



This digital edition of *Queensland Family Historian* is provided on the understanding that it may be shared with members of your organisation.

Permission is granted to publish *Queensland Family Historian* for viewing on your organisation's internal computers or in a member password-protected area on your website.

Permission is **not** granted for direct digital distribution to your members, or for open access to anyone visiting your website.

Copyright © Queensland Family History Society Inc. and the respective authors.

Reproduction in whole or in part without the consent of the copyright owner is prohibited.

For any inquiries regarding permission to use the material in this journal, please contact the copyright holder through editor@qfhs.org.au

February 2026 | Volume 47 | Number 1

QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORIAN

Journal of the Queensland Family History Society Inc.



QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

ABN - 60 860 936 626 | 46 Delaware St, Chermside Qld 4032
Contact: Secretary, QFHS Inc., P O Box 78, Geebung Qld 4034
07 3355 3369 | info@qfhs.org.au | www.qfhs.org.au

An Association for Genealogical Studies – Founded 1979

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES: *To bring together those people who are interested in the study of genealogy, heraldry, family and local history, and to assist and encourage members in their studies. To encourage the preservation of historical records, to acquire and maintain a reference and research library and to collect and preserve material bearing on the families of the people of Queensland.*

PATRON: Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD

HONORARY OFFICE BEARERS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

President: Graeme Drew president@qfhs.org.au

Vice Presidents:

Charlotte Sale qfhs.mc15@qfhs.org.au

Clem Ditton qfhs.mc10@qfhs.org.au

Secretary: Lyndal Cosgrove secretary@qfhs.org.au

Treasurer: Gayle Wallace treasurer@qfhs.org.au

Minutes Secretary: Barbara Richardson

Committee Members: Carmel Bell, Greg Crawford,
Jenni Doolan, Dette Glenday, Kevin Haley

Education Officer:

Nancy Edwards education@qfhs.org.au

Enquiries: secretary@qfhs.org.au

Journal Editor:

Lyndal Cosgrove editor@qfhs.org.au

Library Co-ordinating Group:

(Vacant)

Library Roster Co-ordinator:

Dette Glenday library_assistance@qfhs.org.au

Membership Secretary:

Leanne Donovan membership@qfhs.org.au

Orientation Sessions:

Ann Swain, Anne Long welcome@qfhs.org.au

Publicity Officer:

publicity@qfhs.org.au

Research Team Co-ordinator:

Charlotte Sale research@qfhs.org.au

Sale of Publications:

QFHSshop@qfhs.org.au

Snippets Items:

snippets@qfhs.org.au

Website:

webadmin@qfhs.org.au

DONATIONS:

Queensland Family History Society Inc. is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient by the Australian Taxation Office.



OPENING HOURS (AEST):

Tues, Wed, Thurs 10 am–3 pm

Saturdays: noon –3 pm

Sundays: Closed

The Research Centre is **closed on Mondays and Fridays** (except for special meetings) and on all **Public Holidays** except **Exhibition Wednesday**.

EXCHANGE JOURNALS:

Please send print journals to P.O. Box 78, Geebung Qld 4034, Australia, and electronic journals to newsletters@qfhs.org.au.

PAYMENTS:

Please remit in Australian dollars, either by Visa, MasterCard, or direct credit to Queensland Family History Society Inc., BSB: 484-799 Account No.: 041217518 including your name/member number.

RESEARCH:

A research service is available for members and non-members. See the “Stuck on a Branch” advertisement for further details or refer to www.qfhs.org.au/about-us/research-service.

PUBLICATION CLOSING DATES:

The closing dates for the Journal are 15 March, 15 June, 15 September and 15 December. (Refer to inside back page).

Copyright © Queensland Family History Society Inc. and the respective authors. Reproduction in whole or in part without the consent of the copyright owner is prohibited.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of Country and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to the people, their cultures and Elders past, present and emerging.



QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORIAN

JOURNAL OF THE QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

ADDRESS: PO BOX 78, GEEBUNG QLD 4034

Editor: Lyndal Cosgrove

ISSN 0811-3394

FEBRUARY 2026

VOLUME 47 NUMBER 1

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

There was a Soldier, a Scottish Soldier <i>by Anne Mackay</i>	4
The Baffling Mystery of the Blacksmith from Inverness <i>by Peter Gehrke</i>	8
A Country Boyhood in the era of the Great Depression <i>by David Huggonson</i>	14
Mulga Belt: Revisited by Wartime Child Evacuee <i>by Clem Ditton</i>	22
“Concomitant Observations?” You may well ask <i>by Mike Vincent</i>	26

ITEMS OF INTEREST

QFHS Inc. Award for Services to Family History	19
Volunteers Thank You Morning Tea Raffle	21
Members’ Interests	23
A new SIG has been formed – Technical SIG.....	23
QFHS Pre-separation Group Presentation of Certificates	24
Date claimers – Upcoming Special Events.....	24
Article of the Year: Members’ Choice Award 2025 Presentation	25
Web Links	28

REGULAR FEATURES

From Your Committee.....	7
Acquisitions – Print, Lending Library	20
QFHS Notices	
Bereavements / The Hills & Districts Re-Tyrement Expo / Learn@QFHS / Talking About	30
GSQ Education Events / Finding your Family: the fundamentals of research / Family Reunion.....	31
Irish Research Day March / QFHS Inc. Family History Book Award 2027 / Membership Renewals.	32
Central European Research Day May / RootsTech 2026 Conference USA / State Library of Queensland Tour / Public Record Office Victoria / Christmas Thank you	33
Dates to Remember, including Members Lounge Dates	34
Special Interest Groups – Meeting Dates.....	36
Welcome to New Members of QFHS Inc.	38
New Members’ Welcome and Orientation Sessions	38
About the Society	39
Monthly Meetings of the Society	40

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Catherine Miller née Macdonald (1847-1926) and grandsons Alexander Malcolm Miller and his younger brother John (Jack) Miller.

Photograph provided by Anne Mackay. See story on p.4.

THERE WAS A SOLDIER, A SCOTTISH SOLDIER

James Ross (abt 1835-1891), 79th Regiment, Cameron Highlanders

By Anne Mackay

annemackayqfhs@gmail.com



*Catherine Macdonald, half sister of the
Scottish Soldier.*

I have this lovely photo of **Catherine Miller (née Macdonald)**, my dad's Grannie, with my dad, **Alexander Malcolm Miller**, and his younger brother, **Jack (John Miller)** (cover photo). Catherine is dressed in a black dress, jacket and hat. She has a slight smile on her face. To me, she looks like a caring grandmother, happy to have a photograph taken with these two small boys.

The Miller family lived in Edinburgh, Scotland, for at least several generations. At least three generations were printers with their own businesses. Catherine Miller (née Macdonald) married **Alexander Miller** in Edinburgh in 1877.

The father of the children in the photo was Grannie's eldest son, **John Lucas Miller**, born in 1878. He was killed at the Battle of Loos 1915 during WWI. As I wrote this story, I realised that this photo, and another I own that shows John Lucas in his Cameron Highlander uniform with his wife, were most

likely taken before John Lucas left Scotland for the front. The family would probably have kept a copy and he, too, would have taken a copy to keep as he faced the horrors of that war.

Catherine died in 1926. I obtained a copy of her death certificate through the Scotland's People website. In that document, I found that her mother's name was **Alexandrina Ross**. This was my first inkling of my connection to the Ross clan. I soon came across the existence of **James Ross**, who became a Scottish soldier. Joining the British Army seems to be part of a family tradition in the Ross family, as there were at least a couple of other generations who were members of Scottish Regiments.¹

I searched for Alexandrina's death certificate. I found that Alexandrina had died in early 1877. The informant on her death certificate was **Jas** (a common abbreviation for James) **Ross Macdonald**.²

Now I had a couple of family names, I began searching the Scottish census records trying to find Catherine and her family. I found in the 1851 census Catherine's family living in the Parish of Trinity College, Edinburgh, at 34 Bailie Fyfe's Close. The family consisted of Alexandrina Macdonald, a widow, aged 40, with her children James Ross, aged sixteen years old, born in Musselburgh, **Isabella Macdonald** aged seven years and Catherine aged four years. Both girls were said to be born in Edinburgh. James was already working as an Errand Boy in a shop. The two girls were scholars. Well, that was a bit of a surprise. Catherine had a much older brother who didn't share her surname. Where did he fit into this story?

I haven't found James in the 1861 or 1871 census records. The James Ross in the family of the 1851 census, given an age of sixteen at that time, would have been born about 1835.

I shared this information with my siblings and a cousin living in Edinburgh, Scotland.

continued

This information rang some bells, when this Scottish cousin came across four military medals inscribed with the name James Ross, his rank and, on a couple of them, a regimental number. These medals are joined by a bar inscribed SERGT JAMES ROSS 79th CAMERON HIGHLANDERS. What a find in a box of family memorabilia handed down from previous generations of Catherine's family.

The battles for which these medals were awarded were:

- Northwest Frontier medal, not dated, inscribed: 4285 Pte James Ross 79th Foot
- Sevastopol dated 1854: inscribed Corpl Jas Ross. 79th Regt
- Crimea dated 1855; inscribed 285 James Ross 79th Cameron Highlanders
- Lucknow dated 1857-1858; inscribed: "Sergt Jas Ross 79th Highlanders"



Medals of Sergt James Ross



Details inscribed on rim of James' medals

I received an email from my Scottish cousin with the news of this find plus photos of the medals. Rather coincidentally, shortly afterwards, this cousin was travelling to the Pacific region and this trip included a stop of a couple of days in Brisbane. He visited me

and my family and brought the medals for us to view and hold. This was a great experience. We were so fortunate.

My Scottish cousin has since spent some more time investigating the box of family treasures. He came across a letter relating to these medals written by my father's brother, Jack, to a cousin in 1987. In this letter, we read:

The medals are a mystery for the moment, but I clearly recall Grandma Miller³ having a set of medals framed and hanging in the "Parlour" at Marischal Place in Blackhall, ... These were sacrosanct, no touching. ... these articles belonged to Grandma Miller's own son, who had been born to Grandma before her marriage to Miller the Printer. This lad had an adventurous life in the Army, of which I was told, and was connected in some way to Inverness and the Army.

The records already found show that the medals actually belonged to Catherine's half-brother. James was Alexandrina's son, born before she married Catherine's father, Archibald Macdonald.

Looking for more information about James Ross, a death certificate for a James Ross dated 2nd February 1891 appeared in Scotland's People. It states:

James Ross, Army Pensioner, married to Isabella Ross.

1891, February second, 0 hours 45 mins AM, Queensberry House, 64 Canongate, Edinburgh.

Male, 53 years.

Father: James Ross, Soldier, deceased. Mother: Alexandrina Macdonald, MS [née] Ross (deceased) formerly Macdonald.

Informant: A. Miller, Clerk, Queensberry House.

This was the first time that I had seen James' father's name given as James. Queensberry House, still standing at Canongate and now incorporated into the new Scottish Parliament building, was built in 1667. It was used as a hospital for almost 200 years (1803 – 1996). The name of the informant to the hospital on James family details is unknown.

THERE WAS A SOLDIER, A SCOTTISH SOLDIER (Cont.)

James and Isabella's marriage recorded in 1872 gives this information:

1869 Twenty-first of May, at the Sheriff Court House, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh... James Ross, Spirit Dealer, Bachelor, 31 years, 40 St Andrew St, Leith, Spirit Dealer, Bachelor

Father: Hugh Ross, Colour Sergeant 92nd, Gordon Highlanders deceased.

Mother: Alexandrina Ross M.S. [née] Ross.

Isabella Ross, Spinster, 33 years, 2 Old Bridgend, North Leith, Spinster.

Father: Donald Ross, Dock Labourer and Margaret Ross M.S. [née] Turnbull

There is some surprising contradiction in here. Hugh Ross, Colour Sergeant, 92nd Gordon Highlanders (or 92nd Highlanders) was named, apparently by James in 1877, on the death certificate of Alexandrina Ross, as Alexandrina's father. Here he is naming Hugh Ross as his own father. How very curious. James' death certificate names his father as James Ross. Obviously, another person was the informant at this time and may have had information from another source.

After finding their marriage certificate, I also found an 1871 Census record for James and Isabella who were living in Cramond at that time. James is noted as being aged thirty-three years and Isabella thirty-one. James' occupation was Pointsman Rail. His place of birth is given as Edinburgh-shire, which at that time I believe included Musselburgh, the only other place of birth we have for James. Isabella's place of birth is given as Leith.

The 1882 Census shows James, a general labourer at the time, is forty-two years old. Isabella, forty-one years, is said to be born in South Leith. They are living in Buccleuch parish. James' place of birth is noted as Edinburgh.

As mentioned earlier in this story, James died in 1891. Somehow, and sometime later, his British Army medals returned to his half-sister, Catherine. And, as we now know, from the letter written by dad's brother, Jack, the medals were framed and displayed on the parlour wall in Catherine's home.

My Scottish cousin and I have spoken of the need to have James' medals kept securely in a place where family members, if they know of their existence, can view them in future. We feel that the place most suitable would be the Highland Regiment's Museum at Fort George near Inverness. That is to be followed up in the near future.

It has been fascinating following the story of James. I hope that more information on James' military career might come to light in the future. As family historians, don't we wish we could have been the proverbial "fly on the wall" years ago, watching and listening to these ancestors with their families?

Scotland's People has been a fantastic resource for me. However, I joke with friends saying that using this website is rather like gambling; you buy a number of credits, then click on this button or that, hoping you get a reward. Sadly, sometimes the result is a disappointing loss of your credits and the wrong information. It can be a time consuming and somewhat expensive addiction but fascinating nevertheless!

N.B. The Macdonald name can be spelled in many ways. I have selected to use one capital and a Mac prefix, rather than Mc, despite other versions being used in records.

References

¹ Archibald Macdonald, Alexandrina's husband, 92nd Highlanders, and Hugh Ross, Alexandrina's father, also 92nd Highlanders.

² I feel that James may have added the Macdonald name to confirm his relationship as son, as I haven't seen that surname used for James anywhere else.

³ Catherine Miller (née Macdonald).

The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders or 79th (The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders) Regiment of Foot was a line infantry regiment of the British Army, raised in 1793. It amalgamated with the Seaforth Highlanders (the Duke of Albany's) to form the Queen's Own Highlanders in 1961. ■

FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

During the past three months your management committee has addressed a number of matters, a summary of which includes:

Arrangements are well advanced to partially redesign the layout of the library and mapping sections to better accommodate the library team, which should permit more use of the limited space at our centre.

Our constitution sub-committee has met and considered the feedback offered from our last mail out. This will result in completion of a draft constitution and model rules for members to vote on at our General Meeting on 24 March 2026. As this is an important project would you please acquaint yourself with the new draft constitution and the model rules, which will be forwarded with the notice of general meeting. If you are not able to be present at the General Meeting on 24 March, to ensure that you have your say on this important matter would you please consider using the proxy voting system to share your view. The use of the proxy process will be outlined in the meeting notice. We do need to get as wider view of our members as possible on this important topic.

Our new server purchased with the Anika Wells' grant is operational at the centre in conjunction with our current server. Once the new unit becomes stand alone expected early in 2026, the old server will support other facets of our IT platform.

We are awaiting a decision from the Gambling Grant authorities whether our grant application for 12 new computer units replacing our aging current units was successful. A decision is expected mid-February to mid-March.

Our SIG groups remain very active and well attended. Thank you to our SIG coordinators who do such a great job in making this all happen for our members. A new SIG (Technical Special Interest Group) will be starting in February.

More than 60 volunteers attended the annual morning tea on Monday 8 December at Kedron Wavell Community club which was a

pleasant way to spend the morning. Thank you Lyndal Cosgrove for arranging the morning.

Installation of our new front door and the erection of the awning over our entrance were completed in December. Thanks to Chris Gibbs for his co-ordination of these two projects.

We held a successful Bunnings Carseldine sausage sizzle on Saturday 27 December. We prepared and sold just over 600 sausages on the day. A big thank you to the three shifts of volunteers who attended to our customers on the day, whether it be for a sausage or a raffle ticket. Our raffle with 15 prizes to the value of over \$5,000, conducted in conjunction with the sausage sizzle, was drawn on New Years Day. Jenni Doolan was the driver of these activities and congratulations Jenni and Carolyn Grimward who ably assisted Jenni in the lead up to and on the day, for this great outcome. Our finances benefitted by \$2,935.00 nett of expenses.

We are working on a number of initiatives to improve the kitchen's appearance and effectiveness. Again a big Thank You to Jenni who has organised two tile companies to donate sufficient ceramic floor tiles for the kitchen and the two bathrooms which are not currently tiled. We require BCC approval for this which will be sought in early 2026. Upon approval we then need to arrange for a qualified tiler to lay same.

A banner denoting when the centre is open is ready for use in 2026. It is much lighter than the wooden sandwich board, which should be welcomed by our L/As.

The Delaware St street sign has been ordered and should be in place early in 2026.

Our Open Day for 2026 will be Saturday 29 August. Please note this in your calendars.

There are a number of jobs requiring attention at the centre. The management committee will seek assistance by arranging a working bee once a plan has been agreed upon and the weather cools off.

Graeme Drew, President ■

THE BAFFLING MYSTERY OF THE BLACKSMITH FROM INVERNESS

By Peter C Gehrke

peter_joanne@bigpond.com

3 October 2023

There it was, in black and white in the old document, plain as day. Beneath the heading “Where born, and how long in the Australian Colonies” was scrawled in uneven handwriting “Inverness, Scotland, 53 years”.¹ Another column named the father as **Charles Stewart Forbes**, occupation Blacksmith, and mother **Elizabeth Tite**. Sex male, age 55 years. Cause of death was listed as a combination of cirrhosis of the liver, ascites, and syncope over a period of 10 weeks. **Dr Faulkner** had attended the deceased on his last day, 31 October 1895. The death certificate gave the man’s profession as Miner.

The medical report of the Rockhampton Hospital several days later noted there had been two deaths that week, including one **C.S. Forbes**, a native of Scotland.²

It seemed a fairly straightforward task to track down the birth of C.S. Forbes in Inverness, Scotland, in about 1840, to local blacksmith Charles Stewart Forbes and his wife Elizabeth.

Edinburgh 1700s

Alexander Forbes was a waterman who carried people and sundry goods in his small wooden rowboat up and down the Water of Leith as it wound its way through Edinburgh to the Port of Leith on the southern shores of the Firth of Forth. Work was plentiful, with a seemingly never-ending procession of ships entering the port to unload, then take on new cargo and passengers destined for other ports. The Water of Leith was little more than a creek, yet it still carried sufficient water over its 23 mile length to power as many as 76 mills.³ Various mills ground grain, spices and snuff, produced paper, cloth, and milled timber and stone for use in construction.

In 1785, on 6 February, **Alexander Forbes** married **Janet Abercrombie**, in St Mary’s Cathedral in Edinburgh.⁴ Janet was the

daughter of **James Abercrombie** and his wife **Christian Gow**, bringing together two of Scotland’s powerful clans – Forbes and Abercrombie. The stronghold of the Forbes clan was Aberdeenshire, where they held no fewer than six castles, with a smaller contingent in Inverness-shire at Culloden House during the Jacobite rising and the battle of Culloden in 1746.⁵

Alexander Forbes and Janet Abercrombie had four sons, **James** baptised 23 February 1786 and **John** baptised 27 December 1787, followed later by **Adam** baptised 7 September 1806 and **Charles** born 30 May 1811. All four children were baptised in St Mary’s Cathedral in Edinburgh. Charles’ baptism was witnessed by Janet’s parents. By 1811, Alexander and Janet Forbes were living in Milne’s Square⁶ approximately 1 km south of St Mary’s, and the same distance east of Edinburgh Castle. Alexander was later listed in the Edinburgh Post Office Directory 1833-1834 as a bookbinder in 5 Milne’s Court.⁷

Bell’s Mills, upstream of the centre of Edinburgh, was a granary along the Water of Leith where **James Tait** worked as a blacksmith. On 28 July 1813, James’ wife **Ann Ashley** gave birth to a daughter, **Elizabeth**, who was baptised in St Cuthbert’s parish church of the Church of Scotland.⁸

In 1828 the Scottish steel mills adopted a patented hot blast furnace process that enabled the Scots to produce steel and iron products much more cheaply than other countries.⁹ Scottish iron workers and blacksmiths were in high demand.

By 1830, Charles Forbes had become a blacksmith and was living in Old Fleshmarket Close near the centre of Edinburgh. He had met Elizabeth Tait sometime previously, perhaps through a connection with her father James’ smithing work at Bell’s Mills. Toward the end of 1830, James and Ann Tait and their family were

continued

living at No 6 Simon Square in Edinburgh's inner south, and James had retired from blacksmithing to become a shoemaker. On Christmas Eve, 24 December 1830, Charles Forbes married Elizabeth Tait in St Cuthbert's parish church when she was 17 years old, and he was 19.¹⁰

In the early years of their marriage, Charles established a solid reputation as a blacksmith. In due course, he was introduced to a man named **John White**, who was assembling a team of men to help build a new non-penal British Colony in South Australia.¹¹ John White arranged for the men and their dependents to travel to London temporarily while their applications for free travel were processed.

Initially during their brief time living in London, Charles and Elizabeth Forbes lived in Brooks Market in London's Holborn district. There they had a daughter, **Mary**, on 25 August 1835, who was baptised in the Anglican church of St Sepulchre in Snow Hill on 15 October 1835.¹² Her baptism record describes Charles' occupation as fitter and founder, which is consistent with the general description of blacksmith. Mary was disabled, and was later described by her mother as "a cripple"¹³, with limited use of her hands and feet.¹⁴ Shortly after, when applying for free travel to South Australia, they moved to short-term accommodation at 12 Green Dragon Court in London's Snow Hill district, about 500m north of the River Thames. They shared this accommodation with **John McGlashan**, who was also a blacksmith engaged for South Australia by John White. Mary was nine months old when the Forbes family boarded the *Tam O'Shanter* in July 1836 for the journey to South Australia. There is no record of them living in Inverness, nor of having a son in Inverness at any time before their departure.

Upon arrival at the Port River entrance to Port Adelaide about 11 am on 18 December, the *Tam O'Shanter* ran aground on a sandbank and stuck fast.¹⁵ After four days work to lighten the vessel and pump water out, *Tam O'Shanter* was pulled free at high tide about 4 pm on 22 December 1836, and

proceeded up the harbour, reaching her final anchorage shortly after daylight on 23 December.

Adelaide 1836 - 1860

Charles and Elizabeth Forbes settled in Adelaide and established a home and blacksmith's workshop in Hindley Street. He quickly established the firm Charles Forbes and Co, trading in January 1838 as Blacksmiths in General¹⁶ from premises by that time in Currie Street. Fellow *Tam O'Shanter* passengers **Robert Jaques** and **Henry Moseley** established a masons, bricklayers and builders business adjoining Charles Forbes' premises in January 1838.¹⁷ Then in February that year Charles entered into partnership with a veterinary surgeon, **James Ferguson** from Edinburgh, to offer veterinary services from Forbes and Co's premises in Currie Street.¹⁸ To further diversify his business, Charles formed a partnership with John McGlashan, a fellow blacksmith from the *Tam O'Shanter*. They traded as licenced victualers under the name of Forbes and McGlashan, although this business was short-lived and the partnership dissolved in June 1839.¹⁹ By August 1839 Charles Forbes was providing rooms for rent at his premises known as The Tam O'Shanter²⁰ in Hindley Street.²¹

In March 1838, Elizabeth gave birth to a daughter, baptised **Janet Abercrombie Forbes** on 1 April, and named after her paternal grandmother.²²

In December 1839, the colonial Government advertised a tender to dismantle some iron stores and re-erect them at the New Port.²³ Charles Forbes was duly awarded the tender for the sum of £240.²⁴ Business was booming.

In early 1840 Elizabeth Forbes gave birth to a son, **Charles Stewart Forbes jnr**, who was baptised in the Holy Trinity Church on 8 March of that year.²⁵

But in September 1840 Charles' life took a wrong turn. On 7 September he was charged and committed to stand trial for attempting to defraud the Government of £2 10s, by

THE BAFFLING MYSTERY OF THE BLACKSMITH FROM INVERNESS (Cont.)

altering a certified account, and released on bail.²⁶ He was subsequently acquitted on 4 November 1840 when the Advocate-General withdrew the charge because he was persuaded that Forbes had not altered the account intentionally.²⁷

From this point in time the whereabouts of Charles Forbes snr become a mystery. In January 1841 the first South Australia Census shows Elizabeth Forbes living in Port Adelaide with her three children, Mary, Janet and Charles jnr, all children under 7 years of age. Charles Stewart Forbes snr is not listed as living with the family, and does not appear anywhere else in census results.²⁸ He is nowhere to be found, and is presumed dead by his wife.

Elizabeth Forbes

By January 1843, Elizabeth Forbes was destitute. She had been relying on rations provided by the colonial Government to house and feed her family. But the rations had been discontinued, and she had been evicted from her home for failure to pay rent. The police had taken custody of her three children. She wrote a letter to the Governor on 9 January seeking financial assistance¹³, explaining her plight since the death of her husband. However, the annotation on the letter made by the Private Secretary's office explains that the rations to support Elizabeth were discontinued as a consequence of her improper conduct. The note also advises that Elizabeth was not a widow as her husband had been seen in Launceston, having left her because of her drunken behaviour. Evidently, the Government had made wide-ranging enquiries into the possible whereabouts of Charles Stewart Forbes snr.

Available records provide only scattered information on the welfare of Elizabeth's children. Mary appears to have been cared for by several families, and was admitted to the Destitute Asylum on multiple occasions. Her admission entry on 21 February 1853 indicates she was 18 years of age, and had been living in the Kensington Street residence of **W. Higgins**, Shoemaker. She had arrived in the Colony aboard the *Tam*

O'Shanter 17 years previously, and had been deserted by her parents because she was crippled in both hands and feet.¹⁴ Mary began working as a governess, teaching children in the Destitute Asylum, and in 1856 was granted a remuneration of £10 a year to allow her to buy her own clothes rather than relying on charity.²⁹ Mary Forbes died on 20 September 1872, aged 36, from atrophy of the kidneys. She had been living in Mount Lofty, southeast of Adelaide, and died in Adelaide Hospital.³⁰

At six years of age, Elizabeth's second daughter, Janet, was found wandering the streets of Adelaide in July 1845, having been abandoned by her mother. Janet was sentenced to one month's imprisonment to ensure she would be properly cared for.³¹ Elizabeth subsequently appealed successfully to the Governor to have Janet returned to her custody.³² The appeal letter makes no mention of her other two children.

Charles jnr appears to have been placed into foster care separately to any care arrangements for his sisters. I have found no further records of Charles jnr until his marriage in Queensland in 1868³³ after he had travelled to the goldfields at Ridglands, northwest of Rockhampton.

From 1843 Elizabeth Forbes appeared no fewer than 20 times before the Adelaide Courts on multiple charges of drunkenness, stealing, possession, trespass, and prostitution.³⁴ By 1862 **Justice Gwynne** in the Supreme Court expressed his exasperation at her lack of contrition by sentencing her to one year's imprisonment with hard labour, for stealing a boiler.³⁵

On 24 December 1849, Elizabeth Forbes married **William Brown Hinchlee** in St John's Church in the parish of the Holy Trinity Church in Adelaide, declaring she was a widow.³⁶ Sometime after her release from prison on 23 November 1863, Elizabeth and William relocated from Adelaide to Panmure in rural Victoria, where she continued her drunken behaviour. Eventually, on 16 February 1874, she awoke, got out of bed, dressed in her best outfit, and told her

continued

husband “This is my funeral dress”. She then took a fatal dose of strychnine, which her husband had bought to control possums in the roof of their house, and died later that afternoon.³⁷

Will the real Charles Stewart Forbes please stand?

There are no confirmed records of Charles Forbes snr after apparently leaving his family in Adelaide in late 1840, and then being reported living in Launceston before January 1843.¹³

Charles Forbes snr’s middle name is a point of some conjecture. All documentation where he would have provided his own details list his name simply as Charles Forbes. Yet documents informed by his daughter Janet and son Charles Stewart Forbes jnr consistently list his name as Charles Stewart [or Stuart] Forbes. The name Charles Forbes appears frequently in records from South Australia and Victoria after 1843, but there is no convincing information to link these names to Charles Stewart Forbes snr. His whereabouts and fate remain a mystery.

Marriage records from Adelaide’s Holy Trinity Church indicate that **Harriet Catchlove**, a young woman aboard the *Tam O’Shanter* in 1836, married Charles Forbes on 12 December 1850. However that Charles Forbes was born in about 1820, and came from London’s Cornhill district.³⁸ The shared name appears to be merely a coincidence.

Janet Abercrombie Forbes married **Henry Best** in 1872³⁹ after her first husband **Robert Revill** died in 1870.⁴⁰ Henry Best had purchased a 73 acre property named Concongella in 1866, near the town of Great Western in Victoria. He planted grapevines and established a vineyard that became the foundation of Best’s Wines, which continue to operate as one of Australia’s oldest family-owned wineries more than 150 years later in 2025.⁴¹

In July 1891, Janet Forbes, known by her married name **Jessie Best**, placed a notice in the Adelaide Observer and other

newspapers:⁴²

Missing Friends

Charles Stuart Forbes arrived at Holdfast Bay 1836 per ship *Tam O’Shanter*. Age now about 80, complexion fair, stout build, native of Scotland, spoke Gaelic and English, trade Engineer, Blacksmith and Moulder. Religion, Catholic. His sole surviving daughter is anxious to get any information whether living or dead. Address C.S.F. Register Office.

This notice indicates that Janet was unaware that her father had developed other lines of business as a victualer and providing rooms for accommodation. She was aware that her elder sister Mary had died, but made no reference to her younger brother Charles Stewart Forbes jnr. It is possible that Janet had no knowledge of her brother’s life if they had been fostered separately from a young age.

1 January 2025

His marriage and death certificates indicate that Charles Stewart Forbes jnr certainly believed he had been born in Inverness, Scotland, in 1840, to parents Charles Stewart Forbes snr, occupation Blacksmith, and mother Elizabeth Tait.

In comparison, the death certificate of Janet Abercrombie Best, née Forbes⁴³, who died in Concongella, Great Western, Victoria on 19 February 1916, listed her birthplace as Adelaide, the same place as stated in her younger brother Charles’ baptism certificate. Her parents were named as Charles Stuart Forbes, occupation Founder, and Elizabeth Forbes, maiden name Tait.

So who was Charles Stewart Forbes, the blacksmith from Inverness?

It appears that Charles Stewart Forbes snr did indeed work as a blacksmith in Edinburgh, but had no association with Inverness. I suggest that after Charles Stewart Forbes snr left his family in 1840, his children were given different information by their respective foster carers. Janet, who was

THE BAFFLING MYSTERY OF THE BLACKSMITH FROM INVERNESS (Cont.)

cared for intermittently by her mother Elizabeth, seems to have been told the most correct information. Her elder sister Mary has no family information recorded in her 1872 death certificate. Their younger brother Charles Stewart Forbes jnr appears to have been told that he was born in Inverness, perhaps by foster carers who were aware of Forbes family history in the Inverness-Culloden district in Scotland.

The mysterious Blacksmith from Inverness never existed.

Notes:

The article tells the story of my wife's 3 x great grandfather, Charles Stewart Forbes, who brought his wife and family from Scotland to Adelaide in 1836 to establish the first settlement in the colony of South Australia. But more than just a family history story, the article documents the personal tragedy and destitution on multiple levels to illustrate that not all immigrant families found prosperity.

Names and spelling: All names appearing throughout the text are spelled as they appear in the source document. Names were often spelled phonetically by whoever was recording the information, so that Charles Stewart Forbes refers to the same person who appears elsewhere as Charles Stuart Forbes, and Janet Abercrombie is also spelled as Jannet. The accent of the speaker also influenced how names were spelled, resulting in Elizabeth Tait's name being recorded in places as Elizabeth Tite. Christian was a common female name in Scotland in the 1700s.

References:

1. Queensland Government. Births, Deaths and Marriages. *Charles Stewart Forbes. Death 31 October 1895. Registration number 1895/C3450*. Brisbane: Queensland Government, 2024.
2. *Morning Bulletin*. Rockhampton: s.n., Monday 4 November, 1895.
3. Priestley, G. *The water mills of the Water of Leith*. Edinburgh: Water of Leith Conservation Trust, 2001.
4. National Records of Scotland. 1785 Forbes, Alexander - Abercrombie, Jannet (Catholic Registers Banns and Marriages MP 7411125, Edinburgh, St Mary's Cathedral). [Online] [Cited: 23 December 2024.] <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>.
5. Coventry, M. *Castles of the Clans: The Strongholds and Seats of 750 Scottish Families and Clans*. Cockenzie : Goblinshead, 2008.
6. National Records of Scotland. 1811 Forbes, Charles (Catholic Registers Births and Baptisms MP 741196, Edinburgh, St Mary's Cathedral). [Online] [Cited: 4 October 2023] <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>.
7. Edinburgh 1805-1834 - Post Office annual directory - 1834-1835. *Scottish Post Office Directories*. [Online] 1834. [Cited: 20 December 2024.] <https://digital.nls.uk/directories/browse/archive/82825485?mode=transcription>.
8. National Records of Scotland. 1813 Tait, Elizabeth (Old Parish Registers Births 685/2 St Cuthbert's) Page 50 of 520. [Online] [Cited: 4 October 2023.] <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>.
9. Finley, R. 4. Economy:1770-1850 age of industrialization. pp 198-9. In M. Lynch, ed. . *The Oxford Companion to Scottish History*. Oxford: Oxford Univrsity Press, 2001.
10. National Records of Scotland. 1830 Forbes, Charles (Old Parish Registers Marriages 685/2 St Cuthbert's) Page 166 of 528. [Online] [Cited: 25 October 2023.] <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/>.
11. Register of Emigrant Labourers Applying for a Free Passage to South Australia. London : s.n., 1836.
12. "England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975", database, FamilySearch. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NLG3-5J8> : 10 April 2021), Mary Forbes, 1835. [Online] [Cited: 1 December 2024.] <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NLG3-5J8>
13. Forbes, Elizabeth. Request for relief. [Online] 9 January 1843. [Cited: 27 November 2024.]
14. Forbes, Mary. . *Register of cases of destitution. c. 1846-1857*. Adelaide: Destitue Board, South Australia, 1849-1847.
15. Tam O'Shanter. *First 8 Ships*. [Online] [Cited: 5 November 2024.] <https://sites.google.com/view/first8ships/tam-o-shanter>.

continued

16. Advertisements. Charles Forbes and Co. *South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register*. Adelaide: 1838. Saturday 6 January.
17. Jaques and Moseley, Masons, Bricklayers, and Builders. *South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register*. 1838. Saturday 20 January.
18. Charles Forbes. *South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register*. Adelaide: 1838. Saturday 17 February.
19. Forbes and McGlashan dissolution notice. *South Australian Register*. Adelaide: 1840. Saturday 18 July.
20. Registry Office relocation. *South Australian Register*. Adelaide: 1839. Saturday 22 June.
21. Notice for payment due. *South Australian Register*. Adelaide: 1839. Saturday 31 August.
22. Forbes, Janet Abercrombie. Baptisms Province of South Australia. Holy Trinity. [Online] 1838. [Cited: 17 November 2024.]
23. To Smiths and Contractors. *Southern Australian*. Adelaide: 1839. Thursday 19 December Page 3.
24. Correspondence of the Colonial Secretary's Office. Forbes, Charles. Tender for removal of iron stores accepted. Adelaide: 1839. Vol. 202.
25. Forbes, Charles Stewart, Baptisms, Province of South Australia, Holy Trinity Parish . Adelaide: 1840. 8 March.
26. Forbes, Charles. Prisoners committed to take their Trial. Adelaide: 1840. 7 September.
27. Criminal Sessions Charles Forbes. *Adelaide Chronicle and South Australian Literary Record*. Adelaide: s.n., 1840. Wednesday 11 November.
28. Index for GRG 24/13 Census Returns - 1841 Census. *Census 1841*. [Online] [Cited: 5 October 2023.] <https://www.archives.sa.gov.au/finding-information/discover-our-collection/registration-of-life-events/census-1841>.
29. Governess In The Asylum. *South Australian Register*. Adelaide: 1856. Tuesday 23 September.
30. Births, Deaths and Marriages, South Australia. Forbes, Mary. Death, Registration Number 252/1872. Adelaide: Attorney General's Department, 1872.
31. Janet Forbes. *Adelaide Observer*. Adelaide: 1845. Saturday 26 July.
32. Correspondence of the Colonial Secretary's Office. Forbes, Janet. To be restored to the custody of her mother. Adelaide: 1845. Vol. 940.
33. Queensland Government, Births, Deaths and Marriages. Forbes, Charles Stuart - Rogers, Rebecca Certificate of Marriage 19 August 1868, Brisbane: Queensland Government, 2024.
34. Elizabeth Forbes, South Australia Prison Records 1838-1912. <https://www.familysearch.org/search/record/results?f.collectionId=2613137&q.givenName=Elizabeth&q.surname=Forbes>.
35. Forbes, Elizabeth. Supreme Court-Criminal Side, Prisoner's Sentences. *Adelaide Observer*. Adelaide: 1862. Saturday 24 May Page 3.
36. Hinchlee, William Brown - Forbes, Elizabeth. Marriage 3/228 1849. *South Australia Marriages 1842 - 1937*.
37. Proceedings of Inquest held upon the body of Elizabeth Brown Hinchlee at Panmure, 19 February 1874. Panmure, Victoria: s.n., 1874.
38. Married - Mr C. Forbes late of Cornhill, City of London, to Miss H. Catchlove. *Adelaide Times*. Adelaide: 1850. Saturday 14 December.
39. Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria. Best, Henry Marriage, Revill, Jessie Abercrombie, Reg Number 1410/1872. *Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria*. [Online] <https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/>.
40. Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria. Revill, Robert Death Spouse Forbes, Jessie - Registration No 10396/1870. 1870.
41. Best's Wines - Our History. *Best's Wines*. [Online] [Cited: 30 December 2024.] <https://www.bestswines.com/about-us/history/>.
42. Missing Friends - Charles Stuart Forbes. *Adelaide Observer*. Adelaide: 1891. Saturday 11 July.
43. Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria. Best, Jessie Abercrombie, Death Registration No. 1970/1916. 1916. ■

Give a Gift membership For Mother's Day



Visit Gift Membership at
<https://www.qfhs.org.au>
and select the Gift Certificate
of your choice

A COUNTRY BOYHOOD IN THE ERA OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

By David Huggonson

David.huggonson@bigpond.com

Walter Sidney Huggonson was representative of a generation of Queenslanders whose childhood was scarred by the loans embargo applied to the Queensland Government by the London capital market. The Theodore Labour Government had increased the rents on pastoral leases in 1920 when his government passed the *Land Act Amendment Act*.¹ Many British companies and financial institutions owned Queensland pastoral leases, and a powerful London financial junta ensured that the Queensland Government's requests for further loans were denied. Theodore broke with tradition and turned to New York for loan funds, albeit for smaller amounts. Many of Premier Theodore's plans for northern development, such as the establishment of an iron and steel industry, were abandoned², and in 1924, 600 railway construction workers were dismissed.³

Walter was eight years old when the Great Depression worsened Queensland's economic woes, when it led to a worldwide collapse in commodity prices and mass unemployment in 1929.⁴

Walter was born on 7 January 1921; prior to his birth his parents, **James** and **Vera Huggonson**, were living on a half-share farm at the head of Woowoonga Creek near Biggenden. James had migrated from Lancaster, England as a 21 year old under a NSW Government program to attract farm labourers. He had contributed 12 pounds towards his passage to Sydney with the NSW Government paying the remainder of the fare. James sailed from London on the 7,954-ton steamship *Geelong* on 26 May 1910. He was a third-class steerage passenger sharing a large cabin with other lads also immigrating.

The chances of a working-class man ever owning his own farm in Britain seemed non-existent. Shortly after arriving in Sydney, James was advised to take a coastal steamer north to Mackay where ballots were being conducted for land on which to grow sugar

cane. Due to the deportation of the majority of indentured Pacific Islanders labour force, large sugar plantations were being broken up into smaller holdings and sold to white farmers. James Huggonson was successful in a ballot for uncleared land on the northern bank of Pioneer River opposite the township of Mackay.

However, after three years of drought⁵ and a lot of really hard work clearing the land of jungle and planting a crop, "new-chum" James was forced to surrender the property to the crown because of lack of income from the sugar cane. His limited funds were exhausted. In 1914, he moved south to the cooler sub-tropical region around Bundaberg where he worked as a sugar-cane cutter. The cutters worked in teams and were paid on piece rates, so the more cane they cut the more money they earned. The cutters worked at other agricultural jobs when the cane-cutting season ended; many had small holdings to which they returned.

While working in a cane cutting gang at Dallarnil, James met **Sid Wallace** a twenty-one-year old fellow worker who had grown up on the 265 square mile leasehold pastoral station named *Boonara*. Originally established in 1846 as a sheep station, *Boonara* by around 1890 had changed to beef production because of the problem spear grass caused to sheep. The construction of a railway line to Kilkivan in 1902 and the advent in the mid 1880s of refrigerated cargo of frozen meat to Britain had also made cattle raising a more profitable business enterprise. When the last pastoral lease expired in 1906, *Boonara* was reduced to 33,000 acres of freehold land, which was owned by **Llewellyn Mander Jones**.

Jones' head stockman at *Boonara* was **Fred Nissen**, who had five daughters of marriage age. Sid Wallace married the eldest Nissen girl named **Idalia** and twenty-five year old **James Wrathall Huggonson** married twenty-one year old **Vera Nissen** on

continued

20 January 1915 at St David Church, Boonara via Goomeri. Their first child **William Clarence** was born on 27 November 1915 in St Helen's Hospital in Maryborough.



*Vera Nissen and James Wrathall Huggonson,
20 January 1915*

Bob Brown, the owner of the lease on which the Huggonsons lived after their marriage, had agreed that when the government closer settlement lease expired and the land became a freehold property he would sell it to them. James worked hard fencing, ringbarking and stump burning, thinking the agreement would be honoured. However, on conversion of the lease Brown sold the property to a returned serviceman, named **George McLaughlan**. Brown claimed this was the right thing to do as the man had fought overseas, but in reality it was a way of obtaining a better price; so much for non-written gentlemen's agreements.

James had not served in World War One because farming was a protected industry and Australia had not introduced conscription as Britain and Canada had done.

The couples' next move was to select a 200-acre forest block lower down the road so that

they had some land to live on and to farm. James had no money so he built a humpy for them to live in. The kitchen part of the establishment had no wooden floor, only a dirt floor made of ant nest material made level and waxed with linseed oil. There was no natural water supply on the property so James had to dig a well for drinking water for the house and the stock. A neighbour divined a likely spot to dig the well. At 65 feet good artesian water was obtained.

The family had a half a dozen dairy cows and two horses. A grey horse named *Bonny* was broken to pull a buggy and *Brownie* was their stock horse. The cows provided the family with a milk supply and the cream was used to make butter. James was forced to work off farm to make ends meet and continued to cut sugar cane during the harvest season.

About 1924 the Huggonsons sold the property to a neighbour for 50 pounds and paid a deposit on a more established property named *Glenrock*, which was situated about 5 miles from Biggenden on the Dallarnil Road. *Glenrock* was 125 acres with Woowoonga Creek as its southern boundary and a line of hills as its northern boundary. The hills were covered with scrub and lantana. The four-roomed house had unlined walls and ceilings but to Vera's mind it was an improvement on the isolated humpy of the former property. By this time she had three children. The family had a dozen cows but no bull so when the cows needed serving the ever-resourceful Vera would drive them down to the fence and open the gate to the adjoining property and let the neighbour's bull in with her heifers. Needless to say the neighbour was not very happy about this practice, so eventually he objected to the Huggonsons crossing his land to reach the road. He claimed that their buggy wheels were spreading khaki burr across his paddock.

In 1926 James persuaded the Council to construct a cutting in the creek bank so the family could go out of their property onto a camping reserve and reach the road by this means.

A COUNTRY BOYHOOD IN THE ERA OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION (Cont.)

James next found off-farm employment as a “powder monkey” with the Shire council. The powder monkey was responsible for blasting large rocks in Council-owned quarries so that roads could be macadamised with smaller pieces so water would drain from the centre of the road. Explosives were also used to level roads by making cuttings through hills. This meant that he had to ride a push bike to where the council crew were constructing or improving roads. During the week he camped at the work site and returned home at the weekend. Vera and the children milked the cows and did other chores on the farm.

The Council ceased all road works to concentrate on poisoning prickly pear, an introduced plant that was introduced to make hedges instead of building fences.

In the Queensland environment it soon spread out of control and infected large areas of land until a biological method was eventually found to eradicate it.

After the prickly pear work was terminated James was laid off, after objecting that a single man was being retained while he as a married man with three kids was being retrenched. After a heated argument with the foreman he was told that “he would never be employed by council again as long as he, **George Fanning**, remained foreman”. Jimmy was also denied relief work at the height of the depression because he had a farm of his own and was told “to go home and work his farm”. In 1931 thirty per cent of the Queensland workforce was unemployed.⁶

He had no option but to do hard manual labour like digging wells and to clear more land for crop cultivation, building pigsties and buying more milking cows. Jimmy Hugonson was totally undercapitalised to become a successful farmer because of lack of farming equipment, and the economic conditions of the Great Depression meant that farm produce sold at extremely low prices.

With three children to feed and clothe, on April Fools’ Day 1928 Vera obtained a job working in the laundry of Biggenden Hospital. In this era hospital laundry was

done by hand and by boiling water in wood-heated coppers. Walter, as her youngest, went to live at the hospital, **Billy** as the eldest was to stay on the farm with his father and **Edna** the middle child was farmed out to **Annie Hedger** who had recently married **Wally Lupean**; in return for her keep Edna was required to do housework and farm chores. This arrangement did not last long as Annie fell pregnant and could not afford to keep Edna. She came to live in her mother’s room at the hospital. Walter was sent home to live on the farm with his father as hospital employees were only allowed one child to live with them in their room.

As a treat one moonless night, Vera took her children to a performance of a visiting circus. On his way back from the show a drunk named **Tom Saulter**, riding a motorbike with no headlight, knocked them all down. Vera and Billy weren’t injured seriously, but Walter suffered a badly broken leg. Edna had a deep cut in her leg almost the length of her shin. Fortunately, **Ivy Todd** who also worked at the hospital came along in her father’s model T ford. The injured kids were loaded in and rushed to the casualty ward of the newly constructed Biggenden Hospital. The doctor put twenty-one stitches in Edna’s leg and Walter’s leg was put in a splint and packed with sand bags. Edna’s leg healed quickly but Walter was kept in bed for a month before being allowed up on crutches until his bones knitted. In later life, Walter wore a built up shoe because the accident left him with one leg shorter than the other.

Shortly after the incident an extra room was added to Biggenden Hospital and an “X-ray” machine was installed. The machine was donated by the philanthropic **Lord Nuffield** whose company manufactured Austin Cars.

On discharge from hospital, Walter returned to live with his father at the farm and was supposed to learn by correspondence lessons at the kitchen table. However, without daytime supervision, Walter played with his dog and horse and ignored his schoolwork. Because of lack of progress it was decided to send him to Woowoonga East School that

continued

was four and a half miles away. After helping with the milking he rode a horse to school and back each afternoon. His teacher at the single-teacher school, **Miss Stegman**, referred to Walter and two other boys his age as her “three precious dunces”.

Walter’s next health setback was to contract diphtheria. He was placed in hospital isolation and the medical staff took a swab each week to monitor his recovery. Three negative swabs were required before they could be sure the infectious disease had passed.

The Queensland Department of Agriculture operated a program for rural schools called the “Farm Boys Club” that involved researching and monitoring particular farm animals and crops. The Department supplied seeds of different fodder crops such as oats, barley, wheat, Sudan grass and lucerne. The students planted seeds in individual plots and kept records of the rainfall, temperature and plant growth. Walter also kept records on the egg production of his white Leghorn and Black Orpington fowls and on the growth of a newborn calf. He also obtained statistics on the district produce from the butter factory, shire council and the railway station. He wrote up all his research including diagrams and had graphs of their progress. At the end of the term the agricultural inspector congratulated him on his work and announced that he had been selected to attend the Brisbane Exhibition with the farm boys camp in August 1934. It was his first trip to the state capital.

Walter left school when he reached the legal leaving age of 14 years. After helping his father on the farm for a period he started paid work with his uncle, **Reg Nissen**, who was working as a drover and horse breaker. Reg Nissen was a renowned horseman and had represented Queensland at the Centenary Stampede against the Americans in Melbourne in 1934. The Stampede was part of the Centenary Celebrations to commemorate the founding of Melbourne.

With the two boys away working and his wife and daughter living and working at the

Biggenden Hospital, James, out of loneliness decided to sell his farm in 1935 and become an itinerant labourer. His relationship with Vera had broken down but in this era divorce was costly and regarded as antisocial and unchristian, particularly when children were involved.

Walter next worked on a fencing contract with his brother Billy who was erecting a 2-mile post and rail fence at Tansey. He next worked as a station hand on a cattle property near Boompa. Also employed there was an Aboriginal returned soldier from the Great War, named **Bert Brown**. Bert told him stories of his service with the 11th Light Horse Regiment in the Middle East.⁷

The Station owner had a back section of property 25 miles from his homestead and Walter was sent there for weeks at a time with another stockman mustering and to do the necessary cattle work such as dipping for ticks, ringbarking trees and fencing. After working on the cattle property and outstation for two years a kindly cattle buyer advised Walter that he was wasting his life in such an isolated occupation.

Walter quit and moved to Biggenden. A saddler and boot maker named **Jimmy Danvers** offered to teach him his trade but could not afford to pay him wages. He would receive what ever the customer paid for his work less the cost of materials. He earned very little money but was learning trade skills. He survived by visiting his mother after work at the hospital where a friendly cook provided him with a plate of leftover food, which he was required to eat in the laundry.

In 1938 the Australian army formed a Light Horse troop in Biggenden. Training was every second Saturday afternoon for which the troopers were paid, so Walter joined this militia unit. His unit number was 76402 of the 5th Light Horse Regiment.

Each year the Light Horse regiment did a ten-day training camp at Maryborough or Gympie. Walter, like other troopers, was paid ten shillings a day extra if he supplied his own horse.

A COUNTRY BOYHOOD IN THE ERA OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION (Cont.)

When Britain declared that it was at war with Germany because of the Nazi invasion of Poland, Australia as part of the British Empire also declared war on Germany. A three-month training camp was organised at Beaudesert for the 5th Light Horse Regiment. A few troopers enlisted for overseas service with the 2nd AIF during this time but Walter being under 21 years of age could not enlist without written parental approval. After harping at both his parents for over a year, finally Vera and Jimmy gave in and signed their approval for him to enlist for overseas service with the all-volunteer Australia Imperial Force.

His elder brother, Billy (William Clarence Huggonson) had already volunteered for service with the Royal Australian Air Force. He was given flight training in Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme. He became a wireless operator/air gunner as part of the crew of a Wellington Bomber. He served with Coastal Command in Britain as part of its anti-submarine strategy for protecting North Atlantic Convoys. Fortunately for Billy, Coastal Command never sustained the level of casualties experienced by Bomber Command who flew missions over occupied Europe.



Sgt W C Huggonson

Walter served with the 6th Division Corps Troops in the Middle East and later in New

Guinea. He celebrated his twenty-first birthday in Beirut while taking part in the Syrian Campaign against the Vichy French. Both brothers survived the war; they each moved to Brisbane because of the great opportunities that the city offered.



Walter and his mother Vera on his return from the Middle East

Endnotes:

- ¹ *Cochrane, Tom*, Blockade: the Queensland Loans affair 1920 to 1924, *University of Queensland Press*, 1989.
- ² The Herald newspaper (Melbourne) 24 April 1920.
- ³ *Young, Irwin, Theodore* : his life and times, *Alpha Books, Sydney* 1971, p.58.
- ⁴ *Beaumont, Joan* Australia's Great Depression, *Allen and Unwin*, 2022.
- ⁵ *Follet, J C*, Droughts in Australia: Review of records from earliest years of settlement to 1955, *Director of Meteorology, Melbourne*, 1957.
- ⁶ *Costar, B J*, The Great Depression: was Queensland Different, *Labour History*, No 26, May 1974 pp 32-48, and *Black, Carmel* The right to work: the unemployed and insurance in Queensland 1900-1944, *PhD Thesis, Griffith University* 1998.
- ⁷ *Brown, William Bert*, 2422, 11th Light Horse Regiment. Enlisted at Maryborough on 11 July 1917 once the Army had allowed the enlistment of "Half-Castes" in May 1917.

(photographs provided by the author) ■

QFHS INC. AWARD FOR SERVICES TO FAMILY HISTORY

Nominations are called each year for the QFHS Inc. Award for Services to Family History, which is reserved for QFHS members only, and in 2025 the Award was announced at our Volunteers' Morning Tea on 8 December. The nominations are considered by previous awardees as designated by the Management Committee and they form an ad hoc committee for this purpose each year.

The nomination accepted for 2025 was **Dette Glenday** member number 1276. All services mentioned have been voluntary.

Dette Glenday

I would like to nominate Dette Glenday for a Services to Family History Award for 2025.

Dette joined QFHS in April of 1989 and was issued with membership number 1276.

She began her journey as a Library Assistant in 1990 and has been supporting both members and non-members for over 35 years. In 2016, she advanced to the role of Library Assistant Co-ordinator, a position she has carried out with dedication for the past nine years.

Although I am a relative newcomer to the Society, it quickly became clear to me just how much time Dette devotes to the Research Centre. She capably manages the roster, ensuring absences are covered, and when no replacement is available, she steps in herself so the Centre can remain open. Even when not physically present, she is always just a phone call away, ready to provide guidance and support with any questions or issues that arise.

To keep Library Assistants well-informed and confident in their roles, she regularly circulates updates via email and, several times a year, organizes training sessions to ensure everyone is up to date with new developments and procedures.

Dette took up a position on the Management Committee in 2024 and has continued in that role this year.

In early 2018, Dette, together with Wendy Angliss and Charlotte Sale, co-founded the Colonial India and Far East Special Interest Group, which held its inaugural meeting in August of that year. From the outset, Dette has been warm, supportive, and enthusiastic about helping members and exploring new

ideas. Her modest demeanor often conceals a deep well of knowledge about the India and Far East region, which shines through in engaging and insightful discussions. She continues to serve as co-convenor alongside Wendy, who notes that they've shared many laughs and looks forward to many more as the group continues to evolve and grow.

Dette has consistently shown kindness, professionalism, and flexibility, making collaboration smooth and effective.

I believe Dette is well deserving of a Services to Family History Award.



*Dette receiving her award from
President Graeme Drew*

CONGRATULATIONS DETTE

Nominated by Pat Gardner. ■

ACQUISITIONS – PRINT LIBRARY

A warm welcome to the New Year from the Print Library Team. Let's hit the ground running with an introduction to "Koha", the new Library Catalogue Database, hosted and supported in Sydney by Prosentient Systems. The new database can be found at <https://library.qfhs.org.au>.

Members of the Print Library Team have been working tirelessly over the last twelve months to massage the data that was imported from v-Library. Some unwanted and unexpected results popped up in the new database and much work has been going on to rectify, cleanse and tidy up the data in Koha.

The most important thing to know at the moment is that v-Library has been frozen for most of the last year, meaning that all new records have only gone into Koha. With the limited resources available, all efforts have been focused entirely on Koha. With the gap widening between v-Library and Koha, the team invite you to have a look at our new database. Some points to know:

- The Koha Catalogue is available to all and you do not need a log-in to search!
- Members will still be able borrow books from the "Book Awards" and "Lending Library" section of the Library.
- Books not on loan from these two areas will show as "available".
- The bulk of the Library is for research only and in most cases these books cannot be borrowed. These books will show up as "Not Available, Restricted Access - Research only".

The Library Assistants will soon be in a position to check books in and out using Koha. Some electronic records will still only be accessed by attending the Library at Geebung.

In Koha, an example of the simplest search would be by going to the drop down button that by default shows *Library catalogue*. Click that button and select *Title*. In the search entry field to the right enter *Geebung* and click the search button to the right. Two entries with Geebung in the title should be shown. Members may have a Call Number to find. To find an exact match, select *Call Number* from the same drop down options and enter the full Call Number in quotes, eg, "H4/034 1 2". The Title "Geebung story : the next fifty years" should be found. An option called *Advanced Search*, directly under the Library Catalogue option button, is where visitors can start to develop more targeted searches.

To see all the Book Award collection, just click on the Group Icon for *Book Awards* and hit *Search*. Further searching is possible from within that selection. Have a look at *Lists*, found near the top left. The Print Library Team have grouped similarly themed records to help with quick searching.

What's next? Links to new books that previously would have pointed to v-Library will direct the reader to Koha. The New Year has certainly started with some pace so welcome to Koha. Please explore, there's a lot to see, and remember, it is a work in progress.

Print Library Team

VICTORIA

C6 HUG 1 Bk 2

Donated by
Jennifer Vivian-Smith

*QFHS Family History Book Award
Entrant 2025

Vivian-Smith, Jennifer

Substance and shadows : a memoir of early arrivals of the Hughan and Bowman families in Australia and some of their descendants, self-published, 2024.

QUEENSLAND

H6 HET 1

Donated by
Anne Hetherington

*QFHS Family History Book Award
Entrant 2025

Hetherington, Anne

Playing a poor hand well : a family story across several generations, self-published, 2023.

continued

H6 SCH 6 Bk 2**Donated by****Penelope Greet & Avis-Ann Ballard*****QFHS Family History Book Award Entrant 2025**

Greet, Penelope; Ballard, Avis-Ann

*May the cane prosper : a Queensland story, self-published, 2023.***H6 ZAM 1 Bk 2****Donated by****Catherine Smith*****Winner, QFHS Family History Book Award 2025**

Smith, Catherine

*Queensland sugar king : the Zammit legacy, Australian Scholarly Publishing, North Melbourne (Vic), 2023.***LENDING LIBRARY****VICTORIA****C6 HUG 1 Bk 1 LL****Donated by****Jennifer Vivian-Smith**

Vivian-Smith, Jennifer

*Substance and shadows : a memoir of early arrivals of the Hughan and Bowman families in Australia and some of their descendants, self-published, 2024.***QUEENSLAND****H6 SCH 6 Bk 1 LL****Donated by****Penelope Greet & Avis-Ann Ballard**

Greet, Penelope; Ballard, Avis-Ann

*May the cane prosper : a Queensland story, self-published, 2023. ■***VOLUNTEERS THANK YOU
MORNING TEA RAFFLE**

We had 61 volunteers attending at our morning tea at Kedron-Wavell Services Club on 8 December 2025 and 3 attending on zoom. Karen Beyer was the happy winner of the raffle, and Ruth Linde won the Lucky Door Prize.

**STUCK ON A BRANCH?
OUT ON A LIMB?**

Our Family History Research Centre is a treasure trove of resources and information.

Do you live too far away?

Have you hit that famous brick-wall?

Do you know that members who live further than 50 km from the Brisbane GPO are entitled to 2 hours of free research per year?

A free Look-up Service for all members is also available.

**Not a QFHS member?
We can still help**

Request help now by downloading a request form from

www.qfhs.org.au/about-us/research-service/extended-research

QFHS members - \$40 per hour (incl. GST)
Non-members - \$60 per hour (incl. GST)

Queensland Family History Society Inc.
P O Box 78, Geebung Qld 4034
Email: research@qfhs.org.au

MULGA BELT: REVISITED BY WARTIME CHILD EVACUEE

By Clem Ditton

clem.ditton@gmail.com

On the weekend of 7 and 8 June 2025, **Judith Johnson (née Kinross)** revisited *Mulga Belt* after 83 years. She was in company with her cousin **Ralda**, Ralda's daughter, **Kayley** and Kayley's daughter, **Ruby**. Judith was one of those children who sought sanctuary at rural locations during the peak of the Japanese threat in WWII.

Mulga Belt is a property about 60 kilometres SSW of Mitchell, Queensland. In 1941 it was primarily devoted to Merino wool production. In 2025, *Mulga Belt* is now diversified to supplement Merino wool production with lamb, goat and beef production. In addition, the current proprietors and custodians, **Ian** and **Jodie Noon**, make the property available as an event venue and a farm stay destination.¹ Ian and his son **Flynn** also run a building enterprise, servicing the surrounding district. The property has been home to six generations of the Noon family. At the time of Judith's visit in 1941/42, it was owned and managed by **Charlie** and **Lizzie Noon** who had purchased the property in 1922.

The State Library of Queensland website states: "On the Japanese assault in the Pacific in December 1941 the Queensland Government closed all coastal schools from Thursday Island to Coolangatta until the end of summer holidays. When the school year commenced again in March 1942, schools within range of the coast were only allowed to reopen if slit trenches were dug in school yards as air raid shelters before the children returned to school. All teachers were taught first aid techniques and children up to grade six, only attended school for morning classes. Infant classes remained closed until the end of 1942."²

Some schools were commandeered for military use or closed due to their proximity to military targets and thousands of students were displaced to either local or rural alternatives. Many teachers enlisted or were called up, putting further strain on the education system.

Four children from two related families (Bell and Kinross) were sent to *Mulga Belt* in late

1941 and returned to Brisbane in 1942. Judith had memories of spending Christmas 1941 at *Mulga Belt* and the QFHS school index records³ show that she was enrolled in Correspondence School in May 1942. The older Bell children were enrolled at the start of the 1942 school year. Records indicate that Judith was back in Brisbane and enrolled at Woolloowin State School in September 1942. Correspondence enrolments increased to 3,961 in 1942 from the roughly 2,500 in the years prior and after.⁴ Judith remembers spending her seventh birthday in August 1942 at *Mulga Belt*. The Bell children and the Kinross children were first cousins. Their mothers, **Alma Bell** and **Lucy Kinross**, were sisters from the McLean family, and the mothers also stayed with the children at *Mulga Belt* during their wartime respite. The children's fathers were involved with war preparations.

Lizzie and Charlie Noon were friends with the McLean family. **Southall** and **Edith McLean** and their family, which included the future visiting mothers, were neighbours to the Noons at Bracalba, in the Caboolture district between 1916-1922. The Noons were growing bananas and Southall was a teamster and farmer.⁵ Another child of the McLean family was their daughter **Florence** (Florrie). Florrie trained as a seamstress and the Noons used her professional services in later years, such as when Florrie made a wedding dress for **Peg Noon**, Lizzie's daughter. Judith's cousin, Ralda, is Florrie's daughter.

Judith is the last surviving member of the group that stayed at *Mulga Belt*. She had memories of being asked to gather wool from the fences and yards that sheep had shed as they moved around. That wool was cleaned and brushed to make filling for sleeping covers. Her days were mostly confined to the homestead precinct, but she did interact with a few farm animals. She also remembered traveling in a farm vehicle that had no floorboards in the back passenger compartment. Charlie Noon instructed the children to keep their feet up to stop them

continued

getting entangled with the revolving drive shaft. She remembered with affection her time with the Noons and her family. Her recent visit to *Mulga Belt* was a heart-warming nostalgic adventure that satisfied a longing that developed after her return to city life.



L to R: Elizabeth Noon, Kenneth Bell, Graham Kinross, Judith Kinross, Merle Bell, circa 1942 at Mulga Belt.⁶

Sources:

¹ <https://www.mulgabeltliving.com.au> accessed 12 June 2025.

² <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/blog/children-world-war-ii> accessed 12 June 2025

³ QFHS Queensland School Pupils indexes Parts 1-6 Combined (member restricted), <https://www.qfhs.org.au/>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Commonwealth Electoral Rolls, Wide Bay, 1913, 1917, 1922.

⁶ Photo from the collection of Judith Johnson.



L to R: Ralda Hooker, Judith Johnson and Flynn Noon reminiscing at Mulga Belt 2025

(photographs provided by the author with permission) ■

MEMBERS' INTERESTS

We remind members that all interests must be submitted using the Members' Interests Application Form, downloaded from our website <https://www.qfhs.org.au/resources/members-interests/>. Interests will be uploaded to our website as soon as possible after the Application Form is received, and printed in the *Queensland Family Historian* as space allows.

Member's name: James Huey

Membership: #6012

Email: james@jameshuey.com

BROWN	1780+	Waringstown	DOW IRL
GEDDES/GEDDIS	1800+	Lurgan	ARM IRL
GRAHAM	1780+	Longdales	CUL ENG
GRAHAM	1780+	Ainstable	CUL ENG
GREEN	1780+	Waringstown	DOW IRL
HORROCKS	1780+	Bolton	LAN ENG
HUEY	1780+	Moneymore	LDY IRL
STEELE	1760+	Kildress	TYR IRL

■

A NEW SIG HAS BEEN FORMED

Recently, sessions in using Microsoft software have been offered by QFHS. Both classes were booked out.

After discussions with participants and other members of QFHS it was determined that a new SIG be formed, the Technical SIG. This SIG will cover topics around using Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

Each session will demonstrate one or more ways to use these products, both for family history and in general, with time for questions and discussion. Our aim is to give participants the knowledge to be able to use these products effectively.

Please refer to page 37 for meeting times. ■

QUEENSLAND PRE-SEPARATION GROUP PRESENTATIONS

At our 15 October 2025 Members' Presenting... meeting, **Ann Swain** and **Jenny Davidson** provided certificates for the Queensland Pre-Separation Group members approved throughout 2025. Cindy attended online and spoke briefly about her pre-separation family. Catherine provided information on her family which Ann read out at the meeting.

Certificates to acknowledge the new memberships were posted to them at a later date.

#356 Cindy Cogill (QFHS Member 6791) is descended from **John Smith**, his wife **Bridget Smith (née Monaghan)** and their daughter **Catherine Smith** who was aged about 16 years when they arrived in Moreton Bay on the *Irene* on 11/2/1858.

#357 Catherine Cuddihy (QFHS Member 6408) is descended from **John Souter**, his wife **Mary Souter (née Sutherland)** and their son **James Alexander Souter** who was aged 9 years when they arrived in Sydney on the *Scotia* on 11/7/1849; the family arrived in Moreton Bay around 1850.

WELCOME TO OUR 2025 NEW MEMBERS ■

DATE CLAIMERS - UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Feb 5	 Technical Special Interest Group (Online)
Feb 13	Learn@QFHS – Are you interested in a One Place Study? (Online)
Feb 18	Presenting... <i>Steam Tug 'Forceful'. Its Life and Times, Gone but not forgotten!</i> (Hybrid)
Feb 23	Book Club - <i>Dirrayawadha</i> by Anita Heiss (Online)
Mar 12	Irish Research Day (Research Centre)
Mar 13	Learn@QFHS – SLQ presents One Search introduction (including finding images), Newspapers, and Colonial Secretary's Correspondence (Online)
Mar 18	Presenting... <i>Sir Augustus Charles Gregory KCMG, MLA, FRGS, DistGM</i> (Hybrid)
Mar 23	Social – <i>Tour of State Library of Queensland, South Brisbane</i>
Mar 24	Bi-annual General Meeting (Online)
Mar 25	Talking About - <i>Ethical Communication of Sensitive Research Discoveries</i> (Online)
Apr 3-6	Easter – some SIGS will still hold their meetings, please check pp.35, 36, 37
Apr 10	Learn@QFHS - <i>Locating your German immigrant ancestor's place of origin</i> (Online)
Apr 15	Presenting... <i>Stories of Service: Australians in the Second World War</i> (Hybrid)
Apr 27	Book Club – <i>No time for Makeup</i> by Dr Elizabeth Green (Online)
May 14	Central European Research Day (Research Centre)
May 20	Presenting... <i>A Medal for (or from) Commissioner Thallon</i> (Hybrid)
May 24	Social – <i>Visit to Miegunyah House Museum, Bowen Hills</i>
Jun 16	Annual General Meeting (Hybrid)

Please refer to Dates to Remember (p.34) for further details and register to attend at <https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/members-lounge/> or through the calendar. ■

ARTICLE OF THE YEAR: MEMBERS CHOICE AWARD 2025

Since November 2021, we have conducted an annual **Journal Article of the Year: Members Choice Award**. Conceived as being 'in the style of the Archibald's Packing Room Prize', we wanted to show support for our wonderful volunteer authors and allow QFHS members to express their appreciation for articles that captured their interest or launched them on new avenues of research and discovery during the year.

During 2025, as each issue of *Queensland Family Historian* was published, members were invited to nominate the journal article that resonated most with them. As expected, reasons for choosing a particular article were as varied as the respondents and the articles themselves. The interest of some members was captured by a particular writing style or by the insight authors gave to their creative process. Others appreciated the use of sources, or the detail of an iconic journey.

While all articles were of particular interest to at least one participating member of the Society, the three most chosen stories were *This Band of Brothers: the Men of No. 15 Section* by Allan Tonks (p.4, QFH No. 46, Feb 2025), *A Deeper Dive into the Family Archive* by Lesley Huxley (p.86, QFH No. 46, Aug 2025) and *The Search for Portion 1879* by Ken Swadling (p.142, No. 46, Nov 2025). Participants' comments included:

This Band of Brothers:

- It was clearly written, well researched, and made the reader appreciate yet again the bravery and efforts of those who have fought for our freedoms in this country.
- Interesting snapshot of a tiny section of the AIF. The group and individual photos lend reality and poignancy to the stark details.

A Deeper Dive into the Family Archive:

- A well set out family story and tutorial - showing that "insignificant" events can be gold to family historians and that constant revisiting of information is crucial.
- I loved the way her search wound thru so many sources (guidance to other family historians) and gave details. And her conclusion about family research methodology: Re-examination alongside wide consultation of sources. So enjoyable to read. Inspirational.

The Search for Portion 1879:

- The author shared the journey of discovery with facts, explanations and humour and was not afraid of including the mistakes and assumptions made along the way.
- Great to read an account where persistence pays off so satisfactorily. This article is family history research in a nutshell.

Our congratulations go to **Allan Tonks, Lesley Huxley** and **Ken Swadling** whose articles were equally chosen most often by our members. They have received a commemorative certificate and a gift voucher of \$75 in recognition of the interest and appreciation of our participating members. Their articles were featured on the QFHS website and our Facebook page.

All participating members were placed in a draw for the prize of a gift voucher for an Education event of their choice. The random draw was conducted at the Volunteers Thank You Morning Tea on 8 December 2022, and Jan Saunderson was the delighted winner.

Congratulations to the prize winners. Congratulations, also, to the team of volunteers who publish and distribute the QFHS journal four times per year – we are grateful for your interest and dedication.

And thank you to all member participants. We do appreciate receiving your feedback.

The Management Committee have decided to discontinue this Award. Thank you to all who have participated over the last few years, and congratulations to all the winning authors.

Charlotte Sale and Lyndal Cosgrove ■

“CONCOMITANT OBSERVATIONS?” YOU MAY WELL ASK

My PEARCE family of TOOWOOMBA

By Mike Vincent

mikevincent122@yahoo.com.au

I have mentioned in previous articles, the value of searching records of sports, hobbies, pastimes and employment for lost relatives, in breaking “brick walls”. The statisticians amongst us would call these “concomitant observations”.

Two of my critical breakthroughs came from searching for “a one legged, professional rat catcher”, and a teenage boy who “ran away with a circus.” [see *A Missing Link Found after 37 years of Searching*, QFH, 2020, 41-1 p.14; *Was Pois, the Family Greyhound*, QFH, 2021, 42-3, p.109; and *My Cousin was a “Siffleur”*, QFH, 2024, 45-1 p.22].

In the first case, I was able to track my grandfather (**Frederick Angell; Edward Vincent; George Robinson** 1885-1964), despite his three different names, by following his rat catching pursuits, and the greyhounds he raced: - Fine Sand, and Pembroke Premier in England in 1915/16, and Was Pois in Australia in 1928. My father (**Harry Vincent** 1921-2015) and his sister, (**May Pearce/Hoolihan** 1915-1998), had “followed” this greyhound, as grandfather had a wooden leg and the kids had to exercise the dog.

In the second case, I traced my grandmother’s missing cousin, (**Leo Elliott** 1890-1965), by following Wirths’ and other circuses, and vaudeville shows, and discovering his stage names, **Leo Kelvedon/Kelvin**.

These were made possible by using NAA TROVE , and other searchable newspapers and magazines, overseas.

Along with family history, pigeon racing is another passion of mine. Perhaps this is an inherited trait , as three uncles, who I never met, were prominent pigeon racers in Toowoomba.

Organised pigeon racing in Toowoomba began in 1892, as *The Toowoomba Homing Pigeon Society*, with **W R Robinson** chairman, **F C Brodribb** president and nine others, continuing until 1927.¹

In 1930 the *Toowoomba Homing Club* was formed, with my uncles **Albert W Argus**

1905-1972, and **W F (Fred) Pearce**, and others, including **N Beasley**. Uncle **C A (Charlie) Pearce** joined in 1931.² This club flew from 1930 until at least 1939.³ For most of this time Fred Pearce was secretary, and Albert Argus often treasurer. Fred was also secretary of the *Darling Downs Kennel Club*, 1925-1939⁴, the *Amalgamated Foodstuffs Union*⁵, and secretary and treasurer of the *AOF Lodge*⁶ for many years.

In September 1933 Fred won a race from Mitchell, and “received a decorated cake generously donated by Mr C Pearce, an enthusiastic member of the club.” - his brother Charlie, a pastry cook.⁷

By following the weekly pigeon race results in local papers over many years, a list of families involved can be compiled. In addition to those noted above were - **Abrahams, Anderson, Banks, Bastin, Baxter, Becker, Beebe, Bryan, Carey, Cook, Crookston, Crowley, English, Erbacher, Gill, Greenwood, Hampson, Hank, Hass, Hodgkinson, Hopkins, Horner, Keogh, Krautz, Lawton, Leamon, Marks, Mastin, McBean, McDonnell, Mitchell, Nolan, Obst, Oelker, Paling, Pointer, Priest, Quelch, Reynolds, Roberts, Ross, Rowan, Savage, Schaffer, Sharp, Shipp, Sinclair, Sloan, Souar, Stanton, Stephens, Stone, Styan, Sudran, Taft, Voght, Walker, Williamson, Wing, Woodward, Wyatt, and Zische**.⁸ A possible source for historians desperately searching for lost relatives.

After the disappearance of my grandfather in 1928, and the death of my grandmother (**Florence R Burston/Pearce/Vincent** 1879-1933), my father was raised by his much older (by 15 to 20 years) married half-siblings, my uncles and aunts. Wearing “hand-me-downs”, his family nick name was “Patches”. He became “assistant” pigeon trainer and “general factotum” throughout the family.

By following the activities of my uncles, I have been able to flesh out the dynamics of my

continued

extended Pearce family in Toowoomba, with many more details that are not pertinent to record here.



*The Pearce Family, Toowoomba, about 1917.
Back: Florence Jessica/Jess 1903-1991,
Charles Albert/Charlie 1906-1952,
Louisa Marion/Lou 1906-1947;
Middle: William Charles 1875-1918,
Florence Rebecca 1879-1933,
William Frederick/Fred 1901-1943;
Front: Grace 1912-1938, May 1915-1998.*



Toowoomba circa 1929. Charlie Pearce with pony stallion "Mickey".



Toowoomba circa 1929. Harry Vincent on Fred Pearce's bike, with Pearce nieces and nephews Dorothy, Colin, Frank and Margie.

References:

- ¹ *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs General Advertiser*, 10-12-1892, p.4.
- ² *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs Gazette*, 30-10-1931, p.9.
- ³ *Courier-Mail*, 29-5-1939, p.10.
- ⁴ *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs Gazette*, 12-6-1925, p.1.
- ⁵ *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs Gazette*, 6-12-1933, p.1.
- ⁶ *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs Gazette*, 3-9-1940, p.1.
- ⁷ *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs Gazette*, 6-10-1933, p.10.
- ⁸ TROVE, *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs General Advertiser*, *Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs Gazette*, *Darling Downs Gazette*, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, *Courier-Mail*, *Brisbane Telegraph*, *Dalby Herald*, 1893-1953, pigeon racing results.

(photographs provided by the author) ■



Need help with Family Tree Maker?

GUM members have free access to two FTM.
Zoom User Groups every month

AND

a monthly newsletter which provides
beginner and advanced articles on using
FTM

Want to know more?

visit www.vicgum.asn.au



An Association of Family History
Researchers Using Computers

Established 1984

WEB LINKS

THEGENEALOGIST RELEASES LLOYD GEORGE DOMESDAY RECORDS FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE

[*TheGenealogist*](#) has announced the release of the Lloyd George Domesday Survey records for *Cambridgeshire*. The records give information about the person living at an address and the type of property they had. Details within the field books can include plans and detailed descriptions of properties that provide a unique snapshot of local communities during a period of significant social change. This latest release includes: 164,524 individuals and businesses pinned to maps on MapExplorer™, covering over 1,000 square miles, Searchable field book entries naming owners and occupiers, Precise property descriptions including size, usage, and value, and detailed mapping of each property using contemporary Ordnance Survey maps. Read more at <https://eogn.com/page-18080/13493088>.

THEGENEALOGIST LAUNCHES SUSSEX LLOYD GEORGE DOMESDAY RECORDS

TheGenealogist has released *Sussex* Lloyd George records in partnership with The National Archives, bringing together the Valuation Office Survey field books ("Lloyd George Domesday") and georeferenced historical maps for *Sussex* in a single, searchable resource. This significant addition allows family and local historians to pinpoint where 269,211 Occupiers, Owners & Organisation ancestors lived or owned property in the early 1910s, then click straight through to the corresponding survey book entry for details such as ownership/occupancy, property description and assessed value. Read more at <https://eogn.com/page-18080/13541647>.

NEW FREE HISTORICAL RECORDS

FamilySearch has recently expanded its free online archives with over 18 million new records from 10 countries. Additions include records from Dominican Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Belgium, French Polynesia, Honduras, Italy, Philippines, UK and United States.

THEGENEALOGIST ADDS OVER 900,000 PERSONS TO ITS IRISH PARISH RECORD COLLECTION

TheGenealogist has released an exciting new collection of Irish parish records from *Waterford, Ireland*. These newly transcribed records offer researchers a fresh opportunity to explore their Irish roots and uncover family connections in one of the country's most historically significant counties. Read more at <https://eogn.com/page-18080/1351406>.

HEBRIDES RECORDS

Bill Lawson is considered the foremost authority on Hebridean genealogy, and his work has helped thousands trace their roots back to the Outer Hebrides. Contact the [Hebrides People Visitor Centre](#) in Harris, which houses Bill Lawson's 60-year archive of island family trees.

A BREAKTHROUGH IN FRANCE GENEALOGY: MYHERITAGE PUBLISHES A NEW COLLECTION EXTRACTED FROM FRENCH NEWSPAPERS

MyHeritage has released a groundbreaking collection of 731 million structured records extracted from historical French newspapers, thanks to their in-house AI technology. This is their first 'Names & Stories' collection in a language other than English, and it opens up a treasure trove of information for anyone researching their French roots. These records delve beyond names and dates: they capture relationships, occupations, addresses, and more, all linked to original newspaper pages. It's a significant advancement in making French historical newspapers accessible and searchable for genealogists worldwide. Refer to <https://www.eogn.com/page-18080/13506216> and search the collection at <https://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-12031/france-names-stories-in-newspapers/>. (Don't forget to use Google Translate.)

FROM MYHERITAGE: COUSIN FINDER™ NOW AVAILABLE FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS IN THE FAMILY TREE

Read more information from their blog at <https://blog.myheritage.com/2025/08/cousin-finder-now-available-for-all-individuals-in-the-family-tree/>.

continued

NEW IRISH HISTORY ARCHIVE LAUNCHED BY DR ÉAMON PHOENIX FOUNDATION

The Dr Éamon Phoenix Foundation, a charity established to preserve and build upon the legacy of the late historian, has launched a new archive of *On This Day* articles on Irish history – including the use of AI to allow readers to listen to Dr Phoenix ‘reading’ his historical columns created over more than three decades. *On This Day* is an ongoing daily column in the *Irish News* looking back either 50 or 100 years. It was compiled by Dr Éamon Phoenix from the mid 1980s until autumn 2022. Published daily on the Foundation’s website and promoted across social media, they are starting from columns originally published in 2020 that look back at 1920 and 1970, two critical years in Irish history. Other years will be added in the future. The website www.eamonphoenixfoundation.com features tributes, images and videos of Dr Phoenix, and details the Foundation’s mission.

SMYTHE-WOOD NEWSPAPER COLLECTION IS ONLINE

The Irish Genealogical Research Society is launching a new database created from a card index compiled several decades ago by the now late Patrick Smythe-Wood. It notes biographical information from Irish, and a small number of Canadian, newspapers. Although the range of newspapers covers all of Ireland, the data tends to mainly represent the nine northern counties which form the province of Ulster: *Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Derry/Londonderry, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Monaghan, and Tyrone*. There are approximately 11,600 index records, referencing about 20,000 individuals. The earliest dates from 1772 and the latest 1900, though the majority fall into the period 1800 to 1860. Non-members can access this database for free to check for the prevalence of particular first name and surname combinations by clicking [HERE](#). Logged-in members can access the full database through the [UNIQUE RESOURCES](#) page. See <https://www.eogn.com.wildapricot.org/page-18080/13525822>.

THE GENEALOGIST RELEASES OVER 330,000 HISTORIC WILLS AND PROBATE RECORDS SPANNING 500 YEARS

TheGenealogist has added a substantial new release to its growing collection of historical records, making over 330,000 names available from a variety of *wills and probate* sources across *England and Scotland*. These valuable records are great for historians trying to push their tree back, with records spanning 500 years from the 14th century up to the 19th century. They provide a remarkable glimpse into the lives, legacies, and legal affairs of past generations. The new fully searchable collections now available on TheGenealogist include:

- Archdeaconry of Cornwall Wills and Administrations 1569-1699.
- A Calendar of Wills, Gloucestershire 1541-1650.
- Calendars of Lincoln Wills 1320-1600 (covering Lincoln, Leicester, Rutland, Northampton, Huntingdon, Bedford, Buckingham, Hertford, and Oxford).
- Wills and Administrations Preserved in the District Probate Court of Lewes 1541-1652 (covering East Sussex).
- Dougal's Index Register to Next of Kin, Heirs at Law, and Cases of Unclaimed Money.
- Commissariat Record of Edinburgh, Register of Testaments, 1514-1600.
- Commissariat of Inverness, Hamilton & Campsie Testaments, 1630-1800.
- Abstracts of Probates and Sentences in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury 1620-24.
- Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills Index 1653-1656.

Read more information at <https://eogn.com/page-18080/13525030>.

WHOLE POPULATION CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES COMMISSIONED FOR 2031

His Majesty's Government has commissioned the Office for National Statistics to conduct a mandatory, questionnaire-based, whole-population census of England and Wales in 2031. To read the announcement go to <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKONS/bulletins/3e967fc>. ■

QFHS NOTICES

BEREAVEMENT NOTICES



We extend our deepest sympathy on the following bereavements:

Joan Manthey, past member #496, late of Victoria Point, who passed away on 5 October 2025, aged 90.

Cameron Struble, member #5032, late of Ashgrove, who passed away on 17 October 2025, aged 70.

Phyllis Massey, member #1032, late of Clermont, who passed away on 4 November 2025.

Marionne Diggles, Secretary of Toowoomba & Darling Downs Family History Society, who passed away recently.

Expressions of sympathy have been conveyed to their families on behalf of the President and members of the Society.



The Hills & Districts Chamber of Commerce would like to advise you that plans are now under way for their 2026 Expo.

As the name 'Twilight Years Expo' has been misinterpreted many times as being a night Expo, they are altering the name to

Re-Tyrement Expo

Please note **Friday 29 May 2026** in your diaries. They are hoping that you will be able to join them again for the 2026 Expo. They will remain at the Arana Hills PCYC as this has proven to be a wonderful venue.

If you have any questions please contact Carolyn Hohnke, on 0448 328 914 or email cadsh@bigpond.com.

LEARN@QFHS

Further courses will be held as follows:

Topic: **Are you interested in a One Place Study?**
Date: FRI 13 February 2026
Time: 10.00 – 11.30 am (online)
Presenter: Pauleen Cass (Limit 50 people)

Topic: **One search introduction (including finding images), Newspapers, and Colonial Secretary's Correspondence**
Date: FRI 13 March 2026
Time: 10.00 am to 11.30 am (online)
Presenter: Kirsten Perris, SLQ (Limit 50 people)

Topic: **Locating your German immigrant ancestor's place of origin**
Date: FRI 10 April 2025
Time: 10.00 am to 11.30 am (online)
Presenter: Eric Kopittke (Limit 50 people)

Cost per presentation:

\$20 members (QFHS and GSQ) and
 \$30 non-members

International speakers:

\$35 members (QFHS and GSQ) and
 \$45 non-members

TALKING ABOUT

Topic: **Ethical Communication of Sensitive Research Discoveries**
Date: WED 25 March 2026 (free)
Time: 10.00 am to noon (online)
Facilitator: Nancy Edwards (Limit 25 people)

Bookings are required – you are invited to register to secure your place for these events through <https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/learn-qfhs/> or <https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/members-lounge/talking-about/>.

"Follow" QFHS and be advised as soon as new events are listed with

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/queensland-family-history-society-inc-4629298833>

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE EVENTS

continued

GSQ EDUCATION EVENTS

Topic: The Mary O'Toole Casestudy
Date: Sat 14 February 2026
Time: 9.00 - 11.00 am
Presenter: Greg Carlill
 (Cost: \$21.00 members, \$31.00 non-members)

Topic: **Part I - Getting started with Obsidian, setting the program up, running through an example**
Date: Sat 21 February 2026
Time: 9.00 - 11.00 am
Presenter: Greg Carlill

Topic: **Part II – More advanced topics, making the most out of the data in your Obsidian Vault dataview queries, bases**
Date: Sat 28 February 2026
Time: 9.00 - 11.00 am
Presenter: Greg Carlill
 (Cost: 1 session \$21.00, 2 sessions \$31.00 for members)

Topic: **MINI SEMINAR From Europe to Australia: Tracing the roots of migrant ancestors**
Date: Sat 28 March 2026
Time: 8.45 am – 1.00 pm
Presenter: Dave Obee,
 Charlotte Sale,
 Eric Kopittke,
 Eve Terry,
 MyHeritage
 (Cost: \$45 members, \$55 non-members)

Our society and the Genealogical Society of Queensland (GSQ) have a reciprocal arrangement re Education events. Each Society makes their own member pricing for Education events available to members of the other Society. Register at <https://www.gsq.org.au/gsq-events/>.

QFHS members will need to input their member number and the code when booking to obtain the GSQ discounted member pricing. You can find the GSQ discount code on the QFHS Members Portal at <https://www.qfhs.org.au/members-portal/gsq-code/>.

The code does not change for different events and generally provides a \$10 member discount.

Finding your family: the fundamentals of research



A six week course

Commences: Monday 9 February 2026
 Time: 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm AEST
 Location: Online event
 Cost: Members \$70, non-members \$105
 Maximum 10 participants
 Content: Home Sources, planning and doing, certificates, archives, libraries, newspapers, overseas research, AI, DNA and much more.

Register at:

<https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/learn-qfhs/>.

FAMILY REUNION

**MARSHALL; PRESTON;
 WOOLMER; WIXON; SCHMIDT**
 (Families who settled in the Fraser Coast area – arriving around 1800's)

SATURDAY 4 APRIL - SUNDAY 5 APRIL
 [EASTER WEEKEND 2026]

BROOWEENA MUSEUM
 (Between Biggenden & Maryborough)

Free Camping Grounds – NO power with
 Toilets

BUT !! No Shower - Tee Bar Hall Up The Road

RSVP & More Details contact: Kathy
 Hunt kathyqf15@bigpond.com
 Kathy Hunt on Facebook
 (with the ANZAC picture)

SHARE, SHARE, SHARE -
 WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE MANY
 DESCENDANTS

QFHS NOTICES (Cont.)

Irish Research Day



Researching Irish ancestors?

The next Irish Research Day is
Thursday, 12 March 2026
10.00 am to 3.00 pm

at

QFHS Family History Research Centre,
 46 Delaware Street, Chermside.

(at intersection of Delaware St & Waring St)

A great opportunity to spend the day on your Irish family history research. Come and work alongside others and help each other as required.

Bring your lunch or food to share.

To get the most out of your time, we recommend you prepare by:

- Reviewing your current research and bringing what you need with you
- Try to specify clear research questions or goals to focus your work

There will be friendly, helpful and experienced people available to assist each other.

Please register early as places are limited.

Contact Dale Fogarty, Irish Research Group at irish@qfhs.org.au with your QFHS membership number.

QFHS INC. FAMILY HISTORY BOOK AWARD 2027

The Society invites entries for this Award which will be presented at a special event in August 2026 to the person or persons producing the best family history with a Queensland content published in book form within the past five years.

Full guidelines, conditions of entry and entry form are available on the website at <http://www.qfhs.org.au/about-us/awards/>.

Please check the guidelines. In brief, these include:

- It must be the story of a family or families with a family history focus rather than just one individual, and have significant Queensland content, and placement of family in its historical setting
- It should have an index
- Desirable features include illustrations such as photographs, maps, diagrams and tables, and a list of source materials.

Further information is available from:

Hon Secretary
 QFHS Inc
 P O Box 78,
 Geebung Qld 4034

or

Clem Ditton
fhaward@qfhs.org.au.



Entries close **30 November 2026**.

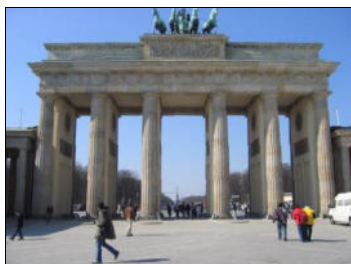
The Award is open to members of the Society and to the general public. For further information email fhaward@qfhs.org.au.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

When your Membership is due for Renewal you will receive an email reminder. If you're not sure, please contact our Membership Secretary, email at membership@qfhs.org.au, before making payment. Also don't forget to let us know if any of your contact details change so that we can update our records.

continued

Central European Research Day



Researching your German or Central European ancestors?

The next Central European Research Day is

**Thursday, 14 May 2026
9.00 am to 3.00 pm**

at

QFHS Family History Research Centre,
46 Delaware Street, Chermside.
(at intersection of Delaware St & Waring St)

This event offers a fantastic chance to dedicate a day to your Central European family history research. You'll have the chance to collaborate with others, offering and receiving support as needed. Feel free to bring your own lunch or some food to share.

Friendly, skilled people will be there to help you and other attendees. Please remember to register soon, as spaces are limited, through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/central-european-research-day-tickets-1977012856674?>

ROOTSTECH 2026 CONFERENCE

Salt Lake City, USA, 5-7 March, 2026

Don't miss this chance to come together with others and learn more about your family story. Register today for RootsTech 2026! Registration is open, for in-person passes and free online access to virtual content, all hosted by [FamilySearch](https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/). Refer to <https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/>.

STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND TOUR

Join us for a research visit and behind-the-scenes tour of the Queensland State Library at Cultural Precinct, Stanley Pl, South Brisbane. We will travel independently and meet in the main reception area at 10 am.

We will have time for a coffee/tea in the café before the Library staff take us on a behind-the-scenes tour. After the tour, we can split into a few groups, e.g. some on level 4 in the John Oxley Library, some on level 3 on microfilm/other resources.

Please note:

- The behind-the-scenes tour will take about one(1) hour. During this time participants will be required to be on their feet and often in confined spaces.
- You can bring your own lunch and other snacks, or use the café on the ground floor.
- Numbers are limited to 15.

When: Monday 23 March 2026

Time: 10.00 am – 2.30 pm

Closing date: Bookings for this trip will close at 5.00 pm on Sunday **15 March 2026** or once we have 15 registrations, to enable SLQ to make arrangements for staff to guide the tour. Please register to secure your place at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/members-lounge-social-tour-through-state-library-of-queensland-tickets-1977493052954?>



The last of Victoria's paper probate records have now been added to the collection, with the first-ever transfer of probates in digital format. These are now available on their website and ready to support your research.

CHRISTMAS THANK YOU

Thank you so much to all who contributed to the Christmas hamper which was delivered to the Salvation Army for distribution to needy families at Christmas. We appreciate your generosity very much. ■



DATES TO REMEMBER, INCL. MEMBERS LOUNGE

DATE	ACTIVITY	VENUE	TIME
FEBRUARY 2026			
Sunday	1 Family Historian Software User Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online	1.00 - 3.00 pm
Thursday	5 Technical Special Interest Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online	10.00 – noon
Friday	6 Family Tree Maker User Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Online	10.00 - 11.30 am
Saturday	7 Central European Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid	10.00 – noon
Sunday	8 Colonial India and The Far East Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online	10.00 – 12 noon
Monday	9 Finding Your Family course Week 1 (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	7.30 - 9.00 pm
Friday	13 Learn@QFHS: Are you interested in a One Place Study? Speaker: Pauleen Cass (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	10.00 - 11.30 am
Saturday	14 Irish Research Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Online	10.30 - 12.30 pm
Monday	16 Finding Your Family course Week 2 (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	7.30 - 9.00 pm
Wednesday	18 Presenting...Steam Tug 'Forceful'. It's life and times. Gone but not forgotten! (<i>See Back Page</i>) Speaker: Keith Boulton OAM, Queensland Maritime Museum	Hybrid	1.00 – 3.00 pm
Saturday	21 New Members' Welcome & Orientation Session (<i>See p.38</i>)	Research Centre	9.30 – 12.30 pm
Monday	23 Book Club - Dirrayawadha by Anita Heiss	Online	10.00 - 11.30 am
Monday	23 Finding Your Family course Week 3 (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	7.30 - 9.00 pm
Saturday	28 DNA Interest Group (<i>See p.37</i>) <i>Experienced</i>	Hybrid	10.00 - noon
MARCH 2026			
Sunday	1 Family Historian Software User Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online	1.00 - 3.00 pm
Monday	2 Finding Your Family course Week 4 (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	7.30 - 9.00 pm
Thursday	5 Technical Special Interest Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Research Centre	10.00 – noon
Saturday	7 Family Tree Maker User Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid	10.00 - 11.30 am
Monday	9 Finding Your Family course Week 5 (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	7.30 - 9.00 pm
Thursday	12 IRISH RESEARCH DAY (<i>See p.32</i>)	Research Centre	10.00 - 3.00 pm
Friday	13 Learn@QFHS: One Search introduction (including finding images), Newspapers and Colonial Secretary's Correspondence Speaker: Kirsten Perris, State Library of Queensland (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	10.00 – 11.30 am
Saturday	14 Scottish Interest Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid	10.00 – noon
Saturday	14 Pre-Separation Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online	1.30 – 3.30 pm
Sunday	15 Welsh Interest Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid	10.00 - noon
Monday	16 The Master Genealogist (TMG) User Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online	7.00 - 8.30 pm
Monday	16 Finding Your Family course Week 6 (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	7.30 - 9.00 pm
Wednesday	18 Presenting... Sir Augustus Charles Gregory KCMG, MLA, FRGS, DistGM, an icon Australian explorer, exemplary citizen and notable freemason (<i>See Back Page</i>) Speaker: Dr Gary Bacon (postponed from August 2025)	Hybrid	1.00 - 3.00 pm
Saturday	21 Family History Writing Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Online	9.00 - noon
Monday	23 Members Lounge – Tour of State Library of Queensland	SLQ	10.00 – 2.30 pm
Tuesday	24 Bi-annual General Meeting	Online	7.30 – 9.00 pm
Wednesday	25 Talking About – Ethical Communication of Sensitive Research Discoveries (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online	10.00 – noon
Wednesday	25 VISIT BY BRIBIE ISLAND U3A STUDENTS	Research Centre	10.00 - 2.00 pm
Thursday	26 English West Country Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Online	noon - 2.00 pm
Saturday	28 DNA Interest Group (<i>See p.37</i>) <i>Beginners</i>	Hybrid	10.00 - noon
Sunday	29 New Members' Welcome & Orientation Session (<i>See p.38</i>) (CHANGE OF DATE)	Online	9.30 – 12.30 pm

continued

APRIL 2026			
Thursday	2	Technical Special Interest Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online 10.00 – noon
Fri-Mon	3	EASTER - RESEARCH CENTRE CLOSED	
Friday	3	Family Tree Maker User Group (<i>See p.36</i>) GOOD FRIDAY, NOT CONDUCTING MEETING	Cancelled
Saturday	4	Central European Group (<i>See p.36</i>) EASTER SATURDAY , <i>Online meeting for those who can join us</i>	Online 10.00 – noon
Sunday	5	Family Historian Software User Group (<i>See p.37</i>) EASTER SUNDAY , <i>Online meeting for those who can join us</i>	Online 1.00 - 3.00 pm
Friday	10	Learn@QFHS: Locating your German immigrant ancestor's place of origin Speaker: Eric Kopittke (<i>See p.30</i>)	Online 10.00 - 11.30 am
Saturday	11	Irish Research Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid 10.30 - 12.30 pm
Sunday	12	Colonial India and The Far East Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online 10.00 – 12 noon
Wednesday	15	Presenting... Stories of Service: Australians in the Second World War (<i>See Back Page</i>) Speaker: Eve Terry of NAA	Hybrid 1.00 – 3.00 pm
Saturday	18	New Members' Welcome & Orientation Session (<i>See p.38</i>)	Research Centre 9.30 – 12.30 pm
Saturday	25	ANZAC DAY – RESEARCH CENTRE CLOSED	
Saturday	25	DNA Interest Group (<i>See p.37</i>) Experienced ANZAC DAY, NOT CONDUCTING MEETING	Cancelled
Monday	27	Book Club - No Time for Makeup by Dr Elizabeth Green	Online 7.30 – 9.00 pm
Wednesday	29	VISIT BY CALOUNDRA FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH INC. GROUP	Research Centre 9.45 – 3.00 pm
MAY 2026			
Saturday	2	Family Tree Maker User Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid 10.00 - 11.30 am
Sunday	3	Family Historian Software User Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online 1.00 - 3.00 pm
Monday	4	LABOUR DAY – RESEARCH CENTRE CLOSED	
Thursday	7	Technical Special Interest Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Research Centre 10.00 – noon
Saturday	9	Scottish Interest Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid 10.00 – noon
Thursday	14	CENTRAL EUROPEAN RESEARCH DAY (<i>See p.33</i>)	Research Centre 9.00 – 3.00 pm
Saturday	16	Family History Writing Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Online 9.00 - noon
Sunday	17	Welsh Interest Group (<i>See p.36</i>)	Hybrid 10.00 - noon
Monday	18	The Master Genealogist (TMG) User Group (<i>See p.37</i>)	Online 7.00 - 8.30 pm
Wednesday	20	Presenting...A Medal for (or from) Commissioner Thallon (<i>See Back Page</i>) Speaker: Greg Hallam, Queensland Railways Historian	Hybrid 1.00 - 3.00 pm
Saturday	23	DNA Interest Group (<i>See p.157</i>) <i>Beginners</i>	Hybrid 10.00 - noon
Sunday	24	New Members' Welcome & Orientation Session (<i>See p.158</i>)	Research Centre 9.30 – 12.30 pm
Sunday	24	Members Lounge – Visit to Miegynyah House Museum	Bowen Hills 2.15 – 4.00 pm

Management Committee meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.00 pm online on Zoom or in person at the Research Centre. If you would like to attend, please contact the Secretary.

Dates and participation methods are correct at the time of printing. Always check the QFHS calendar.



Book Club

<https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/members-lounge/book-club/>



Presenting...

<https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/members-lounge/presenting-monthly-guest-speakers/>



Talking About...

<https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/members-lounge/talking-about/>



Socials

<https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/members-lounge/members-lounge-socials/>

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

FAMILY HISTORY WRITING GROUP



This group meets online via Zoom on the **third Saturday** of **odd-numbered** months at **9.00 am**. The next meeting dates are:

21 March 2026 16 May 2026

If you are interested in joining us, please email fhwriters@gfhs.org.au.

Sue Reid
(Convenor)

IRISH RESEARCH GROUP



The Irish Research Group meets online via Zoom usually on the **second Saturday** of **even-numbered** months from **10.30 am** until **12.30 pm**. The next meeting dates are:

14 February 2026 11 April 2026

For further information, please email irish@gfhs.org.au.

Dale Fogarty
(Convenor)

ENGLISH WEST COUNTRY GROUP



This group researches the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset. The Group meets online via Zoom on the

fourth Thursday of **odd-numbered** months at **noon**. The next meeting dates are:

26 March 2026 28 May 2026

For further information, please email englishwestcountry@gfhs.org.au.

Jenny Davidson
(Convenor)

SCOTTISH INTEREST GROUP



This group meets online via Zoom and in our new Family History Research Centre (hybrid) on the **second Saturday** of **odd-numbered** months (except January) at **10.00 am**. The next meeting dates are:

14 March 2026 9 May 2026

If you are interested in joining this group, please email Chris on scottish@gfhs.org.au.

Chris Schuetz
(Convenor)

WELSH INTEREST GROUP



The Welsh Interest Group meets online via Zoom (or in our new Family History Research Centre) on the **third Sunday** of **odd-numbered** months from **10.00 am** until **noon**. The next meeting dates are:

15 March 2026 17 May 2026

For further information please email welsh@gfhs.org.au.

Charlotte Sale
(Convenor)

CENTRAL EUROPEAN GROUP



This group aims to encourage, educate and assist members in their family history research in the Central European area. The Group meets online via Zoom (or in our new Family History Research Centre) on the **first Saturday** of **even-numbered** months from **10.00 am** to **noon**. The next meeting dates are:

7 February 2026 4 April 2026, Easter

Easter - Online meeting for those who can join us
A \$2 donation goes towards purchasing relevant records.

For further information email Eric at kopittke@tpg.com.au.

Eric Kopittke
(Convenor)

FAMILY TREE MAKER USER GROUP



If you are using the Family Tree Maker™ program, or just want to learn more about it, this enthusiastic group is for you.

The group meets online via Zoom on the **first Friday** of **even-numbered** months and by hybrid meetings on the **first Saturday** of **odd-numbered** months (not January) at **10.00 am**. The next meeting dates are:

Fri 6 February 2026

Sat 7 March 2026

Fri 3 April, Easter, Cancelled

Sat 2 May 2026

For further information, please contact Geoff Morgan on email familytree@gfhs.org.au.

Geoff Morgan & Debra Ricks
(Convenors)

continued

DNA INTEREST GROUP

This group seeks to share information on aspects of genetic family history. The group meets on the **fourth Saturday of each** month (except December) online via Zoom and in our new Family History Research Centre at **10.00 am to noon**. The next meeting dates are:

28 February 2026	Experienced
28 March 2026	Beginners
25 April 2026	Cancelled
23 May 2026	Beginners

For further information contact Chris Schuetz or Ann Swain on email dna@gfhs.org.au.

Chris Schuetz & Ann Swain
(Convenors)

COLONIAL INDIA AND THE FAR EAST GROUP

We welcome you into our friendly, collaborative group to explore the ever-increasing resources available to research Colonial India and the Far East.

Our meetings share information, ideas and short presentations about this fascinating time and place. The group meets online via Zoom at **10.00 am** on the **second Sunday of even-numbered** months. The next meetings will be held on:

8 February 2026	12 April 2026
------------------------	----------------------

For further information please email indiafe@gfhs.org.au.

Dette Glenday & Wendy Angliss
(Convenors)

FAMILY HISTORIAN USER GROUP

Family Historian - simplicity for the newer user, but still the ultimate 'power tool' for experienced family historians. To find out more, join our group's meetings via Zoom on the **first Sunday of each month at**

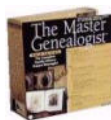
1:00 pm for approximately 2 hours. The next meeting dates are:

1 February 2026
1 March 2026
5 April 2026, Easter
3 May 2026

Easter - Online meeting for those who can join us

For further information please email familyhistorian@gfhs.org.au.

Malcolm Kingston & Chris Wright
(Convenors)

THE MASTER GENEALOGIST (TMG) USER GROUP

This group caters to the needs of all users, from novice to advanced, and meets online via Zoom on the **third Monday of odd numbered** months (except December) at **7.00 pm**. The next meeting dates are:

16 March 2026	18 May 2026
----------------------	--------------------

For further information contact Kevin Haley or Peter Frederick at tmg@gfhs.org.au.

Kevin Haley & Peter Frederick
(Convenors)

QLD PRE-SEPARATION GROUP

Did any of your ancestors arrive in Queensland prior to separation from New South Wales on 10 December 1859? If so, you may become a certificate member of this group. The group also welcomes anyone interested in pre-separation families and history to its periodic meetings and activities. Meetings are held quarterly online via Zoom mostly on the **second Saturdays of March, June, September and December** at **1.30 pm**. The next meeting will be held on:

14 March 2026

For further information please email presep@gfhs.org.au.

Ann Swain & Jenny Davidson
(Convenors)

TECHNICAL SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

The Technical SIG will provide an opportunity for members to discuss and learn commonly used computer software such as Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. The group will meet in person or online via Zoom at **10.00 am** on the **first Thursday of each** month. The next meetings will be held on:

5 February 2026	Online
5 March 2026	Research Centre
2 April 2026	Online
7 May 2026	Research Centre

For further information please email webadmin@gfhs.org.au.



Debra Ricks
(Convenor) ■

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS of QFHS INC.

Membership numbers 6883 - 6900 including members who joined up to 31/12/25:

BRODERICK Helen, Forest Lake, QLD
 CHARITY Robert, St Louis, MO, USA
 CLARKE Morris, Victoria Point, QLD
 CONDON John & Louise, Arana Hills, QLD
 DOWLING Vicki, Enmore, NSW
 GEHRKE Jeffrey, Runaway Bay, QLD
 GROTHERR David, Taringa, QLD
 HIEATT Arron, Chermside West, QLD
 MORROW Gaille, Horsley, NSW
 NELSON Donald, Aspley, QLD
 NEWTON Kylie, Marshall, VIC
 NICHOLLS Julie, Edmonton, QLD
 NOYES Lynn, Bray Park, QLD
 ORR Sandra, Urangan, QLD
 POWELL Karen, Laidley North, QLD
 RYAN Katie, Carey Bay, NSW
 TENNOCK Anne, Ferny Grove, QLD
 WILLIS Justin, Gordon Park, QLD

Welcome back to the following members who are rejoining:

HILL Jayne, Balcolyn, NSW
 MOORE Gary, Corinda, QLD
 WRIGHT Marianne, Acacia Ridge, QLD

Joining with Existing Member:

HARPER Ian, Coorparoo, QLD
 MASON Susan, The Gap, QLD

NEW MEMBERS' WELCOME & ORIENTATION SESSIONS

New Members' Welcome and Orientation Sessions are to be held on the **third Saturday** of **even-numbered** months and **fourth Sunday** of **odd-numbered** months, all from **9.30 am – 12.30 pm** (not December). The next meeting dates will be:

Sat 21 February	at Research Centre
Sun 29 March	Online
Sat 18 April	at Research Centre
Sun 24 May	at Research Centre
Sat 20 June	Online

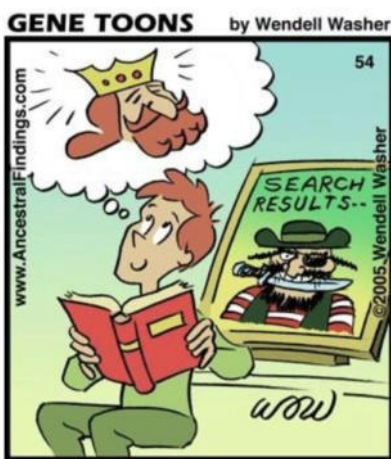
Enjoy an overview of research material and facilities available in the Family History Research Centre. We invite you to attend a New Members' Welcome and Orientation session when you join the Society or at any time you would like a refresher.

BOOKINGS: Essential

Numbers have to be limited in each session to ensure that everyone is able to participate fully in the program. Sessions are usually fully booked, with a waiting list, so please advise the organisers as soon as possible if you book and find you are unable to attend.

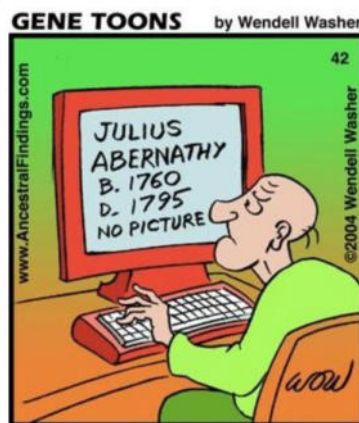
Ann Swain & Anne Long
Convenors

welcome@qfhs.org.au. ■



Phil had preconceived notions.

<https://au.pinterest.com/ideas/genealogy-cartoons/939729454845/>



Fred couldn't understand why Julius didn't even have a snapshot.

<https://au.pinterest.com/ideas/genealogy-cartoons/939729454845/>

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Please refer to our website for the most current information.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Members may:

- Have free access to the Society's Family History Research Centre, Subscription Websites, useful weblinks, and journals from Australian and overseas FH Societies;
- Receive our *Queensland Family Historian* either by mail or email, and our e-newsletter *Snippets*;
- Submit two free *Help Wanted* queries in the journal per year; and a list of research interests for publication in the *Queensland Family Historian* and on our website;
- Use our AskQFHS, Look Up and Extended Research services available to members and non-members at www.qfhs.org.au/about-us/research-service/;
- Country members (living more than 50 km from Brisbane GPO) can use the Research service, see www.qfhs.org.au/join-us/country-members/;
- See other benefits of membership at www.qfhs.org.au/join-us/benefits-of-membership/.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS JOURNAL

The Society is pleased to accept articles of interest to members for publication in this journal – family stories, stories relevant to family history, articles about historical social conditions, research tips, lists, certificate prices and availability, etc. The Editorial Committee reserves the right to decide whether articles are suitable and when they will be published, apart from *Help Wanted* and *Members' Interests* which normally will appear in the journal following their receipt. Alterations in *Help Wanted* or *Members' Interests* will not normally be made without prior consultation with the contributor. Articles for publication should be submitted by email as an attachment. Scanned photographs and images should be attached as high quality *.jpg or *.tif files. Receipt of articles will be acknowledged by email, and any photographs posted to support the text will be returned. Contributors should indicate if copy is being distributed to other family history society journals or family history magazines. The Journal is produced using Microsoft Office (for Windows). The preferred formats for files submitted are MSWord (*.doc or *.docx) or Rich Text (*.rtf). The closing dates for the Journals are **15 March, 15 June, 15 September and 15 December**. The Editor reserves the right to make alterations in submitted text in regards to grammar, spelling, clarity and length. **It is imperative that contributors supply in writing all necessary authorisation obtained in respect to copyright for use of photographs, attachments, etc.**

MEMBERSHIP FEES/SUBSCRIPTIONS (incl. GST)

Joining Fee (for new and lapsed members)	\$10
Single Membership (p.a.)	\$80
Joint/Dual Membership (p.a.)	\$120
Associate Membership (p.a.)	\$120
Single Life Membership	\$1,200
Joint/Dual Life Membership	\$1,800
Journal Only Subscription (incl. postage) (p.a.)	\$40
Journal Only Overseas Subscription (p.a.)	\$40
(incl. postage; no GST payable)	

Renewal subscriptions for existing members as at 1 April 2016 and who maintain continuous membership are due on 1 July each year. From 1 April 2016 new memberships are for 12 months from the first day of the month of a member's admission to the Society.

Joint/Dual members are two members with one registered address. Joint/Dual members receive one journal only, sent to the registered address, and have one vote only at General Meetings.

Associate members are family history societies and allied groups. At any time, two members of a current Associate Group may use the resources and facilities of the Society free of charge.

Journal only subscribers receive the Society's quarterly journal, the *Queensland Family Historian*, but no other benefits or entitlements.

VISITORS'/RESEARCH CENTRE USAGE FEES

Members:	Free
Non-members:	\$20.00 per day (incl. GST)
credited towards joining fee if joining within two weeks.	

INFORMATION FOR ADVERTISERS AND PUBLISHERS

Authors and editors of other publications are requested to quote only the full name of our Society and our mailing address and phone number. Do not quote fees for membership or services, or Research Centre hours, but direct readers to telephone the Research Centre or email the Secretary or the Editor. If authors or editors consider further information is necessary they should submit a copy of their intended script to the Editor for approval before publishing.

ADVERTISING RATES

Non-members may submit *Help Wanted* advertisements (100 words) for \$8.80. The advertising rate for 1/10 page (approx. 5 lines in 1 column) is \$18.00. For larger advertisements, please contact the Editor regarding rates and also space availability. Please remit in Australian dollars, either by cheque, Visa, MasterCard, or direct credit to the Society's account, see Inside Front Cover. All fees quoted include GST.

DISCLAIMER

Views expressed by contributors in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editorial Committee or of the QFHS Inc. Management Committee. ■



MONTHLY MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

Each month, February to November, a Guest Speaker is invited to address topics of interest to family and local history researchers in Queensland and beyond. Presentations are generally arranged for the **third Wednesday of the month** at 1.00 pm to allow as many members and visitors as possible to attend, either in person at the Family History Research Centre, 46 Delaware St, Chermside, or via Zoom. Those unable to attend in person but unfamiliar with Zoom may contact the Secretary at secretary@qfhs.org.au for assistance. Bookings are essential and may be made via the QFHS website and Eventbrite. For the dates of the meetings of the different *Special Interest Groups*, please refer to p.36 or *Dates to Remember* on p.34 of this issue.

Presenting...MONTHLY GUEST SPEAKERS

FEBRUARY 18 (1.00 pm) HYBRID

Presenting...Steam Tug Forceful. It's Life and Times. Gone but not Forgotten!

Join Keith Boulton OAM, Queensland Maritime Museum Hon/Life Member and Volunteer, as he relates the history of the last coal fired Brisbane River Tugboat including: Rescues-WWII Involvement-Returning to normal work-The hand over-Retirement life at QMM-Towards the end and Keeping the Memory Alive. The presentation is supported by many rare and historical photos.

MARCH 18 (1.00 pm) HYBRID

Presenting...Sir Augustus Charles Gregory KCMG, MLA, FRGS, DistGM, an icon Australian explorer, exemplary citizen and notable freemason

Sir Augustus Charles Gregory: The life of this extraordinary man (Birth: 1 August 1819; Farnsfield, Nottinghamshire, England; Death: 25 June 1905; Brisbane, Queensland, Australia) will be covered in three tranches, viz.: Explorer on the Australian Plateau, Early Queensland State Administrator and Community Leader, Patriarch of Queensland Freemasonry.

He has been referred to as the 'Bradman of Australian Explorers' but few today have heard of him. He was also Queensland's first Surveyor General and Land Commissioner in 1859.

APRIL 15 (1.00 pm) HYBRID

Presenting...Stories of Service: Australians in the Second World War

Eve Terry will speak about The National Archives collection of over 1 million records documenting the service of Australian men and women during World War II. These include service records for the Army, the Royal Australian Air Force and the Royal Australian Navy. Last year the National Archives completed a five year project to digitise our collection of WWII service records, making more than 1 million files available for viewing online. This seminar will uncover the fascinating stories of service found within the records.

MAY 20 (1.00 pm) HYBRID

Presenting...A Medal for (or from) Commissioner Thallon

Greg Hallam, Historian with Queensland Rail, will talk about two towns that stand on the Queensland Railways system, both now very much "at the end of the line", one at the end of the Etheridge line in far northern Queensland, and the other at the end of the south western line from Warwick and Goondiwindi, in tribute to one of the Commissioners for Queensland Railways, James Forsayth (or Forsythe in older spellings) Thallon. Thallon died in 1911, and despite his death over a century ago, he maintains a legacy that continues with the railways in Queensland to the present time. Following his death, the fund from 1912, in memory of Thallon, was maintained by voluntary subscription, and the interest used to provide 3 gold medals annually.

Your Society has for sale an extensive range of publications of interest to the family historian, our own publications, those from other societies and authors, books, charts and forms. As new publications become available they will be advertised on our website. All QFHS Inc. CDs, *Archive CD Books Australia*, and *Unlock the Past* guidebooks are available for sale on the Society's website at www.qfhs.org.au/shop/shop-catalogue.

Printed by Eckersley Print Group, Narangba, Qld.