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SHOALHAVEN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

TIME TRAVELLER

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OPEN for Research

Sundays 10am – 2pm

1st and 2nd Thursday

each month

10am – 2pm



S.F.H.S. RESEARCH CENTRE

WORLDWIDE ACCESS

LDS AFFILIATE LIBRARY

LOCAL FAMILY FILES

Berry paper films

Computer WIFI

Scanpro / fiche reader

Microfilms / Microfiche / CD's

Free access to Ancestry.com

Free access to FINDMYPAST

Volunteers to assist

Free research to members

Only \$10 per day for visitors

General Meetings

Commencing 1.30pm

1st Saturday of each
month

February to
December

SHOALHAVEN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

Founded in 1985

Honorary Office Bearers 2023 – 2024

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S.F.H.S. 2022 Membership Fees

Single Membership \$40	Family Membership \$50
Aged Pensioner (single) \$30	Aged Pensioner (family) \$40

Memberships are due 1st January and may be renewed at any time, but if not renewed as of 1st March it will be considered lapsed and member benefits will no longer apply

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Duty Volunteers – thank you

Bill, Carolyn, Chris, Elsie, Gwen, Ken, Lorelle, Lynne, Margaret, Marianne, Neville and Sue

Helping others in the library is very rewarding, so if you'd like to help, come along for a couple of hours and see how it works before you commit.

Time Traveller

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Winter is upon us and the weather not conducive to outdoor activities. Why not visit us at the Research Centre? The heater's on, the computers are fired up and the volunteers are keen to assist you with your research. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced researcher, the extensive library, family files and access to Ancestry, Find My Past, the Descendants of Convicts and state archives on the computers at the Research Centre can present a cornucopia of delights and open doors to your family story.

Our regular Picnic at the Point gatherings have unfortunately been adversely affected by inclement weather but with the coming of Spring we should be once again able to enjoy convivial company in the peaceful and picturesque setting of the waterfront at Greenwell Point.

July 20 saw the Christmas in July gathering at Greenwell Point Bowling Club with those present enjoying a lively gathering of members and friends.

Research requests have continued to be received and the expertise of our research officer, Marianne, has assisted many people to uncover their family's past. If you don't have the time or inclination to put together your family tree, why not avail yourself of our research offers. We offer two kinds of research services for those who cannot get to our centre, the standard one dealing with a specific family or problem or the compilation of a Family Tree for those who would like to know their ancestors but are unable to do this themselves.

We are always in need of volunteers for duty when the Research Centre is open. If you would like to experience the joys of volunteering, why not start by joining us for about 3 hours on the fourth Sunday of the month during the Pyree Markets and 'meet & greet' casual visitors to the centre. No expertise is required other than an ability to welcome people and show them around.

Lynne Allen

England is old and small, and the local folks started running out of places to bury people, so they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to the bone house and reuse the grave!

When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realised they had been burying people alive.

So, they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, thread it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie a bell to it.

Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the graveyard shift) to listen for the bell; this someone could be, "Saved by the Bell" or was considered a "Dead Ringer."



From the Editor

Welcome to the August Edition of the Time Traveller. This issue has some very interesting stories especially the one about Myra Taylor-Farrell who was a woman born into the wrong era, I think! Maybe have your cuppa ready for this lengthy read!

Also note that there has been a change in website and email for BDM Transcription Service.

Jenni Carfoot 22/01



XMAS IN JULY 2023 at GREENWELL POINT BOWLING CLUB

WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS

THE S.F.H.S Committee and members extend a warm welcome to our newest members.

David Inman
Fiona Arnold
Vicki Sweeney
Linda Knight

Kerry Mahony
James McIlwraith
Judith Watson

Mr and Mrs Henry
Julie Lunnon
Mrs A Briggs

IN SEARCH OF THESE ANCESTORS

Interest Names	Details	Member #
Inman		23/04
McKain		23/04
Baliley	1822 Coolangatta Estate/ Brououghton Creek	23/05
Callaghan	1829-1830. Coolangatta /Nowra	23/05
Collins	1828. Berrima/Nowra	23/05
Woods	1835. Died 1884 Greenwell Point (Collins)	23/05
Fleming	1857-1897 Pyree, Crookhaven NSW	23/07
McIlwraith	1840-1897 Kiama, Kangaroo Valley NSW	23/07
Hawken	John. 1853 Greenwell Pt -1930 Tweed Heads. M 1874 Sarah Emily Jarrett	23/09
Hawken	Emma Louise. 1881-1965 Shoalhaven	23/09
Hawken	John. 1825 CON Eng - 1895 Coolangatta	23/09
Henry	Pre 1900 Nowra , Nowra hill	23/08
Robertson	Pre 1900 Nowra , Numbaa	23/08
Middleton	Pre 1900 Nowra	23/08
Senior	Pre 1900 Numbaa	23/08
Williams	Pre 1900 Nowra , Brundee	23/08
Alley	North Queensland	23/10
Lancaster		23/10
Doyle	1874+ Ireland & NSW	23/11
M(A)cdonald	1840-1970 Sydney, Shoalhaven, Illawarra	23/12
Rossiter	19C	23/12
Rose	19c & 20c Millthorpe NSW	23/12
Jackson	19c & 20C Millthorpe NSW	23/12
Conroy	19c & 20C NSW	23/12
Nicholls	19C & 20C NSW Sydney	23/12
Peaty	19C & 20C Western Sydney	23/12
Gibbons	Sydney	23/13
Hutchinson		23/13
Kennedy		23/13
Robertson		23/13

Please direct all enquiries (quoting member number) to:-
PO Box 591 Nowra NSW 2541 Australia OR sfhssecretary@shoalhaven.net.au and your
correspondence will be forwarded to the appropriate member.
In accordance with standard Private Practice and to reduce the risk of spam, members
email addresses are no longer published in the Time Traveller.

RESEARCH REPORT

These families were researched between March & June 2023, if you wish to
contact the client, the research officer can pass on your details.

1. John Martin & Ella May Perceval lived at 129 East St Nowra. Their two daughters married Navy servicemen: Marion Joy in 1962 to Robert Stephen Earle, and Janice Olive in 1962 to Trevor James Leggo.
2. Allan Fleming & Mary Watson & Family; Daniel McIlwraith & Mary Fleming; Henry Hodgkinson & Janet (Jane) Fleming.
3. Murdo Thomson, son of James Thomson & Mary McKenzie, was married twice ; to Susannah Thorburn in 1888 and Elizabeth Hughes in 1899. He died in 1946 – burial place sought.

Research Officer Services

Our Research Officer will undertake research on behalf of paying clients.

The initial \$25 fee covers two hours research and entry level photocopies.

Additional fees may be requested depending on the scope and level of the request.

All enquiries should be addressed to:

The Research Officer
PO Box 591
NOWRA NSW 2541



sfhsresearch@shoalhaven.net.au

S.F.H.S. Research Centre Fees				
Member			Non – Member	
Photocopy (per sheet)	A4	20c	Daily research fee	\$10
	A3	40c	All printing cost as detailed above, except for the following:	
Computer printing (per page)	A4	50c		
Microfilm/Fiche	A4	50c		
SFHS Family Group Sheet (blank)		20c		
SFHS Family Group Sheet (with information)		\$1	Pre-1856 BDM record (Microfilm printout)	\$7
Pre-1856 BDM record (Microfilm printout)		\$5	Family file Certificate Photocopy	\$7
Family file Certificate Photocopy		\$5	Nowra Birth or Death record	\$7
Nowra Birth or Death record		\$5	Photographs via email	\$5

BDM Transcription Service

Our illustrious Secretary received the following email informing us of the change of website and email for BDM Transcription service

Hello everyone,

I am writing to family history groups to let them know that our website and email address have changed. This is because we were suddenly let down by our web server. I was hoping that you would let your members know about this change which is as follows:

- New Website: www.turtleconsolidatedservices.com.au
- New email: colpitts1788@gmail.com

We continue to offer all of our usual services including:

- The NSW BDM Transcription Service
- The State Records Retrieval Service
- The English Certificate Service
- SA BDM Transcripts and a limited Tasmanian BDM service up to 1899
- General research and index searches when necessary

Regards

Laurie (and Lorraine) Turtle

What is an Exchange journal?

While you are immersed in this fascinating journal of ours, I'll tell you more about journals from other societies.

Our Time Traveller journal is sent to all our financial members and to 81 like societies who in turn send their journal to us. Without exception, all these journals contain articles, stories, lessons to be learned, and research queries submitted for publication by their members, with content local to their location the common denominator. They are a fabulous way of getting an inside story on how your ancestors lived and died in their chosen town or locality.

As an example, the latest issue of "Coontin Kin" from the Shetlands, has a transcription of a diary written by John Walker on his voyage to Australia as a cabin passenger on the 'Lord Metcalfe' which sailed from Aberdeen in 1852. John is probably not related to you, but the diary of the voyage is an amazing insight into class divides and, his scornful behaviour towards the "tweendecker" passengers, and even the Minister's wife. Once he recovered from his seasickness, his disgraceful attitude towards the people for whom he held no respect is noted in the diary as all being great fun.

If your ancestors travelled on this ship then you really must read this.

Recent events like covid, and a lack of storage space in overcrowded rooms have forced most societies to send their journals as an email attachment.

These exchanged journals are all loaded periodically on to the hard drive attached to our computers in our research library at Pyree, for members to view when they visit.

Most emailed journals can be forwarded to members on request, but a few societies insist that their journal remains in our library only for viewing by our membership.

Exchange journals are another avenue for research and are a great way of making contact with other researchers who may turn out to be related to you.

Journals which we receive as hard copy are available for members to borrow free of charge to read at their leisure in their very comfy armchair at home.

Next time you come to do some research, or just come to catch up with us, have a read through some journals from your area of interest & see what you are missing.

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky.

The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait to see if they woke up!

Hence the custom of "Holding a Wake"

She Died in Broken HillOr Did She??

When Harold Bridge died in Broken Hill on 25th January 1914 of typhoid, his wife Caroline Annie (nee Grant) was listed in the electoral roll as a dressmaker, living in Thirteenth Street Broken Hill.

Caroline was a bit of a mystery, so searching for any information, I found her name listed online in the database of, "Record of Patients Adelaide hospital" which is remarkable in its detail. Caroline lived at South Terrace Adelaide, was aged 18, single and Roman Catholic. Admitted on 30th October 1879 with Hysteria, she was discharged the following day, "cured". She was a servant and was born in South Australia.

These hospital records show for each patient, their place of birth, and if not in Australia, the ship of arrival and length of residence in the Colony. Given the difficulties in finding South Australian immigration records, this is a valuable resource. For example: Sarah Daly, married, aged 47, living at Kermode Street, was admitted on 24th October 1879 suffering from Cirrhosis of the liver and died the same day. She was born in Galway and had been in the Colony 13 years having arrived on the ship 'Standard' in 1866.

When I was searching for Caroline's death, I found no record in New South Wales or South Australia, but a death found in the Victoria BDM index seemed likely, so I paid and downloaded the certificate, to find that it was my Caroline. She had died on 2nd August 1919 at 14th Street Mildura, of pneumonic influenza (Spanish flu) aged 58 years and was buried at Mildura the next day.

The lesson to be learned here is that given the location of Broken Hill, essential services were often to be found in South Australia or Victoria, so always try to think outside the box when faced with brick walls.

Every fact we discover leads to another question... why was Caroline in Mildura? that's another story.

Marienne Faull 02/18



Totally unrelated to the above story, Marienne found this gorgeous headstone in her travels through cemeteries!!

Leonie Louise Sharp (Edwards)

Born: 14 Feb 1979

Died: 16 Jun 2002

Location: Mudgeeraba Cemetery, Gold Coast

Myra Taylor-Farrell: The “odd duck” Mosman mum who became Australia’s most prolific female inventor.



By KATHRYN BARTON (Mosman Collective)

It was Australia’s entry into WWI that saw a young widow, Myra Taylor, brace herself as she stood at North Head on a windy night in 1915. There she tested her rayless, light-throwing device to see if it might benefit the Allies.

She hoped its reach was impressive, but there was no way for her to measure the distance. The unnamed light had no tell-tale beam to betray its source.

Reports soon reached Mrs Taylor that the light had confused the crew aboard a ship some 700 miles – 1,127 kilometres – out to sea. The alarmed captain had contacted the lighthouse keeper at South Head to ascertain what was happening. He was none the wiser.

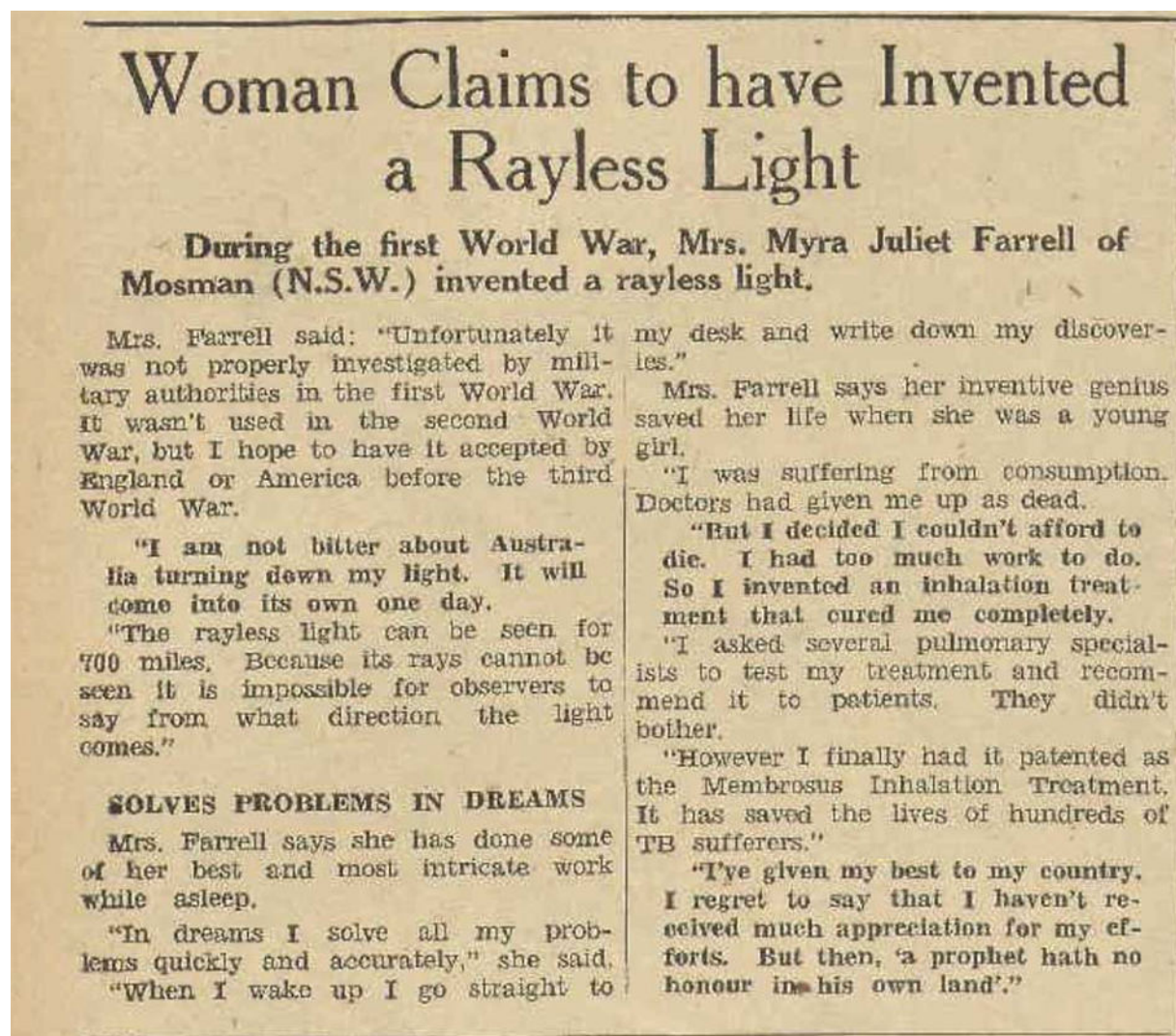
Speculation grew, but the kerfuffle abruptly ended when the Department of Defence, newly thrown into the world war arena and interested in the device, simply confiscated the plans and prototype.

Unbelievably, the disappointment was just a blip for Mrs Taylor, who was busy filing patents for inventions to ease soldiers’ daily discomfort, give medics a superior way to bind wounds, and a new method of mitigating frontline injury and death.



Myra Taylor (later Farrell) was a Mosman resident who became one of Australia’s most prolific inventors.

The blatant confiscation, or theft, of her work would become a theme for Mrs Taylor, but this was not her most significant stumbling block. She was dismissed as a barely educated, weird little woman who tinkered away in a shed filled with chemicals and all manner of things from which she produced the stuff of dreams. Literally.



Woman Claims to have Invented a Rayless Light

During the first World War, Mrs. Myra Juliet Farrell of Mosman (N.S.W.) invented a rayless light.

Mrs. Farrell said: "Unfortunately it was not properly investigated by military authorities in the first World War. It wasn't used in the second World War, but I hope to have it accepted by England or America before the third World War."

"I am not bitter about Australia turning down my light. It will come into its own one day."

"The rayless light can be seen for 700 miles. Because its rays cannot be seen it is impossible for observers to say from what direction the light comes."

SOLVES PROBLEMS IN DREAMS

Mrs. Farrell says she has done some of her best and most intricate work while asleep.

"In dreams I solve all my problems quickly and accurately," she said.

"When I wake up I go straight to my desk and write down my discoveries."

Mrs. Farrell says her inventive genius saved her life when she was a young girl.

"I was suffering from consumption. Doctors had given me up as dead."

"But I decided I couldn't afford to die. I had too much work to do. So I invented an inhalation treatment that cured me completely."

"I asked several pulmonary specialists to test my treatment and recommend it to patients. They didn't bother."

"However I finally had it patented as the Membrosus Inhalation Treatment. It has saved the lives of hundreds of TB sufferers."

"I've given my best to my country. I regret to say that I haven't received much appreciation for my efforts. But then, 'a prophet hath no honour in his own land'."

Myra's "Rayless Light" invention was said to have travelled 700 miles in 1915. It was rejected by the Australian Defence Department.

Sleep on it.

As a child, Myra Taylor was markedly different from her peers. Never knowing it had a name, she had a rare neurological condition called somnambulant writing. It allowed her to focus on an idea as she slipped into sleep and had an invention developed or problem solved by morning.

While still asleep, she'd get out of bed and feverishly record her ideas on anything suitable, including walls and bedsheets. Her scrawling included complex maths solutions, technical drawings, specifications, and detailed prototype plans. Add to this a shopping list, and she was done.

However, by morning she needed a mirror to decipher the lot. She had written the words backwards, starting her notes from the right-hand side of the surface.

“Rifle, shell, and machine-gun proof.”

Mrs Taylor’s next invention attracted even more attention. Her Defence Fence had survived the lengthy assessment process, from thousands of culled entries, following the department’s public shout-out for ideas.

The Defence Fence consisted of two steel shields with sturdy, coiled springs wedged and welded between them. The department pronounced it “rifle, shell, and machine-gun proof”. Despite the lofty endorsement and resultant media, it was confiscated.

It seemed the ‘M J Taylor’ on the application was female, seen as an odd duck, at least in the eyes of the war cabinet.

Myra had more luck with her “stitch-less button”, known as the press-stud, today, and her “stitch-less hook and eye”, which allowed soldiers to rapidly don and doff the now pull-apart fronts of their khakis. So, the department was happy with Mrs Taylor’s inventions as long as she stayed in her lane and did not veer into engineering traffic.



Myra Taylor-Farrell, photographed here in later life, was seen as an “odd duck” by many, despite inventing scores of life-changing gadgets that are used today.

Early life.

Maria Julia Welsh was born in County Cork, Ireland, to a clergyman, Marcus, and the daughter of an Australian engineer, Harriett, though some reports cite Mrs Welsh as the engineer.

Her father met and married her Australian mother in New Zealand; the newlyweds returned to Ireland, later losing their house to arson. Not long after, the family took an arduous trip by ship to Adelaide in 1880 when Myra was two years old.



Myra emigrated to Australia from Ireland in 1880, with her family settling in Broken Hill.

Following disembarkation, the Welshes quickly learned that silver had been discovered at Broken Hill. The Welshes, bringing religion to the area, set

up camp in the mining town. They opened St Peter's School in nearby Silverton, where six Welsh children were eventually educated.

At age 10, Myra startled her mother with her first invention, the self-locking safety pin.

Seeing her mother's reaction, Myra joyfully pronounced: "I can do something that you cannot do!" Sadly, no one thought to patent the ingenious device, the forerunner to those in household drawers today. Later, in what must have been an arresting Deja Vu moment for Myra, her five-year-old also presented her mother with a prototype. The little girl was unhappy that her dolls never looked comfortable, no matter how she laid them out.

Death sentence rejected.

As a young woman, and likely due to the family's proximity to the mines, Myra contracted lead poisoning. She slowly became bedbound and gravely ill after the poison had reached her lungs. Her parents took her to a specialist in Adelaide, whose prognosis was dire.

But Myra rejected the assessment, developing an inhalation system – a type of nebuliser – still seen in hospitals today. Her plan included an apparatus to clarify seven secret ingredients that, when combined in various prescriptions, forced into tablet form, and then burned, its fumes would clear the mucus, kill bacteria, and clean and heal the lungs.

Given up by Specialists
yet freed by
MEMBROSUS
(Regd.)
Inhalation Remedy
from
**LUNG
TROUBLE**

Remarkable Story of an Amazing Recovery.
Thirty years ago Mrs. Myra Farrell contracted lead poisoning, which developed into T.B. She steadily became worse, haemorrhaged frequently, had a very hacking cough for hours on end, no sleep, not able to eat, and very weak, given up by two Specialists as a hopeless case. Within a week of commencing to treat herself with Membrosus Inhalation Treatment she was able to get out of bed, and within two years she was certified as cured. There has never been any recurrence of the disease, and to-day she is in perfect health.

"Membrosus" has been proved to be equally effective in the treatment of all cases of—
**ASTHMA : CATARRH
BRONCHITIS**

Send for particulars and copies of letters from patients, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, mentioning your complaint, to Mr. C. E. MUIR, of IRVINE LTD., Chemists, 181 Victoria Road, Drummoyne, Sydney. Sole distributors for Australia and New Zealand.

Mrs. Farrell when suffering from Lung trouble and haemorrhage, caused by lead poisoning.

13 years after! A Sydney doctor passed her as one of the healthiest women he had ever examined.

An advertisement for Myra's Membrosus Treatment, which became hugely popular as a treatment for Tuberculosis in the 1920's.

Within a week, she was able to dress. Within three years, she was pronounced cured. Myra's generosity and devotion to humanity were evident as she began her regular train trips to Victoria Hospital and Sanatorium in the Blue Mountains to treat desperately ill patients with her Membrosus Inhalation Treatment. For years she was inundated with letters from grateful patients.

At the time, she could not have known that her device was yet to become even more personal.

The dying Scotsman.

1905 was a big year for Myra Welsh. She had registered one patent, designed new devices, or improved others' inventions, and had met a young Scotsman, William Taylor. Her soon-to-be fiancé was already showing signs of tuberculosis, or consumption, as it was called.

Doctors gave Mr Taylor three months to live not long after the pair met. Resurrecting her treatment, Miss Welsh began intensively nursing him. He had shown significant improvement within a year, and they were married.



2 Cowles Rd. Myra's first home in Mosman. She later moved to Prince Albert St.

The Taylors lived at 2 Cowles Road, Mosman, and had two children, Lavie Curtis and William Paterson Welsh. During Mr Taylor's illness, a three-month-old Lavie contracted the disease. Her mother altered the baby's prescription, then administered the discrete formulas to both patients. Later, X-rays showed no sign Lavie had ever been so afflicted.

Mr Taylor died in 1912, seven years after they met. His wife had gifted him two children and much more time. By now, it had been mainly Mrs Taylor's patents, licences, and royalties that had kept the family financially stable.

After her husband's death, the Taylors moved to Perth, Bondi, Paddington, and then back to Mosman, settling at 27 Prince Albert Street.

The music man.

In 1919, Mrs Taylor, aged 41, married William George Farrell – an accomplished musician and director of the Empress Orchestra in the city. The couple had a son the following year: the much-lauded, child-prodigy violinist George Welsh Farrell, who at age 14 made his debut at a Sydney Town Hall concert in 1935, launching an impressive career.

Twenty-four patents by 1915.

With WWI still raging, the female workforce ballooned as women took on roles such as munitions factory workers, farmers, administrators, firefighters, tram conductors, and more.

Spurred on by the suffragette movement and emboldened in their new male-dominated roles, women began loudly demanding more practical undergarments. They were fed up with being strapped into cage-like, never-laundered corsets with multiple, bone or steel rod panel supports at the back, front and sides.



Myra's son, George Welsh Farrell, was a music prodigy who made his solo Violin debut at Sydney Town Hall aged just 14.

Western women wore the corset in much the same format for 500 years. Over its life, the simple addition of lacing at the back dialled up the torture. 'Tightlacing' to achieve the desired 17-to-19-inch (45-to-51cm) waist caused displaced internal organs; broken ribs; collapsed lungs; bruised organs; breathlessness; dizziness and fainting; spinal problems; chronic gastrointestinal issues. It also stunted growth in children who – strapped into the corset as young as three years old – became permanently damaged.



Myra Taylor - Farrell invented Australia's first boneless corset, changing the way women dressed forever.

However, it was still advertised as providing support and good posture and made women appear "more attractive, refined, and intelligent."

Enter Mrs Taylor with her washable, boneless corset, probably best described in The White Ribbon article of March 1916:

"The Camisole Stayette is a garment which is so constructed as to perfect a good figure and improve a bad one."

Myra Taylor offered Australian lingerie giant Berlei the patent and a manufacturing licence. They provided an insulting deal, which she roundly rejected.

Once again, she had been duped by deceitful tactics and betrayal of good faith. Berlei had set about designing their own. However, Mrs Farrell ensured manufacturing, marketing, and sales began in earnest in England. These items were soon on sale in Australia, in direct competition with the yet-to-launch Berlei copy.

Patently talented.

Miss Myra Welsh's first invention was patented in 1905. Her ingenious mechanical tracing machine could copy single size sewing patterns from books directly onto the fabric, altering the size. Seamstresses and tailors could now offer made-to-measure garments more efficiently, faithful to the original design.

Mrs Farrell invented the baby sling, allowing mothers to 'wear' their babies, freeing them to go about their day. The knapsack, worn at the front of the body, prompted American commentary, which suggested the inventor had stolen the pouch idea from lady kangaroos.

Myra demonstrating her revolutionary Baby Sling with a local mum, featured in Pix Magazine in 1950.



In 1931, her Surfix facelift lifted the skin by “mechanical means” and promised to do away with the aged look.

“Her theory is that wrinkles and sagging occur as the result of tired muscles,” the editorial ran. “The face gets more work and is more exposed than almost any other body part.”

SURFIX Facial Muscle Lifters

*The Discovery of
Mrs. Myra Farrell*

**SPECIAL OFFER
FOR ONE MONTH
TO INTRODUCE
“SURFIX”**

*A £5/5/- Outfit
Complete for*

£3'3'--

Doing away with facial surgical
operations, massage, face patting,
and other objectionable treat-
ments.
Will guarantee to erase years
from your facial expression in a
few minutes and flatten out wrin-
kles and lift the ugly jowls and
double chin.

BEFORE “SURFIX” TREATMENT

AFTER “SURFIX” TREATMENT

Mrs Farrell said the muscles were lifted to rest them, allowing the “cell tissues to be built up again.” The device was worn for several months “for mild sagging”. The Surfix was a rubber band attached to plaster pads at the temple, each shaped to support a specific problem muscle.

Mrs Farrell’s collapsible, foldable washing line could hold 280 ft (85m) of laundry on its 6-ft by 12 ft (3.6m by 1.8m) area. The drying rack saw the end of people without backyards drying washing on rocks.

She then turned her attention to the more-or-less permanent pole-to-pole backyard clothesline, which wasn’t known for its stability given its ineffective load-bearing attributes. The time-worn design consisted of two poles anchored on either end, each with a floating crossbar strung with rope east to west and susceptible to collapse. The Farrell clothesline kept the two poles and crossbars, but stability was now assured under the design’s better weight-bearing properties. She ran her ropes north to south on shorter lengths, allowing laundry to be hung evenly, and the ropes remained taut.

Myra’s Ointment for flour disease (caused by fungus-infested flour) was developed after a commercial baker and neighbour – admitting that the strange lady was her last resort – sought the inventor’s help. By this time, she was covered in festering wounds and severely depressed.

A test patch of the magic cream on her wrist began destroying the fungus within hours. As Mrs Farrell prescribed, the woman took regular hot baths, patted herself dry, and then applied the Ointment liberally before wrapping herself in a sheet to sleep. This she did religiously and was soon cured.



Myra's washing line was a game-changer for housewives, able to hold two baskets of wet clothes.

Mrs Farrell invented the linoleum clip, a much simpler way of laying flooring, and gave people the option of sidestepping the cobbler with her attachable sole. “[It] will fit any boot or shoe and requires no tacking on,” she said. The “automatic window” opened and closed at the press of a button was one of hers.



Myra Taylor-Farrell photographed with grand daughter Jennifer in 1939.

She had success with her wheat sampler and weigher and her machine for picking and packing fruit, which ensured fruit arrived at its destination unbruised and untouched by human hands. It was tested on “the most vulnerable fruit”, the mulberry.

Her collapsible, rigid, folding hood could fit any vehicle, which she fitted to a “perambulator” for presentation. These have been continuously in use since. The hood provided stellar protection from the elements and “free ventilation, an automatic air purifier and cooler, which can be adjusted to any requirements [with] its principle a form of condensation”.

Only 11 of her eventual 32 patent applications were well-received and registered in Australia. Mrs Taylor bemoaned the obstacles she faced in moving things along:

“It is so difficult to get anything done in Australia, and we are so slow and cautious about assimilating new ideas,” she told The White Ribbon.

In a rare description of Myra Taylor, the newspaper had this to say:

“One would expect to find the person responsible for all this ingenious work to be rather difficult, but Mrs Taylor is quite the reverse when one succeeds in making her talk of herself and her doings. Her manner is simple, kindly, and affable. She is feminine, fair, and plump, with appealing blue eyes and a brilliant colouring, which comes and goes as she warms to her subject, and a soft, slow voice.”

The Star Amphitheatre in Balmoral was built for the Messiah’s second coming in 1922.



While Mrs Farrell still tinkered away in her backyard shed during her early life in Mosman, it became apparent that by 1922 she had sought a broader church. She became well known in theosophical circles and gravitated towards the Order of the Star in the East’s “system of living”, which had revived aspects of the occult.

She took out a subscription to help fund The Star Amphitheatre at Balmoral, completed in 1922. The grand structure would cost 16,000 pounds (now about one million dollars).

Devotees built this to welcome to Australia the apolitical, psychic, humanist, guru, and leader of the Star of the East movement, 17-year-old Indian national Jiddu Krishnamurti. He was eagerly greeted by those who'd forked out small fortunes to have their name etched into one of the arena's stone benches, allegedly for posterity. The theatre, which sat at the northern end of Balmoral above Edwards Beach, was demolished in 1951 to make way for a block of flats.



An accomplished artist in later life, many of Myra's works have disappeared.

Studying under a stage-scenery painter, Mrs Farrell also became an accomplished painter after the style of the Impressionists. Though many of her smaller paintings have survived, larger pieces did not – besides the most well-known of her larger artworks, Seascapes, painted around 1938.

The Egyptian angle.

Mrs Farrell kept an Egyptian mummy's foot on her Mosman mantelpiece, the provenance of which is unknown. However, by the close of WWI, illegal archaeological digs had sprung up in Egypt, egged on by a healthy, global black-market for mummified body parts and sundry trinkets.

After her death, the gruesome item was dumped in the rubbish, where it was discovered by the garbage man, who took it to the police, though records of any formal investigation could not be located.

Myra Taylor-Farrell died in Mosman in 1957, aged 79.

Only scant details of her patents and designs are accessible. Of course, gaining a patent required secrecy and careful vigilance lest one's designs be copied ahead of a tick from the Patent Office – a lesson she had well learned. This may account for the elusive detail.

Death of a quiet achiever.

Myra Juliet Farrell died at her Prince Albert Street, Mosman home on 8 March 1957, aged 79. The house was last sold on 8 March 2018 – the 61st anniversary of her death. The date is also reserved for International Women's Day. A search of Australia's notable people who have been immortalised via a plaque, statue, street name, or another monument – or made it to official International Women's Day lists – revealed no acknowledgement of Myra Farrell.



Residents of NSW 1915 (Who owned a Motor Car)

We have in our library at Pyree a data cd called "Residents of New South Wales 1915". It was compiled by Terry Callaghan in 2012 from the *"Holderness Motorist's Guide for New South Wales. 1915 – 'Being a complete record in numerical order of all Cars and Owners registered in New South Wales and containing much other valuable information for Motorists'" Published by Holderness Motors Ltd. Rawson Place, Sydney.* The original data contains the provision of the Finance Tax 1914 applicable on all motor vehicles and the amount of tax payable per horsepower, listing the technical details eg cylinder measurements, gear ratios and in most cases the price.

The contents are listed in Alpha and Town order, and the Nowra & Ulladulla entries follow:

Surname	First Name	Address	Make Car	HP	Price £	Made In	Seats	Reg No	Notes
Bobart	Albert	Moss St.	Talbot	12		England		4570	
Curwood	Alwyn W.	Berry St	Ford	20	180-195	Canada	2-5	11498	
Elder	M. B.		Brasier	12-15		France		176	
Ewing	Thomas	Berry St	Renault	10-13	525	France	3	3699	
Harrison	George		Cadillac	40-50		U.S.A.		355	
Harrison	George		Cadillac	40-50		U.S.A		13231	
Harrison	George	Moss St	Cadillac	25-35		U.S.A		6542	
Harrison	George	Moss St	Star	15	515	England	5 electric	138	dynamo lighting
Harrison	George	Moss St	Cadillac	30		U.S.A.		6730	
Harrison	George	Moss St	Star	20-25	645	England	5 electric	2750	dynamo lighting
Harrison	George		Cadillac	30		U.S.A.		3999	
Harrison	George	Moss St	Minerva	28-40		Belgium		965	
Harrison	George	Moss St	Cadillac	30		U.S.A.		3289	
Hill	Douglass B.	Moss St.	Metz	22	190	U.S.A	3	8983	
Molong	Matthew J.	Berry St.	De Dion	8		France		725	
Poucet	Frederick	Bomaderry	Peugeot	8	280	France	2	1525	
Priddle	William J	Beaumont	Deasy	18-24		England		13077	
Rogalsky	George	Moss St	Cadillac	30		U.S.A		3290	

Ross	D'Arcy J.		De Dion	6		France		12185	aka De Dion Boulton
Saban	Herbert H.	Berry St	. Ford	20	180-195	Canada	2-5	11371	
Watt	William	Wandanian	B.S.A.	15-20	500-525	England	3-5	2203	
Woodhill	Charles R.		Austin	10	445	England	3	4429	
Pearce	Alfred E.	North St. Ulladulla	De Dion	12-14		France		680	aka De Dion Boulton

A quick look at Trove reveals an advertisement in the Nowra Leader (NSW: 1909 - 1939), on Friday 14 April 1911, on page 3- *“FOR SALE. 8 HP Single Cylinder De Dion motor car. Price £100. A bargain. Apply; DR. BOBART, Moss Street, Nowra.”*

We know that a find in our research can lead to further questions, and mine here is “did Matthew J Molong of Berry Street Nowra purchase the car from Dr Bobart in 1911? It’s not a ‘Need to know’, but definitely a ‘Nice to know’ if you are doing research on Matthew Molong or Dr Bobart.

Marienne Faull 02/18

Fake News?

21st Century social media brings fake news to us constantly – but did it exist in 1863?

It wasn’t called fake news, but so often a report in the local newspaper would be from a witness account, or from a friend of a friend, or whatever the person telling the story wanted to write.

So, in the case of James Mcleod Robertson, do we believe what the newspaper reported, or do we go from the facts to hand and remain in the dark?

The death record held in SFHS library states that James died of pulmonary disease on 7th January 1863, aged 46 and was buried the next day in the Church of England portion of the Tomerong cemetery, witnessed by Henry Doig and James Parnell who was his employer and also the informant. His parent’s names were unknown as was his birthplace and it was noted he was unmarried.

On Tuesday **21 October 1862, the Examiner (Kiama, NSW : 1859 - 1862)**, reported on page 2: *“SHOALHAVEN (FROM CORRESPONDENT OF MERCURY) At Ulladulla a person of the name of Robertson, met with a serious accident yesterday (Tuesday). He was on horseback on his way to the Nowra Court-house, when about 150 yards from Mr Kent's his horse stumbled, and he was thrown against a log lying at the side of the road (a late windfall from one of the overhanging trees), and seriously injured. His head must have come into contact with the log, as he has a fearful deep gash on his head and is quite insensible. Dr.*

Reed was in immediate attendance, assisted by Dr. Alley, who lost no time in hastening to the relief of the unfortunate. This man has a wife and family at Tamarang. Great fears are entertained of his recovery. Had the municipality not been restrained by Mr. Berry's injunction from acting, the cause of the accident, the log, would have been removed."

Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 - 1954), Saturday 24 January 1863, p1 *On the 7th instant, at Tomerong, New South Wales, Mr. J. M. Robertson, son of the late Captain Robertson, of Edinburgh, regretted by all who knew him.*

Just a few weeks before his death on 7th January 1863, James made a Will (on 5TH December 1862) in which he stated he was born in Edinburgh and appointed the Rev Richard William Young of Shoalhaven as his executor.

As the heir to the estate of their father James Robertson, late Captain of the 79th Highlanders, he left his entire estate to his younger brother Robert Robertson of Warwick County of Lambton Upper Canada. His estate on 20th January 1964 was sworn at £5. [NSW Probate S1-5899.]

Every fact we discover while researching can lead to more questions, and sometimes there never is an answer. No records have been found of a marriage or the births of any children to him, and although his father's military career is well documented, evidence of James time as a soldier has not been found. He could have married overseas prior to civil registration, but if he did have a wife and family, why did they not benefit from his estate? If any of our readers can shed any light on this, we'd love to hear from you.

Marianne Faull 02/18

Learn from the Library.

New to the Library

The Tomerong Cemetery book no. LH 4822

This booklet has been researched from various sources by our able research officer and encompasses the burials within the Tomerong cemetery. Interesting to note that the Tomerong district covered, at the time, Wandandian, Tippet Hill, Rosebank and Coonacutta; most folk today would be unaware of these places. Of amusement is the note that some locals residing in the area now, had no idea that they lived within close proximity to this cemetery. An interesting read for those who are 'into' history of this area.

Misfortune or Fraud book no. LH 4823

Illawarra and the 1840's Depression by Lorraine Neate

Interesting stories relating to people within all walks of the community who "went broke" during the harsh times of the 1840's depression – some by misfortune from being gullible to

the wives of entrepreneurs and others from their own bewilderments and high hopes. These insolvent folk usually spent time behind bars, with many of them becoming repeat offenders, on their release.

Published 2023

Nineteenth-Century Dapto. Booklet no. LH 4824

W.G.McDonald. Illawarra Historical Society.

A collection of notes and stories of, and from the Dapto area from early days around 1816 and the development of this township, to the mid 1960's.

Published 1976

Gallipoli Diaries book no. 4825

The Anzacs' own story day by day. Jonathan King.

These are stories written by the troops within the trenches at Anzac Cove as they live from day to day and the trials that beset them as they work through their daily activities. They talk of the deprivations of warmth, food and water, dry spaces in which to work, contacts with their family and friends and the various health issues that caused so much angst. Comments are made about the stench from the dying and the wounded, incessant sounds of gunfire and war-fare and the sights of the goriness of fighting. Many times, there was interaction between opposing sides; perhaps exchange of cigarettes or food, and many times the sounds of music being played by soldiers during solitude times.

Entries include a 'Lest We Forget' Roll of Honour including complete lists of Australians and New Zealanders who were killed at Gallipoli.

Published 2006

Illawarra Pioneers book no. 4826

Pre 1900. (Compiled and edited by Illawarra Family History Group Inc.)

The introduction by Dr. Winifred Mitchell gives a brief history of the Illawarra area up to the industrialisation of the Port Kembla area. Recognised early pioneers of the Wollongong area are listed alphabetically; some with references to their early endeavours, and some carrying references to their date of birth, death; industry pursuit; religion and most with a spouse recognition. Very easy to follow, with spouse references with the index.

Published 1988

Books available in the library

ARROWS of HOPE

Selected Convict Stories Volumes 1. 2. 3.

(compiled by) – The Descendants of Convicts Group 1999

These are stories of convicts; of why they left England, or were forced to leave their homes. This was during a time of rapid change in England with industrialisation growing and movement of people from rural pursuits to the bigger cities. Most folk started life in very conventional ways – rural, military, service; and then had ‘brain-snaps’ and committed a crime, or two. Many of these crimes carried death penalties and later, many being commuted to transportation.

These books tell the circumstances of some of these individual folk; some going on to lead productive and recognised public lives within the various colonies of Australia; others marrying into society and maintaining themselves and their families; and others continuing to reoffend. An interesting history of society of the time and the emotions evoked by the reader.

The authors are authenticated descendants from these convicts. Of interest is that many of these authors strike similar ‘brick walls’, to those we encounter in our own daily research.

A good point is the alphabetical list of the presented convicts appearing in the index.

Sydney Burial Ground 1819 – 1901

(Elizabeth and Devonshire Streets) and History of Sydney’s Early Cemeteries from 1788.

The book carries the history of early burial grounds in Sydney Town prior to 1800, which have been the subject of much speculation. Some early settlers chose to have their own private burial grounds within their own properties and other burials were ‘willy- nilly’ stacked on top of others in public burial sites. This caused a huge crowding problem within the developing colony as most of the approved burial grounds for various religious sects were accessed from Devonshire Street.

It was necessary to have a License to Bury from 1869 and it is estimated that more than 30,000 people were buried in this Sydney Burial Ground up to the time of closure in 1891.

To make way for the expanding metropolis, the graves were relocated; many to Bunnerong, Rookwood, South Head, Gore Hill, Waverly, Golburn, Cootamundra and Kincumber.

This book carries Re-internment index information, transcribed Monumental Inscriptions, exhumations in the 1880-90 period, official records and registers for many of the re-located remains. The monumental inscriptions from Bunnerong are listed numerically and the reader will be rewarded by their search.