



Issue 134  
April 2024

SHOALHAVEN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

# TIME TRAVELLER

ISSN 2207 – 919X

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## OPEN for Research

Sundays 10am – 2pm

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday

each month

10am – 2pm

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## General Meetings

Commencing 1.30pm

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each  
month

February to  
December

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S.F.H.S. RESEARCH CENTRE

WORLDWIDE ACCESS

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Microfilms / Microfiche / CD's

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**Only \$10 per day for visitors**

# SHOALHAVEN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

Founded in 1985

## Honorary Office Bearers 2024 – 2025

President	Lynne Allen
Vice Presidents	Carolyn Howard
Secretary	Marianne Faull
Treasurer	Sue Shore
Librarian	Ken Smith
Journal Editor	Jenni Carfoot
Committee	Neville Bray Jill Darnell Vivien Jones Gwen Smith
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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 1<sup>st</sup> January and may be renewed at any time, but if not renewed as of 1<sup>st</sup> 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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## From the Editor

Where has this year gone???? We are in our 3<sup>rd</sup> month and quickly approaching our 4<sup>th</sup>!!!

Our new committee were elected and not much has changed except that Ken Smith is our librarian.

There's some food for thought on page 6 regarding Griffith Genealogical and Historical Society! There would not be a SFHS if not for the tireless volunteers and every year we ask for new members to join the committee.

We were also fortunate enough to have our Patron Fiona Phillips MP attend our AGM and help draw the lucky door prize won by Jill Darnell.

Please continue to send in your stories no matter how big or small.



*Jenni Carfoot 22/01*

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2023 was a more settled year as society began to open up and people slowly gained confidence to resume a less fearful and more socially active life. It is pleasing that attendance at general meetings has increased and we have once more been able to enjoy the company of like-minded people over afternoon tea. We have taken our first tentative steps to reintroduce the guest speaker program and those present at the November meeting were fascinated by the presentation about the little-known Empire Air Training School at the RAAF Base, Wagga Wagga by retired RAAF Wing Commander Tony Wennerbom. Increased attendance at meetings will ensure reinstatement of our guest speaker program.

Members enjoyed the monthly Picnic at the Park at Titania Park throughout the year and these picnics will continue in 2024. They are a very pleasant way of connecting with other members in a relaxed, sociable environment.

We recently purchased 6 new filing cabinets to replace the tired and mismatched set of cabinets at the Pyree Research Centre and Committee members, led by our secretary, the indefatigable Marianne Faull, have worked hard to install the cabinets, sort through the contents of the old cabinets and transfer materials. The bookcases have been emptied, repositioned, and repacked to give the library area a fresh, uncluttered look.

I would like to remind you that Ancestry.com and FindMyPast are still available in our rooms for use, free of charge to members, and we continue our affiliation with Familysearch.org which enables our members to view restricted documents in our research rooms. We also have an extensive library of books and sets of microfiche and film that are not available online. Please visit the research centre if you live nearby and take advantage of our wonderful archives. And the support and expertise of our volunteers

*Lynne Allen*

## SFHS Inc. 2024 AGM Management Committee Election

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE			
Position	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
President	Lynne Allen	Carolyn Howard	Jill Darnell
Vice President	Carolyn Howard	Marienne Faull	Robert Howard
Treasurer	Sue Shore	Marienne Faull	Carolyn Howard
Secretary	Marienne Faull	Carolyn Howard	Lynne Allen
GENERAL COMMITTEE			
Librarian	Ken Smith	Jenni Carfoot	Marienne Faull
Journal Editor	Jenni Carfoot	Lynne Allen	Marienne Faull
Committee	Neville Bray	Vivien Jones	Ken Smith
Committee	Vivien Jones	Jenni Carfoot	Jill Darnell
Committee	Gwen Smith	Jenni Carfoot	Marienne Faull
Committee	Jill Darnell	Marienne Faull	Carolyn Howard

## WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS

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

Geoffrey Parsons

## IN SEARCH OF THESE ANCESTORS

Interest Names	Details	Member #
Woods	c1850, Pyree, Brundee, Merro Meadow.	24/03
Yarwood	c1850, Pyree, Brundee, Merro Meadow.	24/03

Please direct all enquiries (quoting member number) to:-

PO Box 591 Nowra NSW 2541 Australia OR [sfhssecretary@shoalhaven.net.au](mailto: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.

### S.F.H.S. Inc. Membership includes:

- Time Traveller e-journal (April, August and December)
- Assistance from experienced research volunteers at S.F.H.S. Research Centre
- Guest Speakers at Monthly Meetings
- Access to information sessions, seminars, webinars, interest groups, family history projects, volunteering, social gatherings and a whole lot more.

## RESEARCH REPORT

Research report Nov 1, 2023 – Feb 29 2024.



Once again, several queries have been received and assessed, but not taken any further once the \$25.00 fee was requested. An opportunity missed.

### Tree Packages

1. Burns & Castledine: Casino/Lismore/Shoalhaven. associated names, McManus, White, Fitzsymonds. *completed*
2. Madden & Tanner. Maclean/Sydney. Associated names, McGinty, Sinclair, Thompson, Byrnes, Berringer. *Completed*
3. Carter & McEnally. Associated names: Moon, Lees, Aiken, Randall. Client was mostly interested in the origin of the early immigrants who settled in Pennant Hills & Parramatta before moving to Jamberoo then Budgong. *Completed*

### 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](mailto: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



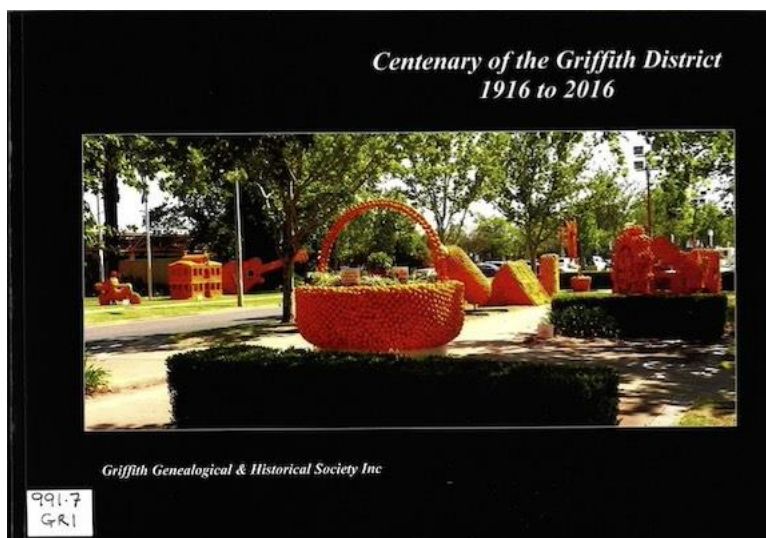
# Closure of Griffith Genealogical and Historical Society

Feb 13, 2024

Written by Christine Gavin (President, Griffith Genealogical and Historical Society)

There was an end of an era when the Griffith Genealogical and Historical Society closed its doors at the end of December 2023 after 42 years. Over time, it became more and more difficult to get members to run the Society due to the ages and medical issues of the active members, and our membership was dwindling.

The majority of our assets and resources have been donated to the Griffith City Library. Many photographs went to the Griffith Pioneer Park Museum, and anything to do with the Wars was donated to the Griffith War Memorial Museum. Those resources that the library did not want (usually because they already had them) have gone to the Leeton Family and Local History Society.



<https://www.rahs.org.au/closure-of-griffith-genealogical-and-historical-society/>

## Did your Shoalhaven ancestor play cricket?



Family historians and cricket buffs are now able to peruse information about Shoalhaven cricket that covers a period of more than 150 years.

It was compiled by Alan Clark, AM, who was the cricket association recorder from 1976-77 until Go to the Shoalhaven Libraries' website and search the catalogue for **Shoalhaven Cricket Research**, where there are 16 files containing more than 2000 typed pages of information, some from official records, but much from contemporary newspapers.

The first file covers the 1850s and '60s, then others cover each decade up until the end of the 2011-12 season when Alan stepped down from his formal involvement in the sport.

Over a period of 40 years, he has written many books about Shoalhaven cricket, and much of the research used, can now be read through this website.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORTS ALF PROTT, A PROMINENT CITIZEN IN NEED

By Alan Clark, AM.

Although born at Braidwood in 1871 one of twin girls, **Elizabeth Brayne** had spent five of her formative years in the Shoalhaven when her father, Charles Walter Brayne was in charge of the police stationed at Terara in the 1880s, first as a senior constable before his promotion to sergeant in 1883.

After her father was transferred to Kiama, Elizabeth met Alfred Ernest Prott, and their marriage took place at the police residence on Monday, 20 March 1893. They subsequently took a train to Mittagong for a honeymoon, before settling at Nowra where Alf had gone into business a year earlier, and being familiar with her surroundings there, it was a smooth transition.

Living in Berry Street, the couple welcomed their first child early in 1894, a son Alfred Roy who would always be known by his second name. They would also have three daughters, Myra Mary (1897, who died in infancy), Olga Madeline (1901) and Sadie Audrey Joyce (1911). Encouraged by Alf, the family became involved in various aspects of community life.

Roy joined his father in the hairdressing shop, but their lives would be turned upside down in early 1922 when Elizabeth became seriously ill. Over five months of ill-health, she underwent two operations and despite a slight improvement after the second, she died in a Sydney hospital on Saturday, 15 July, just short of her 51st birthday.

Her care had resulted in Alf completely exhausting his modest savings, and within days of Elizabeth's death, local watchmaker and jeweller Percy Young convened a meeting of his friends at Nowra School of Arts to decide on how they could assist. Owner/editor of the *Shoalhaven News*, Henry Rauch was voted to the chair and as well as accepting donations, it was decided to hold a benefit concert – a logical choice as Alf had participated in many such events over the years.

It was to be held on Thursday evening, 17 August with Mr Young as chief organiser assisted by Les Hewlett filling the role of secretary, and Joe Canavan treasurer. Owner of the theatre across the road, F.V. "Dad" West agreed to provide the electric power (for Nowra was some years away from getting its own supply), and tickets were to be three, four and five shillings.

Despite it being a bleak night, there was a good crowd who enjoyed the top-class entertainment that started with a selection from Nowra Town Band, followed by various solos, after which many encores were demanded. Described as a "Dandy Show" with a cast of 30 with equal numbers of men and women, the second half included more songs along with choruses, marches and dances.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Alfred Ernest Prott**, was born on 1 March 1869 at Kiama, the tenth and youngest child of Georg Johan Prott (known at Kiama as George) and Anna Margarethe Klein (known as Mary). With their eldest five children, they left their native Germany and in January 1855 at the English port of Liverpool boarded the immigrant ship, *Commodore Perry*. It left 50 Irish and Scottish people in Launceston (Tasmania) before continuing on with more than 200 Germans to Sydney where the ship, which had allocated one deck to each of the three countries, was reported to have been one of the largest and finest vessels ever to enter the harbour.

Settling at Kiama, the Protts enlarged their family to six boys and four daughters. When his stonemason father died in 1879, Alf was 10 years of age, although some of his older siblings had

already married, and the *Kiama Independent* commented, “The head of the house is removed, and much sympathy is felt for the widow, Mrs Prott, but as her family is large, thrifty, respectable, and for the most part grown up, her anxieties for the future, will, we imagine be reduced to a minimum”.

It appears likely that the oldest of his brothers to be born in Australia, George John mentored Alf and gave him a start in the Kiama barber’s shop. He competed in several handicap athletics events, and when George promoted a sports meeting at North Kiama in 1894, Alf gave general satisfaction in the role of “master of the track”. In the same sport, he would accept Nowra entries for Sheffield Handicaps held in 1900 at Nowra and Cambewarra.

He came to Nowra in February 1892 aged 22, taking over a business in Junction Street (next to the Albion Hotel) that for the previous year had been conducted by Cecil Glasson. With a heading of “Shampoo!”, his introductory advertisement in the *Shoalhaven Telegraph* stated:



A.E. PROTT begs to announce to the inhabitants of Nowra and surrounding district that he has now commenced business as a HAIRDRESSER and TOBACCONIST, and hopes by civility, cleanliness and strict attention to business, to merit a fair share of public patronage.

The saloon will be found the best fitted up on the South Coast. If you want a comfortable easy shave, your hair or whiskers fashionably trimmed, or good tobacco and cigars, be sure and call on A.E. PROTT. The best brands of cigars, tobacco, pipes, perfumery, etc., always on hand.

That advertisement ran for 13 weeks, after which there were smaller ones proclaiming Prott’s Celebrated Corn Cure – “never been known to fail”; and fresh supplies of cigars, five brands including Havana; eight brands of tobacco; and perfumery including hair dye and restorer. August saw him list his services as hair cutting, hair singeing, shaving and shampooing, and the verse:

Where shall I go to get this treat? You’ll find his shop in Junction Street,

And over his door in letters neat, A.E. PROTT.

Apparently, content that his business was well established, Alf does not appear to have advertised again in the local press. He was fined in 1907 for a breach of the Early Closing (Hairdressers Shop) Act; and joined with four other Nowra hairdressers to advise a price increase in 1919. When one of his opposition barbers, Tom Kavanagh became ill in 1914, Alf sent Roy to keep the business going on weekdays. Roy would soon be included in the company name, and eventually took over the business which he conducted alone until his retirement, declining to employ other barbers.

However, it was not always been a prosperous concern, with “a meeting of creditors in the bankrupt estate of A.E. Prott, hairdresser of Nowra to be held on 14 April 1897 at Nowra Courthouse”. When he applied for a certificate of discharge in 1902, it was reported by the registrar



that Alf had failed to keep proper books and had continued to trade, knowing himself to be insolvent.

In 1893, he partnered publican Fred Huxley in a double sculls race in light skiffs on the Shoalhaven River for £1 sweepstake, that had started at The Grotto. Their victory at the Nowra Bridge was watched by 200 people. Alf proved to be a versatile sportsman, with victories ranging from quoits in 1894 to billiards in the 1908 tournament at Nowra School of Arts. An occasional cricketer with Nowra-based clubs Perseverance and Half Holiday, he supported other clubs with trophies and by appearing in their concerts.

Alf's favourite sport was rifle shooting, and when the Nowra club was resuscitated in 1893 with its range at Depot Farm, he was one of its keenest members. That involvement would continue for more than 30 years, and during the 1890s he regularly led one team that beat Frank Taylor's combination with the price of a turkey dinner at stake. In 1900 he was the winner of the major competition from the 500-yard mound that earned him a pair of boots and £1, and from 700 yards, for a side of mutton and 17s 6d.

The same year saw him Nowra's only winner at the South Coast Rifle Association event at Kiama; and he soon progressed to the National Rifle Association shoot at Randwick where he acquitted himself well on more than one occasion. He shot six consecutive bullseyes from the 600-yard mound just prior to Christmas of 1900, and shot eight in 1924, by which time he had been joined on the range by son Roy. He had established a club record of 99 out of a possible 105 points in 1908; served as club captain for some of the years during World War I, and there was the occasion in 1902 when his rifle was used to dispatch two large black snakes that had ventured onto the range.

While still a teenager living at Kiama, Alf had shown his prowess as a fisherman and landed a 4-ft 3-in kingfish that tipped the scales to 40-lb. From time to time, he featured in Nowra's fishing columns, and the 53-lb jewfish he caught from the bank at the Back Forest Ferry in 1909 was said to have been the biggest taken from the Shoalhaven River in several years. He had a haul of 34 perch and bream during a day on the river in 1928, but the following year there was pain after an encounter with a stingray. From the 1920s, Alf was an enthusiastic member of Nowra Bowling Club, and that continued for the rest of his life. He is noted enjoying some success in club events and represented Nowra at the Country Week carnival held in Sydney during February 1931.

Alf had a lifelong interest in singing and entertaining and appears to have started with an older brother Phillip at Kiama in the late 1880s. Their duets gave Alf the confidence to sing solos, and concert audiences particularly appreciated the comic songs that became his specialty. Soon after arriving at Nowra, he became a regular performer, and was in the party that travelled to Yalwal in 1893 for the Edwards/Walker Relief Fund concert. While *Miss Hooligan's Christmas Cake* was one of his humorous songs, his repertoire extended to *Martha Dear* from the comic opera *Martha*.

He often appeared with the Nowra Minstrel Club and featured in its style of entertainment, while his skill as a mimic was shown at Cambewarra in 1903 when he produced the sounds imitating an axeman, a train and drawing a cork. When Nowra Dramatic Club staged the drama, *British Born* in 1902, Alf played the part of a sea captain, and he also appeared in the club's productions of 1903 and 1904. He showed his versatility with an act called *The Lone Fisherman* in early 1914 at Milton which was described in detail by its local paper:

*It was not a song, nor a recitation, simply a silent representation of a fisherman. He stalks onto the stage with his kit and proceeds to get lines ready. An unexpected wave sends him back and necessitates a readjustment of things. The lines are baited and thrown out, and the whole business gone through so naturally that one could almost see the line. The quick response to*

*a bite was so realistic. Twice he was “baited”, and a third time got fast to something so hard that in the pull he falls down, then hauls in a broken line, and clears out in disgust. Not a word was spoken, but the actions were very realistic.*

More than a decade later, Alf repeated that performance at benefit concerts in 1924 and 1925. He had previously shared the concert stage with Roy, but when the Minstrels staged a patriotic concert in October 1914, his 12-year-old daughter Olga gave a solo. Alf had appeared in the opening sketch, played harp in a musical medley and acted as business manager for the concert that played to a packed School of Arts. That was the first of several concerts during World War I, and Alf would long be remembered for his musical contributions, mimicry and storytelling.

Along the way, he had been one of the original volunteers of the Nowra Fire Brigade in 1894, although his involvement was not lengthy; and he served on a committee formed in 1900 to support famine relief in India. He apparently had a productive peach tree behind his home, for he won the class for the slipstone variety at the Nowra Show on several occasions.

Alf's latter years were spent living at the East Street home of his son. Soon after celebrating his 80th birthday, he died on Friday, 27 May 1949, and the funeral was held next afternoon at All Saints' Church of England, Nowra. He had been the last of his Prott generation. President Charles Thomas led the group of Nowra Bowling Club members who acted as pallbearers.

Sources: Empire, Sydney – Friday 27 April 1855; Sydney Morning Herald – Friday 27 April 1855, and Saturday 28 May 1949; Kiama Independent and Shoalhaven Advertiser – Fridays 6 June 1879, 18 November and 9 December 1887, 24 February 1888, 19 July and 6 December 1889, 7 March, Tuesday 6 May and Friday 27 June 1890, Tuesday 21 March 1893, Saturday 14 July 1894, Thursday 1 April 1897, and Tuesday 24 February 1903; New South Wales Government Gazette, Sydney – Tuesdays 9 September 1879 and 28 January 1902; Shoalhaven News and South Coast Districts Advertiser – Saturdays 23 May 1891, 4 March, 15 April, 30 September and 7 October 1893, 8 September 1894, 4 May 1895, 7 July and 4 August 1900, 22 August 1908, 15 July 1916, 22 July, 19 August 1922, 26 April and 12 July 1924, 15 August 1925, and 14 June 1930; Ulladulla and Milton Times – Saturday 17 November 1900; The Australian Star, Sydney – Saturday 12 January 1901, Wednesday 5 March 1902; Evening News, Sydney – Tuesday 20 October 1903; Shoalhaven Telegraph – Wednesdays 10 February, 20 July, 3 August 1892, Saturdays 16 June, 15 September and 6 October, Wednesday 12 and Tuesday 25 December 1900, Saturday 16, Wednesdays 9 October and 13 November 1901, Wednesday 10 December 1902, Saturday 14 February and Wednesday 22 April 1903, Wednesdays 28 September and 19 October 1904, Saturday 16 February 1905, Wednesdays 6 February 1907, 9 and 16 September 1908, 21 April 1909, 11 March, 14 October and 9 December 1914, 20 January 1915, 17 December 1919, 25 August 1920, 2 August 1922, 16 July 1924, and 22 July 1931; South Coast Times and Wollongong Argus – Saturday 6 December 1902; Nowra Leader – Fridays 17 November 1905, 22 September 1911, 15 September 1916, 21 July 1922, 28 September 1928, 15 March 1929, and 3 June 1949; Illawarra Mercury, Wollongong – Friday 21 July 1922; Northern Star, Lismore – Thursday 15 January 1931; Shoalhaven News, Nowra – Wednesday 18 December 1940; South Coast Register – Wednesday 14 May 1980; A Century of Tradition: 100 years of the Nowra Volunteer Fire Brigade, by Keith Paterson, 1994; Cop This: Policemen of the Shoalhaven, 1852-1977, by Lee Mills – Shoalhaven Historical Society, 2001; Ancestry.com.

## WEDNESDAY THE PERFECT DAY FOR A WEDDING

By Alan Clark.

While researching the Methodist ministry of Rev. Harold Wheen in the Shoalhaven Circuit at the beginning of the 20th century, I decided to list the marriages he performed that were reported in the local newspapers. Two things stood out – most of the weddings took place on a Wednesday and never on Saturday, and few were in the Nowra church. The list is as follows, and because it is the bride's big day, she is the first mentioned.

**Elizabeth Jane Hawken** of Tomerong to **George Edward Barnes** of Jamberoo, at the bride's home on Wednesday 19 June 1901.

**Ada Williams** of Nowra to **Thomas McLean** (Moruya Post Office, ex-Nowra) at the Nowra home of bride's sister, Mrs Leonard on Monday 30 December 1901.

**Blanche May Waddell** of Yerriyong to **Charles Henry Oke** of Nowra Hill at Yerriyong Vale on Thursday, 26 December 1901.

**Alice Rose Hanigan** to **James Aird**, both of Bomaderry, at Wesleyan Church, Nowra on Wednesday 29 January 1902.

**Margaret Nelson** of Kangaroo Valley to **Robert Chittick** of Gerringong, at the Parsonage, Nowra on Wednesday 30 April 1902.

**Sarah Emma Louisa Hawken** of Tomerong to **Walter Abernethy** of Nowra Hill at bride's home on Wednesday 25 June 1902.

**Ethel Jane Beckett** of *Tulse Hill*, Falls Creek to **Peter Colin Bourne** of Richmond River, at bride's home on Wednesday 24 December 1903.

**Maud Mary Littlewood** of Nowra to **Thomas Macpherson** of Shoalhaven at Methodist Church, Nowra on Wednesday 25 March 1903.

**Sarah Ann Hanigan** and **Henry Shepherd**, both of Bomaderry, at Methodist Church, Nowra on Wednesday 17 August 1904.

**Annie Sinclair** of Falls Creek to **David Shepherd** of Bomaderry, at Methodist Church, Falls Creek on Wednesday 23 November 1904.

**Esther Annie Binks** of Broughton Village to **Thomas Albert Emery** of Cambewarra, at home of the bride on Wednesday 23 November 1904.

Note: The last two weddings on the list occurred on the same day, and one can picture the clergyman hurrying between Falls Creek and Broughton Village, most likely in a horse-drawn vehicle.







Deadly plot . . . looking up York St towards Sydney Town Hall, circa 1888. Construction of the Town Hall appears to be nearing completion. The back of the George St fruit and vegetable markets is on the left, where the Queen Victoria Building now stands. Picture: STATE LIBRARY of NSW

Daily Telegraph 22.8.05

# Town Hall has many bones of contention

The recent discovery of more graves under Sydney Town Hall highlights its varied past, reports MAUREEN SHELLEY

**S**ince the idea for its design was first promoted, Sydney Town Hall has remained a social, political and architectural focus. It has also been the subject of allegations of corruption, incompetence and the abuse of power.

Sydney City Council's first meeting was held on November 9, 1842, in the Market Building on George St. Its next few meetings were held in the Royal Hotel in George St. The council's first regular residence was the Pultenay Hotel in York St.

Councillors (aldermen in those days) lobbied the colonial government to raise a loan to fund the building of a town hall.

For 30 years, while deputations and petitioners negotiated to secure a site, the council met in hotels, houses and other buildings.

The story of the battle between the city council and Macquarie St over the Town Hall is a fiery one.

Finally in 1853, after much petitioning, an estimate of £3000 was set for commencing the Town Hall, at that time proposed for Bent St. However, before anything could happen the council was sacked and its affairs taken over by administrators.

It was 1857 before the council was reinstated. By then any interest in the Bent St site had waned. The council lobbied for a site in the commercial heart of the town.

In 1862, the Town Hall Exchange Act allowed the council to establish a more convenient site by selling or swapping the Bent St land.

A further hurdle was still to be overcome by the city's founders. The site they wanted in George St was a burial ground.

When the site had originally been established it was on the outskirts of town but now it was in a prime position. The cemetery, where convicts, free settlers and soldiers had



In joke . . . the Town Hall's winking lion

all been buried, had become full by 1820. When clearing of the land got under way the bodies were removed to Haslam's Creek. Records were poorly kept so not every body was recovered. Also, the council thought it would be too difficult to match headstones to remains, so the headstones were not moved with the bodies. Instead, a single memorial was erected at Haslam's Creek.

In 1869, the Old Burial Ground was resumed, and half an acre granted to the council, which gave it the legal right to construct the Town Hall. But by then politics had intervened and one of three foundation stones had already been laid.

Sydney's mayor, Charles Moore, seized the day to have the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Alfred, officiate at the stone's laying. The ceremony was held on April 4, 1868, and it was reported that up to 2000 people gathered to try to catch a glimpse of the prince.

The foundation stone is now located above the keystone at the entrance to the Town Hall.

To avoid the cost of hiring an architect, the council had held a competition for designs for the Town Hall. In his book *Sydney Architecture*, former Sydney councillor Graham Jahn writes: "A competition for its design was held and was won by J.H. Willson, an unknown architect from Tasmania. After Willson's sudden death, a

**cl@ssmate**  
classmate.news.com.au

**ACTIVITY:** Discuss or debate whether it was wrong for the Sydney City Council to build on top of a graveyard.

**WEBSITE:** Foundations for a City: [www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history/foundations/Default.html](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history/foundations/Default.html)

**BOOK:** *Sydney Town Hall, A Social History* by Margo Beasley (Hale & Iremonger), \$14.95

parade of architects appear to have suffered through their involvement with the project."

Further, the council had to meet many stipulations laid down by the state government.

It spent more than £25,000 on building the Town Hall. The building, according to the state government requirements, had to be completed by January 1, 1872.

The layout of the grounds was to be in accordance with the recommendations of the director of the Botanic Gardens, the enclosing walls had to satisfy the colonial architect, and "any remains of corpses located had to be removed and re-interred as directed by the Minister for Lands". Failure to meet any of the standards, meant incurring financial penalties.

There were allegations of bribery, overspending, incompetent supervision, and defective building works. Finally, the Town Hall was finished in 1889.

According to the City of Sydney website: "Tender documents prepared in 1876 for the Vestibule included the proviso that the ornamental artwork was to incorporate Australian flora and fauna, and that it was to be introduced at the direction of the City Architect."

The external facade and interior decoration, including the outstanding stained-glass windows, use a profusion of wildflowers and fauna such as lyrebirds and cockatoos.

The main hall was added to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the colony of NSW in 1888. The stair railings incorporate indigenous flora including waratahs and flannel flowers. Many light fittings feature suspended waratahs; and the semi-circular clerestory windows depict native flowers.

At least one worker managed to record his thoughts on the management. Just to the north of the main entrance is a stone lion that has been carved with one eye shut. It is believed to have been a parody by one of the stonemasons of his supervisor who always checked the work with one eye shut and roared at masons who got it wrong.

Eventually, November 27, 1889, was set as the day of the official opening and the colonial government declared a public holiday.

Thousands turned up for the official opening at noon. After the formal proceedings, a mayoral ball was held for 5000 prominent members of society.

The building has been the subject of frequent change and renewal. In 1906, the birdcage lift was added and remains the only surviving example of this type in NSW.

At one time, the building had a porte-cochere over the present steps, and a ring road inside a stone and iron pallsade. Due to the tunnelling for the underground railway, this area was destabilised in 1934 and the formal entry had to be demolished.

In 1973 a major restoration of the organ was begun. A decade later it was completed. In 1992, the Town Hall was re-opened after a makeover costing \$15.5 million.

Things haven't changed and the current upgrade, costing \$8 million and due to be completed in October, has had its own setbacks. The discovery of graves has extensively delayed work and the current lord mayor, Clover Moore, stopped work on a lift on the southern side of the building on heritage grounds.

Some wits have referred to the Town Hall as a wedding cake, but it is one of the few buildings in the city to remain in continuous use for its original purpose.

From Daily Telegraph 22 August 2005



## **Name Change Mystery**

A recent visitor to our library was looking for his ancestor's property, named 'Lebanon' In 'Summer Hill, Tomerong'. The death certificate stated John Stapleton died in 1879 at Currumbene Creek.

With no mention of Summer Hill on any of our maps, or local publications, and no record in our Land purchases (which focus largely on the Illawarra), we had to think outside the box.

A search of NSW Lands & Property Information Historical Parish Maps showed very clearly, John's land on the Creek, and a later map showed that he also owned the block next door, with his son's land a little further down the road.

Our Land Sales & Auctions book had pointed to the sale of his land, and this is how we traced the exact location, not knowing that the area in those days was called Summer Hill.

John's second wife Alicia had died in 1885, but he had never found a registration, after searching fruitlessly for Alicia Stapleton.

In our records we had a death for Eliza Stapleton in 1885, and when this was checked, it was indeed John's wife. The informant was Waldron Carter Brown, who was the Undertaker, and although her parents' names were "not known"; her age, birth place, time in the Colony, husband & children's names proved we had the correct person.

Our visitors were quite amazed that her name could change so much, but when you take into account accents, nicknames, the fact that a lot of people then could not read or write, and the Undertaker was the informant, it was almost acceptable.

John & Alicia's daughter Agnes married into the Caffery family, and we were able to provide some insights here, and also direct him to the Five Oaks Farm on Jindyandy Lane.

Subsequently, our visitors were more than happy with their treasure trove of information when they left and headed off to a local eatery recommended by yours truly.

I hope they return, as I found a few interesting birth records they might want to see...

*Marienne Faull 02/18*

### THE WAY WE WERE

Saturday June 14, 1902

The churches of Berry arranged a united service for the local School of Arts on Thursday June 26 to celebrate the coronation of King Edward VII. It was suggested to the clergy that a collection be taken to aid the Young Women's Christian Association, which had proved a boon to young women from the country



## Hitting The Wall

Researching a Family Tree for a client, I 'hit the wall' only two generations in & it was time to purchase a transcription.

Mary Thompson was married to John Sinclair in Gundagai NSW in 1878/3310, which was curious as the families lived at Grenfell (could this be a registry error of place of registration?) but I went ahead, as buying the marriage transcription would, hopefully, give me the names of John's parents; allowing me to step back one more generation.

The transcription arrived quickly - only to find - as so often happens, that there were 'no entries' for John's place of birth, father, mother, or Father's occupation. The witnesses were no help either, so his "usual Residence" being "Nubba Station Near Young" was my only clue.

Mary was under the age of 21 and consent to the marriage was given by her father Matthew Thompson, so I knew I had the correct transcription.

Over to TROVE, and a search for "Nubba Station" revealed

- An entry in the Brisbane Courier on 19 December 1870 reporting the sale of Nubba Station (Cootamundra) with 13500 sheep, to Mr W Sinclair: (hmm).
- NSW Government Gazette 29 May 1876 published a probate notice for Stephen Brogan with Peter Sinclair, farmer & overseer being the executor (John had a brother Peter)
- Wagga Wagga Advertiser 21 Dec 1882 reported William Sinclair died at Wynna Downs Station, Burke, NSW on Sunday 10 December.... (Burke?)
- 23 December 1882, William Sinclair's obituary is published revealing he was aged 57, had moved to Wynna Downs station, had left a widow and 6 surviving children, and Mrs Scott of Cootamundra was a daughter (John's older sister Margaret was married to Edmund Darracott Scott)
- 13 June 1883, Peter Sinclair is the manager of Nubba Station.
- NSW State Records holds a deceased estate File for William Sinclair [INX-15-135356 Wynna Downs] but his Last Will & Testament can be found on Microfilm at SFHS library at Pyree [Series3 – 8163], and this confirmed all the facts needed; his wife and children were all named, as was all of his property and estate which was sworn at £13655.0.0d

All of this information enabled me to trace the arrival in Victoria in 1848 of William & Helen, & so trace their parents.



We are often advised to only follow the direct line of ancestry, but this is one very good example of the details of his siblings proving to be extremely valuable. Items in the local newspapers often provide so much information, especially an obituary, so read them carefully for clues.




*Marianne Faull 02/18*

## How to PRINT or DOWNLOAD an article from TROVE

When we find an article in our favourite Newspaper site, TROVE, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/> we might have trouble printing or downloading articles or removing the highlighted words. If so, try the tips below.

- below.
- While the article is in the Trove viewer, select **Print**  or **Download**  in the sidebar on the far left-hand side of the screen. You might have to scroll down to see the icons.
  - Select format: **Image** or **PDF** (for downloads) or **Image** or **Text** (for printing). This will generate a new browser tab with the article formatted for printing or downloading. A Print or Download window will appear over this tab.
  - Print (or Save) or download in the normal manner.

Note: Long articles will be split into several images to fit onto A4-sized pages. Images will overlap to ensure that no information is lost.

**How to remove search highlighting** - If you find a newspaper article as a result of a search, the keyword/s used in the search will be highlighted in the article. To remove the highlighting, select the **Cite** icon  in the sidebar on the left-hand side of the screen.

In the Cite window that opens, select the **Article identifier** link. This opens the article without the highlight/s. The article can then be printed or downloaded as described above.

Good Luck



## **Learn from the Library**

### **A History of shopkeepers and their Families of the Milton-Ulladulla area. FH 4830 2022**

This is an interesting publication put together by the Milton Ulladulla Family History Society, which tells of the early history of the area and the growth of the retail activity within the Milton & Ulladulla area from the early 1800s time. Descriptions cover the development from the trade of timber and the consequent need for transport of these products to Sydney and the ensuing development of the need of food and other resources for the developing community of Ulladulla. The community 'spilled over' onto hilly area of Milton 'up on the hills' and it's here that a thriving town developed, which today is still a draw card for visitors.

Of interest are the many photos of the early pioneer people and the stories portraying their journey of settlement within this community. There are also stories relating to the various trades being established accompanied by the advertisements for such.

Many of the names of people are familiar to present day folk, as families have stayed within the area, and some of the business enterprises are still operating.

An interesting read and the nostalgic returns make this publication a good source for researchers looking for local information.

### **Rowdy Voices & Quiet Whispers CON 4831 2024**

This publication is about Female Convicts at Port Macquarie and was published by Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society Inc. 2024.

This book covers the story of female convict prisoners being sent to Port Macquarie – their unexpected arrival and the issues their arrival caused the authorities, who were not expecting females.

Stories relate to the crimes for which named women were convicted and their passage through this penal institution; the manner in which they were delegated various positions within this society; the liberties which were given to some 'ladies' and the manner in which their misdemeanors were handled by the authorities of the time. Some of the stories follow the convict's passage after they received their ticket of leave- current to some present-day families.

Apart from the anecdotes on individual females, there are stories on free settler females who arrived in Port Macquarie as wives of authoritative figures and their assigned female convicts.

As of December 2023; 377 recorded female convicts have been registered and research is ongoing.

A comprehensive record of these females appears near the back of the book, detailing the person's name; the name of the arrival ship to Australia and the date; the trial place and date; the crime and term and comments pertaining to the prisoner re – literacy, age, marital status and other relevant information.





## NSW and ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc. Newsletter

Newsletter for February 2024

### Message from the President

#### Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from the President
- 2 Results of Management Committee Meeting
- 3 Upcoming Family History Events



Welcome to 2024.

I hope everyone had a nice Christmas and New Year. I also hope you found some time over the holiday period to make some new discoveries in your family history research.

I spent the time sorting out my mother's research papers to see what to keep and what to discard. She wrote on envelopes, in exercise books or on note pads! Her research might have been specifically on our families or the result of local research for our society. She loved collecting death notices!

The Australia Tax Office has changed the rules for not-for-profit organisations, which will directly affect many of our member societies. Many groups have contacted the committee for more information. So as a result of this, we will hold an Extraordinary Zoom Meeting for Treasurers, Presidents, Vice Presidents, and anyone else interested on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.30pm. All society Secretaries have already been sent emails regarding this event. Further information is in the Upcoming Events Section of this newsletter.

Unfortunately, no society expressed an interest at the Annual General Meeting to hold the 39<sup>th</sup> NSW State Conference this year. Since then, we have also not had any applicants. At last week's Committee Meeting, the Executive decided to hold a one-day virtual Zoom conference, which hopefully will keep the annual conference in your family history minds. So, we will "Dig Deeper in 24" on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2024. There will be four presentations, followed by the AGM and Forum. Of course, there will also be a raffle - more information to follow.

Best Wishes to all our members,

*Gail.*

## February Management Committee Meeting

This was held on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024 via Zoom. All eight committee members were present. Some important points from that meeting were:

### 5. - 2023 Forum Notes Discussions:

**Use of Funds generated from Conferences:** Funds are still available for family history and historical related requirements for member societies. This is limited to \$250.00 per annum and is not recurrent. If your society is interested, please write to us with your request mentioning the purpose, justification, and usage. Please forward your submission to our secretary: ([secretary@nswactfhs.org](mailto:secretary@nswactfhs.org)). See 10.1 below.

### **Ideas and ways for member societies to utilize the Association Website and Facebook Page (Closed group) to promote their activities and events:**

There is very little advertisement of Societies' upcoming events, book launches or seminars on both of these groups. This is a free service which could increase your attendance at events. Webpage: <https://www.nswactfhs.org/> What's On. FB Closed Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/27068391161995/> You must answer the questions to be able to join.

Could member societies who reported difficulties in using the website at the 2023 Forum, please contact the Secretary to advise of your specific issues? These will then be forwarded to our Webmaster for assistance.

Our Webmaster, Nick advised that:

- o Members with no website of their own may have a free webpage on the Association website.
- o Links to all member societies' webpages are available under the "Members" section of the Association website.  
<https://www.nswactfhs.org/index.php/members>

### **Revision of the frequency of the NSW State Conference considering the difficulties in finding host societies:**

As no member society was forthcoming for a 2024 State Conference, a virtual, mini conference will be undertaken by the Association Management Committee. This will be held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

### 8. - Conference Report:

**8.1 - Conference Final Report - Wyong FHG -** "Overall, the Conference Committee was very pleased with how the weekend went, particularly feeling the excitement that was being generated. We did have some concerns after the event. Did we have too many speakers? Maybe the time between speakers was not long enough, but who would we have left off? Size of the hall was a concern particularly for a place to eat on the Friday, when the weather was not pleasant and could the speaker's room have been bigger. At the end of the day, it worked well with what was available to us (Lyn Hagstrom). "

**8.2 - State Conference for 2024 –** A discussion was held between all Committee Members and we decided to proceed ourselves with a mini virtual conference. This will involve four guest speakers and is to be held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The theme of the conference is: "**Dig deeper in 24**". Registrations will be via the TryBooking site with the choice of individual or society/institutional participants. The cost will be: \$10 – individual and \$50 – per society/institution. An online raffle will also be available. The AGM and Forum are planned for the afternoon at 3.30pm.

## **9. - Other Reports:**

### **9. 1 - Australian Federation of Family History Organisations (AFFHO) –**

The next Congress will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025 in Brisbane, Queensland. Early bird Registration closes in November 2024. Please refer to Upcoming Family History Events below for more details.

COUNCIL OFFICERS for 2024 are: President: Sonya Russell; Vice President: Vacant; Secretary: Greta Gordon; Treasurer: Fay Carbis

**The Nick Vine Hall Award** - All member societies of AFFHO are encouraged to select one of their journals/newsletters published in 2023 and enter it before the **closing date of 30 April 2024**. Further information in the Upcoming Family History Events for 2024 below.

**9. 3 - Website Report** – Please encourage your society to add their events, as this is a free service and has a wide reach. Our Speakers' Register is currently being updated.

## **10. - General Business:**

**10. 1 - Grant Applications – Review and Finalise Framework** – Once again we invite member groups to apply for a grant up to \$250.00 for use within your society's framework.

Some suggestions may be to:

- Support a group of members to travel to another regional town without a family history society or a relatively inactive one to run a beginners' workshop?
- Reach out to other societies for help?
- Support for an inactive society?
- Assistance from a local library to support your society?
- Providing workshops to remote areas?

**10. 2 - Conference Guidelines** – Will be updated to reflect Hybrid Conferences after information is finalised by the Wyong Conference Committee.

**10. 3 - NSW & ACT Association Evening Zoom Groups** – All three Zoom Groups are running well. See Upcoming Events below.

**10. 4 - Dorothy Fellowes Website Awards** – Due to issues beyond the Committee's control, the \$300.00 prize money and Certificates will finally be awarded to the Winners: 2021 (Botany Bay FHS and Bathurst FHG), 2022 (Newcastle FHS and City of Liverpool and District HS) and 2023 Cape Banks FHS. We humbly apologise for the delay. In the future, winners will receive their prizes directly from the Association.

**10. 6 – Family History Federation of England** – there are general issues in England with people not volunteering for Office Bearer Positions just like here. Many overseas people have taken up these roles due to Zoom. This has made face to face meetings unnecessary and enabled virtual access and interaction between members. Ruth has also noted more collaboration between different societies in various locations. They are looking at Virtual Fairs which is an event where different societies can be placed in different rooms which can be then located into regional clusters (Ruth Graham).

## Upcoming Family History Events in 2024 and 2025

### Applications for the following Awards:

**The Nick Vine Hall Award** - All member societies of AFFHO are encouraged to select one of their journals/newsletters published in 2023 and enter it before the **closing date of 30 April 2024**. This is awarded annually to member societies (in two categories based on membership) for the best family history journal/newsletter in Australia and New Zealand. AFFHO provides this award to encourage its member societies to produce quality journals/newsletters, and to honour Nick Vine Hall AM.



The late Nick Vine Hall fervently supported and represented AFFHO at a National level in a Save the Census Campaign in the mid 1980's. Nick utilised his personable skills as a researcher, author, radio presenter, and speaking engagements towards the final achievement that was announced by the Federal Government of their acceptance of the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs report Saving our Census and Preserving Our History. This permitted citizens across Australia to "opt in" and allow retention of their 2001 and future Census information, under closed access for 99 years, by the

National Archives of Australia, and in so doing, made a valuable contribution to preserving Australia's history for future generations.

First prize – Wall plaque and \$300 to the Society; Certificate to the Editor  
Second prize – Certificate and \$100 to the Society; Certificate to the Editor  
Prize winners will be announced during National Family History Month in August 2024.  
Entry - You can download the NVHA Entry Form here.

[https://www.affho.org/images/affho/NVHA\\_OfficialEntryForm.pdf](https://www.affho.org/images/affho/NVHA_OfficialEntryForm.pdf)

**Dorothy Fellowes Award** – entries close 12th July 2024. Information will be sent out to the Secretary of your society.

**Cynthia Foley Award** – will be selected by Cynthia from a list of potential new members.

### Conferences:

**39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the NSW and ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc.**  
**"Dig Deeper in 24".**

**Conference Organisers:** Management Committee NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Inc.

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**Venue:** on Zoom at home or in your society.

**Details:** To follow on Closed FB Group, Association website and this Newsletter.

**Forum and AGM will be held that afternoon too.**

**Individual Registration:** \$10

**Society/Institution:** \$50

