



The Chronicle

JOURNAL of the LAKE MACQUARIE FAMILY HISTORY GROUP Inc.



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



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

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A Word From The President...

Dear Members

I hope you found your memory jar without too much trouble.
Didn't have to search for it among detritus and other rubble.
Mine was hidden in the pantry among the jams and chutney.
Along with maps and souvenirs from my journey to Putney.

Covered with dust and sealed with generous dollops of wax
Which of course was necessary to protect the salient facts.
My hands were shaking nervously as I removed the seal.
Heaven knows what I will find, perhaps it won't appeal.

Open now and reaching in not knowing just what I'll clasp.
Oh, gadzooks, there's some in there too slippery to grasp.
My fingers closed around one or two I was able to extract.
I laid them down and cleaned them to make them more exact.

Then the strangest thing occurred, more came bubbling out.
Before I knew it, there were enough to give my story clout.
I hope you had as much fun as you sought your memory jar.
And the memories we share in here will travel wide and far.

Regards

Patrick Bradbery

Welcome!

The Lake Macquarie Family History Group welcomes new members:



Jamie Vernon Member 323

Margaret & Robert Connors Member 324

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

Disclaimer:-

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Welcome to our first edition in 2025! This issue is arriving a month later than usual, as we've now scheduled our publication dates for March, July, and November. **Your Memory Jar** is the theme for some of the following stories. We hope readers find something of interest here and we wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to all of our contributors and supporters.

Co-editor Jan and I recently attended a Zoom meeting for journal editors arranged by the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies. Thank you to the organisers and participants - it was a most welcome opportunity to share ideas and add to our knowledge base.

Our Group has planned an Open Day to be held at our Marmong Point meeting place on the 17th May 2025. There will be three knowledgeable and interesting guest speakers addressing the theme - **Finding Your Place** - We hope to see you there! Please see the back page for further details.

I'm writing this introduction on 1st March - St David's Day - the feast day of Saint David, patron saint of Wales. When I was growing up this day was often celebrated by eating Welsh rarebit and Welsh cakes, my mother's way of honouring her father's birthplace. My mother was born on 28th February and I recall saying that she was lucky not to have been born on the 29th as she would only have a birthday every fourth year. Her response was that she had always wished that she had been born on the 1st March because it would have pleased her father so much. I think she tried to make it up to him by naming me Glynda because she thought it sounded Welsh!



My grandfather Stanley Brown with older brother Alfred probably taken in Dowlais, Wales c1908.

The last week of February has marked the 70th anniversary of the devastating Maitland Floods. The Maitland Mercury (24th February 1955) headlined 'FEARS OF WORST DAMAGE IN THE HISTORY OF MAITLAND DISTRICT: CRISIS HOUR EARLY TOMORROW'ⁱ.

Sadly, that prediction became a reality as Maitland and many areas of the Hunter Valley were inundated - fourteen lives were lost, hundreds of homes, businesses, and farms were destroyed or extensively damaged.



This imageⁱⁱ appeared alongside an article in the Newcastle Herald (22 February 2025 page 48) detailing events coordinated by Maitland City Council to mark the anniversary.

Images of the flood can be found in the Jim Lucey Collection that can be viewed through the University of Newcastle's Living Histories <https://livinghistories.newcastle.edu.au/nodes/view/112783>

ⁱ *Trove, NLA*

ⁱⁱ *Maitland during the 1955 flood. Picture Hunter Conservation Trust, courtesy of Maitland City Council Collections*

Auntie Dawn is my Dad's stepsister. Approximately 10 years ago we travelled to New Zealand to see her and that's when I learned of the exciting times she had experienced as a teenager.

As a member of the New Zealand Girls' Champion Marching Band, the Warnock's Fusiliers of Wanganui, she travelled by seaplane to Australia.

The girls flew into Sydney early in September 1947 and arrived in Tamworth, NSW, venue of the international competition, on September 6th.

The girls were billeted during their stay and in the leadup to the September 27th contest they toured northern NSW districts and entertained crowds with displays of their marching routines.

Northern Daily Leader 8 Sep 1947
Dawn - at left, top row >>>



The Armidale Express & New England General Advertiser (22 Sep 1947 page 3) described their appearance as a "Colourful Spectacle - Girls' Marching Bands on Parade - New Zealanders Impressive". The report stated that for their first exhibition of marching the girls were dressed in their travelling dress of grey skirts, black coats, and black tam o' shantas (*sic*) with white tassels worn on the back of their heads. Embroidered in white on their coat pockets were the initials W.F. The girls later changed into their marching uniform of white calf-high boots, white pleated satin skirts, with black jackets featuring one white revere, white buttons and black epaulettes braided in white and long white bishop's sleeves featuring an embroidered black kiwi. Their black tam o' shantas were embroidered in front with a kiwi and featured white tassels in the centre of the back. The marching uniforms were donated at a cost of £225 by Warnock's, a Wanganui menswear shop.



Dawn - seated fourth from left

At this time my father was living in Newcastle, NSW, and communication between Australia and New Zealand was not as easy as it is today. Reports of the competition often only appeared in regional newspapers and so my father wrote home to his father - using airmail paper (both sides of course) and fountain pen - to find out whether Dawn had achieved her goal.

The girls did win the coveted trophy and became the champions of the Southern Hemisphere.

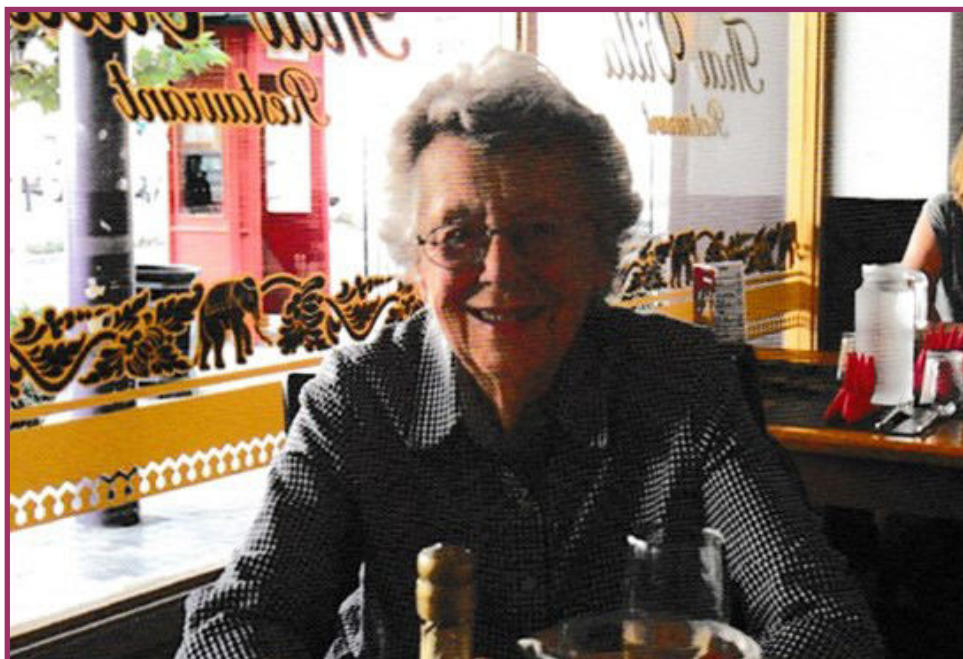


MARCHING TITLE
SYDNEY, Sept. 28.
The Wanganui Fusiliers girls' marching team won the marching bands championship of the Southern Hemisphere at Tamworth Oval last night. They beat Grace Brothers Sydney physical culture squad by 206½ points to 199 7-8.
In the afternoon Grace Brothers, with 248 points, had won the Australian championship from Treloar's Tamworth team with 238½.
Miss Betty Hall, of Wanganui, won the band leaders' competition from Miss Jacqueline Stanford, of Grace Brothers by 57½ points to 54½.
Stanford won the Australian band leaders' competition from Miss Marion Branson by 51½ points to 48½.

Gisborne Herald 30 Sep 1947 page 3

These articles, along with photos of my dad and his family, I carefully bought home and filed as treasured keepsakes.

The photo pictured below of Dawn was taken on our visit 10 years ago. Sadly, now aged 95 she is slowly fading away suffering with dementia.





This lovely little box sits proudly on a table in my lounge room where I am regularly prompting my beautiful grandchildren that one day, one of them will become “Keeper of the Rings”.

(For the uninitiated this is a reference to the “Lord of The Rings” series of fantasy adventures that is always received by the teenagers with an amused rolling of the eyes.)

It was the mystery of the beautiful rose gold belt buckle ring belonging to my great grandmother that started me on my family history journey so, so many years ago. A journey that has since led to many exciting and sometimes confronting discoveries.

That buckle ring has since been joined by the wedding rings of my grandmother and mother in the display box. These two rings are joined in more ways than one. My grandmother passed away prior to my mother’s wedding so when Mum was married in 1944 she wore her mother’s wedding ring. As the years passed, and the ring was worn day after day, it gradually became finer and finer until it was very close to breaking. To keep it safe my mother had it mounted on a wider gold band and so the two rings became joined as one. She continued to wear it until her death in 1993.

For much of the time, when it is not being worn, my wedding ring is also kept in the little box as a reminder to my family that we are each only a small part of the many stories of love, connection, and the shared history that binds us together, even when we are apart.



A wedding ring or wedding band is a finger ring that indicates that its wearer is married. In western culture, a wedding ring is typically worn on the base of the left ring finger. The ring finger is widely claimed to be associated with the traditional belief known as *vena amoris* (‘vein of love’).

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wedding_ring)

Robert and I are bowerbirds, thankfully we have lots of storage at our house, especially in the huge garage downstairs. Whenever the kids say they are throwing out a piece of furniture or disposing of some childhood treasures we offer to house them because "You never know when someone may need one".

Crunch time has come; we need to clear out some stuff before we leave this mortal earth. So, Robert and I started a major cleanup (and throwout) in the garage.

And what did I find? - **A Garage full of Memories.** My back is aching, my hair is full of dust, I am filthy and in need of a bath but I had a wonderful time clearing out and will continue to as I have more days of tidying ahead of me.

The Holly Hobbie material in my box of fabric reminded me of the doona cover and pillow cases I made for our younger daughter to match her [Holly Hobbie](#) wallpaper. She had a lovely little room at our house in Bronte. The scraps of rainbow wallpaper reminded me of the bedroom our boys had in our Maroubra house; the yellow chunky tube beds they had are resting on the other side of the garage.

Glittering in the bottom of a fabric box was a remnant from the purple sequined material out of which I made a formal dress for my elder daughter when she was at Uni. She had a very social time at University; I always seemed to be making formal dresses for her to wear to balls and dinners.

Tucked away in a corner is the big posh metal English pram that I transported my first two children around in before I got a Mini Minor for a car. There was no way the pram that was nearly as big as the Mini would fit in the boot. Prior to getting the Mini I used to push that pram on a 5 mile round trip to have lunch with my Mum in her lunch hour. Just along from that pram is my younger daughter's toy pram.

Still in boxes were some books belonging to my late father. As I offloaded these onto the bookshelves I found some other treasures in the box. There was a full copy of the Daily Telegraph from October 17, 1983. That is the issue that had a picture of our offspring with [Captain Mark Phillips](#). There was the order of service from a cousin's First Communion and a photo of some younger cousins playing dressups in their mother's wedding dress.

Trivial Pursuit, cricket bats, roller skates, an electric trainset and other toys from the seventies and eighties sparked further memories of a family growing up.

Do you have a garage full of memories?



As children of the 1950s, shopping was, in many cases, a daily event. For many families, an electric fridge was just out of reach, especially if they had recently built a new home. From those early years, memories flood back to the ice box and the Iceman who would arrive with his big, clawed tool to carry an enormous block of ice. It almost sounds like something from a horror movie. The block was beautifully clear, almost transparent in appearance, and was locked away in the top of the ice box, where it would last for days before being replaced with a new one.



As a result, shopping had to be done regularly. Living in Adamstown, an outer suburb of Newcastle, not far from the end of Date Street, people were almost spoiled for choice. There was a grocer nearby, and across the road, a butcher shop. The butcher shop employed several men, dressed in the typical white uniforms with navy-and-white striped aprons. The meat was cut on enormous tree stumps blocks, worn down unevenly on one side. The shop felt light, white, and bright, with sawdust strewn across the floor. Carcasses were hung on hooks in the back area, known as the "cool room." All visible from the counter.

The general store across the road in Date Street, Adamstown, was, from memory, a little darker inside, with light coming through stained-glass inserts in the shopfront windows. Shelves behind the counter displayed all the groceries and household items needed by the locals. Colourful biscuit tins, featuring a rosella bird on the label, were neatly arranged. The contents customers selected were weighed out on the shop's scales and placed in brown paper bags for customers. Greengrocer items were also available for purchase, but they weren't the favourite section for the Baby Boomers. The real treat was the display of lollies at kids' eye level. You could spend ages making choices that made that penny go a long way. Some of the favourites included liquorice straps, green frogs, cobbars, musk sticks, freckles, and jelly babies.



Left: Kathie Wright outside her father's grocery shop corner Date & South Streets, Adamstown c1953 (Lost Newcastle - Facebook)



Above: My store as it is today corner of Date & South St, Adamstown (Google Maps)

Other food staples were selected from home - not online, but through home deliveries. The milk was brought early each morning to the front doorstep. At night, the empty milk bottles were left outside on the steps. Eventually, we used a special milk carrier basket that held four pints and made it easy to carry the bottles indoors. To pay for the milk, you would leave the coins in one of the bottles. Each milk bottle was capped with a shiny silver foil bottle top. The best time, however, was at Christmas, when those foil tops were red. We would mould them over a lemon squeezer and use the "little bells" shapes to create our own Christmas decorations.



"Little bells" (Lost Perth - Facebook)

There's still a common saying today to encourage guests to leave when they overstay their welcome: "I'm rattling the milk bottles" as a signal that it's time to put them out and go to bed. School milk, however, was a different story!

Bread, another family staple, was also delivered daily to the neighbourhood. Memories of the 1950s bring back the Co-Op Store baker, who would drive around our streets with his horse and cart. We would run out to make our selection and pay with a store token or two.

Another service was the greengrocer, who would stop in the street and call out "Fruito!" This, too, was a service provided by the Cooperative Store before others took on the business. While a horse and cart had originally been used, I remember fruit and vegetables being sold from a large, open-sided van like vehicle. The goods were stored in the back, and the residents would come out of their homes to do their shopping. The advantage of there being lots of stay-at-home mums was that shopping could be done when the Fruito made his rounds.



<https://au.pinterest.com/pin/208291551504321331/>

There is a lot to be said environmentally for this era. Brown paper bags, reusable glass bottles and minimal packaging were more sustainable options. There was less reliance on the motor vehicle so shopping local was a good option and less use of fossil fuel. My parents didn't have a car until the 60s, so small daily shops suited this lifestyle better. Life definitely felt simpler, but every generation probably says that.



I was recently sent this image - it immediately reminded me of Coronation Street!

It seems to have been doing the rounds on Facebook and Reddit.

Its caption: Pre internet chat room using an old version of windows....

Wonder how they managed when support for their version ended?

(Note that Microsoft support for Windows 10 will cease in October 2025)



Remember, remember, the fifth of November
Bonfire and crackers all turned into ember.
Guy Fawkes Night part of our Anglo culture
As of course was Empire Night. Like a vulture
Waiting to pick on the bones of unspent bungers
After satisfaction of our pyromaniacal hungers.

Now that has all faded as we recognised danger
All that is left are the memories, some stranger.
Let's start with the first memory that I can recall
My sister's second birthday, both so very small
In our new home, where I stayed twenty years
Living with love interwoven with physical fears.

Soon after the birthday, things went slightly awry
Playing with my cousin John, a matchbox did spy
He wanted to chop it apart with a tomahawk blow
While I was determined to keep it and said, "No!"
Well, John swung the axe, and my finger flew far
Reattached by the doctors, but still see the scar.

As the third of eight children, learning to share
Knowing that sometimes the cupboard was bare.
To church on Sundays, not to ever be missed
Then off to Lidcombe, by grandma we're kissed.
Cakes on the table, sometimes jam and cream
But for the rest of the week, it's only a dream.

One day at Grandma's, was chased by big brother
Six years my senior, Barry was a significant other.
Well, I tripped on a crack in this concrete path
Blood started pouring ex-mouth, put in the bath.
Hospital again, this time the doctors said, "Harump!"
"No stitches for you!" My tongue still has a lump.

Little brother came along when I was just seven
And although parents assured sent from heaven
My nose out of joint, asthma soon came about.
Off to children's hospital to work a new diet out
I refused to eat the foods that were prescribed
Soon I was dying, with malnutrition described.

A change of doctors made a difference of sorts
Farex and Pentavite drops remain in my thoughts.
Shipped off to Lidcombe with Grandma and Pop
Learning to walk again, and learning to shop
Armstrong's Butchery was just one block away
And when I went shopping a frankfurt was pay.

Schoolwork was quite easy, because I was clever
Paddy managed to be included in top five forever.
But getting to there was sometimes quite a chore
Breathing became quite often gasping for more.
Medication provided some very welcome respite
But produced hallucinatory dreams in bed at night.

When I was thirteen, my world recognised sport
I joined a new group at school of similar thought
And accompanied my father on Saturday arvo
To watch the Western Suburbs Magpies on show
Now part of the West Tigers as surely you know
Joined up with Balmain, a hard pill to swallow.

My growth was impeded by my illness of course
Played in the five stone sevens, where I was a force
But that was in third year, when my peers towered
They played in the sevens and nines, so I cowered
When in their presence, and often they bullied me
Just because I was little, they hit me with glee.

There was some argy bargy with my father and mother
When the time came to follow my sister and brother
Into the workforce, an apprentice something or other
But employers refused me position, "Talents smother",
They said, so my father bowed to the pressure applied
Parramatta Marist was where my talents were tried.

Now it may seem that this time was long, long ago
And maybe it was, we still had a steam engine to go
From Auburn to Parramatta and of course for return
Just think of the coal that journey would greedily burn.
And the mention of steam engines reminds me of one
Jumped off the tracks at Auburn, upside down fun.

When school was finished, I looked for employment
It was as a chemist I was seeking my deployment
But at Comalco, they suggested I give metallurgy a go
And so I became a metallurgist in six years so slow
Before I had finished the course, I made a change
A new profession, systems analyst, how strange.

While this was all happening, I joined Auburn CYO -
Catholic Youth Organisation in case you don't know.
I became president before I knew what was what
And learned to play basketball and not a bad shot.
We held a barbecue and invited some from Rozelle
There it was I met my future wife, couldn't foretell.

We married in sixty-eight when metallurgy completed
And I started a Master's degree, a challenge I greeted.
Then children came along, but not without trouble
After first born Michael, came bursts in the bubble.
Miscarriages became both fear and reality for Marie
So, we adopted a daughter, Patricia, to our family tree.

Comalco and Paddy agreed to part on unfriendly terms
Unemployed for six weeks while seeking new firms.
Eventually found Pharmaceutical Research Services
Employed as a programmer for computer devices.
Until I was rescued by British Tobacco Circular Quay
Operations Research was much more suited to me.

After a few years of commuting from Granville to City
I decided that life in the “burbs” was something to pity.
So shot out applications for jobs in the outer regions
As you may imagine they weren’t there in their legions
But Email responded well from the fair city of Orange
We eventually lived next door to the family Gorringe.

However, at first, we moved into a company house
Quite comfortable for just two kids and a spouse.
But I had a dream to live on some acres and farm
We bought land at Clifton Grove, peaceful and calm.
We built a bigger house for our family aspiration
Was to add to the population of the Australian nation.

Then Juan came along and put us back in the running
For the family we wanted for which we were gunning.
Sadly, it did not continue as the proverbial bed of roses
Therese lived just twelve hours, and so grieving poses
Then Louise joined us for just eight months or so
Before she and the docs decided that she just had to go.

But thankful we are that we completed our household
With Vincent joining us, we came in from the cold.
Cold it was, for in Orange it occasionally snowed
And it wasn’t so pleasant when the southerly blowed.
We enjoyed the snow when we were sitting inside
Not so much fun when we had to carefully stride.

Now Email and I started to experience some friction
No way that I wanted to experience another eviction.
By this time I had established a role as a teacher
Part time at the TAFE, management was a feature.
So, in a radical move, that left some people agog.
I resigned from Email and became a pedagogue.

A science teacher at Santa Maria, was now my earner
And at Mitchell College in Bathurst I became a learner.
A Diploma of Education was the first target I sought
By the seductive dream of radical change I was caught.
But, alas and alas, by passage of just one single year
I realised that my discernment had been far from clear.

Along the way became a member of St Vincent de Paul
A great institution that had survived the long haul
From nineteenth century France to the world of today
Providing support for many who had lost their way.
It taught me great lessons that sit with me still
That giving away is paradoxically ensuring your fill.

Into the murky deep end of my business career dove I
Into becoming a consultant, rich fields would rove I.
My wife was more sensible, than I, thank the lord
For she was cognisant of the things we might afford.
She borrowed some dollars from her mother you see
And bought a roll of school uniform material, yippee!

Before you could say, “Abracadabra” or similar phrase
We had a school uniform factory and shop under ways.
Just like the legendary Topsy it simply just “grewed”.
While my consulting stumbled along a rough road.
Then in a flash of brilliant but accidental insight
I started a computer processing service, how bright.

Soon selling computers and writing some software
No longer were our pantry cupboards quite bare.
And we bought a new business that made synergy
Between the enterprises, that then grew like a tree.
Spreading its branches, growing flowers and fruit.
Then along came a buyer, with an offer would suit.

So we sold the uniforms and the bookshop to them
But lest you think that would the entrepreneur stem
I then bought a business which did instant printing
And we started printing racebooks, money minting.
All good things must come to an end, so they say
An offer too good to refuse, would see light of day.

Too young to retire, and still teaching classes at TAFE
What could one do to make the future secure and safe?
Charles Sturt University came to the timely liberation,
So I adopted the role of lecturer as my designation.
Helping young people to learn about management
For nineteen years was my last paid assignment.

During this passage, are two things I will mention.
The first is a sadness that my marriage grew tension
I struggled with the image drummed into my mind
Of what good Catholic men do, only sadly to find
I could not live up to this idealistic behaviour norm
And chose to escape the expected permanent form.

The second one sits on the other side of the ledger
It took me ten years and often resembled a wedger
But I finally finished a doctorate in order to prove
Something that in all honesty I would like to remove
The conventional wisdom about teaching and learning
And that is a goal for which my spirit is still yearning.

A memory jar is to be approached with some caution
Once the seal is broken, there could be distortion.
Even worse, one thing leads to another, the sparks
Of one memory can ignite another, and remarks
That have been forgotten can return to cause grief
Challenge the things in which we’ve invested belief.

I sit before my keyboard and ponder the words written
And wonder at the inspiration by which I am bitten
When asked to recall the memories that pepper my life
Have I done justice to the triumph as well as the strife.
The answer of course is, “Well I really don’t know!”
Because there are memories that I don’t wish to show.

Thinking back to a childhood in suburban New South Wales, what did we do for fun? Certainly, our focus was on the great outdoors, as we were offered a lot of freedom. As long as we were home by five, we could play on the street with neighbours. Cricket was a popular game for both boys and girls - "Over the fence and out!" were the rules. The garbage bins served as wickets but had to be moved if an occasional car came down the road. A great street activity that we all joined in and had lots of fun doing.

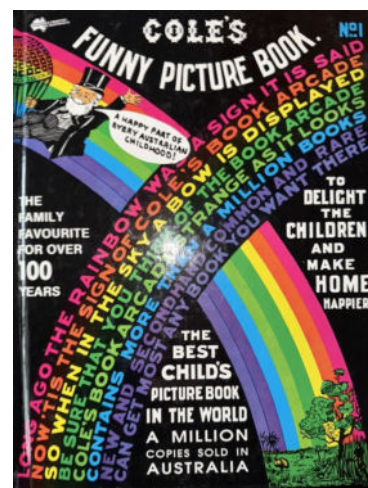
Another coordinated street event was the Empire Day bonfire and cracker night. It was a memorable occasion, as we had half a day off school and spent the year saving up to buy sparklers, jumping jacks, pinwheels, and skyrockets. The big boys would often spend their money on double bangers. From memory, many letterboxes may have suffered from exposure to those dangerous devices. At a curve in our road, there was a vacant block where we'd build a big bonfire, and all the residents in the street would gather there at dusk. I remember one occasion when sparks landed on someone's collection of crackers, setting them all off at once with loud explosions and flying firebombs.



At school or at home, hopscotch was another enjoyable activity. You played using a small flat stone as your tor, but the best tors were those Nugget Shoe Polish tins filled with a little sand or gravel. It was vital to throw it correctly, so it slid neatly into the desired square. I could do with some of those bending exercises on one foot nowadays; I certainly wouldn't be able to balance, pick up my tor, or even hop, now that I think about it.

Fly was another favourite in our street, and I've played it with my grandchildren since. We would search for five or more straight sticks and place them about 30 centimetres (or one foot) apart on a clear track. One participant was selected as "Fly." Each player would take turns stepping between the sticks, ensuring they didn't touch any of them, or they'd be out. "Fly" went last and, on the final step, would try to land as far away as possible. They could then choose any stick to move to a new position, making it the new finish line. Eventually, the gaps became so wide that you'd have to go way back and take a running jump to make it through with only one step in each space. Everyone kept eagle eyes on others to make sure no one cheated. Long legs were definitely an advantage in this game.

Quieter pursuits were less dangerous. Books were always important, but one I particularly loved was *Cole's Funny Picture Book*. Many hours were spent poring over its stories, poems, pictures, and puzzles. We didn't have a television set until the sixties but some of our neighbours did. On special occasions we would go to their place or drive into Newcastle to stand in front of S & W Millers' shop window, with everyone else, to watch an historical event. Our lucky friends even had a hard plastic sheet which went on the front of their television screen. The device had a blue band across the top third, then a red band in the middle and on the lower third, a green band, giving them a "coloured" T.V. We were so envious.



When friends came over, or during school playtime, group activities were popular. Skipping was fun, especially when we progressed to double skipping ropes. “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn around; Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, touch the ground; Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, read the news; Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, tie your shoes... Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, say goodnight” was a common rhyme. Another favourite was “Grannies in the kitchen, doing a bit of stitchin’.” Over time, skipping ropes were replaced with a giant loop of elastic held by two people around their ankles. A third person performed in the middle, and after each successful round, the elastic was raised higher, increasing the difficulty.



Another fun childhood activity of the fifties involved a loop of string strung between your hands. Cat's Cradle was very popular, played either with a friend or on your own. Those with skill could make Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Eiffel Tower, and Egg Beaters, to name a few. You could also do magic tricks by looping the string around your fingers in a certain pattern, then removing it from your thumb and pulling it through as if it were cutting through your hand. Magic!



Jacks was another great game to play with friends. In preparation, we would save the knuckle bones from the leg of lamb roast. To ensure they were clean, we boiled them or left them out for the ants to finish the job. Once clean, we dyed them by boiling them individually in water coloured with clumps of crepe paper. Nothing like the plastic jacks you can buy today. The game involved throwing the jack into the air while picking up a required number of the remaining knuckles, with the level of difficulty increasing after each successful turn.

We also had a way to tell fortunes. Using a square of paper folded like origami, we created special pockets with messages hidden under the flaps. By spelling out colour names or numbers, you'd uncover a prediction - perhaps you'd be a princess, have five children, or become rich. Sadly, looking back, none of those fortunes came true, but it was still fun in the fifties.



Jacks image: <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/items/1805550>

Further information: <https://www.schoolhousemuseum.org.au/resources/oral-histories/1960s-playground-games/>

FILLING THE MEMORY JAR WITH SPACE JUNK

1. Are you old enough to remember buying a Sputnik ice block? These were created in the 1960s during the space race, inspired by Sputnik 1, which was launched in 1957.
2. Do you recall Laika, the dog who was sent into space aboard Sputnik 2?
3. Can you remember who the first man in space was? It was Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, who made history on 12 April 1961.
4. Did you go outside at night to watch the transit of the early satellites across the night sky?
5. What about President John F. Kennedy's promise in 1961 to put an American on the moon by the end of the decade? Do you remember watching that historic televised event?
6. As a child, did you visit the observatory at Mount Stromlo and watch the roof slide open to reveal the stars?
7. Or did your family drive you out west to see "The Dish" at Parkes or visit the Siding Spring Observatory at Coonabarabran?
8. Maybe your "space" experiences came through television shows like *The Jetsons*, *My Favourite Martian*, *Star Trek*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Doctor Who*, *Mork and Mindy*, or *Lost in Space* with young Will Robinson—just to name a few.
9. Where were you when you watched the moon landing on 16 July 1969? Even though it was on those small black-and-white TVs, witnessing it live was pretty amazing technology for the time.
10. Do you remember the famous phrase, "*Houston, we've had a problem here*," from Apollo 13 in 1970?
11. Who can forget the *Pale Blue Dot*—the famous photograph of Earth rising taken in February 1990 by NASA's *Voyager 1* or the *Blue Marble* captured by crew on *Apollo 17* in April 1970? This is when celebrating *Earth Day* began.
12. Maybe you're too young for all of this, and your space memories come from video games like *Space Invaders*, *Asteroids*, *Missile Command*, and *Pac-Man*.
13. Did you host or attend a Halley's Comet dress-up dinner party in 1986, complete with memorabilia? Almost any excuse for a get-together! Since Halley's Comet takes 76 years to orbit the Sun, we won't see it again until 2061.
14. Have you visited the U.S. Space & Rocket Centre Museum in Huntsville, Alabama? It's an incredible experience that truly puts the size of these spacecraft into perspective.

15. Maybe you've been to Cape Canaveral - now the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida. Some of us were lucky enough to visit in 1997, thanks to an uncle who lived nearby!

16. Amazingly, the International Space Station has had a continuous human presence since 2000, including Andy Thomas, the first Australian astronaut in space.

17. The 2000s ushered in an era of incredible space advancements, from high-resolution space photography to planetary orbits, deep-space telescopes, and the growing reliance on satellite telecommunications.

18. More recently, we've seen private companies enter the space race, alongside many other nations beyond just Russia and the United States.

19. Did you go outside just after sunset in February 2025 to witness the *Planet Parade* - with seven planets aligned in the night sky? Even without a telescope, you could see a lot of them in the west-northwestern sky. If it was too hard to spot, phone apps like *Sky Walk 2* can help provide a visual guide.

I'd better stop before we run out of Space! However, don't forget those astronauts unexpectedly stranded on the International Space Station eight months ago. Let's hope they make a safe return to Earth as newly planned in late March or early April 2025.

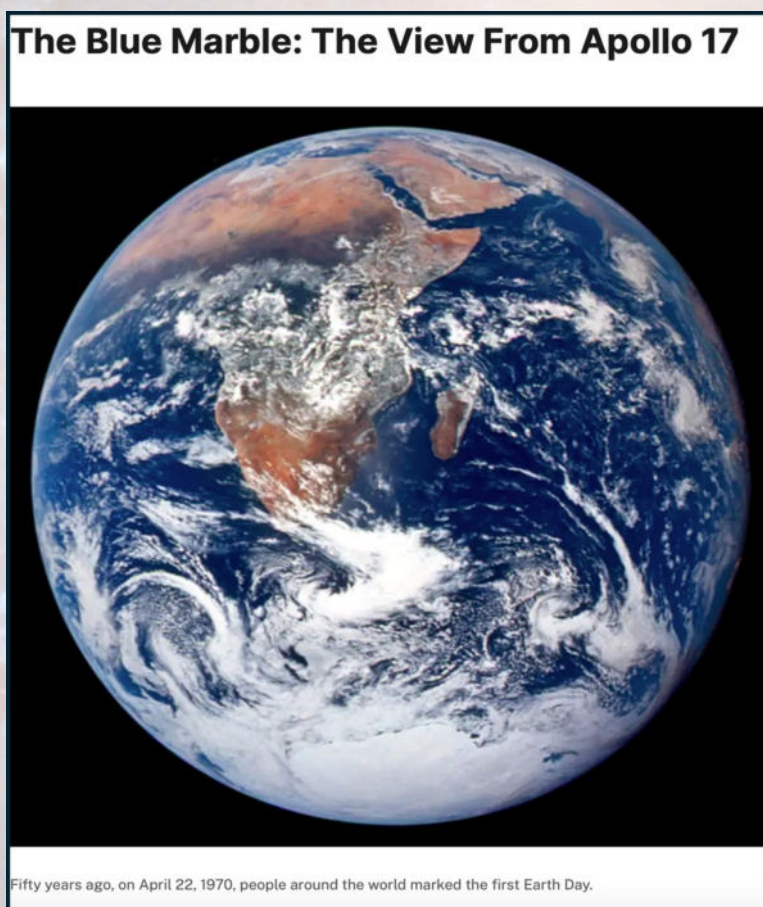


Image Reference: <https://www.nasa.gov/?search=The+Blue+Marble>

FROM POLIO TO COVID-19

It's hard to believe that it's been five years since the COVID virus was identified and our lives were altered. I recall sitting with a map, drawing a circle with a 5-kilometre radius to figure out which friends I could walk with - albeit only one at a time. Friends who could sew made us masks in stylish colours, and elastic became scarce due to the demand for that ear-friendly stretchy tape.



Zooming became the go-to method for catching up with family and friends.

Fortunately, some of us had been using this method of communication prior to COVID, as members of international groups, and the word 'Zoom' gained a new meaning.

Educational and genealogy programs became more readily available outside their countries of origin.

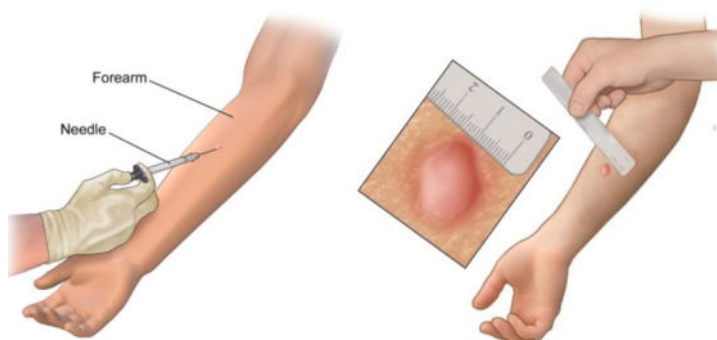
Compared to our childhood, were the 2020s more devastating to society's well-being? It's hard to know.

I vividly remember several health epidemics from my youth. In 1953, we didn't have vaccination programs for childhood diseases like measles, chicken pox, or mumps, so they swept through our community like wildfire.

Polio¹ was also something every young person wanted to avoid. Many today of a similar vintage live with the consequences of catching that disease. I have a memory of lining up for the Salk vaccine at a hall in New Lambton, New South Wales, around 1956. Today, that disease is well managed in Australia.

I recall several children in our street being taken to hospital in an ambulance with diphtheria² in the 50s. Nowadays, we get vaccinated as children, and it is recommended that a combined diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough booster be received several times during our lives.

The fifties were a transformative period in the control of diseases through testing, community monitoring, and the development of vaccines, which were then used in mass immunisation programs. Another large-scale testing regime we were involved in was the Mantoux test³ for exposure to tuberculosis. Most people had no reaction, but some, like me, developed a raised, hard lump at the test site, indicating a positive result. Consequently, everyone in the family then had to line up at an X-ray van to have a chest X-ray to see if there was any evidence of active disease in our lungs. Much investigation was done as to the source of the exposure, but from memory, none was found. Still today, if tested, I show a positive reaction to that skin test.





My mother was a great believer in Lane's Emulsion⁴, and EVERY DAY we had to line up for this fish-smelling concoction. It may have given me a dislike for the smell of fish, but I have to admit that I did not miss one day of school until well into my high school years. As a child I never had a cold or flu.

The late fifties demonstrated the power of vaccines to combat life-threatening diseases when public health measures and widespread community trust aligned.

The 2020s showed the effects of globalisation, ease of international travel, and what can happen in densely populated cities. But these effects also allowed for international cooperation and the acceleration of vaccine development that saved lives.

Both eras underline the importance of global collaboration, science, and education in controlling epidemics.

¹ <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/polio-vaccine-introduced-in-australia>

² <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/diphtheria>

³ <https://laboratorytests.org/mantoux-test/>

⁴ <https://debyclark.blogspot.com/2015/05/lanes-emulsion-its-famous-because-its.html>



Another example of creative photo editing that has been seen on social media. It can be viewed with various captions:

- I knew joining Ancestry.com would be a bad idea.
- Mama was a big-boned gal.
- Who lived in your house before you?
- Genealogy isn't for the faint-hearted.

AUSTRALIA'S EARLIEST MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE (ABC NEWS: POSTED 15 FEB 2025)

Every week for more than 30 years, a small team of historians on the New South Wales south coast has trawled through old newspapers to come up with material for a column about life 100 years ago.

Sometimes the headlines are mundane: upgrades to a butchery to keep flies off the meat or the price of wool increasing.

But every so often there is a nugget of historical gold.

So it was when the team flipped through the Moruya Examiner from January 3, 1925, and saw an article without a headline wedged into the top of page three.

It was a story about a message in a bottle that washed up on Bingie Beach, south of Batemans Bay.

Researcher Julian Armstrong decided the newspaper clipping was a breadcrumb along a trail worth investigating. What he didn't realise at the time was that he may have stumbled onto evidence of Australia's earliest recorded message in a bottle.

The article included a transcript of the original letter and names of nine Scottish seamen aboard the Loch Rannoch, along with the islands they came from. The sailors had drunk out of a bottle bought in Glasgow, before throwing it overboard.

In the note inside, they wrote of their intention of "clearing out to try our luck" when they arrived in Port Phillip Heads the following day.

Artist's impression of the article and note >>

(ABC News: Sharon Gordon)

The Loch Rannoch arrived in Port Phillip Bay on July 24th, 1877.

The bottle was found 48 years later, more than 400 nautical miles (740 km) north of where it was apparently tossed into the sea.

If the information included in the clipping is correct, the message in a bottle would be the earliest written to be discovered on Australian shores and the fourth-oldest in the world.

The original article can be found at:

<https://amp.abc.net.au/article/104922460>

Moruya Examiner January 3, 1925:

Last week a party while walking along Bingie Beach picked up a bottle containing a leaf out of an exercise book on which was written the following:

Loch Rannock – this is the bottle that we all drank out of when we were leaving dear old Glasgow, 1877. We are now having the last dinner together as we have sighted Port Phillip Heads, and we are all clearing out to try our luck.

Names of our hard-case seamen: Dan Campbell, from Island of Mull, Scotland; Willie MacLeod, from Island of Harris; Alex Lamond, from Southwell; George MacKinnon, from Island of Barra; Donald MacLean, from Island of Tiree; John Cameron, from Islay, Scotland; Neil MacDonald, from Island of Skye; Nellie Munn, from Oban, Scotland; Hugh MacIntyre, citizen of the world.

If found kind friend, please report, as we will be looking out for news.

Steamer, Loch Rannoch, under full sail, Port Phillip Head.

Good bye.

Artist's impression

(Does one of these names belong on your family tree?)

LAKE MACQUARIE NEWS FROM THE PAST (Trove, NLA)

140 years ago: Dredge wanted for Lake Macquarie

A public meeting was held at Lake Macquarie harbour entrance for the purpose of devising means of obtaining a dredge from Government. There was a fair attendance, representing capitalists, district residents, and land owners. (NMH&MA 11 Feb 1885, Supplement page 2)

130 years ago: The dredging of Lake Macquarie

Letter from the Public Works Department.....the dredge (grab dredge Delta) has been removed to the Paterson River as no further useful work can be done by her on the lake, where there is such a vast body of sand to be dealt with. As soon as there is a sand-pump dredge availablefurther work at Lake Macquarie will be considered. (NMH&MA 7 Jan 1895 page 8)

120 years ago: Arnott's employees' picnic

The fourteenth annual picnic of the employees of Arnott's factories took place at Toronto yesterday, and though the attendance was 400, there might have been double that number present had the morning been bright and fine, or even promising of fine weather. On the contrary, it rained heavily about the time preparations were going on for making the excursion. (NMA&MA 4 Mar 1905 page 6)

110 years ago: Blackall's Township

Already 800 blocks have been sold in Blackall's Township, Lake Macquarie and Messrs Creer & Berkeley and Mr R T Forsyth announce they still have sixty blocks for private sale at £10 a block. (NMH&MA 3 Apr 1915 page 6)

100 years ago: Warner's Bay Subdivision

An attractive sale of land on the shores of Lake Macquarie will be conducted by Messrs Lang, Wood & Co on Easter Saturday, April 11, at 3 o'clock, when a choice subdivision of 66 allotments at Warner's Bay will be offered. The land fronts The Esplanade, James, Neville and Cooper streets, and comprises delightfully situated water frontage and lake view blocks. (NMH&MA 18 Mar 1925 page 3)

90 years ago: 2000 Tourists - Gay Day at Toronto

More than 2000 tourists, who arrived in four trains from Sydney, had a splendid day at Toronto yesterday. The combined fleets of the Royal Motor-yacht Club and Toronto Sailing Club showed their skill - and beauty - in racing..... The town had a dressed-up look, a look of expectancy. It was free from self-consciousness..... (NMH&NA 25 Mar 1935 page 6) *Who had a laugh at this one?*

80 years ago: Housing Shortage at Lake Macquarie

Lake Macquarie Shire has decided to ask the Housing Commission to erect homes in the shire district. There was a splendid tract of Crown land near the Morisset Railway Station suitable for home sites. In the Morisset district the people cannot secure the services of a medical practitioner because a home is not available for his family. (Newcastle Sun 16 Jan 1945 page 6)

Garbage Service for Lake Shire - Start When Lorries Available

Installation of a garbage service throughout the shire was approved at a special meeting last night of the Lake Macquarie Shire Council. The service will be started as soon as possible. (NMH&MA 1 May 1945 page 2)

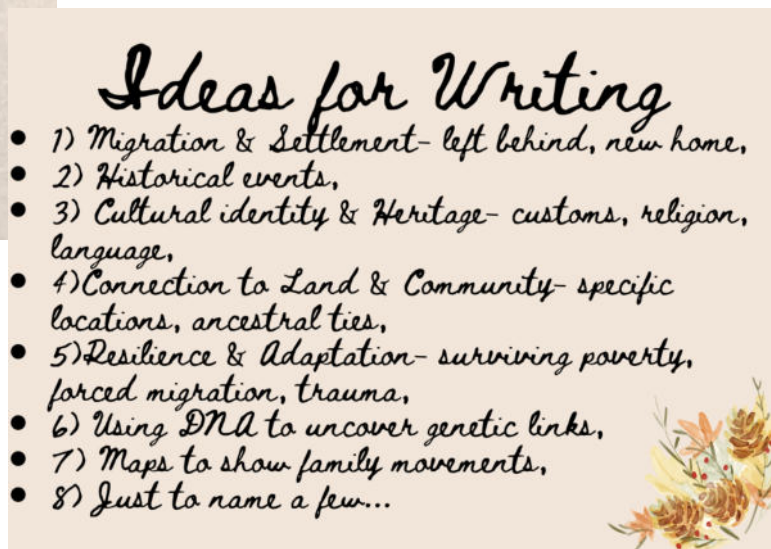
NMH&MA: Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate

THEME FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF THE CHRONICLE - FINDING OUR PLACE



We hope this catches your attention and encourages members to write and contribute to our Journal, whether by putting pen to paper or fingers to the keyboard.

The topic aligns nicely with the theme of our Open Day on 17th May so if you need further inspiration you may find it there!

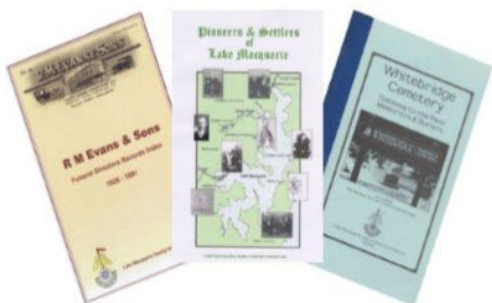


Submissions to: chronicle@lmfhg.org.au close 21st June 2025 but are always welcome sooner!

Members: Following changes made to our Legal Deposit agreement if any member wishes to have a submission published without including their name their member number will suffice.

Remember we always appreciate items, large or small on any topic!

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE



R.M. Evans & Sons Funeral Directors
Records Index 1921-1991 - \$30 + \$15 postage*

Pioneers & Settlers of Lake Macquarie - PDF file on CD Rom
\$20 + \$5 postage* or \$20 by direct download

Whitebridge Cemetery - \$20 + \$5 postage*

*Postage & handling within Australia.
For overseas postage please enquire.

Please refer to our website for details <http://www.lmfhg.org.au>

Remember: Our bookstall is manned each meeting by Sue and is stocked with books, magazines and journals that have been donated and or are surplus to our requirements. Items are reasonably priced.

LAKE MACQUARIE FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

CONDUCTS IT'S MEETINGS ON THE THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH
(WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE CHRISTMAS MEETING WHICH IS HELD

ON THE SECOND SATURDAY IN DECEMBER) AT THE

COMMUNITY HALL,

31B GEORGE STREET, MARMONG POINT.

DOORS OPEN AT 10 A.M.

The Group also opens the hall on the first Wednesday each month from 1pm to 5pm.

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

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

ANCILLARY POSITIONS

Book Stall: Sue Folpp

Blog: Jill Ball

Facebook Group: Jill Ball, Jennifer Myers, Arthur Radford

Librarian & Assistant: Linda Wallis, Jean Jones

LMCC Library Volunteer Co-ordinator: Jean Jones

Membership: Karen Eldridge

Members Interests: Robert Eldridge

Newsletter Editor: Patrick Bradbery

Program Officer: Janne Light

Public Officer: Arthur Radford

Publicity Officer: Kerrie Dean

Raffle & Attendance Register: Kerrie Dean, Shirley Meredith

Refreshments: Ann Ross, Sue Carpenter

Research Officer: Glynda Nolan

Outside Events Trip Co-Ordinator: Jean Jones

The Chronicle Team: Glynda Nolan, Jan Butcher, Linda Wallis

The Chronicle Distribution: Valda Owen

Webmaster: Robert Eldridge

Welfare Officer: Rosemary Thytherleigh

The adage 'it takes a village' aptly describes what it takes to ensure our Group achieves its aims and objectives.

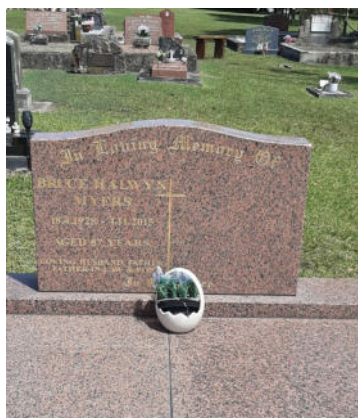
OUR VISIT TO CHRIST CHURCH, MOUNT VINCENT

Jenny Myers Member 53

On Thursday 31st October 2024 a group of ten LMFHG Members were welcomed by Sharon Dyson-Smith to a very informative guided visit to the Anglican Church at Mount Vincent in lovely sunny conditions.

The present sandstone church dates from 1910 and features a beautiful timber vaulted ceiling. Within the Church are numerous items of historical significance to the Church and to previous and present members of the Congregation. The church has beautiful stained glass windows and mounted in a glass case is a unique war memorial - an Australian Flag embroidered with the names of the 14 local men who served in the First World War.

Time was allowed for a leisurely stroll around the very well kept Churchyard where families of the early pioneers of the Watagans, Quorrobolong, Brunkerville, Mt Vincent and Mulbring rest in peace.



Many members of my sister-in-law's Foster family and her husband, Bruce Halwyn Myers, are interred here.



Another memory was recalled - the marriage of our daughter that took place there in 1992.



After our wander, we enjoyed a delightful morning tea of homemade goodies provided by the Ladies Church committee and their partners.

The next outing has been arranged to visit Windsor, home to many of Australia's oldest surviving colonial era buildings, on March 17th (green accessories optional!). Our Group has a long association with the district having transcribed and published Windsor's St Matthew's Church of England parish registers.

A big **THANK YOU** to Jean for organising these activities.

Members celebrated Christmas with lunch at Wangi Workers Club in late November and an informal celebration at the Marmong Point hall in December.



Our monthly Club Macquarie Group Chats have re-commenced and next scheduled for 11th March at 10.30am, 458 Main Rd, Argenton. The topic is: Looking back on your Family History Research is there anything you would have done differently, if so, what was it & how would it have been helpful.

DON'T FORGET TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT

AND SAVE THE DATE

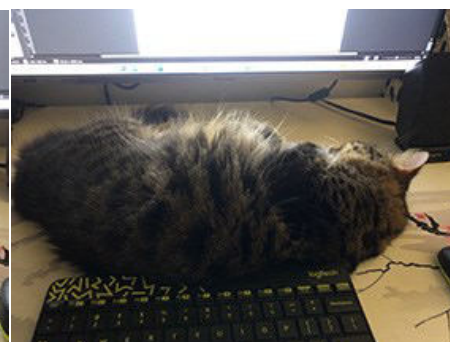
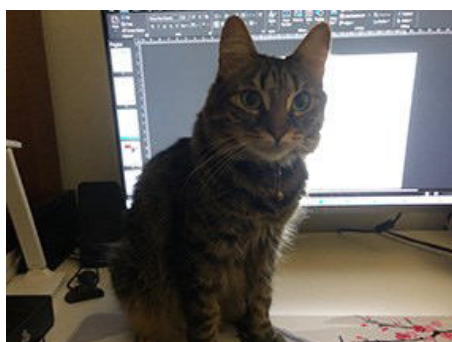
MAY 17th - OPEN DAY!!

May 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

By the time this edition is distributed many of you will have accessed RootsTech 2025 - the world's largest genealogical conference. The chosen theme is 'DISCOVER' - hope you have all been able to discover something to help further your family history research.

I'm rather slow on the uptake when it comes to engaging with new technology so it is only recently that I've experimented with Microsoft's Copilot. It is very easy to use and I'm sure that if our members were to give AI-powered software a try, we would see an increase in submissions to our journal!

I also use my own version of co-pilot - it's called Rico, very user friendly and fully licensed. He offers encouragement, is usually eager to get to work with some proofreading and he even lets me know if it's too boring.





OPEN DAY

Lake Macquarie Family History Group

<https://www.lmfhg.org.au>

Lucky Door Prizes

"Finding Your Place"

Saturday MAY 17th 2025 10.00AM – 4.00PM

MARMONG POINT COMMUNITY HALL
31B GEORGE ST. MARMONG POINT 2284

Cost \$25.00 which includes Registration, Morning Tea and Light Lunch.

Program

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 10.00 | Arrival, book stall and morning tea |
| 10.30 | Official Opening and Acknowledgement of Country |
| 10.45 | Speaker 1: Jeff Madsen "Locating 'Lost' Ancestors" |
| 11.45 | Speaker 2: Veronica Williams "Finding Your Place in WikiTree" |
| 1.00 | Lunch and book stall |
| 2.00 | Speaker 3: Carol Liston "Lost Places – women transported from Great Britain" |
| 3.00 | Panel Q & A |

NB If you have special dietary requirements could you please provide your own preferred meals.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Jeff Madsen: Finding our place in history can mean so much more than just dates on documents—it's about understanding why our ancestors moved to the places they did and connecting them to their history. Identifying specific places expands our knowledge of our ancestors' lives from both historical and social perspectives, using various records to trace them. With a career background in GIS mapping, Jeff applies spatial knowledge to genealogy, enhancing family stories through historical geography.

Veronica Williams: Having taken on the role as a Leader of the Australia Project at WikiTree in 2014, Veronica uses her experience as a genealogist, with particular expertise in Genetic Genealogy, to assist those with interests in Australia to "Find their Place" on WikiTree, a free and reliable resource for family researchers. Veronica blogs about her places at <https://ourgenieplaces.wordpress.com/> and shares her research at <https://genemonkey.com/>.

Carol Liston: Adjunct Associate Professor, Western Sydney University and Vice President, Royal Australian Historical Society, Carol specialises in the history of colonial New South Wales from 1788 to 1860. She has a particular interest in social life under Governor Macquarie and the convict women of the Parramatta Female Factory. Carol is also president of the Board of the Biographical Database of Australia (BDA), a genealogical project that is transcribing, indexing, and uploading biographical records of Aboriginal people, convicts, and free settlers.

Please register with treasurer@lmfhg.org.au

NB Numbers are strictly limited to 50 and closing date is Saturday 10th May 2025. Get in early so that you don't miss out.