Queensland Registries of Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM). I have since found out that if there is no body found then no death certificate can be issued.

I then went looking for an inquest into Sidney's drowning that would enable Frances to marry again but alas, no record could be found. I learned that if there had been an inquest it was the property of the magistrate or

coroner prior to 1940 so not all inquest records had been kept. So, I presume that either an inquest had occurred or the 'presumption of death' legal principle applied, allowing Frances to remarry.

Sidney's memory lingered on years after his tragic death. I found two memorial notices in newspapers:

The Sydney Morning Herald, 10 July 1917, three years later:

BADHAM—A tribute of everlasting love and remembrance to the memory of Sidney Thomas Badham, who met his death in a boating fatality at Tweed Heads July 10, 1914. We miss him most who loved him best. Inserted by his loving wife & children.

Then, nine years later:

Northern Star, 19 July 1923.

BADHAM - In loving memory of my dear father Sidney Thomas Badham, who was accidentally drowned at Tweed Heads 10 July 1914.

The silent grief that's in the soul

No human eye can trace.

For many a broken heart lies hid

Behind a smiling face

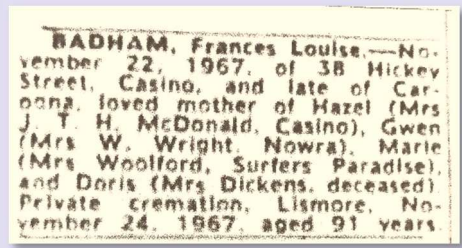
Inserted by his loving daughter Gwendoline.

This was about the time Frances remarried. I then looked to what happened to Sidney's family and how his wife, Frances, managed after the death of her husband, with four young daughters to raise.

The first record I found for Frances and her children was in 1918, where the Sands Directory for Sydney and NSW for that year lists F. L. Badham of wine saloon, Casino. So, Frances had moved her family back to Casino, where presumably she had the support of friends and maybe other family members and did housekeeping jobs to support her family.

In 1923, aged forty-seven, Frances married for a second time, to a John **Lewellyn**, a man thirty years her senior. Perhaps a marriage of convenience, she was probably his housekeeper. John died 13 years later in 1936. After John's death, about 1938, Frances reverted to her first husband's surname of Badham, I presume he was the love of her life. The name change was recorded in the cemetery records.

The NSW electoral rolls showed that she was living at John's place, 1 Little Street, Casino, until the 1950s. In 1954 Frances' address was c/o J.T.H. McDonald, North Street, Casino; occupation, home duties. In fact, she was living with her daughter Hazel and her husband John **McDonald**, a chemist, at 38 Hickey Street, Casino.



Frances lived with her daughter and son-in-law until just prior to her death, when she moved into Caroonna Nursing Home, Lismore. She died there, aged 91 years.

The Children

Hazel married John Thomas Hunter **McDonald**, a chemist, and remained living in Casino.

Gwendoline married William Clement **Wright**, a grazier, and lived all her married life on the south coast of New South Wales.

Marie lived in Sydney until the late forties when she moved to the Gold Coast, Queensland. Records show her as Marie Laura **Woolford** from 1949 but I have been unable to find a marriage record.

Doris, a nurse, married and divorced a John **Cranston**, then married Arthur Russell **Dickens**, a salesman, and moved to Victoria.

References

1. British Library, India Office Records, Madras Baptisms
2. NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Marriages Index
3. *Northern Star*, NSW
4. *Richmond River Herald*, NSW
5. *Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW
6. Queensland Electoral Commission, Electoral Roll
7. *The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland
8. NSW Electoral Commission, Electoral Roll

BFHS OPEN DAY



(L to R) Jill McCann, Elspeth Berger, Vicki Evans, Judy Madigan and Deb Warren

The open day held at the Marie Hart Library on 27 June was a great success with several members dropping in to look at the resources on offer. The room was a hive of activity with people using the microfiche reader, the research computers and the library resources. Some brick walls were broken down and everyone present enjoyed the sense of collegiality that working together brings. Stay

tuned for notice of a repeat of this event in 2027.

DUTY ROSTER CALL FOR HELPERS

If you can spare three hours a month to fill a space on the duty roster, please get in touch with Jill McCann: jilymccann@gmail.com. Duty officers are essential to maintain the service we provide to members and the general public requiring family history research help. Training and support are provided.

HERITAGE BROUGHT TO LIFE

The National Trust recently shared that the BBC pilot program of Antiques Roadshow Australia was filmed on location at the National Trust Norman Lindsay Gallery and Museum in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales. You might want to support the show and future episodes by watching the pilot and sharing the link with others. To view on YouTube type this link into your search engine or just search under the title of the show. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-bVPT_sdr0

Irish Military Pension Applications – War of Independence records.

Around Britain – Suffolk. The latest online records for researching Suffolk.

Who Do You Think You Are – January 2026 – page 14, 38 & 64

Mecca Café – The story of a Lismore icon.

RRHS Bulletin – December 2025 – page 1

Become a Pro with Ancestry – Using Pro Tools.

DNA Dilemma – tricky situations and what to do.

Scottish Wills – how wills were recorded and executed in Scotland.

Who Do You Think You Are – February 2026 – pp.14-17, 19-21, 38-40

Parish Registers Online – regional guide

Children's Workhouses – three helpful sites

Around Britain – Northumberland – including many shipping records.

Who Do You Think You Are – March 2026 – pp.14-19, 32-36, 64-67

Illegitimacy Records from the 19th century- source for finding unnamed fathers.

Who Do You think You Are – April 2026 – pp.30-33

The Irish 1926 Census – your complete guide.

Apprenticeships – how to find out if your ancestor was an apprentice.

Clergy – records for searching your religious relatives.

Who Do You Think You Are – May 2026 – pp.14-19, 30-34, 37-39

Death and Burial on the Goldfields – the burial ground at Whroo in Central Victoria.

Reading Between the Lines – strategies for brick walls.

Traces – Edition 34 2026 – pp.12-14, 32-35

A Short History of South Sea Islanders in Northern NSW - Adele Zubrzycka

History – Magazine of the RAHS – March 2026 – pp.6-9

NEWS FROM THE MARIE HART LIBRARY

Jill McCann, Library Officer

The Marie Hart Library has received a generous donation from Jann Rowe (member 1079), consisting of twelve volumes of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, which have now been accessioned and are together on a dedicated shelf.

Jann has also donated *Shipping Arrivals and Departures Victorian Ports Volumes 1 and 2*.

Another interesting new book is *Butts and Certificates of the First Publican's Licences 1830-1860*

Copies of *The Cedar Log* from September 2018 are also now available on the shelves for members and visitors to read – they are at the end of the room near the reading area. They are not to be borrowed.

The management committee is considering a re-cataloguing of the books in the library. The current system is quite idiosyncratic and confusing for many people. While a reorganisation would be a big undertaking, it is possible that we might be able to use AI to assist with the process. Watch this space!



SCOTTISH RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP

A very lively meeting of the newly-formed Scottish Research Interest Group was held on Friday 26 June in the Marie Hart Library. Seven keen researchers gathered to share tips, blocks and breakthroughs and all agreed to continue meeting on a monthly basis. Anyone is welcome to join the group, meeting on the 3rd Friday of each month at the Marie Hart Library.

NATIONAL LIBRARY PODCAST

The National Library recently launched a series of podcasts called 'The Memory Tapes.' There is also an upcoming book inspired by extraordinary stories from their Oral History and Folklore Collection. Through firsthand accounts and expert storytelling, Dr Shirleene **Robinson** AM uncovers the people behind Australia's history. You can listen to 'The Memory Tapes' on most podcast platforms. The list of episodes is on the library's website.

SOCIAL CLUB



Meet up with fellow members on the Wednesday following the monthly meeting at 4pm at the Henry Rous Hotel. Friends and family are welcome and many stay on for dinner, available from 5.30pm.

NOVEMBER MEETING – TOYS, TOOLS AND TRINKETS.

Get into those boxes in the attic and bring your treasures along to our roadshow. Contact the coordinator, Vicki Evans, for more information.



BUNNINGS BBQ



(L to R) Allan Watt, Graeme Robertson, Kerri Goodger, Dianne Robertson, Deb Warren

Another successful fundraising BBQ was held on 21 June at Bunnings Ballina. We raised \$1882. These events are essential to the financial well-being of the society and we sincerely thank the volunteers who make it possible. If you can spare a couple of hours to help at the next BBQ, on 19 September, please email the secretary secretaryrtfhs1@yahoo.com



CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

You will find raffle tickets enclosed with this journal. Tickets are \$1 each with first prize \$100, second prize \$50 and third prize \$25. Winners will be drawn at the Christmas lunch on 5 December at the Westower Tavern. Return books and money to the treasurer at the Monthly Meeting or leave them at the Marie Hart Library. Closing date is 30 November. Thanks for your support for this important fundraiser.

SOCIETY AND JOURNAL DETAILS

The Ballina Family History Society Inc. (formerly Richmond-Tweed Family History Society Inc.) was established in 1983 to serve the family history needs of researchers, initially with a special interest in north-east New South Wales, Australia, in the area bounded by the Richmond and Tweed Rivers, often referred to as the Northern Rivers.

The Marie Hart Library (MHL) holds numerous local records including the Local Schools Admission Registers, cemetery and burial records, and honour and memorial rolls from many locations within the Northern Rivers, plus death and funeral notices and obituaries from *The Northern Star* (1876 – 2020).

Over the years, the library has expanded and now holds a wealth of information from across Australia including electoral rolls, historical and pioneer records, war records, shipping lists, probate records, landholder returns, Colonial Secretary papers and cemetery books. There are family history journals from within Australia and overseas, in hard copy and electronic form. The latter can be accessed on the computers in the MHL or from home.

Access is available to microfiche, CDs and computers connected to genealogical subscription websites, including *Find my Past*, *Ancestry* and the *Biographical Database of Australia*. We are also a *Family Search* affiliate, which gives access to additional content on the *Family Search* site. Ask the member on duty during opening hours if you need assistance with any of the library's resources.

Family history research requests can be done by the society for a fee of \$30 per hour. Please email the secretary with your request.

The Cedar Log – Journal of the Ballina Family History Society Inc. Published March, June, September and December

Contributions welcome. We would love to hear about how you broke through a brick wall, any interesting information you have found out about an ancestor or any research sources or techniques that others may find helpful. Ideally, articles should be sent by email to editorcedarlog@gmail.com but hard copy is also welcomed. Contribution deadline is 4 weeks before the month of publication. The format preferred is Times New Roman font; 11 point; single spacing. Please have any surnames in bold the first time they appear in your article after the heading. Add sources or references at the bottom of your article if possible. Please add your contact details as the editor may need to discuss editing of material submitted for publication. It is your responsibility to ensure that your article does not infringe copyright, and the views of authors are not those of the BFHS. Items remain the copyright of the Ballina Family History Society and/or the author. Members' input is important and makes for interesting and diverse reading and you might be lucky enough to connect with someone who has read your article, either in Australia or overseas. Material and articles in this journal may only be reproduced with written permission from the society. Please contact the editor via email.

MONTHLY SPEAKERS

June – Cemeteries and Gravestones and what we can learn from them.

Coordinator – Ross Glover.

Speakers – Judy Cosgrove, Gail Knowland, Dawn Lotty, Ann Emery and Jill McCann.

Ross's introduction informed us of the difference between a 'graveyard' and a 'cemetery' and explained the various 'containers' developed over time to house human remains after burial. He then covered the somewhat disturbing reason behind the holding of a 'wake.'

As a child Judy had learned that one of her grandparents' children, Horrie (Horace **Bayley**), had died young. Her grandparents' headstone bore Horace's name and the line: 'Accidentally killed 29 March 1934, aged 19 years.' She had often wondered what the story was behind this sad inscription. Then in 2017 she came across an article in *The Northern Star* reporting on a historical accident. There was a picture of the same headstone. She had found the story of Horrie and could research his brief life further.



Gail shared the story of the **Rodd** Family Mausoleum, a private mausoleum in Sydney's colonial Five Dock area. As a direct descendant of the Rodd family, Gail has previously explored their lives at Barnstaple Manor (The Cedar Log, March 2026).

The Devonshire Street Cemetery, now the site of Sydney's Central Railway Station, was the burial site of Dawn's ancestor, Robert **Brouster**. Dawn fleshed out the story of the interred people's callous removals through her research. Although her ancestor was properly reburied, lots of others were left on the site and unearthed more recently during excavations.

Ann told an intriguing tale titled 'A Chase around the Vault' where mysterious events occurred over several years within a burial vault in Barbados. We look forward to future instalments where the mystery will be hopefully solved!

Unfortunately, technical difficulties thwarted Jill's presentation, so it was postponed to a future event.

July – Tips, Tricks and Techniques

Coordinator – Ann Emery

Speakers – Jill McCann, Deb Warren, Vicki Evans, Ross Glover, Terry Doherty.

The first story was Jill's presentation titled 'Lessons from the Grave'. A moving tale that we have reproduced in this issue.

Several members expressed a need for more instructional content in their responses to the Members' survey, so this meeting was dedicated to lesser-known techniques for research.

Deb demonstrated the value she has had from joining Facebook groups and connecting with other researchers there. Vicki covered several key record sources including the Tasmanian Names Index; the Biographical Database of Australia (available in the Marie Hart Library for members); Public Records Office of Victoria; the Ryerson Index; NSW BDM Church Codes and District Registers and Museums of History NSW. Ross demonstrated using a single term to search Ancestry.com, which can be effective in locating elusive records.

Using the Libby app to download magazines from the local library was Deb's next presentation and Terry finished the day with a live demonstration using Chat GPT, a generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool, to add detail and historical context to an ancestor's timeline. AI is the term on everyone's lips these days and it can save family history researchers a lot of time. Terry warned, however, that the information provided still needs to be verified through traditional record sources.

August – Teaching and Learning

Coordinator – Jill McCann

Speakers – Ann Emery, Jann Rowe, Patricia Wilson and Susan Wilson Gahan

Jill provided an interesting overview of the changes in school education over time as well as insights into vocational and adult education in the 19th century. Jill raised questions to look at for our own research into our ancestors:

- Who got to go to school and were they able to stay past the statutory leaving age?
- What was on the curriculum and were boys and girls able to study the same subjects?
- How educated was the teacher and how did they qualify?

- Did they attend a boarding school and what was school life like there?
- What was schooling like in an Irish hedge school?
- How did people learn their jobs, did they have an apprenticeship or attend night school?
- What were your family traditions in schooling and employment?
- What were the roles of Mechanics Institutes and Schools of Art?

Ann's presentation recounted her family lineage of teachers; the gene apparently having skipped her. Despite that her life as an educator and lifelong learner has stood her in good stead throughout her life's pathways and byways. You do not have to train as a teacher to catch the bug.

Jann's talk investigated a family story that her great grandfather was made to leave school when a protestant replaced a catholic teacher. She drew on family memories and historical records and explored the colony and Port Cygnet's sectarian education debates, the divisive influence of religion and the influence of Thomas Arnold, a visionary in the field in the 1840s and 1850s. Her research led her to the development of public-school education in Tasmania and traced Daniel's and his daughter Ethel's enduring legacy of reading and learning across later generations.

The final presentation for the day was by Patricia Wilson, herself a retired teacher, and her daughter, Susan, also a qualified teacher. The family history and its links to teacher education was interesting and held some surprises regarding the necessity of formal qualifications, even in this day and age!



June speakers: Deb Warren, Jill McCann, Vicki Evans, Ross Glover, Terry Doherty, Ann Emery.



July speakers: Ross Glover, Judy Cosgrove, Dawn Lotty, Jill McCann, Gail Knowland.



August speakers: Jann Rowe, Ann Emery, Jill McCann, Susan Wilson Gahan, Patricia Wilson



SOCIETY EVENTS

Society meetings are at the Players Theatre, 24 Swift Street, Ballina at 2pm on the first Saturday of each month. There is no meeting in January or December.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Contact the secretary or the coordinator if you would like to participate in one of the presentations listed below.

Saturday 19 September: Fundraising BBQ at Bunnings Ballina 9am – 4pm. Contact Judy Cosgrove if you would like to help.

Saturday 3 October Meeting: *Sporting Legends* – Coordinator Judy Cosgrove.

Wednesday 4 November: Museums NSW Collections on Tour. Register with secretaryrtfhs1@yahoo.com.

Saturday 7 November Meeting: *Roadshow – Toys, Tools, Trinkets and Treasures*. Coordinator – Vicki Evans.

Saturday 5 December: Christmas lunch – Westower Tavern, West Ballina. 11.30am for 12 noon. If you would like to attend, contact Deb Warren, editorcedarlog@gmail.com.

Scottish Research Interest Group: 3rd Friday of the month. Contact Vicki Evans.

Beginners Research Group: By appointment, contact Judy Cosgrove.

Christmas/New Year Closure of the Marie Hart Library: Closed 4pm Wednesday 16 December to 10am Wednesday 6 January 2027.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership fees for the year 1 January to 31 December are \$40 individual or \$50 joint membership. Discounts apply for partial year. Journals will be sent to financial members only.