

# Ancestor

*Quarterly Journal of The Genealogical Society of Victoria Inc*



**Getting it write**  
Entering a writing prize

**Research Corner**  
Parliamentary papers: not to be overlooked

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Archibald McAlpin and the  
Emu Flat Presbyterian Church

Letters of love lost

Travels of a tapestry

The convict's daughter

Researching your Irish  
family history seminar

The Irish family history  
research day in Ballarat

How to: Researching  
your Dutch ancestors

*Discover a world of family history*



# Melbourne Tartan Festival

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Scottish cultural heritage will be celebrated throughout July this year under the auspices of the **Melbourne Tartan Festival**. The Festival is a joint initiative of the Victorian Scottish Heritage Cultural Foundation and the Scots of Victoria Co-ordinating Group.



Launched with a Kirkin' o' the Tartan, activities that promote Scottish music, dance, literature and history will be highlighted. All events including the Gala Dinner and Concert, featuring the **Lord Lyon, King of Arms of Scotland**, may be booked online through the Festival's website <https://www.melbournetartanfestival.com.au>

The GSV will participate in the Festival in two ways:

- We will conduct a **Scottish Library Day on Wednesday 10 July** to introduce our Scottish family history research expertise and resources to the general public.
- On **Wednesday 17 July** our **ScotlandsPeople Website Class** conducted by John Blackwood will be open to the general public as well as to GSV Members.

Members of the public should register for these events online through the GSV Events booking system accessible through the link on the GSV website: <https://www.gsv.org.au>

## Joint meeting of Family History Tips and Tools and The Good Oil Circles

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On **Wednesday 24 July at 10.30am** the two Circles will conduct a joint meeting to discuss using family reconstruction techniques, sometimes referred to as the **FAN method**, to help overcome family history brickwalls where normal sources of information are scarce or unavailable. Using the FAN technique in the absence of records, genealogists can identify a list of people (friends, associates, and neighbours) who lived and associated with a given ancestor. By researching these other people, you may flesh out some details about your ancestor's life.

We will examine the research principles governing this technique using some examples of GSV members' research. The standard family history software is not designed to easily record and disseminate the results of this research. We will look at various programs that will assist you to use the technique effectively.

Don't forget to register for this meeting through the GSV Events registration system.



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## DEADLINES

Regular contributors must submit  
material by 1 January, 1 April, 1 July  
and 1 October for publication in the  
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issues respectively. However, articles  
for consideration for publication are  
received at any time. Space constraints  
mean that edited articles have to  
sometimes be held over until a later issue.

## ADVERTISING

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Genealogical Society of Victoria.

# Ancestor

Quarterly Journal of The Genealogical Society of Victoria Inc.  
**Volume 37 Issue 2 / June 2024**

In this edition we feature four articles about forebears. June Torcasio writes about her great-grandfather Archibald McAlpin, and his role in the building of the Emu Flat Church. Prompted by her father's visit to a Grovedale gravesite, Elizabeth Hartnell-Young uses photos, memories and snippets from letters and cards to piece together the rest of a family story. Co-authors Marilyn Kenny, Vikki Jacobsen and Joanne Davin trace the journey of a tapestry stitched in Melbourne over 140 years ago, as it finds its way to the descendants of its original owner. Despite a hazardous voyage to Australia, family loss, and an isolated existence in remote parts of Victoria, Elizabeth Harris's pioneer spirit remained unbroken. Great-great-grandson John Fitzpatrick tells her story from when she was around the age of two, and her father was transported to Australia for burglary, to her death in Wangaratta at 64.

The GSV is a vibrant organisation thanks to our wonderful volunteers and staff. In this edition we pay tribute to Eleanor Pugsley, our past Research Manager, who gave 28 years of service to the GSV as both a staff member and a volunteer, and to Wilbur Vigus of the Saturday library team. We report on GSV activities – the Thank You get-together for volunteers at Docklands, the Ballarat excursion of the Irish Group, the seminars on Irish research held jointly with Family Connections, and the work done by our busy Library and Tech teams and their volunteers.

Do you have Dutch ancestry? In this edition's How-to article, Martin Playne describes many of the resources that are available to anyone getting started in researching ancestors from the Netherlands.

In Research Corner, Meg Bate and Rebecca Landy explore Victorian Parliamentary Papers as a useful source for family historians. Barbara Beaumont and Margaret Vines give their advice on successfully entering a variety of writing competitions in our latest Getting it Write article. If you are inspired to enter our annual Writing Prize, details can be found inside the back cover.

Emma Hegarty  
Editorial Team

Our cover: *The dramatic sunset image on our cover is courtesy of Malcolm Lightbody on Unsplash (<https://unsplash.com/photos/silhouette-of-two-windmills--39wOFDhb5w>). It was taken at Zaanse Schans, a beautiful and unique part of the province of North Holland in the Netherlands: it's full of wooden houses, windmills, barns, craft workshops and museums.*



# Pen of the President



Stephen Hawke

## International Settlers Group

I expect that, like me, many of our members have been researching their ancestry from the British Isles as their key focus. In my case, I've not yet found a direct ancestor within the last 500 years with origins outside the British Isles. DNA tests indicate that although my ancestry originates almost entirely from the British Isles, I do have fairly strong (18%) connections to Scandinavia and 'Germanic Europe'. My research to date leads me to the view that these DNA results are probably tied back to more distant Viking influences in my large numbers of ancestors from Northumberland, Cumberland, Yorkshire and Lancashire. It is hard to be definitive about the origins of these distant ancestors. When you are researching some 500 years ago, you could have in the order of eight thousand 11- or 12-times great-grandparents, and I've identified only a small fraction of those. At least some of them would undoubtedly have origins outside the British Isles.

I do enjoy researching my ancestry in the British Isles – there is a fascinating history and a wonderful diversity of records to explore – **but**, there is a huge world of family history to explore beyond the 'sceptered isle' and its near neighbours. And thankfully, GSV has the International Settlers Group (ISG) to help you with your research in places other than the British Isles.

The ISG is a very active discussion circle, and the circle's activities are available free to all GSV members as part of your GSV membership. The ISG has quarterly meetings on Saturdays, currently by *Zoom*, but they are aiming to commence holding hybrid in-person meetings later this year. The ISG also produces an impressive and informative quarterly 12-page newsletter, which is available online to GSV members who subscribe to the ISG Notice Board. Please call GSV if you need help with subscribing to the ISG, or any of our other Notice Boards and/or for registering to attend their meetings. The ISG is in fact running by far the most active GSV Notice Board, with regular postings of other newsletters and items of interest for the group. Recent postings would be of particular interest for members with German, Italian, Greek, Polish, Slovenian, Wendish, or Chinese ancestry.

All back copies of the ISG newsletter, as well as those for GSV's Irish and Scottish discussion circles (*Blarney* and *Thistle*), have been digitised and are available through the catalogue for viewing and searching in the GSV library

The current areas of greatest research interest in the ISG are Germany, Scandinavia, France, Italy, Poland, the Netherlands and Switzerland. There is also interest in researching in the remainder of the European countries (including Malta and Türkiye), as well as Egypt, Canada, South Africa, West Indies, India, Sri Lanka and the Cape Verde Islands.

The ISG draws on the knowledge of members, and our librarians, and on the extensive range of resources available in and through the GSV library. We have been told by many family history research specialists that the GSV has the best collection of non-British Isles research material in Australia. Our collection includes books, gazetteers and other resources that are not available elsewhere in Australia and we remain keen to add to the collection.

At the moment a little under 10% of our GSV members are involved with the ISG and we would really like to see those numbers increased. If you would like to be involved and broaden the range of your own research interests, please subscribe to the ISG Notice Board, and if you have any queries, the ISG Convenor, Michael Rumpff, can be contacted by email through [isg@gsv.org.au](mailto:isg@gsv.org.au).

Remember, much of the great work we do at GSV is through members helping each other. Your active involvement in ISG, or one of our other discussion circles, may well turbocharge your research. At the very least, it will introduce you to new friends with a shared involvement in your areas of interest. ■

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### Correction

Owing to a referencing error in the article 'TM Girdlestone: surgeon, coroner and politician to the Goldfields and Melbourne' by Catherine Carman (*Ancestor*, Sep 2023, p5), the source for WH Girdlestone attending Scotch College, Melbourne, (1867-1869), omitted from reference 11, is: Scotch College Register, 1857-1903, Admissions 1867/1126, Scotch College Archives, Hawthorn, Victoria.

*We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which the Genealogical Society of Victoria currently stands, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, their Elders past and present, and those young people destined to become leaders.*



# Archibald McAlpin and the Emu Flat Presbyterian Church

by June Torcasio

My great-grandfather, Archibald McAlpin, played a significant part in the construction of the Emu Flat Presbyterian Church, now known as the Emu Flat Uniting Church. The church still holds regular services. In the Shire of Mitchell, it is between Lancefield and Tooborac, 92 kilometres north-west of Melbourne on the Lancefield-Tooborac Road.

Emu Flat residents, regardless of their religion, organized working bees in preparation for the

construction of the church. They carried local granite to the site with Archibald in a supervisory role.<sup>1</sup>

An Emu Flat anniversary thanksgiving service leaflet from 1993 noted that a bark church was erected in 1867 and the present church built 'using local labour, with Mr Archibald McAlpin supervising the construction'. It also stated that Emu Flat Church was placed on the National Trust registry in 1973 and is 'a simple stone building with attached porch, of uncoursed rubble'. The brick porch at the entrance was added in 1895.<sup>2</sup>

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▲ Image 1: *Emu Flat Church*, photographed by the author in 2024

After attending the 1993 anniversary I described the harshness and isolation of this beautiful place in my poem *Emu Flat*<sup>3</sup>:

bare yellow hills boulder strewn  
expansive pines guard a granite church  
by grey wooden door red climbing rose  
remembrance of a child's life  
nearby the schoolhouse  
loosening boards creak windows gone  
aged pupils garner school-day  
memories  
carefully pick pathways through dry  
blades  
enlivened by grasshoppers

at the creek below the homestead  
children search for yabbies  
find green and yellow leeches  
and stir up brown silt  
the creatures hide in rocky clefts

belladonna lilies flare pink  
by lonely granite walls  
bracken grows in fireplaces  
a rabbit runs through grass  
across the dining room  
beyond the broken bridge  
prolific apple trees  
shower earth with fallen fruit

A Tooborac history adds detail about the church:

The first Presbyterian church services held in this district were in the 1860s in a small bark building at Emu Flat near where the present Emu Flat Church now stands; the minister riding a horse from Kilmore. The present stone church was built in the 1870s from local granite carried to the site by district residents. Mr McAlpin, a stone-mason by trade, squared and dressed the stone.<sup>4</sup>

The Mitchell Shire *Stage Two Heritage Study* notes:

The simple rectangular form and rubble granite walls support the argument that the church may have been designed by the mason, who squared and set the stones, and supervised construction ... This rudimentary but very structurally sound building design was also typical in Britain in the nineteenth century, especially where funds and time were in short supply ... The timber shingles remain underneath the short sheet galvanised corrugated iron, which provides excellent insulation for the building.

The *Kyneton Guardian* records the centenary service held at the church on Sunday 18 November 1973. It now appears that the church was built several years later than 1873 and that this service was held prematurely. The article notes that 'the church was built by working bees, under the direction of Mr Archibald McAlpin, a wheelwright who immigrated to Australia from Inverness, Scotland in 1851'.<sup>5</sup>

I have not found any other written evidence of Archibald as a wheelwright, but he did learn carpentering skills. Two personal character references belonging to Archibald became available to me after the death of his grandson, Robert McAlpin, in 1995. One was written in 1841 by John McCallum. Archibald brought it with him when he emigrated from Scotland in December 1852. As shown below, he served an apprenticeship in cabinetmaking and general carpentering during 1835-1839 with McCallum who wrote from Stronfernan on 1 February 1841:

I hereby certify that Archibald MacAlpine Berar [sic] hereof served with me an apprenticeship of four years entring [sic] June eighteen hundred and thirty five to eighteen hundred and thirty nine at Cabinet making and General Carpentering and since eighteen hundred and thirty nine as Journeyman to same line of business and that he is a young man of considerable ability and knowledge of his profession and his acquirements during that period evinced him as professing excellent talent and aptitude for his business that he is of an excellent moral character upright honest and industrious and one who give [sic] the highest satisfaction to me while in my employment in every respect.

There is no mention of stonemason training. However, it is possible that he acquired stonemasonry skills during his work as a carpenter with McCallum. McCallum was involved in the construction of the west wing of Taymouth Castle in Breadalbane between 1836 and 1842. From his reference, Archibald appears to have worked as a Journeyman with McCallum from 1839.

The ruins of the McAlpin home, Glenard, show well-crafted stonemasonry. Built by Archibald, it is a few kilometres from the church. A sepia photograph of the family standing in rubble in front of their new home could date from c1882. The youngest child pictured may have been three-year-old Hugh, born in 1879.

I was unable to find any records of construction of the Emu Flat Presbyterian church in 1873. The earliest newspaper record relating to this church is in September 1879. It advertises a lecture in aid of the Building Fund:

PRELIMINARY NOTICE. EMU FLAT  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY SPECIAL request, Mr. James Scott, Solicitor,  
Heathcote, will upon an early date, due notice of



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▲ Image 2: Ruins of Archibald's home at Emu Flat displaying his stonemasonry expertise.  
Photographed by the author in 2010

which be given, deliver a Lecture in the Church, in aid of the Building Fund, upon the following subject :- The Signs of the Times, considered with reference to cause and progress of Religion in the Colony. At intervals during the Lecture, Selections of Music by amateurs will be given. Further particulars in Handbills, and Programme.<sup>6</sup>

My next step was to find the title to the acre of land upon which the church stands. The Certificate of Title for Vol 1110, Folio 221907, shows that John Patterson, Archibald McAlpin and Robert Hagan, all of Tooborac, were the first owners of the land in the Parish of Pyalong, having purchased it from the Crown for one pound on 29 October 1878. As Trustees of the Presbyterian Church, they became joint tenants.<sup>7</sup> Just over 100 years later, in 1980, the Uniting Church acquired the allotment.<sup>8</sup>

Practically, the church construction may have begun in 1879, after the land purchase. In November/December 1878 there would have been barely time to lay a foundation stone!

During 1878 members of the church had been anxious to buy the land for building to commence. On 7 January 1878 they wrote to the District Surveyor at Seymour saying that they needed 'to purchase the land for the purpose of erecting a Church therein in connection with the Sabbath School'. They had used the original bark hut for over three years, but it was dilapidated and unfit for any further use. They wanted to know when and where the land would be sold.<sup>9</sup> Robert Hagan,

Secretary of the Building Committee, then wrote several letters urging action and requesting that the land be sold immediately so that they could 'get the material on the ground and commence building, it being a very difficult thing to bring timber' from Mt Macedon in the winter.<sup>10</sup> Churchgoers must have been relieved when they gained land tenancy in October 1878.

The new church had its first tea meeting on Friday 11 February 1881 and a contemporary newspaper report noted: 'Though the district around is but sparsely peopled the church was completely filled.'<sup>11</sup>

The meeting's purpose was financial, however hymns and supper made it a social gathering as well. Thus, the church appears to have been built between 1878 (when the land was purchased) and 1881 (when the first tea meeting was held).

So why Archibald's eagerness to build a church at Emu Flat?

The second reference which Archibald had brought to Australia was penned by Dugald Campbell, Minister of Lawers, who wrote:

That the Bearer Archibald McAlpine has lived in my neighbourhood since I became Minister of Lawers, that he has been most attentive upon the means of grace, under my ministry, that his character stands high, ... certified this 2nd day of Feby 1841 by me Dugald Campbell, Min of Lawers.



Archibald's son, Robert Stephen, noted in his diary on 18 July 1897 during a visit to Scotland, that his father was a precenter [sic] at the Free Church of Scotland in Onich.<sup>12</sup> His father led the singing. This love of music may have contributed to Archibald's enthusiasm for building a church in his adopted country.

According to the shipping records, Archibald had left Scotland as an unassisted passenger on the *John Knox*, sailing from Liverpool on 29 December 1852 and arriving in Melbourne on 29 April 1853. He is listed as a 'joiner' aged 29.<sup>13</sup> His marriage certificate notes that he was born in Kilmally [sic], Scotland, in 1824 to John McAlpin and Ann McLaughlan. He lived at Mt William near Lancefield when he married Manie Ritchie at her father's home in Richmond on 18 September 1857. According to the Kilmallie Church Register, he was actually born in Ballachulish on 4 November 1818, and baptised on 8 November. It appears that he had put his age back. Manie was only 19 at the time of her marriage

Archibald was a strong determined Highland Scot who acquired substantial landholdings, first in Goldie (c330 acres), then nearby in the Emu Flat district (c500 acres), for his large family. He and his wife, Manie, had eleven children. In 1860 he had been a storekeeper at Sunbury when their second child, John, was accidentally suffocated in bed. He was five weeks old.<sup>14</sup> The family lived at Jacksons Creek near Sunbury for a few years.<sup>15</sup> In 1868, Archibald lost property at Mt. William. Stacks of wheat, hay and oats, a stable, cart-shed, spring-cart with harness, saddle and bridle, were all burnt and arson was suspected. An offer of a reward and free pardon to an accomplice was published by the *Victorian Government Gazette*.<sup>16</sup> Nobody was charged for these offences although the inquiry revealed animosity between neighbour, Edward Kitchenham, and Archibald and Manie.<sup>17</sup>

Three years later, on 18 July 1871, Archibald was brought to the Kilmore Police Court before Magistrate Arthur Purssell Akehurst. He was ordered to pay maintenance to 18-year-old Mary Ann Milson, the mother of a baby born in May 1871.<sup>18</sup>

Mary Ann had been employed by Archibald and slept in the cheese room where 'he took improper liberties with her'. I have been unable to find what became of her baby, whom she had named James. She subsequently married twice and had eleven children.

This maintenance case must have shocked the community. Manie McAlpin had six children to care for at the time. Later in that year her

three-year-old son, Stephen, died of whooping cough and within a month she delivered another baby. The McAlpin family remained silent over the years about Archibald's alleged misdeeds. I discovered two newspaper reports about the case in the *Kilmore Free Press* while searching Trove.<sup>19</sup> Archibald was reported to have been an elder of the Rev Mr Robert Hunter's church in Pyalong in 1871.<sup>20</sup> Later he became a supporter of the Salvation Army and donated £50 towards the foundation of their Barracks in Seymour.<sup>21</sup> Archibald and Manie left Emu Flat in 1888 and moved to Station Street, Seymour. He died in Seymour from ulceration of the stomach on 20 November 1892.<sup>22</sup> His work on the Emu Flat Church may have been a form of penance and he would have been keen to make amends to restore community respect for himself and his family.

Perhaps his fellow trustee, Robert Hagan, was also doing penance. Coincidentally, in August 1877 he was in court over allegations of misconduct. He was accused of fathering the child of a young neighbour, Margaret Canty, whose son, Jeremiah was born at Pyalong in 1877.<sup>23</sup> The case was dismissed.<sup>24</sup> Records held by PROV note that Hagan was stood down from his post of head teacher at Tooborac state school.<sup>25</sup> Margaret was employed by Mary and Alexander Rainey. Mary was Hagan's sister-in-law.<sup>26</sup> Margaret had the support of her father and of Alexander Rainey. She later married and had four children, but I have been unable to trace Jeremiah.

The Emu Flat Uniting Church, which Archibald McAlpin helped construct, is viewed with pride by our family. In an act of religious faith and perhaps a public act of penance, Archibald McAlpin became a driving force in this community project, and by designing the church, dressing the stone, shingling the roof, and supervising the construction, he produced a church which is still in use today. ■ ➤

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## Surnames

Akehurst, Campbell, Canty, Hagan, Hunter, Kitchenham, McAlpin, McCallum, McLaughlan, Milson, Patterson, Rainey, Ritchie, Scott

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*In accordance with the Rules of the Society and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, members are advised that the*

## Annual General Meeting

**of The Genealogical Society of Victoria Incorporated will  
be held as a virtual meeting via Zoom**

**at 2.00pm Saturday 5 October 2024**

**Please register through our website  
to attend the meeting: [www.gsv.org.au](http://www.gsv.org.au)**

**The winner of the 2024 GSV Writing Prize  
will also be announced at the AGM**



# Researching your Irish family history seminar

by David Down



A two-day Irish family history seminar was held in late February presented by **Fintan Mullan** and **Gillian Hunt**, two internationally renowned experts in Irish family history research from the Ulster Historical Foundation based in Belfast. Fintan is the Executive Director of the Foundation and Gillian is a Research Officer. Both are extremely experienced researchers and travel internationally presenting seminars and workshops. Their visit to Melbourne was part of a series of presentations that they gave throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The seminar, jointly planned and hosted by **The Genealogical Society of Victoria** and **Family History Connections**, was conducted over two days in different venues with different but complementary programs. Due to careful planning and many hours of hard work by the members of the joint organising team everything ran very smoothly on both days. The Sunday

session was held at the Docklands Public Library and on the Monday, it was conducted in the Blackburn RSL hall.

Fintan and Gillian are not only extremely knowledgeable but both are dynamic speakers. Their presentations were very detailed and informative. All participants came away with many ideas to help them progress their Irish family history research.

The organising committee was made up of volunteers from both societies and included Darralyn Cusack, Lyn Thorne, Russell Cooper, Mary-Ann Cohn, Claire Johnson, Meg Bate, Jeanette Bakker, Jenny Redman, Paul Harris, Rebecca Landy, Stephen Lockrey and David Down.

Both societies were very pleased to have had the opportunity of hosting the seminar and the visitors. ■

▲ Image: *Fintan Mullan and Gillian Hunt, presenters of the Irish seminar, at the Docklands Public Library. Photo by Paul Harris*

# Letters of love lost

by Elizabeth Hartnell-Young

*In 2004 I drove my father, then widowed and in his eighties, to an event in Geelong. Afterwards, he suggested a visit to the Grovedale Cemetery nearby. It's a small, pretty cemetery, full of German names on headstones set amongst native trees. That day, in front of a single grave, he shared a snippet of a sad story he had never told. This is what I have pieced together since.*

It was a wedding that started it all. Dorrie Kent was to be married in September 1938, and Ruby – her close friend, who lived 200 miles away – was invited.<sup>1</sup> They had met through the Lutheran Youth Group, which ran regular camps. As Ruby had been ill with tuberculosis (TB), her younger sister Grace accompanied her as carer, and both joined in the excitement of the wedding preparations.

They stayed for two weeks with the Kent family, on their Wimmera wheat and sheep farm near Areegra, with Dorrie's parents, two sisters and two brothers. The youngest, Eric, was tall and dark-haired, with a strong chin, and sun-tanned skin. Grace would have noticed his attractive hands; slender, long fingers with broad nails, cleaner than many farmers. At nineteen, he was a keen reader, interested in politics, and a firm believer in social justice.<sup>2</sup> On the farm, he had few chances to meet new people. With her lively grey eyes and fair complexion, twenty-year-old Grace immediately caught Eric's eye.

Grace, Ruby and brother Theo lived in Grovedale, a little town near Victoria's south coast, not far from the port city of Geelong. Their parents,

Friedrich and Clara, were cousins, descended from Lutheran settlers who congregated around their churches. Consequently the settlement had been named Germantown, until World War 1 led Australians to change many place names reminiscent of the enemy.<sup>3</sup> But Friedrich had TB, and his sudden death – of a haemorrhage one night when Grace was just five – had left a void.<sup>4</sup> For years, Grace told her friends that she remembered the image of his coffin resting across two chairs in the dining room.<sup>5</sup> Clara wore black forever after.

Eric and Grace began to correspond often, rarely meeting, except for one memorable family holiday. Theo, now working at the Ford Motor Company, drove the family's shiny new Ford V8 down the Great Ocean Road to Point Roadknight. Ruby, who had taken a course in hand-colouring photographs, made sure the holiday snaps were colourised.



▲ Image 1: Kent and Pacholke family holiday at Point Roadknight, 1939.  
Photograph in author's possession



After the holiday fun, the months dragged on. Grace missed Eric, and eagerly awaited his letters. They never telephoned. Although the Kents had a phone number, Grace had only the Post Office. Eventually she wrote breaking off the friendship.<sup>6</sup> He was disappointed but stoic, as his Lutheran upbringing demanded.

By the spring of 1940, with a nation-wide drought, Eric made a life-changing decision.<sup>7</sup> 'Growers in the Kooweerup swamp advertised for cheap labour to urgently harvest asparagus. I'd never heard of asparagus, but I hitched a ride south in September with another young lad who had a Model T Ford.'<sup>8</sup> Although he was 21, this was Eric's first break from home, and his first wages: one shilling and three pence per hour.

Shortly before Christmas, Grace discovered where he was and relented, contacting him again by mail. It was a happy time. Clara made the heavy German spice cake that everyone loved, and Grace's family welcomed Eric on his way home to the Wimmera, where Dorrie's baby daughter, Rosemary, would have her first Christmas. The exhilaration soon faded, to be followed by 1941, a turbulent year. Eric was worried. 'We were battling through a severe drought, and Wimmera farmers couldn't harvest enough wheat seed for the next planting'.<sup>9</sup> By the autumn he had found work at the Pivot Phosphate Works at Geelong.<sup>10</sup> Now boarding close to Grovedale, Eric had an opportunity to see Grace more often, and soon they became engaged to be married. As yet, they had no plans for a wedding.

But change was in the air.

## Australia at war

After the attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941 the escalation of war in the Pacific brought opportunities for Australian women.<sup>11</sup> They were needed for the war effort, supporting men through the newly created Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS).<sup>12</sup> Women with some experience could be trained in cooking for large numbers. Grace had done a short course and a little cooking for a local children's home, so she applied. The interviewer made a note that she had 'good clear skin' and was 'nervous, quiet but nice'.<sup>13</sup>

Grace emerged in April 1942 as Private Pacholke. She moved into the Young Women's Christian Association Hostel in Russell Street, Melbourne and swapped her pretty floral frocks for the dull khaki army uniform with its rabbit felt hat. As a trainee Grade 3 Cook, she worked at Land Headquarters in *Illoura*, a grand mansion on Melbourne's St Kilda Road.<sup>14</sup> Here she learnt the methods of cutting vegetables and presenting meat dishes as part of large-scale

catering for hungry men and special events.

Although quite south of the war zone, Melbourne was in 'brownout' mode, but it wasn't all drab. It was jumping with soldiers, Australian and American. Grace loved the excitement and the gifts of nylons, lipsticks and chocolates, especially from the Yanks. And now she had met another man, a soldier with a beautiful speaking voice and deep-welled eyes. Grace wrote a last letter to Eric, breaking off the engagement. According to Eric, 'That was the end, and after constantly being in my thoughts for years it was all over'.<sup>15</sup>

It wasn't a Yank who had stolen Grace's heart. Her new man came from a family of grocers in Melbourne. He didn't bring her presents, but the stories he told were most intriguing. He claimed that he was a Secret Service agent and had to use an assumed surname: Young. He said he was from South Australia, and would inherit a sheep station on the Yorke Peninsula, but failed to mention previous relationships and children. His Army career was patchy, but by the end of 1943, he had proposed marriage.

Grace planned the wedding with great anticipation, choosing a sunny shade of apricot for the bridesmaids, Ruby (who made the frocks) and cousin Lulu. But the beautiful outfits were never worn, and one now rests in the Loel Thomson Costume Collection at the Museum of Vehicle Evolution at Kialla, Victoria. Instead, they had a ►►




▲ Image 2: Private Pacholke, collection of J Lowe

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▲ Image 3 & 4: *Bridesmaid's frock* – now in Loel Thomson Costume Collection; and below, Grace's grave, photographs taken by author



clandestine wedding with no guests. The marriage certificate was riddled with lies.<sup>16</sup>

Grace continued with the AWAS, but by August 1944, weakened through numerous bouts of influenza, bronchitis and tonsillitis, she sought a discharge from the Army on compassionate grounds.<sup>17</sup> She and her husband moved north to Albury–Wodonga, where their first baby, Janice Clare was born.

### A marriage in trouble

Soon after the war ended they headed back to live near Geelong. At last Grace could visit her family. A son was born. Her brother Theo bought land and built a shack for them using old barn timbers. But, unable to create a comfortable home in this makeshift house with no floor coverings, or blinds, or amenities like power and water, Grace felt isolated and trapped. She knew her husband lived on the edge; not voting, nor paying income tax, nor holding a licence to drive. Many bills were not paid, and Grace dreaded the knock of the police on her door.<sup>18</sup>

Her family encouraged her to leave, and to take this man to court, not only because of her reports of his mad rages, but because they believed he was a bigamist.<sup>19</sup> By 1953, Grace was 35 and back in the house her parents built in Grovedale. It was crowded with Clara, her three adult children, and Grace's two youngsters, but this was her refuge. The rain on the tin roof made a comforting sound, but it also dripped relentlessly into the ageing building. Grace might

have wondered what life would have been like with Eric. She knew only that he had married a few years after the war ended. Although his sisters sent Christmas cards each year, no one mentioned him. He imagined she too was happily married.

### Court action

On the day of the sentencing hearing in the Supreme Court, Grace dressed in a neat dark

suit with a white blouse, pinned on her small felt hat, and took the train to Melbourne. The past few months had been harrowing, but when the judge announced a sentence of six months imprisonment with hard labour, the end of an era was near, or at least so she thought.<sup>20</sup> Sadly, the anxiety would take longer to pass.

Grace hated checking the letterbox by the front gate, as the court action unleashed a barrage of letters from her former 'husband'. She handed them to her solicitor, but the avalanche continued for months. Until no letters came at all. Soon after his release, the bigamist vanished from their lives.

### Connections

Despite physical and mental challenges, Grace carried on with the support of her faith and her family, remaining in her childhood home for over 30 years. The house and garden aged, while one by one, Clara and the two children who never married – Theo and Ruby – died. Grace enjoyed catching up with friends. But her world was shrinking to a space, eventually, in a nearby Lutheran nursing home. In her 75th year, Grace died and was buried near her ancestors and so many others with German names in the pretty Grovedale cemetery, with a simple headstone 'remembered with love'.

'What is this grave?' I asked my father on that day in the cemetery.

'I was engaged to her,' he replied, through his tears.

I was shocked, surprised. 'Really engaged? How old were you?'

'About 21,' he said.

'A ring and everything?'

'Yes,' he said. 'A ring'.

'What happened?'

'She dropped me for a soldier'.

I asked no more questions, and we drove home in silence. Weeks later, he handed me a document recording his remembrance of the story from the time he first met Grace until he heard of the bigamy after her death. As a man who rarely expressed his emotions openly, he had me in tears very early when I read 'We fell in love'.<sup>21</sup>

Letters have played a large part in this story. They are also the reason it could be written. When my father died in 2019, just short of his 100th birthday, I inherited boxes of his papers, as well as those from his sister Margaret, who had died many years before. COVID lockdown gave me time to explore them. I found cards dating back to 1959 from Clara, Ruby and Grace to my aunts, and colourised photographs of the family holiday in 1939. From



the cards and their changing addresses, I traced Grace's battle with illness, her move into care, and her son's chronic illness and death.

'Still we carry on,' she wrote one Christmas.<sup>22</sup> By 1991, there was no news, just, 'love from Grace' with her signature looping e.<sup>23</sup>

And then in 1992 came the saddest, and yet the luckiest, card. Sent to Aunt Margaret after Grace's death, and written by her daughter Jan in an artistic hand, it said:

To you and your sister Dorrie. Thank you for your kind letter earlier in the year. I am pleased to stay in touch with those who were friends and 'kindred spirits' with Mum and Ruby. Those friends are special and precious.<sup>24</sup>

Using *Ancestry* (for electoral rolls) and the *White Pages*, I traced Jan and invited her by letter to contact me if she wished. For ten days I didn't hear a thing, until one day my phone rang. 'It's Jan here. I only just received your letter!' We

chatted like old friends, then emailed photos from our archives, including matching hand-coloured photos of the Point Roadknight holiday. The engagement was a great surprise to her, as it had been to me.

Eventually the lockdowns lifted and, with Dorrie's daughter, my cousin Rosemary, I was able to visit Jan. She shared a letter she received from our Aunt Margaret after Grace's death:

Both Grace and Ruby would have appreciated your interest in the family history. It somehow brings us so much closer to those who have passed on when we learn more of their background and early life.<sup>25</sup>

So true, and yet why did it take me so long to hear this story? ■

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Thanks to Jan and Ian Lowe for sharing archival material and memories to support the writing of this article.

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### Surnames

Kent, Pacholke, Young

# Travels of a Tapestry

by Marilyn Kenny, Vikki Jacobsen and Joanne Davin

What are the chances of literally bumping into a previously unseen hand-made tapestry stitched by your great-great-grandfather over 140 years ago? Well, this is what happened to one of the authors when, on an interstate trip in 2022, she was browsing for antiques one Sunday morning in Bendigo. This is the story of that tapestry: how it came into being and its journey through various hands to the present day.

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St Salvador Alfred (Alfred) Case placed his first stitch onto a canvas with a woollen thread on Monday, 26 July 1880. It was the first of what were to be 2,034,604 such stitches made over the next two years. He finished the last stitch on 12 July 1882.<sup>1</sup> Described as ‘probably the most patient and painstaking man in Melbourne’, Alfred worked on the tapestry daily for three to eight hours. Given that he ran an importing and retail business catering for keen anglers and sportsmen like

himself, it is probable that the tapestry was completed in his shop – a two storey building at 26 (later 377) Little Collins Street, just to the west of Elizabeth Street – where it hung and ‘was inspected by many visitors to Melbourne’. The shop was also the family home for his wife Ann (Annie) Rosina Sperrin and their six children aged from nine years to two months at the time.<sup>2</sup>

St Salvador Alfred Case was born on 26 July 1845, at sea, off the coast of Salvador, Brazil. His father, Richard John Case, was a second-generation Master Mariner and Commissioner of the barque *Caledonia* that was

making its return trading voyage from Sydney to London.<sup>3,4</sup> Although both Richard and his wife Eliza Brown were English, after the birth of their third child in 1847 the family settled in Glasgow, Scotland where Richard continued as a Master Mariner and commission agent.

Little is known about Alfred’s childhood with his family in Glasgow. On reaching 21 years of age however, he left behind his life, his parents and three siblings and boarded the clipper *Antiope* in Liverpool bound for Melbourne, Australia.<sup>5</sup> Within two years of arriving, Alfred was advertising at 81A Elizabeth Street as a fishing tackle manufacturer and would have been making lines and nets for anglers of all persuasions and selling bait, flies, reels, rods and hooks.<sup>6</sup> His was one of only two such businesses operating in Melbourne when he moved to 26 Little Collins Street in 1870.<sup>7</sup> That same year he married Annie at St James Church in Melbourne.<sup>8</sup> Born in Backwell, Somerset, England in 1848, she was the elder of two daughters of Zephania Sperrin, a clock maker, and Harriet Morgan. The Sperrin family emigrated to Melbourne around 1860, where Sperrin ran a watchmaking and jewellery business – under the name of James Stephenson – at 73 (later 303) Elizabeth Street.

Alfred’s skills with needle and thread extended beyond fishing tackle, as evidenced by the display of a small tapestry on his premises. On being shown the work, Henry Young, proprietor of a nearby Collins Street jewellery business, laid down a wager, ‘I will show you something you cannot do’. ‘I will take it on, replied Mr Case’.<sup>9</sup>

The finished tapestry measured 6 feet 2 inches (188 cm) long by 5 feet (152.5 cm) wide.<sup>10</sup> The work, ‘Mary Queen of Scots mourning the dying Douglas at the Battle of Langside’, was based on an 1837 painting by Charles Landseer (1799-1879) who specialised in historical works, especially by the author Sir Walter Scott. This painting was a popular subject at the time, with tapestries of it now held in the Victoria and Albert Museum



◀ Image 1: *SA Case Importers, Little Collins Street, Melbourne; (left to right) Joe Mapham, Alfred Salvador Case, St Salvador Alfred Case. Courtesy of Vikki Jacobsen*





Image 2: *St Salvador Alfred Case*. Courtesy of Vikki Jacobsen

in Ardmillan Road. This new house was jointly owned and occupied by Alfred and his son-in-law Joseph (Joe) Mapham who had married the youngest Case daughter, Florence Mabel in 1902.

Joe Mapham had had a troubled childhood, having been fostered out before being licenced to work for Alfred in 1887.<sup>16</sup> When Alfred retired in 1910 Joe became manager of the business. Tragedy struck when in 1918 an explosion at the shop injured Joe, who later died, wounded the eldest Case son, Alfred Salvador, and severely damaged the fabric of the building. The inquest established that whilst Joe had been sawing open a wooden case containing tins of gunpowder, friction caused the powder to ignite.<sup>17</sup> Alfred's wife, Annie, died three years later in 1921, aged 72.<sup>18</sup>

In 1924 Alfred drew up his will listing, in meticulous detail all his effects and the way in which they were to be distributed.<sup>19</sup> Florence Mapham received a personal bequest of the wool work picture *Birds of Beauty* (no further information known) and two ship models, one of which Alfred had made for the 1875 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition.<sup>20</sup> He died in September 1927 leaving an estate of £16,000.<sup>21</sup> The tapestry was listed in the inventory, valued for probate at £50. According to a report in *The Herald* the expectation was that the executors would auction the work.<sup>22</sup>

In 2005 one of the authors, who was visiting the Melbourne Costume Collection at Bulleen established by Loel Thomson OAM, noticed the tapestry on display in the anteroom, alongside which was a copy of the 1927 *Herald* newspaper article. She realised that this unusual work had been made by an Essendon identity and subsequent research tracked how the tapestry had been made and come into the Costume Collection.<sup>23</sup> Some years later, research for the 2013 publication, *Grand Mansions of Essendon*, by the Essendon Historical Society, featuring an article on *Rosina*, would bring the author (Marilyn Kenny) and two descendants of Alfred Case (Vikki Jacobsen and Joanne Davin) together to exchange information on the Case family history, *Rosina* mansion and the tapestry.<sup>24</sup>

In 1975 Loel and Bryan Thomson had acquired the historic mansion *Noorilim* at Nagambie where the tapestry was included as a fitting.<sup>25</sup> Loel's investigations in 1981 established that the tapestry had come to *Noorilim* with Laurie and Margery Dugdale, the owners of the property from 1953 to 1957.<sup>26</sup> When contacted, Helen Hay nee Dugdale, stated that her father had purchased the tapestry in about 1952, possibly in Bacchus Marsh, where it was hanging in a restaurant or dining rooms.<sup>27</sup>

and the Smithsonian Institute.<sup>11</sup> Alfred's work, which included small areas worked in silk thread as highlights, was described as 'outstanding ... for the picture is technically perfect in almost every detail'.<sup>12</sup>

This needlework/tapestry genre was known as Berlin wool work for the place where, at the beginning of the century, bright dyed fine wools were first manufactured. The technique of producing colour coded canvas followed, enabling the non-professional embroiderer to create both decorative and useful works.<sup>13</sup>

The tapestry became a Melbourne attraction, and it was later said that Sir William Clarke, a Melbourne businessman and philanthropist, offered to purchase it for 500 guineas.<sup>14</sup>

Alfred became prominent in the sporting community and displayed his award winning catches in his shop. He also contributed newspaper articles on fishing and made known his opinions on relevant fishing legislation, practices and techniques. The business flourished and expanded into selling sporting guns and ammunition. In 1888 the family moved to a large Italianate villa named *Rosina* in Ardmillan Road, Moonee Ponds, an inner north west Melbourne suburb. This mansion (named after his wife) had several drawing rooms, five bedrooms, a three storey tower, conservatory and all facilities. Despite the 1890s Depression the business grew, enabling Alfred to invest in successful mining stocks and buy *Mt Lyell* a holiday home at Point Lonsdale.<sup>15</sup>

With four of his children marrying in 1902 Alfred sold *Rosina* in 1906, and in 1907 the remaining family moved to a slightly smaller house *Iona*



Image 3: *The tapestry in its new home, 2023. Courtesy of Vikki Jacobsen*

The Dugdales were not related to the extended Case family, but their lives intersected at many points: one Dugdale branch were Alfred's neighbours in Moonee Ponds and his legal advisors. Another, the Laurie Dugdales, lived in Bacchus Marsh and, as property agents, acted in the sale of the tearoom business to the Mapham family in 1930.

In mid 1928, Florence Mapham had relocated with her two sons to a home in Fletcher Street, Essendon. The tapestry had moved with them and, still valued at £50, was listed in her inventory after her death in late 1928.<sup>28</sup> However after the April 1930 auction of the property and effects, the tapestry was listed as an unrealised asset. On inheriting half of his mother's estate, and presumably the tapestry, Jack Mapham, Alfred's grandson, left his employment and struck out for himself.<sup>29</sup> He and Lena Peterson wed in August 1930 and a month later moved to their new business – being the freehold, stock and good will of the double fronted *Federal Tea Rooms* in Main Street, Bacchus Marsh.<sup>30</sup> Renamed the *Wattle Valley Café*, the business was successful in providing refreshments, confectionary, event catering and acting as a booking agent for local entertainments.

The tapestry may have hung on display in the café or more likely in the passageway between the shop and attached residence. After running the café in Bacchus Marsh for 14 years, the Maphams moved on, eventually selling up in 1946 and continuing their confectionary business elsewhere in Victoria.<sup>31,32</sup> An older family member recently recalled the tapestry being given away 'as Lena didn't like it'.<sup>33</sup>

While the family has some theories about the tapestry's travels from here, what is known is that when it was purchased in Bacchus Marsh and transported to *Noorilim*, the 1927 newspaper article went with it, verifying its origin.

The tapestry then stayed with the *Noorilim* property throughout the eras of three owners. Loel Thomson recollects that when acquired in 1975 the tapestry was sagging loosely in a very minimal and damaged frame. She arranged for it to be remounted on a backing board lined with three layers of linen/wool fabrics and reframed. It lived in the Great Hall at *Noorilim*, an area with sufficient wall space to accommodate it out of direct sunlight.<sup>34</sup> When Loel and Bryan Thomson moved in 1999 to Melbourne the tapestry went with them. It was displayed in the



Costume Collection as an example of 19th century needlework. In 2020 the Costume Collection closed as the land was acquired for a freeway expansion. Loel donated the bulk of the Collection to the Museum of Vehicle Evolution (MOVE) in Shepparton. The tapestry however had no place in the museum as it was not an item of Australian apparel. Although she loved it, Loel passed the tapestry on as she and Bryan were downsizing.<sup>35</sup>

And now to the present day ... on recognising the tapestry immediately as 'the' tapestry made by her great-great-grandfather (and after some excited consultation with family members), the tapestry was purchased and transported it to its

new home. After a time with a conservator, it now hangs proudly on the dining room wall alongside original portraits of Annie and other family members. After many moves and 70 years, the 143-year old tapestry has found its way back to the descendants of St Salvador Alfred Case. ■

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Many thanks to Loel Thomson OAM; Nicole Jenkins, fashion historian; Helen Hay; Kay Ball, Murchison and District Historical Society; and the Bacchus Marsh and District Historical Society.

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## Surnames

Brown, Case, Clarke, Dugdale, Hay, Jacobsen, Mapham, Morgan, Peterson, Sperrin, Stephenson, Young

# The convict's daughter

by John MJ Fitzpatrick

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Elizabeth had a recalcitrant convict father; her mother died when she was only twelve; as a teenager she was married to a man almost twice her age and whisked off to live in the wilds of Australia. That's where her first-born died when only three months old. Isn't that enough to make you bitter and twisted? **Not** Elizabeth.



Elizabeth Clark (1824-88)

and her youngest son, George, who shared with her husband, W.H. Clark, in a generous gift of land to the Church.

▲ Image: Elizabeth Clark, neé Harris, courtesy of great-great-grandson, Garry Moore

My great-great-grandmother, Elizabeth Harris, was born about 1823/24 in Uckfield, Sussex, England.<sup>1</sup> She was brought up in nearby Hadlow Down. Her parents were Jonathan Harris and Elizabeth Baker. When she was only two, her father was tried for burglary and sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay.<sup>2</sup>

Her father petitioned for his family to join him.<sup>3</sup> The Government paid for the journey, but it wasn't pleasant. On 6 July 1830 Elizabeth went with her mother and two brothers, Jonathan and Henry, on board the convict ship *Kains* at Woolwich. She was met by 120 unhappy women convicts. Two

other convicts' wives with children also boarded. Passengers on a convict ship were almost as restricted as the convicts. The captain was a hard man, the behaviour of the prisoners on board was appalling, and they almost ran out of water and rations. We know this because one of the sailors, Charles Picknell, kept a diary, excerpts of which

were published in instalments in the *The Sydney Morning Herald* 100 years later.<sup>4</sup>

None of the passengers had cabins. Elizabeth's family simply bunked down with the others. However, there were some pleasant diversions. For example, at the Sandwich Islands, Elizabeth saw dolphins, flying fish and great flocks of storm petrels flying about. One day the flying fish were so plentiful that some even flew on to the deck. The children would have loved catching them.

Pirates were a constant fear. Where does a child hide from pirates on a ship? When a Spanish pirate brig threatened them, the sailor's diary tells us, 'We opened ports, loaded up all our guns with two balls ready for action.'<sup>5</sup> Thankfully, the pirates turned tail. Two other equally frightening incidents were false alarms. Terrifying ordeals for a child, particularly when the adults were panicking. On one occasion they 'fired 1 gun. set all the women a crying, praying and confessing their sins'.<sup>6</sup> No comfort for Elizabeth there.

The journey took eight months with several stop-offs on the way. A six-day storm badly damaged the *Kains'* sails and spars. Two months later they limped into Cape Town. While there, stormy weather delayed them for just over a month. Hopefully Elizabeth and the other free passengers were allowed off the ship to explore. Elizabeth finally arrived, as a 7-year-old, at the Sydney penal settlement with her mother and two brothers (9-year-old Jonathan and Henry, aged 5) on 11 March 1831.

They caught up and were reunited with Elizabeth's father, Jonathan, at Clydesdale House, Bathurst.<sup>7</sup> She would have been very shy of this strange man. She was only two when she had last seen him five years previously. Do you think Elizabeth even recognised her father? Her brother Henry wasn't even born until after his father's incarceration. Because her mother was a free settler, husband Jonathan was assigned to her as convict labour. Before long, Elizabeth had three new brothers and sisters.



On 30 March 1836, Elizabeth was waiting at home for her mother to return from market. Instead, her shattered brother arrived to tell her the life changing news that the cart he had been driving had overturned and her mother had been crushed to death under the wagon.<sup>8</sup> The distraught lad had been present when she died. He couldn't save her.

Losing her mother was distressing enough, but since she was the oldest daughter, 12-year-old Elizabeth would be expected to take on the responsibility of running of the house for the family of seven.

Fourteen months later in May 1837, the family was in the Goulburn District when her father, Jonathan, was detained and accused of stealing cattle.<sup>9</sup> This left Elizabeth, her sister and four brothers to fend for themselves. Thankfully Jonathan was acquitted soon after.

The following year, in February 1838, Elizabeth's father obtained a Ticket-of-Leave which allowed the family to remain in the district of Yass.<sup>10</sup> That is where she was living when she met 29-year-old William Henry Clark. They were married on 22 July 1839 in Bowning, NSW.<sup>11</sup> She was only 15. Why, so young? Was she escaping the drudgery of her family's life? Or was she relieving the family of the burden of her upkeep? We may never know.

William had made a wise decision. Elizabeth was good pioneering material. After all she had been keeping house for her father and brothers since her mother had died. Elizabeth, too, had made a good choice. William had money and livestock, with plans to settle as a squatter on a run on the Ovens River. However, the Ovens Crossing Place, where they were going, was a remote, isolated location. Yass was considered the outer edge of civilisation, yet they were going to live alone in the harsh Australian bush, on the road to Melbourne, 220 miles (350 km) away from Yass and police protection.<sup>12</sup> There were reports that the local Aboriginal Bpangerang people had been treated badly and were retaliating. They may have been justified. People had died.<sup>13</sup>

The newlyweds arrived at the Ovens Crossing around July 1839. William bought an existing, primitive, accommodation and punt business. He then replaced the tumble-down hut with a more substantial building and began operating it as The Traveller's Rest. Elizabeth was now a squatter's wife, as well as an Inn hostess and punt operator. The Traveller's Rest was a basic, three roomed, split slab building with a bark roof and earth floor.<sup>14</sup> Much better than a tent. Two children were born there – George (in December 1840) and Sarah (in 1842). Sadly, baby George died when he was only three months old (March 1841). Having her first-born baby son die so young must have been heartbreaking. At the time there was not

another white woman in any direction within 20 miles (30 km).<sup>15</sup> Did Elizabeth have any female help with George's birth? The indigenous women were often helpful and may have assisted.

The standard of accommodation improved a little when The Hope Inn was built in 1843. Although it was still a split slab building, there were now five rooms, a shingle roof, and a veranda.<sup>16</sup>

Seven children were born here – Elizabeth (1844), Sophia (1845), Emily (1846), Margaret (1848, lived only one year), William (1850), Alice (1851), and Rosetta (1853).<sup>17</sup>

The 1851 gold rush took Elizabeth and family to the diggings.<sup>18</sup> They couldn't have found much gold because they were soon back running the punt where there was real money to be made. This money financed the much more luxurious Commercial Hotel (1855), where her three youngest children, Jemima (1855), George (1859) and Florence (1861), were born.

The Commercial Hotel was a three stories high brick building with a small veranda and balcony at the front. The remarkably high roof led to speculation that it hid a cell used occasionally to accommodate women prisoners.<sup>19</sup> Prisoners' escorts often stopped at the Commercial.<sup>20</sup> So, it could be true. Was Elizabeth also a jailer?

No doubt it was a hard life, but Elizabeth was known for her many good qualities during her time at the Commercial Hotel. Soon after her death in 1888, an ex-trooper wrote to the local paper to tell us all that, 'as the gold and prisoners' escorts always stopped at Mrs Clarke's, he had plenty of opportunities of knowing that lady and her kindly ways'. Elizabeth must have loved helping people. She was known to ride great distances on horseback to comfort the sick and to assist mothers having their babies. Sometimes the level of help led children to regard Elizabeth as a second mother.<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth was a consummate hostess. The trooper mentioned earlier had nothing but praise for the way she was bringing up her family while at the same time making him and his colleagues feel at home.

In March 1861, the Commercial Hotel was leased to William Murdoch. Elizabeth moved out with her ten children to Three Mile Creek.<sup>22</sup> The youngest was six weeks old, the oldest, 19 years. None of the older children had left home yet. That would soon change. In 1862 Emily married James Willett. Three more family marriages followed in 1864; Elizabeth in February to John Moore, Sarah in June to John Baker, and Sophia in December married Patrick Cusack, son of another ex-convict (my great grandparents). That was a pleasantly busy year for Elizabeth as 'mother-of-the-bride'. Most of these weddings, as well as the remaining ►►

six, occurred at the Holy Trinity Church in Wangaratta, Elizabeth's second home.<sup>23</sup>

Sadly, only ten years later, in 1871, husband William died.<sup>24</sup> Thankfully, William had provided for Elizabeth, and she was able to live, not luxuriously, but comfortably. Elizabeth remained a widow for seventeen years. She enjoyed good health until her final year, working to the end.

Elizabeth was a devout Anglican. She and William had earlier donated land to the church and Elizabeth was active in the parish life. Her obituary tells us how she even 'attended the Church of England Tea Meeting a few days before her death'.<sup>25</sup>

Her work for the church is recognised by a photograph of her that hangs in a passage behind the Cathedral. There is also a set of stained-glass

windows and an associated plaque in the Cathedral dedicated to both William and Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Clark (née Harris) died, aged 64, on 29 September 1888 in Ely Street, Wangaratta.<sup>26</sup> She was buried on 1 October 1888 in Wangaratta Cemetery, Church of England Section No. 1; plot 634 C.

Ten of Elizabeth's twelve children outlived her. Furthermore, she could count fifty-four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Someone else of interest who outlived Elizabeth was her 88-year-old, ex-convict father, Jonathan Harris. At the time he was a market gardener living as a respectable, married man, with his third wife in Benalla.<sup>27</sup> Do you think he was able to get to his daughter's funeral? ■

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## Surnames

Baker, Clark, Cusack, Harris, Moore, Murdoch, Picknell, Willett



# The Irish family history research day in Ballarat

On Saturday 10 February the Ballarat and District Genealogical Society (BDGS) and the GSV's Irish Ancestry Discussion Circle (IADC) hosted a day-long conference in Ballarat on Irish family history research.

An introduction and welcome was provided by Carol Armstrong (BDGS) and Carmel McEvey (IADC), then Dr Samantha Fabry the Diocesan Archivist of the Ballarat Catholic Diocese, spoke about the records held in their Diocesan archives.

After morning tea, Dr Kevin Molloy, Principal Librarian, Victorian and Australian Collections, at the State Library of Victoria (SLV) outlined the Irish collection at the SLV.

The lunch break was followed by Phillip Moore and Mary Darcy from the Ballarat and District Irish Association taking us on a virtual Eureka Trail, describing six significant historical landmarks. They handed out maps and information which meant audience members could do the trail in person at their leisure.

Gavan Keating, a member of the IADC, then spoke about his research and provided a list of the resources he has used to discover details of eight of his great-great-grandparents who migrated from Ireland and settled on farming land in the Ballarat district in the early 1860s.

Following afternoon tea, Carol Armstrong outlined the records and resources held by the BDGS.

The last speaker for the day was Rebecca Landy, the GSV's library and resources manager who described the many Irish resources at the GSV, and, in particular, the help provided to members by GSV research assistants.

The conference went from 9:00am to 5:00pm, and was held in the convenient, spacious and well-equipped Ballarat North Community Centre. The BDGS committee provided delicious morning and afternoon teas, with unlimited coffee and tea.



Image 1:  
*Gavan Keating, IADC  
and Claire Dunlop, IADC*



Image 2:  
*Dr Kevin Molloy, SLV and  
Carmel McEvey, IADC*



Image 3: *Phillip Moore, Ballarat and District Irish Association,  
Claire Dunlop, IADC and Carol Armstrong, BDGS*

# *GSV pays tribute to Eleanor Pugsley*

**Eleanor Pugsley**, who died on 22 February this year, is fondly and gratefully remembered by the GSV. For many of us she was our first genealogy mentor. She joined the GSV in 1981 and became a volunteer the next year, back when the GSV was in Curtin House in Swanston Street. After the move to Queen Street, she was appointed Research Manager in January 1998. She built up a volunteer research team, took responsibility for the library research assistants and herself gave talks and co-ordinated educational programmes. Eleanor retired in mid-December 2010 after 28 years of service.



**Linley Hooper** worked with Eleanor for over 20 years, and recalled, on Eleanor's retirement: 'her genealogical knowledge was encyclopaedic ... she had immense patience and a kindly manner to all ... and her enthusiasm, perception, persistency and high standards earned her the trust and respect of us all.'

**Stephen Hawke:** I have wonderful memories of Eleanor, she was the first GSV volunteer to welcome me to the library when I joined back in 2006 and she was always enthusiastic in helping me research my Cornish ancestry. Eleanor also invited me to join GSV's Council in 2015, to fill the role of Treasurer. Eleanor was a kind and welcoming presence in our library for many years and had a great rapport with members, volunteers and Councillors and is sadly missed.

**Claire Johnson:** Farewell Eleanor Pugsley FGSV. We were saddened to learn of the death of our friend, former staff member and Fellow of the GSV in Eleanor Pugsley who passed away on 22nd February after a long illness. Eleanor is fondly remembered by many members of the GSV, particularly the Research Team and the Library Research Assistants. She taught us so much. Rest in peace, Eleanor.

**David Down:** When I became President in 2015 I asked Eleanor, who was due to retire from Council, to remain as a Vice-President for an additional year. She graciously agreed and provided extremely helpful and wise support. Her experience drawn from her time as a GSV staff member and volunteer and as a Board member of Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School was invaluable to me and the GSV Council. My enduring memory of Eleanor is her beaming smile. Whenever she met you, her penetrating look said that she had your full attention and that she would work with you to resolve whatever the situation presented. Her devotion to the GSV and all the Volunteers and Members was unreserved.

**Sue Blackwood**, who knew Eleanor both at the GSV and at church recalls: 'Eleanor invited me to be a Library Assistant, and to give a presentation to the Scottish group on the machinations of the



Scottish churches. She was most caring and her genealogy knowledge was just amazing. A quiet, helpful, professional and patient presence’.

**Tina Hocking:** As a library volunteer under Eleanor’s tutelage for many years, my memories are of her patience, persistence, professionalism – and pearls.

**Shane Allan:** Eleanor was responsible for me becoming a volunteer back in 2006. Eleanor had a vast knowledge of family history research, was easy to talk to and always helpful. Eleanor was a lovely lady. She will be sadly missed.

**Margaret Vines:** Eleanor was wonderful at assessing the talents and interests of GSV volunteers and recruiting us into new roles. When I unwarily suggested it might be good to have a writing class for those who were not ready to present their work at the Writers Circle, I was immediately roped in to teach it!

#### **Ann-Maree Richardson and the Research**

**Team:** The late 1980s and early 1990s were a time of growth for the GSV. The TV series *Roots* had captured the imagination of people, and genealogical interest was on the rise. The growth of the GSV was in part due to Eleanor’s guidance and skill. Eleanor used her educational background to encourage, teach and inspire GSV members and volunteers alike. She was very good at identifying potential talent amongst the GSV members to grow our pool of volunteers.

She and Linley Hooper became a formidable team in the GSV and our growth was in part due to their combined efforts. On Friday nights the volunteers would observe Eleanor and Linley in deep discussion about ways to improve the GSV and also how to make better use of our limited space.

With an ever-increasing workload, Eleanor’s duties were redefined as extra GSV staff were employed, she could then concentrate on the Research Team and the library volunteers. She was ever teaching and guiding the Research Team with her usual smile and laughter and friendly nod of the head. Her biscuit jar was always on her desk with a selection of *Arnotts Cream Assortments* to treat herself and the Research Team, and to share with other volunteers. Her knowledge and guidance was sadly missed after her retirement.

Her lovely biscuit jar still sits in the Research Team area as a continued tribute to Eleanor, even if healthier dry biscuits inhabit the inside.

**Rest in Peace, Eleanor. ■**

# Wilbur John Campbell Vigus

1943 – 2024



Long term GSV member and library volunteer, **Wilbur Vigus**, who joined the GSV in the 1990s, died on 18 March this year, coincidentally the same day as the GSV’s volunteer get together, which he had hoped to be well enough to attend. Sadly, that was not to be.

After moving to Castlemaine about eighteen months ago, Wilbur continued to travel to Melbourne to take his place as a regular on the GSV library duty roster, on both weekdays and Saturdays, until continuing ill health prevented him from doing so.

Of Cornish ancestry, Wilbur had a strong interest in family history, but was also a keen photographer, a railway enthusiast, as well as a lover of books and classical music. He volunteered at the LDS library in Fairfield, as well as the GSV, acquiring a strong background in *FamilySearch*, which stood him in good stead at the GSV.

A meteorologist by profession, as a library volunteer Wilbur was ever patient, courteous and kind, unruffled by the occasional curly query or problematic patron.

Conversation over a coffee at Dymocks, sometimes accompanied by a muffin, cake or Portuguese tart, rounded off a Saturday in the GSV library and became a bit of a tradition.

Wilbur’s company will be greatly missed at the GSV, especially by the Saturday Library Team. ■

# Volunteers get-together and thank-you function

## March 2024

By Cathy Carman

Our annual volunteers get-together and thank-you function was held on 18 March at the Docklands Library.

About 60 of our nearly 200 volunteers attended the morning tea and enjoyed an opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet

some of our newer volunteers face-to-face. In the middle of the morning, attendees heard a series of informative presentations which served to highlight some of the collective achievements of our volunteer members.

Gary Buck, joint Vice-President, introduced the speakers and began the presentation by thanking all volunteers for their time, dedication and ongoing support of the GSV. The presentations brought attention to how much we owe our many volunteers and it was nice to have an opportunity to applaud those of our longer serving members who were present on the day, and who represented a small number of this special group of energetic volunteers.

Rebecca Landy gave us an update of library activities and Meg Bate added in some impressive statistics from the last year, detailing the wealth of library related data entry, digitization and research that has been undertaken by volunteers. Tom O'Dea brought us up to date with the ongoing work of improving the website accessibility. Tom also introduced Victoria University students, Nisha Salien and Theo Farsyah, who have been generously assisting with this process whilst they gain first-hand experience of some of the IT complexities involved in running an organisation such as ours.

Ann-Maree Richardson highlighted the work associated with research requests and quick look-ups. She encouraged members to consider joining the Research Team who keep busy with many varied, short and long, but always interesting requests. Ann-Maree mentioned that her research volunteers enjoy the flexibility of being able to assist for as many or as few hours a month as



◀ Images 1 & 2: Above Scottish Discussion Circle convenor Eric Smith with Jane Chalmers and Margaret Smith, and below GSV councillor Brian Reid with Treasurer Tony Swain and Secretary Keith Oliver





Images 3 & 4: Left Claire Claydon with British India Discussion Circle convenor Maryanne Gourley, and below Vice President Gary Buck with Victoria University internees Nisha and Theo



they prefer, often from home, and that each researcher can take on or defer, the next 'enquiry' as suits their availability.

Peter Gill gave a heart-warming tribute to fellow, long serving member volunteer, Wilbur Vigus who many remembered as a friendly, helpful and always willing RA and library assistant.

Next, Margaret Vines represented the *Ancestor* team and introduced some of her team members to the audience. In highlighting the activities associated with publishing the *Ancestor* journal, Margaret encouraged members to share their stories by submitting them to the journal for publication. Members were also encouraged to consider entering the 2024 GSV Writers Prize competition. Attention was drawn to the regular series of 'Getting it Write' articles in *Ancestor* which give comprehensive advice to support writers, including those who are writing to fulfil the requirements and criteria of the journal and the GSV Writers Prize.



Images 5 & 6: Above Margaret McLaren with Library & Digital Resources manager Meg Bate, Library & Resources manager Rebecca Landy, with Eric Smith, and below, Alison Dennison Ancestor Editorial Team, and Penny Mercer past convenor, Writers Circle

David Down, in turn, thanked all volunteers, and mentioned some of the other many activities volunteers have undertaken – including, giving talks to other organizations or by managing, putting together, presenting or by joining in at Discussion Circle Zoom meetings or, for example, assisting with the two recent Irish activities – one run jointly with the Ballarat and District Genealogical Society and the other with Family History Connections.

All in all, I think we all left feeling inspired by the work going on both visibly and behind-the-scenes at the GSV. Thank you everyone for all your involvement on behalf of our Society. ➤➤



# We have been busy at the GSV!

The recent get-together and thank-you held at Docklands library showcased the many ways in which volunteers can, and do, contribute to the GSV.

The following is a selection of slides from presentations given on the day by team leaders, Rebecca Landy and Meg Bate for the Library and Tom O'Dea for IT. They highlight the main achievements of the GSV Library and IT teams in the past year, ably assisted by their volunteers. ■

## Major achievements in the last year



- ❑ Introduction of the Digital Journal Search Function
- ❑ Resumption of "... Day in the Library"
- ❑ Pursued a Post-Covid journal clean up
- ❑ Conducted a clean-up of the collection at the RHSV
- ❑ Renegotiated a new 10 year contract with Ancestry
- ❑ Presented at Rootstech24

## Major achievements in the last year



### Additions to GIN database

**63,000+ new records**

45,335 in the last 8 months alone  
That's already more than in the previous year

### Additions to Milestones database

**66,000+ new records**

43,624 in the last 8 months alone  
Again, more than in the previous year

### Edits to the main catalogue

**5,503 modified records**

Many of these records were  
modified more than once

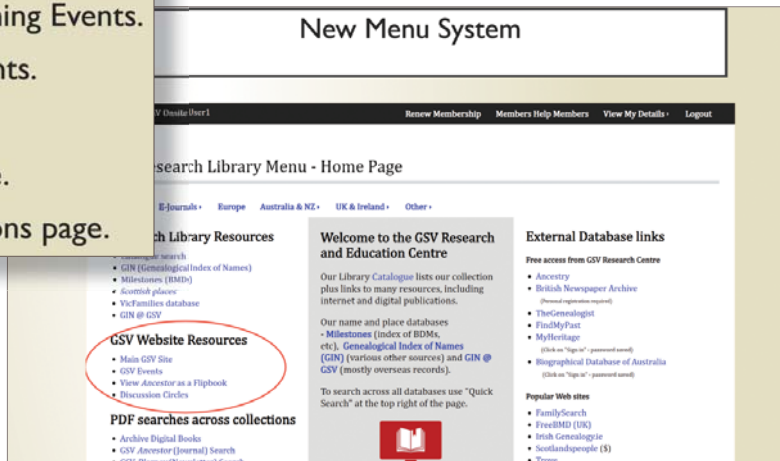
### Additions to the main catalogue

**1,589 new records**

## Summary of Changes

1. New Library Menu System on the Library PCs.
2. Automatic login to the GSV website as a GSV Member.
3. Improved presentation of Current and Upcoming Events.
4. Added a new webpage which shows your Events.
5. Converted phone numbers to hotlinks.
6. Added a google map to the GSV Contact page.
7. Added the ACNC Charity Tick to the Donations page.

## New Menu System





# Book Reviews

Reviews by Cathy Carman, Val Noone  
and Margaret Vines



1

## 1. Place Names in Ulster

Author: Jonathan Bardon 58pp ISBN 9781909556874  
Pub: Newtownards, Northern Ireland, Ulster Historical Foundation, 2020

[In GSV Library](#)

This 58-page book is a boon to anyone researching family histories in the nine counties of Ulster in Ireland. Its strength is its delightful and clear linking of place names with landscapes and history. Jonathan Bardon explores prehistoric sites and early Irish society, he traces Gaelic, Viking, Anglo-Norman, English and Scottish roots, weaving in, for example, the Elizabethan conquest and the Ulster plantation. His accurate and objective writing won him respect across the spectrum of Ulster's religious and political groups. Indeed, in addition to its value in genealogy, this short book is an important contribution to improving cross-community understanding.

When Jonathan died in 2020 the tributes to him in the press from both the general public and historians were impressive. In her Foreword to the book, his wife, Carol Tweedale Bardon, explained how she undertook, and enjoyed, the task of producing this new edition of his 1991 *Investigating Place Names in Ulster*. The book traces ring forts, kingdoms, trees, houses, churches, townlands and so on. It is well laid out with maps and lists. Modern names, some of them puzzling and hard to pronounce correctly, are given alongside their origins and meanings. Anyone with an interest in Irish history will benefit from time spent with this gem of a book. VN

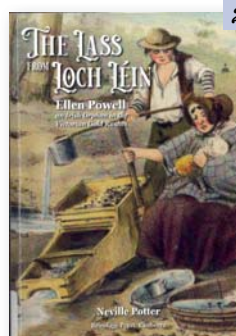
## 2. The Lass of Loch Léin: Ellen Powell – An Irish Orphan in the Victorian Goldrushes

Author: Neville Potter 315pp ISBN 978-0-9924453-2-4  
Pub: Bricolage Press, Canberra, 2022

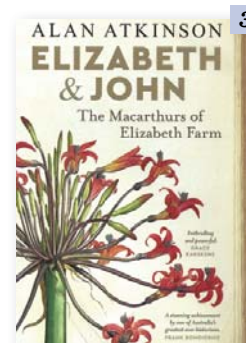
Ellen Powell, illegitimate daughter of 'strong-farmer' John Powell of County Kerry, arrived in Adelaide from Ireland in 1849 on the barque *Elgin*, under Earl Grey's Famine Orphan Scheme for Irish women. Finding her way to Victoria, she married Richard Burke, an immigrant butcher from County Westmeath. The couple, with their growing family, were soon lured to the goldfields by the possibility of riches. They travelled and made a living by mining at the Ararat, Lamplough, Moonambel, Landsborough, Bendigo, Taradale and Drummond North goldfields, eventually finding a permanent home in Malmsbury.

Historian Neville Potter has written an interesting account of the lives, families and times of both the father and daughter, John and Ellen Powell, providing a wealth of well-researched contextual detail. He begins by contrasting John Powell's comfortable and successful life as an Irish landholder and businessman, with Ellen's experience of famine and working-class poverty. He provides the reader with good insight into why Ellen, and other Irish immigrants were prepared to undertake the perilous journey to Australia to seek a better life.

The day-to-day hardships facing the Irish orphans, life in Adelaide and Melbourne and the challenges the family encountered on the Western Victorian goldfields, are all brought to life by the use of, and quotations from, newspapers, government reports, letters, personal journals, pioneer records and secondary sources. Details of the goldrush life cover broader political and racial issues, and more intimate experiences of campsites, tent construction, food available, hazards to health, alcohol, clothing, physical work, fighting and sport. The author uses description, with good effect, to build up a lively picture of what life was like for Ellen and Richard, overcoming the absence of the family's own autobiographical



2



3

material with accounts from other observers and immigrant families. The text is well illustrated and is supported by an extensive bibliography. An index is, disappointingly, not included.

Potter concludes by expressing his admiration for the persistence and resilience of Ellen and Richard, and by reflecting that this era of Irish immigrants with 'ordinary lives', collectively played a significant role in shaping the character and form of emerging Australia. CC

## 3. Elizabeth and John: The Macarthurs of Elizabeth Farm

Author: Alan Atkinson 500pp ISBN 9 781742 237565  
Pub: New South Publishing, Sydney, 2022

[In GSV Library](#)

In his in depth study of John and Elizabeth Macarthur, Alan Atkinson makes use of over 50 years of research – he began with a research thesis and is now writing as a Professor at Sydney University. He explores new possibilities in writing history and biography: combining original documents with the broader view provided by internet research to give insights into personal interior lives and the way people saw themselves and their place in the world.

He provides a new appreciation of John and Elizabeth and their life together – a biography of a married couple. This will resonate with family historians often struggling with the same task. He begins with a chapter on Elizabeth's background followed by one on John's. This variation of focus from one to the other continues throughout the book, but interspersed with those about their lives together and their shared experiences.

The preservation of huge numbers of Macarthur family papers, for example their letters and Elizabeth's shipboard diary, provides Atkinson with insight into their minds and feelings. He also uses evidence from the books they kept, who their friends and visitors were and of course from their actions. They were enlightenment people with considerable self-awareness, part of the era which saw the rise of the novel and this comes across in their curiosity about the new world they had arrived in, their exploration of it, and focus on exactitude and measuring, planning and vision.

*Elizabeth and John* does not read like academic history – more like Hazel Rowley's joint biographies of Sartre and de Beauvoir or the Roosevelts. It's significant Elizabeth's name comes first – a tribute to her importance not just in the relationship but in their joint achievement. The author acknowledges his debt to Michelle Scott Tucker and her biography of Elizabeth Macarthur in *Elizabeth Macarthur: A Life at the Edge of the World*.

This book is worth reading also for insights into early NSW. The Macarthurs knew and met everyone – from Watkin Tench to Governors and convicts to local First Nations people like Tjedboro, and even visiting Maori chiefs. There is a dramatic and succinct account of the Rum Rebellion, clear headed about John Macarthur's penchant for drama, a hint of his later mental health problems: 'The stories John Macarthur told himself during his life, and anyone who would listen, were plays' (p223).

After the Rum Rebellion, John spent eight years away in England, surviving the court martial, resigning from the army and seeing his youngest boys through their education. Elizabeth ran the family concerns in NSW and by 1814 it was clear that was where their future lay. The focus for both Elizabeth and John was increasingly on their children and on the new estate at Camden, and the book continues past their deaths to an Epilogue on the surviving children. It is followed by a select bibliography, endnotes and an index. MV■

# Around the groups and circles

## England and Wales Discussion Circle

This circle focuses on topics that are pertinent to the whole of England and Wales. This includes topics such as census records, poor laws, workhouses, education, health, political and social conditions. The circle will work closely with the four regional English Discussion Circles and the Early English Discussion Circle.

**Meetings:** Bi-monthly on 2nd Tuesday from March at 10.30am. Repeated bi-monthly on 4th Tuesday from March at 7.30pm

**Contact:** [england@gsv.org.au](mailto:england@gsv.org.au)

## Early English Discussion Circle

This circle assists GSV Members with their **pre-1800 English research**. It covers the period before the census and civil registration records of the 19th Century. It aims to help members gain an understanding of pre 1800 records and how to access them, including in significant times such as the Civil War and Commonwealth period.

**Meetings:** Bi-monthly on the 1st Friday from March at 1.30pm

**Contact:** [eedc@gsv.org.au](mailto:eedc@gsv.org.au)

## GSV Writers

The group encourages and helps GSV Members to **write their family histories**. It especially welcomes those that are just starting to put their research into written form. There are collaborative reviews and discussion of members' submitted writing as well as advice and suggestions concerning readability, punctuation, and good editing.

**Meetings:** Monthly on the 1st Wednesday from February at 12.30pm

**Contact:** [gsvwriters@gsv.org.au](mailto:gsvwriters@gsv.org.au)

## DNA Genetic Genealogy Study Group

This group helps in **developing skills using DNA testing** along with traditional research. Participants are expected to have completed the GSV beginner's DNA classes or have a similar knowledge base.

**Meetings:** Monthly on 1st Tuesday from February at 10.00am

**Contact:** [dna@gsv.org.au](mailto:dna@gsv.org.au)

## London and South East Counties Discussion Circle

The aim of this circle is to bring together GSV Members who are researching their family history in the south-east of England. The Counties covered are **Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, East & West Sussex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, London, Middlesex, Oxfordshire, and Surrey**. Discussions can include local occupations and businesses, migration, maps and gazetteers, and church records.

**Meetings:** Bi-monthly on the 4th Thursday from February at 10.30am [not December]

**Contact:** [london@gsv.org.au](mailto:london@gsv.org.au)

## Midlands and East Anglia Discussion Circle

This circle aims to bring together GSV Members who have a common interest in family history research in the English Midlands. The Counties discussed are **Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Huntingdonshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire**. Topics relate to social, economic, and religious and political history that effected the life and times of these counties.

**Meetings:** Bi-monthly on the 2nd Wednesday from February at 1.30pm

**Contact:** [midlands@gsv.org.au](mailto:midlands@gsv.org.au)

## Counties of Northern England Discussion Circle

Do you have ancestors from the north of England? The members of this circle meet to discuss research and shared interests in the north of England, covering the historical Counties of **Northumberland, Westmorland, Durham, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, and Cumberland** as well as the **Isle of Man**. Topics discussed can relate to economic, social, and political history as well as assistance with research.

**Meetings:** Bi-monthly on the 2nd Tuesday from February at 1.30pm

**Contact:** [cone@gsv.org.au](mailto:cone@gsv.org.au)



*Groups and Circles are continuing with Zoom meetings – book via the GSV website.  
Consult the Groups and Circles Notice Boards on our website for all up-to-date information.*

### South West England Research and Discussion Circle

This circle is for those GSV Members who are researching their family history in the south-west counties of England, namely **Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, and Wiltshire**. The aim is to understand the lives and times of those who lived in south-west England. Research and resources are discussed, and members assisted to break through their brick walls.

**Meetings:** Bi-monthly on the 2nd Friday from February at 1.30pm

**Contact:** [swerdcircle@gsv.org.au](mailto:swerdcircle@gsv.org.au)

### British India Discussion Circle

From the **17th to the 20th century**, over three million Britons served in **India and South Asia** in the military, the government or as part of the prosperous community. The British India Discussion Circle is designed to assist those GSV Members who are researching these British ancestors.

**Meetings:** Monthly on the 3rd Tuesday from February at 7.30pm

**Contact:** [britindia@gsv.org.au](mailto:britindia@gsv.org.au).

### Irish Ancestry Discussion Circle

This circle aims to foster the study of **Irish history and genealogical research** as well as providing support for all GSV Members who are researching their Irish heritage.

**Meetings:** Quarterly on 2nd Saturday. February and November meetings are hybrid: in-person and via *Zoom* attendance. May and August are via *Zoom* only, all at 1.00pm

**Contact:** [irish.ancestry@gsv.org.au](mailto:irish.ancestry@gsv.org.au)

### Scottish Discussion Circle

Come along to receive assistance with researching Scottish ancestry and gain an understanding of the nuances relating to **Scottish family history** research. All are welcome to share their research experiences.

**Meetings:** Quarterly on 3rd Saturday of March, June and September, and (usually) 4th Saturday in November at 2.00pm

**Contact:** [scotland@gsv.org.au](mailto:scotland@gsv.org.au)

### Victoria and Tasmania Discussion Circle

This is a circle for GSV Members who are researching family history in **Tasmania and Victoria**.

**Meetings:** Monthly on the 4th Friday from January at 10.30am. The April and August meetings will be held on the Thursday before the 4th Friday at 7.30pm.

**Contact:** [victas@gsv.org.au](mailto:victas@gsv.org.au)

### International Settlers Discussion Circle

Attendance at the meetings of this circle will allow GSV Members to receive assistance with their research, and to share their experiences of **non-British family history research**. On the occasions that there is a guest speaker, insights into their approaches to their research can be invaluable.

**Meetings:** Quarterly on the 3rd Saturday from February at 1.00pm

**Contact:** [isg@gsv.org.au](mailto:isg@gsv.org.au)

### The Good Oil Discussion Circle

The Good Oil circle gives an opportunity for GSV Members to share their experiences on **subjects closely allied to family history research**. This can include the management of documents and images and the conserving of family ephemera. This circle works closely with the Family History Tips & Tools Discussion Circle.

**Meetings:** Monthly on the 3rd Friday from January at 1.30pm

**Contact:** [thegoodoil@gsv.org.au](mailto:thegoodoil@gsv.org.au)

### Family History Tips & Tools Discussion Circle

Our tips and tools forum **examines the sources of family history information and explores how to use them more effectively**. Each session aims to provide information, guidance, and foster engaging discussion on topics requested by GSV Members. Join the circle for a lively exchange of ideas and insights, all aimed at enhancing your family history research.

**Meetings:** Monthly on the 4th Wednesday from January at 10.30am (not December)

**Contact:** [fhtt@gsv.org.au](mailto:fhtt@gsv.org.au) ■

# *A beginner's guide to researching your Dutch ancestors*

by Martin J Playne

The Netherlands and its neighbouring countries, Belgium, Germany and England, share many ancestral connections. The Flanders region of Belgium in particular is closely related historically.

So your research may take you looking for records located in those other countries too. Furthermore, the Netherlands was formerly a colonialist power and held territories such as the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia), some Caribbean countries and parts of present-day South Africa. The Netherlands is well-organised in its genealogical records. This article will concentrate on describing the Dutch records.

## **History of the Netherlands**

The region now known as the Netherlands was under Roman rule from roughly 50BC to the 4th century AD and gradually converted to Christianity by 1000 AD. In the 16th century it embraced Calvinism, a Protestant religion, which sparked the Eighty Years' War (1568-1648) against the Catholic Spanish Habsburg rulers. The country became prosperous and a global power during the 17th Century – an era known as the 'Golden Age', but this was followed by an economic decline in the 1700s. In 1795 the Batavian Republic was formed, leading to it becoming part of the Napoleonic Empire until 1815. The French were expelled, and the Netherlands became part of a Kingdom which also included most of Belgium. By 1839, Belgium was recognised as a separate country. The current population of the constitutional monarchy of the Netherlands is about 17.5 million living in twelve provinces. During the 20th century, the Government made a major effort to protect this low-lying country from the sea and to create new agricultural land from the Zuiderzee in particular. The Government also encouraged emigration efforts and some 500,000 Dutch left the country after the second World War, including around 160,000 who migrated to Australia between 1949 and 1970.

## **Language**

Dutch is the language of the Netherlands. Many of the useful Dutch websites however, can be viewed in English as well, or you may be able to use your computer's browser to auto-translate. The *FamilySearch* Wiki provides a very helpful 'Dutch Genealogical Word List':

**[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Dutch\\_Genealogical\\_Word\\_List](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Dutch_Genealogical_Word_List)**

## **Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM)**

### **Church records**

Church records including baptisms (*dopen*), marriage (*trouwen*) and burials (*begraven*) are known by the acronym 'DTB' and are the main sources for births, deaths and marriages between 1550 and 1811, after which they were largely superseded by civil registration. Most people in the Netherlands belonged to either the Dutch Reformed (*Nederduits Gereformeerd*) or Roman Catholic churches. Most available church records before 1811 are now online in regional archives (*archieff*). The data may also be available on *WieWasWie* or on *Open Archive* (see details in the section about online resources below).

Most Protestant records are in Dutch language, Catholic records in Latin, Huguenots and Wallonia Reformed in French, and Lutherans in German. To search church records, you do need to know your ancestor's religion and location (province). A useful directory of the available Dutch parish registers and where they are located is 'Repertorium DTB' published by the *Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* in The Hague. It is available online as a free downloadable PDF file: **<https://cbg.nl/documents/2/Repertorium-dtb-totaal-ocr.pdf>**

### **Civil records**

Records of BDMs (DTB), from 1811 onwards, are readily available from many online sites described below, such as *WieWasWie*, *OpenArchives* and *FamilySearch*.

Martin can be contacted at:  
**[martinplayne5@gmail.com](mailto:martinplayne5@gmail.com)**



## Dutch online resources

**CBG Centrum voor  
familieschiedenis  
(CBG Centre for Family  
History)**

PO Box 11755, 2502 AT, The  
Hague, The Netherlands  
Tel: +31 (0) 70 31 50 500  
<https://cbg.nl>

This coordinating umbrella body has oversight for the following sites: *CBG Verzamelingen* (name search in diverse collections), *CBG Bibliotheek* (library), *CBG Familiewapens* (family coat of arms), *CBG Familienamen* (surnames), *CBG Stamboomen* (member's family trees) and *WieWasWie* (genealogical data). Details of each are listed below.

While the CBG website is in Dutch, it has a useful 'Dutch ancestors' menu item in English language. The sub-menus include the 'National Register of the Deceased', 'Emigration', 'Indo-European ancestors' and the 'Second World War'. Some searches are free, while others require a subscription. The possibilities and the restrictions of the various records are fully described. The CBG has a newsletter you can subscribe to, and there is a digital genealogical magazine *Gen*.

**WieWasWie (WhoWasWho)**  
<https://www.wiewaswie.nl/en>

This is probably the most important website for researching ancestry in the Netherlands. It is available in both Dutch and English language. There are more than 230 million persons in this database. It has digitised records of some 28 regional and city archives. The CBG Centre for Family History in The Hague owns the *WieWasWie* site. Many records include an image of the original record in addition to the transcription of the record. Simple searches are free, but advanced search requires a premium access subscription (€19.95 per year).

**CBG Verzamelingen (collections)**  
<https://cbgverzamelingen.nl>

This site allows the user to search, by name or by place, large collections of family advertisements,

general police gazettes, East Indian sources, prayer cards, family files, family printing, war resources, photos, manuscripts, family archives and genealogical collections. These are large collections; for example, there are over nine million family advertisements and over 40,000 photos.

**CBG Bibliotheek (library)**  
<https://cbgbibliotheek.nl>

The CBG library contains publications related to genealogy, heraldry, family history and national, regional and local history. There are 48,482 books in the library, a biographical index of 287,295 entries and a genealogy collection of 154,953 entries.

**CBG Familiewapens (family coats of arms)**  
<https://www.cbgfamiliewapens.nl>

This is an heraldic database containing coats



▲ Image 1: 'Map of the Provinces of the Netherlands', by courtesy of Alphathon, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>)

of arms of people. It includes digital and downloadable records of family seals and coats of arms images, and descriptions.

### **CBG Familienamen (family names)**

<https://www.cbgfamilienamen.nl/nfb>

This family name bank gives the locations and numbers of persons with the same surname and their locations in the Netherlands. It is very helpful to search for surnames of those in your family tree. It is based on data collected in 1947 and in 2007.



▲ Image 2: Tulips in springtime, courtesy of AXP Photography on Unsplash  
<https://unsplash.com/photos/a-large-group-of-colorful-flowers-in-front-of-a-pagoda-Nec-Mwm47uY>

### **CBG Stammbomen (family trees)**

<https://www.cbg.stamboomnederland.nl/start>

On this site, researchers can digitally store their family trees sustainably. Others can search and view the family trees.

### **The National Register of the Deceased (NRO)**

<https://cbg.nl/dutchancestors/extracts-personel-record-lists-and-cards>

This register consists of personal record cards of people who died between 1939 and October 1 1994. In 1994 the cards were replaced by digital lists of the deceased and these are also available on the NRO. On these cards and lists, one can find information about births, deaths and marriages, professions, and locations. They are very useful for backing up your research on family members and are something similar to census records, in that they help with determining spouses and children. The CBG manages these records for the NRO on behalf of the Dutch government. These records can be ordered through the CBG and cost between €4 and €10. There are privacy restrictions and limitations as to what is included.

### **GeneaKnowHow**

<https://www.geneaknowhow.net>

This website contains details of genealogical records in all the provinces of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. I found some links were broken, but the site is interesting because it covers all three countries. It gives links to:

- Church books – births, deaths and marriages - (DTB) mostly to 1796 or 1811.
- Civil records – DTB from those years to the present and registers of population starting from the 1840s
- Other ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical material kept in the appropriate archives.

Additionally, this site has links to passenger lists dating back to the *Mayflower* in 1620.

The digital resources section contains many images that are free of copyright and can be downloaded, see 'Picturing the past, illustrations for family history':

<https://www.geneaknowhow.net/in/beeld.htm>

### **Open Archieven (Open Archives)**

<https://www.openarchieven.nl>

This site operated by Coret Genealogy allows you to search the historical genealogical records of Dutch and Belgian archives and societies. There are some 346 million individual entries. While one can do some searching free, for full access a subscription of €22 per year is charged.

### **Genealogie Online (Genealogy Online)**

<https://www.genealogieonline.nl/en>

This site, also operated by Coret Genealogy, enables you to find your ancestors and relatives in published family trees. This site is in Dutch,



German, French and English language.  
Subscription: €52 per annum.

**Familie Archivaris  
(Family Archivist)**  
<https://www.familiearchivaris.nl/abonnement>

This site provides a service to a family historian who wishes to involve his/her relatives in the development of a private digital family archive for the family. The site can be viewed in Dutch, English, French or German language. Subscription: €18 per annum.



▲ Image 3: Typical Dutch architecture on a canal, courtesy of Nastya Dulhiier on Unsplash  
<https://unsplash.com/photos/assorted-color-buildings-in-front-of-water-FiSdT1rZKH8>

## Netherlands records in family history subscription sites

**FamilySearch**  
<https://www.familysearch.org/search/location/1927059?region=Netherlands>

*FamilySearch* has 37 collections of Netherlands records, including army service records, 1807-1929; births and baptisms, 1564-1910; census and population registers, 1574-1940; marriages, 1565-1892; deaths and burials, 1668-1945, numerous archival indexes, some 70 million; some 25 collections of provincial church and civil records. *FamilySearch* has superb coverage of Dutch records, and its *Wiki* on the Netherlands is a great starting place for a researcher. *FamilySearch* is a free website but does require a user account.

**MyHeritage**  
<https://www.myheritage.com>

This subscription site catalogue lists 44 Netherlands collections containing 251,458,413 records, including BDMs, population registers, notarial records (1600-1935) and newspapers. It also holds an index of French vital records, with 357 million civil registration records and allows access to family trees worldwide via the *FamilySearch*, *Geni* and *Filae* tree collections in addition to *MyHeritage* family trees.

**Ancestry**  
<https://www.ancestry.com.au>

Ancestry holds some 50 million records of individuals in 193 Netherlands record collections,

ranging from civil registers of court, government and criminal records, to passenger lists, a number of Belgian records, military records, slave registers and phone book indexes between 1997 and 2011. BDM records from most Dutch provinces are also available through this subscription site.

**Findmypast**  
<https://www.findmypast.com.au>

This site has Netherlands birth and baptism records between 1564 and 1910, marriages between 1565 and 1892 and deaths and burials 1668-1945.

## Archives

Many archives publish their genealogical records on *WieWasWie* and *Open Archives*. Advanced search functions require a subscription.

**Nationaal Archief (National Archive)**  
<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl>

Prins Willem-Alexanderhof 20,  
2595 BE Den Haag  
Tel: +31 70 331 5400

This government archive is the largest in the Netherlands. The right to information for the citizen is central to the Archive's aim. The collection consists of important documents from the central government, archives from the province of Zuid-Holland and private archives. These archives also hold a large photo collection of some 15 million images, of which over one



million can be viewed online. The good news is that about 400,000 are available free of copyright. Some military records of the East India Company (VOC) collection are also in this National Archive.

### **Archieven.nl**

<https://www.archieven.nl>

This site allows you to search archival records from a diversity of 85 archives in the Netherlands, ranging from 60 government archives to polder and water board archives, and museum archives. The site can be viewed in English or Dutch language. Probably not a website for the beginning family historian.

### **Geneal IX**

<https://www.genealix.nl>

*Geneal IX* provides over 162,000 handy links to the holdings of numerous regional and local archives in the Netherlands. This aids a researcher to narrow down which archive to consult to find particular records.

### **Emigration to Australia**

Dutch migrants to Australia from 1946 to 1991 can be searched on the website of the Dutch National Archive (see above). One can request access to these cards if the migrant is deceased:

<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/zoekhulp/nederlandse-emigranten-in-australie-1946-1991>

Records of the arrival of migrants to Australia are also available from the National Archives of Australia for the period 1897 to 1966:

<https://www.naa.gov.au/explore-collection/immigration-and-citizenship>

### **World War 2 records**

The *Genealogy Online* website has comprehensive listings of the victims of the war (dead or missing).

### **Oorlogs Bronnen**

<https://www.oorlogsbronnen.nl>

This site is all about the Second World War and its effects on the Netherlands and its people.

### **Red Cross Archive**

<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl>

Red Cross records of the wounded and dead are in the National Archive in The Hague.

### **Land and property records**

#### **Kadaster**

<https://www.kadaster.nl/production/woning/eigendomsinformatie>

The Dutch Land Register is owned by the *Kadaster* (land and property register). To search to ascertain who owns a house or apartment, a fee is charged by the *Kadaster*. The *Kadaster* is a public authority and is a registry of all real estate. The land is owned by municipalities or sometimes a landlord. One buys a building but not the ground. One has a ground lease (*erfpacht*). Information is held on all property from 1832 to the present day.

### **Notarial records and other legal records**

**The Archive of the Amsterdam Notaries 1578–1915**

<https://www.amsterdam.nl/stadsarchief/amsterdam-city-archives>

Amsterdam City Archives  
Vijzelstraat 32, Postbus 51140  
1017 EC Amsterdam  
Tel: +31 20 2511600

This large archive of the Amsterdam Notaries 1578-1915 held within the Amsterdam City

◀ Image 4: *Cycling in the Netherlands is very popular: the country has many cycle paths, the landscape is flat, distances are short and there is a lot to see. Photo by likesisyphos on Unsplash. <https://unsplash.com/photos/a-row-of-bikes-parked-next-to-each-other-on-a-sidewalk-YvMBwctoGBk>*





Archives is of global importance. It is the key to the history of Amsterdam's connections with countries all around the world for centuries. It holds wills, personal agreements, trading contracts, estate inventories, and information on social and business life. These records have been made somewhat accessible with two million handwritten and typed cards.

**Netherlands, Notarial Records, 1600-1935 collection on MyHeritage**  
<https://www.myheritage.com>

The subscription website *MyHeritage* holds an index to notarial records from archives throughout the Netherlands. The notarial records indexed include legal documents useful for genealogical research such as wills and testaments, estate inventories/divisions, marriage contracts, guardianships, and mortgages. Notarial records are located in the National Archive and in regional archives.

## United Dutch East India Company (VOC)

The United Dutch East India Company (VOC) was a powerful trading company that dominated the Asian spice trade for roughly 200 years.

In 1652, a Dutch colony was established on the Cape of Good Hope in Southern Africa as a supply base for VOC ships travelling to the former Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). As time went on groups of Dutch colonists settled in South Africa.

The National Archives holds VOC records including East India wills 1698–1807, letters and papers received and shipping information from 1609 to 1795 – amounting to over one million items. The East Indies items number over 400,000. The latter collection covers the period 1815 to 1950 and includes slavery reports, administration of Indian pensions, military pensions and deceased persons. See the VOC search aid at the National Archives website: <https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/zoekhulpen/voc-1602-1800>

## Blogs

**Dutch Genealogy**  
<https://www.dutchgenealogy.nl>

Professional Dutch genealogist, Yvette Hoitink has a very informative English language blog on her website which contains many helpful links.

**Yory**  
<https://www.yory.nl>

*Yory* publishes articles about Dutch family tree research, family history, archives and sources, genealogy software, TV series and old

newspapers. Coordinated by founder, Yolinda Lippens, *Yory* draws on a team of authors who provide articles based on their own knowledge, interest and experience in genealogy. It is a Dutch language website, so requires the use of a translate function in your browser to read it in English.

## Groups and societies

**Dutch Australian Genealogy Group**  
<https://dutchaustraliangenealogygroup.com>

This is an enthusiastic group of people who have Dutch ancestry and are researching their family trees. They share research experiences and help others get started with their genealogy. The group is based in Sydney but has a *Facebook* page and group, and also publishes an online newsletter (available from the *Facebook* group page), which provides a wide range of information and histories of Dutch people in Australia. See:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/374598535007299> and  
<https://www.facebook.com/DaggGenealogy>

**Nederlandse Genealogische Vereniging**  
 (The Dutch Genealogical Society)  
<https://www.ngv.nl/hoofd>  
 E-mail: [info@ngv.nl](mailto:info@ngv.nl)

Founded in Amsterdam in 1946 with the aim of promoting genealogical research, the society now has more than 5,000 members.

**Dutch Australian Cultural Centre**  
<https://dutchaustralianculturalcentre.com.au>  
 Email: [dutchaustraliance@gmail.com](mailto:dutchaustraliance@gmail.com)

The Dutch Australian Cultural Centre in NSW is dedicated to preserving Dutch-Australian Heritage, providing access to an 'historical treasure trove through both digital and physical resource facilities', engaging in ongoing research, and collaborating both nationally and internationally.

## Conclusion

The Netherlands has easy and generous access to its genealogical records. A large proportion of records are available online and often include images of original documents as well as the transcription of the record. However, the original documents sometimes have to be viewed in person at the regional and the national archives. It is amazing though, how much family genealogy on your Dutch ancestors can be achieved online without having to travel to the Netherlands. ■

# Research Corner

## Parliamentary papers: not to be overlooked

by Rebecca Landy and Meg Bate

### What are parliamentary papers?

Parliamentary papers are documents tabled in Parliament. These include annual reports of government departments and agencies, parliamentary committee reports, royal commission papers, reports by independent officers of the parliament and regulations and official notices.

While originally a wide variety of documents were considered parliamentary papers, over time they were restricted to reports which might need legal protection or where its author had a special relationship with Parliament.

### What sort of information do parliamentary papers contain?

A wide range of subjects for example:

- Royal Commission or Select Committee reports such as Sale of Liquor laws (1855) Tariff reviews (1860), Industrial and reformatory schools (1872) or Employees in shops (1884);
- Statistics of the colony of Victoria (often referred to as Blue Books). They can include names or people employed by Government, for example the Blue Book for 1851 contains names of members of parliament, foreign consuls, land forces volunteers and officers. The Blue Books were published annually;
- Annual reports of departments and agencies e.g. Botanic gardens, Library, Gallery, Observatories etc.

You may be lucky and find one of your ancestors listed in a parliamentary paper. Even if your ancestors are not named, the papers provide information about the working of particular areas of Government responsibility, so they can prove valuable background to your ancestor's story if they worked in that particular area.

### Accessing Victorian Parliamentary Papers

The Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) holds some parliamentary records. They are held in the record series Blue Books and Statistics covering the years 1851 to 1916. Some of the early records are handwritten. You can learn more about the holdings in this series at <https://prov.vic.gov.au/archive/VP RS943/about>. They are open to the public but must be viewed in person in North Melbourne.

### Parliament of Victoria

A collection of parliamentary papers tabled in the Parliament of Victoria from 1851 to November 2022 are accessible via their website. The papers are searchable and downloadable. It should be noted this is not a comprehensive collection. The GSV have papers in our library that cannot be found on the parliamentary website.

[https://pov.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en\\_GB/parl\\_paper](https://pov.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_GB/parl_paper)

### Genealogical Society of Victoria

Many of the parliamentary papers in the GSV's collection are sorted and bound together into various topics to help users focus on their area of interest. Most of these collections are indexed in our GIN database and we are steadily adding digital publications to these records. Other papers are currently available as a digital copy at the GSV library.

### GSV Indexed Victorian Parliamentary Papers

The following Victorian Parliamentary Papers collection from the GSV collection have records added to our GIN database. For some collections we have included a description of the contents to illustrate their usefulness for genealogical research.



*Parliamentary papers. Law 1853–1886*

(2,730 records)

Some of the reasons people are named in these papers include:

- they were fined or even imprisoned when they sold illicit spirits or even distilled spirits. Both men and women are recorded in this list;
- they were involved in an insolvent estate in the 1850s;
- they provided evidence in administration and workings of the Sheriff's Department or on the workings of the Impounding Act;
- they were mentioned in Coroners' Inquests and Magisterial inquiries into causes of death 1852–54.

*Parliamentary papers. Post Office and Communications 1854–1886* (365 records)

Some of the reasons people are named in these papers include:

- they provided evidence in the enquiry into providing the best mode for the internal communication of the Colony;
- they were a mail contractor for the Post Office or worked for the Post Office.

*Parliamentary papers. Immigration [Reports] 1852–1859, 1861* (1,101 records)

We highly recommend exploring the immigration report, which includes information on both Government assisted immigration, and unassisted immigration and emigration. It has lists of ship surgeons, mentions which masters were prosecuted for not having a list of passengers, or for the sale of spirits, and more. Interestingly, it lists the wages paid to various professions for both males and females in various country areas.

*Parliamentary papers. Public buildings and parks 1856–1886* (2,239 records in GIN)

An ancestor could be named in these documents because they:

- were a government student of telegraphy, or attending engineering, architectural, painting or design classes;
- donated a mineral or fossil specimen, a curiosity or menagerie to a museum;
- donated a painting to the gallery;
- were a contributor of plants and seeds;
- won an art prize;
- were a weather observer or recorder.

*Parliamentary papers. Index to claims and grants 1855–1886* (427 records in GIN)

These papers contain, for example, names of those who:

- made a claim for compensation for losses occasioned by the riots at Ballarat;

- came before a select committee to make a land or compensation claim or were a witness to the case.

*Parliamentary papers. Maritime records, 1853/4 to 1856/7, 1857–1886* (1,071 records)

Was your ancestor an accredited ship pilot or a contractor for the Port of Melbourne? In this collection there are details of the ships arriving into Port Phillip covering which port they left from, number of passengers etc. It also notes if the ship was quarantined and what diseases were present. The GSV also has an index of these ships' arrivals: *Index of vessels in Victorian harbours during the years 1853–1863 and 1884–1886* as listed in "Parliamentary Papers, Maritime books 1 & 2"; 1853–1862.

**Other collections of parliamentary papers in the GIN index**

*Parliamentary papers. Customs and tariffs 1854, 1859–1860 & 1856* (531 records)

*Parliamentary papers. Railways 1854–57, 1859–63, 1884–86* (1,080 records in GIN)

*Parliamentary paper. Police reward fund, return to address, Mr. Strachan - 8th February, 1855* (297 records in GIN)

*Parliamentary papers. Mining 1855–1886* (1,118 records in GIN)

*Parliamentary papers. Victorian Railways report of the Board of Land and Works, November 1862* (451 names from staff section indexed only)

*Parliamentary papers. Public departments – persons employed in and promoted since 1st July 1881 & Public servants with thirty years' service 1895* (6,025 records in GIN)

It is worth checking GIN regularly for updates. Digitisation and Indexing efforts continue with the following collections:

*Parliamentary papers. Education 1854–1862, 1886*

*Parliamentary papers. Agriculture and land 1854–1863*

*Parliamentary papers. University of Melbourne: Report of the proceedings 1854, 1861, 1861–62, 1862–63, 1884, 1885, 1886*

*Parliamentary papers. Police and penal department [1851–1886]*

*Parliamentary papers. Petitions 1853–1886* (Partially indexed in GIN).■



## Entering a writing prize

By Barbara Beaumont  
and Margaret Vines,  
based on a presentation  
at the Writers Circle

Entering a writing prize is a very worthwhile experience. You may win the prize, but even if you do not, you will still have crafted and polished your family history story to produce your very best work, something you can be proud of.

There are many writing competitions we can enter, and write about our family history. They will each have a different focus and different conditions of entry. Three of the most popular are the E.M. Fletcher Writing Award (Family History ACT), the Croker Prize for Biography (Society of Australian Genealogists) and of course our own GSV Writing Prize. As well, many local councils also have writing prizes open to both residents and others.

### What sort of article?

Look at the previous winners of the prize to work out what sort of article or story is likely to succeed. Who is it aimed at? Is it strictly factual or creative non-fiction? Family history or general history? Biography? Human interest?

When you have chosen the prize to enter, read the guidelines and terms and conditions of entry **very carefully**. They may have specifications about any of the following:

- Subject matter
- Length – maximum and minimum
- Font and spacing
- Citations – footnotes or endnotes
- Previously published?
- Images

### Choosing your subject

Choose a part of your research that is suitable to base your article on. Make sure it is a story which really interests you – you will then be able to interest your reader. Ask yourself – what is the focus or theme of your story? You don't have to give every genealogical fact that you know: decide what is relevant to the story.

### Researching well

**The first stage is to gather the evidence:** Look at ALL the available documents: for example, not just one newspaper report but as many as possible because they often have different details and viewpoints. When Margaret wrote 'John the coachman (Thomas John Ibbotson c1807-1840)' for *Ancestor*, Sept 2016, she examined four reports of this coaching accident in different newspapers – and all had different details! Examine your documents closely and always check for a will – and for an inquest if it is a sudden death.

**The second stage is to build a timeline:** You as the writer, and therefore your reader, will be able to see the events clearly. You can now ask are there any **gaps** in my story or my evidence? You should have evidence for all your facts and explanations. The time line will help you to ask **why**, to explain why events happened, and why people made decisions.

**The third stage is citations:** Prove your research with citations of your sources.

### Writing well

The quality of the writing can bring your family history story to life. A lack of attention to writing leads to a confused or bored reader.

**Sentences are important:** Make every sentence count and don't ramble. Vary the length, reserving the shortest sentence for dramatic emphasis. Vary the opening words, and particularly vary the openings of each paragraph.

**Words:** Don't waste a word! Delete any unnecessary words. Use strong verbs and delete overused adverbs like 'sadly' and 'tragically'. Read it aloud to yourself as you write, for the rhythm.

**Structure:** Have a clear beginning, then a rise in tension to a climax, and follow with a conclusion. Avoid sidetracks or meandering and think how you can make your story more interesting.



**Audience:** Remember your audience all the time as you write for them.

With a prize, your audience is not just the judges. They will be seeing entries from the point of view of their users, of their members, and of the readers of the magazine or publication. Though, since they are reading a number of stories over a relatively short time, they will welcome something different, easy to read, and amusing, lively or exciting.

**Context:** Ensure the reader knows where they are and when, from the first paragraph. (Unless you are deliberately creating an air of mystery – to be followed by a big reveal.) Use the context of place and time to add colour to the story.

**Character:** Have a leading character for you and the reader to focus on – to see events through their eyes, and to evoke in the reader an emotional response – sympathy or empathy, horror or amusement.

**Theme and title:** Your article will have a theme. The title should point to this and intrigue the reader.

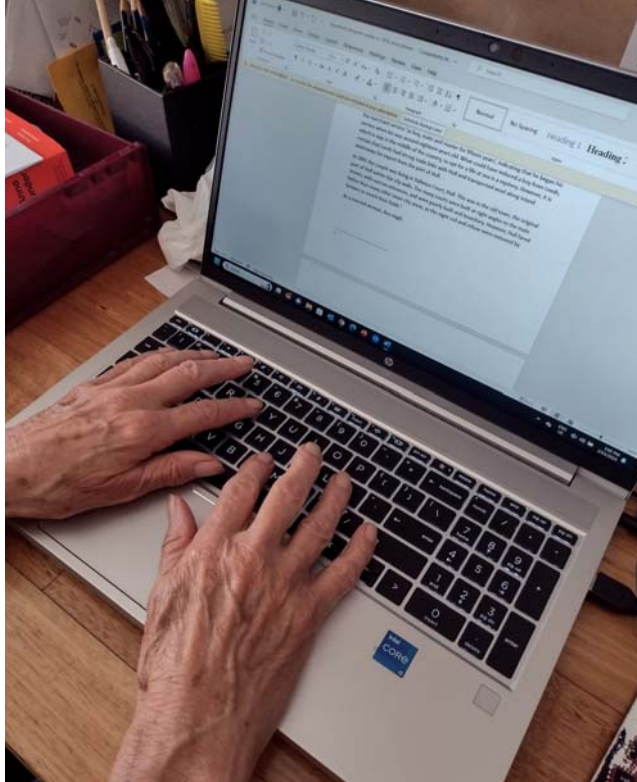
**Quotations:** The use of carefully selected quotations from original sources can provide evidence and add colour, but don't overdo it. For example, obituaries can contain lots of information but it's better to use the information you glean from one as you tell the tale rather than to quote the whole thing at the end. Don't let your quotations outweigh your own writing – keep them short. Don't plagiarise other writers. Instead, tell the story in your own words. If you use a brief quotation of someone else's words, it should be in quotation marks and acknowledged in a citation. **Citations** should document each quotation and important fact, **using the style recommended for the competition.**

**Proofreading:** Be prepared to write a second and even a third draft as you check for accuracy and clarity and polish your writing. After you print and proofread it yourself, recruit an assistant to nit-pick it.

### Submitting your entry

Check carefully when the closing date is – both the date and the time. Know exactly how to enter, and what has to accompany your text. Finally, don't leave it to the last minute – your internet may be down, or your computer may malfunction. Give yourself plenty of time and aim to get your entry in several days before the deadline.

Good luck! ■



▲ Image: Photographer: Trevor Hawksworth

### Helpful reading material

'Tips for writing an article' in *Ancestor*, June 2020.

Some recent 'Getting it Write' articles:

- March 2024 – Opening paragraphs and hooks
- December 2023 – Using structure in our family history writing
- March 2021 – Titles.

There are many others – not all are indexed! A list of the articles for from 2006 to 2024 is on the Writers Circle page on our website: <https://www.gsv.org.au/sites/default/files/stories/pdf/gsvwritersarticles-2024-mar.pdf>

An internet article of interest: <https://compose.ly/for-writers/how-to-write-a-good-article>

Louise Wilson's website has a long list of possible competitions. Not all are for genealogical writing but some may be suitable: [https://www.louisewilson.com.au/writing\\_awardshtml](https://www.louisewilson.com.au/writing_awardshtml)

## 2024 GSV Writing Prize

Don't forget our Writing Prize this year closes at **4:00pm Friday 30 August**.

See the website for details:

<https://www.gsv.org.au/gsv-writing-prize-2024>

# Additions to the Library

Compiled by Meg Bate, Library & Digital Resources Manager

See the library catalogue for full details, including associated names and places, exact format, and location of material within the library – available online at <https://gsv.org.au> or in the library.

Thank you to all donors to the library collection.

Webcasts are available to members at home.

Abbreviations used:

\$ = Society Purchase

(...) = Donor's name, if not the author

## AUSTRALIA

### VICTORIA

*Herald-Sun personal notices 1 Jan 2001 - 1 April 2001*

[indexed and scanned pages of the *Herald-Sun*]. Webster, David. Indexing by David Webster. Digital copy @ GSV premises – indexed in Milestones database.

*List of streets, roads, etc. in Melbourne metropolitan and outer metropolitan areas : showing the name of the subdivision, division, state electoral district and state electoral province in which each such thoroughfare is located.* Australian Electoral Office. State of Victoria. Digital copy @ GSV premises.

*Melbourne miles: the story of Melbourne's roads.* Lay, Maxwell Gordon, 2nd ed. Digital copy @ GSV premises.

*Memories linger as mansion's life ends [Werndew, Toorak].* Digital copy @ GSV premises (Jenny Beauchamp).

### IRELAND

*The Book of Ulster surnames.* Bell, Robert GSV: 929.4416 BEL.

*Place names in Ulster.* Bardon, Jonathan GSV: 941.6 BAR.

### FAMILY HISTORY

*Bell family.* Compiled by Jenny Beauchamp, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Bell, Wood, Clark, Ford, Truro, Nestrip, Cicerone, Munday, Elliott, Foster, O'meagher, Lloyd, Lilly, Banks, Gardner, Powell, Foster, Barnfield, Lloyd, Rogers, Armitage, Townsend** families.

*Charles Keble Beauchamp papers.* Compiled by Jenny Beauchamp, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Beauchamp** family.

*Charles Wesley Turner of "Fassifern", Christchurch.* Turner, Clarence and Kearns, Patience, Digital copy @ GSV premises (Jenny Beauchamp). **Turner, Sargent, Fredale, Shury, Iredale, Kirk, Way, Calvert, Garland, Baff, Scogland, Cuff** families.

*Diary and family of Thomas James Davey, 1844-1927.* Digital copy @ GSV premises (The estate of Virginia Beauchamp) **Davey, Pritchard, Meggs, Manley, Whinfield, Bowater, Pearce, Young** families.

*Family traditions [Bell family].* Bell, Georgina. Includes the original copies of letters etc which have been transcribed into the book. Compiled by Jenny Beauchamp, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Bell, Elliott, Beauchamp, Gardner, Lassetter, Truro, Powell, Iredale, Schofield, Turner, Love, Lane, West, Stone** families.

*Frederic Lassetter.* Digital copy @ GSV premises (Jenny Beauchamp). **Lassetter, Bedford, Ford, Bowring, Bell, Iredale, Beauchamp, Antill, Bicknell, Edwards** families.

*Frederick Matthais Waite Lassetter: a history of his life.* Digital copy @ GSV premises. (Jenny Beauchamp) **Lassetter, Bedford, Pavely, Waite, Iredale, Beauchamp, Bell, Love,**

**Samuel, Mooney, Macgavin, Waterloo, Sharp, Antill, Bicknell, Hazelhurst, Edwardes, Pearce, Jamieson** families.

*From oaks to gums: v. 2 William Price of London, perspectives on places and times through the generation of our families in the British Isles and Australasia.* Margaret and Eric Smith, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Price, Simmins, Casey, Smith, Dunkley, Dunkley-Price** families.

*From oaks to gums: v. 3 a Maltby family from Nottinghamshire – perspectives on places and time through the generations of our families in the British Isles and Australasia.* Margaret and Eric Smith, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Maltby, Price, Blackman, Reynolds, Palmington, Millward, Tomlinson, Campion, Morley** families.

*Horatio Beauchamp.* Beauchamp, Jenny, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Beauchamp, Sutton, Stokes, Powell, Beall, Stone, Lassetter, Mooney, Samuels, Macgavin** families.

*Katherine Mansfield 1888 – 1923.* Includes: "A sense of living" – Katherine Mansfield 1888-1923; A celebration of the 100th anniversary of Katherine Mansfield's birth in New Zealand; Katherine Mansfield birthplace Te Puakitanga, the first place of the story teller; Chronological list of stories by Katherine Mansfield. Digital copy @ GSV premises (Jenny Beauchamp). **Mansfield, Beauchamp, Stone, Dyer, Burnell, Stanley, Bowden, Middleton-Murry** families.

*Landeryou family, Cornwall.* Beauchamp, Jenny, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Landeryou, Prideaux, Rawlings, Williams, Treleggan, Solomon, Battrell** families.

*Lassetter family.* Digital copy @ GSV premises (Jenny Beauchamp). **Lassetter, Elliot, Iredale, Barrett, Bedford, Pavely, Young, Waite, Foster, Beauchamp, Lane, Love, Turner, Uther, Brennand, Hindmarsh, Antill, Bicknell, Edwardes, Pearce, Blackenbury, Slater, Booker, Bell, Wood, Truro, Ford, Bowring, Jamieson** families.

*Shoes and potatoes: Ballard babblings.* Weaver, Edna May RHSV: 929.2 BALL WEA, Digital copy @ GSV premises (contents pages only) **Ballard, Fidge, Holtzman, Noonan** families.

*The history of the 'Underhill' families, with references to 'Weller' & 'Buckney' families.* Allison, Leslie, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Underhill** family.

*The Finchers in history: from Feckenham Forest to far distant lands 1500-1900.* Fincher, Alan, Digital copy @ GSV premises (Alan Fincher and Beatrice Fincher) **Fincher** family.

*The Hutchings family: a journey from Devon to the Wimmera.* David Hutchings, Elizabeth Bell, Murray Hutchings and Tim Hutchings GSV: 929.2 HUTC HUT, Digital copy @ GSV premises. **Hutchings, Newbery, Creswick, Hansen, Gibbs, Edwards, Jamieson, Druce** families.

*The white Wends of St Kitts: a story of the Biele family tracing their history from their immigration in 1858 from Lusatia to South Australia for one hundred and twenty four years.* Graetz, Colin GSV: 929.2 BIEL GRA, Digital copy @ GSV premises (index only) (Rod Armstrong). **Biele, Altus, Bartsch, Giersch, Kleinig, Warnest, Semmler, Noll, Ziegler, Pumpa, Nitschke, Traeger, Jaeger, Menzel,**



**Boehm, Voigt, Noack, Grimwood, Freundt, Doecke, Weiss, Hayes, Nagel, Schoenberg, Radke, Feltus, Pietsch, Warnest, Schwarz families.**

*William Hannibal Lane*. Digital copy @ GSV premises (Jenny Beauchamp). **Lane, Iredale, Thomson, Cleveland, Meredith, Wells, Hutton, Murray-Aynsley, Gould families.**

*Young families*. Digital copy @ GSV premises (Jenny Beauchamp). **Young, Hunter, Hardie, Howarth, Logan, Stubbs families.**

#### GENERAL

*5 ways I discovered more about my family and what I wish I had done*. De Fircks, Alex, Digital copy @ GSV premises.

*Sitmar Line "Fair Sky": menus*. Digital copy @ GSV premises.

#### DATABASES AND INDEXES ADDED

GIN and Milestone database records and digital attachments are available to members at home. Some indexed publications do not have attachments and the original document can only be viewed at the GSV. In this case it is noted by 'Digital copy @ GSV premises'. The newly indexed and digitized publications are listed below. Twenty-seven older publications have also been digitised by our scanning team in the last quarter and are available to view at the GSV premises. So do check the GSV library catalogue.

#### MILESTONE DATABASE

*Bruthen Church of England marriages 1906-1908: district of Bruthen, county of Tambo.*

*Bruthen. Transcripts from original registers of the Church of England, district of Bruthen, county of Tambo 1892-1938 [baptisms].*

*Deaths taken from the records of St Stephens Church of England, Portland (buried in the North Portland cemetery unless otherwise stated).*

*From oaks to gums: v. 18 Robert Linklater from the Shetland Islands – perspectives on places and time through the generations of our families in the British Isles and Australasia*. Margaret and Eric Smith, Digital copy @ GSV premises, indexed in Milestones.

*Herald-Sun personal notices 1 Jan 2001 - 1 April 2001* [indexed & scanned pages of the *Herald Sun*]. GSV has these scanned pages as a Digital Copy @ GSV premises so only the indexed names are in Milestones.

*Index to the Portland Guardian 1842-59 for birth, marriage & death notices.*

*The Mildura cultivator: records of births, deaths, marriages 1888 to 1920.*

*Moondarra cemetery [forms of instructions for graves].*

*Obituaries extracted from Great Scot: the Scotch family magazine Aug 1978 to date*. [incomplete] No. 17 (Aug 1978); 30 (1982), 46 (1987) (missing?); 132-134 (2011), 136-163 (Sep 2013-Sep 2021). Digital copy @ GSV premises, indexed in Milestones database.

*Obituaries of members extracted from Melbourne Legacy bulletin, 1985-1988; 1991-1996*. Melbourne Legacy. Digital copy @ GSV premises, indexed in Milestones database.

*The old pioneers' memorial history of Melbourne...[Ch. 11, The literature of the epitaph and a record of the graves]*. Known as the Old Melbourne Cemetery.

*Presbyterian Church register 1945-1963* [allocated to the Rev. Paul William Robertson Baker and covering marriages in Aspendale, Ballarat, Chelsea, Collingwood, Edithvale, Fitzroy, Gardiner, Mordialloc, Ormond, Richmond & Woodend].

*Wallan cemetery register and headstones 1854-1978.*

#### GIN INDEX

*City of Richmond rate ledger 1857-1887*. Richmond (Victoria).

*Creswick State School no. 122 [pupils' register: indexed transcript]*. Digital copy @ GSV premises.

*Horse tax: register of owners 1784-1874*. Derbyshire Digital copy @ GSV premises.

*[Index to] The Victorian municipal directory and gazetteer for 1885*. Holloway, David.

*Members' convicts and the ships on which they arrived [Members' convicts and their transportation ships] Descendants of Convicts' Group*. Digital copy @ GSV premises (vol. 7).

*Parliamentary papers. Index to claims and grants 1855-1886*. Victoria Parliament.

*Parliamentary papers. Post Office and Communications 1854-1886*. Victoria Parliament.

*Parliamentary papers. Public buildings and parks 1856-1886*. Victoria Parliament.

*Patients in the Melbourne Hospital 1855-1909: an index of the surviving medical ward books, case notes*. Genealogical Society of Victoria. (Over 2,200 new records added, consists of 101,805 records in total).

*Pioneer women of Victoria 1835-1860: chronological index 1836-1860*. Digital copy @ GSV premises.

*Port Phillip district land & immigration receipts 1849-1851*.

*The rate payers roll of the Road Board District of Gisborne for the year ending 1st May 1864*.

*Register of the Common School at Frankston no. 1464 [later State School; 1874 onwards]*. (Only listing students now aged 75 and over).

*Register of the State Elementary School at Boneo no. 1184 [later State Primary School; 1921 onwards]*. (Only listing students now aged 75 and over)

*Register of the State Elementary School at Glen Iris no. 1148 [later State School; 1881, 1924 onwards]*. (Only listing students now aged 75 and over).

*Register of the State School at Marcus Hill no. 1370 from 1874 Register of the State School at Marcus Hill no. 2029 from 1878* [also known as Queenscliff Road and Elementary School].

*Register of the State School at Rosebud no. 2627 [1884 onwards]*. (Only listing students now aged 75 and over).

*Register of the State School no. 2033 at Mornington [1870 onwards]*. (Only listing students now aged 75 and over).

*Register of the Sunbury Common/State School no. 1002: 1870-1873, 1874-1877, 1887-1889; 1910 to Feb 1933*.

*Tallaroock council rates 1867*.

*Victorian industrial & reformatory schools children's registers unfilmed documents*. Digital copy @ GSV premises.

#### WEBCASTS – Members only

*Sources and Citation Methodology*. Landy, Rebecca. Rebecca Landy & Jenny Redman. ■

# Jottings from the Journals

Linley Hooper, FGSV

Daryl Wight writes on the 'Spirit of the Age', a short-lived Geelong newspaper in 1854 in *Investigator* 57:4/227 (Dec 2023). This issue also continues its series on the three hotels in Ceres village by Cheryl Scott.

*Descent* 53:4 (Summer 2023) focuses on DNA testing.

*The Leicestershire & Rutland FHS journal* 194 (Dec 2023) investigates 'Gaddesby – what's in a name' along with 'Shakespeares of Netherseal'.

We have caught up with the last three years of the *Tipperary Historical Society journal*. The 2023 edition includes 'Orphan girls from Tipperary Workhouse' and 'Operation of the Clogheen Poor Law Union Workhouse in the Famine' among its many interesting articles. The 2022 edition features 'Modeshill graveyard, Tipperary' and 'Background to Stanwix Hospital and Alms-houses, Thurles' among many other articles relating to the county. The 2020 issue explores 'Viscount Lismore's Tipperary tenants; 'The boys from Ballingarry: a convict tale from the 1840s' and other topics such as the efforts to conserve and retain the treasures of the Bolton Library, Cashel.

*The Historian* from the Tay Valley FHS features the parish of Airlie in the county of Angus.

*Irish roots* 129 (2024) has an article on the Grand Jury system in Ireland by Stephen Smyrl. These records are available online via the Virtual Records Treasury of Ireland. If you're planning a visit to Ireland, see 'Visiting the UCD Archives, James Joyce Library' for further resources for Irish ancestry. This issue focuses on County Mayo in its 'Local resources for family history research'. Nicola Morris writes on 'The Pitfalls of online church records.'

*Familia: Ulster genealogical review* 39 (2023) includes articles on 'Public Record Office of Northern Ireland: reflections on a century of archiving'; 'Elizabeth Seamour (1810-1889) from female convict to pioneer'; 'The Agnews of Kilwaughter'; and 'The origins of the Kennedys of Cultra, County Down'. 'Lady Frances Macnaghten's "Keen": lamenting the dead in Antrim and Afghanistan' tells us about the Celtic practice of 'keening'. 'Small word, big people' is about Lisburn and the Conway family.

The *Directory of Irish family history research* 46 (2023) includes a list of the 'Balfour rentals of 1632 and 1636' relating to property in Fermanagh. Other useful articles are the 'Antrim congregation Session book, including register of marriage and baptism 1674-1778'; 'A list of names from a rental of the estates of the Earl of Donegall in Belfast and south County Antrim, November 1719' and 'The 1775

Caledon estate catalogue' listing the tenants. Len Swindley lists the members of the 'Yeomanry corps and militia in Seagoe parish, co. Armagh 1796-1803'. 'The O'Rorkes of Ballybollen and beyond' by K J O'Hagan is another well researched article. It concludes with its annual list of subscribers' interests.

*Links 'n' chains* 136 (Feb 24) has an amusing article, 'Cleaning mother's house', which reminds us of the importance of ensuring your family research is not lost when you are gone. Print publishing is expensive, so do consider digitising your work and passing it on to our Society.

The *Lincolnshire FHS* notes that post-1837 marriage indexes for Lincolnshire have been updated: Caistor Registration District; Sixhills Methodist Free Church 1899–1910; Market Rasen Free Methodist Chapel 1899–1911; Grantham RD: Gunby 1837–1911; Skillington 1837–1911; Horncastle RD: Horsington 1837–1911; Kirkby on Bain 1837–1911; Langton by Horncastle 1837–1911; Stixwold 1837–1911; Lincoln RD (Rural): Barlings 1837–1911; Stainton by Langworth 1837–1911; Sudbrook 1837–1911; Newark RD (Lincolnshire parishes only): Barkston 1837–1911; Spilsby RD: Addlethorpe 1837–1911; New Bolingbroke 1854–1911; Stamford RD: Stamford All Saints 1871–1911; Stamford St George 1871–1911; Stamford St John 1871–1911; Stamford St Martin 1871–1911; Stamford St Michael 1871–1911; Uffington 1837–1911. The Index is free and can be found at <https://mi.lincolnshiremarriages.org.uk/index.html>

*Suffolk roots* 49:2 (Sep 2023) provides the text of a Zoom presentation, 'The ill, the impoverished, the illegitimate, and the insane' by Janet Few.

*Tasmanian ancestry* 44:3 (Dec 2023) includes 'Burnt to death: the high incidence of accidental death by fire of children in 19th century Tasmania'. Other families mentioned in this issue are Grimes, Cox, Innes, Baker, Shipphird and Buchanan.

*The Scottish genealogist* 72:1 (Mar 2024) provides a detailed account of 'Mistaken Identity' regarding the MacDonald family and Phoebe Winn which has often been repeated in online ancestry sites. Another article is on 'A school in Skye and the family who taught there' about Arnisort from 1853.

*Cockney ancestor* is always a good read – being the poorer part of London, people from all over the country, and even abroad, found their way there. As it's one of the many digitized journals, it's always a good idea to visit our library and use our full text **digital journal search** to find articles on your people and places. ■



# Blogging with Meg

Meg Bate

*RootsTech 2024 focuses on AI for research and storytelling*  
by Laura Hedgecock

**<https://gsv.org.au/rootsTech24-AI>**

Laura reviews the more interesting AI presentations at RootsTech 2024: *Five tools for your AI genealogy: the good, the bad, and the ugly* by Steve Little, and *Using AI tools to expand your research universe* by James Tanner. There are links to related posts by Laura: *How legal context prevents misunderstood family stories: an interview with Judy Russell*, and *Writing ancestor stories without judgment*. Unfortunately, the presentations that Laura mentions were live, and recordings are not available online. I have looked through the presentations from that conference that are available, and I can recommend *How to use AI for family history experiences* by Matt Armstrong, available at:

**<https://gsv.org.au/rootstech24AI>**

*What you must know to succeed at historical newspaper research*

by Kenneth Marks

**<https://gsv.org.au/anchuntnews>**

In this blog Kenneth explains how optical character recognition works and encourages you to be aware of the pitfalls. He then mentions a number of tips that will enhance your online searching. At the end of his blog, he provides 'Quicksheets' to assist you further.

*In partnership with Museums of History NSW, Ancestry launches a new collection of NSW immigration records*  
by Jason Reeve

**<https://gsv.org.au/ancestryimmrec>**

Jason reports that Ancestry has digitised, indexed and published an important set of 19th century immigration records held in the NSW State Archives Collection. The highlights of this collection are: *Irish women who migrated to NSW as part of Earl Grey's Famine Orphan Scheme between 1848 and 1850*; *Register of applications for assisted passages to NSW, 1884–1887*; *Remittance list refunds, 1855–1868*; *Applications from persons in the colony nominating immigrants, 1857–1858, 1880, 1885–1895*; *Ships' papers, 1839–1891*.

*Aaron Graham and the prison hulks of the early 19th century*  
by Chris Heather and Carol Kellas

**<https://gsv.org.au/tnaprisonhulks>**

This blog reports on the documents recently catalogued at The National Archives (UK) record series HO 42, *Home Office Domestic correspondence*. Documents from 1792 to 1805 have been catalogued and volunteers are now working on 1806 to 1811. The series includes references to prison hulks, decommissioned ship used as prisons from 1776, when convicts could no longer be shipped to the American colonies. Aaron Graham was a police magistrate in London, and also the first Inspector of Convicts. The

treatment of convicts is mentioned, including provisions, illness, employment, early release, instructions to captains, and complaints.

*Closure of Griffith Genealogical and Historical Society*  
by Christine Gavin

**<https://gsv.org.au/rahsgriffith>**

After 42 years, the Griffith Genealogical and History Society has closed its doors, and their collection has been split up and donated to the Griffith City Library, Griffith Pioneer Park Museum and the Griffith War Memorial Museum. Other material went to the Leeton Family and Local History Society. Christine mentions research and work the Society has published over the years.

*The ladies' gallery in the temporary House of Commons*  
by Kathryn Rix

**<https://gsv.org.au/victoriancladies>**

In this blog Kathryn looks at the provision made for women to witness debates in the House of Commons chamber between 1835 and 1852. Barred from the Houses of Commons since 1778, women could only hear debates through a ventilator. After a fire in 1834, the House moved to temporary accommodation, and built a ladies' gallery. Some of the comments by Members of Parliament were: 'Members would be less likely to talk nonsense in the presence of ladies'; 'Women's presence prompted "the language of the House" to "assume a softer, a more poetical, and a more civil style" '; 'The presence of the ladies would lengthen the debate, and induce Members to enlarge on subjects, and cause considerable delay'.

*Kick off the year with a digital cleanup*  
by the Kaspersky Team

**<https://gsv.org.au/kasperskycleanup>**

This blog, from a company selling security software, provides some tips on cleaning up your digital data, such as: deleting unnecessary files, cleaning up your email and messages, closing old tabs, cancel unnecessary subscriptions, removing unused applications, turning off unnecessary notifications, deleting unused accounts, and changing unsafe passwords.

*Murder of Inspector-General John Price*  
by the Williamstown Historical Society

**<https://gsv.org.au/willhisocprice>**

Prison hulks were used for a time to house criminals in Hobson's Bay and Corio Bay. The wooden decommissioned ships used were *President*, *Success*, *Deborah*, *Lysander* and *Sacramento*. After being Commandant at Norfolk Island, John Price was the merciless administrator of these hulks and Pentridge Gaol. He was killed in 1857 by prisoners on the *Success*. ■



# Public Record Office Victoria

## News from Public Record Office Victoria

From Tara Oldfield and Kate Follington

For further information visit <https://prov.vic.gov.au>.

## Adoption records transferred into PROV custody



The other adoption records recently transferred into PROV custody were produced by the Royal Women's Hospital, Queen Victoria Hospital and Bethany Babies' Home. The records are listed from 1930 until 1987. These adoption records are listed within the PROV catalogue under the original hospital name, the agency name e.g. Queen Victoria Hospital. They include Birth Registers, Daily Adoption Discharge books, Name indexes for Adoption, and Foster Mother Record Books. They have not been name indexed.

Please note: **All these records are closed under section 9 of the Public Record Act 1973.**

To request access to these records as **direct descendants**, application **must** be through <https://www.vic.gov.au/apply-adoption-information>.

Public Record Office Victoria has recently acquired and catalogued a range of adoption records. This transfer comprises adoption records from the Court of Petty Sessions, County Court, and Supreme Court from over 100 local court locations around the state. These records were created prior to 1989. They make up the vast majority of court related adoption records produced from 1930 to 1989 outside of Melbourne.

Adoption court records are listed in the PROV catalogue under the location of the court they were processed. To find if records are in custody, search for 'adoption' and the town or city name where the court order was given, then filter results by Record Series. Although they have been name indexed by adopted name, this information is closed for privacy reasons. Additional records regarding interstate and intercountry adoption cases have also been transferred by the Supreme Court of Victoria, including correspondence and agreements between states.

### Provenance journal 2024

Have you read the 2024 issue of *Provenance*? The free online journal of Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) offers professional and non-professional researchers of PROV records a chance to publish their research and writing. Published in April 2024 Kendrea Rhodes, in 'Tracing ancestral voices' uses former ward records for her research as part of a quest to shed light on her family's history and to clear up some longstanding family mysteries. In the process, she discovers that her great-grandparents, James and Ethel, had to hide the truth about their personal circumstances to evade societal judgement and moral condemnation. Rhodes's article traces her research journey through the kinds of official records used by many family historians and provides some lessons on how to deal with inaccuracies when confronting contradictory information. <https://prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/provenance>. ■





# Royal Historical Society of Victoria

For more information, visit <https://historyvictoria.org.au>

From Cheryl Griffin, RHSV volunteer

## RHSV's Jones Collection

RHSV has a new, large and exciting collection of material known as the Jones Collection. It relates to the life of Gwenda Jones (1923–2001). Gwen and her parents lived in Barrow Street, Coburg for much of her life and this amazing collection reflects the everyday life of a family that might have seemed conventionally working class from the outside, but which teemed with life and intellectual activity. So it has much to offer those of us who are interested in documenting our forebears' lives.

Archivist Cathy Dobson is adding more entries to our *eHive* catalogue every day and everything in the catalogue is available to the researcher. You can search under 'Jones Collection', 'Gwenda Jones' or 'Gwen Jones' to see what's there. You'll soon see what a treasure trove awaits you. And to make it just a little easier, there is an explanatory PDF attached to each record so you can place the material into context.

Cathy writes this about the Collection:

The Collection includes diaries, correspondence, photographs, household account books, a portion of her personal library, her LP collection, some objects, many records relating to a lifetime of education and being an educator: from primary school exercise books to high school textbooks to files from her Masters' thesis when she was in her late 50s, to resources she used in her own teaching career. There is material from her travels, particularly from her 1953–54 year living and studying in London with the assistance of a John & Eric Smyth Scholarship in Education. There is also lots of material related to community/amateur and professional theatre and music, including tickets and programmes. It really is a very rich "eco-system" of one person's life – but a life that is emblematic of wider social and economic forces, helping us understand her whole generation.

Cathy also notes that:

There is a lot of ephemera tucked in among the collection (especially the books and diaries) and that this is retained *in situ* and documented in the



Images 1 & 2: Above, Gwenda (Gwen) Jones on the day she graduated from Melbourne University with a Bachelor of Arts, 1947, and below, a selection of Gwen's diaries dating from 1944 to 2016

cataloguing. This is because a researcher may be more interested in the traces of the businesses and organisations that touched Gwen's life, from the place she bought her books to the unions her father belonged to – so we want those to be accessible too.

Sounds tantalising, doesn't it? You can explore the collection by visiting the Drill Hall, 239 aBeckett Street (opposite Flagstaff Gardens). As the material is held in onsite storage, you should contact the RHSV before your visit to make sure the items you want to look at are available when you arrive. ■





## The Genealogical Society of Victoria Inc

Level 1, 10 Queen Street,  
Melbourne, Victoria, 3000  
Australia  
Web [www.gsv.org.au](http://www.gsv.org.au)  
Email [gsv@gsv.org.au](mailto:gsv@gsv.org.au)  
Phone 03 9662 4455  
ABN 86 947 919 608  
Reg No. A0022763D

### Why become a member of the GSV?

Tracing your family tree is one of the world's most popular pastimes. **The Genealogical Society of Victoria** is a leading Australian family history society and exists to assist members in tracing their ancestors and to promote the study of genealogy.

At our centrally located **Research & Education Centre** in Melbourne you can work with our experienced volunteer research assistants. With their guidance, you can efficiently organise and record the family information you already hold. Then you can investigate our many resources and background information to confirm the facts and fill in the gaps.

Enjoy socialising with people who have like-minded interest in the people and circumstances of the past.

### Membership Benefits include:

- **Access to research assistants** – friendly volunteers trained to help with library resources
- **Access to our comprehensive library collection** of family history records not available in commercial databases. It includes indexes, books, family histories, digital resources and unpublished material. Members may also bring a friend for one visit a year
- **Access to commercial databases** within our library: *Ancestry, Findmypast, TheGenealogist, British Newspaper Archive, My Heritage, Biographical Database of Australia*
- **Login from home** and access to parts of our collection, including the library catalogue, the Genealogical Index of Names (GIN), cemeteries database and guided research
- **Our quarterly award-winning journal, *Ancestor***
- **Monthly email newsletter**
- **Regular online blog** 'Family History matters', *Facebook* and social media groups
- **Discounted or free events:** orientation, training courses and classes, seminars, library research days and talks
- **Special Interest Groups and Discussion Circles**
- **Online Forum 'members HELP members'** for sharing research queries and experience of other members
- **Over 270 webcasts** on subjects of interest to genealogists, viewable from home
- **Quick Lookups** – free for members
- **Discounts** on extended research services and education events
- **Free annual research query** (up to 2 hours) for distant members (over 100km from Melbourne)
- **Reciprocal rights** with other major societies in Australia and New Zealand
- **Save 20% on Findmypast** annual Pro subscription

## About the GSV

### Membership Options

A\$

Joining fee 20.00

#### Annual Membership (including digital *Ancestor*)

One person 115.00  
Two, same address 160.00  
18–25 year-old Next Generation Genie 55.00

#### Optional mailed *Ancestor* (Australia/International)

25.00/35.00

#### *Ancestor* only (mailed)

Australia (no joining fee) 100.00  
International (no joining fee) 123.00

#### Member Societies

140.00

#### Day Visitor

Full day with free Library access \*30.00

\*Fee rebatable against membership fee, within 14 days.

### Library Hours

Monday Closed  
Tuesday to Friday 10.00am – 4.00pm  
Saturday **New**  
2nd Sat except long weekends when 3rd Sat  
**Booking necessary** 10.00am – 3.00pm

### Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4.00pm  
Saturday Closed

*Please check the website for updates.*

#### Patron

The Honourable Margaret Gardener, AC  
Governor of Victoria

#### Honorary Office Bearers and Councillors

President	Stephen Hawke FGSV
Vice Presidents	Peter Johnston
	Gary Buck
Secretary	Keith Oliver
Treasurer	Tony Swain
Council	Janne Bonnett
	Cathy Carman
	Claire Johnson FGSV
	Carmel McEvey
	Brian Reid
	Michael Rumpff
	Cherilyn Tillman
	Jackie van Bergen
	Rod Van Cooten

#### Staff

Library and Resources Manager	Rebecca Landy
Library and Digital Resources Manager	Meg Bate
Office Administrator	Linda Farrow



# Research Services Self Help Guide

## Free Quick Lookup

There is a free eResearch service for a library lookup or research advice taking **up to 30 minutes** for members who cannot visit the library. Replies are by email but if prints are required a cost estimate will be given. Members may send in one eResearch query at a time. Another may be submitted after receipt of results.

To submit a request by email, see the Research & Resources page online at <https://www.gsv.org.au/research-services>.

To submit a request by mail, download and complete the Postal Research Request Form located on the website, or collect one from the GSV. Submit with a SSAE. Prints are \$0.25 per A4 page – a quotation can be provided on request if an additional SSAE is provided.

## Extended Research

The Research Team at the GSV can spend time researching a family or topic of your choice.

**Per hour: Members \$30.00** / Non-members \$50.00 pre paid. Includes limited copying and postal charges.

Members residing more than 100 km from Melbourne are offered one annual session of complimentary research taking up to two hours.

## Consultations

Stuck with your research? Arrange a consultation in our library with a member of the research team.

Consultations are for one hour.

**Members \$30.00** / Non-members \$50.00

## Victorian Probate Papers post 1925

Researchers will obtain copies from Public Records Office Victoria (PROV).

**Members: \$50.00** / Non-members: \$75.00

## Other Public Records

Researchers will obtain copies from Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) where specific reference [VPRS/Unit etc] is provided.

**Per hour: Members: \$60.00** / Non-members \$85.00

## Starting Your Family History classes

The class is conducted bi-monthly and provides an introductory guide to researching your family history. Bookings should be made via the Events page on the Member's Area of the GSV Website.

## Member Research Interests Database

Members who have logged in can access this database to 'Submit your Interest', 'View Member Interests or Update your Interests' and 'View the how to webcast'. See the **Members Sharing Tab** in the Members Area at <https://www.gsv.org.au/members-area>

**Further information about our Research Services can be found on our website <https://www.gsv.org.au/research-services>. Contact [research@gsv.org.au](mailto:research@gsv.org.au) if you need specific guidance.**

## General Register Office (GRO) certificates

England and Wales birth, death and marriage certificates, births and deaths at sea and events registered with UK Consuls and armed services personnel may be purchased online: [https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/indexes\\_search.asp](https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/indexes_search.asp)

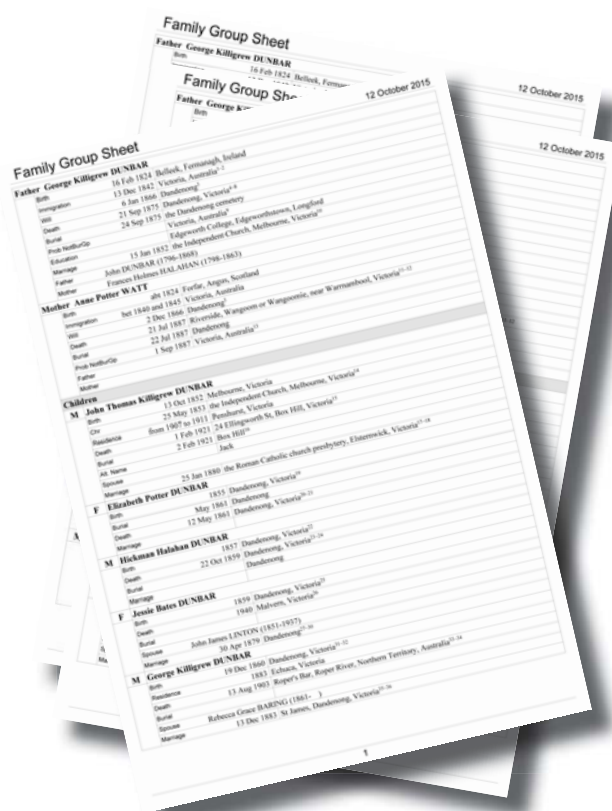
## Scottish birth, death and marriage certificates

Images of Statutory (civil) registrations may be purchased online. Church registers, census records, divorce records and wills are also available: <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk> To learn more you may like to attend the **monthly class on ScotlandsPeople**. Check the GSV website for the latest.

## England and Wales Wills and Probate

Wills and probate may be searched and ordered for people who died in or after 1858 to current times. A 'grant of representation' gives someone the legal right to deal with a deceased person's estate but not all grants of representation contain a will: <https://www.gov.uk/search-will-probate>.

*If you have any queries or need some help in using these websites ask for some assistance in the library.*



# News

## Vale: Constance Tucker

Anita Payne, who is writing a book on Constance's family history on behalf of her and her family, has advised the GSV of **Constance Tucker's** recent passing. At 103 years old, Constance is believed to have been the oldest GSV member. Constance was a Friday night volunteer in the GSV library in the 1990s, finally retiring in 2001.

**Elsie Constance Howard Tucker, née Eastwood**  
26 Nov 1921 – 8 Feb 2024

## The journal *Provenance* 2023-24

A new issue of *Provenance* for 2023-4 has been released online by the Public Record Office Victoria. Contents include: a case study by Fiona Gatt on the value of rate books and multi-scale analysis. She reveals the level of detailed information given on occupiers, the nature of the house they lived in and who their neighbours were. Peter Davies and Susan Lawrence have an article which is on pre-emptive rights of squatters for land and the role of surveyors in 1847. Squatters could apply for survey and purchase of a freehold of at least 160 acres, giving them security over their homesteads and facilities. They give an example of how it was necessary to ensure that access to permanent water was shared. Another article on tracing ancestral voices written by Kendrea Rhodes outlines a genealogical journey involving memory, emotion, history, and archival research. The article is centred on the author's grandfather, Charles William Stott/Hicks, and great grandmother, Ethel Blanche Hicks. The article demonstrates the use and value of public records.

## The English Almshouse

The lead article in the latest issue of the e-bulletin of the Family History Federation gives a full description of the roles of almshouses in providing care for the sick and poor. They were usually attached to a monastery and also gave shelter to travellers. They were called 'hospitals' derived from the Latin *hospitalis* indicating 'hospitality'. They grew to over 500 in England prior to the Reformation. Dr Judy Hill in her comprehensive article gives examples from around England of philanthropists setting up almshouses where they saw a great need. She also describes the difficulties that arose in some almshouses. Part 2 on their history after 1800 will be published later in 2024.

Source: Dr Judy Hill, 'The English Almshouse: a perspective on philanthropy: early Medieval to the eighteenth century', *Really Useful Bulletin*, No. 43 (Family History Federation). See also, Almshouse Association <https://www.almshouses.org>, and the Victoria County History series, and County Record Offices and Archives.

## British Women's Land Army

During the First and Second World Wars, while men went to the front lines, thousands of women left towns and cities across the country to move to the nation's farms. The National Archive records provide a unique insight into the 'land girl' experience as they fought in the 'Battle for Bread' [catalog ref: INF 13/140]. The UK Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries worked with the Ministry of Information to produce publicity material to encourage women to join the Land Army. Some 32 posters were made to promote this effort between 1939 and 1945, with titles like: 'Lend a hand on the land', 'Dig for victory' and 'Battler for bread'.

## Wilhelmsburg migrants from Germany and Denmark

In 2003, Margaret Rowe-Keys published *Wilhelmsburg: Hell or Homeward Bound*, which was a study of the 501 German and Danish passengers on the ship *Wilhelmsburg* that arrived at Port Phillip in 1853. She researched as many of the passengers as possible and compiled their stories, accompanied by three-generation charts. The Germans who migrated on the *Wilhelmsburg* are connected by marriage with most other major 19th century German families in Victoria. She has a large plastic tub full of files for each of these families, containing her research material, emails with descendants, charts, photos and ephemera that she would like to hand over to someone who is interested in the 19th century Germans of Victoria. Her hope is to find someone who would like to actively work with this material for their own research project and make use of what has already been gathered. If anyone is interested, please contact Margaret Rowe-Keys on 0425 816 596.

## Wendish Heritage Society e-News 72

The Wendish Heritage Society Australia Inc., located in Box Hill South in Melbourne, is starting to plan the 175th anniversary celebrations in 2025 of the arrival of the *Pribislav* and the establishment of Westgarthtown. You can get more information on this event on the website <https://www.wendishheritage.org.au> or by emailing: [wensociety1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:wensociety1@optusnet.com.au)

A Wendish tour is being proposed for Easter 2025. Expressions of interest should be sent to Betty and Colin Huf ([bettyhuf@outlook.com](mailto:bettyhuf@outlook.com) or [colinhuf@westvic.com.au](mailto:colinhuf@westvic.com.au)) by 30 June.

[Editor's note: a 'wend' is a member of the Slavonic race, now inhabiting Lusatia in the east of Saxony, but formerly extending over northern Germany. The language spoken was 'sorb'.]■



# GSV 2024 Writing Prize

supported by



The GSV and the *Ancestor* Editorial Team are pleased to announce that the **GSV 2024 Writing Prize Competition is open for entries.**

We are very pleased to announce that **Ancestry** is again generously sponsoring the competition with a **first prize of a 12-month subscription to their Worldwide Membership plus a DNA test kit.** A prize of a **6-month subscription to Ancestry Worldwide Membership** for the runner-up may also be offered at the **discretion** of the judges.

Entries should:

- be between 1,200 and 2,400 words
- have a family history/genealogy theme
- be the original work of one author
- not have been previously published in any form
- contain appropriate citations to sources.

Entries can include up to four images.

Members of the GSV and the GSV Member Societies are eligible to enter.

Full details are posted on the GSV website. See <https://www.gsv.org.au/gsv-writing-prize-2024> for entry form, conditions and how to enter

We recommend you read the *Ancestor* 'Guidelines for Authors' at <https://www.gsv.org.au/guidelines-authors>, and 'Tips for writing an article', *Ancestor*, volume 35, June 2020 pp26-27.

Entrants are reminded that articles should be targeted to the *Ancestor* readership.

Don't leave it to the last minute to submit your entry. Start writing NOW!

**Entries close 4:00 pm on Friday 30 August 2024 and articles received after this date will not be considered.**



# Portland Family History Group



▲ Image: *History House at Portland, Victoria*

The **Portland Family History Group** (PFHG) is a non-profit, incorporated group. Our aims are to:

- Facilitate the ongoing understanding of the Portland district's history and people through preserving and making accessible relevant historical material
- Raise community awareness of and access to the PFHG's collections
- Provide high-quality family history research services to the Portland district community, as well as interstate and international clients where requested
- Collaborate with the traditional owners – the Guditjmarra, Bungaditj and Jardwadjali people – of the land on which Portland is located, Glenelg Shire Council, and like organisations to promote Portland's reputation as a significant historic town
- Encourage and support the learning and development needs of people involved in the management of the PFHG's collections
- Model best practice in the collection, preservation, development and dissemination of resources for the broader community's use and enjoyment.

We have a large repository of local information, including rate books, maps, and church, school, local government and cemetery records. We also hold broader Australian and international

resources to assist with genealogical research. Part of the Glenelg Shire Council's Cultural Collection is housed on-site with us at History House.

Research assistants are available to work with you on your family history enquiries, using our local area records and expertise. Research services are charged at a rate of \$20 per hour. For research assistance contact Belinda Graham, Research Coordinator at **[portlandfamilyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:portlandfamilyhistory@gmail.com)**.

We are located at:

History House (the old Town Hall)  
75 Cliff Street, Portland

We are open every day (except Tuesday) between 10am and 4pm. We close between 12 and 1pm for lunch.

**Contact** us at:

PO Box 409 PORTLAND VIC 3305, or

**[portlandfamilyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:portlandfamilyhistory@gmail.com)**, or on

*Facebook*: Portland Family History Group Victoria

**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2567412799984454>**