

"Spanning the Years"



Tea Gardens Family Research & Local History Inc

'The Cottage'

Cnr Myall and Yalinbah Streets

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FEBRUARY 2025 NO. 51

OPEN DAYS

Except Public and School holidays

Mondays—Cottage

1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th—9.30am – Noon

3rd—1pm– 3pm

SATURDAYS—Tea Gardens Library

9.30—11.30am

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To assist those researching their family history in a happy friendly manner.

To preserve, share and promote our community's local history.

PATRONS: Janis Winn & Owen Holbert

PRESIDENT: Judith Glover

VICE PRESIDENT: Lesley Turner

SECRETARY: Anne Shannon

TREASURER: Ros Bridger

HISTORICAL EVENTS: Linda McIntosh

LOCAL HISTORY: Anne Johnson

LIBRARIAN; Shirley Cox

COMMITTEE:

Margaret Munright Garry Worth

Jenny Little Diane Kiss

Fran Mitchell

Our appreciation to the Tea Gardens Country Club for allowing our group the use of the cottage.

We acknowledge the Worimi people, the traditional owners of the land on which we meet.



Our Patrons, Owen Holbert & Janis Winn

Annual Membership 1st July—30th June
\$15—New member joining fee +
\$30—Annual Renewal
\$10— Extra Family member.

Regional Australia Bank
BSB: 932000
Account: 500044432

At the cottage, we have access to

Ancestry.com
FamilySearch.org
Library research books
Folders containing everything

At the Library, we have access and help to
Ancestry Library Edition
Family Search Library Edition
Find My Past

Welcome to another year, we trust everyone has had a lovely safe Christmas break and are looking forward to what 2025 has to offer. New ideas and different ways to research maybe?

Over the past years our group participated in our local festivals and Australia Day. Since covid, this has come to a halt, we are all getting too old to erect gazebos and pull down displays. Our main aim was to project ourselves in the public domain, talk to people at the 'Lions Australia Day Breakfast' and hopefully gain some new interested members to our group. As we are a small community, all communication is through word of mouth, flyers and our local newspaper the Nota.

Our aim now is to hold historical and family research workshops in our local library in which the community and public are invited to attend. Unfortunately we can't plan too far ahead while we wait for signs that the extensions to the library have commenced. We were all excited when outside the library the Pioneer People poles were moved, expecting the next incident would be the removal of the small trees, but sadly they are still standing!

Please enjoy reading our 'Spanning the Years Journal'.

Note please—all Journals to be sent to our Journal/Newsletter address:

infofromothers@gmail.com

Thank you
Editorial team

While every effort is made to verify the contents of this newsletter, our group do not accept responsibility for the accuracy of the articles.

Please check any submitted articles do not breach copyright law. If there is any doubt, your article won't be published in our Journal.

Submitted articles by members remain the property of the member and must not be reproduced or photocopied without the permission from the contributor or the editorial team.

teagardensfrg@gmail.com

COLLABORATIVE TREES

After watching the webinar from FamilySearch.com, I learnt what a Collaborative tree was all about, it wasn't my 'personal tree' as I had thought. Because of this 'thought', some time ago I took to task a person who had made changes and added information which wasn't relevant to 'my' tree. I messaged this person, but didn't receive a reply. I now understand that anyone can add information and it is up to you whether you take and use this information you know relates to your personal tree, on your own 'tree' on your computer.

The explanation below which has been taken from <https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/tips-collaborative-family-tree>

[The FamilySearch Family Tree uses a collaborative wiki model. You're probably familiar with wiki-based sites such as Wikipedia where all users see the same information and any registered user can contribute and correct information. The purpose of these sites is to create a crowdsourced repository of information that users meet their goals.

It's the same for the FamilySearch Family Tree. Because it is a public tree, all users see the same information about deceased people, and because the tree is a collaborative tree, any user can add or correct information. The ultimate goal is to create an accurate record of the human family and help people connect with family members, both living and deceased.

The idea of a collaborative tree is exciting and innovative. We don't have to work alone anymore! We can collaborate with family members from all over the world. We can reduce duplicate research. To share information, we don't need to print paper copies or email files because everyone has access to current information in one public tree.

Working in a collaborative tree invites us to learn a new way of doing family history. It may take time, patience, and adjustments, but the benefits are huge! As we work together, we can honor our deceased family members, connect with our living family members, and ultimately reach our goal of building a shared tree of all humanity.]

It is well worth reading all about Collaborative trees – using the information you feel is correct for your personal tree on your home computer.

An *in-law* is someone who has married into your family.

An *out-law* is an *in-law* who resists letting you do their genealogy!

Remember to BACKUP - First step, always back up your existing data before anything else. If something goes wrong a simple restore puts your database right back the way it was. Do you check your external hard-drive?

FAMILY HISTORY

WHEN FIRST WE TAKE THE PATH
TO FIND OUT WHO WE ARE,
LITTLE OUR FOREBEARS WOULD HAVE KNOWN
THEY'D LEAD US BACK SO FAR.

BACK TO PAST TIMES IN HISTORY
WHICH HELPS US TO EXPLAIN
THE JOYS, BUT SO MUCH MISERY
HARDSHIPS, CHALLENGERS AND PAIN.

WHEN SHEEP TOOK PLACE OF KIN
WAS SCOTLANDS TIME OF SHAME,
WHEN THE IRISH FINALLY REBELLED
REPRESSION FROM ENGLAND WAS TO BLAME.

SOME VENTURED TO THIS FAR OFF LAND
TO BREAK FROM THE SYSTEM OF CLASS
OF COURSE IT FOLLOWED HERE
BUT EVENTUALLY CAME TO PASS.

MANY SENT IN CHAINS TO COLONISE THE LAND
MANY SURVIVED TO PROSPER WELL,
THO' OTHERS WERE LESS FORTUNATE
THIS COLONY BECAME THEIR HELL.

OUR LIVES ARE ALL THE RICHER
FOR KNOWING OF THE PAST,
SOME ROGUES AND OTHERS HEROES,
HOW IN TIME WILL WE BE CLASSED?

Written by our member Ann Johnson (nee Ringland) 2011

A Member Profile & Australia Day.



Part of 2009 display



Our last display 2019

Jenny Little

These 2 photos above, are from our first and last Australia Day display mainly put together by our talented Jenny, who not only helps, researches, directs & organises together with a couple of members, all our displays but 'is out there' letting the public know of our existence, and to research world-wide, **not** just in England and USA! Jenny herself has relatives in India, Poland and from all around the world.



The photo of the 'thong display' is courtesy of the Pindimar Market Group on Facebook, shows the winners with their name and distance recorded on each thong.

Pindimar Market Day—October 2024

Jenny and her late husband Laurie started the 'Throng Throwing Competition' in 2009. Every throw has to be with the same thong, aptly named "The Competition Thong" which has been used since 2009. Each competitor has a few practice throws before their best throw.

This year Jenny had 130 competitors which were divided into generations—Blokes & Shelia's 1929-44, Baby Boomers 1945-64, Generations X,Y & Z, 7-10yrs, 15-17yrs, 6 & under and even the 2 & 3 years olds! There's even an 'On the Roof' prize!

Families from as far away as Jerry's Plains line up for their chance at winning a 'decorated thong'.

Jenny doesn't miss this opportunity to hand out our 'flyers' and talk to people about what we have to offer them in researching their family trees, all around the world.

Jenny will collect discarded thongs, recycle, paint and decorate them throughout the year ready for the next Pindimar Market Day.

Jenny is a great ambassador for our group.

PS: Jenny's words "When I eventually 'fall off the perch" I guess my grave-stone should be in the shape of a thong"!

Thanks Everyone.



Original thong used each year

A CHILDHOOD YARN

Growing up in the rural town of Gunnedah on the northwest slopes and plains of NSW was a free and easy childhood; we lived two streets from the Namoi River. That river attracted all the local children like a magnet.

Saturdays was our day, we would rise early, do our chores for the day and off we would go until lunchtime, which was the main meal of the day. When we were all leaving home, mum would yell out "stay away from the river" and of course, our reply was "Yes mum."

We would spend many hours swimming, making cubby houses and swinging off a rope into the water, which hung from a huge gum tree on the riverbank. Lucky for us Konz children we were all good swimmers, Dad made sure of that by throwing us into the local baths - sink or swim. However, our favourite thing was to torment an old man who everyone called Punch Kelly. He lived on the other side of the river in a humpy with six or so dogs as companions. He was a tall man with a long dark beard; he always wore an old overcoat and a funny old hat. He also carried a walking stick and a wheat bag over his shoulder, a frightening looking character to us children.

We would stand on the bridge near our favourite swimming hole and yell out "Punch Kelly" as loud as we could. He would come out of his humpy yelling at us, his dogs would then start chasing us we would run away giggling.

He never did catch us; however, this went on for sometime. Poor old Punch must have had enough as he came knocking on our door one day and told our mum what we had been doing, he also told her if he ever caught us, he would put us in his wheat bag and chop us up. Needless to say, we never did that again ever. I remember having nightmares for years after and of course, the river never had as much appeal. After that, the local swimming pool was a much better option.

I can't remember what happened to poor old Punch, but still to this day I reckon I would run a mile if I ever did see him.

Susan Bailey (nee Konz) Member No.22

A great suggestion from Nance Richards (*rip*)

My suggestion for family historians is that they copy the recording of family convict ancestors by setting out similar descriptions of living or recently lost members of their family.

Describe your father or grandfather in terms of: - place of birth, eye colour, height, weight, hair colour, hair pattern eg- bald, visible birthmarks, scars on the face or body from accidents or medical procedures.

You will be surprised at what you have forgotten. Bill cannot remember which side of his fathers face was his black birthmark but photographs show him, when he could, turning only his right side to the camera.

Later generations would appreciate your efforts.

NANNA

As a child I thought that nothing tasted nicer than a sip of Nanna's tea or a piece of toast dipped into the yolk of her boiled egg. My memories of her are that she was a very kind , gentle, soft lady to cuddle with soothing hands to rub your back and I loved her dearly.

Nanna was a great cook. From the age of three I was allowed on cooking days to have my own special little mixing bowl and make a half mixture of cake batter. Winter time was a great time to cook when we had the fuel stove going. Nan opened the oven door, put her hand in briefly to judge the temperature and if needed put a few more sticks in the fire box. Her apple pies and custard tarts were superb. I always enjoyed sitting quietly by the stove safe and warm, listening to the simmering kettle softly singing its own tune.

To Nanna the dining room was to be her showpiece. The sideboard was to have nothing on it but a vase of flowers on a hand crotched doily. For the large wooden table, she had specially made a heavy pure woolen dark green cloth with gold embroidered flowers on each corner. Unfortunately, the room did not stay this way for long. Everyone in the family came home and put their things on the dining room table, the remainder was on the sideboard. Poor Nanna, she gave up and even started to put things there herself although she was known to say "Don't put it down, put it away".

The family were holidaying at The Entrance in May 1936 before my Mum and Dad were married. They were camping and took in the old Chev truck all the gear needed to make their holiday comfortable. Nanna like a covering for the floor of the tent, a wooden cupboard for the food and crockery, stretchers to sleep on, table, stools and a bench to cook on etc. My Dad and Grandfather (Pop) were very keen fishermen and while out trying their luck, happened to speak to another fisherman who told them of this fantastic place called Hawks Nest where there were so many fish they virtually asked to be caught. Pop took special notice of the details and very shrewdly mentioned to Nanna on his return to the tent that being as they had been coming to The Entrance for so many years, maybe they should pack up all their gear and take a look further north as surely there were other lovely places for a holiday. To his surprise Nan agreed and so next morning the truck was loaded up and off they went.

All day they travelled, crossing rivers by punt at Hexham, Karuah and then Tea Gardens. Once on the other side of the Myall River, they drove along a bush track looking for the beach and somewhere to camp. It was just coming on to dusk and the biting mosquitoes were huge and Nanna felt a sense of uneasiness.

Finding a path to the beach Pop and Dad leapt out of the truck and disappeared through a tunnel of lantana bush out onto the most fantastic beach and just looked in awe at the view and prospects of throwing in a line. They came back all excited Pop insisted they should hurry and find a campsite. Nanna sat steadfast. "We will do no such thing. I am NOT getting out of this truck as long as we stay here. We are going back to The Entrance". Pop's face dropped, "What do you mean we are not staying, of course we are after driving all day to get here."

"No" Nanna insisted, "You fellas will disappear for hours on end day and night and leave the girls and me all alone in this isolated place amongst the bush. We ARE going back." She sat with her arms firmly folded across her chest and that was that. The truck was turned around and back they went to The Entrance, putting their tent up on their previous camp site the next day. The caretaker of the camping area was very surprised to see

them back and said "I thought you were going to stay further north?" to which Nanna replied, "Yes, and now we're back."

Pop never forgave Nanna for his missed fishing opportunities. I think it is rather ironic that I now live in this beautiful place and when I go to the beach I like to gaze out to sea and to the islands and just think about those years ago when some of my family did the very same thing.

Nanna always looked forward to visiting her family in England and in 1951 her dream came true and she set sail on board P & O *Strathnaver*. There were many family members and friends to see her off and the adults threw streamers with rowdy cheers from the crowd when successful. Carefully we hung on to our ends and hoped the wind would not break our line of contact until the ship pulled away from the wharf. On arrival at Southampton her brother and two sisters were there to meet her, so very excited and most anxious to talk and celebrate. Unfortunately Nanna had caught a bad cold, had no voice and was not feeling at all well. To their alarm after initial hugs and greetings Nanna fainted. The family were so distressed and thought she had died. After some tender nursing over the next week she started to recover and was able to enjoy her long awaited visit. On her return home she said that the country of her birth was lovely to visit, but Australia was where she wanted to live.

Contributed by Member No. 11

The Sorry End To A Hard Life?

NEWCASTLE MORNING HERALD 4 December, 1901

A man named William Emerton, 46 years of age, dropped dead in the yard of the Racecourse Inn, Merewether, yesterday morning. Dr Dunlop has been authorized to make a post-mortem examination, and there may be no necessity for an inquiry.

NEWCASTLE MORNING HERALD 6 December, 1901

Mr G.C. Martin, district coroner, yesterday held a magisterial inquiry concerning the death of the man William Emerton, which occurred suddenly on Tuesday. Dr Dunlop deposed to having made a post-mortem examination of the body. Death, in his opinion, was caused due to constant indulgence in alcoholic liquor. A finding in accordance with the medical testimony was recorded.

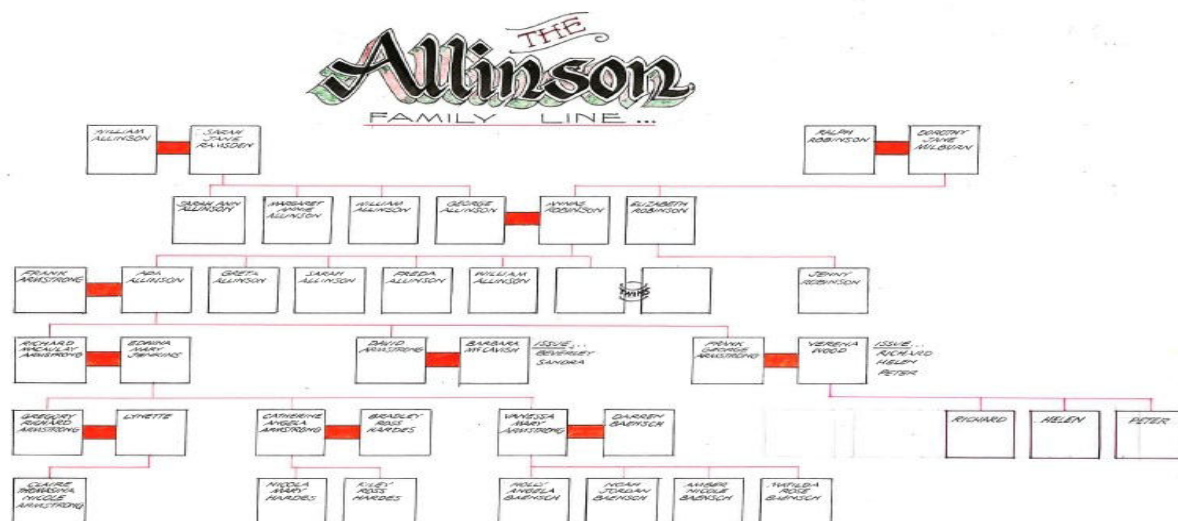
NEWCASTLE MORNING HERALD

The family of the late Mr W. Emerton wishes to return thanks to all kind friends and neighbours who assisted them in their sad bereavement.

Signed: W.C. Emerton Jun

(Contributed by Member No. 8)

Richard's family tree, a different way of recording names and stories associated with his family, all hand drawn and written.



THE Allinson's

The Allinson Family, so far as I can go back, came from the market town of Barnard Castle in the County of Durham in England. Barnard Castle is a very old town which grew around the castle which was once the stronghold of the Barnard family... The town is sited on the north bank of the River Tees which once was the border of County Durham and the North Riding of Yorkshire...

The Allinsons were a typical working class family of the day, they lived a life of hardship and financial disadvantage, they were a good living and moralistic family without much material wealth... In the Census of 1881, one of my Great Grandmothers, now a widow with two young daughters, is recorded as an inmate of the Teesdale Union Workhouse, the workhouse being the last resort of the destitute.

The family lived in an area called Bridgegate, a complex of houses built at the bottom of a very steep hill known locally as "Barney bank", it was at the bottom of this hill that one of my Great Grandmothers was tragically killed as a result of being run over by an out of control steam roller.

My Grandparents, George and Annis Allinson had not only a hard life but also a profoundly sad one, losing five of their seven children, two daughters in their early 20's to meningitis and three in infancy of whom I know nothing, only my Mother and Aunt Freda reaching adulthood and marrying.

Both of my Grandparents lived, worked and died at Barnard Castle.

NAMES AND FAMILY TREES

Were you named after a special person, family tradition or does your name have a special meaning? Have you asked your parents why they gave you your name?

I wish I had – where Judith came from I don't know. Once I asked my mum if I hadn't been named Judith what would it have been – Virginia – was the answer. At the time I was about 14 and thankful my name wasn't Virginia as boys would 'mock' unusual names and I felt I would have been so embarrassed. My second name is Jean – my mum's sister I presumed, but when doing the family history and researching my Baptism day by way of a photograph of all the people who attended, I discovered my God-Mothers second name was Jean – so which Jean?

Oh well I can't change it now, but how I wish I had asked.

What's in a name?

The family tree provides lots of examples of surnames with other usages (just to confuse Google) – try Bunker, Gudgeon, Weed, Huntress, Bean or just Gray or Walker.

First names can be just as difficult: Joy, Increase (who died childless), Darling, Moody or Hatevil and those are just a few of the men!

The one I am most pleased I wasn't named after is Grizel Warren, my 7 times great aunt. "Nominative determinism" hadn't been written up as a concept when she was born in 1662, but she had plenty to grizzle about in her life.

Her father James had been transported to Maine as a Scottish prisoner of war, but after completing his sentence he and his wife Margaret were granted land in Kittery, where they raised five children.

By 1689 Grizel had become the third wife of blacksmith Richard Otis and the mother of two daughters, Hannah (3) and Margaret (3 months). An Indian raid on Dover in June, as part of King Richard's War, resulted in the deaths of at least 20 people, including Richard, his father and Hannah.

Grizel and Margaret were among the 29 captives sold into slavery in New France and marched to Canada, where she was instructed in the Catholic faith and re-baptised as Mary Madeline, while Margaret became Christine. On 15 October, 1693 Grizel was married in Montreal to Philippe Robitaille, with whom she had five more children. but no descendants are known.

Grizel never returned to Maine and died in Montreal aged 89, having been bedridden for nine or ten years. Christine had returned to Maine after the death of her first husband, but was not permitted to take her two daughters, who were placed in a convent according to one account or raised by Grizel and Philippe in another.

We can only hope Grizel found some happiness in Canada, but she certainly had enough sorrows in her life to justify more than one grizzle.

Shirley Cox—Member No 6

Summer Holidays

Summer holidays were the best. The weather was good so swimming at the local Tea Gardens pool was always an option. We just had to walk through the baths' café to the change room and take your chances – no life guards.

The beach was more difficult with having to cross the river by ferry, then walk or ride a bike. Riding bicycles around town was not the challenge it is today as there was very little traffic.

Two sets of grandparents ended up in Tea Gardens so relatives would visit and I would enjoy seeing my cousins. My mother being the youngest of seven children – most cousins were much older and when they climbed Yaccaba or doing exciting things, I was often considered too young. But, I did the climb three years ago for the last time before I was too old! (now 86)

No TV's back then – a movie at the local hall on Saturday, so we had to amuse ourselves with games of cards, snakes and ladders, monopoly etc

Christmas Bells were to be found in the bush mainly on the swampy areas – they went so well with Christmas Bush. These areas are where development has taken over now.

Being a classmate of Jan Winn (nee Motum) I was invited to go with her family to Tamboi & Mungo Brush each year. There was no road so we travelled by boat and set up a tent. That was great fun, swimming and fishing filled in our day, and we witnessed the prawning at Tamboi one night, a real experience.

These memories are of the 40's & early 50's. So much has changed in this town since then.

Cheers Anne Member No 12



Council Baths were built in 1936. The entrance was opposite the Riverview Guesthouse.

Picture reproduced from Ebb & Flow book—Tea Gardens Hawks Nest Historical Society

HOW DO YOU DO YOUR FAMILY TREE?

We encourage our new members to start with a Pedigree Chart.

A Pedigree Chart is the foundation point for your family research. This way you are able to see where you are missing the information and where you need to start to build from there.

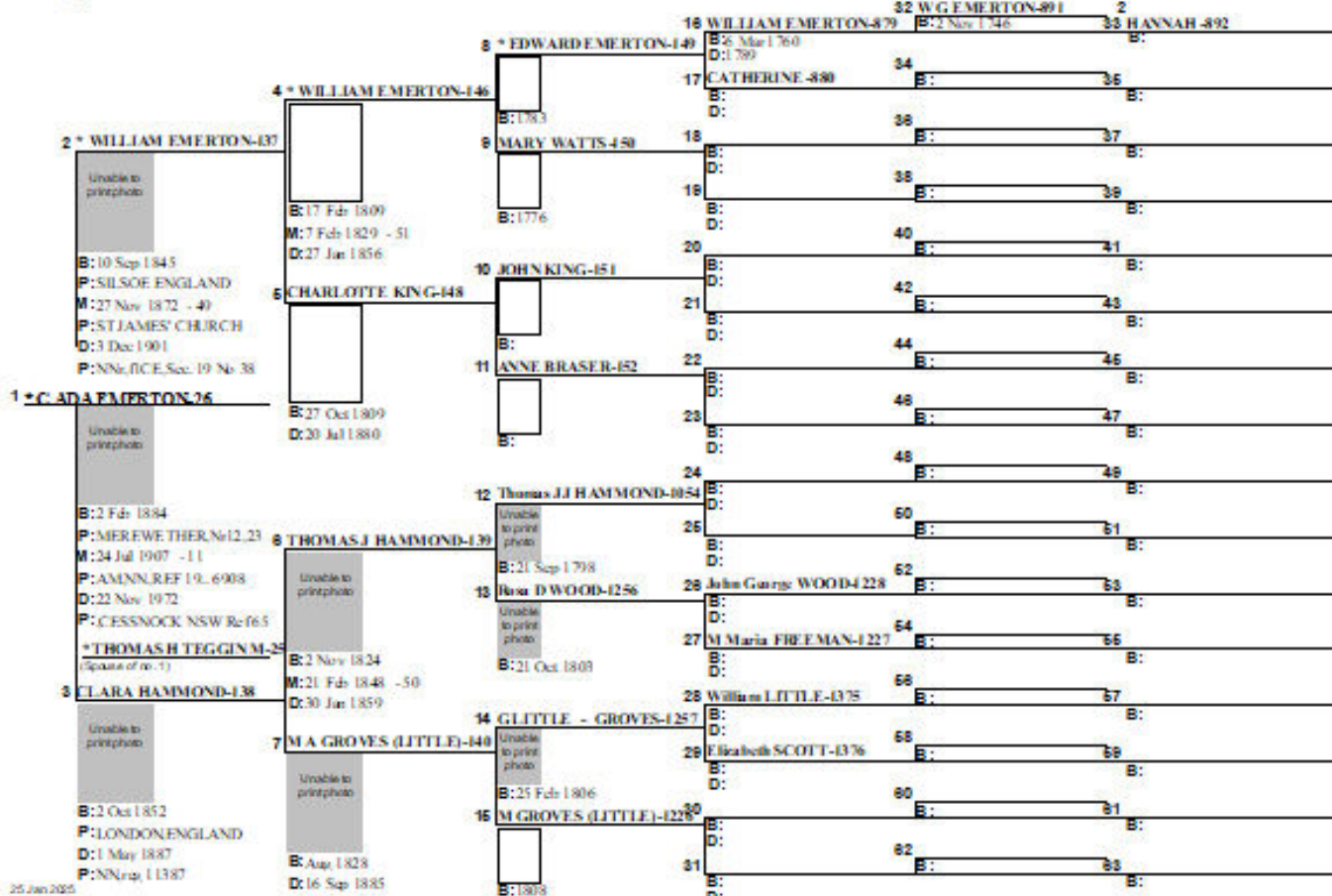
A pedigree shows your direct bloodline. Start with yourself then parents to grandparents etc along with birthdates, marriage dates, death dates and locations for all those dates.

There are numerous templates online for you to copy, or write one yourself. I prefer the prepared template to start with, then expand as I collect the information.

From a pedigree chart, it is wise to start a 'family group' sheet, where spouses, children can be filled in, then to also have a 'worksheet' for added information. It is a good idea to have one for each family.

Pedigree Chart

Chart no. 1



PIONEER PEOPLE OF TEA GARDENS HAWKS NEST

The McRae Family

The Pioneer Poles were created by Margaret Germon (*rip*) and Pearl Ingram (*rip*) in 2005 to tell the story of our local history through the families of our early pioneers.

The pioneer poles (a couple have deteriorated and will be remade) at Winda Woppa represent John & Elizabeth McRae and their son George.

John's father Duncan McRae was one of the earliest pioneers to help settle the Tea Gardens Hawks Nest area. He was only 14 years old when he arrived from Stroud in the UK.

In 1862, Duncan came to the Myall Lakes area with his wife Eliza and set up a saw milling business. They owned 3 vessels that were used to transport timber from Myall Lakes to Sydney.

Duncan & Eliza had eleven children and although they moved away from the area, three of their children remained. John, Alexander and Archibald, who continued to work in the timber industry until it slackened-off in the early 20th century. They then turned to fishing.

John built a house at Winda Woppa as a wedding present for his wife Elizabeth and planted pine trees there in 1911. Those trees still stand today.

John's second son, George married Ida Rose Asquith in 1932 after meeting her when he was fishing in Nelson Bay. In 1935 he started prawning and fishing with another well-known local, Abe Sheather.

Ida also worked with George on the beach during the annual mullet run. During the Depression in the 1930s they literally had to live off the sea to provide for their children. Their eldest children married members of the Fidden family, and are well involved with the local fishing industry today, operating the Tea Gardens Seafood Co-op and Mumm's Restaurant.



Elizabeth & John McRae—Winda Woppa
(George has gone to be repaired)

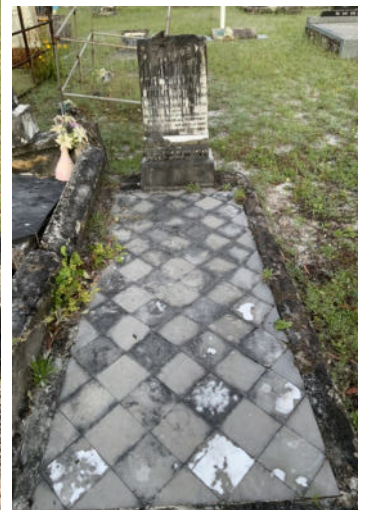
Note from Jan Winn's book 'Pioneer & History from Winda Woppa to Tahlee: Published 2013

Six generations of the McRae family have lived in the region of Winda Woppa. Mrs Ida McRae recalls when the tides were very high, rowing her children across the river to Green Point which was a more direct route to Tea Gardens School. When the time came for High School, the children would walk along the mud flats depending on the tides, or use the cattle track which followed the shore around to Mirreen Street Hawks Nest, then along Moira Parade (the main riverfront street) to catch the 7.15am ferry across the river, walk to Tea Gardens Hotel to catch the school bus at 7.30 each morning.

The children would play around the bush, fish, swim and do chores and housekeeping. They didn't miss any days going to school, "We weren't allowed to" said daughter Betty.



Emily McRae d: 1949 &
Alexander McRae d: 1951
Tea Gardens Cemetery

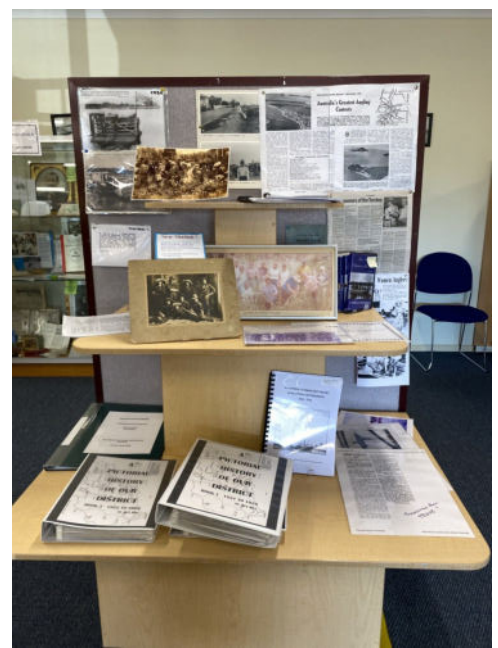
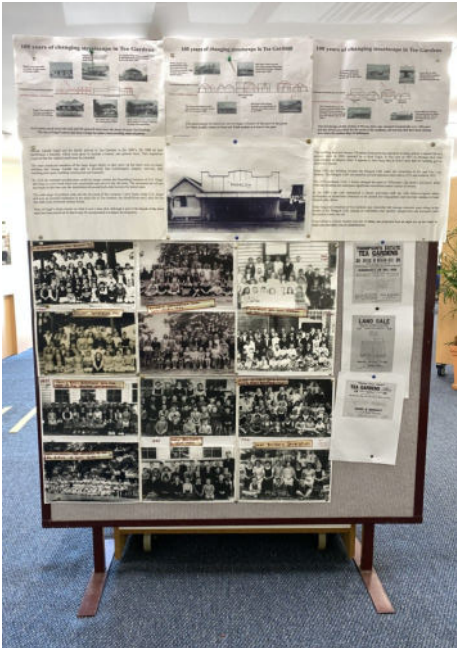


Archibald McRae d: 15-1-1914
Tea Gardens Cemetery

TEA GARDENS LIBRARY LOCAL HISTORY

Below is our display at the local library. Many visitors to our area enjoyed reading through the display which featured early school photos, stories and artifacts from by-gone days in Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest.

The 'gold' framed pictures in the top centre, were found at the local tip many years ago. They hung in our room at shop 3 for many years in the hope that someone would recognise them and take them home. Sadly they are still with us and are now known affectionally as Mr & Mrs Tipp. (If you recognise these people, you are welcome to claim them)



IF I COULD TURN THE CLOCK BACK

If I could put the clock back
A score of years or so
I'd pick up again my old bush tracks
And pals I used to know,
I'd light once more the yarran sticks and
Smoke and yarn with mates
Where they plant for good the finger posts
Beyond the city gates.

Jack Moses 1923

Many thanks to the people who have contributed to this newsletter. I hope these snippets give rise to the talents of our members and others and more contributions will be forthcoming for future editions.

The Editor