Dust of Ages

Journal of the Armidale Family History Group Inc.

Issue Number 182

February 2025

Andrew Cunningham Photographer

Wayne Hoppe based on information by Lionel Gilbert

Painter, professional photographer and decorator, Andrew Cunningham was born in Scotland, probably at Montrose. He married Isabella BOWERS at St Peter's Anglican Church, Armidale, on 3 September 1856. She was born in 1831 at Dunmore, Maitland. Originally a sailor, Cunningham declared that he was a sawyer at the time of his marriage, but by June 1857 he was advertising that he was available for any kind of painting or ornamental work or paperhanging. By August 1859 he was working part time as a photographer, although until 1868 he to referred to himself as a painter (i.e. house painter) when registering his children's births.

When the notorious bushranger 'Thunderbolt' (Fred Ward) was shot near Uralla in May 1870, Cunningham advertised that he had taken the only photographs of Thunderbolt. He also took photos of the scene of where he was shot and Thunderbolt's horse. Prints were 2s each, including a portrait of Senior Constable Alexander WALKER, who had shot the bushranger.



Andrew Cunningham, 'The Spot Where Thunderbolt Was Captured'. State Library of NSW.

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Journal - Dust of Ages Information

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Research Requests

AFHG can undertake research for a fee of \$35 per family group. Our website has a research request form with payment details available for downloading.

Information is generally provided by email, unless otherwise requested.

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Research Centre Opening Times

Monday	1.00pm	to	4.00pm
Wednesday	10.00am	to	4.00pm
Closed public Holidays			

Meetings: Meetings are held at 2.00pm on the 2nd Saturday of each month from February to November, unless otherwise advised. There is no cost and all are welcome to attend.

Workshops: Occasional workshops are undertaken. Details provided in dates for your diary section.

Non-members conducting research at the centre are charged \$10 per visit.

Diary Dates

Saturday February 8 Monthly Meeting – Shipping How your ancestors came to Australia – Wayne Hoppe

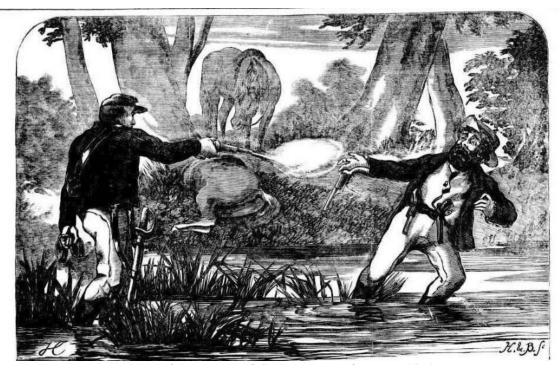
Saturday March 8 Monthly Meeting – TBA

Saturday April 12 Monthly Meeting - TBA

Saturday May 10 Monthly Meeting - TBA

Andrew Cunningham Photographer

In contrast to Andrew's photographs, both of Sydney's illustrated newspapers published engravings purporting to represent the final moments of Thunderbolt's life. However, the published engravings were created with little regard for factual veracity as shown below.



Australian Town and Country Journal, 4 June 1870.

In February 1872 Cunningham, then working from a studio in Barney Street, announced that he was 'taking views of public or private buildings' at 10s a dozen or a shilling each. This architectural interest seems to have been generated by advertisements in February 1872 by 'Artists belonging to the American and Australasian Photographic Company' who were going 'through the streets of Armidale taking photos of the Churches, public buildings, shops, and everything necessary to form an unbroken sketch of the town'.

Around this time Andrew took a photo of the 215 teachers and children attending the public school. An earlier photograph by Cunningham of the National School teachers and pupils, inscribed '173 scholars', is dated May 1865. School photographs, then as now, are a staple part of a rural photographer's business.

Armidale historians have had good reason to be grateful to both the 'resident photographer' and his visitors for the excellent views of streets and individual buildings they took in 1872. Cunningham also received portrait commissions from Armidale citizens, among whom were Bishop TORREGIANI, Mayor BUTLER and Lieutenant DODD. In 1855 the *Armidale Express* recorded a 'portrait in oils' by Cunningham of Senior Sergeant RAFFERTY, and in 1888 he executed a 'fine portrait of the son of Mr. ELLIOT, holding a violin'. Andrew and Isabella Cunningham had eight children between June 1857 and September 1874. The eldest, Andrew Peter, married Julie Ann PALMER in 1880 and was also a photographer.



Gallagher Brother's Blacksmith shop by Andrew Cunningham

Cunningham continued to work in Armidale for many years, opening a new studio in 1887. Notwithstanding his pioneering and long career in a rural Australian context, he remains an obscure figure, particularly given the comparatively large body of historical research that has been published on the Armidale district. In 1902, after almost 50 years' residence, he moved to the Newcastle harbour suburb of Carrington, citing the comparative severity of the New England winters.

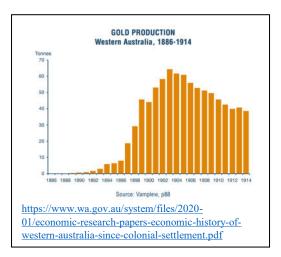
Why Did People Move From Hillgrove to W.A.?

Di Hoppe

There were many reasons that our ancestors decided to move to Western Australia (W.A.) from Hillgrove in the 1890's, but economic reasons was one of the most common factors.

In the late 1890s, many people, including miners from Hillgrove moved to Western Australia for economic opportunities, particularly during the Western Australian gold rush. This period saw a massive influx of people seeking fortunes in the newly discovered goldfields around Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie, and other areas. The following factors and circumstances likely played a role in this migration:

The discovery of gold in W.A. in the 1890s created a huge demand for experienced miners. Hillgrove had already been through its own gold boom and decline by the late 19th century. The decline in local mining opportunities likely pushed many miners to look westward. The 1890s were marked by a severe economic depression in Australia. Throughout the nineteenth century, Australia developed a reputation as a working man's paradise. It was seen by many settlers as a place that was free of the social hierarchies of 'home', a place that offered employment and the means to a comfortable life.



This dream collapsed in the 1890s, when a deep and widespread economic depression affected the eastern colonies. There were high levels of unemployment, continuous strikes and no support for those affected, leading to social unrest. Western Australia was the only colony that escaped, due to the wealth flowing from its goldfields. For many miners and their families, relocating to W.A. offered hope of financial stability. https://john.curtin.edu.au/shapingthenation/htm/theme1.htm

Most people travelled to W.A. via coastal steamships. The journey often began from ports like Sydney or Newcastle, traveling along the southern coast to Fremantle or Albany. For families with young children, the trip would have been arduous. Steamships were often crowded, with limited facilities. Overland travel across the Nullarbor was nearly impossible at the time.

The environment was harsh on the goldfields, with extreme heat, limited water supplies, and rudimentary living conditions. Many families lived in tents or makeshift huts until towns were established. The mining towns of W.A. often offered better wages for skilled miners, so the financial lure outweighed the hardships for many.

If your ancestors made the move, it was likely driven by the promise of better opportunities, or family or friends who were already in W.A. and suggested it was well worth the difficulties associated with doing this. Given the risks and challenges, such a move was a bold decision. They would have required determination and resilience to uproot their lives, travel across the continent, and adapt to the rugged W.A. goldfields. Their experiences reflect broader stories of migration, hardship, and adaptation during this dynamic time in Australian history. We would love to hear from you if your ancestors travelled to W.A. during this time.

Armidale Regional Council Community Small Grant

We have been successful in our application for a grant of \$1,500 for the upgrade of printing and scanning equipment. Over the next few months you will see the new equipment purchased and we look forward to teaching our members how to use it.



Dawson / Bell Photos

The AFHG have recently been donated some beautiful original photos from the Dawson / Bell line. Many were unnamed, but diligent research has assisted in uncovering the identities of some of the people in the portraits. The photos were likely to have originally been owned by Reuben Bell. Below are a couple of the photos from this collection. We are more than happy to share a digital copy of the photos to any relatives and would appreciate any assistance in identifying the remaining unknown photos.



Ralph Dawson and Sarah Hayne and family from oldest Mary, Jane, Maude, Joshua, and Mabel



Choir of St Nicholas Church, Saumarez Ponds 1899. L-R Back: Edward Ferris, Arthur Edmonds, James Ferris, Bill Frost, 2nd Row: Bob Ferris, Ethel Roberts, Maud Dawson, Dick Cooper (choirmaster), Jane Dawson, Tot Roberts, Jock Gordon, 3rd Row: Cecilia Ferris, Mary Dawson, Edith Ferris (organist), Lizzy Roberts, Ethel Hassel, Front Row: Amy Roberts, Mabel Dawson & Mrs Ernie Dawson. (These names came from Frost-Frazier Family History, but there is one to many names listed in the front row)

The following photo is unknown and we would love to find out more about it. Can you help?



President's Report

Wayne Hoppe

Another year has come around. Thank you to everyone that has helped the group in any way over the last year. In particular, the volunteers that keep the centre open every week, undertake research and help others to find their ancestors. To the committee members who, without their help we could not function as a group and also to those members that come in and use their local knowledge to assist in others research.

We trust that you are continuing to enjoy our journal, but we do need your help. As members you are able to contribute to the journal. It is a great opportunity for you to showcase your family, and as we share the journal not only to our members, but also to other family history groups you never know who might read the article and you could find another relative. All you have to do is send us a brief story about your ancestor and possibly a photo and we can then include it in the journal.

We are continuing to collect information on New England convicts and now have researched about 750 of the original list of 1,100 possible convicts. From this number we have 170 convicts that we have confirmed lived in the greater Armidale area. If you have a convict that lived in the area from Bendemeer to Tenterfield and Ebor to Warialda please let us know so that we can ensure they are included in the register.

Wayne Hoppe, President

Who is Going to Tell Your Story? Make Your Own Personal Memory Box.

Jane Driessen

When was the last time you did something to document your life or preserve your own personal history? What plans have you made for the future? How will you ensure this information is not lost? Your life is unique, so it's worth preserving at least some of the memorabilia about the people, places, and experiences that shaped you.

Did you have a clean-up over the Christmas break and came across old documents, letters, cards, photos and other ephemera? Did you sit there for the next 2 hours reminiscing about the good old days? We all have a personal archive whether we know it or not. At its most basic level, an archive is just a collection of information. So, your stack of 'stuff' - photo albums, old diaries, and letters from friends - counts as one.

By adding items such as photographs, letters, souvenirs, and personal mementos, you can create a special place that reminds you of the people, places, and experiences that have shaped your life. So why not start your own memory box and begin collecting items that hold special meaning to you?

Make an initial start by obtaining an acid-free archival box and place items inside, following these best practices:

- Keep items in original groups
- Remove or replace staples, paperclips, or pins with archive-safe plastic paper clips
- Store papers flat but don't try to flatten brittle creases
- Don't try to unroll tightly curled photos or papers
- Isolate newspapers between sheets of acid-free paper or inside acid-free folders
- Use boxes large enough to hold items without folding or bending

What to put in your memory box?

Think of what you would have liked to have received from your grandparents or great-grand parents – a weekly shopping list or invoice, handwritten letter, childhood drawing or a newspaper clipping. Even the most mundane item will be of interest in 50-100 years' time.

Here are some suggestions of what to include in your memory box:

Family Tree: Begin with a family tree as a visual representation of your family's ancestry. It can be a great starting point for exploring your family connections with the items in the box.

School & Clubs: Add some school reports, awards or magazines. Also consider paintings, drawings or other artworks. Include paperwork from a club or civic group that you are a member of. Add any awards that you won or certificates received for your achievements.



Photographs: Photographs are a great way to document your family's history. They can include family members and friends, important events, and special occasions. Scrapbooks and photo albums would be a great addition along with any newspaper clippings. If you don't have physical photos, you can save them to a flash or USB drive and put that in the box.

Mementos & Souvenirs: Souvenirs and memorabilia can be ticket stubs, program or flyers from your favourite concert or sporting event. You never know how much value they'll hold in the future – did you go to one of the Beatles concerts in Sydney in June 1964? Club memberships cards or badges can be included.

Documents: They can include official government documents or church records such as birth, death and marriage certificates, immigration records, old driver's licence or passport. Did you write a travel journal or keep a diary, it will be fun to look back on in years to come.

Also include any creative writing, records of your personal projects and any hobby-related notes and papers.

Employment: Did you or your family run a business? Include letterheads, business cards, advertisements, quotes, and invoices. Add sample of accounts as these will be fascinating to look back on in 10, 20 years' time to compare prices. Not self-employed, then include job resumes, references and employment advertisements that you may have applied for.

Letters & Cards: Letters can provide insights into your family's past. They can include old family letters, birthday or anniversary cards from friends or grandchildren. Postcards or other travel ephemera. As we are now living in a digital age, we all know how rare it is to receive a handwritten letter or card.

Family recipes: Family recipes can be a wonderful way to document your family's culture and traditions. They can include recipes passed down from generation to generation, special recipes used at important occasions or just your own favourite, go-to recipes that you have collected.

Family heirlooms: Family heirlooms can include anything that has been passed down from generation to generation, such as jewellery, furniture, or other items with sentimental value. Perhaps you have a favourite charm bracelet that is broken, and you don't have the heart to throw it away, well include that in the box.

Baby Items: Perhaps your parents kept some of your baby items such as vaccination card, first outfit or shoes, hospital band, teething ring or lock of your hair.

Digital: Blog or social media posts (mobile phone pics in your cloud storage). Save these to a flash drive and place in the box.

And those are just a few ideas; the possibilities are endless! A memory box is a great way to keep your memories and keepsakes organised and preserved. Over time, you can write the history of your heirlooms and keep it with them. Remember, genealogy is not just about the dead.

Remembering the "Old Days"

AFHG Members

At our November meeting our members recalled stories from their early lives. Here are just a few of their memories.

Meal time was around a table with the family together. Almost without exception they had to eat what was put on their plate. At the end of the meal you asked "may I leave the table please".

Many families in the country had a cow. As well as providing milk it also gave cream. Butter was then made, often using a churn and paddles. You could have bread and butter or bread and jam, but not both. Everyone had chickens, which provided both eggs and meat.

The vegie patch and orchard were of great importance. Potatoes, tomatoes, beans, carrots, parsnips, turnips, cucumbers and pumpkins were all grown.



Butter Churn & Paddles

Fruit was important. Whenever there was an abundance, jam or preserves were made using vacola sets. Honey was obtained through robbing wild hives. Cordial was for special occasions only, like Christmas.

The appliances were also very different. Hot water for a bath was supplied by a chip heater, an ice box kept things cool, but this was eventually replaced by a kerosene fridge. Hot water for washing was obtained through heating the copper. The clothes were put through a mangle to dry them out, before placing them on the washing line

There were no inside toilets, with the outhouse down the back. This meant that chamber pots under the bed were very useful at night, especially in winter.

These recollections of what it was like growing up 50 or more years ago, are very different to the experiences that children have now. Recording these stories for future generations is important, as times have changed so much. Your children or grandchildren may not be interested in family history now, but this may change in the future. After writing down your memories, you can then store a copy in your personal memory box that Jane covered earlier in this journal.

James Hamilton

The First Armidale Burial Ground – Faulkner Street

The AFHG are currently looking for information on people buried in the first Armidale Burial Ground. Below are details about James Hamilton who is buried in this cemetery and it provides an idea of the type of information we are hoping to collect. If you have any ancestors buried in Armidale before 1862 it is likely they are buried in this first cemetery and we would love to hear from you so that we can record their story.

Name	James Hamilton		
Date of Death	20 September 1857		
Parents Names	John Hamilton and Janet Brown		
Birth Details	c. 1814 Wishart, Lanarkshire, Scotland		
Cause of Death	"General decline"		
Religion	Presbyterian		
Occupation	Auctioneer		
Spouse	Margaret Lewis (m. 14 Sep 1839 Blantyre, Scotland)		
Children	Janet b.1841 d. 1873	Margaret b. 1848 d. 1939	
	John b. 1843	Agnes b. 1851 d. 1947	
	Henry b. 1845	Catherine b. 1853 d. 1890	
	James b.1848 d. 1931	William b. 1856 d. 1937	

James Hamilton was born in Wishart, but at a young age moved to Glasgow. At the age of ten he became an orphan losing both his parents within 2 years. At the age of twelve he became an apprentice nail maker. By 1839 when he married Margaret Lewis he had established his own business.

In 1844 he left Scotland and travelled to Sydney with his family aboard the *Herald*, where he remained until 1847. During this time he lectured on phrenology. Poor health intervened and upon medical advice he moved to the country, initially at Port Macquarie where he worked for the A. A. Company.

His health continued to cause him problems and, after 'experiencing a multitude of vicissitudes, enduring much suffering on the way', he eventually arrived at *Kentucky* in 1851, then moved to *Saumarez* and finally to Armidale in 1853.

He entered into an auctioneering business partnership with Robert FURNIFULL, but was dogged by ill-health. A few months before his death he 'commenced a series of lectures on phrenology, which unfortunately were not as well attended as they ought to have been, and which he was prevented from completing by an attack of illness'. He appeared to rally for a time, but finally died. He has an extensive obituary recorded in the *Armidale Express*.

He left a wife and seven children and a fund was set up to clear his debts and allow Margaret to purchase land at Kelly's Plains and build a four roomed hut.

Convict register – Joseph Whittaker

AFHG Researchers

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Joseph was born in Betley, Staffordshire, England around 1805. He was convicted at Stafford Quarter Sessions on 21 October 1835 of stealing malt and was sentenced to be transported to Australia for 7 years, along with his brother George.

The description of Joseph in the NSW Convict Indents recorded him as being 30 years of age, able to read and write and a married farm labourer. He was 5 feet 9 ½ inches tall with a ruddy complexion, brown hair and dark hazel eyes. His nose was long and thin, inclining to the right side and he had a small mole on his left cheek near the nose and another on the left side of his neck. He had numerous scars and tattoos.

He was transported to Australia on the ship the *Moffatt*, Joseph arriving in New South Wales in 1836, initially settling in the district of Scone where he received his ticket of leave on 8 October 1840.

He moved to Murrurundi where he married Bridget Flood in 1843. This was a bigamous relationship as he was already married according to the convict indents. When he married Bridget, the marriage certificate showed the groom's name as George Whittaker – not Joseph. Their first child, Mary Ann, had the father's name registered as George. This was most likely to hide the fact he was already married in England.

After Mary Ann was born the family moved to Armidale, where the other children had their birth father registered as Joseph. In 1855 Joseph purchased 10 acres of land just west of the city centre of Armidale and took up farming.

In 1861, along with John BOWE, Charles LYNCH and Arthur TAIT, Joseph began digging for gold on *Tilbuster Station* at Puddledock. The *Maitland Mercury & Hunter General Advertiser*, dated 1 January 1861, describes the discovery of gold.

In June 1865, the four men lodged a claim for a "Reward for the discovery of a new goldfield." The *Armidale Express* dated 10 June 1865 reports: "Notice is hereby given in terms of the Government Regulations of 3 October 1861, that the undermentioned persons have applied for a "Reward for the Discovery of a new gold field" and that any conflicting applications must be lodged with the undersigned on or before the 1 September 1865. The Board met at the Gold Commissioner's office, Rocky River, to consider this claim on 14 September 1865.

Unfortunately, Joseph died on 11 September 1865, 3 days before the claim was considered. However, on 3 February 1866 there is a report in *The Armidale Express*, which records "We had much pleasure in learning this week that the sum recommended to be granted by the Government to the discoverers of Puddledock, £25 each, had been authorised to be expended and that Mrs Joseph Whittaker had received the share of her late husband.

Joseph died after suffering from pleuro pneumonia for eight days. The informant on the death certificate was his brother George, who placed his mark as he was unable to read or write. The headstone which was placed on Joseph's grave still records his name mistakenly as George.

Bridget outlived her husband by 35 years, dying 13 March 1900 and is buried with him in the Roman Catholic portion of the Armidale cemetery. The headstone is broken and is placed face down, but the group holds a photo which shows the inscription.

Much of this information has been sourced from the following Wikitree internet site. https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Whittaker-1696

Interesting UK Websites

Wayne Hoppe

Don't forget our website www.armidalefamilyhistorygroup.com

National Archives (UK)

Access more than 300 guides to wills, census records and other resources on this site by clicking on Help with Your Research > Family History. Another click—Search the Catalogue—will let you explore more than 32 million descriptions of records at The National Archives and more than 2,500 archives across the country. Some records have been digitised. From the home page, click Find Online Collections to access more guides. A helpful feature of this catalogue is that the entries direct you to digitised records on other websites, such as Findmypast.com and Ancestry (although these are paid sites).

https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/

The National Library of Wales

The main catalogue holds indexes of many individual records, including marriage licenses from 1616 to 1837 and wills and administrations proved in Wales between 1521 and 1858. Try searching on a person's name and parish of residence. You can refine the results by collection, such as marriage bonds or wills, and by a range of years. You can use a screen capture to save record images or download files for a small fee.

https://www.library.wales/

Dusty Docs

This site has links to free websites featuring church parish registers from the United Kingdom and Ireland. For example, a search on England, Norfolk County, and the parish of Upwell produces links to several sites, including an index to baptisms, marriages and burials on the <u>FreeReg</u> website.

http://dustydocs.com/

Free BMD

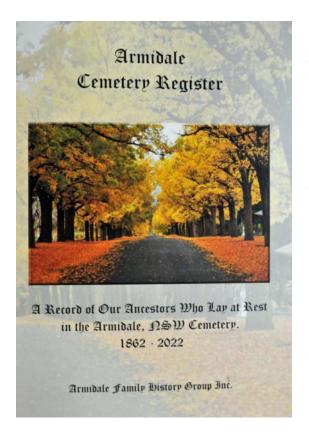
A free-to-search volunteer project to transcribe the English and Welsh civil registration indexes, FreeBMD covers more than 290 million records. All years are not yet available, but more transcriptions are added regularly.

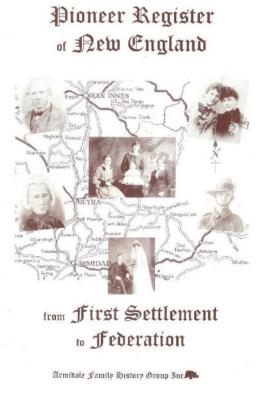
https://www.freebmd.org.uk/

Books for Sale

AFHG

The Armidale Family History Group now has a number of publications for sale. These include the Pioneer Register of New England and the Armidale Cemetery Register, both of which are published by the group. The cemetery register is available in both book and digital formats.





Members – book	\$60
Members – Thumb drive	\$50
Non Members – book	\$70
Non Members – Thumb drive	\$60

Book \$40

In addition, we also have the following local history books published by our members:

The Story of Kingstown, by Jim Swales	\$25
Coopers Burial records, Uralla by Robert B Schofield	\$25
George's Creek Bundarra, by Di and Wayne Hoppe	\$25



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AFHG Membership Fees

Annual Membership (1 July to 30 June)



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Use of Library—each visit......\$10
Each Workshop......\$10