



# The Chronicle



JOURNAL of the LAKE MACQUARIE FAMILY HISTORY GROUP Inc.

We acknowledge the Awabakal people as the traditional custodians of this region we know as Lake Macquarie and pay respect to their Elders past and present.



Aerial photography of Lake Macquarie donated by Karen Myers adapted for use with her kind permission

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Patron Councillor Kay Fraser, Mayor of Lake Macquarie

## ***A Word From The President...***

Dear Members

The theme of this month's Chronicle is Celebration and Commemoration and as we approach the end of 2023 and we commence preparations for family Christmas celebrations that is a very apt topic. I look forward to reading the contributions around this topic.

LMFHG have two functions planned to celebrate our endeavours and get together over the next little while. Firstly, we are planning to have lunch together at Cardiff Bowling Club on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November. Then on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December, we will meet at Marmong Point Hall for our Annual Christmas Function. This will be a catered lunch but members are asked to bring along a slice, sweet, fruit platter, dip and crackers. For the enjoyment of all, members are asked to present their contribution ready to serve. If you would like to attend either of these events please get in touch with member, Jean Jones.

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2024 the committee is organising an Open Day at the Marmong Point Hall – the theme of the day is Family History – Towards the Future. We have invited three speakers –

1. Andrew Redfern who will speak on Artificial Intelligence and the applications for Family History.
2. Amelia Young will present the legal and social implications of using DNA in family history.
3. Peter Moore will tell us of his journey of discovering his family story and the processes involved in having the records relating to his birth changed.

This is looking like it will be a very interesting and informative day. More details will follow in the Newsletter and via Social Media.

Regards and happy researching

Anne Gleeson

### **Welcome!**

The Lake Macquarie Family History Group welcomes the following new members:



Jonathan Harris Member 312

Patrick Bradbery & Sharon Joyce Member 313

Kerren Robards Member 314

Marecelle Curtis Member 315

We trust you will find your stay with us to be pleasant and rewarding!

### ***HO! HO! HO! IT'S CHRISTMAS RAFFLE TIME***

We welcome donations of non-perishable goodies for our  
Christmas Raffle - to be drawn at our final meeting of the year

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023

Please support our Group by donating items and purchasing tickets.



## CELEBRATIONS & COMMEMORATIONS

For this edition of our journal we asked members to write about celebrations and commemorations - whether it be an occasion they experienced personally or one that has been discovered during their family history journey.

While celebrations almost always bring forth thoughts and images of happy, joyous occasions, commemorations can evoke a wider and more serious range of emotions. We were pleased to receive a variety of articles encompassing the theme - a very big *Thank You* to all our contributors - your efforts really are appreciated.

### SPRING FESTIVALS

Ann Ross Member 182

Do you recall when some suburbs held local spring festivals or fairs? These would often have a handful of attractions normally found on “sideshow alley” at the district Show, plus cake and craft stalls, Chocolate Wheels etc. and were generally fund-raisers for local charities. Of course there was always the competition for the title of Festival Princess. When my family arrived in Australia in the early 1950’s we’d had no experience of such things and I was quite excited when my cousin, Dale, and I were asked to be flower girls on a “float” at the Hamilton Spring Festival. I think it must have been around 1953/4 as I was aged about 6.

I have no knowledge of how this came about, but as my mother’s sister and her family lived at Adamstown perhaps it was someone known to their family who had asked for two little girls to be her attendants at the Hamilton Spring Festival. The name Joan springs to mind but this may not be correct. Our mothers made the dresses out of taffeta. Dale wore a lemon dress and I had to wear green, which I loathed, so I am guessing the colours were not of our choice. “Joan” was one of the candidates vying to be crowned Festival Princess. I have no memory of her being crowned so she probably did not win the competition.

I don’t know what we thought the occasion would be like but I recall the “float” turned out to be the back of a truck with no enclosed sides and Dale and I were seated feeling very unsure of ourselves. As the truck bumped along the roads we felt as if we were about to fall into the crowds lining the sides of the street. To top it off it was night time and we had no idea where our parents were. The parade ended at Gregson Park and our mothers were there to collect us – if only someone had thought to reassure us earlier. These local festivals (Mayfield, Wallsend, Hamilton etc) seemed to disappear when the Mattara Festival came into being.



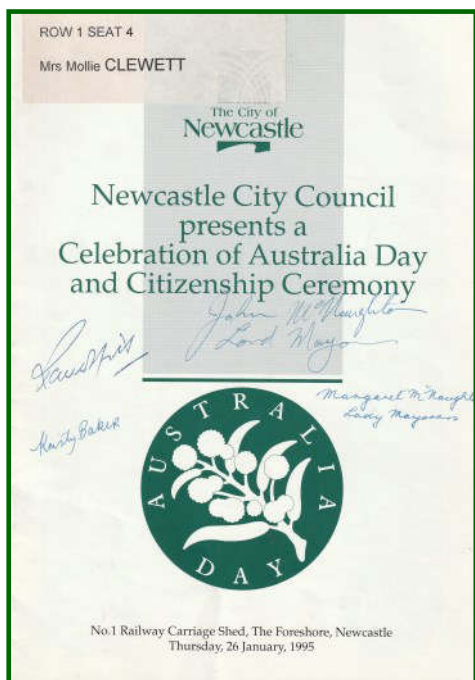
I am centre front in the above photo and my “Princess” candidate is on the right in the back row.



## NEWCASTLE'S AUSTRALIA DAY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 1995     Lyn Hutchings Member 168

In January 1995 my late mother Mollie CLEWETT nee DIEHM (1921-2017) was awarded Newcastle's Australia Day Citizen of the year in recognition of over 21 years voluntary service to the now, non-functioning, Stockton Centre (Hunter Region Developmental Disability Service), which at that time provided services for the developmentally disabled.

Over the years Mollie helped with sewing for the residents, teaching the residents basic skills and providing one-on-one attention, a task that was often impossible for the paid staff to give. The award was presented to Mollie by the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, John McNaughton AM, at a function held at the Newcastle City Hall.



## EXPLORERS '70

Lyn Hutchings Member 168

In 1970 I was fortunate to be part of a group of sixty 18 - 24 year-olds who, from answering questions on Australian history, won a three-week *Coca Cola* sponsored trip travelling around Australia to commemorate the bicentenary of the British explorer Lieutenant (later Captain) James Cook (an employee of the British crown) who sailed and charted the East Coast of Australia in 1770, and claimed the Eastern Seaboard of the Continent for the British Crown.

On the 21 November 1970 the excited group of winners, from all parts of Australia, met in Sydney for this once in a lifetime trip. This included three participants from Newcastle. Part of our prize was a wardrobe of Kenneth Pirrie or Mike Treloar clothing and \$100.00 in spending money.

Over the next three weeks the group flew (my first time in a plane) to Canberra, Hobart, Launceston, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Mount Newman, Darwin, Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Brampton Island, Brisbane, bus to the Gold Coast, then flying to Tamworth and Newcastle culminating in a hydrofoil trip back to Sydney.

Each day of the trip included sightseeing visits to many interesting places including Maria Island, off the coast of Hobart Tasmania by fishing boat, Entally Estate in Launceston Tasmania, National Gallery of Victoria, Old Melbourne Gaol, Myer Music Bowl, Joss Festival in Bendigo Victoria, Morphettville horse races and Kaiser Stuhl winery in South Australia, Rottnest Island, an open cut mine (Mount Whaleback) in Mount Newman Western Australia, Green Island Cairns, behind the scenes in a bank vault in Brisbane, Gold Coast Queensland and the CSIRO Parkes Observatory New South Wales.

Plenty of evening enjoyment was provided over the three weeks including a dinner at the Southern Cross Hotel in Melbourne Victoria with entertainment provided by a popular Australian band of the day, The Mixtures. Along the way we were to meet many well-known people of the era including Ronny Burns (singer), Johnny Famechon (boxer), Alison Durbin (singer), Prue Acton (fashion designer), Kenneth Pirrie (fashion designer), Garth Welsh (dancer and choreographer), Don Dunstan (Premier of South Australia), Sir Charles Court (politician and Premier of Western Australia) and Norm McKellar (mayor of Tamworth) to name a few.

Due to the large number of travellers many a barbeque and smorgasbord was served so by the time the group arrived back in Sydney hot meat pies were handed to each of us at the wharf as we alighted from the hydrofoil.

We were known as "Explorers '70". Time has passed but the memories remain. If there is anyone reading this and was part of, or knows someone who was part of this extraordinary trip, it would be wonderful to hear from you.

## Explorers '70

Colour Me Green Like a Salad.

In Sydney they left out the chicken.  
In Canb'ra they left out the ham.  
In Hobart the crays had been missing for days.  
We had smorgasbord riddled with Spam.  
Chorus  
So its all aboard for the smorgasbord,  
Breakfast, lunch and tea.....  
Lettuce is great, but we just can't wait,  
To find out what else there will be,  
For Explorers '70

In Melbourne they had it with turkey,  
And Bendigo put in a duck.  
Will Adelaide try to give us some pie?  
Sorry, we're right out of luck,

### Chorus

We went for a day at the races,  
Guests of the S.A.J.C.  
They added a horse as a secondary coarse-  
Following Mainwearing's plea.

### Chorus

On flight five hundred and eighty  
TAA pulled up their socks.  
We can still hear the howl when we saw that  
cold fowl  
wrapped up in a smorgas-box.

### Chorus

One party flew to Whyalla,  
risking their lives as they went.  
But they got their reward. It was ... Oh  
my gawd!

A smorgasbord served in a tent.

### Chorus

Then onto Cairns and the Tradewinds,  
Where THEIR smorgasbord took the cake.  
In addition to melon and juicy paw paw  
We could all have a bloody great steak!

### Chorus

At Brampton the Coral Queen met us  
and said she would grant every wish ...  
But the boys were so weary and red-eyed  
and bleary

They settled for battered reef fish

### Chorus

Newcastle offered us goulash.  
We thought Oh Bliss! Oh what heaven!  
But they gave us cold chook and prawns  
that were crook,  
At half past bloody eleven.

### Chorus

← Explorers '70 - the experience detailed in verse!



Map showing places visited and signed by participants



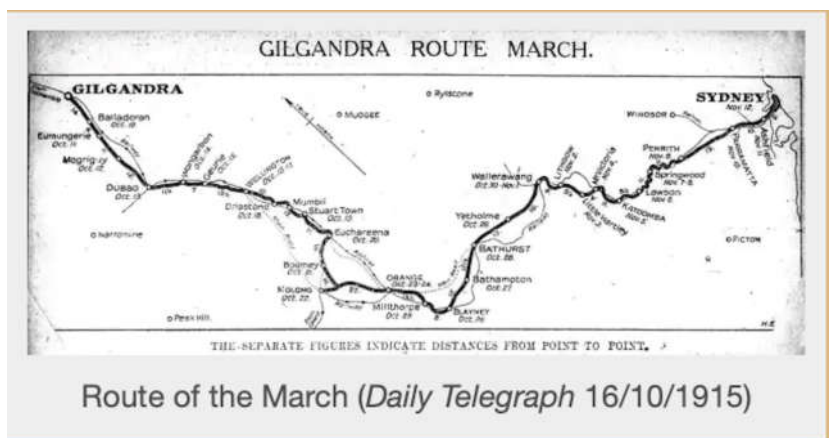
This travel bag was also part of the prize





Due to the setbacks experienced by the British, New Zealand and Australian soldiers at Gallipoli, enlistment numbers in Australia had declined. Later in 1915 as one way to help create an upturn in recruitment figures, Captain Bill (William T Hitchin) proposed the idea of a recruiting march from Gilgandra to Sydney, a distance of 510 kilometres, with the idea of inspiring young men to enlist.

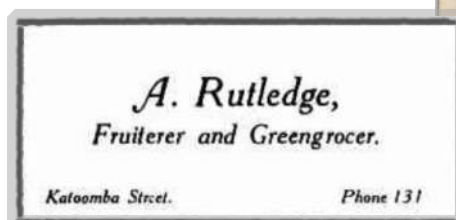
Although state authorities did not support the scheme, it eventually went ahead on 10 October that year. The Coo-ee March moved from western NSW towards Sydney, encouraging others to join in on the way. It also inspired Coo-ee posters, songs, poems, and many celebrations in the towns they passed through.



The original “snowball” march attracted wide publicity and probably encouraged local fundraising to support the recruits. At each town the marchers reached, they would shout “Coo-ee” to attract others.

They were welcomed by large crowds on the way. Initially leaving Gilgandra with 26 members; by the time they reached Sydney, they had 263 recruits. This concept caught on from the original march, and many other snowballing marches occurred over the next few years.

My great grandparents, William Alexander RUTLEDGE (1874-1957) and his wife Amy Caroline Rebecca SMITH (1873-1966), owned a general store in the main street of Katoomba, so on Friday 5 November 1915, the day the Coo-ee marchers arrived in the Blue Mountain town of Katoomba, they would have been right in the thick of the festivities. I wonder whether my fifteen-year-old grandfather, at the time, yearned to join the march?



The Blue Mountains Echo reported on 12 November 1915: *Katoomba was en fête for the occasion. The streets were a blaze of brightly coloured bunting; long streamers arched the principal thoroughfares, and many public and private houses were gaily bedecked, the many and varied tokens being strikingly emblematical of the fact that the hearts of all were with the boys who had come on the long trek "from every hill and valley from mulga and the mallee, to the call of England's rally - from Gilgandra to the sea" - or, as Capt. Hitchen says, "From Gilgandra to Berlin, via Sydney."* The procession formed up opposite the Town Hall, and, punctually at 11 o'clock a start was made for the Marked Tree, headed by the Leura Brass Band...<sup>i</sup>



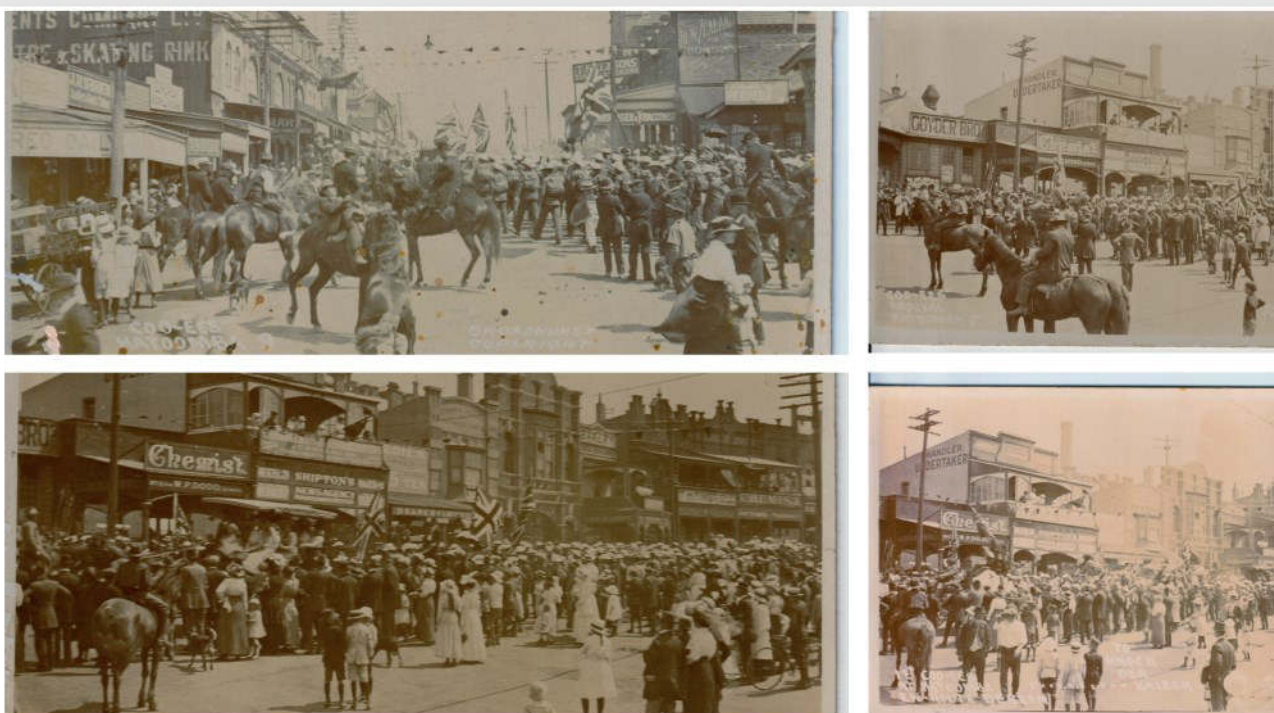
**Figure 1: Katoomba celebrating the arrival of the Coo-ee Marchers. (Photos from Family Collection)**

Arrived at the Explorers' Tree, the Coo-ee contingent found a detachment of the 41st Regiment drawn up to meet them, also the members of the rifle clubs, the cadets, boy scouts, and school children, with scores of motor cars and other vehicles, and a striking tableau representing the Allies.<sup>ii</sup>

A speech of welcome was made by Ald. Brierley, Mayor of Katoomba, and then the procession, a mile long, traversed the principal thoroughfare to the skating rink, the route being thronged with thousands of cheering citizens. Katoomba gave the lads great entertainment, three solid meals, free baths, free picture shows, free socks, and free everything else to add to their comfort. At the Katoomba theatre in the afternoon, the mayor presented a local recruit, Private Perkins, with a wristlet watch, subscribed by the Boys' Association. At night the public reception was turned as usual into a recruiting meeting, and five men signed on.<sup>iii</sup>

The concept was significant in raising the morale of those enlisted and the community at home. Sadly, many, including the leader, Bill Hitchin, never returned home. But their influence continued. After the close of World War One, parishioners from Saint Ambrose Church in Bournemouth, England, grateful for the assistance England had received from the Dominions in defending the British Empire, decided to make a Peace Thanksgiving gift of £1200 to a town in the Empire with a good church and wartime service record. The money was to be used to construct an Anglican church. Gilgandra was selected by Bournemouth church authorities as the recipient. St Ambrose Church Gilgandra commenced construction in 1920 using the funds from the Peace and Thanksgiving Gift.





**Figure 2: Celebration at Katoomba, 5 November 1915 (Photos from Family Collection)**

<sup>i</sup> Blue Mountains Echo page 2, 12 November 1915

[https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/108042142?searchTerm=\(March%20O%27er%20the%20Mountains\)#](https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/108042142?searchTerm=(March%20O%27er%20the%20Mountains)#)

<sup>ii</sup> The Farmer & Settler :9 November 1915 Page 3 : <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article116669569>

<sup>iii</sup> Blue Mountains Echo page 3, 12 November 1915

[https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/108042142?searchTerm=\(March%20O%27er%20the%20Mountains\)#](https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/108042142?searchTerm=(March%20O%27er%20the%20Mountains)#)

## PHOTOGRAPHS DATED 19/7/19

**Glynda Nolan Member 132**

A recent experiment with the photo enhancer and repair feature that my subscription to MyHeritage offers resulted not only in a much improved image but also indirectly led me to a surprising discovery.



**The damaged photo**



**After restoration**



**Back**

The above image was produced as a photographic postcard, a common early 20th century practice, but it has been cut to fit an oval frame. On the back it bears the name A. Smith - my maternal grandmother, Annie Amelia SMITH, a date 19/7/19, and the letters 'agoon' preceding the date. As I added the improved version to my family history program something 'clicked' - I had seen a photo with that date before!



Logic dictated that I start the search with my mother's family collection but none were marked with that date. I do have a lot of old photographs - they are sorted into family groups plus quite a few that are 'unknown', and it was among the latter that I found it - no longer to be consigned to the unknown pile!



At a quick glance the photo (above left) appears to have been 'attached' to the card but the image, lettering and the date are printed directly on to it. The photograph itself seems to be an almost complete image whilst the back of the card (above right) indicates that it had been cut in half. I have puzzled over what appears to be the word GALOOTTS - was it meant to be GALOOTS? I'm leaning toward galoots - in the Australian vernacular it is not necessarily a derogatory term - possibly an apt description of youths idling away the day?

Handwritten on the back of the card is the date that I had recognised and the word 'Lagoon' - solving the puzzle of 'agoon' written on the back of the photo of Annie. It also has initials that I presume identify some of the picture's subjects but they remain a mystery. What I do now know is that it is Annie, looking down, sitting next to the dapper young man in the hat.

The scene may be Glenrock Lagoon, about 6.5 km south of Newcastle, where the fresh water Flaggy and Little Flaggy Creeks join the sea through a tidal channel; since 1986 it is within the Glenrock State Conservation Area. The Lagoon has long been a popular recreational spot and access in 1919 may have been possible via the coastal coal railway line that ran south of Merewether Beach to Glenrock Colliery before the 1923 closure of that mine.

A google of the date found that it was a special day - the [Treaty of Versailles](#), formalising the end of the First World War, had been signed on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1919 and in recognition of its significance, Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July 1919 was designated as [Peace Day](#) throughout the United Kingdom and the British Empire.

That information got me thinking more about the image - I had long thought it charming but since learning about the significance of the date, and my grandmother's 'participation' in the event - I have an even greater affection for it. Here we have a group of young people, Annie was barely 16, it was a Saturday and those still attending school would most likely have been presented with a [Peace Medal](#) the day before.

What impact did the war have on them? Although too young to be directly involved there can be little doubt that their lives would have been negatively affected and influenced by it. I do know that no close relatives of Annie served but was that the case for her young companions? A present and more cogent danger was the arrival of the post-war influenza pandemic 'Spanish Flu', as evidenced by the fact that Perth, relatively free of the disease due to both its isolation and state border quarantine controls, experienced a spike in infections after crowds had gathered to celebrate the July 19<sup>th</sup> Peace Day.<sup>i</sup>

Making the connection between these two images and learning about the day's significance is just one more reason why I will continue on the journey that is family history research.

<sup>i</sup> <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/influenza-pandemic#>



This lovely wedding photo is my Great Aunt Olivia PRICE and her husband Charles Robert Ambrose MONTGOMERY who were married in the Methodist Church at Kurri on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1911 when she was twenty, and he was twenty-two.

In the photo you can see the parents of the bride, my Great Grandparents, James Henry THOMAS and Sarah Ann PRICE, sitting on the left-hand side as the proud elders of their extended family. The best man is Olivia's brother, Ben PRICE, and the three bridesmaids are her nieces. The flower girls are her younger nieces, the one sitting fourth from the left in the front row is Flora, my mother's half-sister.

My grandmother, Margaret Victoria AMES, is peeking out from behind the bridesmaids, holding mum's older half-sister, Olive, who had just turned two.

A beautiful article in The Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate gives a very detailed description of the dresses, the toasts that were made and the fact that the married couple later left by train for Sydney. The bridesmaid's dresses sound lovely. They were of pale blue silk and the girls carried baskets of violets.

James and Sarah Ann had ten children and with the exception of their eldest son all of the other families came together for this photo. The reception was held at James and Sarah's home in Kurri. I imagine there had been a flurry of cooking going on for a number of days prior to the wedding in order to cater for such a large group. Although the bridegroom also had a very large family only three of those in the photograph are from his side of the family. Although Charles is written as living in Kurri perhaps his family lived at too great a distance to travel.



This must have been a very elegant Celebration of Marriage for my Great Uncle and his wife.

Newcastle Morning Herald 5 July 1902:-

*Derkenne - Henderson May 28th at The Presbyterian Church, Dungog by Rev. P McQueen, Gustav Gerard, fourth son of the late Gerard Derkenne to Fannie, fourth daughter of Jao Henderson, of Newcastle.*

Dungog Chronicle 30 May 1902:- Orange Blossoms - Wedding at Dungog

The Presbyterian Church, Dungog, was a hive of activity on Wednesday forenoon, the occasion being the marriage of Mr Gustav Gerard Derkenne, of Newcastle (for many years a representative of the firm of Messrs Ash and Co, of that city), to Miss Fanny Henderson, youngest daughter of Mr John Henderson, ship owner, also of Newcastle. At 10.30 the bridegroom, attended by the groomsmen, Messrs Morrow and Cornish, together with the bridesmaids, Misses Henderson and Munsie, took their places before the communion table, where they were joined shortly afterwards by the bride, who entered the church leaning on the arm of her father, to the strains of the wedding march, played by the honorary organist Miss Dark. The bride looked charming, dressed in a most becoming bridal costume of ivory white silk, with the orthodox veil and orange blossoms, and bearing a beautiful bouquet, the gift of the bridegroom. Miss Henderson, sister of the bride, wore cream figured silk, relieved with pink silk and lace, and hat to match. Miss Munsie was attired in green, relieved with pink baby velvet, and hat to match. Each carried a choice shower bouquet, the gift of Mrs F. A. Hooke, of Dingadee. There was a large attendance present, including many friends and well wishers of the bridal pair, amongst them being Mrs Hill with whom the bride has resided as a ward for several years. The Rev. Peter McQueen performed the wedding ceremony in a very impressive manner, and gave the young couple some excellent advice; after which the choir sang "The voice that breathed o'er Eden," followed by a consecration prayer and the Benediction by the officiating minister. The recessional music was played by the organist, and as the bridal party left the sacred edifice they were impartially deluged with plentiful showers of rose leaves and rice. The church was tastefully decorated. Arches and festoons of flowers and evergreens were suspended over the aisle, while the font and rostrum were adorned with choice blooms, peering forth from the foliage on either side of the latter, in snow white characters, being the initials of the bride and groom, respectively. The decorative work was carried out by Misses Henderson, Munsie, Feint, and Middlebrook, and Messrs Robertson and Peard. The wedding breakfast was laid at Mrs Hill's Royal Hotel, and was a dream of lovelies and epicurean delights. The guests were numerous. The Rev. P. McQueen occupied the chief place of honour, and proposed the toast of 'The King.' After a befitting and loyal reference to her late Majesty Queen Victoria, and her peaceful and glorious reign, the reverend gentleman spoke in eulogistic terms of her son Edward VII, and her Majesty Queen Alexandra, who he believed would worthily follow in the steps of our late beloved sovereign. The health of the "The bride and bridegroom" was proposed in felicitous terms by Mr Morrow, who said he had enjoyed the valued friendship of both for many years. He presaged for them a very happy wedded life, they being admirably suited to each other, both in tastes and temperaments. Messrs Cornish and Litchfield also spoke in congratulatory terms of the bride and groom, and Mr Derkenne responded in an effective and feeling little speech. The toast of "The bridesmaids and groomsmen" was proposed by Mr Neve, and acknowledged by Mr Cornish. Rev. P. McQueen proposed "The bride's father" in terms that excited admiration; and this was followed by a similar compliment to Mr McQueen for his presence at the breakfast. The proceedings were enlivened at intervals by appropriate music, supplied by Professor Royal. At 2 o'clock Mr and Mrs Derkenne took their departure for Woy Woy, where the honeymoon will be spent. They were accompanied

for several miles on their journey by six vehicles loaded with old friends. Numerous and costly wedding presents were bestowed on the happy pair, and each of the bridesmaids was made the recipient by the bridegroom of gold brooches of chaste design, having hearts set around with pearls, and sapphire centres.

The couple went on to have three children: Marie Norah, Phyllis Patricia and Gerard Gordon Derkenne.

*St Andrews Presbyterian Church as it would have looked at the time of the Derkenne- Henderson marriage in 1902 - it was replaced in 1904.*





# THE GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF MY 3X GREAT GRANDPARENTS WILLIAM HILLHOUSE AND MARY NEIL

Jenny Myers Member 53

Married in late December, 1832, it was a rare occurrence to reach such a milestone during the 1800s; William was born to James HILLHOUSE and Jean WALLACE on 25 Aug, 1799 at 'Shaw', Ochiltree, Ayrshire, Scotland, Mary NEIL was born to Robert NEIL and Abigail CUNNINGHAM on 15 Dec 1809 at Crawfordston Toll, Tarbolton, Ayrshire. William and Mary's family consisted of 4 males and 7 females.

On page 5 of the *Irvine Times* on Friday 5th Jan., 1883, is printed a description of the occasion...

**Golden Wedding** – This rare event was celebrated here on Friday last by Mr and Mrs William Hillhouse – they having been married so long ago as 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1832. Mr Hillhouse was at one period an extensive Wood-merchant; and, in this, was the first to supply the Eglinton Iron Company with wood when the Lugar Ironworks were opened, and continued to do so for many years. He also it was who, in 1847 supplied the G. and S. W. Railway with sleepers while laying their line from Mauchline to Muirkirk. At a later period Mr Hillhouse took to farming, and leased the then sheep farm of Slatehill, Ochiltree, from Sir James Boswell. After the death of Sir James, however, it was resolved to convert the farm into an arable one, and the rent was raised from £40 to £120. But owing to the devastations of the ground game the farm never paid; and so after loosing a deal of money, he gave it up. The worthy couple now reside in Auchinleck – he being mostly confined to bed, from the effects of a bad fall he had some time ago, and from the effects of which he has not wholly recovered. The guidwife, however, is as active as ever; and, on the occasion of our visit, was busily engaged, standing on a chair, hanging photographs. They had 11 children (4 of whom are dead), 50 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren. The celebration of the golden wedding lasted two days, and it is meant to have a third to suit the convenience of an unmarried daughter, who could not be present on the regular occasion. Mr Hillhouse is now 82, and his spouse 70; and we trust they maybe long apared to cheer and help each other to “toddle doon” life's brae. They have “speilded the hill”, hand in hand, encouraging and strengthening each other in times of gloom, and rejoicing together in times of prosperity, and are still kind and couthie one to the other – a noble example of the conjugal felicity, and a strong satire on the so-called single blessedness of which we hear so much.



William Hillhouse - Mary Neil



Ayrshire Advertiser 25<sup>th</sup> March 1844



The Stair Inn taken in 2004 - 160 years later

When my two sisters and two brothers and I were growing up mum always made sure we all had a Birthday Party for our birthdays. We were young adults when we found out that mum had never had a birthday party, as her mum died when her brother was 2 weeks old. Mum at 3 years old went from one family member to another family member.



#### MUM'S 70TH

When mum was turning 70 we decided to give her a Surprise Birthday Party, we told mum we were giving her a Family Party for her 70th. My sister Heather lived on 30 acres on Bringelly Road, Luddenham with a dirt entrance road up the hill to their home. Mum's name was Eileen ROBINSON so a large sign was made saying ER 70 and put up on the two telegraph poles at the entrance to the dirt road so guests would know where to turn in. Little did mum know that we had asked a lot of people she knew over the years and hadn't seen for a long time. As guests arrived mum would talk to them, then they would move on as another guest arrived, it was great that guests arrival became staggered so it was not a great shock for mum to see people she had not seen for a long time.

Mum, pictured at left, was thrilled with her party and it was enjoyed by all.

#### MUM'S 80TH

Mum's parents Lilian Mary BLAMEY and Ernest HOTCHKISS were married on Friday, 16th April, 1915. Her mother's Wedding Veil was very important to mum as it was the only thing that connected her to her mum, as no one in the family has any photos of the wedding. Mum was married during the war and was unable to use it and over the years the tulle disintegrated.

With Mum's 80th birthday approaching in January, 1997, late in 1996 I decided upon and had the pleasure of remaking the veil using new tulle and the original Honiton Lace. With the help of a former Tech Teacher I lay the veil on the photocopier and copied the four corners as they were not quite the same. I then began the long process of unpicking the lace stitch by stitch. There were little yellowish brown marks on the lace and I realised that these marks were where a knot had been tied in the cotton. Apparently the person sewing the lace to the tulle had dampened her fingers with saliva when tying the knot.

I placed the photocopied pieces under the new tulle and began the long process of stitching the lace to the tulle. The stitching took me over three months working every night from 7pm-11pm. The veil sat on the card table in our lounge room for the whole time. During that time I did not have mum come to our place in case she saw what I was doing as it was to be a SURPRISE for her.

The finished veil was presented to my mother on Tuesday, 21st January, 1997 at her 80th birthday party at my sister Heather's place. Mum was thrilled and said "thank your teacher for helping to remake the veil". I said "she did not do it, I did"; mum was even more thrilled that I had done it. The original veil was too fragile to use at the weddings of Mum's girls. Since remaking the veil four of my nieces (Kayscha 2-11-2001, Sheriden 6-3-2004, Ashleigh 10-9-2005 and Skye 10-5-2008) and one of my daughters (Vickie 2-11-2002) have been married wearing the veil.



Mum, pictured with son Leigh, was delighted with the veil.

How do family historians celebrate and commemorate when Long Lost Family meets Cold Case? In searching for information and burials of various family members I stumbled upon Find-a-Grave having two very similar memorial records for a particular grave at The Field of Mars Cemetery in Ryde, NSW. One was for **Julian Langdon** and the other **Julia Langden**. They were both buried in “May 1968 (aged 69-70)” and both assigned a birth year as “1898”. If it was one person, the potential gender ambiguity was also noted.

I was intrigued because I have a 1<sup>st</sup> cousin three time removed name Julian Langdon and I had not found any records of him following WW2.

When I looked in NSW BDM records, I found only one death record:

- \* Name: **Langden Julian**
- \* Registration number: 4442/1968
- \* Father's Given Name(s): 75 YEARS
- \* Mother's Given Name(s): DIED NTH SYDNEY
- \* District: SYDNEY

I took this NSW BDM record and the cemetery records to mean that his exact identity wasn't known. I contacted the cemetery who checked their original records and reported:

- \* **Julian Langdon** was buried on 27-May-1968 in Grave 3322.
- \* The record has him at 70 Years of age.
- \* Funeral Director was B Maurer.
- \* Anglican Minister was J Lance.
- \* the Grave was purchased by RSL Club, Anzac House, Sydney.



[https://nmclm.com.au/find-a-loved-one/?site\\_id=6037](https://nmclm.com.au/find-a-loved-one/?site_id=6037)

An old Anglican Directory confirmed Rev J Lance was a provisional priest in the area at the time but the 2022/3 version does not list him. The Funeral Director, Bruce Maurer has also passed away but his son said Maurer Funerals had an arrangement with The RSL organisation, and Field of Mars cemetery to arrange the burials of those returned military people that were destitute. Although the RSL contact in 1968, Herb Pearson, has passed away, I knew my Julian Langdon had enlisted in both WW1 and WW2.

Although NAA Record Search has service records for about a dozen other people with the surname Langdon, my Julian Langdon is the only one with that first name. In an enquiry to the RSL they said they had no records of Julian Langdon.

Julian LANGDON, my 1st cousin three times removed:

- \* was born on 6-Jul-1899 in Kapunda, South Australia. At birth he was named Julius Meincke, but most members of the Meincke family changed their surname to Langdon in 1917/8. His mother also registered a change in his first name from Julius to Julian;
- \* enlisted in WW1 – SN 55848;
- \* enlisted in WW2 - S212744.

His uncle Jules Langdon (1871-1942) was formerly Julius Meincke as well. Jules was Mayor of Thebarton and a South Australian MP who died in office, with a fountain erected as a memorial to him.

Euphemistically it looks like he had a colourful life, albeit a bit sad. According to newspaper records in Trove, he was:

- \* initially a French furniture polisher then later a gardener;
- \* mainly living in boarding houses or hostels;
- \* wanted for failing to pay maintenance for a daughter and wife;
- \* divorced in absentia in 1931;
- \* handed himself in to police on various occasions and in 1938/9 was on two charges of false pretences and twenty of forgery.



Julian's ex-wife remarried in 1934 and died in 1938, with Julian's daughter the only child named in the death notice.

What different lives for these two people named Julius Meincke at birth. One day Julian's descendants may look for their grandfather or his family and find an end point.

## A NON-EVENT CELEBRATION

Robert Eldridge Member 54

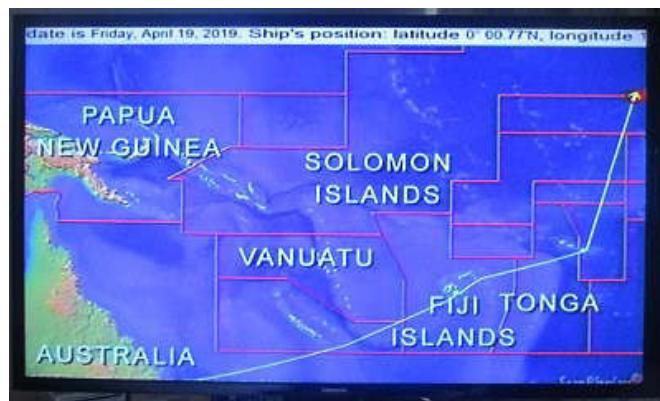
Over the years I have been involved in many celebrations of all kinds, from birthdays, coming of age events, marriage and anniversaries of all types.

The common element to all of these occasions is that something of substance is being celebrated.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 I was really looking forward to celebrating 'crossing the line', when I was to move from my comfort zone in the southern hemisphere to the other side of the world and join that growing group of people who have had their 'sea baptism' in King Neptune's court.

So I carefully monitored the ship's GPS display and around midday it ticked over to show a north latitude and I rushed to look outside, only to be confronted by a big disappointment. I've crossed the line and all I could see was just one big expanse of ocean.

Not a line in sight anywhere.



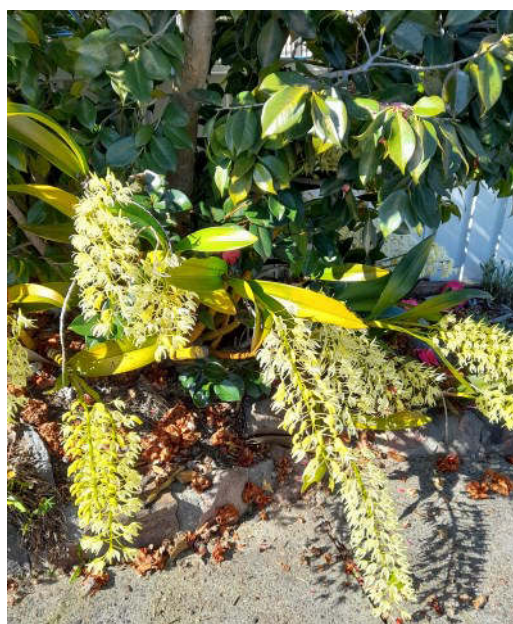
## A LONG-LIVED WEDDING GIFT

Narelle Davies Member 62

The Rock Lily came from the Central Coast and was a wedding present to my Grandparents (mum's parents). They were married at Rockdale Methodist Church on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1915 so this year the rock lily is 108 years old.

When my sisters, brothers and I were growing up it was in a large Hotpoint spin dryer. Many years after dad had passed away, mum went to live at Edinglassie Retirement Home at Emu Plains. My younger brother Leigh took to the rock lily with a chain saw and cut it into seven pieces. One each for the five of us, one for mum near her accommodation and one for Edinglassie.

The piece of the rock lily that I have has been in the front garden since about 1992; I also have a piece of it in the back garden. The lily is a great joy to many when it blooms with its many stems of flowers and it is always admired by people walking by.



**A Letter to his Mother.**

In 1991 I acquired, through my interests in Philately, a letter written in 1843 by the Convict Robert Oliver in Sydney in the Colony of NSW to his mother in Essex, England, with the aim of trying to obtain a full pardon for him through her connections. At the time I had not started my serious family history research and I had high hopes that I may have a convict in my family tree.

Unfortunately this was not to be, however the letter is interesting in itself from a social history view of the times.

Robert was born in 1818 at Bocking, Essex, UK and his trade was a groom and labourer. On 4 March 1839 he was brought to trial at the Quarter Sessions of Essex Assizes on the charge of Burglary and sentenced to Life imprisonment.

He was transported to the Colony of NSW on the ship "Barrosa" arriving in Sydney on 8 Dec. 1839. He was prisoner No 39-1311. The Master of the ship was John Austin and the Surgeon Superintendent was B. Wylie. Robert was aged 21 at the time, single, could read and write and of the Methodist religion. He was 5 feet 2 ½ inches in height, pale and pock pitted complexion, Brown Hair, Grey eyes. He had a mole under his right jaw, blue illegible mark beside the right elbow, mark of a bull beside right wrist, CORCO7 inside his lower left arm and a scar on cap of left knee.

In 1843 he had been assigned to a Magistrate. Robert received his Ticket of Leave No 44/1978 on the 20 July 1844. He was allowed to remain in the District of Liverpool. This was altered to the Parramatta District on 31 January 1848, the Goulburn District on 16 April 1848 and to Sydney on 3 July 1848 for so long as he remains in the service of Miss Sarah Hughes of Parramatta Road.

Robert obtained a Conditional Pardon No 49/841 on 20 February 1849. Under the pardon he could not return to UK or Ireland. Robert Oliver and Sarah Hughes were married in 1849. (Reg. No. 350/1849 V1849350)

The letter is as follows:

Mrs Oliver  
Bocking  
Near Braintree  
Essex, England.  
Sydney, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1843

Dear Mother

I received your kind and welcome letter, it rejoiced my heart to hear you were all well except yourself who had a bad hand. I hope before this letter reaches you it will be quite restored. I am truly glad to hear it was your intention of doing something for me whereby I may be once again restored to my freedom and be assured when once obtained I would show to you all by my good conduct I should not be undeserving of your endeavours but I do hope your endeavours will be crowned with success for the sake of those hopes which I have cherished that my long lost liberty may be once again enjoyed and be assured in the meantime I will do all I can by God's assistance to merit this highly prized liberty. William Grey sends his best respects to you Mother. He is well and doing well. He is situated about 200 miles from Sydney. I saw him about 3 months since. Tell his mother to send a letter if she so wishes and direct the same for him to be left at the Post Office Sydney New South Wales till called for he will get it. When last I saw him he particularly requested me to state in my letter home his earnest desire that something might be done for him, either a Mitigation of Sentence or a Pardon if it could be obtained, for believe me any man who serves any period of time in these colonies as a Prisoner finds out more hardships than he ever could anticipate he would have to endure, so therefore dear Mother you must guess how heart-breaking it is to those who are sentenced to life and perhaps for the most trifling offence he can commit he is severely punished besides being put back a period of time before he can obtain a Temporary Indulgence. It will be no doubt interesting to you to hear how I am now situated. I left the Govt. (Gaol) since I last wrote to you and am now living in private service with a Gentleman who is a Magistrate. I am in the capacity of a Groom and Coachman. I have five horse, one Carriage and one Gig to look after solely

under my charge. So you will say I have sufficient to keep me employed besides driving my Master out occasionally once or twice a day but I am sorry to inform you I receive no wages. I have my rations and clothing found me but until I get into possession of a Ticket of Leave which will be a year more I do not expect any wages but I hope long on that time is expired you will have got me my liberty. May God in his wisdom grant me this happy privilege and I do hope I need say no more to stir you up to this most momentous affair for my own future happiness and welfare. I can assume you could wealth purchase the desired object I would gladly sacrifice a fortune to be once again in my native land. Give my kind love to my Uncle Mott and Aunt and also to Caroline Grey and all my Relatives and Friends. Dear Mother, a point mentioned in your letter to me, I should never see you again. I hope it will not be so. I live in hope of being with you again in this world and I should very much like to know the name of this friend you mention in yours who is to be of service to me in this colony. I can assume they are very scarce things here for almost everybody in these parts adheres to the old adage that charity begins at home and that generosity of the people are very selfish and if you have not the Friend in the Pocket, there is not one out of a hundred who would turn his head to render you a service and Dear Mother if you could spare me a Trifle you cannot think the essential service it would render me. Money indeed here works miracles but I never intend to obtain it again by any dishonest Means, indeed I have examples enough before me every day to deter me from even harbouring a thought of the like, but however I trust I need not say anything further on that subject and I believe you have more confidence in me now than to think I should ever again be guilty of any other offence of that nature. Dear Mother once again before I conclude I must beg of you not to not to forget me and ask my Uncle Mott if he will use his influence in trying to obtain a mitigation for me. And now I will close this sheet by giving my best love to my sister Ann and all my dear relations and best respects to my enquiring friends and that God will bless you all is the sincere prayer of Dear Mother

Your Most Affectionate  
But Unfortunate Son  
Robert Oliver.

Please to direct  
Robert Oliver  
To be left at the Post Office  
Sydney N.S.W.  
Until called for.

## ROYAL VISITOR IN TORONTO

## Arthur Radford Member 58

In 1920 Edward, Prince of Wales, made an extended tour of Australia and favoured the little lakeside village of Toronto, Lake Macquarie, with an overnight stay.

No doubt he would have been exhausted from the travelling and the attention he received prior to his arrival. He had spent some time in Sydney meeting with dignitaries, attending celebrations, listening to speeches, attending dinners, including those to celebrate his 26<sup>th</sup> birthday for which he received over a hundred telegrams from various parts of the empire.

Leaving Sydney from Central Station he waved from the back platform of the train as crowds gathered wherever they passed. After a short stop at Parramatta the royal entourage arrived at Windsor before a car trip to Sackville Reach and a waiting launch to take them down the Hawkesbury River.



His royal highness expressed his delight at the wonderful scenery along the way. At many points along the river settlers, their wives and children stood on the banks waving and shouting their greetings.



At Brooklyn he boarded the awaiting train which rushed him northward at a great pace through Gosford Station with many people trackside hoping for a glimpse as the royal train shot by. Cheers rang out and flags waved furiously. As darkness surrounded the train an enormous bonfire lit up the trees at one point on the line. The shriek of the passing engine heralded the train for those who gathered along the route hoping to see the Royal personage.

Arriving at Fassifern station another cheering crowd greeted the party as they changed to the branch line leading to the waters of Lake Macquarie at Toronto. At Toronto the residents had turned out almost entirely, and the pier and approaches to the station were crowded with people. As the Royal train drew into the platform the band of the Teralba Boy Scouts struck up the National Anthem and "God Bless the Prince of Wales". As the Prince left the Royal train the waiting crowd cheered heartily.

Toronto presented the appearance of a bush fairyland, the station was bedecked with flags, and the township and residences along the shores of the lake were illuminated with electric lights and multi-coloured Chinese lanterns.

The lake which was dotted with the lights of many launches and other small craft glittered with the warm glow of lights. The Toronto pier was decorated with a lofty archway constructed of Australian evergreens and through the foliage with which this arch was constructed, peeped myriads of tiny electric lights.

His Royal Highness passed under the arch of evergreens and proceeded down the pier, passing between the lines of Chinese lanterns to the launch which was waiting to transport him down the lake to 'Craig Royston', the delightful residence of Mr Duncan M'Geachie, the General Manager of the Caledonian Coal Company.



One of the most impressive houses on Lake Macquarie 'Craig Royston' named after the home of Scottish folk hero Rob Roy, it was built not long after the 1887 subdivision of the Toronto Estate. The home was described at the time as *a beautifully situated bungalow, excellently equipped*. With a spacious verandah, it was surrounded by beautiful lawns stepping down to the lake's edge and had every convenience available at the time including being lighted by electricity supplied by its own plant.

*'Craig Royston', 109 Brighton Avenue Toronto, [26 February 1906]*  
(<https://livinghistories.newcastle.edu.au/nodes/view/46600>)

Mr M'Geachie and his daughter received the Prince at the end of their private pier, and escorted his Royal Highness to the house, which they had placed absolutely at his disposal. I am not sure that the Prince would have fully appreciated the residence that night as he must have been exhausted and badly in need of a rest after such a busy day.

However, a restful night had left him reinvigorated for the day of sightings and receptions which awaited him in Newcastle. The morning sun rose over a cloudless sky and the water shimmied below. This was the pleasing, peaceful view that met the Prince's eye as he emerged. The view from the verandah the next morning must have impressed him as he remarked to Miss McGeachie what a beautiful place she lived in.

After taking breakfast the Prince and his personal staff rejoined the launch and were quickly returned to the Toronto pier. Here a troop of WW1 returned soldiers under Colonel Burnage was drawn up to receive his Royal Highness. There were also present on the pier several nurses, and the wives and mothers of soldiers. At the end of the pier, immediately adjoining the point of disembarkation, gathered a large group of children, from the Toronto Public School each child was provided with a flag waving these enthusiastically, sang the National Anthem, followed by "God Bless the Prince of Wales".

After addressing the gathered assemblage and listening to the children sing it was time to board the awaiting train. But before he left he was presented with an illuminated address and book of scenes of the local area. In return the school children received an autographed photograph to be hung in the school. The train whistle sounded, and he departed amidst the waving flags and foliage.

Now over one hundred years later some Toronto residents haven't forgotten the celebration of their royal visit.

## THE LOG-BOOK OF AN AUSTRALIAN EMIGRANT

In the June edition of *The Chronicle* we introduced Daniel Wallwork (1824-1909), a Lancastrian locksmith/engineer/machinist who emigrated to Newcastle, NSW in 1863. His account of the voyage aboard the *SS Auckland*, originally published in his home county, is being reproduced as a serial in our journal. His story continues now two weeks into the voyage.....

Cape St. Vincent, Tuesday, April 28. – We still remain here coaling. About twenty negroes with the ships crew, are hauling up coals into the ship from what are called Lighters, or middle sized boats. The coals are brought here from England, in vessels employed for the purpose. The vessels lie here in readiness for any vessel putting in here for coals, and it is a great convenience. The coal is of two kinds. There is lump coal, and a kind called patent coal. It is small coal mixed with tar or pitch, and made into square lumps, about fourteen pounds weight. These are thrown up one at a-time, and put among the other coal to burn with them. It is brought here from Wales.

Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> (sic) April. – Having taken in a good quantity of coal, we sailed out of harbour about ten o'clock to-day. We have taken up so much coal that the deck is almost covered. After we left the bay with its rock and cliffs, and got some distance into the open sea, an American Man of War – which sailed an hour before us – fired a shot across our bow, to signify that it wanted to speak with us. Their flag, the Stars and Stripes, was hoisted, and our Union Jack was put up. The engines were slackened, and preparations made to receive an officer from the vessel, who was approaching us in a small boat, manned by four of their crew. He stepped on board, and addressing our Captain, he said he had come to request a sight of the ships papers, where the vessel was from, and where going. He said it was a mere matter of form. The North, to which their vessel belonged, was at war with the Southern States of America, they (the North), claimed the privilege of overhauling all vessels they could meet with, to prevent as far as possible, weapons of war and other contraband articles going to the South. Every one of us were watching the interview with great interest. Our Captain said he did not think he was compelled to show any papers, though he had no particular objections to show them. After a little parley he invited the officer to follow him into his cabin below. After a little time the officer came up again, apparently satisfied that we were all right. This vessel appeared to cruise about Cape St. Vincent, to watch all vessels that pass this way. This American Man of War could not demand a sight of our papers while we were in harbour, but as soon as we gave notice by flag that we were about to sail, they left the harbour an hour before us, so as to be ready when we had got out into the open sea, to demand a sight of our papers, &c. After the visit to our ship they left us, and took their way back again towards the bay we had left, and again we started on our journey.

Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> April. – To-day we fell in with the trade winds which are usual in these parts, and as our breeze was a good one, our engine was stopped and our vessel was driven by winds only; but the speed was not as good as it had been. The lectures upon Australia were resumed again this evening in our fore cabin. The subject this evening was New Zealand, a large island – larger than England, and not a million inhabitants, while England has 18 millions, showing there is plenty of room for emigrants there. He said, at this place anyone who is steady can do well; in fact a steady man can do well in any of the five colonies, no matter which he chooses. To-day we saw numbers of flying-fish, two or three were in the evening on deck, and cooked as a relish.

Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. – The first part of to-day we had been going by sails only, but the captain finding that the wind got weaker, had the steam put on again and we are now going again at a comfortable rate. At present we are 3,800 miles from the Cape of Good Hope.

Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. – To-day the captain calculates upon crossing the line about Monday next. The weather has scarcely been as hot as I expected, though we walk about deck and take our meals in shirt sleeves; still, I expected it to be hotter than up to the present it has been. But we must not shout before we are out of the wood; it will be hot enough shortly no doubt.

Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. – We have accomplished another 200 miles and we now begin to feel the heat in style: the sweat is running off our chins and noses, especially at meal times. On deck we are reduced to shirts and trousers; at dinner and tea we roll up sleeves, and the perspiration runs down our arms and faces in an amusing manner. The ladies are only half their usual size, they have so much less clothing.

We have had a tent or covering on the deck for some days. If this was away we could not remain on deck at all, the sun is so hot above you. At night the cool breeze is quite delicious. You feel tempted to stay up all night, and going to bed is a kind of punishment. Many of us walk the deck at night, and chat away the time very pleasantly. I have stood on the forecastle or front part of the ship at 11 o'clock at night with the moon at full, shining on the waves like silver, and allowing the cool breeze to fan my brow. When doing this it has been quite delicious, and you felt it was almost a shame to go to such a place as bed from such a lovely scene. To-day we saw two very large fish which some of the crew made out to be whales, but which I think were more likely to be grampuses. The last fortnight I have been reading *Chambers' Journal* for 1860-1 – most instructive and profitable reading. In addition to reading I devote some portion of every day to the study of mathematics.

Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. – Last night nearly all on board were awoke by tremendous claps of thunder and blinding flashes of lightning; there came with it a most refreshing shower of rain. The thunder and lightning was really awful, but beside a little fright no injury occurred to anyone. Some of the passengers went up on deck about three this morning to see and hear such a sight as never or very seldom is seen in England. They will long remember it i.e., the lightning. To-day we came within sight of and passed a long extent of African coast. All along the coast appears to be well covered with trees. At one part is what appears to be a kind of seaport or bathing place, upon a pleasant sandy beach. This position of the coast of Africa is called Liberia.

Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, and twentieth day at sea. – During the night we passed the African coast and are now passing the Gulf of Guinea. The captain says had we been a sailing vessel instead of a steamer, we should have crossed the line some days ago. A packet ship is obliged to go further out to sea to catch more wind, and they cross the line sooner in consequence; but our vessel being a steamer can keep nearer the coast and have the advantage of smoother water. The result is we travel further before we cross the line, and we shall have less distance to travel after we have passed it. We are now about half way between England and the Cape of Good Hope – that is five thousand miles from either place. To-day it was my turn to take the office of captain of our mess. Our mess as I have said consists of eight passengers, and the other two messes are nine each. We take the office of captain in turn, - a week each, commencing with the oldest. We have now been at sea three weeks, and have got along tolerably well under our new circumstances. I will now say a word or two about the rations or provisions. As I have before stated, the quantity of our food is ample, and at present abundant, but the quality of some of the articles is not always what I should choose. The salt beef for instance lasts a long time: we have hard work to get it down, and very often leave a good portion of it. The salt-fish, or ling, as it is called is our master. We have once or twice given ours to the crew, and we have never consumed our allowance yet. The quality of the biscuits is not much to complain of, but their hardness is above a joke: it is almost impossible to break them with your teeth; your teeth are nearly as likely to break as them, such is their dryness and hardness. At meal times, to see us, some with the butt end of their knives, some with a hammer, and some at the edge of their table, trying to crush their biscuits is most amusing, and many are the jokes we crack about them; but to break them is no laughing matter, but break them we must, or starve. After the first day or two there was no more fresh bread, unless you began to bake yourself, and no one knows how to up to the present. We have not a baker among us, unfortunately, and one of us is as good as another. Some of us have tried to make dough into puddings, and such puddings we have turned out, would at other times have made us faint, or we should have thrown them at the baker's head! However, having good appetites we manage to get through them without any complaints of indigestion.

Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. – As we get into deeper water, the water, which was a light green is now a delicious blue – a blue that no art could imitate. On an evening, after dusk, and before the moon has risen, some of us amuse ourselves in looking over the ship's side, and watching little bright insects which shine among the waves like so many little stars; they are called phosphorescent insects. There are hundreds and thousands of them, but of course they can only be seen after dark. I caught one one night, and when I brought it to the light it seemed like a little white grub; we could see them nearly all the way from England to Australia. The lectures upon Australia have been postponed, in consequence of the heat. It is so hot that we are all prostrated, and none of us now feel disposed for any mental effort. When we have had tea, and the sun is down, then it is that we all go on deck, everyone in good humour with himself and everybody else. The walking and chatting with the ladies, the singing and music, and dancing to the concertina, which now takes place on deck, gives life and animation to all on board, and the evenings pass in a most agreeable manner, and we feel the better for the exercise.



Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. – It seems strange that though we have the hottest summer weather, with the sun right over our heads, yet it is dark about six o'clock every night. In these parts the day and night are always about equal, the sun going down two or three hours sooner than it does in England the same time of the year.

Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. – We are now 63 miles from the line, and some of the crew say we shall cross the line during the next 24 hours.

Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. – Contrary to expectation we did not cross the line last night. We have been sailing alongside the line instead of crossing it. We shall have less to run after we have crossed, that's all.

Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. – During the last 24 hours we have crossed the Equinoctial Line, the line I have so often referred to. This celebrated line, as you will see by the map of the world, is an imaginary line drawn across the middle of the globe, which divides the north from the south part of the earth. It is the same as if a thread was drawn across an orange, on one side is the north, in which is Europe and England, and on the south side is Africa and Australia, &c. We are now fairly entered upon the south side of the world.

It is usual in ships to do something or have something extra when crossing the line. A number of us celebrated the event of crossing the line last night by a "pump bath." About 12 o'clock, about eight of the male passengers went up on deck, naked, or ready to be so. It was warm, even naked. Two or three of us would go under the bridge in the middle of the vessel, and give ourselves a good lathering with soap, then the rest would turn the pump handles, while one of us, with a leather pipe, would play upon those in the corner as fast as they could pump, and he would turn it upon their face and make them jump and dance amidst the shouts and laughter of the others. The pipeman would shout out, where do you want it? and it give it them where they did not want it, in good style. The bath and the fun did us a deal of good, and we promised ourselves another such treat as soon as convenient. In the morning we were sorry to hear that one of the lady passengers had been so ill during the night that fears were entertained that she would not get over it. She is better to-day. The captain has been very attentive, and calls at the cabin called an hospital very frequently.

Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. – For several days we have had the wind dead against us, and have made less than the usual speed. Had we not had steam our speed would have been slow indeed. We now experience the full benefit of steam by being able to go along in spite of wind and weather. The gentleman who gives readings upon Australia has been laid up with illness for two days, I think he is improving.

Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. – Though the weather is still very warm, having passed the line, we are getting into cooler latitudes, both days and nights are now cool and we are more comfortable in consequence. We can now put on more clothing, and the change is agreeable.

Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>. – We have for several days been making for St. Helena. It is not exactly in our way to call there.

Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>. – Tomorrow morning we expect to cast anchor at St. Helena, distant 245 miles. Having been at sea a month, many of the crew and passengers have used up their stock of clean linen, and I have often been amused to see the men at the wash-tub, scrubbing away at shirts and stockings as if they were used to it, they look as serious in doing it as at any other part of their duties. When they have dried them that is sufficient; they never use the smoothing-iron, but put them on without.

Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. – This evening at about six o'clock we arrived and cast anchor at St Helena. About one o'clock at noon we could just see the top of the highest peak of the island, which was then about 50 miles off. As you approached it, it had much the appearance of St. Vincent, with its rocks running up as straight, but higher than St. Vincent. There were about half-a-dozen ships lying in the bay, as at St. Vincent. There was one English vessel there from India, with about 300 invalid soldiers on board, going home to England. We passed them as we sailed in to cast anchor, and as the soldiers all stood on deck with their red jackets, among the ladies and others, it was a pleasing sight. The ship started next day for England, where I hope they would arrive safely.

Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>. – Well, I have done what I at one time never expected to be able to do; I have seen and spent a day on the island of St. Helena; that place where the celebrated Napoleon I was exiled after the battle of Waterloo. The island, like St. Vincent, is a rocky island, but not quite so barren or so small.

It is 10½ miles long by 7½ miles wide. It seemed to be like a huge rock thrown up out of the sea, and then a big butcher's cleaver used, and it was cloven open at several places.

Up the sides and the bottom of the valleys thus made, there manages to exist some 6,000 inhabitants. In one of these valleys wider than the rest, starting from the sea beach and getting narrower as it goes for a mile, is situated James Town, containing 3,000 of the people of the island. This is the principal place. It has two churches (small), a barracks, public hall, market hall, shops, and residences for the various consuls, &c; with many houses (though poor ones), for the blacks and half blacks who live upon it. Being under the English Government of course the barracks contain English soldiers, officers, &c, including a governor and a general. The shopkeepers take things easy. There is no display of goods at the doors with prices marked on, defying competition, &c. If you want a thing you must go inside and ask if they have got it, and pay what they may choose to ask. The most numerous of the people who live here are blacks, and a mixture of blacks and whites, no doubt through the marriage of blacks and whites together. A number of us were inclined to go up the rocky hills, to see the tomb and residence of Napoleon I. A party of seven of us left the vessel in a small boat this morning, for an excursion upon the island. The weather was all we could wish, a little too warm if anything. The place where Napoleon was buried and where he lived, you could only get to by climbing up the steep and rocky roads, up on the top of the island. The rocks and hills are so steep, that they have not dared to make a straight road up to the top, but the road on each side of the hills are made in a zigzag manner. No cart or carriage could get up if it was a straight road. It was a Saturday, and being market-day, as we went up the hills we met a number of the inhabitants coming down the hills from the other side of the island to the market, with their eggs, and fowl, and fruit upon panniers, and some in rough carts. The men and women were mostly black, and some neither one nor the other. We spoke to some of them, and found they could speak English pretty well. After we had gone up in this zigzag manner for about two hours, we came upon the sight of Napoleon's grave, down in a valley, from the road running along the edge of a wood, pretty well supplied with some kind of nice trees, but not large ones. After about half-a-mile along the road we descend the vale, at the bottom of which is Napoleon's grave, who was buried here in 1819. About half distance down the hill side is a good sized wooden gate, attached to which is a bell, to be pulled by the visitor, giving notice to the attendant who lives near, and minds the place, that someone is approaching. Having got to the bottom, a man in working dress, a Frenchman, attends upon you, and opens the gate of the enclosure leading to the grave. We got into conversation, asking questions about the great man, and the place and time when he was interred, &c. He politely answered all our questions, and would have answered more if we had asked them. The outer fence is a wooden railing about 10 or 12 yards across, and painted black. Inside this railing (i.e. in the middle), is another railing of iron, almost square, and inside this is a large slab, like a gravestone, under which Napoleon was interred. The weeping willow which we have so often heard about, by Napoleon's grave, consists of two trees, a yard apart, and the trunks are about a foot in diameter, and they send up their branches so high, that if they ever did weep, they have now forgot how. I think they are only the common willow, which we saw was very common on the top of the island. Outside the enclosure is a spring of water called Napoleon's well, from which we all drank, for the honour of the thing. Though Napoleon was buried here, his remains are not there now. The French government, in 1840, requested the English government to allow them to take Napoleon's remains from St Helena to inter them in France, where they were conveyed and interred amid the pomp and circumstance befitting a great nation. His remains had been lying at St. Helena 19 years. After receiving instructions from our guide as to the nearest way to Longwood House – the place where Napoleon lived on the island – we ascended the hill side, and made our round the side of two hills, towards the place. The distance from his grave to the house where he resided is about two miles. When we arrived, the guide of the place, who is also a Frenchman, was ready to receive us. The house, though it contained many rooms, was only one storey high. Our attendant took us through all the rooms, and pointed out which was the reception room, the dining room, the sitting room, the library, the billiard room, the bed room, the dressing room, &c. All the rooms were quite empty, but kept very clean and in good condition. In the room in which the Emperor died, a space is railed off in the middle, and inside, upon a pedestal, is placed a fine marble bust of the Emperor, which I should judge is a very good likeness. Our guide said that this room in which he died was not his usual sleeping room, he was carried into this room just before he died, for the sake of being more in the shade, as in his bed room the sun was too powerful. Shortly after he was moved he breathed his last, and thus ended a life that had been a terror to Europe, and the greatest part of the world. In his bed room I read a notice pasted on the wall as follows: -

“If these walls could speak, and pourtray (sic) the sufferings of the Great Emperor, the agonies they would describe would be most terrible.” This was very likely to be true. That the greatest emperor in the world should be taken prisoner, and brought 5,000 miles from his kingdom, and live in exile, away from his former friends and power, and glory, with the prospect of having to die a prisoner, on a lonely island of the sea, that this should give him great suffering is very natural and likely. After having looked through all the rooms, with heads uncovered, “in deference to a great misfortune,” as our guide said, we left the place, strongly reminded of the passage, “How are the mighty fallen”. In Napoleon’s case this was remarkably illustrated. It has been said that ever since the Battle of Waterloo the French have longed to have their revenge, and if the French were to pay a visit to the Isle of St. Helena, and see how humble the grave, and how plain the house in which their great Emperor spent the last days of his life, I say if the whole of the French nation were to pay a visit here and see all, I should not be surprised if every Frenchman felt a burning determination to avenge Waterloo, and should find some excuse for going to war with England as soon as possible. It is fortunate that St. Helena is 5,000 miles from France, it must be true, “out of sight out of mind,” or we should have had a war with France long ago, in my opinion. On our way back we called at a public house, where we had a rest and refreshment, we then descended the rocky sides of the hills of the island, about four o’clock in the afternoon. In passing through James Town we stayed a little at the barrack gates, and got into conversation with some of the English soldiers. The regiment had been there seven years, and they were expecting orders to go home to England by next mail, about which they seemed in good spirits. While we stood at the gates, a number of soldiers with the band of musicians formed procession to go and bury one of their comrades who had died that morning.

In consequence of the heat of the climate, they bury everyone the same day they die. The cause of his death the sergeant told us was drink, a curse not only in England, but everywhere else it is sold and drunk. The sergeant said they seldom had a death among the soldiers. The climate was very healthy, and upon an average they did not bury more than two in a year, out of a regiment of more than 400 soldiers. Here I saw the longest flight of steps I ever saw in my life, and I think it is the longest in the world. On one side of Lower James Town, to Higher James Town, the rock is so steep, that if you want to go from the lower town to the higher, without going about two miles up the side of the rocky hill, in a zigzag manner, you will have to up these steps, which number 651, the largest number I ever saw or heard of. I went up a part of them, but having had a good day’s ramble up the heights, and it being near the time when we should be on board the vessel, and the top looking no nearer than when I started, I turned down again. We got to the ferry boat which took us on board, after having spent one of the pleasantest days I had ever spent in the voyage. As you look at the island from the deck of the vessel, you can see places cut out of the rock, where guns have been placed ready, should anyone molest the place. At six o’clock p.m., on Saturday, we hoisted anchor, and set sail from the island of St. Helena with rather a rough wind, for the Cape of Good Hope. It appears now that the reason we had called at St. Helena, is to have medical advice for a lady on board who has been ill several days. The doctor belonging the army was sent for while we were exploring the island, and he gave it as his opinion that the case was influenza, with prostration from sea-sickness. Another reason for calling was to see if coal was cheap enough to have some put on board. But it was £5 per ton, so he would not stay to have any.

Saturday, May 17. (sic) – Weather still fair and warm, though breezy.

To be continued.....

The Editorial Team takes this opportunity to thank you all for your support and encouragement and to wish you all every happiness in the coming festive season.

Here’s hoping 2024 brings you all opportunities to breakthrough a genealogical brick wall or two.

*Jan, Linda, Glynda*

*Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand. (Dr Seuss)*





## THE CHRONICLE

**The theme for the next edition is: BRINGING THE PAST INTO A NEW FUTURE**

Submissions close 26th January 2024 and may be emailed to: [chronicle@lmfhg.org.au](mailto:chronicle@lmfhg.org.au)



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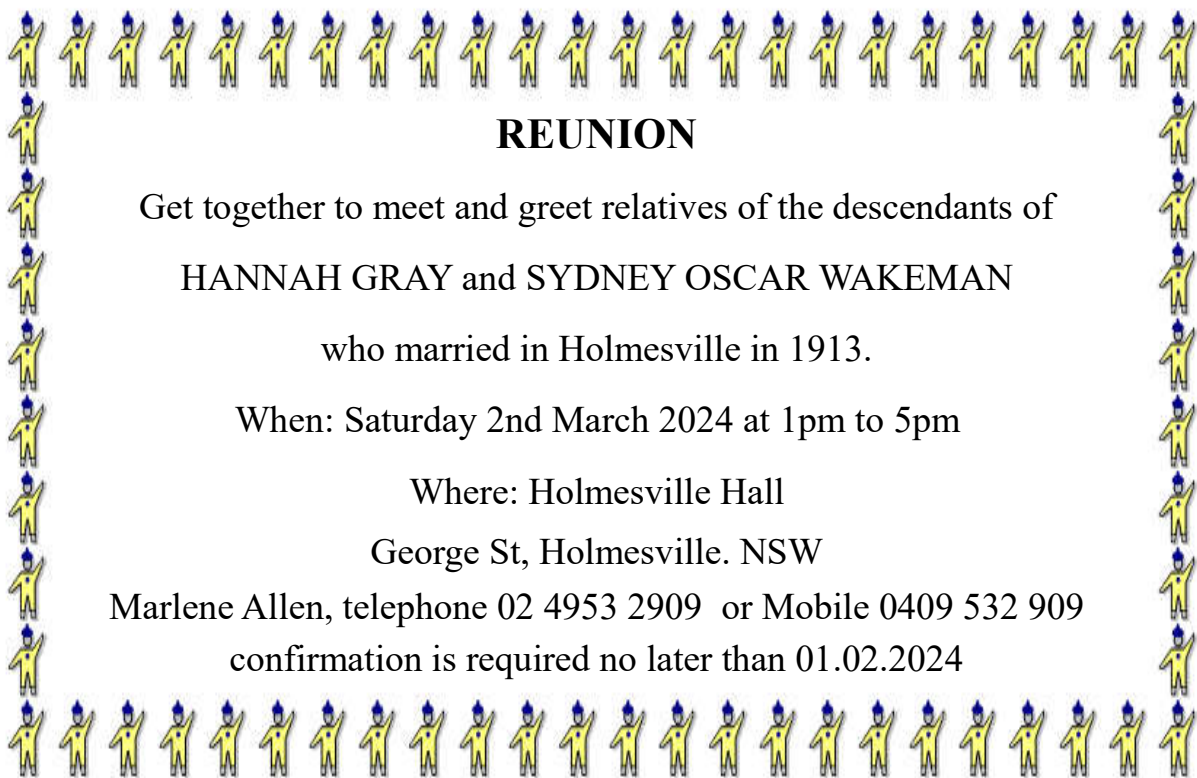
**THE LAKE MACQUARIE FAMILY HISTORY GROUP  
CONDUCTS IT'S MEETINGS ON THE THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH  
(WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE CHRISTMAS MEETING WHICH IS HELD  
ON THE SECOND SATURDAY IN DECEMBER) AT THE  
COMMUNITY HALL, 31B GEORGE STREET, MARMONG POINT.**

**DOORS OPEN AT 10 A.M.**

The Group also opens the hall on the First Wednesday each month from 2pm to 5pm.

Research experienced members are at hand to help with your enquiries.

The Group follows Government Health Guidelines and asks visitors not to attend if unwell.



## REUNION

Get together to meet and greet relatives of the descendants of  
**HANNAH GRAY and SYDNEY OSCAR WAKEMAN**  
who married in Holmesville in 1913.

When: Saturday 2nd March 2024 at 1pm to 5pm

Where: Holmesville Hall

George St, Holmesville. NSW

Marlene Allen, telephone 02 4953 2909 or Mobile 0409 532 909  
confirmation is required no later than 01.02.2024



**To commemorate 160 years since the  
arrival in Australia of**  
*Thomas and Bridget Jennings*  
their descendants are invited  
to a  
**FAMILY REUNION**  
to be held at  
**MEX CLUB**  
*Hanbury St, Mayfield*  
on  
**Saturday 27th January 2024**  
**1.30 - 5.30**  
For more information  
contact Anne Gleeson 0419229079  
agleeson51@gmail.com