

# *Footsteps*



**Port Macquarie & Districts  
Family History Society Inc.**

## SOCIETY ORGANISATION AND CONTACTS

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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### AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY ~ 2020–2021

Acquisitions/Archives.....	Clive Smith
Find a Grave.....	Carol Smallman
Footsteps Magazine.....	Margaret Blight
General Meetings Roster.....	Dawn Stephens
InfoEmail.....	Diane Gillespie/Jennifer Mullin
Journals.....	Alastair Moss/Greg Hearne
Library Assistant.....	Pauline Hincksman
Library Roster.....	Sue Brindley
Membership/Minutes.....	Jennifer Mullin
Museum Heritage Group.....	Diane Gillespie
NSW & ACT Association – Delegate.....	Clive Smith
Public Officer.....	Clive Smith
Publicity/Facebook.....	Bev Mulcahy/Pauline Every
Research Co-Ordinator .....	Trysha Hanly
Ryerson Index Transcribers.....	Kay and Terry Browne
Social Coordinator.....	Margaret Blight
Website .....	Sue Brindley
Welfare.....	Yvonne Toomey

### SUPPORT GROUPS

Convict Studies Group.....	Clive Smith
DNA Support Group.....	Ken Hunt/Pauline Every
Family Search.....	Robyn Denley/Pauline Every
Research Support Group.....	Clive Smith
Writers' Group.....	Diane Gillespie

### CURRENT PROJECT COORDINATOR

Port Macquarie Rate Books.....Rex Toomey

*Life Members: Terry Browne, Kay Browne, Frank Maskill*

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**Cover Photo:** *The Lady Nelson, Prince Regent and Mermaid – the ‘First Fleet’ to arrive in Port Macquarie on 17 April 1821.*

*Photo of the original painting by Richard **Grimmond**, Member of the Port Macquarie and Districts Family History Society.*

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### NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to Bob **Brown** from Tuncurry and Pauline **Gater** and Rhonda **Madden** from Port Macquarie. We hope you enjoy your association with our Society and that you will benefit from the resources, meetings, and workshops available.

The renewal notice for Membership to our Society is included in this edition of Footsteps. Fees for 2021-2022 are due by 30 June 2021 and can be paid at the May or June General Meetings or by Cheque or Direct Deposit.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on 14 August 2021. Some of our current Management Committee members will be retiring, so we hope a few of you will consider joining the remaining enthusiastic and competent team members to ensure the continuation and growth of this valuable community resource.



## PRESIDENT'S TWO CENTS WORTH

*Diane Gillespie*

2021 marks the Bicentenary of European Settlement in Port Macquarie. We recall the arrival of a small fleet of three ships that carried 'volunteer' convicts to establish a penal station and the soldiers of the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment who were sent to guard them.

These volunteers were assigned to carve out a new settlement from virgin bush, on the shores of the Hastings River. They toiled under the promise of an early Ticket of Leave for good behaviour. Captain Francis **Allman** was appointed the first Commandant, under directions from Governor Lachlan **Macquarie**. The Port, named after the Governor, was designated to become a site of secondary punishment for recalcitrant convicts from other settled areas within the colony.

The newcomers encountered the local population of the Birpai nation who had occupied these lands for thousands of years prior to the arrival of the Europeans and there were many encounters and skirmishes between the civilisations from this time onwards.

Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society commemorated the Bicentenary by hosting a collaborative workshop with well-known academic speakers from the University of New England (UNE) namely Dr Hamish **Maxwell-Stewart** and Dr David **Roberts**. Dr Perry **McIntyre**, Dr John **Heath** and Tamsin **O'Connor** completed the line-up of speakers who travelled to Port Macquarie.

Renowned historical author, Meg **Keneally**, joined the workshop via a Zoom video link. She was able to present an author's point of view on how historical novelists can use the research that academics and family historians undertake to compose an interesting story based on true facts.



*Left to Right: Dr Perry McIntyre, Dr John Heath, Diane Gillespie, Tamsin O'Connor, Dr Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, Dr David Roberts, Jennifer Mullin. Meg Keneally is in the background via Zoom Video.*

The workshop has launched a collaborative project that will be available to members of the public. We will be able to add our own data to the project acknowledging the early pioneers, whether they be convict or free. It is hoped this project will grow and develop as a Legacy for coming generations.

It was a phenomenally successful day with many interested participants, both in the hall and online via Zoom, and I would like to thank everyone for their support and participation. Workshops like this can only proceed with members' input. A special 'thank you' to Tamsin **O'Connor** and Jennifer **Mullin** who took the lead and enabled the academics to join the active members of the Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society in launching this database.

Recently we have been fortunate to hear from Jeff **Madsen** who spoke to us on land records and how to glean information from Regional Archives to enhance family history discoveries. In May we look forward to hosting Christine **Woodlands** who will speak about her ancestor, Jane Feeney and the journey to find her. Christine is an enthusiastic family historian who has also developed a passion for DNA and how it can be used to break down 'brick walls'.

The pandemic continues to hamper our efforts to return to some degree of normality and we should be grateful that we live in Australia, where the effects of this pandemic have been minor, in comparison with many other countries. However, there are benefits to staying at home and staying safe. We are still able to access Ancestry and FindMyPast for free till June 30 through our local library by using our Library Card.

Our Support Groups have returned to using the Library Meeting Room, but the DNA group will meet via Zoom till further notice. I hope to see you at one of our meetings soon and thank you for your support.

### FROM THE EDITOR

*Margaret **Blight***

In this edition of Footsteps, I hope you will enjoy reading about the activities and events in which some of our members or their families have been involved. I won't give away any hints here, as I'm sure you will find their stories fascinating.

By now, you will all be aware that the PMDFHS is holding the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies Annual Conference in Port Macquarie in September and we are proposing to compile a **Special Conference Edition Journal** with articles related to our theme "**With Conviction ... beyond reasonable doubt.**" We are proposing (with Members' permission) to include some of the articles that have been used in past Footsteps, but we are also seeking new articles to include, in what will be a 'virtual' or 'on-line' production available to all those registered for the Conference.

Have you discovered that your family had any **Secrets or Lies**? Were they **Factual** or just **Fiction**? Perhaps the information you have found, is much different from the family story? Or maybe it is not reliable evidence? But possibly, despite all your 'digging', it has not been possible to prove or disprove the connections or information you have discovered? On the other hand, has DNA helped you to unravel relationships and find 'lost' family members?

If you have a story that you would like to share in our **Conference Journal**, please forward it to [editor@pmdfhs.org.au](mailto:editor@pmdfhs.org.au) preferably by **1 August 2021**.

Articles are also sought for the **August 2021 Footsteps**, relating to the theme of "**Stories my mother, father, or grandparents told me**". It would be appreciated if these articles could reach me by **Saturday 17 July 2021**.

## THE VOLUNTEER

*Composed by Rex Toomey*

The pain that was within his heart was of his own accord,  
The crime for which his guilt was found, had sent him far abroad.  
Though prison chains were hard to bear – the price he had to pay,  
Was nothing like the freedom lost, which filled his mind each day.

Then all at once an offer came to join a convict band,  
And volunteer to start a town and lose the convict brand.  
With Port Macquarie as its name and eighty leagues up north,  
Aboard three ships, one hundred men, intrepidly set forth.

From Sydney Town his trip was meant to last for just three days,  
But soon a storm of epic size, with lightning bolts ablaze,  
Put fear of doom within his soul, and terror in his eyes,  
And thunder loud and raging seas, would drown out all his cries.

And so for nearly thirty days, the fleet made snail-like pace,  
The volunteer was fearful that he'd never reach that place,  
Yet finally the ships arrived and headed 'cross the bar',  
And came to grief unfortunately, so close, and yet so far!

At last, the ships put anchors down, in need of some repair,  
Inside the Hastings River safe, in weather now quite fair.  
The volunteer, he went to work, no time for celebration,  
To build this town in virgin bush, for convict isolation.

In time the volunteer was done, he had fulfilled his part,  
His freedom came as promised - to the joy within his heart.  
And now 'tis been two hundred years, the town has changed and grown,  
But would it still remind him of the place that he had known?



## Looking Forward – Looking Back

The Port Macquarie-Hastings region reached its Bicentenary this year and we remember the stories that helped make the Port Macquarie-Hastings region what it was, what it is, and what it will be in the future. We acknowledge that the area around the Hastings River has been home to the Birpai people for tens of thousands of years and the European story here began just 200 years ago.



### Looking Forward

We are looking forward to hosting the NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies 2021 Virtual Conference in September this year, and in line with the Bicentenary, our theme is:

#### **“With Conviction ... beyond reasonable doubt”**

remembering that many of the first European visitors were convicts sent to the newly established penal settlement; and that one of our goals is to research our family history with conviction, with confidence, and as accurately as possible (sometimes a challenge!).



### Looking Back

Having decided on Port Macquarie as a place for a new penal settlement, in early March 1821 Governor Macquarie asked the Masters of the vessels, *Lady Nelson*, *Mermaid* and *Prince Regent* to stand by to transport the troops and convicts. On the 14 March, Major **Druitt**, the Chief Engineer in Sydney, was asked to select from the best-behaved convicts in the Sydney gangs, “*three rough carpenters (one of whom must be a shingler), two sawyers, one blacksmith, one taylor [tailor], two shoemakers and 50 healthy labourers*”.

The Governor also announced: -

*“In the case of good steady conduct, sobriety and industry, and carrying on the buildings and other public works so essentially necessary at the first establishment of a new settlement with cheerfulness and expedition, they shall receive either Tickets of Leave, or Conditional Pardons, at the expiration of 18 months after their landing at Port Macquarie.”*

The expedition set sail on 21 March 1821 for the three or four day voyage north with the troops, prisoners, a bull, two cows and supplies. However, the fleet had a terrible trip to Port Macquarie, and this is detailed in Richard **Grimmond**'s story “Port Macquarie's Bicentenary” in this edition of Footsteps.

**Registration is now open for Individuals and Societies to attend the  
NSW & ACT Association of Family History Societies  
Virtual Conference**

**On Saturday 11 September 2021  
Port Macquarie**

Email: [conference2021@gmail.com](mailto:conference2021@gmail.com)

Website: <https://www.conference2021.wixsite.com/pmdfhs>

## PORT MACQUARIE'S BICENTENARY

*Richard Grimmond*

On 17 April 2021 Port Macquarie celebrated its Bicentenary, but exactly what were we celebrating? Actually, we were celebrating one disaster after another. We know from records that our First Fleet took 28 days to sail from Sydney with 14 days sheltering at Port Stephens and 11 days at Trial Bay due to violent storms and bad weather.

On 17 April the decision was made to leave Trial Bay, and attempt to enter the Hastings River.



*The Lady Nelson painted by an unknown artist based on a print 'View of the Lady Nelson in the Thames...reproduced in The Narrative of a Voyage od Discovery, performed in His Majesty's Vessel the Lady Nelson...to New South Wales' by James Grant, published in London in 1803. State Library of NSW Collection Item*

It was known that the first ship to enter, the *Lady Nelson* had retractable keels and it is most likely she raised her keels to cross the bar. She entered safely.

The next ship that attempted an entry was the *Prince Regent*. This was a sixty-ton schooner and carried Captain Francis **Allman** and his family. Already the **Allman** family had lost their luggage overboard in the storms because their cabin was so small that their luggage had to be tied on deck. (Incidentally, Captain **Allman**'s insurance claim was finally rejected by Lord **Glenelg**, 14 years later.)

Even though John **Oxley** had warned the whole fleet of a sunken rock at the southern entrance (today covered by the south breakwall), the *Prince Regent* managed to get stuck on top of it and remained there for a long time being thrashed about. Considerable damage was done but fortunately a freak high wave lifted her free and she entered after 7.30 pm, also on 17 April.

But the *Mermaid* tacked back and forth waiting for a break in the weather until 1pm on the 18 April. However, her keel dug into the sand on the bar and there she remained until high tide at 8 pm. The question should be asked, "*Why did she enter at any time other than high tide? The Captain would have had charts*". She also entered severely damaged.

Having taken 28 days to reach Port, all the flour and most of the ship's biscuits were used, so the settlement was noticeably short of food. With two ships damaged, it was decided to send the *Lady Nelson* to Sydney for food and repairs for the other ships. However, the north-easterly wind prevented her from leaving port until 1 May.

Even though the winds were still gusty, it was decided to leave the harbour as the north-easter had eased a little. John **Oxley** had advised that they use warping buoys and pull the ships in and out of the port using the capstan if winds were contrary. Besides, they had three longboats that they could have used to tow the ship out of the port on the outgoing tide, but they went

out under sail, a wrong decision. A gusty wind took the *Lady Nelson* to the southern side of the entrance and on to the same rock that had held the *Prince Regent* on entry. This time she was stuck fast, and considerable damage was done. Even though the whale boat was swamped they managed to get everyone ashore without loss of life. However, the *Lady Nelson* was washed over the rocks and was eventually washed ashore on today's Town Beach.

The settlement was in a desperate situation with all three ships unable to go for help so Richard **Neave**, the Mate from the *Mermaid* and seven volunteers rowed a longboat all the way to Sydney for help.

So, as we celebrate 200 years since the arrival of Port Macquarie's First Fleet in 1821, spare a thought for the disastrous beginning that occurred at that time.

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## A SCHOOL BOY'S MEMORIES OF WARTIME IN TAREE

*Alastair Moss*

Having spent my school years in Taree during the Second World War, I was old enough to be aware of, and interested in, the ramifications of the war years. Rationing of most items was an everyday experience and many cars had huge plastic gas tanks on the roof as petrol was scarce and many cars were adapted to run on gas. Car headlights were covered with the except for a narrow slit, and all house windows had to be covered so as to prevent lights being visible from the outside. Friends and relatives would disappear for a while and arrive home in uniform. Many homes had trenches in their back yards and Zig Zag trenches were dug in our school playground. At school we were given instructions on how to act in the case of air raids, gas attacks etc.

One lesson I remember, was being told that a burning incendiary bomb should only be scooped up by using a wooden shovel as it would burn straight through a metal shovel. We were, of course, very sceptical of this and were convinced the instructor had made a mistake until he gave us a practical and effective demonstration. As the newspapers were full of the progress of the war and very little else, I remember asking my father if there would still be newspapers after the war. When he answered "yes", I asked "*What would they find to talk about?*"

Several days after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour the Australian Government, through the Air Board, established a Defence Plan to monitor and plot the movement of all aircraft in Australia as a precaution against expected attacks by the enemy. This scheme was called the ***Volunteer Air Observer Corps (VAOC)*** and involved recruiting a large volunteer force of all ages and from all sections of the community, to report on the movement of every aeroplane in the area.

The organisation of the VAOC followed closely that of the **Royal Observer Corps** in England, which was largely responsible during the Battle of Britain, for reporting to Fighter Command, the presence of hostile aircraft over England.

Being a member of the Taree Boy Scout Troop, I, along with my 11-year-old mates, was strongly encouraged to volunteer for service in the VAOC, which we did, as we were all mad about aeroplanes. Several of our schoolteachers were also active in encouraging students to volunteer, especially as many people, both men and women, who would have been ideal aircraft spotters, were away on active service.

The Taree branch of the VAOC was located on the roof of the Fotheringham's Hotel on the corner of Victoria and Pulteney Streets Taree. Fog's Hotel, as it was known, has a flat roof. There was a small adjacent room equipped with a desk, two chairs, a telephone and a pair of binoculars. On the wall were several charts showing the silhouettes of current aeroplanes to assist us to identify the type of plane. We became very proficient at being able to recognise a Zero, a Betty or any other Japanese plane of the time. A wooden tower, similar to those used by beach life savers, had been erected on the flat roof.

Our task was to wait for the sound of an approaching plane then to climb the tower to enable us to have a better view of the aircraft. After the plane had left our sector, we phoned the RAAF Plotting room situated on the corner of Victoria and Commerce Streets, Taree. Our report to the Plotting room had to include the direction the plane had entered our sector, its approximate height, the direction it left our sector and the type of plane. The next Observation Post would then sight the plane as it left our sector and entered theirs. In this way it was possible for the authorities to keep track of all planes and to give early warning if there were any intruders.

The observation post was manned around the clock to ensure there were no gaps in the information. I did not have any excitement during my shifts, although on one occasion a Mustang fighter came into our sector but instead of flying straight through, it circled the town several times, each time at a lower altitude. Eventually it disappeared, so I phoned the RAAF Plotting Room and suggested the plane had crashed. It was found to have crash landed on the other side of the Taree Showground. When the authorities etc. arrived on the scene the American pilot was sitting on the wing waiting for assistance. He had had engine trouble and had circled the town looking for a suitable landing spot. The area he chose looked like solid ground, but the green grass was actually a semi swamp, and he was well and truly bogged.

On another occasion, one of my colleagues reported a very high-flying plane he could not identify, especially as it had an unfamiliar engine sound. It was ultimately identified as a Japanese reconnaissance plane.

The VAOC proved to be especially important, not only to warn about possible enemy aircraft but also to provide assistance to any lost pilots and enable them to get back on correct course. It was also a means by which the authorities could locate planes that were missing or had not reached the next sector.

It is on record that for one 20-month period, 1600 aircraft had been assisted by the VAOC in all parts of Australia. VAOC Observation Posts were spread throughout the country at 10 to 15 miles apart - the Taree Observation Post was a highly active one with a high number of sightings each week.



*Certificate presented to Alastair Moss by the RAAF on 20 September 1945*

The Volunteer Air Observer Corps was disbanded in September 1945 as it was no longer required.

Another interesting experience was one few people seem to remember and that was the presence of a Prisoner of War (POW) depot in Taree.

My parents owned a milk bar and fruit shop in Manning Street, Taree, about where the Reject shop is now located. The Government took over the shop next door and turned it into an Italian POW Depot.

There were three different types of Prisoner of War establishments in Australia. These were the **POW Internment Camps** such as at Cowra, Hay, Liverpool & Yanco; the **POW Control Hostels** such as those at Ingleburn and Bathurst; and the **Control Centres without guards**, such as those in Lismore, Gunnedah and Taree.

The Taree Centre was manned by a small team of soldiers who lived on site. If my memory serves me correctly the officer in charge was Lieutenant Walker, the interpreter was Sergeant Bell and there was a Corporal named Ramsden who came from Bangalow NSW. There were also several Privates.

Prisoners were generally transported from Sydney by train, arriving around 4 am on the North Coast Mail. They were collected by the Taree soldiers and brought to the Depot and ushered out to the back of the Depot which happened to be under my bedroom window, as we lived behind our shop. I would often wake to the sound of Italian singing and sometime complaints about being away from home. Later in the morning the soldiers would take the POWs out to various farms where there were to live and work filling the labour shortage caused by able bodied farm workers being away on active service. The soldiers visited the farms frequently to ensure there was no trouble. If there was a problem that could not be readily fixed, the POW would be moved to a different farm and some would have medical problems which would require attention in other locations.

One POW was an excellent chef, so on the days the soldiers would be scheduled to visit, the soldiers would visit the POW Centre first, leaving some fish they had caught or bought, then they would visit another farm. By the time of their return the chef would have prepared an excellent dinner. Generally, the POWs fitted in very well and made lifelong friends within the farming community. Many prisoners became so enchanted with their experience that after the war they returned to Australia as permanent citizens.

Naturally, there was opposition to the scheme. Some people complained that while our soldiers were being ill-treated overseas, the Italian POWs in Australia were living on farms with comfortable accommodation and were well fed and cared for. However, they partially solved

the manpower shortage and enabled our farms to continue producing food and milk for the local community.

On a personal note. I found the POWs to be interesting people. War time propaganda paints all opponents as being evil and vile people. This was the main memory of my childhood despite my parents' efforts to instill in me a more benevolent attitude towards all people and so I was pleasantly surprised to meet the POWs and find that many of them were decent and intelligent people with whom I could, and did, have some good discussions.

Life in Taree during the war was different to prewar days, there were many privations and friends lost loved ones in the conflict. The sight of the local telegram boy on his bicycle was dreaded as it was likely he was on his way to deliver a telegram containing sad news.

Life during those wartime years was vastly different but to school age boys, it was very exciting.

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## TROUBLE AT NARGONG

*Lyndall Nairn*

In January 1960, when my parents bought a farm called "Ridgelands" at Nargong in the Central West of NSW, they did not realise that the woolshed was connected to a significant event in Australian history. Nevertheless, they were glad that the property included a woolshed because twice a year, it would play an essential role in the shearing and crutching of the sheep, one of the main sources of the farm's income.

The woolshed was located close to the Nargong railway siding, so it was convenient for loading the wool bales onto the train. In addition to the sheep yards, the woolshed structure included a shed for farm equipment along one side and a milking bail attached to the back wall. After we had been living at "Ridgelands" for several months, our neighbours told us the story of what had occurred in our woolshed during the Second World War.

### **3:15 pm, Saturday, 5 August 1944:**

As Merv **Turner**, the owner of "Ridgelands", came into the kitchen for afternoon tea, he heard the long-long-short phone ring that indicated the call on the party line was for his household, so he walked into the dining room to answer it.

*"Something's up,"* said his wife, Mary. *"Everyone on the line has been making calls this afternoon!"*

The caller was doing most of the talking, but as she overheard her husband's end of the conversation, Mary became alarmed. Merv was asking questions like, *"Are they coming in this direction?"* and *"Are they armed?"* and *"Should I join a search party?"*

Merv came back into the kitchen and explained that the party line operator had been asked by the police to notify everyone that the Japanese prisoners in the Cowra POW camp had staged a mass break-out the night before. Many had been killed as they tried to climb the fence, but several hundred had escaped.

Mary panicked, *“Good grief! Are we going to be murdered in our beds?”*

Her husband tried to calm her down by saying that he doubted that the escaped prisoners would get as far as Nargong, which was more than twenty miles from Cowra and four miles off the highway. *“Don’t worry,”* said Merv. *“The camp guards, the soldiers from the Cowra Recruit Training Centre, and the police from Cowra and Woodstock are all out looking for them. We don’t need to do anything except keep a loaded rifle handy.”*

Mary still felt rattled when her husband returned to his outdoor jobs, so she rang her neighbours to find out if they knew any more details. They didn’t, but Mary was a little reassured to know that they were all in the same situation.

### **Three days later at 5:15 am, Tuesday, 8 August 1944:**

Merv went through his usual early morning routine, all the time wishing it was not so dark and cold outside. He got dressed in his warmest clothes, made himself a cup of tea, grabbed two milk buckets, and accompanied by his favourite dog, traipsed through the frost-covered home paddock to take the milking cow to the bail behind the woolshed.

As they approached the woolshed, Merv’s dog pricked her ears and growled softly, her hackles rising. *“Easy, girl!”* Merv tried to calm her because if there was some danger, it would be better if she did not start barking. *“Stay!”* he ordered. Merv left the dog with the cow, and as he stepped quietly into the bail, Merv could hear gentle snoring coming from the woolshed. He peered through a crack in the wall and saw several Japanese men, wearing the burgundy uniforms of the Cowra POWs, asleep on the woolshed floor. They had wrapped themselves in the leftover wool clippings from the storage bins to keep warm. As quietly as possible, Merv crept out of the bail and ran to the house. His dog, sensing the excitement, raced ahead of Merv and could not suppress a few barks.



*The woolshed at “Ridgelands”, Nargong,  
photo taken October 2009 by David Tien*

Merv pushed open the kitchen door and gasped to his startled wife who was preparing breakfast, *“There are Japs in the woolshed! We have to call the police!”*

The phone operator answered in a sleepy voice, but as soon as she heard the word “*Japs*”, she started calling the police and the Army authorities in Cowra. About an hour later, they arrived in several cars and trucks. The officer in charge asked Merv if the escapees were still in the woolshed. He thought they were, so the soldiers and police devised a plan to surround the woolshed and capture them, hopefully without injuring anyone. Mary was relieved to know that Merv would not take a key role in this dangerous operation.

The men did not want to alert the escapees, so they left their vehicles at the house and walked to the woolshed. They broke into three smaller groups, one at each door, where they took the safety catches off their weapons. The leading officer flung open the main door, yelling, “*Nobody move!*” and at the same moment, other soldiers and police barged into the woolshed through the side doors, all brandishing their guns. The five escaped prisoners, who were still sleeping were momentarily confused, but then they moved into squatting positions and put their hands on their heads in a gesture of surrender.

They offered no resistance, not even when the police searched them for weapons, removed their knives and bound their wrists. They did not put up any fight or protest but obeyed the soldiers’ gestures, moved submissively out of the woolshed, and stumbled toward the house where the trucks were parked.

As Merv watched the small convoy of vehicles drive towards his front gate, he became aware that the cow he had left near the woolshed and her calf locked in the sheep yards were both bellowing loudly. “*Struth!*” he said. “*I forgot about the cow. Her udder will be ready to burst!*” “*I’ll have a cup of tea ready for you when you get back,*” Mary called as he strode back towards the woolshed.

Half an hour later, Merv came into the kitchen and deposited the two milk buckets with steam still rising from the frothy cream surface. Mary handed him a cup of tea and sat down at the kitchen table. “*What do you think those Japs were hoping to achieve?*” she asked. “*I doubt that they could have gotten much further than Nargong because they didn’t have any money or food, and they can’t speak English. Besides, everybody would recognise them as Japanese POWs. Did they really think that they could make it to the coast and find a ship that would take them back to Japan?*”

“*I don’t know,*” Merv said. “*It doesn’t seem realistic, but what I don’t understand is the large-scale break-out. If I were a POW, of course I would think about escaping, but I would do it with just one or two others so that we wouldn’t be noticed. The soldiers said that more than a thousand of them attempted to climb over the walls on Friday night. Why did they do it like that? And then, when they were captured, why didn’t they put up any fight?*”

“*Yeah, the Japs are meant to be such fierce fighters, but we didn’t see any evidence of that. That’s very strange. Anyway, the main thing is that they were caught, and we were not hurt.*”

The army officers at the Cowra camp were just as puzzled as the **Turners**. When questioned, these escaped prisoners said that they had decided to walk east along the railway line because although they had no maps, they knew that the trains went to Sydney, which was on the coast. They had walked mainly at night and hidden during the day, but by the time they reached

Nargong late at night on Monday, 7 August, they were tired, cold and hungry, so they decided to rest in the woolshed, which was close to the railway line. However, they were reluctant to discuss a key event that they had witnessed a few days earlier.

These particular prisoners, who had left Cowra as a group of seven, had been rattled on Sunday morning, 6 August, when two of their number had decided to commit suicide on the train tracks. When the train from Blayney to Cowra rounded a curve at 9:45 am, the driver did not have time to stop before running over two Japanese who were kneeling with their necks on the line. They were decapitated immediately. The other five, who were hiding among some nearby trees, heard the collision and the screeching of the train brakes as the driver tried to stop. The remaining five escapees quickly retreated from the scene and hid in a haystack for the rest of the day. That night with heavy hearts, they continued walking east along the railway line, but they understood that their re-capture was inevitable.

Over the next few weeks with the help of an interpreter, one or two Japanese prisoners explained why they had staged this mass break-out, so the Australians gradually realized that Japanese cultural attitudes regarding prisoners of war were very different from their own. It seems as if their motivation in trying to escape was to overcome the shame of having been captured in battle in the first place. The Japanese soldiers who fought in the Second World War believed that all the glory belonged to the victors, so the only outcome for the losers would be dishonour and death. The Japanese prisoners knew that they would be killed in large numbers if they attempted a break-out, so they had planned it as a suicide mission with at least fifteen of them committing suicide by hanging or hari-kari in the preceding hours to set an example for the others. In this way, they were trying to avoid the unforgivable shame of having to return home to Japan as prisoners of war.

\*\*\*\*\*

When I was a child living at “Ridgelands” in the early 1960s, I always liked being in the woolshed, particularly during shearing time. The shearers were hardworking and friendly, and the smell of lanolin, combined with human sweat, grass and dust, was never threatening. That is why I found the story of the Japanese prisoners of war being captured in our woolshed so incongruous. I could never fully reconcile the dangers of war with this otherwise peaceful place.

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### **Image Credit**

Photo taken October 2009, of the woolshed at “Ridgelands”, close to the former Nargong railway siding, from the private collection of David Tien.

## A YOUNG GIRL'S MEMORY

*Pam Moodie*

I was on the News once. Just fleetingly, one person amongst a crowd. It was a good news story, the kind which we seem to get less and less of these days. The date was Sunday, 31 January 1965. I was 8 years old. At the time, I was too young to realise the significance of the event, and my thrill came not so much from being in attendance, but rather from the fact that I later glimpsed myself on the television – a little girl, dressed in blue, skipping across the grass.

I remember it was a long drive from our home in Cronulla, Sydney, going somewhere we had never been before. I remember when we arrived, there were lots of people everywhere, all dressed up in their Sunday best. Every person wore a ribbon. My parents, siblings, and I each had a royal blue ribbon pinned to our chests, and I also had one tied in my hair. Other people had royal blue ribbons as well, and there were many other colours. Such a large crowd of people all adorned with coloured ribbons! I was fascinated.

We stood outside a tiny church and listened to a service going on inside. There hadn't been room enough indoors for us. We weren't the only ones – there were lots of people milling around outside, listening to the voices booming over the loudspeaker. When the church service was over, the crowd expanded and there was lots of chatting and handshaking amongst the adults. This was a bit dull for me, but I had been warned to stay close by, so I tried to entertain myself by counting the number of people wearing the same colour ribbon as me. This became too difficult, as there were quite a few, and they weren't standing still, making it harder for me to remember who I had counted! Thank goodness afternoon teatime arrived. We had a drink and no doubt some cake, and then it was time for the long drive home again. What a long way to go for a church service. I seem to recall we did go into the church, even though we hadn't been able to for the service. What a lot of fuss and so many unfamiliar people.

The event had been a family reunion. The venue was St Thomas' Church of England, at Sackville, on the Hawkesbury River, north of Windsor. All the attendees at the reunion were descendants of Stephen **Tuckerman**, and we were there at the invitation of his great grandson, Rodney **Tuckerman**, who had arranged the event to coincide with a visit to Australia of Mr Bayard **Tuckerman**, of Boston, USA. Each different coloured ribbon represented a different branch of the family.

Stephen **Tuckerman** was our first Tuckerman ancestor to be born in Australia. He was born on 15 December 1802, to Elizabeth **Crouch** and Stephen **Tuckerman**. He was my 3x great grandfather. His father, Stephen, was the master/owner of the ship *Caroline* and was involved in commerce and shipping. He lived in New Bedford, USA and had a wife there. He arrived in Port Jackson in 1801 with a cargo of rum. Negotiations for the disposal of the rum dragged on and, in the meantime, he met and spent time with Elizabeth **Crouch**, who became his common law wife. He may or may not have known that she was pregnant when he departed on his return trip to New Bedford, but he apparently left some money for her upkeep.

On his return journey, Stephen died when his ship was wrecked off the coast of Chile, in 1802.

Stephen **Tuckerman** (junior) was granted land at Portland Head in 1833 and purchased more in the following years. In 1823 he married Sarah **Beasley**, the daughter of Charles and Mary **Beasley**, both convicts. They lived at Sackville Reach where Stephen became one of the first magistrates of the Hawkesbury district. In St Thomas' Church of England, Sackville, where our reunion was held, there is a stained-glass memorial to Stephen **Tuckerman**.



Rodney **Tuckerman**, who organised the reunion, was the son of my great-great uncle. At the time of the reunion, in 1965, Bayard **Tuckerman**, who was in his 70s, was the head of the family. I am in the process of investigating on what branch of the family tree he sits. In the past few years, I have managed to collect quite a bit of information on the **Tuckerman** family. I always knew that day we went with a huge crowd to visit a tiny church was special, and I'm glad I have memories of it, even though they are rather blurry, and from a child's perspective. Perhaps one day I will return to St Thomas' at Sackville and have an opportunity to see that Memorial.

## FOOTSTEPS CONTRIBUTIONS



The next edition of Footsteps will be published in August 2021 and members are invited to submit stories and articles to the editor@pmdfhs.org.au by **Saturday 17 July so they can be included in the August issue.**

**Next time perhaps you can tell us story that you were told by your mother, father or grandparents about an event or incident that they remembered.**

This topic is however, only a 'suggestion' as other stories on any topics relating to your research or your family members, or to helpful articles or web sites, are gratefully received. Funny snippets and interesting newspaper articles are also most welcome.

Articles should be limited to between 1500–1550 words with up to four photos, or up to 1800 words without photos. It is always important when researching to cite your references and sources. When inserting the references or sources in your articles, it is requested that you use numbers i.e. 1,2,3, etc. (not Roman Numerals) and that you place them as 'endnotes' not 'footnotes.'

Stories that are submitted for publication in Footsteps should generally be the work of the author or the contributor submitting the story. If the writing is not the work of the author, please seek permission from the original author where possible, and indicate the source of the work when the article is submitted.

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## AMOS ZAIDE WALTERS AND THE 'GOLDEN GYPSY'.

*Beryl Walters*

'Everything old is new again'. Pardon? News goes 'viral'! Please explain!

I attended the Family History seminar on Trove at Port Macquarie Library in April last year, and after hearing Rex **Toomey** and Amanda **Short** present the advantages and usefulness of Trove records when researching our Family Histories, I couldn't wait to log in later that day. Where can Trove lead you? Up the garden path I'll be bound, and before you know it you will be gasping with disbelief at what is revealed.

I decided to research Digitised Newspapers and sought my husband John's grandfather, Amos Zaide **Walters**, known as Zaide, born 24 July 1881 at Ulmarra NSW, the fifth child to Moses **Walters** and Isabella Jane **Smith**. His parents had 15 children – 10 boys and 5 girls. Zaide married Elizabeth **Goodenough** on 8 January 1909 and they had 2 children, Allan Burnard **Walters** born 18 December 1909, and Minnie **Thompson** (nee **Walters**) born 11 July 1914. Allan married Laurie Gertrude **Lever** on 28 December 1932 at Nana Glen and they had four children, with John the oldest, and we married on 9 January 1965. We have two children and of our three grandchildren we have a grandson Zaide, so all the more reason why I wanted to 'Trove' Amos Zaide **Walters**, as I knew from family anecdotes that his life had been colourful.

What I found amazed John and me and as we scrolled through entry after entry, so began a fascinating journey of discovery for John, as he was largely unaware of the full import of Zaide's gold digging activities. Talk about news going viral – we hadn't heard the half of it! So here begins the saga of the 'Golden Gypsy' starring Zaide and a so-called Fortune Teller.

It appears that Zaide attended Coffs Harbour Show in 1931 where a Lady Fortune Teller (or 'Phrenologist' in one report, surely a misnomer!) gave him a reading, reported as follows in the *Coffs Harbour Advocate* on 15 May 1931:

### **“STRUCK IT RICH: GOLD FIND FORETOLD.**

*A Remarkable Story. Mr Zaide Walters and his mate Mr W Packer struck it very rich in their mining operations at Nana Glen on Tues. last, a foot or two from the surface, and it is improving as it goes down. Men interested in mining who saw it, say that gold can be seen shining like metal match-heads in the reef”.*

The *Wingham Chronicle and Manning River Observer* on 29 May 1931 took up the story:

**“AMAZING STORY** ‘Look for a mineral’ a fortune teller at the Nana Glen Show told Zaide **Walters**, a farmer. **Walters**, knowing little about prospecting, was sceptical, but later his daughter said the woman told her to urge her father to look for a mineral. **Walters** went again and asked the fortune teller which mineral he should seek. “You will find gold a mile and a half from your farm, on Coldwater Creek” she said. “One strike will be rich, but one, a little distance away, will be richer. Your mate will be with you, but he will not find the reef”.

**Walters** and a mate, Mr **Packer**, went prospecting on Coldwater Creek and **Walters**, taking his turn with the pick, struck a reef richly studded with gold. A few days later a second and richer reef was found nearby.



**Walters** again sought the fortune teller at the Grafton Show and she told him not to sell until he got down at least 14 feet (4 metres). *“Only for her I would never have thought of looking for gold,”* Mr **Walters** told a representative of the *Coffs Advocate* who interviewed him recently at Nana Glen.

At the interview, the fortune teller told him that even though he was doing alright at farming and making a comfortable living, he would not become wealthy at that occupation. Mining would treat him much better. *“Search for a mineral”*, she said. *“What mineral?”* he asked, *“Gold”* she replied.

The news went viral - well it was about gold after all - and during May, June and July it hit the headlines of newspapers nation-wide, a reminder of the importance of newspapers in communities. That was how people obtained most of their news, but now we have a very different media world. Often it was placed on Page One, and sometimes repeated later, on a page of lesser importance – perhaps just as a 'filler' item.

*“Seek Gold” Fortune Teller's Word; “Struck it Rich Gold Find Foretold”; “Gold at Nana Glen”: “Amazing Story Man discovers Gold after Interview with Fortune Teller”; “Seek Gold Quoth the Fortune Teller”; “Farmer’s Good Fortune”; “She Justified Her Title Fortune Teller Farmer's Fortune”; “Fortune Teller's Golden Story: Farmer Strikes it Rich Followed Instructions of Sideshow Woman”; “Look for Mineral”; “Fortune Teller Still Right - Mine near Coffs Harbour proves Good Rich”; “Came True 'Seer's Prophecy' Lucky Prospector Reef is Improving”;*

Some of the newspapers were:

**In New South Wales:** 'Coffs Harbour Advocate'; 'Daily Examiner' Grafton; 'Nambucca and Bellingen News'; 'Manning Journal'; 'Wingham Chronicle and Manning River Observer'; 'Casino and Kyogle Argus'; 'Kyogle Examiner'; 'Uralla Times'; 'Manilla Express'; 'Dungog Chronicle'; 'The Sun' Sydney; 'Southern Mail' Bowral; 'Braidwood Dispatch'; 'Western Age'; Dubbo; 'Delegate Argus'; 'Wagga Express';

**In Queensland:** 'Evening News Rockhampton'; 'Northern Miner Charters Towers'; 'Balonne Beacon' St George;

**In South Australia :** 'News Adelaide';

**In Western Australia :** 'Daily News Perth'; 'Western Argus Kalgoorlie'; 'Kalgoorlie Miner'.

On 8 June 1931, *The Daily Examiner, Grafton*, NSW, reported on page 2, that

*“Mr J Salter, Northern Inspector of Mines, verified the story with Mr Walters and noted in his report:*

*The shaft on No. 1 reef was down to a depth of 20 feet, with a width of 12 to 15 inches of quartz and was said to assay from 3 ounces to 5 ounces of gold. No. 2 reef was discovered 100 yards East of No. 1, and the shaft in this was down 10 feet and nice free gold was showing in the quartz. The reef appeared to be improving as the sinking".* The report also noted that *"The whole countryside was said to be excited over the affair."*

On Tuesday 14 July 1931, **the Coffs Harbour Advocate** ran the following item:

*"District Mining: Coramba's Busy Year. Official figures of the Coramba Warden's Clerk's District reveal the great advancement gold mining has made in the district during the year. It compared the years 1930-31 and the previous year 1929-30, where figures show the increase in activity in the 1930-31 figures. The number of Miners' Rights issued was 264 against 61; 61 Authorities to Enter against only 1; 30 Authorities to Prospect to none previously; 7 Mining Leases to 1; with about 200 prospectors operating in the district at present, showing around 3 and 4 ounces to the ton. These came from Bucca Creek, Upper Orara, and around Coramba and Nana Glen.*

The **Advocate** also reported,

*"Among the leading mining propositions in the district is the one found by Mr Zaide Walters at Nana Glen. It has been named the 'Golden Gypsy', on account of a fortune teller having put Mr Walters on to it and is reported to be turning out very well".*

Remember – no Internet, no Skype, no E-mails, no Twitter, no Smart phones, no Facebook, no Selfies, and no Landline Telephones in most country villages and towns, but news of gold finds travelled far and wide ... and fast!

Zaide died on 5 November 1948 'Intestate', and, as often the way with goldminers, Insolvent. What did he spend his fortune on? ... *"Fancy Women"* I've been told!!

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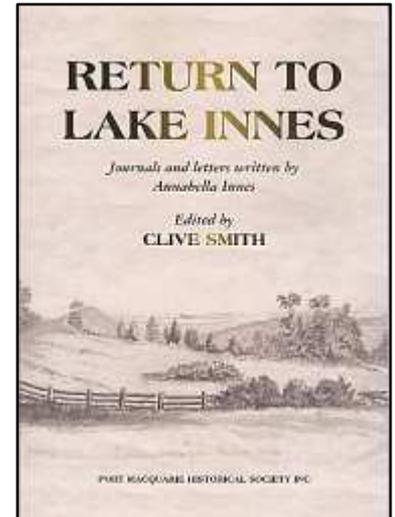
## Did You Know?

- Gold was found in NSW and Victoria in the 1850s and with workers flocking here in the hope of finding their fortune, the number of Australian residents had tripled to 1.1 million by 1860.
- Throughout the 1860s, the gold industry continued to be one of the biggest contributors to the country's growth, exceeding income from wool exports and producing more than 40 per cent of the world's gold.,
- Another golden age followed in the 1890s with the discovery of the 'Golden Mile' at Kalgoorlie in Western Australia, believed to be the richest square mile of gold reserves in the world.
- During the First World War, mining activity and investment declined, however the Great Depression in the 1930s brought revitalisation of the gold industry with a rise again in gold prices and an increase in foreign investment. We can only wonder at the prices that Zaide (in the story above) received for his findings at Nana Glen in the 1930s.
- Today the gold industry employs more than 55,000 Australians nationally, with workers' wages amounting to more than \$3 billion each year. In 2018, we were the second largest gold producing country in the world behind China, with 319 tonnes and 404 tonnes respectively. However, our gold reserves amount to 9,800 tonnes, compared to China's 2,000 tonnes. (Information from wikipedia.org, accessed April 2021.)

## BOOK REVIEW

*Rex Toomey*

*Return to Lake Innes* (Journals and Letters written by Annabella **Innes**) edited by Clive **Smith**. Published 2021 in Australia. ISBN 978-0-9580390-4-8. Softcover, 98 pages, indexed and illustrated. (Price: \$10.00 plus postage from the Port Macquarie Historical Society, 22 Clarence Street, Port Macquarie NSW)



Some years ago, I purchased a hard cover copy of *Annabella Boswell's Journal* (published in 1987 by Angus & Robertson). Upon reading it, I was entranced by Annabella's narrative which managed to uniquely capture a very distinct time in Australian history, especially Port Macquarie in the 1840s. A later edition entitled *Annabella of Lake Innes Port Macquarie* published in 2010, is still available from the Port Macquarie Historical Society.

The first part of the book *Return to Lake Innes* is an adjunct to earlier publications and provides considerably more detail between the period 23 March 1848 to 30 June 1848. The second part of the book has several letters covering the time in December 1853 when Annabella revisited Lake Innes for her cousin's wedding, after an absence of five years. This was where she grew up, and she reflected upon the changes that had taken place after an absence over that time. These letters were mostly written to her mother and sister, Margaret. They are very readable and informative about the journey to Port Macquarie and return, together with the happenings at Lake Innes.

There are many elements in this book which add to its readability and usefulness. Apart from an index (not included in some earlier publications of Annabella **Boswell**), it includes a description of Annabella's family connections together with what could only be described as a 'Dramatis Personae' of people mentioned by Annabella. For example, 'Mrs **Bruce**' is mentioned on page 37 as 'having another son' yet the Editor has kindly included her name on page vii informing the reader that she was 'Helen **Bruce** (nee **Sanderson**), former maid servant of Major **Innes**, wife of Peter **Bruce**, the piper at Lake Innes.' With just that one sentence, the Editor has created a mini biography of a real family connected to Lake Innes, without which the name of 'Mrs **Bruce**' may have been skipped over by the reader.

As a bibliophile, I was also pleased to see the inclusion of references to the books that were being read at the time. On page 3, Annabella mentions enjoying reading *The Dairyman's Daughter*, stating 'wonder much I never read it before.' The details of these are shown as footnotes on the page and usually include the author's name and year of publication.

No doubt, the Editor had an interesting time reading Annabella's 'cross-writing'. This was popular at the time and an example appears on the back cover.

Overall, this is an appealing and moderately priced book. It would be a worthwhile read or gift for any person with a fascination in Australian colonial life and especially for those with an interest in the history of Port Macquarie.



## Taken a DNA test? Now what?

If you have taken a DNA test, interpreting the results can feel overwhelming. Part of your answer depends on why you took the test in the first place but even then, understanding what to do next is often confusing. This article looks at some of the first steps to take to make sense of our results.

Prior to testing, ask yourself if there is a question that needs answering. Is testing simply from curiosity or is there something specific that you wanted to know – such as a brick wall you wish to break down? Is it to affirm that your tree is accurate, or will it throw up some questions about authenticity? Are you unaware of your biological family because of an adoption or unknown paternal line?

Before testing ask whether you are prepared for surprises. How will you – and other members of your family – react if relationships turn out to be other than expected?

### While Waiting for the Test Results

After sending the test away it can take a couple of months to receive the results, so what to do while waiting? Initially build out a wide online family tree to include as many cousins as possible – this is to allow for a lot of cousin matches. Let your family know that you have taken a test – who knows, some long held secrets may be revealed. Ask your relatives to test, especially the older ones, and from different branches of your tree – ask them to notify you when they have their results. Read widely and watch videos about autosomal DNA results to learn as much as you can about the test and what it can achieve.

### Matches

One of the first things to look at when you receive your DNA test results is your matches. In Ancestry<sup>1</sup> the list can be found by clicking on the “DNA” tab on the home page and in the dropdown menu “Your DNA Results Summary” to determine which matches you want to choose. Alternatively, you can go straight to “DNA matches” for a complete list.

At first glance, the list can seem daunting. Who are all these people? Why does it give me such a wide ancestor range as 5<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> Cousin? How can I possibly understand what all this means? Well, let’s take a look at some of my own results.

If I click on the “Shared DNA” tab at the top of my match list, I can see that the first line shows me the total number of matches I have.



As you can see, I have over 25,000 people with whom I match. This means that for each person shown, a length of their genetic material on their chromosome<sup>2</sup> matches a similar length on mine.

You will notice that written under the match's relationship this length is described either as a number of cM (which stands for centiMorgan) or a percentage of shared DNA. The larger the cM number or percentage, the closer that the match and I are to sharing common ancestors. For example, a 1<sup>st</sup> Cousin should share between 396 – 1397cM with me.<sup>3</sup> My cousin and I are 1<sup>st</sup> Cousins – sharing a pair of grandparents who are designated as our Most Recent Common Ancestors (MRCA).

A lot of your matches will be shown as distant relatives, sometimes as far away as an 8th cousin which implies that you share a set of 7x great-Grandparents – 512 in all. I don't know about you, but my tree doesn't go back that far. Because of this it is best to choose the low hanging fruit to work on first – i.e. close relatives with large cM or percentages.

Now that you have chosen the highest half dozen or so matches you need to decide whether they are from the maternal or paternal branch of your family tree. Determining which side each match should be placed is called phasing and is the next thing we need to do.

### **Phasing**

Phasing, according to the International Society of Genetic Genealogy (ISOGG) Wiki,:

*“is the task or process of assigning alleles (the As, Cs, Ts and Gs) to the paternal and maternal chromosomes.”<sup>4</sup>*

In more simple terms it is the act of placing a match on mum or dad's branch of your tree. For some of us, we know who the close matches are and can say “Hey, that's Cousin Susan and she is from Mum's line” and therefore – generally speaking – letting us say that all those who match Susan will also be from Mum's line.<sup>5</sup>

So, if you know the relationship of a person in your Ancestry match list (who is not a sibling or child) you can now look at a list of people that share DNA with you and the match. This is achieved by clicking on the green “View match” button to the right of your match. You can then see your match's tree (if they have one), ethnicity and shared matches.

If you are fortunate enough to have a parent tested, then things become a bit easier. All the shared matches on the list will be exclusively from that particular line. You can now use an Ancestry coloured dot to group (or phase) these matches. For example, if you have tested your mother then you would expect all of her matches to be on the maternal branch and would give each of them a particular coloured dot – say – pink. Similarly with your father's line his matches would be – say – blue. Any new shared matches that match with any blue or pink dots will be given that particular colour too. In this way many of your matches will have been phased.

If you don't have a parent tested, then you can look at relatives on your parents' branches and invite them to test. For example, I have a couple of maternal 1<sup>st</sup> cousins and two paternal aunts that help me phase my matches.

All this is fine if you know your close matches or have family members that you can test with the view to helping you to phase. If not, you could use your ethnicity report to suggest your phasing.

## Ethnicity

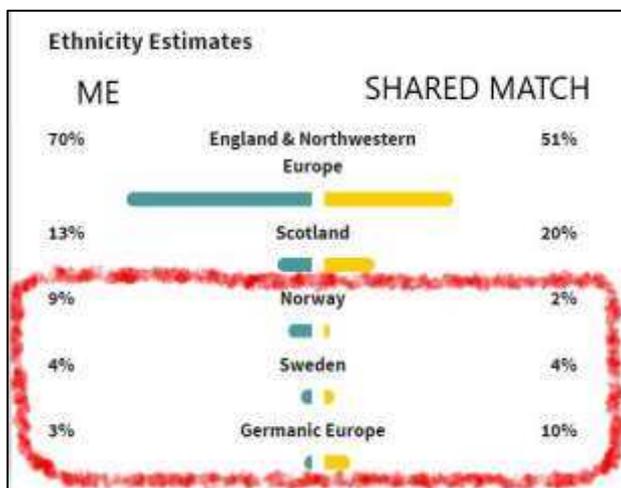
Even a few months ago, I would have dismissed any company's ethnicity report as at best a bunch of fun facts and at worst a distraction. But in recent times the Big Three – Ancestry, MyHeritage and FamilyTreeDNA (FTDNA) have increased the numbers of assigned regions and reference panels to provide better ethnicity estimates and therefore becoming more useful.

Ancestry describes their approach as:

*To create the ethnicity estimate, we compare a customer's DNA to a panel of DNA from people with known origins (referred to as the reference panel) and look to see which parts of the customer's DNA are similar to those from people represented in groups in the reference panel. If, for example, a section of a customer's DNA looks most similar to DNA in the reference panel of people from Sweden, that section of the customer's DNA is assigned to Sweden. The end result is a portrait of a customer's DNA made up of percentages of the 43 ethnicities contained in the reference panel.<sup>6</sup>*

The historical origins reports are now getting better at predicting the location of your family members up to a few hundred years ago as Ancestry recently reported:

*With each [ethnicity] update, we're able to bring more precision to AncestryDNA® results. [W]e've been able to divide larger regions, like the United Kingdom and Ireland, Italy, China, Japan, the Philippines, Eastern Europe, and Southern Africa into smaller regions. We've also added Cyprus as a brand-new region.<sup>7</sup>*



Mind you, if your tree is deep and wide enough, you should already know this information but now ethnicity can be used to help you phase your matches.

You can now methodically analyse the ethnicity locations of your matches to look for similarities in geographic and ethnic heritage. As an example a kit that I manage has a 16% estimate for Scandinavia and Germanic Europe.

I notice that on his paternal branch some of his other matches have a similar ethnic background. Now I am not for one minute saying, that just because of this ethnic grouping, all similar matches will be paternal, but it's a suggestion that is certainly worthy of more investigation.

Also of interest, the 'Recent Origins' ethnicity estimate for this particular kit shows Hampshire and Gloucestershire. His DNA matches and his family tree data indicate that these locations are accurate – his mother's family comes from Gloucestershire and his father's from Hampshire.

The next step is to use your shared matches trees to find a common ancestor, but unfortunately some don't have large trees so often you need to build one.



## Building Trees

Again, it comes back to picking the low hanging fruit. Don't try to look for common ancestors for distant cousins but look for, at the farthest, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> cousins. A 4<sup>th</sup> cousin shares 3x Great Grandparents with you, yet even this distance can prove difficult. This is where you make a "Quick & Dirty" tree – accepting hints without necessarily verifying them just to see if they lead to an MRCA common to both your lineages.

Because the tree is based on "guesstimates" you must make it private and unsearchable. This is to prevent others from copying your tree and proliferating any errors in it.

Open the tree you wish to privatise and click on the down arrow shown alongside the name of the tree on the top left-hand side. The dropdown menu shows "Tree Settings" – click on this. Under the heading "Tree Settings" at the top of the newly opened page, click on "Privacy Settings". Now change the setting from "Public" to "Private" by clicking on the appropriate radio button. Scroll down the page and tick the box that says: "Also prevent your tree from being found in the search index" and then "Save Changes".

You are now able to use Ancestry's hints to build a tree looking for similar locations, ethnicities and surnames until you find a common ancestor or two. Another benefit of doing this is that when you have found the common ancestors, you can send an Ancestry message to the original match letting them know who it is – you may even receive an answer.

If you're still confused, don't forget that we have a DNA Support Group on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month between February to November. This year we are committed to Zoom only (no meetings at the Library), so why not Zoom in and ask your questions there.

Good hunting!

<sup>1</sup> I use AncestryDNA as my example here because they have the largest and most popular database by far.

<sup>2</sup> A chromosome is an organized package of DNA found in the nucleus of the cell. Humans have 23 pairs of chromosomes--22 pairs of numbered chromosomes, called autosomes, and one pair of sex chromosomes, X and Y. Each parent contributes one chromosome to each pair so that offspring get half of their chromosomes from their mother and half from their father. Source: <https://www.genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Chromosome>

<sup>3</sup> Data from the Shared cM Project v4 which can be found at <https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>

<sup>4</sup> <https://isogg.org/wiki/Phasing>

<sup>5</sup> There are a few provisos to using this reasoning as an absolute, such as having a family that includes endogamy, pedigree collapse or a founder population will make the match seem closer than it really is – but here is not the place to discuss these issues.

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.ancestrycdn.com/dna/static/images/ethnicity/help/WhitePaper\\_Final\\_091118db.pdf](https://www.ancestrycdn.com/dna/static/images/ethnicity/help/WhitePaper_Final_091118db.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ancestry.com/dna/lp/ancestry-dna-ethnicity-estimate-update>

## SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FEES

	Renewals	New Members*	
	Payable at 1st July each year	1st July to 30th June	1st Jan to 30th June
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<i>Footsteps</i> Journal editions—November, February, May, August	4 issues included in Membership fees		
	Subscription is available to Non-Members at \$15.00 for one year.		

\*Includes a one-off \$5.00 joining fee.

## FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

The Society will undertake family history research for an initial fee of \$20 and will include a list of records used, entry into *Footsteps* (where appropriate) and suggestions regarding other resources. There may be an additional fee for further research.

Please make your initial enquiry to the Research Officer at [secretary@pmdfhs.org.au](mailto:secretary@pmdfhs.org.au) and include as many details as possible about the person/family and any other relevant information including sources already researched. Alternatively, enquire via mail and include a business size, stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Research Officer, PO Box 1359, Port Macquarie NSW 2444.

## INFOEMAIL

Our Society newsletter, *InfoEmail*, is emailed on a regular basis to members who have provided an email address. Remember to keep your email address up to date so you do not miss out. Please email us if you are not receiving the *InfoEmail*.

If you do not have an email address, but have a computer with internet access, the *InfoEmails* are available on our website at [www.pmdfhs.org.au](http://www.pmdfhs.org.au) to download and read. Journal reviews now have their own separate tab on the left side of the Society's website.

## RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

General assistance with family history – local, Australian and overseas – is available for members and non-members in the Local Studies Room at the Port Macquarie Library. Our volunteers are normally on duty to help on most Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10am to 3pm, with a break over Christmas. This service has now resumed but please continue to observe Covid-19 restrictions within the Library.

## RESEARCH SUPPORT GROUP

The Research Support Group for members which was previously held at Port Macquarie-Hastings Library, in the Technology Room, will continue to be available via the 'Zoom' video link from 1pm to 3pm on the Wednesdays, until further notice. The topic is advertised in the latest *InfoEmail* and at the most recent General Meeting.

## PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

Publication Name	Member Price	Normal Price	Weight
Port Macquarie's Last Convicts; The story of the end of the convict establishment in 1847, 204 pages, soft cover	\$18	\$20	737g
Tile Tales; Stories behind the names on the front wall of the Port Macquarie Swimming Pool, 752 pages, hard cover	\$60	\$60	2kg
Cemetery Trail; Port Macquarie – Hastings Full colour, 224 pages (glove box sized)	\$27	\$30	425g
Can You Remember? Memory Joggers for writing a Life Story (A5 booklet – pink cover – 16pp)	\$3	\$3	25g
Starting Your Family History (A5 booklet – yellow cover – 20pp)	\$3	\$3	30g
Pedigree Chart & Family Group Sheets 1 chart, 16 group sheets (A5 booklet – blue cover – 40pp)	\$5	\$5	54g
Certificates of Freedom Records for PM Convicts: Runaways, Robbers & Incurable Rogues (CD-ROM)	\$8	\$12	n/a
Port Macquarie Index to Colonial Secretary's Papers 1796-1825 (CD-ROM)	\$8	\$12	n/a
Harvesting the Hastings – Farming Families (CD-ROM in colour)	\$17	\$20	n/a
Sydney Gaol Records for Port Macquarie Convicts April 1821-1826 (CD-ROM)	\$8	\$12	n/a
General Cemetery Port Macquarie – Transcriptions & Images (CD-ROM)	\$8	\$12	n/a

Note: All CD-ROM purchases include postage

<b>Postage Australia Wide</b>		
Up to 250g (Large letter)	\$5	Holds one book only
250g to 500g (Large letter/Package)	\$12	
Over 500g (Prepaid satchel)	\$18	Holds several books

Postage charges must be added to the cost of the items purchased. When ordering several books, calculate the total weight and use the table above to calculate postage cost. For ALL overseas rates, please contact the Secretary. To collect items instead of paying postage, please also contact the Secretary (see telephone number on page 2).

An order form is available at: [www.pmdfhs.org.au](http://www.pmdfhs.org.au) – please complete the order form and send with your payment to: The Secretary, Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society Inc. PO Box 1359, Port Macquarie NSW 2444.

Cheques and money orders should be made payable to Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society Inc. or alternatively, send an email to [secretary@pmdfhs.org.au](mailto:secretary@pmdfhs.org.au) to obtain the Society's banking details, and direct deposit reference, in order to pay by direct deposit via the internet. Pre-payment is required; however Local Government Libraries can be invoiced.

# **PORT MACQUARIE & DISTRICTS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.**

PO Box 1359  
Port Macquarie NSW 2444  
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Email: [secretary@pmdfhs.org.au](mailto:secretary@pmdfhs.org.au)  
Mobile: 0475 132 804

## **Our Research Home**

Local Studies/Family History Room  
Port Macquarie-Hastings Library  
Corner of Grant and Gordon Streets  
Port Macquarie NSW 2444

## **Our Meeting Room**

CC Mac Adams Music Centre  
Gordon Street  
Port Macquarie NSW 2444  
(between Port Macquarie Olympic Pool and Players Theatre)

## **Port Macquarie & Districts Family History Society is affiliated with:**

Royal Australian Historical Society  
Parramatta Female Factory Friends  
Australian Federation of Family History Organisations Inc.  
NSW & ACT Association  
of Family History Societies Inc.

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