

THE ENDEAVOUR



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BOTANY BAY FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

Discovering Your Heritage

Internet: <http://www.botanybayfhs.org.au> **Email:** info@botanybayfhs.org.au

Mail Enquiries: The Secretary
Botany Bay Family History Society Inc
184 Gannons Road
Caringbah South NSW 2229

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2024-2025

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Assistant Editor	Leonie Bell	
Librarians	Janette Daly	Pamela Heather
	Maureen Murray	Kate Anderson
Webmaster	Pat Fearnley	
Education Team	Carol Cronan	Lilian Magill
Public Officer	Doug Parkes	
Research Centre Coordinator	Jean Campbell,	
	botanybayfhs@yahoo.com.au	

Meetings

Face to face meetings are held on the first Saturday of March, June, September and December at the Research Centre commencing at 1.30pm. Zoom meetings are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month (except January) starting at 7.30pm.

Library and Research Centre Messages and Bookings Only: 02 9523 8948

Port Hacking Community Centre 184 Gannons Road Caringbah South NSW 2229

Open: 10am-2pm: Mon, Wed, Fri, 1st & 3rd Sat. For bus route 978 & timetable, see:

<https://transportnsw.info/routes/details/sydney-buses-network/978/31978>

Annual Membership Fees

From 1 Jul 2024: single – \$45; family – \$60; distance single – \$23; distance family – \$30; membership renewals due 1 July each year.

Research

Volunteers from BBFHS will research family history relevant to the Sutherland Shire for non-members: minimum fee of \$30 (first hour) and \$30 per hour thereafter.

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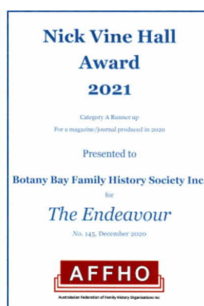
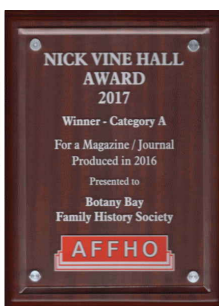
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CALENDAR



Members are advised to check latest details on our Events calendar at www.botanybayfhs.org.au or see your fortnightly BBFHS eNEWS

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Nov 23 | DNA Interest Group: 1.30-3.30pm on Zoom |
| Nov 26 | Family Tree Maker Interest Group: 1.30-3.30pm on Zoom |
| Nov 28 | Writers Interest Group: 1.30-3.30pm at Research Centre |
| Dec 7 | Meeting – 1.30 pm Research Centre. Saturday. Bruce Watt. <i>Curious Eyes.</i> |
| Dec 14 | Scottish Interest Group: 2-4pm at Research Centre |
| Dec 14 | Last day that BBFHS Research Centre and Library is open |
| Dec 18 | Member's Chat Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom. |
|
2025 | |
| Jan 13 | BBFHS Research Centre and Library re-opens |
| Jan 27 | Australia Day Public Holiday – Research Centre closed |
| Feb 5 | Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom. Speaker and topic – TBA |
| Feb 8 | Scottish Interest Group: 2-4pm at Research Centre |
| Feb 19 | Member's Chat Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom |
| Feb 22 | Irish Interest Group: 2-4 pm on Zoom |
| Feb 25 | Family Tree Maker Interest Group:
1.30-3.30 pm on Zoom |
| Mar 5 | Meeting – 1.30 pm Saturday, Research Centre. Speaker and topic – TBA |
| Mar 8 | Technology Group: 2-4 pm on Zoom |
| Mar 19 | Member's Chat Meeting – 7.30 pm on Zoom |
| Mar 22 | DNA Interest Group: 1.30-3.30 pm on Zoom |
| Mar 27 | Writers Interest Group: 1.30-3.30 pm on Zoom |



Botany Bay Family History Society is a member of:



**NSW & ACT
Association of
Family History
Societies Inc.**



**The Australasian Federation of
Family History Organisations Inc.**



**FAMILY
HISTORY
Federation**
Supporting Family Historians since 1974

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

As we approach the year's end, I want to extend heartfelt congratulations to all members of BBFHS on reaching our 40th anniversary! This remarkable milestone reflects not only our shared passion for family history but the unwavering dedication of our volunteers who work both in the Research Centre and behind the scenes. We simply could not operate without their support.

At a recent Forum for Presidents and CEOs of family history societies, hosted by Genealogy SA, we discussed key challenges facing societies today, particularly around member engagement, evolving member needs, and the growing competition from online genealogy resources. Some of the main topics included:

Challenges:

- Misconception that family history research is quick and easy (due to television portrayals)
- Ageing membership and declining new memberships after the first year
- Difficulties in succession planning

Opportunities:

- Leveraging social media for member attraction and retention
- Partnering with local organisations (libraries, U3A) to broaden outreach
- Offering a diversity of meeting formats (day vs. night, face-to-face, Zoom) to accommodate members' schedules

Society Goals:

- Highlighting the unique benefits of society membership
- Emphasizing brand recognition and community belonging

As we continue to improve and adapt, I'd love to hear your thoughts. If you have any ideas, suggestions, or even constructive criticism, please feel free to reach out to me directly at president@botanybayfhs.org.au.

In 2025, the Australian and England Interest Groups will be going on a planned hiatus. Instead, we're excited to introduce a full-day, mini-conference for each group. These two events will offer a fresh opportunity for collaborative learning and deeper dives into our shared knowledge, with contributions from various members.

And personally, I will be heading up a new Interest Group on Technology. The plan is to cover a wide range of topics to help BBFHS members use technology to enhance their genealogy research, streamline their work and connect

with other family historians. Topics will benefit newbies to experienced researchers. Broad topics will include:

- **Genealogy Software and Tools:** comparisons, digital notetaking, research logs, mind mapping, interview recording
- **Digital Archiving and Preservation:** scanning and digitising, storage solutions, photo restoration
- **Social Media and Online Collaboration:** using platforms like Facebook, X, Instagram, and WikiTree
- **Mapping Tools for Genealogy:** Google Maps, historic map overlays, geocoding
- **Webinars and Online Learning:** maximizing genealogy learning resources
- **Artificial Intelligence and Genealogy:** exploring emerging tech in family history
- **Data Privacy and Ethics:** online privacy, cybersecurity, and ethical research practices

The Technology Interest Group is designed to be a collaborative group, and I'd like to encourage members with expertise in any of these areas to consider sharing their knowledge. Whether it's a short presentation or an informal talk, your contributions will enrich the experience for all. If you're interested, please contact me at president@botanybayfhs.org.au

I look forward to a fantastic year ahead and to watching our society to grow and evolve. Finally, have a wonderful Christmas break and I'll see you in the New Year.

Jennie Fairs



RESEARCH CENTRE OPENING TIMES

Monday, Wednesday and Friday – 10 am to 2 pm
Saturdays by appointment, by the prior Wednesday night.

Please phone 9523 8948 if going in after midday.

Centre closed after 14 December, reopens 13 January 2025

When researching, please ask for help if you need it – it is why
the Centre assistants are there and they love to help.

SURNAME AND SHIP SEEKER – THE VERTICAL FILES INDEXING PROJECT

by Pat Fearnley (Member)

Members will be aware that over the years our Society has exchanged journals with many family history societies across Australia, England, Scotland and Ireland. From these journals we now hold hundreds of articles, obituaries, residents' lists and other information particular to the events and histories of local areas of those organisations.

Our members' volunteer indexing team has now indexed names and ships mentioned in these journals and co-ordinators Rhonda **McKinnon**

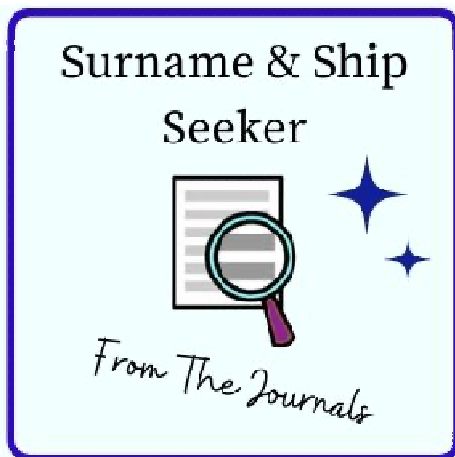
and Sue **Hewitt** have created a searchable database of currently over 160,000 entries. Thousands of additional entries will be added progressively so members should check the *Surname & Ship Seeker* regularly. The Society's heartfelt thanks go to Rhonda, Sue and the many dedicated members who transcribed the records.

In this year of our Society's 40th anniversary, the *Surname and Ship Seeker* is now available for searching **exclusively** for members by logging in to the Members Lounge section of our website. Just click on LOG IN on our website home page at <https://www.botanybayfhs.org.au/> or click on REGISTER if it is your first time. The index can be found in the Members Lounge. Search by clicking on the button containing the appropriate first letter of the name you are searching. The pdf will open in a new window for you to browse or search.

Reproduced below are frequently asked questions with what you need to know about the index. Members will see all references related to the surname search results and can access the articles at our Research Centre.

Yes, it's a bit of a lucky dip, but you never know what fascinating additional information you might glean about your ancestor and their life in their town or district. We look forward to members' feedback.

Happy searching!





- **What kind of information might I find in the Index?** Articles from the journals were selected for indexing with a focus on -
 - * Cemetery transcriptions
 - * War memorial transcriptions
 - * Newspaper reports of local people and events
 - * Histories (and pupil details) of local schools, churches and organisations
 - * Pioneer settler families
 - * Obituaries and biographies
 - * Occupations
 - * Ships' diaries, passenger lists, shipwrecks giving ship's name, date of sailing, and destination (not always clearly stated)
 - * County histories and parish records in the United Kingdom
- **What locations does the index cover and how many entries are there?** As we launch the index in October 2024, over 160,000 entries referencing New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory and Victoria locations have been uploaded. Other Australian states are nearing completion and will be progressively uploaded, so members should check the website regularly for additions.
- **What format does the index take?** Columns with abbreviated details sufficient to identify an individual, BDM dates if given, article title, society/family history group producing the journal, publication date, page number, folder name organised by Australian postcode, e.g. 2508 Helensburgh, UK county e.g. ENG Cornwall; or country e.g. New Zealand
 - * There are clickable links to general and military abbreviations used in the index on the website
 - * Entries are alphabetical by surname followed by given name. Married females have been indexed by both birth and married name
- **Are there any methods of indexing particular surname types that I should be aware of?** Yes. Prepositional surnames such as le Clerc, du Pont, von der

Damm and Mc Donnell have been indexed without spaces and thus appear as LECLERC, DUPONT, VONDERDAMM and MCDONNELL. The apostrophe has been removed in any surname such as O'Connor and D'Arcy and will appear as OCONNOR and DARCY

- **When I find an entry of interest, what do I do next?** Make a note of the folder name in the last column, come to our Research Centre, go to the vertical file cabinets located on the rear wall and select the appropriate folder (arranged in numerical order of post codes) in which the articles are held. They are arranged by journal date found on either the top or bottom of the article page. Some articles were printed over consecutive editions of a journal and may be stapled together. Articles may be photocopied at the Centre. When you finish with an article, please replace in the order in which it was found and place the folder on the Returns Table at the end of bookshelves for refiling by Centre assistants. **DO NOT REMOVE ARTICLES FROM THE RESEARCH CENTRE.**
- **I am a long distance BBFHS member. How can I access articles?** Send us an email at info@botanybayfhs.org.au with details of your search results and one of our research officers will get back to you to discuss access.



NEW MEMBERS

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members. Please use your membership to attend meetings, interest groups, classes and the Research Centre (and please ask for help if you need it).

1962	Jan MacFarlane	Gymea Bay
1963	Gay Hendriksen	Blaxland
1964	Deanne Perry	Lyons, ACT
1965	Susan Brown	Davidson
1966	Deidre Waddington	Burraneer
1967	Cheryl Bruce	Caringbah
1968	Chris Holt	Gymea Bay
1969	Val Ishri	Cronulla
1970	Greg McGuire	Caringbah

BBFHS INTEREST GROUPS

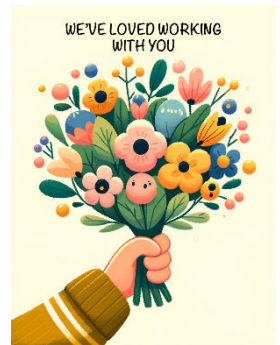
by Barbara **Barnes** (Interest Groups Coordinator)

The calendar for 2025 Interest Groups is currently being finalised. For some reason, perhaps the ability to now do much research at home via the internet, many previous regulars are not taking advantage of attending an Interest Group, either in person at the Research Centre or by joining a ZOOM group for similar interaction in their home environment.

The Committee and members greatly value the input of the coordinators who have a strong interest in the subject but are not necessarily ‘an expert’. They lead the groups whose members share their knowledge to help each other. The group members get to know one another and this social interaction is often a wonderful by-product of their involvement. We appreciate Lilian Magill, Jennie Fairs, Elizabeth Steinlein, Jean Campbell, Leonie Bell, Pam Heather and Geoff Dawes, Sue Jones and John Levy, for the time, effort and knowledge they have given to their group during 2024.

In setting up the 2025 calendar, some co-ordinators have decided to step down but no one has offered to step into their shoes. There are thus some major changes to the overall Interest Group 2025 calendar.

Both the **Australian** and **English** Interest groups will cease to function in their present form. However, there will be a one-day mini seminar for each during the year.



The committee and members thank Sue Jones for co-ordinating the **Legacy** Group from its inception. Whilst Sue has needed to step back, she confirmed that it too had become a small group. Therefore, the Legacy Group is also being withdrawn in 2025. Please be aware that one on one advice, re the use of Legacy, can be given at the Research Centre by other Legacy users. Simply ask.

News from the other Groups, at this time, follow:

Fewer members have been attending the **Writer's** Group at the Research Centre. In 2025, coordinator, Leonie Bell, has opted to change the venue from the Research Centre to ZOOM meetings – the first **2025 ZOOM** session, 27 March.

Scottish Group's attendances in the Research Centre have been steady and co-ordinator, Jean Campbell, sees no need for change. Their first 2025 meeting will be 8 February.

With Pam Heather and Geoff Dawes, the **Family Tree Maker** group continues its regular ZOOM timetable. The first 2025 session is on 25 February. Pam is happy to help members outside of session times and Geoff prepared to give individual help at either the Research Centre or by a home visit. If you would like this assistance please contact Pam – see contact list below.

Whilst three groups are discontinuing, we welcome the arrival of a new group **Technology**. Jennie Fairs is opting to introduce members to better ways, modern ways, of thinking re our Family History research and story writing. Please see Jennie's thoughts for the new group on the President's Page on page3.



To all members, long timers, new members and those in between, please adopt or revisit Interest Groups in 2025. These smaller groups are available to give research assistance with your Family Trees and to break down brick walls with suggestions by fellow participants. The discussion interaction during a group's session also assists the Society's function to be a social hub for community enjoyment. We all love stories. Let us hear yours! Please feel free to contact a coordinator for further information.



The group coordinators are:

Irish Interest – Elizabeth **Steinlein** (care of info@botanybayfhs.org.au)

Scottish Interest – Jean **Campbell** (jeanhcampbell47@gmail.com)

Writers Interest – Leonie **Bell** (LeonieNB65@gmail.com)

Family Tree Maker for Windows and Macs –

Pam Heather (pamheather@gmail.com)

DNA for Family History – John **Levy** (j.levy@bigpond.net.au)

Technology Interest – Jennie **Fairs** (fairsj@gmail.com)

UPCOMING PROGRAM

IRISH INTEREST: Saturday 22 February 2 – 4pm

By ZOOM

SCOTTISH INTEREST: Saturday 8 February 2 – 4pm

At the Research Centre

WRITERS INTEREST:	Thursday 28 November 1.30 – 3.30pm
Research Centre (2024) then ZOOM (2025)	Thursday 27 March 1.30 – 3.30pm
FAMILY TREE MAKER	Tuesday 26 November 1.30 – 3.30pm
FOR WINDOWS & MACS:	Tuesday 25 February 1.30 – 3.30pm
By ZOOM	
DNA FOR FAMILY HISTORY:	Saturday 23 November 1.30 – 3.30pm
By ZOOM	Saturday 22 March 1.30 – 3.30pm
TECHNOLOGY INTEREST:	Saturday 8 March 2 – 4pm
By ZOOM	

NOTE: Session dates are organised months in advance, so members are advised to check the latest details on our Events Calendar at www.botanybayfhs.org.au or see your fortnightly BBFHS eNEWS. You can book and pay the \$5 fee to attend an interest group meeting at <https://www.botanybayfhs.org.au/payments.html>, preferably 24 hours prior to the meeting.



LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS



This article lists the new Library accessions. We remind members that there is a wealth of family history information accumulated over some 40 years in our Library. **Not everything is online!** Check out our library catalogue at <https://www.botanybayfhs.org.au/library--research-centre.html>. You may be very surprised at what you find! **Come to the Research Centre and have a look.** Thank you for the donations from those members who are ‘downsizing’.

AUSTRALIA

- Rum: A Distilled History of Colonial Australia. [A.HIS.1.60LC]
- Islands of Incarceration : Convicts and Quarantine Islands of the Australian Coast. [A19.6LC]

- We Should've Listened to Grandma – Women and Family History. [A.HIS.26.13LC]
- Searching for Mary Ann – Researching Women Ancestors in Australia. [A.HIS.26.14LC]

NEW SOUTH WALES

- Murder, Misadventure & Miserable Ends: Tales from a Colonial Coroner's Court. [AN.HIS.37.11LC]

QUEENSLAND

- Wild Heart Bountiful Land: A Historical Overview of the Mary River. [AQ.LH.4580.1LC]

OVERSEAS

- Tracing Your Ancestors Through Death Records: A Guide for Family Historians. [BRI.GUI.1.45LC]
- Hatred Pursued Beyond the Grave: Tales of our Ancestors from the London Church Courts. [E.HIS.40.4LC]
- Yorkshire Tribute. [E.YKS.HIS.1.1LC]
- West Sussex. [E.SSX.LH.3LC]
- Life in the Victorian & Edwardian Workhouse. [E.HIS.19.1LC]
- Everyday Life in Regency and Victorian England from 1811-1901. [E.26.3LC]
- Victorian and Edwardian Prisons. [E.HIS.37.1LC]
- Aspects of Irish Genealogy - Proceedings of the 1st Irish Genealogical Congress. [I.GUI.1.28LC]
- Irish Libraries, Archives, Museums & Genealogical Centres. [I.SOU.2.5LC]
- The Victorian Workhouse. [E.HIS.19.2LC]
- Tracing Your Clare Ancestors. [I.CLA.GUI.1.1LC]
- Tracing Your Sligo Ancestors. [I.SLI.GUI.1.1LC]
- Tracing your Limerick Ancestors. [I.LIM.GUI.1.1LC]
- Daily Life in Victorian England. [E.HIS.19.1LC]

GENERAL

- The Victorian Sailor. [G.OCC.BRIT.HIS.8LC]
- The Victorian Domestic Servant. [G.OCC.E.HIS.9LC]
- The Victorian Farmer. [G.OCC.E.HIS.LC8]
- The Life of James Rutledge 1817-1899. [G.FH.RUT.1LC]
- Soldiers in Different Armies. [G.MIL.A.HIS.51LC]

NOTE: 'LC' indicates a loan copy, which can be borrowed; 'CD' a compact disc.

Compiled by Janette Daly (Librarian)

LYNDAL HOLLAND WRITING COMPETITION

by John Levy (Editor)

The **BBFHS Lyndal Holland Writing Competition** was established in 2023 in memory of Lyndal Holland, a Foundation Member and inaugural secretary of our Society. The competition is open to all financial members of our Society.

Congratulations to Robyn Smith and Helen Bain, the winner and runner-up in the 2024 **BBFHS Lyndal Holland Writing Competition**. The first prize of \$400 was awarded to Robyn, and the second prize of \$200 was awarded to Helen when the winners were announced at the Annual General Meeting in September. The Competition's theme was 'My Most Inspirational Ancestor'. Please enjoy their articles on the following pages.



Lyndal Holland
(photo: Holland family album)



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THE LYNDAL HOLLAND WINNER – ROSANNA MCFADDEN (1833-1920)

by Robyn **Smith** (Member)

According to the family Bible, Rosanna **McFadden** was born on 29 September 1833 at Dunfanaghy, Donegal, Ireland.¹

A comment made by Rosanna and passed down among the **Poynton** family help to begin her story, “I came out with a boat load of girls”.² For Rosanna can be found on the *Lady Kennaway* Immigrant Passenger List of Orphan Females Arriving at Port Phillip on 6 December 1848 listed as: “McFadden, Rose, 16 years, Housemaid, Donegal, Roman Catholic, Reads”.³

An excerpt from the report of the Immigration Board of Inspection stated that: “Their general aspect indicates good health and gives the impression that they belong to the humble ranks of life. They are generally of stout make, rather low in stature and are endowed with strongly marked Irish physiognomies.” This assessment was backed up by favourable news reported in the *Lloyds Weekly Newspaper* (London, England), Sunday 15 July 1849: “The Irish Female orphans, who reached Port Phillip from Plymouth, per *Lady Kennaway*, made a most favourable impression at their first appearance in Melbourne. About 150 of them attended divine service at the Catholic chapel, and everybody was struck with their healthy, respectable appearance.”⁴

However, by 1850 levels of bitterness and discontent began to surface in the Colony with *The Argus* newspaper voicing its condemnation of the orphan girls. Opposition to the female orphan scheme became so strong that it ended within two years.

Upon arriving at Port Phillip, Rosanna was hired out to Robert **Robinson** of Melbourne at £8 for six months.⁵

In a saying of the times: “It was safer to marry the first man who proposed than be alone on the streets of Melbourne”. Rosanna had to wait four years for that proposal and on 27 August 1852 she married Alexander Poynton at the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria.⁶

When gold was discovered near Ballarat in August 1851 the huge gold rush began. Thousands of people flocked to the area including the young couple. Together they pushed a wheelbarrow in which they carried their possessions to Castlemaine where their first child, Alexander, was born in 1853.⁷ Because Rosanna was Catholic and her husband Alexander was Protestant, he said that the first twelve children will be brought up as Protestant and any after that can be raised Catholic.

After a nomadic life on the goldfields and with now five children the couple finally settled at Bull Dog now known as Illabarook, 34 km south of Ballarat. They leased 33 hectares of land where Alexander built a modest home with a separate kitchen, which is much the same now as when it was first built. It is one large room 5.5 m by 4.0 m with walls made of two rows of split saplings packed in between with mud and bark fibres. They named the property *The Wattles*.

Due to mining impediments the couple were unable to secure ownership of *The Wattles* until October 1889.⁸ This property is still owned by Poynton descendants and has become a place to visit for many descendants including myself.

Despite many childhood infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, scarlet fever, diphtheria, measles and typhoid, Rosanna's greatest achievement was raising eleven of her fourteen children to adulthood and instilling in them the desire to succeed in life. Samuel (1872-1872) was stillborn, Joseph James (1858-1859) drowned in a post hole and John (1873-1876) died aged three.

And what of Rosanna's surviving children?

- Alexander Poynton, Order of the British Empire (1853-1935) left school at fourteen and worked as a miner and shearer before becoming President of the Amalgamated Miners' Association at Creswick and foundation Treasurer of the Amalgamated Shearers' Union. He eventually entered politics and was a foundation member of the first Commonwealth Parliament representing South Australia in the House of Representatives which he held until 1922.⁹
- Charles Poynton (1855-1931) foundation Vice President of the Amalgamated Shearers' Union of Australasia.
- Rosanna **Wales** nee Poynton (1860-1941) mother of Sir Alexander George Wales who became Lord Mayor of Melbourne and was rewarded a knighthood with which he was invested at Buckingham Palace by King George VI whose coronation he attended in 1937.
- Edward Poynton (1861-1949) attended Melbourne University majoring in English and graduating with a Master of Arts.
- Joseph James Poynton (1870-1938) joined the Victorian Railways as a clerk and later held a high position in the Commonwealth Railways. Eventually JJ (as he was known) accepted an offer as General Manager of the Midland Railways in Western Australia. He was Mayor of Midland Junction and then Lord Mayor of Perth. JJ attended the Coronation of King George VI in 1937.

- Catherine Poynton worked as a dressmaker at the very fashionable dressmaking establishment named *Sorelli* in Melbourne. Catherine remained single and died in her eightieth year with a comfortable fortune.
- Henry Neil Poynton became a train engine driver and on 12 June 1905 applied to the United States Patent Office for a patent on a new and useful improved Car-Coupling.
- Frederick William and David remained in the Illabarook area becoming farmers. Mary Jane and Ellen married, sadly Ellen died in 1899 during childbirth.



*Rosanna Poynton nee McFadden with six of her children
Back row: Rosanna, David, Joseph James, Catherine
Front row: Alexander jnr, Rosanna, Edward
(photo: Smith family album)*

Rosanna was my great great grandmother – a mentally and physically strong woman so respected by her husband he honoured his promise allowing their fourteenth child to be raised in her faith and naming Rosanna as the executrix and beneficiary of his Will when he died in November 1896 at the age of sixty four.¹⁰

Rosanna died at the age of eighty seven leaving an Estate worth just over four hundred pounds, including 56 acres in her own name.¹¹

Rosanna's funeral notice in The Ballarat Star (Vic 1865-1924) reads:-

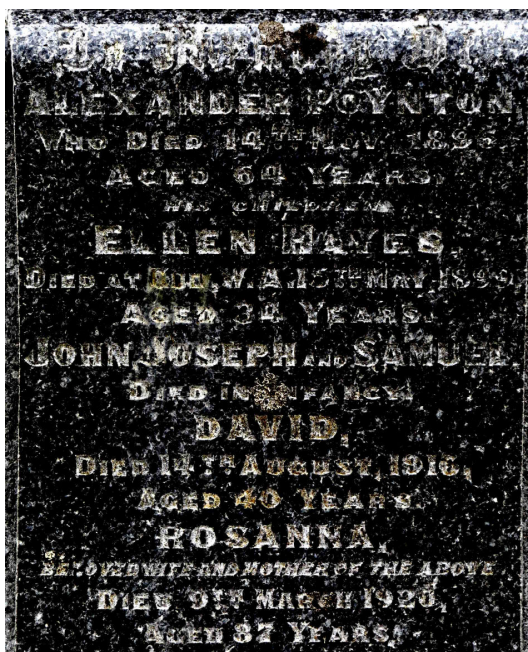
Monday 15 March 1920 Page 2

ILLABAROOK

The funeral of the late Mrs Rosanna POYNTON of Illabarook, took place on Thursday, and was very largely attended from all parts of the surrounding districts, and a number of relations from all parts of the States.

Her remains were interred in the family grave In the Pitfield Cemetery. Her husband pre-deceased her some 24 years ago. The coffin bearers were four sons of the deceased, namely Messrs William Frederick, Joseph James, Charles and Henry Neil POYNTON.¹²

She is buried alongside her husband in the Cape Clear (also known as Pitfield) Cemetery, Cape Clear, Victoria.



Rosanna Poynton gravestone (photo: Rebecca McIntosh, Find a Grave memorial 147842526)

REFERENCES

1. Poynton Bible held by M Poulton
2. Because of a shortage of female domestic servants in the Colonies, Earl Grey proposed to offer free passage to females between the ages of 14 and 18 orphaned by the potato famine
3. Sutherland Reference Library Assisted Passenger Lists 1839-1871 Victoria
4. Newspapers on line, BBFHS
5. *Barefoot and Pregnant* Trevor McClaughlin
6. Victorian BDM Register No 2856/1852
7. Victorian BDM Register No 546/1853 (Pointon)
8. Copies of Correspondence between A Poynton and the Office of Lands and Survey
9. Australian Dictionary of Biography – On line Edition
10. PROV Will VPRS 7591/P2 257 63/077
11. PROV Will VPRS 7591/P2 645 179/253
12. Trove *The Ballarat Star* 15 March 1920 p2

THE LYNDAL HOLLAND RUNNER-UP – JANE ROBERTSON (1812-1876)

by Helen **Bain** (Member)

Jane **Robertson** was my great great grandmother. She was born in Selkirk, Scotland, the youngest of six children and only daughter of Richard Robertson, a merchant, and his wife Julia **Sandilands**. Her husband William also had the surname Robertson but was from an unrelated family. They married in London and lived a comfortable life there with their eight children.

It was two of Jane's brothers, Thomas and Richard, who decided to seek their fortunes on the other side of the world and included their sister Jane and family in their plans.

The brothers arrived in the Colony on the *John Cooper* in 1841 and wasted no time establishing themselves working on rural properties in northern New South Wales as shepherds with an eye to becoming landowners themselves. In about 1844 Thomas squatted on a large area of land he named *Sandilands*. It was followed by the purchase of a property named *Bonalbo* on behalf of his brother-in-law William.

Part of their plan was that as each of Jane's three sons reached the age of 16 they would be sent out to their uncles to work with them and learn the cattle business.

George the eldest boy was first and travelled unaccompanied to Sydney. His arrival in August 1854 coincided with bad weather. With strong winds blowing up the coast, departure was delayed several times before the ship *Isabella* left for the Clarence River. They sailed out of Port Jackson and were never seen again. No wreckage was ever found. Despite this tragedy, the next two brothers and a cousin were sent. This time they were accompanied by another of their uncles and safely reached their destination.

In 1861 Jane, William and their five daughters were the last to follow and sailed to Australia on the *Waterloo*. They brought with them all the equipment they thought necessary for their new venture. It took up more than half the ship's hold. Near the end of the voyage, William suffered a fall and was bed ridden. Nine days after reaching Sydney he died in the home of a family friend in Sydney.

The decision was made that Jane's brother Thomas, who had come to Sydney to meet them, would take the four youngest girls with him to *Sandilands*. This left Jane and eldest daughter Juliana to arrange William's burial in Camperdown Cemetery and then make their way north by ship to meet Jane's brother Richard at Lawrence on the Clarence River.

From there it was an overland trip through the bush to their new home. In her first letter "Home" to her mother-in-law, Jane says: "Juliana and I got safe home but we had the most alarming road to travel over... Brother Richard riding before us to pick out the best parts of the road... we went down precipices and up banks that no one in England would have thought taking a vehicle over... my brother always preceded us sounding for a bottom in the boggy parts".

William and Jane had taken the precaution of making Wills prior to their departure. William left his entire estate, including *Bonalbo*, to his wife. At some stage before their arrival, Thomas had also sold *Sandilands* to his sister Jane.

As often happens in families, there was a dispute concerning the properties when the brothers learned the fact their sister now was to be owner of both properties. The matter went to an arbitration hearing headed by two reputable local landowners who found in Jane's favour. The two brothers then left for Queensland and cut all family ties.

Jane had now become a grazier in her own right. My great grandfather William managed *Bonalbo* and his brother (another Richard) *Sandilands*. Jane was noted for her hospitality to all who travelled through the remote isolated track to their properties. It was 80 km to Grafton and several hours ride through the bush to their nearest neighbour the Barnes family.

Besides running the homestead and kitchen gardens she took over the education of her younger daughters and children of all employees when itinerant tutors were not available. For a doctor they had to send a man on horseback with a spare horse to Warwick 96 km away. At halfway at *Koreela*, he left his horses to rest and was loaned others. These were picked up on the return journey with the doctor. So it was only something serious that this was called for. Unfortunately in June 1876 the doctor was required. Despite the efforts of Dr **Taylor**, Jane died of a bowel constriction and was buried on a hill overlooking *Bonalbo*.

After several prosperous years, bad times struck them in the form of pleuro pneumonia, a curse that spread from Victoria up to New South Wales and killed much of their stock. Those who could sold their stations and joined the exodus to unsettled pasture lands in Queensland. The Robertsons realised that they had no other options but to sell *Bonalbo* to neighbour Henry **Barnes** of *Dyrabba* and *Sandilands* to his son-in-law Charles **Bruxner**. The sale was also required to fulfil the instructions in Jane's Will. In a letter which Jane's daughter Appolina later wrote to my grandfather, she said that the family's only consolation was that their mother never lived to see the end. What a heart break it had become.

On 24 September 1960, a bridge over Peacock Creek, Old Bonalbo was officially opened by Sir Michael Bruxner, DSO, MLA, grandson of Henry Barnes

of *Dyrabba*, naming it "Jane Robertson Bridge".

This bridge and the grave on the hilltop overlooking *Bonalbo* are now the only local tangible reminders of this remarkable lady and her family who braved all the trials of the early pioneer in a new and unknown country and led the way for all who were to come after them.



*Jane Robertson with her children and son-in-law following the marriage of her daughter. Jane died four months after this photo was taken.
(photo: owned by Malcolm Robertson – used with permission)*

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BBFHS RESEARCH CENTRE AND LIBRARY

by Jean **Campbell** (Research Centre Coordinator)

Six new computers were installed in the Research Centre in September. Thank you to all involved. They are working well and are much faster than the very old ones they replaced. A password is now required by Windows 11 – usually just at start-up but ask a Centre Volunteer if you need it. However, the desktop layout is very similar to before, making the changeover easy

Notices on the top of the monitors describe which paid subscription programs are installed on each computer. We have Ancestry, Find My Past and 1921 census, The Genealogist, British Newspaper Archive, Biographical Database of Australia, John Grenham's Irish Resources, Sydney Morning Herald (1955 to 1995) and Internet History Resources (*NSW Family History Document Service*).

The NSW & ACT State Conference in the Research Centre in September was well attended. The four presentations were interesting and useful for further research. Many thanks to members who set out chairs and tables and the ZOOM set up with sound. We are so fortunate to have the veranda (our veranda!) where members can have morning or afternoon tea and lunch. This looked like an outdoor cafe, with chairs and our red tablecloths. We were provided with a delicious morning and afternoon tea and there was lots of talk and catching up. It's a delightful way to attend the State Conference together in our own room. We all enjoyed the day.

Our Open Day in October was held in the Research Centre as well as the Hall. Quite a number of members and visitors attended the day, which started off very cold and very windy. Most people had a look in the Research Centre and visitors were amazed at all our resources (as always happens!) Quite a number of visitors became members.

Many thanks to all the Centre Volunteers who give their time and expertise to be on duty every month. There are 33 members who provide this service. If you would like to volunteer some of your time to be a Centre Volunteer each month, you would be welcomed. Please contact Jean Campbell at botanybayfhs@yahoo.com.au.



WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

is available at the Research Centre.

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THE TRIBULATIONS OF JOHN DESLANDES

by Glen O'Connor (Member)

Among my various ancestral tales, John **Deslandes** story stands out for the sheer bad luck and poor decisions that dogged him through much of his life.

John was born in 1828 on the island of Jersey, where he was mostly known as Jean. Jersey is the largest of the Channel Islands, just off the west coast of France. A substantial part of the populace of Jersey is descended from refugees, known as Huguenots, who fled the religious and political strife in France during the early 1600s. One refugee family went by the name of Deslandes. My great great grandmother, Kezia Deslandes, was also born on Jersey, in 1837 and, as you have no doubt surmised, was a near relative of John Deslandes.

The family name Deslandes means of the moors. It was a name well known in France, particularly in Normandy where there are a lot of moors. The name is pronounced in French as Daylonduh and in English Delond or rarely Delongy.

When economic conditions collapsed on Jersey in the mid-1800s, a flood of emigrants left Jersey bound for North America, New Zealand and of course the Australian colonies. John arrived in Melbourne in 1848 on the *Lady Willing*. He is not to be confused with another Jersey born John Deslandes who later immigrated to South Australia in 1854 on the *Evening Star*.

The Melbourne newspaper, *The Argus*, reported in February 1851 that a “John Deslands” was charged with an assault on Edwin **Dark** at Box Forest to the north of Melbourne. There had been previous disagreements between the two and John claimed he had been provoked. He was fined £2.¹ He is very likely to be the same John Deslandes. This was the earliest of the many recorded fines John was made to pay.

John married Jane **Byng** (or **Bing**) in Melbourne in April 1852 at the Wesleyan Church. The marriage was later registered twice, possibly to correct spelling errors.² Jane was a 15 years old former nursemaid from a rural area west of Athlone in Ireland when she arrived in Melbourne on board the *Diadem* in January 1850. She was an orphan of the famine years living in a workhouse in Enniskillen. She arrived with her older sister Mary. They were called orphans even though, like Jane, they still had one parent.³

Jane was one of the 4,000 or so Irish female orphans sent to Australia under the scheme of Earl Grey, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, which operated from 1848 until it was suspended in May 1850. The scheme reduced the severe overpopulation of the workhouses in Ireland and provided much needed domestic servants and marriageable young women to meet Australian needs.



Enniskillen Workhouse (photo: Fermanagh and Omagh District Council)

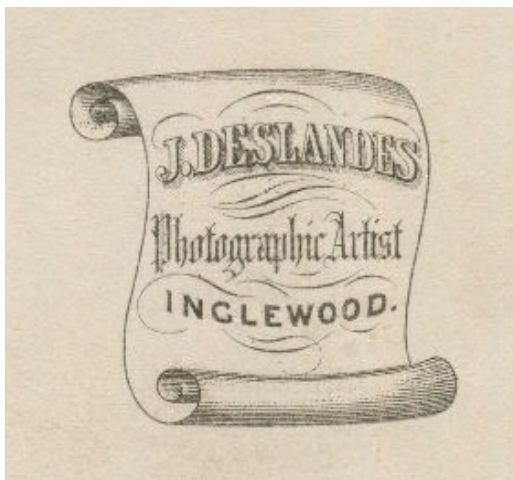
The young girls, however, were condemned in local newspapers and by politicians as being unskilled, untrained and generally useless as well as a financial strain on Australia, which had paid for their passage. They were also branded harlots by many in the community. Some ended up with terrible lives but many others went on to become contented and worthwhile contributors to the community. Jane's first job was working as an apprentice for Gilbert **Pippett** in Russell Street, Melbourne at the rate of £7 for 12 months.⁴ After her marriage to John, she would have ten children between 1853 and 1872.

John and Jane lived in and around Melbourne, usually moving house before the creditors and bailiffs arrived. They left Melbourne in 1856 and relocated to Sandhurst, a name given to the highest producing goldfield in eastern Australia.⁵ The name lasted until 1891 when it was officially changed to Bendigo, which was an earlier name given to the area that had never gone away in the mind of the older inhabitants. Jane's sister, Mary, had married and moved to Sandhurst only a short time earlier.

The two families then moved to Inglewood to the north west of Bendigo about 1860. John worked as a photographer, hairdresser, tobacconist and stationer but his passion was photography. He was identified under the name of "John Desandes" in a book named *Mechanical Eye* by Davies & Stanbury published in 1985 and described as a little known goldfields photographer, active in the Inglewood area during 1866.

In one of his photographic works in about 1870 John produced a series of albumin prints of the Berlin Nugget found at the Berlin diggings near Inglewood. Six prints attributed to John Deslandes, including prints of the Berlin Nugget, were recently offered for sale by Douglas Stewart Fine Books of Armadale, Victoria for \$1,500.

John also had an interest in taxidermy. He was once given a huge “tiger cat” which was “not unlike the native cat” to stuff after it had been shot in a paddock.⁶ The cat was probably one of the native quolls.



Deslandes business logo from the back of a print of the Berlin Nuggett (photo: Leski Auctions #432, Lot 522)

Two of Jane’s children, born after the move to Inglewood, died in infancy, Susan in 1868 at the age of 14 months and Herbert in 1871 at the age of five months. Two more of Jane’s children would predecease her which could only have contributed to her worsening physical and mental state.

A severe storm swept through Inglewood in November 1872 causing much damage, including to two houses that were blown flat. The large front window of John’s shop was blown in and rain destroyed a lot of his “fancy goods” and photographic equipment.⁷ Severe storms were not uncommon in the region and John would suffer more damage to his shop and goods in later storms.

The Police Magistrate in Bendigo for a time was John **Ogier**. He had a habit of treating counsel and witnesses poorly by both his conduct and language. On one occasion in 1877 he made John Deslandes so extremely indignant over the manner in which he was spoken to as a witness that John started his own campaign to have Ogier removed from office. Other complaints by respected citizens had previously been made and continued to be made. A public meeting was held where 150 citizens signed a petition calling for a formal inquiry. Ogier was eventually removed from office but, in a practice that has never gone away, he was paid compensation by the Government to resign. A Parliamentary Select Committee later reported that although Ogier had not broken any laws and did his best to carry out justice, his manner had unnecessarily offended fellow citizens.⁸

John had by now become very well respected, as shown by his election as a

member of the Inglewood Hospital Committee and his involvement in much of the social affairs of the town.

John's reputation for bad luck soared in 1878 when a local lady entered John's shop to buy tickets in the Melbourne Total Temperance Abstinence Society's Gala Raffle. John was the local agent for buying tickets for such popular raffles and lotteries. The lady wanted tickets for each member of her family, except for the baby. As only one ticket was left after the sale and the lady could not be persuaded to buy it for the baby (she was a widow or a deserted wife), John bought the ticket in his name but presented it as a gift to the baby. Amazingly, that ticket with the number 23,545 won first prize which was a new cottage built in Prahran, a Melbourne suburb not far from the coast at St Kilda. The cottage was valued at £200.

John kept his word and transferred the cottage to the baby's mother.⁹ John's generosity (and reputation for bad luck) made the newspapers all over Victoria and he became one of Bendigo region's most talked about citizens.

However, popularity was not enough to save John's fortunes. Making his act of generosity even more remarkable, he was declared insolvent only a few months later in July 1878 due to "falling off in business, borrowing money at a high rate of interest, losses in mining speculation, and pressure of creditors."¹⁰ He was assessed as having liabilities of £551/5/7 and assets of £121/5/10, leaving a deficiency of £430/0/9. His assets were assigned for the benefit of his creditors.

John somehow managed to pay off his debts or at least have had them settled because it wasn't long before he was back in business. However, just as he was getting back on his feet, a fire tore through part of Inglewood in June 1881 causing severe damage to John's shop, now in Verdon Street, and to his photographic equipment and stock. His shop was insured but his cameras and other items were not. The good news for the town was that although the fire destroyed many businesses, it was stopped just after it destroyed the Deslandes shop.¹¹

John was by now totally blind in his left eye, possibly caused by a photographic accident involving use of the hugely dangerous magnesium flash, a known cause of blindness in photographers.

It only got worse for John. Later in 1881 he and his eldest son, John William Deslandes, were charged with larceny of a large amount of building materials from a site in Inglewood next door to the Deslandes business. The materials mostly comprised roofing, floorboards and linings that had been placed on the site for the erection of a new building. The materials had started to warp and become unusable. John considered it unforgivable to allow the materials to go to waste when he could readily put them to use.

Much of the stolen materials were taken to a rural farm selection at Hope Creek occupied by John William Deslandes and on which he was building a public house. At their crowded committal hearing, one witness, who was the occasional foreman at the site from where the materials had been taken, stated “(John Deslandes) said (to me) he had taken the things, but he did it while drunk. He said that the police had taken Johnny, but that he was innocent, and stated he would go and bring everything back, and anything used or damaged he would pay for, if witness would only let it drop.”

The witness also added that in the few weeks he knew John “he had been drunk five nights out of six.” John listened to the evidence presented (which was thought by all present to be conclusive of guilt) and at the end of the five hour hearing he gave up and pleaded guilty but his son continued to plead his own innocence. In the end, both were committed for trial but given bail.¹²

At their trial the following month, the Judge said that the case was an extremely painful one, with each of the two trying to take the blame for the other. John was a well-respected citizen and his 46 year old wife Jane was now an invalid and needed constant care. John was described as having a “stout build” and his blindness in one eye was acknowledged. The son was found guilty by the jury of receiving stolen goods. The Judge said he would give as mild a sentence as he could and then sentenced them both to six months’ imprisonment with hard labour.¹³ I wonder what a harsh sentence would have been.

Father and son were taken from Sandhurst Prison to Pentridge Gaol in Melbourne. John was released six months later on 14 May 1882. His son had been released the day before.

John continued to get into trouble. In 1884 he was fined £2 plus costs for illegally selling laudanum from his hairdressing shop. This was the same fine given at that sittings to Poon Goon for illegally selling opium.¹⁴ A year later John was again fined £2 plus costs on each charge of underpaying postage by concealing postal articles and letters inside newspapers.¹⁵ John certainly showed himself to be enterprising when it came to looking after his affairs.

John’s health, which was made worse by his imprisonment, continued to decline. John was 68 when he died at the Clifton Hill Lunatic Asylum in Melbourne on 3 August 1896 “after a lingering illness” no doubt related to his alcohol addiction and lifestyle. His cause of death was recorded as a softening of the brain which was a rather nice way of saying senile dementia. The *Bendigo Advertiser* said that “prior to his removal to Melbourne, (he) was a very old resident of Inglewood.”¹⁶

Jane was 67 when she died in the Melbourne suburb of Brunswick three years later on 29 August 1899. Sadly, one of her sons, 42 year old George

Deslandes, who took over the hairdressing business at Inglewood, passed away two months before her from multiple illnesses that had left him in hospital for months.¹⁷

It is a wonder young George lived as long as he did. When he was 13 he jumped off a cart to grab the bridle of a wayward horse and was crushed between the horse and a building. He vomited everything he ate and was not expected to survive his injuries but he confounded everyone by recovering.¹⁸ When George was 32 he was again involved in a serious accident involving a horse and cart. This time it was a dark and stormy night and the horse bolted and galloped off at great pace with George at the reins. A doctor, who happened to be travelling with George, had the good sense to jump off early. On arriving at some closed railway gates, the horse successfully jumped over the gates but the buggy failed to make the jump and was smashed to pieces on the follow through. George was thrown to the ground somewhere in the dark. Neighbours in fact found George lying unconscious on the railway tracks and managed to remove him just before a passing train arrived (probably explaining why the gates were closed). Not surprisingly, George sustained serious head and body injuries.¹⁹

George found himself in court two years later charged with stealing money from a fellow drinker at an Inglewood hotel. The drinker had laid out banknotes on the counter totalling £26. George helped count the money and gave the notes back but the drinker later claimed he was missing £5 and accused George of theft. The evidence against George was flimsy and there were many witnesses who backed George. The charge was dismissed with the bench saying George would leave the court without a stain on his character.²⁰

At least George was luckier than his older brother John (the unfortunate receiver of the stolen goods). Farmer John's body was found on the side of the road at Burke's Flat in 1913, apparently the victim of a lightning strike while driving sheep.²¹ His oldest son, Hector Deslandes, was killed four years later in October 1917 at Poelcappelle in Belgium during the Battle of Passchendaele when he was hit by shell fire. Lance Corporal Hector had been with the army since he landed at Gallipoli.

Some families have had their fair share of bad luck but this family had more than most. John and Jane were dogged by misfortune for most of their married lives. Fancy winning a State-wide raffle and coming out empty-handed.

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PLEASE MENTION *THE ENDEAVOUR* WHEN CONTACTING

BOYLE'S HOTEL, SUTHERLAND – A DYNASTY OF PUBLICANS

by Colleen **Passfield** (Member)

In the mid 1880's, during the construction of the Hurstville to Sutherland rail link, camps were established for the workers along the line. When Sutherland station was opened in 1885 and land became available, businessmen and developers quickly moved to meet the needs of the local communities which evolved. There was a move to establish the former campsites as social hubs for the workers and soon, despite opposition from some church groups, hotels were part of that development.

About 1887, on the former camp site at Como, the German Club was established overlooking Scylla Bay. This later developed into the distinctive Como Hotel.



Como Hotel, c1894 (original photo: nla.gov.au/nla.obj-148979938/view , restored by aussiejeff at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/88572252@N06/36781625322>)

About the same time, William **Bramley** purchased three blocks of land on the eastern side of the Sutherland Railway station and, in 1887, built a brick general store and a hotel which he named the Railway Hotel.

In 1893, Catherine **Major** purchased the Royal Hotel on the western side of the railway line and, in 1897, with her husband Alfred **Kitt**, bought the Railway Hotel from William Bramley who had financial problems. In 1901, Edgar (Ted) **Boyle** took over the Railway Hotel which became known as Boyle's Hotel and has been associated with the one family for over a century. When Ted died in 1942, the hotel passed to his daughter, Mrs Doris (Dorrie) **Stapleton**, and after her death in 1948, through her estate to her son Eddie Stapleton a well-known international Rugby Union player.

Edgar William Boyle (1868-1942)

Born in London, Ted, like his older brother, followed a maritime career for nine years, travelling to various parts of the world. He arrived in Sydney in 1890 and joined the police force. After two years he then worked at George **Adam's** hotel, home of the Tattersall's Club, for about nine years learning the hotel business and, in 1901 began his career as the jovial 'mine host' of the Railway Hotel at Sutherland.

The hotels at Sutherland had become venues for sport and entertainment and Ted Boyle's reputation as a hotelkeeper was built on his passion for sport. A good sportsman himself, he sponsored competitions for cycling, athletics, woodchopping, pigeon shooting, snooker and boxing. In 1904, he built Boyle's National Hall, opposite the hotel, where many social events and boxing took place. Many cycling events started and finished at Boyle's Hotel and, in 1927, the first 'City to Surf' race from Boyle's Hotel to Cronulla Beach was run.



Boyle's Hotel, Sutherland (photo: John Levy)

In 1937 the pub was demolished and replaced by the present building on the corner of the Old Princes Highway and Boyle Street in Sutherland. For over 125 years it has been a central part of the local community, and now formally recognized by the NSW Government in the cultural heritage list for the Sutherland Shire.

Ted Boyle was also involved in many other community activities. He served several terms as a councillor and one term as Deputy President of Sutherland Shire Council. He was associated with many charitable organisations such as Kogarah Cottage Hospital, later St. George District Hospital, and St. George-Sutherland Shire Ambulance Service. During the Depression of the 1930s, Boyle's National Hall served as a soup kitchen for the unemployed families that camped in the nearby National Park. He supported the local Catholic Church in their many charitable endeavors and, with Father Thomas **Lloyd**, sponsored many boxing events and provided prize money for the contestants

He was part of the group which agitated for the construction of the tramway from Sutherland to Cronulla and purchased the first tram ticket issued and, in 1931, the last ticket when the tram ceased running. In 1939, when the electric railway from Sutherland to Cronulla was officially opened Ted Boyle purchased the first railway ticket issued from each station on the line.

Ted Boyle died, after a brief illness, on 11 July. 1942, survived by his children Leo and Dorrie (Mrs Doris Stapleton). He was buried in Waverly Cemetery.

Doris Edna Stapleton (1897-1948)

Doris Boyle, known as Dorrie, was the daughter of Edgar Boyle and his wife, Anna. In 1930, she married Thomas (Tom) Stapleton (1891-1964), youngest son of Elizabeth and Charles Stapleton, old residents of the district. A well known and popular resident of the Shire, Dorrie inherited the hotel and was associated with it until her death in 1948 when it passed, through her estate to her son Edgar Stapleton.

Edgar Thomas Charles Stapleton (1930-2005)

Edgar Stapleton, known as Eddie, was the son of Thomas Stapleton and his wife Doris nee Boyle and grandson of Edgar (Ted) Boyle. Growing up in the Shire, he became a well-known international sportsman and, when he inherited the hotel, continued the family tradition of support for local sporting bodies.

Eddie was an outstanding Australian Rugby Union winger, a member of the St George Rugby Union Club (now Southern Districts) and a Wallaby in the 1950s. He is also recognized as an All Black having played a match for New Zealand in 1960 when they were short of a player on a stop over in Australia on their way to a

tour of South Africa. Eddie played 16 Tests for Australia and 13 matches for NSW between 1951 and 1958.

Eddie remained involved in Rugby Union and was chairman of the committee that oversaw the merger of the St George and Port Hacking clubs into the Southern Districts Rugby Union Clubs. He was a life member of Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club as well as the St George, Burraneer and Southern Districts Rugby Union Clubs.

After his retirement, Eddie concentrated on learning the hotel trade in preparation for his eventual managing of Boyle's Hotel at Sutherland and, by 1963, Eddie Stapleton was the licensee of Boyle's Hotel and living on the premises.

In 1954, Eddie Stapleton married June Edith **Fraser**, daughter of Stewart Jack Fraser and his wife, Eileen May nee **Kelly**. Jack had an electrical and bicycle shop in Cronulla and Eddie's occupation was noted as electrician. Eddie and June would have seven children and later lived in Sorrento Place in Cronulla.

Eddie Stapleton died in November, 2005 and was cremated at Woronora Cemetery. He was survived by his wife, June, seven children and fifteen grandchildren. His ashes were interred with his grandfather, Edgar Boyle in Waverley Cemetery.

June Stapleton, nee Fraser died in 1923 and was buried in Woronora Cemetery.

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DEATH FALL IN A VICTORIAN MINE SHAFT

by Janet **Kendrigan** (Member)

Hugh **Ross** was my great uncle who was born 9 April 1901 at Ararat, Victoria. Young Hugh Ross, the baby of the family, commonly known as “Bubs”, was killed in an accident, eleven years of age on 6 April 1913 and just days before his 12th birthday.

The circulation of the news on Sunday evening that another abandoned shaft tragedy had occurred shocked the people of Stawell beyond expression, for it made the third victim that the abandoned shafts on the Big Hill had claimed within the past seven years.



Uncle "Bubs" Hugh Ross. Age 12

How the Accident Happened

Hugh, in company with his brother Don, attended Sunday school, and afterwards with four other lads: Maurice **Morgan**, William **Sprague**, Robert **Webster** and George **Warren**, went for a walk up the Big Hill, as they had often done before. About 5 pm they were returning down the western slope of the hill at the rear of the Court House, and as youngsters of this age do, were skylarking.

Halfway down the hill was the abandoned shaft known as No.6 Old Scotchmen's mine. Some other boys and girls met near this point, and they indulged in some good-natured banter ending up with some volleys of small missiles tossed at one another and perhaps into the mineshafts.

Hugh Ross was last seen by his mates standing on the mullock heap around the shaft referred to, while they went to the dam to wash their hands. A little later they missed Hugh. They looked around and not finding him they concluded he was hiding behind one of the heaps of stone about the place, though one of his mates jokingly said “perhaps he has fallen down a shaft”.

Don Ross went home and asked if “Bubs” had come home. He began to cry, as it began to dawn on him that perhaps his little brother had fallen down the shaft.

The matter was reported to the police and they with Mr J H **Bate** and others went to the shaft near where the lad was last seen and examined the earth around the mouth. They found well defined marks of something slipping down the edge and in one spot what looked like a heel mark. The mouth of the shaft was terribly treacherous; coming down from the hill the earth and mullock had slipped down making a very steep shoot into the shaft. With indications pointing to something recently having slipped down the hole, the police and Mr Bate felt sure that the lad was down the shaft, and their deductions were subsequently proved to be correct.

With a few poles bridging the yawning cavity, Mr Bate lowered a line with a hurricane lamp attached, and after sounding 107 m the light went out, and being drawn up showed that it had been immersed in water. A consultation was then held between the police, Mr Bate and some expert miners, and it was felt that nothing could be done until daylight, when proper bearers and winch could be erected. Mr S Carr volunteered to try a descent, but the danger was thought too great.

Descending the Shaft

The next morning, after a winch had been erected over the shaft, Superintendent Morris placed Mr John **Gunyon** in charge of operations, and he obtained the expert assistance of Messrs A **Lovett** and R **Munro**, both experienced miners. Mr Robert **Hughes** volunteered and went down, but after descending about 1 m, some of the mullock was giving way and slipping down the shaft and endangering Mr Hughes. He was therefore drawn up, and it was decided to slab up each side of the hole, forming a wall to prevent any stones from getting into the shaft. This occupied until midday, when Mr Lovett descended.

After being down about 12 minutes, he was hauled up and stated that he had reached the water, but there was no sign of Hugh's body. He obtained a tuft of whitish hair adhering to the side of the shaft near the water line. On examination in daylight this hair was said to be goat hair. Mr Lovett said that no foul air was encountered but the water was very stagnant. He found no sign of Hugh, but there were numerous scratches on the sides of the shaft, possibly caused by falling boulders.

Mr Lovett descended again – this time with a police grappling iron and 45 m of light rope. He was down about an hour when he signalled to be raised to the surface. At this time there were some 500 people (including a large number of women and young girls) gathered around the shaft and scattered around on adjoining mullock heaps. When it was seen that the men on the winch, Messrs Hume and **Paton**, were raising Lovett, excitement ran high.

When Lovett's figure came into view, he was alone and unburdened, even without the grappling iron. He uttered "I've got the little chap" and it flew around

the assemblage and the worst of the tension was over. Mr Lovett looked exhausted and was helped out of the seat slung on the wire rope.

Mr Lovett's Statement

When I reached the water level, the level opening to the east had about 300 mm of water in it. Owing to the shaft walls opening out on all sides like a chamber, I had to ease the grappling iron from the sling seat. I saw no sign of anything in the stagnant water, no bubbles, though I looked for them. My first cast of the Iron down 23 m drew large piece of black cloth which I took to be the portion of the poor lad's coat. My next cast settled into something, and I thought I had the lad's body, but on drawing it to the surface of the water I found it to be the putrefying half carcass of a goat.

The stench was awful and made me quite sick. The stirring up of the water raised a foul smell too, and it almost overcame the naked candlelight I had. Two more casts of the iron drew blank and the third lodged in something. It required some humouring to release whatever it was for I think it was entangled in some timber. However, I gradually worked the object free and got it to the surface. It was the body of the poor lad.

I felt myself going weaker and weaker from the foul stench thrown off by the water, and I first laid the little body in the level, and secured it, and signalled to be hauled up. I thought if I attempted to carry it on my lap it might slip off owing to the swinging of the rope. I am glad I recovered the little chap's body, for it will ease the parent's minds. It was a piece of good luck that I managed to hook it under the left arm of the brace.

Raising the Body to the Surface

Mr J. Gunyon then decided to go down and bring the body from the level to the top. It took exactly 18 minutes to haul Mr Gunyon up with the body after getting the signal. When he reached the open it was seen that he held the poor little body of Hugh Ross between his knees. His face was almost black with foul slime, and he bore a terrible wound on the right temple where it had evidently come into contact with a jutting piece of reef country on the side of the shaft. It was saddest of sad sights to see the poor little stiffened body clad in what was once white lined clothes, and many of those present were moved to tears.

Mr F. **Gough** had arrived with a casket and in this the remains were reverently laid and taken to the Hospital Morgue. The crowd, who had been attracted by a morbid curiosity, gradually melted away, one and all full of deep and sincere sympathy for the unfortunate lad and his sorrowing parents and brothers and sisters. The little fellow was a particularly bright and winsome lad and clever too being of a studious nature.

In Conclusion

The tragedy was formally notified to the coroner and an inquest was held into the accident. After this concluded, a funeral was held from his parents' residence in Wimmera Street.

The local paper stated: "In connection with yesterday's efforts to recover the body of the lad Hugh Ross, it has been suggested to us that the bravery of those who so pluckily descended the shaft at great personal risk, should receive some tangible public recognition, and we have been asked to acknowledge donations towards this objective, which we are pleased to accommodate.

We feel sure the suggestion thrown out will receive liberal support, and no one will deny that the men who yesterday descended the shaft deserve some reward for their plucked endurance."





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PLEASE MENTION *THE ENDEAVOUR* WHEN CONTACTING

BBFHS EDUCATION PROGRAM

by Carol **Cronin** (Educator)

This year we have been very pleased with the engagement with our Education classes. All have been well attended and the enthusiasm and involvement from participants has been encouraging.

Our last class, or so we thought, was Making Better Use of Word for Family History. The number of attendees was well above those expected and the class was so successful that we had to put a Part 2 on in November. Jennie **Fairs** led the class and superbly demonstrated ways that Word tools could make life easier for the family historian. Her expertise in publishing and editing was much appreciated.



Attentive BBFHS members attending the Making Better Use of Word for Family History class (photo: Carol Cronan)

As the year comes to a close our thoughts are already turning to 2025. Whilst we haven't completely settled on a calendar of workshops for next year we have invited Jeff **Madsen** to do a one day hands on workshop on using the HLRV (the Historic Lands Records Viewer) to discover the history of your family home. This will be a very hands on workshop where you will be invited to research the property where you live – so keep an eye on the BBFHS website and the eNEWS for more details.

The other major news is that Lilian **Magill** has informed the committee that she will step down from the role of Education Officer for 2025. Lilian has been very involved in this role and has not only contributed to the planning and

delivering of sessions but has been willing to share her expertise with me and assist with the development of resources used in various sessions. I thank her for her support and for all she has contributed to BBFHS.

However, that does mean that I am now the only Education Officer and I would very much like to be part of a team. So... if you would like to help me in organising the workshops or would like to deliver a class please contact me at carolcronan@gmail.com or one of the committee and let them know of your interest.

Finally, a reminder that Roots Tech 2025 is not too far away in early March 2025. RootsTech is a family history and technology conference which claims to be (and is) the world's largest! Although it is an event that can be attended in person in the U.S. it is also a virtual event with a huge number of online classes and workshops led by industry experts, **covering topics for beginners to advanced research techniques – and available at your leisure on your computer at home.** You may seemingly be overwhelmed by the choice but it is always worthwhile to pick at least some of the sessions that particularly interest you. For the 2025 conference, FREE online registration is now available at <https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/?lang=eng>.

Classes from RootsTech 2024 are still available online, so over the hot weather why not catch up on all you may not have yet watched and get your self prepared for another wonderful year of family research.

Thank you to all the Committee, the volunteers and all who have made my year with BBFHS such a rewarding one.



COPY DEADLINE

Please submit copy for the March 2025 journal as soon as you have it available but the deadline is **Wednesday 5 February** – preferably by email to the Editor at bbfhs_edu@yahoo.com.au. Copy may also be left in the Editor's folder at the Centre, handed to the Editor or a committee member at a quarterly meeting or posted to 184 Gannons Road Caringbah South NSW 2227. Please include your name and state if you want any materials returned.

NEWSPAPER WEBSITES OF INTEREST

by Marian Kelso

The following websites relate to newspaper coverage of family history subjects. What everybody should remember about the following websites is that they are FREE to use!

Ryerson Index (<https://www.ryersonindex.org/>)

Used in conjunction with the websites mentioned below, these days it is much easier to discover when our family members have passed on. The Ryerson Index has been in existence since 1998 and has nearly 9.5 million entries from 482 different resources Australia wide. It particularly helps to cover the time period between the current day and access to formal death certificate entries from the various birth, death and marriage registries. Make sure you read the links in the left hand column on the front page where you will find much relevant information.

Trove (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/>)

I always say this site is the best thing since sliced bread! Anybody who hasn't used this fantastic resource is not serious about family history. The site has an ever increasing collection of digitised Australian newspapers & gazettes, covering the early days of the colony of New South Wales up to 1954, with a few newspapers past this year, e.g. *The Canberra Times*.

National Library of Australia (NLA) eResources (<https://www.nla.gov.au/>)

This site allows online access to a number of newspaper archives both here in Australia & overseas. Access to some of the archives require users to have a NLA membership to login. Use the link Join the Library to apply for membership (available to all Australian residents). Use the link eResources to browse & access the newspapers which include:

- *The Sydney Morning Herald & The Age*: Library edition (2006 to the present)
- *The Sydney Morning Herald Archives* 1955-1995
- *The Times Digital Archive* (1785-2013)

My Tributes (<https://www.mytributes.com.au>)

This website is run by News Corp Australia and includes (mainly) death and funeral notices from its newspapers – over 130 of them. Although there are a number of smaller local papers, e.g.. the *Gold Coast Sun*, there are also many major metropolitan newspapers included – Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, Melbourne's *Herald Sun*, Brisbane's *Courier Mail*, just to name a few. The death and funeral notices are mostly from this century, although I have found a few from the 1990s. There are a few gaps here and there.

ACM (Australian Community Media) Tributes

Daily newspapers (<https://acm.media/brands/dailies/>)

Non Daily newspapers (<https://acm.media/brands/non-dailies/>)

A number of metropolitan & regional newspapers are now under this banner. Most, if not all, have their own tributes pages (as in My Tributes above) with notices going back to about 2010. Check the links above for the newspaper which interests you. The easiest way to go to that newspaper's tributes is to Google the newspaper name and tributes (e.g. Newcastle Herald tributes) which will provide the direct link. Examples of newspapers included – *Maitland Mercury*, *Bendigo Advertiser* and *Launceston Examiner*.

Papers Past (<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>)

This is the New Zealand equivalent to our Trove. Click on the Newspapers link to get a Search Newspapers box or Explore Newspapers to see Title, Region and/or Year to discover detailed coverage of each newspaper.

EDITORS NOTE: My thanks go to Marion Kelso for allowing me to reproduce her interesting article. Marion is the editor of *Tracks* - the journal of the Tweed Gold Coast Family History and Heritage Association, where the article was originally published.



Illawarra Family History Group

Advance Notice:

**NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc.
40th Annual Conference**

Host: Illawarra Family History Group Inc.

Date: 12, 13 & 14 September 2025

Venue: Fraternity Club, 11 Bourke St., Fairy Meadow, (Wollongong), 2519

Theme: They Came From Where?

NOTES AND NEWS



Marjorie Schoninger. We have received information that 10-year member Marjorie Schoninger has passed away. Our condolences go to Marjorie's family and friends.

Annette Leven. Member Pam Leven has let us know that long standing member Annette Leven passed away at Christmas time in 2024. Our sympathies go to Pam, and Annette's family and friends.

Jeff Greenaway. BBFHS member Jeff Greenaway, aged 80, late of GyMEA, passed away peacefully on 30 October 2024. We extend our condolences to his wife Adele, his children, grandchildren and friends at this sad time.

Hurstville Museum and Gallery at 14 MacMahon Street Hurstville has about 6,000 objects and artworks from the local area and offers a full schedule of high quality exhibitions throughout the year and a diverse range of public programs for all ages. A currently featured exhibition is *Makers and Manufacturers – An Industrial History of St George*. Their website at <https://tinyurl.com/yc4tfuc8> has information and opening times.

The GLAM workbench enables researchers to locate individuals in the indexes on the websites of Australian GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) organisations with a single search. Developed by Dr Tim Sherratt, search the indexes at <https://glam-name-indexes-yajhxrxxsa-ts.a.run.app/> by entering the name you are researching. Click on the link under 'Details' to go to the relevant index on the particular GLAM organisation's website to find out more and to confirm that it is the person you are searching for. There is a full list, as at October 2024, at <https://glam-workbench.net/glam-datasets-from-gov-portals/> of the Australian sites covered. If you are interested in what other approaches Tim has taken to data harvesting, see <https://glam-workbench.net/>.

Journal Contributions

All journal contributions – large or small – are welcome. Email your input to bbfhs_ed@yahoo.com.au, leave it in the Editor's folder at the Research Centre or hand it to the Editor or any Committee member at our quarterly meetings. Please add your name and contact details.

BOTANY BAY FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY – 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

by John Levy (Editor)

On Thursday 24 October, 78 members and partners gathered at Woollooware Golf Club to attend a luncheon to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Botany Bay Family History Society.

At the inaugural meeting at the Sutherland Shire Council Chambers, attended by 71 interested people, Botany Bay Family History Society was adopted as the name of the new society and the first committee elected. That meeting also occurred on 24 October. In the ensuing years, the membership has grown to 400 people who take advantage of the varied support the Society offers to research their family history.

In an article in the *St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, by Murray **Trembath**, Society president Jennie **Fairs** said there had been many changes to genealogical research over the four decades. *Before the internet, members would write letters to repositories or potential family connections, with postage-paid coupons enclosed, and eagerly await responses. Microfilms had to be manually handled at LDS (Latter Day Saints) Family History Centres, and it often took six weeks for films to arrive from Salt Lake City.*

We experienced a thrill when the Archives Office of NSW introduced their paper-bound indexes for assisted immigration and the NSW Registrar General produced a microfiche index for Births, Deaths, and Marriages.

Our commitment is evident in undertaking ambitious projects such as transcribing headstones at Woronora Cemetery and contributing to the Ryerson Index by indexing 11,000 death and funeral notices appearing in the Sutherland Shire Leader between 1964 and 2004.

At the luncheon, formal proceedings were kept to a minimum. However, a celebration cake was cut by four foundation members – Jim **Farrow** (membership number 47), Val Farrow (48), Sue **Hewitt** (41) and Doug **Parkes** (5). Rhonda **McKinnon** and Sue Hewitt launched Surname and Ship Seeker, the Vertical Files Indexing Project (see page 5).

Thank you to Glenda Buck and Noele Watkins for providing the following great selection of photographs from the day.



Cutting the cake – foundation members: Jim and Val Farrow, Sue Hewitt and Doug Parkes



Launching Surname and Ship Seeker, the Vertical files Indexing Project (see page 5) – Rhonda McKinnon and Sue Hewitt





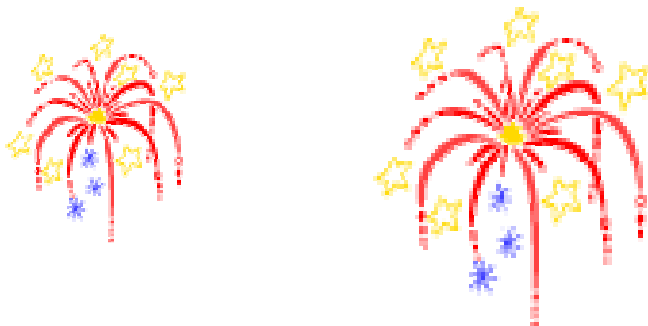








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Happy New Year
in 2025
to All Our Readers*



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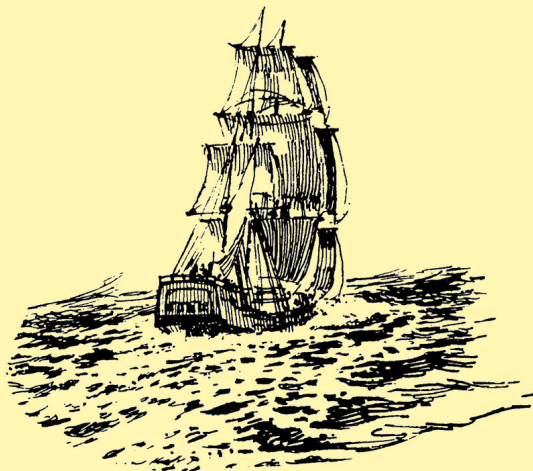
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